

Measuring

Your

Max

HR

Important note! Before you self-test, please read the "Before Your Start" section at the end of this article.

You won't reach your Max HR with these tests, but they give you a range within which your Max HR probably lies. First step is to rate your fitness level as follows:

- Poor shape. You have not exercised regularly during the last two months.
- Fair shape. You walk a mile or more or pursue any aerobic activity for twenty minutes at least three times per week.
- Good shape. You exercise regularly more than an hour a week or walk or run at least five miles a week.

The second step is take either or both of these tests.

TEST ONE.

One Mile Walk Test

Find a track, perhaps at a local school, and walk four continuous, evenly paced laps as fast as you can in your current condition. The first three laps put you on a heart-rate plateau where you hold steady for the fourth lap.

Determine your average heart rate for this final lap. Then to predict your Max HR, add 40 bpm if you are in poor shape; for fair shape, add 50; and for good shape, add 60.

TEST TWO:

The Step Test

Use an eight-inch step. Warm up appropriately. Then, use this four count step sequence: right foot up, left up, right down, left down. Counting "up, up, down, down" as one set and keep a steady pace of 20 sets per minute.

Measure your average heart rate during the third minute, then predict your Max HR by adding 55 bpm if you are in poor shape, 65 for fair shape and 75 for good shape. That number is your predicted maximum heart rate.

HEART ZONES

Heart zones, expressed as a percentage of your Max HR, reflect exercise intensity and the result benefit. Once you have established your Max heart rate, we provide a chart to show you your specific zones. There are five heart zones and they are each 10% of your Max HR so just fill in these numbers below:

Percentage of your Max Heart Rate	Examples	Enter Your
-----------------------------------	----------	------------

		Heart Rates
50%	of your Max Heart Rate =	(example 90 beats per min)
60%	of your Max Heart Rate =	(example 108 beats per min)
70%	of your Max Heart Rate =	(example 126 beats per min)
80%	of your Max Heart Rate =	(example 144 beats per min)
90%	of your Max Heart Rate =	(example 162 beats per min)
100%	of your Max Heart Rate =	(example 180 beats per min.)

To determine your zone just join together the percentages and put them in the chart below. It's easy and takes just seconds to know your heart zones.

Zone Number	% of Heart Range	Enter Your heart Rate Range for Each Zone
1	50%-60% - bpm	(example 90 to 108 BPM)
2	60%-70% - bpm	
3	70%-80% - bpm	
4	80%-90% - bpm	
5	90%-100% - bpm	

Using the 5 zone system to plan your exercise program.

1 minute spent exercising in zone 1 = one exercise point

2 minutes spent exercising in zone 2 = two exercise points

3 minutes spent exercising in zone 3 = three exercise points

4 minutes spent exercising in zone 4 = four exercise points

5 minutes spent exercising in zone 5 = five exercise points

To understand the benefits of each of the 5 zones, and to set up a personal training program, please continue reading this article.

Inside each zone, there are different exercise changes which occur as the result of spending training time "in the zone".