

What's your FITNESS AGE?

Are you as fit as you should be? Working out will not only tone your bod but also boost your health in the long term. Take our test to evaluate your fitness, strength and flexibility

1 How often do you work out for 30 minutes or more? 

- a Less than 3 x per week
- b 3-4 x per week
- c 5 x per week or more

2 Calculate your waist to hip ratio by measuring the narrowest point of your waist and dividing it by the widest point of your hips. 

- a 0.85 or over
- b 0.76-0.84
- c 0.76 or below

3 First thing in the morning, before you get out of bed, take your pulse and write down the number of beats per minute. This will give you your resting heart rate. 

- a Above 75
- b 70-75
- c 69 or below

4 Deduct your age from 220. This should give you your maximum heart rate. Perform 5 minutes of cardio exercise - jog on the spot, skip or use an exercise bike. Take your pulse to find your post-exercise heart rate, then work out how close this is to your maximum. **CALCULATION:** 100/[maximum heart rate] x [post-exercise heart rate] 

- a 70% and over
- b 60-70%
- c Below 60%

5 After a further 2-minute rest, measure your heart rate again. Deduct this figure from your post-exercise rate. 

- a 21 or less
- b 22-52
- c 53+

6 With one hand reaching down over your shoulder, and the other reaching upwards from your waist, flatten

your palms and see whether you can touch your fingers behind your back. Ask someone to measure the gap.

- a 10cm plus
- b 5-10 cm
- c 5cm or below (including touching/overlap)

7 Adopt the 'downward dog' position (an upside-down V) and, keeping your palms flat, try to get your heels as close to the ground as possible. Ask someone to measure the gap.

- a 5cm or above
- b 1-4 cm
- c Heels touching the floor

8 Tree pose. Stand on one leg, with the sole of the other foot placed against that leg and your hands above your head. Hold the pose for as long as you can.

- a 4 seconds or less
- b 5-10 seconds
- c 10+ seconds

9 With your back to a wall, bend your legs so your thighs are parallel to the ground (as if sitting in an invisible chair). Hold for as long as possible.

- a Under 30 seconds
- b 30-60 seconds
- c 1 minute or more

10 A full range press-up is where you balance on your toes with your arms extended, lower your body by bending your elbows and re-extending. How many can you do at once?

- a 0
- b 1-5 full range press-ups
- c 5+ full range press-ups

CALCULATE YOUR SCORE

Begin with your actual age.
For every 'a' +1
For every 'b' +0
For every 'c' -1



YOUR SCORE

'For optimum health, we should aim for a fitness age equal to or lower than our actual age to ensure we feel and look our best,' says wellness coach Michelle Brewster, founder of Supachick (supachick.com). Here's how to turn back the clock.

+0 YEARS OR YOUNGER

Congratulations! Your regime is clearly working well. 'High-level fitness is 80% diet and 20% training. Give yourself an extra boost by fuelling up with plenty of protein, complex carbohydrates and good fats,' advises Michelle. 'Challenge yourself. Set personal bests - and beat them - or try entering an event. Make sure you keep your body supple by stretching before and after working out, and using a foam roller to release taut muscles.'

+1-3 YEARS

Nearly there! 'Introduce weight training - two sessions a week, use small weights, with a high number of reps,' says Michelle. 'And increase your protein intake to maximise the impact of strength training.' Flexibility also matters. Michelle recommends stretching your muscles first thing and before bed - holding each stretch for 20-30 seconds, as well as performing a dynamic warm-up (eg, walking lunges) pre workout.

+4-8 YEARS

Don't be discouraged. 'Start making active choices every day - power-walking to work, doing some light jogging during your lunch break or a new exercise class,' suggests Michelle. 'Focus on eating slow-release carbohydrates, protein and good fats and limiting your intake of sugar, salt and processed foods.' Small changes can make a big difference. Michelle suggests switching white rice for wholegrain to keep you fuller for longer.

+9-10 YEARS

Don't be downhearted. Start with little adjustments. 'Drink plenty of water and gradually cut down on pre-prepared and ready meals,' says Michelle. 'Aim to lift your heart rate by 60% every two days by doing some walking or light jogging - make sure you stretch your muscles before and afterwards.' Stress is often a key factor in weight gain, so listen to a meditation track, try yoga or invest in regular massages.