

# The First Step

- Choosing Your Ideal •

# HEALTH CLUB

Finding the right club is like finding the perfect pair of jeans. Finding your best fit is an essential part of success. What's important to remember when choosing a fitness club is that gyms are no longer "one-size fits all" facilities. You now have the opportunity to choose a club that specifically caters to your health and fitness goals. If you've found yourself at the cusp of making that next step in building your fitness routine, the hardest part is over.



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## GETTING STARTED

Choosing the right health club is an important step towards becoming more active and living a healthy life. To get the most out of your workout and to develop fitness habits that last, it's important to select a club that works best with your lifestyle. With a club that's the right fit for you, working out can actually become something that you look forward to.

When choosing a workout facility, it is worth brainstorming what your personal workout preferences are (e.g., group versus individual) while making sure to consider factors like

personal fitness goals, work schedule, budget, size, desired amenities, and location.

Once you settle on the right fitness routine, it will naturally become part of your everyday life and your workout facility will become a safe haven that allows you to escape from day to day negativities. Through exploring the various types of health clubs that are available to choose from, this guide aims to inspire, inform, and help you navigate the next steps involved in finding your best fitness fit.



## TRADITIONAL HEALTH CLUB

One of the most popular types of health facilities is the traditional health club (e.g., Gold's Gym and Healthtrax Fitness and Wellness). These are typically more mainstream and appeal to a wide spectrum of fitness needs. These gyms usually include designated sections and equipment for weight/strength training (i.e., free weights, machines, cables, etc.). They also provide a designated area for cardiovascular equipment (e.g., treadmills, elliptical machines, stationary bikes, stair climbers, etc.).

Although amenities vary with each unique facility, many have a pool for swimming laps or water aerobics classes and some also provide saunas, jacuzzis, steam rooms, and/or tanning beds. Many facilities also have rooms available for group training and/or aerobics classes. In fact, many traditional gyms now offer more eclectic classes like yoga, Zumba, instructor-led stationary cycling classes, Latin dancing, and more. For parents, another perk with many of these facilities is the benefit of having childcare provided during certain hours.

Lastly, a major perk for those just getting started is that many of these gyms offer personal trainers who can offer guidance with workouts and can ensure that proper form and technique are used to protect against injuries.

These health clubs can be a great option for those in need of more technical guidance (with a personal trainer) as they begin a workout regimen, who enjoy a variety of fitness options throughout the week (classes, strength, cardio, etc.), who may benefit from the childcare options available, or simply for those who find motivation from seeing other dedicated gym-goers training alongside them.

Of course the standard monthly cost of each club will vary by location, club size, and the amenities made available. A facility tour is standard, so we encourage you to visit a club in your area and inquire about costs, amenities, and other specifics of that location.



YMCA/Family/  
Non-Profit facilities usually have many of the same amenities and programs as a “for-profit” Family/Wellness facility. The key difference is that the “non-profit” facilities generally earmark resources for affordable community programs and services that are offered for children, teens, seniors, and single parents.



## YMCA/ FAMILY/ NON-PROFIT

and recreational activities like swimming lessons, kids’ camps, and basketball and/or tennis lessons.

These facilities have a strong community feel to them. They are great for families with children because they offer more opportunities for kids to get involved with other kids.



## FAMILY/WELLNESS HEALTH CLUB

These health clubs have very similar fitness equipment and class options to traditional health clubs. They also provide activities for children and teenagers such as swimming, basketball, tennis, etc. They may additionally provide youth camps and leagues. Most of these membership packages provide both individual as well as family memberships.

Most of these facilities also offer a variety of educational classes or programs to members on topics like balanced nutrition, healthy cooking,

disease prevention, and physical fitness. These classes and programs may be at an additional cost to the standard membership fee.

For adults with children and/or teenagers, a family wellness health club may be a great option. This club type encourages families to become more active together while in a positive environment. In addition, these activities provide an outlet for children to pursue things based around health and wellness.



## WOMEN'S ONLY HEALTH CLUB

These health clubs provide a supportive fitness environment exclusively for women. Typically, these models provide fitness equipment that is arranged in such a way to effectively guide women through a time-based circuit workout that targets every muscle group in the body.

Curves is a popular model of this club type. Here, women are provided the structure of a 30-minute workout where they move from one station to another, alternating between aerobic activities and weight-bearing machines. It is typical to sign a one-year contract and pay

a standard fee to enroll along with ongoing membership fees each month.

This club type is ideal for women looking to get fit in an environment that is smaller in size. It may also be appealing to those with hectic schedules who want to fit a workout in within a short period of time. Finally, for women just beginning to exercise, these clubs may allow them to feel more at ease and supported due to the typical female-only staff. Women may also feel supported by the guided structure of workouts at these types of facilities.



These facilities are typically protected by a sophisticated remote round-the-clock security system that permits members to enter with the proper keycard. Inside, members have access to standard strength training and cardio equipment. Some clubs may also provide additional amenities and/or fitness resources. Since these types of clubs are not heavily reliant on staff, they promote their monthly fees to be more affordable than those of a Traditional facility.

Anytime Fitness is a model of this type of health club. Here, 24-hour access to a large, state-of-the-art facility is provided. In addition to the standard fitness equipment, members are provided access to online tools and resources to support their health and fitness goals. These clubs often also offer amenities like tanning and personal training options. Finally, members gain the opportunity to access any location across the country with their standard membership fee.

With the convenience of working out any time of day or night and the accessibility of being able to workout at multiple locations, this type of health club is an attractive option for those who desire flexibility around their workouts. These clubs may also be very attractive options for stay-at-home parents, busy working professionals, and frequent travelers.



Medical fitness facilities are typically affiliated with a hospital or a physician's practice. These are uniquely set apart from other health clubs in that they integrate medical care into a gym environment. The primary focus with this club type is on disease prevention and management. Most of these facilities provide fitness options in building strength and flexibility. Many offer a variety of group fitness and wellness classes (i.e. focused on mind and body). Each facility will vary but childcare options, progress monitoring, and other services may be available.

With the rise of many adult-onset diseases (e.g., heart disease, diabetes, lung diseases, etc.), doctors are regularly encouraging patients to adopt healthier changes to better manage these conditions and their symptoms. Medical fitness

clubs have become a valuable resource for medical professionals by providing a safe and trusted option for doctors to refer their patients to. These facilities promote evidence-based approaches to health and fitness and employ highly qualified fitness staffs to oversee patients' goals while ensuring safety and efficacy.

A medical fitness facility is ideal for those currently managing a condition and who would benefit from professional guidance as they begin a physical fitness routine. Those recovering from a previous injury, surgery, or any other condition where professional monitoring is encouraged can also benefit from a medical fitness center. For individual program recommendations, these facilities typically coordinate care with a physician.

## SPECIALTY STUDIO

Many specialty studios across the country are quickly growing in popularity among today's health club options. These studios are typically smaller and designed with a modern flare. They normally offer more niche classes and training in areas like kickboxing, CrossFit, barre, Pilates, yoga, and cycling, among others. These classes are usually led by highly qualified instructors who often combine workouts with fast and upbeat music to motivate group members during the classes.

With the offerings of a specialized boutique experience along with top-notch instruction, prospective members should expect membership fees to be higher than a traditional health club. Of course, each specialty studio

will vary but multiple options may be available for members (e.g., monthly fees for unlimited class access, individual classes, or other class package offerings).

Overall, specialty studios may be an option for those inspired to work out in a group fitness environment. Since groups naturally inspire social connection, this club type may also be ideal for someone new to an area who is looking to meet others. Another benefit is the flexibility to schedule classes to a member's convenience as there are typically multiple class options to choose from during the week. Finally, it may also be an excellent option for frequent travelers since many of these clubs encourage and welcome members who visit from other cities.

**SEARCH OUR GYMS AND FIND THE RIGHT FACILITY FOR YOU.  
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