



The Insiders Guide to Joining the Gym In NZ

Looking at social media or walking past your local gym you would be excused for thinking that everyone is exercising, doing it all the time, and loving every minute of it.

And while many people are regular exercisers, and off to the gym each day or doing exercise classes or sessions regularly, it's important to remember if you are that not naturally athletic, that plenty of NZers have never entered a gym in their life.

So, if you are about to take the first steps and thinking of joining a gym or a local class or group training session, then there are a few things you should know:

You may be nervous at starting out

All those people look like they know what they are doing right? Feeling nervous is quite natural, but you'll soon find out that there's nothing to worry about. Many of the people who look confident and assured today, were just as nervous as you when they first joined, and many are just like you, starting out right now.

It won't happen overnight

For the first few times you exercise you will be learning new exercises and it will take some time to get used to. Your body won't suddenly drop a dress size or get muscle definition, but every day you keep up your new routine you are one day closer to getting those results. Exercise has so many benefits including managing stress, and lowering the risk of many lifestyle diseases, so by starting this journey will be doing so much to improve your quality of life.

Huffing and puffing

Regular exercisers talk of the 'feel good' hormone rush they get when they work out. The endorphins that are released do have an impact on your mood, you will be surprised at just how great you feel for the rest of the day, even if your muscles are letting you know they have done more work than usual.

You will sleep better

Exercising certainly gives you more energy, but a good workout can make you feel like you have done some work. The good news is that this makes regular sleep more likely. It is recommended that you try not to make it to the gym for a big workout every day and vary what exercise you do. This way the energy giving benefits of exercise will soon be yours. Gentle movement such as a walk or a mind body class in conjunction with your exercise programme will make you feel better if you need a relaxing day.

Not all gyms/ exercise facilities are the same

Fitting exercise in is half the challenge, so make sure your facility is an easy distance from home or work and a place you look forward to going to, so that way it feels worth the effort. Every facility has a different feel, so it's worth spending some time looking at different gyms/facilities/studios to see how they feel for you. It's not just about the flashiest gear, it's about an environment that you feel comfortable being in and people you can trust to give you the right information.

You will want staff that are able to tailor an exercise programme and give you advice appropriate to your needs, and understand that it's not about giving you the trendiest exercises, but rather the exercises that are best for you.

We are fortunate in New Zealand to have exercise facilities/gym/studios and exercise professionals registered with the NZ Register of Exercise Professionals (REPs). This means that they meet New Zealand and international standards to deliver safe and effective exercise advice. The best way to find them is to look for the REPs branding, or check out the REPs website. This is evidence that their exercise professionals are registered and appropriately qualified and up to date with their education, and that the facility commits to operate within an industry code of practice.

Contact details for further information about the exercise industry:

NZ Register of Exercise Professionals, Registrar Stephen Gacsal
Email: stephen@reps.org.nz telephone: 0800 55 44 99 website: www.reps.org.nz

NZ Register of Exercise Professionals (REPs) - Independent not for profit quality mark of exercise professionals and facilities. Using REPs Registered Exercise Professionals is the "warrant of fitness check" that exercise professionals and facilities meet New Zealand and internationally benchmarked standards to deliver safe exercise advice and instruction. REPs is affiliated globally to other national exercise professional registers representing over 210,000 exercise professionals through the International Confederation of Registers for Exercise Professionals (ICREPs) - www.icreps.org

Exercise Association of New Zealand, Chief Executive Richard Beddie
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Exercise Association of New Zealand - Not for profit exercise industry representative organisation. Its *mission is to proactively support a sustainable exercise and fitness industry in New Zealand by growing participation in structured exercise through advocacy, information and industry standards.*

