

Punch Power Problem

by

Keith Pascal

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Can you tell the difference between the punch to the lower left (1.) and the oneto the upper right in this article (2.)?

Which would be more powerful?

If you are from the United States, you might choose number one. Americans thrive on haymakers and hooks.

For Americans, power torques from the side. You throw your shoulder into the punch.



I taught in high schools for a dozen years. Virtually every fight had students punching with the elbow raised, coming in from the side, with the wrist slightly bent.

This wrist position is wrong!

Punching with a bent wrist will cost you power. With a slight bend, you lose *oomph* -- with a big bend in the wrist, you could seriously injure your hand.

By the way, if you are from China, then a vertical punch with a smooth plane across the back of the hand seems normal.

It makes sense to have the full foundation of your skeletal structure behind your punch, right? That means no wrist bend.

If each joint is in alignment, if each bone supports the next and all work in concert, then you have set the foundation to generate power in your punch.

Do you have to keep your wrist in alignment at all times?

If you are a beginning martial artist, then it makes sense to work on precision in your punches. Precision equals proper wrist alignment.

Whether you are punching vertically or horizontally, you have to understand skeletal positions. In a horizontal punch, you align based on the forefinger and second finger knuckles.

In a vertical punch, you align using the smaller knuckles.

What if you aren't a beginner? Do you still have to maintain wrist alignment?

This may surprise you, but the answer is "no."

Punch Power Pr



2.

If you learn the proper energy -- the correct force behind the punch -- then you can experiment with bending your wrist one way or the other.

You learn to direct the power along the line of the arm, through the fist, no matter how the wrist is positioned.

It helps that you understand the mechanics of a punch. You know how to position the rest of your body, so you can punch with your wrist in a less than ideal position.

Until you are 'punch proficient,' I advise that you practice punching with your fist, wrist and arm in complete alignment.

Add power by punching in straight alignment.

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