

HAMSTRING STRENGTHENING EXERCISES

Standing knee flexion



Stand on one leg and bends the other one using gravity as resistance. This can be done gently and slowly to start with as an early stage exercise. Aim for 3 sets of 10 repetitions once a day building to 4 sets of 20 reps

Hamstring Catches

The leg is allowed to fall and the hamstring muscle catches the leg before it falls to the horizontal. It may take a while to get used to this one. Stay relaxed as the leg falls under the influence of gravity and only contract the hamstring muscles to prevent the foot landing.

This should be done pain free both during, afterwards as well as the next day. A little bit of natural muscle soreness the following day is OK but if it is uncomfortable then take a step back. Again begin with 1 set of 10 reps and build up each day to 3 sets of 15 reps.



Bridge exercises

Lay on your back, knees bent and push the hips upwards to work the gluteal muscles and hamstrings. Use both feet on the floor pushing up to begin with. Hold the position briefly and then lower. Begin with 3 sets of 8 reps building to 3 sets of 12 reps then progress the exercise to single leg bridges.



Single leg hip extensions



This is a more advanced version of a bridge. Using a step or box to rest the elbows on and alternate each leg putting the heel down on the floor maintaining good core stability. It is important to keep the hips and shoulders still. As the heel touches the ground the gluteal muscles and hamstrings have to work isometrically to keep the body stable. This also works the hamstring muscles in a similar position as they are in when sprinting or accelerating.

Hip Extension from Prone



The hip extension in prone exercise may also be known as a reverse straight leg raise. It is a good starting point for strengthening the glute and hamstring muscles. To strengthen the hamstrings and buttock muscles lie on your front and raises the thigh upwards off the couch. Keep the knee straight throughout. Slowly lower the leg back down and then repeat. Ensure that the buttock muscles are contracted to initiate movement.

Hip Extension on all fours



Hip extension exercises such as this work the glute muscles (buttocks) and the hamstrings at the back of the thigh. This is an early stage exercise as no weight is added, only gravity is used as resistance. In an all fours position, raise one leg behind you, keeping the knee bent and moving the sole of the foot towards the ceiling. Once at the top of the movement, hold the position briefly before returning slowly to the starting position.