FORZA
CHIROPRACTIC

Lower Body Mobility Routine

A 12-week hip and lower-body mobility program you can run in 12 to 15 minutes, before training or on a recovery day.

Dr. Drew Voelsch, DC, CSCS · Forza Chiropractic · Arlington Heights, IL

How this routine works

Stiff hips rarely start at the hip. The lower back and pelvis above, and the knee and ankle below, decide how much room the hip has to move. This routine works on all of them, in order, so the range you gain is range you can use.

Three steps, every session

1. **Mobilize.** Open up the range. This is where most of the time goes.
2. **Activate.** Switch on the muscles that control the new range, mainly the glutes.
3. **Integrate.** Use the range under load, then roll straight into your warm-up.

The 12 weeks

- **Weeks 1–4:** lower back and pelvis first
- **Weeks 5–8:** add rotation and more hip work
- **Weeks 9–12:** own the end range, then load it

Each session takes 12 to 15 minutes.

What you need

- A medium-to-heavy resistance band or strap
- A kettlebell or dumbbell
- A foam roller or massage ball (optional)

Two ways to use it

- **Before lower-body training:** run it as written, then go into your ramp-up sets.
- **On a recovery day:** run it on its own and add one extra set of each exercise.

Optional: soft-tissue prep

If one area is noticeably tighter, spend 1 to 2 minutes on it with a foam roller or ball before you start: lower back, hip flexors, quads, hamstrings or calves.

Videos. Exercise names in **blue** open a short demonstration on the Forza Chiropractic YouTube channel. More at youtube.com/@forzachiro.

WEEKS 1–4

Phase 1: lower back and pelvis first

Hips cannot move well on a stiff lower back or a tilted pelvis. This phase teaches the lower back to bend and extend under control and evens out the pull between the hip flexors and the glutes.

EXERCISE	TEMPO	SETS	REPS / TIME	COACHING CUE
MOBILIZE				
A **Low cat-camel**	Slow, hold at the end	1	10–12 reps	Pause 2–3 seconds with light pressure at the end of each direction.
B **Active-assisted straight leg raise**	Slow, assist, hold	2	10–12 reps per side	Use a band or strap to help the last few degrees, then hold 2–3 seconds.
C **Supine scorpion**	Slow	1	10–12 reps per side	Keep both shoulders down as the leg crosses over.
D **Shin boxes (hands for support)**	Slow, hold at the end	2	6–8 reps per side	Sit tall and pause 2–3 seconds at the end of each rotation.
ACTIVATE				
A **Lunge stretch with glute squeeze (band-assisted)**	Slow	1	15–20 reps per side	Tuck the pelvis under and keep the back-leg glute tight the whole time.
B **Cook hip raise**	Slow, pause at the top	1	12–15 reps per side	Hold one knee to your chest and pause at the top of each raise.
INTEGRATE				
A **Goblet squat with press-away**	Slow, hold at the bottom	2	10 reps	Sit in the bottom, press the weight away from you and hold 2–3 seconds.
B **Your session warm-up**	—	—	10–15 minutes	Move into the ramp-up sets for the day's training.

WEEKS 5–8

Phase 2: add rotation

Same approach, with more rotation through the spine and more of the work coming from the hips. The activation and loaded work keeps the glutes involved.

EXERCISE	TEMPO	SETS	REPS / TIME	COACHING CUE
MOBILIZE				
A **Child's pose clocks**	Slow	1	10–12 reps	Walk the hands around the clock and breathe into each position.
B **Lunge and twist**	Slow and controlled	1	6–8 reps per side	Hold the end of the twist for 2–3 seconds.
C **Dragon lunge**	Rock and hold	2	8–10 reps per side	Rock forward and back with a short pause at each end.
D **Shin box with hip raise**	Slow, hold at the top	2	12–15 reps per side	Hold the top 2–3 seconds with light pressure into the rotation.
ACTIVATE				
A **Bulgarian split squat hold** ▶ Watch the video	Hold the bottom	2	20 seconds	Stay low and keep tension in the back (stretching) leg.
B **Torso-supported glute press** ▶ Watch the video	Slow, press at the top	2	8–10 reps	Drive the heel toward the ceiling at the top of each rep.
INTEGRATE				
A **Good morning to squat** ▶ Watch the video	Slow, pause at the bottom	2	2 × 10 seconds each foot position, rest 20 seconds	Pause 2–3 seconds at the bottom of the squat.
B **Your session warm-up**	—	—	10–15 minutes	Move into the ramp-up sets for the day's training.

WEEKS 9–12

Phase 3: own the end range

Now the hip moves to the end of its range while the trunk stays still, and then you load it. This is the phase that makes the new range show up in your squat, hinge and stride.

EXERCISE	TEMPO	SETS	REPS / TIME	COACHING CUE
MOBILIZE				
A Bretzel stretch ▶ Watch the video	Rock and hold	1	8–10 reps per side	Rock in and out with a short pause at each end.
B Heel-to-knee / knee-to-knee ▶ Watch the video	Slow and controlled	1	8–10 reps per side	Hold the end position 2–3 seconds.
C Active thread-the-needle ▶ Watch the video	Slow, hold at the end	2	8–10 reps per side	Hold the end position 2–3 seconds.
D 90/90 with internal rotation ▶ Watch the video	Slow, hold at the end	2	8–10 reps per side	Light pressure into the rotation for 2–3 seconds, no more.
ACTIVATE				
A Half-kneeling to long lunge	Slow, hold at the end	2	8–10 reps	Straighten the back knee off the floor and hold 2–3 seconds.
B Glute bridge with hip sweep ▶ Watch the video	Slow, pause each side	2	8 reps	Pause 2–3 seconds at each end of the sweep.
INTEGRATE				
A Loaded squat with knee drops ▶ Watch the video	Slow and controlled	2	6–8 reps per side	Stay in the bottom of the squat and lower one knee at a time.
B Your session warm-up	—	—	10–15 minutes	Move into the ramp-up sets for the day's training.

Getting the most from each rep

Go slowly

Move and breathe at an easy, even pace. A set of 10 to 12 reps should take close to a minute. If you finish much sooner, you are moving too fast to change anything.

Use light pressure at the end

Go to the edge of the range you can reach comfortably, ease a little further into the resistance and hold 2 to 3 seconds. Keep breathing. Forcing it or holding your breath works against you.

When to stop and get checked

Mild stretch discomfort is expected. Stop the exercise if you feel sharp pain, pain that travels down a leg, numbness or tingling, or if a joint feels like it is catching. If that happens more than once, or you have had hip, knee or back surgery, get examined before continuing.

Want this matched to your body?

At Forza Chiropractic, an exam, a posture analysis and digital X-rays when clinically necessary show where your movement is limited and why. Your exercise plan is then built from those measurements.

Request an evaluation: forzachiropractic.com/book

Forza Chiropractic
1401 S Arlington Heights Rd, Suite 2
Arlington Heights, IL 60005
(847) 472-1224
youtube.com/@forzachiro

This routine is general movement guidance from Forza Chiropractic. It is not medical advice and does not diagnose or treat any condition. Check with your healthcare provider before starting a new exercise program.