

**Everything You *MUST Know*
Before Choosing a Personal
Trainer**



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Introduction

Most of us recognise the importance of physical fitness and exercise to remain healthy and free from illness. A good number of us could use a little time in the gym to lose a bit of weight. Whether you are looking to lose weight, get healthier, get stronger or simply improve your physical health all around, odds are you have considered hiring a personal trainer. A personal trainer is more than just a workout coach. A good trainer is someone who is educated and experienced in the healthiest ways to exercise. A good trainer is also someone who helps with the mental aspects of getting in or staying in shape. They can help keep you motivated to reach your fitness goals as well as helping to ensure that you are using the proper techniques.

Finding and choosing a personal trainer can be a little bit tricky in some cases. Personal trainers cost money, so you have to decide first if you really require their services. Then you have to locate a trainer in your area and find out if they are a person that you can work well with to achieve your fitness goals. Not all personal trainers are created equal. Some have more training, more experience and better tactics than others. The trick to finding a good trainer is knowing what and who you are looking for.

A great personal trainer can really change your life for the better. Very often they are the reason why you will show up at the gym each week. Sometimes just having someone there to guide you and motivate you can make all of the difference. A personal trainer can provide accountability, which makes it a lot harder to skip out on your workouts. They can also create specific workout programs tailored around your individual needs and goals. These programs are step by step strategies that push you just enough to move you outside your fitness comfort zone. This helps you reach your ideal fitness level.

Many of us could benefit from the advice, assistance and knowledge of a reputable personal trainer. Here is everything you must know before you choose a personal trainer.

Do You Need a Personal Trainer?

It is certainly possible to implement and stick with a dedicated workout program on your own. Some of us require a little extra help with certain aspects of our exercise routines. That's where the expertise and help of a personal trainer can come in. Personal trainers cost money and you may be wondering if their services can justify their costs. So, do you need the services of a personal trainer or can you handle it on your own? Here are some reasons why you may want to consider hiring a personal trainer:

1. You want a more individualised workout

While it is easy to research and learn about the major ways to effectively workout, some of us have the desire for a more individualised workout routine. Perhaps you are more interested in building up your core muscles than you are in losing weight. Many of the most common workout routines will not be individualised to your needs. A personal trainer can work on developing a workout program that is specific to your body and your goals.

2. You have been working out, but you haven't been seeing results

If you have specific fitness goals and have been working on them consistently for several weeks or months and are not seeing the results you want, then you may want to consider hiring a personal trainer. A personal trainer will understand more about the process than you might and could offer helpful advice and assistance. A personal trainer can also take a look at your specific workouts and point out any mistakes or omissions that could be the cause of your lack of results. They can even take a look at your eating, sleeping and stress habits and offer advice. The point is that these people are experts in determining the best course of action for reaching specific workout goals and could help you see the results you are looking for.

3. You have no idea where to start

You may have decided to get back into a daily habit of working out or have created some new goals to reach, but you have no idea where and how to begin the process. Setting up a comprehensive and complete workout schedule can be very complicated, especially if you have specific goals you want to obtain, such as strengthening your back muscles or losing weight. It can be tough to figure out what exercises you should be doing, how many reps of each you should be performing and how often you should do each exercise. A personal trainer can help you figure all of this stuff out. They can help you create a specific workout program to achieve specific goals. A personal trainer is experienced and knowledgeable in exactly this.

4. You lack motivation

One of the hardest aspects of any long-term workout program is keeping motivated. Very often it is easy to remain motivated in the beginning, but as the weeks pass we get bored and lose some of our motivation to keep going. A personal trainer knows how to keep you motivated towards achieving your goals. They can even suggest new ways for you to motivate yourself.

5. You need a new challenge to reach your exercise goals

This is another thing that often occurs with people who have dedicated exercise goals. You have been working on a specific program for so long that you no longer feel challenged by it. You may feel that you are no longer benefiting from your workouts and may be losing interest in sticking with them. A personal trainer can help create new and more challenging workouts to push you past your comfort zone. They can also help you remain motivated and create new goals to reach.

6. You have a specific medical condition or injury that requires special assistance

Specific medical conditions and injuries may require specific workouts and exercises. For example, if you have recently injured your knee and required surgery to repair the damage, you wouldn't want to jump back into your regular

workout routine. In order to begin rebuilding the strength and flexibility of the knee you would want to perform specific exercises. Doing too much too soon could result in additional injury or prolonged healing time. A personal trainer will know the best way to get your injured body part back to its original state. They will also know which specific exercises you should be performing and can help ensure that your form is correct. Some medical conditions can result in a loss of muscle tone or damage to the body as a whole. A certified personal trainer can help you set up a workout routine that will slow or reduce this damage. For many people with specific medical conditions, these types of exercises can mean all of the difference. Pregnant women who are looking for safe and healthy ways to stay in shape may also benefit from the advice and expertise of a personal trainer.

7. You want to learn how to work-out on your own

Perhaps you are interested in working out by yourself but want to make sure that you are performing all of the exercises correctly. A personal trainer can show you the basics to ensure that you are doing everything right. Many exercises can harm the body if they are not performed correctly, and a personal trainer can help you ensure that both your technique and form are correct. This will improve the quality of your workouts and improve your results.

8. You are training for a specific event or sport

If you are in training for a specific event or sport, a personal trainer can suggest routines and programs that will increase your chances at being successful. Whether you are training for a sport or an event like a marathon, triathlon or a bicycle race, a personal trainer can help you create program that will strengthen your muscles where you need them. Strengthening sport specific muscles can also help you with sports such as hockey, golf, baseball and running. For upcoming sports events a trainer can outline a program that will make sure you are ready physically and mental when the time comes. There are many sports-specific personal trainers out there.

What Can a Personal Trainer Do For You?

As you can see, there are many reasons why you may want to consider hiring a personal trainer. There are lots of things a personal trainer can do for you to improve the quantity, quality and effectiveness of your workouts. A personal trainer can be a lot of things for you- they can act as a coach, as a friend or as a partner. Here are just a few of the things a personal trainer could do for you:

- **Make you accountable for your workouts**

It is harder to skip out on your workouts if doing so will disappoint someone. A good personal trainer will instil accountability in you and help you keep on track when it comes to your workout routines.

- **Encourage you to keep going**

Sometimes just having someone around to encourage you to keep going can make all of the difference. Sticking with your goals is a lot easier if someone is there to offer some praise and encouragement.

- **Offer guidance**

Even if you prefer to work-out on your own, sometimes just having someone around to offer guidance and answer your questions can be extremely helpful.

- **Make sure your techniques are correct**

Improper workout techniques can lead to injury. They can also reduce the effectiveness of your exercise routines. A personal trainer will help you make sure your techniques and workout strategies are correct and proper. They can even offer spotting assistance to help you prevent injury.

- **Offer fitness assessments**

In order to figure out what is the best exercise strategy you want to employ in order to achieve your specific goals it can be helpful to get an assessment from a trained professional. A personal trainer can help you determine your current fitness level and create a plan for achieving your desired levels.

Finding a Personal Trainer

Once you have decided that you would like to use the services of a personal trainer, the next step is to find yourself a good one. Finding a personal trainer who operates in your area is relatively easy. The hard part comes in when deciding whether or not a potential trainer is a good fit for you. You definitely want to find a personal trainer who is qualified and experienced, but you also want to locate one that is going to be a good fit for you personally. The best way to find the right personal trainer for your specific situation is to make a list of 3-5 potential choices, then do a little bit of research and choose the one that best fits your needs. Here is how you can go about finding potential choices for your list:

- **Check out your local gym**

If you already belong to a local gym you can ask about what types of personal training services they offer. Odds are if you have been a member of this gym for a while you probably already know some of the trainers and can pick one that you think will work well with you. If you have been a member for awhile but do not know many of the trainers you can always ask for referrals from other gym members. Have they had success with any specific trainers and would they recommend them to you? If you do not belong to a gym you should probably start by looking for a good one in your local area. Some gyms will allow you to have a few appointments with a personal trainer without having to sign up for a membership. This is good choice for people who just want to learn how to workout at home the correct way.

- **Ask someone you know**

Another great way to find a personal trainer is to ask someone that you know. You probably know someone who has used a personal trainer before and could recommend a specific one to you. They may also be able to recommend a good gym or a gym that offers a few training sessions without having to sign up for a membership.

- **Perform an online search**

There are several tools that you can use to locate a personal trainer in your area if you do not have access to a gym or are still looking for a gym. For starters you can type in “personal trainer” plus your post code into a major search engine such as Google. This will offer you several thousand results. You can also type in “personal training studios” plus your post code to find independently operating personal trainers in your region. Independently operating personal trainers will probably end up costing you more than the trainers that a gym membership plan will provide.

There are also several fitness professional databases that can be found online including our very own at <http://www.mypersonaltrainerwebsite.com>. IDEA Health and Fitness Association is the largest association in the world for fitness and wellness professionals. They have a “Fitness Connect” database search tool on their website. The IDEA website can be found at www.ideafit.com. For people with specific health conditions or disabilities there is the NCPAD personal trainer directory website. This website allows you to search by city or by postcode for a specialised personal trainer. The NCPAD website can be found at www.ncpad.org.

- **Look in the Yellow Pages**

It is also possible to locate a decent personal trainer by looking in the Yellow Pages or through other traditional advertising techniques.

Using these search methods, you should be able to create a list of 3-5 potential personal trainers. Once you have this list you can begin the next step, which is to determine which individual trainer will be the best fit for you.

Potential Problems with Your Personal Trainer

Not all personal trainers are the same. Some are better than others and some will have more expertise in a specific field. Like any field, there are both good and bad personal trainers. A personal trainer may be a very good one, but their style and techniques may be too harsh or too sensitive for you. You can try out as many personal trainers as you can afford before you find one that is just the right fit. Here are potential problems that can occur if you do not take the time to locate a personal trainer who is knowledgeable, experienced and reputable, and who works well with your personality.

- **Some trainers may use techniques and strategies that do not mesh with your personality**

It is vital that your personal trainer works well with your personality in order for you both to profit from the arrangement. Some personal trainers may be too harsh in their routines and workout methods. Others may be too gentle or soft to offer any real kind of motivation. Some trainers are great at delivering constructive criticism while others simply scream at you. If you hire a personal trainer with a technique and style that doesn't match with yours, then you will probably be unhappy with your results. Some trainers rely on negative reinforcement to guide you through your workouts. Negative reinforcement typically gets old fast and will not encourage you to keep motivated.

- **Some trainers lack the appropriate certification and expertise to handle your requirements**

Anyone can claim to be a personal trainer, but in order to do the job right it requires training, certification and expertise. If you hire a trainer who is lacking in these areas you could end up getting some bad advice and poor results.

- **Some trainers simply don't connect with their customers**

A good trainer listens and responds to their clients. Some less than reputable personal trainers will not listen to your side and simply go ahead and create a workout routine for you anyway. These low quality trainers are not there when you need them, rarely answer your questions or the phone and skip your appointments. Essentially they leave you high and dry when it comes to techniques, strategies and helpful advice.

- **Sometimes a personal trainer is really just a salesman for something else**

If you get a less than reputable personal trainer then you might find yourself talking to a salesman. These types of trainers are more interested in encouraging you to purchase a piece of workout gear or nutritional supplements than they are in helping you achieve your fitness goals.

- **Bad trainers can end up getting you injured or hurt**

If a trainer is not certified or trained properly, they could end up getting you injured or hurt. Proper technique and repetition is important for preventing gym and exercise-related injuries. This is especially important for people with specific injuries or disabilities, who may require special assistance and techniques to ensure their safety.

It is a good idea to be aware of some warning flags when it comes to personal trainers. Overall, it is a good idea to avoid choosing a personal trainer who:

1. Dismisses or ignores your questions.
2. Works you too hard or uses negative reinforcement to encourage you. After a workout you should expect some soreness, but you should not be worked so hard that you cannot move.
3. Recommends a program or exercise that is too much for you or that you are uncomfortable doing.
4. Neglects any part of your routine or program.
5. Is constantly recommending that you purchase training products, such as equipment, clothing, supplements or any kind of drugs.
6. Makes you feel uncomfortable in any way.
7. Answers the phone during your training sessions or talks with other people when they are supposed to be focused on you.
8. Doesn't return your e-mails or phone calls.
9. Is rude, mean or too aggressive.
10. Doesn't take the time to gauge and correct your technique.
11. Causes you to get hurt or injured.
12. Misses your appointments or shows up late or unprepared for appointments.

Choosing a Personal Trainer

Once you have a list of potentials you can begin to decide which one will be the best fit for your situation. If possible you will want to watch the trainer with their other clients to gauge what type of job they are doing. Watch how the trainer interacts with other people. Look for trainers who seem to get along well with their clients. Look for trainers who are engaged and interested in their client's workouts. A good personal trainer should be diligent, professional and positive with their clients. They should also be punctual and educated in the field of personal training. You should choose if you prefer a gender when it comes to a personal trainer as well.

Here are some things to consider when making your choice:

- **Always look for level 3 certification in your personal trainer**

The UK's Register of Exercise Professionals (REPS) and American Council for Exercises (ACE) recommends that all personal trainers be certified to a level 3 standard. Both REPS and the NCCA has accreditation and training programs for a variety of health care and wellness professionals, including personal trainers. Being REPS or NCCA certified shows you that the trainer has the knowledge and expertise to properly handle your fitness and workout needs. It is a very good idea to ask a potential personal trainer for their accreditation certificate. You should also check to see if a trainer's certification is current. Most certifications require continuing education and re-certification classes to be taken every 2-4 years. This helps NCCA accredited personal trainers keep up to date on the most modern techniques and information.

- **Ask the trainer about their level of experience and if they have an area of specialisation**

If you have a specific condition, injury or disability, you need to know if your trainer is specialised in that area before you choose them. You also want to know how long the trainer has been working and what their specific level of experience is. It is always a good idea to look for a trainer with an educational degree in physical training. Accreditations are great, but a college or university degree in the exercise field is a definite benefit.

- **Ask the trainer for references**

A high quality personal trainer can give you a list of previous or current clients that you can speak with. They may even be able to give you testimonials from satisfied customers. You can also ask some of the other trainers at the gym or facility that you are at about the reputation of a specific trainer. Online consumer review websites can also provide valuable insight into a personal trainer. A good example of one of these consumer review websites is Angie's List.com. When reviewing online consumer reports, be aware that not everyone will be happy with the interaction they had with a specific trainer. One or two negative remarks are okay, but a long list of unsatisfied customers should send you off looking for another trainer.

- **Speak with the trainer and ask your questions**

This is the best way to develop a rapport with your potential trainer. A quality personal trainer will take the time to find out what your requirements, goals, limitations and objectives are. They should also be genuinely interested in helping you achieve your specific goals. A good trainer develops a positive and professional relationship with their clients. Try to determine if this trainer will work well with your personality. Trust your instincts in this case.

- **Ask the trainer about their prices**

A high quality personal trainer can certainly be worth the cost, if you can afford the price. Make sure to ask a potential trainer about their prices so that you can be sure you can afford to hire them. A good personal trainer should be able to clearly describe their pricing structure and associated costs. Make sure you understand the trainer's billing procedures and cancellation policies. Find out if you will be signing a contract with the trainer or the gym.

- **Ask about personal liability insurance**

Whether you are hiring a trainer who operates as an independent contractor or one who works in a gym- this is a must. Look for personal liability insurance for both independent contractor personal trainers and gym employed trainers.

- **Look for professionalism**

A truly professional personal trainer will yield the best results.

- **Ask about the trainer's nutrition credentials**

Many high quality personal trainers will have additional nutrition credentials because no fitness program is complete without nutrition. Look for an associates or bachelor's degree in nutrition or extensive work experience in the nutrition field. You can also look for credentials such as a Registered Dietician or RD, or a Registered Dietetic Technician or DTR in addition to their personal trainer certification. This is especially important if you have a specific medical condition.

- **Ask for CPR certification**

Some personal trainers who work in chain gyms or leisure clubs are required to have up to date CPR certifications. If a trainer doesn't have this certification they may not be current with their requirements.

The rest comes down to your personal choice. Go with a personal trainer who you can get along well with, who understands your current fitness levels and who you feel will work hard for you. A good trainer is a friend, a motivator and a coach, and should want to make you keep up with your routines. Once you have a great personal trainer you may wonder how you ever got by without one.

What to Expect

Once you have chosen your ideal personal trainer you are ready to begin your new workout and fitness routines. Don't expect to get out into the gym during the very first session. A good trainer will want to take some time to determine your current fitness levels, your ambitions, your goals and what the best methods for achieving these goals will be. Your first official meeting with your new trainer should be devoted to assessing your current fitness levels. Some trainers will probably want to weigh you and take some body measurements. They may also want to discuss any medical problems or fitness conditions that you may have. These assessments will probably include measuring the amount of fat on your body, some reflex tests and some other body analysis exams. This helps the trainer determine where you are at physically and what steps need to be taken in order to get you to where you want to be.

Your new trainer will probably want to ask you some questions as well. They may wish to know about your physical history and information about your diet and sleep patterns. You will want to take some time to discuss your goals, so that your trainer is

fully informed about what results you expect to see. Once the trainer has a good understanding your physical fitness goals and your current fitness levels, they can begin to map out a plan that will help you achieve those goals. This plan will probably include cardio training, weight training, flexibility exercises and more.

Being a Good Client

In order to help your personal trainer do their job and help you achieve your fitness goals, there are some things that you can do to be a good client. Here are some things that you can do to assist your personal trainer and make the most of your time together:

1. **Show up on time and ready to workout**

This means being dressed and ready to start when your appointment is scheduled to begin.

2. **Focus on your workout**

This means avoiding talking too much, answering the phone or wasting the trainer's time. Focus on doing your exercises correctly and ask questions when you need to.

3. **Provide at least 24 hours of notice if you are going to miss an appointment**

If this is possible you should always give proper notice if you need to cancel an appointment. It's just polite.

4. **Allow your trainer to do their job**

You hired a personal trainer to help you with your workout routine, so allow them to do their job properly. Follow their instructions and respect their knowledge and expertise.

5. **If you have a specific medical condition, put your personal trainer in touch with your doctor or rehabilitation specialist.**

It will be very helpful for your personal trainer to be in contact with your doctor or rehabilitation specialist so that they can agree on the best way to treat your condition or injury.

6. **Schedule a private meeting with your trainer if you have problems, concerns or questions.**

A private meeting gives you the chance to talk with your trainer about any concerns, problems or questions you have about your progress.

Conclusion

For many people, a personal trainer is the best and fastest way to achieve our fitness goals. A great personal trainer can help us lose weight, improve our flexibility, increase our strength and feel healthier. They can also make going to the gym a more rewarding and fun experience. For many of us, a personal trainer is the only way we will stick with our goals and show up to the gym when we are supposed to. Finding the right personal trainer may take a little bit of time and effort, but it can definitely be worth it when we begin to see the results. Personal trainers are educated and trained in the field of physical fitness, and everyone can benefit from their knowledge and experience. You have professionals to help repair your home, fix your computers and do your taxes, so why not have a professional to help you keep fit and healthy?

Checklist for Hiring a Personal Trainer

- Decide that you want or need the services of a personal trainer.
- Figure out what your specific fitness goals are and if you have any special needs or conditions.
- Look up some potential personal trainers by asking for referrals, by asking your gym, by searching an online database or by searching the Yellow Pages.
- Make a list of potential trainers. This list should include 3-5 choices.
- Find out some information about each potential choice. Ask the trainer about their credentials, their training and their level of education. Ask to see their NCCA certification, their CPR certification and their proof of personal liability insurance. Ask about any nutritional expertise or specialty areas of expertise they may have.
- Talk to the trainer and try to gauge their level of professionalism and their personality.
- Ask the trainer for references or testimonials.
- Choose a reputable trainer based on their credentials, education, personality and what your instincts tell you.

- Be a good client and benefit from what services your new personal trainer can offer you.
- Achieve your fitness goals.

Resources

Institute of Personal Trainers

www.mypersonaltrainerwebsite.com

Register of Exercise Professionals

<http://www.exerciseregister.org/>

The American Council on Exercise (ACE)

www.acefitness.com

The National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA)

www.credentialingexcellence.org

The National Center on Physical Activity and Disability (NCPAD)

www.ncpad.org

IDEA Health and Fitness Association

www.idealife.com

Trainers USA

www.trainersusa.com

Angie's List

www.angieslist.com

Next Steps

Thank you again for downloading this free report. We hope that you found it useful and it has given you the information you need to help you better understand the most important things you should know before hiring a personal trainer.

If you would like additional assistance please contact us at:

dan@theipt.com