

KICKBOXING **FITNESS**

**Build A Brickhouse Body
& Rock Hard Confidence**



KICKBOXING FITNESS: BRICKHOUSE BODY & ROCK HARD CONFIDENCE

by

Your Name/Company

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KICKBOXING FITNESS: BRICKHOUSE BODY & ROCK HARD CONFIDENCE

If you are looking for a total body workout that totally kicks butt, then kickboxing is for you. Kickboxing is an excellent way to increase your stamina, flexibility, and strength. It's also a lot of fun!

Combining elements of boxing, martial arts, and aerobics, kickboxing gives you overall physical conditioning and toning. This rigorous cardiovascular workout utilizes controlled jabs, hooks, uppercuts and kicks designed to get you on your way to a leaner body. Practicing Kickboxing moves can also help to improve your balance, flexibility, coordination, and endurance.

Kickboxing sounds intimidating and just the thought of it may make you run in fear. As opposed to what most people think, kickboxing is not as challenging compared to other martial arts such as Tai Chi, Sambo and Silat. Ask anyone who has done it for a long time and they will tell you that this workout rut is a lot of fun. However, it is not something that you will be acquainted with for the first two or three sessions because of its steep learning curve. And it is certainly not a "self-taught" martial art. It is a very risky routine for those who are not doing it with proper techniques.

Kickboxing offers a multitude of benefits to one's health. Even if you are not planning to do competitive kickboxing, the exercises are a great way to stay in shape. If you are looking for high-energy workout routines with heart-pumping cardio that can help develop your agility, balance and coordination then kickboxing may be your best bet. Another benefit is with a strong body your self-confidence soars. You'll find you take on new challenges at a work and play – and succeed!

What is Kickboxing?

Kickboxing can be dated back to Asia 2,000 years ago. It wasn't popularized until the 1970s when American karate experts came up with competitions that allowed full-contact kicks and punches that are prohibited in karate. Kickboxing is not only a very popular martial art, but it is also known today as a general fitness workout technique. The moves mostly involve punching and kicking. All the punches, kicks and foot movements will get your heart rate up and give you a fantastic cardio workout while building muscle and toning your body.

One of the most popular forms of kickboxing today is aerobic or cardio kickboxing. It incorporates different elements of boxing, martial arts and aerobics. The routines are supposed to provide overall physical conditioning and toning. This type of kickboxing is mostly done by people who want to lose weight or those who want to tone and sculpt their bodies. It does not involve physical contact between competitors which means that you do not have to worry about going home with a dislocated shoulder.

Some people think that they need to be really fit before joining a kickboxing class. This is not true at all. We all have different goals and fitness levels so there is really no hard and fast rule about this. Your weight should not be an issue because if you keep using that as an excuse, you will never whip yourself into shape! Do not worry too much about having a little rough time doing the routines when you first dip your toes in the water. This is completely normal. Nobody feels at home right away. Your instructor will surely guide you and if needed, they will modify the exercises based on your level of fitness.

Doing kickboxing exercises to get in shape or stay fit will make you burn massive amounts of calories. This is perfect for people who want to shed weight fast. On an average, a person can burn 500 calories an hour. Some people can burn as much as 810 calories. The routines target the arms, shoulders, abdomen, thighs and butt all in one workout. It will take a few sessions to get the motions down and you may think of quitting after trying it once but kickboxing is totally worth it considering the calories you can burn along with other benefits it can give you.

Types of Kickboxing

There are many styles of this martial art and each one emphasizes different techniques. Here are brief descriptions of the different types of kickboxing:

- 1.) American Kickboxing - this style of kickboxing uses more rules of traditional boxing than other styles. Punches and kicks are allowed but opponents can only target their strikes above the waist.
- 2.) Thai Kickboxing - also known as Muay Thai, this kickboxing style is more open as it allows strikes with the fists, feet, elbow and knee. Opponents can aim above and below the waist.
- 3.) San Shou or Sanda - this martial art style originated from the ancient Chinese Wushu fighting style. This form of kickboxing uses all types of techniques including takedowns and throws.

4.) Lethwei - this is a raw form of kickboxing that can be traced back from Burma. It was more brutal before but now the rules are more controlled. The rules are very similar to Muay Thai. This kickboxing style permits head butts, attacks with all limbs, elbow and knee.

5.) Adithada - this kickboxing uses tackling and striking concepts. It also involves a study of pressure points. Adithada is very similar to Muay Thai and karate.

6.) Yaw Yan- also known as "Sayaw ng Kamatayan" in Filipino, this hybrid kickboxing style was developed in the 1970's. It is a little similar to Muay Thai but Yaw Yan involves hip-torque motions, downward-cutting kicks and long range attacks.

BENEFITS OF KICKBOXING

1.) Great full body workout - the reason why more and more people are getting hooked on kickboxing is that the moves are designed to train the entire body. You do not have to do a set of different routines to make sure that every area of your body is targeted. You are going to sweat like crazy and burn calories like you have never imagined. For you to properly deliver a punch and a kick, you have to work your entire body. With kickboxing, you will learn how to work on your balance and develop muscles you didn't know you had.

2.) Lose weight fast and tone your body - kickboxing combines different martial arts techniques with heart-raising cardio routines that will make you burn calories and fat at a fast pace. If you do the kicks and punches along with conditioning drills and rope jumping, you can burn anywhere between 700 and 900 calories in an hour. The cardio element is a very effective way to burn fat. One study confirmed that doing aerobic exercises is better at reducing belly fat than resistance training. The toning component of the martial art forces you to engage all the muscles in your body.

3.) Reduce stress - because of kickboxing's high energy nature, you would be able to punch and kick your stress away in no time. The movements will challenge several core muscle groups. This is very beneficial in conditioning not only your body but your mind as well. Unlike other workout routines with limited movements, kickboxing will allow you to move your body without limits, and this is considered as a very good stress reliever. People who have been doing kickboxing have noticed an increase on their energy levels.

4.) Improve your coordination - kickboxing is not only a good way to drop the pounds, people with posture problems will benefit from it as well. The moves will help strengthen your core and improve your reflexes, flexibility and coordination skills. When you throw punches and perform kicks, you need to concentrate in doing each movement successfully.

5.) Boost your confidence - once you start losing weight and feeling stronger, you are going to be more confident. Kickboxing releases endorphins, a group of hormones that give us a feeling of well-being. You will feel happier and more confident for several hours after your workout.

BASIC GUIDELINES ON KICKBOXING

Although there is no specific set of rules about who is fit enough to start a kickboxing routine, it's best to be familiar with the basic guidelines to prevent injuries. Kickboxing is a high intensity workout that is action packed and fast paced so it is extremely critical for you to do the moves properly. Here are some important guidelines to keep in mind:

1.) Knowing your current fitness level is very important especially if you haven't been working out for quite some time now. If this is the case, you need to prepare yourself slowly instead of jumping right into kickboxing. You may want to take a low-impact aerobics course for a few weeks to get your body adapt to working out again. This will gradually improve your strength and stamina. Your body will tell you when it is ready to do more. Work out at your own pace and do not overexert yourself because you might end up quitting altogether.

2.) Even if you are fit enough to do the routines, you have to start with the beginner workout. This should allow you to learn the moves correctly. Don't get too excited and try to do the intermediate moves right away. By learning the correct techniques, you have smaller chances of getting injured. For a beginner, it is highly recommended to train in a gym, studio or fitness center because they have all the equipment you need.

3.) It will be great if you can join a kickboxing class for you to stay motivated. Before you sign up for a class, try to observe or attend a few sessions so you'll know if it's right for you or not. Ask the instructor if they can modify the moves to accommodate your fitness and skill levels. If the kickboxing class seems to move too fast or the routines are too complicated, don't go for it! Check if the instructor provides individual instruction during or after the session. In addition to that, the instructor should have a certification and a high-level belt in martial arts. You do not want to attend a class that is run by an unqualified person, right?

4.) Comfort is everything. Always wear something that will not restrict your movement. Go for loose, comfortable clothing that will let you move your arms and legs in all directions. For women, tank tops and sleeveless shirts are recommended but if you want to hide your belly, wear a shirt that is long enough for you to tuck in. A high support sports bra is also a must. Avoid wearing tight shorts or pants. Aside from the fact that they are uncomfortable, they can prevent you from moving freely. Wear loose pants or shorts instead. For best possible comfort, wear cross trainers instead of tennis shoes. Cross trainers are great for

side-to-side movements. Talk to your instructor beforehand so you can buy everything you need for the class.

5.) Make sure you stay hydrated by drinking enough water during and after the workout. You are going to sweat a lot and the last thing you want is for you to pass out during the class. Drink at least half of your body weight in water ounces per day. Keeping your body hydrated will allow your body to work more efficiently.

6.) Do not over train and know when to stop. Overdoing it can cause a lot of problems. Don't overextend or lock your kicks and punches into any position because this can cause problems with your joints and muscles. If you find yourself short of breath, take a few minutes to rest and drink some water. If you are unable to carry a conversation while doing the routine, it means you are training too hard and you should slow down a bit.

7.) Your muscles need a day to repair and rest. You are not doing yourself any good if you tire yourself out all days of the week. Take a rest day to give your body a chance to recuperate. Kickboxing is an action packed martial art so it is highly recommended not to attend classes consecutively.

KICKBOXING GEAR AND EQUIPMENT

Kickboxing equipment can be very expensive which is why most people choose to go to a gym or fitness center instead of buying everything they need to do the workout rut. However, if you do not mind spending the money, it's great to invest on something practical so you can justify the cost. Choosing the right equipment is crucial for your safety and performance. Here is a list of the most common gear and equipment used for kickboxing:

1.) Comfortable clothes - always wear comfortable clothes that will let you throw punches and deliver kicks easily. Do not worry too much about looking good because you will be sweating a lot anyway. Your instructor may require you to buy specific attire for your kickboxing classes.

2.) Shin guards - a shin guard or shin pad is worn on the front of a person's shin to protect them from injury. There is a wide variety of shin guards available in the market today. If you want minimal protection, a cotton foam filled elasticated shin guard will do. Other types of shin pads include standard, special prints and double in-step. Double in-step shin guards provide more protection but they are actually 30% lighter. Some people say that they are able to kick faster and harder if they are wearing this type of shin pad. Shin guards can cost as low as \$20 or as high as \$130.

3.) Gloves – kickboxing gloves add weight to your punches. A good pair of gloves should protect your hands while allowing comfortable movements during class. Many seasoned kickboxers prefer using leather gloves over vinyl gloves. For beginners, it's best to try out foam padded gloves. These gloves have a plastic covering over them. These are great because they provide thicker padding. Kickboxing gloves can cost anywhere between \$50 and \$100.

Here are the three basic types:

- 14oz and 16oz for free sparring
- 12oz gloves for pad and bag work or light sparring
- 8oz and 10oz for experienced fighters

4.) Mouth guards - you do not have to over think this one; a mouth guard is just a piece of protective device that covers the teeth and gums. You do not need the most expensive one because you are not going to be competing with anyone, but at least get something decent. You can get one of those boil and bite mouth guards which need to be placed in boiling water to become softer. What's great about them is

that they take the shape of your teeth. Some people say that a mouth guard is not necessary if you are not competing but to protect your teeth just in case you hit your face on the ground, go get one.

5.) Headband and elastic tie - for women with longer bangs and hair, do yourself a favor and get your hair out of your eyes and face. This will ensure that you can see properly so you can focus on doing the moves. Workout headbands are fairly cheap and they are available in different styles and colors. Who says you can't look cute while punching and kicking?

6.) Training bag - not all kickboxing bags are created equal. If you are planning to kickbox at home, you need a bag that is specifically intended for kickboxing. Using a regular punching bag is not recommended. Muay Thai training bags are the way to go because they are longer. You need a longer bag because in kickboxing, you use the 8 points of attacks including the knees and legs. A punching bag is more or less the waist up of an opponent or target. Obviously, you need a longer training bag to execute the moves properly.

Kickboxing bags are usually made of leather or vinyl. Do not settle for cheap training bags because they will most likely sag within a short period of time. Make an investment and purchase a bag that will endure millions of kicks and punches. If you want to save a little cash, you can fill your own kickboxing bag.

7.) Ankle weights - these are not necessary but they are great to have if you want to include a resistance training device into your workout rut. Ankle weights are mostly used for toning the leg muscles. When you add a little bit of weight to your legs, your muscles work hard to lift them. This is an effective way to build muscle.

Using ankle weights very often is not advisable because they may put too much strain on your ankle joints, knees and legs, increasing your chances of injury. You can start off with light ankle weights (2 lbs.) and slowly work your way up.

8.) Headgear - since kickboxing is a full-contact sport, you need all the protection you can get. You may have a difficult time adjusting to your new headgear because of the weight and the decrease to peripheral vision. Kickboxing headgears are usually padded. Before buying one, try it on first to ensure a proper fit. However, if you are not into competitive kickboxing, there is really no need for a headgear.

KICKBOXING MOVES FOR BEGINNERS

Do not let the thought of being inexperienced with kickboxing scare you. Everybody has to start somewhere, right? This martial art has two basic elements: kicking and punching. Needless to say, most of the exercises involved in cardio kickboxing will be based from these two elements. Here are some of the most basic moves for beginners:

Basic kickboxing stance

A stance is the distribution of foot orientation and body positions when defending, attacking or advancing. The first step is to part your legs more than a shoulder width apart. Your lead shoulder and trailing shoulder should form a forty-five degree angle to your target. Your toes will point forward and your knees should be soft while keeping your abdominal muscles tight. Do not lock your knees or elbows during practice. You cannot go on learning different kicks and punches unless you master the basic kickboxing stance.

Basic Punches

Once you have mastered the basic stance for kickboxing, it's time for you to learn the basic punches.

Jab - involves a simple punch where you extend your arm straight in front of you. Your body should be in an upright position while throwing jabs.

Cross punch - as the name suggests, you need to punch across your body. Simply put, this is a type of punch that is thrown with the left hand rightwards and with the right hand leftwards. Make sure you keep your knees and toes aligned to avoid injury. Many kickboxers like to use these first two punches in a sequence.

Upper cut punch - to throw this punch, you have to stand in a defense position. Lower your fist as if you are going to punch low and swing it back up through the object you are aiming to hit.

Hook - this is a surprise punch that is performed by turning the core muscles and back then swinging the arm. Your arm should be bent at a 90-degree angle, in an arching motion. This type of punch is thrown to create the most impact on the opponent.

Basic Kicks

Roundhouse kick - also known as swinging kick, this type of kick is done by swinging the leg around in a semicircular motion, striking with the front of either the leg or foot. You have to stand with the right side

of your body while facing a target (kicking bag). Your knees should be bent while keeping your feet shoulders width apart. When you lift your right knee, point it to the right of the target or kicking bag and pivot your body toward the same direction. Use your right leg to kick the target and then repeat with your other leg.

Front kick - this is a powerful kick that can bring down an assailant quickly. The front kick is very easy to do. Stand facing your target or opponent, lift the knee of your back leg up, and deliver the kick by snapping your leg out with your toes facing upwards. Use the ball of your foot to strike your target. Position your leg back to the same place where you originally chambered (bend your knee and lift it up) it. Setting up in the chamber position will allow you to aim at your target better. It will also help build up much more power when you kick.

Side kick - to execute this kick, you have to stand with your side to the target. Raise your kicking leg to waist level, fold it tightly while pointing the bottom of your heel at your target, turn as if you are kicking backward toward the target and then throw the kick hard. Hitting your opponent or target with the outer part of your foot will make the most impact.

Other Moves that a Beginner Can Try

Walking kicks - these kicks are actually so much fun, at least for those who hate standing in one place for too long. A walking kick can be done either to the side or front to back. When trying to execute this move, you have to stay balanced and find a rhythm that works best for you. For a beginner, it will be great to have someone hold the pads for you while you kick. This will make it easier for you to stay balanced. Your kicks should be controlled to prevent injury.

Punch and kick combination - the easiest punch and kick combos for a beginner are those that use two moves together. A basic combo can include a left jab and right front kick. You can do your kicks first before throwing punches if you wish. Do not stress about it too much if you cannot perform the exercises well. Your body will adjust in no time and you will be more flexible. If you overdo it, you might pull a muscle or injure yourself.

Kickboxing Exercises for Strength

If you have been walking or jogging for a couple of months now but you are not shedding off the pounds, maybe it's about time for you to take it up a notch and try a more intense workout routine. Cardio kickboxing is one of the most effective ways to lose weight because it involves high-energy exercises that can make you burn at least 500 calories an hour. The workout rut is based from the Thai sport of kickboxing martial arts.

With cardio kickboxing, you are going to execute punches, kicks, squats, boxer shuffle, elbow digs, knee crunches and squats to the beat of quick stepping music. The moves are a little hard to follow at first because they are swiftly performed but you will find yourself enjoying the routines after a few sessions. You may find yourself a little sore after one session but this is completely normal as your body is trying to get used to the high-intensity workout.

What's great about kickboxing is that it is a complete body workout. The routines target all major muscle groups while improving your balance, focus, aerobic capacity and endurance. The first few stages of this exercise routine will let you burn the fat from different parts of your body. Once you are able to burn most of the fat, that's the time you start to develop the muscles in the body. One of the many advantages of doing full body workouts is that they require lower time commitment. You can do the routines three days a week and you are good to go. This is perfect for people who hardly have time to go to the gym.

Warm up

Never start the cardio kickboxing routines without doing stretching and warm up exercises. Ten to fifteen minutes is good enough. Do some exercises that will encourage joint mobility to lubricate your joints. You can do the lumbar rotation stretch, which requires you to lie on your back with your arms out sideways and then roll your hips and legs from one side to the other. Do some light rope skipping and bodyweight exercises such as squats, push ups and cobra which is similar to the push up position but your belly is on the floor and your back muscles are relaxed while you push up with your arms.

Cardio Kickboxing Workout

Start off by doing each of the moves for 2 sets of 10 repetitions each side. If you are new to kickboxing, stick to the basic moves first. Do 10 reps of jabs with the left hand, switch to your right and do another set. You can add another set if you feel like it. Depending on your fitness level, it may take a while for you to feel right at home. Practice your front, side and roundhouse kicks. Keep doing them until you get your technique right.

Once you get confident with the routines (this can take a couple of weeks), you can start throwing punches and kicks combinations. Combos do not always require you to execute kicks and punches at the same time. You can follow a kick with another kick if you want. It's completely up to you. Be creative and have fun with it. You will find yourself doing more and more as you improve your stamina. You can try the following combinations below:

- Jab-cross punch
- Jab-side kick
- Hook punch-hammer kick
- Cross punch- forward punch
- Jumping jacks-forward kick
- Knees-jab-cross punch
- Uppercut-hook-knee
- Jab-jab-cross punch
- High kick-rear kick
- Front kick-roundhouse kick

The calories that you are going to burn will depend on your fitness level and weight. Do not focus too much on the numbers on the scale. Keep in mind that muscle weighs more than fat which means that your weight in number may not drop at the same rate as your clothing size. If your clothes fit better, it means you are on the right track!

KICKBOXING SAFETY TIPS

Cardio kickboxing does not only help you burn a great amount of calories but it can also help you reduce stress and boost your confidence. Attending a class is a fantastic way for you to have fun with the routines while staying motivated. Since kickboxing is a high-intensity workout, you need to take note of the safety reminders pointed out below to avoid injury:

- Know your limitations. Your body will tell you how far it can go. If it signals you to slow down then take a moment to rest. You do not have to deliver accurate kicks and punches in your first few sessions. Allow yourself to get used to the basics before graduating to more advanced exercises.
- Don't do cardio kickboxing consecutively. Start with one workout per week and then work your way up once you get accustomed to the routines. Other beginners make the mistake of doing two sessions of kickboxing in a day and they end up with a pulled muscle or strained joint.
- Warm up for 10 to 15 minutes before engaging yourself in a high-energy workout routine. This will allow you to awaken all parts of your body that you will use to perform kickboxing moves successfully.
- Do not overextend your arms and legs because this may cause a serious injury. If you feel pain or discomfort in your hip flexors, lower the height of your kicks.
- You need to strengthen your feet so you can keep up with the demands of kickboxing. Do some jump rope drills or other simple foot exercises such as toe extension, calf raise and calf stretch.

Cardio kickboxing has become extremely popular over the years because of the benefits it provides to the mind and body. It is a full body workout that can effectively sculpt your body and make you drop the pounds. In addition to that, kickboxing can help improve blood circulation in all parts of the body. People who have stress-related problems can also benefit tremendously from doing the routines because they are able to release stress in a healthy way.

As with any other workout routine, safety measures should always be practiced. Kickboxing is not a light exercise that anyone can do. Knowing your current fitness level will tell you whether this type of martial art is for you or not.

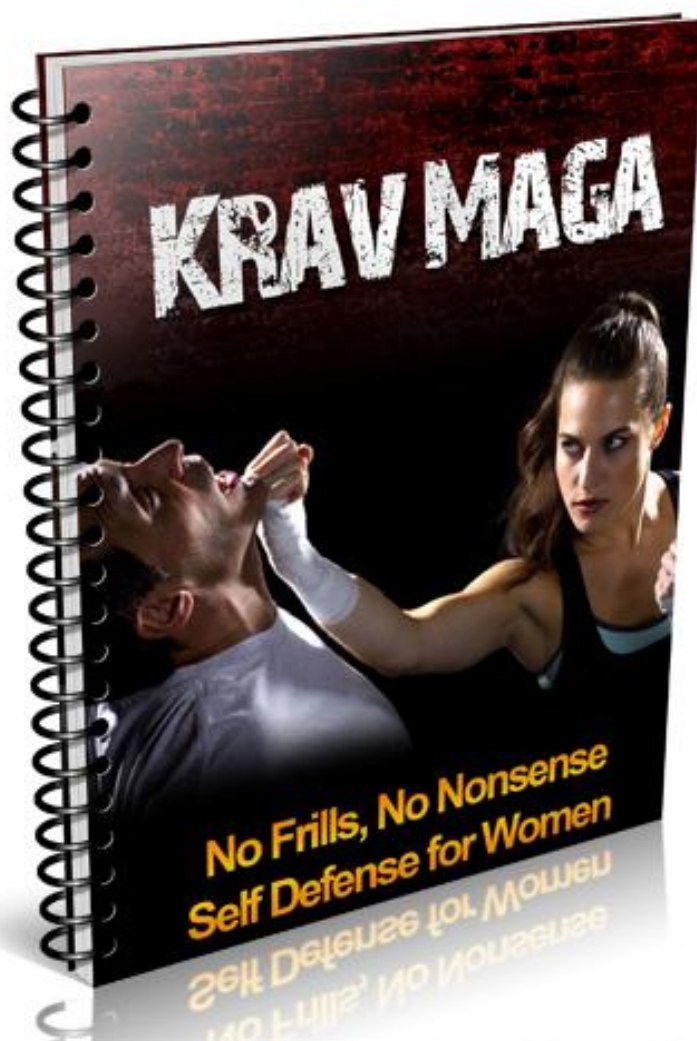
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