

Kalamazoo Law Enforcement Training Center

Tips for Academy Physical Fitness Preparation

All Police Officer candidates must pass the MCOLES Pre-Enrollment Test (PET) as part of the selection process. Passing the PET only indicates the minimum physical abilities required to undertake academy training. Once in the academy, cadets are required to perform at very high physical levels. Just because you have passed the PET does not mean you possess the strength or conditioning to meet the daily rigors of the KLETC Police Academy physical fitness program.

Each cadet is a future Police Officer and must be physically and mentally capable to meet any threat facing them during their career. To succeed in a life-threatening environment these officers must possess the physical and mental strength and stamina to effectively engage, adapt, overcome, and win each confrontation. Furthermore, each officer must grasp a lifestyle that promotes health and wellness that will improve their safety and survival during their career. A fit officer also contributes to reducing healthcare costs to employers and themselves. A fit Police Officer can expect their healthy lifestyle to reduce disease potential and enhance their lives beyond retirement.

This four-month Pre-Academy Fitness Program is designed to help candidates who want to work out on their own to develop Aerobic, Anaerobic, Strength, Endurance, Cardiovascular stamina, and Flexibility. Improving in these areas before you enter the Police Academy will help to ensure your success in the program.

The physical training in the academy includes flexibility, endurance runs, long-distance runs, calisthenics exercises, aerobics, strength training, bicycling, swimming, defensive tactics, ground fighting, boxing, team building events, and circuit training. It is a fact that candidates who enter the basic training academy lacking physical conditioning are prone to injuries that can result in removal from the academy. Even if you do not ultimately become a Police Officer, this program can be the start of a commitment to fitness that will benefit you throughout your life.

It is very important to get a full medical examination and a doctor's approval before starting any physical activity program. It is recommended that each candidate set goals and adjust the level of this program according to their abilities.

Hydration

Most people do not drink enough water. Water is essential to your survival. Every function and movement of an officer's body requires water. During hot weather or strenuous exercise, a larger amount of water is eliminated through perspiration in order to regulate body temperature. Therefore, it is critical to drink more water during hot weather or while exercising. It is recommended that you drink water before exercising. If the exercise is prolonged or vigorous, you should drink small quantities of water every 15 minutes during the activity. A guideline for consumption of water is 64 ounces of water daily. That is approximately four bottles of water 16.9 ounces each.

Weigh yourself prior to your work-out. When you work out hard for 30 minutes you will typically lose one pound. For every pound you lose during a work-out you should replace it with 20 ounces of water.

Nutrition

Exercise alone will not prepare you enough to be “fit for life- fit for duty”. Exercise is only half the battle to total health. What you put into your mouth affects how much progress you will make in the Four-Month Pre-Academy Fitness Program. Start thinking of yourself as an athlete. Police Officers are required to be physically fit to meet the demands of the job. You will face life-threatening situations in which you must rely entirely on your own strength, endurance, and stamina. Change your mindset right now to meet these challenges.

Fad diets don't work. Base your diet and nutrition on your own personal needs and goals. To begin with you should be eating six times per day with smaller portions. You should never feel hungry or starved. Remember, your goal is to build muscle, become lean, and reduce your body fat content.

Suggestions

Breakfast- The most important meal of the day. Keeping your breakfast light will help you with your work-out that is still to come. Try one cup of oatmeal, an orange, or banana and one glass of water. An alternative would be one piece of whole wheat toast with low or no fat peanut butter or almond butter, a banana, and a glass of water.

Post-work-out snack- Whey protein shake with strawberries or protein/power bar.

Lunch- Tuna wrap with romaine lettuce, cup of no-fat yogurt or a salad with crunchy veggies and low-fat Italian dressing.

Afternoon snack- Protein/power bar. Raw almonds are always a plus.

Dinner- Chicken, Fish, Turkey or other lean meats, one cup of brown rice, broccoli, or other fresh or frozen veggies.

Before bed snack (if you must) - Whey protein shake or a bowl of bran flakes or other whole grain cereal.

Try not to consume any carbohydrates after 8:00PM. Remember to drink plenty of water, and take a multi-vitamin.

The key to nutrition is to keep your saturated fat intake to a bare minimum, while still consuming the “good fats” mono and polyunsaturated (peanut or almond butter, omega-3 fats found in fish and flaxseed). Don't let yourself get hungry. By eating six times a day you increase your metabolism and keep your internal oven cooking during the day. You will need to eat to replenish your body with nutrients lost during your workout.

Eat a well balanced diet. Focus on lean meats, vegetables, fruits, and whole grains. Switch to a low-fat 1% or skim milk and low or no fat yogurt and cottage cheese. Nuts

are a great protein source and they help curb your appetite. Raw almonds with the skin on are your best option.

What to avoid

Stop your bad habits now before you start the Police Academy. While at the academy you are not allowed to use any tobacco products. Limit or eliminate the following items: Soda pop, sugared drinks, and simple sugars such as candy, large volumes of fatty foods commonly found in fast food and pizza, limit or eliminate alcoholic beverage. Your progress in eating healthy has a direct affect on how prepared you are for the vigorous demands of the Police Academy Physical Fitness Program.

Warm-up/Stretching

No matter what your level of fitness, you should always begin an exercise session with five minutes allocated to warming-up. A warm-up stimulates your body and activates your cardiovascular system and muscle groups, which increase performance and reduces your risk of injury. Think of your warm-up as "Pre-Heating" your body for a good workout.

Warm-up should be gradual and strenuous enough to increase your core temperature and muscle temperature without causing fatigue or excess stress on the body. You should just begin to break a sweat at the end of your warm-up. This could be walking, running in place, cycling, stair stepping, etc. Begin at a slow pace and gradually increase your intensity. After your warm-up, stretch all major body parts. It is important that you do not stretch until your warmed up. Static stretches for ten to fifteen seconds in duration are recommended. Avoid bouncing during the stretch. Hold your stretch for the time period.

Running

The running component of the Four-Month Pre-Academy Fitness Program is designed to meet the minimal running standards at the Police Academy. It will increase your endurance and speed, and is a great way to improve your cardiovascular system. Running outdoors with fresh air and sunshine is great for the mind and body, but the weather conditions should not make any difference. Just get out and run. Make your routine a habit. But while doing it is easy, if you've never run before, you'll quickly realize how strenuous it can be. It takes time to build up the endurance to run for even a short period of time.

If you are new to running, you should ease into the program. If you are unable to run at a slow pace or continuously for 30 minutes you should begin your program with a walk/run routine, alternating five minutes of fast walking and five minutes of fast running. Gradually build up your running time to 30 minutes. Always complete your workout with a five-minute show paced cool-down and stretching of your calves, hamstrings, hip flexors, groin, and back.

It is very important that you have a good pair of running shoes. Unlike cross trainers, running shoes are designed to allow your foot to strike the ground properly, reducing the amount of shock in your legs that causes injuries. They are also made to fit your foot to prevent slipping that causes blisters and other lower extremity injuries. Invest

in a good pair of running shoes that are made for your body frame (small, medium, large) and the type of arch in your foot (low, medium, high).

The running portion of this program is not designed to be done on a treadmill. A treadmill, although serves the purpose of running to increase your target heart-rate does not have the same affect as running on the ground. Police Officers don't run on treadmills when they are chasing down suspects, so practice the way you will run.

While you are building up your running stamina, practice good running form:

1. Run tall with good posture. Your trunk will lean forward from the hips slightly, but try to lengthen your body, lift your chest, and hold in your abdominal muscles.
2. Let your arms swing at a 90-degree angle between your chest and hipbone, your arm swing should compliment your stride. Relax your wrists and hands. Do not clench your fists.
3. Power your stride from your thighs, hips, and buttocks muscles. Plant your heel on the ground first and roll onto the toes.
4. Stay relaxed.
5. Practice taking deep breaths through your nose, holding for five seconds, and blow your through your mouth when you start to feel fatigued. Keep your pace up and your wind will come back to you. Tactical breathing helps to increase oxygen levels to provide you with more endurance.

Calisthenics/Strength

The Police Academy's strength training is based on a calisthenics platform. Calisthenics develop the ability to squat, reach, twist, lunge, jump, land, push, and to get up and down. These are the types of actions demanded of Police Officers during a patrol shift. Calisthenics build strength and promote endurance without the repetitive motion that often leads to overuse injuries. You should do calisthenics exercises daily. It is important that you adjust the level of activity according to your individual fitness level and gradually progress at your own pace with every workout.

Cool down

The cool-down is just as important as the warm-up. Abrupt cessation of vigorous activity leads to pooling of the blood and sluggish circulation. It may also contribute to muscle cramping, soreness, or more serious problems. It is recommended that you complete your workout with a five to ten minute cool-down and then stretch again for five to ten minutes. It is important that you stretch your muscles while they are still warm. Hold your stretch for fifteen seconds with each muscle group being stretched out.

Stretching Tips

Always warm up for 5-10 minutes prior to stretching. (stationary bike, running in place, stair-stepper, treadmill)

Move slowly when stretching. Take this time to relax and focus on your breathing.

When lying on your back, move your legs one at a time. Sudden movements with both legs can strain the muscles of the lower back.

Stretch to the point of gentle tension or discomfort. If something hurts, stop immediately. Stretching should feel good. Hold the stretch for 10-15 seconds and release.

Stretch daily. This workout can take as little as 7-10 minutes, or as long as you like. A few minutes every day can improve your performance, prevent injuries, and help you relax.

Depending on what you choose, music can help energize or relax you.

Stretching Program

Neck Rotation – Turn your head to the side, stretching your chin toward your shoulder. Turn head back to center and repeat to the other side.

Shoulder Stretch – Stand with feet shoulder width apart. Raise one arm overhead and stretch as far as you can without bending the torso. Repeat with opposite arm.

Forearm Stretch – Extend your right arm straight out in front of you, palm downward. With the left hand, grasp the fingers of the right hand and pull back gently, stretching the wrist and forearm. Repeat with the left arm.

Triceps Stretch – Raise one arm straight up, so your upper arm is near your ear. Bend at the elbow and let your hand fall to the back of your neck. With the other arm, reach behind your head and place your hand on top of the bent elbow. Gently pull down and back on the elbow. Repeat with other arm.

Trunk Stretch – Stand with your feet a little more than shoulder width apart. Reach your left arm overhead and bend to the right at the waist. Repeat on opposite side.

Torso Twist – Stand at arm's length from the wall, with the wall at your side. Reach one arm out and place your hand on the wall. Reach the other arm around the body, stretching the hand to the wall. Repeat on opposite side.

Chest Stretch – Stand with your feet shoulder width apart. Clasp your hands behind your back and gently press your arms upward, keeping your arms straight.

Back Stretch – Lie on your back and bring one knee to your chest. Hold the knee with both hands and gently pull in. Alternate knees and repeat.

Hip Roll – Lie on your back and bend your knees, feet flat on the floor. Let your knees fall to the right while reaching both arms across your body to the left. Hold the stretch, then roll the hips over to the left, stretch arms to the right and repeat the stretch.

Lower Back Reach – Sit on the floor with your legs straight out in front of you. Reach forward toward your toes, keeping your chin up and lower back slightly arched. Try not to round the back or tuck the chin in – this decreases the effectiveness of the stretch.

Butterfly Stretch – Sit on the floor, bend your knees out to the sides and bring the soles of your feet together. Place your hands on your knees and gently press the knees toward the floor. Keep your back straight.

Lateral Hip Stretch – Sit on the floor with both legs straight in front of you. Bend your left leg and place the left foot over the right knee. Place your right hand on the outside of the left knee and gently pull the knee toward your right shoulder, twisting the torso to the left, until you feel the stretch in your left hip. Repeat with opposite side.

Hamstring Stretch – Stand with legs shoulder width apart and the left leg slightly in front of the right. Shift your weight to the back leg (the right) and bend the knee, turning the knee and toe to the right. Extend the left leg and place the heel on the floor, toes in the air. Keep the back straight and bend forward at the hips until you feel the stretch in the hamstring of the left leg. Repeat with the opposite leg.

Standing Hamstring Reach – Stand with one foot crossed over the other. Bend at the hips, reaching toward the floor and keeping the knees slightly bent. Repeat with the opposite foot crossed in front.

V-Stretch – Sit on the floor with your legs extended to either side so they form a “V”. Bend forward, grasp your toes or ankles, and stretch your chest toward the floor. Try to go a little lower each time you perform the stretch.

Leaning Calf Stretch – Stand about 2 ½ feet from the wall. Place your hand on the wall and lean in, gently pushing your hips forward. Keep your legs straight and heels flat on the floor.

Standing Calf Stretch – Stand with your feet together. Extend one leg in front of you and place the heel on the floor, toes in the air. Keeping the back straight, bend forward at the hips until you feel the stretch in the calf. Repeat with opposite leg.

Quadriceps Stretch – Lie flat down and reach back with your right arm to grasp your right ankle. Pull your foot toward your buttocks. Be sure to keep your hips and pelvis on the floor. Repeat with left leg.

Standing Quad Stretch – From a standing position, reach back to grasp your right ankle with your right hand and pull your foot toward your buttocks. Place your other hand on a wall or chair if you need balance support. Repeat with left leg.

	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Month 1	Warm-up / Stretching Cool down / Stretching	Warm-up / Stretching Cool-down / Stretching	Warm-up / Stretching Cool-down / Stretching	Warm-up / Stretching Cool-down / Stretching
	Light aerobics 5-10 minutes Stretching routine	Light aerobics 5-10 Minutes Stretching routine	Light aerobics 5-10 Minutes Stretching routine	Light aerobics 5-10 Minutes Stretching routine
	Run ½ mile 6 to 8 minutes on shock absorbing surface, i.e. track One day of rest No treadmills	Run ½ mile 6-8 minutes on shock absorbing surface, i.e. track One day of rest No treadmills	Run 1mile 12-14 minutes on shock absorbing surface, i.e. track One day of rest No treadmills	Run 1mile 12-14 minutes on shock absorbing surface, i.e. track One day of rest No treadmills
	Calisthenics / Strength	Calisthenics / Strength	Calisthenics / Strength	Calisthenics / Strength
	Push-ups 10-20 reps 2 sets	Push-ups 10-20 reps 2 sets	Push-ups 10-20 reps 2 sets	Push-ups 10-20 reps 2 sets
	Sit-ups 20-25 reps 2 sets	Sit-ups 20-25 reps 2 sets	Sit-ups 20-25 reps 2 sets	Sit-ups 20-25 reps 2 sets
	Pull-ups 3-10 reps 2 sets	Pull-ups 3-10 reps 2 sets	Pull-ups 3-10 reps 2 sets	Pull-ups 3-10 reps 2 sets
	Leg-lift 10-20 reps 2 sets	Leg-lift 10-20 reps 2 sets	Leg-lift 10-20 reps 2 sets	Leg-lift 10-20 reps 2 sets
	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8
Month 2	Warn-up / Stretching Cool-down / Stretching	Warn-up / Stretching Cool-down / Stretching	Warn-up / Stretching Cool-down / Stretching	Warn-up / Stretching Cool-down / Stretching
	Light aerobics 5-10 Minutes Stretching Routine	Light aerobics 5-10 Minutes Stretching Routine	Light aerobics 5-10 Minutes Stretching Routine	Light aerobics 5-10 Minutes Stretching Routine
	Run 1 ½ miles 11 – 12 minutes per mile Shock absorbing surface One day of rest No Treadmills	Run 1 ½ miles 11 – 12 minutes per mile Shock absorbing surface One day of rest No Treadmills	Run 2 miles 11 – 12 minutes per mile Shock absorbing surface One day of rest No Treadmills	Run 2 miles 11 – 12 minutes per mile Shock absorbing surface One day of rest No Treadmills
	Calisthenics / Strength	Calisthenics / Strength	Calisthenics / Strength	Calisthenics / Strength
	Push-ups 15-25 reps 2 sets	Push-ups 15-25 reps 2 sets	Push-ups 15-25 reps 2 sets	Push-ups 15-25 reps 2 sets
	Sit-ups 25-30 reps 2 sets	Sit-ups 25-30 reps 2 sets	Sit-ups 25-30 reps 2 sets	Sit-ups 25-30 reps 2 sets
	Pull-ups 3-10 reps 2 sets	Pull-ups 3-10 reps 2 sets	Pull-ups 3-10 reps 2 sets	Pull-ups 3-10 reps 2 sets
	Leg-lifts 15-25 reps 2 sets	Leg-lifts 15-25 reps 2 sets	Leg-lifts 15-25 reps 2 sets	Leg-lifts 15-25 reps 2 sets

	Week 9	Week 10	Week 11	Week 12
Month 3	Warm-up / Stretching Cool-down / Stretching	Warm-up / Stretching Cool-down / Stretching	Warm-up / Stretching Cool-down / Stretching	Warm-up / Stretching Cool-down / Stretching
	Light aerobics 5-10 Minutes Stretching routine	Light aerobics 5-10 Minutes Stretching routine	Light aerobics 5-10 Minutes Stretching routine	Light aerobics 5-10 Minutes Stretching routine
	Run 2 ½ miles 10-11 minutes per mile Terrain surface One-day rest	Run 2 ½ miles 10-11 minutes per mile Terrain surface One-day rest	Run 3 miles 10-11 minutes per mile Terrain surface One-day rest	Run 3 miles 10-11 minutes per mile Terrain surface One-day rest
	Calisthenics / Strength	Calisthenics / Strength	Calisthenics / Strength	Calisthenics / Strength
	Push-ups 20-30 reps 3 sets	Push-ups 20-30 reps 3 sets	Push-ups 20-30 reps 3 sets	Push-ups 20-30 reps 3 sets
	Sit-ups 30-35 reps 3 sets	Sit-ups 30-35 reps 3 sets	Sit-ups 30-35 reps 3 sets	Sit-ups 30-35 reps 3 sets
	Pull-ups 3-13 reps 3 sets	Pull-ups 3-13 reps 3 sets	Pull-ups 3-13 reps 3 sets	Pull-ups 3-13 reps 3 sets
	Leg-lifts 20-30 reps 3 sets	Leg-lifts 20-30 reps 3 sets	Leg-lifts 20-30 reps 3 sets	Leg-lifts 20-30 reps 3 sets
	Week 13	Week 14	Week 15	Week 16
Month 4	Warn-up / Stretching Cool-down / Stretching	Warn-up / Stretching Cool-down / Stretching	Warn-up / Stretching Cool-down / Stretching	Warn-up / Stretching Cool-down / Stretching
	Light aerobics 5-10 Minutes	Light aerobics 5-10 Minutes	Light aerobics 5-10 Minutes	Light aerobics 5-10 Minutes
	Stretching Routine	Stretching Routine	Stretching Routine	Stretching Routine
	Run 3 ½ miles 10 – 11 minutes per mile Terrain surface One day rest	Run 3 ½ miles 10 – 11 minutes per mile Terrain surface One day rest	Run 4 miles 9 – 10 minutes per mile Terrain surface One day rest	Run 4 miles 9 – 10 minutes per mile Terrain surface One day rest
	Calisthenics / Strength	Calisthenics / Strength	Calisthenics / Strength	Calisthenics / Strength
	Push-ups 25-30 reps 3 sets	Push-ups 25-30 reps 3 sets	Push-ups 25-30 reps 3 sets	Push-ups 25-30 reps 3 sets
	Sit-ups 35-40 reps 3 sets	Sit-ups 35-40 reps 3 sets	Sit-ups 35-40 reps 3 sets	Sit-ups 35-40 reps 3 sets
	Pull-ups 3-15 reps 3 sets	Pull-ups 3-15 reps 3 sets	Pull-ups 3-15 reps 3 sets	Pull-ups 3-15 reps 3 sets
Leg-lifts 25-35 reps 3 sets	Leg-lifts 25-35 reps 3 sets	Leg-lifts 25-35 reps 3 sets	Leg-lifts 25-35 reps 3 sets	