

Technique: Standing Headlock Defense

Position: Standing

Overview

Once you establish the clinch on your opponent, there is a good chance that they will get desperate and try to catch you in a headlock. Without the proper escape strategy, the Standing Headlock can be a very painful and demoralizing experience, but with the proper technique you can turn the tables and use their hold to your advantage.

Technical Slices

1. Standard Variation

- *Indicator:* Opponent catches you in a headlock while standing
- *Essential Detail:* Step, sit, and spin in one fluid motion
- *Most Common Mistake:* Incorrect sitting position and bending the back leg
- *Bad Guy Reminder:* Hold the headlock loosely to protect your partner's neck
- *Safety Tip:* Tighten up your neck muscles for protection
- *Core Principles:* Anchor (25), Momentum (21)
- *Drill Orders:* Headlock start, 1 rep, reverse roles

2. Bonus: Smart Base Variation

- *Indicator:* Opponent establishes a standing headlock while maintaining a very wide stance
- *Essential Detail:* Sitting straight down after the setup step and the through step
- *Most Common Mistake:* Failure to roll to the top position after the takedown
- *Core Principles:* Kuzushi (11), Momentum (21)
- *Drill Orders:* Headlock start, 1 rep, reverse roles

Reflex Development Drill

Practice the

Standing Headlock Defense – Standing (L26)

in combination with all variations of the

Headlock Counters – Mount (L16)

Fight Simulation Drill

1. Clinch – Standing – Conservative Opponent (L15)
2. Standing Headlock Defense – Standing (L26)
3. Headlock Counters – Mount – Armbar Finish (L16)
4. Kimura Armlock – Guard – Rider Variation (L25)
5. Double Ankle Sweep – Guard – Knee Thrust (L20)
6. Armbar – Mount – Standard Variation (L9)

Mindset Minute

Once caught in the headlock, don't hesitate, just step, sit and spin. If you don't go right away, they may take you to the ground and gain the upper hand (forcing you to resort to another technique). Keep in mind that it must be conducted in one smooth motion for the momentum to take full effect.

Street Tip: Bite Prevention

If someone wants to bite you in the course of a fight, it's because they're desperate. To avoid this, always pay attention to where your opponent's mouth is. If you have a control position and they attempt to bite, reposition yourself or use your body to redirect their face so they can't bite you. If you have a submission locked in and they attempt to bite you, never underestimate the power of the submission; give them a little pressure and watch how quickly they release the bite.