

Ankle Strengthening Exercises

The following ankle strengthening exercises are designed to improve strength of the muscles of the ankle. You should discuss the suitability of these exercises with your physiotherapist prior to beginning them. Generally, they should only be performed provided they do not cause or increase pain.

[Balance Exercises](#) are also an important component of ankle strengthening and ankle rehabilitation and should ideally be combined with the below ankle exercises for optimal results.

Ankle Strengthening – Basic Exercises

To begin with, the following basic ankle strengthening exercises should be performed approximately 10 times, 3 times daily. As your ankle strength improves, the exercises can be progressed by gradually increasing the repetitions, number of sets and resistance provided they do not cause or increase pain.

Ankle Dorsiflexion vs. Resistance Band

Begin this ankle strengthening exercise with a resistance band around your foot as demonstrated and your foot and ankle pointed down (figure 1). Slowly move your foot and ankle up against the resistance band as far as possible and comfortable without pain. Repeat 10 times.

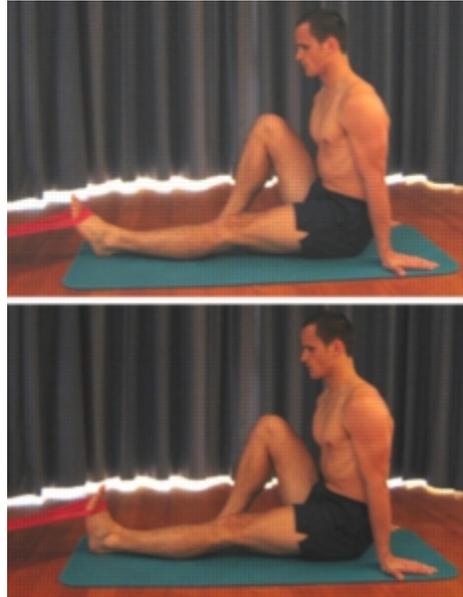


Figure 1 – Ankle Dorsiflexion vs. Resistance Band (left ankle)

Ankle Plantarflexion vs. Resistance Band

Begin this ankle strengthening exercise with a resistance band around your foot as demonstrated and your foot and ankle held up towards your head (figure 2). Slowly move your foot and ankle down against the resistance band as far as possible and comfortable without pain. Repeat 10 times.

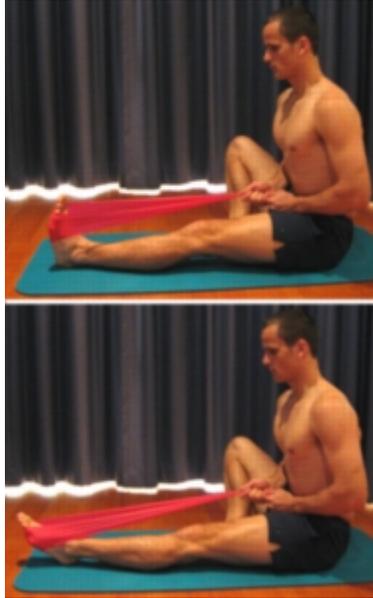


Figure 2 – Ankle Plantarflexion vs. Resistance Band (left ankle)

Ankle Eversion vs. Resistance Band

Begin this ankle strengthening exercise with a resistance band around your foot as demonstrated and your foot and ankle turned inwards (figure 3). Slowly move your foot and ankle outwards against the resistance band as far as possible and comfortable without pain. Repeat 10 times.



Figure 3 – Ankle Eversion vs. Resistance Band (right ankle)

Ankle Inversion vs. Resistance Band

Begin this ankle strengthening exercise with a resistance band around your foot as demonstrated and your foot and ankle turned outwards (figure 4). Slowly move your foot and ankle inwards against the resistance band as far as possible and comfortable without pain. Repeat 10 times.



Figure 4 – Ankle Inversion vs. Resistance Band (left ankle)

Ankle Stretches

The following ankle stretches are designed to restore movement to the ankle and improve flexibility of muscles crossing the ankle. If you are injured, you should discuss the suitability of these exercises with your physiotherapist prior to beginning them. Generally, they should be performed 3 times daily provided they do not cause or increase pain:

Ankle Stretches – Basic Exercises

Foot and Ankle Up and Down

Move your foot and ankle up and down as far as possible and comfortable without pain (figure 1). Repeat 10 - 20 times.

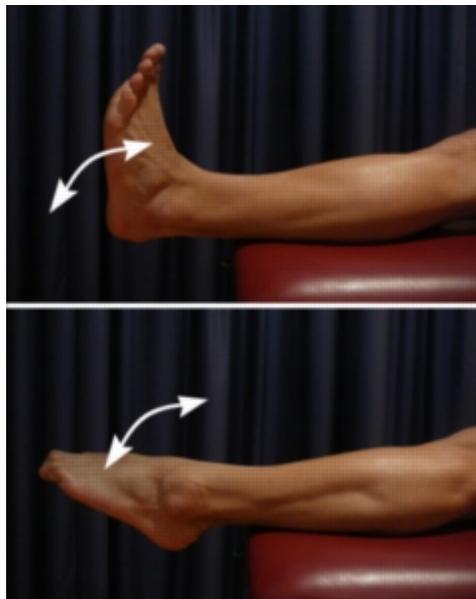


Figure 1 - Foot and Ankle Up and Down

Foot and Ankle In and Out

Move your foot and ankle in and out as far as possible and comfortable without pain (figure 2). Repeat 10 - 20 times.

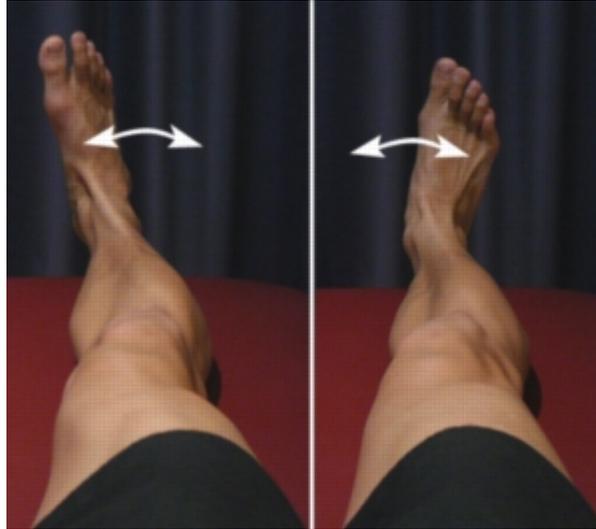


Figure 2 - Foot and Ankle In and Out

Foot and Ankle Circles

Move your foot and ankle in a circle as large as possible and comfortable without pain (figure 3). Repeat 10 - 20 times.



Figure 3 - Foot and Ankle Circles

Ankle Stretches – Intermediate Exercises

Alphabet Writing A-Z

Use your foot and ankle movements to draw the alphabet from A - Z . Use movements as large as possible and comfortable without pain (figure 4). Repeat with lower case letters.



Figure 4 - Alphabet Writing A - Z

Dorsiflexion Stretch with Towel

Begin this exercise in long sitting with your leg to be stretched in front of you. Your knee and back should be straight and a towel or rigid band placed around your foot as demonstrated (figure 5). Using your foot, ankle and the towel, bring your toes towards your head until you feel a stretch in the back of your calf, Achilles tendon or leg. Hold for 15 seconds and repeat 4 times at a mild to moderate stretch provided the exercise is pain free.

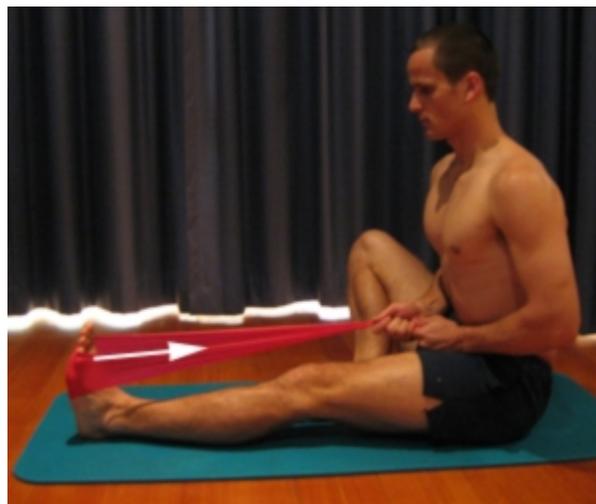


Figure 5 - Dorsiflexion Stretch with Towel

