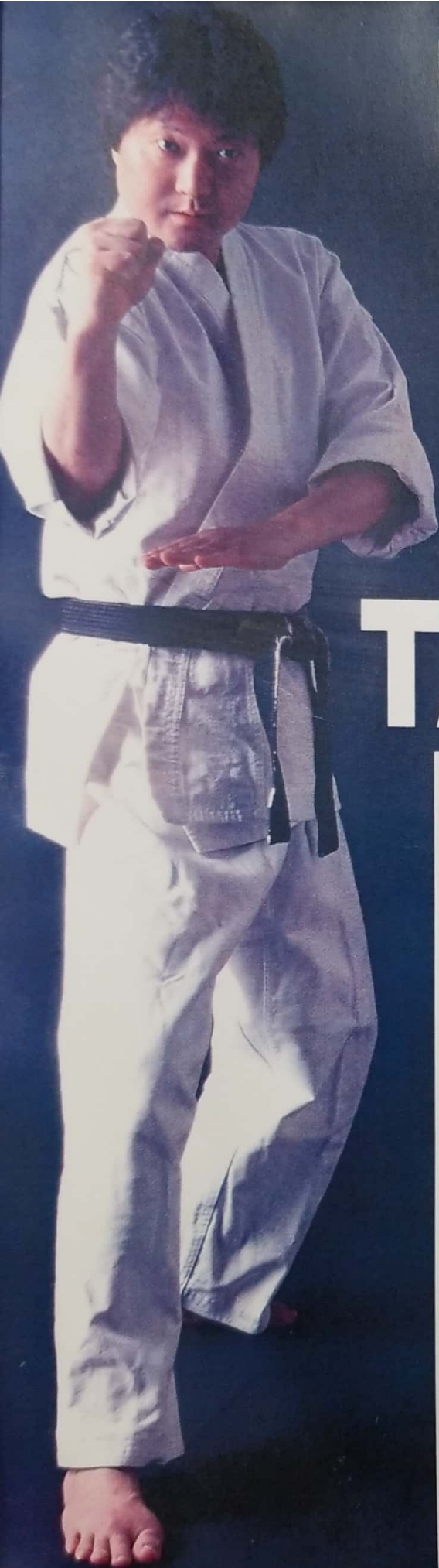


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magazine



Inflict pain with your legs, then
move in for the kill with your hands!

TAEKWONDO

WOUNDING TECHNIQUES

BY FLOYD BURK

When people think of *taekwondo*, they usually envision kicking, kicking and more kicking. With its flashy spinning kicks, dynamic double kicks, powerful linear kicks and beautiful aerial kicks, the art possesses leg techniques that are nothing short of incredible. The emphasis on foot fighting can be seen clearly in most taekwondo competitions and especially Olympic-style sparring. Unfortunately, all that focus on the feet fre-

quently prompts outsiders to criticize taekwondo as ineffective in real fights. Detractors maintain that once an opponent gets inside of kicking range, the Korean art just won't work.

"This is a bad rap for the millions of taekwondo practitioners worldwide, many of whom have identified self-defense as their main motivation for training," says Manhattan, New York-based Andrew Hahn. "I argue that taekwondo is a complete fighting art and is much more than great kicking or just a sport. Taekwondo boasts a large number of hand techniques for use in close-range hand-to-hand combat. All you have to do is

able you to employ your long-range kicking skills to wound your opponent and thus create an opening for close-quarters strikes. They're presented with a sprinkling of principles and philosophies that will help you master them in the *dojang* and use them in combat.

Knee Attack

Wounding techniques create a window of opportunity for you to move in and perform your close-range fighting [skills] by turning your opponent's attention to the injury and pain you've caused him.

—A.H.

your close-quarters techniques," Hahn says. Immediately hit the side of his face with a left elbow strike, then push him to the ground and follow up with a left heel thrust to the groin.

"The advantage of the jumping scissors side kick is that it creates so much motion it can cause your opponent to freeze up," Hahn says. "And because it can be done at such long range, you have the space and time needed to analyze important things about him, such as his fear, anger and confusion."

Success tip: Once you've identified your initial target, don't look directly at it, Hahn says. Track it with your



PHOTOS BY FLOYD BURK

KNEE ATTACK: Andrew Hahn (right) faces his opponent (1). He immediately leaps into the air (2) and chambers his right leg for a low side kick (3). As soon as the taekwondo expert makes contact with the man's knee (4), he advances and drives an elbow smash into the man's face (5) and a heel thrust into his groin (6).

look at the one-steps or the forms, especially the black-belt forms, to see that a lot of focus is put into close-fighting techniques.

"For many traditional taekwondo instructors like myself, techniques such as punches, forearm and elbow smashes, and knee strikes have always been the primary weapons for street combat. Kicks work best for setting up those techniques."

To help you become more proficient at defending yourself at any range, Hahn agreed to discuss three proven combinations designed to en-

Begin by adopting a right-foot-forward fighting stance about four feet to five feet in front of your attacker, who's in a left-foot-forward stance. Perform a jumping scissors side kick by leaping with your left leg forward, then chambering your right leg in midair and driving a side kick into his knee. The impact is guaranteed to draw his attention to his lower extremities.

"Because your momentum will carry you well inside of kicking range, as soon as you place your leg back on the ground, you must be ready with

peripheral vision until you're ready to unload. That will keep you from telegraphing your intent.

Skipping Ax Kick

Don't be intimidated by your opponent's size or behavior. Everyone has weak points, and when a person is wounded, he [doesn't have] all his tools available to him. That gives you the upper hand.

—A.H.

You and your adversary are in a right-foot-forward fighting stance. As

you ready your attack, look for openings such as a shift of weight to his lead leg or a glance in another direction. As soon as you sense one, skip forward to close the gap, then slam a right-leg ax kick down onto his solar plexus. Put your kicking foot on the ground close to him and deliver an arrow-hand strike to his throat. Next, position your left foot behind his right ankle and leverage him down by applying pressure on his trapped leg. Once he falls, finish him with a heel kick to the head.

“When you do the ax kick, be sure to bring your leg up high enough so it goes over his guard,” Hahn says. “That makes it more difficult for him to deflect or avoid your kick.”

And you need not limit yourself with respect to techniques, he adds. “It’s [fine] to do kicks, then use hand moves and sweeping techniques to create the spacing you need to do kicks again. This increases your versatility.”

Survivor’s Guide to Close-Quarters TKD

- Know your ranges. Long range is for kicks, mid-range for punches and knifehand-type strikes, and close range for elbows, knees, head butts and biting.
- Because elbow strikes require little room to execute, are powerful and can be done vertically, horizontally and at an angle, they’re ideal for close range.
- Punches are great mid-range linear techniques and are most effective against an opponent coming straight at you. Use your first two knuckles as contact points, and for added power, snap your wrist back after making contact.
- The hook punch is a close-range technique delivered in an arc-like fashion. It’s perfect for reaching around an opponent’s arm as he tries to shield his face.
- The palm strike is a practical self-defense tool because little expertise is required to deliver it and you’re less likely to injure your hand.
- With all strikes, you must coordinate your breathing and *kihap* as you execute the move. In addition to pumping energy into the technique, it empties the air from your lungs. Then, if you’re on the receiving end of a strike, you won’t get the wind knocked out of you.

—F.B.



PHOTOS BY FLOYD BURK

SKIPPING AX KICK: Andrew Hahn (left) eyes his opponent (1), then closes the gap and drops an ax kick onto his solar plexus (2). He follows up with an arrow-hand strike to the throat (3) and positions his left leg for an ankle takedown (4). Once he leverages the man to the mat (5), he sits and executes a heel kick to the head (6).

Spinning-Wheel Heel Kick

It’s important to have a positive attitude but avoid being unrealistic and thinking every technique you throw will land or that you will end things with one shot. Use combinations and put 100-percent effort into your techniques.

—A.H.

This combination targets your opponent’s groin area. Therefore, if he has his right leg forward and you’re in a left-leg lead, you must spin counterclockwise and hit him with your left leg. If his left leg is forward, you must spin clockwise and hit him with your right—as illustrated here in the text and photos. Begin by darting forward and starting to spin. Use the

speed of the step to add momentum to your turn and deliver a powerful wheel kick up into his groin. Without pausing, perform a flying knee thrust to the chest, then pummel him with a knifehand to the neck and a reverse

adjust your distance—or hit a different target—if he repositions himself. Don't let your arms swing out to the side as you spin. Instead, keep them close to your body to deflect incoming blows if he counterattacks."

tain need. It's not the art that [makes] one better than the other; it's the person doing the art. You are what brings your art to life, and you are what makes it special. Don't abandon your style just because someone says

PHOTO BY FLOYD BURK



Although it is renowned for its kicks, traditional taekwondo includes plenty of hand techniques designed for use at close range, says Andrew Hahn (left).

5 Rules of Combat

- Never underestimate your opponent.
- Don't let combat drag on longer than necessary because as more time passes, the likelihood of your becoming enraged, careless and injured increases.
- Always be aware of your surroundings and ready to use any object or barrier to your advantage.
- Avoid confrontation if possible, and don't let your pride and ego be your downfall.
- Don't assume the fight is over until the surrender, submission or knockout is complete and unquestionable. —Andrew Hahn

punch to the head.

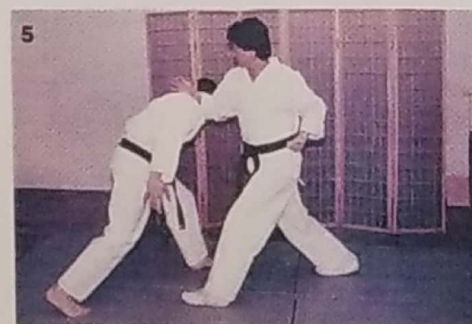
"When executing the spinning-wheel heel kick, you should be fluid and relaxed," Hahn says. "Because the spin causes you to momentarily lose sight of your opponent, be quick about turning your head so you can

Don't Jump Ship

Hahn concludes his discourse with some sage advice for modern martial artists: "Whether you're doing taekwondo, kung fu, karate, Brazilian jujutsu or some other martial art, each has something to offer and fills a cer-

something negative about it or because you hear of some new method.

"As taekwondo stylists, you must embrace your kicks and the other components at your disposal and learn to make them work in unison. Your weapons and your ability to use



PHOTOS BY FLOYD BURK

SPINNING-WHEEL HEEL KICK: Andrew Hahn (right) squares off against Panagiotis Gianopoulos (1). When he detects an opening, the taekwondo master rotates clockwise (2) and slams a heel kick into the opponent's groin (3). Hahn follows up with a flying knee to the chest (4), after which he performs a knifehand to the back of the neck (5) and a punch to the jaw (6).

them will be limitless, giving you a huge advantage over potential street-fighting combatants. You will be a complete fighter and a survivor, and what could be better than that?"

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WORLD'S LEADING MAGAZINE OF SELF-DEFENSE

STATE OF TAEKWONDO

by Floyd Burk

ONE-STEP DRILLS FOR SELF-DEFENSE

One-step sparring (*ilbo daeryeon* in Korean) is perhaps the most underrated exercise in all of taekwondo. That's partly because it is a form of pre-arranged fighting, meaning that the defender knows what type of attack will be executed and can therefore preplan his defense. Many martial artists believe that's not realistic enough for self-defense.

Nevertheless, taekwondo master Andrew Hahn, owner of the International Martial Arts Center in New York City, insists that one-step sparring is a fundamental part of the taekwondo curriculum, one that can benefit practitioners of any art.

To make your one-step sparring practice more effective, Hahn says, you must train with different partners: tall and short, light and heavy, passive and aggressive, and so on. And you should avoid the urge to respond with only fancy kicks and tournament moves, he says, for there is a lot more to taekwondo than great kicking.

"One-steps are great for beginners to get used to punches and kicks coming at them, and advanced students get to expand on what they already know," he says. "Since most adults haven't had a punch thrown at them since grade school, one-steps can help you block or evade with the correct

timing and develop proper footwork and distancing skills. When executing counterattacks, you learn to maximize your power by [using] your reach against different-sized opponents and improve your focus when doing your techniques.

"Another benefit is that your opponent provides

“Since most adults haven't had a punch thrown at them since grade school, one-steps can help you block or evade with the correct timing and develop proper footwork and distancing skills.”

you with the opportunity to study anatomy—to hit effective targets such as pressure points,” he says. Because of the inherent danger involved whenever vital points are targeted, it is crucial to keep the atmosphere safe and to avoid getting into a free-for-all sparring match, he adds.

The following are four of Hahn's favorite one-step sparring drills:

• **Left-side punch to your face.** When your part-

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 26

ner advances and uses his left arm to punch, you evade his attack by stepping slightly forward and to the side with your left foot. That movement takes you out of the line of fire and leaves you in close-quarters striking range. You can immediately counter the punch with an upward right elbow to the chin, then pivot clockwise and simultaneously execute a horizontal left elbow smash.

• **Right-side punch to your chest.** As your partner attacks with a right punch, you step forward and to your left with your left foot, then move your right foot to the rear. Pivot slightly clockwise while deflecting the punch with a left outside-to-inside block, then turn counterclockwise and hit him with a right ridgehand to the throat. Pivot clockwise again and strike his head with a left forearm block while grabbing his right wrist with your left hand. Next, put him in an armbar by lifting his grabbed wrist, wedging your left hand or elbow between the back of his arm and shoulder, and pushing down. You can hold him in that position, or you can end it all right there with a front kick or knee to the face, Hahn says.

• **Left-leg roundhouse kick to your body.** As your partner kicks, you turn clockwise about 45 degrees. That will cause his kick to lose power before it reaches you. Next, trap his kicking leg with your right arm, do a left knee smash to the groin and slam a front kick into the knee of his base leg. Continue with a left elbow strike to the side of the knee of the leg you are holding, and use your right arm and biceps to establish a foot and ankle lock. Flip him to the ground by pushing down on the back of his knee with your left hand while you crank his ankle counterclockwise. You can follow up with a left heel stomp to his groin, Hahn notes.

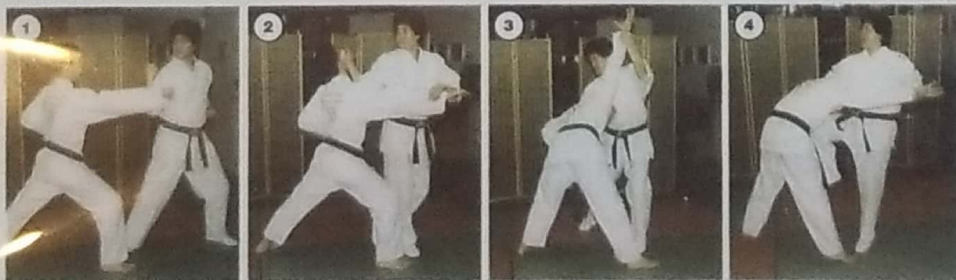
• **Right-side punch.** As your partner launches his fist attack, you retreat into a right back stance and perform a right outside-to-inside block. You then grab his right wrist and counterattack with a right backfist to the head. While maintaining control of his wrist, wrap your right arm around his neck and catch him in a front head lock. You can hold him in that position or knock him out with a knee smash to the face.

Because one-step sparring is an interactive form of training, it is important to respect your partner. Bowing before and after each exercise shows you are thanking him for working with you, Hahn says. “Be sincere when you execute the protocols and stay focused so you can make headway by gradually improving your skills. Then you will improve mentally and physically and be more balanced in your daily life.”

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跆拳道

Right-side punch: As the opponent attacks, Andrew Hahn moves into a right back stance and executes an outside-to-inside block with his right arm (1). Hahn then grabs the opponent's right wrist and slams a backfist into his temple (2). After lifting the trapped arm, the taekwondo expert encircles the other man's neck with his right arm (3) and finishes with a front head lock and a knee thrust (4).



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STATE OF TAEKWONDO

by Floyd Burk

Stopping a Surprise Attack

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When the average person is assaulted, he or she reacts with fear and panic. Indeed, the mere thought of real aggression elicits anxiety, dread and apprehension in most people—and that is a great advantage for the assailant.

To get your feet wet in the *dan jeon* method, slowly inhale through your nose for five to 10 seconds. Use your abdominal muscles to push the air toward your *dan jeon*, which is located just below your navel. Then exhale through your nose using



Andrew Hahn's (right) "basic surprise self-defense drills" involve fending off attackers who approach from behind, as well as from the front and sides.

To overcome that natural response, you must develop better awareness and learn to manage stress so you can win the battle against fear, says Manhattan, New York-based *taekwondo* instructor Andrew Hahn.

In preparing yourself to stop a surprise attack, the first obstacle to surmount is the tendency to think you will never be the victim, says Hahn, who also holds *dan* ranks in *hapkido* and *aikido*. If you accept the fact that you can be jumped at any time and in any place, an actual assault will not come as a complete surprise and the attacker will lose some of his advantage.

Next, you need to learn how to manage the stress that will accompany such an encounter. Hahn recommends the Korean breathing exercise known as *dan jeon ho heup* to help you stay calm and focused before and during an altercation.

the same count. Repeat the exercise until your sessions hit 20 minutes in duration, Hahn says. As your breathing becomes deeper and more even, it will help you stay relaxed, and that will enable you to think clearly and counterattack if necessary.

Once you are accustomed to doing solo *dan jeon* breathing, Hahn advises you to integrate it with self-defense drills. Although the time you spend inhaling and exhaling will become shorter during training and combat, your breathing patterns should remain as even and deep as possible.

His first recommendation is called "basic surprise self-defense drills." Have a series of attackers come at you one at a time from the front, rear and sides. Direct your techniques to your opponents' vital areas and joints while maintaining your coolheadedness as you focus only on the task at hand. If you become overwhelmed—which is

likely in the beginning—use your breathing skills to regain your composure. For realism and safety, have your training partners wear protective gear.

His second recommendation is called "advanced surprise self-defense reflex drills." Surround yourself with four or five opponents who have been instructed to grab, punch and kick you at random. Try to fend them off without hesitation. React calmly and instinctively to each person's assault. For variety, perform the drill with the lights lowered and then turned off. Or do it after arming your partners with padded sticks, practice knives or fake firearms.

You will soon find that you cannot rely only on your eyes, Hahn says. To triumph, you must use your other senses: listen for footsteps, sniff the air in search of the close smell of sweat, be open to the hair on your arm or the back of your neck being rustled by the rush of air that accompanies an attack. You will soon be able to "know" where your opponent is and what technique he's preparing without even seeing him. You will possess a state of consciousness that gives you ample time to recognize, assess and respond to a physical assault. You will have the advantage over your attacker. ✕

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state of taekwondo

THE MYTH OF KICKING

BY FLOYD BURK

The kicks of taekwondo are among the best in the business. Nevertheless, for close-range combat, they suffer from a bad reputation. Some people say the art's kicks should only be used for setting up hand strikes or one-step situational self-defense moves, while others declare that no kicks are effective enough to be used in a real fight.

Andrew Hahn, a seventh-degree black belt in taekwondo, says phooey to all the skeptics: "The general misconception out there is that you can't kick from close range. That's just not true, unless you don't know how to kick or are unwilling to learn. When kicking becomes good, it can happen at any range. Highly trained martial artists will make their kicks [work] at any distance."

The following is his advice for close-range kicking; he divides it into three phases:

- Phase one entails determining the

Taekwondo instructor Andrew Hahn (left) demonstrates how the outside crescent kick can be effective at close range (1-2).

“It's important to understand that you don't need to kick really hard; you just need to be precise.”

kicking action to be used, the level of the kick, the type of kick and the best target. Hahn recommends snapping action for short-range kicking. One of its benefits is that it requires very little wind-up. That helps you maintain your balance while allowing you to do multiple kicks and fast counterattacks. From a defensive standpoint, the snapping action is superior because it minimizes the chance your opponent will be able to grab your leg or get behind it.

Hahn splits short-range kicking into two levels: lower (below the waist) and upper (above the waist). If you're new to kicking or lacking in flexibility, focus on lower-level kicks. "The advantage of low-level kicks is they can be done with relative ease and the kicker need not be

especially flexible," Hahn says. "For best results, avoid the fancy stuff and stick with taekwondo's basic bread-and-butter kicks: the front kick and side kick, done primarily with the lead leg, and the stomp kick. Low-level targets include the groin, knee, outer thigh and shin. Any of them will slow an opponent down, and a groin strike will immobilize him."

Upper-level kicks require more flexibility and strength, but if you're capable, they can work well. "Because of all the additional targets that can be accessed at the upper level, you should add the roundhouse kick, crescent kick and ax kick to your arsenal," Hahn says. "The targets include those in the middle [of the body]—the stomach, rib cage and solar plexus—and the high areas—the

neck and head." The middle areas work great for stopping an opponent by knocking the wind out of him, or worse if certain vital areas are struck. The neck and head can function as immediate off-switches for adversaries who deserve to be put out of commission.

- Phase two involves rigorous physical training in which you practice your kicks first on imaginary opponents, then on a heavy bag or training dummy and finally on a padded partner. It bolsters your knowledge of the targets, their precise locations and the best angles to use for maximum effectiveness. Hahn recommends devoting one or more hours a day several times a week to this phase.
- Phase three pertains to chambering and power management. Because short-range kicking doesn't use a lengthy wind-up or require lots of distance, much of your success depends on awareness and control of your chambering movement. Likewise, you must be able to judge the range of your kicks and the distance to the target. "All kicks done here necessitate that you raise your leg to the chambered position," Hahn says. "The farther you cock your foot back, the more acceleration you can achieve, and more acceleration adds up to a more powerful kick. Upper-level kicks require a higher and tighter close-to-the-body chamber. As your high-and-tight chamber improves, so does your capacity to hit your target with power and control."

In general terms, power management is the ability to measure and manage the acceleration you achieve when moving your foot from the chambered position to the target, Hahn says. "It's important to understand that you don't need to kick really hard; you just need to be precise. Bill 'Superfoot' Wallace is great at short-range precision kicking. Look at how he cocks his leg and how tight it is. That's the secret to close-range kicking." ❧

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PHOTOS BY FLOYD BURK

Beginner's Guide to Dojang Protocol

跆拳道

I receive numerous e-mails from readers asking about taekwondo protocol. The most common inquiries have to do with bowing, wearing a uniform, earning rank and addressing seniors. To obtain the most authoritative answers, I collaborated with taekwondo instructor Andrew J. Hahn and came up with some explanations.

Bowing is the obvious place to start because there's so much of it in taekwondo. It makes people feel good as it provides a means to say hello, good bye, please and thank you. However, many skeptics don't like it because they think it's religious. They're wrong, Hahn says. "Bowing is about respect and courtesy. Religion has nothing to do with it."

Students bow to their instructor to show appreciation for his knowledge and commitment to teaching. The instructor bows to his pupils in recognition of their desire to learn. Students bow to their fellow students to acknowledge them and as a gesture of friendship.

Practitioners also bow when they enter the dojang (training hall) and when they see their country's flag and the Korean flag. This is intended to honor the school and all the past and present masters who have contributed to the creation and transmittal of taekwondo. "Bowing to a flag is showing allegiance and respect to the country where the person practices the art," Hahn says. "Bowing to the Korean flag is not pledging allegiance to Korea; it is paying homage to the country where the art originated."

The white uniform is taekwondo's great equalizer. Whether you're rich or poor, blue collar or white collar, or in shape or out of shape, you are the equal of everyone else on the dojang floor. You are expected to keep your uniform neat and clean, which helps build self-respect and a positive self-image. "The white uniform represents purity and in-

nocence," Hahn says. "This means that you should bring to each training session a focused, true, clear state of mind and [train] with the eagerness and enthusiasm of a beginner."

A belt is used to hold the uniform top closed. Its color indicates the level of your knowledge and experience. Belt colors are divided into two groups: *geup*, which are the pre-black-belt levels, and *dan*, which are the degrees of black

Taekwondo's belt system motivates students to learn because they know that more advanced techniques await them at higher ranks.



belt. *Geup* grades progress from higher to lower numbers and generally use colors in the following order: white, yellow, green, blue and red. There may be two or three stages for each one. *Dan* levels go from lower to higher numbers. It can take several years to earn a black belt and many more to climb through each of the ten levels of black belt.

The belt system, which was created by judo founder Jigoro Kano, is the art's ideal form of motivation. It instills the desire to set goals and achieve them. Advancement brings a sense of pride and accomplishment.

Addressing instructors and senior students in a formal and proper manner sows the seeds of respect. Children and adults who are new to the dojang frequently use words like "huh," "yeah" and "nope" when conversing with older people. They don't know they're being disrespectful. The taekwondo requirement of using "sir," "ma'am," "Mr." or "Ms." when addressing seniors makes them think about how they should speak.

"With time, this practice will spill over into the student's everyday life, and he will become a more courteous and well-mannered person," Hahn says.



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UNLEASHING THE SNAP KICK AND THRUST KICK

BY FLOYD BURK

Practitioners of the Korean arts have a plethora of kicks at their disposal. However, this abundance can cause confusion and indecisiveness when they need to choose a specific technique to use at a specific time. Calling this dilemma a "pleasant" problem, Manhattan, New York-based taekwondo expert Andrew Hahn says you can gain command of the situation by focusing on basic snap kicks and thrust kicks.

The best snap kicks are the front, roundhouse and side variants, all of

which should be executed with your lead leg, he says. "The front kick and the roundhouse are the quickest of the three and can be used like a boxer's jab. They give you versatility because the front kick is linear and the roundhouse is a circular technique."

Snap kicks afford you options when you're attempting to penetrate your opponent's defenses. While the side snap kick isn't as quick as the other two, the additional body mass you put into it gives it some extra pop. "It's unique in that it can be used against

an attacker from the front or one coming at you from your blind side," he says. "The kick also uses a cleaner, more direct line to its target, increasing its efficiency."

Since you don't have to wind up your body to throw snap kicks, you can maintain your balance and do multiple kicks and fast counterattacks, Hahn explains. They're also good tools to slow

The stepping lead-leg side thrust kick has the power to pulverize pine.
Taekwondo instructor Andrew Hahn demonstrates.

PHOTO BY FLOYD BURK



down your adversary if you get caught off-guard. "Snap kicks are effective for testing your opponent's reactions and finding weaknesses, and they're great for setting up your knockout power kick," he says. "They open the door for the follow-through."

In contrast, thrust kicks are executed primarily with your rear leg because you must take an extra step to create enough momentum to launch them, the taekwondo expert says. The most common ones are the forward thrust kick, back thrust kick and stepping lead-leg side thrust kick.

"The forward thrust kick can be done fastest of them all because little weight-shifting is required," he says. "Like lifting up a gun and shooting, just chamber your leg and fire. Remember to extend and thrust your hips forward to make it powerful."

The side thrust kick is especially effective against an opponent who's coming at you from your open side because the sideways stance provides extra protection to vital targets such as the stomach and solar plexus.

Back thrust kicks are ready-made for defending against an attacker who approaches from the rear. All you have to do is lift your leg and initiate the kick. To avoid leaving yourself open to a counterattack, immediately turn toward your opponent once you've executed the technique, Hahn advises.

The stepping lead-leg side thrust kick is effective against an adversary who's attacking from the front, Hahn says. Slide your rear leg toward your lead leg as you chamber it into a side-kick position, then fire the technique using the momentum created by the step and the leg extension. You can also do a two-part movement in which you take an initial step with your lead leg, then bring your rear leg forward to

rocket your opponent backward with an even more powerful shot.

"Thrust kicks give you the ability to end a fight with a single blow," Hahn says. "They also allow you to drive your opponent back and get him off-balance, creating more space for delivering the knockout. Strong bones and multiple boards can easily be broken."

Practice your thrust kicks against an imaginary opponent at slow, medium and fast speeds, Hahn says. Once they become second nature, spread out your practice time and throw each one against a kicking bag at body- and head-height targets. Include some reps in which you aim at the knee and groin for added self-defense utility.

For the next phase of training, one that will hone your thrust kicks and snap kicks, you and your partner should don chest guards and headgear. Start with him in a stationary position as you execute your kicks, then have him move toward you while you attack. Finish by having him launch various attacks and counters as you try to score with your kicks. ✕

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