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The martial arts have developed over many centuries of practice and so have the techniques and the effectiveness of their application. In more recent times the martial arts have really come to the forefront with seem-ably more people than ever now involved in teaching and training!

A large part of this can be attributed to the television media and movies providing the viewers with highly elaborate yet entertaining fight scenes and sequences which has re-enlightening the curiosity and mystery behind some of the supposed 'super-human' black belt feats and movements being performed. This is none more evident than the attraction and glamour of the high kicking and jump / flying skills and tricks, which tend to motivate us all!

The practice, rehearsal and delivery of an effective strike or technique can take hours, months even years of drilling and practice to gain 'perceived' exactness, as the old saying goes - '*To know something can take a moment, to master something can take a lifetime*'.

Jumping techniques are no different, in fact in most instances they are more difficult to execute than many other techniques as the number of factors and variables obviously increases!

There have been many discussions on the suitability of jump kicking in the martial arts, whether it be a Western, commercial concept for glamour and media attention or a practical application for height and strength training. However, the physical conditioning required for the delivery of such techniques can be a fine asset in complimenting many of the other elements of the martial arts – strength, mobility and flexibility to name a few.

TECHNICAL ANALYSIS

There are a variety of training methods and techniques for building and developing the martial arts specific leg strength and explosive power required for jump kicking – plyometrics being a keen favourite for most.

For those who are unaware, plyometric training is a conditioning technique used to increase performance in sports that require explosive speed and power along with quick 'multi-directional', 'change-of-pace' and 'stop-and-go' style movements.

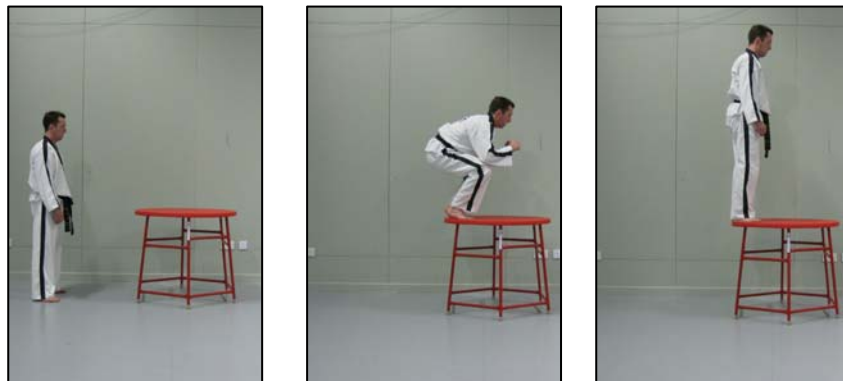
Plyometric training has also been referred to as 'bounce-loading' or 'rebound-jumping', as it utilises the natural stored elastic energy within the muscles.

The photos show just a few of the jump kick specific drills I have worked in order to enable the delivery of my techniques. Note that the depth of the squat and lunges prior to jumping can vary but be aware that deeper movements can put unnecessary strains and pressures on joints, tendons and ligaments.



Side-wards tuck jumps allowing for vertical and horizontal development

Whilst performing the drills and exercises good body form, posture and balance must be maintained throughout.



Changing the height and levels of obstacles will ensure maximum variety and range of movement.



Multiple repetitious jumps, provide focus and co-ordination; heights, angles and distances can also be varied to offer more specific workout drills

In addition, alternative methods of delivery can include leg specific drills i.e. front or side lunges, total load bearing or hopping drills and I can also recommend the use of focus pad, paddles and kick shields in providing target practice as well as goal setting.

Achieving the Serene Kicking Photos!

1. Jumping front kick – include a frontal leg extension to your front tuck jump and progress to a full strike
2. Jump double leg lift, as a plyometric drill the position and control of the legs can be varied from 'heel and toes' together to a split on the legs but ensure gradual progressing as failure may result in injury on landing.
3. Jump spinning crescent kick – involving rotation in your workout offers other considerations, again rehearse and master basics before attempting.
4. Jumping side kick – similar in its execution to the front kick but chamber to the side and use the none kicking leg to assist in the deliver of extra twist and torsion.



Don't forget -

Patience, fortitude and perseverance!

And as with all aspects of martial arts training don't be in too much of a hurry to achieve the end result as understanding the basics and mechanics as well as ensuring correct technique will maximise results.

It goes without saying that you should learn to front kick before attempting to master the jumping version – walk before you run and so on ...

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