

BJJ Round Focus Cards

Choose one card. Agree the task and resistance with your partner. Use familiar skills, follow your coach's guidance and tap early. Stop immediately on a tap.

FOCUS 01

Escapes

Recover guard or reverse the position using movements you have been taught.

- START** Choose one familiar pin: side control or mount. Ask your coach if you need help setting it up.
- AGREE** Bottom works to recover guard or reverse; top works to maintain the pin. Leave submissions out of this task.
- NOTICE** Which part of the pin can you change? Try one taught response instead of several rushed attempts.
- RESET** When bottom escapes, return to the agreed start. Swap roles; pause if either partner needs to.
- REFLECT** What helped you create space? What kept you pinned?

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FOCUS 02

Guard retention

Keep or recover your guard as your partner tries to pass.

- START** Use a familiar open guard, with one partner on bottom and the other preparing to pass.
- AGREE** Top tries to pass and establish the agreed pin; bottom tries to keep or recover guard. No submissions.
- NOTICE** When does your partner get past your legs? Identify the moment before guard is lost.
- RESET** After a settled pass, stop and return to the same guard. Swap roles so both partners practise.
- REFLECT** What connection did you lose first? What helped you recover?

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FOCUS 03

Passing

Move past the legs and establish a stable top position.

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|----------------|--|
| START | Begin in one familiar guard with you on top. Choose a passing approach you have already learned. |
| AGREE | You work to pass; your partner works to retain guard. Agree the finishing pin and leave submissions out. |
| NOTICE | Separate getting past the legs from settling the position. Where does your partner recover guard? |
| RESET | Once the agreed pin is established, return to the starting guard. Swap roles when agreed. |
| REFLECT | Where did the pass stall: entry, clearing the legs or settling? |

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FOCUS 04

Control

Maintain a pin while responding to your partner's attempts to escape.

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| START | Begin on top in a familiar pin, such as side control or mount. Use your coach's positioning guidance. |
| AGREE | Top maintains the position; bottom works to escape or recover guard. Leave submissions out. |
| NOTICE | Which connection changes when your partner moves? Respond with taught positioning, not just more squeezing. |
| RESET | If bottom escapes, return to the agreed pin and swap roles. Pause whenever either partner needs to. |
| REFLECT | What kept the position stable? What movement opened the escape? |

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FOCUS 05

Pace

Notice when you rush, and practise making deliberate decisions.

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|----------------|---|
| START | Use a familiar positional round. Choose a task you and your partner both understand. |
| AGREE | Set a mutually manageable pace. Either partner can ask to slow down, pause or reset at any time. |
| NOTICE | Look for one rushed decision or unnecessary grip. Keep useful effort; avoid suddenly disengaging. |
| RESET | If the pace rises beyond what you agreed, pause, talk and restart. Follow normal tapping rules. |
| REFLECT | When did you rush? What changed when you gave the task your attention? |

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FOCUS 06

Reflection

Take one specific observation from the round into your next practice.

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|------------------|---|
| START | Use this card straight after any round, while one moment is still fresh in your memory. |
| AGREE | Ask your partner for one useful observation. Offer them one in return; keep feedback specific. |
| NOTICE | Describe what happened: the position, your action and your partner's response. Avoid scoring the whole round. |
| NEXT STEP | Choose one small thing to test next time. Ask your coach if you do not know how to approach it. |
| REFLECT | What will you repeat or change? Add that single focus to your training planner. |

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Breathing awareness

An addendum to the six focus cards.

NOTICE FIRST.

Observe your breathing without trying to impose a fixed rhythm on a live round.

01 Before training

Away from partner pressure, sit or stand comfortably and notice a few ordinary breaths. Let breathing stay gentle and unforced; there is no target count to reach.

02 During controlled practice

Agree an easy, familiar task with your partner. Notice whether you hold your breath when gripping, moving or feeling uncertain. If the task makes observation difficult, pause or reduce the resistance together.

03 After the round

Name one moment when your breathing changed. What was happening? Were you rushing, gripping hard or unsure what to do? Record the observation without treating it as a diagnosis.

Keep the focus appropriate

These prompts use ordinary breathing. Do not add deliberate breath holds, rapid breathing or a nose-only rule. Never delay a tap or stay in an unsafe position to complete a breathing task. If practice feels uncomfortable or makes you lightheaded, stop.

A SEPARATE BREATHING MODULE IS PLANNED

This addendum introduces awareness only. Guided breathing lessons will be developed as a separate BJJ Over 40 module; they are not included in these cards.

Keep your notes in the free training planner:

[Free BJJ Training Planner](#)

Background reading

[SBG: training philosophy](#)

[NHS: gentle breathing at rest](#)

These sources inform the training context and gentle breathing guidance, not a tested BJJ breathing protocol.