

# The Anatomical Position, Planes and Axis

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## Anatomical Position

Anatomists and physiologists look at the human body from this standard starting point known as the **anatomical position**.

## The Anatomical Position

- The human body standing erect
- Face facing forward
- arms by the sides
- palms facing forward
- legs straight
- feet flat on the floor and turn out very slightly



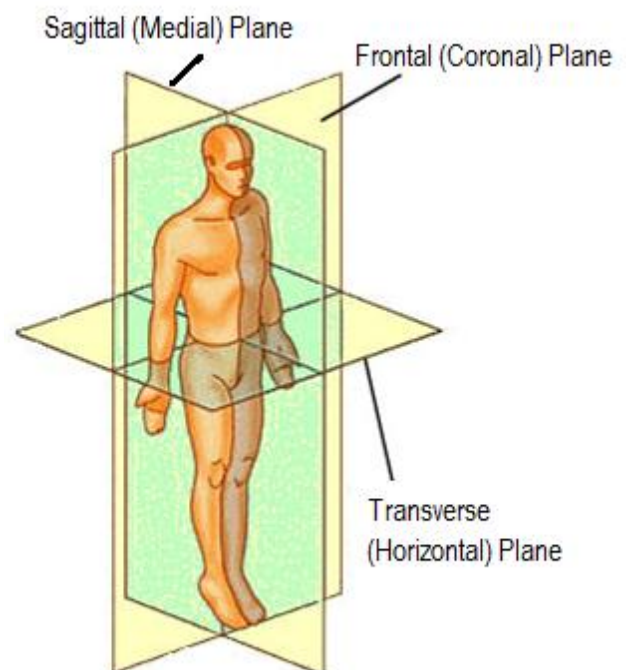
## Anatomical Planes

The anatomical position is further standardized by dividing the body into three anatomical planes. A plane is an imaginary flat surface passing through the body or organ which divides the structure.

1) **Frontal (Coronal) Plane**: is vertical and extends from one side of the body to the other. It divides the body into front and back sections.

2) **Sagittal (Medial) Plane**: is vertical and extends from the front of the body to the back. It divides the body into right and left sections.

3) **Transverse (Horizontal) Plane**: is horizontal and divides the body into upper and lower segments.

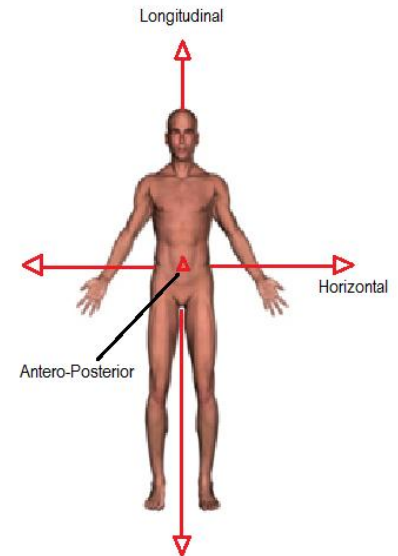


## Axes of Rotation

The human body is also divided into anatomical axes. Axis of rotation is an imaginary line (**point of rotation**) that passes through a joint or the body to describe the movement.

### 3 Primary Axes of Rotation

- 1. Horizontal (Medio-Lateral) Axis:**
  - Runs from side to side
  - Perpendicular to Sagittal Plane
  - Typically flexion/extension
- 2. Antero-Posterior (Sagittal) Axis:**
  - Runs from front to back
  - Perpendicular to the Coronal Plane
  - Typically abduction/adduction movements
- 3. Longitudinal (Vertical) Axis:**
  - Runs straight through the top of the head down between the feet
  - Perpendicular to the Transverse Plane
  - Typically a rotation type of movement



### Summary of the three planes and axes of rotation

Anatomical Plane	Perpendicular Axis
Sagittal (Medial)	Horizontal (Medio-Lateral)
Frontal (Coronal)	Antero-Posterior (Sagittal)
Transverse (Horizontal)	Longitudinal (Vertical)