

GLOSSARY OF WRESTLING TERMS

By Matt Krumrie | May 25, 2017, 9:03 a.m. (ET)

Wrestling is a unique sport. It's an individual sport, but it's also a team sport. It's a sport with three unique styles: freestyle, Greco-Roman and folkstyle. Wrestling is a sport for boys and girls, and men and women of all sizes, from small but strong, to big and burly, and everything between.

Also unique about wrestling are the many terms that dig deep within the sport. The slang terms, or unique terms, that only true wrestling fans know are like its own language. What are some of those terms? We reached out to a variety of coaches and wrestling insiders (including members of the Jeffersonville, Indiana, youth and high school wrestling program; Kyle Klingman, Executive Director of the Dan Gable National Wrestling Hall of Fame and Museum, and wrestling historian Mark Palmer) to put together this fun glossary of wrestling terms.

This is far from a complete list and some of these terms might be up for debate, but it's a start.

All-American: In wrestling, an All-American is someone who finishes in the top eight in their weight class at a national tournament.

Backdoor: Go between opponents legs when on bottom.

Bottom position: The position a wrestler is in when the opponent is in control, or "on top" of the other wrestler.

Break an opponent: A term used when one wrestler, often after a close, tight match, suddenly gains the edge, or takes control in the match. Also used by coaches to motivate wrestlers, instructing wrestlers to work hard to break their opponent.

Bridge: Turning your body into a "bridge" when on your back to avoid getting pinned. Only thing touching is head and feet.

Cauliflower ear: The medical term for cauliflower ear is "a deformity of the outer ear that may occur after injury to the ear" which is common in wrestlers. One glance at one's ears and wrestling fans can instantly determine if a person wrestled.

Cut him/Cut her: Letting the wrestler go, or get up, or escape. Often used when a wrestler's strategy is to score takedowns to earn points, or if a wrestler needs points late in a match. Let go, take down, let go, take down.

Gas tank: Saying he/she has an unlimited gas tank references a wrestler who has excellent stamina, and doesn't wear down over the course of a match.

Gassed: When someone runs out of energy, gets tired, or loses a match because he or she is worn out, fans will say the wrestler is "gassed".

Got caught: When a wrestler gets pinned in an unexpected manner - even more impactful when a well-known, successful wrestler loses to another wrestler who may not have had as much success. They "got caught" and like that, they were pinned and the match was over.

Five: When a wrestler throws another wrestler, feet over head, to create a high amplitude move and score five points with one move.

Funk: An unorthodox style of wrestling. High risk, high reward. See Ben Askren or Dylan Ness, for some well-known funksters of their time.

Grind: The ups and downs of a wrestling season, weight management, dealing with the bumps and bruises, wins and losses, nagging injuries, is all part of the "grind" of a wrestling season.

Good on his/her feet: Meaning they are able to create offense, or defend opponents, from their feet. Someone who is "good on their feet" may get out of tight spots because they excel defending shots, or elude getting scored on because they have great balance, or strength, on their feet.

He's stalling: Referring to a lack of action by a wrestler, or by a wrestler who is not forcing any action. Usually yelled by fans in an intense match where the winner is not doing anything to prevent from "getting caught" late in a match.

He looks like he could still go: A term commonly used to describe a former wrestler who is in great shape, and looks like they could still get on the mat, roll around and compete.

Heavy hips: Saying a wrestler has heavy hips means they have good hip control, or excel using their hips to score points, or defend. Heavy hips may mean they are not as quick using their hips, or didn't fully use hips to defend a shot.

Hit: When a wrestler "hits" a move, they succeeded in whatever move they attempted. Results in scoring points by "hitting" the move resulting in success.

Huge for the weight: Someone who looks big for their weight class. It's not uncommon to hear fans say a 133 or 141 pound wrestler is huge for their weight, often referencing someone who looks lean and mean, muscular, or in peak shape for that weight class. Or perhaps has room to grow into frame for the next weight class up.

Iowa style: A style of wrestling, coined under the Dan Gable-led Iowa Hawkeyes wrestling glory days, that is to outwork other opponents, attack, and use superior conditioning to break/wear down opponents.

In the room: Discussion about what's going on inside the practice room of a team. A lot of times, fans will say "I heard wrestler X (usually the backup), is giving wrestler Y (the starter) all he can handle "in the room." Or, a discussion of "rumors" regarding what's going on with the team internally. People will also say the top assistant is leading things "in the room."

Know where you are at: Know where you are in relation to the outer circle and being out of bounds, and if the wrestler needs to get out of bounds. Usually it's yelled out when a wrestler is on his or her back and in danger of losing by fall.

Limp arm out: Rotation of arm when stuck in whizzer position.

Made weight: When someone weighs in for a match/tournament, and is approved to wrestle in that weight class, they "made weight."

Make the podium: Another term for someone who earns All-American status. Making the podium is referencing making the top eight, and standing on the podium to receive All-American medal/take group picture.

Over/under: Tie up where one wrestler has one arm wrapped over and the other under an opponent's arm. This is other times referred to as the "dance position."

Referee's position: Where the on-the-mat official is stationed on the mat.

Riding time: Riding time is earned when a wrestler is in control, in the top position, during a match. In folkstyle wrestling, a wrestler earns one point by earning one minute of riding time.

Roll around: Drill/practice.

Round of 12: Those who advance to the Round of 12 are one win away from becoming an All-American. Win, and status as AA is set. Lose, and go home. One of the most intense rounds of a national championship.

Russian: Grabbing one arm with both hands to gain control (also known as a 2-on-1) - usually used when a wrestler is winning, it means, "go to safe moves only."

Slick: Someone who is athletic, quick, flexible, smooth. Similar to funk/funky in some instance. West coast wrestlers have a reputation for being slick, but the style can fit anyone from anywhere.

Squeeeeeeze: Often used when a wrestler is trying to escape, such as off the whistle from bottom position, coaches/fans yell "squeeze" to encourage the wrestler on top to hold on to the wrestler.

Top position: The position where a wrestler is on top of the opponent, in control. Common term in folkstyle wrestling.

Whizzer: In wrestling, an overhook, also called a whizzer, is a clinch hold that is used to control the opponent. A Whizzer is performed from any direction by putting an arm over the opponent's arm, and encircling the opponent's arm or upper body.

You go: Attack, be aggressive, make your move. Now is the time.

These are a few of the many unique wrestling terms. What are your favorites? Comment below!