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Kickboxing

A good kick boxer keeps his/ her opponent on his toes, wondering where the next move will land. A neutral position gives no clues as to strategy, giving you an advantage over your opponent. A neutral stance also balances your weight- putting you in a solid position to either throw or block kicks & punches. To protect your body, your hands should be in a vertical position, with your elbows at your rib cage. This stance will be referred to as the fighter's stance.



The Jab- If you want to come out on top, you need speed, speed and more speed. Enter the jab, which is your fastest weapon, period. Every fighter worships the jab, a dynamic punch that's usually used to set up power punches and kicks. You can throw it straight out to the face, jaw, nose or eyes. It can inflict some serious hurt on your opponent. Make sure to recoil your arm back after the jab and never lock your elbow. This can injure your own elbow.



- The Cross- next is the meat and potato punch called the cross. The cross works hand in hand with the jab. You will throw the jab with the lead arm, and then fire the cross with the other hand. Try to follow a straight line from your shoulder to your opponent's face, aiming for the chin. Most jabs and crosses are thrown to the face, so that it can be to your advantage to do the unexpected.





The Hook- The hook is a tough punch to master. Rumor has it that the hook causes more knockouts than any other punch. Execute your hook from front & rear hand. As you fire, bring the arm to a 90-degree horizontal angle, so that your elbow faces away from your body. Make sure your arm stays up equal to your shoulder. Pivot on the front foot; so that your body weight shifts to the front leg.



The elbow- you never use an elbow strike in competition- it is illegal (except in Thailand). But you may use it in your kickboxing workout; and in self-defense situation, it is your best choice. If kicks are your long-range weapons, punches are medium range weapons; your elbows & knees are your close range weapons. And because the elbow is thrown with a lot of power at close range, you can seriously disfigure your opponent. Also the elbow makes a good weapon because the striking surface is the hard, bony part of the elbow. Raise the elbow into a horizontal position with your hand close to your shoulder. Don't make a fist because the closed fist will tighten the forearm muscles and make the strike slower.





Getting a good kick start- this is your new mantra: fold, execute. Snap back and set down. Understand that when you kick, your base of support balances on one foot. That is the reason you snap the leg and quickly return it to the floor. Otherwise, if you let your leg dangle in the air, your opponent just might grab it or kick your base leg from beneath you; neither scenario is too good.



Here is how to execute perfect front kick. Assume the perfect fighter's stance. Bring one leg up in a bent position called the 'fold'. Raise the knee in a high position and use it as your aiming sight for targets. Snap the lower leg out to the target and have enough power as the kick is being executed. Make sure that you strike with the ball of the foot. After you hit the target, bring the leg quickly back to the fold. Set down your leg and return to the fighter's stance



The Back Kick- Fighters have many rules. One that you should commit to memory is the front leg or arm is used for speed, whereas the back leg or arm generates power. Good fighters rely on both speed and power. Learn to kick in the front as well as at back. You may have two opponents standing on either side.

- The Round Kick- Revered for its lightning fast 'concussion' effect, this kick has speed and power. As you fold the front knee, turn the body completely sideways or pivot the body. The knee is horizontal. Snap kick out quickly, hitting the target with the lower part of the shin. Snap the leg back to the fold and set the leg down to return to the fighter's stance.



- Even if you have the flexibility, don't strike to the head. This is an incorrect move. For one, you will lose the power that was meant for this kick. Also, your opponent will be able to grab your foot and flip you on your butt. Instead aim for knees, thighs, groin or midsection. This should be done only in the self-defense situation.



The Sidekick- throwing a sidekick takes a lot of patience because the body mechanics are more involved; at the same time however, this kick generates a wicked sting. As you start to fold the leg, turn the support foot. As the leg snaps out, allow the hip to roll over or turn into the kick. Even if you body is slightly turned away from the opponent at this point, don't take your eyes off the target.