



## Beginner's Guide to Krav Maga

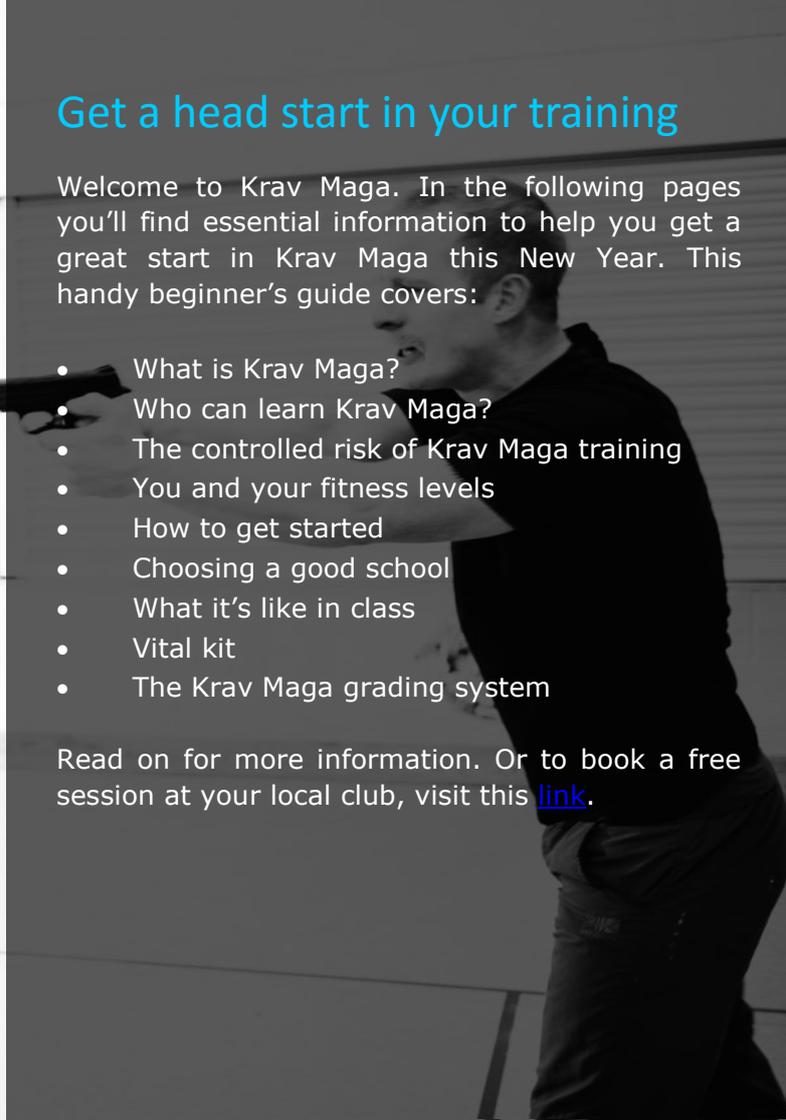


## Get a head start in your training

Welcome to Krav Maga. In the following pages you'll find essential information to help you get a great start in Krav Maga this New Year. This handy beginner's guide covers:

- What is Krav Maga?
- Who can learn Krav Maga?
- The controlled risk of Krav Maga training
- You and your fitness levels
- How to get started
- Choosing a good school
- What it's like in class
- Vital kit
- The Krav Maga grading system

Read on for more information. Or to book a free session at your local club, visit this [link](#).



## What is Krav Maga

Krav Maga is a hand to hand combat system developed in the Second World War. Since its creation, it has proved extremely effective in conflicts around the world and in the hands of ordinary people and professionals alike. It's so successful that it is now required learning in over 500 military and law enforcement agencies globally.

It's important to understand that Krav Maga is not a martial art. It is a combat system. It is easy to learn and has proven, consistent results in many different operational theaters. Its core teaching is one of simplicity – arming the ordinary person with a series of simple, instinctive movements that will work under the pressure of a real assault. The key strength in Krav Maga is not simply in its techniques – but rather in the methodology and the psychology of learning. A good instructor will give you a set of basic techniques and then build up your training until you're testing those techniques under safe, but significant pressure, giving you the confidence that you could repeat what you've learnt in the real world, when your life was under threat.

Taught well, it is a system trusted by a wide variety of people: soldiers, close-protection officers, law enforcement, civilians and security staff. Nothing else in the world has the battle-tested, proven credibility of Krav Maga and nothing else is in such high demand. True self defence begins and ends with the teachings of Krav Maga.

## Who Can Learn Krav Maga

Anyone can learn Krav Maga. Most instructors will only teach adults, due to the sometimes pressured nature of training which can involve role play of violent encounters, bad language, etc. There is no upper age limit and most health issues will not prevent you learning provided you are up front with your instructor about these issues and you agree to follow the instructor's guidance and start gradually, building up fitness and strength in a measured and sustained manner. Any successful Krav school will have a wide range of students training regularly, including men, women, people from all age groups – though the average is usually around 30 – 40 – civilians, police, military and security staff, beginners and experts. As long as you come with the right attitude, the door is open to anyone.



## Controlled Risk in Training

All combative training carries a level of risk, but the risk in a Krav Maga class is carefully controlled and managed to ensure that you have an authentic but injury free experience. Your instructor is a professional, trained and experienced in coaching many hundreds of people of all abilities. They will be first aid trained and will have extensive understanding of the physiology of physical training. It is their job to make sure you receive the best instruction without coming to harm. There is frequently sparring involved in Krav Maga lessons, but it is nearly always at a low level of contact which will not cause injury to you. Of course, during the course of training, the odd bruise is expected and your body will ache after training, particularly for the first month or so. But serious injuries are very rare – Krav practice is statistically much safer than Squash, Football, Rugby and many other popular sports.

*vis pacem, para bellum*



## How Fit Do You Need to Be?

Krav Maga classes involve a lot of physical exercise – it is part of the Instructor’s job to make you fit and physically strong so that you are able to confidently carry out the techniques you learn. Krav will make significant improvements to your fitness and is very successful at bringing people back to fitness and losing weight etc. But this does not mean you need to be fit to start. All you need to do is start slowly, working up to fitness and strength in a measured, gradual fashion. All your classmates have been through the same experience and you’ll find them supportive and helpful both in class and out of it, for advice or useful experience.



## Choosing a Good Krav School

Be warned that as Krav Maga gains in popularity there will be more and more unqualified people claiming to teach authentic Krav Maga. We are seeing a real growth in 2 or 3 day instructor courses, churning out instructors that have no experience or proven training background in Krav Maga. Typically, these instructors will already run martial arts schools and are seeking to add Krav to their programme in order to make extra money. You cannot expect good or even real Krav Maga training from instructors and schools like these. To be sure of your training, seek the big brands in the business – any instructor flying the flag of a major brand will have been through a qualification and training program tougher than you can imagine and will have proven, professional capabilities not only in Krav Maga but in the psychology and physiology of teaching Krav Maga. Remember, it's one thing to practice a system and quite another to be able to teach it.

Ask the instructor about his or her lineage. There should be a clear line back to the source of Krav Maga. A credible instructor has years of training experience as well as an 18-24 day instructor qualification process that demanded over 200 hours of tough, contact Krav Maga, before they were awarded their certificates.

You wouldn't learn to swim from someone who had never been in the water.

Established, credible Krav associations across the world include : British Krav Maga; Krav Maga Global; International Krav Maga Federation; Krav Maga Worldwide.

**TOP TIP: All BKM schools offer free beginners sessions. To get involved, all you need to do is contact your local school and ask for a place. Your instructor will be happy to get you booked in.**

## What it's Like in Class

Most people make the same comment about coming to Krav Maga, especially those who've come from other systems. It's a really great atmosphere, full of supportive people, a truly ego free environment. If you ask a Krav instructor why this is, the consensus is that because we all exercise hard and classes are hard work, people after an ego trip and an easy ride are selected against naturally. A good class will demand sweat and effort from you, and in return you will find Krav groups to be really great training environments and you'll find the experienced folks really happy to train with you and offer you their training wisdom, helping you to reach your own potential. Frankly, if you don't find this in your club, find another club!



**Si vis pacem, para bellum**



## The Kit you Need

For a beginner's session, all you need are loose fitting clothes – tracksuit bottoms, t-shirt and trainers are best – and a bottle of water to drink while you train.

Experienced Kravists progressing from beginner's training will need 16oz boxing gloves, a gumshield, shin protectors and a groin guard. All these things can be purchased cheaply from major sports or online retailers. For more information, ask your instructor.

## Are There Gradings

Yes. Different associations have different systems of ranking, but all have some system of grading assessment. It is, however, a very different ballgame than traditional martial arts. Most arts run on a time-served basis where students will typically grade every 3 months to black belt. Often grading assessments in the arts are short, simple affairs requiring a little pad work, light no-contact sparring and patterns. In contrast, your first grading with the British Krav Maga Association (BKM) will take around 4-5 hours and for many will be the hardest physical undertaking they have ever attempted. Gradings are not compulsory – some students do not choose to do them – and if you decide not to grade it won't affect what or how you are taught. If you do grade and pass, you will not be awarded a belt. All students in the class are the same and the only way of telling who is who is to train with them. This fosters an equal, supportive and ego-free environment. The gradings are very much for you to test yourself. Passing one will be an achievement you will hold for the rest of your life and it will stand you in good stead if you ever need to use your techniques in the real world.

## Are There Tournaments?

No. There are no competitive events in Krav Maga. Most competitive events in the martial arts encourage behaviours and practices that are not conducive to real world survival. For example, roughly 80% of all violent encounters see the victim outnumbered at least two to one against, while most competitions are contested one on one. The job of a Krav Maga instructor is to train you to survive on the street, in the heat of real combat, not to bring home trophies and medals

**INSTRUCTOR**



## What Now?

If you want to try Krav Maga for yourself, contact your local instructor. Most schools offer free beginner sessions designed to offer you a chance to dip your toe into the Krav world and meet some of the people who practice it. Get involved today and find your local school [here](#).

Krav Maga can be a life changing journey. As an instructor, I've had the privilege of training with and teaching hundreds of inspirational and deicated people, many of whom have become great friends. I've seen people totally change their body shape and their mental shape through the forging of tough training. And I've seen professionals come home from conflict with stories of how the training protected them and others in their charge.

Learning Krav Maga may be the best thing you ever do.

Good luck in your training and keep safe.

Will Bayley - BKMA Graduate Instructor



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