

SilverSneakers Stability Sample Class

SilverSneakers Stability is a drills and skills class designed to improve balance, agility, mobility and power in an older adult. All functional movements require a working balance system from walking down the street, to dancing, to executing a squat.

It is recommended that you perform off-balance exercises at the beginning of your workout before your muscles become fatigued. Progress slowly, starting by standing on both legs, then one leg. Add arm movements and progressions only after mastering simpler moves. A recommendation is to train in the sagittal plane first, as that is the first plane we wake up in every morning.

Cues may include:

- Keep your chin and shoulders level.
- Imagine there is string connected to the top of your head that is being pulled toward the ceiling.
- Long and strong spine.
- Aim for controlled instability.
- Move the shoulders and hips together.
- Balance exercises may and should be done every day for best result.
- Practice makes PER...MANENT! Need to practice correctly.

Be sure to cue for breathing, posture, hydration and perceived exertion.

Warm-Up and Range of Motion

(Standing)

1. Walk in place into alternating knee lift.
 - Cue: Walk at your own pace, weight shift.
 - Cue: Shift weight to one direction by sliding hips and shoulders to that direction.
 - Progression: Higher knee lift; long arms extend front.
 - Regression: Alternating heel lift.
2. Fast feet.
 - Cue: Move at a pace that feels good to you.
 - Regression: Alternating heel lift.
3. Traveling alternating knee lift around the chair.
 - Cue: Turn your toes to help you navigate around the chair.
4. Tap toe front, side, back, center, repeat L 4x each side (sagittal, frontal), hands on hips.
 - Cue: Draw a semi-circle with toe 180°, circle - 360°.
 - Progression: Sweep toes, front, side, back, center.
5. Step in a square.
 - Cue: Imagine stepping in the 4 corners of a square - front, side, back, in.

6. Knee flexion and extension.
7. Pendulum lunge: rear lunge down-up, tap in > front lunge down-up, tap back.
 - Cue: Imagine stepping over an obstacle.
 - Progression: Tap becomes a knee lift.
8. Calf stretch with single arm reach.
 - Progression: double arm reach up-down.
9. Pelvic tilt with biceps arm curl.

-repeat other side-

Get water – PE Check

Work: Static Balance

1. Double heel lift – hold x5 sec., repeat 2-4x.
 - Progression: Add single overhead reach, add double overhead reach hold x 5 sec., repeat 2-4x.
2. Double toe lift – hold x 5 sec., repeat 2-4x.
 - Progression: Add single arm overhead reach x 5 sec., repeat 2x.
3. Hip opener: Lift knee front, open out to the side, hold 5 seconds, repeat 2-4x.
 - Cue: Keep hips facing front.
 - Progression: hands on hips. Repeat other side.
4. Rear lunge, hold down, extend both arms up, push them down as back foot steps in with power.
 - Progression: tap in becomes a knee lift.
 - Regression: bend arms at the elbows rather than extending all the way up.

-repeat other side-

5. Big step or hop forward and hold 3-5 seconds.

-step back and repeat-

Work: Dynamic Balance and Gait

1. Body circles - sway in a circle R to L 4x, stand with feet shoulder width apart, add arms out to side for more support. Repeat sway L to R 4x.
 - Cue: Remember to lean from your ankles and keep your spine lengthened.
 - Cue: Keep torso straight.

- Progression: Narrow base for greater challenge or hold a sheet of paper with both hands and read while swaying.

2. Knee extension-flexion > Knee lift hold with toe/ankle circles.

- Progression: Let go of knee lift and add wrist circles with ankle circles.

-repeat other side-

3. Alternating squat with tap in.

- Progression: tap front or across the body.
- Progression: tap behind the body.
- Progression: Squat tap front-side-back.

4. Narrow squat.

- Progression: Rear lunge into narrow squat.

5. Traveling walking knee lift forward 4x, backwards 4x.

6. Side lunge to tap back in.

- Cue: Catch yourself, then push back in. Train for the “catch and land, then push off.”
- Progression: push off into a knee lift.

7. Rotational squat, 3-5x.

-repeat other side-

Get water – PE Check

Work: Somatosensory Variations

1. Narrow squat, arms front.

- Progression: Close one or both eyes.
- Progression: Let go of the chair.

2. Knee lift hold while turning face to look right, hold, left, hold.

- Progression: Hands on hips.
- Progression: both arms reach front, open one arm to the same side head is turning.
- Regression: tap down.

-repeat other side-

3. Slow walk with a step and head turn, forward 4x, backward 4x.

4. Kickstand position with 90% weight in one leg. Lift both arms front. Turn head right while opening right arm towards the right side.

- Progression: Knee lift.

- Progression: knee lift opens with arms during head turn.
5. Extend leg behind. Reach forward while lifting toes off the floor.
 6. Semi-tandem stance, arms out to the side. Hold 3-5 seconds.
 - Progression: stand on toes.
 - Progression: squint/dim eyes or close eyes.
 - Progression: arms down, not holding on to chair.

-repeat exercises on other leg-

Cool-Down

(please note, mistakenly not included in sample class)

1. Spinal rotation-split stance variations; semi-tandem, tandem, and tightrope with heel lifts.
2. March, reach R arm front, shoulder height, lift arm, overhead, reach arm out to R side, eyes follow, 4x repeat L 4x.
 - Progression: R toe touch F, reach R arm F (shoulder height), R toe touch side, add R arm open out to side, turn head, gaze follows, repeat L.
3. Slowly turn head to the R and L 8x (driving exercise).
 - Progression: Add holding a steering wheel, add spinal rotation with head turn R & L.

Final Stretch

(seated)

1. Extend R leg F, hamstring stretch, hinge F, extend R arm, circle wrist, touch thumb to tip of each finger.
2. Lower R toe to floor, stretch, tibialis anterior, draw foot and heel under chair for gastrocnemius stretch.
3. Lift R knee, hold under R thigh, point, flex, circle ankles. Open for straddle stretch.
4. Turn R, seated lunge, lean F, extend L arm, lean back, and hold.
5. Come back center repeat 4 stretches above L.
6. Back to center, arms open wide for a chest stretch.
7. One arm sweeps across body for a shoulder stretch. Circle wrist forward and backward. Repeat on the other side.

8. Raise arms front, palms up. Bend at elbows and touch palms to shoulders. Lift elbows towards the ceiling for a triceps stretch. Release wrists up to ceiling, Float arms front and down. Palms forward into anterior deltoid and biceps stretch.
9. Reach for the back or sides of the chair. Lean forward slightly to stretch the upper back. Chin gently tucks toward chest.

Get water – PE Check

Relaxation

1. Cue: Sit back in your chair. Soften gaze, close your eyes or take your eyes to your thighs. Notice your breath, inhale and exhale through the nose, exhale through mouth. Have an attitude of gratitude.
2. Say 3 positive affirmations:
 - May I be gentle, may I be calm.
 - May I be strong, may I be healthy.
 - May I be strong and healthy in body and in mind.
 - Have students repeat silently to themselves.
3. Open eyes, inhale, arms reach overhead, bring in positive energy, bring arms by side and release, negative energy, pain, fatigue draw hands together at heart center.