

# Personal Fitness

Personal fitness is an individual effort and desire to be the best one can be. Regardless of their current levels of personal fitness, in the twelve weeks it will take Scouts to complete the athletic requirements for this merit badge, they will be in better shape, feel better about themselves, have more energy, and gain self-confidence in their overall abilities.

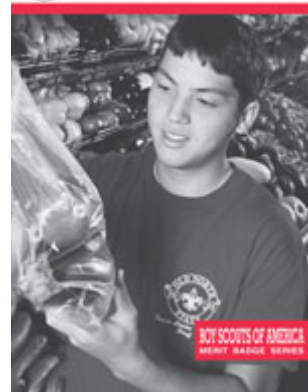
## Requirements

If meeting any of the requirements for this merit badge is against the Scout's religious convictions, the requirement does not have to be done if the Scout's parents and the proper religious advisers state in writing that to do so would be against religious convictions. The Scout's parents must also accept full responsibility for anything that might happen because of this exemption.

1. Do the following:
  - a. Before completing requirements 2 through 9, have your health-care practitioner give you a physical examination, using the Scout medical examination form. Describe the examination. Tell what questions you were asked about your health. Tell what health or medical recommendations were made and report what you have done in response to the recommendations. Explain the following:
    1. Why physical exams are important
    2. Why preventive habits are important in maintaining good health
    3. Diseases that can be prevented and how
    4. The seven warning signs of cancer
    5. The youth risk factors that affect cardiovascular fitness in adulthood
  - b. Have a dental examination. Get a statement saying that your teeth have been checked and cared for. Tell how to care for your teeth.
2. Explain to your merit badge counselor verbally or in writing what personal fitness means to you, including
  - a. Components of personal fitness.
  - b. Reasons for being fit in all components.
  - c. What it means to be mentally healthy.
  - d. What it means to be physically healthy and fit.
  - e. What it means to be socially healthy. Discuss your activity in the areas of healthy social fitness.
  - f. What you can do to prevent social, emotional, or mental problems.
3. With your counselor, answer and discuss the following questions:
  - a. Are you free from all curable diseases? Are you living in such a way that your risk of preventable diseases is minimized?
  - b. Are you immunized and vaccinated according to the advice of your health-care provider?
  - c. Do you understand the meaning of a nutritious diet and know why it is important for you? Does your diet include foods from all food groups?
  - d. Are your body weight and composition what you would like them to be, and do you know how to modify them safely through exercise, diet, and behavior modification?
  - e. Do you carry out daily activities without noticeable effort? Do you have extra energy for other activities?



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- f. Are you free from habits relating to poor nutrition and the use of alcohol, tobacco, drugs, and other practices that could be harmful to your health?
  - g. Do you participate in a regular exercise program or recreational activities?
  - h. Do you sleep well at night and wake up feeling refreshed and energized for the new day?
  - i. Are you actively involved in the religious organization of your choice, and do you participate in their youth activities?
  - j. Do you spend quality time with your family and friends in social and recreational activities?
  - k. Do you support family activities and efforts to maintain a good home life?
4. Explain the following about physical fitness:
    - a. The components of physical fitness
    - b. Your weakest and strongest component of physical fitness
    - c. The need to have a balance in all four components of physical fitness
    - d. How the components of personal fitness relate to the Scout Law and Scout Oath
  5. Explain the following about nutrition:
    - a. The importance of good nutrition
    - b. What good nutrition means to you
    - c. How good nutrition is related to the other components of personal fitness
    - d. The three components of a sound weight (fat) control program
  6. Before doing requirements 7 and 8, complete the aerobic fitness, flexibility, muscular strength, and body composition tests as described in the Personal Fitness merit badge pamphlet. Record your results and identify those areas where you feel you need to improve.

#### **Aerobic Fitness Test**

Record your performance on ONE of the following tests:

- a. Run/walk as far as you can in nine minutes.
- b. Run/walk 1 mile as fast as you can.

#### **Flexibility Test**

Using a sit-and-reach box constructed according to specifications in the *Personal Fitness* merit badge pamphlet, make four repetitions and record the fourth reach. This last reach must be held steady for 15 seconds to qualify. (Remember to keep your knees down.)

#### **Strength Tests**

Record your performance on all three tests.

- a. Sit-Ups. Record the number of sit-ups done correctly in 60 seconds. The sit-ups must be done in the form explained and illustrated in the Personal Fitness merit badge pamphlet.
- b. Pull-Ups. Record the total number of pull-ups completed correctly in 60 seconds. Be consistent with the procedures presented in the Personal Fitness merit badge pamphlet.
- c. Push-Ups. Record the total number of push-ups completed correctly in 60 seconds. Be consistent with the procedures presented in the Personal Fitness merit badge pamphlet.

#### **Body Composition Test**

Have your parent, counselor, or other adult take and record the following measurements:

- a. Circumference of the right upper arm, midway between the shoulder and the elbow, with the arm hanging naturally and not flexed.
- b. Shoulders, with arms hanging by placing the tape measure 2 inches below the top of the shoulders around the arms, chest, and back after breath expiration.
- c. Chest, by placing the tape under the arms and around the chest and back at the nipple line after breath expiration.

- d. Abdomen circumference at the navel level (relaxed).
- e. Circumference of the right thigh, midway between the hip and knee, and not flexed.

If possible, have the same person take the measurements whenever they are recorded.

7. Outline a comprehensive 12-week physical fitness program using the results of your fitness tests. Be sure your program incorporates the endurance, intensity, and warm-up guidelines discussed in the Personal Fitness merit badge pamphlet. Before beginning your exercises, have the program approved by your counselor and parents.
8. Complete the physical fitness program you outlined in requirement 7. Keep a log of your fitness program activity (how long you exercised; how far you ran, swam, or biked; how many exercise repetitions you completed; your exercise heart rate; etc.). Repeat the aerobic fitness, muscular strength, and flexibility tests every two weeks and record your results. After the 12th week, repeat all four tests, record your results, and show improvement in each one. Compare and analyze your preprogram and postprogram body composition measurements. Discuss the meaning and benefit of your experience, and describe your long-term plans regarding your personal fitness.
9. Find out about three career opportunities in personal fitness. Pick one and find out the education, training, and experience required for this profession. Discuss what you learned with your counselor, and explain why this profession might interest you.

## Resources

### Scouting Literature

*Athletics, Cycling, Dentistry, Disabilities Awareness, Family Life, Public Health, Sports, and Swimming* merit badge pamphlets; *Boy Scout Handbook*; *Fieldbook*

### Books

#### Diet

- American Heart Association. *The American Heart Association Kids' Cookbook*. Random House, 1993.
- Figtree, Dale. *Eat Smart: A Guide to Good Health for Kids*. New Win Publishing, 1997.

#### Drugs

- Hirschfelder, Arlene B. *Kick Butts! A Kid's Action Guide to a Tobacco-Free America*. Silver Burdett Press, 1998.

#### Health and Fitness

- Armstrong, Neil, and Joanne Welsman. *Young People and Physical Activity*. Oxford Medical Publications, Oxford University Press, 1997.
- Baechle, Thomas R. *Essentials of Strength Training and Conditioning*. Human Kinetics Publishers, 1994.
- Cooper, Kenneth H., with William Proctor. *Fit Kids!: The Complete Shape-Up Program From Birth Through High School*. Broadman & Holdman Publishers, 1999.
- Frost, Simon. *Fitness for Young People: A Flowmotion Book: Strength, Flexibility, and Stamina Through Personal Fitness*. Sterling, 2003.
- Lam, Dr. Paul. *T'ai Chi for Young People*. Wellspring Media, 2000.
- Larimore, Walt, M.D., and Traci Mullins. *10 Essentials of Highly Healthy People*. Zondervan, 2003.

- Lark, Liz. *Yoga: Essential Yoga Poses to Help Young People Get Fit, Supple, and Healthy*. Sterling, 2003.
- Lockette, Kevin F., and Ann M. Keyes. *Conditioning with Physical Disabilities*. Human Kinetics Publishers, 1994.
- Schwarzenegger, Arnold, with Charles Gaines. *Arnold's Fitness for Kids Ages 11-14: A Guide to Health, Exercise, and Nutrition*. Doubleday & Company, 1993.
- Thompson, Daley, and Peter Walker. *Going for Gold: Daley Thompson's Book of Total Fitness and Body Care for Young People*. HarperCollins Publishers, 1987.
- Wehman, Paul. *Life Beyond the Classroom: Transition Strategies for Young People with Disabilities*. Paul H Brookes Publishing Co., 1995.

## **Sports and Recreation**

- Glover, Bob, et al. *The Runner's Handbook: The Best-Selling Classic Fitness Guide for Beginner and Intermediate Runners*. Penguin USA, 1996.
- Hayes, Larry, et al. *The Junior Golf Book*. St. Martin's Press, 1996.
- Kirby, Daniel. *The ABC's of Golf*. Coyote Publishing, 1999.
- Murphy, Pat, et al. *Complete Conditioning for Baseball*. Human Kinetics Publishers, 1997.
- Schubert, Mark, and Heinz Kluetmeier. *Sports Illustrated Competitive Swimming: Techniques for Champions*. Sports Illustrated, 1990.
- Yessis, Michael. *Sports and Fitness Success from 6 to 16*. Masters Press, 1997.

## **Web Sites and Organizations**

### **Amateur-Sports.com**

Web site: <http://www.amateur-sports.com>

### **American Dietetic Association**

120 S. Riverside Plaza, Suite 2000  
Chicago, IL 60606-6995  
Toll-free telephone: 800-877-1600  
Web site: <http://www.eatright.org>

### **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**

1600 Clifton Road  
Atlanta, GA 30333  
Telephone: 404-639-3311  
Web site: <http://www.fitfamilyfitkids.com>

### **Fitness for Kids**

9100 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 250 W Beverly Hills, CA 90212  
Telephone: 310-275-4141  
Web site: <http://www.fitnessforkids.org>

### **International Food Information Council Foundation**

1100 Connecticut Ave. NW, Suite 430  
Washington, DC 20036  
Telephone: 202-296-6540  
Fax: 202-296-6547  
Web site: <http://ific.org>

### **KidsHealth**

Web site: <http://www.kidshealth.org>

### **National Athletic Trainer's Association**

2952 Stemmons Freeway

Dallas, TX 75247  
Telephone: 214-637-6282  
Web site: <http://www.nata.org>

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The Boy Scouts of America  <http://www.scouting.org>