



# **Wearables & Biometric Data Playbook**

**A HRV-guided approach to  
improve mental health and  
daily function**



# Train Smarter, Recover Smarter: Optimise Your Health Using Biometric Data

Recovery isn't a straight line. Some days you feel ready for anything; other days, even small tasks take effort. That's normal. Whether you're managing fatigue, anxiety or stress, the key is learning to work with your body, not push against it.

That's where Heart Rate Variability (HRV) and other wearable device data comes in. HRV measures the tiny changes in time between each heartbeat, showing how your body is coping with life's daily stressors. When HRV is high, your system is rested and resilient. When it's low, your body may be under strain, even if you don't feel it yet.

By tracking your biometrics, you can see how sleep, stress, movement and emotions affect your readiness. Over time, this helps you make smarter daily choices; when to move, when to rest and how to balance both.

The **Biometrics & Wearable Data Playbook** will guide you step by step through this process. You'll learn how to track your HRV, interpret your data and adjust your activity based on what your body needs each day.

Over time you'll start recognising patterns, managing stress more effectively and building habits that last. This isn't about being perfect, it's about awareness, balance and progress.

Now let's dive in!



## What is Heart Rate Variability (HRV)

Out of all the biometric data available, HRV is the metric we focus on most. It provides the clearest insight into how well your body is balancing stress and recovery, helping you see what's happening beneath the surface long before you feel it. Tracking HRV daily gives a window into your nervous system's health and your body's readiness for both physical and mental demands.

*HRV = the tiny differences in time between heartbeats (the gaps between the spikes on an ECG).*

## How it Works

- Your heart isn't a metronome. The time between beats naturally varies.
- This variation is controlled by your **Autonomic Nervous System (ANS)**.
  - Sympathetic (SNS): fight/flight — speeds things up.
  - Parasympathetic (PNS): rest/digest — slows things down.
- Higher HRV typically means a more flexible, adaptable nervous system. Lower HRV can mean the system is strained (illness, poor sleep, high stress, overload).

## Why this Matters in Mental Health

Many mental-health and fatigue illnesses show ANS dysregulation i.e. the system gets stuck in high alert or can't return to baseline smoothly.

Tracking HRV gives objective feedback on stress load and recovery capacity. That lets us pick the right day for exercise, work or rest and watch progress week by week.

## The Method in One Line

Use wearables to understand the load you're putting on your body, how well you are recovering and then start taking action to reduce avoidable triggers and deploy up or down-regulation activities so, over time, your ANS response gets smoother and you feel better.



## Quick Start (What to do today)

These are the essential first steps, the simple, practical building blocks that get your data collection and tracking underway. By following them consistently, you'll create the foundation for understanding your recovery patterns and making smarter day-to-day choices.

**1 Get a Polar watch (preferred) or Garmin Vivosmart and a Polar chest strap (H10).**

Reliable tools give accurate data, helping you see how your body responds to stress, sleep and activity each day.

**2 Install Elite HRV (mobile app). Create an account.**

Elite HRV turns your data into simple readiness scores so you can easily track recovery and stress trends over time.

**3 Wear your watch 24/7 for heart rate, sleep and steps. Use the H10 strap only when taking HRV readings.**

Continuous wear builds a full picture of your patterns, while the chest strap provides precise HRV readings for accuracy.

**4 Each morning (before coffee/phone), sit for 2–3 minutes and take a Morning Readiness HRV reading in Elite HRV.**

Morning readiness readings show how well your body recovered overnight, giving you a daily guide for pacing and activity.

**5 Tag your day with context (sleep, alcohol, big stressors).**

Tagging context links your HRV changes to real-life factors, helping you see what boosts or drains your recovery.

**6 For the first 4 weeks: no changes to your routine. Just collect data.**

The first phase builds your personal baseline, giving you clear insight before you start making any adjustments.



## Using the Elite HRV Dashboard

Now that your setup is complete, it's time to learn how to use your Elite HRV Morning Readiness dashboard, this will be your daily check-in with your body.

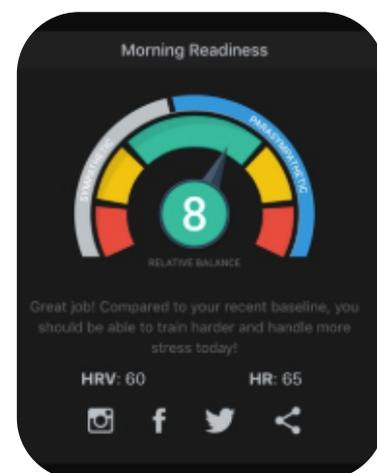
Each morning, after waking and before coffee or phone use, open Elite HRV and complete a Morning Readiness test using your phone and Polar H10 chest strap. The app measures the small changes between each heartbeat to calculate your HRV score and readiness level. You'll see this displayed as a color-coded dial, ranging from Green (High Readiness) through Amber (Moderate) to Red (Low Readiness).

This reading reflects the balance between your Sympathetic Nervous System (SNS), your "fight or flight" mode and your Parasympathetic Nervous System (PNS), your "rest and repair" mode.

- When both are balanced, you'll see Green. This means your system is recovered and ready for activity.
- When SNS dominates, the body is under strain. You may need more rest, recovery or mindfulness.
- When PNS dominates, the system may be over-recovering or under-challenged; gentle movement can help restore balance

Think of this as a daily weather forecast for your nervous system: some days are bright and high-energy, others are cloudy or stormy. The goal isn't to chase "perfect" scores, it's to use this feedback to match your day to your physiology.

Use the colour zones as your guide for the day's plan but before we dive into what each zone means, there are a few key things to understand about how to interpret your daily readings, these will help you make sense of the patterns you'll see.





## Some Quick Notes Before We Move On

### Understanding Your Readiness Trends

HRV scores are most useful when viewed over time. Some days your reading may not match how you feel, for example, you might get a Green reading but feel flat or a Red reading and feel fine. That doesn't mean the data is wrong. HRV reflects how your body's adapting relative to your baseline, not just your mood on the day. Sudden jumps above your usual values can indicate your body is in a temporary stress or adaptation phase (such as fighting illness or recovering from a big effort). Over time, consistency matters more than single readings.

### Green means "go", not "go hard"

Even on Green days, it's not a "go hard" pass. Continue pacing and include rest breaks to avoid slipping into the boom-bust cycle. Think of Green days as opportunities for confidence building, not overexertion.

Gradually increase intensity rather than jumping to maximal loads. Progress comes from consistency, not extremes.

***"Move your **body**, your  
**mind** will follow"***

Now that you've got a sense of how to read your data and what influences your readiness, let's look at what to actually do with it.

The next few pages walk you through each readiness zone, what to look for, why recognising each zone is important and how to move, rest and recover based on what your body's telling you.



## High Readiness (Green Zone)

### What It Means

A Green readiness score shows your nervous system is balanced and adaptive. Your body is managing daily stressors well and recovery systems are active. In Elite HRV, you'll see a stable or slightly elevated HRV compared to your baseline, with a balanced SNS/PNS graph and a smooth trend line.

A few Green days doesn't mean you're "back to normal", but you're definitely on the right track. Your system has the energy and flexibility to take on challenges, be stressed within reason and adapt. It's a physiological "green light," but still within limits.

### What To Look For

In Elite HRV, a Green day often displays:

- A readiness score of 8–10 / 10
- HRV within or slightly above your personal baseline band
- Balanced SNS / PNS levels
- A consistent trend line across several days

### What Supports It

Green days usually follow 2–3 days of consistent pacing, restorative sleep, good nutrition and manageable stress. They reflect balance between work and recovery.

### Why It Matters

These days build confidence. By recognising and using them wisely, you reinforce trust in your body's reliability and this is key in mental health and fatigue recovery.



## Green Zone Summary

### READINESS INDICATORS



- Your HRV is balanced or above your typical baseline
- Your body is showing strong capacity for focus, movement and recovery.
- Even if you don't feel energetic or motivated, this data tells us your system is ready to handle load. Sometimes your mind lags behind your physiology, that's normal.



### PRACTICAL ACTIVITIES

- Increase your exercise, your work hours or some physically demanding home tasks
- Schedule longer exercise / work periods before breaks
- Challenge yourself with cognitively demanding or problem-solving tasks
- Attempt previously avoided social, home or recreational activities



### NOTES

- Use these days to make gains - physically and cognitively
- Green days are your opportunity to retrain confidence in your capacity.
- You're building proof that your body is reliable, even when you don't feel your best.

Pro tip: Notice what you did over the last few days that supported this readiness (sleep, pacing, nutrition, rest) and aim to repeat it.



## Moderate Readiness (Amber Zone)

### What It Means

An Amber readiness score shows your body is in balance but still carrying a manageable stress load. Recovery is underway, but energy systems aren't fully replenished yet. In Elite HRV, HRV values hover near baseline or fluctuate slightly below and the SNS / PNS balance may tilt modestly toward one side.

Amber is the "growth zone." It's where adaptation happens because your system is challenged but coping.

### What To Look For

In Elite HRV, an Amber day often displays:

- Readiness score 5-7 / 10
- HRV near baseline, mild daily fluctuation
- Slight SNS or PNS tilt
- Trend line showing small rises and dips

### What Supports It

Amber days often follow busy periods, lighter sleep or emotional load. Staying active but with a well balance of restorative rest and recovery helps return your system to Green faster.

### Why It Matters

Managing Amber days well is the foundation of resilience. They train awareness, pacing and the skill of adjusting before symptoms builds. Most long-term progress happens here, not in the extremes.



## Amber Zone Summary

### READINESS INDICATORS



- Your HRV is moderate
- Your system is in a state of balance but not fully recharged.
- You may feel good, or you may feel tired, either way, your body is managing a mild stress load.
- This is the zone where most recovery progress happens.



### PRACTICAL ACTIVITIES

- Stay active, but moderate your intensity and pacing.
- If you feel great, still hold back slightly; if you feel tired, gently keep moving.
- These are the days to find your middle ground, avoiding both overexertion and full rest.
- Try intervals of work or movement with recovery breaks and check in on your HRV the next morning to see how your body responds.



### NOTES

- Moderate days teach consistency and self-regulation.
- Trust your data over impulse, this is how you smooth the peaks and dips.
- Long-term stability comes from managing amber days well.



## Low Readiness (Red Zone)

### What It Means

A Red readiness score signals that your system is under strain and needs recovery. Your HRV is notably below baseline, showing reduced adaptability. In Elite HRV, you'll see a low readiness score, HRV suppressed relative to your baseline band and an imbalance between SNS and PNS, either over-activation (SNS dominance) or over-recovery (PNS dominance).

It's important to note that red isn't failure, it's feedback. It tells you your nervous system is asking for rest, regulation and safety.

### What To Look For

Typical Elite HRV features:

- Readiness score 1–4 / 10
- HRV clearly below baseline
- Pronounced SNS dominance (fight-flight) or PNS dominance (over-recovery)
- Downward trend line after sustained stress or illness

### What Supports It

Prioritise rest, sleep, nutrition, emotional regulation and light, restorative movement. Use the day for recovery, reflection and grounding.

### Why It Matters

Recognising Red days early helps you prevent setbacks. They are signals to slow down, not stop completely. Listening to these cues helps rebuild stability and trust in your body's limits.



## Red Zone Summary



### READINESS INDICATORS

- Your HRV is low and your nervous system is signalling the need for recovery and protection.
- You might feel fine and ready to push, but your body is still under stress behind the scenes.
- Ignoring this signal often leads to crashes later, the “bust” part of the boom–bust cycle.



### PRACTICAL ACTIVITIES

- Start by lowering your overall load, fewer demands, more recovery time.
- If Red with SNS dominance (sympathetic overactivity):
  - Focus on down-regulation: slow breathing, mindfulness, quiet time, gentle walking and an earlier night.
- If Red with PNS dominance (parasympathetic overactivity):
  - Focus on gradual reactivation: light movement (walking, stretching), sunlight, hydration and gentle structure in your day.
  - Avoid long periods of inactivity, short, low-demand movement helps the system reset.



### NOTES

- Your HRV data shows how your body's coping underneath the surface
- Red days are an opportunity to recharge and restore, not a reason to stop entirely.



## Daily Scorecard

Your daily tracking is where data turns into awareness. Each morning, take your HRV reading, review your readiness colour and jot down a few key details. This helps you connect what's happening in your life with what your data shows. Over time, you'll start seeing patterns, what helps you recover, what drains you and how small daily choices shape your readiness. The goal isn't to be perfect; it's to become more aware of what your body is telling you.

**Morning Plan:**

**Readiness Score / Colour:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Balance (PNS / SNS):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Baseline vs Today (higher / lower?):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Sleep (hours / quality):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Planned Day:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Evening Check-In:**

**Stressors noticed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Restorers used:** \_\_\_\_\_

**How did i feel?** \_\_\_\_\_



## Weekly Review

Your weekly review is your chance to zoom out and see the bigger picture. This is where you reflect on trends, not single days. Look at how your HRV, energy and habits line up. Did your recovery improve, stay stable or drop off? What events or choices might explain those changes? Use this space to celebrate wins, note patterns and plan one small adjustment for the week ahead. The key is progress, not perfection. Small, consistent improvements compound over time.

### Weekly Overview:

How did my readiness trend overall this week?

### Key Stressors:

What situations, habits, or choices seemed to lower my readiness or drain my energy?

### Key Restorers:

What activities or habits helped me recover or move toward more balanced (green) days?

### Wins and Learnings:

What went well this week? What did I learn about how my body responds to life, work and rest?

### Focus for Next Week:

What one small change will I test next week to support better balance or recovery?



## FAQs

### Is higher HRV always better?

Generally yes, but context matters. Compare to your own baseline.

### What if my HRV drops after a workout?

Normal. That's acute stress. It should rebound within 24–72 hours with sleep and nutrition.

### Can anxiety lower HRV?

Yes, mental stress is still stress. That's why breathwork and pacing help.

### Do I need the chest strap every day?

Use it for Morning Readiness. The watch handles the rest.

## Safety & When to Seek Help

### Important Notes

- Always follow the care plan or medical advice already provided by your treating professionals.
- If you are unsure about any new changes to your routine or if you notice unexpected symptoms, stop the activity and check in with your healthcare team.
- HRV and readiness data are tools to guide awareness, not diagnostic instruments. They should be used alongside, not instead of, professional medical input.

### Seek Immediate Medical Attention If You:

- Experience chest pain, shortness of breath, dizziness or fainting during activity.
- Notice sudden, severe fatigue that doesn't improve with rest.
- Have new or worsening pain, swelling or physical discomfort.
- Experience feelings of hopelessness, distress or thoughts of self-harm.
- Experience any unusual changes in heart rate, sleep patterns or energy levels that seem out of character.
- If you notice increased anxiety, worry, or hypervigilance when tracking your HRV readings, pause daily measurements and discuss with your Exercise Physiologist or treating clinician. Tracking should support awareness, not create distress

Use your readiness zones as a guide, not a rulebook. The goal is balance and consistency, not perfection.

When in doubt, rest, reset and consult a professional before resuming activity.