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**PART ONE: ABOUT KUMITE & KUMITE NO TACHI /KUMITE NO
KAMAE
(FIGHTING & FIGHTING STANCE / FIGHTING POSTURE)**

Kumite or free-fighting, is something that most shy away from, because of the negative connotation of the word 'fighting'; but that is just one's mind ruminating too much and thus, becoming stagnant on/with abstract thought(s). In other words, one should not be 'worried' about kumite, because by free-fighting, one can learn many imperatives; e.g., if one's techniques (waza) are effective or not. And via kumite, within a dōjō, one learns the true aspect(s) of karate or the martial arts, which is to find one's true self or Jiko (in Buddhism), which means the Self (or the Self that is comprised of all being things, i.e., Universality or Interdependent Origination).

So, when one is sparring, which is done in dōjōs, one sees one's reflection in the person/deshi (disciple) or kohai (fellow or subordinate); i.e., one realizes oneself via another being. The separation breaks down or exits one's psyche or subconscious, and thus, one is in the moment or Zen. And this can only be achieved through free-fighting (sparring) against other students, especially of different ranks (levels).



From the earlier portion of the class, one can take the techniques taught for the day and try to incorporate them into one's sparring. This is reinforcing everything into a oneness or "nothingness"; i.e., one does basics (stationary and mobile) in the class, including kata and fighting drills, so that it manifests itself naturally when you spar. One has the opportunity to execute these techniques when paired up with a partner (fellow student). Of course one does not try to injure or kill the other; rather, both, assist one another by sparring and finding their Original Face or True Nature, which is actualized when one is in the moment and demonstrating Zen.

Many Ronins or Shoguns were Buddhists and understood the teachings of it; suffice it to say, it translated and thus, transcended them all when they had to fight, and fight for real (to the death). They all learned and knew the value of calmness and lacking ego. They also understood adages, such as "when your opponent expands, you contract, and when your opponent contracts, you expand." The aforesaid was used in a famous Kung-Fu movie by a famous actor/martial artist; he clearly took this from Buddhism (since he earned his doctrine in Philosophy), but amended the context with the usage of the term "I" or speaking in the first person.

Moreover, they learned that one has to be in a relaxed state of mind, to see things in slow-motion. For instance, if one is tight, rigid, tense, anxious, etc., it shows in one's countenance and body language or kamae/kumite no tachi. This means the person is stiff and lacks pliability, which is not universal, because the universe is not static (nor are its sentient beings); rather, it is forever changing. And that Universality or Interconnected Interdependence is how one sees one's reflection in another.

The above mentioned, is also the reason why Knockdown fighting is a requisite for anyone who desires to be a practitioner, especially one who aspires to teach. One therefore, must compete in Full-Contact Knockdown fighting to experience (Dharma in Buddhism) the effectiveness or lack thereof of one's techniques (waza). It also is a wonderful "test" or dharma (experience) for one's spirit. Much

like a promotion test, which is a “right of passage” or a dharma in which one attains enlightenment or an awakening in some manifestation.

However, again, within a dōjō, sparring is what transpires or is allowed:

[elaborated in the first person]

When sparring, remember to breathe and to fix your breath before executing your technique(s). Meaning, before you attack, you take in air (inhaling or “fixing your breath”), which affects your timing/rhythm or meter. And exhale as you execute your technique(s). At first, one breath, one technique, but in time and development, it will be several techniques in one breath. Consequently, you will have more strength, speed, and thus, “impact” when you fight/spar. This will be in accompaniment of calmness as well, because by control your breathing, your entire body will be in more control by your own intuitiveness.

Also, having me sen, which is fixing your eyes directly in front of you, which can be into someone else’s eyes or at their mouth, nose, chin, throat, clavicle, sternum, chest, or solar-plexus. But looking any lower is ill-advised, because if you look at someone’s hips, thighs, or lower, you will inadvertently lean or pitch forward, thus, throwing you balance off by not having a good posture or alignment, and become susceptible to front knee kicks (mae hiza geri) and to be grab, manipulated as well as miss any high techniques to your head, such as kicks (geris).

Therefore, keep a good balanced kamae with your back or spine straight or in alignment, Possess a shoulder-width or slightly more (depending on technique) stance/posture and relaxed shoulders (a key to punching and impact: see About Seiken), have normal breathing, be on the balls of your feet (chūsoku) with weight distributed 50-50 and knees soft (not locked), head tilted down slightly (as you would do when in zazen: mokusō/meditation or doing nembutsu: chanting), your hands or fists in front of you with your elbows down and not outwards, but downwards near your ribs (for protection), fix gaze (me sen), fix breath, and then execute a technique(s) in as few breathes as possible with a kiai (yell that manifests) and Zanshin (continued concentration).

Furthermore, use punch combinations (ni hon tsukis or son bon tsukis) to set up (sute waza) your low, middle and high roundhouse kicks (gedan, chūdan, and jōdan mawashi geris). Remember punches set up your kicks as kicks can set up your punches, but this is more advanced, so instead concentrate on punch to kick first. Do not be in a hurry to have an “explosive array” of techniques. The masters of old used simplistic techniques and only used complicated ones on adversaries worthy of such effort or detail, which they only used in Japan when “sparring” at the/a dōjō when “sparring” was serious in nature. Even then, they did not try to hurt each other mortally, but striking to the face and groin, submission holds or joint locks, sweeps (on oak floors), grabs, take-downs, and wrestling was all consider a given in “sparring”; thankfully, eye gouging, breaks, and weapons were not used.

Nevertheless, the simple on-two or one-two-three is sufficient/adequate and from that you will develop a plethora of techniques. You will have set up ones and finishing ones. This is especially true of cultivation yourself to be a knockdown (competitive) fighter. This is why some choose to become an uchideshi (see About Uchideshi), but this is only for the serious karateka (karate practitioner). For a student, you learn via experience (Dharma), how to create your desired combination. You find out quickly if your timing or meter is off; i.e., too slow to counter or your technique is being interrupted or impeded, which is called “crushing” your opponent's technique or kamae; or if you become winded fast by not fixing your breath and being out of shape, or your hands being too low and looking down

and thus, pitching forward. You “see” (feel) how others perceive you by their chosen effective techniques. And that/this is how you grow as a person or martial artist, because you are forced to find your Original Face or True Nature. The is especially true at promotion tests, when sparring is the most significant aspect of your test.

Another imperative in kumite is your footwork (ashi no hakobi). Remember you have to use your footwork/agility, such as sliding (okuriashi) and stepping (fumiashi), to reach your target. DO NOT under ANY circumstances REACH for your target, because it puts you off balance and thus, you are completely susceptible to knee kicks (as previously mentioned), including roundhouse kicks (mawashi geris). Sometimes repeating a phrase or “concept” in your mind helps in that moment; so, when you find yourself, say for example, pitching forward, say to yourself, “pitching forward”; thus, you become aware of it, and therefore STOP doing it, by acknowledging it within you consciousness. It is akin to zazen/meditating, in which random thoughts (secretions in/of the brain) pop into your mind and instead of forcing them out, which only leads to ruminating over it and expounding the abstract thought(s), rather, you accept it as a labeled thought, or a secretion, or a synaptic neuronal firing, or as scenery, and then focus on calmness or a clear/thoughtless mind (and by thoughtless, I do not mean inconsiderate or rude, I mean without or lacking discriminatory thoughts).

Accordingly, in free-fighting, you must remember to move; i.e., use your footwork to cut the distance between you and your opponent and use punches to set up (sute waza) kicks or kicks to set up punches is key. You have to develop free-flowing combinations based on basics (kihon). This means use one punch with one kick or two punches with one kick, etc.. The simple one-two or one-two-three with the third technique being the finishing (kime waza) technique is the foundation of all other techniques and combinations. You grow from there. Remember, you sit before you crawl, you crawl before you stand, you stand before you walk, you walk before you run.



PART TWO:

CHARACTERISTIC OF KYOKUSHINKAI KAN KARATE 極真会館

(JAPANESE/OKINAWAN-BASED STYLE)

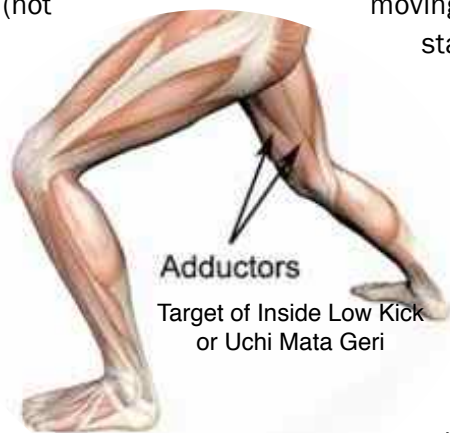
One of the most important aspects of our style (amalgamation of Kenpō, Gōjū-ryū, and Shōtōkan Karates) is that in free-fighting (kumite), we utilize gedan mawashi geri/keri (lower roundhouse kick) as a sute waza (set up) or jōdan mawashi geri as kime waza (finishing technique). We use punches to set up (sute waza) the kicks, and by doing so, this confuses the opponent and allows us to land or execute a blow, in and this case, a kick to be unhampered. This is devastating when we use this a kime waza (finishing technique) with the final technique being jōdan mawashi geri, which leads to an ippon or knockout.

Thus, the low kick can be set up or used in many ways. There is inside low kick (uchi mata geri) to different parts of your opponent’s inner thigh (above knee to below groin), as well the already mentioned above outside low kick, including inside (uchi) and outside (soto) knee kicks (gedan hiza geri). They can be the first movement and followed by punches or be the ending movements to a succession of punches. You can also double or triple up on kicks, although more than two kicks is usually excessive and leaving you open to counter too easily. Remember when you do a technique repetitively, such as a favorite one, others can or will eventually get the timing (meter) or meter of

your technique (waza) and counter it thusly. A caveat is, never become too comfortable with or dependent upon a single technique or combination. It makes you predictive (static/stagnant) and lacking formlessness or pliability/fluidity: remember, be like water (Buddhism).

You can also include a kosa (switch or switching of feet/kamae/tachi) before or after you start a combination; i.e., one-two punch, switch low kick. This can confuse your opponent as well as give you more power, which is generated by the involvement of the hips, core, and feet. However, too many people have the bad habit of looking down when the switch feet as well as jumping upwards or bouncing up and down when attempting this technique. Plus, many hold their breath throughout any of these wazas (techniques).

So, to kosa correctly (switch feet), you have to start at the hips. Your hips lead you into the switch as they do with punches and kicks. The hips and your core are the key to keeping your kamae and spirit imperturbable (not unexcitable). So, as the hips sliding against the floor or opposing foot goes in the hips finishing rotating, your moving and you will be in

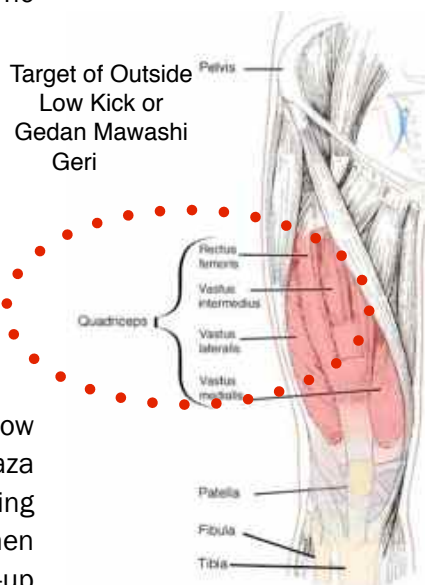


Now, the reasoning for an opponent and make mobility; even if the stronger, if you can keep effectively, then you take dictate your fight, and thus, attack the legs, whether it is the

opponent's kamae will become weak and ineffective, and thus hindered; i.e., their spirit and stance is broke having been crushed by another's technique. It throws off your opponent's timing (meter), balance (posture/kamae - state of mind), agility (footwork - ashi no hakobi), displaces their power (ineffective strength), displaces their confidence (defeats their spirit), exhausts them physically (pain sets in), and makes them think/ruminate (stagnant mind ~ Musashi), instead of being in the moment (zen - calmness). It is akin to a hugely strong and beautiful tree; once it is cut down at its core (above the roots), it timbers and falls. Know this, your opponent is the same, because they are a reflection of yourself.

Suffice it to say, this is why punches (tsuki) is the most important aspect of Karate: it is its essence; i.e., the fist or seiken is the essence of Karate (see About Seiken" Part One). And when you throw a punch, such as a jab (oi tsuki) or leading punch, you follow it with a low kick (gedan mawashi geri). So, the punch is the sute waza or set up technique and the low kick is the kime waza or finishing technique. Once you develop this combination, you can really, when necessary, throw the punch at 60%-75% power (sute waza/set-up technique) and load up on the low (or high) kick with 90%-100% power (kime waza).

the low kick is to wear down them static or lacking opponent is much larger or away or avoid or counter control of the kumite and will not be defeated. When you inner and/or outer thighs, the



Then after much dedication and practice, you will see/find other techniques manifesting or happening. They will come from your subconscious or True Nature. Some of them will be from reflection of movements, but most will just happen, because your body learns from reiteration (repeating things) and will start to make the movements more fluid and thus, natural; then via this, you will have others come out, where you can refine them, since they might be wild or somewhat uncontrolled at first. Not to mention, your angles will improve and will your speed and of course your breathing. This is how you progress and grow as a student, practitioner, and teacher.



PART THREE: COUNTERING TECHNIQUES (AWASE WAZA)

Therefore, an effective way to counter (awase) or defend low and sometimes middle roundhouse kicks is with the shin block, called sune uke (shin-block), which not only can deflect low and middle roundhouse kicks, it can also be used to throw an opponent off balance by pushing away with the blocking leg after receiving your opponent's low kick (like when catching ball, one gives a little upon receiving), and thus, allow one to counter with a technique(s). This is very hard to develop, but very effective and can lead to a devastating counter by a master or very experienced knockdown fighter.



Therefore, the most imperative attribute of sune uke is to lift one's knee high and to the outside (soto) while flexing the foot upwards (toes up, and pushing one's hips forward towards the oncoming kick); this protects the shin from the kick as well as helping in maintaining one's balance or stance (tachi/dachi) or kamae (posture) when the outside of one's legs is being targeted.

However, if one is being kicked to the inside or thigh (uchi mata) of one's leg, then one uses another version of sune uke. In this instance, one crosses one's groin with one's knee and blocks with the same part of the shin, only difference is one's body posture changes due to crossing the knee across the groin. This is where one is more off-balanced, contrastingly to the outside shin block, in which one has better balance.

Additionally, one must be aware of dropping one's hands, tilting one's head downwards, and focusing one's eyes down as they perform either of these blocks; because one will subsequently leave one's head and torso wide open due to one's body position (arms down and the pitching of one's body) and will not allow you to recover to get your hands up to block the oncoming jōdan (upper) kick. So, one must maintain excellent posture or keep one's kamae or one's tachi will be jeopardized and consequently, ineffective.

Furthermore, remember not to keep or make one's body rigid or tense when blocking. Keep relaxed, balanced, and "fix your breath" before countering. Also, DO NOT look down and watch the kick. Keep eye contact or focus eyes directly in front of you (me sen) at someone's chin, throat, or chest. Use peripheral vision when countering and fighting as much as possible. It takes time, so practice the drills (waza



- techniques) taught in class.

One also has a way of countering middle and high kicks with a kick. This is awase waza or counter-attacking technique; e.g., when someone kicks jōdan mawashi geri, one can counter with inside uchi mata gedan mawashi geri and stop/interrupt their unfinished technique.

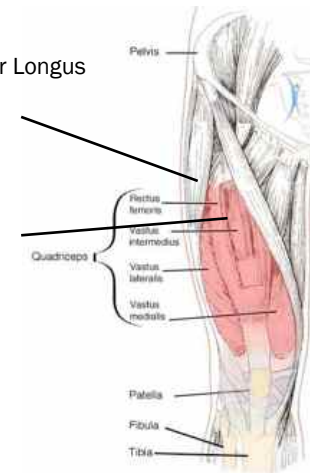
Their chūdan or jōdan mawashi geri will never land, because if executed correctly, the person will be knocked off balance and onto the ground. This also applies if someone throws an oi tsuki (lead punch), which one can counter with chūdan soto uke and steer them off balance and follow with either a kick or punch; plus, if one used gyaku (reverse) gedan barai, one will thus, open up the torso of one's opponent for a punch to their ribs, solar plexus, liver, or spleen. Instead, one would need to use oi (leading) gedan barai to open their opponent's side up, i.e., ribs, liver, or kidney.



Overall, mawashi geri is a finishing (kime waza) technique, but can also be used as a set up (sute waza) technique as well. However, the key to any kick (geri/keri) is placement of one's knee; i.e., how high it is and its angle; thus, determining what kind/type and where the kick is going to go. For any mawashi geri, one's knee needs to come up "as high as possible" to the outside of one's body. From this position, one can kick low, middle or high, and make the kick harder to determine for one's opponent, because the trajectory or placement of the knee is the same. After getting one's knee up, one has to rear up on one's ball of foot (chūsoku), to be able to completely pivot on the supporting leg, after allowing one's hips to lead or start their torque or twisting motion, in which the knee follows (meaning one's knee cap) and thus, becomes a site or crosshairs. In other words, one's knee spots the target and then once one has pivoted/rotated at the hips/pelvis as well as one's supporting foot, in which one's knee has passed the point of intended contact, as well as one's heel or kakatō faces their opponent, then one thrusts out one's leg/shin in a snapping kicking motion, delivering full power or impact.

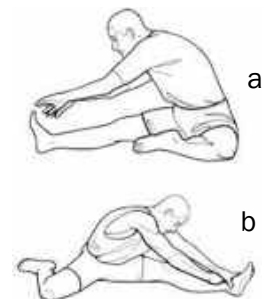
Suffice it to say, in time, one will notice or FEEL the aforesaid; i.e., after pivoting on the ball of foot and rotating the hips/pelvis in which the knee of the kicking leg (the leg that is bent) is PAST the point of contact (target), and at this point, extending the shin out for impact. Once one develops the proper technique by practicing on a pad, heavy bag, and sparring, one will feel one's shin making contact with the target before one finishes one's kick, thus, demonstrating that one is kicking through or past the target, and hence, kicking correctly. Once one finishes one's kick, one brings one's leg back to the outside and then down (naore - back to original position - yasume and/or relaxed position).

Adductor Longus



**PART FOUR:
IMPORTANCE OF STRETCHING (BENEFITS)**

For instance, there is the Hurdler's Stretch (a), in which one "sits" on the floor in a hurdling position: one leg outstretched in front of one and the other leg adjacent and bent behind one. This loosens the hip flexor muscle, which is important for contracting the quadriceps (thigh muscles)



Above and Below are stretches to help elongate the muscles in the upper leg region.

upwards or towards oneself. It also allows one to keep one's thigh close to oneself when raising one's knees; (b) seated alternating hamstring stretch: flex foot and lean forward.



The Groin Stretch is also very good; and there are many variations; this is where one sits on the floor and brings one's feet (heels) inwards towards oneself to hold with one's hands, so that one's knees face outwards, while having someone push your legs by (the knees) downwards into the floor as you lean forward trying to touch your face to your feet; if no assistance, then one can do it alone.

Kneeling Groin Stretch: this is wonderful for opening one's hips and pelvis and strengthening the groin muscles/region. Kneel down and open your legs as wide as possible (but comfortable), place your arms in front of you for support, keep back/spine straight, and push your hips downwards towards the floor and your buttocks backwards, away from you. Do not forget to breathe and as you exhale, you can push yourself more.



Hip Flexor Stretch will elongate your quadriceps' muscles as well as your hamstring. Place your hands to your sides for balance and support and put one leg back and keep one leg bent as you press downwards at your hips back straight. And if you lean erect, you emphasize the hip longus, rectus femoris, and



into the floor while keeping your back more or try to be more flexor, the sartorius, adductor gracillis muscles.

Pelvic Hip Stretch; this region. You



open up your pelvis/hip sit down on the floor and pick up your leg, while the other is on the floor and put one arm around the outside of your leg with the knee going into the crook of your elbow (where it bends towards yourself), and the other hand by your ankle; you then pull your leg towards yourself while exhaling. The more you pull your leg towards yourself and the closer your knee comes to your chest, the better the stretch.

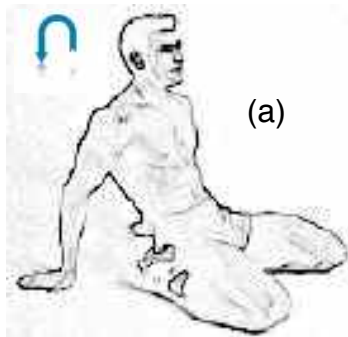
Another one is the **Lying Frog;** You lie down on your back and bring your feet together, so that your soles are touching one another. You bring your heels upwards towards your groin area and let your legs open up outwards to your sides. You breathe and can use your hands to press down on your outstretched legs around the knee area.



Seated Hamstring Stretch; this can be assisted or done alone. You can also do this standing in which you bend over and stretch towards the floor. Put legs out in front of yourself, and keep your back straight as you lean forward from the waist. You can grab your feet and pull yourself forward and you can bend or flex your flex as well, which will stretch your calf muscles and it supporting ones, such as the plantaris too.



Quadriceps Stretch: (a) You can kneel down onto the floor and then lean backwards as much as possible without pain, and try to have your back



(a)

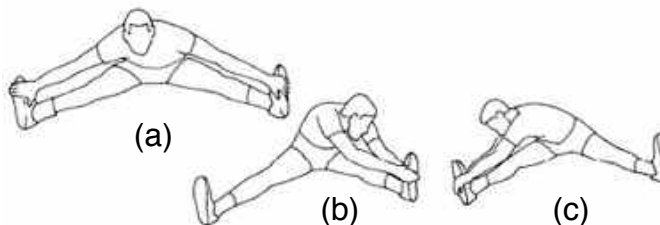
touch the floor. This stretches the entire quadriceps, but us very hard; (b) Standing hamstring stretch. Stand upright, hold and pull your leg upwards (heel touching butt); you can use a wall for support with your opposing or free hand.



(b)

Front and side hamstring, plantaris, achilles and soleus stretching. (a) Center Stretch: try to touch your chest to the floor and do not hold your breath. Can put

hands in front of yourself or to the side, holding your feet. You can also flex your feet to improve the stretch. (b) & (c) are same principles not to rotate or let floor; i.e., they lye instead of toes upwards, keeping alignment.



(a)

(b)

(c)

alternating and the apply. Remember your feet drop to the flat onto the floor pointed to the sky or the pelvis in proper

Lower Back

Stretch: sit on the floor with both legs outstretched in front of you and place one leg over the other one with your knee facing upwards and place your opposing elbow against it. Place your free or other hand onto the floor besides you and twist



you back as you exhale. This aligns your spine and stretches all the supporting muscles within the back.



Do one side, then do the other side and repeat. You can also do this lying down on the ground: same principles apply.

Standing Soleus Stretch: stand upright and place one foot behind you and the other against a wall, so that your ball of foot is touching the wall and your heel is touching the floor; you then put weight forward onto that foot and calf muscle. Another variation is to place one foot behind you, but straight behind you, i.e., do not allow the foot to rotate or face outwards, such as in a 45 degree angle, rather, it needs to be in line with toes pointed forward and heel backwards. Place the other foot in front of you flat onto the ground (assuming a lunge-type position) and then dig your back foot into the ground heel first.



Frog Stretch: you squat down to the floor and place your hands in front of you with your elbows touching or placed on the inside of your knees. You then slowly push your elbows backwards, pushing your knees and thus, legs outwards, opening up your entire pelvic region. Your heels well be off the ground and your weight will be on the balls of your feet. Do not lean or pitch forward too much or you will lose your balance.

Lying Wall Stretch: you lye on the floor and put your legs up onto the wall and try to spread your legs as far apart as possible (without pain). You rest your arms either to the side or put your hands onto your chest or stomach and relax and breathe. Remember to keep your back straight while lying down by pushing or tilting your pelvis forwards (as in zazen) and this will arch your back into

alignment as well as assist you in breathing. This makes the blood flow back downwards towards your torso and head and thus, relaxes tendons.

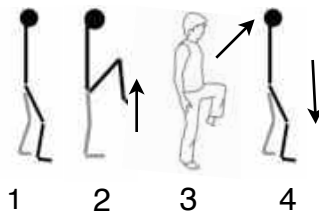
the entire groin region of muscles and

Alternating Squat Hamstring one side while your opposing leg upwards to the sky. This is great soleus too. Try to keep the outwards) flat onto the ground, (calf) muscle of that leg. And with the other extending leg, the more that the foot is pointing upwards as you balance that leg on its heel, then that soleus muscle will be stressed as well.



Stretch: this is where you squat to is outwards with the toes facing for the hamstring as well as the supporting foot (the one that is not because this will emphasize the soleus

Standing Rotating Groin and Hip/Pelvis Stretch: you stand upright and pick one leg up, parallel to navel level, while supporting yourself on your opposing leg, and then rotate it outwards away from your body. Once you extend it to its fullest (to the outside), you then let it come down slowly back to its original position, then do the other leg, and keep switching. It is like making circles or "Cs" starting from the inside and going out. You should keep your hands up around the chest or jaw level, which helps you balance yourself. Exhale as you extend the leg outwards.



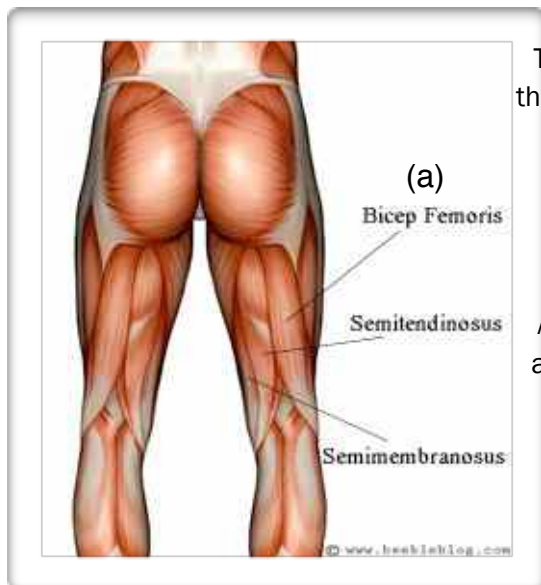
Upright Stretch: you lye down onto your stomach, place your hands in to your sides (nipple level) and raise/lift with your arms while keeping your lower torso onto the ground. You stretch you head and neck upwards, which elongates your spine and lengthens all your back muscles. You then curl yourself back into a kneeling prone position and repeat, exhaling out as you push or reach your torso upwards to the sky.



Lying Back Stretch: you lye down and bring your legs to your chest with your knees under your chin and wrap your arms around them, pulling them towards yourself.

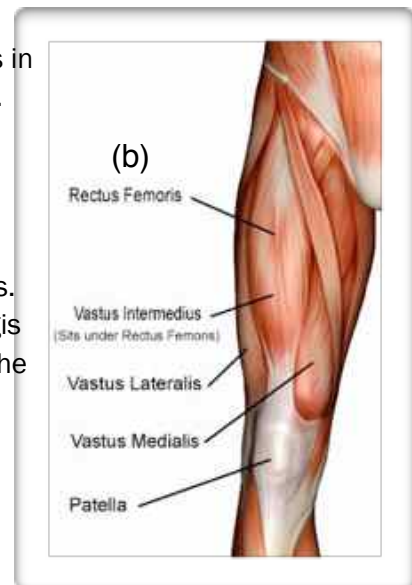


~ OSU!



These illustrations depict the muscles in the front and the back of the upper leg.

Especially the **Bicep Femoris** [a] (Hamstring), **Rectus Femoris** [b] (Quadriceps), and Vaslus Intermedius. Also, noteworthy are the adductor longis and the gracillis: both located within the inner thigh (groin).



リベラ 道場

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