
BUCKLING BRANCH

FRONT | LEFT STEP THROUGH | FRONT KICK

Name:

The name of this technique stems from two sources: (1) Branch" is a synonym for a leg, and (2) the fact that it is your opponent's leg that is being buckled, thus the name Buckling Branch.

Attack:

In the IDEAL PHASE of this technique the attack is from the front. Your opponent commences his attack from a right fighting stance, and proceeds by thrusting a left step through ball kick at your torso.

Theme:

The theme of this technique is similar to **THRUSTING SALUTE** except that you are now blocking on the outside of your opponent's left leg instead of the inside of his right leg. Like **THRUSTING SALUTE**, this technique teaches you how a well placed block can create a notable **ANGLE OF DEFLECTION**. When executed properly two benefits become apparent, (1) the block will cause greater exposure as it forces your opponent's body to turn outwardly, and (2) your initial action will residually move you out of the **line of attack**. Such action diminishes the effectiveness of your opponent's kick, as well as subsequent follow-up moves. Always be mindful of anticipating follow-up moves. It prepares you for the unexpected.

Movement:

1. While standing naturally with both feet together, step back with your right foot toward 4:30 into a left neutral bow. Simultaneously **block your opponent's left kick (from the outside) with a left downward block as your right hand** (clenched and palm up) cocks to your right hip. Instantly recoil your left hand counterclockwise into a vertical position as a positional check. (Your intent is to generate pain to your opponent's left leg, as well as to increase the width of your deflection.)
2. With your opponent's back turning toward you, deliver a **right front snap ball kick to your opponent's groin** (entering from the rear). (This should make your opponent bend over at the waist. Both you and your opponent should be facing 10:30.)
3. Plant your right foot forward (again toward 10:30) into a right front twist stance (modifying it if necessary), and deliver a **left knife-edge kick to the inside and back of your opponent's right knee** (keeping both of your hands open and in a defensive position). (This kick should buckle your opponent to his knees.)
4. Have your left kick flow into a left front crossover, **cover out toward 4:30**

Theme: continued

In the case of this technique your opponent's kick could conceivably be followed by a

left punch.

What If:

- Your opponent follows his left kick with a left punch.
- Your opponent does not step through after his kick.
- Your opponent executes a left step through knife-edge kick.
- Your opponent begins in a left fighting stance and shuffles forward with his left kick.
- Your opponent's left kick is directed toward your knees.

Technique Notes:

Build spontaneity by having your partner vary his attacks: left kick or right kick. Respond to these variables with a left downward block. This method of practice will help to internalize the concept that the same defense may be used on the inside of your opponent's right leg, as well as on the outside of his left leg.

When practicing with the same defense on the inside or the outside of your opponent's legs, follow up with the sequences from either Buckling Branch or Thrusting Salute as the situation dictates. The practice of blending these two techniques in the manner described will help you to internalize responses to diverse situations.

This technique should help you to see the value of using your legs: to (1) reach specific targets, (2) disturb your opponent's balance, and (3) destroy his foundation.

Include segments of Buckling Branch and Thrusting Salute into your Freestyle workouts. Commence by prearranging the timing of your partner's kicks to develop your own timing.

As you close the gap (horizontally and in terms of depth) on your opponent remember to actively check his left arm and shoulder with your left arm.