

May 2016 | realsimple.com | Samantha Zabell | Exercise

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The 10 Commandments of Gym Etiquette

You've resolved to get to the gym more this year and that's great! Whether you're new to the mat or are a regular gym rat, here's some basic rules that all gym goers should live by. Break these rules and it's endless squats for you!

1. Thou shalt contain your exercise equipment. Don't leave your water bottle, towel, weights, and other equipment strewn all over the stretching area. That may fly in your bedroom, but others will not appreciate navigating an obstacle course on their way to work out.

2. Thou shalt not socialize. While working out with a friend is a great motivator, it's difficult for others to focus when you're chatting loudly on the treadmill, or worse, standing on the machine next to them but not actually using it. That heat you feel on your back is people shooting daggers with their eyes.

3. Thou shalt respect others' headphones. If you see someone you know at the gym, say hello! But don't try to strike up a conversation with someone in the zone with headphones on. In fact, approaching someone with headphones can be dangerous. Tapping them on the shoulder could startle them enough to lose control, and we can pretty much guarantee they won't be happy.

4. Thou shalt share with others. We know it's tempting to hoard everything you need, but there is a gym full of people who likely use some of the same equipment, so loosen your grip a little.

5. Thou shalt not peer at adjacent TV screens. You know that feeling you get when someone is looking over your shoulder and you can't get anything done? That's how it feels to have someone watching your channel on the elliptical television.

6. Thou shalt not loiter and text on a machine. If you need to catch up on emails or text messages, feel free to do so in the locker room. Sitting on a machine texting, unfortunately, doesn't count as working out.



7. Thou shalt arrive to group classes on time. If you're late to a cardio class, politely set up in the back, and try not to disturb others. If you're running late to yoga, know that you're likely disrupting people's practice when you enter 10 minutes after it starts.

8. Thou shalt wipe down thy machine. We know—you think that the next person will just wipe down the treadmill before they start their workout. You're wrong, though.

9. Thou shalt not douse thyself with perfume. Perfume and sweat is not a great combo in an already smelly gym. But while you should skip the perfume, please don't skip the deodorant.

10. Thou shalt not stare. No, everyone will not have a private little changing room in the locker rooms. Keep your eyes to yourself, please.

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