

# Air Force Academy Candidate Fitness Assessment

## CANDIDATE FITNESS ASSESSMENT INSTRUCTIONS

### SERVICE ACADEMIES' ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENT

Satisfactory completion of the Candidate Fitness Assessment (CFA) is one of the requirements for admission to the United States Military, Air Force, Naval, and Merchant Marine academies. The CFA is a test of strength, agility, speed and endurance. It is used to predict a candidate's aptitude for the physical program at the Service Academies. The results of this test are very important in the overall assessment of your admissions file, so you should become familiar with the six events in the CFA and practice. The examination consists of the following events: basketball throw from kneeling position, cadence pull-ups or the flexed-arm hang (women's option), shuttle run, modified sit-ups, push-ups and a 1-mile run.

### ADVICE TO THE CANDIDATE

In order to qualify for admission to the service academies, you must take the CFA. You should remember that your score is a combination of your best efforts on each of the six events. Strive for excellence and the highest possible score.

Your examination may be administered by any physical education teacher or Service Academy Liaison Officer. Any active duty commissioned officer may administer the CFA for service members. It is your responsibility to arrange for a qualified person to conduct your examination.

Ask your examiner to record your performance on the enclosed CFA Score Sheet and mail it to the Admissions Office of the service academy to which you are applying in the postage-paid, pre-addressed envelope provided. Note: The scores must be recorded with a black ball-point pen.

### FOR THE EXAMINER

The Candidate Fitness Assessment was developed to measure and evaluate a candidate's potential to successfully engage the physical program at the United States Service Academies. The CFA consists of six physical- and motor-fitness events that are designed to measure muscular strength and endurance, cardio-respiratory endurance, power, balance and agility. When administered together as a single battery, these six test events help the Admissions Committee determine if a candidate possesses the stamina and movement skills required to successfully complete the physical program and perform the duties required of commissioned officers in the uniformed services.

The six test events of the CFA are administered consecutively with specified start, finish and rest times. Candidates should attempt to do their best on all six events, keeping in mind that the events are sequenced to produce a cumulative loading effect. In other words, after completing the first five events, it is doubtful a candidate will score his/her personal best on the 1-mile run. This has been considered in the development of the scoring standards, which will be used to evaluate performance in each of the six events. Candidates' raw scores will be converted to scale scores (0-100 points) based upon their performance on each event. The 100-point maximum scores, by event and gender, are listed in Table 1 below. A candidate who achieves the 100-point level on any of the first



TABLE 1: MAXIMUM PERFORMANCE SCORES BY EVENT AND GENDER

EVENTS	BB THROW	PULL-UPS	SHUTTLE (Seconds)	MODIFIED SIT-UPS	PUSH-UPS	1-MILE RUN
MALE	102 ft.	18	7.8	95	75	5:20
FEMALE	66 ft.	7	8.6	95	50	6:00

TABLE 2: AVERAGE PERFORMANCE SCORES BY EVENT AND GENDER

EVENTS	BB THROW	PULL-UPS	FLEXED-ARM HANG	SHUTTLE (Seconds)	MODIFIED SIT-UPS	PUSH-UPS	1-MILE RUN
MALE	67 ft.	9	n/a	9.1	72	54	6:43
FEMALE	41 ft.	3	19.8	10	68	33	8:06

### CFA SEQUENCE AND TIMELINE

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**Air Force Academy Candidate Fitness Assessment** is a crucial component for prospective cadets aspiring to join the United States Air Force Academy (USAFA). This assessment evaluates a candidate's physical fitness, which is essential for meeting the rigorous demands of military training and maintaining overall health. The Candidate Fitness Assessment (CFA) measures a combination of strength, endurance, speed, and agility, ensuring that all candidates are physically prepared for the challenges ahead. In this article, we will delve into the specifics of the CFA, including its components, preparation tips, and the significance of physical fitness in a military career.

# Understanding the Candidate Fitness Assessment (CFA)

The CFA is designed to assess the physical capabilities of candidates who wish to attend the Air Force Academy. It provides a standardized measure of fitness that helps determine if a candidate is ready for the physical rigors of military training. The assessment consists of various exercises that simulate the types of physical activity that cadets will encounter during their training.

## Components of the CFA

The CFA comprises six key components, each testing different aspects of physical fitness. Candidates are required to complete all of the following:

### 1. Basketball Throw:

- This test measures upper body strength and coordination. Candidates throw a basketball as far as possible using one hand from a standing position.

### 2. Pull-Ups:

- This exercise assesses upper body strength. Candidates must perform as many pull-ups as possible without touching the ground or pausing for more than three seconds.

### 3. Shuttle Run:

- The shuttle run evaluates agility and speed. Candidates sprint back and forth between two markers set 10 meters apart, completing the distance as quickly as possible.

### 4. Sit-Ups:

- This component measures core strength and endurance. Candidates perform sit-ups with their arms crossed over their chests for one minute, aiming for the highest number of repetitions.

### 5. Push-Ups:

- Similar to sit-ups, this test assesses upper body endurance. Candidates perform as many push-ups as possible in one minute.

### 6. 1-Mile Run:

- The final component tests cardiovascular fitness. Candidates complete a one-mile run, aiming for the fastest time possible.

## Scoring the CFA

Each component of the CFA is scored, and candidates receive a total score based on their performance. The

scoring system is designed to ensure that candidates meet minimum fitness standards, which vary based on age and gender. The maximum score for each event is typically 100 points, with the total possible score being 600 points. Candidates are encouraged to strive for the highest score possible, as this can enhance their overall application to the Academy.

## **Preparing for the Candidate Fitness Assessment**

Preparation for the CFA is essential for success. Here are some effective strategies to help candidates gear up for the assessment:

### **1. Establish a Workout Routine**

Creating a consistent workout schedule is crucial. Candidates should focus on a balanced routine that includes:

- Cardiovascular training: Incorporate running, cycling, or swimming to improve endurance.
- Strength training: Focus on exercises that build upper body strength, such as push-ups, pull-ups, and weightlifting.
- Core exercises: Include sit-ups, planks, and other movements to enhance core stability.

### **2. Practice CFA Components**

Familiarization with each component of the CFA is key. Candidates should regularly practice the specific exercises to improve their technique and performance. This can involve:

- Timing runs to simulate race conditions.
- Using proper form during sit-ups and push-ups to maximize effectiveness.
- Practicing the basketball throw to develop coordination and upper body strength.

### **3. Focus on Nutrition and Hydration**

A balanced diet is vital for optimal performance. Candidates should focus on consuming:

- Lean proteins: To support muscle growth and repair.
- Whole grains: For sustained energy during workouts.
- Fruits and vegetables: To provide essential vitamins and minerals.

Staying hydrated is equally important. Candidates should drink plenty of water before, during, and after workouts to prevent dehydration.

## **4. Rest and Recovery**

Rest is an essential part of any training program. Candidates should allow adequate time for recovery to prevent injury and support muscle growth. This includes:

- Getting sufficient sleep to promote recovery.
- Taking rest days to avoid overtraining.
- Incorporating stretching or yoga to improve flexibility.

# **The Importance of Physical Fitness in a Military Career**

Physical fitness is not just a requirement for the CFA; it is a fundamental aspect of a successful military career. Here are several reasons why maintaining physical fitness is crucial for military personnel:

## **1. Enhanced Performance**

A physically fit individual performs better in various military tasks, from basic training to specialized operations. Strength, endurance, and agility are vital in high-pressure situations.

## **2. Improved Mental Health**

Regular physical activity has been shown to reduce stress and anxiety levels. For military personnel, managing mental health is as important as physical readiness, especially during challenging deployments.

## **3. Team Cohesion**

Physical fitness fosters a sense of teamwork and camaraderie among military personnel. Engaging in group workouts or fitness challenges can strengthen bonds and improve morale.

## 4. Leadership and Discipline

Maintaining physical fitness requires dedication and discipline, qualities that are highly valued in military leadership. Fit individuals often set a positive example for their peers, promoting a culture of health and fitness within their unit.

## Conclusion

The **Air Force Academy Candidate Fitness Assessment** is a vital stepping stone for candidates aspiring to serve in the United States Air Force. By understanding the components of the CFA, preparing effectively, and recognizing the importance of physical fitness, candidates can enhance their chances of success. Physical fitness is not merely a requirement; it is an integral part of military life that contributes to overall performance, mental health, and team cohesion. Aspiring cadets should embrace the challenge of the CFA and commit to a lifestyle of fitness and discipline as they prepare to embark on their military journey.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### What is the Air Force Academy Candidate Fitness Assessment?

The Candidate Fitness Assessment (CFA) is a test designed to measure the physical fitness of applicants to the U.S. Air Force Academy. It includes several exercises to evaluate strength, endurance, and agility.

### What exercises are included in the Candidate Fitness Assessment?

The CFA consists of six events: a basketball throw, pull-ups, a shuttle run, sit-ups, push-ups, and a one-mile run.

### How is the CFA scored?

Each event in the CFA is scored based on performance and the scores are then combined to give an overall assessment. Each event has specific scoring criteria that vary by gender and age.

### What are the minimum requirements for the CFA?

Minimum requirements for the CFA vary by gender. For example, male candidates must complete at least 3 pull-ups, while female candidates must complete at least 1 pull-up. Additionally, there are minimum scores for the other events as well.

## How can candidates prepare for the CFA?

Candidates can prepare for the CFA by engaging in a well-rounded fitness program that includes strength training, cardiovascular conditioning, and flexibility exercises. Practicing the specific events in the CFA is also crucial.

## When should candidates take the CFA?

Candidates should aim to complete the CFA as early as possible in the application process, ideally by the end of their junior year of high school, to ensure that their scores are submitted with their applications.

## Can the CFA be retaken if a candidate does not pass?

Yes, candidates are allowed to retake the CFA if they do not achieve the required scores. However, they should prepare adequately to improve their performance before retaking the assessment.

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