

South Texas College Fire Academy

Cadet Physical Agility Test

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Candidate Physical Agility Test Procedures

This is a pass/fail test based on a validated maximum total time of 12 minutes and 30 seconds.

Purpose of the Physical Agility Test

The Candidate Physical Agility Test consists of eight job-related physical tasks that have been selected to evaluate a Candidate's strength, dexterity, and stamina. It is similar to agility tests now required by most fire departments. It is designed to simulate a continuous series of routine tasks that a firefighter could be required to perform at a typical fire emergency.

The agility test will acquaint Candidates with the physical demands required of a firefighter, and assess each Candidate's physical conditioning as it relates to their ability to perform typical firefighter tasks. All props were designed to obtain the necessary information regarding your physical ability. The tools and equipment were chosen to provide the highest level of consistency, safety, and validity in measuring your physical abilities.

It is common for a few Candidates to fail to finish the evaluation fully, or on time, on the FIRST attempt. Failure to finish at all, or well beyond the prescribed timeframe, generally indicates a need for the Candidate to get in better physical condition. Finishing all events, in slightly over the allotted time, may indicate lack of physical conditioning, or just the need to work on technique.

Due to time constraints and the physical drain put on Candidates, each Candidate will be allowed only one attempt to go through the events each test day. The inability to successfully complete this test in the time allotted is a good indication that the Candidate would also have difficulty passing the physical agility tests that most fire departments now require as part of their firefighter candidate screening process as well as the fire academy. It should encourage those who fail or do poorly to implement a program of physical self-improvement.

What will the Candidate wear?

In these events, you wear a 50-pound vest to simulate the weight of self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA). Throughout all events, you must wear long pants, a hard hat with chin strap, work gloves, and footwear with no open heel or toe. Watches and loose or restrictive jewelry are not permitted.

What is the sequence of events?

1. Stair Climb
2. Hose Drag
3. Equipment Carry
4. Ladder Raise and Extension
5. Ceiling Breach and Pull
6. Forcible Entry
7. Ventilation
8. Rescue

Each Candidate will begin with event #1 and proceed non-stop through all eight events. Candidates will walk at a brisk pace from event to event without stopping. Running is not allowed. Timing of the test will begin at the start of the first event and end upon satisfactory completion of all events.

Event Overviews

The sections below are intended to provide just a general overview of the event steps. The prescribed time and other pertinent information will be explained in detail on the day of the test.

1. Stair Climb.

During this event, the candidate picks up a 50 ft. bundle of 1 ¾ inch hose, and places it on either shoulder. The candidate is required to walk on the StepBox at a set stepping rate of 60 steps per minute for 3 minutes. This concludes the event. The candidate walks to the next event.

2. Hose Drag

During this event, the candidate grasps an automatic nozzle attached to 200 feet of 1 ¾-inch hose. The candidate places the hoseline over the shoulder. The candidate is not permitted to run during the hose drag. The candidate drags the hose 75 feet to a prepositioned drum, makes a 90° turn around the drum and continues an additional 25 feet. The candidate then stops within the marked area, drops to at least one knee and pulls the hoseline until the hoseline's 50-foot mark is across the finish line. During the hose pull, the candidate must keep at least one knee in contact with the ground and knee(s) must remain within the marked boundary lines. This concludes the event. The candidate walks to the next event.

3. Equipment Carry

During this event, the candidate removes the two saws from the engines rear compartment, one at a time, and places them on the ground. The candidate then picks up both saws, one in each hand, and carries them while walking 75 feet around the cone, then back to the starting point. Upon return to the engine, the candidate places the saws on the ground, then picks up each saw one at a time, and replaces the saw in the designated space in the compartment. This concludes the event. The candidate walks to the next event.

4. Ladder Raise and Extension

During this event, the candidate walks to the top rung of the 24-foot aluminum extension ladder, lifts the first rung at the unhinged end from the ground, and walks it up until it is stationary against the wall. This must be done in a hand over hand fashion, using each rung until the ladder is stationary against the wall. The candidate then reverses the process and walks the ladder back down to the ground. The candidate must not use the ladder rails to raise or lower the ladder. The candidate immediately proceeds to the pre-positioned and secured 24-foot aluminum extension ladder and extends the fly section hand over hand until it hits the stop. The candidate then lowers the fly section hand over hand in a controlled fashion to the starting position. This concludes the event. The candidate walks to the next event.

5. Ceiling Breach and Pull

During this event, the candidate removes the pike pole from the bracket, stands within the boundary established by the equipment frame, and places the tip of the pole on the painted area of the hinged door in the ceiling. The candidate fully pushes up the 60-lb hinged door in the ceiling with the pike pole three times. The candidate then hooks the pike pole to the 80-lb ceiling device and pulls the pole down four times. Each set consists of three pushes and four pulls. The candidate repeats the set five times. The candidate is permitted to stop and, if needed, adjust the grip. Releasing the grip or slipping from pike pole handle, without the pike pole falling to ground, does not result in a warning or constitute a failure. The candidate may re-establish the grip and resume the event. If the candidate does not successfully complete a repetition (i.e. complete the up and down motion), the proctor calls out "MISS" and the candidate must push or pull the apparatus again to complete the repetition. The event ends when the applicant completes the final pull stroke repetition as indicated by the proctor who calls out "TIME". The candidate walks to the next event.

6. Forcible Entry

During this event, the candidate uses a 10-pound sledgehammer and strikes the measuring device in the target area until the buzzer signal is activated. After the buzzer is activated, the candidate places the sledgehammer on the ground. This concludes the event. The candidate walks to the next event.

7. Ventilation

During this event, the candidate uses a 10-pound sledgehammer and strikes a tire laying on its side 30 times. After striking the tire 30 times the candidate places the sledgehammer on the ground. This concludes the event. The candidate walks to the next event.

8. Rescue

During this event, the candidate grasps a 165-pound mannequin by the handle(s) on the shoulder(s) of the harness (either one or both handles are permitted), drags it 35 feet to a pre-positioned cone, makes a 180° turn around the cone, and continues an additional 35 feet to the finish line. It is permissible for the mannequin to touch the cone. The candidate is permitted to lower the mannequin to the ground to adjust their grip. The entire mannequin must be dragged past the marked finish line. This concludes the event. The event and the total test time ends when the entire mannequin crosses the marked finish line as indicated by the proctor who calls out "TIME".