

# FIT FOR THE JOB



How to pass your medical and fitness test



**METROPOLITAN  
POLICE**

Working together for a safer London

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CAREERS

## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the application process for the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS). The MPS takes pride in its officers and staff. They fill jobs that can be tough and demanding. All new recruits need to be fit and healthy. The MPS checks this at a medical assessment and a fitness test. This leaflet gives you some advice to help you succeed. There are also links so that you can find more help if you need it.

## DIET AND BMI

People who are overweight are more likely to struggle with the fitness test, and to get knee pain and other problems that make it hard for them to patrol. Underweight people can be short of muscle bulk so they may fail the Job Related Fitness Test.

TO PASS – your BMI, which is calculated from your height and weight, needs to be in the healthy to overweight range. If your BMI is above 32 (for police officers) or 35 (for PCSOs, DDOs or Specials) you will not be accepted unless your body fat is less than 30% for men or 36% for women. If it is likely you will need many months to lose the weight/fat required you will be rejected and will have to reapply. It is never too soon to review your lifestyle, so make sure that you have a healthy diet and take regular exercise.

### WHERE TO GET MORE ADVICE

You can check your BMI at [www.eatwell.gov.uk/info/calculators](http://www.eatwell.gov.uk/info/calculators)

You can find out more about healthy eating at

[www.eatwell.gov.uk](http://www.eatwell.gov.uk), [www.direct.gov.uk/en/HealthAndWellBeing/HealthyLiving](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/HealthAndWellBeing/HealthyLiving) and [www.nhs.uk/change4life](http://www.nhs.uk/change4life)

## SMOKING

Smokers are more likely to have lung and heart problems that make passing the fitness test difficult. The medical team tests lung function and blood pressure as part of the health assessment.

TO PASS – quit smoking as soon as possible or, at the very least, cut back.

### WHERE TO GET MORE ADVICE

Your doctor can help you quit and there's further information at [www.smokefree.nhs.uk](http://www.smokefree.nhs.uk)

## RECREATIONAL DRUGS

Drugs, such as cannabis, ecstasy and cocaine, are against the law, and must never be used by police officers or police staff. The MPS tests for drugs during recruitment, training and in service.

TO PASS – avoid all illegal drugs, even as a one-off use.

### WHERE TO GET MORE ADVICE

You can get facts and confidential support from [www.talktofrank.com](http://www.talktofrank.com)

## ALCOHOL

Drinking heavily, especially binge drinking, affects your performance and your general health. This will make it harder for you to pass the fitness test. Police officers on duty are tested at random for alcohol.

TO PASS – know the sensible drinking limits for men and women and keep your drinking well within them.

### WHERE TO GET MORE ADVICE

You can learn about safe limits and controlling drinking from [www.drinkaware.co.uk](http://www.drinkaware.co.uk) or [www.nhs.uk/Livewell/alcohol/Pages/Alcoholhome.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/alcohol/Pages/Alcoholhome.aspx)

## FITNESS

The Job Related Fitness Test looks to see whether you are fit for the job and are ready for Officer Safety Training, where you learn to protect yourself and others. There are two parts to the test: running (known as the Multi-stage Shuttle Run Test or Bleep Test) and a test of strength (Dynamic Strength Test or Push-Pull).

TO PASS – improve your fitness and strength before your medical. For the Bleep Test, aim for a hard run for 20 to 30 minutes, three times a week; for the Push-Pull test, aim for a mixed strengthening programme, two or three times a week at the gym.

### WHERE TO GET MORE ADVICE

There is detailed information about what the test involves and how to prepare at [www.metpolicecareers.co.uk/media/doc/fitness\\_test.doc](http://www.metpolicecareers.co.uk/media/doc/fitness_test.doc)

## EYESIGHT

Police officers need eyesight good enough to defend themselves in a tight situation – even if they lose their glasses or lenses. There is the same requirement for other operational staff (PCSOs and Specials). The medical includes an eye test. Being colour blind does not matter except for some specialist roles. After laser surgery you need to wait six weeks before the eye test.

TO PASS – you need to meet this standard without glasses or lenses using both eyes together: **police officer and special constable 6/36; other roles 6/60**. If you use contact lenses, bring solution and containers so that you can remove them. You will be tested without any aids.

### WHERE TO GET MORE ADVICE

There are tips about looking after your eyes at [www.rnib.org.uk/eyehealth/lookingafteryoureyes](http://www.rnib.org.uk/eyehealth/lookingafteryoureyes)

## HEARING

You may need to hear your colleagues, members of the public and a radio in noisy surroundings. So you need good hearing to be fit for the job. We are able to consider candidates who wear hearing aids and people who are deaf in one ear. All candidates whose hearing is below the ideal level get a specialist review by our in-house ear, nose and throat team to decide whether they are fit to enter.

TO PASS - protect your ears from too much noise especially for two days before the medical. Don't ride a motorbike, work with noisy tools or go to any gigs. Ask your practice nurse to check that your ears are clear of wax.

### WHERE TO GET MORE ADVICE

The RNID has tips on protecting your hearing at

[www.rnid.org.uk/information\\_resources/protect\\_your\\_hearing](http://www.rnid.org.uk/information_resources/protect_your_hearing)

## HEALTH CONDITIONS AND MEDICATION

You need to be managing day-to-day life without problems and not be having many sick days off work. If you need regular medication to stay healthy, you may still be accepted. Every candidate receives a detailed individual assessment and we can accept candidates with many common health conditions, as long as they are under control. But if you can't carry out the role safely, without putting your own health at risk, or you can't meet some of the core requirements, like resilience, you will not be found fit for the job. No one is rejected because of a medical label. The Disability Discrimination Act covers all positions in the Metropolitan Police Service. If you have a disability, adjustments will be made if it is reasonable to do so.

TO PASS - maintain a good record in your current work with as little sick leave as possible. If you have a health problem, or you've recently had a lot of time off, try to bring a copy of your medical records or a note from your doctor with you to your medical.

### WHERE TO GET MORE ADVICE

Contact the medical team for confidential advice on **020 8358 0460** Mon-Thurs 9am-4pm or email [HR-MedicalEnquiry@met.police.uk](mailto:HR-MedicalEnquiry@met.police.uk)

There is detailed information about some common health problems and joining the MPS at [www.met.police.uk/careers/media/doc/medical\\_assessment\\_officers.doc](http://www.met.police.uk/careers/media/doc/medical_assessment_officers.doc)

## STILL HAVE A QUESTION?

This leaflet can't deal with every question. If you need to know more, please contact our Recruitment Call Centre on 0845 727 2212, Mon-Fri 9am-4pm or email [HR.Help@met.police.uk](mailto:HR.Help@met.police.uk) with any general enquiries surrounding the recruitment process. Please contact the medical team on 020 8358 0460, Mon-Thurs 9am-4pm or email [HR-MedicalEnquiry@met.police.uk](mailto:HR-MedicalEnquiry@met.police.uk) with any further medical enquiries.

[www.metpolicecareers.co.uk](http://www.metpolicecareers.co.uk)