



The last review featured the Garmin Forerunner 201, my favorite running gadget. This review is about the LifeFitness treadmills, my favorite treadmill. There are several models to choose from, and the more gizmos on one, naturally the more it will cost. However, I am not concerned with the cost because I run on one at the YMCA facility I use for much of my training.

After having run on other treadmills, I have come to appreciate the LifeFitness because of its forgiving running deck. At another center, I ran on a different brand of treadmill and often came away with my legs feeling as if they had been hammering on a cement road. Not so with the LifeFitness. Certainly I've been bored out of my mind on occasion by running on a treadmill, but at least my legs never feel as if they've taken a beating. And because my orthopedic surgeon recommended I cut down my miles because of thinning cartilage in my right knee, I figure this has to be important.

As with many treadmills, there are several workout modes. I've used only two, hills and speed intervals. With the hills, you can set just how much of an incline you want to tackle, set the speed and take off. And you always can control the speed manually during the workout. The incline usually changes every one minute. With the speed intervals, you set your jogging speed and your running speed. Whenever you want to go from one to the other, just press the speed interval button and the speed changes from one of your preset speeds to the other. I would rather have this feature allow you to set your own interval times, but manually works fine. Other workouts include heart zone, cardio and and fat burn. There are several others, and many new modes on the newer machines. Higher-priced models also include an LCD TV.

There are other treadmill brands that boast shock-absorption beds, and they might be as good or better. But I haven't run on them so I can't rate them against the LifeFitness. However, if you're looking to either buy a treadmill or find a training center that has them, I would recommend a LifeFitness. Besides the nice running deck, the machines apparently are built to last. There has never been one, to my knowledge, of being down because of mechanical failure after more than a year of them being installed. If you'd like more details about this brand, visit www.lifefitness.com. No, I don't get a kickback or even a used treadmill to put in my home for recommending one. However, if any LifeFitness rep would offer me one in appreciation of this review, I certainly would feel obligated to take it. I won't hold my breath, though. Maybe just saving my legs is thanks enough.