



# How Do You See Your Body?

The way you view your body is referred to as *body image*.





Take time to become comfortable with your body. Look at yourself in a mirror.

The way you view your body is referred to as *body image*. Body image is influenced by media such as magazines, advertisements, and television. Be aware that the images you see in magazines and advertisements do not reflect the true appearance of the model.

The people you associate with each day influence your body image. Comments and the way people look at you influence how you feel about your body.

Take time to become comfortable with your body. Look at yourself in a mirror.

- What do you like about your body?
- What part of your body do you think should be emphasized?
- Are you unhappy or feel negative about a part of your body?
- Where do the negative feelings come from?

Having a positive body image influences total wellness. Avoid negative feelings about yourself by doing something positive. You may choose to:

- Take a walk.
- Write in a journal.
- Limit weighing yourself to once a week.
- Eat regularly, making smart choices.
- Surround yourself with positive people.
- Make time to pamper yourself with activities that you enjoy.
- Concentrate on the positive.

### **Body Type**

Every person's body is shaped differently. Some are larger on the top. Others are larger on the bottom. Some people are straight, and others are curvy. Knowing your body type and selecting clothing that will balance your appearance can improve your body image and your outlook.

#### ***Bigger on the Top***

Referred to as "apple" or "reverse triangle" shaped.

- More weight on the top half
- Shoulders wider than hips
- Weight gain in abdomen and upper body
- Legs smaller than upper body

### **Bigger on the Bottom**

Referred to as the “pear” or “triangle” figure.

- More weight on the bottom half
- Hips wider than shoulders and chest
- Excess weight in legs and rear
- Heavy in the buttocks, hips, and thighs on fuller figure

### **Straight**

Referred to as the “ruler” figure.

- Upper and lower body equal in weight
- Waist not clearly defined
- Waist large in comparison to hips
- Weight carried in abdomen and waistline on fuller figures

### **Curvy**

Referred to as the “hourglass” figure.

- Shoulders and hips equal width
- Weight balanced above and below waist
- Waist clearly defined, but somewhat less defined in fuller figures
- Weight gain evenly distributed throughout the body

## **Measure Your Body**

### **Personal Analysis**

To have an accurate body measurement, ask someone to assist. Place your feet together, flat on the floor. Relax and look straight forward. As you wrap the tape measure around your body, be sure to keep it parallel to the floor.

### **Height**

Stand, without shoes, against a wall with your heels, buttocks, and head touching the wall. Measure from the floor to the top of your head (not the top of your hair style).

Measure	Inches
Height	=
Bust to floor	=
Hip to floor	=
Knee to floor	=

### **Bodice**

Measure shoulders at the widest point.

Measure	Inches
Shoulders	=
High bust <i>(at the top of bust before fullness begins).</i>	=
Full bust <i>(at the fullest point of the breasts).</i>	=

### **Waist**

Tie a string around your natural waist at the smallest point. Measure at the string.

Waist	=	inches
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### **Back Length and Arm Length**

Tilt head forward. Locate knot at base of neck. Measure from knot to natural waist while looking straight ahead.

Back length	=	inches
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Place hand on hip. Measure from the base of the neck to the wrist, around a slightly bent elbow.

Arm length	=	inches
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### **Hips**

Measure below the hip bone, where you are the widest.

Hips	=	inches
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### **Bone Structure**

Bone structure can be determined by wrist and ankle measurement.

Wrist	=	inches
Ankle	=	inches

### **Neck**

Neck length and neck circumference influence the type of bodice or blouses that are most flattering to you.

Neck length	=	inches
Neck circumference	=	inches

## Did you correctly identify your body type?

Sometimes the image we have of our body does not match the measurements that designers use to determine the body type. Use your body measurements to figure out what figure type you have.

Waist measurement	=	inches
Hip measurement	=	inches
Bust measurement	=	inches



If the measurement for bust is larger than the measurement for hips, you have an inverted triangle or apple-shaped body type.



If the measurement for hips is larger than the measurement for bust, you have a triangle or pear-shaped body type.



If the measurements for bust, waist, and hips are equal (or within 1 inch), you are a straight body type.



If the bust and hips are equal and the waist is clearly defined or smaller, you are a curvy body type.

### Resources

Reader's Digest Videos. Creating Your Own Wardrobe. VHS format. Available from UK Agricultural Communications. Meridian Educational Corporation (2002). *Your ideal silhouette*. Computer software. Princeton, New Jersey: Meridian Production.

### References

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