



Skinny vs fit

Can you tell which one of these women is the fittest?

We test four *New Woman* readers to prove fitness comes in many shapes and sizes

When was the last time you *really* worried about your fitness? Most of us probably care more about our dress size than sprint times, but fitness expert Emily Hames, personal trainer at The Original Bootcamp (www.bootcampfitness.com.au),

warns that our obsession with size could be costing us our long-term health. 'Very often women's association of thinness with health is misguided,' says Emily. 'Maintaining a good level of fitness is crucial to prevent heart disease, cancer and osteoporosis. What's more, a fit body isn't always a size 8 package.'

Not convinced? We decided to test different sized women's fitness levels. Our four brave volunteers had a DEXA scan (to analyse muscle and fat content), with Dr Jarrod Meerkin from Body Composition Australia, and were put through their fitness paces with Emily. The results are in. Prepare to be surprised...

fit test

SIZE 8
NICOLA PITT, 24,
IS A PUBLICITY ASSISTANT FROM SYDNEY



VITAL STATISTICS
Weight: 50kg
Height: 170cm
Size: 8
WEEKLY WORKOUT SCHEDULE
 • 20min of yoga or Pilates, 5 times a week
 • 30min rollerblading, 3 times a week
 • 60min of swing dancing, once a week
 • 2 hours of Ultimate Frisbee, once a week

Nicola says:
 'I've always had a slim build, and over the past few years I've trained to put on weight rather than lose it. Although I am slim, I'd love to have more muscle tone. I don't have to

watch my diet, which is just as well because I eat a lot of takeaway. People are surprised I can eat whatever I like and stay slim but it's just the way my body works. Even though I'm active I only do low impact activities, which I find 'fun' not torturous, and I know I'm not strong. I think I'll be quite average in the fitness test.'

Jarrod says:
 'Nicola's scan revealed she has minimal central abdominal fat, which tells us she is at a low risk of developing heart disease, type 2 diabetes and high blood pressure later in life. Although her percentage of body fat (20.1 per cent) is slightly below the recommended range (21-33 per cent), she's perfectly healthy at her current weight.'

MYTH BUSTER: CAN YOU BE HEAVY BONED?
 'No! Women usually have between 1.5 and 3kg of bone mass, while men on average have 2-4.5kg,' says Dr Jarrod Meerkin



Emily says:
 'Nicola isn't as fit as she looks. Judging from her slim build I expected her to be a good runner, and although her stride and pace started off well she had to stop too often. If she wants to be fitter she needs to push herself harder in her cardio work to improve her lung capacity. She'd also benefit from some weight training like a mini-circuit, incorporating dips,

lunges, squats and push-ups. These kinds of exercises will help her bulk up in the right ways.'

NICOLA'S VERDICT:
 'I knew I'd do badly in the push-ups section, but I'm happy with my results for everything else and I still consider myself fairly fit. A bit more muscle would be great, but I won't be making any drastic changes.'

ART: Change stamp to ribbon/ rosette 2nd Place

SIZE 14
ROWENA COOK, 25,
IS A YOGA INSTRUCTOR FROM SYDNEY



VITAL STATISTICS
Weight: 78.4kg
Height: 165cm
Size: 14
WEEKLY WORKOUT SCHEDULE
 • 30min of yoga 7 times a week
 • 35min walk 7 times a week
 • 60min of netball once a week

Rowena says
 'My weight has been around 75 kilos for the past few years. I'd be happy to go down to a size 12, but I wouldn't want to be any smaller than that. I have a good layer of fat on me, but I think my physique shows that I exercise. The sense of calm and wellbeing

I get from practising yoga has turned me into a fanatic. I've never had great flexibility, despite the yoga, but my cardio should be good as I've played sport all my life.'

Jarrod says
 'Although Rowena is bigger than the other girls, she was the only one whose body fat percentage was in the ideal range. It should be between 21-33 per cent, so at 32.3, she's pushing it slightly. Ideally she'd drop about 5.8 kilos and get her weight down to 72.6 kilos to reduce her chances of high blood pressure and avoid putting herself at risk of heart disease later on.'

Emily says
 'Rowena is both stronger and fitter than she looks. She did well in strength and flexibility, which her yoga no doubt helped with, and she ran her one kilometre faster than the other girls. While



yoga is great for relaxation, it won't help Rowena improve her cardiovascular fitness and drop the weight she needs to lose. She'd benefit from some swimming or running, which will get her heart rate up and burn fat, too.'

ROWENA'S VERDICT
 'I'm quite happy with the results, but completely understand I need to make changes to my lifestyle in order to be healthier. I don't know about running, but I love to swim so I will try and do more of that each week.'

ART: Change stamp to ribbon/ rosette 1st Place

'Oh sorry, I wasn't timing, start again...'

SIZE 12

LISA HOLMES, 26, IS A JUNIOR DESIGNER FROM SYDNEY



VITAL STATISTICS

Weight: 63.9kg
Height: 169cm
Size: 12

WEEKLY WORKOUT SCHEDULE

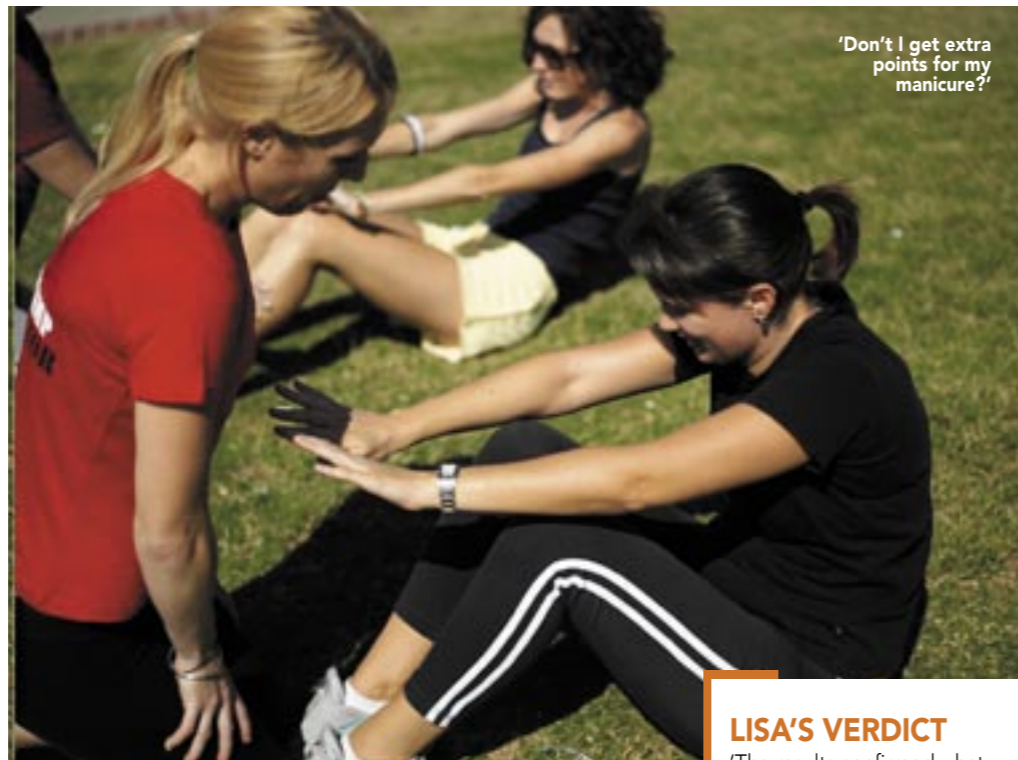
- 60 min walk, 4 times a week

Lisa says

'I had put on quite a bit of weight a few years ago, it just crept on, and then it was quite hard to shift. Now I've lost about 12 kilos in the three years since then, just by walking more and being conscious of when I'm hungry. I wouldn't say I'm my ideal size or fitness right now. I'd love to drop one more dress size and get some muscle tone. I'm a bit worried about the test actually, I think I'll be below average, despite looking quite fit on the outside.'

Jarrold says

'Although Lisa is smaller in



'Don't I get extra points for my manicure?'

size than Rowena, her overall percentage of body fat was higher, meaning she's actually unhealthy. Lisa needs to lose 7.3 kilos of fat, reducing her overall weight to 56.6 kilos to be at her ideal healthy weight.'

Emily says

'Lisa's nowhere near as active as she needs to be to maintain a decent fitness level, but she

showed real determination not to give up during her fitness test, which is the most important thing. Although her times and numbers weren't fantastic, I think Lisa has the mental stamina to go a long way. If she can increase her weekly walks to a jog it won't be long until she notices a difference in her abilities.'

LISA'S VERDICT

'The results confirmed what I already suspected: that there's plenty of room for improvement. I'm definitely going to try jogging rather than just walking. On first impressions I would have thought Nicola was the fittest, and I'm a little surprised that I had a higher body fat percentage than Rowena.'

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WHAT'S CENTRAL ABDOMINAL FAT GOT TO DO WITH HEART DISEASES AND DIABETES?

'By measuring the amount of central abdominal fat a person has, we can assess how susceptible they are to developing heart disease and type 2 diabetes. More than 1kg of fat is a high susceptibility and anything less than 600 grams is a low susceptibility,' says Jarrold

GRADING
under 3:30min: excellent;
3:30min to 4:30min: good;
4:30min to 5:30min: average
5:30min to 7 min: below average
7min+ poor

THE 10-MINUTE FITNESS TEST

Could you give our readers a run for their money? Try Emily's fitness test and see how you measure up

Push-ups:

You have two minutes to do as many military push-ups (ie on your toes) as you can. When you can't do anymore, you must continue on your knees.

GRADING

50+ excellent,
30 to 49 good,
20 to 29 average,
10 to 19 below average
< 10 poor

Sit-ups:

You have two minutes to do as many military sit-ups (ie

knees bent at 90 degrees with feet flat on the ground, hands on thighs, reaching up until your wrists are past your kneecaps and back down). Once you can no longer complete a sit-up without 'throwing yourself' up or lifting your feet off the ground, get your partner kneel on your feet while you continue.

GRADING

50+ excellent,
40 to 49 good
25 to 39 average
11 to 24 below average
< 10 poor

Flexibility test:

With straight legs, sit down and stretch as far forward as you can. Measure the distance you can reach past your toes.

GRADING

21cm+ excellent
11cm to 20cm good
1 to 10cm average
0cm or less: poor

1km run:

Run one kilometre as fast as you can while a friend times you.

SIZE 10

KATHRYN FLEMING, 34, IS AN EXPORT MANAGER FROM SYDNEY



VITAL STATISTICS

Weight: 58.7kg
Height: 162cm
Size: 10

WEEKLY WORKOUT SCHEDULE

- 60min of aerobic class at the gym, 4 times a week
- 75min walk, once a week

Kathryn says

'I've never really been into exercise, but four weeks ago I decided to quit smoking so I've just started using the gym. When I've quit before I've always gained weight so I wanted to avoid that this time, and also keep myself distracted! Before my recent health kick I've been lucky enough to stay at about 55 kilos without any real effort. Although I'm quite slim I've only been going to the gym for a month now so I really don't think I will do too well in any of the tests, but you never know, hopefully I'll surprise myself.'

MYTH BUSTER YOU SHOULD HAVE BODY FAT, TOO!
'For women in their twenties and thirties, body fat percentage (the proportion of your body weight that is fat mass) should be between 21-33%,' says Jarrold

Jarrold says
'Although Kathryn is slim, her body fat percentage was the worst of the four women. She needs to get rid of about 7.8 kilos of fat to be at her ideal percentage. If she doesn't she'll be at risk of developing high blood pressure and diabetes down the track. Even though she looks slim, she has some work to do to get to her healthy weight.'

Emily says

'As she predicted, Kathryn rated pretty badly in her assessment and she's nowhere near as fit as she looks. I could tell she hadn't done much exercise in the past because she didn't have any confidence in her ability or technique. Training with a friend or a personal trainer would really help get her get motivated and improve her fitness. Judging on looks alone I didn't expect her to rate

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so poorly on the tests, but now she's quit smoking there's plenty of opportunity for her to improve.'

Kathryn's verdict

'I didn't expect to be fit, so I'm not surprised by Emily's comment, and I am going to see a personal trainer now. I'm a little surprised I have such a high percentage of fat. I didn't think Rowena would come in lower than me either, but you can't judge a book by its cover!' **NW**



Cue Chariots Of Fire theme here

FITNESS TEST RESULTS See how the girls scored in Emily's fitness test

	1KM RUN	PUSH-UP TEST	SIT-UP TEST	FLEXIBILITY TEST
NICOLA	6 min, 15 sec	0 on her toes, 28 on her knees	47 unassisted	14cm past her toes
ROWENA	5 min, 50 sec	1 on her toes, 24 on her knees	23 unassisted, 26 assisted	16cm past her toes
LISA	6 min, 25 sec	2 on her toes, 19 on her knees	28 unassisted, 13 assisted	4cm past her toes
KATHRYN	7 min, 22 sec	2 on her toes, 35 from her knees	15 unassisted, 22 assisted	7cm past her toes

WORDS ENIMA VIDGEN PHOTOGRAPHY TO-GO ME HAIR & MAKE-UP ANDI COVENTON • GAVIN AINSBURY • GAIL WILSON ALL CLOTHES SUPPLIED BY RUNNING BARE