



How to Dominate a Taller Opponent in Sparring

First, let's talk about what doesn't work...Going toe to toe with me. Hopefully that's obvious. You never want to trade kick for kick with someone that has 4 to 6 inches on you. There is a zone that everyone has. I call it your red zone- red symbolizing "warning".

Everyone's red zone is different and its size is determined by the reach of your kick.

Taller people have a larger red zone than most. This also means, if you're shorter than me, you enter my red zone before I enter yours. In other words, while you're trying to get close enough to get a kick in, I am already scoring on you. Next, you may want to try and overwhelm me with speed. Not a bad idea, but not the best either. Whenever I would get into the ring with someone shorter than me, I'm assuming their going to be lighting quick. The first thing I do is create some distance, then I hang out for a little bit. I study how fast they can really move. I note how fast they can close the gap between us. After I see how quick they really are, I simply adjust my gap so I can begin scoring.

The bottom line is this, speed is good, but when it comes to a taller opponent, they'll simply compensate with distance. Against a taller opponent, too much distance is your enemy. Your opponent has a stride that is mostly likely 1 1/2 ~ times yours. After you make 2 steps forward, your opponent is already 3 steps away, then WHAM... they'll let you have it with a roundhouse kick.

So, what is the best strategy? If you want to dominate your taller opponent in Taekwondo, you must use a method called B.T.C. This stands for Bait, Trap, Counter. Pay attention, because this is the ultimate Taekwondo scoring method against taller opponents, and I hate it! Of course, only when it's used against me. Here's how it works...

When your Taekwondo match begins against a taller opponent, you WAIT. In fact, you wait in a high defensive mode. Be ready to slide back and unleash a spin hook kick or back kick if your opponent is overly aggressive. Otherwise, wait a moment, then we begin the strategy of B.T.C.

Slowly, we're going to creep closer to our opponent- making sure not to over commit too soon. This technique is known as baiting. We're basically making ourselves susceptible to an attack with the main objective of counter attacking before they ever have a chance to score.

The best time for you to Counter is during the Trap. The split second your opponent misses you is known as the trap. As a side note- this is why it's super important to kick and bring that leg down to the floor immediately, so you don't get caught in the trap. The taller the opponent, the longer it takes for them to bring their leg down. This makes for an easier trap. During this trap, that's when you unload your counter attack.

If your strong suit is a back kick, then you'll bait in an open stance (belly's facing the same direction), and try and draw out your opponents roundhouse kick. If your strong suit is a spin hook kick, bait in a closed stance, and try and draw out your opponents fast kick (skipping front leg roundhouse kick). If you are truly one of those shorter, fast fighters, then you can lateral step and do any sort of counter you want, just after the Bait.

Okay, what happens when your opponent figures out what you're doing? Well, you bait even closer, at least to the point where you're still successful at getting the counter attack.

When that has run it's course, you disguise the B.T.C. by move aggressively around the ring. Move aggressively, then quickly bait, thus making your opponent panic and hopefully attack.