

Preparing for the Physical Ability Test

Whereas many training routines can be used to improve performance in the Physical Ability Test (PAT), participants should keep in mind that physical training is specific. That is, one improves in activities practiced.

If one wishes to optimize push-up performance, push-ups should be included in the training program. Many other exercises can also be included to strengthen the chest, shoulders, and arms, but push-ups should be included in the routine. Ideally, muscles and the cardiovascular system should be gradually and progressively trained over several weeks or months to achieve desired fitness gains. Physical adaptations occur gradually in response to regular, consistent overloads, i.e. doing more than your body is accustomed to doing. It is important to bear in mind that every individual adapts at a different rate- a stimulus resulting in an appropriate, moderate overload to one person may be too much or too little for another person. A participant who has been inactive for a significant period of time should plan to take six to twelve weeks to train for the PAT.

The training routine should include exercises to train upper body strength and muscular endurance, abdominal muscular endurance, leg power, cardio-respiratory endurance and anaerobic power. Strength and cardio-respiratory endurance activities should be performed about every other day, or three days per week, to allow adequate recovery and positive adaptations to occur. Anaerobic (high intensity) training should be done once per week, and can be performed instead of a cardio-respiratory training session. For flexibility enhancement, good back health, and injury prevention, stretching exercises should be performed before and especially after training sessions, as well as on days off.

Law enforcement officers have unique job functions, some of which can be physically demanding and dangerous. An officer's capability to perform those functions can affect personal and public safety. Training for the required skills is often more vigorous and demanding than the day-to-day job functions that the officer faces. Physical fitness underlies an officer's ability to perform many of the frequent and critical job tasks as well as the demanded training of skills. The minimum fitness standards identified below are the requisite levels for an officer to effectively learn the frequent and critical job motor skills. Higher levels of fitness are associated with better performance of

physical job tasks.

The PAT is comprised of four tests:

- 300-Meter Run
- Maximum Push-Ups (no time limit)
- Sit-Ups (One Minute)
- 1.5-Mile Run / Walk

Tests may be administered in the above order.

1. Warm-up (5-10 minutes) may be self-directed or led by test personnel.

General warm-up - 2-3 minutes of easy jogging, jumping jacks, etc.
Stretching - 5-7 minutes, include stretches for shoulders, back, upper and lower legs.

2. PAT

300-Meter Run (15 minutes rest)
Sit-Ups (1 Minute) (5 minutes rest)
Maximum Push-Ups (10 minutes rest)

3. 1.5-Mile Run / Walk

Cool-down (5 minutes)
Walking - keep walking to avoid blood pooling in legs.
Easy stretching.

300-METER RUN

Purpose

This test measures anaerobic capacity used in high intensity baton and defensive tactics training, and is important for performing short intense bursts of effort such as foot pursuits, rescues and use of force situations.

PUSH-UP TEST

Purpose

This test measures the muscular strength/endurance of the upper body muscles in the shoulders, chest, and back of the upper arms (the

triceps) used in high intensity self defense and arrest simulation training. This is important for use of force involving pushing motion breaking one's fall to the ground, use of the baton, etc.

ONE-MINUTE SIT-UP TEST

Purpose

This test measures the muscular strength/endurance of the abdominal muscles, which are used in self defense and high intensity arrest-simulation training. Further these muscles are important for performing tasks that involve the use of force, and it helps maintain good posture and minimize lower back problems.

1.5-MILE RUN / WALK TEST

Purpose

This test is a measure of cardio-respiratory endurance (or aerobic capacity) used in extended control and defensive tactics training. This is important for performing tasks involving stamina and endurance (pursuits, searches, prolonged use of force situations, etc.) and for minimizing the risk of cardiovascular health problems.

