



## Hip Opener Series

With Barb Pierce

This series will focus on getting your body ready for regular running or walking by helping you to open your hips, groin, hamstrings, gastrocnemius (calf muscle) and achilles tendons. After completing a warm up, including several sun salutations, hold each of the following poses for 2-3 minutes each. Add a few sun salutations in between each pose if you wish.



**Version 1 - Horse pose lunge: safest version.** Place forward foot between hands, allowing weight to go onto hands and forward foot. Back knee will go on the ground, toe points to the back of the mat. Lean forward enough that you feel the opening on the achilles tendon. It is ok to feel it in the psoas of the back leg (groin/in front of hip bone), but the focus is on the forward leg.

**Version 2 - Horse pose lunge:** place hands on blocks, open chest, sink into the forward leg. If this is too much for your ankle or psoas, place hands on the ground and take some of the weight off the forward leg. Double up the mat or place something under your knee if it is sore.

**Version 3 - Horse pose lunge:** place one hand on your hip and the opposite hand in the air OR place both hands on your hips, sinking into the forward leg. If this is too much for your psoas or ankle, move back to one of the other options.



**Version 1 - Gecko: safest version.** place forward foot to the outside of your hands, allowing weight to go onto hands and forward foot. Back knee will go on the ground, toe pointed to the back of the mat. You should feel this in the hip of the forward leg and the psoas of the back leg.



**Version 2 - Gecko:** place forward foot to the outside of your hands, allowing weight to go onto your forearms and forward foot. If it is too much for your hip or psoas, go back to the safest version. You can also try raising the back knee in the air with the balls of your back foot on the ground.



**Version 1 - Twisting Gecko:** allow weight to go on the arm opposite the forward leg. Place hand on hip of forward leg as you twist your torso, sinking into your forward leg.



**Version 2 - Twisting Gecko with hands in prayer:** place your arm on the quadricep of your forward leg, twisting toward the forward leg & placing hands in prayer position, sinking into the forward leg.



**Version 1 - Hamstring Stretch:** allow weight to go to the back leg, straightening the forward leg, weight on hands, engage quadricep & relax hamstring.



**Version 2 - Hamstring Stretch:** allow weight to go to the forward leg as you gradually extend the forward leg towards the splits. Weight is on hands. If it is too intense, go back to version 1.



**Version 1 - Happy Baby:** lying on your back, pull legs up, holding on to the bottom of your feet. Allow legs/knees to sink down, relaxing hips.



**Version 2 - Half Happy Baby:** lying on your back, pull one leg up, holding on to the bottom of your foot. Allow leg/knee to sink down, relaxing hip. Switch sides.



**Version 3 - Eye of the Needle:** lying on your back, place one ankle over the other knee. Pull the knee to your chest & hold shin with clasped hands. Relax. Switch sides.