

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Hanging Leg Raise

The Hanging Leg Raise

- The strict Hanging Leg Raise (HLR) is a powerful abdominal and lat exercise.
- It can be a platform for learning many important strength skills.
- The HLR is also one of the best pullup assistance drills.
- However, this presumes that you have competency in the Hanging Hollow Position and that you are not flexion intolerant.
- Performing the Calf stretch and Toe-Touch stretch from the Pistol section is recommended before HLR practice.

Chapter 2: Technique

Partial HLR

- Begin in the Hanging Hollow Position with a thumbless grip, your hands narrower than your shoulders.
- Pack your shoulders, “break” the bar, and push down on it as hard as you can—like you are trying to pull it to your feet.
- At the same time raise the legs as high as you can without arching the back or bending the knees.
- Do not hold your breath or force any particular pattern.
- Practice 3-5 sets of 3-5 reps.
- This drill and the full HLR are a “jackknife”—not only are the legs moving toward the arms but the arms are attempting to move toward the legs.

Floor Leg Raise

- Lie on your back and grasp a bar placed on a low power rack pins or a dowel rod placed between two heavy kettlebells so your shoulders are inside of shoulder-width and the elbows are at eye level.
- The drill will start from the top by bringing the feet to the bar by bending the knees to the chest then straightening the legs so the ankles or insteps touch the bar.
- Take a breath and push down on the bar, power breathing in short hisses and contract all the muscles in the front of the torso.
- At the same time push the ankles/insteps into the bar.
- Without releasing the tension and maintaining the push into the bar, lower the legs until they form a 90-degree angle with the body. Nasal inhale into your stomach on the way down.
- Pause in the L-sit position while staying tight and power back up to touch the ankles/insteps to the bar. Note that you are only performing the “top half” of the motion.

- When you get to the bar perform a series of short hissing power breaths. Sink the chest and the shoulder blades flare.
- Practice 3-5 sets of 3-5 reps on alternate days from the Partial HLR taking a day off between them.
- Progress in this drill until your shoulders can be in line with your ears achieving a more open shoulder position.

HLR

- Attempt the full HLR beginning from the Hanging Hollow Position and progressing past the partial HLR level trying to bring the ankles/insteps to the bar.
- You will try to raise the legs as high as you can before releasing the glutes but you will reengage them on the way down at the L-sit level to unload the back.
- Relax momentarily at the bottom, let the breath out and allow the spine to stretch then inhale and reengage the tension for the next rep.
- Practice 3-5 sets of 3-5 reps.

Chapter 3: Conclusion to the HLR

The HLR

- There are no small details—take time to practice all the drills and techniques.
- Mind your Safety and only work pain-free.
- Rest is your friend—don't chase fatigue when building your strength.
- Take time to own this powerful lat and abdominal exercise.
- Remember this drill presumes that you have competency in the Hanging Hollow position and that you are not flexion intolerant.

