

6 Easy Ways to Improve Your Balance

PLANTAR FLEXION

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

Summary:

Stand straight, holding onto a table or chair for balance.
Slowly stand on tip toe, as high as possible.
Hold position.
Slowly lower heels all the way back down.
Repeat 8 to 15 times.
Rest a minute, then do another 8 to 15 repetitions.
Add modifications as you progress.



KNEE FLEXION

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

Summary:

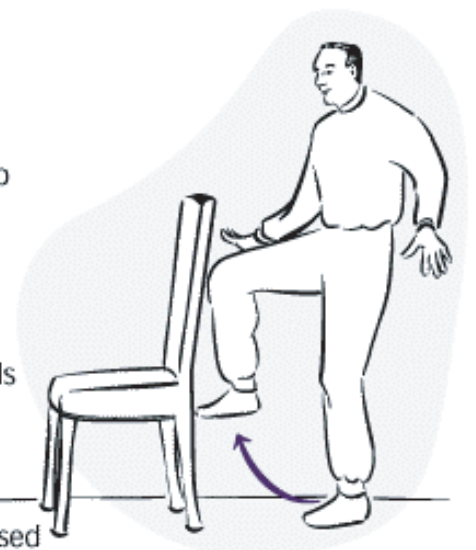
Stand straight; hold onto table or chair for balance.
Slowly bend knee as far as possible, so foot lifts up behind you.
Hold position.
Slowly lower foot all the way back down.
Repeat with other leg.
Add modifications as you progress.

HIP FLEXION

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

Summary:

Stand straight; holding onto a table or chair for balance.
Slowly bend one knee toward chest, without bending waist or hips.
Hold position.
Slowly lower leg all the way down.
Repeat with other leg.
Add modifications as you progress.



SIDE LEG RAISE



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

Summary:

Stand straight, directly behind table or chair, feet slightly apart. Hold table for balance.

Slowly lift one leg to side, 6-12 inches.

Hold position.

Slowly lower leg.

Repeat with other leg.

Your back and knees are straight throughout exercise.

Add modifications as you progress.

HIP EXTENSION

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

Summary:

Stand 12 to 18 inches from table.

Bend at hips; hold onto table.

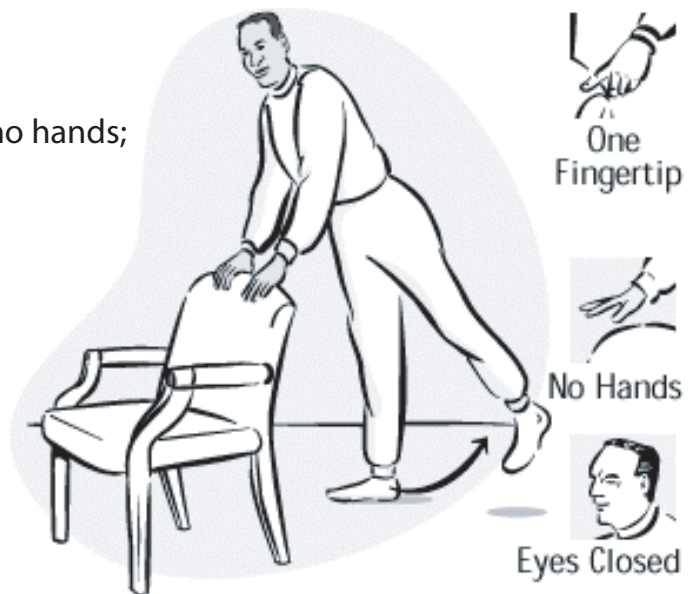
Slowly lift one leg straight backwards.

Hold position.

Slowly lower leg.

Repeat with other leg.

Add modifications as you progress.



ANYTIME & ANYWHERE

These types of exercises also improve your balance. You can do them almost anytime, anywhere, and as often as you like, as long as you have something sturdy nearby to hold onto if you become unsteady.

Examples:

Walk heel-to-toe. Position 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 Illustration.)

Stand on one foot (while waiting in line at the grocery store or at the bus stop, for example). Alternate feet.

Stand up and sit down without using your hands.

