

Foot Sweeping Techniques

CJC Manual (pg 111)

There are many examples of foot sweeping techniques associated with all martial arts traditions. Our CJC Manual gives one example [*Ko Soto Gari (Minor Outer Reap)*] that is very effective and it demonstrates several concepts that are critical to an effective sweeping technique.

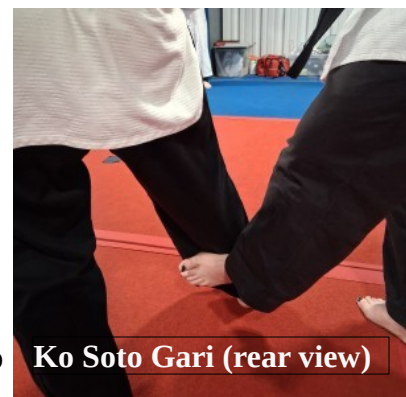
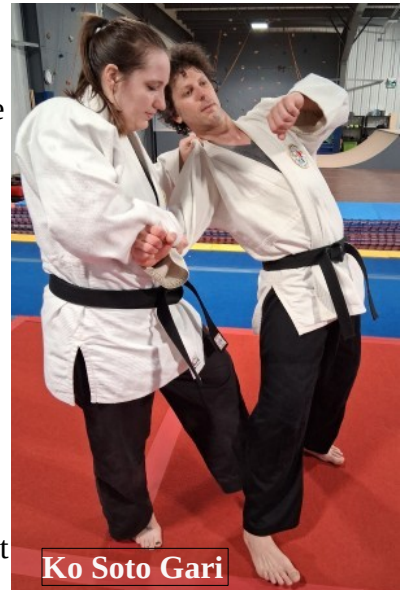
- Dynamic Motion
 - Balance
 - Timing

For the purpose of this article I will use Judo Terminology, because it is accessible for most students, to describe some of the more common examples.

Foot sweeps in Judo are part of the Ashi-waza (foot/leg techniques) family. They rely heavily on timing, balance breaking (kuzushi), and movement, which makes them extremely useful for stand-up Jiu-Jitsu, especially for self-defense and “come-along” control situations where you want to take someone down without heavy impact (perhaps).

Generally, the motion is to the opponents side, (through evasion of a punch, response to grappling etc.) followed by a sweep with the bottom of the foot to force the opponents foot forward as we break their balance to the back.

These techniques make use of timing, balance, and natural motion with minimal emphasis on raw strength and power. To use an analogy, a sweeping technique basically pulls a leg away from a table or chair so it will fall naturally under its own weight.



Other Examples to Study



Ko Uchi Gari

Ko Uchi Gari (Minor Inner Reap) is a takedown that attacks the inside of the opponent's foot or lower leg. The technique works by reaping the opponent's supporting leg from the inside while directing their balance backward toward the attacked foot.

In the application of this sweep we are located closer to the centre line of the opponents attack. We take advantage of the opponents balance to the back while sweeping their foot to the front.

De Ashi Harai (Advancing Foot Sweep) in this technique the opponent is moving forward or backward while we sweep their foot across in front of them. The timing is critical as balance is moved from the foot in a retreating direction or just as the foot is placed down in the advancing direction.



De Ashi Harai



Kosoto Gake

Kosoto Gake (Minor Outer Hook) Here we can see that the opponent's leg is hooked and the balance is forced back while the Tori either discards the Uki or walks over to move into the mount position.

O Uchi Gari (Major Inner Reap) It is one of the most widely used techniques in both Judo and wrestling-style clinch fighting because it works well against opponents who adopt a square stance.

The attacker steps deep between the opponent's legs and uses a powerful reaping motion with the back of the leg to remove the opponent's base. At the same time, the upper body pushes or pulls the opponent backward, forcing them to fall once their support is removed.

The attacker steps deep between the opponent's legs so their hips are close to the opponent's centre-line. The opponent is forced backward, typically toward the heel of the targeted leg.



This article has looked at only a few of the many foot sweep options available to the Jiu Jitsu practitioner. We encourage you to deepen your personal practice and your explorations in order to discover not only the individual techniques but more importantly the deep lessons to be understood through foot sweep practice.

Dojo Challenge

Review and practice the following techniques and decide if they are a good fit for your martial arts path. What can you learn about yourself and your practice partners as you continue your journey.

Sasae Tsurikomi Ashi
(propping lift-pull foot throw)

Harai Tsurikomi Ashi
(lifting pulling foot sweep)

Okuri Ashi Harai
(following foot sweep)

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