

The Life Time Fitness Heart Rate Training Chart: Your guide to finding your individual training zones.

Heart Rate Training—An introduction:

The heart is a muscle that needs to be exercised regularly to be strong and efficient. Your heart rate (heart beats per minute) provides a constant measure of your exercise intensity. Exercising at the right intensity for the right amount of time is the key to getting the most out of your workouts and meeting your fitness goals.

FAQs:

1. What is heart rate?

The frequency that the heart pumps blood and oxygen to working muscles. It is the most practical measure of cardiovascular intensity.

2. What is heart rate training?

Heart rate training is simply using heart rate training zones to guide your fitness program. If you're interested in weight loss, it balances the best use of your fuel (fat vs. carbohydrates) with the need to increase calories burned. If you're interested in athletic performance, it balances the need to build an aerobic base and endurance with the need to improve your ability to maintain higher intensity exercise.

3. How do I measure my heart rate?

A heart rate monitor is the most accurate way to consistently measure your heart rate during exercise. Manually measuring your heart rate is often inaccurate and impractical.

4. What is a heart rate monitor?

A heart rate monitor consists of a strap worn around your chest that counts your heartbeats, plus a watch that displays your current heart rate in beats per minute. The chest strap wirelessly transmits your heart rate data to the watch. In more advanced models, the watch can also display information such as workout time, time in specific zones, calories burned and distance traveled.

5. What are the benefits of heart rate training?

- Improved results: Heart rate training will help you lose weight or increase your speed and the amount of activity you can do.
- Increased motivation to exercise:
 - Your workouts are more interesting and accountability is improved when you know how many calories you've burned, your average HR and time spent in your target heart rate zones.
 - Different workout types make exercise fun.
 - A heart rate monitor is your "cardiovascular dashboard," continually providing feedback on your workout.

- Increased metabolism:
 - Heart rate training provides the right mix of aerobic (longer time spent) and anaerobic (higher intensity) exercise to increase your fitness level and the amount of time spent using fat for fuel.

- Helps you avoid overtraining:
 - A heart rate monitor provides the feedback necessary to show you if you are over exercising and should slow down.

6. What is Anaerobic Threshold? (AT)

Your Anaerobic Threshold (AT) is the exercise intensity level at which exercise becomes noticeably difficult. Breathing becomes heavy and talk is challenging. A beginner can only exercise for a few minutes at this intensity. A very fit individual can exercise at or above AT for thirty minutes or more. Your AT will improve with exercise and is the best way to measure your personal fitness level.

7. Why should AT be used to create heart rate training zones?

As your fitness level improves, you are able to do more work at the same intensity or the same amount of work at a lower intensity. What was once hard is now moderate and what was moderate is now easy. The change in your ability to exercise, i.e., your fitness level, requires that your heart rate zones change too. Anaerobic Threshold is the best measure of fitness level as it changes with fitness improvements. (Other cardiovascular measurements, like predicted maximum heart rate, do not change when your fitness level improves; Life Time Fitness does not believe they are accurate gauges for determining heart rate training zones.)

8. What is maximum heart rate? What is resting heart rate?

Maximum heart rate is the highest number of beats per minute that your heart can produce. Resting heart rate is the beats per minute your heart is pumping just after you wake up and before you get out of bed. With improved fitness levels, you will lower your resting heart rate, i.e., your heart can provide the same amount of blood and oxygen in fewer beats.

9. Which method for determining AT is right for me? (See chart)

The **Bronze** method is a general estimate and should be used for a starting point only. You will quickly learn whether it works for you or not. The **Silver** method is a feeling-based measurement and is a much more accurate determination of AT. The **Gold** method provides an absolute measurement and also provides you with your fat utilization profile.

10. How often should I have my AT tested?

It depends on your level of fitness. If you're just starting a fitness program, you can test 4 to 6 weeks after you begin. If you're moderately fit, you should test 8 to 12 weeks after beginning a program. If you are very fit, you should re-test every 3 to 4 months or when you are starting to train for an event. The more fit you are, the harder it is to change your AT.

11. What is my target heart rate or target zone?

There is no single target heart rate or heart rate zone. You should use a variety of zones in your fitness program. The zone or zones for a given workout will vary depending on the goal of the workout and your fitness program. A good guideline to use for your fitness program is to keep 80% of your cardiovascular training below your AT in zones 2 and 3. The other 20% should be spent above AT in zone 4. Very fit users should also use zone 5.

12. If zone 3 is where I burn the most fat, is that the zone where I should exercise?

- You should train in multiple zones. Training in zone 4, above AT:
- Helps increase your fitness level, providing a large range of intensities where you use fat for fuel.
 - Helps you increase the calories you burn after exercise and at rest.
 - Helps improve your ability to store excess carbohydrates as glycogen in the muscles instead of as fat.

Where can I find out more about Life Time Fitness Heart Rate Training or heart rate monitors?

Talk to any member of our fitness staff for more information on how to get started with our Heart Rate Training program, or for help selecting the right heart rate monitor. You can also check the club seminar schedule for the Life Time Fitness Heart Rate Training seminar.