



SINGAPORE  
SPORTS COUNCIL

**Sports  
Safety**

# Safe Judo Guide

Think Safe. Play Safe. Stay Safe.

## A Sports Safe Singapore

The Singapore Sports Council (SSC) recognises that safety must be a fundamental component of a sporting culture and a prerequisite for every healthy lifestyle. Therefore, SSC has set a corporate goal of zero injuries, in the belief that all accidents are preventable. Emphasising the need for personal accountability, SSC also urges people to be responsible for the safety of others. SSC's first Sports Safety Division was formed in 2006 directly under the purview of the CEO's office. It is tasked to promote safety throughout Singapore's sporting community and to inculcate a safety-first mentality in the minds of every stakeholder. For more information, please visit [www.sportssafety.ssc.gov.sg](http://www.sportssafety.ssc.gov.sg)

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**Think Safe. Play Safe. Stay Safe.**

*Another initiative by the Sports Safety Division, Singapore Sports Council*

# CONTENTS

Introduction .....	2
Basic Techniques .....	3
Attire Specifications .....	8
Safe Training .....	9

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# INTRODUCTION

As a form of martial art, judo can instil a sense of self-discipline and respect for others. As a sport, it develops faster reflexes, better body coordination and concentration. However, you should always observe the rules and be conditioned adequately before practising judo to reduce the risk of injuring others and yourself.



# BASIC TECHNIQUES

## 1. Break Falls

One of the first things that should be taught in judo as a safety consideration, even before throwing techniques, is how to break a fall.

This technique aims to maximise the surface area in contact with the mat as one receives a throw to reduce the impact of the fall. In judo, dives and rolls are common ways of breaking a fall. Regular practice of this technique can help one to perfect his/her form and instil confidence in his/her ability in the sport.

**The following are some tips for better break falls:**

- Relax your body to avoid injury.
- Exhale just before you hit the mat.
- Go with the flow of the throw; avoid the resistance to being thrown.



## 2. Choke Holds

In judo, there are two basic ways of choking or strangling an opponent, as well as some combination of both:

- Compression of the carotid arteries on one or both sides of the neck, restricting the flow of blood and oxygen to the brain.
- Compression of the windpipe (trachea), stopping or reducing the flow of air to the lungs.

**The following are some safety tips for the safe execution of these techniques:**

- Ensure that chokes are taught and supervised by a qualified instructor.
- Exercise care and be on alert when teaching chokes to children under age 13.
- Understand your own limits to avoid the risk of losing consciousness.

**Loss of consciousness can be detected by:**

- Limpness of the body
- Pallor of the face
- Eyes closing

Convulsions may also occur if the choke hold is maintained for too long.



Learning when to give up is an important part of training to avoid the risk of losing consciousness.

The universal signal for submission is tapping of the opponent or mat repeatedly with the hands or feet. It is also possible to signal a submission verbally in cases where the judoka's (a practitioner of judo) limbs are pinned onto the mat or locked in a joint lock.



**"When yielding is the highest efficient use of energy, then yielding is judo." - Jigoro Kano**

**When the opponent has given up or lost consciousness, students should also be trained to release the hold. This would facilitate the application of resuscitation techniques, where required:**

- Immediately release the victim.
- Lay him/her flat on the back to facilitate flow of blood back to the brain.
- If there is any sign of vomiting, place the victim on his/her side, with the head resting on the arm. This would facilitate breathing whilst preventing vomit aspiration.
- Monitor the victim closely to make sure the victim is breathing.
- If the victim does not regain consciousness in 20 to 30 seconds and remains unresponsive to your efforts, medical assistance should be sought immediately.

### 3. Joint Locks

Joint-locking techniques may be applied in judo to immobilise the opponent and/or force him/her to submit. Joint locks may only be applied at the elbows in competition settings.

In addition, they should be applied in a gradual, controlled manner. This would allow ample opportunity for the training partner or opponent to indicate a submission.

As with the choke hold, when an effective technique is applied, the student should signal for submission by tapping the opponent or mat repeatedly with the hands or feet.

Likewise, students applying joint locks should also be trained to release the hold upon his/her opponent's submission.

#### Did you know?

Pushing one's entire body weight onto an opponent's joint can be penalised with disqualification in a competition.

This is due to the risk of causing injury to the opponent, without allowing him/her a chance to submit.





## 4. Throws

Throws are one of the most spectacular and recognisable elements of judo. Judokas do not need to wear protective equipment like pads and guards and are therefore, encouraged to master break falls before being thrown.

Once a judoka executes a legal technique to throw his/her opponent with considerable force and speed for the opponent's back to land flat on the mats, tori (executor of the throw) is awarded an ippon (full point) and declared the winner of the contest.



# ATTIRE SPECIFICATIONS

- The sleeves of the jacket and legs of the trousers are not allowed to be too short, they must extend to no more than 5cm above the wrists and ankles. This is to allow contestants to be gripped by their opponents.
- Trainees should not wear or possess hard objects beneath their judogi (traditional judo uniform). This would pose a risk of causing injury to one's training partner or opponent. In a competition, infringement of this rule may cause the judoka to be disqualified.

## Common items to be removed include:

- Watches
- Hairpins
- Jewellery
- Spectacles
- Braces/Guards with metal/Plastic components

### Note:

Trainees should trim their nails to reduce the risk of breaking them, or scratching one's training partner or opponent.



# SAFE TRAINING

With regard due to the highly physical nature of the sport, it is recommended that every judoka take note of the following points for safe training.

## 1. Feeling Unwell

In the event that you are not feeling well, refrain from partaking in any form of training.

## 2. Existing Medical Condition

Seek medical advice before engaging in the sport if you have any pre-existing medical condition or are on any prescribed medication.

## 3. Instructor

Practice sessions should always be conducted under the supervision of a qualified instructor. Inform your instructor or training partner at any point in the training where you are unable to proceed.

## 4. Warm-Up

A warm-up with adequate stretching and a gradual increase in physical intensity should be done as part of the training routine to reduce the risk of injury.

## 5. Cool-Down

Upon completion of training, a cool-down routine will help with the removal of lactic acid from the body, reducing the incidence of muscle cramps and acute-onset stiffness.





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