

T & T - tips & techniques

Back in the days when my back troubled me, I had the good fortune to receive some valuable advice, an exercise that, if done regularly, could relieve and prevent back problems. I think it comes from some esoteric bodywork practice which initial research hasn't revealed, but knowing that is not necessary. What is important is that it works.

What this does, as I understand it, is to flex and strengthen the *Psoas* muscle which attaches to the lumbar region of the spine, goes through the pelvis and attaches to the upper part of the femur (that's the large single one in your upper leg. If this muscle is strong and supple you're less likely to "throw your back out" and/or suffer back pain. And it's okay to do this if you're suffering pain, at least I've done so and it seemed to help. Standing up and alternatively raising each leg so that the thigh is against your chest is also said to help strengthen the *Psoas*.

Here's what to do:

Lay on your back on the floor and bend your legs. Feet slightly apart. Knees in the air.

Feel the arch of your spine? Flatten that arch. Let it spring back. Flatten it. Let it spring back. Got that?

Now, as you lay there, imagine your pelvis to be a box. Let's call the four corners of the bottom of this box A, B, C, and D.

A	B
C	D

When your spine is arched, the lower corners, C + D are touching the floor.

When you flatten the arch the upper corners, A + B come down to touch the floor. Got that? Okay, let's rock:

Begin by arching your spine, C D.
Flatten it, A B; arch it, C D. That's 1.
Flatten it, A B; arch it, C D. That's 2

Do 25 or more of these.

Next, let's rock and roll.

With your back arched turn your pelvis to the left so it rests on corner D. Keeping it arched, turn your pelvis to the right so it rests on corner C. Now, keeping turned to the right, flatten the arch so your pelvis rests on corner A. Keeping the arch flat, turn to the left so your pelvis rests on corner B.

That's 1.

Now again - D, C, A, B, That's 2. Repeat this 25 or more times.

Then, reverse the order, rotate counter clockwise, C, D, A, B. And again, and again. 25 or more times.

T.L.

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