

INTRODUCTION

The information set out in this document applies to Scotland only and has been developed in line with current [Scottish Government: Exercise & Activity Guidance](#) for Phase 3.

We recommend that you keep up to date with the Scottish Government's guidance on health, physical distancing and hygiene. Facility operators, clubs and participants should be aware of any updates and may need to adapt to changes in the guidance at short notice. Information on the Scottish Government's approach to managing Coronavirus (COVID-19) is available at [Scottish Government: Coronavirus in Scotland Guidance](#).

Who is this guidance intended for?

It is intended for facility operators to help them prepare for the opening of **indoor gyms**, which are defined as cardio equipment, fixed resistance, free weights and other areas used for a similar purpose.

This appendix to our [Getting your facilities fit for sport guidance](#) will guide you through the key facility-specific considerations and actions required before opening. It should be read in conjunction with, and not instead of, our overarching guidance.

Additional considerations

Scottish Governing Bodies of sport (SGBs), clubs and participants should be made aware that the easing of restrictions does not mean that all facilities will open immediately. Owners and operators will require time to consider the implications of opening facilities, putting plans in place to re-engage their staff and setting up operations that ensure the safety of participants, staff and volunteers.

Prior to any activity taking place at a facility, it is the responsibility of the operator to undertake a documented risk assessment, based on their local circumstances. Consider safety first, particularly focusing on minimising the risk of infection/transmission. Appropriate measures must be put in place to ensure participants, staff and volunteers are always protected.

Operators must ensure that all sport-specific organised activity planned and programmed at the facility is fully in accordance with the guidance issued by SGBs – see [Scottish Governing Body specific guidance](#).

Please note it is now more important than ever that operators of facilities develop inclusive plans for everyone, ensuring extra support for people who may need it to be active.

Four-stage plan



The work carried out at the plan stage should now be put into action. This next stage will help you prepare your facility prior to opening.

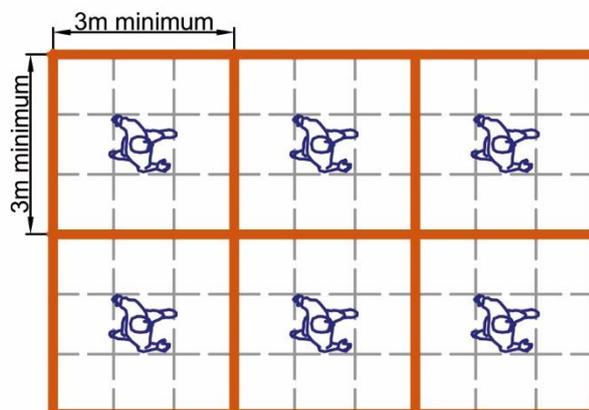
MAXIMUM GYM CAPACITY

The maximum capacity in indoor gyms should be based on the Scottish Government requirement for physical distancing, and with consideration given to the nature of the activities to be undertaken (i.e. if the activity is static or dynamic), the equipment layout and the overall ventilation and configuration of the facility.

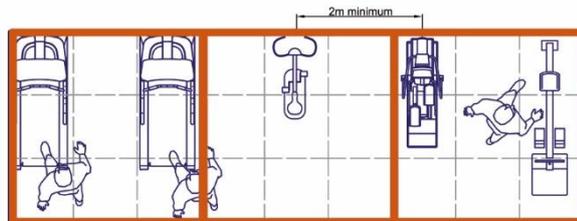
Checklist of considerations

- You must conduct a risk assessment for the facility and the proposed activities that will be undertaken to determine the maximum safe capacity in each of the spaces. The risk assessment must consider the:
 - activities that can be undertaken and the spaces that will be used.
 - impact of ventilation on the overall maximum capacity for the building.
 - specific measures to be put in place to ensure physical distancing, enhanced hygiene and cleaning.
 - additional needs of any participants with disabilities.

We recommend you allow a minimum of **9 square metres (sqm)** per person to maintain 2m physical distancing. This figure is based on a physical footprint of 1sqm per person and the requirement to maintain 2m between one another. It is based on a more static activity and may need to be increased in line with the risk assessment.



Gym equipment should also be spaced a minimum of 2m apart to maintain physical distancing.



The guidance on physical distancing will inform how many people can safely be involved in activity in each space, while never exceeding the overall maximum capacity for the building set out in the ventilation guidance below.

If your risk assessment identifies that a facility or specific spaces within a facility cannot be opened safely, or identifies activities that are not safe for staff, coaches or participants, then the facility or spaces must remain closed or activities suspended.

PROGRAMMING

Checklist of considerations

- Implement a booking system (online or phone) or other approaches to manage demand, so that no more than the maximum number of participants and staff are in the building at any one time. Operators may want to consider providing booked slots for participants to achieve this.
- Manage the number of participants and staff in the building by reducing class sizes and amending the timetabling of bookable sessions.

VENTILATION

Checklist of considerations

- Evidence continues to suggest that, in poorly ventilated indoor spaces, airborne aerosols are a possible transmission route. This is why ventilation is an important part of mitigating against the transmission of Coronavirus (COVID-19). Ventilation into the building should be optimised to ensure a fresh air supply is provided to all areas of the facility and increased wherever possible. Particular attention should be given to spaces where high-intensity exercise activity takes place.

Ventilation systems should provide 100% fresh air and not recirculate air from one space to another if possible.

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- If you have no mechanical ventilation within your facility or your facility is naturally ventilated:
- Doors (not fire doors) and windows should be opened to allow in fresh air 15 minutes before and when activity spaces are in use.
 - During the colder months, wind and indoor/outdoor temperature difference are greater and therefore the openings do not have to be opened as wide to create the same airflow.
 - Take care to ensure that open windows do not cause a hazard to anyone moving outside or within activity spaces.
 - It is important to ensure that windows are open even if it is cooler outside. If it is windy, cold or raining then it may not be practical to fully open the windows, but they should be open as far as reasonably possible without causing discomfort.
 - It may be necessary to heat a room more than normal or the space may be colder than previously experienced. Participants should be made aware of the changes and encouraged to wear more layers.
 - Where a room only has openable windows on one side, consideration should be given to areas within the room where air may become stagnant. It is generally considered that rooms can be well ventilated by single-sided ventilation if the depth of the room is less than twice the height. In deeper-plan rooms it is advisable to use a local recirculation unit or fan at the back of the room to enhance air disturbance and reduce the risk of stagnant air.
 - The guidance on physical distancing will inform how many people can safely be involved in activity in each space. Consideration should also be given to reducing the numbers or removing from use any activity spaces that do not have windows, doors or vents to allow natural ventilation.

Please refer to Section 4 in the CIBSE [COVID-19 Ventilation guidance](#) for more detailed information.

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- CIBSE guidance suggests that Nondispersive infrared (NDIR) CO₂ sensors can be used to monitor the provision of adequate ventilation to an occupied zone. Indoor ventilation dilutes exhaled CO₂ from occupants and so the CO₂ concentration in a space can be used to demonstrate ventilation rates. A CO₂ concentration of 1000ppm (parts per million) is generally indicative of an outdoor air supply of 8-10 litres per second per person.
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- If you have mechanical ventilation within your facility:
 - A target ventilation rate of 20 litres per second per person is advised for indoor sports facilities.
 - This may be achieved in one of three ways:
 - a) Adjustments to ventilation systems to increase fresh air intake.
 - b) Increase natural ventilation by opening doors and windows in line with the guidance above for natural ventilation.
 - c) Controlling numbers by limiting the overall maximum capacity in your building to **9sqm** per person, irrespective of age.
 - Reducing occupancy in this way whilst sustaining ventilation flows will increase the typical current 10 litres per second per person flow rate of ventilation to at least 20 litres per second per person as fewer people are being served by the ventilation system.
 - To use this figure, first check that your system is operating at a minimum of 10 litres per second per person, then calculate the net useable indoor facility space available to participants to use – including changing rooms, toilet and wash facilities – before dividing by nine.
 - All staff, coaches, volunteers, contractors, participants and any supervising parents must be included in your maximum occupancy.
 - The guidance on physical distancing will inform how many people can safely be involved in activity in each space, while never exceeding the overall maximum capacity for the building.

Further information is provided in the CIBSE [COVID-19 Ventilation guidance](#); you can also contact a specialist engineer.

This stage includes actions to protect participants while your facility is open and operating. The work carried out at the plan and prepare stages should now be put into action.

PHYSICAL DISTANCING

Checklist of considerations

- Gym equipment should be spaced a minimum of 2m apart to maintain physical distancing. This should be measured from the centre of equipment to the centre of equipment. This may be achieved by moving equipment, marking every other piece of equipment in the gym 'out of use' or by using an alternative space within the facility.

- Gym equipment should be placed so that users are not facing one another.

- Suitable circulation routes should be clearly marked out to ensure 2m physical distancing. In any areas, such as corridors where physical distancing is difficult, the use of a one-way system, traffic-light system, screens or use of face coverings should be implemented.

- Free weights areas should be marked/zoned to ensure 2m physical distancing can be achieved. This may require additional signage and/or the removal of equipment.

- Any activities that cannot be modified to meet physical distancing requirements should be suspended. This includes spotting of free weights, unless the participants are from the same household or bubble.

- Enough space should be allowed to ensure that physical distancing can be maintained between participants, staff and instructors when moving through the facility or during any activity.

Please note, this may reduce the capacity of the facility and impact on the size or number of sessions that can take place.

HYGIENE, HEALTH AND SAFETY

Checklist of considerations

- Sweat towels are not permitted on the gym floor. Paper towels or blue roll and disinfectant spray should be made available for cleaning and disposed of after use.
- Equipment that is difficult to clean should be taken out of use.
- Although there is no requirement for a gym to always be staffed, **sportscotland** recommends that a designated responsible person is tasked with ensuring maximum capacity, physical distancing, hygiene and cleanliness standards are adhered to throughout all opening hours of the facility.

CLEANING

Checklist of considerations

- Touch points of both fixed and free equipment should be cleaned after every use. This can be done by the customer before and after use, with spray and disposable cloths provided.
- For advice on how to clean equipment thoroughly and appropriately, please seek advice and guidance from your equipment supplier/manufacturer.
- Touch-point cleaning should be in addition to the planned daily cleaning schedules. Links to cleaning plan and sample schedule are available on the [Getting your facilities fit for sport resource page](#)

GOOD PRACTICE HELPS SAVE LIVES

If your risk assessment identifies any activity, space or facility that cannot be opened safely then the facility or spaces must remain closed or the activity suspended.

CONTACT US

If you have any questions regarding the guidance please get in touch with one of **sportscotland's** Facilities Project Managers at facilities@sportscotland.org.uk

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