



# Martial Arts

Learn How to Protect Yourself

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# Introduction

Jujitsu is a name used for Japanese martial arts techniques. The meaning of this word is the “art of softness” or “way of yielding”. Jujitsu came from Japan as a way of defeat of an opponent without using any weapons. Since hitting the opponent didn’t do much justice, they would be attacked with pins and throws. This worked against the attacker’s energy.

There are different ways that people do jujitsu. Some of the techniques used include, holds, throwing, trapping, biting, gouging, striking and kicking. At one time, there were self-defense schools that taught their students how to use weapons, but that is no longer the case.

Jujitsu is practiced all over the world, including being used in sport form. It has been used in the Olympic Games competitions.

Other methods of combat with jujitsu include:

- Striking (kicking and punching)
- Throwing (body throws)
- Restraining (pinning, wrestling)
- Defense moves (evading, blocking, escaping)

Sport jujitsu has many forms. One of the most popular is judo, which has been implemented into the Olympic Games. Mixed-style competitions are the ones that are most seen at these Games. With these competitions, there are throws, strikes and holds in order for the competitors to get points.

Kata competitions, which is where competitors use techniques of the same style and get graded for how well they perform. You will also find freestyle games where the competitors go after each other. The defenders are graded on how well they perform.

With the jujitsu system, there is more attention paid to pinning, throwing, choking and strangling techniques. This is different than other systems of martial arts like karate. Even though jujitsu is originally a Japanese system, there are some jujitsu schools that use some Chinese moves.

The danger of jujitsu is that with training, some of the moves can be fatal. Students that have jujitsu classes are usually taught in an environment that is not competitive. Because of that, there is not a lot of risk.

With jujitsu, you will find five main sectors, otherwise known as the arts of training. The five sectors are:

- The Art of Blocking (defend against attacks)
- The Art of the Fulcrum Throw (used in judo)
- The Art of the Non-Fulcrum (throws that have very little contact)
- The Art of Escaping (used in different jujitsu styles)
- The Art of Striking (do not have body armor)



# Techniques Of Jujitsu

Here are some techniques of jujitsu that include:

- **Chokeholds** – Chokeholds are banned for the most part. However, those participating in judo are allowed to do it. This technique is dangerous because a person's windpipe could be cut off and the opponent would be asphyxiated.

More people use strangulation because it can be done without fatal consequences. Jujitsu has many alternatives to choking methods.

- **Joint Locks** – This technique involves grappling and manipulating the joints of an opponent to where the joints reach a point where they can only move so far. With joint locks, a person can experience different levels of joint pain. If this technique is applied with force or very sudden, it can cause injury, dislocation or fracturing of the bones.

Joint locks can affect five different areas such as leg locks, arm locks, spinal locks, wristlocks and small joint manipulation. Joint locks can also be used in hand to hand combat or the disabling of an opponent by tearing the knee or elbow joints.

- **Grappling** – A lot of people use the grappling technique. This was used in the early days in conjunction with Jujitsu. Nowadays, grappling is used in sporting games where it is safe to do. Grappling is in the same league as striking. This works when the defender is using techniques and strategies in order to defeat their opponent.

Grappling techniques are important when it comes to self-defense purposes. The ones that are used the most are hold escapes and compliance techniques for pain.

There are three subcategories it is used in: throws, joint locks and pinning techniques. There is no middle consensus with this because the locks are connected with throws and that may lead to a pin.

Another subcategory is called sweeps and escapes. This is used to make a ground fighting position better by going into a position where locks and pins can be used better. Grappling is used in different fighting systems.

There are some that are strictly used for grappling. Some of them include: amateur wrestling, judo and Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu. Also, these systems do not include striking. Mixed martial arts (MMA), which is part of combat sports, allow grappling while keeping striking at the same time.

- **Strike** – A strike is performed using a weapon or your body. It's performed to affect their opponent or to cause harm to them. There are different kinds of strikes. One is an

attack using their fist which is referred to as a punch; using the leg or foot is called a kick; using the head is called a head butt.

## Principles of Striking

In martial arts, strikes are performed with your body. Martial artists learn them through constant repetitions being trained by an instructor. The instructor must be qualified to do this.

Here are some of the principles of striking that martial artists employ for themselves:

- **Breathing** – A shout works to tighten the muscles at the beginning of impact. This works to scare the opponent. Strikers will exhale once they get close to their opponent. Controlling your breathing is used to get your body relaxed during a period of not attacking.
- **Footwork** – In order to balance your body, you need the right footwork. This helps to support a mixture of strikes and start strikes from the right area. This is not the easiest part of striking. You have energy coming from your legs and taking the advantage to throw combinations. When you're doing this, your footwork must be in exact form.
- **Muscular Tension** – As a striker, your muscles get tense while you are trying to relax during the strike. Your muscles are tense during impact, and then they relax again to withdraw the striking. When you relax, the strike is allowed to get as much speed while it's traveling. There is the highest transfer of force during impact.
- **Combinations** – In order for strikers to get strikes to impact their opponent, they can use different techniques to do this. The attacks are aimed at different parts of your body. The strongest force uses a certain technique.
- **Penetration** – Strikers should shoot for getting at least 4 – 6 inches behind the surface of the target. This helps to bring the maximum energy to it. When a striker is in combat, they should try to strike through the target and not just the surface.
- **Focus** – Strikers can force through an attacker's body. However, make it a small area of the body. When you as a striker, focus on that, you can get penetration and enlarge the impact damage.
- **Gravity** – Gravity helps strikes that start upward and come downward and elbows that come downward and stomp kicks.
- **Summation of Force** – Muscles use a certain sequence to get as much force as possible. Strikes can be done by moving body weight that will hold up the blow. This is different than an arm or a leg that strikes.



- **Timing and Rhythm** – The memory of muscle, along with repetitious moves are use to begin strikes. The momentum has a flow and there is a knowing that there will be some type of action. The striker can have an edge if the flow is interrupted.
- **Telegraphing** – This is when the striking body is moved before the blow occurs. This lets the opponent know that the strike possibly won't be effective. The weapon that is striking should be the first to move. Then the body should move after it. For this to be effective there has to be precise footwork and distancing.
- **Deception** – Distractions are used to throw off how strikers are going to attack. They will use things such as noise, hand movements, switching guard positions, etc. These gestures help to trick their opponent and they end up letting their guard down.
- **Attack Level** – The level of attack can differ. It can be a kick to the ribs or the opponent's head getting jabbed. When strikers use various levels of attack on their opponent, the opponent's guard is let down.

## Throw

In martial arts, a throw is a techniques used in grappling. A throw can pick up an opponent and toss them on the ground. This techniques uses rotation in order for it to be effective. The person that does the throw is not in sync with their opponent and comes up on their feet.

They can also use what is called a “top position”. This is when the person that initiates the throw connects with the opponent. There are certain techniques in throwing that are referred to as “sacrifice throws”. These throws consist of the person allowing themselves to be at a disadvantage. They will be on the ground in order to perform a throw.

There are different types of throws in martial arts. One of the better known ones is judo. It has plenty of techniques for throwing and they consider them one of their special ones. The names of the different throws are connected with Jujitsu throws.

The Japanese have been known to do it this way. In western martial arts, they give them names in English, primarily so their students will know them.

Here are the types of throws associated with Jujitsu:

- **Leg throws** – Leg throws consist of reaps and trips. A leg reap is when a person uses a leg to gather up one of both legs of their opponent from the ground. The weight of the opponent is on the leg that is taken up.

The attacked is able to control the body of the opponent using their hands. This causes the opponent to lose their balance and fall. A leg trip uses the attacker lifting the leg instead of gathering it up. When the opponent’s leg is lifted, it is being pulled up and swung away.

- **Shoulder throws** – This type of throw is used when throwing the opponent from the ground over the attacker’s shoulder. A shoulder drop is when an opponent is dropped to the ground and pulled over the shoulder.
- **Hip throws** – The thrower’s hip is used by putting the hip in a lower position. It would be lower than the opponent’s midpoint of gravity. Beginners usually learn O Goshi. With judo, hip throws are referred to as Koshi Waza.
- **Pick-ups** – When a pick-up is performed, the opponent is lifted from the ground and then brought down again. Pick-ups are used in techniques such as hand throws and the double leg takedown.
- **Sacrifice throws** – The thrower is disadvantaged and may fall to the ground. When the body falls, there is additional strength with the throws. During the effect, there is not much strength.

This section of the report will discuss the biting, gouging, poking and grasping techniques that are used in Jujitsu. These techniques were implemented in order for the attacker to have an advantage of their opponent.

Since their opponent would use ways that were undesirable, the attacker had to counter with techniques that could overpower the opponent. They were considered a defense for the attacker against the opponent.

### **Biting**

The target spots for biting are the ears, nose and fingers. This technique can be used for attacks such as bear hugs. Biting can also be used where a person can attack their opponent's face, hand or fingers.

### **Gouging**

Gouging is a poking technique that attacks the eyes or genital areas of the body. This distracts the opponent and causes them great pain. This technique is used as an attack method of when one is defending themselves from an opponent. When a person gouges an attacker's eyes, they can control their opponent's balance.

### **Poking**

When you are poking, you target the pressure points of the eyes. This is good to use to defend yourself against grabs from your opponent. It can also be used for grappling purposes. If the opponent is winning over you, it can be used as a defense mechanism. With poking, you would use your fingers and knuckles.

### **Grasping**

With the grasping method, you can attack the groin or any sensitive area of the body. In order to apply this technique, you can distract your opponent by causing pain. The areas affected by this include the ears, hair, nipples, and skin.

Atemi is when you strike the pressure points or psychological areas of an opponent. What this does is the opponent cannot move around to strike back. Atemi is used to strike the body so that it will trigger a psychological reaction. It can also be used to distract an opponent and causes the opponent to try another technique.

### **Takedown**

A takedown is when an opponent is dragged to the floor using the attacker's body weight. They can also be taken to the floor if their attacker uses a strike against them. The legs of the opponent are such where they cannot move. The opponent gets floored using brutal force. The

balance may be broken by tricking the motion of the opponent. With takedowns a lot of strength is used from the body and when the balance is broken, it's just broken. There is no skill to it.

With the different styles of jujitsu, there are various ways that the techniques are applied. Here are some of the applications and how they are applied to this sport:

### **Rolling**

A forward shoulder roll involves rolls using the palm-down and palm-up method. A backward should roll requires landing on your hip on the far side, in the palm down method.

### **Arm Bars**

When performing an arm bar technique, some use a "hand open" method. Others simply use their fist. With both techniques, there is supposedly increased power. However, it has been proven that the closed fist method provides more of an advantage. This helps to prevent fingers from having an accident or getting snagged in the process.

### **Wrist Locks**

Wrist locks use the bottom three fingers without the index finger. Other methods use the top three fingers without the pinky. Both methods have the same effect to not block the wrist of the opponent with this technique.

### **Grappling**

The difference with grappling is if the style of it is considered a sport or is it a need for training for self-defense purposes. Both are legit, and there is some overlap with the training. However, there will be differences. With the self-defense portion, there are factors in regard to the position of grappling. With the sport, the main focus is to get up and away as quickly as you can.

## **Jujitsu Characteristics**

Jujitsu is considered a soft art. It uses balance, leverage and momentum against an attacker's opponents. This is different than hard methods, such as karate. Hard methods tend focus on power, speed and strength. When learning jujitsu in a class, there are similar factors that apply:

- The students learn traditional jujitsu methods by looking at the instructors and doing what they do.
- Ateimi can focus on weak parts of the body. It breaks up a balance for a lock, throw or a take-down.



- The body of the defender can take full advantage of the weakness of their opponent. In the meantime, they can choose to use some openings or weak spots.
- An attacker's momentum is increased to put a joint in a difficult position. For a take-down or a throw, the balance is broken.

Jujitsu has a lot of different compartments. It is the catalyst for different styles. When instructors implement new methods than the original ones, they end up creating their own. Some of the original material has been changed that it is not considered to be a jujitsu style.

Some martial arts that have been affected by jujitsu are:

- Bartitsu
- Judo
- Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu

# Bartitsu

This martial art method is used for self-defense. It originated in England starting in 1898. This method had stopped for a while, but in 2002, it started back up again and has received a renewed spirit.

The most attention was at the striking range and the grappling range with jujitsu. Students that took up Bartitsu learned the art of self-defense by using jujitsu and Vigny stick fighting. This method employed using sticks and umbrellas for self-defense.

Students were engaged in private sessions before they could be in groups. The classes often performed exercises that were arranged beforehand. These exercises included those that were deemed to be dangerous to perform.



# Judo

Judo actually came from Jujitsu and was out of sync for a while. However, there are people that still incorporate judo as a martial arts technique. It does not rely on tactics that involve karate, kicking or punching. Judo does not rely on throwing and grappling, either.

With judo, you grip your opponent and place them off balance. Kuzushi is used to supply a small amount of energy while engaging in judo. Even though judo was birthed from jujitsu, there are some differences between the two. Kuzushi happens when the opponent is hit along the weak line. There is also twisting, grabbing or poking of the points of the atemi (pressure points).

Judo also implements some throw, falls, rolls, chokes, hold downs, strikes and joint-locks. There are ground fighting techniques that are used to go against the joints or joint locks. These techniques also affect chokeholds and strangleholds, along with techniques of pinning down or holding.

Judo uses sparring, which means “free practice”. There are also techniques of striking that involve punching and kicking. In addition to that there are techniques that implement swords and knives.

In Judo, there are only certain people that can implement joint locking, chokeholds and sacrifice techniques due to safety issues. It all depends on how old you are and what your rank is. In the United States, chokeholds can be used by people 13 years old and older, while arm locks can be used by people 16 years old and older.

When a joint lock or chokehold is used, the other person will tap the mat or their opponent twice. This will let them know that they have yielded to the other person. You will know that the one that yielded was the loser and they are released from the chokehold or joint lock.

A Judoka is a practitioner of judo. A judoka is one that is experienced in the techniques of judo. A judoka can mean any judo practitioner minus the level restrictions. So even if the judoka is just starting out, they are still a judoka.

A sensei is a judo teacher. With the western culture, the teachers are referred to as a “dan grade sensei”. It used to be used only for a certain group, but now it can be used for anyone that teaches judo.

Practitioners wear a judogi, which is a white uniform that is worn when performing judo. There were uniforms that looked similar that came along after the first one came out. The uniform is made of cotton and the pants are usually white and blue.

The pants come with a drawstring so the waist can be adjusted. The top is actually a white or blue cotton jacket that is quilted and is accompanied by a belt. The belt is used to close the jacket. The belt will be a certain color to signify rank. The jacket is used to endure grappling, which is why the uniform has more thickness than a uniform used for karate.

During a competition, a blue judogi is worn by one of the competitors. This helps to distinct one from the other for the spectators, referees and judges. The Japanese judoka use a white judogi and a red sash. For minor competitions, a colored sash can be used. If this is a regional or higher level competition, only the blue judogi can be used.

## **Techniques**

Judo has two categories of combat, the ground and the standing phase. Both phases use different techniques, conditioning and strategies. In order to close the gap, training is implemented for changing techniques. There are some judoka that may know more in one area than they do in others.

With the ground and standing phases of combat, the judoka can bring opponents down, pin and submit them on the ground. Since this is considered a balanced method, judo is a martial art that people want to learn.

## **Ground**

If the person is on the ground, combat can keep going on the ground. They cannot drop to the ground to start ground fighting. The two people try to get a hold down or force submission from their opponent. This is done by using strangulation, arm lock or a choke. With the arm lock, the lock can only be used on the elbow joints due to safety concerns.

## **Standing**

With standing, the opponents try to throw one another. They hardly use submission techniques of joint lock and choke strangulation. It is difficult to use these techniques because of the standing phase. However there are some judoka that can handle takedowns along with submission. With the submission, it starts with the standing phase and ends being on the ground.

The throwing techniques are used to take an opponent down. The opponent is usually standing up on their feet. In that position, they are considered to be a danger. When they come down, they come down on their back in order for them to have limited mobility. This helps you to control the opponent and make you be the dominant one.

With this stance, the practitioner can provide an outcome. Throwing the opponent is also used to their body into shock. This happens when their body is forcefully smashed to the ground. A match can be won if the opponent uses a controlled throw that is powerful. Lesser throws receive a lower score. With a standing position, a person will get a score for a throw.

Throwing techniques are based on four different facets: off-balancing, positioning of your body, execution and finishing. Each facet comes very quickly after the previous one is completed.



### **Hold downs**

An attacker is required to hold down their opponent for a certain amount of time. This helps the attacker to have an effective target for striking. You would get scored on the length of time of the hold down. The hold down can also end in a submission from the opponent if they can't take the pressure any longer.

### **Joint locks**

These combat techniques when a judoka has control over their opponent using what is called a pain compliance technique. This technique is a grappling hold that implements one of three things: compression lock, joint lock or pressure point.

One of these is used to keep the opponent down and the judoka in control. This technique is used as a self-defense mechanism. A judoka can also control their opponent by breaking the locked joint. You can perform a joint lock on the elbow because that is considered a safe place to do it. Doing this can cause the opponent to claim submission. Attacking any other joints can cause serious injury.

# Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu

This technique includes the methods of ground fighting and grappling.

Ground fighting is when the both people are on the ground and are grappling with each other. They are within close distance of each other. Depending on how close they are, they can engage in techniques such as eye gouging, joint locks, pressure point techniques or biting, just to name a few.

This technique is set up to where the smaller person uses techniques against someone that is bigger than them. Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu can also be implemented for self-defense purposes, tournaments that involve sport grappling and mixed martial arts competitions. When training sparring is included and fighters must perform well.

Getting a dominant role on the ground is part of the makeup of this technique. This includes the guard position to protect oneself and to keep trying to stay as the dominant force using positions such as side control, back mount and mount.

When a submission is activated, a combat situation can occur.

## **Submission Holds**

Submission holds can be used in two groups: chokes and joint locks. A choke hold can stop the blood flow to the brain. If the opponent does not acknowledge submission in time, they can lose consciousness.

Joint locks use the limb of the opponent and make a lever in the position they are in. This will make the joint to go beyond the normal measurement of movement. The increased pressure is controlled and let go if the opponent can't get out of the hold. They end up submitting the match.

With this technique, a compression lock can also be used. The opponent's muscle is pressed against a bone that is large in size. The opponent ends up in pain. When it's time for the real competition, these methods cannot be used because there could be serious injury.

## **Joint Locks in Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu**

Joint locks are used with this technique. However, there are some competitions that limit or do not permit joint locks that use the spine, ankles and knees. The joint locks can cause injuries in these locations.

There are some joint locks in which the knee gets twisted. These kinds of techniques are ones that competitions do not approve of. This is dangerous and can cause permanent damage that can result in surgery.

Another technique that is barred is the spine having joint manipulations. The spinal area could be crushed, or there could be a misalignment of some sort. The competitions do allow leg locks up to a certain degree along with the skill level.

If you are a beginner, you can use straight ankle locks. If you are an intermediate, you can use straight knee bars. If you are advanced, you can use toeholds along with inward pressure.

There is a majority of joint locks that can be used with flexibility. They include the elbow, shoulder, wrist and ankle. These joint locks can be used according to the rules of the competition.

Of course, there are some fighters who intentionally cause pain on their opponent, so they can stop competing. They will use their body weight, placing their knuckles into pressure points, or tiring their neck by holding their opponent's head.

These actions are used to distract their opponent in competitions that are based on a lower level. With competitions that are at a higher level, they are not used much, if at all.

### **Chokes and strangles in Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu**

This is used as a submission. With chokes, the windpipe is restricted and with strangles, the artery is limited. With air chokes, the fighter can cause harm to the trachea of their opponent.

With blood chokes (strangling), the blood flow ceases to go to the brain of the opponent. This can cause unconsciousness. When a fighter is choked-out, they will be ok if they are removed from the choke after they lose consciousness. Otherwise, they could suffer damage to the brain due to lack of oxygen.

### **Training**

In Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu, submissions minus strikes during training can help the practitioner. They can then continue to practice for everything that they need. The training includes drilling of techniques. These techniques are done with a partner that doesn't resist. There is also sparring in isolation where some techniques go against total resistance. Then there is sparring in full where they opponents try to force their opposites to submission without using the proper techniques. There are also places where they will go to get physical conditioning.

# A Look At Ninjutsu

The martial art known as Ninjutsu is very secret, with a very clouded history. The history isn't documented all that well, as most of what is known about the martial art is that which has been passed down from generation to generation. There are a lot of historical records that state families from the Koga region as being the creators to this very secret style.

Over 70 different Ninjutsu Ryu have been identified and discovered over the years, however most of them have died out. A majority of them were created around a set of specific techniques and skills, although when those skills of a specific Ryu were no longer needed or wanted, the Ryu seems to die out and fade away from existence.

The art of Ninjutsu is best associated with the ninja's from ancient Japan. The ninja's are well known all around the world, for their stealth and very secreted life. The ninja is known to have went through very tough and demanding training, which hardly anyone really knows about. Those that were actual ninja's are either dead, or not allowed to let anyone know their true identity.

During the 1980's, when the ninja trend really hit the United States, the instructors of Ninjutsu popped out all over the place, making black a very happening color. Years later, the trend seemed to die out, and there aren't that many people trying to learn the art.

In regards to the art, the term of Ninjutsu doesn't actually refer to any certain style, but rather a group of the martial arts, with each one having it's own view that's expressed with each of the different Ryu. The Ryu vary, meaning that one may focus on one certain physical dynamic, while the next may be focused on redirection.

What many people aren't aware of, is the fact that Ninjutsu involves both unarmed and armed fighting skills, along with philosophy, strategy, and history. There are a few dojo's that offer the art, many of them being quite comprehensive with the way they teach.

During combat, Ninjutsu focuses on distance, posture, and flow. Stylists are taught to react to every movement, and respond in ways that will place them in the advantage position. From being in a position of advantage, the stylist can effectively change the outcome of the encounter - quickly going from negative to positive.

Those that practice the martial art of Ninjutsu are instructed and trained to use their entire body for everything they do, which provides the most leverage and power. Ninjutsu is well known in Japan, and for good reason. It is a very secretive martial art, yet very powerful. The techniques can be used or self defense, along with stealth. It can be a great martial art to learn - if you can find a dojo that teaches it.

# An In Depth Look At Muay Thai

Also known around the world as Thai boxing, Muay Thai is an ancient art of self defense that was created and tested in battle by the fearless warriors of ancient Thailand. Today, Muay Thai is used all around the world. The United States Navy SEALs, Thai military, and even the CIA takes full advantage of the devastating and bone crushing techniques this martial art offers.

Unlike other martial arts, students of Thai don't earn belts for their skills and their progression. Instead, their skills are tested in the ring. Since Thai fighting first began, the only things that the fighters themselves are interested in are the championship belts which showcase their dominance in Muay Thai fighting.

The skills that are taught with Muay Thai are far more dominant to other striking based martial arts. Muay Thai uses very little grappling, but focuses more on crushing kicks, punches, and bone shattering elbows. Students of Thai fighting can often take an opponent down with just one shot, often times breaking bones and sometimes even killing them with just one lethal kick or elbow.

The reason why Muay Thai didn't utilize ground grappling or submission holds is because it was developed in ancient battlegrounds where there were always multiple attackers. These attackers were knowledgeable in sword fighting skills, which made the need for a dependable martial art more or less a necessity.

Muay Thai used swords, spears, sticks, and hard strikes. In this type of environment, you didn't want the fight to go to the ground. The strikes and weapon movements needed be fast, hard, and very precise. With these types of conditions and the type of environment, Muay Thai needed be a very fast responsive martial art with an excellent weapons system.

Even though grappling and submissions were planned for Muay Thai, the martial art became more of a ring sport before grappling could be implemented. With Thai originally being a martial art for striking purposes, a lot of martial artists have started using the techniques that have been proven time and time again with time boxing.

Although there are other martial arts that put a lot of emphasis on striking, Muay Thai is quite different. The first area in which Muay Thai differs is the effective use of both elbows and knees. The elbows and knees that are used with most Thai techniques are feared all around the world by boxers and other stylists.

Kicking and kneeing is the main objects in Muay Thai. In order to become efficient with kicking, the shins need to be conditioned - which can be quite painful. Once the Thai stylist has conditioned the nerves in his shins for impact, the shins can be used just like a club or a baseball bat. This is something you should really see for yourself in action - as the sound of the impact alone can send chills down your back.

Through years of training and conditioning, Muay Thai fighters can become lethal and deadly weapons. A properly trained fighter can make deadly impact, meaning that his knees, shins, and

elbows are quite possibly deadlier than a gun or other type of weapon. For this very reason - Muay Thai is one of the deadliest and most feared martial arts in the world.

All in all, Muay Thai is a great martial art for defense and competition. Thai is one of the best martial arts in the world, proving it time and time again - in both ancient times and anytime it is used today.

# An Introduction To Aikido

There's no mistaken the fact that Aikido is one of the best and most popular martial art in the United States today. The art of Aikido is best associated with actor Steven Seagal, who made it even more popular with his movies. Aikido is rich and history in tradition, an art that originally started in Japan back in the 1940s.

Aikido's founder, Morihei Ueshiba, was born on December 14, 1883. As he was growing up in modern Japan, Ueshiba witnessed the local thugs vandalize his father. The young boy decided that he would make himself strong in order to seek revenge against the thugs. Ueshiba was strong willed, and devoted every waking moment to physical training and martial arts.

He received a lot of certificates in jujitsu, spear fighting, and fencing. Even though he was very impressive with his abilities, he found himself not happy with his skills. He knew that there was more to it, and began to look into religion, hoping that he would find a greater significance with life - pursuing martial arts all the while.

Ueshiba founded the martial art of Aikido by combining both his religious beliefs and his training in martial arts. At that time, the style was known as aikibudo, it wasn't until 1942 that he decided to go with the name Aikido. The style was quite different indeed, incorporating several different styles of jujitsu, aiki-jujitsu, and spear and sword fighting techniques as well.

Even though a lot of us think of Aikido as the ultimate martial art, it is an art that is based on religion and harmony. Aikido uses joint locks, weight manipulation, and throws to achieve it's purpose. The martial art is very effective, which were the intentions of Ueshiba from the start. Aikido consists of many techniques, and it is the result of Ueshiba's creative innovation.

Aside from what many think, there really is no unified belief or philosophy in the martial art of Aikido. While Aikido is indeed rich in heritage and religion, it believes in harmony and peace of the spirit. By achieving a higher spiritual power, Ueshiba has always believed that the human body is capable of anything. Even though he wanted revenge, he still stated that Aikido wasn't about fighting, but rather a way to reconcile with the world and make every human being on giant family.

Over the years, Aikido was introduced in America with amazing results. Steven Seagal is by far the most popular, showing the world the power and harmony of Aikido through his many movies. There are a lot of martial arts dojo's around North America that offer Aikido to study, possibly even some in your area. Not only will Aikido teach you self defense, but it will also teach you harmony of the spirit and how to find inner peace as well.

# A Look At Wing Chun

Up until the turn of the twentieth century, the martial art known as Wing Chun was very obscure not known much about. Back then, Wing Chun was just getting started, not practiced by a lot of martial artists. Over the years, it became a very dominant force in China, becoming one of the most prominent martial arts in existence. Even today, hundreds of martial artists study Wing Chun and everything it provides them with.

The first thing that students are taught when studying Wing Chun is that they should always use force to counter force. By using force against force, weaker and smaller fighters can easily and quickly take out bigger and stronger opponents. Whenever they get in a confrontation, Wing Chun stylists will use their brains - and use an opponents strength and force against him.

Throughout training, a lot of emphasis is put into that very concept. Students will learn all about force and strength, and how they can properly counter it. What many don't realize, is the fact that countering force requires very little strength from the stylist. Even the weakest Wing Chun stylist can take down an opponent 3 - 4 times his size if he uses the proper technique and his opponents force against him.

Wing Chun teaches other techniques as well, such as punching, kicking, and a few grappling holds. It doesn't teach much grappling though, as most of the techniques use force against force through throwing and striking. The strikes that are taught with this martial art are very fast, and aimed at vital areas on the body of the opponent.

A majority of the most vital areas on the human body are found along the center line, the very area that Wing Chun teaches stylists to protect as well as attack with their techniques. This line is the most vital in battle, which is why martial artists should always aim their attacks for any area that exists along this line. Most of the vital points found in the center line can be the end of the encounter if the stylist is able to land one powerful blow.

As Wing Chun emphasizes time and time again, the shortest straw between the stylist and the opponent is the center line, which is where a majority of movement takes place. Due to the linear fashion of Wing Chun, students will spend a lot of their training learning how to direct attacks as well as opposing force towards the center line.

Wing Chun is an exceptional martial art, teaching students how to use force against force in any type of encounter. There aren't that many grappling holds or weapons used with Wing Chun, although the techniques and moves that are taught are tried, proven, and above all - very effective for self defense.

# Chinese Martial Arts

Throughout the world, Chinese martial arts are well known and well respected. China is a pioneer to martial arts, founding several excellent styles. Although Kung Fu is the most well known Chinese martial art, there are others that are just as good. Below, we will look at some of the other Chinese martial arts that aren't as well known as Kung Fu.

## HSING-I

This is actually one of the internal styles of Kung Fu, very closely in relation to Tai Chi. It teaches students to subordinate their bodies, creating powerful movements with a very little expense of energy. HSING-I isn't well known about, although it is very powerful and well known throughout China. The United States and other areas aren't that familiar with it, with little to no schools or dojo's out there that teach it.

Just like Tai Chi, HSING-I has deep roots in Chinese medicine and the Chinese perceptions of nature. The blows that come from HSING-I come from the five elements of the Chinese - metal, fire, earth, water, and wood. Similar to other forms that originate from Kung Fu, HSING-I offers complex, dance like movements that are adapted from the way animals react and move. Due to the training being so demanding and rigorous, and the breathing exercises being so demanding, those who practice this martial art have astounding physical skills and amazing endurance.

## Tai Chi

To those who live outside of China, Tai Chi resembles more of a dance. The slow and calm movements it teaches are balanced and exact, performed while the stylist is in a deep state of relaxation. While in this deep state of relaxation, the stylist will be fully aware of what he is doing and his movements, although he will appear to those around him to be asleep.

In reality, Tai Chi is an energy exercise that promotes strength, stamina, and flexibility. By using the deep state of relaxation, Tai Chi enables stylists to benefit emotionally and spiritually as well. Tai Chi also uses deep states of mediation as well, helping stylists to learn how to reach their high level of peace.

## Chinese martial arts

Even though Kung Fu is the best martial art in China, there are many different forms and styles that originate from it. There is the Shaolin style as well, which offers several different styles of Kung Fu as well, including the world famous "5 animals system". The five animals system is among the most popular in China and well known around the world for their devastating techniques and amazing power when used in combat.

Along with Kung Fu, both HSING-I and Tai Chi are great martial arts that help with endurance training and flexibility. A lot of Kung Fu students in China choose to study one of these arts as well, as it helps to add to their physical and emotional power. Students who study Tai Chi or HSING-I as well as Kung Fu, have a higher state of endurance and spirituality that simply cannot be matched.

All around the world, China is well known for martial arts. China brought Kung Fu and Tai Chi to the world, which is something we are all thankful for. Even though Japan offers their unique blend of martial arts, many consider China to be the founding father of martial arts. The Chinese have been using martial arts for hundreds of years - providing just how dominant it can be as a means of self defense and a way to live your life in a peaceful manner.

# Martial Arts For Children

These days, martial arts are something that everyone should know. With crime at an all time high, knowing how to defend yourself is essential. For the children, martial arts can mean a lot of things. Even though martial arts is great for adults to know and practice as well, it is also a great way for children to stay in shape and learn how to defend themselves from attackers.

Although martial arts can teach children how to defend themselves, it will also teach them self control and self confidence as well. If your child has a bad temper or low self esteem, learning a martial art can actually help them to get back on the right path. Martial arts will help children with life in general - which will take them a lot farther in life.

The first thing you will need to do when getting your child involved in martial arts is pick a style that they will enjoy. With several different styles to choose from, it can be a very difficult choice to make. Among the most popular for children are Karate, Taekwondo, Judo, Muay Thai, and Jiu-Jitsu. When making the decision, you should go by what your child has interests in, such as punching and kicking, or ground grappling and submission.

Once you have a style in mind, you'll need to start checking out the local martial arts centers and dojo's. If you live in a big city, you'll have a lot more to choose from than those who live in smaller areas or rural towns. Those who live in smaller towns or rural areas may be very limited on the choices available for themselves and their children.

Rural and smaller towns are limited in choice, although what they offer is normally among the best styles of martial arts. The instructors are black belts and above, with the highest ranked students helping them instruct classes. If the classes are small in attendance, the instructors and student teachers can spend a lot of hands on time with the kids to help them improve in their weakest areas.

When you decide to enroll your child in martial arts, you should always check out the dojo or classes first. You don't want your child to be in a class that isn't goal focused, nor do you want them to have a teacher who doesn't know what he is teaching. The environment is also important, as you want to be sure that the dojo and equipment are clean, and that everything is up to the latest and greatest standards.

Even though a martial art may be beneficial to your child, it won't do them any good unless the facilities and the instructors are good. You want to make sure you get the best available to you, which is why it always pays to look around. If you look at all of your available choices, you'll normally be able to find the best for both you and your child.

When it comes to children and their future, martial arts is a great way for them to start. Martial arts can help them improve in many different areas, not just self defense. A martial art can help a child develop a lot of essential areas, including self control and responsibility. The longer a child studies a martial art, the more goal oriented and responsible they will become. Martial arts are a great investment for parents and children - which is why they are so very popular.

# The Art Of Hapkido

The martial art known as Hapkido is an art of complete self defense. Those who study it are more than capable of defending themselves in any type of situation, being more than able to apply their confidence and discipline from the art to enhance their lives, protecting themselves and those that they love as well.

Hapkido teaches students to use minimal force with any stronger opponent. Contrary to other martial arts, it doesn't involve strength to execute the techniques. To control the opponent and take him down, Hapkido focuses on pressure points and the impact they have on opponents. It also involves a very powerful arsenal of thrusts, spin kicks, and sweeps. If they are executed properly, the moves from this martial art can be very effective against opponents and attackers.

Along with kicks, punches, and pressure point attacks; Hapkido also uses wrist and joint manipulation locks, along with several throwing techniques. All together, there are nearly 300 categories of special movements in Hapkido that involve nearly 3,500 techniques.

Hapkido is a very popular martial art, which is mainly due to the fact that just about anyone, regardless of age or weight can practice the techniques. The martial art also involves systematic training and stamina exercise, which can improve your health. You don't need to be in the best shape either, as Hapkido can actually help your body as well as your health.

Studying Hapkido will also help with developing your muscles, along with your posture, controlling your weight, developing confidence, self control, even fulfilling your spirit. Although it is mainly based in self defense techniques, it also teaches you how to become a better person and get yourself back in health and in touch with your spirit.

Throughout the style, the linear techniques work together to form a solid base in which all of the circular techniques can be perfected. Everything in Hapkido is tried and tested, in order to come up with a balanced blend of techniques and skills that are apt for any situation. With Hapkido being a martial art of self defense, there is a lot of practice involved blocking attacks in many different situations. This way, the stylist can be more prepared for any situation he finds himself in.

Today, Hapkido is practiced by men and women of all ages, even little children. It is a very beneficial martial art, one that can be utilized from nearly any position or direction, such as lying, sitting, and standing. It is an art of self defense, and can even be deadly if the stylist is proficient with the techniques. What makes it even more deadly though - is the fact that a lot of people aren't familiar with it.

# The Art Of Tai Chi

Tai Chi is an ancient martial art, one that was practiced for centuries in China as an exercise, a martial art, and a way to improve the internal flow of energy in the body. It emphasizes correct form and feeling with each and every movement, which is why it is always taught to be practiced in a slow and gentle fashion.

By involving the entire body with little to no impact, Tai Chi promotes strength, flexibility, and stamina. With the entire body being taught to move as a whole, Tai Chi cultivates the link among the mind and the body, helping to enhance one's coordination and balance. It can also help with the joints as well, especially if an individual is very stiff in the joints.

Although it was developed to be a martial art, it involves very little striking, offensive, or even defense techniques. Tai Chi is a movement and breathing art that works all of the major muscles and joints in the body, helping to circulate internal energy, or chi. The Chinese believe that internal energy, or chi is what prevents or stops diseases.

When practicing the art, the body will remain very soft and relaxed, just like it was suspended from the top of the head with the joints being similar to that of a puppet. The mind of the student is focused on each movement, focusing on the flow of energy. By being relaxed and focused, you allow the energy to flow through your entire body.

Even though you are soft and relaxed, you are still constantly moving. The energy that flows through your body never stops, it keeps you moving. When you move in reality, it takes little to no energy to make a movement. By using your chi, everything you do seems as if it is weightless.

In combat, the Tai Chi student uses his opponent's energy against him. The stylist is very relaxed, believing that the energy of the opponent can be used against him. There is little to no strength involved. When the opponent becomes weak and tires himself out - the stylist attacks. This way, there is very little energy left for defense or even attacking.

Tai Chi is one of the oldest styles of martial arts, and one of the hardest to find these days. Just like other martial arts, such as Tiger Claw and Ninjutsu, it can be very hard to find a dojo that teaches the art. If you can find a dojo that teaches the art of Tai Chi, you really shouldn't pass it up. It can teach you a lot about internal energy and your spiritual well being - learning more about yourself than you ever thought possible in the process.

# The Basics Of Tae Kwon Do

Tae Kwon Do is a modern martial art, well known all around the world for its lightning fast, often high, spectacular spin kicks. Tae Kwon Do has been around for many years, originally founded in Korea. It translates to “the art of punching and kicking”, or the “art of unarmed combat”.

The martial art Tae Kwon Do has four disciplines - patterns, self defense, break test, and sparring. It isn't just one of these disciplines that make up the art, but a combination of them. All 4 of them are important, especially for those looking to advance in belt ranking. To advance in a belt, there are certain tests that students need to pass.

One of the great things about Tae Kwon Do is the fact that there are no age limits, and it can easily be learned by young children. Children of all ages will quickly learn fast reactions playing games, learn respect, and they will also learn their abilities as well as their disabilities.

The competitions however, are a bit different for children than they are for the adults. Even though the participants will wear full body protection, children can only kick and punch to the body, as no shots to the head are allowed. The competitions in Tae Kwon Do is what makes the art so very dominating. A majority of students that practice this martial art do so because of the competitions.

The competitions can be very exciting to watch, as they can get very competitive. Contrary to what many may think, the competitions aren't deadly, nor are they anywhere close to being as dangerous as Muay Thai fights. Competitors will wear full protection, including head gear. For adults, kicks to the head are allowed, although a majority of stylists can block them before they make impact.

In order to participate in the competitions, stylists will need to have a certain level of experience. It can take years to become good enough, especially for those who win. Competitions are a great way to learn, especially if there are participating fighters from other areas of the world. The skill of a stylist is a very important factor with the competitions and tournaments. If you have a black belt fighter going against a white belt - the results will normally be quite obvious.

All things aside, the art of Tae Kwon Do is a great martial art. Stylists can learn kicking, punching, blocking, and the spectacular movements the art is known for. Tae Kwon Do is practiced all around the world, meaning that there are just as many places to learn this art as there are Karate. For an art that won't disappoint - Tae Kwon Do teaches self defense and a whole lot more.

# The Many Styles Of Kung Fu

The martial art known as Kung Fu is very old, yet very powerful. There are several different forms involved with Kung Fu, that only add to the power and mystique. Below, we will go over a majority of the different styles and forms that make up Kung Fu.

## White Crane style

The spirit of the White Crane has led to what many martial artists consider to be the most graceful system of Kung Fu. The pattern for the White Crane style was patterned after a crane bird often found in marshes and open plains. The White Crane defense forms and attacks are nothing short of amazing, often known as “deadly beauty”.

Although the techniques within the White Crane style can take years to properly master, they are simple and to the point. White Crane stylists are masters of self defense, although they are taught to avoid confrontations. Even though a stylist can handle himself in any situation, he will avoid a fight at all costs and only react with physical action when he is left with no choice.

## Wing Chun

From a Chinese standpoint, Wing Chun is the essence that the opponent will attack, absorb, and then neutralize the attack. Then, the opponent or attacker will back off, pursue, then counter - disengage his restriction from arms, and then retaliate with a deadly and penetrating force.

This philosophy will take years to fully understand, and years of practice to master. Technically speaking, Wing Chun uses a steady and never ending forward flow of energy that's based on the principle that a straight line is the shortest distance between two points.

Offensively, Wing Chun is all about a combination of intercepting and straight lines with deflecting arcs. In general, it is an aggressive close quarter style that pushes offensive attacks and takes the fight right to the attacker. In other words - Wing Chun doesn't care nor does it put a lot of time towards the more traditional block and counter routines.

## Hung Gar

Hung Gar is more or less an adaptation of the Tiger system of Shaolin that emphasizes close quarter techniques. Hung Gar isn't much on distance fighting, although it is very effective in close quarter situations, such as alleys and in small rooms. It is a very strong system, teaching stylists to handle themselves properly in areas where other martial arts seem to fail.

## Praying Mantis

Nearly 400 years ago, a man named Wang had a vision. Using a praying mantis that he was able to capture, Wang studied it's movements. By using what he saw, he created and founded the style of Praying Mantis. Wang perfected his own martial art style by continuing to observe both the offensive and defensive movements of the praying mantis, and using them with his style.

## The Monkey style

Even though it is thought of a comical approach to martial arts, the Monkey style is actually one of the deadliest martial arts systems in the world. This style dates back to the 1840s, when missionaries were first allowed passage into China.

The Monkey style all began when a peaceful man named See resisted arrested after accidentally killing an officer of the law. See was sentenced to prison for his crime, where he spent all of his time watching the prison apes. He found them amazing, and would watch them from his cell, which his also helped to pass the time.

Over his ten year prison sentence, he studied the way the apes moved, paying very close attention to how they defended themselves and fought each other. Then, when he was released from prison, he adapted his style, becoming known as the Monkey Master. A lot of people joined him along the way, and began to learn his Monkey system which is still very effective today.

# The Techniques Of Muay Thai

A majority of the offensive techniques that are used in Muay Thai utilize a student's hands, feet, elbows, and knees to strike an opponent. In order to bind the opponent for both defensive and offensive reasons, there is a small amount of grappling on the feet that is used - the clinch.

The clinch occurs when someone gets in your circle of radius, inside of your comfort zone. To execute knees and short kicks from the inside, the clinch can be very useful. The Thai fighter makes great use of the clinch, tying up an opponent on the feet then pounding his stomach, ribs, knees, and legs with brutal knees. Knees are very popular techniques with Muay Thai, as Thai fighters spend a lot of time training their strikes - especially knees and elbows.

Although high kicks to the opponent's head looks amazing during the fights, experienced Thai fighters always say that knees and elbows have a lot more impact, and they do the most damage to the body. If a Thai fighter is very experienced and has enough power in his strikes, he can quickly and easily kill someone with his techniques.

In all Muay Thai techniques, two in particular have become very popular with other styles of martial arts.

## The roundhouse kick

The roundhouse Thai kick is a very useful technique for both self defense and competitions, proving to be very efficient when it is executed properly. Thai stylists execute the roundhouse kick by a straight leg and the entire body rotating out from the hip. The hip is locked shortly before the thrown leg makes impact with the opponent. If executed properly, the roundhouse kick can easily render someone unconscious.

## The low kick

The low kick is a common Muay Thai attack, that involves a circular movement from the stylist's body to kick the opponent in his upper shin area. If the low kick isn't blocked or defended, it can quickly lead to fight being ended. After a few well placed low kicks, the opponent will be unable to put pressure on his legs due to the bruising, and will eventually crumble.

With other martial arts styles, such as Tae Kwon Do, stylists use snapping kicks that are indeed faster to execute, although they have less power. Muay Thai on the other hand, teaches stylists to follow through with kicks, using the shin instead of the foot. Nearly all of the techniques involved with Muay Thai emphasize movement with the entire body, which means rotating the hip each time the stylist kicks, punches, or blocks. The techniques are slower, although they are far more powerful than techniques found in Tae Kwon Do and even Karate.

As a lot of people already know, the training and conditioning training found in Muay Thai is nothing short of legendary for the intensity and rigorous training. The training in Muay Thai aims to harden the weapons used in the martial art to a high degree. Students who have been training in Muay Thai for many years can absorb a beating, yet if they land a shin kick it will feel as if you have just been hit with a sledgehammer.

All in all, Muay Thai is a very dangerous martial art that teaches punishing blows with very little grappling. Thai stylists are physical strong, capable of taking an opponent out with just one well placed strike. Muay Thai is also one of the most well known and most popular styles in the world today - which is why you shouldn't hesitate to study.

# The Ultimate Fighting Championship

It's no secret that martial arts has indeed come a long way over the years. Many years ago, Bruce Lee helped the arts become even more famous, when he developed his style of Jeet Kune Do. He participated in several movies, showing the world his speed and finesse. Since then, movies have been a popular way to showcase martial arts skills.

Back in the early 1990s, something known as the UFC (Ultimate Fighting Championship) came along to take things one step further. Even though there have been other competitions similar to the UFC, none of them had the flair and the dedication as UFC did. When it first began, the UFC paired different styles and different weight classes.

The result were exciting fights with varying results. The first ever champion was a man from Brazil named Royce Gracie. Gracie was the first to introduce Brazilian Jui-Jitsu in this way, opening up the eyes of everyone who witness him fight. After the first UFC tournament, Brazilian Jui-Jitsu was instantly viewed as the best martial art. Royce weighed under 200 pounds, and he was completely dominating people nearly 3 times his size.

Gracie would go on to win UFC 2 and 4 as well. He was the most dominating in the sport, and opened the eyes of everyone across the world. In UFC 3, he didn't lose, although he ran into a very tough fighter who nearly beat him. Gracie came back in UFC 5 for a superfight match up with Ken Shamrock, which would go the distance and end in a draw.

Other fighters have done exceptionally well in the UFC, although none of them had the impact as Royce Gracie. Fighters like Ken Shamrock, Dan Severn, Oleg Taktarov, Matt Hughes, and Matt Sylvia have also done very well. Matt Hughes is also regarded as one of the best, as he fights in the Welterweight class and is considered pound for pound to be the best fighter in the world.

In the world of MMA (Mixed Martial Arts), the UFC has made a big impact. In the beginning, there were no rules and no judges, just one on one fights until someone either tapped out, got knocked out, or the ref through in the towel. Fighters also fought in a tournament style as well, which took 3 fights to win the championship.

Over the years, there were several changes. The UFC would start with judges after a few years, along with eliminating the tournaments. The fights would eventually go to one on one, which was great for the fans. Although the fights didn't have time limits in the beginning, they do now. The non title fights are three 5 minute rounds, while the title fights are five 5 minute rounds.

If a fight goes to the judges, the judges decide the winner. There are three judges, which normally change with each different UFC. Judges are there do determine the winner if there is no knockout or submission, while the ref is there to protect the fighters. The referee can stop a fight as well, if a fighter is unable to defend themselves.

With all the changes in the rules of the UFC, it's only a matter of time before the UFC gains a lot more popularity. It is more popular today than it ever has been, which tells you that martial arts

have come a long way. Martial arts is very popular these days, with competitions such as the UFC being one of the most popular sports in the world.

# Stretching

With the different martial arts techniques and styles, it's important to have those that participate in them to be flexible. Just like people that exercise, there is the need for stretching before you start. Here are some things that you need to know about stretching:

- **Warm up** – A lot of people will stretch before they work out. In reality, it's better to do it after you have worked out. You will be able to stretch better and farther because your blood will really be flowing.
- **Proper breathing** – With any exercise that you engage in, it is important to breathe properly. During your stretching, you will have to breathe slowly through your nose. Hold your breath briefly and exhale through your mouth.

This is how you will get more out of stretching. This helps your body to relax, have more blood flow and can removed acid from your body after you've worked out. Some judo practitioners should hold out longer with stretching until they exhale.

- **Regular and consistent** – You need to stretch on a consistent basis. It should be done at least four to six days a week. In fact, try to do it on the same days each week. The stretches should be no more than 20 seconds. When you're stretching, do it in a manner where you don't overdo it.
- **Strength and flexibility** – As you are getting more flexibility, you should also work to increase strength at the same time. So if you are working to make your arms more flexible, you need to increase strength in that area as well.
- **Incorporate in a workout** – With martial arts training, incorporate stretching in your workout. You can get better results that way.

There are some things that you should be aware of while you are incorporating this in your regular routine:

- You may feel a burning in your muscles while stretching. It should be nothing serious. However, if you start to feel pain in your muscles, then consult your physician.
- Drink plenty of water before you start stretching.
- You may have tight muscles when you are doing flexibility exercises.
- Wait until you get warmed up before you start your stretching exercises.
- Before you start, check with your physician.

# Mixed Martial Arts

Mixed martial arts or MMA, is a combat sport that uses different techniques of fighting. They are traditional and non-traditional martial arts forms that are implemented in competitions. With this combat sport, the techniques of grappling and striking can be used. Standing and ground methods can be implemented.

Here are some of the common rules that are used in mixed martial arts competitions:

- **Knockout** – When a fighter is struck and loses consciousness, the opponent is deemed the winner. The MMA rules include ground fighting and the fight ends to keep more injuries from happening to the unconscious opponent.
- **Technical knockout** – With a technical knockout, there are different reasons a match can be stopped, such as:

The referee can stop the match if a fighter is overpowering the opponent and they opponent cannot defend himself from him;

When a grappling hold is used that causes the fighter not to respond;

Injuries befall a fighter, such as fractured bones.

- **Submission** – A fighter can accept defeat by doing one of the following:

A tap on the floor or mat;

Announcement;

A tap on the body of the opponent

- **Doctor stoppage** – If one of the fighters can't keep going and the referee notices it, they will ask for a time out. This can happen if the fighter is injured. A doctor will check him out and see if he can continue.

If not, the opponent will be crowned as the winner. Or if the match is halted by illegal methods of the opponent, the referee will declare a no contest or disqualification ruling.

- **Corner stoppage** – If one of the men in the corner claims defeat for the fighter, they will throw the towel in the ring to signify such. This can happen while the match is going on or after one round and before the next round.
- **Disqualification** – When a fighter does something that goes against the rules, they will be given a warning. A disqualification occurs if they receive three warnings.



- **No contest** – If both fighters are in rule violations, the match will be noted as “No Contest”.
- **Decisions** – If the match goes all the way and there’s no clear victor, three judges will determine the winner. The judging is based on specific organizations.
- **Forfeit** – In order to do this, a fighter has to cancel the match before it even starts. This is an automatic loss for the fighter.

## Fouls

With mixed martial arts, there are things that fighters do that are considered to be fouls. Here is a list of some of them:

- Gouging of the eyes
- Butting heads
- Pulling of the hair
- Biting
- Groin attack
- Attacks the trachea
- Manipulation of small joints (i.e. fingers, toes)

- Going out of the ring running
- Getting your opponent out of the ring on purpose
- Holding on to the ropes of the ring on purpose
- Placing your hand inside your opponent's trunks or gloves as a distraction
- Strike the back of the head
- Strike the spinal area

Any of these actions can cause you or other fighters to get a foul or worse, be disqualified from the match. These actions are not ones that you want to be known for.

## Unified Rules

The Unified Rules of Mixed Martial Arts were established in 2000. They were established by the California State Athletic Commission.

These rules are used for mixed martial arts in their unarmed combat competitions. In order for a mixed martial arts event to take place in a venue that is regulated by the state, the event must agree to go by the rules of that particular state commission.

The only exemptions to their rules are the state of Hawaii and Indian reservations. Neither of these places is required to submit to the rules of the commission.

### **Clothing**

Shorts that have been approved are what the fighters must wear. No shoes are allowed. Also, no shirts or long pants are allowed to be worn. Fighters must wear gloves that weigh no more than six ounces. They must be able to let your fingers engage in a grabbing motion.

### **Rounds**

The rounds last five minutes each. The rest time between each round is 60 seconds. If there are title matches, they last for five rounds and non-title matches last three rounds.

### **Judging**

With the fights there is a ten point system. There are three judges that do the scoring for each round. The winner of each round gets ten points; the loser gets less than that. If both fighters get the same number of points, they both get ten points.

## **Legalities**

The Unified Rules let all elbow strikes remain. No illegal or sensitive striking is allowed.

## **Fouls**

Listed below are fouls that were implemented by the Nevada State Athletic Commission:

- Stomping the opponent that is already on the ground
- Holding the opponent's shorts or glove
- Kicking the opponent in the head and they are already on the ground
- Kneeing the opponent in the head and they are already on the ground
- Attacking an opponent whom the referee is attending to
- Attacking an opponent after the period of unarmed combat has ended
- Ignoring the referee's instructions
- Grabbing or messing with the flesh of the opponent in a way where it is not appropriate
- Derogative or abusing language in or near the ring
- The opponent gets spit on
- Forfeit the match by throwing in the towel
- Ignoring the opponents or faking actions deemed unnecessary
- Conduct that is unsportsmanlike that can hurt the opponent

These fouls can get fighters in serious trouble if they try to do one or more of them. They may even get them disqualified from the match.

As with any sport, fighters are routinely tested for illegal drugs, illegal substances and things like steroids.



# MMA Strategies

With MMA, you have to be trained in striking and submission fighting. With mixed martial arts competition, there are two categories. There are striking techniques, which include punches, knees and kicks. The grappling techniques include submission holds, pinning holds, takedowns and clinch holds, just to name a few.

With elbow strikes, spinal locks and head butts being questionable moves in match, there are some techniques that are banned from matches, such as groin strikes, biting, small joint manipulation, etc.

In order to gain experience in different areas of combat, those involved in mixed martial arts must have cross training. They will have to use traditional disciplines to improve their game.

Some popular disciplines include:

- Clinch – Judo is an example that is used to enhance clinching
- Ground – Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu is used to enhance submission holds and the defense. Ground control is maintained and improved
- Stand-up – Different forms, which include karate, are used to help with the improvement of kicking, elbowing and punching, just to name a few

Some styles have been altered from the original format. Fighters will normally train with different coaches that use different styles. This helps to improve their serve. Other important factors of mixed martial arts include strength training, cardio conditioning and speed drills just to name a few.

Mixed martial arts are no longer just for fighters. As more people find out about MMA, there are others who are taking up the sport. Others say anyone can take it and it is safe for anyone to participate in.

# Hybrid Styles

These styles are some that fighters may implement in matches. These hybrid styles include:

## **Ground-and-pound**

This hybrid style is implemented when the fighter puts their opponent on the ground. This is done with a throw or a takedown. The fighter assumes the as the dominant force and uses their fists to strike the opponent. This style is used as a preliminary to submission holds.

Fighters that are experienced with submission defense and takedowns will use the ground-and-pound style. They assume a grappling position and continue to strike until the opponent gives up and decides to submit.

Ground-and-pound has become rather popular with some fighters. However it is not an original style of striking. Fighters still use this style as part of their training.

## **Sprawl-and-brawl**

This is a style that comes from the stand-up fighting method. Ground fighting is not used. However, the fighter implements sprawls in order to protect them against takedowns. In order for this style to be effective, the fighter would have to be trained in wrestling. This is how they are protected from takedowns.

In order to prevent submission in a match, the fighters learn submission wrestling. Even if they end up on the ground, they don't want to be forced into submission. This style is not like original styles of kickboxing. The fighters that use the sprawl-and-brawl method must adjust the way they do things to include ground fighting and takedowns.

## **Submission grappling**

This style deals with getting an opponent on the ground by implementing a throw or a takedown. Then the fighter will implement a submission hold. The opponent will have no choice but to submit and the other fighter would be the winner.

Some fighters try to be the dominant one; others will look to fight from other angles. If the grappler can't implement a takedown, they will try to get their opponent on the ground in a dominant position.

## **Lay-and-Pray**

This is when a fighter has control over their opponent who is on the ground. However, the fighter cannot get an offense that can be deemed effective for them. They try to reverse their opponent's offense and hope for a win in their (the fighter's) favor.

For some that use this technique, they may end up being penalized. This is because the referee may think that the fighter is calling a bluff.



# Injuries and Safety

Competitions in MMA can sometimes be seen as rough and brutal. However, fighters must still take precautions to ensure their safety and work to prevent serious injury. Fighters usually have to go through a medical screening before they can be cleared to participate in a match.

Studies have shown that in mixed martial arts competitions the rate for injuries is close to what injuries are in other combat sports. However, in MMA competitions, the rates are not as high for knockouts. So, the risk of serious injury to the brain seems to be lower than those events that include striking methods.

Whether you decide to take up jujitsu or mixed martial arts, there will be a risk involved. Just make sure that you are up to the challenge and the risks that are involved with these sports.



# Resources

<http://www.jujitsuamerica.org/>, Jujitsu America

<http://www.usjujitsu.net/>, United States Jujitsu Federation

<http://www.ultimatejujitsu.com/index.shtml>, Ultimate Jujitsu

<http://www.mmafighting.com/>, MMA Fighting

<http://www.grapplearts.com/index.php>, Grapplearts

**John Evans**

<http://www.HowToMartialArts.com>

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