



Fitness certification information for EnhanceFitness instructors

In this document, you will find the following frequently asked questions (FAQs):

1. Why do we require EnhanceFitness instructors to be certified?
2. A sampling of nationally recognized fitness instructor certifications
3. My EnhanceFitness instructor candidate has a certification that is not listed in the sampling; is it acceptable?
4. How are fitness certifications accredited?
5. What is the difference between a degree, a certification, and a certificate-of-completion?
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1. Why do we require EnhanceFitness instructors to be certified?

We are providing a safe, effective, and evidence-based physical activity program to your organization's older population. This is a population that requires specialized knowledge and practical training. For many older adults, chronic medical conditions and prescriptions will influence their response to exercise. In addition, physical abilities and motivations differ from the younger population.

To ensure that EnhanceFitness instructors have the proper educational background, we require them to hold a nationally recognized fitness instructor certification.

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2. A sampling of nationally recognized fitness instructor certifications

Following is a sampling of nationally recognized fitness instructor certifications that we are commonly asked about:

- American Council on Exercise (ACE)
- American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM)
- Aerobics and Fitness Association of America (AFAA)
- American Fitness Professionals and Associates (AFPA)
- FiTOUR
- National Academy of Sports Medicine (NASM)
- National Exercise Trainers Association (NETA)
- American Senior Fitness Association (SFA)
- YMCA

For a comparison of their exam costs, length of training, recertification requirements, and prerequisites to certification, click [here](#).

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3. My EnhanceFitness instructor candidate has a certification that is not listed in the sampling; is it acceptable?

With literally hundreds of fitness certifications being offered today, it is difficult to determine what is good and what is not. The health and fitness industry is unregulated, but there are a few well-recognized and highly acclaimed organizations that provide certifications and continuing education. It would be impossible for us to compare all the certifying organizations.

You are responsible for ensuring that your EnhanceFitness instructor has the proper background, education, and experience. We suggest that you take a look at the following topics and resources as you make your decision:

- How are fitness certifications accredited?
- What is the difference between a degree, a certification, and a certificate-of-completion?
- What is the difference between CECs, CEUs, and credits?
- National Council on Aging's Issue Brief, "[Recruiting and Retaining Effective Instructors for Physical Activity Programs](#)," offers guidelines for assessing the

suitability of physical activity instructors, both in initial hiring and ongoing assessment.

- American Council On Exercise’s Fit Facts™, “[How To Choose The Right Group Fitness Instructor](#)”

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4. How are fitness certifications accredited?

The American Council on Exercise (ACE) states the following about accreditation:

Accreditation of certification organizations is a topic of much discussion in the fitness industry which has its roots in the recommendation from the International Health, Racquet and Sportsclub Association (IHRSA) Board of Directors to its membership on qualifications for personal trainers.

The IHRSA Board’s Resolution:

“Whereas, given the increasing importance personal training plays in health, fitness and sports clubs, IHRSA recommends that, as of January 1, 2006, member clubs hire personal trainers who hold at least one current certification from a certifying organization/agency that has obtained third-party accreditation of its certification procedures and protocols from an independent, experienced, and nationally recognized accrediting body.

Furthermore, given the twenty-six year history of the National Organization for Competency Assurance (NOCA) in establishing quality standards for certifying agencies, IHRSA has identified the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA), the accreditation body of NOCA, as being an acceptable accrediting organization. Other equivalent accrediting organizations may be recognized as well, as they come to IHRSA’s attention.”

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5. What is the difference between a degree, a certification, and a certificate-of-completion?

The terms “degree,” “certification,” “certificate-of-completion,” and “continuing education” are often used interchangeably. Most courses provide either foundational education or continuing education content. The American Council on Exercise (ACE) defines these terms as follows:

Degree (education)

-
- Teaches foundational knowledge and skills, measures cognitive retention of student
 - Many fields require that education be completed in form of a degree as a prerequisite for the professional credential.

Certification (credentialing)

- Measures, in standardized and unbiased manner, ability of candidate to apply knowledge and skills in the role of a professional.
- Passing a certification exam establishes that an individual is minimally competent to work unsupervised in a given field or profession.
- Certification does not mean that individual knows everything required to be considered an expert in a given field.

Certificate-of-completion (continuing education)

- Keeps a professional current by updating their knowledge base and teaching them new skills.
- Frequently associated with development of a specialty.
- May also be based on specific modality or tool.
- Assumes that the individual already possesses a foundational knowledge required of a minimally competent professional.
- Generally does not meet threshold for credible certification for exam content, structure, and administration.

Note: Upon successful completion of the EnhanceFitness New Instructor Training, the instructor will receive a certificate-of-completion.

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6. What is the difference between CECs, CEUs, and credits?

To ensure continuing competency and to maintain a high standard for certified professionals beyond the initial certification exam, many certifying organizations require their professionals to continue educating themselves and stay abreast of health and fitness trends.

To do this, instructors will attend workshops and conferences. The hours are documented as continuing education credits (CECs), continuing education units (CEUs), or credits. Each certifying organization uses a different term and has different requirements for maintaining their certification.

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7. YMCA certification track

An EnhanceFitness Master Trainer who is also a qualified YMCA Trainer can provide their instructor candidates with a nationally recognized fitness instructor certification. For more information, refer to the following [flowchart](#) and contact Project Enhance.

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8. Job description: EnhanceFitness Instructor

Click [here](#) for the EnhanceFitness instructor job description, which includes education requirements.

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A sampling of nationally recognized fitness instructor certifications

Certifying Organization	Name of Certification	Exam Cost ¹	Length of Training ²	Recertification Required?	Prerequisites	Notes
ACE American Council on Exercise http://www.acefitness.org/	Group Fitness Instructor Personal Trainer	\$249	Self-paced	Yes - 2.0 CECs every 2 years \$69 renewal fee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ CPR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ACE is a nonprofit organization committed to enriching the quality of life through safe and effective physical activity. ▪ 100 hours of practical experience is highly recommended before taking the exam. ▪ Fee does not include study materials. ▪ Exams are available in two formats: computer-based and paper & pencil. ▪ Exam retakes cost \$135.
ACSM American College of Sports Medicine http://www.acsm.org/	Health/Fitness Instructor	\$279	Self-paced	Yes - 80 credits every 3 years \$60 renewal fee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Associate or Bachelor's degree in a health-related field ▪ CPR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The ACSM advances and integrates scientific research to provide educational and practical applications of exercise science and sports medicine. ▪ 2-day workshop (\$250, not including study materials) is recommended before taking exam. ▪ Fee does not include study materials. ▪ Exam is available in only one format: computer-based. ▪ Exam retakes cost \$150.

¹ Exam Cost: This is the cost of the exam only. Some certifying organizations provide workshops that include the exam cost.

² Length of Training: If the length of training is self-paced, you can study for the exam on your own and take the exam when you are ready. If you are taking a workshop, generally an exam is included at the end of the workshop.

A sampling of nationally recognized fitness instructor certifications

Certifying Organization	Name of Certification	Exam Cost ¹	Length of Training ²	Recertification Required?	Prerequisites	Notes
ACSM (continued) American College of Sports Medicine http://www.acsm.org/	Personal Trainer	\$279	Self-paced	Yes - every 3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ CPR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 1- and 3-day workshops (up to \$375, not including study materials) is recommended before taking exam. ▪ Fee does not include study materials. ▪ Exam is available in only one format: computer-based. ▪ Exam retakes cost \$150.
AFAA Aerobics and Fitness Association of America http://www.afaa.com	Primary Group Exercise	\$299	1-day workshop	Yes - 15 CEUs every 2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Self-study before workshop ▪ Group exercise teaching experience ▪ CPR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fee includes workshop and exam but not all study materials (additional manual required, \$44).
AFPA American Fitness Professionals and Associates http://www.afpafitness.com	Group Fitness Instructor	\$335	Self-paced	Yes - 16 CECs every 2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Basic familiarity with group fitness classes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fee includes study materials and exam. ▪ You must complete a demonstration of a group fitness class.

¹ Exam Cost: This is the cost of the exam only. Some certifying organizations provide workshops that include the exam cost.

² Length of Training: If the length of training is self-paced, you can study for the exam on your own and take the exam when you are ready. If you are taking a workshop, generally an exam is included at the end of the workshop.

A sampling of nationally recognized fitness instructor certifications

Certifying Organization	Name of Certification	Exam Cost ¹	Length of Training ²	Recertification Required?	Prerequisites	Notes
AFPA (continued) American Fitness Professionals and Associates http://www.afpafitness.com	Senior Fitness Specialist	\$335	Self-paced	Yes - 16 CECs every 2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Personal trainer or group fitness certificate from a nationally recognized organization is strongly recommended. ▪ Basic understanding of human anatomy and physiology. ▪ Basic familiarity with resistance/ cardiovascular training. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fee includes study materials and exam. ▪ You must complete a demonstration of a group fitness class.
FiTOUR http://www.fitour.com/	Primary Group Exercise	\$299	Self-paced or 1-day workshop	Yes - renewal exam every 2 years \$25 renewal fee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fee includes study materials.
NASM National Academy of Sports Medicine http://www.nasm.org	Personal Trainer	\$549	Self-paced	Yes - 2.0 CEUs every 2 years \$99 renewal fee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ CPR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The NASM is dedicated to revolutionizing the health and fitness industry through its commitment to deliver innovative education and evidence-based solutions and tools. ▪ 2-day workshop (\$679, including study materials and exam) is recommended before taking the exam.

¹ Exam Cost: This is the cost of the exam only. Some certifying organizations provide workshops that include the exam cost.

² Length of Training: If the length of training is self-paced, you can study for the exam on your own and take the exam when you are ready. If you are taking a workshop, generally an exam is included at the end of the workshop.

A sampling of nationally recognized fitness instructor certifications

Certifying Organization	Name of Certification	Exam Cost ¹	Length of Training ²	Recertification Required?	Prerequisites	Notes
NETA National Exercise Trainers Association http://www.ndeita.com	Group Exercise	\$149	Self-study	Yes - 20 CECs every 2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self-study before workshop 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1-day workshop (\$249, not including study materials) is recommended before taking exam.
SFA American Senior Fitness Association http://www.seniorfitness.net/	Senior Fitness Instructor (Professional)	\$349	Self-paced	Yes - 2.0 CEUs every 2 years \$35 renewal fee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CPR Basic First Aid 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fee includes study materials and exam.
YMCA Contact your local YMCA or http://www.ymca.net	Foundations of Group Exercise	varies	1-day workshop	Yes – 15 CECs every 3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Healthy Lifestyle Principles CPR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The YMCA is the largest nonprofit community service organization in America, working to meet the health and social service needs of 18.9 million men, women, and children in 10,000 communities across the United States. Fee includes workshop and exam but not study materials.

¹ Exam Cost: This is the cost of the exam only. Some certifying organizations provide workshops that include the exam cost.

² Length of Training: If the length of training is self-paced, you can study for the exam on your own and take the exam when you are ready. If you are taking a workshop, generally an exam is included at the end of the workshop.

A sampling of nationally recognized fitness instructor certifications

Certifying Organization	Name of Certification	Exam Cost ¹	Length of Training ²	Recertification Required?	Prerequisites	Notes
YMCA Project Enhance http://www.projectenhance.org	Active Older Adult (AOA) Exercise Leader	\$75	1-day workshop	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Healthy Lifestyle Principles ▪ EnhanceFitness New Instructor Training ▪ CPR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An EnhanceFitness Master Trainer who is also a qualified YMCA Trainer can certify AOA Exercise Leaders with Healthy Lifestyle Principles (\$50, 4 hours) as a prerequisite followed by the EnhanceFitness New Instructor Training (12 hours). The three trainings together comprise the fitness certification. Click here for a flowchart of the YMCA certification track. ▪ Fee includes workshop and exam but not study materials.

¹ Exam Cost: This is the cost of the exam only. Some certifying organizations provide workshops that include the exam cost.

² Length of Training: If the length of training is self-paced, you can study for the exam on your own and take the exam when you are ready. If you are taking a workshop, generally an exam is included at the end of the workshop.

Fit Facts™

FROM THE AMERICAN COUNCIL ON EXERCISE®

HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT GROUP FITNESS INSTRUCTOR

START WITH NATIONAL CERTIFICATION

Certification from a nationally recognized certifying organization is the first thing to look for. It's your assurance that you're working with a group fitness instructor who has the knowledge to provide you with a safe and effective workout.

Certification is more than a piece of paper. For example, ACE, which is the largest not-for-profit fitness-certifying organization in the world, requires group fitness instructors to pass an intensive three hour, 150-question exam that covers exercise science and programming knowledge, including anatomy, kinesiology, health screening, basic nutrition and instructional methods.

After checking certification, there are a few other things you should take into consideration when choosing a group fitness instructor. Here's a guide:

Choose an instructor who accommodates your needs

A group fitness instructor should be able to design moves that help you get the most out of your workout — whether you're a beginner, intermediate or an advanced fitness participant. The class should not fatigue or exhaust you. And you certainly should not feel pain during or after it.

Look for an instructor who is interested in you

A good instructor will want everyone to feel welcome. Making you feel welcome means the instructor should try to learn your name, make eye contact

during the session, and most important, put your workout before his or hers.

Make sure the emphasis is on personal accomplishment

A good group fitness instructor will emphasize personal accomplishment and won't create a competitive environment. The class should focus on improving or maintaining your health, not just on looking better.



Select a good teacher

A good teacher will explain the benefits of each exercise and demonstrate how to do the exercise. A good teacher will also demonstrate modifications for intermediate and advanced movements and explain if you should avoid an exercise if you have an existing injury. A big part of being a good instructor is the ability to be a good teacher.

Be sure you're having fun

The right instructor will be dedicated to helping you enjoy the class, committed to making your workout the best it can be and will be able to translate his or her enthusiasm into a fun class. Remember, the only way you will stay with a program of regular aerobic exercise is if you look forward to attending the class.

Check the intensity of the exercise and the way the instructor relates to you

For an effective cardiovascular workout, you must exercise at a certain intensity during class. The instructor should have you take your heart rate or teach you how to rate your level of exertion using the perceived exertion scale. Before you even begin your workout, the instructor should ask you some general questions about your fitness level and invite your feedback.

The final decision is yours

Choosing a group fitness instructor and class is a very personal decision. The class that's right for you may not be right for another person, and the same applies to an instructor. Take your time and make the right decisions.

Compliments of:



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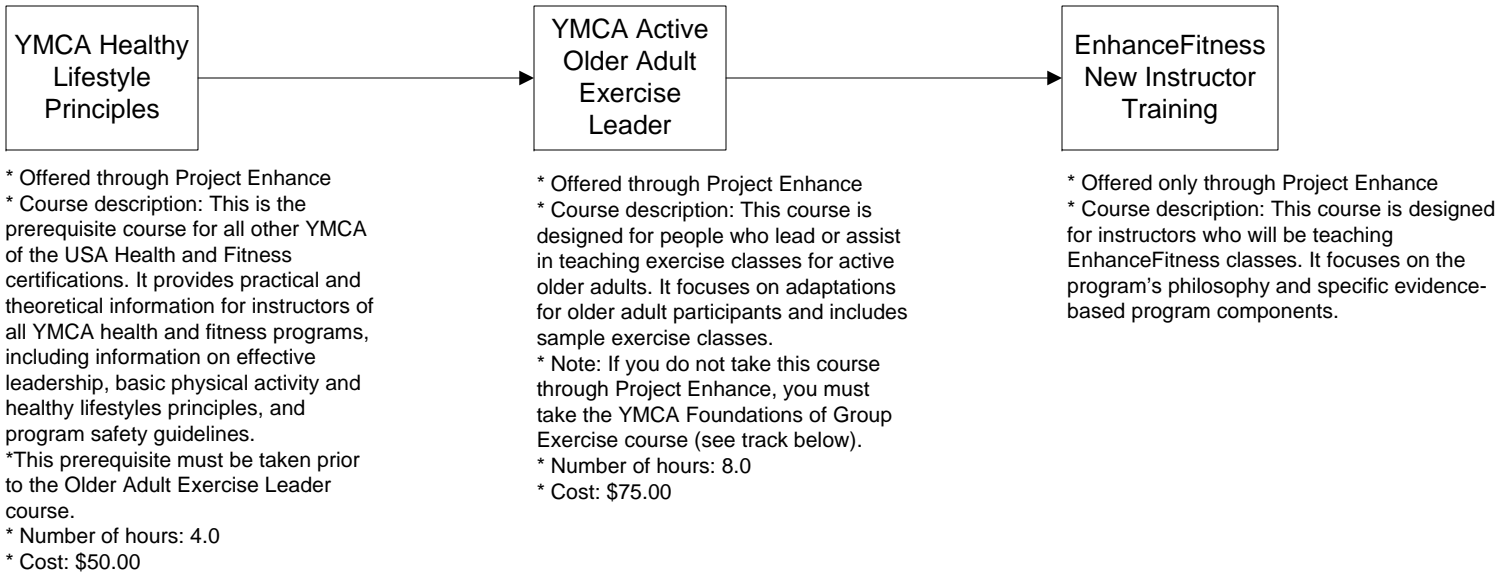
If you are interested in information on other health and fitness topics, contact: American Council on Exercise, 4851 Paramount Drive, San Diego, CA 92123, 800-825-3636; or, go online at <http://www.acefitness.org> and access the complete list of ACE Fit Facts.

YMCA Certification Track

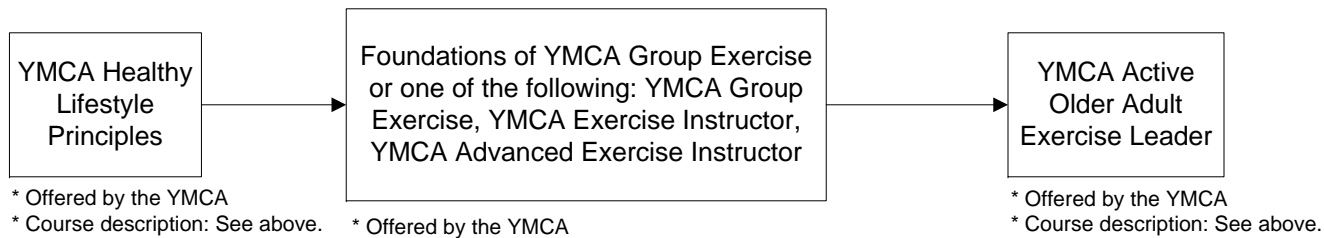
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For people who want to be EnhanceFitness instructors and do not have a fitness background or a nationally recognized fitness certification, Project Enhance offers YMCA certification.

The YMCA Certification Track via Project Enhance



The YMCA Certification Track via Traditional YMCA Process



Note: Prices are set by individual YMCAs; check with your local YMCA.



Job Description: EnhanceFitness Instructor

Overview

Teach an older adult curriculum (EnhanceFitness) that includes flexibility, aerobics, strength and balance training. Training in the specific curriculum is provided.

Classes are held three times per week. Each class session is one (1) hour.

Tasks and Responsibilities

- Organize class space.
- Demonstrate, explain, and lead the proper exercise activities.
- Provide pertinent information about precautions and safety of exercising, especially during strength training.
- Adapt exercises for the level of strength or frailty of each participant.
- Participate in training opportunities provided by the EnhanceFitness sponsors.
- Complete administrative record keeping functions, including health history forms, physician notification letters, class roster report, and evaluations.
- Instruct participants in importance and relevance of fitness testing, and conduct fitness tests per prescribed protocols.
- Store all equipment and return room to its original arrangement.

Required

- Current nationally recognized fitness instructor certification.
- Current CPR certification.
- Successful completion of the EnhanceFitness New Instructor Training.

Skills and Experience (preferred, not required)

- Two years of hands-on leadership experience or an academic background in exercise science, physical education, or a related health field.
- Knowledge of chronic diseases, special needs, and issues pertaining to older adults.
- Basic motivational and counseling techniques.

Start Date, Site, and Salary

To be determined by the site administration.