Precor ActivDesign™
Making your space work harder
**ActivDesign** – making your space work harder.

Research from the retail sector has proven that the layout of a space can affect the responses and behavior of its occupants. If the layout is bland or predictable, the occupants of the space will use it with very little emotion or thought. Good design and layout is needed to create an inspirational environment that gives exercisers a great fitness experience.

Precor’s **ActivDesign** principles work with you and your project team to supply equipment layout solutions and innovative products that help create inspirational spaces.

**Benefits:**
- A space that’s designed to work for your customers
- A space that will achieve your business objectives
- A space that creates the atmosphere you want to represent your brand.

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**How external factors influence exercising**

**GYM ENVIRONMENT**

- **Ambient Factor**
  - Temperature, climate control, lighting, etc

- **Design Factor**
  - Architecture, colour, layout and zoning

- **Social Factor**
  - Membership size, demographics and behaviour of customers

**INTERNAL RESPONSE**

- **Emotional**
  - Pleasure
  - Stimulation
  - Positivity

- **Cognitive**
  - Perceptions
  - Information search and processing

- **Physiological**
  - Comfort
  - Blood pressure
  - Pulse rate etc

**BEHAVIOURS**

- Approach and motivation
- Drawn to specific fitness activities
- Satisfied social and fitness workout experience

Source: Graphic adapted from the findings of *The Effects of Store Environment on Shopping Behaviours – A Critical Review* by Shaun Yin Lam, City University Hong Kong – 2001
DEMOGRAPHICS
**Demographics**, signature offerings and the user experience are good starting points to guide how your gym should look and operate ergonomically, according to IHRSA.

Use this card to determine how much space and resource you are likely to need for each zone. If a zone scores less than three, consider making it a multi-use space. The higher the score, the need for a dedicated zone is more likely.

1. Add the top five demographics that you want to target.
2. Add the names of the zones you want your gym to have.
3. In each box score how well you think the zone will appeal to the corresponding targeted demographic.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOP FIVE DEMOGRAPHICS</th>
<th>PROPOSED GYM ZONES</th>
<th>SCORE APPEAL OF ZONE (1 = LOW APPEAL  5 = HIGH APPEAL)</th>
<th>TOTAL SCORE (LOW SCORE = MULTI-USE SPACE)</th>
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Dare to be different or better with your **equipment layout**.

As well as allowing for adequate space allocation, design your space around your unique proposition, brand identity and values. For instance, if your brand values include community and fun, make sure the design of your space helps to deliver those values.

**TOP TIP**

Don’t start with choosing equipment, start with the zones or areas you want to have in your gym and the percentage of space you wish to allocate to each zone. Then think about the types of equipment you wish to put into each zone.

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**Recommended equipment ratio**

- **CARDIO**: 40%
- **FREE-WEIGHTS AND FUNCTIONAL TRAINING**: 30%
- **STRENGTH**: 20%
- **STRETCHING**: 5%
- **RECEPTION AND ASSESSMENT**: 5%

Use this chart as a starting point for your ideas on how your fitness facility should be laid out and adjust the proportions to your needs.
CARDIO ZONE
**Cardio zone.**

**Location** – Centrally locate in an area with lots of natural light, as this area creates the most energy and vibrancy.

**Layout** - Arrange equipment in multiple tiered rows, with the tallest equipment at the back, facing in the direction of either a large window or an audio-visual system.

**Lighting** – Use natural daylight to its advantage where possible. Complement it with coloured LED lighting, halo-lit ceilings or lights placed behind the rafters, to create drama and a feeling of space.

**Walls** – Utilise or install a glazed area that overlooks a vibrant or pleasant view. Alternatively, a lively, painted accent wall with a motivational graphic should be installed behind the treadmills, with mirrors to the front.

**Flooring** – Wood, vinyl or anti-static carpet is recommended.

**Mirrors** – The individual or continuous stretch of mirrors should be at least two metres high and secured above the skirting.

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**TOP TIP**

Allow all cardio equipment at least a one metre circle of space from the centre of the unit. However, we recommend that you check local regulatory requirements for minimum spacing.
STRENGTH ZONE
Strength zone.

**Location** – Situate in a quiet space where less people will be circulating.

**Layout** – To save space, place equipment back-to-back. Create groupings by exercise type so users are encouraged to move in a logical manner between the equipment.

**Lighting** – Use down lighters or compact fluorescents to create the background lighting. Add shape and texture to the zone with indirect lighting such as uplighters and coloured LED lights, and group equipment with spotlights.

**Walls** – Must be smooth and have no sharp edges, as the exerciser may use the wall for support.

**Flooring** – Cushioned and rubber flooring.

**Mirrors** – Cushioned, toughened, 18 mm, laminated diamond mirrors that are halo-lit with LED string lights or fluorescent tubes.

The layout creates a non-intimidating environment that helps weight trainers to focus on their activities.
FREE-WEIGHTS ZONE
**Free-weights, plate-loaded and functional training zone.**

**Location** – Situate close to the instructor stations, as this area provides the most scope for misuse.

**Layout** – Avoid placing other equipment facing this area, to give more privacy.

**Lighting** – Bright white LED lighting and/or compact fluorescents should be placed over the individual stations.

**Walls** – Two-walled mirrors, acoustic wall panels or sheets of chequer plate that run from floor to wall.

**Flooring** – Thick rubber crumb recessed mat or interlocking floor mounted rubber. Both options must be able to withstand heavy weights.

**Mirrors** – Cushioned, toughened, 18 mm, laminated diamond mirrors that are halo-lit with LED string lights or fluorescent tubes.

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**DID YOU KNOW?**

**COOL HARSH WHITE**

Lights make muscles appear more defined.

Stretch zone.

**Location** – Situate near the fitness gym entrance to promote its use.

**Layout** – Give plenty of space to allow freedom of movement for dynamic and static stretching.

**Lighting** – Use downlighters or compact fluorescents to create the background lighting. Add shape and texture to the zone with indirect lighting such as uplighters and coloured LED lights, and group equipment with spotlights.

**Walls** – Must be smooth and have no sharp edges, as the exerciser may use the wall for support.

**Flooring** – Cushioned and rubber flooring or interlocking floor-mounted rubber.

**Mirrors** – Cushioned, toughened, 18 mm, laminated diamond mirrors that are halo-lit with LED string lights or fluorescent tubes.

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DID YOU KNOW?

Research shows that to avoid a decrease in athletic performance dynamic stretching is better when warming up. So ensure you leave enough space for movement whilst members stretch.

Source: Current concepts in muscle stretching for exercise and rehabilitation by Phil Page, International Journal Of Sports Physical Therapy - 7th February 2012
Studios offer new activities such as scheduled fitness classes that complement equipment-based exercise.

Because these classes give users the opportunity to exercise as a group, they will create a fun, community environment for social engagement, which in turn will retain and attract members.

Consider including at least one contained, multi-purpose studio in your facility.

“Offering specialised classes can cut attrition rates and increase revenue because you are creating social networks within your gym.”

The **reception** area is where first impressions are made.

It’s where everyone is made to feel welcome and looked after.

Locate the reception close to the changing rooms but away from the busy circulation areas. Create a strong, visual impact that represents and sells your brand essence and corporate identity. Use a mixture of decorative, accent and background lighting to highlight the reception area and make it warm and welcoming.

**TOP TIP**

You can use RFID technology, such as a card or wristband, to link all customer touch points, from when they enter the gym, to using lockers and paying for drinks.

Members can also log-in to Preva accounts using the same RFID technology, to track their workouts.
CAFE OR LOUNGE
Cafes and lounges give exercisers an excuse to stay a while.

These areas often form the social hub of the facility because they provide exercisers with an area to interact and enjoy refreshments with their friends and fellow exercisers. Serving food and drink will also create a secondary revenue stream for the facility.

Vending machines for snacks and drinks should also be provided for the times when the cafe is closed. Use vending machines that accept contactless payment so exercisers can use Preva’s RFID system to pay for their items.

DID YOU KNOW?

“The real evolution is the non-exercise space. Lounges, cafes and juice bars provide non-exercise spaces where users can interact, socialise and have fun. When this happens, members are more likely to want to renew their subscriptions”.

Source: Social Environments Help Health Clubs with Member Retention by Paul Steinbach, Athletic Business – April 2011
**Colour** influences the mood of a space and the people within it.

Use it to your advantage to create the atmosphere you want. Warm tones, like red, orange and yellow can energise a space and its occupants. Cool tones such as blue, green and purple generally create quiet, relaxing atmospheres.

Remember to consider how your brand colours should be incorporated into the overall colour scheme.

**TOP TIP**

When choosing colours for walls, flooring and furnishings, keep the goal of the space in mind. If a space is planned for energetic exercise, consider using warm, exhilarating tones, whilst cool tones may be more appropriate in the areas where relaxation and calm is needed.

To ensure that a balanced colour scheme is achieved, use the 60:30:10 decorating rule. The concept states that the main colour occupies 60% of your space and then a secondary colour is added so it represents half as much as your main (30%) plus 10% of accent colour. Remember that these colours can come from the furnishings as well as the walls and flooring.
**Lighting** sets the ambience and mood.

It creates optical illusions, changes colours and the mood of a room. This is why lighting schemes have to be designed so the balance between general and accent lighting is applied correctly and that no glare occurs.

For instance, avoid using standard, direct fluorescent schemes that create a cold, harsh environment. Instead, consider balancing and layering with direct task and accent lighting along with indirect ‘fill’ lighting so you create an effective spread of dim and strong light throughout the area.

**TOP TIP**

Washing walls with an even layer of light seems to push them outwards, expanding the space. And if the wall is light-coloured, the effect is greater.
Clever **flooring** design creates visual impact.

Creating an overall flooring plan of your equipment layout should be one of the first design tasks. This approach ensures that the different flooring finishes chosen for the individual zones and walkways work together as a coherent scheme. It will also focus the flooring needs for each of the areas so they are fit for purpose.

**TOP TIP**

Consider integrating light panels and runway lights into your flooring scheme for decorative and guidance purposes.
Walls divide and define an interior space.

They can be fixed or moveable, decorative or functional, but they should always be attractive and built to withstand the job they were created to do.

Apply light and/or colour to a wall surface and you will create illusions that help to define a space. Walls and partitions also minimise sound transmission and noise pollution within the different areas of a building, but be sure to consider lines of sight when placing partitions.

WHY NOT CONSIDER?

Install a living wall made of plants. Living walls look beautiful and they improve air quality. Research has also shown that they elevate mood and reduce stress. In fact, NASA (The National Aeronautic and Space Administration) has compiled a list of the best 15 plants to use for a living wall.
**Wall graphics** create inspirational environments.

Time should be taken to consider where they should be sited. They must be used carefully so they enhance the space and make an impact.

**TOP TIP**

A couple of large format graphics that span a large area is more effective than numerous small ones placed randomly around the facility.
**Mirrors** reflect light and give an illusion of space.

As well as being functional, the good positioning of a mirror or series of mirrors can create an illusion of space and reflect natural light back into the area.

Exercisers and those who weight train find continuous mirror walls useful because they can check and observe their postures and technique. However, the mirror walls must be constructed in the correct way to avoid image distortion.

**TOP TIP**

Avoid placing mirrors on opposite walls as this will cause a disorientating ‘infinity’ effect.

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**Installing a continuous mirror wall**

- Continuous mirror
- Rigid plywood backing board avoids distortion
- Wall
- Rest mirror on skirting board

Source: Sport England, Fitness and Exercise Spaces, 2008
**Ceilings** should be designed to be attractive as well as functional.

Not only do they influence the overall appearance and atmosphere of a room, they are important for achieving good acoustics and supporting fixtures and fittings such as audio-visual equipment, climate control systems and lighting.

**TOP TIP**

Use halo-lit ceilings (also known as coffer ceilings) to help zone your fitness facility. They also add drama to a space and depending on the colour and type of light source used (eg. neon, LED or fluorescent) different moods for the zones can be achieved.

**Recommended ceiling heights**

- **Fitness Gym** - Between 3.5 to 4 metres from the finished floor level and should not be less than 2.7 metres.
- **Studio** - At least 4.5 metres to accommodate activities that need space to swing equipment.

**Audio-visual (AV) systems** motivate and alleviate boredom whilst exercising.

Research frequently reports that many people who run, jog, cycle, lift weights or exercise in the gym find music to be essential for peak performance and a satisfying workout.

Music distracts the body from pain and fatigue, elevates mood and even promotes metabolic efficiency. In fact, as well as enhancing performance, music lowers the perception of effort, so participants are less aware of their exertion.

Such a distraction can benefit athletic performance by up to 15 percent*.

*Source: *Music Increases Endurance by 15 percent* by Professor Costas Karageorghis, Brunel University School of Sport and Education - October 2008

Precor’s 880 Line incorporates a personal entertainment system, which reduces the number of wall-mounted televisions needed.
**Power and internet** access means networked fitness.

Increasingly, exercisers are looking to networked fitness to enhance their workouts. In order to satisfy this need, the appropriate equipment will require access to power and internet connectivity.

Options to do this might be flush floor service boxes arranged in a grid over the gym area, or the cabling could be routed to the equipment under a false floor.

Prewa™ is Precor’s networked fitness solution and it gives you tools to manage your facility efficiently. It also allows your exercisers to enjoy exciting new workout experiences.

See our Simplified Facility Infrastructure Guide on the enclosed USB stick.
Preva Mobile App
Search: Preva

Download on the
App Store

Android App on
Google Play
Well-conceived information points form the foundations of a good community spirit.

Use them to display and promote notices and messages that will spark off conversations and encourage interactions between the users of the facility.

TV screens with scrolling messages or information display boards should be positioned where they can be seen but at the same time will not obstruct the main walkways.

TOP TIP

‘Preva Champions!’ boards are great fitness motivation tools and they help get conversations going between fellow exercisers.
SIGNAGE

Fitness
Good **signage** should be clear in its presentation and what it is saying. It should always be easy to understand and clearly visible. Make sure it complies with your Local Authority planning and building regulations. This applies especially to exterior signs and health and safety notices.

When considering your signage options, remember to make sure they fit with your brand guidelines and that a consistent style is adopted throughout the facility.

**TOP TIP**

To avoid duplication and a visually confusing environment, the signage plan should take into consideration the needs of all the departments within the facility.

### The types of signage fall into three categories:

**Directional** – Way-finding signage allows people to navigate around the facility.

**Operational** – These signs provide facility and services information.

**Safety** – Safety messages or warnings come under this category and an assessment should be made as to which ones should be displayed.

### PRECOR ActivDesign™

**Fitness Made Personal**
CLIMATE CONTROL
Climate Control ensures that an essential, healthy indoor environment is maintained for pleasant exercising.

Ideally, your chosen system should integrate with natural ventilation as well as mechanical climate control to maintain the ideal temperature, humidity and air quality levels. Directional, comfort cooling, such as fans, may also be provided for exercisers.

The system must respond quickly to the build-up of heat in gyms and humidity in areas such as indoor swimming pools, and provide good ventilation so the air is fresh throughout the facility.

TOP TIP

Consider adopting a heat recovery system. It’s not only energy saving but will help to reduce running costs because it recycles the heat produced by the facility and introduces it back into the building as clean, warm air.

**Internal climate recommendations**

- Humidity below 60%
- Air temperature
  - 18°C
  - 17°C
  - 16°C

**20 Litres per second**

Minimum room fresh air ventilation per person

Source: Sport England, Fitness and Exercise Spaces, 2008