

09: Arm breaks & wrenches

Arm breaks and wrenches should play a significant part in your fighting armoury. To attack you or attach to you, your opponent has to use his arms. Therefore you have easy targets that he brings to you and that you don't have to go and look for. Of all those available, the elbow is one of the easiest joints to wrench and lock. It's less quick and less fluid than the wrist, for example: generally, the closer you go towards the body, the slower that part of the limb moves and the easier it is to lock. Let's look at building a repertoire of standing locks that work.

Outside / under

Use the shoulder or upper arm to wrench or break the arm. You can adapt this, if your opponent tries to escape, by moving his arm upwards to break it across your shoulder. This is one of the fastest ways to wrench or break and requires very little time or effort. It's important to roll inwards, bringing your shoulder behind his elbow. This is the best way to do the lock. The other way is to draw him in with your other hand, which works because often you'll have shoulder-rolled his cross. Other times he pushes: let him do the work. If he feels you pulling him then he'll pull out. Rather, guide him inwards.

Outside / middle

This is more of a drag-down or a pull-down. You can do it when his arm is straight but it often works better when the arm is a little bent. Rotate the arm

upwards (in a circular pattern if he is strong) and then pull down; it's very hard for him to be strong in a circle. Once you've broken his balance and he's facing floorwards, pull the arm away from the body and drag your opponent, spreading him out across the floor.

Outside / armpit armbar over / waki gatame

This is a very powerful arm break and hard to counter once it's begun, as all of your body weight is on his elbow joint. The best way to do this is to grab the wrist and strike at the head. The opponent always takes his head away to protect it but leaves the arm behind for you to break. Use the same punching hand to envelop the upper arm under your arm pit, pinching it with your arm so it's hard to get out. Put the hand of the same arm that's pinching on the opponent's thumb. Basically there are two ways of doing this: one where you walk through and give him a less severe landing, and the other where you pivot on the spot and stretch his arm out, whilst dropping the fulcrum (where your arm is pinching his upper arm) to the floor. It's as quick as turning on a light. Remember to not think about 'down' versus 'up' for the break; instead, think of elongating his arm and pulling or pointing it away from the body centre, whilst putting your ribs as a fulcrum down on the elbow. There are two types; circling, and walking through across his front.

Assisted arm bar with lapel grab

Here's a slightly harder variation to pull off, unless



