

Comparison Shopping Guide: Purchasing a Personal Emergency Response System

There are a wide variety of Personal Emergency Response Systems (PERS) on the market today. When deciding which system is the best one for a particular person and situation, the following suggestions and questions can be helpful.

Comparison of Units Questions

Unit Name		
Cost	<input type="radio"/> Free <input type="radio"/> Money back trial period	<input type="radio"/> Free <input type="radio"/> Money back trial period
Base unit price		
Set-up or activation fees		
Recurring fees		
Cancellation fee		
Other charges		
Features		
Servicing		
Transmitter	<input type="radio"/> Pendant <input type="radio"/> Wristband <input type="radio"/> Tie clip <input type="radio"/> Other	<input type="radio"/> Pendant <input type="radio"/> Wristband <input type="radio"/> Tie clip <input type="radio"/> Other
Transmitter (help button) battery life monitoring	<input type="radio"/> Remotely tracked <input type="radio"/> Tracked manually, in the home	<input type="radio"/> Remotely tracked <input type="radio"/> Tracked manually, in the home
Repair Policy	Replacement? <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	Replacement? <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
What happens if malfunction occurs?		
Monitoring Center	Available 24/7? <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	Available 24/7? <input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
Average response time		
Training of center staff		
Procedures for testing systems		
How often are tests conducted?		



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Notes: _____

Some Tips:

- Check out several systems before making a decision.
- Test the system to make sure it is easy to use and works from every point in and around the user’s home. Make sure nothing interferes with transmissions.
- Read the purchase, rental, or lease agreement and warranty carefully before signing and get any questions resolved, such as what would happen if a parent died before the contract expiration.
- Find out if the system can be used with other response centers. For example, can the same system be used if you move?
- Be wary of high-pressure sales tactics.
- Check the local Consumer Protection Agency, state Attorney General’s Office, and Better Business Bureau (BBB.org). Ask if any complaints have been filed against the companies being considered.



For more information on PERS or how in-home care can provide comfort, safety and peace of mind for families, call **Senior Planning Services** today.

Sources: Federal Trade Commission, Caring.com