

A Roadmap for Brazilian Jiu-jitsu

How To Progress FAST
In Brazilian Jiu-jitsu



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by Stephan Kesting
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A Roadmap for Brazilian Jiu-jitsu

Edition 2.0

by **Stephan Kesting**

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The full Roadmap package, including extensive video instruction, is available at
<http://www.grapplearts.com/roadmap/>



About the Author

Stephan began his martial arts training in 1981. He currently holds the following ranks and certifications:

- Black Belt in Brazilian jiu-jitsu
- Instructor in Erik Paulson's Combat Submission Wrestling
- Black Belt in Kajukenbo Karate
- Instructor in Dan Inosanto's Jun Fan Jeet Kune Do, Filipino Martial Arts, and Maphalindo Silat
- Years of experience in a wide range of other martial arts including Judo, Muay Thai, Sambo, Kung Fu, and Capoeira

Stephan runs Grapplearts.com and writes the Grappling Tips Newsletter (<http://www.grapplearts.com>). He has helped tens of thousands of grapplers improve their skills via his DVD instruction.

He has published more than 20 articles in magazines like Black Belt, Ultimate Grappling, Tapout, and Ultimate Athlete. Interviews with Stephan have been featured on The Fightworks Podcast and Lockflow.com.

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Note to the reader regarding web links

There are many links throughout this book to relevant tips, articles and tutorials, and you should check them out. If you are using version 7.0 or higher of Adobe Reader then these links should be clickable from your PDF browser.

If the links don't work then go to www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html to download a free copy of the latest Adobe Reader.

What this book is about

The full Roadmap for BJJ package, of which this book is part, is an extension of the FREE e-Course designed for people starting out in Brazilian Jiu-jitsu, available at www.beginningBJJ.com.

The goal of this book is NOT to tell you exactly which techniques you need to learn, although I do have a few suggestions. The bottom line is that you can always learn more techniques from your instructor, your fellow students, and other resources such as books and DVDs. My main goal is to **give you a basic framework to help you make sense of all the different techniques you are learning**. In essence I am trying to give you a big picture which functions as a kind of filing system to help you learn more efficiently, and to access the correct technique quickly in the heat of battle.

Why is Brazilian Jiu-jitsu so complicated?

The initial stages of learning Brazilian jiu-jitsu (BJJ) can be a confusing, frustrating and overwhelming process. **This confusion is understandable: grappling is complex**, and it's easy to get lost in the multitude of techniques and details before you ever reach any level of mastery in the sport. Because of this complexity many people quit the art prematurely, and thus never get a chance to experience the joy and excitement of this exciting sport, which is also an incredibly effective martial art.

As I just stated, grappling is complex. It is, in fact, MORE complex than most other martial arts. Let's consider boxing for a second, which really only has 5 or 6 different punches (*i.e.* jab, cross, hook, uppercut, overhand, etc.). Add in a few defenses and a bit of footwork, and you basically have the entire boxing system in a nutshell. I'm not saying that boxing isn't effective – it's a great system and at the higher levels it is very subtle - but it just doesn't have very many individual techniques to learn.

Grappling, by contrast, has at least 6 primary positions (compared to one or two stances in boxing). Each of these 6 positions needs to be trained both on top and bottom, and on the right and left. After that there are many additional variations of each position. Then for each of these positions you can apply a huge number of different transitions, submissions, escapes and defenses. It's easy to see why BJJ has hundreds and hundreds of distinct techniques, and why new students can quickly feel overwhelmed.

So what should a beginner do to make sense of all this technique? How can he organize his knowledge and decide what he should learn next? Part of the solution is to recognize that there are only 6 primary BJJ positions.

The 6 Primary Positions

If you watch any BJJ sparring, be it in class or at a tournament, you will see that the combatants spend about 90% of their time on the ground in one of the following positions:

1. Guard
2. Side Mount
3. Knee Mount
4. Mount
5. Rear Mount
6. Turtle

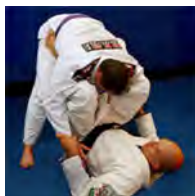
The most complex of these 6 positions is the Guard, and this position is very central to the art of BJJ. The Guard can profitably be subdivided into three additional categories:

- 1a. Closed Guard
- 1b. Open Guard
- 1c. Half Guard

Here is a preview of the basic positions. We will examine each of these positions in considerable detail later in the book, as well as discussing why certain positions are NOT included in this categorization system.



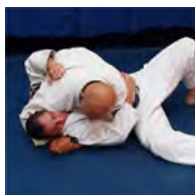
1a: Closed Guard



1b: Open Guard



1c: Half Guard



2: Side Mount



3: Knee Mount



4: Mount (or Full Mount)



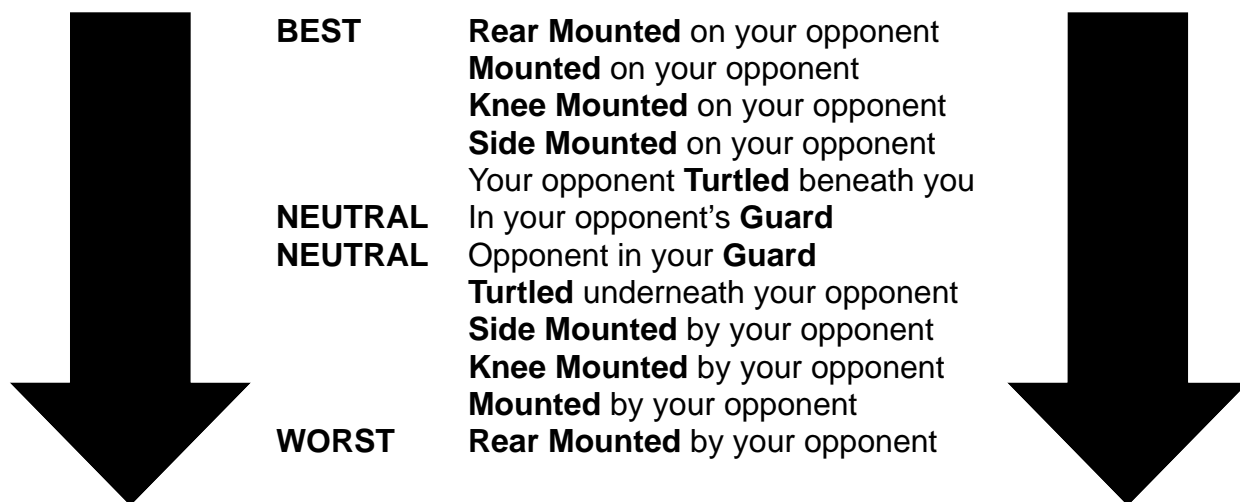
5: Rear Mount



6: Turtle

A Positional Hierarchy

Central to BJJ strategy is the concept that **some positions are more advantageous than others**. Most BJJ instructors would probably place the 12 variations of the 6 positions into a hierarchy something like this:



As you can see from the diagram above, it's generally better to be on top than on bottom. **The only neutral bottom position is the Guard: if you're on the bottom in any position other than Guard you're losing!**

This ranking system is not cut and dried. Of course that there are exceptions, and certain practitioners can make some very unusual strategies work that completely defy conventional BJJ logic. These exceptional people tend to be advanced practitioners who are well grounded in the fundamental techniques and have now decided to branch out and experiment. Start with the above positional hierarchy at first, and then become more creative as you get more experienced.

Everyone wants to talk about exceptions, so let's tackle some of them head on, right now.

- Traditionally the **Half Guard** was regarded as a desperate and precarious position, one step away from having your Guard passed. With the advent of modern Half Guard techniques, many practitioners actually prefer this position and have turned it into a powerful sweeping and attacking position.
- Some MMA fighters, on the other hand, like it when their opponents are in **Half Guard**. They maintain that it is the best position from which to ground and pound an opponent. In the final analysis, whether the Half Guard is a good or bad position depends on the skills and attributes of the two combatants.
- A small number of competitors have developed the bottom **Turtle** position to such a degree that they use it to launch a number of attacks and reversals from that seemingly inferior position. They might even drop to their knees and go to Turtle right at the start of a BJJ or submission grappling match.
- Some BJJ practitioners don't like the **Full Mount**, feeling that the risk of ending up on the bottom (should the opponent reverse the position) outweighs the benefits. These grapplers often prefer the Side Mount, and their personal positional hierarchy would be different from the general one above.

This is far from a complete list of exceptions. Keep in mind though, that most World Champions base their game off of the positional hierarchy at the top of the page, and that the point system of sport BJJ also reflects this hierarchy. Relish and enjoy the exceptions - they keep life and martial arts interesting - but remember that what works for one particularly gifted player might not work for you.

Start with what I'm showing you, and then modify it to fit your own attributes, gifts, skills and goals.

What You Need To Learn

Here is what you need to learn in order to really start enjoying your rolling sessions:

- An ability to **recognize the 6 primary positions**. An example of this might be being able to say to yourself, *"I'm in Turtle and my opponent is now trying to get his hooks in and get to Rear Mount"* while sparring. It is empowering to understand what is going on, even if you can't do anything about it (yet!).
- A basic idea of **how to control an opponent in each of those positions**. You need to learn where to grip, how to position your legs, how to posture your body and how to use your weight to control your opponent. If you're on the bottom you need to know how to position yourself so that his weight isn't crushing you too badly and you're not giving him any obvious submission opportunities.
- At least **two transitions from each top position**. Every top position offers ways to transition to other positions. This might include methods to pass the Guard to get to Side Mount, or go from Knee Mount to Rear Mount.
- At least **two escapes or sweeps from each bottom position**. Should you find yourself pinned by your opponent, you'll need a couple of ways to get out of there. If you have your opponent in your Guard you need to have a few ideas of how to sweep him and get on top.
- At least **two submissions from each position**. The goal of Brazilian Jiu-jitsu is to submit your opponent. You don't initially need to learn every submission in the book, but knowing a couple of attacks from each position will really increase your enjoyment of this martial art.

The Premise and the Promise

Brazilian jiu-jitsu starts making sense and sparring becomes fun when you have a couple of offensive and a couple of defensive options from each of the 6 major positions.

Once you have learned these offensive and defensive options, then 80 to 90% of the time when you're sparring you'll actually have a clue of what is going on and what you might want to do next. **You will no longer be lost, and that is a wonderful feeling.**

Having a basic game plan for each position is your passport to enjoying live sparring, which is the most important training method of BJJ. I'm NOT promising you that your game plan will always work, because your opponent may know how to counter your specific techniques. That's OK though; it's all a normal part of the game. Learning how to counter his counter (and counter his counter to the counter) keeps the game intellectually stimulating and is why **BJJ is a game of physical chess**.

The first step in navigation is always figuring out where you are. Once you know where you are then it's easy to decide what steps you need to take to get you to the correct destination!

Position before Submission

At its core, BJJ is a positional game. You often hear instructors tell their students that “*position comes before submission*”. This is a shorthand way of saying that you should try to get to a good position before going for a submission, that you shouldn't give up a good position to go for a dubious submission, and that a new student should first concentrate on learning good positional skills.

Putting position before submission is good advice, both when you're learning the art, and also when you're actually rolling around on the mats with someone. Learn the primary positions first, and then try to figure out which submissions work best from each position, rather than learning a whole bunch of cool submissions and then trying to figure out where and when to apply them.

It is true that there are a few chokes, armlocks and leglocks you can do from inferior bottom positions, but these aren't successful very often. The sad truth is that if you're in an inferior position then you have far fewer and (less effective) attacks available to you than does your opponent, so he will probably win the battle if you start trading submission attempts. If you're in a bad position, first work on improving your position by getting to the top or at least by putting your opponent into the Guard. By doing one of these two things you significantly reduce the odds that your opponent will submit you, and hugely increase the number of offensive options available to you.

On Keeping the Top Position

Keeping the top position is a contentious issue. To illustrate the debate, let's consider one of the classic BJJ techniques: the straight armbar from Mount. If you manage to pull it off and sink the armbar then that's great, the match is over. If your opponent manages to defend against the armbar, however, then you will typically end up on the bottom, in Guard. Going for that armbar means you run the risk of trading a superior position (Mount) for a neutral position (Guard). Some coaches will encourage you to try for that armbar and end the fight, while others will discourage it, arguing that risking top position is unacceptable.

As with all attempts to balance risk and reward, everyone has their own comfort zone. Some BJJ practitioners are perfectly happy to abandon top position if they think there is a chance that doing so could lead them to a successful submission, whereas more conservative grapplers prefer submissions that don't yield the top position should the attempt fail.

If you're competing in mixed martial arts (MMA), or are in a self-defense situation, then I would think long and hard before abandoning the precious top position. Being on the bottom in these contexts means that your opponent, with gravity on his side, could slip some heavy punches, elbows or headbutts through your defenses. If, on the other hand, you're doing sport BJJ or submission grappling, then you have a more latitude about ending up on the bottom. Being on the bottom in a sport BJJ context isn't the end of the world if you have a good Guard game.

One of the decisions you'll have to make at some point in your BJJ career is where YOU stand on the issue of keeping the top position. Even if you decide to become a die-hard top position player there are still several reasons why you should still learn and occasionally practice submissions with an inherent risk of you ending up on the bottom.

First, it may help your athletic development, and make you feel more comfortable in scrambles where positions aren't so clear cut and the role of the combatants (*i.e.* top vs. bottom) change very rapidly.

Second, an opponent may reverse you and send you to the bottom against your will - feeling comfortable with these techniques may allow you to snatch victory from the jaws of defeat *en route* to the bottom.

Finally, learning submissions that risk losing top position will improve your defense should an opponent try the same attack on you. **The best way to counter a technique is to first learn how to do it yourself.**

High-Percentage Submissions

Submissions make BJJ fun – everybody wants to know how to make an opponent tap out. It's normal, therefore, that most beginners want to get right to all those cool chokes, armlocks and leglocks. There's nothing wrong with learning a few submissions early on, so long as you recognize that it is the underlying positional game that allows you to set those submissions up and make them effective.

The grappling arts have hundreds of different chokes and joint locks that twist, bend and compress the body in a huge variety of ways. In reality, however, **most of what you actually see working between two equally skilled opponents is only a very small subset of all the possible submissions.** These are the 'high-percentage' submissions; chokes and joint locks that nearly everyone uses. If you're just starting out in BJJ, then pick a couple of these high-percentage submissions and learn how to apply them. At first it doesn't really matter which of those techniques you learn: just pick any two for each position and go from there. You'll learn the rest in short order (and in the meantime you'll have something to play with).

To illustrate this concept, let's consider the Closed Guard. This position offers the bottom man at least six high-percentage submissions commonly used in sparring and competition:

- the straight armbar
- the Kimura armlock
- the guillotine choke
- the triangle choke
- the omo plata armlock
- the cross-collar choke (if the top man is wearing a gi)

Initially you could choose to start by incorporating the straight armbar and the cross-collar choke into your game, but it would also be OK if you learned the guillotine choke and the Kimura armlock first.

Illegal Techniques

If you're just starting then it's important to recognize that not all submissions are legal in BJJ. Most BJJ schools, for example, don't allow beginners to do twisting leglocks and neck cranks, and none that I know of allow hair pulling, finger twisting or eye gouging in sparring. If you try these techniques on someone in your first class you will really upset people, so don't say I didn't try to warn you.

This is NOT to say that eye gouging and twisting leglocks don't work - on the contrary, they can be very effective ways to end a fight - but the dangers of including them in sparring far outweigh the benefits. Initially limiting jiu-jitsu practitioners to a smaller but relatively safe set of submissions allows you to do lots of sparring, and gives you the chance to try out your technique on someone who is really determined not to let you do it to them. If eye gouging was legal, then you couldn't train this way and we'd be back to doing two-person katas. Figuring out how to do an armbar on someone who is fully resisting allows you to get really good at the armbar AND at controlling an uncooperative opponent AND dealing with the stress of an almost-real fight.

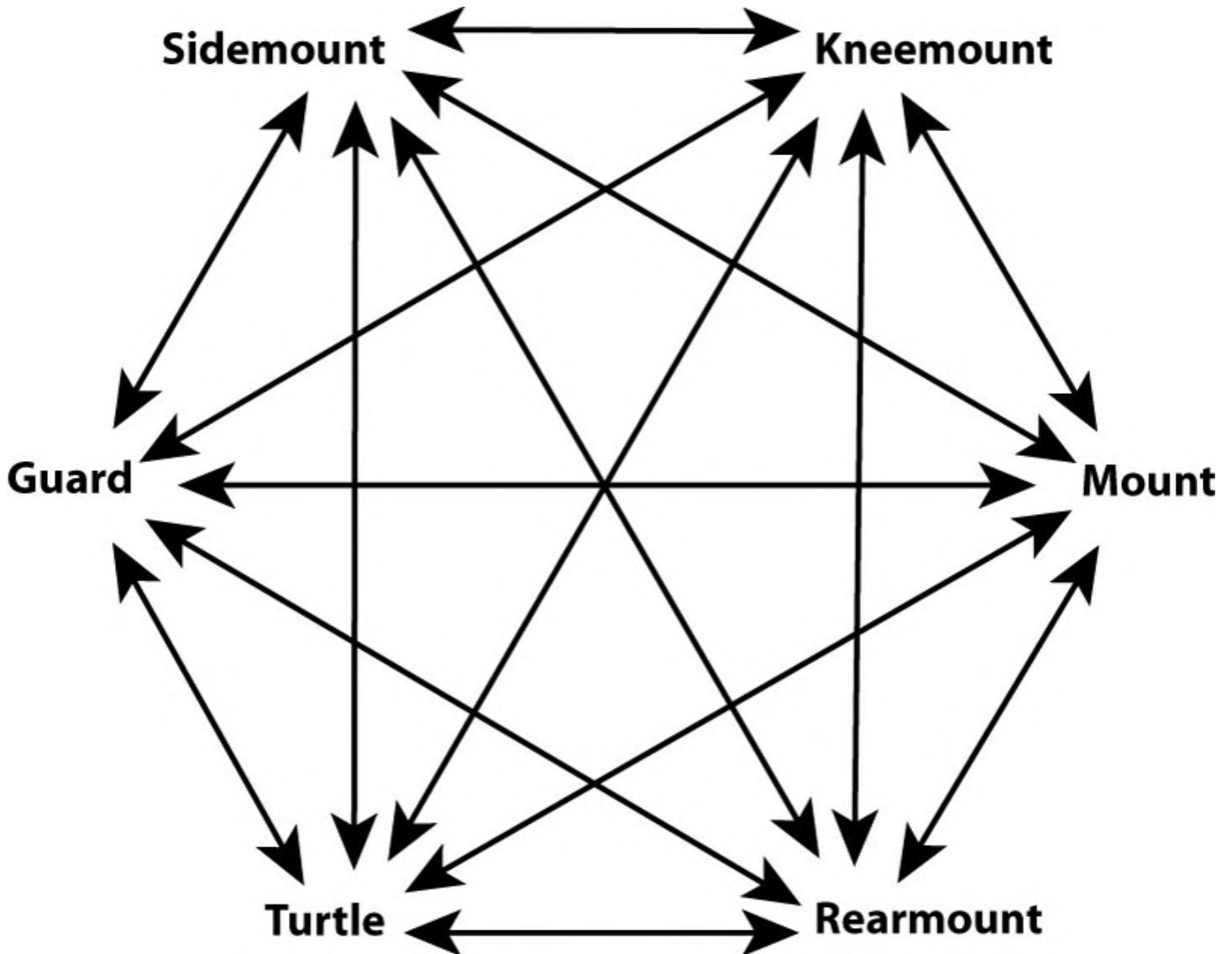
Finally, consider that virtually all forbidden techniques (e.g. eye gouging, biting, hair pulling) are far more effective when applied from a dominant position. **If you are really determined to bite somebody, then get to Side Mount first and bite them from there.** If your only escapes from bad positions rely on so-called 'dirty' techniques then at least be aware that using them really raises the ante in any confrontation. If your one escape based on eye-gouging doesn't work immediately your opponent may start retaliating in kind and eye gouge you (or escalate the fight even further).

Whoever is in the dominant position will usually win the battle, whether the techniques used are 'clean' or 'dirty'.

A Roadmap for Grappling

Advanced BJJ practitioners often talk about the importance of 'flow', but what exactly do they mean by that? **Flow in BJJ is the transition from position to position.** Sometimes these transitions are formal techniques, other times they are unrehearsed, unplanned scrambles, but either way it is possible to transition from any primary position to any other position. If you are evenly matched with an opponent it is impossible to predict what will happen: you can start in a certain position but end up in any of the other positions. Even advanced practitioners are sometimes amazed by the transitions that can occur in the heat of the grappling battle.

The diagram below attempts to convey the multitude of transitions that can occur in grappling. In truth the situation is even more complicated than this, because: a) each transition can be accomplished in different ways, b) each position has lots of variations, and c) this diagram ignores the fact that you could be on the top or bottom in each of the positions.



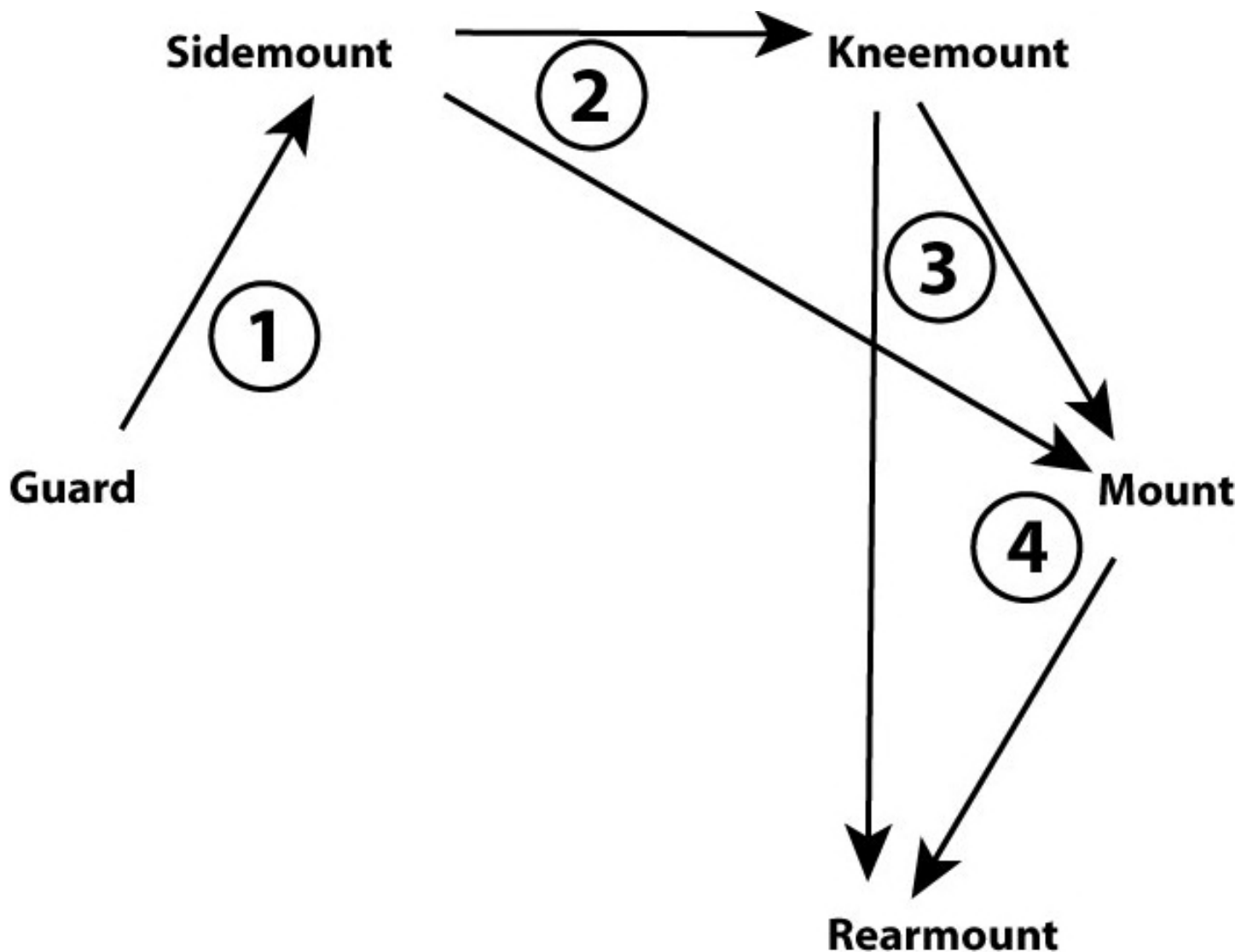
Do you initially need to learn every one of these transitions? Not at all! **If you try to learn everything at once then you'll actually retard your progress.** The saying that being a jack of all trades makes you master of none is very appropriate in this context.

Fortunately BJJ has some very specific advice about which transitions you should learn first. **The transitions you should learn first are the techniques that move you up the positional hierarchy,** thus simultaneously improving your own position and putting your opponent into a worse position.

A Sample Offensive Strategy

A positional strategy doesn't include every possible transition from every position to every other position. Instead it prioritizes certain high value positions and transitions. **You always want to improve your position** (while simultaneously watching out for submission opportunities).

Below is a simple strategy that is instantly recognizable because it is the one used most of the time by a majority of BJJ players, regardless of whether they've been training for less than a year or are black belts competing in the World Championships. This strategy is very effective because each position is more dominant than the last. It is no coincidence that this is also the basic outline of the game plan used on the ground by many very successful MMA fighters.



Here is a step-by-step breakdown of what is going on in the above diagram:

1. If you find yourself in your opponent's **Guard**, try to pass it and get to **Side Mount**.
2. From **Side Mount** you have two options: go either to **Knee Mount** or **Mount**. Which option you choose may depend on your opponent's reactions and escape attempts.
3. From **Knee Mount** your opponent you may be able to get to **Mount** or to directly to **Rear Mount**.
4. From **Mount** you may be able to transition to **Rear Mount**.

Don't forget that submissions also play a role here: **at any point along the way you may get a chance to submit your opponent**, especially if he is completely focused on preventing your positional progression.

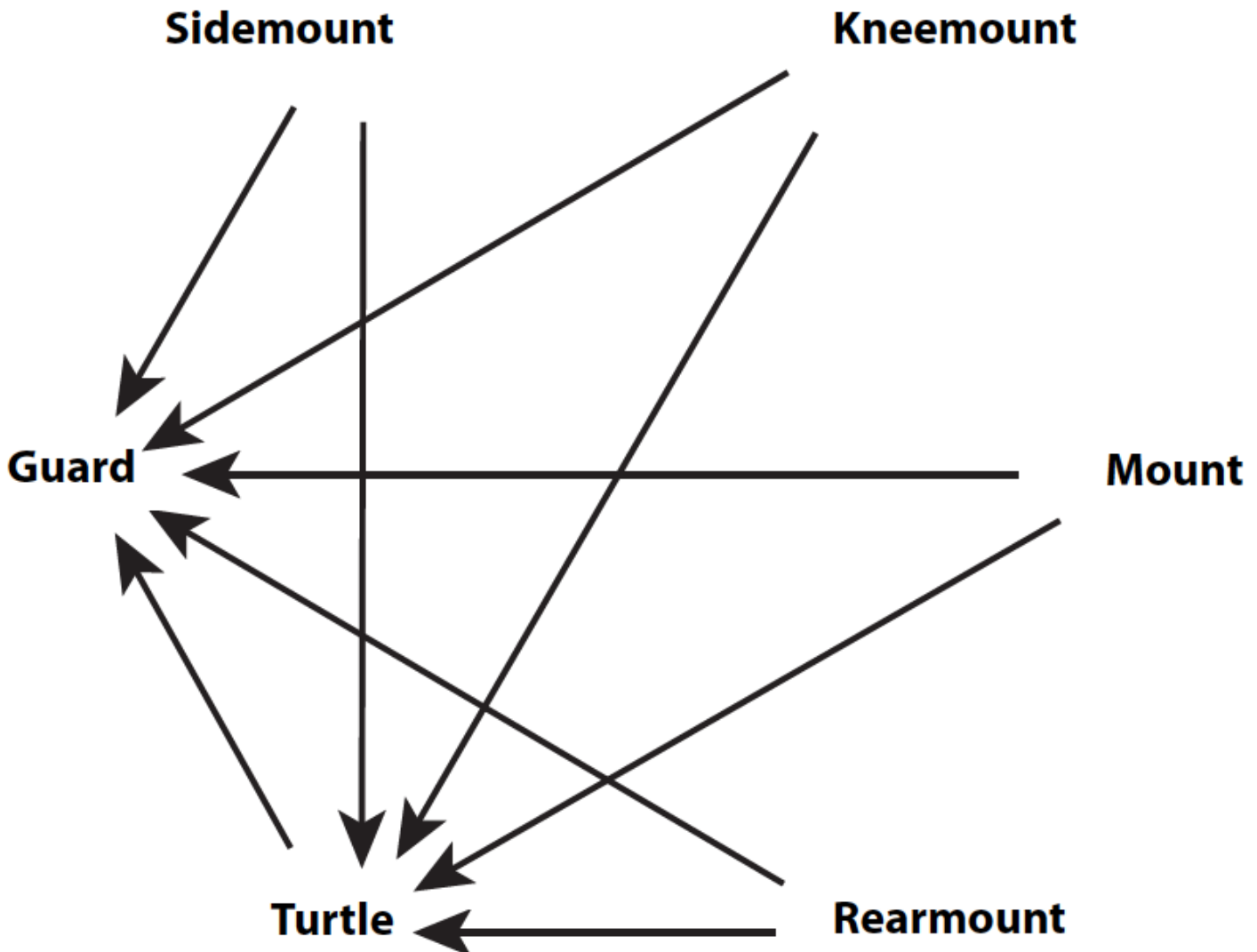
A Sample Defensive Strategy Map

It's a little harder to have one simple defensive strategy for when you are pinned in a bad position. The fact that you're on the bottom means that you are reacting to what your opponent is doing to you. You have lost control of the situation and are now in 'catch-up' mode.

Nevertheless it is still possible to have a plan. The strategy laid out as an example below has two parts:

1. From every bad position try either to get to **Guard**, or, failing that, to **Turtle**.
2. Use the **Turtle** as a transitional position. If you end up there then immediately try to get to **Guard** (Closed, Open or Half Guard).

It is important to emphasize that THIS IS NOT THE ONLY POSSIBLE STRATEGY - there are other ways to escape from bad positions. An alternative strategy, for example, would be to always try and get to Turtle and attack from there, trying to put your opponent on his back using wrestling-style takedowns. What I am showing you below is only one possible way to do things - in time your map will probably end up looking different from this one.



On 'Hooks'

In day-to-day life we don't do much with our legs. Legs hold us up when we stand, and they move us forwards when we walk. When you start Jiu-jitsu, however, you will start using your legs in ways you've never dreamed of before. They are an integral part of controlling and submitting your opponent.

When a leg or foot is used to control an opponent it is referred to as a 'hook'. When your opponent is Turtled and you 'get the hooks in' you've now moved into Rear Mount. Some forms of the Open Guard rely on having one or both feet on the opponent's biceps - these again are referred to as hooks. The struggle for placing, maintaining and removing hooks is an essential part of the game in both Brazilian Jiu-jitsu and no-gi submission grappling, akin to the vital importance of grip fighting in Judo or Wrestling.

On Hip Movement

It is a truism in BJJ that hip movement is the key to the art. Hip movement is what allows you to escape from pins, set up and apply submissions, pass the Guard, shut down sweeps, and so much more. You'll find that at least half the time when a technique just doesn't work your instructor will come over, sadly shake his head, and tell you to "move your hips". When you finally start doing this you will experience a HUGE leap in your abilities on the mat.

Proper hip movement comes with time and experience, but you can also develop it by drilling. The most fundamental (and arguably most important) drill for hip movement is a solo exercise called backwards shrimping. Go to http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x0c_MAS0DU for an excerpt from my Grappling Drills instructional video which breaks down this shrimping movement. Once mastered, there are many more challenging variations of shrimping to further improve hip mobility on the ground.

But What About Other Positions?

Each of the 6 primary BJJ positions can be modified by changes of limb and body position, and it is important to learn a little bit about the most common variations. If, for example, a certain hand position in Side Mount completely nullifies your best escape technique then you'd better be aware of that before you waste all your energy by struggling ineffectively, and instead start thinking about the alternatives.

The boundaries of these positional variations are a bit vague, and some people might classify certain variations as separate positions. For example, some people might consider the North-South position to be sufficiently distinct from Side Mount to deserve its own category, as opposed to what I've done in this book (*i.e.* calling North-South position a variant of Side Mount). The terminology isn't too important; to quote Bruce Lee, "*...it's just a name, don't fuss over it.*"

There are also some positions that aren't really part of mainstream BJJ. An example of this might be the Headlock or Scarf Hold, which is common in Judo, Sambo and freestyle wrestling. I'm not saying that the Headlock isn't a good position, only that it isn't central to the BJJ way of doing things. **If you want to learn BJJ then you should first concentrate on the 6 primary positions.** Once you have these basics down and your roadmap filled in, THEN you can start worrying about, and diversifying your game to include, these other positions and/or invent new ones.

The bottom line is that no classification system is perfect. It doesn't matter if you're dealing with biology, economics, chemistry or grappling: sometimes the things you are trying to classify will absolutely refuse to be forced neatly into a convenient niche. To deal with this problem I encourage you to eventually create your own classification system, and use this system to describe the unique subset of positions, techniques and strategies that YOU use when YOU grapple.

The Closed Guard

The Closed Guard is one of three broad subdivisions of the Guard position, and is the starting point of the BJJ journey for many practitioners. Here you try to control your opponent with a variety of hand grips while using your legs to control your opponent's torso, moving him forwards and backwards, and side to side.

The first concern of the top player is to establish posture. If you are collapsed forward or otherwise out of balance you become susceptible to numerous attacks, and launching your own offense is very difficult.

If striking is allowed and you are on the bottom you want to keep your opponent close to you in order to limit the power of his strikes. If he breaks away and creates distance then you should switch to a long-range form of Open Guard. Keep him either near or far: it is in the middle range where most of the damage is usually inflicted. Another option used by quite a few MMA fighters is to stand up out of Closed Guard and get back to the feet using specialized standup techniques.



Top Transitions: Your main strategic goal in the top position here is to get past his legs and pin him. This is easier said than done; passing the Guard is one of the most difficult BJJ skills to master. In the case of the Closed Guard, passing is a three-stage process: 1) making posture, 2) opening his legs and controlling his legs or hips, and then 3) passing over, under, or around his legs. Each of these three steps can be executed using either a standing or a kneeling position. A successful guard pass often results in the top person achieving Side Mount. It is not uncommon, however, to end up in Knee Mount or Full Mount instead, depending on techniques used and your opponent's reaction.

Bottom Transitions: "Guard sweeps" are techniques that you use on the bottom to flip or reverse your opponent, putting you in top position. Ideally a sweep gets you to a dominant pinning position, but sometimes your opponent may be able to establish Guard on you at some point during the process. This is still good for you though as you've now moved from bottom to top. Now get to work and pass the Guard!

Standing up and getting to your feet is always an option in the Closed Guard, especially if you have decent standup skills. Another type of bottom transition occurs when you roll backwards over one shoulder to Turtle position to prevent a Guard pass. It's not a great place to be, but it's usually better than getting pinned.

Common Attacks: There are many submissions available to you from the bottom of Closed Guard. These include such attacks as the armbar, the Kimura, the triangle choke, the omo plata and the guillotine (check out <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rfwl9V7gKwQ> to see how body positioning can hugely amplify this attack). If your opponent is wearing a gi you can also attack him with a variety of gi lapel chokes.

From the top of Closed Guard you have few submission options. Attempting to submit your opponent prior to passing his Guard is usually a mistake, although leglock attacks are a notable exception to this rule.



Here the bottom player controls his opponent's right arm with an overhook and his left arm by grabbing the wrist.



In the **Leghook Guard** the bottom man loops his arm under his own leg in order to keep his opponent's posture broken.



A competitor in a tournament is shown maintaining the **Closed Guard** even against a standing opponent.

Three Online Resources To Improve Your Closed Guard Game

- A Glossary of Guards Part 1: The Closed Guard
<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/2012/03/a-glossary-of-guards-part-1-the-closed-guard/>
- 16 Closed Guard Tips
<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/2012/03/16-tips-for-your-closed-guard-2/>
- How to shut down your opponent's Closed Guard offense by 'caging his hips'
<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/2007/05/what-is-caging-the-hips/>

The Open Guard

The Open Guard encompasses a very wide range of Guard positions. The common denominator among the different forms of Open Guard is that your legs aren't closed around your opponent's torso. Control is achieved by pushing, pulling, and hooking his limbs and body with your feet. It is inherently a more dynamic, faster-paced position than the Closed Guard, and requires constant adjustments of leg and hip position by the bottom player.

In one of the most common versions of Open Guard (shown below) you keep one or both feet on your opponent's hips and control at least one of his arms. From here you can push him away, break his posture, and set up many different sweeps and submissions.

If you are the top player in someone's Open Guard you will constantly be working to remove or nullify his hooks and grips, establish posture, and pass his Guard.



Top Transitions: There are countless ways to pass Open Guard, but most methods involve first establishing posture, removing some or all of your opponent's hand grips and leg 'hooks', and then gaining control over his legs and hips. At this point you can use your weight to crush your opponent and pass slowly, or use your speed and pass fast: either way you get past his Guard to a more dominant top position.

Bottom Transitions: There are probably more sweeps and sweep variations from the Open Guard than in all other kinds of Guard combined - it's a very rich and diverse position. The placement of your hooks and grips, and your opponent's energy, will determine the type of sweep you end up using to flip or trip your opponent from the bottom. Your opponent can kneel, squat or stand in your Open Guard, so it is important to have attacks that work against each of these 3 types of posture.

Some Open Guard sweeps can be difficult to learn at first, especially when each arm and leg is moving independently to accomplish its task. Don't worry! With proper repetition and targeted drilling of specific movements, these complex techniques will soon feel natural and you'll start doing them instinctively.

Common Attacks: Because of the diversity of the position, there are ways to apply almost every known submission from the Open Guard. Common upper body submissions include the armbar, triangle, guillotine, lapel chokes, Kimura and omo plata armlocks. These submissions are generally easiest to apply if your opponent stays on his knees; if he stands up then attacking the upper body becomes a little harder.

Footlocks and kneebars deserve special mention here, because they can be employed by both the top player and the bottom player. These are more common when the top player stands up (perhaps to defend his upper body). Once he stands up though, the gloves are off and now **both** people can go for leglock attacks.



In the **Butterfly Guard** you position your feet between your opponent's legs to disrupt his balance and sweep him.



The **Spider Guard** relies on having at least one foot on the bicep while controlling your opponent's wrists or sleeves.



Here two grapplers fight for wrist control while simultaneously jockeying for advantageous leg positions.

More Ways to Come to Grips with the Complexity and Effectiveness of the Open Guard

- A Glossary of Guards Part 2: The Open Guard
<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/2012/03/a-glossary-of-guards-part-2-the-open-guard/>
- Butterfly Guard Crash Course
<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/2007/04/butterfly-guard-crash-course/>
- Dynamic Guard Sweeps, a complete system for learning the Butterfly Guard and X Guard positions
<http://www.grapplearts.com/Butterfly-Guard-Info.php>

The Half Guard

The Half Guard is a position where your opponent is halfway past your Guard and you are controlling one of his legs with your legs. It was traditionally considered to be a very weak position in Brazilian Jiu-jitsu, but as the art evolved, new techniques and strategies were popularized that made the Half Guard a powerful position in its own right. When used offensively, the Half Guard allows you to get deep under your opponent's hips, disrupting his center of gravity, and putting him in constant danger from your sweeps and attacks.

In the Half Guard you can use either your outside or inside leg to control your opponent's. A drill to develop legwork in the Half Guard is shown here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qW7FmJayh8o>. The offensive Half Guard mostly relies on using the inside hook (shown below), maintaining an underhook with your top arm, keeping your body on its side and keeping your head and upper body from being controlled. Conversely, from the top Half Guard (sometimes referred to as 'Half Mount') you usually want to put your opponent flat on his back, nullify the underhook and establish control over his head and upper body.



Top Transitions: As with previous Guard positions, your main goal here is to pass the Guard, usually trying to get to Mount or Side Mount. In order to do this you need to understand your opponent's offensive options and know the counters; passing the Half Guard is tough if you're always getting swept or tapped.

The use of posture can proactively counter many of the dangers you face on the top, but posture in Half Guard can look quite different than in the other Guard positions. For example, one method of posture is to drive forward while controlling your opponent's head and far arm. Thus controlling your opponent you can now get to work on freeing your trapped leg and establishing a dominant top position.

Bottom Transitions: Three common types of transitions from the bottom are: 1) putting your opponent back into Closed or Open Guard, 2) sweeping him and getting to the top, and 3) taking his back to get to Rear Mount. If you are new to the Half Guard you should probably first concentrate on how to put your opponent back into the Guard, but with practice you will start to use all three options and learn how they work synergistically to create very powerful attacking combinations.

Common Attacks: Compared to the Closed or Open Guard, submissions aren't quite as common from the bottom of Half Guard. The two that you might see most frequently are Kimura armlocks and kneebars, although some practitioners also specialize in applying collar chokes and triangle chokes from this position.

If you're on top of someone in Half Guard then you have many submission options available to you, including straight and bent armlocks, chokes with and without the gi, and lots of leglocks. These submissions work best when mixed with attempts to pass the Half Guard. Guard passes can help set up submissions, and submissions can help set up Guard passes.



The **Half Butterfly Guard** combines the leg control of the Half Guard and the instep hook from Butterfly Guard. It can also transition into either position.



This variation is known as the **Deep Half Guard**, a form of Half Guard for more advanced grapplers.



The **X Guard** is another powerful hybrid, and could be classified as either an Open Guard or Half Guard position.

Three Links To Accelerate Your Half Guard Learning Process By 300%

- A Glossary of Guards Part 3: The Half Guard
<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/2012/03/a-glossary-of-guards-part-3-the-half-guard/>
- Some Half Guard Resources
<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/2008/05/more-half-guard-resources/>
- 100+ techniques, drills and principles you need to know to make Half Guard your favorite position
<http://www.grapplearts.com/Half-Guard-Sweeps-Info.php>

Side Mount

Side Mount, also known as the 'Hundred Kilos' position, is a very common pinning position in BJJ as it is a secure way to hold your opponent and offers many submission options. In Side Mount you control your opponent's upper body with your grips and your bodyweight. A variety of grips are used, but typically you will keep a hand or knee next to his hip to prevent him from easily putting you into Guard. Blocking the hips isn't as necessary if you rotate your body away from his legs and towards his head into a variation known as North-South position.

Many BJJ practitioners will try to further improve their position by going from Side Mount to the Full Mount, whereas others prefer to stay and hunt for submissions in Side Mount. Side Mount skills are absolutely essential in BJJ, regardless of whether it is your favorite position or just a brief stop on the road to the Mount. Much of your mat time will be spent here, so learning what to do - how to improve your position, how to attack from the top and defend from the bottom - are essential skills that every BJJ student needs to develop.



Top Transitions: A common progression from Side Mount is to go to Full Mount. Two straightforward ways to do this are: 1) swinging your leg over your opponent's body, or 2) first going to Knee Mount and then sliding your knee across to the other side. An alternative, used to open up a defensive opponent, is to go to Knee Mount and use the discomfort of that position to create openings for attacks. You can also transition to different variations of Side Mount by adjusting your leg and arm positions in response to his escape attempts.

Defensive Transitions: There are many techniques you can use to escape the bottom of Side Mount, the two most common being: 1) laterally moving your hips away from your opponent and then bringing your legs in between you and him to achieve Guard, or 2) turning onto your knees to get to the Turtle position and, from there, either establishing Guard or fighting for a takedown. Another option is using a bridging motion to roll an unwary and over-committed opponent over, getting to the top and then pinning him.

As with other techniques, your escapes are best used in combination. An isolated escape attempt may not work, but it can still serve to create an opening that you can then exploit with a different technique.

Common Attacks: There are actually a greater variety of submissions available to you from the top of Side Mount than in most other top positions. These include straight and bent armlocks, chokes with and without the gi, neck cranks, footlocks and kneebars. The most common attacks are the Americana (V-armlock), the Kimura (chicken wing armlock), the spin armbar and several chokes using your opponent's gi.

On the bottom you don't have very many high-percentage offensive options, but it is sometimes possible to submit and/or roll your opponent by attacking the arm closest to your head with a Kimura armlock.



This variation of Side Mount involves keeping both of your arms on the same side of the bottom man's body.



Here the top player has adjusted his arm position and circled his body towards his opponent's head, getting closer to what is known as **North-South** position.



Sometimes it is advantageous to change the position of your legs by 'switching your hips' into a **Modified Scarf Hold** position.

Check Out These Additional Side Mount Resources

- How to Make Side Mount Heavier
<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/2006/04/how-to-make-side-mount-heavier/>
- What Is Proper Posture When You're Trapped in Side Mount?
<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/2012/04/posture-under-side-mount-2/>
- How To Get To Posture While Pinned
<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/2007/02/how-to-get-posture-while-pinned/>

Knee Mount

Knee Mount, also known as 'Knee on Belly', is a miserable position for your opponent because your whole weight is resting on him via your knee, which is painful and makes breathing difficult. Furthermore it offers the top person the strongest striking position in groundfighting. This position is therefore an excellent way to attack a very defensive opponent, because dealing with your knee often forces him to give you an opening for an attack, such as the spinning armbar. Knee Mount can also be used to temporarily secure a scrambling opponent, pinning him in place long enough for you to move to another position.

Depending on the circumstances you can place either your knee or shin on your opponent's belly, abdomen or solar plexus. Your other foot must float and be free to adjust to the movements of the pinned person. Most of your bodyweight must be borne by your opponent, and not by your feet. From the bottom your goals are to escape the position without exposing your arms to a jointlock or your neck to a choke.



Top Transitions: The most common transition from Knee Mount is to slide your knee across to the other side of your opponent's body and go to Full Mount. Your center of gravity is relatively high in Knee Mount, which can reduce your stability somewhat, so you have to compensate by emphasizing mobility and adjusting to your opponent's reactions. It is fairly common, for example, for fighters to drop back down to the relative stability of Side Mount if they start feeling unstable in Knee Mount.

Bottom Transition: Most Knee Mount escapes require you to turn in and face your opponent, causing his knee to slide off your body onto the mat. If you are controlling his foot and leg during this motion you can even sometimes even topple him over and end up on top yourself. Another type of escape involves quickly pushing your opponent's knee down towards your legs and achieving Half Guard.

Sometimes your escape attempts will only result in your opponent adjusting his position and going to Mount or Side Mount. Be prepared for these movements, and plan on escaping DURING the transition, before he can fully stabilize his new position.

Common Attacks: The discomfort of being pinned in this position often leads the bottom person to use his arms to push your body and/or your pinning knee. This is a bad move, especially if done slowly: pushing separates the arms from the body enough to open them up to a variety of armlock attacks, like the near-side armbar, far-side spin armbar, and far-side Kimura armlock. Additionally, if your opponent's hands push on your pinning knee too long it exposes his neck to collar choke attacks.



Knee Mount can be executed using a variety of grips, including the lapel and knee grip shown here.



This variation does not require you to grip your opponent's gi, and is most often found in no-gi submission grappling.



The **Reverse Knee Mount** is usually used as part of a transition to other positions, or to counter escape attempts.

Make Your Opponent Suffer! More Resources For The Knee Mount

- A Knee Mount Transition Drill (and Other Mobility Drills)
<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/2012/03/the-drills-of-shaolin/>
- Keeping The Will To Fight (when things are going badly)
<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/2007/11/keeping-the-will-to-fight/>
- The Knee Mount In Action: Double Leg Takedown to Knee Mount
<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/2012/04/double-leg-shoot-vs-right-cross/>
- Three Ways to Get a Really Heavy Knee Mount
<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/2013/01/3-ways-to-get-a-really-heavy-kneemount/>

The Mount

The Mount, also known as Full Mount, is the classic position of domination in Brazilian Jiu-jitsu. Although other martial arts such as Judo include this position in their repertoire, none have developed it to the same extent. In the Mount gravity is on your side. Your opponent is bearing your weight, and if you choose you can strike him with fists, elbows, hammerfists and palmstrikes. If you posture up in Mount you will be able to strike your opponent's face but he won't be able to reach yours.

In Mount, your weight rests on your opponent's belly and diaphragm, making it difficult for him to breathe. Your feet are tucked alongside, or slightly underneath, your opponent's thighs, and your knees are pinching inward to limit his mobility. If you are on top you should anticipate the most common methods of escape used by pinned opponents and be prepared to counter them. For example, untrained people often try to bench press their way out of their Mount predicament, which gives the top player a great opening for the armbar.



Offensive Transitions: The Mount is a good place to be, but you can improve your position even further by getting your opponent to give you his back and then taking Rear Mount. Turning your opponent like this can be done either with leverage-based grappling techniques, or by striking your opponent and forcing him to turn in order to protect his face. Other transition options include dismounting and returning either to Side Mount or Knee Mount, which can be used if you decide that you don't feel stable in Mount.

Defensive Transitions: To escape from the Mount most people initially learn two complimentary techniques: the 'upa' and the elbow-knee escape. To do the first escape - the upa - you trap your opponent's arm and a leg from the same side of his body, and then bridge up and towards those trapped limbs. Since he now can't use anything to stabilize the position he will tip over and you will up in his Guard.

The second bread-and-butter escape is the elbow-knee escape. In this technique you use limb placement and side-to-side hip movement (also known as 'shrinking') to place your opponent into Half Guard, and then use much the same motions on the other side to return to Closed Guard. This escape is often combined with the upa escape to form a strong combination.

Common Attacks: The two most commonly seen attacks from the Mount position are probably the straight armbar and variations of the cross-lapel choke (gi only), but the Americana (or V armlock), the head-and-arm choke, and the triangle choke are also popular and effective. These submissions work best when linked into combinations, so that your opponent's attempts to defend himself from one attack create an opening for another, making life on the bottom a difficult and dangerous place to be...

From the bottom you have very few submission options. The most frequent of those rare attacks is a footlock, which requires you to bridge and make some space, getting one knee between your bodies, and then applying the hold. It's not a high-percentage option - you are in a bad position after all - but it's worth having this arrow in your quiver to use as a last-ditch effort if nothing else is working.



In **Low Mount** you hook or entangle your opponent's legs to smother him and reduce the power of his bridge.



If your opponent turns his body to one side you can post one leg and slide the other knee up behind his head, going to **Technical** or **Triple Attack Mount**.



The **S-Mount** places a lot of pressure on the bottom man's diaphragm, making it hard for him to breathe and setting up a variety of armlock submissions.

Additional Resources To Fine Tune Your Mount Position

- A Pinch In Time, Using Your Adductors To Maintain Positions
<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/2008/03/a-pinch-in-time/>
- A Positional Strategy for Beating The BIG Guy
<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/2006/12/beating-the-big-guy-again/>
- Submission Grappling vs. Classical Ju-jutsu (with examples of Mount attacks)
<http://tinyurl.com/ClassicalJuJutsuVSGrappling>

Rear Mount

Rear Mount is considered by many to be the ultimate position in BJJ. You're on your opponent's back and controlling him with your hooks (ankles NOT crossed). He can't see what you're doing and you have great access to his neck. The Rear Mount is unique among BJJ positions because you are considered to be applying it regardless of whether you and your opponent are facing up to the ceiling or looking down to the floor. So long as you are on your opponent's back with both hooks in you are in the Rear Mount.

Once you are on your opponent's back he constantly has to defend against chokes. As proof of this position's effectiveness, consider the very large number of MMA matches that have been ended by a choke shortly after one of the combatants finally achieved Rear Mount. This is also a powerful position for self defense, but you have to weight the inherent advantages against the fact that disengaging from your opponent, should you need to do so, is a bit slower than breaking off contact from other dominant positions. Once in Rear Mount you are somewhat committed to it, so sink that fight-ending choke quickly!



Offensive Transitions: Once achieved, the Rear Mount is rarely abandoned. The position can be made even more dominant by flattening out your opponent (2nd variation below) or 'triangling' your legs around his torso if your legs are long enough to do so comfortably (3rd variation). If your opponent is close to escaping Rear Mount you can transition to Mount, Side Mount or Half Mount to maintain the top position.

Defensive Transitions: Escaping the Rear Mount is typically a multi-stage process. Defending your neck from chokes is priority one, and this relies heavily on fighting to control the gripping game. After that, if you are trapped face down (as in the first two photos below), then your next goal might simply be to turn and get your belly facing the sky. From there you may be able to escape your hips and shoulders laterally and get to Half Guard, or turn and face him so that you end up in his Closed Guard.

Generally speaking, any position is better than being trapped in Rear Mount. For example, if your escape attempt forces your opponent to abandon Rear Mount, but he now ends up pinning you 'only' in Side Mount, you can consider that a small victory (and then get to work escaping that position too).

Common Attacks: If you get Rear Mount on your opponent then you want to attack his neck, and one of the most powerful ways to do that is the 'RNC' (go to http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=176SLdBhj_A for a detailed tutorial on this submission). You can also use many different lapel chokes to end the match. Some practitioners are very good at transitioning from the back to the straight armbar, but of course that involves the risk of losing the Rear Mount position altogether.

There aren't many offensive options available to you when someone is on your back. About the only feasible submission opportunity occurs if your opponent crosses his ankles in front of your body: now you might be able to footlock him if you cross your feet over his and bridge your hips forwards.



Here the top player has achieved Rear Mount by inserting his hooks on a Turtled opponent



By securing the upper body and driving your hips forward you can flatten out your opponent, making him very uncomfortable



Long-legged grapplers can 'triangle' their legs (placing their instep behind their own knee). This is another uncomfortable position for the trapped person

Three Links to Turbocharge your Rear Mount

- A step-by step tutorial on how to apply the Rear Naked Choke (aka the 'RNC')
<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/2006/11/a-roadmap-for-the-rear-naked-choke/>
- On Crossing Your Feet in Rear Mount
<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/2005/05/rear-mount-crossing-your-feet/>
- An example of taking the back during a Guard pass
<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/2012/04/taking-the-back/>

The Turtle

The Turtle is generally NOT where you want to be - except if you're on top. If you end up on the bottom, for example after a failed takedown attempt, you are susceptible to getting choked, armlocked, and having your back taken, which gives your opponent Rear Mount. In MMA or in a self defense situation, going to the Turtle will generally result in you receiving a lot of punches to the head, knees to the body, and quite possibly soccer kicks to the face. Not good!

Despite these limitations, being in Turtle is usually still better than being pinned, and so quite a few escape techniques will pass through this position. From Turtle, make sure you defend yourself, but also try to keep the situation dynamic. Do not allow your opponent stabilize his position and settle his weight on you; instead try to get to another position like the Guard. On the other hand, if you're the one on top of a Turtled opponent, then stay connected to him and make sure he's bearing your weight - this will tire him out, and create openings for your attacks.



Top Transitions: Basic jiu-jitsu strategy dictates that you first stabilize the top position and then work towards getting your hooks in to achieve Rear Mount. If you can't do this, or you don't feel comfortable in Rear Mount, then there are many other techniques you can use to turn your opponent onto his back and control him in a different pinning position.

Bottom Transitions: On the bottom your options strongly depend on the exact orientation of you to your opponent, how he is gripping you and where his weight is. You can try to put your opponent back into the Guard, either by turning towards him or by doing more complex rolls and maneuvers. Alternatively you can grab one or both of his legs and try a wrestling-style takedown, or you can roll him over your body if he over-commits himself. Sometimes you can surprise him from the bottom Turtle position and take HIS back, which is definitely an unexpected move. Finally you can also fight your way back to your feet, face him and start the battle anew.

Common Attacks: Although it is most common to get to Rear Mount before attempting a submission, it is also possible to submit a Turtled opponent without taking his back first. Some of the most common submissions used against the Turtle include the 'clock choke' (gi only), the anaconda choke, straight armlocks, omo platos and reverse omo platos. These armlocks often involve first using your legs to trap his near arm and take it away from the relative safety of being close to his body.

Even if you are on the bottom of Turtle you still have a few submission options available to you, including rolling kneebars and Kimura armlocks. Submission attacks from the bottom are most effective when combined with attempts to put your opponent into the Guard and/or reverse him (using the bottom transitions discussed above).



The top player has moved to the side of his opponent and grips around the upper body. His left knee is on the ground and his right foot bases out for balance.



Keeping the same upper body grip, the top player now has his other knee on the ground and is using his left foot to create an opening for inserting his hooks



Here he has moved to a head-to-head position with his legs sprawled back, and is using his weight to pin the bottom man.

A Masterclass on Strategies and Tactics for the Turtle Position

- One way to attack the Turtle position
<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/2012/04/sideride-detail-attacking-the-turtle-position/>
- Grappling with Claustrophobia In BJJ: How to overcome it.
<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/2012/03/grappling-with-claustrophobia-in-brazilian-jiu-jitsu/>
- Two great chokes vs the Turtle that work in gi and no gi
<http://tinyurl.com/BraboAnacondaChoke>

Sample Technique List

This list is provided as an example of the techniques that might be employed by a beginning-to-intermediate level student of BJJ. This is **not a definitive or exhaustive list of techniques** - BJJ is too rich and diverse an art for that. Instead these are just **some** of the fundamental, yet highly effective, techniques you will discover on your grappling journey. If your school already has a curriculum then try to figure out where those techniques fit into this categorization system.

Similarly, **you don't need to learn every single technique here before you start enjoying BJJ**. Start by picking just one or two from each category and go from there. The goal is for you to eventually assemble your own personalized list of reliable techniques, drawn from the resources available to you (your instructor, fellow students, the internet, books, DVDs, etc), and build a game that is tailored to fit your own gifts, attributes and goals.

Some Common Closed Guard Techniques

Submissions	Top Transitions (Guard passes)	Bottom Transitions (sweeps)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 5 step armbar ○ Swinging armbar ○ Triangle choke ○ Cross collar choke ○ Kimura armlock ○ Guillotine choke ○ Omo plata armlock ○ Ankle lock (top) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Guard break & same side knee slide ○ Guard break & cross knee slide ○ Standing guard break & leg toss 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hip bump sweep ○ Scissor sweep ○ Flower sweep ○ Omo plata sweep ○ Make space and stand up

Some Common Open Guard Techniques

Submissions	Top Transitions (Guard passes)	Bottom Transitions (sweeps, etc.)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Triangle choke ○ Armbar ○ Various foot locks (top & bottom) ○ Kneebar (top & bottom) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Leg toss, go to Knee Mount ○ Roll opponent to turtle, take back 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Heel grab sweep ○ Balloon sweep ○ Tripod sweep ○ Tomahawk sweep ○ Butterfly sweep

Some Common Half Guard Techniques

Submissions	Top Transitions (Guard passes)	Bottom Transitions (sweeps)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Kimura (top & bottom) ○ Kneebar (top & bottom) ○ Sleeve choke from top (gi only) ○ Various footlocks (top) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Control upper body, pry legs with instep, go to Mount ○ Control lower body, sprawl & pass, go to Side Mount 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hook with outside leg & reguard ○ Insert butterfly hook, lift & reguard ○ Foot grab sweep

Some Common Side Mount Techniques

Submissions	Top Transitions (positional improvements)	Bottom Transitions (escapes and reversals)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Americana armlock ○ Kimura (aka hammerlock) ○ Near side armbar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pop up to Knee Mount ○ Swing Leg to Full Mount ○ Switching hips ○ Rotate body to North-South 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reguard, trap leg with foot ○ Reguard, trap leg with instep ○ Underhook and bridge ○ Block hips and go to Turtle

Some Common Knee Mount Techniques

Submissions	Top Transitions (positional improvements)	Bottom Transitions (escapes and reversals)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Kimura (aka hammerlock) ○ Far side spinning armbar ○ Cross collar choke (gi only) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Switch to Knee Mount on the other side ○ Slide knee to Mount ○ Drop down to Side Mount 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Escape hips, force him to Side Mount ○ Push leg down to Half Guard ○ Transition to a low single leg

Some Common Mount Techniques

Submissions	Top Transitions (positional improvements)	Bottom Transitions (escapes and reversals)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Floating (hands on chest) armbar ○ Cross collar choke (gi only) ○ Americana (aka V-armlock) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cross his arm (the 'gift wrap') & take the back ○ Dismount to Knee Mount 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Upa (trap arm and leg and then bridge) ○ Elbow-knee shrimping escape

Some Common Rear Mount Techniques

Submissions	Top Transitions (positional improvements)	Bottom Transitions (escapes and reversals)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rear naked choke (aka RNC) ○ Sliding collar choke ○ Straight armbar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Move legs achieve a figure 4 bodylock ○ Return to the Mounted position 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cross his arm & turn to face him in his Guard ○ Lateral slide to Half Guard

Some Common Turtle Techniques

Submissions	Top Transitions (positional improvements)	Bottom Transitions (escapes and reversals)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Clock choke (gi only) ○ Straight armlock with legs ○ Rolling kneebar (from bottom) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Fall back, insert hooks & get Rear Mount ○ Jump over, insert hooks & get Rear Mount ○ Turn him over, secure Side Mount 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Turn in & reguard ○ Turn out & rolling reguard ('Granby Roll') ○ Sitout to the back ○ Trap arm and roll opponent

The Book From Here...

In the next 80+ pages we will go through the techniques listed above in a step-by-step manner. These techniques are mostly drawn from the video materials that form the basis of the full Roadmap for Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu package you have just purchased.

For more information on these techniques please refer to the video materials that came with your Roadmap. Also make sure you take a look at the links for more information that are on most of the pages. I spent a lot of time writing those articles, filming those videos, and choosing the best ones to refer to on each specific page.

Without further ado, let's get started with the techniques!

Closed Guard Submissions

5 Step Armbar



1: Secure the wrist and the elbow of your opponent's right arm.



2: Pull your opponent's elbow to your right and control his left shoulder.



3: Your left foot plants on your opponent's right hip.



4: Pivot 90 degrees to your right and clamp down high on his back with your right calf.



5: Push his head with your left hand, step over his head, pinch your legs together and arch your hips to finish the armbar.

This is one of the most fundamental techniques in Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu, and it continues to win matches in BJJ, submission grappling and mixed martial arts competition.

In addition to it being a constant threat from the guard, the movements and attributes developed by training this technique have a high carry-over value to many other offensive and defensive techniques performed from the guard.

Make the armbar from guard bombproof by avoiding the three worst mistakes explained in this video:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AV9NorNMWI4>

Learn the best defenses for this technique in the 'Submission Defense' app available at

<http://www.grapplearts.com/iphone/index.php>

Closed Guard Submissions

Swinging Armbar



1: Start by controlling his right wrist with your left hand.



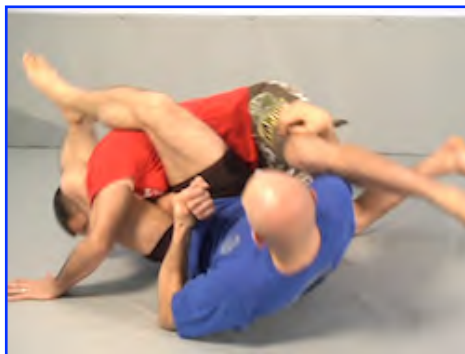
2: Insert your right hand under his left knee with your palm turned upwards.



3: Pull your head towards his right knee while opening your legs and swinging them up.



4: Clamp down on his head and upper back with your legs. Finish the armbar here, or...



5: ...drive down with your legs and lift with your arms to roll him...



6: ...to his back where you can finish the arm bar from an even more secure position.

This armbar has fewer steps and relies more on speed and athleticism than the one on the previous page.

It's important to learn both the 'tight and methodical' AND the 'fast and dynamic' way of applying the arm bar, because in reality you don't know what kind of energy you're going to be getting from your opponent. And you usually end up blending elements from both styles of armbar anyway.

From the position in photo 4 it's very common for your opponent to drive forward and try to crush you. If you can't roll him (photos 5 and 6) then the drill and technique in the link below is very useful to know; it has saved my butt on the mat many times!

<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/2010/02/a-drill-to-rescue-the-armbar-from-guard/>

Closed Guard Submissions

Triangle Choke



1: Start in the closed guard controlling both his wrists with your hands.



2: Maintaining your grips plant your left foot on his right hip.



3: Pull his right hand toward you, stuff his left hand toward his belt, open your guard and shoot your left leg up...



4: ...then chop your calf down across the back of his neck...



5: ...and place your right instep behind your left knee



5: Pull his head down with both hands and squeeze your knees together to finish the triangle choke

The triangle choke is one of those bread and butter attacks that has come to define BJJ for some people. And it IS a hugely powerful weapon: after all, you're sandwiching his neck between two of your strongest limbs.

Here are some advanced triangle choke details that you should use to make this attack truly effective:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5UrATWw9ajQ>

Now if you've got short stubby legs though, the triangle choke might not be the perfect submission for you. But there ARE some really easy modifications you can make to still use the triangle choke:

<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/2012/08/are-my-legs-too-short-to-apply-the-triangle-choke/>

Closed Guard Submissions

Cross Collar Choke



1: Start in the closed guard and open his right lapel with your left hand.



2: Insert your right hand as deep as possible into his lapel.



3: Maintaining your lapel grip pivot to your right side.



4: Use your right elbow to turn his face to your left to create room between his head and his left shoulder.



5: Grip the gi material at his left shoulder (or insert your thumb into his left lapel).



6: Square up to your opponent, rotate your left hand palm up and pull his face to your chest to activate the choke.

This is a classic submission in both Judo and BJJ. Always try to get your first hand as deep as possible into the collar - right to where a label would be if it was a T shirt!

Once your hand is this deep you'll be able to control his posture much better, and your opponent will be living in constant danger of getting submitted by the cross collar choke. And his reactions to the threat of the choke will help set him up for other sweeps and submissions.

So... Always get that first hand in as DEEP AS POSSIBLE! This is a case where a tiny, hard-to-see adjustment makes a huge difference. Get this right and your training partner WILL feel the difference.

BJJ is full of tiny little details that make big differences. Read about the details mindset at the article below:

<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/2007/12/golf-and-bjj/>

Closed Guard Submissions

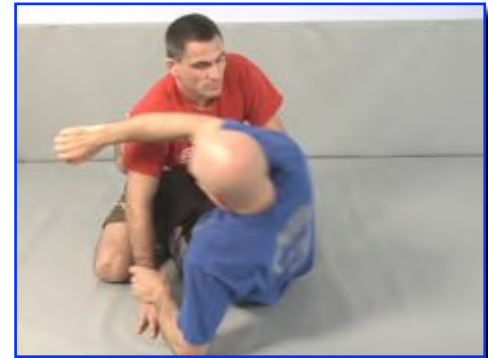
Kimura Armlock



1: You're using the Closed Guard to control your opponent.



2: Drive his hand to the floor, controlling it with your left grip, thumb and fingers on opposite sides of his wrist.



3: Sit up and bring your right armpit over top of his right shoulder.



4: Establish the figure four grip by gripping your own wrist, thumbs now alongside your fingers.



5: Shift your hips to the left and fall to your back, pulling him down to your right side.



6: Pull his elbow towards his ear and then push his hand behind his back to apply the lock.

When you grab his wrist initially (photo 2) you hold it like a baseball bat, with your thumb to the inside of his wrist and your other fingers curling around the outside. You grip this way because you need to control his movement of his arm to the left and the right at this time, or else he'll be able to escape.

When you switch your grip to the full figure four (photo 4) you switch your thumb position too. From now to the end of the technique, both thumbs are adjacent to the other 4 fingers on the hand.

You switch your thumb grip once his arm is wrapped by your right arm, because it's now very difficult for him to escape his arm inward. Without a separate thumb position you can now move your grip much further around his wrist, making it less reliant on grip strength and more difficult for him to escape. This is the same for almost every Kimura attack, regardless of whether you start from the guard or some other position.

Now the sad truth is that the Kimura from Guard is best suited to people with relatively strong upper bodies (because unlike doing the Kimura from the top position it relies more on arm strength). Physical attributes DO matter in BJJ, and not every technique will be suited for every practitioner. More on physical attributes below:

<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/2008/01/jiu-jitsu-and-physical-attributes/>

Closed Guard Submissions

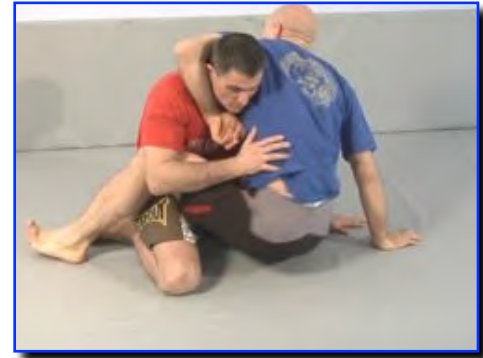
Guillotine Choke



1: Control your opponent using your Closed Guard.



2: Sit up and drape your left arm over his left shoulder (a position very similar to the Hip Bump Sweep on page 43)



3: Scoot your hips **BACK** to create room and loop his neck with your left arm.



4: Link your hands together and move your hips **SIDEWAYS** in preparation for applying the choke.



5: Closeup of the 'cup and saucer' hand position; your right hand holding your left fist.



6: Keep your arms high, cross your ankles, push away with your legs and arch back to apply the choke.

One big part of this choke is scooting your hips **BACKWARDS** to make space for your arm to encircle his neck (photo 3). If you stay torso-to-torso with your opponent then it'll be slower and more difficult to link your hands in the correct position (as demonstrated in photo 5).

Another important factor is trying to get your hands as high as possible on your own chest.

If your hands are down near your belt then there's lots of room for your opponent to wiggle out. Instead lift your hands as high as you can early in the technique using your arm strength, lock them into position, and then use the strength of your legs and lower back to actually apply the choke.

And here's a great little clip on how to use body positioning to amplify (or escape) the guillotine:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rfwl9V7gKwQ>

Closed Guard Submissions

Omoplata Armlock



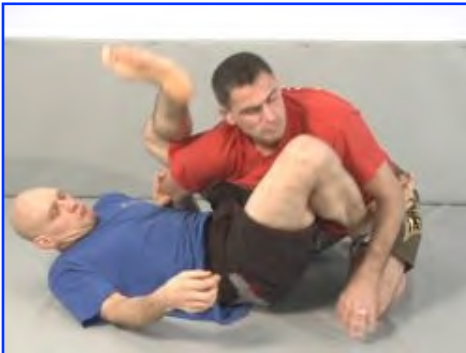
1: You have your opponent in Closed Guard and realize that his right arm is on the outside of your left hip.



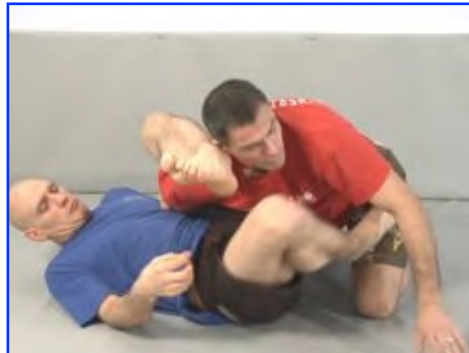
2: Control his right elbow and get your right foot onto his left hip.



3: Pivot to your left and start bringing your left foot over his right shoulder.



4: Continue bringing your foot in front of his face.



5: At this point you are 90 degrees to your opponent.



6: Cross your ankles, kick your legs forward, reach over his hip and sit up.



7: Sit up and flatten your opponent out so he's on his belly.



8: Fold your legs under you and rock forward, bringing his hand behind his back to apply the submission.

The omoplata is a sophisticated, powerful attack that is found in the arsenal of many advanced grapplers.

It's a submission, a sweep, and a great setup for other sweeps and submissions.

Here are the four most common omoplata errors... and also the four fastest ways to seriously improve your omoplata attacks:

<http://tinyurl.com/8yn7tk6>

Closed Guard Submissions

Ankle Lock (from the Top)



1: Start in the Closed Guard, maintaining posture with your hands in his armpits.



2: Keeping your hands in the 'thumbs up' position, jump up to your feet.



3: Bring your left knee behind his tailbone and arch your lower back to open his closed guard.



4: Launch your ankle lock attack the instant you feel his ankles uncrossing. Drop your weight down...



5: ...then loop your arm around his leg and bring your right leg up and over his belly.



6: Arch back and apply the lock with your right forearm on his Achilles tendon, your left hand cupping your right fist, and isolating his left leg with both of your own legs.

Little adjustments make a huge difference when it comes to finishing the ankle lock. Your forearm needs to go on his Achilles tendon, right where the skin wrinkles form if he flexes his foot forward. If your forearm is too high on his leg (a very common mistake) then you lose a large part of the power of the lock.

For photos of where your hands, arms and legs should go, and what you should be doing to finish the lock, please take a look at the following article:

<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/2010/05/breaking-down-the-ankle-lock/>

Closed Guard Passes

Same Side Knee Slide



1: Start in the Closed Guard, your right hand on his lapel, your left on his hip.



2: Your right knee blocks his tailbone and your left leg bases out backwards.



3: Maintaining downward pressure arch your lower back to break open his guard.



4: Reposition yourself so your right knee is up



5: Squat down, with your right knee still pointing upwards.



6: Drive your right knee to the ground and underhook his right leg with your left arm.



7: Pinning his leg with your right instep backstep your left leg over his trapped leg.



8: Remove your right instep and readjust your position...



9: ...end in Side Mount, your left knee blocking his hips.

This pass works well in conjunction with the cross knee slide pass on the next page. Whenever you've opened his legs and achieved the one leg up, one leg down position (photo 5) you can alternate between these two passes using one to set up the other and vice versa.

Trying to decide whether standing or kneeling guard passes suit you best? Check out this article for some ideas:

<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/2007/09/to-kneel-or-stand/>

Closed Guard Passes

Cross Knee Slide



1: Step one is opening the Guard. In this case you might make posture with your arms...



2: ...pop to your feet, put your right knee behind his tailbone, step your left leg back...



3: ...and squat down so that his legs uncross and his Guard opens up.



4: The same position from another angle: your right knee is up, your left knee is down.



5: Get the right underhook and cut your right knee to the side, forcing his right leg down to the mat.



6: Alternate angle: your right leg pins his right leg to the mat, your left leg is still between his legs.



7: Pass your trailing left leg through as well.



8: Lift his near (right) arm and turn your hips towards him.



9: Stabilize the Side Mount.

This is one of the guard passes you see most often in high-level competition, both with and without the gi. If it is executed correctly it is devilishly difficult to stop! For a world champion's breakdown of this pass and tons of immediately useful tips and tricks to make it work against every opponent check out the instructional set I did with Brandon Mullins. More info at:

<http://www.grapplearts.com/biggerstronger2>

Closed Guard Passes

Leg Toss



1: You're making posture in the Closed Guard, in this case with your hands on his biceps.



2: Jump to your feet and place your right knee just behind his tailbone.



3: Squat down, push forwards with your right knee, and arch your lower back backwards....



4: This pops his legs apart and opens his guard.



5: Stand up again, control his feet and start the Leg Toss Guard pass.



6: Fake moving his legs to your left, then throw his legs to your right.



7: Take a big step forward with your right leg, landing your right foot in the vicinity of his right hip.



8: Drop down to secure the kneemount position and continue with your attacks.

Some people get frustrated with this pass - also known as a 'Matador Pass' - when they can't stabilize the final position because their opponents roll to their knees. Check out the video below for some solutions to this problem:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0iq31plo4yQ>

Closed Guard Sweeps

Hip Bump



1: Start in the Closed Guard. your opponent is kneeling with his weight back.



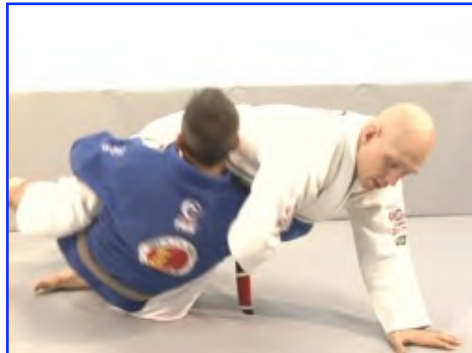
2: Open your legs, sit up and wrap your right arm around his arm, armpit over his shoulder.



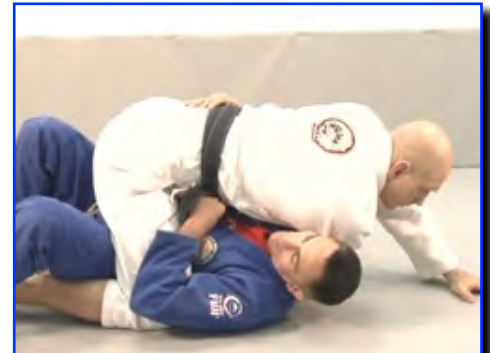
3: With your feet on the floor and posting on your left hand bridge your hips up...



4: ...then turn to your left while controlling his arm to sweep him.



5: This sweep should literally 'pop' your opponent off the mat and give him some airtime.



6: Land on top and collect 2 points for the sweep, and 4 more points for the Mount!!

This sweep is a core technique in my friend Brandon Mullins' Closed Guard game. I've learned a lot about Hip Bump Sweep setups, finishes and followups from him!

Learn how to make this sweep one of your trusted go-to moves, even against people much bigger and stronger than yourself, in this 5 volume instructional set that Brandon and I did together:

<http://www.grapplearts.com/biggerstronger2>

Closed Guard Sweeps

Scissor Sweep



1: Start in the Closed Guard controlling his sleeve and lapel on the same side of his body (his right).



2: Maintaining your grips escape your hips backwards until...



3: ...you get both your feet on his hips. Now push with your feet and pull with your arms to break his posture forwards.



4: Turn to your left and open your left leg to the side.



5: Pulling with your arms swing your left leg along the floor, chopping against his right knee with your left calf.



6: He falls to the side...



7: ...follow him to the top...



8: ...and end in Full Mount with your hand perfectly positioned on his lapel for the cross collar choke (page 94)

The key to making this sweep effective is a strong pull off balance your opponent forward.

If you let him settle his weight backward and hunker down onto his base then your sweep will never work. Plus scissoring your legs at this point just gives him an opening to pass your guard.

But if you pull him forward and stretch him out then the sweep becomes much more powerful and harder to counter.

Closed Guard Sweeps

Flower Sweep



1: Start in the Closed Guard controlling his left sleeve with your right grip.



2: Maintaining your sleeve grip, underhook his leg at the knee with your other hand.



3: Open your legs and swing your right leg in a big clockwise circle...



4: ...until you've come up onto your shoulders and are almost facing the same way as your opponent.



5: Now unleash all that stored momentum and swing your leg back counter-clockwise...



6: Your right leg comes under his body, your left leg kicks his armpit and your left arm lifts his leg.



7: He can't post (his right arm is trapped) so he falls forward.



8: Follow him and stabilize the mount position.

Here's an advanced application of this highly versatile flower sweep:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U0k_sVb7InI

Closed Guard Sweeps

Omoplata Sweep



1: You're controlling your opponent in Closed Guard. He puts his hand on the mat, which is your trigger to move!



2: Shrimp away slightly and get your left foot on his right hip. Also create an angle by pushing his head.



3: Swing your right leg towards his head, your thigh levering against the back of his arm.



4: Cross your ankles and block his hips so he can't jump over top of you.



5: Hook his near (left) leg with your near (right) arm.



6: Kick your legs and pull with your arm to stretch him out. Begin rolling to your left...



7: ...and end up sitting on his shoulder, his upper left arm sandwiched between your calf and hamstring.



8: Slide your hips out sideways and control his lower body in a Reverse Scarf Hold variation of Side Mount.

This is a powerful sweep, just be aware that it can actually take a while to roll him over top of you. Here are some of the changes I've made to my personal omoplata game lately to make it even more effective:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=03JrFAaE8uo>

Closed Guard Sweeps

Making Space & Standing Up



1: You're using the Closed Guard, but your opponent decides to change things up.



2: He gets to his feet and starts working to pass your guard standing up.



3: Uncross your ankles and establish Open Guard before you get into a bad position.



4: Push him backwards with your legs to create room.



5: Sit up, bracing on the ground with your left hand behind you.



6: With your weight on your left hand and right foot slide your left foot backwards...



7: ...and stand up in good position with a strong base.



8: Now you can go for throws, takedowns, trips, etc.

Is it better to be in the guard or up on your feet? Well, as always, context is everything! Is there striking involved? Is your opponent a good guard passer? What are your takedowns like? All of these are important considerations...

Here's a much more detailed breakdown of how to get back to your feet in a real fight:

<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/2012/03/get-up-stand-up/>

Open Guard Submissions

Triangle Choke



1: Start in the Open Guard with both feet on his hips.



2: Control his right arm at the wrist with both hands (thumbs towards yourself). Pull with your arms and push with your legs to stretch him out.



3: Suddenly collapse your legs allowing him to fall towards you while bringing your right leg up...



4: ...and down behind his neck, trapping his head and right arm between your legs.



5: Triangle your legs by bringing your right instep behind your left knee and cross his trapped arm to your right side.



7: Pull his head down with both hands while squeezing your knees and extending your hips to apply the choke.

The two-on-one grip used in photo 2 is a surprisingly strong position that can be used in gi, no gi, and MMA. It's very important to stretch your opponent out by pulling his arm towards you with your arms while simultaneously kicking him away with your legs.

Push-pull effect really stretches him out. In a self defense or MMA context it makes it virtually impossible for him to hit you effectively, whereas you can quickly remove one foot from his hip, heel kick him in the face, and then return to this position.

Also keep in mind that there are FIVE major variation of the triangle choke, and you can hit at least one of them from almost any position. More info about the major triangle variations at the link below:

<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/2010/07/five-triangle-chokes-you-should-know/>

Open Guard Submissions

Armbar



1: Your opponent is getting frustrated trying to pass your Closed Guard on his knees...



2: ...so he jumps to his feet and grinds your throat with his forearm. Immediately get your left foot on his hip.



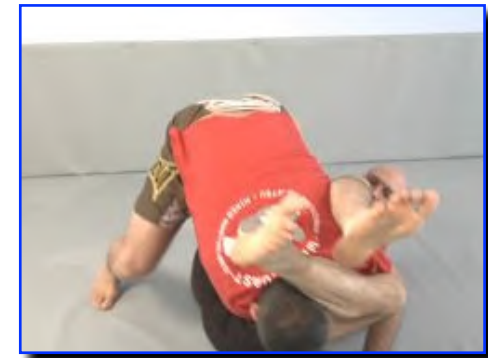
3: Spin to your right while securing his right arm, using the foot on his hip to generate momentum.



4: Turn until you're perpendicular to your opponent, then bring your right leg over his face.



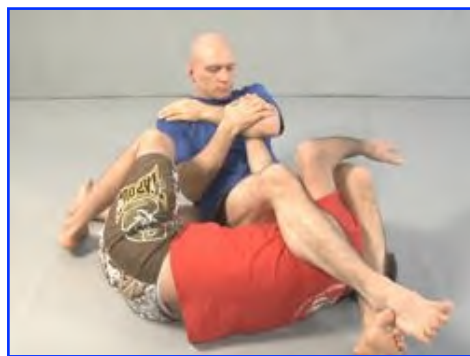
5: Clamp down HARD on his neck and body with your legs and arch your hips to apply the armlock.



6: You also have the option to spin further and lift his left leg with your right arm.



7: This will dump him in front of you, his back on the mat...



8: ...where you can finish him with a very powerful armbar.

Getting at least one foot on your opponent's hip is the key to controlling distance and pivoting.

Staying directly underneath and directly in front of your opponent in the Closed Guard severely limits your offensive options. Pivoting and getting an angle really makes life on the bottom a lot more fun for you!

Check out the spinning armbar drill here - it will really help this move:

<http://tinyurl.com/cfwhsyz>

Open Guard Submissions

Ankle Lock (from the Top)



1: Start in your opponent's Open Guard.



2: Push his right knee down and pull his left ankle up.



3: Wrap your left arm around his right ankle and drive your right knee forward and across his left thigh.



4: Once the right knee gets close to the ground start falling to the side.



5: As you fall bring your left foot over his right leg.



6: Your left leg goes to the floor and your forearm to the base of his Achilles. Pinch your knees together and arch backwards to apply the lock.

This is a great surprise attack you can use whenever you find one of your opponent's feet in a position just beside your hip. Or when you force his foot into that same position yourself...

Just be subtle about it: ignore the foot until you're 100% ready to start your attack, and then move quickly before he gets a chance to reset and adjust.

The description above glosses over several important technical points. To amplify the power of the lock watch the video at the url below which helps you avoid four most common mistakes for this technique:

www.grapplearts.com/Blog/2008/04/the-four-most-common-leglock-mistakes/

Open Guard Submissions

Ankle Lock (from the Bottom)



1: Start in the Open Guard, feet on his hips and cupping his right heel with your left hand.



2: Push him away with both legs, while still gripping his right leg.



3: When he drives back in drop your left leg down between his legs.



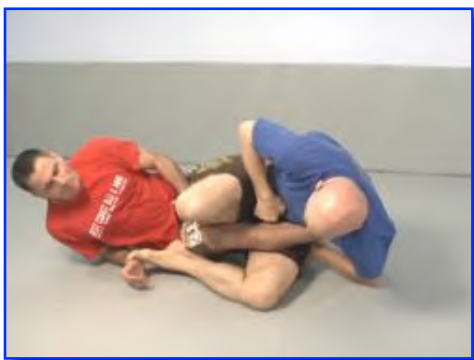
4: Loop your left foot around and over his right leg.



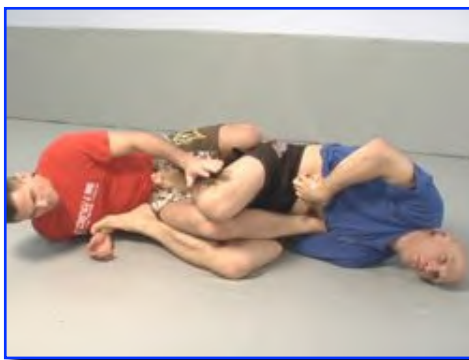
5: Still controlling his right foot bridge onto your shoulders and arch your hips up and to the left.



6: This collapses his base and topples him backwards.



7: Adjust your grip, placing your left forearm at the bottom of his Achilles tendon.



8: Keep your arms high, pinch your legs together, and arch your hips forward to apply the lock.

The fundamental leglock position (photos 4 to 8) is very similar to the Single Leg X Guard, which is a powerful Open Guard sweeping tool used by Marcelo Garcia and his students.

Click on the link below to see an intro to the Single Leg X Guard as well as an innovative and surprising way to pull Guard:

<http://tinyurl.com/bs8q6ht>

Open Guard Submissions

Kneebar (from the Top)



1: You're in your opponent's Open Guard, determined to bring the match to a swift conclusion



2: Underhook his right leg with your left arm, using your other arm to push his left leg to the floor and create space.



3: Bring your right knee between his legs and start rotating to your left (counter-clockwise).



4: Continue to spin, while maintaining control over his leg.



5: Fall onto your side, bringing your upper body as close as possible to his right leg.



6: Glue his foot to your chest, squeeze your knees together, and arch your hips forward to apply the kneebar.

This technique exemplifies one of three major ways to get into the kneebar. The first is the 'Forward Spin' and this is what's used in the technique above. The other two major entries are the 'Backspin' and the 'Turtle Roll'

Once you you learn all three major kneebar entries then you'll be able to hit the kneebar from all kinds of different positions and in all kinds of different situations.

Here's a fun 'comic book' style instructional I did on the three main types of kneebar entries:

<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/2012/04/the-three-knee-bars-you-need-to-know/>

Open Guard Submissions

Kneebar (from the Bottom)



1: Start in the Open Guard, controlling his right foot with your left hand and your left foot on his hip.



2: Switch your left grip to an underhook and circle your body clockwise



3: Roll up onto your left shoulder, bring your left knee between his legs and your right leg to his butt.



4: Maintaining control of his foot and keeping your right heel on his butt arch your hips so that he falls backwards.



5: Stay tight and roll onto your right side following his momentum.



6: Squeeze your knees, keep his foot against your chest and extend your hips to apply the lock.

This technique seemed really fancy to me the first time I saw it, but it has become a staple attack in MMA and submission grappling, so you really need to learn it.

The kneebar is a super-powerful technique that can end a match or a fight right away, but many people do it wrong. For example, having your legs in the wrong position can cut your power by 50% or more. Here's a video to help you avoid the most common kneebar mistakes:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pnSQxE4GfmE>

Open Guard Passes

Leg Toss with Fake to Knee Mount



1: Start in the Open Guard controlling your opponent's feet at the ankles.



2: Fake the guard pass by moving his feet to your left.



3: Reverse direction and throw his legs to your right. Step forward with your right leg.



4: Place your right knee on his belly and then step forward with your left leg.



5: With your left leg outriggered for balance settle into the Knee Mount position

This is a low tech, reliable guard pass that works equally well in Brazilian jiu-jitsu, submission grappling and mixed martial arts competition. Even though it's very simple there are several world champions that have made it their bread and butter guard pass.

One common error is to move the outside leg first. In the example above the **RIGHT** leg moves first, traveling to the knee on belly position in a semicircular motion. Once that foot has planted next to the body the other leg (the **LEFT** leg) takes a giant step forward to the outrigger position.

Click below to fine-tune your knee mount and make yourself truly **HEAVY** on your opponent!

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LErykve-3uc&list=UUXpu025o8edxR9b4NMbH11A&index=1>

Open Guard Passes

Force to Turtle



1: Stand in your opponent's Open Guard and control both of his feet.



2: Switch your grips so that your hands are underneath his ankles.



3: Push forwards and slightly to one side so that both his legs go to one side of his head.



4: Plant his feet on the ground beside his head - he will most likely begin to somersault backwards.



5: As he somersaults begin to move to one side, your knee coming alongside his floating ribs.



6: Drop your knee straight down between his leg and his elbow, and control him in the Turtle position.

If you just push his legs to the ground straight backwards, one leg on either side of your opponent's head, then you can severely hurt his neck and/or his back. This is especially true if he's not very flexible, or if you slip and fall on him as you're trying this Guard pass.

To do it safely make sure that you're in control the whole time. Push both his legs to the SAME side of his head, and do it slowly enough so that he can begin the backroll process. Guide him through the roll by holding his legs in position.

Because you're anticipating the roll it's no big deal to move to one side and control him from the Turtle. In fact, if you're a Rear Mount or Turtle attack specialist you'd actually prefer getting him to Turtle rather than ending up with him in Side Mount.

This is a great technique to use against people with those super-long, super-flexible legs and impossible to pass guards (those 'Daddy Long Legs' types):

<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/2007/11/dealing-with-daddy-long-legs/>

Open Guard Sweeps

Heel Grab Sweep (Lumbarjack)



1: You're in the Open Guard with both your feet on his hips.



2: Bend your knees and grab both his heels with both your hands.



3: Keeping his feet in place with your hands extend your legs, knocking him backwards.



4: Sit up as he hits the ground, keeping control over at least one of his feet.



5: Elevate one of his legs and get your feet under you. Either stand up at this point or...



6: ...drive forward into his Guard to stop him from scrambling away.

There are a lot of different ways you can do this sweep, including 1) pushing with both feet on the hips as per the example above, 2) keeping your knees together on his beltline and your feet flared out to the side, or 3) opening your legs wide and pushing on his knees with the back of your hamstrings.

This may seem like a low level technique, but the basic principle involves immobilizing both of your opponent's feet and then pushing him backwards. It feels kind of like that schoolyard trick where one perpetrator pushes the victim backwards who then trips over the second perpetrator kneeling down behind him.

A related low risk, high reward sweep is the backwards trip (see the link below) that I first saw in a Machado jiu-jitsu book but had mostly written off as a novelty move. It wasn't until I saw this technique being used to great effect by world champions Marcelo Garcia and Emily Kwok that I saw how effective it could be.

I've since added it to my own game and love it!

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=stfPldANAQ>

Open Guard Sweeps

Balloon Sweep



1: Start in the open guard with your feet on your opponent's hips and controlling both of his arms.



2: He drives in - bend your legs and allow him to come closer.



3: When his head is above your head begin to straighten your legs.



4: Still controlling his sleeves lift him into the air with both legs.



5: Put your head to one side and roll backwards over your shoulder...



6: ...coming directly to the Mount position.

This is one of those techniques that can be dangerous if you do it incorrectly: if you lack control, or if your opponent doesn't know how to fall properly, you can spike his head straight into the ground.

When we're training we have a responsibility to take care of our training partners. So don't assume that your training partner will play nice, tuck his head, and do a perfect forward somersault. If you launch him into orbit then you also have the responsibility of returning him safely to the earth!

You can do this sweep safely. Start slow, very slow, until both you and your partner get the hang of it. Put your head to one side (which protects your own neck), roll backwards over your shoulder slowly, and guide his body through the roll by steering his arms with your grips.

And read this article - it might give you a new perspective on what it really takes to get better at this sport:

<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/2006/02/the-most-important-training-gear/>

Open Guard Sweeps

Tripod Sweep



1: Start in the Open Guard with at least one foot on your opponent's hip.



2: Grab his right foot with your left hand just behind the heel.



3: *Opposite side view:* simultaneously hook your right foot behind his left knee.



4: Pull with your hand and your hooking foot while extending the foot on his hip.



5: He topples over. Retain your grip on his foot...



6: ...start coming to your feet...



7: ...and make the choice of passing the Guard on your knees or standing up.



8: If you stand lift one foot up to stop him from standing up or scrambling away

This is powerful sweep that I like to combine with the tomahawk sweep (page 59). Together they form the 'Jab-Cross' of Open Guard sweeps. See video of both sweeps at the url below:

<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/2012/10/the-jab-cross-of-open-guard-sweeps/>

Open Guard Sweeps

Tomahawk Sweep



1: Start in the Open Guard - your feet can be on his hips or in some other position.



2: Grab behind his left foot with your right hand.



3: Switch so that your left foot is on his belly in a 'side kick' position and insert your right leg between his legs.



4: Fully extend and straighten your bottom leg.



5: Simultaneously kick with your top leg and chop his right leg with the back of your own right leg.



6: Immediately start coming to your feet.



7: Keep your grip on his foot and elevate his leg to stop him from standing up.



8: Either pass standing up or dive forward, cover his body, and pass with your weight low.

Even as a black belt, this 'basic' move is one of my very favorite sweeps. It's a threat anytime someone is standing and you can snag their ankle with your hand! Here's the tomahawk sweep in action (from the Guard Sweeps app):

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q-LxzR3X19A>

Open Guard Sweeps

Butterfly Sweep



1: Start in Butterfly Guard with a right underhook and your left hand on his right elbow.



2: Bring your left foot underneath your right leg and fall sideways to the ground.



3: Bridge up onto your left shoulder and lift his left leg up with your right instep.



4: Alternate view of step 1: right underhook and left control over his right arm.



5: Alternate view of step 2: fall sideways, bringing your left ear towards the ground.



6: Alternate view of step 3: lift HARD with your right leg to throw him over.



8: Keep your grips and bring your right leg through, under your left leg.



8: End up in a Modified Scarf Hold position.

This is one of the MOST powerful sweeps, and one of my very favorite techniques. There are a TON of details and nuances which make it so effective, and the best way to learn them is to take a look at the article at the link below:

<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/tag/butterfly-guard/>

Half Guard Submissions

Kimura Armlock (from the Top)



1: Your opponent has managed to secure a shallow underhook from the Half Guard.



2: While basing out strongly with your legs, bring your top (right) arm over his arm and pin it to your body.



3: Slide your bottom (left) hand back and secure his wrist.



4: Push his arm to the ground and secure the figure four grip. Your elbow is against his ribs and your thumbs are now alongside your other fingers.



5: Slide his elbow upwards, towards his ear. This removes the slack from his arm so you only have to lift his elbow a tiny bit to apply the lock.

This attack is one of the few exceptions to 'position before submission.' Most of the time a submission attack is doomed if you start it before passing the guard and securing top position.

But in this case not only can you occasionally finish the armlock without passing the Half Guard first, you can also sometimes just use the threat of the armlock to eventually pass the guard. It's a two-pronged attack, making it a very powerful and versatile option.

And in case you're thinking that this is just some crazy technique I dreamed up, here's noted competitor Marcio Feitosa showing the same technique:

<http://tinyurl.com/crqegt>

Half Guard Submissions

Kimura Armlock (from the Bottom)



1: You're in Half Guard, controlling his left leg by hooking it with your own left leg. Control the distance with your arms.



2: Move your body backwards slightly so you can then suddenly change direction...



3: ...and sit up towards your left bringing your right armpit over his right shoulder.



4: Lock your hands together in a figure four grip, your left hand on his wrist, your right hand on your own wrist.



5: Still controlling his left leg with your legs fall onto your back.



6: Move his elbow towards his ear, and when all the slack is out of the system push his hand behind his back to finish the technique.

The Kimura is one of the big guns from the bottom of Half Guard. Once you lock it on your opponent has to pay attention, or you're gonna tap him out.

In fact, the technique above is the start of what I call 'The Kimura Game,' which is a series of attacks, submissions, sweeps, counters and recounters from the Half Guard all based capitalizing on the power of your initial figure four grip.

If you're interested in going deeper into this topic I recommend checking out the following resource:

<http://www.grapplearts.com/Half-Guard-Sweeps-Info.php>

Half Guard Submissions

Kneebar (from the Top)



1: Start in Half Guard, and gripfight so that he isn't able to control your upper body.



2: Pinning his arms to your chest with your hands pop your upper body up.



3: Kick your right foot in a big circle over his head so that you rotate counter-clockwise.



4: Continue the momentum and land so that your right heel touches your left knee.



5: Fall onto your side and reach forward with both arms to control his right leg.



6: Pin his instep to your chest and control his foot between your head and the ground. Cross your heels at his butt, squeeze your knees together and arch your hips forward to finish the kneebar.

The kneebar is the king of the leglocks; you can hit it from so many different positions and once it's in position your opponent has very little chance to escape.

Here are a link to a TON of resources on Grapplearts taking you through different aspects of the kneebar. Practice this stuff and you'll be able to call yourself a kneebar master someday:

<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/tag/kneebars/>

Half Guard Submissions

Kneebar (from the Bottom)



1: Start in Half Guard, hooking his right leg with your right leg and keeping his weight off you with your hands.



2: Keeping your right leg hooked behind the knee move your hips and body back to create room to maneuver.



3: Roll onto your shoulder and kick your left leg through his left armpit.



4: Scoop behind his left leg (palm up) with your right arm.



5: Roll forward still grabbing his wrist, and hit him in the armpit with your hamstring to knock him off-balance forward.



6: Continue his momentum forward and over top of you while still controlling his leg with your arm.



7: Switch both your arms to controlling his leg, bend your knees 90 degrees, and cross your ankles behind his butt.



8: Squeeze your knees together, glue his leg to your chest with your arms and arch your hips forward to apply the kneebar submission.

When you do this attack you're essentially going from the Half Guard into the Turtle briefly, and then doing the rolling kneebar from Turtle (as covered on page 108).

The key to rolling him over, you and finishing the attack is to kick him as hard as possible in the armpit with your hamstring. It is this hamstring 'strike' that sends him arse over teakettle and allows you to finish the lock from a much stronger position

Half Guard Submissions

Sleeve Choke



1: Your opponent has an underhook from Half Guard, but is being passive and isn't blocking your grips or defending his head.



2: Wrap his head with your left arm (aka crossfacing your opponent).



3: Drop your head beside his face to block his vision and keep him looking up, then insert all four left fingers into your right sleeve.



4: Maintaining pressure with your head start bringing your right fist across his throat.



5: Once your fist is in the middle of his throat and on his trachea then he's really in trouble...



6: Sag your weight to the right and extend your arms to activate the choke. Keep choking him even if he tries to roll you to the bottom.

The sleeve choke is a very versatile attack that you can hit from many different positions. In fact it's a legitimate danger for your opponent anytime you wrap one arm around his neck.

I've even seen a teammate of mine win a competition with the sleeve choke from the bottom when he was trapped in Full Mount! Man, that must've sucked for his opponent!

Some people like to apply the sleeve choke with an open hand - kind of like a 'karate chop' - across the throat. This may be a kinder, gentler way to apply the choke, but I don't like it; there's too high a chance of getting your fingers grabbed. I prefer using the fist in the middle of the throat and applying the choke slowly enough so that your opponent has all the time he needs to tap out safely.

Speaking of safety, every BJJ practitioner should understand the danger of training with submissions. Here's some more info on which locks and chokes are the most dangerous:

<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/2007/03/the-dangerous-locks/>

Half Guard Submissions

Ankle Lock (from the Top)



1: You're in your opponent's Half Guard. Start by dominating the gripfighting.



2: Bring a knee across his belly and cup his leg with your left hand.



3: Fall backwards keeping his leg tight to your body.



4: Bring your free leg to his hip and your right arm behind his ankle, right at the base of his Achilles tendon.

5: Link your hands over your solar plex, fist in palm, and squeeze your knees tightly together.



6: Keeping everything tight arch backwards to apply the ankle lock.



Some people think that learning leglocks means they don't need to learn how to pass the guard...

I couldn't disagree more! Learn how to leglock somebody AND learn how to pass the guard!!

I think one of the best resources to help you become an effective leglocker is my Leglocks Package. Hundreds of techniques, drills, combinations, counters and variations:

<http://www.grapplearts.com/Leglock-DVDs.php>

Half Guard Passes

Instep Pry to Mount



1: You're in the Half Guard. Establish a strong right underhook and left crossface.



2: (Alternate view) The shoulder pressure turns his head away from your free leg.



3: Bring the instep of your free (left) leg over his right thigh.



4: Maintaining pressure on his head with your shoulder, pike your hips up into the air.



5: Use your left instep to pry his legs open and slide your other (right) leg forwards...



6: ...ending up in the Full Mount, still maintaining your cross face and underhook.



7: (Alternate view) Your left arm is still crossfacing him when you get to Mount.



8: (Alternate ending) Instead of going forwards at step 5 you can go to the side...



9: (Alternate ending) ...and establish the Side Mount instead.

In this guard pass, as with many different guard passes, the underhook is the key. If you have the underhook then it's safe to proceed. If you don't have the underhook then stop, back up, get the underhook, and only then push forwards! This pass puts a LOT of pressure on your opponent, and if someone does it to you it can be totally demoralizing. Here's how to keep the will to fight even when things aren't going your way:

<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/2007/11/keeping-the-will-to-fight/>

Half Guard Passes

Sprawl Pass to Sidemount



1: You're trying to pass the Half Guard but your opponent's legs are very strong and you can't get free of his hook.



2: Drive forward, lift your hips, put your stomach on his shoulder, and link your hands around his upper thighs.



3: Just link your hands together like this; nothing fancy.



4: Sprawl backwards on the balls of your feet, driving your legs back and putting a lot of weight on his hips and upper thighs.



5: Still controlling his thighs reach up and grab the head with one arm.



6: Inch around to Side Mount maintaining your wrap around the legs and the head grab until you're safely past his Guard.

Many half guard passes require you to drive forward and get the underhook. The sprawl pass shown here is an exception, but it's still a very powerful way to unlock an opponent's legs when they cross their ankles or triangle their legs in the half guard.

The key to this pass is using the bear hug around the legs (just below the butt) to make it impossible for them to follow your backwards motion when you sprawl. Because they can't go forward to alleviate the pressure you're then able to use the power of your entire body to unlock their legs.

There are lots of different styles of the Half Guard and the truth is that you'll eventually need to learn strategies to deal with each variation. You don't want to be taken by surprise by a position you've never seen before, so check out the major styles of Half Guard at the article below:

<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/2012/03/a-glossary-of-guards-part-3-the-half-guard/>

Half Guard Sweeps

Outside Leg Hook Reguarding



1: You're on your side in the Half Guard, defending his grips and keeping his weight off you.



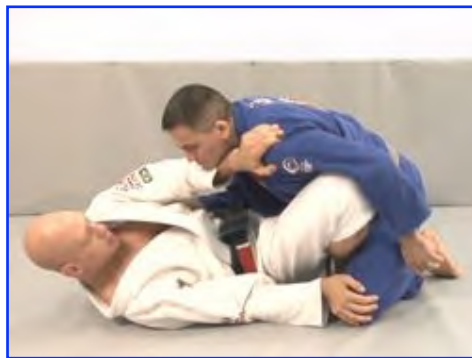
2: You're hooking his right leg with your inside (right) leg.



3: To start this transition bring your outside (left) leg over his lower leg to control his movement...



4: ...and push his knee away with your bottom (right) hand.



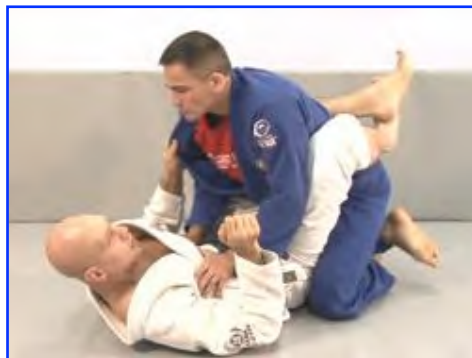
5: Bring your right knee up across your opponent's belt, then extend your hips.



6: Push with your knee until you're squared up with your opponent.



7: Your right foot is still under his hips, so you have the option of shifting your hips to make room, freeing your leg...



8: ...and crossing your ankles behind his lower back to achieve the Closed Guard.

Many BJJ players eventually find that the Half Guard is a very strong offensive sweeping tool.

Ultimately the choice between Closed Guard, Open Guard, and Half Guard is a personal preference.

Regardless of what your favorite type of Guard is, it's not always going to work on every opponent. Sometimes you just have to change positions and go to a different one.

Here's a drill that will REALLY help you with moving in the Half Guard:

<http://tinyurl.com/boar8sf>

Half Guard Sweeps

Butterfly Hook Lift



1: You're hooking his right leg with your own right leg in Half Guard, but...



2: ...he drives in, crossfaces you and smashes you flat. To counter, put your heels on the back of his calf.



3: Extend both your legs, stretching out his leg in the process.



4: Insert your left instep under his right thigh (keeping your other foot on his calf for now). Grip his belt.



5: Plant your left foot and lift your opponent with your leg and your arms.



6: Elevate him as high as possible. Once he's up you can sweep him, or...



7: ...open your legs and let him drop...



8: ...right down into your Closed Guard.

This may seem like a super-fancy move requiring an inhuman amount of leg strength, but that's not the case at all.

If he's driving forward then with proper technique and body mechanics you should be able to lift him this way and have the choice of sweeping him or returning him to your closed guard.

If he's not driving forwards then lifting him is tough, but the lack of pressure then makes it easier for you to get back to the guard via more conventional means.

Half Guard Sweeps

Foot Grab Sweep



1: Start in the Half Guard, entangling his right leg with your right leg and protecting against the crossface with your right hand.



2: Slide down towards his hips and/or throw him up over top of you.



3: Wrap his near (right) leg high on the thigh (but not over the buttocks) with your arms.



4: Scoop up his far (left) foot with your hands, controlling both the foot and the instep.



5: Release the Half Guard, scissor your legs and come onto your knees.



6: Continue holding his leg and drive towards your opponent to knock him over.



7: When you land in the guard don't let go of the foot and don't stop!



8: Circle to your right to pass his Guard (he can't stop you because his foot is trapped) and secure Side Mount.

I think this should be one of the first sweeps that you learn from the Half Guard, because it's powerful, reliable, and teaches you how to get deep underneath your opponent.

It also ties together with other dynamic Half Guard sweeps to create a hard-to-stop combinations.

More Half Guard info here:

<http://tinyurl.com/2yf4vw>

Side Mount Submissions

Americana Armlock



1: You're in Side Mount and your opponent's hand is held high, close to your head and neck.



2: Grab his wrist with your left hand while controlling his upper arm with your right hand.



3: Force his hand towards the ground while weaving your right hand under his upper arm...



4: ...and grab your own wrist to secure the figure four. Your thumbs are now alongside your other fingers.



5: Move his elbow down towards his hip to take the slack out of the arm.



6: Lift his elbow towards to ceiling to apply the submission.

Once you've pushed his hand to the ground make sure that the elbow of your top arm (in this case your left) braced against his head - this adjustment makes it much harder for him to use bicep strength, curl his arm towards himself, and link hands to defend the submission.

Also experiment with step 5 of this technique with a training partner.

- 1) First leave his arm high and see how far you have to lift his elbow to get the tap.
- 2) Then bring his elbow down as close to his hip as you can and apply the submission again.

You'll find that the further you bring his elbow towards his hip then the more slack you take out of the system, and the less effort it takes to finish the submission.

This submission has been around for a long time and is found in many classical Japanese Ju-Jutsu systems. Some of the differences between the old and the new way of doing things are discussed in this article, originally published in Black Belt Magazine:

<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/2012/03/submission-grappling-vs-classical-ju-jutsu-when-cultures-and-concepts-collide/>

Side Mount Submissions

Kimura Armlock



1: Your opponent has his arm in a bad position while you pin him in Side Mount.



2: Bring your bottom (right) hand up to his wrist.



3: Grip his wrist tightly with your thumb on one side of his wrist and your fingers on the other.



4: Encircle his arm with your top (left) arm...



5: Force his arm to the floor and secure the figure four grip. Your thumbs are now alongside your other fingers.



6: Shift his arm upwards, bringing his elbow towards his ear.



7: With all the slack taken out of the system, slightly elevate his left elbow to apply the lock.

The key to an effective Kimura is to take all the slack out of his arm by moving his elbow towards his ear. This is something that I learned from Roy Harris, and I think about it every time I apply the Kimura armlock.

By moving his elbow just a few inches up (as in photo 4 and 5) you hugely reduce the amount of strength you need to finish the Kimura.

If his elbow stays low then you have to lift his arm much higher off the ground, use a lot more strength, and introduce a lot more movement which can compromise the entire attack and give your opponent the chance to get away.

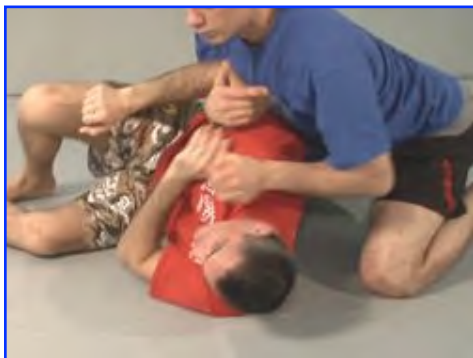
This is super important and often overlooked, so make sure you add this detail to your Kimura game!

Side Mount Submissions

Near Side Armbar



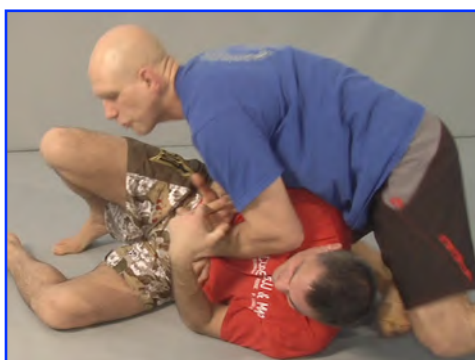
1: You are in Side Mount, controlling the far arm with your right underhook.



2: Your opponent tries to roll away from you - underhook his near arm and drop your right elbow behind his body.



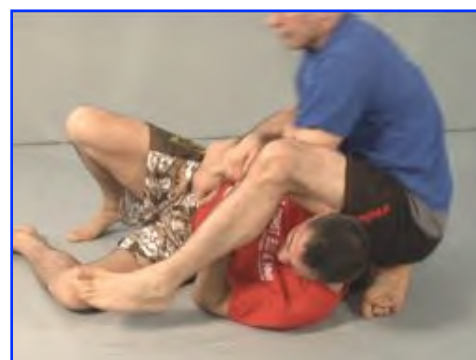
3: Figure four your arms, trapping his right arm. Keep weight on him through your arms.



4: Staying heavy on your opponent pivot on your right knee and bring your right foot behind his head and neck.



5: Swing your left leg out to the side and then over his head.



6: Maintaining the figure four grip on his arm sit your butt down towards the floor.



7: Pinch your knees together, glue his pinky finger to your chest and arch your hips to apply the armbar.

The single most common error people make with this move is not sliding the foot right up behind the head.

If you leave too much room then you'll never get to the tight final armbar position. So think of your leg pivoting on the knee and the rest of the leg moving like a windshield wiper, right in behind the head, neck and upper body.

This is the style of armlock from Side Mount that I teach in the Grapplearts Submissions app for iPhone and Android devices. You can get more information about both those apps here:

<http://www.grapplearts.com/iphone/index.php>

Side Mount Transitions

Pop up to Knee Mount



1: You're in Side Mount but decide to put more pressure on your opponent to open up submissions and/or improve your position further.



2: Frame your bottom (right) arm across his belly, preventing his legs from coming up.



3: Place your top forearm across his neck, giving you a place to push off for the next move.



4: Using a pushup motion, jump up to your feet...



5: ...and bring your right knee onto his belly.



6: Base out with your left leg and stabilize your position.

There are several good reasons to switch from Side Mount to Knee Mount, including putting pressure on your opponent, opening up submission opportunities, and scoring points in BJJ competition (remember to hold it for 3 seconds to get your points).

In the Knee Mount 90% of your weight should be on your right knee - your left foot should be floating so that it can track and adjust to your opponent's movements.

Here's a crash course on how to make the Knee Mount powerful, effective and heavy:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LErykve-3uc&f>

Side Mount Transitions

Swing Leg to Mount



1: Start in a typical Side Mount position, scooping the head and controlling the far side underhook



2: Switch your arms so that you're controlling his far (left) arm from above with your left arm.



3: Then plant your other hand on the mat beside his hips.



4: Switch your hips so that you're in a Reverse Scarf Hold position, hips close to his head.



5: Swing your right leg high up and over his body and legs.



6: Finish in the Full Mount

This is a classic way to advance from Side Mount to Full Mount.

The further you walk your legs back while blocking his hips (photo 4) the more room you create for your legs to go easily to Mount. At the same time try to put pressure on his face with your ribs (which also blocks his vision) and make sure that his near (right) arm is out of position.

Finally know that your opponent is almost guaranteed to try one or several big giant monster bridges during this technique, attempting to knock you over and/or create room to regard. If you know that the bridges are coming then you can prepare for them and not get knocked around too much.

Here's an interesting variation of this technique applied from the North-South position using a little assist from your hand:

<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/2012/04/north-south-to-mount-transition-by-perry-hauck/>

Side Mount Transitions

Switching Hips



1: Start in a tight Side Mount position.



2: Making sure to maintain your right underhook start shifting your weight...



3: ...and kick your right leg through to a Modified Scarf Hold position.



4: Alternate view of Modified Scarf Hold.



5: Switch your legs back to a regular Side Mount configuration and take your left hand from under his head.



6: With your left arm over his left shoulder start rolling your hips the other way.



7: Switch your legs and base them out wide in Reverse Scarf Hold position.



8: Alternate view of reverse Scarf Hold.

You often use these transitions to stop your opponent's attempts to escape side mount.

Modified Scarf Hold = Kuzure Kesa Gatame in Japanese.

Reverse Scarf Hold = Ushiro Kesa Gatame in Japanese.

In both positions opening your legs and spreading your feet as wide as possible is a core part of maintaining stability against a bucking opponent.

Side Mount Transitions

Rotate Body to North-South



1: Start in Side Mount with your left arm under his head and your right arm through his left armpit.



2: Bring your left arm over his head and encircle his left arm, then withdraw your right hand...



3: ...and put it on the floor next to his hip on the side closest to you.



4: Using your right hand to block his hip and stop him from following you circle to your left...



5: ...getting further from his legs and bringing your belly over his face.



6: As your body gets close to parallel with his body you are now in North-South position.

North-South is considered by some to simply to be a variation of Side Mount. Others consider it to be its own position. In the end it doesn't matter what you call it, so long as you're familiar with it and know how to use it.

This may seem like too simple a transition to draw attention to, but moving from a classic Side Mount position to a North-South pinning position changes the game considerably.

Some opponents who are really tough to hold in Side Mount have absolutely no answer for escaping North-South, and it sets up slightly different ways to choke, armlock, and leglock your opponent.

Here's multiple-time world champion and BJJ phenomenon Marcelo Garcia teaching one of his highest percentage finishing moves - the North-South choke:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RkFHJHC58qc>

Side Mount Escapes

Reguard, Trap Leg with Foot



1: You're trapped in Side Mount but your forearms are on his face and hip.



2: Turn onto your right side, facing your opponent, and bridge into him by arching your hips.



3: Then scoot your hips away to create room between your opponent and yourself.



4: Bring your bottom (right) knee into that space and along your opponent's belt line.



5: Extend your hips to bring your body from perpendicular to parallel relative to his body.



6: To stop your opponent from circling with you step over his right leg with your left leg.



7: Once you've created more room by moving away you can withdraw your right leg...



8: ...and achieve Open Guard or Closed Guard, whichever you prefer.

This might be one of the most important escape to learn in all of Brazilian jiu-jitsu.

It teaches you how to use hip movement and shrimping to create room and re-establish the Guard under duress.

Once you become comfortable with this escape you can use variations of it in many other circumstances and to escape many other pinning situations.

Side Mount Escapes

Reguard, Trap Leg with Instep



1: As with the previous technique, start with your forearms on his throat and hip.



2: Bridge hard, not directly up but rather somewhat laterally, into your opponent.



3: Push away with your forearms and move your hips away to create room.



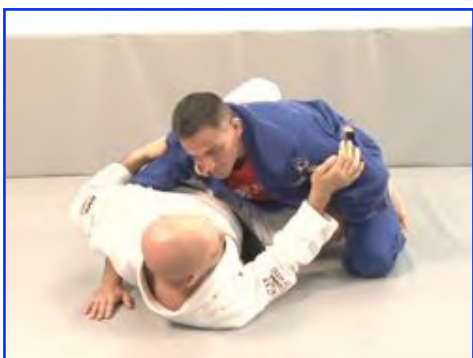
4: Bring your right shin across his belt line, but there's no room to step your left leg over.



5: So instead bring your left leg under, hooking his thigh with your instep.



6: That left instep hook on his thigh stops him from circling...



7: ...and that means you can circle away and square up with him...



8: ...getting to any kind of Guard position you prefer.

A big part of this technique is developing the sensitivity and dexterity to sneak your left foot into the correct position under your opponent's leg. This pays big dividends when you use advanced forms of guardwork like the Butterfly Guard and the X Guard (see links below)

1) <http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/tag/butterfly-guard/> and

2) <http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/tag/x-guard/>

Side Mount Escapes

Underhook and Bridge



1: You're in Side Mount, with your right forearm in your opponent's hip and your left arm under his right arm.



2: Lift both your feet off the ground and bring your knees to your opponent's ribs.



3: Simultaneously stomp your legs down, bridge your hips up, lift your underhook and turn towards your opponent.



4: Latch onto his legs with both arms...



5: ...bring your legs up underneath you to get to the low single leg position...



6: ...and then drive forwards, trapping his far knee with your right hand.



7: Continue driving until you finish the single leg and put your opponent flat onto his back.

Keys to this technique include starting in the correct arm position (with an underhook), and simultaneously bridging your hips while chucking him over your head with your underhook.

Now against a smaller opponent you'll throw him up over your head, whereas against a larger opponent you'll shoot yourself downwards towards his legs. Either way, you'll get out and set up the scramble!

This technique uses one of the three primary postures for your arms when you're trapped on the bottom of Side Mount.

Click below to find out what the other three Side Mount postures are:

<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/2012/04/posture-under-side-mount-2/>

Side Mount Escapes

Block Hips, go to Turtle



1: You're pinned in Side Mount, and this time you've got an underhook with your left arm.



2: Get onto your side and take a giant step backwards with your far (left) leg.



3: Take a second step backwards with your near (right) leg, bringing it under your left leg. Bring your head under your opponent's chest.



4: Turn your belly to the mat while keeping your grips...



5: ...and then immediately begin to drive forward...



6: ...at a minimum getting to your knees, and at best taking your opponent down.

In practice I like combining this technique with the regarding techniques on page 79, 80 and 81.

Sometimes your opponent monitors and controls the space between your hips too well to put him back into the guard using conventional regarding techniques.

If you can't move your leg between your body and his to achieve Guard, then maybe you can still move your legs away in order to create enough room to get to your knees as in this technique.

Note: in steps 3 and 4 of this move you need to bring your head underneath your opponent's chest. If you leave your head where he can control it with his left crossface then you'll remain pinned like a moth to a cork board.

Some people struggle with claustrophobia and absolutely HATE being pinned. It freaks them out! Here's how other grapplers have dealt with claustrophobia in a BJJ context:

<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/2012/03/grappling-with-claustrophobia-in-brazilian-jiu-jitsu/>

Knee Mount Submissions

Kimura Armlock



1: You're in Knee Mount and your opponent is pushing on your knee with his right hand.



2: Reach down and control his right wrist with your left hand.



3: Drop your left knee to the ground and step over his head with your right foot.



4: With your left knee down and your right foot up sink the figure 4 grip on your opponent's right arm.



5: Keeping his elbow tight against your chest pull his hand up...



6: ...and then force his hand behind his back to finish the submission.

This is a powerful way to finish the Kimura. Because of your upright position you can use the strength of your back to pull his arm up and away from his other hand.

One common mistake for this technique is to kneel with the wrong leg: if you kneel with the leg behind his head and keep your other knee off the ground then your opponent will have a lot more space to spin out and escape the Kimura. So, either have both knees down OR one knee up, one knee down, with the knee of the leg behind his head pointing up.

The Kimura is an incredibly versatile attack, and if a skilled opponent locks it on then you're really in trouble no matter what position you're in. Here's a video breakdown of how the Kimura played a critical role in the epic fight between Frank Mir and Rodrigo Nogueira at UFC 140:

<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/2011/12/frank-mirs-kimura-on-antonio-rodrigo-nogueira-at-ufc-140/>

Knee Mount Submissions

Spinning Armbar



1: You're in Knee Mount and your opponent is pushing on your knee with his right hand.



2: Reach under his right arm with your left hand, palm up.



3: Lift up hard on his arm so that he turns onto his side towards you.



4: Take a big step over his head and start turning towards his legs.



5: Keep on spinning, get your right shin tight against his back and sit down while retaining control over his right arm.



6: Sit back and apply the armbar.

This may seem like a fancy technique but it's a bread and butter submission from top position. Learning how to spin smoothly without losing control over the arm will serve you well for many different armbar attacks from many different positions.

Pay particular attention to the positioning of your right leg as you step over his body: too big a step and there will be too much room between your right shin and his body. Too high or too low and you won't be in a good armbar position when you actually do spin. Some repetitive drilling really is the best way to engrain this technique in your brain!

Many times when you go for the straight armlock your opponent will counter by holding his hands together. Here are 20 ways to break his grip and finish the armbar, even if he's way bigger and stronger than you:

<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/2012/06/how-to-finish-the-armbar-against-a-resisting-opponent/>

Knee Mount Submissions

Cross Lapel Choke (gi only)



1: The top fighter (in pink) has Knee Mount and wants to choke me out.



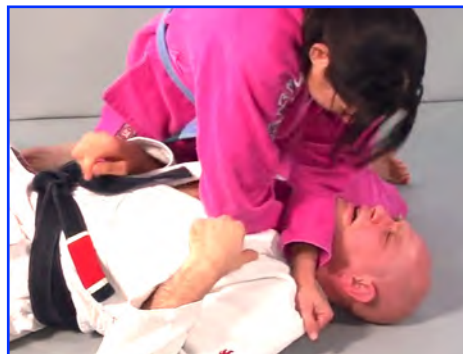
2: She gets a good grip on my right lapel with her left hand and pulls hard to open it up.



3: She inserts her right hand as deep as she can into my right lapel, palm up.



4: She then secures a grip on my left shoulder (palm down) with her left hand.



5: She drops her right knee to the ground.



6: Once the knee is on the ground she drops her chest over my face and pulls with her arms to apply the choke.

A very common error is to skip step 5 and try to apply this choke while still in the Knee Mount position. This can work on a smaller opponent, but on a larger or athletic opponent the odds are that they'll control both your hands and roll you over top of them.

By dropping the knee to the ground before finishing the choke you're adjusting your center of gravity and making it a LOT harder to get rolled by that last-ditch desperate escape attempt.

Wanna get a bit fancier? Here's one of my very favorite and very effective lapel chokes from the top position:

<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/2012/04/the-ninja-choke-by-andreh-anderson/>

Knee Mount Transitions

Switch to the Far Side



1: You're in Knee Mount with your right knee on his belly.



2: You decide that you want to change sides; rock your body forward.



3: Plant your hands on either side of your opponent's head.



4: With your weight on your hands bring both your heels to your butt and jump across your opponent's body.



5: Land your right foot out to the side of your opponent's body.



6: You're now in Knee Mount on the opposite side from where you started.

You might be asking why on earth you would want to be hopping around like this over top of your opponent? And it's true, in the context shown above (i.e. with your opponent lying flat on his back) there is precious little reason to use this technique.

But if your opponent is bucking and twisting hard in his attempts to escape then sometimes the best way to stabilize the situation is to switch sides using techniques like the one above. Knee Mount is all about pressure, but it's also all about mobility, and sometimes that means that you have to change sides in a hurry!

Here's how to specifically drill to improve your mobility on the ground:

<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/2004/11/targeted-sparring-mobility/>

Knee Mount Transitions

Slide to Mount



1: Start in Side Mount, your bottom (right) forearm blocking his legs close to his belt line and your top (left) hand on his near collar.



2: Pushing up off of both arms jump your right knee onto his belly.



3: From Knee Mount you might fake as if you want to go for the choke, but when the moment is right...



4: ...you plant your hand above his head...



5: ...and bringing your heel close to your butt you slide your knee across his body.



6: End up fully mounted on your opponent.

Sliding your knee across from Knee Mount to Full Mount is one of the most common ways to achieve the Mounted Position (the other is swinging your leg into mount as covered on page 76). Both are proven methods of taking the Mount in BJJ, submission grappling and MMA.

When you transition from Side Mount to Knee Mount initially, the positioning of your bottom arm (in this case right arm) is important. By blocking his legs with your forearm across his belt line you make it a lot more difficult for your opponent to bring his legs into play and entangle you as you jump up to Knee Mount.

Getting the mount in a real fight can be an absolute gamechanger. Mastering the Mount is one of the 10 essential skills recommended by police trainer Brad Parker:

<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/2012/04/the-ten-brazilian-jiu-jitsu-moves-every-cop-should-know/>

Knee Mount Transitions

Drop to Side Mount



1: You've achieved Knee Mount but are having a difficult time stabilizing the position.



2: Your opponent turns towards you and starts to shove your leg down into Half Guard (as per the technique on page 91)



3: Before you're completely entangled in the Half Guard slide your knee backwards off his belly...



4: ...and secure a tight Side Mount, trapping his hips between your right elbow and your right knee.

This may seem like a strange transition because you're moving down the positional hierarchy and are accepting a lesser position. But I felt it important to include this transition because it illustrates that you sometimes have to accept the lesser of two evils...

The choice here isn't between staying in Knee Mount vs dropping down to Side Mount. The choice is either ending up entangled in your opponent's Half Guard or getting to a safe and still relatively dominant position, in this case the Side Mount.

Don't be so locked into a specific position - any specific position - that you hang onto it at all costs. Be prepared to abandon a sinking ship and save what positional dominance you can.

In this specific case it means getting to a secure Side Mount position rather than conceding to your opponent's plans, which involve putting you into a far more neutral position like the Knee Mount.

Besides, once you lock him down in Side Mount you can always work towards getting back to Knee Mount!

Knee Mount Escapes

Escape Hips, Force Side Mount 1



1: Your opponent has his right knee on your belly, putting a lot of pressure on you.



2: Moving quickly you bring your outside (right) hand up into position.



2: Without pausing jam his knee to your right while moving your hips to your left.



4: This collapses his position and he ends up back in Side Mount. See pages 79 to 82 for some Side Mount escapes.

When you're doing this technique, pop your hand against his knee and get it over with. Don't leave it in place and gradually push - if you do it slowly he can catch you with a Kimura (page 83) or a spinning armbar (page 84).

I know this isn't a sexy technique - it doesn't flip your opponent over or end up with him tapping out from a surprise submission. But it does relieve the pressure of a painful kneemount and put you back into a less intense position (Side Mount) where you can then start applying your Side Mount escapes.

Getting stuck in the the Knee Mount sucks. It's tiring but it doesn't need to be the end of the match. Here are some tips on not getting exhausted and out of breath when you're grappling:

<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/2004/10/breathing-oxygen-and-exhaustion/>

Knee Mount Escapes

Escape Hips, Force Side Mount 2



1: Your opponent has you in Knee Mount.



2: Jam your far (left) hand into his belly and your near (right) hand onto his top leg.



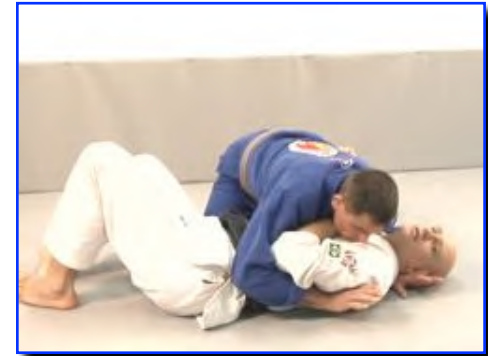
3: Keeping his body away with your extended arms shrimp your hips out to the side.



4: His weight collapses onto the floor. Ideally you use this movement to escape, but...



5: ...quite often your opponent will be able to settle his weight on top of you...



6: ...and trap you in Side Mount. But that's okay, because Side Mount is usually a lot less painful place to be than Knee Mount.

Sometimes escaping from a bad position is a two step process. First you escape from the bad position to a slightly less worse position, and then you work on escaping that second position.

In this case your first move gets you out of Knee Mount and in an ideal world you'd take advantage of the scramble to fully escape. But it's important to be realistic too: at least half the time you'll get out of Knee Mount but your opponent will still be able to secure the side mount. Stay calm, establish good posture with your arms and legs, and then work on escaping the Side Mount.

Also note that pushing his belly with your far (left) hand while pushing his knee with your near (right) hand is a safer alternative than the previous technique where you put your hand onto the knee that was actually on your belly. If you position your arms as in this technique there are slightly fewer submissions he can hit you with during your escape attempt (but there is no 100% safe option).

Finally, here's some stuff to think about and keep you going while you're suffering under your opponent and wondering why in hell you're grappling in the first place:

<http://tinyurl.com/bloodsweatsparta>

Knee Mount Escapes

Push Leg into Half Guard



1: Your opponent has his right knee on your belly.



2: Bridge your hips up towards the ceiling to temporarily bump him and lighten his weight



3: As your hips come back to the mat use your hands to shove his knee straight down towards your legs.



4: Still guiding his leg with your hand start looping your near (right) leg to the side...



5: ...and then over top of his right leg...



6: ...which puts you into Half Guard where you can either work for a sweep or move on to another Guard position.

One of the 'traps' in Knee Mount is to leave your hands on the knee, trying to push it off of you. If you leave your hand on the knee for too long you open yourself up to the Kimura armlock (page 83) and the spinning armbar (page 84). Sometimes you have no option but to put your hand into a bad position but do it consciously and don't stay there for too long. Your safety lies in speed.

Also, before you attempt this escape, make sure you bump your opponent up (step 2). This makes him lighter for a second and gives you the room and mobility you need to work - and then shove his leg down quickly. Don't strain against a fully planted and immobile knee

Once you get to Half Guard you've got to keep working. To get you started are 17 great Half Guard tips:

<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/2012/03/17-tips-for-an-active-bottom-half-guard/>

Knee Mount Escapes

Elbow Bump to Low Single Leg



1: You're caught in Knee Mount; your opponent's right knee is on your belly.



2: Roll your body slightly to your left (away from your opponent) and bring your right arm in front of your chest.



3: Turn hard towards your opponent, moving your hips left and knocking his knee off your belly with the back of your arm.



4: His knee hits the ground due to the combined motion of your body and your arm.



5: Take advantage of the dynamic situation and continue to turn towards him.



6: Latch onto his leg with both arms...



7: ...come up onto your knees...



8: ...and from here you can either finish the low single leg (page 80) or take his back and achieve Rear Mount.

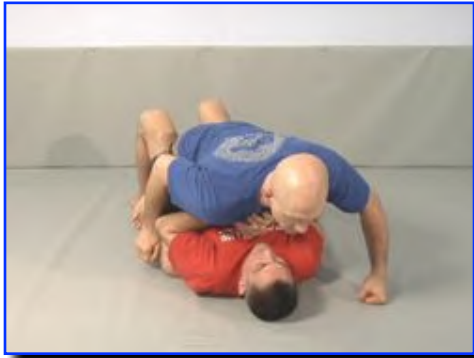
Using the near elbow to bump the knee off your belly is very effective - the most common mistake people make is to do this too slow.

This move requires commitment: when you try it turn fast and violently.

The worst case scenario is that you end up in Side Mount, but do your best to continue that momentum to get to your knees and get the single leg.

Full Mount Submissions

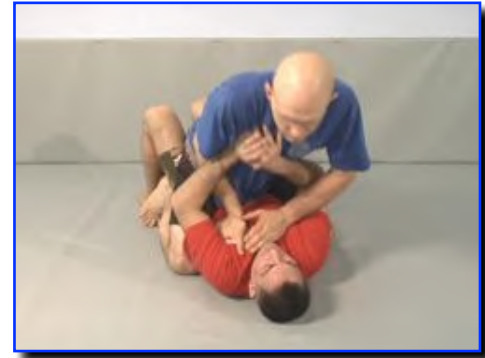
Floating Armbar



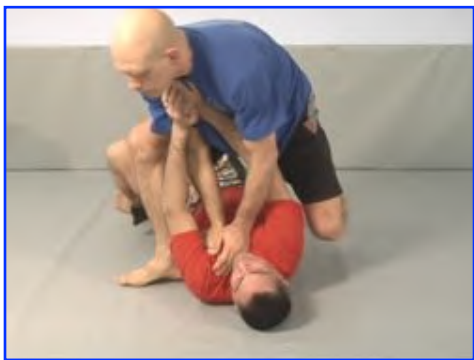
1: You've achieved Full Mount on your opponent.



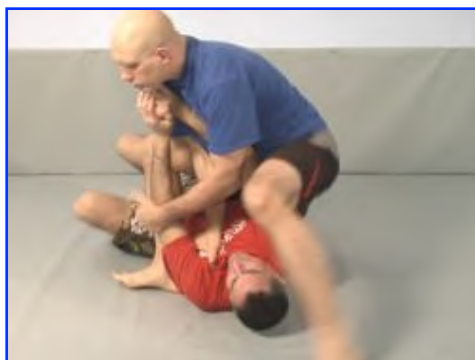
2: He begins to push your chest, hoping to bench press his way to freedom.



3: Place both of your arms on his chest, encircling his left arm.



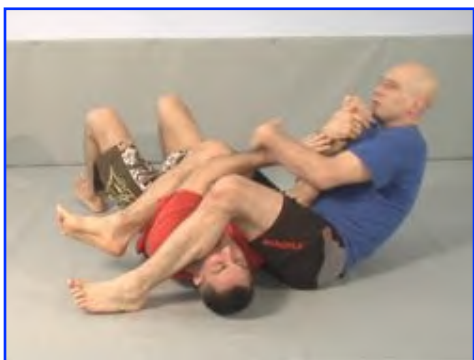
4: In one smooth motion push down on his chest, jump up, plant your right foot...



5: ...and swing your left leg over his head. At this point I control his left arm at the elbow.



6: Begin to sit down with your leg over his face and hips close to his shoulder.



7: Lie back while still controlling both of his arms (which reduces his defensive options).



8: Keep his arm tight against your chest, pinch your knees together and lift your hips to apply the armbar.

This classic old-school attack from the mount works great on beginners, especially on bodybuilder types who think they can muscle their way out of every bad position in grappling. Smother them a bit with your chest... they freak out and try to bench press you off of them... Then - BOOM - armbar!

But even more importantly this technique develops fluid movement and smooth transitions, so it's worth drilling at every level of the game.

Full Mount Submissions

Cross Collar Choke



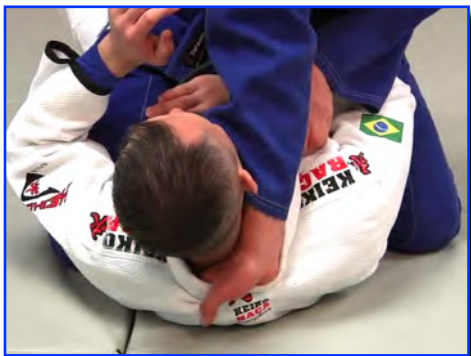
1: You're looking to finish your opponent with the cross choke (finishing hand position demonstrated above).



2: Block his head or shoulders from moving and slide your legs up so that your knees are under his armpits.



3: Open his right lapel with your left hand.



4: Insert your right hand as deep as possible into his lapel with your palm facing upwards.



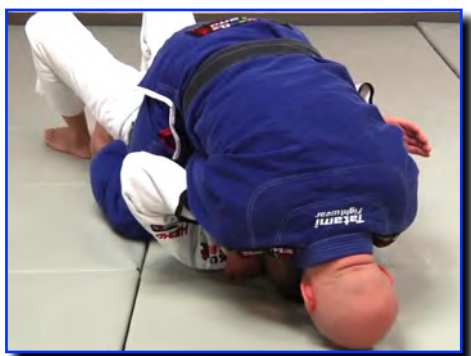
5: Use your left forearm on the top of his head to force his head to the left.



6: Grab his gi at his left shoulder with your left hand. Your left hand is palm down, left thumb inside his lapel.



7: With your grips secure on either side of his neck circle your left elbow down towards his chest.



8: Finish the choke by dropping your weight forward and pulling your hands towards your belly.

You can't just jam your hands into position and expect it to be successful.

You need to clear the route for your grips. Opening his gi (photo 3) makes getting a deep grip with your right hand possible (photo 4).

Then bending his head to your left (photo 5) makes it possible to get your left hand in position. If you're feeling mean you can also use your left elbow on his cheek to turn his head...

Full Mount Submissions

Americana Armlock



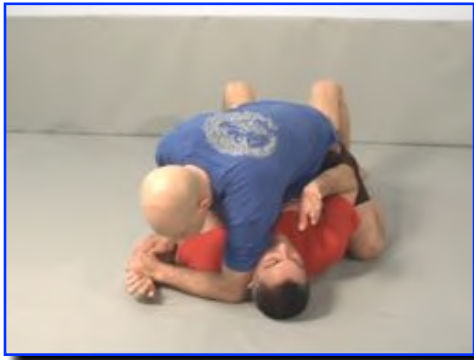
1: You're in Mount and your opponent has his hands high, protecting his neck.



2: Put both your hands on one of his wrists (in this case, his right wrist).



3: Using the weight of your entire upper body drive his arm to the mat beside his head.



4: Grab his left wrist with your left hand, with your elbow settled against his ear.



5: Grab your left wrist with your right hand, locking your hands into the figure four position.



6: Slide his arm down towards his hips and then lift his elbow up towards the ceiling to apply the lock.

The Americana armlock (also known as the Figure Four armlock) is a powerful way to attack the shoulder. The key to this technique lies in moving your opponent's elbow down towards his waist - the further his arm comes down the less force is required to finish the lock.

Refer to the following video to get the fine points about gripping correctly and adjusting the Americana for maximum effect:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jvml30gM-FE>

Full Mount Transitions

Taking the Back with the Giftwrap



1: You're in Mount and your opponent is keeping his arms in tight and being very defensive.



2: Control his right wrist with your right hand and put your left hand behind his elbow.



3: Push his arm across his face and then drop your chest on his triceps to pin his arm in place.



4: Reach under his head with your left arm and control his right wrist to achieve the 'gift wrap' position.



5: Maintaining the grip with your hand post up on your right foot.



6: Sit back and pull him on top of you. Your right hook is already in place.



7: As you fall to your right hip you now insert your left hook.



8: You're now in Rear Mount ready to attack with the choke.

This is a very powerful way to take the back in a BJJ and submission grappling context.

But in MMA and self defense the 'Giftwrap' position is one of the most devastating controls you can achieve.

Once you've got his arm wrapped (photo 5) don't even bother to take his back - just stay in position and keep on punching him with your right. This is one of those times when you definitely **SHOULDN'T** give up the top position!

Full Mount Transitions

Dismount to Knee Mount



1: You've achieved Full Mount and life is good, but...



2: ...your opponent initiates an elbow-knee escape (page 99) and you're not sure you can stop him.



3: Plant your hands on the ground and lift your heel up against your butt.



4: Swing your foot to the side of your opponent, keeping your right knee on his belly.



5: Extend your right leg out to the side and forward to act as an outrigger.



6: Posture up, get your grips, and achieve the Knee Mount.

The Full Mount is generally considered more dominant than the Knee Mount; that's why you get more points for the Mount position in competition.

But in this technique you're deliberately going from a very dominant position (the Mount) to a slightly less dominant position (the Knee Mount). This may seem like a strange thing to do, but it's better to stay on top than it is to fight so hard for a specific position (i.e. the Mount) that you get then get entangled in your opponent's guard.

So stay out of the Guard! Passing the Guard is hard, exhausting, dangerous work. Almost any position is better than getting caught in the Guard of a skilled opponent!

Here's more on the situations and circumstances under which you may want to bail out of the Mounted position:

<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/2012/07/2-good-reasons-to-bail-out-of-the-mount/>

Full Mount Escapes

Upa (Bridge and Roll)



1: You're trapped in Mount and your opponent is seated relatively low over your hips.



2: Bridge hard and lift your hips high to offbalance him.



3: He will usually plant his arms on the ground to prevent his face from hitting the mat.



4: Moving quickly shoot your arms up over your head



5: Clasp your hands (palm-to-palm) and trap his forearm tightly against your chest.



6: Keeping his arm trapped bridge a second time, as high up as you can.



7: Once you're fully bridged upwards start turning to the side to roll your opponent.



8: End up in the Closed Guard and immediately start gripfighting and working on establishing your posture!

The most common newbie mistake for this technique is to maintain the bridge position for the entire technique.

After he puts his hands on the mat (photo 3) make sure your drop your hips back to the mat.

If you stay bridged then not only will you get tired, but it will prevent you from bridging powerfully a second time and you won't be able to roll him and get out of the Mount.

Full Mount Escapes

Elbow-Knee Shrimping Escape



1: You're trapped in Mount. Turn slightly to your left side, extend your left leg, and bring your right heel to your butt.



2: Frame your right arm across your opponent's hips, grabbing your wrist with your left hand. Bury your left elbow under your opponent's thigh.



3: Push down with your forearms and bring your left leg up underneath his right shin and instep.



4: Turn in towards him and secure half guard, trapping his right leg with your bottom (right) leg.



5: To return to closed guard hook your top (left) leg over his left leg...



6: Push on his knee, frame across his chest, and bring your right leg up into position.



7: Swivel your hips slightly to the left to create room for escaping your right foot.



8: Cross your ankles to re-establish the Closed Guard or any other Guard position.

To go deep with this escape and learn how to make it work against much larger people check out this resource:

<http://grapplearts.com/biggerstronger2>

Rear Mount Submissions

Rear Naked Choke



1: Secure the over-under grip (your right arm over his shoulder, left arm under his arm, left hand grabbing your right wrist).



2: Release your grip and grasp the back of his left shoulder with your right hand.



3: Withdraw your left arm and clasp your hands together in a palm-to-palm grip, your right elbow lined up with his nose and chin.



4: Remove his main defending hand by striking his wrist down with your left hand



5: Quickly return to the palm-to-palm grip that you used in step 3 of this technique.



6: Weave your left hand in FRONT of your right hand and BEHIND his head.



7: Your right hand is on your left bicep and your left hand behind his head for the full Rear Naked Choke position.



8: Squeeze your arms DOWN towards his navel, IN towards his spine, and then UP to his head to apply the choke.

Here are two good videos with some of my best tips for sinking this choke against a strongly defending opponent:

1: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=176SLdBhj_A

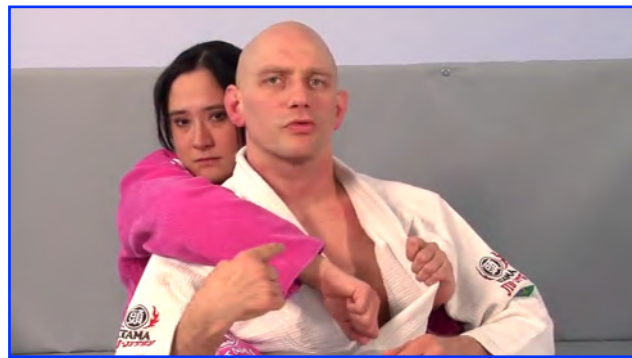
2: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-ciTiubafa8>

Rear Mount Submissions

Sliding Collar Choke



1: My opponent has taken my back using the over-under grip to control the position.



2: She opens up my lapel with her left hand (the one that comes under my arm)...



3: ...and feeds it to her right hand (the one that comes over my shoulder).



4: She repositions her left hand and grabs the far (right) lapel.



5: She pulls down with her left hand and across the throat with her right arm to apply the choke, tapping me out.

Anytime you're on someone's back they're in trouble, even if they're bigger and more powerful than you.

Once you're on the back of an opponent they can't see what you're doing, they're in constant danger of getting choked, and they can't use their superior upper body strength against you.

Getting to the back was a big focus when I worked with world champion Emily Kwok to develop a two programs specifically for dealing with larger, stronger opponents:

<http://www.grapplearts.com/biggerstronger/>
and
<http://www.grapplearts.com/biggerstrongernogi>

Rear Mount Submissions

Straight Armbar



1: You're in Rear Mount and are finding it difficult to sink the choke successfully. Start in the over-under grip.



2: Then cross-grab his left wrist with your right hand.



3: Now grab your own right wrist with your left hand, encircling his torso with a figure four grip.



4: Loop your right arm over your opponent's head and bring your left leg across his belly.



5: Keeping a tight grip on his arm start moving to the side...



6: ...climb your left leg higher across his chest and bring your right leg over his head.



7: Drop your legs into the armbar position, squeeze your knees and arch your hips to apply the armlock.

Abandoning a dominant position like Rear Mount to hunt for an armbar that may or may not work might seem like a bad strategy.

But maybe your opponent is inhumanly good at defending the choke. Or maybe you're in a match, behind on points, and time is running out. Or maybe you're about to lose the position anyway because your opponent is slithering out to the side (similar to the escape shown on page 106) so you go for a last ditch, Hail Mary armbar.

But keep in mind that drilling this technique will train you to move your arms and legs to move together in a coordinated manner. And that will make it easier to apply the armbar from unexpected and unorthodox angles, as well as improving your jiu-jitsu in general.

Here's food for thought about making the armbar bigger, stronger, faster:

<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/2007/03/a-better-armbar/>

Rear Mount Transition

Switch to Figure 4 Bodylock



1: You're in standard Rear Mount, but you would like to switch to a tighter position.



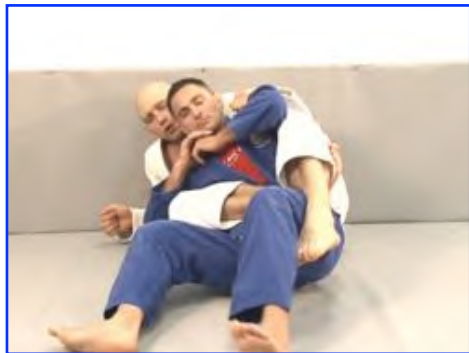
2: Remove your left hook and bring your right leg across his belly. Assist with your left hand if necessary.



3: Bring your left leg up and over your right instep.



4: Triangle your legs and squeeze to constrict his breathing.



5: To make it even tighter tuck your left foot behind his left knee (read the warning below before you try this for real).

THIS IS A CONTROVERSIAL AND DANGEROUS POSITION!!! On the one hand, putting your opponent in the figure 4 bodylock puts a tremendous amount of pressure on him and makes breathing very difficult. On the other, if your legs are short, relatively muscular, or if your opponent is thick around the middle then you can seriously hurt and injure your knee and ankle (trust me, I've experienced this myself).

Keep in mind that you don't typically get points for this position in competition, so go for the regular Rear Mount first, get your points, then transition into the Bodylock afterwards.

Regardless of whether you decide to use the figure 4 Bodylock or not, there are many OTHER ways to choke your opponent by compressing his diaphragm. In fact that's the focus of the very first lesson of the Black Belt Grappling Concepts course - my flagship instructional product. More information available at:

<http://www.grapplearts.tv>

Rear Mount Transitions

Climb to Mounted Position



1: You're in Rear Mount but, for whatever reason, have decided you'd rather be in Full Mount.



2: You have double-unders (i.e. both hands come under his armpits). Grip his left lapel with your left hand.



3: Your right arm (which still comes under his right arm) now weaves behind his head.



4: Fall backwards and start to shuck his weight to your left side and off of you.



5: The left lapel grip makes it impossible for him to turn into you as you switch your leg position.



6: Keeping both arms in the same positions start shimmying around to Mount.



7: When you get to the top you can release your grips...



8: ...stabilize the position, and collect your four points for achieving Full Mount!

I learned this transition in Judo where the Rear Mount is NOT an official pinning position - the Full Mount however IS an official position (Tate Shio Gatame) and so judoka will often try to go from the back to the top.

It's still a useful transition in BJJ though, partially because it's unexpected and partially because it allows you to salvage a dominant position when your opponent is on the verge of slithering out of your Rear Mount.

Rear Mount Escapes

Crossing the Arm



1: You're caught in Rear Mount. Keep your chin down and fight to get control of his top arm.



2: Using both of your hands on his wrist pull his left arm away from your throat



3: Your right hand controls his wrist and your left hand controls his gi, close to his elbow/triceps area.



4: Slide your body down towards his feet and pop his arm up and over your head.



5: Use your head and both arms to hold his arm in place on your right shoulder. Rest your weight on his arm too.



6: When the moment is right reach up and control his head with both arms.



7: Pull yourself around to face him using his head as an anchor point.



8: End up in Side Mount or in another top position

Once you've crossed your opponent's arm like this you're fairly safe from his primary Rear Mount attack - the choke.

Sometimes your opponent will try to salvage this crossed-arm position by trying to catch your right arm in a straight armlock (page 102).

But because he's squished against the ground his position isn't optimal, and as long as you're aware of it you can usually shut it down and escape both the position and the attack.

Rear Mount Escapes

Lateral Slide



1: You're trapped in Rear Mount and your opponent has the classic over-under grip.



2: Drive towards the side of his underhook.



3: Arch backwards and get your head on the ground.



4: Continue driving to get your shoulders on the ground.



5: Move sideways until your hips get to the ground.



6: Your opponent will usually try to get to the top, so make sure to entangle his leg with your legs as he moves.



7: Secure the Half Guard and work for the sweep, submission or standup

This is the Rear Mount escape you see most often in high level grappling and MMA competition.

The sequence I think of as I'm doing this technique is head, shoulders, hips. If you can get those three body parts to the mat in sequence you'll do alright!

Once in a while you'll get lucky and be able to finish this escape by getting to the top position. But most of the time you'll have to be OK with getting Half Guard, which is still pretty darn good considering where you started out!

If you need some help becoming comfortable in the Half Guard and learning to use it offensively take a look at the following resource:

<http://www.grapplearts.com/Half-Guard-Sweeps-Info.php>

Turtle Position Submissions

Clock Choke



1: Your opponent is turtled and you've got your weight on him.



2: Reach under his far armpit and open up his far lapel while keeping your weight on him (we're only sitting up to illustrate the correct gripping).



3: Bring your right hand across his throat and grab deep on his far lapel with your thumb inside the collar.



4: Keeping your right wrist across his throat grip his left wrist with your left hand.



5: Slide your weight forward so that your ribs are on the back of his neck.



6: Walk your legs around his body like the arms of a clock to apply the choke.

This is a very powerful choke that has finished a LOT of high level people in gi competition (I'll never forget when I saw my MMA hero Royce Gracie get choked out by this very technique in BJJ competition by the Carlson Gracie fighter Wallid Ismail). And I've seen it work quite successfully in Judo competition as well.

Basically this technique is a weapon you can use to quickly end the match anytime your gi-wearing opponent turns his back to you. In fact my BJJ coach, Marcus Soares, used to 'allow' his opponents to escape his Side Mount just so that they would give him the turtle, at which point he would sink the Clock Choke and tap them out.

But for the Clock Choke, just like many other submissions, little details make a huge difference. Here's an article I wrote about the small but super-important adjustments you need to make in order to successfully tap out high quality opponents:

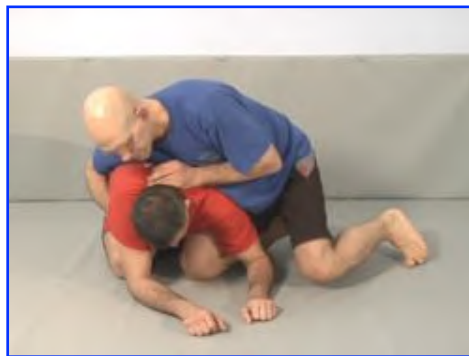
<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/2011/09/critical-submission-details/>

Turtle Position Submissions

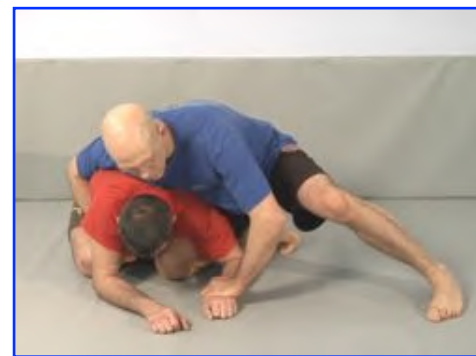
Straight Armlock with Legs



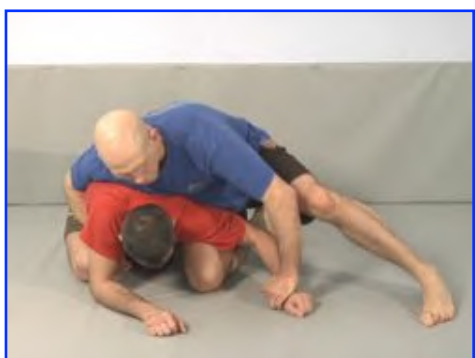
1: Your opponent is turtled. Before he can get away drive in towards him...



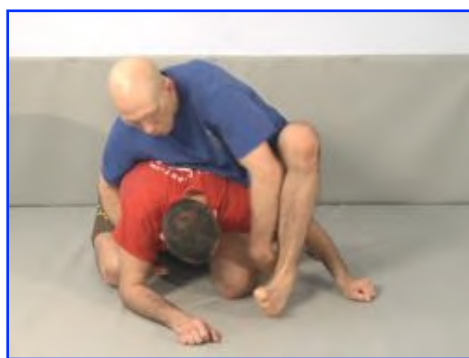
2: ...get your weight on him and drive your right knee to the ground between his left arm and left leg.



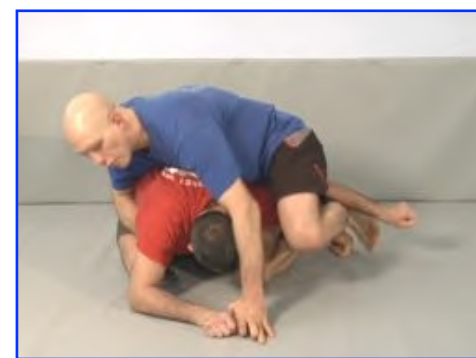
3: Reach down and gently control his left wrist with your left hand.



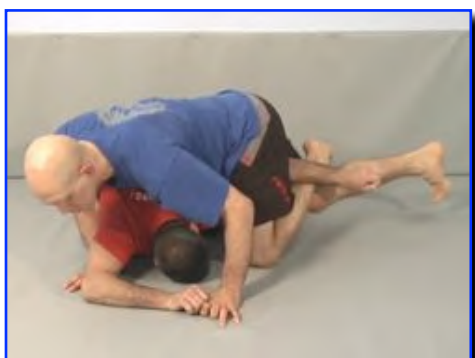
4: Pull his arm out to the side. This makes room for...



5: ...your leg to step over his arm and trap it with your left heel.



6: Using the power of your legs bring his trapped arm away from his body.



7: Triangle your legs and drive your hips down against his straightened elbow to apply the straight armlock.

When you initially control his wrist (step 3) do so gently and in a nonchalant manner. You don't want to freak him out and get him to hide his arm.

When you do pull it out (step 4) then move quickly and step over his arm right away (step 5). Dig your heel in to capture the arm if necessary: it's a lot harder to stop this than you might imagine from simply looking at the photos.

Once you have the arm trapped and your legs in the figure four you can either finish the armlock in a face-down position as shown in this technique, or secure an over-under grip around his upper body and roll forwards into a Crucifix position. From the Crucifix you can finish with a variety of other chokes and armlocks.

Here's a video with lots of information about how to stop your opponent turtling, and why you might actually want to encourage him to go to turtle:

<http://tinyurl.com/ckerwa8>

Turtle Position Submissions

Rolling Kneebar



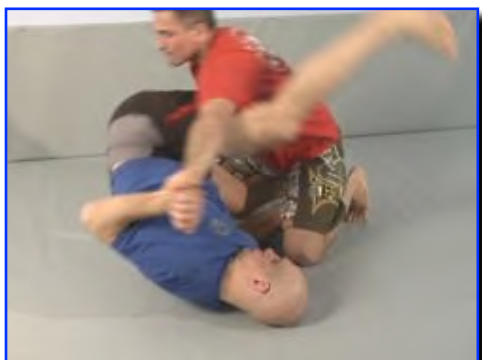
1: You're turtled and your opponent's left leg is between your knees.



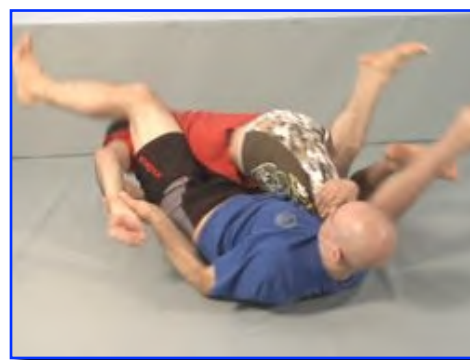
2: Reach down and hook your right arm behind his left leg at the knee.



3: Control his left wrist, tuck your head to the outside and do a forward somersault.



4: Roll over your shoulder bringing your head as close to his knee as possible...



5: ...and also kick him as hard as you can in the armpit with the back of your leg.



6: This will force him to roll forwards, over top of you.



7: Get a secure grip on his left leg by using both of your arms to pin it to your chest.



8: Cross your ankles on his butt, squeeze your knees, and arch your hips to apply the lock.

Rolling into a kneebar from an 'inferior' position is one of life's great pleasures! One moment your opponent thinks he's winning and the next - BAM - he's tapping out.

Two of the keys are

1) Rolling underneath your opponent (don't go too far forward on the roll), and

2) Forcing him over by kicking him as hard as you can in the armpit with the back of your leg.

Turtle Position Transitions

Inserting Hooks (falling back)



1: Your opponent is turtled. Link your hands in the over-under grip (left arm over his left shoulder, right arm under his opposite armpit).



2: Suddenly jump your your outriggered left leg forward so it lies alongside his left leg.



3: Using your over-under grip pull your opponent towards you.



4: Here's what the leg position looks like as you're falling backwards.



5: Continue to pull him sideways and kick your bottom (left) leg underneath his body.



6: The bottom hook (on the side of your 'over' grip) is the most important hook to get...



7: ...but don't stop working for your top hook. Once you have them both it's now easier to start attacking with the choke!

The over-under grip (also known as the 'harness' and/or 'seatbelt') is the key to this style of taking the back.

Make sure that your bottom hand grips your top wrist and your sternum stays glued to his spine.

The video below goes into these points in more detail, including why gripping this way is so incredibly important:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5tew8_nMJeY

Turtle Position Transitions

Inserting Hooks (jumping over)



1: Your opponent is turtled. You've got the over-under grip you used on the previous page.



2: Bring your top (left) knee between your opponent's left elbow and left knee.



3: Kick your other leg back. If he doesn't fall towards you proceed to the next step.



4: Keeping your grip tight swing your right leg over his back...



5: ...and use the momentum generated by that motion to take him with you...



6: ...rolling him belly-to-the-sky. Your left hook inserts in mid-roll.



7: Keep on rolling until you get your left hip to the mat.



8: Now insert your second (right) hook for the full Rear Mount.

Inserting and maintaining your hooks is absolutely critical in Rear Mount. Here's an excellent video tutorial by Emily Kwok did on the role of the hooks in Rear Mount, with lots of tricks and tips for getting them in and keeping them in:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cKVqj71dcwQ>

Turtle Position Transitions

Two-on-One Turnover



1: Your opponent is turtled. Keep your weight settled on him to stop him from moving.



2: Bring your left hand in front of his face and grip his far (right) triceps.



3: Bring your right arm under his body and double up on the grip over his triceps.



4: Pull his arm under his body while driving forwards with your legs and bowling him over with your chest.



5: Collapse him into Side Mount. You can either stabilize the position here...



6: ...or you can reposition your left arm so that it comes behind his arm, and around his head...



7: ...and link your hands and squeeze to apply a far-side arm triangle choke

This is a classic turtle turnover. It's easy to learn and starts working quickly, which is why it is often taught in Judo, wrestling, and BJJ (and why we are showing it here)

However the reality is that this particular technique is a relatively easy to block and counter. Once your opponent has been caught by it a few times it usually loses its effectiveness.

But don't despair: this is still a great 'jab' that creates motion, chaos and other opportunities to finish your opponent (the 'cross'). And there are many other effective turtle attacks and turnovers in the BJJ arsenal!

To get you started here are some Judo techniques you can adopt to your BJJ:

<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/2012/08/judo-and-bjj-cross-training/>

Turtle Position Escapes

Basic Reguard (turning in)



1: You're in the Turtle, defending against his choking and gripping attempts



2: Place your right hand on the inside of his near (left) knee.



3: Plant your left hand to the side. Also extend your right leg behind your opponent.



4: With your weight on your right heel and left hand, move quickly and pivot to face your opponent.



5: Continue to turn in, bringing your left leg up and between you and your opponent.



6: From this position continue to work until you've established your preferred Guard position.

This technique is a LOT easier to do if you start it early in the scramble, before your opponent has fully dropped his weight and stabilized the position.

But if you blow it, and don't manage to apply this technique while there's still movement, then still stay alert: there's always a chance that your opponent will screw up and give you the room you need to reguard while he's trying to improve his position and/or apply a submission.

Here are some additional articles and videos to help you get a better understanding of the Turtle position, both offensively and defensively

<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/tag/turtle-position/>

Turtle Position Escapes

Regarding with Granby Roll



1: You're turtled and your opponent is on your right side. Protect your neck against his grips and chokes.



2: Move your head away and drop your right shoulder all the way to the mat.



3: With your shoulder and head on the mat bump into your opponent with your hips to create room.



4: Roll over your shoulders and throw your left leg in a wide circle over your head.



5: Continue the motion with your left leg coming around in front of your opponent until...



6: ...you end up in the Guard. If your opponent ends up with one arm under your legs (as above) you may be able to now go for a triangle choke!

Yes, it looks a little fancy and it does take a bit of work to internalize this movement, but it's worth the effort because this is one of the highest percentage moves that high level players use to get back to Guard from the Turtle.

Note that you're NOT rolling onto your head - that would be quite dangerous for your neck, especially if your opponent were to suddenly drive into you in mid-roll. You ARE rolling over your shoulders - in the example above your right shoulder makes contact first, then you roll over your upper back, and then close to the end of the move (photo 5) your left shoulder makes contact with the ground too.

If your opponent is really heavy on you then remember to use your hips to bump him away (photo 3) before your roll. Your hips and legs are the strongest part of your body, so shoving your hips with a short, hard bump can move even the heaviest opponent and create enough room for the rest of the move.

The Granby Roll can also be included in your guardwork and will make your Guard infinitely harder to pass. Here are some other tips on developing an 'impassable Guard':

<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/2009/01/the-unpassable-guard-1/>

Turtle Position Escapes

Sitout to the Back



1: You're in Turtle and your opponent has one or two overhooks. Get your head out to the right side...



2: ...then base your right leg out to the side too.



3: Now moving fast swing your right arm backwards, high and fast while sliding your left leg forwards.



4: Sit out to your left hip and drive backwards with your head. But don't stay here or your opponent will recover.



5: Instead keep on moving and spin towards his legs.



6: Ending up behind him where you can either take him down or take his back.

This is a powerful, reliable technique that I've used many times in sparring, even against good opponents who knew it was coming.

You can use it on someone holding you in the bear-hug style grip (as above) or even in a wrestler's front headlock (in which case you do it on the side where his arm comes under your armpit).

Some of the keys include

- 1) sneaking your head out to one side,
- 2) throwing your elbow back high and hard (as if you were trying to hurt his arm with your triceps), and
- 3) sliding your bottom leg out in a 'sit out' motion as you bump his arm off of you with your arm

This technique is a great example of taking techniques from another art (i.e. wrestling) and merging them with Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu. Here's another example of how to merge wrestling with BJJ and MMA:

<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/2010/05/countering-the-double-leg-with-a-sitout-switch/>

Turtle Position Escapes

Trap Arm and Roll



1: You're in Turtle, protecting your neck, with your opponent over you.



2: He reaches under your right armpit, perhaps to control your right wrist.



3: Trap his right arm by clamping it tightly between your elbow and your ribs.



4: Move your knees close to your opponent and roll underneath him.



5: Continue the roll so he goes over top of you.



6: Keeping his arm trapped and his back flat on the mat start coming to the top



7: Reach across his body to control his hips.



8: Stabilize the top position, by controlling his hips and widening your legs apart

This is a very effective technique that I have used in competition and on tons of sparring partners.

One thing to keep in mind is that most good opponents will reach up and try to pull your head backwards with a cross-facing movement as soon as you get to the top (at about photo 8)...

Counter this by keeping your left ear glued to your left shoulder - this makes it a lot harder for him to get the grip he needs.

Some Other BJJ and Grappling Instruction by Stephan Kesting

How to Defeat the Bigger Stronger Opponent Series 1, by Emily Kwok and Stephan Kesting

The best-selling instructional in which World Champion Emily Kwok gives you her best techniques, drills and strategies to handle bigger, stronger opponents on the ground and tap them out!

<http://www.grapplearts.com/biggerstronger/index.php>



How to Defeat the Bigger Stronger Opponent Series 2, by Brandon 'Wolverine' Mullins and Stephan Kesting

The first American World No-Gi champion at black belt level takes you through his takedowns, guard passes, submissions, and guard sweeps to defeat bigger, stronger opponents. Virtually no overlap with Series 1.

<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/bigger-stronger-series-2/>



How to Defeat the Bigger Stronger Opponent in No Gi, by Emily Kwok and Stephan Kesting

Emily Kwok is back with more great material on defeating bigger, stronger people when you're rolling with them without the gi. This is a stand-alone product but it also dovetails very well with the material in Series 1.

<http://www.grapplearts.com/Blog/how-to-defeat-the-bigger-stronger-opponent-in-no-gi/>



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The techniques, strategies and training methods that you need to know to add ankle locks, heel hooks and toe holds and tap out even the toughest competitors.

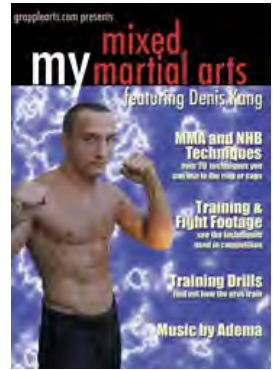
www.grapplearts.com/High-Percentage-Leglocks.php



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Dynamic Kneebars

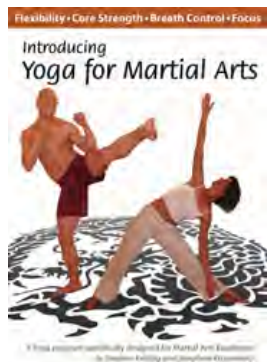
This classic instructional takes you from white belt to black belt in all aspects of the powerful kneebar submission, including setups, counters, concepts and drills.

<http://www.grapplearts.com/Kneebar-Info.php>

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