

Councils and organisations are encouraging active exercise by creating fresh air gyms with the installation of outdoor fitness equipment. Similar to sports fields, children's playground equipment, pathways, cycle ways, landscaping and community facilities, outdoor gyms are typically provided as a facility within a local outdoor park/reserve.

Advantages of Outdoor Gyms

- Encouraging adults, youths and young at heart to be active and healthy
- Fun to use
- Free of charge
- Able to be used 24 hours
- Doesn't take up space at home

Types of Outdoor Gyms

- **All-In-One** - a facility where each piece of equipment is joined to another and resembles children's playground equipment in style.
- **Static Exercise Station** - is similar to an all-in-one, however equipment items are separated.
- **Fitness Trail** - typically a pathway with distanced intervals between equipment eg. 100-200metres.
- **Exercise Station Trail** - a number of small version exercise stations with moving equipment spaced out over a fitness trail. Distances between the exercise stations can vary.
- **Modern** - with incorporated moving parts in the equipment. This equipment looks and is used similarly to indoor fitness equipment.

The design of outdoor fitness equipment is for use by adults and youths with an overall height of >1400mm to discourage the use by younger children. However children are drawn to outdoor gyms, so location is important and standards recommend that fitness equipment not be placed in the immediate vicinity of children's playgrounds.

An outdoor fitness equipment standard was recently developed that specifies the general safety requirements for the manufacture, installation, inspection and maintenance of permanently installed, freely accessible outdoor fitness equipment (AS 16630:2021). Some of the considerations of this standard include providing certified playground surfacing surrounding the equipment (where necessary), and eliminating entrapment, crush and shearing hazards.



What to Consider if Installing Outdoor Fitness Equipment

What to consider when installing outdoor fitness equipment

- Features that would enhance the experience of an outdoor gym such as:
 - Surfacing tested to AS 4422 surrounding equipment
 - Shade
 - Seating
 - Rain shelter
 - Security surveillance
 - Toilets
 - Bubblers
 - Garbage bins
 - Lighting
 - Signage
- Type of gym equipment
 - High quality equipment design for a range of beginner to advanced skill levels
 - High quality construction and durability
 - Static equipment
 - Mechanical equipment
- Site selection
 - Location and views
 - Set out
 - Level Surface
 - Accessibility
 - Parking



What to check if using Outdoor Fitness Equipment

- Condition of the equipment
 - Check that fitness equipment is stable and in good working order
 - Check that components are intact, no missing or broken parts and fastenings are secure
- Safe Environment
 - Check for any suspicious or threatening people in the area
 - Ensure someone knows where you are
 - Check for adverse weather conditions (very hot/cold, lightning, etc) and debris
 - Ensure that you are wearing appropriate clothing, footwear and sun protection
- Safe Usage
 - Refer to the signage on the equipment for correct usage
 - Take regular breaks during exercise
 - Keep hydrated

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Need more help? Kidsafe SA provides a playground inspection service. Contact us for a quote to organise an inspector to visit your playspace and provide specific advice.