

Activating the Glutes

Ever gone through an entire lower body workout to find that the only thing that is hurting is your quads? Quads are the big set of muscles in the front of the leg. Given the chance, they will dominate any workout. What we really need to be doing, is activating the glutes and teaching the quads to relax a little. Glutes are bum muscles, and it is important to learn how to activate these muscles otherwise muscle imbalances occur and could lead to injuries. Plus, to lift and tone the butt, we need to learn to work it. But glute activation can be hard. Being able to squeeze the bum and feel the muscles activate takes time and practice. And they constantly need reminding to switch on, otherwise quadzilla comes to town and takes over again.. But once you know how, it becomes much easier.

The best way to wake up the glutes and get them firing is to do these 4 basic glute exercises. As you do them, you need to focus on the glutes activating. Don't just go through the movements, really think about what you are doing, and feeling that burn in the bum muscles. One of the best tools to have when working the glute muscles are the small loop booty bands. They don't call them booty bands for nothing...

Exercise 1: Clams (3 sets of 10 reps each side)

Lying on your side with your legs bent, feet in line the bum. Make sure your hips are in line and that one hip bone is not dropping backwards or forwards. From there, keeping the feet together, slowly lift the top knee by activating your glutes. You do not need to go to high, if you do you will find your top hip bone will roll backwards. You want to keep the hips stable and only lift as high as you can.



Exercise 2: Lateral Crab Walks (3 sets of 10 reps each way)

Come into a half squat position, holding this as you move. Walk laterally while pushing against the booty bands, 1 leg at a time. Make sure the knees do not fall in towards each other.



Exercise 3: Donkey Kicks (3 sets of 10 reps each side)

On hands and knees – keeping a 90 degree angle in your legs, kick one heel in a controlled movement towards the roof, ensuring you squeeze the glute as you move.



Exercise 4: Glute Bridges (3 sets of 20 reps)

Laying on your back, knees bent, feet flat on the floor about shoulder width apart. Pushing through your heels and pushing your knees against the band, squeeze the glutes and lift the hips.

