

# Older Adult Home Exercise Plan

Sport Ireland and our network of Local Sports Partnerships work with trusted professionals and valued volunteers to engage communities across the country to deliver inclusive, impactful and sustainable opportunities to become physically active.

## Older Adult Home Exercise Plan

This is a 4-week home exercise initiative for Older Adults of all abilities. Over a 4-week period, the guidelines are to try and reach the minimum of 30 minutes of daily physical activity, as recommended in Ireland's National Physical Activity Plan.

Try to be active for 30 minutes in one go or for 3 bouts of 10 minutes at a time. A good idea would be to combine the exercises in this booklet with some other aerobic activity such as walking, cycling or gardening.

Adults of all ages should be physically active, at a moderate intensity, for at least 30 minutes a day



## Making it Happen

- 1 Every evening decide which activities you are going to do tomorrow.
- 2 Decide when and where you will do your activities.
- 3 Prepare and layout any equipment you will need the night before.
- 4 Be active and enjoy the sense of wellbeing afterwards.

To help you, we have included a simple activity planner at the end of this booklet.

## Why use this resource?

- ➔ It helps us age better – we are living longer and being active enhances the quality of those added years.
- ➔ It helps us retain our independence – it is important to be able to do things in life that enable us to live as independently as possible.
- ➔ It helps protect us from common diseases like heart disease and diabetes. It also reduces our risk of falling.
- ➔ Being physically active can help us feel better – physically and mentally by keeping our minds sharp!

## All activities in this booklet

- Can be modified to suit all abilities and ages
- Can be designed using household items
- Can be done indoors or outdoors
- Can be done individually or with a family member or friend.

If you want help with any aspect of this plan or would like to know how and where to avail of other physical activity opportunities, please contact your Local Sports Partnership (details below).

ALL EXERCISES CAN BE PERFORMED IN SEATED OR STANDING POSITIONS. YOU CAN USE A CHAIR, COUNTERTOP OR STABLE SURFACE TO MAINTAIN YOUR BALANCE.

## ANKLE CIRCLES

### What do I do?

- Place one hand on a stable surface for balance, if possible
- Lift one foot off the ground
- Draw circles in the air leading with your toes
- Change direction
- Switch feet and repeat

### Why would I do it?

- It will help you to increase the mobility and stability of ankles for everyday tasks such as walking.



## MARCHING ON THE SPOT

### What do I do?

- Sit or stand tall
- Feet shoulder width apart
- March on the spot by raising your knee high and then lower this leg back to the start position
- Repeat with opposite leg

### Why would I do it?

- It will help you to perform everyday tasks such as climbing the stairs and clearing uneven footpaths



**REMEMBER:**  
If you have an underlying medical condition or are currently inactive, you should consult with your GP before starting any new exercise programme

Moderate intensity exercise means that you're huffing but not puffing or still able to talk but not sing while being active

## SIT TO STAND

### What do I do?

- Place your chair against the wall
- Whilst seated on the chair move your bottom forwards in your chair
- Place your feet behind your knees
- Lean forwards bringing your head over your knees
- Push off with both hands to stand up
- Step back until you feel the chair against your legs
- Bend in the middle, reaching back for the arm rests and slowly sit back down

### Why would I do it?

- It will help you to perform everyday tasks such as getting out of the car, and getting up from a chair
- To make it harder, try to stand up without pushing off the arm rest



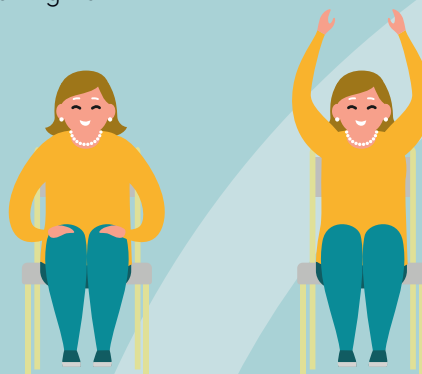
## OVERHEAD REACH

### What do I do?

- Sit in chair
- Arms by sides, inhale
- Exhale as you reach your arms overhead
- You can add a weight by using a water bottle or food tin

### Why would I do it?

- It will help you to increase the range of motion in shoulders for everyday tasks such as reaching for an object out of a cupboard overhead, and washing hair



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## SIDE LEG LIFTS

### What do I do?

- Standing tall, hands on support, feet hip width apart
- Take the weight on one leg, keep knee slightly bent and slowly lift other leg out to the side for a count of 4
- Bring foot back to other foot for count of 4, and repeat

### Why would I do it?

- It will help you to strengthen your hips for everyday tasks such as side stepping when walking, and getting out of bed

For more ideas on how to adapt activities, contact your Local Sports Partnership

Remember to assist those who may need extra help in taking part.



## TOE & HEEL RAISES

### What do I do?

- Standing tall, hands on support, feet hip width apart
- Slowly raise heels off the ground until you're on the balls of your feet, pause and slowly come back to start position
- Slowly raise toes off the ground until you're on the heels of your feet, pause and slowly move back to start position

### Why would I do it?

- It will help you to improve your lower body stability for everyday tasks such as stepping backwards, and reaching for objects overhead



## BODY TWISTS

### What do I do?

- Sitting in a sturdy chair, lift elbows to chest height
- Slowly and gently start turning your head and shoulders to look over one shoulder
- Return back to start position, repeat on other side

### Why would I do it?

- It will help you to improve the strength and mobility of your mid-section for everyday tasks that involve twisting and bending such as gardening and sweeping the floor



## HAND SQUEEZES

### What do I do?

- Hold your chosen object in one hand (Ball, rolled up socks, etc)
- Slowly squeeze it as hard as you can and hold it for a count of 4 and then release
- Repeat the squeeze and release

### Why would I do it?

- It will help you to improve hand strength for everyday tasks such as opening jars, turning keys, holding and carrying shopping items



Age & Opportunity Active is a national programme designed to get older adults more active and participating in recreational sport and physical activity. Further details can be found at [www.ageandopportunity.ie/active](http://www.ageandopportunity.ie/active)

Answer the below 3 questions and then, at the start of each week, set out your physical activity goals

EXAMPLE

<b>Why do I want to be active? What is my overall goal?</b> Focusing on an overall goal will help you to stay motivated over the 4 weeks.	I want to be able to play with my grandkids more.									
<b>When and where will I do my activities?</b> If you maintain a consistent routine, you are more likely to remain physically active.	In the morning time in the living room. I feel like I have the most energy in the morning.									
<b>Who will I share my exercise journey with?</b> If you inform a friend or family member of your intention to be more active or get active with another person, you have a better chance of success.	My friend Mary. I have told her to ask me whether I am reaching my daily target.									
Every evening decide which activities you are going to do tomorrow. Prepare and layout the equipment you will need the night before.										
WEEK NUMBER	WEEK 1		WEEK 1		WEEK 2		WEEK 3		WEEK 4	
Minutes per week	Target Minutes	Achieved Minutes	Target Minutes	Achieved Minutes	Target Minutes	Achieved Minutes	Target Minutes	Achieved Minutes	Target Minutes	Achieved Minutes
	EXAMPLE									
Monday	30	20								
Tuesday	30	35								
Wednesday	0	15								
Thursday	30	30								
Friday	30	35								
Saturday	0	20								
Sunday	30	15								
My Weekly Total	150	170								
<b>How did I do this week?</b>	I am happy with myself. I was active for 20 minutes more than my target and I feel great.									

## #BeActive

Don't forget to share your photos/videos on social media and tag @SportIreland, your Local Sports Partnership and use #BeActive