



Summer Training Programs: Building Stronger Jiu Jitsu Practitioners from the Ground Up

Summer is a powerful season of growth, not just in nature, but in martial arts. For students of Canadian Jiu Jitsu, it offers a unique opportunity to step out of the conventional dojo and embrace a more integrated, full-spectrum training program. Whether you are a novice white belt or a seasoned black belt, summer provides the ideal conditions to develop endurance, test your resilience, and apply the biomechanical principles taught by the Canadian Jiu Jitsu Council.

Outdoor Training: The Summer Advantage

The Canadian summer brings fresh possibilities for conditioning, scenario-based drills, and natural movement practice. Training outdoors challenges the body in unpredictable ways — uneven ground, variable temperatures, and diverse terrain require spontaneous balance, awareness, and engagement.

Recommended Outdoor Activities:

- **Trail running or hill sprints** for anaerobic threshold development.
- **Long hikes with weighted packs** to train aerobic endurance and grip strength.
- **Beach or park-based shadow sparring**, footwork drills, or breakfall (ukemi) practice on grass for improved proprioception (body part awareness).
- **Partner-based evasion and striking drills** in open spaces to expand spatial awareness and fluid response.

These practices strengthen the **body energy systems** while fostering mental adaptability. Anaerobic sessions build explosive power and short-burst energy (ideal for throws and counters), while aerobic training supports stamina for longer engagements and sustained practice.

Keep Training — Even if the Dojo Closes for the summer months

Some clubs take a summer pause from official indoor training to accommodate travel, family time, and facility closures. But a closed dojo is no excuse to stop training. In fact, it's an invitation to get creative and take your practice into the rhythms of Canadian summer life.

Everyday activities can become martial arts training with the right mindset:

- **Gardening:** Deep squats, controlled lifting, grip strength, and mindful movement strengthen joints and core stability.
- **Biking:** Builds aerobic endurance, leg power, and balance.
- **Swimming:** Enhances breath control, whole-body coordination, and muscular endurance.

- **Canoeing or kayaking:** Trains grip, rotational force, and upper body symmetry — perfect for joint lock and come-along motion patterns.
- **Chopping wood, yard work, paddleboarding, even spirited games like tag with kids** — all offer dynamic movement, resistance, and opportunity to develop martial attributes outside the dojo.

Think of these not as distractions from training, but as ways to **embody Jiu Jitsu principles in real life** — stability, continuity, direction of force, and grounded awareness in every action.

Indoor Dojo Training: Structure Meets Depth

While the outdoors offers variability, the dojo provides structure and precision. Summer sessions should revisit and refine the fundamentals while preparing for technical advancement. Air-conditioned indoor training allows practitioners to:

- Deepen **kata and technique sequencing**.
- Work on **joint locking and come-along holds** under supervision.
- Engage in **controlled randori** to test application and timing.

For advanced belts, this is an ideal time to **mentor lower belts**, reinforcing their own technical foundations and embodying the leadership values of Black Belt conduct.

Body Energy Systems: Train with Intention

The Canadian Jiu Jitsu Technical Manual, as developed under the leadership of Shihan R.W. Forrester, outlines the importance of developing the **body's energy systems**. Understanding and training these systems directly contributes to martial performance:

- **Anaerobic System:** Engaged during high-intensity, short bursts like throws, strikes, or resisting a come-along hold. Training includes sprint intervals, plyometrics, and high-rep explosive bodyweight exercises.
- **Aerobic System:** Supports recovery between bursts and overall endurance. Best trained through sustained, moderate-paced activities like jogging, cycling, or continuous kata flow.

Proper integration of both systems improves recovery times, reaction speed, and longevity in both practice and real-life applications.

Biomechanics: Training the Six Principles

The CJC promotes six core biomechanical principles vital to effective and safe technique execution. Summer is an excellent time to emphasize these principles, both in theory and in practice:

1. **Stability:** Train on diverse surfaces to enhance balance.
2. **Summation of Joint Forces:** Slow-motion throws help students feel joint stacking and sequencing.

3. **Continuity of Joint Forces:** Practice continuous, flowing movements through linked techniques.
4. **Thrust or Impulse:** Emphasize explosive starts from grounded positions.
5. **Direction of Force:** Use resistance bands to visualize force lines and directionality.
6. **Grip and Control:** Vary partner sizes and grips to test control across conditions.

Outdoor environments, particularly those with uneven or shifting terrain, are ideal for teaching **stability** and **direction of force** under pressure. The indoor dojo remains the best environment to safely refine the **summation and continuity** of joint forces in complex techniques.

A Season for Holistic Growth

Summer training is not just a change in temperature — it's a change in mindset. It invites students to integrate physical, mental, and environmental challenges. By blending structured indoor work with creative outdoor exploration, students cultivate agility, power, and insight into their own capabilities.

As always, training under the guidance of qualified instructors ensures safety, progression, and alignment with the values of the Canadian Jiu Jitsu Council. Let this summer be a season of transformation — one that sharpens your skills, expands your understanding, and brings you closer to the living art of Jiu Jitsu.

Next time: we will look more deeply into the Six Principles of Bio-Mechanic as taught by Shihan Forrester. We will look at the principles over a series of articles to dive deeper into understanding what they are, how they makes sense, and how to train and apply them.

Enjoy the summer

Canadian Jiu Jitsu Council Directors



Shihan R. W. Forrester (d. 2013)

