

Styling a home gym

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(HealthDay)—Whether it's a matter of cost or convenience, you might want to opt out of a fitness facility and opt to work out in the comfort of your own home.

A home gym can be simple or elaborate, but it's important to have the basics for all key exercise components—cardio, [strength training](#), stretching and balance. You can follow along with workout DVDs or even exercises on YouTube, but there is some equipment you'll need to meet all of your fitness goals.

For indoor cardio, choose a machine that simulates an outdoor activity you really like. This might be an upright or semi-recumbent stationary bike or a motorized treadmill for walking or running (incline settings are great for adding intensity). Other options include an elliptical trainer, a stair-stepper or, for a total-body workout, a cross-country ski machine or a rowing machine, the American College of Sports Medicine suggests.

But before you make an investment, ask questions about operation and programming options. Then take test drives in the store to see how smoothly various machines perform.

For stretching, ab work and activities like yoga, invest in a good mat that's thick yet washable. Yoga mats often have a tacky surface to keep you from sliding.

For balance exercises, choose between a stability ball and a piece of equipment like a [balance board](#), pillow or disc.

Strength training options include an inexpensive set of resistance bands and free weights, such as a set of dumbbells or a barbell and weight plates. If you like the experience of weight training [machines](#), an all-in-one home [weight](#) machine takes up little space. It should have components that will enable you to work all major muscle groups.

More information: The American College of Sports Medicine has a detailed online brochure on [choosing a home weight machine](#).

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