

# Tech review: Nike FuelBand keeps motivation close at hand

June 21 2012, By Jim Rossman, The Dallas Morning News

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I have to admit, I'm overweight. My weight tends to fluctuate depending on my mood and motivation.

So when Nike asked me to review its new FuelBand, I was a little skeptical and a little nervous.

At its core, the \$149 FuelBand is a tool to motivate you to move. With three accelerometers, the FuelBand tracks your body as you move throughout the day. You might think this sounds like a [pedometer](#), and you would be right, but it's a lot more.

Nike has come up with a new unit of exercise called "Nike fuel." I like to think of Nike fuel like a golf handicap. It's a unit of measure designed to put everyone on an equal plane.

Nike calls its fuel units the "ultimate measure of activity." Nike says its fuel units are calculated the same for everyone no matter your age, gender or sport of choice, so it's easy to compare your [workouts](#) with those of your friends, but only if they're using a Nike FuelBand or other Nike+ device.

I have used the Nike+ app on my [iPod nano](#) to track a few walks, and Nike converted those walks into fuel points.

So the FuelBand tracks your movement, but some hard-core athletes will find that's not enough. [Runners](#), for instance, will find the FuelBand doesn't track their time or distance; it only tracks movement.

The FuelBand does calculate [calories](#) burned and steps taken from the [accelerometer](#) readings, and there's also a watch that's limited to telling time. Users can scroll through the FuelBands display with a single button.

I have to say that as a watch, the FuelBand is very cool.

The FuelBand exports its data two ways, through USB to a Mac or PC or through [Bluetooth](#) to an iOS device.

You can use the Nike fuel website or Nike's iOS app to configure the

FuelBand and to set daily goals and to track your progress.

My daily goal started at 2,000 fuel units, which I easily reached the first day simply by mowing my lawn. When you reach your daily goal, you'll see a small animation on the FuelBand celebrating your achievement.

I missed my goal on a few days that I spent mostly at work and in front of the computer. But I think the FuelBand will motivate me to get up and do some more moving around.

The band itself is water-resistant. Nike says you can shower with it on but not to take it swimming.

I'm also a little bummed that it doesn't record much movement when I'm riding my recumbent exercise bike. Oh, well; perhaps I'll attach it to my ankle.

The band comes in three sizes - small, medium and large - and each size includes two small expanders that fine-tune the fit, much like links on a watch band.

I find the FuelBand comfortable to wear; it really disappears on your wrist. Nike says the battery will last about four days before you need to charge it through your computer's USB port or through an included USB charger.

So hard-core athletes might find the Nike fuel a little lacking as a workout monitor for some specific sports, but for people like me - nerds who need to start moving - the FuelBand might just be the [motivation](#) we need to push our chairs away from our monitors and get going.

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## NIKE FUELBAND:

-Pros: Elegant design, clear display, comfortable to wear.

-Cons: Can't measure heart rate, elapsed time or distance.

-Bottom line: If you're into workout gadgets, the Nike FuelBand is really well done.

-Price: \$149

-On the Web: [nikeplus.nike.com](http://nikeplus.nike.com)

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