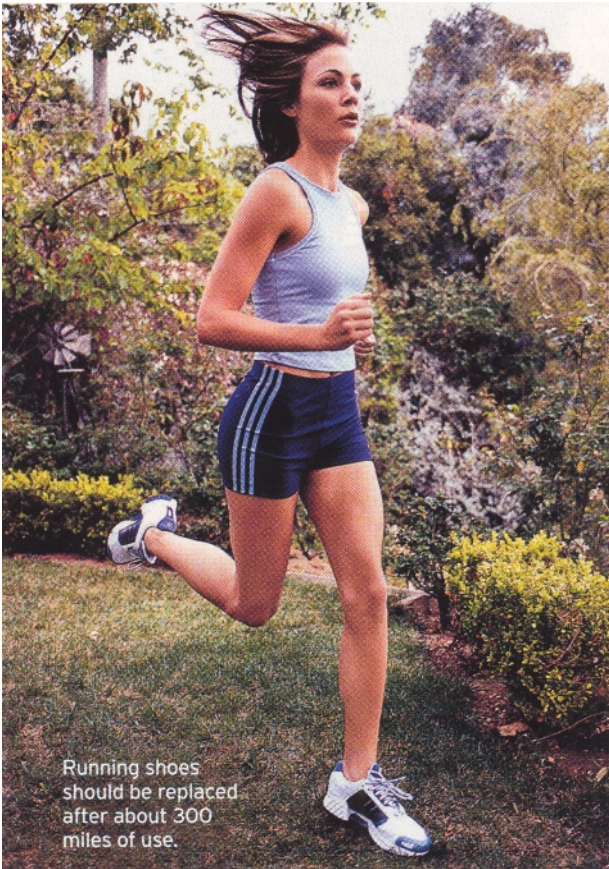


# lose weight with a TREADMILL

**I need to drop some weight. What's a good beginner's treadmill workout? ... and more of your questions answered here. By Suzanne Schlosberg**

**Q** My fiancé and I each have about 50 pounds to lose, and we would like to buy a treadmill. How much do we need to spend, and what features should we look for?

**A** A quality treadmill will run you at least \$1,200, says Salt Lake City fitness consultant Gregory Florez. "Any treadmill that cost less is going to be underpowered and won't have good, strong components that will last."



Running shoes should be replaced after about 300 miles of use.

Rather than focus on bells and whistles such as preset programs, Florez advises first considering the warranty and sturdiness of the deck (the surface on which you walk/run), motor and frame. "The deck should have a three- to five- year warranty," Florez says, "and the frame should have a lifetime warranty." Make sure the motor has a minimum of 1.8 horsepower, and the machine has a weight rating that exceeds your current weight as well as that of your fiancé. (The weight rating can vary: Some treadmills can support as much as 350 pounds, while others hold only 250 pounds.) A large, readable display on the control console is also important.

Florez recommends shopping at a specialty fitness retailer "rather

than a discount store that carries hockey pucks and hunting gear." Specialty shops generally have a more educated sales staff, higher-quality equipment and better warranties, and they can service your machine in the event it breaks down. They also offer 30-day, no-questions-asked return policies.

Wear your athletic shoes to the store and put the machine through its paces at a variety of inclines for 10-15 minutes. "Any treadmill sounds and feels good for two minutes," Florez says. It may take longer, however, to find out if a machine is annoyingly loud or feels unstable. Among the brands Florez recommends are TrimLine, Precor, Nautilus and StarTrac.

**Q** I jog three times a week for 30 minutes and do a body-sculpting class twice a week. Do I need two pairs of shoes, or will one suffice for both running and body sculpting?

**A** Only shoes designed specifically for running will have enough support and shock absorption to handle the demands of the sport, says Manhattan podiatrist Oliver Zong, D.P.M., director of NYC Footcare. "With every stride you take while running, a force equivalent to three to four times your body weight is placed across your feet, ankles and knees," he says.

Running shoes don't offer significant lateral (side-to-side) support, so for activities like a body-sculpting class that involve a lot of this kind of motion, you will need cross

**Only shoes designed specifically for running will have the support and shock absorption you need.**

trainers, which can help prevent injuries such as ankle sprains.

Another reason to have a dedicated pair of running shoes is that it makes it easier to keep track of the "wear mileage." As a rule, running shoes should be replaced after every 300-500 miles of use - closer to 300 if you run outdoors. "If you are using the same pair of sneakers for other activities, keeping track of mileage will be more difficult, and the shoes will show signs of wear sooner," Zong adds.

*Suzanne Schlosberg is the author of Fitness for Travelers (Houghton Mifflin, 2002).*