

5.4 – Spring Ankle 3

In order to transition into this position, the athlete will once again go up onto a single leg heel raise with dorsiflexion. This time there will be a slight bend in their knee. We refer to this slight bend in the knee as the mid-thigh position of this exercise. This is again a prime example showing that it is key to train in different positions throughout the entire chain. We rarely move with locked knees but need to ensure that the joint is structurally strong in the finished position.

We begin by once again guiding the athlete into a dorsiflexed position. You may now see a deviation in the athlete's ability to gain range of motion in comparison to the first position. This change in range of motion in the ankle is due to knee position. Many times, an athlete will struggle with gaining range of motion in a deeper position. As the athlete stands taller less mechanical stress will be produced in the knee and ankle. What this means is that the athlete will likely gain range of motion in the ankle as they stand taller.

Once again, make sure that the athlete is trying to actively pull their heel as deep as possible into end range and not simply just relaxing. From this position the athlete will complete the same steps that can be found in Spring Ankle One. The focal change of this exercise is the thigh position. We have addressed a deep position, we are now addressing that mid-thigh position. This variance in thigh positions helps to ensure that they are addressing the entire chain. These thigh positioning also have correlations in performance qualities such as take-off, acceleration and top end speed. How to identify and train these correlations will be addressed in another upcoming manual? As with every Spring Ankle position always have the athlete locate and lock in on the perfect position with both feet on the ground. Once the feet, ankles, knees and torso are in a prime position, the athlete can gently lift the opposing foot and begin the single leg exercise.

Along with this section, you will find video showing an athlete performing Spring Ankle 3.