



**IS TRADITIONAL
WEIGHT TRAINING
GOOD FOR
MMA ATHLETES?**

By: Funk Roberts

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You are FREE to distribute this report to any MMA Fighter, Combat Athlete or Fitness Fan you think may be interested learning the best strength and conditioning training for Mixed Martial Arts. I actually encourage it!

IS TRADITIONAL WEIGHT TRAINING GOOD FOR MMA ATHLETES?



FUNK ROBERTS is a former professional beach volleyball player turned fitness trainer and MMA Strength and Conditioning Coach. Through his time training and fighting a professional Muay Thai fight in Thailand he uses experience, research and on-going education to provide the best workout and nutrition information to help MMA and Combat fighters around the world become elite athletes. Check out Funk's very popular MMA Strength and Conditioning website <http://www.funkmma.com>

INTRODUCTION

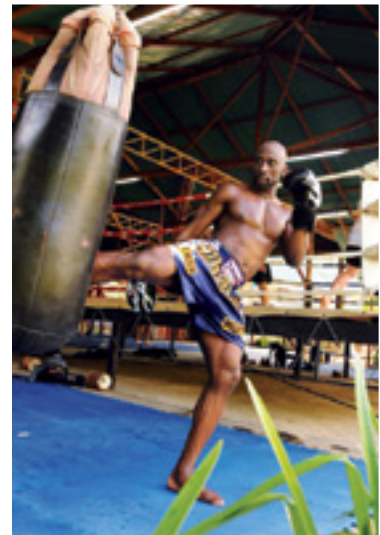
This is a question I have been asked many times over the years and the answer really did not come to light until I went to train for my Muay Thai fight in Thailand a few years back at Tiger Muay Thai and MMA Academy.

During my stay I trained and met over 100 MMA Athletes from all over the world and began to notice that everyone was still using the traditional weight training modalities (Chest and Back, Biceps and Triceps) for the strength training and running on a treadmill for cardio.



As my training had totally changed up to this point it dawned on me that MMA Fighters then and now still do not train effectively for Mix Martial Arts. What I mean is that many fighters still use weight training methods from bodybuilding instead of specific functional strength and conditioning workouts for MMA.

Bodybuilders train to focus on the size of each muscle, while MMA Athletes training is to develop power, strength, muscular endurance, speed, agility, flexibility, core, balance and cardio. All attributes needed to develop into a successful fighter and mix martial artist.



Let's take a closer look at why traditional weight training is not an effective way for MMA athletes to train and talk about the different elements of an effective functional strength and conditioning training program.



TRADITIONAL WEIGHT TRAINING

When I refer to traditional weight training, I am talking about the training we have been doing since our high school days. I am talking about the training that bodybuilders do to sculpt their god-like physiques.

This type of training focuses on isolating different body parts and muscles through slower movements with the purpose of building muscular size for aesthetics. You are either competing to

win a fitness contest or just look damn good with your shirt off.

For the MMA athlete, the purpose of weight training is not to win a bodybuilding or fitness contest but to win fights. I often get asked "Funk, how much can you bench press?" Many fighters waste too much time bench pressing and although there is nothing wrong with bench presses, over-emphasizes and doing too many is a waste of time for most combat fighters.



You are not training to have the physique or compete as a bodybuilder, so why would you train that way. So what is the most effective way to train as an MMA ATHLETE?

Let's take a closer look:

FUNCTIONAL MMA TRAINING - STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING



Mix Martial Arts involve multiple joint and muscular movements. For example, look at throwing a punch: the fighter starts with legs pushing the power through the body, through to the hips, which generate the most power, the core is tight, shoulders for arm endurance and arms for the delivery of the punch. Just think all of these movements for one single punch.

Like Bruce Lee's theory, the trick is not to move the body a great distance but rather to

move it all at the same time to be effective. I am getting off track here but these types of movements are prevalent in Explosive Takedowns, Grappling, Strikers and other elements of a MMA fight.

In order for the MMA or Combat Athlete to get the most competitive edge, you want to be strong, powerful, fast, agile and flexible, balance, co-ordination you also need to have the right cardio and muscular endurance.

The MMA world involves participants from multiple disciplines. Because of this we have to train with this key point in mind. Each discipline requires the athlete to be proficient in that skill but also possess specific strength, endurance and conditioning as well.

With Functional MMA Training you can learn to strengthen and condition your body to fight effectively and be an elite athlete. All of your training sessions should be performed at intensities, durations and mechanical similarities to that of a fight.

Without going into too many details, let's take a high-level look at each of the major components of strength and conditioning for MMA



POWER

In MMA an athlete needs to be well rounded in many areas including knockout and takedown power. The need for explosive power is one of the most important attributes as it allows you to be outwork your opponent every time. Often misunderstood with how strong you are, power depends on how well conditioned your energy systems are to allow you to produce power when it counts.

I don't know how many times I've seen athletes doing workouts that will not improve their power. Power can be developed through exercises and workouts like Olympic lifts and using kettlebells.



STRENGTH

For the MMA athlete maximum strength is essential. Strength is the total force one can exert under voluntary effort. In a MMA fight you may need to lift and throw, physically restrain, clinch & move or manipulate the joints of an opponent, all of which require the ability to exert influence over a resistive opponent. The key is developing your major, small stabilizer and neutralizing muscles.

Using bodyweight movements, dumbbells, sandbags, battling ropes, Isometric and eccentric muscle actions are a few ways you can develop this area of you game.



EXPLOSIVENESS

Plyometrics have been used with great success to stimulate an athlete to use greater force in a shorter period of time while shooting in, jumping, punching or kicking. For explosive strength, kettlebells, Olympic lifts and their variations, along with plyometric movements are often used.



FLEXIBILITY

The importance of flexibility is key component in MMA. It prevents soft tissue injuries in the form of sprains, strains and joint injuries. Flexibility is also important when grappling or ground fighting. Your use of bodyweight movements and stretches will help to enhance your ground game.



CORE STRENGTH

Core stability refers to the ability of the body to hold its core stable. The more direct form of core stability comes from the strength and function of the large bracing muscles as well as the deep stabilizing muscles. This is one of the most important to an MMA athlete.

Strengthening the midsection and core through planks and abs exercises are a couple of direct ways to train your core, but many exercises force you to keep this

section tight during the movement's hence strengthening core indirectly.



SPEED, AGILITY AND QUICKNESS

Athletes with the most speed are going to win. Things like how fast you react to an offensive or defensive move and then execute a technique. The speed at which you can throw a punch or kick, or the ability to move and change directions efficiently when under pressure dodging punches. Let's not forget quick and explosive takedowns. Using sprints, agility ladder, med ball, plyometrics and shadowboxing can all help.

CARDIO-CONDITIONING AND ENDURANCE

Having incredible endurance means being able to work hard for a long period without gassing out. For MMA fighters, it's the most important physical skill you can have after the technique itself.

For everyone else, endurance training is an ideal way to become leaner, more durable and mentally tough. Training the anaerobic and aerobic systems are key through skipping, interval sprints, hills, occasional long runs and killer circuits. Training basic energy systems like anaerobic and aerobic but anaerobic primarily – intervals (sprints, hills, tabatas)



ADDITIONAL TRAINING

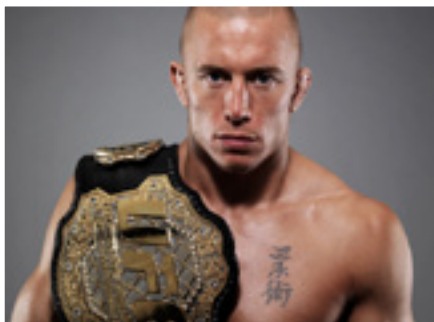
If you add other key training attributes like mental toughness, balance, co-ordination and body composition you can see that the traditional weight training workouts will not effectively help you reach your goals.

If you don't show up conditioned and in shape, you will not have what it takes to beat another fighter. You won't be able to perform your technical skills, make your strategy work OR even have time to think straight if you're not physically prepared. When you are in shape, you have the key to your toolbox of skills, strength and be able to work better, even against and less conditioned but more skilled athlete.

CONCLUSION

I want you to sit back and think about this. You are busy training your technique (Muay thai, BJJ/Grappling and Wrestling 4-5X per week, then imagine if you wasted 3 days a week on traditional weight training, when are you going to have time to train the most important functional movements, building functional strength and endurance for your fights?

There is no "magic" workout that will get you stronger, fitter and tougher than the other guy. Do not leave yourself in the dark and sabotage your MMA skills training by not conditioning yourself and building functional strength to excel in MMA and Combat Sports



Train to have a fighter's physique. You are a combat or MMA athlete not a bodybuilder or weightlifter. Long distance runner or sprinter; you are all of these and more. You are training to fight.

Big biceps and a chest will not win you a fight. The bi-product of functional MMA training will be a great physique, but that is not your focus. Use functional strength and conditioning training as a tool to becoming a better fighter.

FUNK & FLEX STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING FOR MMA ATHLETES

BUILDING A NEW BREED OF ELITE MMA FIGHTERS

As you know, no one workout or training philosophy fits all. Although this workout has great ideas and incorporates multiple exercises beneficial to the MMA athlete, you will still have to customize your training program and workouts based on your goals, weaknesses, and strengths.

Below is a workout that can be used as strength and conditioning circuit to help improve your strength, power, explosiveness, balance, core/abs strength, agility and of course conditioning. If you are in Mixed Martial Arts, Boxing, Taekwondo, Muay Thai, Wrestling, Jiu Jitsu, Karate, Grappling or if you just want to get super strength and a ripped body, then you should try this workout.

FUNK AND FLEX MMA 5 BY 5 STATION CIRCUIT

Complete MMA circuit that targets, strength, power, muscular endurance, cardio and conditioning, abs and core, flexibility, explosion, plyometrics and mental toughness.

The circuit will consist of five-5 minute stations (hence the term 5 by 5). At each station, perform all exercises for the prescribed reps or time at each station for 5 minutes. Make sure you rest for 2 minutes between stations.

WORKOUT TIP - To make the circuit run smoothly for 5 minutes, set up all the exercises and equipment you need close by so you can continuously perform the exercise without effectively.

Ensure you get a 5-10 minute warm up and stretch after you complete the workout (use one of our routines below)

Order your FUNK GYMBOSS TIMER: <http://tinyurl.com/yllwjdT>

Equipment:

- Gymboss Timer
- Stability Ball
- BOSU Ball
- Med Ball (Slam Ball)
- Dumbbells
- Barbell

STATION #1 - MMA STRENGTH AND POWER - Strength and Explosive Power

Perform 7 reps of each exercise one after the other for 5 minutes. Take a breather if you have to but try to complete all the exercises for the full 5 minute round.

BARBELL DEADLIFT - 135lbs - 7 reps

DUMBBELL STEP UPS - 25lbs - 7 reps

CHIN UPS - 7 reps

PLATE DEEP SQUATS - 45lbs- 7 reps

DUMBBELL PUSH-PRESS - 35lbs- 7 reps

STATION #2 - BOSU BALL- Muscular Endurance and Explosiveness - Plyometrics

Perform each exercise for 30 seconds on after the other until 5 minutes is complete

SIDE TO SIDE PLYO PUSHUPS

PLYO SIDE TO SIDE CROSSOVER

PLANK EXPLOSIVE POP UPS - PUSH UPS

BOSU JUMP SQUATS

PLANK CLINCH KNEES

STATION #3 - BURPEE COMPLEX - Cardio and Full Body and Muscular Endurance

Perform each exercise for 30 seconds on after the other until 5 minutes is complete

PUSH LAUNCH BURPEES

SIDE TO SIDE JUMP BURPEES

ALTERNATING KICK THUR BURPEES

CHEST TO GROUND ROTATING BURPEES

SIDE BURPEES

STATION #4 - ABS AND CORE - Core Strength

Perform each exercise for 30 seconds on after the other until 5 minutes is complete

STACKED LEG RAISES

BENCH SIDE PLANK REACH UNDERS

LYING ABS HIP THRUSTS

BOSU CLINCH PLANK

FLUTTER KICKS

STATION #5 - MINUTE DRILL - Cardio

Perform each exercise for 1 minute until 5 minutes is complete. Perform as many reps as you can.

SPRAWLS

RUNNING HIGH KNEES AND DUMBBELL PRESS

SPEED PUSH UPS

JUMPING LUNGES

MED BALL SLAMS

WARM UP AND STRETCH VIDEOS

WARM UP – 5 MINUTE - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IIrriTn5SU8>

WARM DYNAMIC STRETCH - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xbOxmQRi7fM>

POST WORKOUT STRETCH - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2wMSSupoCI8>

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<http://www.funkmma.com>