

FITNESS GAMES!

FOR BOOT CAMP AND FITNESS INSTRUCTORS

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Class Structure

Before we get into the games, I wanted to share with you how I currently structure my boot camp classes. I have found that this works best for me. You can try it and tweak it to fit your own needs.

The Warmup

This involves a number of stretches and movements, usually starting off slowly and gradually increasing the intensity.

Warming up usually takes 5-8 minutes out of the 45 minute class.

If it is cold outside then I will start off with jumping jacks, prisoner squats, sumo squats, one legged squats, butt kicks, squat jumps, froggers, and/or scissor squats in order to quickly warm up the class.

I like to alternate between upper and lower body stretches for varieties sake.

I usually have about 10-12 stretches planned for the warm up.

Abs/Core

Next is the abdominal and core segment. I like to use a lot of the same exercises here so that the participants don't have to think too much. After all, I have my class at 5:45am. It's still early!

I will start off with seated spinal twists, lying leg crossovers or seated groin stretches and then move into core and abdominal exercises.

TIP – Keep the class moving quickly so that the tempo stays up and thus the momentum!

I like to hold the stretches for 10 seconds before moving into the next stretch.

For abs and core, it's usually 3-4 exercise for 20-30 repetitions.

That should be plenty because I also implement abs into the main activity.

This segment usually lasts about 5 minutes.

Dynamic Warm Up

This is the part that I get people up and moving.

And this is where I begin to implement the games. First off, though, I will have the group line up side by side and do some high knees, jogging, skipping, carioca, lunges, jumps, running and/or side shuffles in order to increase the intensity.

I use cones to set up boundary lines – normally about 20 yards apart.

The games come next.

The participants are just a little winded, catching their breath and having a drink of water. It's a perfect time to quickly explain what that day's game entails. More on this later.

Main Activity – the main activity usually lasts about 20-25 minutes.

I may split the group up into pairs, threes or larger numbers. I may have them do individual exercises. I have learned to utilize challenges and games in all that I do because it works so well. It raises the interest and competitive spirit. And this is good.

I always plan the workout with my more advanced participants in mind and then scale down the workout for the beginners. My reasoning for this is that I figure if the advanced boot campers are getting a good workout, then everyone else will too. I'd rather be known as the guy who runs tough but effective camps as opposed to the other way around.

TIP – Use a stopwatch, music, chalk and a dry erase board.

The stopwatch will take the focus off of the instructor and place it on time (how long the class has to complete the activity). The music will inspire the group. Sidewalk chalk is used to keep track of points and reps. The dry erase board is used to display the workout for those who may be more visual. They may need to see the workout before they understand what the workout entails.

LET THE GAMES BEGIN!

Kick The Cones

This is an exciting group tag type of game. Divide the group into 2 equal teams. One entire team is "it". The "its" line up side by side and place a cone in front of each "it" give yourselves enough room – no crowding. The other team forms a group 10-20 yards away from the "its". The boot camp instructor calls "GO". The other team that is not "it" has 10 seconds to run out onto the playing field.

The playing field is marked off by 4 – 8 cones. The larger the group, the larger the playing field. The "its" then run onto the field and try to tag an opposing member. Once tagged, the person has a race with the "it" back to the cones. The "it" tries to again tag the other before he or she kicks any of the cones over. If that person is tagged before kicking the cone over, they are out and have to do a nonstop exercise off to the side until the game is over. If that person reaches the cone and kicks it over before being tagged, then the "it" is out and has to do a nonstop exercise off to the side until the game is over.

Continue playing until one side doesn't have any one left. Switch roles for the next game.

Cone Collection!

There are 2 – 4 equal teams.

You will need a large number of cones (I use 24) for this game.

The day before, using a sharpie, write an exercise and number of reps under the lip of each cone.

For example, write “Squat Thrusts” and “20” on four or five cones.

Write “Prisoner Squats” and “30” on four or five cones. Continue in this manner until all of the cones have an exercise and a number. Prior to starting this game, scatter the cones on the playing field where the participants can see them. Have each team gather separately but within an equal distance (30 yards) away from the nearest cone.

On the instructor’s “GO!” one member from each team runs to any cone and brings it back to the group. The person who collected the cone calls out the exercise and the number of reps to his/her team.

The entire team performs that exercise and reps until the person who retrieved the cone is finished. When that person calls out “finished!” another member of the team runs out and collects a cone. The team with the most cones wins.

The instructor can place a time limit on the game (6-8 minutes) or play until there are no more cones.

Stability Ball Speed Soccer

There are two equal teams.

This game is played just like soccer in that you will need a large grassy field.

I like a 40 yard by 40 yard field because this increases the speed of the game and keeps people moving.

Place 4 cones (a box) at each end of the field to represent the goal.

Place cones along the boundary lines of the field.

If you have a large class (20 people), you can have 2 fields of play at the same time.

The instructor places a time limit on the game (5-8 minutes).

The team with the most goals wins.

The object is to kick the stability ball through the opposing goal.

To really make it interesting, use 2 stability balls at the same time!

Since most soccer leagues modify the rules of soccer, the instructor can modify the rules of the game as he/she sees fit.

This will remove any disputes with people in your class who may be soccer players!

TIP – See www.soccerhelp.com if you are unfamiliar with the basic rules of soccer.

Stability Ball Dodge Ball

There are two equal teams.

There is a line marked off with cones in the middle of the playing field.

The instructor places 3 (or more) stability balls along the middle of the field.

When the instructor calls “GO!” both teams run towards the stability balls and try to pick up the ball and throw the ball at a member of the opposing team while staying on their side of the field. If they hit (below the neck) the opposing member then that person is out and must do nonstop jumping jacks off to the side until the game is over.

If you are running toward a stability ball and you see that you will not reach it before the opposing member, you can turn around and run back towards your end of the field.

If you are hit, you are out.

The instructor can either let the members play as is or he/she can call “time” and line up the stability balls again and let the remaining players start over.

The idea is to keep everyone moving. Not simply dodging the ball. The game is over when there is only one person left.

Note - Obviously this game has a “someone could get hurt” factor although I have never had anyone come close to being hurt (just like dodge ball in school).

The instructor can use his/her own judgment when playing this game.

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