

ONE INCH OF POWER

The Method and Use
of the Jeet Kune Do
One Inch Punch



By

Señior Instructor Jeremy Lynch
Edited by Vincentius Vulpes





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E-book text by

Jeremy Lynch www.JKDDVD.com



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Vincentius Vulpes www.iNeed.to/fight™



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This e-book is humbly dedicated to the memory of
Bruce Lee. May it continue his legacy by contributing
to your authentic self-expression.



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Introduction

Bruce Lee made the “one inch punch” famous in the West at the 1964 Long Beach International Karate Championship. He demonstrated his proficiency at the technique in front of a large audience there, knocking his holder back several feet into a chair. In the years since, many people have made some very interesting, and sometimes weird claims about this technique. Some people say the power that Bruce Lee demonstrated proved that he had developed a large amount of “Chi” energy. Others have claimed that the one inch punch is no more than a party trick, and means nothing. In this e-book we will show you the way that the JKD Wednesday Night Group in Redlands, California, and my own personal group train the one inch punch, and why we do it.

First it must be said that the one inch punch has a lot of potential, but only with the correct mindset. The one inch punch provides valuable training in how to use your body to generate power, but it is not an unbeatable move (there is no such thing). You may be able to impress people with the one inch punch, but the real value of this technique is that the fundamental principles of generating striking power are all contained and exercised in this one technique.

The remainder of this e-book is divided into two parts; first, the exercises that build strength in the one inch punch, and second, the technique itself. The technique is relatively simple, but if you don't do the exercises it will be impossible for you to generate any real power.



Exercises

One thing that I have discovered in my 29 years in the martial arts is that if you do not strengthen your body in a way that supports you, you will not be able to strike with maximum power. There are two reasons for this: 1. Without strength in the right stabilizing muscles for the particular strike there will be “give” on impact (excessive motion in any joints involved in the strike) instead of the rock solid feeling that should be there. 2. If you do not have strong stabilizing muscles, e.g. your forearms, you will not be able to punch with full power because your subconscious mind knows that you may injure yourself on impact when your joints give, and will not let you strike at full power. Once you strengthen your forearm muscles, your punches will become significantly more powerful.

So let us begin the exercises. To give muscles time to recover, rebuild, and gain strength, the exercises should be done approximately every other day.

In the illustrations we have shown the exercises being done on concrete bricks. This does two things for you; it strengthens wrists and arms, and it toughens your hands. It is okay to start on grass or carpet and work up to concrete.

Three point & high hip push-ups

As you might imagine, arm strength is very important for generating power in the one inch punch, and push-ups are a, if not the, classic exercise for building arm strength.

As shown in the illustration, start in the standard vertical push-up position and do ten repetitions (reps). Next, turn your fists to a 45 degree angle and do ten more push-ups. Then turn your fists to the horizontal position and do ten more reps. Varying the angle of your fists helps to build stabilizing muscles in your arms. As you do these exercises, over the next month or so you should increase the number of reps you do in each set.

Another particularly beneficial push-up variant is, from the standard push-up position, to raise your hips up so that you are in the shape of an A, and as you bend your arms try to touch your forehead to the ground. These “high hip” push-ups help strengthen your back.



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Suspended push-ups

To perform suspended push-ups, extend your hands out and forward from your torso (as illustrated) and perform 10 push-ups. This type of push-up activates other parts of the “core muscles” that are important for striking power. As with the other push-ups, gradually increase the number you perform at a time.



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Wrist rolls

You can purchase a commercial wrist roller at sporting goods stores, or you can make your own out of a dowel, rope, and a two liter soda bottle. Use a weight of at least 5 lbs, and increase the weight depending on the ease at which you can perform the exercise.

Stand with your arms out in front of you, hands level with your shoulders. The rope should hang down the side of the roller furthest from you. Now roll it up using your wrists until fully wound, then reverse the motion using your wrists to slowly unwind it (don't just loosen your grip and let it unwind). Do this 10 times. Increase the number of reps according to your increasing wrist & shoulder strength.





Shoulder Raises: Side

Using 5 to 10 Lbs weights, raise your hands out from your sides with the back of your hand toward the sky. Continue raising your arms until your hands are just above shoulder height, and then slowly bring them back down to your sides. Do 10 to 12 reps. This type of exercise can be done with a variety of weight types if you don't have dumbbells. One gallon water bottles work quite well (one gallon of water weighs about eight pounds). Be sure that you are not leaning back in order to get the weight up.



Shoulder Raises: Front

The difference between this shoulder raise and the last is the direction in which you move the weight and the way you stand. Stand upright, with one leg out in front of you to support your back. Alternating right and left hands, move the weight slowly up in front of you (with the back of your hand to the sky) until it is just above shoulder height. As you slowly lower the first hand, start lifting your second hand. Once again, the amount of weight should not be so great that it causes you to shift and lean back. This can cause injury, and doesn't help you become stronger more quickly.



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Medicine ball exercises (Using a 6 to 10 pound ball)

These exercises with a medicine ball need to be done with care, because of the explosive movements used. Such exercises carry a greater risk of pulled muscles and, if done in an inappropriate environment, broken windows. However, this kind of explosive movement contributes greatly to striking power, so if you want to hit with power explosive exercises are essential.



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In the first drill, start with your feet shoulder width apart, holding the medicine ball with both hands at about shoulder height. Keeping your feet stationary, rotate from the waist until the ball reaches the extreme opposite side (as shown in the illustration). Now, simply do the movement in the other direction. The idea is to create a steady rhythm back and forth, using as much snap from the waist as possible without injuring yourself. To decrease the difficulty of the exercise, bend your elbows and hold the medicine ball closer to your torso, to increase the difficulty, hold it further from your torso. Do this exercise for 30 seconds, and over the next few weeks increase the duration to keep it relatively strenuous.



The second medicine ball drill can be done with a partner, by bouncing the medicine ball off of a concrete wall, or simply by using a wide open space.

Start by getting into your fighting stance (in the illustration it is the JKD Bai Jong stance), and place the ball against your lead shoulder. Using your lead hand, launch the ball as far and as fast as you can. If you are working with a partner he should be far enough back so that when you throw it fast and hard he will be able to catch without injury. He can then throw it back to you, and you can continue until you have done twenty reps. If you are using a wall, adjust your distance for safety and your ability to catch the rebound. The challenge with doing this exercise by yourself as illustrated is that you have to run after the ball and retrieve it. However, this is not really a problem, as it is good exercise, and should not be a deterrent for the serious martial artist. The idea behind these drills is to move as fast as possible. That generates power.



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Technique

The one inch punch, like many JKD techniques, requires that you perform a number of precise movements at specific times in order to get maximum results. For this reason we have broken the technique down to movements for each body area, so that by practicing each segment, getting the feel of each segment, gaining proficiency, and then putting it all together, you will be able to get the right end result.

Foot and hip movement and weight distribution

In the one inch punch the hip and rear foot are the foundation and starting point in generating power. When performing the punch, you push off the rear leg and let a large portion of your weight fall forward onto your lead leg. As you let your weight fall forward, you whip your rear heel forward and continue that whipping, twisting energy through your lead hip, driving it forward. This is very important, the majority of the power is generated from here. Power comes from the combined action of your muscles pushing against the ground while letting gravity pull you forward.



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Shoulder and hand technique

As your hip whips forward let it drive your shoulder forward, and from your shoulder drive your whole arm forward. As your shoulder shoots forward, straighten your arm and snap your bottom two knuckles up and forward.





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Timing

The timing essentially goes like this: your rear foot drives the hip as you sink your weight forward, your hip drives you're your shoulder which drives your hand, at the very end of all that, you snap your fist up so that your bottom knuckles drive into the target. This sounds clear enough, but the trick is to keep this clear order while doing it all almost simultaneously. If you extend your arm and fist too soon, you will cut off the building momentum of your hips, if you shoot your hip forward before shifting your feet and dropping your weight, you will not be anchored to the ground, and will push yourself back more than you push your target back. As you practice, keep the order, but shorten the time.



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Distance

Distance is also extremely important, because, as in other JKD techniques, the power is greatest on the very end or fullest extension of the technique. You should not crowd your target, because your muscles will be “jammed up” and you will not get the greatest power. You can prove this principle for yourself by seeing how much weight you can bench press from your chest verses from slightly bent elbows. The most muscle fiber is engaged near your arm's full extension, so make impact with your target at nearly full extension for maximum power. As you practice, play with the distance. Once you have figured it out you will feel the difference.

Putting it all together

Once you have practiced the parts of the one inch punch, you can start to put it together and practice it on something with weight. Each time you practice the one inch punch, you should practice the sub-movements separately, so your mind can focus on a few movements, then try putting them together. Work the wrist & arm movement, the shoulder and arm movement, the hip & shoulder movement, and the foot & hip movement with the weight drop. As you put these sub-movements together, try to gradually merge them mentally and physically into one movement, but without losing any of the sub-movements. This comes with practice.





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You can start practicing with a standing bag, as I am in the illustrations, just keep in mind that the lighter the target, the less power you will feel like you are generating. You can move up to heavy bags and other heavy objects. Use your imagination; I used to practice slamming doors with it when I was a kid. My grandmother wasn't too happy with that, however. My class always practices it with a partner holding a focus glove or phone book to his chest. Keep in mind that the less padding used, the more dangerous this is, and it should never be done without the supervision of a professional trainer. The idea is to practice the technique until it becomes a snap and not a shove; this is where the real power lies: sudden acceleration of your body mass and sharply transferring this kinetic energy, through a solid arm, into your target.

Adding the principles of the one inch punch (e.g., weight transfer, power from the ground to your fist, striking at near full extension, etc.) to all your punches will maximize impact. These are the essential elements of striking power. Learn what you can from the one inch punch, absorb what is useful, and reject what is useless.



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Final comments

I hope you have enjoyed our free e-book. We designed it to allow as many people as possible to benefit from this technique itself, and in so doing to benefit from the art that Bruce Lee founded. Please share this with as many people as you like, and help others get acquainted with what real Jeet Kune Do is like. Check us out on our website, www.jkddvd.com and support our continued production of quality combat / Jeet Kune Do materials. Further instruction in the subtleties of the one inch punch are contained in our “Famous Techniques” DVD, available from our website.

Thank you again for your interest,
Sifu Jeremy Lynch

Senior instructor In the art and science of Jeet Kune Do and core instructor of the Wednesday Night Group
(www.jkdwednite.com), Redlands, California.



About the author & editor

Jeremy Lynch has been active in the martial arts world for almost 30 years, beginning at the age of seven with traditional Karate. At 13 he started his training in Tae Kwon Do at one of Jhoon Rhee's schools. After six years of Tae Kwon Do he was accepted into Tim Tackett's personal training group. There he trained directly under Tim Tackett, Bob Bremer (The Ass Kicker of Chinatown), Jim Sewell, Bert Poe, and Dennis Blue.

Jeremy has been a part of the Jeet Kune Do scene for over 15 years, has fought in the kickboxing ring, and has worked with many of Bruce Lee's original students. Current projects include a series of instructional DVD's, a Jeet Kune Do webcast, and articles for the magazines *Black Belt* and *Inside Kung Fu*.

Jeremy teaches Jeet Kune Do in private and semi-private lessons in Southern California, where he lives with his wife, Jennifer, two daughters, and a son.



Vincentius Vulpes has been consciously working toward his ultimate expression of "The Integrated Life" for the better part of a decade, and to that end has been training in Jeet Kune Do under Jeremy Lynch, Tim Tackett, Bob Bremer, and Jim Sewell for four years.

With a background in gymnastics, rock climbing, kayaking, caving, Karate, Jiu-Jitsu, archery, combat knife throwing, and other survival-oriented activities, he is currently working on sharing what he has learned through www.iNeed.to, a Jeet Kune Do webcast, e-books, and any other format that becomes available.

Vincentius lives and trains in Southern California, and is married to his better half, a woman who shares most, if not all, of his interests in life.

