

# Fundamentals: Footwork

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## **Guy Windsor:**

Hello. Let's have a little look at knee massage. I've been using this kind of treatment on my legs and arms for about 17 years now and I couldn't train without it. I'd be remiss not to share it with you. What we're trying to do is basically like an oil change for the legs. We're going to massage the feet, massage the ankles, massage the calves and the knee and go up to the thigh to about here and we're going to do it in a relaxed and comfortable manner. The thing is my approach to massage is I know what good healthy tissue should feel like and when I feel things that don't feel like that, I let my hands fiddle about with them until they start to feel more like they should. That's only useful once you've had a bit of experience. Basically what you're looking for is no pain. If it hurts either you're sticking your thumb in your eye -- don't do that -- or the muscle is tense in a way that isn't particularly helpful.

For knee massage, what you do, you sit on the floor and because you need to be able to extend this leg, I don't like doing this on a bed because it's too soft and it gets the knee in the wrong place. You want to be able to extend the leg in a relaxed manner so that the kneecap is completely loose. If you pick the knee up, the ligaments around here tighten up and the kneecap won't move so you want the leg relaxed so the kneecap can move. That's our starting point. I also use this stuff which is -- I get this from kung fu instructor friend of mine and it is the best joint maintenance and bruise medicine I've ever come across. You can get similar things in any herbal shop or whatever. It's not 100% essential but in my experience it dramatically speeds up the effect of the massage and the resilience of your soft tissues so if you know a decent kung fu instructor you can ask them what they use and if you have a Chinese medicine shop, you can go along and ask them if they have anything like it but don't worry about

The most important thing is you get in the habit of self-maintenance. Leg is extended, kneecap is relaxed. I've doing this so long I can break the habit of just slapping some on. Just massage around the edge of the kneecap and the kneecap will move gently out of your way and use your thumb just gently. Again be very gentle. Edge of the thumb round. I'm going to do this all the way round to the back of the knee and then the other way around. My theory is that one of the things this does is it increases the blood supply to the ligaments and the tendons which don't normally get much blood because if you notice when you rub something on your body, it does tend to fill up with blood. That could be **[laughter]** -- perhaps I should rephrase that. Notice when I rub my skin, it goes red. Behind the knee be a little careful because it's a little delicate but you'll probably find that there's tender spots back there so just gently massage around. Now let's go to the outside of the knee. Basically the same thing.

I'm turning like this mostly so that you can see it. I would normally do this basically with my eyes shut in this sort of position but I'm turning it so you can see. Again you can either hand but I tend to find that on the outside the opposite hand gives me the thumb right there which is helpful. Now these muscles up here, they can often tighten up and restrict the motion of the kneecap. What we're going to do is -- see there's a 'V' of muscle here. We're going to start at the top of that 'V' and work along the edge of the muscle like so to either point of the 'V' and it's goes to the middle of that 'V'. You know you're onto something if it makes you want to go ahh but in a nice way. We must distinguish always between good pain and bad pain. Again take it to the point of the 'V' right there and then come round this side. Get your thumb in and work your way gently down the edge of that muscle. The thing is if muscle is really healthy and relaxed, sticking your thumb in it doesn't hurt but if you find that there's a sensitive spot, it probably indicates that you need to get in there and gently tease it and massage it and relax it until it melts away.

Then back to that midpoint, we can go. Again I'm turning so you can see, not because I would normally do it this way. I would normally do it just sat naturally, turning so you can see again along that edge of this muscle here. There's the point of the 'V', there's the 'V' itself, massing down and around. Again if you find a delicate spot or something and I'm moving on, feel free to pause the video and give it a little bit of love before you move on. It's perfectly all right to go at a different pace. To the middle of the 'V'. Again I'm using this hand to support that knuckle there so I can press a bit deeper. If your legs are sensitive, you might not want to do that. Then all the way down, all the way down. I am feeling a slight kind of "kxxx". That doesn't belong there so I'm just going to give that a little bit extra attention. Again pain is not the point. The point is to improve the condition of the leg. So at this point you might just want to take your palms and just gently massage those muscles and down the side of the knee.

To get the necessary pressure, I find because I'm not terribly flexible that I need to bring the knee up for this. It's okay. We've done the knee itself. We're now going to work down the outside of the foot. Again I slap the medicine on because I'm conditioned to it. For this I always start with the knuckles so these knuckles in there at this muscle here. Just give it some attention. That's all nicely red. From here I'm going to work my way down the whole muscle. Remember there's no one right way to do this. If it feels wrong, don't do it. If you feel like you really ought to pay a little bit of attention closer to the bone or a little bit of attention closer around there, that's fine. You can modify this as your instinct towards self-healing tells you you should go and then I'll turn to this line here between these muscles. There's the calf here and the front of the shin here. That usually repays some attention. Again if you can't reach this far without stretching uncomfortably, just bring the foot in. That's okay. If you're doing this on another person, it's a lot easier to get a good ergonomic position but of course it's really important that whatever you're doing with your own massage is not causing any additional problems. So make whatever postural changes you need to make sure you're not going to be hurting yourself while you're supposed to be healing yourself.

As we get down to the ankle, this area, it's all tendons and ligaments and bones and stuff, not a lot of muscle there so I just tend to again use my knuckles and roll around the ankle bone to this spot here. Take a point there to there, halfway between. Again I'm using this knuckle right there. Gently work your way out to the toes. Again this whole area is full of aliveness, it's full of useful structures and it does a lot of work so you really need to give it some attention. Because there isn't a muscle there for me to massage, I'm basically using my knuckles just to kind of stimulate the whole area. You can of course be a bit more cautious about it and a bit more gentle. That's fine. You can use

your thumbs. Follow your instinct. If your instinct tells you this is feeling good, then it probably is. If your instinct is telling you no, I need to do something different, go ahead.

On the inside of the ankle, same basic rule. Point to the ankle to the point to the heel, halfway in between. There's usually something there that repays attention. Again here I tend to use my thumb on the side of the Achilles tendon down around the ankle and along the arch of the foot. At the top of the arch, the keystone of the arch, that usually repay some attention and massage all the way out to the ball of the foot here and give it some good?

Let's have a look at the inside of the ankle. Again I always slap some juice on. As before, there's a point halfway along the line between the point of the ankle and the point of the heel about there which will repay some gentle attention. Having woken that up you can work along the side of the Achilles tendon, not actually onto it but just along this channel here and work that around and work your way around to the edge of the foot. There's the arch of the foot there. At the keystone of the arch, that's where all the tension tends to accumulate so give that a bit of extra attention and then work your way along to the ball of the foot and out to the toe. Now the sole of the foot supports you all the time and it is extremely sensitive and extremely strong and with our bad footwork and odd flooring materials and all that sort of stuff, there are all sorts of problems that can occur here so it's a really good idea to get intimately familiar with the sole of your foot and I do that by this sort of massage usually with the thumbs. Again a bit of hip flexibility here is helpful. You can massage it out to the toes and then the toes themselves they do a lot of work, at least they should. You might find again the knuckles.

Lastly we can work our way back up to the calf muscle and it's difficult to get there where you can see because my body's in the way but you basically just grab hold and stick your thumbs in and in that midpoint there is where you should start and work your way down towards the beginning of the Achilles tendon and back up. From the side you can go into this bulge here. There's actually quite a complex of muscles here and when I press there, I actually feel it all the way up here. With this sort of thing, it's extremely useful because also you can sometimes spot problems before they actually cause any real problems. You can think oh, if I don't sort this out then in a month or six months or whatever, it might start causing me problems. That's the basic massage routine I use for one leg. Before you do the other leg, you should just get up and just have a feel and see whether your massaged leg is feeling better than your unmassaged leg. If it is, there's an indication that you were doing something right. If it's not, there's an indication that whatever you're doing isn't very useful so you either want to change what you're doing or you might quit it altogether. Here's a tip. Just about every human culture I've ever heard of has massage in it somewhere. Every healing system I've ever come across has massage in it somewhere. It's universal and it's universal because done right it works.

I would suggest that you now apply that entire process to your other leg but instead of me taking you through the other leg, what I'm going to do is show you my quick and dirty one to two minute leg massage thing because you don't always have 15 minutes to massage one leg and 15 minutes to massage the other leg. Sometimes you just have a few minutes and sometimes they don't need more than a few minutes and once you know what you're doing, once you've gone through it carefully a few times and you have a sense of what feels right and what you should avoid, then this sort of thing does the job. It doesn't have to be terribly precise. It doesn't have to be very time consuming.

It just has to help you leg recover from the rigours of your footwork practice and yes, I do massage the shin bone. Done.

There's the beginnings of how to look after your legs properly. I would recommend that you pay attention to the range of motion lecture and massage your legs regularly. I go to a proper professional massage at least once a month because I want to still be fit and active into my 90s or beyond but that's expensive and you can do a lot just for yourself and if you have training partners who are similarly interested, you can for example trade massages and that's a much cheaper way of doing it. The quality tends to be a bit more variable though. There's never a bad time to massage and there's never a bad time to train so I hope this helps you maintain your fit, active, and healthy training lifestyle for many years to come. Thank you for watching and I'll see you on the next class to come. Bye bye.

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