

MARTIAL ARTS ATHLETE

Check off the Champion for Life missions as you complete them each day.

FLEXIBILITY

Stretching your muscles gets them ready for exercising and allows your body to move farther in every direction. Doctors call it your range of motion. Having more flexibility will allow you to move easier and faster, kick and jump higher. Stretching also helps protect your body from injury and pulled muscles. Hold your stretches for 15 to 30 seconds and do each stretch 3-5 times. Spending a small amount of time stretching can give you a big advantage over other students. Remember: the more you stretch out, the faster you can perform your moves.

Want to do the splits? Try these three things!

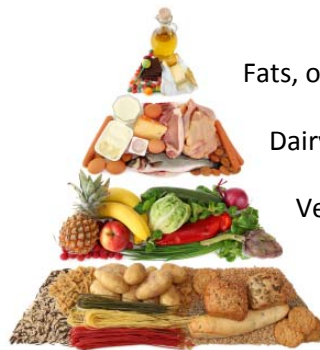
1. Stretch a little harder in class. 2. Spend extra time stretching at the end of your workout. 3. Stretch every day by yourself.

DAY 1 MISSIONS – FLEXIBILITY

- Stretch for 5 minutes at home
- Stretch for 5 minutes before a class starts
- Stretch for 5 minutes after any class ends
- Learn a new stretch and practice it for 5 minutes
- Stretch with your parents or a friend for 5 minutes

FOOD POWER

To become a martial arts athlete, you need to do two things: attend class consistently and eat healthfully. It is important that you understand how foods affect your body. Different types of foods do different things. A good balance of foods will give you energy and make your body stronger from your workouts. Below is the recommended balance of food from the USDA.



Fats, oils, sweets – Eat sparingly

Dairy – 2-3 cups; Meats/beans – 2-3 servings

Vegetables – 1.5-3.5 cups; Fruits – 1-3 cups

Grains – 6-8 servings

DAY 2 MISSIONS – POWERFUL LEGS

- Write down everything you eat for one day and which USDA category it is in
- Draw your own copy of the USDA food pyramid and hang it on your refrigerator or wall
- Write down your 5 favorite foods, then write what USDA categories they go in
- Visit www.kidshealth.org or www.mypriamid.gov
- Read for 5 minutes with your parents or a friend about any nutrition product

PERFECT PRACTICE

The most famous basketball player of all time, Michael Jordan, said that the reason he was so good was because of the way he practiced. He said, "When I practice, I practice exactly like I am in a game. That way, when I play a game it's exactly like I practiced."

Athletes practice moves perfectly over and over so that they get better. If you practice and do a move over and over the wrong way, you will perform it the wrong way and you may get worse. A very famous football coach, Vincent Lombardi, constantly told his players, "Only perfect practice makes perfect players." Memorize these three steps to perfect practice.

Memorize this! Three steps to perfect practice:

1. Practice it exactly the way your teacher shows you.
2. Practice it perfectly over and over until you can do it quickly, correctly, and without thinking about the next move.
3. Make it better by adding tips from a teacher, instructor, or a friend.

DAY 3 MISSIONS – PERFECT PRACTICE

- Practice a move you learned in class for 5 minutes by yourself at home
- Practice a move you learned in class for 5 minutes with a friend
- Show a friend, parent, or instructor a move and ask them for help
- Pretend you are at the world's largest competition and do a form, self-defense, or sparring technique full-power
- Have someone videotape you doing a technique and watch it

DETERMINATION POINT

When training in any sport, activity, or race, a normal person gets burned out or wants to quit 2-3 times before they get to their goal. Major universities have found that most people want to quit 2-3 times during a race, climbing a mountain, going to college, training to black belt, and in many more examples. If everyone wants to quit, how do these people become champions? They don't quit! When you start to feel that you want to quit something, remember you are perfectly normal and everyone feels that way at times. You have reached the determination point!

When you get to the determination point, you have only two choices: give up and quit on your goal, or turn it up and accomplish your goal! The difference is that champions don't quit; they take a deep breath, relax for a moment, focus, and picture their goal. Then, they shift into champion mode. After refocusing, they get a burst of energy called the "second wind." Sometimes, it comes right away and sometimes it takes a few weeks, but all champions will tell you the burst of energy will come!

Try this! When you feel like quitting or get burned out, do this:

1. Tell yourself, "Quitting is not an option. Champions don't give up, they turn it up."
2. Picture your goal and remind yourself that you do want to accomplish your goal.
3. Tell a coach or a friend so he/she can encourage you and give you extra help.
4. When the burst of energy comes, have fun training again.

DAY 3 MISSIONS – THE ARMY OF HABITS

- The next class you get tired in, say out loud "turn it up" and do 5 more repetitions
- Next time you get tired doing homework or a task, say out loud "turn it up" and keep going
- Say "turn it up" any time during the week when you feel tired
- Encourage someone who looks like he/she is getting burned out
- Pick a goal you have and say "I will not quit" 5 times