

McMahon

Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu



Training Manual

Welcome to McMahon Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu (MBJJ)

Congratulations, you have just made the first step on a life-changing journey. Our goal here at MBJJ is for every one of our students to experience the maximum benefits of a great martial arts program. It is important to understand that your success is based not only on our teachings, but on the environment we create. You as a student play an integral role in this environment, and thus the momentum of the academy as a whole. This manual is designed to help your transition into the Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu family, to make you aware of what you can expect from us, and what we expect from you. Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu (BJJ) is not only a highly effective form of self-defense, but also a way of life. Through BJJ you will learn balance not only in a physical sense, but balance in your life. You will learn skills that will increase your self-esteem, self-confidence, and improve your ability to concentrate. This discipline will support you in becoming a healthier, happier, more productive and effective individual.

When you step into the academy, you will see high-energy, physical and technical instruction delivered in the most positive atmosphere. As a student, you are expected to contribute to this atmosphere. Your conduct on and off the mat is a reflection of BJJ. You will be an ambassador of the art of BJJ and a representative of our school. As your practice deepens, you will see many positive applications in your everyday life.

This handbook is designed to give insight into the philosophy behind MBJJ, as well as highlight basic training practices. We want to ensure that your progression through training is consistent and permanent. Please feel free to address any of our staff members regarding any concerns.

Congratulations on getting started, and thank you for choosing McMahon Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu.

History and Philosophy

Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu, also known as Gracie Jiu-Jitsu, is a variant of traditional Japanese Ju Jutsu that was developed in Brazil during the first half of the 20th century by the Gracie family.

Japanese Judoka, prizefighter, and member of the famed Kodokan (later banned for his prizefighting activities) named Mitsuyo Maeda immigrated to Brazil in the early 1900's and was helped greatly by a Brazilian politician of Scottish descent named Gastão Gracie. In return for his aid, Maeda taught Judo to Gastão's son Carlos, who then taught the art to his brothers, including Helio Gracie, who (with Carlos) is generally regarded as the originator of Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu as a style distinct of the Kodokan's.

Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu became internationally prominent in the martial arts community in the 1990's when Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu expert Royce Gracie won several Ultimate Fighting Championships against experienced and much larger opponents using the family's style.

Jiu-Jitsu (translated "Art of Gentleness") emphasizes ground-fighting techniques and submission hold involving joint locks and chokes. The principle is that most of the advantage of a larger, stronger opponent comes from superior reach and more powerful strikes, both of which are largely neutralized if the fight is taken off of the feet.

BJJ advocates that a fight going to the ground is not a matter of chance but a sure fact. If either fighter wants the fight to go to the ground, it will. Once the opponent is on the ground, a number of maneuvers (and counter-maneuvers) are available to manipulate the opponent into suitable position for the application of a submission hold.

Submission holds typically involve getting an inescapable grip on an opponent's limb which allows one to pull it to the point where the joint will break if pulled any more. This typically results in the opponent re-assessing their will to continue the fight.

Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu's emphasis on joint locks, chokes and control over an opponent rather than strikes means that one's technique can be practiced at full speed and power, identical to the effort and technique used in a self-defense situation or competition. Training partners can resist and counter just as they would in an actual fight, providing valuable realistic experience should the techniques ever need to be applied in an actual fight.

Frequently Asked Questions

What do I need to begin training?

A kimono, also called a gi, is uniform required of students as techniques and concepts often use clothing for leverage. As technical progress is made, no-gi classes will be made available. These classes will not be mandatory. We have uniforms and other accessories available for sale. We also strongly suggest a mouthpiece, which you can also purchase at the school.

How will I know what's going on at the school?

Upcoming news and events will be announced a number of ways. First, announcements are always placed on the academy website and the school Facebook page. Second, we communicate through email, so make sure your email will accept the address contact@mcmahonbjj.com. Third, announcements will be made at the end of each class to keep everyone up-to-date.

What can I expect in class?

Classes are one hour long. Before class, you will scan in with your key tag to sign in for class. We will bow in and out of class. Each class has a warm-up that includes calisthenics and movements specific to BJJ. There will be a technical presentation of stand up and groundwork. Drilling or live training will usually follow the technical presentation. The class will end with stretching and any statement, announcement, or training tips from the instructor.

What is expected of me?

Courtesy and respect are valued here at MBJJ. We expect your best effort and your commitment to learning. The instructors will enable your progress and development, rather than control it. You are also expected to follow our code of conduct at all times.

Will I be able to defend myself?

Regardless of size, strength, or fitness level, the techniques and strategies will dramatically improve your ability to defend yourself.

Will I get into shape?

Many students have lost more than 40 lbs adding only BJJ to their lifestyle. Classes are divided by technical difficulty and intensity. All students, whether new to exercise or seasoned athletes, will realize improved physical fitness.

Is the training safe?

As with any physical activity, there is a small risk of injury. The classes are structured to minimize major injuries, but it is important to pay attention to your body and how it is feeling. Make sure to rest and heal outside of class times as needed. To minimize spread of infection, make sure your uniform is cleaned after every class and that you do not have any skin problems that could be contagious.

How will I benefit from BJJ?

It is important to understand that BJJ is not a sport. Although you will achieve all the benefits of a sport, you should expect much more when you put in the effort toward learning a true martial art. BJJ is a way of life.

Initially, gaining knowledge of the most in-demand martial art builds an inherent undeniable confidence into your character. BJJ is both an individual and social activity. Unlike team sports, you face your opponents alone. Self-reliance and self-confidence are enhanced, as is personal responsibility. The BJJ student learns to deal with setbacks and failure in the process of striving for higher levels of excellence. BJJ is also a social activity, as you cannot further develop without the aid of a trusted group of training partners. A student's ability to socialize and become part of a group working towards a common goal is as much a requirement for advancement as technical progress.

There are many benefits yielded by the study of BJJ, beyond the ability to defend oneself. As you gain knowledge and a deeper understanding of the core values required to reach your Black Belt, true excellence will become part of your life, fostering changes well beyond your martial arts training.

Conduct

It is crucial that students learn and adhere to the rules and etiquette that is associated with Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu. It is important to reiterate that students should follow these rules on and off the mat, because you do represent the academy, its instructors and the art of Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu.

Etiquette

- Please conduct yourself in a calm, courteous and respectful manner at all times.
- There is no cursing in the academy on or off the mat.
- Please address the instructors as “Coach” and any black belt as “Professor”.
- Keep your conversations in the waiting area at a low volume. Please show respect for other students in the school and for classes that might be in session.
- The changing areas must be kept clean. Always place your shoes and personal belongings neatly away.
- Uniforms must be kept clean and neat at all times. Proper attire is a Jiu-Jitsu gi top, long pants and a belt. No-gi class uniform is a rash guard/t-shirt, gi pants or grappling shorts.
- Nails should be kept short.
- There is no jewelry, gum chewing or personal items allowed on the mat.
- Acknowledge your instructors and staff when entering or leaving the school.
- Enter each class with energy and enthusiasm.
- Stay focused on your instructor. Please sit quietly and respectfully while the instructor is explaining or demonstrating concepts or techniques.
- Move quickly and work hard during training drills.
- Arrive approximately 10 minutes before class ready to train.

▪ **Student Creed**

- I intend to develop myself in a positive manner and avoid anything that could reduce my mental growth or my physical health.
- I intend to develop self-discipline in order to bring out the best in myself and others.
- I intend to use what I learn in class constructively and defensively to help myself and others and never to be abusive or offensive.

Jiu-Jitsu Strategy

While Jiu-Jitsu is a complete martial, it emphasizes ground-fighting techniques and submission holds involving joint manipulations and chokes.

A larger, more powerful opponent maintains the majority of his or her advantage while standing. This allows the opponent to put body weight and strength behind the strikes. The larger opponent loses much of the advantage when the fight is brought off of the feet onto the ground. Once the opponent is on the ground, a variety of techniques are used to maintain dominant positions and eventually more toward a submission.

Once the conflict is brought to the ground, positions act as an anchor for the opponent. These positions give the Jiu-Jitsu player a platform from which to maneuver and attack.

Guard

The guard is the signature position of BJJ. Bringing a larger and stronger opponent to the ground may place the Jiu-Jitsu player on the bottom. The only safe and even potentially threatening position a Jiu-Jitsu player can implement from the bottom is the guard. This position is maintained when the Jiu-Jitsu player's back is on the ground with their legs wrapped around the torso of the opponent. The ankles are crossed behind the opponent's back.

The legs control the opponents' hips and mediate distance. This allows the Jiu-Jitsu player to stay either too far or too close from potential strikes. Once the position is secured, submissions and reversals become the focus.

The guard has many variations worthy of mentioning: open guard, half guard, butterfly guard, spider guard and x-guard. All of these variations use the legs to control the distance and balance of the opponent.

Side Control

A conflict brought from the feet to the ground can also place the Jiu-Jitsu player inside his or her opponent's guard. The attacks from the top position, inside the guard, are very limited. The Jiu-Jitsu player should look to clear the opponent's legs and control his or her torso. This position is called side control. This is a very stable position, and it allows for strikes and submissions. The Jiu-Jitsu player can also advance his or her position from side control to mount.

Mount

The mount, like side control, keeps the opponent's back on the ground. However, the Jiu-Jitsu player's legs are straddled over the torso of his or her opponent. The mount, like side control can be very heavy and difficult to escape. From the mount, the Jiu-Jitsu player has many opportunities for strikes and submissions, and can also transition to the back, the most dominant position.

Back

The back places the Jiu-Jitsu player behind the opponent, with his or her feet acting as hooks on the opponent's legs minimizing space. When this position is achieved, the opponent has very few offensive options, while the Jiu-Jitsu player can choke and strike very effectively.

Tapping

The key to Jiu-Jitsu's effectiveness is the ability to safely practice these strategies live. During open mat or live training sessions, students compete to secure a position and apply submissions. When a Jiu-Jitsu player successfully applies a submission on his or her partner, the partner should clearly tap out. This lets the Jiu-Jitsu player know that the technique worked and to release the submission well before any injury takes place. Students should maintain a mindset that live training is not a competition, but partners mutually developing each other's skills.

Hierarchy of Positions

4) Back

3) Mount

2) Side Control

1) Guard

↑ Top Position

Neutral

↓ Bottom Position

-1) Guard

-2) Side Control

-3) Mount

-4) Back

Classes

The McMahon Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu Adults Program is divided into three levels, Fundamentals, Intermediate and Black Belt. We believe it to be the best curriculum out there, and it will challenge every type of student.

Fundamentals Program

The Fundamentals Program is designed to bring beginner white belts through the process of the second stripe on their white belt, or for more advanced students to brush up on their fundamentals. It includes basics of Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu, boxing and wrestling, as well as basic self-defense concepts. Students in this program are required to attend 2-3 Basic classes per week. The curriculum lasts 4 months and will give students a solid understanding of the concepts of jiu-jitsu for self-defense. It requires no previous martial arts knowledge, but can also build on prior experiences students may have.

Intermediate Program

A student who has at least two stripes on their belt can begin the Intermediate Program. The Intermediate program is designed to bring advanced white belts to their blue belt, and to further learning for more advanced upper belts. It builds on the fundamentals that students have already learned, with an emphasis on developing moves in succession and more live training. It is more rigorous, and requires 3-5 Basic or Intermediate classes per week and 1-2 randoris per week. Only students who have successfully completed the Fundamentals Program are invited to the Intermediate program.

Randori

Randori, or live training (also called "rolling") is the opportunity for any students 2 stripes and above to begin to practice techniques while sparring. The purpose of Randori is to practice techniques and develop muscle memory. Randori is crucial in maintaining the integrity of jiu-jitsu as an effective martial art and in preparing students for self-defense. The goal of randori is to win rather than learn. Control is key in keeping everyone safe while rolling. Injuries, though rare, are taken seriously and any student who cannot keep their partner safe will not be allowed to train.

Black Belt/Advanced Program

The Black Belt Program helps students blue belt and above achieve their highest potential, and is designed to bring students from their purple belts to their brown and black belts. It is rigorous, realistic, dynamic training that includes 3-5 Basic, Intermediate or Black Belt classes per week, and requires an individual commitment to achievement. Though it is our most demanding program, we believe that ANY student who has successfully completed the Intermediate program can be successful at this level.

Requirements for Promotion

A jiu-jitsu black belt reflects a time commitment of 7-10 years or more of consistent training. Because it takes so long to earn each belt while on the path to black belt, students earn stripes (more traditionally known as “degrees”) on each belt. There are 4 stripes per belt before a student is promoted. Promotions are based partially on a minimum amount of time and classes. Meeting the minimum class and time requirements does not automatically mean a student gets promoted. Students must also demonstrate consistency in training, development of techniques, and control while live training. Students must incorporate live training into their training to be promoted. Setting goals around stripes and belts can be a great way to motivate oneself, however it can be easy to get hung up on promotions when the goal is in fact to learn Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu and develop as a person. Any time you wish to talk with an instructor around goal-setting and areas of improvement we are more than happy to set aside time to help you achieve you goals!

Thank you for your commitment to making our academy a great place to train.

-McMahon Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu Instructors and Staff

“Develop the Courage for Greatness”