

**SAN KAKU JIME:**  
**TEN METHODS OF APPLICATION**

**by**

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# SAN KAKU JIME

## TRIANGLE STRANGLE

### Introduction

In the martial art of Jujitsu, one of the most powerful techniques is San Kaku Jime (Triangle Strangle).

Strangles in general have the effect of rendering an opponent unconscious in a very short space of time. This is because the constriction of the muscles and associated blood streams in the neck area causes a loss of blood flow to and from the brain. Lack of oxygen to the brain has the result of causing the brain to shut down, and the person to lapse into unconsciousness.

### Strangles and Chokes

It must be noted that there is a distinct difference between **Strangles** and **Chokes**.

**Strangles** are applied in such a manner that the carotid arteries on either side of the neck are compressed, causing a loss of blood flow to and from the brain. The loss of blood to the brain results in the subject person falling unconscious. At the same time, the constriction prohibits the blood in the entire head area from exiting the brain, causing a build up of pressure which makes the subject person a bright red in the face and ear lobe areas. The combined effect results in unconsciousness. Generally, this occurs between 4 and 7 seconds.

**Chokes** are applied in such a manner that it causes a constriction to the trachea (wind pipe) in an endeavour to restrict the supply of air to the lungs. This means that the main focus of the pressure applied is to the front of the neck. The person applying the technique must be prepared to overcome any attempt by the subject person to flex their neck muscles to protect their windpipe. A danger exists here that the pressure being applied may cause the wind pipe to collapse; therefore, great caution must be exercised.

Strangles are most commonly applied with the use of the arms, applying either the radius bone or the ulna against the side of the neck, directly attacking the carotid artery. However, with San Kaku Jime, it is the legs which apply the force of the technique. According to a recent study by the University of Philadelphia, the combined strength of one's legs is approximately 4.25 times the strength of one's arms. Logically then, there is more power in applying a strangle with the legs in comparison to the arms. As San Kaku Jime is applied with the legs, this is why it rates as one of the most powerful techniques in Jujitsu.

The Japanese term "San Kaku Jime" literally translates as three edged strangle. This is because of the positioning of the legs, encircling the subject person's neck. When looked at objectively, the legs form a three-sided dimension, resembling a triangle. Thus, the most common idiomatic translation is "Triangle Strangle".

## The Effects of Strangling Techniques

A good strangulation technique should render the opponent unconscious without pain or injury, regardless of the size of the opponent. This applies more specifically to San Kaku Jime, because of the ease of application by a normal person's strong legs. Often, when applying this strangle, the technique may not even be applied fully, and the opponent lapses into unconsciousness. As the feeling of pain is not necessarily an element, quite often the opponent is not aware that the effect of the technique is already upon them. Consequently, extreme caution should be exercised when learning, practising and applying San Kaku Jime. It is always best practice to view the opponent's ear lobes. When these appear to turn pink, the technique is being applied sufficiently, and unconsciousness is merely seconds away.

## General Application

With all forms of San Kaku Jime, some general principles of application apply:

- Tori's legs must encircle Uke's neck with one of Uke's arms entrapped within the triangle;

[If the strangle is attempted to be applied without one of Uke's arms within the triangle, a problem arises where the legs will not make contact with Uke's neck within that area]

- Whichever of Uke's arms is entrapped, Tori's leg on the other side forms the basis of the triangle;

[When grasping Uke's arm, Tori should move his body slightly away from that arm, thereby enabling an easier application of his leg around the neck]

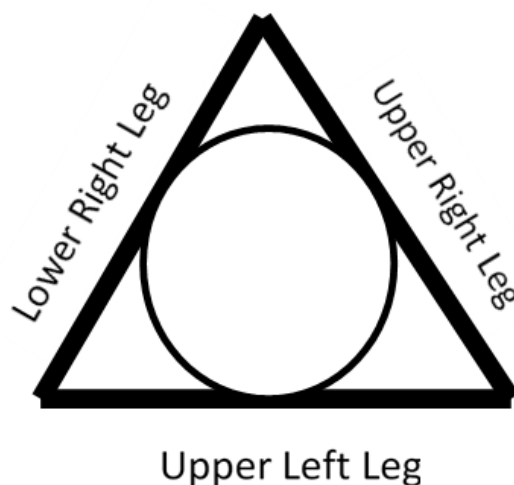
- The foot of Tori's leg which forms the basis of the triangle is placed under the knee of the opposite leg;

[This movement requires a degree of flexibility of Tori's legs, and must be practised to ensure precise movement when applying the technique]

- The strangle is to be applied by constrictive action of the legs, rather than a scissor action.

[When the foot is correctly applied, the constricting strangling action is easily applied without the use of excessive or unnecessary strength]

## The Triangle



### Application 1



Tori lying on his back, with Uke approaching from between the legs

### Application 2



Uke turning his back on Tori in groundwork

### Application 3



Uke on his back, with Tori on top

### Application 4



Uke on his stomach, with Tori on top

### Application 5



Uke defending on all fours, with Tori attacking from the head

### Application 6



Uke defending on all fours, with Tori on top, rolling diagonally forward

### Application 7



Uke on all fours, with Tori attacking from the side, rolling backwards

### Application 8



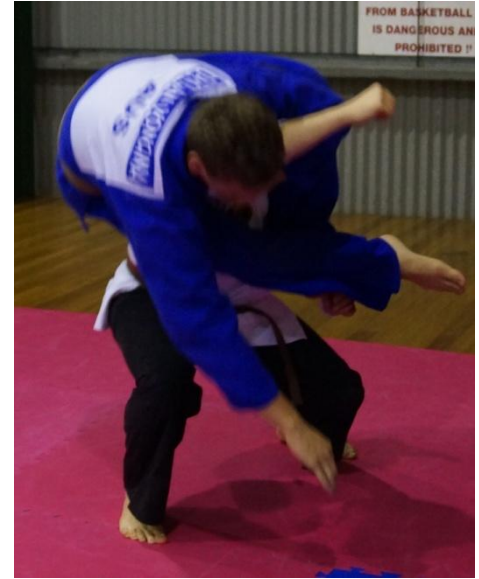
Tori countering Yoko Shiho Gatame with San Kaku Jime

### Application 9



Tori following on from an unsuccessful Ude Hishigi Juji Gatame

## Application 10



From a standing position, Tori attacking with San Kaku Jime, to the ground

## **Safety Rules**

As a matter of caution, the following safety rules should be applied at all times when practising San Kaku Jime:

- The technique should only be taught under the supervision of an accredited coach;
- Extreme care should be taken when the technique is being practised by young members;
- Even though some versions may be practised from an elevated position, it is considerably safer when practising the ground variations;
- Recognising when the effect of the technique is sufficiently apparent is a primary safety issue;
- The subject person (Uke) must be well advised to indicate a submission as soon as the technique feels uncomfortable;
- All practitioners of the technique must ensure that they release the hold entirely, as soon as their partner is showing signs of discomfort.

Remember the mnemonic: CARE -

**Carefully - Assess your partner - Release the hold - Early**

## **Conclusion**

San Kaku Jime is a strong and effective technique that may be entered into from a variety of positions. What must always be borne in mind when practising this technique is the inherent danger associated with rendering a person into a state of unconsciousness.

In the modern era, competition Jujitsu has made a marked influence on techniques such as San Kaku Jime. Contemporary competition rules encourage the application of techniques which result in a swift submission, and San Kaku Jime is a classic example. The technique almost always results in either a submission or knockout, and is highly regarded by many Mixed Martial Arts practitioners. Therefore, repetitious practice of all or most of the applications contained in this paper will result in a positive and rapid outcome for the Jujitsu practitioner.





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- ❑ During the preparation of this paper, the following resources were accessed:
  - Dynamic Judo (Grappling Techniques) by Kazuzo Kudo, Japan Publications Trading Company, Tokyo, 1967
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