



You Can Have a Home Gym

A Practical Guide to Building a Gym in your Home

By

Jeffrey E. Robinson, NSCA-CPT

***ResultZ Personal Training, Inc.
Get Fit! Get ResultZ!***

***311 Tequesta Drive
Destin, FL 32541
850-654-4784
850-496-3294***

Email: getresultz@cox.net

www.resultzpersonaltraining.com

The information in this publication is not intended for the treatment or prevention of disease, or offered as a substitute for medical advice or treatment. Specific medical advice should be obtained from your physician. You are advised to consult your physician before you begin any diet, exercise or training program. This publication is for informational purposes only. Neither ResultZ Personal Training, Inc. nor Jeffrey E. Robinson assumes any liability for the information contained herein.

Copyright © 2007 ResultZ Personal Training, Inc. All rights reserved. Reproduction of any portion of this publication is strictly prohibited without the express written consent of ResultZ Personal Training, Inc.

You Can Have A Home Gym

While most gyms have some of the latest, greatest equipment and many amenities, belonging to a commercial gym may not be the best option for you. First, the total time it takes to travel to and from the gym can be as much as 30-45 minutes depending upon your location and the traffic conditions. During rush hour traffic, this time can be extended considerably. Second, the costs of these gyms can get expensive. If you have children, then childcare at the gym is an additional expense. Third, depending upon your schedule, it could be very crowded at the gym. Early mornings and late afternoons are usually very busy times at most gyms.

If none of these issues bother you, then the gym is probably a good option for you. However, if you have a busy schedule during the day and have difficulty making it to the gym, then maybe you should consider working out in your own home gym. While this sounds expensive, it really isn't. A good workout can be achieved with very little equipment.

Let's look at some of the options available to you. I will provide information on a "Basic Home Gym Set-up" and an "Advanced Home Gym Set-up". I also provide information, retail sources, and approximate costs for the various gym accessories, weights, and equipment that you would need to set up a good home gym.

Basic Home Gym Set-up

So, what would a basic home gym set-up look like? If you don't want to spend a lot of money, then you can find a space in a spare bedroom, garage, or recreation/game room to use free weights. The Basic Home Gym Set-up should have the following components:

- Dumbbells
- Exercise Ball
- Incline or Flat Bench (optional)
- Dumbbell rack (unless you have selectorized dumbbells)

Free Weights/Dumbbells - You can get an excellent workout with just dumbbells and bodyweight exercises. Dumbbells are easy to use and don't take up a lot of space. Cast Iron Dumbbells cost about 60 cents per pound and \$1 per pound for the plastic coated variety. Top of the line dumbbells with rubber coatings and chrome handles cost about \$1.25 per pound. There are also selectorized dumbbells that are made by PowerBlock and by Bowflex/Nautilus. The selectorized dumbbells are more expensive, but take up less space.



Cast Iron Dumbbells



Rubber-Coated/Chrome Handle Dumbbells



Bowflex SelectTech Selectorized Dumbbells

You Can Have A Home Gym

To see the wide variety of dumbbell set selections, go to the following websites:

www.bigfitness.com
www.performbetter.com
www.power-systems.com (under Strength Equipment)

Once you see something you like, you can most likely find it (or something similar) locally at stores such as: Sears, Target, WalMart, Dick's Sporting Goods and Hibbetts Sports (and Fitness Master in Fort Walton Beach and Pensacola.) Go to the **Appendix** for names, addresses, websites, and phone numbers for national and local fitness stores listed in this report. You can order online, however, the costs are higher and you have to pay shipping - which can be high for weights.

To get started, I recommend the following dumbbell weights:

For Women:

Pair of 5# dumbbells

Pair of 8# or 7.5# dumbbells

Pair of 10# dumbbells

Pair of 12# or 12.5# dumbbells

Pair of 15# dumbbells (trust me, you will be using these before you know it)

For Men:

Pair of 10# dumbbells

Pair of 12# or 12.5# dumbbells

Pair of 15# dumbbells

Pair of 20# dumbbells

Pair of 25# dumbbells

Pair of 30# dumbbells

Pair of 35# dumbbells

Exercise Ball - In addition, you will need an Exercise Ball – sometimes called a Swiss Ball or Stability Ball.



Exercise Ball with Pump

You Can Have A Home Gym

The Exercise Ball can be used for doing dumbbell exercises that require seated or lying positions. It's also the best way to do abdominal crunches.

Exercise Balls are sized according to the ball diameter in centimeters (cm). Choose the diameter of ball according your height as shown in the following table:

45 cm Exercise Ball	4'-6" to 5'-0" height	\$20-25
55 cm Exercise Ball	5'-1" to 5'-7" height	\$25-30
65 cm Exercise Ball	5'-8" to 6'-1" height	\$30-35
75 cm Exercise Ball	6'-2" to 6'-7" height	\$35-40

I recommend the Gold's Gym StayBall – priced \$19 at **Walmart**. This ball has 2 pounds of sand inside which keeps the ball from "rolling around" when not in use.

Incline or Flat Bench - If you're not comfortable with using an exercise ball, you can get a small weight training bench. However, having an exercise ball and a bench will give you more flexibility in the types of exercise you can do. A bench will give you more stability when lifting heavier dumbbells in exercises such as: dumbbell bench press, incline dumbbell bench press or seated press. Costs vary from \$100-\$350. Some are adjustable to lie flat or at an incline.



Adjustable Bench by Hoist Fitness
(Adjusts from flat to incline)



Folding Flat Bench by Hoist Fitness
(Folds flat for easy storage)

Fitness Master in Ft. Walton Beach or Pensacola sells Hoist Fitness equipment. Other Hoist Fitness retailer locations can be found at website: www.hoistfitness.com. For other retailers of benches, check the listings in the **Appendix**.

Dumbbell Rack - If you don't have the selectorized dumbbell set and have a lot of dumbbells, it's best to store them in a dumbbell rack for safety and ease of use. Dumbbell racks come in various shapes and sizes and are available at the same retail sources that sell the dumbbells.

You Can Have A Home Gym

Typical examples of dumbbell racks are shown below:



You can find dumbbells, dumbbell racks, benches and exercise balls at **Sears, Target, Wal-Mart** or **Hibbett's Sports** or any local or national fitness supplier (see **Appendix**).

With a variety of dumbbells and an exercise ball and/or adjustable bench, you can have a good full body workout within a very small area. When you are done working out, most of the equipment can be placed in a closet or in the corner of the room.

You may want to buy a workout mat if your floor surface is hard and you need lie on the floor to do some of your exercises. If you have room, you can add cardio equipment to the workout area to further improve your fitness. (See **Cardio Equipment** section later in this report)

As I mentioned, the Basic Home Gym Set-up does not take up much space, is economical, and still provides variety and flexibility for a very effective weight training program.

Other Basic Home Gym Assessories - For more exercise variety you can buy the Gold's Gym Push Up Bars (buy at **Walmart** for \$8) to do push-ups with. You can also buy exercise bands which have rubber tubing with handles on each end to provide resistance. They come in different colors to match the different resistances. Most all fitness retail stores sell them (See **Appendix**)

Advanced Home Gym Set-up

If you have more space and want more flexibility in the types of exercise you can perform, some very economical multi-gym products are available to complement your Basic Home Gym Set-up. The Advanced Home Gym Set-up should have the following components:

- Dumbbells (see Basic Home Gym Set-up)
- Dumbbell rack (unless you have selectorized dumbbells)
- Exercise Ball
- Incline or Flat Bench (optional)
- Multi-gym
- Cardio Equipment (I discuss Cardio Equipment later in this report)

Now you have the flexibility of using dumbbells and a Multi-Gym.

Multi-gym - Multi-gym products are machines that have multiple exercise functions connected to selectorized weight stacks or adjustable resistance bands. You can adjust the

You Can Have A Home Gym

resistance on the weight stack by moving a pin into the desired weight or connect to the proper resistance band.

There is a wide variety of equipment in multi-gym area. See the **Appendix** for a list of equipment retailers. Most of these retailers will deliver and set up your multi-gym in your home.

To evaluate which multi-gym is best for you, investigate the various types in the retail stores and try them out. Look for quality and sturdy design. If you plan to use a multi-gym 2-3 times per week for one hour each session, you need a piece of equipment that is easy to adjust, has multiple exercise features, has smooth operation, and is “beefy” enough to take the abuse. Parts, labor, and service should be local and easy to obtain if needed.

Pictured below are some typical multi-gyms:



Weider Pro 4300
(\$400 price range at Sears)



Bowflex Extreme Home Gym
(\$850 price range at Sears)



Hoist Fitness V3
(\$1500 price range at Fitness Master)

Typically, multi-gyms will have adjustable arms, levers, and pulleys to enable you to perform exercises such as: lat pull-downs, seated chest presses, seated shoulder presses, upright or horizontal rowing, triceps extensions, bicep curls, leg extensions and leg curls. An attachment can be added to the Hoist Fitness V3 for a seated leg press.

The BowFlex machines are lighter in weight and less expensive because they don't have a 150-200 pound weight stack. However, the resistance is provided by the bending rods and the rods lose some of their resistance after repeated usage over time. Also, if you are using the BowFlex in a garage where ambient temperatures may vary, then colder temperatures cause an increase in resistance (and hotter temperatures cause a lower resistance).

I've had two clients that bought the Hoist Fitness V3 and were very satisfied with it. The operation was smooth, adjustments were easy to make, and the unit didn't take up a lot of floor space.

Home Gym Room Layout - Before you purchase your equipment, be sure to get the foot print measurements of the multi-gym, incline/flat bench, dumbbell rack and cardio equipment. Then measure your workout room/area and using paper with grid lines, draw in the equipment foot prints to determine if you have enough room for the equipment. Be sure to leave room around the back of the Multi-gym to allow for access to change weight stack pins and make adjustments to the machine to change functions.

You Can Have A Home Gym

Also, consider the height of the equipment. If you have low ceilings (like in basements), you may not have the proper clearance for the Multi-Gym or ample head clearance for you on a stair-climber machine.

If you are tight on floor space and want to include a treadmill, some treadmills fold up to provide more floor space when not in use. When placing the treadmill or other cardio equipment requiring electrical power, be sure an outlet is nearby the intended equipment location. In addition, if you are considering adding a television in front of your cardio equipment, then be sure that cable and power outlets are convenient.

Consider where you'll place the incline or flat bench if you have one and where you will place the Exercise Ball. The placement of the dumbbell rack (if you need one) is also important. All of these items need to be spotted on your floor plan layout.

Provide ample clearance around all items in the room for access in making equipment adjustments, moving weights around, and equipment maintenance. Consider the effects of your space if two or more people will be using your gym at the same time. Unsafe conditions may occur if it is too crowded. The National Strength and Conditioning Association recommends 3 feet clearance around adjacent equipment in a commercial gym. This may not be practical in a home gym situation. However, try to maintain as much clearance around equipment as you can.

Try different floor plan arrangements to optimize space around equipment. If you are using dumbbells, you need space for the exercise ball and/or bench to safely use the weights without hitting other equipment or people.

Gym Atmosphere and Aesthetics – Besides having the right equipment in the right place, you want the right environment. You should concentrate on making your home gym bright, organized, uncluttered, and aesthetically pleasing. Ample lighting using artificial lighting (recommend fluorescent lighting) and light from windows, outside doors and skylights will brighten the room. Providing racks for dumbbells and storage racks/shelves for accessories will give the room the uncluttered and organized look. A light paint color on the walls will also brighten the room.

Consider putting mirrors on the wall. This will make the room seem larger. Now you can perform standing dumbbell exercises in front of a mirror to help monitor your exercise form.

Having the ability to provide a television in front of the cardio equipment or music in the gym can offer additional benefits during exercise.

Gym Flooring - Rubberized flooring can be placed in the home gym room to provide a quiet, soft, cleanable and durable surface for the exercise equipment and activities. Power-Systems (see Appendix) has a variety of rubberized flooring on their website (look under "strength equipment > flooring"). If you are not able to provide rubberized flooring, then a less expensive alternative is short pile indoor/outdoor carpeting properly anchored or glued to the floor.

If you have the proper head room, installing a ceiling fan in the workout room would aid comfort while working out. Be sure that your equipment levers/arms clear the fan blades. Also make sure that if you are holding a dumbbell overhead while standing, that you have sufficient clearance under the fan blades.

You Can Have A Home Gym

Electrical Considerations - All electrical outlets in the room should be grounded (three-wire pronged) and when possible should be ground-fault circuit interruption (GFCI) protected. Check the electrical requirements of any installed cardio equipment to ensure that your circuits and circuit breaker are properly sized for the amperage load.

Gym Safety Considerations - One very important consideration is safety of the home gym while it is unattended. Children in the home become fascinated with the gym and often want to play with your dumbbells, multi-gym and cardio equipment. If you can, consider locking the room when you're not using it. If not, consider unplugging the cardio equipment, removing weight pins from the machines, and storing the dumbbells in a lockable closet or in another area not accessible to children.

Of course, while working out in your gym, you must be ever vigilant of children and pets in the room. Be sure they don't get caught in the belts, hit by free weights, place hands and fingers in weight stacks, or get clothing caught on the cardio equipment. The gym can be a dangerous place if proper precautions are not taken.

When possible, you should place dumbbells in the dumbbell rack when not in use. Dumbbells on the floor present a tripping hazard.

Maintenance Considerations - When you purchase your multi-gym and cardio equipment find out what routine maintenance is required on the equipment. Typically, the multi-gyms with weight stacks require periodic lubrication of the weight stack rods and pivot points for smooth operation and long life.

Make sure you understand the parts and labor warranty agreement for each piece of equipment before you buy. Also, make sure that parts, service, and maintenance are readily available for your equipment.

Items such as cables, belts, motors and control panels often require replacement. Make sure these items can be easily obtained and quickly replaced by your retailer before you purchase your equipment.

Multi-Gym Accessories - Don't be afraid to buy some accessories for your multi-gym. Special handles and bars are used as attachments to the equipment to give you more exercise variations. Also, some multi-gyms have 5# and 2.5# weights that you can add to the top of the weight stack to gradually add weight. Sometimes, making a 10# weight jump on the weight stack is too much and a smaller increment of 2.5 or 5 pounds will be just right.

Other Weight Training Equipment – If you have the space and want even more variety in your exercise equipment, then you can purchase barbell sets to supplement your dumbbell weights. You can buy a set of fixed barbells or a set of adjustable barbells. With the fixed barbell set, you probably need to buy a barbell rack to store them.

You Can Have A Home Gym



Adjustable Barbell Set



Fixed Barbells
straight and V-bar variety

Adjustable Barbell Sets are usually available in retail outlets like Sears, Hibbetts Sports, Dick's Sporting Goods. Fixed Barbell sets can be more readily found online at websites such as: www.IronCompany.com and www.power-systems.com.

Add Cardio Equipment To Your Home Gym

For a total fitness program, I would recommend that you add some cardio equipment to your home gym. Treadmills, stationary bicycles and elliptical exercisers are the most common units found in most home gyms. Since no one type of cardio equipment is better for calorie expenditure, fat burning or conditioning than another, you must make your choice of equipment based on other factors. Calories expenditure, fat burning and conditioning benefits are primarily a function of how hard you workout on the equipment.

The most important factor is "what you like to do for cardio exercise". Do you like to walk, run or jog? Then a treadmill may be best for you. Do you like to bicycle? Then an upright or recumbent stationary bicycle may be best for you. Elliptical trainers are for people who feel that the fluid, elliptical motion is better for their joints and muscles. If you like the feel and challenge of climbing steps, then a stair-climber may be the unit for you. So, search out your preferences when you make the choice. Don't make it just on price. Go with what works for you. If you don't like the "type of exercise" you're doing on the cardio equipment, then you won't do it over the long term.

Floor space can be a factor in the selection of your cardio equipment. You must make sure the unit can fit into your floor plan. Treadmills are usually the largest unit from a floor space consideration. However, some treadmills fold up vertically to save floor space when not in use. Stair-climbers and upright stationary bicycles usually take up less floor space.

There are many brands and models of treadmills, stationary bicycles, elliptical trainers and stair-climbers on the market today. In fact, it's almost confusing. To narrow down some of the brand and model choices, I researched the Consumer Reports studies and have compiled a summary of the research data they offer on their website: ConsumerReports.org

To access this data, you must be a subscriber. If you subscribe to the magazine, you can sign up for the online reports for a little extra fee.

You Can Have A Home Gym

The following is a listing of the “CR Best Buy” recommendations from Consumer Reports to help you “narrow the field” on cardio equipment selection. Then, go to the retailers listed in the **Appendix** to evaluate these units in the store. Try them out!

Treadmills – Non-Folding

Vision Fitness T9200 Simple, price \$1,300

Treadmills – Folding

Bowflex 7-Series, price \$1,500

NordicTrack S1900, price \$1,600

Horizon Fitness, Performance Series PST8, price \$1,600

Exercise Bicycles – Upright

Schwinn 113, price \$400

Exercise Bicycles - Recumbent

Schwinn 213, price \$450

NordicTrack SL728, price \$500

Elliptical Trainers

Schwinn 418, price \$1,000

When choosing treadmills be sure the belt width is wide enough (20” or more) and belt length is long enough (50” or more). I have no reports on stair-climbers. However, this type of cardio equipment must be chosen carefully. Some people experience knee problems with stair-climbers. In the commercial gyms, most people are using treadmills, elliptical trainers and stationary bicycles. That tells me something about what’s most preferred by exercisers.

Get Started

Hopefully this information has been helpful to you to begin putting together a home gym. It will require a little more research, but I’ve given you a lot of website links and retail resources that you can investigate as you design your home gym.

Rely heavily upon the sales people at the fitness equipment retail stores. They’re experts in their field and can help guide you. Use the information in this report to “narrow the field” on your equipment selections and to help you “ask the right questions”.

Tips to Insure a Safe and Productive Workout

When you use your home gym you expect to have a productive and safe weight training workout. Although weight training injuries are rare in the gym, they can happen and could cause serious injury or discomfort. Injuries can occur to you or you could accidentally injure another person in your gym.

Statistics on gym-related injuries requiring medical attention average 1.2 injuries per 10,000 workout hours. However, many injuries occur that don’t require medical attention, but cause enough discomfort to force you to miss workouts until the injury heals. There

You Can Have A Home Gym

several important rules that you should remember to minimize injuries while using your gym:

- Always warm-up each muscle group before attempting heavier weights. Perform at least one set of 12-15 repetitions with 50-60 percent of the weight you normally workout with as your “warm-up” weight.
- Make sure that barbells or dumbbells have properly secured collars before lifting them. Make sure that the correct size and number of plates are loaded on each end of the bar. Loose plates or an unbalanced bar can cause a serious accident.
- Make sure you are not too close to other people or equipment when lifting weights. Leave at least three feet clearance around you. Be aware of others in your gym, especially children and pets.
- Always have a spotter when lifting dumbbells or barbells overhead or over your face. Your spotter must be strong enough to handle the weights you are using. Your spotter should have his/her hands near your wrists when you are lifting dumbbells and be ready to grab your wrists should you falter during the lift. If you are lifting barbells overhead or over your face, your spotter needs to keep his/her hands near the bar while you are lifting.
- On selectorized weight training machines, be sure that the weight stack pins and seat adjustment pins are fully inserted into their proper holes.
- Lift with your legs and keep your back straight when lifting any bar, plate, barbell or dumbbell from the floor or racks. Lifting with a rounded spine can cause serious back injuries.
- Follow the proper exercise form and speed of movement. The exertion part of the lift should take 2-3 seconds and the return part of the lift should take 4-5 seconds. Control the weight – don't let the weight control you!
- Never hold your breath during any part of your lift. This can cause fainting. Exhale during the exertion part of the lift.
- Always use the emergency safety stop feature on your treadmill. This is a cord with one end that has a clip that attaches to your clothing. The other end is attached to the emergency stop switch on the console. If you should fall or “fly off” the back of the treadmill, the cord will pull the emergency stop switch and shut the treadmill down.
- When using cardio equipment, always warm up for at least 5 minutes before increasing your intensity. At the end of your cardio workout, make sure you cool-down for 5 minutes. Failure to cool-down properly can cause dizziness or fainting after a strenuous workout. Give you body a chance to reduce the heart rate and blood pressure after exercise.
- Keep your gym equipment in good condition. Frequently sanitize and clean the seat pads and other equipment surfaces. Periodically inspect your equipment for dry, unlubricated bearings and weight stack rods, squeaking/squealing bearings/motors, frayed cables and belts, loose/missing bolts and pins, and structural failures such as: broken welds, warped/bent metal, loose seat pads. These conditions can cause equipment failure and potential injuries.

You Can Have A Home Gym

Keep these safety tips in mind when you workout. Don't let injuries ruin your progress. If you are not sure how to perform an exercise properly or safely, then ask a personal trainer or very experienced weight trainer.

One More Resource...

If you don't have the time or inclination to research and make all the decisions necessary to put together a home gym, then I can help you. As part of my personal training service, I offer Home Gym Design Services. These services include the following:

- Consultation to establish your requirements, preferences, and budget
- Select Equipment (with your input)
- Prepare Equipment Specifications and Cost Estimates for your review/approval
- Prepare the Gym Room/Area design for your review/approval – includes:
 - Scaled AutoCAD drawings of floor plan (and wall elevations, if necessary)
 - AutoCAD Layout of gym equipment in room for most efficient and safe usage
 - Layout of required utility connections (phone, cable, electrical outlets)
 - Floor covering specs and layout
- Purchase Equipment
- Coordinate Equipment Delivery and Installation
- Demonstrate equipment functions for you and your family
- Instruct you on required equipment maintenance

Any or all of these services can be provided for a consulting fee. There is a free initial consultation to establish the scope of services you want, discuss your basic requirements, and discuss the consulting fee for those services.

Yours in Health and Fitness,

Jeffrey E. Robinson, NSCA-CPT
Certified Personal Trainer
ResultZ Personal Training, Inc.
850-654-4784 office
850-496-3294 cell
getresultz@cox.net

You Can Have A Home Gym

Appendix

Fitness Equipment Suppliers- NW Florida only

<u>Supplier</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>Website</u>
Fitness Master	99 Eglin Parkway NE Suite 44 Ft. Walton Beach, FL 32548	850-664-0122	www.fitnessmaster.biz
	5515 N. Davis Highway Pensacola, FL 32503	850-478-0842	
Hibbett Sports	4433 Commons Drive East Suite E102 Destin, FL 32541	850-269-2266	www.hibbett.com
	411 Mary Esther Cutoff NW Unit C Ft. Walton Beach, FL	850-986-2460	

National Fitness Equipment Suppliers

<u>Supplier</u>	<u>Website</u>
Hoist Fitness	www.hoistfitness.com
Hibbett Sports	www.hibbett.com
Dick's Sporting Goods	www.dickssportinggoods.com
Sears	www.sears.com
Big Fitness	www.bigfitness.com
Perform Better	www.performbetter.com
Power Systems	www.power-systems.com (under Strength Equipment)
Iron Company	www.IronCompany.com
Fitness Warehouse	www.FWonline.com