

**DIANE, 36**

**THILINI, 20**

**NIKKI, 29**

**LIZ, 35**

**ROSANNA, 36**

**SOLVEIG, 32**

**WHO WEIGHS THE**

JULIE ADAMS

**AUSSIE AVERAGE?**

# THEY'RE ALL THE NATIONAL



HEIGHT: 145cm BRA: 12B TOP: 12 BOTTOM: 14

## DIANE O'DWYER, 36

South African-born Diane is a cleaner and mother of two young boys, Llewelyn and Dylan

**SHE SAYS:** I've always had the classic pear shape. Growing up, my family affectionately called me "thunder thighs", which I always laughed off. Although I've battled with my weight all my life, I've finally reached the point where I'm content. Sure, I'd like to get rid of my muffin top and slim down my thighs, and I'm aware of possible health problems, but I see some advantages to being bigger. I have a higher libido than I did when I was thinner, and I love the bigger boobs.

**MY AVERAGE DIET:** When I moved to Australia, I missed my family. That's when I started eating. On a bad day I'll eat hot chips or McDonald's. I have Weet-Bix for breakfast, a sandwich for lunch, and meat and vegies for dinner. I don't eat a lot of fruit. It's hard to maintain a healthy diet when you work a long day, you're exhausted and the kids are yelling, "We're hungry!"

**MY AVERAGE WEIGHT:** When I was 18, I was 38kg after going through a traumatic event. Years later, after marriage and kids, I gained 26kg. It's been a battle ever since. But I've never wanted my life to revolve around my weight or food. What's on the inside is more important.

**THE MARIE CLAIRE PHOTO SHOOT:** I saw something in me I haven't seen before – the camera captured my soul. And meeting the other girls – there was a great bond between us. I'm proud for people to see the way I really look.

**I see some advantages to being bigger. I have a higher libido than I did when I was thinner and I love the bigger boobs.**



HEIGHT: 170cm BRA: 12D TOP: 12 BOTTOM: 12

## THILINI ATTANAYAKE, 20

Thilini is a dance student and plus-size model who is learning to be happy with her body

**SHE SAYS:** My body is curvy and proportioned, which I should be happy about, but I still compare myself to other girls. I'm happy with my current weight, which I've maintained for about two years, but I'd still like to tone up. I'd describe my body as an hourglass shape. I have a photo of Marilyn Monroe on my Facebook page – it's proof that girls whose thighs touch can be adored by men. I was surprised to find out the average weight is 70kg. This definitely makes me feel better about myself.

**MY FITNESS REGIMEN:** I dance and jog seven days a week. In spite of this, I can't lose weight, so I think my 70kg is mainly muscle. My guy friends say to me, "Thilini, why are you working out more than we are?" It's crazy because I know men like women with more curves, so I guess I'm trying to lose weight to fit in. **WHAT I LOVE ABOUT MY BODY:** I like my skin colour because it's unique. I also think I have a nice smile. I love my proportionate figure and the curves around my breasts, hips and bottom.

**WHAT I'D CHANGE ABOUT MY BODY:** In my early days of modelling, I used to think I'd love to airbrush out my rolls of fat. Now, I believe it's important to work with what you've got. OK, I don't love my stomach. Utopia for me would be a flat stomach, but a friend once told me, "You're perfect just the way you are."

**FACT:** Australians will spend an estimated **\$1.6 billion** on gyms and fitness in 2011/12\*\*

# AVERAGE: 70KG\*

Six Australian women who all weigh 70kg bravely bare their bodies, showing that "average" comes in all shapes and sizes. By Nicole Partridge



HEIGHT: 167cm BRA: 12E TOP: 14 BOTTOM: 12

## NIKKI BRITTON, 29

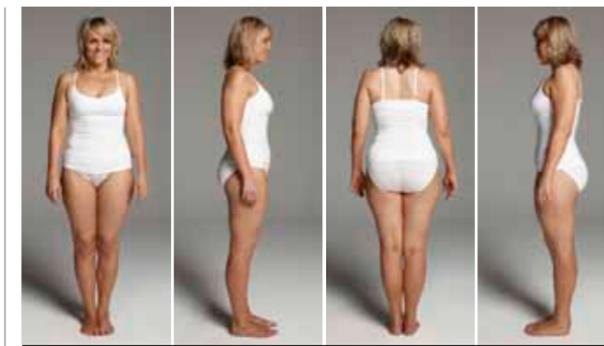
Comedian and actor Nikki has come a long way with her weight

**SHE SAYS:** I've been on quite a journey with this body of mine. Looking back on where I've been and where I am today, I think, "Phew, I made it!" Throughout my teens, I was riddled with insecurity and self-loathing. For years I battled eating disorders. I was never happy with how I looked. Even at my skinniest, which was 38kg, I was so self-conscious and very sick. I couldn't even hold my head up, but incredibly I was so proud of how skinny I'd become. It's frightening how warped my thinking was. Now, at 29, I don't own scales and I've come to believe it's more about how I feel, rather than how much I weigh. Today I can proudly wear my bikini and feel good and womanly and sexy. More importantly, I can do this body image shoot – which is a huge milestone.

**MY BODY MANTRA:** Find the beauty in the imperfections. **WHAT I LIKE ABOUT MY BODY:** It's curvy and strong and very huggable. I love my skin, my waist and my overall shape. My secret weapon is my boobs. As cheap as this might sound, sometimes you just have to get the girls out to boost your self-esteem.

**WHEN I LOOK IN THE MIRROR:** I've fallen in love with looking at myself naked. It's taken me a long time to get to this place. Over the past few years I've come to appreciate my curves and sensuality. I look at this body with its boobs and hips and think, "Yes!" I've finally learnt to appreciate the beauty and the imperfections.

**I don't own scales and I've come to believe it's more about how I feel, rather than how much I weigh.**



HEIGHT: 173cm BRA: 12C TOP: 10 BOTTOM: 12

## LIZ MACKAY, 35

Liz is a medical educator who lives with her husband, Damien, and dog Milo

**SHE SAYS:** I've moved on from the whole weight thing. Whether I weigh 68, 70 or 74kg is irrelevant to me. It's more about how you feel. These days I can tell if I've put on weight by how my clothes are fitting and how bloated I've become. Sometimes I don't weigh myself for months. I've been at my current weight for two years. A while ago I had an epiphany: it's not about looking skinny, it's about being strong, fit and powerful. It's about living a healthy life.

**ON BUYING CLOTHES:** It's difficult because I'm tiny up top and heavy on the bottom. It's so frustrating. What's annoying is when the shop assistant yanks open the curtain and says, "Are you right?" while you're standing there in your control undies – which I wear to keep everything in check. When buying clothes, I usually stick to A-line dresses and jackets. I wear high-cut swimwear. Tight white capri pants are not my friend.

**WHAT YOUR PARTNER THINKS OF YOUR BODY:** My husband loves me no matter what weight I am. The weirdest thing is I've had 10kg of variation in the 10 years we've been together, but I've never felt a change in him. Whether I'm up or down, he's unwavering. When we had our engagement photos done I had a complete insecurity attack and wanted to airbrush everything – Damien wouldn't let it happen. He insisted I was gorgeous the way I was. ▶

**FACT:** The average Australian woman's weight has increased **5.6kg** since 1995\*

PHOTOGRAPHED BY JULIE ADAMS. \*AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS, NATIONAL HEALTH SURVEY 2007-08. \*\*FITNESS IN AUSTRALIA IBISWORLD INDUSTRY REPORT, 2011

# 80% of Australian women reported feeling unhappy with their bodies, despite the fact that most of those surveyed weighed in around average<sup>†</sup>



HEIGHT: 165cm BRA: 10E TOP: 10 BOTTOM: 10



HEIGHT: 186cm BRA: 10D TOP: 10 BOTTOM: 10

## ROSANNA MARIA MOGG, 36

Rosanna, personal trainer, Weight Watchers leader and mum of seven-year-old Darcy, loves her weight

**SHE SAYS:** My wake-up call came four years ago. Weighing 90kg, my Weight Watchers leader told me I had 22kg to lose. My first reaction was, "That ain't gonna happen. I can't even lose 1kg." Up to that point I'd tried everything from acupuncture to herbs and nothing had worked. So I started by walking my son every day in the pram, then I got a personal trainer. After 10 months, I was the proud owner of a 70kg body.

**MY PROUDEST BODY MOMENT:** I was having my photo taken for a Weight Watchers "before and after" story. Standing in a room full of others who were there for the same reason was a huge achievement. I often used to think,

"God, I'd like that to happen to me." Now, here I was, having lost 22kg. I couldn't wipe the smile off my face.

**WHEN I LOOK IN THE MIRROR:** Some days I think I'm pretty good; other days I think, "Look at your stomach, you've got a big bum, look at your legs." Sometimes I'll go shopping and as I'm pulling on a size 10, I'm waiting for it to get stuck. I'll say to my husband, "It fits!" He

rolls his eyes and says, "Of course it bloody fits." Although I feel so much better physically, I still look in the mirror and see someone who's 80kg.

**HOW I FELT ON THE MARIE CLAIRE PHOTO SHOOT:** I loved being a part of the shoot, but I couldn't help comparing myself with the 186cm model. I have to stop being so tough on myself.

“Although I feel so much better physically, I still look in the mirror and see someone who's 80kg”

## SOLVEIG WALKLING, 32

Solveig is a Pilates instructor, writer and model

**SHE SAYS:** Overall, I can say I'm the happiest with my body I've ever been, but it's been quite a journey to get there. After becoming a model at 16 and being told to lose weight, I developed an unhealthy relationship with the scales and food. Eventually I overcame my eating disorder and I'm now at a place where I've learnt to love and appreciate my body. I would describe my body as athletic and gangly. It's healthy and balanced and sits comfortably with 70kg.

**LESSONS I'VE LEARNT:** Looking back at myself at 16, I wish someone had taken me by the hand and told me I was beautiful not because of how I looked, but who I was on the inside. I made the mistake of allowing my looks to define me. I've come to realise the mind and body are inextricably linked, and that your body is the personification of your being.

**MY AVERAGE DIET:** My diet changes depending on how much I exercise. I always make sure I'm eating healthy food. For breakfast, I usually have muesli or porridge and supplements. Morning tea is fruit or fruit juice. I have salad and protein for lunch and maybe fish for dinner. If I feel hungry before bed, I'll have some tahini or goat's cheese.

**MY FITNESS REGIMEN:** I don't have a goal with fitness other than feeling good. At the moment I'm doing five sessions of yoga a week. I run, play basketball and swim. If it's a nice day I might go kayaking or sailing. I just love moving. ■

**FACT:** Australians spent close to \$800 million on weight-loss aids in the past year<sup>‡</sup>