

Suspension Bridge Exercise

Take weight off the toes & better support the spine so you can wear the shoes you choose in comfort.



Setup

If you don't have a ball, you can put your heels on a firm sofa or strong chair with an upholstered seat. Lie down on your back on a mat or soft flooring, and place the backs of the heels on a stability ball. Position your body so knees are bent with thighs at an angle to use the weight of bones into the joints. Establish what would be a sitting position, but laying on your back. Don't flatten the lower spine - instead, lengthen the tail. **Don't flex or point the feet. Instead, find the gentle levering contact of the heels into the ball.**



Steps

- 1 Place the feet together**, allowing the insteps and the toes to soften and drape into a forward curve.
- 2 Press gently** but definitely with the backs of the heels into the ball in a way in which the heels help you to feel the weight of the thigh bones into the sockets
- 3 Place your fingers on your sit bones** to discover how the hamstrings muscles on each leg connect on to each sit bone, as if the sit bones are little anchors for the hamstrings to tether down on to, like the way cords on a tent tether down to the spikes in the ground.
- 4 Extend the legs using the hamstrings back** on to the sits bones. This is key to developing stability in the backs of the hips which will support the spine. If you are not using a ball which will roll when the legs extend, then simply keep the knees bent to perform the bridge.
- 5 Extend the lower spine in a subtle arch out the tail** so that the pelvis isn't tucked and the hip flexors remain released. This is not a typical bridge exercise in which you scoop the belly. The belly will deepen if you use the hamstrings-to-sits-bones and lengthen the lower spine.
- 6 Perform the bridge** by using the gentle force of the heels down into the ball to initiate the tethering of the hamstrings back on to the sit bones. Place the hands down on the floor at your sides for support.

Imagine: It is like a pulley system that suspends a piano off the ground to move it to a higher floor: the cords pull down for the piano to rise. In this case, the hamstrings tether back to the sit bones for the pelvis to rise.

Suspend Once your body is in the bridge, sense the suspension. The hamstrings are like the swooping cables on a suspension bridge. The cables are tethered to anchors that are fastened down toward the ground. The cables don't lift or hike the bridge up. The cable-like hamstrings suspend the bridge of your body so that there is no tension or holding. Imagine that you could be standing in high heels or any shoe with the same strength and ease.

The idea behind this exercise is to develop an experience lying down that can be transferred into standing and walking.



Herald Foot Function for Spinal Support & Pain Relief highheelhealing.com and backboneandwingspan.com

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