

What to look for in an elliptical trainer



Features to look for:

1 The most important feature of an elliptical trainer is feel. Make sure the motion feels smooth, without any jerking or unnatural movement.

2 Comfort is also key. Ensure that the unit is comfortable to get on and off, and easy to use.

3 Some machines offer moving arms to help incorporate a wider range of muscles and improve the workout. Others recommend swinging your arms naturally similar to walking or jogging. Both methods will help get your heart rate up higher and therefore help burn more calories while offering a better workout. To increase the intensity, use a pair of light hand weights.



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4 The design of the elliptical trainer is very important. A better designed unit will allow your feet to remain in contact with the pedal during the entire workout while others could cause the heel to come off the pedal. Full foot contact during the elliptical motion relieves pressure on your knees and makes it a truly impact free workout.

5 Units that offer a motorized or electric adjustable ramp are preferred. They allow for a greater range of movement and motion. Avoid the units which offer 'blocks' or other types of elevation that raise the entire machine, as they are not as well built or effective.

6 Some elliptical units may offer different programs or 'hill' courses. Programs provide added motivation and variety to the workout. This is especially true when the programs adjust both the resistance as well as the ramp height.

Elliptical trainers are the newest and most exciting machines on the market today. These machines offer a no-impact elliptical (or egg shaped) stride which can be done in either a forward or reverse motion. This elliptical motion will allow you to enjoy an excellent cardiovascular workout without the jarring of your hips, knees, ankles or lower back. It's the perfect aerobic exercise to help increase bone density without the impact.

Other features to look for:

- The elliptical trainers that offer different programs may also offer interactive heart rate monitors or programs which can be customized by the user. Both of these features are excellent for improving the effectiveness of these machines.
- Wheels assist in moving the unit around when required.

Optional accessories:

- Heart rate monitors
- Reading racks
- Hand weights
- Water bottles
- Bottle holders
- Rubber matting

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