

Picking an exercise boot camp

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(HealthDay)—Exercise boot camps get you in shape through one or more days of intensive training.

Some have a celebrity aspect, like camps run by the dance squads of pro sports teams, while others promise the secrets of elite military [training](#) forces. There are so many that a quick internet search could serve up dozens in your area alone.

Follow these tips to find the right one for you.

According to the experts at the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM), there are many criteria to evaluate, starting with safety. Ask about precautions the organizers have taken to prevent injury and whether they review your [health history](#) prior to sign up to make sure you're fit enough for the sessions.

Investigate the training of the instructors. Are they certified by the ACSM or another respected fitness association such as the American Council on Exercise (ACE) or IDEA Health and Fitness Association? And what's their prior teaching experience?

How big is the class size and how many instructors are there for each class? You want to figure out whether the instructor-to-participant ratio will allow you to get personalized attention.

Does the content of the sessions meet national [fitness](#) standards, and will you get a mix of cardio, strength training and flexibility with appropriate warm-ups and cool-downs?

How do they track your progress and the boot camp's effectiveness? Are there tools online, like virtual classes, that allow you to follow up and keep the momentum going after the camp is over?

Finally, are you getting your money's worth? Consider not only the number of classes, but also the quality of the facilities and any perks offered to help you decide if this is a good use of your [exercise](#) budget.

More information: The American Council on Exercise has more about [boot camps](#).

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