

Brazilian Jiu Jitsu - Overview

BJJ (Brazilian Jiu Jitsu) is believed to have originated in Brazil and is considered to be one of the best forms of martial arts in the world. It is often said that if you are physically small or bodily petite, but have mastered BJJ (Brazilian Jiu Jitsu), then you can fight a person double your size. BJJ is based on the technique that immobilizes the opponent. It teaches joint locks, chokeholds, and the art to beat an opponent having more physical prowess. BJJ is considered to have the best self-defence techniques in the world.



BJJ is played on a mat. Every time a person enters the field of play, i.e. the mat, bowing to the mat, as a mark of respect at the start of the game is mandatory. The basic objective of Brazilian Jiu Jitsu is to use hands and legs to lock and immobilize the opponent. Different BJJ techniques like pull guard, close guard, scissor guard, full mount, joint locks, etc., are used to cramp the opponent, hence seizing his mobility. The intricacies of this game and its laws can be understood by reading this brief but informative tutorial.

Team Size

Brazilian Jiu Jitsu is played in two categories – Men's Singles and Women's Singles. In fact, this is one of those few martial arts where a person having less physical strength can have more control over a strongly built opponent. Unlike other martial

arts, fixed long arms, long legs and good flexibility does not matter in BJJ. Moreover, this form of martial arts can be undertaken by anyone without any specific physical attributes, be it a slender built or stout person.

History of Brazilian Jiu Jitsu

Jiu Jitsu literally means 'gentle art'. Jiu Jitsu originated in Japan and was practised there for long years. After that, a major evolutionary breakthrough took in the form of Judo, a newly evolved style. Jigoro Kano created a new style of martial art from jiu-jitsu, which he called Kodokan judo. In 1897, Mitsuyo Maeda started training with Kano.

Furthermore, Maeda went to Brazil to help establish a Japanese colony. It was at that place, Maeda met Gastao Gracie. Gastao coordinated with Maeda to create and modify the colony and in return of this favour, Maeda taught Gastao this new form of jiu-jitsu.

From these fundamental techniques, Gracie's family practised and evolved the Kodokan judo to Brazilian Jiu Jitsu.

Participating Countries

Since BJJ originated in Brazil, the neighbouring countries could easily learn this form of martial arts. Over the years, Non-Asian countries have dominated this game and they have currently the best players of Brazilian Jiu Jitsu in the world.

Thousands of people from countries like Japan and Singapore participate in BJJ. Most of these Asian countries also have their own Brazilian Jiu Jitsu Academies. For example, Axis Jiu-Jitsu Academy (Tokyo, Japan) and Evolve MMA for East branch(Singapore).

Apart from Brazil, millions of people from countries like United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, USA, Poland, and Torrance (California) participate in Brazilian Jiu Jitsu martial arts. These countries have many academies dedicated to BJJ in order to teach, organise and popularise the martial art.

Brazilian Jiu Jitsu - Equipment

There are quite a lot of playing and safety equipment's which are used in Jiu Jitsu and some of them are mentioned below.

GI – It is a Japanese term meaning uniform for training. Brazilian Gi's are made from a tough material in order to make it durable and long lasting. Also a player cannot be grabbed by the opponent if he is wearing this dress.

Belt – In order to keep the jacket in place a belt is used. Another usage of the belt is that it can be used in both offensive and defensive techniques. The belt also represents the rank of the player. These ranks are as follows –

- White belt is given to beginners.
- Blue is given to person whose rank is just above white belt
- Purple belt is for intermediate rank.
- Brown belt is for second highest rank.
- Black belt is given to the person who has achieved the highest rank.
- Red/Black belt, also known as coral belt, is awarded when a player reaches seventh degree of black belt
- Red/White belt is given to the person who has reached the eighth degree of black belt.
- Red Belt is awarded to the person who has reached ninth or tenth degree of black belt

Grappling Shorts – Grappling shorts are made in such a way that they do not slide off easily. It also provides flexibility on the ground.

Rash Guard – Rash guard is made of such a material that absorbs moisture. When sweat evaporates it causes cooling effect on the body.

Mouth Guard – Although the does not include kicking or punching, mouth guard can still be used to keep the mouth safe from any accident if it occurs during the game.

Groin Protectors – Since groin is much exposed during the game it should be protected and for this groin protectors are used.

Head Gear – Head gear or ear protector is used to protect the ears and head during the game. The pulling of head can cause trauma to the ear which can separate it from the cartilage which can lead to cauliflower ear. It can also have a great impact on hearing.

Knee Pads – Knee pads and knee braces are used to protect the knees specially during practices as the player may land on knees or position them as per the need.

Gear Bag – Gear bags are used to put all the playing and safety equipment that are to be used in the game.

Brazilian Jiu Jitsu - Terms

Before going into the details of the game, let us discuss some of the important terms used in the game.

- **Amber** – Amber is a type of arm lock. It is a position where a player has full control over the opponent's hand by tightly grasping and crossing your legs over it.
- **Base** – It defines a good balance on surface. If the player is having good base, that means it is difficult to knock him out from the ground.
- **Belt** – BJJ martial comprises of five belts – White, Purple, Brown, Black and Blue. White belt is for the beginners of BJJ martial arts and black is for highest rank.
- **Breakfall** – It is a technique in which a BJJ martial art person reduces the impact of falling on the ground.
- **Bridge** – A technique to dislodge the opponent from mounting position when a player is laying on the ground.
- **Butterfly Guard** – It is a technique to grab the opponent in such a way that he cannot apply his game plan.
- **Clinch** – It is a position where one person has a better control over the opponent in a standing position.
- **Cross Fit** – It is a combination of weightlifting, power lifting, gymnastics, medicine ball training etc.
- **Crank** – This is a term used for abnormal position of body to cause pain.
- **Close Guard** – It is a classic way to control the opponent. In a close guard, the legs are locked around the opponent and the player can control the opponent by grabbing his hand by one hand and head in the other hand.
- **GI** – The other name of BJJ uniform is GI. This uniform is made of fine material so that it cannot get held by the opponent easily.
- **GI Choke** – GI choke is said to that choke where you apply choking technique on your opponent by using his GI (BJJ uniform).
- **Guard** – The Guard is a ground position in which a player has to attack his opponent in various joint locks. This can be regarded as a dominating position.
- **Spider guard** – It is applicable only if the opponent is in standing or kneeling position. Spider guard is used for grappling.
- **NO GI** – No GI refers to the training without BJJ uniform or GI jacket.
- **Mount** – It is the position where a person is above the opponent's body.

- **Soulcraft** – It is an activity which results in modifying and shaping the body of a person concerned.
- **OSS** – In BJJ, OSS is uttered by a student by hearing any instruction from their teacher.
- **Submission** – Submission is a technique that chokes a joint of opponent which makes it impossible to continue the fight. If any player does the submission, then the opponent will be declared as the winner.
- **Take Down** – If a player is able to take his opponent down then he will earn two points. It is a technique to put the opponent down on the ground.

Brazilian Jiu Jitsu - How to Fight?

First of all, the necessary arrangements are to be made and a proper playing environment has to be set up before the start of the play. Generally, the participants start Jiu Jitsu with the basic positions like guard, full mount, and side control. It entirely depends upon the player as to which move is to be made first to implement his best tactics to have a full control on the opponent.

The **Grappling** skill is the most essential technique that should be used at the starting of a match. During the course of the competition, the participant's natural skills will surface. The environment in which BJJ is practised plays a big role in what the participants are going to do in the fight. So before appearing for any BJJ match, the participants should adhere to these following points –

- Handle the crowd in a positive manner.
- Handling your opponent properly, about whom you don't know anything.
- Implementing your skills properly in the fight.
- Finally, the participant should always keep in his mind that he/she has to tackle the opponent's positions and moves.

Playing Techniques

Submission

The main aim of BJJ is to take the opponent down and try for submission. That's always what you have to do. Tap, once you are choked by your opponent, otherwise it may lead to the breaking of your arm or shoulders. The initial phase of this game teaches the way of tapping without getting hurt.

Competition

The categorization of BJJ competition is based on belt, age, weight and gender (male or female). There are many ways to earn points.

One of the simplest way is to take down your opponent. If you take your opponent down, the player earns two points. The player will earn three points for passing the opponent's guard. The player will earn four points, if he mounts or takes the opponent's back.

Positions

In any BJJ tournament, one can see that the combatants spend about 85% of their time on the ground in any one of the following positions –

- Guard
- Side Mount
- Knee Mount
- Full Mount
- Rear Mount
- Turtle

Guards

There are three types of guards –

- Close Guard
- Open Guard
- Half Guard

Close Guard

In the close guard position, your legs are locked around your opponent. The classic way to control your opponent is to hold your opponent's hand in one hand and his collar with another. Then not only pull your opponent down, but also bring your knee in lock position with your opponent towards you. Grab his collar in one hand and control your opponent's head in the other hand. One important move in close guard is to clip your foot on to the opponent's hip. With this you are going to turn and clamp down your opponent head with the help of your other leg.



Open Guard

Open guard is all about good control. Position your legs in between the opponent's hands and put them on his chest. Grab his leg from the back and then push your opponent making him fall over the ground. This will give you the ease of having control over your opponent.



Half Guard

Half Guard is a ground position where you are lying to your opponent having one leg intertwined. Half guard is regarded as survival position. There are many types of half guards such as –

- Regular half guard
- Z-half guard
- Deep half guard
- Lock down half guard
- Butterfly half guard



Side Mount

Side Mount is also known as **Hundred Kilos**. In this technique, you will lay on the top of your opponent. Your opponent may try to escape, but you have to use your body weight over him from doing so. This method will help you to have a full control over your opponent by choking his breathing.



Knee Mount

The other name of Knee Mount is 'Knee on Belly'. This is a very hard and difficult position for your opponent as your entire body weight will be over him through your knee. In turn making your opponent's breathing difficult.



Full Mount

Full Mount is one of the most common used positions in BJJ. In this position a player hinders the opponent's mobility. Full Mount directly put pressure on your opponent's diaphragm resulting in choking of your opponent's breathing. This method is also called as **The Mount**.



Rear Mount

Regarded as one of the most effective positions due to the fact that it will position you on your opponent's back and your opponent wouldn't be able to see you. The result being your opponent not able to judge your moves, which is an obvious advantage. Most of the matches had ended in BJJ through Rear Mount. Participants prefer it because it gives the advantage of locking the opponent's neck and to choke him.



Turtle

Turtle is a random position in Brazilian Jiu Jitsu. You can be on your opponent's top or bottom, provided you end the match choking and directly affecting your opponent's respiration. In Turtle, you have to keep your safety in mind always. It may be dangerous in Turtle that your opponent may end his position by landing his full body weight over you. Learn some anti steps to defend that in advance.



Brazilian Jiu Jitsu - Rules

International Brazilian Jiu Jitsu Federation (IBJJF) is the governing body of this game that decides the basic rules and has the authority to change that. Before playing the game, you should have the knowledge of these rules to have a cutting edge over your competitors. Following is the list of some important rules.

By some of the dominating actions performed by the players, points are awarded to them in the following manner.

- 4 points – Rear mount
- 2 points – Take down
- 2 point – Knee-on belly
- 4 points – Mount
- 3 points – Passing the guard



- Before starting match, the players need to stand in front of each other.
- The match is said to be started once the players move to the ground and after that no reset can be done.
- Some acts like slamming, striking, and engaging in any dirty fight is not allowed in this game.
- Leg locking is not allowed for the beginners who wear white belts. However above blue belts, ankle locking is allowed.
- No points are awarded for escaping rear mount positions.
- If a player is passing to the side control, then also no points will be awarded.
- In this game, it is a rule that the referee will give direction of the match with hand signals and will use Portuguese language only.
- If you are in a locked position you cannot run out of the bounds to escape.

- Suppose the points and the advantages both get ties at the end of the match, then the referee chooses the winner.

Brazilian Jiu Jitsu - Championships

The International Brazilian Jiu Jitsu Federation (IBJJF) organises all the international championships and tournaments. Apart from that, all nations have their individual governing bodies to monitor the match. Following is the list of some important tournaments.



- WV State GI and No GI Brazilian Jiu Jitsu Championships
- The Hereford Open Championships
- Copa Nova Brazilian Jiu Jitsu
- Bay Area Jiu Jitsu Championships
- IBJJF Pan America Jiu Jitsu Championships
- OTM Brazilian Jiu Jitsu Championships
- IBJJF World Championships

Brazilian Jiu Jitsu - Champions

Brazilian Jiu Jitsu is a game in which both men and women participate. The participants take part in various tournaments to win medals and improve their national and international ranks. Following are the details of some of the champions of this sport.

Roger Gracie Gomes



Roger Gracie Gomes, a Brazilian Jiu Jitsu player, is also a mixed martial artist. Currently he is third degree black belt who has won all the eight matches in ADCC Submission World Wrestling Championship.

In 2003 ADCC Championship, he won a bronze medal in under 99 kg category while in 2005 he won gold in under 99 kg and absolute categories. He has also taken part in World Championships where he has won silver and gold medals in both under 99 kg and absolute categories.

Marcus Almeida



Marcus Almeida is a Brazilian Jiu Jitsu player who is a black belt and plays for Checkmate team. He took part in many world championships and won the games. In 2011 World Championship, he won silver in under 100 kg category and bronze in the absolute category, while he won the gold medal in both the categories in 2012, 2013, and 2014 World Championships.

He also took part in the Brazilian Jiu Jitsu World Cup held in Abu Dhabi where he won gold in above 100 kg category in 2012. In 2013, he won silver in above 100 kg category and gold in the absolute category. Besides this, he has also taken part in the Nogi World Championship and the Pan American Championship.

Saulo Ribeiro



Saulo Ribeiro is a Brazilian Jiu Jitsu player who is a fifth degree black belt. Previously he has earned black belt in judo and after that started training in Jiu Jitsu. He earned the black belt in Jiu Jitsu in 1995. He is the winner of Jiu Jitsu Championship five times in different weight classes.

In the World Jiu Jitsu Championship, he won five golds, four silvers and one bronze in various categories. In ADCC Submission Wrestling World Championship he won two golds, two silvers, and one bronze. Besides these, he also took part in other championships and won many medals.

Marcelo Garcia



Marcelo Garcia is a Brazilian Jiu Jitsu player and is a black belt holder. He has won five World Championship titles in middle weight category. He has taken part in many championships and has won golds, silvers, and bronzes.

In the ADCC Championships, he has won three golds, two silvers, and one bronze. In the Brazilian Jiu Jitsu World Championships, he has won five golds, one silver,

and one bronze. He has taken part in the Pan American Championship only once and won a gold medal in the under 82kg category.

Rodolfo Vieira



Rodolfo Vieira is a Brazilian Jiu Jitsu player who has won World Championship four times and World Cup six times. Rodolfo started his career in 2009 and won the World Cup north trials. At this time, he was a brown belt and took part in mixed brown and black belt division.

He also defeated the then two-time world champion Braulio Estima and got the nickname as the **black belt hunter** as still he was brown belt. He has taken part in various categories in World Championships and won five golds and two silvers. In the World Cup he won seven golds and two silvers. In the Pan American Championship and European Championships, he won two golds each.

Leticia Ribeiro



Leticia Ribeiro is a Brazilian Jiu Jitsu player who is a fourth degree black belt and has won the World Cup many times. She started her training in 1995 under Royler Gracie in Tijuca Academy. She has won many medals in various categories.

She started her career with a blue belt where she got the first place in the Brazilian National Championships in 1996. With a Purple Belt, she has won the National and Rio de Janeiro Championships. After earning the black belt, she took part in the National as well as International Championships.

Gabrielle Garcia



Gabrielle Garcia is a grappling world champion and is a native of Brazil. She has won the Abu Dhabi Combat Club Championships two times and Brazilian Championships nine times. She was banned for some time for taking fertility drugs but the ban was lifted when it was found that she was not at fault.

In 2015, she fought with Lei'D Tapa and defeated her via TKO in the first round. In her career till date she has won two golds in Grappling in Abu Dhabi Combat and nine golds and one silver in World Championship.

Luanna Alzuguir



Luanna Alzuguir is a Jiu Jitsu player who has achieved the Black Belt. In 2009 and 2010, she has won World Championships, National Championships, and Pan American Championships. She is also a champion of ADCC.

She is the five times winner of World Championship, one-time winner of Open Class Champion, three times winner of World Pro five times winner of Pan American and Brazilian National Championships.

In the ADCC Championships, she won one gold, one silver, and one bronze in the under 60kg category. While in the World Championship, she won five golds, two silvers, and one bronze medal.

Kyra Gracie



Kyra Gracie is a world champion in Grappling and is also a Jiu Jitsu player. In 2005, 2007, and 2011, Gracie won ADCC Championships where she participated in the under 60kg category. She won World Championships in 2006 and 2010.

In 2008 also, she won the gold in World Championships in light weight and open divisions categories. She also won silver in 2004, 2005, 2009, and 2011. Besides this, she competed in Sasuke and now she gives training in Wrestling, Judo, and Jiu Jitsu.

Bianca Andrade



Bianca Andrade is one of the best players of Jiu Jitsu who has won national as well as international championships. These achievements have placed her name in the IBJJF Hall of Fame.

She started her career in body boarding but due to defeats in many competitions she turned to Jiu Jitsu. She kept on practicing and making her more competitive and in 2000 she won her first medal.

In 2009 she defeated Sayaka Shioda in just a few seconds. She won the world championship in 2005, 2008, 2009, and 2010. Along with this, she also won the World Nogi Championship in 2007 and 2008 and the National Championship in 2005 and onwards till 2010.