



KOALA BALANCE

*Snuggly koala,
snoozing in your tree,
if I climb up there
will you cuddle me?*

PURPOSE

- Strengthens abdominals
- Improves posture and body control
- Provides deep pressure, which can help you feel calm, alert and ready to learn



INSTRUCTIONS

1. Sit on the floor with your knees bent and arms crossed on your chest
2. Scoop your tummy in (squeeze your tummy muscles)
3. Rock back to balance on your bottom
4. Lift your feet, so your shins are parallel with the floor
5. Balance on your bottom as long as you can



WATCH FOR

- Tummy scooped in (tummy muscles squeezed)
- Shoulders relaxed and arms crossed on chest
- If your lower back hurts, rest then try again (focusing on squeezing your tummy)



MODIFICATIONS

- Do the Koala Balance with your feet closer to the floor or only one foot lifted
- Seated: Sit in a sturdy chair (with the chair back against the wall to be extra safe). Wriggle forward in your chair and raise your arms straight up beside your ears. Scoop your tummy in and lean slightly back to engage your tummy muscles (without touching the back of the chair). Lift one foot off the floor also if possible. Hold for as long as you can.

MORE CHALLENGING

- Try the Koala Balance with straight legs.
- While holding the Koala Balance, slowly reach your left hand to touch your right foot, then reach your right hand to your left foot. How many touches can you do?



MAKE IT MULTI-SENSORY

While doing the Koala Balance...

- Imagine being a koala curled in the fork of a tree. Feel the tree gently swaying with the breeze.
- Give yourself a huge hug! Then give yourself a huge hug with your arms crossed the other way (the top arm crossed underneath instead).



BALL SKILLS

- Pass a ball with a friend, while both holding the Koala Balance. How many passes can you get in a row without toppling over?
- Sit facing a wall, and start doing the Koala Balance. Bounce a ball against the wall and catch it again. How many bounces can you get in a row without toppling over?



FINE MOTOR SKILLS

While doing the Koala Balance:

- Practice clicking your fingers, in time with the music
- Hold a pencil in each hand. Roll the pencil between your thumb and each of your fingers, one by one. Start by using your thumb and little finger on one hand, and your thumb and pointer on the other hand (so you're using different fingers on each hand).



FUN FACTS

- Koalas eat eucalyptus leaves, which are poisonous to most animals!
- Koalas sleep 18-20 hours per day. They are mostly nocturnal (awake at night and sleeping through the day).
- Koalas have tough bottoms, so they can sit comfortably in tree forks for hours on end

