

Bodies vs. Machines - Are Your Clients Getting a Balanced Workout?

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Some fitness clients eschew machinery, preferring the mat, barre, or free weights to guide their workout routine. Others gravitate naturally towards the bench, the elliptical, and the resistance machines. Some trainers focus on strength, other than endurance, and still others on sculpting arms, legs, and core musculature into stark relief.

No matter what discipline you specialize in, ensuring your clients get a full body, balanced workout is always a good idea. Whether you use machines, simply your clients' own body weight, or both, a balanced workout is always possible.

Cardio

Cardio machines are designed for repetition at high speed to raise the heart rate and burn calories. While the treadmill, elliptical, Stairmaster, and other machines can deliver an almost brainless workout, full body cardio can be accomplished just as well with a kickboxing session, a round of burpees, or a quick swim.

Strength training

Strength training can start and end on the floor. For example:

- Lunges and squats work leg muscles, buttocks, and hips
- Pushups and chest lifts take care of pecs and triceps
- Tuck jumps, box jumps, scissor jumps and squat jumps put an emphasis on quads and glutes.

Of course, you can achieve great strength results on machine, as well, but teaching your clients floor routines for days they don't make it to the gym can speed their progress.

Weight lifting

Weight lifting with free weights such as barbells, dumbbells, and kettlebells allows much more freedom when it comes to flexibility and will work more muscles than machines do. That said, the stability of machines when it comes to resistance work makes getting reps in easier and more fluid.

Pilates workouts in particular can be harder on the machine than on the mat - but the machine can build awareness of each muscle group, making duplication on the floor easier and more effective.

Using machines can provide helpful, but never lose sight of the advantages of “push-pull training when it comes to mimicking real world situations. Make certain you have proper [fitness trainer insurance](#) in case of mishap on the floor or a machine (machines do make it easier to overextend without realizing it!)