

Rating the top DVD Fitness Programs

Fabulous fitness option or a big fit flop?

Fitness workouts have come a long way from out Jane Fonda and 20-minute workout days. Many of the new DVD's are full programs that truly offer a comprehensive workout option to going to the gym.

We reviewed some of the most popular programs. Most did quite well, but like joining a gym, you want to make sure you find the one that best fits your fitness level, personal goals and budget.

P90X

★★★★

Type of workout: This is a total body workout using a variety of formats and styles including muscle conditioning, circuit training, cardio and yoga.

What works: This is truly a training program rather than a one-off workout which I like for the following reasons:

- the program changes daily
- a variety of equipment is used with lots of options
- lots of options, modifications and technique tips
- well balanced exercise outline

Challenges: Although it's a pretty comprehensive workout, here are some of the potential pitfalls:

- time – a lot of the workouts are 60+ minutes
- the instruction can be annoying, but that's very subjective
- can be too intense for a lot of people – too much too soon

Inclusions and Additional features:

- Beach Body offers free coaching, tips, information and group support through their website by signing onto WOWY on www.beachbody.com
- 12 workout DVD's
- Extensive nutrition and training guide, tape measure and chart

Cost: \$120

Coming soon...P90X2 ★★★ 1/2

Preview – rating may change

In his follow up, Tony includes a lot more interval and circuit training with more plyometrics (jumping). It does appear to offer a lot of options, support and coaching. It has 15 DVD's but may be limited in its appeal given the price and the increased impact. There are an interesting range of packages available with this adding equipment and special features for the increased ticket.

Cost: \$120-239

Insanity ★★★★★

Type of workout: This is a total body workout primarily using the concepts of circuit training and high intensity interval training.

What works: This is a good value if you're tight for time and space and enjoy high intensity interval training:

- power-packed workouts that make use of every minute
- body weight exercises so no need for equipment – you can do this one anywhere
- time efficient – most of the workouts are around 45 minutes
- good balance of cardio and conditioning

Challenges: I've personally done this and enjoy the workouts; however, it's certainly not for everyone. Consider the following challenges before you pick this one up:

- no modifications and very little technique instructed – there are options on the website but many people don't use that feature or don't think to ask!
- a lot of plyometric (jumping) movements which are not suited for a lot of people
- not suited for anyone with orthopedic issues

Inclusions and Additional features:

- Beach Body offers free coaching, tips, information and group support through their website by signing onto WOWY on www.beachbody.com
- 10 workout DVD's
- Extensive nutrition and training guide, tape measure and chart

Cost: \$120

Coming soon...Asylum ★★★★★

Preview – rating may change

Shaun T has termed his follow up program as the ultimate sports conditioning. This one is like a sport-based boot camp. It comes with a ladder he uses to work on agility, speed, cardio and conditioning. If you get the coaching for technique and modifications, this could be a great addition to your fitness library for that price with 6 new workouts.

Cost: \$89

Zumba ★★★★★ 1/2

Type of workout: This is a cardio dance workout from the popular program currently seen at a lot of clubs and facilities.

What works: I love when people dance for fitness as it takes the "work" out of it! Here's what else works:

- the preview DVD with the moves goes through a great 1-2-3 progression of basic moves
- body weight and can be done anywhere
- well-produced and executed with the instruction
- fun music and moves

Challenges: Although I love dance programs, here are few cautions to consider before you buy:

- limited workouts – could be bored pretty quick
- fairly expensive relative to other program packages – tough to see the value
- toning is only focused on endurance – there’s no weight to the “sticks” so the effect with the toning segments is limited and the instruction here is sometimes inaccurate

Inclusions and Additional features:

- 2 Zumba toning sticks
- 4 DVD’s
- Booklet with basic moves summary and nutrition guide

Cost: \$99

Turbo Fire ★★★★★^{1/2}

Type of workout: This is a cardio dance workout from the popular program currently seen at a lot of clubs and facilities.

What works: I’m totally biased with this one since it’s my own specialty, but here are some of the positive perks:

- great balance of workouts focused on cardio and conditioning
- great options for duration – from 15 minutes on
- body weight based so you can do this anywhere, anytime
- fun music and moves
- great quality instruction

Challenges: Although I love kickboxing

- some of the moves and workouts can seem really quick, particularly the first few times through
- kickboxing is the foundation, so if you don’t enjoy that...don’t buy it!

Inclusions and Additional features:

- Beach Body offers free coaching, tips, information and group support through their website by signing onto WOWY on www.beachbody.com
- 15 workout DVD’s
- Extensive nutrition and training guide, tape measure and chart

Cost: \$120 + ultimate packages available as well with equipment

Chalene’s other programs ★★★★★^{1/2}

ChLEAN: is a more traditional workout program that focused on cardio, circuits, resistance similar to P90X.

Turbo Jam: is the first in her series of funky, kickboxing workouts and a great package to start with if you’re new to working out or this format.



Hip Hop Abs ★★★

Type of workout: This is quick workout focused on core.

What works: I do like options for quick workouts and it's nice to see alternatives to countless crunches that can end up doing more harm than good:

- great time-efficient workout option – to start with or squeeze in
- fun option for core training
- fun music and moves
- all body weight so can do anywhere

Challenges: Not a lot of downsides to this one

- No matter how many abs you do, you still have to focus on cardio and nutrition in order to get anywhere close to the abs they show on this DVD!

Inclusions and Additional features:

- Beach Body offers free coaching, tips, information and group support through their website by signing onto WOWY on www.beachbody.com
- 3 DVD's
- Nutrition and training guide, tape measure and chart

Cost: \$49-79 + ultimate packages available as well with equipment

10-Minute Trainer ★★★★★1/2

Type of workout: This is quick option that offers a variety of workouts that take about 15 minutes by the time you set up and transition with exercises. A GREAT option when you're tight for time.

What works: I love this one as an entry or option when you don't have the time or energy for a full workout:

- great time-efficient workout option – to start with or squeeze in
- good instruction through exercises
- band offers a great option for the kind of training included
- great to take on the road!

Challenges: Not a lot of downsides to this one

- band around your waist could feel awkward or uncomfortable

Inclusions and Additional features:

- Beach Body offers free coaching, tips, information and group support through their website by signing onto WOWY on www.beachbody.com
- 5 workouts on 2 DVD's
- band and door anchor
- Nutrition and training guide, tape measure and chart

Cost: \$49-79 + ultimate packages available as well with equipment

We're going to be adding to this in January when you'll no doubt be hit by a huge influx of fitness infomercials trying to capture you with your New Year's Resolutions! Stay tuned to CTV and visit www.libbynorris.com. We're planning lots of tips for home workouts and ways to help you stick to your goals!