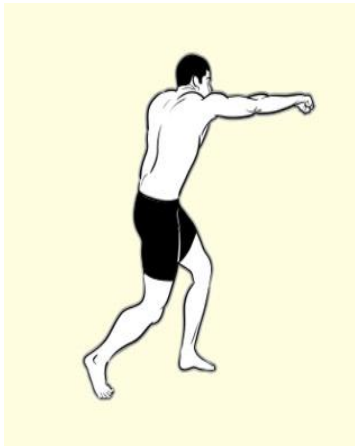


How to.... Reverse punch

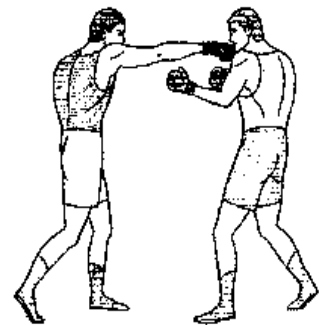
How to perform a reverse punch.

The reverse punch to the head is not an extensively used hand technique in comparison with a straight left jab or back fist, but it is regarded as one of the most powerful punches in Northern Freestyle, because this punch is executed with the use of a stronger right hand, and students usually tend to involve the greater part of their weight in the strike.



From fighting stance this punch is performed with the backhand thrown from the chin, crossing the body and travelling towards the target in a straight line, the arm is extended forward with speed while power is generated through hip movement. The arm is fully extended with full twist bringing the shoulders of the punching arm to the front of the body, with the rear shoulder thrust forward finishing touching the outside of the chin. Impact is with the two big knuckles of the hand; palm turned down as in the jab. At the time of impact the arm should be straight, fully extended, chin tucked in covered with the left fist from the left side together with the right shoulder from right, respectively.

Weight is also transferred from the rear foot to the lead foot, resulting in the rear heel turning outwards as it acts as a fulcrum for the transfer of weight. Body rotation and the sudden weight transfer is what provides the reverse punch its power. Like the jab, a slide forward may be added. After the cross is thrown, the hand is retracted quickly and fighting stance resumed. The reverse punch is a power punch, but because of the weight transfer it can also leave you exposed without a fighting stance for a split second. This is why it is important to return back to fighting stance as quick as possible.



It can be used to counterpunch a jab, aiming for the opponent's head (or a counter to a cross aimed at the body) or to set up a hook. The reverse punch can also follow a jab, creating the classic "double punch combination" which is often followed by a kick with your rear leg. Power and speed can be increased by concentrating on the pull back of the jab which causes a more powerful push on the reverse punch. The reverse punch may become your favourite punch, because this punch is thrown from your preferred hand which is usually the strongest. You should rarely lead with your reverse punch - instead, probe your opponent's defences with your jabs, and kicks, create an opening then throw your reverse punch with power.

Practice the reverse punch on the heavy bag/kick shield using a light left jab to measure the distance, after the heavy bag, move onto a more mobile target like the focus pads, concentrate on maintaining your balance as the punch makes contact.