

MEDIA ADVISORY

IDEA Health & Fitness Association Offers Five Tips for Selecting a Personal Trainer

IDEA Health & Fitness Association (www.ideafit.com), the world's leading membership organization of health, wellness and fitness professionals with more than 22,000 members in over 80 countries, offers five tips for selecting the proper personal trainer.

In fact, finding the right personal trainer can make the difference between a great workout and a ho-hum one—or even no workout at all. In addition, working with a qualified personal fitness expert keeps you motivated, on track and sure your workouts are safe, enjoyable and effective. Finding that person requires basically the same approach as hiring, say, an accountant or dentist—a high degree of applicable knowledge and demonstrated expertise. A recent IDEA survey showed that personal trainers provide a wide variety of services, including nutritional guidance, fitness assessment, lifestyle management advice, weight control programs and many more. Here are tips for helping to guide the process of picking a personal trainer:

- **Make some personal determinations:** Are you looking for a one-time consultation or a longer-term commitment? Personal trainers can perform a fitness assessment or design a custom-tailored workout regimen. Where do you want to work out? Personal trainers can come to your home or meet you at a facility. What's your budget? The majority of personal trainers charge between \$25 and \$50 per hour. If this sounds high, remember you are investing in your most important possession—your health.
- **Where to look:** Personal trainers can be found through a variety of sources. If you are a member of a fitness facility, ask if there's a personal trainer on staff. Friends, health professionals or your doctor are great for referrals. Also, check the local yellow pages, newspapers and magazines. IDEA recommends interviewing at least three candidates before making a decision. Make sure your personal trainer has liability insurance in case you are injured during a workout.
- **What to ask:** Check the personal trainers' exercise and educational background. Ask about certifications with nationally recognized fitness organizations. A four-year degree in a fitness-related field and/or certifications—preferably, both—indicates the personal trainer knows at least the basics of conducting a quality session. As an additional determinant, ask for references from existing clients.
- **When to train:** Most people with full-time jobs want to work out either in the morning, at lunchtime or in the evening. Whatever time you choose, do not feel "locked in;" you have the prerogative to change times, just ask what hours your personal trainer has available.
- **Set reasonable, attainable goals:** No reputable personal trainer should promise you'll lose 30 pounds in 30 days. It's vital for both your health and motivation to set realistic, achievable goals. This prevents disillusionment and disappointment while raising the chances of success.

Keep in mind that most personal trainers got into the profession because they care about their clients and want to see them succeed. Your personal trainer should ask questions about your lifestyle, including eating habits, whether you smoke or drink and other activities that could affect your health. Make sure there are steps taken to tailor your program to your needs. Bring up questions or concerns anytime. You will experience noticeable results, if you stay focused on

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your goals and remain comfortable with and trusting of your personal trainer. For more insight and tips on personal training, go to www.ideafit.com/consumer_articles.asp.

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