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Weight room etiquette and safety



Prevent accidents, reduce injury risk and show consideration for others while you train with weights in the gym. Here are some suggestions . . .

It is the staff's responsibility to regularly check equipment for signs of wear or damage. However, it is very helpful if you also do a quick check and report on any defective equipment to the staff.

Never attempt to lift heavy weights alone. Use a partner, or "spotter" for heavy free-weight lifting. Unsupervised heavy squats should be done in a cage.

The weight plates on barbells and dumbbells should be secured with collars. However, if you *foolishly* attempt heavy bench presses alone, do not use collars on the bar. This way, if you can't raise the bar after you've lowered it to your chest, you can tilt the bar and carefully slide the plates off each end.

When loading or unloading a bar with several weight plates, load the bar one plate at a time alternating on each side of the bar. Always unload the bar when finished, in consideration of other weight trainers.

Avoid dropping free weights to the floor after completing an exercise. You can damage the weight, the floor, or injure yourself or others. Also, don't let the weight plates on a machine's weight stack drop heavily. Lower them gradually.

Always replace weights, foam rollers, exercise elastics and other exercise tools to their rightful storage areas or racks.

Perform all exercises through a full range of motion, using controlled movements. Injuries usually occur during the eccentric part of the exercise, or when the weight is lowered too quickly.

Avoid walking in front of other exercisers or standing too close. Allow them and yourself plenty of room for movement.

Try not to loiter on equipment while you chat with others – someone may be waiting to use it.

When the gym is busy, avoid tying up equipment with nonstop circuit programs (involving two or more pieces of equipment). This will inconvenience others in the gym, particularly those trying to squeeze in a quick workout in their busy work schedules. Tying up equipment is disrespectful and rude.

If you notice someone waiting for equipment you are using, ask if they would like to “work in a set” with you: They can use the equipment while you rest and vice versa.

Carry a towel to protect the equipment and others from perspiration dampness. If not, have the courtesy to clean the equipment after use, especially if you perspire heavily!

Clean your stretching mat after use. If the mats in your gym are stored hanging on the wall, clean your stretching mat on the floor when the gym is busy. Otherwise, if you hang the mat on the wall first, then proceed to clean it while it hangs, you may be holding up others who are waiting to hang their own cleaned mats. If you must clean your mat while it hangs in the wall, be courteous and check behind you to be sure others aren't waiting.

Loud noises and foul language is irritating and insulting to others.

Wear loose, comfortable clothing that allows you to move freely. But be sure the clothing itself doesn't move too freely: Overexposing your body is distracting to others and could be embarrassing for you.

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