

You probably will notice right away that I didn't provide the number of reps and sets you should do for each exercise, or even which group of exercises you should do. This is because I want you to figure out what works best for your specific needs.

My suggestions...

- 1) Do as many reps as you can do while still maintaining proper form. When the burn gets so bad that feel you cannot possibly go on, do one or two more. This is what will help you build muscle. For a majority of these exercises, if you can complete 20-25 reps without feeling a burn, you need to make the exercise more intense. One way to do this with leg workouts is to use ankle or shoe weights.
- 2) I have tried to put the exercises in an order that makes sense and is easy to follow. I pick an exercise or two for each muscle group in my legs, and follow that routine for 2 weeks. At that point, I make a new routine, using some of the moves I already used, as well as some new ones. This will help prevent your muscles from getting used to doing any one exercise. The reason you want to prevent that from happening is it can slow down how quickly you see improvements and gains.
- 3) While I judge how many reps to do by the "burn" level, I do set a time limit. For example, I started out by picking 7 exercises. I decided I would work out for 10 minutes. If that meant I only did one set of each exercise, great. If I didn't get all the way through each of the 7 exercises, oh well! You need to know how long your body can tolerate exercising, and only push it a little. You don't want to push yourself too much and end up unable to exercise for a few days from overdoing it. This was hard for me at first because conventional exercise advice always tells us to push ourselves even when our bodies are tired. Well folks, our bodies are anything but "normal" so don't overdo it!
- 4) Keep track of how many reps and sets you are doing as well as if you are adding weight or not. If one exercise seems really difficult to complete or causes a symptom, note it! I use a heart rate monitor, so I note my starting heart rate. When I am done, my heart rate monitor tells me my maximum and average heart rate during the workout. I record this as well. You will have a very hard time noticing changes in your ability if you don't keep track! When you are chronically ill, something as small as 2 extra reps, or 1 extra minute several days in a row can be a sign of major progress! I have included pre-made charts under the "exercises" tab, so no excuses. ☺

*These exercises are not intended to be taken as medical advice. Consult a physician before beginning any exercise program. These exercises and their descriptions were taken from my personal experience, doctors, and websites listed under "websites with exercise", which can be found under the "resources" tab. I do not give permission to copy any of the content on this page for use on their own personal/business website without asking first. If you just ask, I'll probably say yes! ☺*

Okay, now that we got the legal jargon out of the way, on to the exercises!

## Dumbbell Squats

*everything!*

- The squat is an effective exercise that works every muscle in your lower body. You do have to stand for this one, but without an exercise machine, it is difficult to get this kind of weight resistance without standing up. This will be the only standing leg exercise. With a dumbbell in each hand, stand with your arms by your sides and your feet shoulder-width apart. Push your butt back, bend your legs and squat down until your knees are bent to 90 degrees. Keep your arms straight and hanging down by your sides throughout. Push down through your heels and stand back up. Do not let your lower back become rounded, as this may lead to injury.

## Side Lying Adduction Scissors

*inner thighs*

- Start by lying on your side on the floor, hips stacked, with your top hand on the floor for balance. Bend your top leg and place it flat on the floor behind the bottom leg, then slowly lift the bottom leg as high as you can while keeping your knee pointed forward. Pause at the top of the movement, then slowly return to start, but don't allow the lifting leg to touch the floor. Repeat on both sides. Increase difficulty by adding leg, ankle, or shoe weights.

## Wall Inner Thigh Scissors

*inner thighs*

- Lie on the floor, arms by your side and your buttocks pressed against a wall, and legs straight above you. Your back should be against the floor. Slowly separate your thighs until you feel a stretch in the inner thighs, then contract the inner thigh muscles to pull the legs back together to the start position. For best results, take a four-count to open your thighs and a four-count to return them to the start position.

## Leg Lifts:

*hip abductors, outer thigh*

- Lie on your right side and stack your shoulders, hips, knees and ankles. Bend your right arm, place your elbow on the ground and rest your head on your right hand. Point your toes forward and tighten your abdominal muscles. Lift your left foot as high as possible without rotating your hips, torso or shoulders. Lower your left leg one inch above your right leg and repeat. Add ankle/shoe weights to increase difficulty.

## Hip Rotations

*glutes, hip abductors, hip lateral rotators, inner thighs, outer thighs*

- Kneel on all fours and position your hands under their corresponding shoulders, fingers facing forward. Extend your legs behind you and lift onto your toes. Tighten your abs and align your head, shoulders, hips and heels. Lift your left foot off the ground, bend your left knee and lift it toward your chest without moving your hips or lower back. Pull your left knee toward your right shoulder, rotating your left hip to accommodate the action. Rotate your left hip so that your knee returns below your left shoulder, then externally rotate it as far as possible toward your left. Keep your head, right hip and shoulders still during this exercise. Complete your desired amount of repetitions before switching legs.

## Single Leg Circle

*hip lateral rotators, inner thighs, outer thighs*

- Lie back on the mat with your arms by your sides and your palms facing down. Begin by pointing with your left foot, as if reaching out with your toes toward the ceiling, and rotate your leg slightly outward. Inhale, and trace a circle on the ceiling with your left leg, moving your whole leg, but keeping your hips still. Don't lift your left hip off the floor. Trace the circle on the ceiling 5 times in a clockwise direction. Repeat in a counter-clockwise direction. Ideally there should be no movement in the core, or trunk, as the leg swings through space.

## Hydrant Lift

*glutes, inner thighs, outer thighs*

- Get down on all fours on a yoga mat with your shoulders and hips stacked so they are respectively in line with your hands and feet. Engage your abdominal muscles as you lift your right leg out to the side while keeping it bent at a 90-degree angle. Your right thigh should make a horizontal line with your hips and buttocks. Lower your leg back down to the ground and repeat 20 times on each side.

## Glute Kick Back

*glutes*

- Get down on fours and then lift one knee off the floor. Slowly straighten the leg toward the wall behind you, lifting the heel upwards away from the body to create a “squeeze”. Hold briefly, and repeat with other leg. Always ensure that the pelvis is kept square at all times.

## One Legged Pelvic Lifts

*glutes, quads, thighs*

- Do pelvic lifts using only one leg instead of two to intensify this exercise that is typically done with both feet on the floor. Lie on your back with your knees bent and feet flat on the floor, hip-width apart. Bring your right knee to your chest and interlace your fingers behind your thigh to keep it in place. Lift your torso off the floor so a line forms from the back of your knees to the bottom of your shoulder blades. Lower yourself back to the floor and repeat on the other side to complete one repetition

## Table Dip, Leg Raise

*glutes, quads, hamstrings*

- Get yourself into a yoga table pose.



Raise one leg in the air keeping hips up.

You can opt to keep both feet on the ground

if you are just starting out. Dip down by bending your arms (do tricep dips) changing legs after 5 reps. Dip down with arms 5 times, change legs and repeat.

## Hamstring Exercise

*hamstrings*

- Slip on a heavy pair of boots or attach one-pound weights around your ankles. Lie face down on a rug or on the floor. Starting with your right leg, lift your leg up toward the ceiling about a foot, or until you feel a pull. Do anywhere from 10-30 repetitions per side. You can do a variation of this exercise by keeping the knee on the ground and only raising the feet.

## Barbell Abductions

*quads*

- Lie on the floor on your right side with your right leg lying in front of your left leg, with your knee slightly bent. Place a barbell with a weight plate on only one end of the bar. Place the unweighted end of the bar along the length of your right leg and hold this end with your right hand. Lift your right leg straight up, keeping your knee slightly bent, lifting the entire bar into the air.

## Knee Extensions

*quads*

- Sit straight on a bench or chair on which you can dangle your feet or at least square off your knees at a 90-degree angle. Lift your right foot straight out and then lower back down. Repeat 10 times (or less based on strength), and then perform the moves with the left leg. You should feel your quads tighten and release as you perform leg raises

## Leg Extensions

### *quads*

- Kneel on all fours ensuring that your shoulders are directly over your hands and your hips are directly over your knees. Keep your abs tight and maintain a neutral spine throughout the exercise. Use your quads to extend your knees and rise up onto your toes. Hold this position---which looks like an inverted V when viewed from the side---for a second before bending your legs and lowering your knees to within 1 inch of the floor. Without allowing your knees to touch the floor, repeat the exercise and continue for the duration of your set. You can make this exercise more challenging by elevating your feet on a step to increase the range of movement and difficulty.

## Seated Calf Raise

### *calves*

- To perform the seated dumbbell calf raise, sit on the edge of a bench with your knees bent and feet on the floor. If you have a step you can place your toes on the lower part of the step with your heels off the step. Hold a weight in each hand and rest your arms on your thighs. Lift your heels up onto your toes and contract your calf muscles. Lower your heels slowing down to stretch.