



Technical Manual

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Introduction

This Technical Manual serves as training and grading guidelines conducted under the sanctions of the Traditional Shotokan Karate-Do, Singapore. The Technical Manual is compiled based on the materials and records from the Karate Union of Great Britain, and the current Technical Director Shihan Wong Tuang Seng's personal observations and experiences gained from his training and teaching at the Shitoryu Karate Association and Japan during his 35 years. This manual will serve as a general guide and authority to all instructors of the Traditional Shotokan Karate-Do. In order to standardise the teaching of "Shotokan" karate-do, it is necessary for instructors to be familiar with the manual so that they are able to teach the correct techniques and guide their students to a higher level.

Besides knowing all the technical aspects, it is also beneficial for the instructors to be well versed in the competition rules so that they will also be able to guide their students effectively to win in competitions.

Lastly as the Club promotes the traditional way of karate-do, it is very important that instructors exhibit the sense of loyalty to the Club and display the correct attitude and virtues and upholding the good traditions handed down from those before us. We may improve or enrich ourselves through years of training but we should not ignore the good traditions, otherwise our students will lose their sense of direction.

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Singapore
September 2002

Acknowledgements

Thanks to the following people for their contributions and suggestions:

Sensei Wong Tuang Seng – Shitoryu Karate Association (Singapore)
Laurence Fagnoni – Shitoryu Karate Association (Singapore)
Josef Christek – Shitoryu Karate Association (Singapore)
Sensei Stephen Chan – Seidokan Karate-Do (United Kingdom)
Lance Walton – Seidokan Karate-Do (United Kingdom)
Simon Chilembo – Seidokan Karate-Do (Norway)
Martin Rice – Seidokan Karate-Do (Northern Ireland)
Peter Klimenko – Shotokan Karate of America (Hong Kong)
Mark Caddy – University of Kent Karate Club (United Kingdom)
Chee-Wing Pang
Lana Wai Lan Chan

The Origins of Karate

Indian Origins

Bodhidharma (Daruma in Japanese), an Indian monk, came in the 6th century to China to bring in the Buddhist doctrine. It is important to mention Bodhidharma, as he is believed to have had a crucial influence over Chinese 'hand' fighting techniques. His teaching, called EKKINKYO was probably combining Indian and Chinese fighting traditions, but the objective here was to search for a certain spiritual level (based on the principle that body and mind are not separated). Bodhidharma settled down at the Shaolin Si monastery (Shorin-ji in Japanese), and his teaching was successfully spread while he was still alive. Later, the monastery was destroyed, and its monks were disseminated, together with their fighting traditions, throughout China. Their techniques are considered as the base for the Shaolin si kempo (still practiced today), which spread during that time in China, and probably reached Okinawa.

This conception of martial arts as a way towards body and spirit perfection, is similar to the one developed by Japanese warriors until the 19th century. Funakoshi, the 'father' of modern Shotokan karate, also tried to introduce this conception of martial arts into what was still the Okinawa-te (for this reason, he was strongly criticized by some traditional masters from Okinawa).

Okinawan Origins

Okinawa is part of Ryukyu Islands (琉球), in the Southern part of Japan. Indigenous fighting techniques were already being practiced prior to the 14th century. There are many theories on how and why hand-to-hand fighting methods evolved (from long-existing native techniques) so strongly in Okinawa. One reason, often brought forward, is the interdiction of weapons at diverse periods of Okinawa history. Another one is the close relation that existed between Okinawa and China especially from 14th to 17th Century. As an example: during this period, the village of Kume served as a center of diffusion of Chinese culture, probably including martial arts, to the Ryukyu (Okinawa).

Later, the Japanese influence over Okinawa overtook China's, and this influence the fighting methods as well. In the 1870's, Okinawa officially became part of Japan.

Some main points on the development of fighting techniques in Okinawa in periods when weapons were forbidden (Chinese and Japanese periods):

- *Chinese domination of Okinawa in the 15th Century. Former local basic techniques were developed, enriched with Chinese 'fist techniques' (Chinese 'boxing').*
- *Japanese feudal domination in the 17th Century. During this period, trainings were kept secret in small group, thus different trends appeared - Shuri-te, Naha-te, Tomari-te, according to the region of origin.*
- *Assimilation of Okinawa in Japanese culture (19th Century) - Karate entered the education system, and traditional teaching methods were subsequently transformed into 'mass' teaching'.*

Japan

In Japan 'mainland', hand-fighting arts existed under the name of Jujitsu, which was one of the 18 skills that had to be practiced by the warriors of feudal Japan (commonly known as 'Samurais'). The budo reached an incredibly high level, especially through sword-masters. At the beginning of the 'modern' age (1868), weapons were forbidden and martial arts declined. But Jujitsu, transformed into a sport, Judo (see Jigoro Kano), became increasingly successful (at the same time, traditional values attached to the budo were encouraged in Japan). This is the context that karate established itself in Japan. Karate, which had previously no direct link to the budo, was 'pushed' by Funakoshi to bring it closer.

Kara-te: evolution of a name

At the beginning in Okinawa the system was called 'Te', or 手, meaning 'hand'. The arts of Te, however, appeared to differ its system depending upon geographical locations and instructors. The islanders therefore distinguished its school by identifying a name of city such as Naha-Te, or 那覇手, Shuri-Te, or 首里手, Tomari-Te, or 泊手 and so on. Naha and Tomari were known to be the popular port cities. Shuri once was a capital city where the king resided. Other than that, there was the systems called To-De or Tote that was written as 唐手 of which alternative pronunciation is "Karate"; meaning Chinese hand. Local historians appeared to distinguish To-De and Te as different. However, Japanese called the art, in general, 'Karate' and wrote it 唐手.

During this transitional period of time when the art was becoming more popular in mainland Japan, the art was called "Karate Kempo" or 唐手拳法 that meant Chinese Hand Fist System. Later during 1930s Japanese practitioners changed the written characters to 空手. First word "空" means vacant, absent or empty and second word "手" means hand. Its implication is to symbolize a pair of bare hands combat for the sake of self-defence against the armed hands. However, it was Japanese political attempt to transform the body of the art with metaphysical insinuation so that the name can eliminate its national identity.

Main points:

1. 'Tode' means 'China Hand'. Also called Okinawa-te (te = hand)
2. It becomes 'Karate' but still keeps the meaning 'China Hand'.
3. Jitsu ('technique, science') or kempo is added, thus becoming 'karate-jitsu' or 'karate-kempo'.
4. Karate pronounced as previously, but the ideogram (thus the meaning) evolves from Chinese Hand to Empty Hand (kara = empty)
5. Karate-Do (do = way, pace), like in budo, judo, kendo (which brings us back to the roots of Tode and Bodhidharma (Zen Buddhism relates to 'emptiness'!))

The 'japanisation' of the name (points 4 and 5) partly reflects the willingness of Funakoshi to establish karate as a martial art (budo), and not only as a sport. 'Kara' means empty, but also 'void', thus referring both to the physical emptiness of hands (no weapons), but also to the Buddhist-related idea of detachment. One can also interpret it as 'free of bad intention, etc.

Political considerations also contributed to these name modifications (during this period, everything related to China was generally rejected or at least 'politically incorrect').

Further Reading

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2. La voie du karate - pour une theorie des arts martiaux, Kenji Tokitsu, ed. du Seuil, 1979
3. Shotokan Karate, R. Habersetzer, ed. Amphora, 1992

History of Shotokan Karate-Do

The history of Shotokan karate actually began with Gichin Funakoshi's 1917 trip to Kyoto, where karate was demonstrated for the first time in Japan, at the Butokuden. While the demonstration was successful and the Japanese interest was high, there was no immediate rush to bring the Okinawan art to Japan on a formal basis. As taken as they were with it, the Japanese still tended to be suspicious of anything purely Okinawan, and they found it expedient to view karate as an interesting sideshow.

This attitude could have been the end of karate in Japan had it not been for a fortuitous event on March 6, 1921. On that date, the Crown Prince (the Emperor Hirohito) of Japan visited Okinawa on his way to Europe. Seeking to impress the Prince with the rich culture of Okinawa, the Department of Education asked Funakoshi to give a karate demonstration for him in the Great Hall of Shuri Castle. So fascinated was the prince by the demonstration, that he spoke of it excitedly throughout the rest of his voyage. Thus the Ministry of Education formally requested a karate demonstration be performed at the first National Athletic Exhibition in Tokyo. Funakoshi was of course chosen to perform.

On the same day he gave the demonstration, he was approached by members of the Sho family, direct descendants of Shotai, the last king of Okinawa, and asked to extend his visit. Humbled and inspired by their supplications, Funakoshi agreed to stay for a few weeks. From Jigoro Kano, the founder of judo, came a request to demonstrate karate at the Kodokan, the judo headquarters. To assist him with the demonstration, Funakoshi prevailed upon Shinkin Gima, a student at Tokyo Shoka Daigaku, who had attained a high degree of proficiency in karate while still in Okinawa. At a private demonstration for Kano and selected members of the Kodokan, Funakoshi performed the kata, kanku dai, and Gima performed naihanchii (now known to the Japanese as tekki). So impressed was Kano by the demonstration that he enthusiastically asked Funakoshi to prolong his stay in Japan and to teach him the basics of karate. Funakoshi indeed taught Kano some basic blocks, punches, strikes, and kicks, and Kano later incorporated some of these into an advanced judo kata.

The demonstration at the National Athletic Exhibition, and Kano's introductions to influential Japanese, soon led to official requests for karate instruction by the military academy, the Tokyo Bar Association, and the Society for Research in High School Physical Education. While eager to demonstrate before these groups, Funakoshi was struggling with homesickness, worry about his family, and guilt over leaving his responsibilities behind. After correspondence with his wife, in which she gave her blessing, Funakoshi decided to stay in Japan and fulfil what he now perceived to be his destiny: to teach karate to the Japanese people.

While the Japanese in general were reluctant to endorse anything of Okinawan extraction, they were more than eager to pursue almost anything popular with the upper classes. In less than nine months, karate had become a fad with the intelligentsia. In 1922 Funakoshi established the first formal Japanese karate club at the Meisei Juku, a dormitory and school for newly arrived Okinawan students in the Suidobata section of Tokyo. To support himself, he cleaned the dormitory during the day, often tending the garden and lawns, and taught karate in a lecture hall in the evening. Throwing himself completely into his mission, he wrote the first book on karate, *RyuKyu Kempo: Karate*, published by Bukyo-sha in 1922.

An instant best seller (by textbook standards), it went out of print prematurely, for a time, when the book's plates were destroyed in the great Kanto earthquake of Sept. 1, 1923. The book was not printed again until 1926, when it was re-issued by Kobundo as *Rentan Goshin Karate jitsu* ("Strengthening of Willpower and Self-defence Through Techniques of Karate").

Many of Funakoshi's finest pupils were lost in the earthquake also, and he was forced to take a job making stencils at the Daiichi Sogo Bank in Kyobashi. Since this was some distance from the Meisei Juku, Funakoshi was invited to move his dojo to the dojo of Hiromichi Nakayama, the great kendo teacher. For a great kendo sensei to allow another art to be practiced in his dojo was quite unprecedented.

In 1924, at the age of 56, when most men are contemplating retirement, Funakoshi entered and qualified in the Tokyo Invitational Prize Contest for Athletes. Throughout the 1920s and early 1930s, Funakoshi continued to teach at Nakayama's kendo dojo. The number of active students increased steadily, until his fame brought him an invitation to demonstrate karate before the Imperial Household.

In 1924, Funakoshi was asked by Prof. Shinyo Kasuya of the department of German language and literature at Keio University to teach a group of students at the university. A club was soon organized with the sanction of the university. The Keio club was the first collegiate karate club in Japan, and it is

active to this day. By 1926 the Tokyo University Karate Club was officially chartered, followed in the early 1930s by clubs at Takushoku, Chuo, Shodai (now called Hitotsubashi University), Gakushu-in, Hosei, Nihon, Meiji, and others, until today there are over 200 collegiate karate clubs in Japan. Karate made its greatest headway on campuses, but also through instruction to employee groups at companies such as the Tokyo Department Store, Tokyo Railroad Co., the Matsuzakaya Department Stores, and others.

As karate grew in the 1930s, it spawned several ryu (schools or styles). Chojun Miyagi and Kenwa Mabuni brought the Goju-ryu and Shito-ryu styles from Okinawa, and in 1935 one of Funakoshi's most brilliant senior students, Hironishi Ohtsuka, broke away, forming his own Wado-ryu style. Many others formed styles, of course, but these four, Shotokan, Goju, Wado, and Shito comprise the bulk of Japanese karate. Early on, at least, there was very little bickering among the leaders of the various schools. It was perfectly acceptable, they believed, for different masters to teach in different ways; after all, they were striving toward the same goal: perfection of human character through karate-do.

In 1935 karate men from all over Japan formed a committee that solicited funds to build a freestanding karate dojo. Construction on the building in Zoshigaya, Toshima Ward, began in mid-1935, and was completed in the spring of 1936. Gichin Funakoshi, at the age of 68, bowed and entered the world's first karate dojo in the spring of 1936. As a tribute to him from karate students all over Japan, a plaque was hung over the door inscribed with the characters for "Shotokan," ("the hall of Shoto").

By 1940, with Japan engaged in war on several fronts, Funakoshi's dojo was filled with eager young men. Following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour, Funakoshi's dojo was so crowded with students that they frequently spilled over into the street and neighbouring yards. Japan's defeat in World War II of course brought to a temporary halt the development of virtually all the martial arts, but only for a short time.

In 1944 Funakoshi's students in the university clubs, the Old Boys clubs, and the private dojos all over Japan—officially organized themselves into the Nihon Karate Kyokai (Japan Karate Association, or JKA) and named Funakoshi their chief instructor emeritus. Isao Obata, the chairman, was the wealthy president of his own trading company; the first JKA president, Kichinosuku Saigo, was a wealthy politician with major political influence. These men had neither the time nor the inclination to administer the affairs of such a large and burgeoning organization, and the board of directors immediately hired a full-time, paid staff to run the organization. Masatomo Takagi, a business manager and a 5th Dan in karate, was hired as general secretary. Masatoshi Nakayama was made chief instructor, to conduct day-to-day training at the headquarters; Kimio Ito was appointed director of administration; and Hidetaka Nishiyama was named chief of the instruction committee.

To understand what happened next to the JKA and its export of karate to the rest of the world some background will be useful. Both ancestry and wealth contributed to a man's position within the class structure, and Japanese institutions, especially the colleges and universities, reflect this state of affairs. Even today, a family's wealth and position determine to a large degree which university the children will attend, and a graduate's chances for success are strongly influenced thereby. The "Big Three" colleges, in terms of social and political prestige, are Keio, Waseda, and Hosei. These three, along with Takushoku, also represented the best collegiate karate in Japan. Takushoku, however, was not part of the "establishment" of colleges. Commonly called Takudai, it was created before World War II expressly for the purpose of training administrators for overseas work. Takudai men therefore typically majored in economics, importing and exporting, and international law.

The types of jobs available to Takudai graduates were not considered prestigious by the old-line university graduates, and a good deal of class friction was evident in the JKA between upper echelon Old Boys and highly expert (in karate) but "lower class" Takudai men. Disputes arose over business practices, philosophy, and training methods. The class division among administrators crystallized around the fact that the Takudai staff, Takagi and Nakayama among them, was being paid for teaching karate.

In April 1955 the JKA opened its first commercial dojo in the preview room of the Kataoka Movie Centre, and a strong campaign was launched for the recruitment of new students. Many old-line masters, chief among them Isao Obata of Keio, felt it was absolutely immoral for a man to accept money for teaching the art. Even those who would not deny a man the right to be paid voiced opposition to placing karate on the market.

The Hosei Old Boys were the first to leave the JKA, followed by Obata and the Keio group. Unburdened of the conservative Old Boys, the Takudai men pursued the development of karate in their own way; not surprisingly, in view of their training, they chose to internationalise the art.

The Takudai group thought the best way for an art like karate to gain international acceptance was to give it a sporting aspect. Turning karate into a sport with rules for competition was not new. Since 1936 college clubs had been conducting kokangeiko (exchange of courtesies and practice), in which

they tested their techniques against each other on a free-style basis. Without formal rules or supervision, however, these exchange and training sessions were, more often than not, bloodbaths. The Old Boys refused to acknowledge the existence of such shenanigans because these bouts were obviously opposed to the principles of karate as Funakoshi taught them.

Nevertheless, the JKA directors and leaders in other styles brought free sparring into the open, experimenting with it, debating it, and, finally, encouraging it. By 1950, virtually all the major styles of karate in Japan were practicing some form of freestyle sparring. The JKA contest rules, comprising three chapters and 16 articles, were completed in Aug. 1956. Collegiate clubs and branch dojo immediately commenced staging tournaments to try contestant skills and to train judges. This flurry of activity culminated in the 1st All Japan Karate-do Championship Tournament in June 1957.

Concurrent with their efforts to devise a workable set of contest rules, the JKA instituted a stringent instructor-training program. Only the cream of young karate men was admitted to the program, and only after graduating honourably from college and attaining 2nd Dan rank. In an intensive year of study, candidates were instructed not only in karate but also in psychology, physics, anatomy, business management, history and philosophy of physical education and sports, and other subjects. On completing the training program (with 3rd Dan and a dissertation) they were assigned to a year's teaching internship. The results of this difficult apprenticeship were a dozen or so highly proficient karate men, well prepared to plant and nourish their art overseas.

First to arrive in the U.S. were Hidetaka Nishiyama, Los Angeles, and Teruyuki Okazaki, Philadelphia, both in 1961. Others followed in rapid succession: Takayuki Mikami, twice All Japan Champion, went first to Kansas City and later to New Orleans; Yutaka Yaguchi was assigned to Denver after a brief stay in Los Angeles; and Hirokazu Kanazawa, also twice All Japan Champion, brought the JKA to Hawaii. Kanazawa was replaced after two years by Masataka Mori, who ultimately went to New York, relinquishing the Hawaii province to Tetsuhiko Asai. Shojiro Sugiyama, not a graduate of the instructor program, founded a strong organization in Chicago. Later arrivals were Masaaki Ueki and Shigeru Takashina in Florida, Katsuya Kisaka in New Jersey, and Shojiro Koyama in Arizona.

By the mid-1970s, American students were themselves achieving instructor status. The most senior of these, and the most successful, was Robert Fusaro of Minneapolis. Other notables include Robert Graves of Oregon, Greer Golden of Ohio, Ray Dalke, Frank Smith, and James Yabe of California, and Gerald Evans of Philadelphia.

The All America Karate Federation (now the American Amateur Karate Federation) finally opened its doors to non-JKA karate people in the late 1960s, but too late to salvage an American karate unified under the guidance of the JKA. Indeed, internal strife led in the 1970's to a split in the organization, with master Okazaki spearheading a separate JKA organization, the International Shotokan Karate Federation. Both organizations continue to prosper, but there is no indication of reunification.

Outside the U.S. the JKA is stronger as an international organization. Taiji Kase, from the European branch in Paris, oversees Hideki Ochi in Germany, Hiroshi Shirai in Italy, Keinosuke Enoeda in Great Britain, and Satoshi Miyazaki in Belgium. JKA is represented around the world by Higashino in Brazil, Ishiyama in Venezuela, Stan Schmidt (the first non-Japanese 5th Dan) in South Africa, Hideki Okamoto in Syria and Lebanon, Tanaka in Denmark, Sasaki in the Philippines, Hiroshi Matsura in Mexico, and others. JKA Shotokan karate-do is now practiced daily by approximately 5,000,000 people in almost every country in the world.

While the JKA has led the way in internationalising karate, still there is a large, unaffiliated contingent practicing Gichin Funakoshi's karate. Several of Funakoshi's best pupils chose to leave the Shotokan altogether and develop their own, eclectic systems. Notable among these are Ryosuke Konishi, who founded the shindo-linen-ryu (commonly known as the Ryobukan), and Hironishi Ohtsuka, who developed Wado-ryu.

But the most significant faction outside the JKA has grown from the un-mollified Old Boys in Japan. Prior to leaving the JKA, Isao Obata, head of the Old Boys at Keio University, was instrumental in organizing the Zen Nihon Gakusei Karate-do Renmei (All Japan Shotokan karate is noted for its wide, strong stances, as demonstrated by Italian karate champion Falsoni. University Students Karate League). This organization hoped to unite collegiate practitioners from all styles. Ultimately, it evolved into a loose structure sheltering disaffected Shotokan students who wished to pursue their art free from the directives of the JKA. They called themselves the Shotokai, and their principal leaders included Shigeru Egami and Genshin Hironishi of Chuo University, and Hiroshi Noguchi at Waseda. It was from Waseda University that Tsutomu Ohshima came to the U.S. in 1956 and founded Shotokan Karate of America. Hirokazu Kanazawa broke with the JKA in the 1970s, establishing Shotokan Karate International. Among the famous practitioners who remained within the JKA are: Minoru Miyata, Osamu Ozawa and Junpei Sugano of Hosei, Kimio Ito, Motokun Sugiura, and Hiroshi Shoji.

Technically, there are some gaps between JKA Shotokan and the Shotokai; practically, the gaps are very narrow. While most of the Shotokai groups still regularly practice the taikyoku and ten-no-kata

that were so dear to Funakoshi, the JKA has abandoned them as repetitious and of questionable value. Stances among most of the Shotokai groups are generally higher than those seen in the JKA, and there is relatively little emphasis on free-style sparring in Shotokai dojo. From about 1960 forward, the JKA has pursued the study of karate from a scientific viewpoint-body mechanics, kinesiology, anatomy, physics, and modern psychology. This, contend most of the Shotokai people, is unnecessary and detrimental to the traditional ways taught by Funakoshi. Each group continues to insist that it practices karate exactly as Funakoshi would practice it were he alive today. The present authors, based on the writings of the master, lean toward the JKA claim. Funakoshi frequently said that karate was an unfinished art; it would continue to grow and change, he said, as man's knowledge and circumstances grew and changed.

See also Funakoshi, Gichin; Japan Karate Association; karate-do.

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(Technical material by GARY GOLDSTEIN and ALEX STERNBERG; historical material by RANDALL G HASSELL).



Gichin Funakoshi (1868-1957)

Dojo Kun

訓
一 人格完成に努むること
一 誠の道を守ること
一 努力の精神を養うこと
一 礼儀を重んずること
一 血気の勇を戒むこと

*Jinkaku kansei ni tsutomuru koto
Makoto no michi wo mamoru koto
Doryoku no Seishin wo yashinau koto
Reigi wo omonzuru koto
Kekki no yu wo imashimuru koto*

**Strive for completion of character
Protect the way of the truth
Foster the spirit of effort
Respect the principles of etiquette
Guard against impetuous courage**

Preparatory Exercises

Preparatory exercises are necessary before the start of the normal training. The exercises are aimed at strengthening or limbering the joints of fingers, toes, ankles, knees, vertebra, wrists, elbows and the neck. Such warm up exercises reduces the chances of injury during the main training session.

Warming up involves the physical heating of the muscles, as well as the raising of the heart rate (pulse). Running, jumping and skipping rope are all forms of warm-ups. Stretching the muscles is much easier once they are properly heated and the blood is pumping. Some think of "jumping jacks" as funny looking, but they are a very good warm-up, moving both the arms and the legs at once. The muscles should be kept warm during the entire workout period, and any long periods of discussion/lecture in class should be followed by warming-up exercises when possible. There are different theories on the use of a "warm-down." Let it suffice to say that it is usually advisable to do more, rather than less, warming and stretching of the muscles both before and after a workout.

- For all exercises (unless it is obvious) the teacher should explain very precisely WHICH muscle to stretch, WHERE the student should precisely feel the stretch, and the main reason for each exercise (WHY)
- Advise students on what they should train at home (as conditioning exercise, e.g. to develop muscles to protect knee cap etc).
- Injury prevention: teachers should be very cautious on exercises that strain the body too much, especially when not done correctly. Especially in Shotokan, the knees and lower back are prone to injuries. Some pupils may not be able take up the same exercise as others (e.g. because they lack the physical conditioning, age, previous injury etc).
- When stretching, you should try and feel the stretch. Jerky movements may give short-term benefits, but this type of stretching can only damage your ligaments and muscles. Slow long stretches can provide much longer-term benefits.
- Never over stretch as this can cause long-term injury.

Flexibility

Definition

Flexibility refers to the capability of an individual to use muscles and skeletal joints throughout the full potential range of movement. Flexibility exercises involve lengthening the muscles, and are aimed directly at extending the range of movement of a joint or muscle. The term 'stretching' has become accepted as the description of this type of exercise. Stretching exercises should be performed statically and progressively and only when the body has been warmed up.

Stretching

Stretching aims to:

- Reduce muscle tension and make the body feel more relaxed
- Increase the range of movement of joints and muscles so that the body can work more efficiently.
- Prevent muscle soreness and muscle tears.
- Prevent muscle inflammation and facilitate recovery from soft tissue injuries.
- Improve exercise technique by extending the range of body movement.
- Lengthen the muscle after use.

NB. You can help return the body to a pre-exercise state when you include stretching exercises in a cool down component of a class.

How is this done

- You should start a stretching routine by trying to relax.
- You should only start to stretch when the body has been properly warmed up.
- You should ease into a stretch to the point where it is comfortable but not painful. This is referred to as slow, static stretching.
- You should stretch so that the pull is felt in the bulky, central portion of the muscle.
- You should concentrate on relaxing muscle or the muscle groups being stretched.

- You should not bounce to increase the range of movement of a muscle or a joint.
- You should not hold your breath, but try to breathe calmly and rhythmically.
- You should try to stretch in sitting or reclining positions whenever possible.
- The choice of stretches you chose should be related to the kind and type of exercise you are going to perform.
- You need to stretch daily if you are wishing to increase your flexibility.
- You should not compete during stretching exercise. You should not compare your progress to that of anyone else. Trying too hard can lead to injury and loss of any gains you have made. A feeling of mild discomfort is all that is needed.
- You should alternate your stretches from one muscle group to another, ensuring that they are progressive.
- If you are an exceptionally flexible person, you should take a great deal of care not to stretch too far because there is a danger of injury through dislocation.

All major muscle groups should be stretched for 8-10 seconds in order to prepare the muscles for work and to prevent possible injuries.

To promote an increase in flexibility, stretches need to be developed. You should hold the stretch between 10-30 seconds. As the feeling of tension within the muscle eases, you should develop the stretch further, ensuring you are stable, relaxed and comfortable. The sensation that occurs when the feeling of tension eases in the muscle is known as the 'Golgi tendon organ reflex'.

Lack of flexibility and inefficient technique are the main causes of poor physical performance as well as a reason for many strains and tear injuries in sport. Even today, the flexibility section of most training programmes is neglected. Athletes Martial Artists and Keep Fit Performers prefer to do strength and endurance work because in their minds they feel these components are doing more good. You should aim at a balanced programme incorporating all the aspects of physical fitness.

Some trainees will find that they do not require as much stretching time as others. Many will never be as flexible as they would like to be. Some find that their muscles get cold quickly. Others find they can remain flexible for hours but suffer from occasional cramping of the muscles. No two people are exactly alike and we must understand our differences and limitations.

Do not force your muscles to the point that you are doing irreparable damage. Do not take it too easy either; flexibility helps us in many ways and stretching should be considered a necessary part of training. Those who feel they need more might want to try stretching lightly first thing in the morning and very lightly just before going to bed at night. Also, going to the dojo early can really pay off if you spend that time stretching, instead of just talking to your friends.

Remember that in stretching, just like any other Karate activity, pain in your joints is usually a sign of poor technique; be careful not to manipulate your joints in such a way as to cause pain.

You should notice that you may feel better stretched after some kinds of stretching than others and it is recommended that you try to develop your ideal routine. This may not be ideal for everyone else in the class, and you should do your best to please everyone if you are leading the group. There can be a noticeable difference in the performance of the students following a good warm-up and stretching set. Study why some are more successful than others in getting the class stretched out properly. One thing to consider is the progression of stretching from one area of the body to another (for example, moving from the upper body to the lower body, or starting from the centre of the body [the hips & torso] and working out to the limbs methodically).

One problem many people have is that they do not know how many stretches to include. One recommendation is to consider that some muscles take longer than others to stretch (the larger leg muscles, for instance), so either include more of those stretches or spend longer on the few that you do. There have been studies done which claim that each stretch should ideally be held for 30 seconds. Although that seems a bit extreme, fast, bouncing stretches can often do more harm than good. Even if you do not spend a full 30 seconds on every stretch, there are more than enough different stretching exercises to fill up the better part of an hour. But most people can be sufficiently stretched after as little as 5 minutes, if done properly and follow a good warm-up routine. It is just like everything else in Karate, study and practice!

Some instructors frown upon students wishing to stretch and/or keep their muscles warm between sets of movements. Although one should not advocate chaos, the opportunity to keep in top form throughout the class certainly has its advantages. You should remind students that they should do their best to keep warmed up and stretched out to gain as much as they can from each set of

<http://klik.to/clubdekaratedo>

movements as well as to prevent unnecessary cramping or straining of the muscles. In contrast, one should expect their students to remain still while going through the techniques.

Further Reading

Stretching and Flexibility: Everything you never wanted to know, Brad Appleton

http://galway.informatik.uni-kl.de/staff/weidmann/pages/stretch/stretching_toc.html

Plyometrics

<http://www.brianmac.demon.co.uk/plymo.htm>

Injury-Free Karate, Paul Perry 1993

The Advanced Karate Manual, Vince Morris and Aidan Trimble 1989

Basic Dojo Etiquette

Standing bow (ritsurei)

Stand with your heels together, feet pointing slightly outward (like a "V"). Keep your knees straight, elbows straight and relaxed, hands open and at the seams of your pants (the outside of your legs), and fingers together. Bend at the waist, about 30 degrees forward. Unbend. The whole bow takes about a breath's length.

Kneeling (seiza)

Place your left knee on the floor, then right knee. Sit down on your feet. The big toes of your left and right feet should overlap (either one on top). Keep your back straight and shoulders relaxed. Rest your left hand (hand open, fingers together) on your left thigh and your right hand on your right thigh, so that your fingers point inward. For anatomical reasons, men should have about a fist or two's width between their knees, and women should have their knees together.

Bowing in seiza

Slide your left hand from the thigh to the floor immediately in front of the left knee (not too far in front, i.e., your left elbow shouldn't touch the floor). Do the same with your right hand, so that the right hand motion is slightly behind (in time) the left hand motion. Your palms should touch the floor to show deep respect. Bow at the waist, taking a little longer than for a standing bow (forehead comes close to the floor, but does not touch it). Slide your hands back up to their initial position on the thighs, this time with your left hand slightly behind the right hand.

Getting up from seiza

Opposite of going down to seiza position, by putting right leg out in front with left knee still on ground and then pushing yourself to the upright position. Then pull right foot back to left foot. Bow before moving away.

Entering and exiting the dojo

Bow, standing at the entrance, facing the dojo or towards the front of the dojo, whenever you are entering or exiting the dojo.

Lateness: First of all, try not to be late. But if you are late, bow in, then quietly kneel near the entrance. Wait until the instructor acknowledges you. Then bow while kneeling, get up, and quickly join the group. If you arrive just as everyone is kneeling during the opening sequence (see below), don't move or make any noise -- just wait until class begins warming up, and bow in as when the instructor acknowledges you, in the manner described above.

Opening sequence

When you hear "Line up!" or "One line!" (Or however many lines is necessary for everyone to line up), stand shoulder-to-shoulder facing the front of the dojo, in rank order. Try to line up so that the instructor, standing before your line, is right in the middle of the line. If class is so big that the senior student says to form more than one line, try to line up so that the lines are approximately the same length.

"Seiza!" Sit down in seiza, so that knees are aligned with the person on your left.

"Mokuso!" Quiet meditation -- just lower your gaze, relax, and breathe.

"Mokuso yame!" End meditation.

"Shomen ni rei!" Bow to the front of the room (which shows respect for your training space, to the institution of karate, and to the line of instructors).

"Sensei ni rei!" Bow to the instructor. When you're bowing, you can say "onegaishimasu," which, roughly translated, means "Please," i.e., please teach me, please help me, please hold class, etc. (You may also say "oss," the ubiquitous sign of respect in karate.)

"Otoga ni rei!" Bow to each other. This shows respect for each other. At the signal of the instructor, get up quickly, without necessarily waiting for the person on your left to rise.

Closing sequence

This is the same as the opening sequence. During the bow to the instructor ("sensei ni rei!"), you may say "arigato gozaimashita", which means "Thank you." "Thank you" in English is fine, too. At the

end, the instructor will get up. Wait until the person on your left bows and gets up before you do the same.

Clean-up

After the class finishes, there is usually some sort of dojo-cleaning process. During this time, actively participate to the extent you can. Don't sit back and stretch when others are still cleaning.

Kiai

Don't say any words when you kiai. "Kiai" itself, being a Japanese word should NOT be a kiai. Common kiai include "Ya!" and "Ei!" Don't be afraid to kiai! In general, people tend to kiai too softly rather than too loudly. If you have a strong kiai, it will often spur others to work harder, as well. The overall tone of a class is set by the level of spirit of the class, which can be raised with better kiai. On the other hand, if your spirit is poor or your kiai weak, you might bring down the class spirit.

General etiquette during training

- The moment class starts, *your mind should be on karate and on trying to improve your own technique*. Concentrate, give spirited kiai, don't talk unnecessarily, and practice hard! (This is under "etiquette" because doing otherwise would be disrespectful to the instructor, as well as to yourself.)
- Don't wear jewellery, watches, etc. Don't chew gum. This is for personal safety and also for the safety of everyone training in the dojo.
- Whenever you're told to move from one part of the room to another, do it quickly (i.e., run or trot, at least). Also, don't pass in front of anyone -- go behind and around.
- Yoi :- When called to yoi you should come to attention quickly, without fuss and where applicable come into straight lines. Whilst in Yoi there should be NO extraneous movements such as scratching, yawning or looking around. You should be invoking an alert mindset, in preparation for combating an opponent.
- Yame :- When Yame is called you should stop immediately any activity. Yame means to relax but you should then pay attention to the instructor for the next command.
- Whenever you're asked to stand back or sit back and watch, do so in a normal standing or kneeling position, silently, without leaning on walls or distracting others.
- If you're ever in a kneeling position and you're uncomfortable, it's generally okay to bow and then switch to sitting cross-legged.
- Whenever you stand from a sitting position, switch to kneeling, bow, and then stand.
- If you ever need to leave a class early, let the instructor know beforehand. This is so that the instructor will not have to look for you needlessly because he/she thought you have injured yourself seriously!
- Every time you get a new partner for any exercise, bow. Every time you're about to switch partners, bow to your old partner before moving on to the next.
- Don't make overt displays of how tired you are, no matter how tired you are.
- If you're ever asked to count, count in whatever language you feel comfortable with, but make the counts short, sharp, and spirited.
- Do not hesitate to ask senior students and instructors for help before or after class. Time permitting, you should try to learn kata outside of class so that during class, the instructor can spend more time making comments about your technique rather than what move comes next.
- Check fingers and toenails are cut and clean before training.
- Don't eat or drink too much before the training.
- Don't push yourself too hard if your body is not in good condition.
- Do not practise free sparring without the permission of the instructor in charge.
- Respect your partner and help each other in the learning process.
- Follow the normal rules of etiquette that apply.

Proper Care of Karate Gi

Colourful belts are just one aspect of the standard karate uniform. Karate players tend to dress in a cotton jacket and pants combination known as a "gi" or "do-gi." Say 'g' as in 'game' and pronounce the word "gee." A karate gi is a de-evolution of the excellent uniform that judo requires its players to wear. The Judo uniform is extremely sturdy and designed to accept a lot of pulling and sheering before succumbing to abuse. The karate uniform has, over the years, moved away from the woven uniform of judo and toward white cotton canvas in varying weights.

Although cotton is favoured as a uniform in karate circles, it is a poor quality cloth by today's standards. Cotton is not particularly absorbent, so it does little to draw sweat away from the body. And, once it does become soaked with sweat, it becomes much heavier, clings to the body, and begins to rot.

Most karate gi start off as beautiful white, almost light blue, soft, duck canvas. As the uniform is worn, though, it begins to stain yellow from sweat, particularly in the armpits, and the stitching begins to rot and disintegrate. A karate gi that has been worn many times first self-destructs at the stitching that holds the sleeves to the jacket. Also, the stitching in the crotch begins to unravel as well.

Proper care and treatment of the uniform is necessary in order to prevent it from becoming a yellowish, smelly, rotting testament to your infrequent bathing habits.

1. **Wash After Every Use** - You might think you didn't sweat in your karate gi very much during that cold, winter training session, but you did, and you need to wash the thing to get the bacteria you left behind out of the cotton to prevent it from smelling and rotting. Wash the gi after each time you wear it. You should never wear your karategi two times in a row without washing it.
2. **Wash it quickly** - Do not allow your karate gi to stand before being washed. As soon as you return home from practice, it must go straight into the washing machine. If you allow it to stand over night, it will smell in a way that few detergents can remedy.
3. **Do Not Use Mechanical Dryers** - Your karate gi must dry on the line. That means that if you train every day, you will wash and dry a gi every day. In humid environments, your karate gi may require two days to line dry. You'll need to purchase two or three karate gi, in that case, because you cannot wear it repeatedly without washing it.
4. **Bleach Infrequently** - Using chlorine bleach on your cotton uniform will get it clean, all right, but bleach is highly acidic, and it will also damage the material, causing the stitching to come apart. However, when your karate gi needs bleach, then put some into the wash with it.
5. **Pre-soak Your Karate Gi** - Don't throw your gi into the washing machine, pour detergent on it, and then start the washer. Follow correct laundry procedures. Start the washer so that it begins to fill with water. Put detergent in immediately, and allow the detergent to dissolve into the water. After the washing machine has nearly completed filling with water, add your karate gi. You should also try to wash it with some other white items such as towels, because washing it alone will reduce the friction cleaning effect of modern day washing machines. Turn off the washing machine and allow your karate gi to soak in the soapy water for at least 20 minutes. Then start the washer again and allow it to begin its wash cycle.
6. **Hang Dry Immediately** - When the wash cycle is complete, hang your karate gi to dry right away. Every moment it spends in the washing machine is another moment for it to mildew and yellow.
7. **Fold Properly When Dry** - When your uniform has finished drying, you will find that it is usually quite wrinkled and that it looks like an unmade bed. You can iron your karate gi, but I wouldn't recommend going that far. Considering how your uniform will look after 15 minutes of training, you probably shouldn't bother with the iron unless you are about to wear your uniform to a competition. When your gi is completely dry, not still moist, but totally dry, you may fold it. The customary way of doing so in Japan is shown below.

How to Fold Your Karate Gi

In Japan, one does not wear a karate gi in an inappropriate place. The Japanese are very sensitive to context, and therefore don't appreciate the more casual Western approach to clothing in which one might not take time to change clothes before changing locations. Where as in the West, you might see someone in his or her workout clothes at the gas station or other public place, no Japanese would ever do this. Instead, they make sure that they change into appropriate attire before changing situations.

A karate gi is put into a gym bag and taken to the dojo for training. However, don't just stuff your karate gi into the gym bag! The Japanese find that kind of slop to be contrary to the very essence of the martial arts dojo. Instead, your karate gi should be folded carefully, tied together with your belt, and placed in a neat package into your bag. In Japan, you always get a present at the dojo: your gi.

1. **Use the Floor** - The first step to properly folding a gi is to get on your knees on the floor. Lay the jacket out with the back down to the floor. Spread the sleeves out so that they point straight out to the sides in opposite directions.
2. **Fold One Side Over** - Fold one sleeve and a quarter of the torso of the jacket over toward the other sleeve. As any part of your jacket that was on the floor is folded in, brush it off with your hand to get anything that stuck to it off. Also, this brushing action helps you to crease your uniform neatly.
3. **Fold the Sleeve Back** - Fold the sleeve back on itself to get it out of the way.
4. **Fold the Other Side** - Now fold the other side in and that sleeve back the same way.
5. **Fold the Jacket Up** - Two more easy folds and your jacket is folded into a nice square.
6. **Now for the pants** - Lay the pants out on the floor and brush them off to flatten them. Fold them in half, bringing one side over the other.
7. **Fold the Top Down** - Now fold Top half of your pants down and continue folding them so that your gi is rolled up in folds in three motions.
8. **Tie a Bow** - Now place the jacket and pants together, making sure that the loose ends are inward on both items. Wrap the belt around the package, and tie it off. You're done!

Dirty Uniforms

Some people are very proud of their yellowed and torn karate uniforms as if it is a sign of seniority. This ridiculous idea is very wrong. Senior karate experts may own many uniforms of varying ages, and they have probably owned more than thirty of the things in 15 years or more of training.

Another foolish notion is the one that says you should never wash your belt. You should wash your belt, just make sure you avoid bleach and allow it to soak in soapy water for a long time. Your belt can probably go through the dryer, and it should be washed much less frequently than the rest of your uniform, but wash it you must. If you don't wash your belt, it will begin to smell like urine, it will rot, and every time you or anyone touches it, you'll be risking an infection from the dangerous bacteria growing within it. Wash your belt. But don't wash it with your gi unless you want your gi to change colour.

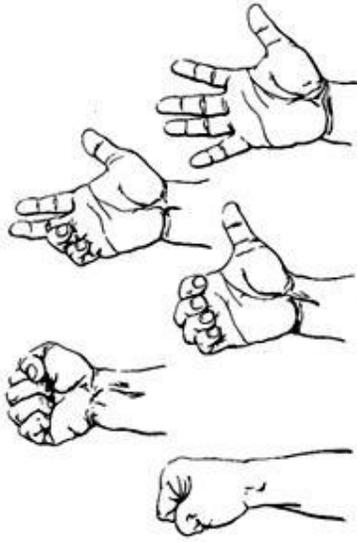
Expensive Uniforms

The people you see in videos and books demonstrating kata usually have their uniforms hand-tailored. They have the uniform custom designed around their measurements, and that's why their uniforms never have quite the sloppy look that yours and mine have. Gi are available in a variety of makes. Shotokan experts tend to prefer moderately expensive heavy weight cotton uniforms with 3/4 length sleeves and 4/5 length legs. Beginners should probably not invest in expensive uniforms until they are sure that they enjoy the practice of karate.

Belts also come in a variety of flavours. Colour belts are usually pretty standard, although there are noticeable changes in quality from one brand to another as far as colour tone, cloth, cut, and stitching. Black belts come in a variety of styles and materials. The most common belts purchased are heavy-duty cotton belts that last for decades and the silk/satin covered kind. Cotton belts wear out more slowly, but silk belts are prettier when new. Also, the silk belts wear out gracefully and have better movement and presentation quality when performing a kata in front of a crowd.

The wear and tear on a belt is meaningless as to the skill of the holder. Anyone can use sandpaper on their belt and wear it out prematurely.

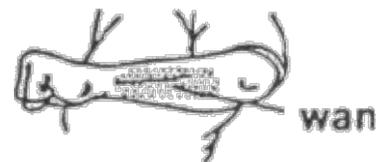
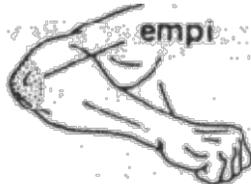
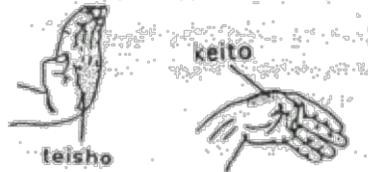
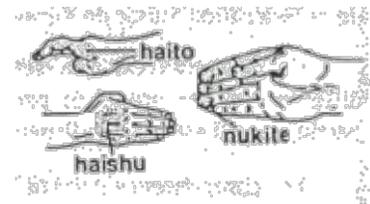
Basic Striking and Blocking Techniques



How to make a Fist

- Four Fingers except the thumb must be rolled in.
- Thumb on the second and third fingers
- This grip must always be maintained

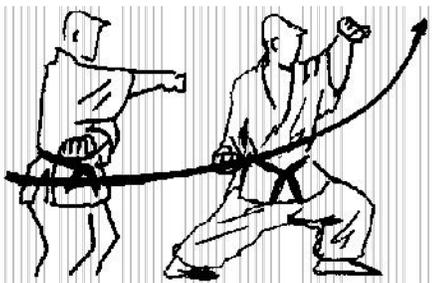
Hand Strikes



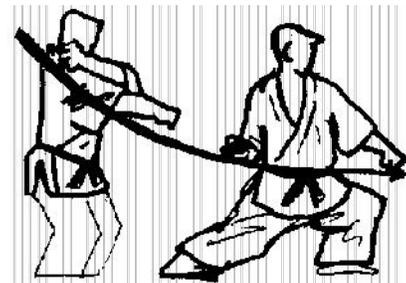
Leg Strikes



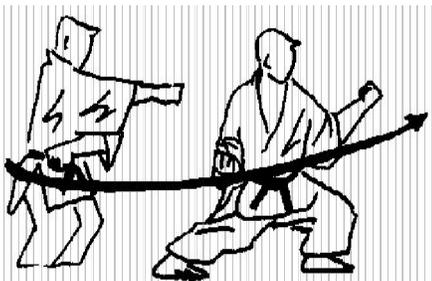
Blocks



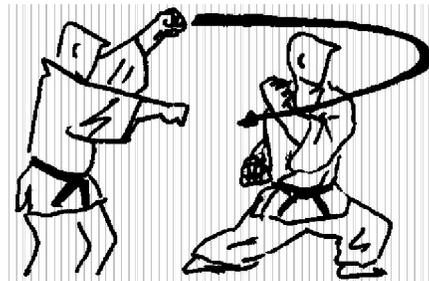
Age Uke



Gedan Berai



Soto (Ude) Uke



Uchi Uke

Extra Points to Consider:

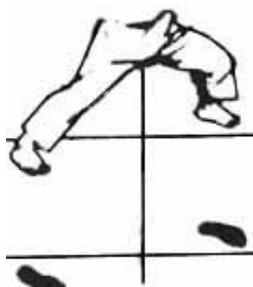
Most striking techniques are directed at one of three levels:

Jodan – Upper Level (e.g. Head)

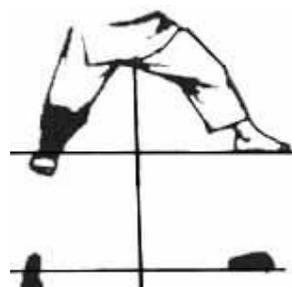
Chudan – Middle Level (e.g. Body)

Gedan – Lower Level (Below Waist)

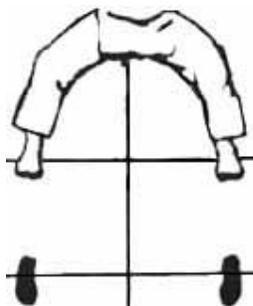
Basic Stances



Zenkutsu Dachi



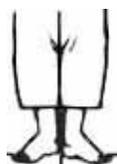
Kokutsu Dachi



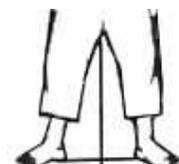
Kiba Dachi



Heisoku Dachi



Musubi Dachi



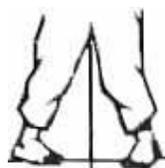
Hachiji Dachi



Heiko Dachi



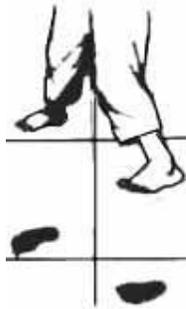
Teiji Dachi



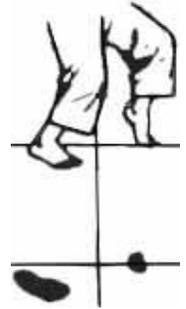
Uchi Hachiji Dachi



Sanchin Dachi



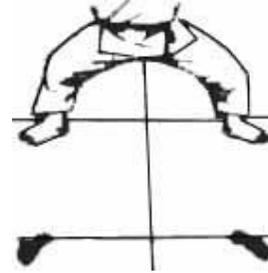
Hangetsu Dachi



Neko Ashi Dachi



Fudo Dachi



Shiko Dachi

Basic Japanese Terminologies

Japanese Numbers 1 – 10

1	Ichi
2	Ni
3	San
4	Shi
5	Go
6	Roku
7	Shichi
8	Hachi
9	Ku
10	Ju

Titles and Honorific

Karate-Ka	Karate Student
Kohai	Junior (not used)
Sempai	Senior (never used for oneself)
Sensei	Teacher (never used for oneself)
Shihan	Master (never used for oneself)
Suffixes	
-san	Mr, Mrs, Ms
-sama	Superior honorific
-chan	For children, young women and friends
-kun	For young men

Ranking System

Mudansha	No Dan title holder
Haopkyu	8 th Kyu
Nanakyu	7 th Kyu
Rokkyu	6 th Kyu
Gokyu	5 th Kyu
Yonkyu	4 th Kyu
Sankyu	3 rd Kyu
Nikyu	2 nd Kyu
Ikkyu	1 st Kyu
Yudansha	Dan Title Holder (Black Belt)
Shodan	1 st Dan
Nidan	2 nd Dan
Sandan	3 rd Dan
Yondan	4 th Dan
Godan	5 th Dan
Rokudan	6 th Dan
Shichidan	7 th Dan
Hachidan	8 th Dan
Kudan	9 th Dan
Judan	10 th Dan

Dojo Instructions

Hajime	Start
Yame	Stop
Yasume	Rest
Yoi	Get Ready
Hai	Yes
Iie	No
Kiai	Shout
Seiretsu	Line Up!
Mawate	Switch
Hantai	Opposite
Migi	Right
Hidari	Left
Shomen	Right
Ushiro	Back

Start-End Salutations

Suki	Attention
Rei	Bow
Naotte	Relax
Seiza	Formal seated position
Mokuso	Meditation
Mokuso Yame	Stop meditation
Shomen Ni Rei	Bow to front
Sensei Ni Rei	Bow to Sensei
Otaga Ni Rei	Bow to each other
Onegaishimasu	Please do me the honour
Arigato Gozaimashita	Thank you

General Terms

Hikite	Pulling Hand
Tsuki	Punching
Uchi	Striking
Geri	Kicking
Uke	Blocking

Uchi (Strikes)

Uraken	Back Knuckle
Tettsui	Hammer Fist
Haito	Ridge Hand
Shuto	Knife Hand
Nukite	Spear Hand
Haishu	Back Hand
Teisho	Palm Heel

Body Parts

Atama	Head
Me	Eye
Kubi	Neck
Kata	Shoulder
Karada	Torso
Suigetsu	Solar Plexus
Ude	Arm
Hije or Empi	Elbow
Te	Hand
Ashi	Leg
Hiza	Knee
Koshi	Ball of Foot
Kakato	Heel
Sokuto	Blade Edge of Foot
Ensho	Bottom Part of Foot
Ashi no yubi	Toes
Josokutei	Ball of Foot
Haisoku	Instep

Karate Terms and Concepts

Wa	Peace, Harmony
Do	The Way
Kai	Association
Ryu	Style
Karate	Empty Hand (Tang Hand)
Dojo	Training Hall
Hombu	Head Office
Hara	Centre
Kime	Focus
Maai	Distancing
Oss	Strong "Yes"
Waza	Technique
Taisabaki	Hip Shifting
Zanshin	Remaining Spirit (Awareness)
Budo	Way of War
Bushido	Way of the Warrior
Shuhari	Maintain, adhere, improve
Go No Sen	Defense then Attack
Sen No Sen	Block/Counter Simultaneously
Sen	Strike Before Attack
Ikken Hissatsu	One Deadly Strike
Ki	Energy
Kamae	Guard Ready Position
Chu Tanden	Centre of Lower Abdomen
Jo Tanden	Centre of Head
Ge Tanden	Centre of Groin
Senchusen	Centre Line of Body
Chikara	Power
Nage Waza	Hip Throw
Ashi Waza	Leg Throw
Te Waza	Head Throw
Sutemi	Dropping Throw
Shime Waza	Strangulation
Kansetsu Waza	Dislocation

Geri (Kicking)

Mae Geri	Front Kick
Yoko Geri	Side Kick
Ushiro Geri	Back Kick
Mawashi Geri	Roundhouse Kick
Ushiro Mawashi Geri	Reverse Roundhouse
Migazuki Geri	Crescent Kick(out to in)
Soto Migazuki Gei	Crescent Kick (in to out)
Fumi Komi	Stamping Kick
Hiza Geri	Knee Strike
Mae Tobi Geri	Flying Front Kick
Kesageri/Tobi Sokuto	Flying Side Kick
Tobi Ushiro Mawashi	Flying Spinning Mawashi
Ushiro Geri	Back Kick
Jo/Chu/Ge Dan	High/Middle/Low
Keage	Snap
Kekomi	Thrust

Ido Kihon (Moving Basics)

Jun Zuki	Lunge Punch
Kette Jun Zuki	Front Kick Lunge Punch
Gedan Barai Uke	Downward Block
Age (Jodan) Uke	Rising Block
Jodan Uchi Uke	High Uchi Uke
Chudan Uchi Uke	Middle Block (out to in)
Jodan Soto Uke	High Soto Uke
Chudan Soto Uke	Middle Block (in to out)
Gyaku Zuki	Reverse Punch
Shuto Uke	Knife Hand Block
Oi Zuki	Forward Punch
Tate Ken Zuki	Vertical Fist Punch

Kata

Kata is an exercise performed individually by karate-ka (practitioners of karate) consisting of precisely defined sequences of techniques in different directions, with perhaps 20 to 40 techniques in each sequence (or kata). Most oriental martial arts utilise this type of exercise, for example the forms of Tai-Chi, the patterns of Taekwondo and, of course, the kata of Karate.

There are a number of reasons for practising kata. It gives us a vehicle that we can use to improve a number of skills, for example, power, precision, focus, speed, intent/zanshin. From the point of view of Karate-do kata can be seen as a form of moving meditation. The pursuit of excellence in striving to perform a kata correctly is an excellent tool in the training of both mind and body. From the point of view of Karate-jutsu kata can be viewed as a catalogue of effective self-defence techniques, a summation of the real life experiences of generations of karate-ka.

The History of Shotokan Kata

The early history of kata parallels the history of Shotokan karate in general. They were developed in Okinawa, with some amount of influence from Chinese martial arts, and then were brought to the main islands of Japan by Gichin Funakoshi in 1922. During the periods when karate training was done in secret, performing kata was the primary form of practice.

Funakoshi's first teacher, Yasutsune Azato, was an exceptional swordsman, and around Funakoshi's time, kata started to incorporate ideas from *kendo*. These included more focus on relaxing the upper body to achieve faster, snapping motions, and more aggressive and pronounced body shifting. (Mr. Nakayama, Chief Instructor of the Japan Karate Association, and Mr. Okazaki, were also noted kendo-ka in their early years.)

The Heian kata were distilled from Kanku Sho, a more advanced kata, by Funakoshi's other instructor, Anko Itosu. (Some sources suggest that Mr. Yabu created them in 1902 to be taught to high school kids) These kata were designed to aid the development of younger students, and they are usually taught to students below the level of brown belt. Although these kata originated in Okinawa, they were primarily practiced in Japan.

Additional changes to the original kata came as Gigo Funakoshi (the son of Gichin Funakoshi) started teaching his students, including Mr. Nishiyama, altered forms of the kata, including deepened stances. A series of meetings at Waseda University in the 1950's lead to further changes in the kata, to emphasize longer, more athletic movements for better conditioning, to eliminate repetitious movements and move the focus to fundamental techniques, and simplify many of the self-defence moves.

Three Important Elements of Kata

1. The application of strength at the correct stance.
2. The control of speed in and between techniques.
3. The smooth transition of the body from one technique to the next.

Shotokan Katas

Original Okinawan names are in brackets.

Name	Translation	Name	Translation
Heian Shodan	Peaceful One	Jiin	Mercy and Kindness
Heian Nidan	Peaceful Two	Bassai Sho	Extract from a fortress Minor
Heian Sandan	Peaceful Three	Kanku Sho	The View of the Sky Minor
Heian Yondan	Peaceful Four	Chinte	Unusual Hands
Heian Godan	Peaceful Five	Wankan (Matsukaze)	King's Crown
Tekki Shodan (Naihanchi)	Steel Horse Riding One	Sochin	Energetic Calm
Tekki Nidan	Steel Horse Riding Two	Meikyo (Rohai)	Bright Mirror
Tekki Sandan	Steel Horse Riding Three	Gojushiho Sho (Useishi)	54 Steps Minor
Bassai Dai	Extract from a fortress One	Gojushiho Dai	54 Steps Major
Jion	Jion Temple (Love & Grace)	Unsu (Unshu)	Cloud Hands
Enpi	Flying Swallow	Nijushiho (Niseishi)	24 Steps
Jutte/Jitte	Ten Hands/Technique Hands		
Hangetsu (Seisan)	Half Moon		
Kanku Dai (Kushanku)	The View of the Sky Major		
Gankaku (Chinto)	Rock Crane		

Kata Application

Kata practice is one of the cornerstones of good karate training. People practice karate for a variety of reasons, including self-defence, physical fitness, and aesthetics, biomechanics study and as a competition sport. Similarly, kata practice can involve various training ideologies and can enhance the overall training experience no matter which of the above reasons one may study karate. The study of the self-defence applications of the movements is just one of the ways to train kata.

A few terms that gets thrown around a lot these days, often incorrectly:

Bunkai: analysis

Oyo: application

Many misinterpret *bunkai* to mean application. Application is just one method of analysing kata movements. Some people think that *oyo* is something to the effect of "hidden meanings." *Oyo* is a subset of *bunkai*, as application is a subset of analysis.

Levels of application study

Some consider there to be only one application for each move. Some consider there to be 5 or more levels. Here is how one can classify the levels of application:

1. Basic punch/strike/block/kick applications.
2. Basic punch/strike/block/kick applications, involving more than just the final/primary technique.
3. Breaking out of grabs.
4. Involving more complex grappling/locks/throws/vital point strikes such that the defender (kata performer) is not just breaking out, but also maintaining contact and often counter-grabbing etc.

Most "traditional" dojo seems to limit application study to level one only, possibly substituting other level applications for just a few moves. There is nothing wrong with studying the first level to the point that those applications become part of the practitioners' subconscious. But let's not forget that Shotokan and most other styles of karate up until about the 1920's involved practice of kata only. Kata application-not simply the level 1 applications-were a very integral part of karate training back when Funakoshi Sensei started training. Isn't that actually more "traditional" a method of training, then?

Regardless of what is more traditional, there is definitely value in devoting at least some time to the study of the deeper levels of kata application.

Note: Not all moves include applications at all 4 levels. Some moves have more than one possible application for a given move. Some moves can also incorporate weapons' use. Some moves can involve applications that deviate slightly from their basic kata form, but a large deviation should not be necessary.

Example:

Let's take the first move of Heian Shodan for an example of how one might study the various levels of kata application. These are just some examples of possible applications. There are more, a lot more.

Level 1: Down-block or lower-level strike with hammer-fist

Level 2: Punch and/or block before stepping into down-block or strike and/or elbow strike to back

Level 3: During intermediate move, opponent grabs right wrist. With left fist, strike opponent's wrist to break free.

Level 4: A) For same grab as above, aim instead for opponent's elbow or shoulder, twisting opponent down towards your left leg. Or opponent grabs left wrist with either of his hands: punch with right arm and twist opponent over toward your left knee by bending his arm at the elbow and/or shoulder.

Or...

As you can see from the above example, the deeper levels of application are more complex and usually require considerably more practice to reach a high level of competency. In defence of study of level 1 application, these meanings are usually more easily taught and understood. Furthermore, learning only one application for a given move may mean that it can be more naturally applied in a realistic encounter, where there is no time to think. One should teach only level 1 applications until they are understood. Then, introduce levels 2-4.

Kumite

Kumite (Sparring) Training

"Kumite" means, literally, "group hand." The "te" is the same as that of *Karate* ("empty hand"), thus essentially an abbreviation for it. The "kumi" means "group" or "pair," as in "practicing Karate in groups/pairs." *Kumite* is usually translated as "sparring." It can actually involve much more than simply trying out punches and kicks with someone else, though, to which sparring is often thought to be limited.

There are many types of kumite. Some may involve basic techniques, some free techniques. Some may not involve actual techniques at all. The idea is to train with another person or people, not just imagining opponents, as with *kihon* (basics) and *kata* (forms). Below are some examples of *kumite* variations typically practiced in the Karate dojo and what is considered to be important training points.

Kihon-sanbon (or -gohon, etc.) kumite - Three-step (or five step, etc.) basic sparring

This is usually the first type of sparring introduced to beginners. The main idea is to repeat movements, to get students used to basic technique. It is usually the case that not enough time is spent doing this type of sparring for most beginners. However, the techniques practiced should sometimes be expanded to include various other basic techniques, as found in the first few kata (traditionally, only punches are practiced as attacks in this type of sparring). Often, students are encouraged to change timing during execution of this type of sparring. While there is nothing wrong with this, "tricking" the opponent should not be the aim. This is basic sparring, thus the primary emphasis should be on proper form.

Kihon-ikken kumite - One-step basic sparring

This is almost the same as the above multiple-step basic sparring, but involves only one step forward by the attacker. Often, the attacks are changed to include a few basic kicks and sometimes the defender is allowed to move off to the side, not only directly back. With all basic sparring, the attacker announces the attack, but the defender is allowed to change the block and counter, as long as it is done in basic form. Again, more time should be spent on this type of sparring, particularly the numerous possible variations and emphasis should be placed on proper form, above all else.

Jiyuu-ikken kumite - Semi-free sparring (lit. free one-step)

Semi-free sparring usually involves the same techniques as in basic one-step, but the attacker and defender are allowed to move around in free-sparring stance until the moment of attack/defence. The completion of the attack and the counter should be in the full basic form. The block is sometimes abbreviated or left out entirely if a large, powerful (basic) block is not necessary. For those under black belt (and for many black belt holders as well), primary emphasis during this type of sparring should also be on proper form. There are actually many possible steps to take between basic one-step and free one-step.

Jiyuu kumite - Free sparring

Is "free sparring" really "free?" The attacker does not call out the intended target or type of attack and, in most cases, both people are allowed to attack at any time. But, as grabbing and certain attacks are not usually allowed, it is not really completely free in the sense of "anything goes." There are many variations of *jiyuu-kumite*, ranging from two people chasing each other back and forth across the dojo floor, to one person being attacked by a group of mock adversaries. Techniques can be limited (e.g., only kicks). Speed can be altered. Time or space could be restricted. A specific timing may be trained. Various levels of contact could be used. Beginners are usually not allowed to practice free sparring, unless it is done very slowly and under the watchful eye of the instructor.

Non-sparring kumite

There are various other types of *kumite* drills. For example, in sets of two, one person can initiate a movement to one side or the other, or front or back. The other person must then follow, as a mirror image. For more advanced practice, add arm/leg techniques and speed up. There is no contact in this example, yet it is still, officially, *kumite*. Other examples of *kumite* could involve timing drills, distance drills or practice of *kata* application, for example.

Additional points to ponder

It is noted at several places above that proper form should usually be the primary focus during sparring. There are, however, other points to consider. Speed, power, control and timing are obviously important, the relativity of each dependent on the focus of the class at the time and what the individual practitioners are attempting to accomplish. Other points are often much more subtle and may actually be more of a primary focus at a higher level of training. For example, a more advanced practitioner may be ready for anything during the entire time while practicing kihon-ippō kumite. Psychological and awareness training may be considered after having reached a high competence level in terms of physical form.

Proper protection should be taken in the form of shin guards, groin protectors, gum shields, chest protectors. Injuries may have long-term effects (e.g. breast injuries in female practitioners may lead to breast cancer). Protection is a must for small children. Of course, the level of protection depends upon the training being undertaken and it is not necessary that each kumite session will require full protection.

Conclusion

When practicing *kumite*, try to keep in mind what the aim of the practice is. It is not always just to "try to get the other guy." Kumite is yet another learning tool. Furthermore, it is recommended that, just as with *kata* and *kihon*, once "advanced" sparring methods are studied, the practice of more basic sparring should not be discarded. Rather, these new methods should be *added*, as opposed to *substituted*.

"A Karate practitioner who says he has nothing to gain from practicing basic sparring (or basic kata) does not understand basic sparring (or basic kata)."

Sport versus Martial Arts

The following gives a brief comparison between what is sports karate and what is traditional karate. The student must understand that being good in one doesn't automatically mean you will be good in the other. Both require different kinds of training and a different mindset. Understanding the differences will give the student a better perspective on his/her training and what karate means in modern times.

Sport (competition)	Budo (martial art)
<p>1) Objective: to win</p> <p>The winner is the one who scores more points than the opponent. Lost points can be gained back later. Measure: number of sparring that are won.</p>	<p><u>Ensure absolute safety</u></p> <p>If, during a fight, you lose an eye, you cannot think 'I will catch up during the next fight'.</p>
<p>2) Objective: Score during the fight</p> <p>Consequences: emphasis on attacking. All techniques that don't make you score are usually neglected. Emphasis on techniques that can be easily identified by the referees.</p>	<p><u>Attack to vital points is essential</u></p> <p>There is no referee, thus the techniques are meant to be efficient, not 'visible'. Efficient techniques, i.e. focusing on vital points, might not be seen as powerful from outside.</p>
<p>3) There are rules: avoid 'dangerous' techniques</p> <p>Dangerous techniques are avoided (e.g. on the knees, genital area) as they lead to disqualification. Therefore, they are neglected during training.</p>	<p><u>No 'rules': All attacks to weak / vital points can be done.</u></p> <p>The training aims at learning how to protect them, thus a wide variety of defensive techniques. During training, one must keep in mind that ANY ATTACK FROM THE OPPONENT CAN KILL YOU.</p> <p><u>All attacks must be so efficient, that IF WE WISH, they could kill.</u></p> <p>THIS GIVES THE ORIENTATION OF THE TRAINING, ALTHOUGH THE OBJECTIVE IS NOT TO KILL.</p> <p><u>Funakoshi</u>: 'Karate ni senti nashi' (meaning 'in karate, there is no advantage to attack' or 'there is no offensive action in karate'). Most of katas start with a defense. (Although one can say that the defense is actually an attacking move acting as a defensive technique).</p>
<p>Conclusion:</p> <p>Sport brings one dimension: physical strength with a technique (thus declining with the age).</p>	<p>Budo, or martial art, is multi-dimensional (this is why old people can defeat 'strong' and young ones).</p> <p>The physical training is deeply related to the person as a whole. The technical objective is to disable the opponent with only one stroke. Thus the importance of vital points, precision, strength and concentration in relation to these points at each and every stroke.</p> <p>Spirit: life / death is at stake (now symbolically).</p> <p>Funakoshi (in '20 precepts of karate-do'): 'karate do is a complement to a right spirit / right mind'.</p>

Kyu Grading Syllabus

KIHOH	KATA	KUMITE
Novice to 9th Kyu <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jodan oi tsuki Chudan oi tsuki Jodan age uke Chudan soto uke Chudan uchi uke Jodan mae geri Chudan mae geri 	Kihon Kata	Sanbon or Gohon Kumite
9th to 8th Kyu As previous grading plus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chudan shuto uke Yoko geri keage Yoko geri kekomi 	Heian Shodan	Sanbon or Gohon Kumite
8th to 7th Kyu As previous grading plus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sanbon tsuki Age uke, gyaku tsuki Soto uke, gyaku tsuki Uchi uke, gyaku tsuki 	Heian Nidan	Sanbon or Gohon Kumite
7th to 6th Kyu As previous grading plus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sanbon tsuki Age uke, gyaku tsuki Soto uke, gyaku tsuki Uchi uke, gyaku tsuki 	Heian Sandan	Kihon ippon Kumite with jodan and chudan oi tsuki attacks from right and left sides
6th to 5th Kyu As previous grading plus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Soto uke, empi uchi, uraken Uchi uke, kizame tsuki, gyaku tsuki Shuto uke, front leg mae geri, nukite Mawashi geri 	Heian Yondan	As previous grading plus mae geri and yoko geri kekomi attacks
5th to 4th Kyu As previous grading plus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Soto uke, empi uchi, uraken, gyaku tsuki 	Heian Godan	As previous grading
4th to 3rd Kyu As previous grading plus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Soto uke, empi uchi, uraken, gyaku tsuki, gedan barai Uchi uki, kizame tsuki, gyaku tsuki, gedan barai Ushiro geri 	Tekki Shodan	As previous grading plus mawashi geri
3th to 2nd Kyu As previous grading plus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kizame tsuki, oi tsuki, gyaku tsuki Mae geri, oi tsuki, gyaku tsuki Yoko geri, uraken, gyaku tsuki Mawashi geri, uraken, gyaku tsuki Ushiro geri, uraken, gyaku tsuki 	Bassai Dai	Jyu ippon kumite with jodan and chudan oi tsuki, chudan mae geri, chudan yoko geri, jodan mawashi geri and chudan ushiro geri attacks
2nd to 1st Kyu As previous grading plus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mae geri, yoko geri, mawashi geri, ushiro geri, uraken, gyaku tsuki 	Bassai Dai	As previous grading

Dan Grading Syllabus

KIHON	KATA	KUMITE
All begin from free-style kamae	List (a) - Candidate chooses from List (b) - Examiner chooses from	All items listed
1st Kyu to 1st Dan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kizame tsuki, oi tsuki, gyaku tsuki • Mae geri, oi tsuki, gyaku tsuki • Yoko geri, uraken, gyaku tsuki • Mawashi geri, uraken, gyaku tsuki • Ushiro geri, uraken, gyaku tsuki • Mae geri, yoko geri, mawashi geri, ushiro geri, uraken, gyaku tsuki • Mae geri, oi tsuki, gyaku tsuki step back gedan barai, gyaku tsuki mawashi geri, uraken, oi tsuki • Same leg, mae geri, yoko geri, ushiro geri - all whilst maintaining balance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Bassai Dai, Kanku Dai, Enpi, Jion or Hangetsu. b. Any Heian Kata or Tekki Shodan. 	<p>Jyu Ippon Kumite with jodan and chudan oi tsuki, chudan mae geri, chudan yoko geri, jodan mawashi geri and chudan ushiro geri attacks</p> <p>Jyu Kumite</p>
1st Dan to 2nd Dan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kizame tsuki, oi tsuki, gyaku tsuki, ren tsuki • Mae geri, oi tsuki, gyaku tsuki • Yoko geri, uraken, gyaku tsuki • Mawashi geri, uraken, gyaku tsuki • Ushiro geri, uraken, gyaku tsuki • Kizame tsuki, mae geri, oi tsuki, gyaku tsuki • Chudan mae geri, same leg jodan yoko geri, uraken, gyaku tsuki • Chudan mae geri, same leg jodan mawashi geri, uraken, gyaku tsuki • Jodan mawashi geri, same leg chudan yoko geri, uraken, gyaku tsuki • Mae geri step forward, bring front leg to rear use rear leg yoko geri, mawashi geri, ushiro geri, uraken, gyaku tsuki • Mae geri, yoko geri, mawashi geri, ushiro geri, uraken, gyaku tsuki • Same leg, mae geri, yoko geri, ushiro geri, mawashi geri - all whilst maintaining balance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Bassai Sho, Kanku Sho, Nijushiho, Tekki Nidan or Jitte. b. Bassai Dai, Kanku Dai, Enpi, Jion or Hangetsu. 	<p>Jyu Ippon Kumite (Any 5 attacks, not pre-arranged)</p> <p>Jyu Kumite</p>
2nd Dan to 3rd Dan Any 1st Dan or 2nd Dan combinations plus:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kizame tsuki, gyaku tsuki, mawashi geri, uraken, gyaku tsuki • step back gedan barai, gyaku tsuki • rear leg mawashi geri and step back, ushiro geri, uraken, gyaku tsuki. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Sochin, Unsu, Gankaku, Chinte or Gojushiho Sho. b. Bassai Sho, Kanku Sho, Nijushiho, Tekki Nidan or Jitte. 	<p>Kaishi Ippon Kumite (Pre-arranged attacks as for 1st Dan grading)</p> <p>Jyu Kumite</p>