Read your zones. Understand your week.

Use this short guide to read the information you already have. Finish with a worked weekly review, not another target number to chase.

What you will learn

Separate a zone label from a heart-rate reading, find the relevant Apple Watch views, and read a completed example without confusing missing data with zero.

What you can take away

Six illustrated pages, two standalone diagrams and three exercises with answers. Read everything online or keep the PDF for personal learning.

Before you begin

No watch or health-data upload is needed. The workout records are fictional teaching examples. This guide explains information; it does not prescribe a training schedule or set an individual heart-rate target.

Educational draft. Professional review and device testing pending. Not medical advice.

A label has a method behind it

A formula, a device label and your description of effort answer different questions.

FORMULA	WATCH	EFFORT
General estimate	**Configured range**	**Relative description**
Read the assumptions.	Read the settings.	Keep words with words.

An estimate

An age-based heart-rate estimate is general guidance based on averages. It is not a measurement of your individual threshold.

A configured zone

Apple Watch uses health data for automatic zones and also offers manual settings. A displayed zone therefore needs the context of its settings.

A description of effort

The talk test is a broad clue to relative intensity. It does not verify the exact boundary of a particular five-zone model.

Worked example

A calculator and a watch show different ranges. First compare the stated method and settings. Making the two displays match would not prove either range is your individual threshold.

Primary references (click to open): CDC · Measuring activity intensity / Apple · View Heart Rate Zones / American Heart Association · Target heart rates

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Find the view before changing the setting

Navigation below follows Apple documentation for watchOS 26. Other versions may differ; this is not a hands-on device test.

During a workout

Start a cardio workout in Workout, then turn the Digital Crown to find Heart Rate Zones. Apple lists a date of birth in the iPhone Health app as a prerequisite for zone calculation.

After a workout

On iPhone, open Fitness, select a workout in Sessions, then choose Show More next to Heart Rate to inspect the zone breakdown.

Inspect the existing settings

On the watch, open Settings > Workout > Heart Rate Zones. Note whether zones are automatic or manual. Do not change the setting merely to match a calculator.

If the view is missing

Use our Apple Watch check tool for the version-specific view checks. For another watchOS version, select that version in Apple's guide before following its steps.

Primary references (click to open): Apple · View Heart Rate Zones / Apple · Customize workout views

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Read one record without filling in the gaps

Fictional 40-minute session: 8 minutes in Zone 1, 14 in Zone 2, 6 in Zone 3 and 2 in Zone 4; 10 minutes unclassified.

The total you can report

The classified time adds up to 30 minutes. Zone 2 contributes 14 minutes in this example's chosen model. Neither number replaces the 40-minute session duration.

The part you cannot infer

The remaining 10 minutes have no classification in this teaching record. Keep them separate. Do not add them to Zone 2 or treat them as time in Zone 1.

A finished review note

"40 minutes recorded; 14 minutes labelled Zone 2; 10 minutes unclassified. Check source coverage before comparing this record with a fully classified session."

What this does not establish

Time in a labelled zone alone does not establish health improvement or explain symptoms. This exercise teaches careful arithmetic and description, not a judgement on the workout's value.

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Turn three sessions into one useful review

These three fictional records use the same zone definition. Monday: 40 minutes total / 14 Zone 2 / 10 unclassified. Thursday: 30 / 18 / 0. Saturday: 25 / 12 / 5.

44 min

labelled Zone 2

95 total / 15 unclassified

Fictional example, not a target.



The finished summary

95 minutes of sessions. 44 minutes labelled Zone 2. 15 minutes unclassified. The remaining 36 minutes belong to other zones in this example.

The next useful check

Before comparing with another week, check the same definition, included sessions and data coverage. A change in settings or missing records can change the comparison.

What an app could save you

A future app could collect existing sessions and prepare this summary automatically. The website demonstration uses this fixed example and reads none of your Apple Health data.

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Check your understanding

Try each question before reading the answer. You do not need to enter any personal measurements.

1. Two tools show different ranges. Which is right?

Answer: the mismatch alone does not tell you. Inspect the methods and current settings; neither has measured an individual threshold in this exercise.

2. A 40-minute session has 30 classified minutes. Add the rest to Zone 2?

Answer: no. Report 10 unclassified minutes separately. In the worked record, the known Zone 2 total remains 14 minutes.

3. Monday has 14, Thursday 18 and Saturday 12 Zone 2 minutes. What is the weekly total?

Answer: 44 minutes in the selected model, with 15 unclassified minutes recorded separately across the week. This is a descriptive total, not a recommended target.

Where to go next

Use the illustrated method guide for definitions, the Apple Watch check tool for device navigation, or the App preview to tell us which repeated task you want automated.

Primary references (click to open): CDC · Measuring activity intensity / Apple · View Heart Rate Zones / American Heart Association · Target heart rates

Online version and source details: zone2.yangluotong.top/learn/starter/

Educational draft. Professional review and device testing pending. Not medical advice.