

TKD Self-Defense for Wrist Grabs, Shoulder Grabs, Head Locks, and Bear Hug

Update: 01/09/24

1. Straight Across Wrist Hold Release—1 Hand (i.e., the Attacker grabs your left wrist with his right hand).
 - Quickly turn your left wrist to the side of your attacker's thumb to break their hold. At the same time, step forward and across with your left leg to use your weight and leverage to help break the wrist hold;
 - In an upward sweeping motion, elbow your attacker in the chin with the left elbow;
 - If the attacker's face is still in close proximity, elbow the attacker again in the face by moving the left elbow in the opposite direction from your initial elbow strike
 - The above steps also work for the case where the attacker grabs your right wrist with his left hand – just change the sides of your response techniques.

2. Straight Across Both Wrist Hold Release - 2 Hands (i.e., the Attacker grabs your left wrist with his right hand AND your right wrist with his left hand at the same time).
 - The same as number 1 above—you only have to break the wrist hold on one arm and perform the same response techniques as in 1 above.
 - If you are right-handed, you probably want to break the hold on your right wrist so you can strike with the right elbow in a stronger and more coordinated manner.

3. Cross-Wrist Hold Release—1 Hand (i.e., the Attacker grabs your left wrist with his left hand).
 - Quickly turn your wrist to the side of your attacker's thumb to break their hold. At the same time, step forward and across with your right leg to use your weight and leverage to help break the wrist hold;
 - In an upward sweeping motion, elbow your attacker in the chin with your right elbow;
 - If the attacker's face is still in close proximity, elbow the attacker again in the face by moving the right elbow in the opposite direction from your initial elbow strike
 - The above steps also work for the case where the attacker grabs your right wrist with his right hand – just change the sides of your response techniques.

4. Alternative Cross Wrist Hold Release -- 1 Hand (i.e., Attacker grabs your left wrist with his left hand).
 - Step back with the left foot while doing a right knife hand strike to the attacker's left forearm to break the wrist hold;
 - Left reverse high punch to the chin; make sure to turn your hips into the punch for power, ending in a front stance.
 - The above steps also work for the case where the attacker grabs your right wrist with his right hand – just change the sides of your response techniques.

5. The attacker uses 2 of his hands to grab 1 of your wrists.
 - Make a fist with the hand whose wrist was grabbed;
 - Take your other hand, grab the fingers and knuckles on the fist of the wrist that was grabbed;
 - Step back and, at the same time, break the hold by using the other hand to pull up the fist – pop it up and out of there, exerting force against the attacker’s two thumbs;
 - Use the forearm of the wrist that was grabbed and place it in the way of the attacker’s two hands to block any potential punches;
 - At the same time, take your other hand and reverse punch the attacker in the face.

6. The attacker uses 2 hands to grab your shoulders (or uniform lapels) from the front.
 - Raise one arm straight up and move over the attacker’s two forearms and then down, trapping the attacker’s arms under your armpit. At the same time, step across and slightly forward with the foot on the same side as the arm used to trap the attacker’s forearms.
 - Use your other hand to grab the attacker’s hands and secure them against your body;
 - In an upward sweeping motion, elbow your attacker in the face with your elbow (the same arm that was originally used to trap the attacker’s arms under your armpit);
 - If the attacker’s face is still in close proximity, elbow the attacker again in the face by moving your arm in the opposite direction from your initial elbow strike

7. Alternative: The attacker uses 2 hands to grab your shoulders (or uniform lapels) from the front.
 - Use this when you need to injure your attacker seriously;
 - Because your arms and hands are free when an attacker grabs your shoulders or uniform lapels from the front, use both thumbs to do an eye strike on each of the attacker’s eyes.
 - While letting the attacker grab onto your front lapels, reach around the outside of their arms and up to their face and jam your thumbs into their eyes; if they are wearing glasses, go under the lenses and jam your thumbs into their eyes;
 - As the attacker recoils away from you, do a front snap kick to their kneecap or groin.

8. The attacker uses 2 hands to grab your shoulders from behind (i.e., similar to #6 above but from a different direction).
 - Raise one arm straight up, turn around, and move it over the attacker’s two forearms and then down, trapping the attacker’s arms under your armpit. At the same time, step behind and slightly across with the foot on the same side as the arm used to trap the attacker’s forearms;
 - Use your other arm’s elbow to elbow the attacker in the face.

- If the attacker's face is still in close proximity, elbow the attacker again in the face by moving your arm in the opposite direction from your initial elbow strike

9. Head Lock Release – the attacker is on your right side:

- Take your left hand and protect your face from any potential punches;
- Use your right hand to reach up and around to place your hand on the attacker's face;
- Hook your right thumb under the attacker's nose and push the base of the nose back and away from you;
- At the same time that you hook the attacker's nose with your thumb, step your right foot back and behind the attacker's legs;
- When you push the attacker's nose away from you, your right foot and/or knee can act to trip the attacker and make him fall backward to the ground;
- Alternatively, if the attacker does not fall, two shock zones are available to you: 1) strike the attacker in the throat with a left bear's paw, or 2) left hammer fist attacker in the solar plexus.

10. Head Lock Release – the attacker is on your left side:

- Take your right hand and protect your face from any potential punches;
- Use your left hand to reach up and around to place your hand on the attacker's face;
- Hook your left thumb under the attacker's nose and push the base of the nose back and away from you;
- At the same time that you hook the attacker's nose with your thumb, step your left foot back and behind the attacker;
- When you push the attacker's nose away from you, your left foot and/or knee can act to trip the attacker and make him fall backward to the ground;
- Alternatively, if the attacker does not fall, two shock zones are available to you: 1) strike the attacker in the throat with a right bear's paw, or 2) right hammer fist attacker in the solar plexus.

11. Bear Hug From Behind – The attacker grabs you under your arms but around your chest (i.e., your arms are free):

- The first thing to do is to drop your weight to lower your center of gravity. This will make it tougher for the attacker to pick you up off your feet and throw you. At the same time as you drop your weight, inhale deeply to expand your chest and stomach area.
- Grab the top of the attacker's left wrist with your right hand. Slip your left hand under the attacker's left forearm and grab your right wrist with your left hand. If you need to create some space for your left hand to go under the attacker's left forearm, exhale deeply to create the space and push out with your right hand that has grabbed the attacker's left wrist. After your left hand is under the attacker's left forearm and grabbing your right wrist, you now have an arm bar lever on your attacker. Lift up and around on the attacker's left forearm while stepping out with your right foot, applying leverage to their arm and twisting

it behind their back. You now have control of the attacker and can follow up with numerous techniques.

- Alternatively, if you do not want to attempt the arm bar lever defense, you can: 1) elbow your attacker in the head, or 2) head butt them by shoving the back of your head into their face, or 3) stomp their foot. All 3 of these defenses can loosen or break their hold so you can escape the bear hug from behind.

12. Bear Hug From Behind – The attacker grabs you over your arms (i.e., your arms are not free):

- The first thing to do is to drop your weight to lower your center of gravity. This will make it tougher for the attacker to pick you up off your feet and throw you. At the same time as you drop your weight, inhale deeply to expand your chest and stomach area.
- Punch both your arms straight out. This action will loosen the attacker's hold on your arms.
- Move your two hands inside his two arms in front of your face to protect against a chokehold.
- Pivot and face your attacker while keeping your hands up.
- Push both hands against his chin and drive him back. Alternatively, use your fingers to claw his eyes out.
- As the opponent falls backward, do a snap kick to kneecap to disable the attacker's mobility.