

3 - Mat Etiquette

For new students Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu can be a little bit like navigating a foreign country so to make your journey as pleasant as possible we have set up some guidelines.

Respect

Traditionally, Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu is a laid back martial art where students typically surf in the morning then go to the academy to train in the afternoon. Despite this relaxed atmosphere respect for your teachers and classmates is the highest priority. We show respect for our teachers and place of training in a few ways:

- Bow on and off the mats.
- Address all guest black belt teachers “Professor” and other coaches as “Coach” rather than “Hey”.
- Pick up items you brought with you to the academy (tape, band-aids, water bottles).
- Refrain from loud conversations while class is in session.

Be a Good Training Partner

This is so important, it warrants its own section - see Section 6.

Train in a Controlled Manner

One of the hardest parts of starting Jiu-Jitsu is showing control during live training. Most students worry about getting tapped out and therefore train with a lot of nervous energy. Relax when training to allow yourself to feel the movements of Jiu-Jitsu. Some things to remember:

- No neck cranks, cervical locks or heel hooks
- No slamming
- No footlocks or kneebars for white belts
- No fish hooking, eye gouging or grabbing fingers individually
- Avoid choking the chin, teeth or face
- Respect the tap, allow partners time to tap

Go Slow When Applying a Submission

If you catch someone in a submission allow them plenty of time to tap. Do not blast your hips into an armbar or crank on a shoulder lock. They may be in an awkward position to tap or they may not know the submission that you have them in. If you let go of a submission to guarantee the safety of your partner, that is normal and appreciated.

Pro tip: Try controlling a submission for six seconds. For example if you can hold your partner in an armbar for six seconds with their arm fully extended and he is unable to escape, that’s a win. Let go of the armbar, count it as a win (internally) and continue the roll. If he doesn’t recognize the submission, then let your partner know they should have tapped.

Tap Early and Often

The flip side of the coin is that as a new student you should be tapping early, often, and in as many ways as possible. Say “Tap, tap, tap, tap” as you physically tap loudly on the person, tap loudly on the floor and tap with your foot if necessary.

“Only by hitting and working on your weaknesses will you become a well-rounded fighter. This business of ‘winning a roll’ is silly and limits a student in learning.” - Saulo Ribeiro

Know the rules of our sport. We follow the rules as laid out by the International Brazilian Jiu Jitsu (IBJJF) Association. Rules of the lower belt and the age group with the most restrictions apply.

Go to www.ibtjif.org or see a coach for a copy of the rules.

Remember to Smile, be Friendly, and Train to Learn

Starting a new sport can be intimidating. At Five Rings we pride ourselves at being happy, well-adjusted people who are ambassadors of the sport. As a new member, “the floor” can be daunting. Find someone, introduce yourself, and let them know that you are new to the school. Our members will go out of their way to show you the customs and training practice of the school. They may become a great training partner or friend in the future.

Hygiene

Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu involves close contact with other people, and proper hygiene is about safety and respecting your training partners.

- Wash your kimono after every practice to avoid skin conditions (ringworm, staph).
- Shower after every practice, without exceptions.
- Keep your finger and toenails clipped to avoid cutting or scratching others.
- Remove any jewelry, watches, earrings, etc before stepping on the mat and tape down any body piercings..
- Do not train if you have any rash, boil or open wound.
- Pick up athletic tape, band-aids, water bottles, garbage or training gear that you used.
- Remove clothing/uniform in the changing rooms.
- Athletes should NOT be training if they have:
 - A communicable disease (cold, flu, etc)
 - A skin condition (ring worm, staph, etc)

Pro tip: Your kimono will be more comfortable if you wear a rash guard underneath it.

Pro tip: We recommend using Selsun Blue or Defense Soap as a body wash. If you have a suspicious of a skin outbreak or pimple, put Tea Tree Oil on it as a first step and go to the doctor if it develops.

Uniform

Here are some recommendations for your kimono / gi (uniform):

- Wash your kimono after every practice (we know we mentioned that above).
- Most serious grapplers have three or four gis to make laundry less of an issue.
- Fix any rips or tears in your kimono.
- Be careful when drying your kimono because it can cause it to shrink.
- No-Gi uniform should include shorts/pants (no zippers or pockets) and a rash guard / t-shirt.

Optional Equipment

- Wrestling head gear (ear protection) can prevent damage to the ear.
- Wrestling shoes can prevent and rehabilitate toe injuries.
- Mouth guards can protect the teeth and we recommend Gladiator Mouth Guards.