

Exercises For Standing on One Leg

Standing on one leg is an important skill that helps children develop balance, strength, and body control.

Standing on one leg can help to support:

Balance and postural control – Standing on one leg challenges a child's ability to stay upright and steady. This helps to develop balance and overall stability.

Strength in legs and core – Supporting body weight on one leg strengthens the muscles of the hips, thighs, ankles, and core that are important for other activities such as walking, running, jumping and climbing.

Weight shifting and coordination – Single-leg standing teaches children how to shift their weight safely from one side of the body to the other. This is important for other skills such as climbing stairs, kicking a ball, hopping, and stepping over obstacles.

Body awareness and motor planning – Balancing on one leg can help children to understand where their body is in space and helps them to learn how to control their movements

Safety

Supervision

- Single-leg standing activities should be initially supervised closely by an adult
- The adult should stay within arm's reach initially when the child is first learning
- Provide handhold support or a stable surface (wall, rail chair) as needed and slowly reduce as the child becomes more confident

Environment

- Practice in a clear open area free of toys, furniture or tripping hazards
- Ensure the space is well-lit and calm with minimal distractions

Weight shifting from side to side

Position your child in standing with feet shoulder width apart.

Encourage them to lean their body weight from one foot to the other (side to side). Use handhold support if required initially.

Progress by reducing handhold support and getting your child to hold the weight shift for 2-3 seconds.

Marching

Position your child in standing with feet hip width apart.

Encourage them to march (on the spot initially), focusing on lifting their knees as high as they can. Use handhold support initially if required.

Progress by taking away support and by encouraging them to move around while continuing to march.

Standing with one foot on a step



Position your child in standing, in front of a low step. Encourage them to put one foot on the step and balance in this position.

Alternate which foot is on the step.

Progress by increasing the amount of time that your child is balancing for. You can also increase the height of the step or swap it for a ball.

Obstacle course



Set up cushions, pillows, and other obstacles to step over or onto.

Encourage stepping up, stepping down and moving around obstacles.

Provide hand hold assistance initially if required before progressing to let them do it with just supervision

Standing on one leg



Start with your child in standing. Initially position them in front of a low surface such as a table or chair that they can hold onto for support.

Encourage them to lift one leg off the floor and balance, initially using support.

Progress by increasing the length of time that they are balancing for or by reducing support.