

Improve your balance

Get Ready

This is something you can do at home after breakfast. Wear some loose clothes and have a chair handy to support yourself until you're confident. Start by either shaking out or rubbing your joints or do the stretching activities on Factsheet 1.

1. Posture Perfect

Start with your feet slightly apart, toes facing forward, knees soft (slightly bent). Raise your shoulders, roll them back and drop them down - arms by your side.

2. East / West Shift

Lift your right leg and turn your hip so that your right foot points out to the right (East). Step out to East (bending your knee as you take the weight). Push back again so that you are standing with your feet almost together. Repeat 5 times and then repeat to the left (West) with your left foot.

3. North / South Shift

Take a long step forward with either foot. Make sure your toes are out further than your knee. Slowly shift your body forward (North) onto the foot in front, (bending your knee slightly to take the weight) until there is no weight on your back foot. Slowly move your weight backwards (South) onto your back foot, (bending the knee slightly to take the weight) until there is no weight on the front foot. Repeat 5 times and then repeat with the other foot in front.



The National Programme for
Sport and Physical Activity for Older People

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This is general information on physical activity. Certain activities may not suit your own physical health and abilities. If you have any doubts about doing any of these activities ask your doctor or public health nurse first.



4. Clock Moves

Step one foot out and return at random to different clock positions from 9 o'clock to 12 o'clock using your left foot and 12 o'clock to 3 o'clock using your right foot.

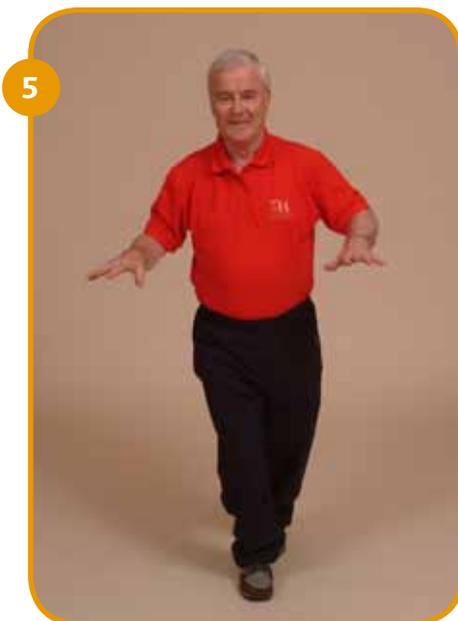
Remember to:

- turn your hip so that the foot points at the time,
- shift your weight out to the position and bend your knee to take the weight

Now add in

- step and return backwards to the 6 o'clock position,
- pivoting on one foot and step and return to the 4, 5, 7 and 8 o'clock positions.

Step at random to different o'clocks 12 to 15 times. Take a breather. Repeat this 3 times, taking a breather between sessions.



5. Tightrope Walking

Slowly step forward and place your heel-to-toe (as if you are on a tightrope). Slowly shift your weight forward onto the front foot, before slowly moving your back foot forward and placing it heel-to-toe.

Repeat for 10 to 12 steps - saying 'move', 'place' and 'shift'.

Then try stepping backwards (slowly and carefully), each time placing the foot toe-to-heel.