

# Solo Wrist-Locks Practice



by Keith Pascal

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If expert counseling of any kind, including legal, is required, the services of competent professional people should be sought for each specific area in question. And you should do a lot of your own research too.

Always practice wrist locks and martial arts with caution. Be responsible for your own safety and the safety of your (passive) practice partners.

**Thanks to Jay Frasier, Ben Rayack, and Mike Russell for acting as wrist-lock models..**

**Thanks to Quinn Pascal for photography.**

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# Introduction



A lot of people have written to me not knowing how to practice wrist locks. It's not that they don't know any locks; they can't seem to find practice partners.

Also, a fair number of people have written claiming that they lack the motivation to get out there and learn how to wrist lock properly ... effectively.

For those in search of either practice partners or developing the motivation to learn to effect joint locks, I recommend **58 Martial-Arts Motivation Questions Answered**.

Even with the guarantee that readers will both get motivated and find partners for training, there are many martial artists who really do want a way to train without finding someone to work out with on a regular basis.

They want to know if they can learn to wrist lock solo.

And my answer is ... well ... sort of.

Actually, this ebooklet is one answer to the challenge of solo practice with wrist locks. By the time, you reach the end of the booklet, you'll have several options for solo, or "almost-solo," practice.

To your wrist-locking success,

*Keith*

# Limbering Exercises

## (A Lame Excuse)

I remember long ago, I went in search of ways to practice solo. The best answer that I could find at the time was the suggestion to use solo time for limbering exercises.

These experts reasoned that if you didn't have a practice partner, you couldn't really practice joint locks effectively. So, your best bet was to use the time to make your joints more flexible and thus less prone to injury.

No offense intended to the other wrist-lock experts out there, but I really do think that's a lame excuse. If a student comes to you with a desire to practice locks solo, then doing a few stretches will be a poor solution to his or her challenge.

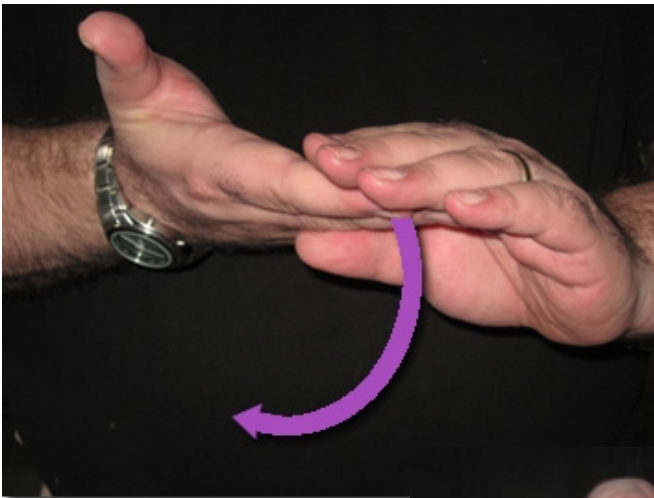
Note: I think stretching one's limbs is an excellent idea for wrist lock artists. I just think it's not a good solution for those wishing to practice on their own. Make sure you stretch, before you practice, but don't bend your joints to extreme and think that you are learning practical-application wrist locks.

## Practicing Alone

My first suggestion, which is only a little better than the stretch-out routines mentioned in the last section, is to practice joint resistance.

Use one hand to grab the other. You have a variety of possibilities.

Grab and then bend. You don't want to hurt yourself — no masochistic locking allowed.



Try to effect a lock on yourself. Experiment — cause yourself a little discomfort. Know at what point more pressure would be painful. When you feel the uncomfortable pressure associated with a joint lock, hold it for a second or two, and then release.



You aren't practicing the full lock — you just want to discover the finite point, where the pain begins.





## Why do this?

When you learn to identify the proper position on yourself with a little locking pressure, then you learn to identify the proper position better on others. Take my word for it — the familiarity will transfer.

It will help you to find the torqued position on your attackers much more quickly.



Don't mistake this for complete wrist-lock training; it's not. But it is a lot closer than just doing a little yoga for the wrists.

Give these mini-lock positions a try. See what you can learn by locking yourself. And if worse comes to worse, you can always turn it into a limbering exercise for the tendons around your joints.

## Quick Thought Before Moving On

Remember to switch hands.

Give equal practice to both sides. Spend time using your right hand to lock your left, and then switch. Use your left hand to lock your right.

If you are really dominant with one of your hands, then consider spending even more time on the weak side.

Bruce Lee said to lead with your best ... but he realized that you might have to effect a wrist lock with either hand.



<= Left locking right

Right locking left =>



# Robot Locks and Other Fantasies

Don't you wish we had a futuristic robot that we could practice martial arts on all day long?

They'd act and behave like humans, but you'd be able to program them for specific martial encounters, and you'd be able to beat on them, without harm. (Oh, and did I mention an reset or reboot button if you knock their block off?)

Unfortunately, we aren't there yet. And if the army does have mechanical training partners, I don't think they are within our budgets.

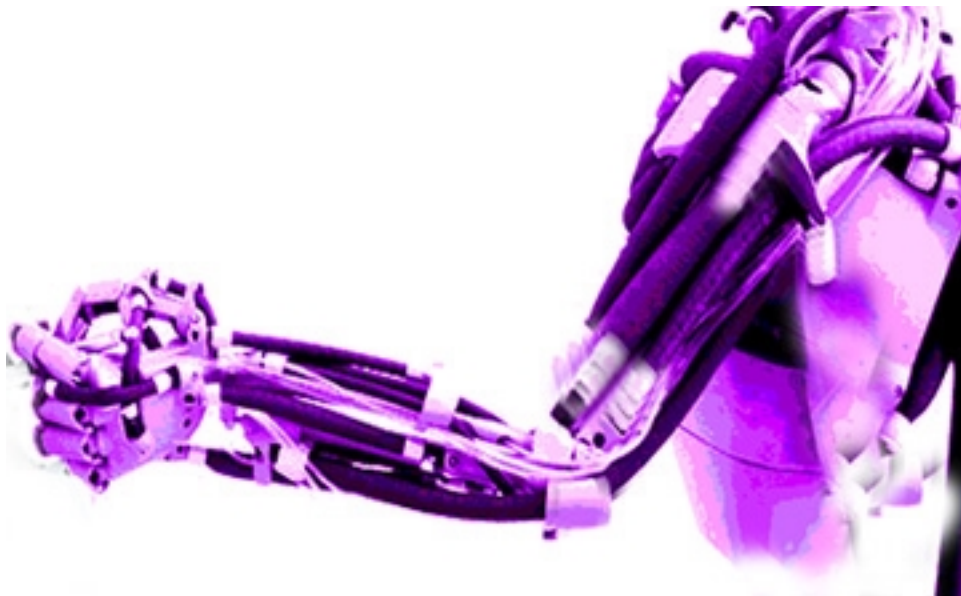
The next best option would be to create an arm with an elbow joint, wrist joints, and finger joints. You'd be able to twist and tweak the arm, in order to practice your locks.

Before you go out and hire a robotics expert to construct a practice arm, consider other options. There are problems with practicing on an artificial arm:

- It still only simulates realism. And it's not very accurate in its portrayal.
- It doesn't resist according to the type of pressure that you apply. Humans adapt as they resist.
- You don't get the feeling of locking an actual human. It won't "feel" the same.
- It can't tell you when you have reached the pain point — point of no return.
- You don't learn to generalize. You need to lock all sorts of different people, in to be able to ... effectively lock all sort of people.

Even though building a practice arm isn't your best option, it's still an option. If you are the type to outfit your training area with all sorts of handmade practice automata, ala Bruce Lee, then go for it.

In my opinion, practicing martial arts against such a mechanical device should be used to build strength, not to teach precise technique.



# Passive Partners

Finally, we come to one of my favorite ways to practice wrist locks without an active partner.

It's really quite simple: Just find someone who will lend a wrist for a little passive practice.

The key to making this type of practice successful is:

- finding someone who doesn't have to go out of his or her way to lend a hand (pardon the pun)
- avoiding hurting your willing participant. He or she should barely notice that you are practicing. This means you can't progress very far into the lock. Be gentle.
- using a friend or relative who is engaged in a different quiet activity, like reading a book or watching tv. You don't want your partner to get bored. After all, you want to practice for more than a few minutes.

Note: If you can only practice for a few minutes at a time, so be it. Try to get in a lot of mini practices. If you can, try to devote at least 10 minutes (hopefully a lot more) to passive practice.

# How to Practice Single Wrist Locks on Your Passive Partner

If you are practicing single wrist or joint locks, then you want to lock just to the point that you see a slight bend of a remote joint. For example:

Start a Double 90 until you see the elbow raise.

Effect your Basic Lock on the wrist only until you see movement at the shoulder.

Do Live Long and Prosper (Spock fingers) only until your passive partner's chest drops forward just a hair.

**(See 'Wrist Locks: From Protecting Yourself to Becoming an Expert' for specific lock instructions.)**

Don't lock your passive partner to the point of causing pain.

After all, you want to make use of this passive partner over and over again, right?

So, be kind.



See how precise you can get. When you develop true finesse, you'll see all of the above movements (and others), but your TV-watching partner won't notice.

Just a hair of a movement will be enough to let you know that you could take the lock a lot further.



## Solo Pattern Practice

You can get a in a super solo practice with patterns. It's a way to cram a lot of locking into a very short period of time.

I don't know about you, but when I practice patterns, I tend to whip my practice partners around a little. And when I pattern practice with my wife, I expect her to reverse and counter some of the locks and to apply a few locks of her own.

It goes back and forth. We create lock flow.

You don't have this benefit when you practice with a passive hand. In fact, you have to be super, super gentle with your practice partner. If you flop him or her around like a live fish in the bottom of a boat, then you'll lose your partner in just a few minutes.

The key is to avoid the mini-movements described in the solo lock practice. This time, you don't want to create any secondary-joint movement.

When I speed through a pattern, it almost feels like I am the one moving around my partner's arm, rather than me using the arm to move my opponent. I start the lock, and then "I" move a little more, rather than bending my partner's arm.





Then I flow into the next lock.

This way, you can speed through a bunch of locks while your friend or relative completely ignores you.

After you feel smooth with one lock, you mix and match the order, and develop new patterns.

Passive practice partners really are the way to practice when you don't have a martial-arts peer available for training. You can gain a lot of benefit, if you can find someone willing to allow you to do some light-locking experimentation.

Before you run off and start practicing the locks that you know, I have two bonus methods for great solo wrist-locks practice.

**Read on ...**

# Bonus Training Method One

There is an entire chapter on teaching wrist locks in *Wrist Locks: From Protecting Yourself (Revised and Updated)*. Often the best way to learn is by teaching.

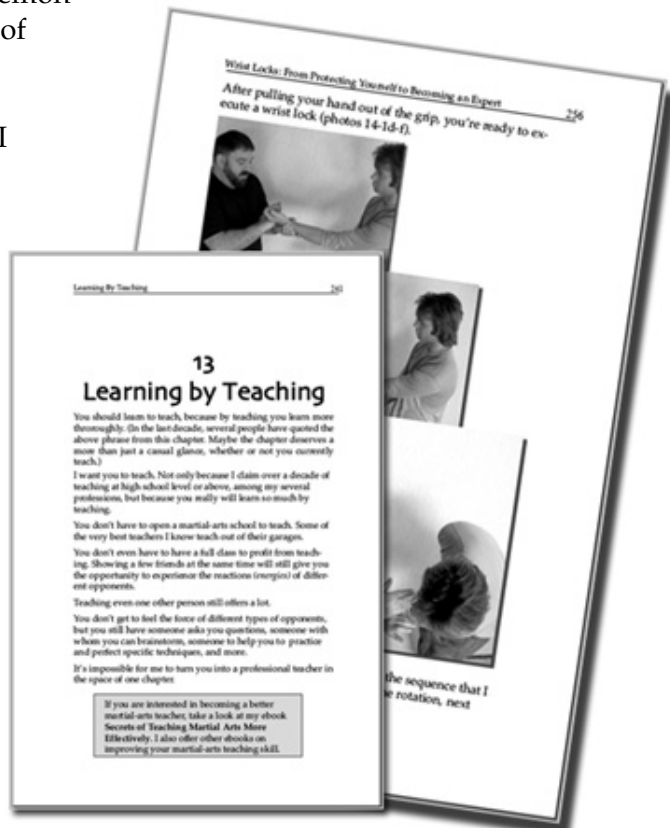
Well, one way I like to practice is buy teaching a lock to someone.

I am very good at turning the conversation to locks. Then, I leave a few openings in the conversation for the person to suggest that I demonstrate ... without hurting, of course.

After the demonstration, I offer to teach the participant how to lock. And I mention that it will take less than 15 minutes.

If the person is interested, then I have a practice partner for 15 minutes.

I demonstrate, and then offer a wrist for locking. Then I correct, and demonstrate a few more times.



Once again, it's time for him or her to practice on me.

At some point while practicing, I counter or reverse the lock being applied. This starts a whole new dialogue between our hands.

And of course, I offer to teach the counter and a few variations.

As my mentor, Steve Golden, says, "I do my best to make my student as good as he or she can be. This forces me to get better. I gain nothing by holding back."

So, do you know anyone who might like to learn a lock from you?

## Bonus Training Method Two

This method truly does fall under the category of solo practice. No practice partners needed. Not even passive ones.

I love to practice this method at parties, or at the mall, in crowded stores.

Really?

Yes, really.

Have you ever read or heard about the studies where three groups of people were tested for making free throws with a basketball.

Each group shot baskets from the free-throw line. They did a pretest, to see their skill before practice.

Then one group practiced shooting every day for a month.

The second group practiced in their minds for the month.

And the final group was the control group. They did nothing.

The results were that the second group improved almost as much as the group that practiced for the entire 30 days.

**Mental practice is powerful.**

With that in mind (yes, another pun), I practice wrist locks while people watching. Since I know a lot of locks, I imagine locking someone with the least amount of movement possible. (Remember, this is all going on in your head. Don't actually lock someone ... or stalk someone in a department store.)

If someone at a party is holding a drink, then I am thinking about a Basic Lock. If I see someone holding a pair of binoculars or holding up something to the light, then I imagine the weird lock with no name. And if the imagined assailant is reaching for something on a lower shelf, then I imagine arm bar.

I also imagine having to hit or kick first, and what possible next responses my aggressor might try.

All of this is going on in my head.

And guess what. You can do the same kind of mental-shadow practice watching TV.

Is mental practice as good as the real thing? No, not by a long shot in my opinion. Especially if you are a complete beginner and don't have the feel for wrist locks, yet.

On the other hand, if you can apply a decent wrist lock, then mental practice can be very effective.

And that brings us to the end of our time together. I hope you found this ebooklet to be of some use.

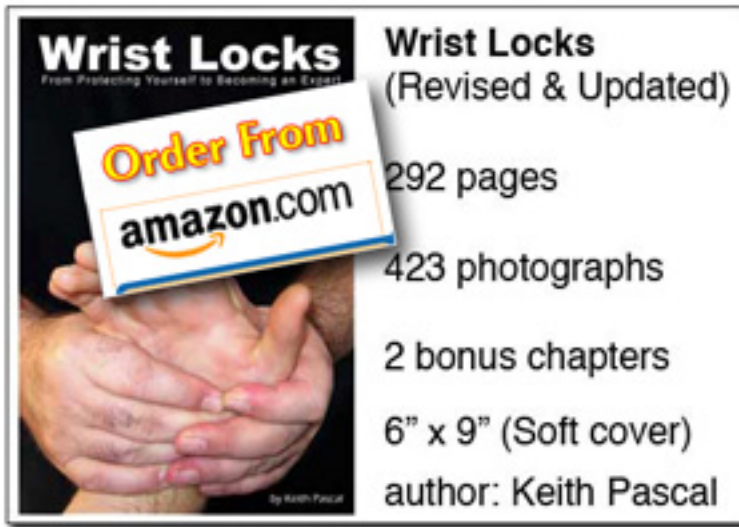
If you'd like to continue our wrist-lock discussion, and actually learn some practical locks, then I'd like to recommend my book, **Wrist Locks: From Protecting Yourself to Becoming an Expert**. (Make sure you get the revised soft cover edition. It has 423 new photos, some bonus chapters and a few new locks.)

You can find **Wrist Locks: From Protecting Yourself to Becoming an Expert** at **Amazon.com** or order directly from the publisher, **Kerwin Benson Publishing**.

To your wrist-locking success,

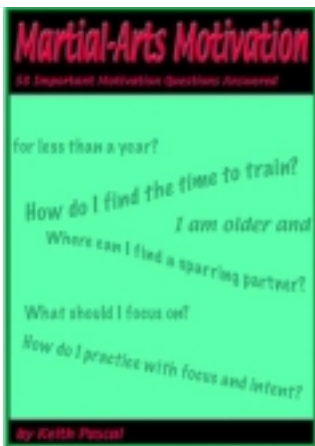
*Keith*

**PS On the next page are links to the book and ebook mentioned in this ebooklet. If you need other recommendations, feel free to write me ([Keith@KeithPascal.com](mailto:Keith@KeithPascal.com)).**



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