

# **NEW BMI-BASED HEIGHT-WEIGHT TABLE FOR WOMEN**

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**In 1943, the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company introduced Weight versus Height tables for men and women. (In 1983, MetLife published revised Height versus Weight tables.) The weights listed in the MetLife tables are associated with people who lived the longest.**

**But be aware that the MetLife tables have some shortcomings. First, the table is a function of frame size (body build). To use the table a person must gauge their frame size which is a rather complex procedure that in practice is rarely followed. Second, although the MetLife tables yield reasonable weights for adults who are slightly shorter than average height, the listed weights are not applicable to very short or very tall adults. Third, the table was intended for people ages 25 to 59 years. The applicability of the table to younger and older adults is problematic. Finally, the MetLife table is not appropriate for athletes, body builders, and the chronically ill.**

**This article introduces a new BMI-Based Height vs. Weight Table and illustrates its use.**

## **[Traditional BMI Height vs. Weight](#)**

**Currently, many health-care practitioners use Body Mass Index, or BMI, to determine if a person is overweight. BMI takes into account both a person's weight and height and is calculated by dividing a person's weight in kilograms by the square of their**

height (in meters). For United States readers, Table 1 provides a convenient way for you to determine your BMI, using body weight in pounds and height in feet and inches.

Although the BMI method is far from perfect, it is considered a step up from the older MetLife Height vs. Weight tables. Again, the BMI table would not be applicable to competitive athletes, body builders and the chronically ill.

Weight (lbs.)	- Height -									
	5' 0"	5' 2"	5' 4"	5' 6"	5' 8"	5' 10"	6' 0"	6' 2"	6' 4"	6' 6"
100	19.6	18.3								
110	21.5	20.1	18.9	17.8						
120	23.5	22.0	20.6	19.4	18.3					
140	27.4	25.6	24.0	22.6	21.3	20.1	19.0			
160	31.3	29.3	27.5	25.8	24.3	23.0	21.7	20.6	19.5	
180	35.2	33.0	30.9	29.0	27.4	25.8	24.4	23.1	21.9	20.8
200	39.1	36.6	34.3	32.3	30.4	28.7	27.1	25.7	24.3	23.1
220	43.0	40.3	37.8	35.5	33.4	31.3	29.8	28.2	26.8	25.4
240	46.9	43.9	41.2	38.7	36.5	34.4	32.6	30.8	29.2	27.8
260	50.8	47.6	44.7	42.0	39.5	37.3	35.3	33.4	31.6	30.1
280		51.3	48.1	45.2	42.6	40.2	38.0	35.9	34.1	32.4
300			51.5	48.5	45.6	43.0	40.7	38.6	36.5	34.7
350				56.5	53.2	50.3	47.5	44.9	42.6	40.5
400							54.3	51.4	48.7	46.3

**Table 1: Body Mass Index (BMI) Chart**

The rationale behind the BMI is based on epidemiological data that show an increase in mortality when the BMI is above 25, although the increase in mortality tends to be moderate until a BMI of 30 is reached. Table 2 (on the next page) shows how scientists and most physicians categorize a person's body-weight as a function of their BMI.

BMI	Weight Profile
18.5 or less	Underweight
18.6 to 24.9	Normal
25.0 to 29.9	Overweight
30.0 to 39.9	Obese
40 or more	Extremely Obese

**Table 2: Weight Profile vs. BMI**

**Example 1:** Use Tables 1 and 2 to determine the BMI of a 5' 6" woman who weighs 160 pounds. Is she overweight?

First, use Table 1, on the previous page, and scan the far left of the table. Locate a weight of 160 pounds. From this number run your finger horizontally (to the right) until it intersects the vertical column headed by her 5' 6" height. The number at the intersection is her BMI = 25.8. So, according to Table 2 she is slightly overweight.

But this calculation doesn't reveal what she should weigh for her BMI to be within the "normal range." In fact most women don't particularly care about or need to know their BMI. What women need to know is what they should weigh.

### [New BMI-Based Height vs. Weight](#)

The new BMI-Based Height vs. Weight Chart shown in Table 3, on the following page, uses BMI information to determine what a person (man or woman) should weigh.

Note in Table 3, the underweight category corresponds to BMI = 18.5 or less, normal weight is for BMI = 18.6 to 24.9, overweight is for BMI = 25.0 to 29.9, obese is for BMI = 30.0 to 39.9 and extremely obese is for BMI = 40 or more.

**Example 2:** Use Table 3, the New BMI-Based Weight-Height Chart, to determine if a 5' 6" woman who weighs 160 lbs is overweight and what her "normal weight" should be.

From Table 3, find that at 5' 6" she should weigh between 116 and 154 pounds for her weight to be in the "normal" range, that is for her BMI to be in what is considered a healthy range, from 18.6 to 24.9.

However she weighs 160 lbs. Hence, we conclude once again that she is slightly overweight. But this new approach also establishes what she should weigh for her BMI to be within the "normal range."

Height	Underweight (lbs)	Normal Weight (lbs)	Overweight (lbs)	Obese (lbs)	Extremely Obese (lbs)
4' 10"	89 or less	90 – 119	120 – 142	143 – 191	192 or more
4' 11"	92 or less	93 – 123	124 – 148	149 – 197	198 or more
5' 0"	95 or less	96 – 127	128 – 152	153 – 204	205 or more
5' 1"	98 or less	99 – 131	132 – 158	159 – 211	212 or more
5' 2"	101 or less	102 – 135	136 – 163	164 – 218	219 or more
5' 3"	104 or less	105 – 140	141 – 169	170 – 225	226 or more
5' 4"	108 or less	109 – 144	145 – 173	174 – 232	233 or more
5' 5"	111 or less	112 – 149	150 – 180	181 – 239	240 or more
5' 6"	115 or less	116 – 154	155 – 185	186 – 247	248 or more
5' 7"	118 or less	119 – 159	160 – 191	192 – 254	255 or more
5' 8"	122 or less	123 – 163	164 – 196	197 – 262	263 or more
5' 9"	125 or less	126 – 168	169 – 202	203 – 270	271 or more
5' 10"	129 or less	130 – 173	174 – 206	207 – 278	279 or more
5' 11"	133 or less	134 – 178	179 – 214	215 – 286	287 or more
6' 0"	136 or less	137 – 183	184 – 220	221 – 294	295 or more
6' 1"	140 or less	141 – 188	189 – 227	228 – 302	303 or more
6' 2"	144 or less	145 – 194	195 – 232	233 – 310	311 or more
6' 3"	148 or less	149 – 199	200 – 239	240 – 319	320 or more

**Table 3: New BMI-Based Height vs. Weight Chart**

I think you will agree that the new BMI-based Height vs Weight table yields a more insightful and useful result.

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