

Heart Rate? What should it be?

One of the questions I get from clients is, "What should my heart rate be when I work out?" This is a question with many different answers. Your heart rate will be different with different training modalities. When you are doing interval training as opposed to a long, steady-state, run, or walk, or even resistance training your heart rate will need to be different to accommodate the different modes of stress you will be putting on your body. The key is to know what the goal of your workout is and what percentage of your heart rate max (HRM) you should be shooting for. There is a good formula I use for learning your heart rate training zones; it is called the Karvonen Formula, but first you'll have to determine your Resting Heart Rate, Maximum Heart Rate and Heart Rate Reserve.

1. Resting Heart Rate (RHR) = your pulse at rest (the best time to get a true resting heart rate is first thing in the morning before you get out of bed). Simply take your right index and middle fingers and place them below the left thumb on your left wrist.



Count the number of times you feel the blood pulse in 15 seconds then multiply that number by 4.

2. Maximum Heart Rate (MHR) = $220 - \text{your age}$
3. Heart Rate Reserve (HRR) = Maximum Heart Rate - Resting Heart Rate

Once you have your Heart Rate Reserve, you can calculate your training heart rate:

4. $(\text{HRR} \cdot 0.85) + \text{RHR} = \text{Upper end of the training zone}$
5. $(\text{HRR} \cdot 0.50) + \text{RHR} = \text{Lower end of the training zone}$

It is really as simple as that. Now get to it and work hard! Your body and heart will thank you for it.