

# Media Release

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## Do the ‘heavy lifting’ before you sign

South Australians who have made a New Year’s resolution to join a gym are being urged to shop around and check out the membership agreement before signing a contract.

Commissioner for Consumer Affairs, Dini Soulio said gym memberships are one of the common purchases that consumers seek advice about during the summer months.

“Making a commitment to get fit is a classic New Year’s resolution and we regularly hear from South Australians who have gone into a contract only to find out it’s not quite what they expected,” he said.

“The best advice is to do a bit of research and take some extra time to think about what you actually want to commit to before you sign a contract.”

Before signing up, shop around:

- Check out the facilities and find out the opening hours;
- Learn about training options and classes;
- If they’re offering a free trial, check the timeframes set out in the conditions; and
- Do some online research and see what independent reviews say.

Consumer complaints also increase during January thanks to the post-Christmas and New Year sales, when people realise they’ve bagged more than a bargain.

“It’s important to look past the discounted price tag and see the real value of deals on offer.” Mr Soulio said.

“Like a new gym membership, it’s helpful to take a moment to consider how you will use your bargain purchase during the year and consider whether it’s worth it.”

Consumers don’t have a legal right to a refund or exchange if they change their mind about a purchase, though many retailers offer to do so because they think it is good customer service.

If a retailer has a ‘change of mind’ refund policy, they are required to honour it.

“It’s something people can ask before they buy, because the policy may exclude sale items or certain products so it’s good to be sure,” Mr Soulio said.

“It’s also where online research can again be helpful in preparing for a visit to the sales, buying bargains online and signing up for a new fitness program.”

It doesn’t matter if the item was on sale, purchased online, from a bricks and mortar store, or if you received it as a gift - consumers have the same refund rights and retailers must provide a solution when a consumer guarantee has not been met.

Further information about shopping rights is available from [sa.gov.au/consumerrights](http://sa.gov.au/consumerrights) or contact Consumer and Business Services on 131 882.