

Building Strong Glutes

Exploring the what, why and how with STRIVE Sport & Exercise Medicine



1 What are the glutes and why should I strengthen them?

The glutes are the main muscles of our buttocks and we have three of them: the gluteus maximus, gluteus medius and gluteus minimus. These produce movements of extending our leg, abducting our leg (bringing it away from our body) and rotating our leg. These muscles also play an important role in stabilizing the leg during activity and maintaining a good pelvic position. Weakness or poor activation of the glutes can be associated with a number of conditions/injuries to the ankle, knee, hip and low back. It is therefore important that we keep them strong. Below are some easy exercises that have been shown to activate the glutes the most.

2 Exercises for you

Exercise: Side Lying Leg Raise
Goal: Strength



1. Begin in a side lying position with your bottom leg bent to 90 degrees at the hip and knee.
 2. Keep your top leg straight. Move your top leg slightly behind you (hip in slight extension). Keep your hips stacked one on top of the other.
 3. Rotate your top leg so your heel points toward the ceiling.
 4. Lift the top leg away from the floor, leading with your heel and maintaining hip extension. Lower and repeat.
- Parameters:** 3 sets of 10 repetitions. Perform once per day, every other day.

Exercise: Standing Leg Slide Outs
Goal: Strength



1. Attach a miniband just above the ankles as shown. Stand beside a chair for support.
 2. Keeping your knees straight, raise the outside leg while keeping your toes pointing forward.
 3. Return to the start position and repeat.
 4. During this exercise, you will feel the glutes of the standing leg working harder, as they are the muscles working to keep your pelvis stable.
- Parameters:** 3 sets of 10 repetitions. Perform once per day, every other day.

Exercise: Pliés
Goal: Strength



1. Stand with your heels together and feet turned out to make a 90 degree angle.
 2. Slowly drop down into a squat with open legs while trying to rotate your knees back. This should take 5 seconds.
 3. Slowly return to standing by pushing through your heels to activate your buttocks. This should take 5 seconds.
 4. Maintain proper low back posture (slightly arched) and keep pushing your knees out during the duration of the movement.
- Parameters:** 3 sets of 5 repetitions. Perform once per day, every other day.

Exercise: Hip Hike
Goal: Strength



1. Begin standing on a step with one foot off the side and holding a chair or rail for support.
 2. While keeping both knees straight, slowly lower the hip that is off the side of the step towards the floor. Go slow; it should take 3 seconds to lower the hip.
 3. Slowly hike the hip back up towards the ceiling as high as possible without letting the other hip drop.
 5. Return to start position and repeat.
- Parameters:** 3 sets of 10 repetitions. Perform once per day, every other day.

Exercise: Single Leg Bridge
Goal: Strength



1. Lie on your back with your knees bent. Your feet can be flat or you can be up on your heels as shown.
 2. Extend one knee, keeping your thighs parallel.
 3. Squeeze your buttocks and lift your hips off the ground to make a straight line with your body. Avoid rotating your trunk or hips.
 4. Slowly return to start position and repeat.
- Parameters:** 3 sets of 10 repetitions. Perform once per day, every other day.

Exercise: Single Leg Wall Squat
Goal: Strength



1. Place the ball between your back and the wall with the supporting foot placed slightly in front of you and your other leg raised.
 2. Maintain proper low back posture (slightly arched).
 3. Slowly bend the knee of your standing leg and roll down on the ball as if you are sitting in a chair, keeping your knee in line with your second toe.
 4. Slowly return to the standing position.
- Parameters:** 3 sets of 10 repetitions. Perform once per day, every other day.