

Staying Strong at Home

STRENGTH AND BALANCE
TRAINING FOR OLDER
TASMANIANS





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Assumption of risk

If you have unmanaged chronic conditions or other serious health concerns, then you should consult a medical practitioner or allied health professional before undertaking the exercises in this guide.

This is an evidence-based exercise program that has been developed by a fitness professional in line with industry best practice. However, by reading this guide you assume the risk of, and the responsibility for any injury, illness, death or damages that may result from undertaking the exercises in this guide.

Self-evaluation of suitability to undertake exercise

If any of the following circumstances apply, please seek guidance from an appropriate allied health professional or medical practitioner prior to undertaking any of the exercises outlined in this guide.

- Your medical practitioner has ever told you that you have a heart condition or you have ever suffered a stroke.
- You have ever experienced unexplained pains or discomfort in your chest at rest or during physical activity/exercise.
- You have ever felt faint, dizzy or lost your balance during physical activity/exercise.
- You have had an asthma attack requiring immediate medical attention at any time over the last 12 months.
- You have diabetes (type 1 or 2) and you have had trouble controlling your blood sugar (glucose) in the last 3 months.
- You have any other conditions that may require special consideration for you to exercise.

This list is adapted from the Adult Pre Exercise Screening System, which is endorsed by Fitness Australia, Exercise and Sports Science Australia (ESSA) and Sports Medicine Australia (SMA).

The benefits of strength and balance training

Participating in regular strength and balance training offers many benefits, including:

- Increasing muscular strength.
- Increasing bone density (the strength of bones).
- Increasing the strength of ligaments and tendons.
- Improving cardiovascular health.
- Reducing the risk of falls through increased strength, better balance and greater coordination.
- Improving functional ability to undertake everyday tasks, such as shopping, preparing food or cleaning.
- Improving posture and gait.
- Increasing metabolic rate and improving body composition (increasing muscle, reducing fat).
- Alleviating the effects of chronic conditions such as arthritis, heart disease, type 2 diabetes and osteoporosis.
- Prolonging the ability to live independently.
- Increasing self-esteem and self-confidence.
- Improving overall quality of life.

This list is adapted from:

www.healthyliving.com.au

No fitness equipment needed!

No fitness equipment is required for the exercises in this guide. You can make use of everyday items, such as a sturdy chair and tinned food from the pantry.

Ankle cuff weights can be used for increased resistance in some exercises, but are not essential.



Exercise duration and frequency

For those that are able to, we suggest doing strength and balance training exercises three times per week. You should aim for at least one day of recovery between training sessions. For example, you might do strength and balance training on Monday, Wednesday and Friday each week.



Sit to stand

PERFORMING THE EXERCISE

From a seated position, stand upright, then sit back down.

That completes one repetition of the exercise.

TECHNIQUE TIPS

Focus on driving upwards using your leg muscles and gluteal muscles (buttocks). Try not to lean forward and swing yourself up. Maintain a good upright posture, with your shoulders back and chest up.

To assist with the movement, you can place your hands on your thighs or on the arm rests of your chair for support if required. Only make use of the rests if they are strong enough to support your weight throughout the movement.

REPETITIONS

The appropriate number of repetitions is dependent on your individual circumstances.

As a general guide, we suggest that you start with a small number of repetitions of the exercise in your first session; and then gradually increase the number of repetitions over subsequent sessions, as your ability and confidence increase.

A goal to work towards could be performing 8 to 12 repetitions of the exercise. As strength and confidence increases, the goal could be performing 15 to 20 repetitions of the exercise.



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Calf raise

PERFORMING THE EXERCISE

From a standing position, lift yourself up onto the balls and toes of your feet, then slowly lower yourself back to a flat-footed standing position (toes, ball and heel of feet back on the ground).

That completes one repetition of the exercise.

TECHNIQUE TIPS

To assist with stability during the exercise, you can place your hand against a wall for support. You could also use a table or bench for support, providing it is stable and at the right height for you to place your hand on.

If you are confident with your balance, for additional resistance you can hold weights in your hands while performing the exercise. You could use dumbbells if you have them, or you can use everyday household items such as tinned food or bottles of water.

REPETITIONS AND ADDITIONAL RESISTANCE

The appropriate number of repetitions and any additional resistance (such as ankle or hand weights) is dependent on your individual circumstances.

As a general guide, we suggest that you start with a small number of repetitions of the exercise in your first session; and then gradually increase the number of repetitions over subsequent sessions, as your ability and confidence increase.

A goal to work towards could be performing 8 to 12 repetitions of the exercise. As strength and confidence increases, the goal could be performing 15 to 20 repetitions of the exercise.



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Seated leg raise

PERFORMING THE EXERCISE

From a seated position, lift one leg to a straightened position, then slowly lower your leg down until your foot is planted back on the floor.

That completes one repetition of the exercise.

TECHNIQUE TIPS

You may not be able to completely straighten one or both of your legs due to a limited range of motion (e.g. due to muscle tightness). Simply raise each leg as high as you safely can within your range of motion.

REPETITIONS AND ADDITIONAL RESISTANCE

Complete a set of repetitions for each leg.

The appropriate number of repetitions and any additional resistance (such as ankle weights) is dependent on your individual circumstances.

As a general guide, we suggest that you start with a small number of repetitions of the exercise in your first session; and then gradually increase the number of repetitions over subsequent sessions, as your ability and confidence increase.

A goal to work towards could be performing 8 to 12 repetitions of the exercise. As strength and confidence increases, the goal could be performing 15 to 20 repetitions of the exercise.



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Glute bridge

PERFORMING THE EXERCISE

Laying on your back (i.e. looking up at the ceiling), with your knees forming 'mountain peaks', slowly lift your hips until your trunk and thighs form a straight line, squeezing your gluteal muscles (buttocks) at the top of the movement. To complete the exercise, slowly lower your hips back down until you are laying flat on the floor.

That completes one repetition of the exercise.

TECHNIQUE TIPS

It is important to slowly lower yourself back down to the floor to prevent potential injury from dropping suddenly and with force onto your tailbone. Lift your hips only so far as to have your trunk and thighs in a straight line, you should not be overarched your back to push your hips beyond that point.

REPETITIONS

The appropriate number of repetitions is dependent on your individual circumstances.

As a general guide, we suggest that you start with a small number of repetitions of the exercise in your first session; and then gradually increase the number of repetitions over subsequent sessions, as your ability and confidence increase.

A goal to work towards could be performing 8 to 12 repetitions of the exercise. As strength and confidence increases, the goal could be performing 15 to 20 repetitions of the exercise.



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Hammer curl

PERFORMING THE EXERCISE

Start from a seated position with your arm extended straight so that your knuckles point to the floor, with your palm facing towards yourself. Bend your elbow to bring your fist towards your shoulder, squeezing your bicep muscle at the top of the movement. Slowly lower your fist by extending your arm out straight again to complete the exercise. That completes one repetition of the exercise.

TECHNIQUE TIPS

Try not to allow your elbow to come forward – keep your elbow fixed in position at your side throughout the exercise. Keep your shoulders 'pinned down', that is, do not have your shoulders 'shrugged up' as you perform the exercise. If you are confident with your balance, you can also perform this exercise from a standing position.

REPETITIONS AND RESISTANCE

You can use dumbbells for this exercise if you have them, or you can use everyday household items such as tinned food or bottles of water. As a starting point, you could also use no weights at all and simply perform the movement.

The appropriate number of repetitions and amount of resistance is dependent on your individual circumstances.

As a general guide, we suggest that you start with a small number of repetitions of the exercise in your first session; and then gradually increase the number of repetitions over subsequent sessions, as your ability and confidence increase.

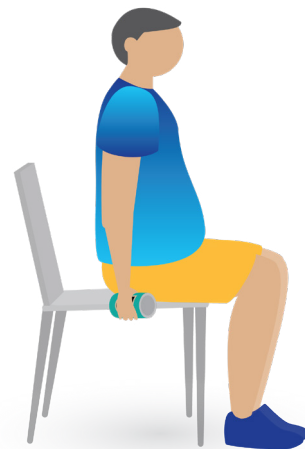
A goal to work towards could be performing 8 to 12 repetitions of the exercise. As strength and confidence increases, the goal could be performing 15 to 20 repetitions of the exercise or increasing the level of resistance (weight).



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Lateral raise

PERFORMING THE EXERCISE

From a standing position with elbows bent so that your arms form a 90 degree angle and your thumbs are pointing up to the ceiling, raise your arms up using your shoulder (deltoid) muscles. Slowly lower your arms back down to your side to complete the exercise.

That completes one repetition of the exercise.

TECHNIQUE TIPS

Keep your shoulders 'pinned down', that is, do not have your shoulders 'shrugged up' as you perform the exercise. To keep the focus on your shoulder (deltoid) muscles and maintain the correct movement, think about pushing your elbows out and up, rather than leading with your hands. If you are not confident with your balance, you can also perform this exercise from a seated position (provided the seat does not have arm rests).

REPETITIONS AND RESISTANCE

You can use dumbbells for this exercise if you have them, or you can use everyday household items such as tinned food or bottles of water. As a starting point, you could also use no weights at all and simply perform the movement.

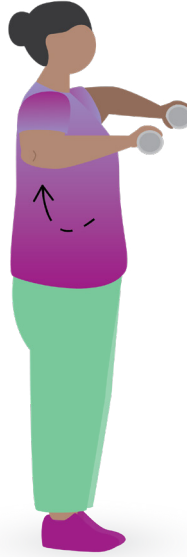
The appropriate number of repetitions and amount of resistance is dependent on your individual circumstances.

As a general guide, we suggest that you start with a small number of repetitions of the exercise in your first session; and then gradually increase the number of repetitions over subsequent sessions, as your ability and confidence increase.

A goal to work towards could be performing 8 to 12 repetitions of the exercise. As strength and confidence increases, the goal could be performing 15 to 20 repetitions of the exercise or increasing the level of resistance (weight).



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Standing hip abduction

PERFORMING THE EXERCISE

From a standing position with your feet together, raise one leg out to the side of your body, keeping your leg straight and your foot pointing straight ahead. Lower your leg back down, bringing your feet together again.

That completes one repetition of the exercise.

TECHNIQUE TIPS

Keep your feet pointing straight ahead of you throughout the exercise.

To assist with maintaining a straight leg whilst performing the exercise, you can try to point/curl the toes of the moving leg back towards yourself whilst performing the exercise.

To assist with stability during the exercise, you can place your hand against a wall for support. You could also use a table or bench for support, providing it is stable and at the right height for you to place your hand on.

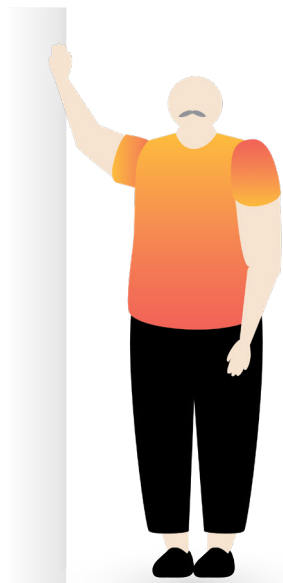
REPETITIONS AND ADDED RESISTANCE

Complete a set of repetitions for each side.

The appropriate number of repetitions and any additional resistance (such as ankle weights) is dependent on your individual circumstances.

As a general guide, we suggest that you start with a small number of repetitions of the exercise in your first session; and then gradually increase the number of repetitions over subsequent sessions, as your ability and confidence increase.

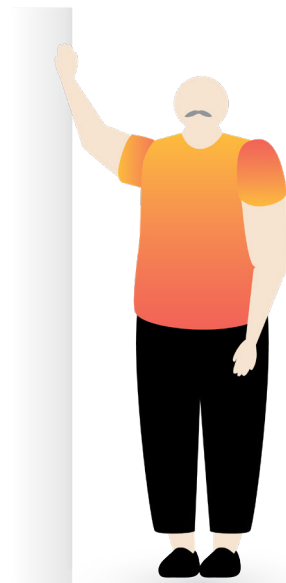
A goal to work towards could be performing 8 to 12 repetitions of the exercise. As strength and confidence increases, the goal could be performing 15 to 20 repetitions of the exercise.



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Tandem stance (heel-to-toe)

PERFORMING THE EXERCISE

From a standing position, move your left foot directly in front of your right foot, so that your left heel now touches your right toes. Hold this position for the target time.

That completes one repetition of the exercise.

TECHNIQUE TIPS

For assistance with maintaining your balance, you can hold your arms out to your sides (in a 'T' position) if needed.

For further assistance with maintaining your balance during the exercise, you can place your hand against a wall for support. You could also use a table or bench for support, providing it is stable and at the right height for you to place your hand on.

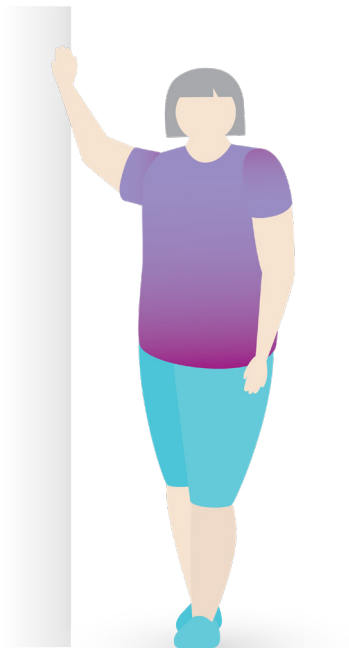
REPETITIONS AND DURATION

Complete repetitions for each side. That is, for one side you would be placing your left foot in front of your right foot; and for the other side you would be placing your right foot in front of your left foot.

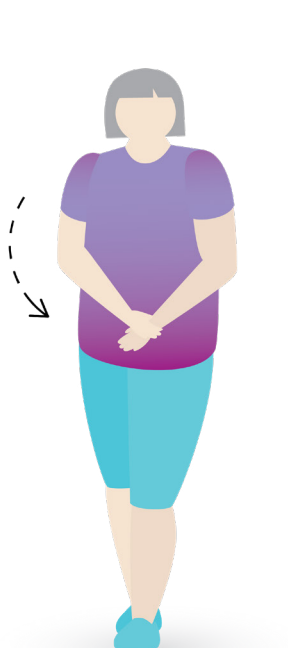
The appropriate number of repetitions and the duration for holding the exercise position on each side is dependent on your individual circumstances.

As a general guide, we suggest that you start with a shorter duration for the holding position of the exercise in your first session; and then gradually increase the duration over subsequent sessions, as your ability and confidence increase.

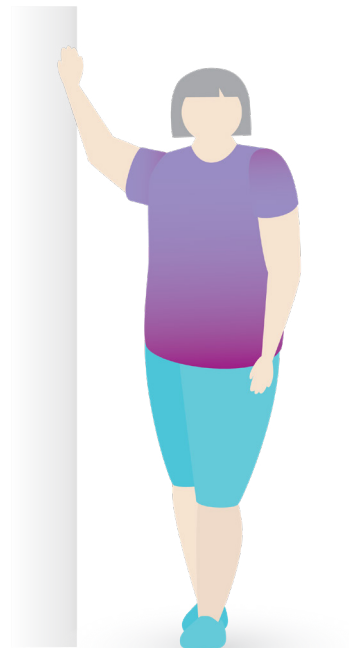
A goal to work towards could be performing the exercise for a duration of 10 seconds on each side. As your confidence increases, a new goal could be performing the exercise for a duration of 30 seconds or even up to 1 minute on each side.



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One leg stand

PERFORMING THE EXERCISE

From a standing position, bend the knee of one leg bringing your heel towards your gluteal muscles (buttocks). Hold this position for the designated time, then slowly extend your leg, lowering your foot back to the floor.

That completes one repetition of the exercise.

TECHNIQUE TIPS

For assistance with maintaining your balance, you can hold your arms out to your sides (in a 'T' position) if needed.

For further assistance with maintaining your balance during the exercise, you can place your hand against a wall for support. You could also use a table or bench for support, providing it is stable and at the right height for you to place your hand on.

REPETITIONS AND DURATION

Complete repetitions for each side.

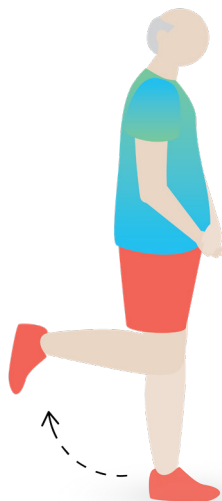
The appropriate number of repetitions and the duration for holding the exercise position on each side is dependent on your individual circumstances.

As a general guide, we suggest that you start with a shorter duration for the holding position of the exercise in your first session; and then gradually increase the duration over subsequent sessions, as your ability and confidence increase.

A goal to work towards could be performing the exercise for a duration of 10 seconds on each side. As your confidence increases, a new goal could be performing the exercise for a duration of 30 seconds or even up to 1 minute on each side.



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Visit the COTA Tasmania website to find a range of health and wellbeing resources for older Tasmanians.

- Strength and balance exercises you can do from home.
- Information about nutrition for older adults.
- Find physical activities in your local area.

www.cotatas.org.au

