

Personal Care and Service

Fitness Trainers and Aerobics Instructors

Fitness Trainers and Aerobics Instructors motivate individuals or groups in exercise activities such as cardiovascular exercising (running), weight training, strengthening, yoga, and Pilates. Fitness workers are typically employed at health clubs, country clubs, hospitals, universities, group exercise studios, and resorts. They may also occasionally work in client's homes.

There are three main categories of fitness workers: *Personal Trainers*, *Group Exercise Instructors* and *Fitness Directors*.

Personal Trainers work with individuals or 2 - 3 people in gyms or at clients' homes. They assess their clients' level of fitness and help their clients reach fitness goals through the development of exercise plans. They demonstrate exercises, and help clients improve their exercise techniques. Often, personal trainers maintain records monitoring their clients' progress.

Group Exercise Instructors conduct group exercise sessions in areas such as yoga, Pilates, and spinning classes. Group exercise instructors typically demonstrate a move and observe, motivate, and correct their students. Group exercise instructors often have the ability to be creative in creating their own routines for the classes they teach and selecting the music to go along with these routines.

Fitness Directors oversee the fitness-related business of health clubs or fitness centers. They create and oversee programs, provide orientations to new members, assess members' fitness levels, select fitness equipment, coordinate personal training and exercise groups, and hire, train, and supervise fitness staff.

Fitness Trainers and Aerobics Instructors spend most of their time indoors in fitness clubs and health centers and often have to work nights, weekends, and some holidays because fitness centers are open long hours in order to accommodate their client's work schedules. They are prone to injury because they are involved in physical activity daily. Some personal trainers travel between clients' homes or to different gyms so they may spend a significant amount of time traveling between jobs.

Education/Training

How to Obtain:

Certification for personal trainers, group exercise instructors and fitness directors is often required by health clubs and fitness centers. There are many organizations that offer certifications for Fitness Trainers and Aerobics Instructors. To ensure that are a

certifying organization is reputable one can check to make sure that it is accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies.

Most certifying organizations offer classes online or in person, and require candidates to:

- Have a high school diploma
- Be certified in CPR
- And pass an exam.

Other requirements vary by the certifying organization. Certifications are typically good for 2 years, after which one must become recertified by completing continuing education coursework.

Requirements for Pilates Certification from The Pilates Method Alliance (PMA) are:

- Minimum of 18 years of age
- The candidate must meet one (1) of the following two eligibility options:
 - 450 Documented hours of training in a Pilates teacher training program OR
 - 720 hours of full-time employment as a Pilates teacher within the last twelve (12) month period.

Certification as a group exercise instructor is available through the same organizations as personal trainer certification and follows the same rules and requirements for their candidates.

In order to teach certain classes such as yoga and pilates group exercise instructors may be required to have their own special certifications.

Fitness director is a position generally obtained after having been in the business for several years and having previous supervisory experience.

More Information on Certification:

- National Commission for Certifying Agencies:
<http://www.credentialingexcellence.org/>
- Pilates Method Alliance:
<http://www.pilatesmethodalliance.org/>
- Yoga Alliance:
<http://www.yogaalliance.org/>
- American Council on Exercise (ACE):
<http://www.acefitness.org/>

- American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM):
<http://www.acsm.org/>
- Academy of Applied Personal Training Education (AAPTE):
<http://www.aapte.org/>
- National Council on Strength and Fitness (NCSF):
<http://www.ncsf.org/>
- National Exercise Trainers Association (NETA):
<http://www.ndeita.com/>
- National Federation of Personal Trainers (NFPT):
<http://www.nfpt.com/>
- National Exercise and Sports Trainers Association (NESTA):
<http://www.nestacertified.com/>

Average Costs:

Personal Trainers: Costs vary by certifying organization, but range between \$200.00 and \$750.00, plus the cost of any exam study aids.

Group Exercise Instructors: Costs vary by certifying organization, but range between \$200.00 and \$560.00, plus the cost of any exam study aids.

Pilates for example has a certification application fee of \$295.