

Treadmill Buying Guide

What components make up a treadmill? Treadmills are designed with basic components like motors, belts, decks, flywheels, frames, rollers, electronics and display consoles. Let us briefly go through each of these components.

Motors:

The motor is considered to be one of the most important components of a treadmill. The treadmill works mainly with the help of the motor. Motorized treadmills have one motor that drives the belt and another lift motor to power the incline. The motor delivers power to the belt system through the rollers. The power of the motor is measured in horsepower (hp) and ranges from 1.0 to 4.0 hp. A large, powerful motor will extend your treadmill's life and help it to operate at a continuous rate. If you are planning to use your treadmill just for walking or jogging, 1.0 to 1.5 continuous hp should be sufficient. For runners, look for a treadmill with 1.5 to 2.0 continuous hp. You will face some disadvantages if you opt for small motors. They tend to breakdown due to overheating and require costly repairs.

Flywheels:

The flywheel regulates the speed and consistency of the belt. If flywheels are absent, the belt comes to a grinding halt as your foot touches the running surface. The smooth and sole model flywheels will help you regulate the belt's speed and avoid jerky movements when compared to proform and image models. A good flywheel protects the motor and electronics, so your treadmill lasts longer.

Frames:

Most treadmills have steel frames. Steel frames provide good performance and are suitable for most purposes. When you look at high quality treadmills, you will find that aluminum frames are more popular for various reasons. An aluminum frame is lightweight and durable. It supports more user weight and offers greater strength when compared to steel. Aluminum frames are also resistant to corrosion and rust.

Rollers:

The rollers of a [treadmill](#) support the belt. You will get better performance with rollers that are large and heavy. Commercial quality rollers extend the life of the bearings and the belt. Avoid frequent repairs in your treadmills with high quality rollers.

Decks:

The treadmill deck helps in shock reduction during use and supports the belt while in operation. Thicker decks provide more cushioning and comfort. The deck protects you from getting injured while running on the treadmill. Go for the phenolic deck if you want to reduce harsh impact on your joints and back. The new proprietary deck cushioning systems increase impact absorption during walks and runs.

Belts:

Belts play a major role in the movement of the treadmill. Most belts have about the same thickness and are usually two ply treadbelts. The length of the belt depends on whether the treadmill is meant more for walkers, joggers or runners. The width of the treadbelts ranges from 14" to 24" and the length between 45" to 63." If you are a runner, go for larger belts to avoid banging your feet on the machine or tripping.

Inclines:

Incline capabilities increase a treadmill's resistance and make your workout more intense. Decide how much incline you need. Most treadmills incline from 0 to 10% while some go up to 15%. You have both power inclines as well as manual ones. It is better to get a power incline as the manual ones use hydraulic pistons and are prone to damage.

What does the treadmill display console do?

The display console gives you details and feedback on your workout. The display panels are either LCD (liquid crystal display) or LED (light-emitting diode). You can access information like time, speed, distance, heart rate, pace, incline and the number of calories burnt with a treadmill display. This information makes it easier to monitor your exercise routine.

Do treadmills occupy a lot of space?

You can opt for treadmills that fold, if space is a concern. There are also compact, non-folding treadmills that do not require a lot of space.

What other factors should be considered while buying a treadmill?

There are other important considerations like speed and warranty to be taken into account.

Speed:

Most treadmills go up to a speed of 10 mph. This is more than sufficient as most people walk at about 3-6 mph and run at about 6-10 mph.

Warranty:

Treadmills are expensive machines, so you should make sure that components like the motor, deck, frame, belts, rollers and electronics are covered. Some good companies offer a lifetime warranty on the frame and the deck.

About the Author

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

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