

Indoor trainer sessions are prescribed throughout the [All Training Plans](#) and, during the winter, allow you to ride no matter how foul the weather and to perform intense and focused workouts without the distractions, disruptions and possible dangers of the open road.

Buying an Indoor Trainer

Turbo

What is it?

A turbo trainer is a metal frame that you bolt your bike to using a special rear QR skewer. A roller then presses against your rear tyre and, by using a fan, fluid or magnets, generates resistance for you to pedal against. The name comes from early fan units which produced comparable amount of noise to a turbocharged engine but thankfully modern ones are far quieter.

Cost

€100-€1500+

What to look for

Buy a model from a reputable and known cycling brand. There are cheaper products but, as you're going to be bolting your bike to it, you don't want it failing. Variable resistance operated from a handlebar mounted lever will increase the variety and improve the quality of your workouts. Spending more will usually get you a quieter turbo, improved smoothness and road like feel, especially at higher resistance levels, and more training feedback.

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Wide price range to suit all budgets and it's possible to get a quality turbo towards the lower end.- You're training on your actual bike so your position will be the same.- They fold away for easy storage.- You can generate high levels of resistance.- More expensive models can provide large amounts of valuable training data.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- They can chew up your tyre so having a turbo rear wheel with a turbo specific tyre is a good idea.- Cheaper models can be noisy.- Training on a turbo will not develop bike handling skills.- They can be stressful on your bike's frame if not setup carefully.

Rollers

What are they?

Drums mounted within a frame that you ride on. The two rear rollers, that your rear wheel drives, are connected to the front roller by a belt, so it's spinning too. Most sets of rollers don't offer variable resistance and training data is usually limited to your bike computer. However there are now sets appearing at the upper end of the price range with variable resistance.



Cost

€150-€1300

What to look for

Quality drums, smooth bearings and a sturdy frame are essential and should be guaranteed if you stick to established brands. Narrower drums can be initially intimidating to ride but make for a more compact unit. If you're planning on using the rollers for pre-race warm-ups or are short of space, an easy folding mechanism and compact stowed size is important. Some makes have parabolic drums that encourage your wheel towards the centre and can make learning to ride them easier.

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Excellent for developing pedalling technique, balance and bike handling skills.- Relatively cheap, €200 can buy you a very good set.- You can ride your road bike on them so no position changes to worry about.- No potential stress on frame and low tyre wear.- Quick to get bike on and off.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- No variable resistance on the majority of models makes lower cadence, "hill" and strength workouts difficult.- Learning to ride them confidently will take some time.

Static Bike

What is it?

Static bikes include basic home fitness models, classic gym bike, Spinning bikes with large fixed flywheels and top end cycling training specific models such as Wattbikes. **Cost**

<€100-€2250

What to look for

For maximum transferable fitness gains, you want a static bike that feels like and replicates the position of your road bike as closely. Both cheap home fitness brands and very expensive commercial gym models should be avoided as they won't give you anything near to a road like ride or position. Spinning style bikes can be good as the fixed flywheel can aid the development of a smooth and even pedalling technique. However, training feedback is minimal or non-existent and the resistance mechanisms can be fairly crude. Higher end cycling specific models will offer a wide range of positional adjustment, a realistic ride feel and accurate training data.

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Always setup and ready to go.- You can keep your road bike setup for the road.- Less wear on your road bike.- Higher end models provide excellent training feedback and data.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Worthwhile models are expensive.- Big, heavy and, once installed, you can't fold them away.- Your position on them may not exactly match your position on your road bike.- Won't benefit balance or bike handling skills.



Spinning Classes

What are they?

Instructor led cycling group exercise classes on fixed gear bikes with heavy flywheels. Music and the instructor should keep you motivated and, based on the instructor's cues and beat of the music, you adjust your bike's resistance and cadence accordingly.

€5.00-€10.00 per class or inclusive in your gym membership

What to look for

Look for a class that is frequented by other local cyclists and is ideally led by an instructor who's a cyclist too. Make sure that the bikes are well maintained and have SPD compatible clipless pedals. Most gyms won't allow you to swap pedals over, so it can be worth buying a cheap pair of cycling shoes with SPD's, if you don't use this system, if you'll be spinning regularly. The first time you go, take key measurements such as saddle height, reach etc from your road bike with you, try to replicate them on the spinning bike and note down these settings for future classes.

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- If you've already got a gym membership it can be a cheap way to do your indoor training.- Class structure can be extremely motivating.- You don't have to take up space in your home with an indoor trainer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- You may struggle to replicate your road riding position.- You won't be able to perform your own specific workouts.- You'll have to travel to the gym.