

## HOW TO USE A TAPE MEASURE TO MEASURE BODY FAT

Tape measures are used in the United States Armed Forces and other militaries throughout the world to measure body fat %. The most common way to measure body fat is the U.S. Navy (and U.S. Department of Defense) method, as tens of thousands of men and women are tested yearly for physical fitness and physical readiness tests.

### Keep in mind the following information when using your tape measure

1. Stand relaxed, with your feet together.
2. Your arms should be hanging naturally at the sides, if someone else takes your measurements.
3. You should be looking straight ahead
4. The tape should be level and horizontal all the way around the measurement area. An unlevel tape will give an incorrect reading.
5. The tape should be pulled so there is no slack. Make sure that you do not create an indentation in your skin, as it will cause an incorrect reading.
6. Record the measurement to the nearest cm or ½ inch.
7. NOTE: women may experience larger than normal circumference readings during menstruation.

### LOCATION FOR TAPE MEASURE MEASUREMENTS - MALES:

**Neck.** Measure the neck circumference against the skin at a point just below the larynx (Adam's Apple). Look straight ahead, shoulders down (not hunched) and have the tape as close to horizontal as possible.

**Abdomen.** Measure abdominal circumference against the skin at the navel (belly button), level and parallel to the floor. Relax and record the measurement at the end of a normal, relaxed exhale.

**Height.** Your height measurement should be taken while standing on a flat surface, without shoes, looking straight ahead, and standing straight, as if at "attention."

### LOCATION FOR TAPE MEASURE MEASUREMENTS - FEMALES:

**Neck.** Measure the neck circumference against the skin at a point just below the larynx. Look straight ahead, shoulders down (not hunched) and have the tape as close to horizontal as possible.

**Waist.** Measure the natural waist circumference against the skin, at the point of minimal abdominal circumference, usually located about the halfway between the navel (belly button) and the lower end of the sternum (breast bone). When you cannot easily see this site, take several measurements at probable sites and use the smallest value. Be sure that the tape is level and parallel to the floor. Relax and record the measurement at the end of a normal, relaxed exhale.

**Hips.** Measure the hip circumference against the skin by placing the tape around the hips so that it passes over the greatest protrusion of your gluteus muscles (buttocks). Be sure that the tape is level and parallel to the floor. If you are not comfortable placing the tape on the skin, please wear a thin layer of clothing or apply sufficient tension on the tape to minimize the effect of thicker clothing.

**Height.** Your height measurement should be taken while standing on a flat surface, without shoes, looking straight ahead, and standing straight, as if at “attention.”

