

PROJECT: HOW FIT ARE YOU?

Evaluating your level of physical fitness is an important step in developing an exercise program that is right for you. In this activity, you will measure three areas of physical fitness--cardiorespiratory endurance, muscular strength and endurance, and flexibility. Body composition is excluded due to the difficulty of obtaining a correct reading. Many YMCAs and other health and fitness facilities have fitness professionals on staff that can measure your body composition.

WARNING: Do not take this fitness test if you have a heart condition or have had a serious illness in the last 6 months. Consult with a doctor or fitness professional if you are in doubt.

Cardiorespiratory Endurance

One Mile Run/Walk

Before you begin, ask a parent or a teacher to evaluate your health status. Are you physically able to walk/run a mile? Next, find a safe place to run a mile. A quarter mile track is the easiest place to complete this test. With the aid of a parent or teacher, measure your time with a stopwatch. Walking is allowed when needed. However, the object of the test is to complete the distance in as fast a time as possible.

Muscular Strength/Endurance

Push-ups

Push-ups are a simple way to test upper body strength/endurance. To perform a pushup correctly, lie face down, with your legs out straight, on an even, cushioned surface. Place your hands underneath your shoulders with your fingers pointing forward. As you straighten your arms, balance the weight of your body on your toes. Be sure to keep your back and legs straight. With the helpful eye of a teacher or parent, lower your body so that your upper arms are parallel to the ground. Record the number of times in a row you are able to properly push yourself up. Stopping for longer than three seconds between repetitions is not allowed.

Sit-ups



Lie on your back on an even cushioned surface with your knees bent and your feet flat on the ground. You may want to have a teacher or parent hold your feet down. Place your hands behind your ears being careful not to pull on your neck or head while doing the exercises. Tighten your stomach muscles by pulling your belly button towards your back. Slowly lift your head and shoulder blades off the ground by contracting your stomach muscles. Hold this position for three seconds and then return to the starting position on the floor. Record the number of times in a row you are able to properly complete a sit-up.

Flexibility

Sit-n-Reach

The Sit-n-Reach test is one means of measuring the flexibility in your legs and back. To perform the exercise correctly, take your shoes off and sit down on an even, well-cushioned surface with your legs stretched out in front of you. Your legs should be close together and flat on the ground. To measure flexibility, place hands on top of each other with the palms down, and reach forward, extending toward your toes. Practice three times, making sure not to bounce. Have a parent or teacher hold your legs down, keeping them straight. On the fourth try, attempt to touch your toes with your fingertips.

RESULTS: Record your results in the table below.

Cardiorespiratory Endurance	One Mile Run/Walk Time	Record in minutes and seconds
Muscular Strength/Endurance	Push-ups	Number of Push-ups
	Sit-ups	Number of Sit-ups
Flexibility	Sit-n-Reach	Touch toes with fingertips Circle one: Yes / No

Gauging Your Results

The following charts contain health and fitness standards for each of the tests performed. Compare your results with the standards for your age to evaluate which areas of physical fitness you might need to improve.

GIRLS

AGE	ONE-MILE RUN/WALK	# PUSH-UPS	# SIT-UPS	SIT-N-REACH (Y/N)
10	10 minutes and 0 seconds	7	20	Y
11	10 minutes and 0 seconds	7	20	Y
12	10 minutes and 30 seconds	8	20	Y
13	10 minutes and 30 seconds	7	25	Y
14	10 minutes and 30 seconds	7	25	Y
15	10 minutes and 0 seconds	7	30	Y
16	10 minutes and 0 seconds	7	30	Y
17	10 minutes and 0 seconds	7	30	Y

BOYS

AGE	ONE-MILE RUN/WALK	# PUSH-UPS	# SIT-UPS	SIT-N-REACH (Y/N)
10	9 minutes and 30 seconds	7	20	Y
11	9 minutes and 0 seconds	8	20	Y
12	9 minutes and 0 seconds	9	20	Y
13	8 minutes and 0 seconds	10	25	Y
14	8 minutes and 0 seconds	12	25	Y
15	7 minutes and 30 seconds	14	30	Y
16	7 minutes and 30 seconds	16	30	Y
17	7 minutes and 30 seconds	18	30	Y

*Tests and standards adapted from President's Challenge Health Fitness Award criterion; Amateur Athletic Union Physical Fitness Program; AAPHERD Physical Best; Cooper Institute for Aerobic Research, Fitnessgram; Corbin, C. & Lindsey, R., Fitness for Life, 4th edition; and YMCA Youth Fitness Test.

Answer the following questions:

According to the standards above, list the areas of physical fitness that you need to improve, if any.

What types of exercise should you participate in to improve these areas?