Hamstring muscles

The word *ham* originally referred to the fat and muscle behind the knee. *String* refers to tendons, and thus, the hamstrings are the string-like tendons felt on either side of the back of the knee.
THE ADDUCTOR MAGNUS

Adductor magnus

Adductor part: inferior ramus of pubis, ramus of ischium
Hamstrings part: ischial tuberosity

Adductor part: gluteal tuberosity, linea aspera, medial supracondylar line
Hamstrings part: adductor tubercle of femur

Adductor part: obturator nerve (L2, L3, L4), branches of posterior division
Hamstrings part: tibial part of sciatic nerve (L4)
Adducts thigh
Adductor part: flexes thigh
Hamstrings part: extends thigh
THE BICEPS FEMORIS MUSCLE

**Long head**: ischial tuberosity
**Short head**: linea aspera and lateral supracondylar line of femur
Lateral side of head of fibula; tendon is split at this site by fibular collateral ligament of knee
**Long head**: tibial division of sciatic nerve (L5, S1, S2)
**Short head**: common peroneal division of sciatic nerve (L5, S1, S2)
**Flexes** leg and rotates it laterally when knee is flexed; extends thigh (e.g., when starting to walk)
THE SEMITENDINOSUS MUSCLE

Ischial tuberosity

Medial surface of superior part of tibia

Tibial division of sciatic nerve (L5, S1, S2)

Extend thigh; flex leg and rotate it medially when knee is flexed; when thigh and leg are flexed, these muscles can extend trunk
THE SEMIMEMBRANOSUS MUSCLE

Ischial tuberosity

Posterior part of medial condyle of tibia; reflected attachment forms oblique popliteal ligament (to lateral femoral condyle)

Tibial division of sciatic nerve part of tibia (L5, S1, S2)

Extend thigh; flex leg and rotate it medially when knee is flexed; when thigh and leg are flexed, these muscles can extend trunk
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Muscle</th>
<th>Attachment</th>
<th>Distal Attachment</th>
<th>Innervation</th>
<th>Main Action</th>
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| Adductor magnus        | Adductor part: inferior ramus of pubis, ramus of ischium                     | Adductor part: gluteal tuberosity, linea aspera, medial supracondylar line         | Adductor part: obturator nerve (L2, L3, L4), branches of posterior division                                                                 | Adductor part: flexes thigh  
Hamstrings part: extends thigh                                                                                                                                    |
|                        | Hamstrings part: ischial tuberosity                                          | Hamstrings part: adductor tubercle of femur                                         | Hamstrings part: tibial part of sciatic nerve (L4) Adducts thigh                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                           |
|                        |                                                                             |                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Semi tendinosus         | Ischial tuberosity                                                          | Medial surface of superior part of tibia                                             | Tibial division of sciatic nerve part of tibia (L5, S1, S2)                                                                                     | Extend thigh; flex leg and rotate it medially when knee is flexed;                                                                                                         |
| Semi membranosus        | Ischial tuberosity                                                          | Posterior part of medial condyle of tibia; reflected attachment forms oblique popliteal ligament (to lateral femoral condyle) |                                                                                                                                                     | when thigh and leg are flexed, these muscles can extend trunk                                                                                                               |
| Biceps femoris         | Long head: ischial tuberosity Short head: linea aspera and lateral supracondylar line of femur | Lateral side of head of fibula; tendon is split at this site by fibular collateral ligament of knee | Long head: tibial division of sciatic nerve (L5, S1, S2)  
Short head: common fibular division of sciatic nerve (L5, S1, S2) | Flexes leg and rotates it laterally when knee is flexed; extends thigh (e.g., when starting to walk)                                                                 |
Injuries
Straining of the hamstring, also known as a pulled hamstring, is defined as an excessive stretch or tear of muscle fibers and related tissues. Usually happen in athletes. Very painful. Often result from inadequate warming up.

Use in surgery
The distal semitendinosus tendon is one of the tendons that can be used in the surgical procedure ACL reconstruction. In this procedure, a piece of it is used to replace the anterior cruciate ligament (ACL). The ACL is one of the four major ligaments in the knee.
Sciatic nerve

The **sciatic nerve** (also known as the **ischiatric nerve**) is a large **nerve** that starts in the lower back and runs through the buttock and down the **lower limb**. It is the longest and largest single nerve in the body. The sciatic supplies nearly the whole of the skin of the leg, the muscles of the back of the thigh, and those of the leg and foot.
Anatomical course
The nerve enters the lower limb by exiting the pelvis through the greater sciatic foramen, below the Piriformis muscle. It descends midway in the greater trochanter of the femur and the tuberosity of the ischium, and along the back of the thigh to about its lower third, where it divides into two large branches, the tibial and common peroneal nerves. In the upper part of its course, the nerve rests upon the posterior surface of the ischium, the nerve to the Quadratus femoris, the Obturator internus and Gemelli; it is accompanied by the posterior femoral cutaneous nerve and the inferior gluteal artery, and is covered by the Gluteus maximus. Lower down, it lies upon the Adductor magnus, and is crossed obliquely by the long head of the Biceps femoris.
**Branches**
The nerve gives off articular and muscular branches. The **articular branches** (*rami articulares*) arise from the upper part of the nerve and supply the hip-joint, perforating the posterior part of its capsule; they are sometimes derived from the **sacral plexus**.
The **muscular branches** (*rami musculares*) are distributed to the following muscles of the lower limb: **Biceps femoris**, **Semitendinosus**, **Semimembranosus**, and **Adductor magnus**. The nerve to the short head of the Biceps femoris comes from the common peroneal part of the sciatic, while the other muscular branches arise from the tibial portion, as may be seen in those cases where there is a high division of the sciatic nerve. The muscular branch eventually gives off the **tibial nerve** and **common peroneal nerve**, which innervates the muscles of the (lower) leg. The tibial nerve goes on to innervate all muscles of the foot except the extensor digitorum brevis (peroneal nerve).

**Pathology**
Pain caused by a compression or irritation of the sciatic nerve by a problem in the lower back is called **sciatica**. Common causes of sciatica include the following low back conditions: **spinal disc herniation**, **degenerative disc disease**, **spinal stenosis**, and **spondylolisthesis**.
Boundaries
The boundaries of the fossa are:

** superior and medial:** the *semitendinosus* muscle  
*(semimembranosus is medial to the semitendinosus.)*

** superior and lateral:** the *biceps femoris* muscle

** inferior and medial:** the medial head of the *gastrocnemius* muscle

** inferior and lateral:** the lateral head of the gastrocnemius muscle
The popliteal fossa houses:
1. popliteal artery, which is a continuation of the femoral artery
2. popliteal vein
3. tibial nerve
4. common peroneal nerve
5. Six or seven popliteal lymph nodes are embedded in the fat
6. The roof contains a portion of the small saphenous vein and posterior cutaneous nerve of the thigh.