

壹 · A Corda Preta

Chapter 1 — a hypothetical Capoeira black belt, built to the fighting bar of a Taekwondo 1st Dan, and whether it would mean anything.

The problem with the title. Capoeira has no black belt. It has *cordas* — cords — and even those are a 20th-century invention: Mestre Bimba added grading to *Regional* so an academy could function like a school; *Angola* often refuses ranks entirely. So a "Capoeira black belt" is a fiction from the first word. Good. We are building it on purpose — but the graft only earns its keep under one rule: **every station tests a real fighting attribute, or it does not go in the exam.** No belt for showing up.

The bar. A Taekwondo 1st Dan is not "expert." It is the line where *the fundamentals become weapons* — clean forms, live sparring under pressure, self-defense that works on a resisting body, a power break, and the theory to teach it. Our *Corda Preta* has to clear the same fence, in Capoeira's own idiom.

THE RHYME THAT GIVES US THE BACKBONE

A Taekwondo 1st Dan is built on **8 Taegeuk poomsae**. Mestre Bimba built Capoeira Regional on **8 Sequências de Ensino** — eight fixed partner drills. Two arts, an ocean apart, both codified their black-belt "forms" layer as *exactly eight teaching sequences*. That is not a coincidence we invented; it is the spine of this chapter. Station ① is those eight.

The exam — six stations

Each station borrows Taekwondo's real grading grammar: an explicit success threshold (Taekwondo grades on 70% → 90% of techniques landing clean, rising with rank). The black-belt tier demands technique that is "*flawless, balanced, powerful, and precise — without hesitation.*"

#	Station	Capoeira content	Taekwondo analog	Pass bar
①	Fundamentos	The 8 Sequências de Bimba + ginga	8 Taegeuk poomsae	90% clean, no hesitation
②	Jogo de Dentro	3 escalating games; a <i>jogo duro</i> vs. a mestre	Kyorugi / sparring	Control range, never swept
③	Aplicação	Sequence counters vs. resistance + grab escapes	Self-defense (hosinsul)	Land on a <i>resisting</i> body
④	Floreios & Potência		Breaking (kyokpa)	Clean aerial + measured power

Aerials (Salto Mortal / Parafuso) + power kick to target

⑤	Fundamento	Berimbau, ladainha→chula, Angola vs. Regional history	Theory / teaching	Lead the roda
⑥	Condicionamento	The long roda; the book's own plyometric drills	Endurance	Aerials still clean when gassed

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Station ① — The 8 Sequências de Bimba

The forms station, and the heart of the chapter. Below is the verified curriculum — cross-checked against two independent lineage sources — with each move's *execution note* drawn from *Capoeira 100*, which the bare sequence-lists lack. One player (**Liso**) drives the attack chain; the other (Riscado) defends and counters. Roles then swap.

#	Liso — attacks	Riscado — defends → counters	Rating
1	Meia-lua de frente ×2 → Armada → Aú → Rolê	Cocorinha ×2 → Negativa	●
2	Queixada ×2 → Cocorinha → Bênção → Aú	Cocorinha → Armada → Negativa → Cabeçada	● ●
3	Martelo ×2 → Cocorinha → Bênção → Aú	Cocorinha → Armada → Negativa → Cabeçada	● ●
4	Galopante → Godeme → Negativa → Cabeçada	Arrastão → Aú → Rolê	● ● ●
5	Giro → Joelhada → Aú	Arpão de cabeça → Negativa → Cabeçada	● ● ●
6	Meia-lua de compasso → Cocorinha	Cocorinha → Meia-lua de compasso (<i>mirror</i>)	● ● ●
7	Armada → Cocorinha → Bênção → Aú	Cocorinha → Armada → Negativa → Cabeçada	● ● ● ●
8	Bênção pulado → Aú → Rolê	Negativa → Cabeçada	● ● ● ●

The moves — what they are, and the physics

- **Meia-lua de frente** — front crescent kick, an inside-out arc across the body. *Pendular: the leg swings from the hip like a gate, power from the arc, not a snap.*
- **Armada** — spinning outward crescent. *Rotational: the waist is a fast-turning cylinder; the leg a rope, the foot a brick flung on the end of it — the source's own image.*
- **Queixada** — reverse/crossing crescent, chopping down-and-across. *Gravity-fed: you fall the heel through the target line.*
- **Martelo** — the hammer (roundhouse). *Hip-snap through the ball of the foot; the fastest strike in the set.*
- **Meia-lua de compasso** — the compass; spinning back-arc with a hand on the floor. *Same cylinder-rope-brick physics as the armada, but the planted hand lets you aim it head-high on an upright opponent — the one true power kick.*
- **Bênção / Bênção pulado** — the "blessing," a straight front push-kick / its jumping version. *Linear: a piston through the hips, all range and stopping power.*
- **Galopante** — open-palm slap to the ear. *Concussive, not linear — a clap that overpressures the ear. Regional's hand game.*
- **Godeme** — short upward hand strike. **Joelhada** — knee. **Arpão de cabeça** — the head-spear/grab entry. *Close-range tools — the arsenal our first draft missed entirely.*
- **Cocorinha** — the crouch, dropping under a kick. **Negativa** — the low escape, one leg out, weight to the floor. *Negativa is a loaded spring: it stores the drive for the cabeçada.*
- **Cabeçada** — the headbutt, launched out of negativa. *Bimba's signature counter-finish: the floor gives, the whole body drives the crown of the head forward. Five of the eight end here.*
- **Arrastão** — double-leg grab-and-pull takedown. **Aú / Rolê** — cartwheel and roll, the exits that reset you upright and safe.

⚡ FUEL — CROSS-LINK TO 神拳學

The *negativa* → *cabeçada* is not a technique, it is a **belief about gravity**: the floor is not where you fall, it is where you load. That is a Shen principle wearing a physical mask — see the Spirit book on *turning the low position into the charged one*.

Station ③ — Aplicação (the honesty station)

This is where we kill the "it's just dancing" objection. A sequence you can only run against a cooperating partner has proven nothing. So Station ③ is a **two-rung resistance ladder**:

Rung	What happens	What it proves
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1 • Fed	Partner throws the known attack from the sequence; you counter clean	You <i>know</i> the shape
2 • Positional (the bar)	Partner genuinely fights to keep his base and escape; the exchange is bounded — one entry, defined roles	You land the counter — the <i>rasteira</i> , the <i>cabeçada</i> — on a resisting body, without ever leaving Capoeira

Rung 2 is where the belt is honestly earned: the partner is non-compliant, but the frame stays tight enough that ginga, esquivas, and the sweep game remain *usable*. Aliveness — timing, energy, motion — without turning it into a brawl.

DOES IT MEAN ANYTHING?

Yes — *if* Station ③ is real. The doubt about Capoeira is **malícia**: in the roda you deliberately *don't* land it, because the game is a conversation, not a war. But the source names the true intent out loud — "*achieving a clean attack on an open target, one that completely surprises your opponent, is a strategic goal.*" The fighting intent was always there, masked. Station ③ just makes you take the mask off, once, against resistance. Prove it once, and the black belt is honest.

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The 80/20 Plyometric Supplement

Station ⑥ needs an engine, and every kick above is a triple-extension event. You do not need twenty jump drills — you need the three that carry the **80/20 of the explosive gains**, one per plane that Capoeira actually loads. Grounded in the MGH progression: **~60 foot-contacts per session, 2× per week**, and you earn single-leg work by owning the double-leg version first.

Drill	Plane	What it feeds	Dose
1 • Squat Jump <i>bilateral, vertical</i>	Vertical	The engine — whole-chain triple extension. Every kick's raw power source.	3 × 8
2 • Single-Leg Bound / Hop <i>unilateral, horizontal</i>	Unilateral	The kick & <i>au</i> takeoff — one leg drives while the other is airborne. This is the <i>meia-lua</i> .	3 × 6 / leg
3 • Lateral Skater Hop <i>frontal plane</i>	Lateral	Ginga direction-changes and the <i>esquiva</i> — power sideways, where capoeira lives.	3 × 6 / side



SPEND — WHERE THE FUEL GOES

Squat Jump → the **bênção** and every landing. Single-Leg Bound → the **meia-lua de compasso** and the **au** takeoff. Lateral Skater → the **ginga** and the **esquiva**. Three drills; the whole kicking game gets faster.

— *David Kwok Ho Chan, with AI Sifu Claude*

Sources & honesty notes. Bimba's 8 verified against two independent lineage records (Papoeira; Capsoc) — they agree on the skeleton but *swap sequences 2 and 3* (Queixada vs. Martelo lead); we follow the Queixada-first order and flag the variant. Move-execution and physics from *Capoeira 100: An Illustrated Guide*. Grading grammar and the 8-poomsae parallel from *The Complete Guide to Taekwondo*. Plyometric selection and dosing from the NSCA plyometric-drills taxonomy and the MGH Sports Medicine jump-training progression. This is a first pass — lineages vary, and a cleaner revision will follow.