What Are Heart Rate Zones?

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Heart rate zones are ranges of heart rate used to describe different levels of exercise intensity. They are commonly used to understand exercise intensity and how your body responds to different levels of effort.

What Are the Different Heart Rate Zones?

Heart rate zones are often estimated using your maximum heart rate, which is sometimes approximated using your age. One commonly used five-zone system divides exercise intensity into the following ranges:

Zone	Approximate percentage of maximum heart rate	General intensity
Zone 1	50–60%	Very light
Zone 2	60–70%	Light
Zone 3	70–80%	Moderate
Zone 4	80–90%	Hard
Zone 5	90–100%	Very hard

These percentages are examples from a commonly used heart rate zone model. The exact boundaries and zone calculations may vary depending on the device, software and personal settings.

What Are Heart Rate Zones Used For?

Heart rate zones provide a way to understand exercise intensity. They can help distinguish lighter activity from more demanding exercise and provide context for workout measurements.

Heart rate zones are estimates, not medical assessments of exercise capacity. Individual heart rate responses vary, and age-based calculations may not accurately reflect everyone's maximum heart rate.