



## LIFT AND DORSIFLEXION

Making sure we have a strong lower body can be the difference in an injury and living a healthy life. Having a strong lower body allows us to get low and lift up objects with proper technique. It helps us to protect our back from serious injuries. All sounds pretty logical, right? Something that may not be quite as straightforward however, is how ankle mobility could be the difference between saving our back from an injury or being sidelined by it.

### ANKLE BONE'S CONNECTED TO THE...

Having the right posture helps us proactively prevent injuries, but to ensure we start on the right foot we have to look at the ankle. Ankle mobility plays a critical role in our ability to get into a proper squat position, which affects how safely and effectively we lift. If the ankle can't move through its full range (especially into dorsiflexion) then the rest of the body has to compensate. This usually means rounding the back, shifting weight forward, or compromising form to get the job done.

### TESTING. TESTING...

Is your body ready to squat? One great way to find out is the **Ankle-to-Wall** test. It's a simple, no-equipment screen you can do anywhere. Watch [this quick how-to video](#) or follow the instructions below to walk through the test step by step.



BY STEVE LIMBRUNNER, ATC

Dorsiflexion

Plantar flexion



### PREVENTION FAVORS THE PREPARED

Improving dorsiflexion is a smart first step toward better squat mechanics, but it's not the only step. Strong, flexible ankles provide a stable foundation for the entire lower body, reducing compensation patterns and improving lifting efficiency.

By starting at the ankles and working up the kinetic chain, we can correct movement limitations that impact posture, performance, and injury risk. 



Check out [this additional resource](#) to improve flexibility and mobility in your ankles.

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