

STEPPING OUT STRONG!



A Healthy Path to Improving
Strength and Balance



BE STRONG FOR LIFE!

*This exercise plan will help
improve balance, increase
hip strength, and improve
your range of motion.*



Let's begin...

You completed a balance test called the *Single Leg Stand*. This test measures your risk of falling.

The length of time you were able to stand on one leg without using your hands will determine which exercise level you will begin with:

Less than 11
seconds, begin with
**LEVEL
ONE**

11–24 seconds,
begin with
**LEVEL
TWO**

More than 24
seconds, begin with
**LEVEL
THREE**



Remember to use good alignment for all exercises. As a reminder of good alignment, take a dowel or broom, place it on your back touching your head, mid-back, and sacrum (pelvis) to the broom. Practice hinging from the hips (as if you were sitting in a chair) without losing any of the three points of contact.

Exercise Level One

1. Before you begin, check your alignment with a broom or dowel. Hinge a few times at the hips.



2. 3-way Hip Exercise.

Strengthens hip muscles. Use a stick, broom, or chair for balance.

A. Keep back aligned and lift straight leg with flexed foot in front 10 times. Switch legs.



B. Keep back aligned and lift straight leg with flexed foot to the side 10 times. Switch legs.



C. Keep back* aligned and lift straight leg with flexed foot behind 10 times. Switch legs.

*If there is tightness or pain in lower back, bend standing leg and tilt forward before lifting the leg.

3. Heel Raises.

Improves mobility in ankles and strengthens calf muscles.

A. Stand with heels close to door frame, touching head, mid-back, and pelvis.

B. Lift onto toes, keeping heels close together.

C. Repeat 10 times—working up to 25 times.



4. Wall Pliés.

Improves quadriceps strength and ankle mobility.

A. Stand against a door frame, touching head, mid-back, and pelvis.

B. Fold at the hips and knees; slide down with heels on the floor.

C. Repeat 10 times—working up to 25 times.

D. If there is any pain in the knees, discontinue.



When you are able to stand on one leg for 11 seconds without using hands for balance, proceed to Level 2.

Exercise Level Two

- 1.** Before you begin, check your alignment with a broom or dowel. Hinge a few times at the hips.



2. 3-way Hip Exercise with band.

Strengthens hip muscles. Use a stick, broom, or chair for balance.

A. Place resistance band above the knees.

B. Keep back aligned and lift straight leg with flexed foot in front 10 times. Switch legs.



C. Keep back aligned and lift straight leg with flexed foot to the side 10 times. Switch legs.



D. Keep back* aligned and lift straight leg with flexed foot behind 10 times. Switch legs.

*If there is tightness or pain in lower back, bend standing leg and tilt forward before lifting the leg.

3. Heel Raises on One Leg.

Improves mobility in ankles and strengthens calf muscles.

A. Stand with heels close to door frame, touching head, mid-back, and pelvis.

B. Lift one leg off of the ground.

C. Lift onto toes of standing leg, keeping knee straight and pelvis against door frame.

D. Repeat 10 times—working up to 25 times.

E. Switch legs.



4. Wall Pliés Heels Raised.

Improves quadriceps strength and ankle mobility.

A. Stand against a door frame, touching head, mid-back, and pelvis.

B. Fold at the hips and knees; slide down with heels slightly off the floor.

C. Repeat 10 times—working up to 25 times.

D. If there is any pain in the knees, do not squat so low.



When you are able to stand on one leg for 24 seconds without using hands for balance, proceed to Level 3.

Exercise Level Three

- 1.** Before you begin, check your alignment with a broom or dowel. Hinge a few times at the hips.



2. 3-way Hip Exercise with band.

Strengthens knee muscles and hip muscles. Use a stick, broom, or chair for balance.

A. Place resistance band around ankles.

B. Keep back aligned and lift straight leg with flexed foot in front 10 times. Switch legs.



C. Keep back aligned and lift straight leg with flexed foot to the side 10 times. Switch legs.



D. Keep back* aligned and lift straight leg with flexed foot behind 10 times. Switch legs.

*If there is tightness or pain in lower back, bend standing leg and tilt forward before lifting the leg.

3. Heel Raises on One Leg Away from Door.

Improves mobility in ankles and strengthens calf muscles.

A. Stand on one leg.

B. Lift opposite leg.

C. Lift onto toes of standing leg, keeping knee straight and spine aligned.

D. Repeat 10 times—working up to 25 times.

E. Switch legs.



4. Lunge Progression.

Improves quadriceps strength and ankle mobility.

A. Step one leg 30–36" as if on a railroad track with legs straight.

B. Lift the back heel up and down, maintaining straight spine. Repeat 10 times. Switch legs.

C. Bend the front leg and back leg and lower down. Progress from $\frac{1}{4}$ of the way to $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{3}{4}$, and then full lunge.

D. Repeat 10 times. Switch leg.

E. If there is any pain in the knees, back off.



Congratulations!

You are on the path to better balance, strength, flexibility, and bone health. Find ways to incorporate these simple, yet powerful exercises into your activities every day. Rather than just standing still, think about slipping in some hip extensions or toe raises. And remember to use good body alignment.

For information on additional exercise programs, consult a qualified exercise practitioner or Physical Therapist with expertise in working with bone health and osteoporosis.

American Bone Health would like to acknowledge the hard work of Sherri Betz, PT, GCS, CEEAA, PMA®-CPT, in bringing this important information to you. For more of Sherri's videos on bone safe exercise, go to TheraPilates.com. We also thank our model, Lori Green, who donated her time to show others how to stay Strong for Life.

STEPPING OUT STRONG™

is the largest community-organized screening campaign to support the National Council on Aging's Fall Prevention Week. This national event brings balance screening along with a healthy path to reduce the risk of falls and fractures.



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