

Supplies

Blood Pressure Cuff

Stethoscope

sphygmomanometer (the pump and dial)

Step by step

1. Wrap the cuff around the arm with the arrow pointing towards the brachial artery. This is the large artery located at the bend of the elbow. It is often visible but if it isn't, try to feel for it.
2. If the sphygmomanometer isn't already attached to the cuff, go ahead and attach it. Make sure the valve is completely closed by twisting the knob clockwise until it stops.
3. Place the earpieces of the stethoscope in your ears and the bell end directly on the brachial artery where the arrow is pointing.
4. Use the bulb to pump up the cuff until the needle reaches 160mmHg. If you immediately hear thumping sounds, keep pumping up the cuff until you don't hear anything.
5. Very slowly and gently twist the knob counterclockwise which will cause the needle to drop. Try to release pressure at a slow and steady 3mm per second.
6. Once you hear the first thumping sound, at that very moment, whatever number the needle is on is the systolic, or top number, of the blood pressure.
7. Keep listening until the thumping sound slowly fades away. Immediately after you can't hear anything anymore, look at the number the needle is on. That number is the diastolic, or bottom number, of the blood pressure.

So simply put, wherever the needle is when the thumping sound begins is the top number (systolic) of a manual blood pressure and when the thumping ends is the bottom number (diastolic).

