

How to Plan an Outdoor Gym area?



8 STEPS TO A SUCCESSFUL INVESTMENT

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	<i>3</i>
STEP 1: DEFINING GOALS AND NEEDS	<i>4</i>
STAGE 2: CHOOSING THE LOCATION	<i>7</i>
STEP 3: SELECTING THE EQUIPMENT	<i>10</i>
STEP 4: SAFETY SURFACING	<i>17</i>
STEP 5: FORMAL AND FINANCIAL MATTERS	<i>20</i>
STEP 6: DESIGN AND VISUALIZATIONS	<i>24</i>
STEP 7: INSTALLATION	<i>30</i>
STEP 8: MAINTENANCE AND SAFETY	<i>34</i>
EXTRAS THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE	<i>38</i>
SUMMARY	<i>41</i>



Introduction

Outdoor gyms are no longer just a trend, they have become a powerful tool for improving residents' quality of life, supporting public health, and activating local communities. An increasing number of municipalities, schools, and private investors recognize their potential, while at the same time facing many challenges related to planning and implementation.

As a manufacturer of outdoor gym equipment, we have been supporting our clients for years and have a deep understanding of the questions and dilemmas that arise at each stage of the project.



To make this process easier, **we have prepared a practical guide that clearly and systematically walks you through every stage of building an outdoor gym.** It brings together our experience, the most frequently asked client questions, and proven solutions that help avoid costly mistakes and create an outdoor gym users will want to return to.

In the following chapters, **we will show you step by step how to plan an outdoor gym** tailored to local needs and available resources.



Step 1

DEFINING GOALS AND NEEDS

Before choosing specific equipment or a location, it is essential to ask a few fundamental questions. A well-defined goal and a clear understanding of users' needs are the foundation of a successful project. An investment in an outdoor gym should respond to the real challenges of the local community. This is why this stage of planning is so crucial.

01

Step 1:

DEFINING GOALS AND NEEDS

1. Which target groups will use the outdoor gym?

Think about who the space is intended for:

- Will it be mainly for young adults and physically active users?
- Do you want to accommodate seniors who prefer calm, health-oriented activity?
- Or are you planning an intergenerational, inclusive space used by entire families—children, adults, and older people?
- Should the area be inclusive and accessible for people with disabilities as well?

2. What Is the purpose of the Outdoor Gym?

Depending on the user profile, an outdoor gym can fulfill different roles:


- **Recreational** – for residents who want to spend their free time actively
- **Sports-oriented** – for more advanced users and youth
- **Community-focused** – as a meeting place and activity hub for different social groups
- **Rehabilitative** – as support for physical therapy (especially near healthcare centers or care facilities)

3. What are the main goals of this investment?

Ask yourself: *What is this project meant to achieve?* For example:

- Improving residents' health and physical fitness
- Supporting social and intergenerational integration
- Activating seniors and people with limited mobility
- Creating an attractive and functional public space
- Complementing existing sports and recreational infrastructure



 **Tip:** *The more precisely you define the project's purpose, the better you can match the equipment, its layout, and the overall character of the space. This, in turn, leads to higher user satisfaction and long-term success of the investment.*



Step 2

CHOOSING THE LOCATION


The location of an outdoor gym is one of the key factors influencing its popularity and functionality. Even the best-designed facility may remain underused if it is placed in the wrong location

1. Where to Locate an Outdoor Gym?

The best locations are those naturally frequented by potential users and places associated with everyday movement and leisure:

- **own or village centers** – easy access for all age groups,
- **near playgrounds** – the gym can complement a family-friendly zone,
- **next to sports fields and facilities** – an additional area for warm-up and stretching,
- **close to schools** – as support for physical education classes or a recreational space after school,
- **in parks** – a calm, green environment that encourages outdoor activity.



 **Tip:** Before making a decision, carry out a brief analysis of which areas in your community are most frequently used and what needs residents express. We recommend asking potential users directly or even conducting a short survey.

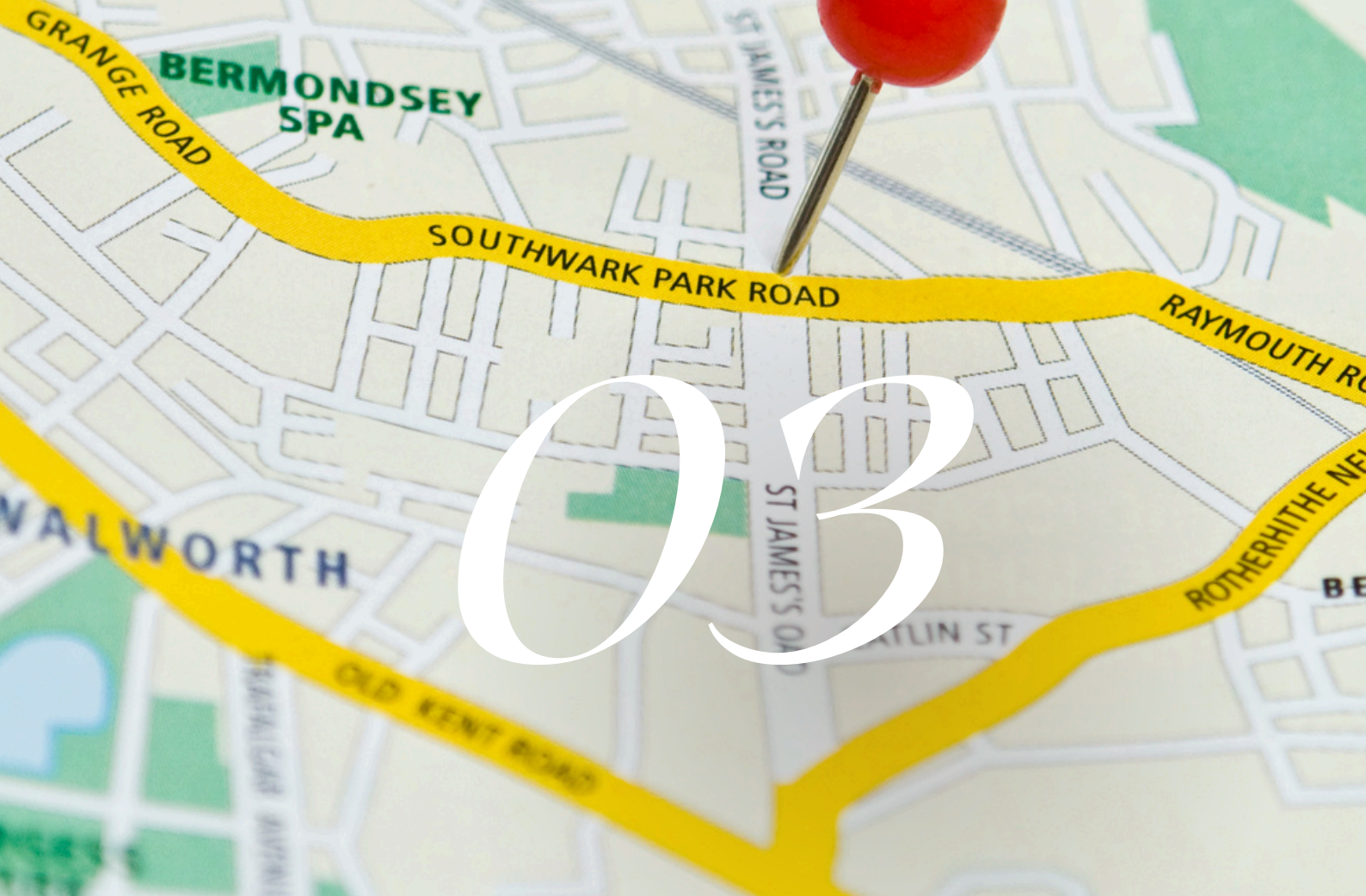
2. Technical Requirements of the Site

- **stable, level ground** - - more about surfacing in Chapter 4,
- **sufficient space** not only for the equipment but also for safety zones around it. *The safety zone for outdoor gym equipment is 1.5 m around each unit, and these zones may overlap. This means that within 1.5 m of the equipment there should be no obstacles such as benches, trees, stairs, shrubs, etc. For street workout equipment, the required safety zone is 2 meters.* Detailed information on safety zones can be found in our product data sheets,
- **access to potential utility connections** (e.g. lighting),
- **absence of hazards** such as slopes or busy roads in the immediate vicinity.

3. Accessibility and Safety

A well-designed location should also meet accessibility and safety criteria:

- **easy access by foot and by vehicle,**
- **usability for seniors and people with disabilities,**
- **adequate lighting and monitoring** (if required),
- **clear signage of the outdoor gym** (e.g. rules board, usage instructions).



Step 3

SELECTING THE EQUIPMENT

Choosing the right equipment is a key stage in planning an outdoor gym. It is the equipment that determines who will use the space and how it will be used.

1. Equipment Categories – What Functions Should They Serve?

A well-designed outdoor gym should offer a wide range of training options.

Equipment is usually divided into four categories:



01

STRENGTH EQUIPMENT

BUILDS MUSCLE STRENGTH AND POWER



Examples of equipment:

leg press, push chair, bench press, pull chair, butterfly machine, bench, back extension



02

AEROBIC EQUIPMENT IMPROVES FITNESS AND ENDURANCE



Examples of equipment:

crosstrainer, bike, air walker, rower, stepper, rider, ski walking, treadmill, abductor



03

COORDINATION EQUIPMENT

SUPPORTS BALANCE AND MOTOR SKILL DEVELOPMENT



Examples of equipment:

coordinator, twister, tai chi, surfer, arm wheel



04

INCLUSIVE EQUIPMENT ADAPTED FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES



Equipment with wheelchair access or a foldable seat f.e.:
integration push chair, inclined bike, hand bike, arm
trainer, integration butterfly



05*

STREET WORKOUT FOR BODYWEIGHT TRAINING



Street workout can be treated as a separate category, as a single structure may integrate multiple functions from strength exercises and functional training to the development of balance and coordination.

The most popular calisthenics equipment includes:

1. **Pull-up bars** – allow for pull-ups, hanging exercises, core training, and dynamic movements
2. **Parallel bars** – used for push-ups and dips
3. **Vertical and horizontal ladders** – develop strength, coordination, and upper-body mobility
4. **Multi-element structures** – combine various grips, bars, and rails in one station, allowing multiple users to train simultaneously and perform comprehensive workouts





Step 4

SAFETY SURFACING

When designing an outdoor gym, it is important to remember that user safety does not end with properly selected equipment. Equally important is the surface on which the equipment is installed.

04

Step 4: SAFETY SURFACING

A key concept in this context is the critical fall height (HIC), which refers to the maximum height from which a user can fall without sustaining serious injuries, assuming an appropriate type of surface is used. Selecting the right surfacing depends directly on the height of the equipment—more precisely, on the height of the part from which a fall is possible. The higher the equipment, the more impact-absorbing the surface around it should be.

According to applicable standards, impact-absorbing surfaces are required when the critical fall height is at least 1 meter.

Most outdoor gym equipment has a fall height of under 1 meter. In such cases, hard surfaces such as **concrete, stone, or bituminous surfacing** are permitted. This is an economical solution commonly used in urban spaces..

⚠ The situation is different for street workout equipment. Its height often exceeds 1.5–2 meters, which means that impact-absorbing surfaces are required. In these cases, the most suitable options include **grass, gravel, sand, loose-fill materials such as bark or wood chips, or certified safety surfacing.**

04

Step 4: SAFETY SURFACING

Below we present a table showing which types of surfacing are required for specific critical fall heights and what thickness they should have, in accordance with the PN-EN 1177:2009 standard. In addition, we have compared the ease and costs of installation and maintenance.

SURFACE		MAINTENANCE EASE	INSTALLATION COST	MAINTENANCE COSTS	LAYER THICKNESS	FALL HEIGHT
	Concrete Asphalt	★ ★ ★	★ ★ ★	★ ★ ★	-	≤ 1000
	Grass	★	★ ★ ★	★	-	≤ 1500
	Sand Gravel	★ ★	★ ★	★ ★	300	≤ 2000
					400	≤ 3000
	Bark	★ ★	★ ★	★ ★	200	≤ 2000
					300	≤ 3000
	Artificial surface	★ ★ ★	★	★ ★ ★	Varies by producer	Varies by producer



Net cash	283	276	843
	4,186	14,355	12,380
Financing			
Short-term debt			
maturities of 9			
Common stock issued	208	660	837
Common stock repurchased	(1,042)	(52)	(2,976)
Common stock cash dividends paid	(1,683)	(363)	(3,024)
Net cash used in financing	(2,513)	(751)	(382)
Investing			
Additions to property and equipment	(498)	(491)	(34)
Acquisition of companies, net of cash acquired, and purchases of intangible and other assets	(8,627)	(69)	(9,502)
Purchases of investments	(10,047)	(5,336)	(21,346)
Maturities of investments	6,061	1,836	8,886
Sales of investments	7,835	2,603	15,371
Acquisitions of securities	(292)	447	(358)
Net cash used in investing	(5,568)	(1,570)	(7,883)
Equivalents, end of	\$ 10,610	\$ 4,023	\$ 10,610
			\$ 4,023

Step 5

FORMAL AND FINANCIAL MATTERS

Building an outdoor gym isn't just about choosing a location and equipment. It also involves a number of formalities and financial issues that are worth planning in advance.

1. Permits and Notifications – Key Information

Depending on the location and scale of the investment, building an outdoor gym may require:

- **notifying the relevant administrative authority about construction works** (e.g. the local municipality office),
- **obtaining a building permit** (for example, when installing safety surfacing with a base layer or additional infrastructure),
- **consultation with a heritage conservation officer** – if the site is under heritage protection,
- **permission from the landowner** – if the investment is not carried out on the investor's property.

It is recommended to consult the local authority or an architect before starting the project.










2. Budget – how much does an outdoor gym cost?

The total investment cost depends on many factors:

- the number and type of devices (e.g. integration or hot-dip galvanized machines will be more expensive),
- type of surface (e.g. polyurethane safety surface vs. natural grass),
- transport and assembly costs,
- additional elements (information boards, benches, bicycle racks, fences).

INVESTMENT COST

What Affects the Price and Cost?

COST FACTORS:		ESTIMATED NET COST	
	Number and type of equipment (e.g. hot-dip galvanized)		SMALL OUTDOOR GYM (3-5 UNITS) 3 500 - 7 000 EUR
	Type of surface (sand, grass, bark etc.)		MEDIUM OUTDOOR GYM (6-8 UNITS) 7 000 - 10 000 EUR
	Transport costs (and installation, if outsourced)		
	Additional elements (benches, lighting, fencing)		LARGE GYM + Street Workout 10 000 EUR +

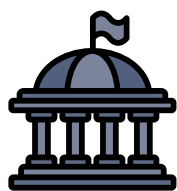
€ Prices may vary depending on location and supplier.

3.Sources of financing – where to look for funds?

1. **Local government and national subsidies** – e.g. physical activity support programs, local funds.
2. **EU funds** – as part of projects for the revitalization of public spaces, activation of seniors or social integration.
3. **Local partnerships** – cooperation with local entrepreneurs, construction companies, sponsors or foundations.
4. **Crowdfunding** – social fundraising, particularly effective for projects integrating the local community.
5. **Participatory budgets** – residents can submit a project in a local competition.




EU FUNDS

LOCAL AND
NATIONAL
GRANTSLOCAL
PARTNERSHIPS

CROWDFUNDING

PARTICIPATORY
BUDGETS

 **Tip:** *It is worth attaching visualizations and a cost estimate to the application, as this increases the chances of a positive decision. As a manufacturer, we offer support in preparing quotations and provide free visualizations for funding applications.*



Step 6

DESIGN AND VISUALIZATIONS

A well-designed outdoor gym is, above all, a functional and safe space.



Step 6:

DESIGN AND VISUALIZATIONS

1. Zoning of space

It's good practice to divide an outdoor gym into user zones. For example:

- **Adult and youth zone:** higher intensity strength and cardio equipment.
- **Senior Zone:** gentler devices to aid balance and mobility.
- **Calisthenics zone:** street workout equipment.
- **Recreation area:** a place to relax with benches, garbage cans, and bicycle racks.

2. The Importance of Equipment Layout

The layout of equipment is crucial for the comfort and effectiveness of your workout. Their placement should ensure:

- freedom of movement between stations,
- accessibility for all user groups,
- appropriate distances in accordance with safety zone regulations.

Avoid cramming equipment into tight spaces. Even in a smaller space, it's better to use fewer pieces of equipment while maintaining ergonomics and exercise logic.

Example equipment layouts

A. Fitness Trail

If the area is long and narrow (e.g. along a river or a walking path), it is worth arranging the equipment in a linear layout. Users perform exercises one after another, moving from station to station and training different muscle groups. This type of trail can also be arranged in a circular layout.



Advantages of a fitness trail:

- **motivates** to complete a full circuit of exercises,
- **introduces structure** and order into training,
- fits well with recreational routes

Ideal locations:

- parks and green areas with a designated path,
- riversides and promenades,
- health trails near sanatoriums and spa resorts.

B.Scattered Layout

The equipment is placed at separate points with greater distances between stations, encouraging users to move from one to another.



Advantages of scattered layout: This type of layout works well in large, open spaces such as:

- naturally blends the equipment into the landscape,
 - encourages movement between stations – users walk from one piece of equipment to another,
 - provides more privacy and space during exercise,
 - allows flexible use of smaller areas, for example when obstacles or trees are present.
- landscape parks,
 - cycling paths,
 - forest trails,
 - recreational areas spread over a wide space.

C. Central Layout

In this model, all training equipment is placed in one shared area, often on a rectangular, square, or circular



Advantages of central layout:

- allows **efficient use of safety surfacing**,
- makes it **easier to organize group workouts**,
- **improves accessibility** for seniors and people with disabilities,
- **encourages social interaction** and community integration.

This solution works well in:


- town and village centers,
- near schools, sports fields, or sports facilities,
- areas where monitoring and supervision are necessary,
- projects where the gym should be strongly integrated with other recreational functions.

3. The Impact of Additional Elements

An outdoor gym is more than just the equipment itself. To make it a welcoming and visually appealing space, it is worth including:

- **benches** - for rest,
- **trash bins** - to help keep the area clean,
- **bike racks** - improving accessibility for users arriving by bicycle,
- **information boards** - with rules and usage instructions.



 **Tip:** As a manufacturer, we offer free 3D visualizations like the one shown above, as well as individual support in planning the layout of the outdoor gym—tailored to the available space, goals, and budget. This allows you to see the project before it is implemented.



Step 7

INSTALLATION

After selecting the equipment and approving the design, we move on to the final stage – project implementation. Three key elements are key at this stage: production, delivery, and assembly.

1. Production and delivery

All TRAINER machines are manufactured in modern factories in Poland, in compliance with European quality and safety standards (EN 16630:2015). After placing order:

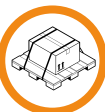


Production

The equipment enters production. The standard lead time is approximately 6 weeks.

Loading

Once completed, the equipment is packed and loaded for transport. The delivery date is arranged together with you.



Delivery

The equipment will be delivered to the address provided.



2. Assembly

TRAINER equipment can be installed in two ways:

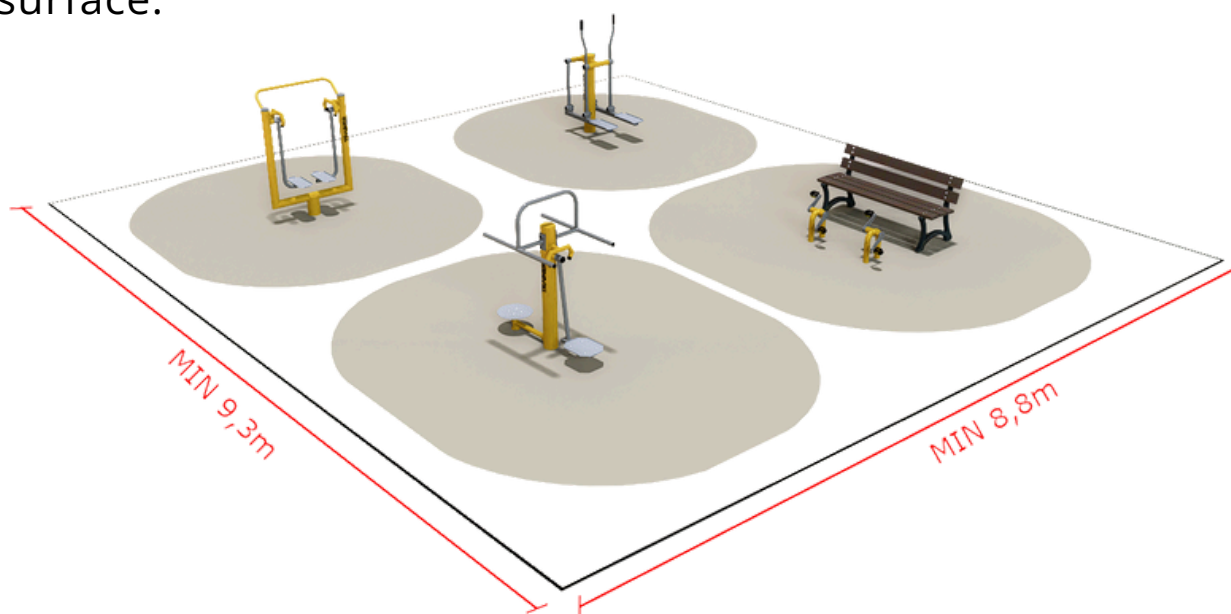
1. Self-installation – we provide a clear, illustrated installation manual. No specialized tools are required.

The entire process is very simple. Each of our outdoor fitness machines is delivered with a special ground anchor that is installed in the foundation. Street workout equipment, on the other hand, is installed without anchors, directly into the foundation.



2. With the help of a local company – if you do not have your own resources, the installation can be carried out by an external contractor. It is best to find a company located near the installation site. We recommend reviewing the installation instructions and sending them to a local construction company, which can then estimate the installation costs.

Installing one outdoor gym set (3–6 units) usually takes 2–3 working days, depending on site conditions and the type of surface.



You can download the installation manual from our website:

[🔗 https://outdoor-gym.com/services/installation/](https://outdoor-gym.com/services/installation/)



Step 8

MAINTENANCE AND SAFETY

Proper maintenance and regular inspections are the key to many years of trouble-free use of your equipment.

1. How to take care of the equipment?

All TRAINER machines are designed for durability and weather resistance. However, like any element of public infrastructure, **they require regular inspection and maintenance.**

We include detailed service and maintenance instructions with every order. Maintenance includes cleaning, lubrication, tightening screws, and replacing damaged components.

2. How often should inspections be carried out?

Owners or managers are responsible for controlling outdoor gym equipment.

VISUAL INSPECTION (ROUTINE)

once a month



Checking the general equipment condition, cleanliness, possible mechanical damage or acts of vandalism.

FUNCTIONAL CONTROL

every 1-3 months



Assessment of part wear, stability, operation of moving parts and structural safety.

BASIC (ANNUAL) INSPECTION

once every 12 months



Detailed technical analysis, recommended to be performed by a specialized company.

3. Certificates and Standards

Equipment should be installed in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations and applicable standards to ensure user safety. **Manufacturers should hold certificates confirming compliance with the relevant standards. In the case of public outdoor gyms, the use of certified equipment is mandatory.**



TRAINER equipment complies with the EN 16630:2015 standard for outdoor fitness facilities. In addition, our equipment has been tested and certified by TÜV Rheinland, confirming its safety and compliance with European standards.

4. Recommended Information Elements

To ensure the outdoor gym is fully functional and safe, it is worth providing proper signage:

- **Facility rules board** – including usage regulations, contact details of the site manager, etc. We recommend purchasing one, and we offer ready-made boards in our product range.
- **Usage instructions** – we provide instructions for each piece of equipment in the form of:
 - stickers (START series),
 - dibond panels (PYLON series).

The instructions are included in the equipment price.





Step 9

EXTRAS THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE

An outdoor gym itself is a great investment, but well-designed additional elements can significantly increase its functionality, accessibility, and overall appeal. Below are solutions worth considering at the planning stage.

1. Street Furniture

A well-designed outdoor gym is not only about equipment. Adding street furniture elements such as:

- **benches,**
- **trash bins,**
- **bike racks,**

helps create a comfortable space where people can not only exercise, but also rest, meet others, or watch their children. These details influence everyday use and the overall perception of the area. Our offer includes many models of street furniture.



✓ *Wooden Trash Bin 03013*



✓ *Metal Trash Bin 03802*



✓ *Bike Rack 0780*



✓ *Cast Iron Bench 0130*



✓ *Steel Bench 02003 B*



Step 9:

EXTRAS THAT MAKE A DIFFERENCE

2. Inclusive Equipment

Inclusivity in public spaces is becoming increasingly important. By choosing inclusive equipment, we enable physical activity for people using wheelchairs or with limited mobility. Inclusive equipment allows joint exercise with able-bodied users and is an excellent tool for building community and preventing social exclusion.



At TRAINER, we offer equipment with foldable seats so that people with disabilities can also use them.

💡 **Tip:** Even a small addition, such as a bench or an inclusive machine, can make an outdoor gym open and welcoming to everyone. It is worth thinking about the space holistically or planning it in a way that allows future expansion with these elements.

Summary

Thank you for reading our e-book. We hope the information included here has helped you organize the planning process and clarify the doubts that often arise during this type of investment.

Over the past years, we have worked with hundreds of municipalities, schools, developers, and architects, which is why we understand the challenges faced by those responsible for creating public spaces. Our goal is not only to supply equipment, but also to provide real support at every stage of the project—from the initial idea, through planning, to installation and service.

What can we do for you?

- Free consultations and professional advice
- 3D design and visualization
- An offer tailored to your budget
- Fast quotation and support with funding applications

As a bonus, we have prepared a **list of the 10 most common mistakes** made when planning an outdoor gym, worth knowing and avoiding before making any decisions, as well as a **checklist of 20 key points to tick off before starting the investment**.

Take the next step with TRAINER Outdoor Gym

Contact us if you're planning to build an outdoor gym or need support with your project. We'd be happy to share our experience and help you create a place to exercise that people will want to return to.

Contact us!



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10 *Most Common Mistakes* WHEN PLANNING OUTDOOR GYM

1. Lack of user needs analysis

Equipment not suited to age groups or fitness levels may result in the gym being unused.

2. Poor location

A site that is difficult to access, poorly lit, or far from main walking routes discourages users.

3. Insufficient number of machines

Too few workout stations can make the gym ineffective when interest is high.

4. No inclusive equipment

Excluding people with disabilities is not only a design mistake, but also a social one.

5. Equipment placed too close together

Lack of proper spacing and safety zones between devices creates hazards and discomfort.

6. Missing additional elements

Lack of benches, bins, or bike racks reduces the functionality.

7. No maintenance and servicing plan

Neglecting regular inspections may lead to faster wear or dangerous failures.

8. No division into activity zones

Mixing equipment for children, seniors, and athletes in one area can cause confusion and reduce safety.

9. No rules board and emergency contact number

This is essential for safety and responsibility of the site manager.

10. Poorly planned access and accessibility

Lack of paths and ramps may exclude some users.

HOW TO PLAN AN OUTDOOR GYM?

01 Define the target user groups. ☐

02 Decide whether the gym should be recreational, community-focused, or sports-oriented. ☐

03 Define the main goals of the project (health promotion, social integration, senior activation, etc.). ☐

04 Choose a suitable location. ☐

05 Check the technical conditions of the site (accessibility, ground type, safety, slope). ☐

06 Determine how much space is available. ☐

07 Select the right equipment set: strength, cardio, coordination, inclusive. ☐

08 Match the equipment to the users' age and fitness level. ☐

09 Choose the appropriate level of anti-corrosion protection. ☐

10 Check whether a building permit is required. ☐

HOW TO PLAN AN OUTDOOR GYM?

11 Plan your budget – equipment, transport, installation, paving and maintenance costs. ☐

12 Consider different sources of funding (grants, local funds, crowdfunding). ☐

13 Select a surface suitable for the free fall height of the equipment. ☐

14 Include additional elements: benches, bins, bicycle racks. ☐

15 Check the technical conditions of the area (accessibility, ground, safety). ☐

16 Plan the layout of your devices ☐

17 Choose your installation option: yourself or with a local company. ☐

18 Determine the timeframe for the entire project. ☐

19 Plan your inspection schedule: weekly, quarterly, annual. ☐

20 Add a board with regulations and contact number. ☐
