



Incorporating **Age & Opportunity active**,
The National Sport and Physical Activity Programme
for Older People

A photograph of an older woman and an older man in a living room. The woman is in the foreground, smiling and pointing towards the camera. The man is in the background, also smiling and pointing towards the camera. They appear to be participating in a dance or exercise routine. The room has a yellow sofa and a window in the background.

LET'S DANCE

**Age & Opportunity Dance Resource
With Dance Artist Olwyn Lyons**

Warm Up

- These exercises will increase blood flow to your joints and enable you to move more freely. Do each movement 7-10 times.
- For these exercises choose a solid stable chair that does not have wheels.
- You should be able to sit with your feet flat on the floor and knees at a right angle. Imagine your feet are standing on train tracks in a parallel position. Move your backside away from the back of the chair, lengthen through the spine by sitting up tall.
- Inhale through the nose for 3-5 counts and exhale fully through the mouth. Ensure you lift the chest on the in-breath and lower on the breath out. Repeat 3 times.

Suggested Music for Activity: *Radetzky March by Johann Strauss Sr*



Warm Up continued

1. HANDS & FINGERS

- Press your hands away from your body, reverse and make a fist. Release and repeat action.
- Bend wrists up and down, side to side and circle 7-10 times.
- Play piano with fingers, hands below the heart.
- Touch thumbs to each finger, both hands 7-10 times.

2. NECK

- Sit upright with shoulders down. Look straight ahead.
- Slowly turn head towards your right shoulder as far as is comfortable. Breathe for 5 seconds and return to starting position.
- Repeat action on the left side.
- Do 3 rotations of each.

3. SHOULDERS

- Lift one shoulder up and down, then the other side. Slow single circles with each shoulder.
- Swim in a breaststroke, wide strokes 7-10 times.

ACTIVE REST - Tap toes, keeping heels on floor. Tap heels, keeping toes on floor.

4. HIPS

- Sit upright on chair. Lift leg with knee bent as far as is comfortable. Place foot down with control and repeat the action on the other side.
- Add in arm movements, swinging arms by each side of the chair.
- Bring to a marching pace if suitable 7-10 times.

ACTIVE REST - Tap toes, keeping heels on floor. Tap heels, keeping toes on floor.

5. BOXING

- Tight fists, punch air in front several times, then upwards, repeat 7-10 times.

6. LEGS

- Easy kicks, one foot then the other, 7-10 times.

ACTIVE REST - Tap toes, keeping heels on floor. Tap heels, keeping toes on floor.

Let's Think Posture

Balance exercises using Ballet inspired movements.

*What is Ballet?

Ballet is an artistic dance form performed to music, using precise and highly formalised set steps and gestures. Ballet can help improve mobility, posture, leg strength, co-ordination and energy levels.

- This activity can be done seated or standing. Seated dancers lift the heels instead of bending knees.

Suggested Music for Activity: *Second Waltz by André Rieu*

STEP 1.

Stand near a chair or wall in parallel, roll shoulders up and back, open shoulders and chest, engage the core and look straight ahead.



STEP 2.

Keeping the spine long, gently bend the knees making sure they stay in line with the toes. Return to standing position and repeat movement 8 -10 times.



STEP 3.

Add a rise or relevé by lifting the heels off the floor, staying long in the spine and strong in the core supporting the lower back. Gently lower heels to standing pose.



STEP 4.

Extend the leg, pointing the toe to create a tendu. Once you've reached the full extension of your working leg, reverse these actions beginning with the toes until the leg returns to its original standing position. Repeat action 8 times.



Photo Credit Kirsty Lyons

Let's Think Posture

STEP 5.

Add an outstretched arm with the toe point or tendu. Reach and tap to the front, side, and back. Follow the hand movement with the eyes, keep length in spine.



STEP 6.

Now create an airplane inspired shape. Make this position your own by using the support of the chair as much or as little as needed. Try adding one or two wings to your airplane position. Keep lifted in your core and open in the arms.



STEP 7.

Leg Swing. Begin at the side of your chair for safety. While balancing on your inside leg, swing your outside leg forward and backward in a smooth motion. Keep your posture while swinging your leg, ribs lifted and head forward, holding on to the chair. Repeat one minute on each side.

To add a challenge, swing the opposite arm to leg.



5, 6, 7.... Let's Charleston

*What is Charleston?

Charleston is a social jazz dance highly popular in the 1920s. Characterised by its toes-in, heels-out twisting steps with high energy, it can be performed as a solo, with a partner, or in a group.

Suggested Music for Activity: *Charleston by Sam Levine*

STEP 1. March & Wave

Start finding a marching rhythm by lifting one foot and then the other. Add a wave by opening the hands with fingers outstretched, looking side to side. Repeat 8 times.



STEP 2. Classic Charleston Step

Step forward with your right foot. Bring the right foot back into standing position and step backward with the left foot. Repeat the action to find a steady rhythm. Swing your arms side to side or back and forth as you move your feet. Repeat 8 times.



Photo Credit Kirsty Lyons

5, 6, 7.... Let's Charleston

STEP 3. Side Taps

Tap the right foot for 8 counts along with tapping the pointing finger on the right hand. Shift your weight and tap the left foot for 8 counts with the left hand pointed.

For an added challenge

- Travel the tapping foot by stepping from side to side for 8 counts.
- Play with rhythm by tapping for less counts each time the movement is performed. For example: Tap for 8 counts, 4 counts, 2 counts, single taps on the right and left sides.



STEP 4. Open & Close

Step open with flexed heel to right side, outstretched arms and look at the right hand. Step back into a standing position with arms by your side. Repeat the action on left side. Alternate from left to right, opening and closing 4 times.





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