

Technique: Elevator Sweep

Position: Guard

Overview

If you can't maintain the mount, use the guard to control your opponent. While trapped in your guard, an unskilled larger opponent may attempt to drive their weight forward onto your upper torso, in an attempt to immobilize you or submit you with their body weight. Little do they know, because they are inside your legs, their weight is distributed in such a way that it makes it quite easy to withstand the forward pressure. In fact, any time a larger opponent is driving all their weight forward from within your guard, there is a good chance that they are actually creating an opportunity for the Elevator Sweep. In this lesson you will learn two variations of the Elevator Sweep starting with the Standard Variation.

Technical Slices

1. Standard Variation

- **Indicator:** Opponent posts one leg to drive their weight forward from within your guard
- **Essential Detail:** Effective body angle for 3 reasons: hook insertion, elevation power, front leg "lowness"
- **Most Common Mistake:** Failure to lift the opponent's weight "north" prior to the sweep
- **Bad Guy Reminder:** Post the leg on the side of your free arm
- **Core Principles:** Kuzushi (11), Tagalong (23)
- **Drill Orders:** Guard start, 1 rep, reverse roles

2. Headlock Variation

- **Indicator:** Opponent establishes a headlock and posts the opposite leg to drive their weight forward
- **Essential Detail:** Effective "chopping" of the opponent's upper- and lower-body base points
- **Most Common Mistake:** Failure to activate the hook immediately after the base chop
- **Core Principles:** Kuzushi (11), Tension (14)
- **Drill Orders:** Guard start, 1 rep, reverse roles

3. Bonus: Late Angle Acquisition

- **Indicator:** Opponent neutralize your angle by squaring up their hips to yours
- **Essential Detail:** Immediate activation of the hook/lift after the late angle acquisition
- **Most Common Mistake:** Failure to use the shin as the push point for the shrimp
- **Core Principles:** Velocity (7), Mobility (30)
- **Drill Orders:** Guard start, 1 rep, reverse roles

Reflex Development Drill

Practice all variations of the Elevator Sweep – Guard (L11) in combination with all variations of the Armbar – Mount (L9)

Fight Simulation Drill

1. Clinch – Standing – Aggressive Opponent (L7)
2. Leg Hook Takedown – Standing (L6)
3. Punch Block Series – Guard – Stages 1-3-4-1 (L8)
4. Elevator Sweep – Guard – Headlock Variation (L11)
5. Armbar – Mount – Side Variation (L9)

Mindset Minute

When your opponent attempts to use their body weight to crush you, don't panic. Swivel your hips out and insert your leg hook and go for it. If it doesn't work, go back to Stage 1, block punches, and remain calm until another sweep or submission opportunity presents itself.

Street Tip: Intervention Options

The choice to intervene during an altercation is one that shouldn't be taken lightly, and if you don't have the jiu-jitsu tools to do so safely, you should probably find a way to help that doesn't land you in a situation you're not capable of handling. Besides tactical empathy, the rear takedown and the arm drag removal are two of our favorite intervention techniques. If you choose not to get physical, you can call for help and/or record the incident for useful evidence down the line.