Essential Parkour Techniques

By Sean Rogers

Disclaimer

Because physical exertion can be strenuous and subject to risk of serious injury, Sean Rogers urges you to obtain a physical examination from a doctor before participating in any physical activity.

Indoors and outdoors exercise and fitness activities involve an inherent risk of accidents, injury, illness and even death, and that I am voluntarily participating in these activities and using equipment and facilities with the knowledge of the dangers involved. It is your responsibility to be aware of the risks and take responsibility for your actions. Opinions concerning the technical difficulties, fitness requirements, safety, and ratings, are subjective and may differ from yours or others opinion, therefore be warned that you must exercise your own judgment as to the difficulty and your ability to safely protect yourself from the inherent risks and dangers involved in physical activity.

In other words, please use **common sense, know your limits, and train smart!**

For fun, in contrast, here's another disclaimer, courtesy of Frank Forencich of Exuberant Animal:

"WARNING: Before beginning a program of physical inactivity, chronic stress, or isolation from the natural world, see your doctor."

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What is Parkour?

The most common (brief) definition of Parkour is the art of moving from point A to point B using only your own body. In practice, Parkour is about overcoming any obstacle in your way with efficiency (a combination of safety, speed, and energy efficiency) . Physical obstacles are the obvious manifestation of what you learn to overcome, but Parkour is just as much about getting past mental barriers and unlocking your potential as it is clearing over things in your path. Parkour can make you a stronger, better, human being. Having a strong mind and body loads you with confidence and aids in tackling your big, scary, goals that will lead you towards your own personal brand of excellence.

So that's the overly serious side of Parkour, since the purpose, if you will, of Parkour is to either escape a situation or reach someone in need of help quickly. Fortunately those situations are rare — we don't have to run away from overgrown felines anymore — so what keeps me, or anyone else, practicing Parkour?

Fun.

Parkour is a natural expression of human movement and vitality. If you watch kids playing you'll see them jumping on things, seeing what they can climb, and generally exploring their world. It's a great tragedy that as we've grown up that playful and exploratory fire has withered away. Parkour reconnects us to that spirit we had as kids and makes moving a genuine joy again, instead of the chore that 'exercise' has become.

Practice Parkour to reclaim your playful spirit and give fitness a much needed injection of fun and purpose. It is my hope that Parkour will awaken your love of movement and speed your journey to becoming your strongest, healthiest, and best self.

In movement,

Sean

Guidelines for Practice

With the usual disclaimer out of the way, let's talk about more practical considerations for how to train safely and respectfully — of your body, other people, and the environment.

Respect your environment, other people have the right of way

Always check surfaces to make sure they are stable, durable, and not slick. Don't jump or move around on anything that seems flimsy, fragile, or excessively wobbly. Be careful to not damage your training area in any way and keep it clean. Pedestrians and other people (cyclists, etc.) have the right of way. If you're about to do a jump and someone is going to be passing by, wait for them to be safely past you. It is both a safety precaution (in case they aren't paying attention) and allows people to travel unimpeded by our antics.

It is also worth noting that if anyone with authority asks you to leave (even in a public space) respectfully agree and find a new spot to train in. The headache of trying to argue that you have a right to be there is rarely worth it when there are plenty of other spots to go to. Laws and regulations about this will differ depending on where you are living, so be aware of your local rules.

"Everything is optional"

This is a phrase I adopted when I was coaching with Fifth Ape. Never feel obligated to try a technique or jump if you aren't comfortable with it. This applies to situations where you see other people doing it, saw a tutorial or watched a video in this course, or anything else where you feel like you "should" try it. Err on the side of caution, especially as you are just starting out. It will take some time for you to become familiar with where the edges of your abilities lie and what is a safe risk to take and what isn't.

Water, food, and recovery

Parkour is a challenging activity. Keep water with you (especially in the summers) and hydrate often. When you're done with a training session be sure to eat plenty of food (lots of protein, lots!) and give your body adequate time to rest before your next session. Physical activity isn't what makes us stronger, it's the recovery from the activity that does.

If you find that something is hurting (sharp pain typically) don't just push through the pain to keep training. The phrase "no pain, no gain" is bull and you should listen to your body. Pain means stop. You can change up what you're practicing to something that doesn't aggravate the injury further, get creative if you need to, or rest up. Choosing which is suitable here will take plenty of common sense, though I'd err on the side of caution.

Note: the above differs from the discomfort of physical exertion (burning muscles, elevated heart rate, etc.) which is fine and a part any good physical activity.

Have fun!

Okay, that's all the serious stuff out of the way. Parkour should be fun, engaging, and challenging. If you stick with it you'll get the feeling of sheer joy that comes from moving freely and being one with the moment. Parkour will require discipline, like anything, to continue practicing regularly, but I suspect that before long you'll be dreaming and salivating at the thought of the next time you can go outside to play and train. I always feel amazing after a good day spent moving, playing, and training. I hope you will too.

Train safe, train smart, and enjoy!

A Parkour Philosophy Primer

The philosophy behind Parkour training is one of those things that attracted me to it in the first place, and perhaps the same will be true for you too. I don't intend to go into great depth on any one concept here, this is simply an overview of the major components of Parkour philosophy. The isn't a "unified" Parkour philosophy, but all of these seem to be commonly accepted and are credited to some (or all) of the original practitioners of Parkour. Without this philosophical underpinning (or one of your own creation) the practice stops being Parkour, at least in spirit. It may still be good movement, but the mindset one takes when training is just as important as what kinds of movements you are practicing. The list is in no particular order.

Efficiency of movement

Efficiently moving from point A to point B isn't just about speed. To be truly efficient you must maximize energy efficiency and safety in execution of your techniques. Being too fatigued to complete a move correctly or injuring yourself in the course of your run both interfere with reaching point B with efficiency (or at all).

"être fort pour être utile"

The phrase comes originally from Georges Hébert, who was a physical educator in France for the military before World War I. It was taken up by the original group (David Belle, the Yamakasi, Sébastien Foucan) and literally translates as "be strong to be useful." The idea being all the strength and skill you are developing through training for Parkour can and should be used with the aim of being helpful both to yourself and others.

"être et durer"

Literally "to be and to last." Training for Parkour should be done in such a way that we are able to continue with this amazing art into our 40s, 50s, and beyond. It's about training for the long-term and for life, rather than doing reckless things to prove that you can do them, or to chase an adrenaline thrill. Smart training and gradual progress are the name of the game. All the founders are around their 40s right now and they are still moving and teaching without signs of slowing down. They all move still move with unmatched fluidity and control.

Non-competitive:

Parkour by its nature is not competitive. It is important to not put stock in comparing your level to others or trying to prove that you are "better" than someone else. Everyone is at a different spot on their own Parkour journey, and every journey is different, which makes comparison of little use. If you're going to worry about comparisons, focus on comparing how much better you are today then you were yesterday. The best metric of progress and skill in Parkour is your own growth. There will always be someone who has had more practice or more time to train than you, but Parkour isn't a competitive sport, so no big deal.

In my personal opinion competition leads to people pushing too far beyond their limits and sacrificing their long-term progress and health in order to win. If you're the competitive type, that's cool too, but train smart and know (or learn) how to maintain your body. Check sites like MobilityWOD and Eat.Move.Improve for ideas on that front.

Respect your environment

Training environments are sacred. Damaging stuff or making a mess means we might not be able to come back and train there again or not be able to do that sweet jump because it's no longer safe or feasible. Always make sure that the stuff you are using to train isn't going to break; it's both a safety precaution and a matter of respecting the space. The world is our dojo.

Self-development and breaking jumps

In many ways Parkour is a tool for self-improvement. You will improve your physical and mental fortitude both directly and indirectly through Parkour training. Parkour teaches you how to deal with and overcome fear in a very visceral setting. Often times you will encounter situations where your lizard brain (the amygdala) will try to stop you through the use of fear from trying something, even if you know you are physically capable of doing it. You will have to disregard its protestations and make that jump anyway. Successfully doing this on any new jump or technique is referred to as "breaking a jump" and it's an indescribably powerful feeling. Regularly moving through that fear creates an immense sense of confidence and a willingness to take the initiative. The benefits don't just cycle back into Parkour training; they permeate every aspect of life. It is no exaggeration to say that everything amazing I've done in the past several years has in some way been thanks to the effects of Parkour on my willingness to take risks and deal with fear.

"Find your way"

This phrase comes directly from Sébastien Foucan's philosophy, but it's a common theme I see from a lot of different people. Parkour (or whatever you choose to call it) isn't a rigid set of techniques, like some martial arts, with explicit rules of what is and what isn't "Parkour." Ultimately you are learning how to move your body, and your movement and style will be unique to you. The same thing goes for what your philosophy of training and life is. There is nothing that says that you must subscribe to any of the philosophy I've mentioned above. Take what works for you, discard what doesn't. The same goes for movement. Bruce Lee has influenced both Foucan and myself heavily, so a quote from him is appropriate here: *"Adapt what is useful, reject what is useless, and add what is specifically your own."*

My only caveat with the whole idea is that we are all subject to the laws of physics and have to move in biomechanically sound ways (patterns which are largely universal). There is most definitely such a thing as, bad posture, and poor technique. Any of those can lead to injuries or just plain ol' being inefficient. However you choose to move, move well.

Introduction + Glossary

This guide serves as a supplement to the videos available through the Movement Library and Udemy course.. Whether you need a reference when you can't access the videos or learn better through reading than watching I hope this guide helps you learn Parkour better and faster.

I've structured the guide to follow the same section formatting as the Udemy course. All the major techniques and progressions are included; each of them has snapshots of the movement, some background on the skill, and a step-by-step breakdown how to execute the technique.

Super important:

Skill breakdowns describe each technique for the right side.

The descriptions are written that way to preserve your sanity. Describing movements with words can be a bit *too* abstract at times otherwise. Remember to **always train your left side with each technique too.** It's okay and natural to have a weaker side, but it's important to be able to perform each technique reasonably well on both sides.

One last thing, while I've created progressions and have ordered them from easiest to hardest, in many cases the earlier progressions are useful techniques on their own. It's not possible to go hard all the time in Parkour, and many of the early progressions (if you prefer, technique variations) require less energy and can be performed safely even when fatigued. Safety is more important than showing off your impressive skills.

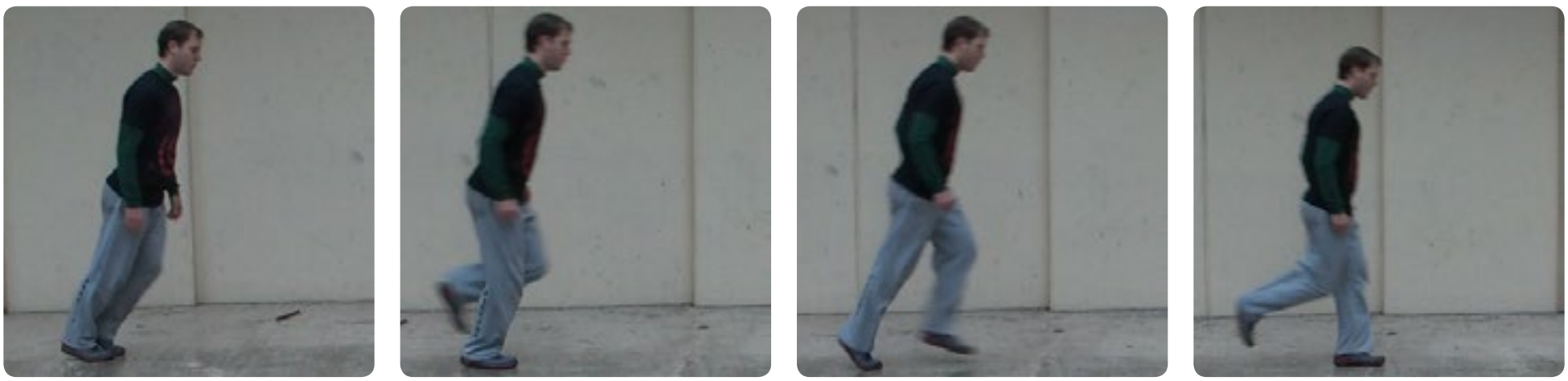
Glossary

Often times there are multiple names for the same technique within the Parkour community. My personal preference has been to use the names from the original French (translated, usually) as they tend to be more literal. In the U.S. the Parkour community doesn't use them widely though, so here are some of the other names for techniques covered in this book.

- **Broad Jump:** Plyo Jump, Two-foot Jump
- **Arm Jump:** Cat Leap
- **Arm Hang:** Cat Hang
- **Arm Jump Bail:** Cat Abort
- **2-Handed Vault:** Monkey Vault (sometimes, usually if knees stay between arms)
- **Gorrila Gait QM:** Gallop QM
- **Waist Position:** Support position
- **Tac:** Technique dependent, sometimes tic-tac, pop vault, or wall run/wall pass.
- **Descent:** Climb-down

Section 1

Running Form



Background

Good running form can be likened to controlled falling. You're letting gravity do the bulk of the work for you. It's not about pushing hard off the ground to get speed. The trick is to lean forward and let gravity pull you. To not fall on your face you just put a foot slightly ahead of you.

There are plenty of little details to running technique, but when you get down to it there are only a handful of key pieces to running well. Just as important as good technique is controlled breathing and staying relaxed while you're running. Too much tension is the enemy of excellent running form. Anyhow, let's get into the technique.

Technique

» **Start position:** Upright posture.

» Arms and shoulders stay relaxed, but not wet noodly, at your sides the whole time.

» If you need to speed up, lean further forward. Sprinting is functionally the same, but you drive the legs through the cycle quicker and use the arms more aggressively.

1. Initiate the lean from the ankles.

2. Pick up (not push) one foot from the ground; think of pulling your heel straight towards your butt.

3. Small strides forward (feet landing under hips).

4. Ball of the foot contacts the ground first, heel touches last.

5. Repeat the cycle: maintaining the lean, picking up one foot, landing, then picking up the other foot. Aim for a cadence of 180 steps per minute.

The Squat

Background

Squats are among the most fundamental of human movements. In Parkour they are extra important, because of the squats link to jumping and landing. You can use squats as a diagnostic for potential mobility issues at the hips, knees, and ankles. Depending on how you train them they are also an excellent conditioning movement for developing strength or endurance.

Technique

» **Stance:** Shoulder width (foot position), toes straight or pointing out < 15 degrees.

» Your weight should rest just in front of your shin.

» Keep your back straight the whole time (chest up).

» Bringing the arms up as you squat helps you stay balanced.

» Knees should not go past the toes. Keep them pointing the same direction.

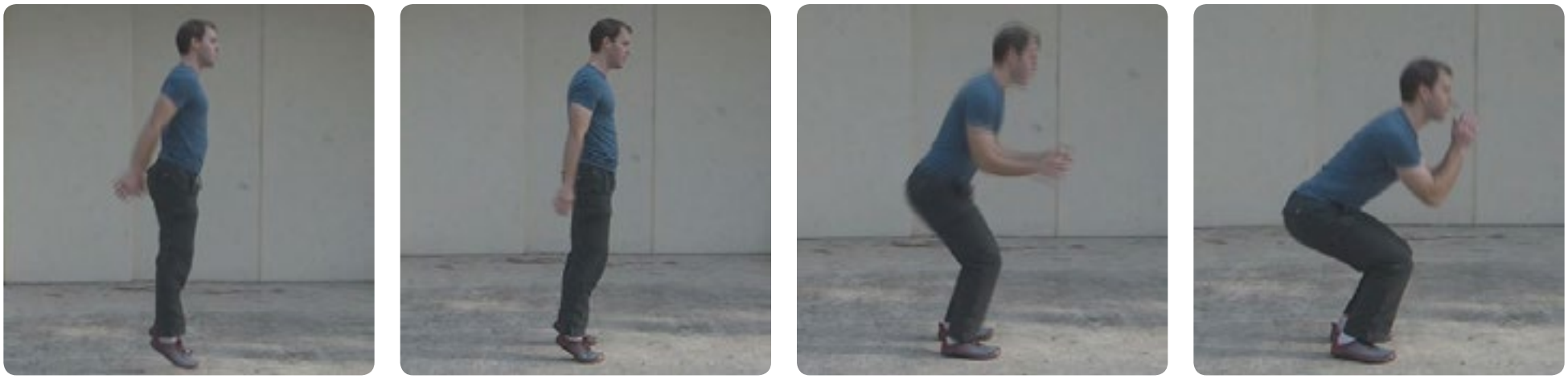
1. Begin the squat by hinging at the hips, pushing them back.

2. Drive/pull your knees out. Think of screwing your feet into the ground.

3. Let the knees as you go, stop once your hips dip just below the knee (4th image).

4. From the bottom of the squat, push from the heels and drive the hips forward to return to standing.

Toe-Heel Landing



Background

Mastering landings early on is super important for a long and fruitful practice of Parkour. You're always going to come back to the ground. Landing properly will allow you to distribute the impact across your body and avoid jarring individual joints, particularly the knees. This style of landing (toe-heel) leads with the hips, which allows the strong muscles of our posterior chain (glutes, hamstrings, calves) to absorb the majority of the impact.

Quiet landings are good landings.

Technique

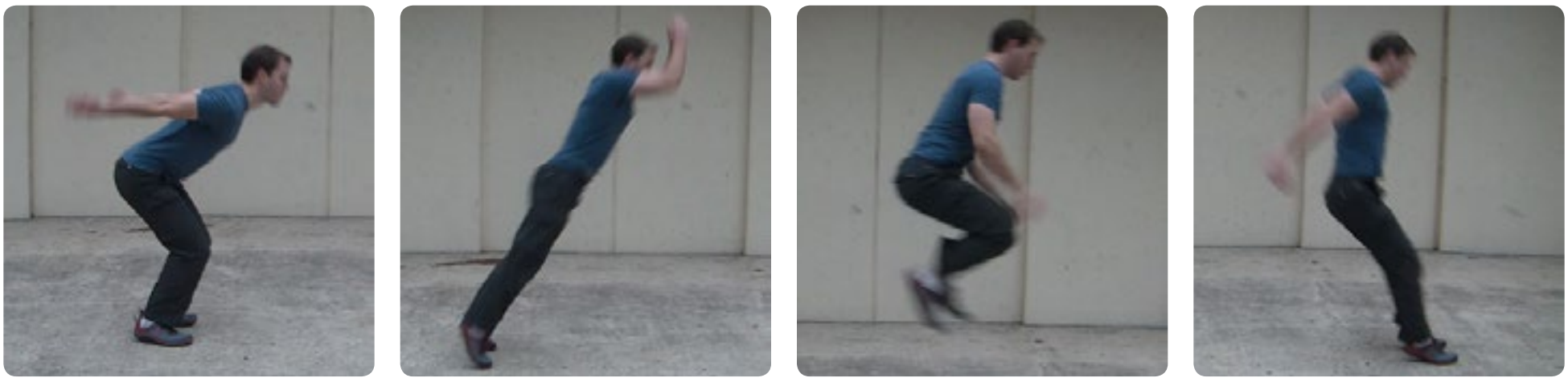
» **Stance:** Feet hip width apart with toes pointing straight forwards.

» Exhaling as you make contact with the ground can soften the landing.

» Like squats keep the back straight and relatively vertical to help balance.

1. The balls of the feet make contact with the ground first.
2. The moment the feet touch the ground the following happens:
   a. Hips push back rapidly.
   b. Both hands come up in front to act as a counter balance.
   c. Drive/pull the knees out. The depth of knee bend should be less than a squat (image 4).
   d. Heels lightly touch the ground.
3. Once stable stand back up.

Broad Jump



Background

Precise and controlled jumps are central to Parkour. It's important to not just develop good jumping power, but consistent accuracy with your jumps. Landing a jump doesn't count unless you're able to 'stick' the landing. The secret to developing accuracy is just practicing. A lot. All the time. As you progress practice all sorts of different angles, heights, and distances of jumps. With more variety in practice comes greater adaptability to new situations.

"Power is nothing without control."

Technique

» **Stance:** Feet hip width or narrower, toes pointing straight ahead.

» To consistently stick landings, arch your jump (about 45 degrees up).

» For accuracy keep your eyes on your landing zone the entire time.

1. The jump initiates with dipping into a partial squat and swinging the arms back
2. For takeoff several things should happen:
   a. Drive out of the feet and legs while pushing the hips as far forward as possible.
   b. Swing the arms aggressively forwards and up (again a 45 degree angle is good).
3. As your feet leave the ground tuck your knees (coil) towards your chest.
4. Pull your arms back to your sides as you're in mid-air
5. Legs should untuck as you pass the apex of your jump and reach forward to land.

Cat Crawl

Background

The cat crawl is core crawling or quadrupedal movement (QM). You have the most control and balance while doing a cat crawl, and it can be used to balance across narrower surfaces when you want to maintain a lower center of gravity. Plus it's a great way to develop good coordination, cross-body stability, and endurance. Forwards challenges the legs primarily, while backwards cat QM is more challenging for the shoulders; in addition to being a greater coordination challenge.

Technique

» **Start position:** Hands and feet shoulder width apart. Bring the right knee forward and the right arm back. Your right knee and elbow should almost be touching (image 1).

» Maintain a flat back (parallel to the ground) during the movement.

» Smaller 'steps' are better for improved stability and speed.

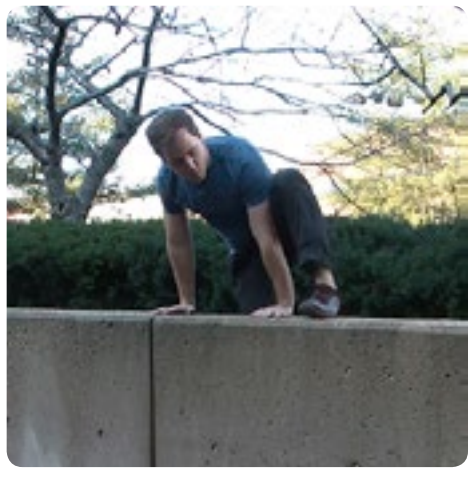
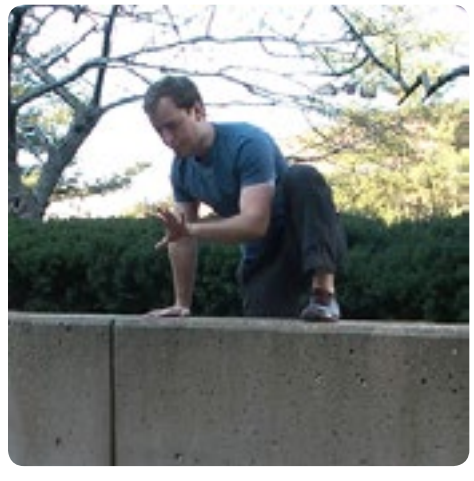
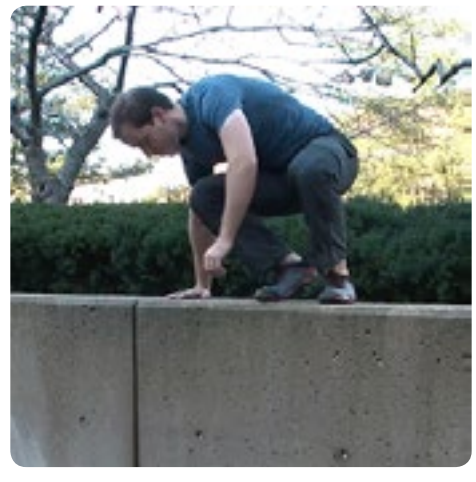
» Keep the knees pointing as straight forward as possible.

» Just the toes and balls of the feet are on the ground.

1. Initiate the movement from the start position by bringing the right hand forwards.
2. The left leg follows simultaneously or immediately after the hand picks up.
3. That pattern (1 & 2) repeats, now on the opposite side. Repeat.

» **For backwards:** The start position is the same, but the pattern is reversed. To move back you push off the left hand and pick up the right (bent) leg. Be sure to look at where you are placing your feet, and keep the steps small.

Mantling

Background

Mantling is an excellent way of getting on top of any obstacle with control. The first phase (image 1), usually called either the “waist” or “support” position, is a universal position used across a huge variety of Parkour movements. The mantle technique itself is similar to many of the vaults covered later as well.

Technique

» **Start position:** Jump into the waist (or support) position with hips against the wall and elbows locked out in full extension. Flex the feet up so that the toes are actively pressing against the wall.

» For improved stability keep the foot as near to the hand as possible.

» Keeping your hips high when pulling the trail leg smoothes the movement.

1. Pick your right foot up the right side of your arms and bring it on top of the wall.
2. Raise your central (right) hand from the wall.
3. Simultaneously:
   a. Push down with your right foot which is on top of the wall.
   b. Push your hips back as you pick the trailing left leg up.
4. Get the left foot on top of the wall.

Section 3

Sit-Out Drill




Background

The sit-out is a useful drill for practicing a common movement pattern seen in Parkour. The mantle and many vaults (2 handed vault, 1-handed safety and speed vaults) all use a more dynamic version of this move. The basic variant switches to a seated position, but you can practice this without sitting to create a more challenging version of the movement. Keeping the hand to the side instead of behind one shoulder can also make the move more difficult.

Technique

» **Start position:** Max depth squat (AKA hunter-gather squat or full squat)

» To keep your hips off the ground press into the ground with the left (bent) leg and your right arm.

1. Drop your right arm back behind you (in-line with the same shoulder)

2. Pick the right leg off the ground and straighten it. Keep your hips off the ground.

3. Relax into a seated position with that leg extended.

4. Two options from here, reverse your steps or switch sides then reverse the steps to return to squat position.

Precision Landing

Background

Precision landings only differ slightly from the toe-heel landings that we covered earlier. The precision allows you to land on even the smallest surfaces while staying balanced. To fully absorb the landing without being able to put the heel down the knees have to come further forward during the landing. In big landings it will be necessary to sink into the very bottom of a squat (image 3) in order to absorb the landing.

Technique

» **Foot position:** Hip with or narrower as the target demands.

» The heel stays up during the landing.

» To be maximally confusing: still try to keep the heel as close to the ground as possible (without making contact, see image 2); it's better for ankle stability.

» If the jump isn't that big you don't have to go all the way down into a full squat. If you need to balance though, go into a full squat until stable.

» Try to keep your back as vertical as you can and head up (not forward).

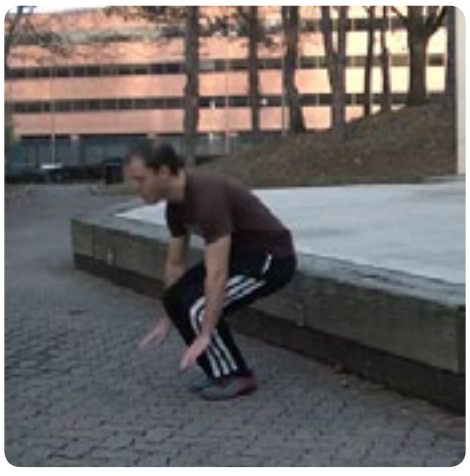
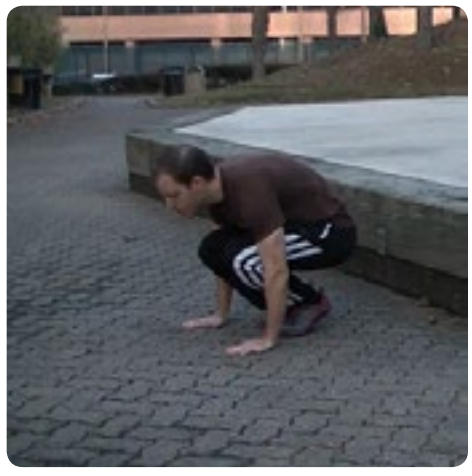
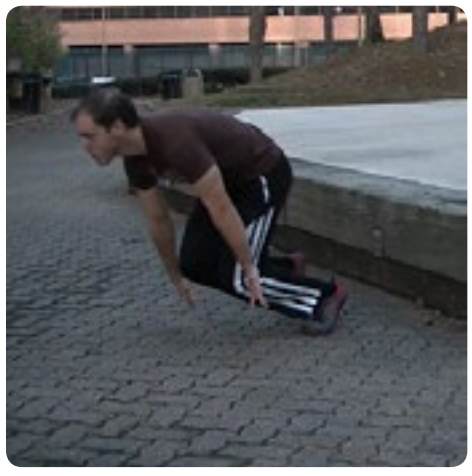
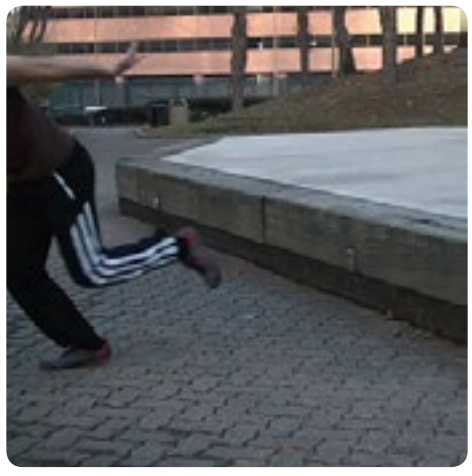
1. As your feet make contact with the target initiate the landing by pulling the hips back first.

2. The knees come forward quickly after (faster than the toe-heel landing). Remember to drive the knees out.

3. Both hands come up in front to counter balance.

4. In the bottom position you can move from the hips and use your arms to stay on balance.

Slap Out Landing

Background

Slap out landings are useful for two general purposes: extra absorption from a drop (slapping the hands dissipates some force) and transitioning quickly from a landing into a run. The movement is similar to the way a sprinter comes out of the starting blocks by using the hands to generate some extra momentum.

Technique

» You can skip steps #3-4 if you don't want to run out. The technique is still useful for absorbing a little extra impact, plus it stops you from pitching forward.

1. As you begin to land let your torso come forward.

2. Put your hands out in front of you (elbows relaxed).

3. After you finish absorbing the landing fully quickly drive your legs forward and push off the ground with your hands.

4. Continue with your run.

Table Landing



Background

Table landings are a form of break-fall. In the event you had too much forward momentum coming into a landing you can use a table landing to save yourself from face planting and absorb some extra impact from the drop. Table landings are also super useful for situations where you can't roll due to lack of space.

Technique

» Relaxed elbows (slightly bent) are key to absorbing impact properly without jarring either your wrists or your elbows.

1. As you land let your torso pitch forward

2. Keep your hands out in front of you with relaxed elbows pointing to the sides.

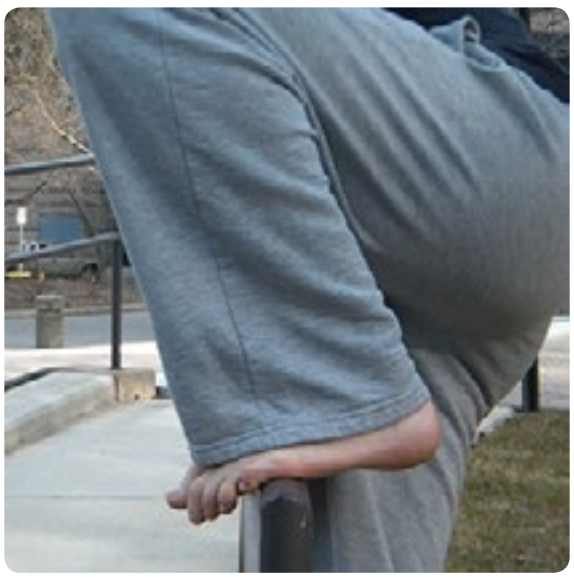
3. As your hands make contact with the ground slow the fall with your arms, almost like doing a slow push-up.

4. Be sure to turn your face to the side as you lower. Scraping noses on the concrete sucks.

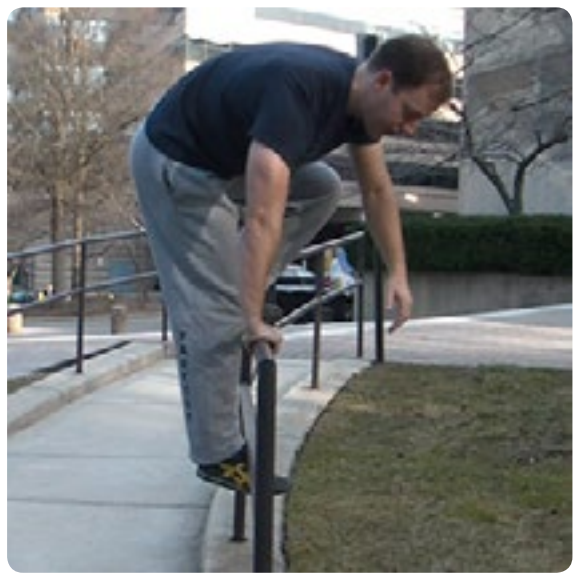
5. Once you've fully absorbed the landing you can either push yourself back into a precision landing position or run out (same as the slap out landing).

2-Handed Vaults

A two-handed vault



Ball of the foot on the rail



Elevated hips to clear the knee

Background

Two-handed vaults are the first vaults we cover because they give us the most control, plus I find they tend to be more intuitive than the others. The two-handed vault variations allow you use the strength in your arms and shoulders more than most other vaults as well. You can clear higher obstacles with less effort using the two-handed vaults than you could with techniques like the speed vault or thief.

More importantly, these vault variations introduce you to the idea using a 'safety' tap on top of the obstacle. Any time 'step' is used with a vault name, it means that you perch one foot on top of the obstacle. From the perch you can quickly check if the other side isn't a huge drop before continuing on, or if it is finding another route. Several friends have avoided serious falls thanks to deciding to use a step vault.

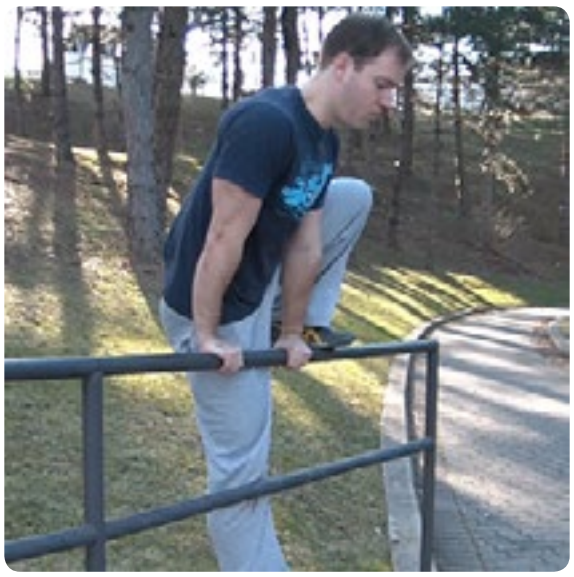
Common Technique Elements

» **Hand position:** Both hands are placed slightly off-center. If you're going to place/jump your left foot on top, then both hands should be to the right and vice a versa.

» **Foot position (on the obstacle):** The ball of the foot is ideal, especially on railings. Keep the toes pointed as straight forward as is comfortable.

» **Clearing the knee(s):** The trick to clearing the legs over the obstacle without risking hitting your knees is all about the hips. The more you can push your hips upwards and back the more space you'll have to clear your knees past the obstacle.

2H Step Vault (Progression 1)


Background

This progression is a more difficult version of the mantle technique. Because we're dealing with railings the demands on balance are much higher than when we were on a wall. Becoming comfortable with bringing our trailing leg up with control will make the later progressions come much more quickly.

Technique

1. Mantle the railing.

2. Bring your right foot on top of the railing (ball of the foot on top).

3. Pick up your right ('central/middle') hand and bring it up in front of you to provide a counter balance.

4. Push down with your right foot and push the hips back simultaneously.

5. Bring the left, trailing, leg up by pulling the hips up and bending the knee, touch the railing with your left foot and then return to the start position.

» **Bonus:** You can turn this progression into a balance drill and challenge. Instead of tapping the trail foot on top of the rail, bring it up to the railing. Push yourself until you're upright, then remove the hand on the railing. Reverse your steps to complete the drill.

2H Step Vault (Progression 2)




Background

Now for the proper two-handed step vault techniques. For progression two we won't be utilizing any momentum, so you can familiarize yourself with the movement first. It's fairly common to need to use the two-handed step vault without any momentum, and this progression/variation is also the best way to check the other side of an obstacle.

Technique

1. Mantle the railing.

2. Bring your right foot on top of the railing (ball of the foot on top).

3. Pick up your right ('central/middle') hand and bring it up in front of you to provide a counter balance.

4. Push down with your right foot and push the hips back simultaneously.

5. Bring the left, trailing, leg up by pulling the hips up and bending the knee and clear it forward past the railing.

6. As the left leg clears, extend it out and downward, reaching for the ground.

7. Step down (or use a two foot landing, if necessary) out of the vault.

» **Bonus:** For a little extra momentum as you exit the vault you can push off with your left hand and drive your hips forwards with a push from your right foot.

2H Step Vault (Progression 3)

Background

Time to add some momentum. Progression 3 is nearly the same as progression 2, but you'll begin jumping into position on the railing. It may take some practice to develop consistent accuracy with your foot placement, but with time you should land on the ball of the foot more often then not. For now, if your foot isn't quite in a good position you can shift it before trying to pick up your trailing leg.

Technique

1. Start from 1-2 steps away from the rail.

2. Jump off the left leg as you approach the railing, placing the hands onto the railing the moment the jump begins.

3. Get the ball of your right foot onto the railing then pick up your right hand and bring it up in front of you to provide a counter balance.

4. Push down on the railing with your right and push the hips back simultaneously.

5. Bring the left, trailing, leg up by pulling the hips up and bending the knee and clear it forward past the railing.

6. As the left leg clears, extend it out and downward, reaching for the ground.

7. Step down (or use a two foot landing, if necessary) out of the vault.

» **Bonus:** For a little extra momentum as you exit the vault you can push off with your left hand and drive your hips forwards with a push from your right foot.

2H Step Vault (Progression 4)

Background

The final, full speed, progression for the two-handed safety vault! At first we'll work on this from just a few steps away, but in practice this can be used for big running approaches as well. Later you'll learn the one-handed safety, which will feel similar. The two-handed version is better for clearing taller obstacles, while the one-handed safety is ideal for maintaining speed across lower obstacles.

Technique

1. Begin 1-2 steps away from the railing.

2. Jump (with more power) from left leg, immediately getting the hands onto the rail and the right foot on top of the rail.

3. A couple things happen very quickly:

a. The right hand clears as the right foot touches the railing.

b. Hips are elevated the moment the foot and hands make contact with the railing.

c. The left leg and knee are brought up at this same moment.

4. Fluidly pull the left leg through and extend it down on the other side of the railing. There should be no pause between the initial jump and landing on the other side.

» **Bonus:** To clear further past the rail and add momentum to your run drive your hips forward and push off the railing as you cross over it.

Two-handed Vault




Background

The two-handed vault is a good fall back vault for clearing higher obstacles when you're not feeling confident (or too tired) with more complex, but efficient, techniques. The technique is reliable and allows you to clear taller obstacles than most other vaults, the downside is it takes much more energy.

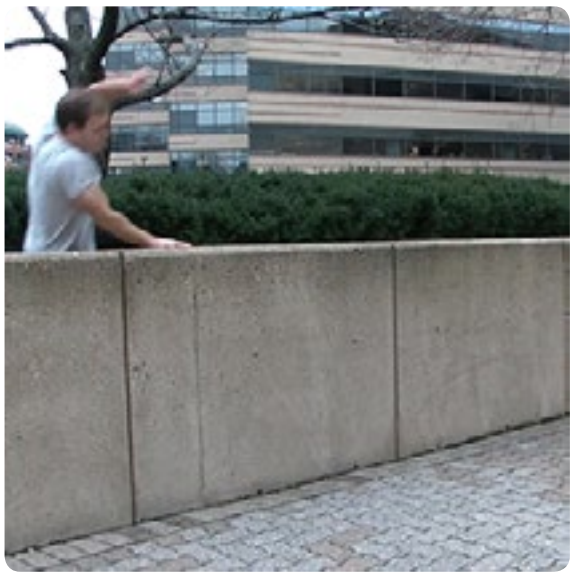
Technique

» **Start position:** Similar to the 2H safety, but grab the railing more off to the right side as you begin the jump

» To generate more height from a standing jump, sink down into a squat (hands grabbing the rail) first then simultaneously jump and pull yourself up with your arms.

1. Jump and pull the hips and knees up to the left of your body, making it easier to clear (opposite side of where you put your hands).
2. Push down on the railing with your shoulders.
3. As you reach the apex of the jump, use your shoulders to pull yourself past the railing.
4. Once the legs are clear begin to initiate a two-foot landing.

Lateral Step Vaults



Background

I once knew this technique as the thief vault; it's not that. It sucks to be wrong, but further proof that knowledge evolves over time. This is more accurately described as a lateral (angled) step vault variation. As a variation you'll find the technique fairly intuitive now after having practiced the step vault. The major differences are in your approach angle and swinging your outside leg in an arc.

The lateral step vault, due to momentum, will always change your path of travel. Usually you'll land on the other side as if you had just used a two handed vault or another vault used in a straight on approach.

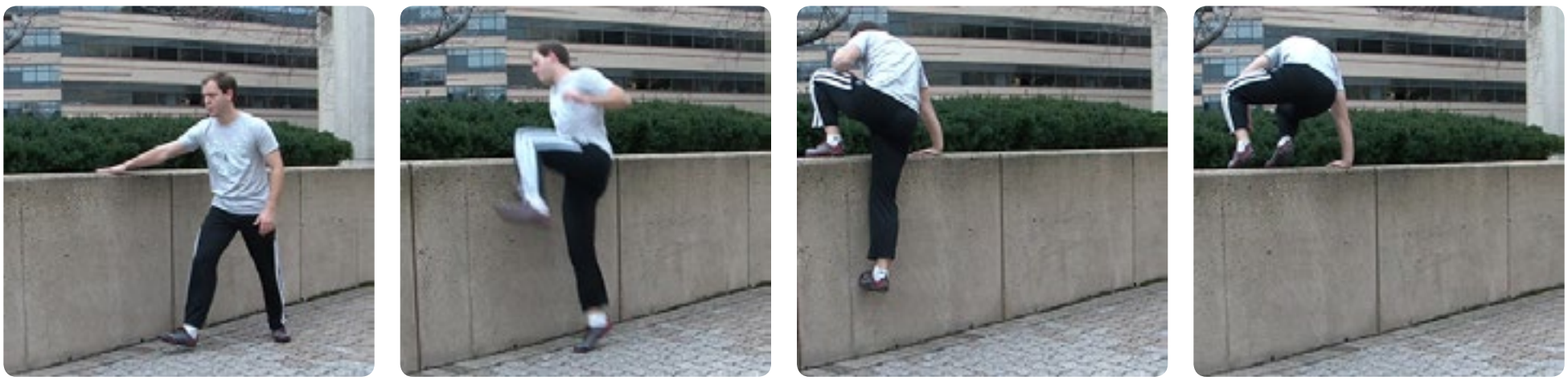
Common Technique Elements

» **Positioning:** Start facing the obstacle at an angle. Any angle could work, but for practice somewhere around 45-60 degrees will give you plenty of space to work with.

» **Hand & Leg Setup:** As the vault begins it's always the inside hand, in this case the right, that grabs the obstacle. You jump off the inside (right) leg and swing the outside (left) leg over the obstacle.

» **Leg Swing:** The leg swing is key to generating extra momentum and directing you. Swing the leg up as hard as you can. Only add some rotation and forwards swing once you're already cresting over the obstacle.

Lateral Step Vault (Progression 1)



Background

This progression is similar to the mantle technique, except now we're getting into the position on top of the wall from an angle. With progression 1 the focus is on getting familiar with the leg swing and rotating into position on top of the wall or other obstacle.

Technique

» Momentum makes this move easier, so start 1-3 steps away from the obstacle to get more height and distance from the vault.

1. Approach the wall at an angle.

2. Plant the right foot, begin to swing the left leg up, and place the right hand on top of the wall.

3. Finish swinging the left leg on top of the wall (this should look like a lopsided part of the mantling technique).

4. Bring the right, trailing, leg up using the mantle technique.

Lateral Step Vault (Progression 2)




Background

In progression 2 you'll be planting the swinging leg on top long enough to check the other side. Like the final progression for the 2-hand step vault the big difference here is actively bringing the jumping leg up with you as you clear the wall, instead of leaving it hanging.

My preference is to use this variation/progression of the lateral step vault in most situations. Less power is required and the leg tapping or stopping on top allows you to dictate which way you're facing when you exit the vault.

Technique

» A more powerful jump will be needed to drive the trail/jumping leg over the wall with you.

1. Approach the wall at an angle.

2. Plant the right foot, begin to swing the left leg up, and place the right hand on top of the wall.

3. The left, trailing, leg raises as you initiate the jump, joining the right foot on top of the wall shortly after the front leg swings up.

4. Clear the obstacle by pushing off the wall with the outside left (swinging leg). Use a two foot landing.

» **Bonus:** As you get stronger try to jump and plant your foot closer to the far edge of the wall. After that shift to just tapping the wall as you clear over, instead of stopping.

Lateral Step Vault (Progression 3)

Background

When you need to quickly clear a taller obstacle the final progression for the lateral step vault is a good option. It's technically just a lateral vault, as you aren't stepping on top when you cross over. You can generate as much or more power than the two handed vault. This variation/progression is also useful for clearing wider obstacles without needing to stop on top.

Technique

» We're going for a full clear here. Maximize the swing and power out of the jump as you begin the technique.

» At first aim to tap lightly on top of the wall with the lead leg as you clear over When you're confident you have the height, stop tapping your foot on top.

» If the obstacle is wide drive hard off your shoulder and hand to push yourself further beyond the wall as you are clearing the obstacle.

1. Approach the wall at an angle.

2. Plant the right foot, begin to swing the left leg up, and place the right hand on top of the wall.

3. Jump from the right leg and swing the left leg as hard as possible.

4. As your legs are beginning to crest over the wall, keep them tucked in a little (knees towards the chest) to aid with rotation speed.

5. Extend the feet out as you clear the wall and initiate two foot landing.

Side Monkey

Background

The side monkey, sometimes just called the monkey walk, is a lateral form of QM. The side monkey is considerably faster than the cat crawl, so it can be used to move quickly along relatively narrow surfaces. It can also be used to quickly move under a series of bars or other obstacles while maintaining speed.

Technique

» **Start position:** Face perpendicular to the direction you intend to go. All weight is on the right leg (heel up), directly under the torso. The left, trailing, leg is extended out to the side.

» Keep the hop/jump small so that your hips don't get high off the ground

1. Extend the left hand as far to the side as possible then plant the right hand just in front of it.
2. Shift your weight onto your hands as you jump off your right leg.
3. The jump should carry you to the side. The left leg will land near your hands.
4. Shift your weight from the left leg onto the right leg, returning to the start position.
5. Repeat.

Front Roll

Background

Rolls are an essential but frustratingly nuanced technique. Rolls allow you to absorb huge amounts of impact by spreading it across most of your body. You **must** have good and automatic rolls in order to take many drops safely. Roll technique is rather individual, so it takes a lot of practice to discover how to roll correctly while avoiding the major potential strike points.

Amos Rendao has the best roll tutorials available if you want to get even more detailed. For beginner rolls here's Part 1 and Part 2. To learn even more about avoiding strike points check the Intermediate Roll Tutorial.

Technique

» **Start position:** Either a precision landing position or split leg squat (one leg back).

» The path of a roll (on your body) goes from shoulder blade to the opposite hip.

» Keep the chin tucked to your chest during the roll.

» Avoid the three big strike points: the top of the shoulder (clavicle), the protruding bones at the junction between the spine and hip (PSIS), and the sides of the pelvic bones. See intermediate roll tutorial for a good drill to avoid all the strike points.

1. Begin by extending both hands forward to your left side. The hands should be placed on the ground with just the index fingers and thumbs touching (forming a triangle shape).

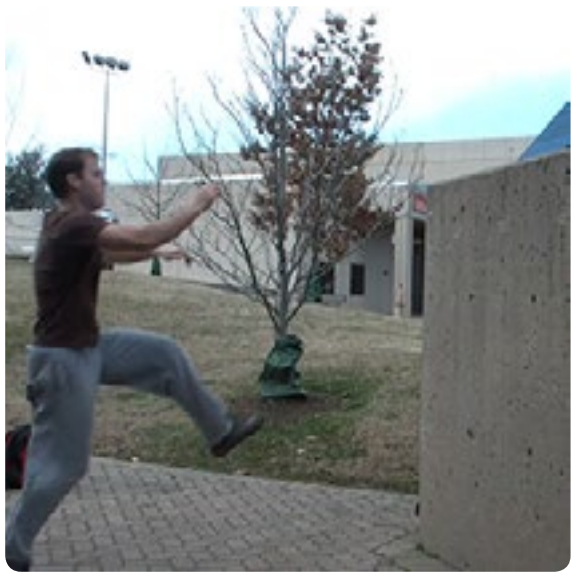
2. Push forwards with the legs to start the roll.

3. Drop your right elbow (gradually) towards the ground as begin to go forward.

4. Tuck your head in and stay as round as possible during the roll. Keep the knees bent.

5. Come out of the roll with both feet contacting the ground (not the ankles or shins).

Arm Jump



Background

Arm jumps are used for landing on walls and near vertical surfaces. Both names for this technique, arm jump (from the French *saut de bras*) and the cat leap, can be confusing. It isn't literally a jump from the arms, and it looks more like a monkey leap than a cat leaping as far as I'm concerned. With that in mind, I think of the arm jump as normal jump, but you also grab with your hands after your feet make contact.

Arm jumps are extremely common. Anytime there is a wall with a gap between it and you, the arm jump is an option. This technique can be scarier than most, so the progressions will focus on trusting our grip on the wall.

Common Technique Elements

» **Landing:** The feet should always make contact with the wall first. Both hands will grab the wall immediately after the feet land. Granted, when you see a full speed arm jump there is only a fraction of a seconds difference between when the feet and hands make contact.

» **Tension:** On the initial grab of the wall you'll be tensed up, with your arms flexed and elbows bent. Once you're secure on the wall, be sure to relax into a arm hang position (elbows fully extended) so you can be ready to setup your next move.

» **Foot position:** Like climb-ups, your feet should be at about the same height as you hips when they make contact with the wall. If they are too low it's easy to slip out.

» **One foot vs. two feet:** To dissipate the landing forces better, land with two feet. You can land them side by side, or one above the other. Landing bigger arm jumps with just one foot is too much impact on the ankle.

Arm Jump Bail

Background

Getting comfortable with arm jumps is easier when you can make the consequences of failure free of danger. The arm jump bail, also called the cat abort, allows you to bounce harmlessly off the wall and land on the ground. The move is a useful technique in of itself, because you can use it to quickly drop down a level while on a run.

Technique

1. Out of a broad jump bring your hands and feet out in front of you (roughly squared with your shoulders).

2. As your hands and feet (one foot is okay too) make contact with the wall, lightly push yourself off the wall backwards.

3. Look for your landing.

4. **Bonus:** As you push backwards, turn your head to look behind you to see the landing. This will automatically help your body turn 180. It's always nice to land facing the direction you want to go.

Arm Jump (Progression 1)

Background

If you're beginning to practice arm jumps on flat ground without a drop, you can skip straight to progression 3. Progressions 1 and 2 are for situations where you're trying to get comfortable with doing an arm jump across a gap (the drop should still be small though). Progression 1 gets you comfortable with your ability to grip the wall securely.

Technique

1. Stand far enough away from a wall (or gap with a wall) that you can comfortably span your foot across.

2. Begin by picking your right foot up, spanning (think stepping across, but planting on a vertical surface instead of the ground) the foot to the wall.

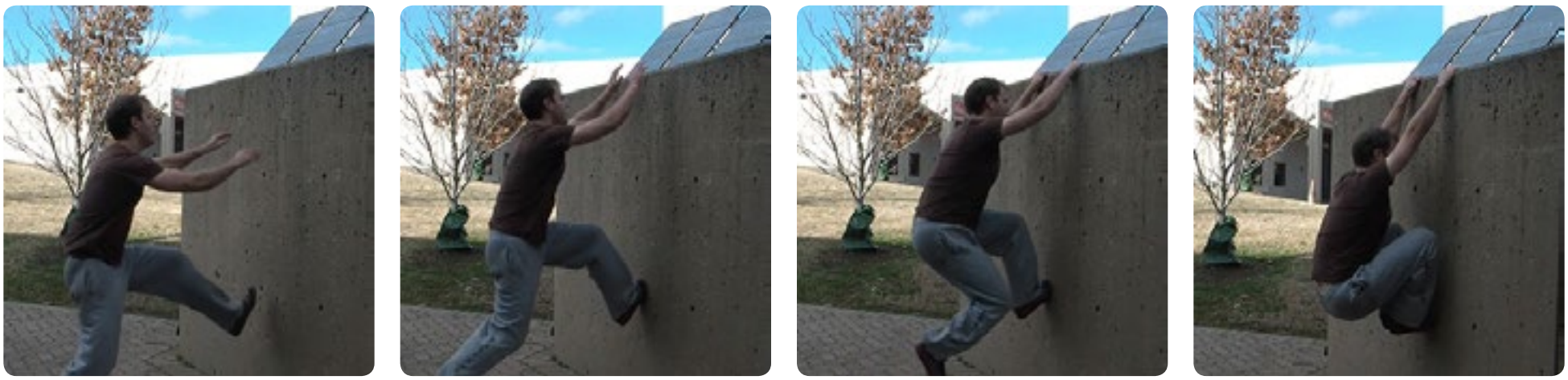
3. Once that feels secure, reach both hands out to grab the top of the wall.

4. Grab on to the wall then pick up and bring the left foot onto the wall as well.

5. Relax into a full arm hang position.

» **Bonus Challenge:** Gradually start moving from further and further away from the wall, so that the span requires more reaching.

Arm Jump (progression 2)



Background

Same idea as progression 1, except now we're adding a little jump to get used to landing with our feet first. Right now we're going to be jumping with just one foot making contact with the wall, but don't let that become a habit, as arm jumps require a two foot landing to absorb and distribute the landing forces evenly.

Technique

1. Stand far enough away from a wall (or gap with a wall) that you can comfortably span your foot across.

2. Jump off your left foot and reach the right foot for the wall. Have your hands out in front of you ready to grab the wall as you begin the jump.

3. Once the right foot makes contact with the wall quickly grab the wall with your hands and bring the left leg onto the wall as well.

4. Relax into an arm hang position.

» **Bonus Challenge:** Gradually start moving from further and further away from the wall, so that you get a little more air time.

Arm Jump (Progression 3)

Background

This is the “full” arm jump technique. You can initiate the arm jump from any of the other jumping techniques covered in this course, particularly the broad jump and running jumps. The key to good arm jumps is absorbing the landing with the legs, just like you would in any normal jump.

Technique

1. From a standing broad jump, initiate a jump towards the wall.

2. Tuck your feet up and have your hands extended in front of you, both reaching to catch the wall.

3. The feet should make contact first.

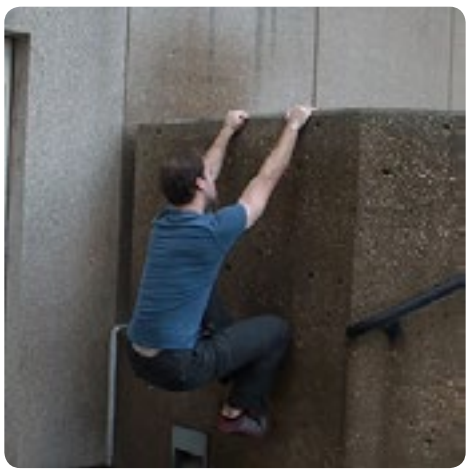
4. Hands immediately follow and grab hold of the wall.

5. To absorb the impact let the knees go forward and have the weight of your hips push directly into your feet.

6. Once fully absorbed, either relax into a full arm hang, begin traversing, or climb-up over the wall.

7. **Bonus:** Try the same technique, but from a running approach. Be sure to get both feet up in front before landing on the wall.

Climb-up


Packed Shoulders


Beached Position


Knee Drive (1)


Knee Drive (2)

Background

The climb-up is another one of those 'universal' techniques in Parkour. If you're dealing with higher walls that cannot be vaulted, you'll be using the climb-up to get on top, especially when you have no initial momentum to help you. The climb-up is a demanding strength skill, and it can take a long time to progress to the faster forms of the movement. Be patient and work on it consistently and you will make good progress.

The climb-up has three major progressions (elbow climb-up, one elbow climb-up, and the final climb-up). With each progression the move can be broken down into two pieces, the pull and the dip. At first we'll keep the two separate, and as you develop more power the two pieces can be combined.

Before getting into each progression, let's talk about some of the common elements of the climb-up technique that will be true for all the progressions.

Common Technique Elements

» **Start position:** Arm hang.

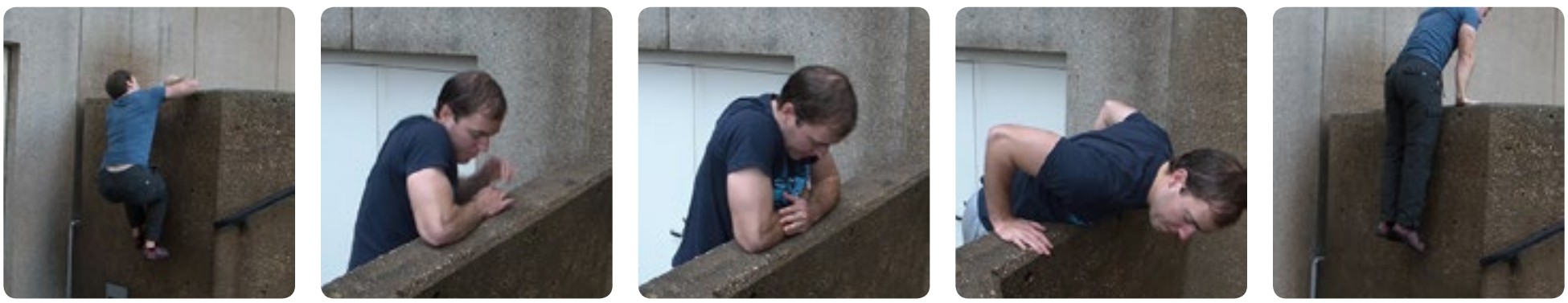
» **Shoulders:** For a better pull, pack the shoulders by pulling the shoulder blades slightly down and back. Do this before you begin the climb-up to generate more explosive power from your upper body. Compare doing this to hanging with your shoulders relaxed and trying to pull up. The difference between the two should be significant.

» **Foot Placement:** One foot high on the wall, roughly level with your hips. The other foot can either be dangling free or resting on the wall below the first foot. You get better grip out of one foot rather than two, which will give you more power out of the leg drive when you pushing against the wall during the pull. Plus, less chances of slipping.

» **Knee Drive:** You can take advantage of the lower leg having little to no weight on it. Immediately as you begin the pulling portion of the climb-up drive that knee as hard as you can straight up towards your chest. The knee drive gives you extra lift which can help you get past sticking points in the movement; it also just makes the entire thing faster and more efficient.

» **Beached position**: This position is great for making the climb-up less physically taxing. By pushing our chest over the wall and resting for a moment before pressing out of the dip you don't need near as much power to successfully complete the climb-up.

Elbow Climb-up



Background

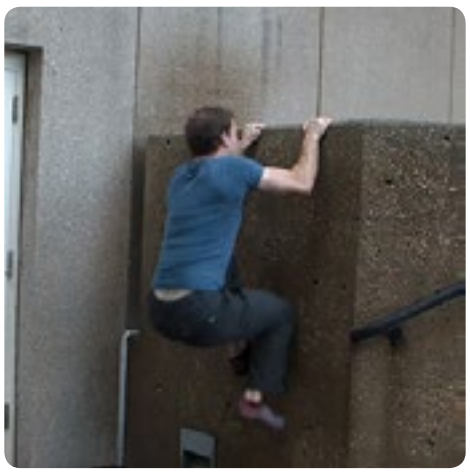
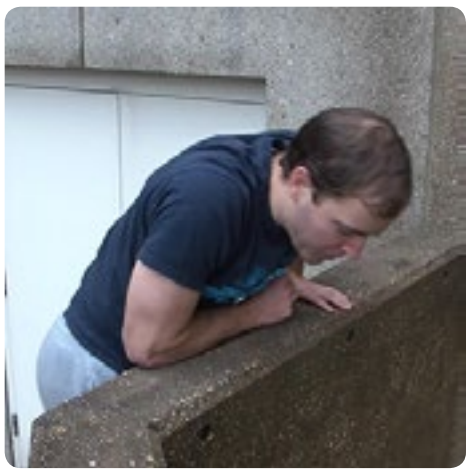
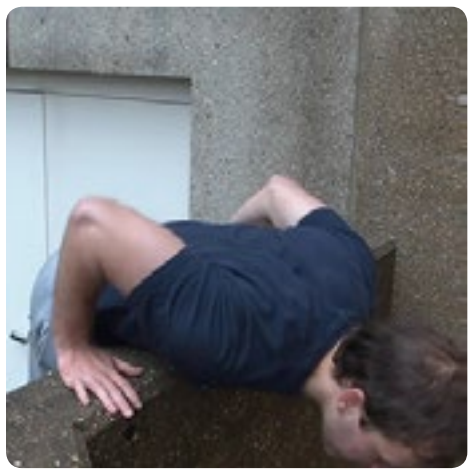
Progression 1 for climb-ups is the elbow (two elbows if you want to be picky) climb-up. Usually when first starting to learn climb-ups the missing piece is the power (moving weight fast) necessary to pull yourself up until your chest clears the wall. The elbow climb-up requires far less power, as you just have to pull far enough to get one elbow on top of the wall.

Even after you progress beyond the elbow climb-up, it will still be a useful skill to maintain. When you're getting fatigued the faster climb-up variations may require too much energy. The elbow climb-up can always be used when you're either trying to conserve your energy or when dead tired and unable to do anything more difficult.

Technique

1. Start from the arm hang.
2. Pull with your arms, enough to get your right elbow on top of the wall.
3. At the same time push into the wall with your feet to aid with the arm pull.
4. Once the eright lbow is on top of the wall, bring the left elbow onto the wall as well.
5. From this hanging position do two things:
    a. Walk your feet up the wall to elevate your hips.
    b. Pull down from the elbows and get your chest over the wall. This is the "beached" position.
6. Once the chest clears the wall, reset your hands so that they are just to the sides of your hips.
7. From here two options:
    a. Swing one leg up to the side and roll your torso and lower body onto the wall.
    b. Press up from the wall until your elbows are locked out in full extension.
8. Proceed with the mantle technique from here.

One Elbow Climb-Up


Background

Progression 2 is the one elbow climb-up. The technique is faster than the elbow climb-up, but requires more strength to pull from the position with the elbow on the wall, plus more strength to press into the waist position. Using just one elbow might sound a bit crazy at first, but you'll be taking advantage of body-weight shifting to make it require little strength.

As you develop more power and strength it will be possible to skip the bodyweight shifting and beached phase entirely, if you want to complete the climb-up quickly.

Technique

» **Start position:** Arm hang.

1. Pull with your arms, enough to get your right elbow on top of the wall.

2. At the same time push into the wall with your feet to aid with the arm pull.

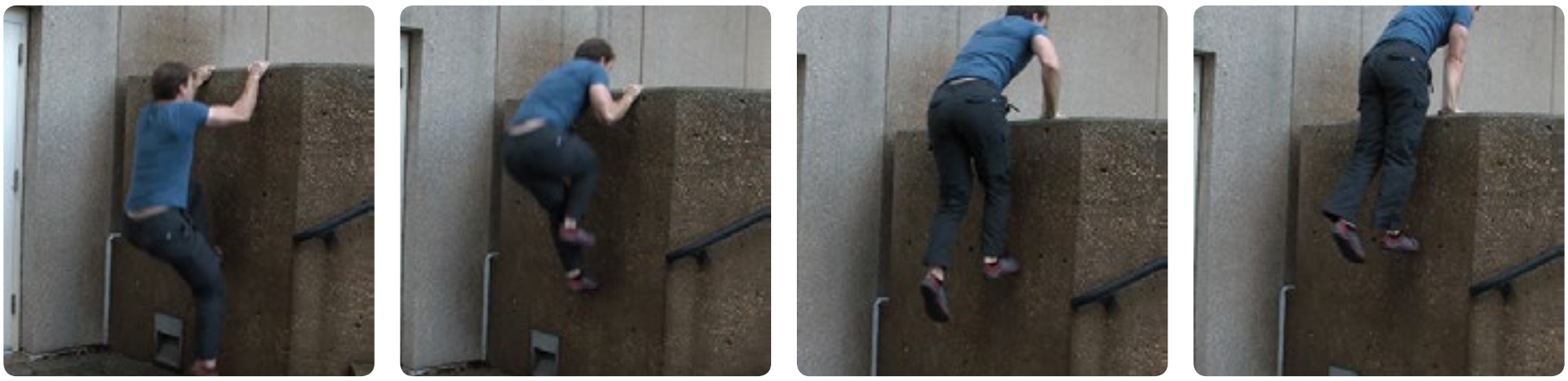
3. Continue to use the momentum of the pull (along with additional pull from the elbow on top of the wall) to bring your chest over the wall.

4. As your chest clears over the wall shift the weight of your chest towards the resting elbow.

5. Reset the hands to the sides of the hips, then press up into the mantle position

» **Bonus:** To speed the movement up a little you can straighten the opposite arm as you shift your weight onto the elbow. From there you can more quickly press into the waist position.

Climb-up / Muscle-Up



Background

Strictly speaking a muscle-up is done on horizontal bars or rings, but the whole ‘muscle’ thing in the name tells you what’s required to do this move. The muscle-up takes a long time to develop, and goes through many stages as you become stronger. Patience and persistence is required to lock this skill down, and there’s always room to make it even better. Personally I still have tons of room for improvement, and I’ve been working on the skill for several years now.

You can gradually make the move more difficult by moving from super grippy walls to near slick walls as you develop more power. The less grip you have on the wall the less your legs help you.

Technique

» **Start position:** Arm hang.

1. All of these steps happen just about simultaneously:

a. Initiate a powerful pull with the arms.

b. Push into the wall with the foot.

c. Aggressively drive the free leg upwards.

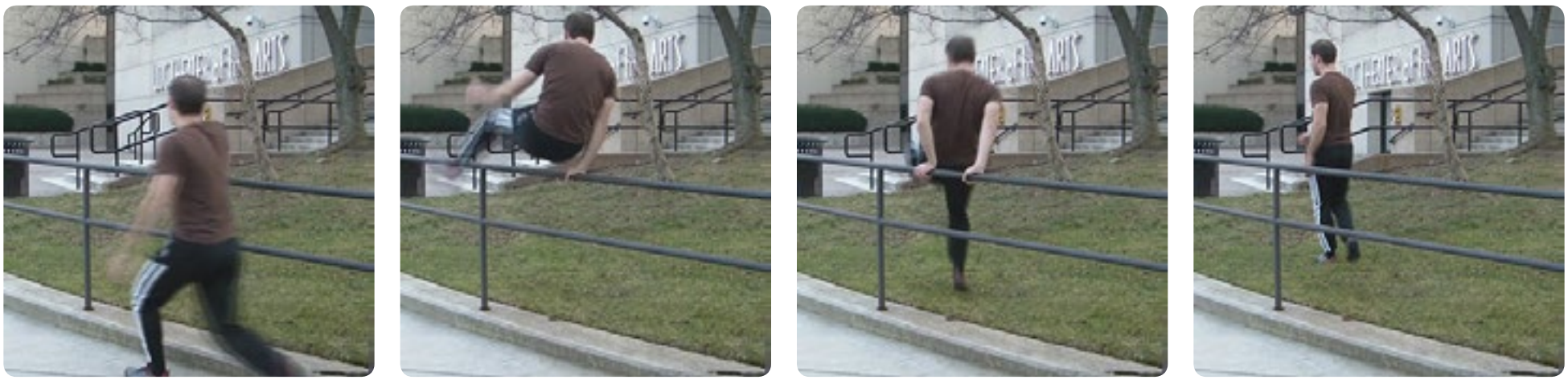
2. (Optional) When your chest is clearing the wall you can ‘pop’ your hands further onto the wall, which can make the press from the beached position easier and more stable.

3. As your chest crests over the wall, drive it forward so you can rest in that beached position, then press up into the waist position.

a. Extra speedy version: skip the beached position and go straight into the waist position. You still need to keep your chest a little forward over the wall though.

Section 5

Lazy Vault



Background

The lazy vault is the other major form of lateral vault. The lazy is used to keep a straight route across an obstacle, even though you are coming at it from an angle. It's a faster technique than the thief which allows you to use a running exit. The lazy vault is versatile. After mastering the normal lazy vault it's possible to control the momentum of the swing to exit the vault in any direction you want, or even turn the lazy vault into a hybrid.

Oh, and it's a lazy vault because it takes so little energy. The technique is all about generating lift and momentum from the big leg swing at the start of the technique.

Common Technique Elements

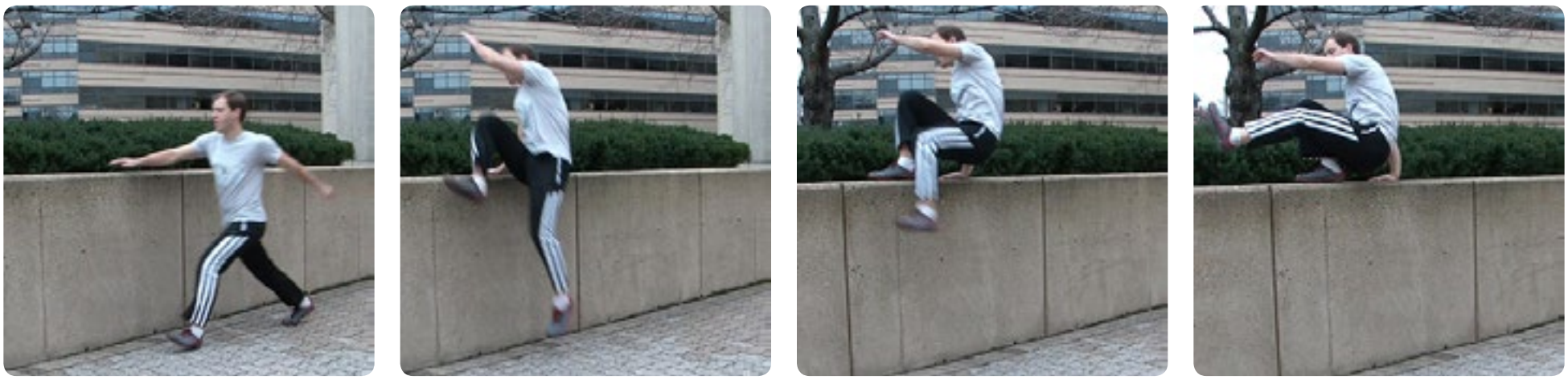
» **Positioning**: Start facing the obstacle at an angle. Any angle could work, but for practice somewhere around 45-60 degrees will give you plenty of space to work with. The lazy vault can even be done safely even when almost parallel with the railing.

» **Hand & Leg Setup:** Almost the same as the thief. The inside hand will be planting on the wall. The jumping leg is the outside leg. The swinging leg is the inside leg.

» **The Swing:** The inside leg should swing straight up. To maximize lift time the jump with the end of the swing, when the inside leg is as high as it can go.

» **Elbow Position:** The lazy vault will be much easier when the elbow of the inside arm is locked out straight. A completely straight arm allows your body to pivot over the arm as your body clears the obstacle.

Lazy Vault (Progression 1)



Background

Progressions 1 and 2 can only be done on walls. If you're working with railings skip to progression 3. These two progressions are an optional extra if you want to become more familiar with creating the lift that comes from the leg swing.

Technique

1. Approach the wall at an angle.
2. Plant the left foot and place your right hand on the obstacle.
3. Swing the right leg upwards.
4. As the right leg gets to the top of its range of motion, jump off the left leg.
5. Get right (swinging) leg on top of the wall.

» **Bonus:** Work on getting the right foot further towards the opposite edge of the wall with each attempt. Move on to progression 2 when you reach the edge of the wall or feel confident with the technique.

Lazy Vault (Progression 2)

Background

Progression 2 requires some more momentum from the swing and more closely resembles the lazy vault technique. Since this is done on a wall you'll get a solid feel for how much distance you can cover (horizontally) in addition to getting even more confident with your ability to clear obstacles with the lazy vault.

Technique

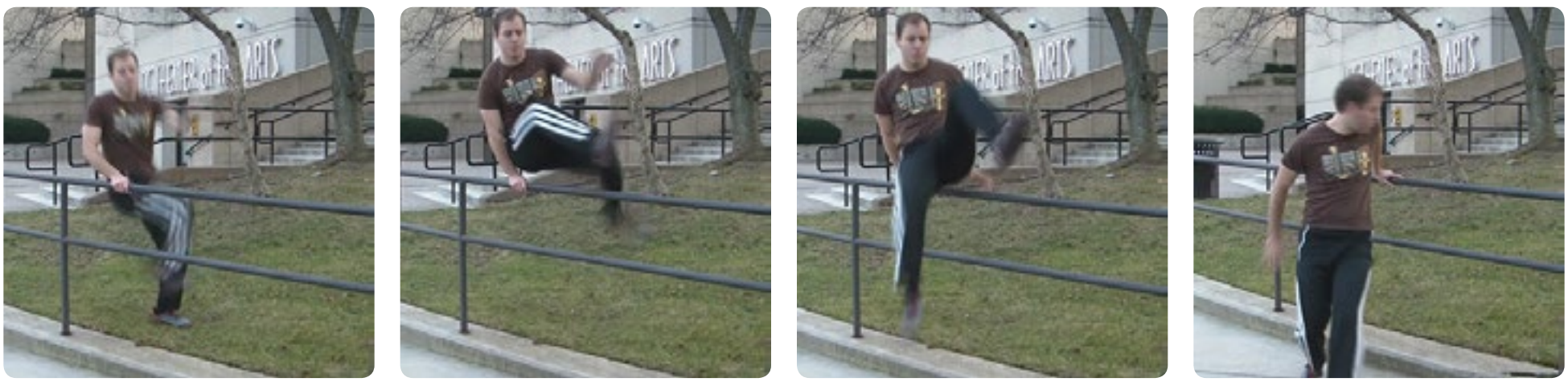
» You'll need a more powerful swing to generate the necessary lift.

» To get extra distance across an obstacle you can use your right arm and shoulder to drive yourself forwards.

1. Approach the wall at an angle.
2. Plant the left foot and place your right hand on the obstacle.
3. Swing the right leg upwards.
4. As the right leg gets to the top of its range of motion, jump off the left leg.
5. Keep the right (swinging) leg straight and land the left foot on top of the wall (knee bent).

» **Bonus:** Same deal, work on getting the left foot planted closer to the far edge of the wall with each attempt. Once you're consistently getting to the edge move on to progression 3.

Lazy Vault (Progression 3)



Background

With the full lazy vault you will be clearing all the way over the obstacle. I prefer to teach this on hip height railings at first, but walls of a similar height can also work. If you worked on progressions 1 and 2 the initial technique will be the same, but we'll be adding a few extra pieces to the exit of the vault to transition smoothly into a run.

Technique

» If you want to get a feel for the maximum elevation you can get from the swing, bring both legs together in the air as you reach the apex of your jump and come down with a two foot landing.

1. Approach the wall at an angle.
2. Plant the left foot and place your right hand on the obstacle.
3. Swing the right leg upward.
4. As the right leg gets to the top of its range of motion, jump off the left leg.
5. Carry both legs up with the momentum of the swing.
6. As your right leg clears over the rail pull it down towards the ground, preparing for a running landing.
7. (Optional) As you're clearing over the railing, let your left hand grab the railing and push off (it helps straighten out the technique).
8. Touch the right foot down and stride the left foot ahead to either run or walk out of the landing.

Turn Vault

Background

Turn vaults rotate you 180 degrees around a railing or other obstacle. They are useful for vaulting over railings that have an edge or drop on the other side that you want to avoid taking. The turn vault allows you to land in an arm hang position on the opposite side of the railing. From there you can lower yourself with control.

Common Technique Elements

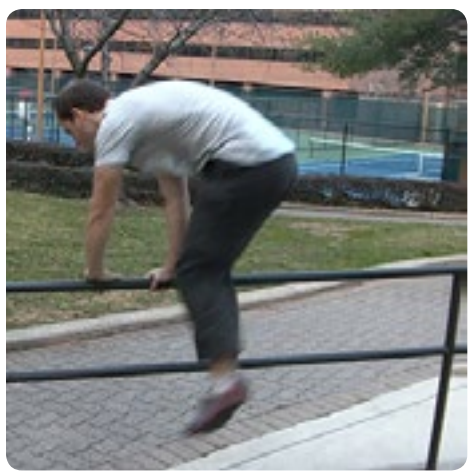
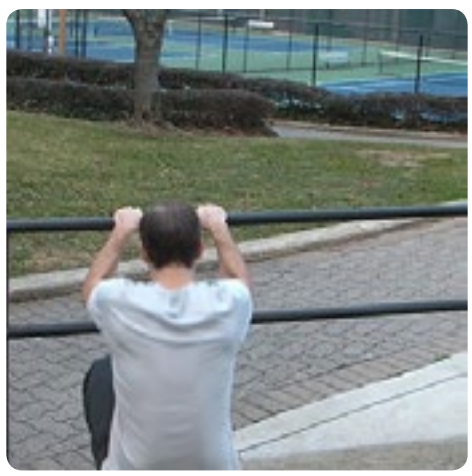
» **Hand position:** When grabbing the railing have one hand palm up, and one hand palm down. Easiest way to remember: both thumbs should point in the direction you want to rotate. If your thumbs are pointing to the right, then you'll be rotating towards your right side.

» **Using your head:** "Your body goes where your head goes" is a good rule of thumb. To improve the rotation of the turn vault and spot your landing, turn your head and look where you want to land during the vault.

» **Rotation:** For accurate turn vaults the smaller you are in the air the better. Keep your knees tucked in to your chest until you are about to land. If the legs are left untucked you will whip out wide, making it far more difficult to land precisely.

Turn Vault (Progression 1)



Background

The first progression for the turn-vault will start like a two-handed safety vault and the mantle technique. The hand positioning and what you do with your feet is different, but it should feel familiar. This progression/variation is quite useful on huge railings that are too tall to vault over normally or when too tired to do a bigger turn vault safely.

Technique

» **Start position:** Begin in the waist/mantle position. Your hands should be setup with one palm facing up (right) and one facing palms down (left).

» *Tip:* Point your thumbs in the direction you want to rotate towards. In this case towards the right.

1. Begin the same as you would a two-handed safety vault. Bring the left foot onto the bar and pick up your left hand.

2. Pick your right leg up and past the railing.

3. As your right leg is beginning to clear the railing do the following:

a. Push the planted left foot off the railing and reach both feet towards where you want to land on the opposite side of the railing.

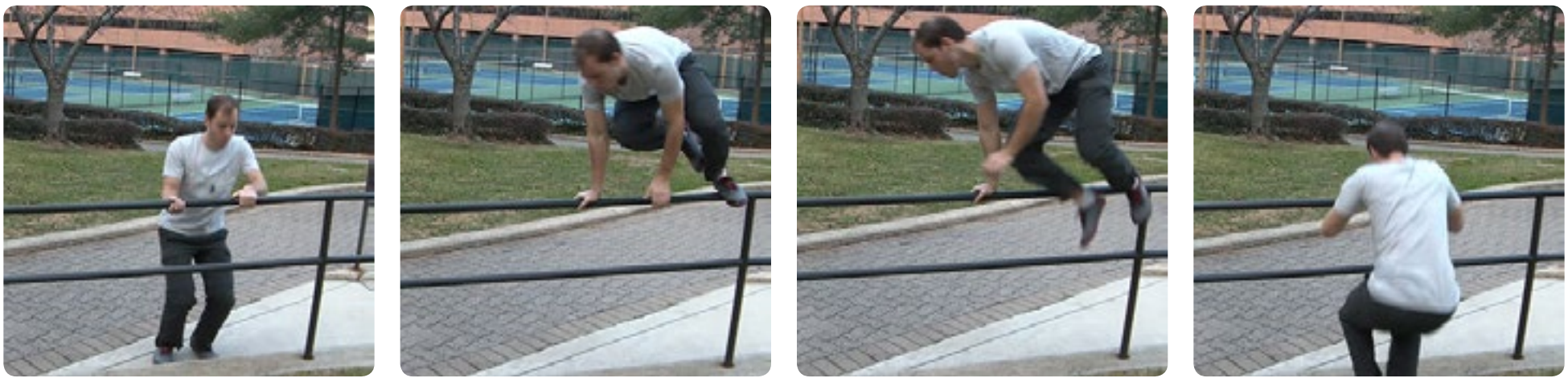
b. Turn your head and look down at where you want to land your feet.

c. As the rotation continues re-grab the railing with your left hand.

4. Extend your legs as you near your landing zone.

5. Absorb into an arm hang position as your feet make contact with the ground.

Turn Vault (Progression 2)



Background

The second progression for the turn vault will be using a safety tap to help clear you over the rail. Besides the safety tap the technique does not differ much from what we did in progression 1; everything just happens quicker.

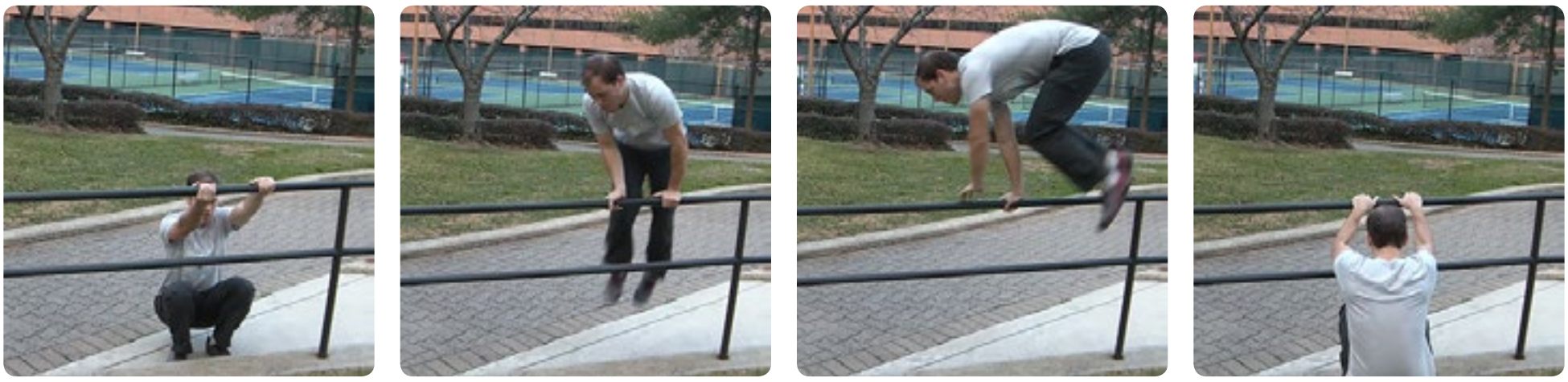
Technique

» Start position: Begin in the waist/mantle position. Your hands should be setup with one palm facing up (right) and one facing palms down (left).

» *Tip:* Point your thumbs in the direction you want to rotate towards. In this case towards the right.

1. Jump up and pull your legs towards the left side while tucking your knees to your chest.
2. As your jump is beginning do the following:
   a. Turn your head and look down at where you want to land your feet.
   b. Pick up the left hand (with the palm down).
3. As you're clearing past the railing, tap your outside foot on top of the railing and push off in the direction of your rotation.
4. As the rotation continues re-grab the railing with your left hand.
5. Extend your legs as you near your landing zone.
6. Absorb into an arm hang position as your feet make contact with the ground.

Turn Vault (Progression 3)



Background

Now for progression 3 we'll clear the rail without tapping on top. The movement will start from a standstill, so you'll take advantage of your arms and shoulders to generate extra height that you would normally get from a running approach.

Technique

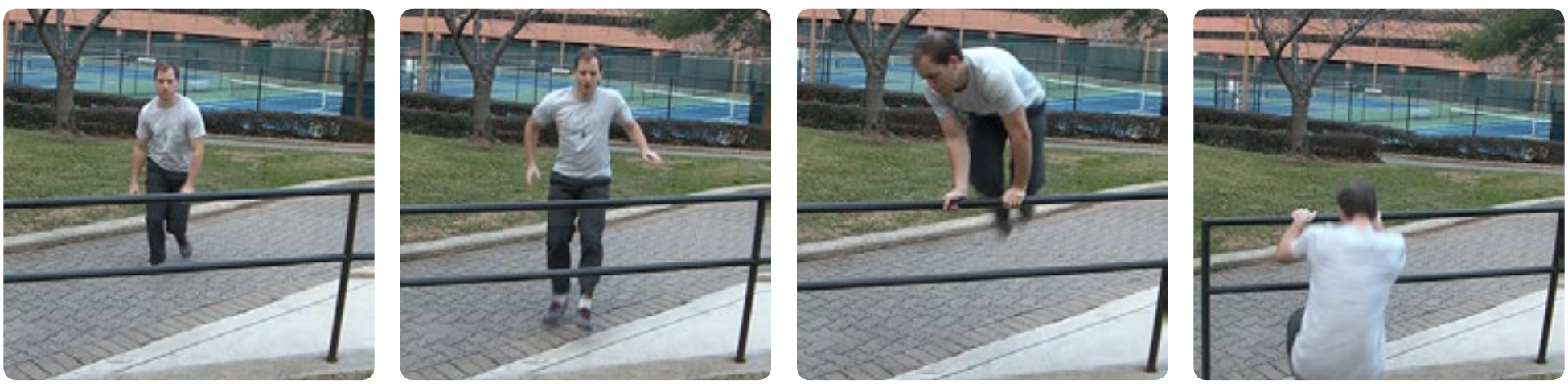
» Start position: Begin in the waist/mantle position. Your hands should be setup with one palm facing up (right) and one facing palms down (left).

» *Tip:* Point your thumbs in the direction you want to rotate towards. In this case towards the right.

» If the railing isn't too tall starting from a squat isn't necessary, but I prefer to use it to make sure I clear the railing cleanly.

1. From the squat pull yourself straight up and jump at the same time.
2. As you're leaving the ground do the following:
   a. Turn your head and look down at your landing zone.
   b. Pick up your left (palms down) hand.
   c. Tuck your knees to your chest and pull your hips to the left.
3. When your rotation clears you past the rail re-grab the railing with the left (palm down) hand.
4. Untuck and extend your legs in preparation to land.

Turn Vault (Progression 4)



Background

Progression 4 is for executing turn vaults from a running approach. The technique is almost identical to how you did progression 3, but a few extra pieces are needed to keep the technique accurate. A running approach gives you a lot of forward momentum which can cause you to swing out wide and miss your target.

Technique

1. Begin with a small running approach, 3-5 steps is okay. Choose your takeoff point before you start the technique.

2. Plant your lead foot at the takeoff point and set the other foot next to it. Begin to jump straight up.

a. At the same time grab the railing with both hands. Same palms up/palms down setup with thumbs pointing to the right.

3. As the jump begins do the following.

a. Turn your head and look down at your landing zone.

b. Pick up your left (palms down) hand.

c. Tuck your knees to your chest and push your hips to your left.

4. When your rotation clears you past the rail re-grab the railing with the left (palm down) hand.

5. Untuck and extend your legs in preparation to land.

1-Handed & Speed Vaults

Takeoff Distance

Clearing the hips (1)

Clearing the hips (2)

Running exit

Background

One-handed vault variations are possibly the most common vault techniques used in Parkour. The one-handed safety vault, also called the step vault, offers an excellent compromise between speed and control. The speed vault hurdles you past the obstacle quickly, allowing you to immediately continue your run without a big landing or roll.

In practice I find that I use the one-handed safety more often than the speed vault. Lightly tapping your foot on top of the obstacle as you clear over requires less power, but still keeps most of your speed.

Common Technique Elements

» **Starting Position:** All the one-handed vaults are mirrored. If you are jumping off your right foot, then your right hand plants on the obstacle. With your left foot you plant your left hand.

» **Takeoff Distance:** To safely clear your knees and legs over the obstacle you should take off about a stride and a half away from the obstacle at minimum. With enough speed and power it's possible to take off from even further away.

» **Clearing the hips and legs:** Driving the hips up and to the side allows your lower body to cleanly pass over the obstacle. You always drive them to the opposite side of your planted hand (right hand = drive to the left, left hand = drive to the right).

1H Step Vault (Progression 1)

Background

This is almost the same as the two-handed step vault (progressions 2/3) except with one hand. I favor this technique over the two-handed step vault unless I do not completely trust the stability of the railing or if it's particularly wet outside.

Technique

» **Start position:** One to two steps away from the obstacle.

» When you plant your foot on top of the wall, place it wider than you would with the two-handed safety vault.

1. Plant and load your right foot where you want to take off.

2. Place your right hand on the obstacle.

3. Jump off the right foot and bring the left foot on top of the obstacle.

4. Pushing through the left foot push your hips up and back to clear your right, trailing, leg past the wall.

5. Drive your hips and right leg forward over the wall and push off the wall to create extra distance.

6. Step/run out of the landing.

1H Step Vault (Progression 2)

Background

If I could use only one vault ever, this would be the one. The one-handed step vault is versatile and the most widely applicable vaulting technique. You can use this vault from most angles, from drops or bigger jumps, and it's possible to change directions during the vault if needed as well.

Technique

» When you tap your foot on the wall it should be further away from the rest of your body than in the two-handed safety vault. The closer you get to horizontal the better.

» Gradually tap your foot more lightly on top with each attempt, until you're barely grazing it.

1. Start with a small running approach, jump off your right foot as you reach the obstacle and plant your right hand on top of the wall.

2. As you takeoff jump do the following:

a. Drive your hips and left leg as high to the other side as possible.

b. Pull the knee of your right foot towards your chest.

3. Lightly tap your opposite foot on top of the wall with your left foot.

4. Drive your hips and right leg forward over the wall and push off the wall to create extra distance.

5. Step/run out of the landing.

Speed Vault



Background

Speed vaults don't differ much from the one-handed step vault, they are just much more explosive. The technique is similar to hurdling, but we get to use our hands to make the move more efficient. The speed vault is best used from a good run. You could use the technique with almost no run up, but the benefits are lost when you have no extra momentum.

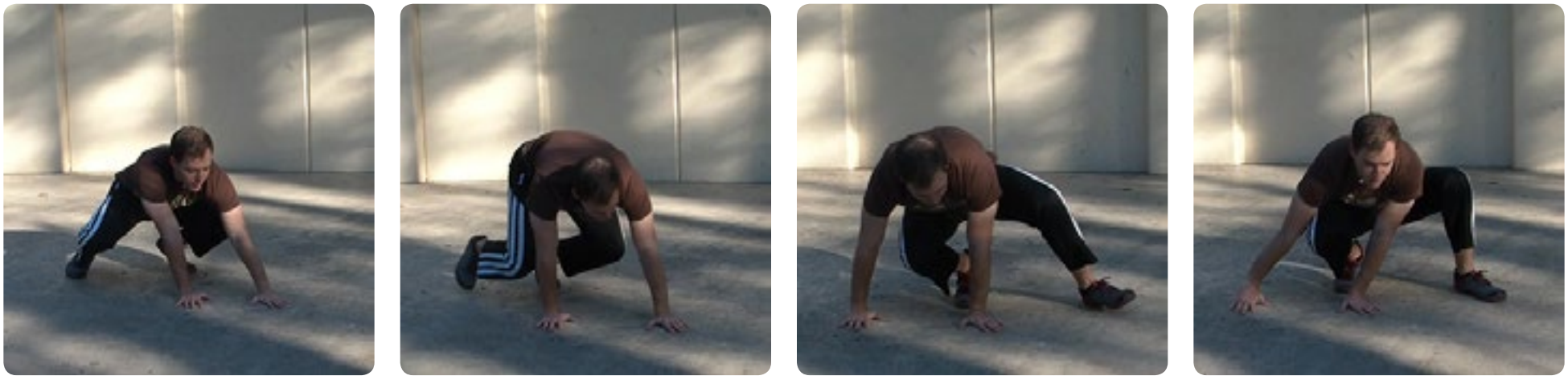
Technique

» The more horizontal your body, legs in particular, as you cross over the obstacle the better.

» A good speed vault is all about committing to the jump and pushing as hard as you can.

1. Start with a running approach (no need for a sprint).
2. Plant your right foot 1.5 or more strides away from the obstacle and jump.
3. As you takeoff do the following:
   a. Plant your right hand on the wall.
   b. Drive both legs up to the opposite side as high as possible.
4. As you clear the obstacle pull the right leg down and reach for the ground.
5. Land and carry into a run.

Gorilla Gait



Background & Setup

Gorilla gait looks like a mixture between the cat crawl and side monkey. Gorilla is the fastest and most versatile of the crawls covered in this course. While it's ideal for moving quickly forwards or backwards, you can move in all directions with it, unlike the cat and side monkey QMs. Downside? It's way more tiring.

Gorilla gait is extra useful for staying low while transitioning to a lower level. We'll be integrating it with level transitions later.

Technique

» **Start position:** Split squat stance. Front foot is flat on the ground and the rear foot has the heel up.

» The arms should always be off to the side (nearer the rear leg). In this case the right side.

» To move at angles reach your arms in the direction you want to go. To reverse the gorilla, just like the cat, you will need to push from the shoulders first.

1. Reach both hands forward, with the same pattern as the side monkey. Rear (left) hand first, then front (right) hand reaches just in front of the left hand.

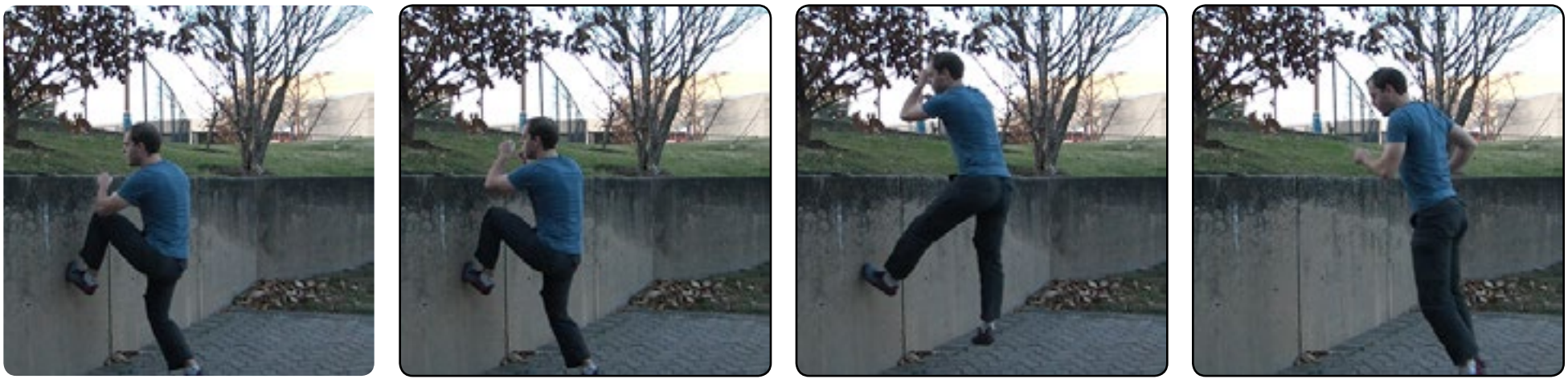
2. Shift weight onto your hands and jump while pulling yourself forward with your shoulders.

3. Carry the momentum forward until your right leg is near your arms.

4. Shift your weight forward towards the left leg while bringing the arms forwards again (step #1).

5. Repeat.

Pop Vault



A drill to practice foot positioning and driving into the wall.

Background

When you have some momentum from a run it doesn't make much sense to do an arm jump or climb-up on a low wall, especially if there is no gap to jump. The pop vault allows you to convert your forward momentum from a running approach into vertical momentum which will help you pop over walls.

The secret? A universal technique usually called the **"tac"** (originally from tic-tac, which is a lateral variation not covered in this course). The tac is just planting your foot on a wall and pushing into it to redirect your momentum upwards.

Common Technique Elements

» **Tac Foot Positioning:** Where you place your foot for the tac is critical. Too high and you'll just push yourself straight back. Too low and you'll slip. The ideal height, like arm jumps and arm hangs, is roughly level with your hips.

» **Push into the wall:** To prevent the foot slipping on the wall during the tac, think of pushing into and away from the wall instead of down. It may sound counterintuitive but your forward momentum from the run will keep you from *actually* pushing away from the wall.

» **Load the leg:** When planting the foot on the wall, you should load your leg so that the knee is bent at about a 90 degree angle. If the leg is completely straight as you start the jump you'll block your forward momentum. If the back of your leg is touching your heel you won't be able to drive yourself up at all.

» **Linked Steps:** Your last takeoff step matters just as much as your tac/planting foot on the wall for creating height in your pop vault. If you want a bigger pop vault, think about jumping higher too, as your hips will be higher off the ground, which allows you to tac from a higher position.

Pop Vault (Progression 1)

Background

At first to get used to the motion of the pop vault we'll be using the technique to help us mantle the wall. Just like the mantle technique from earlier, but faster. It's a bit of a weird idea at first, running at a wall. You'll get used to it, eventually. ;)

Bonus first progression: if you want to practice pushing off the wall, walk up to the wall, plant your foot at hip height and push into the wall and slightly down. You can use this to find the ideal height to plant your foot too.

Technique

1. Start a few steps away from the wall.

2. Begin with a small running approach.

3. As you get to the wall, bring your right foot up in front and plant it at hip height on the wall.

4. Push into the wall and back from the wall with the tac technique.

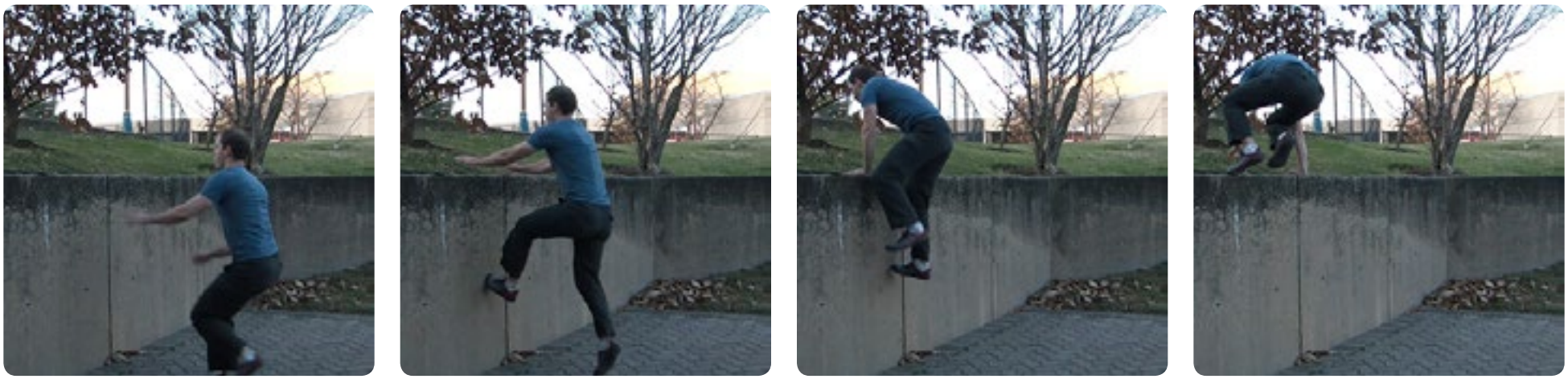
5. As your doing this carry your momentum forwards and plant both hands on the wall and push your chest forwards.

6. Lock out the arms to get into the waist position. ***Note:*** It's a good sign if you feel higher up in the waist position than you normally do.

7. Bring the opposite left on top of the wall, just like the mantle technique.

8. Finish the mantle technique to get on top.

Pop Vault (Progression 2)



Background

It's a total waste of momentum to stop in the waist (pun intended) position using the pop vault technique. For progression 2 we'll take all that momentum and use it to accelerate the mantling technique, skipping the waist position entirely.

Technique

1. Start a few steps away from the wall.

2. Begin with a small running approach.

3. As you get to the wall, bring your right foot up in front and plant it at hip height on the wall.

4. Push into the wall and back from the wall.

5. Do these two things simultaneously:

a. Carry your momentum forwards and plant both hands on the wall and push your chest forwards.

b. Bring your left (the trailing/rear leg) to the side and plant the foot on the wall.

6. The moment your foot makes contact with the wall clear your left hand as you pull the right foot on top of the wall.

Pop Vault (Progression 3)

Background

The technique from progression 2 is fast, but it only gets us on top of the wall. This final progression can clear you completely over the wall, if you want it to. The differences in technique aren't big, but like many other techniques you will need to generate much more power to make this work. Feel free to tap your outside foot on top as you clear over while practicing until you're completely confident in your ability to clear the wall.

Technique

» To improve clearance think of pushing your hips up and away from the wall when you do step #6a.

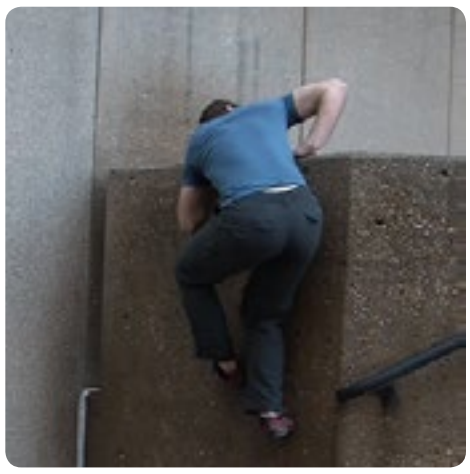
» As you develop better technique and power you can keep your legs closer to center when you clear them over the wall. It's possible to clear both knees between your arms, but it requires your hips to drive super high during the tac/push from the wall.

1. Begin with a moderate speed running approach.
2. Jump off your left foot you get 1-2 strides away from the wall.
3. Reach the right foot out in front, ready to make contact with the wall at hip height.
4. As your foot makes contact do the following:
   a. Push into the wall and back from the wall as hard as possible.
   b. Carry your momentum forwards and plant both hands on the wall and push your chest forwards.
   c. Pull your legs towards your left side and tuck your knees in tightly.
5. Pick up the left arm to clear space for your feet as they land on or beyond the wall.

Descent

Waist/Support

Beached Position



Rotation

Elbow Positioning

Background

Climbing on top of something is all well and good, but it's rather pointless if you can't get back down. Descents are the best technique for lowering yourself from a wall with control, so you can minimize or eliminate the drop. You can also use descents to position yourself for traversing or other techniques that begin from an arm hang.

The descent technique progressions are going to look exactly like the climb-up progressions, except now we're going down instead of up and slow instead of fast.

Common Technique Elements

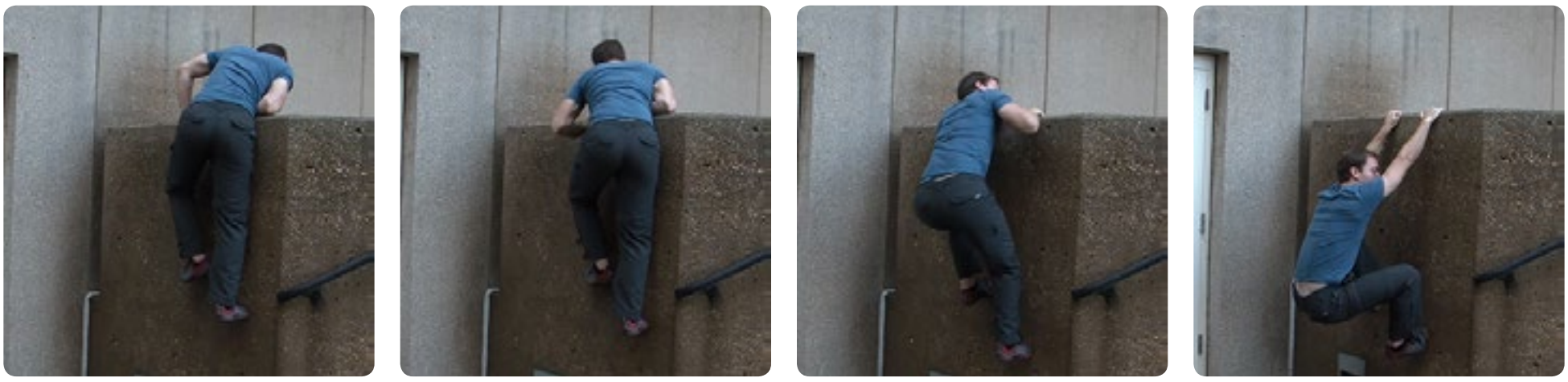
» **Start position:** Waist/Support

» **Feet:** To help further slow the descent keep your feet engaged with the wall and slide them down as you get lower. Your feet function like extra brakes, if you don't use them then you're relying entirely on your grip and arm strength to slow yourself.

» **Foot position:** While I said you should let your feet slide with you, keep them as close to hip level as you can. The goal of the descent is to land into the arm hang position at the bottom of the movement.

» **Rotation:** Elbow and one-arm descents both use rotation to lower the strength required to control the lowering speed.

Descent (Progression 1)



Background

Unlike the elbow climb-up, with the progression 1, the elbow descent, you will only be planting one elbow on the wall. The other hand will stay palms down at the edge of the wall. Elbow descents minimize the lowering speed, requiring far less strength so they won't tire you out as quickly.

The elbow descent can be done safely even when you're exhausted, so it's always a good technique to have available.

Technique

» **Start position:** Waist position or beached. Both hands palms down on the wall's edge. Both feet should be pressing against the wall.

» **I**n step #2 you should feel most of your weight shift to your elbow.

1. Move to the beached position and plant your right elbow parallel to the wall (right at the edge). You can also drop the elbow from a waist position, but it's harder to control.

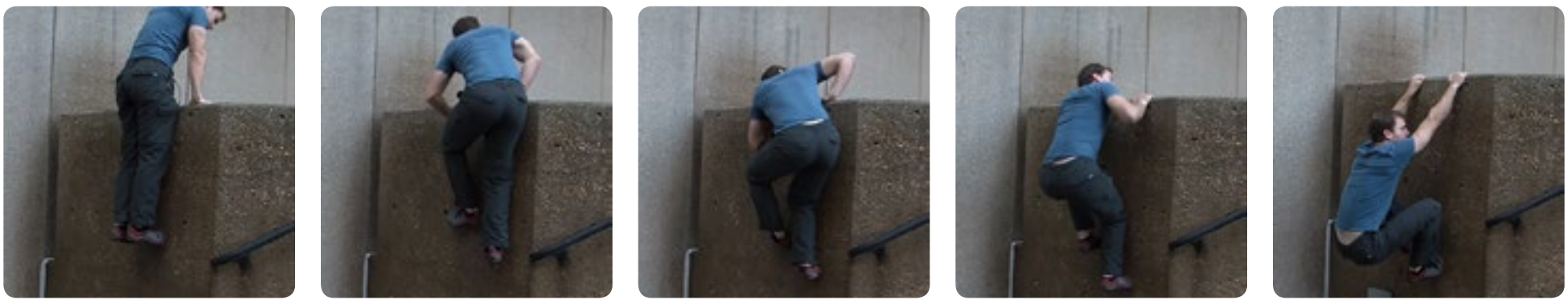
2. Rotate and open your body up to the left side. Your chest should point towards your left hand with the palm down on the wall. Rotate your knees out too and be sure to keep your feet pressed against the wall.

3. As you rotate take your left down arm and pull the elbow down it into the arm hang position (elbow pointing towards the ground).

4. Rotate back towards the center and pull the right elbow down into the arm hang position as well.

5. With control lower yourself into the full arm hang position.

Descent (Progression 2)



Background

I wish I had a good name for progression 2. For lack of a better name you can call them rotating descents. The movement starts straight from the waist position and you'll be rotating your body to one side to control the descent. The movement does take more strength from the arm nearest to the rotation, but it's still far less than progression 3 will require.

The rotating descent is my go-to technique out of the three; it's a good compromise between speed and control, especially because it doesn't tax the grip like progression 3 can.

Technique

» **Start position:** Waist position. Both hands palms down on the wall's edge. Both feet should be pressing against the wall.

1. Rotate and open your body up to the left side. Rotate your knees out to the left as well and be sure to keep your feet pressed against the wall.

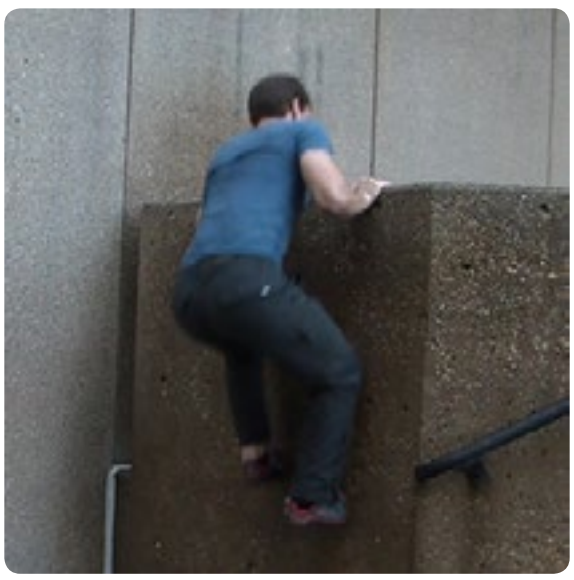
2. As you are rotating bend the right elbow to the side (so it points parallel to the wall) and use the same arm to control the lowering phase.

3. When you finish rotating take your left arm and drop it into the arm hang position (elbow pointing towards the ground).

4. Rotate back towards the center and pull the right elbow down into the arm hang position.

5. With control lower yourself into the full arm hang position.

Descent (Progression 3)



Background

Progression 3, the drop descent, is the fastest but least controlled of the descent technique variations. You are literally dropping yourself from the waist position straight into the arm hang. It's an intense technique. Because of the demands on grip and upper body strength I don't recommend practicing it regularly until much later in your training. I've included it so that you know the option exists if you genuinely need to get down immediately.

Technique

» **Start position:** Waist position. Both hands palms down on the wall's edge. Both feet should be pressing against the wall.

1. From the waist position drop your hips back and down, which will initiate a drop.

2. Keeping your elbows against your torso, resist the drop with your arms and shoulders as much as possible to slow the movement.

3. At the same time press your feet into the wall and let them slide down a little if necessary.

4. Stop in the fully extended arm hang position with your arms straight and your feet at about the same level as your hips.

Traverse

Background

Traversing is used to move laterally along walls while still in the arm hang position. The purpose of traversing is typically to move yourself into position for another technique or to a safe(r) spot to climb up or get off the wall. Traversing will be quite demanding on your grip strength and hands, especially when you're first practicing.

To develop better grip strength one of the easiest drills to do is to just hang on the wall for as long as possible. You can also reference the bonus video (available in the Udemy course) on grip training for some additional ideas.

Technique

» **Start position:** Start in an arm hang position. Shift the right foot out ahead of you. All your weight should be pushing directly into your left (rear) foot, positioned at hip level.

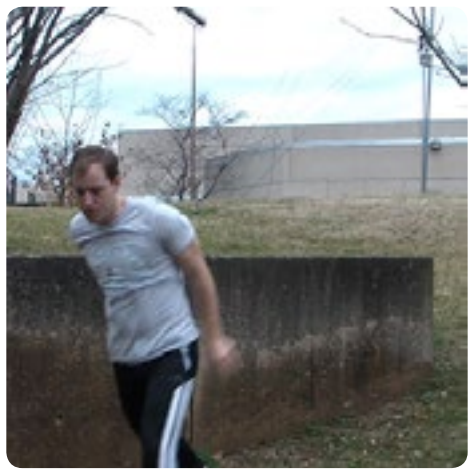
» Keep your hands moving forward with small 'steps' - it's less intense on the grip. Though, if you need to move fast then bigger reaches can be useful.

» If you traverse with your elbows bent (like a pull-up) it's much more tiring, but again, if you need to move quickly then that technique variation is superior.

1. Begin by shifting your right hand forward.
2. Once the right hand is back on the wall, shift the left hand towards the right hand.
3. Continue this pattern until both arms are near to the right leg.
4. All your weight should have shifted to the right leg (image 3) by this position.
5. Bring your left, trailing, leg back to center.
6. Reset back to the start position by shifting the right leg out in front again.
7. Repeat.

Sit-Out Level Transition



Background

Level transitions allow you to maintain the momentum of your run while dropping to a lower level. The purpose of level transition techniques is to drop your center of gravity as you're about to take a drop. The lower center of gravity lessens the drop and makes it easier to continue your run or roll out of the landing.

By now the sit-out technique itself should feel rather familiar. The sit-out level transition is an application of the sit-out to a drop. The technique is about the same, though we'll be combining some little pieces from the one-handed safety vault to make the movement more fluid.

Technique

» **Start position:** A few steps away from the wall/drop. Either at an angle or straight on, it doesn't matter.

» To get comfortable with the movement you can use two sub-progressions. In the first you sit on the wall after you use the sit-out technique. In the second you pause in the sit-out before pushing yourself forward off the wall.

» If you're approaching the wall at an angle plant the trail leg down. Either leg can work, but this tends to flow better.

1. Approach the wall and plant your right foot at the edge of the wall.

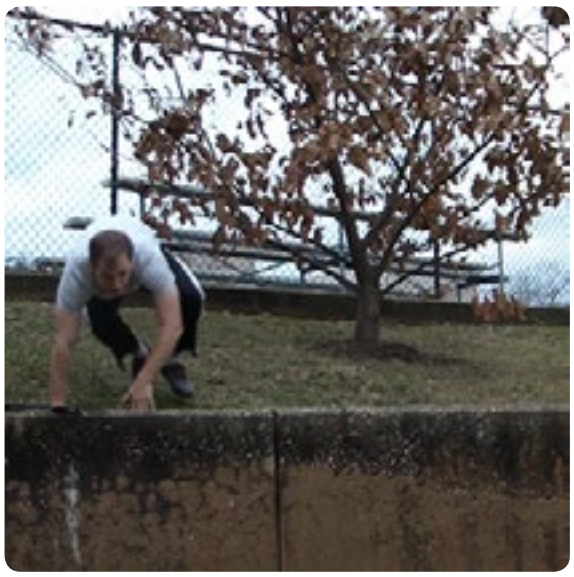
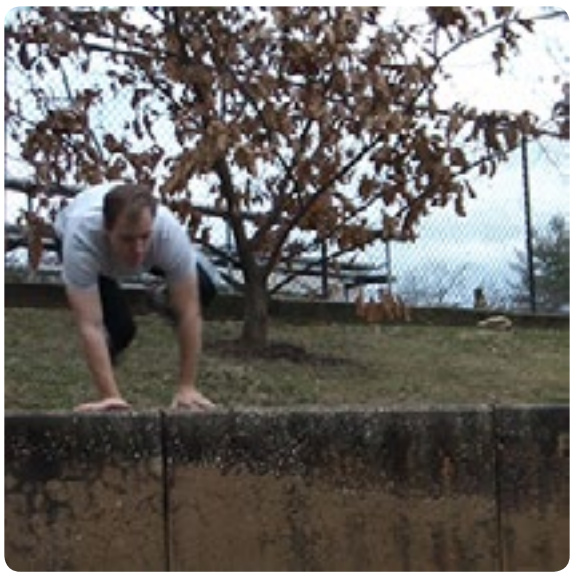
2. Drop straight down (almost like a single-leg squat) and extend your left hand forwards and plant it on the wall. Keep the elbow relaxed to avoid jarring the wrist.

3. As you're lowering swing and push the left leg forwards.

4. To clear the wall push off with both the right foot and left hand while driving your hips and left leg forwards.

5. Land into a run (if the drop isn't big) or a two foot landing.

Gorilla Gait Level Transition


Background

Level transitions allow you to maintain the momentum of your run while dropping to a lower level. The purpose of level transition techniques is to drop your center of gravity as you're about to take a drop. The lower center of gravity lessens the drop and makes it easier to continue your run or roll out of the landing.

The gorilla gait QM you learned earlier is also an excellent level transition technique. This QM is fast, so you can keep the momentum of your run. The move is useful for multiple small level transitions or big level transitions where you need to roll out.

Technique

» **Start position:** At least one full QM cycle's distance away from the wall.

» Like the sit-out you can progress the technique using the same two ideas. First use the gorilla gait level transition to move into a seated position on the wall. Second pause and use a safety tap, just like the sit-out.

1. Reach both hands forward, with the same pattern as the side monkey. Left hand first, then the right hand reaches just beyond the rear.

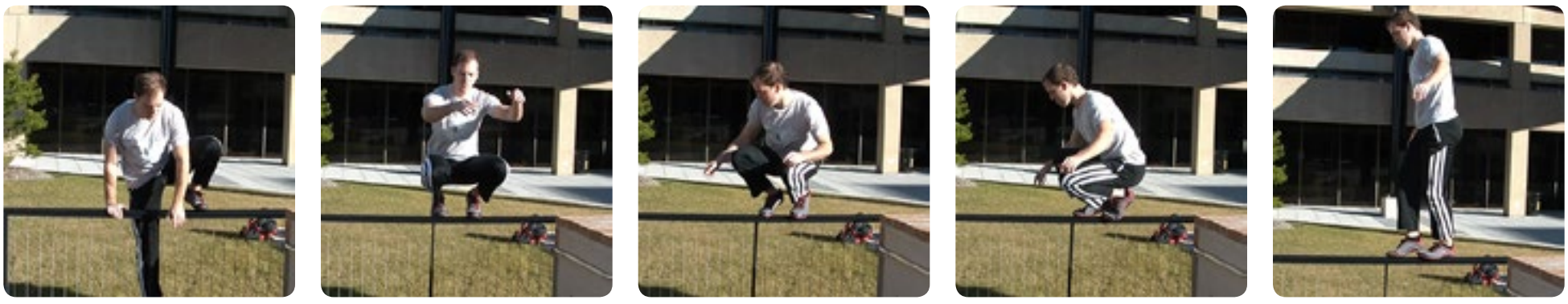
2. Shift weight onto your hands and jump while pulling yourself forward with your shoulders.

3. Clear your feet over the wall to the left of your arms, using a safety tap if desired.

4. Extend your feet out in preparation for a landing.

5. Execute a two-foot landing or a roll.

Getting on Rails (1)



Background

Rail balancing can't happen if you don't get on the rail in the first place. There are tons of ways to get onto rails, including taking advantage of the environment. Here is the first technique for getting on rails with control. The technique is almost the same as the mantle technique on railings, which will get you into a squat balance position. From the squat balance it's a simple combo of rotating 90 degrees and standing up.

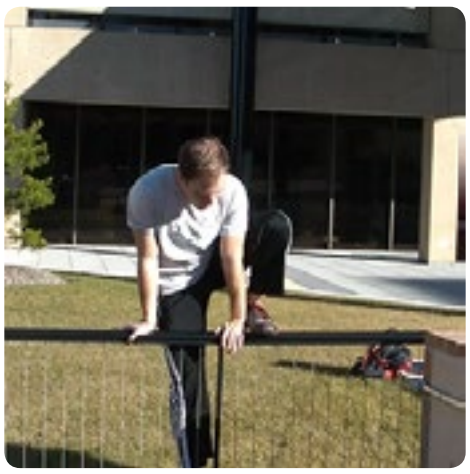
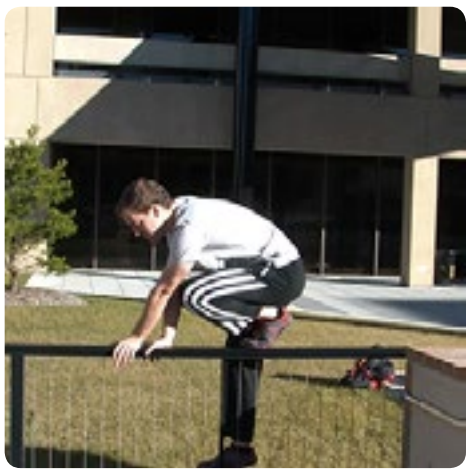
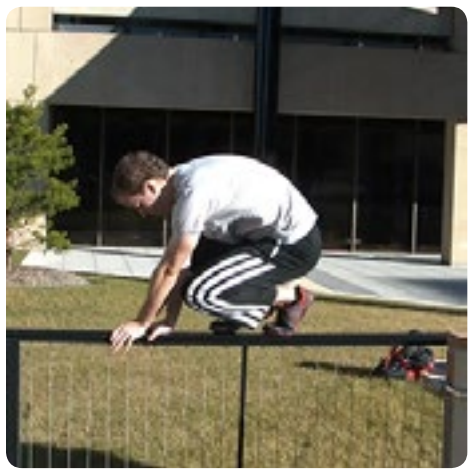
Technique

» **Start position:** Waist position.

» In the rail squat position keep your hands up in front to counter balance.

1. Pick one your left up to the left of your arms and bring it on top of the railing.
2. Raise your left hand off the railing.
3. Simultaneously:
   a. Push down with the left foot.
   b. Push your hips back as you pick the right, trailing, leg up
4. Get the right foot on top of the railing.
5. From the rail squat position do two things:
   a. Turn your head to look at the railing.
   b. Rotate both knees 90 degrees.
6. Once stable, stand up.

Getting on Rails (2)


Background

Rail balancing can't happen if you don't get on the rail in the first place. There are tons of ways to get onto rails, including taking advantage of the environment. Here is the second technique for getting on rails with control.

For this technique we're skipping the squat balance rotation entirely. You'll have your hands on the railing as you begin to stand up during the move, which may make it feel more secure than the first technique. The speed is about the same between the two techniques, so which you use is up to you. It is worth mentioning that the start position of this move is the same as the start position for cat balancing, which is covered later in this same section.

Technique

» **Start position:** Waist position.

» It might take some practice to feel the balance in step #4. You can experiment with distances between your hands and feet to find what is most stable for you.

1. From the waist position bring your right leg on top of the rail. Keep the foot close to the hands to make rotating easier.

2. Rotate to the left. Your knee foot will be parallel with the rail with the heel up.

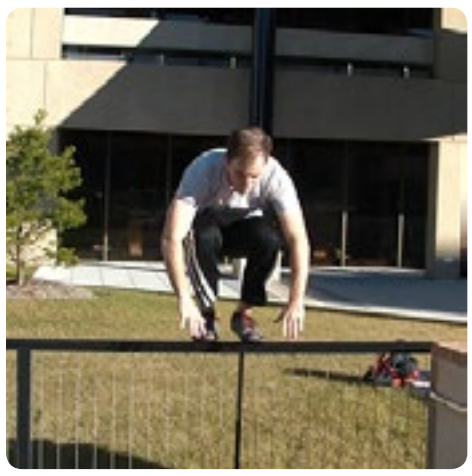
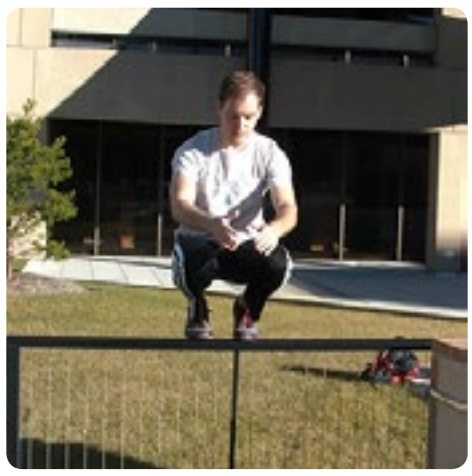
3. With both hands on the rail in front of you (keep some space between the hands and your right leg) slowly pick up your left foot.

4. Place your left foot between your hands and your right leg.

5. Once you're stable in this position, stand up.

Getting on Rails (3)



The rotation after image 4 is the same as in the first technique (page 66).

Background & Setup

Rail balancing can't happen if you don't get on the rail in the first place. There are tons of ways to get onto rails, including taking advantage of the environment. Here is the technique for getting on rails quickly.

You can think of this technique as a two-handed vault, except you intentionally stop on top of the railing instead of clearing over. As a rule of thumb you can use this technique on any railing which you can easily clear with a two-handed vault from standing. The more you can tuck your knees to your chest the easier the technique will be.

Technique

» **Start position:** Standing facing the railing, no more than a step away.

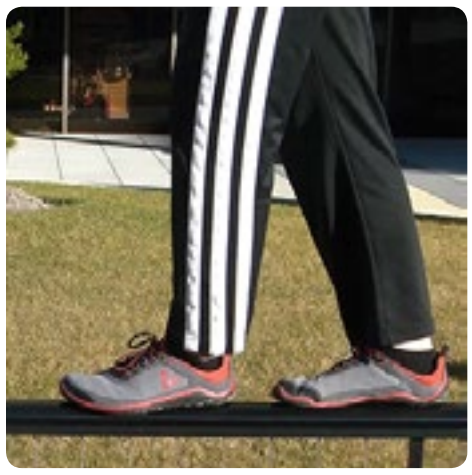
» Like the pop vault we're pulling both legs slightly to the side to get on top of the railing. As you practice more and become confident in the technique you can add more power. With enough power you'll be able to keep your knees between your hands during the technique.

1. Simultaneously jump and push down with your shoulders.
2. Drive both legs up to your right side.
3. As your feet get close to the railing pick up your right hand.
4. Land your feet on the railing, get stable, then take your left hand off the rail.
5. From the rail squat do the same as variation 1:
   a. Turn your head to look at the railing.
   b. Rotate your knees 90 degrees to face the railing.
6. Stand up.

Rail Balance

Straight Posture

Ball of the foot first



Heel comes down last

Use the free leg to counter balance

Background & Setup

Balancing upright seems simple, but it takes a frustrating amount of practice to develop. You're going to lose your balance and fall a lot while learning. The key to consistent balance is staying relaxed and keeping good posture. Each time you practice, try to take go one step further than you did the last time; anything more than that is awesome, but progress is progress.

As you get better at balancing you'll notice that you require less and less use of your arms and that it becomes much easier to recover your balance and return to walking forward.

Technique

» **Start position:** Standing on the rail/edge/whatever with either one or both feet.

» Personally I find that I'm more stable on one leg than two. For me the most reliable counter balance is bringing the free leg to the side (image 4).

» Upright posture is critical. Keep the back straight, shoulders back, and the head up. You can tuck your chin and look with just your eyes to see where your feet are.

» Keep the toes pointing forward along the railing.

» Counter balance (using your arms, free leg, and torso) as much as needed. As you progress the counter balancing should smooth out and feel less jerky.

1. Walk one foot forward, ball of the foot making contact with the railing first.
2. Roll the foot down towards the heel.
3. After the heel makes contact shift all your weight gradually from the rear foot to the front foot.
4. Repeat this cycle.

Cat Balance




Background & Setup

Cat balance is a challenging application of the cat crawl QM. The move can be done either across narrow walls or on railings. While the technique is more physically demanding than balancing upright across a narrow surface, the lower center of gravity makes it safer. Your hands are on the rail already to save you from a fall.

Most of the control comes from the wrists, instead of the ankles, which makes the movement feel quite strange. At first it's a good idea to get comfortable feeling the balance just in the start position without trying to move to acclimate yourself to the difference.

Technique

» **Start position:** Similar to the cat crawl (right leg forward and right hand back), but the elbow and knee aren't as close together. Both wrists should be rotated out so that the entire palm is touching the rail and the fingers are pointing to the side (perpendicular to the rail).

» Keep the knees above the rail and pointing forward.

» The back and hips should be level with the railing.

» Counter balancing is difficult, but it will come from the wrists and shoulders primarily.

1. Walk the right hand forward.

2. Bring the left leg up either at the same time, or shortly after you secure a new position with the hand.

3. Repeat the cycle on the opposite side and continue cycling through the movement.

Straight Underbar (Progression 1)

Background

There will be some situations where using a vault technique isn't an option, but you still need to travel past a bar, railing, or other similar obstacle. Underbars allow you to quickly go through, rather than over, bars and railings. The straight underbar is the best choice when approaching well...Straight on. The first two progressions here assume that you have a railing with a crossbar in the middle. If you don't (lucky) skip to progression 3.

For the first progression we'll be starting against the bar, in the waist position. The idea is to get a feel for how much space you need to clear both of your feet through the bar, and learn how to sweep your legs out to the side.

Technique

» **Start position**: Against the bar in a waist position.

» For the pull in #3 think of pulling your hands up while you keep them a couple of inches away from the chest. Don't pull your chest towards the bar.

1. From the waist position pull both legs, from the knee, to the right side enough to fit in between the railings.
2. Push both feet through to the railing to the other side and reach for the ground.
3. Lean back and pull the bar up until you've cleared through to the otherside.
4. Push/pull yourself into a standing position.

Straight Underbar (Progression 2)

Background

Progression 2 adds momentum to the underbar. We'll use a little safety tap (if you have a crossbar on your rail) to make the idea of jumping feet first through a railing feel less daunting. Again, if you don't have a crossbar on your railing then skip to progression 3.

Technique

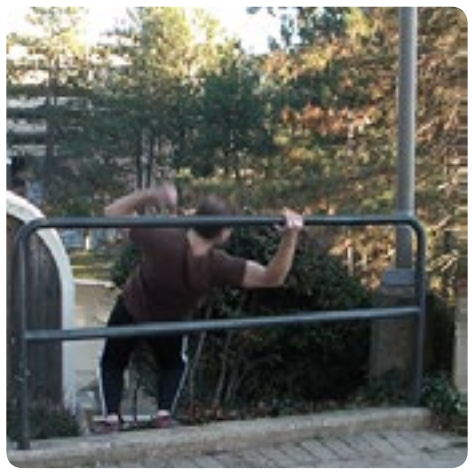
» **Start position:** 1-3 steps away from the railing.

» At first you can step onto the railing. As you gain confidence start to jump into the safety tap on the railing.

1. Approach the railing and take a small jump forwards.
2. Reach the right leg out in front (and a little to the side) to safety tap the railing.
3. As the right foot taps the railing bring the left leg up to the same side.
4. Push both feet through to the other side and reach for the ground.
5. Lean back and pull the bar up until you've cleared through to the otherside.
6. Push/pull yourself into a standing position.

Straight Underbar (Progression 3)



Background

This is the full speed progression. The trickiest part of this technique isn't the technique; it's the commitment to the jump. Slowing down or hesitating as you start the jump will wreck the move. To warm-up for the move practice progression 2.

If you skipped straight to progression 3 because you have no crossbar the precaution above doesn't apply. As long as you are pulling the bar during the movement you'll stay above the ground...unless the bar is literally two feet high.

Technique

» **Start position:** 3-5+ steps away from the railing.

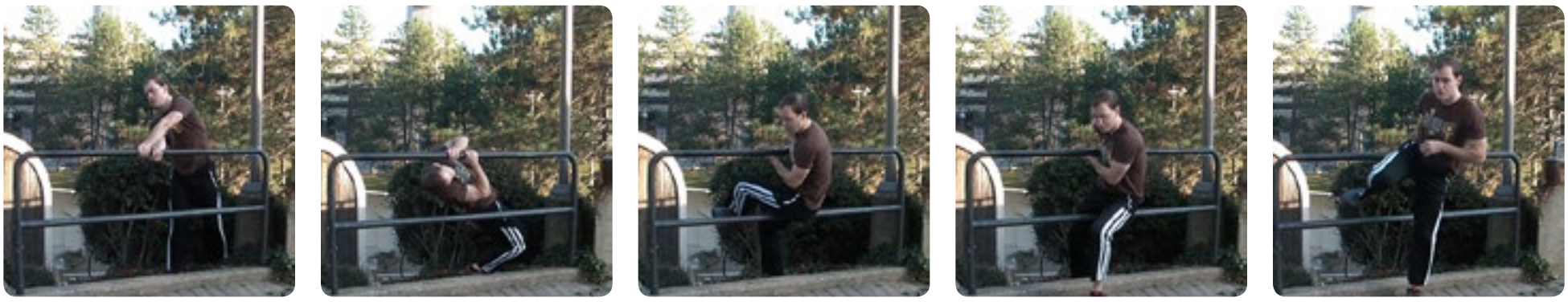
» As you start the jump it's okay if your feet angle to the side to clear the railing better. You'll be able to straighten them out as you commit more energy to the move.

» If you jump too high you will have to stop yourself mid-technique to clear your upper body through. It works, but it's much slower.

» Without a drop on the other side of the railing this technique will always feel a little slow on the exit unless it's a taller (chest height or higher) railing.

1. Approach the railing with a small run and jump (about a 1-1.5 strides away).
2. Quickly bring both legs straight in front of you to clear through the railing.
3. Grab the railing with both hands as soon as possible and lean back.
4. Drive both legs through (extra power if you can push your hips forwards too) as you pull yourself past the bar.
5. Push/pull yourself upright and continue on.

360 Underbar (Progression 1)



Background

When approaching a railing or bar at an angle the straight underbar doesn't work well. Instead the 360 underbar is the best option for quickly crossing under or through a railing if you are approaching at any sort of angle. The move can be confusing at first thanks to the combo of spinning and the hand positioning.

For this first progression we'll be splitting the movement into two pieces. This works best if you have a crossbar that splits the railing you're working with in half; if not you can still pause as you pass through the railing, but it makes less sense.

Technique

» Step #6 may feel confusing at first. Don't overthink it, just try to continue moving in the direction of the rotation.

1. Start facing the railing at an angle.
2. Grab the railing, palm up, with your left hand.
3. Take your right hand and grab just ahead of your left hand.
4. Dip your left shoulder down and rotate it towards the gap in the railing. Your back should be facing the ground as you are about to pass through.
5. Continue the rotation until you're sitting on the railing, facing the opposite direction.
6. Pick up and clear the right leg through the railing and step out.
7. Bring the left leg through the railing to complete the technique.

360 Underbar (Progression 2)

Background

For progression 2 we'll avoid stopping in the middle by controlling the rotation more precisely. The key difference here will be staying tight during the rotation by pulling yourself into the bar as you rotate through the railing. For now there isn't much more momentum in the movement, so the step through at the end may still feel disjointed.

Technique

» In step #4 play with continuing the rotation to make the first step out more fluid. Pick up the knee higher than you think it needs to go to give yourself plenty of space.

1. Start facing the railing at an angle.

2. Grab the railing, palm up, with your left hand.

3. Take your right hand and grab just ahead of your left hand.

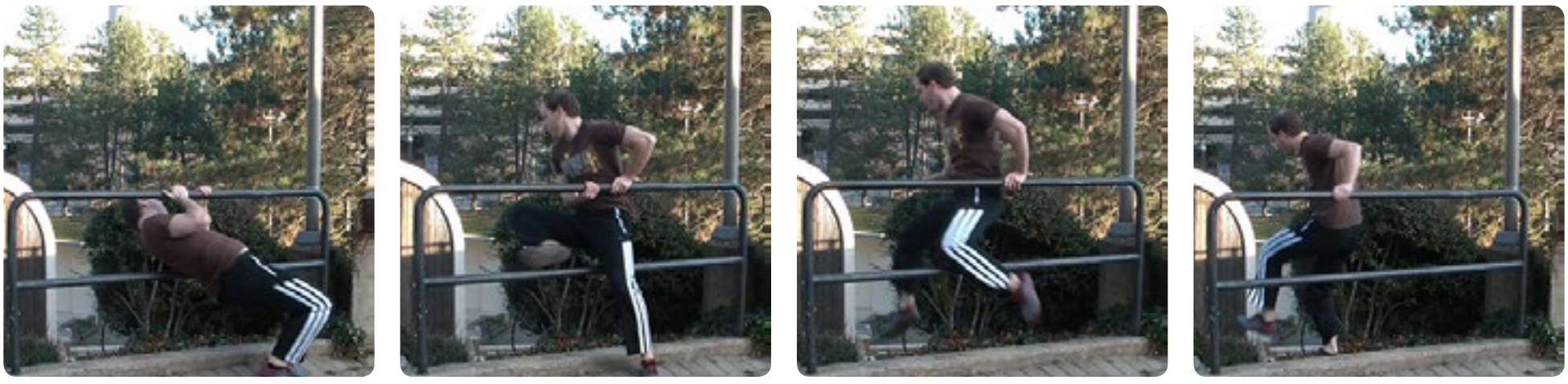
a. Dip your left shoulder down and rotate it towards the gap in the railing. Your back should be facing the ground as you are about to pass through.

b. As you begin the rotation pull both arms close to your chest to tighten the move.

4. As you're exiting on the other side of the rail, pick up and clear the right leg through the railing and step out.

5. Bring the left leg through the railing to complete the technique.

360 Underbar (Progression 3)



Background & Setup

In progression 3 we're going to make the 360 underbar one big fluid spin. By now the first half of the technique where you are rotating under the bar should feel smooth, but one extra piece needs to be added to do the same for the step out at the end.

Technique

» In step #4 play with continuing the rotation to make the first step out more fluid. Pick up the knee higher than you think it needs to go to give yourself plenty of space.

1. Start facing the railing at an angle.

2. Grab the railing, palm up, with your left hand.

3. Take your right hand and grab just ahead of your left hand.

a. Dip your left shoulder down and rotate it towards the gap in the railing. Your back should be facing the ground as you are about to pass through.

b. As you begin the rotation pull both arms close to your chest to tighten the move.

4. As you're exiting on the other side of the rail, pick up and clear the right leg through the railing.

a. When your right leg is about to touch the ground jump and push off the left leg.

5. Pull the left leg through as your lead foot hits the ground and step out to finish.

Section 8

Rolls out of Drops

Background & Setup

There isn't much different between the rolling technique you have already been practicing and applying it to dealing with rolls out of drops. The only major difference is that you spring yourself forward as you make contact with the ground to lengthen the roll and better absorb the impact of the landing. Without the spring forward you end up taking the full impact of the landing *then* rolling. Not terribly useful.

You'll find that this extension works whether you're landing out of a drop or just practicing rolls from a squat.

Technique

» You need a decent amount of forward momentum to make the spring forward work. If you're dropping straight down it's near impossible to do the technique well.

» Think of diving forward as your feet make contact with the ground.

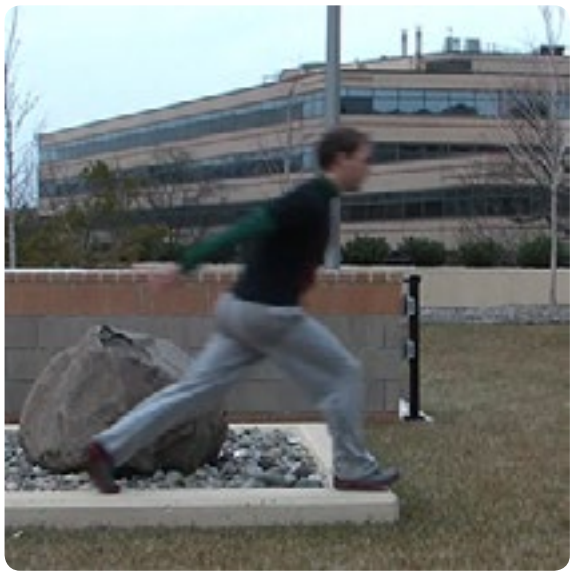
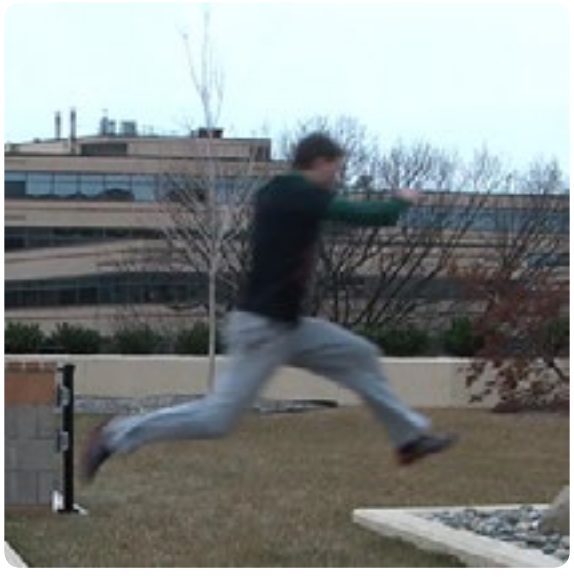
» Begin to practice these without any drop. Do a big forwards jump into a roll. As you get more comfortable you can start the rolls from a drop (I'd recommend max of 4ft) but still on a soft surface. Do not practice these on concrete.

1. Jump and begin to do a normal two foot landing, but let the forward momentum of your jump carry your upper body forwards.

2. The moment your feet make contact with the ground dive forward, reaching your arms ahead (same hand position as you did with rolls earlier) to initiate the roll.

3. The technique continues from here exactly the same as before (page 26).

Strides


Background & Setup

Strides are the best technique for stringing multiple (smaller) jumps together. You could theoretically do the same with broad jumps, or even running jumps, but maintaining the momentum is more difficult. The stride is superior because, unlike all other jumping techniques, you have more forward momentum due to the smaller jump arc. Keep the strides small, especially at first, as the movement requires a great deal of ankle strength and mobility to land well.

Technique

» **Start position:** Either from a running approach or standing can work.

» It can help to think of trying to swing and throw your leg forward to reach for your landing.

» Depending on the situation you can either land on one foot to string strides together, land with one foot and continue into a run, or join both feet in mid air to execute a precision landing.

1. Takeoff by jumping off the right foot.

2. At the same time swing your left leg and hip straight forward. Swing the right (takeoff leg side's) arm forward while as you takeoff.

3. Reach for the landing with your left foot. To continue into another stride repeat steps 1 & 2 on the opposite side immediately as you make contact with the ground.

Split Jump




Background & Setup

The split jump itself isn't that useful of a technique, since you get the same or better distance from the broad jump. However, the split jump is useful for locking in the mechanics of a running jump without the added complexity of a running approach and takeoff.

Technique

» **Start position**: Right foot forward and left foot back, with a hip width stance.

» In most situations a precision landing is ideal, but you can also use a slap out or running landing if the situation warrants it as well.

1. Lean your torso back as far as comfortable, loading the left leg. The right foot should roll back until only the heel is making contact with the ground (image 1).

2. Simultaneously do the following:

a. Drive your chest forwards over your right leg.

b. Swing your arms back behind you.

c. Shift all your weight onto the right leg, bending and loading the knee.

3. For the takeoff phase do the following:

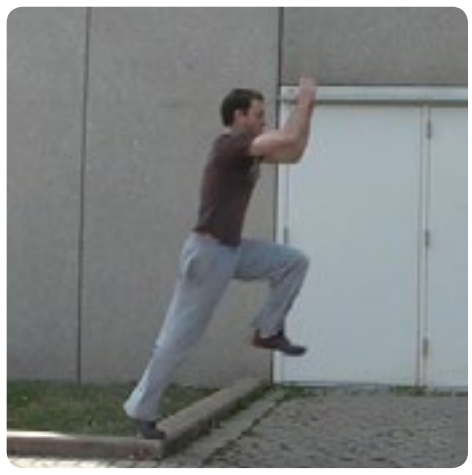
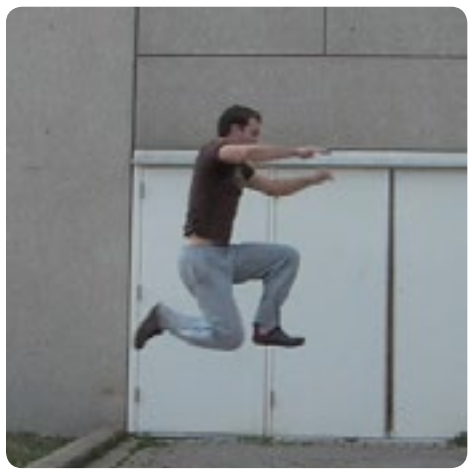
a. Jump out of the right leg.

b. Swing your arms up and forwards aggressively.

c. Drive your left leg forwards and up into the tucked (coil) position.

4. Bring both feet together in mid-air and then extend out to reach for your landing as you pass the apex of your jump. Be sure to pull your arms down to your sides too.

Running Jump


Background & Setup

If you need to cover huge distances or jump without stopping first, the running jump is the ideal choice. Out of all jumping techniques the running jump can get you the greatest distance. The downside is that with greater power it becomes more challenging to develop precise and controlled landings. Start rather small with running jumps and avoid trying for maximum distance until much later in your training.

Technique

» The technique here is effectively the same as the split jump, except now you have to worry about footwork and timing to make good use of the running momentum.

» Due to the amount of momentum involved the arm swing forward as you land may need to be super quick and big in order to keep you on balance.

1. From a run plant your right foot and load the leg.

2. As you are loading the right leg do the following things simultaneously:

a. Push out of the right leg and takeoff.

b. Swing the left leg and arms forwards and up as hard as you can.

c. Drive your chest forwards as you takeoff.

3. In mid-air bring both feet to your chest (coil) and pull your arms down to your sides, or even behind you (image 4).

4. Once past the apex of the jump reach your legs out towards your landing.

About the Author

Hiya, I'm Sean Rogers, and thanks for reading my guide. I hope you found it helpful! Have any thoughts/comments/feedback? Send 'em my way: sean@playeverywhere.co

I'm terrible at brevity, but here goes. I'm a computer geek turned movement teacher and coach. I began this journey when I started practicing the martial art, To-Shin-Do Ninjutsu, in 2005. In a quest to improve my "ninjaness" I discovered Parkour and natural movement in 2009. When I began practicing Parkour all I wanted to become was freakishly good at running way — hey now, don't give me that look, avoiding danger may not be brave, but it sure is smart — and I saw Parkour as the solution.

I expected Parkour to simply supplement my martial arts training, instead it grabbed me and has kept me captivated for the past four+ years. My deepening obesssion with Parkour lead to me begin coaching in 2011 and I've been teaching a mixture of Parkour, martial arts, and other natural movement skills since then. As of now I run my own little project, Play Everywhere, with the goal of teaching how to move and play anywhere, anytime.

Aside from the above I write, make videos, dance, make horrible sketches, and travel whenever the opportunity presents itself. I must have been a squirrel in another life.