



Orthopaedic Physical (Rehab) Assessment Algorithm Tick Sheet

SCAN

POSTURE

Topline	
Limb offloading	
Balance on displacement	
Placing reflex	
Muscle tone throughout	

GAIT

Walk	
Trot	
Turns	
3-leg Stands	

PELVIS

Level cranial-caudal	
Level dorso-ventral	
Tender piriformis	
Tender dorsal SIJ	

LUMBAR

Tender D-V pressures	
Tender S-S pressures	
Muscle tone	

THORACIC

Tender D-V pressures	
Tender S-S pressures	
Muscle tone	

RIBS

Tender at the 'angles'	
Ribs 1	

CERVICAL

Palpation C1 - 7	
Side glides C2 - 7	
C1 position	
Muscle tone brachiocephalicus	
Muscle tone suboccipitals	

TMJ

Muscle tone masseters	
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HIPS

Strong palpation pectineus	
Deep palpation deep gluteal	
Full flexion	
Full extension	

STIFLE

Parapatellar tendon swelling	
Postero-medial jt line sulcus	
Medial Buttress	
Patellar laxity	
Full flexion	
Full extension	

TARSUS

Posterior joint line swelling	
Calcaneal tendon thickening	
Hyperextension test	
Full flexion	
Full extension	

REAR DIGITS

Feel for joint thickenings	
Full flexion	
Full extension	
Look for cuts / abraisions / etc	

SHOULDER

Full flexion	
Full extension - with scapula	
Full extension - pure GH	
Abduction	
Palpate Biceps	
Palpate Supraspinatus	
Palpate Teres Major	
Palpate medial joint line	

ELBOW

Full flexion	
Full extension	
Palpate deep in elbow crease	
Palpate medial joint line	
Palpate lateral joint line	

CARPUS

Full flexion	
Full extension	
Palpate tendons / ligaments	

FORE DIGITS

Feel for joint thickenings	
Full flexion	
Full extension	
Look for cuts / abraisions / etc	



SPECIFIC JOINT EVALUATION

Shoulder

Palpate boney margins scapula	
Palpate spine of scapula	
Palpate supraglenoid tubercle	
Palpate humerus - firmly	
Palpate the joint line	
Palpate subscapularis	
Palpate biceps tendons	
Palpate supraspinatus	
Palpate infraspinatus / T. minor	
Palpate long head of triceps	
Palpate teres major / lats	
Palpate prescapular lymph node	
Flexion end feel	
Extension end feel	
Abduction end feel	
Internal rotation end feel	
External rotation end feel	
Goniometry if needed	
Stretch subscapularis	
Stretch biceps	
Stretch supraspinatus	
Stretch T. Maj / Lat Dorsi	
Stretch long head of triceps	
? Stretch infraspinatus	
? Stretch brachiocephalicus	
Cranio-caudal joint glides	
Medio-lateral joint glides	
Joint Distractions	
Joint Compression (neutral)	
Joint compression in FLEXION	
Scapular glides	

Elbow

Palpate epicondyles	
Palpate olecranon	
Palpate radial head	
Palpate coronoid process	
Palpate anconeal process	
Palpate the joint line	
Palpate the MCL	
Palpate the LCL	
Palpate distal biceps / brachialis	
Palpate triceps tendon	
Palpate carpal/digit extensor muscles	
Palpate carpal/digit flexor muscles	
Flexion end feel	
Extension end feel	
Supination end feel	
Pronation end feel	
Goniometry if needed	
Stretch biceps	
Stretch brachialis	
Stretch triceps - med. lat. accessory	
Stretch long head of triceps	
Stretch carpal extensors	
Stretch carpal flexors	
Glide - olecranon wobbles	
Medial & lateral glides	
Radial head glides	
Joint distraction at 90 degrees	
Joint Compression	
MCL stress test	
LCL stress test	
Anconeal compression test	
Coronoid process compression test	

CARPUS & DIGITS

Palpate the styloid processes	
Palpate the distal radius / ulna	
Palpate carpals	
Palpate metatarsals	
Palpate the flexor tendons	
Palpate the extensor tendons	
Flexion end feel	
Extension end feel	
Medial deviation end feel	
Lateral deviation end feel	
MCL / LCL stress tests	
Palpate muscle of manus	

Goniometry as desired	
Glide the distal radio-ulnar joint	
Wobble accessory carpal bone	
Glide radial carpal on R-U bones	
Glide ulnar carpal on R-U bones	
Glide radial carpal on ulnar carpal	
Glide prox & distal carpal rows	
Glide carpo-metacarpal joints	
Traction carpus	
Glide intermetacarpals	
Glides MCP & IP jts + MCL/LCL tests	
Flex, Ext, traction of digits	
Palpate sesamoids	

Hips

Palpate the greater trochanter	
Palpate the deep gluteal	
Palpate pectineus	
Palpate iliopsoas	
Palpate sartorius / rec.femoris	
Palpate vastus lateralis	
Palpate tensor fascia lata	
Palpate bic fem, semi-tend/memb	
Palpate gracilis	
Palpate vastus medialis	
Palpate inguinal lymph nodes	
Flexion end feel	
Extension end feel	
Internal rotation end feel	
External rotation end feel	
Abduction end feel	
Block pelvis + pure hip flexion	
Block pelvis + pure hip ext.	
Goniometry as desired	
Stretch iliopsoas	
Stretch sartorius / Rec.Fem	
Stretch hamstrings	
Stretch gracilis	
Stretch adductors/pectineus	
Lateral distraction joint glide	
Long leg traction glide	
Joint scouring (diff. ranges)	
Joint compression (diff ranges)	
Side to side displacements	
Thumb test + hip extn rotn	
Barlow, Barden + Ortolani	

Stifle

Palpate the patella	
Palpate the trochlear ridges	
Palpate the patellar tendon	
Palpate the fabellae	
Palpate the med/lat epicondyles	
Palpate the distal femur	
Palpate the proximal tibia	
Palpate the med/lat tibial condyles	
Palpate the tibial tuberosity & crest	
Palpate the fibular head & neck	
Palpate the joint line	
Palpate-parapatellar region	
Palpate-posteromedial jt line sulcus	
Palpate for a medial buttress	
Palpate MCL & LCL	
Palpate long dig. Flex. Tendon	
Palpate the popliteal lymph nodes	
Palpate the distal quads & hams	
Palpate the distal TFL & adductors	
Palpate gastrocs	
Palpate cranial tibial	
Palpate peronei	
Flexion end feel	
Extension end feel	
Rotational end feel	
Goniometry as desired	
Patellar glides med/lat	
Cranial-Caudal glide	
Medial-lateral glide / MCL&LCL tests	
Rotational glides	
Superior tib-fib glide	
Joint Compress - diff ranges	
Joint distraction	
Patellar stability test	
Cranial Drawer	
Tibial Compression	
Meniscal Derangement tests	

TARSUS & PES

Palpate med & lat malleoli	
Palpate calcaneal process	
Palpate talus & central tarsal	
Palpate tarsal bones 1 - 4	
Palpate cr. & ca. joint line	
Palpate MCL & LCL	
Palpate cranial tendons	
Palpate calcaneal tendon-all	
Palpate DDFT & peronei tendons	
Flexion end feel	
Extension end feel	
Medial/Lateral deviation endfeels	
MCL & LCL stress tests	
Goniometry if desired	
Palpate muscles of the pes	

Stretch gastrocs and SDFT	
Glide distal tib-fib joint	
Wobble calcaneous & glide central tarsal	
Caudal glide of talus with flexion	
Distraction at 90 degrees	
Distraction along length or MTs	
Joint compressions	
Hyperextension test in standing	
Digit flex, ext & glides & stress tests	
Palpate sesamoids	

BASIC AXIAL SKELETON ASSESSMENT

TMJ

Palpate the TMJ	
Palpate masseters	
Palpate temporalis & frontalis	
Notice tartar & plaque build up	
Palpate mandibular lymph nodes	
Lateral deviation glides	
Lateral PULL glides	
Rostral glides	

Cervical Spine

Palpate the wings of the atlas	
Palpate the nuchal ligament	
Palpate adjacent muscle tone	
Palpate C1 - C7 TvPs for pain	
Assess C1 side bend position	
Assess C1 rotation position	
Assess OA joint flex/ext	
Assess AA joint rotation	
Assess side glides C2 - C7	

Thoracic Spine

Palpate T1 - T13 SpP for pain	
Palpate epaxial muscle tone	
Palpate multifidus muscle tone	
Bilateral D-V Pressures T1-T9	
Bilateral D-V Pressures T10-13	
Unilateral D-V Pressures T1-T9	
Unilateral D-V Pressures T10-13	
Sidebend/Rotations T1-T13	
Palpate rib 1 for position & pain	
Palpate ribs 2 - 13 for pain	
Glide ribs 2 - 13 ventrally	
Glide ribs 2 - 13 dorsally	
Palpate hypaxials	
Palpate the intercostals	
Palpate the sternum & xiphoid	
Assess 3-leg stands	

Lumbar Spine

Palpate L1 - L7 SpP for pain	
Palpate epaxial muscle tone	
Palpate multifidus muscle tone	
Palpate quadratus lumborum tone	
Palpate iliopsoas for tone & pain	
Bilateral D-V Pressures L1-7	
Unilateral D-V Pressures L1-7	
Sidebend/Rotation glides L1-7	
Isolated flexion glides L1- L7/S1	
Assess 3-Leg Stands	

Pelvis / Sacroiliac Joint

Palpate the body of the ilia/ischia	
Palpate the sacrum	
Palpate/strum piriformis	
Palpate/strum sacrotuberous lig	
Palpate the dorsal SIJ region	
Assess for asymmetry caud-cr	
Assess for asymmetry rotational	
Assess for passive mobility	
Assess 3-leg stands	
Thigh thrust technique	
SIJ traction technique	
Palpate coccygeal vertebrae	
Assess Cxy vertebra side bends	

Objective Measurement Tools

Limb (muscle bulk) circumference	
Joint circumference	
Tendon width (i.e. Achilles)	
Lameness scale/grade	
Pain score	
Goniometric ranges	
Timed tests (standing, moving,...)	
Owner info on functional abilities:	
i.e. walking distance/time	
i.e. stairs, bed, sleep, etc	
Tenderness on palpation scoring	
Weight bearing measurements	
Gait analysis equipment	
Other...	