



Sizing up the Best Firefighter Workout Programs

Presented by:

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AARON ZAMZOW (ZAM)

- Over 20 years experience as a Lieutenant, Firefighter/ EMT, and Training Officer for the City of Madison, WI Fire Department.
- Certified (NASM, Ace – Peer Fitness, NSCA – CSCS, PN1) and degreed Personal Fitness Trainer with 30 years experience.
- Trained with elite athletes for the NBA, NHL, and NFL.
- Owner of Fire Rescue Fitness
- Contributing Writer for Firehouse Magazine, Firefighter International, Lexipol, FireRescue1...
- Host of the “Better Every Shift Podcast”
- Thank YOU! www.FireRescueFitness.com/seminar



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I GOT YOU!

- Get the slides for the presentation: www.FireRescueFitness.com/seminar
- Sign up for a FREE FRF 28-day Catalyst Workout Program and Eating Guidelines.



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WHO ARE YOU?

- Chiefs, Captains, Admin?
- Peer Fitness Trainers?
- Interested in Fitness?
- How many have fitness teams?
- What do you hope to get from today's seminar?



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WHAT WE WANT TO LEARN TODAY.

- Why is “functional” fitness so important.
 - What is functional.
- What are the Essential Components of an effective Firefighter Workout Program.
- How to create and effective and efficient workouts.
- How to put everything together.



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Health and Fitness in the Fire Service

- We still die of heart attacks and strokes.
- Cancer is projected to become the next epidemic in the fire service.
- PTSD and mental health (suicide) cases continually rise...
- Orthopedics injuries still occur at a high rate
 - (Ankle injuries in Jacksonville)



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What does it mean to be healthy?

- **Fit or not fit: Shredded, works out 2 times per day, drinks 2 energy drinks per day, and needs alcohol to sleep...**
- **Fit or not fit: Workout 3 times per week, 10-15 pounds overweight, eats healthy, practices mindfulness...**
- **Health is a confluence of factors that work together.**



Culture Change Starts with Movement!

- Exercise (and hydration) helps with cognitive function and thinking.
- Training properly reduces injuries and lost time!!!
- Even lifting a radio requires strength
- Longevity- Enjoy retirement
- The better you move and feel, the better you perform and function (on the job and off).



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BENEFITS OF FUNCTIONAL FITNESS

- Injury Reduction/Performance Improvement
 - Weight control
 - Lower instances of Cancer
- Decrease chances of sudden heart attack and stroke.
 - Improves cognitive thinking
- Improves mental health (lowers symptoms of depression)
 - Helps manage PTSD
- Improves Cognitive Thinking
- Improves immune response (COVID)

** Brain, Behavior, and Immunity
Volume 61, March 2017, Pages 60-68



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WHERE TO BEGIN



- A healthy and fit lifestyle can reduce instances of heart attack, stroke, cancers, and PTSD (by up to 30%).



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WHERE TO BEGIN



- We know we need to improve our health.
- Overwhelmed?
- Frustrated?
- How?

Fitness Success Spectrum

We must have “functional” resources for all levels of health and fitness.

Unhealthy

Healthy/Fit



Sedentary

Active



**Poor Diet
Habits**

**Good Diet
Habits**



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What is Functional Training?

“Training the body for the activities performed in daily life”.

-Mayo Clinic



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Our Playing Ground “Daily Life”

Firefighting/ EMS is strenuous work!



BARIATRICS

We don't need bigger ambulances, we need smaller people



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Fire/Rescue Ground Motions

- Lifting
- Crawling
- Pulling
- Hoisting
- Carrying
- Dragging
- Climbing
- Slamming (sledge)
- “Core” Work



What is Functional...



These athletes don't do these workouts to prepare for their job...



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Are “WE” Athletes?

**“IF YOU HAVE A BODY,
YOU ARE AN ATHLETÉ.”**

-BILL BOWERMAN



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My Take...

“Being a fire rescue athlete is a state of mind, which is not bound by age, rank, or situation. You must be physically and mentally ready to perform regardless of your playing field.”

--Aaron "ZAM" Zamzow



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The Million Dollar Question



**Do the exercises in your workout mimic
and/or help you do your job more
efficient and effectively?**

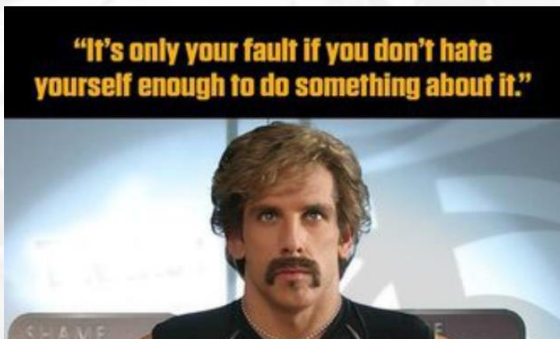


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Functional?

- Marathon/ Ironman?
- CrossFit?
- P90X, Insanity?
- GET HUGE Bro-tein Program?
- How much do you bench?
- 7-minute Abs?
- Zumba?
- Yoga?



How much do you bench?

Many of the traditional weight-lifting machines seen in most firehouses do not “functionally” address the physical challenges fire rescue athletes need.



Is this an effective exercise?





Can we all agree...

The main goal of a firefighter, EMT and/or medics workout should be to improve performance, reduce injuries and promote career longevity?



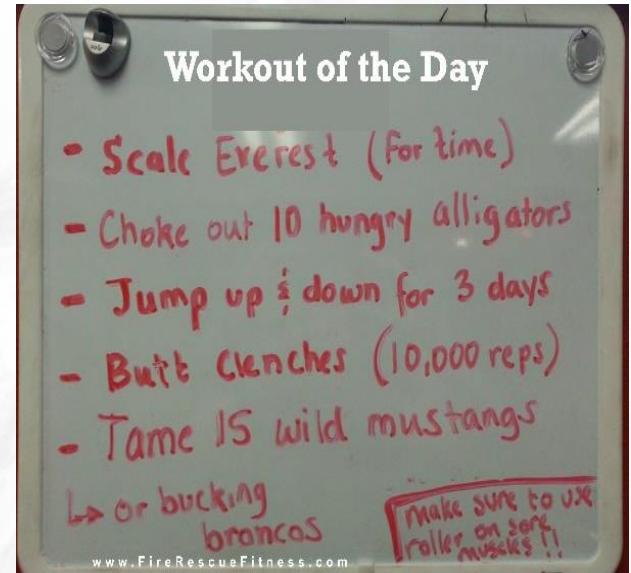
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How Should We Workout?

1. Have a Plan

- Develop a training base.
- Increase intensity with time and skill development.



How Should We Workout?

2. You must work your core.

- During a career, almost 50% of all fire rescue athletes will hurt their back while on duty.



How Should We Workout?

3. Have some heart.

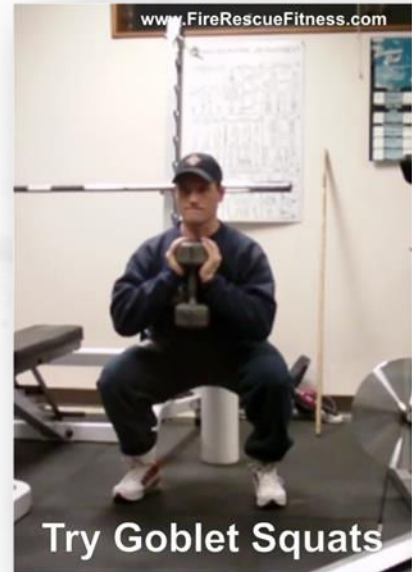
- Not just running or biking...
- Intervals are one of the best ways to simulate the high level of fitness required on the fire ground



How Should We Workout?

4. Full-body Exercise.

- Functional strength exercises increase balance around the joints and prevents injuries by stimulating stabilizing muscles.
- We DO NOT Isolate muscles on the fire/rescue ground.



How Should We Workout?

5. Warm-up and Be Mobile.

- Dynamic warm-up before workouts and trainings.
- *The more flexible...the more efficient the movement.*

Spiderman Steps



Step Ups



Reach and Rotate



How Should We Workout

6. RECOVER!

- Stretch, foam roll, yoga, sleep, nutrition, hydration, stress
- Take a 10-minute break (deep breathing)
- 5 +1 = 6 Breathing



Essential Components of a Firefighter Workout.

1. Have a Plan
2. You **MUST** work your Core
3. Have Some Heart- Intervals
4. Be Full-body Functional
5. Warm-up and Be Flexible (foam rollers)
6. Understand **RECOVERY**



The Anatomy of a Functional Workout

- Active warm-up (3-4 exercises)
- Core Training and prehab (3-4 exercises)
- Strength Training (8 exercises)
- Interval Overhauls (5 movements)
 - Use an interval timer
- Stretch and foam roll (4-5 minutes)



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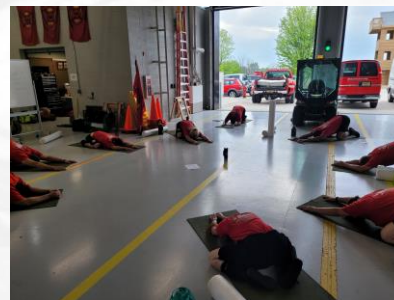
Interval Overhauls

- Choose 5 exercises or movements for intervals (30/30, 30/20, 30/15)
 - Sledges
 - Crawls
 - Sled push/pull
 - Sprints
 - Drags
 - Stairs
 - Carry
 - Ladder raises



4-minute Stretch Solution

- Choose 6 exercises or movements (Hold each for 20 seconds for 2 rounds)
 - Down dog
 - Kickstand
 - Quads
 - Chest
 - Low back
 - Spider
 - Hips
- Foam roll (if time permits)



The Anatomy of a Crew Workout

- Active warm-up (4-6 exercises)
- Fire Ground/ Strength/ Core Movements
 - Circuits of 6 or 8 exercises
 - 3 or 4 rounds (24 total)
- Stretch and foam roll (5 minutes)



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Put it all together!

Big Picture approach

- **How do shifts and workouts relate?**
- **Are function and performance the goal?**
- **How is your nutrition?**
- **Sleep hygiene?**
- **Are you managing stress?**

**THERE IS NO SECRET
FORMULA.
WORK HARD,
EAT RIGHT,
FOLLOW YOUR PLAN,
GET FRF
(FIRE RESCUE FIT)**



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Health is a confluence of factors that work together!

Improve Performance and Resilience

Not just functional
fitness...



E

= Exercise (functionally)



M

= MIND YOUR NUTRITION



S

= SLEEP



PUBLIC SAFETY ACADEMY

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CHANGE YOUR CULTURE

Strong Body, Strong Mind Workout Plan

Sunday (on shift)	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday (on shift)	Thursday	Friday	Saturday (on shift)
Light jog, bike or walk with 10 minutes of stretching/ yoga	Coffee Nap Full-body Strength Workout	OFF Recovery	Crew Interval Workout (slams, crawls, stairs, plank, carry, drag) Deep breathing	OFF Walk with family Coffee Nap	Full-body Strength Workout + 10 minutes of intervals	Yoga and stretching

Daily Nutrition Goals

- At least 80 ounces of water
- Limit Sugars (added sugars 35 grams or less)
- Eat lean protein, veggies and fruit at each meal (4x/ day)
- Have some healthy fats (almonds, avocado)



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Please remember this!



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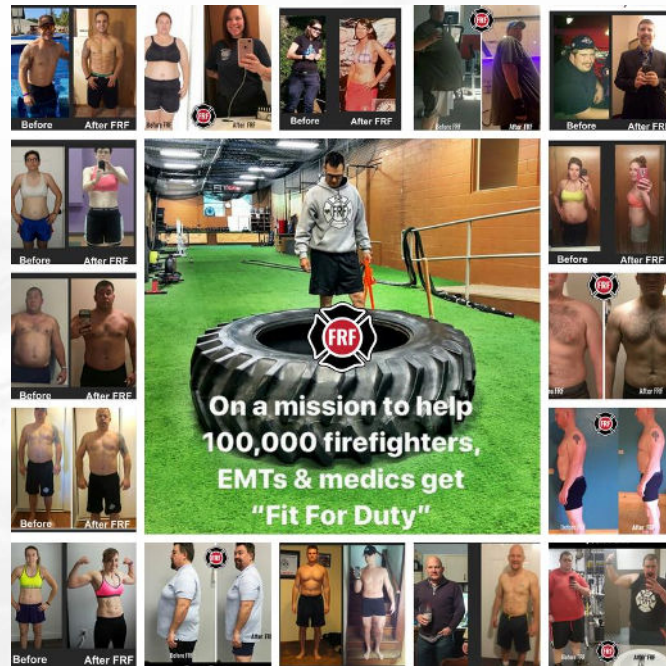
Thanks for attending

Now is the time to make a positive change in our industry.

Eat right, exercise, hydrate, focus on sleep, and set an example for your crew and community.

Take Care of Yourself and Each Other.

-Aaron Zamzow (ZAM)



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I GOT YOUR BACK

FREE Workout and Copy of the
Presentation

(www.FireRescueFitness.com/seminar)



FIRERESCUE
FITNESS



WWW.FIRERESCUFITNESS.COM



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Q AND A

- Nutrition?
- How to motivate the 15%?
- When to Workout?
- Plan for a Year?
- Assessments?



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FRF50

Day 1 and Day 50 take pictures and fill out the assessment.

Every day or Start Over

- Hydrate- Half body weight in ounces of water a day
- 30 minutes of exercise (minimum)
- 10 minutes of self-improvement reading
- 8500 steps (minimum)
- Follow a diet plan (No cheat meals/ alcohol)
- Deep Breathing Exercise- 1 minute per day



FRF Diet Guidelines

- Half body weight in water per day
- Under 35 grams of added sugar
- 4 servings of fruits and veggies (1 serving = approximately 1 clenched fist)
- Follow the 10-minute rule

www.FireRescueFitness.com

Who is in?

Essential Firehouse Nutrition...



**Just because it's there doesn't
mean you have to eat it...**



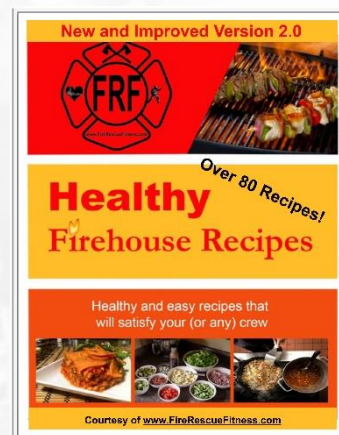
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Nutrition Hacks



Stay hydrated, hide the sweets, have good choices available, plan ahead with healthy snacks, have some go to healthy recipes...



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Functional Firehouse Fitness Equipment

- Space!!!
- Foam buckets, hose, SCBA, heavy stuff to carry, stairs, tires, webbing
- Foam rollers, bands, H2O
- TRX, Dbells, Kbells, bench
- Squat rack (with minimal weight)
- Cable column
- Treadmill, bike, stepmill
- Sandbags, row machine, aerodyne, Jacob's ladder



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CLOSE THE REFRIGERATOR

**YOU ARE NOT HUNGRY,
YOU ARE JUST BORED...**



A FRIENDLY REMINDER FROM WWW.FIRERESCUEFITNESS.COM



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TOP 10 THINGS FIT FIREFIGHTERS DO

1. Train functionally at least 3-4 times per week (consistently).
2. Hydrate- with water. Watch alcohol and energy drinks.
3. Get your annual medicals and cancer screens. And assess your level of fitness regularly.
4. Eat according to your goals. Eat real foods and lots of fruits and vegetables.
5. Focus on sleep (value sleep).
6. Manage your weight and body fat percentage.
7. Clean gear 2x per year and after incidents (including helmet liner and hood).
8. Work on your Emotional Resilience (build resilience). Connect with people!
9. Wear SCBA during all fires including overhaul and dumpster/ auto fires.
10. Get Better Every Shift- Practice an attitude of gratitude and focus on making yourself and those around you inspired to improve health, knowledge, and impact.



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