

# Simple Balance Exercises

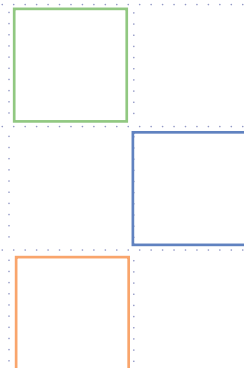
Balance exercises can help you improve and maintain your balance and coordination as you get older. They can also help prevent falls and help you stay independent. Below are 5 simple exercises that can help. You may also check your local community and senior centers for Tai Chi and other balance exercise classes. *Be sure to check with your healthcare provider before starting any exercise program.*



## Heel To Toe

**Make sure you have something sturdy nearby to hold onto if you become unsteady.**

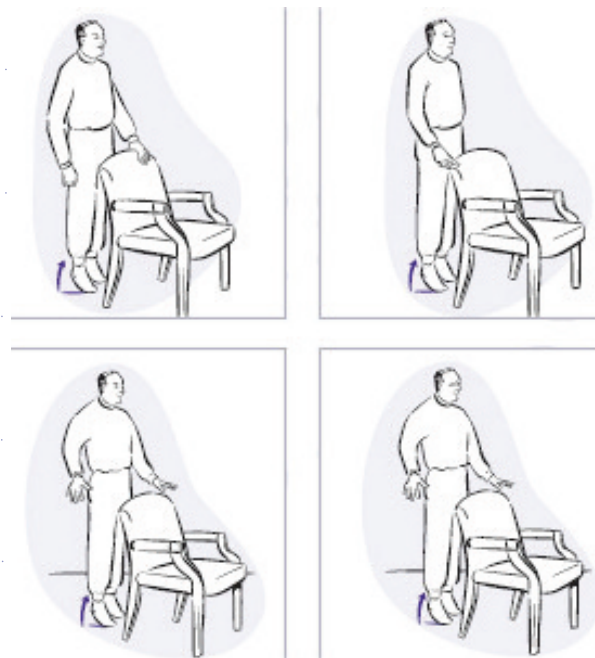
1. Walk heel-to-toe. Put your heel just in front of the toes of the opposite foot each time you take a step. Your heel and toes should touch or almost touch. (See picture.)
2. Stand on one foot (for example, while waiting in line at the grocery store or at the bus stop). Alternate feet.
3. Stand up and sit down without using your hands.



## Plantar Flexion

1. Stand straight; hold onto a table or chair for balance.
2. Slowly stand on tip toe, as high as possible.
3. Hold position for 1 second.
4. Slowly lower heels all the way back down. Pause.
5. Repeat 8 to 15 times.
6. Rest; then do another set of 8 to 15 repetitions.
7. Add these modifications as you progress.

*Hold table with one hand, then one fingertip, then no hands; then do exercise with eyes closed, if steady.*



## Simple Balance Exercises continued



### Knee Flexion

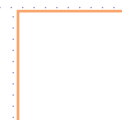
1. Stand straight; hold onto a table or chair for balance.
2. Slowly bend knee as far as possible, so foot lifts up behind you.
3. Hold position for 1 second.
4. Slowly lower foot all the way back down. Pause.
5. Repeat with other leg.
6. Alternate legs until you have done 8 to 15 repetitions with each leg.
7. Rest; then do another set of 8 to 15 alternating repetitions.
8. Add these modifications as you progress.

***Hold table with one hand, then one fingertip, then no hands; then do exercise with eyes closed, if steady.***

### Hip Extension

1. Stand 12 to 18 inches from a table or chair, feet slightly apart.
2. Bend forward at hips at about 45-degree angle; hold onto a table or chair for balance.
3. Slowly lift one leg straight backwards without bending your knee, pointing your toes, or bending your upper body any farther forward.
4. Hold position for 1 second.
5. Slowly lower leg. Pause.
6. Repeat with other leg.
7. Alternate legs until you have done 8 to 15 repetitions with each leg.
8. Rest; then do another set of 8 to 15 alternating repetitions.
9. Add these modifications as you progress.

***Hold table with one hand, then one fingertip, then no hands; then do exercise with eyes closed, if steady.***



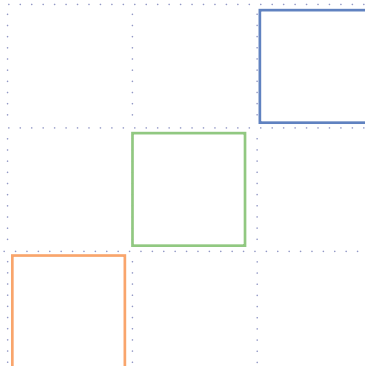
## Simple Balance Exercises continued



### Side Leg Raise

1. Stand straight, directly behind table or chair, feet slightly apart.
2. Hold onto table or chair for balance.
3. Slowly lift one leg 6-12 inches out to side. Keep your back and both legs straight. Don't point your toes outward; keep them facing forward.
4. Hold position for 1 second.
5. Slowly lower leg all the way down. Pause.
6. Repeat with other leg.
7. Alternate legs until you have done 8 to 15 repetitions with each leg.
8. Rest; then do another set of 8 to 15 alternating repetitions.
9. Add these modifications as you progress.

***Hold table with one hand, then one fingertip, then no hands; then do exercise with eyes closed, if steady.***



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