

REACTION TIME

A martial artist has to be fast to respond to dangerous situations. How fast are you? The measurement of how fast you are is called reaction time. You can measure your reaction time with a yardstick and a little help from a friend. Rest your arm on the edge of a table with your hand hanging over the edge (this prevents you from moving your hand down to match the yardstick's motion). Hold your thumb and index finger about an inch apart. Have a friend hold the yardstick so that its positioned with the bottom end between your two fingers. Without warning, have your friend drop the yardstick. As fast as you can, close your fingers on the stick. Record the inch reading where your fingers hold the stick. For most people, the yardstick will fall about six inches before they can grab the yardstick.

To convert the distance the yardstick fell to a reaction time, use the following table:

Inches Fallen	Reaction Time in Seconds
5.0	0.161
5.5	0.169
6.0	0.177
6.5	0.184
7.0	0.191
7.5	0.198
8.0	0.204
8.5	0.210



The above table was compiled in accordance with the results of the testing of 6000 students by the Cooper Institute for Aerobics. Falling within 99% and 95% is considered superior. 90%, 85%, and 80% are excellent. 75%, 70%, 65%, and 60% are good. Fair is 55%, 50%, 45%, or 40%. A poor performance would be 35%, 30%, 25%, or 20%. If you reached 15% or under, those results are considered very poor.

If you are displeased with your rating or see room for personal improvement, keep stretching and exercising. Check back in a month or two and try again. You might surprise yourself. Good Luck!