

Pilates for Lifelong Mobility

Spring 2024

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Week 4 - Balance Exercises

*****Have a chair with a high back to use for stability. You will need to sit, stand facing the back or the side of the chair, depending on the exercise.*****

Leg Lifts - Seated

1. Sit and have your back against the chair, with knees bent at 90°. (If your feet don't touch the floor use a few folded towels or a small stool for your feet.) Pull the bellybutton into the spine while keeping the shoulders down and in line with the hips.
2. Arms are bent with hands on your thighs. Keep your shoulders and hips stacked and aligned into a box.
3. Lift your right foot off the ground one or two inches. Feel like you are pressing your thigh into your hand. Hold for 3 seconds and place your foot back down.
4. Repeat 3-5 times for the right and then 3-5 times for the left.

Leg Lifts - Seated with Extension

1. Sit and have your back against the chair, with knees bent at 90°. (If your feet don't touch the floor use a few folded towels or a small stool for your feet.) Pull the bellybutton into the spine while keeping the shoulders down and in line with the hips.
2. Arms are bent with hands on your thighs. Keep your shoulders and hips stacked and aligned into a box.
3. Lift your right foot off the ground one or two inches. Feel like you are pressing your thigh into your hand. Extend your foot out to straighten your knee. Hold the leg out for 3 seconds, bend the knee and place your foot back down.
4. Repeat 3-5 times for the right and then 3-5 times for the left.

Leg Lifts - Standing

1. Stand with a chair to the side of your body. You can have your left hand on the chair for support if needed.
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2. Keep your box stacked and lift your right foot up in front of you as high as 90°. Hold for 3 seconds while maintaining your box, before returning your foot to the floor.
 3. Repeat 3 times on the right and then turn around to repeat 3 times on the left.

Leg Lifts - Standing to the side

1. Stand with a chair to the side of your body. You can have your left hand on the chair for support if needed.
2. Keep your box stacked, lift and lengthen your right leg out to the side with your big toe on the ground. Lift your leg 1-2 inches. Hold for 3 seconds while maintaining your box, then return your big toe to the floor. Repeat 3 times before bringing the feet back together.
3. Repeat 3 times on the right and then turn around to repeat 3 times on the left.

Leg Lifts - Standing to the Back

1. Stand with a chair in front of your body. You can have your hands on the chair for support if needed.
2. Keep your box stacked and point your right foot to the back, extending from your seat so the foot is only 1-2 inches from the floor with your leg straight. Hold for 3 seconds while maintaining your box, then return your big toe to the floor. Repeat 3 times before bringing the feet back together.
3. Turn around to repeat 3 times on the left.

*****As you practice over the weeks, try holding on to the chair with a lighter grip, or not at all for a few repetitions. Do this until you can maintain your stability without the external support of the chair.*****