

# BLUE LINE

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## FITNESS TESTING

# FIT FOR FIRE GUIDE



# SETTING FITNESS GOALS

## IDENTIFYING PERSONAL FITNESS OBJECTIVES

Setting clear fitness goals is the foundation of success, especially when preparing for a physically demanding test like the Edmonton Fire Department fitness test. This workbook is designed to guide you through the process of setting realistic, measurable objectives to improve your strength, endurance, and agility—key components of the test. Whether you're just starting your fitness journey or fine-tuning your training, this resource will help you track progress, stay motivated, and develop a structured plan to achieve your goal of passing the fire fitness test with confidence.

### SPECIFIC

Your goal should be clear and detailed, answering the questions: What do I want to achieve? Why is this goal important? How will I accomplish it? Instead of saying, "I want to get in better shape," a specific goal would be, "I want to improve my cardiovascular endurance to complete the VO2 Max portion to the highest level."



## SMART GOALS

### MEASURABLE

Progress should be trackable so you can stay motivated. Ask yourself, How will I measure my success? For example, "I will improve my shuttle run time from 6.5 minutes to 5.5 minutes within eight weeks."

### ACHIEVABLE

Your goal should challenge you but still be realistic given your current fitness level, schedule, and resources. If you're new to training, aiming to run a VO2 Max test flawlessly in a week may not be practical, but improving by one level each week is.

### RELEVANT

Your goal should align with your overall objective and be meaningful to you. If your aim is to pass the VO2 Max, focusing on improving sprinting, endurance, and muscular strength will be more relevant than setting a general weight loss goal.

### TIME-BOUND

A deadline creates urgency and accountability. Instead of "I'll get better at the forcible entry station," set a time-specific goal: "I will increase my sledgehammer hits by 2 each session within six weeks through progressive strength training"

# NUTRITION ESSENTIALS

## BALANCED DIET BASICS

Nutrition plays a crucial role in preparing for a fitness test like the Edmonton Fire fitness test. Your body needs the right fuel to perform at its best, recover efficiently, and sustain energy throughout intense training sessions. A balanced diet—consisting of lean proteins, complex carbohydrates, and healthy fats—supports muscle growth, endurance, and overall strength. Equally important is hydration, as even mild dehydration can negatively impact performance, endurance, and mental focus. Proper nutrition and hydration not only help you train harder and recover faster but also give you the stamina and resilience needed to pass your fitness test with confidence.

### PORTION CONTROL AND HEALTHY EATING HABITS

Portion control and healthy eating habits are essential when training for your fitness test, ensuring you get the right nutrients without overeating or feeling sluggish. Eating balanced meals with appropriate portions of protein, carbohydrates, and healthy fats helps fuel your workouts, support muscle recovery, and maintain steady energy levels. A good rule of thumb is to fill half your plate with vegetables, a quarter with lean protein, and a quarter with complex carbohydrates. Eating smaller, nutrient-dense meals throughout the day can help regulate blood sugar and prevent energy crashes. Additionally, avoiding processed foods, excessive sugar, and empty calories will optimize your performance and keep your body in peak condition for test day.

### HYDRATION AND ITS ROLE IN FITNESS

Hydration is a key factor in fitness performance, recovery, and overall well-being, especially when training for a demanding test like the fire fitness test. Water helps regulate body temperature, transport nutrients, and lubricate joints, all of which are essential for endurance and strength training. Even mild dehydration can lead to fatigue, decreased coordination, and impaired focus, making it harder to perform at your best. To stay properly hydrated, aim to drink water consistently throughout the day, not just during workouts. Electrolytes, found in foods or sports drinks, can also help replenish lost minerals after intense training. Prioritizing hydration will improve your stamina, recovery, and overall ability to push through physical challenges.

# WORKOUT ROUTINES



CARDIO



STRENGTH



FLEXIBILITY

## SAMPLE WORKOUT PLAN

### DAY 1

#### Cardio Interval Training (VO2 Max)

- Warm-Up (10 min):
  - 5 min brisk walk or light jog (1% incline)
  - Dynamic stretches: leg swings, lunges, arm circles
- Workout (30-35 min):
  - 5-8 Intervals:
    - 2 min high-intensity incline walking/jogging (3.5-4.0 mph, 12-15% incline, 20-25 kg backpack)
    - 1-2 min recovery (3.0-3.5 mph, 1-2% incline)
- Cool-Down (5-10 min):
  - Gradually decrease incline and pace to flat ground

### DAY 2

#### Functional Strength Training (Obstacles)

- Warm-Up (10 min):
  - 5 min light cardio (bike or rower)
  - Bodyweight exercises: 10 squats, 10 push-ups, 20 mountain climbers
- Workout (40 min):
  - Circuit: 3 rounds (20 sec work, 10 sec rest per exercise)
    - Seated row (cable machine or resistance bands)
    - Dumbbell squat to press
    - Wall sit with dumbbell curls (15-20 lbs per hand)
    - Rope pulls (pull weighted sled or tire 10-15 m)
  - Weighted carries:
    - Farmer carry (20-50 kg dumbbells) for 30 m
    - Backpack carry (20-25 kg) for 30 m
- Cool-Down (5-10 min):
  - Light stretching: focus on back, arms, and legs

### DAY 3

#### Long Cardio Workout

- Warm-Up (10 min):
  - Brisk walk or light jog, dynamic stretches
- Workout (45 min):
  - 20-30 min continuous incline walk or jog (3.0-3.5 mph, 10% incline, no backpack)
  - 15 min steady-state row or cycling
- Cool-Down (5-10 min):
  - Gradually lower intensity and pace
  - Stretch calves, hamstrings, quads, and lower back

# WORKOUT ROUTINES



CARDIO



STRENGTH



FLEXIBILITY

## SAMPLE WORKOUT PLAN

### DAY 4

#### High-Intensity Functional Training (Obstacles)

- Warm-Up (10 min):
  - 5 min light cardio (stair climber or jogging)
  - Bodyweight exercises: lunges, squats, push-ups
- Workout (40 min):
  - Circuit: 4 rounds (40 sec work, 20 sec rest)
    - Tire drags/pushes (weighted sled or tire for 10-15 m)
    - Shallow walking lunges (20 kg backpack and 35-50 lbs dumbbells per hand)
    - Dumbbell chest presses
    - Rope pulls
  - Bonus:
    - Free hold 20 kg for 40 seconds
    - Stair climbs (short bursts, weighted backpack)
- Cool-Down (5-10 min):
  - Light cardio, followed by stretches

### DAY 5

#### Inclined Cardio Intervals with Weighted Backpack

- Warm-Up (10 min):
  - Brisk walk or light jog
  - Dynamic leg and arm stretches
- Workout (30 min):
  - 6-8 Intervals:
    - 3 min high-intensity incline walking/jogging (3.5-4.0 mph, 10-12% incline, 20-25 kg backpack)
    - 2 min recovery (flat ground, 3.0 mph, no incline)
- Cool-Down (5-10 min):
  - Walk flat ground, stretch calves, quads, hamstrings

### DAY 6

#### Active Recovery / Mobility Work

- Warm-Up (10 min):
  - Light cardio (bike or walk)
  - Dynamic mobility exercises (hip circles, shoulder rolls, etc.)
- Workout (30 min):
  - Yoga or mobility flow:
    - Downward dog, child's pose, cat-cow stretch
    - Lunge and twist, hip flexor stretch
  - Foam rolling: back, quads, hamstrings, calves
- Cool-Down (5-10 min):
  - Static stretches: focus on tight areas

# STRENGTH TRAINING



Strength training is a critical component of preparing for the Fire Fitness Test, as it builds the muscular endurance and power needed for key test elements like the forcible entry, rescue tool hold and victim rescue.. A well-rounded strength program should focus on compound movements that mimic the physical demands of firefighting tasks. Key exercises include squats and lunges for lower-body strength, deadlifts and farmer's carries for grip and core stability, and bench presses and push-ups to develop upper-body power. Pull-ups and rows are also beneficial for improving back and shoulder strength, which are essential for controlling the forcible entry and equipment hoist. Incorporating functional movements, such as sled pushes or battle ropes, can help build the explosive strength required for endurance stations such as the hose drag and forcible entry work. A consistent strength training regimen will enhance overall performance and improve your ability to pass the Fire Fitness test with confidence.

Training with a personal trainer that is experienced with the Fire Fitness test requirements and training on the specific equipment such as the forcible entry, sled/hose drag and the dummy drag will be instrumental to helping you prepare and then PASS your Edmonton Fire Fitness Test.

# CARDIOVASCULAR EXERCISES



Cardiovascular training is essential for passing the Fire Fitness test, as the test requires endurance, agility, and the ability to sustain high-intensity efforts. The VO2 Max specifically challenges aerobic capacity, while the different obstacle stations demand bursts of strength and agility.

To prepare, focus on a mix of steady-state cardio, such as running or cycling, to build endurance, and high-intensity interval training (HIIT) to improve speed and recovery. Sprint drills, stair runs, and shuttle sprints mimic the stop-and-go demands of the test.

Practice these obstacle stations at any of our Open Gym sessions held every week at Blue Line or register for our 6 week Fit for Fire training program!



**REMEMBER** - passing the Fire fitness test is just the beginning—recruit training will require an even higher level of cardiovascular fitness, as firefighters must handle long shifts, extreme temperature shifts, and high-adrenaline situations without exhaustion.

Training beyond the minimum test requirements will not only help you pass but also set you up for long-term success in your firefighting career.

# TRACKING PROGRESS

**JANUARY**  
FOUNDATION &  
BASELINE TESTING

- Full-body strength training 3x per week (squats, lunges, deadlifts, push-ups, pull-ups).
- 3-4 days of steady-state cardio (running, cycling, rowing) for 30–45 minutes.
- Footwork drills, ladder drills, shuttle sprints 1-2x per week.
- Perform a mock fitness test to assess strengths and weaknesses.

**FEBRUARY**  
STRENGTH &  
ENDURANCE  
DEVELOPMENT

- Progress to heavier weights with 3-4 sessions per week.
- Introduce interval training (HIIT) 2x per week, continue steady-state cardio 2x per week to simulate the physical demands of firefighting.
- Add exercises like planks and Russian twists to strengthen core muscles, essential for tasks involving lifting and carrying.
- Incorporate exercises that mimic firefighting tasks to develop functional strength and endurance.

**MARCH**  
OBSTACLE TRAINING  
& FUNCTIONAL  
STRENGTH

- Practice stair climbs with weighted vests, hose drags, and dummy carries to replicate test components.
- Implement high-intensity interval training (HIIT) sessions 2 times per week to improve anaerobic capacity and recovery.
- Include exercises like farmer's carries and dead hangs to enhance grip strength, vital for handling equipment.
- Begin practicing different stations under time constraints.
- Increase intensity with explosive movements (box jumps, Olympic lifts, med ball throws).
- Increase sprint-based training (hill sprints, shuttle sprints).
- More advanced footwork drills, faster obstacle transitions.
- Conduct a full timed fitness test in full fire gear.

**APRIL**  
SPEED & POWER  
DEVELOPMENT

- Maintain heavy lifting while focusing on endurance-based strength work.
- Push for peak run performance, sustain endurance training.
- Conduct mock fitness tests under conditions similar to the actual evaluation, including wearing appropriate gear.
- Develop stress management techniques and visualization practices to enhance focus and performance under pressure.

**MAY**  
PEAK  
PERFORMANCE &  
TEST READINESS

- Gradually reduce training volume while maintaining intensity to allow the body to recover fully before the test.
- Focus on any remaining areas of weakness identified during practice tests, with targeted exercises to address them.
- Prioritize mobility work, stretching, and rest to ensure peak condition for test day.

**JUNE**  
TEST & RECOVERY  
PHASE



# BLUE LINE

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## FITNESS TESTING

- PERSONAL TRAINING
- OBSTACLE WORKSHOPS
- PRACTICE TESTS
- FITNESS CLASSES
- INTERVIEW PREP



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# TRAIN

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