

Army Combat Fitness Test (ACFT) Training Quick Reference Guide

The exercises BELOW are simply a “top three” based on common situations (with gym equipment, with common Army unit equipment, and without equipment), there are many other exercises that should be included in a well-rounded program. Any gym-based exercises that can be replicated in a field expedient environment should be incorporated as well. Some simple and portable equipment can also be acquired for use in field conditions (TRX, resistance bands, kettlebells, etc), allowing greater exercise variety.

a. Top 3 Exercises for the 3-Repetition Maximum Deadlift (3RM):

- (1) Sumo Squat: This exercise can be found in the CALL Handbook, pages 31 thru 32 and from ATP 7-22.02, pages 13-1 thru 13-2 and 14-9 thru 14-10.
- (2) Alternate Staggered Squat Jump: This exercise can be found in the CALL Handbook, pages 32 thru 33 and from ATP 7-22.02, pages 5-22 thru 5-23.
- (3) Forward Lunge: This exercise can be found in the CALL Handbook, pages 33 thru 35 and from ATP 7-22.02, pages 3-7 and 3-16.

b. Top 3 Exercises for the Standing Power Throw (SPT):

- (1) Power Jump: This exercise can be found in the CALL Handbook, pages 37 thru 38 and from ATP 7-22.02, pages 5-1 thru 5-2 and 5-5 thru 5-6.
- (2) Overhead Push-Press: This exercise can be found in the CALL Handbook, pages 38 thru 39 and from ATP 7-22.02, pages 13-8 thru 13-9 and 14-15.
- (3) Tuck Jump: This exercise can be found in the CALL Handbook, pages 39 thru 40 and from ATP 7-22.02, pages 5-17 thru 5-18.

c. Top 3 Exercises for the Hand Release Push-Up (HRP):

- (1) Supine Chest Press: This exercise can be found in the CALL Handbook, pages 41 thru 42 and from ATP 7-22.02, page 3-7.
- (2) Eight-Count T Push-Up: This exercise can be found in ATP 7-22.02, pages 5-12 thru 5-13.
- (3) Incline Bench Press: This exercise can be found in the CALL Handbook, pages 44 thru 45 and from ATP 7-22.02, pages 14-8 and 14-9.

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(4) Quadraplex: This exercise can be found in the CALL Handbook, pages 45 thru 46.

d. Top 3 Exercises for the Sprint-Drag-Carry (SDC):

(1) 300-Meter Shuttle Run: This exercise can be found in the CALL Handbook, pages 47 thru 48.

(2) Bent Over Row: This exercise can be found in the CALL Handbook, pages 48 thru 49 and from ATP 7-22.02, pages 11-8 thru 11-9, 13-8, and 14-11 thru 14-13.

(3) Straight-Leg Deadlift: This exercise can be found in the CALL Handbook, pages 49 thru 50 and from ATP 7-22.02, pages 11-1 thru 11-2, 13-2 thru 13-3, and 14-4 thru 14-5, .

e. Top 3 Exercises for the Leg Tuck (TLK):

(1) Bent-Leg Raise: This exercise can be found in the CALL Handbook, page 51 and from ATP 7-22.02, pages 4-2 thru 4-3.

(2) Leg Tuck and Twist: This exercise can be found in the CALL Handbook, pages 52 thru 53 and from ATP 7-22.02, pages 5-4 and 5-8.

(3) Alternating Grip Pull-Up: This exercise can be found in the CALL Handbook, pages 53 thru 54 and from ATP 7-22.02, pages 6-5 thru 6-6 and 10-10.

f. Top 3 Exercises for the 2-Mile Run (2MR):

(1) Sprint Intervals (30:60s & 60:120): This exercise can be found in the CALL Handbook.

(2) Running Drills: This exercise can be found in the CALL Handbook, page 56 and from ATP 7-22.02, pages 7-1 thru 7-34.

(3) Hill Repeats: This exercise can be found in the CALL Handbook, pages 56 thru 57.

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Training Quick Reference Guide

NOTE: The ACFT Training Quick Reference Guide as developed by the U.S. Army Physical Fitness School, also includes the "Top 3" training exercises for each event, gym-based, field expedient, and no equipment.

The exercises BELOW are simply a "top three" based on common situations (with gym equipment, with common Army unit equipment, and without equipment), there are many other exercises that should be included in a well-rounded program. Any gym-based exercises that can be replicated in a field expedient environment should be incorporated as well. Some simple and portable equipment can also be acquired for use in field conditions (TRX, resistance bands, kettlebells, etc), allowing greater exercise variety.

a. 3RM Deadlift (3RM):

(1) Component of Fitness: Lower Body Muscular Strength

(2) Muscle Groups: Hamstrings, Glutes (Secondary: Back, Quadriceps)

(3) Training Notes: The deadlift is one of the best tools for developing full body muscular strength, and is directly applicable to tasks required of effectively every Soldier. The movement can be simulated, and correct techniques patterned, by lifting almost any heavy object with proper technique. Advanced deadlifting and coaching require years of experience, but some simple exercises will yield significant improvements.

(4) Gym Based:

- (a) Deadlift (Hex Bar, Barbell, Kettlebell, etc)
- (b) Reverse Hyper/GHD
- (c) Single Leg Deadlift

(5) Field Expedient:

- (a) Heavy Tire Flip
- (b) Vehicle Push
- (c) Water Can Suitcase Deadlift
- (d) Ruck Squat (worn on back or held in front)

(6) No equipment:

- (a) Glute Bridge
- (b) Braced Hamstring Curl (Bed, Shelf)

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(c) Back Scale

b. Standing Power Throw (SPT):

(1) Component of Fitness: Power

(2) Muscle Groups: Hips, Quads, Hamstrings, Back

(3) Training Notes: Correctly defined, power is the rate at which work is done. As opposed to overcoming maximal resistance, power emphasizes speed and explosiveness. Therefore, to train effectively for the power throw, Soldiers will need to develop not only a baseline level of strength, but also explosiveness and full body coordination.

(4) Gym Based:

(a) Kettlebell Swing

(b) Clean (Kettlebell, Barbell, Sandbag)

(c) Plyometrics (Jumps, Box Jumps, etc)

(5) Field Expedient:

(a) Power Throw (Sandbag, Rock, etc)

(b) Sandbag Clean

(c) Partner Lift Up (boost over wall, onto truck, etc)

(6) No equipment:

(a) Broad Jump

(b) Tuck Jump

(c) Box Jump (chair, bench, etc)

c. Hand Release Push Ups (HRP):

(1) Component of Fitness: Upper Body Muscular Endurance

(2) Muscle Groups: Chest, Shoulders, Triceps, Core

(3) Training Notes: Hand release push ups modify the previous APFT-standard push up to incorporate greater upper back involvement, increased demands on core stability, and proper shoulder movement mechanics. Soldiers will find these significantly more demanding at first, especially if they relied on improper push up

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mechanics in the past, such as very wide hand positioning. More well-rounded upper body and core development will improve performance on this assessment.

(4) Gym Based:

- (a) Bench Press (Barbell, Dumbbell)
- (b) Dips
- (c) Overhead Tricep Extension (Dumbbell, Cable, Resistance Band, etc)

(5) Field Expedient:

- (a) Rifle PT (Presses, Raises, Holds, etc)
- (b) Tricep Dips (Box, platform, etc)
- (c) Ammo Can Press

(6) No equipment:

- (a) Push Ups (As prescribed, feet elevated, from knees, etc)
- (b) Plank Variations (High, low, side, etc)
- (c) Shoulder Stability Drill ("Is, Ys, and Ts" should be included in any program for shoulder mobility, stability)

d. Sprint Drag Carry (SDC):

(1) Component of Fitness: Anaerobic Capacity (Secondary: Lower Body Muscular Endurance)

(2) Muscle Groups: Entire Lower Body, Grip, Core

(3) Training Notes: The sprint drag carry incorporates speed and agility, but is primarily focused on anaerobic capacity. This type of higher intensity, shorter duration endurance is best developed with interval training using efforts on two minutes or less. Some Soldiers, especially those with less body mass, may struggle particularly with the sled drag, in which case their training may need to emphasize lower body muscular endurance focusing on the quadriceps.

(4) Gym Based:

- (a) Sled Drag (Light for speed, heavy for strength)
- (b) Farmers Carry
- (c) Endurance Training Machines (interval training protocols)

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(5) Field Expedient:

- (a) Drags, Various (SKEDCO, Tire w/ tow strap, etc)
- (b) Water Can Carries
- (c) Individual Movement Techniques (executed at high intensity)

(6) No equipment:

- (a) Interval/Sprint Workouts (30/60, 60/120, 200s, 400s, hills, etc. Should be included in any S/D/C program)
- (b) Burpees
- (c) Lunges (Stationary, Forward, Reverse)

e. Leg Tuck (LTK):

(1) Component of Fitness: Upper Body Muscular Endurance, Core Stability

(2) Muscle Groups: Back, Arms, Grip, Core, Hip Flexors

(3) Training Notes: The leg tuck requires the coordination of numerous types of strength including the arms, upper back, core, and hip flexors. A primary concern for many Soldiers will be developing the scapular control necessary to control the body's position while suspended, which can be addressed with many variations of rowing movements that emphasize scapular retraction and depression. Static hangs can also be incorporated in most environments and can develop significant grip strength.

(4) Gym Based:

- (a) Alternating Grip Pull Ups (modified as necessary)
- (b) Lat Pull Downs
- (c) Rows (Cable or free weight)
- (d) Pull Overs

(5) Field Expedient:

- (a) Alternating Grip Pull Up (tree branch, vehicle frame, tent beam)
- (b) Rows (water can, ammo can, TRX, ACU pants)
- (c) Weighted V-Up (ammo can, ruck, IOTV, etc)

(6) No equipment:

- (a) Leg Tuck and Twist

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- (b) Inverted Row (desk, table, etc)
- (c) Rower

f. 2-Mile Run (2MR):

- (1) Component of Fitness: Aerobic Capacity
- (2) Muscle Groups: Entire Lower Body

(3) Training Notes: The two mile run event is unchanged from the APFT, but smart training strategies will maximize performance while minimizing unnecessary impact and overuse injuries. A blend of aerobic and anaerobic capacity training, incorporating low and no impact endurance training machines will improve Soldiers' performance on this event, as well as their capacity to recover between events throughout the ACFT. Long slow distance runs will have limited benefit for two mile performance.

(4) Gym Based:

- (a) Stationary Bike
- (b) Stair Climber
- (c) Rower

(5) Field Expedient/No Equipment:

- (a) Anaerobic Capacity Running (30/60, 60/120, 400s, 800s)
- (b) Aerobic Capacity Running (AGR, Release Run)