

The LifeSpan VP1000 Vibration Plate was the clear favorite in a review of vibration platforms reviewed in the Jan/Feb 2008 issue of Health magazine.

“With three-way vibration and handles, the LifeSpan VP1000 delivered.”

Gina Lombardi, respected fitness expert and celebrity personal trainer, tested the Soloflex WBV, the LifeSpan VP1000, and the PowerPlate my5. HEALTH’s “Bottom Line” summarizes by saying:

*“I improved my flexibility and boosted my muscle workout...
LifeSpan gives the best workout for the better price.”*



Healthy Moves



INSIDETRACK

BY CONTRIBUTING EDITOR GINA LOMBARDI. Gina hosts *FitNation* on Discovery’s *FitTV*, is a personal fitness coach, and is certified by the National Strength and Conditioning Association.

Madonna and Hilary Swank both use a vibration platform to shake up their home-workout routines.

Shake your way slim

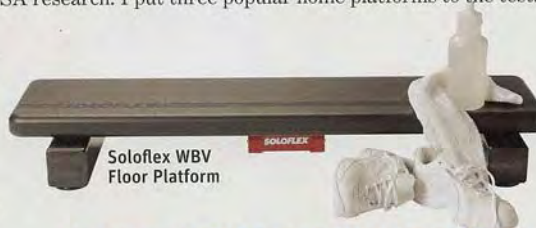
Celebs love this hot new workout gizmo. But does it really give results?

DOING A WEIGHT WORKOUT on a vibration platform (until recently, found only in high-end gyms, but now sold for home use) may help you burn more calories and build flexibility because your muscles are activated over and over, multiplying exercise effects, according to NASA research. I put three popular home platforms to the test:



LifeSpan VP1000 Vibration Plate

Power Plate my5



Soloflex WBV Floor Platform

Soloflex WBV Floor Platform (\$295)

Pros: Only 33 pounds and about the size of a weight bench, this platform gets a few points for portability. There’s a nice selection of stretches and strength moves on both the company’s Web site and the DVD that comes with it. **Cons:** The too-low intensity levels (see the tips below left for the level you need) and vertical-only vibration (three-way vibration is best; more info below left) weren’t enough for me to feel any effects after two weeks’ use. **Details:** www.soloflex.com.

LifeSpan VP1000 Vibration Plate (\$999)

Pros: With three-way vibration and handles, the VP1000 delivered. After I (a.k.a., Ms. Inflexible) stretched to touch my toes on the platform for 30 seconds, I could put my palms on the ground. The vibration essentially “warms up” hamstrings, says Nick Winkelman, a strength-and-conditioning specialist at Athlete’s Performance in Tempe, Arizona. (See Winkelman’s vibration-plate-buying tips at left.) The strength moves I did on the machine made my muscles work harder than usual, too. **Cons:** The wobbly vibration plate you stand on is a little hard to get used to, and the manual has only 11 exercises. **Details:** www.lifespanfitness.com.

Power Plate my5 (\$4,500)

Pros: I got the same great flexibility-and-strength workout on this sleek machine as I did on the one from LifeSpan (it also has handles and three-way vibration), and it’s less wobbly. The video on the Web site shows more than 20 different full-body exercises, plus you can customize the color to match your décor. **Cons:** It’s pricey. **Details:** www.mypowerplate.com.

Before you buy

Expert tips to help you choose.

☼ Look for a platform with three vibration directions (front to back, side to side, up and down), a frequency setting of 25 to 50 Hz, and 2 to 6 mm of amplitude. Don’t go above this, since the jury’s still out on whether higher intensities might cause injury over the long term.

☼ Do your normal 20-minute (or less) strength workout on the platform twice a week. (There’s no benefit in going longer than 20 minutes.)

☼ Don’t use if you’re pregnant or tend to get migraines. All that jarring could trigger a headache if you’re prone.

>>> Bottom line: I improved my flexibility and boosted my muscle workout using two of the machines; LifeSpan gives the best workout for the better price. My advice? Before buying, try out a platform at a gym or a fitness-equipment store.