

# PUNCHBAGPRO

100 ESSENTIAL PUNCH BAG TECHNIQUES



by RICHARD BASKIN

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# **100 ESSENTIAL PUNCH BAG TECHNIQUES**

FOR BOXING, KICKBOXING, MUAY THAI & MMA

By Richard Baskin

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**PUNCH**  **BAG** **PRO**

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**Written by Richard Baskin**

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Please consult your doctor before undertaking punch bag training. You train on your punch bag at your own risk. The authors cannot be held responsible for any injuries that you sustain from the following advice.

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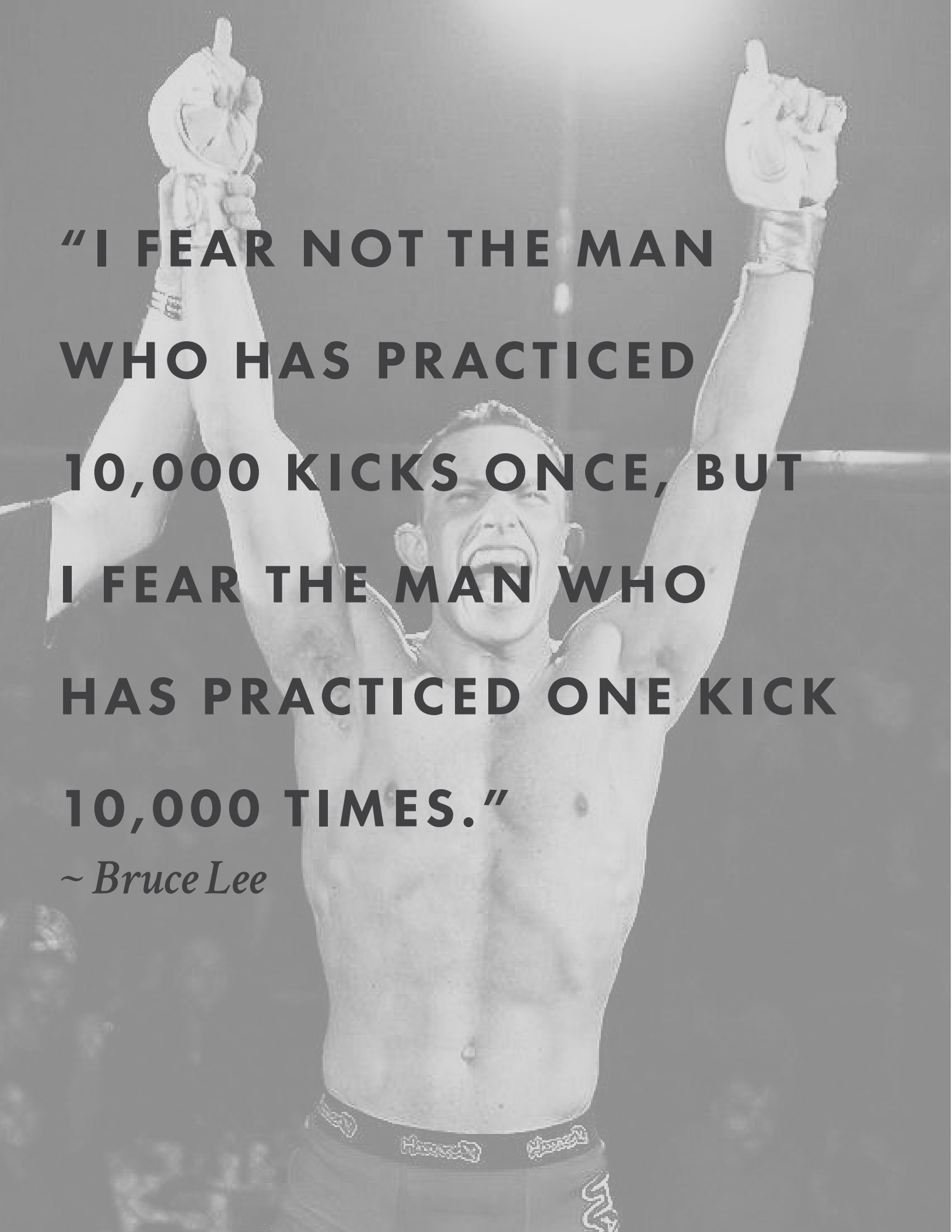
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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my wonderful parents Estelle and Eddie who have supported me with everything I have ever done, along with my coaches Matthew Chapman and James Evans-Nicolle who have taught me nearly all of what I know over the last 15 years. Also thank you to my amazing wife Nikki who is there with me every step of the way.





**"I FEAR NOT THE MAN  
WHO HAS PRACTICED  
10,000 KICKS ONCE, BUT  
I FEAR THE MAN WHO  
HAS PRACTICED ONE KICK  
10,000 TIMES."**

*~ Bruce Lee*



## **ABOUT ME AND WHY I WROTE THIS BOOK**

My name is Richard Baskin and I am a lifelong Martial Artist. I have studied and trained in a variety of Martial Arts styles including Boxing, Kickboxing, Muay Thai, Wrestling, no-gi grappling, MMA plus more and am the owner and head coach of the Fuzion Kickboxing Academy in London. I have travelled the world and have attended seminars with many great martial artists including Remy Bonjasky, Brad Pickett, Paul Daley, Erik Paulson, Jason Woodham, Valmyr Neto, Nick Osipczak, Nathan Leverton, Tom Barlow, Kenny Johnson and Grand Master Anton St James to name a few, as well as multiple world champions in Thailand.

I have competed across multiple martial arts styles including grappling tournaments and muay thai interclubs. This all contributed to my success winning 6 MMA cage fights in just over a year to become the undefeated Ultimate Fighting Warriors Lightweight Champion. I was then offered the opportunity to fight on the promotion Cage Warriors which I chose to pass up on, as I decided that I had proved to myself that my skills were successful and that my true passion was to focus on teaching at my academy.

For me it is very important for you to train in as many martial arts disciplines as possible. The reason being is to become the ultimate martial artist with a huge variety of techniques available to use during your training or competition. The more you know the better you will be. Knowledge is power! The reason I train in Boxing, Kickboxing, Muay Thai, Wrestling and Ju Jitsu is to make sure my strengths are in all aspects of the fight game. In recent years the term mixed martial artist is someone who possesses the ultimate skill level in all of these areas and who can adapt when needed. It is fantastic to specialise in one of these areas but in doing so you become a one-dimensional fighter who is missing out on a lot more. Try experiencing and competing in a variety of disciplines to become a well-rounded mixed martial artist. Whether you win or lose you will always learn and grow as a human being.

As with any sport to become the best you have to study your art for hours, days, months and years and years to get really good and put more work in than everyone else. Whether you become a world champion or teach as a coach

you will have a positive life changing impact on someone else's life. You may not realise it but the smallest connection with another human being can have a positive life lasting effect on them. The more time you put into your training the better you will be, as long as you are always learning new skills and refining what you already know. Training never stops, you should always be in shape, with your skills sharp and practicing what you preach. I make sure I train at least 5 times a week with pad work, bag work, technical drilling, sparring and conditioning.

This book contains the 100 essential techniques you must know on your punchbag, looking at basic strikes and progressing onto more advanced variations. You can use these techniques to train on your punch bag to build your fitness and also apply them against a skilled opponent during combat.

If you have any questions about this book or anything it contains, please feel free to contact me at my online training site [www.punchbagpro.com](http://www.punchbagpro.com) and I will be happy to help.

## **BENEFITS OF PUNCH BAG TRAINING**

### **Instantly realise your current fitness level**

As I mentioned previously the punch bag is a great reflection of yourself. If, for example, you can strike your punch bag with a variety of attacks, for five, five minute rounds with a minute rest between rounds at full power from start to finish then you are in pretty decent fight shape. If you find yourself gassing during the rounds, being sick, needing more recovery time or not maintaining power throughout then you will need to improve on this. Surprisingly enough, with a good training structure you can go from having a medium level of fitness to peak fight shape in just 6 weeks. The punch bag will help you get there.

### **Improve your aerobic and anaerobic cardio and conditioning**

As well as building your aerobic cardio there are hundreds of ways to beast yourself anaerobically on the punch bag as well. Two of my favourite ways are to fill the rest time between rounds with constant burpees so you don't get any rest, crazy I know, but also enjoyable! Along with adding in punch blitzes every 30 seconds throughout the rounds. It doesn't matter how fit you are there are always ways to make your training harder. Now this is a vital aspect when hitting the punch bag. You must realise where you can push yourself harder each time, as if you are not pushing you are not improving. It is best to plan cycles during your training over a period of weeks. This will in a sense allow you to peak your cardio, let your body rest and recover, and then move onto the next peak making you fitter and fitter.

### **Improve your strength and power**

Fighting at 70kg my training was always done on the biggest bag we have which weighs roughly 100kg. Now if I'm shifting that massive bag with my punches, elbows, knees and kicks every time I throw a combination then my power levels are sure as hell going to be good to develop knockout power against someone a third of the weight less. The punch bag allows you to go all out and strike with maximum power on every single shot that you throw. I have had students in my class who can comfortably coast through a 3-minute round on the focus pads, as they are holding back slightly on the kick power. Then putting them on the bag and seeing them having to work that much harder shows them the importance of adding in the punch bag to their workouts.

## Develop great visualisation skills

Similar to shadow boxing, visualisation is one of the most important parts of punch bag training. I can hit the bag for round after round and be in the centre of Las Vegas fighting for the UFC championship belt, or in Madison Square Garden boxing for a WBC title, or even be at the Lumpinee Thai Boxing stadium in Bangkok fighting in the electric atmosphere of a full on muay thai bout. The mind is a powerful and beautiful part of your punch bag training. Now your mind is focused and you can see your opponent then you can begin the fight. Not just smashing the bag but visualising slipping punches, setting up big head kicks, covering and countering and then landing spectacular highlight reel knockout finishes. Honestly put me in a room with a punch bag any day and I'll be happy as can be. The point here is to play the fight as you see it in front of you. Maybe your opponent has a powerful left hook which you need to work counters for during the rounds. It's all there, just visualise and unleash the power of your mind. Just be careful running around the gym as the winner with your hands up after you have finished the last round, you may receive some interesting looks.

## Get fit, de-stress and get that killer beach body

For those of you reading this who are not specifically training martial arts, then the punch bag is a great piece of equipment to have at home. I read somewhere before that "It is not just a punch bag. It's a therapist, psychiatrist and holistic healer, all rolled up into a glorious, 100lb bag of leather and canvas". I think this pretty much hits the nail on the head for anyone not actively training martial arts. The pure rush and release of endorphins when you hit a punch bag every now and then is so beneficial to your emotional wellbeing. I mean how many times have you wanted to punch your boss in the face right? Imagine how great it would feel to release all that energy on a punch bag and de-stress until you're flat on your back from the pure adrenaline overload and exhaustion. Along with this, simple circuits and exercise routines using beginner level martial arts techniques and exercises will help you get fit, toned, lose weight and get you in great shape for the summer. Your body will literally sculpt itself round after round. One of my private students went from 22 stone to 14 stone in the space of a year through a combination of martial arts training involving punch bag routines and more. If you are determined to make a change it can be done.

## WHAT YOU NEED TO START TRAINING ON YOUR PUNCHBAG

Before you start you need to be in a **safe environment**. This includes a level floor with enough room to move around the bag. If you are in a tightly packed space, you may risk accidentally hitting other objects or people next to you causing yourself and them damage and injury. Check the bag is assembled correctly and isn't going to fall on your head as soon as you start, as well as making sure the bag is in a good condition and isn't ripped or torn.

**Hand wraps** are, in my opinion, optional. They are used to protect the hands whilst punching by providing support to the wrists and knuckles. Over time as your technique develops and your power increase you will be striking the bag harder, therefore if your hands do start to hurt then it may be a good idea to invest in some and see how you get on.

You need a good pair of gloves when training. A good **pair of gloves** will protect your hands, fit comfortably and last a long time. There are loads of different glove weights, brands, styles, shapes, fits etc to choose from nowadays with prices ranging from around £30 to over £200+. My favourite gloves to use are 12oz Twins Special boxing gloves. They have a premium level of padding protecting the front part of the knuckles, with a nice thick chunky



wrist support, as well as having Velcro wrist straps allowing me to take them off super quick and easy. They are hard to find in the UK but can be shipped over from Thailand for around £80 depending on what website you buy them from. You can also purchase a pair of MMA gloves for more specific MMA round training.

There is a vast array of fun special **equipment** which you can add to your training to change the workout experience. This is great as it always keeps the body guessing and can give massive new elements to your training by just adding small tweaks. These will make your workouts harder and improve your attributes such as speed and cardio. I love adding a weighted vest into my training. This adds extra weight to my body making me feel heavier, which when removed after a couple of rounds, allows me to move faster and be lighter on my feet. I also like to have a partner pull me back with a belt around my waist. This makes me drive forwards more on every combo making me more hungry and aggressive leading up to a fight. Another piece of equipment I like to use are resistance bands to my arms and legs to add power, and push my muscular endurance. You can also try linking different pieces of equipment together for ultimate beastings, getting you in peak physical shape.

Now you're kitted up, gloves on and ready to rock and roll, you need a punch bag. A **punch bag** is often defined as a stuffed cylindrical bag suspended so it can be punched for exercise or training. There are also a wide variety of different punch bag types each with their own benefits which you can explore and train with. These include for example the heavy bag, banana bag, speed ball and spar bar and each have their own benefits.

## **TOP 10 PUNCHBAGPRO PRINCIPLES**

### **1. Keeping a good stance throughout the round**

Most the time when you are training on the punch bag you will be on your own solo. You may have a partner or instructor keeping an eye on your technique but if not you have to focus on this yourself. It is very easy to develop bad habits on the bag quickly. The basics of my stance are to have my hands up, returning them back to my head after I punch, keeping my chin down and keeping my elbows in to protect against body shots. I find this a comfortable tight guard that works well for me when fighting.

### **2. Moving your head**

Great fighters have superior head movement. They are able to slip punches, roll, bob and weave, snap back, duck under, shoulder roll back and more. If your head is constantly moving in this way, regardless of whether punches are coming towards you, you will instantly make it harder for your opponent to land their shots as they have no idea where your head is moving next.

### **3. Moving your feet – angles, circling, in and out**

Footwork and head movement go hand in hand and are the foundations for everything else to be built upon. I like to treat my opponents like a military battle. If I can draw my opponent forwards into the centre and trap them, or angle and flank them around their blind side, or even get around behind enemy lines to their back then the rest of the battle should be an easier one. You never want to be in front on your opponent when throwing your techniques.

### **4. Variety in technique and the 5 ways of attack**

Attack variation is a golden component to winning fights. If you are throwing the same few techniques, then your opponent will be able to easily defend and counter. You need a huge variety of techniques and then also variations of those techniques to start to take the advantage. For example, I often use up to 15 types of jab in a single round, all at specific times, for specific reasons and for specific opponent reactions. Along with variety in technique you also need



variety in the way you attack on your Punch bag. My training has been heavily influenced by Bruce Lee's Jeet Kune Do system and his 5 ways of attack which includes single attacks, combinations, fakes, baits and traps.

### **5. Adding in visualisation defence, counters, blocks etc**

Visualisation is so important during your training rounds on the punch bag. Ideally you shouldn't really be seeing a static punch bag in front of you, you should be seeing the opponent in your mind in front of you. Give them strengths, give them weaknesses and visualise them throwing techniques in front of you. This is exactly what happens in a real fight and the more you can see it happening in your mind and in front of you on the punch bag, then the better you will become at dealing with it live. You can visualise everything you know.

### **6. Striking at the correct range – Understanding the 5 ranges**

Every technique you know has a correct distance from which it should be thrown and this should always be the case on your punch bag. Understanding this will allow you to transition through different combinations smoothly whilst being able to land every strike with excellent accuracy and power. The five ranges moving from furthest to closest are out of range, kicking range, punch range, elbow and knee range and finally clinch where you have a hold of your bag/opponent.

### **7. Correct breathing**

Breathing is an important aspect when throwing your strikes. Everyone makes different noises when they strike, whether it's just a short breath out or an aggressive roar, this helps you to stay relaxed, whilst keeping your core tight and allowing you to make it through to the end of the round. Anytime you strike without breathing you disrupt your own breathing pattern and start to tense up and gas out quickly.

### **8. Strike through the bag**

When you throw a punch, elbow, knee or kick onto the bag it needs to strike with full speed and power and then retract to its original position at lightning speed. Commonly for some beginners when throwing a punch, the glove connects onto the bag and stays on it for a second whilst pushing the bag with your bodyweight behind the punch. To get maximum power you must be driving through the bag using good body mechanics, not stopping on the connection and pushing the rest of the way. When I throw my roundhouse kick to the body I am aiming to chop the bag in half by theoretically slicing the bag across the centre line and completely spinning through and back to stance. Now this won't really ever happen but the principle of striking through is what you want to apply.

### **9. Analyse yourself**

The key to this is non-telegraphic motion. This means throwing your techniques without giving anything away, and landing them on your opponent, before they have even had the chance to register it coming towards them. Now you can't analyse yourself as you will not know what you are looking for, as you don't know you're even doing it. Either rep out a certain technique with a partner watching you and get them to tell you what you do before you throw that technique, or secondly, set up a camera and film yourself on the punch bag. Watch it back and look for your own tells. Start to eliminate all of your tells and your striking level and initiation speed will improve rapidly.

### **10. Having a structured and planned training regime**

Everything in life works best with routine and structure so making the punch bag part of this for whichever training regime you are performing will bring the best out in you. Not only will it make you mentally tougher but it will allow you to push yourself for the desired work time which you set. You know exactly what you have to do at that moment in time.

## 100 ESSENTIAL PUNCH BAG TECHNIQUES

Here are 100 of my favourite techniques which have been tried and tested in sparring, the ring and the cage. Follow this guide and you can practice the techniques on your punch bag and instantly add them into your game. Each technique has been broken down into different variations which you can use to dominate your opponent. The more techniques you can apply, the harder you are to deal with, as being on the receiving end of trying to defend 10 different jabs, is 10 times harder than defending the same one. I find that technique variation is the key to being a successful martial artist.

When you start progressing through different levels of your training from a complete beginner to an advanced fighter you will come across different opponents with different skill sets. By having an extensive knowledge of hundreds of techniques in your brain, you will apply the most efficient technique to use at that point in time. These 100 techniques are used for specific reasons and I guarantee once you understand and apply them your striking game will improve massively. When learning these techniques, my opponent and I are both in orthodox stance.

**You can watch every technique on the punch bag by clicking the name of the technique and being taken to the Punchbagpro YouTube channel.**

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### PUNCHBAGPRO TECHNIQUES 1 – 10: JAB VARIATIONS

Mastering the jab is one of the golden rules of being a great boxer. I love the jab and use around 25 different variations as a solid foundation of my striking game. This allows me to punch, distract, fake and create openings to then follow up with combinations. The Jab is a lead hand attack. In orthodox stance this is the left hand and in southpaw stance this will be the right hand. The jab is thrown straight with a fully extended arm, turning the knuckles flat at the last second. Be sure to keep your elbow in and not flap it out as this will make it more direct and harder to see by your opponent. To generate maximum power, push off the rear foot and turn your opposite shoulder backwards. Your chin should be tucked and hidden inside the jabbing shoulder for a nice tight guard and after the jab lands return it straight back to your temple. If there is a gap here for too long you will be open for big overhand counters and big power head kicks. Let's take a look at 10 different variations of the Jab.



## 1. THE JAB

I use this jab in 3 ways. Firstly, I use it as a single jab performed with speed, power, or a combination of both. I'm throwing the single to land it on my opponent's head or body and see how they react. I will use the speed jab to change the timing and the power jab to make my opponent respect my power and get them moving onto their back foot allowing me to pressure forwards and advance. The second way is by using a double jab. This is used when my first jab lands cleanly and there is still a clear opening for me to step forwards with the second jab. Thirdly I use the jab as an angled triple. This allows me to angle off to the left or right whilst throwing three fast jabs. Ideally moving away from my opponent's power side and using the triple up high to disguise and hide my footwork. Once on the angle I then follow with a combination.







## 2. THUMB UP JAB

A defence against straight punches to the head is called a front head block. This is where the person defending lifts up their arms from their guard position, grabbing the back of their head and blocking the punch on their forearms. When throwing a jab your wrist turns at the last second making the glove flat. When striking with the thumb up jab keep your thumb up as you punch forwards and sneak through the gap in the centre of your opponent's tight guard or front head block defence. Punching with your thumb up makes your hand narrower allowing it to sneak through the centre and still land on their head effectively.





### **3. CORKSCREW JAB**

The corkscrew adds a rotational twist to your jab punch by turning your elbow up and thumb down towards the floor. This adds a twisting/ripping motion of the leather glove on the soft facial area of your opponent causing extra damage as the punch lands. A great punch which can rip your opponent's face up. When striking with this technique it should feel more of a heavy downward blow rather than a fast-snappy speed jab.







#### 4. THE BACKFIST

This is one of the best punches I like to throw to annoy and frustrate my opponent to the max. The more frustrated and annoyed they become the more chance they will start to make mistakes. The backfist is one of my favourite techniques which I use to flick into my opponent's face. It has a high percentage of landing and doesn't leave you over committed. I like to hang just out of range and then lean forwards at full extension, whilst turning my knuckles down to the floor and whipping my opponent in the face with the back of my fist. Very similar to swatting a fly. This is a super speedy technique, which can blind your opponent for a few seconds if you aim for their eyes, allowing you to follow up your own combination.





## 5. HOT STEP JAB

The Hot Step Jab is a great way of setting up your opponent and bringing them down the centre line. This is great because you are drawing them in and making them move forwards so you can unload with your counter attack. Imagine that as you step forwards and hit your opponent with your jab, the floor is boiling hot, so you have to bounce back out of range as fast as possible. Combine this with a cheeky open guard and a drop of the hands to give your opponent the opening to come forwards and want to hit you in the face. You are then primed and ready to unload a single hard strike or combo as they advance down the centre. Make sure you step back out fast, leave a very obvious opening down the middle and then hit them as soon as they start moving towards you. I like to throw a nice hard full power front kick to their chest or face and then chase them down after with the rest of my combination.

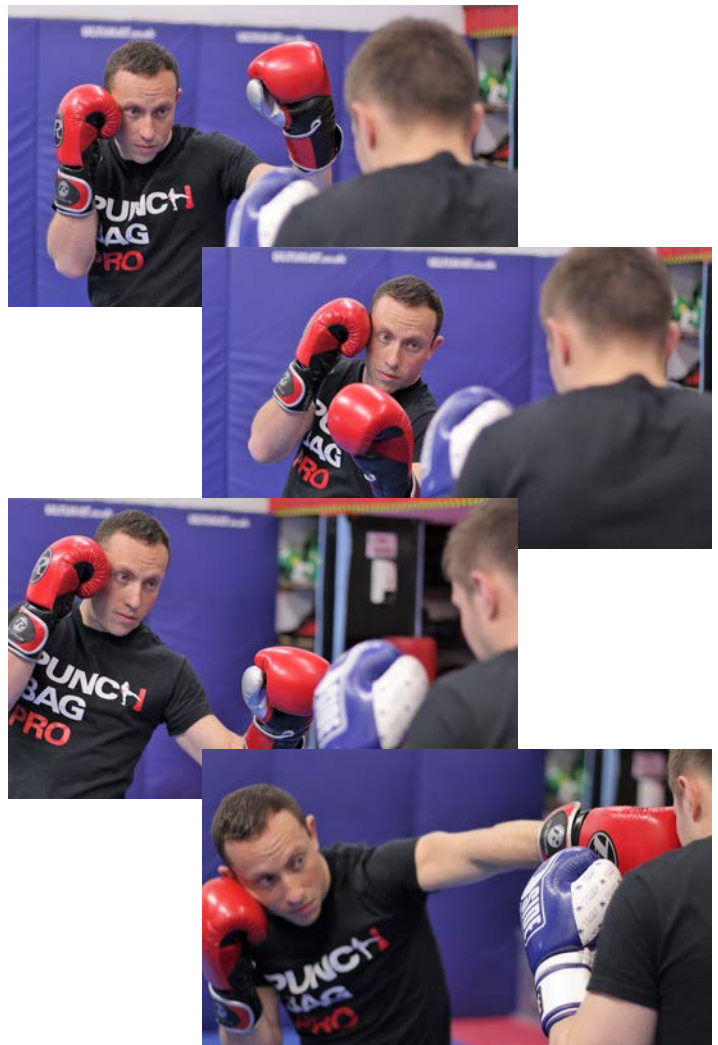






## 6. WINDOW JAB

The Window Jab is used to mix up the timing and hit your opponent from a variety of angles. I like to call it the window jab as the movement is similar to cleaning a large window. Instead of punching from your chin to your opponent's face, start moving your hand at an increased speed in all different directions, then throw your punch from any angle you like. Imagine moving your hand to different numbers randomly on a clock face, and then shooting out the jab from anyone of the numbers whenever you like. The movement is unorthodox, random and unpredictable which makes the punch hard to detect and different each time you throw it. Wax on, wax off and channel your inner cleaner.





## 7. RISING JAB

The rising jab is a brilliant shot which travels under your opponent's field of vision. The hand position can start hanging low in front of your waist or hidden in a half guard boxing stance. When fighting I stare at my opponent's chest which gives me a wide peripheral view of their attacks. When setting up the rising jab I draw my opponent to stare at my eyes which allows me to deliver the rising jab 45 degrees upwards under their vision. Whilst out of range casually drop your lead hand from your guard, wait for the eye contact and then shoot the rising jab upwards with a relaxed arm as you step in. At the last second clench your fist and flick your wrist upwards under their chin, popping their head upwards with the tops of your knuckles and allowing you to follow up with a big right hand cross afterwards.

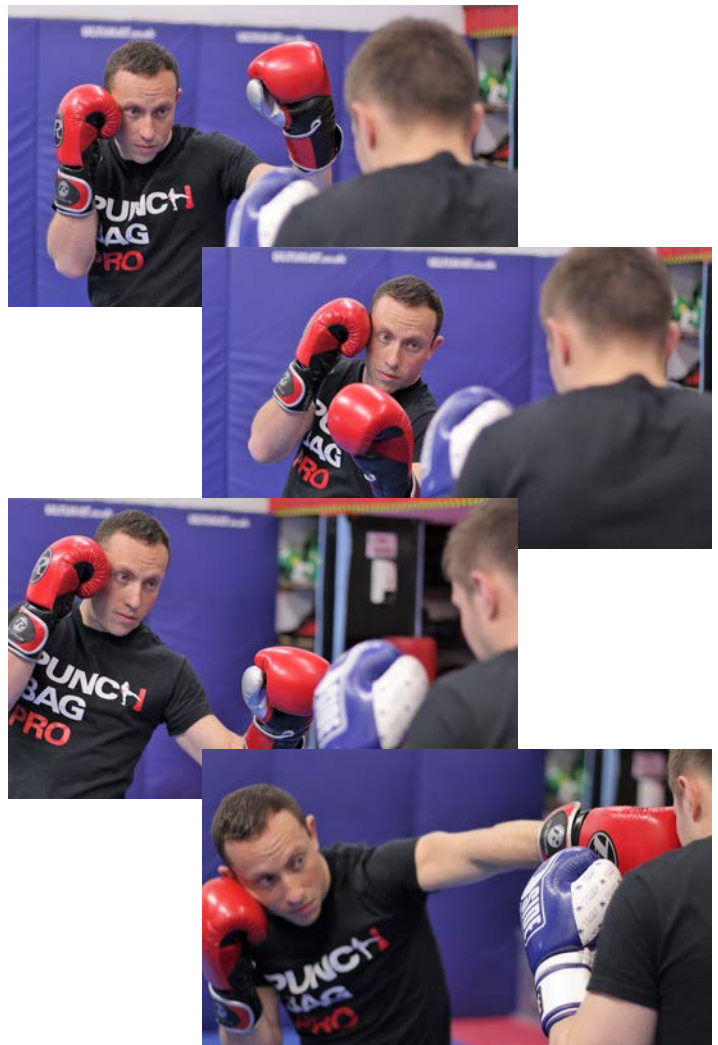






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## 8. STUTTER JAB

You can defend a jab by using a technique called a parry which knocks the jab off the centreline and past the side of your head. The stutter jab is perfect against an opponent who likes to over reach with their rear hand parry, causing them to overreact, leaving them open for the second part of the stutter jab. When defending the jab using a rear hand parry make sure you keep it tight and short, otherwise if you make it big and wide you will become susceptible to this sneaky trick yourself. The reason this is called the stutter jab is because the normal flow of the jab is disrupted. When throwing the stutter jab strike out half way, pause and wait for your opponent to over reach on their parry, then carry on the direct line of movement to your opponent's face. Do not throw it half way, bring it back to your head and then back out to your opponent's face as this is too slow and allows them to bring their hand back to their guard. This is a super simple and highly effective variation of the jab against an opponent who over reaches on their parry defence.





## 9. MAKATOON PUNCH

This is used as a falling punch, adding gravity to increase the power of the technique. Lift up your lead knee whilst stepping forwards and aim for your opponent's head or chest to give to push them back with force. When throwing this shot make sure your hand lands first before your foot hits the floor. This makes sure that the added gravity power travels through your hand instead of through your foot, making your punch harder. Once you get the hang of the body mechanics you can speed up the falling step as one quick motion.







## 10. STICKY JAB

The Sticky Jab is a great way of blinding and confusing your opponent for a split second allowing you to land a secondary power shot. Usually when throwing a jab cross the timing is a fast 1 2. When throwing the Sticky Jab, you want to leave the jab on their face for a split second longer, for example 1....2. This confuses your opponent as they expect the punch to retreat back off their head, but instead you stick it to their face, driving forwards towards them and then instantly following with a power cross. You need to drive the sticky jab through their face otherwise they can move their head off your hand. Also, an important point to note is to leave the sticky jab on their eye line, so they can't see the next shot coming. You can also follow up from the sticky jab with other techniques for example a big right elbow or a big right head kick.





## **PUNCHBAGPRO TECHNIQUES 11 – 15: CROSS VARIATIONS**

The cross, also known as a straight, is thrown from the rear hand when in your stance. This is because it comes slightly across the body as it is thrown. To generate power, you must be driving off the ball of your rear foot, rotating it forwards, which turns your hips and shoulder into the punch. When throwing this rear hand punch make sure you don't over commit, which means throwing it so hard you lose your balance forwards. As this is one of your most powerful punches be sure not to load it up, by cocking back your arm first, as this will be a clear indication to your opponent that it's on its way. Throw it straight down the centre and return in back along the same line with good form and control. Let's take a look at 5 variations of this punch will can be thrown with the rear hand.



## 11. STRAIGHT RIGHT

The straight right is a powerful punch which travels directly down the centreline to your opponent's face, landing between their guard, ideally breaking their nose, landing on their jaw or knocking them out. To align this shot correctly take a small angled step to the left with your front foot whilst in orthodox stance, or to the right if in a southpaw stance. This then puts your rear hand directly in the centre allowing it to travel towards the centre of your opponent's face.





## 12. THE CROSS

This lands on the side of your opponent's face, coming through the outside of their guard, compared to the straight right which travels down the centreline. Think of the direction of travel moving 45 degrees inwards rather than in a straight line. If angled correctly this shot will land on your opponent's jaw line, temple or side of the brain creating a massive knockout shot. Plus, your weight is primed on your rear leg from the angled step to push off from and explode into the punch, sending it straight through the side of their head. It's also known as the big right, as you can see why!







### 13. THE OVERHAND

The overhand is a huge strike, usually thrown off the rear hand, which can cause an instant knockout when delivered to the temple, face or jaw line. The overhand also works well for shorter fighters moving inside and landing the shot on a taller fighter. To generate maximum power in orthodox stance, I like to step to my left which allows the power to travel through my opponent's head, bend my left leg which adds gravity into the punch and finally keep the arm motion short and tight to keep the power compact. Try not to swing it from too behind you as it will be seen easier and allow your opponent to counter you. Alternatively, if your opponent is rocked, this strike works just as nicely by dipping the head and swinging it as big and as wildly as possible. This is a truly powerful shot which you will see on highlight knockout reels around the world! Boom!





#### 14. STEP THROUGH CROSS

The step through cross is a great way of closing the distance on your opponent and secretly switching your stance. When in orthodox stance I throw my power right cross and simultaneously step through with my rear leg into southpaw stance. This allows me to change my stance whilst throwing the technique, rather than allowing my opponent to watch me change stance when out of range. Changing stance brings a wealth of new striking opportunities and strategies to the fight and also allows you to be a much more diverse fighter. Plus, if you can switch without your opponent realising then you will be one step ahead of them.







## 15. THE JUMP CROSS

This is an awesome technique which is used to close the distance, hit with extra power and use after faking a technique off the rear leg. To throw it from orthodox stance, jump up by lifting your rear knee, kick it back behind you and throw a power cross at the same time. It's also known as the superman punch as you look like superman flying through the air. It's very common to forget about your guard when flying through the air, this is dangerous as it can easily be countered if you are too open. Always make sure your guard is up and that you land in your stance ready to follow up with your combination. A great way to set up the jump cross is to throw a couple of techniques off the rear leg, for example a long knee or rear leg front kick, then when you throw it for the third time lift the knee and change it into the jump cross. Happy flying!



## **PUNCHBAGPRO TECHNIQUES 16 – 25: HOOK VARIATIONS**

A hook is a rotational punch thrown off the left or right hand, to side of your opponent's head and body by twisting from the floor and rotating around your core. Always keep your other hand glued to your head or even a touch higher, as if you and your opponent both throw the same hook at the same time and your other hand is down, this will lead to a simultaneous double knockout. The hook is a close-range boxing technique used alongside uppercuts to work on the inside. Make sure you step in closer after throwing your jabs and crosses otherwise you will leave yourself swinging, open and exposed for a counter. In this section, we look at 5 variations on how to throw a hook.





## 16. THE HOOK

The hook is a fundamental punch which can be used in boxing, kickboxing, muay thai, MMA and other combat sports. To generate power for the lead hand hook, push and rotate off the ball of your foot into the same direction of the punch. Rotate your hips and shoulder whilst keeping your chin tucked and your elbow at 90 degrees. You can either have your thumb facing upwards (which engages your bicep) or have your thumb facing towards you. Either way is fine. I like to have my thumb up when I throw my lead hand hook and my thumb facing towards me when throwing my rear hand hook as this just feels comfortable. If you throw your hook and it misses you should still be grounded to the floor and not lose your balance by swinging wildly and falling out of position.





## 17. SHORT HOOK

A short hook is used when you are head to head with your opponent and has totally different body mechanics to a normal hook. When throwing this short hook, don't lean back to create space as this will give your opponent the opportunity to fill the gap and hit you. To generate maximum power from this short range, kick your rear heel into the floor as you rotate your front foot to shift your weight, this will rotate your hips and your shoulder allowing you to throw a super short tight powerful hook. It's very tricky to throw a hook by rotating your front foot first from this close position as it has the most weight on it as you are learning forwards into your opponent. You will not believe how much power you can generate from this technique and it will knock your opponent into next week!







## 18. SWING HOOK

This is a long-range hook which can be used at the same distance as your jab and cross. To throw a swing hook leave your arm loose, straight and with your thumb pointing down to the floor. Rotate your body aiming for it to cut horizontally with your knuckles across the side of your opponent's head. Just before it lands, clench your fist to make the punch solid. I use this all the time and love to set this shot up by baiting my opponent to throw their cross, and then shoulder rolling back with my chin tucked and swing hooking them with my lead hand over the top of their shoulder to their temple. This is a mega powerful hook and can unexpectedly catch your opponent from long range when they are least expecting it.





# LIVER SHOT EP. 19

## 19. LIVER SHOT

A lethal body punch which will obliterate your opponent and drop them into a world of pain. Located in the upper right side of the abdomen just under the floating ribs, this is the largest solid organ in the body, and a perfect target to aim for in a fight. Landing a power shot to your opponent's liver will cause excruciating pain and knock the wind out of them which will result in a technical knockout. To throw the liver shot in orthodox lead I like to dip down to the left and compress my weight onto my left leg. From here I drive upwards at 45 degrees throwing the liver shot at full power.

You must make sure you keep your right hand glued to your head as if not you will become susceptible to your opponent's lead hook or lead head kick to the right side of your head. To set it up your need to expose that area by drawing your opponent's hands up high, as it will usually be protected by their elbows.

A classic high percentage combo which works well is to throw a jab cross (to draw their hands up) then dip and throw your liver shot, and follow with a power head kick to finish. Don't forget you can also hit the liver with

elbows, knees and kicks! There are loads of great finishes in martial arts from liver shots and I would recommend mastering this technique so you will drop everyone when it lands.







## 20. PUSHING HOOK

I LOVE this technique! By using the pushing hook, you are forcing your opponent's weight onto their lead or rear leg, making it near impossible for them to lift it and shin block. When your hook lands instead of making it the classic punch feeling, give them a pushing drive to shift their bodyweight across onto the opposite side leg. The more you can shift their weight the better as it will make it impossible for them to lift their leg if all their weight is on it. This is a super sneaky way for setting up your power low kick to the outside of their sciatic nerve in your opponent's thigh. Hitting this with your full power roundhouse kick will instantly cause a dead leg, nerve pain, numbness, tingling and weakness...completely disabling your opponent from using that leg effectively. This will restrict their movement, reduce their ability to use the leg to kick and make it harder for them to use it to defend.





## **21. PIVOT HOOK**

Creating angles during your attack is important as it allows you to face your opponent and strike whilst they are facing a different direction to you. The pivot hook allows you to create an angle and get 90 degrees on to your opponent. With you and your opponent both in orthodox lead, take a slight step forwards and out at 45 degrees, this allows you to finish up next to your opponent. As you throw the lead left hook pivot on your front foot whilst sliding the rear leg around simultaneously. This will allow you to finish on an angle facing your opponent's side profile whilst they are still facing forwards. You can then unload a nice full power combination.







## 22. THE CLOTHESLINE

The clothesline is a driving, smashing inside forearm strike to my opponent's head to knock them off balance and send them backwards. This allows me to step in behind my opponent and perform an osoto gari, which is an outer foot sweep from judo. This works very nicely for taking people down in MMA if you can land it at will. This is an unusual attack which I use when my opponent has their weight heavy on their lead leg as taking away this base will send them slamming to the floor. This is a low risk takedown which means if it doesn't go as planned, it will still leave you on your feet being able to strike, compared to a failed double leg takedown where you may be sprawled upon and have your face stuffed into the floor with your opponent on top of you.







### **23. BRUSH AWAY HOOK**

This is used when you can slip and get to the outside of your opponent's cross. As the straight right hand comes down the centre line, slip to the outside and brush it away to the side whilst simultaneously following up with a hook on the other hand. I like using this technique either when exchanging strikes with my opponent or when I am under pressure against the ropes or cage. As my opponent is throwing a barrage of punches towards my head I will use my front and side head covers to defend. At the same time, I will be looking out for the big straight to come where I can then use my brush away hook counter. This is a great technique as it keeps your head in a nice tight guard position until the very last second when you can unload your hook back towards them.





## **24. ROLLING HOOKS**

When rolling / bobbing and weaving against your opponent's hooks your head travels under their hook arm, across their torso and finishes up on the other side. As your head weaves underneath you want to throw your hook to their body as it will be a big open target. This can be applied on both sides. As their left hook comes, bob and weave under and throw your left hook to their body and if their right hook comes bob and weave and throw your right body hook on the way past. The option is there for you if you want to take it.







## **25. LEAPING HOOK**

The leaping left hook is a great surprise attack which can cover loads of distance and catch your opponent when they are out of range with their hands down. This is a hook from hell - Mike Tyson style. To set up this technique I use lots of head movement and dip my head low to the left. I turn my rear shoulder inwards and crouch downwards to my lead side, compressing my body like a spring with my weight on my front leg. I then explode off this leg with a tight lead hand hook, leaping towards my opponent at a slight angle across their body and aiming for the side of their head with my hook punch. As I land from the leap my feet finish planted in my stance with good weight distribution and balance ready to throw my next set of strikes. This is a super powerful hook which will cause maximum damage if you can get a fluid transition from the head movement, to the compression, to the leap.





## **PUNCHBAGPRO TECHNIQUES 26 – 30: UPPERCUT VARIATIONS**

The uppercut punch has a vertical direction of travel up the centreline aiming under your opponent's chin or to their face or body when they are slightly hunched over. Uppercuts can be thrown off the lead and rear hands, usually with the palm of the hand facing towards yourself and striking with the knuckles. This is a close-range boxing technique which is used nicely in conjunction with hooks. Throwing uppercuts from a far distance will leave you open and exposed as it will make you want to overreach whilst leaning inwards. Here we take a look at five of my favourite uppercut variations.



## **26. UPPERCUTS**

To throw an uppercut, dip your weight down so you can feel pressure in your legs. Bring the arm into the centre line and drive upwards with your legs whilst extending the arm as the punch lands. Power is generated from the floor by pushing upwards with the ball of your rear foot, not by the arm on its own. Keep your elbows in tight so you have a nice clean upwards powerline. If anything is wonky or bent, then you will not generate maximum power and this may lead to an injury. Try and keep the dip and drive small and compact, not big and swingy like you see in cartoons. Both hands must stay on your head in guard position when you dip, making sure you don't drop your hand low off your head at the start of the punch.





## **27. LONG UPPERCUT**

A long uppercut is thrown at the same distance as your jab and cross. Throwing a normal uppercut at this range will miss but a long uppercut punching upwards at 45 degrees will land under your opponent's chin. I like to distract my opponent with the jab and then sneak the long uppercut underneath their guard. As a striker against a wrestler, moving close with hooks and uppercuts gives your opponent the advantage of being closer to clinch, grab and take you down. As a striker, I favour this punch during this scenario as it allows me to maintain my distance and keep a long range, whilst still being able to land shots under my opponent's chin. Conor McGregor uses this style of uppercut as it also works well against shorter opponents







## 28. DRAGON UPPERCUT

Audiences love to watch spectacular techniques being pulled off in the cage. This is one of those moves. Remember Tekken? Then you must have used the amazing Dragon Uppercut which has an immense amount of power. Sprint step forwards under your opponent's eye line and then explode upwards by jumping straight to the sky with you rear uppercut landing under their chin and lifting them up into the air. I love this move and find it fun to use in sparring. If it's good enough for Ken from the game Street Fighter, then its good enough for me.





## 29. BOLO PUNCH

The Bolo punch is an unorthodox whipping punch that I like to use when my opponent's head is low in the centre line, often when they bob and weave with their head. Bolo is the Filipino word for machete and the "bolo punch" replicates the similar circular movement of cutting sugar cane in fields. Sometimes I will bait throwing the lead hook to get my opponents head moving low and then land the bolo punch as their head drops. To generate maximum power, leave your arm loose and relaxed and use the same motion as skimming a stone across a lake. Clench your fist at the last second to create a solid connection when it lands. When training on the punch bag you must visualise your opponent's head moving (as it would in a fight) as this will allow you to land a variety of techniques like this accordingly.







### **30. SPLEEN SHOT**

filter, meaning any damage to this organ can cause serious internal bleeding. Dig your punch upwards at 45 degrees from the front or horizontally from behind their elbow to target this area. This angle can be modified to however suits you best. With good body mechanics attained by driving and rotating from the floor and hips, this punch can develop in excess of 1000 lbs of force. Not something you want to be on the receiving end of. This is why I like to keep my elbows in protecting my liver and spleen. When boxing it is important not to just head hunt but to work the body as well.





## **PUNCHBAGPRO TECHNIQUES 31 – 40: ELBOW VARIATIONS**

Elbows are used heavily in muay thai and MMA. They work well at close range when striking on the feet, in the clinch and for inflicting heavy damage during ground and pound. Elbow tips are sharp, compared to the padded end of a glove, which causes large cuts to the soft facial area of the face when they land cleanly. I have seen elbows break eye sockets, crush noses and leave losing opponents requiring plenty of stitches. When throwing elbows leave your arm loose and snappy, the more relaxed the better as any tension will begin to lock up the arm making it stiff and slow. Elbow pads are a great piece of equipment to use when sparring as you can land your elbows without injuring your training partner. You can elbow in a variety of directions as the next ten techniques show.



### **31. HORIZONTAL ELBOWS**

Step forwards with your front foot into range and rotate your hip and shoulder to generate maximum power. Land the sharp part of your elbow tip, usually the last inch, on the side of your opponent's head from their temple and along down to their jaw line. When I throw horizontal elbows, I lift my other hand slightly higher for my guard as if there is an opening here then I am susceptible to an elbow from my opponent at the same time. Against a grounded opponent in MMA whilst in the mount position, support yourself with one arm on the floor, and rain down elbows to the centre of their face. Elbows can finish a fight from a knockout or from a doctor's stoppage from a large cut.





### **32. UPWARD ELBOWS**

Using similar body mechanics as an uppercut, but driving more forwards, the upward elbow is used when moving forwards to attack or when your opponent moves forwards towards you. Point your thumb upwards and over your back, this flares up your elbow straight up and into the centreline. Use this to go through their guard targeting the face, lifting the chin or spiking it into your opponent's chest. On the defence, I like to use this elbow when my opponent doesn't move their head offline and comes straight down the centre, moving onto my upward elbow. You can throw upward elbows off of your lead and rear arms. Watch out for upward elbows, they will destroy your face!! Drive from the floor, through your hips and snap your elbows upwards for maximum damage.







### **33. BACK ELBOW**

One of my favourite ever brutal old school knockouts used by Anderson Silva 10 years ago back in Cage Rage 16. The back elbow comes out of nowhere and slides straight through the centre of your opponent's guard which is a very unorthodox motion. From your stance drop your front hand, step in sideways whilst keeping your head hidden and rip the back of your elbow upwards, straight through the middle of their hands. You can step through and do it in the other lead as well.





### **34. DIAGONAL ELBOWS**

Diagonal elbows can be thrown in four directions towards your opponent. They can be thrown 45 degrees diagonally upwards and downwards from either arm. These are thrown in a slashing style across the soft facial tissue across your opponent's face to cut them, or onto their temple and jaw line to knock them out. When throwing diagonal elbows, the body mechanics are generated from twisting the hips and the shoulders. Diagonal elbows are of great use at close range when clinched with your opponent as they can find their way over and under their arms based on your hand position.







### **35. SPIKE ELBOW**

The spike elbow is used in a 12 to 6 downward vertical motion and spikes straight down onto your opponent's head, collar bone or centre of the chest. An old school traditional Muay Boran technique this can also be thrown by stepping up onto your opponent's front leg and then their shoulder. Alternatively, as you step forward lift your weight up onto your toes, so that you can then drop your weight and drive down spiking your elbow straight onto their head. This technique is so powerful it will definitely destroy your opponent's best facial features.





### **36. JUMP SPIKE ELBOW**

The jump spike elbow is a great technique for chasing down a retreating or rocked opponent and causing maximum damage. On the attack jump up high and target the crown of the head, centre of the face or even the collar bone and let gravity do its thing. This is more powerful than a standing spike elbow as you have the additional body weight falling and gravity pulling you downwards on top of your opponent. When you land you will be at clinching range so be prepared to follow up with close range techniques or engage the clinch to keep control of your opponent and continue your combination. Your distancing and timing will be essential when jumping towards your opponent so you can land your technique exactly where you need to and this comes with lots of drilling and practice.







### **37. SPIN BACK ELBOW**

The spin back elbow is a seriously powerful and dangerous technique. Used at close range, you step your front foot across the centre line, spin and look over your shoulder at your target and then hit with the back of your elbow horizontally across or at 45 degrees downwards. As soon as the elbow lands you can return to stance by spinning all the way through or returning back the way you came. I find the best time to use this technique is when my opponent is pressed up against the cage or backed up onto the ropes where there is no room for them to escape. Make sure you keep your other hand up in your guard, keep good balance and instantly return back to stance after you have thrown it. You can also perform a spin back elbow whilst holding your opponent's leg after catching their kick which is super cool!





### 38. CLINCH ELBOW

This is such a deadly and sneaky little gem that I picked up after watching and training with Paul “Semtex” Daley. When in the clinch with both hands around your opponent’s head, known as the Thai plum, start skip kneeing them full power to the body. As they start to defend by bring their forearms into the middle to create a barrier, bring back your next skip knee, as a fake, and then release one arm from their head and instantly elbow them with that arm. This technique works over and over again and is so simple and catches them out so quickly and easily. To practice this on the punch bag, initiate the clinch, throw 5 skip knees, then on the 6th one fake it and elbow the bag.







### **39. DESTRUCTION ELBOW**

One area of defence against an attacking opponent is called destroying. This means that I will try and destroy the strike my opponent throws, trying to injure or break that body part so that they can't use it again. In this instance, I use the destruction elbow against straight punches towards my head, to break the small bones inside their hand as they punch towards me. If every time my opponent punches and gets met with my solid hard elbow it's going to be causing them damage and making them hesitant to continue punching. You will feel this through 12oz boxing gloves and even worse with 4oz MMA gloves. Hang just outside of their punching reach giving yourself time and space to get destroying. I also like to use a downward spike destructive elbow straight down to break my opponent's toes when they front kick me to the body.





#### **40. PEC DECK ELBOW**

Called the Pec Deck elbow as it uses the exact same motion as the butterfly pectoral machine in the gym. Use this motion alongside good twisting body mechanics to snap the inside of your elbow around the side of their temple whilst keeping your hands up in your guard. This can come over the top of your opponent's guard and even glance off their head whilst still being effective. This elbow can be thrown off both sides but I prefer to throw this off my rear as I find it feels more comfortable than my lead.





## **PUNCHBAGPRO TECHNIQUES 41 – 50: KNEE VARIATIONS**

As with elbows, when throwing your knees, you are aiming to land with the very tip of your knee, as this is the sharpest most solid part. Bring your heel up to your butt and point your toes downwards, striking with the knee cap for straight knees and the inside of the femur when using the inside of the knee. Knees are used at striking distance during combinations and also heavily used in the clinch during Muay Thai, K1 kickboxing and MMA. There are also a whole range of hidden strikes, including knees, which can be used when changing position whilst grappling your opponent on the floor which we will cover another time. Knees can be thrown to the head, body and legs making them a highly successful weapon of choice to use. Each of the ten knees which we will now look at has its own specific use and advantages during a fight.



#### 41. LONG KNEE

The long knee comes off the rear leg, which in my orthodox stance is my right side. When I throw the long knee strike, it travels directly in front of me down the centreline to my opponent's body, face or top of their thigh. I step into range with my front leg whilst driving up onto my toes and the ball of my front foot for extra leverage. My left arm comes across my face or I can keep it on the side of my head for my guard. Whilst doing this I pull my right arm behind me to thrust my hip forwards. Do not simply lift your knee upwards as it will finish in the space between you both and not land on anything. You want to imagine using your long knee as a spear piercing through your opponent and out of their back. As soon as the knee has landed bring it straight back to stance in its original starting position behind you.







## 42. SWITCH KNEE

A switch knee is thrown from the lead front leg in your stance. As you switch your lead leg behind you, your rear leg will travel forwards slightly covering distance and now becoming your front leg for a split second. As the original lead leg reaches its rear position it bounces straight off the floor and travels down the centreline landing on your opponent. As soon as the knee has finished place it down in front of you as this will finish you back in your original stance. You will naturally be closer here than before so be aware of this, due to rear leg moving forwards. Make sure you have the correct guard and arm pull as with the long knee to keep your head protected and spear your hips and knee forwards to generate power. As you switch you can also grab your opponent with your lead hand on top of their head and pull their head downwards and towards your knee for extra damage.





# DIAGONAL KNEE

## EP. 43

### 43. DIAGONAL KNEE

A diagonal knee has the exact same body mechanics as a roundhouse kick, but instead of extending your leg and kicking with the shin, keep your heel tucked in and strike with the knee pointed inwards at 45 degrees. This targets the liver, spleen, ribs and arms of your opponent. Pretty much anything which is on the side of their body can be hit with this technique and it is thrown when you are at close range to your opponent. Trying to throw a roundhouse kick from close range is ineffective and will cause your shin to end up past and behind your opponent. This is where you would exchange the kick for the diagonal knee. For example, you may follow up a right hook to the head with a right diagonal knee to the body when the gap opens up during their hook defence, planting it into their rib section and breaking those bad boys into pieces.







#### 44. PUMP KNEE (MMA)

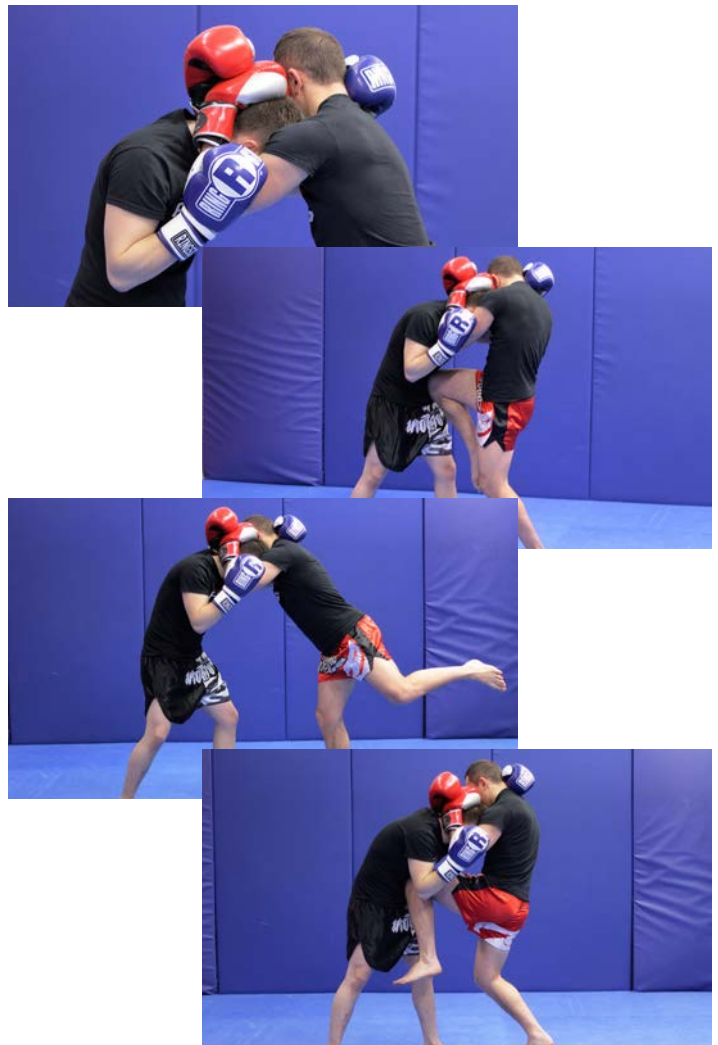
The pump knee is the complete opposite to a long knee in regard to the direction of travel and its body mechanics. With the long knee you are throwing it with full commitment, Muay Thai style, trying to drive through your opponent. The pump knee is used in MMA as a line of defence against an opponent shooting in, preferably for a double leg, trying to grab your legs and finish the takedown. Against an opponent shooting in, if you try and knee them in the face with your hips thrusting forwards you are committing your weight forwards, meaning that they may even get hit with the knee and take it and still continue driving for the takedown. This is where you will use the pump knee instead. The pump knee shoots straight upwards off the rear leg in your MMA stance like a piston directly under your opponent's chin. It is a non-committed movement and as soon as it lands, it returns back to the floor fast, allowing you to move offline with your footwork straight after. The principle here is to not fully commit your knees and hips forwards during a takedown defence but to keep your hips back, your spine arched and pump the knee up and down super speedy.





#### 45. CLINCH / SKIP KNEES

As soon as you lock up a good Thai plum clinch on your opponent's head you want to be repeatedly kneeing and off balancing them with skip knees. Alternate your knees at full speed and power while pushing and pulling your opponent to generate maximum power. You can also double or triple up the knee on the same side to keep your opponent guessing. As your knee starts to wind up by moving backwards you want to push your opponent back with your forearms, then as your knee travels forwards to strike you want to pull them in towards the knee, creating a head-on collision car crash effect where both forces are smashing together. It is very weak to simply hold on to your opponent's head and just try kneeing them. The push pull car crash effect is a good principle to use. To make your opponent suffer even more you want to turn and off-balance them every 2 or 3 knees to disorientate them and make your knees harder to defend as they are being thrown around like a rag doll. I learnt this in Thailand the hard way! A high percentage skip knee combination is to enter the clinch, throw a big knee to the body to fold them over and then bring the second knee up to the head. Check out Alistair Overeem vs. Ewerton Teixeira in the 2009 K1 world GP quarter finals for an unbelievably gruesome skip knee knockout!







#### 46. CLINCH / CURVE KNEE

When clinching, if the centre line is being defended from your skip knees or there is no space to throw them due to you and your opponent being body to body, then curved knees are able to strike your opponent by coming around their sides. Bounce your leg up and out and then use your hip to rotate the knee inwards in a similar motion to a door closing, whilst striking with the inside part of the knee. This knee is also great to use in the 50/50 position in MMA when pressing your opponent up against the cage. When throwing this knee, you are targeting the sides of your opponent's rib cage and the outside of their thighs to deaden their legs. From the Thai plum position, you can also turn their head down to one side to meet your curved knee coming up. Be aware that if you are lifting this knee up high against a skilled opponent, they have the ability to underhook and catch the knee which can then set-up trips and takedowns. Therefore, make sure you start with a good set up before striking with this technique.





## 47. JUMP KNEE

A jump knee has two different uses and two different styles of body mechanics. When your opponent is on the retreat you can run and jump knee towards them with all your body weight flying through the air. More athletic fighters in MMA can be seen sometimes starting with this technique, running across the cage at the start of the fight to close the distance, land a big shot and apply instant pressure to their opponent. Another way is from inside boxing range when you can jump up vertically straight to the sky and land your knee directly under their chin. This is great as from this close range the knee comes under their eye line, out of vision and completely out the blue. You may for example throw a right uppercut, a left hook and then jump straight up and pop the right knee under their chin. The mechanics of a jump knee to generate maximum power can be applied by lifting one leg and switching it mid-air to land the jump knee on the other side, or by squatting down slightly and exploding upwards by jumping with both feet at the same time. I find the switching one works well with my momentum if I'm running towards my opponent and the explosive jump works well starting in at close range. The worst jump knee I have ever seen was watching Michael "Venom" Page jump knee knockout Cyborg at Bellator 158...he cracked the dude's skull!







#### 48. DOUBLE JUMP KNEE

Personally I find the double jump knee is hard to land on its own as a single direct attack as my opponent can simply use good footwork to evade and make it miss. I tend to use this technique during my MMA rounds against a wrestler who is looking for their takedown. As stated previously with the long knee you are committing your hips forwards when you throw it. I therefore use this as a set up. My first knee is a fake to get my opponent bringing down their hands, initiating their takedown and looking to grab my legs. As soon as their guard drops I then follow with the second knee to land on their face. I would recommend landing the double jump knee to the head as you want to knock out your opponent clean as opposed to their body where a well-conditioned athlete will have strong abdominal muscles protecting them here. Saying that a clean double jump knee to the body can generate huge force, cracking their rib cage and knocking the wind out of them by landing it on their solar plexus.





#### **49. ANGLED INSIDE KNEE**

When finishing a combination, I like to angle off to the left or right. With me and my opponent both in orthodox lead and close together, I step my rear leg out to the right to start moving offline at 45 degrees. As my front leg follows I give my opponent an angled knee to the inside of their lead leg thigh as my bodyweight moves across and through them. This is the same target area as an inside leg kick. If you do this hard enough and your opponent's weight is heavy on that leg, you can disrupt their balance and even sweep them to the floor by running through them and taking away this support leg.







## **50. SHIN CHECK TO KNEE**

One option of blocking a low roundhouse kick to your leg is to shin check. This is where I lift my shin to block my opponents leg kick and take the impact bone to bone rather than on my thigh. Ideally I want to point my knee towards their shin to try to break it as the kick comes forwards. As I block the leg kick, my shin is up in the air and my opponents body is exposed down the centreline. As soon as the kick has been blocked I step down and forwards with this leg and follow up with a straight knee strike with my other leg. This means that my knee is already travelling forwards as my opponent's kick is travelling back to stance. This can be performed off either leg and is a great follow up strike after you step down off the block. Whenever you block you want to fire back immediately, otherwise too much blocking and you will turn into a punch bag yourself allowing your opponent to unload combinations on you constantly. For every technique that your opponent throws, you should be aiming to fire back 3-5 moves instantly, finishing the exchanges with your techniques and on your terms.



## **PUNCHBAGPRO TECHNIQUES 51 – 60: FRONT KICK VARIATIONS**

A front kick is a straight kick off the front or rear leg towards your opponent's head, body or legs. You can strike with the ball of your foot or the whole sole of your foot depending on what effect you would like your kick to have. The front kick can be used in three main ways. Firstly, it can be used to stop your opponent moving forwards when they are advancing towards you during their attack. This acts as a solid barrier to stop them in their tracks. Secondly you can use a front kick to push your opponent backwards by blasting it into the centre of their chest and then chasing them down with your combination. Thirdly it's a great technique which can counter a huge number of other techniques. It can be used, for example, to counter a jab by leaning back and striking under your opponent's punching arm. It may be used to counter a roundhouse kick by pushing your opponent off balance in the centre of the chest as their torso squares up before the kick comes around. It can also be used into someone's back when they turn to start a spinning technique to knock them off balance and away from you. This is a technique with a tremendous amount of uses. As well as being used technically, a simple powerful front kick to the head is enough to knock your opponent out. In this section we look at 10 variations of the front kick.





## **51. LEAD LEG FRONT KICK**

The lead leg front kick is the fastest type of front kick, as it travels straight towards your opponent and is already starting closer than your rear leg. Whilst bouncing foot to foot, rock your weight slightly onto the rear leg allowing you to lift your front knee. This is known as the chamber position. Push from the back foot and drive your hips forwards whilst extending the leg and striking with the ball of the foot. You can either keep both hands up on the side of your head, or you can pull the same side arm down behind you on the leg which is kicking, to drive your hips forwards that little bit extra. As soon as the kick has landed, place it exactly back down in front of you and return to your stance.





## **52. REAR LEG FRONT KICK**

Surprisingly you can reach a further distance with your rear leg front kick than you can with your lead leg front kick. This makes it highly deceptive and can catch your opponent even when they may think they are out of range. The reason being is that as the rear leg comes up, you are now supporting yourself with the front leg, allowing your hips to travel forwards more. You can also step your lead leg forwards to generate even more power by moving your body weight forwards as well. The mechanics involve pushing off of the front foot this time, driving your hips forwards and kicking with the ball of the rear foot. Some people like to be up on the ball of the front foot and some prefer to keep the whole foot flat, but you can experiment and find out which works best for you. I find the rear leg front kick is able to generate more power than the lead leg and use this to blast my opponents backwards when landing it on their body, with the similar motion of kicking through a locked door.

As always as soon as the kick has landed I return my foot back to its original position behind me in my stance. A great knockout with this kick was by Anderson Silva against Vitor Belfort at UFC 126. Silva looked low with

his eyes, faking a body kick, and then threw the rear leg front kick straight up through the centre of Belfort's guard, landing on his chin. This is one of many awesome set ups you can use with this technique.







### **53. SWITCH FRONT KICK**

To strike with a switch front kick, switch your stance by bringing your lead leg to the rear and the rear leg to the front. As soon as the lead leg lands behind you, bounce it straight up and strike with the ball of your foot to the head, body or leg. As soon as the kick has landed, place this leg down in front of you. This ensures you finish the technique back in your original stance with the same leg in front. You will find that you can use the switch to cover more distance than the lead leg front kick and the rear leg front kick. This is because as you switch your stance your rear leg moves forwards covering extra ground during the kick. The faster the switch of the feet and the more explosive the bounce of the foot then the more power will be generated. The switch knee and the switch front kick have the same body mechanics.v





#### 54. KARATE SNAP KICK

The snap front kick is Karate based and known as a Mae Geri. When throwing a Muay Thai style front kick you are committing your hips forwards and commonly trying to push your opponent backwards. The Karate snap kick concentrates less on the hip thrust and focuses more on lifting the front or rear knee and snapping the leg out with explosive speed. I like to target my opponent's body with this technique as being hit here feels like a short, sharp, stabbing effect which can cause an instant amount of excruciating pain.







## 55. SWING FRONT KICK

I like to use this front kick variation just as my opponent starts to move forwards into my kicking range. As their body starts to just come towards me for their attack, my rear leg swings straight up to their body, so that they walk on and impale themselves onto my solid straight leg. This stops them dead in their tracks. When lifting your leg, keep it completely straight from start to finish, without bending the knee. This is a great kick which my opponents hardly ever see coming and here's why. The majority of front kicks you learn are taught to lift your knee first, known as the chamber position, and then extend the leg. This involves 2 motions of up and out and lifting your knee may be seen by your opponent if it's not set up correctly. As the swing front kick has a straight leg the whole way up, this makes it very hard to see as the leg travels under your opponent's vision and eye line. There is also no lift of the knee in the chamber position which is commonly expected for a front kick. This is why they end up walking onto it as they start to move forwards. This kick requires precision timing as throwing it half a second early will result in it missing, as your opponent hasn't moved forwards enough. On the other hand, throwing it half a second late will cause it to get jammed up as your opponent has already closed too much of a distance.





## 56. HOPPING FRONT KICK

The hopping front kick allows you to lift your lead leg and then push off the rear foot, hopping forwards a few inches and landing your lead front kick onto your opponent's body. Occasionally your front leg lifts up, maybe as a potential block or fake and sometimes nothing happens. Instead of just lifting the leg and replacing it to the floor, you can hop forwards whenever your lead leg is up, to cover the distance and kick your opponent. This kick is also naturally good at allowing you to move in whilst striking at the same time.







## 57. JUMP FRONT KICK

Become the karate kid with this crane kick. The great advantage of this technique is that it's extremely versatile. You can perform it from kicking range in front of your opponent. You can perform it from starting just out of range and stepping forwards first and then moving into the jump. Or you can even start on the other side of the ring/cage/mat and perform a running jump front kick. These three variations allow the jump front kick to be used at different ranges. The body mechanics can be looked at in two ways. Either you can squat down and explosively jump straight up, kicking with either leg with the ball of your foot. Or the way I prefer is to lift up one knee first and switch it mid-air to front kick with the other leg. This is a similar motion to pedalling on a bike. One of the most awesome jump front kicks I have seen is when Lyoto Machida knocked out Randy Couture at UFC 129. He feinted his rear leg and then came in with the jump front kick off his front leg with perfect distancing, timing and accuracy.





## **58. DOUBLE PUMP FRONT KICK**

When facing a well-conditioned opponent, they will have a good 8 pack of muscle and strong abs of steel. This means that they may be able to take your power front kick with no damage or effect. If this happens you can put your foot straight down to stance, or for this technique, whilst returning the leg back in front to your chamber position with the knee up, fire out a secondary pumping front kick. As they have been hit once they may be caught out with the second kick as they are recovering their breath from the first kick and are also moving forwards onto your kick for a second time. If the second kick still has no effect, then at least the double pump has kept them at good distance and in kicking range, allowing you to then follow with your next shots.







## 59. ANGLED FRONT KICK

As you progress in skill level, you will realise the importance of angling. Angling allows you to strike your opponent with their weapons facing a different direction to where you are, reducing the chances of you being countered. The angled front kick uses footwork based on Kali from Escrima stick fighting in Filipino Martial Arts. Here we are using the female triangle also known as the reverse triangle. Starting at the tip of the triangle you can step along the side of the triangle to create the angle. For example, in orthodox stance I step my rear leg outwards at 45 degrees, moving my body and head off the centreline. Once my foot has landed, I then bring my lead foot up and kick inwards at 45 degrees to my opponent. From their perspective it looks like I am zig-zagging my way forwards instead of travelling straight down the centreline. You can also land the rear leg by stepping out with the lead left leg first and then kicking inwards at 45 degrees with the rear leg. Once you master this footwork you can then start throwing straight punches down the centreline simultaneously to disguise your angled footwork movements.





## 60. JACKO FRONT KICK

Also known as the Michael Jackson front kick due to the outward flick of the foot. Here I am looking for a pattern of defence by my opponent. If I keep throwing my rear low roundhouse kick to the outside of their lead leg and they keep blocking with their shin check then this is a perfect time to use this technique. I will throw two power low kicks realising that they are using the same pattern of defence. On the third kick I will fake the roundhouse kick by initially outward flicking my foot and getting them to react. As soon as they react and lift their leg up to block, I change my direction of travel and turn the round kick flick into a power front kick to the body, as this has now opened up as a big target during their block. This should send them flying back as they are on one leg and will not be able to keep balanced. The kick should be one smooth motion from the round to front. Your best Michael Jackson sound effects are optional.





## **PUNCHBAGPRO TECHNIQUES 61 – 70: ROUNDHOUSE KICK VARIATIONS**

A roundhouse kick is a rotational kick to the side of your opponent. This can be targeted low to deaden your opponent's leg and to cause damage to their knee restricting their movement. It can be targeted up and into their ribcage and internal organs, or horizontally across their arms if their elbows are tucked in, which could break the bones in their arm. Thirdly you can raise the kick up to the head for a knockout catching them clean on the side of the face, or glancing off the top of their temple. You can even lift it up and chop it over their guard, coming downwards into their neck. I like to throw my roundhouse kick in two ways. It can be thrown with the top of the foot as a fast snap kick to precise targets for more of a "point scoring" style kick. Alternatively, a fully committed round kick with full hip rotation swinging in the shin can generate speeds up to 90mph, and has the same effect as being hit by a baseball bat!



### **61. LEAD LEG ROUNDHOUSE KICK**

I often use this as a speed flick kick off my front leg when in orthodox lead. I throw it to the inside of my opponent's thigh and move back out fast to test the range and to annoy them. Getting three or four of these during a round can really agitate your opponent. I also love to use it to the liver as a counter against my opponents right cross. As they throw their cross I rock back just making the punch miss whilst lifting my kick into their exposed mid-section on the same side. Thirdly whilst bouncing foot to foot with good distancing I will flick it up high to catch them in the side of the head to stun them or cause a knockout. I find this kick to the inside of the leg works great when I'm against taller opponents. A great high percentage combo for a shorter fighter against a taller fighter is the left lead inside roundhouse kick, stepping forwards and in and following with a power cross or overhand. Check out the early UFC 68 when Randy Couture opened the round against Tim Sylvia with this combo, sending him crashing back down to the canvas.







## **62. SWITCH ROUNDHOUSE KICK**

The switch roundhouse kick enables you to generate more power on the lead side by switching your stance and explosively bouncing the leg off the floor. In my orthodox stance I begin by switching my lead left leg behind as my rear right leg moves in front. As my left foot lands behind I bounce it off the floor, rotating my right foot, knee and hip. As my left hip swings my shin towards the target, my left arm pulls downwards behind me, thrusting my hip into the kick to allow my body mechanics to flow. Keep your head forwards and your chin down as leaning backwards will cause you to lose energy by not having a compact posture. As the kick lands back in front of you, similar to the switch knee, you will end up closer to your opponent due to your rear leg moving forwards during the switch. For more of a kick and retreat style of switch kick, after the kick lands, place it back behind you and then step your right leg back afterwards, leaving you back in your original stance further away from your opponent.





### **63. POWER REAR LEG ROUNDHOUSE KICK**

This is one of the hardest and most powerful kicks you can throw. In orthodox lead you can step your front foot 45 degrees left as you begin your kick. This offsets your body slightly, allowing your kick to travel through your opponent. If you imagine your foot starts at 0% power and then directly in front of you is 100% power, then this initial step offline ensures that your kick is accelerating and travelling “through” your opponent at around 97%, 98% and then reaching 100%. Rotate on the ball of your front foot turning it outwards as much as possible. This allows your knee and leg to pivot around and starts to engage the turning of your hip. If your foot is flat on the floor you can’t rotate as it gets locked and stuck to the floor. As your hip turns over and your shin swings in, pull your arm on the same side back behind you to thrust your hip forwards even more. Keep the other hand up on the side of your head or move it into the centre to catch and deflect any punches which may be coming down the centre towards your head as a counter. Kick with full aggression, in a 360-degree circle with full commitment, aiming to chop your opponent in half.







## **64. CHOPPING REAR LEG ROUNDHOUSE KICK**

When executing this technique, you want to imagine your shin is an axe chopping down into your opponent's leg which is the base of the tree. This kick is common in Dutch Kickboxing, which uses a flurry of fast punches to knock the opponent off balance and then finishes with hard heavy chopping style low kicks at the end of the combination. This kick doesn't come horizontally, instead your knee comes up and then turns down to the floor, changing the angle to come 45 degrees downwards on top of the outer part of your opponent's thigh. To get even more power, you can jump your weight into it by travelling left and adding gravity into the kick. I have two favourite set ups to land this kick. Firstly, in orthodox stance a left pushing hook to the right side of their head moves all my opponent's weight across and onto their lead left leg. If all their weight is on it then it's impossible to lift that leg and block in that split second and I therefore chop down onto that thigh. Secondly after I land a clean liver shot my body is now primed with the weight on my front leg with tension in my torso. I release the energy by jump stepping out to the left and descending downwards onto their thigh. Try throwing a jab, cross, left liver shot and then the jump chopping round kick to finish and feel the flow. For those of you who are super flexible this chopping motion can also be used to come downwards onto your opponent's neck and collar bone!







## **65. JUMP ROUNDHOUSE KICK**

A jump roundhouse kick is a good fight finisher when your opponent is fading and you can sense you have the advantage. It's extremely powerful and carries lots of body weight as you are flying through the air and connecting all that weight on your shin as it lands. I prefer to jump up explosively from the floor and then rotate and kick with my rear shin as high up as I can possibly go. You can do it on the front leg and I find this faster than the rear as it extends straight out to the target and doesn't require as much hip rotation. Another option of throwing it is to lift up one knee first and then kick with the other leg, similar to the jump knee. This can also be performed on both sides. As soon as the kick hits its target, land on the floor with your feet exactly in your stance with your hands up, ready to follow up if needed. Explosive leg exercises such as jump squats and burpees will increase your kicking power along with good stretching to be able to get that leg up super high.







## **66. DOUBLE FLICK ROUNDHOUSE KICK**

I use this technique to land 2 speed roundhouse kicks in quick succession to different levels on my opponent, without landing my foot in-between. In orthodox stance I will throw my lead roundhouse kick as a speed flick to the inside of my opponent's lead leg. This can either be to land or as a fake. I then lift my leg up to the side of their head and follow with my secondary flick kick. This is more of a half beat and can catch your opponent whilst they are still thinking about the original kick. I tend to use the top of my foot during these kicks and this allows my leg to travel faster, compared to kicking with my shin.





## **67. SHIN DROP ROUNDHOUSE KICK**

This is a rear leg roundhouse kick aimed at the front of the lead leg of an opponent. This works well if your opponent has a wider stance, as their front leg will be out and offer a flat surface area to target. It was taught to me by my coach James Evans-Nicolle and when he landed on me for the very first time I was in absolute agony. Commonly roundhouse kicks attacking the lead leg will land on the sides of the leg with the shin, but this one lands straight across the front of the thigh. To start, begin your roundhouse kick whilst keeping it close to you, and turn your hip over with your shin now between you and your opponent. At the same time as your body weight moves forwards you want to drop your shin downwards onto the front part of their leg. This feels like an iron bar dropping down onto your leg and is so painful when you get it right. Try not to scrape the leg or push down with your shin as this doesn't have anywhere near the same effect. Lift your shin and drop your body weight down, delivering some heavy blunt force trauma on top of their thigh.







## **68. CUT KICK ROUNDHOUSE KICK**

A cut kick is used to sweep the supporting leg of your opponent whilst they are throwing their roundhouse kick at the same time. This kick is easiest to perform against oncoming roundhouse kicks but can also be used against a variety of other kicking techniques. There are also a variety of different cut kicks which you can use but in this case we will be using a roundhouse kick. The easiest cut kick to perform is when my opponent throws a left roundhouse kick to my body or head. As my opponent's leg is up I can then throw my right roundhouse kick underneath to the inside of their support leg, taking away their base and sweeping them to the floor. Alternatively, if my opponent throws their right roundhouse kick I can use my left roundhouse kick to sweep them. To get good power on the sweep you can step inwards as you cut kick to generate more body weight moving forwards, whilst also using your arms to throw them at the same time. The target area on their supporting leg is low down just above the ankle or by the calf as this is where all their weight is based. Kicking too high up the leg will make the cut harder, but not impossible. There are a lot of variations to this technique to explore as well which makes it a great option to countering their kick.





## 69. CHASING ROUNDHOUSE KICK

The chasing roundhouse kick is used to chase down a rocked or retreating opponent. You may have some distance to travel to catch up to them and you can use a variety of different footwork drills to get there. In this instance you want to bounce forwards with both feet whilst keeping in your stance. If my opponent is moving back quick I will often chase them down by bouncing, bouncing and then unloading a killer roundhouse kick as I come off the third bounce. This allows me to generate huge power off my rear leg kick as I have momentum, an explosive bounce and a small jump off the floor at the last second whilst unloading the kick. When throwing this technique, it feels more of a build up to the finish. The first bounce gets me on the chase, the second bounce gets me primed and ready and then the third bounce unleashes the kick. You can adjust the number of bounces depending on the distance. When against an opponent some techniques are used at different times throughout a round. Therefore, I like to throw this kick when they are moving backwards injured, winded or stunned and hunting them down for the finish with 100% commitment and aggressive intent.







## **70. 720 JUMP ROUNDHOUSE KICK**

The 720-jump roundhouse kick is perfect for following up and catching your opponent when they evade your low roundhouse kick by stepping back. The 720 is broken into 3 stages which is the initial kick, the spin and the jump roundhouse kick. In orthodox lead, throw a power rear leg roundhouse kick to the outside of your opponent's lead leg with full commitment. If your opponent evades back, then keep the momentum going and continue the spin the full 360 degrees. As you start coming around, lift up your lead left leg and then jump off the rear leg and kick with the rear shin as it comes up. As you perform the 720 make sure you are travelling forwards during the first spin to cover the distance which your opponent has moved back. This is a cool flashy kick that looks great when it lands and is also a required technique for our students grading for their black belt.



## **PUNCHBAGPRO TECHNIQUES 71 – 80: SIDE KICK VARIATIONS**

A side kick is thrown forwards down the centreline, whilst having your body side on to your opponent. This sideways stance is adopted more from styles such as Kickboxing, Taekwondo and Savate, as this allows excellent use of multiple kicks from the front leg. Whilst having your body turned side on, turn your head to look over your lead shoulder to face your opponent, allowing you to see the target area for your kick. This is a kick which can be used to target your opponent's lead leg, body and head whilst commonly striking with the heel of the foot. A side kick is one of the longest range kicks and allows you to lean your body and head back whilst throwing it to gain full extension of the leg. This is a good point to note compared to a roundhouse kick where your opponent may be able to step in with punches to your head as it is in a closer position due to the mechanics of the kick. There are lots of side kick variations which include the following.





## 71. ROCK BACK SIDE KICK

I use the Rock Back side kick as a counter under my opponent's jab punch. As their jab comes towards me their mid-section opens up exposing their body and ribs. I rock my weight back onto my rear leg allowing my front leg to lift up. As my head leans back just out of range of their punch, I extend my lead leg sideways towards them, striking with the heel and side of my foot into their mid-section. This kick requires good timing and distancing to land effectively when their jabbing arm is reaching its full extension. As my feet do not travel when throwing this technique, as it is a lift and kick, I find it best to use against their initial jab punch. The rock back kick can also be thrown anytime when at kicking range, regardless of whether the jab is coming or not.





## **72. STEP UP SIDEKICK**

The step up side kick allows me to move in and close the distance by stepping up my rear foot to the lead and then blasting out the side kick. To get my kick to land in their mid-section I will throw my jab to my opponent's forehead as my rear leg steps up. This has 2 benefits. Firstly, it disguises my foot work movement as they are being distracted and having to deal with the jab, preferably with a front head block. Secondly as their hands lift to block the jab my feet are already in position to throw the side kick into the gap which has now been created in their body. The jab and side kick have to be thrown within quick succession of each other to give the side kick a good chance of landing. As my jabs are a strong part of my game I find that this is a simple high percentage set up which works really well for me.







### 73. HOPPING SIDE KICK

A hopping side kick is used when you are just out of range of your opponent and neither of you are able to land your techniques. Lift up your lead leg and hop off the rear moving just into kicking range and landing the side kick. This allows your opponent to think that your kick will miss when you lift your leg, but then catch them off position by hopping in and covering a few inches in distance. This technique requires a highly level of distance perception and knowing exactly how far you can extend your leg, allowing you to gage the distance perfectly and land it first time. Start too far out and you will not cover enough distance, and starting too close will mean you will already be able to be hit by your opponent as you are within their striking range.





#### **74. ANGLED SIDE KICK TO LEAD KNEE**

Some techniques such as a body shot will instantly wind you making it hard to breathe for about 15 seconds and then you will be fine straight after. But sometimes you will come across techniques that are just pure nasty and can cause real long term damage to an opponent. This angled side kick is exactly one of those techniques which targets your opponent's lead knee, striking it from the inside or from the outside. Your knee is designed forwards and backwards but not sideways and this is the angle of attack you are aiming for. Using the same footwork as the female triangle from Kali, and the angled front kick, your body will move forwards offline at 45 degrees and then you will sidekick straight through the side of their knee. This technique unloads a ridiculous amount of power which could snap, dislocate and cause major long term damage to the knee ligaments.







## 75. JUMP / RUNNING JUMP

A jump side kick can be thrown at kicking range by jumping up with both legs, tucking in the rear leg and extending out the lead leg to strike your opponent. I much prefer to perform the jump side kick as a running jump side kick as this is an unorthodox technique and is hard to defend against. When competing in fights I would suggest keeping your techniques simple with low risk, but for those who like to be flashier this is great technique to use as an initial opening move of the fight, to close the distance and pressure your opponent instantly. To watch a running jump side kick in action, check out Fabricio Werdum vs Travis Browne at UFC 203 where Fabricio pulled off a jump side kick to the neck as his first move!





## **76. X STEP SIDE KICK**

The cross-step side kick allows you to cover a huge amount of distance, landing, in my opinion, one of the hardest side kicks possible. This is a classic Bruce Lee style side kick. The technique requires your body weight to travel with a fluid momentum through your footwork, releasing massive amounts of energy as a big side kick on the end. To start the technique, step your lead leg forwards, as it lands, cross your rear foot behind your lead to make it your front for a split second, as you keep the momentum going lift up the other foot once again and power through with a side kick. The name of this kick is given due to crossing nature of your footwork. As a beginner you are taught not to cross your feet, but as you advance your skills you will find techniques and situations where the rules can be modified and adapted.







## 77. JUMP SPIN SIDE

A jump spin side kick is a powerful kick which I like to throw from my rear leg. A spin side kick can be executed in two ways. Firstly, starting side on, bend both legs and explosive jump into the air, spin 180 degrees looking over your shoulder towards the target, then side kick off your rear leg and land back into your stance. Alternatively, you can step your lead leg across the centre line first and then jump up and perform the spin side kick. This way requires less of a spin in the air as your body has already started turning. To land a spin side kick I will bait my opponent to throw a cross, or time their cross punch and then jump spin side kick into their liver with my heel as their rib section opens up. An important point to remember is that even though your body is spinning, the side kick travels in a straight line towards your opponent down the centre. Power is generated through centrifugal force of your body mechanics rotating and directing the side kick outwards.





## 78. CHASSE LATERAL

This kick is from Savate and uses different mechanics than a traditional step up side kick. The chasse lateral has more of a circling motion with the leg and hip, lifting the lead or rear knee up high to the opposite shoulder, and bouncing in slightly whilst extending out the kicking leg. This extra lift and circling motion allows the leg to generate circular power. I often use this side kick variation to attack the top of the thigh of my opponent's lead leg, coming 45 degrees downwards on top of it with the heel of my rear leg, which is often unexpected.







## 79. STOMP / OBLIQUE KICK

A stomp kick is used with the foot pointing outwards, leaning your body weight back and extending out the heel of the foot to your opponent's lead thigh or knee. If their lead leg is bent you can strike downwards onto the top surface of their thigh, but if their leg is straight and they are standing tall then the stomp kick can blast straight through their knee cap. The knee doesn't bend backwards so major force striking the knee inwards on itself will cause it to break and snap with heavy internal damage. The stomp kick can also be used to trap or stall an advancing opponent by stopping their lead leg as it begins to move forwards towards you. Jon Jones has been seen using this kick to his advantage in the UFC with his long powerful legs, to frustrate his opponents, hyper extend their knee and keep them at distance.





## **80. MISSED ROUND KICK FOLLOW UP SIDE KICK**

This technique is part of our kicking fakes in our kickboxing syllabus and allows you to land a perfect side kick off a missed roundhouse kick. Sometimes when you fully commit a roundhouse kick off the rear leg and miss you can pull your leg back and return to stance. Other times you may wish to spin all the way through doing a complete 360 and then returning to stance. This set up is where you end up half way between these two options looking out of position and unable to attack. But due to the way your body is positioned your missed leg is able to perfectly pop up and execute a side kick as your opponent tries to move in and capitalise on what they thought was your mistake. This is a great set up to use that works really well for me.





## **PUNCHBAGPRO TECHNIQUES 81 – 85: SPIN TECHNIQUES VARIATIONS**

A spinning technique involves the striker rotating 360 degrees in a full circular motion, throwing the technique with full speed and power whilst landing back in their stance with perfect balance and composure. You must land your spin technique with perfect precision otherwise you will become off balance and out of position, allowing your opponent to capitalise on your mistake instantly. In my opinion a perfect example of this is during the Chris Weidman vs Luke Rockhold fight at UFC 194 where Chris threw a poorly executed spin heel kick, which allowed Luke to close the distance and get a takedown, completely changing the dynamics of the fight leading to a victory for Luke. Power is generated through centrifugal force by spinning around the body's vertical axis, along with having a strong core. There are hundreds of spectacular spinning technique knockouts due to their immense amount of power and highlight reel aspirations. These techniques keep you on the floor but the more advanced you become the more options you have leading into jump spinning techniques as well. A well-practiced spinning technique can be deadly in battle so let's look at five variations to use.



## **81. SPIN BACKFIST**

When using the spin backfist you can strike with your thumb horizontal landing the side of your fist, or you can have your thumb up which will let your knuckles land. I prefer the side of my fist as there is less padding here, compared to the knuckles, which will result in causing more damage to my opponent. You can also use this technique to the body if they are blocking the side of their head and also spin and let the back of the fist come up vertically, with the thumb downwards to the floor, rising up and hitting them between their guard and under their chin. One of my students became really good at throwing a jump spin backfist which is also another cool variation. The best spin backfist I ever saw was watching my good friend Rob Maynard during one of his cage fights. He was losing the first two and a half rounds of the fight and with the last 30 seconds to go he threw a lazy left hook which missed and started his spin. His opponent leant forwards for a big cross counter but Rob continued the spin into a full 360 and unloaded the spin backfist to the guy's head. It sounded like a glass window smashing and it knocked the guy clean out cold along with breaking his jaw. When landing this technique, you have the option to spin all the way through or return back the same way you came after it has landed.







## **82. SPIN SIDE KICK**

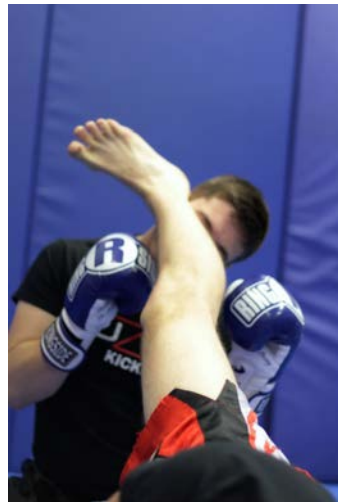
If you start in your stance facing your opponent with yours and your opponent's feet position along the same train tracks, and throw the spin side kick, it will miss and travel just next to their body. This is because the rear leg moves offline as the kick comes around. To land the kick perfectly you initially need to step your lead leg across your centreline and begin the spin, this then aligns your rear leg to come straight down the centre to land on your opponent. Even though this is called a spin kick it is more of a back kick. Your front foot steps across, you look over your shoulder at the target and then you kick straight backwards, similar to a donkey kick. After the kick lands you can spin back the way you came or carry on through back to stance. I like to bait my opponent to throw their cross and as it comes towards my head I shoulder roll back making it miss, start the spin and land my heel straight into their liver.





### 83. SPIN HEEL / HOOK

The spin heel kick and the spin hook kick are two different kicks. With the spin heel kick your body rotates and the leg comes around in a full 360 motion, striking with the heel and keeping the leg straight throughout. A spin hook kick has the same start but just before it lands you bend your leg by pulling your heel inwards resulting in a hooking motion on the end. Personally I have found that the spin heel kick works well glancing across the side of their head and temple, where the spin hook kick can come downwards over the top of the guard in more of a chopping fashion. When rotating, imagine a pole going through the top of your head and down to the floor and spin around this. As soon as your head starts leaning or body starts losing balance you will begin to fall off to one side. The perfect kick gets thrown and then you land exactly back in your stance ready to strike again, no reshuffling of the feet should be necessary. The trick to setting up this kick is to get your opponent moving into the directional path of the kick. Two epic knockouts using this kick are Vitor Belfort vs Luke Rockhold and Edson Barboza vs Terry Etim. These are definitely worth watching for the highlight reel finish.

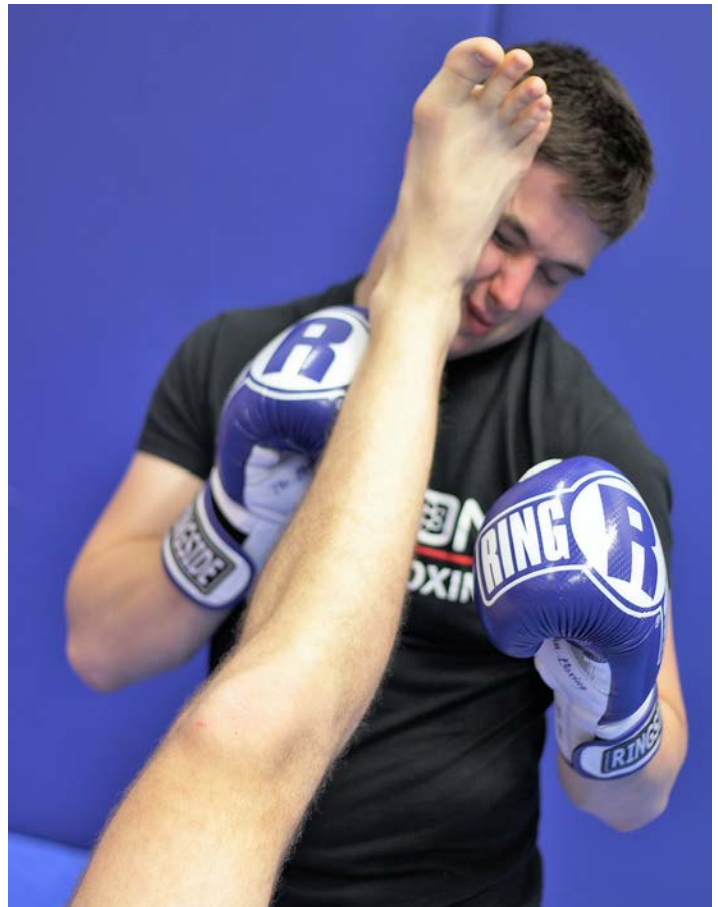






#### **84. SPIN CRESCENT**

A spin crescent kick starts by stepping the lead foot across the centreline, rotating whilst looking over the shoulder at your target. Keep your toes pointing up to the ceiling and strike with the outside blade of the foot to the side of your opponent's head. You can also do a cheeky inside flick crescent kick off the rear leg to the inside of your opponent's thigh to disrupt their timing and annoy them. Another great use of a normal crescent kick is to lift up and hook onto your opponent's guard if their arms are slightly outwards from their head, dragging down their arm and leaving an opening for a punch follow up. For example, I may use my lead crescent kick to pull down my opponent's jab hand and then follow with a power cross as their guard drops.





## **85. DRAGON TAIL**

The dragon tail is a sweeping technique designed to cut kick your opponent's support leg when they throw a high roundhouse kick. As their rear roundhouse kick progresses up to my head, I lower my level to the floor and support my spinning weight with my hand. I then spin my heel around the floor to take away my opponent's support leg by striking across their ankle or lower calf. This is a high risk move but will flip your opponent head over heels, sending them crashing to the floor if executed perfectly. I would suggest only doing it against high kicks allowing yourself enough time and space to drop low and execute the spin. It's called a dragon tail as the spinning sweep of the leg whips around behind you with tremendous speed and force targeting their support leg. One of my sparring partners Martin Lowe used to catch everyone in the gym with this technique, plus he was an athletic heavyweight, so you can imagine the power generated when chopping away his partner's leg. People were flying left right and centre!





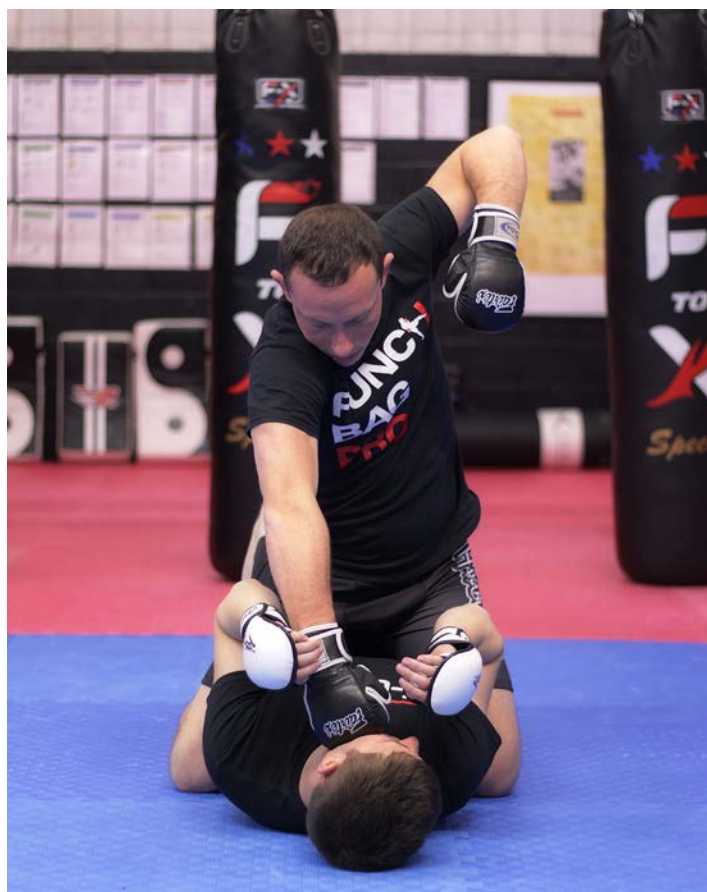
## **PUNCHBAGPRO TECHNIQUES 86 – 90: MMA GROUND BAG**

In this section we look at the MMA ground bag for striking from a top position. It is not enough to simply throw wild shots when trying to ground and pound an opponent, but more the case of securing a position and then executing precise powerful strikes to cause a knockout or stoppage. With good technique, you are able to land extremely powerful blows with maximum force whilst maintaining good balance and position. The worst thing to happen is to be in mount, throw a big elbow and lose your balance, allowing your opponent to escape from underneath. When a perfect strike lands on your opponent you are ideally looking for a clean connection or for their head to bounce off the canvas and cause a knockout.



## 86. HIGH ELBOW JAB CROSS

Being mounted on an opponent in MMA is one of the best hierarchical positions to be in. Here you can unload your strikes by dropping bombs onto them, ideally landing a clean power shot to their head or bouncing the back of their skull off the canvas to knock them out. You can utilise a range of strikes from this position and you need to make sure that you are maximising your power when throwing them. Two or three full power connections will be much more damaging than say five or six softer glancing blows. Lift up your jabs and crosses high with your elbows up above your shoulders, with a slight lift of the hips and then drop your weight and punch through your opponent's face to the floor. This is a similar motion to front crawling whilst swimming. This will generate huge power compared to throwing short punches from in front of your chest. Be aware of your balance, base and posture as this needs to be understood to stop yourself being bridged off or falling out of position. I find the best way to unload my punches is to keep my body weight low with a good stable base and then pop up throwing a blast of shots and then settling back down into control. You can also double or triple up on the same hand if needed.







## **87. HAMMERFISTS**

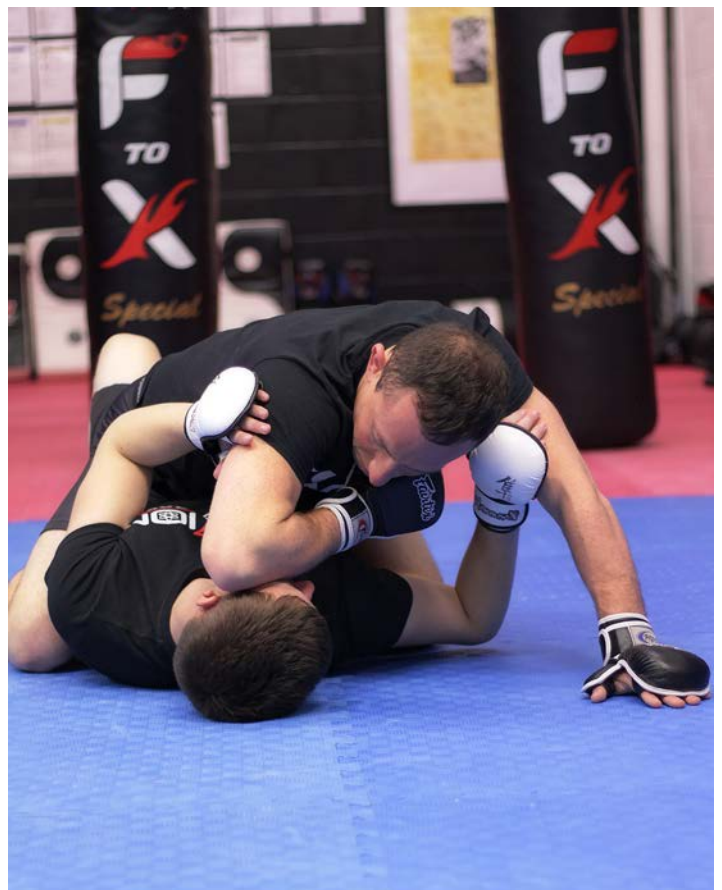
A hammerfist feels totally different to a punch. The reason being is that when a glove is designed it has all the padding across the front of the knuckles to protect this area of the hand. Even in 4oz MMA gloves the padding is situated on the front. Therefore, when you make a fist and strike downwards with the side of the hand, there is literally zero padding here, making the impact more dense and compact like the blunt force end of a hammer. This is a perfectly legal shot in MMA which can be used best from a wide variety of top controlling positions such as mount, side control and half guard. When throwing the hammerfist, leave your arm as loose as possible whilst whipping it up in the air. On the way down clench the fist at the point of impact to make it as solid as a rock. If you keep the arm muscles engaged and tensed throughout the strike, then your arm stiffens up which reduces the power. The great benefit with this technique is that it can be thrown on the same arm repeatedly with extreme speed causing massive damage in a short space of time.





## **88. POST AND ELBOW**

As with punches, elbows can also be thrown from a vast range of positions with different angles of the strike. Here we are looking at striking with the elbow from the mount position either horizontally or 45 degrees downwards to your opponent's face. Compared to punches, when throwing elbows, they have to travel a further distance, so you have to arch your body more and bend lower to reach your opponent's head. Throwing this full power from up high and potentially missing can put you way off to the side, out of position and maybe allow your opponent to roll you over and escape. Therefore, I like to post one arm out to the side of my opponent's head for support and then start to bury away with my elbows on the other arm, striking with the razor tip at full power. This will open up cuts on my opponent's face and even has enough power to fracture and crack their facial skull features. Whilst grappling, I always remember to be aware of my opponent trying to attack or grab my posted arm at all times.







## **89. HULK SMASH**

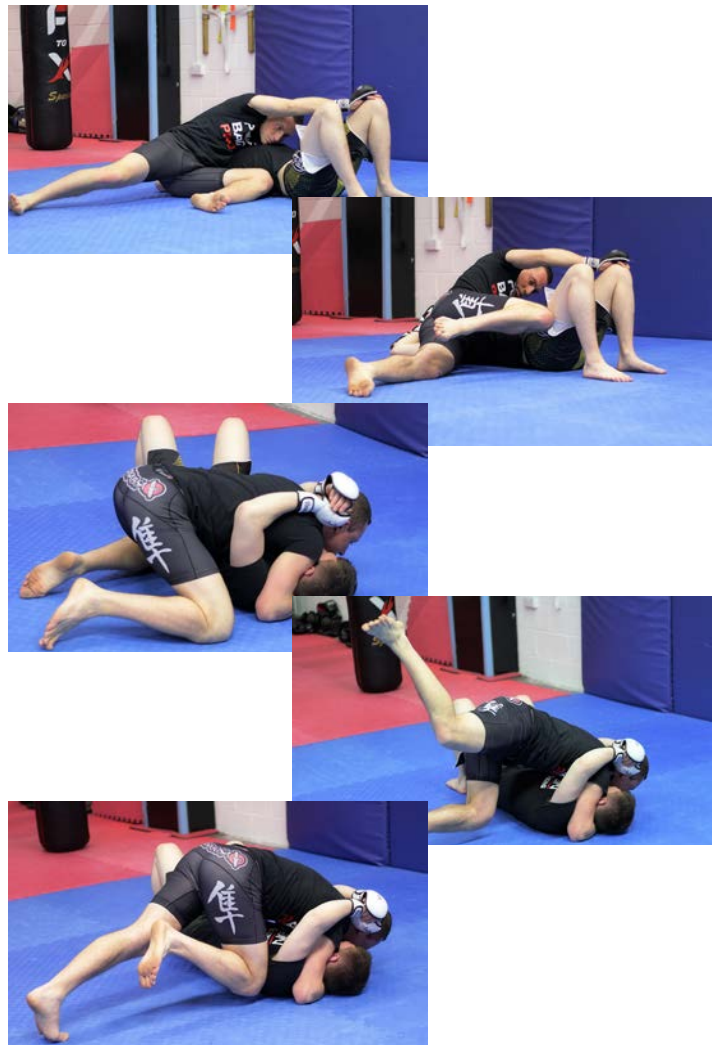
When you are in mount position you have different options. You may look for a submission, change position or engage in ground and pound striking. When starting to strike, your opponent will either defend the strikes or look to escape. The most common defence for them to block the strikes is a front head block where they place both hands on the back of their crown and protect their face with their forearms. This will allow them to ride some of your shots for a few seconds. If you are finding that their guard is pretty tight and you can't seem to get any shots through, then the hulk smash is a great technique to use now. Lift up both arms as a double hammerfist and accelerate downwards with gravity smashing their forearms on their blocked head. This generates enough power to disorientate and rattle their brain, making them dizzy, weakening their guard and allowing you to follow on with more strikes. Doubling up with the hulk smash is an even more powerful feeling, like a sledgehammer to the head causing double the damage!





## 90. SPEAR KNEE

The spear knee is used when I am on top and in side control on my opponent. Side control has lots of variations and can be modified depending on how you need to control your opponent at a particular time. You can pop up with one arm controlling your opponent's body and one arm near their head, raise up your knee behind you and drive it down into the side of their body or head. You can also spear knee in a modified side control position where I am facing down my opponent's body towards their legs. As their near leg is up defending me from getting the mount, I can quickly switch my legs, delivering a spear knee into the side of the thigh or hip. After spearing in this knee they begin to react and hide their leg allowing me to get mount much easier. Whilst striking during grappling you will find different times when a knee can be used to spear into your opponent. This works well as striking distracts them from your next move due to their brain registering the strike and their body feeling instant amounts of large pain. A good quote to remember is position before submission, meaning get control of your opponent before attempting a submission. Whilst controlling your first, then you can begin to work your ground and pound striking.





## **PUNCHBAGPRO TECHNIQUES 90 – 100: SUPER MOVES**

This section looks at ten super moves which are extremely cool and fun to use. I have picked up these techniques over my years of training and have added them into my striking game. As with all the previous techniques, these have been taken from martial arts legends and instructors who I have watched and trained with. These super moves can be used as untraditional attacks allowing you to pull off a spectacular fight finisher against your opponent.



## **91. AXE KICK**

By lifting your straight leg high into the sky you can pull it downwards striking with the heel on top of your opponent's skull, into their face, onto their collar bone, into their chest or on top of their thigh. This is called an axe kick and is the same motion of lifting up an axe and chopping downwards straight in front of you onto a piece of wood. You can lift either leg, inside and up and into the centre or outside and up and into the centre. I prefer to axe kick bringing my leg outside to in, making it harder to spot by my opponent, as it comes outside the wide angle of their peripheral vision. Andy Hug is by far the best axe kicker to have ever lived and his kicks are incredible to watch.







## **92. HAMMERFISTS + BACKFISTS**

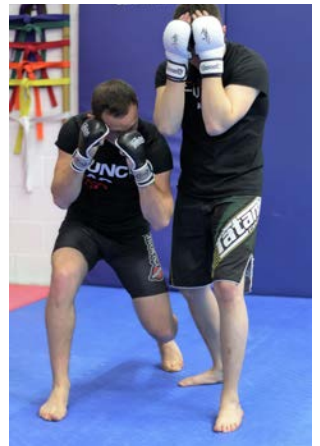
Stand up Hammerfists and backfists are great to use in combination with each other to smash through an opponent's guard. They can be used individually mainly for MMA striking but they do flow really nicely together when linked. If my opponent's hands are up in a tight guard I will throw my backfist to clear their arm and follow with my hammerfist on the other hand into the gap which has just been created. This can be repeated on the other side aswell or even linked together to make a 4-punch cross diagonal striking combination, for example left backfist right hammerfist, right backfist left hammerfist. This flow is part of one of our grading syllabus drills known as the 25 punches which looks at different punch strikes and different targets to attack. Another great time to use a back fist is off a missed hook. Anytime your hook misses and goes past the centreline, you can instantly fire in back with a backfist. This is a quick follow up technique which will catch your opponent by surprise.





### 93. BODY SHOT FROM HELL

I recently attended one of Erik Paulson's seminars here in the UK which was absolutely fantastic as always. Erik is a worldwide legend and is one of my coach's coaches, so training with him is an opportunity never to be missed. Sometimes you learn so much during a seminar it's hard to remember everything, but as soon as he showed me this technique I instantly loved it and started to use it straight away. I've called it the body shot from hell and it comes from one of Erik's students which he had in his CSW gym in California. This tiny guy was dropping big heavyweights with this ridiculously powerful body shot. To execute this technique, you need to get next to your opponent, so step your lead foot forwards whilst bringing the rear foot up to just behind the front foot and rotate your body 180 degrees to face the same direction as your opponent. Ensure your weight is lowered into your legs, with your left shoulder being next to their right. Rotate through their solar plexus 180 degrees and rip a right hook body shot through their body and out their spine, facing the other direction to them when you finish. When you get the hang of the fluid footwork and power body mechanics this is without doubt a body shot from hell which will drop anyone!







## 94. DOUBLE PUNCH

Double striking is a massive area to explore as part of your offensive attacks. It essentially means throwing two techniques at once with the intention of my opponent potentially blocking one strike, therefore landing the other strike. In this instance in orthodox stance, my body dips forward to the right with my jab hand punching towards their head and my cross hand punching low towards their body. Obviously be careful at all times as with both hands leaving your head you have no defence to protect against any counters so timing of this technique is essential. An example of another double strike which you can do is by throwing the right cross and right low kick simultaneously. This is because both involve the same body mechanics and can therefore be thrown at the same time.





## 95. ROUNDHOUSE FROM THE FLOOR

When you have been knocked onto the floor you can still strike your opponent with a selection of damaging kicks. One of these kicks is the roundhouse kick from the floor and the look on your opponent's face when it lands is priceless as they never expect to be hit by it. First you must be in the technical get up position. Instead of standing straight up in front of your opponent where they can unload more strikes on you, you need to get up safely whilst protecting yourself and creating distance between you and them.

This is called a technical get up and is where you sit up onto your right butt cheek and grab your crown with your left arm which begins to protect your head. Base your right arm on the floor along with your left foot and lift your butt off the floor. Finally slide your right leg between the gap in the middle, shuffling back up to your feet and getting straight into your stance. This is one of the safest ways to get up from the floor.

Whilst on the floor and in the technical get up position, you can switch onto the left butt cheek, protect your head with your right arm and post your left arm on the

floor. As your momentum changes sides throw a high roundhouse kick off your right leg to your opponent's head, smacking them in the side of their face and keep spinning around to get back onto your feet. This works nicely if your opponent's head is leaning forwards when they are trying to gain control of your ankles and looking to pass your guard.







## **96. DOUBLE LEG TAKEDOWN**

Having a good double leg takedown will give you the ability to take your opponent down by dumping them onto the floor. A good wrestler can control a fight by deciding whether to keep the fight standing or take it down the ground. Double legs have so many options once you have gained entry to your opponent's legs as you can lift them up and dump them, cut the corner for a quick takedown or even add in trips. The double leg can also transition into different takedowns so whilst training MMA rounds be sure to add it in, by visualising or shooting in to the bag and lifting and driving for the finish. This then allows you to move on to the ground bag and work your grappling, submissions and ground and pound. To start a double leg, I need my opponent to be on the end of my punch range, so I test the distance by throwing my jab and landing it on their face. I then lower my level as if I'm tying my front shoe lace and take a penetration step on my lead leg between my opponent's legs. My arms stay tight in close like a t-rex to prevent my opponent getting their arms under mine and defending. As my penetration step lands my lead knee drops 45 degrees forwards to the floor behind my opponent, as my shoulder drives into their body, folding them over and

onto me. My rear leg steps up getting my hips under them and allowing me to power drive them over to finish. The double leg can be performed by dropping to one knee, or keeping both feet standing or any other variations which you like. I have had the pleasure of being double legged by the English Olympic wrestler Michael Grundy when training with him during a seminar. His shot was faster than a bullet and before I could even think about defending I was 6ft up in the air. Fighting against good wrestlers is a tough business.





## 97. MEIA LUA DE COMPASSO

This is one of the more advanced and complex techniques from Capoeira allowing you to raise your kick up higher than usual due to the angle of your body. Capoeira is a flowing Brazilian martial art which combines elements of dance, acrobatics and music which focuses more on kicks, sweeps and performing takedowns. In orthodox lead I spin to my right whilst turning down to the floor and supporting myself with my left hand. This support is more of a bounce touch as you are rotating around fast so won't have it on the floor for more than half a second. As your body comes around throw a spinning heel kick off the rear right leg in a full 360-degree motion. As the leg lands onto your opponent keep spinning through and return back to your original stance.







## 98. GSP JAB

The GSP jab comes from George Saint Pierre, the three-time former welterweight champion of the UFC. This is essentially a superman punch (jump cross) performed off the jab hand. This is great to use to close the distance whilst also working off fakes by lifting up the front knee. To begin, lift up your lead knee and push off your rear foot whilst switching this leg in front of you. As this rear leg is switching forwards, throw your jab straight down the centre to your opponent's face, then bring your lead leg down to land back in front into your stance. Let your feet glide just above the floor whilst travelling rather than jumping up high. This will make your GSP jab faster, more direct and harder to see coming. A great combo which flows really nicely against a backwards retreating opponent is to throw the GSP jab, a right over hand and then the left high roundhouse kick to finish. The techniques and footwork flow very smoothly together which is exactly what you want when moving forwards and attacking.





## 99. WALL JUMP

It is perfectly legal to jump off the cage wall and follow with an attack on your opponent. This was seen by Anthony Pettis when he performed his unique show-time kick by jumping off the cage wall, flying through the air and kicking his opponent in the jaw and dropping him to the canvas. When performing a wall jump you need to ensure your opponent is relatively close to the wall as too far and you will be overstretching on your techniques. Take a short accelerating run up and you can either bounce off the wall with one foot or step first and jump off the wall with the second step. You can then follow up with punches, elbows, knees and kicks by flying towards your opponent with your chosen technique. You can be really creative here and pull off some incredible ninja matrix skills!







## 100. SAENCHAI KICK

The Saenchai kick is one of his patent moves involving a totally extreme roundhouse kick. This is performed in a cartwheel manner by placing one hand on the floor, supporting your weight with a handstand and kicking with the opposite leg to their head. This kick can be completed striking in front of your opponent or from a counter after catching your opponent's leg. Power is generated by stepping `off to the side first, diving down to the handstand position and kicking downwards in a cartwheel action with gravity pulling your shin downwards onto their head. As soon as the kick has landed finish back in your stance by landing with the rear striking leg or your other leg.





## SUMMARY

To have the most rewarding training session on your punchbag, you need the following:

- A safe training environment.
- A chosen style of bag such as the heavy bag, tear drop bag, spar bar...
- The correct training gear and equipment.
- A well formulated and structured training program to achieve your goals.
- A focused mindset.
- A variety of skills and techniques.
- Excellent training instruction.
- The fitness and conditioning to get you through the rounds.

Get this checklist right and you will find yourself improving rapidly during each session when you train on your punch bag.

So now you have to get on your bag and get training these techniques. Once you have mastered them add them into your striking game applying them against a skilled resisting opponent.

If you want any more information about training on your punch bag for fitness and martial arts, then please check out my website [www.punchbagpro.com](http://www.punchbagpro.com) which contains lots of great content.

**Train hard, train smart and train every day.**

**Love, respect and peace.**

**Richard Baskin** - *Fuzion Kickboxing Academy Head Coach*

If you have any questions about this book or punch bag training in general, you can contact me:

[www.punchbagpro.com](http://www.punchbagpro.com)



## RECOMMENDED WEBSITES

[www.punchbagpro.com](http://www.punchbagpro.com)

My personal punch bag training site, which covers essential punch bag drills for fitness and Mixed Martial Arts.

[www.ufc.com](http://www.ufc.com)

The best mma promotion in the universe

[www.sherdog.com](http://www.sherdog.com)

For the latest mixed martial arts news and interviews

[www.cagewarriors.com](http://www.cagewarriors.com)

A forum to keep up to date with the latest info for U.K. MMA

[www.blitzsport.com](http://www.blitzsport.com)

U.K. store for a variety of martial arts products

[www.fuzionkickboxingacademy](http://www.fuzionkickboxingacademy)

My martial arts academy where the door is always open for you to come and train with me.

[www.erikpaulson.com](http://www.erikpaulson.com)

A martial arts legend providing world class teaching

[www.muaythaistuff.com](http://www.muaythaistuff.com)

A great store for equipment



The **ULTIMATE** guide to training on your punch bag  
by *Richard Baskin* of

**WWW.PUNCHBAGPRO.COM**

Successful coach and MMA champion **Richard Baskin** shares his **100 Essential Punch Bag Techniques** that you need to know right now. These techniques have been successfully tried and tested in sparring, the ring and the cage and can be instantly added into your punch bag training and striking game.

This book guides you from solid fundamental techniques through to advanced technique variations, from the untrained novice who likes to train at their local gym, to a successful martial arts fighter looking to outsmart their opponent.

*If you train on a punch bag you need this book.*

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