

Balance

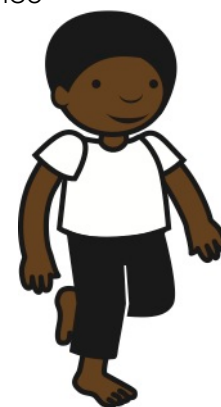
Balance is an important skill required for all that we do and will impact a child's ability to perform locomotive skills and ball skills, as well as when performing everyday tasks such as dressing and reaching. It is therefore important to include balance activities in children's daily activities.

There are four **primary components** of good balance:

- Proprioception or Spatial Awareness
- Vestibular system in the ear
- Strength of the back and stomach muscles, hips and ankles
- Vision

Basic Balance Progression

- Balancing in a place holding onto a chair
- Balance in a place holding onto nothing, using outstretched arms to control balance
- Balance in a place holding onto nothing, with arms by the side
- Moving between two lines on the floor
- Moving on a line on the floor
- Moving and holding or balancing an object
- Moving on a wide balance beam holding onto an adult's hand
- Moving on a wide balance beam maintaining own balance
- Moving on a narrow balance beam maintaining own balance



3-year-old children should be able to walk along a wide balance board.

4-year-old children should be able to walk part way along a narrow beam.

5-year-old children should be able to walk the length of a narrow beam.

Special Needs Balance

Bouncing children with special physical needs on a gym ball or on their parent's knee is an activity that will help them develop their balance. As you bounce them they will need to keep their balance. Depending on the child's level of support needed, hold them by their hands for less support or by their trunk for more support.

Activities to help children develop Balance

- Boat – Core strength. Children balance on their bottoms with their legs and arms off the floor and stretched forward.
- Sit down Stand up – Core strength. Children sit on the floor and stand up without placing their hands, elbows or knees on the floor.
- Can you balance?
- Slow mo activities.