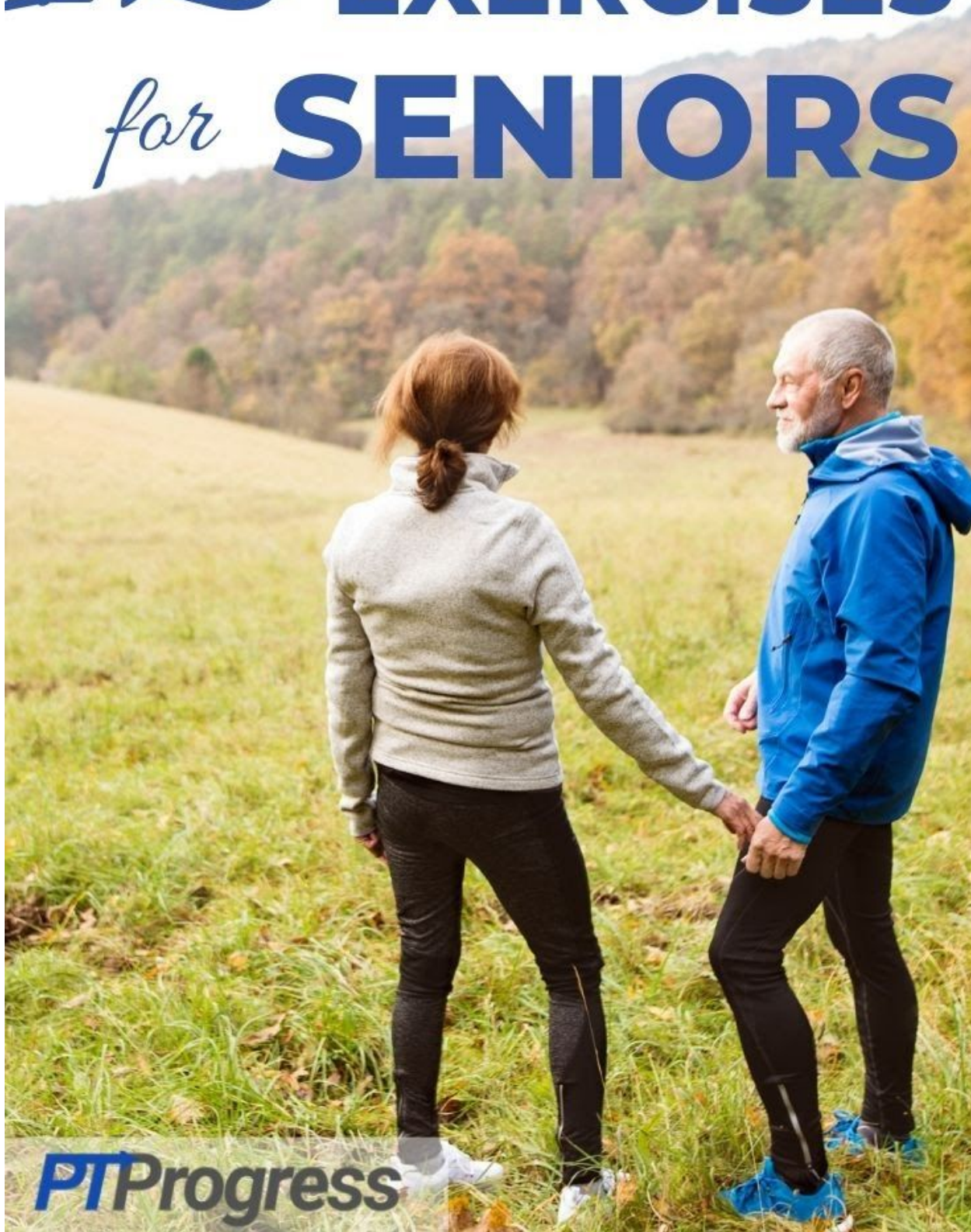


# 12 BALANCE EXERCISES *for* SENIORS



**PTProgress**

# 12 Essential Balance Exercise PDF



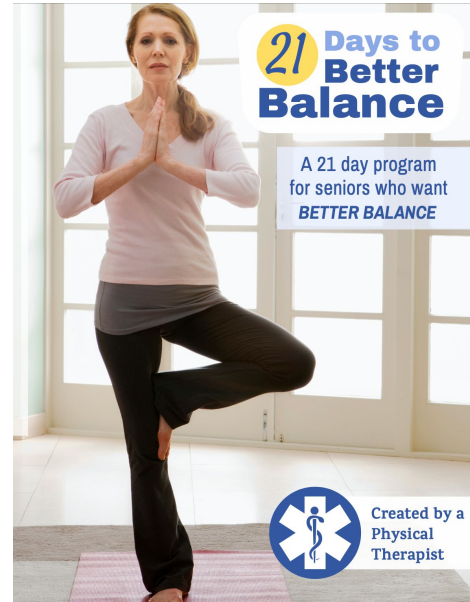
The content of this PDF or material from PTProgress.com is not intended as a substitute for care from a physical therapist or other health care professional. If you experience signs or symptoms of injury, disease or illness you should seek the advice of a physical therapist or other health care professional. PTProgress is additionally covered by the Disclaimer information at [PTProgress.com/disclosures](http://PTProgress.com/disclosures)

# Download the full 21 Day Program:

[GetBetterBalance.com](http://www.GetBetterBalance.com)

## Within the guide, you'll get:

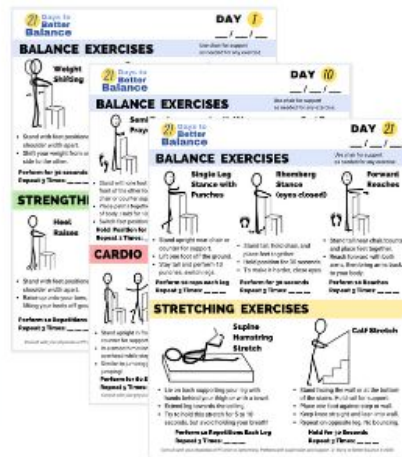
- Quick Start Guide: Why is my balance off?
- Daily Balance Routine (21 unique days)
- Printable Calendar Checklist
- Over 40 Unique Exercises
- Complete guide is 36 pages, PDF download



## How Do I Access the Guide?

The program can be downloaded as a PDF and easily printed for immediate use. You can save it onto your tablet and reference anytime or print it and use the daily exercise pages to guide your balance training.

Get the Complete Guide at [www.GetBetterBalance.com](http://www.GetBetterBalance.com)



- 21 Day Plan
- Large Print Images
- Easy to Follow
- One Day Per Page
- Workout Calendar



The content of this PDF or material from PTProgress.com is not intended as a substitute for care from a physical therapist or other health care professional. If you experience signs or symptoms of injury, disease or illness you should seek the advice of a physical therapist or other health care professional. PTProgress is additionally covered by the Disclaimer information at [PTProgress.com/disclosures](http://PTProgress.com/disclosures)

# How to Improve Balance

As a Physical Therapist, I've helped thousands of older adults improve balance with exercises, stretches, and balance training programs.

Almost everyone replies YES when I ask them, "Does your balance feel off lately?"

The big question I hear is this: **Can my balance improve?**

The answer is a resounding yes! Your balance can improve whether you're 45, 65, or 95 years old!

Here are the best ways to improve your balance:

**Exercises-** Exercises for balance that focus on strengthening the muscles in your legs, core, and arms can lead to significant improvements in your balance. There are many exercises to improve balance and 12 that I highly recommend for seniors (see below).

**Stretching** - Improving your flexibility can result in better balance. Stretches can also help improve your posture which can lead to greater stability and improved balance

**Mobility Training** - Joint stiffness can lead to poor mobility, which you've probably noticed at times when you get up and down from a chair. Improving mobility can lead to improved balance and coordination.

If you're curious on the balance research that supports this, you can find the references at the bottom of the PDF. Nothing like science to back up the importance of balance exercises!

# Single Leg Stance

## Instructions:

Start with your feet at hip width. While holding onto a counter, lift one foot off the ground slightly. Keep your body tall and avoid leaning onto the planted foot.

Progress this exercise by transitioning to one hand support and eventually no hand support. It's always good to perform near a sturdy counter in case you need to quickly catch your balance.



**Hold for 10 to 15 seconds on each leg.**

**Perform 5 times on each leg.**

***Why this is important:*** This is an essential balance exercise because we stand on one leg every time we take a step or walk up and down stairs! Don't underestimate the importance of the single leg stance exercise!

The content of this PDF or material from [PTProgress.com](http://PTProgress.com) is not intended as a substitute for care from a physical therapist or other health care professional. If you experience signs or symptoms of injury, disease or illness you should seek the advice of a physical therapist or other health care professional. PTProgress is additionally covered by the Disclaimer information at [PTProgress.com/disclosures](http://PTProgress.com/disclosures)

# Foot Taps to Step

## **Instructions:**

*Stand tall facing a step or cone.*

*Beginners should use support from a counter or handrail until your balance improves.*

*In a controlled motion, lift one foot and tap the cone or step for one second and return to your starting position. As you repeat this motion, you should focus on consistency and control with each tap.*

**Perform 10 repetitions on each leg.**

**Repeat 2 to 3 times.**

*This exercise is important because it helps with coordination on stairs. How many times have you caught yourself tripping on a step? If you or someone you know has stairs, this is a great balance exercise.*



The content of this PDF or material from PTProgress.com is not intended as a substitute for care from a physical therapist or other health care professional. If you experience signs or symptoms of injury, disease or illness you should seek the advice of a physical therapist or other health care professional. PTProgress is additionally covered by the Disclaimer information at [PTProgress.com/disclosures](http://PTProgress.com/disclosures)

# Narrow Stance Reaches

## **Instructions:**

*Begin with your feet together or as close as you can while feeling safe. Stand tall and reach forward with one hand while holding onto a counter or solid surface for safety.*

*Alternate arms as you reach forward. Progress by reaching with both hands forwards.*

*You can make this more challenging by reaching out to the side or in varying directions.*

**Perform 10 reaches with each arm.**

**Repeat 2 to 3 times.**

*This balance exercise is important because many falls take place while reaching for an item in a tight space.*



*The content of this PDF or material from PTProgress.com is not intended as a substitute for care from a physical therapist or other health care professional. If you experience signs or symptoms of injury, disease or illness you should seek the advice of a physical therapist or other health care professional. PTProgress is additionally covered by the Disclaimer information at [PTProgress.com/disclosures](http://PTProgress.com/disclosures)*

# 3 Way Hip Kick

## **Instructions:**

*Stand with your feet shoulder width apart. While holding onto a counter or firm surface, extend your leg forward and return to your starting position.*

*Repeat this motion to the side returning to the starting position*

*each time. Finally, extend your leg back and return it to the starting position.*

*Perform each motion 5 to 10 times on each leg.*

*Repeat 2 to 3 times.*

*This exercise builds strength in the hip muscles which are important for maintaining stability with walking, turning, and going up and down steps.*



The content of this PDF or material from [PTProgress.com](http://PTProgress.com) is not intended as a substitute for care from a physical therapist or other health care professional. If you experience signs or symptoms of injury, disease or illness you should seek the advice of a physical therapist or other health care professional. PTProgress is additionally covered by the Disclaimer information at [PTProgress.com/disclosures](http://PTProgress.com/disclosures)



# Standing Marches

## **Instructions:**

*Stand with your feet shoulder width apart. While holding onto a counter or firm surface, raise one leg in a marching motion. Alternate legs and progress difficulty by performing without holding onto the counter or chair.*



*Focus on smooth, controlled movements and keep your body tall to avoid leaning side to side.*

**Perform 20 marches (10 on each leg).**

**Repeat 2 to 3 times.**

*This exercise is great for improving hip strength and single leg balance. If your feet ever catch the ground while you're walking, you'll benefit from this exercise!*

The content of this PDF or material from [PTProgress.com](http://PTProgress.com) is not intended as a substitute for care from a physical therapist or other health care professional. If you experience signs or symptoms of injury, disease or illness you should seek the advice of a physical therapist or other health care professional. PTProgress is additionally covered by the Disclaimer information at [PTProgress.com/disclosures](http://PTProgress.com/disclosures)

# Mini Lunges

## **Instructions:**

*Stand with your feet shoulder width apart. While holding onto a counter or firm surface, step forward and allow your front knee to bend slightly. Return to your starting position and repeat with the opposite leg.*

*The lunge does not need to be deep. If you experience increased knee or hip pain, modify this exercise by holding onto a counter and taking a smaller step.*

**Perform 10 lunges on each leg.**

**Repeat 2 to 3 times.**

*This is a helpful balance exercise because it strengthens the legs while simulating a forward stepping motion. If you ever feel like you sometimes stumble forwards, this exercise will help you to practice catching yourself before you actually fall!*



# Lateral Stepping

## **Instructions:**

*Stand with your feet together. While holding onto a counter or firm surface, step to the side so your feet are just past shoulder width.*

*Continue this motion along a counter, performing 5 to 10 steps on each side.*



**Perform 5 to 10 steps.  
Repeat 2 to 3 times.**

*We are constantly turning and sidestepping throughout the day. Unfortunately, this is how many older adults fall. This exercise helps you to become more coordinated with turns and stepping in tight spaces.*

The content of this PDF or material from [PTProgress.com](http://PTProgress.com) is not intended as a substitute for care from a physical therapist or other health care professional. If you experience signs or symptoms of injury, disease or illness you should seek the advice of a physical therapist or other health care professional. PTProgress is additionally covered by the Disclaimer information at [PTProgress.com/disclosures](http://PTProgress.com/disclosures)

# Squats

## Instructions:

Stand with your feet shoulder width apart.

While holding onto a counter, perform a squatting motion like you are about to sit down.

It can be helpful to position a chair behind you for safety and accuracy.

**Perform 10 squats.**  
**Repeat 2 to 3 times.**

*If you've ever felt unstable when sitting or standing up from a chair, this is a great exercise to build strength and coordination!*



# Tandem Stance or Semi-Tandem

## **Instructions:**

*Stand with one foot in front of the other so you are in a 'heel-toe' position.*

*If this is too difficult initially, move your feet apart slightly. Use a counter or chair as support if you need.*

***Hold this position for 10 seconds on each side.  
Repeat 2 to 3 times.***



*This balance exercise is great to practice because it puts your body into a narrow stance. With a decreased base of support, you are challenging your muscles to keep you centered!*

*The content of this PDF or material from PTProgress.com is not intended as a substitute for care from a physical therapist or other health care professional. If you experience signs or symptoms of injury, disease or illness you should seek the advice of a physical therapist or other health care professional. PTProgress is additionally covered by the Disclaimer information at [PTProgress.com/disclosures](https://PTProgress.com/disclosures)*

# Heel Raises

## **Instructions:**

*Stand with your feet shoulder width apart. While holding onto a counter or firm surface, lift your heels off the ground. You should feel most of the pressure on the front of your feet like you're standing on your toe.*

*It's ok to put pressure into the counter with your hands at first.*

*Make sure you stay tall and avoid leaning. Progress this exercise by applying less pressure with your arms and eventually performing without holding counter.*

**Perform 10 repetitions.**

**Repeat 2 to 3 times.**

*Calf strength is important for balance because this muscle controls our ankle position. When we feel unsteady or need to correct our balance, we use our ankle muscles to reposition our body. Stronger calf muscles can lead to better balance!*



The content of this PDF or material from PTProgress.com is not intended as a substitute for care from a physical therapist or other health care professional. If you experience signs or symptoms of injury, disease or illness you should seek the advice of a physical therapist or other health care professional. PTProgress is additionally covered by the Disclaimer information at [PTProgress.com/disclosures](http://PTProgress.com/disclosures)

# Hamstring Stretch

**Instructions:** Stand with your leg on a step or on the ground slightly in front of your body. Keep your back straight and gently lean forward feeling a stretch in the back of the thigh and knee.

Another way to stretch the hamstring is to sit and extend your leg, leaning forward until you feel a gentle pulling sensation.

**Hold each stretch for 10 to 20 seconds.**

**Repeat 2 to 3 times on both legs.**

This is an important exercise for improving balance because the hamstrings can become very tight as we age. This usually happens due to sitting for prolonged periods.

Improving flexibility in the hamstrings can help to decrease cramping or spasms in the hamstring when you first stand up.



*The content of this PDF or material from PTProgress.com is not intended as a substitute for care from a physical therapist or other health care professional. If you experience signs or symptoms of injury, disease or illness you should seek the advice of a physical therapist or other health care professional. PTProgress is additionally covered by the Disclaimer information at [PTProgress.com/disclosures](http://PTProgress.com/disclosures)*

# Calf Stretch

**Instructions:** Stand with your foot against a step and gently lean forward while holding onto the railing or a countertop.

You should feel a gentle pulling in your calf or ankle as you hold for 10 to 20 seconds. Avoid bouncing or rocking back and forth.



**Hold this stretch for 10 to 20 seconds each leg.  
Repeat 2 to 3 times.**

Stretching the calf can help relieve soreness and cramps in the lower leg. If you ever experienced a 'charlie horse' in your leg that almost took you off your feet, this calf stretch is a great exercise to perform!

The content of this PDF or material from PTProgress.com is not intended as a substitute for care from a physical therapist or other health care professional. If you experience signs or symptoms of injury, disease or illness you should seek the advice of a physical therapist or other health care professional. PTProgress is additionally covered by the Disclaimer information at [PTProgress.com/disclosures](http://PTProgress.com/disclosures)

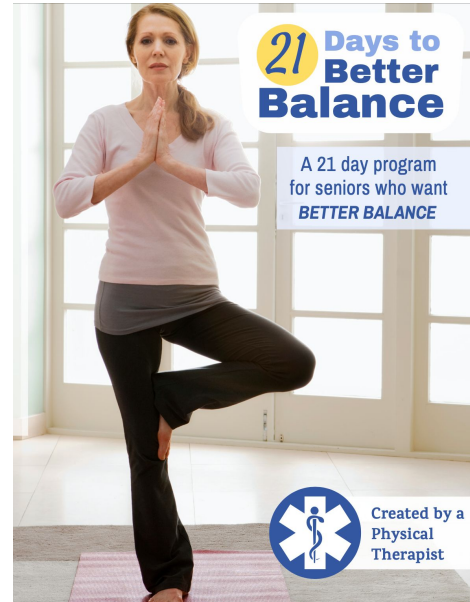


# Download the full 21 Day Program:

[GetBetterBalance.com](http://www.GetBetterBalance.com)

## Within the guide, you'll get:

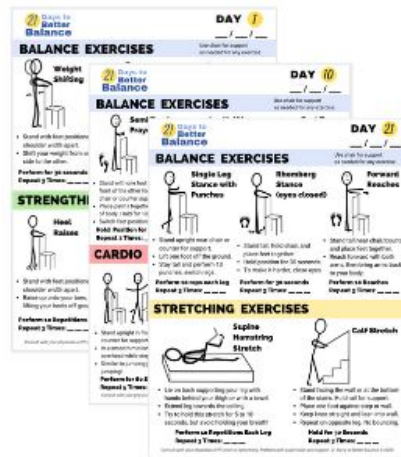
- Quick Start Guide: Why is my balance off?
- Daily Balance Routine (21 unique days)
- Printable Calendar Checklist
- Over 40 Unique Exercises
- Complete guide is 36 pages, PDF download



## How Do I Access the Guide?

The program can be downloaded as a PDF and easily printed for immediate use. You can save it onto your tablet and reference anytime or print it and use the daily exercise pages to guide your balance training.

Get the Complete Guide at [www.GetBetterBalance.com](http://www.GetBetterBalance.com)



- 21 Day Plan
- Large Print Images
- Easy to Follow
- One Day Per Page
- Workout Calendar



The content of this PDF or material from PTProgress.com is not intended as a substitute for care from a physical therapist or other health care professional. If you experience signs or symptoms of injury, disease or illness you should seek the advice of a physical therapist or other health care professional. PTProgress is additionally covered by the Disclaimer information at [PTProgress.com/disclosures](http://PTProgress.com/disclosures)

## References:

1. CDC: [https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/65/wr/mm6537a2.htm?s\\_cid=mm6537a2\\_w](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/65/wr/mm6537a2.htm?s_cid=mm6537a2_w)
2. <https://www.cdc.gov/homeandrecreationalafety/falls/adultfalls.html>
3. [Community-based group exercise improves balance and reduces falls in at-risk older people: a randomised controlled trial](#)
4. A balance exercise program appears to improve function for patients with total knee arthroplasty: a randomized clinical trial. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/20378678>
5. Training of balance under single- and dual-task conditions in older adults with balance impairment. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/16445340>
6. [The effect of multidimensional exercises on balance, mobility, and fall risk in community-dwelling older adults.](#)
7. Effects of elastic-band resistance exercise on balance, mobility and gait function, flexibility and fall efficacy in elderly people. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/27942147>
8. Effect of Lower Extremity Stretching Exercises on Balance in Geriatric Population. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5003582/>
9. A best practice fall prevention exercise program to improve balance, strength / power, and psychosocial health in older adults: study protocol for a randomized controlled trial <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3852637/pdf/1471-2318-13-105.pdf>