



Inspire the World to Fitness®

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IDEA Health & Fitness Association Reveals Top Tips for Selecting the Ideal Gym

While Proximity and Convenience May Be the Primary Motivators in Choosing a Fitness Facility, IDEA Research Reveals a Variety of Other Factors that Prospective Members should Consider

December 1, 2008: [IDEA Health & Fitness Association](#), the leading membership organization of health, wellness and fitness professionals worldwide with more than 23,000 members in over 80 countries, continuously polls its members, to identify the latest trends in fitness programs, equipment and facilities. In providing guidance on picking the ideal fitness facility, IDEA provides a worksheet that prospective gym members can use to assess a facility's staff, programs, members and physical environment in order to find the right fit based on individual fitness goals and particular exercise preferences.

What to look for:

- Research reveals the No. 1 reason people leave a facility is because it's not conveniently located. For that reason, determining proximity to either home or work is a top selection criterion.
- Does the facility thoroughly explain payment methods and contractual obligations? Be sure to ask about sign-up fees in addition to monthly gym charges.
- Determine if the facility has adequate room for the number of members who want to work out. This is especially important if exercising at peak times (usually before work, during lunch and after work hours).
- Does the facility have the kinds of weight training and/or cardiovascular equipment you want to use? Look for a combination of weight machines and free weights as well as treadmills, elliptical trainers and cycles.
- Is all the equipment properly cleaned and maintained? Is the facility kept at a comfortable temperature with adequate air flow and circulation?
- Does the facility offer a variety of interesting fitness programs that will keep you inspired to return on a regular basis? Are classes scheduled at convenient times?
- Is the staff composed of highly qualified, industry certified fitness instructors? They should have an exercise certification that's accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies, which

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indicates they have at least a basic knowledge in the areas necessary to teach a safe, quality class or teach a personal training session. Instructors should be knowledgeable in anatomy, kinesiology, exercise physiology, injury prevention, monitoring of exercise intensity and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).

- Does the facility belong to a professional association? Associations such as IDEA Health and Fitness Association or [International Health, Racquet and Sportsclub Association](#) keep fitness facility owners and instructors informed about current safety standards while also providing a strict code of ethics that members adhere to.

Supporting Resources:

- [How to Choose a Quality Fitness Facility](#) includes all 22 points on the IDEA Health and Fitness worksheet.
- According to the 13th annual [IDEA Fitness Programs & Equipment Survey](#), equipment topping the charts continues to be small and versatile; 94 percent of survey respondents (fitness professionals) said they offer resistance tubing or bands while 87 percent favor barbells and/or dumbbells.
- What kinds of exercise programs are most popular? Respondents to the 2008 survey said personal training in small groups (of three to five people) made an impressive leap to 58 percent, up from 44 percent last year.
- During typical personal training sessions, 54 percent of the time is spent on resistance training; 22 percent is spent on cardiorespiratory exercise; and the remainder is split between flexibility and other training.

Supporting Quotes:

Kathie Davis, co-founder and executive director of IDEA Health & Fitness Association:

- “While proximity is an important determinant in selecting a workout facility, do not overlook the importance of a clean and safe environment operated by a well-trained and responsive staff.”
- “Before joining any type of fitness club, make sure the operation is one that is geared toward your specific goals. For example, if your workout focuses on cardio, be sure there is a sufficient amount of equipment available for your particular workout.”

About IDEA Health & Fitness Association

IDEA Health & Fitness Association is the world’s leading membership organization of fitness and wellness professionals with more than 23,000 members in over 80 countries. Since 1982, IDEA has provided personal trainers, group exercise instructors, fitness program directors, mind-body teachers, health club owners and fitness center managers with pertinent information, health and fitness educational opportunities, career development programs and industry leadership while helping them enhance the quality of life worldwide through safe, effective lifestyle and fitness programs. IDEA members interact with consumers more than 25 million times a year in the

fitness marketplace. For more information on IDEA fitness and wellness conferences, publications, professional fitness education and products, member services and other activities, visit [IDEA Health & Fitness Association](#).