
Boxercise: What You Should Know?

Boxercise is a class in which you perform exercises inspired from the training boxers do for keeping themselves fit. Classes take place in different formats but a usual one involves skipping, shadow-boxing, kicking punchbags, hitting pads, press-ups, sit-ups and shuttle-runs. Most classes include men and women of every age and fitness standard. Since no session involves physical hitting of someone, it is fun, safe and challenging. This training caters everyone irrespective of shape, size and gender. Do not forget that every boxer must have begun his journey from zero. So you can also work your way up to the desired level of fitness. Attend classes thrice a week and you would become fit in 3 months only; if you do it twice a week, it will take half a year. Boxercise is a wonderful way to release your aggression. It calms you down as all the aggression is channelized and in control. Although it is devoid of physical contact, it makes you feel that you are in control of your body and have more confidence in protecting yourself if the need arises. Visit boxercise.co.uk for epic, useful and exciting boxercise workout programs.

Boxercise increases discipline. A lot of people don't acknowledge that boxing training has a lot to do with discipline and is a very good way of increasing it in other walks of life like drinking or eating. If everyone takes up boxercise, we would live in a world which is much fitter and better mentally, emotionally and physically. It elevates your energy, focus and concentration. It stimulates the mind boosting self-belief. It is wonderful for overweight children as it builds self-esteem in youngsters who might have been bullied or been devoid of confidence. An important tip is do not gulp your water. Pro boxers sit down and drink water after every round. If you apply it in your training, you won't have a stitch. Not everyone can float like a butterfly and sting like a bee. In fact, in boxing training, you don't need to. Express yourself and be the best you can.

Boxercise appeared on the scene in the early 90s in UK. Now, there are innumerable classes of it being conducted nationwide. Sessions of boxercise (boxercise.co.uk) are in general taught by expert aerobic and fitness instructors with the content set to music. They are run from health clubs and leisure centres. A lot of local clubs now provide boxing style classes taught by pro boxers as well as coaches. Where these might be slightly hard-core, you have a more authentic experience. We don't have any central body for such classes; thus, look online or elsewhere. Prices vary from 5 pounds for a single class to 75 pounds a month for unlimited classes with pro boxers. Every session includes a warm-up and cool-down besides many boxing skills and drills. It challenges your aerobic stamina with continuous moving exercises coupled with sharp short exercises like punch-balling which train one's anaerobic energy systems. If you have not done any explosive short-burst activity in the past, you would be challenged.

The Boxercise organisation (boxercise.co.uk) provides manuals plus DVDs of personal training. For amateurs, Billy Blanks' Tae-Bo DVD series combines boxing skills, martial arts and dance moves. It is very famous and accessible for people who are keen to experiment at home. There is no dedicated magazine for boxing training but if you aim to be familiar with the world of boxing when you practice your moves, you should read *Boxing News*. For inspirational stuff, read *Workouts From Boxing's Greatest Champs*.

What about the gear to be used? Silk shorts or flashy robes are not needed but a pair of trainers

is required along with shorts or leggings and a loose light top. If you train at a club, you might end up investing for a pair of boxing shoes (about 25 pounds) but gloves, skipping ropes and punchbags are in general supplied. If you want to do training at home, sugarrays.co.uk has a selection of equipment and boxing clothing whereas totallyfitness.co.uk has a collection of skipping ropes and fitness accessories including Reebok gloves (30 pounds) and punchbags (99 pounds). Women would require a fine support bra. boobydoo.co.uk has a variety of functional as well as flattering styles. Grant protection to your hands with strapping available in good sports shops.

Are there only pros of it or is there any downside to boxercise as well? Yes just like any other thing in this world, it has its own set of cons. Firstly, it is addictive. Instructors commonly report cases of over-indulgence in training by boxing lovers as they enjoy it too much; thus, keep that in mind and try building up slowly and gradually. 3 or 4 times per week is quite sufficient. Secondly, you can have sore knuckles. Hand injuries are extremely common in boxing as there are many small bones. Knuckles should be wrapped up during punchbagging to prevent bruising or scraping. Thirdly, shin splints is a common injury in which muscles on the front of your leg are inflamed or injured as a result of skipping. Get nice shin supports from sports shops and wear nice trainers. Fourthly, you must protect your thumbs which are quite vulnerable to dislocation or strains. Learn how to strap in an effective manner and if you wear gloves, do tuck the thumbs in.

Finally, what are the positive aspects of boxercise? It increases mental agility. Sports research has shown that training techniques applied by boxers while using punchbags or sparring result in higher skills of decision making. It betters hand- eye coordination on both sides of your body. Unlike tennis and golf, your body is improved equally on right and left sides which lessens postural disalignment. Boxercise increases stamina. Studies published in Indian Journal of Medicine state that boxing is 70-80% anaerobic and 20-30% aerobic. Its training enhances stamina in lungs and heart. It increases core strength. For taking a punch and holding your balance, abdominals should be toned and powerful; strong core stability reduces the possibility of back pain and betters your posture. It makes your muscles stronger. Boxercise elevates muscle strength utilized in daily activities and 'fast twitch' muscle fibres needed for short explosive movements.