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Okay guys, I'm here today with the great Joe Daniel, a huge honor for me. I came here to New York City and I couldn't lose the opportunity to beat him on the mat and learn from him a little more. So today we're gonna pretty much talk about it here, like what's the blue belt in Jiu Jitsu? Like what are the concepts about the blue belt? What do they should know? And what's our thoughts on it, Joe? We were talking about that a little earlier. You're like, when are you going to put that in the video? Yeah, one of the distinguishing characteristics of Brazilian Jiu Jitsu is that it has a very informal belt structure and a relatively simple one. It's just blue, purple, brown, black. There's not a large number of belts and there's no set criteria as to what constitutes a blue belt, purple belt, etc. So there's a natural question for people to ask, okay, what does it mean to say this guy's a blue belt? What did he do to deserve this? The whole idea of a blue belt is interesting when you think about it. It's the first belt you get in Jiu Jitsu which is based on merit. When you walk in the door and begin to study, you're a white belt, they just give you the belt. It doesn't matter what you know or what you don't know, you just get the belt when you start it. But blue belt is the first where you're getting it not arbitrarily, but because you've achieved something in the eyes of your instructor. He's looking at you and saying, okay, this guy deserves this belt. The question of course becomes, well, what did you do to deserve it? What we could do here is offer some kind of artificial set of moves. If you know these 15 moves, you're a blue belt. And if we said that, we'd be liars because there's no one set of moves where if you know them, it guarantees you're a blue belt. Ultimately, the decision will be based upon considerations like how well you do against your peers in a white belt class. There will be certain moves that you are expected to know, but there's a lot of flexibility about that. There are some people who clearly deserve to be a blue belt who don't know certain moves. Other people who also deserve to be a blue belt will know a different set of moves. So we can't say, okay, if you know these small set of moves, you are definitely a blue belt. I'm never going to give that as an answer. What I will say is there are certain skills that you should be able to perform against people of your own experience level, which will demarcate you from white belt to blue belt. For example, I've always believed the primary skill that any blue belt should have is the ability to escape from someone of roughly similar training experience at will. If you're in a class of white belts and if someone gets on top of you and pins you down and you can't get out, you're not a blue belt. Your first skill that you must develop is the ability to, when you're working with your peers, people of roughly the same training experience as you, you've got to be able to get out of bad positions. If you're struggling with that, it's going to be a major issue for you as you go further into the sport. That will be probably the first and most important skill you'll want to work on as a blue belt. Another key theme of being a blue belt, of showing that maturity, is that you have an equal propensity to be effective from both top and bottom position. The sport of Jiu-Jitsu clearly works along the idea that it's neutral between top and bottom position. You should be equally effective in both. If you're in a situation where you can only win when you're on top and you can never win when you're on bottom, it's going to be hard for me to grade you as a blue belt. You can have a preference. There's nothing wrong with that. You can prefer bottom position or prefer top position. But you can't be completely ineffective at one. You must have some kind of effective game plan from both top and bottom position. That's another distinguishing characteristic of a blue belt. Another key thing that I'm looking for, you've got to have some kind of effective offense. You've got to be able to go out there and beat people. By the time you get to blue belt, you should be able to beat people in the room among your peers. You've got to be able to get out of bad positions, you've got to be effective from bottom position, you've got to be effective from top position, and you've got to be able to finish someone. With that in mind, let's look at some good examples of moves which I would be pretty worried if I met someone who claimed to be a blue belt and they didn't have a good working knowledge of the moves we're about to look at. I won't say that there's a set number of moves that you have to know

which will, by definition, make you a blue belt. But there are some moves where if you didn't know them and have a good working knowledge of them, it would be grounds for frowning upon a blue belt if it were awarded to you. Let's look first at escaping. If there's one thing that I think the entire Jiu-Jitsu community would agree on with regards to giving a blue belt, it would be that the elbow escape is the single most important defensive movement that you must learn. If you don't know this by the time you're a blue belt, you shouldn't be wearing that blue belt. I think that's one thing that we all agree on. Let's look first at the elbow escape. There are many manifestations of the elbow escape. We're going to look at one from side position and then quickly show a variation from mounted position because it can be used in many different ways. When someone is across my side, I can never have my elbows on the outside of my opponent's body here, where they are now. This puts me in a completely ineffective position to move out of here. Banano brings his body in tight to mine and holds me down. The first thing is I want to take the arm that is closest to my opponent and start to wedge my elbow as a frame inside my opponent's hip, just like so. At the same time, I want to take my knee on the same side as my opponent's body and start to wedge it against the hip on the other side, so that Banano feels in his left hip my forearm and elbow. He feels in his right hip my knee and thigh. I take my foot higher than my own knee, like so. As a result, every time I go to shrink away from my opponent to create space, I create an angular movement of my right leg that fits inside the geometry of Banano's hip. It makes it very easy for me to bring my elbow and knee together. If Banano sits up and away from me, and I bring the camera over here, you'll see that my elbow and knee form a V-shaped frame between myself and my opponent. That's what we're looking for. Once again, my opponent is here on top and he brings everything in close. Right now, my elbow is in a completely ineffective position. We're going to turn and bring our elbow inside as a frame just inside our training partner's hip. Now we're going to take our knee and do the same thing at the hip on the opposite side. I bring my foot higher than my knee, so that as I go to move away from my opponent, it's very easy for me to bring my knee and elbow together. If I did not have my foot higher than my hip, when I try to bring my knee inwards, it just runs into Banano's hip and I'll never penetrate inside the hip and bring my elbow and knee together. If I try to bring it on the floor, his knee will always walk me out. The ideal place of entry is here at the hip, and the ideal angle is downwards. So I have my foot higher than my knee to do exactly that. Once we do this, now we're in a position where I can start to push on my training partner's body. As a result, we can start to square up with the man. Now I'm going to bring the camera on this side. From here, I just take my foot and place it inside my training partner's leg. Now we'll bring the camera out on this side. From here, as I block with the leg, I plant my right foot on the floor, and as a result, I completely square up to my training partner. Once we square up in this position, there's no reason why I have to stay on my back. We're going to head a forward shift, where I lift my training partner and sit up. With our back off the floor, we're now in a position where we can start getting into some serious offense. We can switch from a defensive situation into an offensive situation. So once again, we start off. Here, I'm 100% defensive. The basis of my defense is my ability to form an effective frame inside the hip and get my elbow in good position. Then my knee goes into a good position here at my training partner's hip. My foot higher than my knee, so every time I'm going to move out, I can form that V-shaped frame very, very easily. Now from here, I start to push and square up to my training partner. As we make that squaring up action, it's relatively simple for us now to drop into a butterfly guard. Then from here, look how I use a forward shift. I take my knees back towards myself, and we sit up. Now our back's off the floor, and we're ready to play offense. You've gone from a 100% defensive situation into one where now we can realistically play an offensive game. If my opponent were mounted on me... Now the situation's a little different. As he comes in here, locks out, probably going to have his other arm out wide for base. Again, I can't have my elbows in an imperfect position here on the outside. Rather, what I want to do is take my hand... Let's bring the camera on this side.

My left hand goes here to the hip. My right hand goes underneath my training partner's stomach. I give a little bump so that I can form an effective frame here at my training partner's hip. Without his feet, we're probably in tight. From here, we're going to come up and drive. Like so. With my hand or elbow inside his knee, I take my foot higher than my knee. My knee comes through very easily. I plant my foot down on the floor and I start to turn out in the opposite direction. Now, my knee pops in here at the hip. I shrimp out another time. As a result, we're going to close our guard around our opponent and end up in a good, safe position. No longer in the mount. One more time. From here, I take my hand. I give a little bump so I can form my frame. Now, with my left elbow inside my training partner's knee, I hit an asymmetrical bridge over my left shoulder. It puts my knee inside his knee. Now, we come out in the opposite direction. I bring my knee in front of his hip. I move my body out and lock up a nice, closed guard. This would be two good examples of an elbow sweep. One from side position, one from mounted position. That would be one of the absolute key skills we would expect you to have as a developing blue belt. Now, when it comes time for positional attacks, if we're in bottom position, it's a wonderful thing for us to sweep an opponent over from bottom position and gain top position. Again, the idea is that we have to be effective from both top and bottom position. If there was one move that I would expect most blue belts to be starting to work towards mastery, it would probably be the hook sweep or sumigation. This is an amazing move, particularly effective when someone is down on two knees, although there are variations that can be used on a standing opponent. It's typically used in situations where an opponent is on one or both of his knees, directly in front of us, working from a butterfly guard, and we can sweep our opponent over and take top position. Let's have a look now at sumigeshi or the hook sweep. The basic idea here, there are many different ways we use it, both with and without a gi. I'll show one which works particularly well. This is the idea of taking an overback grip with my two hands close to each other. I get a straight lapel grip. I switch to a cross lapel grip. When I get a pull on my training partner's body, this will always expose my training partner's belt. We hook in, not down the middle, but slightly off to one side, just like so. After bringing the camera around this side, I position my head here at my training partner's shoulder. So my head goes from one side of Bernardo's head across to the other. Now we're going to take either a forefinger grip on top of our training partner's wrist, or a three-finger grip here underneath the wrist. They're both good options. You can go with either one here. My whole thing now is to get my shoulder down to the mat. So as I start to fall back, I come down to his shoulder. I never fall flat on my back. I want to be on my side here. You can see what's happening here. It starts a tilting action on Bernardo, where his hips are starting to get exposed to the ceiling. Now, I take my bottom foot and I curl my toes down to the mat. So that I can use my right foot to push off the mat, while my left foot engages in a lifting action. And between those two things, a strong drive off the mat and a strong lift, I take my opponent not over directly to the side, but rather to my front corner. What I want to do is open my body outwards, so his head goes down towards me. Outwards, so his head goes down towards the mat. And you can see now, pushing off the floor, lifting with my left foot, and looking in the direction of the sweep, creates a very strong lifting action that gives me top position. So once again, we have an opponent here with two knees in front of us. I go through, I take a cross grip with my two hands close together. A good pull will always expose his belt to us. I bring my head across, I take either three finger or four finger grip and lock in like so. My first commitment is down to his shoulder. As his forehead comes down towards the mat, we want to push off the floor and bring our body up like so. And as a result, we can walk the man over. I'm just going to demonstrate one solo, so that you can see it without obstruction. The pattern here is once we get our grips, I commit to a shoulder first. Then I use my bottom foot off the mat, don't have a dead foot down on the floor. Actively use the ball of your foot to push and get yourself up to your knees. This is the lifting position. It's tough work to lift people from your hip. You can do it, but it takes a lot of pulling from the part of your arms. What we want to do is draw the

man forward and come up into a superior lifting position like so. So that my hips are up off the floor and it's from here that we do our best lifting. So once again, we have an opponent here in front of us. We go through and expose the belt. Now I get my second grip right here at the sleeve. Now I commit down to his shoulder. And from here, you can put your left leg out for base if you want, but good. A lot of your opponents will be looking to do this to base out. Look how I use my right foot to come all the way up off the floor. And as a result, we can lift and drive our man over, take a nice top position. So this would be a fine example of a high percentage method of reversing someone from bottom position. Now, we also said that we need to be effective in top position. Now, when it comes to being effective in top position in the school of Jiu-Jitsu, probably the single most important skill we need to learn is to get past your opponent's legs and pass their guard. Okay? Now, there are a mountain of different techniques we can use to pass someone's guard. But one which I would insist that almost all move ups be highly effective at, even if it's not your favorite pass, someone's going to be using it against you on a regular basis. So even as a defensive measure, you should have knowledge of this move. This would be a move often used, the term often used here is a knee slice guard pass. We use a knee to cut diagonally across your opponent's hip and pass their guard. Okay? So let's have a look at this now. We have an opponent who's in a seated guard in front of us. As we go in towards our man, we're going to go through and take a good lapel grip here on our training partner like so, okay? I'm going to get a hold of my training partner's knee pads here on the outside. Make a strong body movement. I'm going to give a little push so that Bernardo's feet become light, okay? Just off the floor. I'm going to start a circular run over to the side so that I can step inside my training partner's legs. And I stuff my training partner's leg in just like so. He will be doing everything he can to bring knees in close like so. I want to bring my elbow and knee close together and sit down into a position right here, okay? My intention is to bring his knees down towards the floor and my elbow and knee close together. When I do this, I turn my hand so that my palm goes up to the ceiling. I don't want palm down here, okay? We go in just like so. That makes it a much better connection of knee and elbow. Now, from Bernardo's perspective, he's going to want to hook his leg around. I don't want that, okay? So very often I'll post to make sure that he doesn't form an effective connection with his right foot so he doesn't have an effective De La Riva hook here, okay? Now, what we want to do is get a hold of our training partner's arm, preferably above the elbow, but this, too, is also a pretty good grip. My intention now is to get my right knee down to the mat. When Bernardo tries to bring a knee shield in, it's difficult because of my elbow and knee position. If there were deficiencies there, it could cause problems for me. So it's important that elbow and knee come close together, okay? Once we work in this position, we're going to start to drive this shoulder to the mat. So as my opponent makes a strong defensive body here, I'm going to pull up on his arm and I'm going to post on his shoulder and bring my knee down to the mat like so. Bernardo's last option now is to try and hook onto my foot as best he can, okay? So it's going to be his best option here. As we drive on through, I'm going to take my foot and post right here on my training partner's knee. As my elbow comes down, we slide on through and then we pivot. Off my knee, across, and into a strong pinning position, okay? So once again, we start off with a seated opponent. We come in towards our man and we take a pal grip and a pan grip. From here, I push so that his feet become light on the mat and I start a circular run that gets me into position where I can bring his knee down to the floor, turn my palm up and get elbow and knee close together. So when Bernardo tries to lock a knee shield, it's quite difficult. Now we go in. I want to create a turning action with a strong, resisting body, Bernardo. I want to turn his shoulders down to the mat and I want to drive my knee down to the floor. When he tries to hook onto my foot here, it's quite easy for me now to swing the camera to the other side. Take my elbow underneath his armpit and swing the camera to the other side. Now my foot comes here to my training partner's knee and we start a quick kick out. Now, a common thing here is people will start sliding out. Then Bernardo can now turn in either

direction. He can elbow escape, he can sit up, do all kinds of things, okay, because there's too much space. So instead, from here, with my knee enclosed to his body, he tries to turn towards me, the knee will always block him and we just pivot off that knee. And as a result, we end up with a nice pass, okay? Now there are many variations of this move, but this is a good working one to start your guard passing with, okay? Now, the last skill that we want to be developing as we go through our blue belt training cycle is the idea of some kind of offense. You should have some move that makes you dangerous to the other guy. We saw our first thing is defensive skills. You've got to learn how to get out of pins. The elbow escape is the king method of all of us, probably the least controversial out of any of the things we've seen so far. The next skill, you've got to have some kind of strong positional skills from bottom position, which usually means sweeping people. We saw one excellent method, the hook sweep, or sumigeshi. Then we looked at top skills, the skill of getting past your opponent's legs. And we looked at one very, very effective method. This is the knee slice method. So, one variation of that. Now, the last skill is one where we actually go out and start attacking the other guy. Probably the best one for us to work with is a strangle from behind someone, okay? Now, whenever we work with a jacket, as much as possible, we want to use the jacket in the act of strangulation. Everyone likes really good strangles. They're a wonderful thing when we work without a jacket, but they are inherently less efficient than using the incredible strangle potential of the lapels. The lapels are literally like a noose around your opponent's neck, and it's important for your development. You get used to the idea of using these to strangle. They are far more efficient and more effective than your arms. So, when someone's wearing a jacket, make sure that's the direction you're going, okay? Now, let's quickly close in on the idea of an effective strangle from the back. Whenever we go here, I want to use my training partner's jacket as efficiently as possible. I never want to use the flat area of the collar for strangulation. I always want to use the blade of the collar, which is much more narrow and is much more effective as a strangle instrument. So, we always want to be able to turn the collar down. The way we do this is by using two-on-one methods, where when I get behind someone, one hand goes under his arm and one hand goes over, okay? So, this is always our starting position. When we go here, I place my thumb right on my training partner's collarbone. A common tendency many people have is to reach across and try and grab. Then they start grabbing way too much cloth. It creates very, very inefficient strangle surfaces where you're using the flat of the collar to strangle instead of the blade. What I should do is plant my thumb and feed the thumb with the lapel. So, left hand feeds right thumb. Don't just go in with right hand and now you've got a very inefficient grip, okay? Place the thumb, feed it with the left hand. You can see what's happening. The blade of the collar is going right on Bernardo's neck. Then from here, we use the biting method to bite my hand into a superior grip. Don't just go in with the first grip you get, okay? My opponent can easily peel the hand down and make things very hard for me, okay? Place the thumb, feed it, and the biting method creates a strong connection. When my opponent goes to pull that grip off, good luck. It's gonna be tough, okay? Now my second hand goes across and grabs lower down on the opposite lapel. That takes the slack out of the collars. Understand that there's a lot of slack here, okay? It's like a noose around your opponent's neck. When it's time to strangle, you wanna take that slack out. So first, place the thumb, feed it, block it, use the biting method to set a secure grip, and then go hunting for the second lapel. Take the second lapel down towards the crotch. All the slack goes out of the jacket, okay? And from here, the hands are now properly set. Step one is the hands. We've seen how to do that. Step two is the legs. The single greatest advantage of learning to strangle with the collars is that you can employ the strength of your legs into the strangle. When we go in with rear naked strangles from here, I can only use the strength of my arms and back. Puts a limit on how effective my strangles can be, okay? But when we work down on the mat like so, now I can start to employ my legs into the strangle. By placing a leg over my training partner's shoulder and the second leg across the hip, now when the outer goes to pull

away from me, you can push across the leg. And now I can push my opponent's head forward into the strangle and create tremendous strangulation pressure, far more so than any rear naked strangle. So once again, we start off behind our opponent. First, the hand feed. We go in on a training partner, two on one, one under, one over, and I place the thumb and feed it, turning the very, very hard and very, very thin edge of the collar onto my opponent's carotid arteries, okay? Never the flat. We use the biting method to go up into a very strong strangulation position. Then I go across, I take the slack out of the jacket. As I place my training partner down towards the floor, I want to employ my legs as part of the strangle, okay? That means a foot goes across the hip, a second foot goes out, goes over the bicep, so my hamstring is over the shoulder. So my leg can engage in a push where my whole body hangs off my training partner, and as a result, bring the camera in closely, you can perform one finger strangles. Here, I have just an index finger on board like so, and then as I sit back, we can easily strangle for the finish, okay? Done in this fashion, you're maximizing the use of your hands and, indeed, your entire body, in particular, the all-important lower body, so that your body weight and the strength of your legs is engaged in a strangle where a rock-hard and extremely thin noose is put around your opponent's neck. That will create a strangle pressure far beyond any rear naked strangle, okay? If the gi's there, use it. Make it a part of your offense. Of all the strangles, there's no question that the most high percentage, and the safest in terms of positional strategy, tactics, et cetera, et cetera, are strangles from the back. So, as a developing blue belt, I would insist on the idea you've got to have a good strangle from the back. That would be my logic for developing blue belts. We can't give an actual curriculum, because that's a very artificial kind of way to think about it. There's gonna be variations. Yeah, but it was a very good idea to understand that the person has to have a good bottom game, good top game, good escapes, and good submissions. And while you were talking, I was even thinking, like, for example, one person who does wrestling. Maybe he has a good top game, but he doesn't have escapes. He doesn't have submissions. Now, he might be very tough in the gym, provided he can get his favorite positions. He's not yet a blue belt, he's not yet complete. Yes, he doesn't have the audience. If you went against a better wrestler, you would be exposed. I agree. So, there's that sense in which you've got to cover those four bases. That's a very good call. And we looked at four high-percentage ways to do that. Yeah, and also, the person knows those four topics like, good enough, he might be in that level, that he's the blue belt, and so on, purple, and... And you could even get fancy now and start saying, if he could exhibit those four skill areas and actually help some of his fellow white belts, in other words, he's starting to teach, then he's definitely getting towards blue belt level. If he can make someone else better, then at that point, he's starting to show. Okay, this guy's got some maturity now. I got it. Yeah, even when you were explaining that, before you mentioned Finnish people, you mentioned big people. And I was thinking, that's true. Like, in order for him to become blue belt, he got to be able to at least do well against somebody. You got to be dangerous. Yeah, I know. You got to take someone who's your own experience level, and you got to be dangerous to them. If you're not dangerous, you're not there yet. The first thing, you got to be able to disarm the danger from the other guy. You got to have defense, okay? I would say this again, because it's so important. If you're in a room full of white belts, and some of those white belts are pinning you down and holding you down as long as they want, you're not ready for blue belt. Okay? I don't care what else you've got in your game, you've got to be able to get out of bad situations. You've got to be equally good from top and bottom position, and you got to be a little bit dangerous. You got to be able to finish people. You can do those four things, and do them competently, do them well, and do them under stress in a sparring situation, you're looking good for promotion. And Joe, you just talked about escapes, and I was just thinking here, the very first video of your Go For The Fastest program, the fundamentals one, is the pin escapes, right? And it was first for a reason. Yeah. Oh, I got it. Yeah, so guys, we are building the entire series if you draw

about the Go For The Faster, so make sure to check that out at bjjfanatics.com. And thanks so much, Joe, that was amazing. It was a great explanation. Even though I have a black mouth, it was great to hear this way of explaining, those four topics, it was very, very clear to understand. So thanks so much, Joe, appreciate it. Please help me out to grow my YouTube channel. Just click subscribe. And to watch more videos, just click under see more videos. I hope you enjoyed. BJJfanatics.com, use the promo code YouTubeFaria to get 10% off any instructional video. Improve your jiu-jitsu faster.