

Technique: Take the Back

Position: Guard

Overview

Against a trained opponent, you can expect them to sit back and establish posture from within your guard; but against an untrained opponent, you can expect the exact opposite. When a person drives all their weight forward from within your guard, they unknowingly create a perfect opportunity for you to take their back especially when they are attacking your neck or face with one of their hands. In this lesson, you will learn how to Take the Back from the guard, but in order to simplify the process of learning all the steps, we're going to break everything down into three slices.

Technical Slices

1. Head & Arm Control

- **Indicator:** Opponent drives their forearm in your throat from Stage 1
- **Essential Detail:** Effective use of legs to control opponent's weight and neutralize forearm choke
- **Most Common Mistake:** Weak initial angle and loose head and arm control
- **Bad Guy Reminder:** Lean forward heavily to give your partner the chance to redirect your energy
- **Safety Tip:** Tighten up your neck muscles and turn your chin to the side of the elbow to protect neck
- **Core Principles:** Sacrifice (20), Redirection (29)
- **Drill Orders:** Guard start, 1 rep, control for 5-10 seconds, reverse roles

2. Angle Acquisition

- **Indicator:** Opponent calms down after you establish Head and Arm Control
- **Essential Detail:** Wait until the opponent stops trying to pull their arm out before achieving the angle
- **Most Common Mistake:** Creating the arm escape opportunity by dropping the head to the ground
- **Bad Guy Reminder:** Stay strong on your knees rather than falling limp to the ground after the leg chop
- **Core Principles:** Centerline (31), Ratchet (26)
- **Drill Orders:** Guard start, 1 rep, control for 5-10 seconds, reverse roles

3. Final Get-Up

- **Indicator:** Opponent calms down after you acquire the angled body position
- **Essential Detail:** Effective body hug, elbow tuck, and bottom knee base
- **Most Common Mistake:** Failure to pronate the shoulders prior to the shoulder Get-Up
- **Core Principles:** Tagalong (23), Buoyancy (27)
- **Drill Orders:** Guard start, 1 rep, reverse roles

4. Bonus: Headlock Variation

- **Indicator:** Opponent establishes a headlock from within your guard
- **Essential Detail:** Use a solid frame and a guard extension to create the duck-under window
- **Most Common Mistake:** Failure to connect to the opponent immediately after the head slip
- **Bad Guy Reminder:** Check the control at each phase of the technique
- **Core Principles:** Frame (10), Velocity (7)
- **Drill Orders:** Guard start, 1 rep, reverse roles

Reflex Development Drill

Practice all variations of the

Punch Block Series (Stage 5) – Guard (L27)

in combination with

Take the Back – Guard (L31)

Fight Simulation Drill

1. Elbow Escape – Mount – Fish Hook (L12)
2. Take the Back – Guard (L31)
3. Rear Naked Choke – Back Mount (L5)
4. Double Ankle Sweep – Guard – Kick Variation (L20)
5. Positional Control – Side Mount – Roll Prevention (L13)
6. Take the Back – Mount – Remount Technique (L4)
7. Armbar – Mount – Side Variation (L9)

Mindset Minute

Your top priority during each step of this technique is control. Wait for your opponent to calm down before you progress to the next step. If you move too quickly, you risk allowing them to escape and having to start over. Techniques like this teach you to look for the good that is hidden in a bad situation. While choking you, they are creating the perfect opportunity for you to Take the Back and finish the fight.