



boxing for fitness

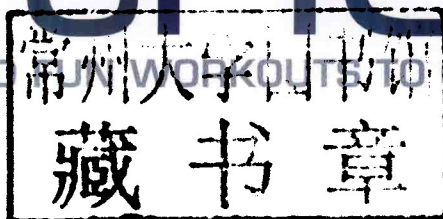
SAFE AND FUN WORKOUTS TO GET YOU FIGHTING FIT

CLINTON MCKENZIE & HILARY LISSENDEN



boxing for fitness

SAFE AND FUN WORKOUTS TO GET YOU FIGHTING FIT



CLINTON MCKENZIE & HILARY LISSENDEN

FIREFLY BOOKS



A FIREFLY BOOK

Published by Firefly Books Ltd. 2011

Copyright © 2011 A&C Black Ltd.

Text copyright © 2011 Clinton McKenzie and Hilary Lissenden

All rights reserved.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the Publisher.

First printing

Publisher Cataloging-in-Publication Data (U.S.)

McKenzie, Clinton.

Boxing for fitness : safe and fun workouts to get you fighting fit / Clinton McKenzie and Hilary Lissenden.

[192] p. : col. photos. ; cm.

Includes index.

Summary: Describes the techniques involved in boxing, a circuit that includes shadow boxing, skipping, punch bag and focus-pad work. Also explains how a routine can be tailored to address individual fitness goals.

ISBN-13: 978-1-55407-906-3 (pbk.)

1. Boxing. I. Lissenden, Hilary. II. Title.
796.83 dc22 GV1133.M3546 2011

Library and Archives Canada Cataloguing in Publication

McKenzie, Clinton, 1955-

Boxing for fitness : safe and fun workouts to get you fighting fit / Clinton McKenzie and Hilary Lissenden.

Includes index.

ISBN 978-1-55407-906-3

1. Boxing--Training. 2. Physical fitness. I. Lissenden, Hilary II. Title.

GV1137.6.M35 2011 796.83 C2011-900219-1

Published in the United States by

Firefly Books (U.S.) Inc.

P.O. Box 1338, Ellicott Station

Buffalo, New York 14205

Published in Canada by

Firefly Books Ltd.

66 Leek Crescent

Richmond Hill, Ontario L4B 1H

Commissioned by Charlotte Atyeo

Edited by Rebecca Senior

Designed by Greg Stevenson

This book is produced using paper that is made from wood grown in managed, sustainable forests. It is natural, renewable and recyclable. The logging and manufacturing processes conform to the environmental regulations of the country of origin.

Typeset in Meta Plus on 9 on 11pt by Saxon Graphics Ltd, Derby

Printed and bound in China by C&C Offset Printing Co., Ltd

Note

Whilst every effort has been made to ensure that the content of this book is as technically accurate and as sound as possible, neither the author nor the publishers can accept responsibility for any injury or loss sustained as a result of the use of this material.

Photo Credits

Cover photographs © Grant Pritchard; © Shutterstock

Photographs on pages 10, 13, 16, 34, 35, 45, 56, 68, 70, 79, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 89, 91, 97, 102, 137, 149, 151, 158, 160, 164 © Shutterstock

Photographs on pages 2, 5, 11, 19, 43 and 105 © Getty Images

All other photographs © Grant Pritchard

Illustrations on pages 9 and 36 © Tom Croft

Illustrations on page 46 © Greg Stevenson

Acknowledgments

Many people have helped and supported us in bringing this book to fruition. We'd like to thank them all – and to mention especially:

- > For giving us the chance, our Publisher, Charlotte Atyeo; and our Editor, Becky Senior.
- > For their continued friendship and encouragement, Miriam Bernal, Leigh Bruce, Sally-Ann Cairns, Lee Clayton, Mel Cook, Richard Dix, Tim Dyson, Beckie Lloyd-Jones, Angel McKenzie.
- > David Cowland, for his expertise freely given, and all the benefit of his experience.
- > Andrew, James and Lindsey at Lemarr Boxing, for providing clothing and gear for the photoshoot.
- > Liz Puttick, for having faith in us first.
- > The photoshoot models, Adam, Angel, Arbnor, Cat, Christopher, Dave, Duncan, Fausat, Harry, Heather, Leoard, Magda and Rhys.
- > Both of our families – they know why.



Preface

Dreams are made of wishes, and wishes do come true. This book represents a dream that has become a reality for me.

Boxing has always been my passion – even as a child, running through the fields of Jamaica in bare feet. I want to thank my dad for encouraging me; he made it all possible. As did all the other people who supported me, throughout my career and ever since.

Those BBC commentaries by Harry Carpenter still linger in my mind. If Harry rated you, then you knew you were good. His voice was the perfect expression of the excitement, the enthusiasm that I myself felt for the sport of boxing. I still do.

Boxing training changed my life. If my words of fitness can change yours, then this book is everything I wanted it to be.

Yours in boxing fitness,

Clinton McKenzie

British & European Champion 1979–89

Olympic quarter-finalist 1976

Foreword

I was delighted to be asked to endorse this book, in which Clinton McKenzie – a much-loved British champion in his day – brings boxing fitness into the light and makes it accessible for everyone to enjoy.

Boxing has been my life, as it has Clinton's, and it's a special kind of world. A fighter needs physical prowess, but other qualities come into play too – both in the gym and in the ring. Things like strategic thinking, self-control and an ability to adapt.

But perhaps the most important lesson to be learned from boxing is something that we in the business call “heart.” This is the will to go the distance; the determination to stand up and be counted.

In these pages, Clinton shows us that you don't have to get hit to have heart. You're in safe hands with him, and through your boxing fitness training you will constantly challenge yourself, overcome your physical and mental limitations, and become stronger in every way.

Sir Henry Cooper OBE, KSG

British, Commonwealth and European Heavyweight Champion



Contents

Acknowledgments	vii
Preface	ix
Foreword	xi
Introduction	1
PART ONE: THE KNOWLEDGE	5
1 What is boxing fitness?	7
PART TWO: THE PREPARATION	11
2 Organizing your training	13
3 Preparing for your training	21
4 The warm-up	35
PART THREE: THE TECHNIQUES	43
5 Stance, punches and combinations	45
6 Footwork	56
7 Defensive and evasive techniques	61
8 Shadow boxing	64
9 Skipping	66
10 Punching bag work	70
11 Focus pads	75
PART FOUR: DIET AND HEALTH	77
12 Nutrition and hydration	79
13 Preventing injuries	88
14 Health matters	93

PART FIVE: TRAINING PROGRAMS	99
PART SIX: TRAINING AROUND YOUR BOXING	137
15 Core training	139
16 Resistance training	148
17 Running	158
Appendix: taking it further	161
Resources	165
Glossary	167
Index	171

Introduction

If you've picked up this book, and are interested in finding out what boxing fitness can do for you, then you're already on the way to putting on a pair of gloves and enjoying a great new kind of workout.

>> What is boxing fitness?

First and foremost, boxing fitness is fun. You get to “make like a boxer” – and let's face it, who hasn't imagined themselves storming up the steps like Rocky, whacking the heavy bag in *Million Dollar Baby*, or polishing up the old “one-two”? With the techniques and training programs described in these pages, you can do it all ... and you can do it without hitting anyone or getting hit back.

With boxing fitness you will follow almost all the elements involved in a boxer's traditional training regimen. You'll learn how to shadow box, skip, hit the heavy bag, work the speed ball and practice your punching combinations – a routine that develops a unique blend of heart-lung stamina, strength, speed, co-ordination, balance and flexibility.

This training routine places the boxer who is at the top of their game firmly among the fittest athletes in the world. It follows, then, that by training in a similar way, you will quickly see results.

Depending on what you want from your boxing fitness workout, you will lose weight, tone up, get stronger, increase your stamina and improve your performance in other sports and activities. And, perhaps best of all, you will get to “bust” your stress and channel your frustrations in a safe, non-combative environment. (Remember the driver who cut you off on your way to work this morning? Go on – get it all out with your best left hook!)

>> Safety first

What you won't do in the type of training described here is have any glove-to-body contact. This, of course, is the point of the sport of boxing: hitting someone else harder, and more often, than they hit you. It is *not* the point of boxing fitness. By removing the element of bodily contact, boxing fitness also removes the element of risk – so that when you train, only the benefits of the workout remain.

These benefits are entirely achievable by you, no matter what your age, gender, or level of fitness or ability. And because boxing fitness is fun, and really does work, your achievements will motivate you to continue to exercise, to improve and to progress.

>> Is boxing fitness the same as “boxercise”?

The sport of boxing has experienced a dramatic resurgence in popularity over the last few years (see page 7 for a very brief history). This has contributed



Train anywhere with boxing fitness

to the rise of some explosive new workout trends which incorporate boxing moves and techniques into their sessions – boxercise, “boxfit” and “body combat” among them.

Although such developments seem very recent, boxercise and other combat-type training routines have been around since the early 1990s, so that today there is a huge choice of activities available. Usually these are run as group classes, set to music and taught by aerobics and fitness instructors out of recreation centers and health clubs. As their names suggest, they’re not an easy option and can really help kick-start your fitness. But boxing fitness as described in these pages is quite a different kind of workout.

So what makes boxing fitness stand out from the rest?

- 1 The boxing fitness workout **closely mirrors the traditional boxer’s regimen**. By following the guidance given in this book, you will have a

unique and authentic exercise experience – one that was originally devised (and has been taught for 20 years) by Clinton McKenzie, former boxing champion and professional boxing trainer.

- 2 While parts of boxing fitness can be taught in a class environment – for example, boxing circuits and shadow boxing – it is essentially an individual workout where **the elements are tailor-made to your own particular goals**. For more information on this, see Part Five, in which we structure a number of different sessions to target specific fitness aspirations and concerns. We also show you how you can still enjoy boxing fitness even if you have limited time, space and/or money available.
- 3 Boxing fitness is both **flexible and inexpensive**. You don’t have to work out at a gym: if you can’t get to a registered boxing club, or to one of the many health or fitness gyms that now offer suitable facilities, you can do an adapted version of the workout at home or in the park.

All you need to start is a small initial outlay on a skipping rope, some hand-wraps and possibly some boxing gloves. Do it alone, with a partner, with your personal trainer, or in a group of friends!

“

We meet our boxing instructor in the park after our joint shift, once a week. Training together is fun, and it's also more affordable since we can split the cost between us. Mostly we punch the focus pads, because all three of us love an energetic workout. And the session works well with three people, since we can alternate cardio boxing with core exercises and some basic resistance training – so none of us has to wait around with nothing to do. At the moment, we're working on our bikini bodies!

Magda, Anna and Karolina
Starbucks baristas

”

>> How to use this book

To get the best out of your workout, and to ensure that you exercise safely as well as effectively, we advise that you read through this book chronologically. However, if you already possess some knowledge and experience of boxing training, the programs detailed in Part Five can be used as a stand-alone resource.

- > **Part One: The Knowledge** gives a brief background to the sport of boxing; sets boxing fitness in its past and present-day context; and details the benefits to you of taking it up.
- > **Part Two: The Preparation** comprises all you need to know about how to organize and prepare for your training. We discuss the importance of establishing suitable goals; where, when, how often and for how long to

train; options for exercising with a coach, partner or in a class or group; the importance of hand-wraps and the warm-up; and the equipment and/or facilities you may use to box your way to fitness.

- > **Part Three: The Techniques** – the nitty-gritty! Step-by-step, illustrated instructions explain how to stand; how to perform individual punches, combinations, footwork and defensive/evasive techniques; and how to go about all the other elements of boxing fitness, including shadow boxing, skipping, using the punching bag and speed ball, and focus pad work.

- > **Part Four: Diet and Health** deals with such matters as good nutrition and hydration; how to prevent common injuries such as sore knuckles – or address them should they unfortunately occur; and some useful precautions to ensure that boxing fitness training can be safely and enjoyably undertaken by those who are older, younger, or less able-bodied.

- > **Part Five: The Training Programs** sets out sessions and programs that progress, in clear steps, from complete beginner through to advanced practitioner. There is advice on choosing the right training level; building up your workouts within that level; and determining when it's time to move on to the next phase – together with guidelines on how long that may take.

Alternative techniques and sessions are offered for those who have limited access to facilities and equipment, including our unique boxing circuit, which is designed specifically around the concept of the three-minute round to improve stamina and strengthen all the major muscles involved in boxing training.

- > **Part Six: Training Around Your Boxing** talks about core work, resistance training and running – three types of exercise which can greatly enhance your boxing fitness program, even though they don't directly involve boxing techniques. We dispel some of the doubts and

fears surrounding these training techniques, and suggest ways in which they can be incorporated into your sessions for significant fitness gains – no matter what your ability level or goals.


Throughout each section of the book, author, trainer and former boxing champ Clinton McKenzie gets you ahead of the game, providing some invaluable insider info, tips and tricks-of-the-trade. There are

checklists to help you achieve the correct technique and avoid common pitfalls, and nuggets of interesting facts about boxing and how it has influenced our popular culture.

Finally, we include real case studies based on the experiences of men, women and young people who have benefited from boxing fitness – featuring direct quotes, practical advice, personal anecdotes and pictures. We hope you'll join them!

PART ONE >> THE KNOWLEDGE





To understand fully what boxing fitness is, and all the ways in which it can benefit you, it helps to know a little about how this type of training evolved – and to dispel a few misconceptions around the sport of boxing, from which boxing fitness has developed. This section shows you how anyone can enjoy boxing fitness, and prepares you for the next step toward starting your training.



What is boxing fitness?

>> A quick word about boxing

The activity we refer to as “boxing” – basically, two people hitting each other – has an ancient history, and has taken many forms in its journey to what we now know as the modern sport.

Stone carvings that date back to at least the third millennium BC depict bare-fisted contests between two individuals, who fought without weapons, gloves or any other kind of protection. Such gruelling encounters endured well into the 19th century, and were termed variously “fisticuffs,” “pugilism” or “prizefighting” – because opponents fought for prize money, and spectators bet on the outcome.

Bare-knuckle prizefighting had no rules at all until 1743, when it was determined that you were no longer allowed to strike an opponent when he was “down,” nor wrestle or “grapple” him at the waist. At the same time a type of glove, called a “muffler,” was designed, but this was used only in training and for exhibitions.

It was not until 1867 that a proper set of rules was introduced to govern this rather dubious pastime, which had by then been outlawed in England and much of the United States. These rules were devised under the patronage of the Marquess of Queensberry, whose name remains associated with them.

There were a total of 12 Queensberry Rules, which specified among other things that fights should be a “fair stand-up boxing match” and conducted in a roped-off ring of 24 square feet or similar. “Rounds”

(boxing intervals) were to be three minutes long, with one minute’s rest between each, and padded gloves were to be worn that laced up at the wrist.

From these rules developed boxing as we recognize it today, in both its amateur and professional forms – now strictly controlled by its respective governing bodies, and enforcing stringent safety standards.

FIGHTING TALK

Amateur boxers wear protective headgear, and gloves that have a white portion over the knuckle. Scoring is based on the number of clean punches delivered with the white part of the glove. The ultimate prize is an Olympic gold medal.

Professional boxers wear no headgear, and bouts are scored by “decision,” made by a referee and/or three judges who sit ringside. The winner gets a boxer’s “purse” – money that is shared with their trainer and manager, and traditionally collected as cash directly after the fight. Arguably, the biggest purse for a single bout was received by US heavyweight Mike Tyson, who was paid over \$30 million for his 1997 fight against Evander Holyfield.

Dispelling a few misconceptions

Boxing was a widely popular spectator sport until the 1970s to 1980s – a time many consider to be its