

GEAR

Shake up that routine

Vibration platforms, which purportedly provide a host of bone, muscle, circulatory, flexibility and injury-rehab benefits by shaking your body 20 to 50 times a second as you stand on them, are becoming more varied and practical as the market grows beyond pro sports teams and physical therapy offices. Backed by numerous studies (sometimes company-supported) suggesting that vibration increases load and stimulation with less joint stress, the machines are promoted as “workout accelerators” that hammer muscles in half the time of normal gym sessions.

Some of the newest models provide built-in cords and timers to move you through a full-body strength routine, with a few offering on-screen virtual coaches. Also, rival companies now offer different types of vibration technologies, including vertical (up-and-down plate movement), pivotal (alternating-side teeter-totter movement hinged from the center) and non-mechanical vertical, which works on sound wave pulses. Although they function similarly, each claims performance advantages.

Here's an overview of the machines that are shaking up the workout world.

— ROY M. WALLACK



Power Plate

Chic shaker

Power Plate pro6: The newest vertical-vibration model from the category founder and leader includes a pair of retractable polymer cables, which allow upper body workouts. **Likes:** My body was thoroughly blasted in 20 minutes, yet I finished feeling relatively fresh. The cables greatly increase the number and range of exercises beyond the squats, push-ups and stretches possible on a simple plate. A wall chart of exercises is included. The control panel includes a timer and a vibration frequency-per-second adjuster. Sleek looks. An ankle-strap for leg exercises will be available in the fall. **Dislikes:** No virtual coach. It's not cheap. (The Power Plate my3, at \$2,499, does not include cables.)

Price: \$10,750. (877) 877-5283; www.powerplate.com.



DKN

Built-in personal trainer

DKN XG3.0: Vertical vibrating plate with attached straps and an on-screen trainer icon that leads you through various workouts. **Likes:** Most practical machine of the bunch. By combining vibration, straps and rare on-screen images of a virtual coach illustrating four preset workout programs (upper body, abs, lower body, total body), this machine delivers a fun, effective, easy-to-follow workout. You can also do your own workout, as you would with the other brands. The adjustable-length straps (not stretch cords) force you to pull against your body weight, an effort multiplied by the vibration. Also, it looks great and is relatively inexpensive. **Dislikes:** None.

Price: \$2,495. (888) 887-8423; www.DKN-usa.com.



Nitrofit

Side-to-side shifter

Medvibe Nitrofit Personal: Pivotal-motion vibration plate, with add-on resistance cables, that rapidly alternates side to side. (The others reviewed here move up and down.) **Likes:** Fine cable-vibration workout at a decent price. Monitor displays speed, heart rate, body fat percentage, and includes a timer. The company claims that the teeter-totter motion improves toning, core strength and posture better than the up-and-down motion of the vertical machines. Includes instructional workout poster, full-length training mat, adjustable resistance cables with handles. **Dislikes:** The monitor has no virtual coach. As with Power Plate, and the Wave and Turbosonic, you make your own workout. **Price:** \$999. (888) 861-0480; www.wholebodyvibration.net.



Turbosonic

Feeling vibrations

Turbosonic Ovation: Vertical platform with sound-generated movement; you vibrate on top of a giant subwoofer speaker. **Likes:** Similar workout potential and feel as the other machines. the LCD screen has seven automatic and manual modes that adjust frequency and amplitude, and includes a 10-minute countdown timer and calorie counter. The company says sonic vibration provides a more natural shaking that is easier and more healing for joints than mechanical vibration. **Dislikes:** No cords, so has a more limited exercise potential than the others. And big bucks. **Price:** \$7,500. (877) 684-7245; www.turbosonicusa.com.

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