



Personal Trainer Career Guide

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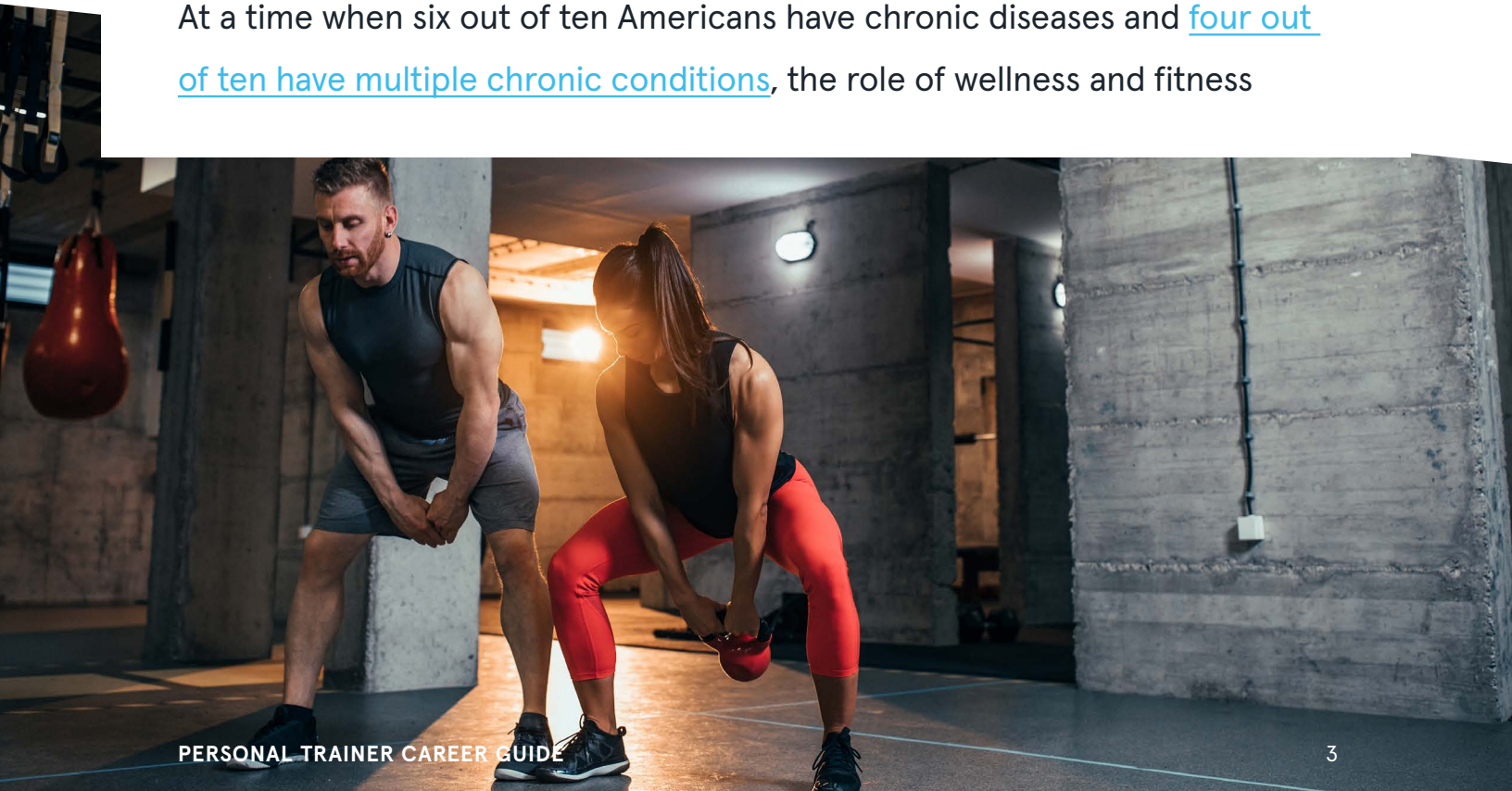
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Introduction

You know firsthand how important fitness is to achieving a healthy lifestyle—and you're not alone. In 2017, more than 201,000 health and fitness clubs around the world served 174 million members to generate global health club revenues of \$87.2 billion, [according to the International Health, Racquet & Sportsclub Association](#). In the United States alone, the number of fitness clubs rose by 33.6 percent over the past 10 years.

A career as a personal trainer can be highly rewarding because you're seeing results one workout and one client at a time. When you have the skills and training to assess your client's needs, to create a personalized workout plan, and to motivate people to keep going no matter what and get results.

At a time when six out of ten Americans have chronic diseases and [four out of ten have multiple chronic conditions](#), the role of wellness and fitness



professionals is more important than ever. According to the United Nations, chronic diseases could cost as much as [\\$47 trillion](#) in healthcare spending by 2030, and a shocking [85 percent of those chronic diseases](#) are caused by factors other than genetics—including a lack of physical activity.

What does this mean for you? It means that now is the perfect time to take the leap and turn your love of fitness and healthy living into a career. Now more than ever, personal trainers who can translate complex exercise science into actionable plans for clients are in high demand.

In this guide, you'll learn everything there is to know about being a personal trainer in today's booming wellness industry.

Now is the perfect time to take the leap and turn your love of fitness and health living into a career.

Personal Training 101

What is a Personal Trainer?

Exercise is one of the many keys to lifelong happiness, but people only see results when they're performing exercise in the right way. A personal trainer is an expert at knowing how and why certain physical activity and exercises are effective for each of their clients. With that knowledge, personal trainers deliver personalized fitness programs to help clients achieve their health goals, such as:

- Losing weight
- Building muscle
- Quitting smoking
- Boosting strength
- Reducing chronic disease risks
- Improving athletic performance
- Increasing endurance

Personal training is about introducing clients to exercises that are catered to their specific skill levels, needs, and health goals. To do this, a personal trainer keeps up-to-date on health and fitness trends in order to provide the most current and relevant training and guidance for clients.

Additionally, a personal trainer has the skills and experience to conduct an assessment of a client's lifestyle and eating habits so their training program can be completely personalized. With the right training and enthusiasm for helping people change their lives, a certified personal trainer can motivate clients to stay the course and work hard to achieve their goals through fitness and healthy living.

Some personal trainers work one-on-one with clients. Others work with groups and specialize in a fitness area they really love, whether that's senior fitness, strength conditioning, youth fitness, or another niche.

“I looked at a lot of certifications out there. You name it, I’ve looked at it, but AFPA stood out to me. They’re out-of-the-box thinkers and so am I. The certification process was fairly easy, it was very effective, and fun to learn.”

Andrew Schuth, AFPA Certified Personal Trainer

The Industry is Booming

Every day, more and more people are changing the way they look at their health. Rather than seeing “health” as the absence of disease, people are deciding that living the most vibrant and active life possible is what health is all about—and the market value proves this. According to the Global Wellness Institute, global wellness represents a [\\$3.7 trillion market](#), which is more than triple the \$1 trillion pharmaceutical industry. Within that market are the fitness and mind-body industries, which represent \$542 billion on their own.

The interest in local food, plant-based diets, alternative medicine, and fitness also means that the trillion-dollar health and wellness industry will likely [grow 17 percent over the next five years](#).

Certified personal trainers have the ability to empower their clients to make serious changes to their physical activity in order to alter or improve their health outcomes. One of the benchmarks of a healthy lifestyle, [according to the CDC](#), is participating in regular physical activity. In fact, the benefits of regular physical activity are boundless, including:

- Weight control

- Lower risk for heart disease
- Lower risk for Type 2 diabetes and metabolic syndrome
- Lower risk for certain types of cancers
- Stronger bones and muscles
- Better mood and mental health
- Increase in lifespan

Helping your clients change their physical activity and habits can be difficult, but with the right training, tools, and experience, you can help others make lasting lifestyle changes.

“Most consumers are more interested in staying out of the doctor’s office than they are about scheduling their next physical.”

Nielsen, a global measurement and data analytics company

Is Personal Training Right for Me?

You're passionate about fitness and healthy living and you love spending time one-on-one with clients, helping them see how they can make lasting, meaningful changes to enhance their lives. But how do you know personal training is right for you? If these benefits of being a personal trainer excite you, then you're in the right place:

- **Flexibility:** As a personal trainer, you can work for yourself or at a wellness center, spa, gym, training center, university, and beyond. Many corporations are also hiring personal trainers as part of an uptick in [wellness programs](#), which provide incentives for employees who make healthy choices and changes.
- **Easy Entry:** You could spend years going to school to get a degree in sports medicine, exercise science, kinesiology, or physical education, or you could get your personal trainer certification and bring your enthusiasm and expertise to clients more quickly. If you don't have the [tens of thousands of dollars needed to pursue a four-year degree](#), a personal training certification is a great way to put your passion into practice. Additionally, many personal trainers get certified first and then pursue a university degree in one of the aforementioned fields part-time so they can gain experience and make money while pursuing further education.

“The training profession has given me a lot more than just experience teaching people how to exercise. I have maintained relationships with clients for over 15 years, and I look at them as my family and friends. It surprised me, when I started, how generous people were to me.”

Kevin Hughes, AFPA Certified Personal Trainer

- **Change-Maker:** Teaching clients how to implement lasting behavior change through evidence-based methods is extremely rewarding—for you, your clients, and their families. As a certified personal trainer, you’ll put your love of healthy living into practice to battle the epidemic of chronic disease one person at a time on a personal level.

There are many paths that could lead you to a personal training certification. If your nine-to-five is no longer fulfilling or you want to help combat the surge of obesity and chronic disease, a personal training certification could be just the thing you’re looking for to change your career.

What if I don't have a formal background in fitness or wellness? Although experience in health and wellness is a plus, the best personal trainers come from diverse career backgrounds and life experiences.

If you're a health coach, nurse, yoga instructor, or chef, a personal trainer certification can help you round out and complement your existing skills and experience. As a personal trainer, you can expect to:

- **Craft** personalized training regimens based on current, relevant research and your knowledge of exercises and programs with variations
- **Conduct** client assessments, administer fitness tests, evaluate movement, and more to create the right training program
- **Educate and coach** clients on the best exercises and ways to train to help them achieve their unique health and fitness goals, including increasing speed, athleticism, and endurance
- **Empower** your clients to achieve lasting health through fitness

Your Career in Personal Training

As a personal trainer, there are [endless career paths](#)—and the options continue to increase. Some of the spaces you could find yourself in as a personal trainer include:

- Community centers
- Apartment complexes
- Outdoor boot camps
- Corporate wellness programs
- Resorts and cruise ships
- Fitness centers and gyms
- Client homes
- Online training



As a personal trainer, it's not uncommon to charge \$25 to upwards of \$100 an hour. [According to some estimates](#), the average annual personal trainer salary is \$56,000, while some trainers earn upwards of \$125,000 per year. The U.S. Bureau for Labor Statistics reports that personal trainers can [earn as much as \\$74,520 per year](#) doing what they love. It's important to note that your salary can vary according to any number of variables, including:

- Your location
- Whether you're working part-time or full-time
- Whether you're self-employed or working for a company
- Your years of experience
- Whether you're renting space or not
- What types of certifications you have (the more, the better)
- What types of tools you're using to streamline your business

“The growth trajectory of the wellness industry appears unstoppable.”

Growth Wellness Institute senior researchers
Katherine Johnston and Ophelia Yeung

Additionally, once you get certified as a personal trainer, you can pursue additional niche or complementary certifications to work with special populations, including:

- Prenatal and postnatal clients
- Youth and adult athletes
- Seniors
- Bodybuilders
- Women
- People with disabilities or impairments



In fact, by narrowing your area of focus, you actually gain a larger client base and can increase your revenue stream. Here are some career paths you can pursue with a specialized certification:

- **Holistic Health and Wellness Coach:** With a health and wellness coach certification, you can help clients achieve their health and fitness goals using the sweeping, holistic principles of complete lifestyle and behavior change.
- **Special Populations Trainer:** If you're passionate about working with people living with chronic disease, a disability, or other limitations, this niche certification can give you the special skills needed to help these populations thrive.
- **Post-Rehab Exercise Specialist:** If you want to be the trainer that gets referrals from sports medicine doctors, surgeons, and physical therapists, then this niche certification is for you. This certification will give you the skills to help clients rehabilitate injuries and improve their health to better manage or prevent disease.
- **Senior Fitness Specialist:** By 2019, there will be [72 million Baby Boomers](#)—people born between 1946 and 1964—ages 55 to 73. These aging adults are not as active as they used to be, but many of them want to be more active. This is where you come in as a certified personal trainer.

7 Steps to Kick-Start Your Career

If you're ready to dive in and get started, here are some simple steps you can take to become a personal trainer:

Step 1: Research

The first step to becoming a personal trainer is to do your homework and find a program that will provide the skills and knowledge to achieve your specific career goals. Some considerations:

- What kind of certification do you want or need?
- Does the course offer online study?
- Are all materials online, or are there hard-copy options, too?
- Is the test online, or do you need to go to a testing site?
- What kind of supplemental materials does the course offer?
- Will there be career support during and after the course?
- Does the program offer complementary certification for specialized populations?
- What kind of specialized population or niche do you want to work in or with?

Step 2: Hire a Trainer

Hiring your own personal trainer can provide valuable insight into the world of personal training. The more you understand how other trainers work with clients, the better equipped you'll be to formulate your own training style and approach. Here are some questions to consider:

- How do they treat clients?
- What type of approach do they take?
- What types of workouts do they focus on?
- What type of equipment do they use?
- How do they reinforce the workout after a session?
- How do they keep tabs on their clients' progress?
- What type of digital tools do they use?

Step 3: Gain Experience

Getting certified is just one part of the path toward a successful career as a personal trainer. You should consider obtaining some practical experience, whether through training sessions with colleagues, friends, or family members or by shadowing another professional in the workplace. These real-life experiences will help to build your confidence and skills—not to mention your résumé.



Step 4: Get Certified

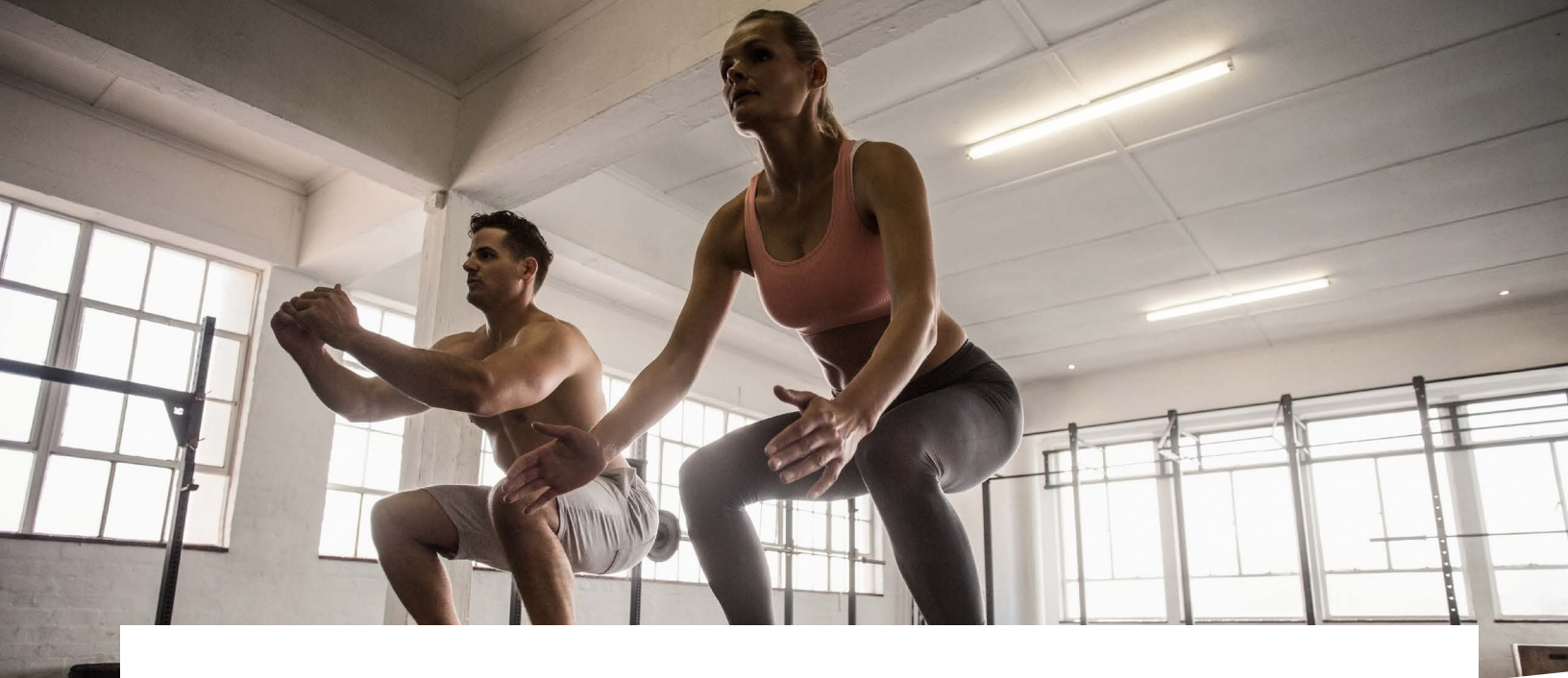
Once you've chosen a program, you'll study when you want, at your own pace, in your own space. Follow the suggested schedule to study just 7-10 hours a week and you'll be certified within six months. Or complete the program sooner if you're truly motivated to get your career going.

Step 5: Secure Insurance

Whether you're working with clients in their home, in your home, at the park, or in a fitness center or gym, having the right personal trainer insurance is priceless. It protects you, your clients, and your business at a time when the [median cost of a liability lawsuit is \\$54,000](#). Depending on how you are operating your business, you may want to look into the following types of insurance:

- Commercial general liability (CGL)
- Product liability
- Professional liability
- Sexual misconduct liability
- Disability

For more about these different types of insurance, read this article on [Professional Insurance for Professional Trainers](#).



Step 6: Get Hired

Whether you work for yourself or decide to pursue a career as a corporate fitness instructor, getting hired in today's fast-paced health and wellness industry is a full-time job in itself. Keep your résumé up-to-date and use [health industry career resources](#) and job boards to find the right gig for you.

Step 7: Stay Certified

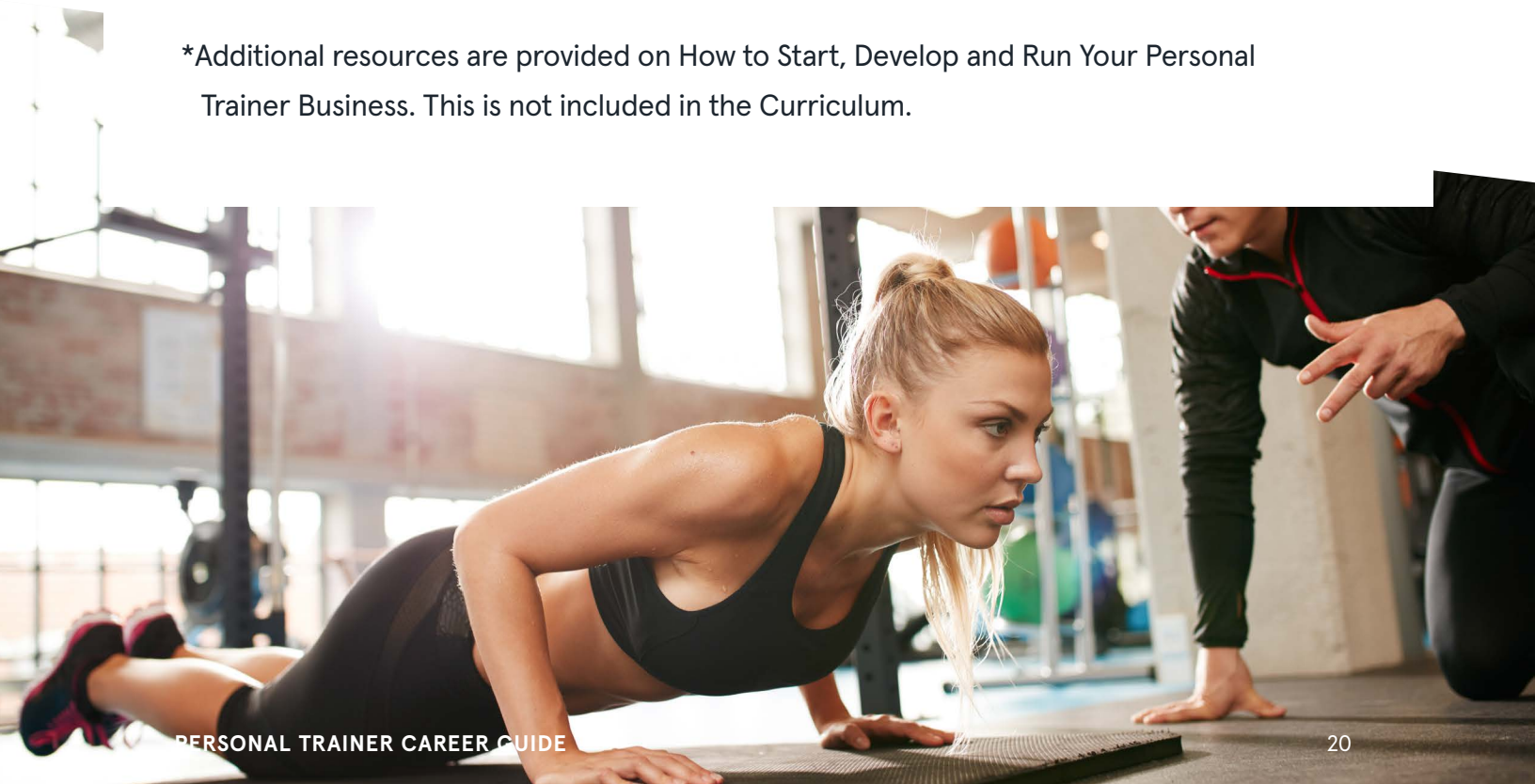
Long after you've become certified and landed the perfect job helping others see how powerful a more active life can be, you must [keep your certifications current](#). Additionally, it might be worth exploring [complementary certifications](#) in areas such as nutrition or health coaching to round out your personal training chops.

Get to Know the Curriculum

Personal Trainer Certification Program Curriculum Overview

- **Module 1** Scientific Foundations
- **Module 2** Fitness Assessment
- **Module 3** Exercise Prescription for Health, Fitness, and Performance
- **Module 4** Special Populations Physical Activity & Recommendations
- **Module 5** Comprehensive Exercise Program Considerations
- **Module 6** Bodyweight Training Program Design
- **Module 7** Muscle, Strength, Speed, and Performance Program Design

*Additional resources are provided on How to Start, Develop and Run Your Personal Trainer Business. This is not included in the Curriculum.



Module 1:

Scientific Foundations of Physical Activity & Performance

Part 1 Health, Fitness, and Performance

Health and Avoidance of Disease

Physical Activity and Health

Physical Activity Guidelines

Fitness Performance

Pulling It All Together

Part 2 Health Risk Appraisal

Pre-Activity Screening

Fitness Program Decisions

Part 3 Functional Anatomy and Biomechanics

Skeletal Anatomy

Structure and Function of Joints

Joint Movements

Skeletal Muscle

Muscle Groups

Basic Biomechanical Concepts for Human Movement

Muscle Groups and the Mechanics of Physical Activity

Part 4 Exercise Physiology

Energy and Work

Understanding Muscle Structure and Function

Metabolic, Cardiovascular, and Respiratory Responses to Exercise

Graded Exercise Test

Cardiac Output

Effects of Endurance Training and Detraining

on Physiological Responses

Cardiovascular Responses to Exercise

Cardiovascular Responses to Isometric Exercises and Weightlifting

Regulating Body Temperature

Part 5 Nutrition

Essential Nutrients

Examining Dietary Intake

Recommendations for Dietary Intake

Diet, Exercise, and the Blood-Lipid Profile

Nutrition for Physical Active Individuals

Part 6 Energy Cost in Physical Activity

Measuring Energy Expenditure

Expressing Energy Expenditure

Equations for Estimating the Energy Cost of Activities

Energy Requirements of Walking, Running,

Cycling Ergometry, and Stepping

Energy Requirements of Other Activities

Module 2:

Fitness Assessment

Part 1 Assessment of Cardiorespiratory Fitness

Testing Sequences

Field Tests

Graded Exercise Tests

Common Variables Measured During a Graded Exercise Test

Procedures for Graded Exercise Tests

Part 2 Assessment of Body Composition

Health and Body Composition

Methods of Assessing Body Composition

Calculating Target Body Weight

Part 3 Assessment of Muscular Fitness

Preliminary Considerations

Muscular Strength

Local Muscular Endurance

Testing Older Adults

Testing Clients with Cardiovascular Disease

Testing Children and Adolescents

Part 4 Assessment of Flexibility and Low-Back Function

Basics of Flexibility

Factors Affecting Range of Motion

Hip, Knee, Ankle, and Shoulder Flexibility Testing

Spinal Range of Motion and Low-Back Function

Lumbopelvic Rhythm

Combined Tests of Range of Motion in Trunk and Hip Flexion

Module 3:

Exercise Prescription for Health, Fitness, and Performance

Part 1 Exercise Prescription for Cardiorespiratory Fitness

Prescribing Exercise

Short-and Long-Term Responses to Exercise

Public Health Recommendations for Physical Activity

General Guidelines for Cardiorespiratory Fitness Programs

Formulating the Exercise Prescription

Determining Intensity

Exercise Recommendations for the Untested Masses

Exercise Programming for the Fit Population

Exercise Prescription Using Complete Graded

Exercise Test Results

Part 2 Exercise Prescription for Weight Management

Increasing Prevalence of Obesity in the United States

Etiology of Obesity

Maintaining of a Healthy Weight

Behavior Modification for Weight Loss and Maintenance

Gimmicks and Gadgets for Weight Loss

Disordered Eating Patterns

Strategies for Gaining Weight

Part 3 Exercise Prescription for Muscular Fitness

Principles of Training

Program Design Considerations

Types of Resistance Training

Modes of Resistance Training

Safety Issues

Resistance Training Guidelines

Resistance Training Systems

Resistance Training for Special Populations

Overreaching and Overtraining

Part 4 Exercise Prescription for Flexibility and Low-Back Function

Anatomy of the Spine

Mechanics of the Spine and the Hip Joint

Exercise Considerations: Preventive and Therapeutic

- Core Muscle Exercises
- Exercises to Enhance Flexibility
- Pilates, Yoga, Tai Chi, and Aquatic Approaches

Part 5 Training for Performance

- Warm-Up and Cool-Down
- Training for Aerobic Events
- Training for Sprint Events
- Training for Explosive Power Events
- Concurrent Strength and Endurance Performance
- Commercial Programs Targeting Performance Enhancement

Module 4:

Exercise Prescription for Special Populations

Part 1 Exercise for Children and Youth

- Responses to Exercise
- Special Considerations
- Fitness Measurements
- Recommendations for Physical Activity
- Developmental Concerns

Part 2 Exercise and Older Adults

- Demographic Profile
- Effects of Aging on Fitness

Special Considerations Regarding Exercise Testing
Exercise Prescription
Psychological Health and Well-Being

Part 3 Exercise and Women's Health

Pregnancy and Exercise
Osteoporosis
Female Athlete Triad

Part 4 Exercise and Heart Disease

Atherosclerosis
Cardiovascular Disease
Populations in Cardiac Rehabilitation Programs
Evidence to Exercise Training
Diagnostic Tests to Detect Coronary Heart Disease
Exercise Testing in Patients with Coronary Heart Disease
Typical Exercise Prescription
Medications

Part 5 Exercise and Obesity

Potential Causes of Obesity
Prevalence of Obesity
Physical Activity in Prevention and Treatment of Obesity
Screening and Testing Clients with Obesity
Exercise Prescription

Part 6 Exercise and Diabetes

- Comparison of Type 1 and Type 2 Diabetes
- Exercise for Clients with Diabetes
- Screening and Testing Clients with Diabetes
- Exercise Prescription

Part 7 Exercise and Pulmonary Disease

- Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease
- Restrictive Lung Diseases
- Evidence for Exercise Training
- Diagnostic Tests to Detect COPD
- Typical Exercise Prescription
- Medications

Module 5:

Comprehensive Exercise Program Considerations

Part 1 Behavior Change

- Theories of Behavior Change
- Promoting Exercise in Sedentary and Low-Active Individuals
- Enhancing Sustained Motivation and Behavioral Adherence
- Health and Fitness Counseling

Part 2 ECG and Exercise Performance

Structure of the Heart

Oxygen Use by the Heart

Electrophysiology of the Heart

Interpreting the ECG

Medications That Affect Heart Rate Response

Part 3 Injury Prevention and Treatment

Emergency Action Plan

Injury Management

Environmental Concerns

Medical Conditions

Basic Life Support and Emergency Procedures

Part 4 Legal Considerations

Injury Data and Injuries Leading to Litigation

Causes of Injuries and Negligence



Law and the Legal System
Federal Laws Application to the Fitness Profession
Determining Duty in Negligence Cases
Risk Management
Strategies to Minimize Legal Liability
Record Keeping and Documentation of Evidence

Module 6:

Bodyweight Training Program Design

Part 1 Bodyweight Training Program Design

The Bodyweight Challenge
The Bodyweight Advantage

Part 2 Arms

Muscles
Action and Movements
Exercises

Part 3 Neck and Shoulders

Muscles of the Neck
Action and Movements
Exercises

Part 4 Chest

Muscles
Action and Movements

Exercises

Part 5 Core

Muscles

Action and Movements

Exercises

Part 6 Back

Muscles

Muscles Action and Movements

Exercises

Part 7 Quadriceps and Hamstrings

Muscles

Action and Movements

Exercises

Part 8 Glutes

Gluteal Muscles

Glutes in Motion

Glute Exercises

Part 9 Lower Leg

Lower Leg Muscles

Lower Leg Actions

Lower Leg Exercises

Part 10 Whole Body

Metabolic Training

High-Intensity Interval Training (HIIT)

Metabolic Resistance Training (MRT)

Whole Body Exercises

Part 11 Planning Your Program

Individualization

Structural Balance

Training Goals

Sport-Specific Training

Strength

Hypertrophy

Body Part Specialization

Fat Loss

Training Variables

Exercise Selection

Exercise Order

Split

Frequency

Volume

Intensity

- Intensiveness
- Density
- Tempo
- Periodization
- Putting It All Together

Module 7:

Muscle, Strength, Speed, and Performance Program Design

Part I Principles and Rationale

- Functional Training
- Improved Performance
- Specific Exercises
- General Exercises
- Types of Resistance Exercise
- Total-Body Power Exercises
- Cross-Body Exercises
- Compound Exercises
- Isolated Exercises

Part 2 Building Muscle, Increasing Strength

- Movement-Speed Training
- Movement-Strength Training
- Muscle-Size Training
- Programming Strategies
- Varying the Order and Volume
- Varying Sets and Reps for Better Gains

Part 3 **Cardio Conditioning**

- Types of Cardio Conditioning
- Supramaximal Interval Training
- Steady-State Cardio Training
- Metabolic Conditioning Protocols
- Cardio Conditioning Exercises

Part 4 **Upper Body**

- Pushing Total-Body Power Exercises
- Pulling Total-Body Power Exercises

Lower Body

- Total-Body Power Exercises
- Cross Body Exercises
- Compound Exercises

Core

- Total-Body Power Exercises
- Compound Exercises

Warm-Up and Cooldown

Warm-Up

In-Place Warm-Up Exercises

Large Space Warm-Up Exercises

Part 5 Workout Programs

Foundational Programming

Foundational Workout Program Guidelines

Foundational Workout Programs

Break-In Workout Programs

Muscle-Based Workout Programs

Strength-Based Workout Programs

Power-Based Workout Programs

Performance Programming

Performance Workout Program Guidelines

Performance Workout Programs

Performance Program 1: Workout A—Pulling

Performance Program 1: Workout B—Lower Body and Core

Performance Program 1: Workout C—Pushing

Performance Program 2: Workout A—Pulling

Performance Program 2: Workout B—Lower Body and Core

Performance Program 2: Workout C—Pushing

Performance Program 3: Workout A—Pulling

Performance Program 3: Workout B—Lower Body and Core

Muscle Programming

Muscle Workout Program Guidelines

Muscle Workout Programs

Muscle Program 1: Workout A—Pulling

Muscle Program 1: Workout A—Lower Body and Core

Muscle Program 1: Workout C—Pushing

Muscle Program 2: Workout A—Pulling

Muscle Program 2: Workout B—Lower Body and Core

Muscle Program 2: Workout C—Pushing

Performance and Muscle Programming

Performance and Muscle Workout Program Guidelines

Performance and Muscle Programs

Performance and Muscle 1: Workout A—Pulling

Performance and Muscle 1: Workout B—Lower Body and Core

Performance and Muscle 2: Workout A—Pulling

Performance and Muscle 2: Workout B—Lower Body and Core

Customizing Programs for Personal Results

Adapt Exercises Based on Your Ability

Work Around—Not Through—Injuries and Limitations

Use the Two C's When Selecting Exercises

Work Within Your Training Environment

Use the Principle of Specificity

Launch Your Career with AFPA

Getting certified with AFPA will provide you with the education, tools, and knowledge to help your clients achieve their fitness and health goals. Our program emphasizes the important elements of being a successful personal trainer, including:

- Principles of exercise science, human anatomy, and biomechanics and how they apply to movement design and exercise instruction
- Communication skills needed to work with clients and in group settings
- Fundamentals of [managing and marketing a personal training business](#)
- Exercise testing procedures to complete physical and fitness assessments
- How to design personalized fitness programs based on current research
- How to properly use various commercial fitness machines and equipment
- How to cater exercise principles and practices to the correct clients and populations
- How to discuss exercise testing and training modifications
- How to uphold the [AFPA Code of Ethics](#) as you build your career as a personal trainer

Becoming an AFPA Certified Personal Trainer will allow you to use your expertise to motivate, educate, and instruct others to reach and exceed their fitness goals.

The Benefits of AFPA

Every AFPA certification program has been developed by trusted, experienced professionals who are experts in their field. Not only do our programs offer the most up-to-date research and best practices, but they also feature the following benefits:

- **Study at Your Own Pace:** Our personal trainer program is a self-paced, self-study program that you can complete from the comfort of your home in six months or less. You can complete the course 100 percent online, or you can choose a hybrid learning program with physical textbooks and online testing.

“After my (professional) baseball career came to an end, I made the realization that I wanted to work in exercise and help people (myself included) get and stay in shape. I sought out certification as a personal trainer with AFPA while I worked a part-time job at Aspen East Fitness.”

Jared Trout, AFPA graduate and General Manager/Director
of Personal Training at AE Fitness in Montclair, NJ

Nationally Recognized and Accredited

The AFPA Personal Trainer Certification program has been voted a Top 10 Best Personal Trainer Certification by both [LiveStrong](#) and [Huffington Post](#). Our national and international accreditations attest to our program being current, on-trend, and based in science and research. Also, our programs have been evaluated by third-party accrediting organizations, which is a testament to the high quality of not only our program, but our graduates.

AFPA is a proud member of the [Institute for Credentialing Excellence \(ICE\)](#) and our certifications are approved by the [G.I. Bill](#) and [Military Spouse Career Advancement Accounts \(MYCAA\)](#).

The Price is Right

One of the best things about an AFPA certification is that our program won't break the bank. If you're on the fence about whether you truly want to pursue a career as a personal trainer, our curriculum is very affordable. With [payment plans](#) that fit your budget, the AFPA Personal Trainer Certification costs significantly less than the tens of thousands you would spend on a four-year degree program. You can put your training into practice faster, too.

FAQs

Is there such a thing as a license to be a Personal Trainer?

Personal trainers are not “licensed” practitioners. You can conduct your training business how you choose, keeping in mind the AFPA Code of Ethics.

Why should I become an AFPA Certified Personal Trainer?

AFPA is recognized nationally and internationally as a leader in fitness, wellness, and nutrition education and certification. Earning your AFPA Personal Trainer Certification is the first step in gaining the knowledge to successfully train various populations, as well as to gain professional recognition and financial rewards. You will learn all the important information necessary to get you started as a certified Personal Trainer.

Who completes the AFPA certification programs?

Many people with different backgrounds and education have participated in AFPA certification training programs, including doctors, chiropractors, gym owners, college and high school coaches, wellness coordinators, weight loss counselors, non-certified instructors and trainers, and individuals who are currently certified by other organizations. There are no state-by-state regulations for personal training, and your certification is therefore valid in any state and country.

Are there any pre-qualifications for becoming an AFPA Certified Personal Trainer?

AFPA requires that individuals be at least 18 years of age, have the equivalent of a high school education, and have a sincere desire to help others obtain their fitness and lifestyle goals.

How long does it take to complete the AFPA Certified Personal Trainer program?

Completion time varies by individual and will depend on which certification program you enroll in, your educational background, reading and writing skills, and efficiency. Most individuals can become a competent certified Personal Trainer in fewer than six months when studying 7-10 hours a week.



What is the enrollment fee to become an AFPA Certified Personal Trainer?

The price for AFPA Certification varies depending on the certification course chosen. Please review the individual certification courses for the prices. These prices include all courses materials and examination fees—there are no hidden costs!

How soon after I enroll can I get started?

Enrollment orders can take up to 24 business hours to process. If you enroll in a digital delivery option, you will be sent your enrollment email with online digital access. If you have selected to receive printed materials, shipments take 3-5 business days.

How long do I have to complete the Personal Trainer program, and how do I take my exam?

The Personal Trainer course includes multiple textbooks/e-books, self-assessment quizzes, online videos, course guidelines, and a final exam. Typically, it takes 100 hours. This is a self-paced, self-study program that is typically completed in fewer than six months. The final exam is completed on your own desktop or mobile device. For more information, [click here](#).

Do I have to go to a testing site for the final exam?

No. You can complete the final exam on your own desktop or mobile device.

Does my certification include professional liability insurance (PLI) coverage?

Because of the varied nature of the positions held by AFPA professionals, liability insurance coverage is not included with your enrollment fee.

Once you complete your AFPA certification, however, you may apply for professional liability insurance with any one of AFPA's approved insurance providers.

Do I need first aid and/or CPR certification prior to enrolling in a Fitness or Personal Trainer certification program?

No. First aid and CPR certifications are not required prior to completing your certification program.

What if I don't pass the certification exam?

If you don't pass the certification exam, you may retake the exam for a retest fee of \$75.00.



How much time is required to complete the Master Personal Trainer certification program?

You will have up to two years to complete the Master Personal Trainer program. The average student takes approximately 400 hours to complete all four courses. The hours include reading, listening, watching, note taking, self-assessment quizzes/activities, assignments, and the final exam for each program.

The courses include:

- Personal Trainer

- Nutrition and Wellness Consultant

- Advanced Personal Trainer

- Sports Conditioning Specialist

For details on the Master Personal Trainer, click [here](#).

Who can enroll in this certification program?

We welcome anyone interested in making their lives better and those around them through creating a healthy lifestyle!

Also, any licensed and credentialed healthcare professionals, as well as individuals working as any of the following fields, may be interested in taking this program to further their skills and practice: physician, physician assistant, licensed clinical counselor, chiropractor, nurse practitioner/clinical nurse specialist, RN/LPN/LVN, therapists and assistants, dentist/licensed dental hygienist, registered dietitians, certified nutrition specialist, certified nutrition professionals, certified diabetes educator, certified athletic trainer, certified exercise physiologist, licensed acupuncturist, certified personal trainers, and certified fitness professionals.

My background is not in healthcare or fitness. Can I still enroll?

Absolutely! Although experience in a health and wellness field is a plus, great coaches come from diverse career backgrounds and prior life experiences.

I just want to learn for my own self-improvement, can I still enroll in this program if I do not want to practice being a Personal Trainer?

Absolutely. We encourage you to foster your personal and professional growth even if you have no desire to become a Personal Trainer. We are confident that the information you learn from this course will not only benefit you personally but also those with whom you share your knowledge.



When can I enroll? What do I need to do in order to enroll?

Whenever you want! We have a rolling enrollment for all programs, meaning that all you need to do is [complete your enrollment online](#).

How much does the program cost?

Visit the online enrollment page for more information.

Are there any payment plan options?

Absolutely! Pick the loan that fits your budget, and make payments over three, six, or 12 months. Our payment plans offer instant approval, are safe and secure—security of your personal information is top priority—and payment reminders can be sent via email and text. Please visit our [Payment Plans page](#) to learn more about available options.

What is the estimated time commitment per week?

This program is a self-paced, self-study course, so you dictate when, where, and how long you will study each week. The time it takes to complete your

coursework will vary depending on your learning style. Between reading assignments, practice quizzes, and online videos and assignments, most students spend about 10–15 hours per week on their coursework.

We understand that adult learners will pace themselves according to their learning style and schedule. However, we have provided a suggested study schedule to set you on course to have your Personal Trainer certificate program completed in fewer than six months.

You may complete the coursework whenever and wherever is convenient for you. You may choose to access your program 100 percent online, or, if you prefer textbooks, we offer those as well. We recognize that not all our students like online materials but prefer physical materials. Either way, you can access program materials anytime.

Will I practice coaching techniques and client consultations during the program?

Yes. You'll have assignments that require you to practice coaching and consultation in your environment on your own and with a person of your choosing. Hands-on coaching practice sessions and dietary consultations will help prepare you to work with real clients after your program completion.

Will there be exams?

Yes. As you complete your program you will test your knowledge through quizzes, review questions and assignments to support your learning. You will complete a practical skills assessment by completing coaching and consultation sessions with a person of your choice. This will be followed by two comprehensive online certification examinations.

Will I have access to the entire course when I enroll?

Yes! We don't hold back your materials. Once you are enrolled, you will receive all of your course instructions to access your materials online and/or tracking information for any materials you have requested to be shipped to you.

What books and materials will I need?

Your enrollment fee includes all of your course materials, assessments, online access, student support, and online certification testing. There are no added fees.

Is the program set up for international students?

Yes. The program is designed to accommodate students from around the world, and you can select your delivery method—100-percent digital, in print, and delivered to your doorstep, or both—when enrolling.

What if I need technical support with my online access to materials?

Should you have any questions or problems, we provide you with contact information for you to reach out to your instructor or the technical support team to troubleshoot any technical difficulties.



Since 1994, AFPA has offered some of the most highly regarded nutrition, wellness, personal trainer, group fitness, yoga, pilates, and sports conditioning certifications—at a price you can afford—online or through distance education. With more than 25 different nationally and internationally recognized certification programs, we also offer many specialty credentials in medical wellness, as well as more than 200 continuing education courses to keep you on the cutting edge of what is happening in our industry—and to help you maintain your credentials.

Put Your Passion into Practice

Visit the AFPA Store

For more information on becoming an AFPA® Certified Personal Trainer, visit AFPAfitness.com.

