

# FITNESS INSTRUCTOR

THE GUIDE OF THE FITNESS INSTRUCTOR



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# INSTRUCTOR CHALLENGES EXPLAINED

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Written by instructors  
to instructors



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# 01

# INTRODUCTION

**Regardless of whether you want to become a fitness instructor, whether you are newly certified or a confirmed fitness instructor this guide is for you**

This guide is the first international version in English. We plan to translate it to other main languages (French, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, Dutch), and to create regional or country-specific guides. If you would like to help us in completing some of these tasks, reach out to us and let us know how you can help.

It is completely FREE and is written by instructors for instructors. Feel free to share it with your colleagues and friends. If you would like to receive updates of this guide or receive any new publication from us, please make sure you subscribe to updates on:

<http://bit.ly/pfigupdatesreg>

All the data written in this guide originates from personal experience as fitness instructor, it isn't broad, and likely many more themes could be covered. On the off chance that you might want us to develop other subjects, or be a part of this experience and become a recognized contributor, let us know.

**Wishing you a pleasant read ;)**



**"TELL US HOW WE CAN IMPROVE; KEEP IT POSITIVE AND SUPPORTIVE; WE WOULD PREFER NOT TO SPEND ENERGY ON NEGATIVE COMMENTS"**

**To reach out to us, send us an e-mail on  
[support@passionfitness.be](mailto:support@passionfitness.be).**



# 02

## CERTIFICATION & PROGRAM

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**Are you a certified  
instructor?**

This is most likely the principal question any wellness administrator ought to ask while meeting or enlisting a fitness instructor.

Sadly, there are numerous individuals out there working without having any substantial or recognized certification. Even though there are no solid numbers to approve this statement, we have all observed this happening, and seldom, this question gets asked, and certifications get verified.

A few nations have stringent guidelines in regards to fitness instructor certifications. Some have light to no laws managing this industry.

It's never too late if you don't have a certification in a fitness program, do get one. You have probably learned by doing, or with the help of others, but this may not be sufficient, and getting a certification will give you extra knowledge and experience you currently don't have.

You will be amazed at how much more you can learn in just a few days.

# 2.1 CERTIFICATION RECOGNITION

**When seeking for a program or certification in the area you are passionate about, do some research, and assess the following criteria:**

## Reach

Is this program present in many countries?  
Does it have Worldwide recognition, or is it region-based?

## Approved

Is this program approved by governmental or global fitness authorities?

## Popular

Is this program well developed, popular, and recognized by the fitness industry?

## Certification Process

What is the certification process? For how long is the certification valid?

## Progression

What is the potential progression, instructor levels?

## Market opportunity

Is there a market need for this type of program? Are there too many instructors already in the market and in your area (overpopulated), or not enough instructors (penury)?



**Most programs have an instructor website, fitness app, or instructor identification card. These tools allow you to prove your certification status and level. If the certification is limited in time, you will also be able to find the certification expiry date.**

# 2.2 CERTIFICATION BENEFITS

**Becoming a certified instructor in a recognized program can bring you quite a lot of benefits, including:**



## **Brand Recognition**

Use of existing marketing, and aura of such a brand, gives you access to an extensive instructor and fan community.

## **Market access**

Easier access to class teaching, either in Sub (replacements) or to obtain fixed classes.

## **Education**

Access to continuing education increases your experience to become a better, more knowledgeable and popular instructor.

## **Better pay**

Get better pay, negotiate better hourly rates by showing your certifications and instructor level.

## **Quality**

Guarantee quality for your participants and the fitness you are working with.

## **Always updated**

Be kept up to date with the latest evolution in terms of teaching, coaching, training routines, science, and career progression.

**Get the most out of your program certification, be an informed instructor and understand what it takes to keep it active. identify the direct and indirect advantages, how these can benefit you and your personal business.**

# 2.3 CONTINUING EDUCATION

**You may think you know it all, so why would you need to get educated? You will be surprised how much more you can learn in just a few days, by going through a recognized certification.**

Getting certified is the initial step and education you can get from known fitness programs. These programs also have a catalog of additional tuition, specific to the program, or related to other topics, allowing you to develop various skills.

Your classes will improve, your credibility will rise, and you will be able to handle more complex situations when teaching and advising your participants. It will allow you to transform yourself from an instructor into a coach.

Search what type of additional education your certification program proposes, and select the best fit for your purpose.

You should also look outside the program. Some external education can significantly benefit your coaching skills and help you in your instructor career progression.

Here are some objections we often hear from instructors that do not want to follow any additional education:



- It's too expensive.
- It's useless.
- I know it all.
- I don't need to learn anything else.
- I don't have the time.
- I'm teaching on those days.
- Brands only want to get money from us.
- And probably many more... Have you used any of these excuses before?

**Well, some instructors like to complain about everything, and although all of these can be valid, instructors should be more open-minded. Education is essential in an instructor's career and should not be undervalued and underestimated.**

## 2.3 CONTINUING EDUCATION CONT.

**It is essential to Inform the fitness facility and your students of your absence; they usually don't like it when you miss a class.**



You should create an education strategy for yourself, define a budget and a frequency to stay up to date. Plan at least one education a year or every two years and use it as a refresh of what you already know and maybe forgot.

Also, use this opportunity to share knowledge with other instructors, learn and improve with your peers.

It is essential to Inform the fitness facility and your students of your absence; they usually don't like it when you miss a class. Explaining why you are attending additional education will give them a better understanding, so they'll value your professionalism.

They will be thankful and probably will be very interested in the new things you have learned and how you will apply them in your daily teaching. After you started to implement your new techniques, it is probably the best time to ask for a pay raise.

Learn and progress at your own pace, education should be at the top of your yearly objectives.

**You are the pro; people look at you as a knowledgeable and experienced instructor, are you what you represent? Nobody can claim they know everything you included.**

# 2.4 RULES & TRADEMARK

**Brand trademark and usage guidelines are frequently miss-used or infringed, involuntarily by pure ignorance, or voluntarily to the benefit of the fitness facility, most even think this is business as usual.**

To be a certified instructor of a known brand brings a lot of benefits; however, there are rules to respect and brand guidelines to pay attention to.

These rules are usually not very complicated and are often well described and discussed during the program's initial education.

Why is this important, and why do brands give so much attention to this matter?

## Licensed Programs

Some fitness facilities schedule classes based on licensed programs, but re-name it differently to avoid license agreements, including the restrictions associated with it. However, the instructor often uses the material provided by the licensed program; the usage of this material can also be regulated and limited to facilities that contracted the license agreement. Facilities and instructors may be voluntarily infringing on the trademark regulations. Only licensed facilities may schedule and use the material provided by the fitness brand.

## Consistency & Intellectual Property

Brands have worked hard and invested heavily to create consistent marketing and fitness program material; this intellectual property is specific to the brand, its products, and services. Brand name, logos, products, and services, represent the brand and a certain level of quality standards. Brands want their products and services to be consistent; as such, they want to keep control of how the brand is in use overhaul.

## Commercial Impact

Printing, producing, selling, or promoting any trademarked material without the owner's authorization, is considered as counterfeit; as such, it may impact the brand.

Brand image and financials. Promoting any fitness workout with the name of a trademark without a proper license agreement damages the brand image. Customers may have the impression they are buying an original product; instead, they are getting a copy that may even be non-compliant with the training program.

**The usage of any fitness registered brand is regulated; it includes class schedule, organizing events, the printing of any material on paper or clothing, publishing on social media, or any other type of advertising.**

## 2.4 RULES & TRADEMARK CONT.

**There are elementary rules instructors, or fitnesses should follow. There's no excuse not to do it, no one is sensed not to know the law. Check these out and make sure you stay on the safe side:**

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### Trademark usage checklist

- Check if you are using a registered trademark in your communication?
- Is it a free term, brand, or registered trademark?
- Search on google, any logo with the ® sign or with the ™ symbol is a show stopper; it means it is regulated or restricted
- Do you have the proper authorization to use the brand in this specific situation?
- Are you a certified instructor of that brand?
- Are you a certified or licensed center for that brand? Are you a brand representative?
- Search and read the brand usage guidelines carefully, you may find it on the brand website or in your instructor manual.
- Read the instructor or Brand's manual. If you couldn't find it, contact the brand representative.
- Although you may be authorized to use the brand, product, or service, you still need to follow the usage requirements and to validate your content with the brand representative.

**Wrong or undue usage of a trademark can cause the brand to notify you of a brand guideline infringement. It is a counterfeit or unlawful activity, and it may lead to legal actions.**



# 03 LEGAL STATUS

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## What's your current legal entity?

You recently certified, and you don't have any fixed class yet? You started prospecting; however, you don't have enough experience yet?

This will play against you when searching for a class and being on the schedule of a fitness facility.

You should start by taking as much replacements as you can.

It's a challenge on its own, but it will give you a lot of experience, and also inspire you to teach in different clubs.

You may see this new activity as a full-time job, but most of the time, it is not; it can be complementary to your current situation.

Depending on how you see it and want to integrate it into your life and professional career you should also choose the most appropriate legal entity.

This chapter helps you to choose the best legal entity for your specific purpose.

# 3.1 FREELANCE PART TIME

**Most countries' legislation allows for a partial freelance status; it's usually fast and easy to enroll; it also costs less in taxation.**

It's probably the easiest option to start your instructor career, and this is also the preferred and most used contracting method fitnesses use.

This status is best applied if you have a main full or part-time job; this is your first source of income. Adding the fitness instructor activity on the top may complement, usually with a lower income than the primary income source.

If this situation reverses, you may consider changing the legal entity from a partial freelance to a full-time freelance or employee status.

Be sure to get all the information from a legal source, start by searching on the web or make an appointment in your local social security or a legal registrations office.



Registration usually takes a couple of days and shouldn't cost a lot of money.

This status is often limited either to certain monthly / annually working hours or to a limited annual amount that you can not exceed.

You are looking for Subs or fixed classes? Have you tried the new app for fitness instructors? With TINA you can get more work, increase your revenue and find your dream classes: <http://tin-a.com>

**Part time Freelance status may exempt you from the VAT declaration; unnecessary paperwork will be avoided by you and fitness facilities you work for, it makes things easier for everyone.**

## 3.2 FREELANCE FULL TIME

**You should choose this status if you have a large number of fixed classes, and if you propose other products and services like Personal Training, Nutrition, Life Coaching, or any other fitness-related services.**

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Choosing a full-time free-lance status brings additional costs, you will have to maintain precise accounting or hire someone to do it for you. Even though you hire a third party to do this work, you still have to do some part of it as well.

You will have to create invoices and VAT declarations, pay social security, and insurances at a higher rate.

However, you will benefit from better control of expenses; you will be able to spend operational costs on education, transportation (car, fuel, or public transports), any material like a computer, phone, internet, but also your fitness gear and clothing.

You will invoice VAT, but you can also deduct the VAT from everything you buy and expense related to your activity.

**Your job income must be sufficiently high to cover all the costs associated with your job. You may also incur an additional tax increase when selecting this status.**

# 3.3 COMPANY INC.

**If your activity goes beyond selling your hourly services, or if your income is higher than an average salary, you may consider the move to a company legal entity.**

Creating a company becomes financially attractive when you sell lots of products or services, the revenue may increase to a substantial level, enough to cover your salary, your costs but also the running costs of your company.

You may need to hire an accountant and maybe even employees.

Establishing a company legal entity is more complex, requires a minimum capital investment, the paperwork and more complex and constraining, but the taxes applied on your revenue are usually substantially lower than the ones of a free-lance.

A Corporation (also known as a “C-Corporation”) is a separate legal entity that can shield the owners from personal liability and company debts.

These are the different types of corporations: click [here](#) to know more



- Corp., Inc. Corporation, Incorporated
- C & S Corporation
- Professional corporation
- Doing Business As
- Limited Liability Companies
- LLC, LC, Ltd. Co. Limited Liability Company
- PLLC Professional Limited Liability Company
- Partnerships
- General Partnership
- LP Limited Partnership
- LLP Limited Liability Partnership
- LLLP Limited Liability Limited Partnership

**The tax advantages can be considerable (i.e. you are able to deduct many business expenses, healthcare programs, etc. that other legal entities cannot). Income is reported completely separate via a tax return for the corporation.**

## 3.2 EMPLOYEE

**You feel like you are ready to take the challenge; you decide to turn your passion into your main activity, and you accept a job at a fitness facility.**

It will assure you consistency and job security, although the fitness industry does not have a good reputation in job stability, it is a highly competitive market with continuous changes and adaptations.

Be prepared to do more than teaching fitness classes; you may be asked to sell fitness subscriptions as this is one of the main jobs in a fitness facility.

You may complement this activity with other types of work like maintaining the fitness neat and clean, class management, personal training, and group fitness training as well.

Your passion for fitness is great, but there's a lot more than just it when you decide to move to a full-time job, you may even consider to start with a part-time, evaluate the work you need to do and decide to take it fully after you tried it out for a few months.



## NO LEGAL STATUS

You should avoid this situation; newly certified instructors usually start this way, simply because they may not have any class yet.

Starting with no legal entity can bring you into trouble situations in case of an inspection, as you will be doing non-declared work, the fitness facility hiring you will also get penalized.

Money exchanged between the fitness, and a not declared instructor becomes an illegal transaction. In case of an accident, you even may not be covered although you have insurance.

Are you in this situation? It's never too late to change it, consider all the risks you are taking, and you need one bad day to get into deep trouble. Look for a fast solution and how you can make your activity legal.

**Our advice is to start with a part-time free-lance status, and you can later adapt and change accordingly, either as full-time freelance, employee or to create your own corporation.**



# INSURANCE POLICY

## 04 LIABILITY INSURANCE

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**Do you have  
insurance?**

**Do you know you  
need one?**

If you have one please move on to the next chapter :)

If you don't have one then you need to read this chapter, it may save you from getting into trouble.

If you are working for a fitness facility as an employee, you are probably insured by your employer, to be sure, check this with them.

If you are a free-lance or you own a company, you should consider getting insurance.

You are providing direct customer services; you are in the front line, and although you may be representing your fitness facility, you are the one teaching, throwing instructions, and workout queues, in the classroom you are the master of ceremony.

As such, everything you do can impact positively or negatively, the experience of the class participant.

Accidents can happen when you least expect, causing damages with dramatic consequences. Although we all love when things go well, you only need one little thing to happen to make things go wrong.

# 04 LIABILITY INSURANCE

**Instructor insurance is usually public liability insurance, covering any damage you may cause to others, due to any of your acts in the duty of teaching fitness in general.**

Most often, fitnesses remove their responsibilities in case anything happens to a client present in their facilities; these are generally written in the terms and conditions clients sign to become members of the fitness facility.

It's legally discussable if an accident happens in the facilities, and the client can prove the accident is due to the negligence of the fitness owner; he has good chances of winning any legal case and requests for damage.

If that accident happens while you are teaching, in your classroom and the client can prove you are the cause of it, either by negligence or through your instruction, he could ask for damage repair.

When this happens, you may be just by yourself; if the fitness you work for does not back you up, and from this point on, you also need some protection.

Imagine a customer of the fitness gets injured in your classroom, the medical costs raise to thousands of dollars, the fitness puts the non-responsibility regulation towards the client, and the client claims he/she got injured because of you, will you pay for the expenses?



Talk to a local insurer or search on the internet for public liability insurance; typical covers go up to 1 million dollars or more.

By the way, this cost is often deductible from your taxes and general operating expenses.

It should not cost more than \$100 a year, and it's worth investing in such a service.

**We wish you will never have to use that insurance, but you will sleep a lot better if you get one, you can focus on your teaching without worrying that any accident may happen in the classroom caused by you.**



# 05

## RATES & BUSINESS MODEL

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**Do you work solely for the passion?**

**What's your charging model?**

You like fitness so much that it became your passion, your way of life, you decided to become a fitness instructor, and you are happy doing it, that you are even ready to teach fitness classes for free.

However, your passion also costs money; you invested in getting certified, you bought new material and probably new clothing.

You take your time to prepare your classes and get to the gym early to set up your class, and you stay late to connect with your participants.

It's hard to make a living from teaching group classes; however, it is an excellent complement to your primary revenue.

You should ask for a reasonable pay for teaching your fitness classes unless you don't need the money, and you do it for passion alone.

Instructors are usually not paid good enough for the work they deliver; this is a general feeling across the instructor community; exceptions occur in geographical zones like urban areas, luxury facilities, and fitness studios.

# 05 RATES & BUSINESS MODEL

**The fitness industry has dramatically changed in recent years with the explosion of low-cost fitness centers; they focus on a broad spectrum of equipment and extended access hours, some even run 24/7.**

However, they propose the minimum amount of services to lower the costs down. You may find fitnesses with no classes at all, quite a lot with virtual classes, and some with the addition of instructor-led classes, usually with a supplement to attending this type of service.

These types of fitnesses have pushed down the instructor-led classes tariff; if you are teaching in those types of fitnesses (usually larger chains), you may get as low as 10\$-15\$ for 40 to 60 min classes.

No wonder instructors feel they are not being paid enough for all the work they have to execute. You will barely cover your costs with this hourly pay unless you are teaching a large number of hours.

Fitness instructors have substantial costs like the initial certification education and certification renewals, some programs may have instructor subscriptions, the investment in good quality material and gear (clothing, shoes, or other equipment).

Instructors also spend a substantial time in class preparation, either to build it or to learn the new release of the fitness program.

In some urban areas or high-end fitness facilities, hourly pay is often higher, starting at 30\$, 40\$, or even 50\$ for one hour class. This rate is fair, covers costs, and provides better financial outcomes; you can focus on quality rather than quantity.

It is normal to have a pay raise discussion with your fitness manager at every step in your instructor career, acquired years of experience, reach of a new certification level, additional education, and events you are asked to present.



This rate can even grow higher in fitness boutique centers; these are like boutique studios that focus on client comfort and high-end services. Usually, clients pay per class, and instructors can earn a lot higher rates, up to 100 or more dollars.

If you start your studio and your client business model is pay per class, you will get even higher rates, although you may encounter higher costs as well as renting the space and having your equipment.

**Instructors usually arrive 30 minutes before their class, prepare and set up, talk with the newcomers and explain initial configurations, often stay later than the class hour to answer customers' questions, shower, and get dressed again, this can last from 30 to 60 min after class.**

# 05 RATES & BUSINESS MODEL CONT

**Class attendance may have a significant impact on the hourly pay; some fitnesses even have a fixed and variable model;**

Each instructor would get a fixed amount, like 10\$-15\$, and will have a variable complement depending on the rate of filling of the class. This amount can then double if the class is full.

Usually, the class attendance is the primary KPI fitnesses overlook to either maintain a class, maintain the instructor, and decide on the pay per hour for the service delivered. Although lower cost clubs usually run on a low-cost subscription model and the fewer people enter the fitness every day, the better as it reduces their costs as well.

**Increase your fitness revenue, easily find available subs or fixed classes in your area. Install TINA the Instructors APP on IOS & Android <http://tin-a.com>**



Privately owned fitness facilities, medium to high-end fitnesses, including fitness boutiques, have a different focus and way of working. They focus on their customers and the quality of services they provide, targeting increased client visits, the main goal is to fill in all classes as much as possible.

Typical filling targets for group fitness classes are 70% attendance and more. Usually, an instructor is seen as successful if he/she can reach this target.

Teaching fitness classes can be a highly demanding physical activity; it can wear your body pretty fast if you train too much and too intense, you should prefer quality versus quantity.

Accepting to work in low-cost chains with low pay rate per class not only will make you increase the number of classes you teach, wearing you out faster, it also pushes the prices of the industry down. Instructors should take the courage to refuse to teach if the pay per class does not cover their costs, if clubs have problems to find instructors at a lower rate per hour, they will raise their hourly rates.

It is not reasonable that a newly certified instructor with no experience is paid the same rate as an advanced or elite instructor with many years of experience, in reality, this happens more often than not.

It is also our responsibility as certified fitness instructors to inform the fitnesses we work for about our certification levels, additional education, and experience to back it up with attendance numbers and request for honest and correct pay for the value we bring to the fitness.

Newly certified instructors can accept any rate, their goal is to gain experience fast, and the best way to acquire that experience is to teach often, take all subs/replacements they can. Promote yourself in the fitness facilities around you, until you get asked to pick up a fixed class. It is normal to start with a low hourly rate.

**If all certified instructors take action on this model, the rates will adapt by themselves, and experienced instructors should not be paid at the lowest rates newly certified instructors will usually accept.**



# 06

## MATERIAL & EQUIPEMENT

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**You are the professional and the role model, present like one**

The way you enter the classroom will give your class participants a first impression;

What you wear and how you act plays an essential role on how people will seize you, although they should not judge you purely on your appearance, they will try to evaluate you.

It is even more true if you are doing a sub/replacement or if you are a newly certified instructor, and people do not know you yet.

At all moments, you are the role model, people look at you as an example to follow, and they will replicate most of what you will do, say, and even wear.

If you neglect yourself through your presentation and material, like your fitness gear, you may damage your credibility level towards your participants, they may not say anything.

Still, they will think a lot and probably comment on themselves. You don't want that to happen; they should focus on your work and not on any side comments.

# 06.1 PROFESSIONAL IMAGE

**It starts with your fitness bag, the one you take to the gym, get one large enough to put all your gear inside, make it beautiful and representative of your program.**

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Probably one day you were simply a fitness enthusiast, then you decided to certify and start teaching fitness classes, from that point on you become a professional, your attention to detail should also change in this evolution, your look as an instructor should be sharp and neat, it should deliver the image of a pro at all times.

Your clothing should be appropriate to the type of program you are teaching; it should be trendy and have beautiful colors or prints. You should renew it quite frequently, wearing the same clothing for two years in a row, will not give you a good image, make sure you have a good number of kits so you can interchange often.

You are a professional; as such, you research material of exceptional quality, you will be wearing it very often mostly in harsh conditions, and quality does matter in that situation, clothing will be worn and washed many times.

**Your participants will look at you as the professional, always up to date with the latest and highest standards; this will deliver a better image of you and the brand you represent.**

# 06.2 BRAND REPRESENTATIVE

Becoming a certified instructor of a specific program links you to a brand, and every time you are teaching, you are also representing the brand and its fitness program.

Whether you like it or not, you are a customer-facing brand representative, by wearing the official brand kits that representation becomes even stronger, you will then benefit from the image and visibility created by the brand.

You don't have to wear brand clothing or material, but if you do, it will show your brand identity.

You may score a higher credibility level when you introduce yourself with your certification status, wearing the official brand gear will only reiterate that statement.

It will undoubtedly create a better connection with some of your class participants that are also fans of that fitness program.



Your participants will look at you as the professional, always up to date with the latest and highest standards; this will deliver a better image of you and the brand you represent.

# 06.3 MICROPHONE

**Some believe this piece of equipment should be the fitness center responsibility, some think it should be the responsibility of the instructor, we will share with you what's best and what's our recommendation.**

In both cases, there are pros and cons, but the bottom line usually gets down to the financials, microphone sets are expensive to buy and maintain.

Nobody wants to take that cost, neither the fitness facility, neither the instructor, the only way to get away with a good result is then to put the price into a secondary concern.

## Mic qualification checklist

- **Think about the hygiene:** by having your material, either your mic or at least having a couple of personal mic bonnets will keep your colleague's sweat and microbes away from your mouth.
- **Overuse and quality:** Shared microphones get to be used multiple times a day, they do not have the time to dry up, humid mic's lower the quality of the audio, and will probably even cease to work due to high levels of humidity or rust.
- **Mic care and maintenance:** Shared microphones are from everyone and no-one, resulting in instructors not taking good care of it, fitness facility personnel neither. Rechargeable batteries are often discharged, ordinary batteries empty with no spare left. Mics are highly sensitive material and should be taken care of delicately; this usually does not happen if it's not your material; thus, they are often broken, unusable, or will not last long.
- **Quality:** Professional mics usually bought by facilities are excellent material of high quality. This type of material provides better sound quality than cheaper microphones instructors would buy; however, due to the reasons described above, this high-quality material can just be useless. Either by lack of charged batteries, either by overuse or misuse of the material, the assured high quality can downgrade or fail to be used.

The above situations happen more often than not. It will not happen again if you invest in a mic or mic set for your use.

The main objection we get from instructors for not making this investment is the cost of this equipment, how much of a problem can that be, you just need to find out the best compromise, here are some tips to help you:

**How many of you could simply not use a mic due to the many reasons described above?**

# 06.3 MICROPHONE CONT

## Microphones are most vulnerable to humidity or moist;

At the end of each usage, dry it up in an open place. Store it in a breathable pouch or bag, it is not a good idea to store it in a closed compartment like a plastic box as the humidity will not evaporate. Prefer a fabric bag or pouch with enough space and semi-rigid structure, so the mic does not get squeezed or crashed in it.

## Mic qualification checklist

- **Budget:** Set yourself a reasonable budget, evaluate medium quality material, and avoid the low cost, as it's not good enough in terms of quality and longevity. On the other hand, professional equipment can be very costly and is a too high investment for the usage; you will sweat on it and transport it everywhere, often in adverse conditions. Medium quality mic usually sets a price between 200\$ and 400\$.
- **Mic Set:** Do you need the complete mic set? With the transmitter and receiver? Maybe you teach only in one fitness center, share the costs with the facility, they can invest in the base (receiver) and instructors can invest in the mic and transmitter. This will lower your investment, and you get a win-win situation. This will not work if you teach at different facilities, and each uses a different type of mic type/brand.
- **Batteries and cables:** buy one or two sets of rechargeable batteries, including a battery charger and a battery check tool, always have extra fully charged batteries in your mic pouch. Buy two or three types of cables, or check the facilities sound system connections. The principal used connection types are:
  - XLR Female to XLR Male (you need a cable XLR Female to XLR Male)
  - XLR Male to Jack Female (You need a cable XLR Male to Jack Female)
  - Jack Female to Jack Female (You need a cable Jack Female to Jack Female)



Check the explanatory video on “how to select a microphone set” on our youtube channel “Passion Fitness Digital Academy”:  
<https://youtu.be/Zsw6-A9J3jo>



# 07 PROGRAM TEACHING

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**It's time to sweat, are  
you ready to teach?**

How do you learn your routines and prepare your classes?

Preparation is a large part of the fitness instructor life, and at the same time it is not seen and valued by others.

Depending on the program you are teaching, there may be different types of preparation work, however you will not be able to avoid this task.

It may be complex and time consuming, the best way to handle it, is to create your own learning system, what works best for you, and industrialise it in a repeatable way.

Do not be scared by the task itself, it's often what what new instructors fear the most and question themselves, where to start and how to progress through it to make it right.

It's all a learning process, it's laborious at start but you will get expert on it in no time. Give yourself the time to learn and instantiate the process.

Here are some hints and techniques you need to know to apply it in the best way.

# 07.1 FULLY SCRIPTED PROGRAMS

**A good number of known fitness programs/brands base their classes on fixed scripted choreographies, created centrally by program managers, and rolled out regionally or globally at predefined interval periods.**

Certified instructors have access to the new releases; nowadays, through instructor portals, where they can download the material, some concepts may still use physical resources like paper scrips, DVDs, and Audio CDs.

Scripted classes are usually composed of a video, with the demonstration of the choreography, a playlist with the music, and a detailed written script of the class planning, moves, exercises, timings, and repetitions.

Instructors need to spend time to train and learn the new choreography, to adapt their coaching and practice it before the launch date in the fitness centers.

It's quite a time consuming and stressful activity; you usually need to access a fitness facility to train and practice. And you will need to repeat this every time there is a new release. Typically, the timing for new releases is the quarterly model, with four releases per year.

Be sure to know the choreography up to your fingertips, this type of concept relies on a product delivered precisely in the same way all over the world, providing the same client experience wherever you are.

The creation process is made easier for instructor; this can be seen as a significant advantage, the disadvantage is that if you don't like it, you will have to teach it anyway.

Subscribing to the release model can also bring a cost to the instructor; usually, new releases come with a price tag, this subscription also can be used to maintain the instructor certification active.



**The main advantage of this model is the ready to use class; instructors just need to learn the latest version, practice, and deliver it. Music has been carefully selected and licensed by the program managers; it's permitted to use while teaching, and it's provided in the package.**

# 07.2 FLEX SCRIPTED PROGRAMS

**some programs/brands rely on modules that you may combine to create a class. The program managers create blocks, with routines and propose blocks of choreographies together with recommended music.**

The instructor prepares his class by putting together different blocks of predefined choreographed routines.

This makes it more flexible for the instructor and gives him some liberty to adapt the training to his population of participants.



Instructors still need to spend quite some time learning the new routines when they are released, and they also spend time building their classes.

Although this flexibility gives the instructor some freedom of creation, it may be even more time consuming than the fully scripted programs unless the instructor changes the classes less frequently.

There is no need to create a new class each and every week.

Create a base class and apply slight changes week after week. You could start with a basic level 1, then move on with the same class with more intensity.

The participants will evolve from a basic to advanced level in a couple of weeks time.

**The main advantage of this model is the flexibility to build your classes with pre-fabricated blocks. To get the new choreographed blocks and music can also bring a subscription cost.**

# 07.3 BUILD YOUR OWN

**This is by far the most flexible and creative model. Each instructor builds his class by putting together movements, intensity levels, routines, and tempos.**

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The last type of program/brand-related model is the build your class while respecting the program guidelines and rules.

The main disadvantage of this model is probably the time you will have to spend to create your classes from scratch; there is no choreography, neither building blocks or predefined music material you can use.

It's the responsibility of the instructor to find and buy/rent his music, design his class, and make sure he is respecting the program guidelines in terms of fitness movements, intensities, and routines.



You decide the frequency at which you change your class. Some instructors create a new class each week, some will keep the same class for a few weeks. Probably the best model is to build one class and make it evolve in a series of weeks before changing it completely.

The cost per class depends pretty much on the music choices and your music source. If you already have a vast music library, probably you don't need to incur additional costs, every-time you buy new music you will incur additional charges, check the chapter 4.4 for more information about the music.

**The freedom of class creation is seen by many as a joyful activity, it is very personal, and every time you will deliver class you created yourself. It brings high satisfaction if your participants loved it, of course.**

# 07.4 FREE STYLE

**This category, called freestyle, needs to be separated from the others; the main reason is the fact it is not linked to any known official program or brand.**

Some types of fitness practices are on free domain and do not have any brand commercialization, or the instructor chose not to be linked to any recognized or certified brand and creates his routines.

Instructors need to build everything by themselves but also decide on the routines and rules to apply to their classes.



Fitness classes probably started this way, everyone recalls aerobics in the 80's and how popular it was.

Proficient fitness enthusiasts were able to create their own routines, put them up together, add music and roll it out in fitness facilities as group classes.

These are still valid and qualified professionals can create specific types of training and deliver it as group fitness.

The principle and process is not much different than the one the brands use, but you are the one with all the work and responsibility.

Although free style is still much appreciated, make sure you do it right, you base it in industry standards and up-to-date fitness science, respect the body and its biomechanics restrictions and requirements.

**Keep it on the safe side, creativity does not mean madness, crazy moves and techniques you invent just to make it fun and attractive. Fun is important but the main goal of fitness is health and body conditioning, keep this in mind when creating your free-style classes.**



# 08

## COACHING

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**Improve coaching skills and become a better instructor**

Being able to learn and replicate fitness training is one part of the job and you may master it to perfection, however you can raise the bar and develop additional coaching skills.

Great coaches keep learning new techniques and science based training, in order to apply these in every day training with a long term vision.

Being a popular instructor doesn't mean you are a great coach, the opposite is also true, being a great coach doesn't always result in being a popular instructor. The combination of both will guide you to mastery.

The coach sees beyond a particular class, a specific music and that great exercise. He creates, prepares and delivers quality content, sharing his knowledge and motivating fitness practitioners to reach their goals.

While doing this he cares about participants safety, he elaborates classes for a general population, but delivers it individually, although a group of people seem to have the same objectives, each person is different.

To best deliver content, the coach is a master of communication, he elaborates and uses different techniques to connect and engage with participants

# 08.1 SAFETY FIRST

**Everyone wants to have fun when training, but no-one wants to get hurt. Always keep this in mind, everything you do in your class do it with safety in mind and as your primary requirement.**

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You are a fitness instructor, you teach fitness classes, and you instruct what and how your participants need to perform. This is a big responsibility, to stay on the safe side, for your participants and yourself, safety needs to be taken seriously. We usually say in fitness, **SAFETY FIRST.**



Newcomers are the most fragile population type, they probably never practiced before, they may be new to the facility or fitness in general. They may not know and understand the material they will be using, they may have poor technique and poor fitness endurance as well.

It's their discovery session, and it is the best moment they can learn the necessary steps to perform your class safely.

Ask something more about themselves, for how long are they registered in the facility? Were they training anywhere else, and when was the last time they have trained?

Ask them if they have any specific injury or if they have any past traumas that may impact them at this type of physical training.

Better understanding newcomer's physical condition helps you adapt training queues and keep them within their safe zone.

**It's frequent to find people with had knee or back surgeries, chronic pain, or any health sensitivity that can impact physical activity. You would be surprised how many people have significant health issues you should know about that may impact their workout.**

# 08.2 COMMUNICATION

**Instructors are communicators; they instruct training routines, teach, and correct technique, together with connection and motivation.**

Communicating may be natural for you; no effort required; it's like if you were born with it, for others, this may be less natural and somewhat harder; it is a skill you need to learn and develop.

Many factors affect class attendance and filling percentage; however, your communication skills can be a determinant factor in deciding who attends your classes and how many people you can influence and attract.



Have you ever noticed or analyzed the type of participants you have in your classes?

This is a relevant question in terms of communication; in everyday life, you usually attract like-minded people, it is no different when you are an instructor.

You are probably in a situation where a vast majority of your class participants share the same characteristics of your character and behavior.

Your classes are rocking, and you have enough followers, however, if you want to enlarge your reach, and cover every personality type more effectively, you should create more variety and diversity in the way you behave and communicate. It will expand your reach towards a more significant and more varied population.

On the other hand, if you learn how to identify your participant's behaviors, you can better understand what their preferred communication type is. It allows you to adapt your communication and create a better connection between you and them.

**By understanding the different personality types, you can better assess how you are, how you behave and communicate.**

# 08.2 COMMUNICATION CONT

**Here are some of the things you can develop to improve your communication:**

Great instructors are masters of communication, learn more and develop communication skillsets.

Read books about it, follow additional education to understand better what it is, and how you should practice improving your communication skills in every situation.

## Tone of voice

Use different tones of voice, avoid getting a monotonous tone, play with intonations and put stress on keywords.

## Speed of speech

Are you not talking too fast, or too slow? When using a mic words may be missed out if you talk too fast

## Clarity

How is your pronunciation? Check if your participants hear you and understand you.

## Amount of information

Do not throw information like an encyclopedia, give time for your students to assimilate and process the information.

## Balance

Find the right balance between talking and silence, do not talk over lyrics.

## Type

Type of communication, verbal versus non-verbal, visual, kinaesthetic, auditory.



**Attend our online video education “Communication Skills for fitness instructors”, in this course you will learn the communication tips successful instructors use. <http://bit.ly/coachskillscourse> try it out now and enjoy our 30-day money-back guarantee.**



# 09 TRAINING & INJURIES

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**Avoid being out of  
business due to injury**

Your focus is to improve others health and physical condition, but what about yours?

You are part of a population group at risk, getting injured is your worse nightmare, unfortunately the probability it may happen in your career is pretty high.

You seem to be doing everything right, using the perfect techniques you were thought to teach, you practice sports frequently and you feel to be in great shape.

Before you know it you may get injured and you didn't saw it come.

Injury can be cause by many factors, let's put aside anything caused accidentally and focus on risk evaluation.

We will use the F.I.T.T. principle to explain and evaluate the risk level.

Do you know or remember what does F.I.T.T. stand for?

# 09.1 F.I.T.T.

**F.I.T.T. stands for  
Frequency Intensity Time Type**

## Frequency

Frequency relates to repetition, or number of times you are teaching or training, how many times per day or per week you are at the gym. Let's look at it from a weekly perspective, how many days of the week you train and how many rest days you have planned?

If you are teaching or training Seven days a week, meaning you have no single recovery day, you are increasing heavily your risk of injury. You should plan at least one free day a week, two if you are working out very intensively or many hours a day.

Professionals can get scared about off days, they have the feeling they are losing it, reducing their physical performance. It's very wrong, and it goes against the basis of the physical conditioning process of surcharge, followed by recovery and resulting in improvement.

## Intensity

What are the intensity levels you train at? Instructors tend to go all in, by giving themselves to the max, pushing and motivating practitioners to go higher and stronger. It may result in recurring high intensity workouts.

If you are training/teaching more than 80% of the time at high intensities you are heavily increasing the risk of getting injured. Your body is a great machine, but when you push it continuously to hard, it will weaken up instead of getting stronger.

The combination of high frequency and high intensity increases even more the injury risk level. As an example working out seven days a week with 6 days of high intensity gets risky.



## Time

Time is the duration of one or more workouts, how many hours do you teach/train a day, and how many you accumulate over one week.

Many of you teach more than one class a day, often up to three or four, more than 3 hours of fitness on the same day will increase the risk of injury. The fatigue installed after 3 hours can lead to weaken up your technique, bad technique is one of the major causes of accidental injury.

Add the amount of hours you train/teach per week, if it's higher than 8 hours, you are again increasing the risk substantially.

When accumulating long workout durations, at high intensity frequently, you are accepting to take high risks. As an example, you are teaching more than 8 hours a week, 7 days in a row at a high intensity of fitness, guess what? Injury is knocking at the door.

## Type

Type is the qualification of your sport, are you training/teaching strength, cycling, aerobics, yoga, dance? Having one single type of fitness, is not the best thing to do, your body gets used to it and you keep repeating the same movements and routines over and over again.

This is the main cause for tendinitis, but also joint and ligament overuse.

Performing multiple types of fitness, varies the body movements, strengthens the body as a whole, probably protecting you from overusing certain parts only.

**Cumulating one single type of fitness, with long duration, at high intensity quite frequently is the best cocktail to get injured in no time. Finally luck also plays a role, are you a lucky person?.**

# 09.2 AVOID INJURY

**We will add one extra T to the FITT principle. T for technique and how important this is to avoid injury.**

The loop closes when asking one more time the first question stated at the start of this guide “are you a certified instructor?”

Most certified instructors have been through strong education, and learned the best and perfect technique for themselves and for teaching during class.

Despite that many instructors, certified or not, like to create their own variations or new routines, they believe they can make it more attractive and motivating for their participants.

It can lead to create wrong technique models and contraindications to fitness and biomechanics. Bad or contraindicated movements proposed at fast speed and high number of repetitions are the perfect cocktail for generating injuries.



**It may not happen today or tomorrow, but it's only a matter of time before it gets you, causing you inability to teach for some time and loosing your financial revenue.**

## 09.2 AVOID INJURY CONT

**If you are combining teaching over more than 8 hours and 7 days a week, it's time to step it down, reduce some classes and get down to at least 6 days a week, to allow one day of recovery.**

Although it may sound obvious and logical, why all of the above increases the risk of injury substantially, the passion gets over it most of the times and you may get unreasonable.

Do you really think it's work it to keep so many classes and not give your body one day to recover? When going over 12 hours a week allow for one to two days to recover, and plan a few days of recovery every two to three months.

Your body is your best monitor to identify when to make a pause and plan one or more recovery days, listen to it carefully.



You feel general fatigue, this is alert number one, stop and rest. You feel early pain in one part of the body, check it out immediately and make sure it's not related to the movements you perform.

You get sick to easily and too often, generally it will also take longer to get our of it. This is a clear sign your imune system is weakening, it happens when you are over training, definitely it's time to take a break immediately.

Your hear rate levels are way above your normal for the same type of workout, this is a great sign you need a few recovery days, for your body to heal, reconstruct, re-energize so you can come back stronger.

**You may be and feel strong, but any injury will shut down your teaching, having serious impact in your current and future career. Your body is precious, take good care of it so you can perform at your best.**



# 10 MUSIC

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**Music is the cherry on  
the cake of fitness  
classes**

Music is a magical component in fitness, either you are training by yourself, running outside or attending a group class, it's there to motivate, to give a meaning of energy and intensity but also rhythm and movement.

With or without lyrics, popular or alternative, vintage or actual, energetic or calm, opera or rock, well used, at the right moment with the right people will make it a memorable workout.

It's the instructor companion day in and day out, no wonder we spend so much time listening it, preparing it and understanding how to use it in our favor when teaching fitness routines.

The approach to music in group classes can be very different from one program to another, while some provide you with ready to use music, others give you the freedom to select your own.

The majority of posts, on Facebook instructor groups, relate to music, although nowadays we have easy access to millions of songs, it doesn't make it any easier to select the best and most appropriate one for a specific class or training.

Let's explore the different music options at your disposal...

# 10.1 WHERE TO FIND MUSIC

**Some programs offer playlists as a ready to use products, music is then linked to choreography and a class release. Others do not provide any music and give you the freedom to select your own.**

## Provided by program

Music is licensed by the program, the instructor can use it while teaching that type of class in the certified fitness centers.

Beware that delivering such kind of class on a non-licensed fitness center may not be legal and not covered by the music license.

Other programs may propose playlists or music to use in the building blocks they recommend; you may have to buy this music on their instructor portal.

The music is then licensed to be used while teaching your routines.

Some programs do not provide choreographed classes and thus do not link music with the routines; they may still sell music adapted to that type of training.



## NOT Provided by program

Many instructors today use this option, although the music you use is on rental mode only; this means if you stop your subscription, you cannot use that music anymore.

With these services, you can create playlists and store them, even share them with other instructors.

If you prefer to own your music, then you will have to buy it, either physically, audio CD's and rip them to mp3, the option may be more expensive as you have to obtain a complete album, and probably you will only use one or two songs.

The other option is to buy online; this option allows you to buy one song at a time at a lower cost.

Many instructors still download music from Youtube by using converter tools from video to mp3. Although videos with fantastic music and remixes are available on youtube, it doesn't give you the legal right to download and use it for teaching.

The music you find on these types of channels may not have been licensed from the start when it was uploaded, and are probably not authorized for mass distribution, download, and re-use in front of audiences.

Although it is technically possible to do, but beware you may be infringing the law by downloading and using this music. Despite that, music that gets converted from videos to mp3 does not have excellent quality.

**The streaming industry has made it very affordable to have access to libraries of millions of songs for a low price. Check the resources section for the interesting links.**

# 10.2 MIXING MUSIC

**Music mixing can be a vast topic; let's make it concise, clear, and helpful. In this section, we will cover the technical mixing aspect rather than the semantic aspect.**

The semantic music mixing aspect focus on music characteristics like a musical key, tempo, and genre. The technical mixing aspect focus on the tool and techniques you require to transition from one song to the next.

Some fitness programs don't require any complex transition mechanism between songs. When CD's or cassettes were used, each song would play sequentially, giving some flexibility to pause between songs, while preparing the transition to the next track.

Some other fitness programs are better performed if the music has no breaks between tracks, creating a seamless experience by mixing music tracks using different techniques like "beat mix" or "simple crossfade".

If you desire to create your own music mixing, you should use music software that provides that capability. The most known tool used by fitness instructors is Mixmeister.

Although this is still the best tool for fitness music mixing, Mac support is very unstable, it also seems there will be no new versions being created by the R&D of the tool. Our advice is to use it on windows; the latest version works very well on that platform.

Mixmeister allows you to change the music speed by increasing or decreasing the tempo, matching your workout pace, you can also cut and paste parts of music, use loops to extend the track.

You can use advanced mixing capabilities like the beat mix with a tempo marker or use a custom one or simply crossfade it automatically or manually.

By using some advanced techniques, you can also change the volume and sound configuration like bass or tremble anywhere in the soundtrack. Stay tuned, we will soon develop a complete online video course on music mixing using Mixmeister.



**Known streaming platforms offer less playback control, you can create playlists and play them with default fade between tracks, for a duration of 2 to 5 seconds the previous music fades out, and the next one fades in.**

# RESOURCES

Find here some useful resources and links

## Music software

- Mixmeister – [mixmeister.com](http://mixmeister.com)
- Mixed in Key – [mixedinkey.com](http://mixedinkey.com)

## Where to buy music

- iTunes. Average cost per album: \$10
- Amazon Music. Average cost per album: \$9.50
- Google Play Music. Average cost per album: \$10
- Bandcamp. Average cost per album: \$8
- 7Digital
- Bleep
- CD Baby.

## Music Streaming

- Music streaming comparison here
- Spotify (\$9.99) [spotify.com](http://spotify.com)
- Deezer (\$9.99) [deezer.com](http://deezer.com)
- Google Play Music (\$9.99)  
[play.google.com/store/music](http://play.google.com/store/music)
- Apple Music (\$9.99) [apple.com/apple-music](http://apple.com/apple-music)
- Amazon Music Unlimited (\$9.99)  
[amazon.com/music/unlimited](http://amazon.com/music/unlimited)
- Tidal (\$9.99) [tidal.com](http://tidal.com)

## FREE Music

- Jamendo Music – [www.jamendo.com](http://www.jamendo.com)
- SoundCloud – [soundcloud.com](http://soundcloud.com)
- Amazon Music – [amazon.com/Free-Songs-Music/b?node=334897011](http://amazon.com/Free-Songs-Music/b?node=334897011)
- SoundClick – [soundclick.com](http://soundclick.com)
- ReverbNation – [reverbnation.com/main/discover](http://reverbnation.com/main/discover)

- **Create your company**

<https://www.sba.gov/business-guide/10-steps-start-your-business/>

## Insurance for instructors

- Protectivity [protectivity.com/product/fitness-instructor-insurance/](http://protectivity.com/product/fitness-instructor-insurance/)
- Next Insurance [next-insurance.com/business/fitness-instructor](http://next-insurance.com/business/fitness-instructor)

## Passion Fitness Digital

- Youtube channel – [bit.ly/pfayoutube](http://bit.ly/pfayoutube)
- Digital education – [bit.ly/pfadigedu](http://bit.ly/pfadigedu)
- Instructors Mobile App – [tin-a.com](http://tin-a.com)
- Digital agency – [fitnessdigitalagency.com](http://fitnessdigitalagency.com)
- Fitness Instructor Guide – [bit.ly/freeinstructorguide](http://bit.ly/freeinstructorguide)



Attend our online video education “Communication Skills for fitness instructors”, in this course you will learn the communication tips successful instructors use. <http://bit.ly/coachskillscourse> try it out now and enjoy our 30-day money-back guarantee.