

"Ground" Rules

Gracie Jiu-jitsu is known as one of the most effective martial arts in the world. It has revealed itself to be an important element of Mixed Martial Arts training and competition. However, it is important to follow some ground rules when training in Jiu-jitsu to maximize each student's potential . . . and minimize injuries! Students must familiarize themselves with the following ground rules for successful jiu-jitsu training at the OKS.

Drills

First of all, it is important to listen carefully to the instructions given by the coaches and more senior students in a class. Each student should do their best to "stick to the plan" and perform drills exactly as they are shown. Students should check with a coach before trying variations of drills shown, as they may actually be ineffective for various reasons. When practicing drills, students must cooperate with one another for the purpose of learning moves or techniques through repetition. Each student should take their time and focus on all of the technical aspects shown in the move. Students should only slight resistance for their partner, allowing them to practice the move.

Rolling/Grappling

After training for several weeks, the student may begin Rolling or freestyle grappling. Newer students typically feel that they must compensate for their lack of jiu-jitsu knowledge by going hard and using their strength and athleticism to keep up. They usually expend a tremendous amount of energy fighting with the coach or senior student and end up exhausted in a short time. However, one of the most important aspects of jiu-jitsu is learning to play smart with a balance of technique and strategy, and using strength and cardio capacity intelligently. Every student should approach rolling with the team mentality, and an attitude of working with their partner to help each other improve. Competition against other teams, or self-defense situations are the time for the practitioner to be aggressive!

Submissions & Tapping

In the beginning stages of grappling, it is very important for students to learn when and how to "Tap" or signal that a joint lock or choke is finished. For chokes, this should occur when the student feels that they cannot escape from the move, when they are getting light headed, or when they feel that they cannot breathe. Similarly, for joint locks, they tap should happen when they feel that they cannot escape from the move, or when they feel significant pressure or discomfort from the move. The student should err on the side of being cautious and tapping early until they gain an understanding of where the limits are for each situation. The risk in not tapping for a clean choke is simply going to sleep, but not tapping for a sloppy choke or neck crank can be dangerous. Not tapping for a joint lock can lead to damaging the joint with a sprain or break! unfortunately, for most joint locks, the student will not experience pain until damage has occurred, so it is best to tap from PRESSURE not pain.

Each student should approach submissions with the attitude of performing a quick, technical set-up and then finishing slowly. This allows their partner the opportunity to practice an escape, or tap if need be. Allowing partners to practice escapes will intimately raise everyone's level of play.

Illegal Techniques

Some moves or techniques in freestyle grappling are too risky for newer students to attempt. This can be due to a lack of understanding of proper application and

control over the move, or because the move can be difficult to learn to tap for. Therefore, the following moves are not to be attempted by beginner or novice students in rolling:

- Neck Cranks
- Twisting foot locks
- Heal hooks
- knee bars

Students at upper blue belt level should begin to experiment with setting up these moves and gradually familiarize themselves with their application and counters.