Treadmill Deck and Belt Guide

Residential & Light Commercial Treadmills

Caring for and maintaining the treadmill deck and belt will help extend the life of the treadmill and keep it running smoothly. This document will provide you with information regarding these topics.

This document applies to BowFlex and Schwinn models manufactured in 2024 or later. For legacy BowFlex and Schwinn models, please refer to your product's service manual.

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Treadmill Supplies

All treadmills come with a t-handle wrench to be used to make running belt adjustments. Treadmills with silicone running surfaces also come with a 40ml bottle of silicone (1-2 applications). Additional bottles can also be ordered through Johnson Health Tech by contacting Customer Technical Support or visit https://www.horizonfitness.com/accessories.
Part #: 40ml bottle - # 1000092805 (1-2 applications)

For Purchase Supplies

Lubricating a treadmill that has a silicone running surface is key for performance and longevity. In the section *Running Deck/Belt Lubrication – for Silicone Surfaces ONLY,* you will see 2 ways to lubricate the running surface using the silicone that comes with your treadmill. Procedure 1 shows how to apply the silicone using the silicone that comes with the treadmill. Procedure 2 show how to apply the silicone using a syringe applicator that can be purchased at places like Amazon and other for purchase silicone lubricants can also be found in the Running Deck/Belt Lubrication section.

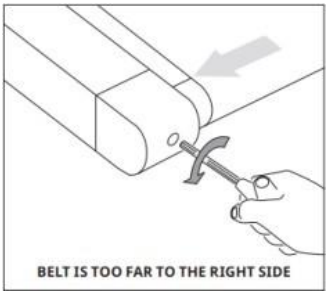
Click this link to see the applicator: Silicone Applicator.

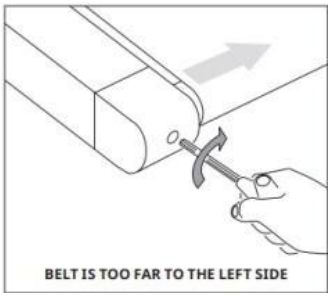
Running Belt Adjustments

Once the treadmill is positioned where it will be used, the running belt must be checked for proper tension AND alignment (centering). It's recommended to check the belt tension and alignment after the first week of use. Temperature and humidity can cause the belt to stretch at different rates. If the belt starts to slip or is drifting to one side of the running deck, follow the steps below to make the adjustment needed.

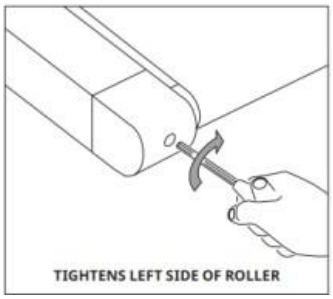
Tensioning and Pre-Alignment Procedure

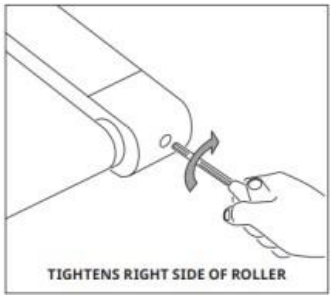
1. Start with the running belt not in motion. Check to see if you can lift the edge of the running belt on both sides. If not, go to step 2. If you can lift the belt edge on both the left and right side, and you find the belt to be very loose, go to step 4.
2. Before tensioning, if the belt is too far under the rails on one side *or* if it is significantly bunched up on one side, preventing you from lifting the edge of the belt, and showing a large gap on the opposite side, follow the steps below to pre-adjust the belt alignment. This procedure is to adjust the pre-alignment until you can see the belt start to become centered:
    a. Refer to the alignment procedure in the images below. If the belt is bunched up on one side, use two full rotations to adjust the belt in the correct direction (as shown in the images). Then run the belt until the belt finishes adjusting. Determine if the alignment will allow you to lift the edge of the belt sides, as if the belt is aligning. If so, continue to step 4.
    b. If the movement is too quick to the opposite side, use a half turn or a quarter turn to correct the direction for alignment. Run the belt again, and if it starts to center correctly, the pre-adjustment is completed.





3. To set the tension, with the treadmill paused, go to the edge of the belt on the left- or right-hand side, center yourself in the middle of the deck, pick up the edge of the running belt enough to stack two fingers vertically (one on top of the other) and go to your middle knuckles as a point of measurement.
    a. If you can't get two fingers stacked vertically, loosen that side (refer to the tensioning procedure in the images below). Do one full rotation in the correct direction, checking after each rotation, until you can stack two fingers vertically.
    b. Make sure the same is applied to both the left and right sides. The belt should be just snug on your fingers, but not too tight.





4. If the running belt is snug on your two fingers for both the right- and left-hand side, it is tensioned correctly. If there is a significant amount of slack (e.g., if you can have your hand fully vertical under the belt, with four fingers or more, stacked), jump to step 5.
    a. Please go to the Running Belt Alignment section to make any slight alignment adjustments as needed.
5. For each finger you can stack on top of the first two fingers vertically, tighten three to four full rotations for the same side you are testing and finding to have too much slack. Then check tension.
    a. Please note: If you are testing the tension on the left side and have slack, only adjust the rotations on the same left side. The same applies for the right side: When there is slack, tighten the rotations on the right side.
6. If the belt slack is greater than four fingers stacked under the side of the belt (2 or 3 inches of running belt slack, in the middle of the deck), a minimum of five full rotations are required to start getting the tension back to the walking belt. Test after each attempt and adjust rotations as needed by going back and following steps 4-6 until tension is complete.
7. Once the tension is corrected for both the right- and left-hand side of the belt, run the belt and see if any further adjustments are needed.
    a. Please note: If the belt still needs to be centered, follow the alignment procedure in the Running Belt Alignment section for final adjustments. This procedure is also available in the owner's manual.

If after attempting multiple times or if something isn't making sense or working correctly, it could be due to an underlying cause—the alignment bolts threading may be damaged, the treadmill may have a damaged roller, or the running belt itself may be misshapen or cut wrong.

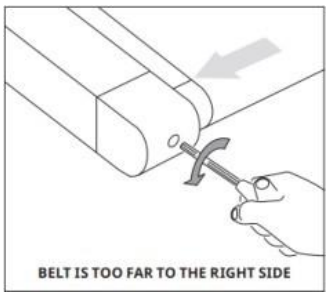
Please feel free to contact customer technical support for further assistance.

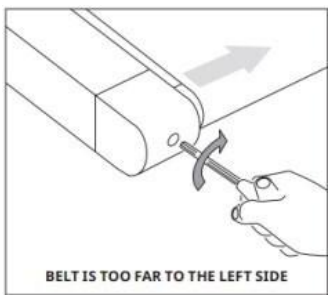
Running Belt Alignment

Find the two rear roller bolts in the end caps adjust the rear roller position. To align the belt to the center of the running deck, using the t-handle wrench turn bolt on the side that the belt moved and turn clockwise. In other words, if you want to move the belt to the right, turn the left bolt counterclockwise (see image below). A ¼ - ½ turn will move the belt quite a bit.

Procedure

1. Press Go on the treadmill and adjust speed to 3mph/4.8kph. You can use higher speeds to allow the belt to walk side to side faster.
2. Move/adjust the belt by turning the roller bolts clockwise or counterclockwise.
3. Watch the belt move to the center of the deck (increasing the speed allows the belt to adjust left or right quicker).
4. Repeat until belt is centered on the deck.





Running Surface Type

There are 2 different running surfaces on residential treadmills: silicone oil OR waxed surface. It is important to know what you are working with to help you understand maintenance and/or when replacements are needed. Johnson Health Tech has 2 different tests used to check if a new deck or belt is needed. Which test you use is based on drive motor type and running surface type. Please use the chart below to determine what test you should follow.

Drive Motor Type	Running Surface Type	Test
DC Motor	Silicone	Look and feel test
AC Motor	Silicone	Look and feel test
AC Motor	Wax	Friction test*

**A technician will need to perform this test. Refer to Online Remedy and view Using Your Multi-meter instruction to see how to perform the test.*

Overview

Silicone Surface - silicone oil is applied to the surface of the deck then walked into the belt. Add 20ml silicone oil to deck every 150 miles or 3 months. An additional 10ml could be added after walking in the 20ml if it doesn't seem smooth. Never apply more than 30ml at one time.

Wax Surface – Some treadmills have decks that can be flipped because they have wax ironed onto both sides whereas decks that are not flipped are not waxed at all and only 1 side of the deck is useable. No matter the deck type, all waxed systems have wax infused into the running belt. Unlike silicone surfaces where it's recommended to add silicone through the life of the deck/belt, you should never apply anything to a waxed system.

How do you tell if a deck or belt needs to be replaced?

- AC drive motors with waxed running surface – a friction test must be performed to see if replacement is warranted (a technician will need to perform this test)
- DC drive motors with silicone or wax running surface - "look and feel test" (see Running Deck and Belt Condition)

Running Deck and Belt Condition *(Look and Feel Test)*

Issues related to "no belt movement" or "the belt abruptly stopping" can be related to the condition of the running deck and/or belt. The deck and belt look and feel will determine if replacement is needed or if silicone should be added. There are several ways that will show when it's time to replace a running belt, a running deck or BOTH. Besides physical damage to the deck, it usually does not need to be replaced.

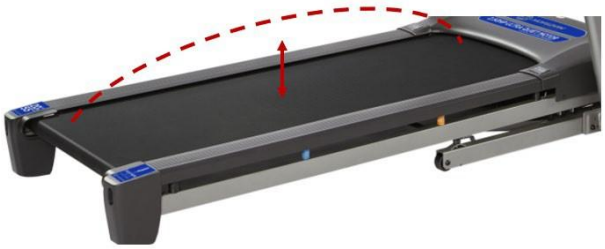
- The most common issue is to see white dust or nylon fabric at the rear of the machine, underneath the deck, and around the rollers – replace belt

- Excess heat from friction could cause the running belt to rip and split in half – replace belt
- Excess heat from friction can cause the underside of the running belt to discolor (dark brownish in color) – replace belt
- Excess heat from friction can cause the top layer of the deck to wear through exposing the wood (brown). This will also damage the belt – replace deck and belt

Procedure to check condition of running surfaces

1. From the rear roller, find the 2 roller bolts inside of the end cap (1 on each side)

2. Loosen these bolts until the belt is loose enough to inspect the underside from the center of the running surface.



3. Refer to the images below to compare the deck and belt condition

Surface of the running deck

Good – black in color, surface is shiny and smooth to the look and touch

Bad – showing grooves you can see and feel

Bad – showing dull marks you can see and feel.

Underside of the running belt

Good – white in color and no material peals or burn marks. Slight discoloration is normal

Bad – burn marks/lines are starting to appear

Bad – majority of material is black/dark brown in color

Once the condition of the deck and belt have been determined, you should take different steps related to the type of running deck and belt on the treadmill. Is it a silicone running system or waxed running system? Check the Owner's Manual to determine this. When in doubt, contact Johnson Health Tech Customer Technical Support with your treadmill

serial number and they can answer this for you. It's important to know if the treadmill has a waxed running surface as it cannot have silicone (or anything for that matter) added or it will ruin the entire running system and the deck and belt will need to be replaced.

Running Deck/Belt Lubrication – for Silicone Surfaces ONLY

IMPORTANT: *Check the Owner's Manual to see if your treadmill has a silicone running deck/belt or a waxed running deck/belt. Waxed decks/belts are considered maintenance free meaning nothing should ever be applied/added to the deck or belt for its life.*

To ensure optimal long-term performance of your treadmill, the belt and deck must be lubricated periodically. Lack of lubrication causes friction and can lead to premature failure of the belt, deck, motor, or electronics. **It is recommended to lubricate the deck every 150 miles (241 km) or every 3 months**. This can change depending on many factors such as usage, age of the machine, and environmental conditions, among others. A simple inspection of the deck and belt surfaces can be performed to identify if the deck/belt need to be lubricated.

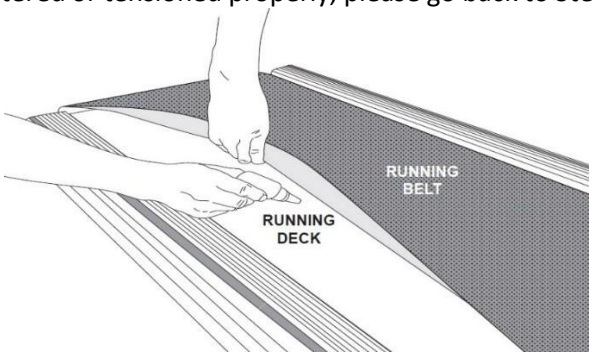
Procedure 1 – using the bottle of silicone that comes with the treadmill

This procedure requires you to loosen the running belt. Although, you can lubricate the deck/belt this way, it is important to make sure to re-tension and align the belt. Procedure 1 does not require you to loosen the belt and is the preferred method and requires less steps to perform.

Required supplies:

- 8mm T-handle wrench
- 20 ml silicone oil (The bottle contains 40 ml, which is enough for two applications. Additional bottles can be purchased at https://www.horizonfitness.com/accessories.

1. Power down the treadmill and unplug the power cord from the outlet.
2. Using the t-handle wrench or socket, loosen the rear roller bolts until the running belt can be lifted enough to expose the center of the deck.
3. Lift up on the belt as far as you can and apply the silicone in a zig-zag pattern across the entire running deck surface. Use 20ml per application. An additional 10ml could be added if needed but never use more than 30ml at one time.
4. Plug the power cord into the outlet and power on
5. Re-tension and align the belt
6. Walk on the unit at a comfortable speed for 3 minutes to spread the silicone.
    a. If you notice the belt not centered or tensioned properly, please go back to Step 5



Procedure 2 – using the Silicone Applicator

1. Power down the treadmill and unplug the power cord from the outlet.
2. Silicone applicator - Fill the applicator with 10ml of silicone.
3. Lift the running belt from the side in the front middle of the belt. Insert the applicator under the running belt. Press the syringe while moving the applicator towards the rear roller until all 10ml is applied.
4. Stand on the running belt and walk so the other half of the belt is on the top.
5. Repeat steps 2-3
6. Plug the power cord into the outlet and power on
7. Run the treadmill for 3 minutes without walking on it.
8. After 3 minutes, get the treadmill to a comfortable walking speed and walk on it for another 3 minutes to spread the silicone.
    a. If you notice the belt not centered or tensioned properly, please go Running Belt Adjustments

Caring for the Deck and Belt

Always power off the treadmill and disconnect the power cord from the outlet before performing these tasks.

Running Deck

- With a dry cloth, wipe the side rails and any exposed parts of the running deck. Do not get the running deck wet as it can cause irreversible damage.
- Vacuum under the treadmill at minimum every month. More frequent if placed on hard surfaces or if pets are in the home.

Running Belts

- Clean the top surface as needed using a soap and water solution (1:10) and bristled scrub brush. Place a towel on the floor under the rear roller to catch any excess solution. Spray solution on the brush and scrub. Turn the belt with your foot or hand to expose a new surface. Be careful not to get water on the deck. Belts must be completely dry before using. DO NOT perform this cleaning technique on the underside of the belt (the side that touches the deck).

Customer Technical Support

Warranty Product

Brand	Phone	Email
Matrix & Vision	800-335-4348	info@johnsonfit.com
Horizon, Merit, AFG	800-244-4192	techsupport@horizonfitness.com
BowFlex & Schwinn	800-605-3369	retaildispatch@johnsonfit.com

Out of Warranty Product

Brand	Phone	Email
Matrix & Vision	888-993-3199	visionparts@johnsonfit.com
Horizon, Merit, AFG, BowFlex, Schwinn	888-878-9011	support@horizonfitness.com parts@horizonfitness.com customerservice@bowflex.com