

# Balance Skills Information and Exercise Sheet

**Children's Physiotherapy Service  
(Cambridgeshire)**



## What is balance?

Balance involves both static balance such as standing still on one leg and dynamic balance such as hopping, jumping and walking on a line.

Your balance continues to develop starting as a baby.

It requires good muscle strength and tone and mature reactions. The child also requires good sensory awareness of their body.

## Why is good balance important for your child?

We need balance in order to carry out everyday activities, such as sitting, walking, getting dressed and riding a bike.

## General Guidelines

### Help your child to achieve better balance by providing:

- opportunities to practice in play
- a safe environment to practice
- physical support which can be reduced as your child becomes more confident

It is easier to balance if your child has a large base of support i.e. they are lying down.

It becomes more difficult when the base of support is reduced e.g. standing with their feet together.

## Static Balance Exercises

### Standing on one leg

Stand on one leg for \_\_\_\_ seconds.

Can you cross your arms while standing on one leg?

Can you touch your standing leg with your opposite arm?

Can you pick up objects with your free foot whilst keeping balanced?

Can you do it with your eyes closed?

Can you do draw shapes in the air with your free leg?

Repeat with your other leg.

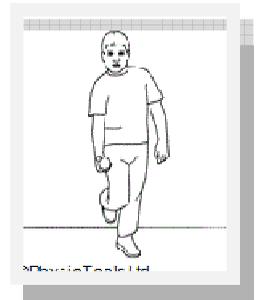


### Balance Throw

Stand on one leg.

Roll a large ball or throw and catch a small ball with your partner.

How many times can you catch before losing your balance?



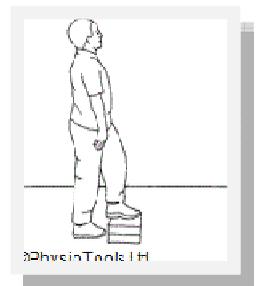
### Telephone Book Balance

Stand on one leg with the other foot resting on a telephone book.

How long can you hold this position for?

Roll a large ball or throw and catch a small ball with your partner in this position.

How many times can you catch before losing your balance?

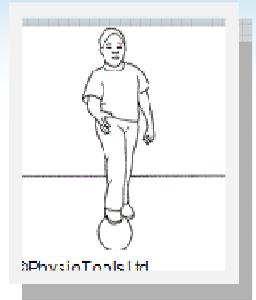


## Standing on One Leg

Stand on one leg with the other foot resting on a medium sized ball.

Aim to hold this position for \_\_\_\_ seconds.

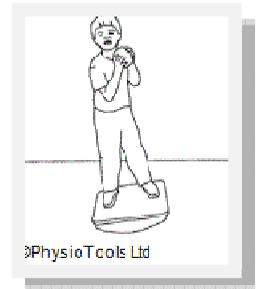
Can you throw and catch a ball whilst holding this position?



## Wobble Board or Cushion

Standing on a large wobble board or cushion with your feet slightly apart. Try not to let the edges of the board touch the floor.

Can you do this whilst throwing and catching a ball?  
Can you do this on one leg?



## Stork Throw

Stand on one leg with your other foot resting on the standing knee. Keep your hips level.

Can you throw ten beanbags into a bucket without losing balance?

Gradually position the bucket further away.



## Dynamic Balance Exercises

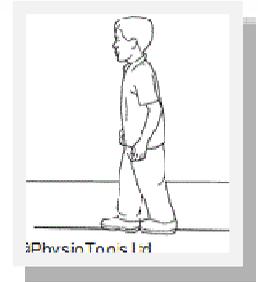
### Line Walking

Tape a line approximately 5m long by 2.5cm wide (using masking tape).

Walk forwards along the line, using your arms as necessary for balance.

Once you have mastered walking forwards, try other ways.

For example, heel-to-toe, walking sideways, walking backwards or walking on tip-toes. If you get really good try and balance a beanbag on your head.

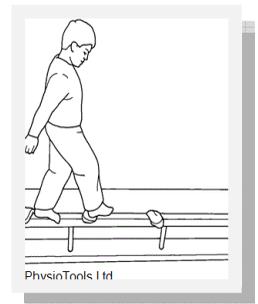


### Balance Beam

Start with a wide bench and gradually decrease the width.

Ensure that you have mats around the bench for safety.

Practice walking along the bench, stepping over beanbags, or small obstacles that have been placed in your path.

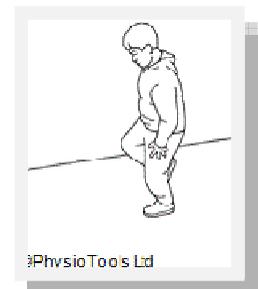


### Hopping

Practice hopping forwards from one side of the room to the other.

Hop along a line.

Hop while clapping at the same time.



## Jumping on Pillows

Place some pillows close together. Pretend the floor is water and try not to fall in by jumping between each pillow.

Bend your knees and swing your arms when jumping and land with your feet together.

Progression:

i. Increase the distance between the pillows.



## Hoop Jumping

As above but with hoops.



## Jump over a Low Rope

Tie a rope between two objects.

Remember to swing your arms behind you, bend your knees, then jump and land with your feet together.

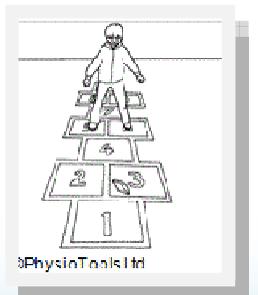
Gradually increase the height of the rope.



## Hopscotch

Throw a beanbag into a square.

Hop over the beanbag to the end of the grid, turn around and pick up the beanbag on your way back.



## Useful Groups in the Community

- Tumbletots
- Swimming
- Judo/Karate
- Dancing
- Gym Clubs
- Horse Riding

## For further information about this service contact:

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If you require this information in a different format such as in large print or on audio tape, or in a different language please contact the service on the details above.

If you have any compliments about this service or suggestions for improvements, contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service on 0300 131 1000 (charges may apply depending on your network) or email: [ccs-tr.pals@nhs.net](mailto:ccs-tr.pals@nhs.net).

For free, confidential health advice and information 24 hours a day, 365 days a year please contact NHS 111.