

# Balance Training

## How It Works

Though it might not cross your mind, you need good balance to do just about everything, including walking, getting out of a chair, and leaning over to tie your shoes. Strong muscles and being able to keep yourself steady make all the difference in those and many other things you do every day.

Balance training involves doing exercises that strengthen the muscles that help keep you upright, including your legs and core. These kinds of exercises can improve stability and help prevent falls.

Doing balance exercises can be intense, like some very challenging yoga poses. Others are as simple as standing on one leg for a few seconds. Or you can use equipment that forces your body to stabilize itself, like a Bosu half-circle stability ball or a balance board you use along with a video game.

## Examples of balance exercises include:

- Standing with your weight on one leg and raising the other leg to the side or behind you
- Putting your heel right in front of your toe, like walking a tightrope
- Standing up and sitting down from a chair without using your hands
- Walking while alternating knee lifts with each step
- Doing tai chi or yoga
- Using equipment, like a Bosu, which has an inflatable dome on top of a circular platform, which challenges your balance

Over time, you can improve your balance with these exercises by:

- Holding the position for a longer amount of time
- Adding movement to a pose
- Closing your eyes
- Letting go of your chair or other support
- You can do balance exercises as often as you'd like, even every day. Add in two days a week of strength training, which also helps improve your balance by working the muscles that keep you stable.

## Balance- How?

To balance train, you don't have to run, jump, or do any other high-impact or high-intensity exercises. Usually balance training involves slow, methodical movements.

## What Else Should I Know?

You can do balance exercises on your own, with nothing more than a chair. If you want to take a tai chi or yoga class, or buy a stability ball, video, or other piece of equipment that works too.

The beauty of balance training is that anyone can do it. Balance training improves the health, balance, and performance of everyone from beginners to advanced athletes, young and not-so-young.