

Police Officer Responses to Underhooks (2023-2025)

Comparing Trained vs Untrained
Officer Responses.



Police Officer Responses to Underhooks

(2023–2025)



This study analyzes police officer responses to **underhooks** during Effective Fitness Combatives (EFC) Level 1 courses conducted nationwide from March 2023 through August 2025. Two students (ST1 and ST2) participated in each course. Their natural responses as **untrained officers in grappling** were compared against responses from **trained officers in grappling**. The purpose of this study is to identify instinctive reactions among untrained officers and evaluate how trained officers respond differently to underhooks.

Officers were assessed under two categories:

Untrained Officers (Grappling-Naïve):

Initial instinctive reactions to an opponent's underhook (e.g., Grab Head (GH), Rest on Shoulder (ROS), Tie-Up (TB)).

Trained Officers (Grappling-Experienced):

Technical responses to an opponent's underhook (e.g., Over Hook (OH), Pummell In (PM)).

Data was collected across multiple locations and training sessions from **2023 through 2025**. Each course included both trained and untrained officers for comparative analysis.

The analysis reveals clear distinctions between untrained and trained officer responses to underhooks:

Untrained Officers' Responses

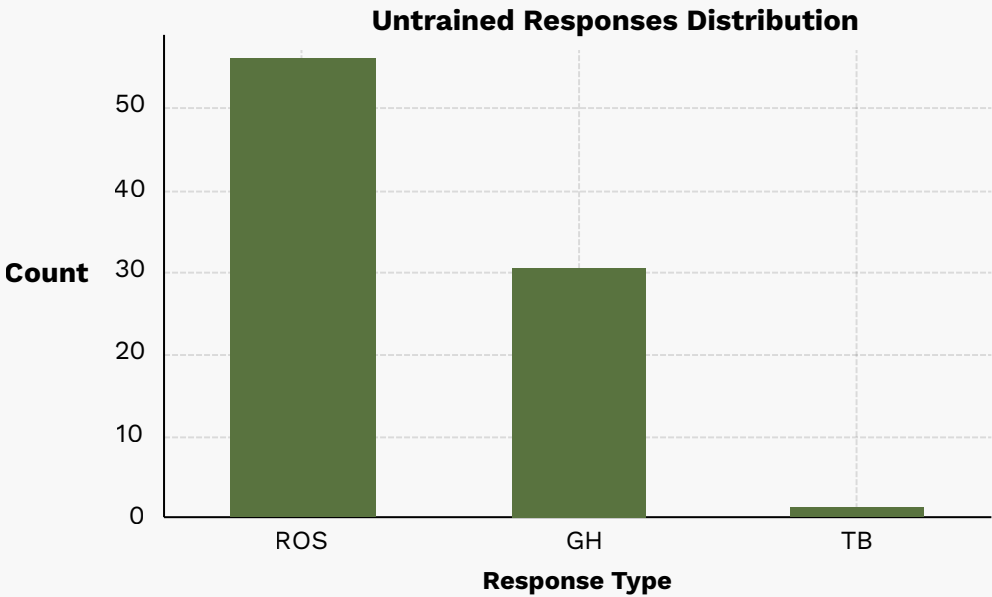
Response Type	Count
ROS (Rest on Shoulder)	56
GH (Grab Head)	31
TB (Tie-Up)	1

Trained Officers' Responses

Response Type	Count
OH (Over Hook)	83
PM (Pummell In)	5

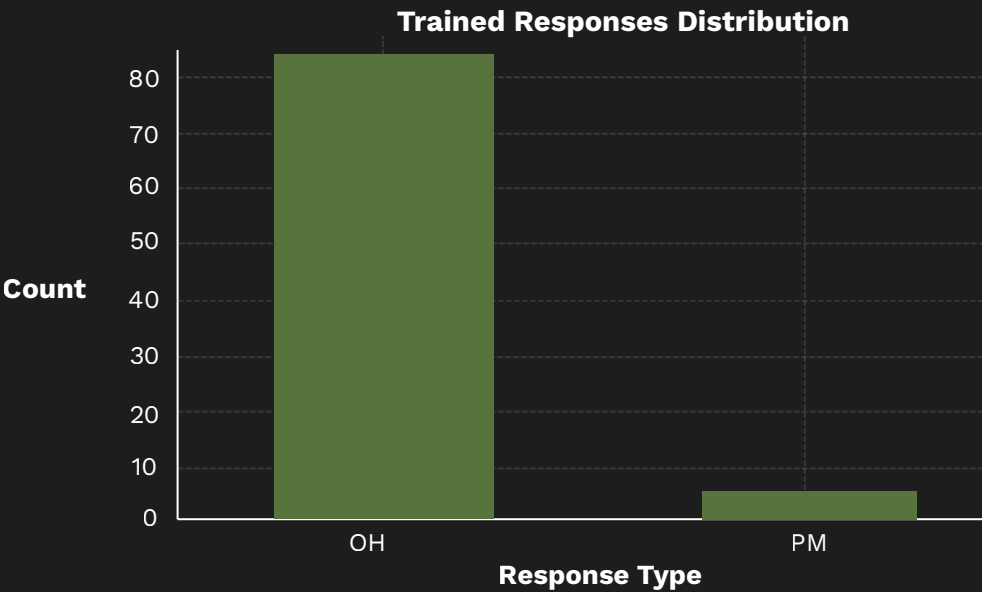
Distribution of untrained officer responses to underhooks:

(2023-2025)



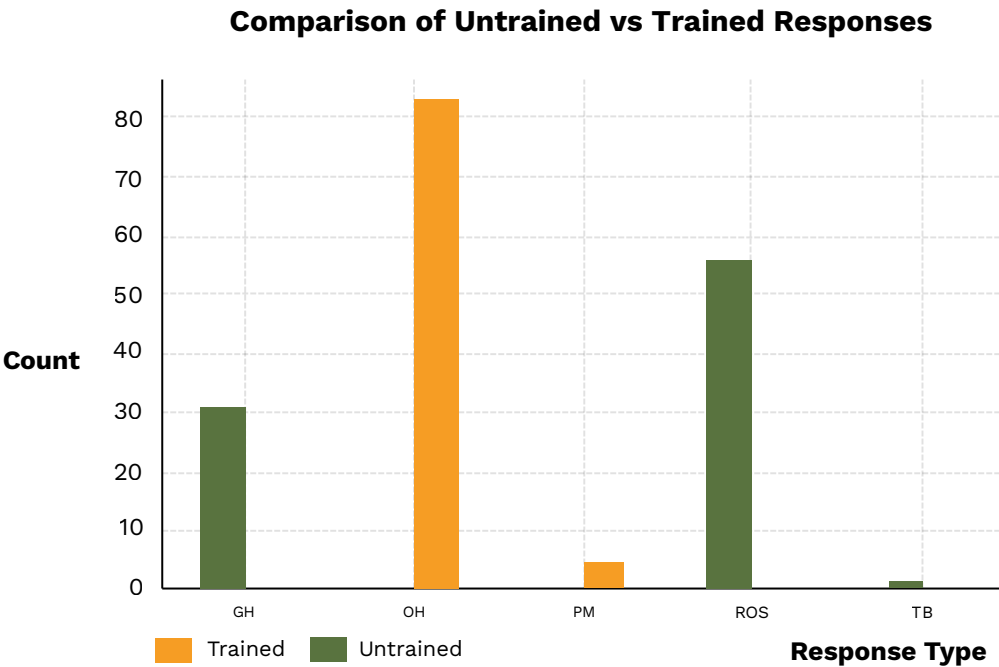
Distribution of trained officer responses to underhooks:

(2023-2025)



Comparison of untrained vs. trained officer responses to underhooks:

(2023-2025)



Full Dataset of Responses

(2023-2025)

Course	Student	Untrained Response	Student Trained	Trained Response
Brighton MI/EFC L1 3/27/23	ST1	ROS	ST1	OH
Brighton MI/EFC L1 3/27/23	ST2	ROS	ST2	OH
Ft. Myers FL/EFC L1 4/3/23	ST1	GH	ST1	OH
Ft. Myers FL/EFC L1 4/3/23	ST2	ROS	ST2	OH
Ft. Knox EFC L1 6/5/23	ST1	GH	ST1	OH
Ft. Knox EFC L1 6/5/23	ST2	GH	ST2	OH
Evansville IN EFC L1 6/12/23	ST1	ROS	ST1	OH
Evansville IN EFC L1 6/12/23	ST2	ROS	ST2	OH
Napa CA EFC L1 6/26/23	ST1	GH	ST1	OH
Napa CA EFC L1 6/26/23	ST2	ROS	ST2	OH
Monreville PA EFC L1	ST1	ROS	ST1	OH
Monreville PA EFC L1	ST2	GH	ST2	PM
Ontario CA EFC L1 7/24/23	ST1	GH	ST1	OH
Ontario CA EFC L1 7/24/23	ST2	ROS	ST2	OH
Boulder CO EFC L1 8/7/23	ST1	ROS	ST1	OH
Boulder CO EFC L1 8/7/23	ST2	GH	ST2	OH
Delray Beach FL EFC L1 8/14/23	ST1	GH	ST1	OH
Delray Beach FL EFC L1 8/14/23	ST2	ROS	ST2	PM
Holland MI EFC L1 8/28/23	ST1	ROS	ST1	OH
Holland MI EFC L1 8/28/23	ST2	ROS	ST2	OH

Full Dataset of Responses

(2023-2025)

Course	Student	Untrained Response	Student Trained	Trained Response
Stafford VA EFC L1 9/25/23	ST1	ROS	ST1	OH
Stafford VA EFC L1 9/25/23	ST2	ROS	ST2	OH
Memphis TN EFC L1 10/9/23	ST1	GH	ST1	OH
Memphis TN EFC L1 10/9/23	ST2	GH	ST2	OH
Surprise AZ EFC L1 10/23/23	ST1	TB	ST1	OH
Surprise AZ EFC L1 10/23/23	ST2	ROS	ST2	OH
Westchester NY DCJS 11/6/23	ST1	ROS	ST1	OH
Westchester NY DCJS 11/6/23	ST2	GH	ST2	PM
Charleston SC EFC L1 11/27/23	ST1	ROS	ST2	OH
Charleston SC EFC L1 11/27/23	ST2	ROS	ST2	OH
Lansing MI EFC L1 12/4/23	ST1	ROS	ST1	OH
Lansing MI EFC L1 12/4/23	ST2	ROS	ST2	OH
Lansing MI EFC L1 12/11/23	ST1	GH	ST1	OH
Lansing MI EFC L1 12/11/23	ST2	GH	ST2	OH
Austin TX EFC L1 1/22/24	ST1	GH	ST1	OH
Austin TX EFC L1 1/22/24	ST2	GH	ST2	PM
Surprise AZ EFC L1 2/5/24	ST1	ROS	ST1	OH
Surprise AZ EFC L1 2/5/24	ST2	GH	ST2	OH
NYC NY EFC L1 2/26/24	ST1	ROS	ST1	OH
NYC NY EFC L1 2/26/24	ST2	ROS	ST2	OH
Utica NY DCJS 3/11/24	ST1	ROS	ST1	OH
Utica NY DCJS 3/11/24	ST2	GH	ST2	OH
Chicago IL EFC L1 4/22/24	ST1	ROS	ST1	OH
Chicago IL EFC L1 4/22/24	ST2	ROS	ST2	OH
Monreville PA EFC L1 6/17/24	ST1	ROS	ST1	OH
Monreville PA EFC L1 6/17/24	ST2	GH	ST2	PM
Nashville TN EFC L1 7/8/24	ST1	GH	ST1	OH
Nashville TN EFC L1 7/8/24	ST2	ROS	ST2	OH
Niagara County NY DCJS 1/8/24	ST1	ROS	ST1	OH
Niagara County NY DCJS 1/8/24	ST2	ROS	ST2	OH
Arlington Tx EFC L1 1/13/25	ST1	ROS	ST1	OH
Arlington Tx EFC L1 1/13/25	ST2	ROS	ST2	OH
Riverside CA EFC L1 1/27/25	ST1	GH	ST1	OH
Riverside CA EFC L1 1/27/25	ST2	GH	ST2	OH

Full Dataset of Responses

(2023-2025)

Course	Student	Untrained Response	Student Trained	Trained Response
Cape Coral EFC L1 2/17/25	ST1	ROS	ST1	OH
Cape Coral EFC L1 2/17/25	ST2	GH	ST2	OH
Gaitherburg MD EFC L1 3/10/25	ST1	ROS	ST1	OH
Gaitherburg MD EFC L1 3/10/25	ST2	ROS	ST1	OH
Colorado Springs Co EFC L1 3/24/25	ST1	GH	ST1	OH
Colorado Springs Co EFC L1 3/24/25	ST2	GH	ST2	OH
Spokane WA EFC L1 4/7/25	ST1	ROS	ST1	OH
Spokane WA EFC L1 4/7/25	ST2	GH	ST2	OH
Golden Co EFC L1 5/9/25	ST1	ROS	ST2	OH
Golden Co EFC L1 5/9/25	ST2	ROS	ST2	OH
Henderson NV EFC L1 5/13/25	ST1	ROS	ST1	OH
Henderson NV EFC L1 5/13/25	ST2	ROS	ST2	OH
Chicago IL EFC L1 5/19/25	ST1	GH	ST1	OH
Chicago IL EFC L1 5/19/25	ST2	ROS	ST2	OH
TacOps Jacksonville 5/28/25	ST1	ROS	ST1	OH
TacOps Jacksonville 5/28/25	ST2	GH	ST2	OH
TacOps Jacksonville 5/29/25	ST1	ROS	ST2	OH
TacOps Jacksonville 5/29/25	ST2	ROS	ST2	OH
OTOA Ohio 6/12/25	ST1	ROS	ST1	OH
OTOA Ohio 6/12/25	ST2	ROS	ST2	OH
OTOA Ohio 6/13/25	ST1	GH	ST1	OH
OTOA Ohio 6/13/25	ST2	GH	ST2	OH
Omaha NE EFC L1 7/14/25	ST1	ROS	ST2	OH
Omaha NE EFC L1 7/14/25	ST2	ROS	ST2	OH
Noblesville IN EFC L1 8/12/25	ST1	ROS	ST1	OH
Noblesville IN EFC L1 8/12/25	ST2	GH	ST2	OH
Tacops Nashville, TN 8/20/25	ST1	ROS	ST1	OH
Tacops Nashville, TN 8/20/25	ST1	ROS	ST2	OH
Tacops Nashville, TN 8/21/25	ST1	ROS	ST2	OH
Tacops Nashville, TN 8/21/25	ST2	ROS	ST2	OH
Tacops Nashville, TN 8/22/25	ST1	GH	ST1	OH
Tacops Nashville, TN 8/22/25	ST2	GH	ST2	OH

Conclusion:

The study demonstrates that **untrained officers in grappling**, when faced with underhooks, predominantly relied on instinctive responses such as Rest on Shoulder (ROS) and Grab Head (GH). In contrast, **trained officers in grappling** consistently used Over Hook (OH) and Pummell In (PM), which are technically sound and tactically effective.

Tactical Importance:

If an officer does not counter an underhook with either an Over Hook or a Pummell, they are compromised and at risk of giving up their back. This is a highly vulnerable position that can lead to loss of control and significant danger to the officer.

The results of this study highlight the critical need for grappling training to ensure officers can respond to underhooks with proven, reliable techniques that maximize safety and control.

Police Officer Responses to Underhooks (2023–2025):

Data Collection Method

All data were collected through live observation of in-person Effective Fitness Combatives (EFC) Level 1 courses conducted nationwide between March 2023 and August 2025. Four students (2 untrained and 2 trained) were observed per course. Each officer's first, natural response to an underhook was recorded in real time.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Trained Officers (Grappling-Experienced): Officers with any prior grappling background (wrestling, judo, BJJ, or consistent defensive tactics with grappling).

Untrained Officers (Grappling-Naïve): Officers with zero grappling experience.

Exclusion: Officers with mixed or unclear prior training were not included in the analysis.

Results:

Untrained Officers (n=88)

Response Type	Count	Percentage
ROS (Rest on Shoulder)	56	63.64%
GH (Grab Head)	31	35.23%
TB (Tie-Up)	1	1.14%
OH/PM (Technical Responses)	0	0%

Results:

Trained Officers (n=88)

Response Type	Count	Percentage
OH (Over Hook)	83	94.32%
PM (Pummell In)	5	5.68%
ROS/GH/TB (Instinctive Responses)	0	0%

Key Contextualization

- 94.32% of trained officers countered an underhook with an Over Hook, versus 0% of untrained officers.
- 100% of untrained officers defaulted to instinctive, non-technical reactions (ROS, GH, TB).
- 100% of trained officers used technically sound counters (OH, PM).

Conclusion

The study demonstrates that **untrained officers in grappling**, when faced with underhooks, predominantly relied on instinctive responses such as Rest on Shoulder (ROS) and Grab Head (GH). In contrast, **trained officers in grappling** consistently used Over Hook (OH) and Pummell In (PM), which are technically sound and tactically effective.

Tactical Importance:

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