

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Saut de chat is to overcome high and long obstacles. It is also very useful when tired, or attempting to precision or Saut de Bras onto another obstacle immediately after the Saut de Chat.

METHOD

The first aspect of the technique is the split foot takeoff. It is very important that you learn to use this technique early on as many people stick to the double foot, punch jump take off. While the punch jump becomes more useful on higher obstacles it can be downright dangerous when used on lower obstacle as the mechanics of the movement point your head at the ground when vaulting. If anything goes wrong your body usually travels where the head points, in this case, the ground.

The first thing to do is find an obstacle. The height of the obstacle you choose will be dependent on what you feel confident with. Many people start off with walls as low as their knee height. While this isn't practical in a 'real' situation it is sometimes necessary to start like this so as to learn some specifics of technique that will assist you as you start to apply the technique in more practical heights.

A flat wall that goes up to your knee height will be suitable.

For some people you will not need a small wall, a larger one will be fine. Regardless of what size wall you are capable of vaulting try and focus on learning the split foot take off.

If you can find one, a wall with grass on either side can help a lot (grass is soft, so if you need to fall / roll over it will not hurt.)

One of the main things to consider while learning this is that eventually you want to have the capability to do this at your full running speed.

Initially you should attempt this at walking pace, then slowly build up the speed.

- > With this in mind, take a few steps back from the obstacle and stand facing it.
- > Take large strides, towards the obstacle, as if you were running at the obstacle.
- > At this point you shouldn't be jumping over the obstacle. You are just getting a feel for the approach to it.
- > Another thing to remember is do not get into the habit of using one foot over the other (a favored foot) if you start favoring a foot now it will cause you to lose speed and the will make you unable to do certain movements later on.



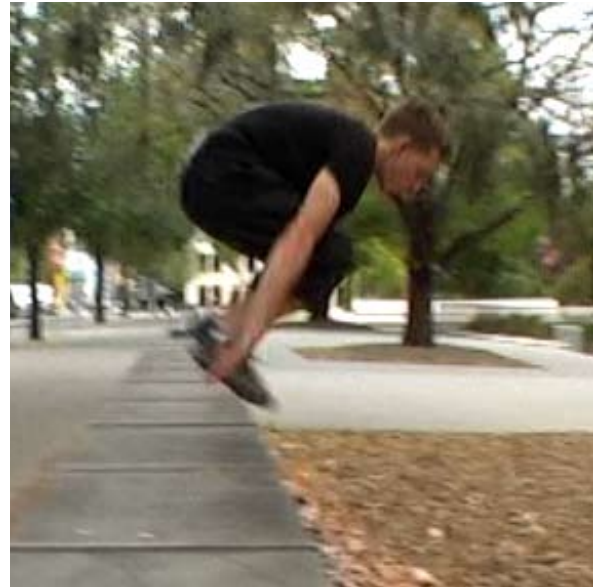
- > After you have paced at the obstacle a few times on each foot, start placing your hands on it, without jumping over the obstacle.
- > When placing the hands, don't just reach forward, swing the arms back then forward onto the obstacle in rhythm with your approach to the obstacle
- > With long strides (as if running) pace up to the obstacle. This time when you get to the obstacle, place your hands on the end of it. As you can see in the pictures, your back legs will have to lift up.
- > Remember, putting your hands towards the end of the obstacle means there is very little chance of clipping your feet when you bring your feet through.
- > Practice doing this a few times on each foot.



- > Once you have the confidence to jump up start to land on the obstacle.
- Do this enough so as you become confident that your feet will not clip the edges.



- > Once you feel confident that there will not be any clipping of the feet start to vault over the obstacle without landing on it.
- > Keep the knees tucked to the chest as you pass over the obstacle.
- > Notice how the hands leave the obstacle and are not planted on the obstacle the whole time. This allows you to avoid clipping the toes.
- > When placing the hands on the obstacle pay attention to the sounds that you make, try to avoid 'slapping' the hands down, you need to almost grasp the obstacle and throw it underneath yourself, as opposed to just slapping it with your palms.



- > Extend the legs for landing on the other side.



> The next series of photos depict the saut de chat being done on a higher wall at greater speed.



PROGRESSION

Add height, length or speed to the equation as you gain confidence. Try to do it on different surfaces, over rails, rocks, walls.

IMPORTANT! Parkour is not a set of moves or tricks, there are base techniques that are used regularly but are not the “moves of Parkour”. They can be varied and changed to suit a particular situation or environment. These are designed to give you the building blocks to go out and innovate and find your own way of doing things. As long as the application of speed and efficiency are observed, you are applying the principles of Parkour. Remember, Parkour is more than just the movement, it’s the philosophy that makes it unique.