

Ayurvedic Deep Tissue Massage *Training Manual*



Registered with the Complementary Medical Association

**Thaivedic
massage
school**



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Acknowledgments are due to my fantastic teacher Chetan Baghel, of **www.rasovai.com** in Goa, India. I attended his Ayur Balance course in 2014, and then his Massage Teacher Training course in early 2018. He is a talented, patient teacher and enthusiastic exponent of this beautiful massage. As well as teaching Ayur Balance massage he is now running Meditation Teacher Training courses in Goa. A trip to Rasovai is highly recommended!

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THE COMPLEMENTARY MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

Thai-vedic Massage School has been recognised as a Centre of Excellence by The Complementary Medical Association (The CMA). This means that we hold full Training School Membership of The CMA which demonstrates our commitment to the very highest standards of excellence.

When you successfully complete this course, you will be eligible to apply for Full Membership of The CMA - the world's largest and most highly respected professional membership association. The CMA ensures that the public has access to a Professional Register of elite practitioners and outstanding training schools, that doctors and other healthcare professionals know that they can safely refer their patients to. Membership has huge benefits, including support with your practice development, through CMA President, Jayney Goddard's regular online MasterClasses and access to CMA Member's low-cost insurance
Visit www.the-CMA.org.uk for more information.

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NOTES:

1) INTRODUCTION

AYURVEDIC DEEP TISSUE (AYUR BALANCE) MASSAGE

Originating from India, Ayurvedic Deep Tissue massage (taught as Ayur Balance massage in Goa) is a deep, relaxing and stress relieving massage. Deep, slow strokes are given with the fingers, knuckles, fists, forearms and elbows allowing the therapist to go much deeper into the muscles of the receiver than massages performed with the hands only.



The massage begins with the application of oil with soft strokes to warm up the muscles and prepare them for the deeper work to come. Unlike Abhyanga only a little oil is used to enable the therapist to use friction to go deeper into the muscles

During the massage the therapist uses their own body to support the receiver, for example the therapist's leg is used to support the receiver's leg and the therapists foot is used to hold down the shoulder during the spinal twist.

Emphasis is placed on using our body weight rather than our muscles so that the massage is not as strenuous as it otherwise might be, and so that we can deliver mutiple massages in one day without putting too much strain on our bodies.

For this training course I have also added in some refinements from other modalities, such as hot towels from Abhyanga massage, some palming and pinching techniques through the hot towels from Thai massage and some particularly nice to receive techniques for the arms, hand and feet from Balinese massage.

If there is time I can also add in some shoulder rotations and lower back stretches from Thai massage that are useful to add in if needed.

Benefits of deep tissue massage for the receiver

- Relieves muscular pains and stiffness in the joints
- Good for breaking down knots in the muscles
- Stimulates blood and lymph circulation
- Relieves stress
- Brings the receiver into a state of deep relaxation

Contra-indications

- **Cancer:** clients undergoing chemotherapy should not receive massages
- **Muscular inflammation**, or tendinitis. Avoid the affected areas
- **Pregnancy:** after 3 weeks deep tissue massage is not suitable, except on the legs and arms. After the third trimester clients should receive only pregnancy massages
- For any of the following conditions, avoid the whole **stomach** area or go very softly: gastritis (inflammation of the stomach lining), stomach ulcer, stomach or intestinal cancer, hepatitis (inflammation of the liver caused by viral infection), pancreatitis (inflammation of the pancreas), appendicitis, or diarrhoea.
- **Skeletal disorders.** Osteomyelitis (infection of the bone leading to painful, weak and damaged tissue). Avoid massaging clients with this condition. Osteomalacia (loss of calcium and phosphorous due to lack of vitamin D causing weak bones) and Osteoporosis (brittle bone disease) use caution and work carefully on and around joints.
- **Infectious diseases:** including the common cold. Avoid massing the person until they are fully recovered. *If you catch their cold you could have to take several days off work!*
- **Bacterial or fungal infections.** Avoid the infected area.
- **Heart related disorders.** Massage only with their doctor's consent.
- **Recent surgery** (within the last 12 months). Avoid the area of surgery.

Before your client arrives

Make sure you have:

- prepared **iced water, flavoured with fruit**
- wet your **hand towels**, with hot water, and placed them in the towel warmer
- placed a **clean sheet** and **face cradle cover** on your table and cradle, (and in autumn, winter and spring, turned on your electric blanket)
- placed your **towel** to warm on the radiator, or folded your **sarong**
- topped up your bowls with **sesame oil** and scented **oil for the face massage**
- lit your **essential oil burner, incense** and **candles**.

Questions to ask your client

Some massage schools will advise you to give clients a long questionnaire with questions about your clients illnesses, injuries, medications they are taking etc. However this can take up valuable time and most clients arrive stressed or tired and just want to get on with the massage as soon as possible... they have come to you to relax not to fill out forms! The questions /requests below should be enough to prompt them to tell you anything important and ensure that you are not disturbed during the massage.

- **Would you like some water?** Have some iced water infused with fresh fruit (e.g. lemon, lime, strawberry) ready for them when they arrive
- **Do you have any particular aches or pains you would like me to work on today?** Usually clients will mention one or two areas that they would like you to focus on (more often than not their shoulders or lower back). This information allows you to tailor the massage to their needs by spending more time on those areas.
- **Do you have any illness or injuries I should be aware of?** If there are any contra-indications, either advise against the massage or observe caution as appropriate
- **Do you need to use the bathroom before we start?**

- **Would you like me to avoid getting oil in your hair today?** I mainly ask this question to female clients, but use your judgement: men can have long hair or may use styling products they don't want disturbed.
- **Do you have any problems with your neck?** If yes use the face cradle instead of starting with their face turned to one side on the table
- **Please turn off your mobile phone or put it on silent.** Most people are happy to do this, but sometimes a doctor on call or a young mother who has told her babysitter to call in case of emergency, will ask to leave it turned on. Don't forget to put your phone on 'Do Not Disturb' mode (if you are playing music from it) or turn it off, too.
- **Please remove any jewelry** (e.g. bracelets, necklaces, dangly ear-rings or watches)

2) PRACTITIONER STANCES, POSTURE AND SELF CARE

To avoid developing painful lower back or shoulder pains, its extremely important to ensure your stance and posture while giving the massage is correct.

Common mistakes for massage practitioners

- **Bending the back.** This can result in a sore back for the practitioner. To get lower down when working on a client, try to bend your knees, so that you are in a lunge or squat position.
- **Bending the arms.** This results in overuse of the arm muscles. Instead you should always lock the elbow when applying downward pressure, so that you are using your bodyweight rather than your muscles.
- **Tilting the head downwards.** It natural to want to look at what you are doing, but once you have learned the massage techniques you should be able to massage and perform stretches without having to look down which can result in neck pains.

The height of your table is important so make sure that it is just the right height to be able to work on the receiver's back with your arms straight. Clients come in all shapes and sizes so dont be afraid to lower your table if a very large client arrives as you could injure yourself if you try to massage them and dont have enough space to be able to apply the deep pressure the massage requires... and they wont get a satisfactory massage either!

Self care

Strategies you can employ to minimise strain on your shoulders and lower back while giving the massage include:

- Place the arm you are not using behind your back. This will help you to avoid hunching foward and straining your shoulders.
- Take every opportunity to stretch: if you are massaging the neck with one hand only, stretch into a back bend with the other arm.

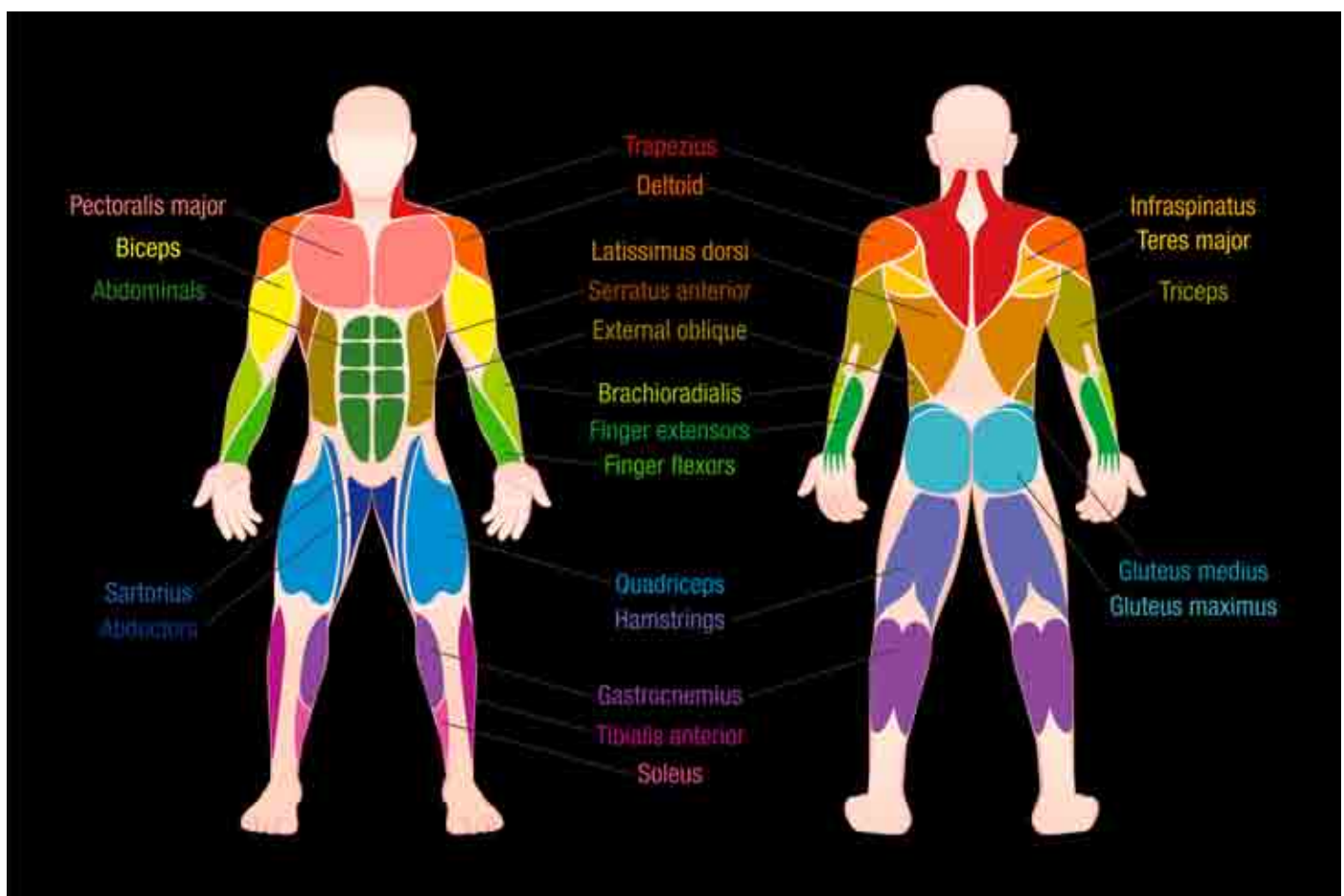
Yoga, Qi Gong, Pilates..

It's important to find a way of looking after your body to compensate for the strain put on your back and shoulders while giving massages. You may prefer yoga, qi gong or pilates.

Many of your clients will be interested in or already practicing yoga and may expect you to be knowledgeable about yoga too. You might want to try out your local yoga classes so you can recommend one to your clients.

Once you have learned some stretches or self massage techniques, be sure to use the time while you are waiting for your client to get dressed to stretch your muscles after you have completed each massage.

You can also advise clients to use the same stretches or some self massage techniques to help with their own aches and pains.



3) PRACTICAL: BACK, SHOULDERS AND ARMS

1. Over the sarong or towel: place hands on upper and lower back. Ask client to take 3 deep breaths, pressing down with each breath



Notes:

Muscles worked?

Erector spinae, trapezius,
latissimus dorsi, quadratus lumborum

2. Strong circles on sacrum, using little oil



Notes:

Muscles worked?

Erector spinae, gluteus maximus

3. Palm up spine, long strokes, x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

Erector spinae, trapezius

PRACTICAL: BACK, SHOULDERS AND ARMS

4. Sideways short strokes down right & left sides



Notes:

Muscles worked? Erector spinae,
trapezius, infraspinatus, latissimus
dorsi, quadratus lumborum

5. Long palm stroke up x3



Notes:

Muscles worked? Erector spinae,
trapezius, rhomboids,
quadratus lumborum

6. Long palm stroke down x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

Erector spinae, trapezius, rhomboids,
quadratus lumborum

PRACTICAL: BACK, SHOULDERS AND ARMS

7. Curved palm stroke upwards over ribs & scapula x3



Notes:

Muscles worked? Erector spinae, quadratus lumborum, intercostals, infraspinatus, teres major, supraspinatus

8. Downwards palm stroke on side x3



Notes:

Muscles worked? Intercostals, latissimus dorsi, serratus anterior

9. Long inner fist stroke up x3 down x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

Erector spinae, trapezius, rhomboids, quadratus lumborum

PRACTICAL: BACK, SHOULDERS AND ARMS

10. Long forearm stroke (hand pointing inwards) up x3 down x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

Erector spinae, trapezius, rhomboids,
quadratus lumborum

11. Long forearm stroke (hand pointing outwards) up x3 down x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

Erector spinae, trapezius, rhomboids,
quadratus lumborum

12. Elbow, deep stroke x3 up x3 down



Notes:

Muscles worked?

Erector spinae, trapezius, rhomboids,
quadratus lumborum

PRACTICAL: BACK, SHOULDERS AND ARMS

13. Reassuring stroke x3 up (both hands)



Notes:

Muscles worked? Erector spinae,
quadratus lumborum, latissimus
dorsi, trapezius, infraspinatus,

14. Massage shoulder inwards - fingers x 6



Notes:

Muscles worked?

Upper trapezius, levator scapulae

15. Massage shoulder inwards - fist x 6



Notes:

Muscles worked?

Upper trapezius, levator scapulae

PRACTICAL: BACK, SHOULDERS AND ARMS

16. & 17. Massage shoulder inwards - upper arm x 6, elbow x6



Notes:

Muscles worked?

Upper trapezius, levator scapulae

18. Fist - traps to rhomboids x6



Notes:

Muscles worked?

Trapezius, rhomboids,

19. Elbow - traps to rhomboids x6



Notes:

Muscles worked?

Trapezius, rhomboids,

PRACTICAL: BACK, SHOULDERS AND ARMS

20. Massage neck upwards from above head, stretching occiput x6



Notes:

Muscles worked? Longissimus and splenius capitis, suboccipitals

21. Massage head with fingers in claw position x6



Notes:

Muscles worked?

Occipitalis and cranial aponeurosis

22. - 25. Shoulder outwards - fingers , fist, upper arm, elbow x 6 each



Notes:

Muscles worked? Trapezius, levator scapulae, deltoids

PRACTICAL: BACK, SHOULDERS AND ARMS

26. Scrape fingers downwards - above scapula x6



Notes:

Muscles worked? Trapezius, levator
scapulae

27. Scrape fingers downwards - on surface of scapula x6



Notes:

Muscles worked? Supraspinatus,
infraspinatus, teres minor

28. Support top of shoulder with right hand fingers, dig deep with left hand thumb into teres minor. Give a little wiggle, then strong thumb strokes outwards



Notes:

Muscles worked?

Trapezius, teres minor

PRACTICAL: BACK, SHOULDERS AND ARMS

29. Hold hand with thumbs in palm & shake to open scapula



Notes:

Muscles worked?

Mobilises shoulder joint

30. With hand behind back, massage fore & upper arm with fist x3

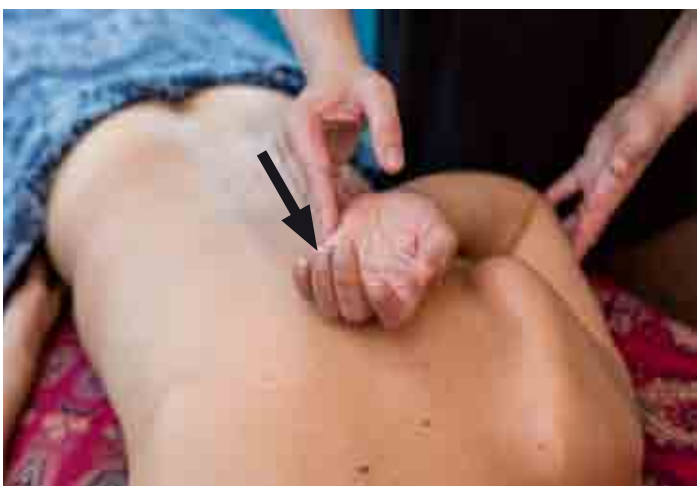


Notes:

Muscles worked?

Arm extensors, brachialis, triceps

31. With fingertips touching wrist & elbow push hand towards scapula x3



Notes:

Muscles worked? Stretches the muscles of the upper arm and shoulder

PRACTICAL: BACK, SHOULDERS AND ARMS

32. Stretch scapula with forearm, side of hand then fingertips



Notes:

Muscles worked?

Rhomboids, trapezius

33. Pull scapula with fingertips in rocking motions, walk smoothly around other side of table and rock with thumbs



Notes:

Muscles worked?

Rhomboids, trapezius

34. Slide thumbs away from each other under scapula and squeeze traps x6



Notes:

Muscles worked?

Rhomboids, trapezius

PRACTICAL: BACK, SHOULDERS AND ARMS

35. Slide alternate thumbs under scapula and over traps x6



Notes:

Muscles worked?

Rhomboids, trapezius

36. Hold arm above elbow with both hands, (receivers wrist on your inner forearm) & raise forearm to stretch scapula



Notes:

Muscles worked? Stretches the muscles of the upper arm and shoulder

37. Massage forearm and upper arm on table with palms x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

Arm extensors, brachialis, triceps

PRACTICAL: BACK, SHOULDERS AND ARMS

38. Massage forearm and upper arm on table with with forearm x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

Arm extensors, brachialis, triceps

39. Lift arm up & scrape fingers upwards on deltoids x6

40. Stretch arm inwards & work deltoids downwards with fist x6



Notes:

Muscles worked? Deltoid

PRACTICAL: BACK, SHOULDERS AND ARMS

41. With arm up, massage deltoids with wrist and palm in a loop x6



Notes:

Muscles worked?

Deltoid

42. Double thumb strokes down upper arm x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

Deltoid, brachialis, triceps

43. Palm strokes on topside of forearm x6



Notes:

Muscles worked?

Arm extensors

**44. Reassuring palm strokes up & down back, pulling up traps x3.
Turn head to the other side**

PRACTICAL: BACK, SHOULDERS AND ARMS

Repeat 5-43 on other side

45. Add more oil and spread with zig zag strokes on back and arms



Notes:

Muscles worked?

46. Looping strokes with palms over upper, mid & lower back



Notes:

Muscles worked?

47. Looping strokes with forearms over upper, mid & lower back



Notes:

Muscles worked?

PRACTICAL: BACK, SHOULDERS AND ARMS

48. Reassuring stroke over back (shake back on way up) and arms



Notes:

Muscles worked?

49. Apply hot towel, massage neck & shoulders through the towel



Notes:

Muscles worked?

50. Massage back through the towel (Thai techniques)



Notes:

Muscles worked?

PRACTICAL: BACK, SHOULDERS AND ARMS

51. Massage spine through the towel (Thai techniques - “The Snake”)



Notes:

Muscles worked?

52. Walk up the back through the towel (Thai techniques)



Notes:

Muscles worked?

Cover back with sarong, or towel. If you have time:

- **Shoulder pains: add Thai shoulder rotations**
- **Lower back pain: add Thai lower back stretches - “The Locust”**

4) CLIENT COMFORT AND HYGIENE

It's tempting when you start your massage business to buy less expensive equipment and products. However this is a false economy: cheap massage tables break, inexpensive massage oils aren't as aromatic, cheap towels will need replacing sooner. Remember all your equipment and products are a tax deductible expense, so while you might save money, you may end up having to pay the money you save to the taxman!

And if you use good quality towels and oils, your clients will notice that no expense has been spared and the experience will feel more comfortable and luxurious.. And they will keep coming back!

Equipment and products needed

- **Massage table.** Invest in a good quality massage table with metal legs (my first massage table's wooden legs buckled under the weight of a particularly heavy client!). Ensure there is space at both ends to sit with your knees under the table, for when you are massaging the head (or if you train in foot massage, the feet). If you are planning on offering pregnancy massage consider getting a table with an adjustable back rest so that you can offer leg and foot massages to pregnant clients who find it difficult to lie on their back.



- **Massage oils.** Traditionally this massage is performed using unrefined, pungent, cold pressed sesame oil: this is difficult to find in the UK. Most sesame oil you can find will be fragrance free. For the authentic experience you can find certified organic cold pressed sesame seed oil,

with its fabulous fragrance intact, at www.bayhousearomatics.com Alternatively you can use organic coconut oil, but this will need to be heated to bring it out of its solid state for most of the year. You can use a scented oil for massaging the arms, face and neck. There are many available, but our favourites are Neal's Yard's Neroli and Mandarin 'Mother's Massage Oil' (www.nealsyardremedies.com) and iMantara's Rachawadee or Jasmine massage oils ([www.thaisquarespa.com/im-antara](http://www.thaisquarespa.com/imantara))

Sarongs. When I first started I used good quality, heavy cotton towels to cover my clients. However I eventually realised that as long as the room is adequately heated (to around 24 degrees C) you can use sarongs instead. This will save you hundreds of pounds in laundry bills, as sarongs are much smaller and easier to launder, You can use light cotton Indian or maybe Indonesian patterned sarongs (www.etsy.com is good place to find these). To make the sarongs feel extra cosy you can put them on the radiator before your clients arrive so that they are nice and warm when your clients get under them. You will still need a couple of large, heavy bath towels, in case a client complains that they are cold, so that you can cover them with the towel over the sarong.

- As well as bath towels you'll need some small **hand towels** to use as: hot towels on the back and feet; to cover your clients eyes while in supine position; and to wrap their feet, to keep them warm, if they are tall and your bath towel isn't big enough.
- **Sheets.** You can use whatever sheets you like but if you want to create an Indian ambience, you can use Indian patterned bedsheets (available on www.amazon.co.uk or www.etsy.com)
- **Face cradle covers** available from the same sites.
- **Cushions and bolster.** You'll need some square cushions to; put under your client's head when they are in supine position; and occasionally clients with breast implants will need a cushion under their stomach. Again you can find nice Indian/ bohemian cushion covers online. A bolster is useful to place under clients ankles in prone position and under their knees in spine position if they are uncomfortable lying with their legs flat on the table.

- **Towel warmer.** A towel warming cabinet for heating the small, wet hand towels with which to wash the feet and use on the back.
- **Small bowls** for your massage oil. Polished coconut shells work well for this purpose.



- **Rose water and cotton eyepads** to place on your clients eyes in supine position. You can also use Orangeflower or Jasmine water.
- **A folding chair or stool** to sit on while giving the head/face massage. A chair is also necessary if you plan to offer Indian Head massages.
- **An electric blanket** for your massage table to keep your

clients toasty and warm during the cold winter months.

- **An electric room heater** to heat your massage room quickly if your heating hasn't heated the room quickly enough in winter.
- **Hand warmers.** Another nice touch if you notice that your clients hands are cold (however warm your room is, they often come in from the cold with ice cold hands).
- It's a good idea to get a **digital thermometer** so you can monitor the temperature and humidity of your room - I try to keep mine above 24 degrees.
- **An electric fan** for the few weeks of the year when the temperature rises above 25 degrees
- **A box of tissues** for when clients need to blow their nose, or wipe away excess massage oil.
- **Glasses** for providing your clients with a drink of iced, fruit infused water on arrival.
- **A card machine** so that you can take card payments. I use Sum Up who charge 1.85% per transaction, but cheaper deals may be available.

NOTES:

5) PRACTICAL: BACK OF THE LEGS AND FEET

53. Apply hot towel to feet. Thumb down 5 lines, in line with the toes, wipe feet & between toes.



Notes:

Muscles worked?

54. Apply oil. Put knee under ankle



Notes:

Muscles worked?

55. Massage sole with fingers x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

PRACTICAL: BACK OF THE LEGS AND FEET

56. Massage sole with fist x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

57. Massage sole with forearm x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

58. Massage sole with elbow x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

PRACTICAL: BACK OF THE LEGS AND FEET

59. Massage ankle to buttock with palm, long strokes x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

60. Massage ankle to buttock with fist x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

61. Massage ankle to buttock with forearm x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

PRACTICAL: BACK OF THE LEGS AND FEET

62. Massage ankle to buttock with elbow x3, slide down IT band & calf with forearm



Notes:

Muscles worked?

63. Lift & shake ankle



Notes:

Muscles worked?

64. Rotate knee joint to its limit, with fist on hip joint x3 each direction



Notes:

Muscles worked?

PRACTICAL: BACK OF THE LEGS AND FEET

65. Holding sacrum stretch knee outwards & inwards



Notes:

Muscles worked?

66. Sit on table. Massage sole of foot with fingers (Thai style).

67. Pull toes.



Notes:

Muscles worked?

PRACTICAL: BACK OF THE LEGS AND FEET

68. Massage lines between toes x3 each



Notes:

Muscles worked?

69. Resting foot on your shoulder, massage calf muscles with downwards milking motion.



Notes:

Muscles worked?

70. Sideways calf stretches



Notes:

Muscles worked?

PRACTICAL: BACK OF THE LEGS AND FEET

71. Bend lower leg outwards, massage inner thigh with fist x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

72. Bend lower leg outwards, massage inner thigh with forearm x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

73. Bend lower leg inwards, massage outer thigh with fist, long strokes x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

PRACTICAL: BACK OF THE LEGS AND FEET

74. Bend lower leg outwards, massage inner thigh with forearm x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

75. Bend leg, foot to knee. Massage ankle-knee (side of calf muscle) with palm x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

76. Massage side of calf muscle with fist x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

PRACTICAL: BACK OF THE LEGS AND FEET

77. Massage side of calf muscle with forearm x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

78. Massage side of calf muscle with thumb, squeezing calf x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

79. Massage up IT-band with palm x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

PRACTICAL: BACK OF THE LEGS AND FEET

80. Massage up IT-band with fist x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

81. Downwards pulling strokes on glutes with fingers x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

82. Downwards pulling strokes on glutes with fist x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

83. Downwards double palm strokes on IT band x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

84. Straighten leg. Pulling strokes on top of foot x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

85. Place foot back on knee. Reassuring strokes with both palms x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

- Prepare Rosewater eyepads and roll up hand towel
- Say to the client "OK Jane, I'm going to lift the towel & look away, if you could turn over, and move down the table, so that your head is on the table please". Hold sarong up so they can see that you can't see
- Put pads & towel on their eyes and a cushion under their head

6) STARTING A MASSAGE BUSINESS

Of all the - sixteen - massage courses I've attended, not one has spent more than a few minutes on the topic of how to run a massage business. So in this course I want to give us sufficient time to discuss what goes into setting up and running a successful massage business. What follows is not meant to be a comprehensive 'how to' guide, nor the only way to do it, but more of a starting point for our discussions on the course.

Marketing

- **Website.** A good website should list your treatments and prices on the homepage, have an online booking system, your contact details, headshot, opening hours and details of your cancellation policy visible at the top of the page. Treatments should be briefly described so that clients can see which massage is good for relaxation, and which are more therapeutic treatments. If you have any special offers there should be a brief description of the offers on the homepage with a link to a page with more details. There should be an online contact form, and maybe 'subscribe to our newsletter' and 'read our latest newsletter' links. It should be colourful and illustrated with photos of the treatments you offer. Text should be concise - no one wants to read long, dense paragraphs of text when they are just trying to book a massage.
- Other pages can: describe your treatments in more detail; list your terms and conditions; give directions and a map. You can have: a page with biographical details about yourself and how you got interested in massage; a page with your recent reviews; and another with details of how your clients can purchase gift vouchers
- Unless you are a web designer by trade, don't attempt to make your own website. For a few hundred pounds you can pay a company to make you a professional website. I used **www.therapywebgenie.uk** who have a range of designs to choose from, or you can do as I did and ask them to copy the design of a particular website that you like.
- **Booking system.** There are several booking systems out there. I use **www.treatwell.co.uk** which offers a booking widget that can be added to your website, and you will also have a listing on their website. If they bring you new clients through their website they will charge you

a 35% commission for bringing you the new client, which seems high but after that they only charge a 2% commission for repeat bookings. Bookings made via the booking widget on your website or bookings you take on the phone or by email are not subject to commission. You can easily view all your appointments in their app, and create and your own treatment menu for clients to view on your website & Treatwell's. They even send your clients automated emails prompting them to re-book!

- **Leaflets.** One of the best ways to advertise your business is to design and distribute leaflets to local cafes, shops or door to door. Like your website homepage they should be colourful and eye-catching, with all the information you have on your website homepage, with your special offers prominent. If you have some graphic design skills you can design them yourself, if not pay a professional (remember their fee will be tax deductible). There are many printing companies available but I have found **www.saxoprint.co.uk** to be reasonable prices and reliable.



- **Sandwich board.** If your massage practice is near a busy high street (and if it isn't you should consider moving close to one) a sandwich board is an excellent way of increasing your visibility. I have found a sandwich board with an A1 sized poster that can be removed and replaced when you increase your prices (which you should do annually), with a leaflet dispenser attached, will get you far more new customers

than facebook and twitter combined. You can find sandwich boards at **www.ukpos.com**. Make sure you buy a sturdy one, not the cheapest flimsiest one. You'll need a cable lock to lock it to a signpost, and don't forget to bring it inside every evening to prevent it being damaged by high winds, heavy rain or vandals.

- **Newsletter.** After you've been up and running for a few months you should have collected enough email addresses (if you use Treatwell, they are all stored online for you) to be able to send an email newsletter to your clients. Don't beat yourself up about doing this every month or every two months. Only do it when you have something interesting to say: perhaps you have a new special offer, a new therapy you have trained in and are ready to offer to your clients, or you want to promote your gift vouchers ahead of Christmas or Valentines Day. There is a great website that you can store your clients' email addresses and easily design and send email newsletters called **www.mailchimp.com**
- **Google Maps listing.** Its important to ensure your Google Maps listing is accurate so that clients can find you easily. Clients can also leave reviews here, and the more reviews you have the more likely it is that people finding you on Google Maps will contact you. Make sure your listing has plenty of photos. You should also consider paying Google to do a 360 degree tour of your practice so that prospective clients can look around inside your massage room(s).
- **Facebook groups, Instagram and Twitter** are useful for sharing your newsletter, but I've found other marketing methods to be more effective.
- **Local community websites** are another way to reach your target local audience. You can usually post for free on this kind of website, which will have a section for local business to advertise their services

Finance

Tax returns. Yes everybody hates doing it but unfortunately, like laundry, its a big, time-consuming part of the job. For your tax return you will need to keep all your receipts (paper and emailed) and then record them on an Excel spreadsheet. Its best to try to do this once a month otherwise you will end up with a huge pile of receipts at the end of the financial year and you'll have to take a few days off just to do your accounts.



If you use a booking system such as Treatwell, all your income will be recorded in the invoices they send you, and in online sales reports. But to work out your net income (your gross income minus your expenses) you'll need to have an accurate record of everything you spend. Don't forget to include things like council tax, electricity, gas, telephone and internet bills (or a reasonable percentage of these if you are working from home) and the commission Treatwell (or other booking system) charges for bringing you new or repeat clients.

You can include costs of training courses, and travel, accommodation and meals eaten while you are attending training courses: so this is your chance to travel the world and learn different modalities available in other countries. Clients love that you have 'gone to the source' for your training. I chose to specialise in Thai and Ayurvedic massages, but have also been to Bali to learn Balinese Bamboo massage and Hot Stone massage. You may wish to travel to Hawaii to learn Lomi Lomi or Japan to learn Shiatsu. The world is your oyster!

You can also claim massages you receive for yourself, as it counts as self-care or self maintenance. As do any yoga, pilates, tai-chi or qi gong classes you might attend to keep yourself in shape. Knowing what is and isn't allowable as a business expense is a bit of a minefield. You can find various lists of what's allowable online, but I've found it's best to use your common sense and only include things that you can defend if challenged (which is extremely unlikely anyway).

Insurance. You'll need public liability insurance to protect yourself in case a client accuses you of injuring them, and your local council may require you to have it to operate as a business.

If you have already completed a 100 hours course in massage therapy you can join **the-cma.co.uk** and get insurance from their partner Balens Insurance. Contact Balens by email: **info@balens.co.uk** and ask for information on the CMA insurance scheme.

If you haven't completed a 100 hours course, you can still get insurance, after completing this course, from **www.salongold.co.uk/ayurveda-insurance**, who will ask on their online application if you are a member of a professional association (you'll need to join the CMA, CThA or the FHT) and whether you have completed a training course that has been recognised by a relevant professional association.

Licences. Whether you need a licence or not will depend on whether your council requires it. If they do you still might not need one if your professional association has negotiated an exemption on your behalf. In practice, licences are only necessary if they are enforced. In theory you need a licence for sandwich boards too, but I discovered that the licence in Southwark is £70 and the fine for not having one... is £70. Needless to say I have never been asked for a licence - either to operate as a therapist or for my sandwich board - by anyone. But it may be wise to check with other therapists in your area, and with local shopkeepers about your sandwich board, as some councils may be better at enforcing licences than mine.

Dealing with Inappropriate Behaviour

Unfortunately, if you are going to be running a massage business, you are going to have to come up with a way of dealing with requests for 'extra services'. Some of the red flags to look out for, either when they call to book an appointment or during the massage, are:

- **If they call late at night.** I make it a rule to not answer my phone after 9pm at night. Even if you are desperate to fill some empty appointments the next day, it's better to reply by text message, if at all.
- **If they ask if you have a female therapist.** The gender of the therapist shouldn't matter and if it's a man asking this question it's usually because he wants something extra. If it's a woman asking, it may be be-

cause her religion prevents her from being massaged by a man or just that she feels uncomfortable being massaged by a man.

- **If they ask if you provide extra services.** I usually just reply '*No we dont, I think you have the wrong place*' and put the phone down.
- **If they say they are not wearing any underwear,** when you ask them to undress down to their pants. Have some disposable underwear to give them in case they try this. It may be completely innocent, but it may not. I've had some clients say they are used to receiving massages in Asia where they were asked to strip off completely... but to be safe I prefer clients to keep their underwear on!
- **If they start adjusting themselves periodically under the sheet/towel.** This doesn't happen often, but if you are massaging near their groin, move somewhere else!
- **If they start touching themselves inappropriately.** Thankfully this has never happened to me, but I gather it happens much more regularly for female therapists. If it does happen it's good to be prepared with something professional to say to them. For example you could say "*I'm afraid that what you are doing is not permitted here, so I'm going to have to end the massage now. I'll leave you to get dressed*".

7) PRACTICAL: FRONT OF THE LEGS

86. Place your knee on the table & receivers ankle on your thigh.
Massage shin with palm x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

87. Massage shin with fist x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

88. Massage shin with forearm x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

PRACTICAL: FRONT OF THE LEGS

89. Massage shin with thumb, along shin bone x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

90. Palm circles around knee x3, each direction



Notes:

Muscles worked?

91. Massage top of thigh with palm x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

PRACTICAL: FRONT OF THE LEGS

92. Massage top of thigh with fists x3 (outer, middle, inner)



Notes:

Muscles worked?

93. Wring thigh with both hands, up and down x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

94. Rotate leg out, support with your thigh. Lower leg strokes with palm x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

PRACTICAL: FRONT OF THE LEGS

95. Lower leg strokes with fist x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

96. Lower leg strokes with forearm x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

97. Lower leg strokes with thumb, squeezing calf x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

PRACTICAL: FRONT OF THE LEGS

98. Massage inner thigh with palm x 3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

99. Massage inner thigh with fist x 3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

100. Place knee on table, with foot close to knee (tree pose). Hold opposite leg. Long outward forearm strokes on inner thigh x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

PRACTICAL: FRONT OF THE LEGS

101. Place receivers foot on opposite side of table, place your foot on their shoulder. Short strokes with palms x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

102. Short strokes with fists x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

103. With your foot on their shoulder, press knee to table for a strong spinal twist



Notes:

Muscles worked?

PRACTICAL: FRONT OF THE LEGS

104. Let lower leg hang over the side of the table. Long strokes knee to crotch with palms x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

105. Long strokes knee to crotch with fists x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

106. Long strokes knee to crotch with forearms x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

PRACTICAL: FRONT OF THE LEGS

107. Long strokes knee to crotch with forearms x3 and elbow x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

108. Stretch leg outwards & work adductors with fingers x 3, fist x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

109. Straighten leg on table. Reassuring strokes both hands x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

8) MASSAGE ROOM AMBIENCE



Want your clients to keep coming back? If you're going to be successful, it's not enough to be brilliant at delivering a consistently fantastic, therapeutic and relaxing massage. You also have to create a welcoming and luxurious ambience to make your clients feel instantly relaxed as soon as they walk through the door. That's not just about making your entrance hall and massage room *look* good, it also has to *smell* amazing and *sound* relaxing. You want to give your clients a multi-sensory experience that will allow them to escape their problems and leave their stress outside the door.

- **Incense and essential oil burner.** Burning your favourite incense (my favourites are Tulasi brand Frangipani or Sandalwood incense, available on www.amazon.co.uk) is not only a great way to make your entrance hall smell fabulous. If you work from home like I do, incense is also essential for covering up unavoidable cooking smells. In the massage room itself I prefer to use an essential oil burner. There are so many scents available: ones I like to use include frangipani, lemongrass, cinnamon and clove to add an exotic eastern fragrance to your room. I use Freshskin essential oils www.freshskin.co.uk

- **Decor and furniture.** Personally I find going for a massage where the walls are white and the decor is minimal to be way too cold and clinical. Instead I have tried to make my decor colourful but relaxing. My walls are Tibetan blue (inspired by the colour of Tibetan temples I visited in Ladakh, India) and my massage room and entrance hall are decorated with textiles, prayer flags, masks and wall hangings that I picked up on my travels to India, Thailand and Bali. Similarly with furniture, if you are going to buy a new cupboard to store your towels in, or a table to put your leaflets and client's water on, why not buy furniture that fits with the theme of your decor - whether that be Asian inspired or whatever theme you have chosen for your practice.

- **Lighting.** Soft dimmable lighting is essential in your massage room, but also in your entrance hall. I've used Moroccan coloured glass or perforated metal lightshades that cast coloured and/or intricately patterned shadows onto the wall. I also have small candle holders that cast similar shadows.



- **Music.** Its a nice touch to offer your clients a choice of music to listen to while they are having their massage. To that end I created 15 different playlists of mellow, down tempo music on Spotify and display the options as a 'music menu' on the wall of my massage room. The playlists (African, Arabic, Blues, Bossa Nova/Latin, Chill out, Classical, Folk, Indian, Indie, Instrumental, Jazz, New Age/Spiritual, Random mix & Soul) are available on Spotify and clients often ask me to send them the links to the playlists so they can listen at home. They are also available on my website homepage at www.thai-vedicmassage.co.uk. Very occasionally you will get a client that asks for silence. I hate it when that happens as I will often massage in time to the music (to add to the multi-sensory experience!)
- **Training certificates.** Clients like to know that you are well trained, so its a good idea to display your training certificates on the wall of your massage room, so they can see what you have trained in and where.

9) PRACTICAL: ARMS, STOMACH AND CHEST

110. Pulling strokes on arm to spread oil



Notes:

Muscles worked?

111. Arm to side massage inner arm wrist to shoulder x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

112. Arm on table massage outer arm wrist to shoulder x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

PRACTICAL: ARMS, STOMACH AND CHEST

113. Massage inner forearm and upper arm with thumb x3 each

114. Massage outer forearm and upper arm with thumb x3 each



Notes:

Muscles worked?

115. Massage back of hand between tendons with thumbs



Notes:

Muscles worked?

116. Massage fingers and thumb



Notes:

Muscles worked?

PRACTICAL: ARMS, STOMACH AND CHEST

117. Balinese sideways thumb strokes, back of hand



Notes:

Muscles worked?

118. Balinese sideways thumb strokes on palm



Notes:

Muscles worked?

119. Interlock fingers, rotate & stretch wrist. Bring arm down & stretch hand backwards



Notes:

Muscles worked?

PRACTICAL: ARMS, STOMACH AND CHEST

120. Finger circles around navel, going deeper til you feel resistance



Notes:

Muscles worked?

121. Clockwise D shapes x3, in each of the 4 quarters of stomach, above & below navel



Notes:

Muscles worked?

122. Upstrokes on stomach with palms x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

PRACTICAL: ARMS, STOMACH AND CHEST

123. Upstrokes on stomach with fists x3, elbow x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

124. Upstrokes on side of sternum with palms, ending with sideways strokes on pecs x6



Notes:

Muscles worked?

125. Massage sternum downwards with fingers, then under ribcage, with thumb of outer hand and fingers of inner hand x6



Notes:

Muscles worked?

PRACTICAL: ARMS, STOMACH AND CHEST

126. Pull up side of body on way back up x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

127. Thumb circles on pecs x6



Notes:

Muscles worked?

128. Reharmonising stroke, sternum-stomach, rocking the body on way back, down arms. Then place towel/sarong back over your client



Notes:

Muscles worked?

10) CLIENT AFTER CARE ADVICE

If a client visits you with a painful neck, lower back or knots in their trapezius muscles for example, you might give them an excellent massage and help relieve the pain temporarily. But its good practice to show them 2 or 3 yoga or qi gong stretches or self massage techniques they can do at home to relieve the pain, if it comes back. The following stretches and techniques focus on the two most common problems - neck and shoulder pain and lower back pain - but if you are practising yoga, qi gong or pilates yourself, you will probably know many others for these and other parts of the body.

Neck and shoulder stretches and self massage techniques

The following exercises can be done in a seated or standing position:

- **Rotate the head** slowly to the front side and back, stretching the neck to its limit in each direction. Rotate both clockwise and anti-clockwise.
- **Stretch the neck** to the left and right by pulling the head gently downwards with your hand.
- **Rotate the shoulder** by making a fist with your hand, bending your elbow and punching forward (without straightening your arm) and rotating your shoulder. Rotate in both directions then repeat on other shoulder.
- **Pummel and squeeze your traps.** Pulling your right elbow towards your chest with your left hand, make a fist with your right hand and pummel your left trapezius muscle. Then open your right hand and squeeze the muscle between your finger and palm. Change sides and repeat.

Lower back stretches and self massage techniques

- **Elephant shakes its trunk.** From a standing position with your feet hip width apart, bend forward and let your arms hang loose. Then gently move form side to side like an elephant shaking its trunk.
- **Lower back rotations.** From a standing position with your feet hip

width apart, put the index fingers and thumbs together to form an inverted heart shape in front of your chest. Slowly start circling your hands in a clockwise direction. Gradually make the circles bigger and bigger until you are bending as far back as you can when your hands are at the top of the circle and as far forward as you can at the bottom of the circle. When you have reached the limit of your circle (you should be brushing the floor by this point) change directions so you are going anti clockwise, and gradually make the circles smaller and smaller until you are back where you started.

- **Sideways stretches.** With your feet spread wide apart, toes facing forward, let your right hand rest on your thigh and bring your left arm over your head. Bend to the right sliding your right hand down your thigh and stretching your left arm over your head. Add in a lunge to the right for a stronger stretch. Repeat on other side
- **Lower back pummelling** From a standing position with your feet hip width apart, make fists with both hands, place them behind your lower back and start pummelling!
- **Lower back self massage** From a standing position with your feet hip width apart, massage your lower back either with the fingers of both hands (small circles on the muscles on either side of the spine) or thumbs (press hard into the muscles and move your thumbs upwards and downwards. These can be done through clothes or with a little massage oil on the skin.

As well as showing your clients some stretches and self massage techniques, you might also recommend a good local yoga, qi gong or pilates class.

And then the most important after care question: ask them if they would like to book another massage!

11) PRACTICAL: HEAD, NECK AND SHOULDERS

129. Remove pillow. Hold head to one side. Massage side of head with finger circles (2 techniques) & straight strokes x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

130. Massage occiput x3 in 3 places



Notes:

Muscles worked?

**131. Loop round top of shoulder & back up traps to neck x3.
Repeat 124-6 on other side**



Notes:

Muscles worked?

PRACTICAL: HEAD, NECK AND SHOULDERS

132. Apply oil to both sides of face with thumbs, along chin, upper lip, cheekbones & forehead



Notes:

Muscles worked?

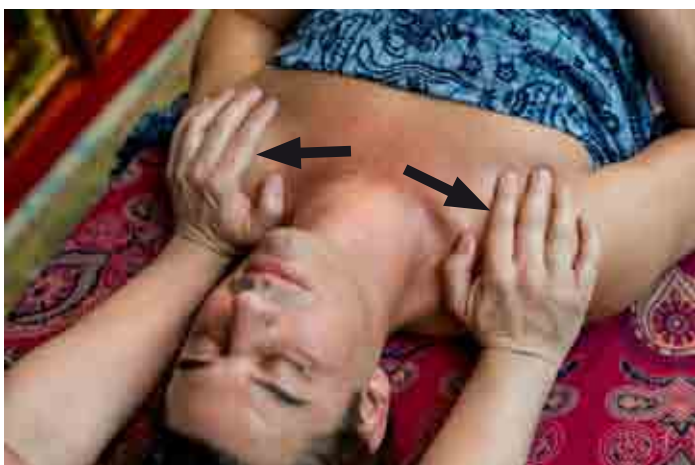
133. Namaste Forehead, Namaste chin and continue, stretching scalene muscles with the sides of your hands



Notes:

Muscles worked?

134. Loop around chest with both hands ending at occiput x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

PRACTICAL: HEAD, NECK AND SHOULDERS

135. Massage traps & neck with knuckles x6



Notes:

Muscles worked?

136. Namaste Forehead, Namaste chin, continue along scalene muscles & loop around chest with both hands, ending at occiput



Notes:

Muscles worked?

137. Stretch neck, pulling on occipital bones with rocking motion



Notes:

Muscles worked?

PRACTICAL: HEAD, NECK AND SHOULDERS

138. Massage neck with fingers, 3 techniques



Notes:

Muscles worked?

139. Massage head, straight strokes, crown to occiput x3



Notes:

Muscles worked?

140. Finish by pressing forehead (for extra pressure rest your forehead on your hands)...



Notes:

Muscles worked?

PRACTICAL: HEAD, NECK AND SHOULDERS

141. ...then press forehead and belly x3, asking client to take 3 deep breaths



Notes:

Muscles worked?

- Turn light back up slowly, not too bright
- Say to client *"Take your time coming round. Dont forget there's some water on the table if you're thirsty. And just open the door when you're ready"*.
- Leave the room quietly, and do your self-care stretches and self massage, while you are waiting for your client to emerge.
- When they do you can ask them *"How are you feeling"* or *"Do/does your shoulders/ lower back/ hips feel any better"* depending what aches and pains they told you about before you started,
- After you have taken payment, remember to ask them if they would like to rebook. You can say something like *"Would you like to book in again for a month's time, say?"*
- Remember to give them a copy of your leaflet, and when you are starting out, you can also ask them if they would be willing to write you a review on Treatwell, Google Maps, Facebook or wherever they found you

NOTES:

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