

A woman in a red tank top and maroon leggings is sitting on a rowing machine, smiling and high-fiving a man. The man is kneeling on the gym floor, wearing a grey hoodie and khaki shorts. They are in a modern gym with large windows and various exercise equipment in the background.

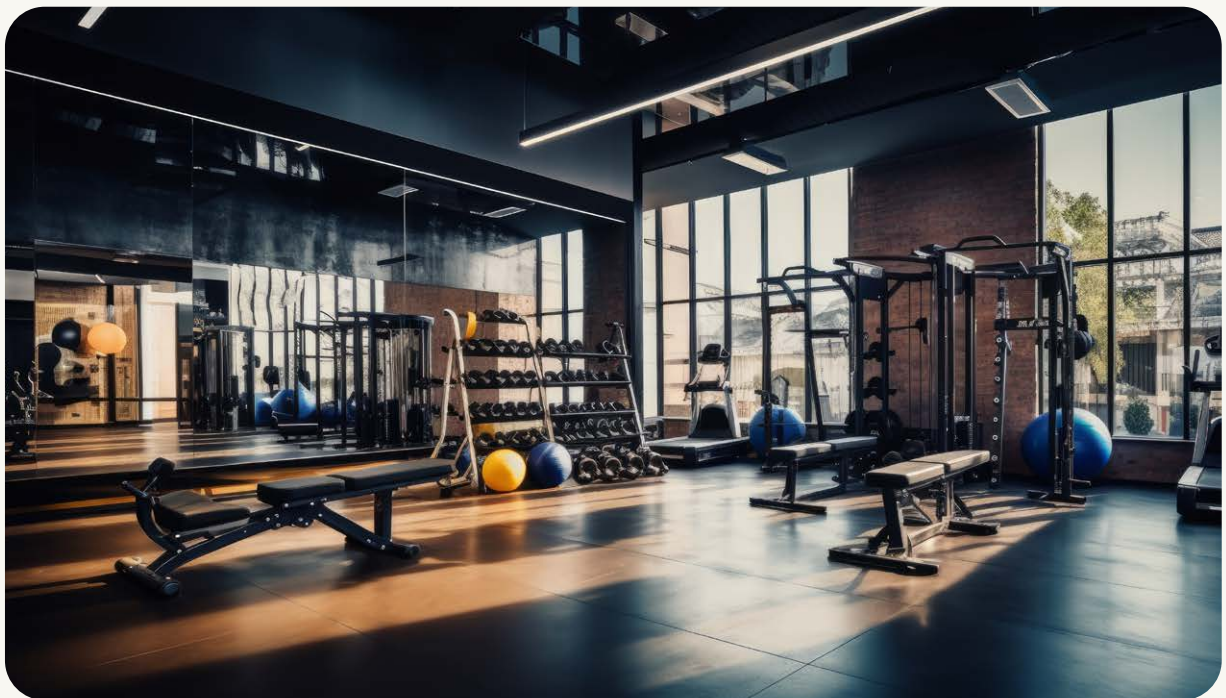
Gym Without Stress

How to Start Exercising Safely and Effectively?

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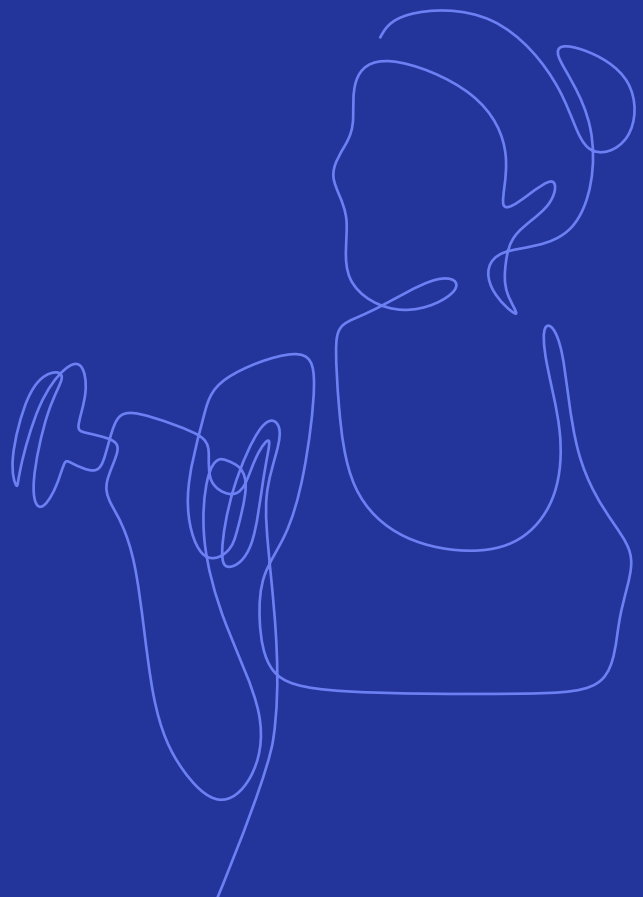
Starting to train at a gym can be both an exciting and daunting experience, especially for those who are taking their first steps into the world of fitness. Whether your goal is to improve your shape, build muscle mass or shed a few pounds, understanding the basics and rules of the gym is key to success.

This e-book is designed for people who are just starting out in the gym and need support in their first steps. From choosing the right equipment to planning effective workout sessions to exercise techniques, we will help you get on the right track. You will find specific advice and tips on how to avoid the most common mistakes, build confidence and get the most out of strength training.



What does strength training involve?

Strength training focuses on developing strength, muscle mass and endurance by performing exercises that require muscles to work against resistance.



Basic principles of strength training



Use of resistance - this can come from a variety of sources, such as free weights (dumbbells, barbells), exercise machines, resistance bands or even your own body weight. Working against resistance forces the muscles to contract and increase their strength.

Muscle building - regular strength training leads to micro-injuries in muscle fibres. The process of regenerating this damage makes the muscles stronger and bigger. This phenomenon is crucial for building muscle mass.

Variety of exercises - strength training engages different muscle groups. Multi-joint exercises, such as squats, deadlifts and bench presses, engage multiple muscle groups simultaneously. Isolated exercises, on the other hand, focus on one muscle group, such as the biceps or triceps.

Recovery - muscles need time to recover from intense exertion in order to grow and strengthen in a healthy way. It is also important to avoid overloading.

Why go to the gym?

The gym is a place where you can not only improve your figure, but also your physical and mental health. Regular training has many benefits that translate into better well-being and higher quality of life.



Improved cardiovascular function

Exercise, especially cardio exercise, increases the capacity of the heart and lungs, and improves circulation. With regular training, the body is better oxygenated and the risk of heart diseases is significantly reduced.



Increased strength and muscle mass

Strength training helps build muscles, which is crucial for bone and joint health. Stronger muscles also mean better body stabilisation and less risk of injury.



Weight regulation

Physical activity is extremely effective in burning calories and speeding up metabolism. Regular exercise helps maintain proper body weight as well as reduce body fat. This, in turn, reduces the risk of many diseases, such as diabetes and obesity.



Improved mental health

Exercise also has a positive effect on mental health. Regular activity can reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety, improving mood through the release of endorphins, the so-called happy hormones. Workouts also help manage stress and improve sleep quality.



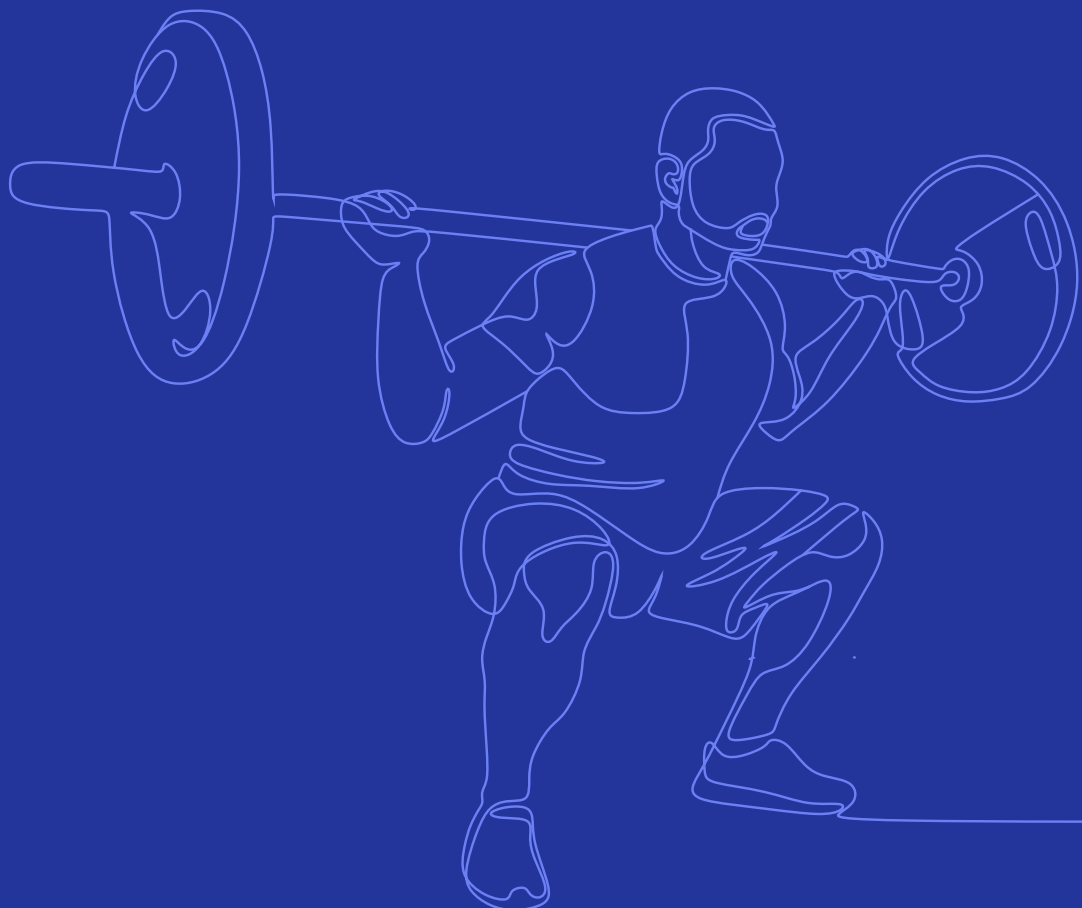
Increased energy and endurance

Regular training improves the body's endurance, making it easier to function on a daily basis. Systematic exercise also strengthens the immune system, which translates into greater resistance to diseases.



Improved flexibility and balance

Exercise increases the range of motion in the joints, thereby improving flexibility and overall body fitness. Regular training also supports balance, which is particularly important in preventing falls and injuries, especially in older age.



Gym training for beginners

– the foundation is to have a good plan

The key to success is a well-thought-out and solid training plan. It will help you make the most of your time at the gym and avoid unnecessary frustration.

Why is planning important?



Structure and purpose – a training schedule helps you focus on the right exercises and thus avoid chaos. With a well-organised plan, you can track your progress, tailor workouts to your goals and avoid skipping key muscle groups.



Motivation and regularity – setting fixed days and times for training makes it easier to incorporate physical activity into your daily routine. It also helps maintain motivation and consistency, which is key to achieving long-term goals.

Elements of a good training plan



Exercise selection

The plan should include exercises for all major muscle groups. For example, it is worth including exercises for legs, back, chest, shoulders and abdomen to avoid disproportionate muscle development.



Appropriate intensity and volume

At the beginning, use smaller loads and simpler exercises to gradually increase the intensity and load. The plan should also include rest days, which is essential for muscle recovery and to avoid overtraining.



Technique and form

Learning the correct technique for performing exercises translates into training effectiveness. The plan should include time to learn technique, such as by consulting with a personal trainer, watching video tutorials or using instructions on exercise machines.



Goals and progress monitoring

Setting training goals and regularly tracking progress allows you to evaluate the effectiveness of the plan and make adjustments, if needed.

Where to get a training plan from?

Here are a few places where you can find a valuable plan tailored to your goals:



1. Personal trainer

A professional trainer will create a plan perfectly suited to your needs and fitness level. He or she will also ensure that you learn proper technique, so you can exercise effectively and avoid injury.



2. Gym

Many gyms offer ready-made training plans, available in the form of brochures, posters or materials on the website. Sometimes group training sessions are also organised to help you verify the correctness of the exercises performed.



3. Fitness apps

Fitness apps often offer ready-made training plans with video instructions and progress tracking features. This is a convenient solution for independent users.



4. Fitness websites and forums

The Internet is full of free plans and advice on specialised sites. However, make sure the source is reliable.



5. Books and e-books

Books and e-books with training plans and additional tips are available in bookstores. Choose publications by authors with experience in the fitness field.



6. Online programmes and courses

Some platforms offer comprehensive online training programmes, often enhanced with educational materials and nutrition plans.

First steps at the gym

Starting your gym journey can be stressful, but a few simple steps will help you feel more confident.

The gym – where to start?

You should start your first visit by familiarising yourself with the general layout of the gym.

Make a round of the facility to see where each zone is located: strength training equipment, cardio, and a stretching area. Determine where to find helpful materials, such as instructions for machines and muscle group markings.

Orientation in space: how to find your way around?

Pay attention to the signs and instructions located in different parts of the gym. Many of them feature diagrams, showing the location of equipment and training zones. If you have difficulty finding your way around, don't hesitate to ask staff for help.

How to use lockers and changing rooms?

Some gyms require the use of their own padlocks. Get an idea of what it looks like at the facility you plan to visit. After the workout, leave the place in order and make sure you have all your belongings with you. At virtually every gym you can take a shower. However, remember to take an extra towel, toiletries and waterproof flip-flops with you.

Basic rules of behaviour at the gym

To make the use of the gym comfortable for everyone, it is important to follow a few basic rules.



Use towels

Always take a towel with you to put on the equipment when exercising. This helps maintain hygiene and prevents sweat marks on the machines.



Clean the equipment

After exercising, thoroughly clean the equipment you have used. At the gym, you will find disinfectants, such as liquid and paper towels, for cleaning the machines.



Leave the equipment in order

Always put your equipment back in its place when you are done training. Maintaining order makes it easier for other users to use the gym and keeps the space functional.



Respect others

Observe the rules of politeness towards other users. Avoid occupying equipment for long periods of time during peak hours and behave in a way that does not disturb others.

Following these rules will help create a friendly and efficient atmosphere at the gym, as well as provide a comfortable and hygienic environment for all users.

Sample training plans for beginners

Are you just starting? Opt for the simplest possible training plans. Here are some examples that you can easily adapt to your needs, goals and capabilities.

1. Full-body training plan

Objective: to develop overall strength and shape

Frequency: 3 times a week

Exercises:

Squats: 3 series of 12 repetitions

Bench Press: 3 series of 12 repetitions

Dumbbell Rows: 3 series of 12 repetitions

Plank: 3 series of 30 seconds

Dumbbell Biceps Curls: 3 series of 15 repetitions



2. Cardio and strength training plan

Objective: to improve fitness and burn body fat

Frequency: 3-4 times a week

Exercises:

Treadmill running: 20 minutes

Intervals on a stationary bike: 15 minutes (1 minute intense, 1 minute slow)

Lunges with dumbbells: 3 series of 12 repetitions per leg

Push-ups: 3 series of 10-15 repetitions

Sit-ups: 3 series of 20 repetitions



3. Training plan for upper and lower body

Objective: to increase muscle mass and improve endurance

Frequency: 4 times a week (2 days for upper body, 2 days for lower body)

Exercises (upper body):

Bench Press: 4 series of 10 repetitions

Pull-ups: 4 series of 8 repetitions

Dumbbell Shoulder Press: 3 series of 12 repetitions

Dumbbell Lateral Raises: 3 series of 15 repetitions

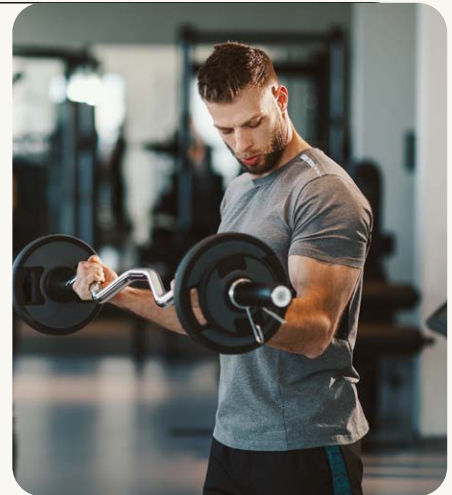
Exercises (lower body):

Deadlift: 4 series of 10 repetitions

Lunges: 3 series of 12 repetitions per leg

Leg bends lying down: 3 series of 15 repetitions

Calf Raises: 3 series of 20 repetitions



4. Training plan to increase flexibility

Objective: to improve range of motion and flexibility

Frequency: 2-3 times a week

Exercises:

Dynamic stretching: 10 minutes (e.g. arm circles, leg swings)

Yoga or Pilates: 30 minutes (focus on asanas that improve flexibility)

Muscle stretching: 15 minutes (e.g. stretching legs, back and shoulders)



Each of these plans can be customised by changing the number of series, repetitions or type of exercises. It is important to start with the right level of skill and gradually increase the intensity of training, taking care of technique and recovery.

Equipment and machinery

Getting familiar with the basic equipment and machines available at the gym is key to effective and safe training.

Overview of basic equipment

Gyms offer a variety of equipment, which can be divided into several categories.

The most common include:



- **Exercise machines**

Used for isolated and multi-joint exercises, often equipped with adjustable seats and resistance.

- **Dumbbells and barbells**

Used for free-weight exercises that engage different muscle groups and help build strength and muscle mass.



- **Cardio equipment**

Treadmills, stationary bikes and elliptical trainers, which are used to improve fitness and burn calories.

How to use strength training machines?

Exercise machines are designed to provide stability and support during training.

Here are some tips on how to use them:

1. 2. 3.

Adjust the seat height, handle and other elements according to your needs to ensure proper posture and range of motion.

Pay attention to the correct technique of performing the exercises. Many machines have instructions or markings attached to help you learn.

Always make sure the machine is stable and in working order before starting the exercise. Use the preset loads according to your own abilities.

Exercises with free weights: dumbbells and barbells

Dumbbells and barbells offer great versatility and are excellent tools for building strength and muscle mass. Here are the key tips in this area:



Dumbbells – ideal for isolated exercises, for example triceps or biceps. They allow you to work on individual muscle groups and improve balance and coordination;



Barbells – used for more advanced exercises, such as squats, deadlifts and bench presses. They require good technique and stability, so you should start with smaller loads and gradually increase them.

Monitor your progress

Track your progress by recording completed exercises, weights, and repetitions.

Regular assessments will help you adjust the plan to your evolving needs and goals. Proper use of equipment and machines, along with a well-thought-out workout plan, will contribute to more effective and safer training sessions at the gym.

The importance of warm-up before strength training



Warm-up is a key part of training, as it: prepares the body for exertion, reduces the risk of injury, increases the temperature of muscles and joints, which improves their flexibility, improves blood circulation, increasing the flow of oxygen and nutrients to the muscles, thereby supporting their performance and reducing soreness, prepares the psyche, thereby facilitating concentration on training and correctness of exercises.

An effective warm-up takes about 5-10 minutes and should include light cardio, dynamic stretching and movements specific to the planned workout. Warming up on a regular basis increases the safety and effectiveness of exercise, helping you achieve better results.

Key exercises at the gym

Basic strength exercises: squats, deadlift, bench press.

Basic strength exercises are the foundation of effective strength training and are key to the comprehensive development of strength and muscle mass. Here is an overview of the most important activities to include in your training programme:

Squats

The classic squat engages the muscles of the legs, glutes and lower back, improving leg strength and stability. For beginners, a good option is the Goblet Squat, which is a squat with a dumbbell held to the chest. This exercise is easy to learn and control, which helps in acquiring the basic movement pattern;



Deadlift

This versatile exercise strengthens the lower back, glutes and leg muscles, improving posture and stability. Initially, you should start with the Romanian Deadlift with dumbbells, which is a lighter version of the deadlift and helps you learn proper hip bent;

Bench Press

Crucial for developing muscles of the chest, shoulders and triceps. To begin with, it is worth doing dumbbell bench presses, which are easier to control than barbell presses. Elevated push-ups (e.g. on a bench) are an alternative that reduces the load and is more accessible to beginners;

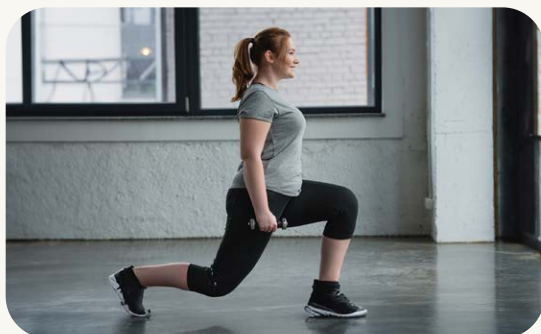


Dumbbell Rows

This is a simple exercise that develops the muscles of the back and shoulders and is easy to control. Pull-downs are an alternative to pull-ups, being a more accessible option for those in the early stages of training;

Dumbbell Shoulder Press

This ensures a more stable position that helps you learn to press overhead;



Reverse Lunges

Reverse lunges with dumbbells is an effective exercise for legs and buttocks, easy to perform, and perfectly complements lower body training.

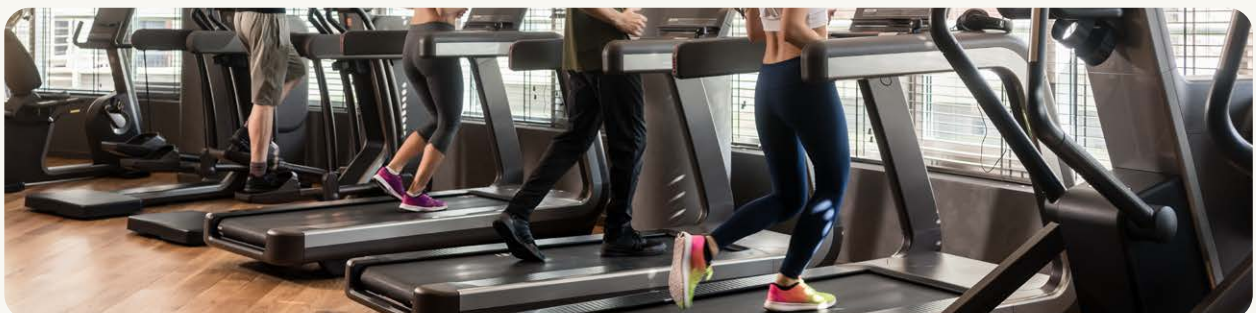
Incorporated into a training programme, these exercises enable comprehensive development of strength and muscle mass, as well as safe and effective achievement of fitness goals.

Abdominal muscle exercises

Strong abdominal muscles are key to stabilising the body and improving posture. It is worth including sit-ups in your workout, which engage the upper abdomen, and the plank, which strengthens the entire body, including the lower abdomen and back. In turn, hanging leg raises help to effectively work the lower abdominal muscles. Doing these exercises regularly helps build a strong and stable core.

**Cardio exercises: treadmill, bicycle, elliptical trainer**

Cardio exercises are key to improving fitness and burning calories. The treadmill allows you to run or walk. Both have a positive effect on heart and lung health and calorie burning. The stationary bicycle, on the other hand, is perfect for those who prefer less impact on their joints. It also improves endurance and leg strength. The elliptical trainer combines the advantages of a treadmill and a bicycle, engaging the whole body and offering an intense cardio workout.



Exercise technique

Proper exercise technique is a key element of effective training, especially for beginners. The foundation of any effective programme is to know the basics of technique. It helps achieve high exercise efficiency, but also minimises the risk of injury.

A workout for beginners at the gym: how many exercises, how many series, how many repetitions?

The ideal approach for beginners is to focus on basic exercises. It is worth starting with 2-3 exercises for each muscle group. For each training session, consider doing 2-4 series of each exercise, with the number of repetitions varying from 8 to 12. This approach supports the building of strength and muscle mass, while allowing the body to gradually become accustomed to the loads.



Training for beginners at the gym – technique is key!

Focus on performing the exercises accurately, avoiding excessive loads that can lead to injury. Make sure you know the correct way to perform each exercise, paying attention to posture, range of motion and pace. It is worth taking advice from a personal trainer or use educational materials to learn proper technique. At many gyms, you can get a free consultation with a personal trainer, which is a great way to learn basic techniques and customise your training plan.



Training for beginners at the gym – intensity

Start with moderate loads, focusing on technique, and over time you can increase the intensity by adding weights, increasing the number of series or shortening the intervals between them. Regularly tracking progress and adjusting training to your skills will help you develop safely and effectively.

Motivation and progress

Motivation is a key element that affects the regularity and effectiveness of training. Maintaining a high level of motivation and systematically tracking progress are essential to achieving fitness goals.

How to stay motivated to exercise regularly at the gym?

1. Set specific goals that will drive you. It could be to improve shape, increase strength, or achieve a certain weight.
2. Maintaining regular training hours and creating a plan that blends into your daily routine also help keep you motivated.
3. Introduce elements of variety, such as training with a partner.
4. Don't forget to celebrate small successes.

Tracking progress and setting goals

Use a workout log or app to note loads, reps and other important metrics. Regularly reviewing these records will allow you to assess how far you have come and make adjustments to your training plan, if needed. Setting new, realistic goals after achieving previous ones is an effective strategy to facilitate further development.

What to eat before a strength workout?



1. Carbohydrates

Carbohydrates are key to providing energy for training. A pre-workout meal should contain easily digestible carbohydrates that will quickly raise blood sugar levels. You can choose sources such as oat flakes, whole-grain bread, fruit (e.g. bananas), or energy bars. Consuming carbohydrates 1-2 hours before training will help maintain energy and improve performance.

2. Protein

Although protein is mainly useful for post-workout recovery, a small amount before exercise can be beneficial. Protein sources include yoghurt, eggs, or lean meat. However, it is recommended that it should not be the main component of the meal before training (as it can cause a feeling of heaviness in the stomach).



3. Fats

They should be limited before training, as they can slow digestion. If you do go for them, choose healthy ones, such as avocados, nuts, or seeds, but in moderation.



Examples of pre-workout meals: **bananas with natural yoghurt, oatmeal with fruit, whole-grain bread sandwich with turkey.**

What to eat after workout?



1. Protein

After the workout, it is a good idea to consume a meal or drink rich in protein to support the repair of muscle micro-damage. Excellent sources of protein include chicken, fish, eggs, cottage cheese, or protein supplements. It is advisable to consume protein within 30-60 minutes after training.

2. Carbohydrates

Post-workout carbohydrates are essential for replenishing muscle glycogen stores and speeding up recovery. Good choices are fruit, cereal bars, rice, or sweet potatoes. In combination with protein, carbohydrates will support the effectiveness of recovery.



3. Hydration

Proper hydration is also important after an intense workout. In addition to water, consider isotonic drinks, which replenish electrolytes lost during exercise.

Examples of post-workout meals: **protein smoothie with banana and milk, grilled chicken with rice and vegetables, omelette with vegetables and whole-grain bread.**

Adequate nutrition before and after strength training not only supports performance, but also contributes to faster recovery and overall well-being.

The role of dietary supplements

Dietary supplements can support the achievement of training goals, but they are not a substitute for a balanced diet. Consider using supplements such as: whey protein, which helps with muscle recovery after training, creatine, which increases strength performance, vitamins and minerals that support overall health. However, before you decide on any supplements, consult a dietitian or doctor to match them to your individual needs and make sure they are safe and effective for you.



The importance of hydration

Water helps transport nutrients to cells, regulates body temperature and supports metabolic processes. Drinking enough water before, during and after a workout is key to maintaining performance. Pay attention to your hydration needs, adjusting water intake according to the intensity and length of your workouts and weather conditions.

What is worth taking with you to the gym?

Towel

Many gyms require that you use your own towel. It is a good idea to have a small towel to use during the workout and a larger one to wipe yourself off after exercising.

Sports shoes

Good sports shoes are essential for safe and comfortable training. Choose footwear that provides adequate support and cushioning, tailored to the type of activity you plan. For strength training, stability is key, while for cardio, adequate support and shock absorption are important.

Sportswear

Choose comfortable, breathable sportswear that does not restrict movement and allows the skin to breathe. Well-fitting exercise clothes improve comfort and efficiency of the workout, and also help maintain hygiene.

Water

Take a bottle of water with you to drink regularly while exercising. You can also add electrolytes to the water if you are planning a long and intense workout.

Water bottle or shaker

If you use dietary supplements or protein supplements, it is a good idea to carry a water bottle or shaker with you. This practical solution makes it easy to prepare and consume drinks before or after training.

Exercise mat

If you plan to perform exercises on the floor (such as stretching or abdominal exercises), an exercise mat will ensure comfort and hygiene. Many gyms provide mats, but having your own can be more comfortable and hygienic.

Headphones and smartphone

Make your workout more enjoyable with music or your favourite podcast. Wireless headphones will work best. They will not interfere with your training.

Sports bag

Make sure it is roomy enough to fit a towel, water, change clothes and other accessories.

Smartwatch or wristband

Such gadgets will be useful for monitoring heart rate and number of repetitions.

MultiSport card

Don't forget to bring your membership card or Multisport card if it's required for gym entry, as well as any personal identification documents.

Frequently asked questions about training at the gym (FAQ)

1. How often should I work out at the gym?

For beginners, training 2-4 times a week is recommended. It is important to give the body time to recover between sessions. Over time, as your shape and strength improve, you can increase the number of workouts and their intensity.

2. What exercises are best for beginners?

To begin with, it is advisable to focus on basic strength exercises, such as squats, deadlifts, bench presses and cardio exercises. These exercises engage large muscle groups and help build a foundation of strength.

3. Do I need to use dietary supplements?

Dietary supplements are not necessary, but can be helpful. The most important thing is to focus on healthy eating, and supplements should be considered as a complement, not a substitute for a healthy diet.

4. How long does a workout last?

The session lasts from 45 to 60 minutes. Beginners should start with shorter workouts and gradually increase the time spent exercising.

5. Can I train every day of the week?

Daily training is not recommended. It is optimal to give the body at least one day of rest between training sessions, especially for the muscle groups themselves.

The most common myths about strength training



Myth 1: Strength training leads to excessive muscle growth in women

Fact: Strength exercises are effective in building strength and toning muscles, but excessive muscle growth in women is unlikely without intensive training and a specific diet. Most women see improvements in muscle shape and strength rather than significant increases in volume.



Myth 2: You need to lift weights to build muscles

Fact: Although lifting weights is an effective method for building muscles, own-weight exercises such as squats, push-ups and planks can be just as effective. The key is proper intensity and progression.



Myth 3: Warm-up before training is not necessary

Fact: Warming up is important to prepare your muscles, joints and cardiovascular system for intense exertion, which reduces the risk of injury and improves training performance.



Myth 4: More repetitions and lighter weights are better for muscle sculpting

Fact: Both heavy weights with fewer repetitions and lighter weights with more repetitions can contribute to muscle building, but effectiveness depends on your overall training plan and goals. Variety in training is key to achieving the best results.



Myth 5: There is no need to do cardio after strength training

Fact: Cardio and strength exercises can complement each other. Cardio improves cardiovascular fitness and helps burn calories, while strength training builds muscle mass and strength. Incorporating both activities into the training plan is beneficial to overall health.

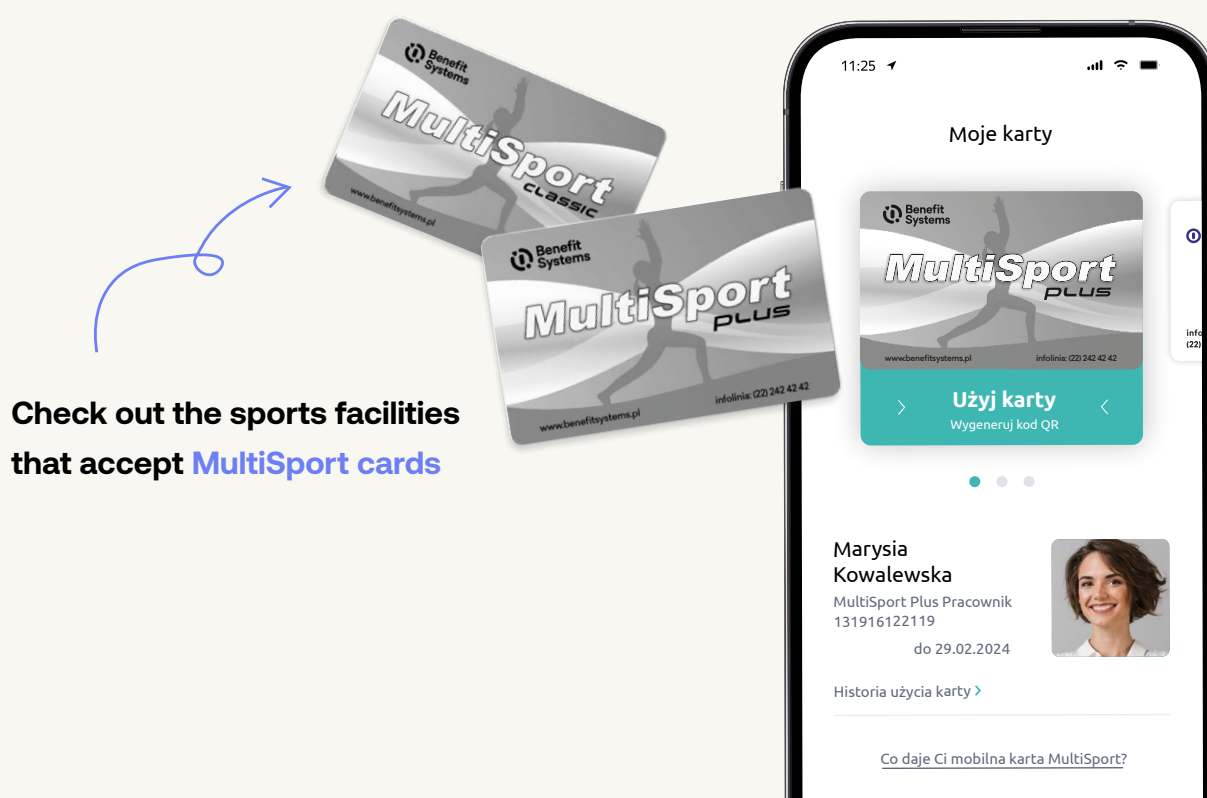
Try your hand at the gym with the MultiSport card!

Starting workouts at the gym is a great way to introduce healthier habits into your life and increase physical activity. While the first steps can be a challenge, with the right plan and realistic goals, your gym journey will be rewarding.

Set yourself specific, achievable goals that will help you track your progress and stay motivated. Understanding the new environment and creating a well-thought-out training plan will minimise the risk of injury and increase confidence. Using a personal trainer can help you master your exercise technique and provide additional motivation and support.

Regular visits to the gym have many benefits – they improve physical fitness, increase energy levels and help you better cope with stress. Systematic training has a positive effect on health and well-being, and the results will be visible in a short time.

Do not put it off – start your gym journey now and discover the benefits that regular physical activity will bring you. Remember that success in training is not only hard work, but also proper rest and recovery. Your path to a healthier life is now at your fingertips, and the MultiSport card can make that journey even more accessible and convenient. Join the ranks of those who enjoy better health and shape through regular training!



Check out the sports facilities that accept MultiSport cards

The image displays two MultiSport cards: 'MultiSport classic' and 'MultiSport plus'. A blue arrow points from the text 'Check out the sports facilities that accept MultiSport cards' to these cards. To the right, a smartphone screen shows the MultiSport app interface. The app displays 'Moje karty' (My cards) with a 'MultiSport plus' card. Below the card, there is a button 'Użyj karty' (Use card) with 'Wygeneruj kod QR' (Generate QR code). The app also shows the user's profile: 'Marysia Kowalewska', 'MultiSport Plus Pracownik', '131916122119', and 'do 29.02.2024'. At the bottom, there is a link 'Historia użycia karty' (Card usage history) and a note 'Co daje Ci mobilna karta MultiSport?' (What does the mobile MultiSport card give you?).