

THE FUTURE OF FITNESS: Going solo

Online broker TD Ameritrade found that 59% of Americans say they don't plan on renewing their gym memberships once the pandemic is over in their recent US-based survey. More than 56% of those surveyed say that the pandemic helped them find "more affordable" ways to get exercise and live a healthier lifestyle.

TD Ameritrade surveyed 2,009 adults ages 24 and older with at least \$10,000 in investable assets from March 4 -12 and April 24 - May 4. Of that group, 776 respondents said they lead a healthy lifestyle and exercise regularly. In the survey, respondents said they spent around \$177 a month (or about \$2,124 a year) on things like gym memberships, fitness classes and personal training.

In a recent article published by Mic, most people who shared their experience said that they will not be going back to the gym after the pandemic ends. The reasons vary.

For example, Genesis Gutierrez, a 22-year-old marketing assistant in Los Angeles shared what going solo meant for her, especially as a woman. She said that the perk of going solo for her is that she's not being judged for her body type or being stared at, which gave her a sense of

comfort that she was missing in the community setup. Now she is focusing more on strength training and that feeling herself get stronger throughout the pandemic is what got her through some tough times.

If you too, feel the comfort of leaving community setups and working out on your own, that is a pretty achievable goal in terms of equipment as well. You can spend basically any amount of money on gear, all the popular apps and online fitness studios offer workouts that teach you to use your own body weight. If you have the money to invest, there's fancy at-home workout gear to fit every desire. It really all depends on how much you feel comfortable spending.

If you're not comfortable with large equipment and simulating the actual gym, a few hand weights and resistance bands are recommended. The elastic bands last longer than the rubber ones. And yes, you can spend a lot of money on a treadmill or spin sike, but there are a lot of creative ways you can hack a cheaper stationary bike or tread if you want palpable results on a budget.

If you're more comfortable with apps, there are a lot to choose from. Nike Run Club is a jogger fave. If you want a guided outdoor running experience, but you're a novice, Couch to 5k and Zombies Run! are very accessible as well. If you think you'll miss working out with other humans, you can always take live classes online, and not for nothing, but some folx feel an extraordinary amount of kinship with the people in workout videos. Working out alone doesn't have to be lonely, you get to be alone if that's appealing to you, without really being alone.

