

How to strengthen your knees

If you think how many pedals revolutions you do in a ride, then think about the strain that gets put through your knees. However, compared to other exercises such as rowing and skiing, your knees are safer turning the pedals of a bike due to the less amount of impact.

It's the muscles and tendons attached to the knee joint which take the strain away from the joint. If these muscles get tired and muscle in-balances occur then pain in the knees will get the better of you. So to keep the muscles surrounding the knee strong take some time to do the following exercises twice a week.

1. Static squat:

You could do these every day while brushing your teeth. Simply sit in a squat position against the wall. Make sure your thighs are parallel to the ground and your feet are far enough in front of you so your knees don't go further forward than your ankle, keep your back flat against the wall and try to focus on putting your weight through your heels. Hold for 10 seconds the first time and build up by 5 seconds after that.

2. One leg squat:

Keep your stomach muscle tight and focus on pushing your weight through your heel to make it tougher on the quadriceps muscles. Try to do 3x10 and build to 3x20 on each leg when you feel comfortable.

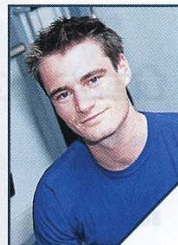
3. Leg extension:

Sitting down, straighten one leg at the time out in front of you and hold for between 15 seconds to one minute. Turn your foot slightly outwards to make the focus more on

➔ Every rider knows knees are super important so here's how **Andy Wadsworth** strengthens them



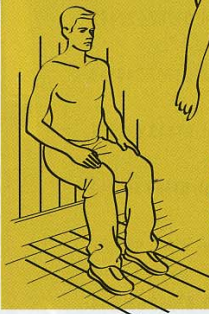
Pro XC racers rely on top quality knee strength



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

Andy's 3 steps to stronger knees

1 Static squat
Easy to do your reps anywhere there's a wall



2 One leg squat
Push down through your heel for stronger quads

3 Leg extension
This is a great exercise for working the muscles inside of your thighs



the medialis – that's the muscle on the inside of the thigh. This muscle plays a major role in the tracking of the knee when you're riding.

Just riding your bike will make all of these muscles stronger. But by doing these three exercises you will avoid disappointing knee pain due to muscle in-balance and injuries. You'll also be able to ride for longer and harder leaving everyone and their achy knees in your wake.