



The Wooden Dummy: *The shocking truth about its use*

By Alvin Kan 5th Level GBMAI

The wooden dummy is a training device that is used in many different systems of Chinese martial arts. There are many different designs for wooden dummies. Certain designs are used to highlight particular attributes in martial arts practitioners.

The dummy is often used to develop “toughness” in the limbs and striking surfaces. Some systems also develop sensitivity and trapping skills by flowing around the dummy’s arms.

PPS (Progressive Protection Systems) uses the wing chun design of the wooden dummy for a number of purposes. The most important is to develop “snap power” in the checks, blocks employed in the system. Short, sharp movements are used to shock the dummy on its support beams.

With correct technique the practitioner will develop the snap power necessary to slide the dummy across its support beams. Use of the dummy also ensures that excessive follow through of blocks and check does not occur as the dummy’s arms only have a slight “give” in their housing which prevent this from occurring.

Correct distancing and body positioning can also be enhanced with the use of the dummy. Incorrect body alignment, negative hip orientation will result in a person kicking being pushed backwards, as the dummy’s body had no give except for the flexing of its support beams.

PPS uses the dummy as aid in the development of high speed, checking, trapping and striking functions. When checking a dummy’s arms, the PPS practitioner will use the reaction force from the dummy’s arm to initiate a secondary function whether it is a check or a strike.

Master Bennett terms this “bounce energy” and the result is high velocity multiple functioning. The effect is similar to a pinball when it hits a series of bumpers. PPS has used the physics theory of inelastic collisions and applied to it to martial science.



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