



Walkover Tips and Drills

Back Flexibility

For walkovers back flexibility is really important here are a few tips on increasing your back flexibility:

- Toes to head - We do this in contemporary warm up. You can also do it with your legs/shins on the wall and try to get your head as far back as possible, rather than your toes to your head. This way it stretches mainly your lower back, rather than your thighs.
- If there is someone to help, you can lay on your tummy and they can lift your arms and walk backwards as far as you can go. Put your head back and hold it and repeat.
- Lay on your back with your head against the wall and push up into a bridge. Then try and push over your shoulders as much as possible and try to get your armpits against the wall. I would say this is more of a shoulder stretch but it does stretch your back too. Plus, with a lot of back flexibility, you need flexible shoulders.
- When you are in a bridge, you can sit your bottom down as if you were trying to sit on a chair, that helps give an extra stretch in your back.
- When you're doing your bridge against the wall you can try to walk your feet into your hands as close as possible.

Always remember to stretch out the other way afterwards! Stand up and slowly roll down and up to curve your back the opposite way.

Forward Walkovers

Firstly you need to be able to do a handstand into a bridge and stand up, preferably all in one motion. When doing this

- Look at your hands for as long as possible
- Arch your back and keep your shoulders over your hands
- When you land in bridge, you need flat feet on the floor
- When standing up, your arms need to stay by your ears and your head is the last thing to come up.
- The key is to arch your back as much as possible. The closer your feet land in your bridge to your hands, the better. If you have quite a wide bridge then it will be hard to stand up.

Your legs need to split so that one-foot lands before the other. To help you do this:



- Practise going over into a bridge and landing on one foot
- Try to get a nice split in the middle
- If there is someone to help, they can put their hand at the top of your back and push to help you stand up.
- As soon as your first foot hits the floor, you need to start pushing it straight so you stand up nice and tall, otherwise you will go on to your knee.
- If you have some mats available (or anything else you can find!) you can stack them up to a small height and do your walkover off of them. So, you stand on the mats, your hands go on the edge and your feet land on the floor. It gives you a little bit of momentum to go forward and helps you recover.

Remember: hands ALWAYS by your ears, keep them really strong. Head comes up last.

Backwards Walkover

For a back walkover, you need to be able to drop back into a bridge and kick over.

Dropping Back in to Bridge

- Stand with your back against the wall and walk your hands down the wall in to a bridge on the floor. The better you get at this, try to do less walks down to the floor. Do it 5 hand movements, then 4, then 3, then 2 etc.
- Arms need to be by your ears! If your arms stay next to your head, then your hands will hit the floor before your head does!
- Feet hip width apart, head back first with your arms, push hips forward and arch your back as much as possible. You need to be looking at the floor as you go back so you can see where it is.
- You can also try dropping into a bridge onto your sofa and gradually make the height lower and lower until you're doing it onto the floor.

Kicking Over From Bridge

- In a bridge, lift one leg off the floor bent and then jump and swap to the other leg so you're 'running' in bridge. Keep your shoulders over your wrists, this should be a straight line up.
- You can start by putting your feet on the sofa, hands on the floor, and kicking over from a height. Again, gradually lower the height until you're doing it on the floor.
- When in your bridge, stretch out the leg that you're kicking over with, make sure it goes over straight and you're trying to get a nice split in the middle. Don't join your legs in the air.



- The closer your feet are to your hands, the better. If your bridge is wide then it's harder to get over your shoulders and kick over.

Backwards Walkover

- The foot that you kick out of your bridge with is the one that needs to point forward before your walkover.
- Stand up straight, one leg forward, arms by your ears.
- Everything from before still applies; head back, hips forwards, look at the floor. As soon as your hands hit the floor you want to kick over from your bridge.
- When dropping back, you need to arch as much as possible so your hands are close to your feet to make kicking over easier.
- At first, you might need to practise just dropping to bridge with one foot pointed as that can be quite scary and it feels a bit weird.
- Try and split your legs as much as possible in the middle
- When you can do them consistently and they're fluid, you can try starting with your leg lifted off the floor before doing your walkover.