

Fox Den Martial Arts Striking Curriculum



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Introduction

There is a flawed belief that athletic attributes (power, speed, volume, chin) are the primary ingredients for success in striking sports. While a fight between two equally skilled fighters might be determined by physical attributes most fights are won based on the mastery of fundamental striking skills. Fundamental skills are attributes that allow smart fighters to achieve tactical and strategic goals using appropriate techniques.

Fundamental Skills

1. Positional and Movement Skills: Foot work, Position, and Stance
 - (These include clinching and grappling)
2. Strike Mechanics and Kinesthetics
3. Timing and Precision

Fundamental skills are best trained with sport specific methods like drilling footwork or striking sequences, as well as situational and live sparring. Training should be recorded as much as possible, so that coaches can monitor in greater detail. Training quality should always be favoured over training volume, to avoid injury and fatigue.

While there is room in a training program to build athletic attributes, this is best targeted through strength and conditioning. Athletic attributes should only become the focus of a training program for advanced athletes who have already mastered fundamental skills and even then fundamental skills need to be honed and maintained.

Strategic Training Priorities

1) Don't get hit

- Movement related skills (footwork, position, and stance)
 - every strike is damaging to some degree and chin is a non-renewable resource

2) Hit better

- Non-positional fundamentals

3) Hit more

- All fundamentals

Outcomes for Conventional Striking Training

- Don't just smash pads or hit a bag - think about the purpose of each combination, the mechanical quality of each strike, and the athlete's stance and position at all times
 - Whenever a striking technique is taught the focus should build towards understanding the typical function of the technique within a fight (counters to be aware of and techniques that can be built off of it)
- Jumping rope probably isn't the best use of class time, specific plyometrics will accomplish much more
- Film and coach supervised training will maximize the benefit of any drill
- Everything done in class should aim to maximize fundamental skills, not simply speed, power or volume

Outcomes for Technical Priorities

- Movement related skills and integrated defense, should serve as the foundation of the striking skills taught
- Simply blocking or guarding is a last resort defence, range and position always need to be considered. Slipping *and* blocking should be the standard fundamental.
- Techniques should always be kept at an appropriate level for the athlete, so that good training practices (posture, position, hands-up, eyes on target) can be maintained

Foundational Drills

Strike and movement mechanics

- Focus on mechanics and quality.
- Understanding how the strike functions in a fight

Reaction combinations

- Focus on mechanics, position, and desired timing
- Gradually decreasing reaction time available for the athlete

Footwork, Positioning and Stance

- Focus on mechanics and position, gradually decreasing reaction time.
- Favoured positioning based on range (including close range framing and clinching as an element)
- Adapting stance and guard
- Situational combinations
- Adapting combinations
- Live and situational sparring, with pre-sparring objectives and feedback from coaches

Footwork and Position

Maintaining dominant position is the safest and best way to win in striking. In the simplest terms, a dominant position is when you are facing your opponent, but your opponent is not facing you. There are two main categories of position: inside and outside. These terms refer to the position of the center of a fighter relative to the opponents' lead foot.

Dominant Positions

Inside Position: A position at the middle or end of the fighters' reach with the lead foot near the center of the opponent. When done correctly this has the effect of squaring the opponent to put them at a temporary reach disadvantage. The closed stance variation of this is slightly preferred as there is much less risk of yielding outside position.

Close Range Inside Position: At close range standard inside position becomes a disadvantage as it jams the lead hand and risks yielding outside position to the opponent. Instead, the lead foot needs to be aligned with the opponents' rear foot. This can only be done in closed stance.

Outside Position: When the fighter's lead foot is outside the opponents lead foot. The open stance version of this position is longer lasting. The greater the degree of back exposure the better.

Basic Footwork

- Step and slide
- Switch step
- V-step
- C-step
- Pivot
- Shuffle/hop

Principles for Winning Dominant Position

Simultaneous Motion: Similar to the push/pull concept in grappling, moving at the same time as the opponent in a different direction will allow the fighter to cover the most distance and give the best chance to assume a dominant position.

Moving Under Cover: Moving while the opponent is committed to defense/using strikes to hide the positional threat is the next best plan.

Dominant Positions from Closed Stance

In closed stance, more footwork tends to be required than in open stance. Lateral motion or retreating is a good way to get an opponent to overcommit and yield position.

Getting to the Long Inside Position:

- Usually with a step and pivot

Getting to the Close Range Inside Position:

- V-step (lead), c-step

Getting to Open Stance Outside Position:

- Usually with a v-step (switch), c-step
- Also possible with a defensive pivot (karate pivot)

Getting to Closed Stance Outside Position:

- Usually with an outside slide and pivot
- Mostly as a counter

Willey Pep-Step: circling away from the opponent into southpaw stance to steal outside position

Dominant Positions from Open Stance

Open Stance Outside Position:

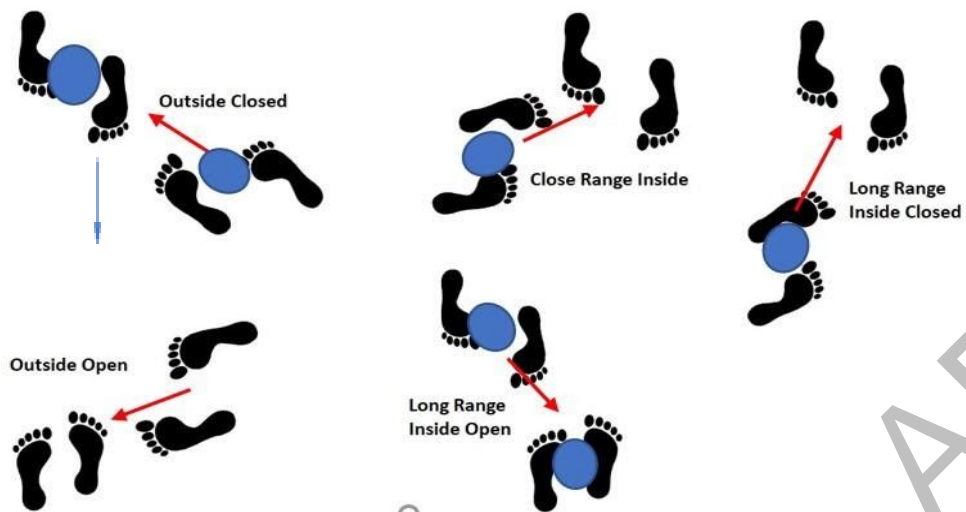
- The most common for a southpaw and usually the first choice
- Fighting for outside position is the focus in open stance
- A simple lead step, a shuffle, or both

Open Stance Inside Position:

- Tends to be more defensive; often a reaction to a minor loss of outside position
- Sliding, pushing off the front foot

Closed Stance Inside Position:

- Defensively pivoting to closed stance inside position, as reaction to aggressive forward motion (like a karate pivot)
- Can be chained off of open stance outside position



Day 1

Warm-up: Line movements (step and drag)

Review: Positions and names

Drill: Move to positions (throw 1, 2)

Drill: V-step C-step (Closed stance move to front pocket or back pocket using the V-step/C-step)

Progression: Chain as partner steps back

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Stance and Guard

After positioning, stance and guard are the most fundamental elements of effective striking. Effective use of stance and guard allows a fighter to fully integrate their defense and offense. Skilled use of stance and guard gives a fighter the greatest range of tactical options and makes it difficult to determine their intentions.

No one stance or guard is best. A static guard is a porous guard. Similarly, an inflexible stance will limit a fighters' movement and options for defense and offense. Skilled fighters can change their stance and guard to suit the situation at hand.

Types of Guard

- Neutral
 - The best general purpose guard. Keeping the hands near eye level means the hands only need to drop slightly to punch, or raise slightly to cover the temples and commit to defense.
- High
 - Both hands committed to defense and touching the head above the eyebrows. The elbows are high and the body is unprotected. Blocking head shots is easier from this position (especially with large gloves), but the hands will have to travel further to reach a typical striking position, making counter offence slow.
- Long
 - Lead hand extended to frame. Often thumb down with the upper lead arm covering the temple. Chin tucked.
- Elbow/Fitzsimons
 - Like the long guard, but the lead hand retracts to cover the chin with the thumb down and palm out. The elbow is extended to discourage punches.
- Shoulder Roll/Stone wall
 - Similar to the elbow guard, but the lead shoulder takes the place of the elbow. The rear hand is high. The lead arm can be high or low to protect the body. In boxing this guard can be somewhat static; in other sports it is most often used to draw and deflect punches while entering mid or close punching range, or as a last resort defence when the hands are unavailable to defend.

Stance

There are three main stances and two interim stances that are typically used. The interim stances are more vulnerable than the main stances and exist to provide alternate routes for shifting between the main stances and to diversify head movement. Skilled fighters will vary their stance and head position to enhance slipping, draw strikes and counter, and to achieve dominant angles on their opponent.

Main Stances:

- Neutral
 - Head and hips centered between the feet
 - The most common stance

- Most balanced offense and defense, but predictable if used exclusively
- Forward
 - Head towards the lead leg
 - Often used to disguise range and draw offence for counters
 - Difficult to kick (especially with the lead leg)
 - Pull back, slide, or pivot for defensive movement
- Rear
 - Head towards the rear leg, often with the lead shoulder elevated
 - Often used to counter strikes or enter range
 - The lead leg is more vulnerable in this stance
 - Shuffle back or pivot for defensive movement

Interim Stances:

- Crouch (forwards)
 - Interim between the Forward and Neutral stances. Can be done with a minor slide of the rear foot to enhance stability
- Lean (back)
 - Interim between the Rear and Neutral stances. Can involve a slight back step of the front foot to square the stance but enhance stability.

Day 1

Warmup: Step on feet game

Lesson: Intro to stances and head positions

Drill: Line drill moving backwards from long guard to elbow guard to stone wall to neutral

Progression: The same drill while reacting to a partners movement

- Partner steps in closed stance -- longuard and frame on lead shoulder
- Partner advances while switching stance to release frame -- switch to elbow guard to block their uppercut
- Partner steps into close range closed stance -- shoulder roll to block cross, then shuffle to return to a neutral position

Trapping Hands, Clinching, and Takedowns

Clinch and takedown skills are needed to keep dominant position at close range. They also allow a savvy fighter to dictate the distance and pace of the fight.

Breakfalls

Some of the worst injuries and most avoidable injuries in kickboxing occur because athletes do not breakfall properly. The most important breakfalls for kickboxing are the lateral breakfall (*yoko ukemi*) and backwards breakfall (*ushiro ukemi*).

Trapping Hands

Lomachenko vs high guard: Cross hand pulls opponent's thumb diagonally to the center of the chest to open outside hook

Throw through the hole: An inside pull on opponents lead hand, to open the rear overhand (closed stance)

Block Lead hand: Blocking the lead hand to gain outside position or clinch (closed stance)

Tap & Go: Pulling the lead hand down to jab from southpaw

Clinch Traps: Trapping hands while clinch pummelling, to land elbows or sweep

Clinch Entries

- Enter by occupying the opponents hands, by hand trapping, kicking into their guard, or slipping
- Shoulder jab, or long guard to collar tie
- Slap hook to collar tie
- Head on chest to clinch

<p>Class A Clinches Strong control of the opponent, good ability to strike, with little risk of counter offence</p>
<p>Double collar tie, double under hooks, collar tie and under hook, pinch headlock, cross face and under hook, standing front headlock</p>
<p>Class B Strong control of the opponent, ability to strike, some risk of counter offence</p>
<p>Strong underhook (underhook and head position), weak underhook (no head position), overhook and cross face</p>
<p>Class C (Neutral Clinches) Theoretically these positions don't give a clear advantage to either fighter. In practice the fighter with better grips or positioning will be favoured.</p>
<p>Over-under clinch, mutual collar ties</p>
<p>Class D You can protect yourself, there is significant risk, but offence can be developed if the position is managed properly. (Strike and disengage, re-pummel, or pull guard or leg entanglement).</p>
<p>Overhook and post or grip on the far arm, over-tie with post or grip on the opponents far arm</p>
<p>Class E The opponent has a Class A clinch. You are at a clear disadvantage and need to disengage.</p>

- With dominant position in Class C and B clinches, it is usually possible to pummel to a higher class of clinch. With Class D and E clinches this becomes more difficult and disengaging is often the better option.

Notes on Tie-Ups:

- Underhooks offer the best control and are generally preferred ahead of over-hooks.
- Collar ties can offer the best opportunities for striking but sacrifice control.
- Cross-faces tend to offer better offence than posts; posts tend to be favoured for disengaging.
- If you can look in your opponent's ear or directly at their cheek bone, you usually have a dominant head position in a clinch.

Procedure for Working with a Dominant Clinch

- 1) Establish a clinch
- 2) Work to confirm your grips and positioning, usually while striking
- 3) Off-balance and break the opponents posture
- 4) Land damaging strikes
- 5) Stop your opponent from disengaging or regaining posture (re-off-balance)
- 6) Disengage to an advantageous position

E.g.:

- 1) Clinch (double collar ties and land a short knee to the lead thigh)
- 2) Shake the opponent's head to establish collar ties at the crown of the head
- 3) Knee, then foot sweep to break posture and off balance
- 4) Land hard knees against the opponent's broken posture
- 5) Switch to a single strong side collar tie as the opponent re-postures
- 6) Push off to disengage with the opponent out of stance

Off Balancing Tactics

- Switching to strong single collar ties
- Disengage with a face post
- Knees to the inner thighs
- Foot sweeps, *Sasae-tsuri komi ashi* (outside foot sweep from the far side of the opponent), *tai otoshi*, half *tai-otoshi*, stabbing *uchimata*, *ashi harai* (outside foot sweep), and *Ko-soto gari* (outside foot reap)

Double collar tie counters

- Over tie to russian or slide by
- Renzo over-tie to knee bump
- Reach through middle to face or far shoulder post, pop shoulder

Takedowns

Closed Stance

Lead hand and foot strikes favour entries to take downs on the lead leg (head on the outside)

- High Crotch
- Double

Rear hand strikes favour entries to head on the front side take down

- Single leg, knee tap
- Head on the wrong side double

**The lead hook can be used for either set of takedowns*

Open Stance

The situation is reversed, lead hand and leg strikes will favour takedowns with the head in front on the opponent

- Single leg, knee tap
- Head on the wrong side double

Rear hand strikes with outside foot position, will favour take downs with head on the outside

- High crotch
- Double leg

Day 1

Warm up: neck conditioning and clinch pummeling

Warm up: Breakfalls

Progression: Partner initiates leg sweep from caught kick for breakfall. Partner assists fall (be nice).

Lesson: clinching positions and clinch classes, overview clinch procedure

Drill: Enter with strikes, clinch, off-balance, strike, post or push to exit

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Strike Mechanics

Proper striking mechanics will directly enhance an athlete's power and energy efficiency. Strike mechanics are determined based on an athlete's stance, orientation, and strategic purpose. A striker needs a strong stable core, and mobile powerful limbs. Power is first generated in the legs, then translated through the core and arms/legs to the target. Force is almost always directed perpendicular to the surface of the target. Lack of mobility in the hips and shoulders will lead to strikes landing off target or angle, and poor body coordination. A weak core will reduce total power, and often leads to injury. In general, an athlete should remain within their stance when a strike is complete.

We can divide strikes into the categories:

- 1) Straight punches
 - * For all punches power should be direct perpendicular to the surface of the target, in a straight line with the main bones of the forearm and the first two knuckles (index and middle finger).
- 2) "Round blows" (hooks, overhands, uppercuts)
- 3) Straight kicks
 - a) pushing
 - b) snapping
- 4) Round kicks
- 5) Spinning attacks
- 6) Elbows
 - a) Straight across (arm should be parallel to the floor, or at a slight angle where is elbow is up)
 - b) "tak mala" - uppercut elbow
 - c) Stabbing elbow
 - d) Downward elbow
- 7) Knees
 - 1) Power is translated from the rear leg to the lead leg, usually with a forward step. Your shoulder will remain within the 'box' of your stance, your head will drift laterally to allow the strike to travel down the centerline. Shoulders rotate as much as 90 degrees, ideally reaching full extension just after contact. Contact is made with the first two knuckles.
If moving backwards the push off the lead leg initiates and allows hip rotation, the rear foot lands and braces when contact is made.
 - 2) Power is generated from the leg on the same side as the strike, as the hips turn weight is shifted from one foot to the other. Head and shoulder may move to the outside of the stance.

- 3) For pushing kicks, the shoulders counter balance back as the hips thrust towards the target. The athlete should be able to remain balanced throughout the strike, lifting and returning their striking leg along the same path.

Snapping and pushing kicks should make contact with the ball of the foot, never the toes.

Beginner steps for pushing kicks:

- 1) Step the rear foot directly under the shoulders
- 2) Lift the lead knee towards the chest
- 3) Translate the hips forward and the shoulders back, extending the leg into the strike
- 4) Reverse the above steps, bring the leg back along the same path, with the hips and shoulders returning to neutral. Step back into the original stance.

4) There are many correct ways to round kick. In every variation power is generated through rotation of the hips and extending through the target. A few main points:

- Ideally make contact with the bottom of the shin
- Be sure to rotate on the ball of the foot of the planted leg
- Ideally never switch in front of your opponent. Only do so if they are not in a position to attack.

5) Spinning attacks are quite powerful and can be a great follow up to your own missed attack or retreat. When telegraphed, however, they present easy opportunities for the opponent to enter take downs or clinches; worse they also risk yielding your back.

Generally the spin is accomplished by pointing the lead heel toward the opponent and rotating backwards (from the closed side of the stance) over the ball of the foot to attack with the rear leg or arm. The main point is to minimize the amount of time required to complete the rotation and find the target over the opposite shoulder. Having a good read on your opponent is key to staying confident during the “blind turn” in the attack.

- 1) Step with the lead heel pointing at the target
 - 2) Turn the hip facing away from the opponent and find them over your other shoulder (at this point you are often facing 180 from your opponent)
 - 3) Complete the rotation and follow through into your strike
 - 4) Step into the opposite stance or rotate through to your original stance
- 6) Elbows should make contact near the point of the elbow or slightly below with the pinky angled down to make sure contact is made with the ulna and not the soft tissue around it.
- a) Power is generated much like a hook but at close range. The usual target is the opponent’s jaw or temple.
 - b) The movement is similar to a straight punch. The power is generated from the leg on the same side as the elbow in a forward movement (with a sight step). This is performed at an extremely close range.

7) Power is generated from the hips. The movement can be performed in a clinch or as a “free knee” in mid range. To achieve the ultimate power and reach, it is imperative that the striker lean back while thrusting the knee forwards (*not* upwards like an uppercut). The knee will be thrown as a rear knee (or a switch rear knee). This knee can also be combined in multi-knee or skip knee sequences.

Strike Numbering

1. Jab
2. Cross
3. Lead hook
 - a. Elbow
4. Rear hook (rarely called)
 - a. Elbow
5. Lead uppercut
 - a. Elbow
6. Rear uppercut
 - a. Elbow
7. lead front kick
8. Rear front kick
9. Lead Thai kick
 - a. Knee
10. Rear Thai kick
 - a. Knee

*knees and elbows also as called

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Reaction Strikes Closed Stance

Strike Slipped	Reaction Combo
Jab	two-three
cross	three-two
lead hook	two-three or 4a-3 or 4a-5a
rear hook	three-two or 3a-2 or 3a- 4a
Lead upper (shelved)	two-three or 4a-3 or 4a-5a
Rear upper (shelved)	three-two or 3a-2 or 3a- 4a
Lead upper to the body	6-3
Rear upper to the body	5-3
Lead check (kick from opp rear leg) (same reactions for head kicks)	3-2, 3a-2, 3a-4a or 2-3, 4a-3, 4a-5a or 9 or 10
Rear check or cross check (same reaction for head kicks)	2-3, 4a-3, 4a-5a or 10
Lead push kick	Pull foot across 3-2 or 9
Rear push kick	Pull foot across 2-3 or 10

Reaction Strikes Open Stance

Strike Slipped	Reaction Combo
Jab	1-2 or simultaneous 2-3
cross	1-2 inside or 2-3 v-step c-step
lead hook	two-three or 4a-3 or 4a-5a
Lead upper (shelved)	two-three or 4a-3 or 4a-5a
Rear upper (shelved)	three-two or 3a-2 or 3a- 4a
Lead upper to the body	6-3
Rear upper to the body	5-3
Lead check (kick from opp rear leg) (same reactions for head kicks)	3-2, 3a-2, 3a-4a or 2-3, 4a-3, 4a-5a or 9 or 10
Rear check or cross check (same reaction for head kicks)	2-3, 4a-3, 4a-5a or 10
Lead push kick	Pull foot across 3-2 or 9
Rear push kick	Pull foot across 2-3 or 10

Timing and Precision

"Timing beats speed, precision beats power"

- Old boxing adage

Timing and Precision are the final skill-based elements of a well rounded striking game, and also the most elusive. Athletes with well developed timing and precision, not only have technical skills but also an understanding of the role techniques within a fight. Athletes with masterful timing can seem to mind read because they are able to predict their opponents movements and intentions, allowing them to be in the right place at the right time. Precise strikers seem extra powerful and well conditioned, (accurate strikes do more damage, fewer are needed and with less power).

Timing and precision can only be developed through mindful training and experience. Never just hit a bag or pads, always consider distance, positioning, the purpose of the combination, and the opponent's most likely reactions -- always be sure you are in a position to offer the best response when the combination is finished. To improve timing and precision, don't just throw combinations, *select* your strikes based on the situation at hand.

Progression of Range and Strike Selection

There is a general pattern most fights follow, which can be described by four stages:

- 1) Fighters look to feint and establish their effective range, while making reads on eachothers favoured strikes, guards/stance, footwork and tactics
- 2) Fighters attempt to establish their longest range attacks (jabs, push kicks, leg kicks)
- 3) As long range attacks are established, fighters leverage these threats into combinations and dominant positions
- 4) Fighters will begin to establish roles of offence and defence or lead and counter. Fighters leading successfully will continue to leverage their attacks in favour of a general strategy. Fighters on defence (or fighting on the counter) will look to find new ways to adapt to their opponents attacks; if successful they may choose to fight on the lead rather than the counter.

Fighters should favour strikes that will allow them to stay safe and retain or recover dominant positions against many different styles of offence. Strike selection depends upon a fighter's physical attributes (height, limb length, explosive power etc.) as well as preferred range and strategy. It is best for a fighter to come up with a closed system in which the athlete has strikes available to return to offence from a large range of situations. Here is an example for reference:

Zabit Magomedsharipov; a long fighter with a large arsenal of strikes, Zabit's 'strategy' is more of a collection of techniques that will play out according to the choices of his opponents. Zabit fights from both stances but his best work usually comes from orthodox, while he uses southpaw to keep distance and land with well chosen shots one or two at a time. When on the lead Zabit initially establishes his jab, side-kick and push kick (pushing

and snapping). Once the jab is established it is a general range finder (along with his front kick) and leverages into a jab-hook, jab-leg-kick, and occasional jab-cross. Zabit's side-kick disguises entries into a bladed stance which leads to a range of spinning attacks, and a cheeky hopping *osoto-gari*. If his opponents are unable to close the distance Zabit will often vary his attack by closing the distance himself to score with elbows or upper cuts.

On the counter, Zabit will preserve range with a check hook or snappy lead kick to the body. He has tried a long guard with mixed success. Later on in fights Zabit will look to score turning side kicks against rushing opponents. His reactive takedowns are always a threat to opponents closing distance.

In the clinch Zabit is always quick to steal inside position (often double underhooks, from where he will shuck to the back and look to score a takedown). Zabit liberally attacks with jumping knees from the Thai plumb. He also has a range of set attacks boxing on the inside: elbow and upper cuts (depending on his head position) from cover up, followed by push-offs, or clinch entries.

Many of Zabit's traps seem to have frustrated or hesitant opponents in mind. When Zabit sees an opponent is looking to enter on his jab, he will feign the jab and follow with elbows, then steal clinch position. Hesitant opponents will fall victim to his embarrassing hopping *osoto*, or he will showboat raising his hand in victory while back peddling, then score an easy reactive double as his opponent rushes in to preserve his pride.

As a result of Zabit's long limbs he has a natural advantage fighting on the outside (at long range). It would have been a simple and logical choice for Zabit to develop as a one-note striker, simply stalling or counter-grappling when forced outside of his preferred range. Instead Zabit has adopted a strategy that leverages his advantage at distance, to give him a multitude of robust attacks whether his opponent elects to counter-strike, close distance, grapple, or defend passively.

Strategy Guide

So far this curriculum has defined fundamental striking skills, as separate sets of skills that allow athletes to achieve tactical and strategic goals using appropriate techniques. It follows that even the most honed striking skills can become useless if they are used in support of a bad strategy.

This section outlines major goals in striking sports, and tactics to achieve them for several common types of opponent. Savvy opponents may not fall completely into the models set-out below (counter-fighter, kicker, elusive, etc.); ultimately your goal should be to adapt your game plan based on the opponent's unique attributes - the best fighters are able to make these adjustments fluidly in real time.

Major Goals

- 1) Create an angular advantage
- 2) Back them onto a barrier
- 2) Draw them forward in a predictable manner

Secondary Goals:

1. Keep them out of their effective reach;
 - a. too far,
 - b. over extended, or
 - c. too close
2. Wear them. Either through:
 - a. fatigue or
 - b. damage.

Common Situations:

Reach advantage/disadvantage

- You can be the longer fighter or the lower fighter, but rarely both

Advantage:

- Keep them at the end of your range
- Cautious with forward motion
- Consistent pressure as range is established
- Don't stand too tall, but do maximize reach (longer fighter)
- Generally, a more conservative approach
- Use clinches to stifle short range (neutral and stalled clinches are fine)

Disadvantage:

- Lots of feints
- All the way in or all the way out (at least initially)
- Look to win head position on entry (lower fighter)
- Try to draw offence from the taller fighter

- Try to force retreats
- Usually establish your longest range first
- Initially quality will often tend to be favoured over volume
- Clinches need to be productive

Open Stance:

- Outside foot position is preferred
- Rear strikes are enhanced vs in closed stance
- Lead hand needs to be more defensive than in closed stance, somewhat a reversal of blocking and parrying roles
- Kicks from the open side will be favoured

Entering on a kicker:

- Use feints
- lead with accessible kicks to enter punching range
- Check into punches
- Use pushing to off-balance
- Sweeps will be enhanced
- Look to catch kicks and time take downs

Fighting a counter fighter:

- Sound fundamentals, especially strike mechanics and defense
- Tight compact strikes
- Don't chase the head, attack the legs and body when the head is moving
- Lots of feints
- Don't stick around to be countered
- Measured pressure
- Read which strike is being countered and adjust

Countering aggressive forward motion:

- Lots of lateral motion
- Use counter footwork to get off the line of attack
- Look to counter strike
- Dictate pace
- Look to time takedowns
- Circle away from barriers early
- Stifle rushes with clinches when necessary, be ready to win head-position
 - Favoured strikes:
 - Lead hook
 - Body kick
 - Intercepting knee

Fighting an elusive opponent:

- Cut off space, don't follow

- A squared stance may help with lateral movement
- Attack the body and legs
- Don't over commit to attacks
- Don't over-react to feints
- Keep measured pressure

Fighting a faster or more powerful opponent:

- Feints and motion
- lots of head movement, to deal with punches
- look to be elusive and encourage them to chase
- As you establish distance rolling and blocking can help to tire them, and create openings for counter striking
- Attack the legs and body
- "Punch and clutch" strategy; land with selective shots while stifling their offence and rhythm with clinches and grappling

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