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Okay guys, I'm here today with John Denning again, huge honor for me. Guys, John today is going to show us how to do the perfect guard retention and that's the next instructional we are launching for his fundamental series. So today he's going to show us here how to do the perfect guard retention. And guys, guard retention, in my opinion, is one of the most important parts in Jiu-Jitsu because if you have a good guard retention you're going to be able to attack or open for a much longer time than anybody else. So John, can you explain a little more? With regards to guard retention, I'd probably say, Bernardo, you're a teacher as much as you are an athlete, it's probably the single most difficult skill to teach beginning students in all of Jiu-Jitsu. I see probably more frustration out of people trying bottom position, especially early in their development, and feeling there's no broad program for them to follow. It's something you kind of figure out over time. And some people get it and some people don't. And the sad thing is that most people tend to dismiss it as a body-related skill. They say, well, flexible guys, it's easy for them, so they're good at retaining guard, but me, I'll never do it, I'm not flexible. So they answer everything in terms of physiological qualities. When in fact, if it's taught well, it can be learned like any other skill in a relatively short period of time. I would say, probably, if you were brought up in Jiu-Jitsu or anything like me, Bernardo, we were taught the move-for-move method of guard retention. This is the idea that I'm supposed to identify what guard marks my opponent uses against me, I identify the move, and I counter that move. So say, for example, Bernardo Faria goes into an over-under guard pass. He goes in, establishes his grips. My job here is to first ascertain, again, what kind of guard pass is he using. I identify it as an over-under guard pass. We look for various kinds of weaknesses. We understand it's an over-under guard pass. There's certain kinds of weaknesses we can exploit. For example, there's a danger if Bernardo's two knees are on the ground, as they are now, that the man might be off-balance in a given direction, so that a foot can come out, and now we can start threatening triangles or what have you. You can see what's happening here. First, we identify the guard pass, the specific guard pass being used against us. Then we correlate that with a weakness associated with that guard pass, and we counter the specific move with a specific counter. So this requires, on our part, an ability to quickly identify what is the threat, and then bring out a kind of a rehearsed set of counters to the threat that we've identified. Now, that works okay. It's not a disaster. It certainly can work. I will teach aspects of that on the video, but it's difficult to apply the old-fashioned move-for-move method on a skilled opponent, because they will often change what guard pass they're using, the angle of it, the direction of force, which side they're applying it on. Guard passing is one of the most dynamic skill sets in all of Jiu-Jitsu. Things happen quickly. If I have to identify the move, then bring in a set of specific counters to that specific move, it always feels like you're a day late and a dollar short. You're always chasing what the other guy's doing. You're reacting to what he's doing, and you feel like eventually, if the guy just keeps changing direction and speed enough, he's just going to break through and pass your guard. So people often end up getting frustrated with the old move-for-move method. Most of the focus of this instructional series is on a conceptual method, where we tend to look at broad concepts involved in guard passing and guard retention, so that people have a general picture, a set of heuristic rules, as it were, on what they ought to be doing, based upon where their opponent is moving, that apply in a wide variety of situations. So the set of rules that we're going to give you, or the set of insights that we're going to give you, would apply against many different kinds of guard pass. So it wouldn't matter so much if your opponent switched from one passing method to another passing method rapidly, because these general principles hold true for whatever kind of guard pass your opponent is employing. One of these principles that we spend a lot of time on in the video is the idea that there are six fundamental requirements that my opponent must satisfy if he's going to pass my guard. Our job is to fight our opponent along all six of these requirements. Understand that as your opponent

satisfies more and more of these six requirements, he becomes more and more of a threat to us as a guard passer. So if he's only satisfied with one or two requirements, there's not much threat. We don't need to react that much to what he's doing. But as he accumulates one, two, three, four, five of the requirements of passing the guard, now there's a serious threat. Your opponent has almost passed your guard. And now we need to start taking more and more risks in order to prevent our opponent from passing. Understand always that the ultimate goal of every guard pass is some kind of chest exposure. If I position my body in such a way that my chest is never exposed, my elbows and knees are close together. Even if Bernardo gets an angle on me and starts coming around to the side, provided my knees and elbows are close together, it's going to be tougher to establish some kind of pin control on top of me. But if my knees and elbows ever move to the side, my chest becomes exposed. And that's when the problems start. That's when people start passing your guard. Now the temptation under these circumstances is to trade off, if someone's coming around the corner getting an angle on us, chest exposure for back exposure. So for example, I could come up and expose my back to my opponent. I haven't exposed my chest, so that's good. But on the other hand, I've taken a risk here. I've exposed my back. And often you'll see in competition, people avoid chest exposure by doing something worse, back exposure. So if we are going to expose our back, we need to manage it in a way where it's done in a safe fashion. So playing those two, chest exposure and back exposure, against each other is a big, big part of the final stages of guard retention. We'll be spending a lot of time on that in the video. But first, let's look at just what these six requirements are and what we should be doing as someone who's interested in retaining guard and how we can use knowledge of these six fundamental requirements to become better at guard retention. The first requirement that my opponent must satisfy if he's going to begin passing my guard is he must break whatever connection that I have to him. What does this mean? As a general rule, when someone goes to work and passes our guard, say for example we have a standing opponent, I want to be connected to my opponent. If I can create four strong points of connection to my opponent, it's going to be very difficult for him to pass my guard. I have four limbs with which to connect to my opponent. If all four are connected strongly to his upper body or lower body or what have you, it's going to be hard for him to pass. So for example, a basic example here, here I have two points of connection at my training partner's sleeve cuffs. If I come into a situation where I thread a lasso through on my training partner and then a spidey guard, now I have four points of connection. My left and my right hand are connected at the cuffs, my right foot is connected at the bicep, and my left foot through at the lat muscle. Now if Bernardo started moving around to his left hand side, you'll see that I'm connected to him. So wherever he goes, I go. If he switches direction and goes to the right hand side, same thing. Because I have four solid points of connection, there's no danger that my opponent will be able to form an angle on me. If he tries to come directly forward, that's not going to work because he runs right into my legs. If he starts to move back and away, my hand is holding him in place. And as a result, we can start moving this man around and getting the man out of balance. So as long as I hold four points of connection, my opponent is not going to be passing my guard. So the first thing that my opponent must satisfy is to break the four points of connection. So say for example, he came in and broke the four points of connection. Now, I only have two points of connection on Bernardo, my hands, and that is not enough. Now, if Bernardo started going in, he's established his first prerequisite, he's broken the four points of connection. The second requirement is that Bernardo must have a working grip upon my body. If Bernardo has no grip upon my body, it's going to be very hard for him to pass my guard. If he moves to an angle, it's so easy now for me just to catch and control him and just realign my body with him. Things change when Bernardo starts getting grips on my body. Here, he's established one of the most commonly seen forms of grip, a double pant grip on the inside. Now, when he starts to move, it's hard for my legs to follow him because my legs are being controlled by his grip. So that's our second

requirement. First, he's got to break the four points of connection. Second, he's got to get a strong working grip upon my body, usually at the legs in this kind of scenario. Now, the third thing he's going to need is angle. If my opponent just comes straight towards me, no angle, he just comes right into my legs and he's into my guard. So to some degree, he needs to get an angle on me. The next thing he needs to do is close distance. If he closes distance, now things are starting to get interesting. So we see the first thing he's got to do is break the four points of connection, establish his grips. Then from here, he gets angle and closes distance. He's satisfied four of the prerequisites. Now, the next one, level. He's got to bring his chest down towards my chest. Even if he drops to his knees here, as long as his chest makes no contact with me, he's never going to bust my guard. He's got to come down with the chest or alternatively...

his knee to my stomach. As a general rule, chest-to-chest is a little more controlling than knee-to-stomach, so most athletes tend to favor that in modern-day competition. Okay, and now the last thing my opponent needs, the sixth thing, the sixth requirement of guard passing. As he comes around, he gets angled, closes distance, changes level down. Now he's got to pin my head and shoulders to the mat. He's got to form wedges around my head and shoulders, and he must hold at least one of my shoulders to the mat for at least three seconds. If he can do that, he's officially passed my guard. Okay, so once again, the six requirements of guard passing. First things first, as long as I have four points of solar connection to my opponent, he's not going to be passing my guard. Wherever he goes, I'm connected to him and I'll go with him. Okay, so he's first got to break that connection. As the connection breaks, he's got to establish a working grip. So step number one, break the four points of connection. Step number two, get a working grip upon my body, because without grip, I can easily follow his movement. If he's not connected to me through grip, wherever he goes, I will easily be able to follow. Okay, we've got to go up and cause all kinds of problems for him. So step number two, he's got to establish grip. Step number three, he's got to create angle and close distance. Step number four, distance. And now step number five, he's got to level change down. He can level change with his chest, that's the most commonly seen method. Some people like to level change down with the knee to stomach, a little less common, but still very effective. And then finally, he's got to establish control of my head and shoulders. And if he can do that, and hold one of my shoulders down on the mat for six seconds, sorry, for three seconds, then he's officially passed my guard. Okay, so six requirements that Bernardo Faria needs to satisfy, or anyone else for that matter, to pass my guard. So what's our job as the man interested in guard retention? You have to fight your opponent at all six of those steps, and understand very clearly that the more of those steps that your opponent satisfies, the more threat he becomes to you, and the more extreme your defensive measures have to become. The more risks you have to take, all the way up to back exposure, if you're going to prevent your opponent from scoring points on you. Okay, so let's have a look at how this might play out. From a situation where we start off, and Bernardo has broken the four points of connection, okay, as he starts to come around the corner and form angle and close distance. From here, I know what he needs next, okay, he's broken the four points of connection, he's gotten solid working grips on me, and he's closed distance, and he's formed an angle. So we know what's next, he's got to bring this level down, he's got a level change on us. So what do we want to do under these circumstances? We want to start framing on our opponent. As he comes around the corner, we're going to use a forearm frame on our training partner's bicep. Why the bicep? Because ultimately, he's got to get control of our head. So we want to make sure we have control of the arm that will be controlling our head. It's going to make it hard for him, okay. Now from here, we're going to bring our knees up to our chest, and we're going to use, as Bernardo passes my right leg, we're going to use our left leg to come over the top, and left foot touches my right hand. So we form a scissor with our legs, just like so, okay. If Bernardo tries to level change now, he comes right onto my legs. This is not really in his best interest, and from here, it's an easy thing for

us to start moving people and sweeping them, okay. So once Bernardo comes around to that angle, okay, we start using frames on our opponent. From here, a forehand frame on my training partner's bicep, and a frame on my own knee. When Bernardo goes to push my knees to the side, my left hand makes it difficult for him to move the knees, and then we start using our outside legs so that as he passes one leg, the other leg comes to the rescue, and we form a scissor action. Now, with my legs scissored like this, if Bernardo goes to move in this direction, my left leg keeps me aligned. If Bernardo goes to move in this direction, my right leg keeps me aligned, and all that remains at this point is to realign, and then of course, where do we want to finish? Back with four points of connection. Once we have four points of connection on our training partner, now when he goes to move left or right, we're connected again, and as a result, he's going to have to go through all those steps and sequences again, okay. It doesn't matter where the four points of connection are, so long as we have them, we're good, we're connected, now we're going to be able to retain guard, okay. So once again, we have an opponent who's done a good job of breaking the four points of connection, establishing his grip, so he's got two of the six requirements satisfied already, then he comes around to an angle, closes distance, there's two more. As he goes to level change, we put in a frame, so as he goes to level change down, that frame will hold him just long enough, it's not going to hold him forever, but because my knee and elbow are close together, it's a fairly strong frame, now we scissor our legs. As the legs scissor, they catch our opponent, and they offer the opportunity now to create space where we can misalign, and now find ourselves in a position where we can go back and start counterattacking. Now, understand that when we go to frame on people, there are different ranges of frame. We just looked at a forehand frame, that's the longest range out of all the various frames that we had, the entire length of my arm. What if my opponent gets further down, closer to me, and I can't frame with my forehand? Then we go to forearm frames. So, let's say for example, Renato's down on two knees, and from here he throws my legs to the side and starts coming in. You see he's pretty close now, he's so close in fact, it's going to be very difficult for me to use a forehand frame. Whenever we see this kind of thing going on, we go to forearms. Now, a forearm frame is half the length of a forehand frame, and as a result it deals better with close proximity. So, we come in here, and we get inside. Now, I'm going to take a reverse shrimping motion. I reach for the floor, and I pull my body around the corner, almost to a north-south position, and as a result we can spin underneath our training partner, and once again we form a scissor. Our legs are scissored once again, and as a result, when Renato goes to move around, we're connected to him through that scissor action, and now we can go in and retain our guard, forming four points of connection in the usual kind of fashion. The last element is where our opponent blasts all the way through and almost lands chest-to-chest to us. So, now we're going to use a third kind of frame. No longer a forehand frame, no longer a forearm frame. He's so close now, we go to a backhand frame, where we put our hand on our chest, so the back of our hand is between his chest and my chest. I put my hand like so on my head to protect my head from being controlled. So, Renato's on two knees, and he throws my legs to the side. He comes all the way in. I just put my hands in this position. So, now when Renato goes to control my head and shoulders, I have the inside position. So, he never gets a cross face in place. Now, my hand goes through, becomes an underhook, as he comes chest-to-chest on top of me. He gets chest-to-chest, but I have the inside position, and as a result, I can come up. As I get up to my base, I make sure I control Renato's legs. If I don't, my back is exposed in a way which is destructive, and Renato can take my back. So, it's important we go in and we control our training partner's leg. Now, from here, there's many ways for us to go into counter-offense, but an easy way for things to work is for me to slide knee-to-knee, step over my training partner's leg, and once again, we're back in guard. So, we learn to retain guard in that emergency situation that the guy has almost passed. So, once again, Renato's on two knees. He casts my legs to the side. I come into this defensive position here. As he goes to get a hold of my

head, I hit the inside position, so he never really gets a crossface. I go through. I get an underhook. I shoot up to my base. Now, as he tries to run to my back, I have a single leg, and as a result, we can easily sit down and put this guy back in some form of guard and re-establish four points of connection. So, you can see, as my opponent gets closer and closer and the threat becomes greater and greater, we have to start taking a few more risks all the way towards back exposure in order to prevent what will ultimately result in your opponent passing the guy, which is to expose your chest to his chest in a way we can land chest-to-chest and pin you. So, there you have it. The six requirements that my opponent must satisfy in order to pass my guard. Your job as the guard retainer is to fight him along each six of each step of the way. Six steps, fight him along each one of them. As your opponent gets further and further along those six steps, you've got to take more and more risks, all the way to the point where you may even have to expose your back, but if you do so, let's make it manageable. We have some element where the back exposure is within acceptable limits of risk, and in this way, you'll be very effective at retaining guard against resistance. So, guys, I think this is what John does the best, right? He takes like a simple concept that many people know and he puts that as a system, right? So, for example, I have done guard retention all my life, but I had never thought in this way that he just explained it, about like the four points connection and the six parts as he showed. So, it's very, very cool and I think it's much easier for us to understand, and also something is easy to understand, it's easy to learn, right, John? Yeah, it's easy to put into operation. Yeah, no, I love it. Thanks so much, John. Appreciate it. So, guys, guard retention is the second part of the Fundamentals series, Go Fuller Faster, and we are hoping to launch it in July 2019, so I hope you guys enjoy it. Thank you so much again, John. BJJFanatics.com. Use the promo code YOUTUBEFARIA to get 10% off any instructional video. Improve your jiu-jitsu faster.

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