

Stretching Exercises: Lower Limbs and Back

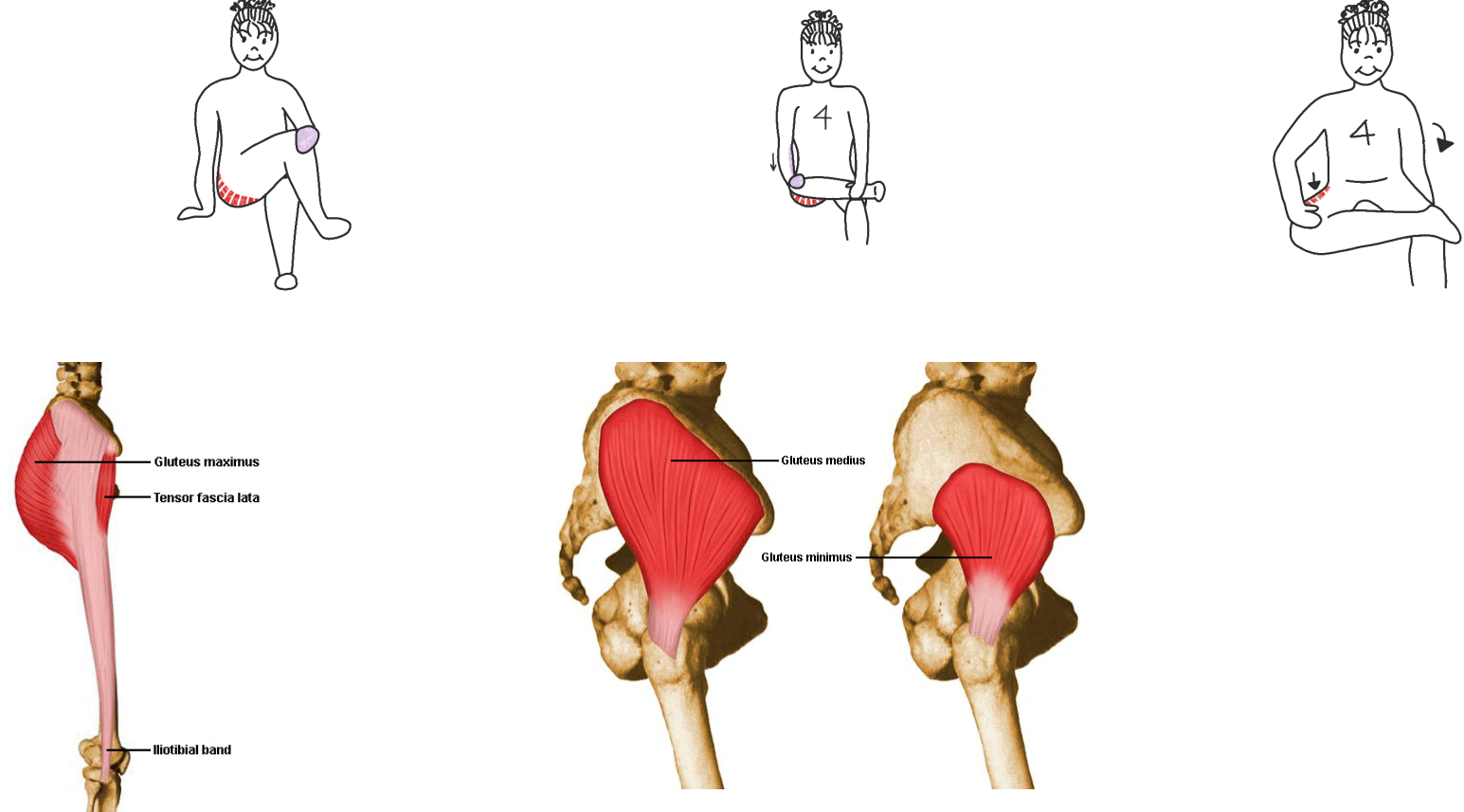
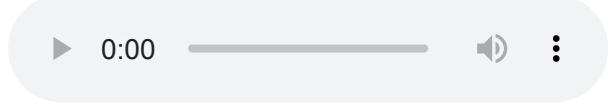
Stretching your Gluteal muscles and Iliotibial Band

Don't do this stretch if you've had a hip replaced. Check with your surgeon first.

3 variations: You should feel the stretch in the right hip and buttock (when following directions for the right leg).

1. Bend your left knee 90 degrees keeping your left foot on the ground. Cross your right leg over your left. Use your left hand to pull your right knee toward the left side of your body, keeping your right buttock cheek down. Repeat this exercise crossing your left leg over your right and pulling your left knee toward the right.
2. Bend your knees 90 degrees keeping your left foot on the ground. Put your right ankle on your left thigh just above your left knee letting your right knee drop down as much as your body and clothes will allow. This is called a "figure-4" position. Push down on your right knee with your right hand. Repeat this exercise putting your left ankle on your right thigh just above your right knee and push down on your left knee with your left hand.
3. Sit in a figure-4 position with your right ankle on your left thigh as in variation 2. Keeping your torso straight, lean forward trying to get your belly button into the space between your thighs. Repeat this exercise putting your left ankle on your right thigh and leaning forward.

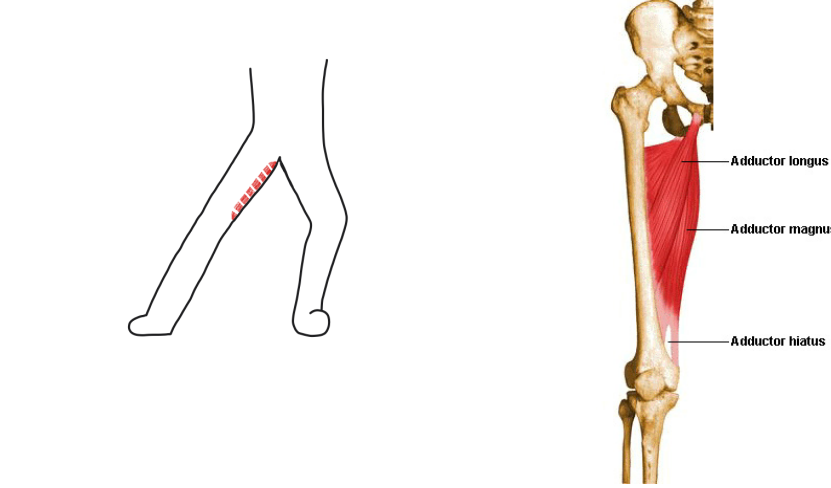
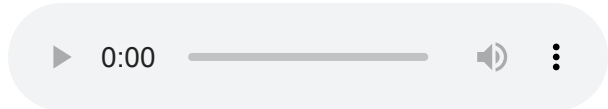
Listen to Stretching Your Gluteal Muscles and IT Band Instructions



Stretching your Inner Thigh - Adductor Muscles

Stand with your feet apart, a bit wider than your hips. To stretch the inside of your right thigh, bend your left knee and shift your weight to the left. Make sure your bent left knee is lined up over your left foot. Reverse, shifting your weight on to your bent right knee stretching the inside of your left thigh.

Listen to Stretching Your Inner Thigh Instructions

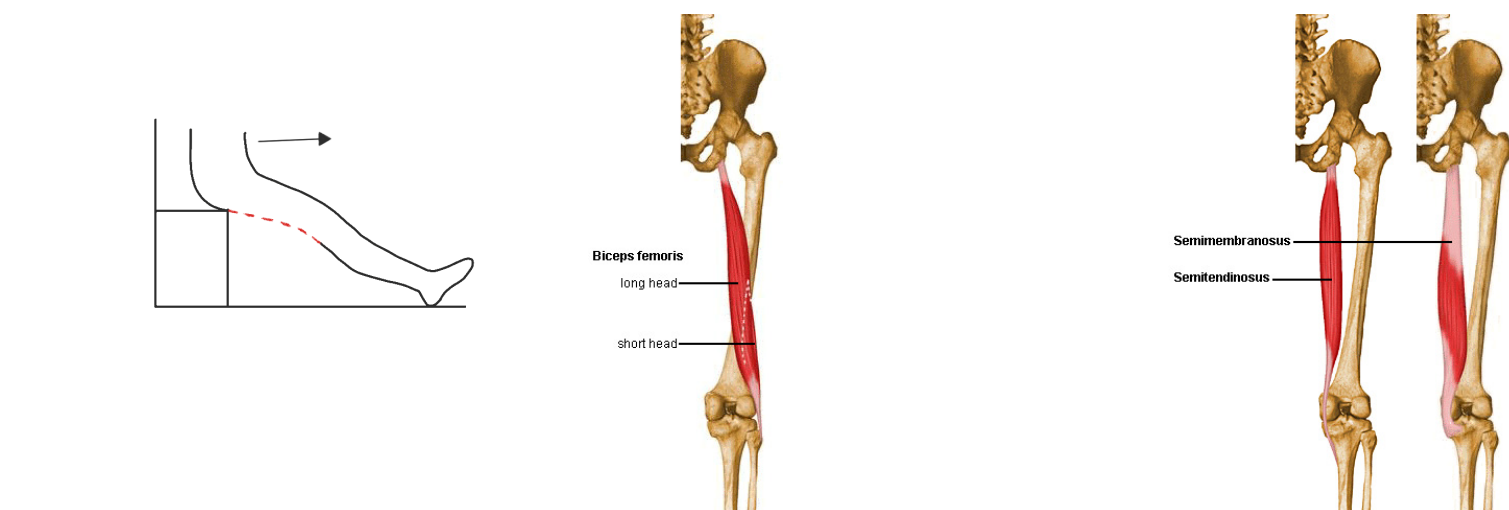
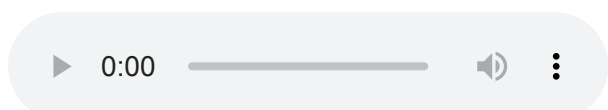


Stretching your Hamstring and Calf Muscles

Don't do this stretch if you have back problems.

Sit on the edge of your seat keeping your knees straight, heels on the floor, and your toes pointing up. Roll forward on your sit bones lifting the back of your buttock cheeks slightly. Your trunk will lean forward slightly but don't curl your back.

Listen to Stretching Your Hamstring and Calf Muscles Instructions



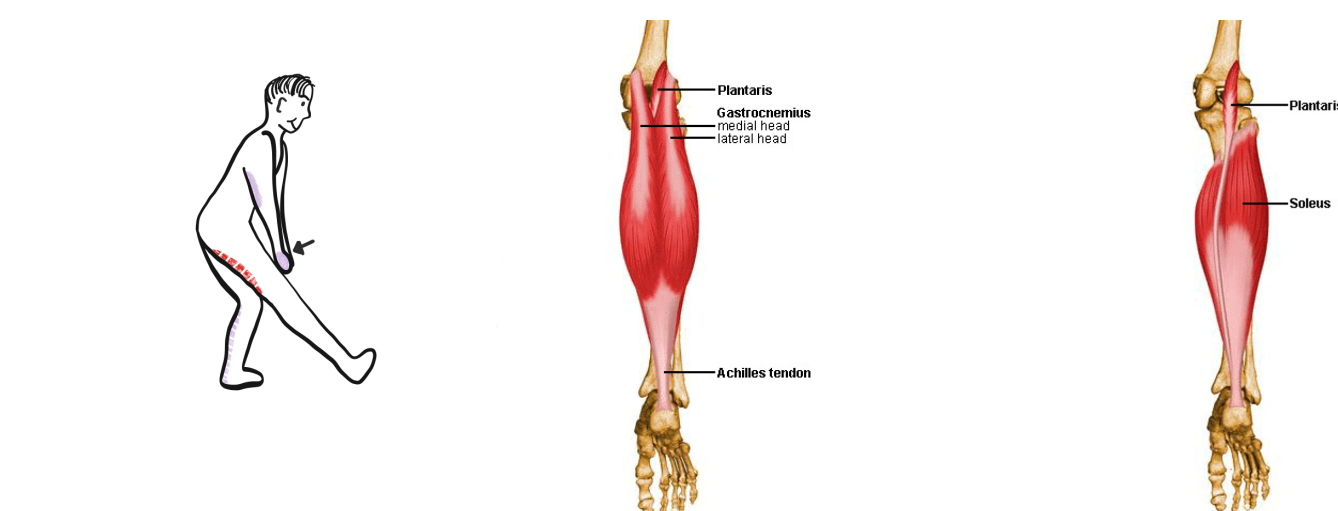
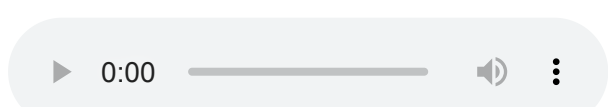
Standing Hamstring and Calf Stretch

Don't do this stretch if you have back problems.

Put your right leg out in front of you at about a 30 degree angle with weight on your right heel and your toes pointing up. Start to push your buttocks back, such that your weight shifts to your buttocks and left leg. Keeping your trunk straight, bend forward from your buttocks, pushing down slightly on your right thigh. Your left knee will bend and you will simultaneously stretch one of your calf muscles on the left leg. If your left kneecap starts to hurt, you haven't shifted your weight far enough to the back.

Repeat this exercise putting your left leg out in front.

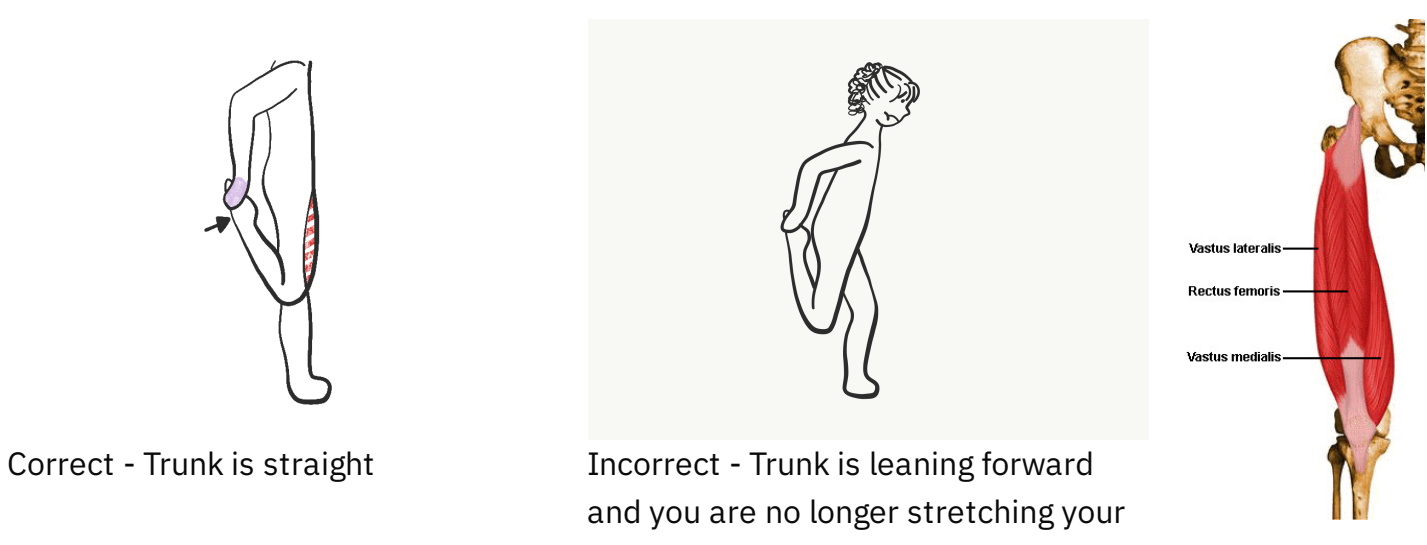
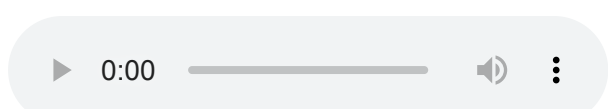
Listen to Standing Hamstring and Calf Stretch Instructions



Stretching your Hip Flexor and Quadriceps muscles (standing)

Bend your right knee, grabbing your right ankle with your right hand and trying to pull your thigh back behind the vertical line of your trunk without leaning forward or moving your right thigh out to the side.

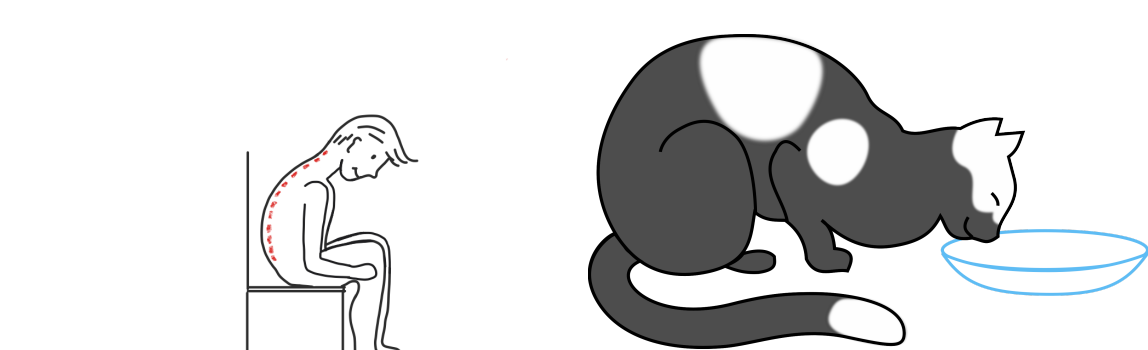
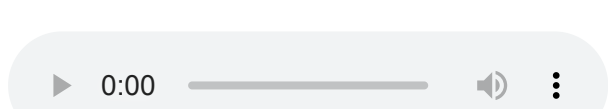
Listen to Stretching Hip Flexor and Quadriceps Instructions



Spine motion -" Cat-Cow" Trying to Move 1 Vertebra at a time

Bend your knees 90 degrees. "Cat" - Start with your hands on your knees and your elbows lightly bent. **Slowly** shift your weight toward the back of your buttocks tipping your pelvis back so that if it were a bowl of liquid, the liquid would spill out the back. Continue to slowly round your back so that your belly and rib cage scrunch in, while your shoulders move forward and your elbows start to straighten. Continue slowly bending forward through your upper back until your neck and head come down.

Listen to Spine motion - Trying to Move 1 Vertebra at a Time Instructions



"Cow" - Keeping your hands on your knees, **slowly** shift your weight toward the front of your buttocks tipping your pelvis forward so that if it were a bowl of liquid, the liquid would spill out the front. Continue to slowly straighten your back so that your belly and rib cage straighten out (without over-arching), while your shoulders move backward and your elbows will start to bend. Continue slowly bending back through your upper back until your neck and head come up.

Repeat both "cat" and "cow" alternating slowly 10 times. Breathe out while doing "cat" and breathe in while doing "cow."



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