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# Fitness & Wellness

**Krav maga...**

*This is the best workout if you want to look chiselled*



Krav maga makes you feel, quite literally, like a lean, mean ass-kicking machine. In the 1930s, when anti-Semitic sentiment was rising in Slovakia, a wrestler named Imrich Lichtenfeld discovered his training in boxing and wrestling was worthless in an actual fight situation. So he began to develop a new form of self-defence grounded in real-life circumstances and absolute practicality. The fundamental basis is simple: do what you have to do to save yourself and to cause your attacker the maximum pain possible. Today, krav maga is a prominent form of military training and is used by the Israeli Security Forces as well as special units within the FBI and the US army.

Mehul Vora, president of the National Krav Maga Federation of India, also happens to be a black-belt karate and judo champion, trained Japanese swordsman, president of Maharashtra's professional kick-boxing association, head of one of the country's largest martial arts organisations, choreographer of the Akshay Kumar-starring Nat Geo series, *The Seven Deadly Arts* and instructor to the Mumbai police force's special operations squad as well as the BMC's demolition squad. So it's no surprise that he taught me five self-defence moves in an hour. These included how to break the hold of an attacker that's sitting on your stomach trying to strangle you, and send him flying – literally – over your head. Another helpful strategy to ward off someone that's trying to pull you by your arm requires delivering a sharp push to his Adam's apple. "Use his own strength against him," advises Vora. "The harder he pulls you, the more pain he feels. He'll have to let go. And when he does, cover your face and run". Krav maga isn't about showing off your power or skills; it's not a competitive sport either. Vora explained, "You've got to do whatever it takes to save your life." Meanwhile, the classes I took with Mehul Dedhia, who's trained under Vora, were a little less combative but gruelling. After a warm-up that includes on-the-spot running, jumping and cross-jumping, we practised the perfect groin kick (arch your back slightly and pull down on his shoulders for greater impact). As Vora explained, when in a fight, aim to hurt the face, throat, groin and knees because these areas are most prone to immediate pain and weakness. Similarly, don't forget to protect these parts from attackers. Krav maga's sheer practicality and the instant gratification that arises from having learned a definitive, tangible move makes it enjoyable for everyone, belly dancers and power yogis included. Besides, on every girl's list of things to know, right next to fixing a flat tyre and reading a roadmap, is how to deliver the perfect kick to the groin.

**Krav maga classes with Mehul Vora are available for free at the Krav Maga National Federation of India training centre at Arihant building basement, Bajaj Road, Vile Parle (W) (+91 22 6696 0857/+91 22 2673 4579/+91 98200 55730). Call for more details. [www.kravmaga.in](http://www.kravmaga.in).**