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ABSTRACT

This guidebook for a self-directed physical fitness program offers information on: (1) What is physical fitness; (2) How is physical fitness measured; (3) What is body composition; (4) How to improve fitness; (5) What is the new presidential physical fitness award program; and (6) What exercises qualify for the Presidential Fitness Award. A fitness quiz with answers is included. (JD)

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

September 26, 1986

I am pleased to have this opportunity to address the youth of America on the importance of being physically fit.

Many of you have seen photos of Nancy and me riding horses, walking, swimming, and staying active in other ways. We do this not only to maintain good health, but because exercise makes us feel better and helps us to be able to deal with the responsibilities we have.

I know that you young people have plenty of responsibility of your own. You have schoolwork to do, tests to take, household chores, and part-time jobs. You've got to be at the top of your game to accomplish all that's expected of you, and I'm not just talking about school athletics. Exercise helps all of us to be winners in whatever tasks we take on.

But too many of America's youth are not in the shape they should be. I want you to help turn that trend around. Make daily exercise a regular part of your schedule. It will brighten your life and assure America of a brighter future.

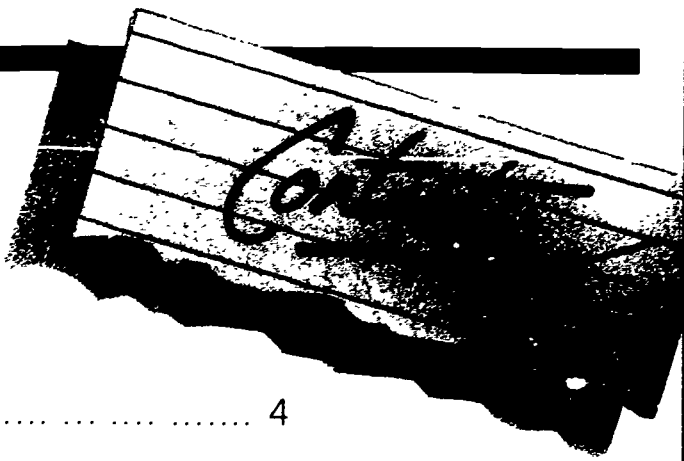
I invite each of you to meet my "challenge" and earn the Presidential Physical Fitness Award. Winning the award is an achievement, but trying hard is just as important. You will never know what you are capable of until you really try.

Nancy joins me in wishing you a healthy, physically fit and rewarding future. God bless you.

Ronald Reagan

KEYS TO SUCCESS

- **TAKE PRIDE IN WHAT YOU DO:** Finish each job you start and make sure you've done your best
- **TAKE SETBACKS IN STRIDE:** Learn from your mistakes and keep looking toward the future
- **SET NEW GOALS:** You'll never know what you can do until you try
- **WORK HARD:** Talent alone is not enough. Only by hard work can you reach your goal
- **COMMITMENT:** Make a total commitment to achieve your goals
- **BE CONSISTENT:** Set a regular schedule and stay with it
- **ALWAYS GIVE 110%:** Do more than is expected of you
- **BE PREPARED:** To get ahead, plan ahead
- **ENTHUSIASM:** Be positive. Enjoy what you do and do it as well as you can
- **BE INNOVATIVE:** The ability to find a new method or get better results sets people apart
- **BE CONFIDENT:** To succeed, you must *know* you can do it



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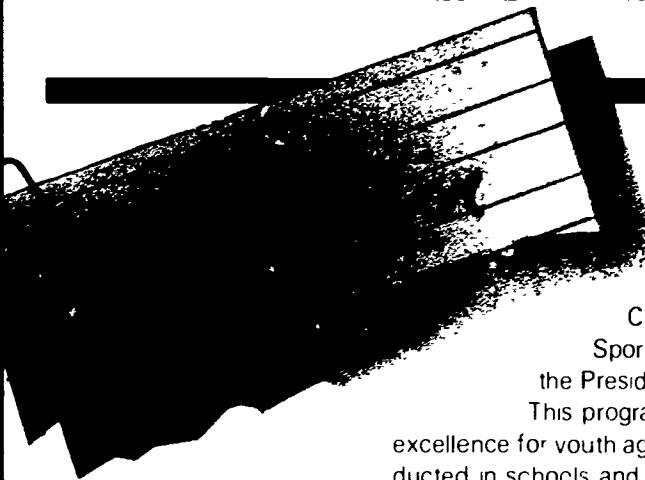
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On the following pages you will learn about the "President's Challenge," a program of the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports. It is the basis for achieving the Presidential Physical Fitness Award.

This program recognizes physical fitness excellence for youth ages six through 17, and is conducted in schools and other youth-serving agencies.

You also will learn how to get in shape to meet the "Challenge" and earn the award. Descriptions of the exercises in the "Challenge" and other activities you can do to get physically fit are included. By increasing your fitness you will increase your chances of earning the award.

Don't be discouraged if you can't do all the exercises right away. If there is one that is very hard for you, do what you can and go on to the next exercise. The important thing is that you try—everyone can become physically fit.

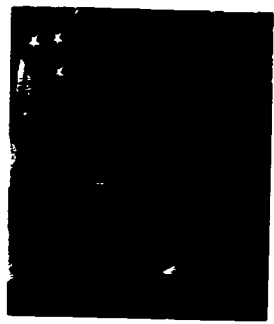
Follow the directions for the exercises and don't try to get in shape all at once. "No pain, no gain" is a myth. Exercise should not be painful. A workout should challenge your body by making it do more than it usually does. But, if you do too much too soon you could injure yourself and the benefits of exercise will be lost.

So, let's GET FIT

Getting in shape strengthens the body, relaxes the mind and toughens the spirit. But it takes hard work and determination to become physically fit. Don't make the mistake of thinking that because you are active, you are physically fit. It takes exercises to build physical fitness—exercises that build flexibility, strength and endurance. But most important, it takes a commitment.

To help you keep that commitment make exercising fun. Exercise to your favorite music or in the outdoors. Start a fitness club with your friends or family. Make exercise a part of your daily life by climbing stairs, working out and trying not to spend too much time watching TV. So that you understand how exercise will affect your body, read a book on fitness, or on the human body and learn how your muscles work.

Set goals for yourself and record your weekly progress in a personal log or notebook. Keep track of miles jogged, number of pull-ups and curl-ups and how far you can stretch. Then when it comes time to meet the President's Challenge you'll be ready to do your best. Even if you don't earn the award, you'll know that you've tried hard and followed through on your commitment. No one can ask you for more than that.



*Chairman,
President's Council
on Physical Fitness
and Sports*

Being physically fit means having the energy and strength to perform daily activities vigorously and alertly without getting "run down," and to have energy left over to enjoy leisure-time activities or meet emergency demands. When you are physically fit your heart, lungs and muscles are strong and your body is firm and flexible. Your weight and percent body fat are within a desirable range.

Physical fitness will help you control your weight and cope with stress. You'll feel and look better, and that often means success in anything you want to do, such as work, sports, dance, and other recreational activities. You may even do better in school.

Getting in shape is important for your future. You'll be healthier both now and as an adult, and that means a more enjoyable and active life.

*Fitness is
feeling GREAT!*

Physical fitness can be broken down into three main parts: endurance, strength and flexibility. Each one can be measured. There are specific exercises to improve each area.

ENDURANCE is the ability to keep moving for long periods of time.

There are two types of endurance:

Cardiorespiratory endurance means

that your heart and lungs are in good shape and are able to supply your muscles with lots of oxygen and nutrients. "Aerobic" exercises like running, walking, jumping rope and cycling build endurance in your heart and lungs. How fast you can run or walk a mile is one test of heart/lung endurance.

Muscular endurance means that your muscles are strong enough to move for long periods of time. Exercises such as push-ups, leg raises, and curl-ups build muscular endurance and strength. How many curl-ups you can do is a test of abdominal muscle strength and endurance.

WHY BUILD ENDURANCE? With high levels of endurance you have more energy and are able to last longer when you play sports or games. You don't get out of breath easily and your muscles are firm and trim. When your heart and lungs are in good shape you're healthier and less likely to develop some forms of disease. Also, doing "aerobic" exercises burns extra calories and helps keep your weight under control.

STRENGTH is how much force you can exert with your muscles. You can measure this by seeing how much weight you can hold in place (static strength), how much weight you can move (dynamic strength), or how fast you can move a weight (power). This weight can refer to your own body weight or special equipment such as a barbell or strength training machine. Always make sure you talk to someone who knows a lot about strength training before you use special equipment.

WHY BUILD STRENGTH? When you are strong you don't need to rely on others to do the "heavy" work and you are less likely to injure your muscles. You can do things like lift your body weight and move heavy objects. Hard jobs become easier and you'll also do better in sports, games and other activities.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

FLEXIBILITY means that you can move your muscles and joints through their "full range of motion." Stretching exercises increase flexibility. Seeing how close you can come to touching or reaching beyond your toes is one measure of flexibility.

WHY BUILD FLEXIBILITY? When your muscles are flexible you can reach, bend and stretch more easily. You are less likely to injure your muscles and joints. Stretching helps decrease tension and stress, and makes your body feel good.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Other factors that will affect how well you do in the "President's Challenge" are Speed, Agility, and Coordination. These factors also will help improve your performance in your daily activities.

People who are physically fit have a well-balanced body shape and good body composition. Body composition means how much of your body is fat compared to lean-body mass, which includes muscles, bones, tissues and organs.

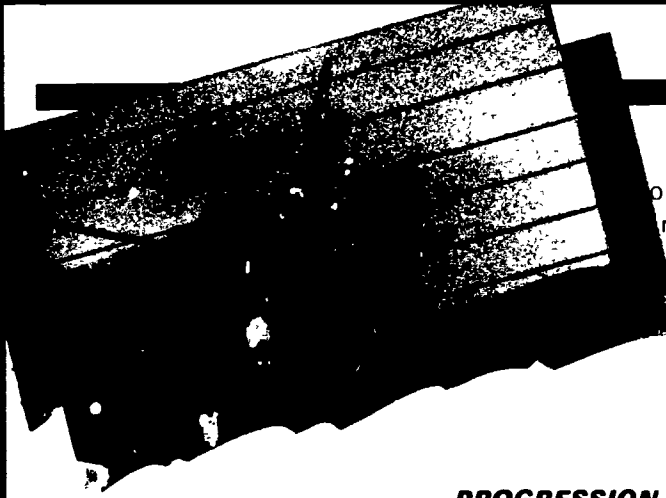
Exercise gives muscles their shape, and muscles give shape to your body. People who exercise are more likely to have less body fat than those who are not in shape. Boys tend to have less body fat than girls.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

You are healthier when your weight and body fat are in the right range.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

The scale is not always a good indicator of fitness particularly for athletes. Since muscle weighs more than fat, you could have good body composition yet appear to weigh too much on the scale or, you could weigh the right amount but have too much fat on your body. If you want to know whether your body composition is good ask your physical education or health teacher, or a fitness instructor, to measure your percent body fat.



to improve your fitness level, must follow the P R O S — the principles of exercise. They are PROGRESSION, REGULARITY, OVERLOAD, SPECIFICITY, and here's what they mean:

PROGRESSION—*Gradually* increase how hard, how long and how many times you do an exercise over a period of time. It takes six to eight weeks for physical improvements to be seen, but you'll feel better right away. For example, don't try to go from 5 curl-ups to 50 curl-ups overnight, but add a few more every week until you've reached your goals.

REGULARITY—Set up a *regular* schedule and work out every day, or at least 3-4 times each week. It's not good to take too much time off between workouts—what you don't use, you lose.

OVERLOAD—For a muscle to get stronger it must *work harder* than it does at rest. This means making your heart beat faster and your breathing increase during aerobics, doing more repetitions of an exercise or lifting more weight. If an exercise feels too easy it probably is, and chances are you won't improve. But remember, don't over do it. "No pain, no gain" is a myth!

SPECIFICITY—Exercise is *specific*. For example, aerobic exercises won't build flexibility. And, stretching exercises won't make your muscles stronger. To be flexible you have to stretch, and to be strong you have to make your muscles work hard. And, to be good at a certain sport you have to practice that sport.

Since 1966, American youngsters have taken part in the Presidential Physical Fitness Award Program. Beginning with the 1986-87 school year, boys and girls ages 6 through 9 participated in the program for the first time, bringing the age range to 6 through 17.

To earn the award, you must meet the Presidential Physical Fitness Challenge by scoring at or above the 85th percentile on *all five* Challenge items below. Additional norms have been set up based on the fitness scores of thousands of students in the United States.

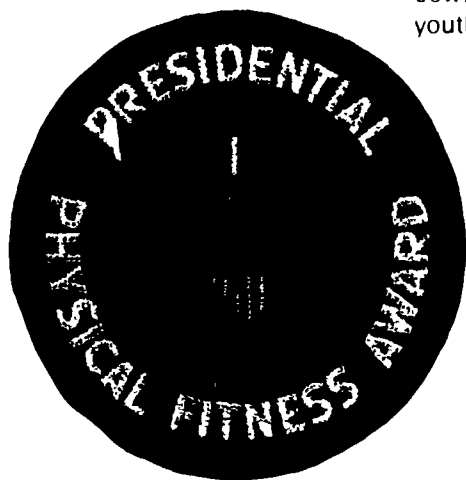
Challenge Item	Primary Fitness Component Measured
One-mile run/walk	heart/lung endurance
Curl-ups	abdominal strength/endurance
V-Sit Reach (or sit and reach)	lower back/hamstring flexibility
Shuttle Run	leg strength/endurance/power/agility
Pull-ups	upper body strength/endurance

WHAT DOES THE 85th PERCENTILE MEAN? If

you score at the 85th percentile or above you have scored in the top 15 percent of your age group based on students sampled in a national survey.

When you qualify for the Presidential Physical Fitness Award you can receive a certificate signed by the President and an official emblem to wear on your jacket or sweater. The emblem has the American eagle and "Presidential Physical Fitness Award" embroidered in gold, red, white and blue. The emblem also has on it the number of years you have won the award. If you start when you are six, you could earn a total of 12 emblems.

The program is conducted in schools, park and recreation departments, YMCA's, Jewish Community Centers and other youth organizations. Ask your teacher for more information on the program.



Winning this award is something of which to be proud. But don't get discouraged if you don't qualify the first time you try. Take note of your scores, try to do better the next time, and

GET FIT AND GO FOR IT !

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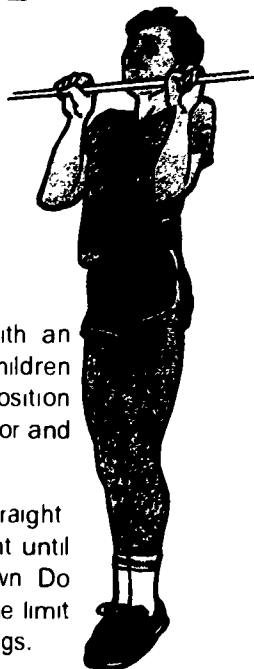
These are the exercises you will be asked to do to qualify for the Presidential Physical Fitness Award. Check your scores against the chart on page 12.

Sit on the floor with your knees flat and feet about 12 inches from your buttocks. Place hands on opposite shoulders, arms close to chest. A partner will hold your feet and count each curl-up. Raise your trunk up to touch elbows to thighs. A complete curl-up is counted each time you lie back and touch your shoulders to the floor. The goal is to do as many curl-ups as you can in one minute.



Grasp a bar with an overhand grip. Small children can be lifted to this position. Feet should not touch the floor and legs should hang straight.

Begin by hanging with your arms straight. Pull your body up with a steady movement until your chin is over the bar and extend back down. Do as many pull-ups as you can. There is no time limit and the pull-ups must be done with straight legs.



Blocks of wood or similar objects are placed on the ground and a line drawn 30 feet from where you start. On the signal "Ready, Go!" you run to the blocks, pick one up, bring it back and place it behind the starting line. You then run and pick up the second block and bring it back across the starting line. Your fastest time is recorded.

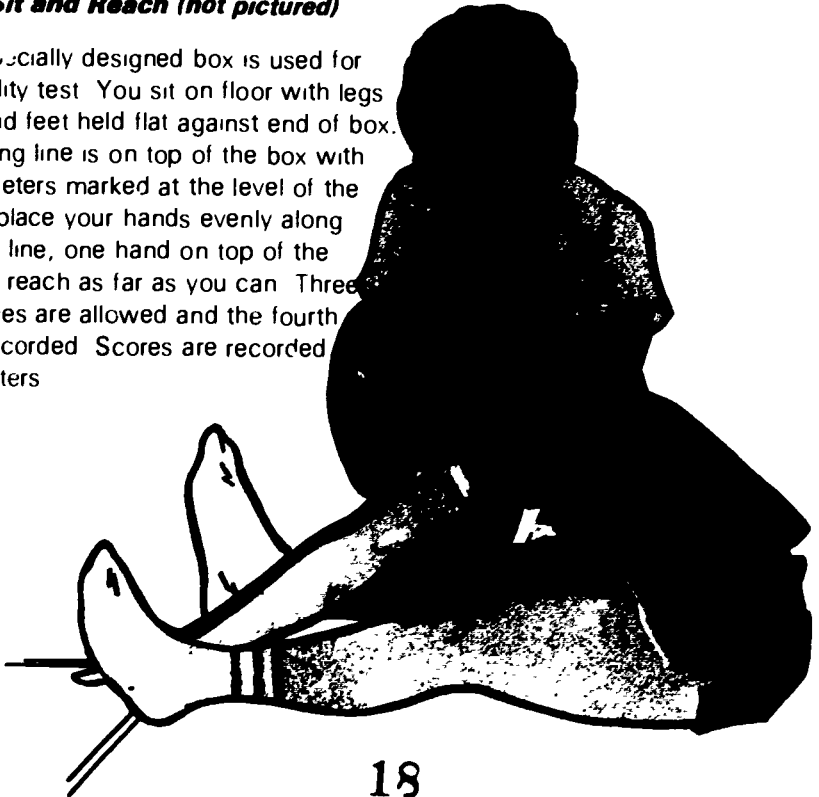


At the signal "Ready, Go" you begin running one mile on a track or safe area marked off to the correct distance. Walking is permitted. However, the goal is to complete the mile as fast as possible.

Take off your shoes and place your feet directly behind a line marked on the floor. Your feet should be 8-12 inches apart. This is the baseline. A measuring line is placed between your legs. Clasp your thumbs so that your hands are together with palms down and place them on the measuring line. A partner will help. Keeping your toes pointing upward (feet flexed) reach forward as far as possible along the measuring line. Exhale as you reach forward. Reaches beyond baseline are "plus" scores, behind baseline are "minus". Baseline equals "0". You'll have three practice tries and the fourth reach will be recorded.

Option: Sit and Reach (not pictured)

A specially designed box is used for this flexibility test. You sit on floor with legs straight and feet held flat against end of box. A measuring line is on top of the box with 23 centimeters marked at the level of the feet. You place your hands evenly along measuring line, one hand on top of the other, and reach as far as you can. Three practice tries are allowed and the fourth reach is recorded. Scores are recorded in centimeters.



If you score at or above these scores for your age and sex
 on ALL FIVE EVENTS you qualify for
THE PRESIDENTIAL PHYSICAL FITNESS AWARD

AGE	CURL UPS (Arms across chest) (Timed one minute)	SHUTTLE RUN (seconds)	V-SIT REACH OR SIT AND REACH (inches)		SIT AND REACH (centimeters)	ONE-MILE RUN (minutes seconds)	PULL-UPS
BOYS							
GIRLS							
6	32	12 4	+5 5		32	11 20	2
7	34	12 1	+5 0		32	10 36	2
8	38	11 8	+4 5		33	10 02	2
9	39	11 1	+5 5		33	9 30	2
10	40	10 8	+6 0		33	9 19	3
11	42	10 5	+6 5		34	9 02	3
12	45	10 4	+7 0		36	8 23	2
13	46	10 2	+7 0		38	8 13	2
14	47	10 1	+8 0		40	7 59	2
15	48	10 0	+8 0		43	8 08	2
16	45	10 1	+9 0		42	8 23	1
17	44	10 0	+8 0		42	8 15	1

On the following pages are some exercises you can do to get in shape for the "President's Challenge" How you do these exercises is very important so be sure to follow the directions carefully. If you are unsure about what to do or would like some different exercises, ask your physical education teacher or someone knowledgeable about physical fitness. Remember, exercising comes easier to some kids than others. Work hard but don't make getting in shape a contest. Progress at your own pace and you will soon see and feel the benefits.

Always warmup your body first for about five minutes to get your muscles and joints ready for action. You'll know you are warmed up when you start to sweat and breathe heavier. Warmup exercises actually raise your body's temperature and make your muscles more limber. After you've warmed up, your body and mind are ready for more vigorous activity. The four exercises that follow are warmup exercises.

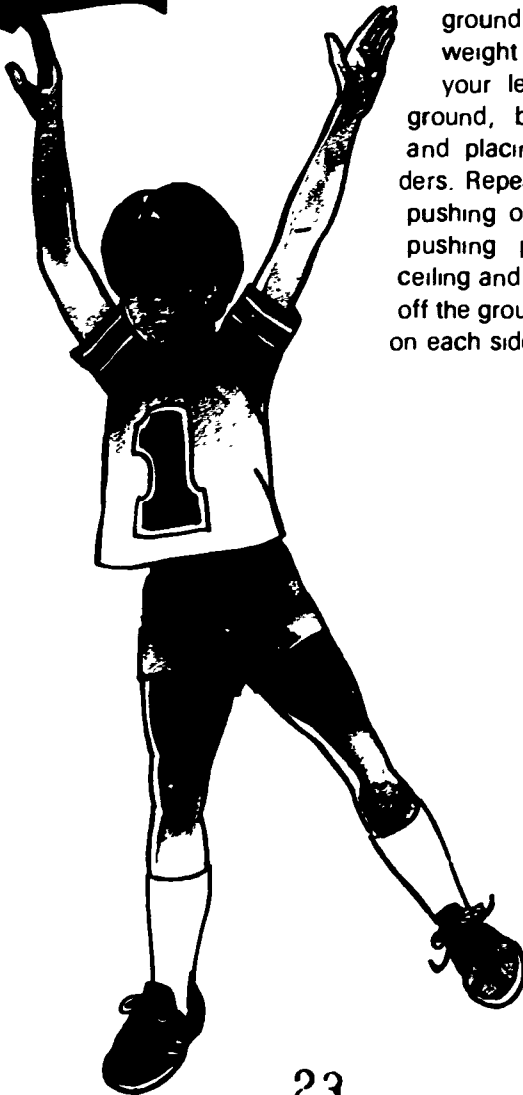


Stand tall with knees slightly bent. Rise on your toes and slowly circle your arms inward and upward, until arms are straight overhead. Inhale deeply. Continue circling your arms backward and downward while lowering your heels and exhaling. This exercise should be done slowly and smoothly. Repeat 5 times.

Stand up straight with feet shoulder-width apart, hands at your sides. Alternate right and left arms in forward circles as if you were doing the forward "crawl" swimming stroke. At the same time, raise your knees so that when your right arm is circling forward your left knee is raised; right knee is raised while left arm is moving forward. Do 10 complete circles with each arm and then switch arms to do the "backstroke." Repeat 10 full circles with each arm.




Stand straight with arms at
side. Step to right, bend
your right knee. Raise arms
up and push towards
the ceiling. At the same time,
rise on your right toes and
lift your left leg off the
ground, keeping all your
weight on the right foot. Put
your left leg back on the
ground, bending both knees
and placing hands on shoul-
ders. Repeat to the left side by
pushing off on your left foot,
pushing palms towards the
ceiling and lifting your right foot
off the ground. Repeat 10 times
on each side.



Stand straight with feet together.
Jump up and land with your feet
shoulder-width apart as you bring
your arms to shoulder height. Jump back
to starting position while clapping
hands over your head. Jump up
and land with feet apart while bringing
your arms back to shoulder height.
Jump back to starting position
while bringing arms to your sides. Repeat this
4-part jumping jack 10-20 times at a
slow, controlled pace.





Stretching helps prevent your muscles and joints from getting injured. Stretching makes your body more flexible so you are able to move easily and do your best in your activities.

When you stretch, relax and breathe comfortably. Don't bounce or jerk. Hold each position for about 10 seconds. If it hurts ease up a little. As you improve, hold each stretch for 30 seconds. Stretching also helps you relax when you're feeling tense. Always remember to stretch muscles after they've been warmed up.

• **The following are just a few of the stretches you can do every day to improve your flexibility.**

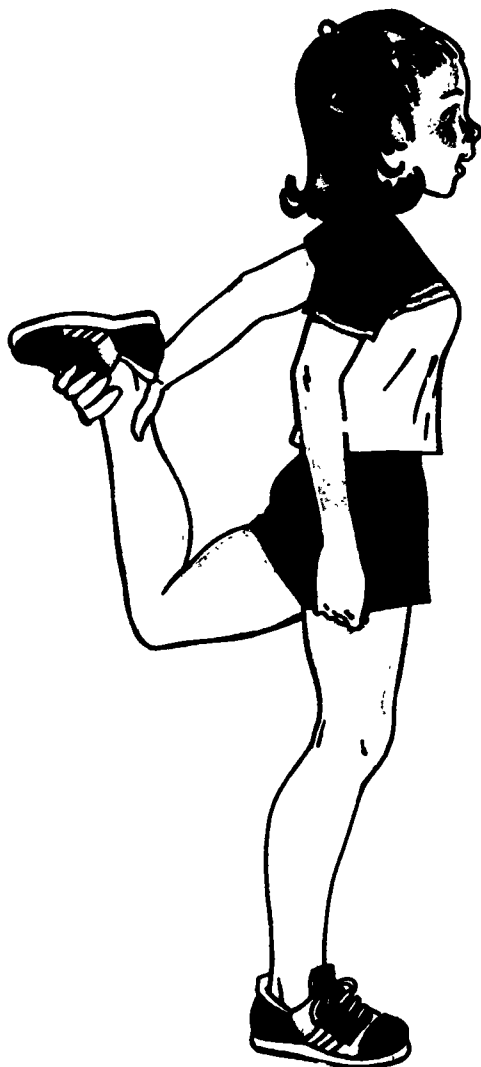
You can do this stretch standing or sitting. Raise your right hand into the air with your palm facing to the back. Bend your elbow and place the palm of your hand on your back between your shoulders. Bend your left hand behind your back and try to touch your right hand. Hold 10-30 seconds. Repeat two times on each side. Don't force this stretch, you may find one side easier than the other!



While standing, lift left knee
toward your chest. Place
left hand under your knee
and push up to stretch the back
leg and your lower back. Keep
leg slightly bent. Hold for 10-30
seconds. Repeat twice on each side.

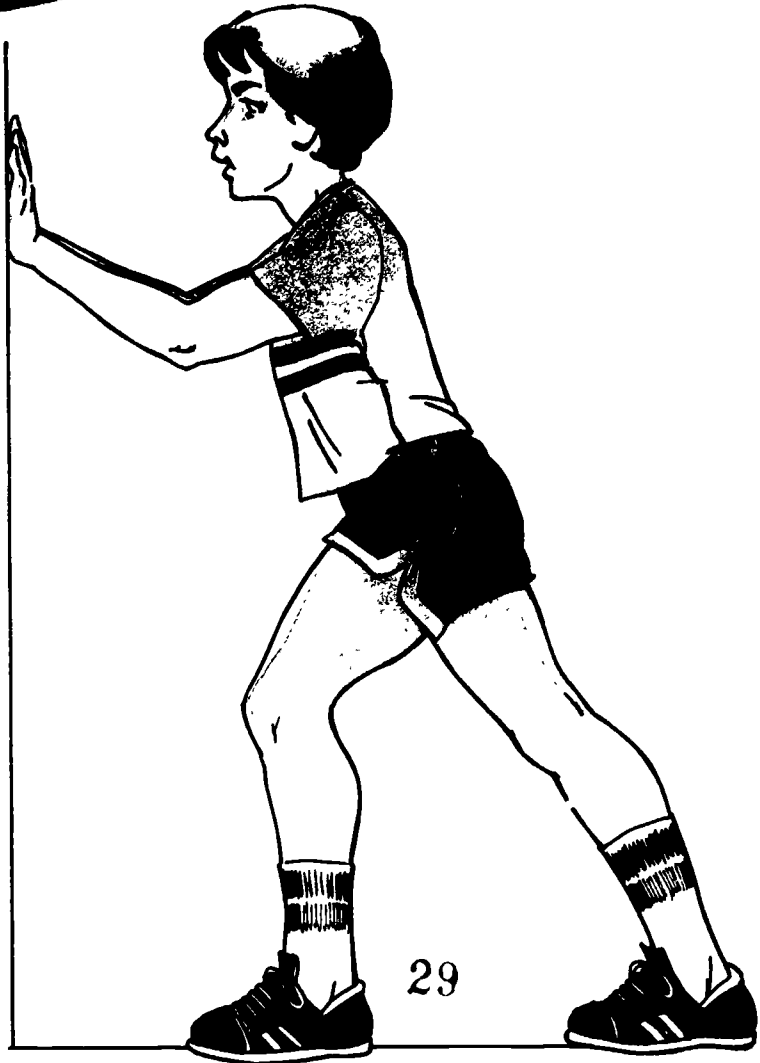


Keeping body upright, grasp left foot behind you with left hand. Slowly pull leg back so that your knee moves away from your body until you feel a stretch in front of your leg. Hold 10-30 seconds. Repeat twice with each leg.



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Lean against a wall and put right leg behind you. Keep right heel on the floor and very slightly bend the right knee. Lean forward until you feel a pull in your calf and behind your ankle. Hold 10-30 seconds. Repeat twice with each leg.



Every exercise program should include aerobic activities to strengthen your heart and lungs. Aerobic exercises require lots of oxygen, make your heart beat faster and include swimming, running and aerobic dancing. Examples of this type of exercise are the President's Challenge includes a one-mile run/walk, it's a good idea to practice running as your aerobic activity.

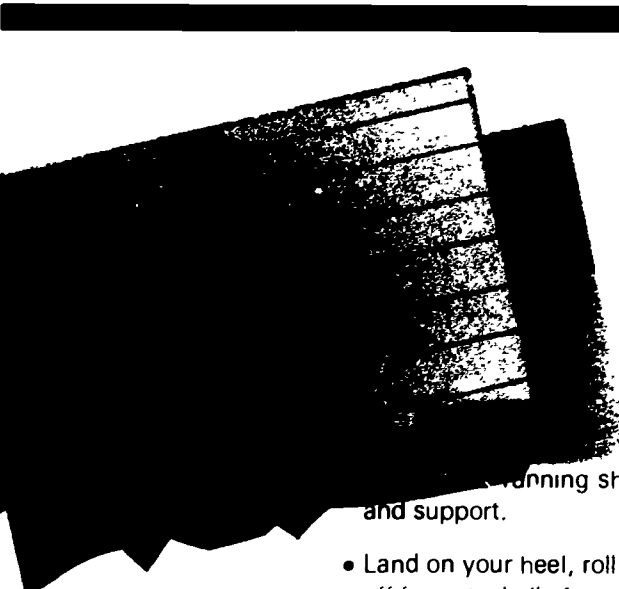
After you've warmed up and stretched you're ready to run. And, don't forget the P-R-O-S (page 10)

First, find an area where a one-mile distance can be marked off. Four times around a school track is usually one mile. If you've never run a mile before, follow the Beginner program. If you're a pretty good runner, but haven't been following a regular running routine, follow the Intermediate program. If you've done a lot of running and are ready to time yourself for the one-mile, follow the Advanced program.

BEGINNER:—Jog 2 minutes/walk 1 minute for a total of 15 minutes. Repeat. Do this at least three times a week for 2 weeks. Don't worry about the distance yet.

INTERMEDIATE:—Jog 4 minutes/walk 1 minute. Do this for about 15-20 minutes at least three times a week. After about two weeks, reduce the amount of walking time to 30 seconds. Gradually build up to about 30 minutes using this pattern.

ADVANCED:—Continuously jog for 20 minutes. Of course, there is no limit here. If you find jogging is for you, you can run longer distances. Once a week, time a one-mile run for speed and work up to the score you need to meet the "President's Challenge."



Choose your running shoes with plenty of cushion and support.

- Land on your heel, roll through your feet and push off from the ball of your foot. Running on your toes can make your calves feel very tight.
- Keep your shoulders relaxed and your elbows slightly bent. Look straight ahead, not at your feet.
- Breathe steadily and deeply, with mouth open. If you have trouble catching your breath, slow down a little.
- Run with good form. Let your arms swing naturally, and alternate arms and legs. Your right arm and left leg should be moving forward at the same time and your left arm and right leg at the same time.
- Always warm up (start gradually) and cool down (stop gradually). Stretch your muscles before and after you jog.
- NEVER stop abruptly or lie down after your jog. When you're ready to stop, gradually slow down and walk for about 3 minutes before coming to a complete stop.



These exercises will help you get in shape to do CURL-UPS, PULL-UPS, and SHUTTLE RUN for the "President's Challenge." They will help develop your muscle strength and endurance. Do these exercises *and* practice the specific "Challenge" items as well.

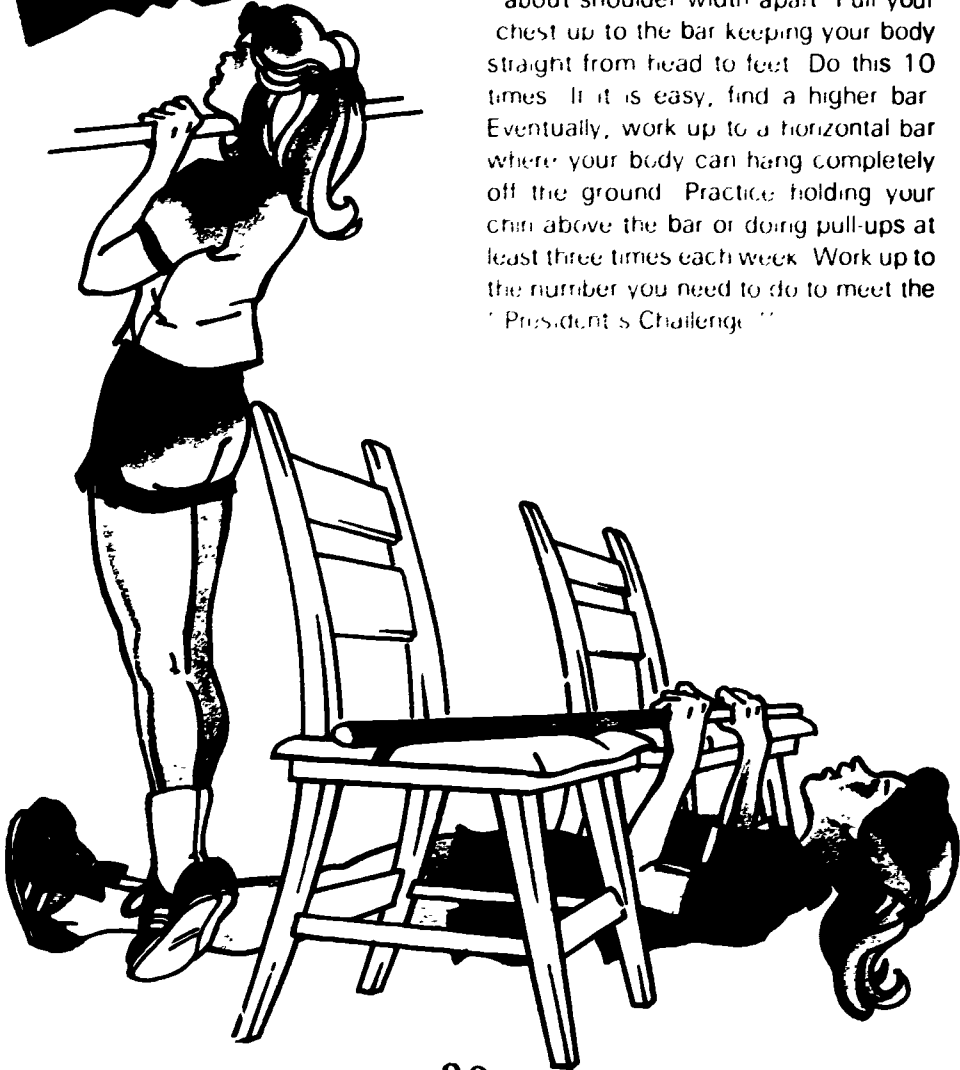
CURL-UPS:

Lie on your back with knees bent at 90 degrees, feet flat on the floor. Place your arms across your chest with hands on opposite shoulders. Slowly curl your head, shoulders and upper back off the floor bringing elbows to thighs. Lie flat out as you curl up and then return to starting position while breathing in. Start with 10 repetitions.

Gradually add 2 curl-ups each week until you've reached the 85th percentile score needed for your age and sex. Practice these curl-ups at least 3 times each week. In addition, have someone time you once a week to see how many curl-ups you can do in one minute. Eventually, you'll reach your goal! You can do it with enough practice.



Place a strong pole or pipe on the backs of two chairs placed about 2 feet apart. Make sure the ends of the bar are secure. Lie on your back, slide under the bar and grasp it with two hands, palms facing away from your body and hands about shoulder width apart. Pull your chest up to the bar keeping your body straight from head to feet. Do this 10 times. If it is easy, find a higher bar. Eventually, work up to a horizontal bar where your body can hang completely off the ground. Practice holding your chin above the bar or doing pull-ups at least three times each week. Work up to the number you need to do to meet the "President's Challenge."



Get down on your hands and knees and position yourself so that your back is straight, head in line with your spine. Hands should be placed slightly outside your shoulders, fingers pointed forward, feet on the ground. Slowly lower your body until your chest touches the floor. Return to starting position. Once you can do 20-25 with your knees bent, advance to the straight-leg position on your hands and toes. Try to do 10 repetitions again!



Support your body (turned sideways) on your right hand and arm and both feet. Keep your right arm and both legs fully extended, with feet slightly apart. Now "walk" your body in a circle using your right arm as a pivot. Repeat using your left arm. Repeat 10 times on each side.



Sit on the floor with knees bent, feet flat on the ground and hands placed behind you on the floor. Raise your body up so that it is supported by your hands and feet. Walk forward on hands and feet, then backward for 5 steps. Add one step every week. Build up to 20 steps in each direction.



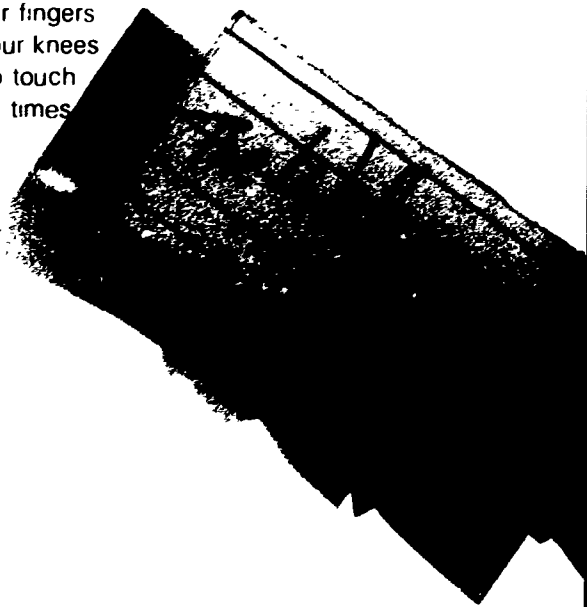
36

...out circles of paper or mold
...out of wire about 12-15 inches
...diameter Stagger 12 hoops in two
...s of six with 12 inches separating
the hoops from one another Run
through hoops, alternating right and
left, with right foot going through
hoops on right side, and left foot
going through left hoops Lift your
knees high Once you get good at
this time yourself and try to get
faster



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Stand sideways next to a wall and extend your arm up. Mark, mentally or with a piece of tape, the spot one yard away from your fingers. Drop your arm, bend your knees and leap up and try to touch that mark. Repeat 10 times on each side.

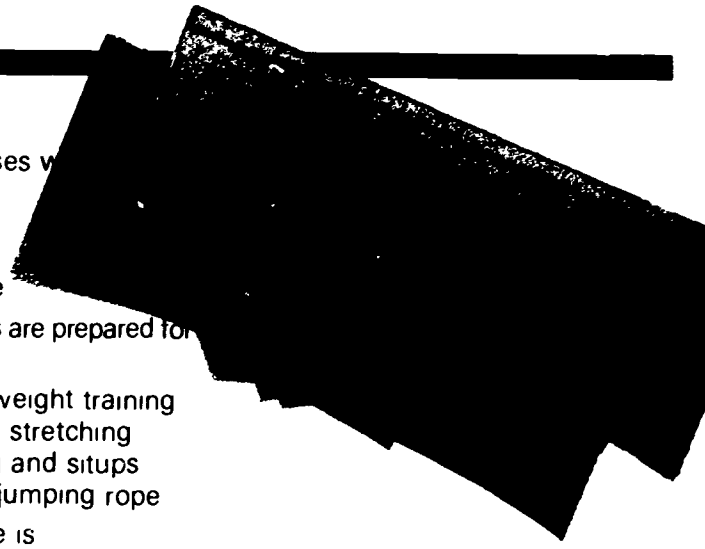


After you have done your "aerobic" or "muscular conditioning" work, you're ready to "cool down." Just as you had to "warmup" your body before exercising vigorously, you should "cool it down" to get back to normal. Cooling down helps your muscles from becoming sore and stiff.

Before you do your cooldown stretches, walk around for a few minutes to make sure your breathing is back to normal and your heart is NOT beating fast. You should be feeling slightly relaxed by the time you're ready to do stretches.

You can choose stretching exercises you've done in your warmup or add others. The important thing to remember is to stretch all major joints and muscle groups, especially those you have used during your workout. This is the time when you really can work on your flexibility, since it's easier to stretch warm muscles.

When you're done, see how many questions you can answer correctly in the fitness quiz that follows. You're on the road to physical fitness!

-
- 
1. Stretching exercises will
A. Build strength
B. Avoid injuries
C. Burn calories
D. None of these
 2. Joints and muscles are prepared for exercise by:
A. Jogging and weight training
B. Warmups and stretching
C. Rope climbing and situps
D. Pushups and jumping rope
 3. Muscle endurance is
A. The ability to move a heavy weight once
B. The ability to stretch
C. The ability to move something many times
D. The ability to jump high
 4. Jogging for 20 minutes will improve
A. Flexibility
B. Muscle strength
C. Heart/lung endurance
D. None of these
 5. The best heart/lung (aerobic) endurance exercise is:
A. Short, fast runs
B. Long, slow runs
C. Tumbling
D. Basketball
 6. Muscle strength is the ability to
A. Move a heavy weight once
B. Play sports
C. Move something many times
D. Run fast

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(continued on next page)

7. Which athlete will probably require the most heart/lung (aerobic) endurance during a game:
 - A. Soccer goalie
 - B. Softball fielder
 - C. Basketball guard
 - D. Football quarterback
8. Cooling down after a workout is important because:
 - A. It gives your body time to return to its normal level
 - B. It helps reduce your chance of injury
 - C. It lowers your pulse and breathing rate slowly
 - D. All of the above
9. The ratio of lean body mass to fat is:
 - A. Body size
 - B. Body type
 - C. Body fitness
 - D. Body composition
10. Physical fitness is important for
 - A. Health
 - B. Physical performance
 - C. Mental well-being
 - D. All of the above

(Adapted from "Fitness for Living," Walt Disney Educational Media Company in cooperation with the PCPFS)

Answers

- | | |
|-----|------|
| 1 B | 6 A |
| 2 B | 7 C |
| 3 C | 8 D |
| 4 C | 9 D |
| 5 B | 10 D |



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