

GEAR & GADGETS



I Only Have \$100. Can I Get Fit?

If you're looking to buy a single piece of workout gear, consider these expert picks for budgets high and low

By **ASHLEY MATEO**

WHEN MY GYM closed its doors back in March, I needed to find a way to stay active (and sane) without turning my 700-square-foot condo into an unofficial Equinox outpost. My solution: a single pair of adjustable dumbbells that work for all sorts of strength-building moves, from bench presses to squats, and take up little room in my already cramped closet. But even if you live in a vast ranch house, fitness experts agree, nobody requires a suite of gym-rat gear to get an efficient total-body workout. In many cases, you only have to budget for a single, strategic piece of equipment. (And, no, a Peloton isn't your only option.) Here, five products you can rely on for multiple fitness needs, whether you're a taut pauper or someone with more money (and calories) to burn.



BEST UNDER \$100
Fit Simplify Resistance Bands
With a free weight, your muscles only engage while working against gravity. When you use these jumbo rubber bands, your muscles also

have to withstand the tension of the loop. That makes them an incredibly flexible tool for improving mobility, stability and muscular strength, according to CrossFit co-founder Lauren Jenai. A typical move: With the band around your calves, assume a squat and shuffle sideways. Made from durable natural latex that doesn't irritate sweaty skin, Fit Simplify's set lets you choose from five different levels of stretchiness depending on how much opposition your muscles are ready to face. Plus, unlike a clunky machine, you can easily stash the bands out of sight. (\$16, fitsimplify.com)



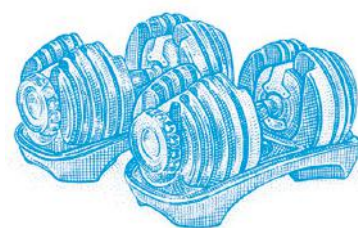
BEST UNDER \$300
TRX HOME2 System

Hang these adjustable straps from a beam or shut the anchor piece in a door frame. When you place your palms on the handles and push the straps away from you to perform a chest press, for example, it creates an unstable dynamic that your body has to work against to control your movement. As you try to keep your limbs from flailing, your body has to work harder than if it were pushing against solid resistance, said Kenny Santucci, founder of workout program Strong New York. Not only are your working muscles engaged, so are smaller stabilizer muscles that don't get as much attention. Ad-

justing your body's angle (picture moving your feet closer to or further from the door frame) can increase the challenge, he added. The whole system comes down as easy as it goes up, letting you build muscle without marring your home. (\$185, trxtraining.com)

BEST UNDER \$500
Bowflex's SelectTech 552 Adjustable Dumbbells

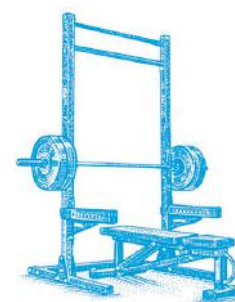
Why junk up your house with multiple free weights when you can get 15 sets in one? At the turn of a dial, each of these dumbbells adjusts from 5 to 52.5 pounds in 2.5- and 5-pound increments, an easy way to make workouts more challenging as you get stronger. "Use the lower settings for exercises like overhead presses, bicep curls and shoulder raises, and the heavier settings



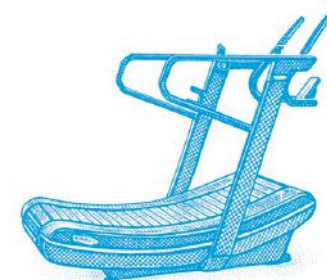
for deadlifts and squats," said National Academy of Sports Medicine-certified personal trainer Martin Kelly. (\$349, bowflex.com)

BEST UNDER \$1,000
Rogue Squat Stand, Bar and Bench

This gym trifecta might be the most efficient way to build strength at home, says Dale Santiago, a trainer at boxing studio Rumble. "The barbell alone allows you to perform major functional movements like squats [and] deadlifts," he said—exercises that build total-body strength. With a



stand and bench, you can adjust the barbell to your height for safer lifting, and perform bench presses, shoulder presses and more with added weight plates (which cost an additional \$415 for a 230-pound set). Caveat: You'll probably want a private space to house this hulking contraption so as not to offend your family or housemates with your utilitarian tastes and grunting. (\$910, roguefitness.com)



BEST UNDER \$10,000
Technogym Skillmill Connect Treadmill

Unlike motorized treadmills, this manual machine features a curved-deck design and is powered by your efforts: Each fall of your foot pulls the belt underneath you. The faster you move, the speedier the belt gets. And because the only way to maintain your ideal pace is to keep the belt moving, you have to engage more muscles (which will burn more calories) than you would on a standard tread. Tap into Skillmill training programs via the built-in LCD screen and companion app. The design encourages better form, explained Ms. Jenai, and the rubber slats are more forgiving on your joints—all of which translates to a lower risk of injury during any run and better performance on the road, priceless benefits for rabid runners. (\$9,740, technogym.com)

THE LATEST WFH indignity? Enduring attacks of the shivers in the poorly insulated spaces that we've converted into makeshift home offices.

"I got tired of wearing three or four layers on my video calls with clients," said Lauren Cooney, a career strategy coach who's been working from a freezing room in her Marin County, Calif., home. Though Ms. Cooney tried to power through the chill, "I couldn't Bernie it," she said, referring to the Vermont senator who inspired a meme by attending the inauguration in woolly mittens—great for cozily witnessing history, lousy for typing.

To cope, Ms. Cooney did what countless others have this winter: She bought a space heater. But she wasn't willing to settle for one of the infernal cages Grannies have been known to wheel out to save a few dollars on the gas bill. "I didn't want an eyesore," she said, or, for that matter, a fire hazard in her wood-beamed home.

After a thorough hunt, she splurged on a handsome Dyson Pure Hot+Cool HP04 (\$650, dyson.com), which can heat or cool up to 800 square feet, and features a built-in air purifier as well as the ability to monitor air quality on the unit's screen. (The activated carbon and glass HEPA filter on the slightly newer Dyson HP06, \$750, can also capture and destroy formaldehyde in the air.) "I wanted something that would work for me year round," Ms. Cooney said.

The Dyson is among a new class of stylish yet powerful, remote-con-

The Chicest Way to Warm Up This Winter?

These powerful, high-tech space heaters won't give your décor a chill



1. Duraflame Electric Fireplace Stove, 2. Nordic Hygge Värme, 3. Dyson HP06, 4. De'Longhi Panel Heater

trolled, or even app-enabled, heaters that let you adjust the temperature without having to slink off-screen during a Zoom call. Plus, they're a lot safer than that decades-old fire-hazard you might be tempted to ferret out of the garage.

"Old space heaters should be replaced when they begin to show

signs of wear, like fraying cords," said Brianne Deerwester, communications coordinator for the Electrical Safety Foundation International. And all newer models, she points out, automatically shut off if the unit overheats or tips over.

That's true even when the devices emulate the flicker and glow

of fire. Ryann Deutsch, a student at Marquette University Law School in Milwaukee, lacked a fireplace in her chilly sitting room and found a worthy substitute in the remote-controlled, extravagantly named Duraflame 3D Infrared Electric Fireplace Stove. The 5,200 BTU infrared heater can warm up to 1,000

square feet (\$270, amazon.com), while the old-school wood-stove design and crackling faux flames add just the right amount of coziness for her Instagram-famous dog, an Aussiedoodle named Sherlock Freddie Mercury. Her four-legged friend, she said, is "perfectly content laying in front of the 'fire' while I'm watching a movie or eating dinner."

For those who think a heater should be felt and not seen, however, De'Longhi's new 1500-watt Slim Style Digital Convection Panel Heater with Fan might be a better bet (\$140, delonghi.com). The unit conceals its heat source in a sleek white case, which can also be mounted to a wall (for anyone with white walls, it becomes almost invisible). The heater can warm up to 144 square feet and offers a "freeze prevention" mode to keep a room above 45 degrees while you're out of town to ward off burst pipes.

The Nordic Hygge Värme, meanwhile, is best for those who want their heat close at hand (\$89, mynordichygge.com). The small tabletop heater has one really neat trick up its sleeve: a removable, puck-shaped hand warmer that is magnetically attached to the unit. With 400 watts of power, the Värme is best suited to making its immediate vicinity toasty. But it's useful if you want to take your own Sherlock for a walk.

Just pluck off the puck—designed to stay warm for an hour thanks to its wax filling—and pop it in your coat pocket.

—Matthew Kronsberg