



Lunges for a Great Derriere!

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My favorite exercise for the hamstring and glute area (otherwise known as the back of the leg and butt) is the lunge, because it works really, really well. Lunges work the entire leg, and there are a few different kinds of lunges. The ones I describe below particularly focus in on the hamstring/glute area.

The Lunge: Step one foot back and bend the knee as if you were going to kneel but don't actually touch your knee to the ground. Then stand back up.

Notes on Advancement: Whatever level you're at, always do as many as you can on each leg and try to make it even. Once you can do more than 20 repetitions on each side, move to the next level.

Level 1.) If you haven't done lunges before, start next to a wall or a table or chair – something to hold on to for support. Start by just bending and straightening the knees as described above, keeping the feet in place.

Level 2.) Once you're comfortable lunging in place, go from kneeling position to standing tall, by bringing the back leg up to meet the front leg.

Level 3.) Do the lunge without holding on to anything. At first you may find that it's quite challenging in terms of balance.

Level 4.) Once you can do 20 lunges without holding on to a wall or a chair, and it feels like your legs are ready for a more intense workout, take a weight in each hand and go from there.

Safety: To keep your knees safe when doing lunges, remember the following points:

- 1.) When you bend your knees, they must be pointing the same direction as your toes.
- 2.) Keep your knees behind your toes and the weight of your leg in your heel.
- 3.) Bend your knee only as far as it feels comfortable. If it hurts your knee, don't go there.

It's recommended that you talk to your doctor before starting to workout. This is basic exercise information for the general public. If you have injuries or other physical limitations, this exercise may not be appropriate. A good rule of thumb: If it doesn't feel good- don't do it!

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