THE COMPLETE PROGRAM

BACK ATTACKS



THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO MASTERING THE JIU JITSU BACK GAME

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Back Attacks 101 Mastering The Jiu Jitsu Back Game

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"When it comes to chokes, there are no tough guys."

- Helio Gracie

"It doesn't matter how big and tough someone is, *everybody's got a neck*."
-Anonymous judo guy

Why Back Attacks? Attacking someone from the back mount is one of the most effective strategies you can use in a fight. When you are on his back, he cannot see what is coming. You can attack him and he is almost completely helpless and cannot counterattack.

This is one of the reasons why the RNC is, by far, the most effective submission in MMA.

There are four main parts to this curriculum. Sequentially, any back attack specialist must first:

- 1. Learn how to take the back,
- 2. then maintain the back,
- 3. then win the hand fight,
- 4. and finally finish the choke.

This curriculum provides techniques and tips in all four of these areas. After the student learns the techniques, they should spend time drilling in each of the four areas against various degrees of resistance. Learning the techniques is only the first part of a solid jiu jitsu training program. Once the techniques are learned they must be drilled to bring about proficiency. Focused drilling in each of the four areas will bring the most success.

The 4 Steps Of Back Attacks:

A Skilled Back Attack Specialist Will Be Skilled In All Four Areas
Each step should be singled out for drilling

I. Take the Back

- a. Master one simple back take from every main position. Pick one and drill it like crazy.
- b. Tips here vary depending on the move

II. Maintain The Back

a. Upper body control

i. Maintaining upper body control is critical for maintaining the back. It is more important than the hooks. It is both necessary and sufficient

- ii. Clamp your bodies together tight like Siamese twins
- iii. Upper body control options
 - 1. **The Collar grip** (This is the ideal grip because it allows for both control and attack)
 - 2. The Seatbelt
 - 3. The Kimura Grip
 - 4. The Straightjacket
- iv. Use aggressive counter twisting
- v. Reset the back mount when necessary
- vi. Seat Belt Control And Maintenance Tips
 - 1. Grab hand not the wrist
 - 2. Seat belt "high"
- b. Lower Body Control (Keeping and resetting the hooks)
 - i. The hooks are not as important as upper body control
 - ii. The body triangle
- c. The Positional Order Of Preference
 - i. Strong side
 - ii. Neutral (on back)
 - iii. Weak side

III. Win The Hand Fight

- a. "Whoever wins the hand fight will dictate the submission"
- b. Strips
- c. Traps
- d. Spider walks with fingers up opponent's body
- e. Hand saws move your forearm back and forth hard and fast to free arm to choke

IV. Finish the Choke

- a. Always look for the choke. Nobody keeps their chin down all the time
- b. Use the fast forearm choke –
- c. Wrist Wedge: The WRIST is the skinniest part of your arm. Use it as a WEDGE
- d. Always be attacking aggressively
- e. "Submission before position" choke before hooks
- f. Finishing Tips:
 - i. Use aggressive head pulling
 - ii. Turn the key
 - iii. Spider walking
 - iv. Crowbar
 - v. Arm saw
 - vi. "Choke the face" Gary Tonon if opponent puts their chin down, choke their face to cause pain.

Section I: Upper Body Control And Maintenance

- I. **Upper body control for back mount is by far more important than hooks.** Upper body control is both necessary and sufficient. This means that you can keep a back mount with only upper body control and no hooks. You also always need your hooks to maintain the back mount, even if you have the hooks.
 - a. Hooks will not help bad upper body control
 - b. If you have good upper body control you won't even need hooks
 - c. You can not only maintain the back mount with just upper body control but you can even finish and submit with only upper body control and no hooks.
- II. **Four Main Forms Of Upper Body Control**: While there are many types of upper body control we recommend the following four as the most effective.
 - a. **The Collar Grip** The collar grip is a very effective form of upper body control. It is not only very strong for back mount maintenance but also allows you to immediately threaten your opponent with a rear collar choke. It puts you in a very

close positon to submitting your opponent.

- i. Tip him to the opposite side the choke arm is pointing (strong side). If he back scrape escapes on the strong side and you have this grip he will choke himself.
- ii. This grip works with gi only.
- b. **The Seatbelt** The seatbelt control from the back is underrated. It is a very strong form of control that works both gi and no-gi. It is the most common form of upper body control as it is the easiest to get.
- c. The Straightjacket The straightjacket is a old school jiu jitsu form of upper body control that has been increasing in popularity in recent years. This grip is very strong and offers you a simple attack, quickly fold one arm over the other to trap both of the opponent's arms and execute a fast attack. Or you can push an arm down and trap with your leg. This control works for both gi and no-gi but is especially strong with gi.
- d. **The Kimura Grip** this grip is less popular but very strong. Simply lock a kimura grip on one of the opponent's arms from the back. This grip works in both gi and no-gi.
 - i. **Head In Variation**: From the seatbelt, simply reach over and grab his wrist with your top arm and you get this hold.(Make sure you are holding the seat belt with bottom arm).
 - ii. **Head Out Variation**: Same grip on his wrist just over his shoulder without the head in there
- III. **4 Ways To Perfect The Seat Belt Grip**: Although all forms of upper body control mentioned above are good, we go in to more detail on the seat belt because it is the most common grip used in jiu jitsu.
 - a. **Grab your hand and not your wrist** If you grab the wrist it leaves your hand exposed as a handle or lever for him to pull on. Also keep that hand *closed* into a fist to avoid exposing your fingers for the same reason.
 - b. **Seat belt grip "high"** When the seatbelt is high up on his chest (as opposed to lower towards his stomach) he has to use his fingers to try and break the grip. This weakens the opponent's ability to escape. But when it is low he can push on your arms with his palms and have a stronger ability to break the seat belt.
 - c. Glue your chest to his back If you leave space you give him way too much upper body freedom to turn and scoot. Clamp him down! Keep your head tight to him too. "Fuse" your bodies together into one.

- d. **Keep your head tight against him next to his head** This decreases his ability to move
- e. **Use aggressive upper body twisting** Don't passively hold the seatbelt. Use it to counter twist his upper body in the opposite direction he wants to go. This makes it hard for him to get his upper body to the mat. This will actually help you keep your hooks as well (see section on lower body control and maintenance).

Section II: Lower Body Control And Maintenance

I. **The Hooks**: The hooks are the most common form of lower body control. Although not as important as upper body control, hooks are important for helping you control the opponent and maintain the back mount. First we will cover hook maintenance and then discuss an alternative form of lower body control.

II. The Invisible Counter Crank

- a. Opponent scoots his hips to one side causing you to lose your hooks. This hip scooting to one side is what makes your hooks start to come out.
- b. Counter crank him the opposite way he wants to go by twisting his upper body with your seat belt control. So if he is wanting to scoot his shoulder out to the right side, counter crank that shoulder back to the left.
- c. IN other words, pull the scooting side closer to your body. If he wants to scoot his body to the left, steering wheel his body to the right.
- d. This small "invisible" move really hampers his ability to scoot his hips and therefore helps you retain your hooks.

III. The Leg Lace

- a. He starts to hip out and you are losing your hooks
- b. Use your other (far side) foot to "lace" his far escaping leg under the knee, hook his inner knee, and lift that leg up to turn him to the other side and re-hook your legs to back control.
- c. You can also hook it deeper under his near knee grapevine and extend that leg to lift him up and reset the lost hook

IV. Using The Face Plant To Reset The Hooks

a. Turn him on his side almost in a side control, and keeping your seat belt grip. *Shove his face into the mat with your body weight and shoulder*. This will make him want to post his hand(s) and stop hand fighting. This can also be used to reset the hooks if he is using his arms to prevent the hooks.

- V. **The Body Triangle** a very powerful lower body control. Makes it difficult for the opponent to breathe. Always put the "link" on top. Never let them put your link on the bottom towards the mat. If you need to switch the body triangle to the other side, hold his hands during the transition, especially the initial link side arm he is trying to tilt you to.
 - a. **Drill** Transition side to side with the body triangle. Control the arms during the transition.

VI. **Drills**

- a. Keep the back with no hooks, just a seatbelt. Move around.
- b. Same but reestablish hooks as much as possible. Use the turn to belly resets too.

Section I: Perfecting The Back Attack

I. Strong Side Choke Attack Series

- a. **Protect top arm** Keep your choking arm protected from getting fatigued. *Hold seatbelt grip with bottom hand* because opponent will usually attack the arm that is on top.
- b. **Arm Control** Top arm and bottom arm can control his wrists
- c. **Fall To Strong Side** so that he can't escape
- d. **Leg trap opponent's top arm: Pin heel tight to body** (cross your feet to really lock it down!)
- e. Free hand snaps opponent's forehead back
- f. Fast choke with forearm
- II. **Weak Side Choke Attack Series** (Above situation but you cannot help but fall to weak side)
 - a. **Head Pillow** try to keep your head between your opponent's head and mat so he cannot escape
 - b. **Leg trap opponent's top arm** Dig heel in tight to his body (cross your feet to really lock it down!)
 - c. Turn The Key to get top forearm started under his chin
 - d. **Crowbar** use palm on shoulder and pry up to get arm in tighter

- e. Free bottom arm pull him up on his side a bit to free bottom arm
- f. **Fast choke** before his shoulder can hit the mat, lockup the forearm choke
 - i. **Key Failure**? If the key is not enough to open his chin, use that top hand to control his bottom arm. Pull your bottom arm out and use that to pull his forehead back, fast forearm choke with top arm.
- ** Drill The Back Mount Attacks With Mild Resistance **

III. The Back Mount Reset (weak side)

a. You have a back mount but he falls to weak side and tries the shoulder scrape escape (and you could not prevent with head pillow). His back starts to scoot on the mat.

b. The Head Pillow

i. Prevention is better than cure. Use the head pillow to keep his head from getting to the mat. Place your head between his head and the mat and he cannot back scrape escape.

c. The Seatbelt Switch:

i. Super easy. Quickly switch your seat belt to make this now the strong side!

d. Reconnect Your Hands & Pull Back:

- i. Reach across behind his head with your top arm and Gable grip your hands. Pull him back to back mount position. Try to pull him all the way back to strong side!
- ii. **Note**: If you cannot reach your hand at least grab the far side of his neck/trap and pull him back and then connect your hands.
- iii. Reset the Seat Belt Grip and Attack start attacking again
- e. **Post Foot**: Post a foot on the ground and pull him back to strong side. Don't be afraid to rely on your strong upper body control for a second and use your feet to move him around

f. Kimura Grip To Stop Back Scrape Escape

i. When opponent escapes with back scrape, get a kimura grip on his far arm. Post your foot and turn him back to the strong side.

IV. The Back Mount Reset (strong side)

a. He falls to strong side and is able to escape your hooks scrape and his back is on the floor

b. The Mount Reset

- i. **Grip His Head & Arm** using Gabel grip, and squeeze the head and arm as hard as you can
- ii. **Mount** Sit up to partial mount with foot on floor near his hip. You heel blocks his hip from escaping any further! *Roll him onto his side* as you mount (push with your rear foot with ball of foot on ground).
- iii. **Sit Back and Recover Back Mount** Pull him up as you sit back hard. Try to pull him all the way over to the opposite side. The mount is kind of a "wind up" for this.

V. The Ultimate "Lost Hooks" Back Mount Reset (Go To Belly And Sit Him Up)

- a. If he escapes hooks all the way, shrimp north, get to your belly, then get to your knees, then sit him.
- b. Immediately attack from the kneeling position or reset the hooks
- c. Remember to keep your chest attached to his upper back and seatbelt tight
- ** Drill The Back Mount Resets Back And Forth With Mild Resistance **

VI. "The Death Trap": A Back Choke from a "Flattened Out" Top Back Mount:

- a. You have back mount, op starts to fall to weak side, kick his leg down and roll on top with opponent on stomach hooks in and *flatten him out*, one hand on forehead (or whole forearm across his forehead) and pull his head back, immediately punch/dig other hand underneath to forearm choke.
- b. Very difficult to escape this!

VII. The One-Armed Choke Finish

- a. Hand control before falling to the side. Control both arms.
- b. Remember, nobody keeps their neck open for long. Shoot the choke as soon as you see the opening.
- c. He falls to one side. As soon as he opens the neck a little, fire the forearm in and make the grip on the back of his shoulder. **Pull tight with ONE ARM as you**

bring your elbow back.

- d. If he grabs your arm with both arms to relieve pressure use your other hand to peel his hands off, (just grab his hands and push them down) then re-choke with one arm while you fend off his other arms with your free arm
- e. If you cannot finish with one arm then just release the grip on your other hand and finish with two hands.

Section II: Winning The Hand Fight

- I. **Goal**: The goal of winning the hand fight is to stop his hands from defending and free up your hands to attack. We do this with
 - a. One on Ones
 - b. Two on Ones
 - c. Strips
- V. **Grip -** Grab hands, fingers, or thumb instead of opponent's wrists for more control
- II. Fight the hand not the wrist the hand offers better control of his arm
- **III.** Use "pulsating force" pulsate and shake his hands to loosen his grip. Don't just use constant force.
- IV. The Face Plant you can stop his hand fighting by taking out your hooks, turning him on his side almost in a side control, and keeping your seat belt grip. Shove his face into the mat with your body weight and shoulder. This will make him want to post his hand(s) and stop hand fighting. This can also be used to reset the hooks if he is using his arms to prevent the hooks.
- V. The Spider Walk: Finger crawl you arm into choking position
- VI. Wrist wiggle: wiggle your wrist side to side to free your choking arm
- **VII.** Wrist wedge the wrist is the skinniest part of your arm use it as a wedge and spider walk the choke in
- VIII. **Hand Saw** "Saw" or shake your choking arm side to side to sink choke in
- IX. 4 Principles To Win The Hand Fight and Choke: Strip, Trap, Pull, and Switch Choke
 - a. Strip:
 - i. He grabs your arm, strip his arm off by pushing his hands down.

ii. Strip his arms off and in a fast move, grab the forehead with the stripping arm when his arms are off and fast choke (keep stripping until choking arm is free for half a second and use a fast forehead pull and choke.

b. Trap:

i. Use your leg to trap his arm. This usually will be the arm that is on top since you are laying on his other arm.

c. Pull:

i. Be aggressive with head pulling! Pull two handed if need be to expose the neck.

d. Switch Choke:

- i. Switch the choking arm often. Be aggressive.
- e. * Note: If he grabs deep on your choking elbow don't worry about it because you can still get the forearm choke. *He has to hold near your wrist to stop the forearm choke*.

X. Maintaining A Strong Seat Belt

a. The Seatbelt Break & Counter

- i. Opponent pushes your seatbelt out and weaves one hand in and grabs that hand with his other one to push out with both and break your seatbelt.
- ii. Don't fight this, just do a quick release of your seatbelt as he pushes and re-grip before he can counter
- iii. Re-grip the seatbelt high on his chest to prevent him from getting a good grip.
- iv. When the seatbelt is high he has to use his fingers but when it is low he can push on your arms with his palms
- v. Keep your movements tight and short and **re-clasp the Seatbelt higher than normal to avoid it breaking again**. When the seatbelt is high he has to use his fingers but when it is low he can push on your arms with his palms

b. Opponent Arm Control Release

i. If your opponent controls one arm, use your free hand to rescue your trapped arm from his grips by peeling away or *yanking backwards*.

c. Big Yank and Re-Choke

- i. If he does break your seatbelt open and is hanging on to your choking arm, give it a big hard yank as you sit back hard to free your arm, then immediately attack his neck with the choke. If you don't get the choke, just go back to the seatbelt.
- ii. This move will also work if opponent grabs your seatbelt and lifts it over his head to just his weak side. (This is a good seat belt grip counter). But you can re-counter with the big yank and re-choke or re-grip the seatbelt.

XI. "The Choke From Hades" The Most Powerful Choke In Jiu Jitsu (Classic Hadaka Jime - A Kneeling Choke To Stop Back Escape)

- a. Opponent starts to escape to the weak side. You attack him with a forearm choke, but he clasps his fingers on the choke relieving some pressure
- b. You have the choke but can't finish because he is relieving this pressure
- c. Release your hooks, go belly down, and get to your knees while keeping the choke. Sit him up on his butt
- d. Now apply the same choke as you pull him flat and walk his body back and you bow forward to make him tap.
- e. This kneeling move allows you to squeeze the same choke but from a stronger position. It can make the choke work sometimes even if he has his hands inside. MG thinks that this kind of choke is stronger than even the standard RNC because you can drop your weight into it
- f. *Note Getting to this kneeling choke can also finish a guy who has his chin partially down. It's not all the way down but not completely up with a sunk in choke either. The choke is in between. The kneeling position can add enough power to make this choke work in this situation.
- g. Note: This kneeling choke position is actually stronger than the back mount itself. His mobility is lessened. There are no mats in the way of you staying on his back. Go for this position often!

General Tips On Back Attacks:

• Basic Strategy: Always be attacking. If you start to lose the back position, stop attack, reestablish back mount and reinitiate the attack.

- Always look for the choke! Don't take cheap alternatives that force you to give up the back. The back mount is a dominant position.
- Remember: nobody ever has their chin down all the time. Fire a fast forearm choke anytime his neck opens up. You only need a couple of inches!
- Always force your opponent towards your strong (top) choking arm side during back control. This makes it harder for him to escape.
- Work to trap his arm with your top leg when you are in the back mount on your side.
- A higher seatbelt is harder to break than a seatbelt down lower on his body. When the seatbelt is up by his neck he doesn't have as much pushing power on it.
- You can pull his forehead back with both hands too whenever possible.
- Experiment with different hand grips and forehead pulls to fast forearm choke.
- Remember the attacking principles strip, trap, pull and switch choke. Be aggressive with these and use them in combination.
- Use the kneeling hadaka jime ("choke from Hades") if choke is close but cannot be completed
- Use the back mount resets when losing the back mount position
- Practice strong seatbelt maintenance

Section III: Gi Choke Series From The Back

With Collar Grip

- I. Standard Back Collar Choke
 - a. Open up his gi
 - b. Sink a grip in deep by grabbing opposite collar with choking arm
 - c. Grab his opposite collar low with your other hand
 - d. Extend your arms straight to finish. Use the "fly fishing" wrist motion. Make space in between your body and his to finish this choke properly.

II. Wing Choke

- a. Same as standard back collar choke but instead of grabbing second collar place your non-choking hand in a "karate chop" position under his arm and behind his neck.
- b. Extend arms to finish putting pressure on both the front and back of his neck. Use the "fly fishing" wrist motion

III. Bow And Arrow Choke

- a. This choke is extremely powerful. Every jiu jitsu fighter should know this choke!
- b. Get the same collar grip as above
- c. Take out hooks and put feet on the other side of him. You can also cross your feet here.
- d. Grab his pants at the knee with other hand
- e. Rest your weight on your knee grabbing elbow
- f. Extend him away from you to choke. Use the "fly fishing" wrist motion.
- g. Note: Keep your choking elbow DOWN TIGHT to prevent him from slipping his head out
- h. Knee In Variation: Bring your top knee in behind his head and use it to push his head into the choke.

Without Collar Grip

- I. **The Ezekiel Choke From Seatbelt** The advantage of the Ezekiel choke from the back is that you don't have to have the collar grip. You can use just your own arms.
 - a. Top arm grabs inside sleeve of bottom arm
 - b. Bottom arm "karate chops" the back of opponent's neck
 - c. Finish on the strong side by extending arms
 - d. Use the fist in the side of his neck if you can't reach the back of his neck

II. The Ezekiel Choke Without The Seatbelt

a. Same grip as above but the bottom arm is out of the seatbelt

Section II: Taking The Back

From Closed Guard:

I. The "Roger Gracie"

- a. This is a slow style back take that is very high percentage.
- b. He has posture on you.
- c. You hold his sleeve or wrist and his elbow.
- d. Life your hips up and slide your hips out as you slide his elbow past your midline. Just get his elbow on the opposite side of your belly button.
- e. Immediately grab across his back and hold his lat.
- f. "Punch" his trapped fist across as you slowly scoot out inch by inch to his back.
- g. Look for the gift wrap position here if possible.
- h. Keep tight and close with this position.
- i. Take his back.

II. The Rickson Gracie "Shuck"

- a. This is a simple and high percentage move that Rickson Gracie used all the time
- b. Close punch block series stage 1 with underhook
- c. "Shuck" him to the side as you slide under his shoulder
- d. Grab his chin or lat, and take the back

III. The Standard Arm Drag From Closed Guard

- a. Wrist control: Hold both of his wrists with your elbow down
- b. Reach across and grab the far tricep
- c. Pop his elbow across and keep it tight to your body
- d. Get the arm trap "ratchet" position with the head
- e. Post on the ground, shrimp your hips, and take his back.

From Butterfly Guard

I. The Arm Drag From Butterfly Guard

- a. Sitting in butterfly
- b. Hit the arm drag
- c. Put hand on mat, take one leg out
- d. Pull him through
- e. Take the back
- f. Drill- drill just hitting the arm drag without taking the leg out
- g. Then drill the arm drag with taking the leg out
- h. Look for a fast choke!

From Half Guard

I. The Shuck From Bottom Half

- a. Get the underhook and your other hand keeps your head safe from punches
- b. Shuck to the back

From Mount

- I. From Gift Wrap: From the gift wrap, lock up the seat belt
- II. **From Elbow Escape**: When opponent elbow escapes, lock up the seatbelt

From Top Side Control

I. From The Arm Crucifix

- a. Use arm crucifix to get him to turn on his side
- b. Put your top arm under his head, your bottom arm "walks" his far arm up to capture his arm pit with your top arm
- c. Turn him on his side while putting pressure on his head
- d. "Air guitar" to seat belt

II. Baiting The Turn Away

a. Block his hip so he can't put you in guard

- b. Underhook his near leg and lift it a little to "encourage" him to turn away and attempt an escape
- c. When opponent turns away from you to turtle, lock up the seat belt and sit him up

III. Baiting The Turn Towards

- a. If he doesn't fall for the turn away you can bait him to turn towards you
- b. Pull his far hip towards you
- c. When he turns (don't give him full control of your leg) lock in a top arm like a cross face, get a full seatbelt, and turn him on his butt

IV. From "Broken Kesa"

- a. Walk and drive his arm across his face
- b. Turn him on his side
- c. Lock up seatbelt and take back

V. From Top North/South

- a. Get gi grip under his arms
- b. Stand up and pull to take back

From Bottom Side Control

I. The Bottom Shuck (The Crowbar)

- a. You are on bottom in side control
- b. Get an underhook
- c. Shuck and shrimp as you raise your underhook arm to the north corner
- d. Take his back

From An Armlock Tie Up

- I. Reach under his head with far arm
- II. Pull his head up as you take your leg off of his head
- III. Grab your own arm from under his head with other arm (gift wrap if possible)

- IV. Drag him north as you start sliding under him to a strong side seat belt position. Take your time here, like a snake with captured prey.
- V. Alternatively, shuck him past you as you dump him to the side and take his back that way

From Omoplata

- I. Straighten both legs to release his trapped arm
- II. Spin to top turtle
- III. Lock up seatbelt and basic turtle tip

From Standing

- I. Single leg
- II. Clinching with underhook
- III. Arm drag

From Top Turtle

- I. **Basic Turtle Tip:** You have seat belt control from top turtle with bottom knee in
 - a. Jump and switch your legs. Top leg shoots in
 - b. This motion tips the turtle on his side
 - c. Now insert hooks

II. The Ankle Pick To Back

- a. Semi seatbelt on top turtle with bottom knee in
- b. Grab the ankle pick
- c. Switch legs and pull ankle.
- d. Finish seatbelt or set the hooks

III. The Gi Collar Pull

- a. This is an extremely powerful move with gi
- b. You are behind opponent

- c. Grab his gi collar behind his neck with both hands (Alternatively grab his collar with one hand and back of his belt with other)
- d. Pop up to a squatting position and pull opponent's upper body up
 - i. Pull him to a seated position and directly attack
 - ii. Or from the pullup position set the hooks and seatbelt

From Bottom Turtle

- I. **The sit out to back** (drill this often from a shot and sprawl shoot, he sprawls, sitout and take back)
 - a. Opponent is on top and north in top turtle with both arms around your body or a weak front head lock (this move won't work well against a strong front head lock)
 - b. Sit out (everyone should know how to do a basic sitout)
 - i. Get on an elbow base
 - ii. Post leg
 - iii. Sit through by shooting your far leg through
 - iv. Drive your top elbow back and to the mat (elbow pressure against the back of his arm) as your head lays across his back looking up at ceiling
 - v. Then cut back and take top rear turtle
 - c. Lock seat belt
 - d. Basic turtle tip to take back