

MANSION



SPREAD SHEET

Where a House Can Raise Your Heart Rate

HOMEOWNERS IN the Northeast love their tennis courts, while residents in the South are taking the plunge.

This week's Spread Sheet looks at which areas of the U.S. aspire to be the "fittest" by combing through real-estate listings that include workout amenities. The answer is the South, where 17.7% of single-family homes for sale mention some sort of fitness feature in their property listing, according to real-estate website Trulia. Next is the West, where 15.1% of listings mention a fitness amenity. The Northwest is close behind with 14.6%, and the Midwest has 10%.

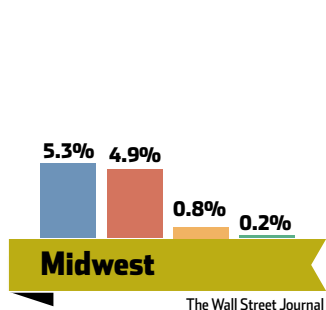
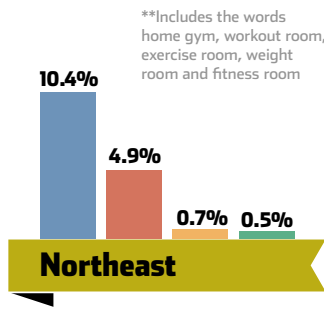
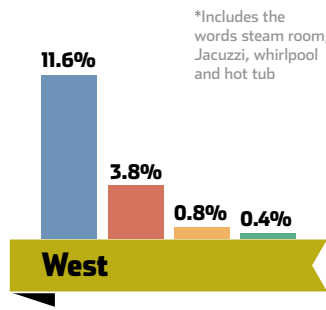
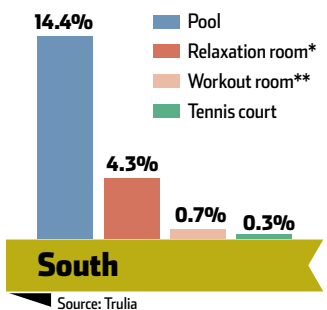
Still, these features are rare. "Few homes are advertised as having these amenities. They are definitely luxuries," says Jed Kolko, chief economist and head of analytics at Trulia.

Swimming pools are most common in the South, appearing in 14.4% of listings as of Jan. 2. "The weather in the South



PUMPED UP

Percentages of single-family homes currently for sale that have fitness facilities in their listings:



is conducive to a lot of outdoor activities. People can be outside from April to past Labor Day," says Nancy See, senior vice president/managing broker at Atlanta Fine Homes Sotheby's International Realty.

The abundance of exercise features can also be attributed to affordable land, making it more feasible to install big-ticket items like swimming pools, Ms. See adds. For high-end homes over \$2

million, Ms. See says a swimming pool could add between 50% and 75% of the pool's cost to the property value. "People are engaged in outdoor lifestyles, but more important, the pool is a visual and

entertaining center. It becomes a focal point in the home," says Michael Thorpe, broker/co-owner at Treasure Coast Sotheby's International Realty in Vero Beach, Fla. Many pools are moving away from boxy or cir-

cular shapes and chlorinated water and are instead installed in eye-catching geometric shapes with saltwater.

When considering fitness features, Brian Zehetner, chief science officer at Anytime Fitness, a 24-hour-fitness-club chain, recommends against trends and fads, like rock-climbing walls and bocce courts. "Getting away from the traditional workout room is probably a mistake for 80% of people," says Mr. Zehetner, who lives in Woodbury, Minn. "People want the newest thing, but bottom line, they usually go back to what they've always done, or they do nothing."

If exercise isn't your thing, relaxation rooms, like hot tubs and saunas, are a good way to get your feet wet, he notes. "There are benefits to the skin; it helps eliminates some toxins, it opens up your pores, and it's great for relaxing," Mr. Zehetner says.

—Sanette Tanaka

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