

Counter-blocking



Photo courtesy WFTDA

Coaching Points

- Multiple repetitions at each stage will build muscle memory and consistency.
- Key point: timing
- Counter-block attempts to intercept the block before the trajectory is completed
- Transfer weight into the oncoming hit

Safety Points

- Drop center of gravity to increase stability
- Core engaged, chin tucked, arms in close to the body
- Force absorption through “soft & springy” joints

Introduction

Preparation & Positioning

- Demonstrate and explain the full skill and the fundamental steps to counter-blocking: **Check stance, Drop & Engage, Stomp, Meet, Absorb and reset**
- **Check stance:** low, stable, knees bent, weight slightly back over heels, shoulders in front of hips
- **Drop center** of gravity by adopting a lower stance to increase stability and **Engage** the core for impact

Exploration

Timing

- **Check stance + Drop**
- **Stomp:** lift one foot and stomp forcefully back down while shifting your weight into the oncoming hit
- Attempt to time the stomp at the moment of impact or just slightly before impact
- (For lateral oncoming hits) Stomp the foot that is nearest to the initiator of the block and shift weight towards the oncoming hit
- (For oncoming hits from behind/derby-direction) The stomp will be with the braking leg which will have the foot perpendicular to the track opposite to the oncoming hit ; weight will shift back into the oncoming hit

Development

Impact & Absorption

- **Check stance + Drop + Stomp** + practice repetitions of:
- **Meet** the block - shift weight into the initiator of the block before their trajectory is complete
- **Absorb and reset** into the hit. Force absorption that will shift the receivers position, **absorb**, then **reset** into a strong, stable counter-block. Maintain low stance with weight-shifted into the block, using the stomp-leg to absorb the impact and pressure

Proficiency

Synthesis

- Combine the fundamental steps of counter-blocking.
- Practice with oncoming blocks from different angles, at different speeds, and fighting against short, quick hits, an longer drives and pushes.
- Encourage experimentation from counter-blockers with the angle and positioning of their **stomp** and weight shift that they can feel what works best for them

Land Training

- Squats, Cossack Squats, Lunges, Side-Lunges; focus on eccentric control and deceleration
- Isometric Core (e.g., include planks, side planks, hollow holds, supermans, palloff presses)
- Focus on resisting movement (e.g., trunk flexion, extension, side-bending, and rotation)
- Weight transfer and balance (e.g., balance board drills w/external stimuli)

