

## PHYSICAL FITNESS TEST (PFT) SIT UP



Fig 1

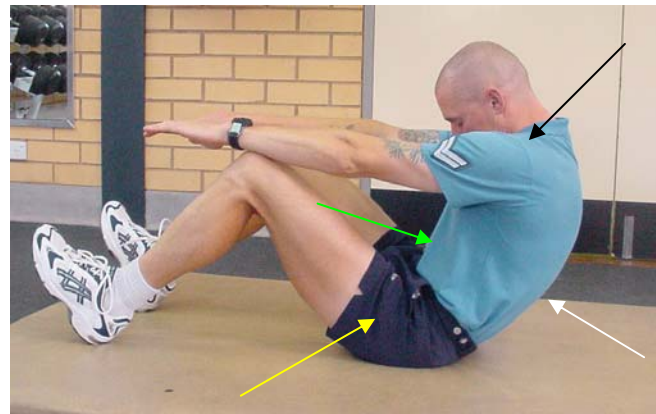


Fig 2

### Explanation

1. The problem with most people's inability to perform the PFT sit up is that they lack the skill or technique required to complete the sit up.
2. They also train incorrectly. Everyone starts in the lying position and attempts to sit up, often with very poor technique. If you train incorrectly, you'll perform incorrectly.
3. To develop the skill required takes patience and a bit of work, but once you have the skill and technique, the sit up becomes reasonably easy.

### The Technique

4. Start at the top of the sit up and slump or round your back as much as you can (red arrow, Fig 1). It is absolutely critical that you **maintain** this curve. Draw your navel back towards your spine and keep it there. Again, this is absolutely critical. You'll know that your navel is far enough back because the waist of your pants will become loose.
5. Move your shoulders and arms as far forward as possible (yellow arrow, Fig 1). This moves as much of your weight forward of your hips as possible.
6. From here, lower your upper body by pivoting around the hips, NOT the waist (yellow arrow, Fig 2). Move back slowly until just before you feel your feet unweighted. HOLD this position for approx 2 seconds ensuring that your back is still curved (white arrow, Fig 2), shoulders forward (Black arrow, Fig 2) and navel drawn back towards your spine (green arrow, Fig 2).
7. As you move forward back to the start position you must **BREATH OUT FORCIBLY through pursed lips**. This means that you should be trying to blow the wall down. Breathing out hard forces the abs to contract firmly, which will assist in moving you forward (that's the idea isn't it?)
8. As you get stronger you will find that you will be able to move past Fig 2 and roll all the way onto the mat (Fig 3). Do this slowly and you'll feel your back roll onto the mat. When you sit up, you must **roll** your back off the mat. You must also pretend that you have a pencil on the tip of your chin and you're

trying to draw a line down the front of your body. This will force the back to curve. See (Fig 3). You still have to adhere to all the above protocols.

9. The mistake that most people make is that they try to look at the ceiling or lead with the chin See Fig 4. Do this and you will not only fail the PFT sit up, but you'll risk hurting your neck.



Fig 3



Fig 4

## REPS & SETS

10. Perform every 3<sup>rd</sup> day. If you're still sore, wait another day until you're not sore. Perform as many reps as you can to a 221 cadence (2 second down, 2 second pause, 1 second up) **WITH PERFECT FORM**. I cannot stress this enough. If you can only perform 4 reps **PERFECTLY**, then 4 reps are all you do. As you get stronger, you'll be able to perform more reps.

11. Training with anything less than perfect form is just training to fail.

12. Once you have reached the end of your 1<sup>st</sup> set, take a 4-5 minute break. Stretch out the abs by turning over onto your stomach and prop yourself up onto your elbows.

13. After 4-5 minutes, try another set with perfect form. That should be enough for the 1<sup>st</sup> 2 weeks.

## STRETCHING

14. If someone is having problems, stretch their Psoas (hip flexors) before the test.

15. To stretch Psoas, lunge stretch:

- a. kneel and place L leg fwd with knee above ankle;

**This knee/ankle relationship DOES NOT CHANGE. Always keep the knee above the ankle.**

- b. Place chest on L knee, do not remove chest off knee, place hands on ground. Keep head in a neutral position;
- c. Slide R leg bwd and allow hips to drop. Do not alter knee/ankle positional relationship;
- d. Push rear heel towards horizon, allow knee to raise 5 cm;
- e. *Relax hips, let gravity draw hips down. Maintain heel position as per sub para d; and*
- f. This is NOT a comfortable stretch.



a.



b.



c.



d.

### One final point

16. Your jaw should be closed for the entire duration. If you swallow, you will find that your tongue will position itself on the roof of your mouth, just behind the front teeth. Your tongue must be in this position for the entire duration as well. This means that you cannot talk!!!

17. The above action helps to stabilise the head neck complex and will assist in preventing neck problems.