



No Base, No Power!

Try this ancient kung fu exercise to develop the strength of base needed to produce true power.

THE TRAINER

Danilo (Danny) Hajdukovic has been practising martial arts since 1978. Over the years, he has trained with some of Australia's most influential martial artists and considers himself fortunate to have been inspired and mentored by experts in various disciplines such as Wing Chun, taekwondo, karate, Choy Lay fut, Hung Gar, Western boxing and grappling to name a few. Danny is accredited to the level of sifu (teacher) directly under Grandmaster Wan Kam Leung in Hong Kong and is now the regional director of an Australian branch of Leung's Practical Wing Chun Kung Fu Organisation in Canberra.

THE DRILL

This is one of kung fu's old-school gems that can be applied to any martial discipline. It's a beast of a drill that requires no training aids, just the determination and patience to go through the motions.

Start by standing with your shoulders squared on, completely relaxed. Touch the tip of your tongue against the roof of your mouth, just behind (not touching) your teeth, and breathe through your nose. Throughout the drill, your back and neck must remain aligned and as straight as possible.

Sequence one: Sink straight down into a deep horse-stance (ideally with your heels at shoulder-width apart and your upper thighs parallel to the floor, your back and neck aligned and straight) then gently pull your hands up to your chest. Once in position, extend both arms to a relaxed (elbows bent) position in front of you.

Sit in this position for three long/deep breaths, then place your arms in your chosen fighting guard. Breathe in, and then launch three consecutive punches from your shoulders within one exhale of breath (keeping your torso squared

on and do not lock out your elbows). Repeat this process, varying your punches between straight ahead and upwards at 45 degrees for increased difficulty.

Sequence two: In the same horse-stance, keep your torso squared on, breathe in and extend one arm out to either your left or right, with the other hand cocked ready to strike.

In a fluid double motion, exhale and twist your torso, punching across your body and simultaneously retracting the extended hand, then breathe in and twist back to the extended-arm position.

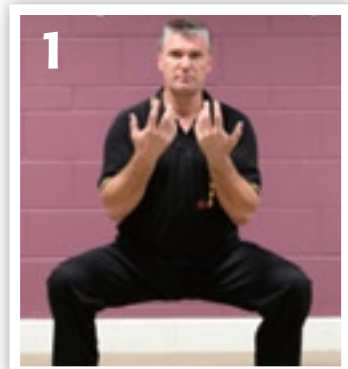
Keep repeating this sequence, drilling both the left and right sides of your body.

For advanced training you can add a sideways crab walk during the twisting punch or in between, while holding the extended-arm position.

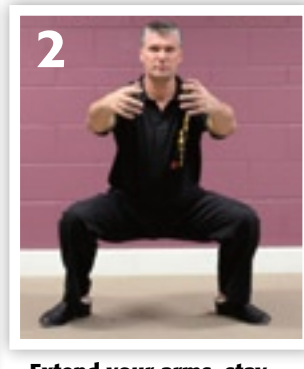
In your initial stages, this is by no means a comfortable drill to perform, however, as time passes and you manage to take ownership of it, the rewards are plenty. The gains made from it are the long-term type that, if maintained, will make your legs and core a powerful unit from which to fire your range of striking techniques.

When next thinking of the possibility of being confronted with a real threatening situation, ask yourself if your current training regime provides you with the ability to utilise fluid/raw power, or will you have to expend excessive energy in applying multiple techniques to achieve the same results? Get back to basics, keep it simple, keep at it and arm yourself (regardless of size) with power like Thor's hammer rather than a pea shooter. Remember: no base means no power!

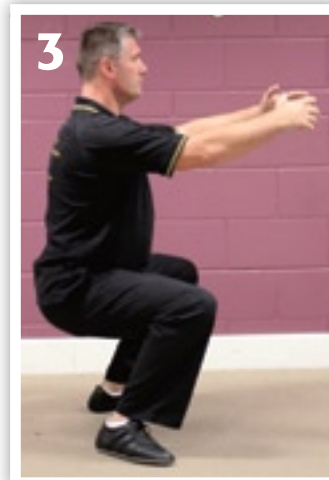
HORSE-STANCE DRILL #1



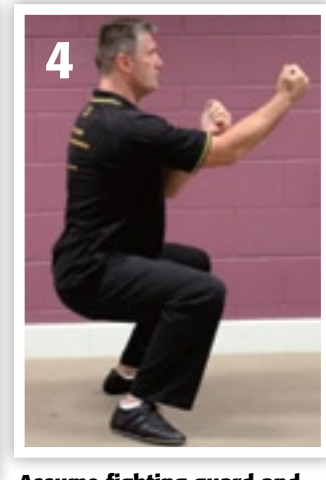
1 Sink into horse-stance with your hands relaxed in front.



2 Extend your arms, stay relaxed and take three deep breaths.

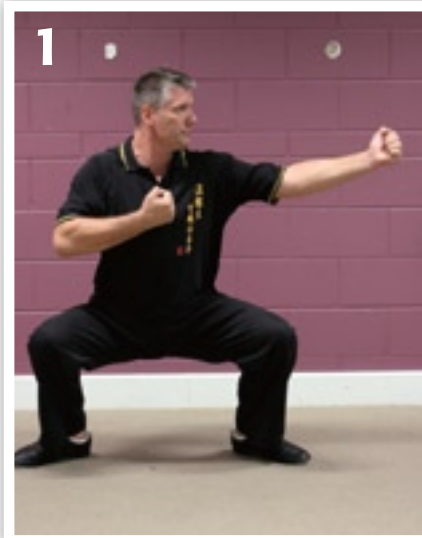


3 (Side angle to show posture when breathing)



4 Assume fighting guard and fire triple punches on each single exhalation.

HORSE-STANCE DRILL #2



1
Extend your left arm out with your right hand cocked.



2
Twist and punch across your body, retracting the extended hand, then twist back to the start.



3
After three punches on one side, swap sides. Extend your right arm out with your left hand cocked...



4
...then twist and punch three times to the right.

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