

the **CrossFit**  
JOURNAL ARTICLES

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## Kettlebell Skills

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### H2H Tapping Drills

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Once you have mastered the two-arm swing, H2H Swing, and Swing Release, it's time to move to the next progression: H2H (hand-to-hand) tapping drills. These drills are excellent for increasing your hand-to-eye coordination, hand speed, dynamic grip strength, and work capacity.

When learning new H2H drills, it is best to practice multiple sets of low reps using a light kettlebell. Grass, sand, or a firm mat provide the best surface for such training. Develop skill first. Initially, the goal is mastery, not a workout. The "workout" will be a byproduct of practicing and perfecting H2H skills.

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## Tapping Drill #1: Swing Release and Tap Chest

Warm up with a series of two-arm swings and Swing Releases as described in the last issue of the CrossFit Journal (#53). As you become comfortable with those, it's time to progress through the "crawl-walk-run" phases to master the H2H tapping drills.

### Crawl Phase

Using one light kettlebell, perform:

1. One repetition of the two-arm swing (photo 1).
2. One repetition of the Swing Release (photo 2).
3. One repetition of the Swing Release & Tap Chest. As soon as your hands let go of the kettlebell, quickly tap your chest (with the fingertips of both hands) and re-grip the kettlebell handle before it drops to below chest level (photos 3 and 4).
4. Repeat steps 1 through 3.

Note: It is vital that you re-grip the kettlebell before it drops below chest level. The lower the kettlebell is when you re-establish your grip, the more you risk the chance of experiencing a whiplash effect. Nothing good will come from this. When in doubt, just step back and let the kettlebell fall safely to the ground.



## Tapping Drill #1: Swing Release and Tap Chest (continued)

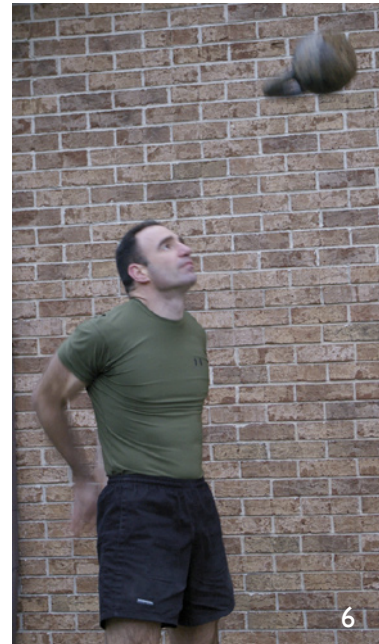
### Walk Phase

1. One repetition of the two-arm swing.
2. One repetition of the Swing Release & Tap Chest.
3. Repeat steps 1 and 2.

### Run Phase

1. One repetition of the Swing Release & Tap Chest.
2. Repeat for desired time or repetitions.

A challenging variation on this drill is to clap your hands in front of your chest (photo 5) instead of tapping your chest. Begin with one clap, then two, then three.... If you're really getting fast, you can try clapping behind your back (photo 6). Remember: "Quick feet are happy feet!"



Note: The kettlebell should not rotate, turn, or flip during any of the tapping drills described in this article. Do not use the "half-rotation switch" for tapping drills. The handle must remain horizontal during the tapping portion of these drills.

More detailed information on learning to perform these H2H tapping drills is available on my *H2H Kettlebell Drills – Volume 1 DVD*. With just a few minutes of training each day, you'll be at the "Run" phase very soon!

**Jeff Martone**, owner of [Tactical Athlete Training Systems](#), was one of the first certified senior kettlebell instructors in the United States. He is best known as the creator of "hand- 2-hand" kettlebell juggling, SHOT training, and the T.A.P.S. pull-up system. He is also the author of six training DVDs. He was the first to implement kettlebell training in a federal law enforcement agency and now offers instructor-level certifications. He has over 15 years of experience as a full-time defensive tactics, firearms, and special-response-team instructor.

The following terms are trademarks of Jeff Martone: *H2H Swing, Swing Release, Tap Chest, One Tap, Two Taps & Grab*.

## Tapping Drill #2: H2H Swing & alternating taps



Warm up with a series of one-arm swings and H2H Swings as described in last month's CFJ (#53).

### Crawl Phase

Pick up the kettlebell in your left hand and perform:

1. One repetition of the one-arm swing (photo 7).
2. One repetition of the One Tap. This is similar to, but harder than, the H2H Swing. For the One Tap, as you release the handle with your left hand, lightly tap the handle with the open palm of your right hand (photo 8), and then immediately re-grip the handle with your left hand (photo 9). Resume the one-arm swing.
3. Repeat steps 1 and 2 for five reps.
4. Perform one H2H Swing to transfer the kettlebell to the right hand.
5. Perform one one-arm swing (right).
6. Repeat step 2 with the kettlebell in your right hand.
7. Repeat steps 5 and 6 for five reps.

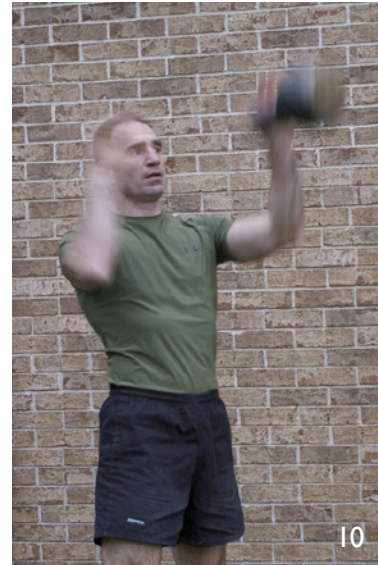
The key to success is to quickly and gently tap the kettlebell handle. Think of the reaction when touching a hot stove. This cat-like reflex is the goal—not hitting the kettlebell with any force. Avoid hitting the handle hard enough to push the kettlebell away. If this happens, **DO NOT** attempt to reach out and grab the handle. Let the kettlebell fall. Attempting to grab a kettlebell that is falling away from you compromises proper body mechanics and common sense and is a likely way to get hurt. Never compromise proper form!

## Tapping Drill #2: H2H Swing & alternating taps (continued)

### Walk Phase

Pick up the kettlebell in your left hand and perform:

1. One repetition of the one-arm swing (left) (photo 7).
2. One repetition of Two Taps & Grab. This is very similar to the H2H Swing. The distinction is the addition of two taps between switching hands. As you release the handle with your left hand, quickly but lightly tap the handle with the open palm of your right and then left hand (photos 8 and 10), before grasping the handle with your right and letting it swing down (photo 11).
3. One repetition of the one-arm swing (right).
4. One repetition of the Two Taps & Grab.
5. Repeat steps 1 through 4 for five cycles.



### Run Phase

Perform the “walk phase” sequence minus the one-arm swings in between each Two Taps & Grab (i.e., eliminate step 1 and step 3). When properly executed, the kettlebell alternates from one hand to the other with every repetition.

