Body condition scoring has become an integral part of dairy herd management because it is indispensable in monitoring the dynamics of body energy reserves throughout lactation. Ensuring proper body condition enables the dairy cow to realize high milk yield, good reproductive performance, and to keep well and fit throughout lactation. Body condition can be evaluated precisely by ultrasonographic measurement of backfat thickness. Backfat thickness and total body fat are highly related. We review the literature regarding this technique, its validation, and its value compared with other methods. Target values for body condition are given.