



### Why Athletes Need Good Butts

Why hello my Bootyful [SweatCommunity](#).

I think the hip-hop industry speaks volumes about the present-day American ideal of body image through songs like "Bootylicious, Ms. New Booty, Bubble Butt, and Baby Got Back." Who knew that hip-hop had such concern for fitness and health?

Having a strong, muscular backside does have great benefits for athletic functional purposes. The gluteus maximus (the big meaty part of your butt) is the source of much power and explosiveness when we jump and sprint. For this reason, squats and deadlifts have become the most important lifts in many strength and conditioning programs.

But I want to talk more about an exercise that will build the outer part of your butts, the "gluteus medius." Not only will it help all you with your curviness, but more importantly it serves as a primary mover in all lateral movement for athletes. Anytime we cut, change directions, or run lateral, we are relying on our glute medius (and hips) to decelerate our body one way and accelerate it the other way.

So today, we are going to focus on one of the best functional movements for athletes: **the side lunge**.

For video instruction of our side lunges, check out our [SweatChannel's: Drill of the Week](#) on our SweatCommunity Page.

#### **The Side Lunge:**

- 1.) Start from a standing position with feet together.
- 2.) Step out to the side with one foot as wide as you can comfortably. We'll call this your "wide leg."
- 3.) Squat down on this wide leg as low as you can, keeping the foot flat on the ground and toes pointed straight ahead. Your opposite leg should remain straight and should feel a gentle stretch on the inside of the leg (groin).
- 4.) Push forcefully into the ground with the wide leg through your heel and explosively return back to a standing position, bringing your feet back together.

In any sport that requires lateral movement (football, soccer, basketball, baseball, lacrosse, volleyball, hockey), the wider and lower an athlete can get, the more agile they become. The stronger and more flexible our hips and their supporting muscles become, the better we become as athletes.

A bonus drill I'm going to include in this article is called "Ice Skaters." This is a more advanced drill that helps to build explosiveness and stability in the hips and knees when moving laterally. It can also be seen on the SweatChannel.

**Ice Skaters:**

- 1.) Balance on one leg in a standing position with a slight bend in the knee.
- 2.) Jump laterally (close to maximum distance) and land on your opposite leg. Try to stick the landing with a slight knee bend. You can bounce land if you need to, but the goal is to stick the landing.
- 3.) Once you collect your balance, jump laterally back onto your original leg.
- 4.) Try to increase the distance you can jump as you get better.

For more drills on how to increase muscle strength in your hips and glutes, continue to revisit our [SweatChannel](#). We'll be continuously adding videos to the library for you to watch.

**Be the Butt of Every Joke,**

**Chris Chinn  
President | Sweat City  
650-759-2390  
[www.sweatcityfitness.com](http://www.sweatcityfitness.com)**

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