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Repairing and Maintaining Your Treadmill

By [Paul Webb](#)

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TREADMILL REPAIR

PREVENTIVE MAINTENANCE

The first and most important part of owning a treadmill or any piece of equipment is preventive maintenance. If you are not currently doing this then start today!

Items required for a good preventive maintenance program on your treadmill:

Vacuum cleaner

Screwdriver- philip's and flatblade

Sockets and allen wrenches depending on your model Grease Cleaning Rags

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Now let's get started!

ALWAYS UNPLUG THE TREADMILL OR ANY EQUIPMENT BEFORE SERVICING!

Remove the hood or motor cover. There's probably anywhere from 2 to 8 screws. Now vacuum the dust from around the motor and drive mechanisms. What you can't get to with the vacuum, use a small cloth or brush. A clean motor doesn't become clogged and overheat.

After you have cleaned around the motor, look for any grease fittings, these are usually found on commercial grade units, but your's might have some also.

For those of you who have never seen one, they are about the size of a pencil eraser and have a hole in the end. they are usually found on bearings. If you don't have a grease gun you can buy a small gun and grease at your local auto parts store for less than \$10.00.

If your unit is chain driven, clean the chain of excess dust, and apply a small amount of grease to the chain, also grease the drive chain and elevation chain as necessary. Use white lithium grease if available.

Check all drive belts for wear, look for cuts and nicks, and replace as needed.

Loosen the walking belt, most treadmills have either a bolt or screw on each side at the rear of the unit. Loosen these, push the rear roller

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toward the walking deck until the belt is loose enough for you to look underneath.

Raise the belt and inspect the underside for wear. If it looks worn or burned you need to replace the belt.

Inspect the walking deck for wear, you will be able to tell if its worn. If it has little ruts worn into it or bear spots it needs to be either flipped or replaced.

Many treadmills today have walking decks that can be flipped. If your deck is worn flip it, but it is recommended that when you flip the deck you replace the walking belt.

Wipe the deck and underside of the belt with a soft cloth, depending on your model of treadmill you should lubricate the walking deck at least every 6 months. Some unit use silicone spray or gel. Others use wax. Check your owners manual for what the manufacturer recommends.

After you clean the belt and deck and lubricated the deck as needed center the belt on the walking platform and tighten the screws at the end of the treadmill.

Turn each bolt the same amount to keep the belt centered. Tighten the belt until it does not move freely on the rollers. Then with CAUTION straddle the belt and start the treadmill at low speed.

Wait for the belt to start moving then step on the belt. If it stops it is not tight enough. Step off the belt and tighten each side 1 turn then step on the belt again.

Repeat as necessary.

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Once you can walk on the belt at low speed without it stopping or slipping increase the speed to 3 miles per hour. This should be a fast walk. If your unit has side rails hold the rails and try to stop the belt with pressure.

IF ok then increase the speed to 5 MPH. Run on the treadmill, if you feel any slipping tighten the bolts another 1/2 turn each. Repeat if necessary.

If the belt is not centered, stand behind the treadmill and run the belt at full speed, if the belt is tracking to the left. Tighten the left bolt or screw 1/2 of a turn, and loosen the right bolt or screw 1/4 turn until the belt is centered.

IF the belt is tracking to the right, tighten the right side bolt or screw 1/2 turn and loosen the left bolt or screw 1/4 turn. Repeat as necessary, this should center the walking belt.

Always wipe the treadmill down after each use, perspiration is very corrosive.

If your treadmill inclines increase the elevation to maximum and vacuum underneath.

If it doesn't incline pull it out and vacuum.

Most operating problems are usually easily seen, detected and repaired. If the cause of a problem is not obvious, follow a logical process of checking each component in the system.

Repair of Your Treadmill

It would be impossible for me to list every problem for every manufacturers treadmill in this report, but here are some common problems:

Walking belt is not centered. See preventive maintenance procedure for centering belt.

No power, check that the unit is plugged in to a live outlet, ALWAYS USE CAUTION when dealing with electricity. Try another outlet if you need to.

If you know the outlet is live, unplug the unit and check the fuses, you may need to lift the cover for this.

IF you have power but the motor does not turn you either have a bad power supply or the motor brushes are worn. Contact the manufacturer for information.

If the motor is turning make sure the drive belt is not loose or broken. Tighten or replace as needed.

Walking belt moves, but there is a loud grinding noise.

Loosen the belt and see if the noise goes away, if it does you may have a bad front roller. Sometimes you can spray the bearing in the roller with a lubricant like WD40 and this will solve the problem, but you may need to replace the roller.

If the noise does not go away then the motor bearings are probably bad and you will have to replace the motor.

Elevation does not work, unit will not go up or down or is stuck in the elevated mode.

Unplug the unit and check the elevation motor fuse, replace if necessary. Check the elevation system for broken chains or cables, make sure something hasn't gotten caught in the gears.

If your unit is equipped with limit switches for the up and down limits check them to be sure they are not engaged. These are usually little microswitches located around the elevation gears.

ALWAYS LOOK FOR LOOSE OR BROKEN WIRES FOR ANY PROBLEM YOU ARE HAVING.

You have power to the treadmill but the control panel does not work.

If your unit requires a key or a magnet make sure it is inserted correctly.

You may have a bad control panel, and you will need to replace it.

Check, for broken or loose drive belts underneath the cover.

The treadmill will run for a short time then either pops a fuse, or breaker or just stops.

Probably the belt or deck, or both are worn and need to be replaced. Try lubricating the deck first. If this doesn't help then you will need to replace the worn parts.

Maybe the belt is too tight and is causing the motor to draw too much current. Try the belt tightening procedure under preventive maintenance.

Paul Webb-Paul has several years in the repair business and has seen most problems that can occur with treadmills and fitness equipment. You can visit his treadmill website at: <http://treadmills.cc/>

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