8-WEEK JUDO BEGINNER BLOCK

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Four two-week stages, with break-falls before throws. Use it as a starting point and adapt it with your instructors so it fits the other programs you teach.

Class: _____

Coach: _____

Start date: _____

1 The Block move on when the check is met

WEEKS	FOCUS	HELD BACK	READINESS CHECK
1–2	Break-falls and rolls	No throws, no grips	Falls back, side, and front without bracing a hand
3–4	Grips and movement	No throws at full speed	Keeps stance, posture, and balance while gripping
5–6	First throws	Cooperative partner only	Completes entries and lets the partner land safely
7–8	Combinations and review	Full randori, until handfighting, footwork, and takedown mechanics are set	Throws and falls with control, under supervision

Why falls come first. At ITC New York, Danny Gutman spends the first two to four classes on break-falls and rolls (back, side, and front) before grips and throws. The students he sees get hurt are the stiff ones who resist and won't take a fall. Teach beginners to relax, follow instructions, and put control ahead of winning. That matters most for BJJ students, who are used to resisting and scrambling.

2 Run the Break-Fall Sign-Off

- [ ] **Sign off on the mat.** Tick a fall only after you've watched the student take it without bracing a hand.
- [ ] **All three, then initials and date.** Back, side, and front all ticked, and a coach has initialled and dated the row: that student is ready for Weeks 3–4.
- [ ] **Not there yet?** They stay on Weeks 1–2: break-falls and rolls, no throws, no grips.
- [ ] **Track judo ranks on their own.** A student can be a brown belt in BJJ and a white belt in judo. Each discipline needs its own progression.

3 Break-Fall Sign-Off

Weeks 1–2 readiness check: falls back, side, and front without bracing a hand.

#	STUDENT	BACK	SIDE	FRONT	COACH INITIALS	DATE
1		☐	☐	☐		
2		☐	☐	☐		
3		☐	☐	☐		
4		☐	☐	☐		
5		☐	☐	☐		
6		☐	☐	☐		
7		☐	☐	☐		
8		☐	☐	☐		
9		☐	☐	☐		
10		☐	☐	☐		
11		☐	☐	☐		
12		☐	☐	☐		
13		☐	☐	☐		
14		☐	☐	☐		
15		☐	☐	☐		
16		☐	☐	☐		
17		☐	☐	☐		
18		☐	☐	☐		
19		☐	☐	☐		
20		☐	☐	☐		
21		☐	☐	☐		
22		☐	☐	☐		
23		☐	☐	☐		
24		☐	☐	☐		
25		☐	☐	☐		
26		☐	☐	☐		