

Hapkido 10th – 9th Kup

Before we start learning specific Hapkido techniques, all practitioners need to learn how to fall safely. Whether this is from a throw, at take-down or a strike, knowing how to fall correctly will considerably help your ability to remain in the fight with minimal injuries.

Forward roll

A martial arts style forward roll differs greatly from an early stage gymnastic forward roll in that it allows you to not only break your fall but to re-gain your feet as quickly as possible. Make sure that your head does not touch the ground as, if you ever need it outside of the dojang, you will most likely be on a concrete floor, where any head impact will cause injury.

Tuck your head in, under your elbow and lead with your fingertips in a knife-hand position. Your arm should be at an angle of around 120 degrees. Allow your body weight to fall forward and roll along the length of your arm. Tucking your legs in will allow the roll to continue until your feet touch the ground, where you can roll straight back up onto your feet, allowing you to continue the battle.

Forward break fall

If you are in a position where you are unable to roll, you will need to spread the impact of the fall, to avoid injury.

Fall forward and, as you reach the floor, try to impact with the length of both forearms, both knees and both feet. The more arm that touches the ground, the more the impact is spread, reducing the chances of injury.

Backward break fall

Similarly, you are looking to cushion the fall as much as possible. Crouch down to your haunches, then roll backwards. The natural curve of your spine in this position will allow you to roll up your back. As your shoulders reach the floor, tuck your head in, to avoid impact, then slap your arms on the floor as wide as possible. As before, the impact of the arms spreads the impact, reducing injury. It also prevents the roll from continuing, keeping your head out of harms' way.

Sideways break fall

Similar to both the front and backward break falls, you are still looking to spread the impact with the floor by using your arms. In this case though, you will only be able to use one arm, as you are rolling sideways. For the gents, as you land, it might be an idea to have a gap between your knees at the moment of impact ...