

27 Essential Things to Remember As a BJJ White Belt

Everyone can benefit from these.



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A few months ago, I wrote a Twitter thread for Jiu-Jitsu white belts that offered 10 things that I think every white belt should focus on.

If you'd like to read that thread, you can below:



chris wojcik

@chrismwojcik

If I were a Jiu-Jitsu white belt, I'd focus on these 10 things:





3 years ago · Chris Wojcik

In sum, I've spent a lot of time thinking and writing about how I can make the white belt experience better.

I've also taught weeks and weeks (more than a year!) of classes for rooms of mostly white and blue belt students, and this has changed the way I view teaching. This has changed the way that I view white belts.

With that, here's a mega-list of 50 tips that will help white belts reach the next level effectively as possible.

These points are short, so I've linked further reading where possible. Enjoy!

1. [Learn how to increase your training frequency without getting injured.](#)

2. Accept that you're going to get put in a lot of bad positions. Instead of negatir this, focus on defending and escaping these bad positions. *Then* focus on learni to negate these bad positions. This is how you develop confidence.
3. Stop trying to convince all your friends to do Jiu-Jitsu. If a friend wants to do Jitsu, treat them the way you wish you'd been treated in your first few days.
4. Don't date your training partners. Or your coach. For fuck's sake.
5. Buying new gear doesn't make you any better at grappling.
6. Tap frequently and ask questions often.
7. If a gym *makes you* sign a contract, buy their gi, or doesn't offer you at least a week of classes, that's not "smart business", that's a red flag. Determine how many red flags you're okay with before you go train somewhere else.
8. [Buying instructionalis is great](#). It supports up-and-coming grapplers and you will learn important information. Some instructionalis are more beginner friendly than others.
9. If you don't want to pay money for quality content, you will have to sift through some bullshit. [Here's a free resource on learning BJJ that I created that I'm proud of](#).
10. The easiest way to accelerate your progress in Jiu-Jitsu is to decelerate your progress in something else.
11. Most high-level grapplers are complete messes in areas of their life outside the gym. Maybe you're different, but probably not. Decide how much chaos you're willing to deal with to do this well.
12. Don't take advice on maintaining a training schedule from people who are obviously using performance-enhancing drugs to maintain their training schedule.
13. Feed your love for Jiu-Jitsu as much as possible. This will make it harder to quit and easier to progress. White belt is a honeymoon phase—enjoy it. It doesn't last forever.

 forever.

14. **Cross-train frequently.** If your gym doesn't allow you to cross-train, do it anywhere they get mad, go to a new gym. Cross-training is how you make friends, learn new things, and get to experience new environments.
15. **Lift weights.** Strength on the mat is not something to be afraid of. Get strong ([here's how!](#)).
16. **Make yoga/massage/stretch therapy/PT part of your routine.** I did a 10-week yoga class as a white belt and it taught me how to develop the flexibility that I've used for the last 8 years on the mat.
17. **You don't need to be an expert leg locker, but you should definitely try learning some leg locks.** It will only help you in the long run.
18. **Set realistic goals for yourself based on your age, the amount of time you're willing to dedicate to training, and your athletic ability.** If you can't do this, develop the self-awareness to do this.
19. **Become comfortable with the idea of getting tapped out in training every single day for the rest of your time doing Jiu-Jitsu.**
20. **If you want to do Jiu-Jitsu for a long time, focus on balance.** If you want to do Jiu-Jitsu as well as you can as fast as you can, focus on output. The best approach is probably a bit of both.
21. **You need to stay humble, but you can definitely be too humble.** Work on building a healthy relationship with your ego.
22. **Don't let black belts (or any other belt for that matter) treat you badly.** There's no reason to haze another adult just because they're new at something. If someone is an asshole, it's because they're an asshole, not because you're a white belt.
23. **Try competing at least once.** Best case, you'll make a habit out of it. Worst case you'll learn better Jiu-Jitsu.

24. **Don't measure your Jiu-Jitsu progress on the results of sparring sessions alone.** There are too many factors for these judgments to be remotely accurate.
25. **It's okay to keep score if you tap someone, but it's not okay to let that get to your head.** If you can't be competitive without becoming overly competitive and ego be less competitive. Relax.
26. **Get your diet under control.** It doesn't have to be perfect, but you need to be eating enough to train well. Most people tend to lose weight when they start Jiu-Jitsu. If this isn't your goal, eat more.
27. **Try not to think too much.** Jiu-Jitsu is fun. It's easy to get obsessed. Don't let the obsession ruin the joy of it for you. It's the joy *and* the obsession that makes you stay on the mat and keep progressing long-term.



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