

Gym etiquette

America has finally gotten on board with healthy living. In addition to eating better, many of us are regulars at the gym. I feel rather disgusted when I get on a treadmill and the screen and bars are soaked in sweat. I also get antsy when I have to wait while someone decides he'd rather do 20,000 repetitions on the one piece of equipment that 10 of us are standing in line to use.

As a 21st century lady, apply these general rules of etiquette to show consideration for fellow gym users.

In the gym

1. If your gym does not provide towels, bring one so you can wipe your sweat off any machine you use.
2. If you pick something up, put it away when you finish using it. This includes weights, bands, mats and any other equipment.
3. Be considerate when doing circuit training. If you notice there is a line, limit the number of repetitions you do. This also applies to cardio equipment. If there is a line, try to limit yourself to 30 minutes, but definitely to no more than one hour.
4. If you want to fill your water bottle at the fountain, look behind you to see if someone is just trying to get a sip of water. Let that person go first, since you will take a while.
5. Practice good hygiene by wearing deodorant and fresh gym clothes each visit.
6. Always use headphones when listening to music. Try not to use your cell phone at all. In fact, turn off the ringer and put it on vibrate.
7. If late for a class, go quietly to the back in order to not interrupt other participants.

In the locker room/shower area

1. Show courtesy for others by not using all the bench space to spread out your belongings.
2. Keep in mind that although you may be proud of your body and see no harm in walking around in the nude, many women are very modest. Change your clothes as quickly as possible and try not to walk naked to the bathroom or shower from the bench area. Use a large towel to cover up.
3. Try not to engage in loud conversation. Many times, people are trying to wind down after a grueling workout, and welcome peace and quiet.
4. Don't leave any area wet. Use your towel to wipe off any bench or counter you've used.
5. After showering and washing your hair, be sure to remove everything you've taken into the stall, including the paper wrapper for your soap. If you shed a lot of hair, wipe it up.
6. After blow drying your hair, wipe the counter clean.
7. Place all used towels in the appropriate bins.
8. During busy times, try not to take long showers or hog the mirror or hairdryer if there is a line.
9. Shut your locker before leaving.

In the sauna

1. Never walk into a sauna wearing your sweaty gym clothes. Rinse off and change into a swimsuit. If you are modest, you can wear a wrapper around the swimsuit or even an oversized t-shirt. If you don't want to go barefoot, wear flip flops, but never gym shoes.

2. Don't be a Chatty Cathy. Most people are looking for peace and solitude in the sauna. While it is okay to offer quiet greetings (a nod of the head or smile is enough), try not to engage anyone in conversation.
3. Do not talk on the cell phone in the sauna. Doing so is rude and inconsiderate.
4. Make sure your headphones really work, so your music doesn't distract others.
5. Do not exercise or make loud grunting sounds in the sauna.
6. It's fine to lie down in the sauna, but if you see it is becoming crowded, sit up to make room for others.

In the lap pool

1. Many people use the pool as a source of full-body exercise. Don't use the lap lanes just to splash around, aqua jog or splash water with your feet, if you see people are trying to swim laps to work out. If a swimmer approaches while you are frolicking, respectfully defer to his workout and leave (or start swimming laps)!
2. Before getting into the pool, observe the pace of others swimmers. Determine which lanes are designated the "slow" and "fast" lanes. In some gyms, various lanes even determine the type of swimming techniques.
3. If the pool is busy and you will have to share a lane with someone, make sure that person sees you, so he or she will know to begin swimming in a circle, going counterclockwise. You will do the same when someone enters your lane with you.
4. To pass another swimmer in your lane, gently touch their feet with your fingertips to let them know you are about to pass. If you are the one being passed, don't slow down or speed up. Just swim toward the wall to allow that person to pass.

5. If the pool is crowded, try not to use wide strokes. This will help you avoid hitting other swimmers.

Airline Etiquette

*D*o you all remember that incident with the flight attendant a few years ago? Even his name sounded like an action hero's – Steven Slater.

If you woke up in America on that morning in 2011, you couldn't have missed his story – the straight-out-of-the-movies-style meltdown of the JetBlue flight attendant.

The drama: Fed up with a passenger, he cursed her out over the airplane's loud speaker, grabbed a couple of beers, and escaped in a blaze of glory via the emergency hatch. Cheering throngs celebrated him online.

Ten years ago, this would have been a scandal. The response when it hit the news in 2011? "Dude! You lived my dream!"

Everywhere you looked, folks were talking him up. Polls show that most saw him as a hero, even suggesting that he get a reality show, or at least a beer commercial.

Hopefully, I thought, when this dies down, people will move on to a more appropriate thought. "***Why would a seemingly nice man throw away a 20-year career in such a nonsensical, irresponsible manner?***" And, why would he set such a poor example of civility in front of families with small children?

My thoughts? Slater was no hero. And, his actions were not commendable. But, he's right there with the rest of us – fed up with rude, selfish people who, whether at work or play, refuse to follow rules, are inconsiderate and who believe their immediate gratification trumps common decency, self-control and respect for others.

I don't know what was going through Slater's head to make him behave in such a way. I guess he just lost it. Matter of fact, I think this incident was bound