

GYM BUSINESS PLAN TEMPLATE

A practical roadmap for opening or growing a gym

A fill-in planning document for independent gyms, fitness studios, and health clubs. Built to help you test the idea, explain it clearly, and turn assumptions into evidence before money is committed.

How to use it: Work through the plan in order, but write the executive summary last. Replace every placeholder with evidence, a verified quote, a documented assumption, or a number from your own model. If a figure is unknown, leave it blank until you can support it.

Before you start: the five-question reality check

- Who is the gym for, specifically?
- What problem or unmet need will the gym solve in its local market?
- What will members pay for, and what does it cost to deliver?
- What must be true for the gym to cover its monthly costs?
- What evidence supports the location, pricing, demand, and funding assumptions?

Think of the plan like a pre-opening walkthrough. You are looking for the loose cable, blind corner, or missing key before members arrive, when fixing it is still relatively cheap.

The roadmap

Step	Section	What it should answer
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1	Executive summary	One-page picture of the business, written last.
2	Company and gym concept	What you are building, for whom, and how the business is structured.
3	Market and competitor evidence	Local demand, customer profile, alternatives, and evidence.
4	SWOT and positioning	What helps, what limits, what may change, and how you will respond.
5	Services, pricing, and revenue model	What members can buy and how each revenue stream works.
6	Marketing and pre-launch plan	How awareness becomes leads, tours, trials, and memberships.
7	Facility, equipment, and launch requirements	Space, layout, equipment, permits, and buildout.
8	Operations, staffing, and systems	How the gym works on an ordinary Tuesday, not just opening day.
9	Financial plan and funding	Startup costs, monthly costs, forecasts, cash flow, break-even, and funding.
10	Risk, compliance, growth, and KPIs	What could go wrong, what must be verified, and how progress will be measured.

1. Executive summary

Write this section last. It should let a lender, landlord, partner, or future manager understand the business without reading the full plan.

Prompt	Your notes
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Gym name and proposed location	
Gym concept in one sentence	
Primary target member	
Main services and membership model	
Why this market needs the concept	
Ownership and legal structure	
Funding required, if applicable	

What the funding will be used for	
High-level financial goal and path to break-even	
Key milestone for the first 12 months	
Quality check: A strong executive summary does not promise success. It shows that the concept, market evidence, operating plan, and financial model fit together.	

2. Company and gym concept

Describe the business clearly enough that someone can picture the member experience, the business model, and the team behind it.

Prompt	Your notes
Business name, ownership, and legal structure	
Mission: what the gym exists to help members do	

Gym type and training model	
Proposed location and why it fits the concept	
Primary customer segment	
Problem or unmet need the gym addresses	
Member experience from first inquiry to regular attendance	
What makes the offer meaningfully different	
Short-term objective (first year)	

Longer-term objective (3 to 5 years)	
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Evidence to attach

- Business formation documents, if already filed
- Owner and leadership resumes
- Draft lease, letter of intent, or site information, if available
- Relevant licenses, permits, or professional credentials already obtained

3. Market and competitor evidence

Do not write this section as a broad fitness–industry essay. Show what is true in the trade area where the gym expects to win members.

A. Define the trade area

Prompt	Your notes
Geographic area you are evaluating	
Why people in this area could realistically use this gym	
Population and household characteristics relevant to the concept	

Employment, commuting, or daytime-population factors that matter	
Evidence source and date	

B. Define the target member

Prompt	Your notes
Primary member profile	
Main fitness goal or use case	
When and how often they are likely to train	
What they currently use instead	

What would make them switch or join	
What would make them leave	

C. Map direct and indirect alternatives

Business/altern ative	Distance or area	Offer	Price evidence	Strength	Gap or unmet need

Primary data source: Use U.S. Census Bureau tools for local demographic and business evidence. Pair public data with your own fieldwork, such as site visits, current published prices, member interviews, waitlists, lead tests, or landlord traffic information.

4. SWOT and positioning

A useful SWOT is not a list of flattering adjectives. Each point should change a decision, budget, timeline, or contingency.

Strengths Internal advantages you can prove or control. • • •	Weaknesses Internal limits, gaps, or dependencies. • • •
Opportunities External conditions you may be able to use. • • •	Threats External risks you cannot fully control. • • •

Positioning sentence: [Gym name] is designed for [specific member] who needs [specific outcome or experience], delivered through [clear operating difference].

5. Services, pricing, and revenue model

List each thing the business expects people to pay for. Do not assign industry-standard percentages unless you have evidence for your own model.

Revenue stream	Offer	Price	Expected volume	Variable cost	Capacity limit	Evidence/assumption
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Memberships						
Personal training/coaching						
Classes or programs						
Recovery/ancillary services						
Retail/beverages						
Corporate or other B2B						
Other						
Reality check: A revenue stream is only useful if the plan also shows who buys it, how often, what capacity limits it, and what it costs to deliver.						

6. Marketing and pre-launch plan

Build the plan backward from the behavior you need: awareness, lead, conversation, trial or tour, sale, onboarding, repeat attendance, and referral.

Stage	Goal	Audience	Channel/activity	Owner	Measure
Before site is ready					
Pre-sale period					

Opening month					
First 90 days after opening					
Ongoing retention / referral					

Questions worth answering:

- What is the founding-member offer, if any?
- How will leads be captured and followed up?
- What conversion steps can be measured?
- How will new members be onboarded into regular attendance?
- What marketing spend can the cash-flow plan actually support?

7. Facility, equipment, and launch requirements

The facility plan connects the member experience to the lease, buildout, equipment, accessibility, safety, and cash requirements.

Prompt	Your notes
Site address or preferred area	
Required usable square footage and why	
Training zones and member flow	

Locker, restroom, reception, storage, office, and staff needs	
Accessibility requirements to verify	
Zoning, occupancy, signage, fire, or local permits to verify	
HVAC, power, plumbing, acoustics, flooring, and load requirements	
Equipment list by must-have / phase-two / optional	
Buy, lease, finance, or used-equipment decision by category	
Vendor quotes and installation lead times	

Contingency for site or buildout changes	

Equipment decision sheet

Item/category	Qty	Source	Buy / lease	Quoted cost	Lead time	Why it is needed

8. Operations, staffing, and systems

This section should explain how the gym works when the owner is not standing at the front desk. Map the repeatable systems that keep access, service, safety, payments, scheduling, and communication consistent.

A. Staffing plan

Role	Employee/co ntractor	Main responsibilities	Coverage needed	Compensation basis	Hiring trigger
Owner / GM					
Front desk/member services					
Coach/trainer					
Cleaning/main tenance					
Sales/marketin g					
Other					

B. Daily operating systems

- Member sign-up, waivers, billing, failed-payment follow-up, and cancellation handling
- Check-in and access control, including after-hours exceptions
- Class and appointment scheduling, waitlists, substitutions, and no-shows
- Lead capture, follow-up, tours, trials, and sales handoff
- Member communication and service recovery
- Cleaning, inspections, equipment maintenance, and incident reporting
- Opening and closing procedures
- Cash, retail, inventory, refunds, and reconciliation where relevant
- Payroll, contractor payments, and management reporting
- Data access, staff permissions, backups, and business continuity

Operational test: If a process depends on one person remembering what to do, it is not yet a reliable operating system. Document the trigger, owner, action, record, and escalation path.

9. Financial plan and funding

Use your own quotes, lease terms, payroll assumptions, tax advice, and demand evidence. The purpose is not to make the spreadsheet look impressive. It is to show what must happen for the business to stay solvent and repay any funding.

A. Startup uses of cash

Category	Quoted/estimated amount	Source	Due date	Notes
Lease deposit and professional fees				
Buildout/improvements				
Equipment and installation				
Furniture, fixtures, technology, access, security				
Licenses, permits, insurance, legal, accounting				
Pre-opening payroll and training				
Marketing and signage				

Opening inventory/retail				
Working capital reserve				
Contingency				
Other				

B. Monthly operating costs

Cost	Fixed / variable	Monthly assumption	Evidence	Sensitivity
Rent/CAM/occupancy				
Payroll and contractor costs				
Utilities				
Software and payment costs				
Insurance				
Equipment financing/leases				
Cleaning and maintenance				
Marketing				
Professional services				

Supplies/inventory				
Debt service				
Other				

C. Revenue forecast

Build the forecast from operating drivers rather than a single top-line growth percentage. For memberships, that means showing opening members, new joins, cancellations, average realized revenue, and timing. Model other revenue streams separately.

Driver	Month 1 assumption	Month 12 assumption	Evidence/logic	Downside case
Active members				
New joins				
Cancellations/churn				
Average realized membership revenue				
Personal training/coaching				
Classes/programs				
Ancillary/retail/other				

D. Financial statements to prepare

- Income statement/profit and loss forecast

- Cash-flow forecast, with the first year modeled monthly where practical
- Forecast balance sheet
- Capital expenditure budget
- Debt schedule, if borrowing
- Best-case, base-case, and downside assumptions that can be explained

SBA alignment: For a traditional funding plan, SBA guidance calls for forecast income statements, balance sheets, cash-flow statements, and capital expenditure budgets, with more detailed projections in the first year. Match the financial projections to the funding request and explain the assumptions.

E. Break-even analysis

Simple member-based formula: Break-even members = monthly fixed costs ÷ (average monthly revenue per member - variable cost per member).

Important: Use realized revenue, not just the advertised membership price. If the gym has meaningful non-membership revenue, model those streams separately so the break-even logic stays transparent.

Your calculation: Monthly fixed costs \$ _____ ÷ contribution per member \$ _____ = _____ break-even members.

F. Funding request and use of funds

Prompt	Your notes
Total funding required	
Owner equity or cash contribution	

Debt requested	
Other funding sources	
Specific use of each funding source	
Timing of draws or major payments	
Collateral, if applicable	
Repayment assumptions	
What happens if opening or member growth is slower than planned	

10. Risk, compliance, growth, and KPIs

Separate what you can control from what you must verify. Legal and regulatory requirements differ by location, business structure, facility, staff model, and services offered.

A. Risk register

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Prevention/mitigation	Trigger/response
Opening delay				
Lower-than-planned membership				
Cash shortfall				
Equipment failure				
Staff turnover				
Member injury/incident				
Payment/billing interruption				
Lease or occupancy issue				
Data/system outage				
Other				

B. Compliance and insurance checklist

- Confirm business registration, tax, and employer requirements for the chosen structure.
- Confirm state, county, city, zoning, occupancy, signage, fire, and other permits that apply to the site and activities.
- Confirm ADA accessibility requirements for the facility and planned alterations, including routes and exercise-equipment clear floor space where applicable.
- Confirm workplace-safety obligations that apply to employees, including emergency procedures and first-aid arrangements where required.
- Review member agreements, waivers, recurring-payment terms, cancellation practices, privacy practices, and staff/contractor agreements with qualified counsel as needed.
- Confirm insurance requirements and coverage with a licensed broker or adviser, including the risks created by the facility, services, staff, equipment, and any 24/7 access model.
- Confirm music, media, or other intellectual-property permissions if the business uses protected content commercially.
- Confirm any role-specific credential requirements imposed by law, insurer, landlord, franchisor, or company policy.

C. Growth plan and KPIs

Choose metrics that answer a management question. Avoid copying “healthy ranges” from the internet without context.

Metric	Why it matters	Definition	Target/threshold	Review cadence
Active members				
New joins				
Cancellations/churn				

Lead-to-sale conversion				
Average realized revenue per member				
Attendance/visit frequency				
Personal training or secondary-service uptake				
Payroll cost				
Occupancy cost				
Cash balance/runway				
Member receivables / failed payments				
Member satisfaction/service issues				

Opening milestones

Turn the plan into a sequence of decisions. Dates should come from your real lease, permitting, funding, buildout, vendor, hiring, and presale timelines.

Milestone	Owner	Target date	Dependency	Done when
Business structure confirmed				

Site selected				
Lease/financing conditions satisfied				
Permits and approvals confirmed				
Buildout started				
Equipment ordered				
Core systems configured				
Key staff hired/trained				
Presale launched				
Safety/operations walkthrough complete				
Soft opening				
Public opening				

Appendix checklist

- Owner and leadership resumes
- Market research exports and source notes
- Competitor observations and dated price evidence
- Lease, letter of intent, or site documents
- Architect/contractor plans or quotes

- Equipment and technology quotes
- Insurance quotes or coverage summary
- Licenses and permits
- Membership agreement and waiver drafts
- Staffing plan and job descriptions
- Marketing plan and launch calendar
- Financial model, assumptions, and supporting quotes
- Funding documents and use-of-funds schedule
- Risk register and emergency/incident procedures

Primary sources to use while completing the plan

These sources do not replace local legal, tax, insurance, or professional advice. They are useful starting points for evidence and verification.

[U.S. Small Business Administration – Write your business plan](#)

Traditional and lean business-plan structure, funding requests, and financial projections.

[U.S. Census Bureau – Census Business Builder](#)

Local demographic, economic, and business data for market research.

[Internal Revenue Service – Starting a business](#)

Federal tax basics, business structure, EIN, and recordkeeping starting points.

[U.S. Small Business Administration – Launch your business](#)

Starting-point guidance on licenses and permits, with reminders that state and local requirements vary.

[U.S. Small Business Administration – 7\(a\) loans](#)

Current 7(a) program overview and permitted uses of proceeds.

[U.S. Small Business Administration – 504 loans](#)

Current 504 program overview for qualifying fixed assets and related uses.

[ADA.gov – 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design](#)

Accessibility requirements, including provisions for accessible routes and exercise equipment.

[OSHA — Emergency action plans, 29 CFR 1910.38](#)

Emergency-action-plan requirements where an applicable OSHA standard requires one.

[OSHA — Medical services and first aid, 29 CFR 1910.151](#)

General-industry first-aid and medical-services requirements.

[U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics — Fitness trainers and instructors](#)

National occupational information and current wage data; use state and area data for local staffing assumptions.

Final test before you share the plan: A reader should be able to trace every major claim back to evidence, every forecast back to an assumption, and every funding request back to a specific use of cash. If a number cannot be explained, it is not ready yet.