

Bridges

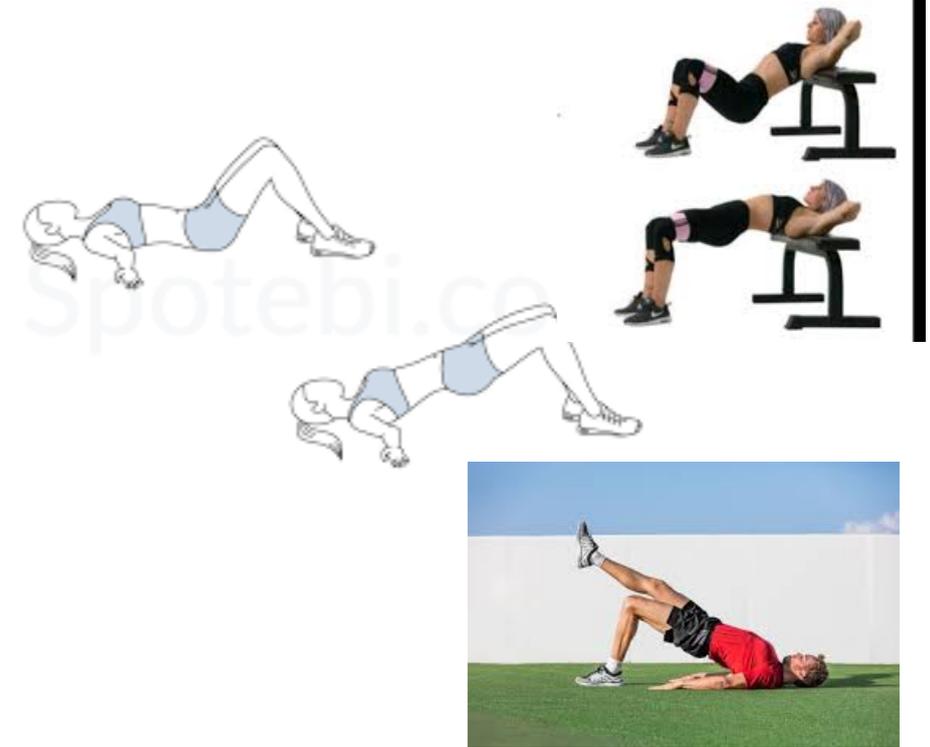
Do it Right!
Exercises you Should Do

Types (progression): The Bridges are done mostly on the floor, but can be done standing along a wall (novice) or with shoulders off a bench (advanced). A floor double leg bridge can be done by most novice exerciser, while a floor single leg bridge is an intermediate to advanced exercise. An advanced version bridge can be done with weight along the hips (aka hip thruster). Another advanced version is with feet on a stability ball and out of a rollout position when doing a stability ball leg curl.

Performance: The Bridge can be done with isometric holds of 5-30+ seconds or by repeating 5 or more repetitions.

Form: You should never have back pain when doing this exercise. See Details below, but key points. Engage the glutes throughout. Pushing through your heels helps engage the glutes. Always breathe. Keep neutral spine alignment (especially lower back) throughout. Brace your abdomen with 20% isometric contraction - this helps stabilize the spine ([bracing](#)). [SEE DETAILS ON HOW TO DO A BRIDGE.](#)

[SEE SINGLE LEG BRIDGE.](#) [SEE HOW TO DO A WEIGHTED BRIDGE.](#)



The Bridges are one of the best exercises for buttock activation.

I consider it one of the essential core exercises as well. [See: What is the core?](#) I also consider it a [foundation exercise](#) and it should be part of a basic fitness routine or as a warm up for advanced exercisers and athletes. Performing this exercise will help stabilize the spine and it strengthen the muscle of the hamstring, lower back, central core, and especially the glutes. They can be done anywhere, in different positions, and with and without equipment. They can be done often, even everyday. I would recommend performing them at least 3 x a week. I recommend a static hold exercise so when you do perform them hold them isometrically for 5 or more seconds. I often recommend a 5 second holds for 10 repetitions or 15 second holds for 3 repetitions. There is no excuse. It only takes minutes to do.

Did you know: The Bridge is often prescribed for patients with back pain. It is a closed chain exercise that increases the activities of trunk stabilization muscles such as the internal oblique, external oblique, and erector spinae muscles ([see study](#)). This exercise is also useful for facilitating pelvic motions and strengthening the low back and hip extensors, and it enhances motor control of the lumbo-pelvic region. A study found that bridging exercise in the prone position may be a more effective bridging method. Performing the bridging exercise on unstable surface (like a stability ball) increases the muscles activity of the deep abdominal muscles (transverse abdominis and internal oblique) compared to on a stable surface.