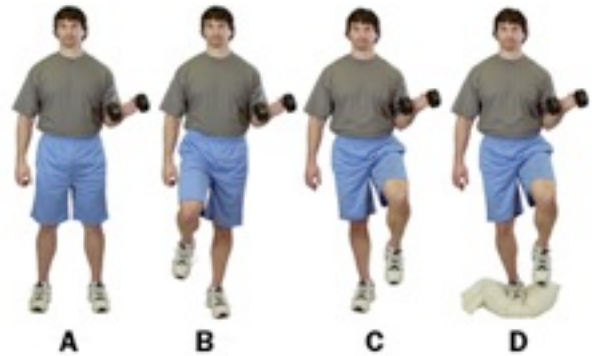


Introduction to balance exercises

Balance exercises can help you maintain your balance — and confidence — at any age. Balance exercises can also help prevent falls and improve your coordination. For older adults, balance exercises can promote independence.

Nearly any activity that keeps you on your feet and moving, such as walking, can help you maintain good balance. You can also include balance exercises in your daily routine. Try balancing on one foot while waiting in line, or stand up and sit down without using your hands. For a more targeted approach, try specific balance exercises. If you have severe balance problems or an orthopedic condition, get your doctor's OK before doing balance exercises.



Biceps curls for balance

You can do many balance exercises with weights. Try biceps curls with a dumbbell:

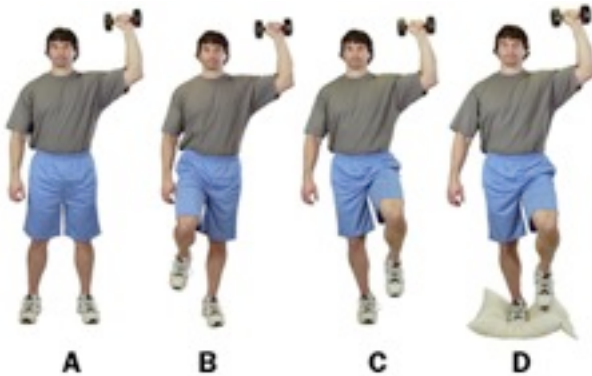
- + Stand with your feet hip-width apart and your weight equally distributed on both legs. Hold the dumbbell in your left hand with your palm facing upward (A). Lift your right leg off the floor and bend it back at the knee (B).
- + Hold the position as long as you can maintain good form, up to 30 seconds.
- + Return to the starting position and repeat on the other side. As your balance improves, increase the number of repetitions.
- + For added challenge, balance on the leg opposite the weight (C) or while standing on a pillow or other unstable surface (D).



Weight shifts

When you're ready to try balance exercises, start with weight shifts:

- + Stand with your feet hip-width apart and your weight equally distributed on both legs (A).
- + Shift your weight to your right side, then lift your left foot off the floor (B).
- + Hold the position as long as you can maintain good form, up to 30 seconds.
- + Return to the starting position and repeat on the other side. As your balance improves, increase the number of repetitions.



Shoulder press for balance

Try the shoulder press with a dumbbell:

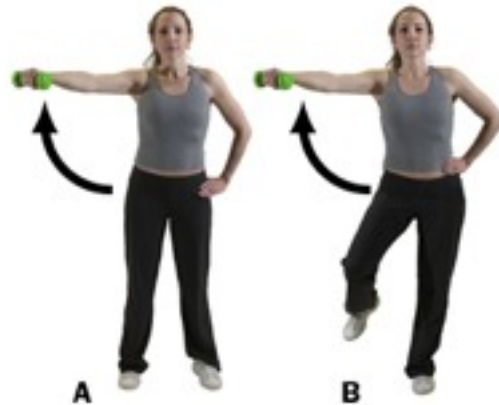
- + Stand with your feet hip-width apart and your weight equally distributed on both legs. Hold the dumbbell in your left hand and press your arm upward until your forearm is perpendicular to the floor (A). Lift your right leg off the floor and bend it back at the knee (B).
- + Hold the position as long as you can maintain good form, up to 30 seconds.
- + Return to the starting position and repeat on the other side. As your balance improves, increase the number of repetitions.
- + For added challenge, balance on the leg opposite the weight (C) or while standing on a pillow or other unstable surface (D).



Single-leg balance

Standing on one leg is another common balance exercise:

- + Stand with your feet hip-width apart and your weight equally distributed on both legs. Place your hands on your hips. Lift your left leg off the floor and bend it back at the knee (A).
- + Hold the position as long as you can maintain good form, up to 30 seconds.
- + Return to the starting position and repeat on the other side. As your balance improves, increase the number of repetitions.
- + For variety, reach out with your foot as far as possible without touching the floor (B).
- + For added challenge, balance on one leg while standing on a pillow or other unstable surface.



Side-lateral raise for balance

Try the side-lateral raise with a dumbbell:

- + Stand with your feet hip-width apart and your weight equally distributed on both legs. Hold the dumbbell in your right hand and raise your arm perpendicular to the floor (A). Lift your right leg off the floor and bend it back at the knee (B).
- + Hold the position as long as you can maintain good form, up to 30 seconds.
- + Return to the starting position and repeat on the other side. As your balance improves, increase the number of repetitions.
- + For added challenge, balance while standing on a pillow or other unstable surface.