

Busy-gym exercise swap sheet

Each swap trains the same muscles through a similar movement, so your session stays intact when the kit you planned on is taken.

Swap for equipment, never for pain. If a movement hurts, stop that movement and choose something that does not.

Chest

If this is taken	Swap 1	Swap 2	Swap 3
Barbell bench press	Dumbbell bench press Same flat press, one weight in each hand.	Smith machine or guided bench press Flat press on a fixed bar path, so no spotter is needed.	Chest press machine Same pressing direction with the path chosen for you.
Incline dumbbell press	Incline barbell press Same angle with one bar.	Incline machine or Smith machine press Same angle on a fixed path.	Low-to-high cable press Presses up and in, like an incline, from a standing position.
Cable fly	Pec deck / machine fly Same arms-together action, seated.	Dumbbell fly on a bench Same action with free weights.	Press-up with a controlled lower Free, and keeps chest work in the session when nothing is available.

Back

If this is taken	Swap 1	Swap 2	Swap 3
Lat pulldown	Assisted pull-up machine Same overhead pull, with help.	Kneeling cable pulldown Any cable stack can replace the pulldown seat.	Single-arm dumbbell pullover Keeps the overhead pulling direction with a dumbbell.
Barbell row	Chest-supported row Same pull, with the bench holding your torso still.	Single-arm dumbbell row Same pull, one side at a time.	Seated cable row Same pulling direction from a seat.
Seated cable row	Chest-supported machine row Same horizontal pull, torso supported.	Single-arm dumbbell row Same pull with a dumbbell.	Inverted row under a bar Bodyweight horizontal pull, no stack needed.
Pull-up	Assisted pull-up machine The same movement, scaled.	Lat pulldown Same direction of pull, seated.	Band-assisted pull-up Keeps the real movement when the machine is taken.

Legs

If this is taken	Swap 1	Swap 2	Swap 3
Barbell back squat	Hack squat or Smith machine squat Same squat pattern on a fixed path.	Goblet or dumbbell squat Same pattern with the weight in front.	Leg press Loads the same muscles with your back supported.
Leg press	Hack squat Same pressing pattern, standing.	Goblet squat Free-weight version of the same pattern.	Walking or reverse lunge Same muscles, one leg at a time.
Romanian deadlift	Dumbbell Romanian deadlift Same hinge with dumbbells.	Single-leg Romanian deadlift Same hinge, much less load needed.	45-degree back extension Trains the same hip extension with the pad taking the load.
Leg curl	Seated or lying leg curl (whichever is free) The same movement on the other machine.	Nordic or sliding leg curl Knee bending with no machine at all.	Dumbbell Romanian deadlift Trains the hamstrings through the hip instead of the knee.
Leg extension	Hack squat or leg press Heavy quad work when the extension machine is busy.	Bulgarian split squat Loads one quad at a time with a dumbbell.	Sissy squat or slow bodyweight squat Keeps quad work in the session with no equipment.
Barbell hip thrust	Glute bridge with a dumbbell Same movement on the floor.	Hip thrust machine or cable pull-through Same hip extension from a stack.	45-degree back extension Hip extension with the pad supporting you.
Calf raise	Standing or seated calf machine (whichever is free) The same movement on the other machine.	Calf raise on the leg press Same movement with plenty of load available.	Single-leg calf raise off a step No equipment needed and plenty hard enough.

Shoulders

If this is taken	Swap 1	Swap 2	Swap 3
Overhead press	Seated dumbbell shoulder press Same press, one weight in each hand.	Shoulder press machine Same direction on a fixed path.	Landmine or Smith machine press Pressing up and slightly forward when nothing else is free.
Lateral raise	Cable lateral raise Same movement with steady tension.	Machine lateral raise Same movement, path fixed.	Upright row with a light weight Keeps side-shoulder work when no dumbbells are free.
Rear delt fly	Reverse pec deck Same movement, seated and supported.	Face pull Same muscles from a cable.	Bent-over dumbbell fly Same movement with two dumbbells.

Arms

If this is taken	Swap 1	Swap 2	Swap 3
Barbell or dumbbell curl	Cable curl Same movement, steady tension.	Machine or preacher curl Same movement with the upper arm supported.	Chin-up or underhand pulldown Heavy biceps work when curls are unavailable.
Triceps pushdown	Overhead cable or dumbbell extension Same movement with the arms overhead.	Skull crusher Same movement lying down.	Close-grip press-up or dip Bodyweight triceps work, no stack needed.
Dip	Assisted dip machine The same movement, scaled.	Bench dip Same direction with your feet on the floor.	Close-grip press-up Keeps the same muscles working on the floor.

Setup notes for every swap: bodywise.io/hub/tools/exercise-substitute-finder