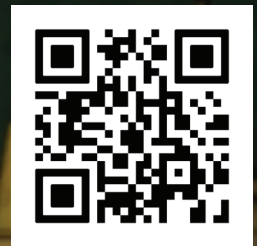


PREPARING FOR THE POPAT

Cardiovascular Training



During cardio training, you are focusing on training the aerobic system. Cardio is important when preparing for the POPAT as it gives you the base required to have enough endurance to complete the tasks involved in the test. It is the “foundation” required to enable you to push yourself with the required level of intensity. Running is a great way to build and improve your cardio strength and it will also help you to build the necessary leg strength that is required for the test. It is VITAL that you also add in higher levels of intensity to your training. You should be doing this higher level of intensity at least 3 times a week.

Helpful training methods:

400 meter repeats

(running continuously for 400 meters at a high effort level)

Aim for under 2 minutes for each repeat. Make this your goal. Try and keep each repeat within 5 seconds of your last. Rest between can be anywhere from 30 seconds to 2 minutes. As you get fitter, you can add more repeats and can decrease the recovery time.

Stairs/Hills

(running repeated sets)

These both can be done for time or for a number of sets. If the stair set or hill is only 30 seconds, aim for 6-10 strong sets.

30 second run pick-ups

(run harder and faster for 30 seconds during your run)

Perform 5-10 repeats, with a 1-2 minute rest between sets. These should be done at a very high effort level – 8-9 on a 10 point scale.

Sprints

Use a basketball or tennis court. Set 5 cones up about 20 meters apart. Run 3-5 sets of these cones, resting 30 seconds to 1 minute between sets (run to the first cone, then back to the start, then to the second cone etc). The effort level on these should be high.

You should aim at running a 5 kilometer course in 30 minutes or less. The above cardio drills will help both your POPAT test, as well as your speed on your distance run. Try and run a minimum of 3-4 times per week.

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PREPARING FOR THE POPAT

Strength Training



Strength is an important component of your training as you prepare to succeed in the POPAT. When undertaking a strength training program, your focus should be multi-joint movements which recruit as much muscle as possible. These types of exercises include: squats, deadlifts, lunges, presses, pulls and rows. Body weight exercises are excellent and convenient ways to incorporate strength training into your routine without the need for equipment. These exercises can also be part of a cardio-style bootcamp workout that gives you the best of both worlds!

- As a general rule, to improve your strength, you need to perform 3-6 sets of 4-8 reps using a weight that is about 80-85 percent of your 1 rep max. Make sure that you take sufficient rest between sets.
- Make sure you are doing a proper warm up prior to strength training. A light cardio session and some mobility exercises are most recommended.
- You need to focus on both upper body and lower body strength to successfully complete the POPAT course. Your core strength comes into play as it is what will help you to maintain proper form throughout the test.

Helpful Tips

1. Build your fitness gradually and avoid doing too much too soon. Jumping into a program when you are not prepared will result in both injury and disappointment.
2. Balance endurance cardio, high-intensity cardio, and strength workouts in your routine. You need all three to be successful.
3. Invest in a proper training shoe for indoors and a proper running shoe for outdoors (Consult with an expert at a running/sports store for advice on what shoe is best for you). Sometimes your shoes can make a world of difference.
4. Eat healthy, clean food and approach food as “fuel” for your workout sessions (Seek advice from a nutrition coach or a dietitian for proper guidance if necessary). Hydrate well and get the rest that you need when embarking on this kind of training.
5. Take rest days when necessary. Listen to your body and don't forget to practice self-care!



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