

# OUTSIDE/INS

## A CORNER

# GYM IN

By Joe Blundo  
Dispatch Home Reporter

**L**et's say you want to get some home exercise equipment but have only a corner of a room and a few hundred dollars to devote to it. Can you get a good workout with those limitations?

Yes, according to local experts. For advice on fitting exercise equipment into a home, we went to Gerry Greenspan, founder of Columbus Fitness Consultants and columnist for *Home Gym and Fitness Magazine*; Don Moxley, exercise physiologist at Grant Sports Medicine and an instructor at Columbus State Community College; and Dawn Vishey, a manager at Berry's Barbell and Fitness Equipment.

- Here are some things they said to consider:
  - In exercise equipment, you get what you pay for. Cheap equipment won't last as long and may pose a safety hazard.
  - Put the equipment where it's easy to get to and in a room where you enjoy being so you'll be more likely to use it.

Home exercise equipment can fit cramped quarters

Greenspan, who advises people on what exercise equipment to buy and how to use it, helped Betty Smythe of Delaware choose a set of dumbbells, an exercise bike and a thigh exerciser that fit in part of a sitting room where she spends a lot of time.

Basements, lofts, spare bedrooms and family rooms are good spots for equipment. But not the bedroom where you sleep, said Greenspan. The sight of the equipment can provoke anxiety — and you don't need that when you're trying to sleep.

If watching television or listening to music while exercising makes it a more pleasurable experience, then by all means do it, Greenspan said. "You don't want it to feel like it's punishment."

■ Set some goals that are not exercise-related but that exercise can

help you achieve, said Moxley. An example would be exercising so that you can complete a 5-mile run. Or, Greenspan suggested, make fitting into a certain pair of pants a goal. Keep goals realistic and short-term, he said.

■ You can get an aerobic workout by walking or running outdoors. For indoor cardiovascular work, a stationary bicycle is a good choice. You can get a good one for \$300 to \$600.

An alternative, Moxley said, is to put a recreational bike on a special stand that allows you to pedal against resistance while stationary. Treadmills, steppers and cross-country ski machines, such as the NordicTrack, are other possibilities.

A person's characteristics, such as age, weight or old injuries, will often determine which piece of equipment is best. Both Moxley and Greenspan recommend consulting a professional before buying.

Costs of aerobic exercise machines vary, but Moxley said, "I don't think you can spend (less than) \$200 and get anything more than a clothes rack."

■ For strength conditioning, all three of our experts said dumbbells are a good choice where space and money are tight. A set of dumbbells, a rack to hold them, and a bench for certain weight exercises can be purchased for less than \$300 total, Vishey said.

A less expensive alternative to dumbbells are a set of square, flat stacking weights. These take up even less room and don't require a separate rack to hold them.

Greenspan said people seeking a strength workout often buy the "Olympic bar" — the classic long bar and big round weights. For some people, that's the right choice, he said. But Olympic bars are more cumbersome, harder to use, take up more space and require the presence of a second person for safety.

■ Beware of equipment you're not familiar with. Greenspan, who studies the effect of exercise on joints and the designing of equipment to fit the body, said poorly designed fitness equipment puts joints under unnatural stresses.

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Betty Smythe's exercise-sitting room