Pre-Academy Fitness Guide
PRE-ACADEMY FITNESS GUIDE

It is very important to get a full medical examination and a doctor’s approval before starting any physical activity program. It is recommended that each candidate set goals and adjust the level of this program according to their capabilities. If you start using this Pre-Academy Fitness Guide NOW, you will go a long way toward meeting the goal of being ready for the Aurora Police Academy (APD) Academy.

“Don’t be the person who waits until they know they have a job as a police officer in order to start working out. If you aren’t willing to go above and beyond before you get paid to get in shape, then maybe this is not the line of work that you should enter” APD Academy Staff.

ACADEMY PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

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To pass the physical fitness test with a minimum score of 70%, you must be able to do the following:

• 1 ½ mile run under 12:54 minutes  
• 26 push-ups under one minute  
• 7 pull-ups  
• 35 sit-ups under one minute  
• 300 meter dash under 60 seconds (age/gender changes time)

Recruits must achieve 70% as minimum score to pass. Before getting discouraged, be aware that with proper preparation none of these events are overly difficult.

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Hydration

Most people do not drink enough water. Water is essential to survival. Every function and movement of an officer’s body requires water. During hot weather or strenuous exercise, a larger amount of water is eliminated through perspiration in order to regulate body temperature. Therefore, it is critical to drink more water during hot weather or while exercising. It is recommended that you drink several cups of water before exercising. If the exercise is prolonged or vigorous, you should drink small quantities of water every 10 to 15
minutes during the activity. A guideline for consumption of water is eight glasses of eight ounces (8 and 8 rule) of water per day.

**Nutrition**

Exercise alone will not prepare you enough to be “fit for life- fit for duty”. Exercise is only half the battle to total health. What you put into your mouth affects how much progress you will make using the Academy Fitness Guide. Start thinking of yourself as an athlete, police officers are required to be physically fit to meet the demands of the job. You will face life-threatening situations in which you must rely entirely on your own strength, endurance, and stamina. Change your mindset right now to meet these challenges.

Fad diets don’t work, base your diet and nutrition on your own personal needs and goals. It is a good rule to try to begin eating smaller portions of food six times per day, but you should never feel hungry or starved. Remember, your goal is to build muscle, become lean, and reduce your body fat content.

**What to avoid**

Stop your bad habits now before your start the APD Academy. Limit or eliminate the following items: high fructose corn syrup (soda and candy), processed foods, large volumes of fatty foods commonly found in fast food and pizza, limit or eliminate alcoholic beverage. Your progress in eating healthy has a direct affect on how prepared you are for the vigorous demands of the APD Academy. The APD academy does not permit you to use any tobacco products.

**Suggestions**

The key to nutrition is to keep your saturated fat intake to a bare minimum while still consuming the “good fats” mono and polyunsaturated (peanut or almond butter, omega-3 fats found in fish and flaxseed). Don’t let yourself get hungry, by eating six times a day you increase your metabolism and keep your internal oven cooking all day. Remember to eat to replenish your body with nutrients lost during your workout.

When eating a well balanced diet, focus on lean meats, vegetables, fruits, and whole grains. Switch to a low-fat 1% or skim milk and low or no fat yogurt and cottage cheese. Nuts are a great protein source and they help curb your appetite. Raw almonds are your best option.

There are so many eating programs on the market right now. We found that Body for Life is an all around good eating program. Body for life is a program that encourages 5-6 small meals throughout the day with a balance of carbohydrates and protein. Visit their website at [http://bodyforlife.com/](http://bodyforlife.com/). There are so many eating programs out there, find the one that suites you.

*Example of eating healthy:*

**Breakfast- The most important meal of the day.** Keeping your breakfast light will help you with your work-out that is still to come. Try one cup of oatmeal, an orange, or banana and one glass
of water. An alternative would be one piece of whole wheat toast, scrambled egg whites and a glass of water.

**Post-work-out snack**- Whey protein shake with strawberries or protein/power bar.

**Lunch**- Tuna wrap with romaine lettuce, cup of non-fat yogurt or a salad with crunchy veggies and low-fat Italian dressing OR a chicken fajita wrap (grilled chicken breast, grilled vegetables in a whole wheat wrap).

**Afternoon snack**- Eat a protein with a small amount of carbohydrate; apple with peanut butter.

**Dinner**- Chicken, fish, turkey or other lean meats, one cup of brown rice, broccoli, or other fresh veggies. Remember to drink plenty of water and try not to eat after 7:00PM.

**Dynamic Warm Up**

Regardless of your level of fitness, you should always begin an exercise session with an appropriate amount of time allocated to warming-up. A warm-up prior to exercise stimulates the cardiovascular system and various muscle groups, which increases performance and reduces your risk of injury. Dynamic exercises are performed for approximately 30 seconds each and may consist of: walking, jogging, high knees, butt kickers, jumping jacks, frog-hops, high knees, and burpees. If you do not know how to perform these dynamic exercises, google is a great tool to use!

Do dynamic warm ups for at least 7-10 minutes prior to starting your main work-out.

**Proper Push-Up**

To see how a proper push-up is performed please visit this website: [http://www.exrx.net/WeightExercises/PectoralSternal/BWPushup.html](http://www.exrx.net/WeightExercises/PectoralSternal/BWPushup.html)

In the academy you will partner up and perform push-ups. One partner will lie flat on their stomach, arm extended and hand making a fist touching the floor. The second person doing the push up will go down until their chest touches their partner’s fist-slightly down and in from collarbone area. To practice this technique, draw an imaginary line from base of hand to base of hand and place shoe on the floor, or turn a water bottle on its side or find a 10 or 15 pound dumbbell and place it on the imaginary line. Go all the way down in your push-up until your chest touches the object on the floor, this is the proper push-up required of you in the academy.

**Pull-Ups**

If you are having trouble with doing one (1) pull-up, we recommend that you start with negatives every other day. Using a pull-up bar, jump or use a chair to get your chin over the bar and hold that position as long as possible, slowly lower yourself to the ground, don’t just drop!
Repeat this seven to ten times, trying to increase your time over the bar. If you work hard doing this for a few weeks, you should be able to pull yourself up.

**Running**

It is very important that you have a good pair of running shoes. Unlike cross trainers, running shoes are designed to allow your foot to strike the ground properly, reducing the amount of shock that travels up your leg and causes injuries. They are also made to fit your foot comfortably, which reduces the slipping and sliding that can lead to blisters.

The running component of the Pre-Academy Fitness Guide is designed to meet the minimal running standards at the APD Academy. It will increase your endurance and speed, and is a great way to improve your cardiovascular system. There is nothing easier than putting on a pair of running shoes and heading out the door for fresh air, sunshine, and exercise. But while doing it is easy, if you have never run before, you will quickly realize how strenuous it can be. It takes time to build up the endurance to run for even a short period of time.

If you are new to running, you should ease into it. If you are unable to run at a slow pace continuously for 30 minutes you should begin your program with a walk/run routine, alternating five minutes of fast walking with five minutes of running. Gradually build up your running time to a 30-minute self paced run. Always complete your workout with a five-minute slow-paced cool-down and stretching of the calves, hamstrings, hip flexors, and back.

The running portion of this guide is **not** designed to be done on a treadmill. A treadmill “pulls” the ground underneath your feet, and you do not meet any wind resistance, which makes running somewhat easier. However, many treadmills are padded, making them a good option if you’re carrying a few extra pounds or are injury-prone and want to decrease impact. To better simulate the effort of outdoor running, you can always set your treadmill at a one percent incline.

While you are building up your running stamina, practice good running form:

1. Run tall with good posture. Your trunk will lean forward from the hips slightly, but try to lengthen your body, lift your chest, and hold in your abdominal muscles.

2. Let your arms swing at a 90-degree angle between the chest and hipbone, not crossing them over your body. Your arm swing should complement your stride. Relax your wrists and hands. Do not clench your fists.

3. Power your stride from your thighs, hips, and buttocks muscles.

4. Get in a rhythm when breathing. Try this: when your left foot hits the ground breathe in, right foot breathe in. The next time your left foot hits the ground breathe out, right foot
breathe out. Repeat this rhythm and you will be more efficient and less likely to develop a side stitch.

5. Stay relaxed. When you can jog continuously for 30 minutes, you can begin the running portion of the department’s Pre-Academy Fitness Guide.

Calisthenics / Strength
The Department’s strength training is based on a calisthenics platform. Calisthenics develop the ability to squat, reach, twist, lunge, jump, land, push, and get up and down. These are the types of actions demanded of law enforcement officers during a routine patrol watch. Calisthenics build strength and promote endurance without the repetitive motion that often leads to overuse and injury. Finally, these exercises improve mobility by progressively taking the major joints through a full, controlled range of motion. Calisthenics also demand attention to detail that conveys physical readiness and discipline. You should try to do the calisthenic exercises every day. It is important that you adjust the level of activity according to your individual fitness level and gradually progress at your own pace with every workout.

- Deadlift
- Clean Squat
- Rope Climb
- Squats
- Pilates
- Bike, Run, Swim

High Intensity Interval Training (HIIT)
HIIT is an enhanced form of interval training, an exercise strategy alternating periods of short intense anaerobic exercise with less-intense recovery periods. HIIT is a form of cardiovascular exercise. Usual HIIT sessions vary from four (4) to 30 minutes. These short, intense workouts provide improved athletic capacity and condition, improved glucose metabolism, and improved fat burning. An example of this type of training would be alternating walking for 20 seconds then jogging for 20 seconds for a short period of time.

ACADEMY PHYSICAL TRAINING
The recruit physical fitness training follows a program similar to the one given below. The program is indicative of what is expected of recruits from the day they enter the APD Academy. Candidates should use this Pre-Academy Fitness Guide to be prepared for the physical demands of the academy.

After the warm up, recruits participate in a 2-5 mile run that starts at 10 minutes per mile and increases to 8 minutes per mile (end of academy).

Runs are up and down hills as well as on flat ground. The runs are progressive both in distance and pace. Recruits will also do sprint and track work to include HIIT.

WORKOUT
HIIT
Can’t find a full hour to work out, try this HIIT workout. *No excuses, it’s only 12 minutes!*

- Warm up with a light jog - 4 minutes
- Sprint for 20 seconds then jog for 10 seconds (recovery) then sprint for 20 second etc.. – alternate this for 4 minutes.
- Light jog / walk cool down – 4 minutes.

Calisthenics
The workout concludes with a calisthenics session that lasts approximately one hour, during which the entire workout is performed twice. The following are included:

- Push-ups - 30 Repetitions
- Sprint One Lap
- Abdominal Curls - 30 Repetitions
- Sprint One Lap
- Abdominal Leg Lifts - 30 Repetitions
- Sprint One Lap
- Leg Lunges - 30 Repetitions
- Sprint One Lap
- Grass Drill - 30-Second Repetitions
- Two-Lap Recovery Jog.

WORKOUT PROGRAMS
1. **P90x** is a 90 day plan to gain push-up and pull-up strength. There is some cardio in this program, but we also recommend running or at least HIIT interval runs along with this program.
2. **Insanity** is a 60 day plan, again can be used to get better at push-ups. It’s cardio, but it’s not running cardio, we recommend running at least 1.5-2 miles and HIIT interval training *along with* this program.
3. **Body-for-life** incorporates weight lifting and HIIT intervals. This program does not specifically do push-ups or sit-ups, which you can include as an option for chest or abs, or you can do those separate, every other day.
4. **Crossfit.com** has a plethora of information on exercises including daily workouts. This is great for someone who wants to get in great overall shape, but again you need to specifically add running to your workout program.
5. **Spartan workouts** send out daily email list for workouts. They incorporate running and push-ups.
6. There are all kinds of plans on the internet to help you with pull-ups and push-ups:
   - [http://www.military.com/military-fitness/workouts/tips-for-better-pullups](http://www.military.com/military-fitness/workouts/tips-for-better-pullups)

Cool down
The cool-down is just as important as the warm-up. Abrupt cessation of vigorous activity leads to pooling of the blood and sluggish circulation. It may also contribute to cramping, soreness, or more serious problems. It is recommended that you complete your workout with a five-minute
slow-paced cool-down, and stretch for ten minutes following your workouts. It is important to remember to stretch while your muscles are still warm.

**Stretching Tips**

Move slowly when stretching. Take this time to relax and focus on your breathing. When lying on your back, move your legs one at a time. Sudden movements with both legs can strain the muscles of the lower back.

Stretch to the point of gentle tension or discomfort. If something hurts, stop immediately. Stretching should feel good. Hold the stretch for 10-15 seconds and release.

Stretch daily. This stretching routine can take as little as 7-10 minutes, or as long as you like. A few minutes every day can improve your performance, prevent injuries, and help you relax.

**Stretching Program**

**Neck Rotation** – Turn your head to the side, stretching your chin toward your shoulder. Turn head back to center and repeat to the other side.

**Shoulder Stretch** – Stand with feet shoulder width apart. Raise one arm overhead and stretch as far as you can without bending the torso. Repeat with opposite arm.

**Forearm Stretch** – Extend your right arm straight out in front of you, palm downward. With the left hand, grasp the fingers of the right hand and pull back gently, stretching the wrist and forearm. Repeat with the left arm.

**Triceps Stretch** – Raise one arm straight up, so your upper arm is near your ear. Bend at the elbow and let your hand fall to the back of your neck. With the other arm, reach behind your head and place your hand on top of the bent elbow. Gently pull down and back on the elbow. Repeat with other arm.

**Trunk Stretch** – Stand with your feet a little more than shoulder width apart. Reach your left arm overhead and bend to the right at the waist. Repeat on opposite side.

**Torso Twist** – Stand at arm’s length from the wall, with the wall at your side. Reach one arm out and place your hand on the wall. Reach the other arm around the body, stretching the hand to the wall. Repeat on opposite side.

**Chest Stretch** – Stand with your feet shoulder width apart. Clasp your hands behind your back and gently press your arms upward, keeping your arms straight.

**Back Stretch** – Lie on your back and bring one knee to your chest. Hold the knee with both hands and gently pull in. Alternate knees and repeat.
**Hip Roll** – Lie on your back and bend your knees, feet flat on the floor. Let your knees fall to the right while reaching both arms across your body to the left. Hold the stretch, then roll the hips over to the left, stretch arms to the right and repeat the stretch.

**Lower Back Reach** – Sit on the floor with your legs straight out in front of you. Reach forward toward your toes, keeping your chin up and lower back slightly arched. Try not to round the back or tuck the chin in – this decreases the effectiveness of the stretch.

**Butterfly Stretch** – Sit on the floor, bend your knees out to the sides and bring the soles of your feet together. Place your hands on your knees and gently press the knees toward the floor. Keep your back straight.

**Lateral Hip Stretch** – Sit on the floor with both legs straight in front of you. Bend your left leg and place the left foot over the right knee. Place your right hand on the outside of the left knee and gently pull the knee toward your right shoulder, twisting the torso to the left, until you feel the stretch in your left hip. Repeat with opposite side.

**Iliotibial Band Stretch (IT Band):** Cross one leg over the other leg and push on your knee, hold for 30 seconds. Another stretch: cross your right leg behind your left leg and lean towards the left. This stretch is best performed with arms over the head, creating a "bow" from ankle to hand.

**Hamstring Stretch** – Stand with legs shoulder width apart and the left leg slightly in front of the right. Shift your weight to the back leg (the right) and bend the knee, turning the knee and toe to the right. Extend the left leg and place the heel on the floor, toes in the air. Keep the back straight and bend forward at the hips until you feel the stretch in the hamstring of the left leg. Repeat with the opposite leg.

**Standing Hamstring Reach** – Stand with one foot crossed over the other. Bend at the hips, reaching toward the floor and keeping the knees slightly bent. Repeat with the opposite foot crossed in front.

**V- Stretch** – Sit on the floor with your legs extended to either side so they form a “V”. Bend forward, grasp your toes or ankles, and stretch your chest toward the floor. Try to go a little lower each time you perform the stretch.

**Leaning Calf Stretch** – Stand about 2 ½ feet from the wall. Place your hands on the wall and lean in, gently pushing your hips forward. Keep your legs straight and heels flat on the floor.

**Standing Calf Stretch** – Stand with your feet together. Extend one leg in front of you and place the heel on the floor, toes in the air. Keeping the back straight, bend forward at the hips until you feel the stretch in the calf. Repeat with opposite leg.
**Quadriceps Stretch** – Lie face down and reach back with your right arm to grasp your right ankle. Pull your foot toward your buttocks. Be sure to keep your hips and pelvis on the floor. Repeat with left leg.

**Standing Quad Stretch** – From a standing position, reach back to grasp your right ankle with your right hand and pull your foot toward your buttocks. Place your other hand on a wall or chair if you need balance support. Repeat with left leg.

**WORKOUT EXAMPLE**
On page 10 of this guide, we have given you an example that you can use for your four (4) month workout program. Applicant abilities will differ, so adjust your program accordingly with the information that we have provided you. If you feel that this particular program is not suitable for you, find one that is and start working out now!

**REMEMBER WHAT IS REQUIRED OF YOU FOR THE ACADEMY:**
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The first physical fitness test occurs during the first week of the APD Academy, this is why it is critical that candidates begin a physical conditioning program as soon as they apply.

If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact one of the Aurora Police Department Recruiters, Officer Julie Stahnke at jstahnke@auroragov.org or Officer Arturo Zepeda at azepeda@auroragov.org.
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