



Your goal: Move one column left

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As much as we Texans like to brag about being at the top, being listed as one of the most obese states in America is not much of an accomplishment. We have gone from being the 16th fattest state in 1995 to being the 12th fattest state in 2010. We are going in the wrong direction, folks!

As the Texas Legislature struggled to put together a budget this year, our fitness made their job even harder. Approximately 20% of all our healthcare dollars is spent on illnesses and long-term diseases caused by obesity and smoking.

Just think what our legislators could have done if the Texas Medicaid budget could have been 20% less! That is us wasting our own money!

You can help yourself, your friends, and your family. Locate your height and weight on this chart.

What is your classification?

What about your family members?
What about your friends and co-workers? Where are they on the chart?

The further to the right of the *Normal Weight* column you are, the more serious your own personal health problems are going to be.

Just moving yourself one weight column to the left will make a big improvement in how you feel, how much more fun you are able to have, and how much money you can save in long-term healthcare costs.

Where are you on this chart?

	UNDER WEIGHT (BMI less than 18.5)	NORMAL WEIGHT (BMI of 18.5-24.9)	OVER-WEIGHT (BMI of 25.0-29.9)	OBESE WEIGHT (BMI of 30-34.9)	SUPER-OBESE (BMI of 35-39.9)	MORBIDLY OBESE (BMI of 40+)
<i>Height</i>	<i>Pounds</i>	<i>Pounds</i>	<i>Pounds</i>	<i>Pounds</i>	<i>Pounds</i>	<i>Pounds</i>
4' 10"	90 or less	91-118	119-142	143-166	167-190	191+
4' 11"	93 or less	94-123	124-147	148-172	173-197	198+
5' 00"	96 or less	97-127	128-153	153-178	179-203	204+
5' 01"	99 or less	100-131	132-157	158-185	185-210	211+
5' 02"	103 or less	104-135	136-163	164-190	191-217	218+
5' 03"	106 or less	107-140	141-168	169-196	197-224	225+
5' 04"	109 or less	110-144	145-173	174-203	204-231	232+
5' 05"	113 or less	114-149	150-179	180-209	210-239	240+
5' 06"	117 or less	118-154	155-185	186-217	216-246	247+
5' 07"	120 or less	121-158	159-190	191-222	223-254	255+
5' 08"	124 or less	125-163	164-196	197-229	230-261	262+
5' 09"	127 or less	128-168	169-202	203-235	236-269	270+
5' 10"	131 or less	132-173	174-208	209-242	243-277	278+
5' 11"	135 or less	136-178	179-214	215-249	250-285	286+
6' 00"	139 or less	140-183	184-220	221-220	258-293	294+
6' 01"	143 or less	144-188	189-226	227-264	265-301	302+
6' 02"	147 or less	148-193	194-232	233-272	272-310	311+
6' 03"	150 or less	152-199	200-239	240-278	279-318	319+
6' 04"	155 or less	156-204	205-245	246-286	287-327	328+

* Data from the Nat'l Heart, Lung, & Blood Institute, of the Nat'l Institute of Health

Is there a full-length mirror in the house where you can see yourself every day?

It will help you as you work on this problem. In our house, we have a mirror in the hallway between the bedroom and the front door.

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There is a reason Colorado came in as the least fat state in 2010.

Our Southern lifestyle is contributing to our weight problems. We don't have to abandon what we love about being Texans. We just need to learn to be smarter about it.

Texas is hot, so we stay inside on the couch. We drive to go just a few blocks down the street, when we could have walked or ridden a bicycle -- because we would need another shower once we got there.

It is too hot to cook, so we go out to eat in air conditioned restaurants or grab fast food through the car window. Restaurants compete with good tasting, chef-style foods rather than low-fat, low calorie foods. And their portions are too big.

Ask for your vegetables to be steamed, and get your salad dressing on the side. Eat half of the entree and take the other half home for tomorrow's lunch.

Electronic communications also has contributed to our weight problems. Ten years ago, we would walk down the hall to give someone a note or to discuss a situation with a co-worker. Today, we just text, Twitter, or send e-mail. The only movement involves our fingers, not our feet.

We can still be in air-conditioned comfort, but we also need to be moving our bodies. Your form of exercise needs to match your personality, or you won't keep doing it. Set small goals at first and keep a log. Then next week, set your goal to be only a little bit greater.

If you are not an "exercise" person, pick up a pedometer (with a tether) at the drugstore. Put it in your pocket every morning and go about your day.

In the evening, check it to see how far you walked. You may need to do a little more walking before the evening is over.

Remember your grandmother's saying "birds of a feather flock together"? If you are surrounded by others who also have weight problems, it is easier to ignore your own condition.

If your fellow overweight co-workers, friends, and family members won't join you in this effort, seek out more active friends and co-workers and try to spend some of your time with them each week.

Forget "quick fixes" or "flavor-of-the-month" fad diets. By slowly making changes in a number of little habits in your daily life during the next six to twelve months, the improvements will become new, more permanent habits, and the pounds you get rid of won't be as likely to come back.

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