

Hip External Rotation Exercises to Improve Mobility-

Hip external rotation is the movement of turning your thigh outward from the hip joint. Improving this mobility can help with walking, squatting, sitting cross-legged, balance, and reducing stress on the knees and lower back.

1.Seated Figure-4 Stretch

How to perform:

Sit on a chair with your feet flat on the floor.

Place the ankle of the affected leg on the opposite knee.

Keep your back straight and gently lean forward until you feel a stretch in the buttock and hip.

Hold for 20–30 seconds and repeat 3–5 times.

Effects:

Stretches the piriformis and deep external rotator muscles.

Improves hip joint mobility

Reduces tightness in the gluteal region.



2. Supine Figure-4 Stretch

How to perform:

Lie on your back with knees bent.

Cross one ankle over the opposite thigh.

Pull the supporting thigh toward your chest.

Hold for 20–30 seconds and repeat 3–5 times.

Effects:

Increases flexibility of the hip external rotators.

Helps reduce stiffness and discomfort in the hip and buttock region.



3.Clamshell Exercise

How to perform:

Lie on your side with hips and knees bent.

Keep your feet together and lift the top knee without rolling your pelvis backward.

Lower slowly.

Perform 10–15 repetitions for 2–3 sets.

Effects:

Strengthens the gluteus medius and deep hip external rotators.

Improves hip stability and control.

Enhances functional external rotation.



4. 90/90 Hip Rotation Stretch

How to perform:

Sit on the floor with both knees bent at approximately 90 degrees.

One leg is positioned in front and the other to the side.

Lean forward over the front leg.

Hold for 20–30 seconds and repeat on both sides.

Effects:

Improves both hip internal and external rotation mobility.

Enhances joint capsule flexibility.

Useful for athletes and individuals with restricted hip motion.



5. Prone Hip External Rotation

How to perform:

Lie on your stomach with knees bent to 90°.

Slowly move your feet apart while keeping your knees together.

Return to the starting position.

Perform 10–15 repetitions.

Effects:

Improves active hip external rotation range.

Strengthens the external rotator muscles.

Enhances neuromuscular control.



6. Resistance Band External Rotation

How to perform:

Sit with a resistance band around your feet.

Rotate one leg outward against the band's resistance.

Return slowly.

Perform 10–15 repetitions for 2–3 sets.

Effects:

Strengthens external rotators and gluteal muscles.

Improves dynamic hip stability.

Supports better gait and lower-limb alignment.

Clinical Benefits of Improved Hip External Rotation Mobility

Increased range of motion during daily activities.

Better squat and lunge mechanics.

Reduced compensatory stress on the knee and lumbar spine.

Improved balance and gait efficiency.

Enhanced athletic performance and injury prevention.

For rehabilitation purposes, combining stretching exercises (mobility) with strengthening exercises (clamshells, band rotations) generally provides the best outcomes for improving hip external rotation.



Dr. Sanket Bajpai (PT)

Professor Department of Physiotherapy