



# COACHING CERTIFICATION MANUAL

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Spreading Jiu-Jitsu across Saskatchewan

THE SASKTACHEWAN BRAZILIAN JIU-JITSU FEDERATION INC.

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## Introduction

Welcome to the Saskatchewan Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu Federation (SBJJF) Coaching Manual. This document serves as a comprehensive guide for coaches at all ages and levels, from beginner to elite competition. It provides essential information, methodologies, and standards to ensure high-quality coaching and athlete development in Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu (BJJ) across Saskatchewan.



## Vision

To build a thriving community of Brazilian Jiu Jitsu practitioners, fostering excellence in sport and character throughout Saskatchewan.

## Mission

The Saskatchewan Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu Federation (SBJJF) was created so that the sport of Brazilian Jiu Jitsu will be recognized and grow in the province of Saskatchewan. Our main goals are to organize and regulate the sport on a Provincial level, in cooperation with the Canadian Jiu Jitsu Association (CJA); the Saskatchewan Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu Federation has incorporated the official competition rules of Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu. The SBJJF is also actively involved in promoting and sanctioning high quality tournaments that are crucial for the technical evolution of the sport and since Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu is constantly evolving and becoming more popular around the globe, we're creating more stabilization in its growth.

## Values

**Integrity:** Upholding the highest standards of honesty and sportsmanship.

**Respect:** Encouraging mutual respect among athletes, coaches, and officials.

**Excellence:** Striving for continuous improvement and achievement.

**Inclusion:** Ensuring accessibility and diversity within the sport.



## History and Principles of Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu

The history of Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu (BJJ) dates back to the early 20th century in Brazil, where it was developed by the Gracie family. BJJ was created as a result of the Gracie family's desire to improve traditional Japanese Jiu-Jitsu techniques to make them more effective in real-life combat situations.

The Gracie family continued to refine and develop BJJ over the years, eventually founding the first BJJ academy in Brazil in the 1920s.

The Gracie family later moved to the United States, where they began to spread the knowledge of BJJ through a series of challenges known as the "Gracie Challenge". These challenges involved challenging practitioners of other martial arts to no-holds-barred fights, with the goal of demonstrating the effectiveness of BJJ techniques.

BJJ is based on the principle of leverage and technique over strength and size. BJJ techniques are designed to enable a smaller, weaker individual to defend themselves against a larger, stronger attacker by using leverage, joint locks, and chokes to neutralize the attacker's strength.

BJJ also places a strong emphasis on sparring and live training, as this allows practitioners to test and refine their techniques in a realistic, dynamic environment. This live training is often done in a competitive setting, with BJJ tournaments being held around the world at various levels of competition.



Figure 1 Members of the Gracie family

## Organizational Structure

### Provincial Leadership

#### SKBJJ Federation Board of Directors

- President
- Vice President
- Treasurer
- Secretary
- Assistant secretary

### Committees

#### Coaching Development

- Chair of Coaches Committee

##### Roles of the Position:

- Responsible for maintaining the contact list of registered coaches with SaskBJJ.
- Confirm and provide information to all coaches with an online course for Respect in Sport.
- Provide dates and information for NCCP certification for all registered SaskBJJ coaches.
- Provide opportunities for coaching development.

#### Referee Development

- Chair of Referee Committee

##### Roles of the Position:

- Responsible for maintaining a contact database for all referees trained by SaskBJJ through provided clinics or courses.
- Arrange referee training a minimum of once per year.
- Assist tournament organizers to secure referees for SaskBJJ sanctioned tournaments.
- Act as head referee, on availability, at all SaskBJJ sanctioned tournaments.

## Membership

- Chair of Membership Committee

### Roles of the Position:

- Maintain all online and offline memberships.
- Attend all sanctioned SaskBJJ tournaments on availability.

## Coaching Structure

- Provincial Head Coach
- Club Coaches
- Assistant Coaches

## Coaching Certification Pathway

### Level 1: Introductory Coach

#### Requirements:

- White belt or Blue Belt.
- Minimum age 16 years old
- Respect in Sport certification
- Basic Coaching Principles
- Ethical Considerations
- Safety Protocols

## Rules and Regulations of BJJ

### Communication

#### Training:

**Online Modules:** Covering topics such as introduction to coaching, basic techniques, rules and regulations of BJJ, safety protocols, and ethical considerations.

**Practical Workshops:** Hands-on sessions focusing on teaching basic BJJ techniques, managing a class, and fostering a positive learning environment.

All coaches are encouraged to take the referee certification course offered by CJA and the SBJJF.

## Certification:

**Theoretical Assessments:** Mentorship sessions with an experienced coach. Verbal discussions and preliminary testing on basic coaching and development concepts.

**Practical Assessments:** Demonstration and evaluation of coaching ability through assisting with regular classes, under the direction and supervision of a Level 2 (or higher) experienced coach.

## Level 2: Intermediate Coach

### Requirements:

- Blue to Purple Belt.
- Minimum age 18 years old
- Respect in Sport certification

**Coaching Experience:** Minimum of 1-year active coaching experience, preferably as an assistant coach.

- Intermediate Coaching Principles
- Ethical Considerations
- Safety Protocols and first aid certification
- Rules and Regulations of BJJ

## Communication

### Training:

**Advanced Coaching Techniques:** In-depth modules on advanced BJJ techniques, effective coaching methodologies, and athlete management.

**Long-Term Athlete Development (LTAD) Principles:** Understanding the stages of athlete development, designing training programs tailored to different age groups and skill levels.

All coaches are encouraged to take the referee certification course offered by CJA and the SBJJF.

## Certification:

**Theoretical Assessments:** Continuation of mentorship with an experienced coach, covering advanced techniques, LTAD principles, and effective coaching practices.

**Practical Assessments:** Coaching demonstration with intermediate-level students, showcasing ability to teach advanced techniques and manage class dynamics.

## Level 3: Club Head Coach

### Requirements:

- Purple to Black Belt. (Consideration will be given to a Blue Belt with a letter of recommendation from an affiliate Black Belt.)
- Minimum age 18 years old
- Respect in Sport certification

**Coaching Experience:** Minimum of 2-year active coaching experience, including experience working with competitive athletes.

- Advanced Coaching Principles
- Ethical Considerations
- Safety Protocols and first aid certification

## Rules and Regulations of BJJ

### Communication

#### Training:

**High-Performance Coaching:** Training focused on preparing athletes for competition, including advanced technique refinement, competition strategies, and performance analysis.

**Sport Psychology:** Modules covering mental preparation, motivation techniques, handling stress and pressure, and fostering a winning mindset.

All coaches are encouraged to take the referee certification course offered by CJA and the SBJJF.

#### Certification:

**Theoretical Assessments:** Demonstrated understanding on high-performance coaching, sport psychology, and competition preparation.

**Practical Assessments:** Live coaching sessions evaluated by experienced coaches, focusing on preparing athletes for competition and incorporating sport psychology techniques.

## Level 4: Provincial Head Coach

### Requirements:

- Black Belt.
- Minimum age 25 years old
- Respect in Sport certification

**Coaching Experience:** Minimum of 5-year active coaching experience including competition experience.

- Advanced Coaching Principles
- Ethical Considerations
- Safety Protocols and first aid certification
- Rules and Regulations of BJJ
- Communication
- Liaison with the Canadian Jiu Jitsu Federation
- Provincial team development

### Training:

**Elite Athlete Development:** Demonstrated advanced understanding on talent identification, individualized training programs, and peak performance strategies.

**Strategic Planning:** Training on developing long-term training plans, managing a coaching team, and contributing to the strategic growth of the provincial BJJ program or an individual academy.

All coaches are encouraged to take the referee certification course offered by CJA and the SBJJF.

### Certification:

**Theoretical Assessments:** In-depth understanding on elite athlete development, strategic planning, and overall program management.

**Practical Assessments:** Evaluation of real-world coaching practices, including the development and implementation of strategic training plans, and the ability to mentor other coaches.

## SaskBJJ Policies and Procedures

The Saskatchewan Brazilian Jiu Jitsu Federation (SBJJF) is committed to promoting Brazilian Jiu Jitsu in Saskatchewan. This is the main focus of our organization and is displayed in all of the programs and courses conducted by the SBJJF.

Coaches will review the SBJJF Policy and Procedure manual.

## Coaching Responsibilities and Roles

### Provincial Head Coach

- Oversee provincial team programs.
- Develop training plans and competition strategies.
- Mentors club coaches.

### Club Coaches

- Conduct regular training sessions.
- Develop individualized training plans for athletes.
- Ensure safety and adherence to SBJJF standards.

### Assistant Coaches

- Assist in training sessions.
- Provide feedback to head coaches and support to athletes.
- Help organize events and activities.

## Roles of a Coach in the Operation of an Academy

The role of a coach in a Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu academy is critical to the development and success of the program. Here are some key responsibilities and considerations for BJJ coaches:

**Create a positive and inclusive environment:** As a coach, it is important to create a welcoming and supportive environment where athletes feel comfortable to train and learn. This can involve establishing clear expectations for behavior and respect, encouraging teamwork and collaboration, and addressing any concerns or conflicts that arise in a timely and effective manner.

**Develop and implement training plans:** Coaches should work with individual athletes and groups to develop training plans that align with their goals and abilities. This may involve planning and leading drills, sparring sessions, and conditioning exercises, as well as providing feedback and guidance to athletes on their technique and performance.

Monitor athlete progress and adjust training plans as needed: It is important for coaches to regularly assess athlete progress and make adjustments to their training plans as needed. This may involve tracking individual performance metrics, identifying areas for improvement, and working with athletes to set new goals and targets.

Foster a culture of continuous learning: BJJ coaches should encourage athletes to continually learn and develop their skills, both on and off the mat. This may involve providing access to resources and information on BJJ theory and technique, as well as encouraging athletes to attend seminars, workshops, and competitions to expand their knowledge and network.

Promote safety and injury prevention: Coaches should prioritize the safety and well-being of their athletes, and take steps to minimize the risk of injury during training and competition. This may involve teaching proper technique, providing appropriate supervision during sparring and other activities, and ensuring that all athletes have access to appropriate safety equipment.

Serve as a mentor and role model: BJJ coaches have a unique opportunity to serve as mentors and role models for their athletes, both on and off the mat. This may involve providing guidance and support in areas such as nutrition, mental health, and career development, as well as modeling positive behaviors and attitudes.

Overall, the role of a BJJ coach is multifaceted and requires a combination of technical knowledge, leadership skills, and a commitment to fostering a positive and inclusive training environment. Coaches who are able to effectively balance these responsibilities are more likely to see their athletes thrive and succeed in the sport of BJJ.

SBJJF club membership is available to any organization that wishes to promote and grow the sport of Brazilian Jiu Jitsu in the province of Saskatchewan.

Coaches will review the SBJJF [Club Membership Policy](#).

SBJJF coaches will lead by example, and follow the principles of Sport for Life.

## Fundamentals of “Sport for Life”

Sport for Life is a long-term athlete development model that aims to promote lifelong participation in sport and physical activity. Some key fundamentals for Sport for Life that apply to the sport of Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu include:

**Physical Literacy:** Physical literacy refers to the development of fundamental movement skills. In BJJ, this can involve training in basic movements and techniques, such as shrimping, bridging, and rolling, to develop overall athleticism and body awareness.

**Technical Skill Development:** Developing technical skills in BJJ involves mastering the fundamental techniques of the sport, such as sweeps, submissions, and escapes. Coaches should focus on providing athletes with a solid foundation of technical knowledge, while also encouraging them to continually learn and develop new skills.

**Tactical Awareness:** Tactical awareness refers to an athlete's ability to understand and respond to different situations and strategies in the sport. In BJJ, this can involve developing a sense of when to initiate attacks, when to defend, and when to counter-attack, based on the position and movements of one's opponent.

**Mental and Emotional Development:** Mental and emotional development is an important aspect of Sport for Life, as it helps athletes build resilience, confidence, and positive attitudes towards training and competition. Coaches should focus on promoting a growth mindset, providing support and encouragement, and fostering a sense of community and belonging among athletes.

**Long-Term Athlete Development:** Finally, Sport for Life emphasizes the importance of long-term athlete development, rather than short-term success or outcomes. This means taking a holistic approach to athlete development, focusing on building overall fitness, technical skills, and mental and emotional resilience, rather than solely on winning competitions or achieving short-term goals.

Overall, coaches who focus on these fundamentals for Sport for Life in BJJ are more likely to develop well-rounded, resilient, and lifelong athletes who are able to participate in the sport and physical activity for many years to come.

Coaches will review the [Long Term Development Stages](#).

## Safety and Risk Management

In fostering an environment of safety for all participants, coaches must be familiar with SBJJF policies and procedures as well as the rules and regulations of BJJ as laid out by the International Brazilian Jiu Jitsu Federation (IBJJF) and our national body, the Canadian Jiu Jitsu Association (CJA).

Safety and liability issues are important considerations for BJJ coaches to ensure the well-being of their athletes and protect themselves from legal risks. Here are some key areas that coaches should be aware of:

**Facility Safety:** Coaches should ensure that their training facility is free from hazards, such as uneven mats, sharp edges, or slippery surfaces. They should also ensure that the facility has appropriate lighting, ventilation, and temperature control to prevent injuries and discomfort.

**Equipment Safety:** Coaches should ensure that all equipment, such as mats, belts, and uniforms, are in good condition and free from defects. They should also ensure that athletes are using appropriate

equipment, such as mouth guards (optional) and protective ear guards, to prevent injuries, as needed.

**Injury Prevention:** Coaches should emphasize injury prevention in their training programs, such as by teaching proper technique, providing appropriate warm-ups and cool-downs, and monitoring athlete fatigue and recovery.

**Emergency Action Plan:** Coaches should have an emergency action plan in place in case of injuries or other emergencies during training or competition. This should include access to first aid kits, contact information for emergency services, and protocols for contacting parents or guardians.

**Liability Waivers:** Coaches should ensure that all athletes or their legal guardians sign liability waivers before participating in training or competition. These waivers should clearly outline the risks and responsibilities involved in participating in the sport, and provide legal protection for the coach and training facility.

**Insurance:** Insurance is crucial for coaches and members of a BJJ club for several reasons. Firstly, it provides financial protection in case of injuries sustained during training or competitions, covering medical expenses and potential loss of income due to temporary or permanent disability. Secondly, it safeguards the club against liability claims arising from accidents or injuries that may occur on the premises or during events. Additionally, insurance fosters a sense of security and trust among members, allowing them to focus on their training without worrying about the potential financial burdens of unforeseen circumstances.

All coaches and individual members must have a valid SaskBJJ membership for insurance coverage.

Coaches will review SBJJF insurance and liability information on the [SBJJF website](#).

**Child Protection:** Coaches should be aware of the specific child protection laws and guidelines in their jurisdiction, and ensure that they are following appropriate protocols for working with minors, such as obtaining criminal background checks and adhering to minimum supervision ratios.

By being aware of these safety and liability issues, coaches can ensure that their training programs are safe, effective, and legally compliant, while also protecting themselves and their athletes from unnecessary risks and legal disputes.

## Ethical Standards and Coaches Code of Conduct

Ethics in BJJ are critical for maintaining the integrity of the sport and the safety of its practitioners. As a BJJ coach, it is essential to instill ethical principles in your students to ensure that they develop into well-rounded athletes and good people. Here are some important ethical considerations:

**Respect:** BJJ is built on the foundation of respect. As a coach, it is your responsibility to teach your students to respect themselves, their training partners, their coaches, and the sport. This means emphasizing the importance of manners, etiquette, and sportsmanship in and out of the gym.

**Fair Play:** BJJ is a sport that is based on rules and regulations. As a coach, it is your responsibility to ensure that your students follow these rules and compete with integrity. Cheating or intentionally violating the rules is not only unethical, but it also puts the safety of all athletes involved in danger.

**Honesty:** BJJ is a sport that requires honesty and integrity. As a coach, it is your responsibility to teach your students to be truthful and transparent in their training and competition. Encourage your students to be honest with themselves, their training partners, and their coaches about their abilities, progress, and limitations.

**Responsibility:** BJJ is a demanding sport that requires a high level of physical and mental discipline. As a coach, it is your responsibility to teach your students to take responsibility for their actions, their training, and their overall development. Encourage your students to set realistic goals, work hard, and take ownership of their progress.

**Compassion:** BJJ is a community-based sport that emphasizes the importance of teamwork and mutual support. As a coach, it is your responsibility to create a positive and supportive training environment that fosters compassion, empathy, and kindness. Encourage your students to support each other and to be good role models for the younger athletes.

**Safety:** Safety should always be a top priority in BJJ. As a coach, it is your responsibility to ensure that your students are practicing and competing in a safe environment. Teach your students proper techniques and encourage them to take the necessary precautions to prevent injuries.

**Confidentiality:** All coaches are expected to protect the privacy of athletes and their personal information.

**Reporting and Accountability:** Report any unethical behavior or misconduct to the appropriate authorities.

**Conflict of Interest:** All coaches are required to disclose any potential conflicts of interest with SBJJF.

**Integrity:** BJJ is a sport that values honesty, fairness, and respect. As a coach, it is your responsibility to uphold these values and to instill them in your students. Encourage your students to be honest and transparent in their training and competition, and to compete with integrity and respect for their opponents.

In conclusion, ethics are an essential component of BJJ coaching. As a coach, it is your responsibility to instill ethical principles in your students and to create a positive and supportive training environment that fosters respect, fairness, honesty, responsibility, compassion, safety, and integrity. By doing so, you will not only develop well-rounded athletes but also contribute to the growth and sustainability of the sport.

**Coaches will review the steps to ethically responsible coaching:**

- Coaches will review the SBJJF [Club Manual Guidelines](#).
- Follow the Coaching Canada [rule of 2 guidelines](#) when interacting with athletes.
- All registered coaches will complete the [Respect in Sport](#) certification.
- All coaches will do appropriate background checks with their local police department and share them with their clubs.

**Long-Term Athlete Development (LTAD)**

- Stages of Development
- Active Start (0-6 years): Basic movement skills.
- Fundamentals (6-9 years): Fundamental BJJ skills and enjoyment.
- Learn to Train (9-12 years): Skill development and sport-specific training.
- Train to Train (12-16 years): Advanced skill acquisition and competition.
- Train to Compete (16-23 years): High-performance training and competition.
- Train to Win (23+ years): Elite competition focus.

**Active for Life:**

- Lifelong participation and enjoyment of BJJ.
- Implementation
- Develop age-appropriate training programs.
- Emphasize physical literacy and technical skills.
- Monitor athlete progress and adjust training accordingly.

## Coaching Principles and Methodologies

### Planning a Practice

An effective BJJ class is structured to ensure that athletes receive a comprehensive and well-rounded training experience. Here are some key elements that coaches should consider when designing a class:

**Warm-Up:** The warm-up is an important part of any class, as it prepares the athletes physically and mentally for the training ahead. The warm-up should include a range of dynamic movements, such as jogging, jumping jacks, and lunges, to elevate the heart rate and warm up the muscles.

**Stretching:** After the warm-up, athletes should perform some stretching exercises to increase flexibility and reduce the risk of injury. Coaches should focus on stretching the major muscle groups used in BJJ, such as the hips, shoulders, and back.

**Technique:** The technique portion of the class is where coaches introduce new techniques or review previous instruction. Coaches should break down the technique into its component parts, and provide clear explanations and demonstrations to help athletes understand the mechanics of the movement.

**Drills:** Drills are a key component of BJJ training, as they allow athletes to practice specific techniques and movements in a controlled environment. Coaches should choose drills that are appropriate for the skill level of the athletes, and provide clear instructions and feedback to help them improve their technique.

**Sparring:** Sparring is where athletes can apply the techniques they have learned in a live, competitive setting. Coaches should ensure that athletes are paired with partners of similar skill level and size, and provide clear guidelines for safe and respectful sparring.

**Cool-Down:** The cool-down is an important part of the class, as it helps to lower the heart rate and prevent soreness and stiffness. Coaches should include some gentle stretching exercises and breathing techniques in the cool-down, and encourage athletes to hydrate and refuel after the class.

By following these guidelines, coaches can design effective and well-structured BJJ classes that provide athletes with a safe and rewarding training experience.

## Teaching and Communication

Teaching and communication are critical components of effective coaching in BJJ. A coach who is skilled at teaching and communicating can help their students improve their skills, stay motivated, and achieve their goals. Here are some key principles and strategies that coaches can use to improve their teaching and communication skills in BJJ.

**Set clear expectations:** To help students achieve their goals, it is important to set clear expectations from the beginning. This includes outlining the class structure, the techniques that will be taught, and the goals that students should aim to achieve.

**Demonstrate techniques clearly:** One of the most important aspects of teaching BJJ is demonstrating techniques clearly. Coaches should break down each technique step by step and demonstrate it slowly and clearly, allowing students to observe and ask questions.

**Encourage questions and feedback:** It is important to create a safe and welcoming environment in which students feel comfortable asking questions and providing feedback. Coaches should encourage

their students to ask questions and provide feedback to ensure that they understand the techniques and are able to apply them effectively.

**Provide constructive feedback:** When providing feedback to students, it is important to be constructive and provide specific feedback on how they can improve. Avoid criticism or negative comments, and focus on providing practical suggestions that can help students improve their techniques.

**Motivate and inspire:** Coaches should motivate and inspire their students to achieve their goals. This can be done by setting achievable goals, providing positive feedback, and celebrating successes.

**Use a variety of teaching methods:** Different students learn in different ways, so it is important to use a variety of teaching methods to cater to different learning styles. This may include visual aids, hands-on training, or verbal explanations.

**Practice active listening:** Coaches should practice active listening by paying attention to their students and responding to their needs. This includes responding to questions, addressing concerns, and adjusting the training program to meet the needs of individual students.

By following these principles and strategies, coaches can improve their teaching and communication skills, helping their students achieve their full potential in BJJ.

**Support of athletes in training:** Coaches are expected to provide comprehensive support for their athletes in training and development within the sport.

## Understanding levels of athletes

### Adult Belt Levels

In BJJ, practitioners are awarded belts to signify their level of skill and knowledge in the sport. The following is an overview of the different levels of belts in BJJ and what is expected of practitioners at each level.

The International Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu Federation (IBJJF) has a standardized belt ranking system for adults that involves colored belts and stripes.

#### Here is a breakdown of the IBJJF belt ranking system for adults:

**White Belt:** The white belt is the starting point for all beginners in BJJ. In order to be eligible for promotion to the next belt, a practitioner must typically spend a minimum of 2-3 years training as a white belt.

**Blue Belt:** After spending some time as a white belt and demonstrating proficiency in the basic techniques of BJJ, a practitioner can be promoted to blue belt. A blue belt must typically spend at least 2 years training at this level before being eligible for promotion to purple belt.

**Purple Belt:** The purple belt represents a significant milestone in a practitioner's journey in BJJ. A purple belt must typically spend at least 2 years training at this level before being eligible for promotion to brown belt.

**Brown Belt:** The brown belt is the second-highest rank in BJJ, and represents a high level of technical proficiency and skill. A brown belt must typically spend at least 1-2 years training at this level before being eligible for promotion to black belt.

**Black Belt:** The black belt is the highest rank in BJJ, and represents a mastery of the art. In order to be eligible for promotion to black belt, a practitioner must typically spend a minimum of 10 years training in BJJ, with significant time spent at each of the lower belt levels.

**Stripes:** In addition to colored belts, the IBJJF also recognizes stripes as a means of tracking an athlete's progress within a belt rank. Stripes are typically awarded based on a combination of time spent training, technical proficiency, and competition performance.

- White Belt: Four stripes.
- Blue Belt: Four stripes.
- Purple Belt: Four stripes.
- Brown Belt: Four stripes.
- Black Belt: Up to 9 stripes.

Coaches can use the IBJJF belt ranking system to help guide their athletes in their training and progression in BJJ, and provide feedback on their technical proficiency and performance in competition.

Understanding the different levels of belts in BJJ is important for coaches and practitioners at all levels. It provides a clear understanding of what is expected at each level and helps practitioners set goals for their training.

As a coach, it is important to help your students understand the progression of belts in BJJ and provide them with the knowledge and guidance they need to reach their full potential.

## Training for Recreation or Competition

As a coach, it's important to understand whether your athlete is training for recreation or competition. The goals, expectations, and training plans will be different for each type of training, so it's crucial to have a clear understanding of the athlete's goals and motivations.

Here are some guidelines to help you determine whether an athlete is training for recreation or competition:

**Talk to the athlete:** Have a conversation with your athlete to understand their motivations and goals for training. Ask them about their training history and what they hope to achieve through their training.

Assess their skill level: Observe the athlete's technical proficiency and physical abilities. Do they have the skills and athleticism required to compete at a higher level? If not, they may be training for recreation.

**Look at their training schedule:** If the athlete is training several times a week, working with a coach, and competing regularly, they are likely training for competition. If they are training less frequently and without a specific goal in mind, they may be training for recreation.

**Consider their attitude towards training:** Athletes who are training for competition are often more focused, disciplined, and goal-oriented than those who are training for recreation. They may be more willing to push themselves and take on new challenges.

**Look at their competition history:** If the athlete has a track record of competing and has achieved success in competition, they are likely training for competition. If they have not competed, or have only competed occasionally, they may be training for recreation.

Once you have determined whether an athlete is training for recreation or competition, you can adjust your coaching approach accordingly. Athletes who are training for competition may require more intensive training plans, focused technical instruction, and specific goal-setting.

Athletes who are training for recreation may benefit from a more relaxed and flexible approach to training, with an emphasis on enjoyment and personal growth. By understanding your athletes' goals and motivations, you can help them achieve their full potential and get the most out of their training.

## Identify individualized athlete goals and create training plans

Start by assessing your athletes' current abilities and goals: Talk to your athletes about their current abilities, what they enjoy about BJJ, and what they want to achieve in the sport. This can help you tailor their training plan to their specific goals.

**Establish realistic goals:** Help your athletes set realistic goals that are achievable within a certain time frame. Make sure these goals align with their abilities and training schedule.

**Create a training plan:** Based on your athlete's goals, create a training plan that includes both technique training and conditioning. Be sure to adjust the training plan as necessary to meet your athlete's goals and abilities.

**Set benchmarks and track progress:** Set benchmarks and monitor your athlete's progress towards their goals. This can be done through testing or regular competitions.

**Adjust the training plan as needed:** As your athlete progresses, adjust their training plan to reflect their increased abilities and changing goals.

**Provide feedback and support:** Regularly provide feedback to your athletes on their progress, and provide support when they encounter setbacks or challenges. Encourage them to stay motivated and committed to their goals.

Consider the athlete's lifestyle and schedule: Keep in mind your athlete's lifestyle and schedule when creating their training plan. If they have work or school commitments, consider scheduling training sessions around their availability.

Create a supportive team environment: Foster a supportive team environment where athletes can help each other achieve their goals. Encourage athletes to support and motivate each other.

By following these guidelines, you can help your BJJ athletes identify their individualized goals and create training plans that will help them achieve their full potential in the sport.

## Mental and physical limitations

As a BJJ coach, it's important to recognize when an athlete has physical limitations that may prevent them from performing certain techniques or participating in sparring.

Talk to your athlete: Have a conversation with your athlete about any physical limitations they may have. Ask about any past injuries, surgeries, or medical conditions that may affect their ability to train.

**Observe their movements:** Observe how your athlete moves during training. Look for any limitations in range of motion, flexibility, or mobility. Pay attention to any pain or discomfort they may experience during certain movements.

**Assess their physical condition:** Consider your athlete's overall physical condition. Are they overweight, out of shape, or have a sedentary lifestyle? These factors may limit their ability to perform certain techniques or participate in sparring.

**Consider their age:** Age can also be a factor in an athlete's physical limitations. Older athletes may have limitations in range of motion or mobility that younger athletes do not.

**Consider modifying techniques:** If an athlete has physical limitations, consider modifying techniques to work around their limitations. For example, if an athlete has limited mobility in their hips, modify guard passes to avoid putting pressure on the hips.

**Encourage seeking medical advice:** If you suspect an athlete has a medical condition or injury that may be limiting their ability to train, encourage them to seek medical advice before continuing training.

**Create an individualized training plan:** Create an individualized training plan for athletes with physical limitations. Modify drills and techniques to accommodate their limitations, and focus on building strength and mobility in areas that may be weak or limited.

**Create a safe training environment:** Ensure that your training environment is safe for athletes with physical limitations. Provide padding or mats to prevent injury during falls or throws.

By following these guidelines, you can help identify when an athlete has physical limitations that may limit their ability to perform certain techniques or participate in sparring.

You can then modify their training plan to work around these limitations, creating a safe and effective training environment for all athletes.

## **How limitations apply to different age groups and technical levels.**

As a BJJ coach, it's important to understand how physical limitations and sparring can vary among different age groups and technical levels.

**Children:** For younger children, sparring should be kept to a minimum and closely supervised to prevent injury. Children may also have physical limitations due to their developing bodies, so it's important to focus on technique training and building a foundation of basic movements.

Modify techniques to accommodate their physical limitations, and encourage them to have fun while learning.

**Teenagers:** As teenagers reach puberty and go through growth spurts, they may experience physical limitations due to rapid growth or hormonal changes. Sparring can be increased, but should still be closely supervised. Focus on building a strong foundation of techniques, and encourage teenagers to listen to their bodies and speak up if they experience pain or discomfort during training.

**Adults:** Adults may have a wider range of physical limitations, such as injuries, chronic conditions, or limited mobility due to age. Sparring can be more intense, but it's important to create a safe training environment and modify techniques to accommodate individual physical limitations.

Encourage adults to communicate any physical limitations they may have, and work with them to create an individualized training plan.

**Advanced practitioners:** Advanced practitioners may have developed physical limitations due to years of training or injuries sustained during competitions. Sparring can be intense, but it's important to prioritize safety and modify techniques as necessary.

Encourage advanced practitioners to continue building strength and mobility in areas that may be weak or limited, and consider incorporating cross-training to prevent overuse injuries.

By understanding how physical limitations and sparring can vary among different age groups and technical levels, you can create an effective training plan that accommodates individual needs and goals.

Modify techniques as necessary, create a safe training environment, and encourage open communication to create a positive and inclusive training environment for all practitioners.

## Injury Prevention and recovery

As a BJJ coach, it's important to identify areas where the risk of injury is greatest and which techniques require further explanation to prevent injury.

**Joint Locks and Chokes:** Joint locks and chokes are effective techniques in BJJ, but they also pose a risk of injury. As a coach, it's important to teach these techniques with caution and to emphasize proper technique and control.

It's also important to teach your athletes to recognize when a joint lock or choke is applied too aggressively, and to tap out before injury occurs.

**Takedowns:** Takedowns are another area where the risk of injury is high. It's important to teach proper technique and to emphasize control and balance during takedown drills and sparring. Additionally, it's important to teach your athletes to protect themselves when being taken down, and to learn how to fall safely.

**Sparring:** Sparring is an important part of BJJ training, but it also poses a risk of injury. As a coach, it's important to emphasize the importance of control and to encourage your athletes to spar at a level appropriate for their skill and experience.

It's also important to teach your athletes to recognize when they're in a position where they could be injured, and to tap out before an injury occurs.

**Overtraining:** Overtraining is a common cause of injury in BJJ. It's important to encourage your athletes to rest and recover between training sessions, and to avoid training when they're tired or injured.

Additionally, it's important to encourage your athletes to communicate any injuries or concerns to you as their coach, so that you can help them modify their training to prevent further injury.

**Identify student limits:** Be mindful of situations when they arise in practice.

According to a [2021 study](#) 75% of BJJ injuries result during sparring, most injuries occur during submission attempts.

**Discuss safe practices:** Slowly applying the technique, allowing time to tap out and that tapping out is not a loss but an opportunity to learn. Understand that when an injury occurs students will need time to heal before returning to practice.

In summary, by identifying areas where the risk of injury is greatest and which techniques require further explanation to prevent injury, coaches can help their athletes train safely and effectively in BJJ.

By emphasizing proper technique, control, and communication, coaches can help their athletes reach their full potential while minimizing the risk of injury.

## Nutrition

Nutrition is a critical component of athletic performance, and BJJ athletes need to be aware of their dietary choices in order to optimize their performance in training and competition.

Here are some guidelines for coaches to help their athletes with nutrition:

**Basic Nutrition Principles:** Coaches should educate athletes on the basic principles of nutrition, such as the importance of macronutrients (protein, carbohydrates, and fat) and micronutrients (vitamins and minerals), and the role of hydration in athletic performance.

**Energy Balance:** Coaches should encourage athletes to maintain a healthy energy balance by consuming enough calories to fuel their activity levels, without overeating or undereating. This will help athletes maintain a healthy body weight and optimize their performance.

**Pre-Workout Nutrition:** Athletes should consume a balanced meal or snack containing protein, carbohydrates, and fat 1-2 hours before training to ensure they have enough energy to perform at their best. Coaches can recommend healthy pre-workout options.

**Post-Workout Nutrition:** After training, athletes should consume a meal or snack containing protein and carbohydrates within 30-60 minutes to help repair and replenish their muscles. Coaches can recommend healthy post-workout options, such as a grilled chicken salad or a protein shake.

**Hydration:** Athletes should drink enough water to stay hydrated throughout the day and during training. Coaches should encourage athletes to drink water before, during, and after training, and to avoid sugary sports drinks unless they are participating in intense, prolonged training sessions.

**Nutritional Supplements:** Coaches should educate athletes on the use of nutritional supplements, such as protein powders or multivitamins, and caution against the use of untested or illegal supplements.

By providing athletes with guidance and education on nutrition, coaches can help their athletes optimize their performance in training and competition, and improve their overall health and well-being.

The [NCCP Sport Nutrition module](#) helps coaches understand how to support athletes and their parents or caregivers in making effective nutrition choices, identify common food allergies and intolerances. Provide guidance to athletes, parents and guardians before and after training.

## Support in competition

**Understand the rules:** Familiarize yourself with the [IBJJF rules](#) and make sure your athlete understands the rules as well. Review the rules with your athlete and ensure they know the scoring system, allowed techniques, and prohibited moves.

**Develop a game plan:** Work with your athlete to develop a game plan for their competition. Consider their strengths and weaknesses, as well as the strengths and weaknesses of their opponents. Develop a strategy that maximizes your athlete's strengths and minimizes their weaknesses.

**Focus on mental preparation:** Competition can be mentally challenging, so focus on mental preparation with your athlete. Encourage positive self-talk, visualization techniques, and relaxation techniques to help your athlete manage their nerves and stay focused.

**Conduct thorough warm-ups:** Warm-ups are crucial to preventing injury and preparing your athlete for their match. Conduct thorough warm-ups that include mobility drills, technique drills, and specific warm-ups for the athlete's weight class and division.

**Offer technical advice:** During the competition, offer technical advice to your athlete. Provide feedback on their techniques and offer suggestions for improvement. Keep your communication clear and concise, and avoid overwhelming your athlete with too much information. Remember that competitions can be intense and that coaches should be supportive but professional. (See Ethics in BJJ)

**Provide emotional support:** Competition can be emotionally taxing, so provide emotional support to your athlete. Offer words of encouragement, positive reinforcement, and physical support if necessary.

**Debrief after the match:** After the match, debrief with your athlete. Discuss what went well, what could have been done better, and what can be improved for future competitions. Celebrate successes and learn from mistakes.

## **When coaching in competitions:**

All coaches are encouraged to take the referee certification course offered by CJA and the SBJJF.

All SBJJF coaches must have their [Respect in Sport](#) certification in order to be in the athlete area at competition.

## **Develop an emergency action plan for your academy**

As a BJJ coach, it's important to have an emergency action plan in place for practices in the gym.

**Establish emergency contacts:** As a coach, you should have a list of emergency contacts for each athlete, including their parents or guardians and emergency medical personnel. Make sure this list is up-to-date and easily accessible.

**Assess the situation:** If an emergency occurs during practice, assess the situation quickly and calmly. If necessary, call for emergency medical services immediately.

**Administer first aid:** If an athlete is injured, administer first aid as necessary. Make sure that you and your coaching staff are trained in first aid and CPR. Keep injury reports in line with your insurance provider.

**Evacuate the gym:** If an emergency occurs that requires evacuation of the gym, have a plan in place to do so quickly and safely. Make sure that your athletes know where to go and what to do in the event of an emergency.

**Follow up:** After an emergency occurs, follow up with the athlete and their family to ensure that they're receiving proper medical care and support. Additionally, review the emergency action plan with your coaching staff and athletes to make any necessary updates or improvements.

In summary, by establishing emergency contacts, assessing the situation quickly and calmly, administering first aid as necessary, evacuating the gym safely, and following up with the athlete and their family, coaches can ensure that they're prepared to handle emergencies during practices in the gym.

By having a well-defined emergency action plan in place, coaches can help protect the health and safety of their athletes.

- Resources and Continuing Education
- Professional Development
- Attend coaching seminars and workshops.
- Participate in online courses and certification programs.
- Coaching Resources
- Access to IBJJF technical manuals and training guides.
- Subscription to coaching newsletters and publications.
- Networking and Support
- Join coaching associations and networks.
- Collaborate with other coaches and experts in the field.

## Conclusion

By adhering to the guidelines and principles outlined in this manual, coaches can effectively contribute to the development and success of BJJ athletes throughout Saskatchewan.

The SBJJF encourages all coaches to broaden their knowledge by also enrolling in [NCCP Multisport Certification](#) courses listed on the Coaches Association of Saskatchewan website.