

## New Army fitness test

Army soldiers struggle to haul heavy sleds backward as fast as they can down a grassy field at Fort Bragg, filling the brisk North Carolina morning air with grunts of exertion and the shouts of instruction from their coaches. Watching from the sidelines, Sgt. Maj. Harold Sampson shakes his head. As a military intelligence specialist he spends a lot of time behind a desk. Over his two decades in the Army, he could easily pound out the situps, pushups and 2-mile run that for years have made up the service's fitness test. But change has come. The Army is developing a new, more grueling and complex fitness exam that adds dead lifts, power throws and other exercises designed to make soldiers more fit and ready for combat. "I am prepared to be utterly embarrassed," Sampson said on a recent morning, two days before he was to take the test.

Commanders have complained in recent years that the soldiers they get out of basic training aren't fit enough. Nearly half of the commanders surveyed last year said new troops coming into their units could not meet the physical demands of combat. Officials also say about 12 percent of soldiers at any one time cannot deploy because of injuries.[READ MORE...](#)