



NEW WORKOUTS

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Posted on Monday, March 13, 2006

URL: <http://www.nwanews.com/adg/Style/148611/>

S. A. V. E. Level 1, KB Productions, DVD, \$ 26. 98. Available at [www. save workout. com](http://www.saveworkout.com).

The world's a scary place. Not to worry.

S. A. V. E., which stands for Survive a Violent Environment, was created by martial arts expert Philip G. Ross so we can get fit and learn how to protect ourselves in the comfort of our homes (well, not protect ourselves there, but learn how.... OK, maybe protect ourselves, too, but we hope we don't have to).

Ross, a national amateur kickboxing champion and member of the Martial Arts Hall of Fame, has brought some of the techniques he teaches at the American Eagle Martial Arts Academy in Ho-Ho-Kus, N. J., to DVD. On his Web site, [www. aemaa. com](http://www.aemaa.com), he says the martial arts of "Taekwondo, Bando, Jujutsu [jijitsu] and Arnis" comprise a defense system "well-suited for the street, ring, artistic competition, physical fitness or 'piece of mind. '"

In the S. A. V. E. program, Ross says, he has combined "actual self-defense techniques that could save your life" for a fitness workout. And it's a kick-booty workout. In fact, any segment of the program — warm-up, techniques and workout — kicks booty and then some.

The warm-up segment starts with a series of squats that are more bounce than squats (oh, please... the knees) and moves on to a variety of arm circles and other movements designed to get the blood flowing. If your knees survive the bouncing and your rotator cuffs don't scream during arm circles, you can then try the "techniques" segment of the DVD.

Ross, a la Billy Blanks of Tae Bo fame, provides an extensive movement tutorial that's necessary before jumping into the actual workout. In the tutorial, Ross clearly explains and demonstrates all the moves used in the program. Among those are six basic punches (including jab, hook, upper cut), strikes using the side and palm of the hand and kicks (front, side and roundhouse).

After the basics, Ross moves on to the really interesting moves, such as grappling (used to take an opponent down) and break falls (ways to fall without hurting yourself). He also teaches how to protect yourself if someone starts choking you.

So, picture yourself being held at the throat from the front, in what Ross calls the classic

“front choke.” Ready ? Ross’ instructions to free yourself: “Turtle ! Chin down, shoulders up, strike with a palm-heel strike, step back, clear, sidekick.” It makes more sense when you see it.

S. A. V. E. isn’t for the weak of knee and lower back. It requires even beginners to already be in good, perhaps even top, physical shape. Learning to “break fall,” for instance, requires a person to possess good coordination and a strong back. Also, some booty padding wouldn’t hurt.

Ross’ desire to combine a fitness workout with self-defense works, but users shouldn’t expect to learn to really fight or defend themselves without the benefit of practicing the moves with another person. There’s a big difference between punching air in your living room and punching something that can punch back. — Rhonda Owen

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