

Glossary of Wrestling Terms

-A-

Arm bar

A method of turning an opponent from stomach to back on the mat by wrapping an arm around the opponent's elbow and using the leverage of that hold to flip him over.

Arm throw

A move in which a wrestler throws the opponent over his shoulder by holding the opponent's arm.

-B-

Bottom position

The wrestler who is on hands and knees is in the bottom position.

Bout

A match between two wrestlers, which is made up of three periods of 1 minute to 1 1/2 minutes each. A bout ends before the regulation time in the event of a fall, a technical fall, an injury default, or a disqualification. If the bout is tied after time expires, there is an overtime period.

Breakdown

The act of getting an opponent to the mat on his stomach or side.

Bridge

An arched position adopted by a wrestler, with his back above the mat, usually to avoid being pinned but sometimes as an offensive move.

Bridge out

An escape move in which a wrestler rolls from a bridge onto the stomach.

-C-

Central circle

The inner circle, 1 meter in diameter, on the wrestling mat.

Central wrestling area

A circle, 8 meters in diameter, inside the passivity zone.

Control

A wrestler who has a dominant position that restricts the opponent's mobility is said to be in control.

Cradle

A hold in which one arm is around the neck of the opponent, the other around the neck, with the hands gripped tightly together.

Cross-face

A hold in which the wrestler's forearm is pressed across the opponent's face.

-D-

Default

A win declared because of the opponent's disqualification or injury.

Decision

A victory in which the winner leads the opponent by 1 to 11 points. Compare technical fall.

Disqualification

A wrestler may be disqualified for brutality or unsportsmanlike conduct.

Double-leg takedown

A move in which a wrestler takes the opponent down by grasping both of the opponent's legs and pulling them.

Duck-under

A takedown move in which the wrestler ducks under the opponent's arm to

get behind him and then uses a lift, throw, or trip to take the opponent to the mat.

-E-

Escape

If an athlete gets out from being under control in the bottom position and gets to his feet, facing his rival, it is an escape, which scores one point.

Exposure

Turning an opponent's shoulders to the mat, thus exposing him to the possibility of a pin.

-F-

Fall

When both of the opponent's shoulders are in contact with the mat (a pin), a wrestler is awarded a fall, which wins the match.

Fireman's carry

A takedown move in which the wrestler brings the opponent temporarily over his shoulders, then to the mat.

Folk style

A style of wrestling generally used in youth wrestling, high schools and colleges, which is similar to freestyle wrestling but with more emphasis on control and safety.

Full nelson

A hold in which both of the wrestler's arms are passed under the opponent's armpits and both hands are on the back of the opponent's head; illegal in amateur wrestling. See also half nelson.

-G-

Grapevine

A hold in which a wrestler wraps a leg around one of the opponent's legs, often preparatory to a throw.

-H-

Half nelson

A hold in which the wrestler's arm is passed under the opponent's armpit and the hand is on the back of the opponent's head. See also full nelson.

Headlock

A hold in which an arm is around the opponent's neck and the hands are locked together. The opponent's arm must be gathered into the hold to prevent accidental choking.

-I-

Injury default

A win rewarded to a wrestler when the opponent cannot continue to compete because of an injury.

Injury time

A period during which a match is halted because one of the wrestlers is injured or bleeding. If the wrestler cannot continue within two minutes, the match ends with an injury default.

-L-

Leg shot

A quick move, involving a level change, in which a wrestler thrusts toward the opponent's legs in an attempt to get a lock on one or both of them.

Level change

Bending at the knees to raise or lower the hips in order to get into a new position for a hold or takedown move.

-M-

Mat

The mat for international wrestling competition has a central wrestling area, 9 meters in diameter, with a center circle 1 meter in diameter. Inside the contest area is a red band, 1 meter wide, known as the passivity zone.

-N-

Near fall

If a wrestler exposes the opponent's shoulders four inches or less above the mat or has one of the opponent's shoulders on the mat and the other at an angle of less than 45 degrees to the mat, it is a near fall, worth two or three points depending on the amount of time.

Neutral position

The position wrestlers take at the beginning of a match, standing and facing each other, but not in contact. Also known as standing position.

-O-

Overtime period

If the score is tied when time runs out on a bout, a one minute overtime period begins immediately. The first wrestler to score a point wins.

-P-

Pin

Forcing both of the opponent's shoulders to the mat. The result is a fall, which wins the match.

-R-

Referee's position

Where one wrestler is in the bottom position on knees and hands.

Reversal

If the wrestler in the bottom position completely reverses the situation and

comes to the top position in control, it is a reversal, worth two points.

-S-

Single-leg takedown

A move in which a wrestler takes the opponent down by lifting one of the opponent's legs.

Singlet

The one-piece uniform worn by wrestlers.

Slam

To lifting the opponent from the mat and bring him back down with unnecessary force; illegal in amateur wrestling.

Sprawl

A move used to counter a leg shot. The wrestler throws the legs back and arches the hips into the opponent to break the hold.

-T-

Takedown

When a wrestler takes the opponent to the mat from the neutral position, it is a takedown, worth two points.

Technical fall

If a wrestler accumulates a lead of 12 points or more, it is called a technical fall and that wrestler wins the match. Also known as technical superiority.

Throw

Any move in which a wrestler lifts the opponent from the mat, then brings him back down.

Tie-up

Any move in which a wrestler grabs the opponent's upper body to gain control.

Tilt

To turn the opponent so that his back goes from an angle of 45 degrees or more to less than 45 degrees.

Top position

The wrestler who is on top of their opponent who is.

Tournament

A series of bouts to determine championships in various weight classes.

Although you may hear the same move be called a variety of terms. These are just a sampling of the most common terms. There will be many more to learn as the season progresses!