



## ADAPT and APPLY

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The first two main principles of self defense to understand are the terms: ADAPT & APPLY.

Now let me use a couple of analogies in order to make these principles more easily understood.. Many traditional martial arts try to make the student 'fit' the art, when in many cases because that art was designed for maybe short slim Oriental people, and is being learned by a tall fat westerner, the two don't 'gel'.

So, imagine you are a 6ft 6inch man married to a 5ft tall woman... you both drive the same car. When you and your wife first get into the car, you will both 'adjust' the seat and the rear-view mirror to fit YOU.

What you are doing is 'adapting' the car. The same with clothes ... you wouldn't buy a made-to-measure suit and send your fatter taller older brother for the fitting and expect it to then fit you!

Yet essentially both the car and the suit are the same objects, just 'adapted' to make them fit each individual. So the same with your martial arts skills ... If you are 6ft 8inch tall, then what are the chances of a taller man attacking you? ... so why learn from a 5ft 3inch tall instructor and try to 'ape' his moves expecting them to work for YOU, or Vice Versa..

So first use moves that feel good to YOU, not that look good when done by someone else. Normally if you like a move, it will like you. I often get asked by my students about a specific move... "Dave when I do this counter the Palm strike feels better than the punch ... what do you think?" What I think, is actually very simple, if the palm strike feels better... then use it.

It's one thing having to learn and demonstrate a fixed number of moves to pass a specific grade, but often when the street beckons and you have to do it for real, then certain moves will be no good for YOU, that may be better for others. So first, adapt everything to fit YOU, drill moves and make them feel right The next principle is 'APPLY' ...It's not much use having the best punch in the world if you can't actually USE it.

So let's look at a few ways in which you can improve your impact methods for the street.

First your posture or stance ... there are many weird postures in the martial arts, and it often seems like some trainees feel as if they are better 'fighters' by having their arms in some unnatural position and their feet the same. So either with a partner holding focus-mitts, or even facing the punch bag, stand in some ordinary every day postures, hands at sides, scratching your head, arms partly (never fully) folded and so on. Then strike the mitts or bag FROM WHEREVER YOUR HANDS ARE. Don't

pull them into some martial arts posture thus giving your opponent a 'signal' that you are about to strike. Just hit from where you are.

Try all kinds of positions, the object being to develop your ability to be able to launch a strike from where ever you are. Practice walking up to, or past the bag/partner and launch your strikes from there.

Lean into him with your hand cupped over one ear and say "Sorry Mate, what did you say?" then as he starts to repeat, just use the hand over the ear and strike hard from where it is. You get the idea now, don't telegraph your strikes - be able to hit from anywhere. With kicks, don't posture; just learn to kick from a simple stance or walking position.

Launching your impact techniques from complex stances slows them down and telegraphs them. If all you do to your training is to add this one principle, then you will improve your combat efficiency GREATLY.

What was often known as 'chambering' (cocking the kicking leg) is a great give away for your opponent, and if he sees the chamber leg positioned for a kick, then he can counter it much more easily. By training to launch your kicks from much more natural postures, you reduce that advantage to your attacker.

Secondly with kicks...LOW, LONG & POWERFUL... That is the best way of utilizing legs in combat. If you kick higher than parallel, you slow down the kick, reduce recovery time, and weaken your balance. The low stomach is the highest you should be aiming your kicks at. Best keep them to legs and low stomach/groin areas.

The HIGHEST you should ever kick is the height you can SLOWLY lift your leg, NOT swing it. OK you can swing the leg hard and get head height...But there is no power in SWING. Now try and LIFT the leg slowly, and now let's say the leg reaches low chest area.. That's now the highest that leg should reach in a kick.

Also most martial artists want to kick from TOO FAR AWAY... Get closer and kick with the shin bone for roundhouse kicks NOT the foot. It's a lot easier to break or damage a toe than it is the Tibia/Fibula Shin area.