

P.E. SPORTS AND ACTIVITIES

CARDIO KICKBOXING



“Discipline is remembering what you want most, not what you want now.”

Billy Blanks, fitness guru, martial artist

INTRODUCTION

Cardio kickboxing is one of the most popular fitness trends to hit gyms in recent years. Kickboxing is a combination of aerobics, boxing and martial arts. These workouts, which are inspired by martial arts, have motivated many people to start fitness programs.

This intense, total-body workout can improve strength, aerobic fitness, flexibility, coordination and balance. The American Council on Exercise (ACE), which evaluates exercise products and programs, notes that during a one-hour kickboxing workout, 500 to 800 calories can be burned. This can be twice the calories burned during a one-hour step-aerobics class.



Cardio kickboxing classes can be a great alternative for people who have become bored with cardiovascular activities such as, brisk walking or jogging on a treadmill. They also provide an alternative for people who enjoy the “semi-dance” movements found in aerobics or step classes.

Cardio kickboxing can help reduce stress. Controlled punching and kicking movements carried out with the discipline and skills required for martial arts can relieve frustration and anxiety. Cardio kickboxing can also be a boost to a person’s balance, flexibility, coordination and endurance.

However, kickboxing-style fitness programs are not necessarily geared toward everyone. Beginners must have above-average endurance, strength and flexibility.

HISTORY OF KICKBOXING

Kickboxing as a combat sport has its origins in Eastern Asian combat arts, especially in karate. However, today's popular form of kickboxing is known as aerobic or cardiovascular ("cardio") kickboxing, which combines aspects of boxing, martial arts and aerobics to provide overall physical conditioning and toning.



The man behind most of this trend is Billy Blanks, the seven-time Martial Arts champion. He is seen on many Tae-Bo infomercials and videos.

Unlike other types of kickboxing, cardio kickboxing does not involve physical contact between opponents. Kickboxing is a cardiovascular workout that's done to benefit a person's body.

Cardio kickboxing, like aerobics classes, is usually offered in three different forms of intensity: low-impact, moderate-impact and high-impact

HOW TO DO CARDIO KICKBOXING

Before starting cardio kickboxing you should know your present level of fitness. This activity is a very intense and a high-impact form of exercise. You may want to start by taking a low-impact aerobics course and work up to a greater level of endurance.

It is a good idea to observe a cardio kickboxing class before trying this activity. You may want to ask the instructor if she is willing to modify the routine to accommodate a variety of skill levels. Signing up for a fast moving class with complicated moves may not be a good idea for a beginner. Try to find an instructor who has martial arts experience and is also certified as a fitness instructor.

Talk to your doctor. It's always a good idea to see your doctor and have a complete physical exam before you begin any type of exercise program - especially one with a lot of aerobic activity like kickboxing. This is extremely important if you have any

chronic medical conditions such as asthma or diabetes or are overweight.

Start slowly to build-up readiness and endurance. A good workout session includes a series of controlled movements. Overextending yourself by kicking too high or locking your arms and legs during movements may result in pulled muscles and sprains.

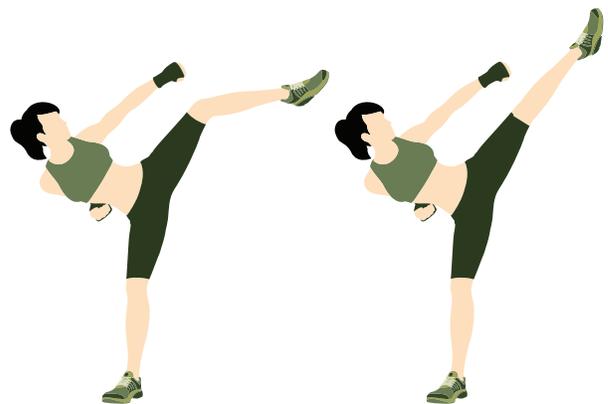
Beginners should start with low kicks until proper kickboxing techniques are learned. Beginners are more prone to developing injuries while attempting quick, complicated kickboxing moves.



Do not wear or hold weights when punching or kicking. Although using weights can help develop your aerobic fitness in certain programs, the risk of joint injury outweighs the benefits for the beginning kickboxer.

Drink plenty of water before, during, and after class to keep yourself hydrated.

Cardio kickboxing is meant to be a fun and effective program for achieving your fitness goals. If you follow the guidelines, it can be just that!



TYPES OF KICKS

1. Roundhouse kick: Start with the right side of your body facing an imaginary target, with your knees bent and your feet shoulders' width apart. Lift your right knee, pointing it just to the right of the target and pivot your body toward the same direction. Kick with your right leg, as though you are hitting the target. Repeat with your other leg.
2. Front kick: Start with feet shoulders' width apart and arms at a 90-degree angle in front of your shoulders. Bend your knees slightly and pull your right knee up to your chest. Point your knee in the direction of an imaginary target. Now, kick out with the ball of your foot. Repeat with your other leg.

3. Side kick: Stand with the right side of your body facing a target. Pull your right knee up to your left shoulder and bend your knees slightly as you kick in the direction of your target. The outside of your foot or heel should be the part that would hit the target. Repeat with your other leg.

CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT

Wear loose and comfortable clothing. This will help provide you with the needed flexibility to move your arms and legs easily in all directions.

Many experienced cardio kickboxers suggest using cross-trainer shoes instead of tennis shoes. Cross-trainer shoes allow for side-to-side movements. Gloves or hand wraps are sometimes used during classes.



CARDIO KICKBOXING NOTES

Not since the aerobics explosion in the 1980's has any form of cardiovascular fitness been such a hit. Cardio kickboxing classes are being taught in almost every aerobics room, in every gym, in every city across North America. You shouldn't think of it as fighting, you certainly don't have to fight to pick up the sport.

Cardio kickboxing is a high-energy group class that challenges you both mentally and physically. It brings together the best of cardio training with interval and resistance training. It is a great stress buster and you can even learn some elements of dance and self-defense too.

Several athletes and celebrities praise cardio kickboxing. They include: Sinbad, Shaquille O'Neal, Magic Johnson, Pamela Anderson, Goldie Hawn, and Carmen Electra. All have endorsed the activity.

If you are bored with the treadmill or the elliptical kickboxing can certainly change up your routine. Some may think that kickboxing is too violent but the actual movements and training can make for excellent exercise without having to do any fighting.

When selecting a program or gym be honest about your level of fitness. Kickboxing can be more intense than many exercise programs, and many classes may challenge your body in ways it is not yet used to. If you do have some limitations or concerns make sure you let your instructor know before beginning.

If you are interested in finding a kickboxing class to join you can check with your local YMCA or park district. They are a popular offering in larger cities.

Check out these websites for kickboxing tips:

www.kickboxingguide.com/beginners-tips/

www.exercisegoals.com/beginner-Kickboxing.html