



## Tips on Joining a Gym

Gyms offer a variety of different services and membership options. Here are some tips to help you find the right gym for you.

- Verify that the health studio is registered and bonded with the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. Certain health studios are exempt from the registration and security requirements.
- Checkout the complaint history of a gym with Pinellas County Consumer Protection and the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services..
- Do the amenities offered meet your needs? Some facilities are for women only, while others are coed; do they offer the exercise programs or equipment you want; do the hours fit your schedule?
- Make sure the gym you choose has qualified staff available to instruct and assist you with training and equipment. There is no state licensing for personal trainers, so be sure to ask what type of training and qualifications the instructors have.
- Determine the ownership of the facility. Is it a franchise or individually owned facility? Is it leased space or company owned?
- You may be paying for a lot more than just the membership. Be sure that all amenities are stipulated in the contract and identify whether they're included or if there is a charge.
- Does the gym limit membership? If there is no cap on the number of members, that could lead to overcrowding. Also visit the gym at different times of the day to determine when the peak times occur.
- You should feel the burn from working out, not pressure from the staff to join on the spot. Many gyms will even allow you to work-out on a trial basis before you join.
- Avoid long term contracts, so you won't be obligated to pay for something you're not using.
- Know what your consumer rights are under The Health Studio Act, so you'll know what to do if your gym closes or moves. Visit <http://www.freshfromflorida.com/Divisions-Offices/Consumer-Services/Consumer-Resources/Consumer-Protection/Publications/Health-Studios>