

Super Seniors Choreography To Go



# **Super Seniors**

## **With Kelly Reed-Banks & Rachel Holmes**

***Welcome to Super Seniors***

***This online workshop for Super Seniors choreography is designed for the fully qualified instructor who specialises in older adult fitness classes or would like to start teaching senior fitness classes alongside their other specialised classes.***

***We have designed this online workshop to give you all the updated information you need to progress your teaching in older adult fitness classes in the comfort of your own home. It is ideal for the busy instructor who would like to gain CPD in the comfort of their own workplace or home.***

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### ***What do you receive in this online workshop?***

- Health & Safety guidelines with regards to exercise and the older adult
- Choreography notes on different formats for your super senior classes, including – Seated classes – warm up, simple dance fusion and conditioning, Fit for Life conditioning, crunchless core and standing simple dance fusion.
- Choreography DVD which complement the notes
- Choreography downloads for more ideas

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### **Why would you teach Super Senior Fitness classes?**

According to the National Institute of Health (NIH), exercise and physical activity are some of the best things older adults can do to stay healthy. Even moderate exercise can improve the health of those who are frail or who have age-related diseases.

Some seniors are concerned that physical activity or exercise may be too strenuous or may do them more harm than good. In fact, it's an inactive lifestyle that proves to do more harm than exercise does.

Without physical activity, older people tend to grow weaker in four areas important for staying healthy and independent: strength, balance, flexibility, and endurance.

Running specialised classes for the older adult will help them:

- Increasing strength and endurance make it easier to climb stairs and carry groceries.
- Improving balance helps prevent falls.
- Being more flexible may speed recovery from injuries.

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Exercising regularly can also have a positive impact on the immune system, blood pressure, cardiovascular system and it can decrease the risk of heart disease and help with depression or anxiety.

Age is simply nothing more than a number and adults who exercise on a regular basis generally live longer and have a better outlook on life.

Your fitness classes will become a social event and an important part of their weekly routine. You may wish to run other social events that coincide with your classes like coffee mornings and luncheons?

Whatever you decide to do, these classes will be your most rewarding as the improvements you'll see will be endless and the satisfaction you will gain from teaching these classes is priceless.

### **HEALTH & SAFETY**

Here are some basic guidelines for exercising with older adults:

- Do include a wide variety of standing moves which incorporate balance, co-ordination & reaction time

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- Do slow your moves down so that your older adults can move easily into them
- Do include some upper body strength work either with bands or weights if standing, or if they can come to the floor, press ups
- Do include functional moves that will help them with everyday tasks like sit to stand & movements coming up and down from the floor if possible
- Do work on flexibility of the spine as this is reduced as we get older – use standing back extension where possible
- Do use the wall and a chair if necessary to help aid your participants
- Do use sequences but make sure they are taught at correct pace
- Do Par-Q and verbally screen your older adults more frequently & spend time with them finding out their goals for coming to class.
- Do make your classes fun & enjoyable for them and emphasis the social aspect of the class
- Avoid holding isometric contractions for long periods of time like the plank or wall sit as this will increase blood pressure.
- Avoid rolling on the spine, eg sit ups or half/full roll back as if they have Osteoporosis or Osteoarthritis these moves can cause fractures of the spine – use a mini ball behind them for half roll backs instead

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- Avoid lots of kneeling/on all fours work as this can be uncomfortable on joints
- Avoid head over legs as this will increase blood pressure
- Avoid exercising in one position for a long period of time eg lying supine. Try to keep the class flowing and moving as much as possible.

### TEACHING TIPS FOR YOUR SUPER SENIOR CLASSES

**Programme Design - know your participants.** In many of the standard fitness programmes offered in clubs today, the class descriptions are so specific that participants know what to expect before they enter the room. Make sure this is the case:

- Find out what types of exercise they do and don't like.
- Determine what they hope to gain from the class.
- **Stay flexible;** be ready to change or modify moves.
- Be aware of goals not related to physical conditioning; **social interaction is an important desire** for many participants.

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- Keep It **Safe and Simple** (KISS): You can provide a great workout just by walking in squares, triangles, circles, lines and squares. Basic moves work well in this format and help with injury prevention.
- Think “Good, Better, Best”; the best movement choice is one that everyone can perform well and that is easy on the joints. And **be careful about sudden direction changes** so that you decrease the potential for falls.
- Plan for longevity; this group of loyal participants will stay with you for years, so plan moves they can perform and perfect for years to come.
- Incorporate exercises that mimic or assist with the activities of daily living; for example, squats help people get in and out of chairs.
- **Ask for feedback** from the group.
- Remember that choreography isn’t the goal; improved health is.

## MOVEMENT & CUING

Most of your older participants will probably attend your classes because they want to feel better and enhance their quality of life. They want functional fitness, not fashionable fitness. **Teach movement with meaning**, such as stretching and reaching up to increase the ability to get something off the top shelf!

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- Explain why a move is relevant, and describe its purpose.
- Use the **warm-up as a rehearsal** for moves that will be used later in the class.
- Build from basic steps and do gradual progressions.
- **Pay attention to changes in direction**, rhythm, tempo, balance, volume, complexity and plane.
- Suggest simple modifications or default moves.
- Use **movement patterns that reinforce agility, balance and stability**.
- Take advantage of repetition to reinforce muscle memory and create a comfort zone.
- Occasionally introduce a challenging move, but be sure to label it as such first and give participants permission to opt out.
- **Cue both visually and verbally**; people may have visual or auditory difficulties.
- If it's not too confusing for your participants, **face them**. This helps those who may be lip-reading. It also alleviates the effects of extraneous noise, such as indoor pool echoing.
- **Keep verbal cues short and concise**. "Go right four" is easier for participants to process than "We're now going to grapevine over to the right in four counts."
- Assess the room's physical setup. How will posts, doors, equipment and size affect your participants' ability to move safely?



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- **Help people find the right spots in the room.** For example, someone who wears bifocals may need to be directly in front of you so she isn't constantly trying to shift focus, whereas a person with a hearing aid may need to stand away from the speakers. Also, someone who gets hot easily might be best off by the fan.

## MOTIVATION & COMMUNICATION

How you communicate with your older participants helps determine whether they continue with your class, but their reasons for initially attending can differ significantly from those of other age groups. **This population tends to be motivated by four factors: Prevention, Control, Reversal and Participation.** Notice how **appearance is not a top motivator!**

- Look for **underlying social needs** that may not have been articulated.
- Say your name and learn participants' names.
- **Notice and comment on progress** of any sort.
- Be sincere, enthusiastic, caring and compassionate.
- **Have a sense of humor.**
- Act in a trustworthy manner so that you gain participants' trust.
- Respect participants' physical limitations.

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- Dedicate portions of the class to members' specific concerns. For instance, tell participants, "Today we'll focus on the back for a few minutes because Clyde is saying his back has been bothering him."
- Make eye contact with each participant at some point during class.

## MUSIC

**Volume and selection are the biggest issues when selecting and playing music for older-adult classes.** If the music and you are competing for attention, turn the sound down or off. Turning up your microphone will not improve the situation, especially for people with hearing aids.

As in any age group, music preferences differ, but big band, swing, Broadway, classical, jazz, social dance (e.g., mambo and lindy) and even Motown are usually good bets. Depending on your class makeup, country, pop, disco, rock, Latin and Top 40 may also be well received.

- **Ask about music preferences** and favorite singers/songs.
- Buy professionally mixed music that targets this age group. Your purchases will create a demand in the market, which will encourage music companies to make more!
- Ask at the start of class and every time you change selections if the music and microphone volume are okay.
- **If you turn on a cooling fan, check the music volume again.**

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- Encourage everyone to sing along.
- Occasionally tailor your moves to the music (do-si-do works great on land and in water for country songs).
- Consider using a **slower cadence** (beats per minute) than you use in standard class formats.

### INDIVIDUAL TOUCHES

Every participant (and instructor) has things they prefer, but **one essential personal touch is to learn students' names**. And depending on style, hugs or a hand on the shoulder may be welcome, especially as it may be the only human contact of the day for that student.

### BASIC GUIDELINES FOR YOUR PARTICIPANTS

**Get started** – just 20 minutes of moderate intensity exercise every day will help you stay stronger and more mobile. Start off slowly and gradually build up rather than trying to do too much too soon. Chair based exercises are a great way to build your confidence and strength so you can move on to weight bearing exercises when you are ready.

**Always do the warm up** to prepare your joints, muscles and mind for exercise. And also remember the cool down as the tensing and relaxing allows your muscles to return to normal and aids recovery.

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**Listen to your body;** when you start using muscles that you haven't used for ages you may well feel a little fatigued or stiff at first, so take it steadily and remember not to do anything that causes you sharp pain. It's normal to feel a bit achy a day or two after exercising (this is called delayed onset of muscle soreness or DOMS) although acute pain is not. As long as you build up gradually your body will adapt and your mobility will improve.

**Don't just think about your arms and legs,** incorporate exercises that use your core muscles and move your whole body including fingers, hands and feet.

**Exercising can help improve your emotional wellbeing too** – why not try to get a friend or two to come to class with you? Research shows that people who work out with a friend are more likely to keep exercising and the whole point is to make exercise fun for older people!

**Keeping an active mind is vital** as we age and learning a new skill is really stimulating for the brain. Class routines combine following a series of movements set to the rhythm of the music with exercises that challenge your co-ordination – with practise it gets easier.

**Being inactive for long periods** causes muscles to lose their strength but resistance training has been proved to be very effective in redressing this balance – even when done sitting down. Any weight bearing activities help with strength such as walking up stairs or carrying shopping so try to incorporate these activities into everyday life.

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**One of the most important exercises older people can do is the ‘sit to stand’.** Gradually, as you build up leg strength this will become easier. Try to increase the number of repetitions or try to sit back down as slowly as you can if you want to progress.

**Remember it’s just as important to do exercises** to strengthen your pelvic floor muscles as any other muscles! Once you’ve mastered the technique you can do them sitting or standing, about ten repetitions at least once a day to improve confidence and continence.

**When you have improved and feel strong** and confident enough, you may feel ready to progress to exercise standing up. Weight-bearing exercises can help prevent or slow the progress of osteoporosis but as always, check with your GP if you have any medical conditions before starting a new exercise programme.

Stop exercise and consult your physician immediately if you experience any of the following:

- chest pain or tightness in the chest, neck or throat
- considerable difficulty breathing
- abnormal heart rhythm; nausea' dizziness, light-headedness, or visual interruption
- excessive cold sweat
- extreme or lasting weakness or fatigue

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### **CHOREOGRAPHY NOTES TO UPDATE YOUR CLASSES**

#### **SEATED SENIORS:**

Sit tall on the chair – using postural muscles rather than the back of the chair to keep you upright

Heel digs in front & toe taps

Neck mobility – take head forward and gently look up – rotate from side to side

Shoulder lifts up and down and forwards and back – use arms to create more mobility in upper back

March feet in with shoulder rolls forward and back, alternate shoulders, add in elbow and full arm

Repeat with legs marching wide

Arms reach back on a diagonal (grab your seat belt)

Circle arm in (put your jacket on)

Reach down to your feet – opposite arm to foot and then same arm same foot

Reach back at shoulder height, reach back behind chair, reach to side of chair (grab the remote) and then over head to side – repeat both arms

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Hands forwards, cross chest, out to side and on hips – repeat 4x

Box step feet forward and back both right and left leg

Alternating knee lift – no arms, add in opposite arm to knee and then same arm to knee, reach hands up with a knee lift

Knee lift – single single, double

Kicks forward and to side – with or without arms

Kicks – single single, double

Repeat everything with Mini Balls in hands or in between knees or feet

### **SEATED CONDITIONING:**

Sit tall away from back of chair

Reach single arms up R&L with ball in hands. Reach wide, down to side of chair, over to side with opposite hand, reach back grab your seat belt, put the jacket on, reach back straight, take ball around the back and over head

Ball under foot – roll foot forward and back, diagonal & circle.

Put weight onto ball, lift other leg in all 3 planes of motion – use hands on chair if they wish – repeat other side

Squat with ball under one foot – seated

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Ball in between knees – squeeze ball with any arm work – either with weights or arm lines

Lift feet off floor and squeeze ball

Ball behind back or keep in between knees, complete half roll back sequence

Sit to Stand - Use body weight – help come out of chair – squat back down

Stand behind chair – thread like a needle for back mobility, roll downs, back release, press ups

**BAND WORK** – Band under feet

Low rows, - alternating & both arms

High row – alternating & both arms

Bicep curls in all 3 planes

Push forward & back

Swoop the arms release the back

Reach back on to diagonal, put coat on, reach back behind and to side of chair

Put band around one foot – leg press, leg extension, leg abduction, leg rotation

Leg curl & push, put foot down – pull on band to lift knee, take it wide



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Sit on Band – shoulder press, triceps press, shoulder rotation, reach other head to opposite side, wood chop

Wrap band around thighs – knee squeeze out and in

### **SEATED SIMPLE DANCE FUSION**

**Disco:** march with a tap single and double

Saturday night fever arms – single single double, shuffle right and left – chorus

Verse - Leg goes single, single double to side with a click

Forward roll, back clap, repeat with double clap

Repeat chorus

Bridge – Step clap, bring feet together, big circle round R&L 4x

Repeat verse & chorus

**Bollywood:** Snake 1, 2 clap, snake down

Verse - R arm pull 1 to side 1 up, snake to the middle, repeat L

Chorus – reach over to R&L slow, faster 4x reach up with arms

Repeat verse, chorus to end

**Candy Man:** Point toes forward 8x with click

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R arm out to side 4x and back arm line – forward, forward, cross cross shimmy forward

Repeat from top

Heel digs forwards alternating, then double up

Change chorus to hand forward, forward, hips, shoulders across to R 2X and L 2x

Repeat from top

Double kick but take second kick wide

Repeat chorus

**Ballet Fit:** Sit up tall on edge of chair, take feet out into position 1 – repeat 4x

Come up onto toes 4x, bring R leg forward 2x, repeat 2x

Arm line – breathe in, arms out to R&L and then over to side. Arms out, forward, out and down

Repeat leg brush with toe point and flex

Leg forward, out to side back and in – add in same arm

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Arm float away with leg

Arm Line – up, up, forward, forward, open close, open down – repeat  
leading with other arm

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## **CHOREOGRAPHY FOR THE MORE ACTIVE SUPER SENIOR**

### **FIT FOR LIFE CONDITIONING WITH MINI BALLS AND BANDS**

Repeat all of the following with these arm lines -

Ball in both hands -pushing down, forwards, across and up – repeat all arms with ball in alternating hands. Reach ball back behind at shoulder height, hip height (putting your jacket on) and diagonally back (reaching for your seatbelt), straight up from the floor (putting something on the shelf), over to the side above the head from one foot.

March

March forward 4x tap & back tap

Step Taps

Box Steps

Step Touches – single and double

Grapevines

Hamstring curls

Knee lifts

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Squats – Normal and asymmetric – ball reaches to alternating feet, reaches across body, reaches behind, above the head straight up and to a diagonal

On asymmetric squats shift weight forward and back– reach ball to front foot and back foot and then reach forward and behind you

Balance on R leg, L leg brush forward and back, ball in hands or add arm lines, bring leg across and open, circle leg

Repeat L

### **CRUNCHLESS CORE:**

Put ball in between legs

Single reach up right and left

Single reach out right and left

Single reach across right and left

Repeat with both arms

Wood chop R&L

Rotate through back right and left for a back release

Canoe arms quickly

### **Stand in Band, stand with band under feet and hands in loops:**

Rotate shoulders, swoop arms forwards and back, swoop but in a diagonal

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Reach alternating arms up and to side, reach back, reach on diagonal, reach past your hips behind you, reach forward

Repeat arms but with a squat

Bicep curls in all 3 planes – (normal lift, lift out to side, rotate the forearm)

Triceps in 3 planes – (normal extension, extend wide, rotate as you extend)

Lat raise with palms up, lat raise on a diagonal, reach out forwards and down with both arms and then reverse.

Add pulses to all moves

Make band smaller – reach down to floor with squat, reach arms back and round behind head

Diagonal stretches opening out to side, overhead, rotating back behind you

## **SIMPLE DANCE FUSION FOR MATURE MOVERS**

### **LATIN**

Simple Latin march on the spot with Latin arms

Turn around in a slow circle with 'OLAY' arms

R leg mambo forward, side, behind – clap twice, shimmy shoulders moving forward if you wish or just on the spot

Repeat L leg

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Just the mambo without shimmy shoulders

Fast feet – salsa on the spot

Turn around in a slow circle with ‘OLAY’ arms

Fast Feet – Salsa

Shimmy shoulders – Hot Hot Hot

### **LATIN PARTNER**

Face partner, hold hands and Latin march for 32 counts

One partner mambo’s back whilst the other one mambo’s forward, cha cha cha and then repeat other way. Open out, come together, open out, come back together

Repeat the mambo’s with open and close

Mambo side, 123, mambo side, 123, open close arms 2x

Face front and hold hands, mambo over with Left leg, chassé, mambo over with R

Hips Right & Left on hits of the track, shimmy

Repeat from top

### **DISCO;**

Step touch R&L with a click

Scoop 2x R & L with clap at the end repeat 2x

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Turn R (or 2 steps) single clap, turn back (or 2 steps) double clap

Roll down and up

Repeat from Scoop

Chorus – arm line up and out R&L Shoulders 123

Circle the arms R&L

### **BROADWAY/TAP**

Step out R 4X Tap foot across 4x

Step out L 4X tap foot across 4x

Repeat 2x

Single time step 4x

Wings or step back for 4

Tap forward with double click

Repeat from top

### **JIVE - with or without partner**

Kick forward R and out step ball change – repeat on other side

Repeat 2x

Repeat but face partner 1x circle under tap things, clap partner's hands



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Face front kick out to side 4x Twist R – Repeat L

Step out R & L

Repeat from top

### **BALLET-FIT**

Stand in first position with heels together and toes out – take arms out as well 4x

Come up on to toes 4x in first position

R leg brush forward 2x, side 2x, back 2x, plié squat 2x – repeat on L leg

R leg forward quicker 2x then keep forward, point and flex foot, repeat to side and back on both legs

Legs in second position, plié and lift leg

Legs in first position – arm float away – bring in leg to side with foot drop

Arm line – arms forward, out, forward, down – repeat 4x then add in heel lift

Arms forward, up, out, down – repeat with heel raise

Arm float away R&L

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### **Marketing ideas for your senior classes**

Setting up your own community classes is an option for every teacher wherever you live, in your area there are scores of people who will NEVER join a health club but would love to go once or twice a week to a local class - the key to your success is regular MARKETING.

Here is a check list of marketing ideas that, if applied, will guarantee success in setting up your own community classes. If you apply them all you will definitely get the masses streaming into your class.

1. Have professional posters made and designed by companies online like 'FIVER'. Include a photo and class details, include what to wear, what to bring. Laminate posters and put up in Hairdressers, Chiropractors, Nail Bars, Beauticians, Chiropodists, Sports Massage therapists, Physiotherapists, Doctors, Dentists, Supermarkets, Post Offices, Library, Shops, and Offices.
2. Send press releases and a photo bi monthly to all local papers about fitness for the older adult. Offer to give a monthly workout or fitness tips for older adults.

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3. Write 5 short interesting fitness articles and send to all local papers and enquire about writing for FREE a weekly/monthly fitness articles.
4. Make or have professionally made a banner advertising your class and put it outside your venue when you are teaching, invite new people to come and have a look at the class before they join.
5. Advertise your class regularly in the leisure guide or What's On section of your local paper.
6. Organise a Bring a Friend For Free week.
7. Sell blocks of classes and give a class for free eg buy 10 classes and get 2 free
8. Run a loyalty scheme. Have cards printed or make your own and sign each time the client comes to class, offer a prize or free class when the clients attends 10x, 20, 50x, 100x
9. Always carry business cards, timetables, flyers and posters wherever you go. Always give out at the end of class and pass on complimentary cards to friends.

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10. Ensure clients rely on you for their fitness information. Photocopy fitness articles and information or write your own and give out at the end of class.
11. Align yourselves with other Health related professionals in your area. Keep a stock of business cards for your favourite beautician, nail technician, physio, osteopath etc and give out their cards at the end of the session in return for them endorsing your classes.
12. Give A5 Flyers out to your class members to put up at their networking places.
13. Give out comment cards and get regular feedback from classes.
14. Take everyone who attends your class, name, address, telephone number and email address and when clients stop attending or drop off from your class send them an email, a postcard explaining that they are missed and invite them back into your class.
15. Organise social events at local coffee shops, restaurants or day centres and invite your members' friends and family to attend too.

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16. Social Networking websites. Join Facebook/ Twitter/ Instagram and set up a page and community group. Invite all of your friends/school friends/class members/neighbours/local groups to join your Facebook site. Mail out to your group every week and create a Super Seniors closed group on Facebook to speak to your members on a daily basis.

17. Build your list. Your email database and postal mailing list is your businesses life blood. Maintain it and update it every week. Email out weekly and post out monthly.

### **FINAL POINTS**

The rewards of teaching super seniors far outnumber any extra effort involved. This is a group of people who are grateful, consistent, loyal and supportive and who truly want to learn.

For more information please contact [kelly@choreographytogo.com](mailto:kelly@choreographytogo.com)