

5-Minute Dynamic Stretching and Balance Exercise

Balance and flexibility help your body to do everyday activities and to prevent falls and injuries.

Learn more about the benefits of physical activity and access more resources to keep you motivated and moving at extension.umaine.edu/food-health/physical-activity.

Exercise instructions: Do each exercise for 30 seconds. Repeat the circuit.

Marching with Knee Ups



How to: Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart. Bring one knee up toward your chest. You can engage your arms by tapping the palm of your opposite hand on your knee when you bring your knee up. Bring your foot back to the start position and repeat with the opposite knee.

Modify: Bring your knees up slightly lower if needed.

Squats



How to: Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart and engage your core muscles. Lower your body, bending at the knees as if you are going to sit in a chair. Once you get down that far, use your leg and glute muscles to push back up to the standing position.

Modify: Don't go as deep into the squat or do a chair squat, where you sit fully down in the chair before returning up. (note: pictures show a chair squat.)

Challenge yourself: Add weight to your squat by holding a weight, a jug of water, or some books in your hands while you squat.

Arm Circles



How to: Start with your feet shoulder-width apart. Extend your arms out at shoulder height. Now rotate your arms in a large circle. You can alternate halfway between and rotate your arms in the opposite direction.

Side-Step with Heel Kicks



How to: Stand with your feet together and hands by your side. Step one foot out to the side and raise your opposite foot off the ground. Then bring it behind you into a heel kick, and put your foot back down. Alternate between sides. You can also engage your arms by curling both arms upward in front of you into a bicep curl while you lift to do the heel kick.

Alternating Forward Lunges



How to: Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart. With your right foot, take a large step forward, and begin to lower your body to the floor by bending your legs so that both legs make a 90-degree angle or an L-shape. You will then use your front leg to push back up, bringing your feet back together to the starting position. Then alternate by stepping forward with your opposite foot.

Modify: Don't go as deep into the lunge.