

Fitness Vitals Cheat Sheet

All 8 metrics — what they mean, what's "good," and how to improve each.



1. BMI (Body Mass Index)

What it measures: Your weight relative to your height. A screening tool, not a diagnosis.

Healthy range: 18.5 – 24.9 (adults). Note: muscular individuals may have a higher BMI despite low body fat.

How to improve: Focus on body composition, not just weight. Combine strength training with moderate cardio. Track with the [BMI Calculator](#).



2. Body Fat %

What it measures: The proportion of your body weight that is fat versus lean mass (muscle, bone, organs).

Healthy ranges: Women 21–32% · Men 10–20% (varies by age). Athletes are typically lower.

How to improve: Calorie deficit for fat loss + high protein to preserve muscle. Use the [Body Fat % Estimator](#) with the US Navy method.



3. Waist-to-Hip Ratio

What it measures: Where you carry fat. Belly fat is more dangerous than hip fat.

Low risk: Women below 0.85 · Men below 0.90 (WHO guidelines).

How to improve: Reduce visceral fat through Zone 2 cardio, strength training, stress management, and quality sleep. Use the [Waist-to-Hip Calculator](#).



4. Heart Rate Zones

What it measures: Your training intensity — from easy recovery to maximum effort.

Most valuable zone: Zone 2 (60–70% max HR) for fat burning, aerobic base, and longevity.

How to improve: Spend 80% of cardio time in Zone 2, 20% in higher zones. Use the [Heart Rate Zones Calculator](#).



5. VO₂ Max

What it measures: Your body's capacity to take in and use oxygen. One of the strongest predictors of longevity.

Good range: Varies by age and gender. Check the percentile on the calculator.

How to improve: Consistent Zone 2 training + 1–2 high-intensity interval sessions per week. Use the [VO₂ Max Estimator](#) with the Rockport Walking Test.



6. 1-Rep Max (1RM)

What it measures: The heaviest weight you can lift for a single repetition with good form.

Why it matters: Knowing your 1RM helps you program training loads for strength and hypertrophy.

How to improve: Progressive overload — gradually add weight, reps, or difficulty. Use the [1-Rep Max Calculator](#) with the Brzycki formula.



7. Strength Standards

What it measures: How your lifts compare to age and gender norms — beginner to elite.

Useful benchmark: Intermediate level means you've built a solid foundation.
Advanced means you're in the top tier.

How to improve: Focus on compound lifts: bench press, squat, deadlift, overhead press.
Use the [Strength Standards Calculator](#).



8. Calorie Deficit

What it measures: The gap between calories eaten and calories burned — the driver of fat loss.

Safe deficit: 300–500 calories below maintenance per day for steady, sustainable fat loss.

How to improve: Know your BMR and TDEE first. Use the [Calorie Deficit Calculator](#).