

TRAINING WORKOUTS

Preparing for a career in Canadian law enforcement and its mandatory BFOR test requires you to participate in a resistance training and cardiovascular program. Every BFOR has components that necessitate strength, endurance, agility, and coordination. To prepare properly, you should be training *at least* twice a week for resistance training and *at least* three times a week for cardiovascular training. Depending on your fitness level, the amount of time you have to train and the equipment you have available to you, there are a number of different types of workouts that you could do. Chapter 7 of *Fitness and Lifestyle Management for Law Enforcement* outlines how to design your individual resistance training program, with explanations on how to arrange exercises, decide on sets/reps, and choose your appropriate weight. In Chapter 7, you can also learn the differences between various types of training methods, including circuit training, light to heavy, heavy to light, pyramid, superset, triset, negatives, and functional training.

GUIDELINES FOR RESISTANCE TRAINING

Table 2 has a reminder of the guidelines for resistance training in respect to your goals. When training for a BFOR, it is important to incorporate all principles of resistance training into your program as most BFORs include aspects of each. And to complement your resistance training program, make sure that you are also including cardiovascular training as well.

The *Fit for Duty, Fit for Life* training guide was designed to prepare you for task-specific law enforcement requirements. There are eight movement domains that need to be practised and mastered to complete most BFOR tests:

1. push exercises,
2. pull exercises,
3. arm restraint exercises,
4. grip strength exercises,
5. heavy object relocation exercises,
6. core training,
7. agility and plyometric training, and
8. cardiovascular/running training.

TABLE 2 Guidelines for Resistance Training

TRAINING GOAL	LOAD	VOLUME (SETS/REPS)	REST BETWEEN SETS	FREQUENCY
Strength	N: 60%–70% of 1 RM I: 70%–80% of 1 RM A: 100% of 1 RM	N: 1–3 sets, 8–12 reps I: multiple sets, 6–12 reps A: multiple sets, 1–12 reps	1–3 minutes	N: 2–3x/week I: 2–4x/week A: 4–6x/week
Hypertrophy	N: 60%–70% of 1RM I: 70%–80% of 1 RM A: 70%–100% of 1 RM	N: 1–3 sets, 8–12 reps I: multiple sets, 6–12 reps A: multiple sets, 1–12 reps	1–2 minutes	N: 2–3x/week I: 2–4x/week A: 4–6x/week
Power	Strength: heavy (>80%) Velocity: light (30%–60%)	N: train for strength I: 1–3 sets, 3–6 reps A: 3–6 sets, 1–6 reps	1–3 minutes	N: 2–3x/week I: 2–4x/week A: 4–6x/week
Endurance	N: 50%–70% of 1 RM I: 50%–70% of 1 RM A: 30%–80% of 1 RM	N: 1–3 sets, 10–15 reps I: multiple sets, 10–15+ reps A: multiple sets, 10–25+ reps	<1 min for 10–15 reps 1–2 mins for 15+ reps	N: 2–3x/week I: 2–4x/week A: 4–6x/week

N = novice, I = intermediate, A = advanced

SOURCES: ACSM, 2009; ACSM et al., 2021.

The *Fit for Duty, Fit for Life* training guide provides exercises for each of the components. Most exercises offer variations of equipment and position, as well as beginner, advanced, and at-home modifications. Pick exercises based on your goals, what you need to improve, and the BFOR you are training for.

Try to balance your workouts: push exercises with pull exercises, resistance training with cardiovascular training, and strength exercises

with endurance exercises. To evaluate your progress, make use of the resistance training and running logs at the end of this guide. They can assist you in monitoring your results so that you can modify your workouts if required and reward your achievements.

Effective resistance training depends on proper technique and execution. Follow these basic rules to maximize your weight-training program.

- *Ensure that you use the correct technique.* In this guide we have described and displayed pictures of each exercise, but it is vital that you are doing the exercise correctly. Ask a fitness specialist to watch your technique and correct your form.
- *Choose the proper weight.* If the weight is too much, you may have trouble lifting it and will start recruiting other muscles to help instead of isolating the correct muscle. It is better to start out with a lighter weight and work your way up.
- *Control the weight.* Make sure that you are lifting the weight under control and that you are not lifting too fast or bouncing the weight. You want to control the weight not only through the concentric contraction but also through the eccentric contraction.
- *Maintain a neutral spinal position.* In its neutral position, your spine has three curves between your head and your pelvis. Your neck and lower back have inward curves (lordosis) and your mid-back curves outward (kyphosis). Maintaining these three curves (a neutral spine) is critical when lifting weights as it helps distribute your weight linearly through your vertebral column. This allows your vertebral discs to cushion the impact of the exercise and is vital in limiting your risk of a back injury.

TRAINING TIP

Working at the right tempo helps you stay in control rather than compromise strength gains through momentum.



FYI

MAKING YOUR OWN AT-HOME GYM

Working out at home is a great way to stay fit when going to the gym is not possible. Here are some tips for making your own at-home gym.

- Pick an appropriate space to work out in. Make sure that the space is clear of clutter and that you will not slip on anything (i.e., a mat on linoleum can be very slippery). Ensure you have enough room to lie down flat and enough height to jump up and down.
- Consider starting your workouts with body-based exercises that do not require equipment or a lot of space like burpees, push-ups, squats, and lunges.
- It is not necessary to spend a lot of money on expensive exercise equipment. You can make your own equipment at home, such as making your own weights (see ideas below) or using a towel as a yoga strap. Ask family and friends if they have any exercise equipment that they are not using that you can borrow or buy from them.
- If you have the ability to purchase some exercise equipment, start with a multipurpose item, such as a kettlebell or a resistance band. Once you have started working out with a couple of basic items, consider adding dumbbells, a foam roller, or a yoga mat. Consider buying used equipment as it can be half the price and can often be in great condition.
- If you need the external motivation to stay focused for your at-home workout, consider a virtual personal trainer or an online accountability group to keep you on track.

MAKING YOUR OWN WEIGHTS

Look for heavy objects around your home to make your own weights. Fill a cloth grocery bag, gym bag, or backpack with heavy objects, or simply hold a heavy item in your hand. Some examples include:

- heavy objects from your kitchen (bag of rice, sugar, flour, cans, bottles);
- heavy objects from outdoors (sand, gravel, stones, rocks);
- heavy objects from your garage/basement (laundry detergent containers, water/milk jugs filled with sand); and
- heavy objects from your room (books, textbooks).

You can even make your own push–pull machine by attaching weight on a rope attached to doweling to a wired fence.

PUSH EXERCISES

Push exercises are necessary to successfully manipulate the body control simulator, which is used in the PREP, FITCO, A-PREP, PARE, POPAT, COPAT, SOPAT, and ESAP-ENPQ BFORs.

The body control simulator (also known as the push/pull machine) simulates an altercation with an individual at an “emergency pace” in a controlled manner. The push phase involves pushing the handles away from you and lifting the weights (which requires forces of 31.5/35.5/38.6 kg [70/80/85 lbs.] depending on protocol) off the cradle and moving left or right depending on the instructions given. It is important for you to push straight along the main rod, so placing your hands at hip height is key. Throughout the push, your arms must be slightly bent at all times and your chest must not be touching either the handles or your hands. While moving from side to side, you must not allow the weights to touch the base.



The following exercises have been suggested to help prepare you for all of the push components of the tests. Pushing requires training the chest, shoulders, triceps, legs, and core.