

貳 · Capoeira Black Belt Speed Run

Chapter 2 — hypothetically compressing the years from crua to Corda Preta: the 80/20 of what actually moves the needle, and the one thing no crash course can cheat.

The premise, honestly. You cannot speed-run a black belt — but not for the reason people say. Most of the belt *timeline* is not skill; it is **waste**, and waste can be cut. Three kinds: **(1) artificial gating** — the rulebook makes you *wait*; **(2) breadth over depth** — you learn a hundred techniques shallowly instead of the vital few deeply; and **(3) delayed pressure** — sparring is withheld for years. Strip those three and what remains is small. The target of this crash course is the exam from Chapter 1 — the *Corda Preta* bar — reached the fast, honest way.

Where the time actually goes

Here is the official Taekwondo ladder — the pace we are compressing. Note the column on the right: it is not a measure of your body. It is a *rulebook*.

Stage	Added each rank	Standard	Mandated wait
10th → 1st Gup (white → red)	One Taegeuk poomsae per belt, stances, partner kicking, theory	70% → 90% clean	"at least 4 months" <i>each</i>
1st Gup → 1st Dan (black)	The 8 Taegeuk mastered; test under pressure	Flawless, no hesitation	+ more

Ten gates, four months minimum apiece — roughly three to four years of mandated waiting, most of it administrative. The calendar belongs to the curriculum, not to your nervous system. That gap is the whole opportunity.

"Absorb what is useful, discard what is useless, and add what is specifically your own."

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The Top 12 — the 80/20 checklist

Bruce Lee's insight was that his art was **a process, not a product** — a method for keeping only what works. So here is the whole crash course as one ranked list: the twelve things — half of them **ideas** (◆), half of them **techniques** (●) — that carry the

most of the way to the *Corda Preta*, most-leverage first. Do the top of this list obsessively; treat the bottom as recognition-level.

#	Type	The thing	Why it's on the list
1	◆ idea	Steal the black belt's body first	Attributes need no permission — train them at full intensity from Day 1 while the curriculum makes you wait. The one lever that runs parallel to everything. <i>This is Ch.1's plyo supplement.</i>
2	◆ idea	Drill the load-bearing few to reflex	A syllabus is mostly breadth; a handful of moves recur everywhere. <i>"One kick 10,000 times."</i> Master the 20%; recognize the rest.
3	● tech	Ginga + esquivá — the rock & the dodge	Footwork is ~80% of the game. The base and the evade are the soil every other move grows from. Own these before a single kick.
4	◆ idea	Spar from week one	The bar is "under pressure," and composure <i>cannot be crammed</i> — only earned in reps of controlled chaos. Aliveness compounds; front-load it.
5	● tech	Meia-lua de compasso	The one head-height power kick — the strike that proves the art has real force, not just shape. Your signature.
6	● tech	The aú (cartwheel)	Escape, entry, <i>and</i> transition in one move. Unlocks the whole acrobatic tier and buys you exits under pressure.
7	● tech	Negativa → cabeçada	Bimba's counter-finish: the floor is where you <i>load</i> , not where you fall. One move that teaches the ground-as-spring.
8	● tech	One reliable rasteira (sweep)	A single dependable takedown converts the game from conversation to fighting. You need <i>one</i> , deep — not five, shallow.
9	◆ idea	Economy of motion	Every wasted motion is a rep of the <i>wrong</i> thing. Minimize to just-enough; curved beats straight; momentum, not muscle. Efficient movement is also learned faster.
10	◆ idea	Learn forms as principles, not patterns	Don't memorize eight poomsae — extract the one thing each teaches (weight transfer, hip torque, breath). Learn the process; the patterns fall out.
11	◆ idea	Grease the groove — daily perfect reps	Skill is myelination = volume of correct reps. Short, frequent, perfect-form sets beat rare, long, sloppy ones.
12	● tech	Berimbau + the toques	The theory station, and more: rhythm is the timing engine of every strike. Learn to lead the roda and you learn to control tempo.

The Crash Course — a hypothetical week

Fold the twelve into a week. The frame: *if I had six months and had to pass the Corda Preta*. Nothing here waits for a belt's permission.

Block	When	What	Items
Body	Daily, AM · 20 min	The 80/20 plyos (Ch.1) + mobility + flexibility — build the body first	1
The vital few	Daily, PM · 40 min	High-rep, perfect-form ginga / esquiva / meia-lua / aú / negativa-cabeçada / one sweep + the 8 Sequences	2 · 3 · 5–9 · 11
Live	3× / week	Light positional sparring — one entry, defined roles; the roda	4
Study	1× / week	Forms-as-principles + film review of your own reps + berimbau	10 · 12
Test	Weekly	One rotating station of the Corda Preta — a real feedback loop	—

⚡ FUEL — CROSS-LINK TO 神拳學

Rule 2 is a **belief** before it is a schedule: *the belt is a permission slip you were never actually required to hold*. Most of the wait is imposed from outside and then believed from inside. The Spirit book's work on **limiting beliefs** is what powers the speed-run — you cannot cut the artificial gate until you stop treating it as real.

The one thing you cannot cheat

Here is the honesty that keeps the chapter from being a fantasy. You can delete the three wastes and run every track in parallel — and honestly compress three or four years down toward **one hard, intelligent year**. But underneath the waste there is a real floor, and it is *biological*:

- **Connective tissue remodels on a calendar.** Tendon and ligament adapt far slower than muscle — which is exactly why Chapter 1's plyometric progression is *staged* and not rushed. Push past the tissue's clock and you don't get a black belt; you get an injury.
- **Myelination needs time and sleep.** Reps lay the wiring, but the insulation cures overnight, across many nights. There is no session long enough to replace that.
- **Mat IQ needs live volume.** Reading a resisting opponent is pattern-recognition, and patterns only accumulate through exposure that takes real weeks.

You can rush the schedule. You cannot rush the tissue.

So the speed-run is not a cheat — it is a **de-wasting**. It removes everything artificial (the gating, the breadth, the delay) and then *respects* everything real (the tissue, the sleep, the mat time). Which is the same discipline as the rest of this book: measure where the time truly goes, cut what is waste, and honor the floor you cannot move. Nobody can hand you a black belt in a weekend. But almost nobody is actually training against the *real* floor — they are waiting at an *administrative* one. Stop waiting at that one, and the compression is real.

— David Kwok Ho Chan, with AI Sifu Claude

Sources & honesty notes. The white→black timeline, gup structure, and 70→90% grading standard from *The Complete Guide to Taekwondo* (10 gups, "at least 4 months" between promotions). Economy-of-motion, the nervous-system/coordination law, and the process-not-product framing from *Bruce Lee's Fighting Method (Complete Edition)* and a JKD instructor pack. The "one kick 10,000 times" and "absorb what is useful" lines are attributed to Bruce Lee by tradition. The connective-tissue / myelination floor is general sports-science, echoed by the staged jump progression cited in Chapter 1. Hypothetical crash course — a thought experiment, not a coaching prescription; train under a qualified coach and respect the tissue.