

UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
FIELD MEDICAL TRAINING BATTALION-EAST
PSC BOX 20042
CAMP LEJEUNE, NORTH CAROLINA 28542-0042

STUDENT READ-AHEAD MATERIAL

EXECUTE COUNTERS TO CHOKES AND HOLDS

MCCS-TAN-1010

MARINE CORPS EXPEDITIONARY AND COMBAT SKILLS TRAINING

M03L753

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1. **SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS**. To prevent injury during training, ensure the following:

a. Select a training area with soft footing such as a sandy or grassy area. If training mats are available, use them. A hard surface area is not appropriate for training counters to chokes and holds.

b. Have students perform the techniques slowly at first, and increase the speed of execution as they become more proficient.

c. Never apply a choke at full force. During training on counters, the opponent should place his forearm around the student's throat without placing pressure against the trachea.

d. Once a technique is applied to the point the student is uncomfortable, the student must "tap out" to indicate to his opponent to immediately release pressure or stop the technique. The student "taps out" by firmly tapping his hand several times on any part of the opponent's body that will get his attention.

e. Never execute softening techniques at full force or full speed.

2. **PURPOSE**. The purpose of counters to chokes and hold is to be able to remove yourself from the choke and hold in order for you to counter attack and regain the tactical advantage.

3. **PRINCIPLES**. Regardless of the choke, there are two principle actions that should be taken to counter an opponent. Clear the Airway and Tuck the Chin.

a. Clear Airway. A choke can cause unconsciousness in eight to thirteen seconds. Therefore, the first movement in any counter to a choke is to clear your airway so you can breathe.

(1) Distracters can be used before or after you have attempted to clear the airway. These techniques include groin strikes, an eye gouge, foot stomps, etc. Softening techniques are used to loosen an opponent's hold.

b. Tuck the Chin. Once your airway is clear, tuck your chin to prevent the opponent from reapplying the choke.

4. **FUNDAMENTALS**. All techniques taught during this lesson are for right-handed students. Left-handed students should reverse instructions as necessary. Chokes are very effective techniques but they are more difficult to execute than a hold such as a headlock. If a choke is not executed properly, it often results in a headlock. Headlocks are not taught in the Martial Arts Program because more effective chokes are trained. In addition, a hold limits your actions because, while it ties the opponent up, it also ties you up and prevents you from executing finishing techniques. Because headlocks are a common move by an opponent, especially in close range engagements, we will train counters to headlocks.

a. COUNTER TO A REAR CHOKE.

(1) Purpose. The counter to a rear choke is used when the opponent approaches from the rear and puts his right arm around your throat. To train the technique, have the student:

(2) Technique.

(a) With both hands grab the aggressor's wrist and his forearm (at the radial nerve) and pull down just enough to clear your airway. Once the airway is clear, tuck your chin to protect your airway and to prevent the aggressor from re-applying the choke. At the same time drop your body weight down, stepping out with your right leg. This places you more to the aggressor's right side and also makes space for your left foot to step through.

(b) With your left foot, step behind the opponent's right leg keeping both of your legs bent making contact on your opponent with your left hip (almost in a squatting position).

(c) It is important to keep your legs bent because this places your hips lower than your opponent's hips so you can easily off-balance him. Bend your legs to the point that you can still maintain your own balance. Legs need to be in a squatting position with enough balance to maintain control.

(d) At the same time turn forcefully to the left, strike and drive your left elbow into the opponent's torso while rotating your hips and pivoting to your left. The opponent should fall to his back or side causing him to lose his grip.

(e) Rapidly return to the basic warrior stance, ready for any follow-on techniques.

b. COUNTER TO A REAR HEADLOCK.

(1) Purpose. The counter to a rear headlock is used when the opponent approaches from the rear and puts his right arm around your neck, bending you forward and locking your head against his hip.

(2) Technique.

(a) Begin by having the student bend forward at the waist. The opponent faces in the same direction as the student and places his right arm around the student's neck, his forearm across the student's throat.

(b) With both hands, grasp the opponent's wrist and forearm at the radial nerve and pull down to clear your airway. Once the airway is clear, tuck your chin to protect your airway and to prevent the opponent from re-applying the choke. Once you have cleared your airway and tucked your chin in a choke, you are in a headlock.

(c) Take a 12-15 inch step forward with your right foot to off balance your opponent. At the same time reach over your opponent's right shoulder with your left hand. Once off balancing has been achieved grab any part of the opponent's face with the left hand (chin, nose, and eyes) and pull back while rising to a standing position.

(d) With your right hand, execute a hammer fist strike to the opponent's exposed throat. For safety, the opponent should bring his free arm up to protect his throat. In addition contact can be made on your opponent's chest when executing this technique during practice.

Ensure students are off balancing their opponents by keeping their hips lower than their opponents while rotating hips through the technique and following through with the elbow strike. The opponent's momentum from the elbow strike should carry the opponent to the deck.

For the counter to the rear choke, ensure students execute the techniques slowly. The opponent should not be thrown forcefully to the deck.

4. **FUNDAMENTALS**. All techniques taught during this lesson are for right-handed students. Left-handed students should reverse instructions as necessary. A headlock is a hold in which your head is being controlled or held; a bear hug is a hold in which your torso and arms are being controlled or held.

a. COUNTER TO A REAR BEARHUG.

(1) Purpose. The counter to the bear hug is used when an opponent approaches from the front or rear. The opponent will grasp around the arms so you end up in a vulnerable position with no use of the arms.

(2) Technique.

(a) The aggressor approaches the Marine from behind and applies a bear hug with the Marine's arms included in his grasp.

(b) Drop your body weight down, stepping out with your right leg. This places you more to the aggressor's right side and also makes space for your left foot to step through. Simultaneously hook the aggressor's arms with your hands, slightly flaring your elbows, preventing his arms from slipping off or up into a choke.

(c) Step behind the aggressor's right leg with your left foot, keeping both legs bent (almost in a squatting position). The left side of your body should be against the aggressor's. Your left hip is in contact with the aggressor's right thigh/buttocks, breaking his balance.

(d) While keeping positive control of your opponent's arms, turn forcefully to the left, strike and drive your left elbow into the aggressor's torso while rotating your hips and pivoting to your left. The opponent should fall to his back or side causing him to lose his grip.

(e) Rapidly return to the basic warrior stance, ready for any follow-on techniques.