

島会道場空手道

Shima Kai Dojo Karate-do

Technical Program

Shima Kai Dojo Karate classes are based on the teaching methods common to many Karate styles with an emphasis on the study and application of kata. Here the objective of both students and instructors is to understand the art of Karate-do beyond the superficial physical movements and through this understanding improve the quality of an individual's Karate, self confidence and inner strength.

The knowledge base of the Shotokan and Chito-Ryu styles are contained in their respective kata and serve as the textbook for learning karate. The kata are used to define the requirements for advancement through each of the Kyu (non-black belt) and Dan (black belt) ranks. It should be noted that both Funakoshi (Shotokan) and Chitose Sensei (Chito-Ryu) agree on so many of the important points of Karate that either of their seminal works (Karate-do Kyohan; Kempo Karate-do) provides excellent insight on Karate-do and these are used as primary reference material in our study. The teaching approaches identified by Funakoshi and Chitose Sensei provide a focus on basics, kata, applications of kata and etiquette as the foundation of learning Karate-do. One other excellent reference work is Unante by John Sells and this also serves to provide much needed understanding of historical developments and evolution of Karate-do.

In the Shima Kai Dojo, the required kata for achieving each rank are listed in Table 1. These kata define the minimum technical requirements for proficiency at each level, however, there is considerable supporting material in addition for each level. This includes the application and explanations of the movement in the kata, which must be clearly understood by the student to progress to the next level. It should be clear that Karate-do is not a performance art, that just being able to execute the movements of the kata is not sufficient. What is required is having an in-depth understanding of the kata and attaining this goal is the primary focus. The upper level black belt requirements are currently listed as free kata and these kata will be defined in the near future, but are anticipated to include kata such as Jitte, Jion, Kanku Dai, Chinto, Chinte, Unsu, Sochin, Wanshu, etc along with weapons kata.

In addition to the kata listed above, the form Wan Kan (King's Crown), (based on Sells book Unante, was developed by Funakoshi Gigo, however, is used as one of the defining forms practiced in the Shima Kai Dojo. There are seven non-black belt or Kyu levels identified in this system by different colored belts. There are specific kata associated with each of these level and as a result there are fewer kata in this program than in many Karate dojos. Dedicated students should be able to approach the Dan or Blackbelt level with about three years of consistent training, though most students will spend a significantly longer time due to their outside commitments. Progress beyond the first blackbelt level is considerably slower as significant knowledge of all the Kyu belt material and the Dan material is required. Students seeking their Ni Dan or San Dan ranks will require the formation of a grading board with appropriately ranked instructors to be present. As such, black belt gradings will be scheduled based on need.

Sparing in the Shima Kai Dojo it takes the form of "one step", "two step" and "three step" sparing. Free style point fighting is discouraged in the dojo, though students who have interests in attending tournament events are encouraged to follow their interests. It is important for all students to fully appreciate that when

practicing Karate with someone else that their partner's safety is the most important consideration and that all efforts must be taken to avoided any injury.

Table 1: Kata studied at each of the Kyu and Dan levels.

<i>Rank</i>	<i>Belt Color</i>	<i>Kata</i>
7 Kyu	White	Taikyoku Shodan Heian Shodan
6 Kyu	Yellow	Above + Heian Nidan Shihohai
5 Kyu	Orange	Above + Heian Sandan
4 Kyu	Green	Above + Heian Yondan
3 Kyu	Blue	Above + Heian Godan
2 Kyu	Brown	Above + Tekki Shodan
1 Kyu	Brown	Bassai Dai
1 Dan	Black	Free Kata
2 Dan	Black	Free Kata
3 Dan	Black	Free Kata