

**Better Balance Equals Better Running**

Running is in fact an intricate one-footed balancing act. Balance is an important component of an athlete’s ability because all forms of movement rely on it. Balance training – improving your ability to control the body’s centre of mass – enables us to move forward more effectively and skilfully and thus run smoother and faster. You want as much energy as possible to be available when running to go towards forward propulsion and not wasting energy towards preventing yourself from falling over. Improving your balance will reduce the energy you must put into maintaining your balance.

Select one of the three Balance Challenges (CH) and identify which stage you at. Aim to work towards the emerging stages with Balance training a minimum of 3 times per week.

**Static Balance and Postural Control – Single and double leg Standing**

(It is assumed all challenges are completed on both legs. Athletes should always maintain a good core positioning for each challenge)

|     | Develop Stage 1   | Develop Stage 2  | Develop Stage 3   | Practice Stage 4   | Practice Stage 5   | Practice Stage 6   | Emerging Stage 7  | Emerging Stage 8   | Emerging Stage 9  |
|-----|---|--|---|--|--|--|---|--|---|
| CH1 | a) Stand still with one foot on the floor for 5 secs without losing balance | a) Stand still with one foot on the floor for 30 secs without losing balance | a)Stand still with one foot on the floor and eyes closed for 10secs with losing balance | a)Stand on one foot and do 10 ankle extensions, lifting the heel off the floor and slowly putting down | a)Stand on one foot and complete 10 ankle extensions with eyes closed without losing balance | a)Stand on one foot and complete 10 squats into ankle extensions with eyes closed without losing balance | a)Stand on one foot and complete 5 squats with eyes closed and on an uneven surface | a)Stand on one foot and complete 10 squats into ankle extensions with eyes closed and on an uneven surface | a)On an uneven surface place cones at 3, 6, 9 and 12 o'clock and then pick them up with the same hand |