

## **Fitness Career Opportunity**

### **Athletic Directors**

They manage athletic programs in schools or colleges. They direct coaches, ticket sales, athletic facilities, trainers, and sports information offices. Some athletic directors also teach and coach.

### **Broadcasters**

Broadcasters work on-air doing sports reporting or providing commentary on radio or television. Technicians work behind the scenes in production, direction, or technical operations.

### **Exercise Physiologists**

They study the effects of exercise on the body. They design individual exercise programs. These scientists are often employed by universities. They may also work at sports medicine clinics, in competitive sports programs, and at health clubs.

### **Fitness/Sports Psychologists**

They help athletes improve their attitude and ability to focus in athletic activities. They work with individual athletes or teams, or teach and conduct research at the college level.

### **Health Club Managers**

They manage the day-to-day operations, marketing, membership sales, and athletic and fitness programming in a health club.

### **Orthopedists**

These doctors treat muscular or skeletal injuries. Doctors who specialize in sports-medicine may practice in sports-medicine clinics. They also may work as a team physician, treating, and preventing sports-related injuries.

### **Recreation Planners**

They run recreational programs for governments or private companies. Their work may include scheduling sports leagues, developing camp programs, managing parks, or managing company wellness programs.

### **Writers or Editors**

They cover sports or fitness for different types of publications. They may write or edit for local papers, or national sports or fitness magazines. They may write or edit books on sports or fitness topics.

### **Youth/Recreational/Pro Officials**

They enforce the rules of athletic games from grade schools to recreation leagues to professional sports. Working as a sports official is a good way to stay involved in a sport you love.

### **Other Active Career Opportunities**

- Athletic Managers
- Chiropractors (spinal manipulation, realignment)
- Massage Therapists
- Dance Instructors
- Facility Designers
- Podiatrists (treat foot, ankle problems)
- Sports photographers
- Public Relations Specialists
- Team Owners
- Scouts
- Sporting Goods Retailers and Salespeople

## Unit 7: Personal Fitness Program

### Introduction

Everyone should want to achieve total fitness and wellness. Totally fit and well people are physically and mentally healthy. They enjoy life and gain satisfaction from their social and spiritual self. Achieving total fitness and wellness is a process. You need to work towards it one step at a time. The first step in achieving total fitness and wellness is to begin a personal fitness program.

### What Is a Personal Fitness Program?

*A personal fitness program is a plan you design to help improve your total fitness. Designing your own fitness program allows you to make choices. You can include activities that you enjoy. You can plan your workout schedule around your school day and work hours. And you can set goals that fit your needs.*



*Set goals that fit your needs.*

As your fitness level improves, you can change your fitness program to meet your new needs. You can also alter your program to work around injuries or other problems.

A complete personal fitness program aims at developing all of the health-related components of **physical fitness**. Health-related components include **body composition, flexibility, muscular strength, muscular endurance, and cardiovascular fitness**. To improve in these components, you may need to make some changes in your *lifestyle*. Your lifestyle is the way you conduct your life. For example, you may need to modify your diet to improve your nutrition. Or you may need to exchange a few hours of weekly TV watching with your workout schedule. Your personal fitness program should include health related activities, sports skills, stress diversion activities, and good nutrition.

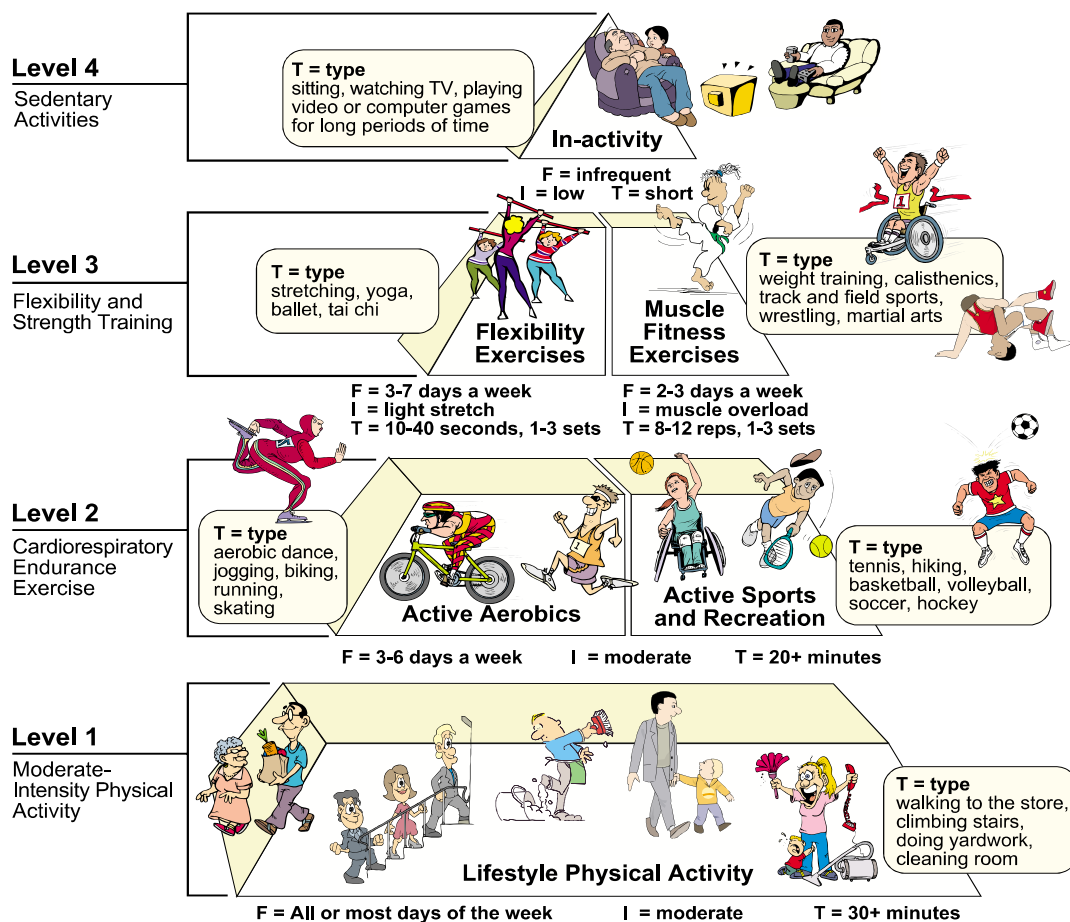


*Totally fit and well people are physically and mentally healthy.*

## Why Is a Personal Fitness Program Important?

Commit yourself to a regular program of aerobics, strengthening, stretching, and proper nutrition, and you will look better and feel fantastic! You will also *decrease* your chance of health-related diseases and *increase* your chances for a long, healthy life.

The Physical Activity Pyramid below is similar to the Food Guide Pyramid (see Unit 2, page 83). The Food Guide Pyramid was developed as a general guide of what to eat each day. The Physical Activity Pyramid was designed to help people live an active lifestyle and reduce the health risks associated with inactivity.



F.I.T.T. formula (F = frequency; I = intensity; T = type; T = time) recommendations

*The Physical Fitness Pyramid*

The four levels of the Physical Activity Pyramid on the previous page are arranged according to their **F.I.T.T.** formula recommendations. Activities that should be performed most frequently are at the base of the pyramid. Activities that should be performed less frequently are at the top of the pyramid. Activities that should be performed less frequently are at the top of the pyramid.

If you are currently inactive, begin at the bottom of the pyramid. Gradually increase the amount of moderate-intensity activity in your life. If you are already moderately active, begin an exercise program that includes cardiorespiratory endurance exercise, flexibility training, and strength training to help you develop all the health-related components of fitness.

### Steps in Designing Your Personal Fitness Program

Follow the steps below to design a sound and complete personal fitness program.

1. Evaluating Health-Related Fitness Components
2. Setting Personal Goals
3. Selecting Appropriate Activities
4. Applying the **F.I.T.T.** Formula
5. Tracking Your Progress with Periodic Assessments

#### 1. Evaluating Health-Related Fitness Components

Before you can decide what kinds of exercise you need, you must determine your levels of fitness. You should be aware of your current levels of cardiovascular fitness, muscular strength and endurance, flexibility, and body composition.

Give the greatest attention in your personal fitness program to your weakest areas. For example, if you scored low in muscular strength, make weight resistance a key part of your program. However, do not ignore the areas in which you scored well. Include activities to *challenge* your strong areas. You must continue to exercise regularly to *maintain* physical fitness. (Preview pages 327-329.)



*You must determine your level of fitness.*



## 2. Setting Personal Goals

Ask yourself what you would like to accomplish with your exercise program. Determine what areas of fitness you need to improve and also what areas you would like to improve.

Setting goals you can reach will encourage you to stay with your exercise program. Do not set goals in order to compete with friends or classmates.



*Exercising with a friend can be motivating and enjoyable.*

Try to avoid comparing your fitness level and progress with others. Competition can add stress to your exercise program rather than reduce it!

However, exercising with a friend can be motivating and enjoyable. Make it fun, and you will be more compelled to stick with it.

Set short-term as well as long-term goals for each of the health-related fitness components. Make your goals specific. For example, a short-term goal might be to improve your scores on the various health-related fitness assessments. Another short-term goal might be to eat healthier foods.

Long-term goals might include improving your body composition (less fat and more muscle) or improve your posture. Other long-term goals might include to tone and define your leg muscles and become stronger in the upper body. (Preview pages 330-331.)



*Stretching exercises need to be included in the warm-up.*

**Establish a reward system for your goals.** Try to remain focused on the process of physical exercise rather than an end result. Focus on your journey to a healthy destination! However, enjoy a sense of pride and accomplishment when you reach your goals. Reward yourself each time you reach a small goal. Try not to use unhealthy food as a reward.

## 3. Selecting Appropriate Activities

For overall fitness and health, a combination of **aerobic exercise** and **muscle fitness** activities are both necessary. In addition, stretching exercises for *flexibility* need to be included in the **warm-up** and **cool-down** portion of every workout session.

Consider your health and physical fitness level when selecting activities. Pick activities in which you either have some knowledge, skill, or ability, or that you are interested in learning and enjoy doing.

Try to select a variety of activities, some indoors and some outdoors. Choose an exercise that you can do anytime and anywhere, even if you are alone. This is a perfect time to gain an



understanding of different cultures by studying multicultural activities such as tai chi or yoga. Explore your exercise options.

Change your routine occasionally and learn to cross train. Perform *cross training* by participating in different activities to improve fitness components and a specific part of the body. For example, to improve your cardiovascular fitness, you can run one day and then bicycle the next day. Cross training helps to prevent boredom, burnout, and makes your workout routine more enjoyable. (Preview pages 332-333.)

## Rating Physical Activities

The following chart lists each health-related component of physical fitness. Below each component is a rating number that describes the level of benefit you'll receive from a particular activity. Remember, the way in which you participate in an activity affects the benefits you can receive.

<b>Physical Activity Ratings</b>					
1 = Low Benefit 2 = Average Benefit 3 = Very Effective/High Benefit					
Activity	Flexibility	Cardio-fitness	Muscular Strength	Muscular Endurance	Body Composition
Aerobic Dance	3	3	1	2	3
Baseball	1	1	1	1	1
Basketball	1	3	1	2	3
Bicycling	1	3	2	2	3
Boxing	1	3	2	3	3
Calisthenics	3	1	2	3	2
Football	1	1	1	2	1
Golf (walking)	1	1	1	2	1
Gymnastics	3	1	3	3	2
Hockey	1	3	1	2	2
Jogging	1	3	1	2	3
Jumping Rope	1	3	1	2	3
Karate	3	1	2	2	1
Racquetball	1	2	1	2	2
Rowing	1	3	1	2	3
Scuba Diving	1	2	1	2	1
Skiing (Downhill)	1	2	2	2	1
Skiing (Cross County)	1	3	2	2	3
Skating (Ice/Roller/In-line)	1	2	2	2	2
Soccer	1	3	1	2	3
Step Aerobics	2	3	2	2	3
Swimming	2	3	2	2	3
Tennis	1	1	1	2	1
Volleyball	1	1	1	2	1
Walking	1	2	1	2	2
Waterskiing	1	1	2	2	1
Weight Training	2	1	3	3	2
Yoga	3	1	1	2	1

#### 4. Applying the F.I.T.T. Formula: Training Principles



**F** is for *frequency*—how often to exercise. Begin an exercise program by working out three times a week. When your body has adjusted to the demands of this exercise, you may increase the frequency of your workouts to four or five times per week. Exercising three times a week helps to maintain fitness. Exercising four or five times a week helps to increase your level of fitness.

**I** is for *intensity*—how hard to exercise. Your personal goals and current level of fitness will determine how intense your exercise program should be. For most people, regular exercise at a moderate intensity is best. Try to pace yourself, listen to your body, and challenge your body gradually.

The first **T** is for *type*—what kind of exercise. During *aerobic* exercises, the body uses oxygen for energy. The more oxygen the body uses, the harder the cardiovascular system will work and become more fit. Be sure to exercise aerobically a minimum of three times each week.

*Anaerobic* exercises are performed at a pace which use oxygen faster than the body can replenish it. They are strenuous and can only be performed for short periods of time before rest is needed. Anaerobic exercises demand bursts of energy and quick starts and stops. Do **resistance training** (weight-training) a minimum of two times per week. Always perform stretching exercises before and after each workout session to increase flexibility and prevent injury.

As a general rule, when exercising aerobically, you should be able to carry on a conversation (the “talk test”) without becoming short of breath. Measure your exercise **heart rate** once a week or so to check the intensity of your exercise. First, take your **pulse** before you begin exercising. Second, take your pulse at the peak or completion of the most intense part of your aerobic workout. And, third, take your pulse after the cool-down. An activity must raise your heart level to a level called the **target heart rate zone (THRZ)**.

The second **T** is for *time*—how long to exercise. Continuous activities such as jogging, walking, jumping rope, cycling, and swimming are all aerobic exercises. To maintain a good level of aerobic conditioning, work up to 20 minutes or more of aerobic exercise per session.

In an overall, moderate **weight training** program, do a minimum of two to three workouts per week for 30 minutes to an hour. You may choose to do **calisthenic**, free weight, or weight machine exercises. Your muscular fitness program should include exercises for all the major muscle groups of the upper and lower body.

What type of muscular fitness exercises or program you will choose depends upon your personal goals. To develop muscle tone and general strength, use low weight and perform high **repetitions**. To develop muscular strength and growth, use high weight and perform a low number of reps. Perform one to three **sets**, or group of repetitions without resting, for a general fitness program.

Work on all the major muscles in your muscle fitness program. This will help prevent overdeveloping one muscle group while neglecting the muscles on the opposite side of the joint.

## 5. Tracking Your Progress with Periodic Assessments

Keeping a workout log will encourage you to keep up your exercise program. A workout log will also help you measure your progress. Writing down the activity, days you exercise, and the distance or duration of each exercise session helps you keep track of your improvements. It can also be helpful to make a notation about how you felt during and after each workout.

You may want to periodically re-evaluate your exercise program. Re-evaluating your program after four weeks and then again after eight weeks will show if you have reached short-term goals. It will also help you see if you are getting closer to long-term goals. Realize that you will not make drastic improvements in a short amount of time. Also, it is important to be aware that you may improve at a quicker rate in some areas than others. Use the results of these evaluations to update your personal goals. (Preview pages 337-341.)



*When exercising aerobically, you should be able to carry on a conversation without becoming short of breath.*

## Other Considerations When Designing Your Personal Fitness Program

**Medical Exam.** Get a medical checkup before beginning any exercise program, especially if you have had a serious illness or injury, or are at risk for heart disease. A doctor may approve your exercise program. Or, based on your medical history and present level of fitness, the doctor may tell you to proceed with caution and outline which activities to avoid.



*Get a medical checkup before beginning any exercise program.*

**Warm Up and Cool Down.** Before engaging in any exercise, take the time to warm up. A warm-up includes exercises that increase the body's temperature and prepares the muscles for more vigorous activities. An adequate warm-up prevents sudden strain on the heart and circulatory system. A warm-up is the best insurance against injury and muscle soreness. Injury and soreness are common reasons for dropping out of an exercise program.

Cooling down after exercise is also essential. The cool-down is the tapering-off period after exercise that allows the body to gradually return to a resting state. The cool-down helps to eliminate body heat and return the blood from the muscles to the heart. Warm-up and cool-down exercises should include some cardiovascular exercises and some flexibility exercises.

**Order of Workout.** Many people choose to alternate days for aerobic workouts and muscle fitness workouts. For instance, you might do aerobics on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, and do weight training on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. You can participate in aerobics and strength training on the same days if you prefer. Always make sure to first warm up, workout, and then cool down.

### Motivation: Reasons to Continue Exercising

Do you need a reason to exercise or to continue your program? You are not alone. We all need *motivation*, or encouragement, to stick with a program. Starting an exercise program is not the difficult part. Staying with the program, or committing yourself to a healthy, active lifestyle is!

Beginning an exercise program doesn't necessarily improve your health and fitness, but staying with your exercise program on a long-term basis will! Here are some tips to help you keep it up.

- **Make it fun.** Find an activity that you enjoy and you are more likely to stick with!
- **Start slowly.** Begin your exercise routine slowly and build gradually as your body adapts to the new demands. The quickest way to ruin your enthusiasm and risk injury is to do too much, too soon.
- **Be patient.** Don't expect dramatic changes overnight! Changes occur gradually over weeks and months. You will begin to see and feel changes after about four to six weeks of working out. Don't just measure improvement on weight loss. Remember muscle weighs more than fat. As you develop your fitness habit, you will notice increases in energy and other healthy side effects in addition to looking and feeling better!
- **Listen to your body.** It takes muscles time to become well conditioned. Expect a little stiffness and soreness after strenuous physical exercise or a new activity. However, sharp, specific pain or unusual discomfort is the body's signal that something is wrong. Never push through pain. If it hurts, stop. If the pain continues, seek medical advice. Work within your abilities.
- **Keep it convenient.** Choose an exercise or activity that you can do anytime, anywhere, even if you are alone. If exercise is convenient, you are more likely to do it.
- **Be disciplined.** Remind yourself of the image you have created of how you want to be. Consistently work towards that image in a healthy way.
- **Gain knowledge.** Read and learn as much as you can about health and fitness. Ask experts for advice or to explain anything you may be confused about.





- **Keep a positive attitude.** Focus on all the benefits of exercise. Be proud of yourself as you gain new strength, endurance, energy, confidence, and a healthy lifestyle!
- **Exercise with a friend.** Working out with a buddy can help increase your chances of continuing your new fitness habit. Both you and your partner need to be reliable and committed to sticking with the program. Working out with someone can be twice as much fun as exercising alone!



- **Join a support group.** Enlist support from your family and friends. They can encourage you as you make strides in your exercise program. Perhaps a parent can initial your workout log after your exercise session to assure you have actually performed it!
- **Join a club.** You might want to consider joining a health club or signing up for a fitness class or other program of interest to you. The more appealing your fitness program is to you, the more likely you'll make it a regular part of your daily routine!
- **Schedule exercise time.** Make exercise a part of your lifestyle by setting aside a certain period of time each week for it. Make appointments with yourself to exercise. Treat these appointments as seriously as you would any of your other responsibilities. Take responsibility for your health and fitness!
- **Keep a balanced perspective.** Total fitness and wellness involve more than exercising. Eating properly, coping with stress, and getting sufficient rest are also important ingredients for your physical health.
- **List possible setbacks.** Make a list of obstacles you could face on your road to fitness. For example, some people may find their workout schedule inconvenient. Others may find the program they have designed too hard. Some may suffer from "burnout" or sickness or injury. And some people will fall back into poor habits. Take the time to develop a plan to prevent and overcome setbacks.

Before you start your personal fitness program, identify certain attitudes and feelings that you have about physical activity. Your past experiences will influence how you feel about exercising. Being aware of a poor attitude towards physical activity can help you understand why you may not be motivated to exercise.

Take the attitude profile on the following page on your past record of exercise and your attitudes about physical activity.

## Summary

A complete personal fitness program involves all of the health-related components of physical fitness. By itself, no single activity or exercise can help you accomplish flexibility, cardiovascular fitness, muscular strength, muscular endurance, or a healthy body composition. You must include a variety of activities in your exercise program to develop all areas of physical fitness. You also must build a healthy lifestyle.



Strength training and aerobic conditioning should be the primary focus of your personal fitness program. Strength training will lift and tone the muscles. Aerobic conditioning will strengthen the heart and decrease the overall amount of body fat. Flexibility can be developed and improved by stretching before and after any exercise. Proper nutrition and a well-rounded exercise program will help improve your body composition.

There are important steps to take in designing your personal fitness program. They include evaluating your health-related fitness components, setting personal goals, selecting appropriate activities, applying the F.I.T.T. formula, tracking your progress, and periodically re-evaluating your fitness level.

Motivation is important to include in your personal fitness program to help you continue with your exercise program. All of us need encouragement to help us stay on a workout schedule and eat nutritiously.

The positive effects of exercise occur as a result of regular and consistent efforts. Treat your body well and feel the benefits. Become fit so you can enjoy a full and long life!