

Carmela Hernandez started teaching kickboxing in 2000. 7 years down the road, her passion for the sport still hasn't waned. She gives Choices a peep into her life at Amore Fitness.

Q. Are there any qualifications you need to earn to teach kickboxing?

Firstly, one must have sufficient background in martial arts. One must also have the endurance and the appropriate fitness level to begin with. Certification in kickboxing is being offered internationally. I got mine from Lisa Gaylord when she conducted her certification course in Hong Kong. It is important that one be trained and taught the correct technique, how to build up a certain move/progression, address injuries should it be encountered in your class, how to correct your students' form and technique, etc. As kickboxing can be easily watched on tv or dvd's, it is still recommended that one get the proper training.

Q. What other classes do you teach besides kickboxing?

I also teach hi-lo aerobics, sculpting class, pilates, belly blitz, cardio blitz and stretch fit – 3 of Amore's signature class.

Q. How often does Amore Fitness conduct kickboxing classes?

Each branch has at least 3 kickboxing classes within the week. So for all of Amore's branches, we would have around 18 kickboxing classes in a week.

Q. How many participants are there (approximately) in each class?

Class size would depend on the class timing and location. However expect peak hour classes (that would be after office hours and during the weekend) to reach around 50 participants per class. Off peak classes would just have a third of the attendance during the peak hours.

Q. What is the ratio of male to female participants?

As Amore is an-all female fitness center, the most we have is 1:50..that is for a peak hour class taught by a male instructor. Otherwise, it would just be a group of screaming, sweaty and 'empowered' ladies. However, for unisex clubs, I still observe that there would be more women in the class as the men all gravitate to the gym and weight training section of the club.

Q. What are the benefits that participants can gain out of kickboxing?

Kickboxing develops a person's cardio respiratory system, muscle tone and is a good fat burner. With every session, one can burn an average of 300-600 calories, depending on your body weight. The workout is also a good form of stress-release as the jabs, uppercuts and side kicks, etc., when done with the correct form, somehow enables one to vent out day-to-day frustrations and worries. One can also pick up practical moves that may be used in situations calling for a little self-defense.

Q. What are the injuries commonly suffered by first-timers attempting kickboxing?

The common injuries would be ankle sprain and shoulder strain. Ankle sprains happen when they do a move that they are not yet

familiar with, and land on the wrong footing. Sometimes, the participants get too excited and fascinated with a move (i.e. hitch kick) that they try to do that move straight away, in an attempt to move and cope with the regulars. Most of the time, technique is lost in the attempt to rush into the movement. Delivering punches by using wrong technique usually causes shoulder strains.

Q. What equipment is needed for kickboxing?

For a non-contact kickboxing class, a good pair of cross-

training shoes is needed to cushion and support your feet all throughout. One may also opt to wear hand wraps during the class. Attire must be comfortable enough and not restrict any movement, like when you do a sidekick. For the Blast class, another signature class of Amore that uses boxing moves, boxing gloves are pads are needed, as this is a 'contact' class. Participants would pair up (Person A and B) and are given a combination of movement. The objective of Person A is to deliver the punches and kicks with great power and technique, while Person B uses the pads to protect herself and at the same time cushion the impact of all the blows being thrown by Person A to her.

Q. What is the approximate cost for our readers who are interested in taking up kickboxing?

Basically, readers can just sign up with any Amore branch for a package that suits them. We have a package for the occasional exerciser up to those who make Amore their second home.

