

Exercise from home

Your guide to
keeping active
at home through
simple chair
exercises



This resource is intended to be a stand-alone,
publicly available guide for anyone to use.

Please read before
commencing any
of the exercises in
this guide

Do not
exercise if
you're feeling
unwell.

Wear loose,
comfortable
clothes and
supportive
footwear.

Prepare a space
and have your
exercise band and
a glass of water
ready before
you start.

Disclaimer

This exercise resource has been developed in partnership with Age UK Bolton, Bolton Council, and Portfolio Design to support older adults in improving mobility, building strength, and reducing the risk of falls through safe, structured activity.

While the exercises in this guide are based on established best practice, they are not a substitute for individual medical advice. You should consult your GP or a qualified healthcare professional before starting this programme, especially if you have any medical conditions, are recovering from illness or injury, or have not exercised recently.

Participation in these exercises is at your own risk.

The creators, partners, and contributors to this resource accept no liability for any injury, loss, or health condition arising from the use of the exercises provided. If at any time you feel unwell, dizzy, or experience pain, stop exercising immediately and seek medical advice.

This guide is designed for general use and does not replace tailored exercise programmes delivered by qualified professionals. If you are working with a health or exercise specialist, please follow their specific guidance.

For best results, perform these exercises in a safe space, wear supportive footwear, and ensure any equipment or surfaces used are stable and secure.

Stay active - age well

Improve your strength, flexibility, co-ordination and mobility.

As we get older it's essential to stay active to combat the effects of ageing and maintain your health and independence.

You should aim to be active daily.

Activity should add up to at least 150 minutes (2.5 hours) a week of 'moderate' physical activity in bouts of 10 minutes or more. One way to approach this is to do 30 minutes 5 days per week.

'Moderate' physical activity means any movement of the body which makes you feel warmer and breathe faster. If you are unable to talk due to breathlessness, you are working too hard.

Remember:
'Moderate' means
'breathless not
speechless'



How to exercise safely

When starting a new programme of physical activity it's vital you don't do too much too soon. It's better to build up the amount and level of activity at a gradual pace.

While exercising:

- If you experience chest pain, dizziness or severe shortness of breath, stop immediately and contact your GP (or call an ambulance if you feel very unwell and your symptoms do not go away when you stop exercising).
- If you experience pain in your joints or muscles, stop, check your position and try again. If the pain persists, seek advice from your GP.

Feeling your muscles working or slight muscle soreness the next day after exercise is normal and shows that the exercises are working.

If you are using this guide without attending a supervised exercise session, consult your GP to check it's suitable for you.

If you have not exercised recently or have any unstable medical conditions, please seek advice from your GP before taking part in chair based exercise at home.

Ensure the chair you use is sturdy, stable, has a good back support (ideally without arm rests) and on a non-slip surface.

Wear loose, comfortable clothes and supportive footwear.

Prepare a space and have your exercise band and a glass of water ready before you start.

Drink plenty of fluids before, during and after exercise.

Do not exercise if you're feeling unwell.



Rate of perceived exertion (RPE) scale

The RPE scale measures how you are feeling when exercising to determine if you are working at the correct level.

To gain health benefits, for the main part of your exercise programme, you should aim to work within these sections.

Remember:
'Moderate' means
'breathless not
speechless'

Max effort

Feels almost impossible to continue
difficult to catch your breath.

10

Very hard activity

Difficult to maintain exercise intensity, short
of breath and can only say a few words.

9

Vigorous activity

Borderline uncomfortable, short of breath,
can speak a full sentence.

7–8

Moderate activity

Comfortable, heavy breathing, can still hold
a conversation.

4–6

Light activity

Comfortable, moderate breathing, easy to
have a full conversation.

2–3

Baseline activity

Base movement of active rest.

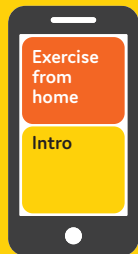
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How to use your home exercise guide

This guide has five sections of simple chair based exercise routines. Follow the instructions carefully and complete each exercise separately.

Only do exercises shown within this guide that you are confident of doing.

Watch video online



Scan the QR code to watch the video.



Or visit:
www.exercisefromhome.co.uk

Warm up

These exercises prepare the body and mind for exercise, raising body temperature and heart rate.

7
mins

Mobility

These exercises will loosen up the joints preparing the body for exercise.

4
mins

Strength

These exercises improve and maintain muscle strength, muscle endurance and also improve posture and body shape.

10
mins

Cardio

These exercises help strengthen your heart and lungs, improves circulation and helps build stamina.

6
mins

Stretch

These exercises stretch out the muscles gradually to reduce the risk of injury.

3
mins

Take your time – 30 minutes is just a guide.
Complete the exercises at a pace that is comfortable for you.

30
mins

TOTAL

Let's get started!

Correct posture

Using the correct posture when doing chair based exercises will allow you to get the best from your work out.

Assume this posture before each exercise

Look straight ahead

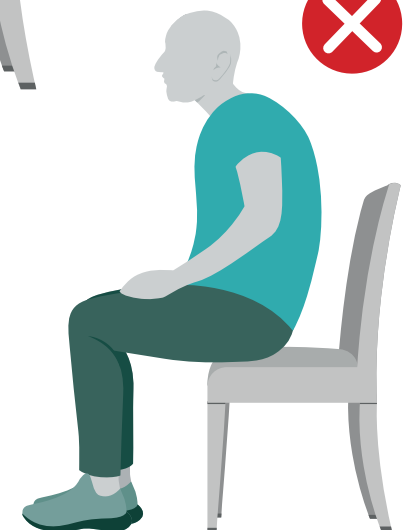
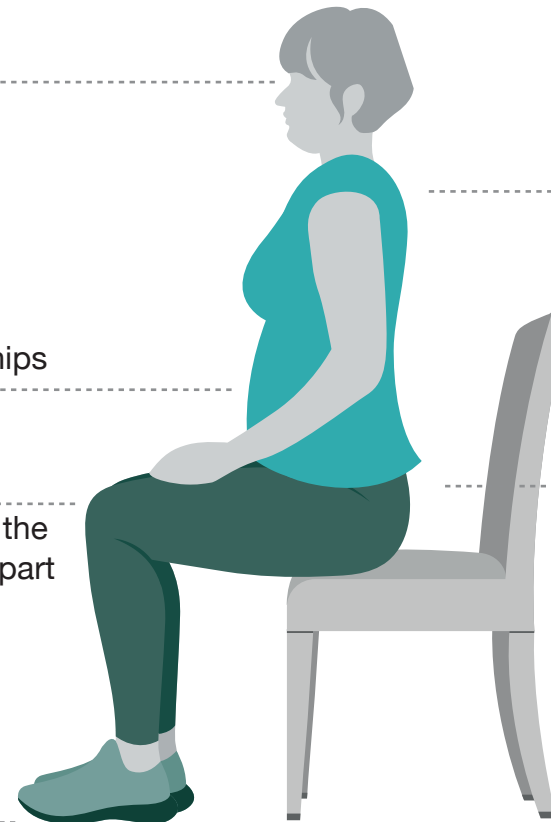
Keep shoulders back and relaxed

Sit tall to keep space between the ribs and hips

Sit in the front 3rd of the chair (Only use back of chair for support if essential)

Ensure knees are over the ankles and hip width apart

Place both feet flat on the floor



Warm up

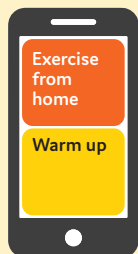
These exercises prepare the body and mind for exercise, raising body temperature and heart rate.

If you have a long-term health condition a prolonged slow and steady warm up and cool down is recommended.

RPE - Light activity

2-3

Watch video online



Scan the QR code to watch the video.



Or visit:
www.exercisefromhome.co.uk

✓ Check posture



Time: 30 seconds

Hold side of chair for support if needed



Marching Arms

Lift alternate arms to face height

Remember:

- Ensure arms are straight
- Take care not to lean back

7 mins

4 mins

10 mins

6 mins

3 mins

30 mins

TOTAL

Warm up



Check posture



Time: 30 seconds arms
30 seconds arms & legs



Marching Legs

Lift alternate knees raising feet off floor.

Remember:

- Ensure heels go down without stamping
- Take care not to lean back



Marching Arms and Legs

Lift alternate arms and knees raising feet off the floor and arms to face height

Remember:

- Ensure heels go down without stamping
- Ensure arms are straight
- Take care not to lean back

Progression

- Standing march

7
mins

4
mins

10
mins

6
mins

3
mins

30
mins

TOTAL

Mobility

These exercises will loosen up the joints preparing the body for exercise.

RPE - Light activity

2-3

Watch video online



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Or visit:
www.exercisefromhome.co.uk

Hold side of chair for support if needed



Check posture



Time: 30 seconds

Reps: 4-6



Head Turns

Turn the head to the left and then right in slow and controlled movements.

Feel a stretch on the opposite side of your neck. Hold for two seconds and return to where you started.

7 mins

4 mins

10 mins

6 mins

3 mins

30 mins

TOTAL

Mobility

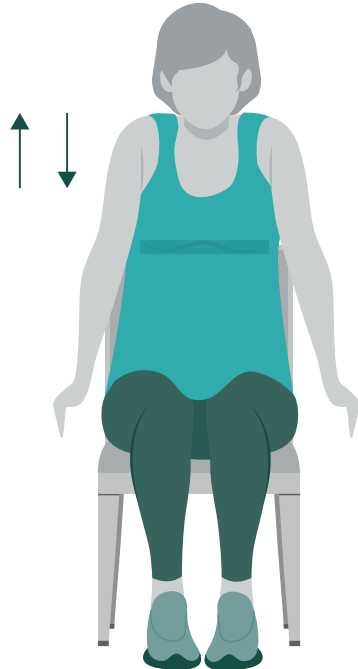


Check posture



Time: 30 seconds

Reps: 4-6



Shoulder Lifts

Lift both shoulders to the ears then lower with control.



Shoulder Circles

Ease both shoulders forwards, upwards, and backwards in a circular motion.

Remember

- Keep movement slow and breathe regularly
- Keep chest lifted and open throughout
- Work within your range

7
mins

4
mins

10
mins

6
mins

3
mins

30
mins

TOTAL

Mobility

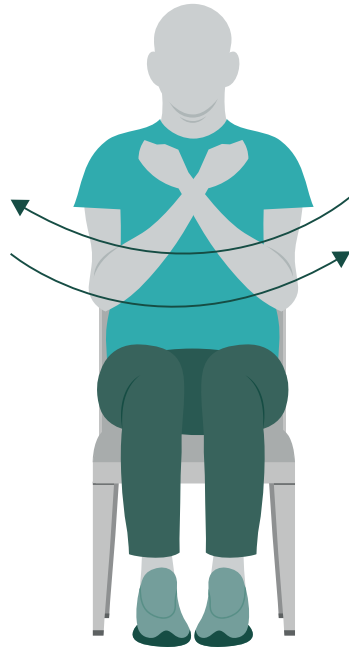


Check posture



Time: 30 seconds

Reps: 8-12

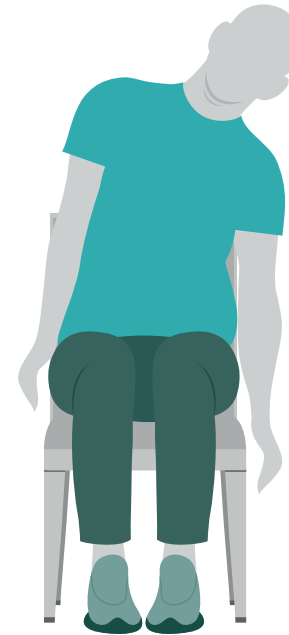


Torso Twist

Cross arms and turn upper body left then right.

Remember

Twist from side to side by rotating your upper body from the hips, bringing the head around.



Side Bends

Place hands at sides of chair, slide one arm down the chair in line with hip and return to starting position. Repeat exercise on the other side.

Remember

Check posture before leaning. Take the ear towards the shoulder whilst keeping the neck and back aligned.

7
mins

4
mins

10
mins

6
mins

3
mins

30
mins

TOTAL

Mobility



Check posture



Time: 30 seconds

Reps: 4-6

Hold side
of chair for
support if
needed



Heel Toe Taps (ankle mobility)

Lift the heel and tap the toe on the floor then lift the toe and tap the heel in the same spot on the floor. Repeat at a steady and comfortable pace.

7
mins

4
mins

10
mins

6
mins

3
mins

30
mins

TOTAL

Mobility



Check posture



Time: 1 minute

Reps: 4-6



Ankle Circles

Hold leg out and rotate the front of the foot clockwise and anti-clockwise.

Remember

Keep your heel slightly off the ground whilst rotating the foot.

Progression

- Alternate arm circles for cognitive challenge.

7
mins

4
mins

10
mins

6
mins

3
mins

30
mins

TOTAL

Strength

This is the main part of the exercise session and will allow you to safely and effectively maintain and improve muscle strength, bone density and immune system.

The strengthening exercises in this guide will help give you more control over daily activities such as carrying shopping and reaching into cupboards.

RPE - Moderate activity 4–6

Watch video online



Scan the QR code to watch the video.



Or visit:
www.exercisefromhome.co.uk

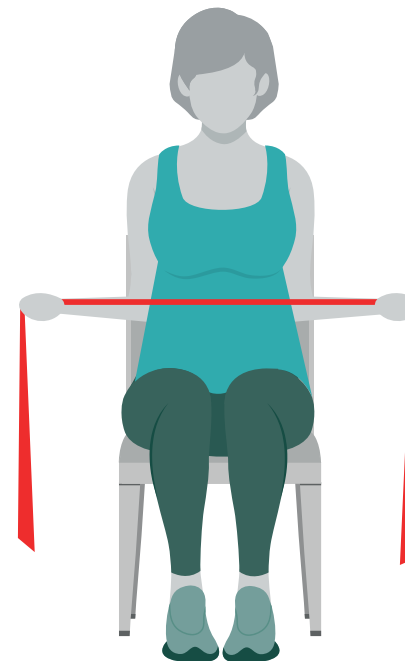
Important

Strengthening exercises should be done properly to avoid injury.

Please make sure you follow the instructions carefully - for best results you should ensure that each exercise is controlled and done slowly

These exercises use a resistance band

Resistance bands are used for strength training or physical therapy. They help activate and tone your muscles, building strength along the way. The band offers a simple yet effective way to get an all-around strength workout at home.



7 mins

4 mins

10 mins

6 mins

3 mins

30 mins

TOTAL

Need a resistance band?

Resistance bands come in a variety of strengths and colours. The 'stronger' the band, the more resistance it has and so the more effort you have to put into the exercise. You can purchase resistance bands online relatively cheaply.



Age UK Bolton are happy to supply you with resistance bands in exchange for a small donation. Your donation will help cover the cost of the bands and go towards everything we do to support Bolton's older people.

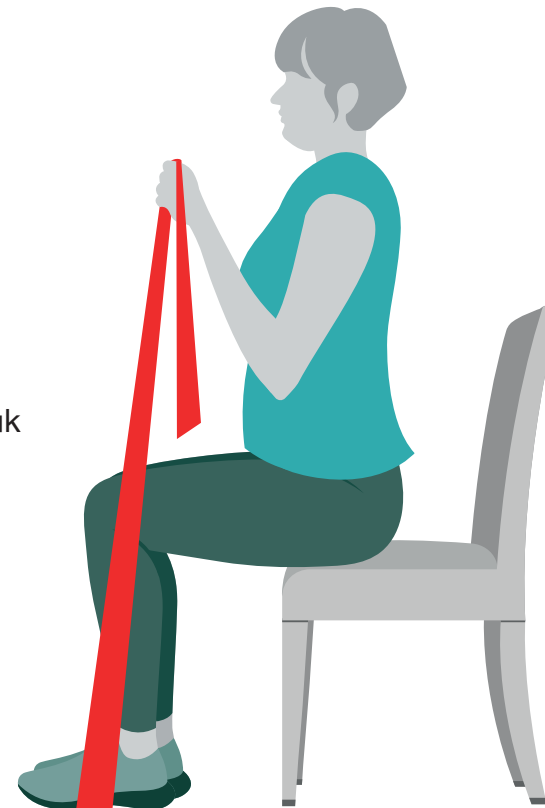
Call us

01204 382411

Email

strengthandbalance@ageukbolton.org.uk

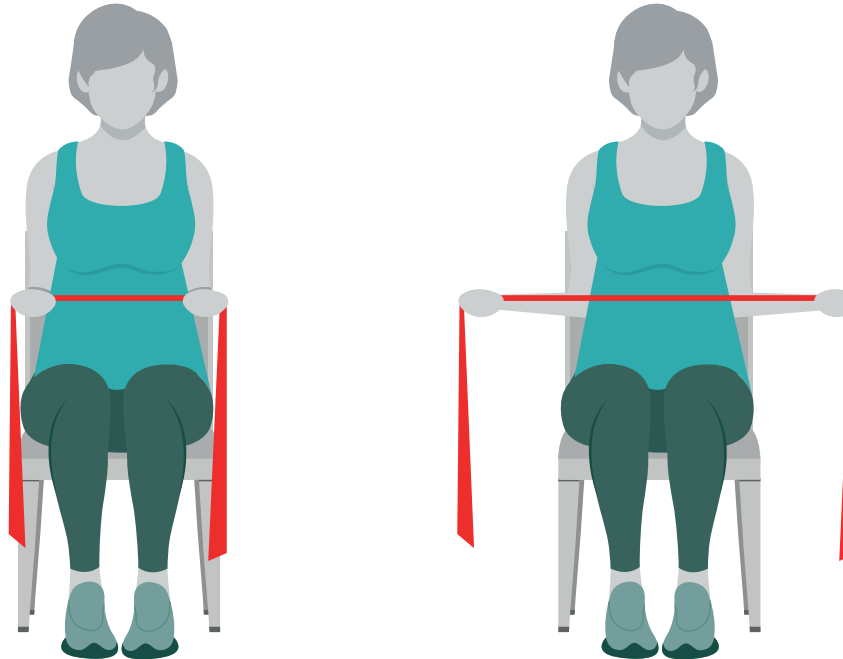
Your donation will support older people in Bolton



Strength

✓ Check posture Reps: 8-12

These exercises use a resistance band



Upper Back Strengtheners

Scoop both hands under the band with palms facing upwards. Keeping elbows tucked in against the side of the body squeeze shoulder blades together to slowly move hands apart. Hold for a second and relax the shoulder blades bringing the hands back to the start.

Remember: Squeeze the shoulder blades together and keep your feet on the ground.

Progression: Increase time under tension.

7 mins

4 mins

10 mins

6 mins

3 mins

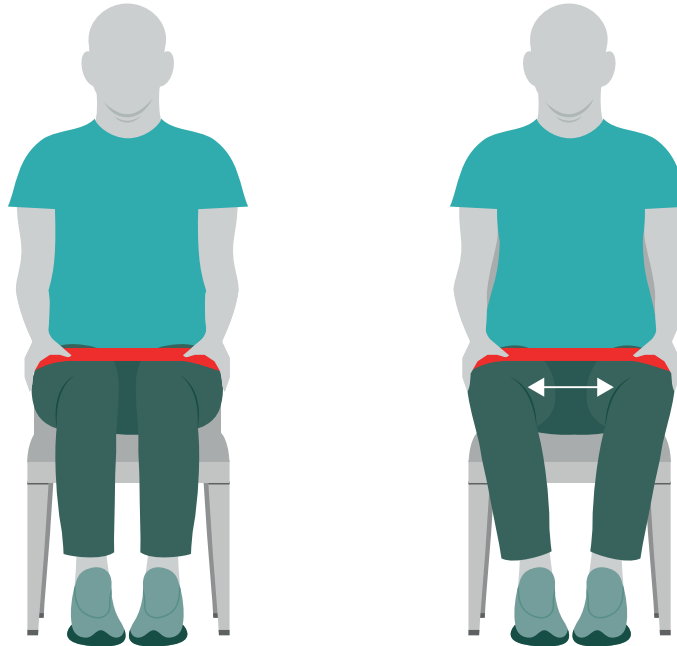
30 mins

TOTAL

Strength

✓ Check posture Reps: 8-12

These exercises use a resistance band



Outer-thigh Strengthener

Wrap the band around your thighs.
Push your knees outward and hold for a second.

Remember: Keep the band secure with both hands on the thighs. Keep your feet flat on the floor.

Progression: Increase time under tension.

7
mins

4
mins

10
mins

6
mins

3
mins

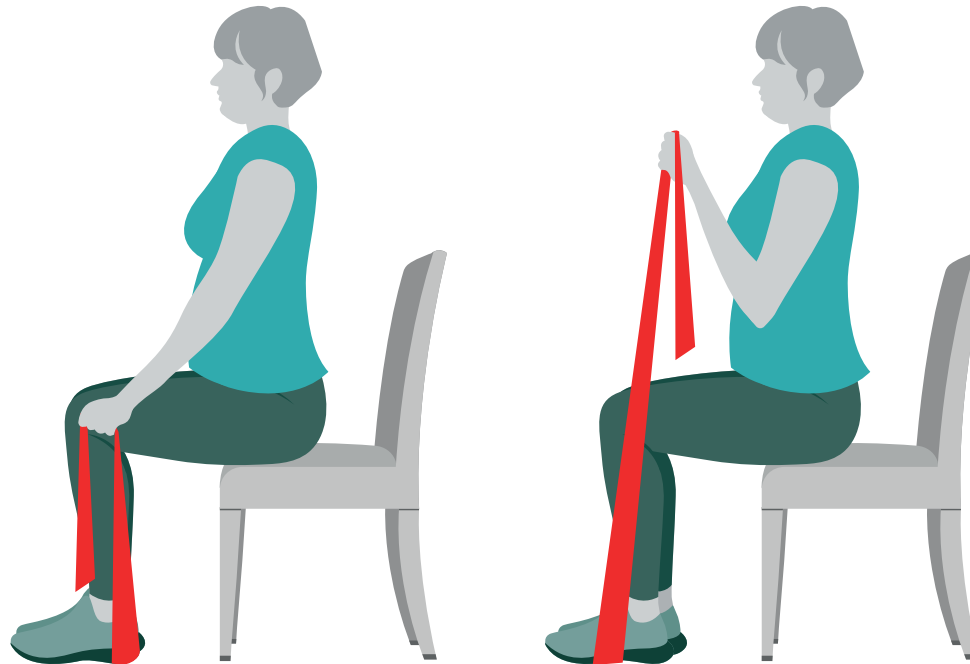
30
mins

TOTAL

Strength

✓ Check posture Reps: 8-12

These exercises use a resistance band



Bicep Curl

Place the band under both feet.

Hold the band thumbs up and bring the hands towards your shoulders to gently lower back to the start.

Remember: Avoid leaning back and keep the movement smooth

Progression: Increase time under tension. Hold at half way point for 5 seconds. Swap for heavier band. Use weights.

7 mins

4 mins

10 mins

6 mins

3 mins

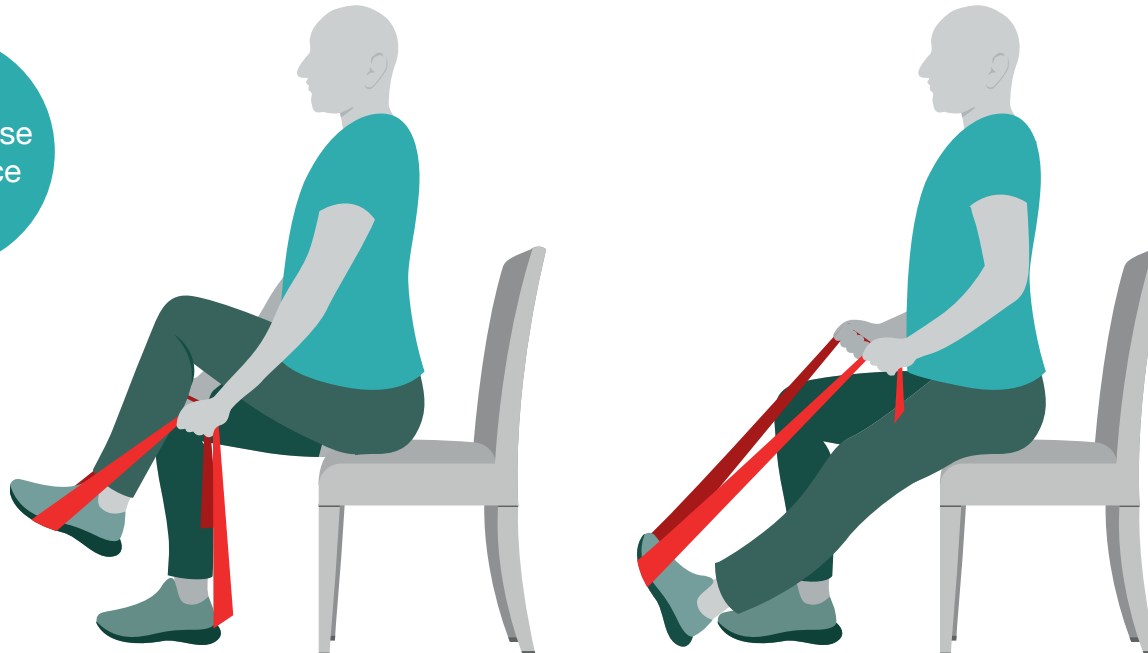
30 mins

TOTAL

Strength

✓ Check posture Reps: 8-12

These exercises use a resistance band



Front of thigh Strengtheners

Loop the band under the ball of the foot.

Move hands down the band to the knee level and lift the foot raising your hands to hip level.

Straighten the knee with heel just above the floor and hold for a second.

Bend the knee replace the foot on there floor. Extend the leg to avoid locking the knee.

Remember: Keep good posture. Extend the leg avoid locking the knee.

Progression: Sit to stand.

7
mins

4
mins

10
mins

6
mins

3
mins

30
mins

TOTAL

Strength

✓ Check posture Reps: 8-12

These exercises use a resistance band



Chest Press

Position the band around your back in line with the chest.
Start with your elbows bent at your side.
Hold the band slightly tensioned and push your arms forward.
Hold for a second and move arms back to the start position slowly.

Remember: Keep your back straight.

Progression: Wall press-ups.

7 mins

4 mins

10 mins

6 mins

3 mins

30 mins

TOTAL

Strength

✓ Check posture Reps: 8-12



Sit to Stand

**Sit at the front of the chair and place feet slightly back and lean forward.
Stand up and step back until your legs touch the chair then slowly lower back down onto the chair.**

Remember: Use your hands on the chair if needed.

Progression: Slow sit with control. (avoid flopping into the chair).

7
mins

4
mins

10
mins

6
mins

3
mins

30
mins

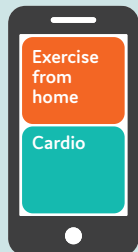
TOTAL

Cardio

These exercises help strengthen your heart and lungs, improves circulation and helps build stamina. Work up to RPE 4-6 and maintain.

RPE - Moderate activity 4-6

Watch video online



Scan the QR code to watch the video.



Or visit:
www.exercisefromhome.co.uk



Check posture



Time: 6 minutes



Seated March

Lift alternate arms and knees raising feet off the floor and arms to face height. Increase intensity for 2 minutes and then maintain pace for the next 2 minutes, gradually slowing down for the final 2 minutes before moving onto the stretch.

Remember:

Ensure heels go down without stamping
Take care not to lean back.

Progression

Standing behind with the chair for support.

7
mins

4
mins

10
mins

6
mins

3
mins

30
mins

TOTAL

Stretch

These exercises stretch out the muscles gradually to reduce the risk of injury.

RPE - Light activity

2-3

Watch video online

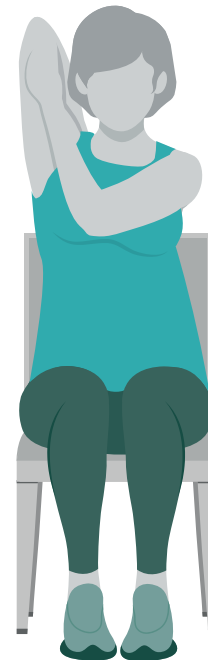


Scan the QR code to watch the video.



Or visit:
www.exercisefromhome.co.uk

✓ Check posture ⌚ Time: 15 secs each arm



Tricep Stretch

Raise hand to shoulder, walk fingers to shoulder blade and use other arm to support.

Remember: keep your posture and hold on to the chair if needed.

Progression: Keep upright posture.
Remove holding onto chair.

7
mins

4
mins

10
mins

6
mins

3
mins

30
mins

TOTAL

Stretch

✓ Check posture ⌚ Time: 12–15 seconds each leg



Calf Stretch

Straighten one leg out in front with the heel resting on the floor.

Bring the toe upwards towards the shin and slide the heel forward to feel the stretch.

Remember: Keep your posture and hold on to the chair if needed.



Seated Hamstring Stretch

Straighten one leg out in front and place both hands above the bent knee. Bend forward from the hip until you feel a stretch in the back of the straightened leg.

Remember

Lift chest and lengthen the body upwards and forwards

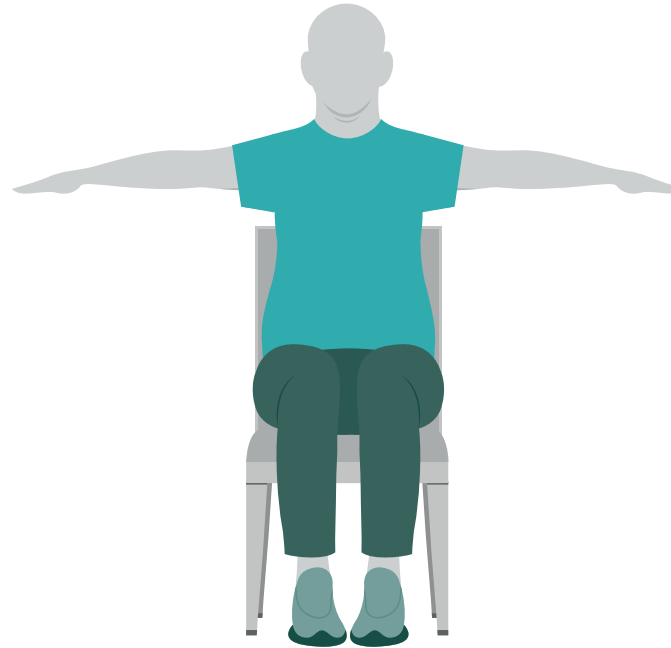
Progression

- Prolong the stretch



Stretch

✓ Check posture ⌚ Time: 12–15 seconds



Chest Stretch

Start with the arms crossed at the chest.

Move each arm out at the same time as far back as you can until you feel a stretch.

Remember: Check posture before stretching. Keep hands at shoulder height throughout.

Progression: Reach for the back of the chair.

7
mins

4
mins

10
mins

6
mins

3
mins

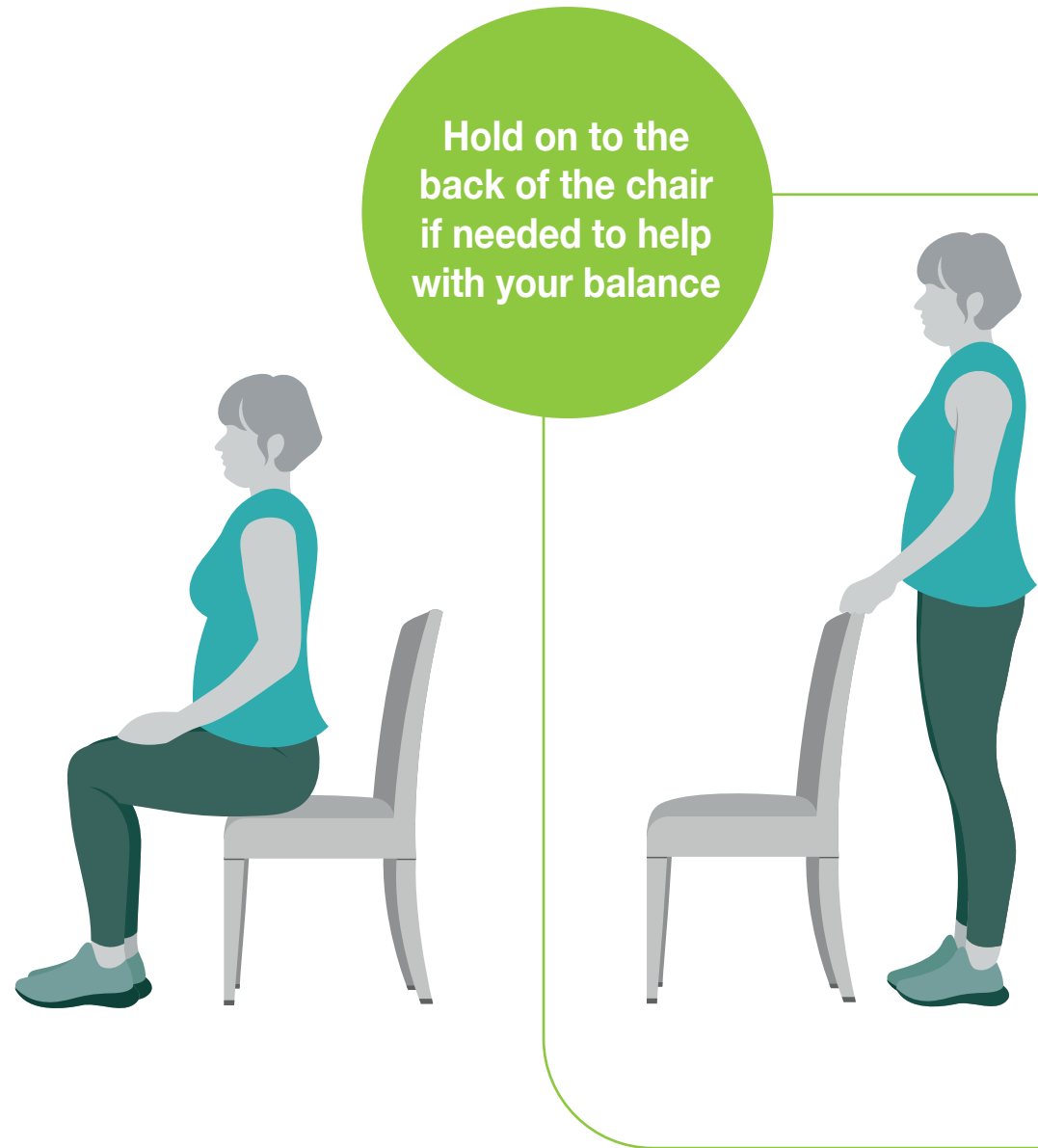
30
mins

TOTAL

Seated or Standing

Some of the exercises in this guide can be performed seated or standing dependent on your fitness levels.

It's recommended you try them seated build up your strength and then progress to standing exercises when you feel more confident.

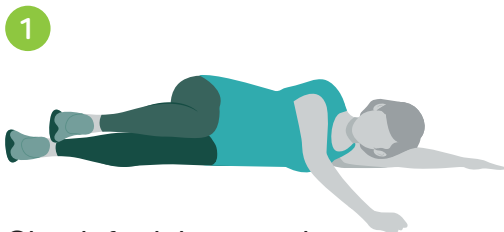


Getting up from the floor

Getting up from the floor is a vital skill at any point in life. It requires mobile joints and strong muscles to be able to get up safely. Many of the exercises in this guide can help improve mobility, flexibility and strength.

If you fall, the first thing to do is to lie still for a minute and take a deep breath.

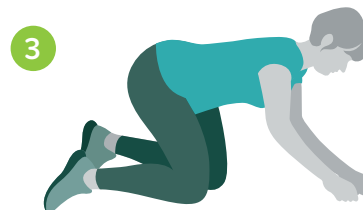
Try to stay calm and then check for injuries. If you think you're okay and can get up, follow the simple steps in the diagram provided.



1
Check for injuries and regain composure.



2
Roll onto your side and push up on your elbows.



3
Use your arms to push yourself on to your hands and knees.



4
Crawl to a stable chair (or a sturdy piece of furniture) and hold on to it for support.



5
Slide or raise the foot of your stronger leg forwards so it's flat on the floor.

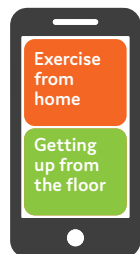


6
Lean forwards and push up using your arms and front leg, slowly rising to a standing position.



7
Turnaround and sit down for a few minutes to rest.

Watch video online



Scan the QR code to watch the video.



Or visit:
www.exercisefromhome.co.uk

Let's Keep Bolton Moving

Looking for different ways to be active and connect in the community? Visit Lets Keep Bolton Moving and you will find loads of information on walking groups, gentle exercise classes and opportunities to get involved locally.



Scan the QR Code

Or visit:
www.letskeepboltonmoving.co.uk

More ways to stay active



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ACTIVITIES | HEALTH | WELLBEING

Need more information?



Visit: www.ageuk.org.uk/bolton/

Call: 01204 382411

Email: strengthandbalance@ageukbolton.org.uk