



# the kettlebell swing

Tone It Up Personal Fitness  
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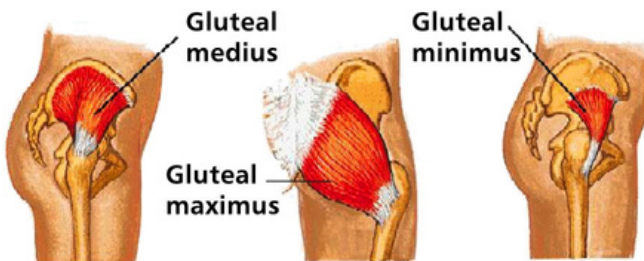
# Muscles used

The primary muscles used to perform a kettlebell swing include, which is a hip hinge

- Glute minimus
- Glute medius
- Glute maximus

We also use so many other muscles: hamstrings, lats, core, quads, calves, shoulders... but we will for this concentrate on the glutes.

## Gluteal Muscles



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# Warm Up

Before we do any lifting we need to ensure we do a good warm up. Adding 'booty' bands are a great way to increase tension on the muscles we are activating.

## ***Let's start with Activation.***

1-2 rounds, 12-15 Reps

1. Laying Leg Clams
2. Front Plank 30 sec
3. Side Plank 30 sec each side
4. Prone Hip Extension
5. Banded Sky Diver
6. Bird Dog
7. Upper Back/ Lat Activation

## ***Then we move into movement patterns***

1-2 rounds, 15-20 reps

1. Glute Bridge (band Optional)
2. Kneeling Hip Extension
3. Standing Hip Hinge (banded Optional)

See [YouTube Video link](#) for Video Demo



# Hip Hinge

This movement is the *fundamental* movement for a deadlift, which then leads to a swing. If this isn't right- then your ability to perform a correct swing without pain will not be possible

So we will start from the *bottom up*. - *Feet First*

Standing feet hip width apart, screw your feet into the ground (toes and heel planted), this will drive your knees out and create external hip abduction. Push your feet into the ground. You will create more force by doing this.

By activating your lats, (those big muscles that start from your lower back and insert under your arm) pull your shoulders back and down think shoulder blades down to pelvis. Now you have created a nice strong back, and neutral spine.



In addition, brace your mid section. When I say this, think you are about to be hit in the stomach, so you brace for impact.

This is also how you should feel during the plank. We are contracting through the mid section- creating STABILITY.





# Hip Hinge...cnt

So our feet are stable & remember here soft knees, braced mid section and back, shoulders are back and down (neutral spine) your head also needs to stay neutral, so we don't have our head up. Our head stays in alignment with our spine & eyes on the kettlebell.

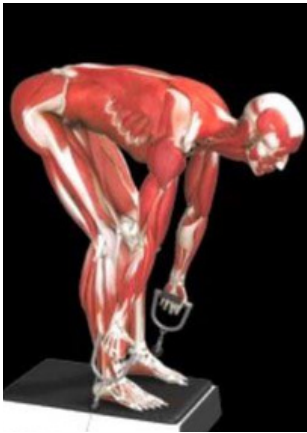
NOW, we tilt at the hips.

Push your bum out. A great way to practice is to stand with your back to a wall, step out a few steps. Now aim for your butt to hit the wall. Here you should feel your hamstrings stretch.

IF you were holding a weight it DOES NOT NEED to touch the ground. Everyone's range of movement will be different. The aim is the neutral spine, we don't want a rounded back. Chin stays tucked in to your chest. Once the butt hits the wall, use your power to drive your hips (contract glutes) forward squeeze the glutes as you push forward.

Once in the upright position we still should have braced midsection and back. Here we *cannot* hyperextend back. Ie arch your spine.

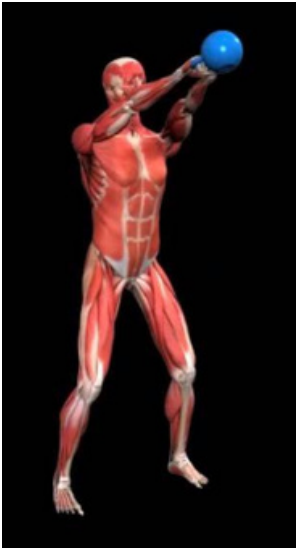
If you struggle with keeping a neutral spine, use a piece of dowel or broom stick (refer video). Maintain three points of contact. Back of the head, middle of the thoracic and the coccyx. Your aim is to deadlift and maintain these three points of contact.



**PRACTICE!**  
**If this movement**  
**cannot be**  
**achieved, then**  
**NO SWING FOR**  
**YOU!**



# Time to Swing



First cue, always keep your eyes on the Kettlebell.

The starting position is a deadlift. Place the kettlebell (KB) between the feet. Hip hinge to pick the KB up. Using all the above points of deadlift ie neutral spine, bracing mid section, activation of lats, feet firmly screwed into ground.

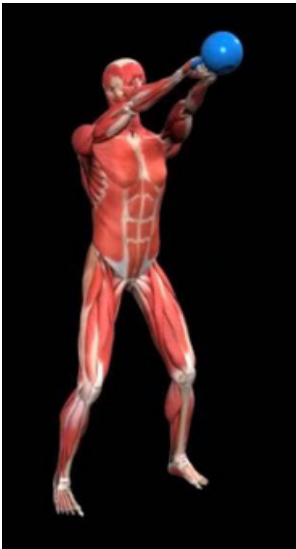
*This is also how you place the KB back to the ground. Don't drop is like a sack of potatoes. Treat it like it is 100kg.*

*Side note.*

*Most injuries occur because we are not picking up and putting weights down with correct form. It's like picking up a basket of washing, it's easy to round your back & not use correct posture and just pick up the basket. Think about form on everything you pick up!*

**How many every day movements are a squat or deadlift?**

# Time to Swing...cnt



Now we gather momentum for a full swing (eye level). Hip hinge and allow the KB to swing through your legs (note it should NOT hit the ground, if it does you are bending the knees too much aka squat).

So all the power is being produced from the hips through our posterior chain (muscles through the back of the body).

Our arms are actually kind of soft, they're kind of relaxed. So we don't want to strangle the KB, we don't want to front raise the KB, we don't want to see white in the knuckles but rather all the movement comes from your hips! It's far more powerful this way anyway.

Once that KB leaves the hips it's actually in free flight. It's not lifting and that's why you shouldn't be resisting it on the way up or way down.

*There you have your Kettlebell Swing.*

*See our [YouTube Video for my Swing](#), or join in our class to learn more.*



# Mistakes

1. Squatting in the KB swing. People are used to moving through their knees, not their hips. You can see the difference straight away.

That KB is getting much closer to the ground. This is a very, very common one. A lot of people are actually quite comfortable from sitting and squatting moving through their knees, but they're not so comfortable at hinging through their hips. A warm up to activate the glutes is very important so we learn to 'feel' the glutes working.

2. Hyper extending through on the KB swing. So it's coming too far, beyond hip extension- so shoulders go too far back when we are in the upright position. This is where you will 'feel' it

in your lower back. You will also 'feel' your lower back if you don't maintain that strong braced mid section- you will be rounding your back.

3. Lifting the KB with your arms & not engaging hips at all. It's not an arm workout, they assist for sure but hips do all the work.

4. Not finishing the kettlebell swing. So the opposite of the hyper extension, is we actually don't get hip extension, ie standing upright. Pop and snap. Think legally blonde "Bend & Snap"

5. Arching of the back as the KB goes between the legs in the swing. This generally happens when we get the torso too parallel to the ground. So just a general rule of thumb is we want the torso at about 45 degrees \* depending on your range.

