

5 Exercises For a Foot Strengthening Fitness Program

Why is a Foot Fitness Program Important to Incorporate into Your Wellness Lifestyle?

Our feet are the most used & abused part of the body. The arches of the feet provide us with flexibility, help to absorb shock, distribute the weight of the body, and assist the feet in adapting to surface changes when walking, running, & climbing. Lack of proper foot and/or arch strength & flexibility can contribute to fallen arches, ankle, knee, hip, back, shoulder, & neck problems, and potential pain or injury. Good balance and body control is necessary for daily living activities as well as sport performance. Our feet play an important roll in maintaining posture and health.

You can quickly and easily help improve foot muscle strength, flexibility and movement with a focused foot posture program and specific foot care exercises. [Before following any advice, it is recommended that you consult with your physician if you suffer from any health problems or special conditions, or are in doubt about the suitability of any exercise.]

Theraband Foot Series - The following series of exercises can assist you in developing improved strength & flexibility for your toes, arches, feet, and lower legs. (excerpt from the book – Fantastic Feet! Exercises to Strengthen the Ankles, Arches, and Toes by Aliesa George)

The Theraband foot exercises can be done seated in a chair, or lying on your back. Place the band lengthwise along the entire foot. Hold the ends of the bands with your hands. The tighter you hold the band (closer to your ankle) the more resistance/more difficult the exercise. The stronger the Theraband, the more challenging the exercises will be. Bands come in a variety of colors for increasing the difficulty. Work to maintain good knee, ankle, and foot alignment during each the exercises.

- Beginners ~ Do Exercise #1 on the right leg, then switch to do the left. Then continue to #2 right & left, 3 ,4, & 5.
- Intermediate/Advanced ~ Do Exercises #1-5 on the right foot, then switch to do #1-5 on the left foot.
- These foot-fitness exercises can be done without a band to start with, or add a band for increased resistance.
- Therabands come in several different colors and strengths to challenge your fitness level.
- Be sure you use a resistance BAND not a Tube. Need to purchase? You'll find individual Therabands and other great Foot Fitness products available at www.Centerworks.com/equipment.html.

It is recommended that you remove any jewelry and wear socks during these exercises to protect the theraband from tearing.

Exercise #1 ~ Toe Curls - Flex the foot (pull the ankle back towards your shin) Hold the ankle still, and point just the toes. (Like a monkey, grabbing a branch with its feet.) Release the toes.

Repeat 5 times.

Exercise #2 ~ Point & Flex the Foot - Begin with the ankle and toes flexed towards your shin. Move the ankle first, pointing the foot, then point the toes (like a ballerina on her tip-toes) Release the toes first, then flex the ankle back to the starting position.

Repeat 5-10 times.

Exercise #3 ~ Curl & Point the Foot - Starting position as #2 above, only curl the toes first, then point the ankle. Holding the toes curled, flex the ankle back towards the shin, and then flex the toes.

Repeat 5-10 times.

Exercise #4 ~ Ankle Circles - Away from the body. Articulate through the toes and ankle while completing big, slow circles of the foot. As the foot moves away from the body, press to the ball of the big toe, and point the big toe first, then one by one from the big toe to the little toe until you are in a good “ballerina point”. Hold the point as you pass through the top of your circle, and release the toes from the big toe to the little toe to finish in a strong flexed foot position for a calf stretch.

Repeat 5-10 circles in this direction.

Exercise #5 ~ Ankle Circles - Towards the body. Articulate through the toes and ankle while completing big, slow circles of the foot. As the foot moves towards the center of the body, press through the little toe side of the foot - pointing the little toe first. Then one by one point the toes from the little toe to the big toe until you are in a good “ballerina point”. Hold the point as you pass through the top of your circle, and release the toes from the little toe to the big toe to finish in a strong flexed foot position for a calf stretch.

Repeat 5-10 circles in this direction.



To discover more great foot care tips and exercises for healthy feet... Check out the book **Fantastic Feet! Exercises to Strengthen the Ankles, Arches, & Toes**, by Aliesa George, the **Centerworks® Foot Fitness Kit™**, and other great foot care resources available at:

www.Centerworks.com or www.Foot-Care-Help.com