

Glossary of Wrestling Terminology

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The following terms are commonly used in wrestling. The understanding of the meaning of these terms will aid you immensely when listening for instructions from your coaches in practices and matches:

1. **Position** - This term refers to your position in relation to your opponent. Being in a good defensive position is the most important skill in wrestling. Getting your opponent out of a good defensive position is the one thing that must first be accomplished to penetrate into your opponent. In wrestling there are three positions when beginning action in a match:

Neutral - Both opponents' are facing each other, without either being in control.

Bottom/Down - You are under your opponent and he is in control of you. If you gain the neutral position, then you have "escaped". If you gain the Advantage/Top position then you have "reversed" your opponent. You may pin your opponent from this position by scoring a "defensive fall" no near fall or reversal points are awarded, but the match is ended.

Advantage/Top - You are on top and in control of your opponent. In "folkstyle" wrestling this is the only time points are awarded. A defensive wrestler must score and "escape" or "reversal" in order to score points, except for illegal holds or for stalling.

2. **Head Position** - The relation of your head to your opponent's.

Head to Head - Your fore head is in the same position as your opponent's. Your head may or may not be touching depending upon the situation. This head position is the primary defensive position when in the neutral position.

Ear-to-Ear - This is a common position error by beginning or unskilled wrestlers. If you are in a position where your ear is next to your opponent's you cannot block a penetration attempt by using your head.

Head in Chest - The most preferred head position for executing a penetration attempt into your opponent is to have your head in the middle of your opponent's chest. If you can't get it in the middle, then getting on his pectoral muscle on either side is the next most preferable head position.

Head in Neck or Temple - This position allows you to block your opponent from penetrating through you. It also allows you to execute moves such as high single legs, and pinch headlocks.

Head Up - With very rare exceptions you will always want your head up so that you can look directly ahead.

Head Down - This means your face or your opponent's face is looking down towards the mat.

Head and Shoulder Lead - This means getting the head and shoulder farther forward than the lead knee. This extension/violation of position is needed to execute most offensive takedowns from the neutral position.

3. Hip Position - The ability to use your hips correctly and to take the opponent's ability to use his hips is one of the major reasons for success or failure in wrestling. The hips and thighs are the most powerful parts of your body. If you can drive forward or backward with your hips you can move your opponent out of a good defensive position. All lifting in wrestling should be done with your hips and thighs, not your back.

Hips Down - You cannot be a successful defensive or offensive wrestler if your hips are up. This means your knees are bent, and directly under your shoulders.

Create an Angle - This means having your hips in a position where you can drive your hips forward and across your opponent's hips.

Drive Across His Hips - Once you've created the angle, now you can move forward drive your hips across your opponent's. This will make him move sideways. If you are in the neutral position and have blocked his opposite foot or knee he should land on his side, making it easy for you to score a takedown. If you are in the top position and drive across his hips, and are pulling his head, far arm, knee or Ankle towards this action should put him on his hip, making it easier to put him on his back.

Hip Lock - This position is used to execute many upper body throws such as: head locks, whizzers, etc. You place your buttocks in front of the opponent's hip, and pull his upper body forward to execute the throw. By blocking his hips he cannot maintain a good defensive position.

Hip Heist - In wrestling you will want to "flip" your hips from a pointing down to the mat to pointing up to the ceiling and vice versa. You do this instead of rolling over. If you roll over you will be moving laterally in relation to your opponent and will probably get out of a good offensive/defensive position in doing so.

Hip Pop - This is an explosion of your hips upward and forward into your opponent. It creates a quick lifting action; this is necessary after the initial penetration of an opponent to finish the takedown attempt.

4. **Inside/Near** - It will depend upon what position you are in relation to your opponent what Inside/Near means. In most cases these terms are interchangeable.

Inside Position - This generally applies only when you are in the neutral position. It means that your hands and/or elbow are inside your opponent's hand and/or elbows. This is usually the dominant position when in the neutral position.

Double Inside - Both of your hands/thumbs are inside of your opponent's elbows.

Near - This means the closest to you. As an example your are in the top position, and your body is located adjacent to the left of your opponent's body: Then his left arm and leg and your right arm and leg are considered near or inside

Get Inside His Hands - This means you want your hands inside the opponent's hands and still remain in a good defensive stance.

5. **Outside/Far** - The opposite of Inside/Near Your hands and/or elbows are outside your opponent's hands and/or elbows.

Outside Position - There are certain times when you will want to be in the outside instead of the inside position. Sometimes you will have the inside position on one side and the outside position on the other side.

Overhook/Whizzer - These terms mean the same. Your hands and forearms are hooked over the opponent's upper arm.

Near Arm - In the neutral position this means the arm, which is closest to you. This occurs only when you or your opponent is in a staggered stance.

6. **Stance** - Being in a proper stance is essential in wrestling. It most commonly applies to the neutral position, but is also applicable in the bottom and top positions.

Square Stance - This means that your feet are even in alignment when you are in a standing position.

Staggered Stance - This means that one leg is farther forward than the other foot.

Squat Back Stance - A stance used in the down/bottom position in wrestling. Your knees and hands are as close to the lines as possible, with your hips sitting down on your heels.

Tabletop Stance - A stance used in the bottom position. Thighs are essentially perpendicular to the mat, and your back is parallel to the mat like a "tabletop".

7. **Violation of Position** - This can apply to the Neutral, Top, and Bottom positions. There are certain positions, which are correct, and certain positions, which are incorrect, an incorrect position prevents you from defending actions by your opponent. Hence, you want you opponent to violate position to improve your chances of success.

8. **Motion** - This usually refers only to the neutral position. Motion means that you keep moving your feet. Most of the time motion means that your move in a circling or lateral direction.

9. **Penetration** - This means that your are stepping into your opponent. Many wrestlers mistakenly think they are penetrating by getting their head closer to their opponent without moving their feet. Penetration is accomplished only by stepping forward with a foot and moving your hips forward.

10. **Changing Levels** - The changing of levels is lowering your Head & HIPS at the same time. You can accomplish this by bending your knees and/or stepping into your opponent, which will automatically lower your head and hips.

11. **Hand Control** - This means that you are holding one or both of your opponent's hands with your hands. It is generally preferable to grab your opponent's hand instead of his wrist. There are occasions when it is preferable to grab his wrist. When an coach says hand control, he means hand control and not wrist control

12. **Rotate Your Wrist** - Most wrestlers in the neutral position make the mistake of grabbing a wrist instead of a hand. When a wrestler grabs your wrist, you can simply cause him to release your wrist by rotating your wrist in the direction of the tip of his thumb.

13. **Elbow-to-Elbow** - This is another means of making an opponent of releasing his grip on your wrist. You take the elbow of the same arm your opponent has grabbed hold of a wrist, to the elbow of the arm he is using to grab your wrist.

14. **Post** - This means placing a body part to a mat. It will be a head or foot in most cases.

15. **Elbows in** - This means to keep your elbows on the same alignment as the sides of your body, it does not necessarily mean that your elbows are against the side of your body.

16. **High Leg Over** - When you are in the top position, there will be times that you need to turn your hips towards the ceiling temporarily. By stepping one leg over the other and putting your foot to the mat, you are executing a "High Leg Over".

17. **Two on One** - This means gripping an opponent's hand, wrist, or arm with both of your hands.

18. **Elevate** - When on your back; with your opponent on top of you raise his hips and legs further off of the mat. This can be done by using a neck bridge, hand, legs, and/or feet depending upon where your body is in relation to your opponent. It can be done from the bottom position or as part of a throw from the neutral position.

19. **Bridge** - Forming an arch "Bridge" with your back and legs, by supporting your body with only your head and feet on the mat.

20. **Under the Near Arm** - This term applies only when you are behind or beside your opponent. With your outside/far arm reach under his near arm.

21. **Chop** - This usually means to pull the opponent's near elbow towards the mat.

22. **Step and Slide** - This is how you move your feet in a circle or laterally. You step sideways with one foot (this is a small step usually 6" to 1', you then slide your other foot to keep an even distance between your feet.

23. **One Step Back Then Circle** - When in the neutral position and in a tie up, an opponent will push into you. You take one step backward to maintain your balance then, step and slide in a circular pattern away from his pressure.

24. **Back Heel** - This can be done from the neutral and top position. In the neutral position it means stepping your foot outside and placing it behind the opponent's foot. In the top position this usually occurs with your opponent in a standing position, with you standing behind him with your hands locked around his waist. You place one of your feet behind his heel, and then pull him over the foot you've blocked.

25. **Limp Arm** - This is a method to release an opponent's overhook/whizzer when you are in the neutral or top position.

26. **Get His Head under You** - This means place your opponent's head under your chest.
27. **Back Pressure** - This means driving your back into your opponent's chest.
28. **Chest-to-Chest** - This means placing your chest against your opponent's when he's in his back at approximately a 90-degree angle.
29. **Push - Pull** - This is a means of getting an opponent to push into you, thereby creating a head and shoulder lead.
30. **Dictates the Action** - This means you are moving your opponent, you are wrestling aggressively by trying to score a takedown, escape, reversal, or near fall depending upon your position.
31. **Circle to the Trail Leg** - When you are in the neutral position and your opponent is in a staggered stance, a good defensive action is to be in a square stance and circle towards his trail leg. This will prevent him from being able to shoot a leg takedown attempt directly into you, unless he moves his trail foot.
32. **Head in the Hip** - This usually applies only to a near side cradle. You place your head into the front of your opponent's hip nearest you.
33. **Rip Back** - This means you take the opponent's head backwards over his hips by rolling over your own when you are at a 90-degree angle to the opponent.
34. **Underhook** - A form of tie up in the neutral position. You drive your hand and forearm inside your opponent's arm, and raise your hand and forearm up under the opponent's shoulder.
35. **Under cup** - A means of controlling an opponent when you are in the top position. From behind you reach under your opponent's shoulder and grasp the front of his shoulders from behind.
36. **Cutback** - When in the bottom/down position you turn your inside shoulder and head under the opponent's near shoulder.
37. **Cross leg** - This means reaching under the opponent's chest/stomach and grabbing the knee/calf of the far leg.

38. **Cross face** - This will drive the opponent's head away from you, by pushing his head with you're the bicep portion of your upper arm to the side of his head. This is used typically to counter leg takedown attempts, and on top to apply a crossface or far side cradle.

39. **Cross face Him towards You** - A normal crossface will drive the opponent's head away from you, by pushing his head with you're the bicep portion of your upper arm to the side of his head. When executing a chicken-wing as a part of the setup to turn him you will cross face your opponent towards your.

40. **Drag** - To pull your opponent's arm towards you.

41. **Swisher** - To swing your feet away (like a windshield wiper blade action) from your body when in a squat back or tabletop stance.

42. **Pick up an Ankle** - This applies when you are on top and behind your opponent. You reach under and grab the part of his foot where the shoelaces are and lift it upward.

43. **Belly Down** - This means put your belly so it faces or is on the mat.

44. **Cut Him Loose** - This means let your opponent go when you are in the top position. Your coach may want you to do this for the following reasons:

A. You are about to be reversed, therefore let him go and give up only 1 point.

B. You are about to be called for stalling because you can't break your opponent down. This action will save a penalty point, which you may be able to make up by scoring a takedown. If you don't let him go you'll be penalized, and then if he escaped he has scored 2 points instead of the one you gave up when you "cut him loose.

C. A coach may decide that you are better off to take your opponent down and let him go, and repeat the process, rather than trying to ride him.

45. **Base** - This applies only to the bottom position. It means your body is being supported by your arms and legs that you are not broken down onto your stomach.

46. **Drive Back over Your Hips** - This applies when you are in the down position. Many times when you are broken down from your base, the best way to rebuild your base is to drive your weight back towards your hips an into the opponent.

47. **Walk Your Fingers Forward** - When in the top or bottom position, you want to improve your position, but cannot freely move your hand forward because of your opponent's action do the following: Place your palm down on the mat, keep your elbow next to your side, and begin pulling your arm forward by walking your fingers forward and grasping the mat with your fingertips.

48. **Trap** - To hold a part of the opponent's body with part of your body. You may "trap" or squeeze his head with your knees, trap an arm by squeezing your elbow to your side, etc.

49. **Parallel** - This means your body is on the same alignment as your opponent's body.

50. **Get 90-degrees** - This means to create a right angle to your opponent with your body. This is especially important when applying a pinning combination, which requires you to be chest-to-chest to your opponent.

51. **Flanker** - When in the top position this means you take a foot and calf of your leg and place it inside your opponent's leg. If you use your outside leg it is an outside flanker, which is the most commonly used type of flanker. If you use the inside leg, it is usually because the opponent stepped over your near leg.

52. **Double Top Stretcher** - You overhook both of your opponent's legs below the knees while in a chest-to-chest position. Many high school wrestlers refer to this as a "Saturday Night Ride".

53. **Keep You Heel to Your Butt** - This is applicable when you have an outside flanker or double top stretcher on your opponent. By doing this you will force your hips into your opponent and will keep his hips on the mat.

54. **Daylight** - This refers to the distance between you and your opponent. Defensively you want to create daylight; offensively you want to eliminate daylight.

55. **Cover Down** - This typically refers to eliminating daylight when you score a takedown or reversal. You want to eliminate any distance (daylight) between you and your opponent.

56. **Turn the Corner** - This means going from a head-to-head alignment to a 90-degree or less angle to your opponent. It means you will wind up to one side of the opponent.

57. **Setup** - Create a motion or action by the opponent, which will allow you to attempt a takedown while the opponent is not in a good defensive position.
58. **Finish** - To complete the action you initiated.
59. **Back Door** - To go between the opponent's legs from in front until you are behind him.
60. **Block** - To keep a certain part of the opponent's body from moving. Example, blocking the opponent's foot, and driving or pulling his body over that foot will cause him to lose his balance.
61. **Roll Your Shoulders in** - Instead of having an erect posture with your shoulders back, you will want to "roll" both shoulders in, this will allow you more easily keep your elbows in, and it creates a more relaxed stance.
62. **Whizzer** - This is the same as an overhook of the opponent arm from the front or when you are parallel to him.
63. **Straight-line Defense** - This mean's you keep your body on the same alignment as the opponent's, only your body is above his body. This is a means of stopping his penetration on a leg takedown attempt. Hopefully you will be able to stop his penetration, get him extended, and score a takedown by getting behind him.
64. **Reverse Cross face** - You use the tricep (backside of your upper arm) to push the opponent's head towards or away from you.
65. **Drive Him Over His Ear** - When you apply a half nelson or chicken wing pinning combination, in most cases you will need to drive the opponent's arm from one side of his body to the other side. You generally want to drive your weight towards the "ear" of the opponent, which is the farthest from you. This is about a 30-degree angle from the alignment of his body.
66. **Pinch Head Lock** - Secure and underhook with one arm, and grab the opponent's head in a "collar tie" lock your hands together, place your forehead in the opponent's temple. After doing this simply drive him down to the mat and onto his back.
67. **Keep Your Hip on Top** - When you have one leg in, you need to have you hip higher than the opponent's or, he can easily put you on your hip and reverse you.