

Leg Exercises

Gluteals



Quadriceps



Hamstrings



Barbell Squat


Furman University
Greenville, SC




Select weight. The Olympic bar in the picture weighs 45 pounds. Use safety collars when adding additional plates. Place the bar on your upper back (not your neck). Stand with feet hip distance apart and knees straight but not locked. Lift your toes inside of your shoes to shift the weight back onto your heels.

Inhale and squat down as if you were sitting on a chair. Ideally, your thighs will be parallel to the floor and your knees will make a 90° angle. You should be able to lift your toes inside of your shoes throughout the motion. Do not let your knees move forward over your toes. Keep your chest up and look forward. Exhale and press through your heels to stand back up.


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Hamstrings



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Smith Machine Squats


Select weight. The Smith bar in the picture weighs 10 pounds when unloaded. Place the bar on your upper back (not your neck). Stand with feet hip distance apart and knees straight but not locked. Lift your toes inside of your shoes to shift the weight back onto your heels.

Inhale and squat down as if you were sitting on a chair. Ideally, your thighs will be parallel to the floor and your knees will make a 90° angle. You should be able to lift your toes inside of your shoes throughout the motion. Do not let your knees move forward over your toes. Keep your chest up and look forward. Exhale and press through your heels to stand back up.


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Hamstrings



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Hammer Strength V-Squats

Stand with feet hip distance apart and lean back on the back rest. Do not touch shoulder pads with your shoulders during set up. Select weight from the weight stack. Lift the handle on the right side of the back rest to lower the seat position. Squat down so your knees make a 90° angle and your thighs are parallel to the floor. Lift your toes inside of your shoes to shift the weight back onto your heels. Shift up slightly so your shoulders are touching the shoulder pads.


Exhale and press through your heels to stand up. Keep your knees straight but not locked. Inhale as your lower into the squat position.

When you are finished with your set, use the handle to the right of the back rest to return to a standing position. Do not touch shoulder pads with your shoulders as you return to the standing position.


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Dumbbell Squat


Gluteals





Quadriceps



Hamstrings



Select dumbbells. Stand with feet hip distance apart and knees straight but not locked. Lift your toes inside of your shoes to shift the weight back onto your heels.

Inhale and squat down as if you were sitting on a chair. Ideally, your thighs will be parallel to the floor and your knees will make a 90° angle. You should be able to lift your toes inside of your shoes throughout the motion. Do not let your knees move forward over your toes. Keep your chest up and look forward. Exhale and press through your heels to stand back up.

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Plate Loaded Leg Press

Gluteals



Quadriceps



Hamstrings






Add plates to the machine if desired. The unloaded sled weighs 75 pounds. Adjust the reclining position on the back rest if desired. Place your feet hip distance apart on the foot platform.

Notice the safety handles on both sides of the machine. They rest in a low position for shorter legs and a high position for longer legs.

Lift your toes inside of your shoes to shift the weight back onto your heels. Straighten your knees as you press the weight up (the safety handles will drop back). Inhale and slowly lower the weight until your knees form a 90° angle. Exhale as you press through your heels to push the weight back up to the starting position. Do not lock your knees.

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Cybex Leg Press

Gluteals



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Hamstrings






Lie on the sled. Place your head on the head rest and slide up so your shoulders are touching the shoulder pads. Place your feet hip distance apart on the foot platform. The middle part of the feet should be over the middle strip on the platform. Use the sled adjustment to find a position where your knees make a 90° angle as shown above.

Use the pin to select a weight on the weight stack. Lift your toes inside of your shoes to shift the weight back onto your heels. Exhale as you press through your heels and straighten your legs. Do not lock your knees. Inhale as you slowly release the weight back to the starting position.

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Dumbbell Reverse Lunge


Gluteals



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Hamstrings






Select dumbbells. Stand upright and hold the dumbbells by your sides. Draw your shoulder blades down and back to stabilize your shoulders.

(Similar variations include walking lunges, stationary lunges, and forward stepping lunges.)

Step back with your right foot. Lunge down so both knees form 90° angles. Keep your torso upright. Do not let your left knee move forward over your toes. Do not bang your back knee on the floor. Lift your toes inside of your left shoe. Press through your left heel to stand back up. After you have completed one set, repeat on the opposite leg.

Gluteals



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Hamstrings



Lunge ON the Step

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Select dumbbells. Stand upright and hold the dumbbells by your sides. Place your right foot on the center of a short box (~4 inch height). Shift forward slightly so your right knee is directly over your right ankle. Lift your toes inside of your right shoe. Draw your shoulder blades down and back to stabilize your shoulders.

Lunge down so both knees form 90° angles. Keep your torso upright. Do not let your right knee move forward over your toes. Do not bang your back knee on the floor. Press through your right heel to return to the starting position. Complete one set and repeat on the opposite leg.

Gluteals



Quadriceps



Hamstrings



Lunge OFF the Step

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Select dumbbells. Stand upright and hold the dumbbells by your sides. Place your left foot on a short box (~4 inch height) as shown. Lift your toes inside of your right shoe to shift the weight back onto your right heel. Draw your shoulder blades down and back to stabilize your shoulders.

Lunge down so both knees make 90 ° angles. Keep your torso upright. Do not let your right knee move forward over your toes. Do not bang your back knee on the floor. Press through your right heel to return to the starting position. Complete one set and repeat on the opposite leg.

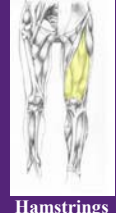
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Medicine Ball Step-up

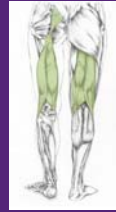
Gluteals





Quadriceps



Hamstrings



Position the box for a 12 inch or 18 inch step height. Choose a box height that allows your right thigh to form a 90° angle as shown above. Practice this exercise without weights until you feel comfortable with the motion. Select a weighted Medicine Ball if desired. Place your entire right foot on the center of the box. Lift your toes inside of your right shoe to shift the weight back onto your heel.

Use the strength of your right leg to step up onto the box. Try not to use your left leg. Carefully step down with your left leg. Complete one set with the right foot on the step and repeat on the other side.

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Straight Leg Barbell Deadlift

Hamstrings



Erector Spinae (Lower Back)





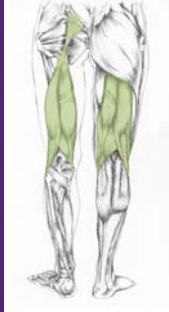

Select a weighted barbell. Stand with your feet hip distance apart and your knees straight but not locked. Place hands shoulder width apart on the bar with an overhand grip. Draw your shoulders down and back to stabilize your shoulder blades.

Inhale and hinge forward from your hips. Lower the bar toward the floor. Keep your knees slightly bent and your back flat throughout the motion. Beginners may want to stop when the back is parallel to the floor. At the bottom of the motion engage your hamstrings. Exhale and stand up with a flat back.

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Dumbbell Straight Leg Dead Lift

Hamstrings



Erector Spinae
(Lower Back)



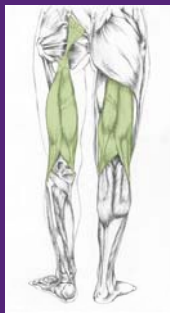
Select weight. Stand with feet hip distance apart and knees straight but not locked. Place your hands shoulder width apart with an overhand grip on the dumbbells. Draw your shoulders down and back to stabilize your shoulder blades.

Inhale and hinge forward from your hips. Lower the dumbbells toward the floor. Keep your knees slightly bent and your back flat throughout the motion. Beginners may want to stop when the back is parallel to the floor. At the bottom of the motion engage your hamstrings. Exhale and stand up with a flat back.

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Cybex Prone Leg Curl

Hamstrings



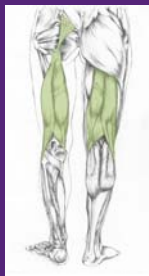
Adjust the optional range limiter if needed. Lie face down on the machine. Your knees should be in line with the red pivot point. You will feel your knee caps hanging off of the thigh rest. Place your ankles under the ankle pad. Rest your elbows on the elbow pad and hold the handles.

Select a weight on the weight stack. Use the optional 2.5 pound increments if needed. Exhale as you bend your knees to lift the weight. Inhale and slowly lower the weight back to the starting position.

Med-X Leg Curl

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Hamstrings



Remove pin from the weight stack. Sit on the seat and adjust the back rest so your knees are in line with the pivot point. Slide your right and left leg in between the leg pads. Straighten but do not hyperextend your knees. Select a weight on the stack with the pin. Notice that there is a double weight stack for smaller weight increments.

Lightly grasp the handles on the sides of the seat. Exhale and bend your knees to form a 90° angle. Inhale and slowly return to the starting position.

Trotter Standing Leg Curl

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Hamstrings



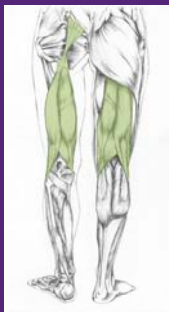
Select a weight on the weight stack. Stand on the platform and place your chest against the chest pad. The ankle pads should rest on the back of your ankles.

Lightly grasp the handlebars. Exhale and bend your knee to form a 90° angle. Inhale and slowly return to starting position.

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Hamstring Curl on Ball (double leg)

Hamstrings



Lie on your back with your hands by your sides. Place your calves on top of the ball. Try to relax your shoulders. Lift your hips off of the floor.



Bend your knees to curl the ball toward your hips. Slowly straighten your legs to return to the starting position. Keep your hips off of the floor throughout the exercise.

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Hamstring Curl on Ball (single leg)

Hamstrings



This exercise is an advanced version of the Double Leg Hamstring Curl on the Ball. Lie on your back with your hands by your sides. Place your left calf on top of the ball. Raise your right leg into the air. Try to relax your shoulders. Lift your hips off of the floor.





Bend your left knee to curl the ball toward your hips. Slowly straighten your left leg to return to the starting position. Keep your hips off of the floor throughout the exercise. After you have completed one set repeat on the other leg.

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Bridge on the Ball


Gluteals






Lie on your back with your hands by your sides. Place the ball right next to your hips. Place your heels on top of the ball as shown. Try to relax your shoulders and neck.

Hamstrings






Using the strength of your hamstrings and gluteals, lift your hips off of the floor. Slowly lower back to the starting position without touching your hips to the floor.

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Trotter Leg Extension

Quadriceps





Use the handle on the range limiter to move the ankle pads away from the machine. Sit on the seat with your back against the back rest. Use the handle on the range limiter to place the ankle pads flush against your lower shins as shown. Use the adjustment setting under the ankle pads to raise or lower the ankle pads if needed.



Adjust the back rest so your knees are in line with the red pivot point. Choose a weight on the weight stack. Lightly grasp the handles on the sides of the seat. Exhale as you extend your knees. Inhale as you slowly return to the starting position.

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Med-X Leg Extension

Quadriceps



Sit on the seat with your back against the back rest. Adjust the back rest so your knees are in line with the grey pivot point. Choose a weight on the weight stack. Notice that there is a double weight stack for smaller weight increments.

Lightly grasp the handles on the sides of the seat. Exhale as you extend your knees. Inhale as you slowly return to the starting position.

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Cybex Abductor (Outer Thigh)

Abductors (Outer Thighs)




Sit on the seat with your back against the back rest. Place your ankles in the ankle pads. Swivel the thigh pads around so they are resting on your outer thighs. Use the knob adjustment under the seat to bring your legs close together as shown. Select the weight on the weight stack.


Exhale and press your legs away from each other. Inhale as you resist the weight and bring the legs back together.


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Cybex Adductor (Inner Thighs)

Inner Thighs







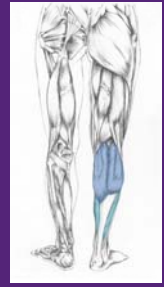
Sit on the seat with your back against the back rest. Place your ankles in the ankle pads. Swivel the thigh pads around so they are resting on your inner thighs. Use the knob adjustment under the seat to bring your thighs apart. Use a comfortable range of motion. Select the weight on the weight stack.


Exhale and squeeze your thighs together. Inhale as you resist the weight and return to the starting position.


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LifeFitness Calf Raise

**Calves -
Gastrocnemius**





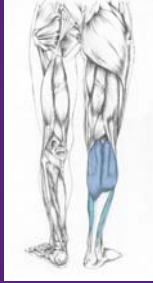


Sit on the seat with your back against the back rest. Adjust the back rest fore/aft position so your knees are straight but not locked. Place the balls of your feet on the foot platform.

Press the foot platform away from you using the balls of your feet. Contract your calf muscles at the peak of the motion. Slowly release back to the starting position. Be careful not to overstretch the arches of your feet as you release the weight. Keep your knees straight but not locked throughout the motion.

Standing Calf Raise

Calves -
Gastrocnemius



Stand on the foot platform and place your shoulders under the shoulder pads. Raise or lower the shoulder pad setting if needed. Lightly grasp the handles.



Keep your knees straight but not locked throughout the motion. Lift your heels above the height of the foot platform and contract your calf muscles. Slowly lower your heels below the height of the foot platform. Be careful not to overstretch the arches in your feet.