Heart-Rate Zones By Age

The talk test first, heart rate as the backup, and how to make the numbers your own.

Start with the talk test. Research shows it tracks your real aerobic threshold about as well as any formula. Use heart rate to back it up. Max heart rate here is estimated with **208 − 0.7 × age** (Tanaka, 2001), which fits adults over 40 better than "220 minus age." After-class Zone 2 at TLC is 30–40 minutes, about twice a week.

AGE	MAX HR	ZONE 1	ZONE 2	ZONE 3	ZONE 4	ZONE 5
30	187	94–112	**112–140**	140–153	153–168	168–187
35	184	92–110	**110–138**	138–150	150–165	165–184
40	180	90–108	**108–135**	135–148	148–162	162–180
45	176	88–106	**106–132**	132–145	145–159	159–176
50	173	86–104	**104–130**	130–142	142–156	156–173
55	170	85–102	**102–127**	127–139	139–153	153–170
60	166	83–100	**100–124**	124–136	136–149	149–166
65	162	81–98	**98–122**	122–133	133–146	146–162
70	159	80–95	**95–119**	119–130	130–143	143–159

ZONE 1 · 50–60%
Easy
Easy chat. Warm-ups, cooldowns, walking.

ZONE 2 · 60–75%
Conversational
Full sentences, but someone could tell you're working. Fitter members sit near the top.

ZONE 3 · 75–82%
Steady
Short sentences only. Comfortably hard.

ZONE 4 · 82–90%
Hard
A few words at a time. Threshold and interval pieces.

ZONE 5 · 90–100%
All-out
No talking. Short sprints only.

MAKE IT YOURS: HEART RATE RESERVE

Take your resting heart rate in bed in the morning. Zone 2 = (max HR − resting HR) × 0.60 to 0.70, plus resting HR. Age 50, resting 60: (173 − 60) × 0.6 + 60 = 128, × 0.7 + 60 = 139. Zone 2 = 128–139 bpm.

ON HEART-RATE MEDICATION?

Some medications lower your heart rate, so these numbers won't fit. Use the talk test and ask your doctor what range is right for you.

Zone % = percent of estimated max heart rate. A lab lactate test is the gold standard; heart rate reserve and the talk test are the best free options. Not medical advice.