

A person is running on a treadmill in a gym. The person is wearing blue shorts, white socks, and grey sneakers. They are holding onto the grey handrails of the treadmill. The treadmill is black and grey. In the background, there is a large window showing a cityscape with trees and buildings.

Everything You Need To Know About Treadmills



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There are few pieces of equipment that guarantee from the gym to gym. Whether working out at your school or university gym or home, treadmills are ever present. They are cost efficient ways to take control of and improve your body's cardio capacity.

While cardio alone won't get you a six pack, no one can deny a treadmill's usefulness. Treadmills are the perfect tool for starting or elevating your workout regimen. Most think of a treadmill as just a way to jog or run. The various amount of exercises and training systems you can use a treadmill for make it a must have

If you can only pick up one piece of equipment for your home gym, a treadmill is it. Whether you've owned one before, or are considering picking one up, their importance is evident. No one serious about taking their personal fitness to the next level should overlook them.



About This Guide

This guide is made to be an introduction and a primer. It will cover the main details of what a treadmill is, example exercises, uses, and common questions about the subject. While it won't make you a complete expert on the subject, it will provide the right background to competently buy, use, and make the most of the treadmills.

Each section has a header that makes it easy to find exactly what you are looking for. It's written to both be read through in one sitting or skimmed for the information you want to know. Everything from a brief treadmill history to speed interval training and treadmill uses for rehabilitation will be covered in some detail.

What Is A Treadmill?

Chances are if you are reading this guide you are familiar with what a treadmill is in the most basic sense. For those that aren't, a treadmill is a piece of gym equipment used to stimulate low intensity or high-intensity cardio sessions for personal fitness or athletic training.

It does this by using a motorized system for rotating a walking belt in a continuous smooth motion.

Treadmills come in a variety of forms that each have their general or specific advantages. The main point of a treadmill is to offer a controlled environment for runners or recovering individuals to push themselves to the limit over time by increasing their body's cardio capacity. It is used for other purposes, but we will get into that later on.

For now, the important thing to remember is:

- ➔ A treadmill is a piece of gym equipment.
- ➔ It is mostly used for running and walking in the home or gym.
- ➔ They use a rotating belt similar to a conveyer belt to promote continuous motion.
- ➔ They can match the speed of your stride so that there is no break in the fluidity of your walking motion.

Treadmill History

Treadmills, like most innovative creations, was not made with fitness in mind. Treadmills have a long and rich history of being used for torture as well as labor. It's possible that for this reason it still has the connotation to some of being a chore.

Treadmills originally appeared as early as 100 AD. Its original use was as a first crane for helping small teams of men lift loads twice or three times their standard load capacity. The small groups or teams would use the rotating mechanism of a large tread base and forcefully rotate it manually. This would lead to the crane lifting the load.

Treadmills then underwent a variety of changes over time. Treadmills, conveyer belts, and the same parts used in car engines to generate motion from gas all share a common ancestry. As time went on up until the 17th century, animals were beginning to be used to produce energy.



This was a massive change from relying on unpredictable sources of energy such as the wind, lightning or hydro based systems. These allowed the power of animals (and occasionally humans) to be harnessed. This was how the word “horsepower” came to be known as a unit of measurement.

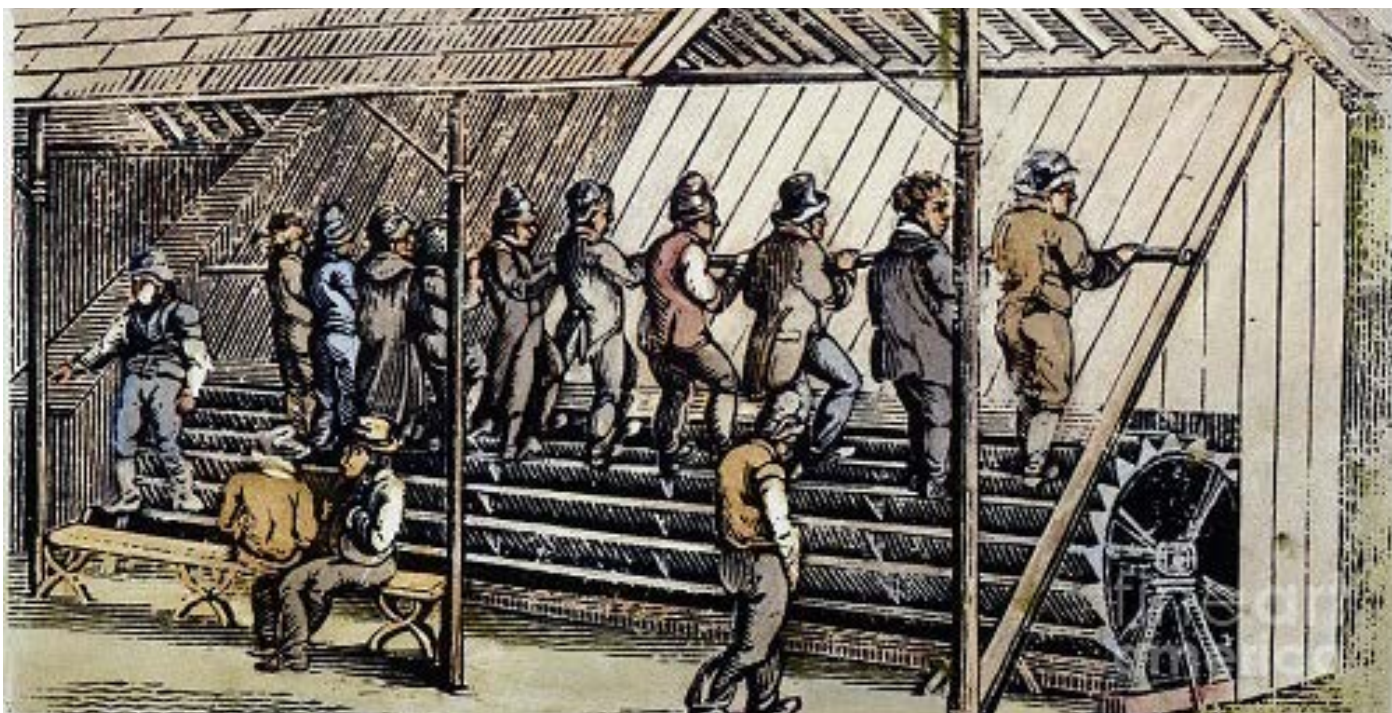
There were varying sizes, and types of these machines meant to power operations both big and small. Animals and people of all sizes were used as a source of energy. As time went on, prisons and jails adopted the treadmill as a means of torturing inmates convicted of serious crimes. Eventually, this use was outlawed, and the treadmill underwent another progressive development.

Doctors began to use it to test issues within patient’s cardiovascular and respiratory system. These tests would be continued to be used and developed in their application even until now as a simple process of discovering weaknesses. It also provided the perfect chance for testing resilience in both young and old patients.

In the late 1960s, the first home and gym treadmills were developed for personal fitness usage. The point of home and gym treadmills were to provide an inside environment for exercise that would have minimal impact on the body compared to outside training. They were a hit.

Why Are Treadmills So Prominent?

As far as new creations go, treadmills are one of few inventions that showed the mechanics of what would be used for later in its infancy. Treadmill’s first use as a tool for work is one of the reasons it became so prominent.



Other reasons include:

- ➔ There was a rise in global obesity after the 1950s through the 2010s.
- ➔ Starting in the 1920s & 1930s, an obsession with personal fitness began.
- ➔ There was an increase in personal technology and gadgets as trends.
- ➔ Home based gyms became more advanced and more easily purchasable.
- ➔ Progressing advertising methods made it easier for consumers to find things they needed.

Treadmills began as a fad and lasted due to their usefulness. While dumbbells and free weights are the basis for strength training, treadmills are the foundation of speed and aerobic training.

Treadmill Types

Treadmills come in a variety of forms. While the basic idea is still the same, the subtle and not so subtle features are what make them distinct. Their training purpose can be different. One of the most popular treadmill features available is incline adjustments.



Incline adjustments are meant to simulate walking up a hill or mountain.

These sloped surfaces force a greater focus on balance and activate the thigh and calf muscles more thoroughly. The added impact on the body can lead to shorter more intense workouts being more efficient.

Lower priced equipment that has incline adaptations may make you change the slope only when the treadmill isn't running.

This can cut into the flow of your workout. For others, it's perfect because it allows focus on high-intensity intervals and during the rest period the incline is adjusted.

At a slightly higher price, some treadmills can be programmed to change after a certain distance or amount of time has passed. These are good for fluid long form workouts that don't need interruptions for breaks.

The added benefit of these slighter more expensive machines is that they also have more features for monitoring your vitals, how many steps you have taken, and can measure intensity. The best use of incline treadmills is for those that plan to run hills for competition or personal habit.



Sprint vs. Low-Intensity Treadmills

There is an extensive list of features that matter. One that makes a significant impact is how fast the belt moves. Some have limits that lead to them being categorized as low intensity or walking treadmills. Some manual treadmills are this kind.

Walking on treadmills make it easy to get a bit of casual exercise in without the need to feel pressured to overexert yourself in gym environments. Because of the less stress placed on slower speed treadmills, they tend to last longer and can withstand more wear and tear due to weight increases.

This means that usually, the warranty on these treadmills tend to be far longer than those of high-intensity treadmills.



The choice between high-energy electric treadmills or gym quality treadmills and quiet power treadmills go beyond just the speed of the belt. Low-intensity ones are usually heavy duty treadmills. They tend to be used for heavier users.

High-intensity electrical treadmills also can be utilized for both low intensity and high intensity workouts. The drawback lies in their difference in their composition. High power treadmills don't last as long due to the amount of damage they take from each steps shock to the electrical requirements to make it them run as fast as they do.

High intensity treadmills for running are also expensive compared to their low intensity counterpart for walking. High intensity treadmills also come with a much more different amount of features. The same thing can be said of small intensity treadmills that are specifically meant for more top weight users.

The additive costs of materials and the sturdiness can add up.

Unless you truly need a low intensity treadmill, it makes more sense to get a high intensity treadmill. It offers more options and the potential to grow into it with your workout.

Under The Desk Treadmills

Under the desk treadmills are a relatively recent development. The name tells you what it is. It's a small desk with a treadmill underneath. Or, it can be compact treadmills or portable treadmills. They have gained prominence due to the working culture of white collar workers being seated for long periods of time.

It's an option to condense getting a light workout and still get work done. At the least, it prevents the muscle loss and fat gain that comes with sitting for eight to ten hours a day. The advantage is that it can lead to increased muscle tone without needing to put too much stress on your joints.

Treadmill Uses

I've briefly outlined a few methods for treadmills historically in a broad sense. Now, I want to go into a bit more detail about the various specific personal uses of treadmills. With brief details on how they are used for sports training and personal fitness.

Sports Training

Treadmills are the perfect tool for training athletes in a controlled setting. Many have seen hyperbolized versions of athletes running intensely in commercials, hooked up to an array of wiring and monitoring equipment. The reason for this is because treadmills are perfect for controlling and measuring an athlete's speed and vitals.

Treadmills can be used in a variety of ways for sports training. They can be used to increase general athleticism by focusing on the components of what makes an athlete faster.

Running technique for long distance and short distance sprints is one used by track athletes that want to improve their event times.



For General Athleticism

You don't need a team of scientists and a multimillion promotion deal from Nike to capture the same benefits. You can just as easily record yourself using your phone or a video camera running from variant angles at different speeds.

This will show your weakness in form, how you maintain it over short distance or intervals.

The only limits are your ability to analyze yourself. It also has the added benefit of being posted online for others to review and comment on as well. Treadmills make it easy because of how they allow you to run long distances in place.

To some degree, most modern treadmills also offer the ability to measure your heart rate and step count to see how well your stride is performing. Small adjustments can lead to big increases in distance and lessened effort.

Speed Interval Training

Many higher end treadmills are fully programmable. This allows you to program your regimen in on a timed basis thoroughly. It makes the process of doing interval training with inclines even easier.



Speed interval training with variant inclines is perfect to increase your muscle tone and strength while improving endurance. It's as simple as cutting down short sprints of 100 to 200 meters at high speed than a lull in between of 50-100 meters at a light jog.

The machine can change between these two as long as you have it programmed in.

The important thing is to preserve time for rest between sets. The period of rest is necessary for oxygen and stretching to prevent lactic acid build up. It also gives you time to reset so that your form doesn't suffer mentally.

Personal Fitness

For personal fitness, the goal for many is better cardiac output and a better physique. If you want increased muscle mass and definition, short sprints are better than long runs. Long runs are good for burning calories, but most lose control of their form over time.

There are some treadmills with arm workout capacity. The reason for this is not to let you become bottom heavy. The problem with private body part workouts is that while it is good for bodybuilding, it isn't for overall athletic functionality.

The point is that every workout should be oriented toward the body working as a cohesive unit. If that doesn't happen, then exercises can lead to a disjointed fluidity in your movements. Think of awkward bodybuilders that are too tight when they move.

Stress Tests

Another example use is stress tests. Stress tests are used to determine how well your body can handle stressful activity. How well it handles, the tension can be reflective of how you feel anxiety or how well your cardiovascular system is working.

Rehabilitation

Treadmills are the perfect exercise equipment for getting back into the swing of things after an injury. They are used by private therapists to build back up to walking or running. Everyone from recovering athletes to surgery patients uses them.

Treadmills are great for recovery due to the ability to add suspension to take weight off of your legs and joints. You can use the hand rests or have a best fitted to your ceiling to help prevent injury. Not to mention, most treadmills come with a kill switch for safety.



How Much Does A Treadmill Cost?

A treadmill is a piece of gym equipment that is a requirement. At the same time, because of how popular they are, there are so many variations in price. Some can be as cheap as a few hundred dollars. Others can cost thousands of dollars due to the feature add-ons.

It is dependent on how seriously you plan to take your training. It also can depend on what the purpose is. Most people don't know how a treadmill works before buying one. If you do understand the amount of care it takes to own one and plan to use it in the long term, consider it an investment.

Folding Treadmills And Used Treadmills

You don't need to have a lot of space or money to own a quality treadmill. Folding treadmills are especially useful for those that have limited space in their home or apartment. They aren't as expensive as bigger more robust options and tend to be extremely convenient.

Used Treadmills are a staple for many home gym builders that are on a limited budget. The usual thought is that it will be cheaper to put together a gym with used equipment. While that may be true in the short term, it does not mean you will save money in the long term.

Chances are, you will end up losing a substantial amount of money.

The reason is that most used treadmills don't come with with a warranty. It depends on the company. Plus, unless you are buying from a licensed used dealer then you may be getting second hand damaged treadmill parts that will need to be replaced within weeks or months. In some cases, you will have to replace the entire thing.



Refurbished Treadmills

The alternative for those that don't want to drop all of the money required on a new treadmill is to buy one refurbished. This means that it has been thoroughly inspected and refitted with new parts that make it like new.

The keyword in that sentence is like new. It does not necessarily guarantee that it will be perfect.

Refurbished treadmills have the advantage of almost being perfect but usually come at a substantially lower price. The main disadvantage is that it doesn't tend to be as good as you would hope. The lack of warranty in some cases can make buyers nervous. In either case, they are a good option for the price point.

Buying Used

While buying used in itself is a way to save money, going refurbished makes the most sense. It has the benefit of getting it cheaper than a new treadmill but still, gives you some semblance of assured quality.

The only lack of quality that you need to worry about would be if you purchased a sub-par product. Be sure to familiarize yourself with which treadmills have which hardware issues that go back to the manufacturer.

In a bit, we will go into the best time of the year to buy treadmills. The answer may surprise you.



Why Do People Use Treadmills Versus Just Running?

It no surprise that people often wonder ‘why use treadmills when you can just run?’. The answer is a bit complicated because it depends on a person’s background. Usually, it includes some variation of the following:

- + Safety
- + Time & Convenience
- + The Gym Culture

Treadmills are safe. They are more shock absorbent ways to workout that are easier on the knees and joints This means for older users and those susceptible to temperature changes in an outdoor environment; it is much easier.

For others, time and convenience play a bigger part. Most people who work long work weeks don’t have the time to drive to a gym every day for a full workout. This doesn’t mean that their workout should suffer. Not to mention, others have to work odd hours and don’t have the right window of opportunity even to go jogging in their neighborhoods.

The added benefit of using a treadmill is that you can use it indoors year round. Whether in your garage or living room, it is as useful in winter as it is in summer for being the perfect way to exercise without dealing with harsh elements.

The last point to consider is that gym culture has become a necessity for some and something to avoid for others. Most don’t want to deal with others watching them when they first start working out.

It’s easier to get a workout in at home without others making you feel bad. Plus it provides the perfect chance to test and see what you want to focus on without feeling self-conscious.



Are Treadmills Bad For You?

Another common question that I see often is, “are treadmills bad for you.” It’s nowhere near as bad as you would expect. While any form of exercise is going to have some wear and tear on the body, it’s much less with treadmills.

Things to consider are:

- ❗ The effects on your joints
- ❗ Stress on the body
- ❗ Dangers of slipping and falling off treadmills in the home

The effects treadmills have on your joints are far less than that of any other home based workout. The shock absorbent surface of the walking belt makes it easy to dissipate force even during intense workouts.

Your knees and ankles won’t take the same amount of impact as they would running on a concrete or cement surface. Your footwear plays a big part in it. The overall stress on the body depends on how accustomed you are to exercise.

Many people make the mistake of doing too much right out the gate. This leads to injury and can dampen motivation. It’s the reason why you see so many “new fitness buffs” on January 1st but so few at the end of the first week or first month.

It’s easy to blame the treadmill, but it comes down to understanding your limits.



How Useful Are Treadmills For Training?

The effectiveness of treadmills for training is dependent on the purpose. For personal fitness and performance sports, they are great. But as with anything, it all comes down to your system for how you use the tool. The tool itself can only do so much.

The issue lies in how treadmill training works compared to on the field activity. The difference in the surface you are running on and the unforeseeable elements can make a big difference.

What kind of footwear you would use during a sport can also play a big part. Cleats have entirely different traction on grass than running shoes do on soft rubber or plastic.

How Often Do People Use Treadmills They've Bought?

The fact is, most people don't use home gyms they pump money into. They don't understand the equipment they buy. They don't find the best system for themselves to use it and make an impact on their health. They don't make time or create a realistic set of goals.

On the low end, most people get only one or two uses out of their home gym equipment, and it collects dust. On the high end, as many as 30% of buyers that build the habit of using their home gym equipment regularly use it for at least a year. That's not including those that sustain serious injuries.

The central detail is building a regimen gradually when starting out using your treadmill. If you try and do too much at once, you won't be able to make the most of it.

Build the habit by starting off doing little increment workouts on it. It's essential to learn every function of what your treadmill can do so that you can program it to fit your particular workout schedule. It will save you time and effort and will help maximize your time and output. It will lead to quality results.

How Long Do Treadmills Last?

A good treadmill can last a long time. This may vary depending on the date of speed and the treadmills weight limit. Treadmills that are low speed and are made for bigger users will last longer but may need a replacement belt due to the weight.

The quality of the treadmill also has a significant impact. If you invest in a quality treadmill, in the beginning, you will avoid many of the long-term costs of maintenance and replacement. Some treadmills last more than a few years and others last a few decades.

How well the treadmill lasts goes beyond just how fast it runs and how smoothly. Treadmills can only last as long as you maintain it. Spending the amount of the time and money to get one should extend to properly learning and supporting it as well.

Learn how to properly oil your treadmill as well as what the important parts do so that you understand how your treadmill works. Even self-propelling treadmills or self-propelled treadmills require careful maintenance.

What Are Three Things That Can Improve Treadmill Training?

Treadmill exercise isn't about the treadmill itself alone. It also isn't about your routine or how much time you spend on it. It's about carefully measuring your results and ensuring that you are consistently improving from session to session.

While improvements will take time, there are a few things that can make a significant impact.

1. Keep a careful record of your distances, vitals, and time spent.
2. Don't stay at one speed or style for extended periods of time.
3. Don't overexert yourself to try and progress faster.

When it comes to working out, the small details lead to the best results. Take a few minutes before and after workouts to record your goals and your results. The challenge is staying on top of your results and tracking them about how well your workout is helping you progress.

Stagnation when training with a treadmill comes from not switching up your plan enough. The easiest way to keep your progress improving at a steady pace is by alternating between sprint workouts and jogging workouts. It keeps your body from getting used to the exercise itself.

You need to keep some semblance of stress or tension during workouts. This doesn't mean that you need to exert yourself on every workout. Patience is as important as working out being a habit. People ruin their progress and set themselves back by trying to do too much too fast. Progress is parabolic.

What Are Four Must-Try Tips/Exercises For Weight Loss?

There are a few types of workouts that have a high impact on weight loss. The four tips to keep in mind when setting up your exercise for your treadmill and beyond are:

- ➔ Your treadmill Alone Isn't Enough
- ➔ High Intervals For Tone, Consistent Long Runs For Balance
- ➔ Diet Plays an Important Role
- ➔ Safety, Safety, Safety

More Than Just The Treadmill

Your treadmill alone isn't enough. It should be a part of a greater workout routine that incorporates working your arms, abs, and back muscles. Without that, your body balance will be off. Too much cardio alone after a certain point leads to loss of muscle as well as fat. This will make you skinnier, but you will look unhealthy and be weaker.

A good workout plan has some balance of weight routines even if it isn't free weight based. Using other machines can have a big impact. The alternative is to build an aerobic body weight routine.

This means doing things such as convict conditioning. It uses sit ups, chin ups, pulls ups, planks, push-ups and more. These at least maintain your muscle or get better muscle definition and increase your strength.



Speed Makes A Difference

Beyond weight incorporation, as mentioned before, speed plays a role. Different speed workouts on your treadmill have a different purpose. If you want to tone up your legs and body, doing long intervals can lead to more toned legs.

It's because the fat is being burned off and replaced with muscle. Consistent long runs can balance the results and lead to your overall durability and endurance increasing.

Diet

Diet plays an important role. Most overlook just how important food is to how your body is formed and changes. It is the basis for how your energy levels are maintained. The only thing more important is your water intake and the amount of sleep you get.

Without sleep, your body won't repair itself. Without proper nutrition, your body won't have the materials it needs to repair it efficiently.

If you don't have enough carbs in your diet while doing long distance runs, your energy levels will be severely depleted. This will lead to a less quality workout. You will feel sluggish and unfocused.

Another important point is to get at least a few meals in a day. One large meal isn't enough. You have to do more based on how many calories you are burning a day. Think of your body as a fire. Without the proper fuel, it will just burn out.

The catch is that you need to have a diet that's applied to your individual goals. If your goals are muscle gain or becoming more toned, a diet that is high in fiber and low in sugar and bad fats is important.

You need to have some carbs integrated to prevent your body from going into ketosis. However, too many and you will become more athletic but won't see a significant enough change in your body composition as fast as you might hope. Think of your diet as your cheat code to changing how your body looks.



Safety, Safety, Safety

Your safety is what matters. Beyond trying to gain muscle and become more toned, how you train matters. If you undergo an injury or have physical weaknesses such as bad knees or tender feet, get the proper equipment.

Most underestimate the impact a treadmill or running has on the body. The stress is far more than most would imagine.

If you have a bad knee, be sure to at the least properly wrap your knee and take care to ice it after a strenuous workout to prevent swelling and ensure your next session you don't exacerbate the problem. Take into account your form, your athletic wear from your shoes to how well your clothes hang.

After all, treadmill injuries are the highest related to gym equipment in the world. It's also increasing over time. Consider all of the more minute details both before, during, and after your workout.

It can go a long way to preventing any long-term damage to your body that could have easily been avoided by taking care of it. Proper shoe wear is as important as making sure your treadmill is well lubricated to prevent a fire. You're more likely to injure yourself running that your treadmill is to burn your house down.



Conclusion

In summary, working out is a challenge. The right tools can make it easier to deal with. Whether for personal fitness or sports performance training, a treadmill is necessary. It makes a big difference in how well you can carefully develop your body's reaction to stress.

The perfect treadmill for you will be based on your budget and what you expect to use it for. From refurbished treadmills to brand new high-end ones, the features you choose will help or hinder your progress in the gym.

Learn how to use your treadmill properly. Too many people don't consider the impact knew how to properly use a piece of gym equipment can have on their workouts. It goes beyond results but can include important safety features and maintenance requirements that can save you from harsh injuries.

When you decide to purchase or replace your treadmill, it's recommended you buy new or at the least refurbished. The best case scenario of buying through craigslist or another third party unverified source is that you won't get what you are looking for but something similar. The worst case is that you get scammed or pick up a treadmill that is dangerous to use.

Amazon and other main predominant sellers can offer the best quality for the best price. It really depends on what you are willing to deal with as a buyer. If you want assured quality, then go through a main distributor.

