



Stair Training Rehab Plan (Weeks 0–6)

Physical Therapy Simplified

Doctor of Physical Therapy–Designed Home Program to Help You Go Up and Down Stairs Without Pain

This progressive rehab plan helps you reduce pain, build strength, and improve knee control to confidently use stairs again. Follow the exercises phase by phase, and only move forward when pain is well managed.



Phase 1: Weeks 0–3 — Non-Weightbearing Strength & Motion

Perform these exercises 1–2 times per day. Focus on form and avoid pushing through pain.

Glute Bridge with Resistance Band

Purpose: Strengthen glutes and hamstrings without loading the knee

Benefits: Improves hip extension and supports better knee alignment

How to Do It:

- Lie on your back with knees bent and a resistance band above your knees
 - Squeeze glutes and lift hips, forming a straight line from knees to shoulders
 - Hold 2 seconds, then lower slowly
- Pro Tip:** Lightly press your knees outward into the band to activate hip stabilizers
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Short Arc Quad (SAQ)

Purpose: Activate quadriceps with minimal joint movement

Benefits: Builds knee strength without overloading the cartilage

How to Do It:

- Place a foam roll or rolled towel under your knee while lying on your back
 - Straighten your leg by lifting your heel while keeping the knee on the roll
 - Pause briefly, then lower with control
- Pro Tip:** Focus on tightening the quad before beginning each rep
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Long Arc Quad (LAQ)

Purpose: Strengthen quadriceps in a supported seated position

Benefits: Builds control needed for walking and stair climbing

How to Do It:

- Sit upright with your thigh supported
- Slowly extend your knee fully, then lower it back down
- Avoid locking the knee at the top

Pro Tip: Add a light ankle weight once reps feel easy

Heel Slides

Purpose: Restore knee flexion range of motion

Benefits: Lubricates the joint and promotes smooth motion

How to Do It:

- Lie on your back and loop a strap around your foot
- Gently slide your heel toward your buttocks
- Hold 5–10 seconds, then return to starting position

Pro Tip: Use a smooth surface or socks for easier sliding

Straight Leg Raise (SLR)

Purpose: Strengthen quads without bending the knee

Benefits: Helps maintain strength during early pain-limited stages

How to Do It:

- Lie flat with one leg bent and the other straight
- Tighten your quad and lift the straight leg to the height of the bent one
- Lower slowly without dropping

Pro Tip: Keep toes pointing toward the ceiling to avoid compensations

✅ Phase 2: Weeks 3–6 — Weightbearing Strength & Stair Control

Perform these exercises 4–5 times per week. Use a mirror or support as needed.

Prone Quad Stretch

Purpose: Lengthen quadriceps to reduce knee stress

Benefits: Improves knee extension and relieves tension in the front of the thigh

How to Do It:

- Lie face down and loop a strap around your ankle
- Gently pull to bring your heel toward your glutes
- Hold for 20 seconds and release slowly

Pro Tip: Keep hips square and don't let your back arch

Sidesteps with Resistance Band

Purpose: Strengthen hip abductors and glutes

Benefits: Supports better knee alignment during stair use and walking

How to Do It:

- Place a resistance band above your knees
- Get into a mini squat and step sideways slowly
- Keep knees aligned and tension in the band

Pro Tip: Take small, controlled steps to keep glutes engaged

Step-Ups (Forward)

Purpose: Build quad and glute strength in a stair-specific movement

Benefits: Improves control during upward motion on stairs

How to Do It:

- Step up with your affected leg onto a low platform
- Bring the other leg up, then step back down
- Use a counter or rail for support if needed

Pro Tip: Focus on controlled lowering to avoid knee buckling

Lateral Step-Overs

Purpose: Improve side-to-side control and stair coordination

Benefits: Enhances joint control for real-life stair navigation

How to Do It:

- Stand beside a low step and step up sideways

- Bring the trailing leg up, then step down to the opposite side
 - Return in reverse
- Pro Tip:** Avoid letting the knee collapse inward during the step
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Goblet Squats

Purpose: Build compound strength in quads, glutes, and core

Benefits: Enhances functional strength and improves squat mechanics

How to Do It:

- Hold a dumbbell close to your chest
 - Squat down slowly, keeping knees aligned and chest upright
 - Press through heels to return to standing
- Pro Tip:** Place a small box behind you as a depth target

Color	Number of people
Green	5
Red	3
Blue	7



Fruit	Number of People
Apple	5
Banana	3
Orange	7

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