

Technique: Punch Block Series (Stages 1-4)

Position: Guard

Overview

The ideal position in a ground fight is the mount. If you are unable to maintain the mount, you can use your legs to wrap the opponent in a position called the guard. The guard is the “secret weapon” for any Gracie Jiu-Jitsu practitioner. From the guard, you can apply joint locks and choke holds to subdue even the largest opponent. These submissions can only be executed, however, if you survive long enough to attempt them. With an outraged opponent in your guard, it is almost certain that punches will be thrown at your face from every possible angle. The Punch Block Series will enable you to neutralize all punches and exhaust your opponent until the opportunity arises to execute a sweep or submission. The Punch Block Series is broken down into four stages which you learn individually and in combination with one another.

Technical Slices

1. Stage 1

- **Indicator:** Opponent attempts to punch your face from within your guard
- **Essential Detail:** Effective head control and inside arm positioning
- **Most Common Mistake:** Expending too much energy
- **Core Principles:** Posture (16), Head Control (28)
- **Drill Orders:** Mount start with roll to guard, 15-20 seconds of protection and control, reverse roles

2. Stage 2

- **Indicator:** Opponent pulls their arm back to punch your body or head
- **Essential Detail:** Fill the space with shins and forearms
- **Most Common Mistake:** Too much time spent in Stage 2
- **Bad Guy Reminder:** Sit back on your heels when pulling the punches
- **Core Principles:** Frame (10), Tension (14)
- **Drill Orders:** Guard start, 1-2-1-2-1, reverse roles

3. Stage 3

- **Indicator:** Opponent sits up to generate more powerful punches
- **Essential Detail:** Quick insertion of the knees with extended hips
- **Most Common Mistake:** No face protection in drop to Stage 1
- **Bad Guy Reminder:** Lean forward in Stage 3
- **Core Principles:** Depletion (18), Acceptance (6)
- **Drill Orders:** Guard start, 1-3-1-2-3-1, reverse roles

4. Stage 4

- **Indicator:** Opponent stands up to throw punches
- **Essential Detail:** Slight bend in the knees and toes facing out
- **Most Common Mistake:** Uncontrolled drop of your opponent
- **Core Principles:** Clock (8), Connection (1)
- **Drill Orders:** Guard start, 1-4-1-2-3-4-1, reverse roles

5. Bonus: Guard Get-Up

- **Indicator:** Opponent is in your guard and you must get back to your feet rapidly
- **Essential Detail:** Effective knee shield and 45-degree body angle
- **Most Common Mistake:** Failure to redirect the arm across your body
- **Core Principles:** Buoyancy (27), Redirection (29)
- **Drill Orders:** Guard start, 1 rep, reverse roles

Reflex Development Drill

Practice all variations of the Americana Armlock – Mount (L2) in combination with all variations of the Punch Block Series – Guard (L8)

Mindset Minute

Blocking all the punches and exhausting all of your energy in the process is just as bad as not blocking any punches. Focus as much on relaxing and breathing as you do on neutralizing the strikes against you. Always remember that the final goal is to establish Stage 1 control because it's the safest and the most energy efficient position. The further your opponent is from Stage 1, the less control you have. In future lessons, you will learn other techniques that can be used if your opponent gets past your guard.

Fight Simulation Drill

1. Clinch – Standing – Aggressive Opponent (L7)
2. Leg Hook Takedown – Standing (L6)
3. Take the Back – Mount (L4)
4. Rear Naked Choke – Back Mount – Weak Side (L5)
5. Punch Block Series – Guard – All Stages (L8)