

4-Week Senior Fitness Program

A Comprehensive Workout Plan for Adults 60+ — Strength, Balance & Mobility



Planner Contents

This evidence-based guide contains daily workout checklists, routine guidelines, progress tracking sheets, and safe progression milestones strictly adhering to guidelines by the CDC, NIA, and AHA.

Program Suitability

Designed for: Adults 60+ looking to enhance functional fitness, beginners restarting exercise, those seeking better balance/strength, and individuals with well-managed chronic conditions.



Medical Clearance Required

Consult your healthcare provider before starting, especially if you have chronic heart conditions, diabetes, arthritis, or severe unsupervised balance difficulties. Never exercise through pain.

Overview & Equipment

Week	Goal	Routine	Time	Frequency
Week 1	Build confidence & form	5 core exercises	15 min	3 days / week
Week 2	Improve fundamental strength	5 core exercises	20 min	3 days / week
Week 3	Increase balance & challenge	6 exercises (1 new)	25 min	4 days / week
Week 4	Build long-term consistency	6 exercises	30 min	4 days / week

Required Items:

- **Sturdy Chair:** A stable kitchen or dining chair without wheels.
- **Supportive Shoes:** Proper footwear with comfortable, non-slip soles.
- **Hydration & Tracking:** A water bottle, timer/clock, and the printable tracking sheets below.
- *Optional: Light resistance bands or light dumbbells (1-2 lbs) as you progress.*

Weeks 1 & 2: Building the Foundation

Schedule: Perform on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Rest on Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday, and Sunday.

1. Warm-Up (3 Minutes)

- **Marching in Place (1 min):** Lift knees alternately with gentle arm swings. Breathe steadily.
- **Gentle Arm Circles (1 min):** Extend arms at shoulder height. 10 slow circles forward, 10 backward.
- **Shoulder Rolls (1 min):** Roll shoulders up, back, and down smoothly. 10 circles forward, 10 backward.

2. Core Strength Routine (10 Minutes)

1. Chair Squats (8 Repetitions)

Target: Thighs, hips, and glutes for safer walking and standing.

Execution: Stand behind a sturdy chair holding the backrest. Feet shoulder-width apart. Slowly lower hips 2–4 inches as if sitting down. Hold for 2 seconds, then straighten up using your legs.

✗ Avoid letting knees collapse inward or dropping too quickly. Do not hold your breath.

2. Wall Push-Ups (8 Repetitions)

Target: Upper body strength (chest, shoulders, arms).

Execution: Face a wall at arm's length. Place hands flat at shoulder height. Lower your body toward the wall until your face is 2–3 inches away, keeping your trunk perfectly straight. Push back smoothly.

✗ Avoid sagging your lower back or flaring elbows out excessively.

3. Seated Leg Extensions (8 each leg)

Target: Quadriceps strength and knee joint stability.

Execution: Sit tall with feet flat. Extend one leg fully straight out in front, pulling toes toward your shin. Hold dynamically for 3–5 seconds, then lower with control. Switch legs.

✗ Avoid swinging the leg or locking the knee aggressively.

4. Bicep Curls (10 Repetitions)

Target: Arm strength for daily lifting and carrying tasks.

Execution: Sit or stand with arms at sides. Optionally hold light water bottles. Keep elbows tucked stationary and curl hands up toward shoulders. Lower slowly.

5. Heel Raises (10 Repetitions)

Target: Calf strength and ankle stability.

Execution: Stand behind your chair holding the backrest lightly. Lift your heels high, rising onto your toes. Hold for 2–3 seconds, then lower flat with control.

3. Balance & Cool Down (5 Minutes)

- **Single Leg Stance:** Stand behind chair holding lightly. Lift one foot and hold balance for 10 seconds. Do 2-3 attempts per leg.
- **Seated Stretching (3 min):** Gentle neck tilts, shoulder crossings, and 10 ankle rotations per side.
- **Deep Breathing (1 min):** Inhale for 4 counts, hold for 2, exhale slowly for 6 counts. Repeat 5 times.

Weeks 3 & 4: Progressive Challenge

Schedule: Perform on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday. Rest on Wednesday, Saturday, and Sunday.

1. Enhanced Warm-Up (3 Minutes)

- **Marching with Higher Knees (1 min):** Drive knees closer to hip level with a slightly faster tempo.
- **Larger Arm Circles (1 min):** Gradually increase circle diameter while keeping movements fully controlled.
- **Side Leg Swings (1 min):** Stand behind chair, swing one leg gently out to the side and back. 10 swings per leg.

2. Advanced Strength & Balance Routine (12 Minutes)

Build capacity by advancing repetitions and integrating outer-hip stability movements:

1. **Chair Squats:** Increase to **10 repetitions** (Maintain perfect form).
2. **Wall Push-Ups:** Increase to **10 repetitions** (Step slightly further back for difficulty).
3. **Seated Leg Extensions:** Increase to **10 repetitions per leg** (Focus on a full 5-second hold).
4. **Bicep Curls:** Increase to **12 repetitions** (Integrate light 1–2 lb dumbbells if ready).
5. **Heel Raises:** Increase to **12 repetitions** (Extend hold time at the apex).

6. NEW: Hip Abductions (10 each side)

Target: Outer hip muscles (gluteus medius) for pelvic stability and fall prevention.

Execution: Stand tall behind your chair holding the backrest. Keep your standing leg slightly soft. Lift the active leg straight out to the side (approx. 45 degrees) without tilting your upper body. Hold for 3 seconds, then lower slowly.

 Avoid swinging the leg using momentum or leaning your torso sideways.

3. Advanced Balance & Cool Down (7 Minutes)

- **Single Leg Stance Challenge:** Extend hold time to **15–20 seconds** per leg. Attempt to lighten your grip on the chair.
- **Toe Stands:** Rise onto your toes and hold the top position for a full 5 seconds. Repeat 5–8 times.
- **Full Body Stretching (5 min):** Extended routine incorporating neck tilts, shoulder stretches, a gentle seated forward fold for back flexibility, and a seated knee-to-chest hip release.
- **Deep Breathing (1 min):** Box breathing pattern to fully lower heart rate.

Weekly Accountability Tracking Sheet

Print this sheet weekly to document progress. Rate your exertion level using the 1–10 scale below.

Day	Completed?	Duration	How Felt (1-10)	Notes (Weights used, discomfort, etc.)
Monday	☐ Yes ☐ No	_____ min	_____	
Tuesday	☐ Yes ☐ No	_____ min	_____	
Wednesday	☐ Yes ☐ No	_____ min	_____	
Thursday	☐ Yes ☐ No	_____ min	_____	
Friday	☐ Yes ☐ No	_____ min	_____	
Saturday	☐ Yes ☐ No	_____ min	_____	
Sunday	☐ Yes ☐ No	_____ min	_____	

Exertion Scale: 1–3: Very Light/Easy | 4–6: Moderate/Manageable (Ideal target) | 7–8: Vigorous/Energized | 9–10: Maximal Effort

Progress Milestones Checklist

☐ **End of Week 1:** Completed 3 foundational sessions; mastered strict form on squats; held single leg stance for 10s.

☐ **End of Week 2:** Completed all 5 strength movements reliably; noticed subtle improvements in daily walking stability.

☐ **End of Week 3:** Integrated hip abductions safely; comfortably sustained 25-minute active duration.

☐ **End of Week 4:** Achieved 20+ second single leg stance balance; completed full program; ready for long-term maintenance.

Intensity Monitoring: The Talk Test

- **Level 1 (Too Easy):** Can sing lines out loud comfortably. Consider increasing tempo or reps.

- **Level 2 (Perfect Target):** Can talk comfortably in full sentences but cannot sing. Stay here.
- **Level 3 (High Exertion):** Can only manage short, fragmented words. Slow down your pace.
- **Level 4 (Danger Zone):** Breathless, unable to speak. **Stop and rest immediately.**



Warning Signs: When to Stop Immediately

Cease activity and contact your emergency services or healthcare professional if you experience: chest pain or heavy pressure, severe breathlessness, lightheadedness, sudden dizziness, nausea, sharp localized joint pain, or an irregular pounding pulse.

Post-Program Blueprint & Nutrition Support

Protein Intake: Aim for 1.0–1.2 grams of protein per kilogram of body weight daily (eggs, fish, poultry, beans) to preserve skeletal muscle tissue.

Bone & Joint Health: Target 1200mg of dietary Calcium and discuss Vitamin D supplementation with your physician.

Next Steps: Maintain your consistency by repeating Weeks 3–4 with light resistance bands, joining local senior center walking groups, or transitioning to water aerobics and low-impact senior yoga classes.