

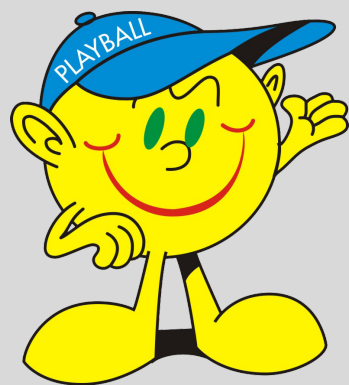
playball



BALANCE

BENEFITS

- Improves overall coordination
- Reduces risk of injury
- Promotes balanced strength on both sides of body
- Helps maintain a healthy vestibular system which regulates a child's response to sensory input.



EQUIPMENT



- Beanbags
- Tennis (or any other small) ball
- Tennis racket (substitute cookie tray or any flat item)
- "Balance beam" (substitute pool noodle, tape, string, chalk line)

PRACTICE

- Alternate standing on one leg at a time
- Practice balance skills on uneven surfaces (pillows, beanbags, towels)
- Play freeze dance/statue freeze tag
- Walk with a ball steady on a tennis racket or other flat surface (cookie sheet)
- Balance beam (tape line, chalk line, pool noodle)
- Play hopscotch
- Do an obstacle course



UP YOUR GAME

Add activities like the ones here to enhance the practice your child's practice.



- Yoga
- Practice handwriting
- Read
- Spot the difference pictures
- Mazes
- Connect the dots

AGE SPECIFIC TIPS

- **18mos-2+:** Hold your child's hands as needed. Progress to child using airplane arms for balance > eyes closed for additional challenge.
- **3-4yo:** Increase difficulty by giving child a ball to hold overhead during standing exercises. Have them catch a soft ball/beanbag/rolled socks while standing on uneven surface. Progress to walking balance beam in reverse.
- **4-6yo:** Place an object on the floor for your child to pick up while standing on one foot. Alternate sides. Play catch while child stands on uneven surface. Progress to catching, then throwing at a target from balance "beam."
- **6+ yo:** Increase complexity of obstacle course. Ask your child to do it using only their feet. Have them balance a beanbag on their head from one end to the other. Complete 5 throws and catches while standing on an uneven surface.

