

Bodyweight Reverse Lunge

Basic bodyweight form with hands on hips

Key positions



1. After stepping back: establish support



2. Same foot positions: lower with control

Muscles worked

Main muscles

- Quadriceps extend the front knee as you rise.
- Gluteus maximus contributes to front-leg hip extension.

Supporting muscles

- Hamstrings and hip muscles assist leg movement and pelvic control.
- Lower-leg, foot and trunk muscles support contact, posture and balance.

What makes it useful

A bodyweight exercise stepping backward while the front leg provides the main support. Train strength and balance on both sides; distinguish it from forward lunges and static split squats.

Movement & technique

Bodyweight Reverse Lunge | Plant the front foot. Step back, lower with control, and return steadily.

Before you start

Use a clear, nonslip floor with enough space to step backward. Wear stable shoes and start without weights. Keep a sturdy support nearby if balance is difficult.

1 Set your standing posture

Stand hip-width with hands on your hips and head aligned. Brace your trunk, keep your pelvis steady, and settle your weight before moving one foot backward.

2 Step back and establish support

Step one foot straight backward into a stable split stance. Land on its forefoot with the heel raised, keep a comfortable width, and establish balance before lowering.

3 Lower with control

Inhale and bend both knees slowly, keeping the front foot flat. Allow a slight natural torso lean; stop before losing balance, with the rear knee above the floor.

4 Press through the front foot to return

Exhale and press through the front mid-foot, with rear-leg assistance as needed. Extend the hip and knee, bring the rear foot forward, regain standing balance, and repeat both sides.

Form reminders

- Plant the front foot; support the rear forefoot and toes with its heel raised.
- Let knees follow toes; avoid crossing feet or twisting the pelvis and trunk.
- Choose controlled depth without forcing a fixed knee angle or maximum range.
- Step backward and return steadily, without adding a jump or knee drive.

Finish safely

- Stop for knee, hip, ankle or back pain or dizziness. Reduce step length or depth and use stable support if needed.
- Check the space behind you. Avoid dropping the rear knee, rushed repetitions or crossed feet; seek coaching when balance or technique is uncertain.

References

1. ACE - Backwards Lunge (www.acefitness.org)
2. NASM - Reverse Lunges / Squat Alternatives (www.nasm.org)
3. ACE - Split Lunge Support and Balance (www.acefitness.org)
4. Well+Good - Reverse Lunge ([movement reference](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...)) (www.youtube.com)