

Arm-Bar Resistors

by Keith Pascal

Some schools try to take a punch directly into an arm bar. Other, more practical schools teach you to slow the punch down before you attempt a lock. (See Chapter 3, in the first part of 'arm bars' in **Wrist Locks: From Protecting Yourself to Becoming an Expert**, for more on slowing down the initial attack.)

Let's say you know how to slow down the initial punch with a block or an offensive response. You are in position to snap on a powerful arm bar. You pull the arm out, turn the wrist palm up, and torque. You are ready to press down on the spot between the elbow and the triceps, except...

You find someone more powerful than you.

He resists your pressure. How are you going to muscle his arm down?

If he resists any more, he'll have control of you. Not good.

So, what do you do?

Many styles would recommend that you give up the arm bar, and immediately try something else. Their logic is that if something isn't working, change it.

I agree, that you should try something else — but I wouldn't be so eager to give up on the arm bar.

Think leg sweeps and kicks.

Here's the way the sequence could progress:

1. You slow down your attacker's punch enough to try an arm bar.

2. You begin to apply pressure as you gain precise positioning

3. Except the bad guy resists your efforts. Even throwing your weight into the arm bar, you can't drop him.

4. He begins to stand up.

5. You distract him with a solid kick to the leg closest to yours. In other words, concentrate on kicking to the shortest distance.

6. Your attacker drops a little from the force of your kick. You wanted your sweep to have more of an affect, but it does distract just enough. So, once again...

7. You apply arm-bar pressure. This time, the pressure is enough to drop your opponent.

8. You have gained control.

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My goal with this tactic is to distract my adversary enough to re-apply my arm bar. Sure, I will try to kick with considerable force, but it's not of paramount importance.

A good damaging kick could be considered a bonus. But sometimes, I kick just enough to control up top, with the arm bar.

Let's end this tip with some kick considerations:

* If you are behind your opponent, then try a kick to the back of the leg, behind the knee. Try to collapse your opponent's leg forward.

* For a lot of damage, kick right into the side of the leg. You aim for the side, at about knee level, from wherever you happen to be positioned.

* If your opponent moves behind you a little, so your leg is in front, then you could try a sweep back against the shins or the knees. With sweeps, make sure your opponent can't step over your leg.

So, what do you do if someone snaps an arm bar on you?

You'll find three excellent reversals and counters specifically for the type of arm bar in this article. And there is a further consideration of counters and reversals in Chapter 9 of **Wrist Locks: From Protecting Yourself to Becoming an Expert**.

