



SHOW ME YOU MEAN IT
GRACIE BARRA BONDI

STANDARDS • COMPETITION DAY

COMPETITION DAY

No screens on comp day. Music is fine. Be with yourself and your feelings: calm, present, human.

SAME FOR EVERYONE

7 MIN READ

01

WHY IT MATTERS

On comp day I want you to be able to just be with yourself and your feelings, without a screen to supplement or numb them.

You can do that because you've done the work: the reading, the writing, the thinking, the conversations with your coaches. You're used to these feelings. That's what all of it is for. Scrolling three hours of other people's matches and comments doesn't calm you down. It fills your head with things you can't control. Recovering without devices matters on a normal day (see [Recovery](#)). On comp day it matters most.



FROM THE COACH

It's easy for me to see from across a venue. That athlete is in the moment: calm, present, trying their best. Calm, present, human. That's what I'm looking for.

RICKY

02

THE STANDARD

NON-NEGOTIABLE

- **No phone on comp day.** Music is fine. Scrolling is not.
- **A normal night before:** packed bag, a normal dinner, phone away an hour before bed, your normal bedtime.
- **Plan your arrival around check-in and weigh-in,** then sit with your coach and your team.
- **Shake hands and thank the referee,** win or lose. No yelling at referees, ever.
- **Stay for your team** after your own matches.
- **Debrief within two days,** in writing.

03

HOW TO DO IT

STEP 01

KEEP THE NIGHT BEFORE NORMAL

AFTERNOON	Pack your bag using the checklist at the bottom. Check your weigh-in time and the venue address once, write them down, then stop checking.
BRACKETS	Look once, if at all. Who you fight isn't in your control. How you fight is.
DINNER	A normal dinner you've eaten before, about two hours before bed. Nothing new. Under 18 there's no weight cut, so eat properly.
1 HOUR OUT	Phone away. Same rule as every night. Charge it in another room. Use your alarm clock.
WIND DOWN	Read, write, stretch. Read a poem from our mindset site (https://mindset.bjjau.com/), or a few pages of your book. Slow breathing: in for four seconds, out for six.
BED	Your normal bedtime. Nerves are normal. If you can't sleep, stay in bed and rest. One rough night won't decide your day. A month of good sleep before it matters more.

STEP 02

START THE MORNING WITHOUT THE PHONE

WAKE	No phone for the first hour. Same as always. Music is fine.
WATER	Drink water as soon as you're up.
WALK	Go for a little walk and get some sun. Light movement. Notice how you feel. Let the nerves be there.
BREAKFAST	The breakfast you always eat. Give yourself time to digest before your first match, about two hours, the same as before morning training. Pack snacks for the day.
CHECK	The control check. I control my preparation, my effort, how I respond. I don't control the ref, the bracket, my opponent or the result. Let the second list go (see Mindset).

STEP 03

PLAN YOUR ARRIVAL AROUND CHECK-IN

Work backwards from your match time, and build the logistics in first. Check-in, registration, weigh-in and gi check all take time, and every event runs them a little differently.

- **Know your event's rules.** Some events ask you to be there an hour before your match. Add an hour of warm-up and you're starting about two hours out.
- **If you're already checked in and weighed in,** many events only need you there about 30 minutes before your match. Getting the boring stuff done early buys you that flexibility.
- **Sort the boring stuff first:** registration, weigh-in, the help desk if something's wrong, the bathroom, your mat, the test scale, gi check.
- **Find your coach and your team.** Sit with them. We're there for each other.
- **Earphones in if you want.** Your music, your space. No scrolling, no checking results, no reading comments. Read your book or your poems while you wait.
- **Hungry means a bad mood. Tired means bad decisions.** Keep eating small and sipping water.

STEP 04

WARM UP FOR ABOUT AN HOUR

In an ideal world, your warm-up takes about an hour and finishes just before you need to be at your mat. The goal is to arrive warm, sweating and moving well, not still cold when they call your name.

START	Stretch, then the GB warm-up. Hips, hamstrings, low back, shoulders, neck, then get your heart rate up.
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10 MIN	Drill block. Move through your whole game with a partner at light resistance, about 20 to 40%: takedown or guard pull, guard, passing, sweeps, submissions. The point is to get your body moving and shake the rust off, not to win. Get a sweat on. I like to wear a hoodie so I sweat without having to go as hard; that's personal preference.
5 MIN	Break. Sit, relax, chat with your training partner.
REPEAT	Drill block, break, drill block. Three rounds of drilling and rest brings you to about an hour.
OPTIONAL	One hard-ish roll. Plenty of our athletes like one higher-intensity round to open up their wind before the first match. It depends on your cardio and how you feel. If you're carrying an injury or aren't confident in your fitness, skip it. I don't always do it myself.
GO	Into the warm-up area or bullpen. Ideally you're fighting within about 20 to 40 minutes.

Then the last two pieces, every time:

- **Breathe:** a minute of slow breathing before you walk to the mat. In for four, out for six.
- **Your pre-match routine,** the same one every time. If you don't have one yet, the mindset site has one to start from.

Stuck in the bullpen for ages? It happens. Brackets run late. Use your mindset tools to stay calm and collected, keep your body moving, stay warm, and refresh with a short burst of movement before you're called.

STEP 05 RESET BETWEEN MATCHES

- **Water, then a small snack** if there's time. Electrolytes if it's a long, hot day.
- **Stay warm.** Hoodie on, keep moving.
- **One short note from your coach.** Long instructions don't help in the moment. "Get up, get on top." Short and sweet.
- **Leave the last match behind.** Win or lose, it's done. The next one is the only one you can do anything about.
- **Still no phone.** Results, messages and videos can wait.
- **Focus on yourself, focus on the first step, commit and do it now.**

STEP 06 AFTER, WIN OR LOSE: WE TRY, WE LEARN

- **Shake hands. Thank the referee.** Even if you didn't like the call (see [Team Standards](#)).
- **Stay for your team.** Coach and support your teammates. We're not just there for us.
- **Feel it.** Losing hurts because you didn't get what you wanted. That's allowed. It says nothing about your worth.
- **A win only proves you won that day,** against those opponents. Enjoy it. It doesn't guarantee tomorrow.

- **Don't post or message while you're upset.** Tired, emotional thoughts after a comp aren't reliable. Sleep on it (see [Mindset](#)).
- **Debrief within two days.** Write the competition entry in your [training log](#): what did I try, what did I learn, what's one thing for the next block? How you feel about the result goes in your weekly reflection; the debrief questions on the mindset site are a good start.
- **Review your own footage** with the routine in [Technical Empowerment](#) and add it to your competition entry.

Competition is hard for everyone, me included, and I didn't win straight away either. Look for the little wins: the guard pull you nailed, the sweep you finally tried, the nerves you sat with instead of numbing.

04

COMMON MISTAKES

- ✗ **Scrolling brackets, results and comments.** It fills your head with things you can't control. Check the essentials once, then put the phone away.
- ✗ **Trying something new to eat.** Comp day food is food you've eaten before.
- ✗ **Arriving rushed.** Plan around check-in and weigh-in, and sort registration and gi check first.
- ✗ **Still cold when your name is called.** Start your hour of warm-up early enough to be sweating when you reach the bullpen.
- ✗ **Sitting still in the bullpen.** If it runs late, keep moving and stay warm.
- ✗ **Replaying the last match.** The next match is the only one you can change.
- ✗ **Leaving as soon as you're knocked out.** Stay and support your team.
- ✗ **Posting or messaging while you're upset.** Sleep on it first.
- ✗ **Skipping the debrief.** Write it down within two days, while you still remember.

BAG CHECKLIST

PACK THE NIGHT BEFORE

COMP BAG

- ☐ Stock GB gi (clean, no patches) and GB belt. A spare gi for a big event.
- ☐ GB rashguard and shorts (NoGi), team T-shirt or hoodie.
- ☐ Registration details, ID, weigh-in time and venue written down.
- ☐ Water bottle, electrolytes, snacks you've eaten before.
- ☐ Mouthguard, tape, nail clippers (check your nails the night before).
- ☐ Thongs or slides, towel, warm layer.
- ☐ Earphones and downloaded music (so you don't need the phone open).
- ☐ Your book or your poems, for the waiting.
- ☐ Your medicated cream and tape, if you're dealing with a small skin lesion. Competing with a small, covered one: I don't recommend it, but it's an option. Never with a big abscess. See [Skin & Staph](#).