

## *Balance Drills for Gaelic Footballers/ Hurlers*

Do the following drills 3-4 times per week to improve balance.

**One-Leg Squat.** Start by standing on one leg with the free (non-support) leg straight ahead. Squat down to a position just above a half-squat, hold for 10 seconds, return and repeat on the other leg. When you can do 5 reps on each leg, make the drill more difficult by extending your free leg out to the side. Later, repeat the drill with your free leg rotated back behind your support leg. When you have perfected all three positions, do a 3-rep circuit alternating the position of the non-support leg each rep. For greater difficulty and more balance, repeat the drills on a balance board.

**60-Second Balance Step.** Start from the ready position. This drill has 6 steps. Hold each step for 10 seconds. Start with one set and gradually build to 5 sets. For greater difficulty, catch a 3-5 pound medicine ball after you achieve balance.

- 1) step onto your left foot and hold for 10 seconds
- 2) step onto your right foot and hold for 10 seconds
- 3) step forward onto your left foot and hold for 10 seconds
- 4) step forward onto your right foot and hold for 10 seconds
- 5) step backward onto your left foot and hold for 10 seconds
- 6) step backward onto your right foot and hold for 10 seconds

**Balance Board.** Assume a ready position with both feet on a balance board and hold for 10 seconds. When you can do 5 sets, repeat the drill with your eyes closed. Then, for added difficulty, hold your balance and catch a ball. In time, repeat the sequence on one foot.

**Diagonal Lunge.** From a ready position, lunge (step) back and out at about a 45-degree angle. Hold for 10 seconds, return and repeat on the other leg. When you can do 5 sets, catch a 3-5 pound medicine ball as you step back.

**Lateral Restart Jumps** (two feet). Jump sideways to the right two times and then immediately jump back to the left one time. Do 5 reps and then repeat the drill jumping to the left two times and one time to the right. For variety, repeat the drill jumping in back and front and diagonal patterns. You can add difficulty by catching a ball at the end of each sequence. On the other hand, if you wait too long between sets, the muscles recover fully, negating the beneficial effects of the preceding sets. Bottom-line, rest long enough between sets to catch your breath and then start the next set.