

**HIP AND GROIN STRENGTHENING EXERCISES**

**Isometric Hip Abduction**



Isometric exercises are muscle contractions without movement (static contractions). Isometric hip abduction means contracting the muscles which move the thigh outwards. Sit in a chair with the knees bent and feet flat on the floor. The hands are placed either side of the outer knees, as shown. Use your hands to resist as you try to push the knees (thighs) outwards. The contraction is held for 5 to 10 seconds, before you relax and then repeat the exercise.

**Isometric Hip Extension**



Isometric exercises involve muscle contractions with no movement of the body part (static contractions). Hip extension can be performed as shown here to work the buttocks! To begin to work the buttock and hamstring muscles, lay on your back. Push the leg down against the surface (floor or table). Ensure that the buttock muscles are contracted throughout.

**Isometric Hip Flexion**



Static contractions are muscle contractions with no movement of the limb. In this case, the hip flexor muscles are contracted against resistance. To begin to work the hip flexors at the front of the hip, you will need to be seated as shown. Then use one hand on the lower thigh to provide resistance, as you attempt to lift the leg up. Avoid using the foot to push off. Hold for 5 or 6 seconds and gradually release. Repeat 10 times.

## Straight Leg Raise Exercise



The straight leg raise (SLR) exercise is a common exercise which is used in the early to mid stages of rehabilitation for knee, hip and thigh injuries. It works the hip flexor muscles. The starting point is lying on the back with both legs out straight. One leg is then lifted a few inches off the couch/floor, keeping the knee straight. The position may be held for 2-5 seconds, before the leg is lowered slowly back to the floor.

## Clam Exercise



The side-lying clam exercise strengthens the hip abductors such as gluteus medius. It is commonly used in rehabilitation of lower back pain and hip injuries. Lie on your side. Rest your head on your arm or hand as shown. Bend hips to approximately 45 degrees and bend your knees at 90 degrees. Make sure one hip is lying above the other. You should now be well aligned- your feet should be in line with your back. Float the upper leg upwards while keeping your feet in contact with one another. Inhale and as you exhale bring the leg down to the starting position. Repeat 5- 10 times each leg.



## Hip Raise

The hip raise exercise (sometimes called hip drop or hip hitch) is a great one for runners suffering with hip or knee pain. It strengthens the muscles responsible for the level of the hips when standing on one leg. The starting point for this exercise is sideways on a step with one leg unsupported. The unsupported leg is lowered towards the ground from the hip. The knees of both legs stay straight throughout. Drop the foot as low as possible before reversing the movement to list the hip as high as possible. This works the muscles around the hip on the standing leg.

### Alternate Leg Hip Extension



The alternate leg hip extension exercise is similar to a bridge but a little harder as it alternates weight between single legs. The weight is rested between the forearms and heels as shown. The weight is then transferred from one leg to the other as the alternating leg is raised just off the floor. Try to keep the pelvis as still as possible throughout.

### Figure 4 Lift



The figure 4 lift exercise works the external hip rotators (sometimes also called lateral hip rotators) which are found in the buttocks. To strengthen the hip rotators, lay on your front with the leg to be stretched bent and the ankle under the other thigh. Lift the bent knee as high as possible. It is then slowly lowered back to the floor / couch, before repeating the exercise.

### Good Mornings



Good mornings are a well known exercise to strengthen the hip extensor muscles. Be careful with this one if you have a history of any back pain. The starting position is a shoulder width stance, with the bar over the shoulders as shown. From here, bend forwards from the hips, keeping the lower back straight. Once parallel to the floor, the movement is reversed to stand upright again.