

Keeping **Active** in **Barnsley** during **Lockdown**



This guide contains information on how to keep active at home and in your local area during lockdown restrictions. From gentle beginner activities to more advanced suggestions.

Keeping Active in the Home

Going outside or starting a new class may not be possible right now. There are exercises you can do at home that are suitable for people of all abilities and fitness levels. To begin with, let's look at some gentle ways in which you can start to become more active in the home, even if you haven't done any exercise before.

All of these exercises and tips are taken from the Age UK website, which you can find at www.ageuk.org.uk.



Standing without help

Work towards pushing up from sitting in a chair to a standing position without using a walker or leaning on someone else.

- Sit on a chair without arm rests, with your arms across your chest.
- Lean forward.
- Put your weight on your feet while leaning forward.
- Stand up by straightening your knees. Sit down again.
- Repeat this as many times as you feel able.
- Try to do this exercise 3 to 5 times a day.



Regular standing

If you sit down a lot during the day, try to get up once an hour. If that's not possible, moving your arms and legs for a few minutes will help.

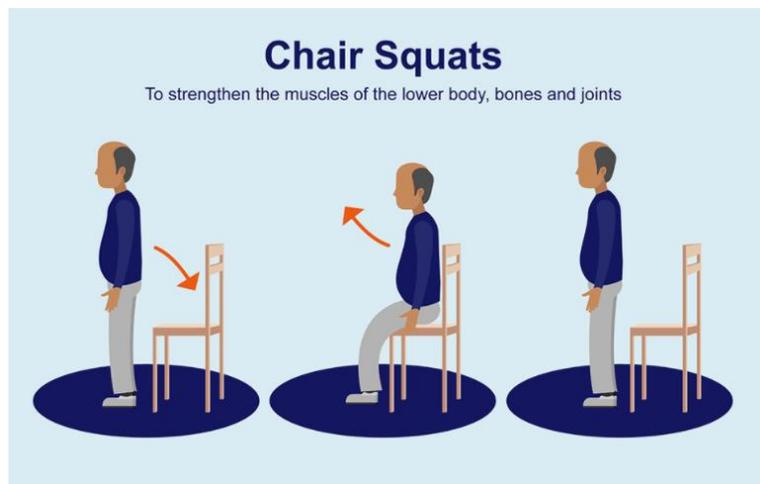


Gentle stretches

Try some gentle stretches in bed or a chair every day to keep supple.

- While sitting or lying, bring your toes towards your shin and then point them toward the floor. Repeat for both feet.
- Sitting on a chair, lift your leg up off the seat, keeping your knee bent. Return to starting position and repeat.
- Sitting on a chair, pull your toes up, tighten your thigh muscle and straighten your knee. Hold for about 5 seconds, if you can, and then slowly relax your leg. Repeat for both legs.
- Sitting on a chair with your feet on the floor, bend your knee as much as possible. Repeat for both legs.
- Sitting on a stool, let your back drop and get rounded, then use your back muscles to straighten your back and arch it (but not too much!).

When you've got used to standing and moving, you can move on to some gentle exercises.



To help strengthen the muscles of the lower body, bones and joints

1. Stand in front of a chair with your feet as far apart as your hips
2. Bend your knees while keeping your shoulders and chest upright
3. Lower your bottom slowly (4 seconds) so you sit down
4. Then push your body back up to return to a standing position (2-4 seconds)
5. Try to avoid using your hands
6. Aim to perform these 5-10 times or for a duration of 20-60 seconds, take a rest after for 40-60 seconds
7. Repeat this action 2-5 times.
8. If you don't feel like you can do this exercise in full, just try bending your legs a little until you feel you can go further. Then work towards the full activity.



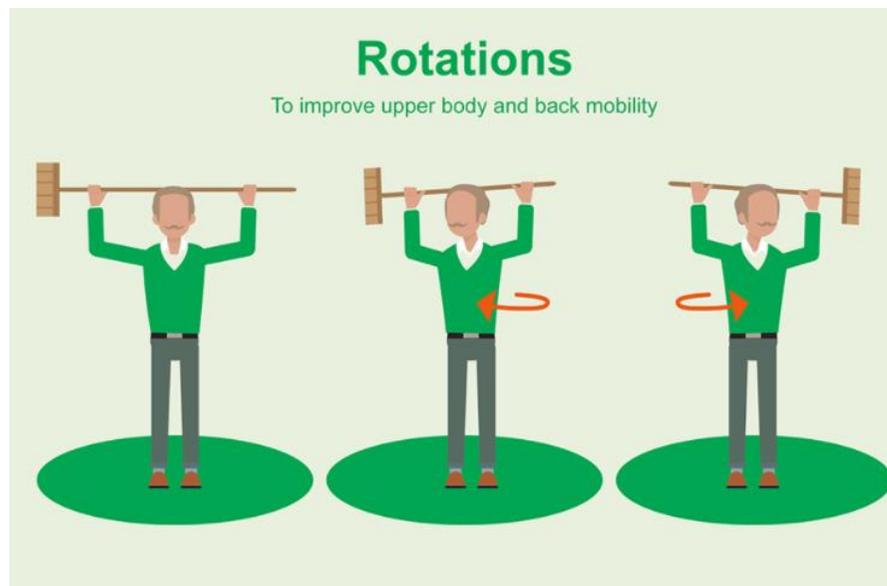
To improve balance and bone strength

1. Stand facing a non-moveable chair or surface for support if you need it
2. Warm up with a slow march for 1 minute, gradually raising your knees higher
3. With your arms at your side, slowly lift your left foot and balance on your right foot for 10 seconds
4. Slowly lower your left foot and repeat with your right foot
5. Aim to build up the duration by 5 seconds each time as you feel more comfortable
6. To increase difficulty, try raising your hand above your head on the same side or slowly swinging your arms like you're running
7. Repeat on both legs 3-5 times each.



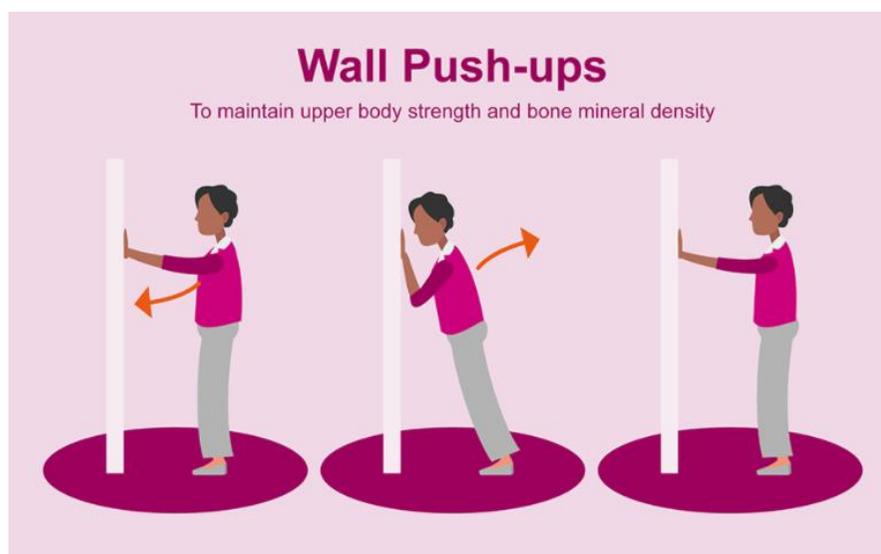
To improve mobility, posture and strength

1. Stand with your upper back, head, bottom and heels against the wall
2. Start with your hands out to the side with your palms facing outwards
3. Whilst maintaining contact with the wall, slowly raise your hands above your head, stretching as wide and as high as possible
4. Slowly return to your starting position and then repeat – aim to complete 5-10 times
5. Perform this 2-3 times, take a break for 40-60 seconds before repeating again.



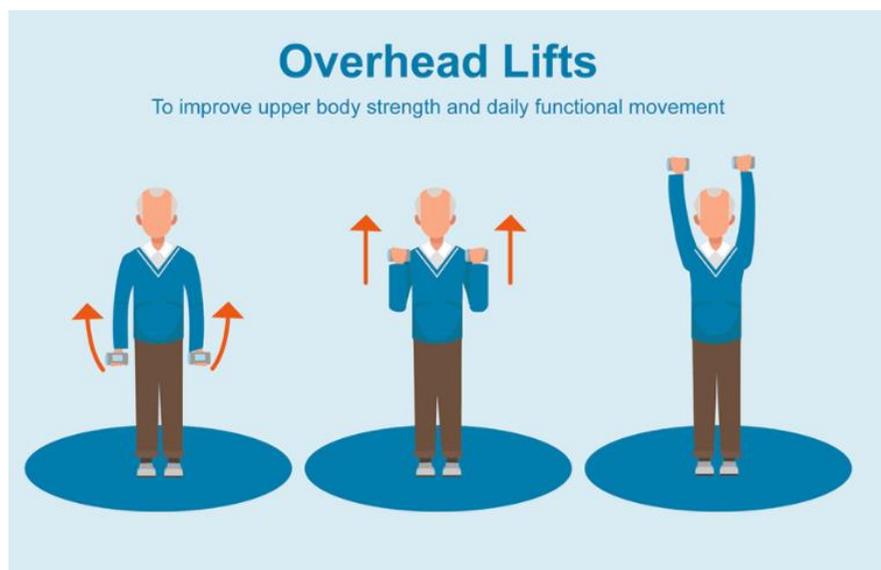
To improve upper body and back mobility

1. Holding a stick or broom horizontally behind your head, stand with your feet hip width apart and your knees slightly bent
2. If you don't have a broom, put your hands on your shoulders keeping your arms at 90 degrees
3. Keeping the broom straight, turn to your right as far as comfortable, twisting through your hips
4. Then slowly turn to the other side, building up your range of movement
5. Repeat 10-20 times
6. Perform this 2-5 times, take a break for 40-60 seconds before repeating again.



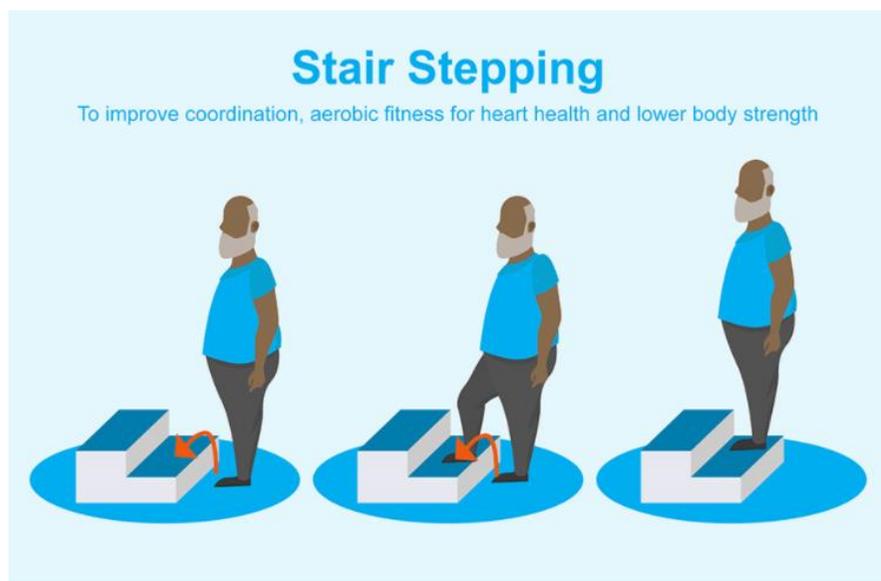
To maintain upper body strength and bone mineral density

1. Stand at arm's length in front of a wall which is safe
2. Lean forward slightly and put your palms flat on the wall at shoulder height
3. If you are just starting out have your feet closer to the wall
4. If you want more of a challenge have your feet further back from the wall
5. Keep your feet planted as you slowly bring your body towards the wall, aiming to keep your body straight
6. Gently push yourself back so that your arms are straight again
7. Aim for 5-10 slow repetitions
8. Perform this 2-5 times, take a break for 40-60 seconds before repeating again.



To improve upper body strength and daily functional movement

1. In a standing position hold 2 evenly weighted objects like cans of beans or bottles
2. Start with your hands down by your sides and your palms facing away from you
3. Keeping your elbows by your side, slowly bring the objects up to your shoulders then slowly extend your arms above your head
4. Reverse the action until your hands are back by your side
5. Repeat the movement 5-10 times
6. Perform this 2-5 times, take a break for 40-60 seconds before repeating again.



To improve coordination, aerobic fitness for heart health and lower body strength

1. Stand in front of a staircase or step and step up with your right foot, then up with your left
2. Then step back down with your right, then back down with your left. Try to repeat 10 times or for a period of 20-60 seconds
3. Take a rest before changing the leading foot
4. If you need a little support, hold on gently to the railing, or gently touch the wall with your finger tip
5. If this is comfortable, to increase difficulty, hold some weight in each hand such as a bottle of water
6. Try to perform these 2-5 times, take a break for 40-60 seconds before repeating again.

Worried about starting exercise?

If you're new to exercise or haven't done any for a while, the thought of it may be overwhelming. Here are some things to consider:

- It's important to pace yourself and not overdo it. Listen to your body and if you start to feel uncomfortable then stop.
- Start gradually and then build up. This is particularly important if you have a health condition.
- Set yourself small goals.
- Build in a routine and make it part of your day. A walk after breakfast? Chair exercises during the Archers? A dance whilst you're watching Strictly? It all adds up!

Have you got enough space?

If you're exercising at home, make sure that the space on the floor around you is clear.

If you're moving a lot as part of your exercise, such as stretching or dancing, make sure you have plenty of space

around you - you don't want to knock into anything like a table or a shelf.

Don't exercise on a slippery floor and if you're near a rug make sure it isn't a tripping hazard.



For exercises where you need to lay down, such as yoga or Pilates, try and use a yoga mat if you can.

REMEMBER:

Chair exercises and gentle stretching can be just as beneficial as any other type of exercise. If you don't feel like heading outside, 10 minutes of stretching whilst you're watching television is better than no exercise at all.

Always stay hydrated and drink plenty of water

Exercising can be fun on your own or with an exercise buddy – is there someone in your household or support bubble who can exercise with you?

Getting outside

It's really important to get outside and get some fresh air if you can. Walking is a great way to keep active and fit. Another benefit of getting outside is connecting with nature and the outdoors can have a really positive affect on our wellbeing.

If you haven't been out walking for a while, it can seem daunting. Age UK have put together some tips on walking, which you can find here.



Choose the right shoes

Problems with your feet or shoes can affect your balance and increase your risk of tripping or falling. Talk to your doctor about any foot issues.

These footwear tips can help you feel more confident on your feet:

- Make sure your shoes fit well and don't have a tendency to slip off.
- Well-cushioned shoes offer comfort and support.
- Avoid sandals with little support and shoes with high heels.
- Wear slippers that have a good grip and that fasten and stay on properly.
- Always wear shoes or slippers, and never walk indoors in bare feet, socks or tights.

Tips on starting walking:

Even a short stroll can have health benefits. If you aren't quite ready to head out on your own, try a walk around your garden or your street.

Make walking a part of your everyday routine if you can. A walk to the shops or a short walk after breakfast can be a great way to start a routine.

Most areas of Barnsley have green spaces and parks nearby. Try using your local parks if you can as being in green areas can give your mental health a boost too.

Although group walking stops during lockdown, if we do go back into tier 3 restrictions outdoor exercise may still be possible. See if there is a local walking group near you. You can find information on walking groups in your area by contacting Age UK Barnsley.



There are lots of areas around Barnsley that are good for walking and suit all ages and abilities. This could be your local park or nature reserve, or a walk around your neighbouring streets. Barnsley has lots of green space where you can enjoy some fresh air. **A top tip?** Getting outside can boost your mood!

Some popular walking spots include:

(Please check they are remaining open)

Rabbit Ings

Wombwell Ings

Worsbrough Reservoir

RSPB Old Moor

Scout Dyke

Hoyle Mill

Monk Bretton Priory

The Fleets

Carlton Marsh

Wombwell Woods

Grimethorpe Nature Reserve

These are all nature reserves across the borough, but the council manage a number of parks and green spaces too.

For more information visit their website at www.barnsley.gov.uk/services/parks-and-open-spaces/ or contact the Parks and Open Spaces team on 01226 774353.

Worried about going outside?

Can you buddy up with someone in your support bubble or go for a walk with someone in your household?

Going for a walk in the early morning can often be quieter with fewer people around. It also means you've got your exercise in for the day so don't need to worry about remembering to do it later!

*If you're self-isolating, shielding or don't want to leave the house, can you walk around your garden? If not, try and walk around your home regularly. This may seem strange at first but it's a good way to make sure your muscles don't lose condition.



Web/online based resources

There are many websites available that offer online exercises for people who are unable to leave the home, whether this is due to health, self-isolating, shielding or lockdown.

Versus Arthritis

www.versusarthritis.org

helpline: 0800 5200 520

Versus Arthritis provides information and support to people living with arthritis. They have a programme called Let's Move and their website has lots of exercises suitable for people with arthritis and exercises to help manage pain.

We Are Undefeatable

www.weareundefeatable.co.uk

We Are Undefeatable is a campaign. It provides exercise and tips for people managing a long term health condition. The website has lots of information about moving more and ways to be more active.

Age UK

www.ageuk.org.uk

Lots of tips on being more active and starting exercise, falls prevention and looking after your health.

Join the Movement

<https://www.sportengland.org/jointhemovement>

This is a Sport England initiative brought in specifically to show people how to keep active during lockdowns. It has tips and information on exercising in the home, outside and has online classes. All activities are suitable during lockdowns and many of the classes are free.

Age UK Barnsley

www.ageuk.org.uk/barnsley/

01226 776820

Contact your local team in Barnsley for information on services across the borough