

Are You Ageing Well?

The 5 Movement Tests



A 10-minute self-assessment for anyone over 40.

Hello!

There's no scan, no blood test and no clever bit of kit that tells you how well you're ageing. There are, however, five simple movement tests that quietly predict more about how the next 30 years will go than almost anything else you could measure.

I'm Gareth — The Longevity Coach. The tests in this assessment are the same ones I run with every new private client in their first session, Four of them also form part of the testing assessment in the Brain Body Lab program.

They take ten minutes. You need bare feet and a clear bit of floor.

The point isn't to pass them all. The point is to find out where you stand right now, so you know where to put your attention next.

A short note before you start: skip any test that causes sharp pain. The tests aren't worth re-injuring yourself for. Mild discomfort is fine — sharp pain is a no-go. If anything feels seriously off, stop, and consider getting it looked at by a professional.

Ready? Let's go.

How To Score

Each test gives you a grade.

A — You're in the top tier for your age.

B — Solid baseline, with room to improve.

C — A priority area. This is where focused attention pays off the most.

Write your grades down as you go. The results section on the last page tells you what to do with them.

Test 1 – The Floor Sit-to-Stand

WHAT IT TELLS YOU

This is the single most studied movement test for how long you're likely to stay independent. A Brazilian study found that adults aged 51 to 80 who scored poorly on this test were five to six times more likely to die in the following six years than those who scored well. It's a quiet, brutal predictor – because it tests strength, balance, mobility and coordination all in one go.

HOW TO DO IT

1. Find a clear space on the floor. Bare feet are best.
2. From standing, lower yourself down to sitting cross-legged on the floor.
3. Then stand back up.
4. Try to do both bits without using your hands, knees, forearms, or the sides of your legs for support.
5. Take your time. Smooth beats fast.

SCORING

Start with 10 points.

Subtract 1 point for every "support" you used (a hand on the floor, a hand on your knee, a knee on the floor, a forearm down, leaning on the side of your leg).

Subtract another half point if you wobbled noticeably at any stage.

Highest possible score: 10. Lowest: 0.

YOUR GRADE

8 to 10 → A. You're in the top bracket. Keep doing what you're doing.

3 to 7 → B. Workable. Hip mobility and lower body strength are the levers.

0 to 2 → C. This is the test where score change matters most. Twelve months of focused work can move this dramatically.



Test 2 – Single-Leg Balance, Eyes Closed

WHAT IT TELLS YOU

Balance, particularly with the eyes closed, is one of the earliest indicators of nervous system decline. It tests how well the brain is integrating information from your feet, your inner ear and your muscle sensors. Falls are the leading cause of injury death over 65 – and they're largely prevented by trained balance, not luck.

HOW TO DO IT

1. Stand barefoot on a flat, hard floor.
2. Pick up one foot off the ground – any height, doesn't have to be high.
3. Close your eyes.
4. Start a timer. Stop when you have to put the foot down, open your eyes, or grab something to steady yourself.
5. Do both legs. Use the lower of the two scores.

YOUR GRADE

30 seconds or more → A. Exceptional, especially over 50.

15 to 29 seconds → B. Solid baseline. Daily practice will lift this.

Under 15 seconds → C. Priority. This is the easiest test to improve fast – even five minutes a day on it for two weeks usually doubles the score.



Test 3 – The Deep Squat Hold

WHAT IT TELLS YOU

The deep squat is the resting position humans were built for. Most cultures still squat to eat, to talk, to work. Losing it is a sign that the hips, ankles and lower back have all lost a big chunk of their original range. If you can sit comfortably in this position, it tells me a lot about every joint south of your ribcage at once.

HOW TO DO IT

1. Stand with your feet roughly shoulder-width apart. Toes can turn out a little if you need them to.
2. Lower yourself into a full squat. Hips should drop below the line of your knees.
3. Keep your heels flat on the ground. This is the bit most people fail.
4. Aim to stay relaxed, not braced. Arms can rest forward for balance.
5. Hold the position for 60 seconds.

YOUR GRADE

60+ seconds, heels flat, relaxed → A.

30 to 60 seconds, heels flat, some discomfort → B.

Heels lifting, or can't hold longer than 30 seconds → C. Hip and ankle mobility are your priorities.



Test 4 – Overhead Reach

WHAT IT TELLS YOU

This is a clean test of your shoulder and upper back mobility. If you can't get your arms overhead without arching your lower back, you've lost the basic architecture that lets you reach, carry, swim, hang and lift things over your head without compensating. It's also one of the strongest predictors of neck and shoulder pain in your 60s.

HOW TO DO IT

1. Stand up straight.
2. Lift both arms overhead, palms facing each other.
3. Try to get your arms inline with or past your ears.
6. The lower back must stay flat, arching is compensating.

YOUR GRADE

Both hands level with the ears, lower back stays flat → A.

Hands close to the ears, slight lower back lift → B.

Hands at 45 degrees or less, or you have to arch your back to get the arms higher → C. Thoracic spine mobility is the priority.



Test 5 – The Forward Fold

WHAT IT TELLS YOU

This is the whole back of your body — calves, hamstrings, lower back, all the way up to the base of the skull. Tightness here usually means your hips have stopped doing their job and your back has been picking up the slack for years. It's not the most life-or-death test on this list, but it tells you a lot about what your back is having to do every day.

HOW TO DO IT

1. Stand with your feet about hip-width apart.
2. Knees straight — not locked hard, but straight.
3. Fold forward from the hips. Lead with your chest, not your head.
4. Let your arms hang. Don't bounce.
5. Hold for 10 seconds. Don't force anything.

YOUR GRADE

Palms flat on the floor → A.

Fingertips touch the floor → B.

More than 5cm from the floor → C. Hip hinge and hamstring mobility are the priorities.



So how did you score?

Don't write off the Cs.

Almost everyone over 40 gets a C on at least one of these the first time around. The good news is they tend to be the most responsive — you usually see meaningful change inside a month of daily attention.

Here's what to do with your grades.

MOSTLY As

Mostly As → You're in better shape than 95% of people your age. Keep moving daily. The tests in this assessment are worth re-running every 4 weeks to make sure you're not quietly losing ground. The biggest risk for the high-functioning isn't decline — it's complacency.

MIXED Bs AND Cs

Mixed Bs and Cs → This is the most common result, and the easiest to move quickly. Pick the one C that bothers you most and focus there first. Most of the over-40s I work with start here and end up at mostly As within three to six months.

THREE OR MORE Cs

Three or more Cs → This is the most important moment to pay attention. How you move at 60, 70, 80 is mostly decided by what you do in the next five years. Not training hard. Just training daily, in the right places. This is exactly what I built Brain Body Lab for — a one-time £27 programme that runs you through every joint, every range, every day. The link's at the end of this PDF.

If you want the full system I use with my private clients — every joint, simple structure, video follow-alongs — that's Brain Body Lab. One-time £27. Yours for life. No subscription, no upsell carousel.

[→ \[Brain Body Lab — £27\]](#)

And if anything in this assessment landed for you, I'd love to hear which test surprised you most. Hit reply to any of my emails — I read every one.

Gareth
The Longevity Coach