

One Foot in Front of the Other!

Maintaining balance requires complex coordination of a variety of large muscles. While it is lots of fun to wobble along a balance beam in a playground, practicing and mastering balance helps develop skills that are used in many daily activities.

Here's how you can practice balancing skills:

Place a strip of wide tape on the floor. Walk steadily along the tape, placing one foot in front of the other.

Hold different poses as you stand on the strip of tape.

Practice simple movements like bending down or raising one leg while staying on the strip of tape.

You can make the practice more fun by...

- creating a silly walk to perform on the tape.
- placing items on the tape and picking each one up as you walk.
- making the tape on the floor into a zig-zag shape.
- repeating the same activities on a balance beam that is raised from the floor.



Activity Skill Focus: Balance

What is it?

The ability to maintain a controlled body position during task performance, whether sitting, walking, running, jumping and standing.

Types of balance:

- **Static Balance:** The ability to hold a stationary position.
- **Dynamic Balance:** The ability to remain balanced while engaged in movements.

Why do we need it?

Balance is needed to effectively interact across environments on a daily basis. Children need the ability to maintain controlled positions during both static (still) and dynamic (moving) activities.

How can you support the development of your child's balance?

The development of balance follows a natural progression when engaging in functional motor tasks. Activities that strengthen muscle tone and push your child to step out of his or her base of support therefore engaging in good balance maintaining strategies will help support this skill.

Other activity suggestions: dancing, yoga, walking/running on uneven surfaces, and hiking.

