

EXERCISE AT HOME:

14 Easy Exercises to Keep Your Strength & Balance

Falls are one of the leading causes of injury and death for Seniors. However, you don't have to fall prey to slips and falls. With exercise, you can improve your balance and your strength. Try building in these 14 exercises into your weekly routine so you can stand tall and feel more confident when walking.

Exercise 1: Single Limb Stance



Stand behind a steady, solid chair (not one with wheels), and hold on to the back of it. Lift up your right foot and balance on your left foot. Hold that position for as long as you can, then switch feet.

Exercise 4: Clock Reach



You'll need a chair for this exercise. Hold the chair with your left hand. Lift your right leg and extend your right arm so it's pointing to the number 12. (Like a clock). Next, point your arm towards the number three, and finally, point it behind you at the number 6. Bring your arm back to the number three, and then to the number 12. Look straight ahead the whole time. Repeat this exercise twice per side.

Exercise 2: Walking Heel to Toe



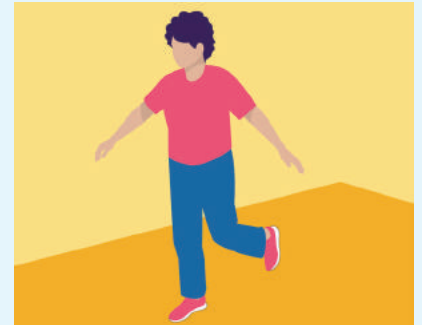
Put your right foot in front of your left foot so that the heel of your right foot touches the top of the toes of your left foot. Move your left foot in front of your right, putting your weight on your heel. Then, shift your weight to your toes. Repeat the step with your left foot. Walk this way for 20 steps.

Exercise 5: Back Leg Raises



Stand behind a chair. Slowly lift your right leg straight back – don't bend your knees or point your toes. Hold that position for one second, then gently bring your leg back down. Repeat this ten to 15 times per leg.

Exercise 3: Rock the Boat



Stand with your feet apart, so that the space between them is the same width as your hips. Press both feet into the ground firmly. Stand straight, with your head level. Transfer your weight to your right foot and slowly lift your left leg off the ground. Hold that position for as long as possible (no more than 30 seconds).

Slowly put your foot back onto the ground, then transfer your weight to that foot. Slowly lift your opposite leg. Start with this exercise five times per side. Work up to more repetitions.

Exercise 6: Single Limb Stance with Arm



Stand with your feet together and arms at your side next to a chair. Lift your left hand over your head. Then, slowly raise your left foot off the floor. Hold that position for ten seconds. Repeat the same action on the right side.

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Exercise 7: Side Leg Raise



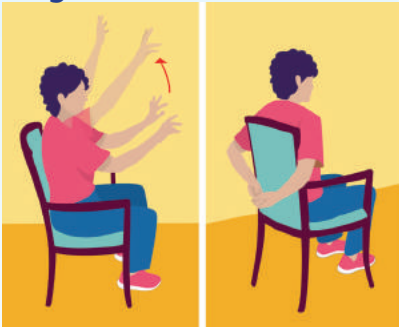
Stand behind a chair with your feet slightly apart. Slowly lift your right leg to the side. Keep your back straight, your toe facing forward, and stare straight ahead. Lower your right leg slowly. Repeat this exercise ten to 15 times per leg.

Exercise 10: Marching in Place



If you need to hold onto something, do this exercise in front of a counter. Standing straight, lift your right knee as high as you can. Lower it, then lift the left leg. Lift and lower your legs 20 times.

Exercise 13: Hand and Finger Exercises



You don't need to stand for this exercise. First exercise, pretend there's a wall in front of you. Your fingers will climb the wall until they're above your head. While holding your arms above your head, wiggle your fingers for ten seconds. Then, walk them back down.

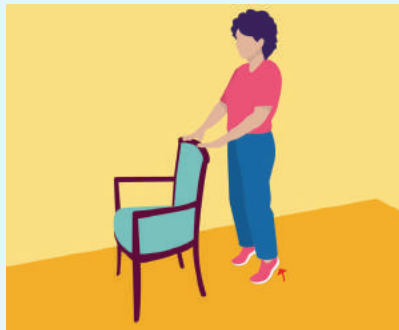
Second exercise, touch your hands while they're behind your back. Reach for your left hand while your right hand is behind your back. Hold that position for ten seconds, then try with your other arm.

Exercise 8: Balancing Wand



This balance exercise for seniors can be performed while seated. You'll need a cane or some kind of stick. Hold the bottom of the stick so that it's flat on the palm of your hand. The goal of this exercise is to keep the stick upright for as long as possible. Change hands so that you work on your balance skills on both sides of your body.

Exercise 11: Toe Lifts



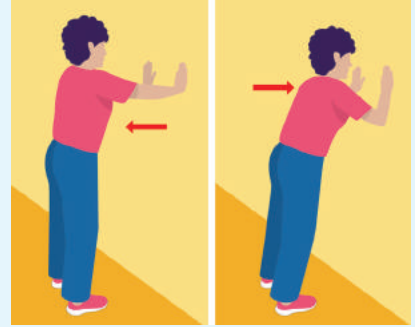
You'll need a chair or a counter for this exercise. Stand straight and put your arms in front of you. Raise yourself up on your toes as high as you can go, then gently lower yourself. Don't lean too far forward on the chair or counter. Lift and lower yourself 20 times.

Exercise 14: Calf Stretches



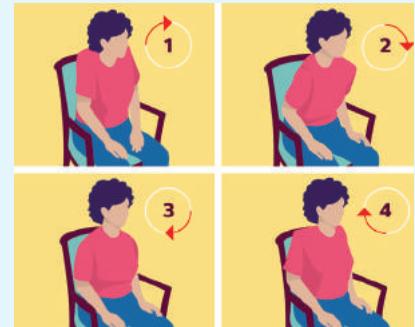
This exercise can be performed sitting or standing. To do calf stretches while standing, Stand facing an empty wall with your hands at eye level. Place your left leg behind your right leg. Keep your left heel on the floor and bend your right knee. Hold the stretch for 15 to 30 seconds. Repeat two to four times per leg.

Exercise 9: Wall Pushups



Stand an arm's length in front of a wall that doesn't have any paintings, decorations, windows or doors. Lean forward slightly and put your palms flat on the wall at the height and width of your shoulders. Keep your feet planted as you slowly bring your body towards the wall. Gently push yourself back so that your arms are straight. Do twenty of these.

Exercise 12: Shoulder Rolls



You can do this exercise seated or standing. Rotate your shoulders gently up to the ceiling, then back and down. Next, do the same thing, but roll them forwards and then down.

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