

KARATE

INSTRUCTOR:

Room:

Phone:

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Introduction to Karate

This introduction is written in the hope of clearing up any misconceptions you may have about the class, as well as giving you a better understanding of what you are about to take.

Karate may be defined as a weaponless means of self-defense consisting of dynamic offensive and defensive techniques, efficiently using all parts of the body to their maximum advantage. Because this class is only one semester long, I hope you realize it is impossible to master Karate in such a short period of time -- there is no instant Karate. However, it is possible for you, in this amount of time, to grasp the principles of Karate, as well as to lay a solid foundation upon which you can improve, should you decide to continue practicing after this semester.

Repetitious practice and adhering to Karate principles is important, so that through constant practice these techniques can become second nature. Only in this way can the techniques become useful in a self-defense situation.

It is also important that you take this class seriously, just as you would a situation of life and death. When you match, don't think of your opponent as just a classmate, but rather as someone who is trying to kill you. When you are doing your basics (blocks, punches, kicks, etc.) without an opponent, image one. The more realistic you can make your practice, the better.

This class will also include a variety of basic self-defense techniques which can be of immediate value. This class is no guarantee that you will never have to worry about being attacked--but you will, by the end of this semester, have a much better chance, and in most cases, a decided advantage in a self-defense situation.

However, because there are so many variables involved, do not put yourself into such a situation unless you have no other choice. To this end, remember -- hard practice, easy fight.

History

Karate, the Japanese word meaning "empty hands," is a weaponless means of self-defense whose origins are not known with any degree of certainty. One story has it that Daruma Daishi, an Indian Buddhist Patriarch, taught a discipline to the monks at the Sholin Monastery in China which evolved into Karate. At any rate, the earliest record mentioned of a Karate-type of art was in China. Statues depicting Karate techniques dating to 800 A.D. have been found. Probably around 2,000 years ago, Karate-type arts were developed as a means of self-defense. Karate, or Karate-type arts have since spread and evolved in every Eastern Asia country. Okinawa fighting arts called "Te" were strongly stimulated by contact with experts of Chinese fighting arts. After the subjugation of Okinawa by the Japanese, arms were prohibited; therefore, unarmed fighting techniques of necessity underwent strong development. After relations between the native Okinawan and the Japanese became normal, Karate was brought into the open for the first time. In 1921 an expert of two styles of Okinawan Karate, Gichin Funakoshi, gave exhibitions in Japan. He was subsequently invited to found a Karate Club at Keio University. Soon after he founded a club at Waseda University. Later, clubs were founded in many of the universities in Japan, and this was the beginning of the spread of Karate throughout the world. Master Munakosi is now considered the "Father of Karate."

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In 1955 ~~Tsutomu~~ Ohshima, one of Master Eunakoshi's last direct pupils, came to the U.S. to study at the University of Southern California. He didn't know it then, but he soon was to become the father of Karate in the United States, for as soon as it was discovered who he was, a group of Americans asked him to form a Karate group. This group, the first American Karate Club, later became as it is today, Shotokan Karate of America, Inc.

However, Karate has also evolved in Japan through contact with certain aspects of Japanese culture, as a "do" (i.e., Aikido, Judo, Kendo, and Karate-do) -- "do" meaning "way of life." In other words, a strict ethical and philosophical point of view is taught as a part of Karate itself. An ethical sense that can form the guideline for correct acting in one's life, a philosophical viewpoint that can help one understand his world, his own strength, and more important, his own weaknesses is taught. One who practices Karate hopes to polish his will power and self-discipline through hard concentration and serious training, so that when confronted with personal weaknesses or serious problems, he is strong enough to meet them.

Spirit While Training

While training, you must keep in mind that your true opponent is yourself. Self-mastery is a paramount necessity if you are to master Karate. Therefore, do not give in to your desires to rest or take it easy when you become tired. Each time you ease up during training, it is a defeat to you. You must make a habit of victory over your weaknesses and gain control of your body by your will power.

Through hard training we must bring up our weaknesses one by one. They will appear in many forms: physical weakness, fear of injury, psychological dominance by particular people, overconfidence, discouragement, constant injuries, and many others. All must be faced and overcome. In the end it is not the physically strong who master Karate-do, but the mentally strong.

Some Common Questions About Karate

Question 1: What is the importance of the yell during Karate -- is it to frighten one's opponent?

Answer: Kiai or "yell" is definitely not for the purpose of frightening one's opponent. First, one never kiai's until the point of impact when striking an opponent. Second, one might scare a weak opponent, but it would only serve as a warning to a strong one, and he would probably literally "beat" you to the punch.

Question 2: Is Karate effective against a street fighter?

Answer: There are many good reasons why one who practices Karate strongly would be very effective against a street fighter. First, the serious Karate student has superior conditioning from long hours of strong practice. Conditioning is a major factor in any encounter between opponents in the serious Kumite of Sparring practiced by strong Karateka. Also, the strong techniques of dynamic blocking and striking that are the result of practicing repetitiously, makes the serious Karateka very effective against a street fighter.

Question 3. What is the purpose of board-breaking in Karate?

Answer: Today, the breaking of boards, bricks, etc., has very little if any real significance to the art of Karate other than demonstrating the dynamics of certain punching techniques and kicking techniques.

Question 4: How long will it take to be a "good" Karateka?

Answer: This is probably the question most often asked of the Karate instructor. It is also the question most difficult to answer precisely and explicitly due to the many factors involved. First, what is meant by "good?" Every practicing Karateka knows that the more he practices, the more he feels the need for the improvement in his level however, (as is most often the case) referring to "black belt" as this ideal level of "good," the question can then be answered with a series of minor questions. First, what is the individual's physical condition when he starts training? If it is good, then of course, he will progress much more rapidly. Second, how often is the individual willing or able to practice? To make any kind of rapid progress (say black belt in three to four years), one should practice at least four days a week for 1½ to 2 hours per practice. Third, how serious is this individual's attitude about practice? Of course, this question cannot be answered until after several months of practice. If an individual finds himself sluffing through only half-heartedly, then his level will be delayed accordingly. In conclusion, the answer to being good is, of course, long, long and hard hours of serious practice. How long it takes should not be as much a concern as trying to attain the highest level, no matter what the necessary time limit might be.

Question 5: What is more important -- strength or technique?

Answer: It is impossible to separate strength and technique. How well one is capable of using or applying his strength to the technique is the real value. Though a man may be physically strong, if he is unable to properly express or direct his strength, he is weak. Technique is the proper direction of strength. Remember, however, that to develop strength faster than technique is a waste -- for even a small amount of strength perfectly directed through strong technique is extremely effective.

Question 6: Is it true that Karate is not practiced for fighting?

Answer: Karate is a martial art like Aikido or Kendo. All the martial arts are very closely connected to the ancient Samurai code of Honor-Budo. Budo is quite closely related to Zen in its desire to achieve self-perfection and enlightenment. Although all the martial arts, Karate included, are basically fighting arts, the highest level of their practice goes far beyond mere fighting. It goes to perfection and the understanding of oneself through hard practice and the perfection of the art.

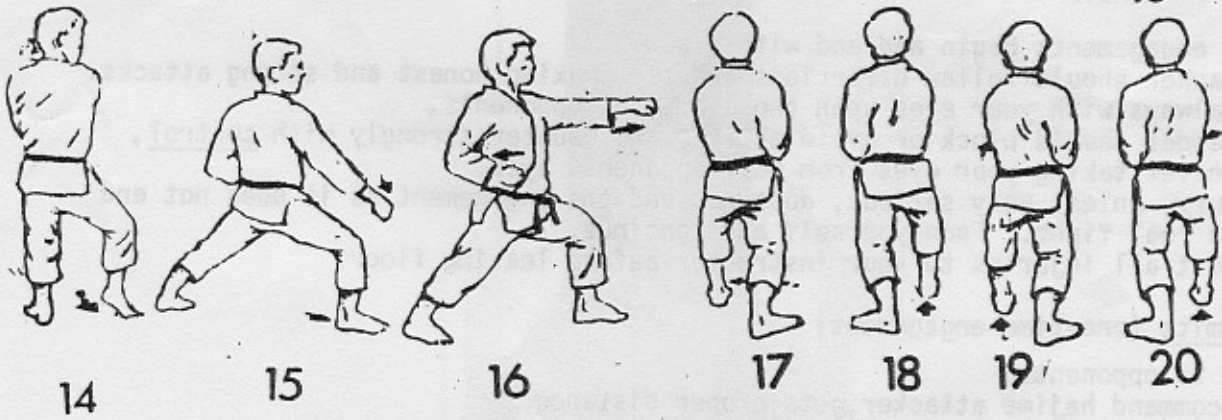
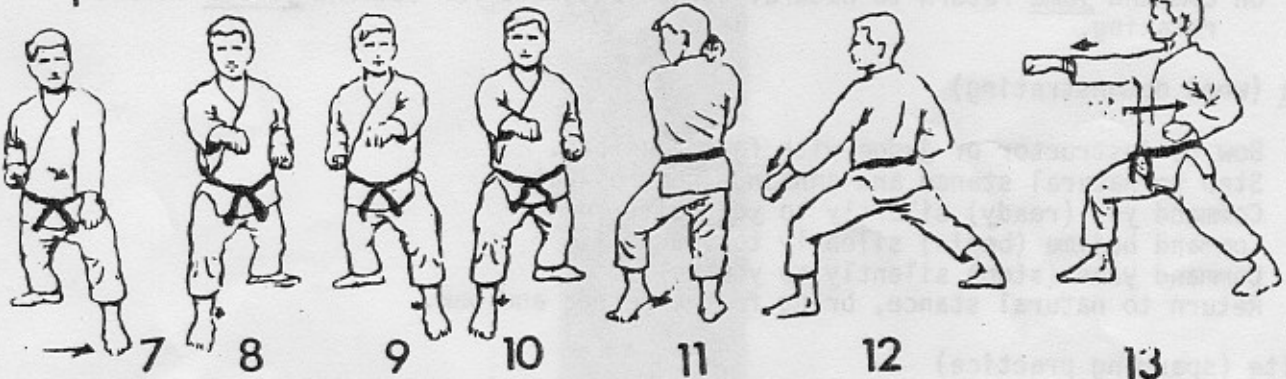
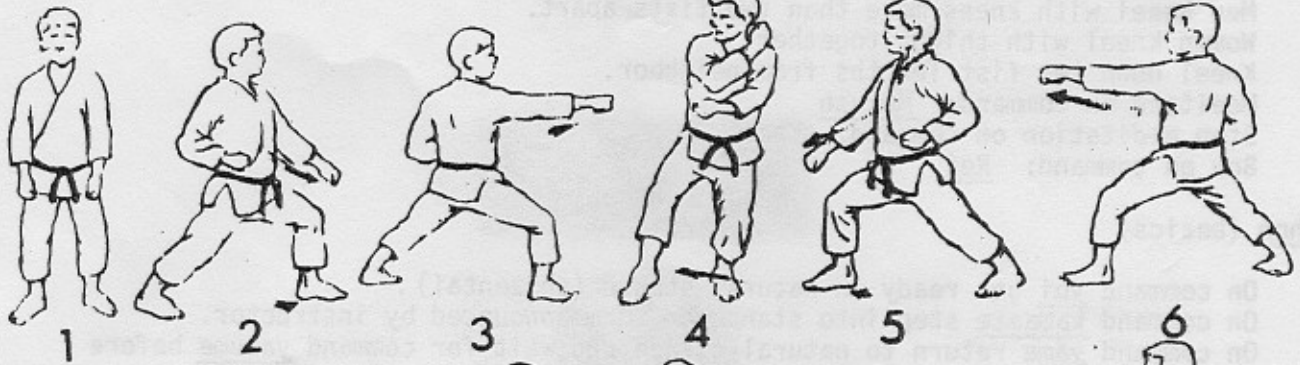
Question 7: Why is it incorrect to use shoulder power when throwing a punch?

Answer: The most effective punching in Karate is that which best utilizes body weight and rigidity (focus). Since the weight of the body is mainly carried in the hips, it is essential not to detach any other part of the body from them. By punching with the shoulder, one not only detaches the top half of the body from the bottom half, but by so doing, makes it impossible to focus the body so that it will be totally rigid at the point of impact. A shoulder punch, therefore, is only able to utilize about 25% of the body's weight and power.

Question 8: Should an individual practice against a street fighter's punches and kicks, or just against classical moves?

Answer: All of the martial arts are based on the idea that one should be able to apply his mental, as well as physical level in his everyday life. Unfortunately, this is an extremely idealistic possibility. We believe there are relatively few individuals involved in the martial arts who sincerely attempt to perfect themselves and be living examples of a high-level life, both inside and outside of the Dojo.

KATA
(TAIKYOKU SHODAN)



ETIQUETTE AND PROCEDURE

Bow when entering or leaving training floor.

Line up for meditation.

Line up by rank or by seniority if of equal rank.
Wait for person on right to kneel before you kneel.
Men kneel with knees more than two fists apart.
Women kneel with thighs together.
Kneel down two fist lengths from neighbor.
Meditate on command: Mokuso
Stop meditation on command: Yame
Bow on command: Rei

Kihon (basics)

On command yoi get ready in natural stance (shizentai).
On command kamaete step into stance or form announced by instructor.
On command yame return to natural stance and wait for command yasume before relaxing.

Kata (when demonstrating)

Bow to instructor or judge with feet together.
Step to natural stance and announce name of kata.
Command yoi (ready) silently to yourself.
Command hajime (begin) silently to yourself.
Command yame (stop) silently to yourself.
Return to natural stance, bring feet together and bow.

Kumite (sparring practice)

All engagements begin and end with a bow.
Attacker should follow directions exactly, making honest and strong attacks.
always with your eyes upon those of your opponents.
Defender should block or avoid attacks and counter strongly with control,
never taking your eyes from your opponents eyes.
Injury, unless very serious, does not end the engagement as it does not end
a real fight. Face yourself and continue.
Report all injuries to your instructor before leaving floor.

Ippon Kumite (one-time engagement)

How to opponent.
On command hajime attacker gets proper distance.
Attacker steps forward into front stance.
Defender stands in natural stance.
Attacker attacks with prescribed attack to defender.
Defender blocks and counter with control.
Procedure is reversed and continues until the command yame.
Bow to opponent at end of engagement.

Sanbun Kumite (three-time engagement)

Bow to opponent.
On command hajime attacker gets proper distance.
Attacker steps backwards into front stance.
Defender stands in natural stance.
Attacker attacks with three prescribed stepping attacks to opponent.
Defender uses three stepping blocks and counters with control after opponent's 3rd attack.
Procedure is reversed and continues until command yame.
Bow at end of engagement to opponent.

Muzila

GLOSSARY OF ENGLISH AND JAPANESE TERMS

Numbers

One	ichi (ee-che)
Two	ni (nee)
Three	san (sahn)
Four	shi (shee)
Five	go (goh)
Six	roku (roo-koo)
Seven	shichi (shee-chee)
Eight	hachi (hah-chee)
Nine	ku (koo)
Ten	ju (joo)

General

Assume Stance	Kamaete (kah-mah-eh-teh)
At ease	yasume (yah-soo-meh)
Basic training	kihon (kee-hon)
Formal exercise/forms	kata (kah-tah)
Instructor	sensei (sehn-seh)
Meditate	mokuso (moh-koo-soh)
Pivot/assume opposite direction	kaetee (kah-eh-teh)
Ready	yoi (yoh-ee)
School	dojo (doh-joh)
Training uniform	gi (gee)
Training uniform belt	obi (oh-bee)
Vocal expulsion of air	kiai (kee-ah-ee)

Basic Stances

Back stance/weight rearward	kokutsu-dachi (koh-koo-tsoo dah-chee)
Forward stance/weight forward	zen kutsu-dachi (zehn-koo-tsoo dah-chee)
Straddle-leg stance/ Horse-riding stance	kiba-dachi (kee-bah dah-chee)

Basic Blocks

Downward block	gedan-barai (gee-dahn bah-rah-ee)
Forearm block	udo-uke (oo-deh oo-ke)
Knife-hand block	shuto-uke (shoo-teh oo-ke)
Hammerfist	tettsui-uke (tet-soo oo-keh)
Rising block	ago-uke (ah-geh oo-keh)

Basic Hand Attacks

Back-first strike	uraken uchi (oo-rah-kehn oo-chee)
Jab	meate (mah-eh-teh)
Lunge punch/front punch	oi-zuki (oh-ee zoo-keh)
Reverse punch	gyaku-zuki (gyah-koo zoo-keh)

Basic Kicks

Crescent Kick	mika zuhi geri (mee-kah-zoo-koe-gah-ree)
Front kick	mae-geri (mah-eh-geh-ree)
Round kick	mawashi-geri (mah-wah-shee-geh-roe)
Side-up kick	yoko-gerikeage (yoh-koh-geh-ree-keh-koh-gee)
Side thrust kick	yo ko-geri-kakomi (yoh-koh-geh-ree-keh-ree-keh-koh-mee)
Stamping kick	fumi komi (foo-meh-koh-mee)

Sparring

One attack/basic	ippon gumite (eep-pohn goo-meh-teh)
Three attacks	sambon gumite (sahn-bohn goo-mee-tah)
Begin	hajime (hah-jee-meh)
Bow	rei (reh-ee)
Distance between opponents	ma (mah)
Upper body	jodan (joh-dahn)
middle body	chudan (choo-dahn)
Lower body	gedan (geh0dahn)
Stop	yame (yah-meh)

Katas

Taik yoku Sodan	Heian Shodan	Tekki Shodan
	Haian Nidan	
	Heian Sandan	
	Heian Yodan	
	Heian Godan	

Karate

Recommended Reading

ZEN IN THE ART OF ARCHERY, Eugene Herrigel, Vintage Books, 1971.

KARATE-DŌ: MY WAY OF LIFE, Gichin Funakoshi, Kodanshan International Press, 1975.

KARATE-DŌ KYOHAN, Gichin Funakoshi, translated by Tsutomu Ohshima, International Press, 1973.

This book, is the most comprehensive and authoritative ever published on Karate, was being revised by Master Funakoshi shortly before his death in 1957 at the age of eighty eight, and was translated for the first time by Mr. Tsutomu Ohshima. Through Master's advise on both practical and spiritual aspects of training, he guides the student from basic techniques to the "way" of Karate. Fully illustrated demonstrations by Mr. Ohshima cover not only every technique of the Kata but also the fundamentals and applications. Because of its cast, it will not be necessary to purchase. However, copies will be available at the reserved section of the Library and partial reproductions will be given as handouts.