

Metadata: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XGBHXO-EMk0>

You're here because you've seen Gordon Ryan use leg pummeling tactics to float over his opponent's guard, as well as toriando passing with beautiful footwork. And we've also seen him use tight body lock style passing to grind past his opponent's guard. And with enough time and money, you can learn all of these techniques from the best guard passer in the world. I'm here because I've spent the past month thinking about how to make you a better guard passer. I've experienced a huge leap in my guard passing ability, and I guarantee you will as well after watching this video. And for the price of hitting the like button, I would like to share with you my findings. From cross-referencing John, Gordon, Brandon, and Lachlan to make you an advanced guard passer as fast as possible. In his book called The Art of Learning, Josh Waitzkin recommends that when you're dealing with a dynamic problem, you should start at the end. And by beginning with the end in mind, all of your actions now have direction. He remembered the endgame, and like a Norse star, it guided him through the chaos. And when we're passing the guard, I believe that our Norse star and the direction that all of our actions should be moving towards is chest-to-chest half guard. Essentially, it all comes down to variations of toriandos, body locks slash tight waist passes, pommeling floating passes, and half guard passes. Our intention is to create sufficient pressure through the use of the first three to get to the fourth, half guard passing. Now what makes half guard passing so good is that if you want your opponent's hips to face to the left, you can do that. And if you want them to face to the right, you can do that as well. And at the same time, you have the ability to pin their head and shoulders, which will give you a very controlling position once you eventually pass their legs. And at the end of the day, the best people in the world force chest-to-chest half guard and pass from there. Roger's entire goal when he fought was to force guys into a bottom half guard, and then instead of passing the side control, he usually passes directly from mouth, and then either finishes from there or takes the guys back. Now on the flip side of this coin, people have built a career off of attacking from bottom half guard. But if we're able to keep our opponent's back flat on the mat, this now becomes a very dominant passing position, where our opponent has very limited options. And with our opponent's back flat on the mat, we can work to free our knee to the near hip to pass to side control, or the far hip to work towards mouth. So the game we're playing is actually quite simple. Can our opponent turn on their side, or can we hold them flat on the mat? And you're about to get a lot of tools that are going to help you win this battle. Now the first tool is posture. You will see Gordon and his team using tactics that keep their hips very low, but also tactics that involve keeping their hips very high and disconnected from their opponent. And the basic give and take that we're trying to balance while we're passing half guard is that the more connected we are to them, the easier it's going to be for them to bridge us over. And if we disconnect too much, we give them space to recover their guard. So the way that I've been trying to balance it is that if I'm dealing with someone smaller that has a more crafty guard, I'm going to gravitate more towards keeping my hips lower throughout my pass. But if I'm rolling with someone who outweighs me by a hundred pounds, my focus is going to be on disconnecting myself from them. But the main goal in both scenarios is to keep our opponent flat. Just on a back into the bottom of the half guard. This is where good black belts go to die right here, flat back, bottom of half guard. Now we're going to go into a lot of ways to configure our upper body, but the classic method is the cross face and under hook. And it does a great job of keeping our opponent flat on the mat. But please remember, we're talking about chest to chest half guard. And if you chase these upper body grips before you get there, it can be very risky. Yep. I'm flying through the air. This is not good. Now it's always nice if we can get that under hook, but a lot of times our opponent is going to be very aware and steal it from us. And they're going to try to use that under hook to turn onto their side. And rule number one is we need to keep them flat on the mat. And the way we do this is by making their knees face away from us. So even though they have the under hook, they have no

ability to use it to turn onto their side. If this is not our first priority and we start thinking about freeing our knee before we get our opponent's knees to face away from us, we open a door for them to use that under hook or push on our boob or do whatever it takes for them to get onto their side. But if we prioritize putting them flat on their back with no ability to turn towards us, now their primary option is going to be to off balance us in this direction here enough to allow them to recover their guard. But if we have our hand on the mat or even use our head as a post, we have a very wide base of support in that direction. And now that we have very much limited our opponent's options, we can now start to focus on freeing our knee, reestablishing our under hooks and passing the guard. And this is the exact sequence that Gordon Ryan talks Big Dan through during his ADCC trials performance.

Another popular thing to do if you have the cross face but no under hook is to bring your cross face to the other side of your opponent's head, which gives you the ability to use the threat of the guillotine to pass your opponent's guard and maybe even finish the match. But if you choose this option and you take a reverse cross face, be careful because your base is very limited on the back side. Which is why I think the preferred option, especially against bigger people, is to stick with the standard cross face. Now if you're able to get the far side under hook but your opponent denies you a cross face, this can be a great time to dig for double under hooks. But if they're super persistent on turning towards you, it might be difficult for you to stop that movement. But you can definitely slow them down and look for that Khabib style control as they're getting up. And the final tool that we're going to talk about for your upper body control is going to be the use of a near side under hook. And it's very similar to when you have a cross face but you're not able to get an under hook on the far side. You're going to want to prioritize making your opponent's legs face away from you so they cannot use their far side under hook. Which will keep them flat and limit their options as you work to free your knee and potentially get double under hooks as you work your way to mount. So now that you have a lot of tools in your belt, we're going to learn how to use these tools to deal with your opponent's resistance. And again, the goal is to keep them flat on their back so they have a limited number of options available to them and their resistance is going to be predictable. And we can make them feel like they're stuck between a rock and a hard place. And the number one form of resistance you're going to deal with is a far side under hook. And like we've talked about before, the best way to deal with this is take either a cross face or a near side under hook and walk their knees away from you. But for whatever reason, if you're not able to take a cross face or a near side under hook, you can take a cross shoulder post which will make it difficult for them to turn towards you because there's now weight over that shoulder. Or if you are able to get the cross face and you're just having trouble getting their knees to face away from you, if they want to use their hand as an under hook, it's not going to be protecting their neck. Which means it's often a good time to transition to a guillotine. And in particular, try to use a high elbow variation of that guillotine because it prevents your opponent from accessing your head, which would give them a strong ability to off balance you. Now, another very common form of resistance is going to be our opponent trying to off balance us. And a very efficient and technical way to do this is through the use of a knee lever where our opponent is going to take two feet to the ground on the outside of our knee and rotate their hips in that direction. So our goal is going to be to keep our opponents back on the mat and make our base as wide as possible in that direction. But if you have that far side under hook and you want to stick with it, please know that if your head is on that same side, you leave yourself very vulnerable to this knee lever. And we're going to dive into head position more as we talk about probably the most common form of off balancing, which is bridging. But as your opponent goes into an explosive bridge, they often open up the door for you to go directly to mount. But if you don't time this correctly, it can result in you getting swept. So if this is something you're concerned about, it's often a good idea to disconnect yourself from your opponent's hips as you're passing the guard. But someone who uses bridging in a very tactical way is often going to first bridge hard in the direction

of your crossface. And as you resist that bridge, they're going to switch direction and bridge to the other side. So the person that's going to cause us the most problems is the side to side bridger. And the way we're going to go about dealing with this is to mitigate the effect of each bridge. So we don't put ourselves in a situation where we have to over correct, which will leave us vulnerable when they decide to switch directions and bridge to the other side. Now from a standard crossface and underhook situation, the first bridge is often going to be to the side of the crossface. And if there's space between our head and our opponent's arm, when they decide to bridge, it's going to pop us in that direction and may even off balance us enough for them to recover their guard. So if you can create a situation where your ear is connected to their arm, it's going to limit that popping effect and reduce the power of their bridge. We also need to make sure that our toes are not curled underneath and sliding along the mat. Instead, we're going to put our toes on the mat where we can resist that initial bridge, making it very difficult for them to off balance us. But you must realize that this is a very dynamic situation. And maybe we have a great starting position that shuts down their initial bridges. But as we go to pummel in our butterfly hook, our base is compromised and they can bridge once again to recover their guard. So again, this is where you can do things like disconnect yourself from your opponent's hips or switch your head position. And I think this is just so brilliant and where things start to get very interesting. Because with Gordon's head now on the right side of his opponent's body, he's now very vulnerable to being bridged in that direction. And because he knows that's his opponent's primary option and it's a very predictable line of resistance. Gordon has a very wide base of support in that direction and I think a great example to the flip side of this coin is when you're able to free your knee to your opponent's near hip and you're starting to work to side control. If you leave your head on the top side of your opponent's body that is the direction you're vulnerable to be rolled and because you have no base in that direction they're often going to be able to sweep you or at the very least they're going to be able to off balance you and recover their guard and just as a little side note if you do pass the side control and your head is on the far side they can throw up a buggy choke. Damn kids. So oftentimes it's a good idea to switch your head position from the far side to the near side as you finish your pass because with your head on the near side it leaves you vulnerable to being off balanced in that direction but you also have tons of base in that direction and it's going to be very hard for your opponent to effectively off balance you so just realize that whatever side of the body your head is on that is the direction in which you are most vulnerable and if you have no base on that side your opponent is probably going to be able to off balance you. Now another great tool that can be used to off balance us is a butterfly hook and they can off balance us to the side of our cross face and recover their guard or they can off balance us to the side of our under hook and try to enter into our legs or they can try and off balance us to the side of our cross face and enter into their false reap. Now you can try to hip switch past this butterfly hook but it seems to me like often times when this does work it often results in a little bit of a scramble and if it doesn't work it often results in them recovering their guard but the times when it looks effortless and very very controlled is when your head is on the near side so my advice to you is to do this hip switch method if your head is on the near side but the primary method of dealing with a butterfly hook is again to limit their options and prioritize keeping their back on the mat by making their knees face away from us and you can do that with a cross face or a near side under hook. Their primary option is going to be to off balance us in that direction and because this is very predictable we're able to make sure we have a very wide base of support in that direction to deal with that line of resistance. Now for me the most annoying line of resistance I've had to deal with especially against bigger people is deep half but from a prevention standpoint if we start with a cross face and an under hook and we feel our opponent reaching for that scoop grip to enter into deep half we want to walk our legs back towards theirs extending their body and making it difficult for them to complete the entry but if we find ourselves in a situation where they already have a deep

scoop grip it's often a good idea to relinquish the cross face and double down on that far side under hook and this is going to make you very vulnerable to being off balanced in that direction so keep that under hook secure with your south arm and use your north arm as a post when they try to off balance you and then start to work to walk your legs back towards theirs as you work to re-establish your cross face or even better switch your head position to that near side which will completely shut down their deep half entry. Now if our opponent denies us the under hook by reaching their arm towards our back this is a great opportunity to use a half nelson to flatten our opponent out and re-establish our cross face and under hook. Now if you find yourself in a situation where you've lost the under hook battle it's often a good idea to threaten a front head lock but if you do this please make sure that your knee is off the ground and facing their far hip you can see as manning is trying to drive his knee towards that far hip reese is trying to shove it down towards his near hip so he can go into that classic old school half guard sweep and you can see when the tables turn and reese is on top when he loses the under hook battle his immediate response is to use his hand to help bring his knee to that far hip which in this case doesn't result in a submission but does lead to a beautiful guard pass and you can see here again reese's priority is to keep that knee on the far hip so when manning tries to get up reese is able to put him on his back but sometimes in order to keep your knee facing that far hip you have to sink your weight back a little more than you want to and your opponent can use this as an opportunity to come up on top and when they do stay patient shoot in that 100% and use the sumigeshi to end up back on top and ideally pass the guard so the way this will look if you're gordon ryan is you'll first try and put your opponents back on the mat using a cross face so you can go into your standard deep half guard defense but if that doesn't work your attention goes towards making sure your trail leg is facing your opponent's far hip making it very difficult for them to come up towards you or do the classic old school sweep from there you look to expose their underhook and take a kimora grip now that the kimora grip takes over the responsibility of preventing them from turning towards you you can point your knee outwards in an attempt to free your leg and if they're nice enough they'll bridge and the kimora grip will allow you to keep their back flat to the mat while you extract your leg and go in for the finish now the problem that i'm running into is against bigger people i find that i have a very solid base of support when i'm securing the underhook with my south arm and posting with my north arm and if you've seen Lachlan's course on passing deep half guard you know that you want to keep your foot close to their butt and your hips low so they're not able to hook your foot and free their head out the back door but you also don't want your hips so low that they're on the ground because that will allow your opponent to turn into you now ideally you're able to just turn the corner really quick and lock up that kimora grip which prevents them from turning into you while you set up your attacks but when you're reaching for that kimora grip you're dramatically compromising your base and against bigger people i'm finding it difficult to balance the ideas of keeping your hips high enough so that you don't feel their bridge but low enough to prevent them from sneaking out the back door and as i reach for this kimora i often find that my base is compromised while my hips are in the air so they don't even need to use any sort of hook to off balance me in this direction and slip their head out the back door so this is something that i'm still working on and experimenting with but in moments where i find myself getting frustrated i remember i have a friend to lean on fuck it try a leg lock lean on me when you're not strong another fun one to deal with is the lockdown and if you're like me when you think of the lockdown you think of 10th planet and throughout brandon's lockdown course he emphasizes that the initial off balance is going to be to the side of the underhook so that you can establish that underhook yourself and go into your attacks so as the top player what we need to be ready for is for them to off balance us to the side of our underhook and if we don't do anything we're going to get swept and again this comes down to head position you can do these fancy escapes from lockdown with your feet but if your head is diving down towards the mat over their far shoulder you're basically

starting a race for you to free your foot or them to off balance you to a side that you're very vulnerable you lose that battle nine times out of ten but if you watch gordon's head it's just kind of hovering over andre's and if not more leaning towards the near side making it much more difficult for andre to off balance him to the side of the underhook and once he frees himself from that lockdown then he starts to commit more weight over that far shoulder now this idea of head position when passing lockdown is so important that lachlan giles transfers his head all the way to the near side to initiate his pass so now just to recap what we've done so far i started out by giving you guys tools that you can use to keep your opponent flat which limits their options and then we dove into what these limited options are and the best ways to use the tools we have to counter those options while we work to free our knee to either the near hip or the far hip and now we're going to apply chest to chest half guard to the boxing idea of ring generalship and what this means is fighters are going to often work to stay in the center of the ring because if you're in the center you have more options you have the ability to give a little ground and circle to your opponent's lead arm because you've given yourself the space to do so but if someone is able to force you against the fence you no longer have that option and because you have fewer options you become more predictable giving me the ability to attack with more precision and of course you're going to be throwing back offense as well and you're going to be doing what you can to disengage and get back to the center of the ring but i'm going to be doing what i can to put you back against the fence simply because you have fewer options and if you become good at passing chest to chest half guard it allows you to control the center of the ring and when you start to fire off your attacks and your opponent starts to defend they do so in very predictable ways so even if they're able to successfully defend your attack and live to see another day you can push them back up against the fence and make them fight using a very limited and predictable arsenal we can be passing with a cross face and no underhook and as we're doing so our opponent counters by threatening a guillotine now they're hoping that this threat will allow them to reset back to a neutral position but if you understand chest to chest half guard well it allows you to negate this resistance and get right back into your passing so while jumping guard passes are great and the knee cut from headquarters is awesome it's probably the most classic guard pass there is but nothing allows you to control the pace of the match and gives you such an unfair advantage over your opponent like getting good at chest to chest half guard and if you feel like you're now a better guard passer leave a fist bump in the comment section like the video and we'll see you in the next one