

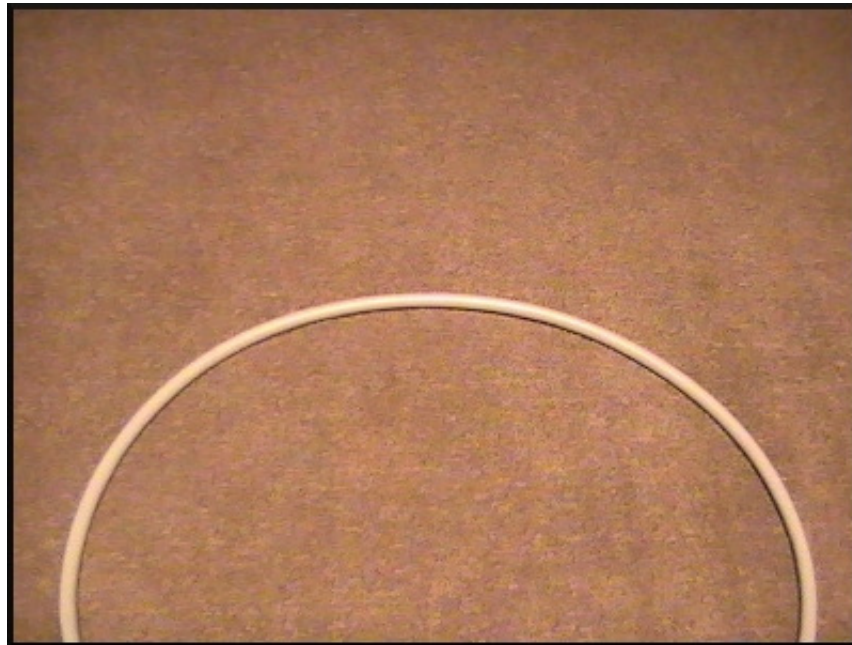
The JKD Outside Circle Step

by Kip Brockett

In this article, we're going to look at the basic building blocks of the JKD Outside Circular Step. I'm going to give you step-by-step instructions to this Jeet Kune Do footwork pattern. Even if you're new to JKD, this should get you started.

Note: When I refer to the "Outside" step, I'm talking about the outside perimeter of your stance. The outside will be towards your backside. If you're in a right lead, this will be stepping to your right. Left if you're in a left lead. If an opponent were to step towards the backside of your stance, they would be considered to be on the outside of your stance.

You can use a variety of training aids to help practice the circular footwork. I'm using a cut piece of garden hose in the examples below. (See picture #1)



Picture #1

Water Hose for Training JKD Footwork

All you need is something to form a semi-circle or complete circle.

The JKD Outside Circle Step

Here are some examples you could use:

- * Chalk (simply draw it on the floor)
- * Hula Hoop
- * Jump Rope
- * Rope or String
- * Duct Tape
- * Basketball Court (Free Throw Line)

You don't have to use a training aid, but I feel it's very useful in the beginning. It also helps to work the finer or more precise movements involved with this footwork.

To begin, we'll start in our JKD stance at the center of our half circle, as seen in picture #2. (More on variations of the stance in articles to come.)

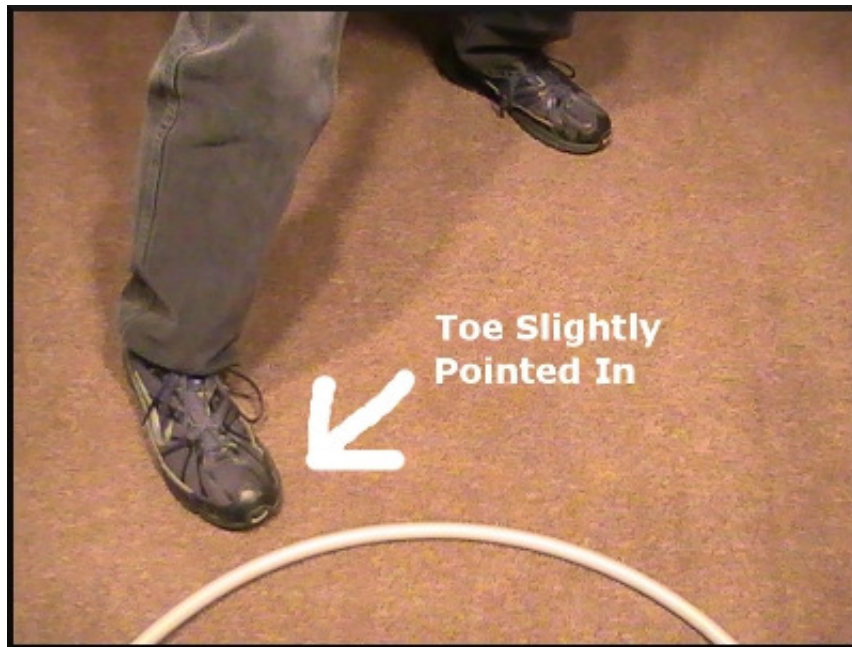
From this starting position we will:

1. Take a short step to the outside with your front foot.
(See picture #3)
2. Bring your rear foot around to your outside, regaining your stance.
(See picture #4)



Picture #2

Starting Position for JKD Outside Circle Step



Picture #3

Front Foot Angles on Outside Circle Step



Picture #4

Re-Alignment of Stance After Circle Step

Pretty simple, right?

Yes, it is simple. But simple doesn't always mean easy, now does it?

Let's look at some of the details we need to pay attention to in each of the 2 steps.

1.) Take a short step to the outside with your front foot.

When taking this initial step, you'll need to turn your toe slightly inwards in order to regain your stance alignment. As you can see from picture #3, this is not an exaggerated move. The angle of the foot will be determined by the length of this first step. The larger the step, the greater the angle.

This is done to insure that your alignment will be correct when the rear leg is brought around.

Stay on the line for training purposes.

2.) Bring your rear foot around to your outside, regaining your stance.

Your rear leg should travel approximately 2 times the distance you stepped with your front foot.

For example, if you stepped approximately 3 inches with your front foot, you will step approximately 6 inches with your rear foot.

This should re-establish your stance alignment. (See picture #4)

If it doesn't re-establish your alignment, then you need to adjust the distance to correct for this. After enough practice, you'll be able to feel the correct distance needed to step with the rear foot to regain your alignment.

Experiment with different distances. But don't get carried away. Too large a step with the front foot will only slow you down. It's usually better to make several smaller steps than one large step. The large step puts you out of balance for a significant length of time. (See picture #5)



Picture #5

Ungainly Step Puts You Out of Balance

When you begin, I suggest that you start by stepping first with the front foot, then the rear foot. A 2 step or 2 count movement.

Once you are comfortable with this, move on to a more realistic one.

You should aim to practice this footwork by pushing off the rear foot first. When you do it this way, you'll need to already be comfortable regaining your stance. Everything is done while in motion and in the air.

*"You pivot as your foot is off the ground.
Then you step down."*

Jeet Kune Do: The Arsenal of Self-Expression by Teri Tom, pg 48.

I'm not saying that you'll never use the stepping version of this footwork. But one weakness of stepping is that it leaves you exposed for a brief moment.

If you are safely at a distance from an attack, then this isn't a big deal. But I would suggest that you not step while in range of an attack. Bad things could happen! You should push off the rear foot in this situation.

So the sequence of the push stepping version is this:

1. Lean slightly to the outside to create momentum by using your bodyweight to start the movement.
2. Push off with the rear foot to the outside.
3. Lift your front foot and turn your toe slightly inward before it touches down.
4. As your front foot lands, swing your rear foot around to regain your stance.

Once you feel comfortable with both versions, start combining them with your shadowboxing. Imagine your opponent coming at you with an attack. You circle out of the line of attack, while staying in range to counterattack.

And finally, incorporate this footwork into your sparring. You'll learn very quickly how to judge the correct distance and execute with the correct timing.

Take your time. Learn the footwork exactly before trying it in a live situation. Always check your stance alignment. If you find you are swinging the rear leg around too far, slow it down and correct.

Don't continue to practice bad habits!

So what we've covered here is a very basic way to train the circle step to the outside. I've given you some ideas on training aids as well as some particular details to pay attention to.

I will cover variations to this footwork in another article, as well as some additional ways to train it.

If you have any questions or comments, I'd love to hear from you! Go to the "Shout Out!" form and submit them. I'll post your questions/comments along with any comments I have for you.

Coming soon!!!

"The JKD Inside Circle Step"

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