

BIKE FIT

How to get a nice hard tail

The Glute muscles (the buttock muscles) are essential in mountain biking, they can provide a huge amount of power and stability. But if they aren't trained in the correct way then they won't be any help at all. A lot of athletes, especially cyclists, struggle to make the glute muscles fire at the right time. Recruiting different muscles is about nerve endings firing signals from the brain to the muscle.

As a cyclist your hamstrings (the ones at the back of the thigh) will be short so often it's these muscles which are recruited first. These exercises will help you get your glutes into play and enable you to unleash your hidden bum power and leave the competition behind.

1. Side Raises

Lying on your side, raise one leg all the way up to 45 degrees. Take 2 seconds to go up and 2 seconds to go down, tensing your glutes and abs. Do 3 sets of 20 on each leg.

2. Hip Raises

Lying on your back with your knees bent and your feet flat on the floor. Raise your hips until your body makes a straight line from your shoulders to your knees. Really tense your glutes together; do not use your hamstrings. Do 3 sets of 20. To increase difficulty do it with one leg in the air and swap legs.

3. Leg Kick Backs

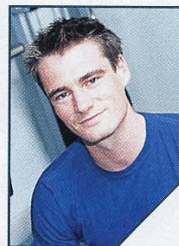
On your hands and knees keep one knee on the ground while the other leg kicks back behind you making the leg straight. Make the abs and glutes do the work. Pull your tummy in to stop your back from arching. Do 3 sets of 20 on each leg.

➔ Get your Glutes firing and enjoy the extra power says WMB's fitness guru **Andy Wadsworth**



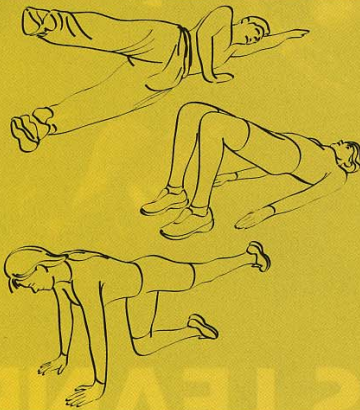
If you can get a stronger derriere you will avoid injuries caused by overusing other muscles, especially the hamstrings. A solid rear can also stop your cheeks wobbling from side to side when you pedal, this unwanted movement can cause embarrassing power loss.

Having a hard tail has many cycling advantages, but you may also find it has certain aesthetic qualities people find hard to resist.



Andy has raced the World Cup series as a privateer for two years, is a former Xterra (off-road triathlon) World Champion, runs his own personal training company,

Andy's 3 steps to a rock-hard rear



1 Side Raises
Raise your leg to 45 degrees. Make sure to take a full two seconds on the way up and the way down.

2 Hip Raises
Make a straight line from your shoulders to your hips. Really push those glutes together!

3 Leg Kick Backs
Push out the leg without letting the back arch. Make the glutes and abs do the work.