PIGEON

The Pigeon is an excellent hip mobility exercise as well as a stretch for the gluteus muscles. When done correctly it lengthens the trunk and stretches the latissimus dorsi as well.

Not suitable for people with knee injuries or pain.

Technical points:

Begin in a pressup position (abdominal muscles activated, wrists under the shoulders etc) and move the left knee in between the hands, as far as you can, with the left foot under the body and to the side. The foot is not under the body, but to the side.

Hips are levelled, with the buttocks off the ground. Avoid sitting down on one side. The upper body is straight and upright before leaning from the hips to reach forward. The back leg is stretched out behind you with the knee touching the ground. Point the back foot and toes.

Bend forward from the hips, stretch out the arms in front of you and reach out with the hands as far as you can. Come up on the back knee and this time drive the right knee in between the hands.



[Fig 97: Pigeon]

Fig 97: Pigeon shows the movement on one side only, from left leg forward to right leg forward. Continue the movement by bending forward from the hips, stretching the arms out and reaching with the hands as far as possible. Come up on the right knee and drive the left knee in between the hands.

Continue moving forward with one leg and then the other, creating a smooth movement.

Benefits:

Stretching the gluteus muscles primarily and lighter stretch on the hip flexors of the back leg secondarily.

Light stretch on the upper and lower back and the latissimus dorsi.

Strengthening core muscles and improving co-ordination and agility.

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Improving ankle mobility in plantar flexion.

Mobilising hip joint.

This is the counter stretch to the Lizard.

Common errors and/or weaknesses to be aware of:

- Compressing the body. The upper body is either straight upwards or reaching and stretching forwards when moving, never compressed or hunched over.
- Sitting on one side of the buttocks, usually on the side with the bent leg. Ensure that both sides of hips are levelled.
- Front foot is under the body. Ensure the foot is out to the side as far as you can.
- Not reaching far enough with the hands so the back knee doesn't have room to move forward. This leads to either compressing the body or pushing the back leg back to lengthen and make room.

Notes:

Can be used as a dynamic stretching exercise as well as static stretch.

Can be performed forwards as well as backwards.

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