

Appendix 1.

Strikes with the Stick and Cane

I have always found jointlocks and takedowns with the stick and cane to be far more interesting than the strikes, most of which are obvious, even to beginners. Some are not, however, and the sheer number of possible strikes is impressive. So, to make the book more complete, I describe here the 60 strikes I teach for the stick and cane.

The strikes depend on how the stick or cane is held. Most can be directed to any of several targets, often while stepping forward or backward, to the side, or both. Thus, the targets identified here are simply the most common or most unique for a given strike. The most common angles of attack are vertical (up and down), horizontal (side to side), and diagonal (from high to low corners and low to high corners). Thrusts go to the throat, solar plexus, groin, or top of the foot.

The descriptions below assume that you are holding the stick or cane in your right hand and that your opponent is attacking with his right fist or leg, unless otherwise specified.

***Hanbo* Strikes from a Double-Handed, Palms-Down Grip**

Hold the *hanbo* with both hands palm down, hands about shoulder width apart. This grip is the beginning position used throughout the book.

1. Sliding Horizontal Strike

Slide your hands to the ends of the stick as you step to your left with your left foot. Quickly “push” the stick into his temple with your left hand, letting it slide along the shaft as the stick goes away from you.

Keep your right grip firmly on the right end of the stick and extend your right arm during the strike. The strike can be done on the left or right side, and common targets are the forearms (when attacking a punch or a thrust) and temples.

2. Sliding Downward Vertical Strike

In a motion similar to that in the first strike, slide your hands to the ends of the stick as you step to your right with your right foot. Bring the right end of the stick up and the shaft to vertical, then quickly “push” the stick down onto his head

with your right hand, letting it slide along the shaft as the stick goes away from you.

Keep your left grip firmly on the right end of the stick. The strike can be done on the left or right side, and common targets are the forearms (when attacking a punch or a thrust), head, or the neck when the opponent is doubled over.

3. Sliding Upward Vertical Strike

In a motion similar to that in the first strike, slide your hands to the ends of the stick as you step to your right with your right foot. Drop the left end down and bring the shaft to vertical, then quickly “push” the left end up and into his groin with your left palm, letting it slide along the shaft as the stick goes away from you.

Keep your right grip firmly on the right end of the stick. The strike can be done on the left or right side.

4. Sliding Front Thrust

Slide your hands to the ends of the stick as you step forward with your right foot. Point the right end of stick at your target, then thrust the shaft through your right hand with your left.

Keep your left grip firmly on the left end of the stick. The thrust can be done on the left or right side. Common targets are the face, throat, solar plexus, and groin.

5. Tension Strike

Create tension on the stick by bending both wrists to the outside, as if trying to break the stick in half with your hands. Release the tension and strike with one hand.

The strike can be done on the left or right side, and common targets are the forearms (when attacking a punch or a thrust) and temples.

6. Reverse Scissor Strike

Release your left hand and push the stick to your left as you step to your left with your left foot. Reach under your right hand with your left and regrip the horizontal stick, palm up. Quickly pull your left hand back to your left and pull your right hand back to the right to snap the stick over to your right in a reverse scissoring action.

The most common target is an attacking forearm. The strike can be done on the left or right side and is very strong, if done correctly. The most common problem is to turn the stick over with your

7. Forward Rolling Strike

Bring the right end up, under your right arm, and move the long end around your right elbow with your left hand, then release your left hand and deliver a forehand strike to his head or forearm.

This strike takes more time than most to execute, but it flows and is quite strong. It can be used as a block as long as your left hand is on the shaft, if you can get the timing right.

8. Battering Ram Jab

Parry a right-hand punch to your face to your right with the left end of the stick. Circle the left end of the stick back and down, then step into the opponent and jab the end of the stick into his body with both hands.

This jab is very strong because it is delivered with both hands and has your body behind it.

***Hanbo* Strikes from a Port Arms Grip**

Hold the *hanbo* diagonally across your chest, with your left hand palm up and your right hand palm down, hands about shoulder width apart. The military calls this position “port arms” when holding a rifle as described. Because the hands do not move on the stick and because the body is put into every strike, these strikes are probably the most effective strikes with the *hanbo*.

9. Tip strike to the collar bone

Step forward with your left foot and strike his right collar bone with the left end of the stick.

10. Butt strike to the short ribs

Step forward with your right foot and strike his left short ribs with the right end of the stick.

11. Horizontal jab with the tip

Step forward with your left foot and thrust the left end of the stick into his solar plexus.

12. Downward diagonal jab with the butt to the thigh

As the opponent punches, step forward and out with your left foot to avoid his punch, push the stick up and to your left to prepare for the thrust, then thrust the right end of the stick back down into his right thigh.

13. Flat strike with the shaft

Step forward with your left foot and strike under his nose with the shaft, keeping it horizontal.

14. Embracing strike with the shaft

From a clinch, circle your arms around your opponent and grip the stick with both hands, then pull the shaft into him.

Common targets are the back of the head, the spine, and the ribs.

15. Forehand stroke to the chin with the butt

Step forward with your right foot and strike the left side of his jaw with the right end of the stick in a "round-house" movement.

***Hanbo* Strikes from a Single-Handed “Club Grip”**

Hold the *hanbo* vertically in one hand, choking up about 6 inches from the lower end, as if holding a club. The strikes are made while keeping the wrist strong and straight, as if pounding a nail with a hammer; resist the temptation to let your wrist bend forward. All but the last two of these strikes come from Filipino *Kali*, where they are performed with any of several weapons, especially knives, short swords, and clubs.

16. Forehand downward diagonal strike, right to left

Common targets are the head and collar bone.

17. Backhand downward diagonal strike, left to right

Common targets are the head and collar bone.

18. Forehand horizontal strike, right to left

Common targets are the elbow and ribs.

19. Backhand horizontal strike, left to right

Common targets are the elbow and ribs.

20. Single-hand front thrust

Common targets are the groin, solar plexus, and throat.

21. Overhand Forehand Thrust (a “picador” thrust)

Bring your right elbow back and up, behind your head, point the stick at the opponent’s throat, then thrust the tip straight in to the hollow above his collar bone.

22. Reverse Overhand Backhand Thrust (a reverse “picador” thrust)

Circle the tip past your left side, bringing your arm across your chest and your right hand high, above your head. Point the stick at the opponent’s throat, then

thrust the tip straight in to the hollow above his collar bone with a corkscrew-like movement of your right hand.

This thrust is the backhand version of the one above, although it is awkward to perform.

23. Forehand Flip Strike

Bring your right arm across your chest and the stick past your left side. With the motion of your forearm, flip the stick forward, into the opponent.

When done with a machete or short sword, this strike hits the opponent with the side of the blade, by design. The strike is especially effective when your right arm is under your opponent's right arm and the strike unexpectedly comes from outside his arm.

24. Backhand upward diagonal strike, left to right

25. Forehand upward diagonal strike, right to left

26. Vertical downward strike

27. Upward thrust

Begin with the tip close to the ground, then bring it straight up and strike under the opponent's chin. The stick will be close to vertical as you strike.

This upper-cut-like strike can come under the opponent's vision and is quite effective. In the corresponding knife attack, the targets include the groin and solar plexus and the attack is a disemboweling one.

28. Extended Horizontal Swinging Strike

To attack the opponent from a distance, take a long forward step and, with your arm fully extended, swing the stick horizontally into his shin, knee, or head.

29. Whip Strike

Begin as in the extended swinging strike described above. As he raises his left hand to block the swing, turn your hand palm down, let your wrist bend so the stick comes around his block, and pull the tip into the back of his head by counter-rotating your hips.

This strike comes from Western swordplay and is both surprising and surprisingly strong. It can also be done in a clinch, if your stick hand is free.

30. Reverse Two-Handed Ice-Pick Jab

From a clinch, when your arms are around your opponent, place the butt of the stick anywhere on his body, especially his back or neck, and pull it into him with both hands until he submits.

This jab is one of the most effective close-in stick attacks, especially if you are on the ground.

***Hanbo* Strikes from a Single-Handed “Ski-Pole” Grip**

Hold the *hanbo* vertically in one hand, about 6 inches from the upper end, as if holding a ski pole. This grip is surprisingly versatile, as anyone who has watched Zatoichi* films will attest. Simply turning slightly to the side can parry an attack with the shaft, and if you grip the stick with both hands thumbs up, you can strike to either side, hard, by turning your hips into the strike. Holding the stick in this position, close to your chest, is also very unassuming and nonthreatening.

31. Front flip to the groin

Flip the long end of the stick into the opponent’s groin.

This groin strike is obvious, but you can deliver it with one or both hands. As with any groin strike, diversion is an important part of the technique.

32. Forehand stab to the shoulder with the short end

Parry a thrust to the outside with your left hand, step forward with your right foot, and strike the opponent in the shoulder with the short end of the stick.

33. Backhand stab to the throat with the long end

To stop a rapidly advancing opponent, stab him in the chest with the long end of the stick.

34. Forehand downward vertical strike

35. Forehand downward diagonal strike, right to left

36. Forehand horizontal strike

37. Forehand upward diagonal strike, right to left

38. Backhand downward diagonal strike, left to right

39. Backhand horizontal strike

40. Backhand upward diagonal strike, left to right

41. Kneeling horizontal forehand strike to the knee

From a high attack to your left side, pivot to your left, drop to your left knee, and strike horizontally to the inside of the opponent's knee.

***Hanbo* Strikes from a Double-Handed Sword Grip**

Hold the *hanbo* in both hands, as through it were a sword. One hand will be at the butt, the other about two hand-widths above it.

There is both art and science in the formal sword cut, which takes personal instruction and years of practice to perfect. (My book on the *jo* explains the cut in more detail.) For self-defense purposes, the strikes here can be baseball-bat swings.

42. Vertical downward strike

43. Right downward diagonal strike to the head

- 44. Right horizontal strike to the side
- 45. Right upward diagonal strike to the side
- 46. Left downward diagonal strike to the head
- 47. Left horizontal strike to the side
- 48. Left upward diagonal strike to the side
- 49. Two-handed front thrust

When you thrust, assuming your left hand is at the butt, turn your right hand to palm down as if twisting the stick into his body. When your arms are fully extended, your left hand will end palm-up under your right forearm.

Common targets are the throat and solar plexus.

Cane Strikes

50. Foot Stab

Holding the cane in the walking grip, jab the tip into the top of the opponent's foot.

This jab is harder than it looks; accuracy is difficult to develop. To be effective, the jab should be accompanied by a distracting hand movement. Do not look at his foot as you strike, rather, look over his shoulder or to the side to draw his attention away from the strike.

51. Groin Snap

Holding the cane in the in-line grip, snap the tip into his groin with your wrist.

This strike is obvious, and many people will anticipate it. Thus, to be effective, the strike should be accompanied by a distracting hand movement. Do not look at him as you strike, rather, look over his shoulder or to the side to draw his attention away from the strike.

52. Fencer's Lunge

Holding the cane in the in-line grip, take a long step forward with your right foot, extend your right arm completely, and thrust the tip into his throat. Turn your right hand to palm-down as you thrust.

This thrust begins a long way from the target, so the opponent can see it coming. A more effective application is to use it when you have gripped the opponents arm and you attack him as he tries to pull away. In this case, a good target is the armpit of the hand you have gripped.

53. Forehand Ridge-Hand Strike to Right Shin

Holding the cane in the in-line grip, parry a punch to your right as you step to the left and strike the inside of his right shin with the cane. Your hand will end palm-down.

Do not look at him as you strike; rather, look over his shoulder or to the side to draw his attention away from the strike.

54. Backhand Ridge-Hand Strike To Left Shin

Holding the cane in the in-line grip, parry a punch to your left as you step to the right and strike the inside of his left shin with the cane. Your hand will end palm-up.

Do not look at him as you strike; rather, look over his shoulder or to the side to draw his attention away from the strike.

55. Circling Vertical Downward Strike around the Left Shoulder

With the cane in the in-line grip, and keeping your hand relaxed, turn your palm *down* and lift your right arm up and around your head from the front, letting the cane pass around your *left* shoulder, hanging straight down behind your back as you do so. Complete the motion by bringing the cane vertically straight over your head and down along the midline to hit your opponent in the head.

56. Circling Vertical Downward Strike around the Right Shoulder

With the cane in the in-line grip, and keeping your hand relaxed, turn your palm *up* and lift your right arm up and around your head from behind, letting the cane pass around your *right* shoulder and hanging straight down behind your back as

you do so. Complete the motion by bringing the cane vertically straight over your head and down along the midline to hit your opponent in the head.

57. Circling Low Horizontal Strike around the Left Shoulder

With the cane in the in-line grip, and keeping your hand relaxed, turn your palm *down* and lift your right arm up and around your head from the front, letting the cane pass around your *left* shoulder, hanging straight down behind your back as you do so. Complete the motion by bringing the cane around in a forehand horizontal strike to an opponent's knee.

58. Circling Low Horizontal Strike around the Right Shoulder

With the cane in the in-line grip, and keeping your hand relaxed, turn your palm *up* and lift your right arm up and around your head from behind, letting the cane pass around your *right* shoulder and hanging straight down behind your back as you do so. Complete the motion by bringing the cane around in a backhand horizontal strike to an opponent's knee.

59. Flailing Horizontal Strikes

To forestall an approaching opponent, hold the handle with the horn up and swing the cane side-to-side.

Although these strikes can be fast, they are also wide and require more recovery time than other strikes. You are most vulnerable at either end of the strike.

60. Swinging Figure 8 Strikes

To forestall an approaching opponent, let the handle slide your hand and swing the cane in a series of figure 8's.

Although these strikes can be fast, they are also relatively easy to disrupt because the cane is swinging loose in your hand. If the cane is light enough, a determined opponent can simply take the hit and attack anyway, leaving you trying to regain control of your weapon.

* Zatoichi is the fictional blind swordsman of Japanese television and movie fame who wanders around feudal Japan defending himself and others with his *shikomizue*, or sword cane. He holds the cane close to his chest with this ski-pole grip, which lends itself to quick draws, backhand figure 8 strikes, and rear thrusts.