

PURPOSE

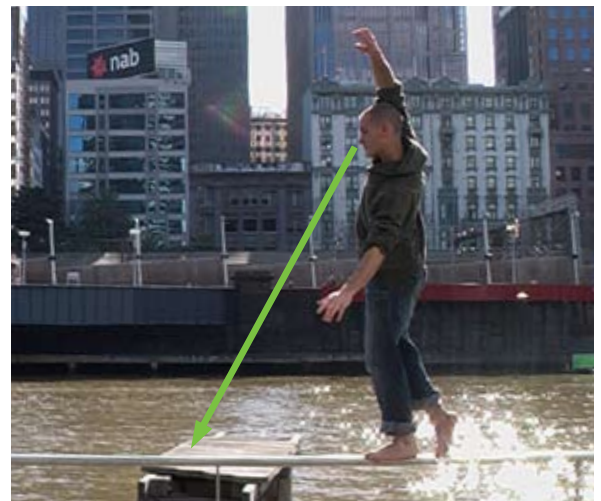
As well as being useful for body awareness and to reduce the chances of injury, the ability to balance allows us to move in places and ways that others would find difficult.

METHOD

- > An important thing to remember in balance is that the line of balance in the foot runs down through the heel along the arch and out through the second toe.



- > When balancing one needs to remember to just stand up straight and walk. Do not focus on where you are, rather, where you are going. Ideally at least a couple of feet in front of where your feet are.



- > When balancing keep they knees slightly bent and as you walk along be ready to lower yourself if you feel unsteady. Lowering yourself by bending the knees creates a lower centre of gravity that is easier to control.



Balance for most is purely a mental thing. If you can stand on two feet you can balance. If a rail is two inches off the ground most people could walk along it quite easily. But put that rail 10 feet in the air and suddenly it's not so easy.

One of the biggest factors is telling yourself you "will keep your balance" even when it seems there is no saving yourself. By simply changing a mindset balance will often improve straight away. Many people fall off a rail because they tell themselves they have lost their balance when in fact they were never at risk of falling. People have come back from seemingly impossible positions to regain balance simply because they refused to admit defeat.

When you start working on balance you will find there are some days where it is a continual battle to stay in balance, every few steps along a rail you have to stop and focus before you can move on. Other days it is easy and balance comes with little effort at all. As with most things, the more you practice the easier and more natural it becomes.

PROGRESSION

You can continue to challenge your balance as it improves by looking for surfaces that are thinner, more unstable or at different heights. You can also change things like how much you use your arms (arms at your side rather than reaching out for balance). Close your eyes to make it harder, crouch down. Your imagination is the limit, as long as you are challenging your body neurally you will be improving your balance.

IMPORTANT! Parkour is not a set of moves or tricks, there are base techniques that are used regularly but are not the "moves of Parkour". They can be varied and changed to suit a particular situation or environment. These are designed to give you the building blocks to go out and innovate and find your own way of doing things. As long as the application of speed and efficiency are observed, you are applying the principles of Parkour. Remember, Parkour is more than just the movement, it's the philosophy that makes it unique.