

Fitness Forum: Give balance ball a role in your regimen

by CNS

The moves: Sitting on a balance ball with single-leg support.

Works on: Balance, core strength.

STABILITY MATTERS - Firefighter Jason Shanley sits on a stability ball holding one leg off the ground. CNS Photo by Peggy Peattie. Setup: Choose an area free of obstructions. There are various sizes of balance balls. For sitting activities, the correct size ball is one that allows your hips to be 90 degrees to the torso with the feet flat on the ground and the knees bent 90 degrees. Often the ball is sized correctly, but just needs more air. The firmer the ball, the harder this activity.

Steps: Sit on the ball with upright posture and the feet shoulder width apart. Lift one leg from the hip so that the foot is no longer contacting the ground. When lifting the leg, do not let the lower back slump. Hold this position for up to 30 seconds. Repeat with the opposite leg off the ground. If this initial exercise is too easy, move the foot away from the ball, or slightly bounce on the ball for more challenge.

Repetitions: Perform three repetitions of 30 seconds on each leg.

Precautions: Falling off the ball is possible for someone with poor balance. Hold on to a table or something stable while learning this activity.

Options: For extra challenge, try doing dumbbell raises or overhead presses while balancing on the ball.

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