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RIGHT AT HOME: Home Gyms Must Be Fun, Functional

RIGHT AT HOME: Home fitness zones work out when they're fun and functional

By KIM COOK For The Associated Press

Choosing a room to function as a home gym or personal workout space is just as important as finding the right equipment. The key is to make the space inviting, experts say.

1. Strength-building: You no longer need a cumbersome rack filled with different weights. "Selectorized" dumbbells can be weight-adjusted with just a click. Bowflex makes a popular version. Add an ab machine and bench press if you want to get serious.
2. Cardio and Heart Rate: Portable fitness options and small accessories can help you go the extra mile. Eric Herman, fitness category manager for Boston-based CSN, likes Stamina's elliptical trainer that's compact, lightweight, and stores easily under a desk or in a closet. They make folding treadmills and bikes, too. Tara likes the Bowflex/Nautilus Treadclimber. Gaiam has a fun mini-trampoline with a handle; it comes with a 35-minute workout DVD. And a few rounds in Wii Fit's hula-hoop activity are effective too.

"People may splurge on an elliptical or a treadmill, and then a year later, they'll add more equipment as they've proven to themselves that they're serious about working out," notes Herman.

Sourcebook:

<http://www.gaiam.com> - Core Advantage Stability Ball, \$20; T'ai Chi Fan Kit, \$29.98; Trampoline, \$99

<http://www.fitnessequipmentandmore.com> - Stamina In-Motion elliptical trainer, \$94.99; Stamina folding bike, \$179

<http://www.csnstores.com> - Cardiogym self-contained woodgrain workout center, \$2,105

<http://www.homegymdesign.net> - Ruth Tara designs small or large custom home gyms.

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fitness category manager
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Cardiogym/The Associated Press
Cardiogym's Cardio Gym is a self-contained woodgrain workout center that sells for \$2,105 (www.csnstores.com).