



Healthy Choices

Attract residents with the latest fitness equipment.

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Many fitness centers offer nothing more than a few treadmills and an old television, but the right mix of fitness equipment can differentiate one multifamily community from its competitors. The newest and trendiest equipment can attract residents, improving occupancy and creating an opportunity to raise rental rates. "We consider our fitness centers as marketing tools," says Julie D. Schoenbachler, a portfolio manager with The Bascom Group, an Irvine, Calif.-based multifamily owner and manager.

Nearly 40 years have passed since the treadmill was introduced, and today more than \$3 billion of fitness equipment is purchased annually. While treadmills, reclining bikes, and elliptical trainers continue to be the most common fitness equipment, the most popular pieces are smarter and more intuitive, offering customized exercise programs, monitoring technologies, and interactive, integrated elements such as televisions or video games.

Additionally, fitness equipment that provides "functional fitness training" or "mind-body exercise" is increasingly popular. Functional fitness training exercise mimics natural movements and challenges multiple muscle groups to improve strength and endurance, while mind-body exercise equipment draws from elements of yoga and Pilates, two of the fastest growing health and fitness trends in the United States. LifeFitness' Summit Trainer, for example, combines total body cross-training with climbing steps that simulate a trek through the mountains.

"We try to choose the best equipment we can afford, including treadmills, elliptical trainers, multi-use machines, and free weights up to 50 pounds," says Cindy Davis, director of design for Atlanta-based Gables Residential. Davis also works with a fitness consultant to make sure Gables provides its residents with state-of-the-art equipment. To that end, the company spends \$60,000 to \$70,000 on a fitness center for a 300-unit property.

- 1. MOUNTAIN HIGH:** LifeFitness' Summit Trainer offers total body cross-training by simulating full climbing steps with upper body movement. The 26-inch stride length makes it easy to use for even the tallest people. It comes with 17 programs, four goal workouts and six custom workouts and is available with an integrated LCD panel and an attachable EZ-TV. **For more information, contact LifeFitness at 800-634-8637 or visit www.us.commercial.lifefitness.com.**
- 2. ROW CONTEST:** Concept2 has unveiled the Model E, an indoor rower that offers a full-body, low-impact workout and combines strength training with cardiovascular conditioning. The new model includes a performance monitor equipped with wireless technology that allows users to "link" their rowers together and race each other. **For more information, contact Concept2 at 800-245-5676 or visit www.concept2.com.**
- 3. OFF THE WALL:** Mind and body work in harmony with Kinesis, a wall-mounted system that allows more than 250 exercises and movements. With its closed loop cable system, tri-dimensional movement and resistance, Kinesis allows users to improve strength, flexibility and balance. **For more information, contact TechnoGym USA at 800-804-0952 or visit www.technogymusa.com.**
- 4. WEIGHT A BIT:** Universal weight systems tend to start weight resistance at 25 pounds or more, but SmoothFitness' Rio Grande has a starting resistance of only five pounds and increases in small increments. The compact system can accommodate four users at a time. **For more information, contact SmoothFitness at 888-211-1611 or visit www.smoothfitness.com.**
- 5. DON'T BE A DUMBBELL:** Try the Clubbell, a system that offers three-dimensional muscular development. By swinging clubs of different weights rather than lifting, the Clubbell increases metabolism, releases tension, and strengthens connective tissues in the back, hips, shoulders, elbows, and knees. **For more information, contact RMAX International at 678-867-7629 or visit www.rmaxinternational.com.**

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