

Hi everyone.

Over the next few articles, we will look at hip mobility and ways to improve stability and strength.

When skating, the hips are required to perform several activities; stability, power generation and maintaining balance.

For many people, hip mobility is an issue. Particularly if the majority of your time is spent sitting.

Two easy to do hip mobility tests are the seated gluteus test and the internal thigh rotation test.

Seated gluteus test: Take a seat on a bench or chair so the thighs are horizontal to the floor and the shins are vertical.

Place one ankle on the opposite knee and let the knee drop outwards.

Sit upright and then lean the torso forward from the hips.

Have someone measure the angle the shin and floor create.

Anything above 20 degrees indicates a limitation in the external rotation range of movement.



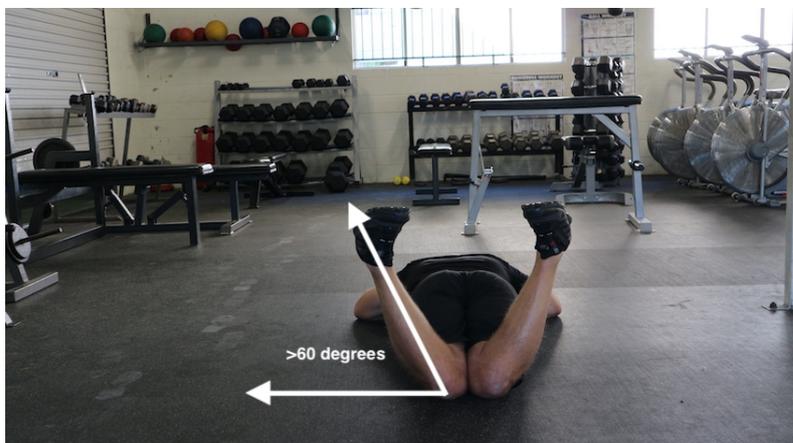
Internal thigh rotation test: Lie face-down on the floor, with your legs together.

Bend your knees to 90 degrees and let your shins drop away from each other.

Have someone measure the angle the shins and floor create.

An angle greater than 60 degrees shows there is a limitation of internal hip rotation.

Doing regular and consistent stretches for the hips (and any other major muscles and joints), can improve range of movement and strengthening the joint to improve function and lower the risk of injuries.



Two simple stretches for external and internal hip rotation are:

The seated gluteus stretch

Take a seat and place one foot over the other leg. Grab hold of the knee with both hands and pull the knee towards the chest and the opposite shoulder. Rotate the torso towards the leg. Be sure to keep both sit-bones on the seat as you execute this stretch.

Hold for between 10-30 seconds.

Switch sides and repeat the stretch. If needed, repeat again before moving on to the next stretch.



Seated internal hip rotation stretch

Sit on the floor, place the arms behind you with palms on the floor and fingers pointing away from the body and lean the torso back.

Bend one knee and place the foot slightly wider than the hips. Be sure to have the foot and shin turned in to protect the knee from excessive stress. Place the other foot on top of the thigh. Keeping the glutes on the floor, apply sufficient pressure from the top foot to sink the knee in towards the midline of the body and the floor. The stretch should be felt in the outer hip area and there should be no pain in the knee as you do this movement.

This stretch may be modified by placing knee on the floor in an internally rotated position, anchoring the knee with the other foot and sinking the hip joint back down towards the floor. Breathe throughout the stretch, aiming to relax further into the stretch with each exhalation.



Richard Nizielski