

# BALANCE CHALLENGE

Balance is our ability to maintain a stable posture.  
The following activity suggestions are designed to develop balance while having fun.

## Walking:

- ☀ Along cracks/joins in the pavement, touching heels to toes.
- ☀ Place small mats made out of cardboard or carpet on the floor. Follow the course by placing one foot on each 'stone'. Vary the distance between them. Ensure that the mats do not slip on the floor.

## Floor Activities:

- ☀ Balance on hands and knees. Lift up one leg or arm and try to keep your balance.
- ☀ Try to maintain balance while standing on one leg with their hands on their hips. Make it more difficult by swinging your free leg and, later, to slowly make shapes in the air with your other foot.

## Play Equipment:

- ☀ Visit the local playground and have fun playing on swings, slides, balance beams, climbing frames and ladders.
- ☀ Kicking a tennis ball to a partner. Stop the ball with your foot, rest your foot on top of it for a few seconds before kicking it back. Try a larger ball, larger balls are more difficult.
- ☀ Toy stilts can be bought from toyshops. The best ones to start with are shapes that support the whole foot with a length of rope to hold onto.

## Trampolining:

- ☀ You could enrol for classes; or use a large garden trampoline ensuring there is a surrounding safety net and that a responsible adult is nearby for safety. Begin by bouncing in sitting, then try kneeling and finally standing. You can then try jumping with feet apart and then back together; hop on alternate feet; jump sideways, forwards and backwards.

## Hopscotch:

- ☀ Try jumping with both feet together and then move up to hopping on one foot.

## Balance on hands and knees:

- ☀ Practice keeping your balance by lifting up one leg or one arm. Make it more difficult by lifting up a leg and opposite arm at the same time.

## Statues:

- ☀ See if you can jump off a chair and stay still like a statue in your landing position for a few seconds, without moving.

## Standing on one leg:

- ☀ When standing on one leg, initially hold hands with someone. Then try to let go gradually. Next pinch one earlobe with the tip of your finger and thumb and look straight ahead, and stare at an object as you slowly lift your leg and hold it up for as long as possible. Keep a record of your times.

## Aeroplanes:

- ☀ Lie on the floor on your tummy. They lift your head, shoulders and arms off the floor and count to 10. Now lift your legs off the floor as well, keeping your legs straight. Count to 10 and relax.

## Other activities for balance:

- ☀ Horse riding
- ☀ Musical statues
- ☀ Gymnastics
- ☀ Twister game
- ☀ Using a scooter
- ☀ Nintendo Wii fit has games for balance

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