



# THE ORIGINS OF SKIP BEATZ

Everybody needs some form of direction in their life. For me, this realisation came about in 2012 when I fell into a bout of depression, and this led me down an interesting path of introspection. 'What am I good at? How can I improve? Where do I start?' Sometimes we get stuck looking for the answers, but eventually, everybody meets the day where they feel the missing piece of the puzzle click into place. For me, this day occurred when I decided to take a skipping rope to the gym. It was from then onwards that everything began to change for the better.

I hadn't really skipped much before. I remember struggling to control the rope, whilst also finding it difficult to synchronise my skips with each swing. I could only just about skip, but I felt an inner urge pushing me to continue. My skills began to improve over time, but I still felt as though something was missing - I just couldn't quite put my finger on it. 'Do I need to add some more refinements to my technique? Are there any external influences that could positively contribute to my improvement?' I needed to add another string to my bow, so I started to brainstorm again.

Everybody has a gym playlist. Music can be key in energising you during your workout routine, as it plays a pivotal part in influencing your mood. Music happened to be the spark that kindled my passion for skipping, and by combining energetic high-bpm drum and bass with skipping, I began to generate a rhythm and my coordination and dexterity started to improve.

I started to do this everyday, and I got better and better. I was skipping to songs that were clocking in at 170bpm, which meant that I was skipping incredibly quickly whilst still managing to align my skips to the song. Not only did this massively improve my fitness levels, but it also became a meditative activity for me. I could feel every part of my body harmonizing with the song I was skipping to. The more I skipped, the less I worried. Any negative thoughts that were nagging me simply vanished into thin air.

Achieving your goals is a habitual process that requires time, effort, and perseverance. My gradual improvement was incredibly encouraging, and I began to learn new tricks and skills that I could implement into my skipping routines. I started running through the ropes, pulling off crossovers, and executing side swings. Over time, after fine tuning each technique separately, I started to string together the different tricks to form more complex combinations, all the while maintaining the rhythm of my skipping to the beat of the song.

What really helped me excel from here was the power of visualisation. Whilst skipping, I would imagine myself performing on stage in front of huge crowds, backed by the bassiest sound systems pumping out drum and bass music. I would picture myself executing tricks that I hadn't even learned yet, and by visualising myself performing them, they seamlessly weaved themselves into my skill set over time.



I was so in love with skipping, that I started to skip anywhere. I was no longer confined to the gym - I was skipping to the beat, anywhere, anytime. I started to film myself skipping all over the place - from rooftops to cliff edges, from underpasses to subways. Throughout all of this, I was gradually building mini performances to individual songs, further honing my skipping skills. Skipping became a creative space for me - when I would hit the perfect flow of movement, a trance-like state would envelop me each time, and I would leave each session with a bank of new ideas, along with the inspiration to convert them into reality. This daily practice helped me find my direction and turned my obstacles into tangible goals.

Every skipping session put me in the zone - I would regulate my breathing and pay no mind to my body position, only focusing my attention on watching the rope whiz past my eyes. This is what helped me improve the most, and I started to drill this thought process into practice when doing crossovers. My skill level was fairly high at this point, and so when I entered this zone I could feel my muscle memory taking over, allowing my mind to drift off into a space composed of total peace. My crossovers got quicker and quicker, and all of the tricks that I initially struggled to learn became second nature.

This was it. Every fibre of my being was telling me to push this further. I had to think of a way to make skipping more of a performance and how I could turn it into something a little more visually appealing. I managed to get a hold of an ultraviolet skipping rope, and bought some UV lights that would make the rope glow in the dark.

I then developed a ninja costume to go with the bright orange rope, and when practicing the performances in the dark, the UV lights would illuminate the orange parts of my costume as well as the rope. I also found that skipping in the darkness helped me get into the zone of creativity and calmness. The idea of Skip Beatz was conceived at this point.





I then decided that I was ready to perform in front of others, so I took my conception of Skip Beatz to a local school and decided to put on a dazzling show for the pupils. This wasn't just an opportunity to showcase my newly found talent. Above all, the idea of Skip Beatz is based around teaching others the discipline that goes into achieving your goals and persevering through the bumps in the road. In many ways, skipping was my salvation from depression, and over time I noticed that my mental health and quality of life improved through skipping. Skipping was so instrumental to the betterment of my health, to the point where I felt as though I had to share it with others in an effort to help and spread positivity.

Today, I frequently visit schools throughout the nation and host Skip Beatz workshops. These workshops are designed to teach school children how to attune their skips to the beat of fast paced drum and bass tracks, but the sessions primarily serve as a means of catharsis for them. That being said, the most important part of any Skip Beatz workshop is making sure everyone has fun. There is no better indication of a successful workshop than being able to see the happy smile of someone discovering their passion for a new hobby.

Since my start in 2013, I have twice broken the world record for most crossovers in one minute. My first record was 110 skips in 60 seconds recorded in April 2017, and on my second attempt in March 2019 I managed 117 in 60 seconds. I now also perform live at music festivals nationwide, and the positive response is truly overwhelming. The narrative of the Skip Beatz movement is grounded in the principles of resilience, continuous improvement, and positivity. Skip Beatz is geared towards helping you maintain a calm and collected mindset for the benefits of your mental health.

When this is combined with the theatrical finesse of the performances, it becomes a totally unique form of exercise bursting at the seams with originality.

I feel like I'm truly living the dream with Skip Beatz - I am incredibly grateful to be in the position that I am currently in, and it's an honour to be able to inspire young people through sport. I never expected my career to become what initially began as my own medication. I feel like I gain a superpower every time I pull on the ninja head scarf and start rotating the rope.

