

## **How fit are you? See how you measure up**

[By Mayo Clinic Staff](#)

You probably have some idea of how fit you are. But knowing the specifics can help you set realistic fitness goals, monitor your progress and maintain your motivation. Once you know your starting point, you can plan where you want to go. Get started with the simple assessment below.

For the purposes of this self-assessment, you want to measure: aerobic fitness; muscular strength and endurance; and flexibility.

### **Aerobic fitness: Heart rate at rest**



#### [Checking pulse over the carotid artery](#)

Your heart rate at rest is a measure of heart health and fitness. For most adults, a healthy heart rate is 60 to 100 beats a minute.

To check your pulse over your carotid artery, place your index and middle fingers on your neck to the side of your windpipe.

To check your pulse at your wrist, place two fingers between the bone and the tendon over your radial artery, located on the palm side of your wrist below the thumb.

When you feel your pulse, look at your watch and count the number of beats in 15 seconds.

Multiply this number by 4 to get your heart rate per minute. Let's say you count 20 beats in 15 seconds. Multiply 20 by 4 for a total of 80 beats a minute.

### **Aerobic fitness: Target heart rate zone**

The target heart rate zone is an increase in your heart rate — 50% to 85% of the maximum heart rate for your age — great enough to give your heart and lungs a good workout. Aim for 50% to 70% when you do moderately intense activities and 70% to 85% when you do vigorous activities.

### Target heart rate zone

Age	Target heart rate zone: Beats a minute	Maximum heart rate: Beats a minute
25	98-166	195
35	93-157	185
45	88-149	175
55	83-140	165
65	78-132	155

### Aerobic fitness: Running or jogging test

Another way to assess your aerobic fitness is to time yourself on a 1.5-mile (2.4-kilometer) run or jog. The following times are generally considered indicators of a good fitness level based on age and sex. A lower time generally indicates better aerobic fitness, and a higher time suggests a need for improvement.

### Good fitness results based on timing of 1.5-mile run

Age	Women: Time in minutes	Men: Time in minutes
25	13	11
35	13.5	11.5
45	14	12
55	16	13
65	17.5	14

## Muscular strength and endurance: Pushup test



### [Measuring muscular fitness](#)

Pushups can help you measure muscular strength and endurance. If you're just starting a fitness program, do modified pushups on your knees. If you're generally fit and able to do them, do classic pushups. Follow these steps for both types:

- Lie facedown on the floor with your elbows bent and your palms next to your shoulders.
- Keeping your back straight, push up with your arms until your arms are extended.
- Lower your body until your chin touches the floor.
- Do as many pushups as you can until you need to stop for rest.

The following counts are generally considered indicators of a good fitness level based on age and sex. If your pushup count is below the target number, the target can serve as a goal to work toward. Counts above the targets indicate better fitness.

### Good fitness results for pushup counts

Age	Women: Number of pushups	Men: Number of pushups
25	20	28
35	19	21
45	14	16
55	10	12
65	10	10

## Muscular strength and endurance: Situp test



The situp test measures the strength and endurance of your abdominal muscles. Here's how to do the test:

- Lie on the floor with knees bent at a 90-degree angle and feet flat on the floor. A partner holds your feet firmly to the floor. Another option is to place your feet on the wall so your knees and hips are bent at a 90-degree angle. Cross your arms across your chest. This is the down position.
- To move into the up position, raise your head and shoulders off the floor. Don't lift your buttocks off the floor.
- Return to the down position.
- Each time you move to the up position is counted as one situp.
- Do as many situps as you can in one minute.

The following counts can generally be considered markers of a good fitness level based on age and sex.

### Good fitness results for situp test

Age	Women: Number of situps	Men: Number of situps
25	39	44
35	30	40
45	25	35
55	21	30
65	12	24

## Flexibility: Sit-and-reach test

The sit-and-reach test is a simple way to measure the flexibility of the back of your legs, your hips and your lower back. Here's how:

- Place a yardstick on the floor. Secure it by placing a piece of tape across the yardstick at the 15-inch (38-centimeter) mark.
- Place the soles of your feet even with the 15-inch (38-centimeter) mark on the yardstick.
- Slowly reach forward as far as you can, exhaling as you reach and holding the position for at least 1 second.
- Note the distance you reached.
- Repeat the test two more times.
- Record the best of the three reaches.

The following measurements can generally be considered indicators of good flexibility based on age and sex. If your result is below the target number, the target can indicate a goal to work toward. Measurements above the targets can mean better flexibility.

### Good results for sit-and-reach test

Age	Women: Farthest reach	Men: Farthest reach
25	21.5 in. (55 cm)	19.5 in. (50 cm)
35	20.5 in. (52 cm)	18.5 in. (47 cm)
45	20 in. (51 cm)	17.5 in. (44 cm)
55	19 in. (48 cm)	16.5 in. (42 cm)
65	17.5 in. (44 cm)	15.5 in. (39 cm)

## Body composition: Body mass index

### [BMI calculator](#)

Your body mass index (BMI) is a calculation that indicates whether you have a healthy amount of body fat. You can determine your BMI with a BMI table or online calculator.

If you'd rather do the math yourself, divide your weight in pounds by your height in inches squared and multiply by 703. Or divide your weight in kilograms by your height in meters squared.

### Interpretation of BMI results

BMI	Weight status
Below 18.5	Underweight
18.5-24.9	Normal weight
25.0-29.9	Overweight
30 and above	Obesity

### Stay active

The results of your fitness assessment can help you set goals for staying active and improving fitness outcomes. The Department of Health and Human Services recommends these exercise guidelines:

- Get at least 150 minutes of moderate aerobic activity or 75 minutes of vigorous aerobic activity a week, or a combination of moderate and vigorous activity.
- Do strength training exercises for all major muscle groups at least two times a week.

Moderate aerobic activity includes:

- Walking fast
- Water aerobics
- Bicycling on mostly level ground
- Pushing a lawn mower

Vigorous aerobic activity includes:

- Running
- Swimming laps
- Fast bicycling or biking hills
- Playing basketball or soccer
- Playing singles tennis

Muscle-strengthening exercises include:

- Lifting weights or using resistance bands