

Tora Martial Arts Academy

Jiu-Jitsu Curriculum

The art of Jiu-Jitsu (which literally translates to “gentle technique”) has been around for centuries. Originally, jiu-jitsu (also spelled ju-jitsu) was a method of combat developed by the Japanese Samurai that focused primarily on attacking and manipulating the joints of the body. Since the Samurai wore body armor to protect against the commonly used weapons of the time (swords, spears, arrows, etc.), striking was an ineffective means of dispatching an enemy. Jiu-jitsu allowed a warrior to quickly and efficiently neutralize an attacker, even after losing his weapon.

While the purpose of original, Japanese jiu-jitsu was to instantly kill or maim one’s opponent on the battlefield, modern forms of jiu-jitsu have evolved into a very effective and sophisticated means of controlling and subduing an opponent, even one who is much larger or heavier. In the late 1800’s, a jiu-jitsu practitioner named Jigoro Kano developed the art of Judo (literally “gentle way”) as a means of allowing practitioners to spar with one another using full resistance while still maintaining a high level of safety. Since many of the techniques of Japanese jiu-jitsu could not be practiced at full speed without the risk of injuring one’s training partners, Kano simply discarded those techniques and focused on the ones that could be practiced safely against full resistance. This allowed the practitioners of Judo to train their art to a much higher degree of proficiency, and thus utilize their skills more easily in realistic conditions.

Though many people think of Judo as primarily a throwing art (due mostly to the rules of modern sport competition), Judo also has a ground grappling component, in which many early practitioners specialized. They found that by focusing the majority of their training on perfecting the subtleties of ground grappling, they could usually emerge victorious against those practitioners who devoted the majority of their time to practicing throwing techniques. It didn’t take long before these ground fighting specialists began to travel the world to compete in challenge matches against fighters of many different styles of martial arts. These fighters, who were often much larger and heavier than the ground grapplers, almost always found it impossible to avoid being taken down to the ground and submitted with either a joint lock or choke.

There were many of these ground grappling Judo fighters, but one stands out as being key to the development of modern Jiu-Jitsu: a man named Mitsuyo Maeda. Maeda, after a long and colorful career as a no-holds-barred fighter, eventually settled in Brazil in the early 1900’s. It was here that he met and began teaching his fighting style of Jiu-jitsu (then used interchangeably with the term “Judo”) to several members of the now famous Gracie family. Through many years of practice, the Gracie family further refined the combative techniques and principles taught to them by Maeda, focusing specifically on the techniques that required the least amount of physical strength to execute, and thus the art of Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu was born.

What to expect in class:

This class will include technique and principles from both modern Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu, as well as more traditional forms of Japanese Jiu-Jitsu, including Aiki-Jitsu (from which modern Aikido was developed), and Judo. Students can expect a heavy emphasis on ground grappling skills, as well as many practical standing self-defense techniques, including defense against various grabs, strikes, and common weapons.

Class will usually begin with some sort of warm up and basic movement skill practice, and then move into technique practice and drilling. After students have gotten comfortable with some of the basic concepts, they may also begin various kinds of "live drilling," in which students will attempt to utilize the techniques taught in class while their training partner offers varying degrees of resistance. Eventually, when a student is comfortable doing so, they will begin various kinds of sparring with their classmates. There are two kinds of sparring our students will use to hone their skills:

- 1) Freestyle grappling: a form of live sparring, commonly referred to as "rolling," in which both practitioners will attempt to defeat the other using close to full resistance (while keeping reasonable safety in mind) with various joint locks or chokes.
- 2) Fight simulation sparring: a form of sparring in which one practitioner will wear either MMA or boxing gloves, and will essentially be playing the roll of the "bad guy." This person will be feeding punches and other "bad guy behaviors," such as a headlock, to the other person, as they attempt to neutralize the threats using their Jiu-Jitsu technique. The "bad guy" will be using extremely light contact on all strikes so as to allow a high level of safety for our students, while still allowing them to prepare to defend against a realistic street attack. This kind of sparring drill is not 100% live as is the freestyle grappling, but instead is partly cooperative.

Studying martial arts, especially one as complex as Jiu-Jitsu, can be extremely challenging, even frustrating at times. When you first start sparring with your classmates, you may feel like you are in completely over your head. You will be forced to submit, or "tap out," to your classmates over and over again until you get the hang of things. This can be seriously damaging to one's ego, but it is perfectly normal for every new student to go through this. There is a saying, "There is no losing in Jiu-Jitsu...you either win...or you learn." Take each defeat not as a blow to your ego, but as an opportunity to learn from your mistakes and sharpen your skills. In time, you will find the study of Jiu-Jitsu to be one of the healthiest and most rewarding activities you can ever do.

Tora Martial Arts Academy
JiuJitsu curriculum – White/black belt requirements

Physical Skills:

- Combat base (push and pull)
- Forward shoulder roll (from kneel/crouch)
- Backwards breakfall

Standing Self-Defense:

- Body lock clinch
 - Aggressive opponent
 - Conservative opponent
- Low wrist grab lever escape variations
 - 1 on 1
 - 2 on 1
 - 2 on 2
- Low cross grab escape (rotate and strike)
- High wrist grab lever escape variations
 - 1 on 1
 - 2 on 1
 - 2 on 2
- Front choke defense
 - Duck under
 - Elbow drop

Positional controls/escapes:

- Trap and roll escape from mount
 - Standard
 - Punch block
- Punch block stage 1 from guard:
 - Arm swim
 - Head hug switch swim
- Lockdown from open guard
 - Hip control
 - Punch protection

Submissions:

- Americana armlock
 - Standard variation
 - Neck hug variation
- Straight arm lock from the guard – straight arm variation

Guard Passes/Sweeps:

- Open guard pass

Tora Martial Arts Academy
JiuJitsu curriculum – Green/white belt requirements

Physical Skills:

- Side breakfall
- Forward shoulder roll (standing)
- Backward should roll (sitting)
- Shrimp drill

Standing Self-Defense:

- Cross grab - shoulder lock
- 1 hand lapel grab - overhook shoulder crank
- 2 hand close lapel grab:
 - elbow drag to chin control
 - back bend throw (se mage nage)

Takedowns/throws:

- Leg hook takedown
- Osotogari (outside leg sweep)

Positional controls/escapes:

- Positional control from mount:
 - Anchor and base
 - Low swim
 - High swim
- Trap and roll escape from mount
 - wrist pin variation
 - neck hug with hooks in
- Technical mount transition and climbing back take
- Remount

Submissions:

- Rear naked choke
 - Strong side variation
 - Weak side variation
- S-mount arm lock

Tora Martial Arts Academy
Jiujitsu curriculum – Green belt requirements

Physical Skills:

- Backward shoulder roll from kneeling
- Technical stand up
- 4 point stance drill

Standing Self-Defense:

- Kotegaeshi (outside wrist throw)
- Maki kotegaeshi (reverse grip outside wrist throw)
- Ikkyo (straight arm wrist lock)
- Standing straight arm lock
- Standing guillotine choke

Takedowns/throws:

- Ankle pick single leg sweep
- Double leg takedown – straight drive variation

Positional controls/escapes:

- Shrimp escape from side mount:
 - Shrimp and shoot
 - Block and shoot
- Standing back takes
 - Arm drag
 - Shoulder spin

Submissions:

- Straight arm lock from the technical mount
- Kimura from guard
- Cross collar choke
 - from the guard
 - from the mount

Tora Martial Arts Academy
JiuJitsu curriculum – Green/black belt requirements

Physical Skills:

- Rolling breakfall
- Backwards roll from standing
- Sprawl

Standing Self-Defense:

- Rear choke escape 1 (step around and sweep)
- Side headlock escape 1 and 2:
 - peel back
 - rear drop
- Standing guillotine escape 1 (frame and pull)
- Achieve the rear clinch:
 - from haymaker duckunder
 - as guillotine attempt counter from double under clinch

Takedowns/throws:

- Head and arm
- Sitting rear takedown

Positional controls/escapes:

- Punch block stages 2-4
- Positional control from sidemount:
 - Sprawl and post
 - Hip switch to scarfhold
- Sidemount to mount transition – knee slice

Submissions:

- Kimura from side control
- Cross grip straight arm lock from guard
- Guillotine choke from guard

Tora Martial Arts Academy
JiuJitsu curriculum – Blue/white belt requirements

Standing Self-Defense:

- Standing guillotine escape 2 (takedown)
- Front bear hug arms free escape (neck frame)
- Front bear hug arms pinned escape (hip frame to clinch)
- Nikkyo (bent arm wrist lock)

Takedowns/throws:

- Single leg scoop from clinch
- Body lock clinch guard pull

Positional controls/escapes:

- Guard get up
- Shrimp escape from the mount:
 - Standard variation
 - Fish hook/heel drag
 - Hook removal

Submissions:

- Triangle choke from guard – hand trap variation
- Near side tuck knee arm lock
 - from standing
 - from knee on belly

Guard Passes/Sweeps:

- Bullfighter pass
- Double ankle sweep
 - standard variation
 - kick variation

Tora Martial Arts Academy
Jiujitsu curriculum – Blue belt requirements

Standing Self-Defense:

- Rear bear hug arms free escapes:
 - Finger peel
 - Ankle pick
 - Standing kimura
- Rear bear hug arms pinned escapes:
 - Step around and throw
 - Slip out to arm lock
- Shihonage (duck under shoulder lock)

Takedowns/throws:

- Double leg takedown with leg wrap
- Ogoshi (hip throw)

Positional controls/escapes:

- Headlock escape 1 – frame escape:
 - Scissor choke variation
 - Super lock variation
- Reverse scarfhold and long step mount transition

Submissions:

- Cross collar choke from rear mount
- Triangle Choke, Punch block stage 1.5 variation
- Spinning straight armlock from mount

Guard Passes/Sweeps:

- Double underhook smash pass
- Elevator hook sweep

Tora Martial Arts Academy
Jiujitsu curriculum – Blue/black belt requirements

Standing Self-Defense:

- Full nelson escape:
 - Step around and throw
 - Drop variation
- Rear choke escape 2: (duck out to shoulder lock)
- Standing side headlock escape 3 and 4:
 - Punch block and back take
 - Drop Spin
- Sankyo (inverted twisting wrist lock)

Takedowns/throws:

- High crotch to double leg takedown, turning the corner
- Gi guard pull

Positional controls/escapes:

- Punch block stage 5 with rollover
- Sitting back take from technical mount

Submissions:

- Paper cutter choke from side control
- Pressing collar choke from top guard (as a counter to cross collar choke)
- Tuck knee guillotine choke

Guard Passes/Sweeps:

- Log splitter guard break
- Back step pass
- Scissor sweep:
 - Standard variation
 - Kick variation

Tora Martial Arts Academy
Jiujitsu curriculum – Brown/white belt requirements

Weapon Defense:

- Stick/club defense:
 - Clinch: before the strike or after the strike
 - Block to reverse strip
 - Block, arm capture and throw

Takedowns/throws:

- Koshi guruma (headlock hip throw)
 - Standard variation
 - Drop variation
- Seioenage (shoulder throw)
 - Standard variation
 - Drop variation

Positional controls/escapes:

- Headlock escape 2:
 - Rolling variation
 - Super base variation
 - Punch block variation
- Escape from back mount

Submissions:

- Head and arm choke from mount
- Far side arm lock from side control
- Defending the arm lock from the guard: hug, stack, and pass

Guard Passes/Sweeps:

- Double leg wrap pass
- Double knee grip smash pass
- Tripod sweep

Tora Martial Arts Academy
Jiujitsu curriculum – Brown belt requirements

Weapon Defense:

Gun disarms:

- Quick strip
- Redirect, hit, strip
- Straight arm lock

Takedowns/throws:

- Ouchi Gari (Outside to inside reverse leg trip)
- Kouchi Gari (Inside to inside reverse leg trip)

Positional controls/escapes:

- Bridge escape from side mount

Submissions:

- North/south kimura
- Arm lock from back control
- Armlock defense counters:
 - Triangle
 - Omoplata
 - Compression armlock

Guard Passes/Sweeps:

- Over under position and smash pass
- Pendulum sweep
- Hip bump sweep

Tora Martial Arts Academy
JiuJitsu curriculum – Brown/black belt requirements

Weapon Defense:

- Knife defense
 - Overhead/forehand stab or slash
 - Block to reverse shoulder lock
 - Pass and step under to shoulder lock
 - Block, hug, and sweep
- Backhand slash defense
 - Block to figure 4 lock
 - Block to straight arm lock
 - Pass and step under to wrist crank
- Straight thrust defense
 - Block to underhook/head control
 - Block to standing kimura

Takedowns/throws:

- Tomoenage (overhead sacrifice throw)
- Uchi mata (inner leg sweep)

Positional controls/escapes:

- Back take from guard:
 - Climbing
 - Shrimp and pull

Submissions:

- North/South head and arm choke
- Straight ankle lock
- Escaping the armlock from mount:
 - Push, slide, and turn
 - Swing and stack

Guard Passes/Sweeps:

- Standing guard break to knee slice pass
- X-pass from half guard
- Sweeps from half guard
 - Foot grab sweep
 - Roll under sweep

Tora Martial Arts Academy
Jiu-jitsu curriculum – Black belt requirements

The black belt is a highly distinguished rank that many will aspire to, but only a small percentage of those who begin training will attain. A student at the black belt level should have a deep knowledge of the techniques and principles of a system, both in theory and application, and be able to apply their skills in a live combative situation. A student at the black belt level should also be knowledgeable enough to teach the basic techniques and principles of the system to others. Even if you have no plans to go into teaching, either as a career or a hobby, one can learn a great deal by teaching others. It is a valuable part of the learning process and will help to solidify your conceptual understanding of the system in ways that mere practice cannot.

In addition, all black belt candidates must be in good physical shape and of sound moral character. It is the responsibility of all martial arts practitioners, but especially those at the black belt level, to never misuse their training, and to use the absolute minimum amount of force needed to resolve any conflict. Black belts should be a force for good in this world, and stand out as examples of humility, politeness, respect, and kindness. Generally, students who do not live up to this standard will eventually drop out for one reason or another before reaching the black belt level. However, on the rare occasion that this is not the case the instructor reserves the right to refuse instruction or promotion to any student at any time, and for any reason he deems appropriate.

The amount of time it takes to reach the black belt level will vary greatly depending on several factors, including: how many days a week a student trains, either in class or at home; the level of focus and dedication with which one practices; previous martial arts training in other styles; how old a student is when they begin training; a student's natural ability and coordination. Generally it will take the average teen/adult 4-6 years to complete the entire curriculum through to the black belt level. Some people may take more or less time depending on the above mentioned circumstances.

As far as testing requirements go, there is no new information to learn. The black belt exam will instead focus on two things:

- 1) A candidate's cumulative knowledge of the entire curriculum from white belt to black belt, and their ability to execute the techniques at a higher degree of proficiency than in previous exams.
- 2) A candidate's proficiency at live sparring, both freestyle grappling as well as fight simulation sparring.

The exam itself is meant to challenge the student and push them to their physical limit. Everyone's exam will be slightly different, as each person has individual strengths, weaknesses, and limitations. Though the exam will be rigorous, measures will be taken to ensure the candidate's safety. If a candidate fails their exam, they will be permitted to retest in 3 months.