

How to improve your balance with exercise

1. One – legged stance: Stand on one leg, keep your standing leg straight with that knee slightly bent. Lift the other leg about six inches of the floor. Keep your hands by your side. See how long you can hold your pose.
2. The Tree: In this yoga pose, stand tall with your arms by your side and your weight evenly distributed on each foot. Slowly lift your left foot of the ground and place the sole of the foot along the inner thigh of your right leg. Place your hands together in front of your chest and slowly raise your arms overhead, palms together.
3. Repeat step 1 but close your eyes. Can you keep your balance with your eyes closed?
4. Stand with your feet close together and balance with your eyes closed.
5. Stand in a heel-toe position (ex: R foot ahead of L foot, L toes should be touching R heel).
6. Now try step 5 with your eyes closed.
7. Practice walking heel-toe across the room. (Pretend you are walking a ‘tightrope’).
8. Repeat step 7 with your eyes closed. Try it again but walk backwards.
9. Practice side stepping (walk laterally) across the room. Try again with your eyes shut.
10. Walk carioca style (walk laterally, take one step in front of the body, then take another step behind the body). Some call this exercise cross overs.
11. Repeat step 1, step 4 and step 5 , but stand on an eight inch piece of foam.
12. Balance one 1 leg. Tap your toe of the free leg on each hour position of a huge imaginary clock on the floor.
13. Balance one 1 leg. Hop forward 4 times, then hop backwards 4 times. Switch legs and repeat exercise.
14. Practice stepping over a big thick telephone book. Go forwards, backwards and sideways. Athletic individuals can try hopping over the book.
15. Raise a long 2X4 piece of wood up on some blocks and practice tandem heel-toe walk, side steps, and cross overs
16. Tight rope walking: Place a string or a piece of tape (about 8 feet long) in a straight line on the floor. Position yourself at one end of the tape. Hold a small tennis ball in one hand. Walk along the line while tossing a tennis ball from one hand to the other, without falling of the line.

Tips:

1. Mini trampolines work well for one-legged balance techniques. Add some small vertical or lateral hops on the mini trampoline.
2. Make a tight obstacle course with soup cans and weave in and out and around the cans. Try to weave and bend down to pick up the cans.