Title: FURNITURE MODULE CONTAINING FITNESS EQUIPMENT

Abstract: A furniture module comprising a container (2) which opens to provide access to the inside of the module (1). The module contains folding fitness equipment (11) which can be brought from a closed position of minimum dimensions to an open, operating position.
Description

Furniture module containing fitness equipment

Technical Field
The present invention concerns a furniture module containing fitness equipment, the module having a configuration designed to allow its integration in practically any surroundings and to make the equipment available, preferably already in operating configuration, by simply opening the module.

Background Art
Fitness equipment for performing numerous types of exercise has been known for many years. Recent years have seen the development and marketing of a large range of exercise equipment destined primarily for use in the home and for home fitness applications. This development is the result of a combination of factors such as the increasing importance attributed to personal appearance and image and the ease with which advertising can now reach a much wider public through a wide variety of channels such as telesales. This situation has lead to very strong competition between manufacturers who now offer increasingly more complex equipment at lower and lower prices. As a consequence, one of the most frequent problems is to be lacking in the amount of space needed to actually use the equipment. This shortcoming has almost entirely been overcome by designing the equipment so that it folds up when not in use and can be stored in small or unused spaces. Folding equipment does to a large extent successfully solve the problem of space. However, even folding equipment continues to be inconvenient to use. It has to be taken out of its storage position, folded out
into the working position and then, when the user has finished, folded back up again and returned to its storage position. Clearly these operations, even though they might be quick and easy, are still inconvenient and may prove to be an obstacle to the full use of the equipment. If a user has little time to dedicate to exercising the fact that the equipment is not immediately ready may become a considerable psychological barrier to its use. Some inconveniences may arise due to the fact that the equipment must be set up, at any time it is to be used, in rooms designed specifically for purposes different from home fitness. The inconveniences described may be small but their sum total is such that they can discourage use of the equipment altogether.

Disclosure of the Invention

The object of the present invention is a furniture module according to one or more of the appended claims.

The invention substantially overcomes the problems described above by means of a furniture module containing fitness equipment according to the claims 1 or 29. Various embodiments are described in the dependent claims. The module has a regular shape and dimensions such that the module can easily be incorporated into any type of furniture or furnishings. In particular, the present invention achieves the aim to make the home fitness equipment it contains quickly and easily available when required.

The purpose of this invention is achieved by incorporating the module perfectly into the surroundings of the room where it is located. The module itself can be finished so that it matches or
is coordinated with the style and finish of the surrounding furniture units. This means that the module can be easily be positioned in the rooms most suited for this purpose.

The furniture module according to this invention comprises a container completely enclosing the fitness equipment when it is not in use. The fitness equipment is designed to be made available for use in a few seconds, advantageously by simply opening the door of the module. In this way the equipment is always ready for immediate use. In practice, users can also undertake exercises even when they only have a few spare minutes because the time needed to prepare the equipment is practically zero. The style of the container is designed to match and fit in with its surroundings and can therefore always remain in full view.

In one embodiment of the invention, the container is designed to be installed in an item of furniture such as a cupboard so that it is completely hidden from view when not in use, while simply opening the cupboard door makes the fitness equipment according to this invention ready for immediate use. In particular, the container could be designed to form an integral part of a shower cubicle unit.

In another embodiment the cover of the module could be manufactured in the same material and style as the item of furniture in which it is installed and could thus be considered an integral part of that item of furniture. Once again, closing the equipment is very quick and easy and involves simply closing the module cover.

**Brief Description of the Drawings**

These and other purposes are illustrated in greater detail in the description and drawings of preferred embodiments which follow below. These embodiments are
provided as examples only and are in no way limiting. The drawings are as follows:
- Figures Ia and Ib show the furniture module according to the invention in the closed and open configurations;
- Figures 2a, 2b, 3a and 3b show the furniture module in the closed and open configurations in a bathroom as an integral part of shower cubicles where the shower tray is raised or flush with the floor;
- Figure 4 shows the furniture module in the open configuration in a bathroom where it is not an integral part of an item of furniture;
- Figures 5a and 5b show the furniture module in the closed and open configurations in a bedroom as an integral part of a cupboard;
- Figure 6 shows the furniture module in the open configuration in a kitchen as an integral part of an item of kitchen furniture;
- Figures 7 to 11 show various other embodiments with the furniture module containing fitness equipment inserted in various items of furniture.

**Detailed Description of the Preferred Embodiments of the Invention**

With reference to figure 1, with 1 it is indicated a furniture module according to the invention designed to contain fitness equipment. The furniture module (1), shown in closed configuration in Figure Ia, comprises a container (2) and a cover (3) attached to the container (2) by means of a pair of hinges (4). Figure Ib shows the furniture module (1) in the open configuration with the fitness equipment in its operating configuration.

The figure clearly shows that the open configuration of the equipment is obtained by simply opening the cover (3) and extracting the other parts that
comprise the equipment. In the operating configuration, the container (2) and the cover (3), connected to each other by the hinges (4), act as a support frame for the fitness equipment and in effect become integral parts of the fitness equipment itself.

The furniture module (1) comprising the container and the cover can be opened to enable access to the inside of the module. The inside of the furniture module (1) contains the fitness equipment (11) which is mounted on the container (2) and the cover (3), the container (2) and the cover (3) acting as a support frame for the fitness equipment.

In the embodiment shown, the fitness equipment consists of a treadmill (5) and the other parts that comprise the equipment are handlebars (6) and a computer (7) for controlling the exercises performed by the person using the equipment.

The container as described here is also suitable for housing other equipment. Other equipment could be an exercise bench complete with the mechanism for creating the counter force necessary to perform exercises. Another embodiment could be that shown in Figure 7 where a module containing a folding exercise cycle is incorporated in a sofa.

Advantageously, opening the cover places the fitness equipment (11) in partially operating configuration. The partially operating configuration is one where the fitness equipment is at least partially extracted from the module and is directly accessible by the user. To make the fitness equipment (11) fully ready, the user must however perform additional operations such as extracting additional components; in the embodiment shown in Figures 1a and 1b, for example, the user must extract the handlebars. It may also be necessary to fold out the fitness equipment (11) from its compact storage position to an open operating
configuration.
Further advantageously, opening the cover places the fitness equipment (11) in its operating configuration ready for immediate use. In a special embodiment of the invention, the movement of the cover can be linked to the movement of the fitness equipment (11). For example, in the embodiment shown in Figures 1a and 1b the movement of the handlebars could be synchronised with that of the cover. In a non-limiting example, the action of the handlebars could be spring-loaded so that handlebars would spring out into the operating position when released by opening the cover. Alternatively, the handlebars could be fixed and made inside the container (2) so that they would not have to be extracted from the container (2).
The fact that opening the cover (3) positions the fitness equipment (11) in the partially operating configuration or fully operating configuration is a very important feature and also saves considerable time when preparing fitness equipment (11) for use. The next section describes examples of the furniture module (1) according to the present invention in a variety of home environments. In the examples reference will be made to treadmills. However, an expert in this technical field will have no difficulty in generalising and extending the design concepts embodied in the container (2) to include fitness equipment of other types given that the appearance of the module (1) in the closed configuration remains unchanged and is independent of the equipment contained inside the module.
In all cases the fitness equipment is moved into its operating configuration by simply opening the cover or by sliding out the module (3) and, where necessary, extracting the other components.
In Figures 2a and 2b, the module (1) is installed in
a bathroom and is an integral part of a shower cubicle (8).

Figure 2a shows the module (1) mounted inside the shower cubicle (8) so that the fitness exercises are performed partly inside the cubicle. This can be seen in Figure 2b where the treadmill (5) is partly inside the shower cubicle (8) and runs out through the door of the cubicle (8).

In this case it is clear that the container (2) and the cover (3) must be designed to protect the equipment from water.

In Figures 3a and 3b the module (1) is also an integral part of a shower cubicle (8) but this time it is mounted outside the cubicle (8) as shown in Figure 3a. Exercising takes place outside the cubicle with the module installed at the back or to the side of the cubicle, as illustrated in figure 3b which shows the treadmill (5) extending from the back of the shower cubicle (8).

This solution is to be preferred to the previous one for technical reasons because in this case the shower water cannot spray onto the cover (3). However, this solution requires more space which may not always be available. In both cases the fitness equipment is immediately available and does not cause an obstruction of any type.

In Figure 4 the module (1) is shown opened once again in a bathroom but in this case as a stand-alone unit. In this embodiment the module (1) is not incorporated in an item of furniture and is simply fixed to a wall.

The figure clearly shows that in this case also the module (1) is easy to install and use without any problems.

In Figures 5a and 5b the module (1) is installed in a bedroom and built-into a cupboard (9). Figure 5a shows that the module (1) is finished on the outside
with material which is the same as that used for the cupboard (9) and is an integral part of the cupboard. Figure 5b shows how the fitness equipment is prepared for use. The cover (3) is opened and the treadmill (5) can extend outside for using it conveniently.

In Figure 6 the module (1) is installed in a kitchen and is built into a kitchen cabinet (10) in the same way as any built-in electrical appliance; it could also be built in behind the baseboard located at the base of a kitchen unit, which is a space usually left unused. The module (1) is finished on the outside with material which is identical to or matches that used for the cabinet (10). The module (1) is built into the kitchen furniture in the same way as a built-in electrical appliance and may be completely hidden from view when not in use. It can also be installed as a sliding version which can be pulled out horizontally from the hollow base of the kitchen cabinets. The equipment is prepared for use, as always, by opening the cover (3) so that the treadmill (5) extends outwards into the exercise position.

The purpose of the present invention is also to provide a furniture module (1) comprising a container (2) which opens to provide access to the inside of the module (1). Characteristically, the module (1) contains folding fitness equipment (11) which can be brought from a closed position of minimum dimensions to an open, operating position. Figures 10d and 10e show an item of folding fitness equipment (11) which in this case is a running fitness equipment but which could be another type of fitness equipment (11) such as an exercise cycle.

Advantageously the fitness equipment (11) is linked to the openable container (2) to form a single unit. The container (2) comprises a first and second part (30, 3) where the second part (3) is mobile in
relation to the first part (30) and moves between a first configuration where the user has access to the fitness equipment (11) and a second configuration where the fitness equipment (11) cannot be used. In the second configuration, the fitness equipment (11) is housed inside an internal compartment (12) defined by the container (2). The second part of the container (2) comprises a drawer (20) and the first part (30) of the container (2) comprises a housing (21) for the drawer (20). The drawer (20) is mobile with a translatory motion between the second configuration in which it is inside the housing (21) and the first configuration in which it is at least partially outside the housing (21). Advantageously the fitness equipment (11) is connected to an internal surface of the drawer (20). An Example of such a constructional solution is shown in Figures 7, 8a, 8b and 9 and in Figures 10a to10e. Preferably, the drawer (20) comprises rolling means (22) which facilitate translatory movement along a support. The rolling means (22) could, for example, consist of small wheels moving along guides or directly on the floor.

In an alternative embodiment, the movement of the second part (3) of the container (2) between the first configuration and the second configuration includes a tipping movement. Examples of similar constructional solutions are shown in Figures 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 11. Advantageously, the tipping motion is relative to a horizontal axis.

Furthermore, the movement of the second part (3) of the container (2) between the first configuration and the second configuration includes a translatory motion in relation to the first part (30) of the container (2). This translatory motion could accompany the tipping movement as shown in the case
In Figure 11 or could not accompany the tipping movement as shown in the case in Figures 7, 8a, 8b and 9 and Figures 10a to 10e.

In the constructional embodiment shown in Figure 11, the second part (3) of the container (2) is connected to the first part (30) of the container (2) by means of at least two return hydraulic pistons (14), each piston (14) having its two opposing ends rotatably connected one to the second part (3) and one to the first part (30) of the container (2), respectively. Said pistons (14) exert a force which retracts the second part (3) of the container (2) from the first configuration, where the second part is horizontal, to the second configuration where the second part is vertical; furthermore, the pistons also exert an opposing force counteracting the weight of the second part when it moves from the first to the second configuration and thereby prevent the second part from hitting the floor violently.

The example embodiments in Figures 7, 8a, 8b and 9 and in Figures 10a to 10e, show the fitness equipment (11) connected exclusively to the second part (3) of the container (2) or connected exclusively to the first part (30) of the container (2).

In the example shown in Figures 10d and 10e, the fitness equipment (11) consists of a treadmill (5) complete with handlebars (6) and a control panel (7). The handlebars (6) are hinged to a pair of uprights which in turn have a hinged connection to the treadmill (5). The fitness equipment (11) can therefore be folded down into the closed position of minimum dimensions before the second part (3) of the container (2) is moved into the second position. The fitness equipment (11) consists of a treadmill (5) with handlebars (6) and a control panel (7) where the handlebars (6) are hinged to a pair of uprights which are in turn hinged to the base and where the
control panel (7) is mounted on supports also hinged to the handle bars (6) thereby enabling the fitness equipment (11) to be folded into a closed position of minimum dimensions.

The examples in Figures 7, 8a and 9 and in Figures 10a to 10e show the furniture module (1) installed in a sofa or in a bed.

In the alternative embodiments shown in Figures 1 to 6, the fitness equipment is mounted on the first part (30) of the container (2) and on the second part (3) of the container; in this case the first and second parts (30, 3) of the container (2) act as a support frame for the fitness equipment (11).

The first part (30) can be advantageously connected to the second part (3) by means of hinges (4).

The fitness equipment (11) comprises a treadmill (5) with handlebars (6) and/or a control panel (7); the treadmill (5) is mounted on the second part (3) of the container (2) while the handlebars (6) and/or the control panel (7) are mounted on the first part (30) of the container (2).

Advantageously, the second part (3) of the container (2) comprises a cover. In particular the cover is the cover of the furniture module (1).

The subject of the present invention is also a shower cubicle comprising a furniture module (1) of the type described previously.

In particular, the furniture module (1) forms one wall of the shower cubicle where the second part (3) of the container (2) opens towards the inside of the shower cubicle (8) and, where necessary, extends outwards through an opening in the shower cubicle (8).

In an alternative embodiment, the furniture module (1) comprises one wall of the shower cubicle where in this case the second part (3) opens towards the outside of the shower cubicle (8).
In general, the subject of the present invention is a furniture unit (15) which incorporates the furniture module (1) described previously. Advantageously, a portion of the furniture unit (15) also forms part of the furniture module (1). In particular, a portion of the furniture unit (15) forms the first part (30) of the container (2). Advantageously, the container (2) is made in a style which matches that of the remaining parts of the furniture unit (15) in which it is inserted.

The movement of the second part (3) of the container (2) from the second to the first configuration moves the fitness equipment (11) into a partially operative configuration. The at least partially operative configuration is one where the fitness equipment (11) is at least partly extracted from the furniture module (1) and can be directly accessed by the user. To make the fitness equipment (11) fully operative, the user must perform additional operations such as extracting other components (such as the handlebars shown in the embodiment in Figures 1a and 1b) or folding out the fitness equipment (11) from its folded position of minimum dimensions to its fully-open operating configuration (as shown in the embodiment in Figures 10d and 10e).

In a preferred embodiment the movement of the second part (3) of the container (2) from the second to the first configuration moves the fitness equipment (11) directly into the operating position. In this case the fitness equipment (11) is ready for immediate use. In one constructional embodiment, the movement of the fitness equipment (11) is linked to the movement of the second part (3) of the container (2). With reference to the example embodiments shown in Figures 1a-1b and 10d-10e, the movement of the handlebars could be contemporaneous to and depend on the movement of the second part (3) of the container.
In another non-limiting example, the handlebars could be controlled by elastic means. In this case the movement of the second part (3) of the container (2) could be such as to move the handlebars directly into their operating configuration when the restraining action exerted by the second part (3) of the container (2) is removed by opening the container. Alternatively, the handlebars could be fixed and made inside the container (2) so that they would not have to be extracted from the container (2).

The fact that the movement of the second part (3) of the container (2) positions the fitness equipment (11) in the partially operating configuration or in the operating configuration is a very important feature because it saves a considerable amount of time when preparing the fitness equipment (11) for use.

The technical characteristics described above and indicated in the following claims can be applied to numerous furniture units subject of the present invention. Examples of such units are given below.

With reference to Figure 7, the subject of the invention is a sofa comprising the furniture module (1); preferably, the furniture module (1) is installed in the section of the sofa under the seat. Advantageously, the seat forms the second part (3) of the container (2) and can be tipped between a substantially horizontal position and a substantially vertical position where the fitness equipment (11) is available for use. In an alternative embodiment, the second part (3) of the container (2) comprises a drawer which can be extracted from under the sofa seat and where the fitness equipment (11) is suitably linked to the inside of the drawer. When the drawer is opened, the fitness equipment (11) is usually in the partially operating configuration. The user moves...
the equipment into the operating configuration; in the example in Figure 7 showing an exercise cycle, the user rotates the cycle on an underlying plate (110) and then raises it through 90°.

The subject of the present invention is also a table comprising a furniture module (1) according to the present invention; advantageously, the furniture module (1) is installed in the section of the table under the substantially horizontal tabletop used to support other objects. Opportunely, the tabletop comprises the second part (3) of the container (2) and can be tipped between a substantially horizontal position and a substantially vertical position where the fitness equipment (11) is available for use (this embodiment is not illustrated here). In this case, the tabletop is supported by legs and is hinged to at least one leg and can be detached from the remaining legs and rotated around the hinges into the vertical position.

In an alternative embodiment shown in Figure 8b, the second part (3) of the container (2) of the furniture module (1) comprises a drawer (20) which can be extracted from under a surface. Opportunely, the fitness equipment (11) is suitably linked and connected to the inside of the drawer (20).

The subject of the present invention is also a bed incorporating the furniture module (1) according to the present invention; the furniture module (1) is installed in the section of the bed under the surface supporting the mattress. In one embodiment not shown here, a section of the bed comprising the second part (3) of the container (2) can be tipped from the normally horizontal position to a vertical position where the user can use on the spot the fitness equipment present and located underneath the second part (3) which tips.

In an alternative embodiment, the second part (3) of
the furniture module (1) comprises a drawer which can be extracted from under the bed and where the bed provides a housing for the drawer. Opportunely, the fitness equipment (11) is foldable and is suitably linked to the inside of the drawer (see Figure 9 and Figures 10a to 10e for an example).

The subject of the present invention is also a kitchen cupboard incorporating a furniture module (1) according to the present invention. The furniture module (1) is preferably made in the base of the cupboard. The second part (3) of the container (2) comprises a drawer (20) which can be extracted from the base. The inside of the drawer (20) is suitably linked to the fitness equipment (11).

The subject of the present invention is also a bathroom furniture unit comprising a furniture module (1) according to the present invention; the bathroom furniture unit could, for example, be a bathroom cupboard or a bathtub. The furniture module (1) is made in a vertical wall of the bathroom cupboard or the bathtub. The second part (3) of the container (2) is mobile and moves between a first configuration where it is horizontal (see Figure 11) to a second configuration where it is vertical. The bathroom cupboard could, for example, be located under a washbasin; in this case, while going from the second configuration to the first configuration, the second part (3) of the container (2) is first tipped sideways through 90° and, where necessary, is then moved by translatory motion to be extracted from its location under the washbasin. Figure 11 shows the fitness equipment (11) in its configuration of minimum dimensions. To move the fitness equipment (II) into the fully operative position, the user raises the handlebars (6) and the control panel (7).

The subject of the present invention is a cupboard comprising a furniture module (1) according to the
present invention. Advantageously, the furniture module (1) is linked to a section of a side-hung door, the section being inside the cupboard when the door is closed.

Advantageously, the furniture module (1) according to the present invention could also be installed in a specially shaped recess made in a raised floor. The raised floor defines a hollow space between the tread surface and the support floor underneath. In this case, the thickness of the furniture module (1) advantageously approximates to the depth of the hollow space. The hollow space could be of the type used as a cableway. In the second configuration, the module (1) is closed and does not project from the floor surface. In the first configuration the second part (3) of the container (2) is raised to permit access to the fitness equipment (11) located inside the module. The furniture module (1) according to the present invention could be installed in the same way inside a recessed compartment made in a vertical wall. The wall could be solid or could be made from plasterboard. The section of the furniture module (1) visible when the module is in the second configuration and the fitness equipment (11) is not available for use, has the same finish as the surrounding wall surface. Alternatively, this section could be fitted with a mirror.

In a preferred embodiment this section lies on the same plane as the wall and is therefore flush with it.

With reference to the figures attached and as a continuation in part of the descriptions given above, the following should be noted.

Figures 8a and 8b show a module designed to be installed in a sofa (Figure 8a) or under a table (Figure 8b) respectively, fitted with fitness equipment consisting of a treadmill comprising
handlebars (11) hinged to support arms (12) and a control panel mounted on supports (13) which are in turn hinged to the handlebars. This enables the structure to be folded down horizontally so that it occupies less space in height.

The sliding module containing the fitness equipment can be installed in various types of furniture or seating using the spaces and parts underneath these which are often unused also because of the fact that the fitness equipment can be folded down when not in use thus assuming reduced dimensions in height instead of in depth.

The same module can, for example, be installed under a bed at the headboard end, as shown in Figure 9, or under the bed at a side, as shown in Figures 10a to 10e. The figures show the various stages of extracting the module and opening the equipment to move it into the operating configuration.

The embodiment shown in Figure 9 could have two separate modules installed in parallel on the two sides of the bed one opposite the other.

A module fitted with folding fitness equipment could be installed under an item of tipping furniture such as a bed, a table or a sofa of the type which is fixed to a wall and which is tipped to be opened and moved into the operating position. In these cases the fitness equipment could be housed inside a container which is also tipping.

The descriptions of the invention and the example applications clearly show that the fitness equipment contained in the module is always ready for use even though it is perfectly hidden from view. It can therefore be used fully even when there is little time available for exercising, stated that the invention overcomes all the barriers, even psychological ones, which are connected to the need to take the fitness equipment out of a closet, set it
up ready for use before carrying the exercise out and store it back after use.
The invention described is a preferred embodiment intended as an example only which is in no way limiting. An expert in this field could find numerous other embodiments which all fall within the scope of the appended claims.
Claims

1. A furniture module comprising a container (2) which opens to provide access to the inside of the module (1) characterized in that the module contains folding fitness equipment (11) which can be brought from a closed position of minimum dimensions to an open, operating position.

2. A furniture module according to claim 1 characterized in that the fitness equipment (11) is linked to the openable container (2).

3. A furniture module according to claim 1 or 2 characterized in that the container (2) comprises a first and second part (30, 3) where the second part (3) is mobile in relation to the first part (30) and moves between a first configuration where the user has access to the fitness equipment (11) and a second configuration where the fitness equipment (11) cannot be used, the second configuration being one where the fitness equipment (11) is housed inside a compartment (12) defined by the container (2).

4. A furniture module according to claim 3 characterized in that the second part (3) of the container (2) comprises a drawer (20) and the first part (30) of the container (2) comprises a housing (21) for the drawer (20), the drawer (20) being mobile with a translatory motion between the second configuration, in which it is inside the housing (21), and the first position, in which it is at least partially outside the housing (21), the fitness equipment (11) being connected to an internal surface of the drawer (20).

5. A furniture module according to claim 4 characterized in that the drawer (20) comprises rolling means (22) which facilitate translatory movement along a support.

6. A furniture module according to claim 3
characterized in that the movement of the second part (3) of the container (2) between the first configuration and the second configuration includes a tipping movement.

7. A furniture module according to claim 6 characterized in that the movement of the second part (3) of the container (2) between the first configuration and the second configuration includes a tipping movement relative to a horizontal axis.

8. A furniture module according to any one of the claims from 3 to 7 characterized in that the movement of the second part (3) of the container (2) between the first configuration and the second configuration includes a translatory motion in relation to the first part (30) of the container (2).

9. A furniture module according to claim 6 or 7 or 8 characterized in that the second part (3) of the container is connected to the first part (30) of the container (2) by means of at least two return hydraulic pistons (14), each piston (14) having its two opposing ends rotatably connected one to the second part (3) and one to the first part (30) of the container (2), respectively.

10. A furniture module according to any one of the claims from 3 to 9 characterized in that the fitness equipment (11) is connected exclusively to the second part (3) of the container (2) or is connected exclusively to the first part (30) of the container (2).

11. A furniture module according to any one of the claims from 1 to 10 characterised in that the fitness equipment (11) consists of a treadmill (5) complete with handlebars (6) and a control panel (7), where the handlebars (6) are hinged to a pair of uprights which in turn have a hinged connection to the treadmill (5).

12. A furniture module according to any one of the
claims from 1 to 11 characterized in that the fitness equipment (11) consists of a treadmill (5) with handlebars (6) and a control panel (7), where the handlebars (6) are hinged to a pair of uprights which are in turn hinged to the base and where the control panel (7) is mounted on supports also hinged to the handlebars (6) thereby enabling the fitness equipment (11) to be folded into a closed position of minimum dimensions.

13. A furniture module according to the claim 3 or 6 or 7 characterized in that the fitness equipment (11) is mounted on the first part (30) of the container (2) and on the second part (3) of the container (2), the container (2) and the second part (3) of the container (2) acting as a support frame for the fitness equipment (11).

14. A furniture module according to claim 13 characterized in that the first part (30) is connected to the second part (3) by means of hinges (4).

15. A furniture module according to claim 13 or 14 characterized in that the fitness equipment (11) comprises a treadmill (5) with handlebars (6) and/or a control panel (7), the treadmill (5) being mounted on the second part (30) of the container (2) while the handlebars (6) and/or the control panel (7) are mounted on the first part (3) of the container (2).

16. A furniture module according to claim claim 13 or 14 or 15 characterized in that the second part (3) is a cover.

17. A furniture module according to claim 16 characterized in that the second part (3) is a cover of the furniture module.

18. A furniture module according to any one of the claims from 3 to 17 characterized in that the movement of the second part (3) of the container (2) from the second configuration to the first
configuration places the fitness equipment (11) in an at least partially operating configuration.

19. A furniture module according to any one of the claims from 3 to 18 characterized in that the movement of the second part (3) of the container (2) from the second configuration to the first configuration places the fitness equipment (11) in an operating configuration.

20. A furniture module according to any one of the foregoing claims characterised in that the module is installed in a sofa.

21. A furniture module according to any one of the foregoing claims characterized in that the module is installed in a bed.

22. A furniture module according to any one of the foregoing claims characterised in that the fitness equipment (11) consists of an exercise bicycle.

23. A shower cubicle characterised in that the cubicle incorporates a furniture module according to one or more of the claims from 1 to 22.

24. A shower cubicle according to claim 23 characterized in that the furniture module (1) forms one wall of the shower cubicle, the second part (3) of the container (2) opening towards the inside of the shower cubicle (8) and, where necessary, extending outwards through an opening in the shower cubicle (8).

25. A shower cubicle according to claim 23 characterised in that the furniture module (1) forms one wall of the shower cubicle (8) and the second part (3) of the container (2) opens towards the outside of the shower cubicle (8).

26. A furniture unit characterised in that it incorporates a furniture module (1) according to any one of the claims from 1 to 22.

27. A furniture unit according to claim 26 characterized in that part of the unit also forms
part of the furniture module (1).

28. A furniture unit according to claim 26 or 27 characterized in that the container (2) is designed to match the style of the remaining parts of the furniture unit in which it is inserted.

29. A furniture module comprising a container and a cover which opens to provide access to the inside of the module characterized in that the module contains fitness equipment (11) mounted on the container (2) and on the cover (3), the container (2) and the cover (3) acting as a support frame for the fitness equipment.

30. A furniture module according to claim 29 characterized in that opening the cover places the fitness equipment (11) in a partially operating configuration.

31. A furniture module according to claim 29 or 30 characterized in that opening the cover places the fitness equipment (11) in an operating configuration.

32. A furniture module according to claim 29 or 30 or 31 characterized in that the cover (3) is connected to the container (2) by hinges (4).

33. A furniture module according to claim 29 or 30 or 31 or 32 characterized in that the module is incorporated into a shower cubicle (8) forming part of the wall of the shower cubicle (8), the cover (3) ing towards the inside of the shower cubicle (8) and, where necessary, extending outwards through an opening in the shower cubicle (8).

34. A furniture module according to claim 29 or 30 or 31 or 32 characterized in that the module is incorporated into a shower cubicle (8) thus forming a wall of the shower cubicle (8), the cover (3) of the module opening outwards from the shower cubicle (8).

35. A furniture module according to claim 29 or 30 or 31 or 32, characterized in that the module is incorporated into a cupboard (9) or another item of
furniture (10) thus forming part of the cupboard (9) or item of furniture (10), the container (2) and cover (3) being designed to match the style and finish of the cupboard (9) or item of furniture (10).

36. A furniture module according to any one of the claims from 29 to 35 characterized in that the fitness equipment (11) comprises a treadmill and handlebars and/or a control panel, the treadmill (5) being mounted on the cover (3) while the handlebars (6) and/or control panel are mounted on the container (2).

37. A shower cubicle characterized in that the cubicle incorporates a module comprising the fitness equipment according to one or more of the claims from 29 to 36.