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Ready, Steady, Floor!

How to get down to the floor and back up with confidence — to stretch, to play with the grandkids, or to get yourself up after a fall. No equipment needed. You can do it all in your living room, starting from wherever you are today.

Step 1: The floor check

Before you train anything, find out what's actually holding you back. Lower yourself to the floor, sit for a moment, then stand back up. Use as much support as you need.

- Set up next to a **sturdy couch, or a chair pushed against a wall.**
- Make sure **another person is home** and keep your **phone on you.**
- If you're sure you couldn't get up again, **skip the check** and start with the exercises.

Where did it get hard?

WHAT YOU NOTICED	WHAT NEEDS WORK	START WITH
Wobbly or out of control on the way down	Balance	**Section 1**
Your hips, knees, or ankles wouldn't bend far enough	Mobility	**Section 2**
Hard to push off the floor or pull on furniture	Upper body strength	**Section 3**
Your legs couldn't drive you up from kneeling	Lower body strength	**Section 4**

More than one? Very common. Start with the one that felt hardest. You'll do the check again in 8 weeks and see how far you've come.

See your doctor before you start if:

- You've been **dizzy** or the **room spins**
- You've had **new or frequent headaches**
- You've been **falling more often** than you used to

Had a knee or hip replacement, or being considered for one? Check with your surgeon first. If your doctor or physical therapist has told you to avoid a movement, skip it.

How to use this guide

This isn't a workout to follow top to bottom. It's a menu. Pick what you need, skip what you don't, and come back for more whenever you're ready.

Start here	The section that felt hardest in your floor check.
Pick a few	Choose one or two moves from that section — or anything that looks like fun.
Make it fit	Add them to a workout, or sprinkle them through your day: during TV commercials, while the coffee brews, after breakfast.
Level up	When a move feels easy, hold on less, go a little deeper if it doesn't hurt, then add weight.
Both sides	**Start with your weaker side,** then match it exactly on the stronger side.
Come back	In **8 weeks,** do the floor check again and see how far you've come.

The menu

choose what you need

1 Balance

STAYING IN CONTROL ON THE WAY DOWN

Suitcase carry. Carry a weight at your side — a dumbbell, a half-full water jug, or a loaded grocery bag — and walk. Stay tall and don't let it pull you sideways. Walk a lap of the house, then switch hands.

Suitcase deadlift. Set the weight on the floor beside one foot. Bend at your hips and knees, keep a straight back, pick it up, and rise to standing. Then switch sides.

Single-leg stand. Stand on one leg next to the counter, hand hovering just above it. Work up to 30 seconds. **Harder:** slowly turn your head side to side.

Short on time? Pick one and do it every day after breakfast.

2 Mobility

BENDING YOUR JOINTS WHILE THEY CARRY YOUR WEIGHT

Getting down and back up takes a deep bend at your hips, knees, and ankles with your whole bodyweight on them. So train them that way.

Couch squat. Sit down slowly to the edge of the couch, then stand up without using your hands. Easy one to do during TV commercials.

Half-kneel stand-up. Kneel with your back knee on a pillow and your front foot planted, one hand on the couch. Push through your front foot to stand. Your free hand can press on your thigh until you don't need it.

Heel raise. Hold the wall, rise onto your toes, and lower slowly. **Harder:** with the balls of your feet on a step and a hand on the rail, sink your heels below the step, then rise.

Love your mobility drills? Keep them — but do these too. They build mobility *and* strength at the same time.

3 Upper body strength

ARMS THAT CAN PUSH AND PULL YOU UP

The closest thing to grab might be low (push down on a step) or high (pull on a table edge). Train both.

Push-up ladder. Wall → counter → edge of the couch → floor. Move down a rung when the one you're on feels easy. Have dumbbells? Add chest presses and overhead presses.

Row. One hand on something sturdy, a weight in the other (a can of beans will do!). Bend over at the hips with your back straight. Pull the weight up toward your hip and squeeze your shoulder blade back. At the gym, use the row machine or lat pulldown.

Why push these hard: if a fall hurts one leg, your arms have to help your good leg get you up. Step-by-step demos are in my **2-Day Home Workout video**.

4 Lower body strength

LEGS THAT DRIVE YOU UP TO STANDING

Split squat. One foot forward, one back, holding on to something. Lower slowly, then push up through your front foot. This is the exact move that stands you up from the floor.

Step-up. Whole foot on a stair or step stool, light hand on the rail. Push through your front foot to stand tall, then lower slowly. No good stair at home? This is the step platform I recommend — it works for heel raises too.

Want more options? Knees guide · Hips guide · Exercise Library

Put it together: three ways down and up

Start at the level that feels safe today. Practice going down to **both sides** — sitting to your left and to your right. Every time you practice, you're training all four things at once.

Level 1

TWO HANDS ON THE COUCH

Down: Both hands on the seat. Lower to one knee, then the other. Shift your hips and sit to one side.

Up: Turn to face the couch and come up onto both knees. Step one foot forward. Push through your hands and that front foot to stand.

Level 2

ONE HAND ON THE COUCH

The same steps, with one hand on the couch. Rest the other on your thigh and use it to help push.

Level 3

NO HANDS

Down: Step back into a half-kneel, lower the other knee, sit to the side.

Up: Hands and knees, bring your stronger foot forward, push up through it. A hand on your knee is fine.

This is also how you get up after a fall. Roll to your side, get to your hands and knees, crawl to something sturdy, and use the Level 1 steps. Practicing now means you'll know exactly what to do if you ever find yourself in that situation.

Bonus: power, the thing that catches you

Strength is how much you can move. **Power** is how *fast* you can move it. When you trip, what saves you is how quickly your foot steps out and your arms come up — and that's power.

1–3%
Strength lost per year after 50 if you're not training it

3–4%
Power lost per year after 50 — it fades even faster than strength

How to train it: once you know an exercise well, drop to **about half your usual weight.** Do the hard part as fast as you can, and the easy part slowly. Squat: lower slowly, stand up fast. Overhead press: push up fast, lower slowly. Trying to move fast is what counts, even if the weight doesn't fly.

When: right after your warm-up, do 1–2 light power sets before your regular strength work, not after — you can't move fast when you're tired. Or give it 2 days a week of its own: 2–3 sets of 4–8 reps, stopping as soon as you slow down.

HIIT trains it too. My video on HIIT teaches you exactly how to do it.

Want to build your own workouts?

Your First Strength Program teaches you to put these moves into a plan made for your body, your goals, your equipment, and your schedule — so you always know what comes next.

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For education only — not medical advice, and not a substitute for care from your own physician. Stop any movement that hurts. The step platform link is an affiliate link — I may earn a small commission at no extra cost to you.

Floor Bingo

Your 8-week challenge. Every time you do a square, color it in or mark a big X. Anything from the guide counts — mix and match as you go.

Better with a friend. Print a card for her too. Play as a team and cheer each other on — or make it a race: **first to black out her card gets treated to lunch.**

Bingo
Five in a row — across, down, or corner to corner.

Double bingo
Two lines. You're building a habit now.

Blackout
The whole card in 8 weeks. Then redo your floor check.

F	L	O	O	R
BALANCE Suitcase carry to the mailbox and back	MOBILITY 10 couch squats in one commercial break	FLOOR PRACTICE Down & up: Level 1	UPPER BODY 12 wall push-ups	LOWER BODY 10 step-ups each leg
UPPER BODY 10 rows each arm (a water jug counts)	FLOOR PRACTICE Got on the floor for fun — grandkids, the dog, a stretch	BALANCE Stood on one leg while brushing my teeth	MOBILITY Heel raises off a step	POWER 5 fast stand-ups from a squat
LOWER BODY 10 split squats each leg	BALANCE One-leg stand, 30 seconds each side	**FREE** I did the floor check	FLOOR PRACTICE Went down to my weaker side	MOBILITY 5 half-kneel stand-ups each leg
MOBILITY 15 heel raises	POWER A light power set before my workout	UPPER BODY Moved down a rung on the push-up ladder	LOWER BODY A split squat without holding on	FLOOR PRACTICE Down & up: Level 2
FLOOR PRACTICE Practiced the after-a-fall get-up	BALANCE 10 suitcase deadlifts each side	LOWER BODY Step-ups holding a weight	BALANCE One-leg stand with slow head turns	FLOOR PRACTICE Down & up: Level 3

Balance · Mobility · Upper body · Lower body · Floor practice · Power