



In partnership with  
 mind  
for better mental health

## Active together for better mental health.

1. Gyms should offer a sense of community; a safe space for those who feel anxious, vulnerable, and alone, to build themselves up mentally and physically. If yours doesn't. Change gyms.
2. If you're new to training forget all the various 'programmes' and concentrate on doing basic movements with progressive and gradual overload.
3. A simple workout format is: general warm-up, specific warm-up, speed, strength, conditioning, cool-down, post-workout shake, shower.
4. **City Strongman** classes build strength and speed, but also grip, rotational strength, stability, and heart. Perfect for a range of sports.
5. Changes in habits need to be sustainable to be long-term, and they need to be long-term to sustain changes.
6. Whilst we tend to avoid it, training your weaknesses has greater potential for improvement than sticking with your strengths
7. Many people change their gym programme so often they don't give it a chance to see if it really works. Patience wins out.
8. Try to see the gym as a positive place where you can improve, rather than a punitive place to be punished.
9. Despite the dogma, there are very few real 'rules' in training, but what you get out is proportionate to the quality of what you put in.
10. When time is short concentrate on doing the same amount of work with shorter rests. Increasing workout density is a great way to challenge your body
11. Unless you are competing, how much you lift is a lot less important than how you go about lifting it.
12. If you sit down all day for work, don't do the same on machines in the gym. Choose load-bearing activities that get your body moving
13. Do everything you can to make yourself accountable: find a gym buddy, hire a trainer, sign up for challenges, commit to go the next day by putting it in your diary and packing your gym bag the night before.
14. You could wobble about on a BOSU for 'core stability' but we prefer carrying heavy things around the gym, like dumbbells, kettlebells, plates, sandbags and farmers walks.
15. Most of us tend to sleep poorly, work too long, travel often, drink too much, and make poor food choices. Try to fix one thing at a time, rather than all at once to support your new gym routine
16. Match your training to the desired outcomes. The more specific the outcome, the more specific the training.
17. Unless you have a medical or personal reason which contradicts this, a good rule of thumb when selecting equipment is to use: dumbbells, barbells, and machines, in that order.
18. To significantly improve muscular endurance and strength with bodyweight exercises like chin ups, try 'greasing the groove'. Do many easy, small sets of 1-3reps throughout the day or during rest periods in your workout. You won't even notice you've done them.
19. Leave your ego at the gym door and just enjoy how good it can make you feel to be active
20. Jumping exercises are better for training speed and power than for cardio, but they remain popular in many exercise classes. If they hurt your joints or you don't like them, ask for an alternative.
21. If you have an injury you don't need to stop exercising. Research suggests you can stimulate muscle fibres in an injured limb and stave off atrophy simply by training the other ones.
22. Perfect the hip hinge or deadlift movement when starting out with training before anything else. It is fundamental to protecting the back and for good form in the gym.
23. Train your weakest areas first instead or last in your workout if you want to really see them improve.
24. Schedule a gym session in your diary like any other appointment. It increases accountability and reduces the chance you'll miss it.
25. Commit to a competitive event to motivate you to train. It can be as anything from a 5km or as challenging as a team fitness competition. Pick something you feel comfortable with and focus your training towards the goal.
26. Working out in groups can offer more benefits than working out alone – science supports it! Exercise together, share tips and swap encouragement.

- 27.** Try following fitness accounts on social media which provide you with daily motivation, inspiration and encouragement. If they make you feel bad in any way...unfollow.
- 28.** Make yourself unavailable some of the time, for example when you are at the gym. Turn off your phone, put it in your bag, and leave it for an hour.
- 29.** Two simple moves for total physical conditioning, Log Clean and Press x 5 into 50m Prowler Pushes. We know the **perfect gym** to try them
- 30.** Training is a lifelong pursuit, sometimes you need to push hard and other times you need to ease off. Do you give your body enough rest, recovery and flexibility to last the next 30, 40 or 50 years?
- 31.** Working out is a relatively small part of our lives, although it can help make the other parts function a bit better. It is a means to an end, not the end itself.

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