

# Chapter 5

## Everyday Exercises for Core Strength and Flexibility

### Standing exercises for flexibility

#### Key Tips for all Standing Exercise

1. Stand with your feet in parallel under your hips or a foot apart, whichever feels more stable to you. Keep your weight equally in the balls and heels of your feet.
2. Notice your abdominals throughout all exercises and keep them tight/engaged. If you forget to keep them tight, just notice and tighten them again.
3. Breath in and out gently but deeply. Inhale through your nose if possible. Exhale out your mouth.



#### 1. Side stretch

- 1) Stand with feet under hips or a foot apart so you feel stable. Let your arms hang at your sides. Take a deep INHALE and raise both arms out to the side and up over your head or as far up as your shoulders allow, hands apart.
- 2) Lean your head gently to the right and slowly lower your right arm down your side. Your elbow can be bent as much as needed for comfort. Stay to the side and EXHALE out your mouth. Take 3 deep inhales and exhales, relaxing the left side of your neck and your right shoulder with each exhale.
- 3) To come up, inhale and raise your right arm and right side up to stand with both arms over head again. It is important to keep your abdominal muscles tightened. This supports your spine and protects against strain.
- 4) Repeat on the left side.



## 2. Overhead Stretch

- 1) Stand with feet under hips or a foot apart so you feel stable. Let your arms hang at your sides. Take a deep INHALE and raise both arms out to the side and up over your head or as far up as your shoulders allow, hands apart.
- 2) Interlace your fingers or keep them apart. INHALE and stretch straight up, allowing your shoulders, whole back, and stomach to stretch upwards. Keep the hands up and EXHALE, letting all the body relax. Repeat with 3 to 5 inhale stretches up and exhale relax the shoulders, back and stomach.



## 3. Arch Back (Adding)

- 1) Stand with feet under your hips. Keep your weight in both the balls and heels of your feet equally. Let your arms hang at your sides.
- 2) Take a deep INHALE and hold your breath as you lift your chin, nose to the ceiling, and gently arch the upper back backwards. You can hold onto a chair or counter if you fear falling. Tighten your glute or butt muscles and thighs to hold you.
- 3.) After holding your breath for 3 to 5 counts, squeeze your abdominals and your glutes, then EXHALE and rise back up to standing. Repeat 2 to 4 times.

**NOTE:** The Overhead Stretch is very good when doing an activity where you lean forward for 15 minutes or more. It relaxes the low back muscles. It is excellent for everyday to stop while playing card games, gardening, at a computer, playing with a child, working on a car, cooking, etc.



#### 4. Forward roll-ups

This stretch and relax the core back muscles and open the spaces between your vertebrae. This helps lubricate your spine and relax your back.

- 1) Stand with your feet in parallel under your hips or 2' apart, so you feel stable. Keep your weight in both the balls and heels of your feet equally. Let your arms hang at your sides.
- 2) Take a deep INHALE and as you slowly EXHALE, drop your chin to your chest, bend your knees, and round forward. STOP when you feel your back is stretched comfortably.
- 3) Take another INHALE, tighten your stomach muscles, and round back up slowly, one vertebrae at a time back to standing. Repeat 2 to 3 times.



#### 5. Shoulder rolls

These improve your ability to move your shoulders and arms, reduce stress in your trapezius muscles, and enhance your posture which is key to balance.

- 1) Stand with feet a hip distance apart. Keep your weight in both the balls and heels of your feet equally. Let your arms hang at your sides.
- 2) Take a deep INHALE and roll your shoulders up towards your ears, then backwards, down, forward, and back up to neutral. Roll them 8 times. Keep your abdominals and glutes gently engaged to protect your low back. T
- 3) Now reverse the shoulder roll: take a deep INHALE, and roll your shoulders forward, down, backward, up towards your ears, and back to neutral. Roll them 8 times.



**6. Hip circles**



**7. Rotational stretch**



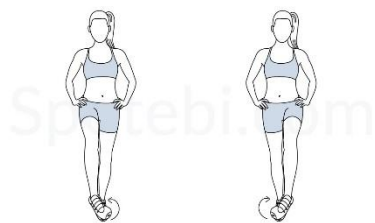
**8. Hamstring stretch**



**9. Calf stretch**



**10. Quad Stretch (added in)**



**11. Standing Ankle Rolls (show using wall support)**



**Palms Facing each other**



**Palms Facing Up**



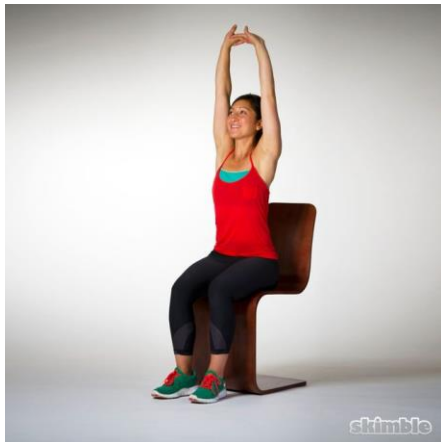
**Palms Facing Down**

## **11. Hand stretches**

## Seated exercises for flexibility

### Key Tips for all Seated Exercise

1. Stand with your feet in parallel under your hips or a foot apart, whichever feels more stable to you. Keep your weight equally in the balls and heels of your feet.
2. Notice your abdominals throughout all exercises and keep them tight/engaged. If you forget to keep them tight, just notice and tighten them again.
3. Breath in and out gently but deeply. Inhale through your nose if possible. Exhale out your mouth.



### 1. Seated Overhead Stretch - added

- Sit up straight in a chair.
- Lift both arms up overhead. You can interlace fingers, inhale, and stretch your hands up towards the ceiling. If you prefer not to interlace the fingers, just stretch hands up towards the ceiling. Either way, try to stretch from the waist and up the back as well as you inhale. On the exhale relax your body and shoulders. Repeat 5 times with an inhale.
- You can add alternately reaching one arm at a time upwards, from your waist if you can. Alternate, 5 sets of right arm, left arm reaches.



## 2. Seated shoulder rolls

Sit upright in a chair with your feet flat on the ground, and your abdominals slightly tight/engaged.

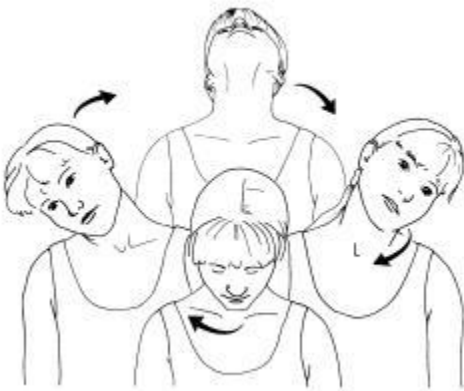
2) Take a deep INHALE and roll your shoulders up towards your ears, then backwards, down, forward, and back up to neutral. Roll them 8 times. Keep your abdominals and glutes gently engaged to protect your low back. T

3) Now reverse the shoulder roll: take a deep INHALE, and roll your shoulders forward, down, backward, up towards your ears, and back to neutral. Roll them 8 times.



## 3. Seated Forward Roll-Up

- 1) Sit in a chair with your legs extended, heels on the floor, and feet flexed with toes upwards. Extend your arms in front of you.
- 2) Slowly curl your chin to your chest and gently round the upper back, only as far as is comfortable. Then, inhale as you roll back up to the seated position, one vertebra at a time.
- 3) Repeat 3 to 5 times slowly.



## 4 Neck circles

(Note- Don't let the head go back that far – inaccurate sketch for seniors)





## 5. Hip marching

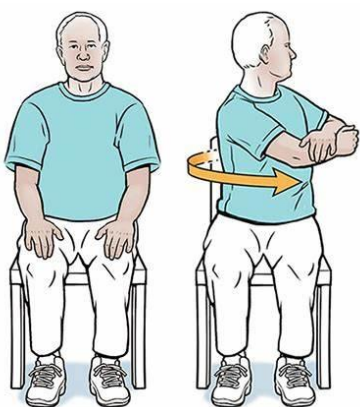
Seated hip marching helps seniors maintain lower body strength. Of great importance, it improves walking endurance as well as enhances the ability to pick up objects from lower surfaces.

1. **Sit in a chair** with your feet flat on the floor.
2. **Lift your right knee** as high as is comfortable.
3. **Lower your leg** back down.
4. **Alternate lifting your knees** for a total of **10 lifts per leg**.

Remember to maintain regular breathing throughout the exercise. Avoid performing more than 20 hip marches in a row to prevent fatigue and soreness. You can also place your hands on your thighs and resist the upward movement of your knees by pushing downward for an added challenge.

### Benefits of Hip Marching:

- Strengthens your **hip flexors** (the muscles responsible for lifting your leg when stepping over obstacles).
- Improves **walking endurance**.
- Enhances balance for reaching and turning at home or in the backyard.
- (all good but straight off internet. Need to rephrase)



## 6. **Seated rotational stretch**

- 1) Sit up straight in a chair.
- 2) Lift your arms up and grab each opposite forearm OR place one hand on each opposite shoulder (Butterfly pose).
- 3) Gently rotate the upper body to one side while keeping the hips in place. Do not rotate to the point of discomfort.
- 4) Hold the stretch for a few seconds, and then switch sides and repeat.



## 7. **Ankle rolls**

Inward and Outward Rolls

1. Sit back in seat. Tighten abdominals so back is pressed against the back of the seat to avoid arching the low

# Everyday Exercises for Core Strengthening

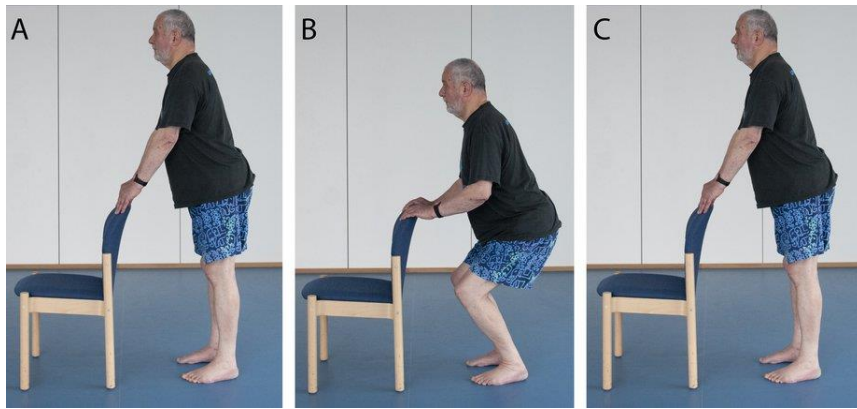
## Standing exercises to improve your core strength



**1. Side bend**



**2. Side reaches (added)**



Or



### 3. Squat

- Stand up tall with feet shoulder-width apart.
- Toes can be facing forward, or slightly outwards.
- Hold onto a chair with both hands or keep arms out straight in front for balance.
- Engage core, hinge (bend) at the hips and sit back as you would if you were to sit on a chair.
- Keep eyes forward, chest up, and heels planted.
- Push hips back to lower into a squat.



or



### 3. Lunge



### 4. Plank walkouts

## Seated exercises or on floor to improve your core strength



or



1. Forearm plank on floor



2. Modified plank in chair



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### 3. Seated side bends

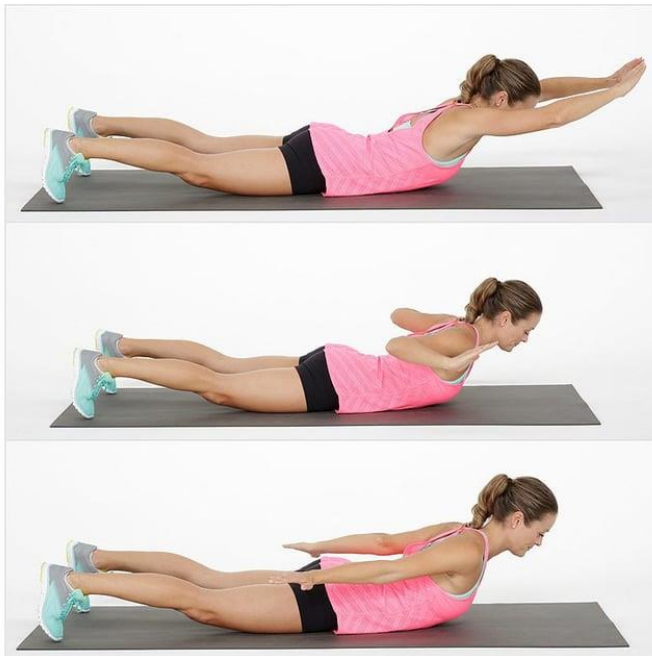


### 4. Seated leg lifts





**5. Glute bridges on floor**



**6. Superman Pose on floor**

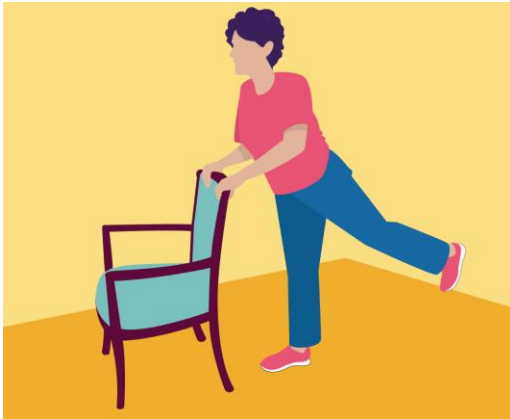


## Exercises for balance and alignment

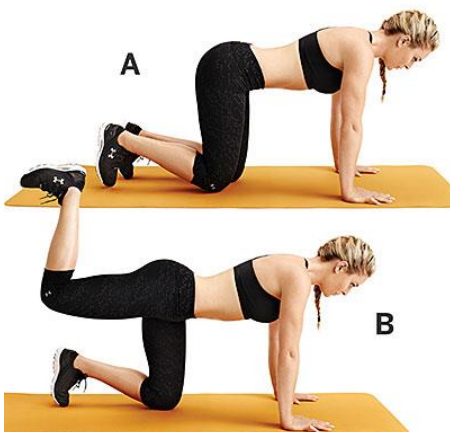


### 1. Walking heel to toe

Maintain a **steady heel-to-toe gait**. This involves striking the ground with your heel first, then rolling through your heel to your toe, and pushing out of the step with your toe. Avoid flat-footed steps or striking the ground with your toes first.



### 2. Back leg raises



### 3. Single leg lift with support (e.g., chair, kitchen counter)



#### 4. Side leg raise



#### 5. Marching in place

- Stand next to a chair or counter. You can use this for support if you begin to fall. .
- Stand with your feet slightly apart (as you normally stand) and your arms at your side.
- March in place, lifting each knee high toward the ceiling and elbows to 50 degrees.
- Do this 20 times.



**6. Toe lifts**



**7. Heel Lifts (added)**



**8. Single limb stance**



**9. Standing leg circles**

## Yoga poses to improve balance and alignment



1. Tree pose – More advanced balance exercise



2. Puppy pose

**Puppy Pose** is a basic **yoga asana** that offers a **multitude of health benefits**. Not only does it enhance strength, flexibility, and focus but it also promotes a deep sense of calm.



3. Bird Dog Pose (added)

4. Eagle pose (delete)



or seated



## 5. Cat-Cow