



Get A Jump on Fitness

Remember Devo, the Ramones and the Clash? Punk rock is making a comeback—only this time, Mohawks are optional.

➔ CLASS: PUNK ROPE

By Paula Vergara

Back in 2004, Punk Rope jumped onto the exercise scene at New York University and since then has become a big hit. Founder and President Tim Haft

developed an ingenious workout, combining fun with fast and edgy music, designed to improve agility, balance, strength and endurance. He believes that jumping rope is the most effective cardio workout around. It's also much more forgiving than other activities such as running. "Rope jumping is much gentler on the joints," he says. "With good form, a jumper only leaves the ground about one inch, whereas most runners tend to get much higher in the air. Also runners typically land on one foot, which leads to increased impact forces. Rope jumpers frequently land on two feet, which helps to disperse the impact."

The 55-minute Punk Rope class structure involves mixing up your rope jumping with a series of "creative calisthenics." A typical class begins with a warm-up followed by a few minutes of jumping rope, and then the real fun begins. You and a partner arm-wrestle on the ground while in the push-up position, attempting to pull one another's wrist while trying to stay in position. Another jumping rope interval follows. Then you sit on the ground back-to-back with your partner, jump up quickly facing your partner and do a high-five and repeat. Another rope interval, a three-to-four person relay race is thrown in, rope interval again, tug-o-war, core training and, finally, a cool down/stretch.

Teanna Babcock, Punk Rope instructor at Heathworks, emphasizes the importance of having fun. "I tell the class that they are free to go at their own pace," she says. "The fact that the class realizes this is not a boring aerobics-type workout, they feel empowered to play, and laugh and cheer each other on and just be more expressive and more free." She even tells her class to "slam" the rope on the ground at the end of each song to really get into the anarchy.

Kacie Allen, a college freshman who hails from Hawaii, started taking Punk Rope classes in October at Healthworks. "The cardio workout is great," she says. "It keeps you pumped and also brings back old songs that you haven't heard in a while." www.punkrope.com