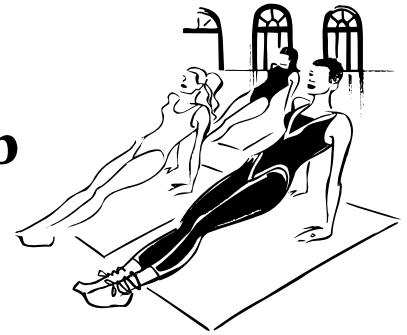




# Joining a Health Club

What is right for you?



## **Try it out---for free**

Many health clubs will allow you a week or so to try out their facility. During the trial period see if the club has the equipment and resources you need to improve your exercise routine. Also pay attention to facility cleanliness, what current club members have to say, and if they will show you how to use their equipment. Ask about available services and if there are additional charges to use them (babysitting, exercise classes, fitness testing, court fees, personal trainers, etc.).

## **Location**

This is critical. It helps tremendously if the club is near your home, work or places you travel to anyway on a daily basis. It will become a habit to find yourself arriving at the club before you can come up with any excuses like it is too far or you're too busy to go work out.

## **Payment**

If you decide to join, usually there will be a contract to sign. How long a commitment, how much and when you pay may be some of your choices. Look at their options for enrollment fees, 3-month plan, 6-month plan, 1-year plan, multi-club vs. single-club prices, pay by the month, cost savings for automatic payment and paying in advance. Remember sales tax will also be added.

## **Ask about specials**

Waving enrollment fees, signing up two people discounts, adding children, do they have a state employee discount, automatic payment deduction discounts, paying for the year in advance discounts, and other offers may be available. January is the most popular time to join a health club so specials may be limited. As summer weather arrives health clubs may offer more membership specials.

## **If a health club just doesn't work for you**

Still strive to exercise at least 30 minutes everyday. There are many activities you can do without equipment like push ups, sit ups, walking, and stretching. If you want to invest in exercise equipment start small to see what you really need and will use. Some small weights, a mat, good tennis shoes and maybe an exercise video may be all you need to make big improvements. Check out your local library for books and videos that may also help.

*When starting a new exercise program consult with your doctor, especially if you have been inactive.*

***Take care of yourself!***