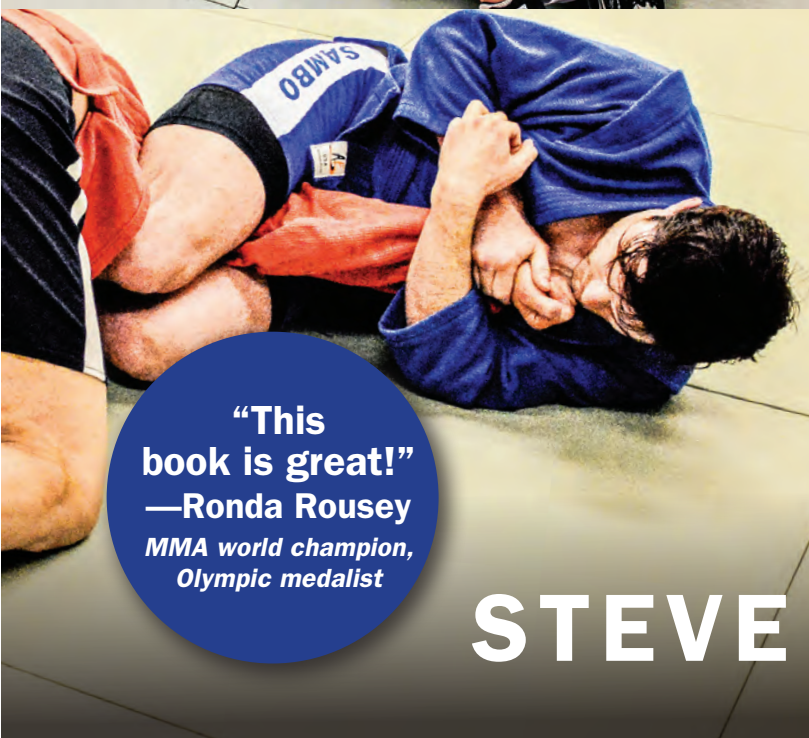


# THE Juji Gatame ENCYCLOPEDIA

Comprehensive Applications of the Cross-Body Armlock



for all  
grappling  
styles



**"This  
book is great!"**  
—Ronda Rousey  
*MMA world champion,  
Olympic medalist*



**STEVE SCOTT**

# Juji gatame is the pinnacle of armlocks

**"If it weren't for the armlocks shown in this book, I'd still be working the graveyard shift as a night clerk in my local gym. I recommend it!"**

—Ronda Rousey, World MMA champion

**"You will benefit by studying this book."**

—John Saylor, director, Shingitai Jujitsu Association

**"Steve's book truly is an encyclopedia on this armlock."**

—Becky Scott, World and Pan American Games sambo champion

**"A wealth of information on winning."**

—AnnMaria DeMars, PhD, World and Pan American Games judo champion

**"The armbar is without a doubt a universal joint lock that all grapplers must refine. A must-have book."**

—Stephen Koepfer, head coach, New York Combat Sambo

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**"The preeminent work on the straight armlock."**

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—Jan Trussell, World and Pan American Games sambo champion

Juji gatame remains the most consistently used joint lock in many grappling sports including judo, sambo, jujitsu, submission grappling, BJJ, and MMA. Athletes and coaches around the world use and respect this game-ending armlock.

Juji gatame was not widely popular until the 1960s, when the sambo grapplers of the former Soviet Union began their innovations with Japanese armlocks and groundfighting. With great success, they took their opponents to the mat, submitting them with never-before-seen applications of juji gatame techniques.

This comprehensive manual organizes juji gatame into four primary application types:

- Spinning juji gatame
- Back roll juji gatame
- Head roll juji gatame
- Hip roll juji gatame

Steve Scott carefully breaks down the basics, analyzes the structure, and offers hundreds of variations so you can successfully win with juji gatame, even under stress.

- A logical and systematic teaching method—for easy learning
- A functional perspective showing hundreds of variations—your options
- Juji gatame unbiased—inviting all grappling styles
- Thousands of photographs—in action



Author photo: Becky Scott  
Cover design: Axie Breen

**Steve Scott** has decades of training and experience in judo, sambo, and jujitsu. He holds an 8th dan in judo and a 7th dan in Shingitai jujitsu. He is a member of the US Sambo Hall of Fame. As a coach, he has developed hundreds of national and international medal winners, as well as members of World, Pan American, and Olympic teams. Steve Scott lives in Kansas City, Missouri.



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Praise for *The Juji Gatame Encyclopedia* ...

“This book is great. If it weren’t for the armlocks shown in this book, I’d still be working the graveyard shift as a night clerk in my local gym. This book goes into a lot of detail about the cross-body armlock. I recommend it!”

—Ronda Rousey  
World MMA champion  
Olympic bronze medalist  
World Judo Championships silver medalist  
World under-21 judo champion  
Pan American Games and US National judo champion

“Steve is one of the foremost authorities on juji gatame in the world. This book reflects Steve’s pragmatic and realistic approach to teaching. Whether you are a world-class fighter or a novice in any fighting sport or martial art, you will benefit by studying this book.”

—John Saylor  
Director, Shingitai Jujitsu Association  
Past coach, US Olympic Training Center judo team  
Coach of national and international champions in judo, sambo,  
sport jujitsu, submission grappling, and professional MMA  
US national heavyweight judo champion

“Juji gatame is one of the most effective submission techniques ever invented, and Steve’s book truly is an encyclopedia on this armlock. This book represents years of training, research, and coaching at the world-class level.”

—Becky Scott  
World and Pan American Games sambo champion  
US Olympic festival champion  
US national champion in judo and sambo

“If you stretched an opponent’s arm, they never forget you were the one who made them tap out. *Juji Gatame Encyclopedia* is a wealth of information on winning with juji gatame.”

—AnnMaria DeMars, PhD  
World and Pan American Games judo champion  
US national judo champion  
US Olympic festival champion

“Perhaps the quintessential submission hold that crosses boundaries between judo, sambo, jiu-jitsu, catch wrestling, and the myriad of other grappling styles practiced today is the armbar, or juji gatame, as it is known in judo. Regardless of the diverse opportunities that exist today for competitive grapplers, they all allow for armbars. Inasmuch, the armbar is without a doubt a universal joint lock that all grapplers must refine. As many competitive venues as there are for armbars, there are equally astounding numbers of juji gatame attack variations. Steve Scott has achieved no small feat with the *Juji Gatame Encyclopedia*. Anyone interested in advancing his or her armbar game must have this book in their collection.”

—Stephen Koepfer  
Head coach, New York Combat Sambo  
Founder, American Sambo Association

“As a long-time martial artist, I was thrilled to read Steve Scott’s *Juji Gatame Encyclopedia*. Scott is a master grappler, and it shows in the more than 400 pages of his excellent book on the world’s most popular and functional armlock—juji gatame. This well-written and photo-rich book covers an amazing amount of information on this armlock, including numerous examples of the four basic entries, many details about how to trap and lever the arm to straighten it for the armlock, various techniques to escape from juji gatame, and much more. I particularly liked how he goes into great detail with his insightful captions for the many technical photos. His book is an invaluable lifelong reference for juji gatame, for both combat sports and self-defense.

“Steve Scott’s book is highly recommended!”

—Andrew Zerling, martial arts veteran  
Multi-award winning author, *Sumo for Mixed Martial Arts: Winning Clinches, Takedowns, and Tactics*

“Steve Scott’s knowledge of juji gatame really can, and does, fill an encyclopedia! The *Juji Gatame Encyclopedia* is the preeminent work on the straight armlock. It is an all encompassing and concise examination of juji gatame. Whether you are a judoka, a jiu-jitsu practitioner, or a sambist, this book will enhance your game.”

—Gregg Humphreys  
Judo, sambo, and Shingitai coach, Dynamo Combat Club  
International sambo coach  
Coach of many national and international sambo champions

# JUJI GATAME ENCYCLOPEDIA

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**Editor's Note:** Throughout this book, readers will see mention of US Judo, judo's national governing body. This organization is also known as US Judo, Inc. and USA Judo. For our purposes, the terms are synonymous.

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## FOREWORD

When I was a young athlete, two-time Olympian Pat Burris gave me this advice: “Always go for the armlock, because even if the referee doesn’t give you the win and makes you stand up again, for the rest of the match, you’re fighting an opponent with one working arm. And, if you can’t beat a one-armed opponent, you really suck.” I took Pat’s advice to heart, as anyone knows who saw me on television winning the Pan American Games. I aggressively attacked my opponent with juji gatame, but the referee did not stop the match and made us get back up after groundfighting. Just as Pat predicted, an injured arm hampered my opponent, and I won the match. I won quite a few other matches as well, and juji gatame was one of my main weapons.

Enough about me (and Pat); what about Steve’s book? It is, pure and simple, everything you need to know about armlocks and juji gatame in particular. The section on exercises specifically designed to build muscle strength used in armlocks is just brilliant. Not only is it a good, safe way to teach beginners some skills, it’s also good for any athlete who was ever injured—and all top athletes are injured at some point—to have something they can do to build strength when they are not cleared for grappling.

My favorite part of the book, though, is the drills. To get good at armlocks, you need to do tens of thousands of repetitions. Think about it for a moment: when you are trying a technique that has the potential to dislocate an opponent’s arm, you are fighting a motivated individual. Often there is just one second to catch that arm. And to be able to capitalize on that one second, you need to have drilled and drilled so it is almost an instinctive reflex. Let’s be honest, though: repetitions can get boring and no amount of yelling, “No pain, no gain!” from a coach can change that fact. Having a huge variety of drills and exercises, as shown in this book, allows athletes to train from different angles, at different speeds and for different situations. Also, anyone reading this book will benefit from the photos showing the techniques from a variety of angles.

I have known Steve and Becky Scott for many years and count them as friends of mine. Steve is one of the most innovative coaches I know. He’s been there and done that, and he knows what he is talking about.

AnnMaria DeMars  
World Judo Champion  
Pan American Games judo champion  
U.S. National Champion in both judo and sambo



## INTRODUCTION

This book concerns itself with one subject and one subject only: juji gatame, the cross-body armlock. For those who may not be familiar with the subject, juji gatame is an armlock used in a variety of fighting sports and martial arts. Basically, the attacker controls and then stretches his opponent's arm out straight, applying pressure as he does it. Actually, it is quite simple in its concept but complex in its execution.

There may be those who question why so many pages are devoted to the simple act of stretching an opponent's arm. But if you delve into this book, you'll see that the simplicity of this armlock lends itself to a versatility not seen in many other fighting skills or techniques. Maybe juji gatame is simple in its concept, but it is multifaceted in its applications, and as you study this book, you will see that there are many applications. juji gatame is one of the most versatile and functional techniques in any form of sport combat (or real combat, for that matter).

This book presents a comprehensive, systematic, and realistic study of juji gatame. Everything presented on the following pages works. The skills featured in this book have proven themselves in every fighting sport used on the planet. There is no fluff or filler material designed to look impressive and to sell books. The skills shown on these pages have been used (and continue to be used) by athletes at all levels of competition in every combat sport that allows joint locks within the structure of its rules. Some techniques and applications may look similar, and there are indeed subtle differences in some of the setups, entries, breakdowns, rolls, turns, and applications presented in the chapters of this book.

While juji gatame has proven to be a workhorse in the arsenal of many athletes in a variety of combat sports for many years, there hasn't been (to this author's knowledge) an attempt to produce a book to examine, analyze, catalogue, and systematically present this armlock to a large audience. Hopefully this book will offer a comprehensive and thought-provoking examination of juji gatame that can be used as a reliable reference for years to come.

Juji gatame is the most popular armlock in the world, and there are a lot of good reasons why. It is simplicity in motion and, because of this, can be adapted in an almost infinite number of ways. Basically, you stretch your opponent's arm over your hips and make him give up; and from this almost humble start, there are limitless ways to make this armlock work in real-world situations.

Over the course of my personal career in judo, sambo, jujitsu, and submission grappling, I became fascinated

with juji gatame. Everyone has a "tokui waza" or favorite technique, and juji gatame is certainly my favorite technique. Because of this fascination, it's been my approach to methodically study and teach juji gatame from a functional perspective. My concern hasn't been in the aesthetics of this armlock; I don't care what a technique looks like as long as it works and works with a high rate of success. This book offers this functional approach to the study and practice of juji gatame, breaking the armlock down into its core components and methodically building it back up, integrating the many factors that make this armlock so versatile, adaptable, and successful. Every attempt has been made to examine juji gatame from as many different perspectives as possible on the pages of this book. The many setups, rolls, turns, breakdowns, and entry forms used to secure and apply juji gatame are dissected, analyzed, and examined so that they can be used in real-world situations under the stress of competition and against a resisting and fit opponent. This book also examines a variety of combinations, transitions (from throws or takedowns), defenses, and escapes as well as some specific drills that can be useful in developing juji gatame. This book also presents a variety of practical and effective traps and levers to control and pry an opponent's arm free and secure the armlock. We will also delve into the tactical applications of juji gatame as well as the positions and control methods used to make this armlock work for you and work for with a high rate of success. Hopefully, this pragmatic approach will offer you, as the reader, a clear picture of how to make this great armlock work for you. juji gatame is one of those skills that can be molded to fit the needs of the person doing it, and its effectiveness comes from its versatility. I like it because any grappler or fighter in any weight class, man or woman, can make juji gatame work and work on a regular basis with a high rate of success.

As with all techniques, structured, disciplined, consistent, and focused training is the key to developing top-level skill. Repetitive drill training on the techniques presented in this book, making sure that the skill is done functionally and correctly, will lead to success. Simply learning a move and practicing it a few times won't build or develop the skills necessary to use it against skilled, resisting, fit, and motivated opponents. Disciplined, structured training is necessary for success. Train hard and train smart and it will pay huge benefits for you.

The complete name for the armlock that is the subject of this book is udehishigi juji gatame, or the "arm breaking cross lock." It's an apt name for this effective armlock,

but it's also too long and cumbersome for most people. As a result, over the course of its development, the name has been shortened to juji gatame, but whatever you call it, the important thing is that this armlock works and works well.

No book or one source of information can offer a complete presentation of any subject, especially an armlock that is as versatile as juji gatame. The skills and information presented on these pages reflect my approach to coaching and performing juji gatame and I make no claim that everything you need to know about this armlock is contained in this book. In reality however, a lot of practical information is presented in this book, and I hope that you can use the information presented in these pages to enhance your study and appreciation of juji gatame. Use this book along with the other books that I have written, as well as other books, DVDs, and additional sources of information by other authors to supplement your study of juji gatame.

My sincere thanks are extended to the many people who helped in the development and production of this book. As with my other books, my wife Becky offered excellent technical advice as well as serving as an objective editor during the writing phase. The athletes and coaches at the Welcome Mat Judo-Jujitsu Club and the Shingitai Jujitsu Association not only patiently posed for many photographs but offered invaluable help in the technical direction taken in this book. Special thanks also go to Turtle Press and Cynthia Kim, who again provided professional excellence in the editing and publication of this book. The photographs in this book are the result of some talented and skilled professionals. My sincere thanks go to Jake Pursley, Terry Smemo, Sharon Vandenberg, Jorge Garcia, Mark Lozano, Victoria Thomas, Rachel Rittman, Holly Weddington, and Bill West for the excellent photography they provided for this book.

I have been fortunate to have some good coaches through the years, and the juji gatame "bug" bit me long before I met Neil Adams. But the brief time spent training with Neil gave me a wider view and appreciation of what juji gatame was and how it could be used as a major weapon at all levels of competition. Neil's influence on my personal appreciation of juji gatame has been profound; and as a result, the athletes who have trained with me and used this versatile armlock with success have benefited from his influence. My sincere thanks are extended to Neil.

I hope, as a coach and author, that you can use the skills and techniques presented in this book to enhance your success in the world's most popular and effective armlock, juji gatame. Beating an opponent, by stretching

his arm and making him tap out is an "up close and personal" way of winning. No fighter or athlete with any pride in his soul wants to ever give up to an opponent and I always tell my athletes that if you make your opponent submit to you, he will never forgive you and never forget you. With that being said, let's use this book to take a look at how to make opponents never forgive or forget you.

I hope you enjoy this book. Best wishes, keep training, and keep learning.

Steve Scott

### TECHNICAL TIP

**This book is for athletes and coaches in every combat sport or area of personal combat. The act of trapping, stretching, and locking an opponent's arm is not restricted to only one discipline of fighting or grappling. A good technique is a good technique no matter who does it or in what sport or context it is done. Many techniques or positions shown in this book can be done with or without a judogi or jujitsugi. A majority of the photos show the athletes demonstrating the skills in a judogi. In other photos, the sequence of action shows athletes who are not wearing a judogi or jujitsugi. (Most of the photos in this book were taken during actual workouts at Welcome Mat.) My belief is that the core, basic, and fundamental technical skills of juji gatame should be sound enough so that it does not matter what combat sport it is done in or what type of clothing is worn. There are, however, some specific techniques or variations that require a judogi or jujitsugi, and when this is the situation, it will be clearly presented as such.**

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*The photographs used in this book were taken at various AAU freestyle judo competitions as well as during workouts at the Welcome Mat Judo-Jujitsu Club. I wish to thank all the athletes and coaches who patiently allowed themselves to be photographed during their valuable training time. Their skills and expertise added much to the content of this book.*

*Steve Scott*



## USING THIS BOOK

As stated in the introduction, this book is about one subject and one subject only: juji gatame. There's a lot to be said about juji gatame and the goal of this book is to examine, dissect, analyze, and synthesize this armlock from as many applications, positions, and functional situations as possible. No claim is being made that every variation or application of juji gatame will be seen on these pages, but there are a lot of ways to do juji gatame presented in this book, and every attempt has been made to offer the most comprehensive and exhaustive work on this subject in print. The purpose of this book is to serve as a reliable, accurate, and realistic source of information and instruction on the subject of juji gatame and make as complete an analysis as possible of why and how this armlock works. It is hoped that you, as the reader, will refer to this book time and again for many years to come. It is also hoped that this book stimulates thought by anyone who reads it and this thought is transferred into the action of new and practical applications of this great armlock.

This is the first book, of which this author is aware, that attempts to systematically present juji gatame as a singular subject and analyze its many applications into functional, real-world terms. From quite a few years of study and analysis, four specific and unique applications of juji gatame have been identified and are presented in this book. They are: 1) spinning juji gatame, 2) back-roll juji gatame, 3) head-roll juji gatame and 4) hip-roll juji gatame. These four, distinctive applications of the armlock are analyzed and examined methodically and then applied in realistic and functional ways that are useful for any combat sport or method of fighting.

Some may wonder why a single book is devoted to the specific subject of juji gatame. Why not? Like any skill or interest of any subject there are those who find an affinity for the subject and want to explore it as thoroughly as possible. This is the case in this instance. I was bitten by the juji gatame "bug" many years ago and was (and continue to be) impressed by the versatility and reliability of this technique. No matter what combat sport it is used in, juji gatame time and again has proved to be one of the mainstays of successful, effective, and practical groundfighting. An athlete who has the reputation of stretching arms is feared, and if not feared, certainly respected by his or her peers. This book is for those of you who have been bitten by the juji gatame "bug" as well as for everyone else who may want a reliable reference and source of information on the subject. Juji gatame may indeed be only one armlock,

but it has an infinite number of applications limited only by the imagination and creativity of the people doing it.

This book will examine as many functional ways of controlling an opponent and then applying juji gatame as possible. As said before, not every variation or application of juji gatame is presented in this book, but an honest attempt has been made to systematically and methodically catalogue and examine as many ways to do this armlock as possible.

### TECHNICAL TIP

**Many variations of juji gatame will be presented in this book. Some may be similar to the point that they look alike to an inexperienced or untrained eye or even at first glance to an experienced coach or athlete. Every application and variation is different from the others, and in some cases, the variations are subtle, but every application of juji gatame is practical, effective, and most of all functional.**

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## JUJI GATAME: THE WORLD'S MOST POPULAR ARMLOCK

**“THE PURPOSE  
OF FIGHTING IS  
TO WIN.” GEORGE  
MASON**

### **SOME BACKGROUND AND HISTORY ABOUT JUJI GATAME**

There are, fundamentally, two core ways of “locking” an arm. You either bend it over a fulcrum to cause pain or you straighten and stretch it over a fulcrum to cause pain. Juji gatame is one of four primary armlocks that attack the elbow joint (as well as shoulder joint). There will be more on the four primary armlocks later in this chapter.

Juji gatame, the cross-body armlock, has been the most consistently used joint lock for many years in a variety of combat sports and in many different applications of self-defense. Whether it’s judo, sambo, jujitsu, submission grappling, BJJ, MMA, or anything else, athletes and coaches use and respect this armlock. Historically, juji gatame was not widely popular until the sambo grapplers of the former Soviet Union began their innovations with armlocks and groundfighting in general. Other European judo athletes and coaches watched and learned what the Soviets were doing and quickly began an intense development of juji gatame as an offensive weapon.

When the Soviets burst onto the international judo scene in 1962 at the European Judo Union Championships and inelegantly took their opponents to the mat and made them submit with armlocks and other submission techniques not previously seen, the world of judo (and ultimately, the world of combat sports) changed forever. This was the first exposure

to sambo seen by athletes and coaches of Western nations and the world at large. Sambo, the Soviet hybrid grappling sport, took a decidedly utilitarian approach to all phases of sport combat, and in this case, to armlocks. Up to that point in history, no major judo champion on the international level had really developed his groundfighting skills to the point that juji gatame was a primary method of winning matches. Traditionally, judo has preferred throwing techniques to groundfighting techniques. Catch-as-catch-can wrestling, the historical forerunner (along with judo) to some of today's submission grappling, used its version of what we now call juji gatame based on early Celtic and Breton forms of European wrestling. After some exposure to Japanese professional wrestlers who were former judo athletes in the early 1900s, several variations of the cross-body armlock were seen in professional wrestling in North America, South America and Europe. But no one was doing flying armlock attacks or well-practiced rolls, breakdowns, or entries to juji gatame until the Soviet sambo wrestlers appeared on the scene. The Japanese invented juji gatame, but it was the Soviets who developed it and showed the world that this armlock is a viable technical skill in world-class competition.

The Soviet sambo/judo men competed in the 1964 Olympics in Tokyo and won four bronze medals, proving that this no-nonsense form of grappling called sambo was on the international scene to stay. These sambo men were less interested in what the judo world thought of them than they were in winning matches. Judo was in the initial stages of becoming an international sport in the 1960s. It was making the transition from being a martial "art" to more of a martial "sport." Athletes were more interested in results than the aesthetics of a particular technique. The concept that a technique should be performed based on its function more than the aesthetic quality was quickly becoming the standard in European (and eventually international) judo circles. Soviet athletes were winning on a regular basis in international judo tournaments with their variations of juji gatame, and in several cases, against established Japanese judo champions. However, it cannot be emphasized enough that had it not been for the sound fundamentals initially developed by Kodokan Judo, juji gatame would not have gained the technical soundness or complexity (and resulting dominance) it has in the world of combat sports.

This author's personal appreciation for juji gatame took place initially in 1976 after getting involved in the sport of sambo. Having been involved in judo and jujitsu since 1965, I wanted to try something new and my

coach Ken Regennitter suggested that I try the rough-and-tumble grappling sport called sambo. I enjoyed groundfighting and took to submission techniques in particular. Ken had seen sambo before and knew that it placed emphasis on armlocks and leglocks, and he thought it might be something that I would enjoy. He was right. Sambo was in its infancy in the United States in those years, but I was determined to find someone who could teach me. Keep in mind that there was no such thing as the Internet at that time where someone could learn or research new skills. Often, learning more about sambo (and specifically juji gatame) was the result of finding someone who would actually get on the mat with you and personally teach you the fundamentals. This was certainly my experience, as I was fortunate enough to meet the Scotsman Maurice Allen in 1976 through our mutual friend Dr. Ivan Olsen. Maurice was the World Sambo Champion in 1975 and was the first person to expose me to how juji gatame could be used as an effective and functional weapon. Later, sometime in the late 1980s, I was fortunate enough to meet Neil Adams, the 1981 World Judo Champion from Great Britain, who was (and continues to be) well known and respected for his ability at juji gatame. (Neil won his world championship with juji gatame over his Japanese opponent.) Over the next several years, I was able to spend (all too brief) time learning juji gatame from Neil. Eventually, several of us made the trip from the United States to Neil's dojo in Coventry, England, to spend a few weeks training with him. I was amazed at the fluidity and versatility of Neil's approach to juji gatame, and the brief period of time spent with Neil gave me a real appreciation for the effectiveness of this armlock, even against elite-level opposition. For the record, Neil informed me that Alexander Iatskevich, the world-class judo/sambo man from the Soviet Union, heavily influenced him in his thinking, training, and development of juji gatame. Iatskevich, like Adams, certainly deserves a good share of the credit for exposing many people all over the world (this author included) to the functional effectiveness of juji gatame. Of course, there have been many other exponents of juji gatame who have added tremendously to its development, but the people previously mentioned are the ones who motivated me in my personal journey.

For reasons that still cannot be explained, the study, research, and practice of juji gatame became a significant interest of mine. Most likely, at least from my perspective, juji gatame represents the functional, gritty, no-nonsense, and utilitarian approach that I identify with. There are a lot of other people with this approach, and more than likely, if you are reading this book, you

are one of them. Over the years, as a coach, it's been my goal to have my athletes use juji gatame as a primary offensive weapon, and I hope what is presented on these pages will convince you to do the same.

Let's explore more about juji gatame on the pages to come.

## TECHNICAL TIP

**The Japanese initially developed the basic form of juji gatame as we now know it (with early drawings and descriptions dating to the late 1700s and early 1800s), although it has also been used in some other cultural grappling and fighting styles in one form or another in other parts of the world through the centuries. As mentioned earlier, the exponents of Kodokan Judo, starting in 1882, established the framework and fundamental principles for (what we now call) juji gatame. However, it was the Soviets and their sambo that showed the world (starting in the 1960s) how effective and versatile juji gatame could be. Also, the name of this technique is interesting, and some history about the name gives us some insight as to the original intent and purpose of this armlock. Juji gatame has been known by other names through the history of Japanese jujitsu, judo, as well as other forms of grappling, martial arts, and combat sports. In the early years of Kodokan Judo, this armlock was called “jumonji gatame.” The word jumonji is translated to mean “cross” or referring to something lying sideways to something else, and Gatame refers to locking or holding something in place. In his masterwork *THE CANON OF JUDO*, Kyuzo Mifune referred to this armlock as “jumonji gatame ude kujiki,” which translates to “cross lock arm wrenching skill.” Eventually, the Kodokan Judo Institute named this armlock “udehishigi juji gatame,” which means “arm breaking cross lock.” It is apparent that the people who invented this armlock intended it to be a technique that could, and did, break people's arms. The combat effectiveness of this skill was reflected in how the Japanese jujitsu and judo masters developed juji gatame in the way they did, and why they named it what they did.**

## THE FOUR PRIMARY ARMLOCKS

When it comes to self-defense or fighting on the battlefield, any joint-locking technique that causes compliance, pain, injury, or death is encouraged and allowed. Joint locks are dangerous and they are dangerous because they are effective. But when it comes to fighting as a sport, rules have to be in place to ensure the safety of the combatants. This is certainly the case when it comes to armlocks. Since the advent of the concept of “sport” and sport as it applies to fighting, wrestling, or grappling, four primary forms of locking an opponent's arm have been consistently used in almost every part of the world. As combat sports developed and evolved through the nineteenth century, then on to the twentieth century, and now into the twenty-first century, almost every form of sport combat has been adapted so that the elbow is the primary target for joint locks against the arm. Wristlocks have proven to be too dangerous for sport fighting. The wrist joint is far too fragile, and in the early days of submission wrestling, jujitsu, and judo, when wristlocks were allowed in contests, too many wrists were broken (and broken too easily). The joints in the hands have often been off-limits to combat sports as well. The thumb and fingers are comparatively small and easy to break, as are the bones in the hand itself. The shoulder joint, while not a small joint, is a weak one; and while not the primary target of juji gatame and other joint locks, is often a secondary victim of an elbow lock. However, again for safety concerns, the shoulder isn't the primary target of a joint lock, at least when it comes to the sporting aspect of fighting.

However, the elbow joint is a hinge joint and, as such, has proven to be able to withstand more abuse than the other joints of the hand, arm, and shoulder because of its size and function. And because of this, the elbow joint has become the principle target of those who are so inclined to stretch, pull, bend, crank, or wrench an arm of an opponent in a combat sport. (If you are reading this book, you are most likely one of those people so inclined to stretch, bend, or crank someone else's arm.)

There are four primary ways of locking an opponent's elbow that are universally used in almost every form of submission grappling or sport combat. I have come to refer to these as the “primary armlocks.” One of these four primary armlocks (juji gatame) is the subject of this book. Three of these four primary armlocks attack the arm by straightening it, and one attacks the arm by bending it at the elbow joint. Juji gatame is one of the three primary armlocks that straighten the opponent's arm and is unique in that it is the only one where the attacker places his opponent's elbow joint against his

pubic bone, taking the elbow out of its normal range of motion and “barring” it as the attacker crosses one, or both, legs over his opponent to assert more control of his opponent’s body.

Following is a brief description of the four primary armlocks.

### PRIMARY ARMLOCK: JUJI GATAME (CROSS-BODY ARMLOCK)



This armlock is unique in that it is the only one where the attacker crosses one, or both, legs over the head and torso of his opponent.

### PRIMARY ARMLOCK: UDE GATAME (ARMLOCK, ALSO CALLED THE “STRAIGHT ARMLOCK”)



This photo shows one of the many variations of this armlock. Pretty much any armlock where the attacker straightens or “bars” the opponent’s arm falls under the category of ude gatame.

### PRIMARY ARMLOCK: WAKI GATAME (ARMPIT LOCK)



The distinctive feature of this armlock is that the attacker straightens his opponent’s arm with the attacker using the side of his body at the ribcage under his arm as the fulcrum. It is a powerful and effective armlock.

### PRIMARY ARMLOCK: UDE GARAMI (ARM ENTANGLEMENT OR BENT ARMLOCK)



There are two basic applications of this armlock; one with the defender’s arm bent in an upward direction (as shown here) and the other with the defender’s arm bent downward. This is the only primary armlock where the attacker bends his opponent’s arm to cause pain in the elbow joint.

Maybe someone else will devote an entire book to each one of these primary armlocks, but for now, we will concern ourselves with juji gatame.



## LEARNING, PRACTICING, AND DRILL TRAINING FOR JUJI GATAME

**“THE FIRST TIME  
IS COGNITION. THE  
SECOND TIME IS  
RECOGNITION.”  
MARSHALL  
MCLUHAN**

### TEACHING, LEARNING, AND TRAINING FOR JUJI GATAME

Juji gatame is a core skill for all combat sports. The study of this armlock teaches fundamental skills that go beyond simply stretching an opponent’s arm. It is a useful, reliable tool with a high rate of success used in all combat sports and can be used by both male and female athletes in all weight classes.

Juji gatame is also a fighting skill. The intention behind learning how to fight is of learning how to fight is different than learning any other sport or activity. Sports (and life in general) can be stressful enough, but the stress that is present in a real fight or a fight in a sporting context is much greater. How a person trains, practices, or learns directly affects how he or she will perform under pressure. People sometimes say that they will “rise to the occasion” under a stressful situation. That’s not true. You don’t ever rise to the occasion. You rise to your level of training. The better you prepare in your training, the better you will do under stress.

There’s a lot of stress in any form of fighting. Whether it’s a combat sport or real combat, stress is always present. Only a person who is a sociopath or a person who is totally oblivious or naïve about the situation will not feel stress in a fight. The better we train in a realistic, functional manner, the better prepared we will be for the real thing.

Fundamental, core skills are vital as a basis of all training and skill learning, and the serious, realistic study, and practice of these fundamental skills in functional and efficient applications prepare an athlete

or student for the real world of fighting, either in sport combat or in real combat. Effective practice produces effective results.

A major key to success is structured, disciplined, and effective training. Train hard, but be sure to train smart. Simply showing up to the dojo or gym and rolling with the other guys may be fun, but if that's all you do, you are not getting the most out of your training time. I'm not trying to sell books, but my books *Conditioning for Combat Sports* (along with John Saylor), *Tap Out Textbook*, and *Winning on the Mat* offer some useful and realistic advice on how to get the most out of your training time. But the main point here is that drill training and working on technical skills of new (and already-learned) moves and techniques, along with structured free practice (call it what you want: randori, rolling, going live, or any other term used in your sport) get the best results. Structured training also keeps injuries in training to a minimum and focuses the athletes and coaches on the ultimate goals they have, both immediate goals and long-term goals.

In the next few pages, some exercises and drills will be presented that are useful in training for juji gatame. These are simply a few exercises that can be done, so make it a point to search for as many good, effective ways as possible to train. Training time is limited; we all have lives to lead, so getting the most out of the time you are on the mat or in the gym is vital to your success.

#### TECHNICAL TIP

**A major key to success is structured, disciplined, consistent and effective training; that means effective and constant, drill training is essential for making juji gatame an effective weapon in your arsenal of skills.**

## COACHES: TEACH JUJI GATAME AS A CORE SKILL

When I started my judo career in 1965, the contest rules of judo only permitted black belts to perform juji gatame. There is an old, and true, adage that people tend to learn and practice what the rules of the sport allow. What is not allowed in the rulebook is often neglected in terms of learning, coaching, and practicing. This was certainly true for armlocks when I was young and starting out, and in some cases, it still is. Armlocks were considered “dangerous” even though there were few injuries resulting from them in either competition or practice. As a result, few people learned armlocks,

and even fewer still were skilled enough to use them in competitive situations. Even when a person achieved his or her black belt, scant attention was paid to the study and practice of armlocks. When my personal learning progressed into the study of jujitsu and eventually sambo, the awareness of armlocks (as well as other submission techniques such as leglocks) opened up to me. As the world of combat sports has expanded and evolved in the intervening years since my first involvement in 1965, armlocks have gained the recognition they merit for their effectiveness and versatility.

As a coach, I teach juji gatame as a core skill. My belief is that novices should “learn from the ground up,” and juji gatame is usually the first thing a new person learns in my club. As the novice learns the safety of breakfalls in preparation for throws and takedowns, he or she is also immediately introduced to spinning juji gatame. The spinning application of juji gatame not only teaches the actual armlock, it also teaches fundamental skills of groundfighting such as learning how to move from the hips and buttocks, the shrimping or curling movements necessary for good groundfighting, learning spatial awareness, learning how to use the opponent's (and one's own) body or training uniform as handles to manipulate and control the opponent, and a variety of other skills that are examined later in this book in the chapter on core skills. The underlying premise of juji gatame is to force an opponent to surrender to you. Learning juji gatame as one of the first things a novice does teaches that person the aggressive, hardcore, and serious approach and attitude necessary for the real world of combat sports or the real world of self-defense.

## ARMLOCK SAFETY

The old saying, “When in doubt, tap out” applies to the study of juji gatame, or any submission technique for that matter. Especially in training, don't make the mistake of being macho and refusing to submit when you are caught in an armlock or other submission technique. In many combat sports, tapping an opponent or verbally submitting (either by a recognized word or phrase or simply by yelling out) is the safety valve that separates injury from non-injury. A good idea is to tap your opponent or partner and not the mat when submitting. In a busy practice room or gymnasium, you may not be able to hear your opponent tap out as quickly as you feel him tap out. But, in a fight or match, make sure the referee also sees your opponent tap out or hears your opponent verbally surrender. Remember, in a sport combat fight, it doesn't count unless the referee says so.



There is also an old saying, “He didn’t tap, so it went snap.” This implies that the athlete who has the armlock applied on him (or her) has the responsibility to submit and signal surrender before his arm is injured. Injured pride takes a lot less time to heal than an injured elbow.

A mature attitude is required when practicing and using armlocks or any form of submission techniques. One has to be physically, mentally, and emotionally mature enough to practice armlocks, and those who are not are wasting your valuable time on the mat. Take care of yourself and take care of your training partners.

## **TEACHING ARMLOCKS TO YOUNG PEOPLE**

Armlocks are safe for young people who are mature enough to understand that injury could result from poor attentiveness, horseplay, or not taking a mature attitude in their study, practice, and application. But then that can also be said for throwing and takedown techniques, as well as most any aspect of judo, jujitsu, sambo, grappling, or wrestling. My approach is to introduce juji gatame to students who are physically mature enough, as well as mentally and emotionally mature enough, at about eleven or twelve years of age (or at about the onset of puberty), making sure that they learn the correct fundamentals (same as an adult would learn) in a structured and controlled training atmosphere.

Neil Adams once told me, “Judo is an adult activity that we allow children to do.” Neil is right, and that advice applies to a variety of other combat sports as well. This is certainly the case when teaching young people juji gatame.

## **DRILLS AND EXERCISES FOR JUJI GATAME**

It’s a good idea to be specific when warming up for any training session. Do warm-up exercises that relate, both directly and indirectly in some cases, to what you plan to do in practice. There are a lot of good exercises and drills you can do to enhance your ability at juji gatame and some of them are presented on the next few pages.

## WARM-UP EXERCISES

### ROLLING EXERCISE

An important physical skill is to be able to stay round. This exercise is not only a good warm-up, it teaches how to stay round and keep rolling when doing juji gatame.



1 Sit on the mat with knees wide as shown and grab your feet.



2 The grappler rolls to one side (in this photo, to the athlete's right), continuing to hold onto the feet as shown.



3 The athlete continues to roll to his right and across his back as shown.



4 The athlete rolls across his back and over toward his left.



5 Roll back to the sitting position and proceed to roll the other direction. Do this as a timed drill (about thirty to forty-five seconds) or roll five times each direction as a good initial warm-up.

## SHOULDER WARM-UP

The shoulders take a lot of abuse when practicing juji gatame and this exercise helps warm the shoulder area as extend the range of motion in the joint to prevent injuries.



The athlete rolls onto his left shoulder as he extends his left arm as shown.



The athlete repeats the exercise on his right shoulder as shown.

## HEAD POSTING: KNEELING



Posting on the top of your head is an important skill when doing juji gatame. There are many positions and applications of juji gatame where you will have to balance yourself on the top of your head. A good warm-up is to kneel as shown here, rocking forward, backward, and to each side with your head.

## HEAD POSTING: ROCKING BACK AND FORTH AND FORTH



As shown here, kneel and use your hands and arms to support yourself as you rock back and forth on the top of your head to both warm up and strengthen the muscles of the neck and shoulders.

## HEAD POSTING: TRIPOD POSITION



Get on the top of your head as shown in this photo and rock back and forth as well as side to side gradually and slowly. Don't rock back and forth fast to avoid neck injury. You can do this drill by using your hands for support as shown or without using your hands for support on the mat, allowing the neck and head to take the full force of your weight.

## HEAD POSTING: BALANCE ON HEAD



While this exercise may not be done at every workout as a warm-up, it's still a good one to help strengthen the neck and supporting muscles of the neck and head.

## HEAD-POST DRILL WITH PARTNER



The top grappler controls his partner from the top position as shown here. This exercise is a good one to develop the muscles necessary to post on the head and control an opponent from this position. It is also a good drill to teach how to post and balance on the head and maintain control of an opponent.



The bottom grappler will move in different directions with the top grappler moving and adjusting his position as necessary to stay on the top of his head.

## GRANBY ROLL OR SHOULDER ROLL

Many applications of juji gatame require that you roll easily. This exercise is excellent for this purpose.



Start by kneeling and placing the top of your head on the mat much like you do in the head-posting exercise.



Roll over your left shoulder (high up on the shoulder) as shown here.



Keep rolling across the top of your shoulders as shown here.



Finish the exercise by rolling over onto your head as shown here. Repeat this exercise by doing this roll in the other direction.

## SHRIMP DRILL

Shrimping or curling the body and turning onto the hips is one of the most often-used movements when doing juji gatame, especially when doing spinning juji gatame. Do this exercise every workout as part of your warm-up. A good drill is to shrimp from one side of the mat to the other.



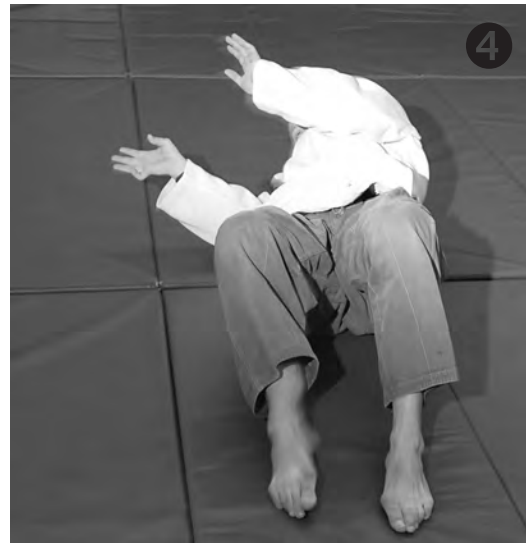
What many people call “shrimping” is the action of curling the body, shifting or moving to the hip and side, and using the feet to move. Start by lying on your back as shown here.



Shift your body so that it is curled up as shown here.



Push against the mat with your feet as shown here. Doing this causes you to scoot back.



Quickly roll over to the other side of your body.



Curl up as shown here.



Push against the mat with your feet, extending your body. This shrimping action is an important skill in all groundfighting, and especially useful when doing juji gatame.

## LEG-PRESS LEVER EXERCISE

This exercise is good for both athletes, with the top grappler developing the muscles necessary to lever his opponent's arms free and the bottom grappler using his muscles to keep his arm from being pulled apart.

There are three ways to perform this drill. 1) Decide whom the drill is for. If the drill is for the top grappler, his job is to pry his partner's arms free. The bottom grappler will offer varying degrees of resistance. 2) If you decide the drill is for the bottom grappler, the top grappler will offer varying degrees of resistance in pulling the bottom man's hands and arms apart. The bottom grappler's job is to keep his arms and hands clamped together to develop the muscles necessary to keep them from getting pulled apart when in this position. 3) Both athletes can go 100 percent, with the top grappler attempting to pull the bottom grappler's hands and arms apart, and the bottom grappler attempting to keep his hands and arms clamped together.



The top grappler has his partner in the leg press. The bottom grappler grabs his arms together. The top grappler uses his arms to grab his partner's arms.



The top grappler pulls back, using both the strength of his arms and the weight of his body. The bottom grappler keeps his hands grasped together.



The top grappler pulls and rolls backward as shown, with the bottom grappler continuing to hold his hands together tightly.

## ARM-DEFENSE EXERCISE FOR BOTTOM ATHLETE IN LEG PRESS



This is a good strength exercise for the bottom grappler if he gets caught in the leg press and gets his arms extended as shown here. The top grappler holds the bottom grappler's arm as shown to start the drill.



The top grappler offers varying amounts of resistance, with the bottom grappler pulling his extended right arm in toward his body as shown.



The bottom grappler has pulled his right arm in, completing the exercise. Do this in sets of five to ten repetitions per arm for each athlete.

## LEG-PRESS BALL GRAB



This is a fun drill and is a good workout as well. The bottom grappler holds tightly to a basketball (or for a tougher workout, a medicine ball) as shown. The top grappler holds his partner in the leg-press position and tries to steal the ball away from the bottom grappler. This teaches the top grappler to aggressively pursue getting his opponent's arm to lever it and apply juji gatame. This exercise is also good a good defensive drill for the bottom grappler as it teaches him how to keep his arms from being pulled apart and having juji gatame applied against him.



## LEG-PRESS SCOOT EXERCISE

This is a useful exercise to develop the muscles in the legs and hips necessary for pressing an opponent to the mat in the leg press. The top grappler does not use his hands to grab his partner in this drill at all and makes sure to squeeze his knees together, trapping his partner's arms and shoulders as shown.



The top grappler holds his partner with a leg press using only his legs as shown.



The top grappler scoots backward, holding his partner tightly with his legs. The bottom grappler can offer varying degrees of resistance, from absolutely no resistance to strong resistance.



The top grappler can also scoot forward, driving into his partner and moving him forward.



The top grappler moves his partner back to the original starting point to finish the drill. This drill can be done as a timed drill, going anywhere from twenty to forty seconds in duration.

## DRILLS TO IMPROVE SKILL IN JUJI GATAME

You can invent or create a drill for any situation that actually comes up in a match or fight. Time spent on drill training is time well spent. Presented here are a few drills that I use often in the training of my athletes. These are repetitive drills that can be performed with total cooperation or varying levels of resistance by the defender. In judo, we call these drills “uchikomi,” which means repetitive training. Structured drill training on specific skills is essential for success in any form of sport combat. Drills can also be used for training for fitness as well as for training in the tactics of a match or fight.

### TECHNICAL TIP

**Drill training is structured training. A coach must not allow the athletes in a drill training session to horse around or deviate from the drill being performed. Simply showing up and going live, rolling, or doing randori full blast for an hour or so is fun once in a while, but it doesn't develop elite-level athletes with elite-level skills. Structured, disciplined training is vital to success in any combat sport. I recommend devoting at least one half of every one of your workouts to drill training. For more on this subject, I recommend my book *Winning on the Mat*.**

### SPINNING JUJI DRILL: GROUNDFIGHTING UCHIKOMI



This drill develops a lot more than just juji gatame. It teaches and refines the many skills, movements, and reactions necessary for good groundfighting. This drill can be done in varying levels of resistance, but I recommend that this drill be done with total cooperation

on the part of both athletes to better develop instinctive movement. Generally, I run this drill by having one athlete do five repetitions each, doing as many sets of five repetitions as possible (but still doing good skills) in a specified time period, usually about three minutes. At the end of three minutes, each athlete does quite a few good, skillful repetitions of juji gatame. In my club, this drill is done every practice, often immediately after some warm-ups at the start of the workout. An enjoyable variation of this drill is to have the coach time thirty seconds, with each athlete doing as many good, skillful juji gatames as possible in that thirty-second period of time. The top grappler keeps count of how many his partner does. The idea is to get as many good, full juji gatames as possible. This is a repetitive drill to develop the many skills of juji gatame (specifically) and groundfighting in general and not a drill where the athletes go live or randori.

**IMPORTANT:** You can take any entry or application for juji gatame and drill on it with groundfighting uchikomi. In my club, in addition to the spinning juji drill, my athletes often do three sets of five repetitions each of head-roll juji gatame, back-roll juji gatame, or hip-roll juji gatame to instill instinctive reaction and behavior for those specific setups for juji gatame.

### TECHNICAL TIP

Uchikomi is repetitive drill training and is a great method of developing the instinctive behavior that is required when an athlete is in a real-world situation in a fight or match. Efficient practice produces effective results. What is sometimes called “groundfighting uchikomi” is any repetitive drill that athletes can perform every workout. Perform a lot of repetitions with your training partner or partners, all the while developing the kinesthetic awareness that leads to instinctive behavior (or the “feel” of doing the skill) that enables you to perform the skill under the pressure of a real fight or match.

You can also take any skill or technique and invent a drill to improve it or invent drills that simulate actual situations that take place in a match to ensure that you are as well prepared as possible for anything that might happen in an actual fight or match. Remember, this is drill training, so don't let your drill training workout regress to rolling around and going live or into a randori session. Stay focused, stay structured, and stay disciplined in your training.

## JUJI-GATAME SHRIMPING DRILL

This is a good repetition drill to develop the skills necessary for spinning juji gatame. Each athlete should perform a specified number of repetitions, spinning from one side to the other. Often, the athletes in my club do two sets of ten repetitions on each side as a good warm-up before doing the spinning juji gatame drill that was presented prior to this.



The attacker (on bottom) is lying on her back ready to start the drill.



The attacker spins onto her left hip and side, curling up into a compact ball and swinging her right leg over her partner's head and neck. She also places her left leg across her partner's right side.



The attacker spins back to the starting position.



The attacker spins over onto her right hip and side, placing her left leg and foot over her partner's head and leg and placing her right leg across her partner's left side.



The attacker finishes the drill by returning to the starting position.



## TRAPS AND LEVERS: CONTROLLING AN OPPONENT'S ARM AND PRYING THE ARM STRAIGHT

**“IT’S ALWAYS A  
GOOD DAY WHEN  
YOU CAN STRETCH  
A GUY’S ARM.”  
DERRICK DARLING**

### LEVERS TO PRY AN OPPONENT’S ARM STRAIGHT

What may be an awkward term for some people, “levering” the defender’s arm so that the attacker is able to secure his juji gatame is simply prying, pulling, yanking, or wrenching the defender’s arm loose and stretching it to get the submission. I first heard the term “lever” from Neil Adams. Previous to that, I simply called it “prying” the arm free. But, as Neil pointed out to me, you may do more than simply pry the arm free. You may hook, tug, pull, wrench, twist, pry, yank, crank, or jerk an opponent’s arm out straight to apply juji gatame. The word “lever” describes all of these actions, and they are not simply limited to “prying” the arm free. Okay, this may be nothing more than an exercise in semantics, and some people may say that this is splitting hairs. But if a master of juji gatame like Neil Adams calls it a “lever,” then it’s good enough for me.

But before you lever an opponent’s arm, you have to trap it first.

### TRAPPING THE ARM

In the chapter on core skills, “trapping” the arm was discussed. Trapping, catching, hooking, scooping, hugging, holding, or in other words securing and controlling an opponent’s arm to the attacker’s upper body, chest, and torso is necessary before the arm can be levered and stretched.

I'm going to restate what was written in the chapter on core skills (with some additional commentary) because it's worth repeating here. Trapping an opponent's arm to your chest or torso allows you to use the weight of your body to roll or arch back and straighten it. You are using the weight of your body and not simply your arm strength to stretch his elbow. Trap your opponent's arm as quickly as possible and make it part of your initial movement. You may have already established a leg-press position or followed through after a throw or takedown to a shoulder-sit position, or you may have trapped your opponent's arm as you have rolled him or turned him onto his back or side. In any event, make sure to trap his arm as soon as you possibly can.

A key rule in trapping an opponent's arm is to use your arms to hook it. It's not a good idea to grab an opponent's arm with your hands and try to use the strength of your hands and arms to pry his arm out and straighten it. By hooking your opponent's arm with your arm or arms, you latch his arm tighter to your chest, torso, or body and are able to use the weight of your body to roll back and lever his arm out straight.

#### TECHNICAL TIP

**The purpose of trapping an opponent's arm is to isolate it so the attacker can more easily lever (straighten, extend, or stretch) the defender's arm to apply juji gatame. In many situations, the defender is grasping his hands together, holding his arms together; grabbing some part of his (or the attacker's) sleeve, jacket, or uniform; or grabbing onto some part of his body (including arms and legs) or some part of the attacker's body in an effort to prevent the attacker from loosening his grip and stretching his arm out straight. The purpose of a lever is to loosen an opponent's grip and straighten his arm out so the attacker can apply juji gatame.**

### SOME BASIC SKILLS ON TRAPPING THE OPPONENT'S ARM

Here are some fundamentals on how to effectively trap an opponent's arm. In most situations, the action of trapping an opponent's arm leads directly to the next logical step of levering his arm and ultimately stretching it to secure the juji gatame. Keep these basic skills in mind and make it a point to use them to get the best results when applying juji gatame.

### ATTACKER TRAPS OPPONENT'S ARM TO HIS CHEST



When trapping your opponent's arm, make sure to trap it high enough on your torso (at your chest level) so that your opponent is unable to pull his arm back and get his elbow lower than your crotch. His elbow must not be lower than the pivot point of your fulcrum at your pubic bone, otherwise he will be able to extract his arm free and all your hard work will be for nothing. Look at how the attacker is using his arm to hook his opponent's arm. The attacker, whenever possible, should hook the defender's arm, and the attacker should not simply grab the defender's arms with his hands.

### ATTACKER MAY LOWER HIS CHEST TO HIS OPPONENT'S UPPER ARM



Also keep in mind that the attacker may need to lower his chest to his opponent's arm to help in trapping it tighter. Don't simply try to pull his arm to your chest by using the strength of your arms and hands. You may have to meet it halfway by moving your chest to his arm and then letting the weight of your body straighten his arm as you roll back when applying the juji gatame.

## HOOK AND TRAP ELBOW TO ELBOW



The ideal situation when trapping an opponent's arm is for the attacker to hook his opponent's elbow with his elbow. This photo shows the attacker using his right arm to hook his opponent's right arm as the attacker applies a thigh lever. By hooking elbow to elbow, the attacker traps the defender's arm tightly and low at the elbow joint for maximum control of the defender's arm. Look at how the defender's right elbow is pressed firmly against the attacker's chest, isolating the defender's right arm and making it easier to lever it straight and stretch it when applying juji gatame.

## TRAPPING THE OPPONENT'S ARM TO ATTACKER'S CHEST OR TORSO



The attacker uses his right arm to hook the defender's arm tightly to his chest. Look at how the defender's elbow is firmly pressed against the attacker's chest, totally isolating it and allowing the attacker to control it more.

## THE ANATOMY OF TRAPPING AN ARM: ALL PART OF A SEQUENCE OF EVENTS CONTROLLING AN OPPONENT

Here is how trapping an opponent's arm and levering it loose works effectively to secure the juji gatame.



The trap starts. The attacker uses his left hand and arm to hook the defender's right arm.

**IMPORTANT:** If possible, make the trapping action of the opponent's arm part of the roll, setup or breakdown. The sooner and more firmly you are able to trap your opponent's arm, the better chance you have of levering his arm out straight and securing juji gatame.

### TECHNICAL TIP

**While it's not always this simple, think of trapping an opponent's arm as the first step in a sequence of events that build on each other: Trap → Lever → Stretch.**



The trap continues with the attacker using his arms to hook and hold the defender's arm to his torso. The attacker starts the roll back to stretch the arm and secure the armlock by using the weight of his body (with the defender's arm trapped and attached to the attacker's body) to straighten the defender's arm.



The sequence is successful. The attacker has successfully rolled back with his opponent's left arm firmly trapped to his body and has extended the arm to get the submission.

## TRAPPING FOR TIME



Sometimes the attacker will trap his opponent's arm and immediately lever it out straight to secure the juji gatame. The trap is part of the roll, turn, or breakdown from a groundfighting position or follow-through after a throw or takedown and the defender offers little, if any, resistance, having been caught by surprise. The whole action happens quickly with the trap and lever coming in an immediate sequence of events.

However, there are other times when the attacker successfully traps the defender's arm but the defender is able to actively resist having his arms pulled apart and one of them straightened into a juji gatame. In this instance, the attacker must do everything he can to keep the defender's arm trapped and maintain as much control in a leg press or other controlling position or ride as possible. The attacker must now work methodically in an effort to lever the defender's arm and stretch it for the tap-out. This is what I call "trapping for time." This photo shows the defender on bottom grasping his hands and arms together as tightly as possible to keep the attacker from prying them apart and securing the juji gatame. The attacker is effectively trapping the defender's left arm to his torso and chest by grabbing his own lapel with his right hand as he quickly and methodically attempts to control and manipulate the defender in the leg-press position. Look at how the attacker is using his left hand, working at the defender's hip area, to control the bottom man's movement.

Trapping the defender's arms to the attacker's upper body is an important aspect of controlling the defender in a leg press, shoulder sit, or other controlling position. It may take several seconds or minutes to lever the defender's arm free, and it is vital that the attacker control the trapped arm all the while he is attempting to pry his opponent's hands and arms apart and straighten the arm to secure the juji gatame.



## JUJI GATAME FROM BELLY-DOWN, ON THE KNEES, AND OTHER FINISHING POSITIONS

**“IT DOESN’T  
MATTER WHERE  
HE IS. IF YOU  
WANT HIS ARM  
BAD ENOUGH,  
YOU’LL GET IT.”  
BILL WEST**

### AN OPPONENT’S ARM CAN BE STRETCHED BY A JUJI GATAME IN ANY NUMBER OF POSITIONS

An incident that took place years ago at a national judo tournament illustrates what this chapter is about. After tapping out to Bill West (one of our Welcome Mat athletes who was an excellent technician in juji gatame), Bill’s opponent asked him, “What did you do?” Bill’s opponent commented that when Bill was trying to apply his juji gatame, the opponent thought he had defended himself sufficiently enough but found himself flat on his front and tapping out. He told Bill, “I relaxed because I thought I could wait until the referee said *matte* (the referee’s command to stop the action) because you were out of position to get the armlock.” This brief conversation tells a lot. First, if you are defending against juji gatame, never relax and never assume you or your opponent is out of position. Second, if you are the defender, never wait for the mat official to call a halt to the action or expect the referee to get you out of trouble. That’s your job, not his. Third, if you’re the attacker, do what Bill did: never let go of your opponent’s arm and keep rolling him until you get him to tap out and the referee signals for you to stop.

Juji gatame can be applied from almost any position that is seen in any form of sport (or real) personal combat. Neither the attacker nor defender has to be in the classic “belly up” position when applying juji gatame. While the entry into juji gatame might come from spinning, back-roll, head-roll, or hip-roll application, the end result could have the attacker or defender (or both) end up and finish the armlock in any variety of positions—again proving the versatility of juji gatame.

This chapter takes a close look at a variety of



ways that juji gatame can be applied when one or both grapplers are lying on the front, side, kneeling, squatting, or any position that might take place in a fight or match. Obviously, not every position possible can be presented in one chapter, or even in one book, so use your imagination when practicing juji gatame, and remember, never let go of his arm!

**TECHNICAL TIP**

Never let go of your opponent’s arm, stay round, and keep rolling and controlling him as much as possible until you force him to tap out to your juji gatame. In almost every case of catching an opponent in an odd position, the attacker has followed the cardinal rules of: 1) Never let go of his arm. 2) Keep rolling, stay round, and continue to do everything possible to control the action. 3) Don’t stop locking his arm until the referee tells you to stop.

**SOME COMMON FINISH POSITIONS FOR JUJI GATAME**

As mentioned previously, not every juji gatame is applied with the attacker and defender “belly up” or lying on their backs in what the Japanese call “aomuke” or in the face-up position. A lot of effective juji gatame attacks end up in a lot of different positions. Some (but certainly not all) finish positions are presented here.

**ATTACKER IS BELLY DOWN**



A common finish position is for both the attacker and defender to be “belly down” as shown here.

**ATTACKER IS BELLY DOWN WITH LEG AND FOOT ON THE BACK OF DEFENDER’S HEAD**



Another “belly down” position is with the attacker using one foot and leg to drive down on the defender’s head as shown here. Doing this, the attacker has another measure of control over his opponent.

**ATTACKER IS ON HIS SIDE AND HIP FACING THE DEFENDER’S LEGS AND LOWER BODY**



Another common finish position for juji gatame

**ATTACKER IS ON HIS SIDE WITH HIS FOOT AND LEG ON OPPONENT’S HEAD**



The attacker is lying on his side and using a foot and leg to control his opponent’s head as shown here.

### ATTACKER IS ON HIS SIDE AND HIP FACING SAME DIRECTION AS DEFENDER



Sometimes, the attacker is lying on his side and facing the same direction as his opponent.

### ATTACKER AND DEFENDER ARE “UPSIDE DOWN”



When the defender mounts a furious and aggressive defense, he may attempt to swing his legs over the attacker as shown here. In other cases, the attacker may secure his juji gatame as he rolls his opponent.

### DEFENDER IS ON BOTH KNEES



Sometimes the attacker can finish his juji gatame when the defender is on both knees. In situations like this, the defender may have attempted to stand in an effort to pull the attacker up off the mat or simply may have tried to get on his knees and back away.

### DEFENDER IS ON ONE KNEE



In some instances, the defender may attempt to get onto one knee in an effort to pull the attacker off the mat or to avoid being rolled or turned onto his back.

### DEFENDER ON SIDE OR BUTTOCKS



In some situations, the defender may be caught when positioned on his buttocks or hips as shown here. These situations represent the many varied ways and positions that juji gatame can be effectively applied.

### BELLY-DOWN JUJI GATAME FROM THE BOTTOM (GUARD) POSITION



The attacker (bottom) rolls to his right hip and side as he uses both hands to grab his opponent’s right arm. The attacker places his right foot on his opponent’s left knee (very low to the mat).



The attacker pushes with his right foot and leg onto the defender's left knee. Doing this pushes the defender's left knee back. As he does this, the attacker rolls further onto his right side. This stretches the defender as shown.



The attacker quickly swings his left foot and leg over his opponent as shown. All the while, the attacker uses his left arm to trap the defender's right arm to the attacker's chest.



The attacker hooks his left foot and leg over his opponent's head as the attacker uses both hands to firmly trap the defender's right arm to the attacker's chest. The attacker continues to roll over his right side.



The attacker rolls over onto his front, using both hands and arms to pull hard on the defender's extended right arm. As he does this, the attacker arches his back and drives his hips forward onto the defender's straightened right arm to secure juji gatame.

## BELLY-DOWN JUJI GATAME STARTING FROM TOP RIDE POSITION



The attacker (on top) controls his opponent with a rodeo ride as shown. The attacker uses his right arm to hook his opponent's right shoulder.



The attacker turns to his right, moving his body across the defender's back. The attacker places his left hand on the mat for stability as he moves.



The attacker leans over his opponent and places the top of his head on the mat for stability. As he does this, the attacker places his left leg under the defender's head as shown. Look at how the attacker is sideways across the defender's back.



## DEFENSES AND ESCAPES FOR JUJI GATAME

**“ATTACK AND  
DEFENSE ARE  
ONE IN THE  
SAME THING, AND  
WHICH OF THE  
TWO RECEIVES  
PRIORITY DEPENDS  
ENTIRELY ON THE  
SITUATION.”  
DONN DRAEGER**

This chapter examines two areas where most athletes are weakest and, for the most part, train for the least: the areas of defending against juji gatame and how to escape when caught in juji gatame.

Training in defensive skills isn't glamorous, and by our very nature people who engage in combat sports are aggressive. Because of this, we tend to relegate our efforts at working on our defensive skills to only once in a while. We all spend a lot more time figuring out, and then practicing, ways to get an opponent into juji gatame than in the ways necessary to defend and escape it. That being said, it's best to be objective about the whole subject and face the fact that the guy facing you on the mat has every intention of doing to you what you intend to do to him. It makes sense to spend some time during every workout drilling on defense and escapes.

The first part of this chapter will focus on defending against juji gatame and then transition into the skills of escaping from juji gatame. In many cases, the concepts of defense and escape will intermingle, and as a result, an active defense leads to an escape and ultimately to a counter attack.

### THE CONCEPT OF KOBO ICHI

The Japanese have an old concept called “kobo ichi,” which translates into the idea of an “aggressive defense” or turning a defensive move into an aggressive counter move. Kobo ichi is a fluid concept of defense-offense, with the athlete defending as necessary and always looking for an opening to attack.

This concept can be applied to our study of juji gatame. It's recommended that whenever you defend against, or

escape from, an opponent's juji gatame, immediately take the offense and attempt to secure your own juji gatame or other attack. If your mindset is to think of defense as a means of beating your opponent, then you have the right idea of what kobo ichi is about.

Realistically, in some cases, you will be happy to defend or escape and survive to fight another day, but whenever possible make every effort to turn the situation around and take the offense. In every situation presented in this chapter, keep kobo ichi in mind and look at how the skills presented in this chapter can be turned into an offensive move. (For a more comprehensive explanation and discussion about kobo ichi, refer to my book *Winning On The Mat*.)

### TECHNICAL TIP

**When defending or escaping from juji gatame, think logically. Keep things simple and get out of trouble. Often, your defensive move will put you in position to better make your escape. Don't try some complicated technique or skill simply because some famous fighter or athlete has done it. It's your arm in jeopardy right now, not his.**

## AN OUNCE OF PREVENTION IS WORTH A POUND OF CURE

The old saying is true; an ounce of prevention is indeed worth a pound of cure. Obviously, the best defense is not getting caught in juji gatame. But that is easier said than done. However, if you develop a mindset that you will do everything possible to control the position and not allow your opponent to control the situation, you are a step ahead. As mentioned throughout this entire book, controlling the position is vital to securing the submission, and the reverse is true as well. If your opponent initiates an attack, work to get to a better position. It may take incremental movements to work to a better position so that you are not vulnerable to a submission technique. In a lot of cases, it may be best to engage in a scramble for position. A "scramble" takes place when neither grappler has the advantage in position. If your opponent has taken control, immediately do what is necessary to get out of his control. Often, a scramble is the best answer to getting you out of trouble. At least in a scramble the odds are more in your favor than if your opponent dominates the position.

Specifically, make sure to always keep your arms bent and close in to your body. Never reach too far or extend your arms out straight unless you are actively applying a technique on your opponent. Always work to get off of your back, and do everything possible to not be flat on your back. Instead, work off of your hips and buttocks. There will be times when you may have to be (temporarily) on your back, but the key word is temporary. Always work to get to a stable base and do everything possible to get behind your opponent and get his back so you will be able to launch your own attack.

## DEFENSE AND ESCAPE

If you get caught in juji gatame, there are some logical steps to take. First, "steal" your shoulder and arm back from his control. He stole your arm from you and it's your job to steal it back. Get out of trouble and pull your shoulder and arm back into you so that your elbow is no longer situated on the attacker's pubic bone area. It's best to position your arm so that it is below your opponent's crotch or pubic bone so he can't lever your arm against it. The defender can do this regardless of the position. The defender may be flat on his back with the attacker controlling him in a leg press, or the defender may be on his knees with the attacker applying a spinning juji gatame. The concept is the same: steal your arm back so your opponent can't lock it.

Second, get to a stable base if at all possible. The odds are good that if you are in a defensive position with the attacker attempting a juji gatame, you are not situated in a stable position. An example is that if you are flat on your back, shrimp and bridge into your opponent so that you are better able to sit up and get to a position on your knees. As you get to a more stable position, continue to steal your arm and shoulder back away from the attacker.

Third, the odds are that if you are able to do steps one and two, you and your opponent are scrambling for the superior position at this time. This is the time to try to control the position and gain the advantage. By doing this, you can launch your counterattack (remember kobo ichi).

## THE DEFENDER MUST PREVENT HIS OPPONENT FROM TRAPPING HIS ARM

The attacker wants to control the position, trap the defender's arm, and then stretch it to apply juji gatame. Now, reverse the situation and put yourself in the role of

the defender. As the defender, you want to get out of the bad position your opponent has put you in, and in the process, you must prevent your arm from being trapped and extract it so the attacker won't be able to extend and stretch it to apply juji gatame.

## A STRAIGHT ARM IS EASIER TO LOCK THAN A BENT ARM WITH JUJI GATAME

Maybe it sounds too obvious, but it's true. If you, as the defender, extend or straighten your arm it will be easier for your opponent to trap and stretch it. Always keep your hands and arms in close to your body and whenever possible, keep your elbows bent and at your side. There are times when you will have to extend your arm, but keep them to a minimum. A phrase that I like to tell my athletes is to "work close to your body." Keep your arms bent with your hands in front of you and don't extend your arms out straight. Don't extend your shoulders out too far ahead of your hips. If you do, you will be off balance and your opponent will take advantage of it. Don't get in a hurry to grab your opponent with your hands and arms. Be methodical; don't rush things.

## DO NOT EXTEND YOUR ARM OR ARMS: NEVER GIVE YOUR OPPONENT A STRAIGHT ARM



The grappler on his knees (in this photo) is making a fundamental mistake. He is reaching for his opponent and extending his arms. By doing this, the attacker (on the bottom) can more easily control the defender and apply juji gatame (or just about any technique). Do not get in a hurry or rush to grab your opponent. Take your time, keep your arms bent and in close to your body, and never reach for your opponent. If you reach, you generally extend your arms out straight, extend your shoulders too far out in front of your hips, and become unbalanced.

## STAY SOUTH OF THE BORDER



In keeping with the fundamental skill of not extending your arm or arms, make sure to keep your arms bent as much as possible, in close to your body, and never reach too far to get to your opponent. The top grappler in this photo is using his hands and arms to control his opponent's knees and legs. By doing this, the top grappler is forcing his opponent on the bottom to extend his arms and reach out too far.

## GRASP YOUR HANDS TOGETHER AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE AND BEND YOUR ARMS IN AS CLOSE AS POSSIBLE TO YOUR BODY

As mentioned before, be realistic. If your opponent has the advantage and is rolling you into a juji gatame, start your defense immediately and grab your hands together. Do not wait until you've been rolled over and are on your back, looking up at the ceiling. By then, it's most often too late and your opponent has your arm stretched.



This photo shows what not to do. Look how the defender has his hands apart and is more vulnerable to