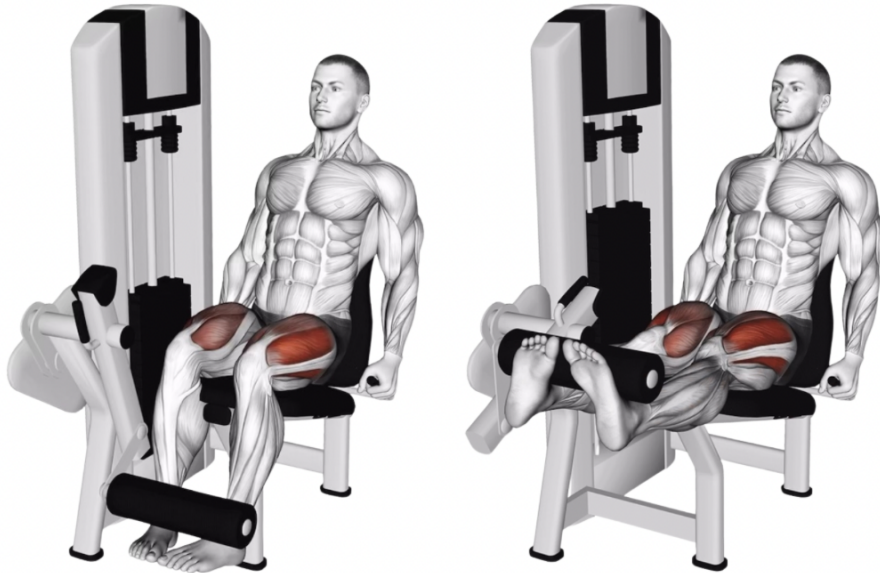


## HOW TO PERFORM A LEG EXTENSION

### **MUSCLES WORKED**

QUADRICEPS



Adjust the machine so that you can sit with your back flat against the support and your knees bent at 90 degrees.

The leg pad should be in front of the top of your ankles, feet facing forward.

Grip the bars on either side of the seat.

Use your quads to extend your legs up until they are fully straight.

## COACHING QUEUES

**Slow and controlled.** The big mistake people make with this exercise is bouncing/swinging the leg bar up, using momentum, and letting it drop back down. Instead, you want to lift the bar up and bring it down in a slow and controlled manner. Slow and controlled is the path to building muscle.

**Lift the bar.** As you raise the leg bar, you're not lifting your bum and hips up. You're not rocking back and forth; only your legs are moving, not the upper half of your body. Bum stays in contact with the seat's base pad; back stays in contact with the seat's back pad. Lean back a little. Grip the handles to keep your bum down.

Steadily bring the bar up until you reach full knee extension/peak contraction. Pause for a second during this top hold. Squeeze. Feel and relish the burn.

**Lower the bar.** Much of building muscle happens during the eccentric (lowering) phase of a lift, so lower the bar in the same slow and controlled manner that you lifted it — its descent should take a full one to two seconds.

Rather than slamming back down, the weight should just gently touch the weight stack as it returns. Once you hear it lightly clang, lift the bar up again and do another rep.

**Toe position makes little difference.** Keeping your toes straight ahead versus angling them a little inwards or outwards can create small differences in which parts of the quads get worked. But unless you're an elite bodybuilder, this isn't something you need to worry about. Keeping your toes straight or tilted slightly in is fine. Do whatever feels most comfortable for you, as this will help you produce maximum force.

**Go for full range of motion.** Go all the way up and all the way down with each rep. If you can only lift the leg bar halfway up, the weight is too heavy.

**Go hard.** Don't just mindlessly crank out leg extensions, tacking them on to the end of your workout without giving them much effort. Just going through the motions won't build muscle. You should be doing sets that bring you within one to two reps of failure.