

Metadata: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tEcLa3w6wvU>

Now, we're looking at the idea of breaking down a total position, okay? A very important theoretical understanding that will make you better at this skill and enhance your performance out on the mat is a very simple theory, the theory of the clock. We've used this in the past with regards sweeping people from open guard positions, and it was an important part of our understanding is how we sweep people more effectively from open guard. Let's look now at how the same theory gets used to break down a total position. We're going to have our training partner here in front of us, total position facing towards the camera. Okay, let's understand the human body in terms of the face of a clock, okay? Let's take our training partner's center line, the spine running down the middle of the body as the 12 o'clock and the 6 o'clock of the clock. Let's understand our opponent's hip line as the 3 o'clock and the 9 o'clock of the face of the clock, okay? So we've got 12 to 6 and 3 to 9 across the hip line and the center line, okay? Once you understand that, you have officially divided the clock face into 4 quadrants, okay? There is the 9 to 12 quadrant. There is the 12 to 3 quadrant. There is the 3 to 6 quadrant, and there is the 6 to 9 quadrant. Please understand that each one of your opponent's 4 limbs covers one of those quadrants, okay? So my training partner's right arm covers 12 in a forward direction, keep your hand there, so that if I were to push him forward, his right hand would make it very difficult for me to do so, okay? It covers from 12 all the way up to 3, okay? When he covers 3, it gives him tremendous base of support in that direction, okay, and I can't move him as a result, okay? So one arm covers one quadrant. This arm here covers from 12, and once again, it forms a very, very strong base of support out to 9, where once again, it forms a very, very strong base of support, okay? His left leg covers from 9 to 6, and forms a very strong base of support in that quadrant. His right leg forms a very strong, to 3, and all the way back to 6, like so. So you can see, each one of his 4 limbs covers one of the 4 quadrants. Make sense? Now, with that in mind, when it's time to break down a total position, what you've got to do is you've got to pin one of those limbs and roll him into the quadrant that he can't cover. That's what we do. So, for example, if I took this elbow and it went inwards, now this leg comes out and it covers the 9. This hand comes out and covers the 12. So that he's actually pretty strong on the forwards direction. He's actually pretty strong out towards the 9 direction, but interestingly, the quadrant from 12 out to 9 is incredibly weak, okay? Because you took one of your opponent's limbs and rolled him into the quadrant that he couldn't defend, okay? That's always what we do when we go to break down a total position. You take one of your opponent's 4 limbs and block it. Then, knowing that he can't defend that quadrant, the quadrant that that limb is designed to create basic support in, you roll him over that quadrant. So what you start to learn, total position, is that the best directions to roll people are never along the center line, 12 to 6, or across the hip line, 3 to 9. Those are inefficient. Because no matter how strongly you go to push your opponent in that direction, he can always put one limb out to defend, okay? So if I block a sit-up, he's got to take his right hand and grab his own gi. Go back down, total position. So he has no means of supporting the right upper quadrant, okay? But he can block with this leg out wide. So when I try to pull him, here, his right leg makes it impossible, and I can't pull him over. I can't break his base, okay? But it's so easy for me to take him in the diagonal situation towards 10, 30, or towards 4, 30, okay? So the efficient way to break someone down is never along the center line or the hip line. The efficient way is always across the diagonal lines. So that when I block a given limb, that is the direction of efficiency, okay? Once you understand that to attack along the diagonal lines by blocking one limb and taking him to the center of that quadrant, you will be able to break down total positions very easily and very efficiently. But if you try to work along the hip line and the center line, you'll always be frustrated, okay? Here, grab your own jacket. His right arm has been taken away as a base of support with your right leg out. But like an idiot, I'm attacking along the hip line. And so even though I've done a good job of blocking that limb, I can't put him over, okay? I can't do it because he's still got his right leg to save him. But now, if I change direction

and take him in this direction, we break him down so easily, okay? That is the theory of the clock, that the efficient way to attack someone is to take away a limb by bringing it in towards the center line or blocking it, and then rolling him across the diagonal axes, never across the hip line and the center line, but rather put your elbow in tight, the other elbow, and from here, attacking along those diagonal lines. And that is where it suddenly becomes easy to break down total positions. That is the key insight, the key theoretical insight that's going to make you not just theoretically better, but practically better out on the mats where it counts. Understand the theory of the clock and you will understand exactly what you need to do anytime it's time to break down a tough, resisting opponent from total position.