



THREE PRINCIPLES OF A BREAKFALL

APPLIED UKEMI Companion Resource

Ukemi answers concentrated impact with three principles applied together: **more surface area, divided force, and a protected head.**

1

MORE SURFACE AREA

Spread the load.

Make contact across broad soft-tissue surfaces rather than concentrating impact at one fragile point. The manuscript highlights the forearm from elbow to wrist, the glutes over the hip, and the back away from the spine. More contact area means less force concentrated at any single point.

2

DIVIDED FORCE

Tataku: the slap divides force.

The slap is not just a sound cue. The arm contacts the ground slightly before the torso, increasing the time over which the body decelerates. A wide, resonant slap signals broad contact and distributed force rather than a narrow point of impact.

3

PROTECTED HEAD

Organize everything around the head.

Tuck the chin and use the arms and body position to keep the skull from meeting the ground unprotected. The exact shape changes with the direction of the fall, but head protection remains the constant.

THEY WORK TOGETHER

More surface area reduces concentration. Divided force reduces peak load. Head protection keeps the most vulnerable area organized away from unprotected impact.

Remember: Training changes the way the body receives a fall. It does not guarantee that injury will not occur.

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