Fitness Center Etiquette



This resource for individuals with autism provides main guidelines for the different areas, equipment, and classes at a fitness center.

Going to the gym is good for your body and your mind. It can also be fun! But gyms have rules — some are written down, and some are not. These rules help everyone feel safe and confident. When everyone follows the rules, the gym is a better place for all.

General etiquette for fitness centers includes the following:

- Follow any safety signs or rules you see.
- Keep yourself clean. Wear deodorant. Keep your gym bag and clothes clean. Shower often. Wash or sanitize your hands frequently.
- Wear appropriate clothing.



Shoes

- No bare feet or open-toed shoes.
- Wear flip-flops in the locker room shower.



Clothes

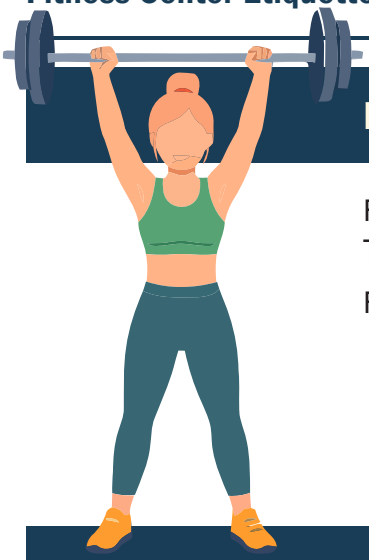
- Wear clothing meant for working out. Example: athletic shorts, T-shirts, running pants/leggings, sports bras (females). No jeans.

- **Remember:** most people are at the gym to exercise, not to chat.
- Do not spread your stuff all over. Respect other people's space.
- Keep noise down. This includes music, voice, and sounds.
- Be flexible. If someone is using a machine you want, use another one or wait your turn.



- Turn off your cell phone or put it on silent.
  - Do not film other people.
  - Do not spend time on social media or your phone if other people are waiting to use the equipment.
  - Wear headphones; do not listen to music aloud.
  - Step outside if you need to take a phone call.
- Use the cleaner provided to wipe down the equipment and put it back in the right place when you are done.

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Free Weights

Free weights are used for strength training and are not attached to machines. They could be dumbbells, kettlebells, barbells, and weight plates.

Free weight users should do the following:

- Only grab the weights you are using right now.
- When lifting heavy weights, do not grunt or make loud noises.
- Be safe. Ask for help from a trusted adult or staff member.

Fitness Machines

Fitness machines help you build strength and endurance. These machines could be treadmills, ellipticals, Nautilus machines, and stationary bikes.

- Fitness machine users should follow the general etiquette above.

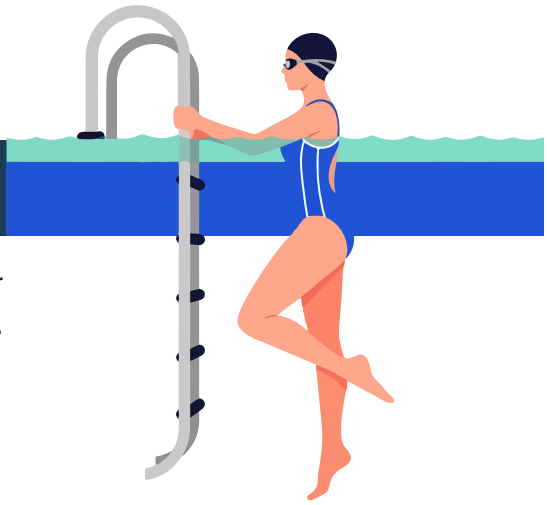


Group Classes

Group fitness classes are great if you like to exercise with others. Group classes include aerobics, yoga, and Pilates and are taught by an instructor.

When taking a group fitness class, remember the following:

- Be on time! Arriving a few minutes early allows you to get a space and be prepared for when the class begins.
- Try to listen to the teacher and follow along.
- Do not have conversations with others during the class. If you need to say something, make sure you whisper.



Swimming Pool

Some gyms have a pool. You can do water aerobics, swim laps, or play in the water. Check with the front desk for the pool schedule.

- Check out our Pool Safety resource for more information found at www.paautism.org/resource/pool-safety.