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The History of Treadmills

By Jennifer Dennis

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You must be familiar with the treadmill exercise machine. The darling of home and public gyms alike, treadmills are a popular and ever-present part of the fitness landscape. But where did the treadmill originate? And how did it come to be so popular and effective among fitness buffs and ordinary folks alike?

It all began with fitness equipment. Physicians, physical fitness instructors and personal trainers have been chanting the same mantras for years: "Get in shape!" Exercise can help you burn fat, increase circulation, build healthy bones, create stronger muscles, increase self-confidence, fight high cholesterol and many, many more benefits. With higher importance being placed on getting in shape, the demand for fitness equipment grew. Fitness buffs needed a machine that could give them the workout they were searching for—with additional perks, such as heart rate monitors, calorie counters and more to help them work out smarter, not harder.

Along came the treadmill. The treadmill was actually invented in 1875 and its original purpose was for power, not fitness. Agricultural farmers, needing additional power sources on their farms, used a small manual treadmill run by dogs and sheep for butter churners, while a larger one run by horses for power threshing machines.

The year 1952 ushered in cardiologist Robert Bruce and staffer Wayne Quinton. They bring the first medical treadmill on the market to test and diagnose heart and lung disease. Quinton later sells his concepts to Stairmaster (later bought by Nautilus).

With the design of the medical treadmill comes the easy transition to the

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fitness machine. Fitness enthusiasts and beginners alike demanded a better, smoother machine for their daily workouts. Aerobics, Inc., for example, began production of smooth, affordable treadmills in the late 1960s and now manufactures an award-winning Pro Series with top technology and automated controls. Trackmaster models in 1978 are known for their very tough, very durable machines that set the standard in gym models today.

The addition of the treadmill motor revolutionized the fitness machine. Motorized treadmills give the user a superior workout compared to the manual models. The addition of the motor can give a runner, jogger or walker the encouraging component they need to take that next step...and next step...and next step. Add the cushioning belt originally seen with the Woodway models in 1974 and you can see a rough version of our current-day fitness phenomena.

Technology has given modern-day

an additional boost. Heart rate monitors on advanced models help

the user maintain a steady heart rate for optimal fitness workouts. When a user indicates that he or she wants to maintain a specific heart rate, superior machines will adjust speed and incline to keep it steady. With the technology also comes the speed, overall distance covered, incline and time elapsed. These technology monitors not only are informative, they often work as intense motivation as the users run, walk or jog to their ultimate exercise goals.

Home treadmills have become a popular way for people to get in shape in the privacy and comfort of their own homes. Gym treadmills tend to be more durable and reliable than home versions. Due to the high number of people using the machines, gym models have to be able to withstand many workouts. They offer a range of superior, top-of-the-line features, while home versions can be more reduced to give the home buyer a more affordable option. Gym versions are more expensive, often rust-free aluminum frames and fully programmable. They should also specialize in absorbing shock.

From its humble agricultural beginnings to its powerful presence in the fitness world today, the treadmill has come a long way. Today, rather than working dogs, sheep and horses, the treadmill works humans—helping them get one step further to their personal fitness goals. If you're interested in the fitness industry and treadmills in general, learning more about this machine can enhance your personal workout and fitness lifestyle.

About the Author: Jennifer Dennis is a successful author and regular contributor to

– a fitness and treadmill industry

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resource that features treadmill reviews, guides, product descriptions and articles.

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Your Way To Health Inside And Out With A Treadmills

By John Francis

Treadmills offers a great alternative to walking outside as well as much more versatile than outdoor walking especially in choosing your terrain and walking attributes. Treadmills are a great investment because they are easy to setup, and use. There is no special training when using a treadmill that might be necessary when using weight training equipment or other fitness machines. The price of treadmills is going to vary quite a bit. For a low end model of a treadmill the cost is going to range from 300 to 2000, for the high end people can easily drop over 5000 dollars for a deluxe model. The price varies usually due to the computer system that is present with in the treadmill. Many treadmills of the feature of recording stats including heart rate, time, calories, fat, and distance. Another feature which should be taken into consideration is the horsepower of the treadmill. For the average consumer a treadmill should offer a continuous duty rating. While some treadmills may brag about their peak horsepower which could be extremely high this means at ideals conditions the treadmill might be able to achieve that. There for it is most important to know what the motor of the treadmill can be regularly and consistently. Treadmills can also be very noisy. If noise is a concern for you then seek out treadmills which have DC motors which are significantly quieter then the alternatives.

Treadmills should be strong and stable. When you are testing out a potential treadmills for purchase make sure you are dresses as if you are actually going to exercise and wearing your running shoes. Check the rails to make sure they are properly secured and you can easily wrap your hand around them. Other things to check is if the running path and belt are large enough for you to run on. Another great feature of treadmills is that they are programmable and can be preset. This is a great way to make your exercise experience more enjoyable. Also a bottle holder and magazine rack are handy conveniences when doing a daily workout.

Take into consideration the amount of space you have to devote to your treadmill this will determine which type of treadmill is bets for you. Remember to measure your space and bring home the dimensions of the treadmill first. Most exercise equipment looks small on the sales floor but can be too big for a normal sized room. Many treadmills fold up, if you are seeking a fold up model measure the space you have to house it and buy accordingly.

Learn how to use all fitness equipments and where to buy and sell it.



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