

How to.... Hooking Kick

How to do the correct execution of a Hooking Kick

Hooking kick

The hooking kick strikes with the heel from the side (or flat of the foot in sparring). In sparring always hit with the ball of the foot. Here are for 5 good reasons both physiological and in terms of pure performance for doing that rather than the (side of the) heel, keeping the foot at 90° to the ankle:



1. **Better reach:** having the foot extended it increases your range by nearly the full length of your foot ensuring you will hit, from the same position, targets that would not be reachable if you bend your foot.
2. **Stronger impact:** if the angular speed of the leg moving is constant having a longer weapon (by the length of the foot) increases the speed of the foot itself, build up a higher momentum and delivers a stronger kick.
3. **Safer for you:** the Achilles' tendon is a weak point and if you squash it against a skull it will hurt your foot to the point you might not be able of walking for some time. Even if the impact is not straight on the Achilles' tendon it can still hit the many nerves that are exposed both on the internal and external part of the hill, moving toward the ankle. The ball of the foot is very well padded and can bear much stronger impact than the edge of the hill.
4. **Improve flexibility:** with the foot fully extended the natural flexibility of the leg is highly helped; to the contrary trying to extend a leg while the tibia (shin) muscles are tensed in order to keep the ankle at 90° will have some groups of muscles that are fighting against the direction of your kick getting the muscles behind the leg less prone to extend
5. **Faster:** if all muscles involved in the movement are pushing in the same direction and the others are simply relaxed the overall speed will be improved.

It is executed similar to a side kick. However, the kick is intentionally aimed slightly off target in the direction of the kicking foot's toes. At full extension, the knee is bent and the foot dragged through to the side, impacting the target with the heel. The hooking kick is mainly used to strike the jaw area of an opponent, but is also highly effective in the temple, region.

The hook kick most often comes from the lead leg and is most often seen in NFKA. The kick starts out like a side kick, and then hooks in a horizontal arc across the target. It is therefore important that the knee is chambered before

the kick is delivered. The hook kick isn't really a power technique, more a fast technique often used to confuse or score points.

Like many of the advanced NFKA kicks, it is difficult to learn the hook kick. This is one kick where it especially benefits the user to be flexible, as this is mostly used to strike the head.

Use of the Hook kick

The hook kick is an excellent point scoring technique in semi contact competition as it comes out of the blind side of an opponent's vision. For example, as a follow up after hand techniques or side-kicks have been thrown, particularly as the opponent may be out of range for punches and feel like they can't be hit, but the extra length of the legs and fact that the kick is stretched out of the blind side means it can score.

It can also be used in conjunction with hand techniques, for example the kick could flash across the opponent's face and confuse them so you can follow up with direct punches.

Reverse hooking kicks

A reverse hook kick is a variation of a hook kick. It is performed by spinning 180 degrees and closes distance to your opponent by the width of your hips and then perform a hook kick.

Start in fighting stance you will kick with your rear leg.

Step your front foot to the side and round so that it facing away from your target, or undertake a feint or a turning kick.

Then let your head come round, then your shoulders and torso, then your hips with you rear leg chambered like a side kick or back kick.

Thrust you leg out just to the side of the target, and then drag the heel or flat of the foot through the target.

Once you have finished the strike, continue the hip motion moving through a total of 180 degrees and allow your supporting foot to pivot after the strike.

Start off low and slow and then build it up slowly.

If you are losing your balance you may be falling over for a few reasons.

You may be trying to kick too high too early, if so you will probably be falling backwards as you are leaning back to get height.

If you are falling to the side then it may be because you are spinning from foot up rather than the head down. The balance goes as the head is being whipped round rather than the foot.

This whiplash effect can be made more pronounced if the standing foot remains facing away from the target too long after the other foot has gone through the striking zone.

Practice in thin air to start with and take it easy. If you are getting dizzy after a while and your form is getting worse then stop or change leg.

Then move quickly on to kicking a focus mitt or a similar moveable pad. Get feedback from the pad holder on what you are doing. Play around with striking with the heel and the sole of your foot. If you are doing the straight leg reverse turning kick then don't lock your leg out completely when hitting a target.