

Top Ten Fitness Trends

Out of the Box Workouts – Gyms are not for all. The popularity of TV shows like, ABC's Dancing with Stars has dance studios popping up all around the country. Hip hop, ballroom, Latin and country line dancing combine high energy and motivating music with unique moves and combinations that allow participants to get fit while dancing away their worries. Outdoor boot camps are gaining in popularity and local boxing clubs have crowded rings and classes filled with people of all ages. For some, these fun, recreational activities hide the fact that they really are exercising.

Body Weight and Equipment-Free Workouts – Equipment can intimidate some and others want to add options and flexibility to their existing workout regimens. These full-body workouts focus on movement patterns, repetitions, and plyometric work to target multiple muscle groups. These types of workouts are perfect for traveling since they require no equipment and, therefore, can be performed anywhere.

Event or Sports-Specific Programming – Millions of Americans participate each year in charity runs and walks. Many train up to a year in advance. For many it is a great social event and an opportunity to take the focus off themselves and onto their charity of choice. This trend doesn't stop there; clubs are offering training for surfboarding, golf, football, and etc. specific workouts; all while helping participants build the strength, endurance, and stamina needed for real-life activities and sports.

Boomer Fitness Focus – Individuals age 50+ are redefining our expectations about age, vitality, and life realizing the importance of physical activity as we age. For the aging population, regular exercise is critical in keeping the body limber, injury free, and more youthful. AARP, the noted advocacy group for individuals age 50+, launched a major fitness initiative in September of 2007 aimed at providing a wide range of affordable fitness services to its 39 million members.

Focused Express Workouts– Group classes lasting 30 minutes or less that focus on one component of fitness or training a specific part of the body (e.g., core stabilization, upper-body strength, balance and agility, aerobic training/fat burning). Participants enjoy targeting a specific goal within a short time commitment. Many clubs piggyback these classes in their schedules for members to attend two classes in a row.

Total Wellness Programming – Prevention is the key for long-term health and optimal quality of life. More and more people will focus on injury and disease prevention and understand how food, exercise, weight and a healthier mindset must interact for the body to achieve balance and total wellness. It is a focus on what the body and mind need and how to encourage them to work in harmony. Maintaining a healthy mind and body from the inside with less of a focus on physical appearance is steadily becoming a new ideal.

Hybrid Programming – Fusion of mind-body techniques like breath work and meditation into traditional modalities continues to be popular. Workouts like Spin-Yoga and Pilates Fusion combine strength, flexibility and endurance and offer the equivalent of an all-in-one exercise experience.

Personal Training - 93% of ACE fitness professionals surveyed say personal training will be more accessible in 2008. According to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, personal training is one of the fastest growing professions. Consumers are demanding competent practitioners. Competent personal trainers offer these clients' invaluable expert guidance and motivation. Positive accountability can be among the most important factors in helping individuals make a lasting commitment to an active lifestyle. Many clients view personal training as a wise investment in their long-term health.

Technology-Based Workouts - Consumers are choosing to use downloadable programs to iPods, PDAs etc., which offer fitness programming with illustrations and/or streaming video. In addition, technological advancements are making it possible to more precisely measure a wide variety physiological responses and document training program results. As an example, metabolic testing devices provide more accurate physiological data to improve weight management and performance programming.

Functional Strength Training – Whether it's walking, hiking or lifting, functional strength is needed to successfully complete the task. Incorporating it into an existing exercise program enhances strength, endurance, balance, and coordination in everyday activities. Individuals will increasingly be searching for workout programs that will help them more safely and effectively perform their activities of daily living, work-related tasks, and recreational or sports-specific activities. Health clubs and trainers are offering functional training programs and classes for virtually all levels and types of participants.