

## **Get Fit For Golf AND Fit For Life.....Through Balance Training!**

**Written by Mindi Boysen, TPI Level III CGFI @ Tatum Ranch Golf Cub**

Would you like to be fit for golf AND fit for life? Then it is never too late to work on your balance! What I've found that separates the good golfers from the GREAT golfers is their sense of balance. The technical term for this is spatial awareness. Spatial awareness is being cognizant where your body is in space throughout your golf swing and being able to control your equilibrium while moving. Many amateur golfers who do not have adequate balance may experience swing faults such as "over the top" and loss of posture. These are two faults that will lead to inconsistency in your game.

Now to get a true idea of your ability to balance, take off your shoes. It is better to do these exercises with your shoes off because you then force your muscles in your toes, feet, ankles, and shins to do the work instead of relying on shoes which allow your feet to "sleep". If you find each test easy to do for approximately 20-30 seconds, then progress to the next level....if not, then stay at that level until you have mastered it consistently.

1. **TWO LEGGED BALANCE:** Stand with your feet together with good posture and hands at your sides.
2. **TWO LEGGED BALANCE w/ EYES CLOSED:** (same as #1) maintaining good posture and close your eyes for 20-30 seconds comfortably without swaying.
3. **ONE LEGGED BALANCE:** Stand with posture centered over one leg and lift opposite leg off floor. Knee should come to hip height forming a 90 degree angle. Do not allow legs/feet to touch each other.
4. **ONE LEGGED BALANCE w/ SLOW BLINKS:** (same as #3) adding the challenge of blinking eyes slowly to "tease" the body by not being able to focus on an object using sight for balance. First start with 1 second blinks then progress to 2, 3, 4, 5 seconds.
5. **ONE LEGGED BALANCE w/ EYES CLOSED:** This is the shining star! Can you stand on one foot and close your eyes for more than 20 seconds without bobbing or moving your arms from your sides?

How did you do? Are you frustrated yet? Balance is one of the first simple skills to leave us as we age. Why? ...because we don't practice! When we stand on two feet all day and are constantly centering our gravity over both feet as we move, tiny muscles known as stabilizers in our inner and outer parts of our legs get to go to "sleep", just as our feet do when we wear shoes. So, standing on one leg challenges those muscles to do their part and fine tune them for sport specific moves, such as golf, AND helps to prevent injuries from falling.

According to the Titleist Performance Institute (TPI), most professional golfers can stand on one foot for 30 seconds to 1 minute without a problem. So, now you have something to work on! Remember, practice makes progress! Do a little something every day to help you with your balance. It will make you more fit for golf AND fit for life!

For a video clip of the above exercise, check out:

<http://www.cyberlinksgolf.com/Golf%20Fitness.htm>

*Mindi Boysen is a TPI Level 3 Certified Golf Fitness Instructor endorsed by Tatum Ranch Golf Club in Cave Creek, AZ. She has released "Fit For Golf! Fit For Life!", a golf fitness program on DVD's as well as her book, Synergistic Golf, outlines each day of the year with golf performance enhancing tips. You can catch Mindi demonstrating golf specific exercises on [Golf America](#) TV nationwide. She is also the official fitness partner of the Arizona Women's Golf Association and is available for private or group sports conditioning training as well as seminars and nutritional consultations. For more information about Mindi...<http://www.fitforgolfusa.com>*