

Hunger & Fullness Scales

Mindful Eating

Although it may seem like they're opposite ends of the same spectrum, hunger and fullness are quite different physiological experiences.

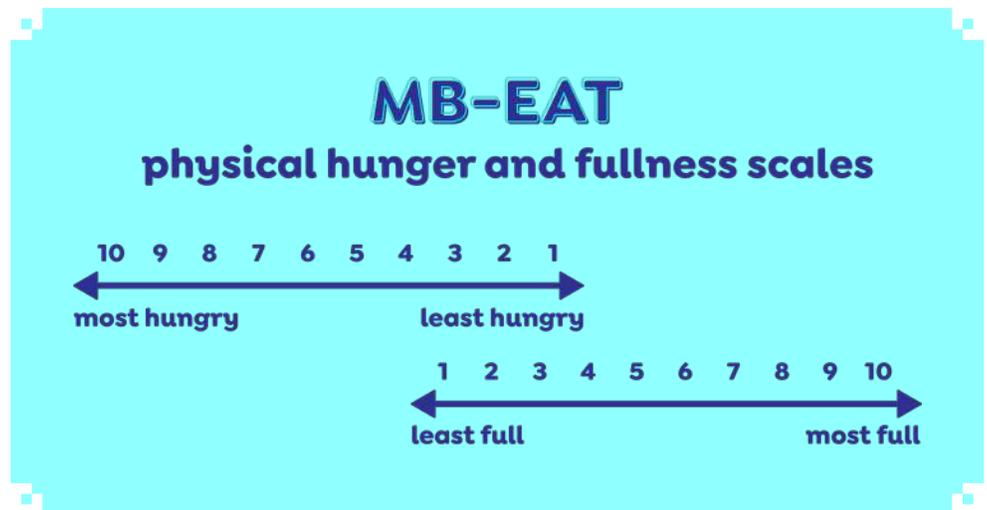
HUNGER

Hunger is your body's way of telling you it needs more nutrients. That's it! But with dieting, hunger can become demonized, and the goal becomes to never be hungry. If that's happening though, that means we are not tuned in to our bodies, and our bodies are becoming disconnected and dysregulated. **We SHOULD feel hunger, and when we do experience it, we should eat.**

Hunger is a feeling, and my hunger feels different than yours. On the hunger scale, **10 is considered most hungry, and 0 is least hungry or not hungry at all.** Your 7 will be different than mine, but in general, 5 is moderately hungry. You will fill in the rest as you get to know your body. You'll learn what a 7 feels like or 3 feels like, and you'll learn to what point you want to eat and what your stopping point is.

I would encourage you to reference these scales a few times this week to practice tuning into the physical sensations in your body that lead you to think you need something to eat.

→ What does your stomach feel like? Are there sensations anywhere else? Your head? Are you fatigued? How do the sensations change when you're hungry at a level 6, vs. a level 10?



Just notice, no judgment—this is all about awareness.

Notice your hunger throughout the day. Before you eat, rate your hunger on the scale, and consider if that affects how much you eat at each meal the rest of the day.

FULLNESS

Fullness is not the same as hunger, but we use a similar scale. **0 is not full at all—so empty—and 10 is extremely full.** Fullness is what you feel specifically around your stomach based on the weight and volume of what you've eaten.

"Full enough," is going to vary from person to person. The "goal" is not to get to 10 every meal, because we don't want to be uncomfortably stuffed. Personally, I aim for maybe a 6 or 7, but it will vary by the day, and you'll have to get to know YOURSELF to know the answer.

As mentioned, the fullness and hunger scales in the MB-EAT® program I went through are separate, but they can overlap, as shown above. **When you're the most hungry, you are probably the least full. But you CAN also be somewhat full in the stomach and still be hungry, and that's why the two scales have to be separate.**

THERE ARE NO RULES!

*Use these scales as a guide to help you practice tuning into inner wisdom. There's no need to get attached to these though, or set any "rules" about using them. In fact, **be on the lookout if attachments pop up.** Use these scales for a few meals or a few weeks, and then take a break. They are here to support you, but you do not require the physical scale in front of you to practice tuning into your body, and there are no "rules" about what numbers you need to reach in order to eat or stop eating—you are the one in control!*

