



Blocks

Once you start to get the feel of what it is like to take the offensive with punches and kicks, you must turn your attention to what it is like to see a blow coming toward you from an attacker. One of your most natural reactions is to run away! This is a very valuable reaction and a good defense if you can get away safely. Another natural reaction will be to duck or dodge. Work at putting those reactions on hold and learn how to block the blow and then take the offensive. Eventually you will know when to block, duck or dodge without having to think.

Start your blocks from the correct fold until you are totally familiar with the function of each block in relation to where it strikes the incoming attack. Practice the techniques slowly at first to make sure your form is correct. As you become more familiar with the technique you will naturally begin to gain speed, which in turn leads to power. Once you have imprinted the pattern of movement for these blocks, you can execute them with speed and power without a full fold.

When you are familiar with the mechanics of blocks, you will need a partner to direct different hand strikes or kicks at you. Have your partner strike slowly at first while you block slowly and lightly, striving to deflect the forward motion of the attack.

A block does not just lie on your opponents arm, nor does it stay out where the block ends. Quickly re-fold your blocking hand so you can use it again, either to block or to attack. Your block should snap out and back.

Blocking may be used to stop an oncoming attack, to deflect an attack, or stop the forward motion of an attack. Blocking can also be used to distract an attacker or as an offensive measure to open up a line of attack of your own.

Definitions

Universal Fold

The universal fold is used as a starting position for several blocks. It covers the majority of your own targets. Bend one arm at 90° and keep the other arm straight (elbow not locked). The straight (lower) arm should be at a 45° angle to your body. The upper part (shoulder to elbow) of the bent arm should also be at a 45° angle to the body. Bring your elbows together in front of your body. The inside (palm) of both fists should face your body. In this position, you should just be able to





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see over the top of the bent arm's fist, and the fist of the straight arm should be in front of your groin.

Blocking Edge

The blocking edge is the side of your arm with which you block. It can be either side depending upon the type of block executed. The outside edge is the side between your little finger and your elbow. The inside edge is the side between your thumb and your elbow.

Guard Arm

The guard arm is the non-blocking arm in an inside block (this term is also used in *Forms* and *One-Steps*). This arm should be bent in a 90° angle at the elbow in front of the chest at shoulder height. The upper arm (shoulder to elbow) should be at a 90° angle to the shoulder. The forearm should be parallel to the floor at shoulder height. The fist of the guard arm should be directly in front of the opposite shoulder.

Chamber

To chamber means to put yourself in place for your next technique. In Tae Kwon Do you will learn how to chamber for blocks, kicks, and hand techniques.

Basic Blocks

Down Block - Front Stance

This block is primarily used against kicks, but can be used on anything you wish to deflect downward, like a punch or a weapon.

- FOLD Move arms into Universal Fold with blocking (left) hand on top.
- STEP Step into left front stance.
- BLOCK Strike downward with the outside edge of your left arm; do not go past the edge of your body. Chamber your right hand at your hip with your palm facing up.

- FOLD The chambered hand now becomes the blocking hand. Move arms into Universal Fold with blocking (right) hand on top.
- STEP Step into right front stance.
- BLOCK Same as block above but with opposite arms.





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Up Block - Front Stance

The upward movement of this block is generally used to protect the head from overhand strikes, club blows, etc.

- FOLD** Move arms into Universal Fold with blocking (left) hand on the bottom.
- STEP** Step into left front stance
- BLOCK** Snap your forearm up in front of your forehead rotating your fist from the palm-in position to a palm-out position as you raise your arm. This brings the harder outside edge of your arm into the blow that will block the attacker's arm (or club) upward. Your forearm should be angled slightly upwards, with the fist higher than the elbow. The fist is slightly past the side of your head to protect the temple and is out in front of the head by several inches to protect the forehead. Keep your fist closed and your wrist in a straight line with your forearm. Chamber your right hand at your hip.



- FOLD** The chambered hand now becomes the blocking hand. Move arms into Universal Fold with blocking (right) hand on the bottom.
- STEP** Step into right front stance.
- BLOCK** Same as block above but with opposite arms.

Outside Block - Front Stance

This block is performed in a scooping motion. It is generally used to protect the torso from incoming punches or kicks.

- FOLD** Move arms into Universal Fold with blocking (left) hand on the bottom.
- STEP** Step into left front stance.
- BLOCK** Snap blocking arm upwards and outwards in a scooping motion with palm facing in towards body (block with the inside edge). Your arm should be bent in a 90° angle and your upper arm (shoulder to elbow) should be at a 45° angle from your body. Remember not to go past the outside edge of your body. Chamber your right hand at your hip.
- FOLD** The chambered hand now becomes the blocking hand. Move arms into Universal Fold with blocking (right) hand on the bottom.





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- STEP** Step into right front stance.
BLOCK Same as block above but with opposite arms.

Inside Block - Front Stance

The inward motion of this block is useful for deflecting strikes aimed at your head or upper body.

- FOLD** Both hands are closed into fists. Fold blocking (left) arm back with palm out facing forward and the fist close to the ear. Fold the guard (right) arm across your chest with the palm down.

- STEP** Step into left front stance
BLOCK Swiftly move the blocking arm forward, snapping the fist around to a palm-in position so that you block with the outside edge of your arm. Stop the block at the center of your chest with your fist at chin level. The fist moves in a straight line, not in a circular motion. Chamber your right hand at your hip just as you strike.

- FOLD** The chambered hand now becomes the blocking hand. Fold the blocking (right) arm back with the palm of the fist facing forward and the fist close to the ear. Fold the guard (left) arm across your chest with the palm down.

- STEP** Step into right front stance.
BLOCK Same as block above but with opposite arms.





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Low Knife-Hand Block - Back Stance

This block is used in similar situations as a down block, primarily against kicks, but it can be used on anything you wish to deflect downward.

- FOLD** Fold the blocking (left) arm across your chest with the inside of your palm facing your opposite cheek. Stretch your other (right) arm back at a 45° angle upwards with the palm facing the rear.
- STEP BLOCK** Step out into left back stance. Sharply drop the blocking arm downward across the chest snapping the hand outward, palm-down, just above the knee but not past the left edge of your body. Your arm is parallel to your leg. Simultaneously snap your other (right) hand downward to a palm-up position just below your solar plexus. The hand at your solar plexus is your chambered hand.
- FOLD** The chambered hand now becomes the blocking hand. Fold the blocking (right) arm across your chest with the inside of your palm facing your opposite cheek. Stretch your other (left) arm back at a 45° angle upwards with the palm facing the rear.
- STEP BLOCK** Step out into right back stance. Same as block above but with opposite arms.





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Middle Knife-Hand Block - Back Stance

- FOLD** Fold the blocking (left) arm across your chest with the inside of your palm facing your opposite cheek. Position your other (right) hand at waist level on the side of your body, palm down.
- STEP BLOCK** Step out into left back stance. Sharply swing the blocking arm across the chest snapping the knife edge of the hand out in line with the shoulder, palm outwards, finger tips at chin level, with the forearm inclined at a 45° angle. Simultaneously snap the other (right) hand upward to a palm-up position just below your solar plexus.
- FOLD** The chambered hand now becomes the blocking hand. Fold the blocking arm (right) across your chest with the inside of your palm facing your opposite cheek. Position your other (left) hand at waist level on the side of your body, palm down.
- STEP BLOCK** Step out into right back stance. Same as block above but with opposite arms.

