A **MET** is a ratio of your working metabolic rate relative to your resting metabolic rate. It's a way to describe the intensity of an exercise or activity. One MET is the energy you spend sitting at rest. An activity with a MET value of 4 means you're exerting four times the energy than you would if you were sitting still. For example, a brisk walk at 3 or 4 miles per hour has a value of 4 METs.

To calculate METs, it's helpful to know that one MET is approximately 3.5 milliliters of oxygen consumed per kilogram (kg) of body weight per minute. So, if you weigh 160 pounds (72.5 kg), you consume about 254 milliliters of oxygen per minute while at rest (72.5 kg x 3.5 mL).

The formula to calculate calories burned per minute using METs is: **METs x 3.5 x (your body weight in kilograms) / 200 = calories burned per minute.**

For example, if you weigh 160 pounds (approximately 73 kg) and play singles tennis (MET value of 8): 8 x 3.5 x 73 / 200 = 10.2 calories per minute. If you play tennis for an hour, you'll burn about 613 calories.

Here are some examples of MET values for various activities:

Light (< 3.0 METs)

- Sitting at a desk: 1.3
- Sitting, playing cards: 1.5
- Standing at a desk: 1.8
- Strolling at a slow pace: 2.0
- Washing dishes: 2.2
- Hatha yoga: 2.5
- Fishing (sitting): 2.5

Moderate (3.0–6.0 METs)

- Housework (cleaning, sweeping): 3.5
- Weight training (lighter weights): 3.5
- Golf (walking, pulling clubs): 4.3
- Brisk walking (3.5–4 mph): 5
- Weight training (heavier weights): 5
- Yard work (mowing, moderate effort): 5
- Swimming laps (leisurely pace): 6

Vigorous (> 6.0 METs)

- Walking at very brisk pace (4.5 mph): 6.3
- Bicycling 12–14 mph (flat terrain): 8
- Circuit training (minimal rest): 8

- Singles tennis: 8
- Shoveling, digging ditches: 8.5
- Competitive soccer: 10
- Running (7 mph): 11.5