



**Special  
Olympics**



SPECIALOLYMPICSWASHINGTON

# **FITNESS COMPETITIONS**

SUMMER 2021 PLAYBOOK

# FITNESS AS COMPETITION

## PRE-READ

Physical fitness exercises can include a broad array of fitness components. The recommended competition formats for the Fitness Heptathlon and Fitness Triple Combination incorporate fitness exercises that target the following:

- 1) Agility and speed
- 2) Balance
- 3) Cardiovascular endurance
- 4) Core body strength
- 5) Lower body strength
- 6) Lower body endurance
- 7) Upper body strength

**The Fitness Heptathlon will allow participants to select which exercises they will focus on for training to challenge themselves and compete against other participants over the course of a pre-determined season length.**

## PREPARING FOR A FITNESS COMPETITION

It is a good idea to prepare yourself and others to assist you before conducting a fitness competition or training session. Carefully plan and organize the session in advance so that you can effectively educate, engage, and motivate participants to give their best effort during each session. The following steps will help you prepare:

- **Gather equipment in advance** – Don't forget to bring something with which to record scores, whether that is pencil and paper or an electronic device.
- **Learn and practice the exercises** – All the exercises have protocols on how to conduct and score the individual exercises. Training, which should include participants regularly practicing their selected exercises, will allow individual participants to improve their scores and become healthier and more physically fit.
- **Plan the order and timing of exercises** – It may be best to do the more challenging exercises first, such as the ones that cause more fatigue, and then do the exercises that are not as difficult. Also, build in rest time between tests so that participants do not tire as quickly and can perform optimally. While you are planning your exercise order, you should also consider how many assistants you will need to help so that each exercise is done and supervised appropriately, as well as scored correctly.
- **Ensure participants stretch and warm-up properly prior to attempting the fitness exercises, as well as cool down afterwards and ensure that hydration (i.e. water) is provided.**



# FITNESS HEPTATHLON

## FAST FACTS



**▶ Length of Season: 7 weeks**

**▶ Participants select any seven activities from the Competitive Fitness Exercise options in this guide.** These fitness exercises require little to no equipment, so they can be done at home or at a training site.

**▶ Each participant must train and compete in the same seven exercises throughout the course of the 7 week season.** For Unified Pairs competition, however, participants do not have to train and compete in the same seven exercises.

**▶ Participants will be divisioned based upon age, gender and a score which reflects level of improvement.** This approach provides flexibility to participants and Programs, while encouraging participants to continually work towards progression in their fitness exercises.

- Participants have choices when selecting fitness exercises and Programs have flexibility and ease of implementation for the competition season. Under this divisioning and scoring format, participants and teams that participate in different exercises can compete against each other.
- Participants are incentivized by the scoring format to improve throughout the course of the 8 week season and become more fit and skilled. This is due to awarding points based upon the levels of increase in their performance.

# FITNESS HEPTATHLON SCHEDULE

## PRESEASON

Program staff conduct a webinar to provide an overview of the season for athletes, Unified partners, coaches, family members and local coordinators.

## WEEK 1

**Participants select their seven fitness exercises and receive instruction on how to do each one properly.** Each participant must keep these same seven fitness exercises throughout the duration of the 8 week season.

**A baseline score is recorded and submitted for each of the seven fitness exercises,** following established scoring criteria for each exercise ([please consult scoring criteria document](#)). For example, some fitness exercises may require the number of repetitions within a designated amount of time, such as the number of push-ups properly completed within 60 seconds. Other fitness exercises may be scored based on the amount of time/duration to complete an exercise.

## MIDSEASON (WEEK 4)

**A score (i.e. number of repetitions or elapsed time) for each of the seven fitness exercises is recorded and submitted** at midseason (the deadline date established by the Program).

Using the performance improvement scoring method, **the participant receives a point value based upon the percentage of improvement achieved during the first half of the season for each fitness exercise.**

- The baseline score from Week 1 (i.e. number of repetitions or elapsed time) is compared with the midseason score from Week 4 or 5 (i.e. number of repetitions or elapsed time). Points are assigned based upon the percentage of improvement.
- Each of the seven fitness exercises is assigned a corresponding numeric score (based upon % improvement for each) and these seven scores are added together for a composite score.

### Performance Improvement Scoring

- No improvement or 0% = 0 points
- 1-10% improvement = 1 point
- 11-20% improvement = 2 points
- 21-30% improvement = 3 points
- 31-40% improvement = 4 points
- 41-50% improvement = 5 points
- 51-60% improvement = 6 points
- 61-70% improvement = 7 points
- 71-80% improvement = 8 points
- 81-90% improvement = 9 points
- 91-100% improvement = 10 points
- 100+% improvement = 11 points

# FITNESS HEPTATHLON SCHEDULE

continued

## Divisioning from Midseason for End of Season Competition

- Division participants by age, gender and similar composite performance improvement scores/points.
  - For example, if a participant was to receive a composite score of 70 at midseason, then they would be divisioned with other participants of comparable age, gender and scores similar to 70 or within 20%.
- For teams, the composite scores for each participant are added together to determine the team score.

## End of Season Culminating Competition (Week 7)

- This can be held either virtually or in-person.
- Participants compete in each of their seven fitness exercises and receive a score (i.e. number of repetitions or elapsed time) for each of the seven fitness exercises. These are recorded and submitted.
- Using the same performance improvement scoring method that was used midseason, **a participant receives a point value based upon the percentage of improvement achieved from their midseason/divisioning score to the finals/end of season competition score for each fitness exercise.** The midseason/divisioning score (i.e. number of repetitions or elapsed time) is compared with the finals/end of season score (i.e. number of repetitions or elapsed time) with the corresponding performance improvement point totals assigned.
- The performance improvement points for each of the seven fitness exercises are added together for a composite score.
- The composite score is used to determine places of finish within each division.
- Programs can present recognition to participants that could include awards, certificates, keepsakes (such as pins, flipping coins), incentive items (such as tee shirts) or ribbons.

# FITNESS HEPTATHLON TEAM FORMATS

## Unified Sports Pairs or Traditional Pairs

- **Unified Sports Pairs:** An athlete and Unified partner train and compete together, either in-person or virtually, against other Unified Sports pair teams.

▶ Ideally, the pairs team members would select the same seven fitness exercises, but this is not required.

▶ The Fitness Heptathlon composite scores for the two participants are added together for the team's score. This is used for divisioning and in competitions against other Unified Sports Special Olympics pairs teams.



## FITNESS COMPETITIONS

# THE EXERCISES

**This section contains everything you need to know to guide participants through each of the eight exercise target areas.**

- materials needed for each exercise
- goal of the exercise
- instructions
- scoring guidelines
- pictures and video links
- links to supplemental exercises

# FITNESS COMPETITION EXERCISES

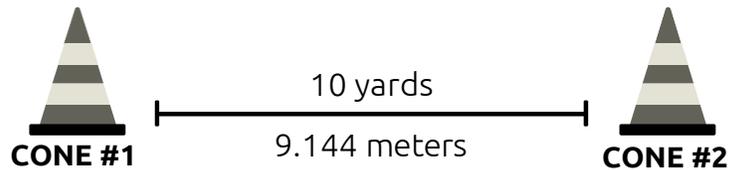
- 10 yards - Run/Walk/Roll\*
- 5-10-5 Agility Run\*
- Box Agility Test\*
- One Leg Stance - Eyes Closed
- Ball Tap
- Seated Lateral Bends\*
- Curl-Ups\*
- Planks\*
- Squats
- Sit to Stand\*
- Wall Sit
- Front-to-Back Jumps
- Side to Side
- Jumping Jacks\*
- Burpee
- Mountain Climbers
- Power Punches
- Roman Holds
- Push-Ups\*

Exercises marked with a star \* offer modifications or can be modified for participants with mobility issues.

## MATERIALS

Before you start, make sure you have:

- Two cones
- Measuring tape
- Stop watch



## PROCEDURE AND SCORING

[WATCH THE VIDEO HERE](#)



**PREPARATION:** Create a start line and finish line measured at 10 yards (9.144 meters) with cones.

### EXERCISE:

1. Participant will be timed as they run/walk/roll from the start to finish.

**SCORING:** The time it takes participant to go from start to finish line is recorded as their total time.



## MATERIALS

Before you start, make sure you have:

- Three cones
- Measuring tape
- Stop watch

[WATCH THE VIDEO HERE](#)



## PROCEDURE AND SCORING

**PREPARATION:** Place three cones 5 yards (4.572 meters) apart in a straight line.

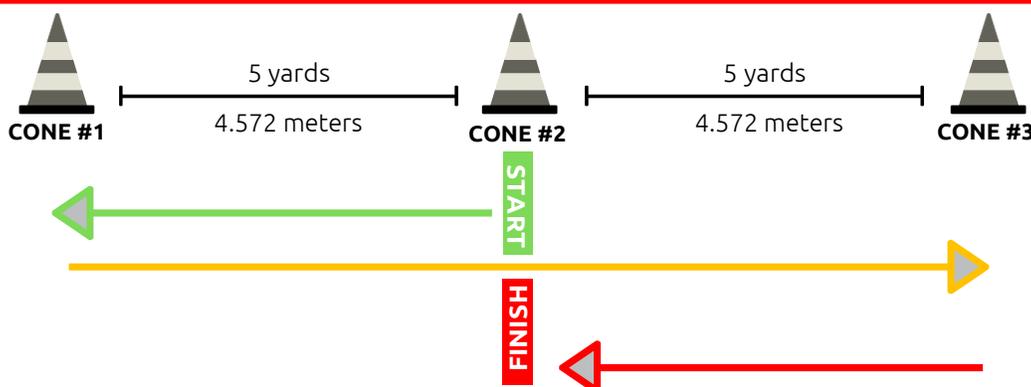
### EXERCISE:

1. Have participant start at cone #2 in a good starting stance so they can sprint to cone #1.
2. Participant should sprint to cone #1 and touch the cone with their fingertips.
3. Participant should then turn and sprint to the cone #3 and touch cone #3 with their fingertips.
4. Participant should return to cone #2.

**SCORING:** Participant is timed for the entire exercise. The final score/time is based on the time it takes for participant to complete the 5-10-5 exercise.

## MODIFICATIONS

Participants with lower body mobility issues can perform this test in a wheelchair. Participants start at cone #2 and face cone #1. Wheel quickly to cone #1. Turn tightly around the cone and wheel quickly to cone #3. Turn tightly around the cone and wheel quickly back to cone #2.



1



2



3



4



5

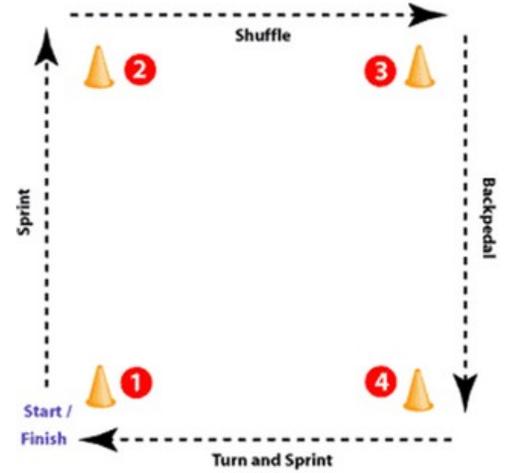


## MATERIALS

Before you start, make sure you have:

- Four cones
- Measuring tape
- Stopwatch

## PROCEDURE AND SCORING



[WATCH THE VIDEO HERE](#)

**PREPARATION:** Set up four cones in a square ten yards (9.144 meters) apart.

### EXERCISE:

1. Participant starts by getting in a ready stance next to cone #1.
2. On the command of Ready...Set...Go, participant sprints to cone #2.
3. Once they reach cone #2, they side shuffle to cone #3.
4. Once they reach cone #3, they backpedal to cone #4.
5. Once at cone #4, participant sprints to the state/finish line at cone #1.

**SCORING:** On the command participant completes the square as quickly as possible. Scoring is based on total time for completion back to the start/finish line at cone #1.

## MODIFICATIONS

Participants with lower body mobility issues can perform this test in a wheelchair. Participants will start at cone #1 and move quickly around the cones, turning tightly near the cones.

Participants performing this test in a wheelchair will move in a forward direction for the entire test.

## MATERIALS

Before you start, make sure you have:

- Stopwatch

## PROCEDURE AND SCORING

### EXERCISE:

1. Participant stands within arm's reach of a stationary object.
2. Feet are shoulder-width apart.
3. Participant places their hands on their hips.
4. Participant bends the knee of the non-supporting leg lifting the foot off the ground.
5. Participant does this test with their eyes closed.

**SCORING:** Time starts when participant is in the correct standing position and ends when balance is lost which is when the non-supporting leg touches the ground, or when the hands come off the hips.

Once participant has exceeded 55 seconds without a loss of balance, they have achieved the maximum amount of points for this exercise.



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## MATERIALS

Before you start, make sure you have:

- Stopwatch
- Ball



[WATCH THE VIDEO HERE](#)



## PROCEDURE AND SCORING

### EXERCISE:

1. Participant stands with their feet together and holding a ball in both hands.
2. Participant lifts one foot in the air and bends their knees keeping their other foot on the ground.
3. Participant reaches down and taps the floor to the one side of their body while keeping their balance.
4. Return to the starting upright position.
5. Repeat this exercise. If participant is a beginner at this exercise, they can reset each time by putting both feet on the ground and even alternating which foot they raise off of the ground.

Note: If participant would like a more advanced exercise, keep the same foot off the ground and repeat without losing balance as many times as possible in the prescribed time.

**SCORING:** Participant goes from the upright position to the floor touch position as many times as they can without losing their balance for 60 seconds. Count how many times they tap the ball in that 60-second timeframe for their total score.

## MATERIALS

Before you start, make sure you have:

- Stopwatch
- Chair or wheelchair



[WATCH THE VIDEO HERE](#)



## PROCEDURE AND SCORING

### EXERCISE:

1. Participant will be seated with their arms extended out to both sides.
2. When time begins, participant will have 30 seconds to bend to the right as far as they can, and come back up to a normal sitting position.
3. Participant will then bend to the left as far as possible and return their normal sitting position.
4. Each lateral bend to the side and return to a normal seated position will count as one.

**SCORING:** This process will repeat for 30 seconds, and the amount of successful total bend and ups to normal seated position will count toward the final score.

## MODIFICATIONS

This exercise can be performed seated in a chair or in a wheelchair.

## MATERIALS

Before you start, make sure you have:

- Stopwatch
- Metronome App on phone



**WATCH THE  
VIDEO HERE**



## PROCEDURE AND SCORING

### EXERCISE:

1. Participant lies on their back on the floor. They bend their hips and knees so their feet are flat on the floor.
2. Participant reaches their arms toward their knees.
3. Participant lifts their head and then slowly lifts their upper back until they reach their knees.
4. Participant should get their shoulder blades completely off the ground.
5. Participant touches their knees and lowers all the way back down, including their head.

**SCORING:** Participant does as many curl-ups as they can. Total number of curl-ups completed is the total score.

## MODIFICATIONS

Participants with mobility issues can use the NCHPAD adaptations for curl-ups found [here](#).

## MATERIALS

Before you start, make sure you have:

- Stopwatch



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## PROCEDURE AND SCORING

### EXERCISE:

1. Participant starts on hands and knees.
2. Participant straightens one leg at a time and put the balls of their feet on the floor.
3. Participant's hands are placed below their shoulders.
4. Participant's body should make a straight line from their heels to their shoulders.
5. Participant should keep their abdominal muscles tight and their back straight.
6. Participant should hold this position in the correct form for as long as possible.

### NOTES:

1. Participant should always have a straight back and should never make an "A" body shape while completing this exercise.
2. Stop the test when correct form cannot be maintained for 5 seconds or longer. That means when any movement such as bending, sagging or swaying occurs at the elbows, shoulders, trunk or knees.

**SCORING:** Total time until participant breaks form is recorded. After the max of 55 seconds the max score has been achieved.

## **MODIFICATIONS**

Participants with mobility impairments in the hands, wrists or forearms can complete this test with their elbows and forearms on the ground. Note that this test is more difficult so form should be monitored even more closely.

## MATERIALS

Before you start, make sure you have:

- Stopwatch



[WATCH THE VIDEO HERE](#)



## PROCEDURE AND SCORING

### EXERCISE:

1. Participant should start each rep in the standing position, holding no weight and feet slightly wider than their hips or shoulder width apart. Toes should be pointed slightly outwards.
2. Participant should find a spot in front of them at eye level to focus on so their head stays in the proper position.
3. Participant squats down until their hip crease is below the top of knee.
4. Participant stands up again and finishes with knees and hips fully extended.

### NOTES:

1. Participant should maintain a natural head position – chin up, eyes straight ahead.
2. Participant should make sure their knees are bent over toes.
3. Participant's feet need to be shoulder-width apart.
4. Participant's spine should be straight.

**SCORING:** Each successful repetition is counted for 30 seconds. No repetitions are counted after time runs out. No repetitions are counted for bad form. The count remains the same until a proper repetition is completed.

## MATERIALS

Before you start, make sure you have:

- Stopwatch
- Chair (without wheels)

## PROCEDURE AND SCORING

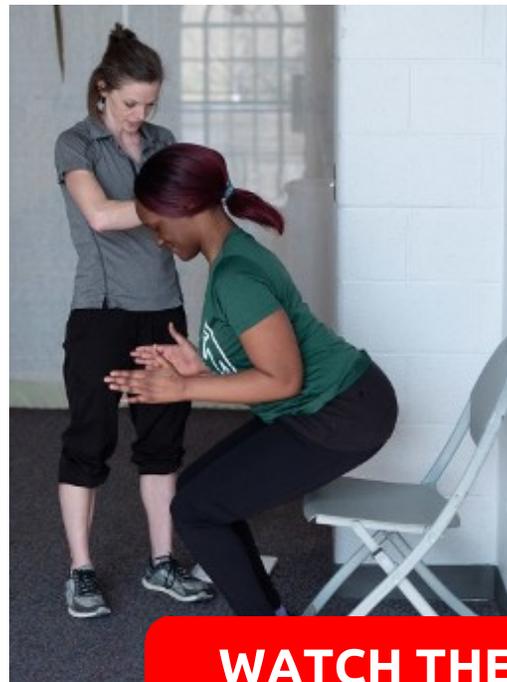
### EXERCISE:

1. Participant sits on chair or bench with feet hip-width distance apart.
2. Participant's arms are positioned across the chest.
3. Participant stands up fully from sitting position and sits down again without using their arms to assist.
4. This is considered 1 repetition. Participant continues to do the sit to stand component for 30 seconds.

**SCORING:** Each successful repetition is counted for 30 seconds. No repetitions are counted after time runs out. No repetitions are counted for bad form. The count remains the same until a proper repetition is completed.

## MODIFICATIONS

Participants with lower body mobility impairments can perform this test pushing on arm rests or pulling on a countertop (or similar) for assistance. Participants should use the same assistance methodology for each testing opportunity for consistency.



[WATCH THE  
VIDEO HERE](#)



## MATERIALS

Before you start, make sure you have:

- Stopwatch
- Solid wall



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## PROCEDURE AND SCORING

### EXERCISE:

1. Participant stands with back flat against the wall and feet about 1-2 feet away from the wall.
2. Participant holds arms at sides or across chest.
3. Participant bends at the knees and lowers down until thighs are parallel to the ground.
4. Participant holds this position for the desired time.

**SCORING:** Time is recorded starting when the participant assumes the correct position. Total time is time to failure which is any adjustment from the original position.

## MATERIALS

Before you start, make sure you have:

- Three cones
- Stopwatch

[WATCH THE VIDEO HERE](#)



## PROCEDURE AND SCORING

**PREPARATION:** place three lines or three cones on the ground one foot (or 30 cm) apart. Adaptations can be made to reduce this distance if needed.

### EXERCISE:

1. Participant starts on cone #2 and jumps with two feet to cone #3.
2. Participant then jumps back to cone #2.
3. Once participant is back to cone #2, they immediately jump to cone #1.
4. Once they have jumped to cone #1, they jump back to cone #2.
5. Participant repeats this process for 30 seconds.

**SCORING:** Participant is scored by the number of completed cycles (2-3-1-2) in 30 seconds. One point is awarded for each completed cycle.

## MATERIALS

Before you start, make sure you have:

- Three cones
- Stopwatch



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## PROCEDURE AND SCORING

**PREPARATION:** place three lines or three cones on the ground one foot (or 30 cm) apart. Adaptations can be made to reduce this distance if needed.

### EXERCISE:

1. Participant starts on cone #2 and jumps with two feet to cone #1.
2. Participant then jumps back to cone #2.
3. Once the participant is back to cone #2, they immediately jump to cone #3.
4. Once they have jumped to cone #3 they jump back to cone #2.
5. Participant repeats this process for 30 seconds.

**SCORING:** Participant is scored by the number of repetitions completed in 30 seconds. One point is awarded for each completed cycle (2-1-2-3-2).



## MATERIALS

Before you start, make sure you have:

- Stopwatch
- Sturdy chair with armrests and no wheels



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VIDEO HERE



## PROCEDURE AND SCORING

### EXERCISE:

1. Participant starts in a standing position with arms at their sides.
2. Participant jumps up and spreads legs apart as they swing their arms over their head. They should clap their hands together at the top.
3. Participant jumps again and bring their arms back to their sides and their legs together.
4. Repeat for allotted times.

**NOTES:** Participant must complete a full repetition (ex. go from start position, clap at the top, return to start position = 1 repetition) in order for it to be counted.

**SCORING:** Each successful repetition is counted for 60 seconds. No repetitions are counted after time runs out. No repetitions are counted for bad form. The count remains the same until a proper repetition is completed.

## MODIFICATIONS

Participants with lower body mobility issues can do Seated Jumping Jacks.

### EXERCISE:

Participant will extend their arms out to the sides and then up above their head, clapping their hands. The arms will come back down to the side position. The process will continue for 60 seconds. Each time the participant claps hands above the head, a repetition is counted.

**SCORING:** The total number of repetitions done in 60 seconds is counted for the final score.

## MATERIALS

Before you start, make sure you have:

- Stopwatch

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## PROCEDURE AND SCORING

### EXERCISE:

1. Start each rep in a full standing position.
2. Participant must drop and touch their chest and hips to the ground.
3. Participant then returns back to a full standing position to jump and clap both hands together over their head.

**SCORING:** Each successful repetition is counted for 60 seconds. No repetitions are counted after time runs out. No repetitions are counted for bad form. The count remains the same until a proper repetition is completed.



## MATERIALS

Before you start, make sure you have:

- Stopwatch



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## PROCEDURE AND SCORING

### EXERCISE:

1. Participant gets into a push-up or plank position, making sure to distribute their weight evenly between hands and toes.
2. Hands should be about shoulder-width apart; back should be flat and head in alignment.
3. Participant pulls their right knee into their abdomen as far as possible.
4. Participant switches legs, pulling one knee out and bringing the other knee in. This movement continues for the allotted time. Each time their knee comes towards their abdomen that counts as 1 point.

### NOTES:

1. Participant should keep hips down in a push-up position the entire time.
2. If the knee does not come close to the participant's abdomen, that repetition does not count towards their score.

**SCORING:** Each successful repetition is counted for 60 seconds. No repetitions are counted after time runs out. No repetitions are counted for bad form. The count remains the same until a proper repetition is completed.

## MATERIALS

Before you start, make sure you have:

- Stopwatch
- Chair or wheelchair



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## PROCEDURE AND SCORING

### EXERCISE:

1. Participant puts both hands in fists by their chest.
2. They should keep their elbows down by their side. Participant stands with feet a little wider than their shoulders and their knees should be bent slightly.
3. Participant turns toward the left side and punches their right arm in that direction.
4. Participant returns to the center with both hands in fists by their chest and elbows down by their side.
5. Participant turns toward the right side and punches their left arm in that direction.
6. Participant returns to the center with both hands in fists by their chest and elbows down by their side.
7. Repeat these movements for allotted times.

### NOTES:

1. Participant needs to punch arm out and return it to the starting position in order for the repetition to count.
2. If the participant does not rotate or extend their arm all the way, the repetition will not count.
3. Each punch thrown successfully will count as 1 point.

**SCORING:** Each successful repetition is counted for 60 seconds. No repetitions are counted after time runs out. No repetitions are counted for bad form. The count remains the same until a proper repetition is completed.

## MODIFICATIONS

This exercise can be done with the participant seated in a sturdy chair.

## MATERIALS

Before you start, make sure you have:

- Stopwatch



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## PROCEDURE AND SCORING

### EXERCISE:

1. Participant stands flat-footed with their legs shoulder-width apart.
2. Participant raises their arms laterally to a 90-degree angle (shoulder height) and holds that position. Their body should form a T-position.
3. Participant holds their arms at 90 degrees for as long as possible without dropping them below shoulder height.

### NOTES:

1. Participant will receive one warning if they bring their arms above or below 90 degrees. If a participant is warned for a second time, the time will be stopped, and the score will be recorded.
2. Participant should not walk or move around when completing this exercise.
3. Focus on keeping participant's neck long and natural. Elevating the shoulders can cause neck tension if done improperly.
4. Dumbbells can be used to increase the difficulty of the exercise, but the test is designed to complete on body weight alone.

**SCORING:** The total amount of time to failure is counted as the final score. If the participant holds the exercise for more than 55 seconds, they have achieved the maximum score.

## MATERIALS

Before you start, make sure you have:

- Stopwatch
- Sturdy chair with armrests



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## PROCEDURE AND SCORING

### EXERCISE:

1. Participant starts in a high plank position with arms shoulder width apart and palms flat on the floor.
2. The head, back, hips, knees and toes should be in a straight line.
3. Participant bends their elbows and lower their chest toward the ground. Participants must bend their elbows at least 90 degrees before returning to the starting position. A towel or a block under the chest can help participants to know they've gone far enough down. They should use their arms and core to push back up to the starting position.

**SCORING:** The total amount of push-ups in 60 seconds is counted as the score. Participants must maintain form in order for the push-up to count.

## MODIFICATIONS

Participants with mobility issues can use the NCHPAD adaptations for push-ups found [here](#).

### CHAIR PUSH-UP EXERCISE:

1. Participant will begin in their wheelchair or chair with armrest and palms on the arm rest.
2. Participant will fully extend the arms; while pressing against the arm rest lifting their body.
3. Once arms are fully extended, the participant returns to seated position.
4. A complete push-up is done once the participant returns to the seated position.

**CHAIR PUSH-UP SCORING:** Count the number of push-ups completed by the participant in 60 seconds.