



NAVIGATING A BUSY GYM

BY SARA THISTLE

You've made the wise decision to start some healthy habits to begin the new year. Maybe you're the new owner of a shiny new gym membership? Starting out at the gym? You're not alone... clearly! This is one of the busiest times of the year as people are getting back on track, starting out fresh, or they never stopped going (#gains).

A busy gym can be very intimidating as you are in a new setting, learning where everything is, and trying to not invade anyone's personal space... or have someone invade your own. Try these tips to make your trip less overwhelming, more productive and eventually, a consistent part of your routine.

1

Have a Game Plan

First and foremost, **arrive at the gym with a plan!** This doesn't mean you *must* keep a fitness journal, but have an idea of what you want to accomplish! You know when you go to the store without a list, and leave with a million things? This same idea is prone to happen at the gym, too. Devise a plan and stick to it the best you can. Don't forget - you have six other days you can work on something else.

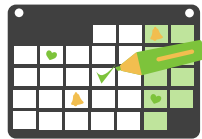


and learn the general layout (machines here, free weights over there, etc.), what equipment/free weights can be used for, and how to quickly substitute with other options if what you need is taken by other gym-goers. Avoid being anchored to one piece of equipment. **Remember there are likely multiple other options that can achieve the same objective** and keep your workout movin'!

2

Break Up Your Days

When starting out, **break up your workouts into some sort of split** (i.e. biceps/back, leg day, triceps/chest, etc.). This will help shorten the list of equipment to use and keep you on track, utilizing your time efficiently!



4

Quality Over Quantity

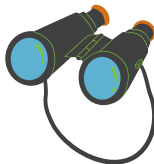
Don't worry about doing ten different exercises, **pick 4-5 main movements, learn them and execute them WELL.** Not every workout needs to result in you leaving looking like a baby giraffe. Performing the movements safely and proficiently will lead to greater gains than any poorly done and rushed movement ever will.



3

Scope Out Equipment and Acceptable Swaps

When you are first getting acquainted with your new surroundings, don't be afraid to take a week or so to work through the gym



Focus is one of the greatest tools you can bring to get you in and out of the gym without sacrificing hours of your day. Go in with a plan, execute with confidence, and you'll be returning for the next one in no time!



About Sara Thistle, LAT, ATC, CSCS

Sara is a Certified Athletic Trainer, with over 6 years of experience managing musculoskeletal injuries. She has a special interest in strength and conditioning, and its utilization in injury prevention. Outside of work, you will find her reading, coaching, working on anything that has to do with an excel spreadsheet, and Olympic Weightlifting (with aspirations to compete nationally).

Work Right NW is changing the way that companies view workplace hazards. Our focus is on educating the workforce to prevent injury. We provide access to Injury Prevention Specialist's in the workplace to address the early signs of discomfort. We are changing the industry one company at a time by helping one person at a time.

