



# FITCO

## Fitness Test for Ontario Correctional Officer Applicants



Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services



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# FITCO

## FIT to be a Correctional Officer!

### Introduction

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Maintaining order and security in a correctional institution is the primary function of a correctional officer. This is a complex task, which goes far beyond locking and unlocking doors. Correctional officers employed by the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services are peace officers responsible for the care, custody and control of offenders.

Correctional officers work in diverse settings; their duties are varied and include supervision of offender activities and control of offender movement throughout the institution.

A career in corrections will appeal to individuals who enjoy working rotating shifts and the challenge of balancing the two diverse components of the job: security and custody and the rehabilitative needs of the offender.

Correctional officers must be:

- Alert and prepared to react to the unexpected;
- Able to handle a variety of difficult situations when dealing with the offender population;
- Able to communicate effectively with a variety of people
- Able to work as a member of a team of professionals in the care and rehabilitation of inmates;
- Willing to work shifts.

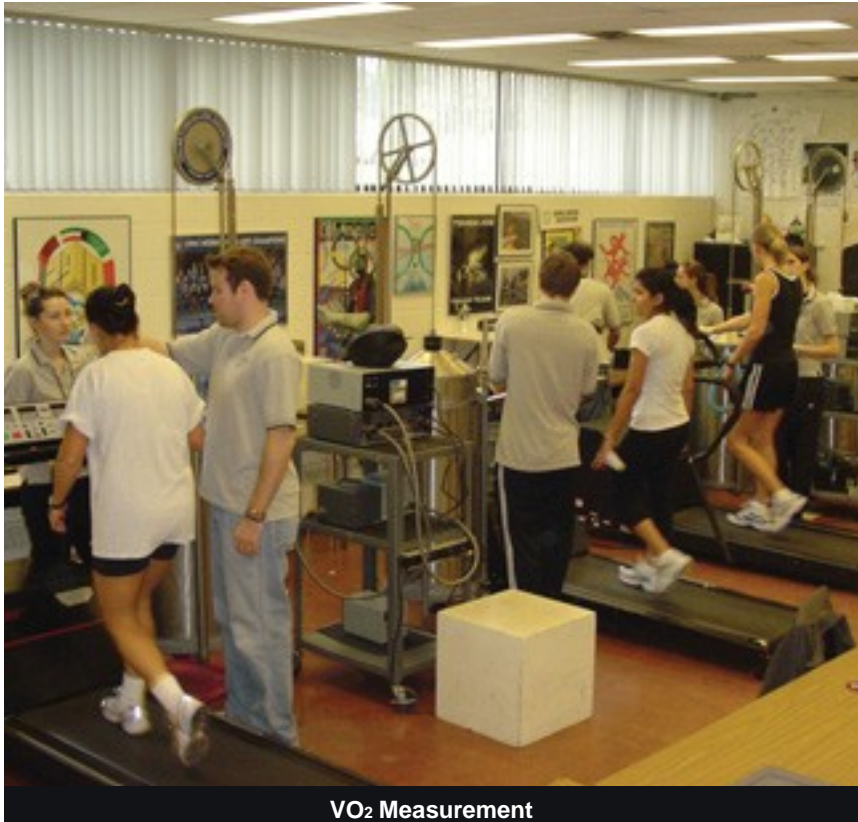
Correctional officers receive a thorough training program, both on the job and at a ministry training site. Training includes search procedures, self-defence and emergency response. Correctional officers work rotating shifts, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, making a positive contribution to public safety in Ontario.

As part of the Correctional Services Recruitment Unit Selection Process you will be required to pass: competency testing; an enhanced security check; a competency-based interview and a physical skills and ability test. If selected you will be required to attend and pass the Correctional Officer Training and Assessment (COTA) Program at the Ontario Correctional Services College. The Fitness Test for Ontario Correctional Officer applicants (FITCO) is the name of the physical skills and ability test.

For more information on becoming a Correctional Officer please contact the Central Recruitment Unit at 1-888-412-8111 or [www.mcscs.jus.gov.on.ca](http://www.mcscs.jus.gov.on.ca)

- "Corrections"

- "Career in Corrections"



**VO<sub>2</sub> Measurement**

## Purpose

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The purpose of this book is;

1. To inform you about the individual components of the FITCO, how to successfully complete each, and how you will be evaluated;
2. To provide exercise training guidelines, to help you improve your capability to succeed at the FITCO, and
3. To show you how to test your readiness for the FITCO

## Background

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The FITCO was developed over a two-year period by experts in the areas of corrections, fitness, human rights and diversity to ensure that it is a culturally inclusive, gender neutral, valid and transparent Bona Fide Occupational Requirement for Correctional Officers.

The development of the FITCO was based on a comprehensive scientific process. We are confident that the FITCO effectively identifies those individuals who possess the minimal physical abilities needed to meet the demands of the correctional officer position.

**Correctional Officer Force Measurement****Characterization**

To validate the FITCO researchers:

1. Conducted a comprehensive job analysis to identify the physical correctional tasks in which the safety of the correctional officer, co-workers, offenders or the public would be compromised by ineffective performance
2. Compared the job simulation tasks in the FITCO with on the job correctional officer tasks; and,
3. Established standards of acceptability based on the performance times of experienced female correctional officers.

## FITCO Test Components

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There are four separate components to the FITCO: a screening component to ensure your medical readiness and three performance components to assess your physical capability:

1. Search Station,
2. Emergency Response Circuit and
3. Aerobic Shuttle Run.

## Medical Readiness - Informed Consent and Pre-exercise Clearance

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Before attempting the FITCO as part of the recruitment process, you will be required to complete:

- **PAR-Q Clearance** – to screen participants for medical conditions that could pose a risk during FITCO testing
- **Participant Informed Consent and Release** – to fully inform participants about the requirements of the FITCO along with their rights and responsibilities, to receive their permission to use the FITCO



**Blood Pressure Measurement**

- test information and to receive the participant's release and indemnity of the Ministry or its agents
- **Participant's Blood Pressure Screening** – resting blood pressure must be  $\leq 160/94$

- **Participant Performance Declaration** – on the day of the test, the participant is required to disclose any factors that he/she feels may affect his/her ability to perform the FITCO.

## Test Day Preparation

### In preparation for taking part in the FITCO, please follow these instructions:

1. Complete the PAR-Q form, which identifies the presence of medical conditions that could pose a risk during exercise. If you are over 45 years of age AND not accustomed to the regular strenuous exercise of a correctional officer OR if you answer “yes” to any of the PAR-Q questions listed below, you must receive clearance from a physician using the PARmed-X form before taking part in the FITCO. Take the FITCO Participant Consent and Release form to the physician along with the PARmed-X form so that the physician is aware of what you will be doing when performing the FITCO.

*Note: If untruthful or misleading answers are given the applicant may be found unsuitable for employment, or if accepted for employment, could be subsequently dismissed.*

### The PAR-Q+:

1. Has your doctor ever said that you have a heart condition OR high blood pressure?

2. Do you feel pain in your chest during your daily activities of living, OR when you do physical activity?
  3. Do you lose balance because of dizziness OR have you lost consciousness in the last 12 months? Please answer NO if your dizziness was associated with over-breathing (including during vigorous exercise).
  4. Have you ever been diagnosed with another chronic medical condition (other than heart disease or high blood pressure)?
  5. Are you currently taking prescribed medications for a chronic medical condition?
  6. Do you have a bone or joint problem that could be made worse by becoming more physically active? Please answer NO if you had a joint problem in the past, but it does not limit your current ability to be physically active. For example, knee, ankle, shoulder or other.
  7. Has your doctor ever said that you should only do medically supervised physical activity?
2. Applicants who possess two or more of the following major coronary risk factors should receive medical clearance (using the PARmed-X form) before participating in the FITCO;
    - a. A family history of myocardial infarction or sudden death before 55 years of age;
    - b. Currently smoke cigarettes;
    - c. Have high blood pressure;
    - d. Have diabetes mellitus;
    - e. Have high blood cholesterol;
    - f. Are in a sedentary occupation and are physically inactive;
  3. Complete the Informed Consent and release document, which provides information about the FITCO test and any risks associated with participation.
  4. In preparation for testing, be aware of the following:
    - a. **Exercise Attire:** Wear running shoes and exercise clothing. Hats cannot be worn during the testing as they can interfere with candidates' performance if they fall off.
    - b. **Smoking:** Do not smoke for two hours prior to the test.
    - c. **Food & Beverages:** Do not eat for at least two hours prior to the test and refrain from drinking caffeine or alcoholic beverages prior to the test.
    - d. **Exercise:** Do not exercise vigorously in the 24 hours prior to the test.
    - e. Arrive at the test site at least 30 minutes prior to your test appointment time to allow your blood pressure to normalize. Bring your completed PAR-Q (and if required - the completed PARmed-X) and Informed Consent forms with you.

# FITCO Performance Components

(Cell Search, Emergency Response Circuit, Aerobic Fitness)

## 1. Cell Search

**Test Description:** During this test you will conduct a simulation of the tasks

required to effectively search a cell in a correctional facility. You will be required to lift and remove a standard weight mattress from the top bunk of a bed, (Fig. 1) hold the mattress vertically or horizontally, away from the body for 5 seconds for it to be searched for contraband with a metal detector (Fig. 2) and replace the mattress on the bunk. You will also be required to find and move four small different coloured blocks

of wood from different areas around the bunk, which simulates the ranges of motion and movements required in the searching of a bunk for contraband (Fig. 3 & 4). You must successfully complete all components of this task. Although this is a non-emergency task, it is normally completed well within 60 seconds and as such you will be allowed a very generous two-minute time limit for completion.



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3

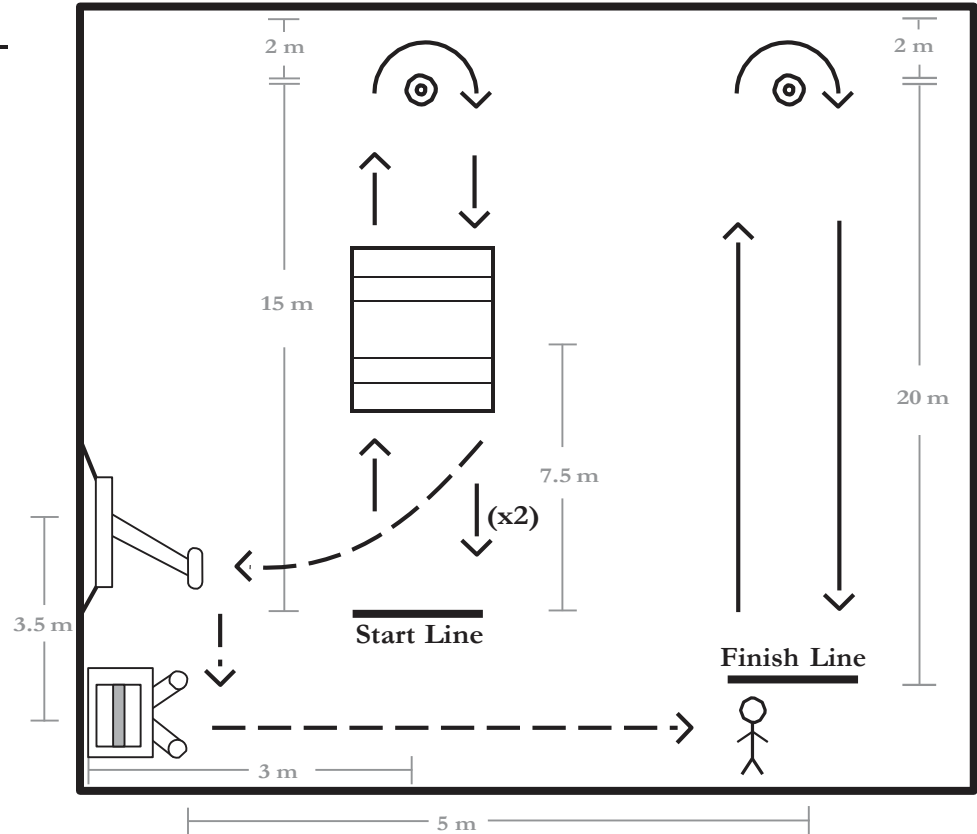


Figure 4



## 2. Emergency Response Circuit

**Test Description:** This circuit simulates a typical emergency response in which a correctional officer quickly covers a distance of 60 m while scaling four sets of stairs, engages in a physical altercation with a noncompliant inmate (Body Control Simulator), establish control of a for the application of restraints (Arm Retraction Simulator), then escorts the inmate to segregation at a purposeful walking pace.



**A. 60 Metre Response:** On the tester's cue, you will begin by running up and over the stairs - touching every step on the way up and every step on the way down - then run around the traffic cone and back over the

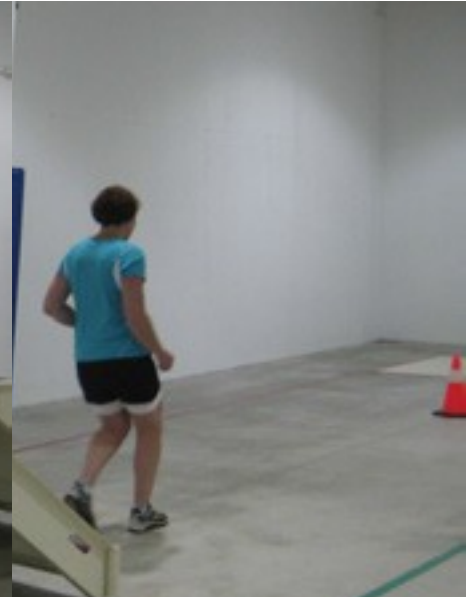
stairs to the starting line. When you reach the starting line, you will turn around and complete the same loop a second time going over the stairs, around the cone and back over the stairs.



Start



Up the stairs



Towards the cone

**B. Body Control Simulator:** This task simulates an altercation with an inmate and should be performed at an “emergency” pace in a controlled manner. Start in the centre by pushing the handle in and lifting the weights (which requires a force of 38.6 kg or 85lb) off the cradle. It is important that you push straight along the main rod. If you push up or down while pushing in, the task is more difficult. Next, release the handle and weights in a controlled manner, **do not slam them up or down**, and then pull the handle toward you thereby lifting the weight (which requires a force of 38.6 kg or 85lb) off the cradle. While holding the weight up, shuffle step to the right. Release the weight, then push the handle in lifting the weight off the cradle. While holding the weight up, shuffle step to the centre. Release the weight again, pull the handle toward you and shuffle step to the left. Release the weight again, push the handle in and shuffle step to the centre. Repeat this process once more to complete two full revolutions.

Candidates will be given a warning if they do not completely raise the weights and keep the weights completely elevated as they shuffle through an arc. Improperly executed arcs must be repeated. If, after three warnings, the

candidates are still unable to properly perform the required manoeuvre, they will have failed the Body Control Simulation and will be directed to the Arm Retraction Simulator.

During the task the tester will direct you by verbal cues – Listen carefully to avoid confusion:

“**Push all the way in**” or “**Pull all the way out**” will indicate the action you are required to perform while keeping the weight above the cradle. After each action cue, do not let the weight down until you are directed to “**Release the weight**” “**Left Wall**”, “**Right Wall**”, or “**Centre**” will indicate the direction to which you should move using a shuffle step.



Push all the way in



Pull back



Pull back and move to right wall



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3

### C. Arm Retraction Simulator:

This machine simulates the forces required to grip (26 kg or 57 lb) and retract (28.5 kg or 62.5 lb) the arms of a noncompliant inmate. Begin by positioning your feet so that the handle is in line with the midline of your body. Grasp the handle with two hands and squeeze the lever until it is fully depressed (Fig. 1). **Without moving your feet** (Fig. 2.), push the handle toward the middle of

the machine so that it passes the indicator line (Fig. 3), and then return it to the starting position in a controlled manner. You must maintain an adequate grip force to keep the lever depressed throughout the movement or the arm will not move. After returning the arm to the starting position, move to the other handle and perform the same manoeuvre. Candidates will be given a warning if they do

not completely retract the arm beyond the marker and return it in a controlled manner to the starting position without moving their feet. Improperly executed arm retractions must be repeated. If, after three warnings, the candidates are still unable to properly perform the required manoeuvre, they will have failed the Arm Restraint Simulation and will be directed to the Mannequin Escort component.

**D. Mannequin Escort:** The weight of the mannequin (39 kg or 86 lb) is equivalent to half the weight of the “average” Ontario male inmate and this task simulates the demands required for one correctional officer, along with a partner, to escort an inmate to segregation. You will grasp the mannequin by

the handle (Fig. 1) and transfer it a total distance of 40 m around the far traffic cone (Fig. 2 & 3) then back across the finish line. The transfer should be completed at a “**purposeful walking**” pace. It is not necessary to lift the mannequin completely from the ground.

There will be a rest period of a minimum 10 minutes to a maximum of 20 minutes between the end of the Emergency Response circuit and the beginning of the Leger 20 metre Aerobic shuttle run.



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3

### 3. Leger Twenty Metre Aerobic Shuttle Run:

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**Test Description:** The Leger Twenty Metre Shuttle Run provides an evaluation of aerobic fitness which is relied on by Correctional Officers during everyday activities and in particular while performing physically demanding tasks. In this test, the participant runs back and forth over a 20-metre (66 ft) course in time with audio signals recorded on a CD. The time permitted to cover the 20-metres initially requires a very slow jog, then the time is made progressively shorter so that the participant runs faster until he or she completes stage 5.5 or is no longer able to maintain the required pace.

*In each leg of the Shuttle Run, at least one foot **must touch the end line** and the warning lines (situated 2 metres (6.6 ft) from each of the 20 metre end lines) **must be reached before** the permitted time elapses.*

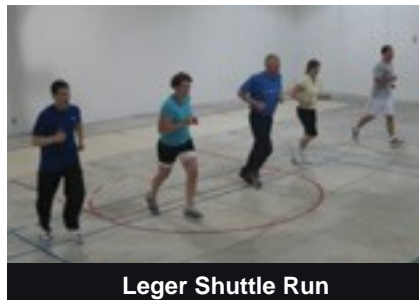
The participant is warned when he or she misses a *warning* line. However, he or she must still reach the *end* line. The test is terminated and the participant receives a rating of “DOES NOT MEET STANDARD”

when two *consecutive warning* lines are missed and the participant is instructed to exit out the end of his or her lane and not to cut across lanes.

If the participant fails to reach an *end* line, he or she will be cautioned. If, after two cautions, at any time during the test the participant's foot does not touch on or over the *end* line, on a third occasion the test will be terminated and his or her performance will be rated “DOES NOT MEET STANDARD”.

#### Scoring the Aerobic Shuttle Run:

Candidates who complete stage 5.5 in the Leger Twenty Metre Shuttle Run receive a “Meets Standard” rating.



## Summary of FITCO Scoring

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### Cell Search:

**Acceptable** = successful completion of all aspects of the search within 120 seconds.

**Unacceptable** = unsuccessful completion of any aspect of the Cell Search or completion time of greater than 120 seconds.

### Emergency Response Circuit:

**Acceptable** = successful completion of all aspects of the ERC in 128 seconds.

**Unacceptable** = unsuccessful completion of any aspect of the ERC or an ERC completion time of greater than 128 seconds.

### Aerobic Shuttle Run:

**Acceptable** = Completes Stage 5.5;  
**Unacceptable** = completes less than Stage 5.5 or receives a “does not meet standard” rating.

## Overall Pass/Fail on the FITCO:

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Applicants must receive an “Acceptable” score on the Cell Search, the Emergency Response Circuit and the Aerobic Shuttle Run to PASS the FITCO.



Figure 1



Figure 2

## PREPARING FOR THE FITCO

To pass the FITCO you may have to participate in a training program. Performing the Search Station requires an adequate level of flexibility and range of motion. You will also need upper body strength and muscular endurance. Ten to fifteen minutes of stretching should be performed daily and optimally after your cardiovascular workout. Performing the emergency response circuit requires a combination of strength and endurance of the legs, arms, shoulders,

functional core stabilizer muscles and anaerobic fitness. Aerobic fitness (including running and pacing skills) is necessary to successfully complete the shuttle run.

### How To Get Started

The first step in any training program is to identify your goals. The goal of the training program defined in this booklet is to improve upon and develop the physical capacities needed to safely and efficiently pass the FITCO test. This program is made up of two components; a musculoskeletal fitness component and an aerobic training

component. If followed properly, the program should assist the participant in achieving the FITCO test standard.

### Muscular Strength and Endurance Training Considerations:

Muscular strength and endurance are required during the FITCO test. Two sample training strategies have been included, one program that can be performed at home with minimal or no equipment, and another that requires slightly more equipment and would necessitate access to a fitness center or gym

to perform. As such there are two or three training sessions devoted to these aspects of physical fitness each week. During the first two to three sessions the most important consideration is to learn proper technique and determine the appropriate weights to use for each exercise. It is always better to start light and build to heavier weights than to start at too high a weight and risk injury.

**Intensity:** To ensure adequate strength and muscular endurance in each muscle group, a resistance-training program, which utilizes free weights, machines, body weight exercises or a combination of the three should be followed. The main goal of a resistance-training

program is to “overload” the muscles of the arms, shoulders, back, abdomen and legs. Overloading a muscle group involves a combination of resistance, repetitions, sets and frequency. Rest and recovery of at least 48 hours between workouts will ensure “adaptation” to the resistance training in preparation for subsequent training sessions. The intensity of a muscular strength program can be set or changed in 3 different ways. Changing the number of repetitions of each exercise, the number of sets of repetitions, and the amount of resistance used will all dictate the intensity of the workout.

For example: Changing the workout from 3 sets of 10 repetitions at 50 lbs resistance to 3 sets of 15 repetitions of 50 lbs resistance or 3 sets of 10 repetitions at 60 lbs resistance.

Note: that if you are doing exercises at home and you do not have access to increased weights, then repetitions or sets should be changed to increase the intensity of the workout. It should be noted that only one of the aspects of the workout should be changed at a time in order to avoid muscle or joint injury. Also, it is advised that if one aspect of the workout intensity is changed by a large amount, then the other two aspects should be reduced.

	Sets	Target Number of Repetitions	Resistance
Week 1	1-2	8	A light weight that can be easily lifted. Proper technique should be emphasized
Week 2	2	10	Weight increased so 10 reps are completed, where the last rep is difficult to perform.
Week 3	3	10	Weight increased so 10 reps are completed, where the last rep is difficult to perform.
Week 4	3	12	Weight maintained from the previous week.
Week 5	3	15	Weight maintained from the previous week
Week 6	3	10	Weight increased so 10 reps are completed, where the last rep is difficult to perform.



## Muscular Strength and Endurance Program:

This program consists of exercises from 7 muscle groups, each of which is chosen specifically as they relate to the motions and forces required to complete the FITCO test. Exercises can be chosen from any of the three modalities. The exercises can be performed one at a time with adequate rest between each of them or in a circuit format. The circuit

format means that one set of each exercise would be completed, followed with minimal rest in between by a repetition of the entire circuit according to the prescribed number of sets. Each time you perform a set your aim is to reach the target number of repetitions listed in the previous chart, where the last repetition performed is the most difficult. This circuit format is recommended because during the emergency response circuit there are no breaks and a variety of different

muscle groups are used immediately following one another. Note that the determination of initial weights is essential. Learning proper form and perfecting the technique is the main goal of the first week and therefore, weights that are easy to lift should be used while mastering proper technique. Warm-up: 5-10 minutes of easy whole body aerobic activity, Cool down 5-10 minutes of stretching.

Muscle Group	Exercise Modality		
	Body Weight	Machines/Equipment	Free Weights
Legs	Step-ups/Lunges/Step Lunges	Leg Press	Squats, Lunges
Chest	Push-ups	Bench Press	Dumbbell Chest Press/Chest Fly's
Back	Chin-ups (overhand-underhand)	Seated Row/Front Lat pull-down	Dumbbell row
Shoulders	Rubber-band Shoulder Press	Shoulder Press	Dumbbell shoulder press
Triceps	Rubber-band Overhead Press	Triceps Press Down	Dumbbell Overhead Triceps Press
Biceps	Rubber-band Arm Curl	Biceps Cable Curl	Dumbbell Biceps Curl
Abdominal/Core	Modified Curl-ups	Stability Ball Crunches	Weighted Abdominal Crunches



Stair Climber Training

## Aerobic Training Considerations:

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**Overview:** The aerobic training component of this program is included because the FITCO test requires a standard level of aerobic fitness to pass the 20-meter shuttle run. Aerobic training involves continuous whole body exercise of at least 20 minutes at a set intensity level, three days per week and is an integral part of this training program. To improve aerobic fitness, the exercise training must involve large muscle activity such as running, cycling, cross-country skiing, swimming or active sports like basketball, soccer and squash. It is best to choose an activity with which you are already familiar. Exercising with a partner will provide greater motivation to continue the activity

**Intensity:** The level of effort exerted during these training sessions should be at a steady pace at which you are breaking a sweat but can be maintained throughout the entire session. Initially, it is better to work slower and at a lower intensity but to last the whole time, than to work too hard and have



**Treadmill and Elliptical Aerobic Training**

to stop early. The easiest way to gauge how hard you are working is through the “talk test”. If you can still talk easily while exercising you are probably exercising at the appropriate pace. Use a heart rate monitor or learn to take your own pulse by placing your fingers on the underside of your wrist and

counting the heartbeats felt. It is best to stop exercising and count your pulse for 10 seconds then multiply it by 6 to get your heart rate for one minute. You should be working at about 65-85% of your age predicted maximum heart rate. This can be determined by the following formula;

Predicted Maximum Heart Rate =  $220 - \text{age}$ .  
For example, if you were 28 years old, your Predicted Maximum Heart Rate would be  $220 - \text{age}$ , or 192 beats per minute. For a 28-year-old to work at 75% intensity, the threshold training heart rate is 75% ( $220 - 28$ ). This equals 144 beats per minute or 24 beats per 10 seconds. Hence, an effective training program for a 28-year old would be to exercise 3 days per week for 20 up to 45 minutes each day with the heart rate continuously around 144 beats per minute throughout the exercise session.

To aid in improving the accuracy of determining your heart rate you may consider utilizing a heart rate monitor.

**Duration:** Throughout the course of the six-week program you will slowly build up the length of time spent exercising from 20 minutes up to 45 minutes of continuous activity. Note that a longer duration will provide greater fitness benefits, so that there is a progression to a longer duration.

**Type:** Aerobic exercise can be achieved using a variety of modalities all of which involve a repetitive and continuous movement of the body. Examples include running, cycling or elliptical machines. The shuttle run in the FITCO involves running and therefore the recommended way to train this skill is by engaging in activities that involve running. If there are limitations in the type of aerobic exercise that can be performed, start with something that can be done comfortably and then try to work toward more vigorous running.

**Progression:** To achieve continuous improvement throughout your training program, your workload must be increased gradually as your fitness level improves. At the start, your workload will be mild to moderate, but as your body adapts to this level of exercise, the intensity, duration and type of exercise, as outlined above, should be altered progressively. It is important not to change all three (intensity, duration and type) simultaneously. For example, if you increase the duration of your workout then intensity and type will either remain unchanged or

decrease slightly. Keep progression in mind as you work through the programs described in this booklet. Remember that running is highly recommended and should definitely be the

exercise of choice. If you are not able to run for the prescribed time, then start by walking and jogging and then progress to a run. The other types of aerobic exercises provided are to be used in conjunction with a primarily running/jogging/walking-based program.

### **Circuit Training:**

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This form of training is as an alternate way in which to work on the muscular strength and endurance, aerobic fitness and flexibility. Instead of working on all three components during separate sessions or during distinct parts of the workout, they are all worked on in rotation with one another. This simulates the demands of the FITCO, where there is often no separation between the demands on these different components of fitness. One advantage of doing the program in this way is that it requires fewer trips to the gym in a week. However, it is likely that each session will be longer in length, up to one hour. As in the other programs, the exercises used in this program simulate the movements, and target the same muscles as those used in the FITCO. This program is most easily done in a gym

setting where there is easy access to a variety of training equipment, however with simple modifications it can be done in a home setting. Remember to follow all of the aerobic, strength training and stretching considerations while doing this program.

For the first week, for each muscular strength and endurance exercise, you should complete one set of 15 repetitions before moving on to the next exercise. In the second and third weeks, you should attempt to complete two passes through the circuit. If in the fourth

week two times through the circuit is easy, you should increase the weight or repetitions used.

Activity	Description	Repetitions
Warm up	10 minutes of easy whole body aerobic activity	-
Aerobic Activity 1	Five minutes of moderate to hard intensity aerobic activity	-
Step up/down	Using stairs or step box	12-15
Front Arm raises	Using rubber bands or dumbbells	12-15
Aerobic Activity 2	Five minutes of moderate to hard intensity aerobic activity	-
Seated Row	Using machine or dumbbells	12-15
Modified curl ups	Bodyweight	15-20
Aerobic Activity 3	Five minutes of moderate to hard intensity aerobic activity	-
Bench Press	Bench press Machine or Free Weights	12-15
Aerobic activity 4	Five minutes of moderate to hard intensity aerobic activity	-
Grip strength	Forearm curls with bar or dumbbells	12-15
Cool-down	5 minutes of light intensity aerobic activity	-
Stretching	10 minutes of moderate stretching of major muscle groups	-

## Sample Six-Week Action Plan

The following sample training strategies are designed to address all of these fitness considerations. The programs require a commitment to 5 or 6 training sessions each week of 20-50 minutes in duration. The sample training programs are designed so that they can be followed whether or not you have access to a fitness training facility.

Initially, an overview is provided for each of the fitness components plus general information on the related training considerations. Following this overview there is a detailed six-week training program designed to assist in the attainment of the fitness levels needed to pass the FITCO.



**Modified Curlups**



**Lat Pulldown**



**Seated Lat Pull**



**Stability Ball Curlups**

	<b>Monday</b> Day 1	<b>Tuesday</b> Day 2	<b>Wednesday</b> Day 3	<b>Thursday</b> Day 4	<b>Friday</b> Day 5	<b>Saturday</b> Day 6	<b>Sunday</b> Day 7
<b>Week 1</b>	Aerobic training Session I 20 minutes; Stretch	Muscular Strength & Endurance	Aerobic training Session II 20 minutes; Stretch	Muscular Strength & Endurance	Aerobic training Session III 20 minutes; Stretch	Circuit Training	Rest
<b>Week 2</b>	Circuit Training	Aerobic training Session I 25 minutes; Stretch	Muscular Strength & Endurance	Rest	Aerobic training Session II 25 minutes; Stretch	Muscular Strength & Endurance	Rest
<b>Week 3</b>	Aerobic training Session I 30 minutes; Stretch	Muscular Strength & Endurance	Aerobic training Session II 30 minutes; Stretch	Muscular Strength & Endurance	Aerobic training Session III 30 minutes; Stretch	Circuit Training	Rest
<b>Week 4</b>	Circuit Training	Aerobic training Session I 35 minutes; Stretch	Muscular Strength & Endurance	Rest	Aerobic training Session II 35 minutes; Stretch	Muscular Strength & Endurance	Rest
<b>Week 5</b>	Aerobic training Session I 40 minutes; Stretch	Muscular Strength and Endurance	Aerobic training Session II 40 minutes; Stretch	Muscular Strength & Endurance	Aerobic training Session III 40 minutes; Stretch	Circuit Training	Rest
<b>Week 6</b>	Muscular Strength & Endurance	Aerobic training Session I 45 minutes; Stretch	Muscular Strength & Endurance	Rest	Aerobic training Session II 45 minutes; Stretch	Circuit Training	Rest



Figure 1

## SELF-TESTING

### Self-Testing Suggestions:

1. Simulate the protocols of the Emergency Response Circuit by making a home made version of the Emergency Response Circuit:
  - Locate a set of stairs with at least 5 steps.
  - Construct a “home” Body Control Simulator (BCS) apparatus. Securely fasten a hitch ring into a wall, 1.2 metres above the ground.

Attach a pulley to the hitch ring using a security snap hook (Fig. 1). Using a 38.5 kg. (85 lbs.) weight (such as a bag of sand, landscaping stones or weight plates), fasten a sturdy rope to the weight and loop it through the pulley attaching it to a sturdy piece of wood such as the handle of a hockey stick or a 2"x2". Try to position the home BCS within 15 metres of the stairs. It is important to ensure that the BCS is fastened securely, preferably to a stud in the wall and that the hitch ring, security snap hook, pulley and rope are all rated to handle 38.5 kg.

- Use a set of hands grips to simulate the strength of the Arm Retraction Simulator machine. Squeezing tennis balls will also improve your grip strength.
- Mark out distance approximately 10 metres from the “home made” Body Control Simulator apparatus, make a dummy bag of 85 lb, practice dragging it over 40 metre distance (4 circuits)
- Practice the 20-meter shuttle run. You will require a flat and straight distance of 20 metres to practice this protocol. The Leger shuttle run CD is available from Fitness York for approximately \$55. Please contact [fityork@yorku.ca](mailto:fityork@yorku.ca) for more information.
- Aim to run 3 miles continuously in 24 – 27 minutes

2. As you work through the training program set out in this manual, it is advantageous to test yourself either every week or every two weeks to objectively see the gains you have made or to identify areas where further improvement is needed.

### Gauging your success on the FITCO test and tracking your progress.

Look for these indicators:

- You rate the exercise at a lower Rate of Perceived Exertion (RPE)
- Your heart rate is lower at the end of the exercise
- It is easier to do the various exercises
- You do an increased number of maximum push-ups or curl-ups
- You cover a greater distance while running over a set period of time
- It takes you less time to complete your home version of the FITCO

For all of the examples listed above, use either the RPE scale (page 23) or your heart rate to track your progress.





**Homemade BCS “Pull”**



**Homemade BCS “Push”**

For instance, if you rated the exercise as a “17” in week one and a “14” in week three, it is evident that you have made positive gains. Alternately, if your heart has decreased from 170 to 165 at the end of the exercise for the same work load, this also suggests that improvements have been made.

### **Borg Scale for the Rating of Perceived Exertion (RPE)**

Rating	How does the exercise feel?
6	
7	very, very light
8	
9	very light
10	
11	fairly light
12	
13	somewhat hard
14	
15	hard
16	
17	very hard
18	
19	very, very hard
20	

## Final Words

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The information in this booklet has identified the FITCO protocols and standards and suggested training programs on how you can prepare to pass. By following the guidelines in this booklet you will improve your muscular strength, muscular endurance and aerobic fitness, putting you in a better position to pass the FITCO. If you are unfamiliar with flexibility, aerobic, or resistance training consider consulting a Certified Personal Trainer (CPT) or knowledgeable fitness professional to help you.

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With any physical exercise program there is a risk of physical injury. If you are unsure of your medical condition and especially if you have any cardiovascular, pulmonary or metabolic disease, or a family of such diseases you should consult with your doctor before beginning or modifying your exercise program. It is advisable to exercise with a partner and to use caution when using exercise equipment. The Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services shall not be held liable for any damages, direct or indirect, special or circumstantial, which result from the use of equipment or exercise programs depicted in this brochure, including, without limiting the generality of the foregoing and damages arising from injury.

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