



Balance and Agility



Every movement you make requires both balance and agility. Balance is our ability to stay upright or stable while agility is our ability to move quickly and easily. When we combine good balance and agility, it allows our bodies to move quickly and precisely. The following Active@Home™ cards will provide a series of activities designed to improve your body's balance and agility. Whether you're walking a tightrope, playing a game of football, or just chasing after a friend the key to your success starts with balance and agility!

@Home
Equipment Substitution

- Pillow
- Folded Blanket

Balance

Balance is your body's ability to use, or not use, certain muscles to maintain a position. Your body continually uses information from all around it to decide how to best balance itself. It might sound complicated, but your body does this constantly, and in most cases, without you having to think about it. For example, if you step onto a slanted sidewalk or walk out into a strong wind your body recognizes that it is going to have to use its muscles differently in order to keep you balanced. Like anything, we can improve our balance with practice. Here is a quick balance test. Standing up, place your left foot in front of your right with your left heel touching your toes on your right foot. Close your eyes and see if you can hold your balance for 30 seconds. If so, you did great! If not, that's OK. One of the best ways to build better balance is to strengthen your core muscles (the muscles of your pelvis, lower back, hips and abdomen). The activities on the following cards will use the UltraFit™ Core Balance Disc to help your strengthen your core muscles and improve your balance.

Tips and Reminders:

1. Always use proper fitting athletic shoes while exercising.
2. Make sure you exercise in an open area, clear of objects near the balance disc. The disc is an unstable surface on which you could lose your balance.

Crunch

Start



Finish



1. Lie on your back with the center of the balance disc a couple inches above your waistline. Have your hands straight at your sides and your knees should be bent as shown.

2. Breathe in and let it out as you slowly pull your upper body up and forward using your abdominal muscles.

3. Stop when your hands can touch the heels of your shoes. Hold the position for 2 seconds.

4. Breathe in and let it out as you slowly lower your upper body back to starting position.

Challenge: Do the Crunch 10 times, rest for 1 minute, and do another 10 times.

Harder Challenge: Hold the position in Step 3 for 5 seconds each time you reach the top.

Forward Lunge

Start



Finish



1. Stand upright with your feet shoulder-width apart and knees slightly bent. Place the balance disc no more than two feet in front of your toes.

2. Breathe in as you slowly step on the center of the balance disc with your left foot. Keep your back straight as you use your arms to help balance your upper body. Do not let your left knee extend past your toes.

3. Stop when your right knee is 3-5 inches off the floor and hold the position for 2 seconds.

4. Breathe out as you use your left thigh to push up and back to the starting position.

Challenge: Alternate with each leg until you have done the Forward Lunge 5 times with each leg.

Harder Challenge: Hold the position in Step 3 for 5 seconds each time you reach the bottom.

Lateral Lunge

Start



Finish



1. Stand with your left foot in the center of the balance disc with your arms straight forward to help balance.

2. Lift your right foot off the ground and breathe in as you slowly step no more than 3 feet to your right. Keep your back straight with your arms forward as you lower yourself into a squatting position.

3. Stop when your left knee is at waist-height and hold the position for 2 seconds.

4. Breathe out as you use both thighs to push up and back to your left leg, ending in starting position.

Challenge: Do the Lateral Lunge 10 times with your left foot on the balance disc and another 10 times with your right foot on the balance disc.

Harder Challenge: Hold the position in Step 3 for 5 seconds each time you reach the bottom.

Squat

Start



Finish



1. Stand with both feet on the balance disc with your arms straight out to help balance.

2. Breathe in as you slowly lower your bottom and bend your knees. Keep your back straight with your arms forward. Keep your lower legs straight so that your knees don't pass over the tops of your toes.

3. Stop when your knees are bent at a right angle (like you are sitting in a chair) and hold the position for 2 seconds.

4. Breathe out as you use both thighs to push up into starting position.

Challenge: Do the Squat 10 times, take a 1 minute break, and do another 10 times.

Harder Challenge: Hold the position in Step 3 for 5 seconds each time you reach the bottom.

One-Legged Deadlift

Start



Finish



1. Stand with your left foot in the center of the balance disc and your right leg slightly bent and off the floor.

2. Breathe in as you slowly lower your chest forward. Keep your back straight with your arms out to help balance. Keep your lower leg straight so that your left knee doesn't pass over the tops of your toes.

3. Stop when your chest is 2-4 inches from touching your left knee and hold the position for 2 seconds.

4. Breathe out as you slowly use your lower back to pull your upper body back to starting position.

Challenge: Do the One-Legged Deadlift 10 times with your left foot on the balance disc and another 10 times with your right foot on the balance disc.

Harder Challenge: Hold the position in Step 3 for 5 seconds each time you reach the bottom.

Superman

Start



Finish



1. Lie on your stomach with the center of the balance disc at your waistline. Have your hands and legs extended and shoulder-width apart.

2. Slowly raise your legs and arms, using your upper and lower back muscles. Keep your head up and limbs extended, yet slightly bent.

3. Stop when your arms and legs are at the height of your torso — so that you look like you're flying like Superman! Hold the position for 2 seconds.

4. Slowly lower your arms and legs until they rest gently on the floor.

Challenge: Do the Superman 10 times, rest for 1 minute, and do another 10 times.

Harder Challenge: Hold the position in Step 3 for 5 seconds each time you reach the top.