

LAGUNA BEACH

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MATT FUKUSHIMA

BODY OF WORK

Local designers offer tips for creating the perfect home gym.

By Somer Flaherty

READY TO TAKE YOUR EXERCISE ROUTINE HOME WITH YOU? TO CREATE A PERSONAL GYM SPACE that is the ultimate wellness experience at home, designers say the key is to create an environment that motivates you to work out and enriches your fitness practice.

For Laguna Beach designer Lisa McDennon, the space of a home gym is just as essential as any other space you spend time in. “I think the environment you surround yourself in is so connected to your productivity and well being,” she says. “Even just providing a connection to the outdoors like a balcony or French doors to help make the room more functional and provide an opportunity for air to flow in can make a big difference.”



LISA MCDENNON

LBM: A mirror seems pretty essential to a home gym. Any tips for choosing the right one?

LM: A mirror ensures proper form and will let you see the benefits of working out—the fruits of your labor! I’ve done home gyms with both framed and unframed mirrors and either works. If you have a contemporary home, you may want to go unframed, and if you have a traditional home, go with a frame. You can also put multiple mirrors on a single wall.

LBM: What are the best flooring options for a home gym?

LM: If you can afford it, invest in hardwood, cork or even basketball gym-style flooring—just stay away from carpet.

LBM: Television can help the time pass quickly during long bouts of cardio, but where should it be placed?

LM: If you have a treadmill or a stationary bike, put the television directly in front of the equipment. It won’t be good for your alignment if you’re looking to the side watching TV during your workout.

LBM: You’ve worked in Laguna for more than a decade. Any tips for clients struggling with the area’s common problem of not having enough space for a separate gym?

LM: You can do lots in a small space like put a pull-up bar in your doorframe and add resistance bands to pull off of it. You can literally do any exercise in a doorway with the right equipment.

If your small Laguna cottage doesn’t afford enough space to devote an entire room to your home gym, use a current space for multiple functions. Local interior designer Rick Campos, who also chronicles new home decor style trends on his popular blog “Design Between the Lines,” says these days every room in the house can have multiple purposes. “When not in workout mode, the home gym is an ideal space to set up a massage table for in-home spa treatments. A collapsible massage table fits swiftly into a standard wardrobe closet and is perfect for post workout stretching or a rewarding massage,” he says.

LBM: Any specific lighting concerns people should be aware of?

RC: For lighting I always go for dimmable and directional recessed lighting. Think twice about any type of flush mounted ceiling fixtures and fans if you are incorporating cardio equipment like a treadmill or elliptical machine into your home gym. These types of cardio machines orient the user about a foot or more off the ground, bringing your head that much closer to your standard ceiling height as well as fan blades and light fixtures.

LBM: No home gym is complete without ...

RC: An amazing immersive sound system to invigorate your workout. I recommend integrating audio and video into an easy-to-use, one-touch system so you can spend your valuable time focused on your workout and not how to switch from satellite radio to cable TV and back. I also recommend wireless headphones to help keep the noise level to yourself!