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Elevated hamstring stretch

hamstrings are the large muscles in the back of your legs that run from your glutes to your knees. And they are the source of two common fitness complaints: tightness, or lack of flexibility; and hypermobility, or the inability to hold tension. Both are symptoms of poor hamstring mobility, the balance between flexibility and stability. Prolonged sitting is a major lifestyle factor that causes tightness, says Minnesota-based physical therapist Erin Babineau, DPT. Running, skiing, and other activities that call for repeatedly contracting the hamstrings can contribute to the problem as well. Weak glutes, which put pressure on the hamstrings to power lower-body movement, can also lead to tightness, adds Los Angeles-based trainer and sports physical therapist Brian Schwabe, DPT, CSCS. At the other end of the spectrum is hypermobility. People with naturally flexible joints and muscles don't typically have trouble achieving full range of motion, but they often lack control in that full range, Babineau explains. If hypermobility isn't supported by adequate strength to stabilize joints, it can potentially lead to pain and injury. Schwabe notes that hypermobile people will sometimes complain of hamstring tightness, but their issue isn't a lack of flexibility, it's a lack of strength. They're tightening up because their body is searching for stability," Schwabe says. Once you start strengthening your glutes, your hamstrings will relax, and your tightness will disappear, he adds.

Single-Leg Deadlift Strengthens the hamstring in a lengthened position while also training balance. While standing, shift your weight onto one leg and let that knee bend slightly. Keeping your back straight and neck neutral, with hands on your hips or extended in front of you, hinge your hips back and begin to slowly "dive" forward. Allow your free leg to rise behind you, in line with your torso, and keep your hips square to the floor. Lower your body until you feel a slight pull in the back of your standing leg — or notice that you can't hinge your hips back any farther — then squeeze your glutes to return to standing. Complete two or three sets of eight to 12 reps per leg. Make it easier: "Kickstand" your back foot so you have some balancing support from your toes. Make it harder: Instead of stretching your arms in front of you for balance, hold a weight in each hand by your sides. | **Standing Resisted Hip Extension Strengthens the hamstrings and glutes.** Strengthening the glutes will take some of the load off your hamstrings when walking, running, or performing lower-body exercises. Anchor a resistance band at ankle height and loop the other end around one ankle. While facing the anchor point, take a few steps back until you feel slight tension in the band. (Note: You can also use a cable machine.) Soften your knees and press your resisted heel behind you as far as possible without curving your lower back. Keep your core tight and squeeze your glutes at the top of the movement and return your foot to the floor. Perform two or three sets of eight to 12 reps per leg. | **Bridge With Pelvic Tilt** Targets the glutes while also providing a gentle stretch in the front of the leg for your hip flexors and quads. Lie on the floor on your back with knees bent and feet flat on the floor. Lift your hips until your thighs are parallel to the floor. Then, while your hips are lifted, tilt your pelvis forward by pulling your lower back toward your heels. Hold for 15 to 30 seconds. Repeat two or three times. | **Glute Bridge** Targets the glutes and hamstrings. Lie on your back with knees bent and feet flat on the floor. Lift your hips until your thighs are parallel to the floor. Hold for 15 to 30 seconds. Repeat two or three times.

Hamstring Stretches: Below include: Basketball and Netball; Cycling, Hiking, Backpacking, Mountaineering and Orienteering, Ice Hockey and Field Hockey; Ice Skating, Roller Skating and Inline Skating; Martial Arts; Running, Track and Cross Country; Running sports like Football, Soccer, Eridron and Rugby also benefit from regular hamstring stretching. Snow Skiing and Water Skiing; Surfing; Walking and Race Walking, and any sport that involves jumping or explosive movement. While performing the hamstring stretches below there are a number of muscles within the hip and upper leg that are stretched. Below is a comprehensive list of the anatomical muscle names involved in the following hamstring stretches. **Semimembranosus (Medial hamstring); Semitendinosus (Medial / central hamstring); Biceps Femoris (Lateral hamstring); Gastrocnemius (Upper calf); and the Gluteus Maximus (Buttocks).** As with most activities there are rules and guidelines to ensure that they are safe. Stretching is no exception. Stretching can be extremely dangerous and harmful if done incorrectly. It is vital important that the following guidelines be adhered to, both for safety and for maximizing the potential benefits of stretching. **Breathe.** Don't hold your breath. Holding your breath can raise your blood pressure, if you suffer from high blood pressure. In any event, it makes you more tense. The deeper you breathe, the more relaxed you are, the deeper and longer you will be able to stretch. **Never force a stretch.** Never force a stretch beyond the point of mild discomfort. Stretching tight muscles will be uncomfortable, but it should never feel any sharp or sudden pain. If you do, stop immediately: you are pushing yourself too far. **Be consistent.** Stretching for a few minutes each day will greatly reduce the risk of an injury or loss of motion. This is far preferable to stretching only once a week for a longer time. **Wear comfortable clothing.** It's obviously very difficult to stretch if your clothes are tight or restrictive in any way. The position of your hip, leg and foot are vital to perform effective hamstring stretching. **Be patient.** It may take a while to feel the benefits of this work. You can learn more about the benefits of this work in the video below. **Individual muscle names involved in the following hamstring stretches:** **Semimembranosus (Medial hamstring); Semitendinosus (Medial / central hamstring); Biceps Femoris (Lateral hamstring); Gastrocnemius (Upper calf); and the Gluteus Maximus (Buttocks).** As with most activities there are rules and guidelines to ensure that they are safe. Stretching is no exception. Stretching can be extremely dangerous and harmful if done incorrectly. 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