

Body image concerns more men than women numbers/ health/ social issues

to be used with <https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2012/jan/06/body-image-concerns-men-more-than-women>

Discuss these trends in pairs:

- Cosmetic surgery (= Plastic surgery)
- Body image problems amongst women
- Body image problems amongst men
- Body talk
- Compulsive exercise
- Dieting to lose weight
- Eating to gain muscle
- Bulimia (vomiting and/ or using laxatives after eating to lose weight)

Try to predict a percentage for each of these things about the UK. For each one, the most precise correct estimate will get two points, or the closest guess will get one point if everyone is wrong.

Useful language for making estimates

- Around/ More or less/ (Very) approximately...
- Between... and.../ From... to...
- Less/ Fewer than...
- (A tiny bit/ A bit/ Quite a lot/ A lot/ Much much) more than...
- In the (low/ mid/ high) twenties/ thirties/...
- (Very) nearly/ Almost...
- (Almost) exactly...

- Men who talk about their own or others' bodies
- Women who talk about their own or others' bodies
- Men who have heard someone refer to their beer belly
- Men who have been described as chubby
- Men who have heard people talking about their moobs (man boobs)
- Men whose worries about their appearance have stopped them going to the gym
- Men who think their arms or chest aren't muscular enough
- Men who think about their appearance at least five times a day
- Men who are on a high protein diet to increase their muscles
- Men who are on a diet to slim down
- Men who would give up at least a year of their life if they could have the ideal body weight and shape
- Men who would give up ten years or more if they could have the ideal body weight and shape
- Men who have made themselves sick to control their weight
- Men who have used laxatives to control their weight

Read the text and check your answers.

Ask about anything in the text you don't understand, then discuss these questions related to the topics in the text:

- Which numbers were you most and least surprised by? Why do you think those two numbers are at that level?
- What things are similar and different in your country and other places you know about, do you think?
- How much of your life would you give up to have the ideal body weight and shape?
- What would you give up a year of your life for? What about two years, five years and ten years?
- How are men and women different in your country? (Look below the folded line if you need some ideas). Which of those differences are acceptable and/ or inevitable?
- How do those things compare to other countries? How have things changed?
- Are gender differences mainly innate (= genetic) or due to upbringing, do you think? Which might be innate?
- How much of a glass ceiling is there in your country? What are the reasons for it, and could it change?
- Who has a better life in your country, women or men?

-----fold-----

Possible gender differences to discuss

- Being a gentleman (opening doors, carrying luggage etc)
- Being a priest
- Being expected to wear a skirt or tie at school or at work
- Childcare
- Children being allowed to travel abroad alone
- Controlling household finances
- Employment practices (e.g. physical jobs, caring jobs, air stewardess)
- Housework
- How you dress babies
- Jobs that you expect kids to do about the house
- Making important family decisions
- Maternity and paternity leave
- Military service
- Paying in restaurants and bars
- Sports you do at school
- Studying Home Economics
- Toys you buy for young kids
- What time children are expected to be home
- Working with small children