

Probably the first thing you're asking when you look at this video is what the hell are these two guys wearing hockey jerseys for? I'm from New York so I asked for a Rangers jersey and these assholes gave me a Bruins jersey so I apologize for that. We're going to talk about the impact of clothing on self-defense takedowns. Let's understand right from the start that there is one highly evolved form of using clothing for fighting purposes which comes from an unexpected source and that is the American sport, not the American sport, the world's sport of ice hockey where clothing is regularly used as part of their fighting methodology. Let's understand right from the start there are some senses in which ice hockey is massively different from fighting in a self-defense street scenario. There are certain limits on what ice hockey players can do. They're part of a professional sports organization. So the similarity is the idea of using a uniform to grip up and to establish some form of control over an opponent which can be facilitated to take them out of balance and amplify the effect of striking. But when hockey players go to strike they are typically only allowed to use their fists. If they went to headbutts, elbows, et cetera, et cetera, they would be taken out of the league. There'd be ramifications for this. So they're limited in the main to taking off their gloves and engaging in fisticuffs only. So that's an obvious first element. The second and perhaps most obvious is they're on freaking ice skates. Thankfully we don't have that as a problem when we go into engage. So I can't in any ice skating situation take a foot off the floor. It's suicide. A simple push would put me flat on my back now. So they have to stay grounded. They can't be throwing knees, kicks, et cetera, et cetera. They have to stay grounded because of the very nature of what they're doing. They're on ice. In addition, the clothing that they use is a uniform which is ideal for gripping. It is ideal in the same sense that a jiu-jitsu gi is ideal for gripping. Not quite as good as a jiu-jitsu gi, but pretty damn good. The cloth is fairly soft and it is made for grips. I can grip inside a collar. That's one popular grip amongst ice hockey players. And I can also use thrusting grips where I can simply go into the cloth and lock up and put tremendous control over my opponent. Now of course, I'm wearing the same uniform that he is. So he can do the same thing to me. So the first and most noticeable difference between hockey grabbing versus street applications that you'll be dealing with is the idea of symmetry in clothing. We both have the same uniform on. So any grip I can get on him, he can also get on you. As opposed to street situations that we'll be looking at later where I may have clothing that he can easily grip, but he might be fighting with a t-shirt on or no shirt at all. In which case you have asymmetries of gripping. And that's where things start getting damn interesting. Because when they can grab you and you can't grab them, things start getting pretty damn interesting pretty damn quickly. So yes, the general answer to your question is, are there similarities between hockey fighting and self-defense applications of takedowns? The general answer is yes, there are similarities. But there are also significant differences. There's certain things we cannot do in an ice hockey context. There's certain blows, certain strikes that I can't use. I have to stay grounded on two feet. I can't take feet off the floor. And we have symmetrical gripping possibilities. We both have the same uniform on. And the uniform is ideal for gripping. Grips that I can impart in an ice hockey situation are extremely strong and robust. As opposed to a situation where you have a flimsy shirt on where you grip it and it just rips. This is not going to rip. You can put tremendous stress on an ice hockey uniform. It's not going to rip any more than a jiu-jitsu gi will rip under competition stress. So the basic answer is, there are some things that we can learn from the ice hockey situation. But there are also significant differences. Please understand that when you first start looking at ice hockey confrontations, it just looks like two guys getting a hold of each other and slugging away until one of them goes down. That is a very incorrect assessment. What these guys do is actually highly practiced. And there are some interesting nuances to it which we can learn from and which can profit you immensely when it's time for you to employ takedowns in the context of clothing and a self-defense situation. We'll be looking at those very shortly.