KARATE FROG

The Karate Frog is an excellent stretch for the adductors and opening the hip. It is particularly strong on the hip, as such warm up with the Lizard and Pigeon first. And if you are a Karate-ka this is a great way to improve your Yoko Geri (side kick).

Technical points:

Begin in a standing position and squat all the way down with the heels on the ground. Now rock your body forwards and come up onto your toes, into the basic Frog Jump start position, with knees outside the arms.

In this example you will be moving towards the right side only. Stretch the right leg to the side with toes pointing forwards and sole of foot on the floor, the left leg is still under your body and the left thigh is out (don't let it come it, it forms a 90 degree angle at the groin).

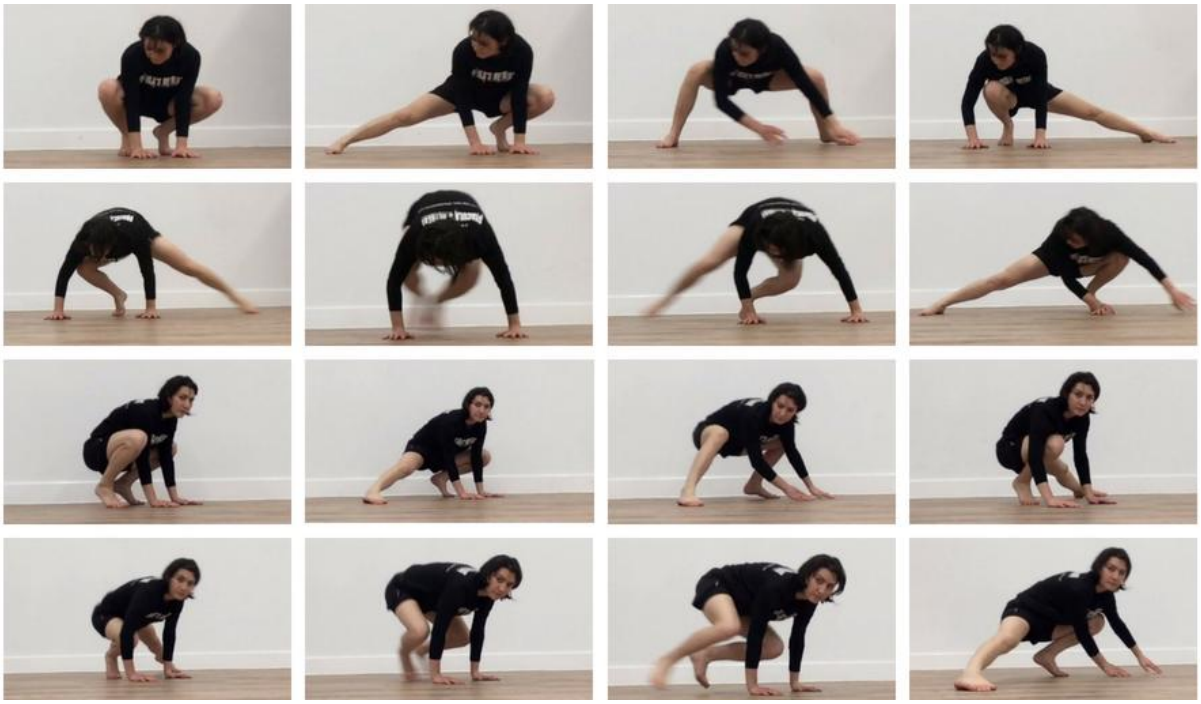
Bend the right knee and transfer the bodyweight towards the right. Now your right leg is bent and your left leg is straight.

Shift your bodyweight on your arms and, as you jump, bring the left foot under your body and stretch your right leg to the side, toes landing first. Now you are back with the right leg stretched out and the left leg under your body.

Continue towards the right doing exactly the same movement (i.e. shifting the body weight on the right leg, the shuffling the feet under the body, left leg pulls in and right leg stretches out). Then do the same moving to the left.

Fig 98: Karate Frog shows the Karate Frog moving to the right side. The top two rows of pictures are from the front, and the bottom two show exactly the same movement from the side.

Keep your hips as low as possible as you transfer the body weight. In this exercise you don't lift off the ground high as you would in the Frog Jump, you just hover as you switch legs under the body.



Copyright © Move Wild Academy

[Fig 98: Karate Frog]

Regression: instead of jumping and shuffling, just step as shown in *Fig 99: Karate Frog*



[Fig 99: Karate Frog]

Progression:

- Create a continuous movement, without stopping after each shuffle.
- Land with both feet in the same time.
- Hold the position for a fraction of a second, or even a second, in the air, using your core, before landing.

Benefits:

Stretching adductor muscles predominantly and improving hip mobility.

Taking joints through full range of motion.

Strengthening the core and upper body.

Develops co-ordination and agility.

Improving ankle mobility in dorsiflexion.

Common errors and/or weaknesses to be aware of:

- Lifting hips too high when shifting from one side to the other. This is normal at the beginning while the hip and muscles open and stretch. In order to get the most out of the exercise, to open the hip and stretch the muscles, keep the hips as low as possible when transferring the bodyweight.

- Holding the hips high after the shuffle. After each shuffle you should end up in the starting position, with one leg stretched out and the other under the body, touching the heel with the buttocks (or as close as possible).

Copyright © Move Wild Academy

- Toes not pointing forwards. To stretch and also mobilise the ankles try to keep the toes facing as forward as you can, on both feet. You can point them out while you transfer the body weight. As with all the exercises it's important to acknowledge where there are challenges and adapt. If the toes can't point straight forward just do your best to come as close as possible.

- Lifting the outside of the foot off the floor on the stretched out leg. Sole of foot should be on the floor all the time. Lifting the outside of the foot off the floor causes the knee to collapse inwards and place unnecessary pressure on it.

Notes:

The exercise is very tough on the hips, especially for someone who had never done this before. Take it slowly step by step, performing other hip opening exercise before, such as the other Frog exercises, Tiger, Lizard and Pigeon.

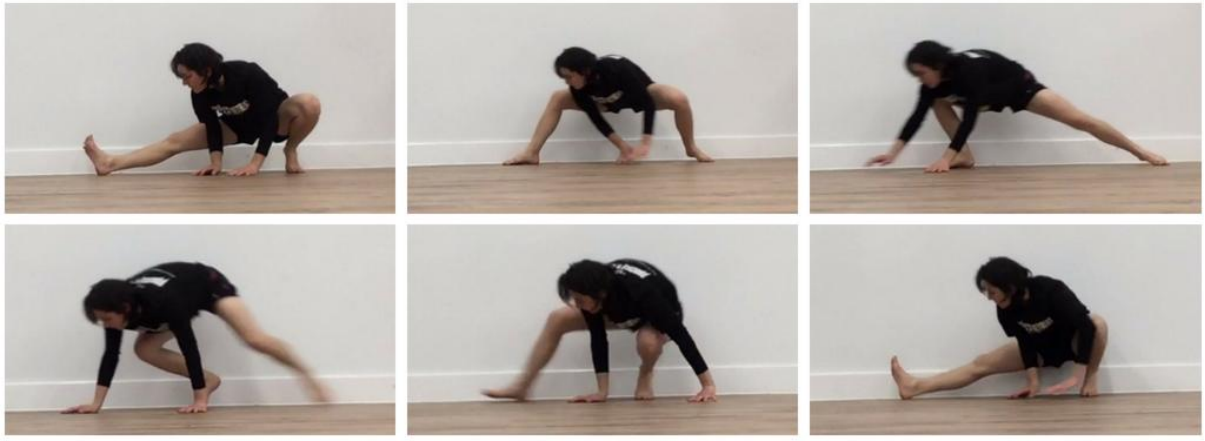
People with knee pain might feel some pain when transferring the body from one side to the other. In this case pointing the toes outwards can help. However, pointing toes outwards too much may cause the knee to collapse inwards which can also affect the knee. Try variations, but, if the pain persists, change the exercise.

Even when you move fast try to fully stretch out the legs and touch your heel with your buttocks before engaging in the next movement.

Try to step, or rather slide, into the end position with toes first, making the landing soft and controlled.

Variation:

Instead of the toes facing forward with the sole of the foot on the floor, lift the toes upwards after landing. When transferring the bodyweight point the toes and place the sole of the foot on the ground. Transfer the body weight and shuffle as usual. Remember to perform the exercise on both sides.



[Fig 100: Karate Frog Var]

Copyright © Move Wild Academy

The regression of the variation is the same as for the original exercise, stepping instead of jumping.

Copyright © Move Wild Academy