

FOUR ELEMENTS FITNESS GYM POLICIES

Four Elements Fitness gym strives to be an inclusive and welcoming place for people who may not feel at home in other workout spaces. Your presence plays a major part of what makes the gym an excellent place to learn and train. To keep our gym a positive space, we ask all gym members and guests to adhere to the following guidelines to keep things smooth on and off the mat.

GENERAL GYM POLICIES

- Everyone in our gym space, including instructors, students, and visitors, should be respectful of each other. Bullying or harassment (including hate speech) will not be tolerated and will result in expulsion from the gym.
- Students should not interrupt instructors or talk while instructors are explaining movements. Students should listen to the instructor and not talk over them or try to "teach" their partner or other students unless the instructor has asked them to do so.
- Instructors should be respectful of students. This includes using students' correct pronouns, using positive language during training, and encouraging students to take care of their bodies and wellness, while also providing challenging training opportunities.
- Four Elements Fitness is a body-positive gym that does not judge people based on size, body type, or ability. While weight may be discussed regarding preparation for tournaments, weight loss or changing of bodily appearance is not the goal of training at Four Elements Fitness.
- Four Elements Fitness strives to be an inclusive school that respects wellness as its highest priority. However, martial arts practice can be psychologically distressing for many people, and our instructors are not trained therapists or trauma experts. Students should consult medical and psychiatric professionals to assess their capacity to participate in martial arts and exercise classes before attending.
- Four Elements Fitness meets ADA standards for accessibility. Training can be adapted to accommodate students with disabilities; please contact us for more information.

HYGIENE AND CLEANLINESS

- Instructors and students should keep the gym clean by throwing trash in appropriate receptacles, cleaning up any messes, wiping down used equipment, and cleaning the mats after use. Students should take all belongings with them after class.
- In order to keep outside dirt off the mats, shoes should be worn on the hard floor of the gym and in the bathroom, and removed when stepping onto the mats.
- Training on the mats should be done barefoot or in training-only shoes (such as wrestling or boxing shoes) that are not worn outdoors or on the hard floor or bathroom.
- Nails should be cut short, clean and filed.
- Bulky jewelry and piercings should be removed prior to class. If they cannot be removed, students should tape them down to avoid getting them caught.
- Clothes, feet and body should be clean and free of odor.
- Students should not train if they are sick or have a skin rash/lesion/infection.
- Students should not be under the influence of drugs or alcohol during class.
- Smoking is not permitted inside or in front of the academy.

GENERAL CLASS POLICIES

- All students must sign a waiver in-person or online prior to taking their first class. If it is their first class, notify the instructor and training partner.
- Students should inform their instructor before class if they have an injury or any other factors that may influence their participation in class. Students can also email the gym in advance.
- Students may choose not to participate in any class activity for any reason. All participation is opt-in. Students can step out of any activity, with no explanation needed. The instructor may check in to see if the student needs anything or would prefer a modified activity. When possible, it is helpful if students can let their instructor know if they need to step away so the instructor can adjust partners as needed.
- All-levels classes should begin with introductions. Introductions should include names and pronouns (for those students who desire to share pronouns).

- Students should take good care of themselves by discussing their boundaries with their training partner and instructor as needed.
- Students who are not participating in class/need a break should step off the mat, with shoes, to make room for those who are participating.
- Students who are not participating or who are coming/going from a class should avoid conversation that will distract from the class in progress.

ADVANCED CLASSES

Classes marked “Advanced” on the schedule have the following policies:

- Students must have instructor permission to attend advanced classes.
- Instructors will assume that students are familiar with basic moves and techniques of the martial art being taught.
- Instructors will push students harder in these classes than in all-levels classes. Participation in an advanced class is implicit consent that a student wishes to be challenged in terms of cardio, endurance, strength, skills, and/or comfort. Students will be expected to participate in all class activities unless they have given a reason for opting out such as an injury.

GRAPPLING AND SPARRING

These policies apply to any grappling drills, sparring drills, or sparring in any martial art at Four Elements Fitness:

- The purpose of sparring is to learn, not to win. Students should approach sparring with an aim to provide a good learning experience for themselves and their partner.
- Competitive sparring may take place as part of training (such as point-scored sparring or drills with a winner). Students participating in these drills should still always prioritize the safety of themselves and their training partners.
- All students are responsible to communicate with their partners about intensity level during sparring or other drills. If a student’s partner is going harder than the student would like, the student should communicate that verbally to their partner. If overly hard contact continues, the student may speak to the instructor to find a solution.

- Regardless of belt and/or rank, students are entitled to ask training partners to lower their intensity especially when safety or injury is of concern. Students who do not comply with requests to lower intensity will not be allowed to train.
- During drills, students should cooperate and let their partner perform the drill. Partners should provide appropriate resistance when requested and check in with the instructors when there are questions. Students who are stronger, larger, or more experienced than their partners should be mindful of their movements and should communicate with their partners to ensure safety.
- Rolling/sparring should be at a 20-50% intensity level, unless the instructor indicates otherwise. Students should slap hands/touch gloves and notify their partner of any issues/injuries prior to the round.
- In Gi (uniform) BJJ classes, students are expected to follow IBJJF rules set based on the belt rank of the lower-ranking student when sparring. Students may use other rules sets if agreed upon prior to rolling. Default rolling rules are always dictated by the instructor.
- In BJJ classes, students must respect the "tap," stop action and release partner in the event they "tap" or make a verbal exclamation. Students should always apply submissions with enough control to give their partner time to tap. Students should tap prior to pain, as soon as they cannot escape a submission.
- Students in any sparring class must follow their coach's directives regarding intensity level and techniques used (for example if a coach says a certain technique is not allowed). Failure to follow the coach's directions may result in the student being asked to sit out for the rest of class or not being allowed to spar in the future.
- No techniques should be used that are not explicitly part of the martial art being practiced (e.g. no punching during grappling, no biting, scratching, etc.).
- Students should wear all required and recommended gear. Mouthguards are required for kickboxing sparring and recommended for BJJ sparring.

PRONOUNS

- Students should include pronouns in introductions if they feel comfortable doing so.
- If a person discloses their pronoun, students and instructors should use that pronoun to refer to them.

- Unilaterally using neutral pronouns ("they/them") is generally respectful –using them with with all people, trans and cis, unless they have disclosed their pronouns.
- After using an incorrect pronoun, a speaker should correct the pronoun, restate the sentence, and move on. Excessively apologizing for misgendering someone can draw an embarrassing level of attention to them.
- Practicing pronoun use on one's own is a positive way to avoid pronoun mistakes.