

## Treadmill Fitness Should Be Cheap, Not Easy

While shopping for a treadmill as a gift for some elderly relatives, a few things caught my attention. One was that the price of some treadmills is more than I paid for my first car. Of course, these deluxe treadmills have more monitoring capability than a university research laboratory had even a few years ago, so, I should not complain about the price if the machine is delivering real value. I always read the Amazon reviews of people who have purchased products that I want to buy. You almost always learn something about the idiosyncrasies of a piece of equipment that you would never find in the product description. Some are good, some are bad, but they are almost always useful. After I moved from the upscale seats to the bleachers, I started looking at manual treadmills. It's been awhile since I looked at treadmills, so I was even a little surprised that they still made manual treadmills. But, why not? Manual treadmills are really the ideal cardiovascular fitness equipment. The models I looked at have weighted flywheels so that once you get the thing going the motion is very smooth and rhythmic. One of the reviewer's gave a particular machine that looked pretty good to me a bad review. The reason was that using the treadmill was too much like work. The reviewer complained that the exercise was strenuous. Has the deluxe gadgetry and convenience clouded the whole purpose of an exercise machine in the first place? Walking and light running, on Mother Earth or a treadmill, are good for toning muscles and burning calories, but if you want to improve cardio fitness you have to move large volumes of air. You do that by working your large leg muscles in a rhythmic fashion for a sufficient duration. Which is exactly what you do on a manual treadmill. Increase the degrees of incline, increase the work, and increase your blood flow and the volume of air you move in and out of your lungs. Manual treadmills can be had for a little more than \$100. Many models have some monitoring features but you may be better off spending some of what you would save on a manual treadmill on a Polar fitness/exercise monitor that you can also use outside the house for other activities. Knowing exactly what your training heart rate should be, and how to calculate it, are essential to improve your cardio fitness. A manual treadmill, a heart rate monitor, and a little knowledge will equip you with a professional quality cardiovascular fitness center that you can use in all weather and at the most convenient time. One other advantage with a manual treadmill is that you really can fold it up and move it out of the way when not in use.

## About the Author

You can also learn about your own fitness level and use the online fitness diary to keep track of your own exercise.

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