



BESTFIT

CHALLENGE

MARTIAL ARTS HAS MANY HEALTH BENEFITS, AND NOT JUST PHYSICALLY. IT STRENGTHENS THE MIND-BODY CONNECTION AND FORCES THE NERVOUS SYSTEM TO CONSTANTLY ADAPT. DOING MARTIAL ARTS TRAINING CREATES DYNAMIC STRENGTH AND POWER, TOO.

“This is a typical flexibility and speed workout I would go through with my students,” explains Jay Edwards, who holds junior Master rank and who has studied martial arts for 26 years. He has more black belts than you’ve had hot dinners. “It helps them develop balance, core strength and explosive speed without forfeiting power.”

“This challenge should last between 12 minutes to 35 minutes. Push yourself, but do it safely. Always keep an eye on your active heart rate – try not to let it go over 175bpm.”

OVER TO YOU...

THE EXERCISES

HORSE RIDING STANCE

“Stand with your feet half a shoulder width outside of your shoulders, feet facing forward, and squat into a position where your thighs are parallel to the ground. The knees should be behind the toes, not in front, back straight, head and neck relaxed. You can use a wall to begin with to get the correct posture. You should feel like you’re sitting wide legged on a low toilet. Keep the core muscles tight, breathe in through the nose and out through the mouth. Hold this position for as long as possible, ideally for a minimum of a minute. As you become more accustomed to the position you should be able hold the position indefinitely. For an added extra warm up and stretch element, hold the arms out parallel to the floor, or alternatively throw slow punches into the air.”

LEG FIGURE OF EIGHTS

“Stand with you back to a wall to begin with, bring your right leg up from the ground straight but not locked. Whilst keeping the core tight, make small figure of eights with the right leg, do it at a height comfortable for your flexibility level. Continue with the right leg for 30 seconds, then switch to the left leg and repeat. Now turn to have your left shoulder towards the wall and use the left arm to support

yourself. Bring your right leg out to the side in-line with your hip, once again make small figure of eights for 30 seconds, switch and repeat with the other leg.”

SWITCH STEP

“This exercise is designed to develop speed whilst switching feet, utilised a lot in Taekwondo. Start with your right leg and left leg slightly outside of your shoulders’ width, stand side on with your right side facing forward. To do this exercise correctly you must lift your weight from the ground whilst allowing the hips to snap side to side. This technique would normally be repeated continually for five minutes and sometimes as long as 20 minutes. I would recommend trusting your body and going for as long as you feel you can. This exercise focuses on explosive reactions and strengthening the obliques, hip flexors and core muscles.”

TWO PUNCH, TWO KICK COMBO

Start in a shoulder-width stance, hips facing forward, hands up in front of you but not above your shoulders. The key to this exercise is to start out fast and explosive and allow yourself to get slower, making the movements more deliberate and focused. This will teach you about accuracy and speed development and targets the shoulders, triceps, biceps, core, legs... basically the whole body. Its also a great cardio and anaerobic routine. Straight punch with the right hand, then the left, then kick with right leg then with left leg. Straight snap kick starts with the knee coming up straight in front to the height of the waist, the lower leg and foot is then projected out from the knee in a snapping motion. Go for a minimum of a minute, and work up to failure.

SEND US YOUR IMAGES OR VIDEOS OF THE CHALLENGE AND YOU COULD GET YOUR HANDS ON A FREE BESTFIT T-SHIRT.

Jay currently runs a reality-based self protection dojang based in East London. He is a qualified personal trainer, strength coach and pressure point expert.

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