

Buying Exercise Equipment

By Kent Pegg

Are you thinking about buying some exercise equipment? A treadmill or elliptical? Maybe some weight lifting equipment?

Well, after attending the Health and Fitness Business Exposition and Conference in Denver last weekend, I can tell you that there is a LOT of equipment out there.

The problem is that much of what is available is overpriced and poorly constructed.

Before investing in any equipment you need to consider several things. First, will you really use the equipment regularly once you get it home?

Exercising at home challenges you with many potential distractions. Telephones, televisions, family members, and refrigerators all work against your best intentions when trying to exercise at home.

Even the best equipment is worthless to your health and fitness if you turn it into an expensive coat rack or towel holder.

All you have to do is look around any weekend at any yard sale and you'll see people whose best intentions and money went to waste.

Avoid jumping into any equipment until you're sure you'll use it regularly and get your money's worth.

Once you've decided to spend some money on your health and fitness you'll have to decide whether to buy home exercise equipment or join a gym. Each method has its own benefits so consider what's most important to you.

If you join a gym you'll usually get much more equipment of a much higher quality. Gyms also provide a social environment where assistance is available and classes are offered.

If variety and the higher quality equipment are right for you, think about investing your health and fitness dollars in a gym membership.

For those who are more interested in working out at home, spend some time learning about exercise equipment before you spend your money.

Equipment comes in a variety of levels of quality and prices. Commercial grade, light commercial, heavy duty home and light duty home equipment is available.

Don't try to differentiate equipment quality by what the equipment looks like. Most all equipment these days has bells and whistles that make it look intriguing.

But don't be fooled. A cheap piece of exercise equipment with lots of lights and shine is still a cheap piece of exercise equipment. Look for equipment that has the features you need but try to stay simple in the overall design of the piece.

Also, avoid the intriguing, but usually inferior, infomercial equipment. While it may look good on television, it probably won't work so well at home.

And, the people who look so great using the equipment on TV probably got to look so good by using a lot of other equipment too.

It's always good to be able to see and try out a piece of equipment before investing in it, so consider visiting some exercise equipment retailers.

But, beware before buying from retail outlets. Remember that salesmen are, well, salesmen. It's their job to sell you the product, not necessarily to do the most to benefit your health and fitness.

My advice is to buy the best equipment you can afford, but only the equipment you know you'll use.

Start by investing in just one piece of equipment and see if you actually use it. Too much money is wasted each year on exercise equipment that goes unused.

If you're looking for a few hundred thousand dollars worth of commercial equipment then join a gym. If, however, you need, and will use, a piece or two of home equipment, invest sensibly.

Think about the right equipment for you, research to find a quality product, and invest your health and fitness dollars wisely.

Kent Pegg is a certified personal trainer and the co-owner of the Los Alamos Fitness Center. If you have any questions about the information in this article you can call him at 662-5232.