

# Frequently Asked Questions

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The USAPFS receives many questions daily on a variety of fitness/readiness related subjects.

We also receive many questions on other issues such as AR 600-9 and uniforms for which we are not the proponent. We welcome your fitness questions and input, however, please check these Frequently Asked Questions, our [POLICY](#) page, and the rest of our [WEBSITE](#) **FIRST** before contacting us.

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## APFT

**The Army Physical Fitness Test (APFT) consisting of the push-up, sit-up, and 2-mile run remains the Army's current standard for physical fitness testing. Disregard any PowerPoint presentations or e-mail messages concerning a new test, as these are NOT official.**

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**I need a clarification on assigning points for the two mile run. If a soldier's time is faster than the lower point value but slower than the next higher point value, does the soldier get the lower or higher point value?**

In all cases, when a soldier's time falls between two values, the lower point value is used and recorded.

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**How do you score the alternate event on the APFT? What about a soldier who has a profile for push-ups and/or sit-ups? I heard that you average the other scores.**

Alternate events are scored GO/NO GO IAW with the standards in FM 21-20, [CHAPTER 14](#). Personnel with medical profiles that preclude taking the push-up or sit-up event, or both, will take the remaining events, if a physician or physician's assistant approves. The 2-mile run event or an approved alternate test event must be taken if the test is to count for record. Soldiers with profiles for an event or events (push-up and/or sit-up) do not receive a score for that event or events. Soldiers medically excused from an APFT event or events must attain a score of GO, 60, or 120 depending on the number of events taken (Reference is AR 350-1).

For example, a soldier with a profile for push-ups who scores 85 on the sit-ups and GO on the 2.5 mile walk, receives a total score of 0 + 85 + GO = 85 points. The **ONLY** time event scores are averaged is when filling out a promotion packets for soldiers with permanent profiles. Click [HERE](#) for the message that covers this situation.

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**Where can I get a video tape on administration of the APFT?**

A video on administration of the APFT will be produced in conjunction with an update of FM 21-20. In the meantime, read and become familiar with [Chapter 14](#) in FM 21-20. It has all the information needed to successfully conduct an APFT. Also, click [HERE](#) for a PowerPoint briefing that can be viewed or downloaded and used to train scorers.

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**Can we use a Lifecycle for the alternate APFT stationary bicycle event?**

**NO.** Only stationary bicycles which can be calibrated and which have mechanically adjustable resistance may be used to test profiled soldiers on the 6.2 mile alternate APFT event. See FM 21-20, Chapter 14 and Appendix D. If a mechanically braked stationary bicycle is not available, soldiers should be tested IAW the moving bicycle protocol described in FM 21-20, Chapter 14.

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**How do you calculate APFT promotion points for soldiers with permanent profiles?**

Click [HERE](#) for the message.

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**Why do we run two miles on the APFT? Why not three miles like the marines?**

The two mile event is a sufficient assessment of aerobic capacity. It correlates well with measures of laboratory testing, and the correlation does not improve sufficiently to warrant extra time necessary to administer a three mile run.

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**How do I calculate a PT score using the extended scale?**

Scores above maximum as reflected in FM 21-20 on page 14-19, Figure 14-8 is no longer authorized for use in relation to the Army Physical Fitness Test (APFT). Click [HERE](#) for the message.

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**How do I calculate a soldier's APFT score if he or she is on profile? For example, we have a soldier who scored 59 on push-ups, 49 on sit-ups and walked 2.5 miles and passed by doing it in 37 minutes.**

The soldier's score is push-up=59 + sit-up=49 + 2.5 mile walk=GO = 108 total points. Reference is FM 21-20, Chapter 14 and AR 350-1.

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**If a soldier does an alternate event for the 2-mile run event, is the soldier eligible for the Army Physical Fitness Badge?**

**NO.** The soldier must complete all three events with 90 points in each event. The soldier should still be recognized for the accomplishment. Soldiers are required to meet the 90 points in each event and be in compliance with body fat standards each record test to continue to wear the badge. For the badge requirements, click [HERE](#) for the message.

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**If a soldier runs a 2-mile course during the PT test and that course is actually longer than 2 miles, then is the test valid?**

The test is invalid. The soldier can accept the score, however, the test must be administered again if the soldier does not accept the score.

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**If a soldier starts an APFT and does not complete the APFT and does not complete all events because of injury, does the soldier fail the APFT?**

YES. If a soldier gets injured during the APFT and does not complete an event because of the injury (or any other reason), then that soldier failed the test. The injury must be annotated by the OIC or NCOIC in the comments section on the DA 705. The soldier should go for a medical evaluation and get a profile, if applicable. A retest will be scheduled after twice the length of the profile not to exceed 90 days after the profile expires.

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**If only two record APFTs are given in one year, then must they be separated by six months?**

NO. According to AR 350-1, "Active Army soldiers and Active Guard/Reserve will take the APFT at least twice each year with a minimum of 4 months separating record tests if only two record tests are given." The intent is for AC and AGR soldiers to take a record test every six months and for USAR and ARNG soldiers to take a record test every 12 months. Mission requirements often prevent the even spacing of record tests. Therefore, commanders are encouraged to test soldiers for record as close to the record test window as possible.

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**If a soldier has failed a record APFT, as long as both the soldier and commander feel the soldier is prepared, can the commander administer the record retest any time within the next three months?**

YES. According to AR 350-1.

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**Should the unit physical training program be based upon achieving the highest average record APFT score in the battalion?**

NO. According to AR 350-41, Chapter 9, Para. 9-8a. The unit PT program must be based on the unit's mission and METL. Being able to do a lot of push ups, sit ups, and run two miles will help a soldier do their job but the only mission they will truly be prepared for is the APFT. Soldiers/units must perform PRT activities that will develop the physical attributes they need for their specific duty situation.

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**How long after a profile expires can one administer the APFT to a soldier?**

FM 21-20, Chapter 14 states that "once the profile is lifted, the soldier must be given twice the time of the profile (not to exceed 90 days) to train for the APFT. For example, if the profile period was 7 days, the soldier has 14 days to train for the APFT after the profile period ends. If a normally scheduled APFT occurs during the profile period, the soldier should be given a mandatory make-up date."

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**If a soldier is on a temporary profile, can he perform both push-up and sit-up events without completing an aerobic event and count this as a record APFT?**

NO. According to AR 350-41, Chapter 9, the two mile run event or an alternate aerobic test event as outlined in FM 21-20, Chapter 14 must be taken for the test to count as record. Soldiers

on temporary profile of short duration (less than three months) don't take an APFT. They take the APFT after the profile has ended plus twice the length of the profile (not to exceed 90 days).

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**As the company commander, am I required to initiate some type of personnel action against a soldier who fails two consecutive, record APFTs?**

YES. According to [AR 350-1](#) soldiers without medical profiles who repeatedly fail the APFT will be either barred from re-enlistment ([AR 601-280](#)) or processed for separation from the service ([AR 635-100](#) and [AR 635-200](#)). A repetitive failure occurs when a record test is taken and failed, the soldier is provided adequate time and assistance to improve his or her performance, and failure occurs again.

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**Are soldiers who turn age 40 after 1 JAN 90 exempt from taking a record APFT until they have been screened and approved by a medical professional?**

NO. See [AR 40-501](#).

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**Are there specific requirements for test scorers other than what is stated in FM 21-20 that they must be thoroughly trained.**

No. Click [HERE](#) for a PowerPoint presentation that can be used to train scorers.

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**What is the NSN for the Physical Fitness Badge.**

The Physical Fitness Badge is an award and should be obtained from clothing sales or wherever your unit procures awards.

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**Is it legal to conduct a weigh-in the day prior to the APFT?**

Yes. [AR 600-9](#) says that if the circumstances preclude weighing soldiers during the APFT, they should be weighed within 30 days of the APFT. PFS recommends that units weigh soldiers at a time other than on the day of the APFT. Weighing soldiers on the same day as the APFT may create an unsafe situation for soldiers that employ "starvation" diets and/or don't drink water prior to the weigh-in to try to make the screening table weight.

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**Are soldiers over 55 years of age required to take the APFT?**

Soldiers over 55 years of age and older now have the option of taking the three event APFT or the alternate APFT (Alternate APFT means push-ups, sit-ups and an alternate aerobic event). Soldiers over age 60 have the option of taking the APFT, however, they must maintain a personal physical fitness program approved by a physician and remain within Army height and weight standards. Click [HERE](#) for the message that applies to this situation.

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**What exercises are not authorized due to an increased injury rate?**

None. Some exercises are safer than others depending on the fitness level of your soldiers. Common sense should always prevail. For more information, click [HERE](#) for the message.

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**What is the regulation that governs physical fitness training and testing?**

AR 350-1 supercedes AR 350-41, CHAPTER 9 which superceded AR 350-15.

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**Is there a change to FM 21-20 that states that during cool down you should not do bending stretches because lowering the head can cause dizziness?**

CHAPTER 4, The cool-down information says not to stop suddenly after vigorous exercise because doing so can cause the blood to pool in the muscles, thereby reducing blood flow to the heart and brain. This may cause fainting or abnormal rhythms in the heart. Lowering the head below the heart (when heart rate is elevated) can also reduce blood flow to the brain causing fainting.

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**Is it authorized to hold your left foot with your right hand when conducting the thigh stretch? Someone told me that it puts too much torque on the knee?**

If you maintain the same leg position, it's safe to hold your foot with either hand.

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**What publication actually has the step by step procedure for the extended rectangular formation?**

The procedures were omitted from FM 21-20. Click [HERE](#) for the message. Click [HERE](#) for information on the standardized execution of the activities in FM 21-20.

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**Does pregnancy automatically mean no physical training?**

No. Upon diagnosis of pregnancy, the soldier is exempt from the regular physical training (PT) program of the unit and exempt from PT testing as outlined in AR 350-1 for the duration of the pregnancy and up to 6 months past pregnancy termination. It is recommended that installations offer pregnancy PT programs to assist pregnant and post partum soldiers in maintaining fitness throughout their pregnancy and to assist them in returning to pre-pregnancy fitness levels after pregnancy termination. Exercise programs must follow the guidelines of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, and women must be cleared to participate by the physician who confirms the pregnancy, or by the nurse midwife who issued the pregnancy profile. (See Para. 7-9b(2), AR 40-501) and click [HERE](#) for the message..

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**Uniforms**

(The proponent for uniforms is HQ DA, ODCSPER. For more information on PT uniforms, go to their website at [www.hqda.army.mil](http://www.hqda.army.mil), see AR 670-1, and click [HERE](#) for the message announcing introduction of the IPFU.

**Are spandex shorts authorized for wear with the IPFU? Are there any restrictions on**

**wearing the IPFU items together (can I wear the long sleeved t-shirt with the shorts?)**

Gray or black spandex shorts are authorized for wear with the IPFU, as an optional item. There are no restrictions on the combination of the IPFU items, unless the commander has prescribed a particular uniform for formations. The various IPFU items allow for comfort in a variety of temperatures/conditions.

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**Where do I wear the Physical Fitness Badge on the IPFU?**

On the short and long sleeved t-shirts, wear the badge in the same place as on the PFU t-shirt; on the upper left front side. On the jacket, center the badge 1/2 inch above the word "Army".

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**What is the length of the socks worn with the PT uniform?**

AR 670-1. Commanders may authorize the wear of commercial running shoes; calf-length or ankle-length plain white socks with no logos; gloves; reflective belts or vests; long underwear; and other items appropriate to the weather conditions and type of activity.

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**MFT Course****How do I attend the MFTC?**

The Master Fitness Trainer Course is no longer being taught. The USAPFS will continue to provide training support to the Army by conducting fitness leader courses. Fitness Leader Courses are hosted and paid for by MACOMs that request physical training assistance.

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**I attended the course in 1996 and lost my manual when I PCSed. Can you send me another copy?**

The manual has been updated several times and the USAPFS does not keep a stock of old manuals. The cost to do so and mail to everyone who requests one would be prohibitive. The most current PT information is on this website.

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**What procedure do I need to follow to get the P5 identifier on my records?**

If you attended a Master Fitness Trainer Course, send a copy of your diploma with a DA Form 4158 requesting the ASI through your chain of command to your local personnel office.

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**AR 600-9**

The USAPFS is not the proponent for AR 600-9. The proponent is Deputy Chief of Staff, G-1, Human Resources, Personal Readiness Division, Weight Control Policy Section. For more information, go to their website at <http://www.odcsper.army.mil/>.

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**Miscellaneous**

**Who will assist in administering the Health Risk Appraisal to my unit?**

The post Community Health Nurse has this responsibility.

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