What’s going on!

Sean Fagan here and I just wanted to thank you for checking out my comprehensive training course, *The Heavy Bag Blueprint*. I'm confident that this course will be a major factor in helping you take your training up to the next level.

This heavy bag course is loaded with useful tips, intense workouts, practical drills, awesome techniques and sweet combos that you can implement into your training right away.

Trust me, I know how boring and mundane the heavy bag can be and how it can be a frustrating tool if you're not sure how to use it to its full potential... and that is exactly why I created this course.

I used to just go through the motions and have no real focus or intentions whenever I banged the heavy bag. I doubt I was improving much, if at all, since my mind wasn't really there and I wasn't pushing myself the way I should have been. Not only that, but I would just get bored very quickly since I didn’t have any structure to my heavy bag training.

If you struggle with those same issues I’m here to share everything I’ve learned throughout my career that has helped turn my heavy bag training into one of the most important and beneficial aspects of my game.

But before we get into the nitty gritty (yea, I just said nitty gritty, what you gonna do about it?) I wanted to talk a little bit about why you should always use the heavy bag as part of your training regimen.
Benefits Of The Heavy Bag

There are SO many ways you can benefit from using the heavy bag. Although it may seem like a simplistic tool compared to the more advanced pieces of training equipment that have been coming out recently, it’s still (and always will be) one of most important pieces of equipment in every Muay Thai gym.

With that being said, here are the main benefits you’ll be getting if you use the heavy bag properly:

**Technique**

Probably one of the most obvious benefits of banging the heavy bag is the fact that you can dramatically improve your striking technique. Although many people end up just going through the motions of hitting the heavy bag and pick up some bad habits, if you’re hitting the bag with the purpose of improving your technique, then you definitely will.

**Conditioning**

Improving your cardio is another reason the heavy bag is so badass and should be a big part of your training.

Of course, getting your fitness up to where you want it comes down to how hard you can push yourself while working the heavy bag. It’s much easier to train when you have people around you who are pushing you to hit harder and faster, but if you’re training solo, will you be able to go that extra mile? Well, that’s essentially what this course is aiming to help you do.

**Power**

We all want to possess that brutal knockout power, right? Well one of the best ways to gain that explosiveness is by thoroughly working the heavy bag and focusing on driving your hips through with all of your strikes. You’ll be able to build the fast-twitch muscles fibers you need for power by working them repeatedly on the heavy bag.

**Accuracy**

How nice would it be to end a fight in a few seconds with a perfectly placed shot to the jaw? I mean, that sounds pretty fucking sweet to me, right? Well, by working on your
accuracy, distancing and timing with the heavy bag, you’re much more likely to clock your opponent where they won’t have a choice but to hit the canvas.

**Footwork**
An overlooked concept when training the heavy bag is footwork. Without proper footwork chances are that you won’t be in optimal position to land hard, effective strikes. Not only that, but the lack of footwork will also hinder your ability to land counter strikes and avoid any counters your opponent throws at you.

**Combinations**
Single strikes are all fine and dandy, but they won’t amount to much if you don’t set them up with other strikes. Learning how to flow with your strikes and find openings by utilizing fakes, feints and setups is a crucial aspect that can’t be overlooked, especially when training the heavy bag.

**Mental Toughness**
Believe it or not the heavy bag is one of the best ways to develop mental toughness and endurance. Like I mentioned before, most of the time when you’re working on the heavy bag, you’re not going to have someone pushing you to work harder. In that case, it’s up to you to learn how to push yourself and keep going even when you feel exhausted. Being able to push yourself in situations where no one is pressuring you will play a huge role in building your mental toughness and awareness.

**Different Types Of Heavy Bags**
If you’ve trained at a Muay Thai gym before you’ve probably noticed that there are a variety of heavy bags to work on. In this section I’ll breakdown the different types of heavy bags and what each one is used for.

**Hanging Heavy Bag**
This type of heavy bag is the most common one you’ll see throughout most boxing, MMA and Muay Thai gyms.

It’s one of the best options in terms of being able to work pretty much all your strikes and has enough weight to it where you can condition your shins and feel like you’re truly hitting something.
**Standing Heavy Bag**

Although I’d much rather use a swinging heavy bag, sometimes it makes more sense to go with a standing heavy bag.

One of the main reasons for using a standing heavy bag is because of lack of space. Since they don’t have to be installed or hung up, they can easily be moved around the room (whereas a swinging heavy bag can only be in one location).

**Thai/Banana Bag**

The banana bag is probably my favorite one to use because it allows you to work on low kicks, which I absolutely love throwing. Since it provides a full body to work with, you’re able to work more of a variety of strikes from different levels.

**Uppercut Bag**

The geometrical looking bags that are sticking out of the wall are called uppercut bags because, well, you can throw uppercuts! They are primarily used for boxing and working on different angles with your hands, but I like to add teeps and knees (and even some flying knees) to mix things up.

**Teardrop Bag**

Shaped like a teardrop, this type of heavy bag is great for knees and working your boxing to the body. Although it’s a little smaller and a different shape than most other bags, it’s still useful for working roundhouses and teeps as well.

**Double-end bag**

This weird looking bag is a great tool to work on your boxing technique and accuracy. If you’re not sure how to use this bag, my trainer Brandon Levi from Evolution Muay Thai in NYC shows us how in this tutorial. This is a great tool so don’t overlook it!
**Speed Bag**

To be honest, I don’t see this bag being too useful. It does help with hand speed, timing, and rhythm, and it does make you look kinda cool if you can do it quickly, but for the most part I’d suggest focusing on other heavy bags if you really want to improve your Muay Thai game.

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**Heavy Bag Training Tips**

Training at multiple gyms in the US and Thailand has given me the chance to take a step back and assess what most people are doing when they are hitting the heavy bag.

Of course, it can be truly beneficial watching a world class fighter bang the bag, but believe it or not, I actually felt like I learned more from watching the people who had *no idea* what they were doing!

1. **Set An Intention**

Hitting the heavy bag can be very mundane and boring if you don’t go in with the right attitude. One of the best ways to make sure you actually get a solid training session in is to have a clear focus before you even strap on your gloves.

You can go into your heavy bag session with one of many intentions, but it’s important not to overwhelm yourself by trying to focus on too much during your training. So, before you hit the heavy bag you should choose to focus on various aspects of your game such as footwork, conditioning, technique, defense, and others. But, you can also focus on just one technique or one combo if you really wanted to perfect that specific technique.

The next time you plan on hitting the heavy bag, take the extra minute to pick an intention for your practice so you are actually focused on improving a specific part of your game.
2. Wrap Your Hands

You should definitely make sure to protect your wrists and fists by learning how to wrap your hands properly. There are a variety of ways to go about wrapping your hands but I wouldn’t say there is one “correct” way that’s better than all others. Your best bet is to ask your trainer (if you have one) to show you how to wrap hands or watch an online tutorial (like this one I made).

3. Breathe!

Your breathe is a very important to getting the most out of your training session. Not only will controlling your breathing help you hit the bag longer, but it will also help you develop more explosive power in your strikes. Don’t be afraid to make a sound when you exhale and hit the bag!

4. Using/Stopping The Bags Momentum

One of the common mistakes I see people making when they are hitting the heavy bag is not using the heavy bags movement to their advantage. For instance, when you fight or spar, your opponent isn’t going to stand directly in front of you and let you hit them right? Well, take that into consideration when hitting the bag.

Do not just grab the bag and stop it’s momentum! If the heavy bag is swinging side to side just do your best to use a strike to stop it from swinging side to side… or better yet, just keep hitting the bag regardless of where it is. This will help your distancing and timing since it won’t consistently be in the same position.

5. Work Your Defense and Head Movement

Another very common mistake I see people make is focusing solely on their offense without any thought of their defense. Sure, the heavy bag isn’t going to hit you back, but if you get too comfortable with standing in front of the bag without any defense or head movement, then it will translate over into your sparring sessions… which ultimately means you’ll be prime picking for your sparring partner.
Make sure to mix in checking kicks, moving your head, covering for punches, angling off after strikes, your long guard and other defensive maneuvers.

6. **Focus On Footwork and Body Positioning**

Similar to the last tip, it’s also very important to be aware of your footwork to get the most out of your training session. I personally love working on my footwork because it allows me to improvise and find different angles of attack and better defensive positions after throwing a strike.

If you get into the habit of always standing stationary in front of the bag and never moving your feet you’ll be an easy target whenever you spar or fight. Mess around with different foot positions and even consider learning how to strike from another stance.

7. **Enter At An Angle**

Angles are a commonly overlooked aspect of heavy bag training that you should consider focusing on every now and again. Having a variety of angles to enter a combo with will catch your opponent off guard and give you an opportunity to find more openings to land powerful strikes.

8. **Exit At An Angle**

This goes along with the footwork and defense tip, but I thought it’s worth mentioning again because of it’s importance. After you throw a strike or combo try to find different ways of avoiding any counters by circling out (NOT straight back).

9. **Stay Relaxed**

It is super easy to tense up your shoulders and hips whenever you throw strikes. Doing this will quickly tire you out AND slow down your strikes tremendously. Not only that, but you’ll have much less power in all of your strikes if you’re too tensed. Being loose and fluid is crucial in every aspect of Muay Thai.
10. *Keep Your Chin Tucked*

It's easy to create bad habits if you're not aware of what you are doing. One of the most dangerous habits you can learn is leaving your chin up whenever you are working the heavy bags and throwing combos. Your chin (also known as “the button”) is very fragile and taking a strike on the chin could easily knock you out.

Whenever you’re banging the heavy bag (or hitting pads or sparring… or basically doing ANYTHING) make sure you are hiding your chin by keeping it tucked and having your shoulders rolled slightly forward.

A great drill to do to make sure your chin is tucked is to put a $100 bill (or tennis ball) underneath your chin and pinch it to your chest. The key is to NOT let the $100 bill drop, otherwise you have to give it to your trainer. If you do this drill, you’ll learn very quickly to keep your chin tucked!

11. *Keep Your Hands Up!*

It’s easy to be lazy and let your hands drop in between combinations, I mean, the heavy bag isn’t going to hit you anyway right? Well, yes that’s true, but if you get used to dropping your hands while hitting the bag, then you will have a rude awakening when you decide to spar or fight. Keep those hands up yo!

12. *Train With Your Mouthguard*

Learn how to breathe and be comfortable wearing your mouth guard, *especially* if you plan on sparring or stepping in the ring. It’s a whole different workout with your mouthguard in since you have to be more aware of your breathing and keeping your jaw closed.

13. *Mix Up Your Workouts and Combos*

It’s easy to fall into a comfortable routine where you’re doing the same workouts and combinations over and over again. Although repetition is very important to learning proper technique, it can get very mundane doing the same thing every single workout.

In order to avoid this plateau, make sure to alternate workouts and focus on improving different combos. Also, going into a heavy bag workout with a different intention or focus is a great way to improve in a different area of your game.
14. Work On Both Stances

I’m a HUGE fan of learning how to fight and defend in both stances (orthodox and southpaw). Not only does it totally mess with your opponent’s mind, but it opens up different angles of attack that your opponent will never see coming. Also, if you ever hurt your lead leg in a fight, learning how to fight in your opposite stance will help you avoid any further damage to that leg.

This also is a great way to mix up your workouts and keep things entertaining. I can guarantee if you’ve never trained or fought in your opposite stance that you will have more than enough to work on for awhile (I’m still working on my southpaw cross and I’ve been doing it for years!)

15. Keep It Simple

Don’t overcomplicated things. Yes, it’s cool to work on advanced combos or techniques every once in awhile, but most of the time you’re going to want to keep it simple. It’s easy to get overwhelmed by trying to do too much and that overwhelming feeling can easily kill your morale and motivation to train.

16. Work On Your Weaknesses

I know how easy it is to constantly be working on the things you are good at, but unfortunately, that’s not going to make you a more well-rounded fighter. Learning to overcome your own limiting beliefs and practicing the things you suck at is what will ultimately make you a complete fighter.

For instance, I used to work on my hands all the time even though they are a stronger part of my game (I still catch myself focusing on them too much something). Now that I’m more aware of what I’m not very good at, I make sure to concentrate on improving those areas of my game so my sparring partners and opponents have no idea what’s coming!
17. Add Feints/Fakes To Your Combos

It’s easy to hit the heavy bag with everything you got because it won’t hit you back and it doesn’t have any type of defense. However, if you’re sparring your partner who actually can react to what you’re throwing, then it’ll be much easier for them to defend and counter you if you don’t add any type of fakes to your combos.

Mess around with different fakes to see where your body ends up and what type of strikes you could throw from that position. This is a great way to diversify your attack and create openings when you don’t see any in your opponent.

18. Get A Gym Boss Timer

This is especially important if you train solo or are hitting the heavy bag while a class is going on at your gym. Having your own portable timer to keep track of your rounds and workouts is going to make things a lot easier and make your training sessions much more structured.

Final Words

So you’ve read all these tips on how to get the most out of your heavy bag sessions… now go do it!

All of these tips are completely useless if you don’t act on them and actually utilize them during your training sessions. You’ve come this far and bought The Heavy Bag Blueprint and reading the Master Manual, so you might as well keep that going and start killing your heavy bag workouts!

Like I’ve said before, being able to count on the heavy bag as one of your go-to workouts will be key to your success regardless of what your goals are. If you want to lose weight, pushing yourself hard and holding yourself accountable will be key. If you want improve your striking skills and become a champion, the amount of dedicated, focused time you put on the heavy bag will help you reach that dream.

Wherever you go from here just make sure to stay persistent through lulls in training. It happens to the best of us and is bound to happen at some point for you. Stay driven and keep your goals in mind whenever you go to training and I guarantee it will lead to amazing results.

Best of luck to you and your training! Make sure to keep in touch and email me at sean@muaythai-guy.com if you have any questions, comments or just want to say hi. Thanks a ton for checking out The Heavy Bag Blueprint and I can’t wait to hear from you about the goals it helped you reach!

- Sean Fagan