

New England Shotokan Karate-do



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Kime is the focusing or concentration of all one's physical and psychological forces at the same time. In karate it is the *tanden* (center of gravity) internally and a point just beyond the external target: a penetrating blow (*kikomi*). It is the ultimate technique that gathers one's entire being in a single instant and movement.

Ki is energy: a force that affects other people. Increasing *ki* requires filling your mind with positive *ki* by focusing your mind on *tanden* (center of gravity), and practicing deep abdominal breathing. Positive *ki* requires patience, understanding, self-confidence, and courage. It generates an aura of positiveness and harmony around you to which others will respond in a positive way.

Kiai brings together energy (*ki*) and union (*ai*). It is the perfect concentration of energy—physical and mental—upon a given object, with intense determination, to achieve a goal. It increases your fighting spirit and confidence through a focused yell. The *kiai* exerts physical and mental forces rapidly and dramatically. Its power can surprise, paralyze, confuse, scare, or delay an opponent by producing a *suki* (gap): a mental opening, or block. With the *kiai* the entire body and spirit in unified and forced out by generation of great muscular tension and ending with a violent impact or punch. *Kiai* projects *ki* externally through *kime*.

Karate Terminology

Pronunciation for Romanized Japanese is relatively simple. All syllables are stressed equally unless a vowel is doubled. In that case the vowel is stressed. Japanese vowel sounds are similar to English and do not change based upon contiguous characters.

Vowels

In all cases “O” remains the same, even if followed by a second vowel. The second vowel is also pronounced. In some words, an ending vowel is not pronounced.

A = ah E = eh I = ee O = oh U = oo

Consonants

Consonants are generally the same as English and are pronounced consistently across all words without change based upon contiguous characters. “G” is always hard.

Basic Terms

You should understand these basic terms that describe our discipline, the training place, and uniform.

Japanese	Pronunciation	Translation
Karate-do	Ka-ra-tay-doe	Empty hand way.
Dojo	Dough-joe	Place of the way, or training place. The practice area for karate. Upon entering and leaving the dojo, always perform a standing bow.
Kun	Kun	oath
Gi	Gey (Like key)	Katate-ka uniform. We wear only the traditional karate uniform.
Obi	Oh-bee	Belt, or sash.
Ki-Ai	Key-aye	Focused yell that concentrates physical and mental energy.

Learn the Japanese word for the numbers 1 through 10. All repetitions of kihon techniques are spoken in Japanese. Individual Kihon techniques are often performed by breaking down the technique into sub-steps. Also, Japanese is used for counting when kata is performed by individual moves. As a minimum you should know the Japanese words for white and red as these are used to designate the participants in kumite.

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Numbers

Japanese	Pronunciation	Translation
Ichi	Eech	1
Ni	Knee	2
San	Sahn	3
Shi (or Yon)	She (Yon)	4
Go	Go	5
Ruku	Rook	6
Shichi	She-sh	7
Hachi	Hah-sh	8
Ku	Koo	9
Ju	Joo	10

Colors

Japanese	Pronunciation	Translation
Shiro	She-ro	White
Aka	Ah-ka	Red
Oranji	Oh-ron-je	Orange
Kiroi	Ker-oi	Yellow
Midori	Me-doe-ri	Green
Aoi	Ah-oi	Blue
Murasaki	Mu-ra-sa-ki	Purple
Cha iroi	Cha ir-oi	Brown
Kuroi	Kur-oi	Black

Karate-ka Rankings

New students of karate wear a white belt; there is no rank associated with this status. Students must pass a performance test to be awarded a higher rank. Colored belt grades are called *Kyu* (pronounced cue). These are numbered in diminishing order from 10 (the lowest grade) to 1 (the highest grade). In the black belt, or *Dan* (pronounced don), the levels begin at 1 and increase through 10.

Kyu: Color Belt Grades

Dan: Black Belt (Yudanshi) Levels

Kyu	Japanese	Pronunciation	Belt Color	Dan	Dan Level	Pronunciation
—			White			
10	Jukyu	Joo cue	Yellow	1	Shodan	Show-don
9	Kukyu	Koo cue	Orange	2	Nidan	Knee-don
8	Hachikyu	Ha-sh cue	Blue	3	Sandan	Sahn-don
7	Shichiku	She-sh cue	Green	4	Yondan	Yon-don
6	Rukukyu	Rook cue	Green	5	Godan	Go-don
5	Gokyu	Go cue	Purple	6	Rukudan	Rook-don
4	Yonkyu	Yon cue	Purple	7	Shichidan	She-sh-don
3	Sankyu	Sahn cue	Brown	8	Hachidan	Ha-sh-don
2	Nikyu	Knee cue	Brown	9	Kudan	Koo-don
1	Ichikyu	Eech cue	Brown	10	Judan	Joo-don

Titles

Every student of karate-do is a karate-ka. Within our association the master is Shihan Kenneth Funakoshi, Kudan (9th degree). Testing for our black belts is done by Sensei Kyle Funakoshi, Rukudan (6th degree). At our dojo the senior teacher is Sensei Roger St. Pierre, Godan (5th degree). Our other teachers are Sempai Mark St. Pierre, Yondan (4th degree) and Sempai Normand Laliberte, Nidan (2nd degree). A karate-ka who is senior in rank to you is addressed as sempai; one who is junior is kohai.

Japanese	Pronunciation	Translation
Shihan	Shi-han	Master instructor; a teacher of teachers
Sensei	Sen-say	Teacher; highest rank at the dojo
Sempai	Sem-pie	Senior student; may be a junior teacher
Kohai	Ko-high	Junior student
Karate-ka	Ka-ra-tay-ka	A Student of karate

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Opening Ceremony

Each training session at the dojo is opened with a brief ceremony that is designed to show respect and to recognize the senior karate-ka who are present. As time is at a premium, the period of meditation is very brief.

Japanese	Pronunciation	Translation
Yoki	Yo-key	Directed by Sempai. Line up facing the front of the dojo; most senior rank to right; most junior to left.
The following commands are given by the rightmost student		
Seiza	Say-za	Kneel in line, cross feet, sit back on heels, hands on thighs with palms down, fingers extended and joined.
Matso	Maht-so	Close eyes; short meditation.
Matso yame	Maht-so ya-may	Open eyes.
Shomen ni rei	Show-men knee ray	Bow to the front of the dojo: place hands in front on floor, fingers extended and joined; forefingers and thumbs touching to form a diamond; bow until your forehead touches the “diamond.” Hold the bow until the student to right rises, then rise to kneeling position.
Sensei ni rei	Sen-say knee ray	Bow as above towards Sensei.
Sempai ni rei	Sem-pie knee ray	Bow as above toward Sempai.
		Sempai directs when to stand.

Closing Ceremony

Each training session at the dojo is closed with a similar ceremony. The chief difference is that meditation is replaced with recitation of the dojo kun.

Japanese	Pronunciation	Translation
Yoki	Yo-key	Directed by Sempai. Line up; most senior rank to right; most junior to left
The following commands are given by the senior (rightmost) student.		
Seiza	Say-za	Kneel in line, cross feet, sit back on heels, hands on thighs with palms down, fingers extended and joined
Matso	Maht-so	Close eyes; short meditation
Dojo kun	Do-joe kun	Echo the recitation of the Dojo kun. There is a brief pause after each principle for reflection on its meaning.
Matso yame	Maht-so ya-may	Open eyes
Shomen ni rei	Show-men knee ray	Bow to the front: hands in front on floor, fingers extended and joined; forefingers and thumbs touching to form a diamond; bow till forehead touches the “diamond”; hold until student to right rises, then rise to kneeling position.
Sensei ni rei	Sen-say knee ray	Bow as above towards Sensei
Sempai ni rei	Sem-pie knee ray	Bow as above toward Sempai
The following command is given in English by the Sempai.		
	Spirit	Respond with KIAI.
		Sempai directs when to leave.

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Japanese	Pronunciation	Translation
Yoi	Yoi	Get ready
Ikei	Ike	Show respect; execute a bow; return to yoi position
Hajime	Hah-je-may	Begin
Yame	Yah-may	Finish
Naotte	Nah-oh-tay	Bow to the front; return to yoi position
Oss	Ohd	A response from students; I understand
Gamae (or Kamae)	Gah-may (Kah-may)	Assume a stance (dachi)

Directions

Similarly, kihon or kata techniques forward, backward, to left, or right. Some kihon techniques require that you turn around to perform additional iterations. Techniques may be performed toward the upper, middle, or lower portion of an opponent's body. These direction are given in Japanese.

Japanese	Pronunciation	an opponent's Translation
Seishi	Say-she	Stationary
Shomen	Show-men	Front
Ushiro	Ooh-shi-row	Back
Hidari	He-dah-ree	Left
Migi	Me-gee	Right
Mawate	Mah-wah-tay	Turn around
Jodan	Joe-don	Upper; toward the head
Chudan	Chew-don	Middle; toward the body
Gedan	Geh-don	Lower; toward the leg

Training phases

The karate-ka begins training with kihon, or basic techniques. As proficiency is gained, they are applied in a kata. As the kata is mastered, it is applied against the associated bunkai. Finally, fighting is learned through a series of kumite drills. Each level of training has its own set of kihon, kata, and kumite that must be mastered and tested before moving to the next level.

Japanese	Pronunciation	Translation
Kihon	Key-hon	Basic techniques of karate
Kata	Kah-tah	An orchestrated sequence of blocks and punches in a set pattern of movement. In Shotokan karate there are 27 kata.
Kumite	Koo-me-tay	Fighting, or sparring, techniques against a real opponent.
Bunkai	Bun-kai	Application of the kata against a set of four to eight opponents.

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Kihon

Ki is inner strength, Hon means basic, or fundamental.

Kihon trains the karate-ka in the basic techniques (waza) of karate: stances and positions, punches and strikes, blocks, and kicks. Repetition is the secret to perfection of character and of techniques in shotokan training. New techniques are done slowly and correctly at first. This is followed by repetitive training in order to reinforce learned techniques, to condition breathing, to relax and create tension, to develop rhythm, and to preserve stamina.

Basic Stances (Dachi)

Japanese	Pronunciation	Translation
Hachiji dachi	Hah-sh-jee dah-sh	Open leg stance; feet shoulder width apart, feet turned outward at a 45° angle. Assumed for yoi.
Musubi dachi	Moo-soo-bee dah-sh	Attention stance; heels together, feet turned outward at a 45° angle. Assumed during rei.
Zenkutsu dachi	Zen-kut-sue dah-sh	Front knee bent stance; feet 32 inch apart; weight 60% front foot; 40% back foot.
Kokutsu dachi	Koh-koot-sue dah-sh	Back stance; feet 32 inch apart; weight 70% front foot; 30% back foot.
Kiba dachi	Key-bah dah-sh	Straddle, or horse, stance; feet point forward, greater than shoulder width apart, knees outward.

Basic Punches (Tsuki)

Japanese	Pronunciation	Translation
Oi tsuki	Oi zoo-key	Lunge punch
Gyaku tsuki	Yah-koo zoo-key	Reverse punch

Basic Strikes (Uchi)

Japanese	Pronunciation	Translation
Nukite uchi	New-key-teh ooh-shi	Spear hand strike

Basic Blocks (Uke)

Japanese	Pronunciation	Translation
Age uke	Ah-gay ooh-kay	Upper rising block
Ude uke	ooh-de ooh-kay	Outside block
Uchi uke	ooh-shi ooh-kay	Inside block
Gedan barai	Geh-don bar-ai	Lower lever block
Shuto uke	Shu-toe ooh-kay	Knife hand block

Basic Kicks (Geri—pronounced with a hard ‘G’)

Japanese	Pronunciation	Translation
Mae geri keage	My gee key-ah-gey	Front snap kick
Mae geri kekomi	My gee keyko-me	Front thrust kick
Yoko geri keage	Yo-ko gee key-ah-gey	Side snap kick
Yoko geri kekomi	Yo-ko gee key-koh-me	Side thrust kick
Mawashi geri	Mah-wah-shi gee	Roundhouse kick
Ushiro geri	Ooh-she-row gee	Backward kick

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Kata

Kata is the soul of karate. Kata develops rhythm and coordination. They require composure for their performance and the exhibition of strength and dignity. Kata helps to develop spirit as well as physical performance and should be performed with boldness, confidence, humility, and gentleness. Kata integrate mind and body into a singular discipline.

Colored Belt Kata

Japanese	Pronunciation	Meaning	Belt Color
Taikyoku Shodan	Tie-key-oh-ku show-don	First Cause (Training Kata)	Yellow
Heian Shodan	Hey-on show-don	Peaceful Mind, level 1	Orange
Heian Nidan	Hey-on ni-don	Peaceful Mind, level 2	Blue
Heian Sandan	Hey-on san-don	Peaceful Mind, level 3	Green
Heian Yondan	Hey-on yon-don	Peaceful Mind, level 4	Green
Heian Godan	Hey-on go-don	Peaceful Mind, level 5	Purple
Tekki Shodan	Tek-key show-don	Iron Horse, level 1	Purple
Bassai Dai	Bah-sigh die	Storming the fortress: greater	Brown
Jion	Gee-on	From the temple of Jion	Brown
Kanku Dai	Kan-koo die	Look to the sky: greater	Brown

Bunkai

Bunkai is heart of kata. Bunkai is the application, use, or meaning of a technique. Both kata and bunkai are necessary to understand the full meaning of karate techniques. To apply bunkai correctly one must understand both offensive and defensive levels. Each kata is performed against four to eight opponents, all of whom attack using punches and kicks.

Kumite

Kumite, or sparring, is used to train the karate-ka in the elements of fighting. It is the practical application of karate against a real opponent. Kumite is developed through stages starting with a simple punch and block sequence.

Kumite begins and ends with a bow to your partner.

Japanese	Pronunciation	Meaning
Otagai ni rei	Oh-tah-gah knee ray	Bow facing your partner

Stages of Kumite Training

Japanese	Pronunciation	Meaning	Belt Grade
Gohon kumite	Go-hon ku-mi-tay	5 step sparring	Yellow
Sanbon kumite	San-bon ku-mi-tay	3 step sparring	Orange
Ippon kumite	ee-pon ku-mi-tay	1 step sparring	Green
Jyu ippon kumite	Joo ee-pon ku-mi-tay	1 step semi-free style	Blue
Jyu kumite	Joo ku-mi-tay	Free style sparring	Purple
Jyu kumite shobu ippon	Joo ku-mi-tay show-boo ee-pon	Free style tournament	Brown