

13 Balance Exercises for Older Adults, Kids & Athletes

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· Source: Healthline.com

Overview

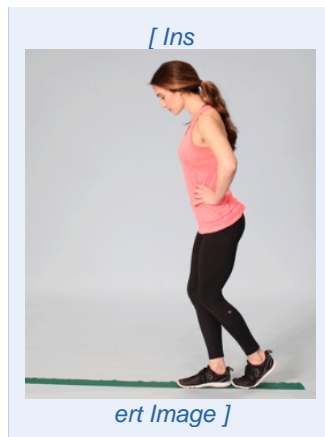
Balance is one of the key pillars of optimal health. These exercises improve coordination, stability, and mobility — making everyday tasks easier and helping prevent falls, the most common cause of injury in older adults.

- Strengthens core, lower back, and lower body muscles
- Develops proprioception — your body's awareness in space
- Prevents falls and supports independence
- Easier: lean on a wall or chair | Harder: close your eyes or start on your non-dominant side

For Older Adults — Exercises 1–3

Maintain mobility, independence, and prevent falls.

1. Tightrope Walk



1. Start at one end of a line on the ground (string, resistance band, or floor marking), one foot directly in front of the other.
2. Hold your arms out wide to the sides.
3. Walk without stepping off — focus on controlling movement and gazing ahead.
4. Walk at least 15 steps for 3–5 sets.

2. Rock the Boat

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5. Stand with feet hip-width apart, hands on hips.
6. Shift weight to your left foot and lift your right foot out diagonally in front. Hold up to 30 seconds.
7. Slowly lower and repeat on the other side.
8. Perform 3–5 sets of 5–10 reps per side.

3. Flamingo Stand

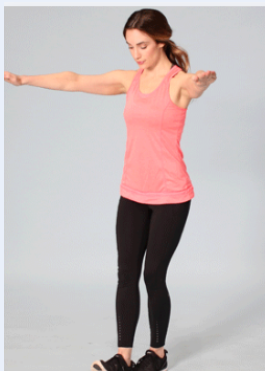


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9. Stand straight, feet together, hands on hips.
10. Lift your right leg, bending the knee as high as you can. Keep spine, neck, and head aligned.
11. Hold up to 15 seconds, then slowly lower. Repeat on the other side.
12. Perform 3–5 sets of 8–12 reps per side.

Tip: For added support, lean against a chair, countertop, or wall.

4. Heel-Toe Walking



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13. Start with feet together, arms at sides.
14. Raise arms to the side so they're parallel to the floor.
15. Walk in a straight line placing the back of your heel against the toes of your opposite foot.
16. Move slowly and with control — at least 15 steps.

Tip: Have kids draw a chalk line outside for a fun setup.

5. Bean Bag Balance

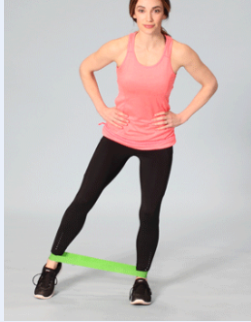
17. Place a bean bag on top of your head or shoulder.

18. Walk in a straight line, maintaining posture to keep it secure.
19. Progress to zig-zag, circles, backward, or side-to-side movement.

6. Musical Statues

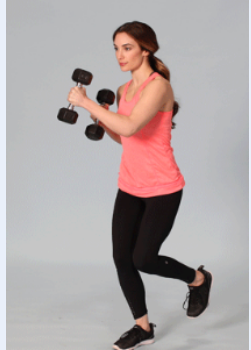
20. Play music while children move around and dance.
21. When the music stops, everyone freezes in a balancing position.
22. Try one foot, arms extended, or leaning in one direction.

7. Banded Triplanar Toe Taps

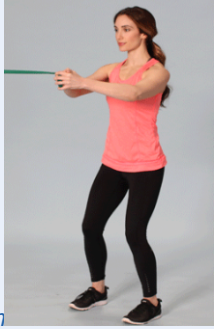
<p>[In</p>  <p>sert Image]</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">23. Place a resistance band around your ankles, hands on hips.24. Balance on your left leg and tap your right leg forward, to the side, and behind you. Engage core, glutes, and hips.25. Perform 3–5 sets of 8–12 reps per side.
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Tip: To make easier, remove the resistance band.

8. Single-Leg Cross-Body Punches

<p>[In</p>  <p>sert Image]</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none">26. Hold weights in each hand at chest height.27. Shift weight onto your right foot into a quarter-squat, left leg raised behind you.28. Punch the weights across your body alternately — 5–8 reps per arm. Repeat on other side.29. Perform 3–5 sets per leg.
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9. Pallof Press with Rotation

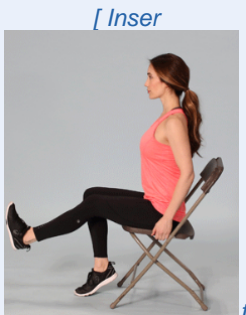


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30. Face a cable machine or wrap a resistance band around a sturdy pole. Hold at chest height, arms extended.
31. Feet shoulder-width apart, knees slightly bent.
32. Bring cables to chest, extend out, rotate left, return to centre. Repeat rotating right. That's 1 rep.
33. Perform 3–5 sets of 8–12 reps.

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10. Chair Leg Raises



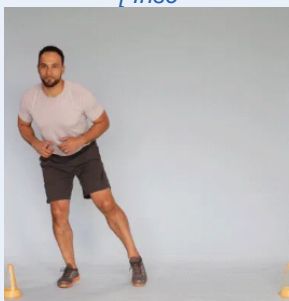
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34. Sit in a chair with a straight spine, feet directly under knees.
35. Slowly straighten your left leg and hold it up for a few seconds.
36. Lower back down and repeat with your right leg.
37. Perform 3–5 sets of 10–20 repetitions.

Tip: To increase difficulty, add an ankle weight.

11. Side Shuffle



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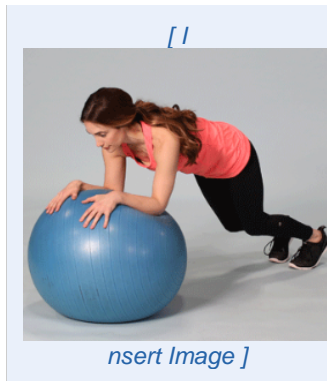
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38. Place two objects 3–5 metres apart on the floor.
39. Stand with legs slightly wider than shoulder-width, knees bent in a quarter-squat.
40. Shuffle sideways from one object to the other and back.
41. Perform 3–5 sets of 15–60 seconds.

With a Ball — Exercises 12–13

Stability and Bosu balls target deep stabilizer muscles. Require more advanced balance — higher injury risk.

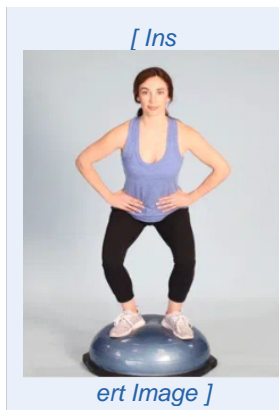
12. Plank with Elbows on a Stability Ball



42. Place forearms on the ball and come into a plank. Engage core, glutes, and quadriceps.
43. Align shoulders and hips square to the floor.
44. Hold up to 10 seconds, then drop knees back to start.
45. Perform 3–5 sets of 8–12 reps.

Tip: For variety, use elbows to make small circles with the ball in both directions.

13. Bosu Ball Squat



46. Stand on the Bosu ball, feet shoulder-width apart, toes slightly out, hands on hips.
47. Squat by bending knees and hinging at hips until thighs are parallel with the ground.
48. Stand back up, pushing through your entire feet.
49. Perform 3–5 sets of 8–12 reps.

Tip: To increase difficulty: hold a weight, or flip the Bosu ball to squat on the flat platform.

Key Takeaways

- Balance can vary day to day — be patient and consistent
- Exercises can be done throughout the day and adapted to any fitness level
- Modify difficulty: wall support to reduce challenge; eyes closed to increase it
- Consult a physical therapist or personal trainer if you have a health condition or are unsure where to begin