



Ladies Technical Lifting Class Posterior Chain Exercises

By

Dave Brockway

What Is The Posterior Chain?

If you looked into a mirror and all the muscles you couldn't see would be your posterior chain. These are the muscles that run from the head all the way down to the end of your feet to your toes. This may confuse some of you because on most posterior chain workouts the author may only include Hamstring and Glutes. Unfortunately this is incorrect but harmless.

So, why is it so important to work the posterior chain? Most of the population is anterior dominant. This can lead to several problems like acute and long term injuries and discomfort. If you are looking to get a bit more serious about pretty much any sport or type of training a weak or non dominant posterior chain will lead to poor performance. Another issue I see in the gym a lot is internet programs being anterior dominant which can compound your performance. Plus we for what ever reason we tend to work the mirror muscles. In many ways although I'm exaggerating we are working out to perform worse.

We all sit far too much and the body being an incredible feat of evolutionary engineering and adapts to any stress we put it under. Sitting is in fact a stress on the body. This manifests its self in a tight anterior chain like Tight Hip Flexors, Tight Pectorals, Tight Quadriceps Muscles & weak core muscles. It will also over extend all the posterior chain muscles. This leads to poor posture and mobility issues like internal rotations of the shoulders, hip disfunction, back pain, shallow or faulty squat mechanics.

The posterior chain muscles are **Calfs, Hamstrings, Gluteus, Erector Spinae, Latissimus Dorsi, Trapezium, Rear Deltoids and Triceps**. Obviously I'm not going to list every single muscle as it would take half the page and I'm grossly over simplifying muscles of the posterior chain. for the purposes of how to workout the posterior chain these are the main groups we need to know.

So how important is the Posterior Chain? A strong posterior chain makes you perform better, look better and helps keep you injury and pain free.

Mobility & Dynamic Warm Up

Lunge with Rotation

Step With Knee Hug

Inch Worm to Frog With Rotation

Full Squat with Elbow External Rotators

Frog Squat

Pigeon With Lateral Reach

Broom Handle Stretch Overhead Squat

Horizontal (Long) Jump

My Favourite Posterior Chain Exercise

As you will notice from my list I've not included some very popular exercises like Glute Bridges. I do think they are good exercises when performed correctly but in my experience they are an exercise with a limited shelf life of progression.

Conventional & Sumo Deadlift

Glute Ham Raises (GHR)

45 Degree Back Extension

Romanian Deadlift (RDL)

Bb Good Morning

Lying Leg Curl

Nordic Hamstring Curl

Seated Row

Cable Rope Pulls

Pull & Chin Ups

Cable Prone Flyes

Trap 3 Raises

Gravity Press



How To Assess Posture For Posterior Chain Training

If you hang a plumb line from the ceiling stand to the side. If your ears, shoulders, hips and ankles align you have perfect posture. I have only ever come across a couple of people who come close to a positive result to that assessment. No one is perfect and I wouldn't worry either if you are not anatomically correct. But it doesn't hurt to improve poor posture.

Protect Your Lower Back

Very often I will ask a client if they had used a piece of equipment or an exercise like a 45 Degree Back Extension, Romanian Deadlift. They will either say **"Yes, it's really good for working the lower back"** or **"It really makes my lower back sore"**. Please don't continue with this exercise until you speak to a professional who can help you correct the exercise. This maybe a form, hip dysfunction or flexibility issue and 9 times out of 10 it's not going to get better on its own.

One of the first things I assess with a new client is that they can hip hinge and look at the mechanics of the hips. If they cant then I prioritise correcting hip function through mobility, rebalancing muscles and drilling the movement without load. Because as soon as I add load or get them to run or pretty much any exercise the way their mechanics take load is much higher through the lower back.



Training The Posterior Chain For Aesthetics

Lets not disguise the fact that most of the people you see in the gym are going there to improve their overall appearance. Who blames them. When you look good you feel good. Unfortunately you are not going to have much impact on your silhouette by training the **mirror muscles (Anterior Chain)**. The largest group of muscles are the Back, Gluteus. I can't speak for everyone but in my general experience most people aspire to the narrow waist and tapered back with shapely legs. Rather than spending so much time on training the abdominal muscles why not start focusing on the shape of the Back, Glutes and Legs to create that aesthetic appearance. This will improve posture and the more upright you stand the better you look. This can be accomplished through a healthy Posterior Chain.

