

## 🌟 September Challenge : 🌟

### 🌟 5 minutes a day, stronger in every way ! 🌟

*Choose from the following exercises and do them every day for a month. Why not print the page and put it to your fridge.*

*It's ok to start mid-month — just be sure to stick to the challenge and complete the exercises every day without fail. Everyone can find 5 minutes a day.*

**Each day includes three exercises:**

 **Strengthening (2 mins)**

 **Balance (1 min)**

 **Cardio (2 mins)**

*The idea is to do a minimum of 5 minutes; you can do more if you are up to it, or build up to 5 minutes if it is too challenging. Watch your progress as the days and weeks go by! If you miss a day, no worries, catch up the next.*

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### Monday

 **Squats** 2 mins

Imagine sitting on a chair. When lowering your hips, check that your knees are aligned with your ankles and don't move past your toes.

Do this for 1 min, pause 10 seconds, then repeat. Count your reps and track progress during the month.

 **Easier option:** Sit down on a chair and stand up again for 1 min, building to 2 mins.

 **Balance** minimum 1 min

While brushing teeth, stand on one foot for 30 sec, then switch. Try not to touch the sink!

 **Stair climbs:** 2 mins

Walk up and down stairs for 2 mins (stay focused). If you live in a bungalow, use outside steps.

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## Tuesday

### Wall sit

Sit against a wall as if in a chair. Make sure your lower back touches the wall. Hold 30 sec × 4.

### Washing-up balance

Wash the dishes standing on one foot, then switch. This can become a regular habit!

### Jumping jacks

Jump, opening arms and legs at the same time. Engage your pelvic floor.

 Easier option: March on the spot quickly, lifting knees high and swinging arms.

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## Wednesday

### Plank

Hold a plank for 30–60 secs, pause, then repeat. If this is too hard, start on your knees. (Watch video to help you start).

### Heel-to-toe walk

Walk heel-to-toe in a straight line, looking ahead. Try forwards, backwards, then with eyes closed if you feel safe.

### Running on the spot

Run (slow or fast) for 1–2 mins. Easier option: Brisk walking on the spot, but give it your all!

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## Thursday

### **Arm circles**

Arms outstretched at shoulder height, hands flexed. Rapid circles forward for 1 min, then backward for 1 min.

### **Floor get-up**

Sit (or lie) on the floor and stand up using your arms as little as possible. Repeat at least 3 times. Go slowly if you feel dizzy.

### **Fast punches with marching feet**

March on the spot while punching forward quickly. Keep feet light and core engaged. Very joint-friendly but effective! Do for it for 2 mins with force and energy.

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## **Friday**

### **Side plank**

Hold 30 sec (on knees if needed). Rest, repeat, build to 1 min, then switch sides. You can do this on your knees rather than your feet. Lift those hips high ladies!

### **Balance with eyes closed**

Stand on one foot (barefoot if possible). Hold a wall or broom for support. Lift the other leg horizontally. Fix your gaze, then close your eyes. (Keep the image you saw in your mind) Let go of the support if possible. Count to 10–20. Repeat 2× per leg. Its all about focus and concentration. Tighten your abs to help you keep still.

### **Hill or steps walk**

Find a hill and walk up once or twice. If there are no hills, use stairs.

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## **Saturday**

### **Plank day**

If possible, hold 45 sec × 2 with a 15-sec break, if not 30secs, rest and repeat. Even 10 or 20 seconds is better than not at all. We all have to start somewhere, no excuses, go on you can do it!

### **Object reach balance**

Stand on one foot. Place a small object on the floor on 1) the inside, 2) the outside, 3) in front, and 4) behind your foot. Try to pick it up without putting your other foot down. Go slowly and surely, not too quickly to avoid feeling dizzy.

### **Knee lifts with rope pulls**

Imagine pulling on a rope from the ceiling with one arm, then the other, pull hard and at the same time lift your knees high. (Climb the rigging) (For extra intensity, hop from one foot to the other as you “pull.” Ahoy there ladies!

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## **Sunday**

### **Wall sit with forearms spinning**

Sit against a wall as if in a chair. Move your forearms in circles (spin them) in front of you.

### **Backward walk**

Walk backwards somewhere safe outdoors.

### **Toe taps with opposite hand**

Lift one leg in front (straight if possible) and touch toes with the opposite hand. For intensity, add a small hop from side to side. Otherwise, keep a brisk pace for 2 mins.

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**Walking: 10 top tips to get in shape and improve your fitness.**

**Try to change your walking routine:**

- 1) One day, walk quicker than you would usually, even if it is a short walk, step up the pace.**
- 2) One day, walk that further 10 minutes.**
- 3) One day, take big strides.**
- 4) One day, aim to be slightly out of breath, (yes don't avoid that uphill or stairs!)**
- 5) Never take lifts or escalators and park far from the shops.**
- 6) Try walking and working on your pelvic floor muscles. Hold for 10/20 seconds on and off during your walk.**
- 7) Use your arms to pick up the pace and get your upper body moving.**
- 8) Try walking backwards, it's the new thing in! Good for cognitive awareness and memory building. Go to a safe space and try it out for 5 minutes.**
- 9) Alternate your pace, walk fast for a few minutes or steps and then slower your pace, keep alternating, it shocks the body and avoids habit forming. Great for the heart and blood circulation.**
- 10) Walk with a friend or colleague, walk at a good pace and see if you can keep up the conversation whilst walking without being too out of breath. Alternatively listen to a podcast, learn something new as you walk.**

**Whether you walk 10 minutes or 30 minutes a day, or several hours a week, alone or in a group, with friends or family, whether you walk fast or slow, the most important thing is that by walking and moving and being outside in the fresh air, come whatever the weather, you'll feel better for it both physically and mentally and you'll never regret it. Get walking women!**