

Mawashi-geri — A Method Its Own Teacher Never Used

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TLDR / 80-20

The whole progression is built on one mechanic: lean away and the leg rises on its own.

And the teacher says plainly that he never trained this way himself — he built it afterwards, for adults who started late.

The Keys

- **Hips first, always.** The sequence opens with hip-joint warm-up before any kicking, and returns to "softness of the hip joint, softness of the flanks" as the two conditions.
- **Gyaku-ashi sets the shape.** Flip the foot, keep the thighs close together, pull the heels toward the buttocks — then build the body's centreline from there.
- **Start low and frontal.** The first mawashi-geri is on the front and low, with the sides softened, then returned to the original position before repeating.
- **Hands on the floor is the key drill.** Recline the body, and the leg becomes easier to raise — the lean does the work the flexibility has not yet done.
- **Lean further and the foot passes the face.** That is stated as the target image, not as an achievement: *this is the picture to hold in mind.*
- **The partner is a balance rig, not a target.** Both stand in zenkutsu-dachi and hold hands, so the kicker can go past the point where they would otherwise fall backward.
- **Height is raised by degrees, never jumped.** Chudan first, partner catches the kick, then the held height goes up little by little across sessions.
- **The adjustment is the partner's, not the kicker's.** If the kicker is inflexible, the *partner* lowers their own body and steps down to meet them.
- **Stiff leans back, flexible leans forward.** One instruction, two opposite executions, chosen by the body you actually have.
- **"At this point, it hurts" is anticipated.** The answer is not to push — it is to drop back to the hands-on-floor version and face downward.

AI's Take

- **The interview at the end outweighs the drill.** Asked whether he trained like this when young, Naka answers plainly: **no**. He used kicks constantly in fights, and never practised this way.
- **He built the method after he began teaching,** for a specific population — people starting karate in middle age who want a kick their training never gave them.
- **So this is a teaching invention, not a transmitted tradition** — and he says so himself, which is rarer than it should be.

- **He also undercuts his own subject.** "Usually, you don't need to kick high. But everybody wants to be good at kicking." The method serves the wish, not the fight.
- **Same shape as 拾壹 and 拾貳.** There the drill numbers were constructed and labelled as such. Here the constructor is the lineage holder — and he labels it too.