



# TRAINING FOR THE PFA

Prepare your fitness for a career in the  
Navy, Army and Air Force



NAVY



ARMY



AIR FORCE

## Pre-entry Fitness Assessment

Fitness is a big part of serving in the Australian Defence Force (ADF). It's important for ADF personnel to be fit enough to carry out their duties effectively, so keeping fit will be an integral part of your job. The Pre-entry Fitness Assessment (PFA) is the minimum standard for entry and the requirements are different for each Service and some job roles. There is also a minimum Body Mass Index (BMI) you will have to meet in order to qualify.

**You will need to pass the PFA 12 weeks prior to your Enlistment or Appointment Day.**

This guide was designed to help you reach the PFA standards for entry into the ADF.



### NAVY

#### Under 35 years\*

20 sit-ups (feet held)

#### Choice of cardio exercise

16min - 2.4km run or

44min - 5km walk or

5.5 shuttle run or

14:30min 500m swim

#### Under 35 years\*

20 sit-ups (feet held)

#### Choice of cardio exercise

14min - 2.4km run or

43min - 5km walk or

6.0 shuttle run or

13:30min - 500m swim

*\*Fitness standards differ for 35 and over.*

Once you join, a basic swim test, consisting of a 3-metre platform jump, a 50-metre swim, a 10-metre underwater swim and a 15-minute treading water exercise



### ARMY

#### General Entry Combat roles & Officer Entry roles

8 Push-ups

45 sit-ups (feet held)

7.5 Shuttle run score

15 Push-ups

45 sit-ups (feet held)

7.5 Shuttle run score

#### General Entry Combat Support roles

4 Push-ups

20 sit-ups (feet held)

6.1 Shuttle run score

8 Push-ups

20 sit-ups (feet held)

6.1 Shuttle run score.



### AIR FORCE

20 sit-ups (feet held)

5.1 Shuttle run score

20 sit-ups (feet held)

6.1 Shuttle run score

## Army Pre-Conditioning Program (APCP)

The Army Pre-Conditioning Program is designed to help candidates develop their skills and adjust to life in the Army. It is suited to candidates who have the attributes and personal drive required to join the Army, but would benefit from additional physical and mental preparation.

To be eligible for the program you must be applying for a General Entry role, aged over 17 years and able to achieve a minimum of:



#### Combat Roles

2 push-ups

20 sit-ups

5.5 shuttle run score

4 push-ups

20 sit-ups

5.5 shuttle run score

#### Combat Support Roles

1 push-ups

9 sit-ups

4.9 shuttle run score

2 push-ups

9 sit-ups

4.9 shuttle run score

During the seven-week course, Army instructors will guide you through:

- Fitness activities to help you to achieve your fitness goals, including aerobic conditioning, circuit, strength and endurance training.
- Army skills, including daily routine, basic drill and field craft, navigation, environmental survivability and how to work in a team environment.

Improving your fitness, confidence and resilience will help you pass the PFA and assist with your Initial Recruit Training.

## Body Mass Index

To join the ADF you need a BMI between 18.5 and 32.9, depending on the role. Outside of those ranges could be unsafe for training. It will be measured on Assessment Day and again on your day of entry to the ADF. You can determine your BMI using the calculator on the ADF Active app. More details on the ADF Active App, including how to use it, can be found on the following page.



## Tips to help you get started:

- Download the free ADF Active app (search for ADF Active in the App Store or Google Play) for a personalised exercise program and technique tips that together, will prepare you for success. You'll be able to take the PFA to see how close you are to ADF requirements and can also check out your BMI. You'll be shown the correct way to do push-ups and sit-ups, and complete a shuttle run (beep test), with step-by-step instructional videos.
- Download other fitness-related apps to help track your fitness and keep you motivated. You may also benefit from finding a local fitness or running group in your area.

## Correct technique

### PUSH-UPS



- 1 Lay flat on the front of your body with legs straight and feet no more than 30cm apart. Navy and Air Force candidates may then adjust to start on one knee.



- 2 Position your hands comfortably on the ground, usually shoulder width apart.

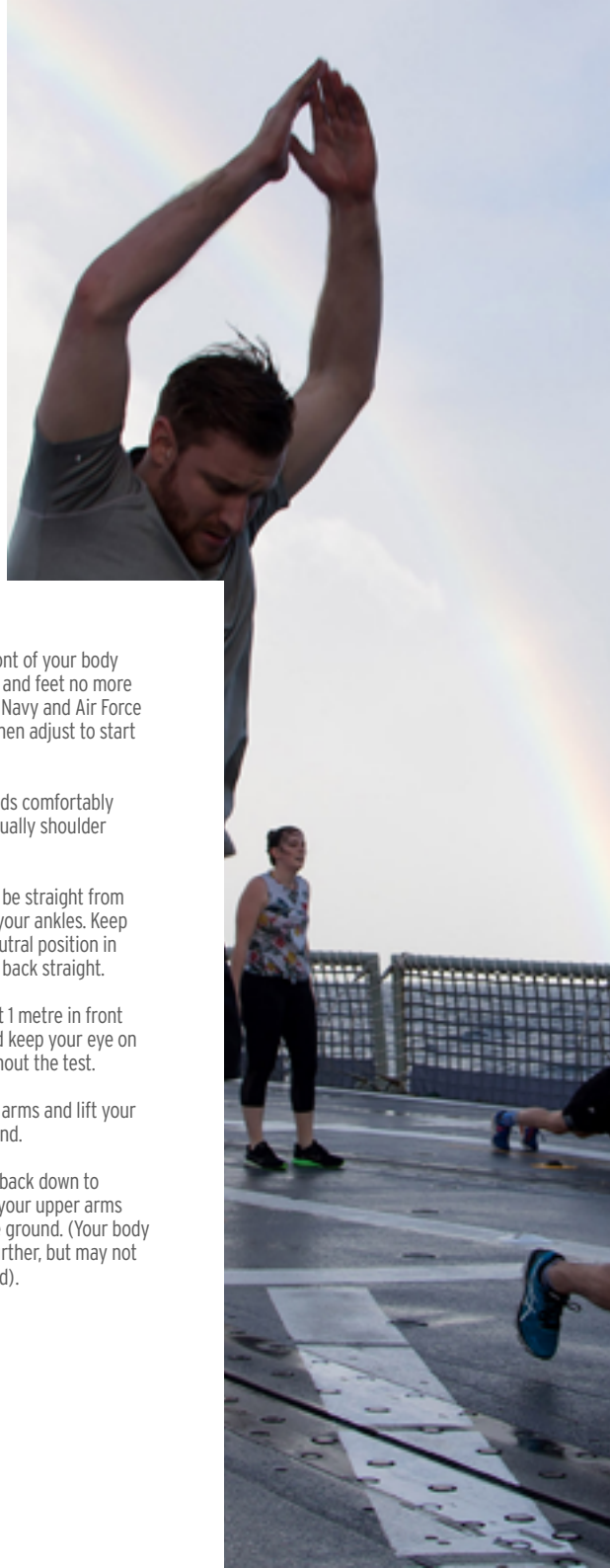
- 3 Your body should be straight from the shoulders to your ankles. Keep your head in a neutral position in order to keep the back straight.

Pick a point about 1 metre in front of your hands and keep your eye on this mark throughout the test.

- 4 Fully extend your arms and lift your body off the ground.



- 5 Lower your body back down to a position where your upper arms are parallel to the ground. (Your body can be lowered further, but may not rest on the ground).



### SIT-UPS



- 1 Lay flat on your back with feet resting flat on the ground. Your legs should be bent to form a 90 degree angle at the knees.



- 2 Hold your arms straight with your palms resting on the top of the thighs.

- 3 Your feet can be held or anchored in place.

Flex the neck to a comfortable position so that your head is off the floor during the assessment but not flicked forward on the up movement.

- 4 As your upper body is raised to the 'up' position, your hands should slide up over the knees until your wrists touch your knees.



- 5 Your chin should be as close to your body as possible when you're in the 'up' position.

- 6 Then lower your body until your shoulder blades touch the floor and you're back in the start position. Your head should not touch the floor.

It is important for each exercise to be executed correctly. The rep or set won't count if your technique isn't right and you will be warned during the assessment.

- 7 Army candidates: you may rest your head in between repetitions. Navy and Air Force candidates: you may not rest your head during the test.



## Correct technique

### SHUTTLE RUN (BEEP TEST)



- 1 Setup a 20 metre track.
- 2 Run back and forth while keeping up with the beep and ensure you place one foot on or over the 20m mark before turning.
- 3 The speed of the beeps will increase at each level (this is not every beep). You can treat the first few levels as a warm up and an opportunity to practice your technique, helping you reach the higher levels.
- 4 For each shuttle try timing your arrival at the line to allow for a slight pause prior to the beep.
- 5 When you are running make sure you are keeping your upper body relaxed and that you focus on your breathing.
- 6 Remember that once you hit a certain level (usually a few minutes into running properly) you might feel like you can't breathe or want to stop the test. If you push through this feeling, you will gain what's known as your 'second wind' and you will feel much more energised and able to run for longer.





## Tips for success

### RUNNING

The best way to improve your running endurance is to practice running as often as possible. Consider joining a running group or running with a friend or family member.

- Aim to run a minimum of 2-3kms at least once a week.
- Conduct sprint interval workouts at least twice a week.
- Run as far as you can and the next time try to run further.
- Use a running app to track your distance and time so you can keep track of your progress.
- Join a local gym to improve your overall fitness.

### SHUTTLE RUN (BEEP TEST)

You can train for the beep test by using the ADF Active app.

- Try training with a friend to keep you motivated.
- If you stop before you've reached the level you need, have a short break and then keep going from where you left off.
- The only way to get better at the beep test is to practice the beep test!

### PUSH-UPS

Incorporate strength sessions into your weekly fitness regime. If you can't do any push-ups yet, start with finding an incline to make it easier (a wall, a table or a chair) and then progressively lower yourself to the floor.

- Practice the push-ups as often as you can, this is the best way to improve.
- Watch yourself in a mirror to ensure you're following the correct technique, or have a friend or family member check for you.
- Focus on quality over quantity and your strength will improve over time.
- Try hand release push-ups to help work on your technique. These involve going all the way down and lifting your hands up as your torso touches the floor.

### SIT-UPS

- Focus on core workouts during your weekly strength sessions.
- Regularly performing a practice test will help you see progress as you get stronger.
- Push yourself to complete a few additional repetitions to gradually build up strength.
- When you feel ready, add a weight such as a dumbbell or plate.



Ready to get started?

This guide will help you to get started on your fitness journey, including practising correct techniques for your PFA.



# HOW TO APPLY

1

## CHOOSE A ROLE OR APPLY WITHOUT A SPECIFIC JOB IN MIND

Find full details  
of each role at  
[defencejobs.com.au](https://defencejobs.com.au)

2

## APPLY ONLINE, CALL 13 19 01 OR VISIT YOUR LOCAL DEFENCE FORCE RECRUITING CENTRE

You'll need to provide  
your contact details,  
degree status and job  
preference(s).

3

## ATTEND A YOUR OPPORTUNITIES UNLIMITED (YOU) SESSION

Talk about the role(s)  
with a Careers Coach  
at your local Defence  
Force Recruiting Centre,  
take a Job Opportunities  
Assessment (JOA) and  
complete a medical  
questionnaire.

4

## ATTEND AN ASSESSMENT SESSION

Undertake a medical  
assessment and  
attend psychological  
and job interviews to  
have your leadership,  
teamwork and other  
areas of potential  
assessed.

5

## COMPLETE A PRE-ENTRY FITNESS ASSESSMENT

Shortly before your  
enlistment, you will be  
asked to complete a  
PFA. You'll be expected  
to complete a set  
number of push-ups  
and sit-ups, complete  
a shuttle run  
(Army & Air Force)  
or your choice  
of cardio (Navy).

6

## ATTEND ENLISTMENT DAY

After a final medical  
check, you'll join  
family and friends  
for the welcome  
ceremony, and  
then head straight  
into initial military  
training.

## HERE TO HELP

Reach out to your local Defence Force  
Recruiting Centre if you'd like additional  
information and support. For female  
applicants, we have dedicated female  
recruitment specialist which are  
located across the country and are  
available to support you through your  
recruitment process.


## TIPS FOR SESSIONS AND ASSESSMENTS


Read more about what's involved and get  
handy preparation tips:


 [ADF RECRUITMENT PROCESS](#)


**Find out more**


[defencejobs.gov.au](https://defencejobs.gov.au)

 Defence Jobs Australia

 Defencejobsaust

 Defence Jobs Australia

 Defence Jobs Australia

 @defencejobsaust

DECEMBER 2022



**NAVY**



**ARMY**



**AIR FORCE**