

YMCA Basketball Fitness Activities for Ages 12 and Up

Key Idea	Description	Page ¹
General Fitness	Gather team into a group. “Do we play basketball to get in shape or do we get in shape to play basketball? Let’s talk about both sides. What do you think?” Discuss for two or three minutes. “We should improve our fitness—cardiorespiratory, flexibility, and muscular strength and endurance—in order to play better basketball. By playing basketball we gets lots of opportunities to improve our fitness. All season we’ll be talking more about the different areas of fitness and ways to improve those abilities.”	188
General Fitness	Gather the team into a group. “Last practice we talked about different kinds of fitness. Can you tell me what they were?” Listen to responses until they say cardiorespiratory, flexibility, and muscular strength and endurance. “What are some examples of physical activities to improve cardiorespiratory fitness?” Discuss examples (walking, running, swimming, and so on). “Muscular strength and endurance?” Discuss examples (ballhandling skills and drills, dribbling, passing, etc.). “Flexibility?” Discuss examples (leg and arm stretches). “By working hard at all the practices and outside of practice you can help attain the overall fitness you need for basketball.”	192
Overload Principle	Gather the team into a group. “Who can tell me what overload means?” Listen to their responses. “If your bodies do a little bit more work than they have done before, they will adapt and be able to do even more. We’re talking about small amounts of work or activity—too much harms your body and causes injuries. Your fitness will improve and you’ll be able to do more activity in practice before getting too tired. Let’s use the acronym F-I-T—what do you think it stands for?” Listen to their responses. “F stands for frequency, or how often you practice the activity; I stands for intensity, or how hard you practice or play; and T stands for time, or how long you practice the activity. FIT is a good way to remember how to use the overload principle to improve our fitness.”	196

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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Overload Principle	Gather the team into a group. “What does FIT stand for and when do we use it?” Listen to their responses. Discuss frequency, intensity, and time. “I want you to choose a letter of FIT and demonstrate it.” As players give examples and demonstrate, encourage other players to try also. If frequency is chosen, increase repetitions. If intensity, they should try harder or faster. If time, lengthen the amount. Encourage basketball-related activities such as running and shooting. “You need to practice skills and running outside of practice and participate in other physical activities and exercise. This will give your body enough workload to overload and improve your fitness levels or abilities.”	199
Overload Principle	Gather team into a group. “What does FIT stand for, and when do we use it?” Listen to their responses. Have a review discussion. “When we think about the second area of FIT, what is it? Intensity, or how hard you practice the activity. Raise your hand if you think that the only way to increase the intensity of an activity or make it harder is to go faster.” Encourage all players to vote. “You can overload the work your body is doing by going faster and/or by going a longer distance, as in running, for example. Every time you run a greater distance or faster, your body will adapt and you’ll be able to do more next time.”	203
Flexibility	Gather the team into a group. “It’s important to stretch our muscles. What area of fitness does that improve? Right—flexibility. It’s also important to stretch muscles that have been used the most in a sport or activity. In basketball, what do we use the most? Our legs and arms. I am going to show you the proper way to stretch the different muscles in your legs and arms.” Choose stretches that include quadriceps (front of thigh), hamstrings (back of thigh), calves and Achilles tendon (back of the lower leg and ankle), arms, and deltoids (shoulders). Remind players to get in position and hold their stretch, not to bounce, and they shouldn’t feel pain.	206
Flexibility	“Your muscles need to be stretched every day to prevent injuries. Lie down on your back with one leg up in the air. Stretch your knee toward your face and hold it there for 10 counts. Now let’s try the stretch again. . . . See if you can use FIT. Repeat the stretch again, holding the stretch now to 15 counts and stretching your leg a bit farther. You should not stretch so far that you hurt yourself, lock your knee, or feel pain. Just stretch until you feel a gentle pull. Stretching helps to prevent injuries and improves your flexibility, an important part of fitness.”	209

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Muscular Strength and Endurance	Gather the team into a group. Choose two players to demonstrate with one ball. Have the players pass to each other 10 times without telling them how hard or fast to pass. Then have them spread out farther. Direct them to pass as hard and as fast as they can 10 times. Have them come back to the group. "Did everyone see how during the second times they passed the ball harder and faster? When you do that, what area or component of fitness do you improve?" Listen to their responses. "Muscular strength and endurance. When you pass harder you are improving your strength; when you pass faster, you are improving your endurance."	212
Cardio-respiratory Fitness	Gather the team into a circle. "I want everyone to run to the opposite basket and back. Before you go, describe how your lungs feel and how fast your breathing rate is. How tired is your body?" Listen to their responses. "When you're done running, I'll ask you the same question and see if the answers are faster or slower or more tired than before. Ready? Go!" Repeat the question. Discuss their responses. "To strengthen your heart and lungs, you need to run and make your heart beat faster and breathe faster. You need to feel a little tired while running to improve your cardiorespiratory fitness. Checking how you feel tells you that you are running fast enough to improve the strength of your lungs and heart."	215
Cardio-respiratory Fitness	Gather the team into a group. Have players run for two minutes with a partner without stopping. "During our run I want you to be able to run for the whole two minutes. Who remembers what a talk test is?" Listen to their responses. "You can use a talk test to pace yourself so you don't run too fast and get too tired before the two minutes are up. Say the words 'two points' to your partner. If you can say it without being out of breath, keep the same pace; if you're out of breath, slow down a little. Start running." Time for two minutes and gather team as a group. "Using a talk test helps you pace yourself. Pacing yourself when you run helps to improve your cardiorespiratory fitness."	218

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Healthy Habits	Gather players into two equal groups. “I want the first group to take a ball, then dribble and pass to each other, making sure everyone gets one chance with the ball, then attempt a basket.” After players finish, ask them to come over to the sidelines. Have the second group go out and repeat the activity. “Following a play like that, and every time you come out of the game or during practice, what is one of the most important things you should do?” Listen to their responses. “Drink water during every break and especially when you need it. Drinking regularly prevents dehydration or when your body loses water. It’s important to drink water before you feel thirsty. Drinking plenty of water is a healthy habit to do every day.”	221
Healthy Habits	Gather the team into a group. “It’s important to eat foods that give the most energy for basketball. What are the four main nutrients or parts of food that help you grow and stay healthy?” Listen to responses. Discuss how carbohydrates (breads, cereals, and fruits) give energy. Discuss how proteins (meats, nuts, and tofu) build muscle and bone. Mention that fats (fat and oils in meat, milk, and nuts) provide stored energy. Remind them that water (from the tap or in juice or milk) makes up 60% of their bodies. “One healthy habit you should be practicing every day is eating foods that keep your body healthy—that includes snacks. What are examples of each nutrient? Carbohydrates? Proteins? Fats? Water?” Discuss food choices.	224
Healthy Habits	Gather the team into a group. “Tell me some healthy habits you practice every day?” Responses may be brushing teeth, eating foods that help you grow, and getting enough sleep. If taking drugs or using alcohol is not a response, discuss this. If it was a response, lead discussion from the response. “You have been hearing ‘say no to drugs’ probably since you were very young. Let’s talk about what it really means and if/where you might have to use that phrase. Tell me some situations where you think you might have to ‘say no to drugs.’” Discuss responses—in school, from other kids you don’t know very well, parties, etc. “It is an important healthy habit to stay away from drugs, alcohol, and tobacco.”	228

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Reversibility Principle	Gather the team into a group. “What happens to your body if you do not stay active and keep training and conditioning your body?” Listen to their responses. Discuss losing conditioning when you stop being active. “What is that called? Right—the ‘reversibility principle.’ What should you do to prevent losing your conditioning? Participating in physical activity or another sport after the season will prevent you from reversing your conditioning. How will you stay active after the basketball season is over?” Listen to their responses. “Remember the ‘reversibility principle’—you use it or lose it! You worked hard all season to improve your Fitness, so keep it up for next year!”	231