

YMCA Basketball Fitness Activities for 10-11-Year-Olds

Key Idea	Description	Page ¹
General Fitness	Gather the team into a group between two cones about 20 feet apart. “Do you think there’s a difference between physical activity and physical fitness?” Listen to their responses. “Physical <i>activity</i> is any body movement you use while performing a skill or task. Physical <i>fitness</i> is a condition of the body. The more fit your body is, the better you can perform some skills and tasks. I will give you some activities. Run to this cone if you think it is regular physical activity. Run to the other cone other if you think it is an activity done for fitness.” Examples of physical activity are walking to school or walking stairs to bed; examples of physical fitness are walking to school for exercise, jogging to improve sport performance, or walking stairs to strengthen leg muscles. “All season we will talk and learn about the different areas of fitness during our fitness circles. We’ll also work on improving your body’s fitness for basketball.”	140
General Fitness	Gather the team into a group. “Who can tell me what ‘warm up’ means?” Listen to their responses. They might mention getting the body ready to do more strenuous activity, increasing blood circulation, and moving muscles so they are more flexible and will help prevent injuries. Discuss their responses and other possible responses. “Raise your hand if you think the muscles actually get warmer during warm-up activities?” Listen to their responses. “They do get warmer from the blood circulating and your moving. Give me some examples of good warm-up activities.” Choose one for the team to try. “The warm-up is an important part of a good basketball fitness program. We will do a warm-up activity every practice.”	144
Cardio-respiratory Fitness	Gather the team into a group. “Who can tell me what cardiorespiratory fitness is? When you have good cardiorespiratory fitness, your heart picks up oxygen from your lungs and takes it all over your body.” Ask three players to demonstrate. Have one ball ready. The players should be spread out in a line; the ball will be passed zigzag down the line. Stagger players so the ball is passed across to each other, one side then the other side, in the line. “Let’s set up our own blood vessel to carry oxygen to the muscles.” Set up and perform the activity, with player 1 being the heart, player 2 the lungs, and player 3 the legs. “We need to run more to improve our body’s ability to get oxygen to our muscles. That is improving our cardiorespiratory fitness.”	147

¹ This page number refers to pages in the “Plans for 10- to 11-Year-Olds” document found on the “Season and Practice Plans” page in the YMCA’s **Coaching Basketball** online course.

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Cardio-respiratory Fitness	Gather the team into a circle. “What fitness area improves when we run more and strengthen our heart and lungs? Cardiorespiratory fitness. When we run more during practice to improve our cardiorespiratory fitness, what will start to happen?” Listen to their responses. Discuss getting fatigued if they run too fast early in the practice. “If you don’t want to tire early in the practice, we can use a special test to help you judge how fast to run. It’s called a talk test. A talk test can tell you if you’re running too fast for your body and need to slow down. Everyone jog to the goal and back with your partner saying ‘two points.’ You should not be out of breath while you’re talking; if you are, slow down!”	150
General Fitness	Gather the team into a group. “If you participate in basketball practice every week, do you think that’s enough to keep your body’s fitness to play basketball? Do you think you’ll improve your body’s fitness in the different areas?” Listen to their responses. “You need to be active outside basketball practice to keep your overall fitness at a level that helps your basketball. What are some activities you could do outside of practice?” Listen to their responses. Discuss practicing skills such as dribbling or shooting alone or with a partner. Ask one player to demonstrate using one ball. Have all players try.	153
Muscular Strength and Endurance	Gather the players into a group in a small area. “I want everyone to find a partner and balance back to back while sitting like a chair. I’ll time you for one minute.” Model the action for the group. “What muscles did you use to hold yourselves up?” Touch the different areas with your hand to show players the muscle groups of their legs, front and back. “You use different muscles to perform different activities. Practicing using specific muscles improves your muscular strength and endurance—that is, how hard you can dribble the ball and how long you can keep going before your muscles get tired.”	156
Flexibility	Gather the team into a circle. “Is there such a thing as stretching your muscles too far, or should you stretch as far as you can to improve your flexibility?” Listen to their responses. “Muscles should stretch only until you feel a slight pulling. You should never feel pain stretching. If you do, you’re stretching too far.” Choose a stretch for the team to try. “I want you to stretch until you feel the slight pulling. Everyone will have different levels of flexibility, but all of you need to stretch properly to stay flexible and prevent injuries.”	159

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Safety	Gather the team into a group. Gently tap your head with your fist. “Is my head hard or soft? Right—it’s hard because my skull is hard. It’s made out of bone. Raise your hand if you think bones can break. Right—we all know that bones can break. That’s why we want to control our bodies and protect ourselves when we’re playing basketball.”	162
Training and Conditioning	Gather the team into a single-file line. Players will run two distances, one longer than the other. Have the team run the shorter distance first and come back to the starting spot. Then have the team run the longer distance. “Do your muscles feel tired? Running farther, especially if you’re a little bit tired, is called overloading the muscles. Running a longer distance adds more for the muscles to do. It’s training the muscles to make them stronger and able to move longer before getting tired the next time you play. You’ll get stronger and have more endurance every time you overload the muscles.”	165
Flexibility	Gather the team into a circle and choose a stretch for them to try. “When we’re stretching, should we feel anything?” Listen to their responses. “When I feel the slight pulling, what should I do? Bounce or hold the stretch? Raise your hand if you think bounce. Now raise your hand if you think hold. To get a good stretch, you should hold the stretch for 10 counts, then relax. If you feel the slight pulling go away, you can stretch a bit further. That tells you your muscles are getting more flexible. Be sure to practice proper stretching to improve your flexibility.”	168
Training and Conditioning	Gather the team into a group. “Do you think you should swim to get ready for basketball season? Raise your hand if you think swimming is a good way to prepare for basketball. Swimming is a good way to keep active in the off-season or other times when you don’t have basketball practice. To improve your basketball conditioning either before or during basketball season, it’s best to participate in skills you use in basketball. That is called specificity training because it is specific to the sport. What are some of the training skills we should be using for basketball?” Listen to their responses. “Running, shooting, and dribbling would be the best.”	171

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Healthy Habits	Gather the team into a group near two cones about 10 feet apart. Show a pyramid shape with your hands and fingers put together. “This is a pyramid. Does anyone know what the food pyramid is? We use the food pyramid to remind us how to eat well. The bottom of the pyramid has foods like carbohydrates (breads, cereals, rice) and fruits and vegetables; these should be eaten in greater amounts. The top of the pyramid has high-fat and sweeter foods such as fried foods, cake, and chips; these we should eat in smaller amounts. Tell me a snack and run to this cone if it is a bottom-of-the-pyramid snack or to the other cone if it is a top-of-the-pyramid snack. It’s important to eat foods that give you energy for playing basketball. Bottom-of-the-pyramid foods give you more energy to play basketball and are much healthier.”	174
Healthy Habits	Gather the team into a group near two cones about 10 feet apart. Tell team that one cone represents good health habits and the other poor health habits. “Give me examples of some daily habits. If you think it’s a healthy habit, stand at this cone. If you think it’s a poor health habit, stand at this cone.” Ask all players to participate. “It’s important to have all our habits be healthy habits every day. This helps your body stay healthy and helps you perform better in basketball.”	177
Training and Conditioning	Gather the team into a group. “Everyone jog to the opposite basket and back. Do you remember your first days of practice and how you felt after running that distance?” Discuss their responses. “Think about running an even longer distance during the beginning of the season. Compare how you feel now that it’s the end of the season. Your bodies are conditioned from playing all season. Remember to stay active during the off-season. Play other sports or participate in other physical activities. If you don’t participate in physical activity after the season, all the training you did for your body will be lost. Your body will reverse its conditioning. This is called the reversibility principle—you use it or lose it!”	180