

## THE HIPS DON'T LIE

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**By Neil O'Connor** Powerful blocks and punches in karate are generated by turning the body and rotating the hips in unison. When delivering a punch or blocking, a smooth and level turn of the hips is essential to ensure the effective application of power. You cannot throw an effective punch or execute an effective block with arm and shoulder strength alone.

The hips are a crucial, yet often neglected part of many peoples karate techniques. Hip rotation adds power to the upper body, and is therefore essential for strong blocks and punches. The hips proximity to the body's centre of gravity make them the foundation of strong, stable movements, good balance and proper form. A karateka cannot move smoothly, quickly, or powerfully if the hips are passive (inactive).

Remember to:"block with your hips," "punch with your hips," and "kick from your hips."

A given amount of hip rotation results in a much larger motion of the extremities of the body. Your abdominal muscles at the side play a major role in turning the hips, but the thigh muscles will also contribute to smooth and powerful hip movements. To increase the power and speed of a punch, simply turn the hips faster. Simply punching with no hip rotation is pointless and powerless.

Constant training will produce a sharp, snappy hip rotation. The turn of the hips produces the driving power necessary for strong technique. Therefore, a great deal of practice must go into producing good hip movements, even at the expense of practice in arm movements.

Constant practice in the correct method is essential. Persevere in spite of the monotony of this practice. Learn the theory because this is the foundation of your karate.