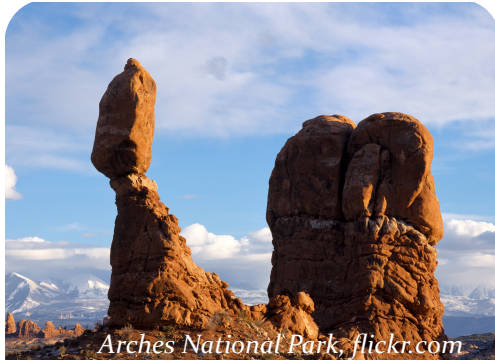




Improving Balance



Arches National Park, flickr.com



Brynn Tweeddale, flickr.com



State Library of New South Wales, flickr.com

IMPORTANCE OF BALANCE

Balance allows us to gracefully go through life with less klutzy moments, as well as decreases the likelihood of dangerous falls in the future when bones are more fragile. Once we hit 30, balance begins to deplete at a more rapid rate if preventative measures are not taken. But don't fret! Here are some tips to staying on top of your balance!

Stand on one leg

This one is easy because you can incorporate it into other activities, like washing dishes. Try to hold the pose for 30 seconds on each leg. You can stand on a less stable surface (such as a couch cushion) or close your eyes for a greater challenge.

Try Ballet or Tai Chi

Activities such as tai chi, ballet, and yoga have been shown to increase stability and core strength, both of which aid balance! Your body will also train itself to use more of its muscles during everyday tasks with time.

Do Squats

Squats are a great way to build leg strength and sturdy legs can help stop a stumble from turning into a fall. These can be done with or without additional weight. Wall sits are a great alternative exercise for strengthening legs.

Balance on your toes

This adds an additional challenge to balancing on one foot. Once successfully able to balance on one (flat) foot for 25 seconds, try repeating the exercise but on the "tippy toes" of the foot. Place your hands on your hips and non-supporting foot on the inside of the other leg, above or under the knee. Try to hold this position for 25 seconds.

Walk heel to toe

Walking a fine straight line is a great activity for anyone just beginning out with balance exercises. Think of what a cop's sobriety field test may look like.

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