BEST HOME FITNESS EQUIPMENT

Ellipticals • Exercise Bikes • Home Gyms • Treadmills

Plus

♦ Viewer's Choice: Why Streaming Video Is Taking Off
♦ How Online Bill-Payment Services Compare

Best Buys

DISHWASHERS • SEWING MACHINES • VENTILATION FANS • TANKLESS WATER HEATERS • SPECIALTY RADIOS
screen won’t help your workout, so we wouldn’t blame anyone for believing that such a feature merely is a sales gimmick at a time when consumers increasingly get their entertainment fix from tablets and other mobile devices.

Life Fitness hasn’t released pricing for treadmills that have the LifeScape program and the 19-inch touch screen. But commercial models that have the same features that were introduced in October 2012 start at $6,000, which is $2,151 more than what you’d pay for our premium Best Buy treadmill selection, which has a conventional console. Kamm says the program and console also will be available on Life Fitness ellipticals and exercise bikes.

In a similar but much less expensive vein, Diamondback Fitness plans to introduce a treadmill that connects with your tablet and lets you use it as a supplemental console or display. The Bluetooth-enabled console will work with a third-party mobile app that tracks results, displays real-time monitoring and gives you access to custom workouts that take you on virtual runs through famous places, such as the Himalayas and the Great Wall of China, which are displayed on your tablet.

Diamondback likely will introduce the treadmill in 2013, and it likely will cost around $3,000. Demonstrations of the virtual runs that we saw on the Diamondback treadmill appear quite realistic, but the effect is only visual, because the machine won’t change speed or incline to replicate the virtual terrain.

The use of apps for home fitness equipment appears to have limits, however. For example, apps likely never will control the treadmill’s major settings, such as speed and incline, because such capabilities would violate a manufacturer’s warranty, says Roger Bates, who is president of LifeCore Fitness, which is the parent company of Diamondback. He says allowing third-party apps to control a treadmill could jeopardize the treadmill’s hardware, so manufacturers would limit the extent to which apps would control elements such as speed and incline.

Experts tell us that touch-screen consoles and computer integration hold great promise for the future. In the years ahead, you’ll be able to post the results of your workout on a website to compare against others’ results, and you’ll be able to race in real time or delayed time against friends who have the same

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**Best Buys in Elliptical Machines & Treadmills**

**Best Buy Categories**
- [P] = Premium selection
- [M] = Midrange selection
- [E] = Economy selection

**Best Buys in elliptical machines and treadmills** were selected based on features, quality of construction, manufacturer reputation and aesthetics.

We considered only models that have a heart-rate monitor, which is important for gauging your proper workout intensity and fitness progress over time.

All treadmill Best Buys have instant-response quick keys that allow you to change the speed and elevation instantly.

Prices don’t include delivery or setup.

**Best Price** is a reflection of the lowest retail price that was available at press time and is subject to change.

**ELLiptical Machines**

**[P] Octane Q47c**

- **MSRP:** $4,199
- **Best Price:** $3,799

>> The Q47c is a repeat Best Buy selection, because no other model has a better combination of quality construction, smooth performance and premium features. We found this model to have the smoothest movement among models that have an automatic stride-adjustment range of 18-26 inches. We couldn’t find another model that has a program that automatically shifts the exercise emphasis from legs to arms, and vice versa, like this one does. The Q47c ($4,699), which adds heart-rate-control programs and strength-training accessories, is also a Best Buy.

**Features:**
- *Preset programs: 12
- *Dimensions: 60 in. (h) x 28 in. (w) x 72 in. (l)
- *Weight: 290 lbs.
- *Warranty: Lifetime frame; 5 yrs. parts; 1 yr. labor

**[M] LifeCore VST-V6**

- **MSRP:** $2,299
- **Best Price:** $2,299

>> **The VST-V6 is the least expensive model that has manually adjustable stride length and adjustable stride shape—both are great features, particularly for different sizes of people and fitness levels. Adjustable stride shape means that the motion ranges from step-climbing to full running stride. Plus, no other model that’s in this price range has a wider stride range (18-26 inches) than this model has. The VST-V6 ($2,999), which electronically adjusts stride length and shape, is also a Best Buy.**

**Features:**
- *Preset programs: 12
- *Dimensions: 65 in. (h) x 24 in. (w) x 63 in. (l)
- *Weight: 221 lbs.
- *Warranty: Lifetime frame; 5 yrs. parts; 1 yr. labor

**[E] Vision X10**

- **MSRP:** $999
- **Best Price:** $999

>> The X10 delivers what we found to be the smoothest and most stable performance among models that are in this price range because of its 20-inch stride length and 21-pound flywheel. This model also has contact heart-rate grips on the handles, which is a rare feature among economy models. This model’s seven preset programs

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22 CONSUMERS DIGEST JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2013