

# Joining a Fitness Club



Looking to shed a few extra pounds and tone up that tush? Joining a health & fitness club could be just the ticket. Here are a few tips to consider when searching for a club with all the "right stuff".

**Rule #1 - CONVENIENCE.** The facility must be within a 10-15 minute drive time from your home or place of work and be easily accessible from a variety of roads. However, if the club that is the closest to you is over crowded, it may be wise to seek out another facility as you will probably be saving time in the long run.

**Rule #2 - ATMOSPHERE.** Choose a facility you will be comfortable at. This is a biggie! In a recent survey of people who dropped out of a club, many cited the main reason for dropping out was that the atmosphere was not appropriate for them. You should get a good feeling the minute you walk in the front door as to whether or not a club is right b for you and whether or not you will fit in.

**Rule #3 - TIME.** Choose a facility that you can get in and get out in a reasonable time! You shouldn't have to spend more than 1 hour to 1 hour & 15 minutes for your workout (unless you choose to). 5 minutes to warm up, 40 minutes for strength training, and 30 minutes of cardio exercise. If a facility is overcrowded and you have to wait in line to use the equipment, you won't be utilizing your time efficiently and remember your time is valuable! Be sure and tour a potential facility at the time of the day you plan on using it & see what the crowd is like.

**Rule #4 - CLEANLINESS.** This is REAL important and should be a no brainer. How does it smell when you walk in the front door? How about the locker room? Are there plenty disinfectant spray bottles and paper towels on hand? If the management doesn't make the effort to keep their facility clean, what else don't they care about? You deserve a club that takes pride in it's appearance and cleanliness.

Don't settle for less!





Rule #5 - **FRIENDLINESS**. How does the staff greet you as you walk in the door? This is a good indicator of the type of operation they run. Any quality organization focuses on GREAT customer service. Most clubs have all the right equipment, but not all clubs have the right approach to customer service. Being treated in a kind and professional manner will help you adhere to your program and ensure you more enjoyment out of your membership. Don't overlook this important factor!

Rule #6 - **PRICE**. While this is always a factor for any educated consumer, remember that all facilities are not created equal and thus it is almost impossible to compare a club based on price. The old adage "You get what you pay for" holds true in this case. Generally consumers are willing to pay between 1.5% - 2% of their gross income on a fitness club. Look for a club that sells itself based on service and not based on a "low" price. Stay away from ridiculously low offers such as Two for Ones or "Unlimited" use for only \$29 a month. Also, be cautious of big discounts to pay up front.

Rule #7 - **VALUE**. Notice we saved this for last because value is measured when you apply rules 1 thru 5 against rule #6. As a consumer, you need to weigh out which factors are the most important and where you feel you will get the most bang for your buck, but in an atmosphere that will be conducive to helping you achieve your overall fitness goals. After all, paying a few extra dollars a month is well worth it if you are motivated to get to the club on a regular basis and are establishing friendships with other like minded members. Also remember to factor your valuable time into your decision. Don't drive an extra 5 minutes to save \$5 a month. In the long run convenience = more value, except at a facility that is overcrowded which = less value.



**Summary** - Choosing the club that is right for you is a lot like buying a good quality pair of shoes. You want something that's stylish, yet comfortable and made to last. After all, if you plan on using your new fitness club 3 to 4 times per week, you want a club that has stood the test of time and lives up to all your expectations.