

Calf Muscle / Achilles Tendon Conditioning

V1 September 2025

These calf exercises are variations you can swap between, depending on what feels comfortable for you.

- The goal is for the exercise to feel **challenging but manageable**.
- Some discomfort during the exercise is okay but change between difficulty levels to find a level of symptom tolerance and stop if the pain becomes more than tolerable.
- Aim to do 1-3 sets every other day or 2-3 times per week.

Caution: It is normal to feel calf muscle soreness or aching in the first few days/weeks. This should ease as your body adapts.

Seated (Easier)

1. Sit on a chair with your feet flat on the floor.
2. Push up onto your tiptoes, then slowly lower back down (take 4 seconds up and 4 seconds down).

To make it harder:

1. Lean your body weight slightly forward over your knees.
2. Add weight over your knees (e.g. objects in a backpack)

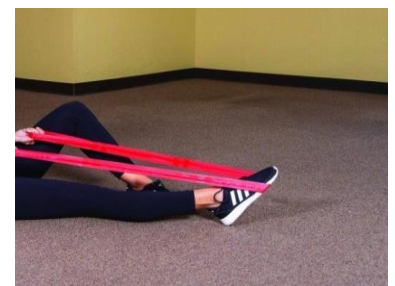


See video link: <https://bit.ly/3fCLlbo>. Choose No 15.

Exercise Band (Medium)

You'll need a therapy (resistance) band - available from www.physiosupplies.com or www.amazon.co.uk.

1. Sit on a chair or the floor.
2. Loop the band around the front half of your foot, holding the other end with your hands.
3. Remove all slack from the band — your foot should point slightly toward you and your knee should be straight.
4. Keep your **heel on the floor**. Slowly point your foot and toes away, then slowly return to the starting position. Take 4 seconds down and 4 seconds up.
5. Only move your **foot and ankle** — keep your knee and leg still.
6. Repeat until your ankle/leg feels tired.
7. Switch sides.



To make it harder:

1. If resistance feels too light, increase the tightness of the band by taking up further slack or
2. Increase the band difficulty type (usually denoted by the colour).

See video link: <https://bit.ly/3fCLlbo>. Choose No 14.

Standing (Harder)



1. Stand with both feet flat on the floor.
2. Push up onto your tiptoes (take 4 seconds up, 4 seconds down).
3. Continue repeating this movement until your legs feel tired.
4. Rest, then repeat another set if you can.
5. To reduce discomfort, slightly lean your weight off the painful side while doing the exercise.

To make it harder:

1. Do the exercise on **one leg at a time**.
2. Do the exercise on the **edge of a step** (first with both legs, then one leg).
3. Add weight (e.g. objects in a backpack).

If tolerable, try also performing a set with softly **bending your knees**, keeping them bent throughout the exercise (picture, right).

See video link: <https://bit.ly/3fCLlbo>. Choose No 6 and No 13.

If you have any questions about the information in this leaflet,
please contact Podiatry Services.

For more information about our services and how to manage common foot problems at home, please visit our website: www.livewellsouthwest.co.uk/project/podiatry

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