



November 2021

To Our Boulders Community:

Happy December! This comment response will address feedback we've received in the month of November.

As a reminder, comments can be submitted anytime to our [three online comment boxes](#), and to our two physical comment boxes (one in each location). We do our best to respond as frequently as possible in a public forum, and for urgent or easy-to-take-care-of matters, we often fix things on the fly. While we don't address every comment in our public responses, we do try to get the gist of all the comments represented, either through combining comments or addressing a concept more generally. If you have a question about how your comment was (or wasn't) responded to, or the response process in general, feel free to email community@bouldersgym.com.

We can't thank you enough for contributing to improvement at Boulders. We really appreciate the comments, especially the ones which spark thoughtful internal conversations and engagement with our community. We're happy and privileged to serve each and every one of you.

Sincerely,

Boulders Climbing Gym

General Feedback:

Four comments addressed together: #1 *I had a great climb today! but a sauna would have made it even better! :)* #2 *What about a dry sauna?* #3 *You all are awesome! But what would make this place even more awesome... A SAUNA!* #4 *Love the positive tunes I've been hearing lately, with the cold weather approaching a sauna would seal the deal on a great afternoon of climbing, peace*

Response: We aren't sure if this was the same person 4 times, 4 people on a collective mission, or a classic "great minds all want a sauna" situation, but regardless it made us smile.

We too would love to have a sauna. With the financial and logistical constraints we have in our current buildings, this likely won't happen in the near future. However, we will make sure our CEO is aware of this immense interest when designing and constructing our future gyms.

Comment: *I would LOVE 7 am yoga! I'd come ALL THE time!*

Response: Good to know! We have been expanding our class times and selections as we are able given COVID restrictions, and will make sure that our programs director is aware of this want.

Comment: *Why not use dyson/air dryers instead of paper towels?*

Response: We currently have a combination of both dryers and paper towels! In future gyms, we'll prioritize having only air dryers, but the cost to switch them out at our Eastside location (both financial and environmental) is not currently feasible for our circumstances.

Comment: *thank you for early members hours!!! :)*

Response: We're glad you're taking advantage of them! We personally think it's a great way to start the day.

Comment: *Although it looks nice, I don't see very many people using the sitting area. I would like if it was a warm-up area with mats and equipment. Thanks for the opportunities to give feedback! (downtown location).*

Response: In pre-COVID times, the lounge area was a very important space for socializing and community building. We're holding onto it for now in hopes that those times return again soon.

Comment: *Ending my membership because it's just too expensive :(*

Response: Oh no, don't do that! We have sliding scale pricing options available! Due to the immense community support of our climb4community program, we're able to grant a reduced-price membership for nearly everyone who applies. Head to climb4community.org to apply for your reduced price, or to add on an additional fee to your dues that will subsidize memberships for others, among other things.

Regardless of how much you pay (more or less than normal), every climb4community membership comes with a load of perks, including free rentals, a second monthly guest pass, and more. [Click here](#) for the full list of membership perks.

If you're not ready for membership, we also offer sliding scale pricing for day passes, groups, and classes. Email community@bouldersgym.com to get started.

Comment: *My child loved it here!*

Response: We're so glad! Children are the future!

Comment: *More kid options. Like, every Saturday is a kid day.*

Response: Kids are always welcome at Boulders! If you're talking kids-only, however, it's a bit tricky to ask our members to cede the gym for an entire day. However, we are thinking about kids-only spaces in future constructions, either for days, hours, or even whole gyms.

Two comments, addressed together: *#1 You are all awesome! Is there a way that the gym could be kept a bit cooler? It has been really warm. (downtown location) #2 Hello, lovely session today. I felt that the temp was a little high, and thought it could be cooler. Thanks! (downtown location)*

Response: Yes, thank you for the feedback! Our temperature controls downtown were a bit scattered for a while but desk staff now have control over them, so you should hopefully have noticed an improvement here. If you notice this in the future, feel free to let desk staff know right away and they should be able to adjust.

Comment: *I've been a member since last March and LOVED the capacity limit. Now when I come in, it is crammed full, seems unsafe, and not as fun ' _ '*

Response: Yes, we agree, the crowding downtown is less than ideal. We will be continuing to monitor COVID restrictions and recommendations and can re-implement restrictions as needed. We hope that you'll be able to find space during off-peak hours in the meantime. As you may already know, we have members-only hours from 7-9 every morning, and we also have a specific "early bird" membership that provides access only at off-peak hours, for a discounted rate. See the front desk or bouldersgym.com for more information.

Comment: *tension power strips for the campus board*

Response: Passed this along to our facilities manager :)

Setting Feedback:

Comment: *"See Kaya" has been your response when people ask for the V grading of a problem. This is not accessible for people without smartphones as there is no web interface (I've asked Kaya about it!). I recognize that I may be a niche person and it might just be that I am just SOL but it's frustrating to not know what I'm climbing, especially with the grade creep that's been happening over the last year. I was thinking about signing up for the competition but I have NO concept of what grade I climb. Sometimes I can flash greens and project blues, sometimes I can't make it up oranges despite multiple tries. "Intermediate - V2-V4" means nothing when you never label climbs as V anything! Sorry I have just been frustrated about this for a long time now!!*

Response: Hi, thanks for expressing this frustration to us. We know that KAYA isn't the best solution for everyone, and we've been looking into potential alternatives as they become available to us.

The reason that we keep grades a bit hidden in KAYA is that we are trying to encourage folks to worry less about grading and more about what feels good or challenging for their bodies. We recognize that this system only works as long as our tags stay consistent and grade creep is something our setters are working hard on.

If finding the grades is super important to you, feel free to talk to the desk staff. They should all have access to KAYA and should be able to find the V grades for you.

Comment: *Thank you for sandbagging the grades at both gyms equally*

Response: We actually don't have any officially assigned grades, so you'll have to turn this thanks over to all of our community members who grade the climbs individually. Personally, we're pretty proud of our setting and hope that everyone can find enough to climb. If you're having a hard time finding climbs that are doable for you, feel free to chat with desk staff or let us know here.

Comment: *I'd like harder (5.10-5.12) routes on auto belay lines*

Response: Thanks for letting us know! We need to keep lots of easy things on our autobelays since they're generally the most accessible form of climbing (roped or unroped) for our newer climbers. However, as we expand our autobelay inventory, we will be able to expand our grades options as well.

Comment: *I wish the climbing holds were bigger - age 5 kid (disregard this but he insisted we write it :))*

Response: We do too! Climbing is so hard, but we bet you crushed it :)

Comment: *At other gyms they have a whiteboard map of the gym and the areas of the gym and on each area, they have the date they are going to change the set and I feel that would be cool to have here*

Response: We like this! Downtown, our setters work in circuits rather than areas, so we currently have which circuits are new and which are being stripped next. At Eastside, though, we will look into something like this!

Comment: *the two routes that start in one place are really fun*

Response: Thanks! We will let our setters know you like them :)

Comment: *Free setting clinic! (I missed your summer one)*

Response: Keep your eyes out! We will likely be doing this again in the future!

Safe Space Feedback:

Comment: *The set at Eastside is super inconsistent and difficult. It's really hard to get better and have fun moving your body when the options for v1-v4 are all super hard with tiny holds. I would go downtown but I don't like paying for parking and being in an even More crowded gym.*

Response: Thank you for reaching out about this, we hear your frustration and we're sorry that you're having this experience in our gym.

This is a multifaceted problem. One part of it can possibly be attributed to the setting. If you are able, please download KAYA and comment on specific routes. It helps our setters understand what places they could use improvement. We certainly want to make sure that you (and everyone) have enough to climb.

Another piece of this may have to do with managing expectations. We have staff here who climb for years without climbing much harder than v2 or so. As long as folks have *enough* to climb, we encourage them to take the pressure away from *improvement* in terms of grade and rather try to find movement that feels good or challenging for their body.

We addressed this issue more completely in our last feedback response, feel free to check there for a more in-depth discussion

Big Picture Feedback*

**This is a new segment of feedback we are going to dig into as a community. Here we will address one or more issues that came up during this feedback period that feel core to the construction of community, who we are as a business, and how we would like to engage with each other moving forward. Please feel free to email community@bouldersgym.com if you have any questions, or if you would like to engage in further discussion regarding any of our Big Picture Feedback comments or responses. We think this works best as a dialogue and would love your input.*

Two comments addressed together: #1 *I noticed some shirts at the gym with a design that looked reminiscent of Asian art, so out of curiosity, I looked up the artist. What I saw was disappointing. Not only is it made by a white man, but a white man who appropriates Asian art, and sexualizes Asian women in his art. I'm an Asian woman who's been the target of sexualization in the gym before. I don't know if anyone will read this, but it makes me feel sad that you all did this, especially after the Atlanta shootings.*

#2 *Recently, the boulders Instagram page has been posting and highlighting the same [artist as above]. As Boulders was highlighting their profile, I decided to check it out. I was pretty appalled by what I found on their page.*

Response: Thank you for bringing this to our attention. We would first like to apologize. The promotion of this shirt and the artist should've raised flags during our decision-making and review processes, but because of the specific timing of this design and some internal changeover, it slipped through. We have adjusted our processes accordingly and nothing like this should happen again.

While it never should have come to this point, we feel incredibly lucky to have a community that will bring things like this to our attention when we do make errors. Combating systemic violence and inequity takes a wide range of experiences and knowledge bases, and we truly cannot do it alone. Thank you.

As you hopefully noticed, the shirts were taken down shortly after we received the first comment. We ate the remaining cost of those shirts and canceled a second run we'd put in at the same time (a different design but the same artist), absorbing that cost as well. We will be donating the profit we had already made to Red Canary Song, an organization that's working to end violence against Asian American women. Additionally, we are setting up talks with the artist to see if we can help educate and hopefully mitigate future harm.

While this shirt and others we've done with human form often come from a hope to increase representation, we understand that they're fraught with particular difficulty. Since we are a primarily white institution, we believe that it will be in everyone's best interest for us to stop putting representation of human form on our merchandise. That will be our policy going forward.

While this specific incident was an error on our part, we would also like to acknowledge the wider issue of community content control brought forth by the second comment. We agree that when we intentionally highlight an artist it's our responsibility to check in with and make sure we feel comfortable promoting all of their work. However, our general Instagram policy has been to re-post anyone who tags us in their videos. For that lower level of engagement, we do not thoroughly check out every Instagram profile to make sure that we agree with everything that's been posted, and can't take responsibility for the actions or opinions of every individual.

Again, thank you again for bringing this to our attention, and for your patience as we continue to learn and unlearn. If you'd like to continue the conversation or have any further questions, please feel free to fill out another feedback form, or contact us at community@bouldersgym.com