

# To Be Physically Fit

## *A Program of Emphasis For Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, Venturers, and Leaders*

### The BSA Physical Fitness Award

Two important challenges in preparing youth for the 21st century—particularly in today's increasingly automated and sedentary culture—are physical fitness and good health. Every adult leader for the year 2002 should set the example and contribute directly to the health and fitness of today's Scouts by completing requirements for the BSA Physical Fitness Award.



The award's objectives, developed by the Council Services Division of the National Council and the national BSA Health and Safety Committee, are as follows:

- Encourage youth fitness in the BSA by providing positive role models and by enhancing youth awareness and understanding of fitness parameters, health risks, and personal circumstances.
- Encourage physical fitness among Scouters by enhancing their awareness and understanding of fitness parameters, health risks, and personal circumstances.
- Reduce the rate of stress- and fitness-related incidents throughout Scouting.

People who earn the recognition can receive a special certificate and can purchase and wear the unique BSA Physical Fitness Award patch. In addition, upon completion of the Fitness Award requirements, Scouts and Scouters may wear a special recognition pin and patch that can be purchased through their local council.

This award is a national program of emphasis designed to heighten fitness awareness and to help change the lifestyles of American youth and adults regarding exercise and a healthy diet to improve the quality of their lives.

Many concerns have been voiced regarding the increasing percentage of overweight and out-of-shape adults and youth in America due to overeating, poor diet, and lack of exercise. The Boy Scouts of America is the organization that is best equipped to adopt a program of emphasis on physical fitness.

One of the founding purposes of the movement is to emphasize physical fitness. This program is intended to have significant grassroots involvement without encumbering a district or council. The target audience is the youth and adult members of the units.

### Purpose

This award has been developed to

- Encourage the development of attitudes, knowledge, and skills that promote fitness and safe conduct.
- Lay a skill, knowledge, and attitude foundation of the seven major components of fitness.
- Improve health, fitness, and quality of life through daily physical activity.

## Recognition

Scouts completing the requirements can receive a patch. The complete award application should be submitted to the council by the unit leader.

## Teaching Areas

Instruction and participation must be conducted in an environment free from all hazards and dangers. All BSA precautions and safety measures apply to this award.

## Mentor

These people will be identified by the council's health and safety committee, risk management committee, or training committee, and could include any person recognized and trained in activity education. A merit badge counselor in any physical activity-oriented merit badge may serve as a mentor for this award.

- Mentors and merit badge counselors must have undergone the appropriate BSA merit badge counselor orientation training, as reviewed and identified by the council's training committee and health and safety committee.
- The mentor should check to make sure all participants have had medical checkups from their physician prior to participation.
- The mentor should not omit, vary, or add requirements unless part of the individual's goal.
- The mentor should recognize that both youth and adults will participate in this program.

Mentors, merit badge counselors, and adult Scouters will be provided with the new trifold Leader's Fitness Card (pocket card) as they initiate this program. The council's training committee and health and safety committee will ensure that adequate supplies are available for the duration of the BSA Physical Fitness Award program.

# The Seven Major Components of Fitness

The BSA Physical Fitness Award's core requirements are the following seven major components. They are used to measure an individual's improvement over time, not to establish an arbitrary minimum level of activity.

## **Posture**

Posture is evaluated with a posture-rating chart. The Scout or Scouter is compared to a photo of his or her starting posture, noting 13 different body segments. Each body segment is scored as a five, three, or one, making a possible range of scores from 13 to 65. Higher scores over time reflect improving posture.

## **Accuracy**

The target throw is used to measure accuracy. The Scout or Scouter makes 20 throws with a softball at a circular target and is scored on the number of times the target is hit.

## **Strength**

The sit-up is used to measure strength. The Scout or Scouter lies on his or her back with knees bent and feet on the floor. The arms are crossed on the chest with the hands on the opposite shoulders. The feet are held by a partner to keep them on the floor. Curl to the sitting position until the elbows touch the thighs. Arms must remain on the chest and chin tucked on the chest. Return to the starting position, shoulder blades touching the floor. The score is the number of sit-ups made in a given time.

## **Agility**

The side step is used to measure agility. Starting from a center line, the Scout or Scouter sidesteps alternately left and right between two lines 8 feet apart. He or she is scored on the number of lines crossed in 10 seconds.

## **Speed**

The dash is used to measure speed. The score is the amount of time to the nearest half-second running a set distance that can be increased each year.

## **Balance**

The squat stand is used to measure balance. The Scout or Scouter squats with hands on the floor and elbows against the inner knee. He or she leans forward until the feet are raised off the floor. The score is the number of seconds held in that position.

## **Endurance**

The squat thrust is used to measure endurance. The Scout or Scouter starts from the standing position. He or she performs the usual four-position exercise. The score is the number of completed squat thrusts made in a given time.

Some of these tests measure more than the components they represent. For example, the sit-ups, a measure of strength, also reflect some endurance because of their repetition. The squat stand requires balance, its major component, but also requires strength and endurance to support the weight of the body on the arms.

The following physical fitness activities are included in the Cub Scout, Boy Scout, and Venturing programs. These suggested advancement requirements could be a resource for youth in earning the BSA Physical Fitness Award.

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## Cub Scouting

### *Tiger Cub Handbook*

- **Elective 37:** Take a bike ride
- **Elective 40:** Swimming-related activity

### *Wolf Cub Scout Book*

- **Achievement 1:** All of them
- **Achievement 9:** Ride a bike
- **Achievement 10b:** Walk
- **Elective 7:** Walk on stilts/puddle jumpers
- **Elective 20:** Sports—boating, skiing, ice-skating, roller-skating, sprint start, standing long jump, soccer, baseball, basketball

### *Bear Cub Scout Book*

- **Achievement 14, 15:** Bike riding, games
- **Achievement 16, 23:** Building muscles, sports
- **Elective 5, 19:** Boats, rowing, swimming
- **Elective 20:** Sports—plus long and high jump

### *Weelos Scout Book*

- **Aquonaut:** Swimming, boating
- **Athlete:** Push- and pull-ups, curl-ups, standing long and vertical jump, 50- and 600-yard dash
- **Sportsman:** Two team sports, two individual sport

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## Boy Scouting

### *Boy Scout Handbook*

- **Tenderfoot:** requirements 10a and 10b
- **First Class:** requirement 9b—Swim test
- **Chapter 15:** "Physically Strong"

### *Merit Badge Pamphlets*

- **Athletics** merit badge pamphlet
- **Cycling** merit badge pamphlet
- **Swimming** merit badge pamphlet

- **Personal Fitness** merit badge pamphlet
- **Sports** merit badge pamphlet

### *Troop Program Features Vol. I*

- Athletics program feature

### *Troop Program Features Vol. III*

- Sports program feature
- Physical Fitness program feature

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## Venturing

### *Venturer Handbook*

- Gold Award requirement 4—Set and accomplish one goal related to total fitness.
- Sports Bronze Award requirement 3—Take part as a member of an organized team sport.
- Arts and Hobbies Bronze Award requirement 6—Develop a plan to assess the physical skill level of each member of a group and a physical training improvement plan to re-evaluate in 90 days.

### *Venturing Leader Manual*

- Olympic Day for Youth, pages 95-113
- Cycling program, pages 166-171
- Cooperative games, page 242

### *Ranger Guidebook*

- Physical fitness elective, page 45
- Cycling/mountain biking elective, pages 28-29

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# Award Application for Leaders and Scouts

## Requirements

1. Complete a cardiovascular fitness evaluation/consultation with your personal health care provider. (This can be done as part of the examination required by any council-approved class 3 medical evaluation.)
2. Using the BSA references listed after the seven major components, give a presentation to a BSA or other community youth group (at least eight youth participants) on cardiovascular fitness, diet, the health benefits of regular aerobic exercise, exercise recommendations for the Scout-age group, and healthy lifestyles.
3. Review the BSA guidelines for the Athletics and other physical activity or personal fitness-oriented merit badge and explain steps you have taken to follow each of the guidelines for the fitness goals. Explain precautions to be taken for a physical fitness activity in each of the following: woods, fields, facilities, and waterfront.
4. Explain to your mentor the symptoms of dehydration and hypothermia. Explain the special considerations for preventing dehydration and hypothermia.
5. Properly outfit for physical activities with proper equipment, clothing, and footwear. Know your own capabilities and limitations. Illustrate how you would prepare for the physical fitness goals included in the award program.
6. With supervision from your mentor or other qualified persons, set up a fitness goal-oriented plan using the seven major components of fitness.

Demonstrate your ability to improve your strength, posture, endurance, agility, speed, accuracy, and balance with your own goal-oriented fitness plan.

# Note to Mentors

## Purpose

This award has been developed to

- Encourage the development of attitudes, knowledge, and skills that promote fitness and safe conduct.
- Lay a skill, knowledge, and attitude foundation of the seven major components of fitness.
- Improve health, fitness, and quality of life through daily physical activity.

## Mentor

These people will be identified by the council's health and safety committee, risk management committee, or training committee, and could include any person recognized and trained in activity education. A merit badge counselor in any physical activity-oriented merit badge may serve as a mentor for this award.

- Mentors and merit badge counselors must have undergone the appropriate BSA merit badge counselor orientation training, as reviewed and identified by the council's training committee and health and safety committee.
- The mentor should check to make sure all participants have had medical checkups from their physician prior to participation.
- The mentor should not omit, vary, or add requirements unless part of the individual's goal.
- The mentor should recognize that both youth and adults will participate in this program.
- Mentors, merit badge counselors, and adult Scouters will be provided with the new trifold Leader's Fitness Card (pocket card) as they initiate this program. The council's training committee and health and safety committee will ensure that adequate supplies are available for the duration of the BSA Physical Fitness Award program.

## Recognition

Scouts completing the requirements can receive a patch. The complete award application should be submitted to the council by the unit leader.

## Teaching Areas

Instruction and participation must be conducted in an environment free from all hazards and dangers. All BSA precautions and safety measures apply to this award.

# Application: BSA Physical Fitness Award

Name of applicant \_\_\_\_\_

Chartered organization \_\_\_\_\_

Unit number \_\_\_\_\_ Check appropriate  Mentor  Scout  Unit leader

Council name \_\_\_\_\_

Name of mentor \_\_\_\_\_

The applicant named above has satisfactorily completed the BSA Physical Fitness Award requirements.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_  
(Mentor)

1. Complete a cardiovascular fitness evaluation/consultation with your personal health care provider. (This can be done as part of the examination required by any council-approved class 3 medical evaluation.)

**Note to healthcare provider:** Subject to your professional discretion, it is recommended that the evaluation/consultation include a personal health history, a basic health data physical, and a discussion of health risk factors. No specific medical studies or tests are required, but such may be included in the evaluation or examination based on professional discretion and individual choice. The results of such studies or tests are for the use and information of the applicant and provider only, and are not required for this application.

The required evaluation/consultation was completed on \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of healthcare provider \_\_\_\_\_

2. Give a presentation to a BSA or other community youth group (at least eight youth participants) on cardiovascular fitness, diet, the health benefits of regular aerobic exercise, exercise recommendations for the Scout-age group, and healthy lifestyles.

List of youth participants attending on \_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

The required presentation was completed on \_\_\_\_\_. Signature of mentor \_\_\_\_\_

3. Review the BSA guidelines for the Athletics and other physical activity or personal fitness-oriented merit badge and explain steps you have taken to follow each of the guidelines for the fitness goals. Explain precautions to be taken for a physical fitness activity in each of the following: woods, fields, facilities, and waterfront.

The required explanations were completed on \_\_\_\_\_. Signature of mentor \_\_\_\_\_

4. Explain to your mentor the symptoms of dehydration and hypothermia. Explain the special considerations for preventing dehydration and hypothermia.

The required consultation was completed on \_\_\_\_\_. Signature of mentor \_\_\_\_\_

5. Properly outfit for physical activities with proper equipment, clothing, and footwear. Know your own capabilities and limitations. Illustrate how you would prepare for the physical fitness goals included in the award program.

The required presentation was completed on \_\_\_\_\_. Signature of mentor \_\_\_\_\_

6. With supervision from your mentor or other qualified person, set up a fitness goal-oriented plan using the seven major components of fitness.

The required plan preparation was completed on \_\_\_\_\_. Signature of mentor \_\_\_\_\_

7. Demonstrate your ability to improve your strength, posture, endurance, agility, speed, accuracy, and balance with your own goal-oriented fitness plan.

The required evaluation was completed on \_\_\_\_\_. Signature of mentor \_\_\_\_\_

**Completed all BSA Physical Fitness Award requirements on \_\_\_\_\_.**

**Signature of mentor \_\_\_\_\_**