

Exercises for older people



Strength

Getting started

If you've not done much physical activity for a while, you may want to get the all-clear from a GP before starting.

For the exercises that require a chair, choose one that is stable, solid and without wheels. You should be able to sit with feet flat on the floor and knees bent at right angles. Avoid chairs with arms as this will restrict your movement.

Wear loose, comfortable clothing and keep some water handy.

Try to attempt these exercises at least twice a week, this will help to improve muscle strength, balance and co-ordination.

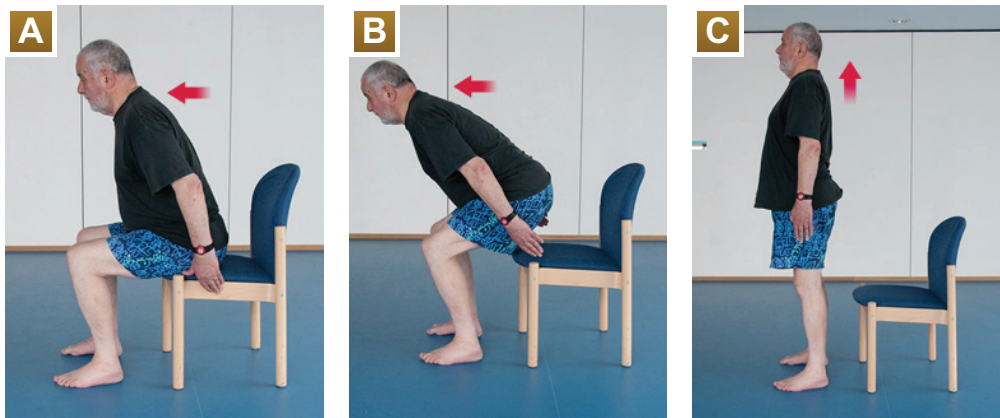
Build up slowly and aim to increase the repetitions of each exercise over time.

As your fitness improves, why not look for a group session near you? Age UK have lots of ideas. www.ageuk.org.uk

There are three other sets of exercises in this series: Sitting, Flexibility and Balance.
Go to www.nhs.uk/exercises-for-older-people to download.



SIT TO STAND



This is good for leg strength.

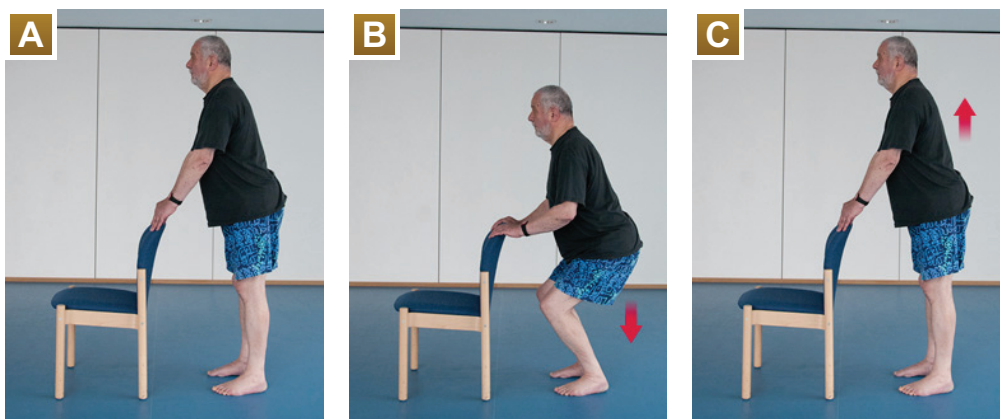
A. Sit on the edge of the chair, feet hip-width apart. Lean slightly forwards.

B. Stand up slowly, using your legs, not arms. Keep looking forwards, not down.

C. Stand upright before slowly sitting down, bottom-first.

Aim for five repetitions - the slower the better.

MINI SQUATS



A. Rest your hands on the back of the chair for stability and stand with your feet hip-width apart.

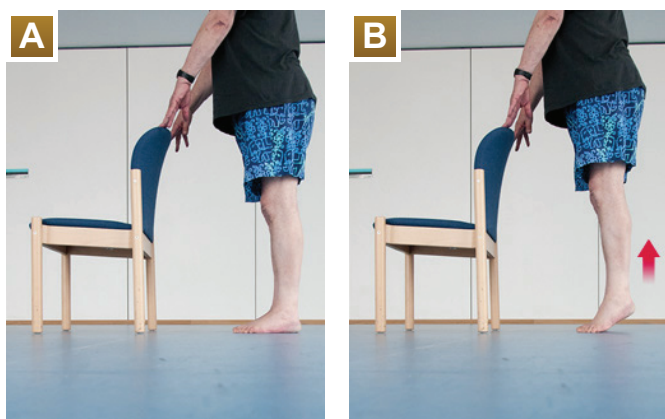
B. Slowly bend your knees as far as is comfortable, keeping them facing forwards. Aim to get them over your big toe. Keep your back straight at all times.

C. Gently come up to standing, squeezing your buttocks as you do.

Repeat five times.



CALF RAISES

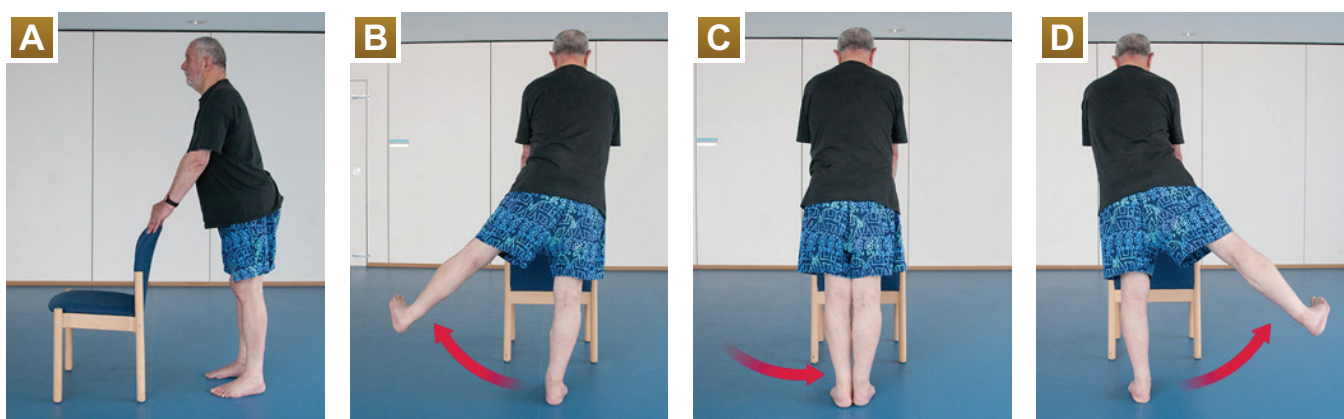


A. Rest your hands on the back of a chair for stability.

B. Lift both heels off the floor as far as is comfortable. The movement should be slow and controlled.

Repeat five times. For more difficulty, perform this exercise without support.

SIDEWAYS LEG LIFT



A. Rest your hands on the back of a chair for stability.

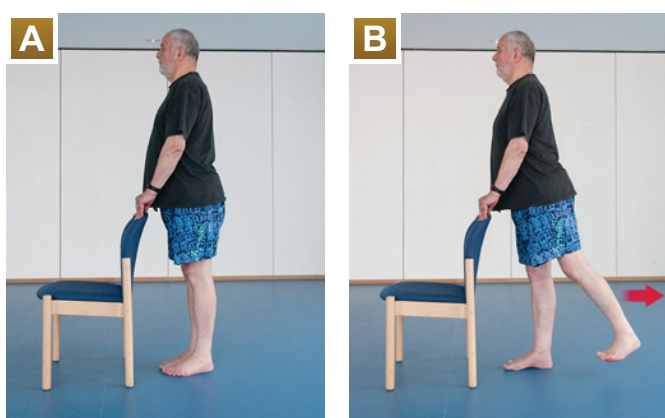
B. Raise your left leg to the side as far as is comfortable, keeping your back and hips straight. Avoid tilting to the right.

C. Return to the starting position.

D. Now raise your right leg to the side as far as possible.

Raise and lower each leg five times.

LEG EXTENSION



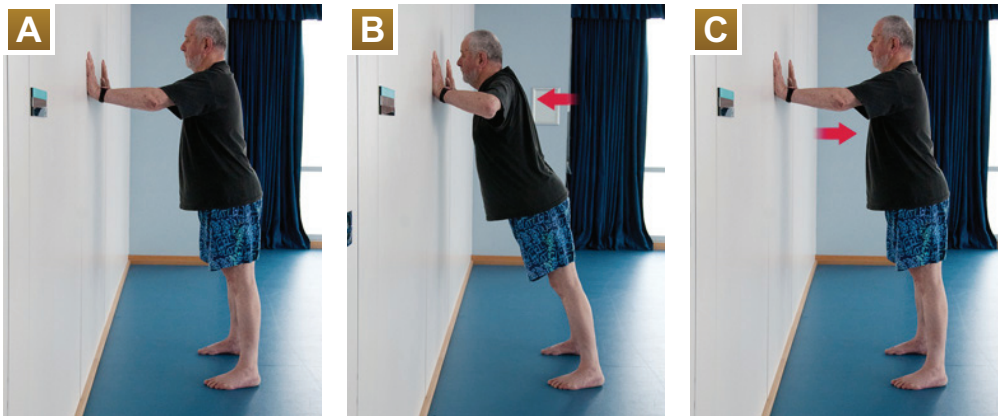
A. Rest your hands on the back of a chair for stability.

B. Standing upright, raise your left leg backwards, keeping it straight. Avoid arching your back as you take your leg back. You should feel the effort in the back of your thigh and bottom. Repeat with the other leg.

Hold the lift for up to five seconds and repeat five times with each leg.



WALL PRESS UP



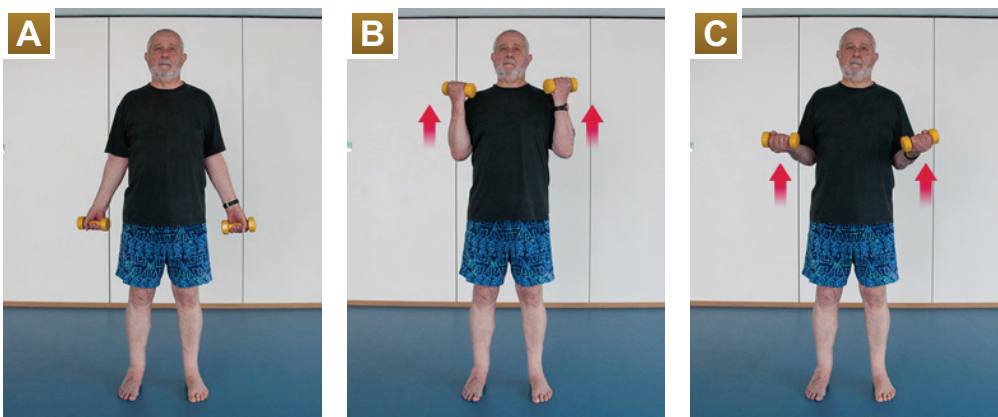
A. Stand at arm's length from the wall. Place your hands flat against the wall, at chest level, with fingers pointing upwards.

B. With back straight, slowly bend your arms, keeping elbows by your side. Aim to close the gap between you and the wall as much as you can.

C. Slowly return to the start.

Attempt three sets of 5–10 repetitions.

BICEP CURLS



A. Hold a pair of light weights (filled water bottles will do) and stand with your feet hip-width apart.

B. Keeping your arms by your side, slowly bend them until the weight in your hand reaches your shoulder.

C. Lower again slowly.

This can also be carried out while sitting. Attempt three sets of five curls with each arm.