

How Do You Measure Up?

LET'S GET STARTED

The first thing you need to do is assess your fitness level. You probably have some idea of how fit you are or aren't! It is important to gather as much information about your fitness starting point through a fitness assessment. The following tests can be done right in your living room. Recording baseline fitness scores can give you a better idea of your starting point as well as a benchmark against which to measure your progress. The results of your test will be a great motivational tools to help you reach your goals.

Body Measurements

Taking your measurements is an excellent way to see where you are beginning and to keep track of your changing shape as you get fit. Here is how you take your body measurements.

Chest: Don't squish yourself -- measure all the way around your bust and back right at your nipple line, and make sure the tape measure is not lower.

Upper arm: Measure wherever they are biggest above your elbows.

Waist: Measure wherever it is the smallest (if you have "no waist" go around yourself right at the navel)

Hips: Measure at the very biggest part, even if that is so low that you are almost on the top of your thighs.

Thighs: Measure wherever they are the biggest.

Calves: Measure wherever they are the biggest.

It may seem discouraging to see your measurements when you start, but once you begin to see results, the feeling of accomplishment is wonderful. Take your measurements every six weeks

Body composition is the term used to describe the different components that, when taken together, make up a person's body weight. The human body is composed of a variety of different tissue types including lean tissues (muscle, bone, and organs) that are metabolically active and fat tissue that is not. There are several online calculators that are easy to use. Just plug in your details and get valuable information about your body.

The Step Test... Measures aerobic fitness

This test is designed to measure your cardiovascular endurance. Using a 12 inch high Bench (or a similar sized stair in your house), step on and off for 3 minutes. Step up with one foot and then the other. Step down with one foot followed by the other foot. Try to maintain a steady four beat cycle. It's easy to maintain if you say "up, up, down, down". Go at a steady and consistent pace. At the end of 3 minutes, remain standing while you immediately check your heart rate by taking your pulse for one minute.

Minute Step Test (Men)

<i>Age</i>	<i>18-25</i>	<i>26-35</i>	<i>36-45</i>	<i>46-55</i>	<i>56-65</i>	<i>65+</i>
Excellent	<79	<81	<83	<87	<86	<88
Good	79-89	81-89	83-96	87-97	86-97	88-96

Above Average	90-99	90-99	97-103	98-105	98-103	97-103
Average	100-105	100-107	104-112	106-116	104-112	104-113
Below Average	106-116	108-117	113-119	117-122	113-120	114-120
Poor	117-128	118-128	120-130	123-132	121-129	121-130
Very Poor	>128	>128	>130	>132	>129	>130

3 Minute Step Test (Women)

<i>Age</i>	<i>18-25</i>	<i>26-35</i>	<i>36-45</i>	<i>46-55</i>	<i>56-65</i>	<i>65+</i>
Excellent	<85	<88	<90	<94	<95	<90
Good	85-98	88-99	90-102	94-104	95-104	90-102
Above Average	99-108	100-111	103-110	105-115	105-112	103-115
Average	109-117	112-119	111-118	116-120	113-118	116-122
Below Average	118-126	120-126	119-128	121-129	119-128	123-128
Poor	127-140	127-138	129-140	130-135	129-139	129-134
Very Poor	>140	>138	>140	>135	>139	>134

The One Mile Test... measures aerobic fitness

This test is another great way of measuring your cardiovascular endurance. Simply measure a mile route around your neighbourhood and walk as quickly as possible. Take your heart rate when you begin and when you finish. Also record how long it takes to walk the mile.

One-Mile Walk Test Ratings

Key: < less than; > more than

Women (all times are in minutes and seconds)

Age	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70+
Excellent	<13:12	<13:42	<14:12	<14:42	<15:06	<18:18
Good	13:12- 14:06	13:42- 14:36	14:12- 15:06	14:42- 15:36	15:06- 16:18	18:18- 20:00
Average	14:07- 15:06	14:37- 15:36	15:07- 16:06	15:37- 17:00	16:19- 17:30	20:01- 21:48
Fair	15:07- 16:30	15:37- 17:00	16:07- 17:30	17:01- 18:06	17:31- 19:12	21:49- 24:06
Poor	>16:30	>17:00	>17:30	>18:06	>19:12	>24:06

Men (All times are in minutes and seconds)

Age	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70+
Excellent	<11:54	<12:24	<12:54	<13:24	<14:06	<15:06
Good	11:54- 13:00	12:24- 13:30	12:54- 14:00	13:24- 14:24	14:06- 15:12	15:06- 15:48
Average	13:01- 13:42	13:31- 14:12	14:01- 14:42	14:25- 15:12	15:13- 16:18	15:49- 18:48
Fair	13:43- 14:30	14:13- 15:00	14:43- 15:30	15:13- 16:30	16:19- 17:18	18:49- 20:18
Poor	>14:30	>15:00	>15:30	>16:30	>17:18	>20:18

The Push Up Test... measures muscular strength and endurance

How many can you do? Men should use the standard "full" push up position with only the hands and the toes touching the floor. Women have the additional option of using the modified "bent knee" position. To do this, kneel on the floor, hands on either side of the chest and keep your back straight. Do as many push ups as possible until exhaustion. Count the total number of push ups performed.

Ratings for Men (Full Push ups), based on Age

	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+
Excellent	> 54	> 44	> 39	> 34	> 29
Good	45-54	35-44	30-39	25-34	20-29
Average	35-44	24-34	20-29	15-24	10-19
Poor	20-34	15-24	12-19	8-14	5-9
Very Poor	< 20	< 15	< 12	< 8	< 5

Ratings for Women (Modified Push ups), based on Age

	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+
Excellent	>48	>39	>34	>29	>19
Good	34-48	25-39	20-34	15-29	5-19
Average	17-33	12-24	8-19	6-14	3-4
Poor	6-16	4-11	3-7	2-5	1-2
Very Poor	< 6	< 4	< 3	< 2	< 1

The Sit Up Test measures... core strength and endurance

Abdominal muscle strength and endurance is important for core stability and back support. This sit up test measures the strength and endurance of the abdominals and hip-flexor muscles. Count how many sit-ups can you do in 1 minute.

Starting Position: Lie on a carpeted or cushioned floor with your knees bent at approximately right angles, with feet flat on the ground. Your hands should be resting on your thighs and reach up to the tops of your knees for a complete count.

Age	18-25	26-35	36-45	46-55	56-65	65+
Excellent	>49	>45	>41	>35	>31	>28

Good	44-49	40-45	35-41	29-35	25-31	22-28
Above average	39-43	35-39	30-34	25-28	21-24	19-21
Average	35-38	31-34	27-29	22-24	17-20	15-18
Below Average	31-34	29-30	23-26	18-21	13-16	11-14
Poor	25-30	22-28	17-22	13-17	9-12	7-10
Very Poor	<25	<22	<17	<9	<9	<7

1 Minute Sit Up Test (Women)

<i>Age</i>	<i>18-25</i>	<i>26-35</i>	<i>36-45</i>	<i>46-55</i>	<i>56-65</i>	<i>65+</i>
Excellent	>43	>39	>33	>27	>24	>23
Good	37-43	33-39	27-33	22-27	18-24	17-23
Above average	33-36	29-32	23-26	18-21	13-17	14-16
Average	29-32	25-28	19-22	14-17	10-12	11-13
Below Average	25-28	21-24	15-18	10-13	7-9	5-10
Poor	18-24	13-20	7-14	5-9	3-6	2-4
Very Poor	<18	<20	<7	<5	<3	<2

The Squat Test...measures leg strength and endurance

How many squats can you do? Stand in front of a chair or bench with your feet at shoulder's width apart, facing away from it. Place your hands on your hips. Squat down and lightly touch the chair before standing back up. Make sure your knees do not travel past your toes. A good sized chair is one that makes your knees at right angles when you are sitting. Keep going until you are fatigued.

<i>Age</i>	<i>18-25</i>	<i>26-35</i>	<i>36-45</i>	<i>46-55</i>	<i>56-65</i>	<i>65+</i>
Excellent	>49	>45	>41	>35	>31	>28
Good	44-49	40-45	35-41	29-35	25-31	22-28
Above average	39-43	35-39	30-34	25-38	21-24	19-21
Average	35-38	31-34	27-29	22-24	17-20	15-18
Below Average	31-34	29-30	23-26	18-21	13-16	11-14
Poor	25-30	22-28	17-22	13-17	9-12	7-10
Very Poor	<25	<22	<17	<9	<9	<7

Squat Test (Women)

Age	18-25	26-35	36-45	46-55	56-65	65+
Excellent	>43	>39	>33	>27	>24	>23
Good	37-43	33-39	27-33	22-27	18-24	17-23
Above average	33-36	29-32	23-26	18-21	13-17	14-16
Average	29-32	25-28	19-22	14-17	10-12	11-13
Below Average	25-28	21-24	15-18	10-13	7-9	5-10
Poor	18-24	13-20	7-14	5-9	3-6	2-4
Very Poor	<18	<20	<7	<5	<3	<2

The Sit and Reach Test... measures low back and hamstring flexibility

Sit on floor with legs straight ahead, place back and head against wall and soles (don't wear shoes) against box. Put hands on each other and reach forward while keeping head and back against the wall. The distance from fingertips to box edge becomes your starting point. Slowly bend hips and reach forward as far as possible. Move fingers along ruler to reach final position. Practise three times. The fourth time, keep final position for two seconds and measure the value. Instead of using a sit-and-reach box you can also hold a ruler between your feet.

	women		men	
	cm	inches	cm	inches
excellent	>53	>20.9	>50	>19.7
very good	44-53	17.3-20.9	40-50	15.7-19.6
good	34-43	13.4-17.2	29-39	11.4-15.6
average	24-33	9.4-13.3	23-29	9.1-11.3
fair	16-23	6.3-9.3	15-22	5.9-9
poor	9-15	3.5-6.2	4-14	1.6-5.8
very poor	<9	<3.4	<4	<1.6

If you don't score as well as you would have hoped, don't worry, this is your starting point! Everyone starts somewhere! Just try to improve gradually over time from where you started. Remember, you are looking for improvement in yourself, regardless of what a chart says or how many repetitions someone else can do.

