



INSHAPE

A Guide to Firefighter Point of Entry Tests and Fitness Standards

Recruitment information

Important Information

Disclaimer:

Before beginning any strenuous exercise programme, consult your Doctor. Cleveland Fire Brigade disclaim any liability personal or professional, resulting from misapplication of any of the training procedures described in this guidance document.

IF AT ANY TIME YOU FEEL SHORT OF BREATH, CHEST PAIN OR SIGNIFICANT DISCOMFORT STOP AND CONSULT YOUR DOCTOR.

This programme offers general health and fitness advice. It is not a replacement for professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment.

Whilst we believe that for most people, following this programme will lead to their desired results, all exercise programmes depend on the individual. Results could be affected by the effort and commitment of the individual however in certain circumstances even where an individual follow this programme, they may not achieve the desired results.

Introduction

WELCOME!

It's great to know that you are wanting to come and join us as a Firefighter here at Cleveland Fire Brigade. But to do the job safely and effectively it's important that you are physically fit enough to be able to carry out this demanding but highly rewarding role.

The practical tests which we use as part of the selection process, referred to as 'Point of Entry Selection Tests', are all based upon the National Firefighter Selection Tests. These are designed to reflect a selection of the tasks that a Firefighter performs; giving the opportunity for us to assess your level of fitness, strength and manual dexterity in each of the seven tests, as well as your level of confidence and personal resilience.

Regardless of your gender, age or lifestyle, the tests are the same for everyone. To help you on your journey through the recruitment and selection process we have designed this information booklet to give you so general information about what you can expect and how you can develop your fitness to help you be successful in the testsso that you are **'in shape'!**

Are you ready? THEN LET'S GO!

The Practical Tests Explained

BEFORE YOU START

You **MUST** disclose any pre-existing medical conditions, any treatment you may be under-going at the time of the tests or medication that you are taking. If so you should have already consulted with your own GP to clarify if it is safe for you to participate in the tests. Confirmation in writing from your GP will be required in order for you to take part.

ON THE DAY

You **MUST** disclose any pre-existing medical conditions, any treatment you may be under-going at the time of the tests or medication that you are taking. If so you should have already consulted with your own GP to clarify if it is safe for you to participate in the tests. Confirmation in writing from your GP will be required in order for you to take part.

HOW MANY TESTS?

There are six tests which must be completed in the test rotation order to ensure fairness and consistency to all candidates.

You will undertake the 'Ladder Manoeuvre' test as a group first, and then each candidate will be informed which test station to attend next.

WHAT YOU WILL WEAR

You will complete all tests wearing full Fire Kit (tunic, leggings, boots, helmet and gloves). For the enclosed space test you will be required to wear a Breathing Apparatus set and facemask.

WARM UP

You are required to participate in a warm up exercise which will be conducted by a competent assessor prior to commencing any tests. If you have been waiting some time before completing a part of the test, then the assessor will consider whether a further warm up is required.

Ladder Manoeuvre

Description:

Candidate required to carry 13.5m Fire Service Ladder as part of a crew of four over a total distance of 20m (2 x 10 m lengths).

Measure:

Ability to perform a team lift and manoeuvre of a 13.5m ladder.

Endurance, upper and lower body strength, co-ordination and team work.

THIS IS NOT TIMED

Ladder Climb

Description:

Designed to assess confidence at heights. Wearing a safety harness, you are required to ascend two thirds of the way up a 13.5 metre ladder and take a leg-lock. You will be asked to lean backwards and outstretch your arms to the sides, then confirm a symbol being shown by the assessor at ground level.

Measure:

Confidence in working at height.

THIS IS NOT TIMED

Enclosed Space

Description:

Candidate to negotiate an 80cm crawl way unsighted containing eight obstacles wearing a full Breathing Apparatus set (not under air) and a face mask. Visibility will be obscured by way of either covering the face mask or undertaking in a dark area.

Measure:

Ability to work in confined spaces, agility and stamina.

THIS IS A TIMED EXERCISE

Ladder lift

Description:

Candidate to raise the free end of the pivoted ladder arm (13.5m, mass=26kg) supported 75cm off the ground to a height of 182cm and back down to the 75cm support. the mass of the ladder at the lifting point will start at 20kg and increase by 4kg (5kg added to the simulator) after every successful attempt (following at least 60s of rest). The maximum weight to be lifted is 30kg.

Measure:

Ability to lift 25% of the free end of a 13.5m ladder onto the back of a fire appliance (height of 1.82m).

Upper and lower body strength and co-ordination.

THIS IS NOT TIMED.

Casualty Evacuation

Description:

Candidate to drag a 55kg casualty (using two hand grip on the neck walking backwards while guided by the Assessor) around a 30m course (10m turn left 90o, 10m).

Measure:

Physical ability to rescue a casualty.

Upper and lower body strength and co-ordination.

THIS IS TIMED

Ladder Extension Simulation

Description:

To simulate the extension and unhitching of a 13.5m Fire Service Ladder.

1) Using a Lat Pull Down machine with rope, candidate is to complete as many continuous pull down repetitions at a rate of 35 reps/min at 28kg up to maximum of 23 reps.

2) After rest of up to 60s, candidates perform up to 3, 1 repetition pull downs which increase in weight (45kg, 52.5kg, 60kg) with up to 60s rest in between.

Measure:

Ability to extend and unhitch a 13.5m ladder.

Upper body strength and endurance

THIS IS NOT TIMED

Equipment Assembly

Description:

Candidate to assemble and dis-assemble a piece of Fire Service equipment following diagrams provided.

Measure:

Manual dexterity, ability to follow instructions and problem solve

Upper body strength and endurance

THIS IS TIMED, 3 referrals only

Equipment Carry

Description:

Candidate performing along a 25m shuttle; to drag a hose (15kg) from the reel on an appliance for 25m, jog back 25m, pick up and carry 2x70mm coiled hoses (2x15kg), placing them at 100m, run out the one placed hose (25m), jog back 75m to appliance, pick up and carry 2.4m of 100mm suction hose (12kg) and basket (4.4kg) 100m, jog back 100m to appliance, pick up and carry 33kg Barbell (to simulate the weight of a Light Portable Pump) 100m.

Measure:

Physical ability to carry equipment during prolonged firefighting duties.

Endurance, upper and lower body strength and co-ordination. Cardiovascular fitness.

THIS IS TIMED

Finding your starting point

Now you know what the physical tests consist of, it's time for you to think about your level of fitness and to make sure you have a fitness programme that will better help you to prepare for the tests and the role of a Firefighter.

We have provided you with an example fitness plan to help get you started.

But remember this is just an example and we encourage you to tailor your training days to suit your working or personal life and make this personal to you.

When you create your own schedule remember to :

- include two strength workouts and two cardio workouts, including one interval style for cardio.
- don't train for more than two days in a row - have that rest day....You've earned it!
- if you can only include three training sessions a week, alternate them so that you do two strength and one cardio and then vice versa the following week.

Example Training Plan

Monday: Cardio (interval), Tuesday: Strength, Wednesday: Rest,

Thursday: Cardio (continuous), Friday: Strength

Training Tools:

The Rate of Perceived Exertion Scale (RPE) is a guide of how hard you are working during training and fitness tests.

During a cardio workout you will ideally be working between the points 7 (hard) and 8 (very hard) to ensure you are getting the most efficient results.

1 = Minimal effort, 2 = Very light, 3 = Fairly moderate, 4 = Moderate, 5 = Quite hard,

6 = Moderately hard, 7 = Hard, 8 = Very hard, 9 = Near maximum effort,

10 = Maximum effort

You're almost set to start your training

As you begin, SET YOUR STARTING POINTS to track your progress

Don't worry if you don't meet the final target on your first try - this is to give you a baseline, to show how you're improving throughout your schedule and help you to get a feel for what you can do initially, so you don't over-exert yourself too quickly.

For example, before you start a strength workout do a set of 15 reps on the bicep curl and shoulder press using light weights.

- **AEROBIC TEST:** Complete 2.4 kilometres as fast as you can and record your time.
TARGET: 12 minutes
- **STRENGTH TEST:** Choose a weight and perform two bicep curl and should press reps.
If you were able to lift the weight rest for one minute, then increase the weight and attempt two reps again. Continue until you reach a weight you cannot lift for two reps.
TARGET: 30 kilograms

Warming Up

Before beginning your warm up, make sure it is specific to the type of training session you are about to do.

Going Running? Start with a brisk walk, then increase to a light jog and then your normal running speed.

Weights? If you're weight training then perform the light bodyweight circuit below to help increase blood flow to the muscles in preparation for your actual training session.

The first sets on the first few exercises also have a warm up set included to help further prepare your muscles and joints for the heavier weights.

This warm up circuit will help raise your heart rate before you begin exercising. Spend 30 seconds on each exercise, rest for 30 seconds in between. Complete the circuit twice and you'll be good to go.

Work Out Top Tips

CARDIO

- completing 2.4km in 12 minutes will give you a good guideline to feel more confident about your speed and aerobic capacity
- use interval style training bursts (bursts of sprinting and jogging) alongside traditional running to increase your fitness further

STRENGTH

Number of sets	Number of reps	Weight	Example
1 (warm up)	10	5 kilogram lighter than your final set	5 kg
3	5	2.5 kilogram lighter than your final set	7.5 kg
1	2	5 kilogram heavier than your final set	10 kg

AIM TO INCREASE THE WEIGHT YOU LIFT BY 2.5KG EVERY 3 WEEKS

Your Work Out Plan

CARDIO

Work Out 1: Continuous Cardio

WARM UP: Use light to moderate intensity on any cardio machine e.g. treadmill, go for a run for 10 minutes or use a warm up circuit.

TRAINING: Run for 30 to 40 minutes at a steady pace, working a 7 (hard) on the RPE scale.

Work Out 2: Interval Cardio

WARM UP: Again, use any cardio machine, go for a run at a light to moderate intensity for 10 minutes or use a warm up circuit.

TRAINING: Jog for one minute (at 7 on the RPE scale), then sprint for 30 seconds (9 on the RPE scale). Repeat this 15 times.

TOP TIPS:

Your jog sprint speed should be around 2-3 kilometres per hours faster that your jog.

Your jog speed can change at any point, provided you are still working at the correct RPE levels.

TO GIVE YOU AN INDICATION AS TO WHAT IT FEELS LIKE TO UNDERTAKE PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES WHILST WEARING FULL FIRE KIT AND BOOTS TRY TRAINING IN WELLIES WEARING A WATERPROOF JACKET!

STRENGTH

WARM UP: Use light to moderate intensity on any cardio machine e.g. treadmill, for a run for 10 minutes or use a warm up circuit.

DUMB BELL OR BARBELL BICEP CURL (FINAL TARGET = 30 KILOGRAMS)

1 SET OF 10 REPS (WARM UP SET)

3 SETS OF 5 REPS

1 SET OF 2 REPS

DUMB BELL OR BARBELL SHOULDER PRESS (FINAL TARGET = 30 KILOGRAMS)

SET OF 10 REPS (WARM UP SET)

3 SETS OF 5 REPS

1 SET OF 2 REPS

DUMB BELL SQUAT

TARGET = 20 KILOGRAMS, straight into Farmers Walk TARGET 20 KILOGRAMS

1 SET OF 10 REPS (WARM UP SET)

3 SETS OF 5 REPS

1 SET OF 2 REPS

DUMB BELL DEADLIFT TARGET = 30 KILOGRAMS

1 SET OF 10 REPS (WARM UP SET)

3 SETS OF 5 REPS

1 SET OF 2 REPS

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

INTERVAL TRAINING:

Training which consists of alternating high and low intensity - for example, repetitions of jogging and sprinting.

RPE SCALE:

The Rate of perceived Exertion Scale and is a guide of how hard you are working during training and fitness tests. It's based on how difficult something feels to you, so is different for each person.

REPS AND SETS:

A rep (repetition) is a single time you perform an exercise, and a set is the number of cycles of reps that you complete. For example, if you wanted to complete three reps of a bicep curl you would lift the dumbbell three times. If you then took a short break of 60-90 seconds and repeated the process again, you would have done two sets of this exercise.

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