

Blood Pressure Monitors from Consumer Reports

Arm Monitors: These monitors automatically inflate the cuff and display readings. Most have "risk category indicators" that will flag high readings.

Pros: Some models have multiple user memories, allowing more than one person in your household to monitor and record their blood pressure. Arm monitors tend to be more accurate in our tests.

Cons: Correct fit of the arm cuff is essential. If it's too tight or loose, you may get inaccurate readings. Often, the units are bulky or not portable, and they're often not as comfortable as wrist monitors.

Wrist Monitors: These convenient monitors are fully automatic but may be less accurate than arm models.

Pros: They're compact, lightweight, and portable. They're usually more comfortable than arm monitors.

Cons: Pressure measurements taken at the wrist are extremely sensitive to body position. Both wrist and arm cuffs should be positioned at heart level for an accurate reading; this is more difficult to get right with a wrist cuff.

Check the Fit: Make sure the blood pressure monitor you choose has a cuff that fits the circumference of your upper arm or wrist. (Use a tape measure to be certain.) Using a cuff that's the wrong size can result in inaccurate readings. Most of the arm models we tested have two cuffs or a cuff that can be adjusted to fit most people. Wrist models also fit most people.

Choose One That's Easy to Use: The display on the monitor should be easy to read. The buttons should be large and intuitive. The directions for using the cuff and operating the monitor should be clear.

Using Your Home Monitor Properly: Bring your BP monitor to your doctor's office, to make sure you're using it correctly and test whether its results are the same as the office monitor's yearly. And note that even the best home blood pressure monitor can still give inaccurate readings if it's used improperly. The following tips from the AHA can help:

- Don't smoke, drink any caffeine, or exercise for at least 30 minutes before you measure your blood pressure.
- Use the bathroom and then rest quietly for 5 minutes before taking a reading.

- Wrap the cuff around your bare arm, without any clothes in between the cuff and your skin.
- Sit on a sturdy chair with a supportive back (not a sofa), with your feet flat on the floor. Your arms should rest on a flat surface. The cuff of the device, whether it's on your arm or wrist, should be at the same level as your heart.
- Record your results and take them to your next appointment.

Overall Score	Brand & Model / Price	Accuracy	Convenience	Comfort
Arm Monitors				
OVERALL SCORE				
86	Omron Platinum BP5450 (Amazon) Recommended Price: \$75.00			
85	Omron Silver BP5250 (Amazon) Best Buy Price: \$50.00			
84	Omron 10 Series BP7450 Recommended Price: \$100.00			
83	Omron Evolv BP7000 Recommended Price: \$100.00			
81	A&D Medical UA767F Best Buy Price: \$45.00			
80	Rite Aid Deluxe Automatic BP3AR1-4DRITE ^{1, 2} Best Buy Price: \$37.00			
80	Omron 3 Series BP7100 Best Buy Price: \$50.00			

¹The scoring scheme has changed since the last test, therefore some models may have shifted in rank.

²Replacement cuffs for all of the models listed in the ratings should be available through the manufacturer.