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## **Wrestling - A Beginners Guide**

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## The History of Wrestling

Almost everyone has his or her own memories of watching wrestling on television. Viewing this sport can be gruesome especially for those who couldn't bear the thought and the sight of people being tossed around like furniture. Well, wrestling can be that and more so anyone who doesn't have a tough stomach should think twice before watching wrestling.

People who don't have a tough stomach for the throwing and the bumping of burly and big people inside the ring still watch wrestling because of the excitement characterized by the sport. While watching human beings being tossed around like salad, one wonders about how wrestling became a manifestation of man's innate animalism.

History will show that the wrestling we regularly witness on television now is even less violent than the original wrestling hundreds, even thousands, of years ago. Wrestling was earlier used to train military personnel so the muscle development is understandable.

Depending on the point of view of a person, he can either thank or curse the Greeks for making wrestling popular. As an event in the Olympics, wrestling was a much more violent and heart stopping sport. Blame it on man's penchant for what hurts but wrestling became a familiar sport all over the world including Japan, which popularized their own brand of wrestling as well as China and even the Arab world.

The Greeks and the French were the first to develop a love for wrestling but the sport ultimately reached the modern world and became popular in the Western countries. The traditional wrestling used to be characterized by two burly opponents, each wanting to defeat the other by pinning the opponent on the

floor. New styles in wrestling allowed the wrestlers to grab their opponents and use their legs to pin down the opponents.

The wrestling style identified with the Greeks and Romans prohibited the use of legs to pin down opponents. However, this was allowed in the freestyle wrestling type.

While people identify wrestling with modern civilization, there is proof that wrestling was popular even in the ancient ages with the discovery of drawings depicting wrestling in some French caves. It may be the brutality of wrestling that made it a popular sport among the Greeks, Romans, French, and later on among the royal houses of Japan, China and the United States.

While wrestling didn't originate in America, the popularity of wrestling on live televised shows can be attributed to them. American country fairs thrived on wrestling as a means of entertaining their guests. Even the military that used wrestling as a training method for their personnel also participated in wrestling shows.

True to form, it was New York City that hosted the very first wrestling competition on a national scale way back in 1888. The Olympic Game of the modern world also saw the first wrestling competition in Missouri way back in

1904. Since then, wrestling became a favorite hobby, pastime and sport of every American.

While wrestling shows look like a free-for-all competition where the burly musclemen can use their body parts to pin down their opponents, wrestling is actually governed by rules depending on the version being followed. Wrestlers can either choose between the proper or upright type of wrestling or the ground form of wrestling.

Proper type of wrestling aims to throw the enemy on the ground and three such successful efforts to throw the opponent on the ground means a win for the successful wrestler. The ground type of wrestling is actually a free-for-all wrestling where the winner is the wrestler who can bear the most tumbles. In this type, the wrestler who raises his hands first admits defeat.

To prove that it is really a game governed by rules, wrestlers aren't allowed to bite their opponents but they are allowed to trip them. Unlike boxing where weight is a major factor in the matching, wrestling doesn't distinguish. And lo! Wrestling was originally held in a muddy arena, and not in the clean boxing ring that we see on television today.

To be an ideal wrestler, one has to be big and strong and fast. He must also be able to bear the fall and the weight of his opponent. Furthermore, a future wrestler must be fearless.

## **Defining Different Wrestling Styles**

### **Why go for the Different Wrestling Styles**

A person who is big and burly, strong and fearless can be an ideal wrestler. A person who possesses these characteristics and is interested in the sport can be a good wrestler. However, some people who respond to the above characteristics would rather sit down and enjoy a wrestling match from their televisions.

Wrestling is definitely a contact sport that requires the use of almost all body parts. The people who fight in the ring have not only developed physique but they should also have strength and flexibility to allow them to bear the bodily impact of wrestling.

The art of wrestling originated from the Greek Olympics so it is understandable that the Olympic wrestling used the Greco-Roman style. However, later Olympic events used the freestyle and the Greco-Roman style alternatively.

The Greco-Roman wrestling style allows wrestlers to attack the opponent only in body parts from the waist up. Freestyle doesn't allow biting but it allows tripping.

Wrestling is a sport that requires the use of bodily muscles and so it isn't for lame ducks. A wrestler must be physically strong and mentally alert if he wants to throw his enemy and keep himself from being thrown across the arena. Blood, sweat and tears go hand in hand in wrestling although not literally.

This sport is very demanding and it requires commitment and dedication from its players. It isn't something that a person decides to do and gives up the next day. It is actually a passion and people who wrestle do it because they love the sport.

There are different wrestling styles aside from the Greco-Roman and the freestyle and these are the Judo, Folk and Sombo. American students that practice wrestling use the folk style. Four of the five wrestling styles are used in international competitions while folk style remains a favorite among student wrestlers.

Judo may have been identified with Karate but it is really an Oriental wrestling style. The folk style being practiced by students is more or less similar to the freestyle

Wrestling has been a popular sport due to the exposure it gets on television. However, wrestling is a sport that is also played by high school and college students.

Students who want to go into wrestling as a hobby or professionally should start by attending wrestling summer programs. Wrestling during the summer season can offer a good training for budding wrestlers because they will then be ready for the next season.

It is important to choose a good wrestling coach if you want to succeed in this sport. Most college wrestlers who are now wrestling coaches are familiar with the freestyle. There are also a few college coaches who are well aware and knowledgeable about the international wrestling styles.

While having a good coach to teach the budding wrestler the rudiments of wrestling is important, it is also twice as important to have the proper mindset. It is ideal to be a part of a group of winning wrestlers because it conditions the

mind of the wrestler to winning and being the best that he can be in any wrestling style.

Some professional coaches suggest that wrestlers shouldn't restrict themselves to one certain style of wrestling. A student wrestler may have been trained in folk style wrestling but the similarity between the two styles makes it easy for him to go into freestyle wrestling in no time.

Each wrestling style has its own technique and strengths so learning one or two wrestling styles can mean a whole new world of techniques for a wrestler. A wrestler can develop good footwork techniques, balance and learn to be aggressive in the freestyle. On the other hand, learning the Greco-Roman style can teach the wrestler proper motions of the hip when throwing.

A wrestling match is won in several ways including by fall, by the technical fall of the opponent, by decision of the judges, win as a result of the majority decision which is used in free style wrestling in college and win by the injury of the opponent.

While wrestling appears to be a very brutal and violent sport, there are prohibitions such as biting of the opponent, scratching of the opponent especially in the eye area, striking and leg locking and strangling. It is also

prohibited to grasp the genitals of the opponent even if it's the best way to win the match.

## **Exploring High School Wrestling**

### **Why High School Wrestling?**

All eyes and ears of many households are pinned on the television whenever there are wrestling matches. Clearly, professional wrestling has made it international. And yet, there are many people who engage in wrestling not for the pay but merely for the fun and for the discipline.

Wrestling originated from the Greeks and was made popular when it was incorporated in the Olympics way back in 708 B.C. While most people consider the wrestling matches of today violent and brutal, the early wrestling matches were much more violent.

The Greco-Roman style of wrestling became popular among the French. However, freestyle wrestling became more popular and acceptable to the Western wrestlers.

The international community views wrestling as a professional sport. However, wrestling is also popular as a sport among high school students.

Many parents panic when a child becomes interested in wrestling because it is a contact sport and is known to be violent. However, high school students seem to be fascinated with wrestling as a hobby and a sport. So what does a parent do when a child brings up his interest in high school wrestling?

First thing don't panic and erase horrible thoughts of your child being kicked and hurled across the arena by a burly classmate or schoolmate. High school wrestling is actually tamer and much different than the professional wrestling bouts seen on television.

Professional bouts of wrestling as seen on television are done purely for entertainment purposes and so there must be a shock or entertainment value that will keep the audience and the fans begging for more. Wrestling done by professional wrestlers is intentionally made to look brutal and violent to get more viewers to tune in and to improve the rating of the television shows.

High School wrestling on the other hand is a real sport that isn't performed merely for show. High school wrestling doesn't use an arena or rings typical of professional shows. And unlike professional bouts of wrestling where the

wrestlers use costumes and paint their faces to appear scary, high school wrestlers aren't allowed to go wrestling without the use of safety mechanisms like head gear, pads for the knees and the required shoes.

While professional bouts require costumes and the scare factor, high school wrestling couldn't proceed without making sure that the wrestlers are attired safely.

Parents who have children that are interested in wrestling should know wrestling is basically a discipline sport that doesn't tolerate violence. The professional bouts of wrestling seen on television are far from real wrestling as a sport.

While wrestlers need to be strong and sturdy, there is no need to be scared of their kids going into wrestling because it requires more discipline and skill. The reason why wrestlers must be strong isn't because of the fallacy that he will be tossed and turned during wrestling but because wrestling demands so much of his body power and not on any equipment to defeat the opponent.

It may be called high school wrestling but children who want to go into high school wrestling should start with the discipline as early as the higher elementary years.

Wrestling has become one of the most sought after sports in high school that the number of boys that competed in high school wrestling increased by 3.5 percent from 2005 to 2006. During that period, more than 200 thousand high school boys competed in wrestling tournaments. The number of wrestling teams also increased by 1.9 percent during the same period, bringing the total number of high school wrestling teams to more than nine thousand teams.

High school wrestling isn't just relegated to boys because the number of female high school wrestlers also increased by 14.8 percent in 2006 bringing the total number of female wrestlers to more than four thousand. What is astounding is the 14.9 percent increase in the number of female high school wrestling teams during the same period.

So the next time a child insinuates his interest in high school wrestling, don't despair. Rather, keep an open mind and support him or her in that sport.

## **College Wrestling**

What does College Wrestling lead to?

Wrestling may have its early beginnings in the ancestral caves and after that in the Greek Olympics but as we have shown it has steadfastly earned the interest of all people regardless of race and nationality.

We've covered those people who are television fanatics have the tendency to associate wrestling with the professional wrestling competitions they see on the boob tube.

However, as we discussed, the televised wrestling competitions with all the brutality and the harsh words of the monstrous wrestlers are a far cry from real wrestling as a sport.

Wrestling is a very disciplined sport that demands physical strength, emotional ability and most importantly, commitment from those who go into the sport. It has become so popular that even high school and college students have considered wrestling not just as a hobby but a possible career.

College wrestling refers to the wrestling sport practiced and played by students in the Universities. College wrestling makes use of the rules and procedure of folk style wrestling that college wrestling is even commonly referred to as folk style wrestling.

What makes college or folk style wrestling different from the international wrestling styles like Greco-Roman and freestyle is how the match is scored. The latter wrestling styles urge the wrestlers to perform volatile actions, college wrestling focuses more on gaining control or power over the adversary.

There are two groups in America that take care of the various college wrestling competitions and shows all over the United States. College or folk style wrestling is different from high school wrestling or even professional wrestling in many aspects. A high school wrestler should get good training while on that level if he wants to proceed to college or folk style wrestling.

While professional wrestling competitions make a mockery of the real wrestling as a sport with all their emphasis on the profane, violence and brutality, real college wrestling is concerned with the safety of the wrestlers. College or folk style wrestling is in fact concerned with gaining control or power over his adversary.

The fear identified with the throwing and stomping of wrestlers is unfounded because it is only practiced in wrestling that is put on for show. The rules of college wrestling are very strict and do not allow the throwing or biting of opponents to discourage and minimize injury of both parties.

Unlike professional wrestling competitions that makes use an arena or a ring, college wrestling makes use of shock-absorbent mats made of rubber to make sure that the wrestlers are safe from any injury that may be brought about by too much body contact.

College wrestling is made up of three periods, the first one lasting for 3 minutes while the next two periods lasting for 2 minutes per period. The term riding is also important for college wrestling and this is also what makes it unique from the other wrestling bouts. Riding means that the other wrestler has managed to ride on top of the other wrestler's back. If he manages to do that for longer than one minute then he gets another point.

While high school wrestlers try to do good in high school wrestling so they can get college wrestling scholarships, the majority of those in college wrestling use the skills they learn from college wrestling to make it big as a professional wrestling figures.

While college wrestling is a very good training ground, not all college wrestlers make it big in the professional wrestling arena. The majority of good college wrestlers however end up as very good wrestling coaches for high school and college wrestling. However, there is always a good chance that talented

college wrestlers will be spotted and recruited by talent scouts during college wrestling shows and competitions.

College wrestlers can do their best and pray that they get recruited for big time or professional wrestling. Some people go into professional wrestling for money and for fame. However, most college wrestlers go into wrestling for the love of the game.

### **Amateur Wrestling**

#### Wrestling for Amateurs

It's hard not to get hooked – especially if you're into grown men hauling one another around in a ring. For some reason, there is an appeal to watching wrestling. Though some insist that it is fake – that the wrestlers are merely performers who can pass for stunt men in a Hollywood movie – the itch to watch is just so easy to scratch that many people spend hundreds of dollars to get ring side tickets to tune in live.

Amateur wrestling, just like its counterpart professional wrestling, is quite popular with blood-curling men and women alike. There are two "international" wrestling styles that are conducted during the Olympic Games – the Freestyle

and Greco Roman. They are supervised by FILA or the Federation International des Luttes Associees or International Federation of Associated Wrestling Styles.

Freestyle and Greco-Roman have different rules when it comes to which holds are permitted. In Greco-Roman, wrestlers are allowed to hold their opponents and attack them above the waste.

In Greco-Roman and Freestyle, the scores accumulated by the wrestlers are eventually the same:

1. When an opponent is gained control from a neutral position then a "takedown" has taken place.
2. When an opponent is gained control from a defensive position, then a "reversal" occurred.
3. When the wrestler escapes his opponent's control.
4. When the wrestler exposes his opponent's back.
5. When the wrestler successfully lifts up his opponent from a defensive position and exposes his back.

6. There are various scoring systems when calculating penalty points.

Infractions such as acting with brutality, striking your opponent, intending to injure, using illegal holds are considered to be penalties. If the wrestler ends up bleeding, that is considered to be a penalty point. When a wrestler steps out of bounds while he is in a neutral position and the match is taking place, he is penalized and gives his opponent a point.

Format for international amateur wrestling is three two-minute periods. The wrestler who gets two out of the three periods is declared the winner. If the opponents are tied up with 1 point after the second game, the third match is the deciding factor. The only time a match is terminated is when a fall or disqualification occurs.

However, amateur wrestling conducted in high schools and universities have different periods. A high school match also has the three two-minute periods but overtimes are allowed.

There are many ways for a wrestler to win a match:

1. Win by Fall.

Once a wrestler gains hold of both of his opponents' shoulders at the same time on the mat, then it is declared to be a "pin"

## 2. Win by Technical Fall

If a wrestler has a six-point lead over his opponent at any given time while the match is taking place, then he is declared to be the winner of that round.

## 3. Win by Decision

If both wrestlers fail to accomplish any kind of fall, the wrestler who earns the most number of points during the period is the winner. If both wrestlers earn the same number of points, then the judges rule through a criteria based on the international style. In collegiate or high school wrestling, the overtime period will decide who the winner is.

## 4. Win by Major Decision

In collegiate or high school wrestling, if the wrestler outscores his opponent by eight or more points, then he is declared to be the winner by "major decision." Not only that, he is also rewarded with an additional team point.

## 5. Win by Injury

If a wrestler is injured and can no longer continue competing in the period, then the other wrestler wins the match. This is called "medical forfeit" or

“injury default.” It also applies to incidences wherein the wrestler gets injured, has asked for too many time-outs or worse, is bleeding. However, if the wrestler is injured by his competitor’s illegal strike or punch, then the assailant is disqualified.

Since amateur wrestling requires a lot of grappling, these moves are not allowed:

- Pinching and poking with nails, fingers, and toes.
- Fish hooking the mouth or nose
- Biting
- Gouging
- Striking with the elbows, feet, fists, knees or head
- Joint locks such as spinal locks, arm locks and leg locks
- Strangling
- Smothering
- Choke holds
- Holding and grasping an opponent’s genitals
- Grabbing an opponent’s clothing

The ironic thing is that amateur wrestling is said to be more real than professional wrestling that is aired on TV which a number of Americans watch. Real or not, there are rules and the last wrestler standing wins.

## **Professional Wrestling**

### Professional Wrestling: A Performance Art

Get ready to rumble! A warning in a WWE advertisement goes like this...."Bodies have been battered, necks broken, careers ended in an instant. Yes this is entertainment, but the hazards are real. No matter who you are, what you do, please don't try this at home." Picture Batista attacking Triple H in a cage match! What do you see? In WWE (World Wrestling Entertainment) wrestlers are superstars! But are they plainly actors? Do they really hurt their opponent?

### Wrestling Entertainment

Professional Wrestling is completely different from Olympic Wrestling. Generally, Professional Wrestling or Pro-Wrestling is a form of performance art. Wrestlers are paid for participating. They aren't opting to get Gold. Here, their prize is a belt. The winner is predetermined such that, the match itself is scripted. Wrestlers are actors. There's drama in each match! The story depends on the viewers. Usually, the winner of every match is predetermined.

Are you pre-occupied by WWE? Think about John Cena, "The Animal" Batista, Rey Mysterio, or Chris Benoit. What do you imagine? These superstars have different styles. They establish different image by which they are known and became popular. What they do is for the sole reason of satisfying their audience. Thus, this defines that Professional Wrestling's main focus is to keep and maintain its audience not as a mode of athletic competition.

Are wrestling superstars getting hurt in a match? The answer here is yes. Although they just do entertainment, all the stunts they do are real! They do stunts by themselves. They don't double themselves with stuntmen. Some really do bleed and get injured in serious matches.

## Rules

The rule of this game is similar to Olympic form of wrestling. The objective of every wrestler is to make their opponent fall, to make the other unable to fight back by locking, submission or by count out. In WWE, the most common match is either a 'pin fall' or 'submission'.

After each match, since this is a live action. Oftentimes, the loser dares to challenge the winner for another match. Commonly, cheating is allowed if the game goes for a no rule match.

Everything goes. But if rules are declared at the start of the game, players may be disqualified for doing such illegal moves. For instance, if Sabu attacks Rhino with a steel chair, the officials may immediately disqualify Sabu. Normally, especially in 'Hard Core' wrestling, violence is portrayed. Thus, hitting the opponent with a steel chair is very common.

### The Referee

A referee is the one who directs a match. He's the one who declares the winner. Since, pro-wrestling is predetermined, meaning—the outcome is already written, referees, like the wrestlers are also considered actors. There are instances by which referees are often distracted by other players not included in the game. Hence, cheating here is sustained.

### Pro-Wrestling Shows

WWE was the most popular and commonly heard wrestling show on TV. Have you heard about WCW? WCW stands for World Championship Wrestling. WWE and WCW hold different kinds of shows in wrestling and handles different sets of superstars. On the contrary, some stars move from one show to another.

Like in the case of 'Christian Charisma', he moved from WWE to TNA (Total Non-Stop Action).

Different shows portray different dramas and each has different rules. WWE's rules may not be applicable to TNA. Show organizers create in advance the rules that govern matches on their shows.

### How Do Wrestlers Get Paid?

Wrestling superstars are said to be fed. Different companies hold the company who holds them pays each player and them.

Before, players were paid per performance. However, as shows profits increased, pro-wrestlers are now paid with a base pay. Their salaries range from \$70,000 to over \$700,000.

### Wrestling Division

It has been known that vast majority of pro-wrestlers are men, but who says, women can't be tough? Women are supposed to be demure? But as time evolves, women now do men's job. The 'Midgets' were also given the chance

to fight in the ring. Whether boy or girl, big or small, pro-wrestlers strike, hit, wrestle and fight for pride.

## **Olympic Wrestling**

### World of Olympic Wrestling

Wrestling is a sport where strength and skill are applied. This sport uses man's ability to strike, hit and strangle another person. The main objective is to make the opponent fall.

In a natural setting, every wild animal competes with each other in order to survive. Man, as an animal, competes to ensure existence. This is how traditional wrestling originated. Due to competition, man developed the skill to strangle and strike until his opponent falls.

History dates wrestling as the first recorded sport. It was included in the first Olympics held in 1896. The first Olympics featured eight events with each athlete participating in all of the events.

In 1931, the first Amateur Wrestling Championship was staged in New Zealand. It has been held annually ever since.

Olympic wrestling differs greatly from Pro-Wrestling. Olympic wrestling is purely a sport. Each country represents a team delegated to compete with other countries worldwide for a gold medal. Whereas, Pro-Wrestling, is just a performance art where pro-wrestlers are paid for participating.

Wrestling, as the oldest sport, is evidenced by Egyptian wall paintings 5,000 years ago. It was played in the ancient times and was made popular before and is still popular today.

### Styles of Olympic Wrestling

Greco-Roman and Freestyle Wrestling are two of the international wrestling styles performed in the Olympic Games supervised by FILA. These two styles are generally known as Amateur Wrestling.

Greco-Roman Wrestling is the oldest style identified. It is an exact carry over of the ancient Greek and Roman wrestling. In this style, only arms and upper portions of the wrestler's body are used. "No hitting below the belt!"

In the 1904 Olympics, a second wrestling event was added. This was called "Freestyle Wrestling" or "catch as catch can". Unlike Greco-Roman wrestling, this enables wrestlers to use their legs for lifting, pushing and tripping as well as for holds on opponents above or below the waist.

### Women's Wrestling

It's a common notion that "women can't do what men can do". This is plainly false! In the world of modern wrestling, women also participate. Women's division of Olympic Wrestling highlights women athletes wrestling like men.

### Real Wrestling

Olympic wrestlers are disciplined athletes. They don't use props like pro-wrestlers. There isn't any yelling and no grudge matches. This is plainly a sport of "real wrestling".

### Rules in Olympic Wrestling

The two styles of amateur wrestling (Greco-Roman and Freestyle) follow different rules, although in some cases rules might have similarities.

In general, players beat their opponents by hitting and locking them until they are knocked down on the ground. Fighting continues until one of them can't fight any longer.

In Greco-Roman Wrestling, attack on the opponent is limited only to the upper portion of the body including the arms.

However, in Freestyle, both of the upper and lower portions of the body can be used. Arms and legs can execute moves for attack.

## Athletes

Qualified athletes must be 17 years old and above and they must be sponsored by their national federation to compete for the Olympics. Athletes are assumed to be properly trained and must be equipped with the rules. They must not hold any bad record as a citizen of his country.

## Weight Divisions

Like boxing, Olympic Wrestling also has several weight divisions. Each athlete is classified according to his weight. Weighing is done before the game starts. Athletes allowed to participate must be at weight level or below.

## The Wrestling Mat

Real Olympic Wrestling is contested over a mat. This mat is circular in shape and 9m in diameter. All international mats have a 1.2-1.5m protection border.

Wrestlers are encouraged to stay inside the competition area where there is 1m passivity zone on the inner edge of the circle. Competition area is represented with a red band.

## Officials

Three officials rule a match, a referee, a chairman and a judge. Officials can't work on a match with athletes of their own country. They have the authority to award points and declare the winner.

## The Match

Pinning the opponent is the main objective. The match ends when an opponent is locked to the mat  $\frac{1}{2}$  of a second. Match runs for 5mins/ period. The first one, who will be able to score 3pts within 5mins, wins.

## **Wrestling Gear**

What is the purpose of Wrestling Gear, Shoes and Equipment?

Is wrestling dangerous? If wrestling is really dangerous, then what could be the measures to overcome the danger? Risks are always present in each and every sport. If this is so, then what are we going to do?

Being careful in everything, keeps us from harm. That's true! But can we predict danger? It's a fact that we can't control accidents, if we are really meant to experience them. In wrestling, we can't control it because that's what wrestling is for-- to hurt and to get hurt.

If this is the case, if we can't stop harm, all we can do is to lessen it. We can lessen the impact of getting hit by using protective gears on our body.

### **A Wrestler's Gear and Equipment**

In basketball, the common protective gears are kneepads, elbow pads, supporter and much more. In wrestling, it is a natural thing that athletes get hit, because that's wrestling. Similar to basketball, some pro-wrestlers also use kneepads, elbow pads, supporter plus a mouthpiece. In the Olympics,

wrestlers are required to have this gear: as well as specialized wrestling shoes, a wrestling singlet and a headgear.

What are these specialized wrestling shoes? Wrestling shoes have a thin sole and are light and flexible. It is an ankle-high sneaker that allows maximum speed for the wrestler and maximum traction on the mat. It is specialized so that it gives special support to the ankles. Usually, shoelaces are required to be covered to prevent them from becoming untied during the match.

Shoes are common gear in any sport, but what is a singlet? It is simply a wrestler's uniform. It is an over-all colored lycra outfit that defines the shape of the one wearing it. It is designed to fit muscle curves so that they won't be able to accidentally grasp each other. This design also aids the ref to properly see their bodies when giving points and falls in a game. On the other hand, a high-cut uniform is made for women. They are also required to wear a sports bra beneath their uniforms.

Aside from shoes and uniforms, protection for the head is also required. Thus, this is called "head gear". It is made up from either a plastic polymer or foam inside covered with vinyl with a solid layer outside. It is used to protect the ears from getting hurt as it is usually seen securely tied on the head.

Unlike in basketball, players compete in a basketball court. This is quite large for a wrestling match. Professional wrestlers are staged as they fight in the ring or a cage. In Olympic wrestling it is on a cushioned mat. The mat needs to be resistant from wear and tear, as it must also be able to absorb shocks superbly. Usual mats are crafted from rubber foams. However, as technology advances, new models were made. Such modern ones are made of closed cell and polyethylene foams enclosed in vinyl. The reverse side is made using polyester.

Some additional wrestling gears and equipment are made available on the market which features signature wrestling socks, wrestling singlets or uniforms, wrestling headgear, wrestling shoes, wrestling knee pads, wrestling tights as well as gear bags. Adidas, ASICS, Brute, Matman, Cleef Keen and many others usually sponsor athletes who compete internationally.

### Additional Accessories

Olympic wrestlers are just required to wear a singlet, headgear and wrestling shoes. No additional accessories are allowed so as to ensure the safety of athletes while on the mat. However, in the professional world of wrestling, there are many extras.

Just imagine Rey Mysterio. Rey was known to be 'Rey Mysterio' because of the stylistic mask that hides his face. Triple H on the other hand would not have been Triple H without his sledgehammer. Edge, he's popular for his Rated R Superstar T-shirt while 'The Big Show' is dressed like a Goliath, if you can imagine how Goliath dressed.

These additional accessories and costumes make these pro-wrestlers well liked by fans. These things create different images for every superstar in the ring.

## **Wrestling Basics**

### **Wrestling Basic – Getting Started the Right Way**

Contrary to popular opinion, wrestling isn't merely a sport of throwing bodies out of the ring. Besides the required strength, physical and mental agility are required as well if one wishes to survive inside the ring. Although the rules in wrestling vary according to the style, the basics are fundamentally the same for all.

As such, no matter if you wish to make a name in Ultimate Fighting Championship or World Wrestling Entertainment, you'll still need to learn basic wrestling skills before you can learn advanced techniques properly.

## Basic Skills in Wrestling

Positioning – Without a good starting position, a wrestler won't be able to properly defend his position, and as we all know, the best offense is defense. To have a stable position when in the ring, a wrestler must make sure that his knees and back are slightly bent while keeping his head up. Make sure that you keep your weight balanced on your feet and keep your hands outstretched while your elbows remain in.

Whenever you're attempting to make a takedown or tackle your opponent, just make sure that your position doesn't give any hint of your intentions.

Movement – Wrestling isn't a sport where opponents remain static and have no contact with each other. Every time you move, make sure that at least half of your mind is dedicated to preventing your body from being vulnerable to your attack. Movement in the ring must always be quick; even if you're heavier than most individuals, your speed should match people who are lighter than you.

Penetration – If you're planning to attack your opponent, make sure that you don't back up before attacking. Your hands should make a lunge before your body does because they move quicker than the rest of your body. Keep your

hands accessible at all times. Do your best not to blink your eyes when you're making an attack. One blink is all it takes for your positions to be reversed.

**Tie-Ups and Set-Ups** – The problem of most first-time wrestlers is that they purely concentrate on learning how to under-hook and over-hook their arms on their opponents for control. Although those two movements are essential in controlling your opponent, they're not the alpha and omega in tie-ups and set-ups. To improve your chances of being able to tie-up or set-up your opponent effectively, you need to focus as well on developing other techniques that can allow you to control your opponent's HEAD.

**Defense** – Lastly, you need to learn about defensive stances you can take on the mat. The best defense is to avoid tie-ups that don't allow the controlled opponent any maneuvering space. Learn what those tie-ups are to prevent getting victimized by those positions.

## How Scores Are Tallied in Wrestling

You need not worry about the technicalities of scoring in wrestling federations such as WWE because the winner is declared simply by knocking out the competitor. As long as you're able to hold your opponent to the mat beyond three counts, you're automatically the winner.

## **Takedowns**

### How to Execute a Takedown in Wrestling

Takedowns are one of the ways a wrestler can score a point on the mat.

Takedowns, however, are somewhat difficult to execute especially if you're still a beginner in the sport.

The best way to learn takedowns is to learn from a professional. Wrestling lessons are usually offered at schools or in sports centers, but these can cost a lot of money. Your next best option is to learn from instructional wrestling videos. It's not that easy to learn from these videos if you're studying alone so consider asking a friend to accompany you. To facilitate your self-study of takedowns, read the following tips below before watching your wrestling video:

Takedowns are made at a close proximity to your opponent. As such, if you're standing too far from your opponent, you should make an effort to relax your body. Keeping your body tense for no reason at all but mere anticipation of your opponent's moves will get you nowhere. If you're in no position to make a takedown, don't waste precious energy feeling tense for no reason.

Basic positioning is important when executing takedowns. For that reason, people who jump immediately to advanced techniques such as takedowns and skipping lessons in basic skills such as positioning (stance) and penetration are usually unable to execute their takedowns properly.

The right positioning will give you the opening you need to make a takedown and at the same time prevent you from giving the same opening to your opponent. The best position to adopt when you're in range of your opponent is to remain slightly bent with your hands in proximity to your head.

Legs play an important role when you're attempting a takedown. If you're planning to use your leg to hook his and tackle, make sure that you do so at the right distance. A good takedown using the legs shouldn't be made beyond arm's length. If you're going to swing your legs out farther than arms length, there's a good probability that either you won't reach your opponent quickly or he'll be able to block it out effectively.

When you're at a distance, remember that all your attacks – legs or arms – will have lesser force than it should.

All sports – basketball, football, or in this case, wrestling – all depend on a game play and set up. In basketball, the point guard is usually appointed the role of designing the set up in the court for his teammates to score a basket. In wrestling, however, since there are only two people on the mat, it's up to you to set up your own takedown.

Without a proper set up, it's possible that you won't be able to execute a takedown perfectly. When preparing for a takedown, your first goal should be to destroy your enemy's position. You need to devise a way to cause your opponent to fall down on the mat from a previously standing position.

Tie-ups are very interesting for the audience to watch, but extremely difficult to win for a wrestler. For first-timers in wrestling, you can always do your best to avoid getting involved in a tie-up but then you'll never be able to learn how to act in a tie-up. A tie-up can reduce your opponent's energy substantially enough to increase your chances of making a successful takedown.

Movement is integral in wrestling, especially if you're attempting to make a takedown. Never stay too long in one position, as this will give your opponent time to study your position and find a weakness or opening in it. Always be on the prowl, as this will allow you different angles of your enemy's position.

Avoid making a pattern when moving, but don't concentrate too much on moving randomly as you'll unconsciously create a pattern when you do so.

Keep your steps short but quick at all times.

Keep in mind that practicing takedowns in front of the TV is quite different from executing them in reality and against a real opponent. Be patient and bide your time well. Don't be disappointed when you don't get to execute a takedown in your first few matches. Practice, practice, and practice some more and it will soon pay off!

## **Escapes & Reversals**

### **Wrestling Escapes And Reversals: A Parable Of Life**

Wrestling is a popular sport that has reached the level of performance art. Thanks to different organizations such as the World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE), Total Nonstop Action Wrestling (TNA), and the Mexican Consejo Mundial de Lucha Libre, wrestling has become a phenomenal test of strength and wits. Kids, and kids at heart, from all over the world who watch professional wrestling matches are always left in awe by the dramatic moves and tricks applied by the wrestlers to win contests

Of all the combat maneuvers taken by the wrestlers, escape and reversal moves are the most spectacular. These moves are the most awaited by wrestling aficionados because somehow it represents life outside the ring. Everyone must somehow take a hold of life and escape or reverse the hardships and ills besetting one's existence. Wrestling escapes and reversals convey the idea that things in life can change for the better, or worse, depending on the choices an individual makes.

In classic wrestling matches, namely freestyle and Greco-Roman, points are actually awarded to the contestant who is able to perform wrestling escapes or reversals. In a way, this emphasizes the difficulty of these maneuvers. It also is a statement of the fact that many people love the underdog in any given match. Fans wait to see how the defensive contestant will escape or reverse the attacks made by the offensive contestant as if it was a magical trick.

### Escape Moves

For the man at the bottom--also known as mat man-- to achieve an escape, he or she must assume a neutral position that will cause the opponent to lose control. As always, in terms of amount of force, action is equal to reaction so initially the defending wrestler should assume a neutral stance; this will leave the offensive wrestler to exert all the force of strength. And then at the right

moment, the defending wrestler should do the escape moves in his or her arsenal. The stand up move and the Granby roll are two famous escape moves.

The stand up escape move basically is the use of sheer strength on the part of the defensive wrestler to topple down or break away from the offensive wrestler's hold by simply standing up. On a standing stance, the defensive wrestler has a better chance of unlocking the offensive holds.

When the top man applies tight forward pressure to the mat man, the Granby roll is the effective escape technique. In this roll, the mat man, begins to form a tripod stance. The tripod stance enables the mat man to gain a stronger foothold. Slowly, the higher his back goes, the more momentum is built by the mat man. Along with a kick on the mat, the mat man will achieve a roll forward and escape the tight pressure of the top man's waist.

There is a wide array of ways to set up an escape maneuver. Escape moves are mostly applicable to the man on the mat rather than the man on top who is in control. A successful escape move is awarded one match point.

## Reversal Moves

The defensive wrestling competitor may bring about a reversal by forcing himself from the bottom to the top position or acquiring control of the opponent while they are standing or grappling on the mat. Switches and rolls characterize reversal moves. One of the most effective reversal maneuvers is the Peterson roll.

Although opinions vary as to what a genuine Peterson roll is, the most common is when the mat man reaches out to control or lock the top man's wrist. Then the mat man turns toward the top man and reaches underneath to lock on the latter's leg. Once the top man is anchored this way, the mat man must turn his feet toward the opponent and make outside shoulder roll.

When done successfully, this will place the mat man on top position with his back trapping the opponent under. Obviously, the mat man reverses his position and achieves the top position. The Peterson roll is much like the Granby roll, only the mat man is required to control the opponent's wrists in doing the Peterson roll.

In wrestling we see how the underdog manages to triumph given proper training and knowledge of escape and reversal techniques. We see how the top man can lose his control by over confidence or ignorance. The match in a way is a reflection of life.

Wrestling is truly a game of strength and wits. It has been a sport since the olden Roman and Greek ages. And it is definitely here to stay. So let's get ready to rumble!

### **Breakdowns, Rides and Pinning Combos**

Learn the Different Ways of Defeating Your Opponent - Wrestling Breakdowns, Rides, and Pinning Combos

Although the difference between freestyle and professional – such as those you see in the World Wrestling Entertainment – wrestling is glaringly obvious at times but there are still a lot of moves that you can use in both styles without violating any rules and regulations.

#### **The Different Ways You Can Defeat Your Opponent in Wrestling**

Stretches – When used in professional wrestling, stretching isn't that dangerous because everything that happens in the ring, as we all know, is rehearsed. It only becomes dangerous when used in freestyle wrestling. Also known as submission holds, stretching allows a wrestler to place pressure – or stress – on certain parts of the opponent's body.

When the pressure becomes unbearable, the opponent can do any of the following to submit to defeat: he can verbalize his abdication from the match, tap out by slapping the mat or ground thrice.

Chokes – This is another technique that will employ pressure to an opponent until he's forced to admit defeat. Chokes are used to cut off oxygen supply to the brain, although not to the point that it will cause the subjugated wrestler serious physical injury.

Anaconda Vice – This technique was invented and popularized by Japanese pro wrestler Hiroyoshi Tenzan of New Japan Pro Wrestling. If both wrestlers happen to occupy sitting positions on the mat, the Anaconda Vice can be executed. First, one arm is used to take control of the opponent's head – which is the primary target zone in wrestling – and bend the opponent's arm while his other arm goes around the opponent's waist.

Afterwards, the wrestler will shoot his arm pass through the circle created by his opponent's bent arm and lock both his arms together. When this happens, you'll be able to subject your opponent to substantial pressure.

Obviously, this move is somewhat akin to how an anaconda kills its prey.

Rear Chin Lock – This is a popular move used in entertainment wrestling. A wrestler goes on the offensive with the rear chin lock by lifting his opponent from a supine to a sitting position. Next, the wrestler keeps his knee on the other man's back while keeping hold of his enemy's chin and exerting pressure either by pulling the chin back or to the side. Extreme care must be shown when executing a rear chin lock because it can cause tendons in the neck to break if done improperly.

Arm Bar – Although not a finishing move, the arm bar can substantially reduce your opponent's energy. To accomplish this move, all you have to do is twist your opponents' arm and place pressure on his elbow and shoulder.

Hammer Lock – With a hammerlock, a wrestler takes hold of his enemy's arm and pulls it backwards. Pulled far enough and this move can cause the enemy's arm to become immobile.

Suplex – This is a move that's used in professional, freestyle, and competitive sport wrestling. As such, we'll be discussing several variants of it. The suplex requires a wrestler to use his strength and weight to bring down another wrestler to the mat. In most cases, a recipient of this move will land on the mat flat on his back.

Vertical Suplex: This is a type of suplex that's commonly used in almost all kinds of wrestling. A vertical suplex is also known as Brainbuster in Japan. After locking the opponent's face or head from the front, the opponent is raised up by the wrestler then thrown in a backward motion until the opponent's back forcefully hits the ground.

When a vertical suplex is made effectively, it is usually enough to render a wrestler temporarily immobilized, enough to enable the other wrestler to pin his opponent down and win the match.

Reverse Suplex – The basic starting move – a front face lock – is once again used for this particular version of the suplex. Instead of ending on his back however, the opponent is lifted up then hits the mat face down.

Please remember that all the moves described above shouldn't be attempted by any individual without proper guidance and supervision of a professional wrestler. No matter how skilled or flexible you are many of these moves can cause harm not only to you but to other people as well. Take special care when exercising these moves, and do keep them within the ring or mat.

## **Escapes**

## How to Make a Proper Escape at Wrestling

Escape is one of the ways for you to score a point, although it's essentially better if you avoid having the need to do so in the first place. Judges award points to a wrestler when he's able to escape – thus the name of the move – the hold of his opponent and back on his feet immediately.

Escapes are easier to do than reversals since your only aim is to win back your freedom; escapes however are slightly more difficult to accomplish than takedowns because an escape is basically a defensive move – which means you're put in a position where you're not in control – while a takedown is an offensive move.

Although you may find different rules detailing how to make an effective escape in wrestling, experience in the sport will later on make you realize that there are truly no rules in making escapes. The most important thing you have to remember when you need to make an escape is to keep your head at all times.

## Tips Related to Wrestling Escapes

Although we've advised you to avoid allowing your opponent to get a controlling hold on you in the first place, that doesn't mean you should stay far from your opponent all the time. If you don't get close, you'll never be able to make a score.

And even if you do get caught, you shouldn't be afraid because that's what escapes are for. After all, just because your opponent temporarily catches you doesn't automatically mean you're the loser in the match.

Protect your head at all costs. This is the primary target zone in most offensive strategies. Move your head constantly, and make sure that it's not within reach by your opponent. Keeping your head out of reach will prevent you from having the need to escape your opponent. After all, if your opponent doesn't get a hold of your head, there's nothing for you to escape from!

Always remember to force your opponent to wrestle in your style rather than the other way around. If both of you are wrestling against each other in your style, this will provide you with more openings to go to the offensive instead of having to perpetually rely on defensive stances like escapes.

Technique is always more important than strength alone. Don't be worried about not making an escape if your opponent is heavier than you. When

there's a will, there's a way. At the same time, for every offensive strategy, there's always a counter or defensive strategy you can use.

When fighting and attempting to escape the hold of a heavier man, you need to find a way that will enable you to use his strength against him. And of course, remember to be light-footed!

When you do manage to free yourself from the hold of your opponent, don't forget to get up immediately or else no points will be awarded to you.

### Examples of Wrestling Escapes

The Matrix – This is best used when your opponent has a hold on you using offensive maneuvers such as the clothesline. To execute the matrix, you need to bridge your whole body in a reverse position. Secondly, you need to keep your hands down on the mat. This will help you prevent an attack or make an escape. It will also allow you to get back on your feet immediately.

The name is borrowed from a scene of a popular movie that showed actors bending back in extremely flexible motions. This move is also used in gymnastics and acrobatics, although it's referred to in another term.

Bell Clap – This is an escape that's easier to accomplish than the Matrix and is commonly seen in exhibition matches in leagues like those of World Wrestling Entertainment. To execute a bell clap, all you have to do is put a simultaneous slap on both ears of your enemy. Your movement will cause your opponent to lose their balance. When they do, that's the time you should make an escape!

The bell clap is often used to escape from offensive moves such as the bear hug hold.

Although these tips seem easy to do on paper, participating in a real wrestling match will soon show you the error of your thoughts. Keep in mind however that practice makes perfect. Good luck on escaping to victory!

## **Reversals**

Tips on Reversals – Why the Wheel of Wrestling is Constantly Turning

In boxing, once you're down, you're down. There is an official way for you to reverse your positions and be on top once more. Thankfully, however, it's not the same for wrestling. Whatever type of wrestling you're engaged in, a reversal will always score you needed points when your opponent temporarily tackles you.

## What are Wrestling Reversals?

There are four types of wrestling moves that will allow you to obtain points in a match: takedowns, tackling or forcing your opponent's back to the mat, escapes, and lastly, reversals. Reversals are moves that wrestlers use to get back into a controlling position from a previously submissive position.

### How to Get in the Proper Physical and Mental Positioning for a Reversal

Before attempting any fancy reversal move, make sure first that you're in optimal physical and mental condition.

Bide your time before attempting a reversal. Although your opponent certainly expects you to attempt reversing positions, you still have the element of surprise at your side because he has no way of knowing when you'll make a move. That is, if your body doesn't give it away!

If your opponent is intuitive and with considerable experience in the sport, he's sure to be keeping track of any telltale signs coming from your body to give him an idea of when you plan to reverse your positions. As such, if you need to be tense or relaxed before attempting a reversal, be certain that the change in your stance is made gradually.

You're usually given one chance and one chance alone to attempt a reversal, especially if you're fighting a veteran wrestler. If you make your move and it fails, your opponent will be alert and he most probably won't let his guard down anymore after that.

Sometimes, reversals in wrestling are simply successful because the wrestler subjected to an inferior position is able to wage a psychological war against his opponent and win that round. Try deceiving your opponent into thinking that you're slowly giving up hope. When you do that, your opponent might unconsciously weaken his hold on you, and that's the time you should make a move!

When you do make a move, make sure that you do so with complete confidence and utmost determination. One moment of hesitation can easily be your downfall. And don't at all costs blink! A blink may be more than enough for your opponent to regain control of you!

## How to Execute a Common Wrestling Reversal

Now that you're aware of the necessary physical and mental stance to take when attempting a reversal, here's how to make the reversal itself. What you're about to learn is a move called the Granby roll. The term is borrowed from Granby Street High School that is located in Norfolk Virginia and where the famous wrestling mentor Billy Martin once taught.

Obviously, the starting position of the Granby roll will find you in a submissive stance. Your opponent is either holding you at the waist or attempting to push you on your back. To properly reverse positions, you need to raise your body slightly on the floor. You need to raise it at least a few inches above ground, enough to allow you to cross step.

Next, use your other leg and make a high kick while performing a shoulder roll. Make sure that you target the inner or nearer shoulder to you and not the one facing outside. Finish with an arm lock to reverse your positions. Once you've gotten a secure hold on your opponent, do your best to pin him to the mat.

Keep in mind however that the Granby roll can also be used as a wrestling escape move. Instead of finishing with an arm lock, you can just opt to directly escape from your opponent's hold.

Wrestling reversals are one of the hardest moves to accomplish in the sport because not only do you have to escape from your opponent's hold but you're expected to reverse your positions and gain a controlling hold as well. You'll need to get to the top of the world from the very bottom, and that's a very tall order to make. It is possible to make and all you need is practice!

## **Freestyle Turns**

### Wrestling Freestyle Turns Behind The Cheers And Jeers

In the world of professional wrestling, the word "turn" is slang that can mean the plots or gimmicks resorted to by wrestlers to re-ignite the fans' interest in them. One example is Hulk Hogan suddenly turning against long time partner Randy Savage in 1996. Also, Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson was a member of the hated The Nation Of Domination before turning into the well loved "The Rock".

In mainstream wrestling, the word turn means the blow or the attack maneuver used by the wrestler to gain control of the opponent and ultimately win the match. The wrestling matches we see today are mostly freestyle wrestling. In freestyle wrestling, all sorts of holds and throws are allowed.

That is why in freestyle wrestling, the wrestlers' entire body is used for the competition. This permits a greater variety of movements and techniques. And yes, wrestling freestyle turns are adequately and colorfully named, unlike in other fighting sports that all they have are a jab, a punch and a hook.

Wrestling freestyle turns add flavor and charm to the sport. Freestyle turns have helped wrestling become a giant entertainment genre on its own. And sometimes, people are watching the moves rather than the wrestler.

Wrestling freestyle turns involve an assortment of martial arts maneuvers. Wrestling freestyle turns are performed on the mat or sometimes even while the wrestler is up in the air as in the case of the Luchadores of Mexico. Take a look at some of wrestling freestyle turns.

### Spinning Headlock Elbow Drop

Any elbow drop that is done after executing a headlock is referred to as the spinning headlock elbow drop. Sometimes a wrestler puts his opponent into a reverse face lock before turning 180°, and then knocking the opponent's chest with his elbow driving the opponent down to the mat. The wrestler makes another derivation of this maneuver by making use of his whole arm rather than just his elbow.

### Back Flip Kick

The wrestler stands with his opponent at his back. The wrestler then makes a back flip while standing and strikes the opponent's head with one or both legs, with the wrestler landing on his hand or feet.

### The Airplane Spin

Basically, the wrestler lifts and spins the opponent up in the air. The spinning around will make the opponent dizzy before the wrestler slams him on the mat. This move is a conventional finishing attack for many wrestlers.

### Rolling Wheel Kick

The wrestler rolls on the mat headed for the opponent. The wrestler extends a leg on the last roll. The leg will hit the opponent. It is effective when it connects to the opponent's back, chest or even face.

### Flying Mare Take Down

This move is also referred to as the Flying Head Scissors. The wrestler stands near the opponent; the wrestler soon leaps into the air, catching the opponent's head between the wrestler's shins. The wrestler crosses his ankles to lock as he falls down pulling the opponent to the mat headfirst.

### The Stun Gun

The wrestler faces the opponent while they are near the ropes. Wrestler then grabs the opponent's waist, lifts and releases the opponent up in the air so that the opponent's neck or chest lands badly on the ropes.

### The Senton

The senton basically is a turn where the wrestler will jump over the opponent while falling backwards, thereby landing on the opponent back first. A slight adaptation of the senton technique is seen when the wrestler makes a somersault in the air to land on the opponent back first.

### The Suplex

The suplex is one of the most famous moves in wrestling matches. Here the wrestler stands facing the opponent while grabbing the latter's midsection with

both arms. In a flowing motion, the wrestler brings the opponent up into the air while revolving to one side and going down the mat. The opponent should thump down underneath the wrestler.

Another suplex approach is performed when the wrestler places his opponent in a front face lock and in one swift movement, throws the opponent's arm behind his neck. The wrestler then takes one of the opponent's legs by the knee; and flexes backwards to throw the opponent over and behind him in a continuous vertical curve, resulting in the opponent hitting the mat back first.

These are just a few examples of wrestling freestyle turns. While people see them being performed during matches, it is a good thing to remember that these moves should never be done at home especially by kids.

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