



4 Advanced Hapkido Techniques

MAXIMUM RESTRAINT

by Bill Darlas and Robert W. Young

Any student of self-defense who has visited South Korea will tell you that the "Land of the Morning Calm" is rich in martial traditions. Upon further examination, however, you will discover that most of the styles there exhibit either a distinct sporting character—such as taekwondo, judo and kumdo—or a spiritual, New Age bent—such as kung fu (or kung fu) and ki gong (or chi kung).

Not so with hapkido.

In the land of its birth, as well as in every country to which it has spread, hapkido enjoys a reputation for effectiveness and simplicity. Because it includes techniques for dealing with all sorts of attacks, practitioners of other Korean arts often look to its arsenal for inspiration when they need to add self-defense moves to their curriculum. If your taekwondo school teaches weapons-use or weapons-defense sequences, chances are they came from hapkido.

The four hapkido belt techniques described in this article are suitable for inclusion in the repertoire of any martial artist who wishes to be able to defend himself on the street against the most frequently encountered punches and kicks. —Editor

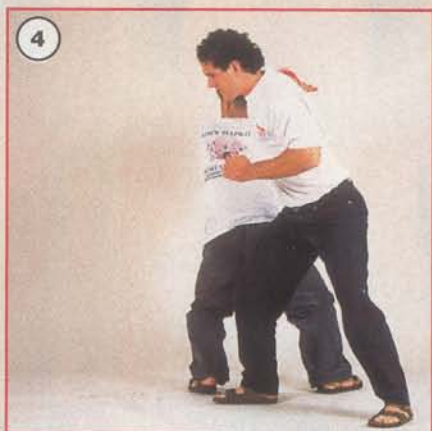
Throw the Puncher

One of hapkido's preferred methods for using a belt to defend against a punch involves waiting for the opponent to move forward to strike your face, then slipping to your left to avoid the path of his energy. As you move, you use your belt (or a

length of rope, twine, etc.) to block his punching arm. With continuous motion and pressure, you twist the belt around the wrist of his punching hand, pulling the arm downward and immobilizing it. Next, you pivot counter-clockwise as you circle under his trapped arm. To throw him, you drop to one knee and twist his arm. After he lands on his back, you maintain control of his punching arm as you wrap the belt around his neck. Then you simply cinch it down to control him.

Surprisingly, you don't need to be a speed demon to successfully block a full-speed punch and trap the punching hand with a belt. Because your motion is continuous, there are no starts and stops to slow your response. And because you are using the opponent's energy against him, you are able to wrap the belt around his limb without him stopping. You sim-

to Neutralize **ANY** Attacker



Throw the puncher: Hapkido instructor Han Woong Kim (left) waits for opponent Bill Darias to attack (1). Kim moves to his left and deflects the punch (2). In a continuous motion, he wraps the belt around the opponent's wrist, pulls the arm downward and immobilizes it (3). Kim then pivots counter-clockwise and circles the trapped arm overhead (4-5). He drops to one knee and throws the opponent (6). The hapkido stylist finishes by wrapping the belt around the opponent's neck (7-8).

ply push his hand downward and then move it in a circular manner, making sure to keep his and your energy moving. That enables you to quickly spin and twist him down on the ground.

Because this technique is considered an advanced component of hapkido, efficient usage of it requires that you have a good understanding of the art's circle principle and are skilled at using the belt to wrap various body parts. It takes a lot of practice to hone your skills to the point where you can apply it on the street, but that's part of the challenge of learning any martial art.

Flip the Puncher

Another hapkido technique for using a belt to defeat a puncher involves waiting for the opponent to begin moving forward, then stepping to the outside and stopping his attacking arm with the belt. As you block, you move behind him while you slide the belt over his head. Then you spin counter-clockwise to position your back against his. That orientation enables you to easily tighten the belt around his neck as you flex your knees and bend forward, then send him flying straight over your body or to the side. He lands on his right side, after which you tighten the belt around his neck and control his upper body with your knees.

You must always use caution when practicing this technique because it forces the opponent to take a dangerous fall that can put great pressure on his back when he hits the ground. Furthermore, when a person is that high up and cannot see the ground on his way down, he cannot prepare to do a breakfall to lessen the blow. Therefore, the technique should be practiced only with the proper training, supervision and equipment.

Although movies and television shows frequently depict actors maneuvering into the same intermediate back-to-back po-



Flip the puncher: Hapkido instructor Han Woong Kim (left) prepares for Bill Darlas' attack (1). As the punch comes in, Kim steps to the outside and stops the opponent's arm with the belt (2). He then moves behind the opponent and places the belt around his neck (3). Next, Kim pivots counter-clockwise into a back-to-back position and throws the opponent (4). After the opponent lands on his side (5), Kim tightens the belt around his neck and controls him with his knees (6).

sition before they grab the villain's chin and break his neck, you should realize that it is purely a Hollywood technique. The ability to break a person's neck comes from using a twisting or jamming motion. The more immediate danger of this portion of the technique comes from inadvertently choking the other guy with the belt.

Trip the Kicker

Against a common roundhouse kick, hapkido teaches you to step in the direction the kicking leg is moving as you use the belt to block the technique by making contact between the opponent's shin and knee. Once the danger of the kick has been eliminated, you drop to one knee before he gets a chance to

retract his extended leg, then wrap the belt around his base leg. Next, you immediately yank his supporting leg out from under him, dropping him onto his back. Then you wrap the belt around his trapped leg and swing it to your left to roll him onto his stomach. While using your left hand to maintain your hold on the portion of the belt that encircles his left ankle, you utilize the remainder of the belt to encircle his neck. If necessary, you can tie his foot and neck together, rendering him as helpless as a baby.

The danger to which you are exposed as you squat and shoot in to wrap the belt around the opponent's leg can be minimized if you train to improve your speed during that phase of the technique. Because you are moving toward the open side of his body, he may be able to deliver a punch or knee thrust if he can reposition his kicking leg on the floor. Therefore, it is essential to break his balance as quickly as possible.

"The ability to break a person's neck comes from using a twisting or jamming motion."

Although the opponent will obviously have all his weight on one leg, it is easy to sweep it out from under him because the belt allows you to use both hands and generate more force.

The final key to effectively employing this technique is to ensure that you never release the belt from the leg you sweep. If you cannot use the opposite end of the belt to wrap around the opponent's neck, you can grab a handful of hair instead. However, you probably will not be able to restrain him as long because your grip will eventually give out.

Sweep the Kicker

To defend against a side kick, hapkido contains an advanced technique in which



Trip the kicker: Han Woong Kim (right) waits for Bill Darlas' roundhouse kick (1). As soon as he detects it, Kim steps to his right and blocks it with the belt (2). He then drops to one knee and wraps the belt around the opponent's base leg (3). Next, Kim pulls the base leg out from under him (4). The hapkido stylist immediately twists the belt around the trapped leg (5) and rolls the opponent onto his stomach (6). While maintaining his hold on the belt, Kim grabs the opponent's hair to immobilize him (7).

you evade the attack and use the belt to lift the extended right leg as you move behind the opponent. After you wrap the belt around his kicking leg, you slide in closer so you can insert your left leg under his trapped leg and in front of the thigh of his supporting leg. Then you sweep his supporting leg with your left leg, swinging it upward to destroy his

Sweep the kicker: To defend against a side kick, hapkido instructor Han Woong Kim (left) first evades the attack, then uses the belt to trap the kicking leg as he moves behind the opponent (1-2). Next, Kim positions his left leg under the opponent's trapped leg and in front of the thigh of his supporting leg (3). To effect the throw, Kim sweeps the supporting leg with his left leg (4). After the opponent lands (5), the hapkido stylist maintains his hold on the leg and delivers a finishing strike (6).

balance. He lands on his back with at least one leg in the air because it is still trapped by the belt. You can restrain him in this position or, if need be, strike him in any number of vulnerable spots with the belt or your fist.

Most of the damage inflicted by this technique comes from the execution of the throw—or, more accurately, from the opponent's inability to perform a proper breakfall. The impact will most likely leave him partially or totally incapacitated; after that it is easy to restrain or finish him.

Once again, it is important to exercise caution when practicing or performing this technique. Although advanced hapkido practitioners may not be in much danger because they know how and when to use breakfalls, martial artists who are not accustomed to falling safely can get hurt—especially when they do not know the direction in which they are being thrown.

The key to the technique's effectiveness, however, relies upon just that element of the unknown. When the opponent does not know where he will fall or which body part will make contact with the ground, disorientation reigns supreme. That, coupled with the combination of your downward force and the effect of gravity on his body, makes this technique one of hapkido's most effective self-defense moves. ✘

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