

MULTI-INSTRUCTOR PAY LADDER

Good instructors know when they're in a dead end. A ladder shows them what comes next and shows you what the team costs before you promise a raise. Typical pay is from Gymdesk's BJJ instructor pay guide; geography moves it, so write in your own.

Academy: _____

Effective: ____/____/____

Review by: ____/____/____

THE FOUR TIERS

fill in the three right-hand columns for your academy

TIER	TYPICAL PAY (THE GUIDE)	YOUR PAY	BONUS TRIGGER	WHAT EARNS THE NEXT TIER
Tier 1 · Assistant blue / purple belt	\$15–\$25/class, or free membership + \$200–\$400/month stipend Warm-ups, drilling help, demos under a higher belt			
Tier 2 · Class instructor brown / new black belt	\$30–\$50/class, or \$25–\$40/hr part-time Runs classes independently; a written one-page agreement starts here			
Tier 3 · Lead instructor experienced black belt	\$45–\$75/class, or \$40,000–\$60,000/year The coach students come to see; add retention and enrollment bonuses			
Tier 4 · Head instructor program director	\$60–\$100+/class, or \$50,000–\$80,000/year, hybrid Curriculum, mentoring, assessments; base plus a share of revenue			

Assistants on free mat time: it's common, and it works for a while. Start with a modest stipend plus free membership and raise it as they take on more. Even \$200 a month says you value the work.

BONUS TRIGGERS THAT WORK

reward the behavior you want to see

BONUS	HOW THE GUIDE SETS IT	YOURS
Student retention	\$300–\$500 a quarter if the classes they teach hold retention above your target	
Enrollment	\$25–\$50 per new student who stays past 90 days	
Attendance milestone	Annual bonus tied to total student attendance in their classes	
Annual review	A formal review with a raise path. Even 3–5% a year signals long-term investment.	

Does the whole team fit? The guide's benchmark is 25–35% of monthly recurring revenue on instructor pay. Below 25%, you're probably underpaying. Above 38%, rent, equipment, and marketing get squeezed.

Team per month \$_____ ÷ MRR \$_____ = _____%

Private lessons, decided up front. ☐ Gym keeps 20–30% ☐ Flat facility fee of \$10–\$20 a lesson ☐ 100% to the instructor. Ambiguity here creates resentment faster than almost anything else.

Our split: _____

INSTRUCTOR PAY AGREEMENT

A one-pager covering pay, schedule, cancellation, and non-compete terms, signed before a Tier 2 instructor runs their first class alone. Nothing kills an instructor relationship faster than late or inconsistent pay, so write the pay date down too.

Academy: _____

Start date: ____/____/____

THE TERMS

one row each; blank rows are the conversation you haven't had yet

Instructor

Tier and role

Pay rate per class / per hour / monthly: _____

Pay schedule ☐ Biweekly ☐ Monthly first pay date ____/____/____

Classes and schedule

Duties beyond teaching cleaning, social media, locking up, other: _____

Cancellation policy notice required to drop a class, and who covers it

Private lessons ☐ Gym keeps ____% ☐ Facility fee \$____ a lesson ☐ 100% to instructor

Performance bonus trigger and amount

Non-compete scope, distance, length; enforceability varies by state

Review date

CLASSIFICATION

decide it deliberately, before the first check

- ☐ Employee or independent contractor decided on purpose, with your accountant. It changes what this agreement can say and what the instructor really costs you.
- ☐ This agreement has been read by a local attorney. Non-compete clauses are enforceable in some states and not in others.

Academy owner, date

Instructor, date

This template is a checklist of terms to agree on, not legal advice.