Take a look at our 2018 Treadmill Buying Guide to help you research and buy with confidence. Here are a few treadmill buying tips you’ll want to consider to ensure you’re getting the right treadmill for you. We’ve consulted the best experts from engineers to product designers to sales managers to answer your most popular questions below.

What treadmill should I buy based on my fitness goals?
How much do treadmills cost?
And why do treadmills vary so much in price?
How much space do I need for a treadmill?
Do I need a running treadmill?
How important is a folding treadmill?
How to keep my treadmill workouts fun, motivating, and entertaining?
What do I need to know about treadmill specs?
Where to buy treadmills?
What are delivery and shipping options?
Treadmill reviews and awards
Is it worth buying a treadmill warranty?

Fitness Goals

What treadmill should I buy based on my fitness goals?
There are many reasons why someone may be buying a treadmill...to lose weight, to walk, to run, or to rehabilitate. These goals will help you to decide what you are looking for in a treadmill. Keep these in mind when looking into the specs and details of each treadmill.

Once you have taken time to define your fitness goal, then shopping will become much easier. You’ll often find treadmills categorized by their primary purpose – walking or running. If running is your primary goal, look beyond the walking treadmills. Running treadmills are designed to handle more impact and wear and tear vs. a standard walking treadmill.

Table of Contents
How much do treadmills cost?
Price is almost always the number one thing that people consider with any major purchase – and rightly so! One thing you’ll quickly learn is that treadmills are available at many different price points, starting at around $500 and going up to $3000 or more. While a less expensive treadmill may be an okay choice for someone who may not use it very often or wants a basic machine, it most likely is not a good option for someone who will use it heavily or for the household that may have more than one user on a regular basis.

And why do treadmills vary so much in price?
The old adage of “you get what you pay for” rings true when purchasing a home treadmill. If you’ve determined that a treadmill is the best fitness tool to help you and your family reach their health and fitness goals, consider the amount of time you will be using this new accessory in your fitness pursuits. This treadmill will be tested day in and day out, will be placed under load, raised and elevated to mimic outdoor grade changes, along with being put through the paces of low to high miles per hour based on your walking or running needs.

With so many variable exercise situations a treadmill can be placed in, the quality, frame size/type, deck & deck flexion system, console technology, maintenance needs and manufacturer warranty can all determine your final price range for a home treadmill found at a specialty fitness equipment dealer.

Albert Abrego, Dealer Sales Manager
How much space do I need for a treadmill?

Treadmills can be as large as 3’ wide and 7’ long, so having adequate space around your unit is important. Depending on the size of the treadmill you plan to purchase, an ideal space would measure 4’–6’ in width and 12’–14’ in length.

- You should only need about a foot of space in front of the treadmill to allow for turning the power switch on and off.
- You will only need about 6” of space on the sides of the unit. It is important to make sure you can safely grab the handlebars without restriction.
- It is highly recommended that you leave additional space behind the treadmill. Allowing for at least 5’ between the treadmill and any other object makes for a safe environment.

Table of Contents
Treadmill Sizing, continued.

- You should also consider the ceiling height if you plan to use higher inclines. Basements with ceilings lower than 7'10" can become problematic if using inclines higher than 12%. You can look for a treadmill deck step-on-height from some manufacturers if you think this might be an issue for you. Traditionally non-folding treadmills have the lowest step-on-height.

Do I need a running treadmill?

Avid runners should look to maximize the size of their treadmill as much as possible. Since runners are moving faster, their arms move more, and their body position can vary from side-to-side. As fatigue sets in, runners can also move back on the belt, so having extra space makes it easier to speed up again. While most treadmills offer a standard 20” wide belt, a 22” wide belt is ideal for an avid runner.
How important is a folding treadmill?

When considering a folding treadmill, it is important to think about the space allotted for the equipment. Is the space dedicated to fitness, so you might never fold the treadmill? Is the room multipurpose, so you'll need to fold up the treadmill or even move it from time to time? While folding treadmills have come a long way in construction and quality, there are still some advantages to non-folding treadmills. Since non-folding frames tend to have less parts, they often provide superior stability and quality. Another advantage to non-folding treadmills is that the handlebars and console move with the incline deck. Most folding treadmills feature handlebars and consoles that remain in the same place when the deck inclines, so they aren't always at the optimal level.

Bob Najduk, Senior Product Manager

Table of Contents
Exercise Programs & Treadmill Console Technology

How to keep my treadmill workouts fun, motivating, and entertaining?

Treadmill entertainment and exercise programs have come a long way in recent years. If you are a person that generally gets bored while exercising on a treadmill then you may want to consider a treadmill with a high-definition touchscreen display and or WiFi connectivity. The Matrix XER and XIR treadmill consoles allow you to search the internet, watch movies via Netflix, use social media, and more. Virtual Active Technology allows you to view a HD motion picture right on your console and takes you on an adventure while working out in destinations like Northern Italy and the American Southwest. This technology is responsive and will change your incline based on your elevation/terrain.

Table of Contents
Need motivation to help you reach your fitness goals? Check out Viafit, which helps you track your workouts through your treadmill. You can even sync it to your favorite third party apps like MyFitnessPal, MapMyRun, FitBit, and more. Additionally, challenge yourself with using different workout programs. One of my favorites is the Sprint 8 program, which is a quick, high intensity interval training (HIIT) workout. It’s very effective, builds muscle, and burns fat all while only taking 20 minutes. Other workout programs to consider are heart rate monitoring with Heart Rate % using the Polar chest strap, Incline, and Performance to name a few.

Melissa Pitney, Digital Project Coordinator and Fitness Enthusiast

Table of Contents
Comparing specifications is the most common way to evaluate different frames and features, but with so many specs, it can become overwhelming to determine which features may be more important than others. Key specs to focus on are size of running surface, motor or drive system and cushioning system.

**Treadmill Deck Sizing**

One should consider how the treadmill will be used (walking, running, both) to determine whether a smaller or larger running surface is appropriate. A fairly common width size is 20” and some manufacturers offer a wider, 22” belt. Also, the length of a belt can vary from 50” to 65”. Knowing one’s own stride length can help, as well as taking the machine on a ‘test run’.

**Treadmill Motors**

A responsive digital drive motor like the Johnson Drive System can help you maintain your rhythm because it continuously re-calibrates with each footfall. Plus, you’ll be able to use your treadmill in any room of the house because the motor always runs at low RPMs, which minimizes noise and enhances durability.

Motors are important and one sign of a quality machine is that the manufacturer will back their motor with a life-long warranty. This will guarantee that your machine will run with you for the long-haul. While some treadmill specs list high horse power motors, it is really the quality of the motor and how it works along with the other machine components that will pay off in the product’s overall performance.

Continuous duty motors ensure smooth transitions as runners/walkers vary their speed/incline. Another key feature of motors and moreover treadmill drive systems is whether they are analog or digital. This indicates how responsive the treadmill will be when user is adjusting speed/incline and is integral for users wanting to use their treadmill for HIIT training.

**Table of Contents**
Treadmill Motors, continued.
A digital drive system will receive and transmit adjustments to speed/incline almost instantaneously; whereas an analog system requires much more time for such adjustments. The motor selected to power your routine should also be tested in-person if possible, larger motors can produce noise and they can ‘run hot’ which will cause them to inevitably ‘burn-out’. Horse power rating needs to be factored along with motor efficiency.

Cushioning Systems

Our exclusive Ultimate Deck System includes a heavy-duty frame, extra-thick deck and industrial-grade cushions for miles of durable performance.

Cushioning systems are also integral in selecting a quality treadmill to suit one’s needs. An optimal cushioning system balances the need for stability with the importance of supporting each footfall. Treadmills manufactured by Johnson Fitness feature industrial-grade cushions and variable response systems for a consistently superior running experience.

Jenny Page, Assistant Product Manager

Table of Contents
Get specialized attention from a fitness expert when you shop at a local fitness shop.

When investing in such a large purchase, it’s often best to try out machines in-store. You can test out treadmills at Big Box Retailers, as well as Specialty Retailers. Big Box Retailers often have a limited variety of treadmills and most sales floor team members do not know much about the machines. On the other hand, Specialty Retailers tend to carry the most durable and quality machines. They also have fitness experts on staff to give you a personalized experience and help you to find which treadmill is best for your needs. They are very knowledgeable about the brands carried and often times have fitness backgrounds.

Table of Contents
Delivery and Shipping Options

Free shipping is available on all purchases through matrixfitness.com. The shipping company will contact you for delivery and schedule a drop-off time between 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. Machines will not be left outside and we will bring them inside your ground-level door of your house or building. Currently, shipping is to the contiguous 48 US states, and does not include P.O. boxes, international locations, including Canada.

Delivery and set-up is available through your local fitness dealer. They will deliver to your room of choice and can also show you how to properly use your equipment. Stop in or call the store nearest you for more details on our installation and enhanced delivery options. Additional fees may apply.

Ryan Hoodjer, Senior E-Commerce Manager

Treadmill Reviews and Awards

Every year fitness equipment is up for review by various third parties. These individuals take quality, specs, price, and customer service into consideration for their awards. Matrix Fitness is honored to have earned many awards for quality treadmills.

Also, check out the treadmill product pages for reviews on each model from our customers.

Table of Contents
Is It Worth Buying a Treadmill Warranty?

Warranty coverage can be used as a general guide but probably shouldn’t be the number one determining factor. Treadmill warranty coverage can range from as little as 90 days up to lifetime on parts. Most manufacturers also have distinct coverage for different parts of the treadmill i.e. motor, cushion supports, belt, and electronics. Labor coverage ranges from zero to 3 years. As with other industries, you may find that some smaller or newer manufacturers will attempt to win customers with an inflated amount of warranty coverage. It is also worth noting that lifetime warranties are often limited to product life expectancies or product cycles which typically last for 5-7 years after a specific model ends production. In some states lifetime warranties may have a clearly defined period of time such as 7 years.

**Treadmill Motor Warranty**

We recommend purchasing a treadmill with lifetime motor coverage included. Matrix Fitness engineers and manufacturers their own motors and stands behind their performance with their lifetime motor warranty coverage.

**Treadmill Parts Warranty**

For a very light use treadmill, you can expect a 90 days to 1 year warranty. However, you should not instill a lot of confidence in the product’s expected durability.

When purchasing a treadmill that will be used moderately, you should expect a 1 to 3 year parts warranty. And lastly, expect a 5 year to lifetime (commonly limited to 7 years) warranty for a premium treadmill that is built to withstand higher intensity and higher frequency use.

**Treadmill Labor Warranty**

Labor warranties differ slightly. A treadmill that will be used extremely lightly will typically have a 90 day warranty.

Warranties are extended to 1 year for light to moderate use treadmills. And the high intensity, higher frequency use, premium treadmills should have the longest warranties of 2-3 years.

*In addition to warranties that come with the machine, check out our warranty boosts.*

**Table of Contents**