

The Art of
WEAPONS

ARMED AND UNARMED SELF-DEFENSE



M A R C T E D E S C H I

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Weatherhill

The Art of Weapons:

Armed and Unarmed Self-Defense

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*For the brave hearts
and righteous spirits
who sing their song
in the clear light of day.*



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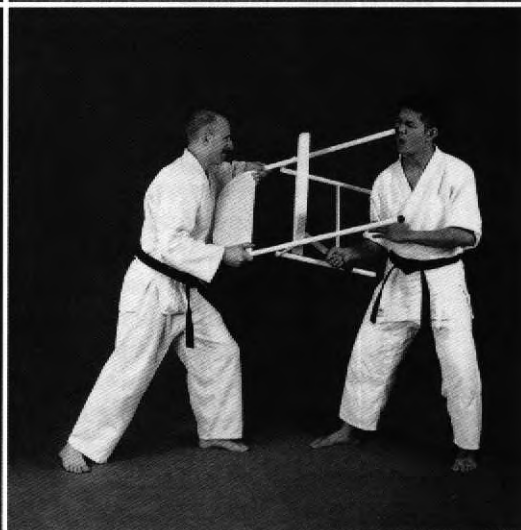
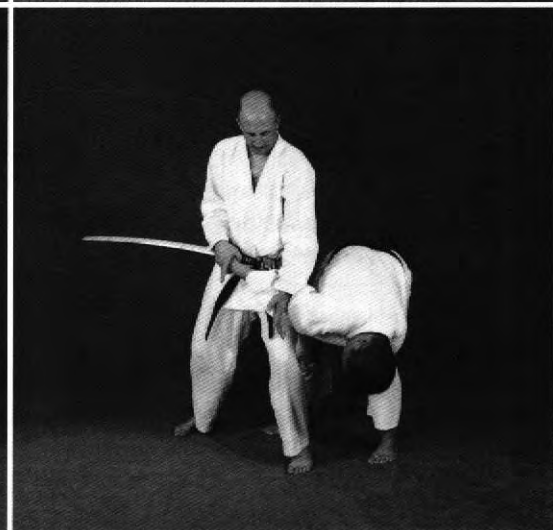
Editorial Notes

The information in this book is a reorganized and expanded version of material found in the author's 1136-page *Hapkido*, and employs similar editorial conventions: To avoid sexist grammar, *they*, *them*, *their*, and *themselves* are used in place of the singular pronouns *he*, *she*, *him*, *her*, *his*, *hers*, *himself*, and *herself*. To avoid wordiness, articles may be omitted, and abbreviations are employed: (R) for right, (L) for left.

This book outlines the core principles and techniques that define armed and unarmed self-defense involving common weapons. The technical differences between most martial arts are identified by the unique ways in which they use and combine skills. This is largely determined by philosophical ideas, as the techniques themselves are often similar. The reasons are not difficult to grasp: since all martial techniques seek to capitalize on strengths and limitations of the human form, they by necessity come to similar conclusions and embody

O V E R V I E W

similar technical principles. While these principles may be expressed quite differently in different styles, they usually reflect the same basic concepts. The techniques in this book come from Hapkido, a varied and practical martial art that shares historical and technical similarities with many other arts, such as Jujutsu, Aikido, Karate, Kung Fu, Kuk Sool Won, and Hwa Rang Do. It is hoped this book will enrich your practice, regardless of style, and help you to recognize your style's place within the larger culture of martial arts.



Introduction

The Art of Weapons is part of a series of books that provide an in-depth look at the core concepts and techniques shared by a broad range of martial arts. The author's previous books in this series dealt with the specific technical areas that define unarmed combat—strikes, holds, and throws—and showed how these skills are combined for use in self-defense against an unarmed opponent. *The Art of Weapons* will demonstrate how these empty-hand skills are used to wield common weapons or defend against them.

In the martial arts as a whole, there are many different types of weapons, as well as innumerable systems for employing them. If one were to make a comparison of these differing styles, one would quickly find that there are many contrasting philosophies that influence choice of weapons and techniques, appropriate use of force, and the circumstances and manner in which techniques should be executed. Some martial arts do not involve weapons training of any kind, others incorporate only a few weapons, while still others attempt to integrate larger families of weapons into comprehensive self-defense or combat systems. Generally, most weapons systems require serious, dedicated study over a long period of time, if one is to obtain an appreciable level of expertise. For the modern martial artist concerned with practical self-defense, two important questions arise: 1) what is the proper mix of weapons and techniques for an individual who wants a broad range of practical skills, without investing a lifetime of study into a particular weapon(s); and 2) how can weapons techniques be integrated into a martial art's existing repertoire of unarmed skills, so that one is not required to learn a completely new or unrelated set of physical skills and tactics in order to employ weapons proficiently?

This book will attempt to address these issues by focusing on seven basic classes of weapons, the mastery of which will provide the practitioner with a broad range of skills that should allow them to wield almost

anything as a weapon; and by outlining core principles and techniques common to a range of martial styles, so that experienced practitioners will possess the tools to modify and integrate these skills into their own martial art, in a manner that it is consistent with their art's core values and techniques.

Most confrontations involving weapons generally fall into three basic categories:

- Unarmed defense against weapons
- Armed defense against unarmed attacker
- Weapons against weapons

Weapons techniques will be presented in separate in-depth chapters, each covering a specific class of weapons. The following pages will provide an overview of this book's approach to weapons training as a whole, followed by a visual comparison of similar techniques from different martial arts, as applied by notable masters.

Historical Development

In the Asian martial arts, there are many different types of weapons, which are studied for a wide variety of purposes. Some of these weapons are obsolete and are studied purely for their historic, artistic, or spiritual qualities; for physical exercise; or as a form of moving meditation. Other weapons are still valued as highly effective tools for modern self-defense or combat. Most weapons observed today are not unique to any particular martial art, but originated within Asian culture as a whole.

Historically, most Asian weaponry developed from three primary sources: the military, religious monasteries, and common citizens. Consequently, the specific characteristics of a weapon, and its uses, will often reflect these historical roots and the needs of the classes that developed them. For example, the sword is clearly a military weapon developed for warfare. In contrast, the cane is a utilitarian device, which also evolved into a potent tool for self-defense, since monks and common people were often forbidden to carry weapons. Some of the unusual weapons

found in Okinawan styles originally evolved from common farm implements, since Okinawans were forbidden weapons. The *tonfa* (a club-like tool used to operate a millstone) and the *kama* (a sickle-like tool for harvesting rice) are typical examples. For the most part, military techniques tended to focus on the "quick kill." Martial skills developed by monks, while equally effective, tended to be more humane, since they were primarily concerned with self-protection.

Most martial arts that evolved in the twentieth century did not create wholly new weapons systems. Rather, they have selectively adopted and synthesized those techniques from existing systems that were most in keeping with their philosophical approach to weapons and self-defense. Some of these modern martial styles have merely copied existing weapon arts, practicing them without modification. Other styles have attempted to be more innovative by modernizing skills, creating new techniques, or by integrating both armed and unarmed skills into unique, comprehensive, and learnable systems.

Weapons Overview

Weapons covered in this book fall into seven categories, which are listed below, in the order in which the chapters are presented.

- Knife Techniques
- Short-Stick Techniques
- Staff Techniques
- Cane Techniques
- Rope Techniques
- Common Objects (held or thrown)
- Defense Against Handgun

Knife Techniques

The knife is a short-bladed cutting instrument used for a variety of utilitarian or combative purposes. The knife techniques in this book consist primarily of unarmed defenses against knife attacks, and secondarily, offensive use of the knife for self-defense purposes. Most of the unarmed defenses can also be used to defend against other types of weapons, as shown several pages later.

Short-Stick Techniques

The short-stick is a hard wooden cylinder that is 10 to 14 inches long and about 1 to 1 1/4 inches in diameter. It is primarily used at close-quarters to apply snapping strikes, thrusts, blocks, holds, or throws, against armed or unarmed combatants. The techniques in this book show short-stick defenses against an unarmed attacker; however, these same techniques can also be used when defending against weapons, such as a knife or stick.

Staff Techniques

The staff is a long wooden pole that is 4 1/2 to 6 feet long and about 1 to 1 1/4 inches in diameter. It is primarily used from a distance to apply circular strikes, spearing thrusts, pushes, blocks, traps, holds, or throws. The self-defense techniques covered in this book include staff defenses against unarmed attackers, multiple opponents, and weapons, as well as unarmed defenses against a staff.

Cane Techniques

The cane is a common walking-implement found in almost all cultures. It is primarily considered to be a mid-range weapon, but also works well at closer distances. It is typically used to apply strikes, blocks, traps, hooking grabs, holds, or throws, against armed or unarmed combatants. Many cane techniques can also be applied using a mid-size stick, although the cane's curved handle permits a range of additional techniques that are unique to this weapon. The techniques in this book show cane defenses against an unarmed attacker; however, these same skills can also be used to defend against weapons.

Rope Techniques

The rope is a common utilitarian object found in almost all cultures. It is primarily considered to be a close-range weapon, although mid-range strikes are also possible. The rope is typically used for blocking, or for wrapping-holds to an opponent's limbs or

throat in order to apply joint locks, chokes, restraining holds, and throws. The techniques in this book show rope defenses against an unarmed attacker; however, these same skills can also be used to defend against weapons.

Common Objects

Almost any common object can become a weapon in the hands of a creative and skilled martial artist. Common objects can be either held or thrown, and are typically wielded using the same principles found in unarmed self-defense and traditional weapons training. The techniques in this book show a range of possibilities; many others exist.

Defense Against Handgun

The handgun is one of the most common weapons used by criminals. The material presented in this book is intended to familiarize practitioners with basic principles and common techniques used to defend against a handgun.

Weapons Overview



Knife Techniques



Short-Stick Techniques



Staff Techniques



Cane Techniques



Rope Techniques



Common Objects (held or thrown)



Defense Against Handgun

Philosophical Considerations

This book's approach to weapons is defined by certain technical and philosophical qualities that are primarily an outgrowth of the author's experiences in the martial art of Hapkido. Naturally, many of these ideals are also found in other martial arts. From a technical point of view, it is all rather simple: weapons are conceptualized as an extension of your arm or body, and are based on the same technical principles as unarmed techniques. From a philosophical point of view, this book's approach to weapons can be summarized in three words: practical, versatile, and humane.

Practical: Real World Self-Defense

The weapons that are presented in this book were originally selected for their practicality and relevance to a wide variety of circumstances that characterize modern life. Thus, these weapons are not fancy, elaborate, or expensive. They are simple, utilitarian, and innocuous—more reminiscent of tools than weapons. In a sense, this selection of weapons is meant to be a reflection of the common objects found in daily life.

Versatile: Anything is a Weapon

In the eyes of a skilled weapons master, anything can become a weapon. If you become fluent in the seven basic classes of weapons documented in this book, you will possess a range of skills that should allow you to wield almost anything as a weapon. Thus, in the author's approach, the study of a particular weapon serves two purposes: 1) it teaches expertise with a specific weapon, and 2) it teaches fundamental principles and mechanics that can be applied to a range of similar common objects or weapons. For example, cane techniques can also be applied using an umbrella or a mid-length stick. Short-stick techniques can be applied with a rolled-up magazine, a piece of pipe, a hand tool, or anything else possessing similar physical characteristics. Thus, when studying the weapons in this book, the specific physical characteristics of a weapon are considered of lesser importance than your

ability to wield it effectively. Being dependent on a particular design or personalized weapon is not encouraged, since it limits your ability to handle any weapon you might acquire during the course of combat.

Humane: Act Responsibly

This book's approach to self-defense is essentially humane. Weapons techniques should only be used for self-defense, the protection of others, physical exercise, or in organized competitions. The use of force to resolve a situation carries with it a social and moral responsibility to apply force in an appropriate and sensible manner. Generally, the preference is to immobilize an opponent without causing serious injury. Devastating techniques should only be used in appropriate or life-threatening circumstances. Be aware that anytime you strike someone with a weapon, you may be held legally liable for your actions—particularly if your opponent is unarmed. Just because you are morally in the right does not mean the legal system will agree. Exercise caution and prudence. A weapon can inflict very serious injuries. Remember, it's easy to seriously injure or kill someone, with a minimum of skills. It may not be as easy to live with what you have done. Your skill and maturity are shown by how little force you require, not how hard you can hit. For the skilled martial artist, the *excessive use of force* is an inexcusable and morally reprehensible act, deserving condemnation.

Training Considerations

The material presented in this book assumes that the practitioner is already a skilled martial artist, who possesses experience in the major technique areas (strikes, holds, throws) and has a strong understanding of the core principles and techniques that define unarmed self-defense. That material was previously covered in depth in the author's books *The Art of Striking*, *The Art of Holding*, *The Art of Throwing*, *The Art of Ground Fighting*, and the 1136-page *Hapkido*. If practitioners have not mastered these prerequisite skills, they will likely find it very frustrating to learn weapons techniques.

Since weapons are capable of generating serious injury to yourself or others, weapons training in most martial arts does not usually begin until a student reaches black-belt level. At this point, the student should possess adequate physical and emotional self-control, and the needed technical skills. If you are an instructor and you doubt a student's moral character or physical abilities, you should not teach this person weapons skills. If you do and a student abuses this knowledge by intentionally or accidentally injuring someone, you are partially to blame.

This book's approach to weapons training does not include the historic or ritualistic elements found in many other martial arts. Instead, the material focuses on the development of specific offensive and defensive skills that can be applied to a variety of common self-defense situations. In order to provide readers with a learnable amount of material, the weapons techniques shown were carefully selected from the larger body of skills typically associated with each weapon. If one were to undertake a more focused study of fewer weapons, then a larger repertoire is appropriate. Be aware that there are also many other types of weapons that are used in the martial arts, some of which require unique skills peculiar to that weapon.

Techniques in this Book

More than 350 weapons techniques are shown on the following pages. They represent skills common to a range of martial arts. Hundreds of other possibilities exist. Do not limit your training to what is shown in this book; continue to develop additional skills and techniques, based on the principles demonstrated in each weapon chapter. Although the techniques are shown in specific situations, most can also be used in a range of other applications. This fact is demonstrated in the photos at right, which show how a common joint-lock hold is adapted for use in a variety of armed and unarmed situations. For those wishing to explore additional weapons techniques, please reference the author's book *Hapkido: Traditions, Philosophy, Technique*.

Extendibility of Skills

The same fundamental skills and techniques used in empty-hand fighting are also employed in weapons techniques. These photos demonstrate how a basic holding technique (an arm bar applied with the elbow) is adapted for use when:

- Defending against unarmed attacks (1)
- Defending against weapons (2, 3)
- Wielding a weapon for self-defense (4, 5).

Many other techniques can also be adapted for use in a broad range of situations involving weapons.



1. Arm bar used to defend against a lapel grab



2. Arm bar used to defend against a knife attack



3. Arm bar used to defend against a staff attack



4. Arm bar applied using a cane (defending against a punch)



5. Arm bar applied using a rope (defending against a punch)

Comparing Martial Arts

The photos on the following pages show examples of similar weapons techniques from different martial arts, as applied by notable masters. In some cases, the differences are obvious; others require a more educated eye or prior experience with specific styles to be able to perceive the subtle distinctions that distinguish one art from another.

The purpose of these photos is not to make any particular point, but to invite the reader to look outside of their own art. Understanding how other martial arts interpret similar techniques can lead one to a deeper understanding of their own art, and its place in the larger culture of martial arts. Please recognize that these photos have been selected for their similarities. Each of these martial

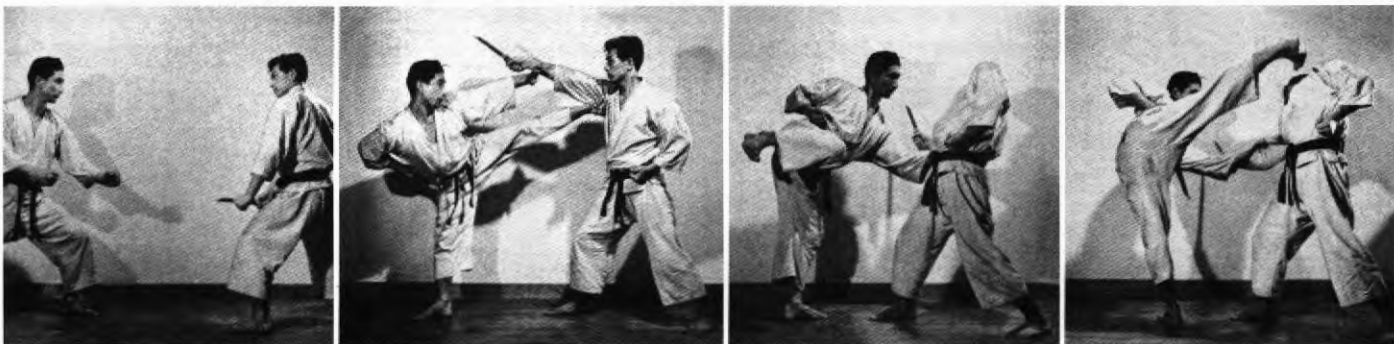
arts also possess numerous qualities and techniques that are relatively unique unto themselves. Please do not assume that by looking at these photos you understand these arts. To make in-depth comparisons and draw intelligent conclusions would require the examination of hundreds of techniques, decades of training, and a great deal of familiarity with specific martial arts.



Hapkido: Inside Crescent Kick / Turning Back Kick, as demonstrated by the author in his book *Hapkido: Traditions, Philosophy, Technique*, 2000



Taekwondo: Inside Crescent Kick / Side Kick, as demonstrated by Merrill Jung in the book *Taekwondo: Traditions, Philosophy, Technique* by Marc Tedeschi, 2003



Karate: Knife Hand Block / Side Kick / Arm Pull / Roundhouse Kick, as demonstrated by Hidetaka Nishiyama in his book *Karate: The Art of Empty-Hand Fighting*, 1960



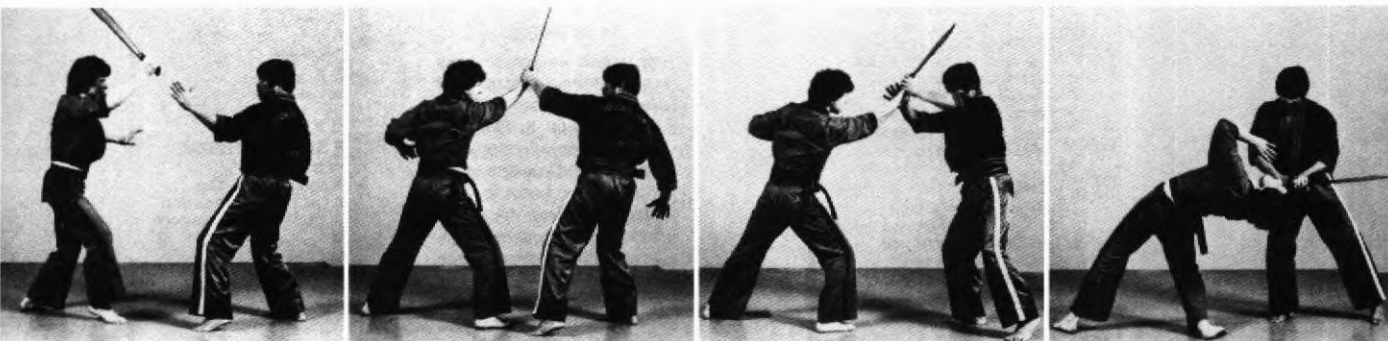
Hapkido: Inside Parry / Outward Wrist Lock, as demonstrated by the author in his book *Hapkido: Traditions, Philosophy, Technique*, 2000



Hwa Rang Do: Block / Outward Wrist Lock, as demonstrated by Michael Echanis in his book *Knife Self-Defense for Combat*, 1977



Aikido: A portion of Kote Gaeshi (Wrist Twist) against attack from behind, as demonstrated by Yoshimitsu Yamada in his book *Ultimate Aikido*, 1981

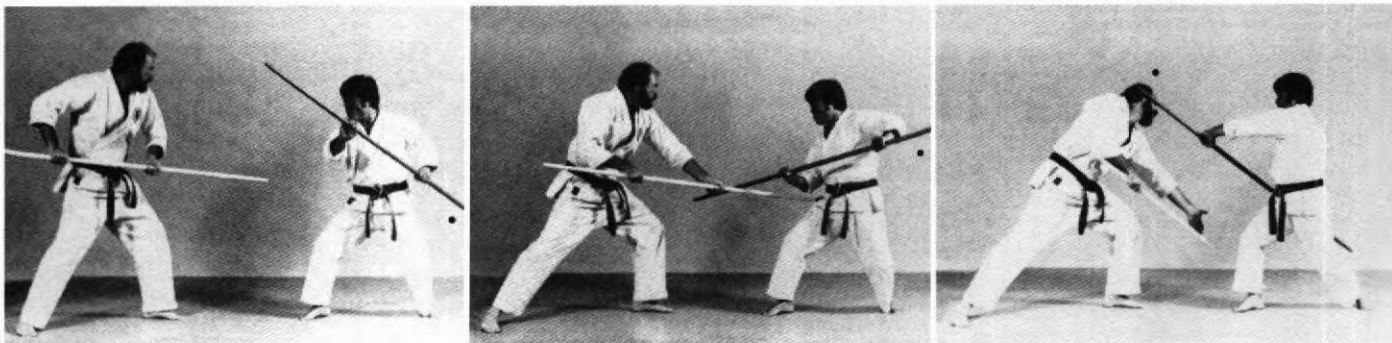


Arnis: Palm Block / Wrist Twist, as demonstrated by Remy Presas in his book *Modern Arnis: The Filipino Art of Stick Fighting*, 1983

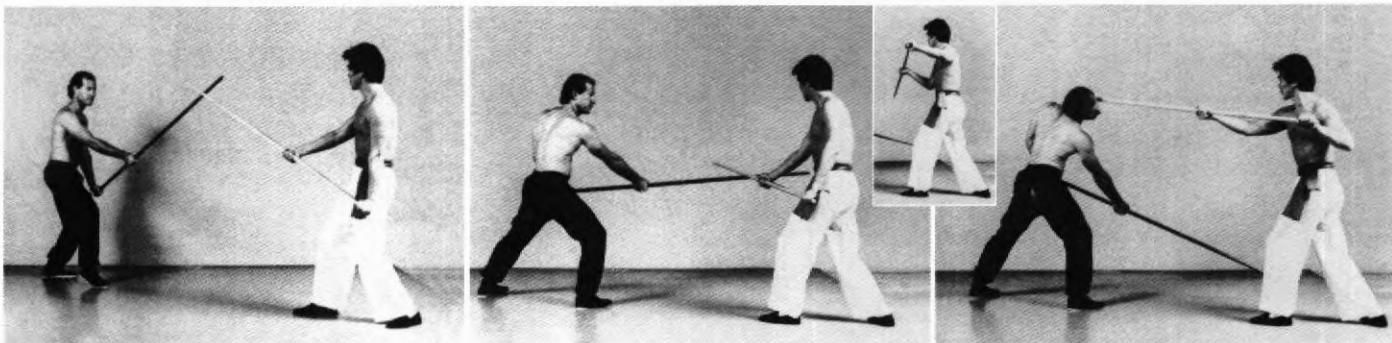
(•) A dot marks one end of staff so you can follow its rotation



Hapkido: Rising Block / Trap / Reverse Descending Strike, as demonstrated by the author in his book *Hapkido: Traditions, Philosophy, Technique*, 2000



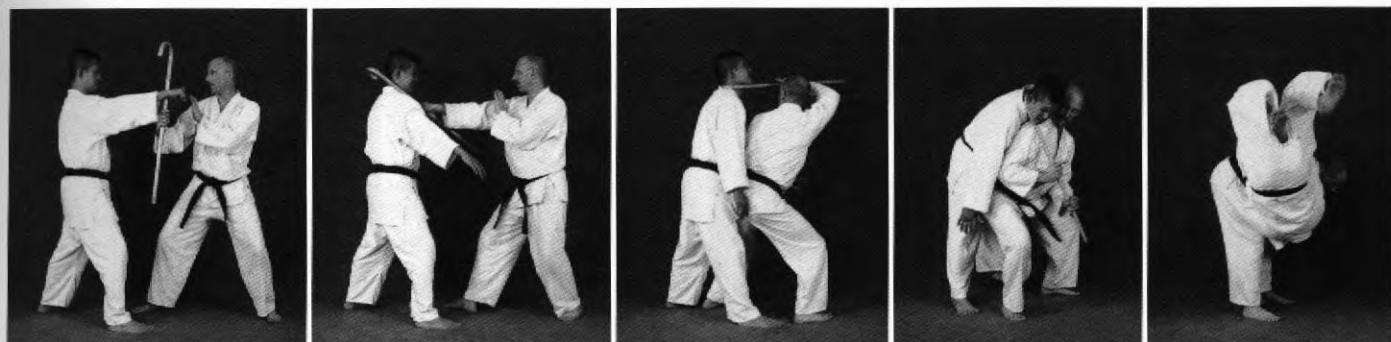
Karate: Outward-Downward Block / Reverse Side-Strike, as demonstrated by Fumio Demura in his book *Bo: Karate Weapon of Self-Defense*, 1976



Kung Fu: Downward Block / Swinging Strike, as demonstrated by William Cheung in his book *Kung Fu Dragon Pole*, 1986



Aikido: Naname Age Uchi (Parry, Diagonal Rising Strike), as demonstrated by Dave Lowry in his book *Jo: The Art of Japanese Short Staff*, 1987



Hapkido: *Inside Block / Neck-Hook Hip Throw, as demonstrated by the author in his book Hapkido: Traditions, Philosophy, Technique*



Hwa Rang Do: *High Block / Inside Circular Neck-Breaking Throw, as demonstrated by Hwa Rang Do founder Lee-Joo Bang in the book Basic Stick Fighting for Combat, 1978*

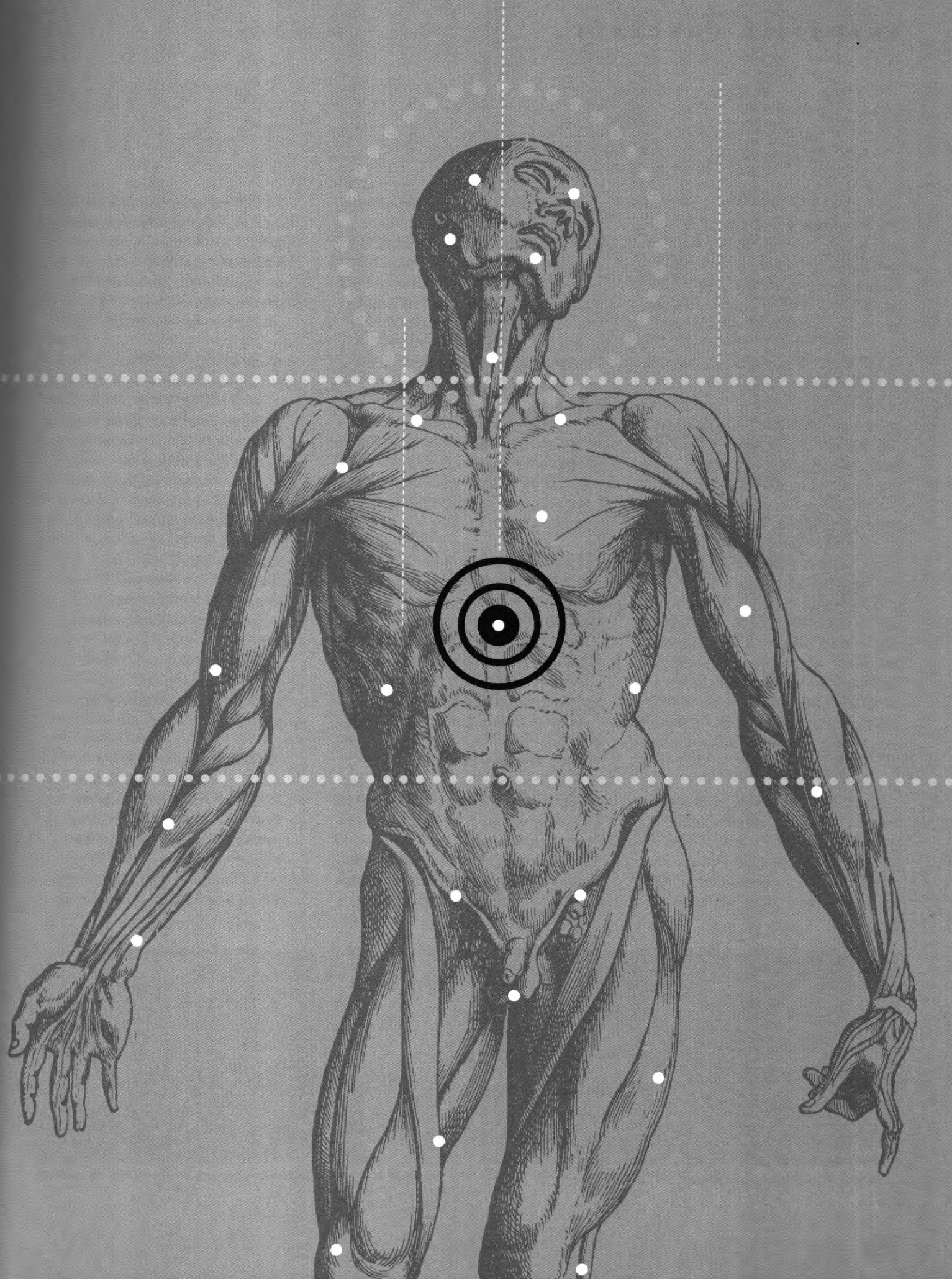


Kuk Sool Won: *Block and Hook to Knife-Arm / Choke Hold, as demonstrated by Kuk Sool Won founder In-Hyuk Suh in the book The Fighting Weapons of Korean Martial Arts, 1988*

When building a house, one begins with the foundation. If the foundation is strong, the building's structure will be able to withstand the trials of nature and time. If the foundation is weak, the entire structure will be undermined, and its life span more limited. Before learning and practicing specific weapons skills, it is important to first understand the basic principles that govern the execution of virtually all martial techniques. As outlined in the Overview chapter, this book assumes that the practitioner is already a skilled martial

FUNDAMENTALS

artist with a strong understanding of the core principles and techniques that define unarmed combat. That material has been previously covered in depth in five of the author's earlier books. Nevertheless, even skilled practitioners may occasionally need to refer to certain basic information in order to clarify techniques or terms found in this book. For the convenience of those readers, this chapter will provide a brief overview of important underlying energetic concepts, stances, footwork, and anatomical and pressure-point targets.



Ki

The word *Ki* (also written as *Qi*, *Chi*, or *Gi*) is essentially untranslatable, although it is often described as the "vital energy" or "life force" that permeates the universe, flowing through and animating all things. It has been the basis of Oriental medicine for thousands of years.

In martial arts, the combative use of *Ki* usually involves blending and harmonizing your own *Ki* (internal energy) with that of your opponent and the greater universe. This is done to assist the application of a technique, such as a strike, hold, throw, or escape. Although skillful technique does not require *Ki* manipulation to be highly effective, focusing *Ki* will increase a technique's efficiency. When fighting a highly skilled or overpowering opponent, harmonized *Ki* may be the difference between a technique that works and one that fails. In energy-oriented martial arts, such as Hapkido, Aikido, and Tai Chi Chuan, one's ability to strengthen and control *Ki* is developed through exercises and meditation. For serious practitioners trying to develop their *Ki*, a variety of factors must be in balance—diet, air quality, emotional state, sleep, sexual activity, and the level of stress in your life all affect the levels of *Ki* in your body.

Live-Hand

The term *Live-Hand* refers to specific hand formations which are used in the martial art Hapkido to increase the flow of *Ki* into the hands and arms, or a weapon. This increases strength and power when most needed, such as when applying a hold or weapon strike.

Live-Hand techniques involve visualization, breath control, and tensing of the fingers, hands, and arms. Concentration and focus are very important, as is practice. The use of a Live-Hand is typically characterized by extending one or more fingers and breathing out as a specific technique is applied.

As previously stated, the techniques in this book come from Hapkido; thus, one will notice the use of Live-Hands in many techniques. If you practice a martial art that does not use Live-Hands, merely ignore that portion of the technique. Live-Hands are not a crucial component of the techniques shown, but rather one of the useful additions that can create greater efficiency.

In recent years, the use of extended fingers in combat has fallen into disfavor among some practitioners due to their increased vulnerability to attack or damage. Today many stylists restrict Live-Hand use in fighting to wrist escapes, well-controlled breaking blocks, or holds in which the extra power is often needed and the fingers are well-protected from being grabbed or broken.

Typical Live-Hand Formations

The photographs shown below illustrate two typical Live-Hand formations. In the lower-left photographs, a basic Live-Hand is formed by spreading all five fingers very wide, with the thumb slightly bent. This hand formation expands and hardens the wrist and forearm, concentrating *Ki* in the hand and fingertips.

It is often used to apply wrist escapes, blocks, and energy-oriented strikes. In the lower-right photos, a Live-Hand is formed by closing the hand, with only the forefinger extended (in some instances, the thumb is also extended). This formation is often used when gripping a weapon, or an opponent's wrist or ankle.

Breath Control

Proper breathing when executing techniques is essential. Do not hold your breath. During training or combat, try to breathe deeply and rhythmically. This calms the mind, oxygenates the blood, and maximizes the flow of *Ki* throughout the body, encouraging peak performance. In most martial arts, you will exhale as a technique is applied or a strike is executed. This helps coordinate physical actions, increases physical strength, and channels *Ki* to the extremities; it is often referred to as *breath power* or *extending one's Ki*. Conceptually, three actions (breathing, physical action, and the flow of *Ki* from one's center to the limbs) become one coordinated, powerful response. When these actions are intimately linked to an opponent's energies and actions, technique becomes effortless.

The Energy-Shout

The distinct shout many martial artists emit when executing techniques is essentially breathing meditation converted to dynamic action. In Korean, this energy harmonizing shout is referred to as a *Kihap*. In the Japanese language it is called a *Kiai*. Most Chinese arts do not use an audible shout.



Live-Hand with five fingers spread (forearm blocks an inward knife-attack)



Live-Hand with forefinger extended (gripping short-stick and wrist to apply joint lock)



The word *Ki* is defined as the universal energy or dynamic force that animates all things. *Hap* or *Ai* is the root form for words which connote harmonizing, coming together, or coordinating. Thus the concept of *Kihap* or *Kiai* literally means to harmonize with the dynamic universal life force. The "energy-harmonizing shout" is a means, then, of coordinating our actions with the flow of energies and events of which we are part. All individual actions and events merge into a single flow. This is what is meant by "being at one with the universe."

The Dynamic Release of Energy

When you execute a strike, kick, hold, or throw, or block a strike, energy is released—typically as a rush of air from the lungs. This exhalation of air, coordinated with muscular tension in the body and throat, creates the deep, roaring growl of the true energy-shout. When you are first learning martial arts, the energy-shout will mostly be an artificial adornment, merely accompanying physical actions. However, if you train in an uninhibited way, focusing on the purpose of the shout, you will eventually develop a shout that is natural, spontaneous, and uninhibited. It will become a reflection of your dynamic emotional state, and an expression of the harmonized, total commitment of your body, mind, and spirit to the techniques you are executing. The true energy-shout is often characterized as a low, deep, harsh roar that emerges from the diaphragm, rather than the throat. It should be an expression of indomitable spirit, not fright.

The Silent Shout

The silent shout is not an audible shout, but rather a total commitment of body, mind, emotions, and spirit into the events of the moment. There is no thought of the outcome, only the now. You are completely in tune with your opponent's actions. The silent shout is considered to be the highest level of energy-harmonizing. If there is any sound at all, it might be characterized as a low humming "ohmm" sound, which is a reflection of your own breathing in unison with the events transpiring before you. Remember, the ultimate objective is not to make noise, but to develop a natural and effortless unification of body, mind, and spirit.

Leading and Blending

Leading refers to the act of directing your opponent into a strike, hold, or throw by using their own energy against them. This may involve redirecting a strike or charge, or creating an initially deceptive movement that causes your opponent to react by moving in a direction that assists the execution of your technique. Leading movements can be short or long depending on circumstances, and are often executed in the opposite direction in which you intend your opponent to move. For example, if you pull an opponent's arm toward your right, they will usually react by pulling to your left. This sets up specific techniques.

Blending refers to the act of uniting with your opponent's force. This reduces your chances of injury and increases the efficiency of your

techniques, by avoiding a direct confrontation with your opponent's forces. Blending can be thought of metaphorically, as occupying the calm space within a tornado, or joining with the force of the tornado by matching its speed and motion. This is accomplished by knowing when to give way and when to attack. Blending is particularly important when countering with holds or throws, or facing an overpowering opponent. In practical terms, leading and blending require good footwork, timing, speed, power, and versatility, as demonstrated in the photo sequence below.

Pressure Point Attacks

Some martial arts, such as Hapkido, make extensive use of pressure points (also called *acupoints*) to assist the application of techniques. These are the same points commonly used in Eastern medicine to heal the human body. Manipulating pressure points alters the body's energetic state by affecting *Ki*-flow and neurological functions. In martial arts, specific pressure points may be struck or pressed to cause pain; reduce physical strength; cause involuntary muscle responses; limit motor functions; cause loss of consciousness; or damage neurological, respiratory, or circulatory functions. In weapons techniques, pressure point attacks are mostly used to increase the efficiency of techniques, reduce an opponent's strength, and decrease the likelihood of injuries. In this book, pressure points are cited using their standard alphanumeric name (e.g., TW-11). Common points are shown later in this chapter.



Leading, blending, breath control, and complete harmony with an attacker's energy are demonstrated in a shoulder-throw against a sword attack

The stances you will use depend upon the techniques you are executing, the martial art you are practicing, personal preference, and a variety of other factors. It is not possible to cover all of the stances used when executing weapons techniques, as there are simply too many variables. Nonetheless, there are a few fundamental stances that are found in many practical or self-defense oriented martial arts. They are shown opposite. Generally speaking, it is better to think of stances as the links in a series of continuous movements, rather than as precisely defined foot placements. A rigid approach only limits your technique and your ability to adapt and improvise based on the constantly changing dynamics of combat. Most stances fall into two basic categories: relaxed stances and fighting stances.

Relaxed Stances

Relaxed stances resemble everyday standing or sitting postures. Since one never knows when they might be attacked, reacting and applying self-defense techniques from relaxed stances is an important skill for students to learn. Self-defense oriented martial arts, such as Hapkido, also make significant use of relaxed stances to camouflage tactics and lure an opponent into a false sense of security. Attacking and defending from relaxed stances is also useful when one wishes to maintain a low profile or minimize disturbance to people nearby.

Fighting Stances

In fighting stances, the position of the hands, feet, and body is optimized to facilitate execution of techniques. There are many types of fighting stances. The three shown at right are found in many practical martial arts. These stances can be used in a wide variety of circumstances to launch a broad range of armed or unarmed weapons techniques. The Front Stance tends to be more offensive, whereas the Back Stance usually favors defense. The Grappling Stance is often used to set up holds or throws, or to defend against them. Additional stances are covered in specific weapons chapters.

1. Relaxed Standing Stance

Weight Distribution: Equal between both feet. This basic ready stance is often used to disguise tactics and intent. Place your feet shoulder-width apart with the knees slightly bent. Hands are open and hanging loosely at side. The entire body should be relaxed, ready to quickly respond. Do not adopt any hand or foot positions that could be construed as a preparation to attack. Face is expressionless. This stance is also called a *Natural Stance*.



2. Relaxed Walking Stance

Weight Distribution: Constantly changing. This posture is actually a form of offensive movement as well as a stance. It is used to disguise tactics and intent while being constantly mobile. Adopt a normal walk with relaxed arms and legs swinging freely and naturally. The flowing continuous movement of the hands, arms, and feet make this an excellent posture for launching disguised strikes, blocks, holds, or throws.



Foot diagrams refer to top photograph and indicate preferred foot positions. However, these positions are always modified based on end-use requirements. Black dot indicates center of gravity based on weight distribution given in the text. When a range is given, a black and a white dot indicate the range.

3. Front Stance

Weight Distribution: 50–60% front foot.
This basic fighting stance is highly mobile, and good for fast footwork and entering. It is excellent for launching strikes, holds, or throws, but lacks stability if you are grappling at close range. Position the feet about 1 to 1.5 times your shoulder-width apart. The back foot may be flat or raised on the ball. This stance is commonly seen in a variety of styles, from boxing to Olympic Taekwondo.



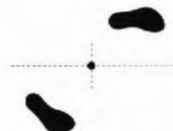
4. Back Stance

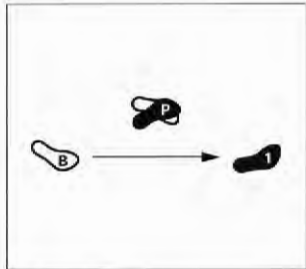
Weight Distribution: 50–75% back foot.
This basic defensive stance possesses a good balance between stability and mobility. More weight on the back foot favors defense and use of the front leg for countering and blocking. Position the feet about 1.5 times your shoulder-width, with both legs bent. The front foot points straight forward, the rear foot points sideways (slightly less than 90°), the heels align. Shoulders and hips align with feet.



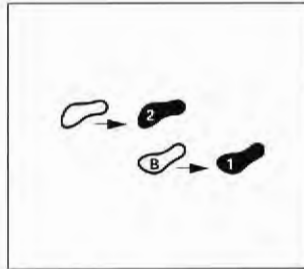
5. Grappling Stance

Weight Distribution: Equal between both feet.
This basic defensive stance is used when grappling, holding, or throwing. It can be very stable, but possesses low mobility. Position the feet about 1.5 times your shoulder-width, with the toes turned outward and legs equally bent. Align the shoulders and hips with the feet. Center of gravity and hip placement are fairly low, to prevent being unbalanced or thrown by a grappling opponent.

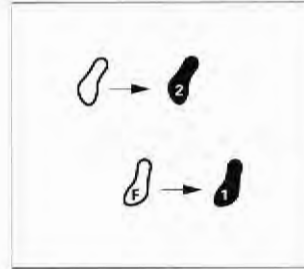




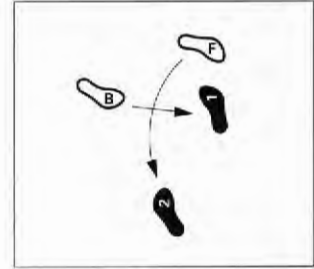
1. Forward Step



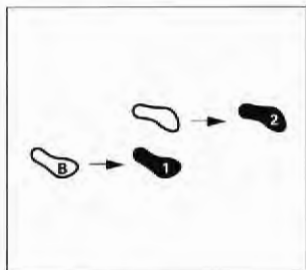
6. Back Shuffle



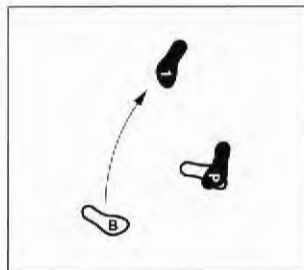
11. Side Slide (front left)



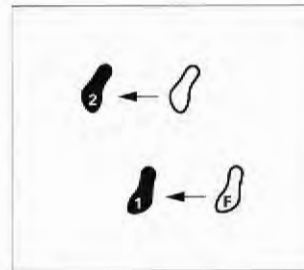
16. Side Slide-Step (right)



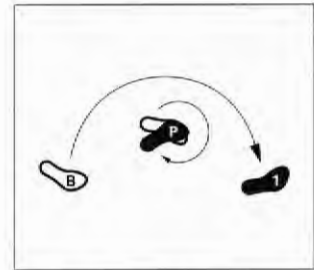
2. Forward Slide



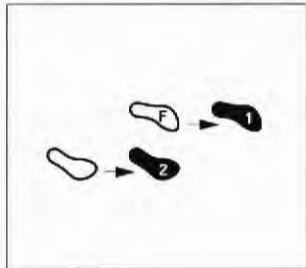
7. Side Step-Front Pivot (left)



12. Side Slide (front right)



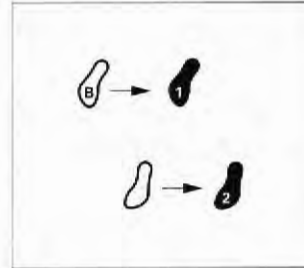
17. Turn Step (face forward)



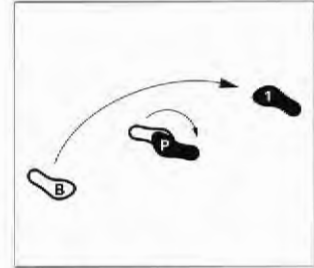
3. Forward Shuffle



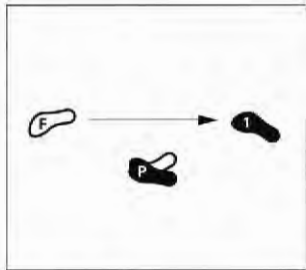
8. Side Step-Front Pivot (right)



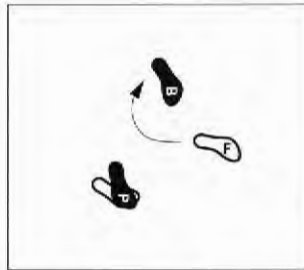
13. Side Slide (back left)



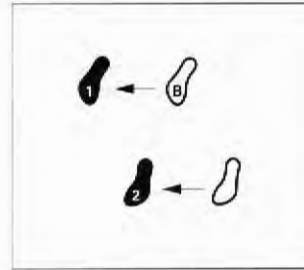
18. Turn Step (face behind)



4. Back Step



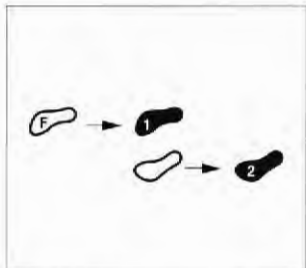
9. Side Step-Back Pivot (left)



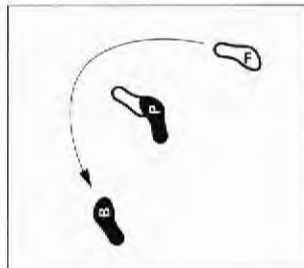
14. Side Slide (back right)



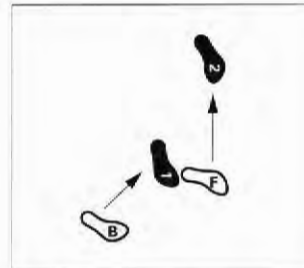
19. Pivot (face side)



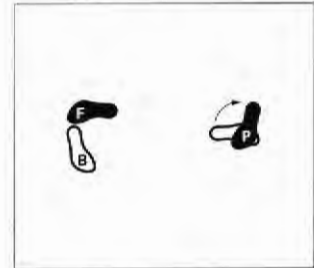
5. Back Slide



10. Side Step-Back Pivot (right)



15. Side Slide-Step (left)

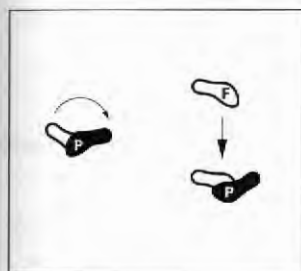


20. Pivot (face behind)

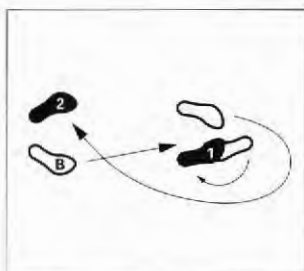
Most standing footwork derives from about 40 basic steps, which are combined or altered to create innumerable possibilities. During grappling, short steps with wider stances are usually preferred for stability and to prevent an opponent from sweeping your feet or throwing you. Steps 31–40 are variations modified for close-range grappling.

Outlined feet indicate start position; *solid* feet indicate ending. Numbers indicate which foot moves first.

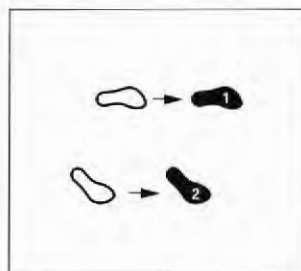
P Pivot
B Back Foot
F Front Foot
1, 2 Sequence



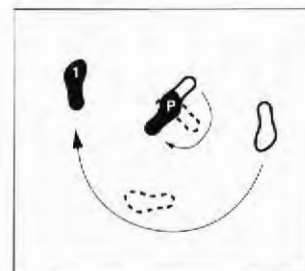
21. Step-Pivot (front step)



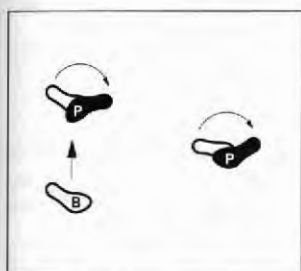
26. Rear Draw Turning



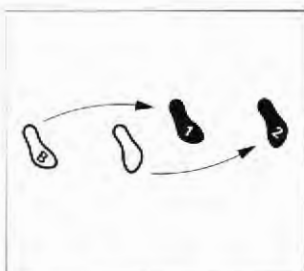
31. Forward Shuffle



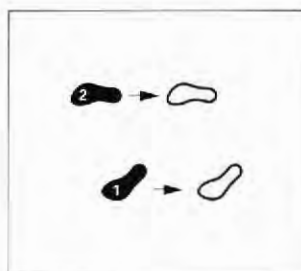
36. Forward Turn (right pivot)



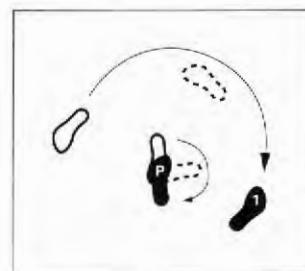
22. Step-Pivot (back step)



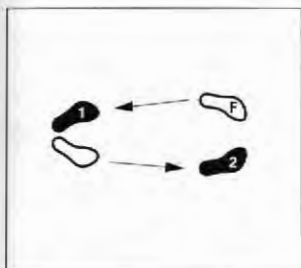
27. Cross Step Behind



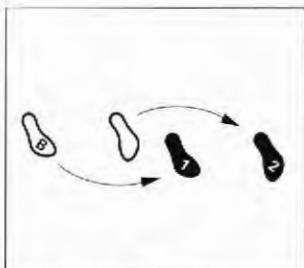
32. Back Shuffle



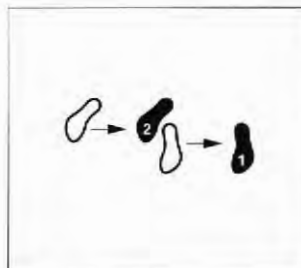
37. Back Turn (left pivot)



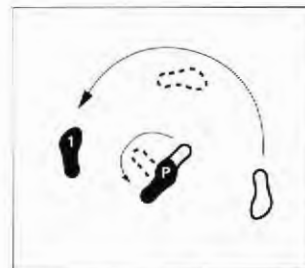
23. Front Draw



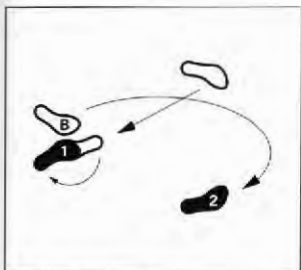
28. Cross Step Front



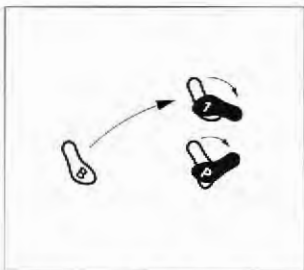
33. Side Shuffle



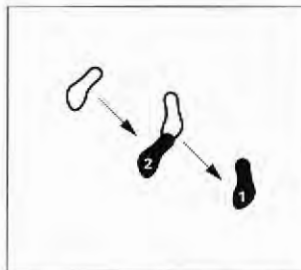
38. Back Turn (right pivot)



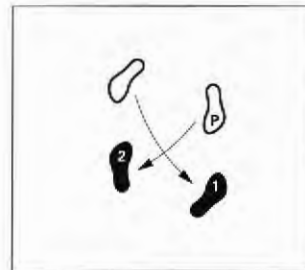
24. Front Draw Turning



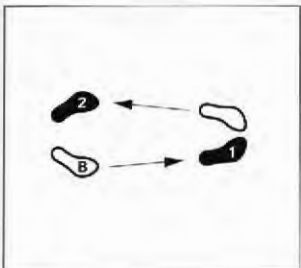
29. Cross Step Behind-Pivot



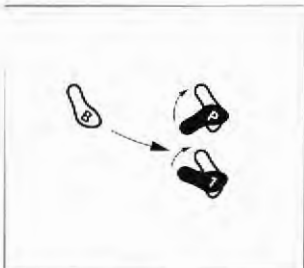
34. Diagonal Shuffle



39. Two Step Turn (left)



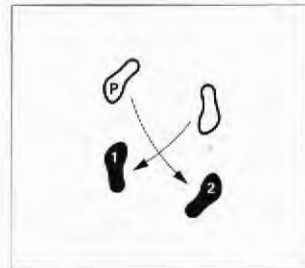
25. Rear Draw



30. Cross Step Front-Pivot



35. Forward Turn (left pivot)



40. Two Step Turn (right)

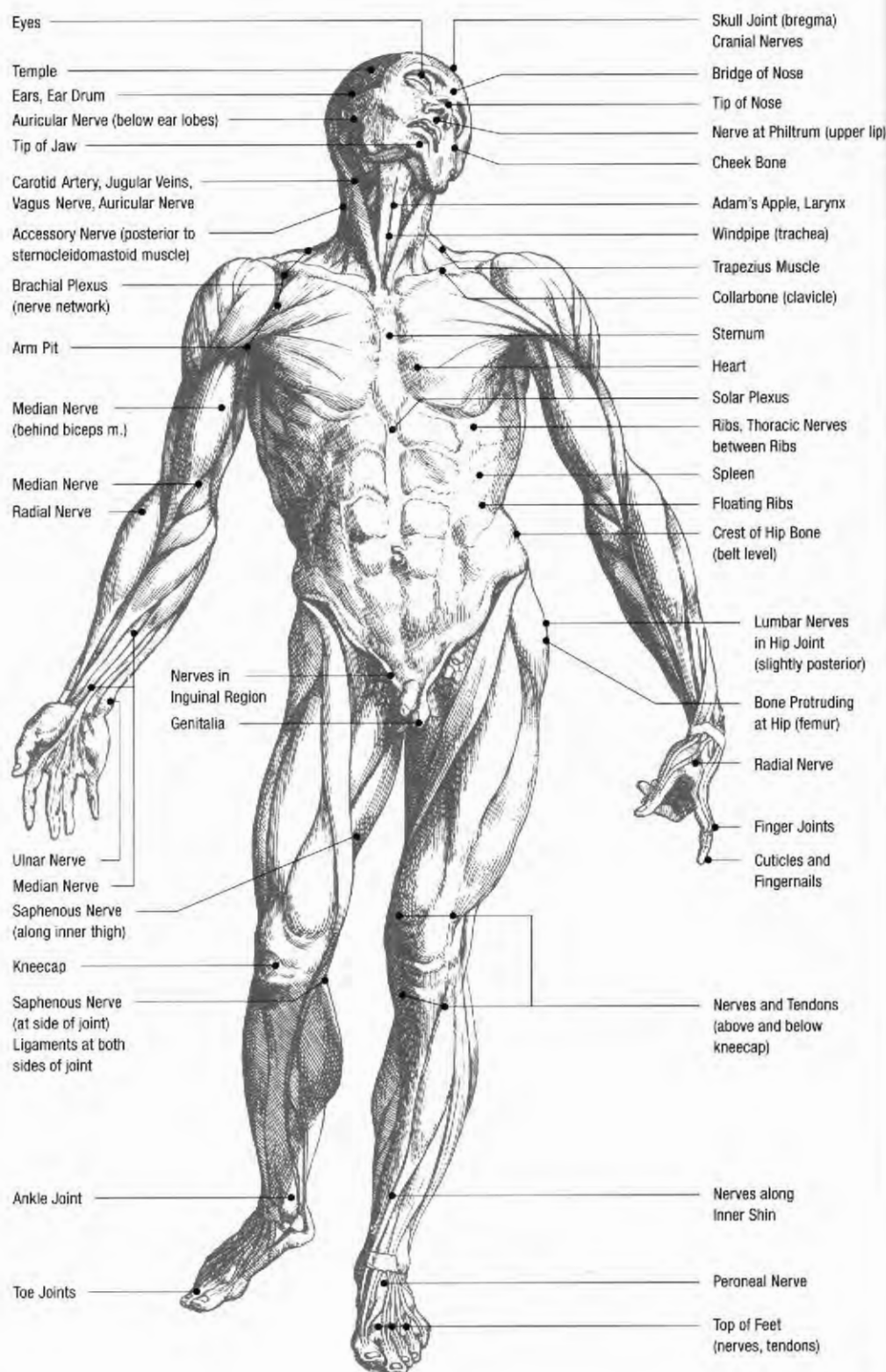
The following drawings identify vital targets using basic Western medical terminology. Damage to these anatomically weak points can cause trauma to blood vessels, nerves, bones, tissue, and joints—either separately or in unison. For example, striking the temple may cause a concussion, a skull fracture, neck trauma (whiplash), damage to cranial nerves, arteries, and veins; all of the above; or none of the above (the strike could be ineffective). The level of damage depends on force, angle of attack, method of attack (strike, press, hold), hitting surface (fist, weapon), and individual anatomy (bone mass, musculature, etc.).

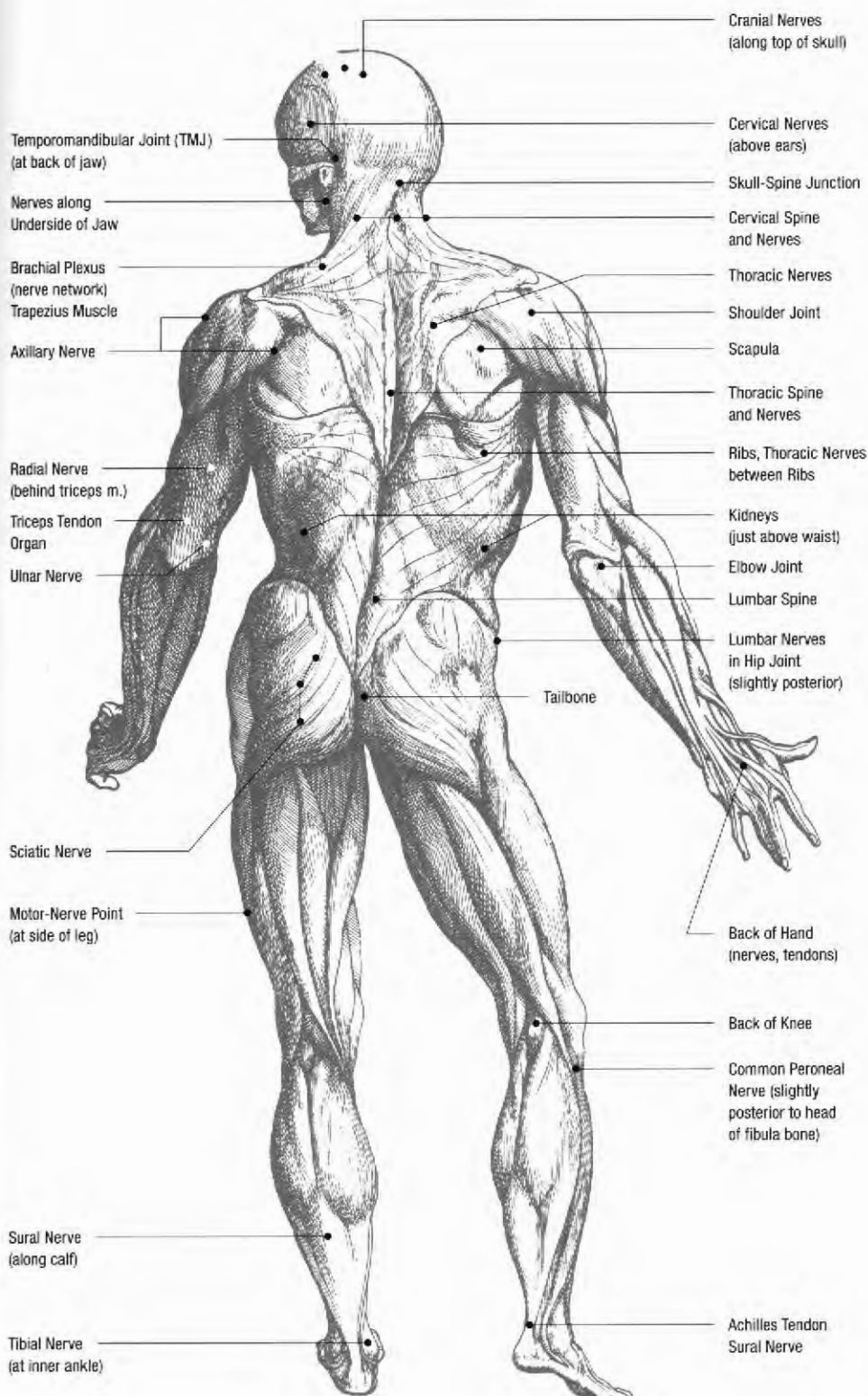
Head Area

The head, face, and lower edge of the jaw contain numerous *cranial nerves*, well exposed to strikes or pressing holds. Head blows may cause a concussion by slamming the brain against the skull cavity (usually 180° opposite of the blow). This causes bleeding into the brain and death of brain cells, resulting in dizziness, confusion, loss of consciousness, or even death. Blows to the chin are usually directed sideways, causing the TMJ (joint) to fracture at the back of the mandible, especially when the jaw is open. The nose is structurally weakest when struck from the side, although a frontal blow is also painful. Eye strikes can result in corneal abrasion, globe rupture, retinal detachment, or fracture of the socket surrounding the eye.

Neck Area

Major blood vessels (carotid, jugular) and nerves (cervical, supraclavicular, auricular, vagus, accessory) are all concentrated close to the sternocleidomastoid muscle, at the side of the neck. Chokes applied at this point restrict blood flow to the brain, resulting in loss of consciousness or death. Blows to the back or side of the neck can dislocate cervical vertebrae or damage nerve roots, impairing motor functions. Accessory nerve damage paralyzes sternocleidomastoid and trapezius muscles, resulting in an inability to raise the shoulder or turn the head. Violently twisting the head can fracture vertebrae, causing paralysis or death. A blow to the larynx, trachea, or surrounding cartilage can cause obstruction of the airway and bleeding into the throat—injuries which can be fatal.





Shoulder Area

The *brachial plexus* is a network of cervical and thoracic nerves (median, radial, ulnar, axillary, musculocutaneous) which form the entire nerve supply for the upper extremities and shoulder area. The nerves lie close together as they pass from the top of the shoulder, behind the collarbone, along the front of the joint, and down to the armpit, where they branch into the arm. They are very vulnerable to blows or pressure directed to the areas indicated. The collarbone is easily fractured or separated by a direct blow or fall. Joint-lock holds or a throw can dislocate the shoulder. Blows to the back of the shoulder or scapula can damage a variety of thoracic nerves (especially if near the spine).

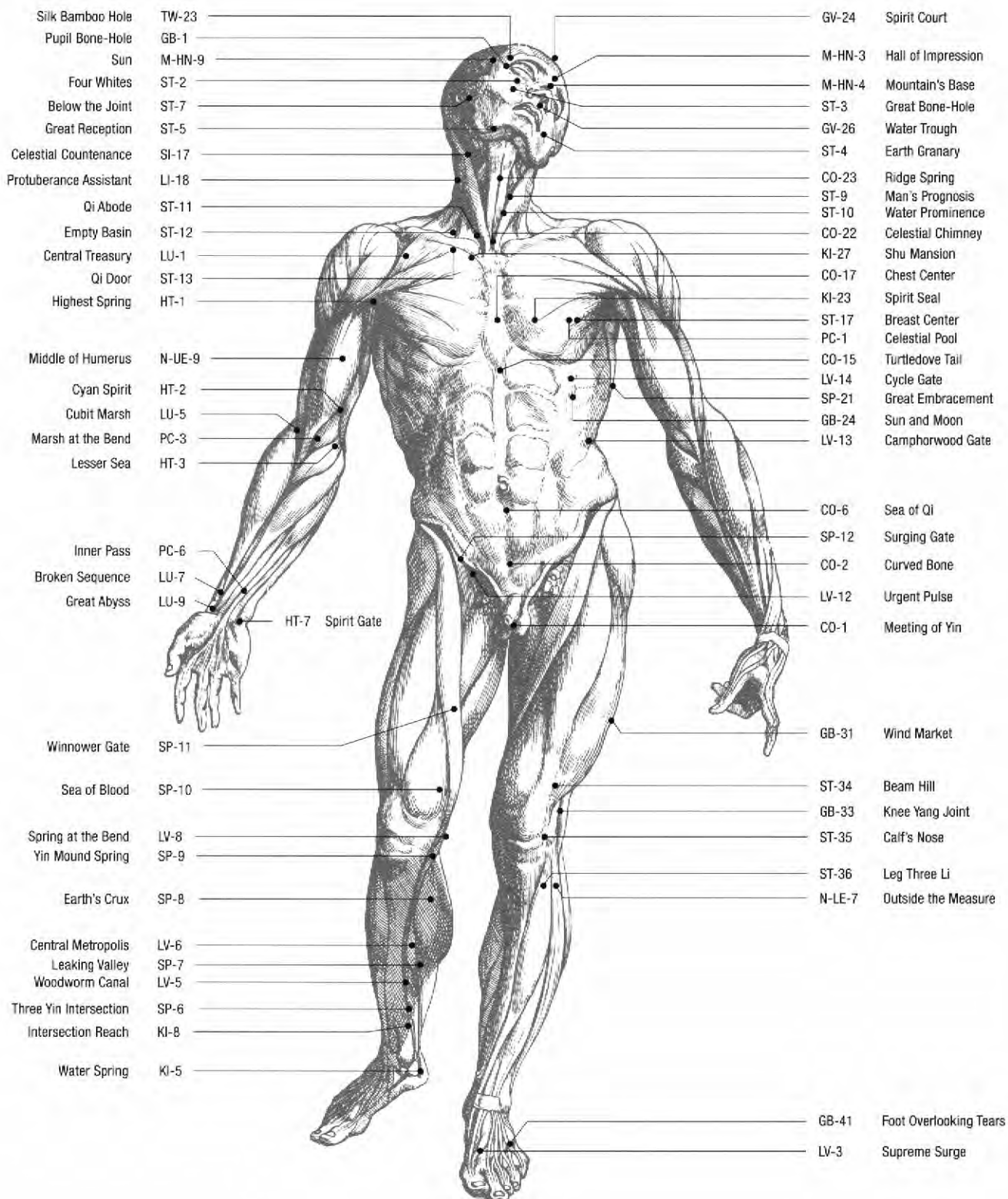
Trunk Area

The *solar plexus* is a nerve network found below the sternum. Blows to the solar plexus may fracture cartilage projecting from the sternum, or hinder breathing by causing transient paralysis of the diaphragm. Blows to the sternum can cause trauma to the heart. Ribs are easily fractured by forceful blows (especially floating ribs) and may puncture the lungs or other organs. Lateral or posterior blows can rupture the spleen, while posterior blows to the kidneys can cause bruising or internal bleeding. Strikes to the genitalia are painful, but not always debilitating. Strikes to the spinal column can damage nerves, resulting in transient or permanent paralysis.

Arm and Leg Areas

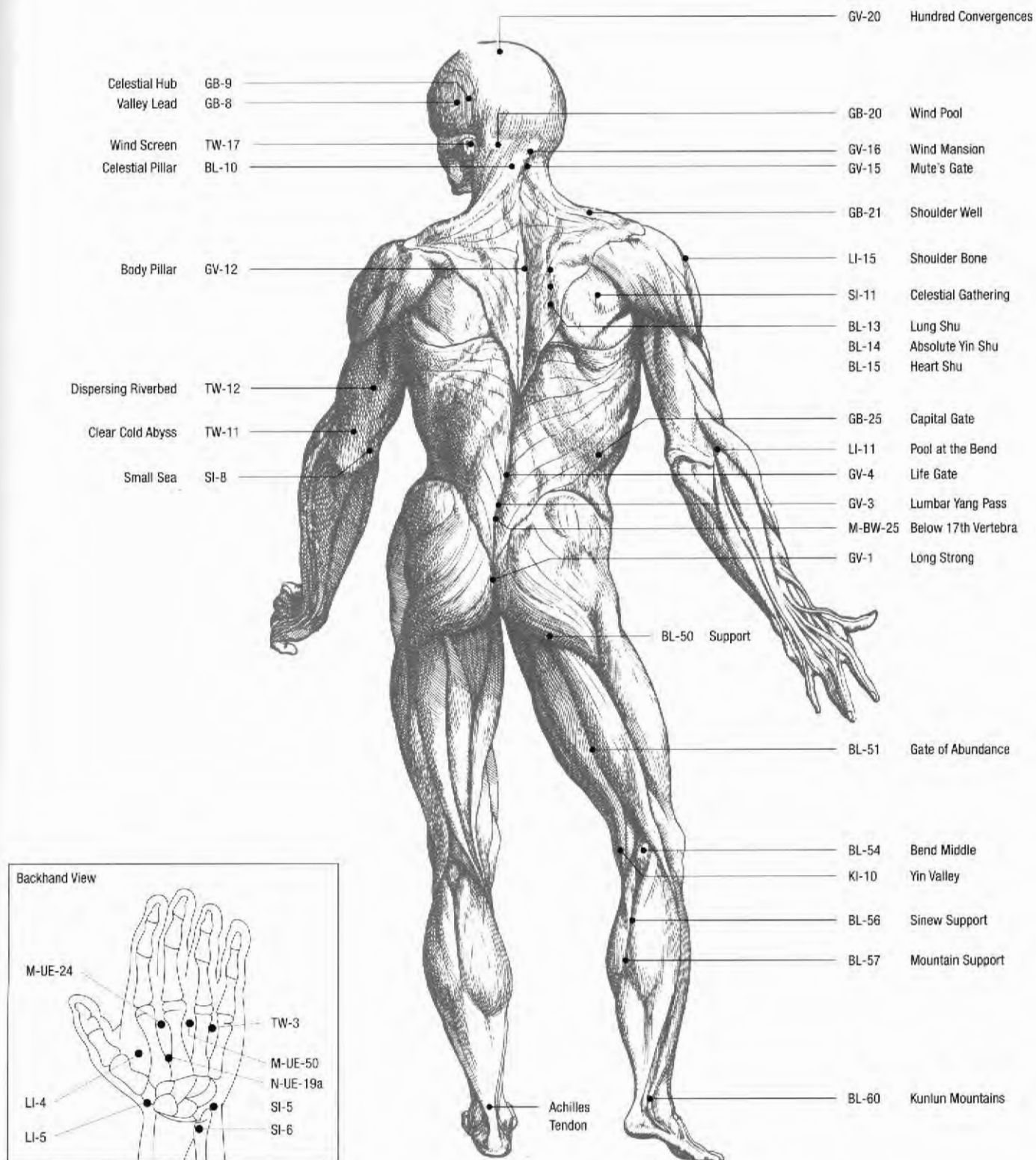
The elbow, wrist, and finger joints are frequently attacked with strikes or twisting holds due to their inherent weakness and susceptibility to pain. Nerve attacks to hands, fingernails, and elbows are usually used to release a hold, dislodge a weapon, distract, or assist applying a hold. The knee is likely the most vulnerable target on the legs. It is structurally quite weak and can be attacked from any direction. If you damage your opponent's knee(s), you normally take away that person's ability to maneuver or continue the fight. The kneecap almost always dislocates laterally, so horizontal or 45° angular blows are most efficient. Strikes or pressing attacks to leg nerves will usually weaken the leg or cause a fall. Small fragile foot bones are easily damaged by strikes.

PRESSURE POINT TARGETS



The illustrations on these pages show 106 common pressure point targets used in the martial arts. Each point is labeled using both its alphanumeric symbol, and the English translation of the point's Chinese name. Korean and Japanese translations are usually similar, if not identical. *Essential Anatomy for Healing and Martial Arts*, by the same author, contains

additional pressure point targets and charts, a detailed discussion of pressure point fighting principles, a comprehensive presentation of human anatomy in both Eastern and Western medical systems, and an index listing the precise anatomical location of more than 380 pressure points, cross-referenced to nerves, blood vessels, and other anatomical landmarks.



PRESSURE POINT LOCATIONS

BL-10	Back of neck, 1.3 units lateral to GV-15, within hairline, on lateral side of trapezius muscle.
BL-13	Upper back, 1.5 units lateral to lower edge of spinous process of 3rd thoracic vertebra.
BL-14	Upper back, 1.5 units lateral to lower edge of spinous process of 4th thoracic vertebra.
BL-15	Upper back, 1.5 units lateral to lower edge of spinous process of 5th thoracic vertebra.
BL-50	Buttock, at midpoint of crease below buttock (transverse gluteal crease).
BL-51	Back of thigh, 6 units below BL-50 on line joining BL-50 to BL-54.
BL-54	Back of knee, midpoint of transverse crease, between biceps + semitendinosus m. tendons.
BL-56	Lower leg, 3 units above BL-57, in center of belly of gastrocnemius m. (calf).
BL-57	Lower leg, directly below belly of gastrocnemius muscle, on line joining BL-54 to Achilles tendon.
BL-60	Outer ankle, recess halfway between protruding bone at ankle and Achilles tendon, level with tip.
CO-1	In center of perineum, between anus and genitals.
CO-2	Front midline, directly above pubic bone (pubic symphysis), 5 units below navel, (pulse is felt).
CO-6	Front midline of abdomen, 1.5 units below navel.
CO-15	Front midline, 7 units above navel, usually below xiphoid process (depends on length of cartilage).
CO-17	Front midline of chest, level with 4th intercostal space, level and between nipples, on sternum.
CO-22	Front midline, at center of sternal notch (top edge of sternum, at base of throat).
CO-23	Front midline of throat, above Adam's apple, in recess at upper edge of hyoid bone.
GB-1	About 0.5 unit lateral to outer corner of eye, in recess on lateral side of orbit (bony eye socket).
GB-8	Side of head, above apex of ear, in recess 1.5 units within hairline (point is felt when biting).
GB-9	Side of head, above and behind ear, 2 units within hairline, about 0.5 unit behind GB-8.
GB-20	Back of neck, below occipital bone, in recess between sternocleidomastoid m. and trapezius m.
GB-21	Shoulder, halfway between C7 vertebra and protruding bone at top of shoulder (acromion).
GB-24	Below nipple, between cartilage of 7th+8th ribs, one rib space below and slightly lateral to LV-14.

GB-25	Side of trunk, at lower edge of floating end of 12th rib (lowest rib).
GB-31	Outer thigh, 7 units above kneecap, at end of middle finger when arm hangs at side.
GB-33	Outer thigh, in recess above bony knob of femur, between bone and biceps femoris tendon.*
GB-41	Top of foot, in recess distal and between junction of 4th and 5th metatarsal bones.
GV-1	Halfway between tip of tailbone (coccyx) and anus.
GV-3	Midline of back, below spinous process of 4th lumbar vertebra.
GV-4	Midline of back, below spinous process of 2nd lumbar vertebra.
GV-12	Midline of back, below spinous process of 3rd thoracic vertebra.
GV-15	Back midline of neck, in recess 0.5 unit below GV-16, 0.5 unit within hairline.
GV-16	Midline of neck, in recess below ext. occipital protuberance, at trapezius muscle attachments.
GV-20	Midline of head, 7 units above rear hairline, on midpoint of line joining earlobes and ear apexes.
GV-24	Midline, on top of head, 0.5 unit within front hairline.
GV-26	Front midline, in center of groove below nose (philtrum), slightly above midpoint.
HT-1	With arm raised, in center of axilla (armpit), on medial side of axillary artery.
HT-2	3 units above medial end of elbow crease and HT-3, in groove medial to biceps muscle.
HT-3	With elbow bent, at medial end of elbow crease, in recess anterior to protruding bone at elbow.
HT-7	On transverse wrist crease, in recess between ulna and pisiform bones, radial side of tendon.
KI-5	Inner heel, in recess above and in front of bulge in heel bone, 1 unit below level of ankle.
KI-8	Inner lower leg, 2 units above level of protruding bone at ankle, posterior to medial edge of tibia.
KI-10	Medial side of back of knee, between semitendinosus + semimembranosus tendons, level BL-54.
KI-23	Chest, in 4th intercostal space (between ribs), 2 units lateral to body midline, level with nipple.
KI-27	Chest, in recess at lower edge of medial head of clavicle, 2 units lateral to body midline.
LI-4	Center of muscle between 1st + 2nd metacarpals on back of hand (web of thumb), slightly to 2nd.

LI-5	Radial side of wrist, in recess between extensor muscle tendons at base of thumb.
LI-11	In recess at lateral end of elbow crease, midway between LU-5 and protruding humerus bone.
LI-15	With arm raised, in a recess at edge of shoulder joint, slightly forward to middle of deltoid muscle.
LI-18	Side of neck, level with Adam's apple tip, directly below ear, on rear part of sternocleidomastoid m.
LU-1	Chest, 1 unit below lateral end of clavicle, in first intercostal space, 6 units lateral midline (pulse).
LU-5	Crease of elbow, at radial side of biceps tendon, at origin of brachioradialis muscle.
LU-7	Thumb-side of forearm, in crevice at lateral edge of radius bone, 1.5 units above wrist crease.
LU-9	Wrist at transverse crease, in recess on radial side of radial artery, where pulse is felt.
LV-3	Top of foot, in recess distal and between junction of 1st and 2nd metatarsal bones (above web).
LV-5	5 units above tip of protruding bone at inner ankle, between posterior edge of tibia and calf m.
LV-6	Inner ankle, 7 units above tip of protruding bone at inner ankle, on posterior edge of tibia.
LV-8	Inner knee joint. When bent, point is at medial end of crease, above tendons attaching at joint.
LV-12	Inguinal groove, 2.5 units lateral to midline, lateral to pubic symphysis, 5 units below navel.
LV-13	Trunk, below free end of 11th floating rib, 2 units above level of navel, 6 units lateral to midline.
LV-14	Chest, near medial end of 6th intercostal space (between ribs), 2 ribs below nipple.
M-BW-25	Back midline, 1 vertebra below GV-3, at lumbrosacral joint (5th lumbar and 1st sacral vertebrae).
M-HN-3	Front midline, in recess halfway between medial ends of eyebrows (glabella), also called GV-24.5.
M-HN-4	Front midline, lowest point on bridge of nose, halfway between inner canthi of left + right eyes.
M-HN-9	Temple, in recess 1 unit posterior to the midpoint between outer canthus of eye and tip of eyebrow.
M-UE-24	Back of hand, between 2nd and 3rd metacarpal bones, 0.5 unit proximal to base joints of fingers.
M-UE-50	Back of hand, between 3rd and 4th metacarpal bones, 0.5 unit proximal to base joints of fingers.
N-LE-7	Outer lower leg below knee, 1 unit lateral to ST-36.
N-UE-9	Front upper arm, in center of biceps brachii muscle, 4.5 units below axillary (armpit) fold.

N-UE-19a	Back of hand, at forked recess where 2nd and 3rd metacarpal bones merge.
PC-1	Chest, 1 unit lateral to nipple, in 4th intercostal space.
PC-3	Inner elbow, on transverse crease, slightly medial to tendon of biceps brachii muscle.
PC-6	Forearm, 2 units above wrist crease, between tendons of long palmar m. and radial flexor m.
SI-5	Ulnar side of wrist, in recess between ulna bone and triquetral bone (wrist joint).
SI-6	With palm facing chest, 0.5 unit proximal wrist, in bony recess on radial side of head of ulna bone.
SI-8	In recess on flat spot between elbow point (ulna) and medial bony knob of humerus (arm flexed).
SI-11	Flat part of scapula, halfway between left + right edges, 1/3 the distance between ridge and base.
SI-17	Directly behind corner of jaw (angle of mandible), recess at anterior edge of sternocleidomastoid m.
SP-6	3 units above protruding bone at inner ankle, on rear (posterior) edge of tibia.
SP-7	6 units above protruding bone at inner ankle, 3 units above SP-6.
SP-8	3 units below protruding tibia bone at inner knee, on line joining SP-9 and protruding anklebone.

SP-9	In recess below protruding tibia at inner knee, between rear edge of tibia and gastrocnemius m.
SP-10	Thigh, 2 units above top medial edge of kneecap, on medial edge of vastus medialis m. (on bulge).
SP-11	Thigh, 6 units above SP-10, at medial side of sartorius m., between SP-10 + 12 (pulse is felt).
SP-12	In inguinal crease, lateral side of femoral artery, 3.5 units lateral to CO-2, where pulse is felt.
SP-21	Trunk, on midaxillary line, 6 units below armpit, halfway between armpit and free end of 11th rib.
ST-2	In a recess on top edge of cheekbone, aligned with eye pupil.
ST-3	Directly below eye pupil and ST-2, level with lower edge of nostril.
ST-4	Slightly lateral to corner of mouth, directly below ST-3, a faint pulse is felt close below.
ST-5	In a groove-like recess along bottom of jaw bone, on front edge of masseter muscle (pulse is felt).
ST-7	In front of ear, in recess at lower edge of zygomatic arch, forward of jaw joint.
ST-9	Side of neck, level with Adam's apple tip, at front edge of sternocleidomastoid m., along carotid a.
ST-10	On front edge of sternocleidomastoid muscle, halfway between ST-9 and ST-11.

ST-11	Front base of neck, in recess between two heads of sternocleidomastoid m., at end of clavicle.
ST-12	In a recess at top edge of middle of clavicle, aligned with nipple, 4 units lateral to midline.
ST-13	In a recess at lower edge of middle of clavicle, above and aligned with nipple.
ST-17	Chest, in center of nipple. This acupoint is often used as a landmark to locate other acupoints.
ST-34	Thigh, 2 units above top lateral edge of kneecap, between rectus femoris and vastus lateralis m.
ST-35	In a recess below kneecap, lateral to patellar ligament when knee is bent.
ST-36	Lower leg, 3 units below ST-35, about 1 unit lateral to crest of tibia bone (shinbone).
TW-3	Back of hand, between 4th and 5th metacarpal bones, in recess proximal base joints of fingers.
TW-11	Back of upper arm, 2 units above point of elbow, on triceps brachii tendon.
TW-12	Back of upper arm, at end of lateral head of triceps brachii muscle.
TW-17	In recess behind ear lobe, between mastoid process (on skull) and jawbone (mandible).
TW-23	Side of head, in recess at lateral end of eyebrow.

Locating Pressure Points

Pressure points (also called *acupoints*) are usually located in depressions at bones, joints, and muscles. The area affecting each point is usually the size of a dime, but can be as small as a pin head. Some points are easy to locate by simply probing around, since they are very sensitive to pressure. Others are well hidden and require very precise targeting. The angle of attack is often critical. Feel for a slight depression or hollow at each point. This might be a perceived as a slight depression in the bone, or a small space between muscle fibers, tendons, and muscles.

Location Methods

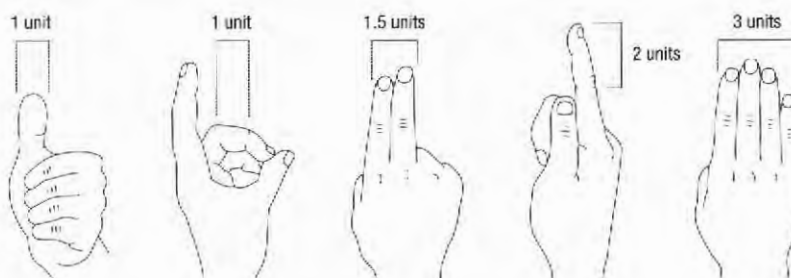
In ancient China, a system using body landmarks and a relative unit of measurement called a *cun*, assisted practitioners in locating points. This system is still in use today. A *cun* (also called a body inch, unit, or finger unit) varies in length based on the proportion and size of the individual being measured. The length or width of different parts of the fingers are used to make rough estimates of point locations, as shown at right.

Terms Used in This Reference

When describing the locations of pressure points on the human body, it is necessary to use precise anatomical terms to avoid confusion. For example, "above the wrist joint" can refer to either side of the wrist, depending on how the arm is oriented (raised, lowered); whereas, "proximal" is precise, regardless of orientation.

Superior:	Toward the head or upper part of a structure.
Inferior:	Away from head, or toward lower part of a structure.
Anterior:	Nearer to, or at the front of body.
Posterior:	Nearer to, or at the back of body.
Medial:	Nearer to the midline of body, or a structure.
Lateral:	Farther from the midline of body, or a structure.
Proximal:	Nearer to the attachment of an extremity, to trunk or a structure.
Distal:	Farther from the attachment of an extremity, to trunk or a structure.
Superficial:	Toward or on the surface of body.
Deep:	Away from the surface of body.
Unit:	Relative unit of measurement based on use of the fingers.

Abbreviations: (m.) muscle, (n.) nerve, (a.) artery, (v.) vein



There are many different systems of knife fighting, which are characterized by differing philosophies that determine preferred techniques, appropriate use of force, and the circumstances and manner in which techniques should be executed. Needless to say, a comparison of these different systems often yields numerous contradictions. The knife techniques shown in this chapter, and the martial philosophy behind them, stem primarily from the author's experiences in the martial art of Hapkido. Consequently, most offensive knife techniques

KNIFE TECHNIQUES

are humane in nature, and focus on ending a confrontation without seriously injuring or maiming your opponent. Most defenses against knife attacks consist of strikes, holds, or throws that can be applied with varying levels of force, based on what is appropriate and justifiable. This chapter begins with an overview of basic concepts and principles, followed by offensive use of the knife, then unarmed defenses against basic types of knife attacks. The material reflects a mainstream approach, adaptable to a broad range of martial styles.



Overview

The knife techniques in this book consist primarily of unarmed defenses against knife attacks, and secondarily, offensive use of the knife for self-defense purposes. Most of the offensive knife techniques shown are meant to be applied in a humane manner that focuses on ending a confrontation without seriously injuring or maiming your opponent. Therefore, light slashing to the limbs is emphasized; deep stabs to body cavities are discouraged. Lethal strikes and knife-throwing arts are not covered in this text, as their use is confined to military applications.

Currently, most martial arts schools that teach knife skills focus almost entirely on unarmed defenses against a knife. Most masters do not teach offensive knife techniques, since they do not wish to see these deadly skills abused. The author of this book agrees. Nonetheless, it is important to study basic offensive uses of the knife, so that we are better able to defend ourselves from attack. Understanding basic knife attacks enables us to: evaluate our opponent's level of skill; determine the types of attacks that are possible; avoid an

opponent's cutting-counters as we grip their arm; and wield a knife for our own defense, especially if we gain control of an attacker's weapon during the course of combat.

Types of Knives

There are many different types of knives, any of which can be used to inflict deadly injuries. Kitchen knives, folding knives, switch blades, hunting knives, short combat knives, throwing knives, machetes, and razors are all capable of producing serious injury, particularly in the hands of a skilled fighter. Most knives are manufactured for either general use or specific applications. For example: a switch blade is designed for concealment, a star is used for throwing, a pen knife is used for general non-combat tasks, and a K-bar is used for a variety of combat and military needs. The combat knife in widest use today is probably the K-bar design (shown below). It is relatively cheap, does not slip when gripped, throws reasonably well, and has been proven in military use for decades. Most knife systems use various types of short combat knives, although soft rubber knives are used during training to prevent injuries.

Common Grips

Grip choice is determined by the type of knife to be held, intended strikes, and individual preferences. Analyzing your opponent's grip can tell you what type of knife strikes are possible, and whether you are dealing with a skilled opponent. The following grips are commonly used to hold a knife. Many others also exist. All have specific advantages and limitations. Most stylists use variations of the Natural Grip or Reverse Grip.

Natural Grip

Lay the handle diagonally across your palm, with the butt against the meaty edge of the palm. This grip is preferred by many practitioners, and favors straight thrusts, inside circular thrusts, and slashing or pressing cuts.

Sabre Grip

This is similar to a *Natural Grip*, except the thumb is braced against the guard. This supports the knife when cutting, allows control of blade angle, and keeps your hand from sliding past the guard (and severing your fingers) during straight thrusts. However, it is possible to break your thumb if you strike

Grips



Natural Grip



Reverse Grip



Sabre Grip



Hammer Grip



Ice-Pick Grip



Throwing Grip

something hard. This grip is used in numerous knife-fighting systems.

Hammer Grip

The knife is held at a 90° angle to the arm, like gripping a hammer. The wrist stays loose and flexible until impact. Inside circular thrusts, uppercuts, and slashing or chopping deliveries are most feasible. High straight thrusts are only possible if your wrist is severely bent. When thrusting into a hard surface with a guardless knife, your hand can slide down onto the blade, severing fingers. This grip is used in many military systems.

Reverse Grip

Lay the handle diagonally across your palm, with the cutting-edge facing away from your arm. This grip is typically used for slashing, outside circular thrusts, or descending strikes. The Reverse Grip also allows the blade to be concealed along the holder's forearm, or permits use of the Fore Fist for punching. This grip is widely used in many knife-fighting systems. It affords less reach than the *Natural Grip* or *Sabre Grip*.

Ice-Pick Grip

This is similar to a *Reverse Grip*, except the blade is held at a 90° angle to your arm, with the cutting-edge facing your arm (in the *Reverse Grip*, the cutting-edge faces away). This grip is typically used for deep penetration in outside circular thrusts or descending strikes. The Ice-Pick Grip is not appropriate for slashing unless the blade is double-edged. Because the blade faces the holder's forearm, it can be used to cut into a person's arm if they block near the knife-holder's wrist. This grip is common to many systems, although most practitioners prefer the *Reverse Grip*.

Throwing Grip

Generally, most experts do not recommend throwing a knife, since you lose possession of the weapon, an opponent may recover it and use it against you, and your chances of hitting a target that incapacitates an attacker are too low to justify the risk. There are many ways to throw knives. A typical grip is shown at left.

Stances

There are two types of knife stances: *armed stances* are used to wield a knife against armed or unarmed attackers; *unarmed stances* are used to defend against a knife.

Armed Stances

In many tradition-oriented systems, the knife is held in the rear hand. This is typically done to disguise its presence, camouflage your method of gripping and the characteristics of the weapon, and keep it from being knocked out of your hand or taken away. The lead empty-hand is used for parrying, grabbing, or striking, as the knife darts forward and back, striking as needed. In modern systems, the knife is often held more forward or in the lead hand. From this position, the knife can be used more quickly for blocking and striking, particularly when facing another weapon.

Unarmed Stances

Unarmed stances vary widely, based on the style one is practicing and the techniques one plans on executing. For example, certain stances facilitate kicking, while others are more suited for grappling. A few examples are shown below; many others are also practical. The relaxed stance is often used to disguise tactics or intent. In terms of fighting stances, traditional Korean arts typically begin with a right-lead stance that often changes to a left-lead as you block or strike. Japanese systems often begin with a left lead. There are also many variations in foot and hand placement. Generally, as a fight progresses, stances will change radically as you evade cuts, execute strikes, or secure a hold. Thus, it is more important to focus on speed, movement, and footwork, rather than precise postures. The ability to evade is paramount.

Armed Stances



Horse Stance



Back Stance (knife at chest)



Back Stance (knife at hip)



Knife in Lead Hand

Unarmed Stances



Relaxed Horse Stance



Back Stance (Knife Hands)



Grappling Stance



Front Stance (loose fists)

USE OF THE KNIFE

This section is not a comprehensive overview of offensive knife-fighting techniques. These skills are part of some martial arts systems, but are only justified in military applications. Nonetheless, most martial artists should learn a limited vocabulary of simple strikes, so that they will understand the nature of an attack against them, will be able to practice with a partner, and will be capable of using a knife offensively, in a *humane* manner, if needed. This may be required if you recover a knife used against you, or when facing multiple attackers or an overpowering person.

Generally very few thrusts or deep stabs are used in a humane approach to knife fighting. Instead the emphasis is on close-range slashes or cuts designed to quickly end a confrontation without severely maiming or killing an opponent. This occurs by discouraging an attacker or by limiting their mobility. For example, non-lethal cuts to an attacker can produce significant blood loss, which can have a tremendous psychological effect, causing them to abandon the attack. Cutting major muscle or tendon connections will immediately limit an attacker's mobility and end a confrontation, since they can no longer physically operate. Knife-action should be characterized by short, tight, circular motions or thrusts. Avoid big swings or long deliveries, as this opens you up to attacks. In eclectic martial arts, knife-fighting is often combined with hand strikes, kicks, holds, and throws.

Types of Attack

There are two basic types of knife attacks: *stabs* and *slashes*. In both attacks, depth-of-penetration and target location determine the seriousness of the wound.

Stabs

Stabs are thrusting strikes that puncture the body's surface. Minor stabs are used to inflict pain and cause injury, without being lethal. Major stabs penetrate deep into vital body cavities, and are usually fatal if accurately targeted. In non-military uses, deep thrusting stabs are rarely justified or legally defensible.

Slashes

Slashes are strikes that make incisions in the body's surface. The blade is drawn across the target. Depth is a function of pressure and sharpness. Light slashes are designed to draw blood and create pain, without causing serious injury. This gives your opponent the chance to abandon their attack before serious injury results. Medium slashes cut more deeply and are designed to cause heavy blood loss, or limit mobility by damaging motor functions—without being lethal. Deep slashes cut very deeply, sometimes to the bone, and are used to sever muscles, tendons, and multiple blood vessels, or to damage organs. These types of strikes can be lethal or create permanent disabilities. Deep slashes should only be used when justified by circumstances.

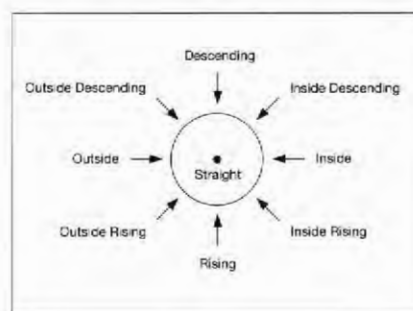
Knife Strikes

Many styles of knife fighting exist, and are far too numerous and complex to discuss here. Generally, knife strikes can come from any angle or direction and may involve thrusting, slashing, chopping, or pressing cuts. Straight thrusts, circular stabs or slices, uppercuts, and rising and descending motions are all possible. Like empty-hand strikes, knife strikes can be combined in numerous ways.

The knife strikes listed below and shown at right illustrate typical simple attacks. During training, they are commonly used in strike-and-block drills to learn basic forms of self-defense against a knife, while also gaining knife-handling skills. Real knife-attacks can be far more complex and often occur in rapid combinations. Many other strike variations are possible, based on the particular grip used (see chart below). In eclectic arts, the knife is also used for blocking, countering grabs, or applying joint locks (see subsequent pages).

Basic Angles of Attack

Slashes and stabs can be applied from any direction. However, for purposes of study, the possibilities are usually simplified into nine basic directions of attack (see below).



Basic Knife Strikes + Grip Possibilities

	Natural Grip	Sabre Grip	Hammer Grip	Reverse Grip	Ice-Pick Grip
1 High Straight Stab	•	•			
2 Low Straight Stab	•	•	•		
3 Inside Stab	•	•	•	•	•
4 Inside Slash	•	•	•	•	
5 Outside Stab	—	—	—	—	•
6 Outside Slash	•	•	•	(with palm up)	
7 Descending Stab	—	—	—	•	•
8 Descending Slash	•	•	•	—	
9 Rising Stab	—	—	•	(to side or rear)	(to side or rear)
10 Rising Slash	—	—	—	•	

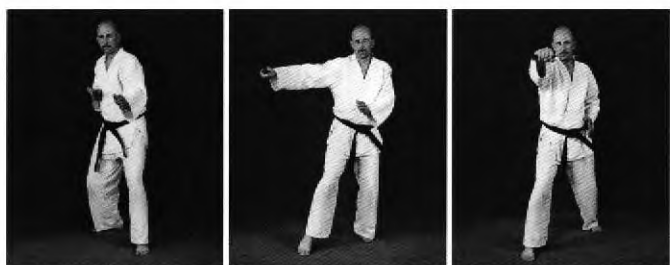
(•) common grip (—) less common grip, but also possible



1. High Straight Stab



2. Low Straight Stab



3. Inside Stab



4. Inside Slash



5. Outside Stab



6. Outside Slash



7. Descending Stab



8. Descending Slash



9. Rising Stab



10. Rising Slash

Combination Strikes

The basic knife strikes shown on the previous page are often linked sequentially into numerous combinations. This book will not deal with sophisticated offensive techniques. However, try to learn a few basic attacks, so that you are better able to defend against them. Several examples are shown, but many others are possible. Targets and strike mechanics vary widely based on your tactics and grip choice.

If you are using a knife to defend against hand-held weapons, target your strikes to the hands, wrist, or arm. If you can damage these areas, an attacker will be unable to use their weapon.



Inward Slash to Outward Stab (Reverse Grip)



Inward Slash to Outward Slash (Natural Grip)



Descending Slash to Straight Stab (Natural Grip)

No-Cut Strikes

While gripping a knife, it is also possible to strike with the end of the handle, the flat side of the blade, or the top dull-edge. This allows you to hit forcefully without cutting, and greatly increases your repertoire of strikes. Even light blows are very effective. You can also punch with your Fore Fist, usually from a Reverse Grip.



Descending strike with end of handle



Inside strike with end of handle



Fore Fist Punch with Reverse Grip

Cutting into a Block

When your knife strike is blocked, or your wrist is grabbed, it is often very easy to direct the blade into an opponent's arm or wrist. If you circle their wrist, you can also lock their joint as you cut, using the same basic holds found in empty-hand techniques (See author's books *Hapkido: Traditions, Philosophy, Technique*, or *Wrist Locks chapter of The Art of Holding*). When executing unarmed defenses, be aware of these counters, which might be used against you.



Cutting into a wrist grab and locking the wrist (rotate the knife inward, over, and down; like an Outward Wrist Lock)



Cutting into an X-Block (using an Ice-Pick Grip)



Cutting into a wrist grab and locking the wrist (rotate the knife outward, over, and down; like a Bent-Arm Wrist Lock)



Cutting the biceps against a cross-wrist grab



Cutting into a wrist grab (rotate the knife outward, over, and down; you can also use your other hand to press)



Blocking with a Knife

The knife can also be used to block an opponent's attack—armed or unarmed. By blocking into the opponent's arm or leg, you also immobilize the limb by cutting as you block. Often a simple slash to the wrist or hand will cause an attacker to drop their weapon or abandon their attack. Numerous other possibilities exist.



Low Block and slash to a kicker's ankle



Rising Block and slash to a striker's wrist



Slashing the hand to dislodge a weapon

UNARMED DEFENSE AGAINST KNIFE

Any time you confront a knife and are unarmed, you are facing a very serious threat. Any knife attack can result in serious injury or death, depending on the attacker's intentions. Even if your attacker knows nothing, and you are highly skilled, you will probably be cut. If they possess even a small amount of skill with a knife, the odds are seriously against you. If they are a skilled knife-fighter, you have almost no chance—regardless of your skill and experience.

This is the reality of any confrontation between an armed attacker and an unarmed defender. Consequently, all defensive techniques must evolve and be evaluated from this point of view: the attacker possesses an extreme advantage. This viewpoint is widely held by military experts and others with significant practical experience.

The defense techniques shown in this section have been present in the martial arts for many decades. They are designed to defend against simple thrusts, lateral slashes, and pronounced descending strikes. They are generally more effective against unskilled attacks, commonly found in street situations. A skillful knife-fighter will handle the weapon in such a way that it will be very difficult for you to secure a grip—certainly not without being cut. Their attacks will come in rapid combinations linked to feints and draws, possibly combined with kicks and punches.

Defensive Principles

The material in this chapter assumes that the practitioner already possesses experience in the major technique areas. Therefore, when an opponent attacks with a knife, you should be ready to counter with avoiding movements, strikes, kicks, joint locks, or throws—seizing any opportunity presented. Generally, knife defense techniques employ the same basic principles used in empty-hand fighting. In addition to concepts covered in the author's other books, the following defensive principles apply to most situations in which you will be defending against a knife with empty hands.

1. Run Away

Running away is always your first choice. Look for exits that allow you to remove yourself from the area of conflict. For example, run up a stairway, run into a busy public place, barricade yourself in another room, etc. This is not a sign of cowardice, but of intelligence. Addressing a knife with empty hands is not something you ever *want* to do. Being brave will not change the balance of power, so if you don't have to fight, then don't. Avoiding the conflict will also greatly simplify your life: there are no legal issues to address, you will not need to explain excessive or deadly use of force on your part, you have not risked your life, and you are no worse off, perhaps even a little wiser.

2. Give Them What They Want

Most non-military confrontations with a knife occur in connection with muggings, surprising a thief, heated arguments, or domestic violence. If a mugger wants your wallet, give it to them. Nothing in it is worth risking your life for. Even if you win a fight (seriously injuring or humiliating your attacker), this doesn't mean it's over. They may return days, weeks, or even months later (with their friends) seeking revenge. You may now be dealing with a far more serious situation than the one you were originally involved in. If a confrontation stems from a heated argument, apologize or make other concessions that will encourage your opponent to stand down without losing face. This is a sign of maturity on your part, not cowardice.

3. Talk Your Way Out

Confrontations with persons who are angry, enraged, or mentally unstable can often be resolved by reasoning with them, in an attempt to calm them down. By addressing the source of their anger, and helping them to understand that you are not a threat, you can often diffuse the situation. If you can get them to be sympathetic, and view you as a *person*, this will make it much harder for them to commit an act of violence against you.

4. Focus Your Mind

Relax, empty your mind, and focus your concentration. Breathe regularly, which will help you to relax and oxygenate your blood. Put fear out of your mind, and forget about life and death. These things will only paralyze you, hindering your ability to respond quickly and intuitively to whatever may come.

5. Stay Focused on the Weapon

Always stay focused on the weapon. Never take your eyes off it. Always know where it is. It represents your greatest threat. Of course you must also be watchful for kicks, or hand strikes executed with their free hand.

6. Look for an Equalizer Weapon

Look for anything that can be used as a weapon to equalize the balance of power: a club, bottle, scissors, another knife, objects you can throw, a tennis racquet—anything that will help to realign the confrontation in your favor. The use of everyday objects as weapons is discussed in a later chapter.



6.1 Look for an Equalizer Weapon (using a bottle)



6.2 Look for an Equalizer Weapon (using a belt)

7. Use a Shield

Look for anything that can be used as a shield against knife thrusts and slashes. A chair, books, dishes, a kitchen cutting board, a laundry basket, a suitcase, a small rug, a blanket, a pillow, a purse or bag, or a laptop computer are all usable as shields. If you are wearing a heavy coat, zip it closed. You can also wrap your jacket around one of your arms and use it to shield against strikes. You can also place yourself behind furniture or other environmental obstacles.

8. Distract and Deceive

Talk, yell, ask questions, or knock things over. Do anything that causes your opponent to be confused, hesitant, or hinders their concentration. Distractions increase the chances that your counters will be successful; this is especially true if your attacker is under the influence of alcohol or narcotics. Sometimes cowering stances can also be used to close distance, or lull your opponent into a false sense of confidence—making it easier to execute counters. If you are already cut and bleeding, flick blood into the attacker's eyes.

9. Attack First

Try to attack before your opponent is ready, catching them unprepared. If they are brandishing a weapon in a show of bravado, try to kick it out of their hand (you will only get one chance). If they bend over to draw a knife from their boot, kick to their head.

10. Analyze Their Grip and Weapon

Analyze an opponent's weapon and the grip they are using. This can tell you whether they have any knife skills, as well as what types of techniques are most likely to be executed. Remember, certain grips favor certain types of strikes (see previous pages). For example, straight thrusts are very unlikely with a Reverse Grip; descending stabs are not likely with a Natural Grip. Observe the weapon. How many edges are sharp? What is the condition of the blade? Can it be thrown? Does the handle permit a secure grip, or can it be easily dislodged? Knowledge of these subtle details may give you the advantage you need.



7.1 Use a Shield (forceful book-block dislodges knife)



7.2 Use a Shield (wielding a chair)



7.3 Use a Shield (wrapping a jacket around your arm)



8.1 Distract and Deceive (cowering to lull an attacker in close with a stationary weapon, sets up a counter)



9.1 Attack First (striking as they draw knife from belt)



9.2 Attack First (striking as they draw knife from boot)

11. Analyze the Opponent and Environment

Analyze an attacker's physical characteristics and emotional state. Are they overweight, athletic, drunk, upset, or angry? Look for weaknesses or limitations (slow movement, hesitant, clumsy, bad knees, etc.). Does the immediate environment present any opportunities that can be used in your favor?

12. Keep Moving and Maintain Distance

A moving target is much harder to hit than a stationary one. Keep moving away, and try to maintain a safe distance. In smaller spaces, circle an opponent or make angular steps. An attacker must be within a certain range in order to strike. If you can manage to stay outside their range, they cannot strike you. If you can make them take chances or awkward steps, you will increase your chances for a successful counter. Be aware that a knife is an extension of your opponent's arm, which gives them greater reach.

13. Keep Outside the Knife Arm

If you can keep to the outer side of the arm wielding the knife, strike options are reduced.

14. Use Low Kicks to Block or Create Space

Use low kicks to the ankles and knees, to keep an attacker at a safer distance or to distract them. Kicks allow you to engage someone at a greater distance than your hands permit. Shoes can afford some protection, depending on their design. High kicks require caution, since you are at greater risk (e.g., the kick may be caught or slashed, or

you may lose balance). Kicks can also be used to block straight thrusts, or dislodge the knife.

15. Use Appropriate Blocks

Use soft blocks to grab and stick. Use hard blocks (to nerves) to damage the arm or dislodge the knife. Generally, you should try to block sideways against straight thrusts, since there is greater margin for error. For example, if you block too early, you will hit into the flat-side of the blade, still deflecting the weapon without cutting your hand. Whereas rising blocks must be more accurate, since early blocks will bring your arm into the cutting-edge of the blade. Try not to use rising blocks against low or middle strikes, since you risk redirecting the blade into your chest or head.

16. Sacrifice Limbs to Shield Vital Targets

If you cannot avoid being cut, try to block the blade with your arms, legs, or the back of your hand. This gives you a better chance of survival than being stabbed in the torso or head. Sometimes you may have to grab the blade with your hands, deflecting or levering it out of the attacker's hands. Losing your fingers may save your life. If you are wearing gloves or the blade is dull, it may not matter.

17. Control the Weapon Arm

Always attempt to control or immobilize the arm wielding the weapon. When grabbing, try to seize the wrist, or both the wrist and elbow. This is the key to controlling the arm. Try to press or hit pressure points, since this reduces arm strength and may dislodge the weapon.

18. Apply Locks with Speed and Force

When seizing the arm to apply joint locks, execution speed is essential to prevent an attacker from redirecting the blade into your forearm (see previous *Cutting into a Block*). As you lock joints, try to break the wrist or elbow, or dislocate the shoulder. This makes it impossible for an attacker to continue wielding a knife, and is safer than trying to contain them with a submission hold. Devastating force may be justified if your life is at risk.

19. Use Strikes and Traps to Counter Speed

If an opponent's arm movements are too quick for you to secure a proper hold, use block-and-strike combinations to slow them down. Try to trap their arm against their body. Quickly move out of range after striking, unless you secure control of the knife arm. Target highly vulnerable areas, such as the eyes and throat, using Spear Hand and Knuckle Hand formations (greater reach).

20. Avoid Grip Changes or Slow Entries

Avoid techniques that use radical grip changes, or are excessively slow in applying a hold. Such techniques give your opponent too many opportunities to counter—and you cannot afford to be countered when facing a knife. Your mistakes may be fatal.

21. Maintain a Standing Posture

Try to keep from falling down. Do not use high kicks that compromise your balance. Sacrifice throws are not wise unless you are very sure of yourself, or have no other choice. If you are knocked down, keep your legs toward the attacker, and kick to their knees and ankles. If possible, throw dirt or stones in their face. Try to recover a standing posture.

22. Always Take The Weapon Away

After forcing a submission, always take the weapon away. If it is knocked out of an attacker's hands, recover it at the earliest safe opportunity, so it cannot be used against you again. If you recover the weapon, you can wield it against your opponent if necessary. Blunt handle-blows or humane cuts are preferred. Do not stab or slash vital targets.



13. Keep Outside the Knife Arm



14. Use Low Kicks to Block or Create Space



15.1 Use Appropriate Blocks (soft block to grab)



15.2 Use Appropriate Blocks (hard block to dislodge)



16. Sacrifice Limbs to Shield Vital Targets (hand block)



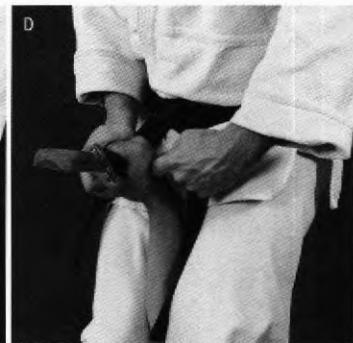
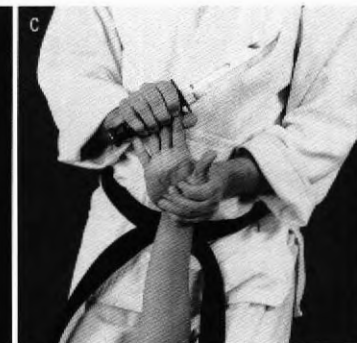
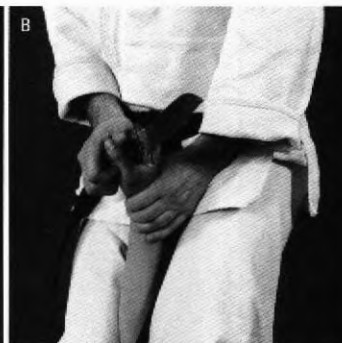
17. Control the Weapon Arm (seizing wrist and elbow)



19. Use Strikes and Traps to Counter Speed

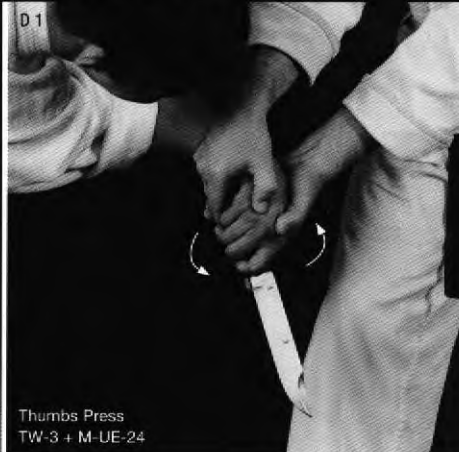


22.1 Always Take the Weapon Away



22.2 Common methods of taking knife away while restraining attacker: Kneel on throat, trap arm between legs (A). Wrap your fingers around their fingers. Gouge into cuticles or lock third set of finger joints (B). Peel back fingers, roll knife into your hand (C). Alternate grip release: Gouge nerves on back of hand (D). Never let them drop the knife near their free hand.

DEFENSE AGAINST KNIFE



Thumbs Press
TW-3 + M-UE-24



1. Against High Straight Stab

Use Outward Wrist Lock

Step laterally or backward to avoid a straight stab. Parry and grab attacker's hand with your L hand (A–B). Grip with both hands. Step back, pulling attacker forward to unbalance them, as you twist their hand outward and downward to lock or break their wrist (C–D). Force a fall (E). Kneel on attacker's throat and trap their arm between your legs. Lock their third set of finger joints or pinch their cuticles. Peel back their fingers and take the knife (F).

Important Points

Techniques for taking the knife away (F), were shown on the previous page (see 22.2). The direction you step when locking the wrist (C–D) is based on attacker's reactions. If they are moving toward you, blend with their actions by stepping backward as shown in the photos. If they retract their arm, blend with their actions by stepping powerfully forward, past their right side, as you unbalance them toward their right rear-corner. If they retract their arm toward their rear shoulder or left side (less common), step forward to their left with your right foot as you pivot 180°.



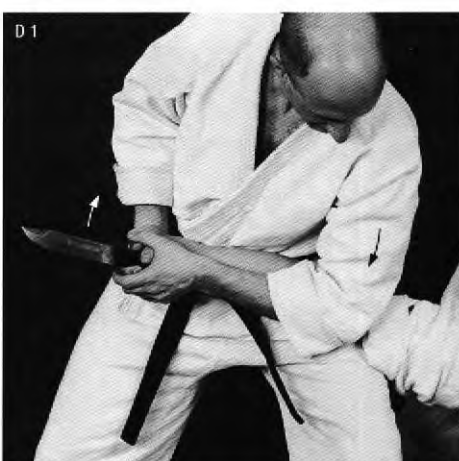
2. Against High Straight Stab

Use Elbow Arm Bar

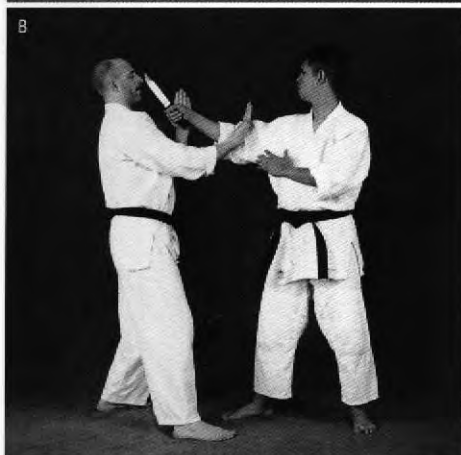
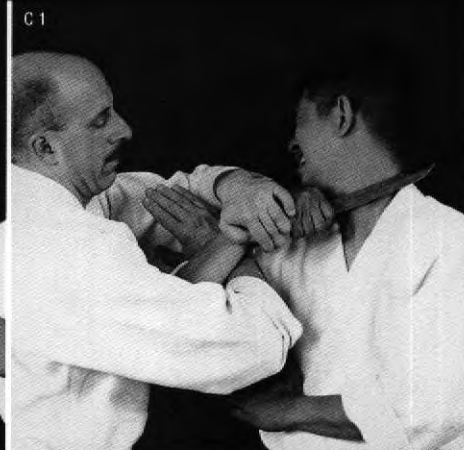
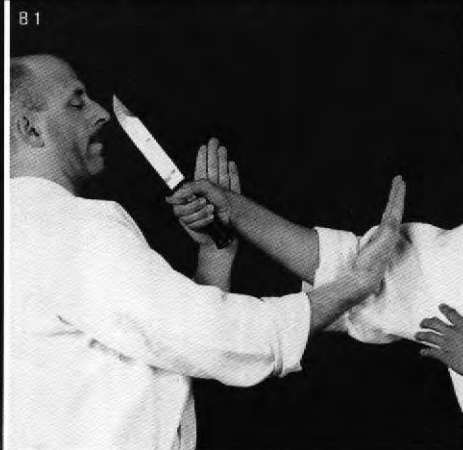
Step laterally to avoid a straight stab. Parry and grab attacker's hand with your R hand (A–B), then grip it with your L hand. Lead the arm slightly to your left (fake), then abruptly pass it to your right as you twist their arm and pull it straight (C). Step forcefully to your right with your L foot, planting your L inner elbow over their elbow. Lock or break their elbow by driving your elbow down, as you pull up on their wrist (D). Bend and twist their wrist to lock it. Drop to one knee, forcing attacker onto their belly (E). Take the knife (F).

Important Points

When passing the attacker's arm from left to right, take care that the tip of the knife does not cut your face (common mistake). Use a high, whipping circular motion, particularly if the blade is long. While a high motion increases the time it takes to enter the arm bar, it is also safer, can briefly disorient attacker, and helps rotate the tip of the elbow upward, so it is properly positioned for the arm bar. If you fail to rotate the arm or are countered, transition to an Outward Wrist Lock (see technique 1).



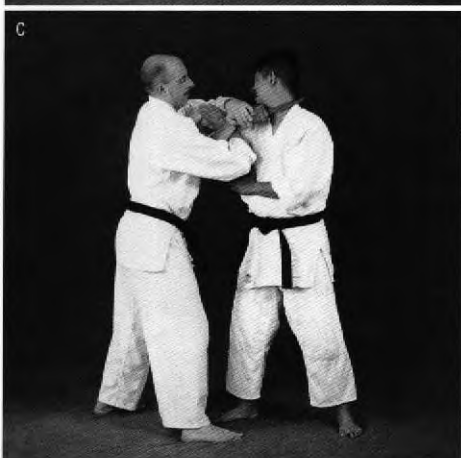
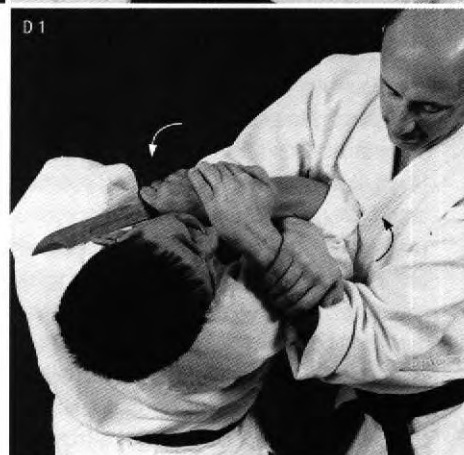
DEFENSE AGAINST KNIFE



3. Against High Brandish

Use Inside-Chop Shoulder Lock

Attacker brandishes a knife (A). Step left and lean away, as you parry inward with your L hand, and hit the inner elbow at HT-3 with a R Knife Hand or Ridge Hand (B). Sweep the knife to the throat, as you pivot your hand and grip their wrist (C). Grip your L wrist with your R hand. Push their wrist down as you lift their elbow, pivot (D), and throw (E). Pin the bent-elbow with your L hand, keeping it close to their head. Take the knife (F). You can also choke with your elbow during E.



Important Points

The initial step left and lean allows you to avoid an attacker's thrust, should their reactions be quicker than your parry. The hold can be entered more quickly without this avoiding action, but is riskier. As you press the knife into attacker's throat (C-D), they may release the weapon to avoid being cut (depends on the blade's orientation). This motion also levers the knife out of their hand. If the knife travels past their throat, sweep your R elbow into their head.



4. Against High Straight Stab

Use Front Toe Kick

Defend from a L stance (A). As attacker delivers a straight stab, step backward and kick simultaneously: slide your L foot back toward your R foot, as you raise your R leg (B) and execute a R Front Toe Kick to HT-1 (armpit), using the point of your shoe (C). Attacker will usually drop the knife as you hit the sensitive nerves that control the arm. As an alternative, you can also execute a Front Toe Kick to their wrist or hand (C1), or a Side Kick to their armpit or elbow (C2). These kicks can also be used to hit an attacker brandishing a knife. When kicking with your front leg, use a Forward Slide or Rear Draw Step to generate power and increase your range (see "Footwork" in *Fundamentals* chapter).

Important Points

Note that the length of your leg allows you to hit your attacker while keeping your torso and face out of range. For less skilled kickers, it is usually safer to target the hand or wrist, preferably when it is stationary or moving slowly and you are wearing hard-soled shoes.



C 2 (option: Side Kick to armpit)



C 1 (option: Front Toe Kick to wrist or hand)



DEFENSE AGAINST KNIFE

B



A



C



D



E



Knife Hand



Ridge Hand

5. Against Low Straight Stab

Use Ridge Hand + Low Side Kick

As attacker stabs, step 45° forward with your L foot. Parry their wrist sideways and down, using your palm or a Knife Hand Block (A–B). Push their hand into their body, as you swing your R Ridge Hand into their throat at ST-9 and ST-10 (C). Continue to trap their hand on their body, as you raise your R leg (D). Execute a Side Kick to the outer knee, driving it into the floor (E). Try to step, block, and strike simultaneously, since this is more difficult to counter. If you cannot trap the attacker's arm (C1), move away after your initial counterstrike.

Important Points

When you block (B), make sure you deflect sideways, not up. Parrying up may cause the blade to collide with your incoming Ridge Hand, blocking your strike and cutting your arm. When facing quicker or more skilled attackers, holds or throws are often impractical, since it is often difficult to obtain proper grips. In these situations, techniques 5 and 6 can be used as hit-and-run tactics, or to set up grappling techniques (see "Defensive Principles," 19).

B 1



C 1



Trap



6. Against Low Straight Stab

Knuckle Hand, Elbow Strike, Front Kick

As attacker stabs, step 45° forward with your R foot. Execute a Low Block with your forearm or Knife Hand, and a R Flowing Knuckle Hand Strike to the throat at CO-23 (A–C). Slide your R hand down their arm to the elbow (D) and push it across their body, as you execute a L Inside Elbow Strike to their temple or jaw (E). Unbalance them with a L Front Thrust Kick to their hip (F). Try to kick their arm into their hip.



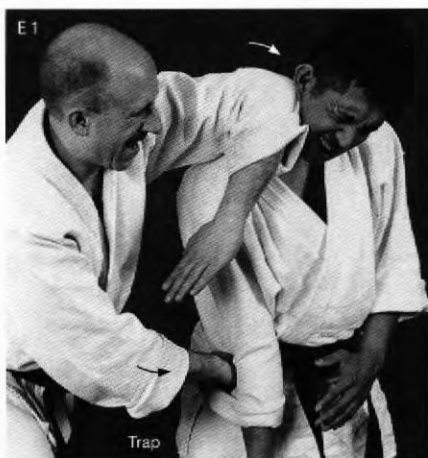
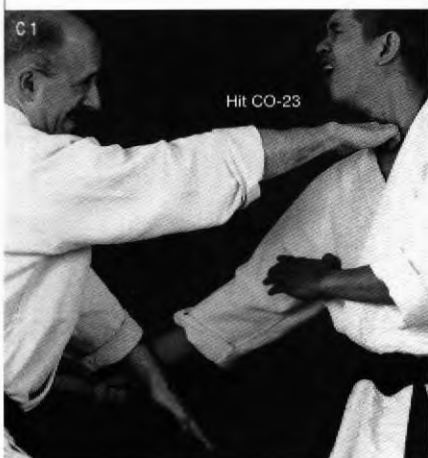
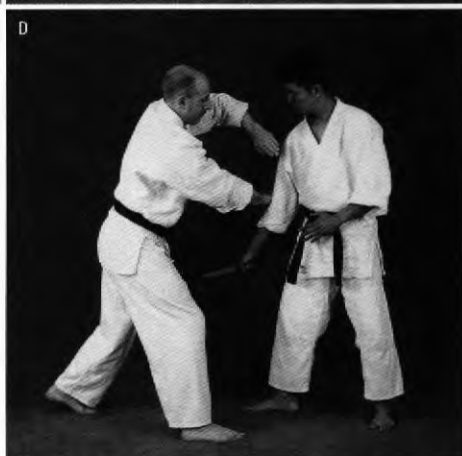
Knuckle Hand

Important Points

Steps A–E should be performed very fast and fluidly: each action flows into the next action, without abrupt changes or pauses. This technique can also be used against a low circular strike to your abdomen. Try to block to nerves or acupoints in order to dislodge the knife or shock your opponent. When facing quicker or more skilled attackers, holds or throws are often impractical, since it is often difficult to obtain proper grips. In these situations, techniques 5 and 6 can be used as hit-and-run tactics, or to set up grappling techniques (see "Defensive Principles," 19).



Lower Elbow



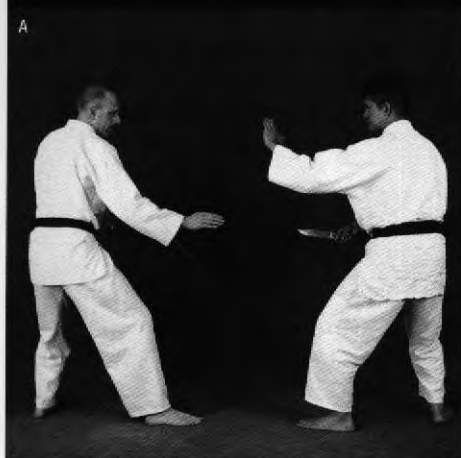


7. Against Low Straight Stab

Crescent Kick, Back Kick, Roundhouse Kick
Defend from a R stance (A). As attacker stabs, step back and kick simultaneously: slide your R foot back toward your L foot, as you execute a L Inside Crescent Kick to their hand, forearm, or the flat-side of the blade (B). Plant your L foot, continue turning (C), and execute a R Back Kick to their floating ribs (D). Note that your kick passes outside the attacker's arm. Plant your R foot. Execute a L Roundhouse Kick to their outer knee, buckling or sweeping their leg to force a fall (E). If attacker steps back to avoid (changing to a L lead), execute a Roundhouse Kick to the groin, hitting with the ball of your foot or the tip of your shoe.

Important Points

The Crescent Kick is used to deflect the knife, possibly dislodging it from attacker's hand. Strike using the hard inner-edge or flat bottom of the sole of your shoe (B). Keep the kick's motion short and powerful. Adjust your plant (C), based on target distance. If the knife is held low or dropped during C, you can also execute a Spin Kick to the head (riskier).



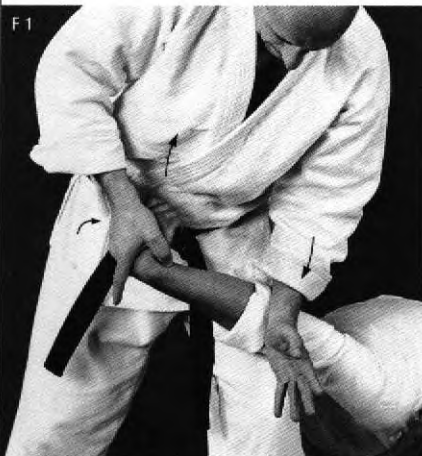
8. Against Low Straight Stab

Use Two Chops + Forearm Arm Bar

As attacker stabs, step laterally with the L foot. Parry attacker's wrist at SI-6 with your L wrist (A-B). Strike the other side of the wrist at LI-5 or LU-8, with a R Descending Knife Hand Strike (C). This may dislodge the knife. Grip their wrist with your R hand and pull the arm straight, as you hit the ribs at LV-13 with your L Knife Hand (D). Twist attacker's arm and lock their elbow with your L wrist. Push downward into TW-11, as you lift their locked wrist, forcing attacker to the ground (E-F). Force them to lie flat. Pin them by kneeling on their elbow at TW-11, which will also force them to release the knife (G). Take possession of it.



Knife Hand



Important Points

You can either strike the wrist on both sides simultaneously, or cradle the wrist with your L palm, as you hit downward with your R Knife Hand. The Descending Knife Hand Strike can also be executed with a much shorter delivery than shown in B. When pinning (G), use your L hand to press down on the shoulder or head, execute strikes, or take away the knife.

DEFENSE AGAINST KNIFE



9. Against Inside Stab

Use Inside Shoulder Throw

Attacker delivers an Inside Stab (Natural Grip). Step inside the blow, as you execute a L Live-Hand Block to the wrist at LU-7 (A-B). Grip their wrist with your L hand. Pull them forward, as you wrap and lock their elbow with your R wrist. Step behind your R foot with your L foot, pivot, and plant your hips on their thigh (C). Raise your hips as you pull attacker over your shoulder. If justified, break their elbow by jerking it upward as they fall. Kneel on their throat and take the knife (E).



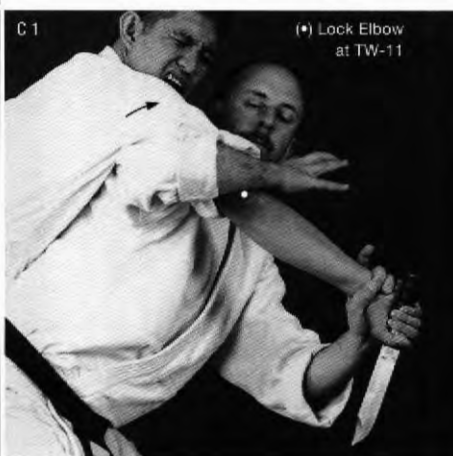
Blocking surface (left)
Attacking surface (right)

Important Points

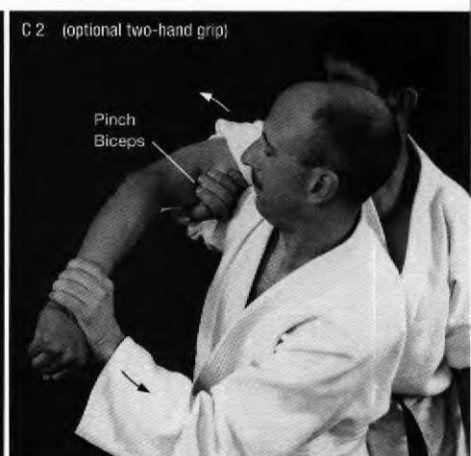
As you enter (B), keep your right elbow high to guard against a left punch: your right hand is lower to set up the wrap. Both bodies are pressed tightly together, with your shoulder seated deeply in attacker's armpit. As you pull their arm down and raise your hips, their shoulder will likely separate. During training, seat the armpit on your outer shoulder to prevent injuries. When entering, plant your hips low, and pull attacker onto your back. Twist your hips as you rise. If justified, break the elbow by hitting into the joint as you wrap the arm (C). You can also throw without locking the elbow, which can be faster.

Blocking Considerations

The Live-Hand Blocks in techniques 9 and 10 are targeted to sensitive nerves at attacker's wrist. A forceful block will shock the arm, often causing an attacker to drop their knife. Point selection is based on the attacker's grip: target LU-7, LI-5, HT-4 to HT-7, or SI-6. When blocking against any inside strike, always try to step in close, past the blade, as shown in these examples.



(*) Lock Elbow
at TW-11



C 2 (optional two-hand grip)

Pinch
Biceps



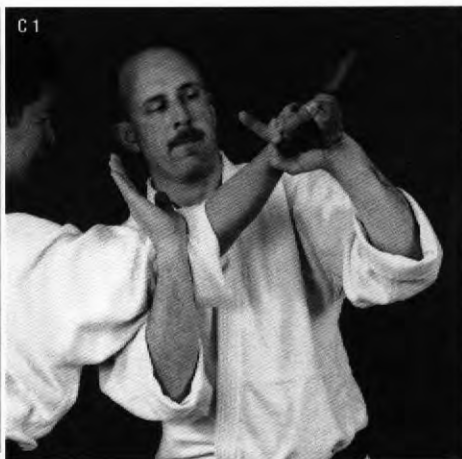
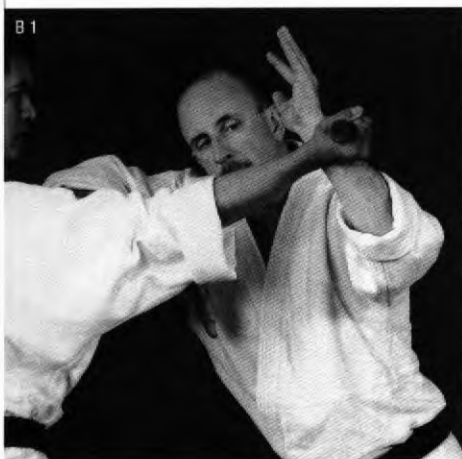
10. Against Inside Stab

Use Inside-Lift Shoulder Lock

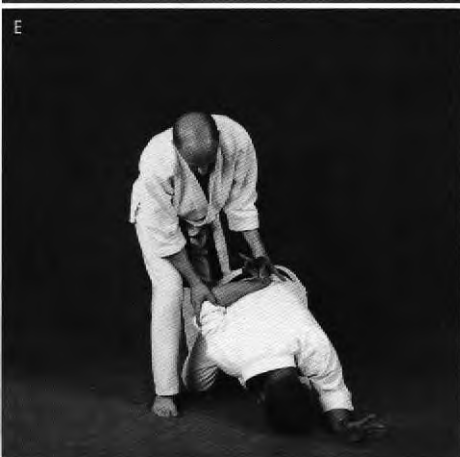
Duck to avoid a high Outside Stab (Reverse Grip), raising your arms for protection in case you misjudge the blow or the blade is redirected (A). As attacker follows with a high Inside Stab, step forward to their inside and execute a L Live-Hand Block to their wrist at HT-4 (B). Grip their wrist with your L hand, as you hook your R Ridge Hand or wrist upward into their inner elbow, bending their arm (C). Scoop their elbow upward, as you push their wrist down. This dislocates their shoulder and forces a fall (D–E). This joint lock can also be applied by shifting to a Two-Hand Shoulder Lock (see technique 17). This two-hand variation can provide greater power, and is often easier for smaller, less powerful individuals to apply.

Important Points

This counter works best when an attacker strikes with their arm bent, or pulls away (bending their arm). It is used against slashes or stabs from any knife grip, but works best against an Ice-Pick or Reverse Grip, since the elbow is lowered. Against a Natural or Hammer Grip, you can break the elbow during your block, by hitting into the joint with your R wrist or forearm (see round photo on previous page) as you enter the hold. As you initially enter (B), keep your right elbow high to guard against a left punch: your right hand is lower to set up the wrap (B1). As you lift attacker's elbow, gouge LU-5 with your middle finger, and HT-3 with your thumb. For important notes on blocking, please see "Blocking Considerations" and the round photo on the previous page.



DEFENSE AGAINST KNIFE



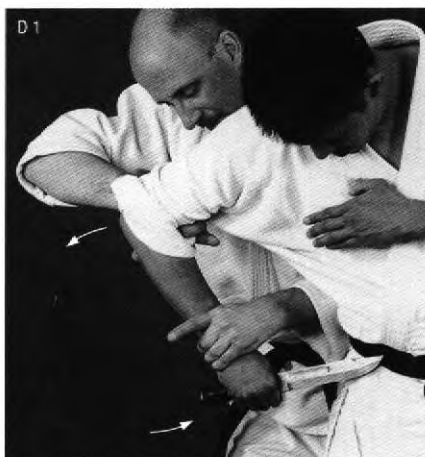
11. Against Inside Stab

Use Passing Stab or Hammer Lock

Attacker delivers an Inside Stab (Hammer Grip or Natural Grip). Slide your lead foot forward, blocking to the wrist and inner elbow with both Knife Hands or palms. Grip the wrist and elbow (A–B). Step forward with your rear foot, as you push their elbow up and pull their wrist down. Pass under the arm, pivot 180° (C), and direct the knife into their belly (D). You can also apply this hold by passing attacker's bent-arm behind their back. Then lift the wrist and push the elbow inward, locking their wrist and shoulder. Pivot right and force a fall (E).

Important Points

This technique is most effective when applied in one rapid, continuous motion. Try to blend with the blow's delivery, accelerating its power as you redirect the blade into the abdomen or thigh. Forceful blocks are usually less effective, since they arrest the attacker's motion. If you miss the torso or the knife is dropped as it hits their body (D), shift to a Hammer Lock (E). Do not allow the attacker to fall near a dropped knife, or they may seize it with their free hand.





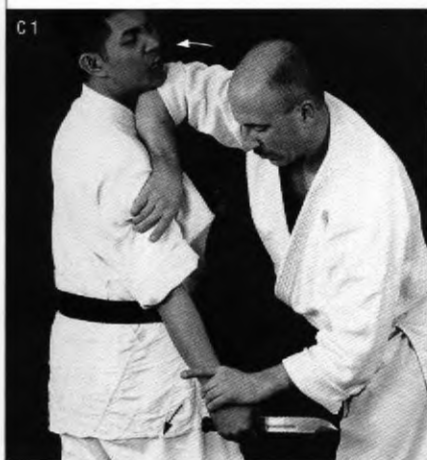
12. Against Inside Stab

Use Elbow Strike + Outer Reap Throw

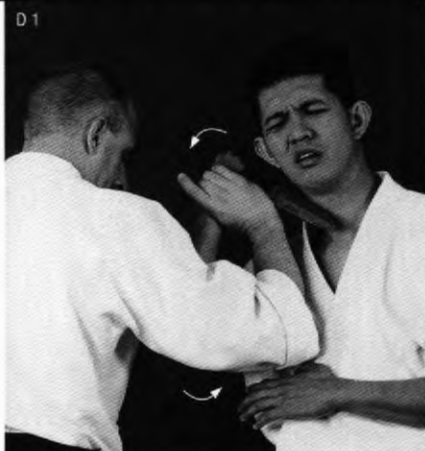
Attacker delivers an Inside Stab (Hammer Grip or Natural Grip). Block their stab early in its delivery: step forward with your L foot to attacker's right side and block with both Knife Hands to the wrist and biceps, then grip both (A–B). Pull attacker's arm downward toward their right rear-corner, as you thrust your R elbow into their throat, unbalancing them backward (C). Snap your R leg backward into their calf (D), reaping their leg upward (E).

Important Points

You must break attacker's balance backward, before reaping the leg. Otherwise, you may be unbalanced backward, or countered as attacker applies the same throw to you. Make sure you step deep to their side on your first step. Coordinate three actions: pull their wrist down toward their heel, drive their head backward and down, and reap the leg. Swing your leg high for power. You can also use a kicking motion with your heel, into the calf, to reap the leg. Drive your elbow forcefully into the throat, chin, or face.



DEFENSE AGAINST KNIFE



13. Against Outside Stab

Use Outside-Lift Shoulder Lock

Attacker delivers an Outside Stab. Step 45° forward to attacker's outside, inside the blow's path. Block with both Knife Hands to attacker's wrist and elbow, then grip both (A–B). Gouge pressure points on their elbow and bend their arm, circling attacker's hand toward their head (C). Step in with your R foot and pivot 180°. Bend their wrist and lock it outward, driving the knife into their throat (D). Step behind your R foot with your L foot and pivot 180°. Lock their shoulder by lifting their elbow inward, as you twist-push their hand down, forcing a fall (E). Maintain the locks and pin attacker (F).

Important Points

When gripping the elbow, gouge LU-5 with your middle finger, and HT-3 with your thumb (if your hand is too small, just press LU-5). When pivoting, your arms will cross as you lock the shoulder (D). During your pivot bring your hips close to attacker's hips: this adds power and makes it easier to unbalance them. Forcefully applying the lock ahead of the attacker's fall can dislocate their shoulder.



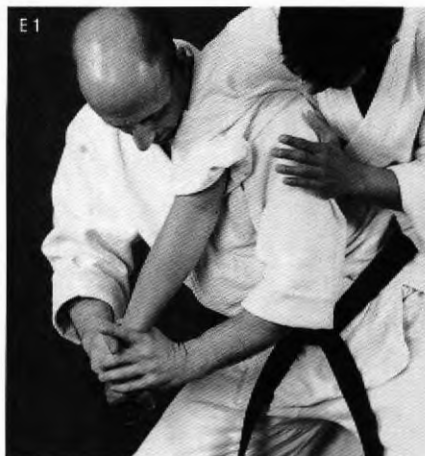
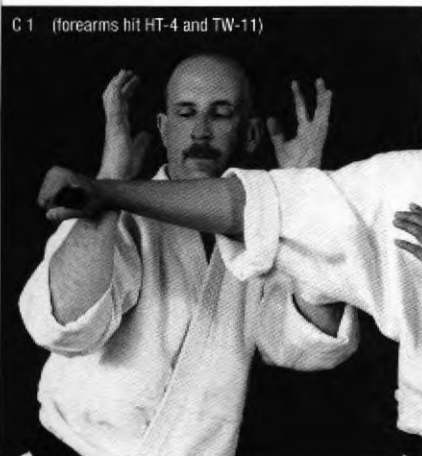
14. Against Outside Stab

Use Outside Shoulder Throw

Duck to avoid a high Inside Slash (Reverse Grip), raising your arms for protection, in case you misjudge the blow or the blade is redirected (A). As attacker follows with a high Outside Stab (B), execute a Twin Live-Hand Block to their wrist at HT-4 and their elbow at TW-11 (C). Grip the wrist and arm, pull toward you, step in with your L foot, and pivot 180°. Grip their wrist with both hands, as you plant your shoulder in their armpit and your hips on their thighs (D). Pull their arm forcefully down toward your right side (breaks the elbow and dislocates the shoulder) (E). Lift your hips and pull attacker over your shoulder (F).

Important Points

This is a devastating throw. If an opponent cannot initiate a breakfall, they will be seriously injured. During training, unlock the elbow to prevent injuries. The proper fall is a Side Fall. When falling, direct your hips up and over. Do not turn inward (common error), since you may land on your shoulder or head, and are unable to *slap* or land properly.





Blocking surface



15. Against Outside Stab

Use Forearm Arm Bar

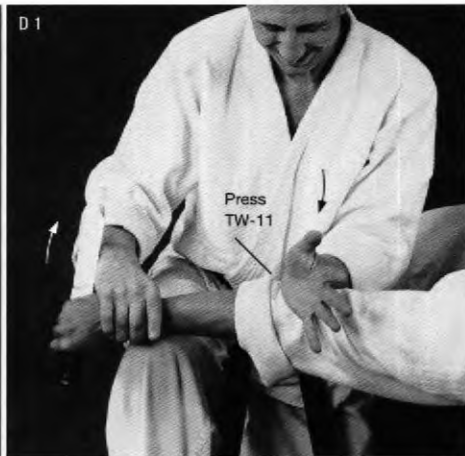
Step outside as attacker delivers an Outside Stab (Reverse Grip) or Outside Slash (Natural Grip) (A–B). Execute a L Live-Hand Block to attacker's elbow at TW-11 and grip their wrist with your R hand (C). Twist their arm and pull them off-balance to their right front-corner. At the same time, pivot 90°–180° to your right and drop to your L knee, pressing downward at TW-11 with your wrist, as you lift their wrist, locking or breaking their elbow as you force a fall (D). Kneel on attacker's elbow, pressing the bony edge of your tibia into TW-11 (very painful). Pin their wrist with your L hand and take the knife with your R hand (E).

Important Points

You must rotate attacker's arm, till their elbow points up. Your R hand twists their wrist, taking care to avoid the blade. Your L wrist drives up, over, and down (at elbow), as you pull their wrist in the opposite direction. Begin pushing their elbow at *side of joint*, and finish *above back of joint*. This rotates and locks their elbow, even if the elbow is bent or facing sideways. Use your pivot to unbalance attacker, as you apply the arm bar. This reduces your need for power.

Blocking Considerations

The Live-Hand Blocks used in techniques 15 and 16 are targeted to sensitive nerves at attacker's wrist and elbow. A forceful block will shock the arm, often causing an attacker to drop their knife. Target the elbow at TW-11 (triceps tendon), and the wrist at HT-4 or SI-6. When blocking against any outside strike, always try to step in close, past the blade, as shown in these examples.





16. Against Outside Stab

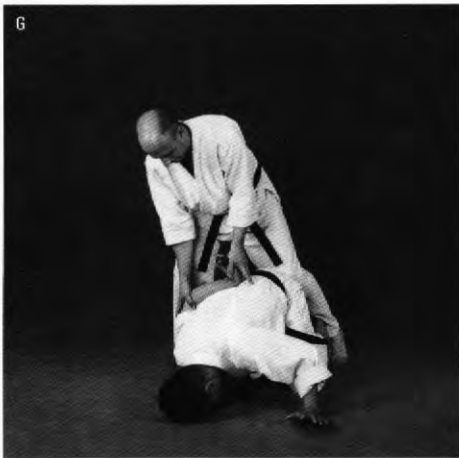
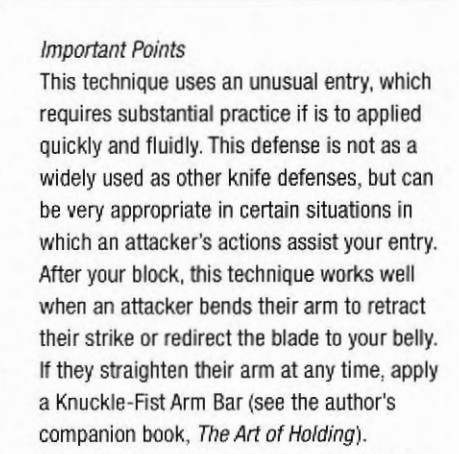
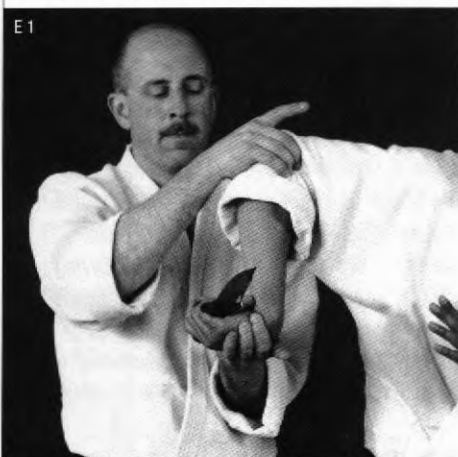
Use Bent-Wrist Hammer Lock

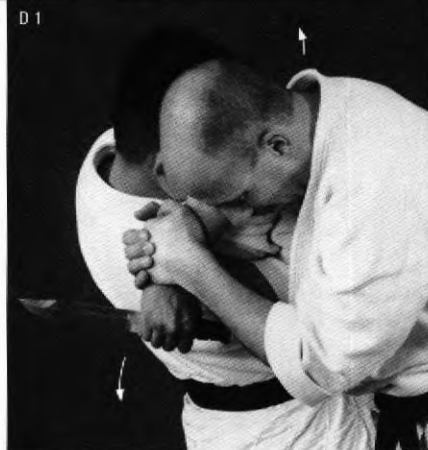
Step outside as attacker delivers an Outside Stab (Reverse Grip) (A–B). Execute a R Live-Hand Block to their elbow at TW-11 (C). Reach under their arm with your L hand and grip their wrist (D). Pull their wrist downward as you lift their elbow upward, locking the arm and shoulder (E). Pass the bent-arm behind their back. Bend and lift their wrist as you drive their elbow inward, locking the wrist and shoulder (F). Maintain the lock as you pivot to your right, forcing a fall (G). Take the knife.

Important Points

This technique uses an unusual entry, which requires substantial practice if it is to be applied quickly and fluidly. This defense is not as widely used as other knife defenses, but can be very appropriate in certain situations in which an attacker's actions assist your entry. After your block, this technique works well when an attacker bends their arm to retract their strike or redirect the blade to your belly. If they straighten their arm at any time, apply a Knuckle-Fist Arm Bar (see the author's companion book, *The Art of Holding*).

When initially passing the bent-arm behind the back, you can also try to lock the wrist earlier, as shown in E1. Recognize that this is not always possible or prudent, and in any case should not be allowed to slow your entry. Pivoting 90°–270° (F–G) is crucial, since it unbalances your attacker, prevents them from initiating common counters, and forces a fall while keeping the Hammer Lock tight. Generally, this hold is not secure if you remain standing (F), although many martial artists apply it in this manner. For important notes on blocking, please see "Blocking Considerations" on the previous page.





Ridge Hand

17. Against Descending Stab

Use Two-Hand Shoulder Lock

As attacker delivers a Descending Stab (Reverse Grip), step forward past them with your L foot. Execute a L Rising Block to their wrist (A-B). Hit up into their inner elbow with your R Ridge Hand or wrist, bending their arm (C). Grip their wrist with both hands. Pull down on their wrist, as you lift their elbow with your R elbow, locking or dislocating their shoulder (D). Throw attacker straight backward or toward their right rear-corner. Kneel on their shoulder. Pull their wrist laterally to lock their arm and shoulder (E). Take the knife (F).

Important Points

You must block early and step past attacker, as you hit up into their inner elbow. In unarmed versions of this hold, you would normally grip above their wrist (on their hand) for maximum leverage. This is often not possible because the blade may cut you. Compensate by driving your upper body forcefully forward, or attacker can apply the same joint lock to you. When pinning (E), pull the wrist sideways with the elbow bent and pointing up.





18. Against Descending Stab

Use Elbow Strike + Outer Reap Throw

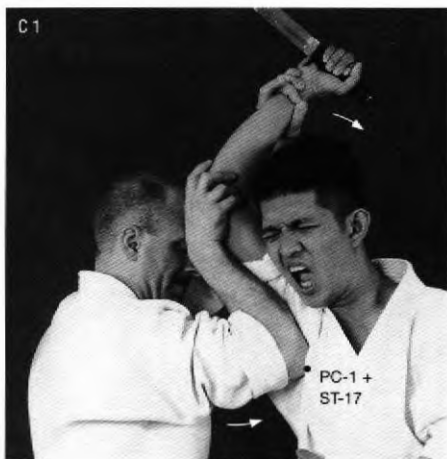
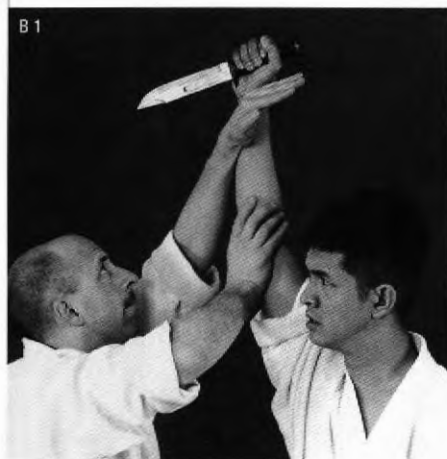
As attacker delivers a Descending Stab (Reverse Grip), step forward and outside with your L foot. Execute a L Rising Block to their wrist, and a R Palm Heel Block to their elbow (A-B). Grip their elbow and wrist. Push their wrist downward, as you forcefully thrust the tip of your R elbow into their chest at PC-1 and ST-17 (painful), unbalancing them backward (C). Throw attacker backward or toward their right rear-corner by coordinating three actions: pull their wrist downward, lift their elbow, and sweep your R leg back into their calf, reaping their leg upward (D-E).



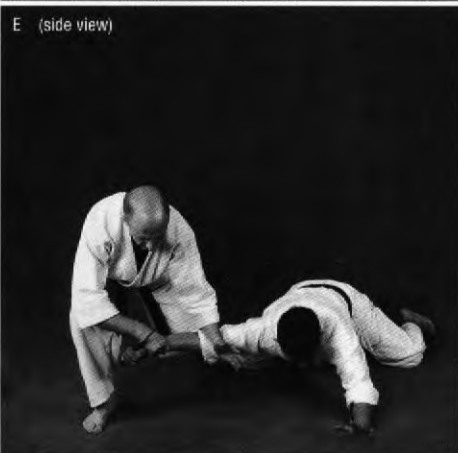
Palm Heel Hand

Important Points

You must break attacker's balance backward, before reaping the leg. Otherwise, you may be unbalanced backward, or countered as they apply the same throw to you. As you throw, drive attacker's arm forcefully down, slamming them into the ground. Pulling their wrist slightly sideways as you throw may lead to a shoulder dislocation. You can also drive your elbow into the throat, underside of the chin, or face.



PC-1 +
ST-17



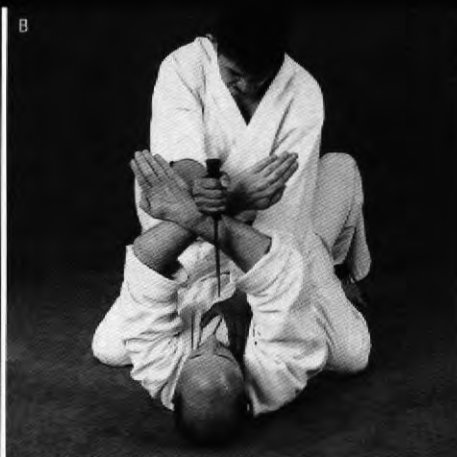
19. Against Descending Stab

Use Forearm Arm Bar

As attacker delivers a Descending Stab (Reverse Grip), step forward and outside with your L foot. Execute a R Rising Block to their wrist, and a L Rising Block to their elbow (A–B). Grip their wrist with your R hand. Twist their arm as you rotate your L wrist into TW-11, locking the elbow (C). Push down at TW-11 and lift their wrist, as you pivot 90°–180° to unbalance them (D). Pull attacker toward their right front-corner and force a fall (E).

Important Points

When executing your initial block, be very aware of the placement of your R wrist: the attacker's blade can cut your wrist if they are using an Ice-Pick Grip or a double-edged knife (see "Cutting into a Block" under "Use of the Knife"). The closer your wrist is to their hand, the easier it is for them to cut you. As you pivot your left wrist into position for the arm bar (B–C), it is important to maintain constant pressure on attacker's elbow. This ensures that their elbow remains locked while you transition from the block to the arm bar.



20. Against Descending Stab

The three techniques shown on this page were developed by the author to show how basic principles are modified for ground fighting. All three are related: selection is based on circumstances. Attacker straddles your waist and delivers a Descending Stab to your face (A). Execute an X Block (R hand over L hand) (B). Grip their wrist with your L hand and twist their wrist outward, as you push the edge of your R hand into the flat-side of the blade, levering it in a circle (C).

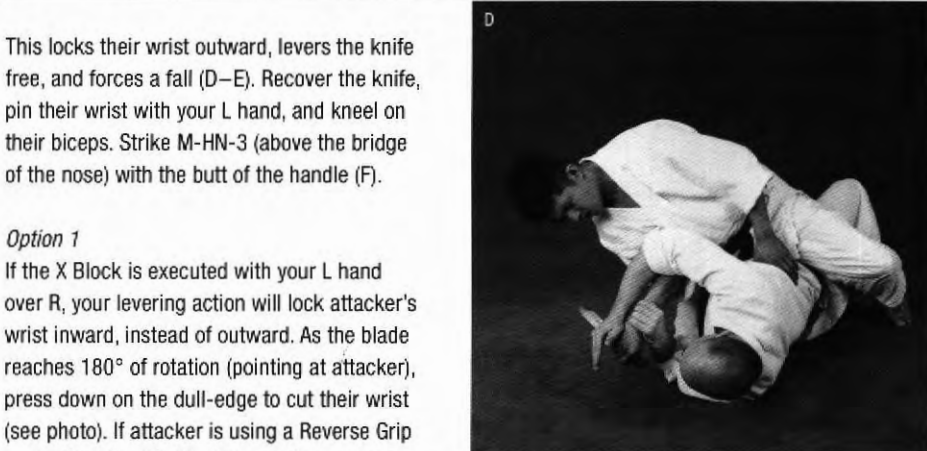
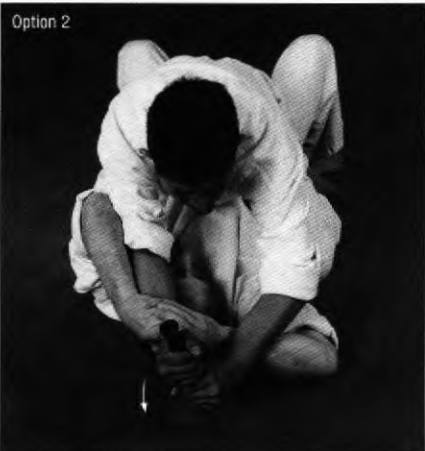
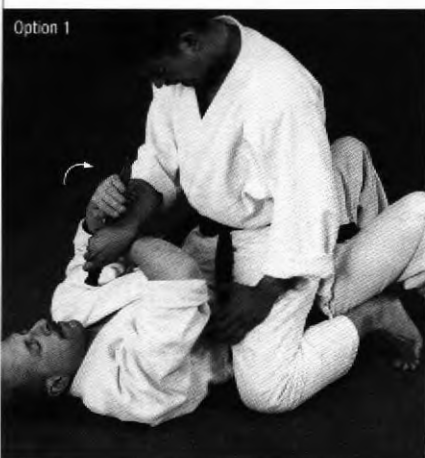
This locks their wrist outward, levers the knife free, and forces a fall (D–E). Recover the knife, pin their wrist with your L hand, and kneel on their biceps. Strike M-HN-3 (above the bridge of the nose) with the butt of the handle (F).

Option 1

If the X Block is executed with your L hand over R, your levering action will lock attacker's wrist inward, instead of outward. As the blade reaches 180° of rotation (pointing at attacker), press down on the dull-edge to cut their wrist (see photo). If attacker is using a Reverse Grip or double-edged knife, this pressing action is not feasible unless your hand is covered with a glove or protective material that prevents you from being cut (e.g., a thick jacket-sleeve).

Option 2

After blocking a Descending Stab, grab attacker's wrist with both hands and push briefly upward. As attacker continues to push forcefully down toward your face, use their power to redirect the knife over your head into the floor. Pull their wrist forcefully downward, forcing their hands to slide into the blade as the point of the knife hits the floor (see photo).



The “short-stick” is a hard wooden cylinder about one-foot long. There are many different systems of stick fighting, which are characterized by differing ideals determining weapon characteristics, preferred techniques, appropriate use of force, and the circumstances and manner in which techniques should be executed. The short-stick techniques shown in this chapter, and the martial philosophy behind them, stem primarily from the author’s experiences in the martial art of Hapkido. Consequently, this material consists of an eclectic

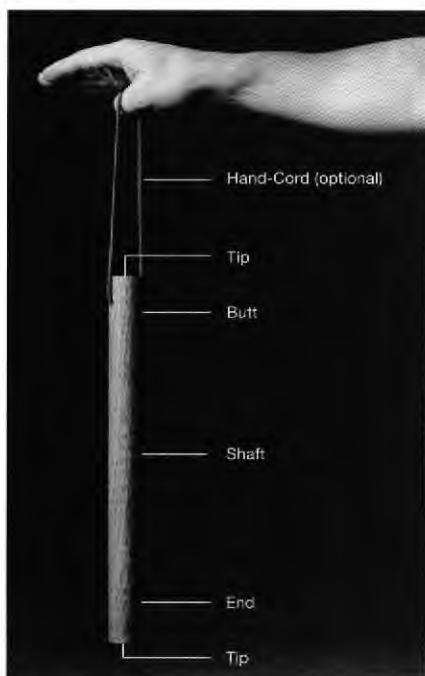
SHORT-STICK TECHNIQUES

range of strikes, holds, and throws that can be applied with varying levels of force, based on what is appropriate and justifiable. This chapter begins with an overview of basic principles, followed by typical short-stick defenses. Techniques are demonstrated against an unarmed attacker; however, these same basic skills are also applied when defending against weapons, such as knives or sticks. Generally, the material reflects a mainstream approach that is adaptable to a broad range of martial styles, tactics, and stick-like weapons.



Overview

The short-stick varies in size, but is usually 10 to 14 inches long and about 1 to 1 1/4 inches in diameter. It is usually made of oak, hickory, ash, or any other hardwood species that is resistant to chipping and splintering. Because of its short length, the short-stick is a highly effective and extremely mobile weapon, particularly at close range. When compared to the baton or longer sticks (18–30 inches), the short-stick permits rapid strike combinations in a short span of time. It is very useful in crowded or restricted spaces, where longer sticks become difficult to use. Its small size makes it easy to conceal in a sleeve, inside your jacket, or in a handbag. The short-stick is used for snapping strikes, spearing thrusts, blocks, or pressing attacks to assist joint locks, chokes, and throws. In strikes, it is usually targeted to bone or nerves, causing fractures or paralyzing nerve complexes. It can be used to defend against unarmed attacks or weapons, and was historically practiced as a sword defense in some Korean arts. The short-stick is said to have evolved from drumsticks used in temples.



Typical Short-Stick

Types of Short-Sticks

Most short-sticks fall into two categories: those with hand-cords, and those without. The hand-cord is used to secure the weapon in your hand, and assists the snapping and retraction motions used in strikes. It also keeps the stick from being knocked away or dropped, and allows a “looser” grip, which promotes speed and fluidity. Short-sticks without cords permit greater grip variation, allow more precise control of the stick, and do not *look* like a weapon—sometimes an important consideration. Generally, you should become fluent in using sticks with or without cords. In this book, *short-stick technique* is not restricted to a specific type of stick, but is meant to be applied using any common object which you might find handy to defend yourself with. A piece of pipe, a rolled up magazine, or a hand-tool can all become highly effective weapons when using short-stick techniques.

The short-stick consists of the following parts: tip, end, shaft, butt, and hand-cord (optional), all of which are used to apply techniques. The hand-cord is attached to the end of the stick in one of two ways: *center-cord* or *side-cord*. In the center-cord version (most common), the cord passes through a single hole located about one inch from the end of the stick; the cord ends are joined using a simple knot. In the side-cord version, the cord passes through two holes, with both ends exiting from the same side of the stick. In both versions, the knotted cord hooks your thumb and wraps the back of your hand to secure the stick.



Types of short-sticks: center-cord, side-cord, no cord

Common Grips

Three basic grips are commonly used to hold the short-stick: End Grip, Middle Grip, and Two-Hand Grip. The grip you will use depends upon the techniques you will be executing. Sometimes you will need to shift between grips as you apply a series of techniques.

End Grip

Grip the stick at one end, leaving 1 to 2 inches projecting past the edge of your hand. This grip is used in most situations, for the majority of techniques. Do not clench the weapon tightly. Maintain a loose grip, tightening it as you apply techniques. For snapping strikes, use wrist-action and the pull of your three smallest fingers, to propel the end of the stick forward (see photos).

Middle Grip

Grip the stick in the middle of the shaft. This grip is commonly used when hooking between the legs to throw, or when executing fast combinations using both ends to strike or block (the stick resembles a propeller with you arm acting as a shaft). This grip also works well with longer short-sticks. When using a hand-cord, you must leave enough slack for your hand to slide up the shaft.

Two-Hand Grip

Grip the stick at both ends, leaving about an inch projecting past the edges of your hands. This grip is often used to apply chokes, joint locks, thrusting strikes, or to trap the arms or legs. It can also be used for forceful blocks.



Holding a short-stick with a cord

Use of Ki-Finger

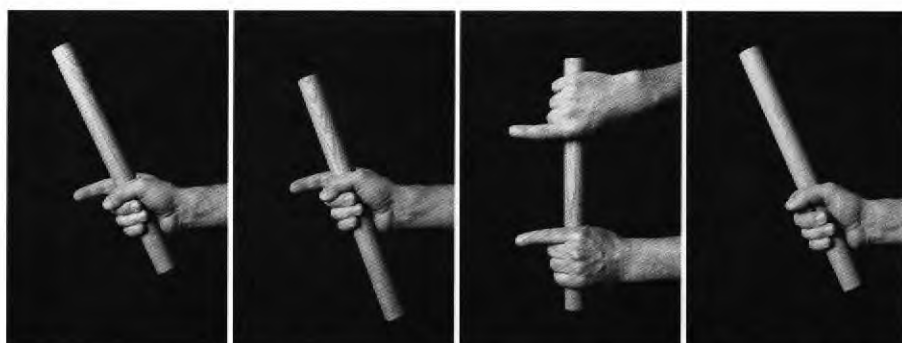
In some energy-oriented arts, stick techniques are often performed with the index finger extended. This generates mechanical power and increases the flow of Ki into the arm, hand, and weapon. However, in certain situations the finger is extremely vulnerable to being damaged or broken, particularly when blocking against another weapon. In fast exchanges it is difficult to prevent inadvertent clashes. When defending against a knife, sword, stick, baton, or long staff, an attacker will often target your hand, fingers, or wrist in order to dislodge the weapon or immobilize your hand. Extending your finger just makes it easier for them to do this. The extended Ki-finger provides many benefits; however, you would be wise to use it judiciously.

Carrying and Drawing the Short-Stick

The short-stick can be carried in a concealed location, such as your sleeve, inner jacket, pants pocket, or belt. From these locations it can be quickly drawn when needed. When using a hand-cord, leave the cord exposed or easily accessible (e.g., hanging out a pocket). To draw the weapon for use, pull the end of the cord, propelling the weapon in a circular motion around your hand, finishing in an End Grip. This basic drawing motion can also be combined with a strike to the temple, as you propel the weapon in a crescent-like arc.

Stances

Three common short-stick stances used to defend against unarmed attacks or weapons are shown at right. Many other stances are also possible. The *relaxed stance* is used to camouflage tactics, appear nonaggressive, and launch surprise attacks or counters. In the two *fighting stances* shown, the short-stick is held in the lead hand, with the tip pointing toward your opponent's face (about a 45° angle). The rear hand is typically held in front of your waist (hand open and relaxed, fingers together), or held loosely on your rear hip in a Live-Hand formation. In both photos, the feet maintain a Back Stance. Many other foot and hand placements are also practical. Be aware that preferences tend to vary widely by style.

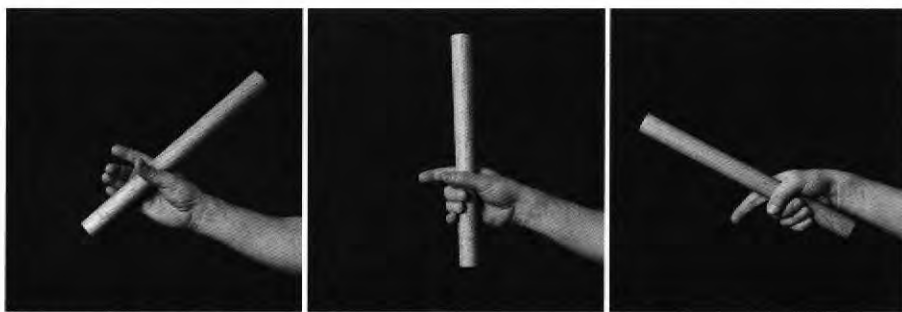


End Grip

Middle Grip

Two-Hand Grip

Ki-finger retracted for safety



Wrist and finger action used in snapping strikes



Drawing the short-stick



Relaxed Stance

Fighting Stance (open-hand forward)

Fighting Stance (Live-Hand on hip)

SHORT-STICK STRIKES

1. Descending Snap Strike

The short-stick follows a downward circular path. Snap the end of stick into the target by pulling with your smaller fingers, as you snap your wrist. Note that most of the stick-snap occurs late in delivery. This hand-action is what generates the snapping power. A common mistake is to strike with a rigid wrist. Typical targets include the forehead (GV-24), collarbone, and knuckles of a punch.



2. Inside Snap Strike

The short-stick follows an inward circular path. Snap the end of stick into the target by pulling with your smaller fingers as you snap your wrist. Most of the stick-snap occurs late in delivery. This hand-action is what generates the snapping power. A common error is to strike with a rigid wrist. Targets include the temple at GB-3, M-HN-9, or TW-23; ribs at SP-21 or LV-13; and knees.



3. Outside Snap Strike

The short-stick follows an outward circular path. Snap the end of stick into the target by pulling with your smaller fingers as you snap your wrist. Most of the stick-snap occurs late in delivery. This hand-action is what generates the snapping power. A common mistake is to strike with a rigid wrist. Targets include the temple at GB-3, M-HN-9, or TW-23; ribs at SP-21 or LV-13; and knees.



4. Inside Lateral Strike

Snap the stick sideways and down by rotating your wrist *inward*. Strike with the end of the stick. This strike is often used to block a punch by hitting into the wrist or elbow. It is frequently combined with the *Outside Lateral Strike* (see next technique), to create fast combinations against multiple punches. It can also be used to strike a kick, or hit the side of the head during close-range fighting.



Short-stick strikes can produce serious or life-threatening injuries. Exercise caution and restraint.

5. Outside Lateral Strike

Snap the stick sideways and down by rotating your wrist *outward*. Strike with the end of stick. This strike is often used to block a punch by hitting into the wrist or elbow. It can be combined with the *Inside Lateral Strike* (see previous strike), to create fast combinations against multiple punches. It is also used to strike a kick, or hit the side of the head during close-range fighting.



6. Straight Tip Thrust

Thrust the tip of stick straight forward into the target. Lock your wrist as you hit, to prevent injury. Grip tightly to prevent the stick from slipping through your hands during impact. You can also rotate your hand as you strike, similar to a Straight Fore Fist Punch. Typical targets include the eye, throat at CO-22, solar plexus at CO-15, and groin at LV-12 and SP-12.



7. Descending Butt Strike

The butt of the short-stick follows a downward circular path, similar to a Hammer Fist Strike. You will strike with the bottom tip, which projects below the pinky-side of your hand. Use an End Grip or Middle Grip. Grip tightly to keep the stick from slipping through your hands at impact. This strike is often used at close range to hit the collarbone, head, or spine; or to block a kick, by hitting the foot.



8. Rising Tip Strike

Hold the stick with an End Grip or Middle Grip. The tip of stick follows an upward circular path. Strike with the tip that projects above the thumb-side of your hand. A hand-cord will keep the stick from slipping, otherwise grip tightly. This strike is often used at close range to hit the underside of the chin, base of the nose, groin, or tailbone; or the chest, face, or throat of a bent-over opponent.



SHORT-STICK STRIKES

9. Inside Butt Strike

The butt of the short-stick follows an inward circular path. Twist your hand during delivery, with your palm facing up. Strike with the bottom tip, which is on the pinky-side of your hand. Use an End Grip or Middle Grip. Grip tightly to keep the stick from slipping through your hands at impact. This strike is often used at close range to hit the temple, side of the nose, jaw, neck, ribs, outer thigh (GB-31), and knee.



10. Outside Butt Strike

The butt of the short-stick follows an outward circular path, with your palm facing down. Strike with the bottom tip, which is on the pinky-side of your hand. Grip tightly to keep the stick from slipping through your hands at impact. This strike is useful when you are too close for snap strikes. Targets include the temple, jaw, rear base of the skull, neck, ribs, kidney, spine, outer thigh (GB-31), and knee.



11. Inside Tip Strike

The short-stick follows an inward circular path, with your palm facing down. Strike with the tip of stick, which is on the thumb-side of your hand. Use an End Grip or Middle Grip. Grip tightly to prevent the stick from slipping. This strike can be used to hook around an opponent's block, allowing you to hit targets when other strikes might fail. Targets include the temple, jaw, neck, ribs, and knees.



12. Outside Tip Strike

The stick follows an outward path. Twist your hand during delivery, finishing with your palm facing up. Strike with the tip of stick, which is on the thumb-side of your hand. Use an End Grip or Middle Grip. This strike is used at close range (e.g., grappling), to hit from odd angles or to hook around an opponent's block. The strike is uncommon, but is very useful in some situations. Target the ribs or head.



Short-stick strikes can produce serious or life-threatening injuries. Exercise caution and restraint.

13. Descending Shaft Strike

(grip with one or two hands)

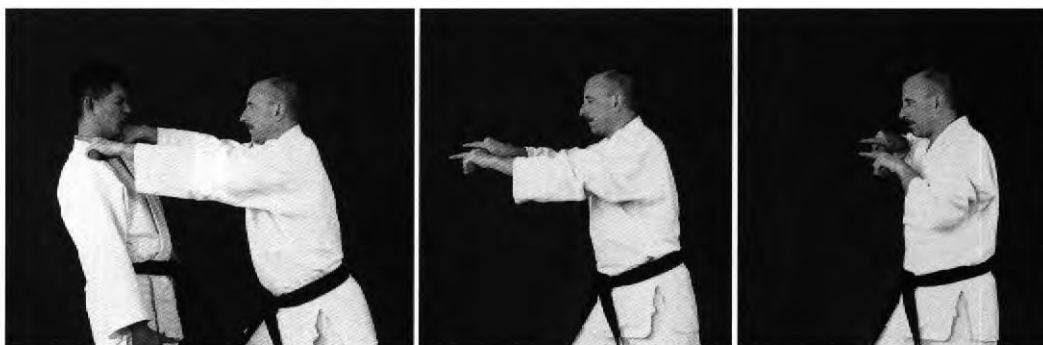
You can grip the stick at the end or middle, or with both hands. The shaft of the short-stick follows a downward circular path into the target. If desired, you can also snap your wrist forward at impact to add power. This is typically a glancing strike directed to the bridge of the nose at M-HN-4, top of the kneecap, or base of the skull when an opponent is bent-over.



14. Straight Shaft Thrust

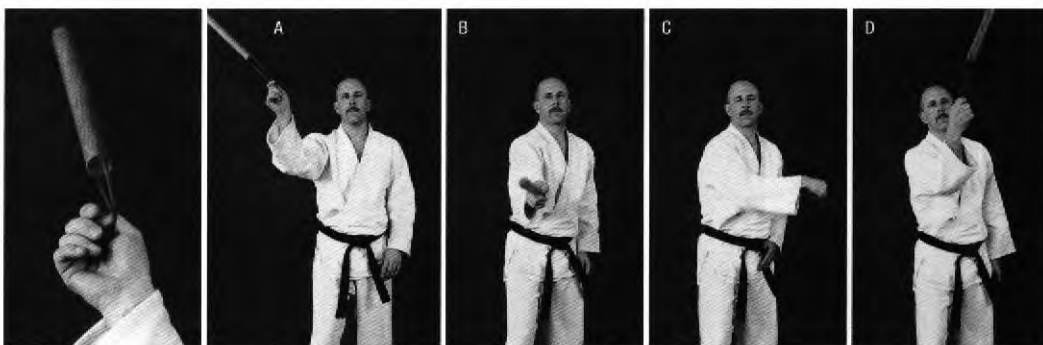
(grip with one or two hands)

You can grip the stick at the end or middle, or with both hands. Thrust the shaft straight forward into the target. A Two-Hand Grip is often used to provide a forceful blow that knocks an opponent backward. Targets include the bridge of the nose at M-HN-3, upper lip at GV-26, underside of the chin (hit up), throat, ribs, and chest. This strike can also be used to attack the knee when locking the leg.



15. Cord-Swing Strike

If you are using a hand-cord, the stick can be swung in various continuous circular patterns. Vertical, horizontal, and figure-8 paths (see photos) are all possible. These motions can be used to strike at greater distances or to keep attackers at bay. You can initiate the strike as part of a drawing motion, or by releasing your grip on the shaft. Keep your thumb hooked in the cord, so you can quickly regrip the stick.



16. Cord-Whip Strike

If you are using a short-stick with a hand-cord, the cord can also be used as a weapon. Grip the end of stick and whip the knot into the face or eyes. The knot's weight and velocity affect the severity of the blow. Adding a small wood or steel ball at the knot (1/2 in. diameter) greatly increases the strike's effectiveness. This strike can be used to distract or discourage someone you do not wish to hurt.



Short-stick strikes can produce serious or life-threatening injuries. Exercise caution and restraint.

13. Descending Shaft Strike

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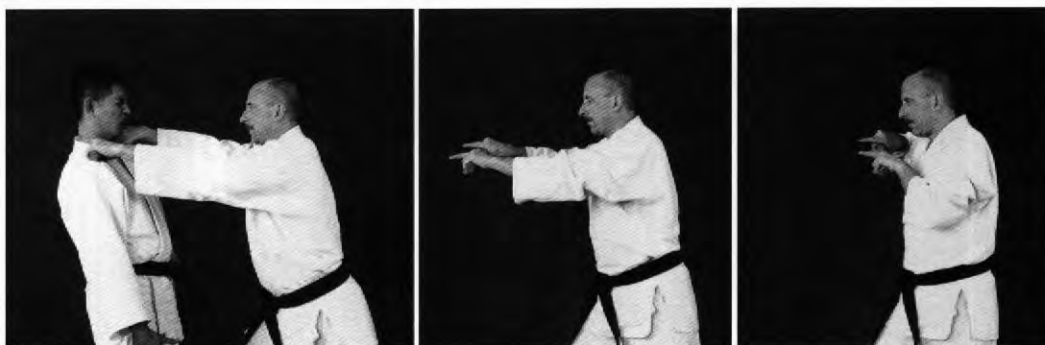
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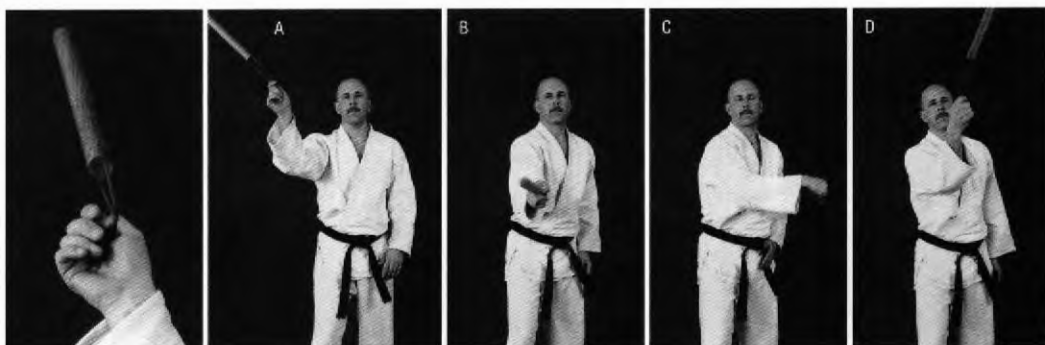
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SHORT-STICK BLOCKS

1. Rising Block

Block upward, from under the blow, using the shaft of the short-stick. Retract the block after you make contact. This motion can be used to execute a forceful snapping block, or to absorb your opponent's energy (like catching a baseball). A Rising Block is typically used to stop a descending strike, or deflect a high straight strike.

2. Inside High Block

Block inward using the shaft of the short-stick. Retract the block after you make contact. This motion can be used to execute a forceful snapping block, or to absorb your opponent's energy (like catching a baseball). This block is used to stop a horizontal strike to the side of your head, or deflect a high straight strike.

3. Outside High Block

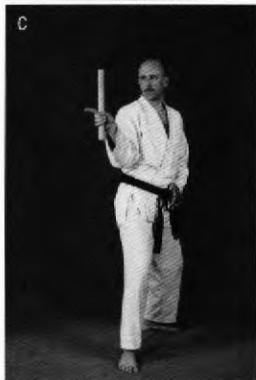
Block outward using the shaft of the short-stick. Retract the block after you make contact. This motion can be used to execute a forceful snapping block, or to absorb your opponent's energy (like catching a baseball). This block is used to stop a horizontal strike to the side of your head, or deflect a high straight strike.

4. Inside Middle Block

Block inward using the shaft of the short-stick (tip points up). Retract the block after you make contact. This motion can be used to execute a forceful snapping block, or to absorb your opponent's energy. This block is used to stop a horizontal strike to the side of your midsection, or deflect a straight strike to your chest.

5. Outside Middle Block

Block outward using the shaft of the short-stick (tip points down). Retract the block after you make contact. This motion can be used to execute a forceful snapping block, or to absorb your opponent's energy. This block is used to stop a horizontal strike to the side of your midsection, or deflect a straight strike to your chest.



6. Inside Low Block

Block inward using the shaft of the short-stick (tip points down). Retract the block after you make contact. This motion can be used to execute a forceful snapping block, or to absorb your opponent's energy. This block is used to stop a horizontal strike to your legs, or deflect a low straight strike to your groin or knees.

7. Outside Low Block

Block outward using the shaft of the short-stick (tip points down). Retract the block after you make contact. This motion can be used to execute a forceful snapping block, or to absorb your opponent's energy. This block is used to stop a horizontal strike to your legs, or deflect a low straight strike to your groin or knees.

8. Inside Blending Block

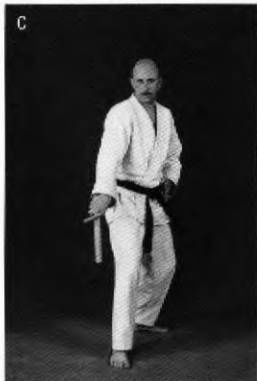
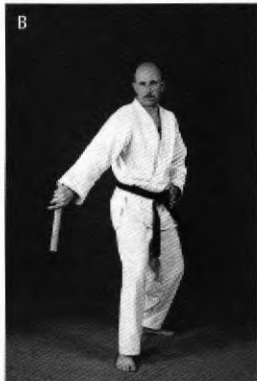
Similar to *Inside High Block* covered previously, except you will step laterally and pivot, to avoid the blow and blend with attacker's force. This block is used to stop horizontal strikes, or deflect straight thrusts. Against a sword or baton, the blending footwork is also used to move inside that weapon's ideal range, close to attacker.

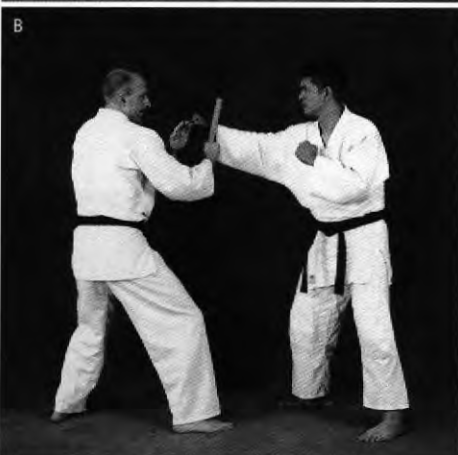
9. Outside Blending Block

Similar to *Outside High Block* covered previously, except you will step laterally and pivot, to avoid the blow and blend with attacker's force. This block is used to stop horizontal strikes, or deflect straight thrusts. Against a sword or baton, the blending footwork is also used to move inside that weapon's ideal range, close to attacker.

10. Down Block

Step 45° forward to avoid opponent's strike, as you block downward using the shaft of the short-stick. This block is used to deflect a low straight strike to your abdomen or groin. You will step to opponent's inside, against a right-handed weapon thrust. This block can also be executed as you step back to avoid a blow.





DEFENSES AGAINST STRIKES

Techniques 1–8 show short-stick defenses against hand strikes by an unarmed attacker. These skills can also be adapted for use against weapons such as sticks or knives. Although the skills may need to be modified, basic principles remain the same. When facing a weapon, you will often target strikes or blocks to an attacker's hand or arm, in order to dislodge the weapon, or damage the limb so it is incapable of handling a weapon. The techniques shown in this section can be initiated from Relaxed Stances or Fighting Stances.

1. Inside Block, Tip Thrust

Attacker steps forward and delivers a R punch. Step 45° to their inside. Execute an Inside Block with the stick, hitting a wrist acupoint on the LU or LI meridian (A–B). Grip their wrist with your L hand and pull it toward you, as you thrust the tip into the base of throat at CO-22 (C). Raise the stick (D) and execute an Inside Snap Strike to their kneecap, or their inner knee at SP-9 or SP-10 (E). If attacker is still standing, use your wrist hold to pull them off-balance to their left side or left rear-corner. Pull their wrist down as you step past them, forcing a fall (see 17, *Wrist Nerve Takedown*).

Important Points

The degree of force used in blocks and strikes should be adjusted based on the seriousness of the threat. Light force can be used to discourage further attack and prevent serious injuries. Against weapons or life-threatening attacks, more forceful, devastating blows may be justified. The strike to the knee is designed to end an encounter by reducing or eliminating your attacker's ability to move.





2. Inside Block + Outside Strike

Attacker steps forward and delivers a R punch. Step 45° forward to their inside. Execute an Inside Block with the stick, hitting a wrist acupoint on the LU or LI meridian (A–B). Grip attacker's wrist with your L hand and pull it toward you, as you execute an Outside Snap Strike to the temple at GB-3, M-HN-9, or TW-23 (C–D). Raise the stick and execute a Descending Snap Strike to attacker's forehead at GV-24 (E–F). If attacker is standing, wrap their neck with your R arm, plant your hips on their R thigh (G), and pull their head down to your left, executing a Head Hip Throw (H).

Important Points

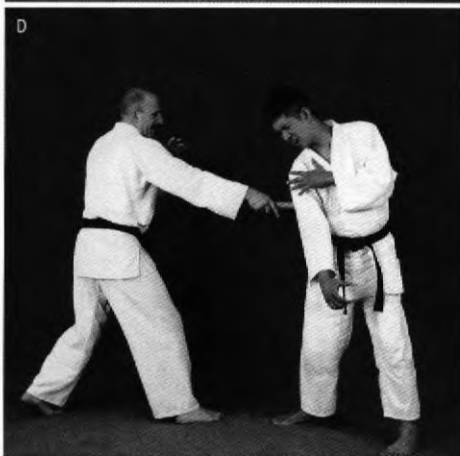
Common acupoint targets on the wrist are LU-7, LU-8, LU-9, and LI-5. The specific acupoint struck during your block is based upon the orientation of attacker's arm, which is determined by the type of strike attacker is executing. When wrapping the neck to apply the hip throw, you can also gouge the tip or butt of the short-stick into targets on the neck or face (e.g., ST-9, CO-22, ST-12).

Techniques 1–4

When practicing these defenses, the attacker punches with their right hand, either from a right lead or by stepping forward from a left lead. These basic block-and-strike counters can also be adapted to left-hand blows.



SHORT-STICK DEFENSES



3. Outside Block + Outside Strike

Attacker steps in and delivers a R punch. Step 45° to their outside with either foot. Execute an Outside Block with the stick, hitting the elbow at TW-10 or TW-11 (A–B). In a continuous circular motion, retract the stick toward your left shoulder (C), then whip it forward and outward, executing an Outside Snap Strike to the ribs at LV-13 or GB-25 (D). Continue the outward motion, raising the stick while your L hand pushes attacker's inner elbow into their body, trapping their arm (E). Execute a Descending Butt Strike to the collarbone at ST-12 (F). Follow with an Outer Reap Throw (G) (see *Knife Techniques* chapter, technique 12).

Important Points

Instead of executing an Outside Block (B), you can substitute an Outside Lateral Strike, which performs a similar function. In soft-styles such as Hapkido, this entire combo is characterized by fluid, continuous, circular motions, with each action leading to the next. Hard-styles should interpret these actions in a more linear manner. When throwing (G), leave your hands placed as in F, or wrap attacker's head with your R arm.

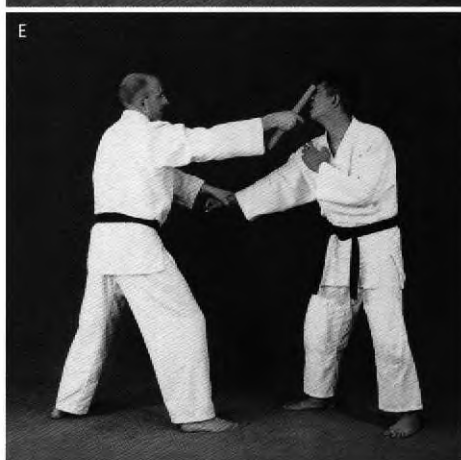
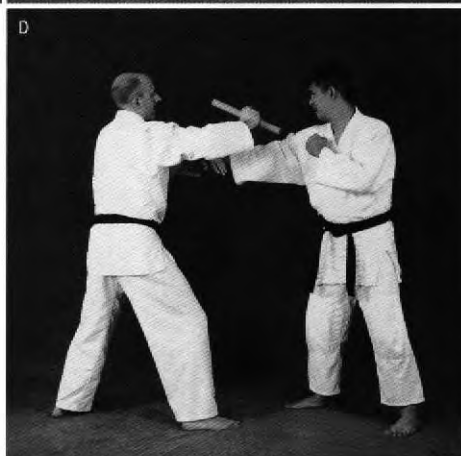


4. Propeller Strikes + Groin Reap

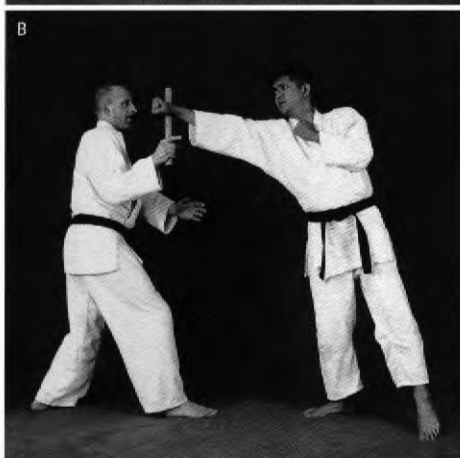
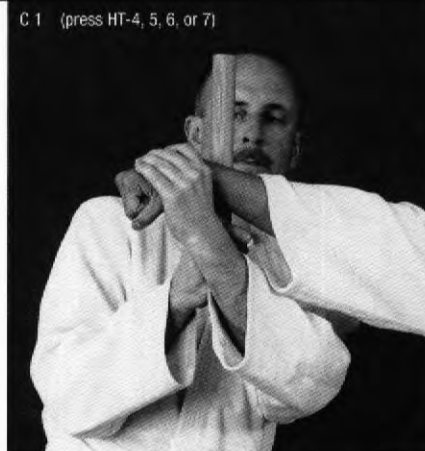
Grip the middle of stick (A). Attacker steps forward and delivers a R punch. Very rapidly twist your wrist clockwise, then counter-clockwise, hitting attacker's wrist on both sides, using both ends of the stick (B–C). Without pausing, grip their wrist as you snap the end of the stick downward to the forehead at GV-24 or M-HN-3 (D–E). These three strikes take less than 1 second. Step toward attacker and pull their arm, as you hit up into the groin with the butt (F). Pass the stick between their legs; hook both legs (G). Pull attacker's hips up toward you, as you lift and push their chin forward and down, forcing a Back Fall (H).

Important Points

Your footwork during E–G varies based on attacker's orientation to you. You must step toward attacker's open side, so you are properly positioned for the throw. A Forward Slide or Forward Shuffle both work well. Plant your lead leg between attacker's legs, maintaining a Back Stance. This permits greater *push-pull* power, and protects your groin from being kicked as attacker falls.



SHORT-STICK DEFENSES



5. Circular Parry + Inside Arm Bar

Attacker delivers a lunging R Straight Punch. Slip outside and parry their wrist with the stick (B). Reach under their arm with your L hand and grip their R wrist (C). Twist their arm clockwise, passing it down to your left. As you pass their arm, press the shaft into nerves at HT-4, 5, 6, or 7 to weaken resistance (D). Pull their arm straight and lock their elbow by lifting their wrist, as you drive the shaft down into their elbow at TW-11, forcing a fall (E-F).

Important Points

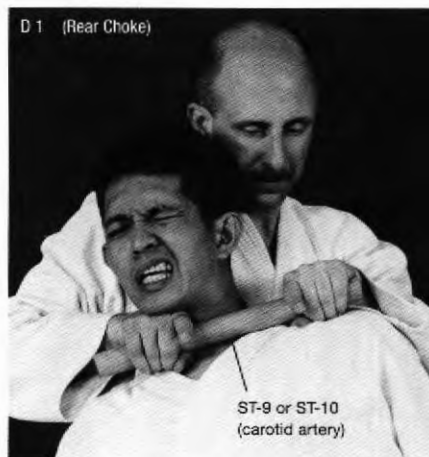
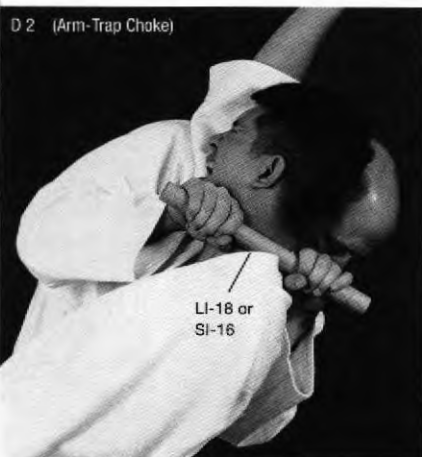
Do not block forcefully (B), or you will knock the arm away, making it difficult to seize the wrist. When initially entering, you can also use the stick to parry the arm downward toward your left hand, gripping much later than what is shown in the photos. The stick is a highly efficient at affecting nerves at the triceps tendon (TW-11) and will cause considerable pain if accurately placed. For deep penetration and greater efficiency, bend your R wrist and draw the stick slightly toward the tip of the elbow, as you apply the arm bar.

6. Lateral Strike + Rear Choke

Attacker delivers a lunging R Straight Punch. Step outside with your L foot. Execute an Outside Lateral Strike to the wrist, pushing it down (A-B). Slide the stick up the arm, to the throat (C). Step behind and grip the stick with two hands. Choke by pressing the shaft into ST-9 or ST-10. Thrust your hips into attacker's lower spine, unbalancing them backward (D). If they lift their arm during step C, reach under it and apply an Arm-Trap Choke instead (D2).

Important Points

Step well past attacker as you parry the punch. When sliding the stick into their throat, you can hit forcefully into these targets if needed. Exercise extreme caution when applying chokes. The stick is a highly efficient strangulation device that requires much less strength than a bare-arm choke. Use *wrist-action* for greater efficiency. If attacker drops their chin to counter your choke, drive the shaft into their jaw (very painful), or shift to the side of the neck and attack LI-18 or SI-17. Avoid pressing the windpipe, since this is life threatening.



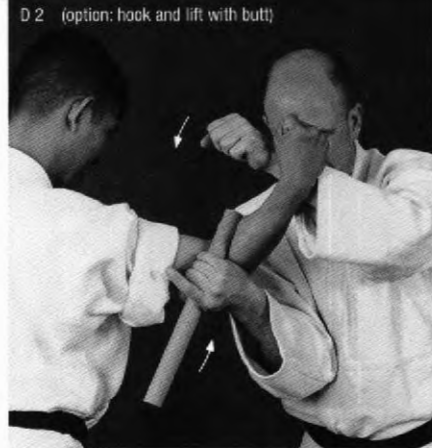
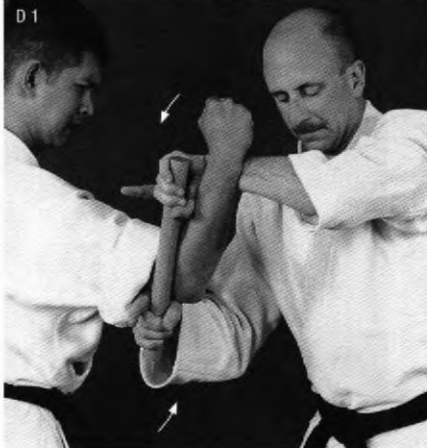
D 2 (Arm-Trap Choke)

D 1 (Rear Choke)

LI-18 or
SI-16

ST-9 or ST-10
(carotid artery)

SHORT-STICK DEFENSES



7. Inside-Lift Shoulder Lock

Attacker steps forward and delivers a R Straight Punch or Hook Punch. Step to their inside with your R foot, as you execute a L Rising Block to their wrist (B). Reach under attacker's arm with the stick. Hit up into their inner elbow, as you push their wrist forward, bending their arm (C). Grip the end of stick with your L hand. Lock the shoulder by pushing their wrist downward with your L wrist, as you lift their elbow with the shaft at LI-11 (D). Maintain the lock as you pivot to your left, unbalancing attacker and forcing a fall (E-F).

Important Points

This counter works best when an attacker strikes with their arm bent, or pulls away (bending their arm). As you initially enter (B), be ready to block a left punch at any time. As you apply the lock, keep attacker's arm bent and place your hips close to theirs as you pivot (E). In photo F, the attacker executes a Flip Side Fall to prevent their shoulder from dislocating. An inexperienced martial artist will not do this, in which case you must lower your body as you throw, if you wish to prevent serious injury.





8. Throat Shoulder Lock

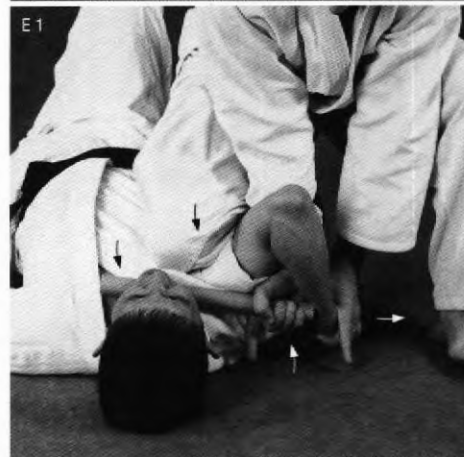
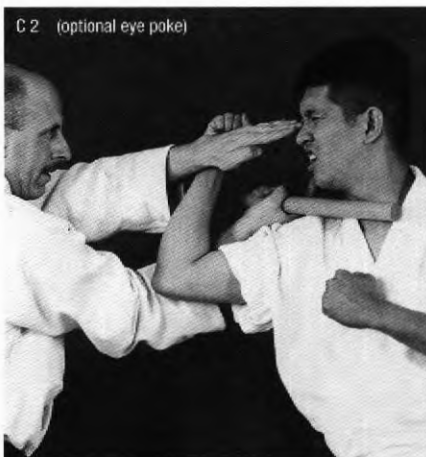
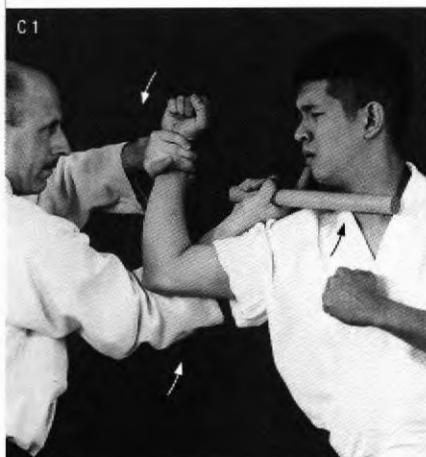
Attacker steps forward and delivers a R Straight Punch or Hook Punch. Step to their inside with your R foot, as you execute a L Rising Block to the wrist (B). Grip their wrist and push it forward, as you reach under their arm and plant the shaft across their throat (C). Lock the shoulder and choke: push the wrist downward with your L hand, lift their elbow with your elbow, and lever the end of the stick into their throat. At the same time, pivot 180° and force a fall (D). Kneel on their shoulder, maintaining the joint lock and choke (E).

Important Points

If an opponent resists the shoulder lock during step C, distract them by sliding your L Spear Hand into their eyes (C2). While you do this, continue pushing on their wrist with your wrist, then regrip their wrist and reapply the lock. The body pivot (D–E) is fairly important, since it unbalances your opponent, even if the joint lock is failing. Keep attacker's arm bent and place your hips close to theirs as you pivot. As your hips get further away, the pivot and joint lock usually become less efficient.

Pinning Considerations

To pin (E), kneel on attacker's shoulder and pull their wrist laterally with their elbow bent and pointing up. This locks their arm and shoulder (E). At the same time, press your R thigh laterally into their upper arm (assists the joint lock), as you continue levering the stick against their throat. Exercise caution to prevent crushing the windpipe, since this is usually a fatal injury unless expert medical care is immediately available.



SHORT-STICK DEFENSES



DEFENSES AGAINST KICKS

Techniques 9–12 show short-stick defenses against kicks. Right-leg kicks are shown; however, these techniques can also be adapted for left-leg kicks. Most of the stick defenses shown in this section are based on techniques used in unarmed defenses, which are covered in the author's books *The Art of Throwing* and *Hapkido: Traditions, Philosophy, Technique*.

9. Inside Block + Strike Neck

As attacker executes a R Roundhouse Kick, step to their inside with your R foot. Execute an Inside High Block with the stick, to the ankle or instep (A–B). As kicker plants their leg (moving forward), retract the stick toward your L shoulder (C) and execute an Outside Snap Strike to the side of the neck at LI-18 (D). Raise the stick overhead and execute a Descending Shaft Strike to the bridge of the nose at M-HN-4 (F). If possible, try to grip attacker's wrist during steps C–D.

Important Points

The force of attacker's kick will likely fracture bones in their foot as it contacts the block. Try to grab attacker's wrist as they plant their foot and you prepare the first strike. Use this wrist hold to pull attacker into your strikes, manipulate their balance, and prevent them using that hand to counter. The first strike is directed into the center of the sternocleidomastoid muscle, which is also the site of numerous important nerves. The descending strike (F) will usually fracture the nasal bone.

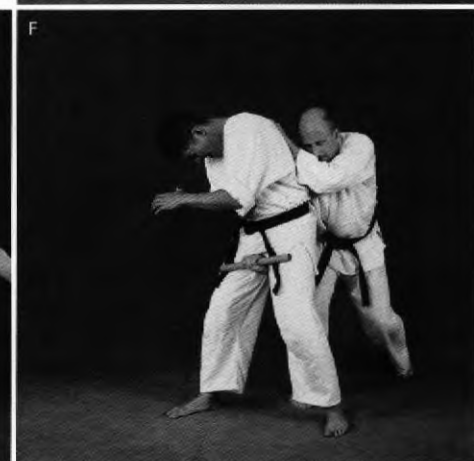
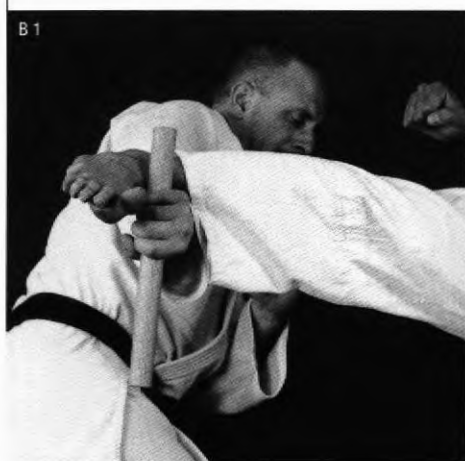


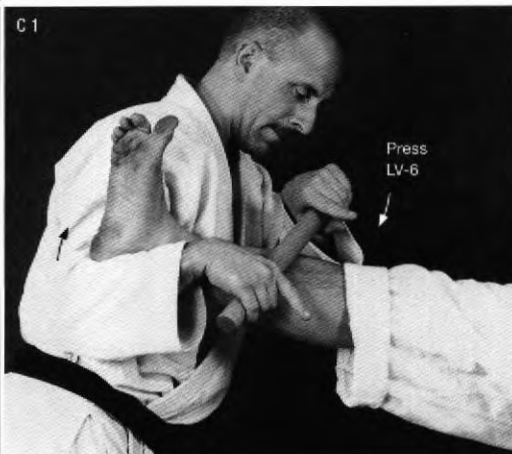
10. Hook Block + Strike Knee

Step 45° outside to avoid a R Side Kick. Deflect and lift the ankle with your R forearm, hooking the butt around the ankle to trap the leg (B). Drop low and execute an Inside Snap Strike to the inner knee (SP-9 or SP-10) or kneecap (C). Grip attacker's collar (D) and pull backward, as you thrust the butt into their kidney at GB-25 (E). Step behind, pass the stick between their legs, and hook both thighs (F). Lift up (wrist presses genitalia), as your L hand pushes the spine, forcing a Front Fall (G).

Important Points

This technique can also be applied without dropping to one knee during step C, although some form of up-down action usually hinders counterstrikes. Good timing and quick footwork is important, so that the techniques rapidly follow one another as you move past and behind attacker. When throwing, make sure your body is turned sideways and your feet are aligned with attacker's midline. This keeps you from being kicked in the groin as attacker falls (G). A Back Stance is typical.





11. Outside Shin-Press Throw

As attacker executes a R Front Kick or Side Kick, step to their outside with your L foot. Deflect the ankle outward and lift it with your R forearm, hooking the butt around the ankle to trap it (A–B). Circle your R forearm upward, trapping the ankle in your inner elbow. Place the shaft across the inner shin and grip the other end (C). Press the shaft downward into LV-6, as you lift the ankle with your elbow. At the same time, rotate the leg counterclockwise and throw toward kicker's right rear-corner (D).

Important Points

This throw is based on the same principles as many other nerve attacks: create pain and unbalance. Since you are stepping to attacker's outside, you are in a somewhat safer position. Begin turning their leg as soon as you wrap it, to prevent them from countering with a Scissor Throw. When applying stick pressure (C1), use *wrist-action* (bend your wrists and draw the stick slightly toward you). As you lower attacker to the ground, guard against a Roundhouse Kick to your head. If necessary, follow with a Stamp Kick to the groin.

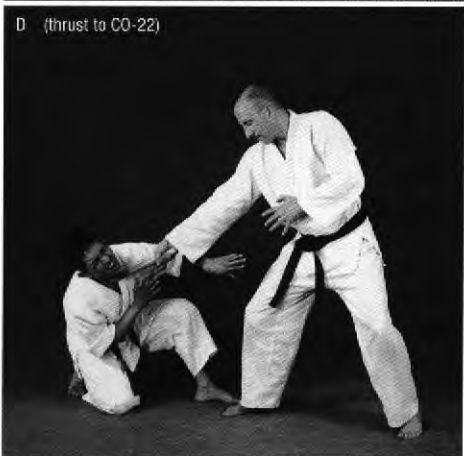
12. Leg Outer Reap

As attacker executes a R Front Kick or Side Kick, step to their outside with your L foot. Deflect the leg outward and lift it with your R forearm (A–B). Wrap your R arm under the knee and plant the butt on the upper-inner knee at SP-10. At the same time, step forward with your R foot, placing it behind the lower leg as you unbalance attacker toward their right side or right rear-corner (C). Lift their knee and continue pressing the butt into nerves, as you reap their leg upward with your calf (D).

Important Points

You will need to adjust your entry footwork (B–C) based on the length of attacker's leg and the distance you need to cover. There are many possibilities: skips, hops, slides, or several quick, short steps are all useful depending on circumstances. Direct the throw toward attacker's right side or right rear-corner. When throwing, exercise caution: it is very easy to over-rotate attacker's body, causing them to land on their head, resulting in skull fractures or a broken neck. You can also leave your foot planted as you throw (Leg Foot-Plant Throw).





DEFENSES AGAINST HOLDS

Techniques 13–16 show short-stick defenses against simple holds by an unarmed attacker. When defending against simple grabs to your arms, body, or clothing, any simple short-stick strike or nerve-press will usually release the hold. Techniques 13, 14, and 15 are counters used if an attacker grabs your stick, and closely resemble unarmed defenses against wrist grabs (covered in the author's books *The Art of Holding* and *Hapkido: Traditions, Philosophy, Technique*). These same skills can also be used if you are defending against a stick attack and manage to grip your attacker's weapon during the course of combat. Both situations essentially begin with the same circumstances: two individuals are gripping the same stick at the same time. Technique 16 shows a counterhold to a choke. Chokes can also be released by simple strikes or pressure to nerves. This is often easily accomplished, since an attacker's hands are often occupied with the choke. Since a choke can often be life threatening, greater force may be justified.

13. Bent-Arm Wrist Lock

Attacker grabs your stick (A). Lead the stick inward (fake). Reverse direction, rotating the end of the stick under, outward, and over their wrist. Attacker's wrist and elbow are bent and twisted (B). Grip the end of the stick with your L hand. Lock the wrist by pushing the shaft down into the wrist at SI-5 or HT-7, as you pull up on the butt. Your hands trace a tight, vertical circular path. Force attacker to their knees or belly (C). If necessary, thrust the tip into the lower throat at CO-22 (D).

Important Points

This defense can be used against a grab from either hand, anywhere on the stick. The joint lock is very similar to unarmed versions: you are merely using the stick to apply leverage more efficiently. Gripping at the stick's ends will provide the greatest force with the least effort (C1). You can also grip the attacker's hand or fingers, trapping them against the stick (C2). This prevents an attacker from releasing their grip to escape. When locking the wrist, keep the stick pointing at attacker's midline; otherwise, efficiency is reduced.

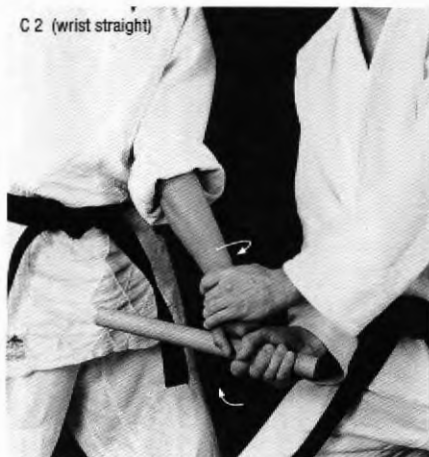
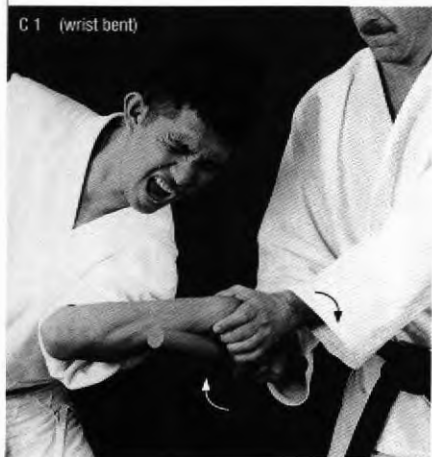


14. Outward Wrist Lock

Attacker grabs your stick (A). Lead the stick outward (fake). Reverse direction, rotating the end of the stick under, inward, and over their wrist. The wrist is twisted outward (B). Continue circling their wrist clockwise, as you grip their hand with your L hand, trapping it on the stick. Lock their wrist outward by lifting the stick into the joint at LU-7, as you twist their hand downward (C). Unbalance attacker backward, forcing a fall. A skilled opponent will initiate a Flip Side Fall to prevent injury (D).

Important Points

The joint lock is similar to unarmed versions: you are merely using the stick to apply leverage more efficiently. Use a tight circular motion to twist and lock attacker's wrist. Be sure to trap their hand tightly against the stick with your L hand. This tightens the joint lock. This hold can be applied with attacker's wrist and elbow either bent (C1) or straight (C2). The second version (C2) is executed by stepping in close, as you pass their twisted-wrist low across the front of their body. This can also cause their elbow to lock against their belly.



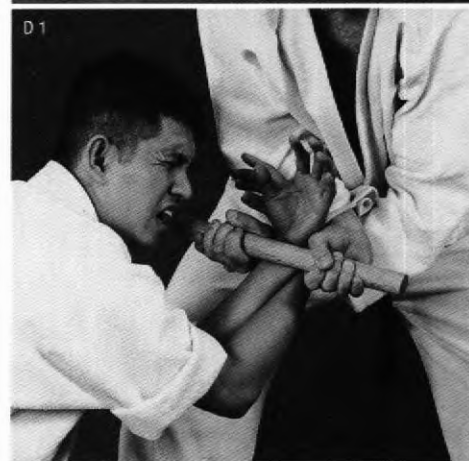
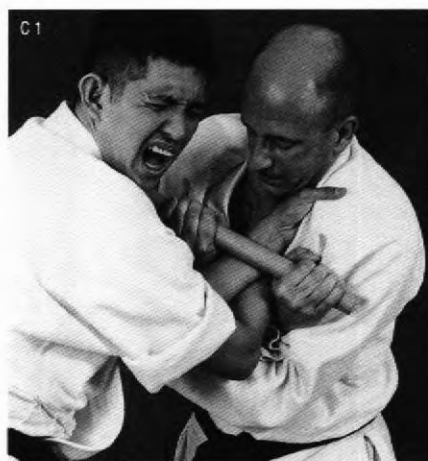
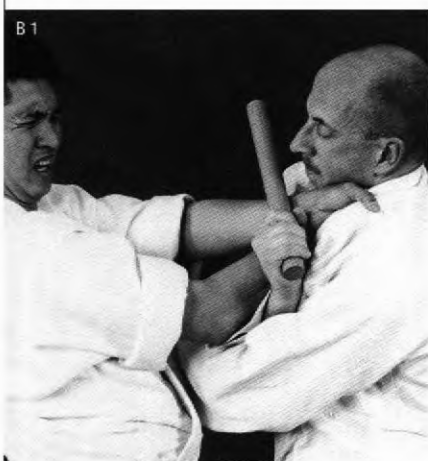


16. Twin Wrist Trap

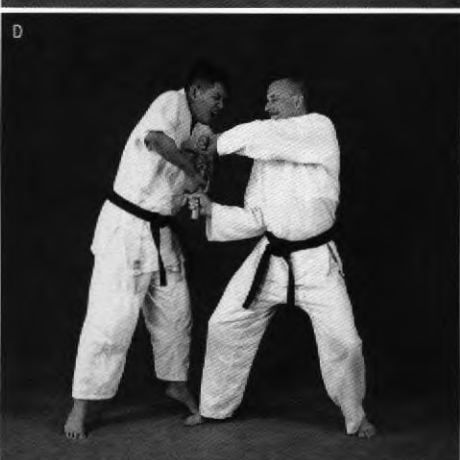
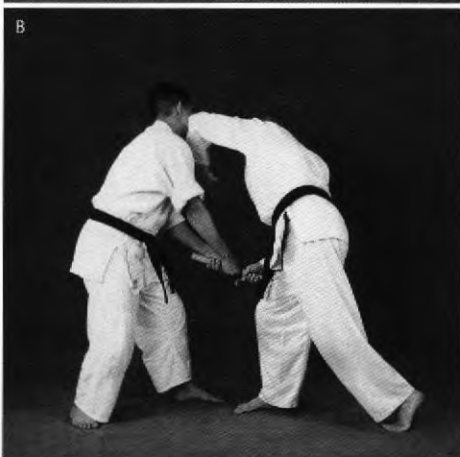
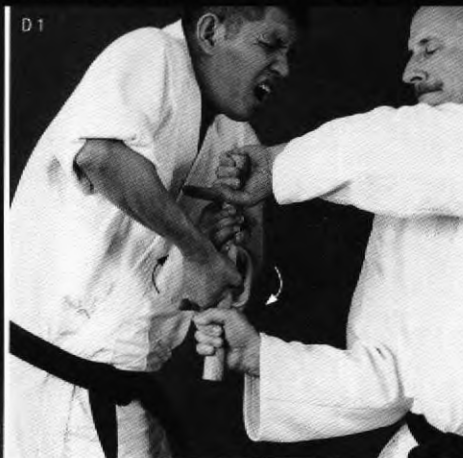
Attacker applies a Double Lapel Choke with their wrists crossed (A). Bring the stick under their arms and place it over both wrists (B). Reach under their arms with your L hand and grip the end of the stick. Your arms are now crossed. Press the shaft into nerves on the top-wrist (e.g., LU-7) by driving your elbows apart (C). Pain releases the choke. Maintain your hold, step away, and force a fall (D). Release one of your grips and raise the stick. If justified, execute a Descending Snap Strike (E) or a Descending Butt Strike.

Important Points

If an attacker applies this choke with their head close to yours (better leverage), you can hit attacker's face or jaw with the tip of the stick, as it crosses over their wrists. Generally, any choke should be taken very seriously, since it can quickly render you unconscious or produce life-threatening injuries. If this counter is failing, act quickly. Since both of attacker's hands are occupied, and yours are free, a range of simple strikes can be easy to apply, such as a poke to the head or groin.



SHORT-STICK DEFENSES

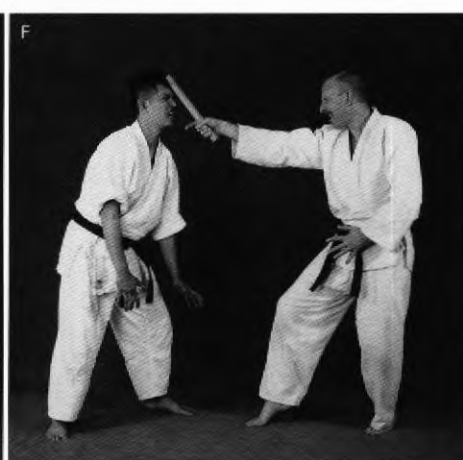


15. Rising Escape + Strike

Attacker grabs the middle of your stick, with both hands (A). Pivot your body as you execute a L Inside Elbow Strike downward into the jaw, temple, or cheek (B). As you finish the striking motion, grip the end of the stick with your L hand (C). Using both hands, rotate the stick in a vertical circular motion, pulling it upward and levering it out of attacker's hands, as you pivot your body (D–E). Attacker will release their grips as their wrists lock (D1). If justified, execute a Descending Snap Strike to the forehead at GV-24 (F).

Important Points

This escape is very similar to an unarmed wrist escape: you are merely gripping the stick instead of your arm. This counter is characterized by three opposing circular motions that are linked, with each motion leading into the next. During C–E, your 180° body-turn and backward momentum are essential for creating power. When levering the stick, keep it on a vertical plane; otherwise, efficiency is reduced. The initial strike (B) is used to set up your escape, but can be omitted if desired.





ATTACKING FIRST

Short-stick techniques 17–20 are used to execute an offensive action, and can be initiated from either relaxed stances or fighting stances. The short-stick strikes covered earlier can also be used to attack first, although this level of force is rarely justified, unless facing multiple attackers, an overpowering opponent, a life-threatening situation, or a potentially lethal weapon. When facing a weapon, target your blows to the hand and arm, to dislodge the weapon. The attacks shown can also be adapted for defensive situations.

17. Wrist Nerve Takedown

From a relaxed stance (A), step 45° forward to your left, with your R foot. Grab opponent's R hand with your L hand (B). Press the shaft downward into nerves at LU-7, as you pull upward on their hand (C). This pressure point is located on the inner edge of the radius bone, just above the wrist. As opponent lowers their body to relieve pain, continue pulling their wrist down and unbalance them toward their right side or right rear-corner, forcing a fall (D).

Important Points

The hard edge of a stick is ideally suited for attacking nerves. Although LU-7 is the primary target, the hardness of the stick allows you to gouge nerves at points several inches higher as well. Make sure the stick remains on the inner edge of the radius bone. Pressing into the flat inner-side of the forearm is usually ineffective. The Wrist Nerve Takedown can also be adapted for attacks to opponent's other wrist. When throwing an opponent toward their right rear-corner, charge *past* their right side as you drive their wrist down. This unbalances them, even if the nerve attack is ineffective.

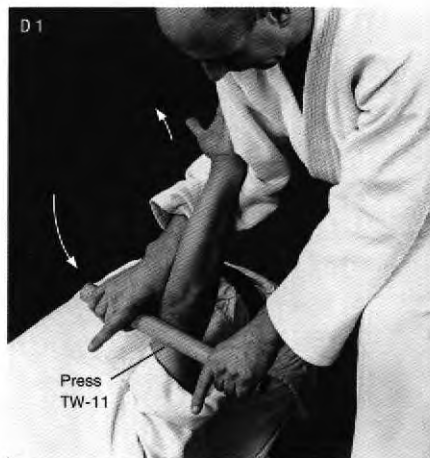
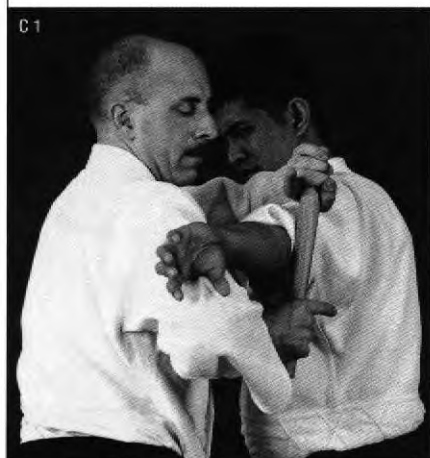
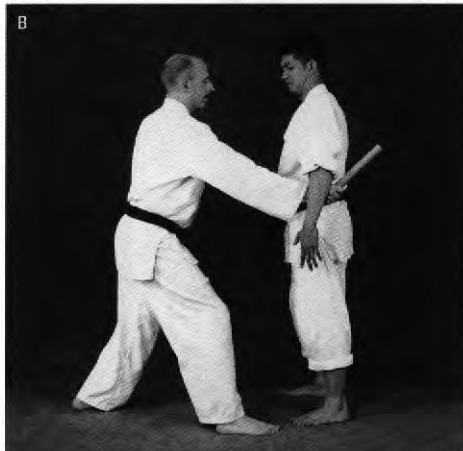


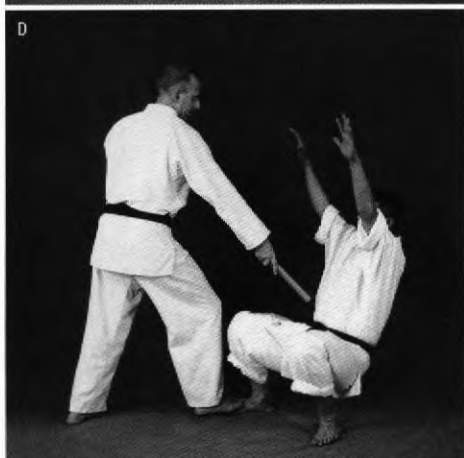
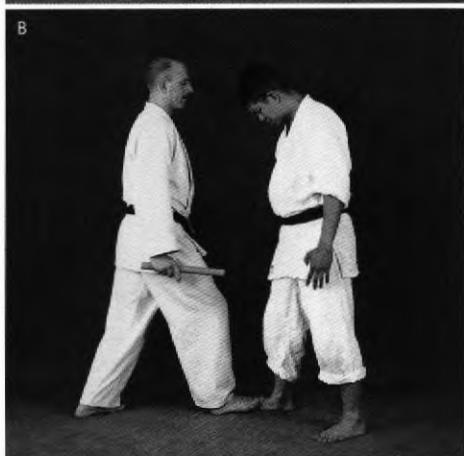
18. Two-Hand Arm Bar

From a relaxed stance (A), step forward with your R foot. Slip your R hand under opponent's arm and lift it upward (B). Step behind your R foot with your L foot and pivot 180°. At the same time, guide their wrist onto your inner elbow or upper shoulder. Place the shaft across the elbow at TW-11 and grip the stick with both hands (C). Continue pivoting as you step away, pressing downward on the elbow to lock it. Force opponent to drop and pin them (D).

Important Points

You can trap opponent's wrist between your neck and shoulder, or in your inner elbow (D1). When using your shoulder, hunch it and angle your head, to keep the wrist from slipping off. Use *wrist-action* when pressing the shaft into TW-11 (bend your wrists, draw the stick slightly toward you). Lift opponent's wrist with your inner elbow to increase leverage. The direction of unbalance depends on the placement of attacker's feet, but is usually their left side or left front-corner. If they bend their arm during the entry, shift to an *Elbow Hammer Lock* (see *Cane Techniques* chapter, technique 18).





19. Stomp + Groin Push Throw

From a relaxed stance (A), step quickly forward to opponent's outside with your R foot, placing it on top of opponent's R foot (B). Weight your R leg, trapping their foot. At the same time, thrust the tip of the stick into nerves in the groin region at LV-12 and SP-12 (C). Your opponent will lean backward to relieve painful pressure, compromising their balance. Continue pushing the stick forward and down, forcing opponent to fall backward (D). You can also throw by pressing the throat at CO-22.

Important Points

This throw should be well disguised. Plant the tip of the stick in the groin, using a natural swinging motion as you step inward in a Relaxed Walking Stance. Do not raise the stick or make any motion that signals your intent. Target the hip-leg joint. Note that you are standing to opponent's outside as you throw, making it more difficult for them to launch counterstrikes or kicks. If opponent's foot is pinned as they fall, it is possible for their ankle to fracture. This throw can also be applied by planting your R calf behind their R calf.





20. Neck Hip Throw

Opponent is standing behind you (A). Step backward between their legs, lower your hips, and thrust the butt into their groin (B). This brings their head forward, even if the strike fails. Reach back, wrap their neck (C), and grip the stick. Pull opponent onto your hip. Choke by pressing your biceps into the windpipe, and both forearms into the carotid arteries, as both hands pull the shaft into cervical nerves (D). Throw by pulling opponent's head downward toward your left, as you raise your hips (E).

Important Points

This throw is basically the same as unarmed versions, in which you grip with your hands. Plant your R buttock in the center of opponent's hips. Your hip should be low with your right leg bent. Raise your hip by extending your R leg, as you pull opponent over. This hip-action provides substantial lift. It is also possible to choke opponent unconscious without throwing. You can also throw an opponent standing in front of you (the grips are identical): apply a choke with your wrists crossed, pivot 180°, and pull opponent onto your hips.



The staff is a long straight pole that is anywhere from 4 1/2 to 6 feet long. There are many different systems of staff fighting, which are characterized by differing ideals that determine weapon characteristics, preferred techniques, appropriate use of force, and the circumstances and manner in which techniques should be executed. The staff techniques shown in this chapter, and the martial philosophy behind them, stem primarily from the author's experiences in the martial art of Hapkido. Consequently, this material consists

STAFF TECHNIQUES

of an eclectic range of strikes, holds, and throws that can be applied with varying levels of force, based on what is appropriate and justifiable. This chapter begins with an overview of important underlying concepts and principles, followed by typical staff defenses against unarmed attackers, multiple opponents, and weapons, as well as unarmed defenses against a staff. Generally, the material reflects a mainstream approach that is adaptable to a broad range of martial art styles, tactical strategies, and staff-like weapons.



Overview

The staff (called *Chang-bong* in Korean, or *Bo* in Japanese) is a long straight pole. Its size is based on a person's needs, but is usually 5 to 6 feet long, and 1 to 1 1/4 inches in diameter. Most staffs are made of wood which is very hard, but also flexes slightly to keep from breaking. Since the staff is quite long, strikes generate powerful leverage which creates extreme stress along the shaft. Consequently, proper choice of materials is very important. Today most staffs are made of white oak, hickory, or other hardwoods that are resistant to denting, fracturing, or being cut by a bladed weapon. The specific wood you use will also influence the staff's weight. Some people prefer lighter staffs, which promote speed and handling-dexterity. Others prefer heavier staffs, which provide greater stopping-power.

Because of its long length, the staff functions best at distances of 5 to 9 feet from the target, although close range techniques are also practiced. The staff is usually held with two hands in order to give it power, speed, and precise handling. By using quick-sliding and rapid grip changes along the length of the weapon, the staff's range is adjusted based on distance or tactics. For example, short length grips are used at close range or to lure an opponent in closer, while longer length grips are used at greater distances or to keep an opponent at bay. Typical techniques include circular strikes, spearing thrusts, pushes, blocks, parries, traps, holds, pins, chokes, and throws. The staff can be used to defend against unarmed attacks or weapons, and is highly effective against multiple opponents.

Types of Staff

Historically, there were many different types of staffs. Some of the more common designs are pictured opposite. Round shapes were favored for their humble appearance and utilitarian uses, such as walking or carrying loads. Multi-edge shapes (square, hexagonal, octagonal) were often used in military applications to increase damage during strikes. In areas where hardwoods were not available, Bamboo was often substituted to

provide light weight, strength, and resilience. The other weapons shown below (spear, halberd, oar) are not technically "staffs," but are handled using staff-like techniques.

Today, the most commonly used designs are the *round* or *tapered-round*. The tapered-round is a more sophisticated design. It is 1 1/4 inches thick at the center and tapers to 3/4 inch at the end. This taper creates a stronger center of gravity in the middle of staff, provides better balance, and increases tensile strength along the shaft, reducing breakage. Generally, most practical-minded practitioners prefer the simple round design, since it more closely resembles a common everyday object. This idea is central to this book's approach to weaponry, which encourages practitioners to use anything at hand for self-defense. Staff techniques can be applied to many common objects, such as a walking stick, piece of pipe, broom stick, shovel, building lumber, oar, closet rod, or pool cue.

Common Grips

Five basic grips are commonly used to hold the staff: Overhand Grip, Over-Under Grip, Swing Grip, One-Hand Grip, and Palm Grip. You will often shift between different grips as you apply a series of techniques.

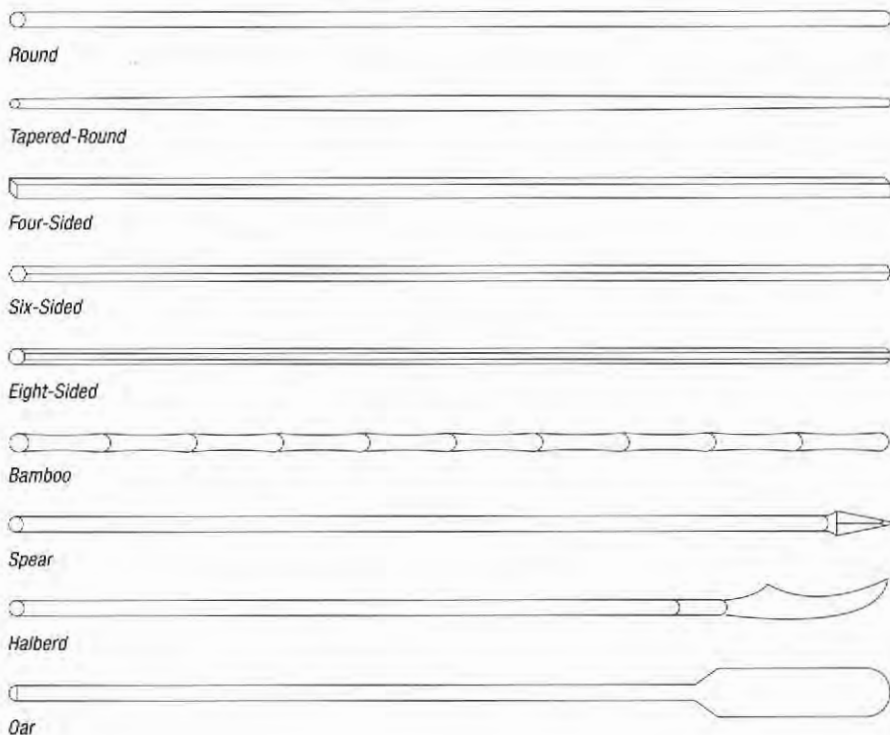
Overhand Grip

Grip the staff in the center-portion, with both hands about shoulder-width apart, and both palms facing down. The placement of your hands will roughly divide the staff into thirds. This grip mostly favors defensive techniques, such as blocking and counterstriking. It is used extensively in many martial arts.

Over-Under Grip

Grip the staff in the center-portion, with both hands about shoulder-width apart. The staff is usually held at an angle across your body. The upper-hand palm faces up; the lower-hand palm faces down. This grip mostly favors offensive techniques, such as striking.

Types of Staff



Swing Grip

Hold the staff near one end, using the previous *Over-Under Grip*. The lead palm faces up; the rear palm faces down. The hands can either butt together or be farther apart, based on the technique. This grip is used for long-range circular strikes to multiple attackers.

One-Hand Grip

Hold the staff with one hand only. This grip is typically used during specific maneuvering techniques, or to execute initial strikes and blocks from relaxed stances. Grip placement varies based on the technique.

Palm Grip

With your hands open, hold the staff using your thumb, index finger, and palm. The staff can be held horizontal, at an angle, or vertical. When horizontal, the palms face up and down. When vertical, both palms face up. The *Palm Grip* is a *brief transitional hold* used to change grips or maneuver the staff. It is usually linked to pivoting or sliding motions along the shaft.

Use of Ki-Finger

In some energy-oriented arts, staff techniques are performed with the index finger extended. This generates mechanical power and increases the flow of Ki into the arm, hand, and weapon. However, in certain situations the finger is extremely vulnerable to being damaged or broken, particularly when blocking against another weapon. In these situations, the finger is often retracted.

Stances

Typical staff stances are shown opposite. The *Formal Stance* is used during demonstrations. The *Relaxed Stances* are used to camouflage tactics, signal non-aggressive intentions, and launch surprise attacks or counterattacks. There are two common fighting stances: The *Defensive Fighting Stance* uses a right lead, with the feet in a Back Stance; the staff is held horizontally across your body, with an *Overhand Grip*. The *Offensive Fighting Stance* uses a left lead, with the feet in a Front Stance; the staff is held at an upward angle, using an *Overhand* or an *Over-Under Grip*.

Grips



Overhand Grip



Over-Under Grip



Swing Grip



One-Hand Grip



Palm Grip



Stances



Formal Stance



Relaxed Stance (vertical staff)



Relaxed Stance (horizontal staff)



Defensive Fighting Stance (Back Stance)



Offensive Fighting Stance (Front Stance)

1. Descending Strike

Hold the staff with an Overhand Grip. Raise your R hand as you step forward with your R foot. Whip the R end of staff forward and down into the head, as you pull back with your L hand toward your L side. The staff follows a vertical circular path. Targets include the top of the head at GV-22, forehead at GV-24, or top of the shoulder. This strike can also be executed using an Over-Under Grip.



2. Reverse Descending Strike

This is the same as the previous *Descending Strike*, except you will pull your L hand to your R armpit, finishing with your L forearm crossing your chest. This strike is often used when both ends of the staff are already held at one side of your body—for example, after a Middle Block or Rising Strike. This strike can also be executed using an Over-Under Grip.



3. Inside High Strike

Hold the staff with an Overhand Grip. Raise your L hand as you step forward with your L foot. Whip the L end of staff forward and inward to the side of the head, as you pull back with your R hand toward your R side. The strike is delivered using a horizontal circular motion, or by sweeping the L end from low to high. Target the temple at GB-3, M-HN-9, or TW-23. An Over-Under Grip is also useable.



4. Outside High Strike

Hold the staff with an Overhand Grip. Step forward with your L foot. Circle the L end of staff inward to opponent's outside, then snap it outward into the temple at GB-3, M-HN-9, or TW-23. Pull with your L hand as you push with your R hand. Turn the shoulders and hips for power. The early part of delivery can follow a low or high arc, as you circle the staff to the outside. An Over-Under Grip is also usable.



5. Inside Middle Strike

Hold the staff with an Overhand Grip. Raise your L hand as you step forward with your L foot. Whip the L end of staff forward and inward to the side of the body, as you pull back with your R hand toward your R side. The strike is delivered using a horizontal circular motion. Targets include the ribs at SP-21 or LV-13, or crest of the hipbone. This strike can also be executed using an Over-Under Grip.



6. Outside Middle Strike

Hold the staff with an Overhand Grip. Step forward with your L foot. Circle the L end of staff inward to opponent's outside, then snap it outward into the side of the body. Pull with your L hand as you push with your R hand. Turn the shoulders and hips for power. The early part of delivery can follow a low or high arc, as you circle the staff to the outside. Target the ribs at SP-21 or LV-13, or crest of the hipbone.



7. Inside Low Strike

Hold the staff with an Overhand Grip. Raise your L hand as you step forward with your L foot. Whip the L end of staff forward and inward to the side of the knee, as you pull back with your R hand to your R side. The strike follows a circular path from high to low, or low to low. Target either side of the knee or ankle (depending on their stance), or GB-31 on the outer thigh. An Over-Under Grip is also usable.



8. Outside Low Strike

Hold the staff with an Overhand Grip. Step forward with your L foot. Circle the L end of staff inward to opponent's outside, then snap it outward into the side of the knee. Pull with your L hand as you push with your R hand. Turn your hips and shoulders for power. The early part of delivery can follow a low or high arc, as you circle the staff to the outside. Target either side of the knee or ankle, or GB-31 on the thigh.



9. Rising Strike

Hold the staff with an Overhand Grip. Lower your L hand as you step forward with your L foot. Whip the L end of staff forward and upward into the chin or groin, as you pull down with your R hand to your R side. The staff follows a vertical path. You can also use an Over-Under Grip, or pull your R hand to your shoulder. Historically, this motion was also commonly used to sweep dirt into an opponent's eyes.



10. Reverse Rising Strike

This is the same as the previous *Rising Strike*, except you will use an Over-Under Grip and pull your hand over your cross-shoulder, finishing with your forearm crossing your body. This strike often follows a Descending Strike, or is used when both ends of the staff are already held at one side of your body. An Overhand Grip is also possible, but more awkward.



11. Straight Tip Thrust

Hold the staff with an Overhand Grip. Withdraw your L foot backward, as you retract the staff by drawing your lead hand to your chest or waist. Slide your L foot toward opponent, as you thrust the tip of staff straight forward into their throat (CO-22), solar plexus (CO-15), or groin (SP-12 and LV-12). Use both hands to thrust as you lean forcefully forward. You can also use an Over-Under Grip.



12. Sliding Tip Thrust

Hold the staff at the middle and end (or both ends) using an Over-Under Grip. Slide the staff rapidly through your lead hand, thrusting the tip into the target. You can grip firmly and continue to thrust, or rapidly retract the staff back through your lead hand (like a jab). An Overhand Grip also works well, especially for low strikes. Target the eyes, chin, teeth, throat, solar plexus, groin, or top of the foot.



13. Straight Shaft Thrust

This strike is used at close range. Hold the staff with an Overhand Grip. Withdraw your hands to your chest. Step as you thrust both arms forward, driving the center-section of staff into the target. You can also thrust upward (e.g., under the chin). The staff can be held horizontal, diagonal, or vertical. Targets include the lower forehead (M-HN-3), upper lip (GV-26), chin (CO-24), throat (CO-23), chest, or ribs.



14. Descending Shaft Strike

This strike is used at close range. Hold the staff with an Overhand Grip. Raise the staff horizontally overhead. Slam it downward, driving the center-section into the target. This strike is normally used to hit the bridge of the nose at M-HN-4, top of the kneecap, or base of the skull at GB-20 or BL-10 (when opponent is bent over). This strike can also be used to counter grabs by hitting down into the wrist.



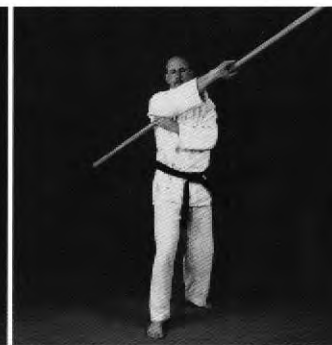
15. Swing Strike

This strike is used at long range. Hold the staff at its end using a Swing Grip, with your strongest hand leading. There are two methods of striking: 1) Swing the staff in a wide horizontal arc, often against multiple attackers; or 2) swing the staff overhead, then vertically downward into the top of the head. The space between your hands affects staff-control and strike range, and is adjusted as needed.

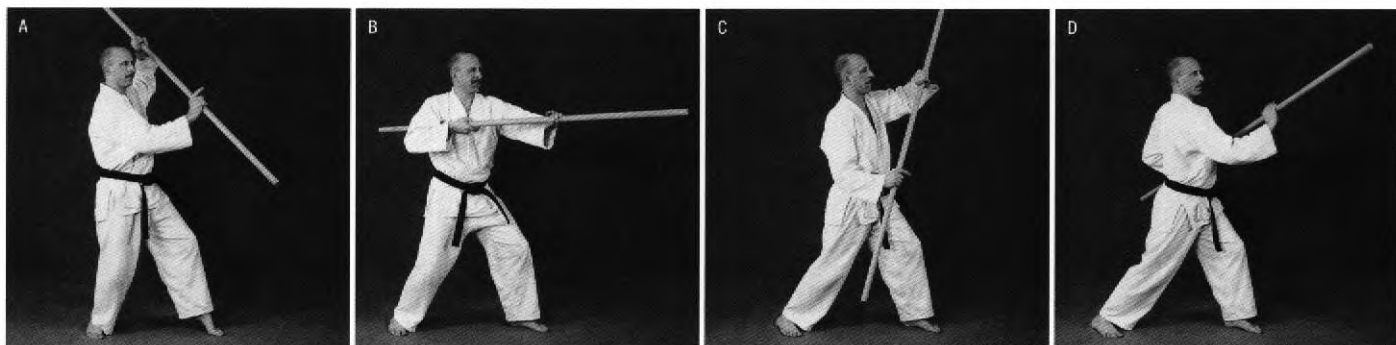


16. Reverse Outside Strike

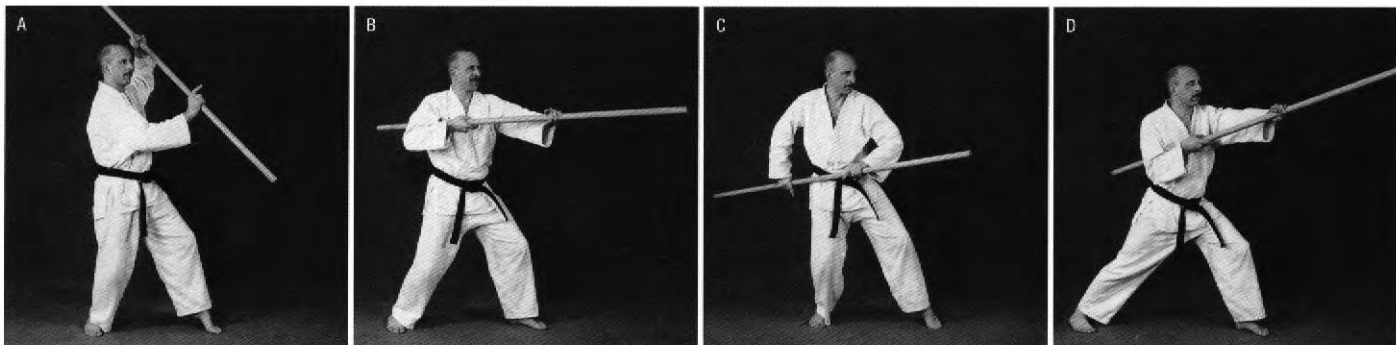
Hold staff with an Overhand Grip. Raise your hands and begin rotating the staff. As your arms cross, pull your L hand under your R arm, toward your armpit. At the same time, push your R hand outward, whipping the end of staff into the target. Turn your hips and shoulders for power. This motion is used for horizontal or diagonal strikes, to targets at any height. An Over-Under Grip also works well.



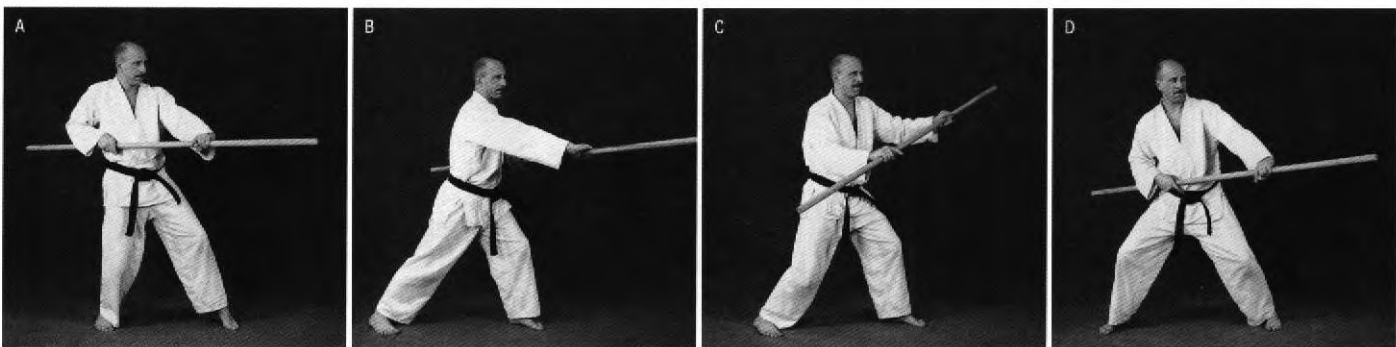
COMBINATION STRIKES



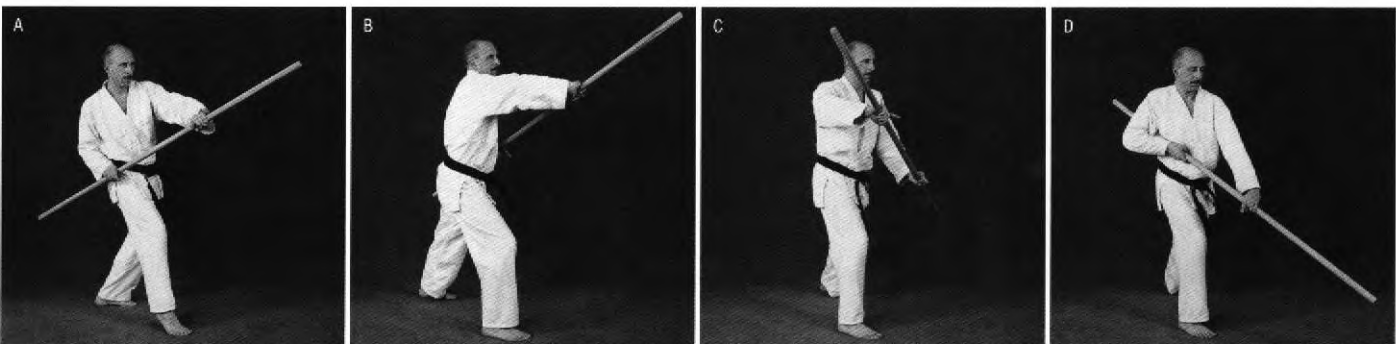
Descending Strike, Rising Strike (or Rising Strike, Descending Strike)



Descending Strike, Straight Tip Thrust



Inside Strike, Inside Strike

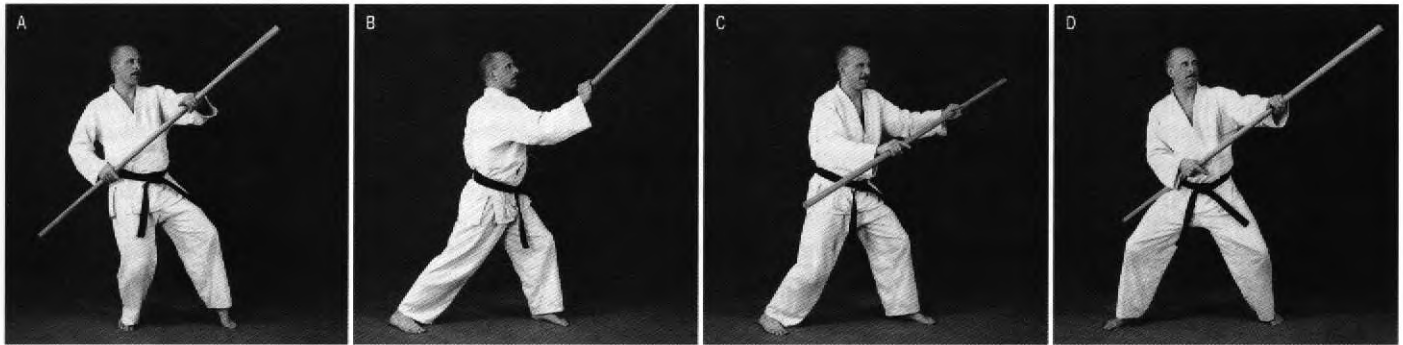


Inside High Strike (low to high), Inside Low Strike (low to low)

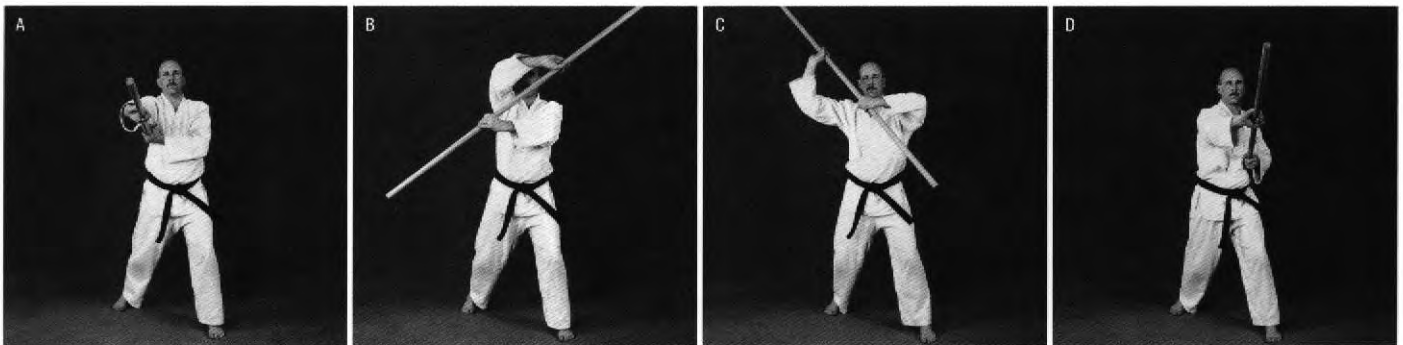
The basic strikes shown previously can be linked into many combinations, as shown in these seven examples.

To execute an Overhead Twirl (second row below), lift both hands as you rotate the staff horizontally 360°,

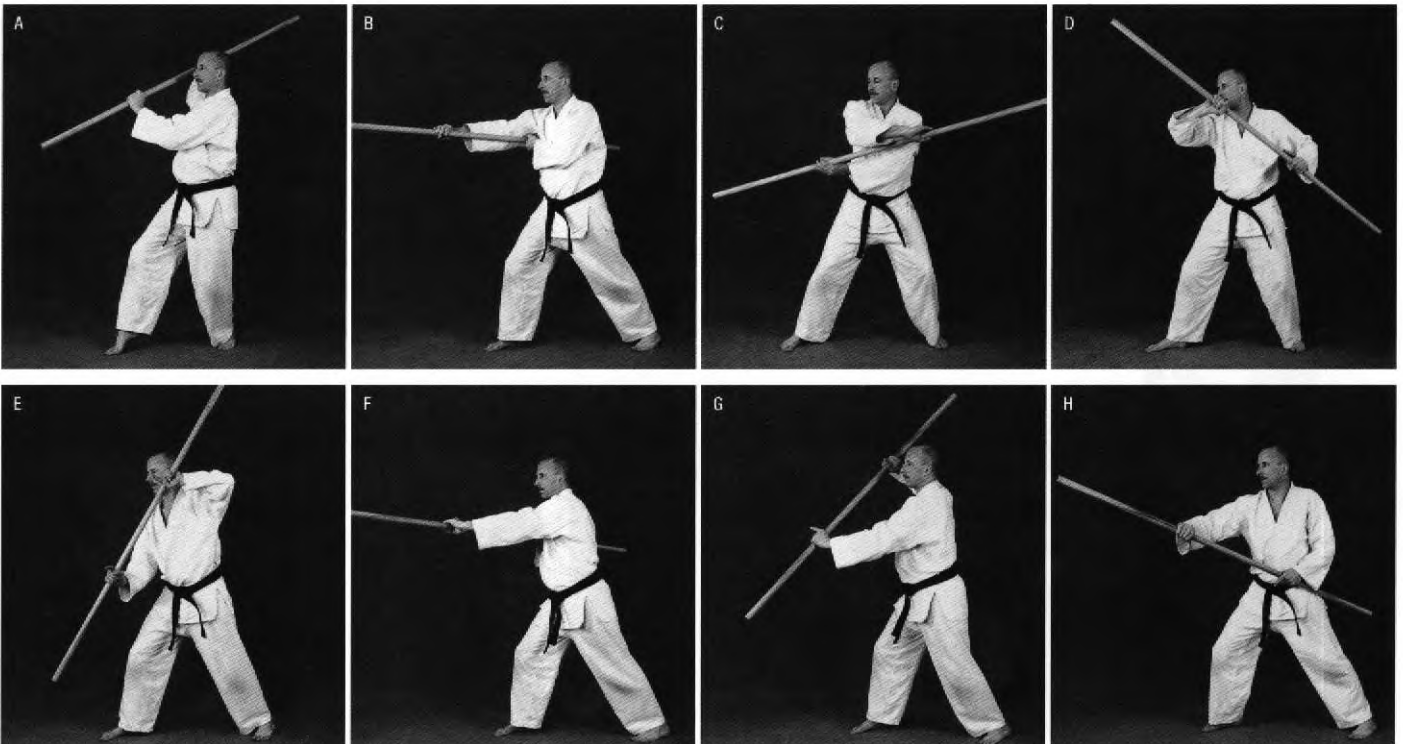
uncrossing your arms. This action is used to shift from one strike to another. The twirl can also be executed in reverse.



Rising Strike, Inside High Strike



Reverse Descending Strike (A), 360° Overhead Twirl (B–C), Inside Strike (D)



Reverse Descending Strike (B), L Descending Strike (F), R Descending Strike (H),

1. Rising Block

Hold staff with Overhand Grip. Block upward, from under the blow, using the center-section of staff. Retract the block after you make contact, bending your legs to lower your body. This motion is used to execute a forceful snapping block, or to absorb opponent's energy. This block is typically used to stop a descending strike, or deflect a high straight strike.



2. Inside High Block

Hold staff with Overhand Grip. Block inward with the upper-section of staff. Retract the block after you make contact. This motion can be used to execute a forceful snapping block, or to absorb opponent's energy. This block is used to stop a horizontal strike to your head, or deflect a high straight strike. The Under-Over Grip can also be used with this block.



3. Outside High Block

Hold staff with Overhand Grip. Block outward with the upper-section of staff. Retract the block after you make contact. This motion can be used to execute a forceful snapping block, or to absorb opponent's energy. This block is used to stop a horizontal strike to your head, or deflect a high straight strike. The Under-Over Grip can also be used with this block.



4. Inside Middle Block

Hold staff with Overhand Grip. Block inward with the center-section of vertical staff. Retract the block after you make contact. This motion is used to execute a forceful snapping block, or to absorb opponent's energy. This block is used to stop a horizontal strike to your midsection, or deflect a straight strike to the chest. The Under-Over Grip is also used.



5. Outside Middle Block

Hold staff with Overhand Grip. Block outward with the center-section of vertical staff. Retract the block after you make contact. This motion is used to execute a forceful snapping block, or to absorb opponent's energy. This block is used to stop a horizontal strike to your midsection, or deflect a straight strike to the chest. The Under-Over Grip is also used.



(●) Indicates blocking surface.
High Blocks 2 and 3 can also be executed by keeping the rear hand close to the hip as the lead hand blocks, similar to Outside or Inside High Strikes.

6. Inside Low Block

Hold staff with Overhand Grip. Block inward with the lower-section of staff. Retract the block after you make contact. This motion is used to execute a forceful snapping block, or to absorb energy. This block is used to stop a horizontal strike to the side of your legs, or deflect a low straight strike to your groin, knees, or foot. The Under-Over Grip is also used.

7. Outside Low Block

Hold staff with Overhand Grip. Block outward with the lower-section of staff. Retract the block after you make contact. This motion is used to execute a forceful snapping block, or to absorb energy. This block is used to stop a horizontal strike to the side of your legs, or deflect a low straight strike to your groin, knees, or foot. The Under-Over Grip is also used.

8. Right Blending Block

Hold staff with Overhand Grip. Step laterally to your right and pivot, as you block with the center-section of staff. Retract the block after contact. The block is used to stop horizontal strikes, or deflect straight thrusts. The blending footwork moves your body out of harm's way (should the block fail), and reduces the strike's impact by blending with its power.

9. Left Blending Block

Hold staff with Overhand Grip. Step laterally to your left and pivot, as you block with the center-section of staff. Retract the block after contact. The block is used to stop horizontal strikes, or deflect straight thrusts. The blending footwork moves your body out of harm's way (should the block fail), and reduces the strike's impact by blending with its power.

10. Descending Block

Hold staff with Overhand Grip. Block downward with the center-section of staff, bending your knees to lower your body. Rise and retract the block after contact. This motion is used to execute a forceful snapping block, or to absorb energy. The block is used to stop a Rising Strike to the chin or groin, or deflect a low straight strike to the belly or groin.



STAFF DEFENSES



DEFENSES AGAINST STRIKES

Techniques 1–6 show staff defenses against hand strikes or kicks by an unarmed attacker. These skills can also be adapted for use against weapons such as sticks or knives. Although the skills may need to be modified, basic principles remain the same. When facing a weapon, you will often target strikes or blocks to an attacker's hand or arm, in order to dislodge the weapon, or damage the limb so it is incapable of handling a weapon. Generally, you should try to maintain greater distance from your opponent, so you can take advantage of the staff's superior reach.



1. One-Hand Block + Strike

Attacker steps forward and punches with their R hand. From a Relaxed Stance, step 45° forward to their inside, planting your R inner foot on the staff. In rapid sequence, execute an Inside Block with the shaft to wrist acupoints (A–B), then thrust the shaft into the forehead at GV-24 (C). Note that the lower end of staff remains planted against your foot during the block. Grip the end of staff with your L hand (D). Deliver a Rising Strike to the groin (E). Step 45° forward with your L foot. Press the staff into the R upper thigh, as you lever the L knee upward (F), forcing a fall (G).

Important Points

When blocking the wrist, try to hit sensitive acupoints, such as LU-7, LU-8, LU-9, and LI-5. Note that the lower end of staff remains planted against your foot during the initial block and strike (B–C). Slight downward pressure on the staff, and your foot placement, help keep the base of the staff from moving. Note that steps D–G employ an Overhand Grip. Keep stepping forward during the throw, if you need to create additional power or leverage.





2. One-Hand Descending Strike + Thrust

You are in a Relaxed Stance (A). Attacker steps forward and punches with their R hand. Step back with your R foot to avoid the blow and establish distance. At the same time, lift the staff and swing the end down into the forehead at GV-24 (B). Retract the staff as you grip it with your L hand (C). Thrust the tip into the solar plexus at CO-15, or belly at CO-6 or CO-8 (D). This drives attacker backward onto their heels and drops their head forward. Execute a R Descending Strike to the top of the head, targeting an acupoint on the GV meridian, typically, GV-22, GV-21, GV-20, or GV-18 (E).

Important Points

When executing the initial strike, use the dropping weight of the staff to add force to the blow. If desired, you can slide your hand lower on the shaft as you step back, so the upper two-thirds of the staff are above your wrist as you strike. This lower fulcrum allows the staff's weight to more effectively power the blow (B). Note that steps C–E employ an Overhand Grip. After D, quickly initiate the next strike to keep attacker from grabbing the end of the staff.

STAFF DEFENSES



3. High-Middle-Rising Combo

You are in a Relaxed Stance (A). Attacker steps forward to punch with their R hand. As they enter, step back with your L foot, grip the upper-section of staff with your L hand, and slide your R hand lower on the shaft (Overhand Grip) (B). As you finish stepping, execute a R Inside High Strike to the temple at M-HN-9 or GB-3 (C). Immediately follow with a L Inside Middle Strike to the ribs at SP-21, LV-13, or GB-25 (D), then a R Rising Strike to the groin (E) or underside of chin. This combination of strikes should be executed very quickly, without pausing.

Important Points

When hitting targets at different heights in rapid succession, you put a much greater burden on your opponent's defenses. Against a more sophisticated fighter, the first and second blows are mostly used to set up the third. If attacker is in a Back Stance or Side Stance, you may need to step slightly to your right as you execute the last strike, to access the groin. After E, you can follow with the throw shown in technique 1, or a L Descending Strike.



4. Low Combo + Sliding Thrust

You are in a Relaxed Stance (A). Attacker steps forward to punch with their R hand. As they enter, step back with your L foot and drop to your L knee. At the same time, grip the upper-section of staff with your L hand and slide your R hand lower on the shaft (Overhand Grip) (B). As you finish kneeling, execute a R Inside Low Strike to the inner knee at SP-9 or LV-8, or the shin at SP-8 or LV-6 (C). Follow with a L Inside Low Strike to the outer knee at BL-53 (D), or the outer ankle, sweeping their leg. As attacker falls, stand up, step as required, and execute a Sliding Tip Thrust to the groin (E-F).

Important Points

Dropping to one knee allows you to avoid a high blow, particularly a swung weapon such as a stick or chain. Be ready to quickly rise at any time should attacker move closer. If they are still standing after step D, quickly rise and execute a R Descending Strike to the forehead or a L Straight Tip Thrust to the face or body. If attacker is too close for either, execute a Straight Shaft Thrust to the head or body, knocking them backward and farther away.

STAFF DEFENSES

A



B (Back Slide)



C



D



E (if attacker charges forward)



5. Descending Block + Inside Strikes

You are in a R Fighting Stance (A). As attacker delivers a R Front Kick, step back to avoid: your R foot steps toward your L foot, then your L foot steps backward. As the kick is extended, execute a Descending Block to the instep or ankle, with the center-section of staff (B). As attacker plants their kicking foot, execute a L Inside Strike to the temple at M-HN-9 or GB-3 (C). Follow with a R Inside Strike to the opposite temple at M-HN-9 or GB-3 (D). These strikes should follow the block in rapid combination, hitting attacker's head before, or as, they plant their kicking foot.

Important Points

When blocking, try to damage the attacker's leg to limit their mobility. Often the force of their own kick hitting the staff will do most of the work. When stepping backward, you will need to adjust your steps as you strike, to maintain the proper distance. If attacker is too close for Inside Strikes, or continues to charge forward after step D, step forward or backward as needed, as you deliver a Straight Shaft Thrust to the throat at CO-23 or ST-9 (E).



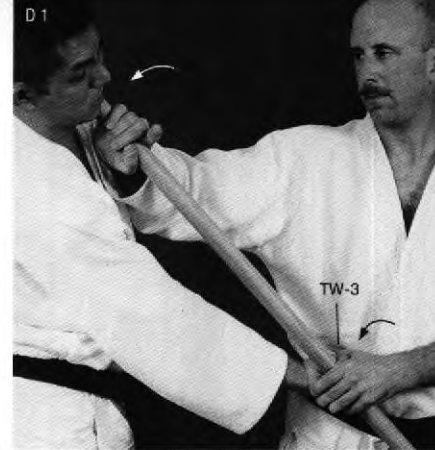
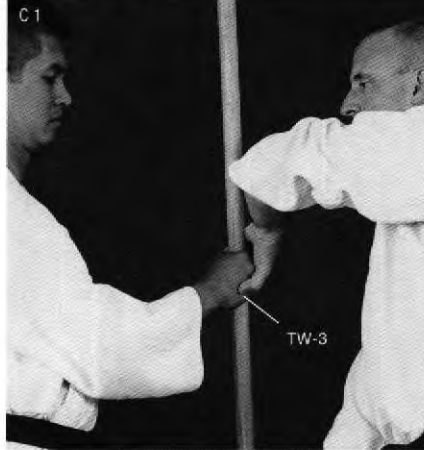
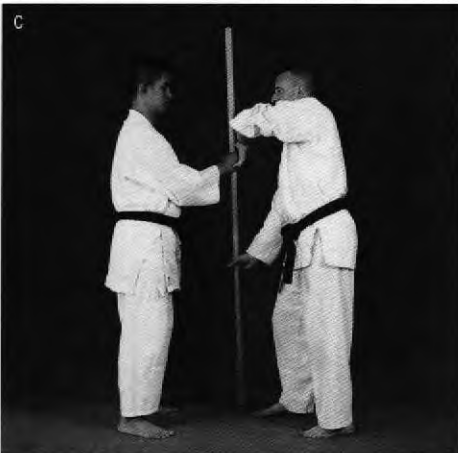
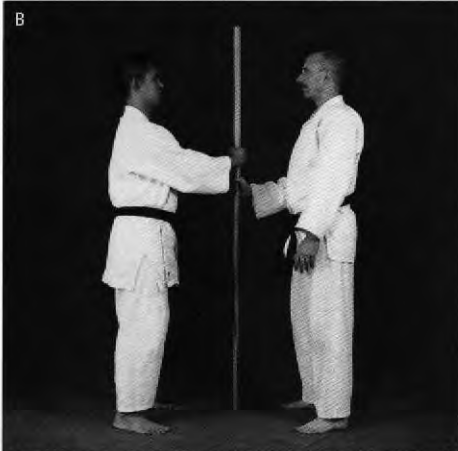
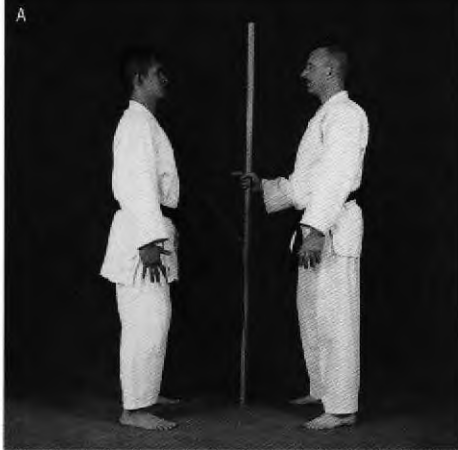
6. Outside Hook Throw + Strike

You are in a R Fighting Stance (A). As attacker delivers a R Side Kick (B), step 45° forward to their outside with your L foot. Deflect the ankle outward with the R section of staff (C). Scoop the leg upward as you wrap the staff and your forearm under the lower leg. Drive attacker's ankle toward their head. This unbalances them backward, forcing a Back Fall (D). As they fall backward, execute a R Inside Strike to their head (E). This strike can be delivered as you lift their leg, or during the fall, or after they have landed. You can also lift attacker's leg using the R section of staff instead of your forearm.

Important Points

This throw can be used against almost any common kick, from either inside or outside the leg (the initial block may need to be adjusted based on the type of kick). When scooping attacker's leg, your inner elbow traps and lifts their ankle, as the center section of staff presses sensitive points on the inner leg at SP-9, SP-8, or LV-6 (D). If attacker attempts to rise after E, deliver a L Descending Strike to the head, followed by a L Straight Tip Thrust.

STAFF DEFENSES



DEFENSES AGAINST STAFF GRAB

Techniques 7–10 show defenses used when an opponent grabs your staff. All of the counters shown are based on the same principle: you will use the staff's length and your grip position to provide superior leverage. This enables you to overcome the grip-power of a much stronger opponent. When applying joint locks (7, 8, and 10), try to use quick, fluid motions to lock or break attacker's joints, before they can release their grip on the shaft. Be aware that technique 10 can also be used if you are defending against a staff attack and manage to grip your attacker's weapon during the course of combat. Both of these situations essentially begin with the same circumstances: two individuals are gripping the same staff at the same time.

7. Outward Wrist Lock + Neck Press

From Relaxed Stances (A), attacker grabs the upper-section of your staff with their R hand (B). Grip their hand with your L hand (Overhand Grip), planting your thumb on the back of their hand at TW-3. Slide your R hand lower on the shaft (C). Step forward with your R foot as you circle the staff counterclockwise, thrusting the R section into the neck or throat. As the staff turns, their R trapped-wrist will lock outward (D). Sweep your L foot behind your R foot and pivot, as you push the head downward and lift the locked wrist (E), forcing a fall (F).

Important Points

When hitting the neck (D), target ST-9, LI-18, SI-16, or SI-17. Adjust your pivot based on attacker's reactions, which determines the most efficient direction to throw them. Usually you will unbalance and throw attacker toward either their right rear-corner, right side, or right front-corner. If the staff slips off their head, either try to complete the throw by focusing on the wrist lock, or execute an Outward Strike upward into their philtrum (GV-26), forcing a fall backward (see technique 15).



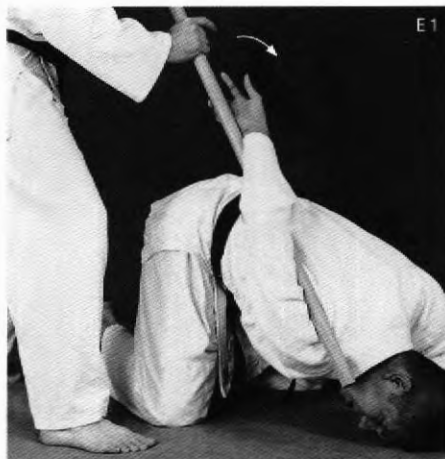


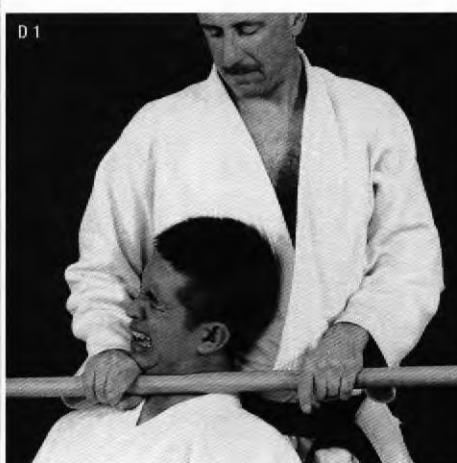
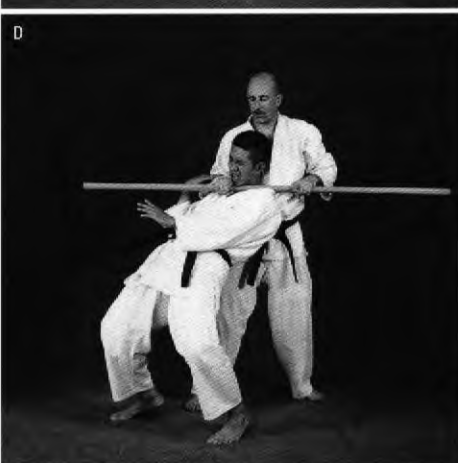
8. Bent-Arm Wrist Lock + Hammer Lock

From Fighting Stances, attacker grabs the end of staff with either hand (A). Circle the end under, outward, and over their wrist (B). Lock their wrist and break their hold by pushing the end of staff forward and down into the wrist at SI-5 (C). Their wrist and elbow are bent, with the staff pointing at their body's midline. As attacker drops to their knees, slide the staff under their armpit. Step around and lift their wrist as you push their shoulder downward, locking it (D–E). To increase pain or dislocate the shoulder, lever the left end of staff forward.

Important Points

If greater force is justified, you can also thrust the tip straight into face or throat as the wrist lock is entered during step C. This can be done while the attacker is still standing, or after they drop. When applying the shoulder lock (E), be careful not to rotate the end of the staff too far toward attacker's left side, or their hand will slip off the shaft. If they are very strong or you need more power to make the shoulder lock work, grip near the end of the stick (increasing the length of a lever increases leverage).





9. Lever + Rear Choke

From Fighting Stances, attacker grabs the end of staff with both hands (A). Quickly step forward with your R foot, as you circle the staff toward their head, keeping the shaft on a vertical plane (B). Step behind attacker, as you pass the center-section of staff over their head. Plant the shaft across the carotid artery at ST-9 (C). Unbalance attacker backward as you apply a choke (D). Their neck is trapped tightly between the shaft and your torso.

Important Points

You can choke virtually any target on the neck (windpipe, carotid artery, nerves), since the hardness of the wood makes any pressure extremely efficient, even if your targeting is poor. As you unbalance attacker backward, you can hang them from the choke, or sit them down onto their buttocks. You can also take attacker down by thrusting the blade of your foot into the back of their knee at BL-53, BL-54, or KI-10, driving their knee forcefully into the ground (E). Exercise extreme caution when applying chokes, since they can easily produce life-threatening injuries.



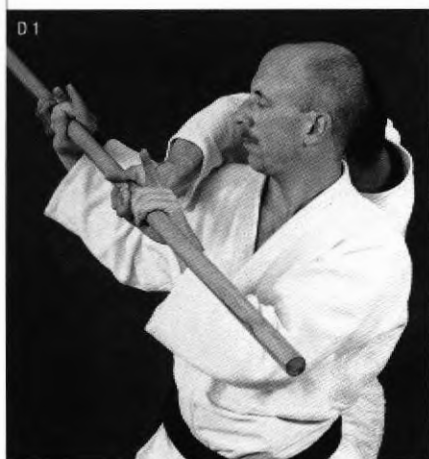


10. 360° Passing Shoulder Lock

From Fighting Stances, attacker grabs the middle of staff with both hands (A). Step forward with your R foot as you turn the staff clockwise (B). Sweep your L foot behind your R foot (C). Continue rotating the staff, crossing their arms as you pass under them and pivot 360° (D). Continue turning the staff vertically, as you push forward and downward to break attacker's grip and unbalance them backward (E). Their left shoulder locks as you throw (F).

Important Points

If desired, you can set up this technique with a brief leading motion (fake) to assist your entry: turn the staff slightly counterclockwise (attacker resists), then abruptly clockwise as you begin your entry. During step C, it is often useful to lead attacker slightly forward, then abruptly backward as you pivot (D–E). The purpose and benefits of leading and blending were covered in the *Fundamentals* chapter. To prevent attacker from unbalancing you backward as you pivot, keep your upper body leaning forward and your arms at shoulder level, and move very rapidly (D).



STAFF DEFENSES

11A



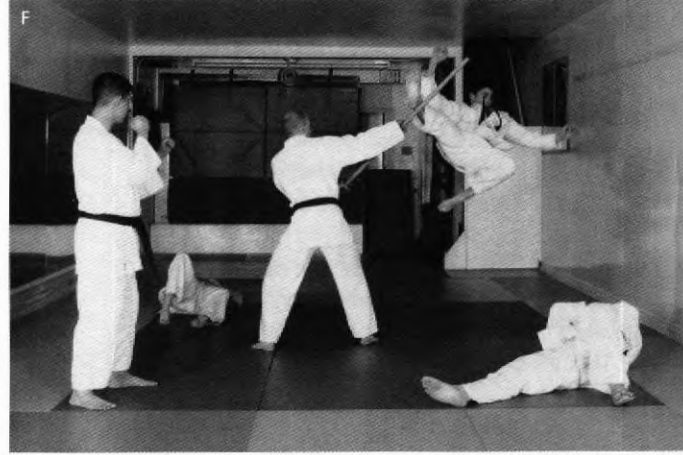
E



B



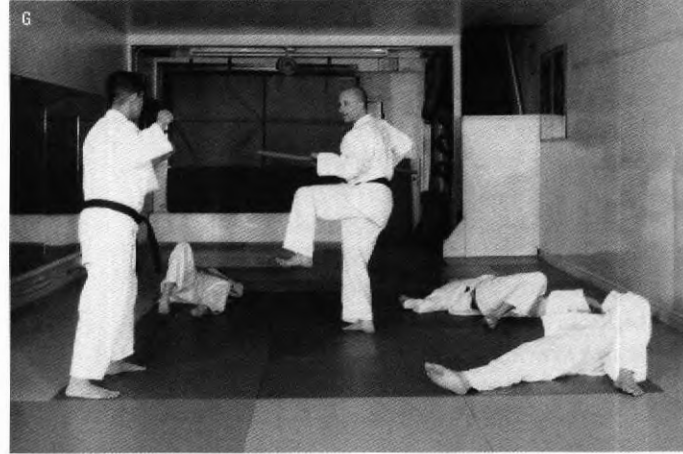
F



C



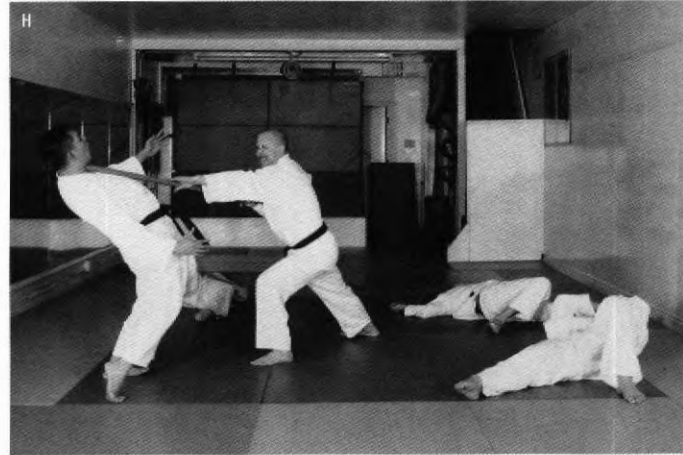
G



D



H



12 A



B



11. Four Distant Opponents

As front-attacker punches, step 45° forward and deliver a R Inside Strike to the temple (A–B). Slide your L foot toward rear-attacker and thrust the L tip into the solar plexus at CO-15 (C–D). As attacker to your right kicks, execute a R Outside Hook Block, scoop their leg upward, and throw (E–F). Lunge to your left and thrust the L tip into the throat or solar plexus of charging attacker (G–H). Against kicks, thrusts to the groin also work well.

12. Four Close Opponents

The combo is executed very fast, without changing your stance: total elapsed time for steps A through F is around 1 second. From a relaxed stance (A–B), step laterally right into a wider Horse Stance as you thrust the R tip into right-attacker (B), then L tip to left-attacker (C). In one continuous motion: circle the R tip to your left, then whip it outward to block front-attacker's blow (D); pull your R hand to your hip as a L Inside Strike hits the temple (E); thrust the R tip straight backward into charging rear-attacker (F). Against multiple opponents, Straight Tip Thrusts are often directed to the solar plexus, since there is a greater margin for error. If you strike inaccurately, you still hit the ribs, belly, or throat. When aiming at the throat or face, accuracy is more important.

C



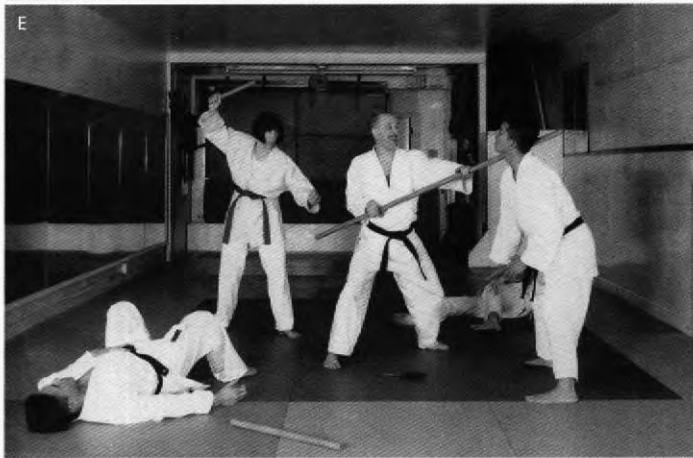
D

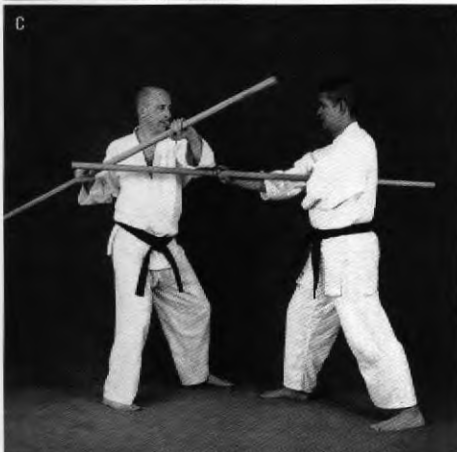


F



E



**DEFENSES AGAINST STAFF**

Techniques 13–16 show typical staff defenses against a staff. The defender is shown in a right Defensive Stance, holding their staff with an Overhand Grip. You should also practice these counters from a left stance as well. Other staff grips, such as an Over-Under Grip, are also often possible.

13. Against Descending Strike

Use Rising Block, Trap, Three Strikes

Attacker steps forward and delivers a R Descending Strike or Reverse Descending Strike. From a R Defensive Stance, execute a Rising Block with your center-section. Retract your block as you make contact, absorbing the blow's energy (A–B). Step forward to attacker's outside with your L foot. Redirect their staff downward, circling your L section forward (C). Continue rotating your staff 180° vertically, delivering a R Reverse Descending Strike to the forehead at GV-24, as your L section traps their staff (D). Using an Overhead Twirl, execute two strikes to the head in rapid sequence: deliver a L Outside Strike (E) and R Inside Strike (F).

Important Points

A basic Overhead Twirl was shown earlier in this chapter, under "Combination Strikes." To execute, lift both hands as you rotate the staff horizontally 180°, uncrossing your arms (E); continue rotating another 180° to finish the motion (F). If attacker backs away after D, step forward as you execute the Overhead Twirl, omitting strike E and delivering strike F.

14. Against Inside High Strike

Use Inside Block, Low-Descending Combo

You are in a R Defensive Stance (A). As attacker delivers a R Inside Strike to your head, step 45° forward to their inside, with your R foot. Execute an Inside Block with your R section (B). Without pausing, execute a L Inside Strike to the outer knee at GB-33 or GB-34 (C), followed by a R diagonal Descending Strike to the bridge of the nose at M-HN-3 or M-HN-4 (D). The Inside Strike to the knee (C) may cause an attacker to fall to their knees. You can assist this by pressing downward on their knee at BL-54 or KI-10 as they fall (E), and then execute a Descending Strike to the head.

Important Points

During steps B–C, be ready at anytime to block a L Inside Strike or L Descending Strike. This can be done in a number of ways, based on where you are in the sequence, typically using the left-section or center-section. Try to execute your combinations very quickly in order to hinder counterstrikes. The alternating motion of your staff sections will also often provide a shielding effect, inadvertently blocking blows.



E (option: driving knee into ground)

STAFF DEFENSES



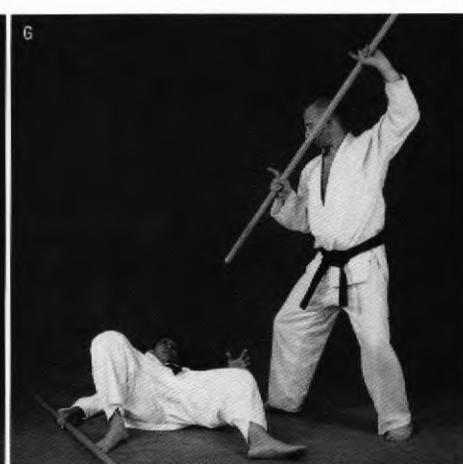
15. Against Inside Middle Strike

Use Block, 360° Trap, Outside Strike

You are positioned in a R Defensive Stance (A). As attacker delivers a L Inside Strike to your ribs, execute a L Inside Middle Block with the center-section (A-B). As soon as your block makes contact, rotate your staff 360° to your left, sweeping attacker's staff up, over, and down (C). Briefly trap it (D), then deliver a L Outside Strike to the chin at CO-24, or upper lip at GV-26 (E). Continue to drive attacker's head outward and downward, unbalancing them backward (F). Thrust the tip into the solar plexus or groin (G).

Important Points

Try to execute the sweeping action as quickly as possible, before attacker can adjust and launch a counterstrike. Once your sweeping action reaches step C, attacker can no longer counter with a R Inside Strike, although an opening for a R Reverse Descending Strike to your head is now possible. After step C or E, you can also execute a stick trap and Reverse Descending Strike as shown in technique 13.





16. Against Straight Tip Thrust

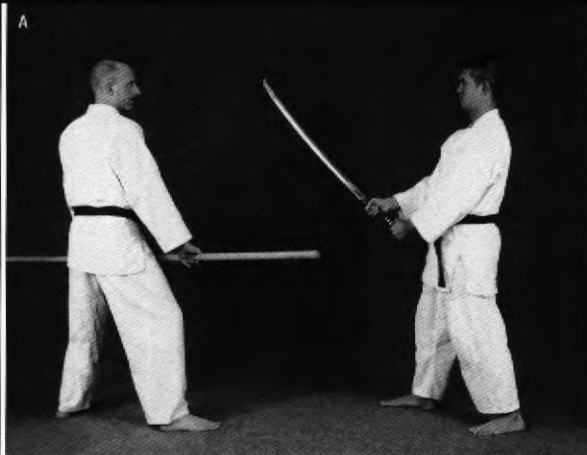
Use Outside Block, Inside-Descending Combo

You are positioned in a R Defensive Stance (A). As attacker lunges forward with a L Straight Tip Thrust (B), execute a R Outside Block (C), redirecting their staff outward and downward. Continue your motion by pulling your R hand to your R hip, as you execute a L Inside Strike to the temple at M-HN-9 or GB-3 (D), or to the side of the neck at LI-18. Without pausing, whip the R section vertically forward, delivering a R Descending Strike to the forehead at GV-24 (E). The initial block and strike is performed very quickly, in a continuous circular motion.

Important Points

If attacker attempts to counter with a R Inside Strike after step D, your returning L section will often inadvertently block the blow as you execute the R Descending Strike. If you wish to add on additional strikes after step E, there are many possibilities. For example: L Rising Strike to the groin; R Straight Tip Thrust to the torso; L Inside Strike to knee; or L Inside Strike to the ribs, followed by R Descending Strike.

STAFF DEFENSES



DEFENSES AGAINST SWORD

Techniques 17–18 show two staff defenses against a sword. When facing this type of weapon, try to use the superior reach of the staff to keep an opponent out of sword-range. Use Straight Tip Thrusts, Sliding Tip Thrusts, and Swing Strikes for greater distance. Use forceful strikes and blocks to shatter the blade, or to dislodge it from your opponent's hands.

17. Attack First

Use *Inside Strike*, *Tip Thrust*, *Descending Strike*. Attacker is in a sword stance. You are in a R Defensive Stance (A). Without preparing, suddenly execute a R Inside Strike to the blade (B), pushing it laterally and down to waist level (C). Without pausing or retracting the staff, slide your R foot forward and thrust the tip into the solar plexus (D). As attacker is knocked back (out of sword-range), retract the staff with your L hand, as your R hand slides to the R end. Step forward, slide your L hand to the R section, and rotate the L section vertically forward (E), whipping it down to the forehead (F). Shifting your grips (D–E), increases your reach and keeps you out of sword-range.



18. Dropped Staff

Use Squatting One-Hand Thrust

This technique is used if you have dropped your staff, or you are grabbing a common object to defend yourself. Although shown against a sword, it can also be used to counter other weapons, such as a club, knife, or staff.

To execute, squat low and grip the staff with your R hand, as attacker steps forward and raises their sword (A–B). As they begin a downward cut, thrust the tip into the throat at CO-22 or CO-23 (C). As attacker is knocked backward, grip the staff with both hands, rise to your feet, and execute strikes. Two options that can be applied while standing or kneeling follow. Option 1: After you thrust (C), grip the L section with your L hand (Overhand Grip). Execute a R Inside Strike to attacker's knees, ribs (D), wrists, or hands (D1). Strikes to the wrists are usually executed as the sword is being raised to begin a cut, and are intended damage the arm or dislodge the weapon.

Option 2: As you thrust (C), grip the R end of staff with your L hand (underhand, near armpit). Execute an inward Swing Strike to the wrists or knee, circling the tip 360° (left-right-left).



STAFF DEFENSES



UNARMED DEFENSES AGAINST STAFF

Techniques 19–22 show unarmed defenses against a staff. Since the staff is most effective at greater distances, you will attempt to move close and grab the staff, to take away your opponent's reach advantage. In these counters, you will use the staff's length, your grip position, and blending motions to provide superior leverage. This enables you to overcome the grip-power of a much stronger opponent. These techniques can also be used to free a staff you are wielding, when an opponent grips it during the course of combat.

19. Against Descending Strike

Use Twin Grab Block, Strike-Throw

Attacker executes a R Descending Strike (A). Step 45° forward to your right with your R foot, avoiding the blow. Catch the staff at its end and middle with two hands (B). Blend with attacker's force as you rotate the staff about 180° (C). Drive the R section into attacker's bent-wrist, neck, and jaw, as you pull the L section toward your hip (D). Unbalance and throw attacker toward their right side or right rear-corner (E). Lever the staff free as they fall, pulling it abruptly toward you. Raise the staff high and spear the foot, knee, or groin (F).

Important Points

When initially entering (A–B), move at the last possible moment to avoid the blow. Try and wait until attacker is fully committed to their action. If you move too early, they will merely adjust their trajectory as they deliver the strike. As you rotate the staff toward attacker's neck, try to slam their bent-wrist into their throat or jaw. Note that the wrist is locked as you throw: this is a Bent-Arm Wrist Lock, a very common empty-hand hold, also shown in technique 8.





20. Against Descending or Inside Strike

Use Twin Grab Block + Twisting Arm Lock

As attacker delivers a R Descending Strike (A). Step 45° forward to your right with your R foot, avoiding the blow. Catch the staff at its end and middle with two hands (B). Pivot to your right as you rotate the staff 180° (C). Step past with your L foot. Continue turning the staff, crossing attacker's arms as you pass under them and pivot 180° (D-E). Continue turning the staff vertically to break their grip, lifting the R section into their groin. Throw by driving the R section up, forward, and down, as you pull the L section up toward your L hip (F-G).

Important Points

When entering (A-B), move at the last moment to avoid the blow. As you seize the staff, use the strike's force to begin your staff-turn. Keep your upper body leaning slightly forward as you pivot, to avoid being unbalanced backward. This counter can also be finished without directing the staff into the groin, in which case you should move away as the grips release, so you can apply strikes from a greater distance and keep attacker from seizing the staff.





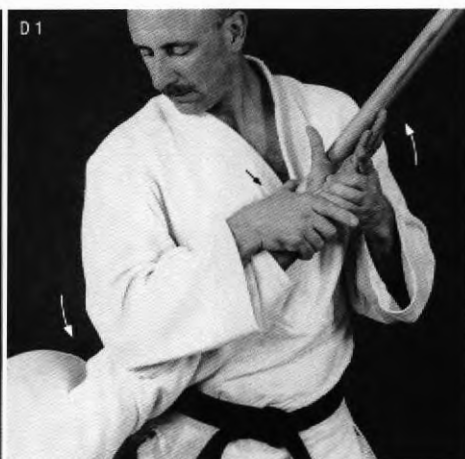
21. Against Straight Tip Thrust

Use Elbow Arm Bar

As attacker delivers a L Straight Tip Thrust (A), avoid the blow by stepping laterally to their inside, with your L foot. Parry with your L hand. Grip attacker's L hand and wrist with both hands (L hand over, R hand under), trapping their hand on the staff (B). Twist their arm as you pass it over your head to your left. Step to your left with your R foot, and plant your R elbow over their elbow (C). Lock the elbow by driving your inner elbow down into the joint, as you lift their wrist. Drive the staff into nerves on the wrist and forearm to assist (D). Drop to one knee and pin (E).

Important Points

When passing the attacker's arm from right to left, use a high, whipping circular motion, so the staff clears your head. This motion also briefly disorients attacker, and helps rotate the tip of their elbow upward, so it is properly positioned for the arm bar. If you need to address other attackers, break the elbow during step D, then jerk the staff free as you step away. Prepare to use it for your defense.





22. Against Straight Tip Thrust

Use Outside Blending Throw

As attacker delivers a L Straight Tip Thrust (A), avoid it by stepping laterally to their outside, with your R foot. Parry and grab the staff at its end and middle with two hands, using an Over-Under Grip (B). Step behind your R foot with your L foot and pivot 180°, as you rotate the staff vertically, pulling attacker forward and upward to unbalance them (C). Try to lock their L elbow by lifting your R upper arm into the joint (C1). Continue turning the staff. Drive your R hand forward and downward, as you pull your L hand backward and upward toward your hip. Attacker falls forward (D–E).

Important Points

This technique works best if you can take advantage of attacker's forward momentum, since it reduces the need for force. As you pivot, your hips should pass very close to attacker's hips (C), which makes it much easier to manipulate their mass. If desired, your R leg can be used to either: block their L leg; reap their leg upward; or execute a Rising Heel Kick upward to the groin.



The cane is mid-length stick with a curved handle, widely used as a walking implement. Sophisticated cane-fighting systems are mostly confined to Korean martial arts, although many mid-length stick systems originating in other cultures use similar skills. These various cane-like systems are characterized by differing ideals that influence weapon characteristics, preferred techniques, appropriate use of force, and the circumstances and manner in which techniques should be executed. The cane techniques shown in this chapter,

CANE TECHNIQUES

and the martial philosophy behind them, stem primarily from the author's experiences in the martial art of Hapkido. Consequently, this material consists of an eclectic range of strikes, holds, and throws that can be applied with varying levels of force, based on what is appropriate and justifiable. This chapter begins with an overview of basic principles, followed by typical cane defenses. Generally, the material reflects a mainstream approach that is adaptable to a broad range of martial styles, tactics, and cane-like weapons.



Overview

The cane (called *Tan-jang* or *Chi-p'ang-i* in Korean) is a common walking-implement found in almost all cultures. Although it is often associated with the aged or disabled, this utilitarian object can also be employed as a highly sophisticated and effective weapon for self-defense—a hallmark of Hapkido.

The common cane varies in size and shape according to an individual's needs, but is usually 3 feet long, 7/8 to 1 inch in diameter, with a curved handle that has an inside diameter of 3 1/4 to 4 1/2 inches. Although canes can be made from a wide variety of materials (wood, plastic, metal, carbon fiber), those commonly used in practical martial arts are made of wood that is very hard, but flexes slightly to keep from breaking.

Based on its length, the cane is considered a medium-range weapon, although close-range techniques are also practiced. The cane can be used to defend against unarmed attacks or weapons, and is highly effective against multiple opponents. While cane techniques include skills found in other stick systems, the curved handle permits a range of additional techniques that are unique to this weapon. This permits greater versatility and a broader range of applications than found with straight sticks. The tip of the handle can be used for gouging vital points or hooking clothing. The inner-handle is ideal for hooking-blocks, leg sweeps, chokes, trapping and immobilizing limbs, or grabbing and throwing. The shaft is used for strikes, blocks, chokes, and joint locks. The tip of the shaft is used for thrusts or pressing attacks to vital targets or nerves.

Cane Anatomy

Historically, many different types of canes have been designed for a wide variety of purposes. Some canes even incorporate hidden blades in the handle or at the tip, which instantly transforms a simple walking stick into a deadly weapon. The cane used in this book is the common, round-handled design shown at right. It is favored for its simple, humble, innocuous appearance.

Today almost all quality commercial wood canes are made out of ash or hickory, although they are frequently stained or painted to look like other woods. Most are strong, well-made, and very appropriate for self-defense. You can sand off the paint or lacquer surfaces, which will provide better handling and feel. The rubber end should be removed, since it renders the tip less effective when striking or pressing, and adversely affects handling, making the cane tip-heavy.

All of the various parts of the cane, which are noted in the drawing below, are used for specific purposes in specific techniques. This will be explained in greater detail throughout this chapter. When obtaining a cane for weapons training, the size of the cane must be matched to your physique. The diameter of the handle affects handling, and must be matched to the size of your hand. If the diameter is too large, it will be difficult to control circular strikes—particularly the Descending Strike. If the diameter is too small, the handle will tend to bind in your hand as you rotate the cane. Handle-size also influences certain techniques. For example, a large handle will permit you to hook around the neck or under the armpit, but is less effective at holding onto smaller targets like the wrist or ankle (they can slip out easier). A smaller, longer handle is more suited for hooking clothing or gouging nerves as you pull a limb.

Common Grips

The cane is wielded with either one or two hands, depending on the techniques you will be executing. Five basic grips commonly are used to hold the cane: Top-Handle Grip, Side-Handle Grip, Middle Grip, Two-Hand Handle Grip, and Two-Hand Shaft Grip. You will often shift between different grips as you apply a series of techniques.

Top-Handle Grip

Grip the top of the handle, in the middle of the curved portion. This grip is mostly used for Straight Tip Thrusts, or a series of Descending Strikes that follow a figure-8 path (see "Combination Strikes," later in this chapter).

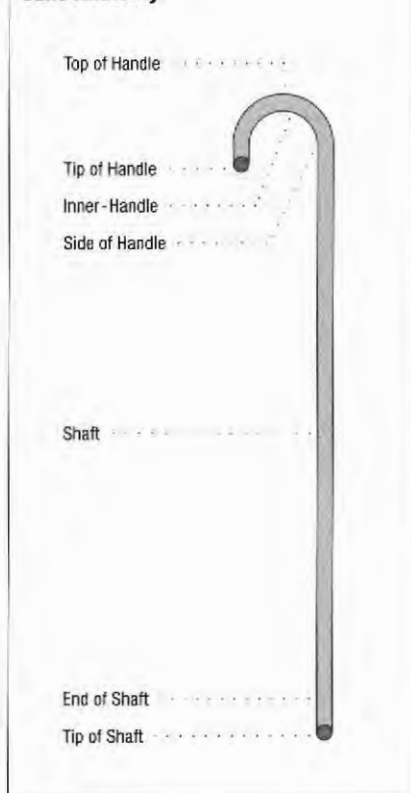
Side-Handle Grip

Grip the side of the handle, where the curved portion meets the straight part of the shaft. The tip of the handle can either be turned away from your hand (see photo at top-right), or turned across your wrist (see inset photo at bottom of next). The Side-Handle Grip is very versatile, allows good control of the shaft, and can be used to execute a variety of strikes, blocks, joint locks, and throws.

Middle Grip

Grip the middle portion of the shaft, so that the handle is on the thumb-side of your hand. This grip is generally used for techniques that use the handle, such as hooking strikes and blocks, traps, grabs, chokes, and leg sweeps. Although you will usually grip in the center, exact grip placement varies based on the technique. For example, you will often grip near the end of the shaft to apply circular strikes with the outer-edge of the handle.

Cane Anatomy



Two-Hand Handle Grip

The right hand grips the top of the handle; the left hand grips the middle of the shaft, usually with an overhand hold. This grip is commonly used for techniques that utilize the tip, end, or lower part of the shaft. This includes thrusting strikes with the tip, joint locks, circular blocks, and throws used to counter kicks. Using two hands provides more power and yields better tip control by stabilizing shaft movement.

Two-Hand Shaft Grip

Grip the cane with both hands, using over-hand grips. The right hand grips at the side of the handle; the left hand holds the shaft at the middle or end. This grip is very versatile and is commonly used for blocks, shaft thrusts, chokes, thrusting strikes with the top of the handle or tip, and hooking strikes with the tip of the handle. The position of your hands and the orientation of the cane varies based on the type of technique you are executing.

Two typical examples are shown. One hand will often slide to different points on the shaft as you execute a series of techniques.

Use of Ki-Finger

In some energy-oriented arts, cane techniques are performed with the index finger extended. This generates mechanical power and increases the flow of Ki into the arm, hand, and cane. However, in certain situations the finger is extremely vulnerable to being damaged or broken, particularly when blocking against another weapon. In these situations, the finger is often retracted.

Stances

Typical cane stances are shown opposite. The *relaxed stances* are used to camouflage tactics, signal non-aggressive intentions, and launch surprise attacks or counterattacks; each stance uses a different grip, which lends itself to specific forms of counterattack. There are two common *fighting stances*. In both, the cane is held in the lead hand, with the feet in a Back Stance. In one stance you will lead with the tip; in the other you will lead with the handle. Each Fighting Stance facilitates the use of different techniques.

Grips



Top-Handle Grip



Side-Handle Grip



Middle Grip



Two-Hand Handle Grip



Two-Hand Shaft Grip



Stances



Relaxed Stance (Top-Handle Grip)



Relaxed Stance (Side-Handle Grip)



Relaxed Stance (Middle Grip)



Fighting Stance (Side-Handle Grip, tip leading)



Fighting Stance (Middle Grip, handle leading)

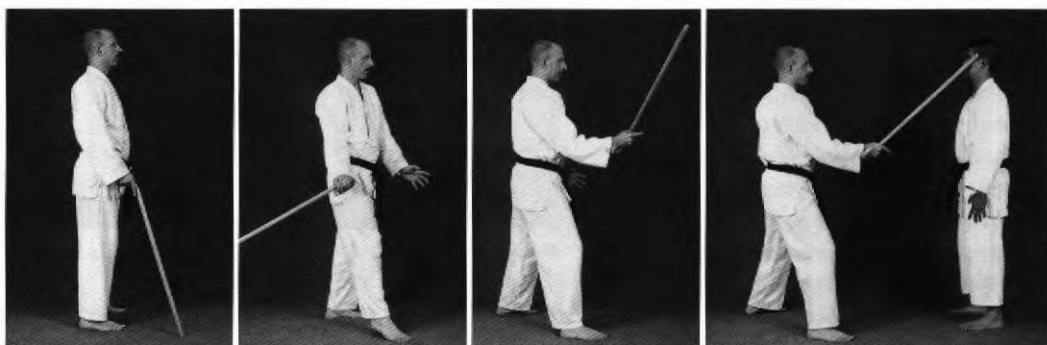
1. Descending Strike

Hold the cane with a Top-Handle Grip or Side-Handle Grip. Step forward and turn your R shoulder back. Rotate the cane with your R hand, allowing the handle to turn in your hand. Whip the end of shaft back, forward, and down into the forehead at GV-24, as you turn your shoulders. The cane traces a vertical circular path. Finish with the handle on the back of your wrist. You can also step backward or laterally, then strike.



2. Inside Strike

Hold the cane with a Side-Handle Grip. Step forward with your R foot, turn your R shoulder back, and bring the cane behind you. Whip the end of shaft forward and inward into the side of the head, as you turn your shoulders. The cane follows a diagonal circular path. Targets include the temple (M-HN-9, GB-3, or TW-23), neck, ribs, or knee. This strike is often executed while stepping 45° forward to avoid a blow.



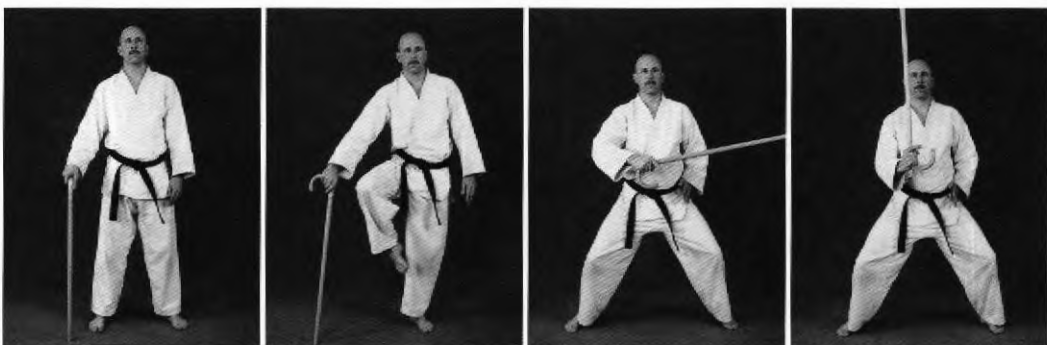
3. Outside Strike

Hold the cane with a Side-Handle Grip. Step forward with your R foot, turn your L shoulder back, and bring the cane across your body to your left side. Whip the end of shaft forward and outward into the side of the head, as you turn your shoulders. The cane follows a diagonal circular path. Targets include the temple (M-HN-9, GB-3, or TW-23), side of neck, ribs, or knee. Other footwork is also possible.



4. Lateral Strike

Hold the cane with a Side-Handle Grip. Turn the handle outward. Step laterally to the right with your R foot (or to the left with your left foot). Whip the end of shaft 180° upward, in front of your body. The cane follows a clockwise vertical circular path. Keep your back straight and your knees bent. This strike is typically used to hit the head of an attacker standing at your side, or strike an incoming punch or kick.



Note: When striking with the end of shaft, try to make contact with the last 2–3 inches. This provides the greatest force.

In many cane strikes, your L Live-Hand is positioned at the hip throughout the strike, or retracted there during your delivery.

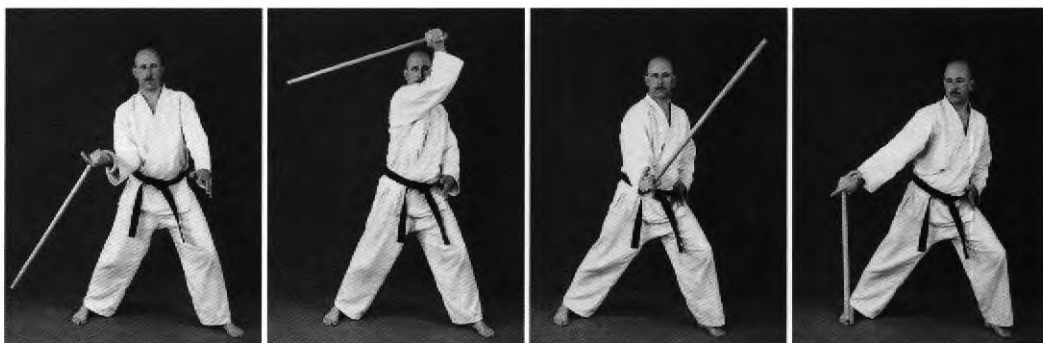
5. Inside Circular Strike

Hold the cane with a Side-Handle Grip, with the handle on the back of your wrist. Step 45° forward with the R foot, as you swing the cane over and behind your head, then forward and inward, tracing a 360° circular path. This is a fast, whipping motion. This strike is directed to targets at any height (head, ribs, leg). The photos show a low strike to the knee. When finishing, your R leg is bent; your L leg is relatively straight.



6. Outside Circular Strike

Hold the cane with a Side-Handle Grip, with the handle on the back of your wrist. Step 45° forward with the L foot, as you swing the cane behind and over your head, then forward and outward, tracing a 360° circular path. This is a fast, whipping motion. This strike is directed to targets at any height (head, ribs, leg). The photos show a low strike to the knee. When finishing, your L leg is bent; your R leg is relatively straight.



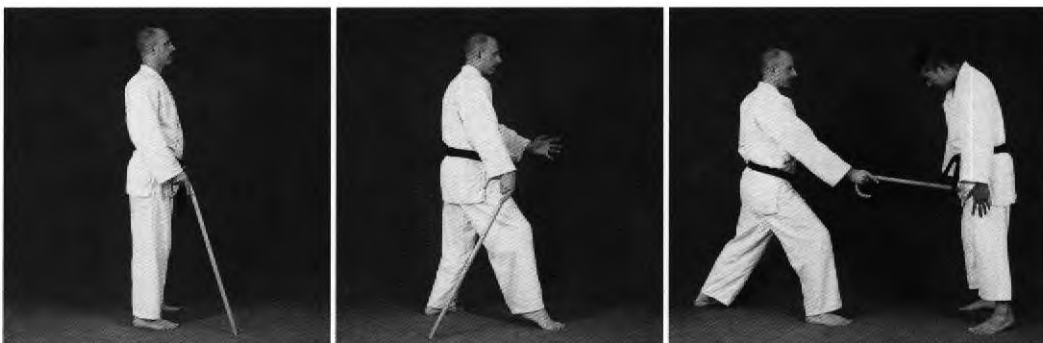
7. Spin Strike

Hold the cane with a Side-Handle Grip. Step, turn, and strike in one rapid, continuous motion, similar to a Spin Kick. Step forward to your right with your L foot, as you turn the handle into the back of your wrist. Turn your body as you step forward with your R foot, bringing the end of shaft toward your L shoulder. Whip the cane outward into the temple (M-HN-9 or GB-3) or neck (LI-18), tracing a 360° circular path.



8. Rising Strike

Hold the cane with a Side-Handle Grip. Step forward with your R foot, initially leaving the tip of cane planted in its original position. As you finish stepping, whip the end of shaft forward and upward into the groin or underside of the chin. As you initially pull the tip forward, press down slightly so the tip drags against the ground, then suddenly release pressure. This initial resistance creates greater velocity.



9. Straight Tip Thrust

Hold the cane with a Top-Handle Grip or Side-Handle Grip. Step forward with your R foot. Raise the tip and thrust it straight forward, as you retract your L Live-Hand to your hip. You can also step sideways or backward when striking. For greater power or reach, turn your shoulders as you thrust. Targets include the throat at CO-22, solar plexus at CO-15, armpit at HT-1, or groin at SP-12 and LV-12.



10. Two-Hand Tip Thrust

Step forward with your L foot, as you lift the cane with your R hand and grip the shaft with your L hand (Two-Hand Handle Grip). As you plant your R foot, thrust the tip straight forward. Targets include the eye, throat at CO-22, solar plexus at CO-15, or groin at SP-12 and LV-12. To prevent your R hand from slipping during forceful strikes, make sure you grip at the top of handle. This strike is very useful at close quarters.



11. Sliding Thrust

Grip the cane at the top of handle. Step forward with your L foot. Lift the cane with your R hand and grip near the end of shaft with your L hand (Two-Hand Handle Grip). Slide the shaft rapidly through your L hand, thrusting the tip into the target. You can grip firmly and continue thrusting, or rapidly retract the shaft through your L hand (like a jab punch). Targets include the eyes, chin, teeth, throat, solar plexus, and groin.



12. Straight Shaft Thrust

This strike is used at close range. Hold the cane with a Two-Hand Shaft Grip. Withdraw your hands to your chest. Step in as you thrust both arms forcefully forward, driving the center of shaft into the target. You can also thrust upward (e.g., under the chin). The cane can be held horizontal, diagonal, or vertical. Targets include the lower forehead (M-HN-3), upper lip (GV-26), chin (CO-24), throat (CO-23), chest, or ribs.



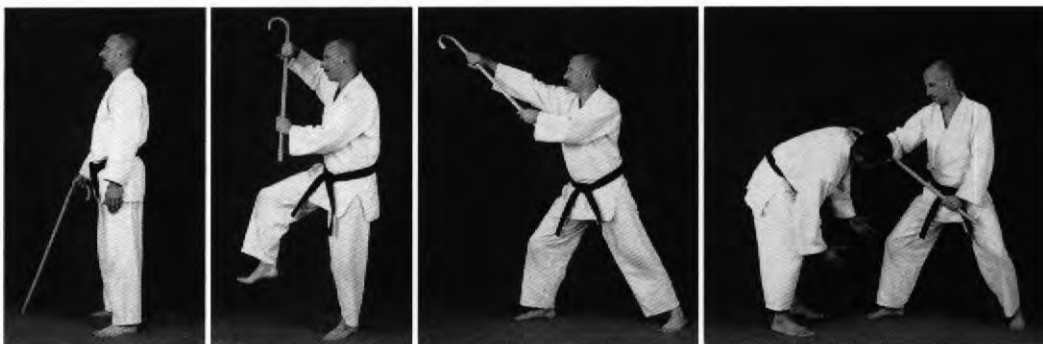
13. Descending Shaft Strike

This strike is used at close range. Hold the cane with a Two-Hand Shaft Grip. Raise the cane horizontally overhead. Slam it downward, driving the center of shaft into the target. This strike is normally used to hit the bridge of the nose at M-HN-4, top of the kneecap, or base of the skull at GB-20 or BL-10, (when opponent is bent over). This strike can also be used to counter grabs by hitting down into the wrist.



14. High Hook Strike

Raise the cane with your R hand; grip the lower-shaft with your L hand. Step forward with your R foot; slide the R hand to the upper-shaft (Two-Hand Shaft Grip). Extend the handle forward, high over the target. Pull down with both hands, toward your hip. Drive the tip of handle into the back of the neck or shoulder (GV-15, GB-21, TW-15, or LI-16), or use the inner-handle to hook and pull the neck, limbs, or clothing.



15. Low Hook Strike

Raise the cane with your R hand; grip the lower-shaft with your L hand. Step forward with your R foot, as you slide the R hand down to the upper-shaft, (Two-Hand Shaft Grip). Extend the handle forward and low, beyond the target. Pull up with both hands, toward your torso. Drive the tip of handle into the back of the knee at BL-54, or the crotch at CO-1 or GV-1, or use the inner-handle to hook the knee or ankle.

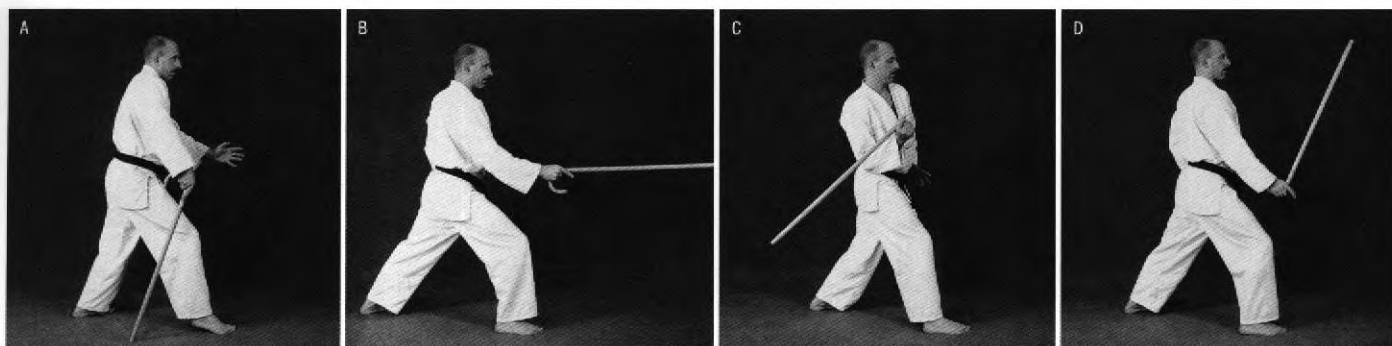


16. Outer-Handle Strike

Hold the cane using a Two-Hand Shaft Grip. Orient your left side toward opponent and retract the handle toward your R shoulder. Whip the outer-handle forward and outward into the side of the head, neck, ribs, or knee. You can also use the outer-handle for two-hand thrusting strikes, as shown in the far photo. Outer-Handle Strikes are usually combined with other two-hand strikes or blocks, to facilitate rapid transitions.



COMBINATION STRIKES



Rising Strike to groin (A-B), Descending Strike to forehead (C-D)

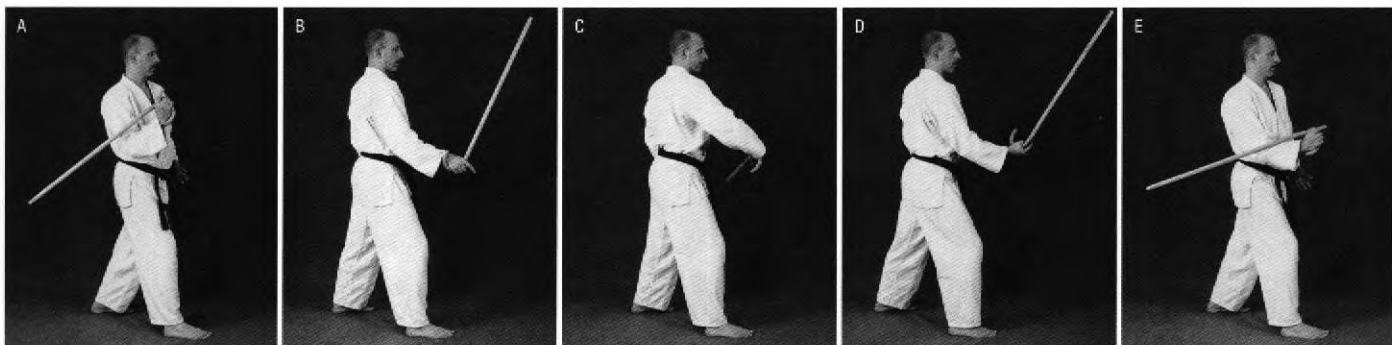
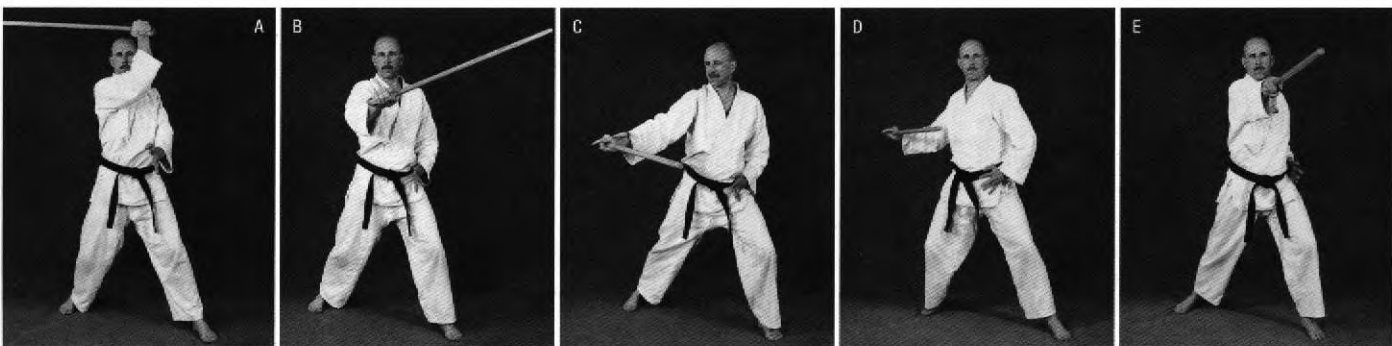


Figure-8 Descending Strikes (three strikes)

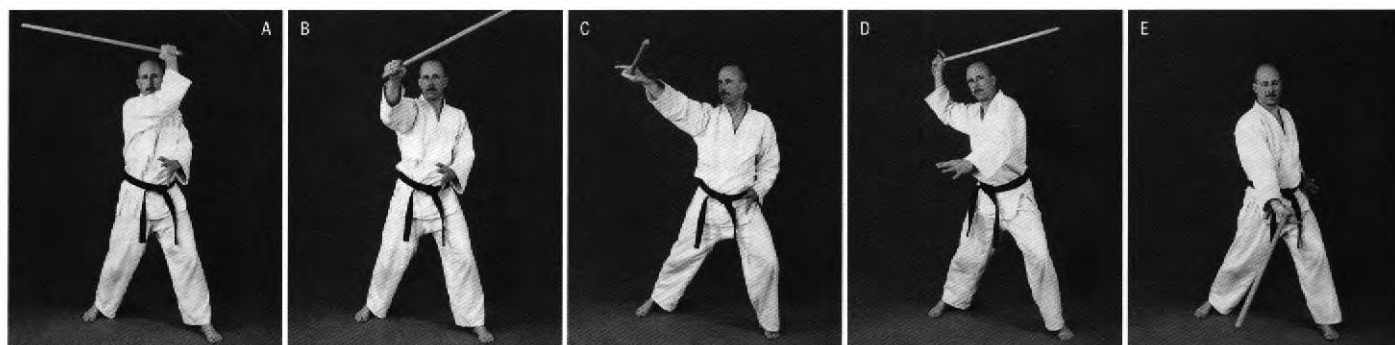


Lateral Strike to fist (A-B), Outside Circular Strike to temple (C-E)

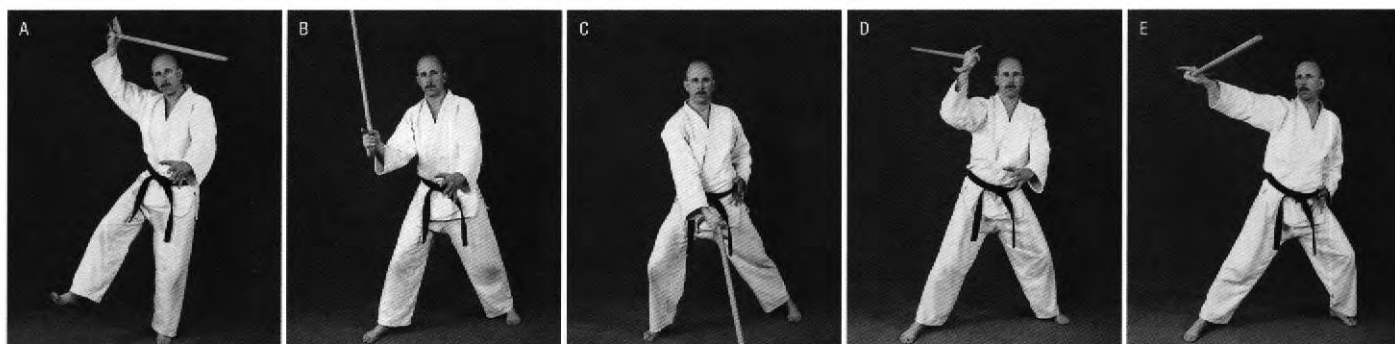


Outside Circular Strike to ribs (A-C), Straight Tip Thrust to throat (D-E)

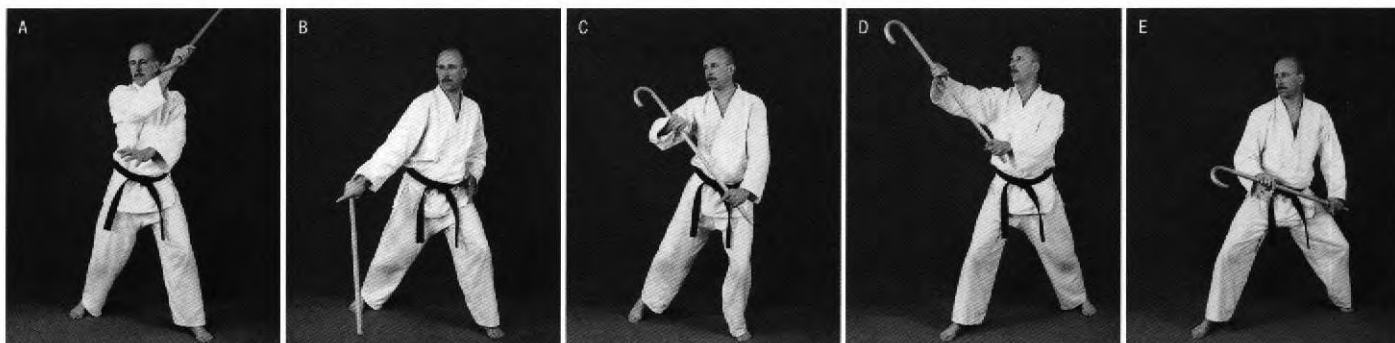
The basic strikes shown previously can be linked into many combinations, as shown in these eight examples.



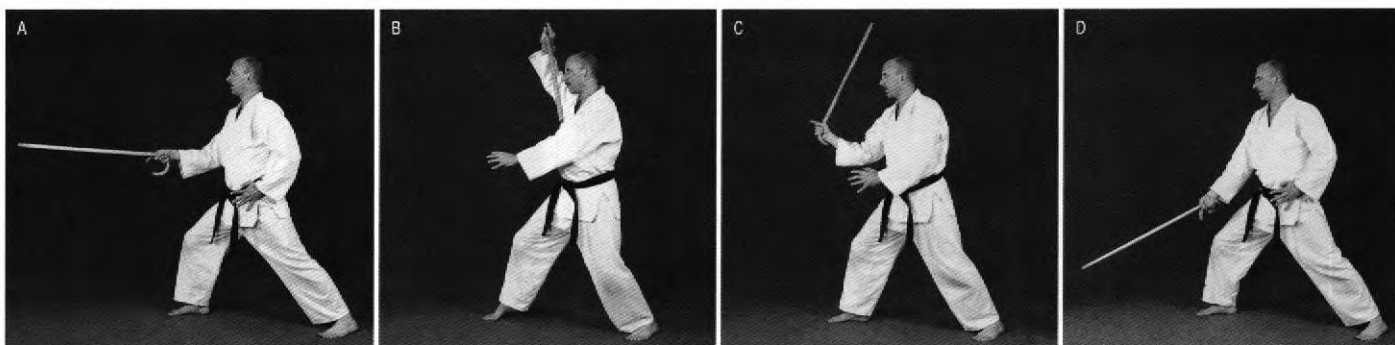
High Outside Circular Strike to temple (A–C), Low Inside Strike to knee or ankle (D–E)



Low Inside Circular Strike to knee (A–C), High Outside Strike to temple (D–E)



Low Outside Strike to knee (A–B), High Hook Strike to neck (C–E)



Low Straight Tip Thrust to groin or solar plexus (A), Low Inside Circular Strike to knee (B–D)

1. Rising Block

Hold the cane at the side of handle and lower-shaft. Block upward, from under the blow, using the center of shaft. Retract the block after contact, bending your legs to lower your body. This motion can be used to execute a forceful snapping block, or to absorb opponent's energy. This block is used to stop a descending strike, or deflect a high straight strike.

2. Inside Block (tip up)

Hold the cane at the side of handle. Block inward with the shaft (tip points up). This block is used to stop a horizontal blow, or deflect a straight strike. The blocking motion can be soft, forceful, a short snapping block, a short parry, or a longer circular parry. Avoid gripping the top of the handle (curved part), since it is difficult to maintain control of the cane.

3. Outside Block (tip up)

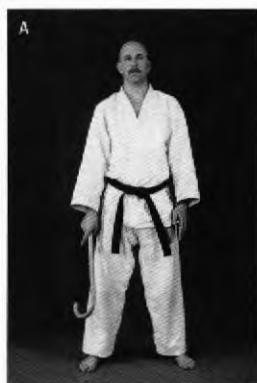
Hold the cane at the side of handle. Block outward with the shaft (tip points up). This block is used to stop a horizontal blow, or deflect a straight strike. The blocking motion can be soft, forceful, a short snapping block, a short parry, or a longer circular parry. Avoid gripping the top of the handle (curved part), since it is difficult to maintain control of the cane.

4. Inside Block (tip down)

Hold the cane at the middle of shaft, with the handle at thumb-side. Block inward with the shaft. This block is used to stop a horizontal blow, or deflect a straight strike. The motion can be either high, middle, or low, depending on circumstances. This block is often used to hook and trap an attacker's arm or leg in the handle, as you deflect a strike.

5. Outside Block (tip down)

Hold the cane at the middle of shaft, with the handle at thumb-side. Block outward with the shaft. This block is used to stop a horizontal blow, or deflect a straight strike. The motion can be either high, middle, or low, depending on circumstances. This block is often used to hook and trap an attacker's arm or leg in the handle, as you deflect a strike.



(•) Indicates blocking surface.
When using the cane to block
unarmed blows or weapons,
there are many variables.
Stance, grip, cane orientation,
and footwork all create

numerous options. Blocking
surfaces include numerous
points on the shaft, or inner-
handle (used for hooking).
Typical blocks are shown
below; others are possible.

6. Two-Hand Inside Block (tip up)

Hold the cane at the side of
handle and lower-shaft (tip
points up). Block inward with
either the center or upper part
of shaft. If you wish to reduce
impact, retract the block as
you make contact. This block is
used to stop a horizontal blow,
or deflect a straight one. Using
two hands helps to support
the block and control the cane.



7. Two-Hand Outside Block (tip up)

Hold the cane at the side of
handle and lower-shaft (tip
points up). Block outward with
either the center or upper part
of shaft. If you wish to reduce
impact, retract the block as
you make contact. This block is
used to stop a horizontal blow,
or deflect a straight one. Using
two hands helps to support
the block and control the cane.



8. Two-Hand Inside Block (tip down)

Hold the cane at the side of
handle and lower-shaft (tip
points down). Block inward with
either the center or lower
part of shaft. If you wish to
reduce impact, retract as you
make contact. This block is
used to stop a horizontal blow,
or deflect a straight one. Using
two hands helps to support
the block and control the cane.



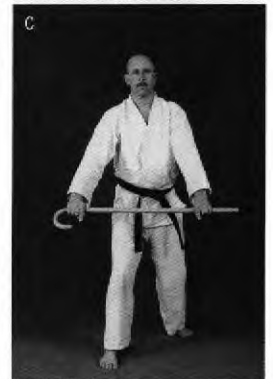
9. Two-Hand Outside Block (tip down)

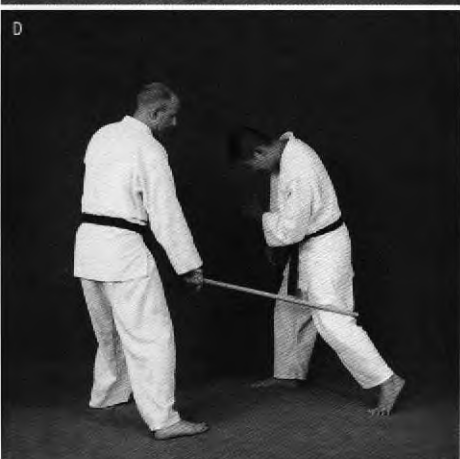
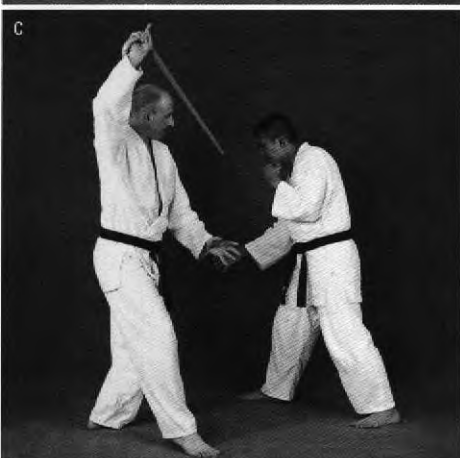
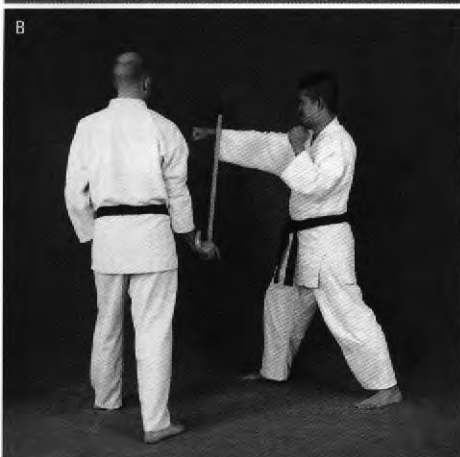
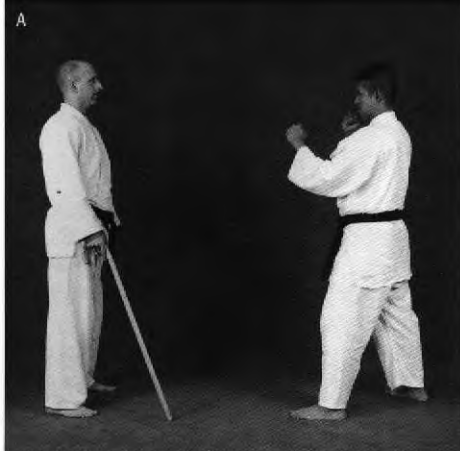
Hold the cane at the side of
handle and lower-shaft (tip
points down). Block outward with
either the center or lower
part of shaft. If you wish to
reduce impact, retract as you
make contact. This block is
used to stop a horizontal blow,
or deflect a straight one. Using
two hands helps to support
the block and control the cane.



10. Descending Block

Hold the cane at the side of
handle and lower-shaft. Block
downward with the center of
shaft, bending your knees to
lower your body. Rise up and
retract the block after you
make contact. This motion can
be used to execute a forceful
snapping block, or to absorb
opponent's energy. The block is
used to stop a Rising Strike, or
deflect a low straight strike.





DEFENSES AGAINST STRIKES

Techniques 1–12 show cane defenses against hand strikes by an unarmed attacker. These skills can also be adapted for use against weapons such as sticks or knives. Although the skills may need to be modified, basic principles remain the same. When facing a weapon, you will often target strikes or blocks to an attacker's hand or arm, in order to dislodge the weapon, or damage the limb so it is incapable of handling a weapon. The techniques shown throughout this section can be initiated from either Relaxed Stances or Fighting Stances.

1. Side Step + Descending Strike

Adopt a Relaxed Stance and Side-Handle Grip (A). As attacker punches, step laterally with your R foot and execute a Descending Strike to their wrist (B), or an Inside Block with the shaft. Without pausing, swing the cane over your head (C) and execute an Inside Circular Strike to the outer knee, hitting GB or ST acupoints (D). Quickly grip the shaft with your L hand, slide your R foot forward (E), and execute a Two-Hand Shaft Thrust to the throat at CO-23 or ST-9 (F).

Important Points

The first two strikes are executed in rapid sequence. Try to target acupoints and bone to increase the efficiency of your blows. When hitting the wrist, target LI-5 or LI-6 along radius bone. The outer knee can be struck at either: GB-34 and M-LE-23 (adjacent points below the joint), GB-33 (above the joint), or ST-35 (outer lower-corner of kneecap). Steps E–F can also be a Descending Shaft Strike to the bridge of the nose at M-HN-4.



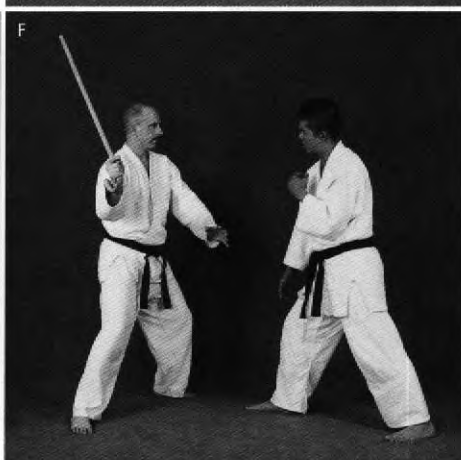


2. Side Step + Lateral Strike

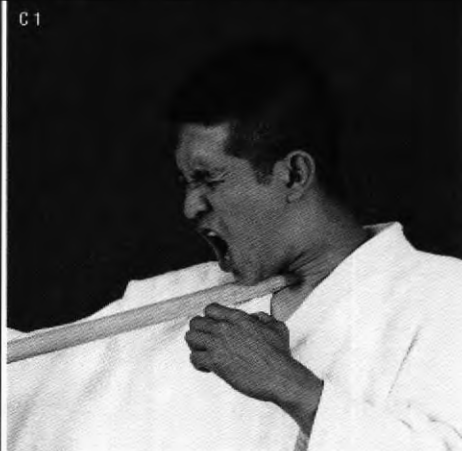
Adopt a Relaxed Stance and Side-Handle Grip (A). As attacker punches, step laterally with your L foot and execute a Lateral Strike to their wrist (B–C), or an Outside Block with the shaft. Without pausing, swing the cane over your head, turn the handle against the back of your wrist (D), and execute an Outside Circular Strike to the temple at M-HN-9 or GB-3. Allow the strikes motion to position the cane for the next strike (F). Follow with an Inside Circular Strike to the inner knee at SP-9 or SP-10 (G).

Important Points

This combination of strikes is characterized by a continuous series of circular whipping motions that are very fast. Properly done, you should hear whistling as the cane cuts through the air. You can easily lengthen this combination by adding additional circular strikes. Alternating between high and low targets makes it more difficult for your opponent to block or avoid your blows, and hinders their ability to grab your cane.



CANE DEFENSES

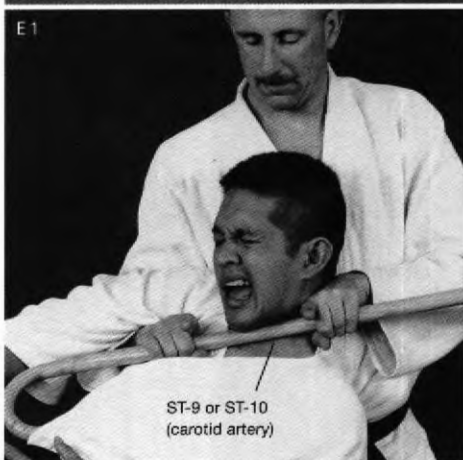


3. Tip Thrust + Ankle Hook

Adopt a Relaxed Stance and Side-Handle Grip (A). As attacker steps forward to punch, step back with your L foot to avoid the blow and maintain distance. At the same time, raise the tip and thrust it into the throat at CO-22 (B–C). Allow attacker's motion to carry them into the strike. As they lean or fall backward, their R foot may swing upward (D). Hook the ankle with the handle and lift forcefully upward, forcing a Back Fall (E–F). This hooking action could also be used to block and counter a low Front Kick to your shin, knee, or groin.

Important Points

The Straight Tip Thrust is a very simple and effective counter against charging attackers. The strike does not require power to be effective; timing is far more important. Try to camouflage your strike, waiting until attacker is fully committed before raising the tip. The thrust can be delivered with one or two hands, to the armpit, solar plexus, groin, or throat. Do not strike to the eyes unless justified. Quickly retract the tip to prevent it from being grabbed.



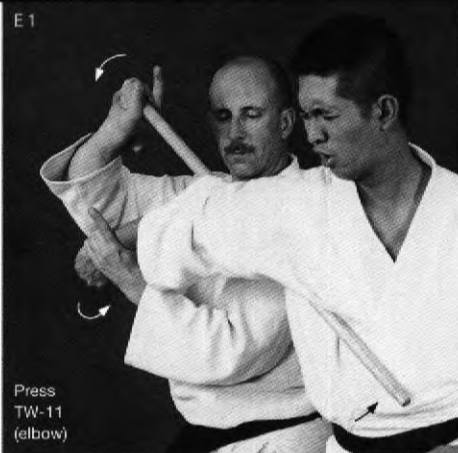
4. Sweeping Parry + Inside Strike

Adopt a Relaxed Stance and Side-Handle Grip (A). Attacker steps forward with a R Straight Punch. Step 45° forward to their outside with your L foot, and parry with your L Hand (B). Swing the shaft diagonally upward, striking the throat at ST-9, or the side of the neck at LI-18 (C). Press the shaft into the carotid artery, step behind attacker, and grip the shaft with your L hand (D). Thrust your hips into attacker's spine, unbalancing them backward as you apply a choke (E). Their neck is trapped tightly between the shaft and your torso.

Important Points

Step well past attacker as you parry the punch. Try to parry and strike at the same time. You can choke virtually any target on the neck (windpipe, carotid artery, nerves), since the hardness of the wood makes any pressure extremely efficient. Exercise caution and avoid pressing the windpipe, as this can cause life-threatening injuries. If attacker drops their chin to counter your choke, drive the shaft into their jaw at ST-4 or CO-24 (very painful).

CANE DEFENSES



5. Belly + Passing Arm Bar

Attacker steps forward with a R punch. Step to their inside with your R foot (A–B). Parry and grab their wrist with your L hand, as you deliver an Inside Strike to the ribs (C). Step inward with your L foot, as you pass your arm and the cane under attacker's elbow, leaving the end of the shaft firmly planted against attacker's abdomen. Lock their elbow by pressing upward and backward with the shaft and your inner elbow, as you push their wrist in the opposite direction (D). Step under their arm with your R foot and pivot 180°, twisting their arm as you go (E). Lift their wrist as you press the shaft downward into the elbow at TW-11, locking the joint as you lever the end of the cane into their chest (F).

Important Points

Try to lock attacker's elbow by step D, since this makes it more difficult for them to counter as you pass under their arm. After applying the arm bar (F), you can force attacker to their knees or belly if needed. Do this by pulling them off-balance toward their front or right front-corner as you apply the arm bar.



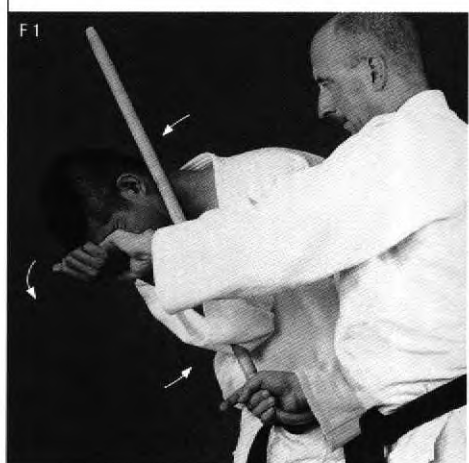


6. Neck + Passing Shoulder Lock

Attacker steps forward with a R punch. Step to their inside with your R foot (A–B). Parry and grab their wrist with your L hand, as you deliver an Inside Strike to the neck at LI-18 (C). Pivot your body, as you twist and circle attacker's arm to your right, pressing the shaft into the side of their elbow (LU-5) and neck (D). Step under attacker's arm with your L foot and pivot 180° (E). Push their wrist downward with your L hand, as you lift their bent-elbow with the shaft, levering the neck downward. This locks the shoulder (F), forcing a fall or shoulder dislocation (G). In these photos, a skilled opponent initiates a high Flip Fall to save their arm and shoulder from injury.

Important Points

When levering the neck (F1), try to press acupoints, such as LI-18, SI-16, SI-17, or TW-16. To keep the cane from slipping off the head, keep the shaft firmly pressed against the neck, and at the proper angle, during D–G. To pin, you can often adapt the holds shown under technique 9 (this chapter), or under technique 8 in the *Short-Stick* chapter.



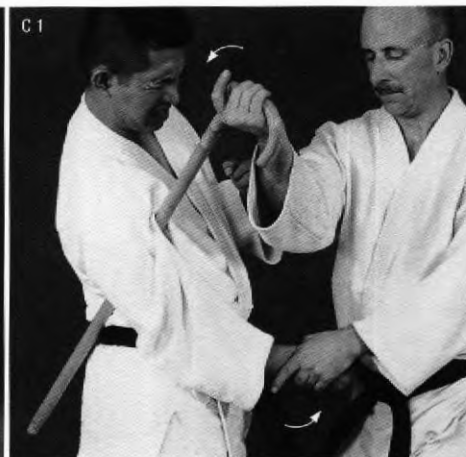


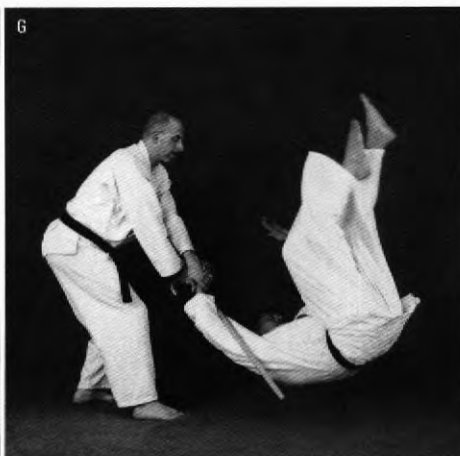
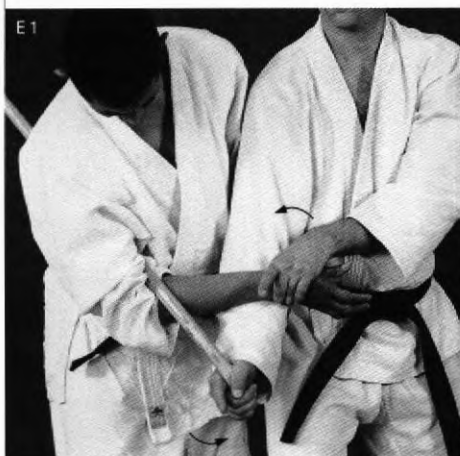
7. Biceps-Lumbar Lever Throw

Attacker steps forward with a R punch. Step to their inside with your R foot. Parry and grab their wrist with your L hand, as you deliver a Rising Strike to the arm at TW-11 or TW-12 (A-B). Slide the shaft to their armpit. Twist and circle their wrist downward, as you circle the handle upward. Lever the shaft into the biceps (N-UE-9 or PC-2) and lower back (C). Step forcefully past attacker with your R foot, as you push the handle downward and lift their wrist, throwing them toward their right rear-corner (D). If needed, execute a Descending Strike to the groin, solar plexus, or face (E).

Important Points

This throw relies on leverage and painful pressure to nerves, to unbalance opponent. When entering, you can also plant the shaft directly into the armpit, rather than striking the arm first. As you circle the handle up, over, and down, allow it to turn in your hand. You will be shifting your grip from the side of handle (B) to the top of handle (C), as the hold evolves. Note that the held-hand and cane rotate counter-clockwise, and are 180° opposed (C1).





8. Passing Arm Lever Throw

Attacker steps forward with a R punch. Step to their inside with your R foot. Parry and grab their wrist with your L hand, as you deliver a Rising Strike to the triceps at TW-12 (A–B). Slide the shaft to their armpit. Twist and circle attacker's wrist to your right, passing it under the cane (C). Step under attacker's arm with your L foot and pivot 180°, as you press the shaft into the forearm at M-UE-31 or M-UE-32 (D–E). Throw by pulling the handle downward into attacker's forearm, as you twist and pull upward on their wrist (F–G).

Important Points

During step D, attacker's arm is trapped between your inner elbow and the shaft: pulling downward on the handle drives the shaft into nerves. This makes it more difficult for attacker to counter as you pass under their arm. If you have trouble applying leverage during E, the cane's angle may be too horizontal; you may be too far away (keep your hip close to theirs); the wrist may not be twisted enough; or you may not be pushing the forearm against the shaft to create pain, as you pull the handle toward you.

CANE DEFENSES



9. Throat Shoulder Lock

Attacker steps forward with a R punch. Step to their inside with your R foot. Parry and grab their wrist with your L hand, as you swing the cane under their arm (A-B). Push their wrist forward as you plant the shaft across their throat (C). Lock attacker's shoulder and choke by pushing their wrist downward with your L hand, as you lift their elbow with the shaft, levering the other end into their throat (D). At the same time, pivot to your left and force a Back Fall (E). Maintain your hold and apply a choke: lever the cane into the carotid artery (ST-9 or ST-10), as you pull attacker's wrist horizontally toward you (F).

Important Points

This is very similar to a hold shown previously in the *Short-Stick Techniques* chapter (technique 8), except the longer length of the cane allows you to generate greater leverage with less effort. When pinning (F), keep attacker's arm bent as shown. As you drive the shaft into the neck, you will also drive it into nerves on the forearm near the inner elbow (typically LU-5, PC-3, M-UE-32, or M-UE-31).





10. Neck-Hook Blending Throw

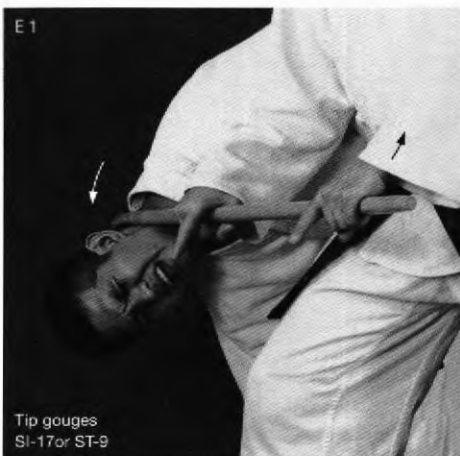
Attacker steps forward with a R punch. Step to their inside with your R foot and grip the shaft with your L hand. Parry the punch with the end of shaft (A–B) and sweep the handle into the neck (C). Hook the neck and pull toward you, as you step behind your R foot with your L foot and pivot 180° (D). Pull the head forcefully downward and twist it by levering the tip of the handle into either GB-20, TW-17, SI-17, LI-18, or ST-9 (E). Point use is based on the relative size of the handle in relation to the attacker's neck. Force attacker to fall toward their front or left front-corner (F). This type of leverage usually causes them to flip over.

Important Points

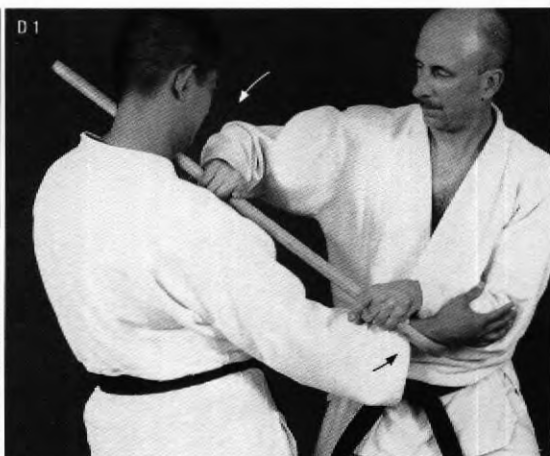
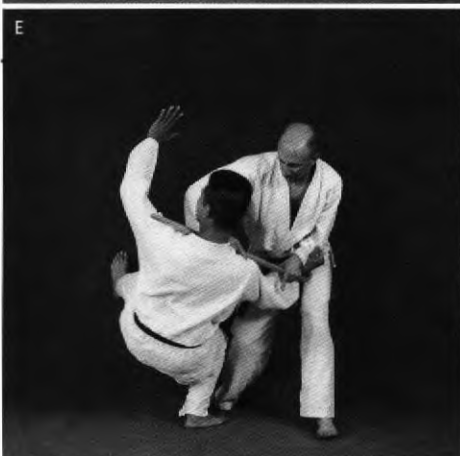
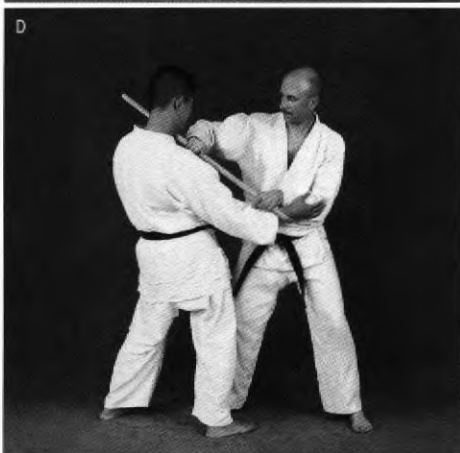
This technique works best against a charging attacker, since their forward motion assists the throw. Although good timing and blending skills are useful, the cane helps reduce the need. The handle does not need to fit the neck precisely: an undersized handle that is too small to wrap the neck will usually gouge the back of it at GB-20, BL-10, GV-15, or spinal nerves emerging from the cervical vertebrae.

CAUTION

Technique 10 may break the neck or cause serious throat injuries. If the handle fits the neck snugly, the tip gouges vital points on the neck, and the handle snaps the head backward, as opponent flips over. The key factor is the angle of the shaft in relation to the head. Practice only under qualified supervision. During demonstrations, a wide handle may reduce risk, since the head can slip free during the fall. Another method is to slip the handle off the neck as the opponent initiates their breakfall. Either of these methods require a high degree of skill by both practitioners to prevent serious injury.



CANE DEFENSES



11. Wrist-Hook Pivot + Neck Strike

Hold the cane with a Middle Grip. Adopt a Fighting Stance with the handle leading (A). As attacker steps forward and delivers a R punch, step to their inside with your R foot. Execute a L Rising Block with your wrist, and an Inside Block with the cane (B). Pull the cane downward with your R hand, trapping attacker's wrist between the inner-handle and your L wrist. Grip the shaft with your L hand. Swing the shaft toward their head with your R hand (C), as you pull the handle toward your waist. Drive the shaft into the throat at CO-23 or ST-9, or the neck at LI-18 (D). Unbalance attacker toward their right side or right rear-corner, forcing a fall (E).

Important Points

Try to keep attacker's wrist trapped throughout the technique (D1). The wrist should be tightly pinned between the handle and your forearm. As you initially hook the wrist, you will usually need to twist the shaft to adjust the angle of the cane's handle, in order to tighten the trap. Naturally, a smaller handle requires less adjustment and is easier to use.



12. Neck-Hook Hip Throw

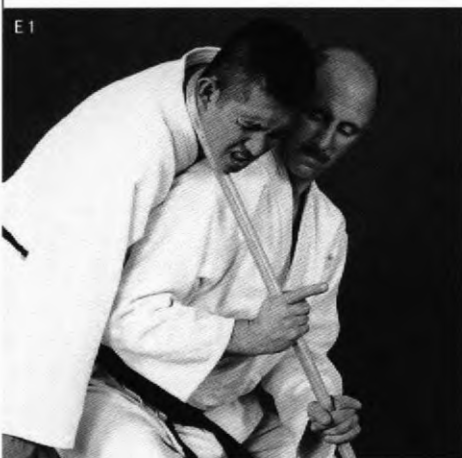
Hold the cane with a Middle Grip. Adopt a Fighting Stance with the handle leading (A). As attacker steps forward and delivers a R punch, step to their inside with your R foot. Execute an Inside Block to the wrist using the cane (B), then immediately strike outward into the neck with the shaft (C). Hook the neck with the handle and pull toward your R shoulder, as you step across with your L foot and pivot 180° (D). Pass under the cane, plant your hips low against attacker's thighs, and grip the shaft with two hands (E). Pull the head downward as you raise your hips, throwing attacker over your shoulder (F–G).

Alternate Throw

This throw can also be applied by gripping attacker's R wrist with your L hand, as you block during step B. Continue to hold the wrist throughout the technique: pass under attacker's arm and the cane, as you plant your hips, then pull the arm and cane to throw. This is basically a common Inside Shoulder Throw. It is a good option if safety is an issue, since the neck-hook need not be part of the technique.

CAUTION

This technique may break the neck or cause fatal throat injuries. If the handle fits the neck snugly, the tip gouges vital points on the neck, and the handle jerks the head backward as attacker flips over, damaging the cervical spine. Even a larger, looser handle can lead to serious injuries.



A



B



C



D



C1



DEFENSES AGAINST KICKS

Techniques 13–16 show typical cane defenses against kicks. Right-leg kicks are shown; however, these techniques can also be adapted for left-leg kicks. Most of the cane defenses shown in this section are based on techniques used in unarmed defenses, which are covered in the author's books *The Art of Throwing* and *Hapkido: Traditions, Philosophy, Technique*.

13. Outside Hook Throw

Adopt a Fighting Stance with a Side-Handle Grip, tip leading (A). Attacker executes a R Side Kick, Hook Kick, or Spin Kick. Step 45° forward to their outside with your L foot. Grip the shaft with your L hand and execute a Two-Hand Outside Block, with the handle below their ankle (B). While attacker's R leg is still in the air, lift the cane upward, hooking the ankle with the inner-handle. Pivot to your left as you lift attacker's leg (C). Rotate the cane 180° vertically, pushing their foot forward to unbalance them backward (D). When executing this action, use the cane as a lever: push your R hand upward and forward, as you pull your L hand downward and back toward your waist.

Important Points

This throw can be used against almost any common kick, from either inside or outside the leg (the initial block may need to be adjusted based on the type of kick). Charge inward as you lift and push, forcing the leg to extend beyond its natural stretch. This throw can also be executed using a simple stick (no handle) by slightly modifying your scooping motion.



14. Ankle-Hook Shoulder Throw

Adopt a Fighting Stance with a Side-Handle Grip, tip leading (A). As attacker executes a R Roundhouse Kick, step to their inside with your R foot and grip the shaft with your L hand. Execute a Two-Hand Inside Block, with the handle below their ankle (B). While attacker's leg is still elevated, lift the cane and hook the ankle, as you step behind your R foot with the L foot, and pivot 180°. At the same time, turn the cane 180° counterclockwise around the trapped-ankle, as you lift the knee with your upper arm (C). Drop to your R knee and plant your shoulder under attacker's knee (D). Bend forward, as you pull attacker's foot down with the cane, throwing over your shoulder (E).

Important Points

This throw can be executed from a standing or kneeling position. The ankle should be tightly pinned between the handle and your forearm. As you initially hook the ankle, you will usually need to twist the shaft to adjust the angle of the cane's handle, in order to tighten the trap. The side of the handle crosses the Achilles tendon (C1). Ankle injuries may occur during E.



15. Outside Shin-Press Throw

Adopt a Fighting Stance with a Side-Handle Grip, tip leading (A). As attacker executes a R Front Kick or Side Kick, step 45° forward with your L foot. Grip the shaft with your L hand. Execute a Two-Hand Outside Block, tip down, and scoop their leg upward with the shaft and your L forearm (B). Rotate the end of cane over the leg and press the shaft down into nerves on the inner shin at SP-6, LV-5, or LV-6. The ankle is trapped between the shaft and your forearm (C). Rotate their leg and throw toward their right rear-corner (D). You can also press the inner knee at SP-10, or the thigh at SP-11 (C2).

Important Points

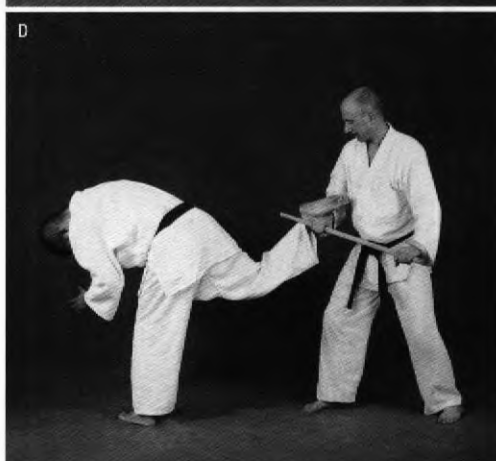
This throw works by unbalancing attacker as you press sensitive nerves on the inner leg. Begin turning attacker's leg as soon as you wrap it, to prevent them from countering with a Scissor Throw. As attacker falls, guard against a L Roundhouse Kick to your head. If justified, you can execute a Stamp Kick to their groin, while maintaining the ankle hold with the cane (attacker is lying on their back).

C 1 (Shin-Press)



C 2 (Knee-Press)



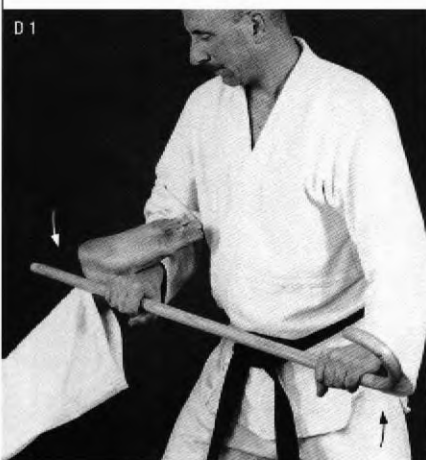


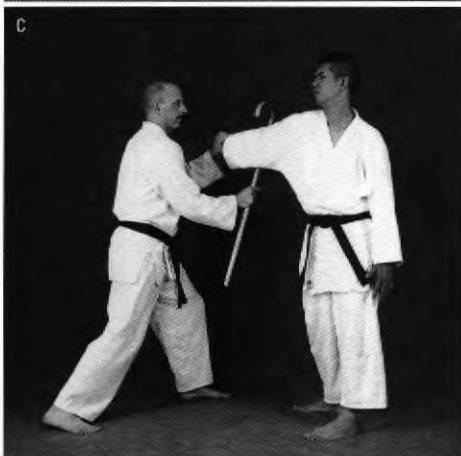
16. Inside Leg-Twist Throw

Adopt a Fighting Stance with a Middle Grip, handle leading (A). As attacker delivers a R Roundhouse Kick, step to their inside with your R foot. Grip near the handle with your L hand and deliver a Two-Hand Outside Block, tip down (B). Scoop the leg upward with your R forearm and the shaft. Rotate the shaft over the Achilles tendon and press downward (C–D). Lift the handle and unbalance attacker toward their front or right front-corner, forcing a Front Fall. Drop to your R knee, as you press attacker's foot toward their buttock. Pin their leg behind them (E), then kneel on their L calf at BL-56 (E1). This is very painful.

Important Points

Pressing the Achilles tendon (D) is painful. When pinning, use your R forearm to keep opponent's instep extended, as you apply pressure against the Achilles tendon with the shaft (foot is fully extended, knee is fully bent, lower shaft is braced on their thigh). If you allow opponent to bend their foot or extend their knee, they will have greater leg strength and may be able to kick-out of the hold.





ATTACKING FIRST

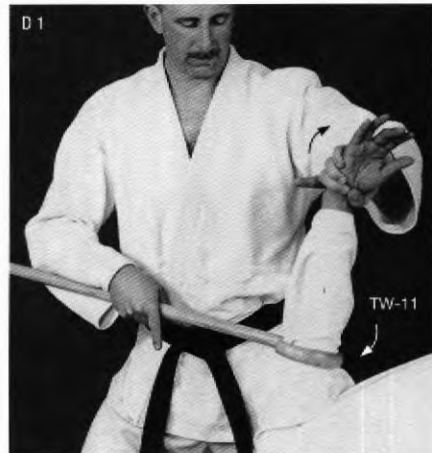
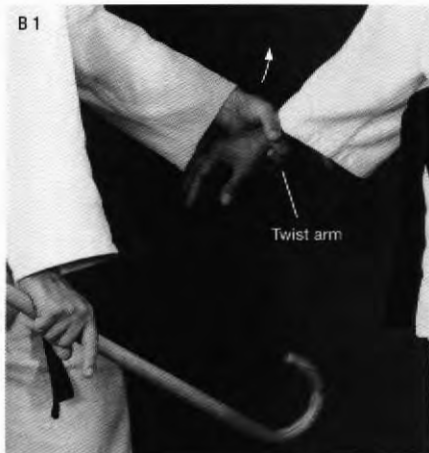
Cane techniques 17–20 are used to execute an offensive action, and can be initiated from either relaxed stances or fighting stances. The cane strikes covered earlier can also be used to attack first, although this level of force is rarely justified, unless facing multiple attackers, an overpowering opponent, a life-threatening situation, or a potentially lethal weapon. When facing a weapon, target your blows to the hand and arm, to dislodge the weapon. The attacks shown can also be adapted for defensive situations.

17. Hook Arm Bar

Adopt a Relaxed Stance with a Middle Grip (A). Step 45° forward to your left with your L foot. Grab opponent's right wrist with your L hand, as you pass the cane under their arm (B). Lift their arm and twist it, so the elbow points up. Pull their arm straight and hook the elbow at TW-11 with the handle (C). Step laterally to your left with your R foot and pivot as you lock opponent's elbow. Pull the cane downward, as you lift their wrist (D). Unbalance them toward their right front-corner, force a fall, and pin.

Important Points

This attack should be well camouflaged. Pass the handle under the arm using a natural swinging motion as you step toward opponent. When entering, it is crucial to rotate opponent's arm, till the back of their elbow faces up. When initially gripping, reach far around and clamp your thumb and middle finger around the wrist (B1). The farther around you reach, the better, since this permits greater range of motion as you lift and twist their arm. During step D, it may be also possible to lock the wrist, by driving opponent's palm toward their forearm.

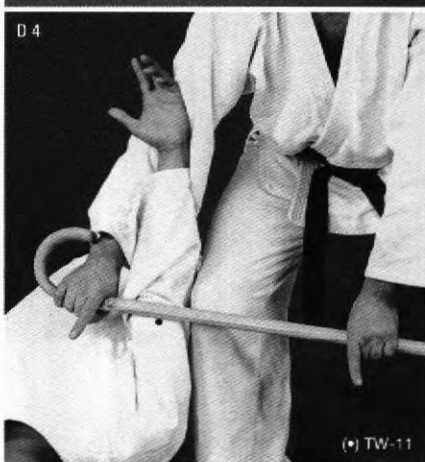
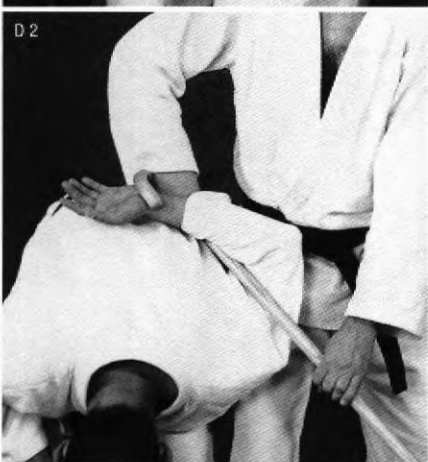
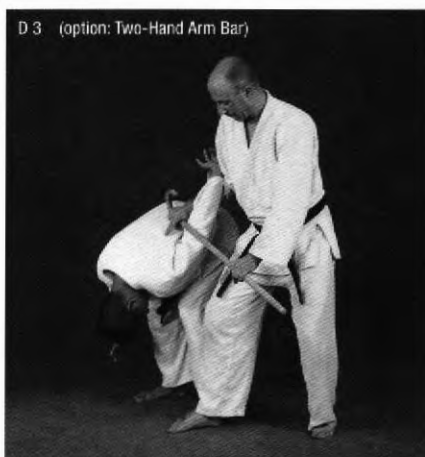


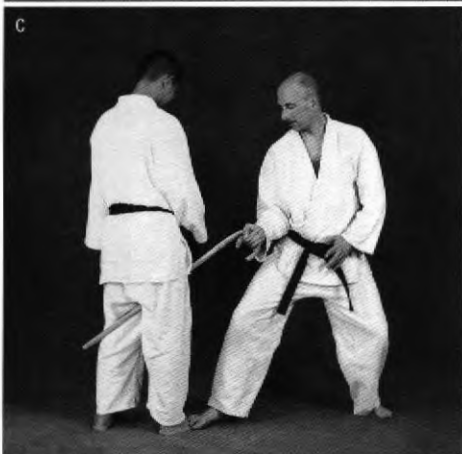


18. Hammer Lock

From a relaxed stance (A), step forward with your R foot. Slip the cane under opponent's L arm and lift it upward (B). Grip at mid-shaft with your L hand, planting the back of your R wrist on their wrist. Step behind your R foot with your L foot and pivot 180°, as you sweep their bent-arm behind their back (C). Lock their shoulder by pressing the shaft down into the inner elbow at HT-3, as you lift their wrist with your R wrist (D, D1). Continue pivoting to your left, force a fall

toward their L front-corner (E), and pin (F). You can also apply the Hammer Lock by driving the shaft into the upper arm, as you hook and lift their wrist with the handle (D2). If an opponent keeps their arm straight during step C, apply a Two-Hand Arm Bar by guiding their wrist toward your inner elbow, as you sweep their arm behind their back. Place the shaft across the back of their elbow at TW-11 and press down to lock the joint (D3, D4). To force a fall and pin, pivot left as described previously. If an opponent's arm bends, shift to a Hammer Lock.





19. Stomp + Leg Lever Throw

Adopt a Relaxed Stance with a Top-Handle Grip (A). Step suddenly forward toward opponent's outside. Plant your R foot on top of their R foot, as you pass the cane between their legs (B). Weight your R leg, trapping their foot. Push the handle to your left, pressing the lower-shaft against the back of their L knee or upper leg, and the upper-shaft against the front of their upper thigh, near the hip joint (C). Drive the handle forcefully forward and down, forcing opponent to fall backward (D). Thrust your hips forward for power. If needed, follow up with Figure-8 Descending Strikes.

Important Points

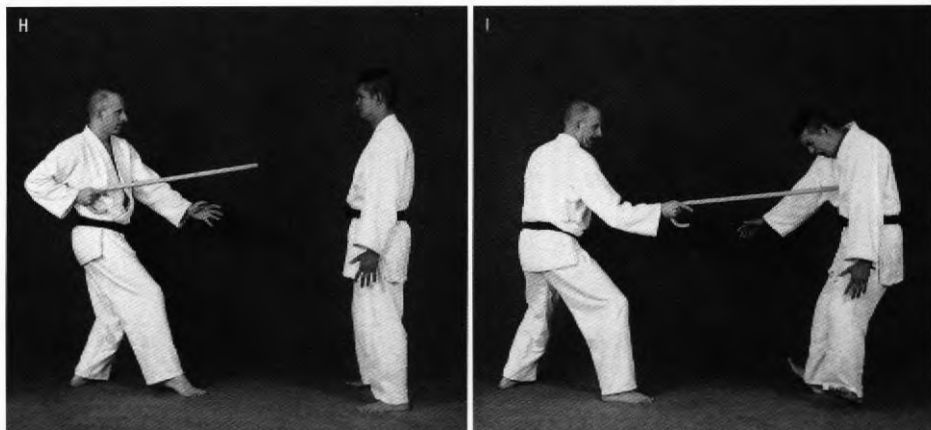
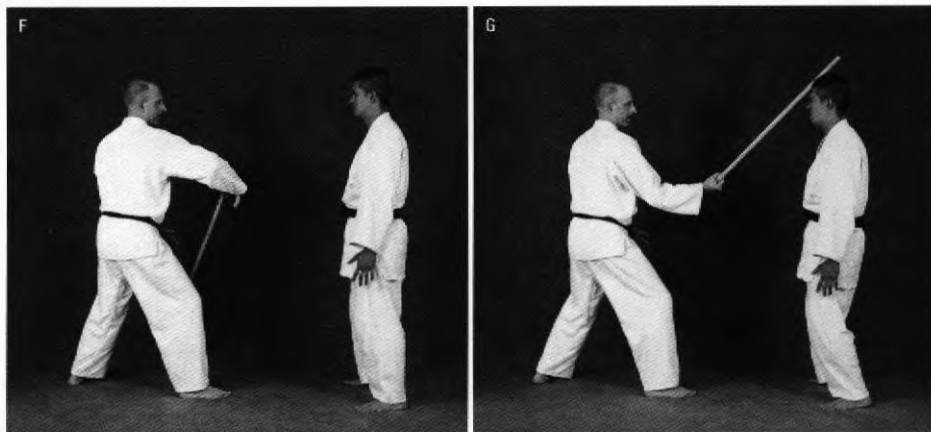
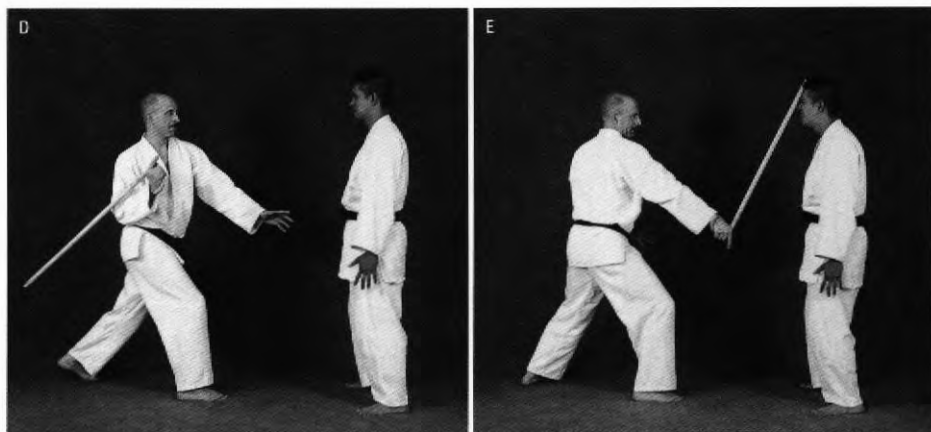
This throw should be well disguised. Place the cane between the legs, using a natural swinging motion as you step inward in a Relaxed Walking Stance. Do not raise the cane or make any motion that signals your intent. If opponent's foot is pinned as they fall, their ankle may fracture. Instead of stepping on the foot, you can also trap the leg by planting your R foot behind opponent's R foot. The Leg-Lever Throw can also be set up by first executing a Rising Strike to the groin (see next page, A–C).



20. Rising Strike, Figure-8

Descending Strikes, Straight Thrust

Attack first, executing four strikes in rapid sequence. Begin from a Relaxed Stance with a Side-Handle Grip or Top-Handle Grip (A). Step suddenly forward with your R foot and execute a Rising Strike to the groin (B–C). Immediately reverse direction and execute two Figure-8 Descending Strikes: swing the cane backward in a circular motion, as you turn your R shoulder back (D); whip the end of cane forward and down into the forehead at GV-24, as you rotate your R shoulder forward (E); swing the cane down to your left side (F), then up, forward, and down into the forehead again (G). Shift your weight back, as you retract the handle to your right side with the tip pointing at opponent (H). Slide your R foot forward as you thrust the tip straight into the solar plexus at CO-15 (I), or lower throat at CO-22. This entire combination should be very fast, fluid, and continuous. If an opponent moves during the combo, step as you strike. The Figure-8 Descending Strikes (D–G) can also be executed in continuous repetition.



The rope is a common utilitarian object that can be made from a variety of materials and in a range of shapes, such as flat cloth or cylindrical fiber. Sophisticated rope-fighting systems are few, although many rope skills can be found scattered across a range of martial arts. These various styles are characterized by differing ideals influencing weapon characteristics, preferred techniques, appropriate use of force, and the circumstances and manner in which techniques should be executed. The rope techniques shown throughout

ROPE TECHNIQUES

this chapter, and the martial philosophy behind them, stem primarily from the author's experiences in the martial art of Hapkido. Consequently, this material consists of an eclectic range of strikes, holds, and throws that can be applied with varying levels of force, based on what is appropriate and justifiable. This chapter begins with an overview of basic principles, followed by typical rope defenses. Generally, the material reflects a mainstream approach, adaptable to a broad range of martial art styles, tactical strategies, and rope-like weapons.



Overview

The rope is a common utilitarian object found in almost all cultures. Although it is often associated with a variety of functional tasks, it can also be employed as a highly sophisticated and effective weapon for self-defense. In this book, "rope technique" not only refers to the use of common rope, but also to a variety of similar rope-like devices including the belt, scarf, and handkerchief. Many other utilitarian objects, such as chains, electrical extension cords, towels, clothing, wire, ribbon, and cable can also be wielded using rope techniques.

Generally, the rope is considered a close range weapon, although medium range strikes are also possible. Rope can be used to defend against either unarmed attacks or weapons. While a limited number of strikes are possible, the rope is most commonly employed for blocking and wrapping holds to an opponent's wrists, ankles, and throat. These wrapping techniques are used to execute a variety of joint locks, chokes, restraining holds, and throws. Most of these techniques are based on the same principles found in unarmed techniques. Historically, rope techniques were also used to kill an opponent quickly and silently, although today the emphasis is mostly on submission holds designed to bind and immobilize an opponent. Generally, rope techniques are quite difficult to master and require substantial practice and a complete understanding of technical principles used in unarmed defenses.

Rope Characteristics

When selecting a piece of rope for training, there is no "official" size, length, thickness, material, or type of rope that is required. In many schools, it is common to practice with a cloth martial arts belt. These are readily available and are less likely to cause injury or abrade the skin when applying wrapping holds or chokes. Length varies widely. Generally, you will need a minimum of 2 feet to employ most techniques, while complex wrapping holds, in which you tie up your opponent's arms and legs, can require a

good deal more length. The rope techniques in this chapter were demonstrated using a common 8 1/2 foot martial arts belt. This length is typical of something you might find lying around. You should also train with other lengths and materials. This will make you aware of the specific limitations of different rope-like weapons and teach you to adapt to a variety of conditions.

Common Grips

Five basic grips are used to hold rope weapons: Overhand Grip, Over-Under Grip, One-Hand Grip, Wrapped Grip, and Wrists Shackled. It is common to shift between different grips as you apply techniques.

Overhand Grip

Grip the rope in the center-portion, with both hands about shoulder-width apart and both palms facing down. The length of rope between your hands can vary based on the specific techniques you are executing. This grip primarily favors blocking and wrapping techniques. It is used extensively in this book.

Over-Under Grip

Grip the rope in the center-portion, with both hands about shoulder-width apart. The rope is

usually held at an angle across your body. The right lead-palm faces up, and the left rear-palm faces down (right-handed person). This grip is primarily used for Snap Strikes or Circular Strikes, since a right underhand grip provides better rope control and wrist-snap, than an overhand grip. Blocks are possible, but not commonly practiced.

One-Hand Grip

Hold the rope with one hand only, at the middle or end. This grip is typically used for strikes in which you are swinging the rope in repetitive circular motions or figure-eight patterns. This is typically done if the end of a rope is weighted or possesses a heavy knot, or you are swinging a belt buckle. You may also find yourself using a One-Hand Grip, if your other hand must temporarily release its hold to execute other techniques (e.g., punch).

Wrapped Grip

Grip the rope in the center-portion, with both hands about shoulder-width apart, and both palms facing down. Wrap the rope once around each hand. This grip is used when a strong, non-slip grip is required. A forceful block or a choke are typical examples. The disadvantage of the Wrapped Grip is that it is

Types of Rope



Rope and rope-like weapons (from top to bottom: scarf, rope, chain, belt.)

difficult to make rapid changes in hand placement, which in turn limits your ability to shift between different rope techniques.

Wrists Shackled (or tied)

This is not a grip per se, but refers to a situation in which your wrists are tied together, shackled, or handcuffed. In this case, it is possible to employ many rope techniques. Blocks, chokes, and wrapping holds leading into joint locks and throws are all possible.

Stances

Typical rope stances are shown at lower-right. The *Relaxed Stance* is used to camouflage tactics, signal non-aggressive intentions, and launch surprise attacks or counterattacks. A typical defensive *Fighting Stance* is shown using a right lead, with the feet positioned in a Back Stance. The rope is held at waist or chest level using an *Overhand Grip* or an *Over-Under Grip*; the right hand leads. The rope can be uncoiled, or folded in sections. Many other stances or leads are possible.

Rope Strikes

Although rope-weapons are typically used for blocking and restraining, they can also be used to strike. Typically this involves lashing or whipping attacks to the face or eyes. This is mostly used as a distraction to set up other techniques. However, if the end is weighted (e.g., a belt buckle or heavy knot), then debilitating strikes are also possible. For example, hit the eyes, or pressure points at the temple or throat; or dislodge an opponent's weapon by striking their hand. Basic rope strikes are shown on the next page.

Rope Blocks

Rope weapons can be used to block a wide variety of strikes, such as punches, kicks, or blows from weapons such as sticks. Most rope blocks are employed by using a two-hand grip. This allows you to deflect a blow by snapping the center-section taut as you contact the blocking surface, or to apply a quick wrapping motion to bind the attacker's wrist or ankle. Basic rope blocks are shown on the following pages.

Grips



Overhand Grip



Over-Under Grip



One-Hand Grip



Wrapped Grip



Wrists Shackled (or tied)

Stances



Relaxed Stance



Fighting Stance



Fighting Stance (rope folded)

ROPE STRIKES

1. Snap Strike

Hold the rope with an Overhand Grip or Over-Under Grip. Position your R hand in front, with the wrist bent. Rapidly whip the end of rope toward the target, by extending your lower arm and wrist. The rope traces a straight path with a tight loop traveling toward its end. As the rope nears full extension, suddenly jerk your arm and wrist backward, causing the end to accelerate into the target with a snap, similar to cracking a whip.



2. Circular Strike

Hold the rope with an Overhand Grip or Over-Under Grip. Draw the R hand backward. Rapidly swing your arm forward, whipping the end of rope into the target, similar to lashing someone with a whip or switch. The end of rope traces a circular path, fully extended throughout delivery. Strike from any direction: rising, descending, inside, outside, or angular; or use figure-8 motions. When using a belt, strike with the buckle.



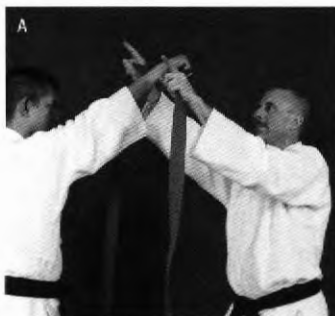
3. Two-Hand Thrust

Hold the rope with an Overhand Grip. Draw your hands toward your chest. Keep the section of rope between your hands slack with a loop. Step toward your opponent and thrust both hands forward, to both sides of their neck. As the slack center-section contacts their throat, snap it tight by pulling your hands outward, as you thrust forward. This strike can also be directed to the forehead to produce whiplash.



TYPICAL WRAPPING MOTION

In rope techniques, you will often wrap an opponent's wrist, ankle, or throat, in order to execute specific joint locks, chokes, restraining holds, or throws. Wrapping motions can be initiated by: attacking first; blocking and wrapping; or striking and wrapping. A typical example is shown, using a Rising Block (A), followed by a R hand counterclockwise-wrap (B-C).



ROPE BLOCKS

1. Rising Block

Hold the rope with an Overhand Grip. Keep the section of rope between your hands slack with a loop. As attacker strikes, thrust both hands forward and upward, to both sides of their wrist or ankle (1A). As the slack center-section contacts the bottom of their limb, snap it taut by pulling your hands outward, as you thrust up (1B). This block is used to stop a descending strike, or deflect a high straight strike to your head.



2-3 Left Block

Hold the rope with an Overhand Grip. Keep the section between your hands slack with a loop. As attacker strikes, step to your right. Thrust both hands to your left, above and below their wrist or ankle. As the slack center-section makes contact, snap it taut by pulling your hands apart. This block is used to stop a horizontal strike, or deflect a straight strike. There are two versions: R hand over left (2), or L hand over right (3).



4-5 Right Block

Hold the rope with an Overhand Grip. Keep the section between your hands slack with a loop. As attacker strikes, step to your left. Thrust both hands to your right, above and below their wrist or ankle. As the slack center-section makes contact, snap it taut by pulling your hands apart. This block is used to stop a horizontal strike, or deflect a straight strike. There are two versions: L hand over right (4), or R hand over left (5).



6. Descending Block

Hold the rope using an Overhand Grip. Keep the section of rope between your hands slack with a loop. As attacker strikes, step backward (6A). Thrust both hands forward and down, to both sides of their wrist or ankle. As the slack center-section contacts the top of their limb, snap it taut by pulling your hands outward, as you thrust downward (6B). This block is used to stop a rising strike, or deflect a low straight strike.



ROPE DEFENSES



DEFENSES AGAINST STRIKES

Techniques 1–8 show rope defenses against hand strikes by an unarmed attacker. These skills can also be adapted for use against weapons such as sticks or knives, although much more skill will be required. When facing a weapon, try to use Circular Strikes or Snap Strikes to distract an opponent and set up attacks such as kicks. If the rope is stiff, heavy, or weighted at one end, you may be able to target strikes to an attacker's arm to dislodge the weapon. A belt or chain are rope-like weapons well suited to this tactic.



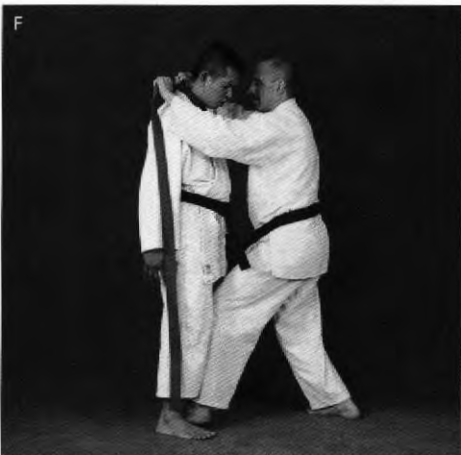
Back Fist

1. Left Block, Back Fist, Elbow

Adopt a Fighting Stance with an Overhand Grip (A). As attacker steps forward with a R punch, step 45° to your right with your R foot, and deflect the blow with a L Rope Block (R hand over left) (B). Retract your R hand toward your L shoulder (C). Execute a R Back Fist Strike to the temple at GB-3 or M-HN-9 (D). Quickly follow with a L Inside Elbow Strike to the jaw, cheek, or nose, using a descending diagonal delivery (E). Step forward with your L foot, planting it between attacker's legs. Execute a Two-Hand Thrust to the throat, snapping the rope taut on contact (F–G). Grip the rope with both hands throughout the counter.

Important Points

In techniques 1–3, you will block and strike while gripping the rope with both hands. This skill is important to learn, since it allows you to quickly shift to rope holds. It also teaches you how to strike if your wrists are bound together or shackled. This entire combo should be very fast and fluid, particularly B–E. When thrusting (F–G), a Back Stance protects your groin from being inadvertently kicked as attacker falls.



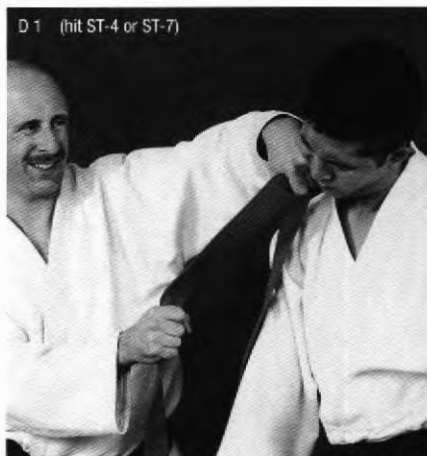
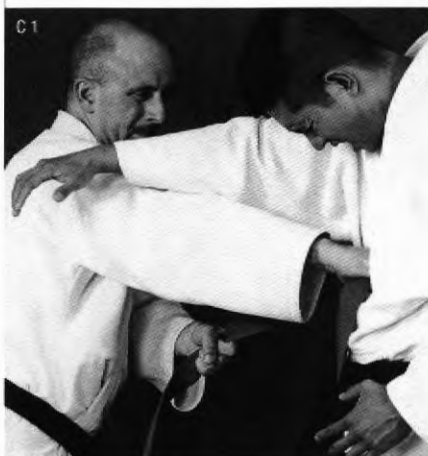
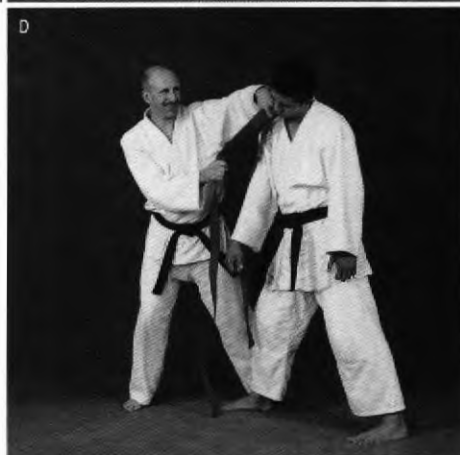


2. Right Block, Straight Punch, Hook

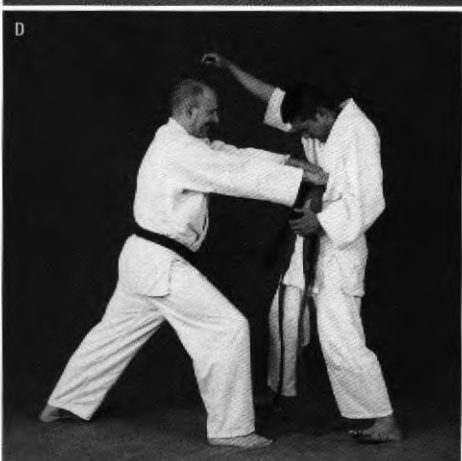
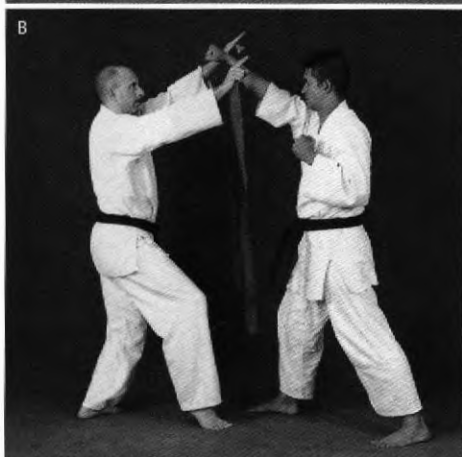
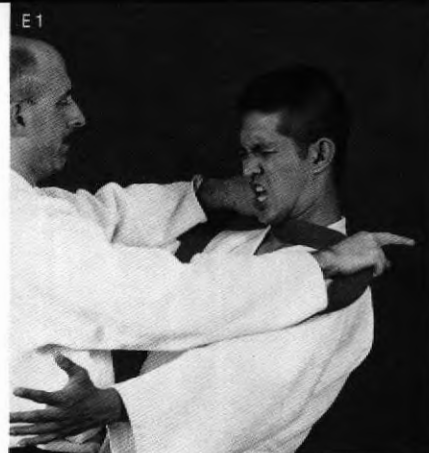
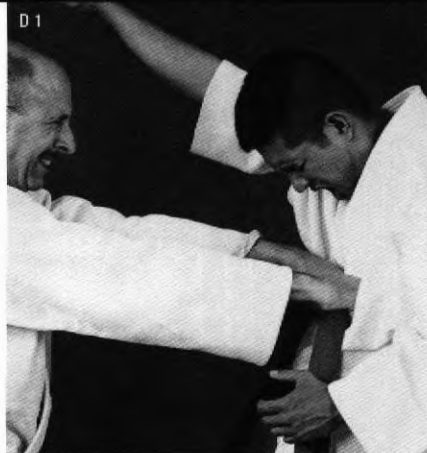
Adopt a Fighting Stance with an Overhand Grip (A). As attacker steps forward with a R punch, step 45° to your left with your L foot. Deflect the blow using a R Rope Block (L hand over right) (B). Retract your R hand toward your R hip. Deliver a R Straight Punch to the solar plexus at CO-15; or ribs at LV-13, or LV-14 and GB-24 (C). Deliver a L Hook Punch to attacker's jaw at ST-4 or ST-7 (D), finishing with a downward motion as you lift your elbow (if their R arm is still extended, your follow-through will cause the rope to deflect their arm downward). Based on attacker's reactions and orientation to you, pass either your L arm or R arm over their head and plant the rope across their throat, as you step behind them and pivot 180°. Apply the choke by pulling backward as you cross your wrists. At the same time, thrust your hip into attacker's lower back or buttock to unbalance them backward, as you pull their head back (E), forcing them to either sit down or hang from the choke (F).

Important Points

As you execute punches, your L hand will need to move in unison with the punch (C1), since it is also gripping the rope. Do not allow the rope to snap taut or you will reduce your punching power. During the Hook Punch, the section of rope between your hands can be used to push attacker's arm inward and down, briefly trapping it. Strike the jaw using the knuckles that best target the acupoint. Sometimes this is not the two largest knuckles, but the smallest. You can also hit TW-17 or GB-3. To tighten the choke, drive your hands laterally in opposing directions: your wrists will usually cross one another unless the portion of rope between your hands is very short, or the attacker's neck is very large. Exercise caution when applying rope chokes. Rope is a very efficient strangulation device that can quickly produce life-threatening injuries. Do not practice chokes unless you are skilled in revival methods (see author's 1136-page *Hapkido and Essential Anatomy for Healing and Martial Arts*).



ROPE DEFENSES



3. Rising Block, Twin Punch, Thrust

Adopt a Fighting Stance with an Overhand Grip (A). As attacker steps forward with a R punch, slide your lead foot back into a Cat Stance, as you deflect the blow upward using a Rising Rope Block (B). Quickly retract both hands (C). Slide your R foot forward as you execute a Twin Straight Punch with both Fore Fists. Hit GB-24 and/or LV-14 on both sides of the ribs (D). Step forward with your L foot, planting it between attacker's legs. Execute a Two-Hand Thrust to the throat, snapping the rope taut on contact (E). Force a fall backward.

Important Points

This combination works well even if the portion of rope between your hands is quite short. This might occur if you are wielding a small cord, short rope, or handkerchief, or when restrained with hand cuffs. As you step forward for the rope thrust (E), you can also sometimes slam your upper thigh into the groin, or use a hip butt or chest butt to unbalance attacker backward. During step E, you can also step on attacker's foot, or sweep their leg using an Inner Reap Throw or Cross Inner Reap Throw.



4. Rising Wrap + Armpit Arm Bar

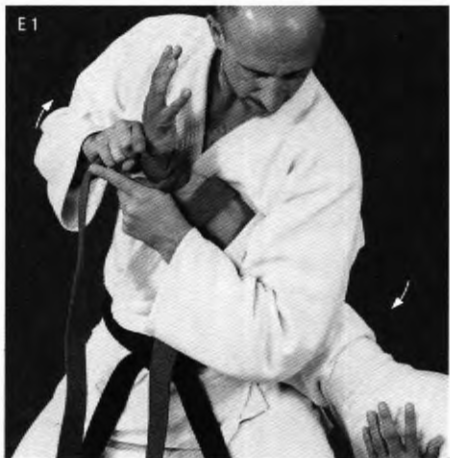
Adopt a Fighting Stance with an Overhand Grip (A). As attacker steps forward with a R punch, step forward as you deflect the blow upward using a Rising Rope Block (B). Circle your R hand 360° counterclockwise, wrapping their wrist with the rope (C). Pivot to your right. At the same time, twist attacker's arm clockwise, pull it straight, and plant your L armpit over their elbow (D). Step across with your L foot and lock their elbow by pushing it downward, as you lift their wrist (E).

Important Points

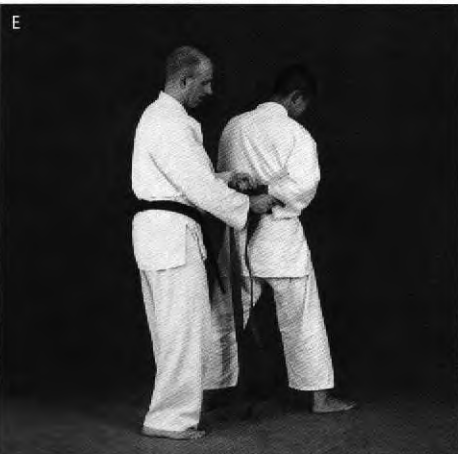
This technique can also be applied by stepping 45° forward to either side when blocking, and by wrapping attacker's wrist with your L hand instead of your R hand. The key factor in making this hold work is adequately twisting attacker's arm as you enter the arm bar. You must rotate attacker's arm until the back of their elbow points upward. This is done by cinching the rope tight (so it doesn't slip), as you rotate your L hand around attacker's wrist. If the arm is not adequately twisted, brace the elbow against your chest and bend forward.

Blocking and Wrapping

All wrapping motions immediately following a block (e.g., B–D) are done extremely quickly, in a fraction of a second. This applies to most of the holds in this chapter, and particularly to techniques 4–8. This requires substantial practice if one is to develop the necessary speed, timing, and accuracy to apply these wrapping motions proficiently and consistently. Being able to anticipate an attacker's actions, and draw their attacks by using feints, are also important skills used to set up block-and-wrap motions. Consequently, most rope techniques are usually more suitable for experienced martial artists, since they will already possess many prerequisite skills.



ROPE DEFENSES

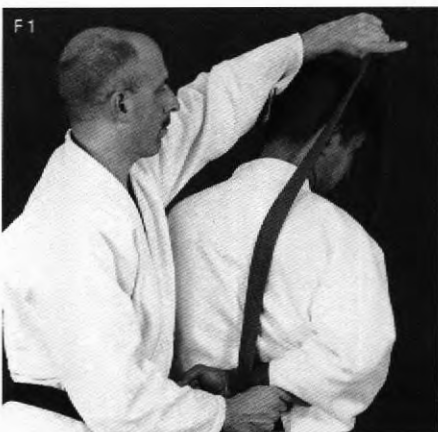
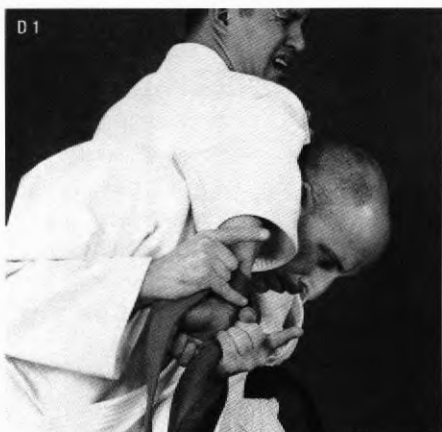
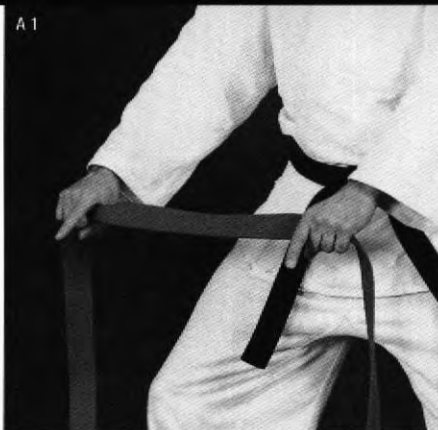
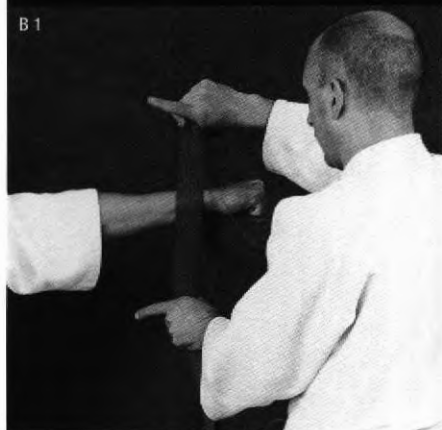


5. Wrap + Choke Hammer Lock

Adopt a Fighting Stance with an Overhand Grip (A). As attacker steps in with a R punch, step 45° to your left with your L foot. Deflect the blow using a R Rope Block (R hand over left) (B). Circle your R hand clockwise, wrapping attacker's wrist with the rope, as you pass their hand downward to your left (C). Twist their arm to lock it, as you step under it with your R foot and pivot 180° (D). Pass their bent-arm behind their back (E). Wrap the rope around their throat with your L hand (F). Pull down to apply a choke and lock the shoulder. Hold both ends with one hand (G). Pull one end down with your free hand to tighten both the lock and the choke (G1). Exercise caution.

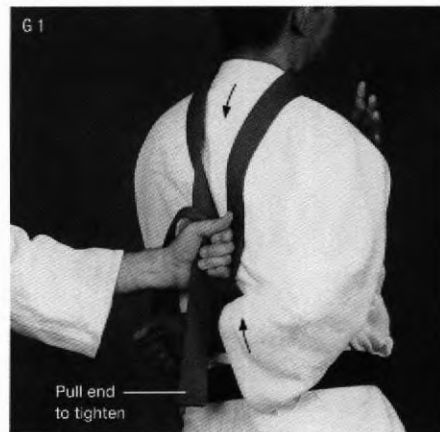
Important Points

Twisting attacker's arm as you enter is crucial. This is accomplished by wrapping and binding their wrist tightly, before you begin to twist their arm. Often you can use your hands to assist. If attacker drops their head before you can wrap their throat, apply a Hammer Lock by lifting their arm as you pivot to your right. This locks their shoulder, forcing a fall toward their right side, or right front-corner.

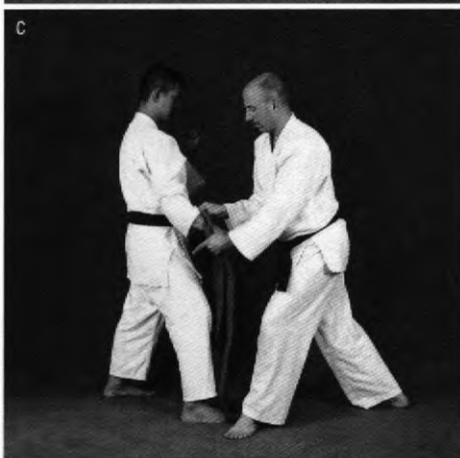


Closeups for #5

Closeup photos shown correspond to full-view photos with the same letter designations. For example, photo B1 is a closeup of photo B. The order and placement of the photos is identical to the layout on the previous page.



ROPE DEFENSES



6. Wrap + Inside Twisting Arm Lock

Adopt a Fighting Stance with an Overhand Grip (A). As attacker steps in with a R punch, step 45° to your left with your L foot. Deflect the blow using a R Rope Block (R hand over left) (A–B). Circle your R hand clockwise and wrap their wrist tightly with the rope, as you pass their hand downward to your left (C). Twist their arm to lock it, step under it with your R foot, and pivot 180° (D–E). Continue to twist their arm, as you whip it forward and down (F), devastating their shoulder and arm and forcing a fall forward (G). In the photos below, attacker initiates a high Flip Side Fall to prevent injury.

Important Points

Twisting attacker's arm is crucial in techniques 6 and 7. This is accomplished by wrapping and binding attacker's wrist tightly, before you begin to twist their arm. Often you can use your hands to assist. The entire technique (B–G) should be very fast and fluid, particularly the spinning motion, since this unbalances attacker, hindering counters. Steps A–C are the same as the previous technique (see closeup photos A1, B1, C1 on previous page).

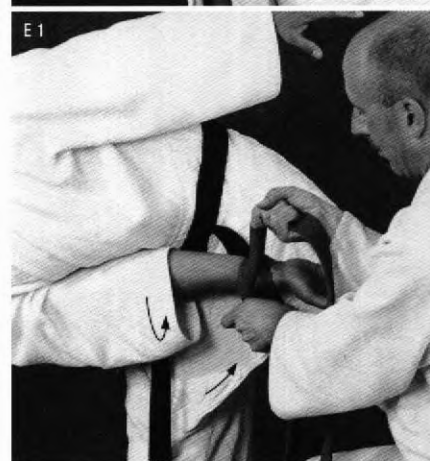
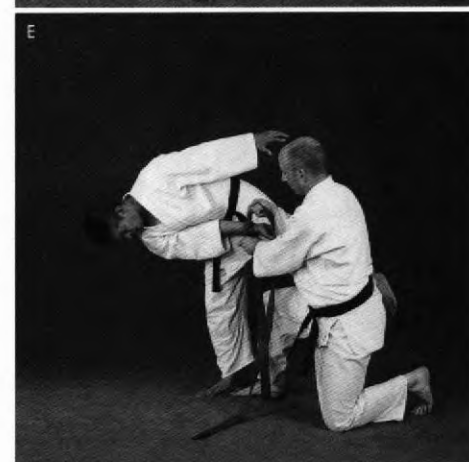
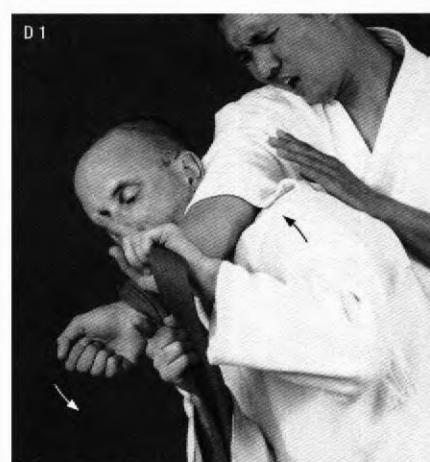
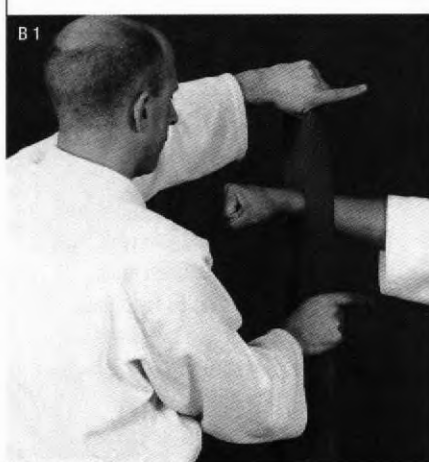


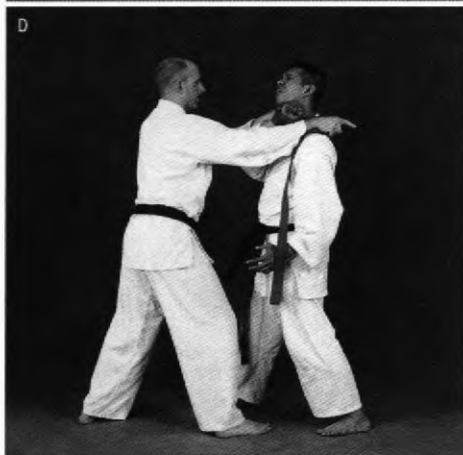
7. Wrap + Outside Twisting Arm Lock

As attacker steps in with a R punch, step 45° right with your R foot. Deflect the blow with a L Rope Block (L hand over R) (A–B). Circle your left hand counterclockwise. Wrap their wrist with the rope, as you pass their hand down to your right (C). Step under the arm with your L foot and pivot 180°, twisting and locking their arm (D). Drop to your L knee, as you twist and lift attacker's straight-arm into their belly, breaking the arm or forcing a fall (E–F).

Important Points

The entire technique should be fast and fluid. After wrapping attacker's wrist, pull the rope tight with both hands. It is crucial to bind their wrist tightly as you twist their arm. If their wrist slips in the rope, the hold is ineffective. As you pass under the arm (D), wrap the wrist a second time, if desired. You can also press your hands against attacker's hand, to assist the arm-twist. As you step under attacker's arm, try to lock their elbow with your upper-arm or shoulder (D1), to hinder counters.





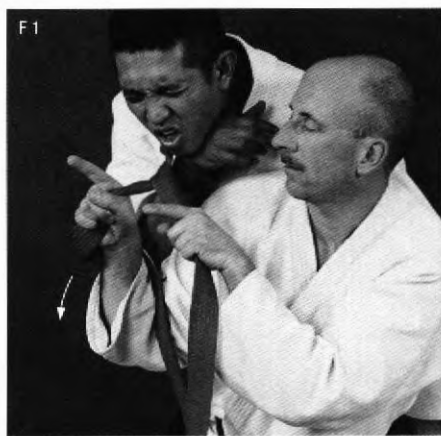
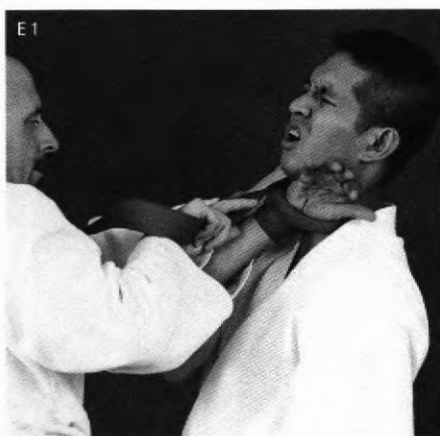
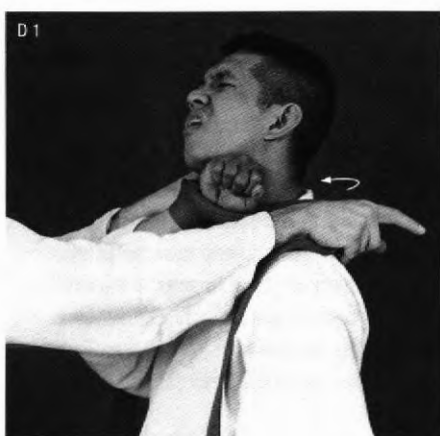
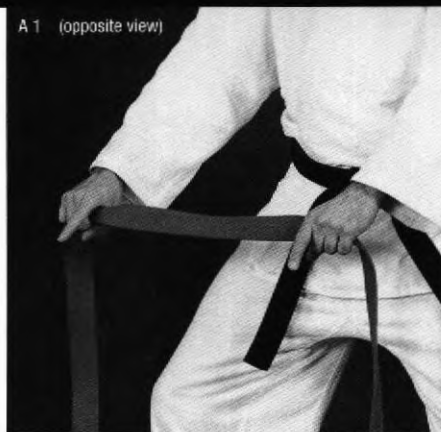
8. Wrap, Choke, Hip Throw

Adopt a Fighting Stance with an Overhand Grip (A). As attacker steps forward with a R punch, step forward (or 45° forward to your right), with your R foot. Deflect the blow upward using a Rising Rope Block (A-B). Circle your R hand counterclockwise and wrap the wrist (C). As attacker pulls their wrist away, push it into their throat (D). Circle your R hand around their neck (right to left), tightly binding their wrist to their throat. Step behind your R foot with your L foot (E), pivot 180°, and plant your hips low on attacker's R thigh (F). Pull forcefully downward as you raise your hips, pulling attacker over your shoulder (G).

Important Points

This hold can often be used as a transition when you are trying to apply other holds in this chapter, and attacker counters by pulling their wrist toward their chest. Historically, tying the wrist to the throat was used to prevent an opponent from being strangled by the rope. However, if the hold is tight and the wrist presses against the carotid artery, a stroke or death is likely unless the hold is loosened.



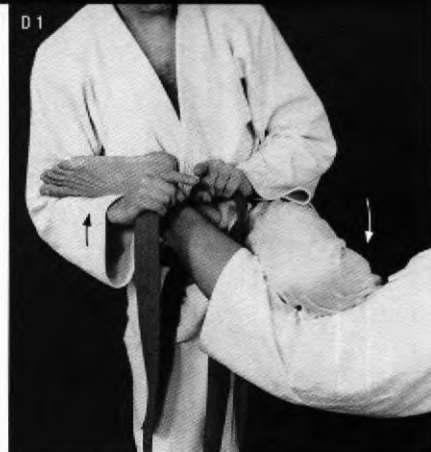


Closeups for #8

Closeup photos shown correspond to full-view photos with the same letter designations. For example, photo B1 is a closeup of photo B. The order and placement of the photos is identical to the layout on the previous page.



ROPE DEFENSES



DEFENSES AGAINST KICKS

Techniques 9–11 show rope defenses against kicks. Right-leg kicks are shown; however, these techniques can also be adapted for left-leg kicks. Note that all wrapping motions following a block are done extremely quickly, in a fraction of a second. The rope defenses shown in this section are based on typical techniques used in unarmed defenses, which are covered in-depth in the author's books *The Art of Throwing* and *Hapkido: Traditions, Philosophy, Technique*.

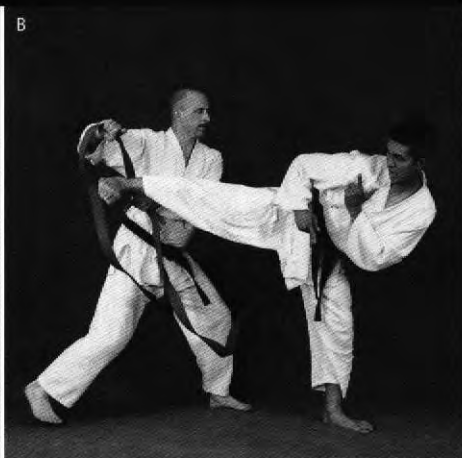
9. Right Wrap + Side Knee Throw

Adopt a R Fighting Stance with an Overhand Grip (A). As attacker executes a R Side Kick, step 45° left with your L foot, and execute a R Rope Block (L hand over right) (B). Circle your R hand 360° counterclockwise and wrap their ankle with the rope (C). Swing your L knee over the back of their knee (D). Use your R forearm to keep their instep extended (D1). Drive attacker's knee downward as you lift their ankle. Force a fall toward their right side or right front-corner, driving their kneecap into the ground (E).



Important Points

When controlling an opponent's leg, try to keep their foot extended, by pressing their instep with your arm or body. This reduces their leg strength and keeps them from kicking-out of the hold, or countering. This technique can also be used against a Spin Kick or Hook Kick; however, you will need to grip the rope tightly and make a forceful block, to arrest the kick's motion. You can also duck and block over your head, catching the kick as it passes over. To pin, press attacker's heel toward their buttock.

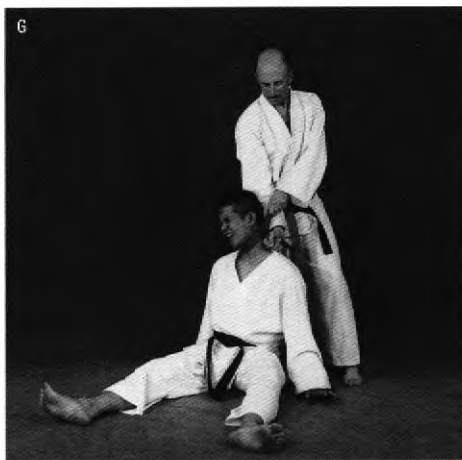
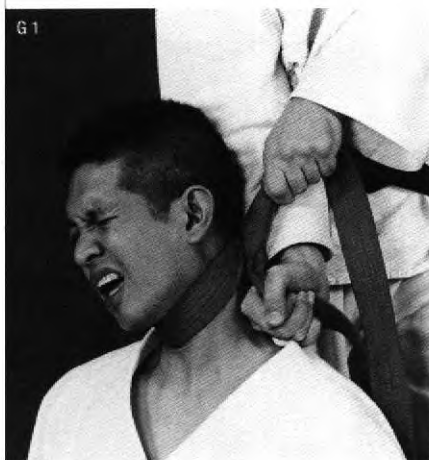


10. Right Block + Rear Choke

Adopt a Fighting Stance with an Overhand Grip (A). As attacker executes a R Side Kick or Front Kick, charge to the outside with your L foot, and execute a R Rope Block (R hand over left) (B). As attacker plants their kick, bring the rope up toward their throat (C). Circle your R arm around and over their head, wrapping the neck with the rope. Step around with your L foot, pivot 180°, and apply a choke (D–E). Thrust your hip into their lower back or buttock as you pull attacker's head backward (F), forcing them to sit down or hang from the choke (G).

Important Points

This technique can be used against almost any kick or punch that can be avoided by stepping outside. Try to catch attacker with your neck-wrap while they are still moving forward. To tighten the choke, drive your hands laterally in opposing directions: your wrists will usually cross one another unless the portion of rope between your hands is very short, or the attacker's neck is very large. Exercise caution when applying rope chokes, since they can quickly produce life-threatening injuries.





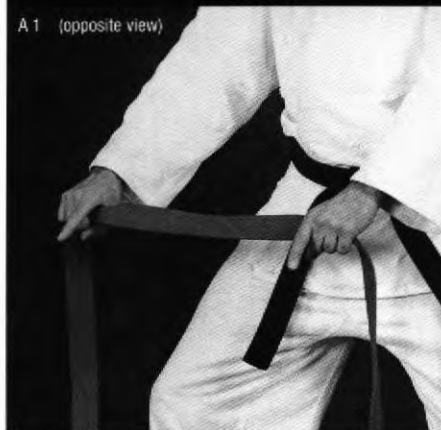
11. Left Wrap + Leg Shoulder Throw

Adopt a R Fighting Stance with an Overhand Grip (A). As attacker delivers a R Front Kick, Side Kick, or Roundhouse Kick, step 45° right with your R foot, and execute a L Rope Block (L hand over right) (A–B). Bring your R wrist under the leg to keep it raised; circle your L hand counterclockwise and wrap the ankle (C). Sweep your L foot behind your R foot and pivot 180°. Drop to your R knee as you pull attacker's leg over your shoulder. Cross your wrists to wrap the ankle further (D). Pull the ankle downward and bend forcefully forward, throwing attacker over your shoulder (E).

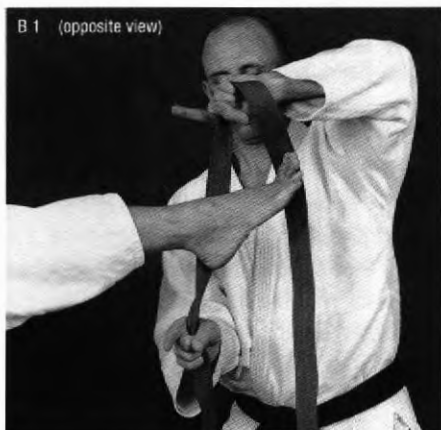
Important Points

After wrapping attacker's ankle, pull the rope tight. As you pull their leg over your shoulder (D1), you can wrap the ankle a second time by crossing your R hand under your L hand (D, D2). This allows you to pull down, with your wrists pressing against attacker's instep. This grip provides a stronger hold, better leverage, and reduces leg strength, since the instep is kept fully extended. You can also throw without wrapping a second time (D3).

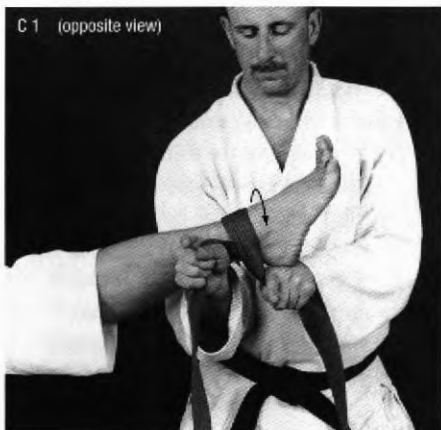
A 1 (opposite view)



B 1 (opposite view)



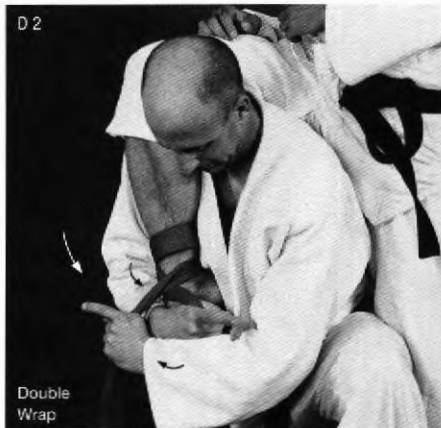
C 1 (opposite view)



D 1



D 2



Double
Wrap

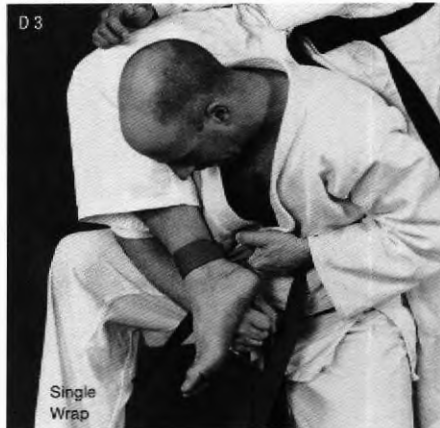
Closeups for #11

Closeup photos shown correspond to full-view photos with the same letter designations.

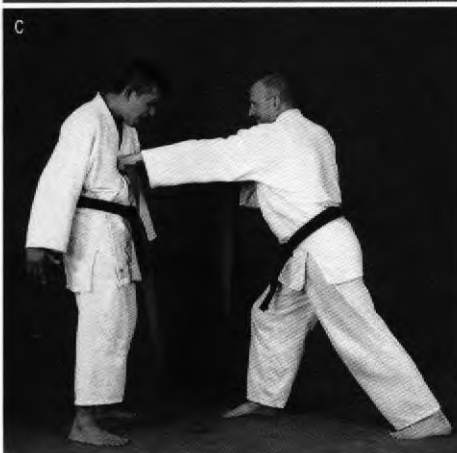
For example, photo B1 is a closeup of photo B.

D2 and D3 show alternate methods of wrapping the ankle to apply the throw. This is explained under "Important Points" on the previous page.

D 3



Single
Wrap



ATTACKING FIRST

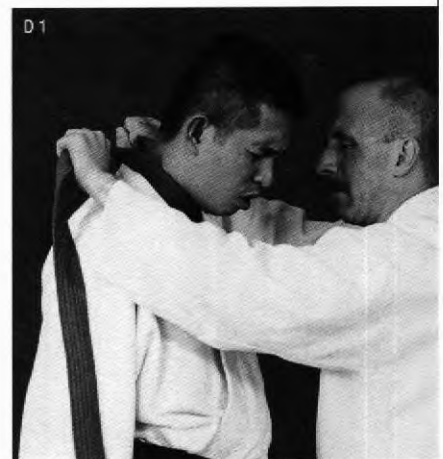
Rope techniques 12–14 are used to execute an offensive action, and can be initiated from either relaxed stances or fighting stances. Many of the rope defenses covered earlier can also be used to attack first, just as these attacks can be used for defensive situations.

12. Snap Strike, Punch, Thrust

From Relaxed Stance (A), step forward with your R foot. Deliver a R Snap Strike, whipping the end of rope into the eye or face (B). This is similar to “cracking a whip.” Without pausing, turn your shoulders and deliver a L Straight Punch to the solar plexus (C). Step forward with your L foot, placing it between opponent’s legs (or block either heel). Thrust the slack-rope against their throat (D). Pull your hands apart as you thrust forward, snapping the rope taut. Force a fall backward (E). If you block their heel with your foot, then throw to their rear-corner (same corner as blocked leg).

Important Points

The first strike is mostly used as a distraction to set up the punch to the solar plexus. This first rope strike can either be a Snap Strike or a Circular Strike. The type of rope or belt you are using will lend itself to one or the other. If you are using a chain or a belt with a buckle, this will add considerable force to the strike as you swing it into the face or temple. The Two-Hand Thrust (E) can also be delivered to the bridge of the nose or forehead (whiplash).



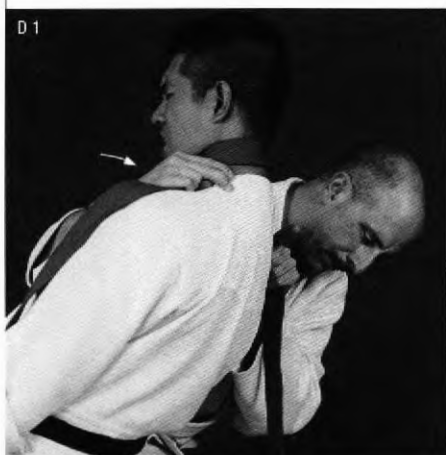


13. Choke + Outer Reap

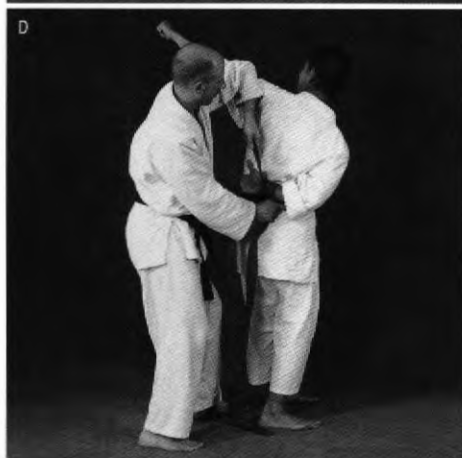
From a Relaxed Stance (A), step forward to your L side, planting your L foot lateral to opponent's foot. Circle your R hand around their neck (B), wrapping it with the rope. Pull the ends in opposing directions to tighten the wrap and apply a choke. Use the choke and your R arm to push opponent's upper body backward, unbalancing them toward their rear or right rear-corner (C). You can also assist by pushing your R forearm against opponent's L shoulder. Throw by swinging your R leg forward, then backward into opponent's calf, reaping their leg upward (D–E). You can also throw without wrapping the neck, which is faster: thrust the rope into opponent's throat as you reap their leg upward.

Important Points

This entry should be executed very quickly. If attacker's leg is too large or heavy to reap (much larger opponent), execute a Side Kick into the back of their knee as you force a fall backward. If attacker counters your Outer Reap Throw by leaning forward or moving, shift to a hip throw (similar to technique 8).



ROPE DEFENSES

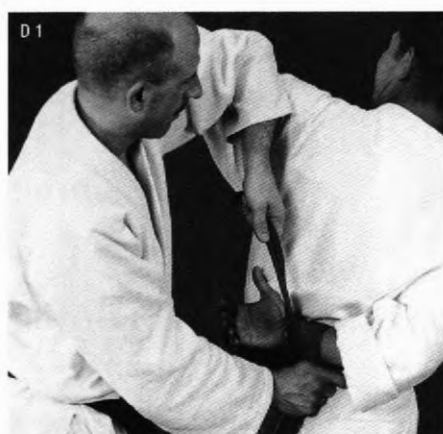
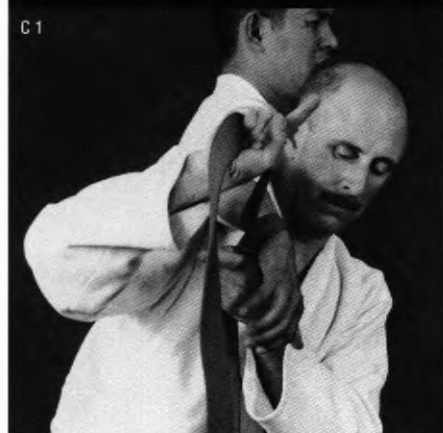


14. Twin Hammer Lock + Choke

From a Relaxed Stance (A), step 45° forward to your left, with your L foot. Sweep opponent's wrist upward with the rope (B). Step under their arm with your R foot and pivot 180°, as you circle your L hand around their wrist and tightly wrap it with the rope (C). Twist their arm behind their back. Block a L strike with your R upper arm (D). Wrap the rope over opponent's L arm, sweep it behind their back (E), and bind both wrists together (F). Circle your L hand around the throat from right to left, then pull downward to apply a choke and upward to lock both shoulders (G). Knot the ends together to secure the hold (H).

Important Points

Twisting attacker's wrist as you pivot helps guide the arm behind their back and hinders counters. Often you can use your hands to assist. If attacker drops their head before you can wrap their throat, press the back of either of their knees with your foot, as you pull their locked arms backward, forcing them to sit down or fall backward. Exercise caution: the choke can produce life-threatening injuries.



Closeups for #14

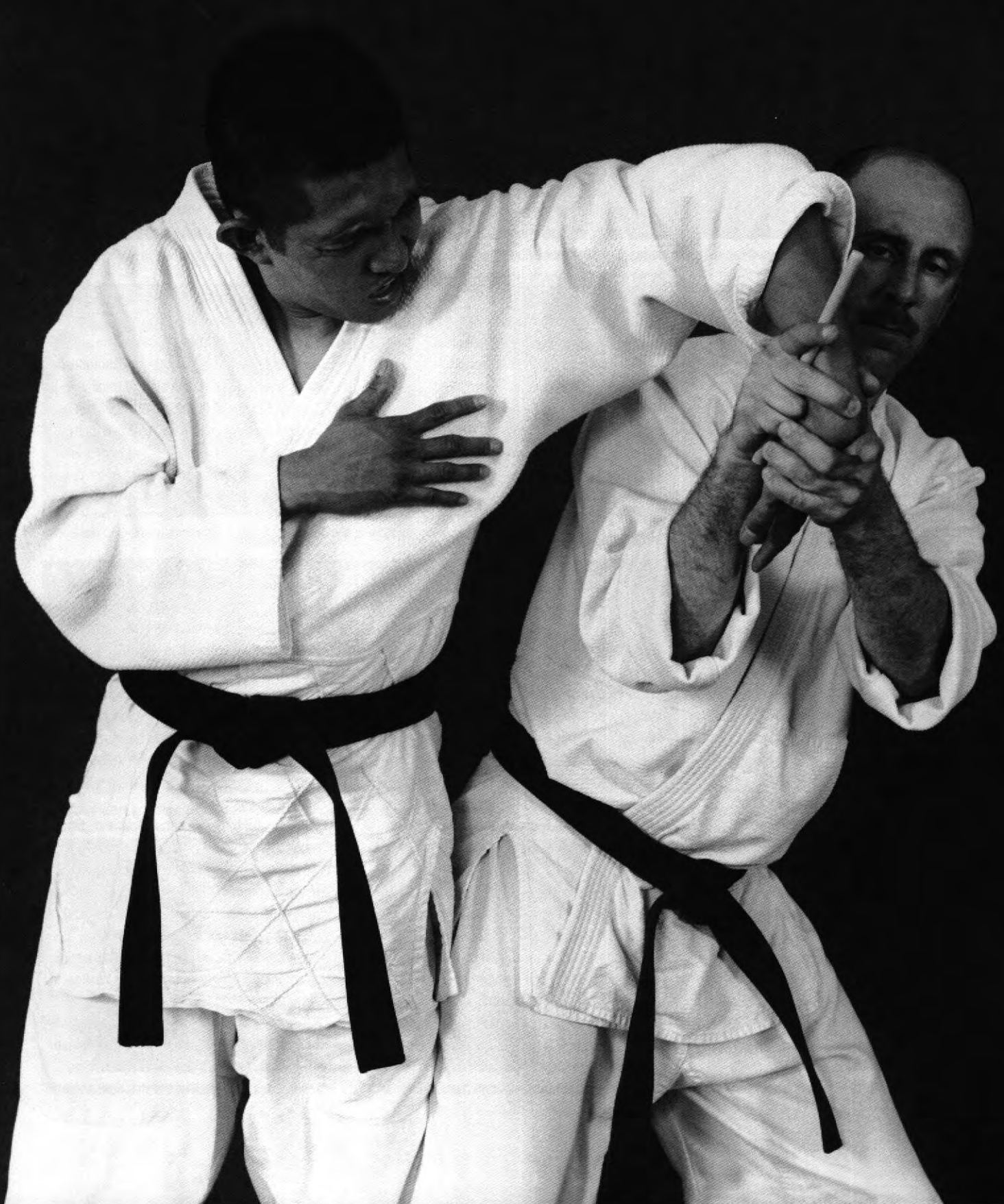
Closeup photos shown correspond to full-view photos with the same letter designations. For example, photo B1 is a closeup of photo B. The order and placement of the photos is identical to the layout on the previous page.



Any common object or tool can become a formidable weapon, just as any sophisticated weapon can be turned into a useless object: it all depends upon the creativity, skill, and intent of the person who wields it. As outlined in the Overview chapter, one the primary objectives of this book is to familiarize experienced martial artists with a broad range of practical weapons skills, the mastery of which will allow them to wield almost anything as a weapon. This chapter demonstrates how a range of common objects can be employed

COMMON OBJECTS AS WEAPONS

as weapons in typical self-defense situations. Recognize that there are also a great many other possibilities. The techniques shown in this chapter, and the martial philosophy behind them, stem primarily from the author's experiences in the martial art of Hapkido. Consequently, this material consists of an eclectic range of skills that can be applied with varying levels of force, based on what is appropriate and justifiable. The material reflects a mainstream approach, adaptable to a range of martial styles, tactics, and common objects.



Overview

Almost any common object can become a weapon for self-defense in the hands of a creative and skilled martial artist. Common objects are wielded based on the same principles learned during unarmed self-defense and weapons training. Once a student masters the principles of the five basic weapons shown in this book (short-stick, staff, cane, knife, sword, and rope), they will possess weapons-handling skills that can be translated to a wide variety of common objects. Thus, a letter-opener becomes a knife, a rolled-up magazine becomes a short-stick, a broomstick becomes a staff, an electrical cord becomes a rope, and so forth. Practical weapons training can also involve study of *thrown objects*, such as stones, coins, plates, or darts. Typical makeshift weapons are shown on the following pages. Many other possibilities exist.

Basic Theory

While most common objects are wielded using traditional weapons skills, a certain degree of modification is often required to compensate for the object's unique physical qualities or limitations.

Evaluating Common Objects

Every object you pick up is unique in its own way. Thus, when you decide to use a common object as a weapon, you must do so in a way that maximizes its specific physical attributes. Material composition, size, weight, tensile strength, surface hardness, and mechanical actions are all considered. All of these qualities tell you how a common object can be used most effectively as a weapon, and under what circumstances. This careful analysis of an object tells you how to hold it; whether it can be swung, thrust or thrown; the types of targets that can be struck; and the degree of force the weapon is capable of delivering during strikes, or withstanding during blocks. For example, a rolled-up magazine (which is a makeshift short-stick) can be used for thrusting strikes, since it is quite rigid in this direction. However, this same object is much less effective at circular

or snapping strikes, since it doesn't possess the surface hardness of the short-stick, lacks rigidity when struck from the side, and will probably bend during forceful strikes. Thus, the unique qualities of a rolled-up magazine suggest it should be used mostly for thrusting strikes or light parries.

Developing Unique Systems

Many examples of common objects employed as weapons are documented on the following pages. Simple and obvious self-defense techniques are shown. However, many of these makeshift weapons could easily be expanded into comprehensive self-defense systems. Today many martial artists are actively pursuing this type of research.

TYPES OF WEAPONS

Most common objects employed as weapons can be organized into two fundamental categories: *held objects* and *thrown objects*. Held objects are weapons that remain in your hand as you execute specific techniques. Thrown objects are projectiles that you hurl at an opponent. Some weapons can be either held or thrown, although most systems emphasize one approach over the other.

Held Objects

Most common objects wielded as weapons will be held in your hands. They are typically wielded using skills acquired in traditional weapons training (short-stick, staff, cane, knife, rope, etc.). Although many weapons can also be thrown, doing so means that you no longer have possession of the object. This means you cannot reuse it, and have given an attacker the opportunity to use it against you.

Thrown Objects

Almost anything can be a thrown projectile. A knife, axe, plates, cups, tools, dirt, sand, stones, marbles, coins, chairs, books, liquids (hot drinks, water), and a paper weight are but a few of the many possibilities. Traditional training in some practical martial arts, such as Hapkido, also includes weapons training in specific thrown projectiles, such as sand, stones, coins, plates, darts, and needles.

The technical principles employed in these weapon systems can be applied to any object that possesses similar properties.

Sand Throwing

Sand or dirt is typically thrown into an opponent's eyes to blind them, or at one's feet to cause them to slip or fall. It can be carried in a pocket or picked up from the ground. It can be thrown with your hands or kicked up with your feet. It is very useful against weapons.

Coin Throwing

Common coins can be thrown singularly or in groups. They can be used to strike vital targets such as the eyes, or to provide an initial distraction to set up other techniques or make an escape. Coins are potentially very dangerous objects. In Hapkido, a coin can be thrown with sufficient force to imbed itself in a wooden board. Early training begins with styrofoam targets and progresses to harder materials as one's technique improves.

Stone Throwing

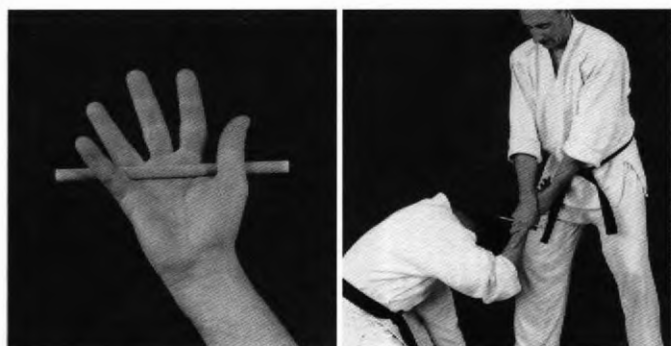
Stones or small metal balls can be thrown singly or in groups. Tactics and targets vary based on the size and weight of the projectile. A variety of overhand, underhand, and side-arm deliveries are possible—similar to the way a baseball or softball is thrown. Stones can be concealed in one's pockets or hand. If you are knocked to the ground, you can grab a stone and throw it. Exercise caution, since a blow to the head can easily kill someone.

Plate Throwing

Plates can be thrown a considerable distance. Targets are usually located on the head and throat. Backhand and forehand deliveries are most common, although overhand and underhand deliveries are also used. In most cases, the plate will spin as it follows a straight path, striking the target with its edge. Deliveries are similar to throwing a Frisbee.

Needles and Darts

These are very small and easily camouflaged in the palm. They are usually thrown at the face or eyes. Historically, the tips held poison.



Mini-Stick (grip wrist and press stick into nerves on forearm, forcing fall)



Mini-Stick (press stick into nerves on wrist, forcing submission)



Mini-Stick: Grab punch and thrust to ribs (A). Press nerves on wrist (B), unbalance attacker, and execute Wrist Nerve Throw (C).



Metal Mini-Stick attached to ring of keys: Swing keys into face (A), then thrust tip into solar plexus (B). Gouge thigh to release bear-hug from second attacker (C).



Scissors (grip wrist and stab biceps, forcing fall)



Screwdriver (step on foot and press groin, forcing fall)



Fork (stab hand to release grip)

COMMON OBJECTS AS WEAPONS



Hand-Held Calculator or Computer: Use calculator as a palm-shield to block knife thrust (A). Grip wrist and hit temple with corner of calculator (B).



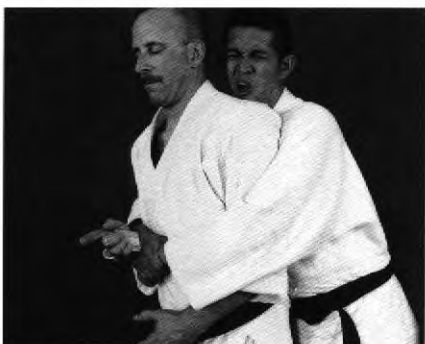
Rolled-Up Magazine (rising thrust to base of nose)



Rolled-Up Magazine (blocking knife strike)



Bottle (straight thrust to base of throat at CO-22)



Credit Card (slashing or gouging to release bear-hug)



Attacker's spectacles (pull off face, hit temple)



Tennis Racquet (striking neck with edge of head)



Telephone (descending strike to bridge of nose)



Telephone (using phone or cord to choke)



Electrical cord used to apply "rope techniques"



Flat Mailing Envelope (chop or thrust to throat)



Book or Video (descending strike to bridge of nose)



Broom wielded like a staff (thrust to solar plexus)



Throwing stone from ground position



Plate being used to block knife strike



Throwing plate



Throwing single coin (two common grips are shown)



Throwing multiple coins into face and eyes



Spray Cleaner (spraying liquid into eyes)



Throwing hot drink into face

The handgun is likely the most effective, expedient, and range-variable weapon in the modern arsenal of hand-held weapons. Although a formidable tool for self-protection, its use in that capacity brings up a variety of legal and moral issues that make such usage a highly questionable and complex subject, well beyond the intended scope of this book. This text will not address the use of a handgun for self-defense, but rather basic methods of defense against one. The material in this chapter is intended for experienced martial artists already

DEFENSE AGAINST HANDGUN

fluent in the handling of firearms. This expertise is essential, since you must know how to handle any weapon once you have obtained it. The handgun disarming skills shown in this chapter are simple, direct, and similar to skills widely used by the military, law enforcement, and practical martial arts. There are also numerous other techniques used by specific martial styles, which vary widely in quality and practicality. Regardless of the techniques you prefer, they must be practiced on a regular basis, if they are to have any chance of success.



Overview

Today the gun is the weapon of choice for most criminals. Therefore, it does make a certain amount of sense to obtain some basic training in firearm handling, and defenses against firearms. However, the danger in familiarizing someone with these techniques is that most people develop a false sense of confidence in their own abilities, while failing to recognize their own mortality. This is as great a danger as knowing nothing. The purpose of this chapter is to familiarize you with the basic principles and common techniques used to defend against a handgun. Do not attempt to apply any technique in this book, or handle guns, without first undergoing comprehensive training under a qualified instructor. The material presented in this chapter is not a substitute for qualified training. Even with proper training, these techniques are extremely dangerous.

Most traditional martial arts training did not originally include study of gun defenses, although today it is common to find these techniques being taught in numerous schools. This is not surprising, since many masters possess strong military or law enforcement backgrounds. Most of the handgun defenses shown in this chapter are very similar to the gun defenses used by law enforcement agencies in the United States. They are simple, direct, and have been field tested. Nonetheless, you must realize that the likelihood of success in using any gun defense is very low. It is highly likely you will be shot as you attempt to seize control of the weapon. A failed attempt may be fatal to you or to someone else in the immediate vicinity. For this reason, most law enforcement personnel are commonly instructed that they should not attempt to take a gun away unless they believe they are going to be shot or killed.

Six typical techniques are shown on the following pages. These cover common situations, although many other possibilities exist. All gun defenses must be adapted to a specific situation. Gun design, barrel length, your opponent's gun grip, posture, and

physical characteristics all need to be carefully assessed. If you cannot do this competently, you assume much greater risk.

Types of Handguns

To adequately disarm an opponent wielding a handgun, it is vitally important to understand the design, mechanical actions, and safe handling procedures of common handguns. This expertise should be obtained through qualified instruction that also includes supervised range-practice in firing a variety of handguns. There are two common types of handguns: revolvers and semi-automatic pistols. They are illustrated at the far right.

Revolvers

Almost all revolvers are of the same basic design. A revolver has a rotating cylinder commonly containing 4 to 12 chambers which hold the ammunition. The action of the trigger or hammer will line up a chamber with the barrel and firing pin. When the hammer strikes the firing pin, it ignites a cartridge and the gun discharges. Releasing the cylinder latch allows the cylinder to swing out for loading, unloading, and inspection.

There are two basic types of revolvers: *single-action* and *double-action*. The primary difference between these two types is the function of the trigger. The trigger on a single-action revolver has one function: to release the hammer. To fire a single-action revolver, the hammer must be pulled back and cocked with your hand. Pulling the trigger then releases the hammer, which discharges the gun. This design is obsolete and rarely encountered today. The trigger on a double-action revolver has two functions: to cock the hammer and release it. This occurs in a single stroke of the trigger. To fire a double-action revolver, you merely pull the trigger. Double-action revolvers can also be fired single-action, by manually cocking the hammer with your hand, and then pulling the trigger. Generally, firing a revolver using single-action provides greater accuracy than using double-action. This is because the trigger will release under less pressure and

with a shorter stroke. Thus, when confronting any revolver in which the hammer is cocked, you are at greater risk, since the gun can be discharged quite easily. If the hammer is not cocked, you will have slightly more time (fractions of a second) to respond.

Semi-Automatic Pistols

A semi-automatic pistol has a single chamber. Each time the trigger is pulled, a cartridge is fired, the empty case is ejected, the hammer is cocked, and a new cartridge is loaded into the chamber. Cartridges are contained in a removable box-like container called a magazine, which is usually located inside the grip. Magazines generally hold 9 to 15 cartridges. Pressing a button or catch will release the magazine. A cartridge loaded in the chamber is ejected by pulling the slide to the rear. Some semi-automatic pistols also possess a safety to prevent firing. While most revolvers possess the same basic design, semi-automatic pistols vary quite a bit.

Unarmed Defense Training

Unarmed defenses against a handgun are based on modifications of common empty-hand techniques, which are covered in the author's previous books. Consequently, you must have a complete understanding of basic unarmed self-defense principles and possess a high level of technical expertise before attempting to learn these skills or disarm a gun-wielding opponent. Any gun defenses you attempt to use must be practiced on a regular basis and ingrained into your body, if they are to have any chance of success. Since it is highly likely that you will be shot as you attempt a counter, you must program your mind and body, through rigorous training, to quickly finish a technique—before your body has time to react to your wound. If you are shot, you may have precious seconds before you pass out. In training, it is common to use real handguns loaded with special blanks. This imparts reality, lets you know when the gun is discharged, teaches you to modify your grips and technique based on the type of gun, and tells you whether you have been hit (a black spot indicates a hypothetical wound).

Defensive Principles

The following defensive principles apply to most situations in which you will be defending against a handgun held at close range.

1. Set Up the Counter

Do not attempt to take a gun away unless you believe there is a strong possibility that you are going to be shot or killed. If you have determined that you will need to take action, you must increase the likelihood of success by initiating your counter when you possess the greatest advantage, and your opponent is at their greatest disadvantage. There is a science to this that involves specific tactics and analysis of an opponent's current psychological and physiological states. You must also evaluate the immediate environment, the weapon, and the attacker's degree of firearm training. A comprehensive discussion of these factors is beyond the scope of this book. Nonetheless, if an opponent is distracted, talking, tired, or impaired by alcohol or drugs, the likelihood of success is greater, since their reactions will be slower. The closer the gun is to your hands or body, the better off you are. This puts a greater burden on your opponent's reaction time. If they are standing at a distance, or the gun is more than a foot away, your chances of success are negligible, since they do not need to react as quickly.

2. Move and Deflect

When you attempt to deflect or grab the gun, you must assume that your opponent will fire. A bullet moves very fast—far too fast to dodge. To avoid being hit, it is crucial to *move* your body (usually by turning or pivoting) as you *deflect* the gun with your hand. These two actions change both the location of the target and the path of bullet. Even if you are hit, these actions alter the entry angle of the bullet, so that it hopefully doesn't hit vital targets. For example, if the gun is aimed at your forehead, turning your head can cause the bullet to graze your skull, or miss entirely. Turning your torso can cause the bullet to pass through non-vital portions of the torso or arm. Mastering body turns and pivots is vitally important, since footwork alone is too slow.

3. Control the Gun

Your first objective, after moving your body and deflecting the barrel, is to control the gun. Strong purposeful grips are essential. Gripping the barrel allows you to control its direction and to lever the gun from the holder's hand. Try to use your hand or fingers to stop the motion of the hammer, trigger, or cylinder, to prevent the gun from discharging. For example, jam your thumb behind the trigger, or the web of your hand on the hammer. If the gun has been fired, try to keep the gunman's finger pressed down on the trigger to prevent a second shot. Don't do this with an automatic, since it will continue to fire. A semi-automatic pistol can be briefly disabled if the slide is forced rearward, or the safety is engaged. If you grip the slide when the gun fires, it will often fail to eject the case, requiring two hands to restore its operation.

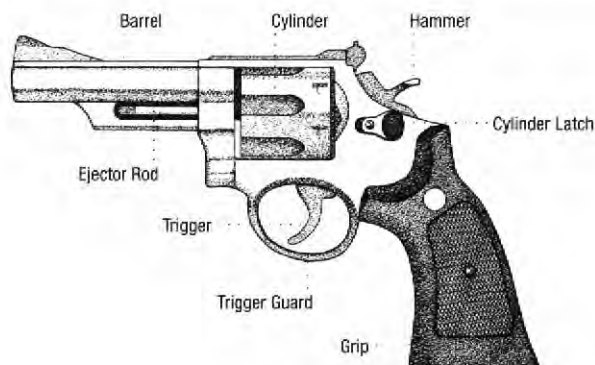
4. Redirect the Barrel Toward the Opponent

In most gun defenses, you will grip the gun as you enter, redirecting the barrel toward your opponent. If the gun discharges (which is likely), they will be shot. When the gun is pointing at the holder and partially under your control, you can often get them to voluntarily release their grip. Always be aware of where the gun is pointing throughout the technique, since it can discharge at any time. You do not want to hit yourself or bystanders. Evaluate these possibilities *before* you begin a counter.

5. Secure the Gun

Always take away the gun. Step away from your opponent. Unload the firearm, render it inoperable, or use it for your own defense. Breaking the wrist, arm, or fingers is justified and will limit their ability to handle the gun.

Revolver



Semi-Automatic Pistol



Mechanical Arrests

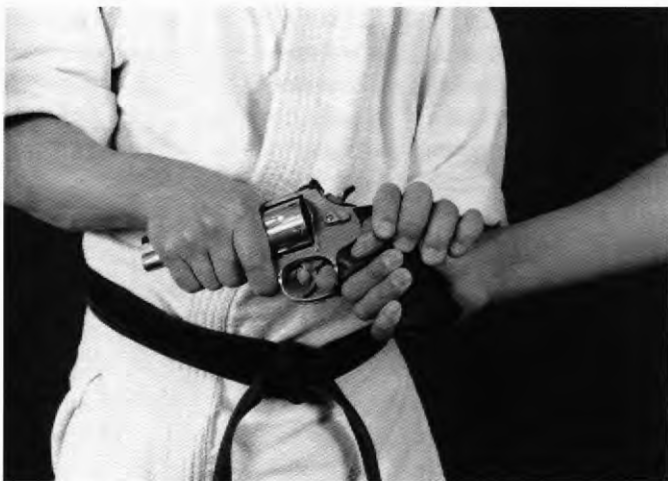
When executing unarmed defenses against a handgun, you will often try to arrest the mechanical movement of the hammer, trigger, or cylinder as you grip the gun. This prevents the handgun from being discharged. These *mechanical arrests* are usually an integral part of specific self-defense techniques. Thus, they should be practiced and applied along with specific techniques (e.g., joint locks) that lead to the complete disarming of your opponent. Some of these disarming techniques are shown on the following pages. Many others are possible.

It is important to realize that mechanical arrests are not always your primary objective. Rather, they are one of the beneficial additions that can make a self-defense technique safer and more effective. It is usually more prudent to focus on avoiding and deflecting motions, quick grips, and lightening-fast execution of a complete disarming defense. Since speed is very important, being overly preoccupied with stopping the hammer or trigger can lead to dangerous pauses or delays in your finishing techniques. This allows your opponent to adjust to your initially disorienting movements and use their physical strength against you.

A selection of common mechanical arrests are shown opposite. The examples shown illustrate a basic approach, and must be modified based on the type of handgun you are facing. If you can force a semi-automatic pistol to discharge while your hand is gripping the slide, it will usually fail to eject the fired cartridge (a new one will not be loaded), and will require two hands to restore its operation. If you possess extensive knowledge of specific models, it is sometimes possible to render the gun mechanically inoperable as you grip it. For example: unlatch the cylinder and eject its cartridges (revolver), or remove or lock the slide (semi-automatic). Be aware that some types of mechanical disassembly require speed, extensive practice, and complete familiarity with specific handguns. Otherwise disassembly may not be practical.



1. Trigger Arrest (with index finger behind)



2. Trigger Arrest (with thumb behind)



3. Trigger Arrest (holding trigger down after discharge)



4. Hammer Arrest (with thumb behind)



7. Cocked Hammer Arrest (with index finger in front)



5. Hammer Arrest (with index finger behind)



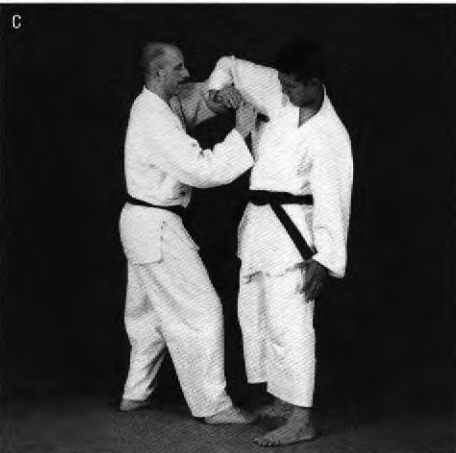
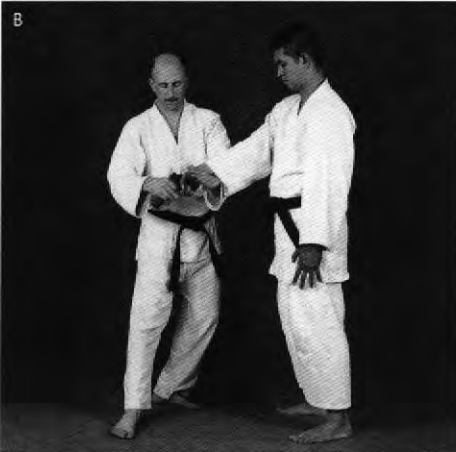
8. Cocked Hammer Arrest (with thumb in front)



6. Hammer Arrest (with web of thumb behind)



9. Cylinder Arrest (a strong grip prevents cylinder from rotating)



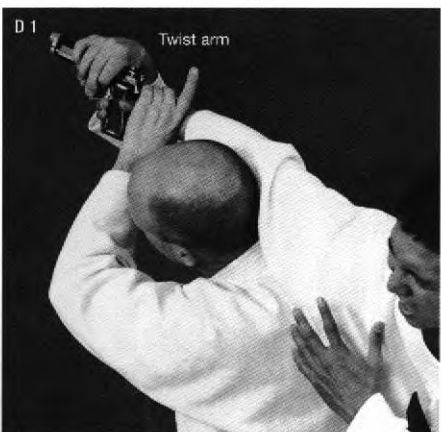
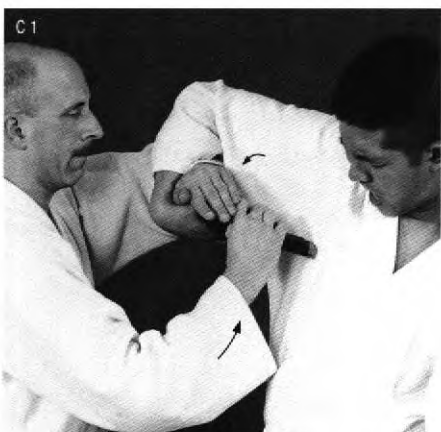
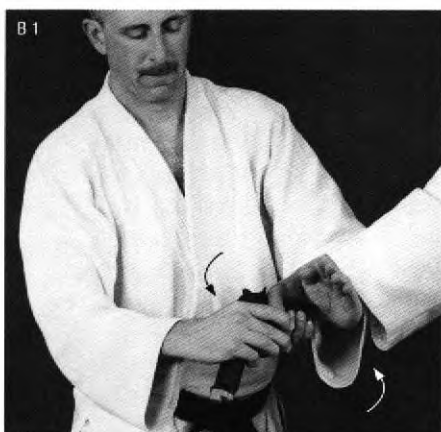
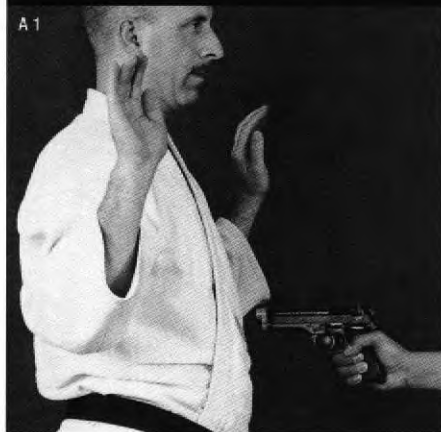
1. Chop + Front Wrist Lock

Attacker holds a gun at your torso (A). Turn your body and displace it to your left, as you grip the top of the barrel with your R hand and chop upward to their wrist with your L Ridge Hand or wrist (B). This bends their wrist and deflects the barrel down to your right. Twist the barrel upward, pointing it into their armpit, as you lock or break their wrist (C). This usually frees the gun. If not, grip their wrist with your L hand. Twist the gun and arm outward, as you step under the arm with your R foot and pivot 180° (D). Continue twisting as you whip the held-arm forward and down to your right, forcing a fall or dislocation (E). Lever the gun free as gunman falls. Pull back on their wrist with your L hand, as you break their elbow by bending your L knee (F). Step away and secure the gun. When initially grabbing the gun, try to pin the trigger finger and/or jam the hammer. You can also direct the barrel into their belly as you pass under the arm.

Warning

When gripping the barrel of a semi-automatic pistol, it is possible your hand will be cut if the gun fires before your grip is tight. This occurs if the slide moves and the front sight cuts into your palm or finger. Ignore the pain and finish your disarming technique. This is the price you pay to avoid being shot. This is not an issue with revolvers.

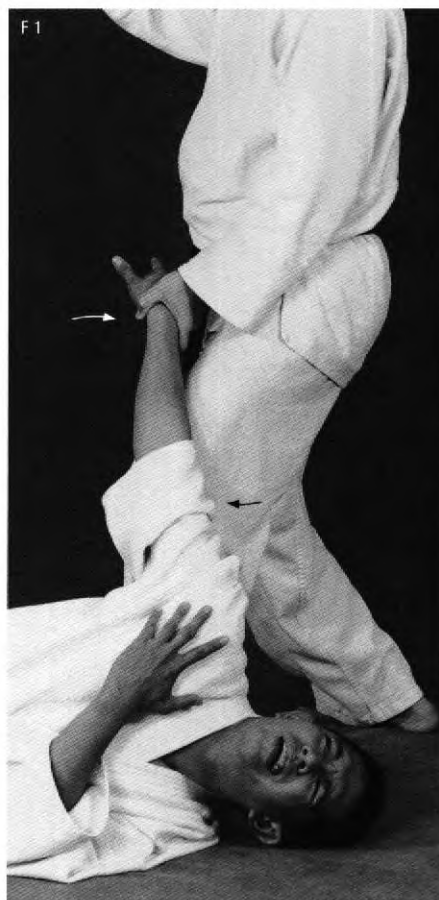


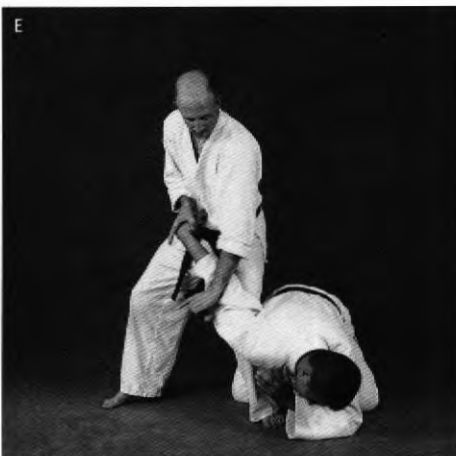
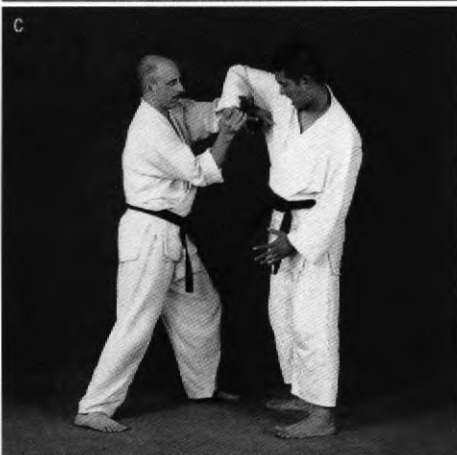
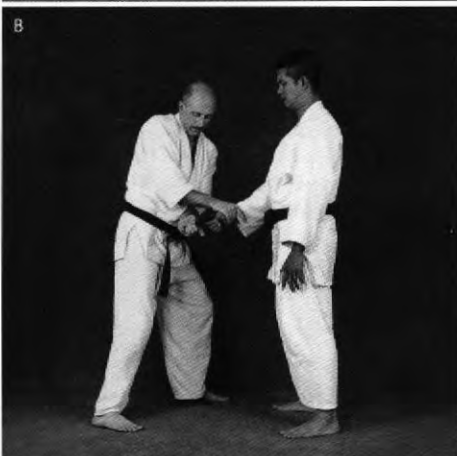


Closeups for #1

Closeup photos shown correspond to full-view photos with the same letter designations.

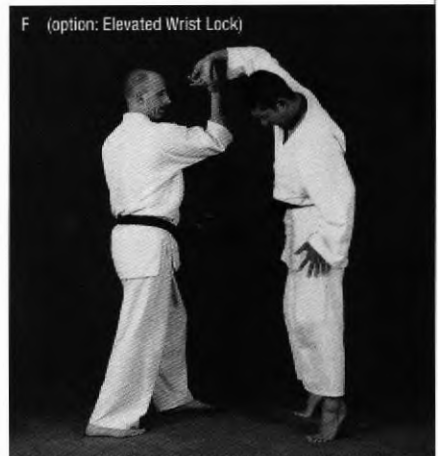
For example, photo B1 is a closeup of photo B. The order and placement of the photos is identical to the layout on the previous page.

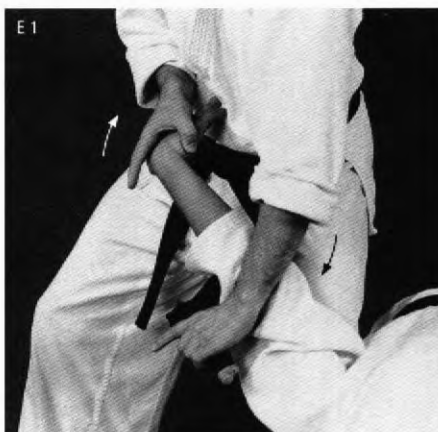
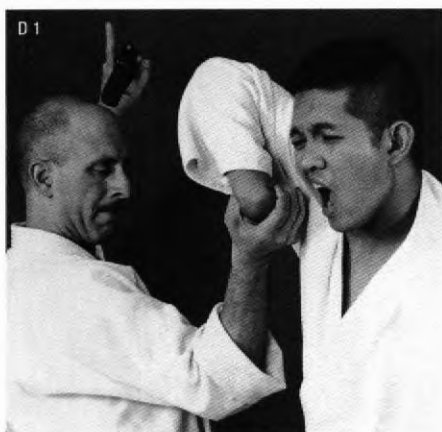
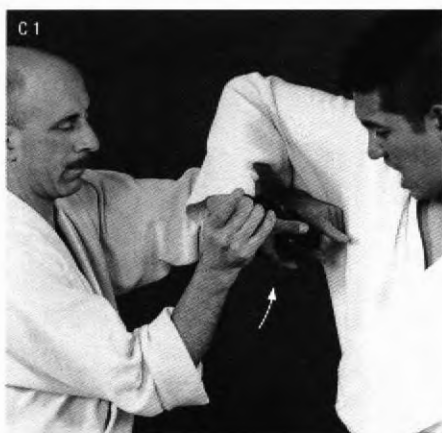
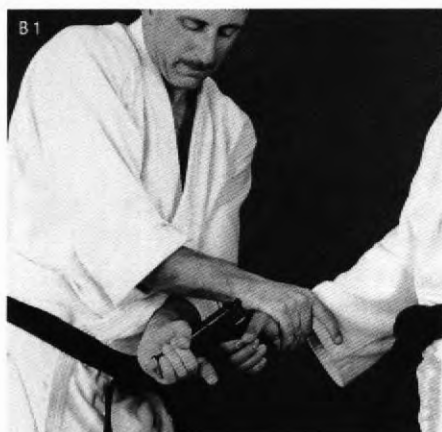
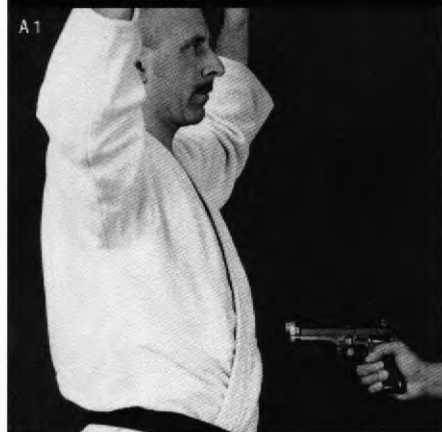




2. Front Wrist Lock, Knee Strike, Arm Bar

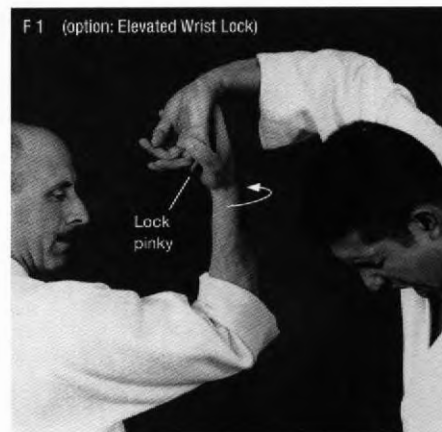
Attacker holds a gun at your torso (A). Turn your body and displace it to your left, as you step 45° to your left with the L foot. At the same time, grip the barrel with your L hand (thumb on top), and their wrist with your R hand. Deflect the barrel to your right (B). Twist the barrel upward, pointing it into their armpit, as you push your R palm up against the back of their hand to bend and lock their wrist (C). Lever the gun free by twisting it horizontally outward, as you lift your R knee into the groin or belly (D). Plant your R foot to your rear, and pull the locked wrist toward your R shoulder straightening gunman's arm. Lock their elbow and pin them by pressing your L forearm (or gun) down into TW-11 (above the elbow), as you lift their wrist (E). Note that the wrist is also locked by bending and twisting it forward (E1). From step D, you can also shift to an Elevated Wrist Lock (F); use your thumb to lock the little finger (F1).

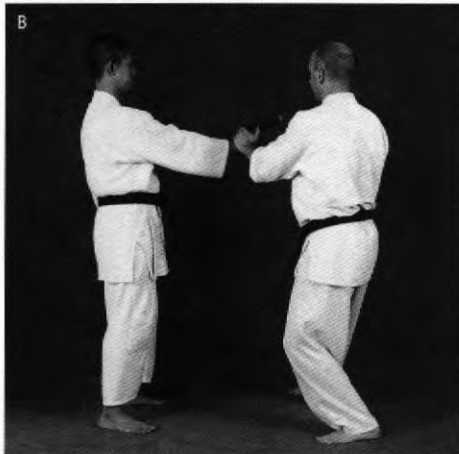
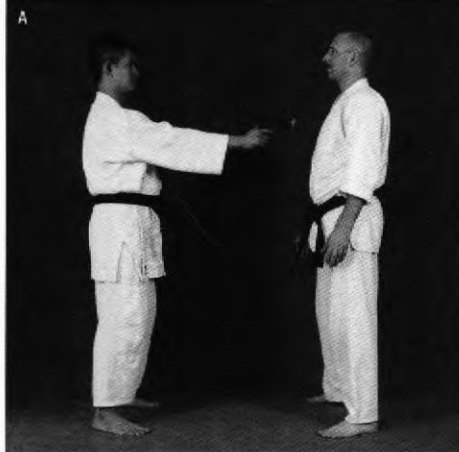




Closeups for #2

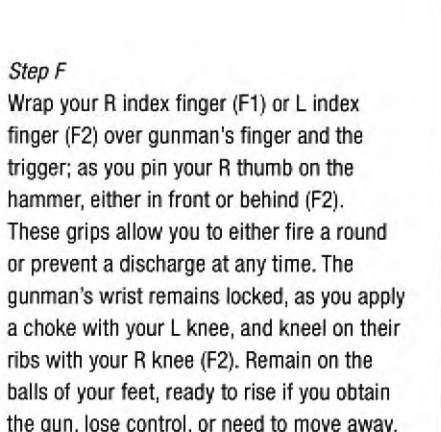
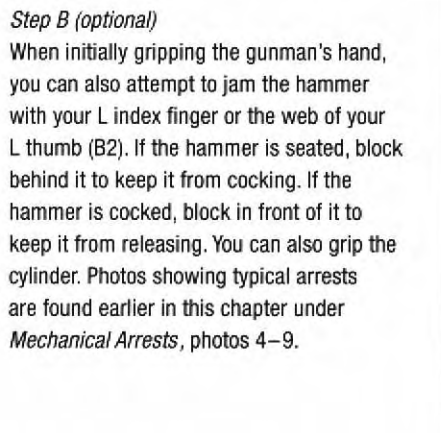
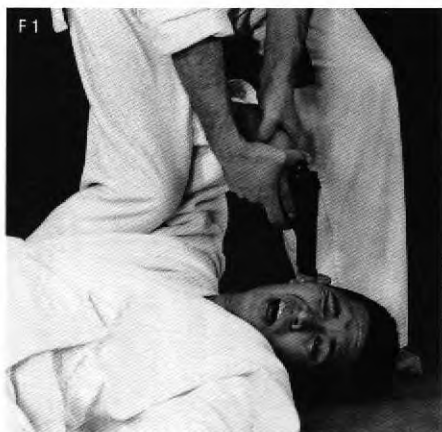
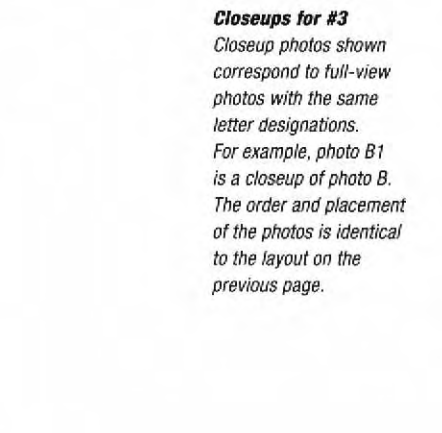
Closeup photos shown correspond to full-view photos with the same letter designations. For example, photo B1 is a closeup of photo B. The order and placement of the photos is identical to the layout on the previous page.





3. Outward Wrist Lock

Attacker holds a gun at your torso (A). Displace your body to your left, as you deflect and grip their hand with your L hand (thumb presses TW-3) (B). At the same time, grip the barrel from underneath with your R hand. If your hands are initially raised above gun level, grip the barrel from the top instead (B2). Step forward with your R foot and pivot. Twist the gun and gunman's hand in a tight circular motion toward their face (C), then outward and downward (D). This locks their wrist outward. Continue to twist the wrist and gun as you push downward, breaking the wrist and forcing a fall (E). As gunman falls, point the barrel at their head or chest, and wrap the trigger with your finger (F). Have them voluntarily release the gun, or lever it free by locking their wrist and kneeling on their chest and neck (F2). Step away and secure the gun. When initially gripping the hand (B), try to pin the hammer (see note next page). When kneeling on the head area, target either the neck at the carotid artery (ST-9, ST-10), the side of the jaw, or the temple, based on what is most accessible. All are quite painful.



Closeups for #3

Closeup photos shown correspond to full-view photos with the same letter designations. For example, photo B1 is a closeup of photo B. The order and placement of the photos is identical to the layout on the previous page.

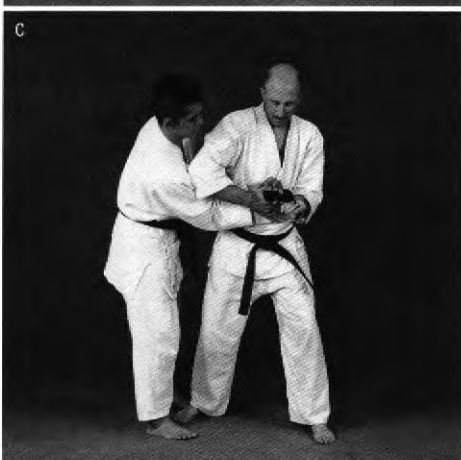
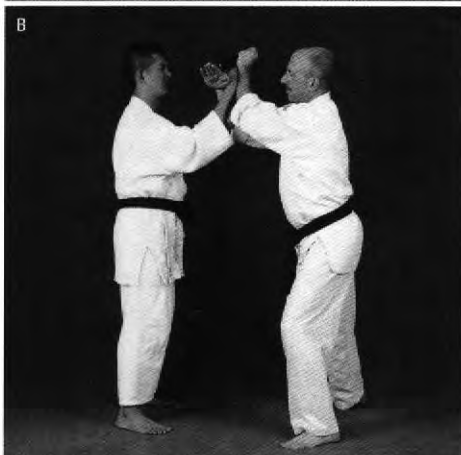
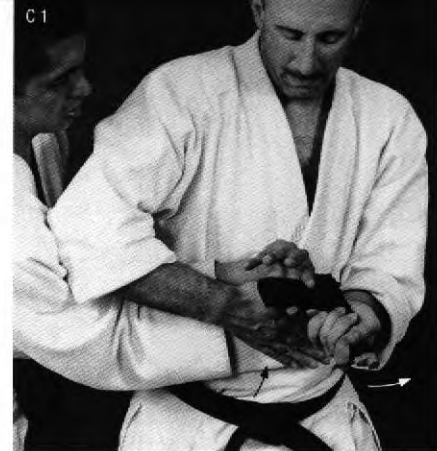
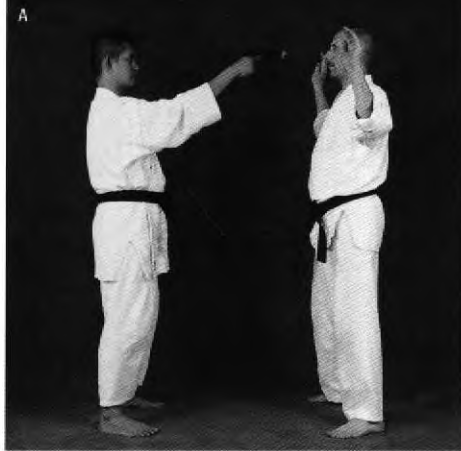
Step B (optional)

When initially gripping the gunman's hand, you can also attempt to jam the hammer with your L index finger or the web of your L thumb (B2). If the hammer is seated, block behind it to keep it from cocking. If the hammer is cocked, block in front of it to keep it from releasing. You can also grip the cylinder. Photos showing typical arrests are found earlier in this chapter under *Mechanical Arrests*, photos 4–9.

Step F

Wrap your R index finger (F1) or L index finger (F2) over gunman's finger and the trigger; as you pin your R thumb on the hammer, either in front or behind (F2). These grips allow you to either fire a round or prevent a discharge at any time. The gunman's wrist remains locked, as you apply a choke with your L knee, and kneel on their ribs with your R knee (F2). Remain on the balls of your feet, ready to rise if you obtain the gun, lose control, or need to move away.

DEFENSE AGAINST HANDGUN

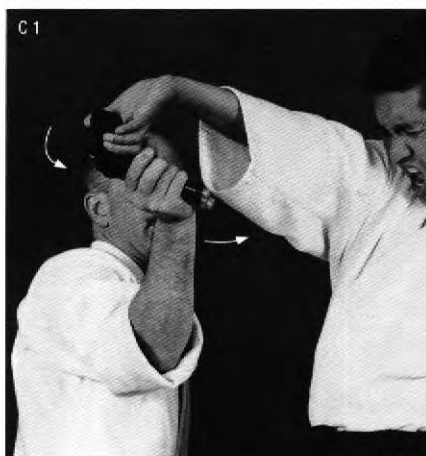
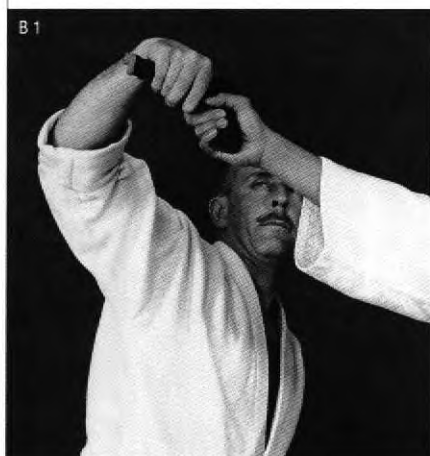


4. Chop + Outward Wrist Lever

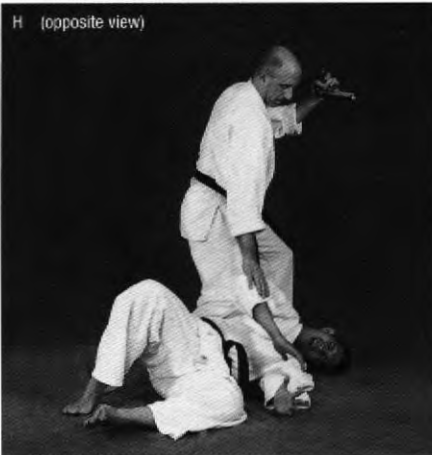
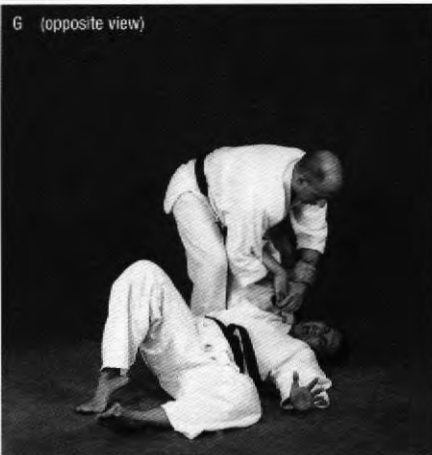
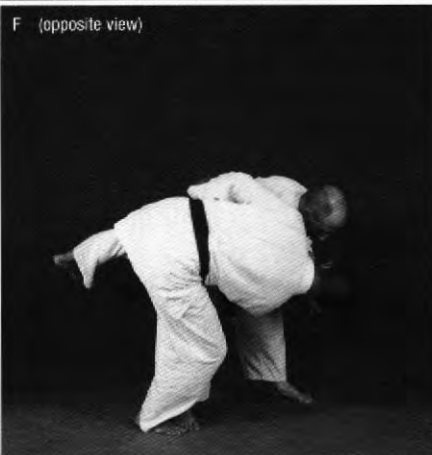
Attacker holds a gun at your face (A). Displace your body to your left, as you grip the barrel with your L hand and deflect it to your right. At the same time, hit their inner wrist from right-to-left with your R wrist or Ridge Hand, breaking or injuring their wrist (B). Step forward with your R foot and pivot. Twist the gun in a tight circular motion toward their face, then outward with your L hand, as you lift your R thumb-knuckle into LU-9 (C). This locks the wrist and levers the gun free (C1). If you twist quickly you may break their finger in the trigger guard. Exercise caution, since the gun may discharge. As the gun levers free, swing your R elbow outward into the jaw or temple (D). Extend your forearm into the throat, forcing a Back Fall (E). Step away and secure the gun (F). During step B, your L hand can also grip further up the barrel to pin the trigger. If the gun is still held during step C, push downward to break the wrist, applying an Outward Wrist Lock (see technique 3).

5. Elevated Palm Lock + Throw

This technique can be used if one hand is injured or restrained. Attacker holds a gun at your face (A). Displace your body, as your L foot steps 45° forward to your left. At the same time, deflect the barrel to your right and grip it from the top with your R hand (B). Rapidly twist the gun counterclockwise until gunman's palm faces up. Without pausing, twist the barrel downward and inward, pointing it at their chest. This tight vertical circular motion locks the wrist and fingers backward. Gunman will rise on their toes and lean back to relieve pain (C). Continue pressing their fingers forward by driving the gun toward their face. This levers the gun free and unbalances them backward, forcing a fall (D). Be aware that this counter can cause their finger to pull the trigger, firing a round into their leg, body, or face. Make sure the barrel is pointing away from you as you twist it. You can assist the throw by executing a low R Side Kick to the knee.

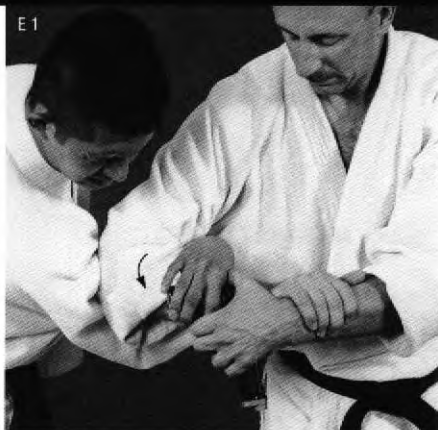
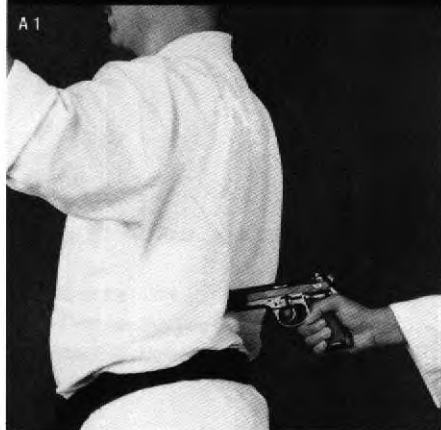


DEFENSE AGAINST HANDGUN



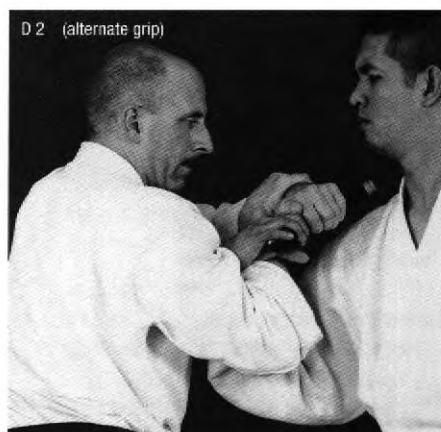
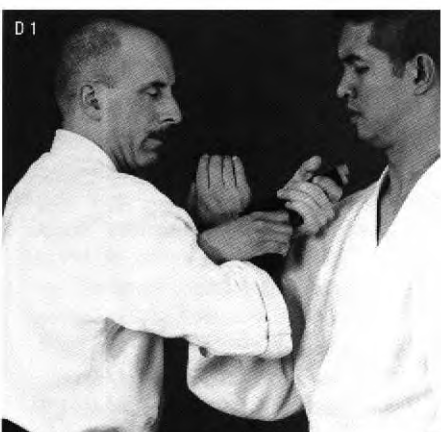
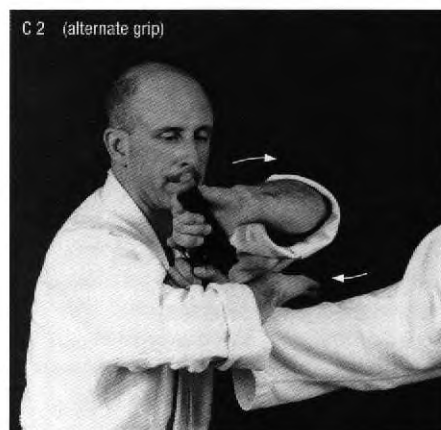
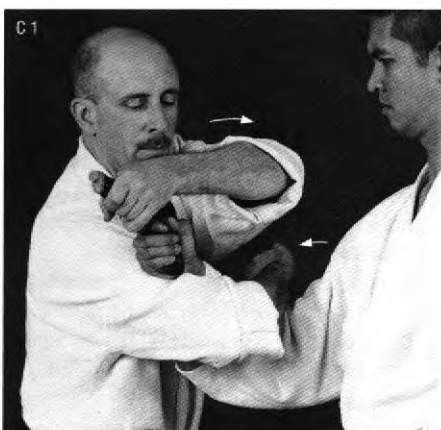
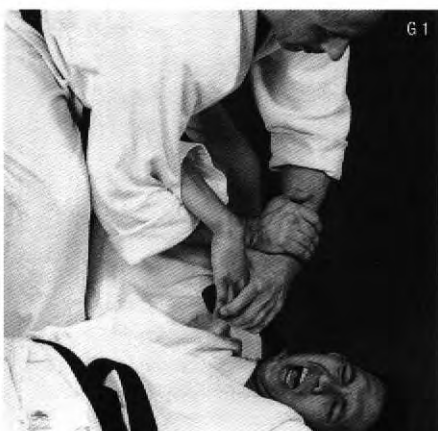
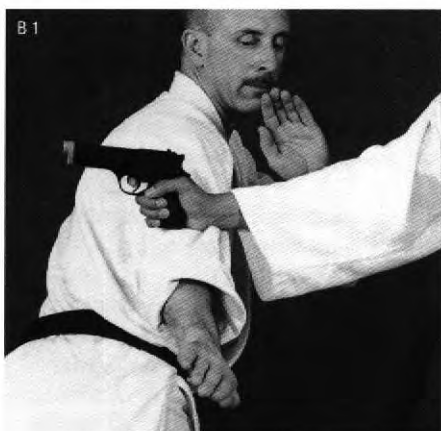
6. Inside-Chop Shoulder Lock

Attacker holds a gun at your mid or lower back (A). Displace your body to your right and turn 180°. At the same time, swing your R arm downward, outward, and upward, to deflect their forearm (B). Grip the barrel with your L hand. Wrap your R arm over their arm and strike into their inner elbow with your R wrist, bending their elbow (C). Twist the barrel toward their face and to your left, as you press your R wrist into their wrist (D). Grip your L wrist with your R hand, as you circle your L foot behind your R foot and pivot. At the same time, push the gun downward to lock the wrist and shoulder (E–F), forcing a fall (G). Lever the gun free (H). When executing this hold, gunman may release the gun as early as step E. If gunman tries to hold on, it will assist your joint lock. If you move quickly, you can break their wrist or dislocate their shoulder before they can release their grip. C2 and D2 show an alternate method of gripping the gun (see opposite page). The entry used to apply the Inside-Chop Shoulder Lock (A–E) can also be used to apply an Outward Wrist Lock, since the motions employed are very similar.



Closeups for #6

Closeup photos shown correspond to full-view photos with the same letter designations. For example, photo B1 is a closeup of photo B. The order and placement of the photos is similar to the layout on the previous page.



Philosophy and Religion

Chan, Wing-Tsit, trans. and comp.
A Source Book in Chinese Philosophy.
 Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1963.

Earhart, Byron H., edit.
Religious Traditions of the World.
 San Francisco: HarperCollins Publishers, 1993.

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