

# Innate Motion Fitness

The Movement Within

---

## 5 B-BOY SCENE FALLACIES THAT EVERYONE FOLLOWS

BY MATT AVILA, CES

### Warm Up

New ideas, training methods, and trends come in and out of the b-boy community every year. Some ideas come in only to quickly leave and some ideas stay to make their place in the culture. However just because an idea has an established place in the community, doesn't mean that it is the best way. In the 11 years that I have been training as a b-boy, I have come across popular ideas that have become consistent dialogues in the scene. Unfortunately following some of these popular ideas can actually hold back your development in this art form. Here are my top 5 popular fallacies in the b-boy community that I believe you should never follow.

#### **1. You must master foundation like footwork and toprocks before beginning to learn power moves and tricks**

Standard b-boy learning protocol dictates that you must master toprock, footwork, and freezes before learning tricks and power. But why? Why MUST you learn six-steps before backspins? Why do you HAVE to learn CC's before beginning to train flares? Don't buy into the idea that there is a correct/incorrect way to progress your skills. It completely depends on your goals and what you ultimately want to gain from your training. If you only want to focus on power moves and tricks then don't let anyone tell you that you are wrong for only training them and not training footwork. If you only want to focus on toprocks and footwork then don't let anyone put you down for not being able to do flares. It is your dance and your decision.

However it is my personal belief that it is best to be able to do both fundamental techniques like footwork and power moves/tricks. If being able to do both is your goal then you should never wait to begin learning power moves/tricks in order to first learn basic footwork. It would serve you much better to begin learning power moves/tricks as early as possible. Having a greater variety of moves early on will allow you to perform better both creatively and competitively later in your career because you will have a greater variety of moves for new transitions, new variations, and entirely new movements. Power moves/tricks also take a significant amount of time to develop so the earlier that you start the better off you will be. Starting early can mean the difference between having clean basic power move transitions after 5 years of training vs just beginning to learn flares at 5 years of training. So if you wish to one day have high level power moves, it is best to begin training as early as possible.

The “foundation before power” mantra most likely came from the idea that foundational movements like footwork were considered “beginner” and power moves/tricks were considered “advanced”. But power moves and tricks have their own set of foundational movements that would be considered “beginner”. For example the foundational movements for a windmill would be wind-ups, back spins, and coin drops; each of these are completely level appropriate for a beginning b-boy, even if he has not fully mastered toprocking or footwork. A beginning b-boy can start learning power moves as early as day 1, as long as they are learning the correct progression for the move and working within their capacity.

I am not advocating that you should begin learning power/tricks before footwork and toprocks. You should learn both at the same time. I am simply saying that you should not learn one at the expense of the other.

## **2. You should only dance to break-beats**

Break-beats are an important part of b-boy culture. But exclusively dancing to breaks will only hold you back as a dancer. So many times I have seen talented b-boys who only dance to break beats fall apart when a different type of music is played. Suddenly their swaggin toprocks are as sturdy as a newborn baby deer trying to walk across a frozen lake. This is because they have gotten so used to the tempos and rhythms of breaks that anything outside of that style of music feels too foreign to dance to.

Avoiding this situation is easy: simply mix up the types of music and the tempos when you practice. Dance to Rock and Hip-hop. Play Immortal Technique and Drake. By continually challenging yourself with a wide range of music you will become a well rounded dancer.

Furthermore dance events outside of the b-boy scene rarely play breaks or anything that would be considered “b-boy music”. Don’t be the one sitting on the sidelines of a cypher because you can’t catch the groove of an R&B song or a club hit.

## **3. You will become too bulky to break if you lift weights**

Unfortunately there is an anti-weightlifting mentality in not only the b-boy community but in the entire movement art community. While there is no way to know where this terrible piece of training “wisdom” came from, we can be sure that following this advice can hinder your progress. The truth is, you won’t gain the bulk of a body builder just by lifting weights. Gaining that kind of size takes a very specific combination of training frequencies, weight loads/ reps, and diet. You would not follow that combination for b-boy training, hence you would not gain the size.

Weight lifting can actually help you build tremendous strength, prevent injuries, and take your fitness to the next level without gaining much size. When Roxrite won Red Bull BC One in 2013 he was actually working with a personal trainer who designed a training regimen that to prepare him for the event. While his program wasn’t 100% weight lifting, it did incorporate weights into the program to help improve his conditioning. We see other athletes that are known to be lean and fast that use weights in their training: Manny Pacquiao, Usain Bolt, and many NFL running backs are some

examples. Again, notice that none of those athletes are built like bodybuilders. They are literally some of the leanest, fastest, and most explosive athletes in the world.

Don't be fooled into thinking that you will swell up like a bodybuilder from merely touching a weight; rather, they can enhance your training when done correctly. The real message here is never to shun a method of training, instead learn as much as you can about schools of thought outside of the breaking scene and you will be amazed at some of the things that you find that will help you on your movement journey.

#### **4. You have to practice hard every single day to improve**

Go hard or go home right? No pain no gain? Following this type of advice is the fastest way to a short career. Yes it is important to go train diligently. Yes it is important to consistently try to push past your limits and improve. Yes it is definitely important to give 110% at practice. But going hard every day will have adverse effects on your body.

Despite popular belief I don't think that b-boying has a high danger for traumatic injuries. Obviously there are occasionally stunts performed that could really mess someone up but rarely do we see someone need to be rushed to the hospital because of an injury. At the worst I have seen shoulder subluxations happen during activity but I have never seen injuries like a tib/fib compound fracture or a spinal cord injury like in sports such as football. While I'm sure it's happened somewhere at sometime I believe those cases are the exceptions and not the rule.

B-boys should be more worried about repetitive stress injuries. These are injuries that are caused by the consistent wear-and-tear on the body's tissues from an activity. Have you ever had wrist pain that began as just a minor discomfort but progressed to the point where it began to interfere with training? It is those kinds of injuries that mostly keep b-boys off the floor.

For optimal training, the body needs ample time to rest and recover. Gains are not made during the actual activity of training; the opposite is actually true. When you train you are breaking down tissues. Your muscles, tendons, and ligaments are all occurring tiny injuries that are referred to as "micro traumas". When the body heals these micro traumas, the tissues are built back stronger and better adapted to the stresses that were placed on them. This is what you would consider "gains". But in order to heal itself the body needs to rest, recover and not train. Then after you recover you begin the cycle over again with training. Repeating this process is how you consistently make gains. The keystone of the whole process is allowing the body time to recover. For maximum results from training be sure to incorporate adequate amounts of recovery time.

#### **5. Becoming a b-boy will get you girls and bring you status**

This is a popular thought, especially for b-boys who are just getting into the game. Unfortunately for us all...this isn't true, at least not at first. When you're first starting out, you don't have moves like headspins and flips to impress crowds (or girls). All you have to work with is an arsenal full of choppy footwork and awkward toplocks. I like to equate being a beginning b-boy to being a beginning rapper

who's trying to make it big. At first you're getting burned in cyphers, no one is listening to your mixtape, and you're working the drive through to pay the bills while your get your name out. The fame, riches, and Hollywood parties are no where in the near future. Luckily, it isn't like this forever. There comes a point where your skills can be good enough to acquire all of the glamorous dreams that you imagined when first starting this dance. Being a b-boy can get you girls and bring you status but only after you have put in the time and effort to reach that level.

The best advice for a beginner who dreams of these things is to be patient and realistically set your expectations of the commitment that it takes to progress in this art. Rome wasn't built in a day and neither are Airflares. Reaching the level of your favorite Red Bull star or even the top of your local scene takes time. So be patient and stay diligent with your training.

### **Cool Down**

Those are my five fallacies of the b-boy scene. Following them will only detract from your dancing and hold back the development of your skills. Remember to always think on both sides of the coin when evaluating new ideas (or old ideas) that come into the scene. My biggest rule of thumb is if an idea puts limits on what you can do such as "you can ONLY dance to breaks" or you "should NEVER lift weights" then it is probably worth a second thought before following. Are there any popular ideas that you're following that may be holding you back?

