

There are 3 documents in this document plus this summary page.

1. an MD/jujitsu owner's set of opening "phases". Not our state's guidelines since we don't know what the "hurdle" will be to get to the next phase, but something to look at.
2. the Minnesota guidelines for Social Distancing in Adult Sports
3. a "playbook for re-opening your Martial Arts School Post Covid 19" that was referred to us by the USAF

There are margin notes and diagrams throughout, and this is a summary of what we might do for phase 2

"Minimal Rules"?

1. If you have symptoms, **STAY HOME**
2. If you don't feel comfortable with the rules, **STAY HOME** and/or/potentially watch classes on Zoom.
3. **Maximum 10 people per class**
4. **You must sign into the class (for contact tracing) instructors and participants** - possibly change attendance sheet to include class time as well as day
5. **everyone must wash hands before classes (and presumably after)** - need hand sanitizer stations
6. **everyone must wear masks inside**
7. **Come in your gi?** or change in the changing rooms **with only one person at a time**
8. **Stay 6 feet apart during class** (do we need to mark out the mat with tape?)
9. **Solo practice only - ukemi practice, tai sabaki, movement exercises, weapons katas**
10. **clean commonly used surfaces after class** - need appropriate cleaner. Sanitize weapons before and after use
11. **Clean mats after every class**
12. **Clean your gi after each class**

How would we handle zoom classes?

do we need a scheduling system
do we need to have pre-defined groups ("pods") of people to minimize possible spread

Open windows if weather permits
Classes in the park if weather and instructor feels up to it

How many classes do we want. Here are just some options...
All classes available to both adults and youth

Option 1

M-F
6:30-7:30 AM
6:30-7:30 PM

Sat
7:30-8:30 AM
10-11 AM
12-1 PM

Sun
11:30-12:30
1-2PM RG

Option 2

M-F
6:30-7:30 AM
5:30-6:30 PM
7 - 8 PM

Sat
7:30-8:30 AM
10-11 AM

Sun
11:30-12:30
1-2PM RG
2:30-3:30 PM RG

Option 3

M-F
6:30-7:30 AM
5:30-6:30 PM
7 - 8 PM

Sat
7:30-8:30 AM
10-11 AM
12-1 PM

Sun
11:30-12:30
1-2PM RG

Option 4

T,Th
6:30-7:30 AM
M,W,F)zz
5:30-6:30 PM

Sat
7:30-8:30 AM
12-1 PM

Sun
11:30-12:30
1-2PM RG

Guidelines for Reopening Brazilian Jiu Jitsu Academies During COVID-19 (Updates: 04/25/2020)

• Phase 1: No training

1. The purpose of Phase 1 is to give them time to prepare for Phase 2:

Determine class schedule

Determine number of staff members necessary to run each class (i.e. someone screening students for entry; someone assisting with mat ingress and egress, and enforcing locker room policy; and the instructor)

Set up hand sanitizing stations

Mark the mats to allow for solo training and determine how many students the mat space will accommodate with the 6'x6' restriction

Determine mat ingress and egress

Set up online sign-ups for classes

instructor(s) set up solo practice curricula

how many classes do we start with?
Do we have sets of classes?
Who is willing to teach?

Do we need a scheduling system?

Phase 2: May open gym for instructor-led solo drills with 36 square feet of clearly demarcated mat space separating each student provided that:

1. A normal temperature is obtained for every person entering the academy for every class he or she enters

A temporal or oral thermometer may be used

Normal temperature will be defined as < 99.3 °F

2. Each person entering the gym confirms the following:

No symptoms of COVID-19 within the last 14 days including³:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell

Vickie notes:

- * get hand sanitizers near doors
- * set up attendance by class rather than by day to do contact tracing
- * do only warmups, ukemi, tai sabaki and weapons katas
- * can we find a temporal temperature scanner for the door?
- * do we need to have a checkoff sheet with the confirmation list to the left?

No known contacts with anyone testing positive for COVID-19 within the past 14 days (this includes all healthcare workers participating in the care of COVID-19 patients)

Has complied with the following social distancing guidelines⁴ for the last 14 days:

- Staying at least 6 feet away from others during shopping at the grocery store or pharmacy
- Wearing a cloth mask covering the nose and mouth when out in public
- Avoiding "large and small gatherings in private places and public spaces, such as a friend's house, parks, restaurants, shops, or any other place"
- Work from home when possible

Is neither a member of nor lives with a member of a population uniquely vulnerable to COVID-19 including:

- "People 65 years and older
- People who live in a nursing home or long-term care facility
- People of all ages with underlying medical conditions, particularly if not well controlled, including:
 - People with chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma
 - People who have serious heart conditions
 - People who are immunocompromised

- People with severe obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 40 or higher)
- People with diabetes
- People with chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis
- People with liver disease⁵

3. No more than one person is allowed into the changing/locker room at a time

4. Hands must be washed or disinfected with hand sanitizer prior to stepping onto the mat after removing shoes

• **Phase 3:** Two scenarios are possible:

1. No additional COVID-19 RT-PCR testing capacity in the area in which the academy is located
NO CHANGE

2. Additional COVID-19 RT-PCR testing capacity is available in the area in which the academy is located to test asymptomatic persons without specific risk factors for COVID-19 (meaning anyone can get a test for any reason)

Instructors and students may begin sparring IF BOTH partners can confirm a negative COVID-19 RT-PCR test within the previous 24 hours (once the rapid version of the test is available in a testing center near the academy).

Note: It is unlikely that obtaining a daily RT-PCR test for COVID-19 will be logistically possible or affordable for most students for the foreseeable future. However, it may be possible to obtain such a test 1-2 times per week. This might make it possible for students wishing to spar to agree to 1-2 blocks of time per week for sparring immediately prior to which they could be tested.

• **Phase 4** (an addendum specifically addressing the unique risk imposed by Brazilian jiu jitsu)

- Definition: No cases of person-to-person transmission of COVID-19 within the county (if rural) or major metropolitan area within which an academy is located for the last 14 days OR widespread testing is available (as specified in Phase 3 above)

- All instructors and students meeting the criteria specified in Phase 2 above may begin to partner training, including sparring.

- Class size should remain below 50% capacity

- Students and instructors who live with or are members of a vulnerable population may return for instructor-led solo drills (as specified in Phase 2)

• **Phase 5** (an addendum specifically addressing the unique risk imposed by Brazilian jiu jitsu)

- Definition: No cases of person-to-person transmission of COVID-19 within the county (if rural) or major metropolitan area within which an academy is located for the last 14 days OR widespread testing is available (as specified in Phase 3 above)

- All instructors and students meeting the criteria specified in Phase 2 (including those who live with or are members of a vulnerable population) above may begin to partner training, including sparring.

- Class size may return to normal

• **Phase 6** (an addendum specifically addressing the unique risk imposed by Brazilian jiu jitsu)

- Definition: No local cases of COVID-19 (including those being treated in hospitals) within the within the county (if rural) or major metropolitan area within which an academy is located for the last 14 days (as specified in Phase 3 above)

- Healthcare workers previously treating COVID-19 patients may return to training

- Special situation: Students and instructors with presumed immunity to COVID-19

- Definition: Students/instructors who were confirmed (via COVID-19 RT-PCR) to have been infected with COVID-19, subsequently recovered, and are confirmed to carry (via serology testing) anti-COVID-19 IgM AND IgG (via serology testing)

Positivity for IgM alone does NOT qualify for immunity for the purposes of these guidelines.

This definition does NOT apply to those without symptomatic history AND previous positive RT-PCR test, who were able to obtain a serological test (i.e. for study purposes) which was found to be positive for

STAY SAFE MN

Guidance for Social Distancing in Adult Sports

This guidance document outlines the practical application of prevention strategies to reduce the spread of COVID-19 among sports activities. We strongly recommend that your program follows the parameters outlined below.

All businesses are required to develop a program-specific plan. Templates for developing a program-specific plan can be found at [COVID-19 Preparedness Plan Template and Instructions \(PDF\): \(http://www.dli.mn.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/COVID_19_business_plan_template_services.pdf\)](http://www.dli.mn.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/COVID_19_business_plan_template_services.pdf)

This document is meant to support organized adult sports, which are any sports activity where participants are organized by entities, associations, clubs, or organizations providing for registration of participants and oversight on a regular basis for a defined period of time.

College and university sports are recommended to follow the below guidance, but should also take into consideration their national association and sports organization's standards.

Those who are not part of an organized adult sport but enjoying a pick-up game, MDH encourages you to know the risk of the various sports and use the following grid as a guide when determining what sports to play.

In general, the guidance and template documents include recommendations for:

- Following social distancing.
- Encouraging and enforcing norms of health etiquette, including face coverings.
- Promoting health checks and screening of participants and staff/volunteers.
- Enforcing stay-at-home when sick expectations.
- Routine disinfection of high-touch items (balls, racquets, bats, other equipment).
- Ensuring policies are considerate of staff, volunteers, and participants at highest risk of complications.
 - [People Who Are at Higher Risk for Severe Illness \(https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-at-higher-risk.html\)](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-at-higher-risk.html)

Programs involving organized adult sports

If your program involves sports as either an activity within a program or as the focus of the program itself, please use the following guidance. The guidance is based on the risk level of the sport. The risk categories were determined after reviewing recommendations from the following groups: the [United States Olympic and Paralympic Committee \(https://www.teamusa.org/-/media/8BEB91F1CD574230BCD39CE0C779B592.ashx\)](https://www.teamusa.org/-/media/8BEB91F1CD574230BCD39CE0C779B592.ashx) and the [National Collegiate Athletic Association \(http://www.ncaa.org/sport-science-institute/coronavirus-covid-19\)](http://www.ncaa.org/sport-science-institute/coronavirus-covid-19) and the MN Higher Education Athletics Workgroup.

General Guidance

- Strongly encourage that games and practices occur outdoors as much as possible.
- Use face coverings; especially among program staff and coaches, and among participants when feasible.
- Within the program, create consistent pods of the same staff, volunteers, and participants with a maximum number of 10 people for indoor activities, and up to 25 people per pod for outdoor activities.
- Remind friends and family members not attend practices to avoid crowding. If necessary for them to be at practices, ensure that proper social distancing is maintained and encourage the use of face coverings.
- Discourage sharing of equipment as much as possible.
- Adhere to facility or field specific guidelines for COVID-19, including capacity limits.
- Avoid using locker rooms and facility showers.
 - If facility showers need to be used, only allow shower and locker room use if there are partitions or else place signage to maintain proper physical distancing of 6 feet.

Risk Factors

Risk Level	Examples
HIGH RISK: sports that involve close, sustained contact between participants, lack of significant protective barriers, and high probability that respiratory particles will be transmitted between participants.	Rugby, boxing, judo, karate, taekwondo, wrestling, pair figure skating, ice dancing, football, lacrosse, hockey, group dance, group cheer.
MEDIUM RISK: Sports that involve close, sustained contact, but with protective equipment in place that may reduce the likelihood of respiratory particle transmission between participants OR intermittent close contact OR group sports OR sports that use equipment that can't be cleaned between participants.	Bobsled, doubles luge, multi-person rowing, multi-person kayaking, multi-person canoeing, water polo, gymnastics, sport climbing, trampoline, table tennis, doubles tennis, swimming relays, synchronized diving, artistic swimming, fencing, cycling in a group, running in a close group, modern pentathlon, group sailing, volleyball, soccer, basketball, baseball/softball, short track, speed skating, speed skating in a group, bowling, curling.

we clearly fit into the "high risk" sports

- Focus on skill development.
- Keep any “play” or interaction between players contactless.
- Do not have intermixing between groups.
- Do not participate in games or tournaments, even if these events are out of state where sports games/tournaments are supported.
- Games and competitions are not recommended at this time for these sports.

Risk Level	Examples
LOW RISK: sports that can be done individually, or with social distancing, or no to minimal sharing of equipment or the ability to clean the equipment between use by competitors.	Archery, shooting/clay target, individual running events, individual cycling events, individual swimming, diving, individual canoeing, individual kayaking, individual rowing, individual diving, equestrian jumping, dressage or eventing, golf, individual sailing, skateboarding, weightlifting, alpine skiing, nordic skiing, biathlon, single luge, freestyle skiing, individual speed skating, snowboarding, ski jumping, singles figure skating, , singles tennis, individual dance, pole vault, high jump, long jump, marathon, triathlon, cross country, track and field, disc golf, badminton.

- Continue to focus on individual development.
- Games are permitted, however, as in line with the general guidance, friends and family should not attend games or practices for this phase. If necessary for them to be at practices or games, ensure that proper social distancing is maintained between friends and family and that limits to social gathering numbers are adhered to.

Future steps

Future steps may include allowing for larger gatherings and/or flexibility around intermixing between teams and will likely have different guidance based on the type of contact that normally occurs in the sport. In general, MDH will be increasing parameters based on the epidemiology of COVID-19 in Minnesota.

Resources

[Reopening of Public Swimming Pool and Aquatic Facilities](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/poolreopen.pdf)

(<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/schools/poolreopen.pdf>)

[Stay Stay Safe Guidance](https://staysafe.mn.gov/industry-guidance/index.jsp) (<https://staysafe.mn.gov/industry-guidance/index.jsp>) [Guidance \(PDF\)](#)



Minnesota Department of Health | health.mn.gov | 651-201-5000
625 Robert Street North PO Box 64975, St. Paul, MN 55164-0975

Contact health.communications@state.mn.us to request an alternate format.

06/06/2020

FEATURES

PRICING

BLOG

CONTACT

LOGIN

SIGN-UP



MARTIAL ARTS ON RAILS

A Playbook for re-opening your Martial Arts school post COVID-19

Eran Galperin - April 30, 2020

RUNNING A GYM POST COVID-19

5 POINTS FOR RE- OPENING YOUR GYM

1. Social distancing and capacity control
2. Testing and contact tracing
3. Sanitation and protective equipment
4. Member communication and education
5. Protecting at-risk members

Last updated April 30th.

Stay safe and keep your members safe!

With most gyms currently closed due to the global coronavirus pandemic, it's hard to tell when or if things will ever go back to the way they were before. I've been having conversations with our users and other gym owners about their concerns and ideas for how to respond to the situation, and have been following closely on how other industries are handling it.

There's a lot of conflicting information floating around, and I encourage everyone to do their own research. We do have a better vantage point with regards to martial arts gyms due to our ongoing contact with all of you and other similar businesses. So I hope you can use this article as a starting point to help you make sense of what to do next.

Spanish version of this article [available here < https://www.maonrails.com/blog/guia-para-re-abrir-tu-escuela-de-artes-marciales-despues-del-covid-19/>](https://www.maonrails.com/blog/guia-para-re-abrir-tu-escuela-de-artes-marciales-despues-del-covid-19/).

Should you re-open at all?

The decision of whether to open your gym in the middle of a pandemic is a personal and difficult one. From my standpoint it comes down to the following factors:

- Can I provide a safe training environment for my members?
- Does it make sense financially – in the short and in the long term?
- Do I feel safe to train in those conditions?

Only you can answer those questions for yourself and the situation you're in. Let's provide some context by going over why governments needed to shutdown business in the first place. There were two main reasons:

1. To slowdown community spread of the coronavirus to avoid overwhelming the health care system (also commonly referred to as “[flattening the curve < https://www.nytimes.com/article/flatten-curve-coronavirus.html >](https://www.nytimes.com/article/flatten-curve-coronavirus.html)”)

2. Buy enough time to increase the testing capacity and develop therapeutics to reduce the severity of the disease.

Most countries that employed a form of shutdown / “stay-at-home” orders have seen their curve flattened to some degree. However, testing capacity is still lagging in most places, and effective therapeutics have yet to emerge.

I've seen some debate on whether it makes sense to open gyms back up before a vaccine is available. It's important to consider that a) a vaccine is at least 18 months away ([probably more < https://www.nationalgeographic.com/science/2020/04/why-coronavirus-vaccine-could-take-way-longer-than-a-year/ >](https://www.nationalgeographic.com/science/2020/04/why-coronavirus-vaccine-could-take-way-longer-than-a-year/)), and b) there's [no guarantee that it's possible < https://nymag.com/intelligencer/2020/04/will-there-be-a-coronavirus-vaccine-maybe-not.html >](https://nymag.com/intelligencer/2020/04/will-there-be-a-coronavirus-vaccine-maybe-not.html) to develop a vaccine for this virus.

I do believe that with some adjustments, which I outline below, you can train in a way that minimizes the risk – once sufficient testing and therapeutics are in place – and get back to some degree of activity.

5 Points For Re-opening

I've been talking to gym owners to get a sense of what people are doing, as well as taking cues from other industries that have been similarly impacted, such as restaurants. I've summarized the approaches I've seen into 5 distinct topics you should work on when preparing to re-open.

- 1. Social distancing and capacity control**
- 2. Testing and contact tracing**
- 3. Sanitation and protective equipment**
- 4. Member communication and education**
- 5. Protecting at-risk members**

There's a lot of nuances to each which we'll go over in detail:

1. Social distancing and capacity control

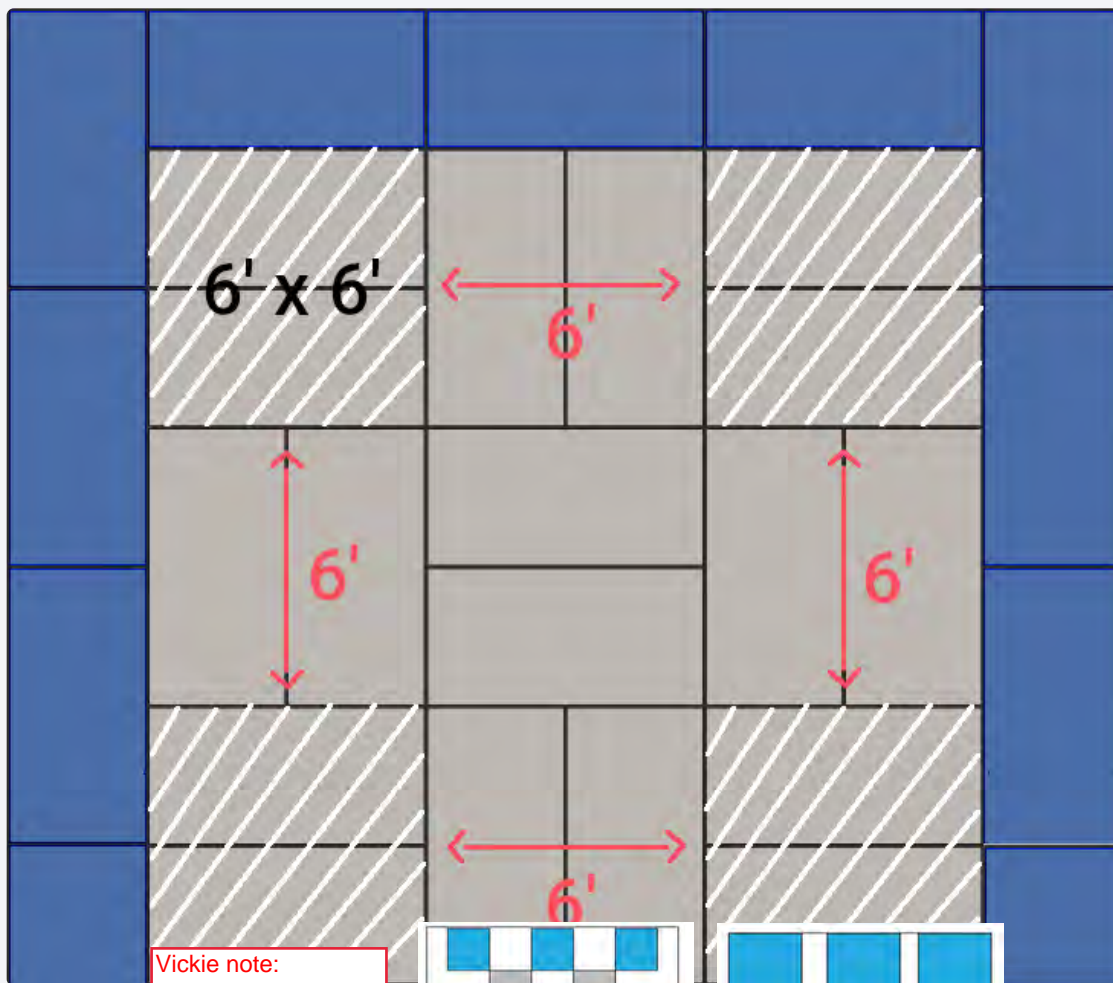
One of the main guidelines published by every health organization is the need for social distancing to reduce the risk of infection. **The common guideline is 6ft / 2m between people** < <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/social-distancing.html> > .

How do you apply that in practice when training in a sport that requires a lot of movement? You can designate training areas that are separated by 6ft in each direction. The size of the training area depends on what you feel would be comfortable to perform movements in. Here's an example layout where each training area is 6ft x 6ft (2m x 2m), separated by at least 6ft from other training areas –

Vickie note:
our mat is 36' 6"
by 41' 6"

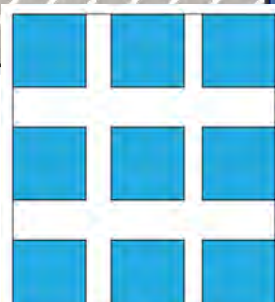
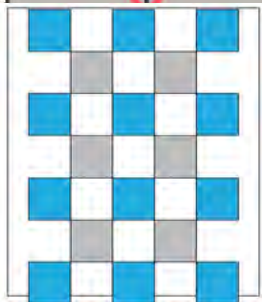
We could divide into
6 across by 7 deep

do we want to tape
off the sections?



Vickie note:
our mat is 36' 6"
by 41' 6"

Here is our mat with
a 6 foot grid and a 10
foot grid.



Mark down the training areas with tape on the mat so it's easy to see where the boundary of the area is.

I would initially start with one person on each training area. If the measures in this guide prove successful, you can consider pairing up people in each area after a few weeks of no rise in infections in your area. Pairs should train together exclusively at least for the entire session, to reduce the chance of one infected person infecting everyone, and possibly stay paired for the entire week / month (more complicated logistically, but possible if those are family members or close friends).

If any person is later tested positive for COVID-19, their ability to spread the infection was limited to mainly the people they trained with (though not necessarily. It's important to notify everyone who trained at the same time – see the section below regarding contact tracing).

The amount of mat space you have will then determine the max number of people that can train at the same time while maintaining social distancing. This is in addition to local government guidelines, which might have specific guidance on the amount of people allowed at any one time.

For example, check out this guidance distributed to restaurants and caterers in Hong Kong, one of the areas that had employed measures successfully to control the spread of infection (screenshot from a video) –



Hopefully, you will see similar guidance provided by your local government, however you can always refer to countries that had successfully implemented those measures for inspiration otherwise.

Once you figured out how to divide your mat space to training areas, and how many people can train at any one time, you also need a way to implement that capacity control which can be hard to keep track of.

We've been adding features to support these measures through our platform – you can now limit the number of people who can book a session to a specific number, and also display the number of people who already booked on the calendar. This allows people to find available sessions that have not reached max capacity yet, and to also do their own risk assessment (such as joining less crowded classes).

The screenshot shows a booking interface for a class titled "Fundamentals" by Jackie Chan. At the top, there is a purple header with the class name and a close button. Below this is a "Select Date & Time" section. On the left, a calendar for May 2020 is displayed, with the date Wednesday, May 6 selected. On the right, two time slots are shown: "11:00am" (90 min - 2/10 capacity) and "07:00pm" (90 min - 1/10 capacity). The 07:00pm slot is highlighted in blue.

Vickie note:

MN guidelines said we should have a max of 10 people indoors

Do we have to set up set groups of classes "pods" (e.g. a Mon/Wed vs Tues/Thurs group or a Morning/Evening separation to minimize everyone connected to everyone else)

Before, our classes generally were 10 people or less. We need to find out how many people are interested in coming back now. If classes are less than 10 people we don't need to schedule.

There is no stigma if you don't want to practice just yet, but I don't want to have to research some scheduling package if we don't have an issue. OR is there a way to schedule on Facebook?

Members can see the how many people have booked and the capacity for each session when booking.

[Learn more < https://www.maonrails.com/features/booking >](https://www.maonrails.com/features/booking)

in close groups, maintain 6 ft apart at all times, before and after class. This includes the locker / changing rooms – so if it's not big enough to practice social distancing, only one person should be allowed at any time.

2. Testing and contact tracing

Currently testing is still limited in most areas of the world, and requires specialized equipment and trained personnel. Part of the reason is the chemicals needed for existing tests are in short supply, and it takes time to analyze the results – with many labs currently heavily backlogged. New tests¹ are being developed² that could be produced much more rapidly and provide quicker results, which would help significantly to control and isolate infection spread. [1 < <https://www.cnn.com/2020/04/27/health/antigen-tests-coronavirus-breakthrough/index.html>>], [2 < <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/powerpost/paloma/the-health-202/2020/04/28/the-health-202-the-newest-way-to-test-for-coronavirus-spitting-in-a-tube/5ea705c9602ff1457841f409/>>]

Increased testing capacity will increase the ability to track the infection spread and allow more businesses to reopen safely.

Until (and if) SARS-CoV-2 tests become available to small businesses or even home testing, one tool you can use right now is a forehead thermometer. One of the problems that make this coronavirus so infectious is that people could be spreading it before showing any symptoms. However, the existence of flu-like symptoms should still be used to exclude people from training, and a contact-free thermometer is a quick and easy way to make sure no one comes to train with a fever.

In addition, all people showing up to practice should confirm no symptoms of COVID-19 within the last 14 days, including:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Chills
- Fatigue
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Loss of taste or smell (if not a previous ongoing condition)

Source: this excellent write-up by Chris Moriarty, a MD and BJJ black belt.

Enforcing proper distancing and testing might require dedicated staff – you need someone at the front door screening people before class – taking temperature and confirming no symptoms for the last 14 days, and someone making sure social distancing is maintained throughout training on the mats and in the locker rooms. This depends on the structure and size of your gym and staff, so plan ahead if you're not sure your current staff assignments can handle it.

Contact Tracing

When you have enough testing and data about the infection spread, you can perform contact tracing – a process in which you trace all the contacts an infected person had during their infectious period, and have them test as well and self quarantine if necessary.

This will require businesses who have walk-in customers, including martial arts gyms, to keep a log of everyone who visited, their times of visit, and to be able to cross reference everyone else who visited at the same time as someone who later tests positive for the disease.

South-Korea, one of the countries that had the most successful application of these measures, allowed indoor sports [including martial arts gyms](#), to re-open as of April 20th. Those gyms have applied many of the measures I outlined above, [including](#) keeping a visitor log of all the members who come in to train.

If you use [our attendance tracking feature](#) or similar software, then this should already be a part of your regular routine, though you should make sure everyone that shows up, checks-in. Otherwise, make sure to add some form of attendance tracking, even if it's just using a pen and paper, and keep records for at least a few weeks.

3. Sanitation and protective equipment

Vickie note:
If we start with ukemi practice and weapons katas, we should sanitize the weapons before and after classes.
vacuum mat after every class
sanitize door knobs, the attendance area etc after every class

Hopefully, you were already cleaning your mats between each session. Your cleaning efforts are about to go to the next level, as common touch surfaces are one of the main spread vectors for this virus.

In the US, check if the disinfectant you use is [EPA listed for use against the virus](#) (you should have [similar](#) guidelines in your country). The CDC website has cleaning instructions which

which include the use of gloves (either disposable, or dedicated for cleaning). Make sure to clean surfaces that are commonly touched, such as door handles, the front desk, seating areas and the toilet. Do this between every session – you might need to arrange your schedule to allow for sufficient cleaning time between sessions.

Provide hand sanitizer at the entrance, or better yet – have everyone clean their hands with soap for at least 20 seconds after walking in and taking off their shoes, if possible. Make sure everyone is using clean uniforms – though this should always be the case, now more than ever it's important to insist people wash their uniforms between each practice.

Consider having everyone wear masks. I know this might be difficult, depending on the level of fitness and intensity of the session, but it can be done. Look into biking masks, [such as this one](#), which have small release valves that reduce the heating inside the masks which could help. Gloves are also an option to consider. It will definitely be less comfortable, but at least initially it's better to be safe than sorry.

4. Member communication and education

One of the key elements for gyms to make it through the shutdown and then successfully re-open and apply the right safety measures, is to keep members constantly informed of your situation, future plans and projected timeline.

Don't go dark on your members. Let them know that you are still keeping the gym going and have a concrete plan to re-open once it is safe to do so. I've seen too many stories of gyms stopping all communications after shutting down, and members are then justifiably concerned the business has gone under and order all payments to be stopped – even if they would have otherwise continued to support the gym.

If you are running online classes, then you should be already communicating with your members on a regular basis. Online classes can only keep members going for a time, so it's important to also communicate your plans for reopening. It can help allay members' concern and tide them over until it is safe to re-open.

Once you have a good idea of the safety measures you will be taking, make sure to communicate those to members as well in advance. Explain the capacity limits and how you will organize class attendance (via online booking or otherwise), the sanitation measures you'll be taking, what is required from members – such as personal equipment (masks, gloves), behavior at the gym (washing hands, not shaking hands) – so everybody is prepared ahead of time.

Vickie Note:
Require masks for inside classes, recommend masks for outside classes.

Should everyone come wearing their gis to not have congestion in the changing rooms?

Emphasis on cleaning gis between each practice?

continue to "Zoom" our classes? for those who don't feel comfortable going to class yet?

access to the wifi so they can actually make the class on-line

It's also important to communicate to everyone not to show up if they are experiencing any symptoms. Even though there are many diseases that share similar symptoms, it's better to be safe than sorry in this case. Ask members to wait a week or two after symptoms disappear, to make sure they don't infect anyone at the gym. If it's possible at the time, ask them to get tested before returning to train.

Add educational materials at the gym as well – print a list of the safety measures to be taken at the gym, and hang it on the wall in a visible location. Here's a basic list you can use or adjust according to your needs:

- Have a fever / dry cough / shortness of breath / loss of taste or smell / chills?
Stay at home.
- Maintain 6ft from each other and no physical contact [except with your designated partner] (*once you decide to allow partnering)
- Bring your own mask and gloves to train. (* unless you plan to provide those)
- Wash your hands with soap when you arrive for at least 20 seconds. (* or use a hand sanitizer if you don't have a sink available)

5. Protecting at-risk members

The disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus, COVID-19, presents a significantly increased risk to certain segments of the population. Older people, and people with existing medical conditions are at a much higher risk for the disease to be severe and possibly fatal.

Research shows < <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/fullarticle/2765184>> the most common comorbidities (existing conditions for COVID-19 deaths) are hypertension (high blood pressure), obesity and diabetes. Other existing conditions that should take extra caution include:

- People with chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma
- People who have serious heart conditions
- People who are immunocompromised
- People with chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis
- People with liver disease

As for age groups, people over 60 are in the highest risk group, though people 50 and over are also a higher risk group.

I would recommend advising people in those groups to not attend training immediately after re-opening, and wait until it is safer to do so, based on the success of implementing the safety measures and how well new community transmission is being controlled in the weeks / months after businesses re-open. I would extend the same advice for people who live or work with people in those risk groups (people who live with older parents or visit them often, or work at a nursing home).

Training in the post-COVID world

These are tough times for all of us, but we'll get through it. I know it's a lot to take in, but people are resilient and adaptable. I'm sure we'll all get used to it and it will become mostly an inconvenience after a while – a small price to pay for being able to train safely.

I also believe that those measures are mostly temporary – as most of the world is dedicated to fighting this virus, medical science will develop effective countermeasures and interventions – including vaccines and therapeutics – that will either eliminate the virus or reduce the dangers to a degree that can be lived with normally, as we do with many other seasonal diseases.

I hope you will find this guide helpful in your efforts to re-open your gym. We will continue to collect information and provide it to you as it becomes available on this topic. If you have additional information you think would be useful, or spot a mistake, please let us know and we'll continue to update it.

Published by Eran Galperin

Eran has been building software and companies for over 15 years, and is a black belt in Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu. In 2016 he founded Martial Arts on Rails, online software for managing gyms and martial arts schools. [View more posts < https://www.maonrails.com/blog/author/eran/>](https://www.maonrails.com/blog/author/eran/)