

Exercise Bikes Buying Guide - Put Your Mettle to the Pedal!

Exercise bikes are one of the most popular home fitness machines on the market. These bikes give you an effective workout and promote a healthy lifestyle. You will have fun, enhance your fitness routine and burn calories with exercise bikes. They are also referred to as stationary bicycles, indoor bikes or studio cycles. They work your legs, lungs and heart while limiting the impact on your knees and leg joints. Exercise bikes are available in several different designs. Due to the cost involved, you will most likely purchase only one exercise bike for several years to come so read the following buying guide and make an informed decision.

What are the factors to keep in mind when buying an exercise bike?

Smart shopping is required when buying home fitness equipment because it is normally a long-term investment. Check whether the bike offers a comfortable seat and a well-balanced flywheel. Also make sure that you can vary your workouts with adjustable resistance options. The exercise bike should have a sturdy frame and a wide range of seat heights. Finally, check whether the bike comes with a good warranty and free repair services.

What are the different kinds of exercise bikes available?

There are three different types of stationary exercise bikes: upright bikes, recumbent bikes and dual action bikes.

Upright Bikes:

Upright exercise bikes are similar to traditional bicycles. These bikes have tiny saddles where you sit with your back unsupported and pedal. Upright bikes occupy very little space. They give you a good lower body and cardiovascular workout. You can even stand up and pedal with an upright bike.

Recumbent Bikes:

Recumbent bikes have a laid-back seating style. The chair-like or bucket seat allows you to lean back for a more comfortable ride. This seating arrangement is good for people with back problems, as it provides lower back support. The pedals are located toward the front of the bike, making the seated position similar to the one that you adopt while driving. These bikes work your hamstrings and gluteals. They also promote efficient blood flow throughout the body. Some recumbent bikes have a recline feature that allows you to adjust the angle of your seat accordingly. They are ideal for overweight persons. If you are not a bike enthusiast, recumbent bikes should be your choice.

Dual Action Bikes:

Dual action or elliptical bikes have movable bars as arm handles. You can increase the overall aerobic intensity of your workout by moving your arms and legs at the same time. Dual action bikes are ideal for those looking to tone both their upper and lower body.

What kind of resistance do you need?

Exercise bikes use friction-based, electro-magnetic or air-resistance mechanisms. The kind of resistance you can choose depends on your budget. Bikes with friction-based resistance, like a caliper or fabric band brake, are low-priced, but they offer only limited programming. Bikes with air resistance use a fan to produce resistance. The fan also provides a cooling effect. These bikes last longer, as they are free from friction which causes wear and tear. Air resistance bikes are very rare. However, the Schwinn Airdyne is the most popular model of this kind.

Bikes that use electro-magnetic resistance are smoother. These models are usually more expensive, but they provide quieter operation. You can benefit from their pre-set programs and heart rate monitors as well. Try to select a bike with automatic resistance settings, as it will be safer to use.

Do bikes require power to operate?

Most bikes are self-driven and do not need mains power to operate. You can use an exercise bike for about six hours a day. These models last longest if only one or two persons use the same machine. If more than two people use the same bike, it is advisable to purchase a model that requires mains power to drive them.

How much space do these bikes occupy?

Exercise bikes are usually small and occupy minimal space. You can opt for fold-away bikes that can be stored in racks when not in use.

Do you want to monitor your workout?

Most [exercise bikes](#) provide information on speed, distance traveled and length of your workout. Do you want to know the total calories you burnt, the program mode or the resistance level? Some advanced models give you all this information along with your pulse and heart rate. Pre-programmed workouts and information storage are offered by sophisticated exercise bikes only.

About the Author

Bob Shanty has been researching and writing articles that help shoppers [shop online](#) and make more educated buying decisions on [exercise bikes](#) for online mega store BIGshop for years. For more articles by Bob please visit <http://www.bigshop.com.au>.

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