

Brain Gym Exercises!

These simple exercises stimulate different parts of your brain and help alert and awaken your mind. They involve activities that integrate the left and right hemispheres of your brain with the motor, speech, visual, and language centers, along with the majority of cranial nerves and vestibular system. Do them daily for increased mental clarity, when you are feeling out of sync (or “out of it”) or whenever you need an energy pick me up! You can do them in isolation or all at once depending on your needs and available time.

Easy for adults and kids alike!

Eye Rotation

(Works cranial nerves 2,3,4,6, speech/motor/visual centers, left brain focus and anterior to posterior cortical centers)

1. Imagine a clock in front of you. With your eyes only (head still) start looking at 12 o'clock and slowly shift your gaze in a circular, clockwise pattern until you return to 12.
2. Now, move your eyes in a counter-clockwise motion, starting and ending at 12 o'clock.
3. While you are moving your eyes, say aloud, “I am _____. I am here and present.”

Belly “Buttons”

(Stimulates parasympathetic nervous system via “vagal” Cranial Nerve 10, stomach and small intestine meridians points, complex motor planning)

1. Place your right hand on top of your belly button and gently rub, while rubbing the knobs where your collarbones meet the sternum (breastbone), with your left hand.
2. Next rub the knobs where the clavicles reach the sternum with your right hand and rub your belly button with your left hand. Breathe deeply.

Standing Cross Crawl

(Complex rep, cross-body movements integrate many neurological centers & both sides of brain, balance challenge works vestibular system/CN 8, CN 11 and more)

1. While standing, lift your left knee into the air and touch your right hand to your left knee.
2. Next, lower your left knee and lower your right hand. Lift your right knee and touch it with your left hand.
3. Keep alternating leg lifts while touching hands to opposite knees.
4. Do this 20-30 times. It's good exercise and works your balance (vestibular system)

Crazy 8s

(Many neurological centers involved, integrates both sides of brain using cross-body movements, balance challenge works vestibular/auditory system & CN 8)

1. While standing, cross your legs at the ankles.
2. With straight wrists, cross your arms in front of you, making an x.
3. Keep your arms in place and flip your wrists, so that your palms are touching (“glue” palms together).
4. Now, carefully rotate your hands in towards your body and up, so that your fingertips point towards the ceiling and your hands/arms are beautifully twisted. Stay in this position for 30 seconds – 1 minute and take a few deep breaths.

Resting Hands

(Deep breathing stimulates parasympathetic NS and vagal nerve/CN 10, increases blood flow to brain and all organs, increases mental clarity)

1. Uncross your hands. Uncross your ankles.
2. Place your hands/palms together and your feet side by side as well.