

6 Steps to Effective Shadowboxing

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"In pretty much any area of human endeavor, people have a tremendous capacity to improve their performance, as long as they train in the right way."

- *Anders Ericsson* -

Okay, so you're caught up on your watch list on Netflix, read your whole book shelf, walked around your block enough that you can do it blindfolded, and ironed all your socks to private school prestige. So what's next?

Being stuck at home sucks and if you're like the rest of the covid-19 (coronavirus) [#quaranteam](#), you're starting to get antsy. Your gym is closed and everything is beginning to look the same, like an awful groundhog day.

Have you tried a bit of *shadowboxing* to get your at-home training fix? If it's good for the mighty [Wu-Tang Clan](#) than it's good enough for us!

All jokes aside, shadowboxing is one of the best ways to practice your tempo, technique, and balance. Plus, you don't need any equipment to have a highly effective workout during your social isolation.

Don't know where to begin? *Sabai sabai* my friends, we're here to set you up with 6 easy steps!

The key here is being conscientious of everything that you are doing. When you don't have a specific target to make contact with, you have to remain mindful to stop yourself from falling into your strikes or hyperextending. If you find yourself doing this, don't worry, keep going and make corrections as you go along. This is how you get better and master shadowboxing!

Here's an example of beautiful shadowboxing execution, by none other than Saenchai.

Step 1: Stretch

Treat this like a training session in the gym. Be well stretched; stretch your hips, shoulders, legs, neck, etc. Since you'll be shadowboxing with high intensity and proper form (full extension), you can definitely pull something out of place if you're not properly stretched.

Here is the well known *Muay Thai Guy*, Sean Fagan, showing us his routine.

Step 2: Flow and Warmup

Start slow and throw a combination of offensive pressures and defensive techniques.

It's important to warm up all your tools. Review what you know, do whatever comes natural, and be mindful of defence. It's easy to get caught up on offensive moves but in a realistic scenario, you'd need a strong defensive base as well.

Think of this round as a mental and physical refresher.

Step 3: Focus on technique



photocredit: reddit

If you have access to a mirror, we encourage you to shadowbox in front of it to ensure that your technique is on-point. Be mindful of what muscles you're engaging, following through with your attack, and maintaining consistent foot movement.

If you don't have access to a mirror or you're shadowboxing somewhere without a mirror, such as a park, face adjacent to the sunlight to see your shadow.

Without a coach or kru advising you, you'll have to be self accountable. The last thing you want is for your body to get used to doing something wrong, which will become your new muscle memory.

"I fear not the man who has practiced 10,000 kicks once, but I fear the man who has practiced one kick 10,000 times."

- Bruce Lee -

Step 4: Strategy

This is the really fun part. Set your gaze on a goal that you want to work on. You may want to work on leg blocks, or you may want to work on parrying or side stepping.

Think of the openings that may occur. Think of all the different angles that your opponent may attack.

Focus on this strategy and make it the training goal of the day. Reflect on all the circumstances that you'll be pressured to apply this specific technique and then calculate how you would react.

Think "How would I set this up and when can I use this as a defensive reaction?"

The answer could be as easy or as complex as you want, what matters most is your form and execution. Do your drills a number of times, solidifying the motions in your mind and body.

The number 1 rule to this is to **be inventive and have fun!** There are tons of tutorials and variations out there to keep you inspired.

Step 5: Intense Flow

Now that your brain and body are in-sync and warmed up, start flowing again like step 2 but now with more speed and intensity. I like to break them down into 5 three-minute rounds, with pushups or squats in-between.

Keep in mind the drills from Step 4 and integrate them every so often. By integrating your combinations into a regular flow, it now becomes second nature.

When you get back into the gym, you will find this step critical when sparring, as you want to maintain a consistent rhythm throughout.

Step 6: Burn out

Time to finish strong! Here's my final drill:

25x	teeps on each side (50 total)
50x	alternating straight knees, moving forward (almost like you're walking)
3x	10-sec speed uppercuts, burpee in-between each set
3x	10-sec speed jab-cross, burpee in-between each set

And there you have it! This whole routine should take about 45-60 minutes and is a great solo workout. Don't forget to do some cardio and strength training throughout the week to supplement this.

Let us know what your shadowboxing regiment looks like in the comments and happy training y'all!

Khop khun khap!