

# Jo Self-Defenses

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Note that cane, sword, and Bo techniques often work well for the Jo. You should always *kiyap* on the counter-strike, as with any self-defense. **Plan and practice for a sequence of counter-strikes, getting the most power and quickness by alternating the end of the Jo used to strike.** These self-defenses assume the Jo is being held in your right hand in *joon bi* (neutral) stance; they may be reversed for left hand technique. [The forms begin with the Jo in the left hand; BUT, walking with the Jo used as a staff, favors a right hand technique. Practice self defenses using both hands.]

Punch or Slap (from attacker's right side): *Basic*: Victim raises the Jo in vertical position with both hands, as the right foot steps forward and to the attacker's side. Thrust the Jo to your left side to block the slap or punch. Pull the Jo back and into a horizontal position then thrust forward end into the abdomen, chest, or throat. *More advanced technique*: See the continuing technique @ <http://fliiby.com/file/126096/ls0qijaigx.html>.

Overhead Strike: Same as the Bo. From neutral (*joon bi*) position use both hands to raise the Jo horizontally to block the strike. Step forward with your left foot to the attacker's right side and perform helicopter spin to strike the right side of the attacker's head or neck.

## Chokes or Double Lapel Grabs:

- Same as overhead strike.
- (Jo begins in the right hand.) Tap the Jo on the ground; the attacker will reflexively look towards the sound. With the right hand lift the Jo directly up to strike under the chin to break the hold. Step forward with the right foot as you twist the right hand to bring the end of the Jo into your left hand at your waist. Slide the Jo forward through the right hand to strike the attacker.
- Holding the Jo in a vertical position with the right hand, lift the Jo straight up between the attacker's arms and grab the Jo with your left hand (your right wrist should be under the attacker's left elbow). Simultaneously step forward with your left foot to the side of the attacker's right foot, turn your body 90 degrees to the right, and turn the Jo with the left hand vertically for 270 degrees to break the choke. Use the left hand to bring the Jo under the attacker's chin and continue to push the chin backwards to throw the attacker over your left leg. When the attacker is on the ground, thrust with the Jo.
- Jo over the back of the attacker's hands. Place your thumbs under the attacker's palms and press the back of the hand into the Jo to release the grip. Counter attack by swinging the Jo horizontally to strike the temple

## Stand Off Attack:

- Jo begins in the right hand in *joon bi* position) As an attacker approaches, step back with the left foot into a front stance while rotating the right hand to bring the end of the Jo into the left hand at your waist. Thrust the Jo forward to stop the attack.
- Beginning in *joon bi* or in the basic *sankakudai* "triangular stance" (which begins the Jo *katas*) with the Jo in either hand. As the attacker moves forward, hop forward with your front leg (same side as the hand holding the Jo) and thrust the Jo into the chin/neck. This is a single hand technique. Follow with twisting the front hand to bring the back of the Jo into the open hand and thrust.
- Beginning in *sankakudai* (back stance with the back foot turned 45 degrees to the side not 90 degrees), the Jo is held vertically with the tip on the floor about 6 inches in front of the front foot. As the attacker approaches, twist the front hand to lift the Jo tip on the floor forward and upward towards the attacker's chin (even if you miss it disrupts the

attack). Holding hand will be palm down with the Jo held horizontal. Now grab the back end of the Jo with the other hand palm up and thrust the Jo into the chest.

#### Disarms:

- (Attacker has short object in their right hand; Jo in the right hand) Step forward and to the side with the right foot while raising the Jo. Grasp the bottom of the Jo with your left hand as the right hand slides down the Jo into a sword grip. Strike across the attacker's wrist to disarm. Step forward with the left foot as the left hand pulls the Jo through the right hand until the right hand is at the end. Swing the back end of the Jo in a horizontal arc as the left hand slides down the Jo towards the middle. Strike the right side of the attacker's head or neck.
- (Attacker uses two hand overhead strike with a long object) Shuffle step to your left to avoid the attack as the right hand twists the Jo into your left hand. Raise the Jo vertically as the right hand slides down the Jo into a sword grip. Strike across both wrists to disarm. Step forward with the left foot as the left hand pulls the Jo through the right hand until the right hand is at the end. Swing the back end of the Jo in a horizontal arc as the left hand slides down the Jo towards the middle. Strike the right side of the attacker's head or neck.

#### Bear Hug:

- Use the Jo to strike the attacker's foot or face to release the grip. Twist the Jo into the left hand as you step forward with the right foot and do a back thrust into the abdomen.
- Use the Jo to strike the back of the hands.
- Step to the side. Use the Jo either to strike the groin or abdomen.

#### Attacker Grabs the Tip of the Jo (similar to the cane, may occur if you thrust towards the attacker and they grab the tip):

- If the attacker grabs the Jo from below (tip upward), your front hand slides towards the attacker's hand and grabs the Jo to act as a fulcrum. Step or hop forward and your back hand now swings the Jo vertically down and towards the groin or continue swinging to strike the chin. [You may also reverse the move to hit the top of the attacker's head, BUT attacking the groin is more likely to pull the Jo from the attacker's hand.]
- If the attacker grabs the Jo from above (tip downward), your front hand assumes a palm down grip on the Jo and slides down to the attacker's hands to act as a fulcrum. Step or hop forward and your back hand swings the Jo vertically up and onto the top of the attacker's head. [You may try the reverse movement as above.]
- Step forward, push the Jo forward to turn and off balance the attacker, with the Jo kept parallel to the ground lift the Jo straight up, and guide the attacker's hands over their head and down their back to throw them down. For added speed, as you lift the Jo upwards, step under the Jo (which strengthens the lift) and use the weight of your body to push the Jo back over the attacker's head to throw them to the ground. This works in 'closed stance'; if in 'open stance', as you lift up the Jo, duck under the Jo and turn 180° to complete the throw.
- Single hand, palm down grab: Move the tip of the Jo to the outside of the wrist. Slide your front hand down the Jo and grab the Jo and attacker's wrist from the outward side. Pull the back of the Jo upwards as you push the wrist/hand towards the midline into an arm bar.

### **Attacks and Counter Moves From Jo Kata**

#### **Attacker Thrusts To Chest:**

- Step to your left and counter thrust [13 & 22-step Jo move 1]
- Overhead block and counter thrust [13 & 22-step Jo move 2]

- If your Jo is behind you, step to the left and swing the Jo around to strike the head/neck  
[22 step Jo move 14 & 20]

**Attacker Thrust to Back:**

- Turn 180° with the Jo held as in a thrust and knock the attacker's Jo away and then counter thrust.

**Yokomen Strike by Attacker:** 45° downward strike towards neck and shoulder.

- Overhead block (as with the cane) and counter thrust to the face.
- Overhead block (as with the cane), deflect the attack

References:

- Jo: The Art of the Japanese Short Staff, by David Lowry, Black Belt Books, 1987
- Jo, The Japanese Short Staff, by Don Zier and Tom Lang, Unique Publications, 1985

Look to the Bo and cane techniques for applicable self-defenses.