

# **Battle Master**

Drills for Practical Self-Defense



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This book is intended to assist experienced martial artists in their training. The drills and techniques listed here are potentially dangerous. Great care must be taken when training in any martial art and special care is necessary when training these particular drills. The author and publisher are not responsible for any harm inflicted by training these drills.

This book is dedicated to:

Dan Inosanto for showing me the power of knowledge,

Paul Vunak for showing me the power of experience,

Professor Wally Jay for showing me the power of a gentler spirit,

and Graciella Casillas for showing me the power of a mean right hand.

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## **Introduction**

The expression “fish out of water” conjures up images of a panting, glazed-eyed trout ready to expire with only a feeble flip or two of fight left in him. In fact, his only fight was to keep himself in the water. Once out, he is dead. Too often, a martial artist faces a street-fighter and finds himself out-punched, out-kicked and beaten to the ground. He is also “out of his element” because he may have only trained in one range, or with unrealistic rules. This book is written to help you train in all elements, it is meant to open up training practices that could save your life. The least that you can gain is an understanding of the ways that a martial artist can train for realistic situations.



**People are faced with some tough situations.**

All styles claim to train a martial artist against an attack “in the street.” This expression is heard in all dojos and training halls in every country in the world. All instructors want to prepare their students for a “street” fight, and all instructors have methods for providing their students with the necessary protection. The total truth is that most training halls offer pieces of good information without training in the element of a real fight. Reality training is nothing more than taking your existing drills and modifying them to reflect the reality of a “street” battle. You might also want to add some drills which stress a range or type of contact that you are unfamiliar with to make yourself a more complete fighter.

There are several types of drills done in the training hall to make a martial artist more proficient in fighting. They can be generally placed into several categories such as; art and form enhancement (kata), form enhancement (kick/punch in air), or basic self-defense (defense and attack with partner remaining stationary). These types of drills are common in many schools but there are some drills done in schools that more closely mimic the energy and response seen in actual attacks. You must try these drills to “get the feel” of being attacked. The drills outlined here are some of the most important drills for fighting. Most of them will be drills that should be trained with a partner. They are; attribute enhancement, sparring, weapons drills, multiple attack drills, and attitude modification.

Attribute enhancement takes a talent that you already possess and makes it better. For training purposes, we will concentrate on those attributes that affect the outcome of a fight; speed, strength, sensitivity and conditioning. Response drills are used to increase speed and are sometimes called one-step sparring. They take an attack and defend against it, sometimes with a counter. Strength is required in any physical contest but the strength required to move your opponent around is slightly different and can be trained

readily. Precision is a very important characteristic, though not stressed in most schools. It can make the difference in a fight by helping you hit where you aim. Sensitivity is the way that you “feel” your opponent striking and moving. This attribute is invaluable in striking your opponent while protecting yourself. Conditioning should be trained along with the other attributes to give you enough energy to stay in the fight.

Sparring is done in most martial arts schools, but in various ways and with various rules. We will go into detail regarding sparring with reality in mind. By adding permissible strikes (such as groin and kidney strikes) and training carefully, you can boost your defense and make yourself a versatile fighter.

Weapons training will be shown that reflects actual assault statistics and modes of attack. Real multiple opponent drills can be shown with and without timing but including effective striking. Finally, a method of enhancing your awareness will be illustrated along with a way of making your attacks more aggressive by the proper mental preparation.

Remember, when you are training with a partner, to always go 100%. If you don't train hard in your school, you won't be able to defend yourself in battle. Challenge yourself to be the best that you can. Set yourself up to fail and then conquer yourself by winning. This is the only way to train.



## Reality

Street fights (or bar fights) fall generally into three categories; fights involving two good fighters, fights where neither person knows how to fight, and fights where one is an experienced fighter. If two fighters start to go at it, you will see almost immediately if one or the other has some training or experience. The inexperienced fighters can sometimes damage each other, but the most common injury would be a bruise or two (or maybe a broken nose). The experienced fighter, however, can damage his opponent in almost any way. He can kick knees, gouge eyes, bruise ribs and knee groins. The best thing that he does is to hit his opponent without getting hit. The most unusual thing about a fight



**You may be off balance ...**



**or hit with unusual weapons.**

with an experience fighter is that it is over quickly. The average fight between inexperienced fighters can last from one to five minutes with neither combatant causing any serious harm. The streetfighter that knows his business, however, usually ends the fight in the first 10 seconds. He puts his opponent out of the fight and makes sure he stays out.

A practiced streetfighter uses any method to win. His only goal is to have his opponent down on the ground and helpless. If an experienced

fighter can see his combatant, then he usually can remain standing and knock the fight out of him. Inexperienced fighters, however, often end up on the ground together, wrestling and pushing until one is on top or the other has escaped. Occasionally, an experienced fighter can be taken to the ground by his combatant. Some assailants feel very comfortable with ground fighting (like a wrestler) and some others can just overpower you. If you have no experience in ground fighting (or fighting in another specific range), then you need to train yourself for this area.

Reality is a common denominator of martial arts. Almost all martial artists know what happens in a fight, they just may not train properly for it. You need to train yourself to handle any situation. You need to beat the streetfighter at his own game. You need to hit and not get hit. You need to fight at whatever level and whatever range your opponent may force you into. You need to control the fight when you can. You need to win by any means and at his expense.

## **Offensive Levels of Combat**

When a woman cuts you off in traffic, you generally don't get out of the car and drag her out to the street for a beating. You know that there is a level of aggression that you must choose when you are attacked in any way. The law also has guidelines set, specifically for "deadly force". Deadly force is the right of the people to kill their attacker in defense of certain crimes, and those crimes vary in each state. You should learn the crimes that can be defended with deadly force in your state. You may be surprised. The woman who has cut you off in traffic is not attempting to hurt you, or kill you. She has accidentally attacked you without aggression and the level of danger to you may have been small. Your response to her could be anger, but not violent blows.

When a mugger holds a gun to your head, demands your money, and then laughs and acts as if he will kill you anyway, this is real life-threatening aggression. The level of danger to you is quite high. Depending on the law, your defense to him (if you choose to defend yourself) should be as if you were going to die. He should be destroyed completely. Somewhere between these two examples lies your response to every other attacker, streetfighter, drunken bum, outraged man, and traffic offender. You need to suit your response to their attack.

In most schools, the response for every attack is violent. Most schools perform a strict set of self-defense maneuvers which defend by striking with an elbow, knee or punch, whatever the circumstance. The attack could be either a lapel grab or a choke, but the attacker still gets mangled with a punch and a kick. In some soft-style schools, on the other hand, there is so much unity that a serious life-threatening situation is often not trained for

aggressively. Blending and flowing in their defenses, these schools often don't train with boxers who can really hit. The answer to this problem lies in the combining of both systems and the philosophy of levels of offense.

**You have many choices when attacked**



**You can choose a softer, controlling type response**



**or you can strike hard to destroy your attacker**

## **Attribute Development**

Every martial artist has faced an opponent in sparring who seems to be untouchable. He is always just a fraction out of reach, he can hit you and make you wonder why you got out of bed that morning. More often than not, he is a veteran of 10 or 20 years, but sometimes he is a young, perhaps inexperienced practitioner. What is it that makes him so good?

The answer is that he had what it took that day to beat you. He could have been faster, or maybe had better timing. Perhaps he has a longer reach than you, or longer legs. These are all attributes of your opponent. Some of these can be trained and some are inherent. It would be impossible to lengthen your arms or legs but, through training, you can make yourself faster and better able to handle his attack.

This book is not only about attribute training because these characteristics should relate to an altercation, not only to sparring. You can develop your sparring talent (including speed) in other ways. There are many books devoted to sparring and ring fighting. All the drills contained here relate to combat!

## *Speed*

The first drills for increasing speed in fighting are the response and reaction drills. These drills can be done in many ways and will additionally enhance several other traits such as timing, range (spatial relationship), and mental toughness. Remember that you can change the drills to suit your personal strengths or to diminish your weaknesses so that you can get the most from them. response/reaction drills can train reaction time (the time it takes to counter after you see or feel an attack) or response time (the time after you begin your counter until you actually strike). They can be defensive only, defensive and then offensive, or totally offensive. The first example will train reaction time with strictly defensive speed.

A proper defense is most important in a fight. All of us have been surprised by an attack and, without defensive training, your chances of being put out of the fight are great. You need to react quickly to an attack and counter quickly if you want to win. There is a simple self-defense drill used in many schools to enhance response time. Drill #1 is very common but it can never be trained enough. It also lends itself to many variations.

### **Drill #1 - Defensive speed**

Stand facing your partner at arms length and choose one person to deliver while the other defends. You can wear some hand protection, preferably open fingered padded gloves. While not necessary for this drill, these gloves will protect your hands for practice but give you the sensitivity and maneuverability to defend yourself.







**Perform an outside block.**



**Block just enough to deflect the strike.**

Have your partner swing widely at first to strike your head and body. Defend at first by blocking outward with your hand or forearm. Try to stop the attack from entering into your space, that is, stop the attack from coming within range to strike you.

You will notice that the faster strikes will be difficult to stop but try to get your speed up to catch the strike. Try not to reach outward to the strike as this will open up your defense. You only need to reach far enough to defend the strike from coming within your space. Do not be preoccupied with striking the arm. Block it outward just enough to clear it from hitting you. Change the response to a parry. Parry the attacking hand inward, sometimes curving your hand over your partners hand. Initially you should remain stationary to limit the effect of lower body movement on the range from your opponent. As you become faster and more proficient, you may want to angle your body backwards and to one side to take some of the energy off his strike. The type of counter (block or parry) is not important since you are training your reaction time. One counter will be more effective depending on your body position and the relative strength of your partner. Start slowly and build on this drill until it is smooth and fast.



**Bob and weave.**



**Shoulder or biceps stop to the strike.**



**Duck under the strike.**

Have your partner add straight punches while you remain stationary. Have him add tighter swings (more like hooks in boxing). Your response now can include a bob and weave, duck, or a shoulder roll. You can also block, parry, or perform a shoulder/upper arm stop. If desired, you can do an elbow or hand destruction, or just cover up and take it. For the bob and weave, make sure that you bend forward at the waist, but keep your eyes on you partner. Duck under high strikes by bending at the knees. For the shoulder stop, straighten your arm out to contact your partner's upper arm or shoulder while he is throwing the strike. This may seem like an offensive move, but we haven't hit your partner yet. This will just keep him from hitting you; it is purely defensive.



**Do a shoulder roll.**



**Use the elbow destruction against a punch.**

The elbow destruction is a lift of the elbow in line with the punch. If your partner tries to throw a straight punch, move the lead (or rear) elbow up so that it is in line with the strike. His hand should strike your elbow before he hits you. The hand destruction is similar, but you must throw a punch to his hand, timing the punch to hit him before he hits you. Be careful with this one because, if he is not prepared to hit, his hand will be loose. When you hit it, you could break his fingers. When you cover up for the hook, lift your hand to your ear and take the blow on the arm and hand. Move the lower body laterally with the strike to take the power away from it.

Add the motion of the lower body to make this drill more like sparring but, for now, try to keep the range (distance from your partner) constant. Try to limit the movement of your feet to train your reaction time. Have your partner add high kicks for balance and for you to defend the high attack. They can be side kicks, thrust kicks, round kicks, hook (heel) kicks, wheel or crescent kicks. Defend the high kicks by a two-handed stop, a jam, an evasion, or a parrying motion. For some kicks, however, you will need to move to react. Perform the two-handed stop on round kicks and hook kicks. Try to stop the motion of the foot by blocking the leg and foot as it approaches. A jam can be done with the knee, the foot, or the whole body. Go into the leg as it is being thrown toward you, stopping it with your body. You can also stop

the leg with a foot stop by hitting the leg as it is being thrown. The knee can also jam your partner so that his kick is never thrown.



**Defend with a knee lift.**

Have your partner add low and mid-line kicks and sweeps. Sweeps and attacks to the ankle can be defended by using a switch step, a foot stop or just by lifting the foot. Evasion is the best choice, since it still leaves you time to counter (without committing you to a certain movement or direction). Your low line defense should almost be independent of what is happening above because you need to concentrate on defending other attacks. Train your reaction to jam or move with little energy. Mid-line kicks include side kicks and round kicks. Defend these kicks by scooping the kick with a circular block or a back step to get out of the range. The round kicks can be stopped with a knee jam or, if they are high enough, a two-handed stop. Try to maintain the proper range for this drill, either kicking range or punching range. Don't lose sight of the fact that you are training in response time.



**Perform the two hand stop.  
foot.**



**Jam the kick with your  
foot.**

## **Drill #2 - Defensive/Offensive Speed**

We can build on the first drill by adding a counter to your partner's strike. This drill will train both you and your partner to strike correctly, but you will be responding to his attack by throwing an attack of your own. This drill trains both timing and speed. Boxers have done this type of training for many years. Remember to wear headgear, a mouthpiece, a cup and boxing gloves for this drill (optional gear can include shin pads). The simplest exercise is to face your opponent in a boxing stance with one foot forward (usually the left for a right-handed person). Have your partner throw a jab (front hand) at your head. You can use your rear hand to parry the strike, then respond with a jab (front hand) of your own. Both you and your partner will be striking but only you will be training in speed. You will be responding as quickly as you can to his original strike. You can use a stopping parry (meeting his jab with your palm in line with his punch).



**You jab - Your partner parries.**



Parry the strike slightly inward, stepping right if necessary or slightly outward with a curving hand, stepping left. You can time this strike to hit when his hand strikes your parrying hand. There should be a rhythm of hits - when he hits your parrying hand - you should start to punch and he will parry the strike. You will hear a “one-two” sound as each parrying hand is struck. Use this sound in your training by trying to make the time between the “one-two” shorter. Remember that this is a drill in learning to respond (hit) faster.

Do this drill with the straight right hand too. Your partner can throw the right hand and you can counter by doing a shoulder roll. A shoulder roll is a bending-away motion that absorbs the punch on your left shoulder (in a left stance). You can respond with a right punch of your own. This drill will train your movement and response time together. Train to counter as quickly as possible.



**Your jab is scooped by your partner ... and you scoop his jab.**



**Shoulder roll to evade.**

You can use this countering drill with several other strikes. The strikes for this drill are all parried or blocked first before you returning strike. Remember that the list on the next page is only a sample of the kind of response drills that will train your reaction and response times. You should invent your own drills

too.

<b>Your partner throws</b>	<b>You throw</b>
Jab	Parry-Jab
Jab	Front hand parry - Right cross
Jab	Parry - Front kick to his knee
Jab	Parry - Rear oblique kick to his knee
Right hand	Front hand parry - Front side kick to his knee
Right hand	Curving hand parry - Jab
Right hand	Front hand block - Counter right hand (step left)
Left hook	Bob and weave/counter right hook
Left hook	Cover up - Counter left hand
Front kick	Evade - Front kick

Side kick

Curving hand block - Side kick



**Knee lift to block ...**



**then respond with a kick.**



### **Drill #3 - Offensive Speed**

To really speed up your offense, you need to modify the previous drill. When your partner throws his jab, fire your jab as soon as you see him moving. Don't worry about defensive motions now. Try to get out of his way just enough and to hit him just before he hits you. It becomes a battle to see which of you can hit first. Use your body's twisting and bending motion (body mechanics) and foot position to get there before your partner. Remember, this is not an exercise in hitting your best friend; you should only fire after he does and you should expect to get hit occasionally. Start last and finish first.



**Counter the right hand with a jab ...or your own right hand.**

The body mechanics that you use should be motions which just get you clear of his strike. You can sometimes use a ducking motion (bending forward at the waist). Remember to keep your eyes on him at all times. You can also use a shifting motion (putting your weight either toward one foot or the other, allowing the body to shift slightly). You can move just your head, either sideways or backwards. You can bend back at the waist to get away from his strike. You can move one foot, either sideways or backwards, to move your body out of the way. These are only a

few ways to use body mechanics in your defense. Try shifting and moving to get away, then put yourself in range to strike back.

Make sure you work off of his timing. He must throw first to give you the signal to hit. The timing of your strike is very important because you should hit before he completes his punch. This is your ultimate goal in training speed; to hit your opponent after he throws a strike but before he hits you. Once you are proficient in this timing, you can control when you hit your partner; after his punch, simultaneous with his punch, or even before his punch reaches you. To accomplish this, you will be slipping and moving to defend against his strike while putting yourself into range to strike him. You will depend on footwork and body mechanics (shifting) to get just out of his range, then strike him. Try hitting him twice before he can hit you once with a double jab or perhaps a jab-cross combination. Sometimes, try to just evade his strike and counter his next strike. Experiment with this drill until you are hitting your opponent when you want to.

Now you are ready to add the lower body motion. Start to experiment by moving around your partner while he is striking you. Do not start sparring yet because this is still a drill in hitting speed. Your response should still be to his stimulus (a punch or kick). Work only on the reaction and response to his strike. Work all of your offensive moves off of his offensive moves. Listed on the next page are some offensive reactions to your partner's strikes. Remember that this is only a small sample of the attacks that can be used to counter your opponent's strikes.

<b>Your partner throws</b>	<b>You throw</b>
Jab	Jab
Jab	Front kick
Straight right	Jab
Looping right	Right hand
Looping right	Rear kick
Front thrust kick	Front thrust kick
Right round kick (high)	Right hand
Side kick	Thrust kick (jamming)
Right uppercut	Right hook

This drill can also train rhythm if you counter with combinations. Respond with a 1-2 combination, then change to a pause between the 1-2. Observe his defense and counter his movement. Your partner may adjust his range (distance from you), his stance, or his defensive position (hand position/body position). Try to modify your second hit to follow his changing position. Try a jab-hook combination if he slips the jab or a jab-cross combination if he backs up; try to hit him as he moves. Try to change the basic rhythm of your attack against his strike. See which rhythm is best for you.



**Perform a front kick before he can reach you with his front kick.**

drill. Try also to be unpredictable in your rhythm during sparring so you can train yourself to change during a fight. This can help you by confusing your opponent which will help you to strike him.

Try to be unpredictable in your rhythm because your opponent will work off of it to counter and strike you. Change the rhythm periodically during sparring to practice with different rhythm patterns. Training with music can also help you with rhythm because you will follow the basic pattern of the music. Change the type of music from rap to new age and see how this affects your

#### **Drill #4 - Response Drill**

Another type of drill to enhance your speed is called a response drill. This exercise depends on some stimulus and a measure of the response time. There are a few focus pads available that provide the trainee with a sound or a light and begin a timer that ends when the trainee hits the pad. Using this equipment, a martial artist doesn't need a partner to train speed. This equipment is perfect for training responsiveness of speed, but this book is about training for an altercation. Let's put a person in the picture.

Have your partner face you in a defensive stance. He can be the trainer and call out a name, make some distinctive noise, or make a small movement. You should strike as fast as you can. Don't worry that you can only react to this type of stimulus. You

are training your muscles to move faster. Your only goal is to move as fast as you can. Challenge yourself! Start from a fighting stance and react at the sound explosively! Throw the front hand to your trainer's head while he just parries the strike. Try to really hit him before he can stop the punch. Throw the right cross. See if you can shift (maneuver) your body to make the hand reach him faster. For instance, lean you head forward during a jab to see if this makes the strike any faster. Start to feel how a very fast punch is thrown.



**React at a shout.**

the effects of the shifting of balance by explosively kicking at your partner.

Make you body learn the correct way to throw a fast punch. Change the strike to a kick. You will notice that a kick generally moves slower than a punch because of increased muscle mass and the shifting of your balance. Try to minimize

Change you stance now to a neutral position. Put your arms down, turn you head to face sideways. This will put you at a disadvantage to hit your partner. You should always make it difficult for yourself to succeed, and then perform at your peak. Now when you hear the signal, strike from this neutral position. React at the sound and strike hard and fast!



**React at a clap.  
movement.**



**React at a body**

## **Drill #5 - Speed With Equipment**

There is one piece of equipment that is useful in promoting hitting speed. It is called a speed ball and is available from some boxing catalogs. You can make a speed ball by buying a soft, light rubber ball about 3 inches in diameter. Drill a hole right through the ball and insert heavy flexible thread (available at a cloth shop) through it. Knot the flexible thread above and below the ball to prevent slipping. Attach both ends of the thread to the floor and ceiling and modify the tension to get the ball moving fast. If you have it too tight, the ball won't move, too loose and the motion will be too slow. Change the tension to challenge yourself when you are trying to hit the ball. The object is to hit the ball as often as possible in a set amount of time. If the ball is not moving enough for you, you should either tighten or loosen it to get more action. Use this drill if you cannot work with a partner, but don't rely on it to train your fighting speed. Use the other drills mentioned before with a partner and remember to always try your hardest.

## ***Strength***

Strength is a very important part of a physical contest. The stronger fighter that knows how to use his strength can defeat a fast opponent with one punch. It is not really enough to just be strong. You need to apply that strength. You must learn to reach deep into yourself and expert all of your strength to combat your adversary. The primary manner of increasing you strength is by weightlifting. There are many books out which can help you develop strength by lifting and there are many pieces of equipment that can give you overall strength. It may be cheaper for you to have your own equipment and to train at home but training at a gym will make you work harder. You may be training differently than a bodybuilder or a powerlifter. The repetitions may be lower and the weight may be higher to train your particular type of strength. The speed of repetitions may also be faster. You want to train your muscles to move heavy objects very quickly. It helps if you start training toward this goal from the beginning. As with any physical fitness program, check with you doctor first to see if you have any physical reasons not to lift. Then, consult an expert on the proper form and exercises to do. Weightlifting is one way to get strong without a partner, but we want to get stronger against a partner. The strength required to move a person is dramatically different than that required for a rigid weight. You need to be able to shift and maneuver your strength for a moving opponent.

### **Drill #6 - Strength Sumo Drill**

A Sumo type drill is a great way to gain useful strength against another person. It combines the *speed* and *reaction time* of

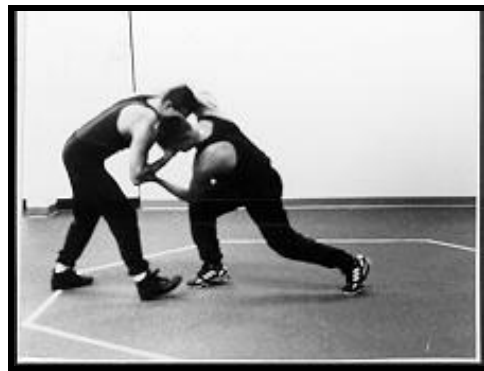


in close fighting, the *sensitivity* of knowing when to shift (side to side motion) and push (forward and back motion), and the overall *strength* to push your opponent where you want him to go. Outline a circle or a square on the floor. Face your partner and, at a signal, attempt to push your opponent out of the circle. Try not to hit each other. Remember, you are trying to train strength! Add leg sweeps to train awareness below the waist, but your major effort should be to push your opponent out of the circle.

You should be using several different types of strength and power to move your opponent. A jerking energy should be used to upset your opponent's balance and to maneuver him into a position to be pushed out. This jerking action can be random in direction and intensity. One way to use this action is to apply a small force in one direction (push to one side), then shift to another direction with a great jerking force. Another way for you to be systematic in your jerking energy is by "rocking" your partner (back and forth) to get his energy (response) timed with your attack, then upset him with a jerk in another direction. As soon as he is upset, you should push him out of the circle.



**Try "rocking" and "jerking" to upset your opponent.**



**Try "grounding" to defend against the push.**

Another type of power is the pushing (grounded) energy. You can learn the basics of grounding in a Tai-chi class. It relies mainly on a straight line push from the ground through the legs and hips and out through the arms. This sounds difficult, but with practice you can upset your opponent easily. The only problem is the adjustment to the ground while you are moving. Tai-chi practitioners can learn to move with practice but normally stay motionless while being attacked, then repel their opponent with this grounded push. Practice an explosive grounded push to throw your partner out of the ring. Keep you legs slightly bent and sit back on your hips. Use you waist and legs to repulse you partner.



**An explosive push to move your opponent.**

The third type of power that can be used is called up from inside of you. You must reach inside yourself to move your training partner explosively and powerfully. Try to control the fight mentally by using your mind to tremendously enhance your body's strength. Your mind is very powerful at calling up

energy to use in a n altercation. Use a loud shout (sometime called a kiai) to help you call this energy up. It will be an immense combination of mental energy and focus. This reaching inside will give you a massive amount of short time energy. Try this repeatedly and you will find yourself getting very tired from the exertion. Train yourself to do this a much as you can. This is one of the best ways to train the mental discipline required to perform at your peak.

## **Drill #7 - Strength By Wrestling**

Western wrestling is another good way to train strength. It will give you the power and speed to shift your position in order to focus your strength in various directions. In wrestling, the players are awarded points for takedowns, escapes, and pins, but we are only interested in the strength training aspect of western wrestling. You should try to overpower your opponent if possible. Work with partners that are of different sizes to gain quickness or strength from the drill. The only problem with using wrestling as a training method is that the fight is not over at the pin. The wrestler is another “fish out of water” when he has you pinned because he expects that the game is over. For example, he can be defeated by an opponent who is on his back (by an arm lock or choke).



**Begin in this position.**



**Perform a double leg takedown.**



**Train for speed and strength.**



**Use different takedowns.**

Adopt a traditional wrestling stance standing and go for a takedown, or try from the ground position. Tie your opponent up and try to control him. Attempt single and double leg takedowns. Learn to control the head and the arms. Shift and maneuver yourself to get your partner down. Once on the ground, you should strive for a hold on your opponent. Every hold can be countered, but you should try to control him using joint locks (arm bars, arm locks) or try to wrap him up (grapevine, leg control). Some scenes from this free-style wrestling are shown here.



**Finish with a pin if possible.**

## ***Precision***

Precision is required to consistently hit where you aim. If your target is two feet in diameter, you can probably hit it but you may not hit effectively. Your opponent is going to be two feet in diameter, but you need to hit the eyes or groin to score on your first strike. Precision perhaps is the most underrated attribute because you never know how precise you can be until you practice. To strike the eyes of an opponent is difficult because of his movement and his protective stance, but training precision will give you the edge in finding the target that you want.

## **Drill #8 - Precision With Focus Pads**

To practice hitting with precision from boxing range, use focus pads. Adopt a boxing stance and have your partner spar with you. Your partner should hold the pads out so that you can see them while he moves around trying to evade your strikes. Try to hit the center of the pad only (normally there is a small circle in the center of the focus pad) with your fingertips. Fight a three minute round, making sure to only hit with your fingers. You may want to wrap or tape your fingers to protect them until they become strong enough to do this drill hard. Try to hit the exact center, visualizing the target as you strike. This type of training will also teach you to see as fast as you can hit. You must see the strike connecting with the pads.



**Right hand to focus mitt**



**Jab to focus mitt**

Your partner can also hold the pads against his chest, then turn and show them to you while sparring. If your partner flashes the pads at you while sparring, this will increase your reaction speed also. Remember to hit at first just with your fingers. Hitting with your fingertips will make your fists much more accurate, and incredibly faster.

This drill can be done to make your kicks more precise also. Your partner can hold the pads out for different kicks and you can attempt to hit the circle with only your toes. Kicking is more difficult than punching (with the fingers) because the natural motion is different for each different kick. A side kick, for instance, will be thrown differently than a round kick. Kicking with the toes can only train precision for round kicks, but you can practice precision kicking on the other kicks also. Try to visualize kicking with the smallest possible area of the foot and contacting your target in the smallest possible area. This visualization will help you pinpoint the kick where you want it to be.

## Drill #9 - Precision in Sparring



The same drill can be used in regular sparring also. Try to contact your opponent with just fingertips. Choose a target (a letter on the shirt, a button, or just the tip of his nose) on your opponent and try to hit it. The goal in this drill is precision in consistently hitting your target. Go slowly at first and hit exactly where you want to. Visualize the target that you are hitting and see it as you strike it. Remember, as you get more experienced, to be precise and fast. A hard punch can come after you have the precision to hit what you aim for.



You can train your feet in the same way. Contact your opponent just slightly at first at the target that you want (knee cap, belt buckle). Try to just touch with the kick first. Remember that as your precision becomes better, you will be able to kick anywhere on your opponent with great speed and force.

## *Sensitivity*

Sensitivity is the most important attribute in fighting because it establishes an entry to your opponent's defense without allowing your opponent to strike you. It can be defined as the feeling of connection and a way of receiving information about your opponent's moves through your contact with him. You'll find that you can begin to direct his actions in the holding and grappling ranges with sensitivity. You must develop sensitivity to your opponent's attacks in order to control him. The drills to train sensitivity originate from Tai-chi, Wing Chun or a number of other arts and are used to train different types of hitting energy. The first drill is used mainly for pushing energy, but can be modified for hitting. As always, these drills should be combative from the start.



## Drill #10 - Sensitivity “Follow” Drill



Start by facing your partner and have him stretch out his arms. Put your hands on his arms gently but without grabbing them. Have him feed strikes slowly to your head and body while you try to redirect his strikes away from their targets.



Maintain contact with his arms and hands to control his strikes completely. You do not need to keep your hands on top of his arms, but remember to maintain contact. Sometimes, as he moves, he may force you to move your hands inside his arms (or underneath them) just to

defend against his strikes. You need to control your own arms before you can control your opponent's. When he pushes you, turn your body and push his hands to the outside. This will redirect the push. When he hooks you, you can use a shoulder stop (described previously) or parry slowly while moving your body away to direct his hook in front of its target. You will find yourself either stopping or parrying his strike, remembering to always be moving and turning your body to remove the target from him. Do this drill slowly until you become proficient in moving with his attack and redirecting it, then increase the speed.

## Drill #11 - Mirror Drill



Face your opponent about arms reach away and have him lead you by stepping and moving around. The object is to always maintain the same distance away from your partner. When he steps forward, you step backward. If he goes left, you follow by going left. If he turns, you should turn also.

Try to maintain the arm's reach away from him as he moves about. Periodically check your distance from him. Go slowly at first, then speed it up to make it challenging. This drill will make you sensitive to your opponent's distance from you and his attack from that distance.

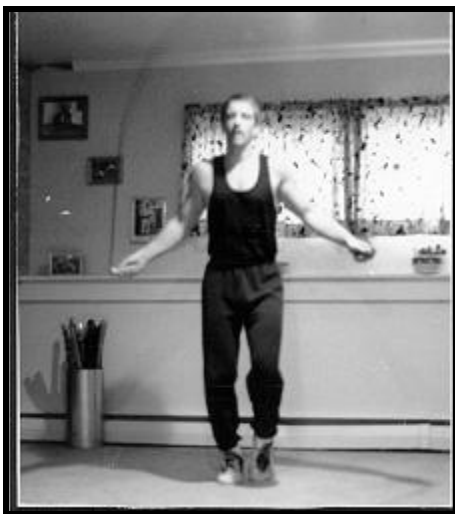
## *Conditioning*

A well-conditioned athlete is better able to handle any kind of stress, and the stress found in a street fight is extremely high. The attributes of conditioning and endurance are immeasurable tools



that you bring to the battle and, along with your attitude, they set you apart from your opponent. The reason that some middleweight boxers could out-punch their heavyweight opponents in the bare-knuckle days was due mainly to these two attributes. A martial artist should be superbly conditioned to fight

at any time and under any conditions. There are many methods of training your conditioning, but the kind that simulates an altercation is a logical option to better prepare you for the real thing.



The drills contained in this text, such as the “range control” (Drill #11), “10 for 1” drill (Drill #23), and the multiple opponent drills (#21, 22) will dramatically enhance your conditioning, if done regularly. These drills, along with your sparring, should give you the conditioning required. If necessary, you can run, jog or do an aerobic type exercise to enhance your endurance. If your

aerobic conditioning is good, then you will have more energy to use in combat.

These are only a few of the exercises to effect the attributes necessary for a battle. You can modify some of your own exercises to train specific qualities, and you can invent some new ones to train your speed, strength, precision and conditioning. All these factors go into your training for a fight, but the most important way that you can train is by sparring realistically. Sparring as close as you can to “street” conditions is the best method of training.

## Sparring

The idea of sparring is to hit your training partner without hurting him too badly. Because of this, certain rules have become commonplace in most dojos where sparring is allowed. No kicking to the groin, knees, or thighs, no hitting the back (or back of the head), sometimes no head contact is allowed. This type of sparring is not realistic, but in order to train safely, these rules were adopted. There have been some schools that train without these rules, but in general, they have also not trained in all ranges of fighting. Most schools that do spar unknowingly limit their sparring to the range that they are familiar with and limit their techniques to those that do little damage. You now can spar without these rules if you are training with a partner that you are comfortable with and you follow some simple guidelines. You will first need a guide (referee) to make sure the action is under control. You must then match the speed and strength of your attack to your partner's, and you must start slowly with only light contact. It is very easy to get too excited and lose your concentration, but try to remember that you are training for a fight, not in a fight.

Sparring should fall into two major categories; excluded range and full range sparring. Excluded range sparring is exchanging strikes with your partner and permitting only certain distances (or certain conditions). One example would be only allowing punching and kicking and disallowing throws. A popular example of excluded range sparring is western wrestling (the type of wrestling seen at H.S. and college events). The combatants don't kick or punch each other, and most of the fight occurs on the ground or at close quarters. Sparring that is done in most training halls or boxing gyms is even more exclusive. When the fighters come in to a clinch, they are separated to allow only kicking or

punching. This way of training is great for isolating the weapons and defenses of each range as long as you don't practice "excluded target" training. An example of "excluded target" training would be to prohibit groin or knee contact while in boxing range. You should allow a strike to any target in that range, but you should modify the strength and speed of the strike to reflect the proficiency of your partner.

Practicing this way may seem dangerous, but once you are used to the different attacks, you will defend against them easily. Remember to wear protective equipment while you spar. Listed below is the minimum required protection for this type of sparring. You will notice that no footgear is specified since combatants should train with shoes on (to simulate street conditions).

Headgear  
Boxing or Tiger Claw Gloves  
Elbow pads  
Mouthpiece  
Rib protector  
Knee pads  
Groin protector (cup)  
Shin pads

## Drill #10 - AG Sparring



**Punching is allowed.**

as long as you are isolating the range of your body to attack or use your head. Anything goes! (As long as you maintain the ranges agreed upon.) Listed below are some strikes that you can use in AG sparring. Remember not to change the range by tying up your opponent. The grappling range will be used in a later drill. First you should work on developing the offensive skills needed for each range and the defensive maneuvers for each attack.

“AG” sparring is very realistic and needs to be done with a supervisor present. Face your opponent and select the total range for sparring. Initially, it should be kicking and punching range only. Decide the time limit, then start! You or your opponent can throw any strike, any combination, or try anything



**Kicking is allowed.**



**Knees and elbows are allowed.**



**Head striking is allowed.**

Your body will learn how to defend against all strikes by movement and other defensive skills. Some martial artists will prefer a certain style of fighting, such as “aggressive infighting” or “countering from outside”. Your style of fighting will lead you to attack and defend in a certain way, but you should be prepared to defend against any attack and any attacking style. Try to find out which defenses are best for your style. You may want to adopt a “pot-shot” defense which will rip into your opponent as he attempts to close in while you move around him. You can also defend aggressively by attacking his limbs as he tries to strike you. Make sure you go slowly at first to familiarize yourself with all attacks possible, then increase the speed and strength to be more realistic.

Timing is the ability to plan your opponent’s strike and plan your counter to it. It is a very important attribute and it is essential in actually contacting your partner. You must



develop the ability to counter his strike as you are striking. Start to think less of his attack and more of your own strikes. Worry less about blocking. Try to time his offensive moves by concentrating on your own offensive moves. Visualize your own strikes hitting in time. This will develop your timing against your partner.

### Strikes in AG Sparring

Kicks to head, body, arms/hands, groin, knees/legs, and sweeps.

Punches to head, body, arms/hands, and groin.

Knees to midsection, thighs (groin for experienced fighters).

Elbows to head, arms/hands.

Head to head, body.

Body to body.

Anything else you can think of.

### **Drill #11 - Range Control Sparring**



**The follower (right) can only kick while the leader comes in.**

you can grab your opponent's arms and body to tie him up, punch, elbow, and use knees (used mostly for controlling), grappling -

There is another exercise called "range control" sparring that is done to teach a martial artist how to control a fight. This activity is extremely strenuous and requires a supervisor with a stopwatch. The ranges to be controlled are: kicking - where you can kick but not punch, punching - where you can punch and use knees, holding/trapping - where

where you tie him up completely so that he cannot attack (this range generally ends on the ground in some hold or lock).

The combatants face each other and decide who will be the leader. The leader will be training the follower to control the range of the fight. The leader must make it difficult for the follower to maintain his own range by constantly trying to move out of the follower's range.

The leader has available to him any range or style of fighting. He can kick outside or inside, punch, grapple, or hold (trap) his opponent. The leader can do anything; try any attack in any range,



**When the leader (left) comes in, the follower must box. When the leader tries to escape, the follower maintains range by boxing.**

attack in close or from outside. The follower is the trainee. It is his job to limit the range of the leader by keeping the range constant. He must use all his energy to contain the leader only to the range that he (the follower) has been assigned to. The timekeeper will call out to start the contest and tell the follower what range he is to control (for example, "boxing"). The follower must try to box the leader, while the leader can move outside and kick, or come inside and tie up the follower.



**When the leader (left) tries to grapple, the follower must trap his arms. When the leader attempts to escape out, the follower must control by trapping.**

You will see how strenuous this drill is when you try to follow the leader (who is backing away from you) and maintain the “punching” range, or you try to push the leader off you to hit him while he is trying to grapple with you. The timekeeper should periodically call out another range such as “kicking”, “holding/trapping”, or “grappling”. The follower must then change the range which he fights in, while the leader is still free to fight in any way. If the timekeeper calls “kicking”, the follower can only kick while the leader attempts to move into punching or grappling range. You will find after training this way that you will develop great control of your partner and his movement. Training with this drill will help you control the range and type of fight and will teach you to have absolute control of an actual fight.



**When the leader (left) tries to get out, the follower comes in to grapple. The grappling range should end in a takedown.**

### **Drill #12 - Defensive Sparring Drill**

This drill teaches a martial artist to defend himself with extreme competency. The combatants face-off and spar with each other, but one fighter cannot strike at all. He must use defensive skills such as movement, bob and weave, parries, covering up. He can pull his opponent, trip or turn his opponent, but he cannot hit or kick. His trainer can strike with anything and in any range.

You will learn great defensive skills by training this drill. If you only defend for a three minute round, then you will gain a great defense. This will give you more time to counter and give your offensive move.

## Drill #12 - Lock Flow Drill



**Wrist lock to ...**



**escape, grabbing to ...**



**another wrist lock.**

Another type of “excluded” range sparring is the lock flow drill. This drill is done in Jujitsu schools to teach students how to adjust their hold on an opponent when he moves his body, or just to move to another lock on a secured opponent. This drill is valuable because almost any lock can be countered or escaped from, and you must be able to adjust your hold in a fluid motion. The idea of a lock flow in a traditional school is to allow the martial artist to move his hold when his opponent counters or escapes. We, however, will do this drill combatively because our opponent will be fighting back. It is not enough to try to secure the attacker; sometimes we have to make sure he cannot escape and reverse the lock. If that happens, you should learn to feel him trying to tie you up so you can move into a lock on him in the next breath. This drill can be difficult for martial artists who have no experience with locks, but practice with



**1. Turn your elbow from the wrist lock, and ...**



**2. grab his wrist again.**

bars and locks, chokes/head locks, full and half nelsons, leg locks (on the ground). If your partner applies a wrist lock, you can grab his right elbow with your left hand, push and turn it into an arm bar, grabbing his wrist with your right hand as you move. In this way, the locks are continuously changing and your defense must constantly change also. You can do takedowns, chokes and other locks as long as you can keep the action going. When you are competent, you can do without the pattern and go “free style”, where neither you nor your partner knows what is coming next. On the following pages in a sample lock flow pattern. You should, of course, make up your own lock flow pattern.

this drill and your ability will develop.

Start with a standing wrist lock with your partner standing across from you. Bend his right wrist to the outside with your right and left hands. He can escape from the hold by moving his body to the outside (right) to relieve the pressure, then grabbing under your right hand with his left into a wrist lock on you. You can break the hold again and force him into a wrist lock, which he will escape from.....and so on.

This drill can move on to other holds such as arm



**Start by applying the wrist lock ...**



**which he will escape by popping your arm up.**



**He turns your arm over into ...**



**an arm bar.**



**Pop up your elbow**



**and grab a Fig. 4 arm lock.**



**He steps back, grabbing your arm into an arm bar.**



**You rush toward him and ...**



**bump him.**



**Grab his arm and pull ...**



**into an arm bar.**





**He turns his elbow down and ...**



**strips your arm.**



**He reaches back behind to choke.**



**You squat and twist out.**



**You get an arm lock.**

## Drill #13 - Lock Flow With Strikes



**You can catch.**



**and lock with added hits**



**or hit after he locks you.**

The first drill must be developed to an extreme competency to be useful. After a while, you and your partner may choose to simulate strikes before, after, or during the locking. If your partner sees a punch coming to him and a wrist lock tying him up, he will move much faster to escape the lock. From the first wrist lock, have your partner try holding the wrist with the left hand while you strike with the right. He must move away from the lock and also defend against the punch by blocking. You will find that sometimes the strike will open up a target for another lock. In this case, you can guide the punch inside (using a hand touching his elbow) to put the arm lock on him. Remember to use your body motion to evade the punch and also to get the arm bar. You will need some energy to guide and catch his striking arm.

Add low kicks to keep

your partner moving and aware of the low attacks. Kick to the ankles to stop his movement, or kick to the knees. You can even hit him with you knees while locking him. Remember to keep the action standing (off the ground) for as long as you can. The tendency to go to the ground is great, but remember that it is not always a good idea to be on the ground when fighting. You ideally want your combatant to hit the ground without you. You also will gain the most useful experience while standing up because most fights begin and could possibly end there. You must keep your partner aware of the attacks, but give him time to counter. Go at a reasonable pace at first, then speed up your locks and strikes on each other. Remember that the lock should flow one to another with only one being locked at a time. You will gain real experience in evading and escaping the locks if you start slowly but practice hard.



**Kick to the legs ...**



**reach in ...**



**grab the head lock.**

## **Drill #14 - Lock Flow With Cheat, Ground Lock Flow**

The last type of flow drill is performed by changing the circumstances of the practice drill and adding extra attacks known as “cheating”. You are “cheating” when you use a nerve strike, pressure point, or bite while you are locked up by your opponent. The lock flow drill will sometimes go to the ground or you may want to force your partner to the ground. You can use an arm drag, a sweep, or a judo throw. Any method of getting your opponent down is acceptable, but try to keep the action going by maintaining contact with your partner. When your partner brings you to the ground, keep hold of him because you will want to counter his lock on the ground with one of your own.

Your opponent can bring you down to the ground with that first wrist lock and you can counter by reaching up around his neck and pulling him down, by pulling down on his arm, or by a trip. You can now put an arm bar on your partner while he is on his back. He can escape by turning over and get a front choke on you. You can knock his arm out and try a leg scissors on him. This flow drill can be continued with each partner taking turns as the aggressor and each attempting to escape. Try not to “strength” out of each hold. Use body motion and levers instead.



**Trip him at the knee (step on foot), turn him over to leg lock.**

We mentioned before that some rule are commonplace in the dojo, but there are also unwritten rules of street fighting. One rule is that it is not fair to bite. Forget it! Your teeth are you best weapon for in-fighting; don't give them up. Use your teeth and nails in the lock flow drill; realize how difficult the drill becomes when your opponent cheats. Grab or hit the groin, strike the kidneys, and bend fingers back. Add all the hits that you would if you were caught in this hold by an attacker. Do anything to break the hold and move on to your own hold. Don't play fair in practice (but be careful and use the proper protective gear).



**He turns out and ...**



**grabs your arm in a bar.**



**Turn your elbow up, push towards him, and grab an arm bar.**





**Lock a Fig. 4 on arm.**



**He pulls hair to escape.**



**He gets a neck-breaker on you.**

### **Drill #15 - AG Fighting - Full Range Sparring**

The last type of sparring drill is a combination of lock flow and “AG” sparring, and it is called “AG” fighting. Both martial artists must be fully geared for this drill using Tiger Claw - open fingered gloves to hit, knee and shin pads, groin protectors, and head gear if desired. A supervisor is necessary in “AG” fighting to maintain some control of the fight. You may begin the fight from



any position and attack your partner anywhere and with anything. **Anything Goes!** If you enter grappling range with you opponent, try to trip or throw him. If you are in outside range, box or kick. If you are both on the ground, then try to lock him up. Some top students in this form of training have grabbed chairs from the audience and stray weapons on the floor. The object of this drill is to see everything that can be cone to you and to learn how to defend against anything that happens. This is not a structured, well planned sparring contest with a feeling-out time, some hits, and some kicks. This is anything that an individual wants to do. You will find out your partner's true nature when you allow him to do anything to you. Some martial artists will attack aggressively, hoping to win in a short time and get their opponent away from them on the ground. Some will try to tie up and go to the ground for grappling because they may feel more comfortable there, wrestling until you are pinned. Some will try anything to cheat and hurt you. This is the best drill to train reality because it is as close to reality as you can get. The truth is that your opponents, outside your training hall, will try to hurt you in any way possible. They are not interested in just punching, or just kicking with you; they will grab, push, butt, knee, bite, and throw you around before they hit you. You should be prepared for it, and this drill will help you. Remember to train as safely as you can. Follow the guidelines stated previously in "AG" fighting; go slowly at first and have a supervisor watching for your safety.



**High kicks are legal ...**



**and head butts ...**

Remember that the idea of this contest is the training; it is extremely difficult to tell the winner in some of these drills and it should be that way. Sometimes the winner is clear because the loser cannot continue. He could be locked up or just too tired to move, but it is very common to end the round without a clear winner. This is still as close to actual combat as you can get, but still train safely.



**and elbows.**



**Grab weapons.**



**Disarm and defend against ...**



**clubs or knives.**



**Defend against the knife or ...**



**get a weapon to use.**

## **Weapons**

Weapons training differs in every martial arts school, generally based on perceptions about weapon attack. In the U.S., attack with weapons is as frequent as empty hand assault. According to the U.S. Department of Justice, only one-third of those people victimized by a gun (shown a gun in an assault) were actually attacked using the gun. This compares to half those victimized with a knife or club who were actually assaulted with the weapon. There is really only a 4% chance of being shot with a gun during a victimization, according to the U.S. Bureau of Crime Statistics. There is, however, a 10% change of being stabbed in a confrontation with a knife. Instructors who have never seen or been victimized in an attack with a weapon do not always know the best way to defend against them, but there are many defensive drills that work well with the weapons that martial artists may see; guns, knives, and clubs.

Guns are without doubt the most dangerous weapon around. They can be used at various ranges, and the skill level of the user need not be high; it requires very little training to shoot someone. There are many martial artists who do exhibitions of some defenses against a gun attack, but these demonstrations are with their students and without using live ammunition. The reason for this is that, sometimes, they don't work correctly. A martial artist who is confronted with a gun should cooperate fully with the wielder, until the time that he feels that he will die whether or not he cooperates. Given the choice between a sure death or an accident while attempting to disarm your opponent, defensive action is the only choice.

The martial artist who wants to prepare himself to defend against a gun should purchase several child's water pistols or cap guns (the realistic kind), preferably with good trigger action. The only disadvantage to using these toys is the a real gun is heavier and is possibly more easily dropped from the hand. The gun could be fired several times while the martial artist is attempting his disarm. If you grab your opponent's arm, he will continue to attempt to aim and fire the gun at your while you hold him. There are several books which give examples of specific drills for removing the gun, but these drills must be examined carefully with the following general guidelines in mind:



1. Commitment: Once you start for the gun or the arm, never lose control of it.
2. Mid/Low Attack: Generally use one (or preferably two) hands to secure the gun and use kicks (or the free hand) to hit while you disarm.
3. Try Anything: If you must do any of the standard defenses against a rear hold-up (like spinning your back to catch your opponent's gun arm), then make sure you keep moving. Some schools even advocate the use of a club or strike to dislodge the weapon, so practice every method to see what you feel most comfortable with.

Remember what was said before; no technique is fool-proof. It really must be a matter of life or death. The eye jab, kick to the groin, or straight punch will not help you for long, and you still might be shot.

## **Drill #16 - Gun Drill**

Have your partner hold you up with the gun while wearing full gear. He must be fully protected because you must attack him with reality in mind. Your punches should not be pulled and he, in turn, must try to shoot if he sees any motion from you. Start by training your response without telegraphing. Have your partner shoot if he sees any movement. This will train you not to “telegraph” your defensive action.

Have him perform a hold-up from several different positions; up front close with a shirt grab, up front close with his hand out for money, from a short distance front with one hand on his gun, a two-handed grip on the gun from a short distance, from each side with a grab, from the rear with a grab. Practice a simultaneous evasion or shifting of the body with a grab to his gun hand. Grab the hand (if possible) right at the gun so that you can have some control over the direction of the barrel. Immediately launch your attack on your partner and don't stop hitting until he lets go of the gun. Concentrate on the gun arm and hand to dislodge the weapon while maintaining your hold and simultaneously attacking the face, legs, arms, and shoulders. Your goal should be to remove the gun from his hand, but any attempt to grab the gun could cause it to go off. Make sure that you are out of the way if it does. If the gun drops, there is a chance of its firing and injuring someone, but your goal should still be to put distance between your attacker and his weapon.

One-step knife drills are common in many dojos but, unfortunately, not too valuable. The chink in the logic of knife drills is that there is no desire present. Your partner is not

normally trying to cut you, and if you are struck with a plastic or wooden knife, your response is not quite realistic. You can use a blunt aluminum knife to make it more realistic. Try to use any method to defend yourself in a real situation. Remember that evasion, talking, and yelling are perfectly valid means of defense. This training is for the time when you feel that you will be stabbed whether or not you cooperate. You must train knife drills from two basic positions, the hold-up position and the ready position.



## Drill #17 - Knife Drill From Hold-up Position



From the hold-up position, your partner's knife (and knife hand) is stationary and your movement should be fast and steady. You can experiment with batting the hand down, hitting the ulna nerve (at the side of the wrist), or grabbing the knife hand. The attacker's knife hand will be at various levels and positions, so change the drill slightly each time you train. In each case, you should attack strongly to your opponent's weak areas (eyes, groin) very quickly. Have your partner "hold you up" by keeping his knife hand in one place but menacing you with it. Attack the knife hand with your knuckles at his nerve centers (back of the hand or at the wrist). Try to slow the hand motion enough to control the knife hand so that you can grab it. Hold firmly onto the knife hand while you attack your opponent with a strike (to the head, eyes, or groin). Do this drill repeatedly

until you feel comfortable with your empty hand knife defense.

## **Drill #18 - Knife Drill From Ready Position**

The ready position is used when knife sparring is done. If your partner is in outside range, you can attempt to kick or hit the knife hand, or you can move in to contain the hand. You can use objects (shoes, sticks, rocks) to help you dislodge the weapon, but your best defense is still to get away if possible. Face your partner in a ready position and prepare to spar with him using the knife primarily. Use your motion to evade the slashes and thrusts while simultaneously attacking his body. Target his eyes, nose, knife hand, groin, and knees for your strikes. Any good hit to these areas will give you some time while he recovers to remove yourself from the area or remove the weapon from him.

One more way to train knife defense is to study combative Judo and Jujitsu. These systems teach a martial artist to blend and move with an attack. You can learn some very basic moves and locks to disarm and evade your assailant. It could be that they can help in the defense of a knife, but remember that there is still a 25% chance of going to the hospital when faced by a knife wielding adversary.

Clubs, bottles and rocks are the preferred weapons for an armed assailant and the worst injury will occur when attacked with these weapons. One half of all attacks with these weapons will be serious (40% will require medical attention). The reason is that these weapons are nearby and attack with these weapons happens very quickly. Later, we will discuss awareness training, but you should have these weapons around when you do your “AG” fighting.

## **Drill #19 - Blunt Weapon (Club) Drill**

The defense against these types of weapons can be very simple. Try to hit before he strikes. Hit him hard and fast and then recover the weapon. If you cannot strike first, then evade the weapon. Remember in club training that, normally, a club is a one-strike weapon. If you can make your opponent miss, you have some time to attack him without fearing for the weapon. The weight of the club sometimes makes his attack predictable and his recovery slower than a knife or empty hand. Have your partner face off to spar with you using a blunt weapon (club or padded baseball bat) primarily. Have him attempt to strike you with the weapon. Don't fool around! He must give you the correct type of attack or you won't learn how to defend against it. He had to attack you strongly with the weapon. If he hesitates to attack you, you have to advance and attack him. Don't go for the weapon, go for his targets. If he does attack you, try evasion first, then move in with your attack. This drill should take no more than 10 seconds to complete. After the bell rings, one of you should be moving to attack and it should be over very quickly. Do this repeatedly until you feel comfortable with the blunt weapon attack.



**Come in strongly when you encounter a blunt weapon.**

Let's stress one point very strongly! You can only hope to defend against a weapon successfully. An assailant with a gun will probably not shoot you, only fight if you fear for your life. An opponent with a knife has a good chance of cutting you unless you can get away. If you fight and cannot run, then attempt to dislodge the weapon and strike your opponent so that you can get away. A person with a blunt weapon or club will probably hit you and will probably hurt you. You should train seriously with these weapons and strike him first. If you can't, then attempt to time the weapon (then strike), or evade the weapon to run.

## **Multiple Opponents**

It makes a great deal of sense to train with multiple opponents. Although there is no evidence of multiple opponents being a factor in assaults, there are occasionally some incidents of attack by multiple assailants. In addition, you can only get better by training against a number of partners. It will increase your awareness, speed, sensitivity and decision making ability. The “AG” fighting drill can be done with a number of partners, but too often it becomes a circus as your antagonists circle around waiting for an ambush. Use a drill which will simulate the attack “on the street”. You need to put your opponent out of the fight very quickly and he needs to stay out.

### **Drill #20 - Multiple Opponents**

Have a group of six or more circle you prepared to come in at any time. Use a one-strike defense; punch to the face, kick to the groin, run one opponent into a wall. Try to get your opponents on the ground. Trip them, throw them, push them over one another. Use Aikido techniques. In fact, the study of Aikido and Jujitsu can help you immensely in this situation. This drill, as mentioned before, is a matter of timing. If your partners decide to rush in and hold you, you can be defeated very quickly. Some groups don't know how to come in and attack a victim all together. They end up getting in each other's way. This is to your advantage. Try this drill using your evasive actions to isolate your opponents. Throw one attacker into another to give you some time. Try to have only one attacker at a time and plan it that way. This drill can be realistic if your partners want it to be, but you may want to practice

a drill which is a little more structured so that you can gain the attributes necessary in an attack by multiple opponents.



**Opponents enter one at a time. You comb the first,**



**and strongly push him.**



**The other enters.**



**You bulldog him.**



**The first enters again.**



**Grab his hair and ...**



**knee him.**



**Push him out again.**



**The other enters from behind.**



**Reach down and ...**



**grab his leg to trip.**



## Drill #21 - Multiple Opponents (Circle Drill)



**Face outside the circle.**

They can move along the circle to group up against you, but, if they do, you can exit the circle from its unprotected segments. This drill is exciting and will challenge you to be creative in your defense against multiple assailants. Have a supervisor call out for you to begin, and keep fighting until you are outside of your opponents. This drill should be done in close quarters and your partners should be fully protected. You must hit, kick, throw and push until all resistance is gone. Time yourself on your escape and try to win out in less time. Compete with your partners to escape quickly.

This drill requires a circle on the floor. The object of the drill is to escape from the circle while several of your partners surround you and prevent your escape.

Your partners cannot enter to contain you and they must stand on the line, but you can trick, push and hit them to remove



**Break through any way that you can!**

There are generally two types of multiple drills; Timed and Simultaneous attacks. The previous drills are examples of times drills; one in which your partners time their attack, and the other in which you time your attack against them. Multiple timed attacks allow the trainee some time before the next aggressor reaches him with a strike or a grab. This type of drill can help you develop your responses to be quicker and more precise, but the simultaneous multiple attack will be more realistic. This next example is of a multiple simultaneous drill.

### **Drill #22 - Multiple Simultaneous Attack**



**Face two or more partners.**

hit. Add opponents when you feel comfortable. You will find that at three opponents or more, the offense will be very difficult but you must throw one into another to give yourself time to escape or to hit. Use this drill with the same rules as “AG” sparring at first. Don’t allow grappling or throws because you want to train to fight multiple opponents while standing. As you become more proficient, allow your partners to try to throw you to the ground and allow anything in “AG” fighting. This will make you extremely comfortable in handling more than one opponent. As

usual, change the complexity and number of opponents in this drill to suit your training. Don't be afraid to experiment.



**Keep moving and hitting.**

## Attitude Modification

You should always train hard when you can, but there are specific drills which will give you some reassurance when you are at peak stress. You practice these drills so that the energy will be available to you when it is needed. In addition, the mental framework required to defeat your opponent will be yours.

### Drill #23 - 10 For 1 Sparring

You should practice a drill called “10 for 1” in “AG” sparring. When your supervisor calls out “10 for 1” to you, you must return 10 strikes for every one that your opponent hits you with. You should shower him until he is backed defeated. This action will heighten your awareness of opponent by speeding up your senses. It will enable you to remain calm during your attack by giving you a mental strength. It will also give you better stamina and endurance, and be more realistic because you will be operating at peak stress for only a short time. Remember, though, that you will become very tired after a few of these “10 for 1” attacks, so your supervisor should limit these to two or three each three minute round. This is exactly the type of energy that you will need to win a street fight.



This type of activity can be used when you train on the heavy bag also. Try to do 10 - 20 seconds of intense hitting and kicking on the bag. Don't pace yourself! When you do this drill, you are trying to go as fast and as hard as you can without respect for form. Proper form will come with practice, but this action is crucial to train battle readiness.

Martial artists are just finding out about awareness training, which can be done at any time and under any conditions. Try to take in every action around you. See who is moving, who is talking, and who is looking toward you. Do this drill in malls, at work, and in your training hall until it becomes a part of you. You should naturally take in all of the information that surrounds you. This will help you better prepare for a confrontation by seeing it before it surprises you.

### **Drill #24 - Awareness Drill**

Have several partners surround you and, individually, attack you. This is similar to the play that is done in martial arts schools anyway. Your friends try to surprise you by sneaking up and attacking you. You can make this a training drill by allowing it to be done realistically for a period of time (or maybe one night each week), or you can make it a standard drill as described here. Stand in the center of your opponents calmly and wait for their attack. Try to feel their attack coming and defend against it quietly. Use all of your senses; your eyes to see their motion, both in front of you and peripherally, your ears to hear their footsteps or their breathing coming closer, your skin which can even feel as someone is coming toward you. Do this drill with your eyes open or closed to train the other senses and to develop your grappling sensitivity.

Develop this awareness to a high degree and it will be invaluable in your training.



**It is better to have some time than no time.**

The last attitude modification is a comment on one-step sparring in general. Most dojos train on-step sparring (one strike with one or more counters), but because the instructors don't make the activity real, the students don't think it is real. The strike that your partner throws should hit you. If he is just throwing his hand up with no desire, then he is cheating you out of your practice. Let him know that! Your counter should be real and your partner should know that too. You can slow your strike to barely hit him, but you better make sure that you at least touch him. Put some energy into your strikes!



**Train hard.**



**Give 100%.**

## Summary

We have learned some drills that train the required attributes for fighting. Strength can be trained actively using partners and specific drills designed to test and enhance this attribute. Speed can be trained with partners also with a concentration on pitting one man's speed against another's. Sensitivity drills are all easily learned and very effective. These drills will enable you to feel your opponent's motion and counter without thinking. We have also reviewed some different ways to spar that duplicates a real situation. This sparring is not conventional, but is highly effective in training a martial artist for combat. We have discussed weapons training that closely parallel actual assaults. Remember to train these drills for the same amount of time that they will be seen outside of the training hall. Multiple opponent drills can be fun and still provide you with skills required in an assault. There were mentioned some drills to train the proper mental attitude as well. Remember that these drills should always be performed with an instructor looking on.

It is possible to train hard safely, but for years martial artists have been afraid to hurt one another (or afraid of lawsuits). This feeble training can do you no good and, in fact, can do you harm by letting you think that you are prepared. You will find after using these techniques and drills that you will no longer think of your normal sparring as a fight. You will know that your opponent can do much more to you, and you will (with luck) be prepared to do battle in its most serious form.

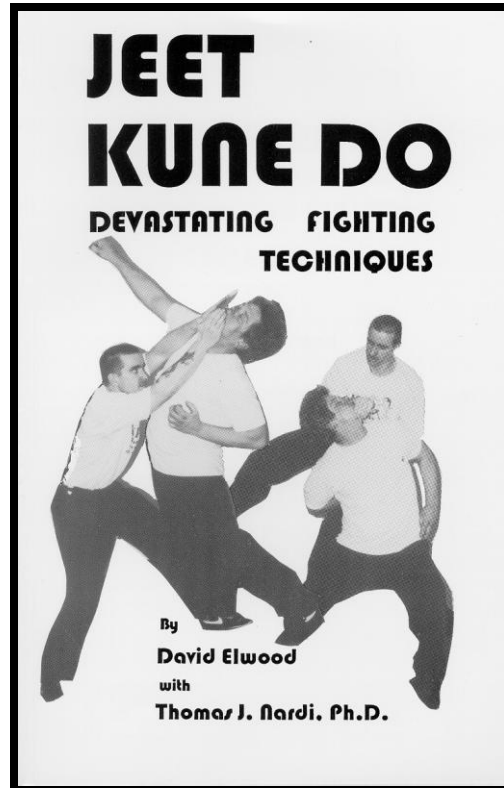


## **About the author:**

Dave Elwood is an instructor of Total Approach Jeet Kune Do, an eclectic martial arts system. He has trained in various martial arts styles from tai-chi to Thai boxing for 23 years and holds black belt levels in Isshyunryu and Tang soo do. His study of training drills and street fighting reality took 6 years and thousands of miles in travel to complete.

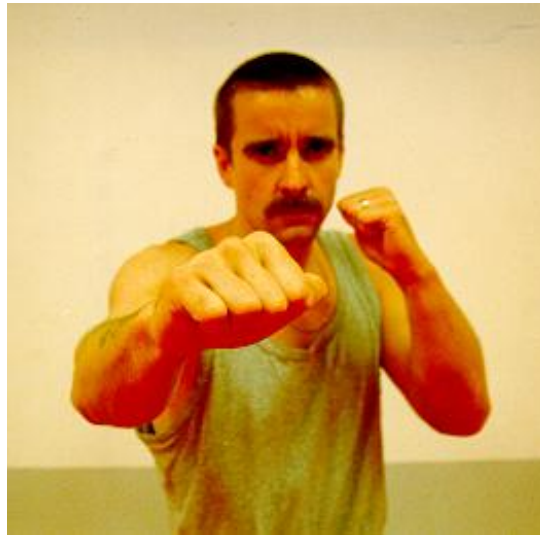


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