



Boost your strength and balance in everyday life

Training on unstable surfaces

Strength and balance are crucial in preventing falls. Training on an unstable surface makes your workout more challenging and increases the efficacy of each exercise. This requires that you are already able to perform them safely and properly on a stable surface. We therefore recommend that you carry out the following exercises on a firm surface before attempting them on an unstable surface. You can also select the level of difficulty as shown below. The balance disc as shown in the images represents

various unstable surfaces such as a gymnastic mat (open or rolled), gyro balance board, Airex® Pad, BOSU® Balance Trainer or a springy garden lawn. A rolled up towel will also serve the same purpose.

Standing position on balance discs

In addition to the exercises shown (basic, intermediate, difficult), you also have the option of varying your standing position on the discs, thus making the exercises easier or harder.

Easy

Stand with each foot on two discs placed one behind the other.



Difficult

Stand with the ball of each foot on one disc, keeping your heels off the ground.



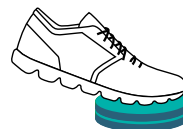
Intermediate

Stand with the middle of each foot on one disc. Try not to touch the floor.



For pros

Stack two discs on top of one another on each side. Stand with the ball of each foot on the double discs, keeping your heels off the ground.



Strength exercises

You need leg strength to cycle, climb stairs and catch yourself when you stumble.

Here are two exercise options:

Start off without the unstable surface and gradually increase the difficulty level.

Do 3 series of 8 – 12 repetitions per exercise. Give your muscles a well-earned 30-second break between series.

First increase the number of repetitions, then the level of difficulty of each exercise. Make sure that you are carrying out each exercise correctly!

Exercise 1: **Lateral leg raise**



Exercise 2: **Upper leg strength**



Lateral leg raise

Exercise 1

How to do the basic exercise

Stand with your feet hip-width apart and parallel. Move your weight onto one foot and move your other foot sideways and outwards while keeping your upper body upright and torso stable. Bring your leg back to the starting position (without standing on your foot) and repeat the movement.

Intermediate

Do this exercise with one foot standing on two discs.

Difficult

Do this exercise standing on one disc. As you raise your leg outwards, simultaneously move your torso in the opposite direction to maintain balance. You may want to lean against a wall for more stability.



Upper leg strength

Exercise 2

How to do the basic exercise

Stand with your feet hip-width apart and parallel. Take a step backwards into as big a lunge as possible. Your weight should be evenly distributed between both legs. Bend your leg to a maximum of 90 degrees and then bring both legs back to the starting position. Your torso should remain stable and your upper body upright.

Intermediate

Do this exercise with a disc under your front foot.

Difficult

Do this exercise with one disc under your rear and one under your front foot.



Balance exercises

Balance exercises help stabilize your body. This supports you, for instance, while walking on uneven terrain (over tree roots in the forest, hiking trails etc.) or when lifting down heavy objects from a height.

Here are four exercise options:

Always start with the basic exercise and gradually increase the difficulty.

Exercise 3: **Standing parallel with arm movements**



Exercise 4: **Standing on one leg**



Do exercises 3 and 4 four times each for 20 seconds and exercises 5 and 6 four times each for 20 to 60 seconds. Take a 30-second break before you start the next exercise.

Exercise 5: Step sequences



Exercise 6: Twist



Standing parallel with arm movements

Exercise 3

How to do the basic exercise

Place the discs at hip-width apart and parallel. Stand on the discs as described on page 2. Hold the tension in your torso and rotate your arms sideways and forwards with sweeping movements.

Intermediate

Move your left arm in the opposite direction to your right arm; i.e. your left arm moves forwards while your right arm moves backwards – and vice-versa.

Difficult

- Stand one foot behind the other.
- Stand on tiptoes.
- Close your eyes.



Standing on one leg

Exercise 4

How to do the basic exercise

Stand with your feet hip-width apart and parallel and tense the muscles in your torso. Maintain an upright upper body and stable torso. Stretch one leg as far back as possible and kneel slightly with your supporting leg. Then, swing the same leg forward without putting pressure on it and bend your knee at an angle of up to 90 degrees.

Intermediate

Stand on the discs with your feet hip-width apart and parallel (as described on page 2). Shift your weight onto one disc

and tense the muscles in your torso. Now lift your other foot from the disc for as long as possible before standing on it again.

Difficult

Stand on the discs with your feet hip-width apart and parallel (as described on page 2) and tense the muscles in your torso. Maintaining an upright upper body and stable torso, move one leg as far back as possible and kneel slightly with your supporting leg. Then, swing the same leg forward without standing on it and bend your knee at an angle of up to 90 degrees.



Step sequences

Exercise 5

How to do the basic exercise

Place the discs in front of you, hip-width apart. Now stand on the right disc with your right foot, then on the left disc with your left foot. Step forward off the discs in steps 3 and 4. Now step backwards onto the discs, and backwards again until you are back at your starting point. Be careful: walking backwards requires good coordination – practise this sequence first without discs.

Increase the difficulty

Place the discs at two steps distance in a line in front of you. Take two steps on the floor along this imaginary line, then two steps over the discs and another two steps on the floor. Follow the same 'route' while walking backwards.



Twist

Exercise 6

How to do the basic exercise

The discs are hip-width apart and parallel. Choose your preferred standing position (as described on page 2). Twist slowly to the right by taking tiny steps on the discs. Move back to the centre, and then to the left. Keep looking straight ahead.

Increase the difficulty

Close your eyes.



The top tips:

- Choose the level of difficulty according to your ability. Start with an easier option and gradually build up.
- Perform the exercises slowly and in a controlled manner. Breathe evenly.
- Practise at least twice, preferably three times a week.

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