

PERSONAL TRAINER

Entry Level: High School Diploma or Equivalent

A personal trainer works one-on-one with a client to develop and implement a fitness training regimen that helps them lose weight, get stronger, improve physical performance, or maintain their health. Trainers introduce clients to individualized exercises that are based upon their personal goals, skill level, and needs. They must keep up with the latest trends and professional recommendations in fitness and nutrition.³

JOB REQUIREMENTS

What is the exact job title?

- Certified Personal Trainer

How do I become one?

- Complete AED/CPR certification. This is required by nearly every national personal training certification organization.³
- Choose a fitness specialty. Group exercise, individualized personal training, fitness programming, etc.³
- Prepare for certification. Training options include exam prep courses, multi-session training classes, undergraduate degrees in exercise science, graduate degrees in kinesiology, etc.³
- Take and pass certification exam through an NCAA Accredited Program.³
 - There are many options for certification programs, but the best are:
 - National Academy of Sports Medicine or NASM (<https://www.nasm.org/>).
 - American Council on Exercise or ACE (<https://www.acefitness.org/>).
 - You can also check out: ISSA, ACSM, and NSCA.
 - Exam registration usually includes an application and fee.³
 - Most certification exams are computer-based multiple choice tests of 120-150 multi-choice questions.
 - Exams usually cost from \$150 - \$600.
- Apply for jobs and build a portfolio.³
- Many trainers gain experience by working at a local gym, shadowing an experienced trainer.
- Some trainers work as independent professionals, building a client roster.

What qualities do I need?

- Customer-service skills: Many fitness trainers and instructors must sell their services, motivating clients to hire them as personal trainers or to sign up for the classes they lead. Fitness trainers and instructors must therefore be polite, friendly, and encouraging, to maintain relationships with their clients.¹
- Communication skills: Fitness trainers and instructors must clearly explain or demonstrate exercises to clients.¹
- Listening skills: Fitness trainers and instructors must listen carefully to what clients tell them in order to determine the clients' fitness levels and desired fitness goals.¹
- Motivational skills: Getting fit and staying fit takes a lot of work for many clients. To keep clients coming back for more classes or to continue personal training, fitness trainers and instructors must keep their clients motivated.¹

1<https://www.bls.gov/ooh/personal-care-and-service/fitness-trainers-and-instructors.htm#tab-1>

2https://www.payscale.com/research/US/Job=Personal_Fitness_Trainer/Hourly_Rate

3<https://www.learnhowtobecome.org/personal-trainer/>

4<http://www.becomingatrainer.com/best-personal-trainer-certification/>

- **Physical fitness:** Fitness trainers and instructors need to be physically fit because their job requires a considerable amount of exercise. Group instructors often participate in classes, and personal trainers often need to demonstrate exercises to their clients.¹
- **Problem-solving skills:** Fitness trainers and instructors must evaluate each client's level of fitness and create an appropriate fitness plan to meet the client's individual needs.¹

TYPICAL WORK DAY

What do they do?

- Demonstrate or explain how to perform various exercises and routines to minimize injuries and improve fitness.¹
- Watch clients do exercises to ensure that they are using the correct techniques.¹
- Provide alternative exercises during workouts or classes for different levels of fitness and skill
- Monitor clients' progress and adapt programs as needed.¹
- Explain and enforce safety rules and regulations on sports, recreational activities, and the use of exercise equipment.¹
- Give clients information or resources about nutrition, weight control, and lifestyle issues
- Give emergency first aid if needed.¹

Where do they normally work?

- Fitness and recreational sports centers, civic and social organizations, self-employed workers, educational services (state, local, private), government.¹

What hours do they work?

- Fitness trainers and instructors may work nights, weekends, or holidays. Some travel to different gyms or to clients' homes to teach classes or conduct personal training sessions. Some group fitness instructors and personal fitness trainers hold full-time jobs in other fields and teach fitness classes or conduct personal training sessions during evenings or weekends.¹

BENEFITS

What is a typical salary in this field?

- BLS: In May 2018, median pay was \$19.15/hour or \$39,820/year.¹
- Payscale: \$24.30/hour or \$36,638/year.²

Does this job come with any benefits? (vision, dental, 401k, PTO, etc.)

- Medical: 29%²
- Vision: 10%²
- Dental: 15%²
- None: 71%²

GROWTH

What is the projected job growth?

- Between 2018 - 2028, job growth is projected to be 13%.¹

Last Updated: October 2019

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