

# the **CrossFit**<sup>®</sup>

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JOURNAL ARTICLES

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## CrossPit Basics

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CrossPit is a blending of CrossFit with the Pit, John Hackleman's mixed martial arts (MMA) and fitness training program—a blending that we believe best prepares fighters for the ring and the rest of us for general self-defense. CrossPit's efficacy comes from its simplicity. Proficiency in stance, movement, and a few basic strikes, combined with the gas to go the distance, is usually more effective on the street and in the cage than extensive training in complex martial arts sequences. The Pit's Chuck Liddell has demonstrated this at the top level of professional MMA, and amateur fighters from the Pit are regularly beating much more experienced and "highly trained" fighters.

CrossPit, like CrossFit, is a multidisciplinary approach that takes what works and discards the rest. What works is what wins fights. MMA provides a great testing ground, and the abundance of street fights posted to the Internet show what works without a referee. The same protective stance, proper movement, power to stop your opponent, and stamina to outlast him are needed in both arenas.

The problem with complex techniques and strategies is that they rarely work in a real fight. The adrenaline is too high, the timing is off, or the opponent's moves are unpredictable. Even experienced ring fighters can lose their composure in a street fight.

The main difference between CrossFit and CrossPit is that fitness itself is the sport and goal of CrossFit, and, for CrossPit, fitness is a means to better fighting and self-defense. Strength and stamina are necessary in a fight, but they are useless without the techniques to translate them into powerful strikes. Intense bag, shield, and paddle work are essential. CrossFit workouts can

be measured (load × reps/time = measurable intensity). Striking training is harder to quantify. You have to bring intensity to the workout by visualizing your attacker or opponent. In either case, you can't train mildly and expect good results.

CrossPit training offers three major advantages over most martial arts: the fundamentals can be used in any fight, real-world conditioning keeps you going, and training at high heart rates and under extreme fatigue develops situational awareness under fight conditions. It may not be glamorous, but it works.

The essence of CrossPit is readiness: being prepared for any kind of attack, and prepared to attack any opening. This preparation derives from excellence in the fundamentals: proper stance, movement, striking, and conditioning.

### Basic stance

- Lower than a traditional striking stance, higher than a grappling stance.
- Feet shoulder-width apart, one foot a normal step in front of the other.
- Shoulders squared to the opponent and raised to protect the chin, which is down.
- Back hand at chin level; front hand lower, at chest level, to block a takedown attempt.
- Weight evenly distributed between the feet.

### Basic movement

- Mirror your opponent's height (drop when he does).

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## CrossFit Basics (continued...)



- Move laterally instead of backward, especially when your opponent approaches.
- Avoid getting into a regular rhythm in your movements.

### Basic strikes (assuming a right-handed stance)

- Left Jab – A straight punch with no turn of the body. It's extremely effective on the street and used more in the octagon. It keeps the opponent at a distance



and hurts and frustrates him.

- Left Hook – Swing your hand like a rock on a rope. Start with the hips. Pivot on the front foot. Hit through the target. The degree of arm bend depends on the opponent's distance. Power matters, not hand position and angle.
- Overhand Right – Misses often but is deadly when it connects.
- Blitz – A minimum of four quick, powerful, straight punches thrown while driving forward off the back foot. It often opens up the opponent for a takedown or power shot, such as a strong overhand right, left hook, or roundhouse kick
- Roundhouse Kick – Use front foot predominantly, and only when the opponent is moving backward. Never kick when the opponent is stationary or moving forward because he can easily grab your leg and put you on your back. Strike with the shin, not the foot. Swing the shin like a baseball bat through the target.

### Basic conditioning

- Train a wide variety of functional movements at high intensity (CrossFit).
- Do conditioning work along with bag work, either alternating between the two or doing the conditioning before hitting the bag. You must train strikes and grappling while fatigued.
- Mix it up.



Tony Budding is the Media Guy for CrossFit, Inc., and a trainer at [CrossFit Santa Cruz](#).