

New Student Guide



durangokarateclub.org
facebook.com/durangokarateclub
durangokarateclub@gmail.com

The Durango Karate Club



The Durango Karate Club is a nonprofit organization with the goals of spreading knowledge, appreciation, and practice of the traditional martial arts to a broad audience in an affordable manner.

The DKC achieves this by offering affordable expert training with black belt instructors representing a variety of traditional karate styles, and a cooperative classroom environment open to a range of ages and skill levels.

The DKC follows a "club" model, rather than as a martial arts "school." This means that instead of one teacher's method being taught and studied, there is a rotation of several instructors, each sharing his or her own insights. Also in a club environment, everyone in the dojo is both student and teacher -- everyone is always learning, and everyone has something to offer the dojo group.

The DKC's classes and dojo were funded and offered through the City of Durango Parks & Recreation Department from 1993 to 2016, when the Club became an independent nonprofit organization. The Durango Karate Club has also traditionally hosted the annual Durango Open Karate Tournament.

Training

Classes range widely in activity and approach, but focus on three primary **traditional methods of training**:

Kihon -- study and practice of basic techniques of striking, blocking, kicking, etc.

Kata -- routines incorporating basic and advanced techniques

Kumite -- sparring, both unpadded and padded

We also engage in **strength and flexibility** training, **self-defense** techniques, and exploration of **a range of martial practices** from around the globe through guest instructors and studies for ranking.

Students also train for and can participate in regional **karate tournaments**.

Style and philosophy

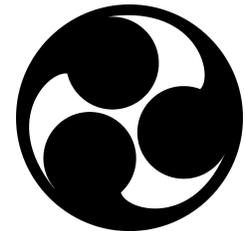


The Durango Karate Club is rooted in **Shotokan karate**, but offers a sort of "general studies" in **Okinawan-style *karate-dō***. Instructors are from a variety of styles and they share a variety of interpretations of the traditional Okinawan-style martial arts techniques and philosophies.

Supporting a "general studies" approach, and in addition to the experience offered by instructors, the Durango Karate Club also explores **a global range of approaches to the martial arts** through exposure to guest instructors and literatures from a variety of martial arts styles.

The goal of this approach is to **put the "art" in martial artist** by developing a broad tool-box and perspective for the *karateka* to draw upon to develop each's own "what works best" approach to the martial arts.

The Durango Karate Club is **an independent dojo**, in the historic style of *karate-dō*, and is unaffiliated with any large organizations. We recognize ranks awarded by other dojos, but offer further ranking only through our own ranking rubric.



Dojo rules

The ***Dojo Kuhn*** ("**School Rules**") clearly define the behavior, attitude, character, and effort expected from and encouraged in *karateka*:

1. Seek perfection of character
2. Be faithful
3. Endeavor to excel
4. Respect others
5. Refrain from violent behavior

That means ...

1. Students are expected to want to be there, engaged and involved.
2. For safety and learning, for both themselves and others, students are required to be focused and attentive at all times.
3. Students are encouraged to always give their best as it is, regardless of skill level, rank, or experience.
4. Students should support the learning of their peers, and must not interfere with or distract from with the training of their classmates and instructors.
5. Bullies are not tolerated.

DKC policies

Students who cannot meet these guidelines for dojo behavior and attitude will be asked to sit out for the remainder of that day's class, but will be welcome to participate again in following classes when they feel ready.

Students who consistently show they're not suited to or ready for the behavior and attitude needed for a safe and engaged dojo environment will be asked to leave the class, and issued a refund for the remainder of the session in progress.

Parents and spectators are welcome at DKC classes, special events, and tournaments. They are considered guests of the DKC, and are expected to respect the experience of the participants, students, and instructors by keeping conversations quiet and not talking on phones during the class, event, or tournament. Guests are asked to also not coach or interact with students during training or practice.

Disabilities and physical limitations should be made known to and discussed with the instructors. Adaptations and accommodations can be implemented when possible.

Feedback and suggestions on the program can be offered from participants and parents on a survey provided at the end of each session. Instructors are available for discussions, as well.

In case of a medical emergency, every effort will be made to reach the parents/guardians of a youth student. Emergency medical treatment by professionals will be given when efforts to reach parents/guardians have failed. In an extreme emergency, EMS will be called immediately.

Students are asked to stay home when they show signs of illness. If a student comes to the program ill or becomes ill during class, the student will be asked leave or be picked up. Ill students may be isolated, to the best of the staff's ability, from others in the program until they are picked up.

Attendance is not mandatory, so reporting absences is not required.

Ranking

To earn a **black belt**, students will learn at least **10 empty-hand kata and one weapon kata** over 7 kyu belts. (Other kata from a variety of karate styles are available and encouraged for kata-inclined karateka.) The intermediary "kyu" belts serve as both markers and motivators for students' growth.



Over the course of training, students engage in and develop strategies and skills in **sparring**, practice and demonstrate **self-defense maneuvers**, grow an understanding and vocabulary of **biomechanics and karate techniques**, practice **teaching**, and learn about the **history and range of the martial arts** beyond our own dojo.

Kyu belts are:

- **White belt [7th kyu]**
- **Yellow belt [6th kyu]**
- **Orange belt [5th kyu]**
- **Purple belt [4th kyu]**
- **Blue belt [3rd kyu]**
- **Green belt [2nd kyu]**
- **Brown belt [1st kyu]**

Always remember that the ultimate goal of the martial artist, and goal of all our training, is **fudoshin** — the ability to remain focused amidst chaos, to be in control while controlling nothing. This is perhaps best described by 16th Century Japanese swordsman Tsukahara Bokuden, who said, "**Mental calmness**, not skill, is the sign of a matured samurai."

Testing for belts in the Durango Karate Club is different than many dojos, in that the DKC does not do formal testing: Students are *always* being "tested." Students are ranked whenever the senseis deem appropriate.

Rankings occur sometimes informally in class, and sometimes in formal "ranking nights" at which ranking students demonstrate their skills and knowledge before a panel of Durango-area black belts, their fellow students, and an open audience.

There is **no charge for testing or ranking** in the Durango Karate Club. When students rank, they may either return their belt for reuse by other students, or they may purchase the belt for \$5.

Disclaimer: At its core, ranking is ultimately a "tribal recognition of spirit." And that spirit is always being tested. And a large part of its measure is subjective, given intuitive weight as deemed by the senseis. (But that's why they're senseis ...) Which also means: As Cap'n Jack Sparrow said, "They're more like guidelines, really." That also means these guidelines can be adapted freely and meaningfully to people whose circumstances may not allow their strict adherence to these guidelines, yet whose spirit and efforts are clearly worthy.

Belt ranking rubrics (yellow to purple)

Yellow belt [6th kyu]

- **Heian Shodan**
 - Be able to perform
 - Identify bunkai
- Basic **stances**
- Basic **kihon**
- **Sparring** basics
- **Dojo kuhn**
- Tie **belt**

Orange belt [5th kyu]

- **Heian Shodan**
 - with improved technique
- **Heian Nidan**
 - perform and identify bunkai
- **Heian Sandan**
 - perform and identify bunkai
- Basic **kihon** with improving form
- Putting techniques together into simple **combos**
- **Karate history** basics (founder, patch, words, simple history, etc.)
- Utilizes **sparring strategies**
- Possess own **sparring gear**

Purple belt [4th kyu]

- **Heian Shodan**
 - with power
- **Heian Nidan**
 - with improved technique
- **Heian Sandan**
 - with improved technique
- **Heian Yondan**
 - perform and bunkai
- **Heian Godan**
 - perform and bunkai
- Be able to **lead & assist** on first few Heians
- **Basic kihon** with form & power
- Developing **advanced techniques** (spinning, etc.)
- **Sparring strategies** developing, and footwork and combos improving
- Utilize basic **self-defense** techniques TBD
- **Read and discuss** *Karate-do: My Way of Life*, by Gichin Funakoshi

Further belt rubrics are individualized for each student

Blue belt [3rd kyu]

Green belt [2nd kyu]

Brown belt [1st kyu]

Black belt [1st dan]

Japanese glossary

Arigato

Thank you

Bunkai

Technique in a kata

Dojo

School, anywhere we train

Gi

A karate uniform

Hai

Yes

Hajime

Begin

Kata

A "form" blending fighting techniques into a routine

Karateka

A karate practitioner

Kihon

Fighting techniques

Kumite

Structured sparring

Kyu belts

Belts between white and brown

Oyo

Other options for kata bunkai that employ the same body movements

Sensei

Teacher, a title for a black belt

Rei

Bow

Yame

Stop

Techniques glossary (English)

Note that this is a glossary for the Durango Karate Club. Other techniques may be defined, and these same techniques sometimes go by different names in other dojos and martial sports.

Strikes

Straight
Snap ("jab")
Reverse
Cross
Hook
Uppercut

Lower
Middle
Upper

Closed fist ("punch")
Backfist
Hammer-blow
Knife-hand (shuto)
Ridge-hand
Spear-hand (nukite)
Eye-jab thingy
Tiger paw
Palm-blow

Blocks

Outside
Down
Inside
Upper
Iron
Cross-block ("x-block")

Lower
Middle
Upper

Kicks

Straight
Snap
Reverse
Spinning

Lower
Middle
Upper

Front
Roundhouse
Side
Hook
Front hook
Crescent
Inside crescent
Back ("mule")
Sweep
Block

Stances

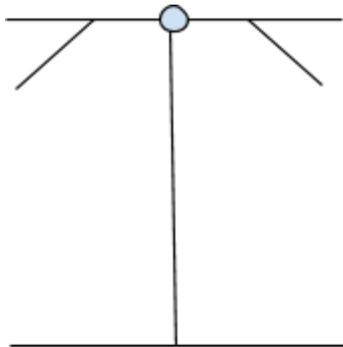
Point
Normal
Fighting
Horse (tekki)
Back
Front
Cat-stance
Immovable

####

Heian kata

Heian Shodan

1. Normal stance, right foot into point stance, bow, right foot out to normal stance
2. Look left, look front
3. Turn left 90 degrees, left front stance, left down block
4. Step forward into right front stance, right straight punch
5. Turn right 180 degrees into right front stance, right down block, to right downward hammer-fist
6. Step forward into left front stance, left straight punch



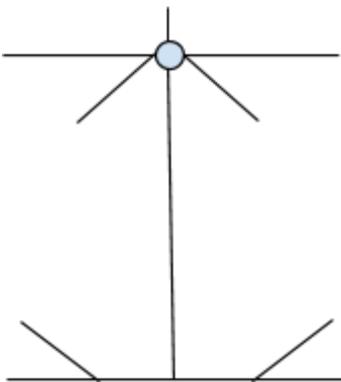
7. Turn left 90 degrees into left front stance, left down block
8. Left upper knife-hand block
9. Step forward slowly into right front stance, right upper fist block
10. Step forward slowly into left front stance, left upper fist block
11. Step forward hard into right front stance, hard right upper fist block, yell kiai
12. Turn left 270 degrees to left front stance, left down block
13. Step forward into right front stance, right straight punch
14. Turn right 180 degrees into right front stance, right down block
15. Step forward into left front stance, left straight punch
16. Turn left 90 degrees into left front stance, left down block
17. Step forward slowly into right front stance, right straight punch

18. Step forward slowly into left front stance, left straight punch
19. Step forward hard into right forward stance, right straight punch, yell kiai
20. Turn left 270 degrees into left back stance, left knife hand outside block
21. Turn right 45 degrees step forward into right back stance, right knife hand outside block
22. Turn right 135 degrees into right back stance, right knife hand outside block
23. Turn left 45 degrees step into left back stance, left knife hand strike, into immovable stance
24. Step back to normal stance, right foot into point stance, bow, step right to normal stance

###

Heian Nidan

1. Normal stance, right foot into point stance, bow, right foot out to normal stance
2. Look left, look front
3. Jump 90 degrees into left back stance with arms in right-side oval set position
4. Snap into left front stance, swinging arms in oval position into over-head block
5. Left inside block to right inside block over left
6. Grab with right and pull right, left horizontal hammer blow
7. Jump 180 degrees into right back stance with arms in left-side oval set position
8. Snap into right front stance, swinging arms in oval position into over-head block
9. Right inside block to left inside block over right
10. Grab with left and pull left, right horizontal hammer blow
11. Draw right foot back to point stance, left side hidden weapon
12. Right leg up to iron block
13. Right side side kick with right horizontal back fist, draw back to right leg up iron block



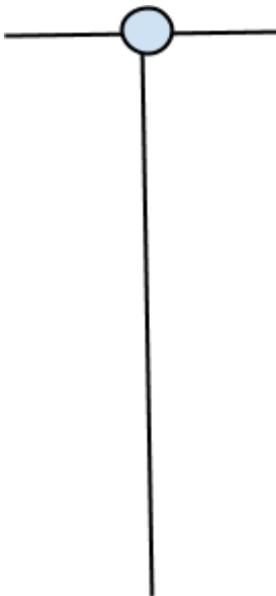
14. Spin 180 degrees on left leg to left knife-hand back stance
15. Step forward slowly to right knife-hand back stance
16. Step forward slowly to left knife-hand back stance
17. Draw to right-side knife-hand hidden weapon
18. Step forward hard to right spear-hand strike, reinforced under elbow, yell kiai
19. Turn left 270 degrees in left front stance, left knife-hand outside block

20. Step right 45 degrees into right front stance, right knife-hand outside block
21. Turn right 135 degrees into right front stance, right knife hand outside block
22. Turn left 45 degrees into left front stance, left knife hand outside block
23. Turn left 45 degrees to left front stance, right (reverse) outside block
24. Right straight kick to right front stance to left snap punch to counter-clockwise break
25. Left straight kick to right reverse punch
26. Step forward to right front stance and right back fist, yell kiai
27. Spin on right leg left 270 degrees to left front stance, left down block
28. Turn right 45 degrees into horse stance, right knife-hand side hidden weapon
29. Left upper knife-hand block
30. Step forward hard to right low front stance, right knife-hand upper block
31. Turn 135 degrees right to right front stance, right down block
32. Turn left 45 degrees into horse stance, left side knife-hand hidden weapon
33. Right upper knife-hand block
34. Step forward hard to left low front stance, left knife-hand upper block, yell kiai
35. Step back to normal stance, right foot into point stance, bow, step right to normal stance

####

Heian Sandan

1. Normal stance, right foot into point stance, bow, right foot out to normal stance
2. Look left, look front
3. Step left to front stance, left outside block
4. Step to point stance, right outside block and left down block (rising arm on outside)
5. to left outside block and right down block (rising arm on outside)



6. Turn 180 degrees right to front stance, right outside block

7. Step to point stance, left outside block and right down block (rising arm on outside)

8. to left outside block and right down block (rising arm on outside)

9. Step 90 degrees left to left front stance, left outside block reinforced

10. Hidden weapon right knife-hand

11. Step forward to right front stance, right spear-hand reinforced

Rotate spear-hand counter-clockwise 180 degrees

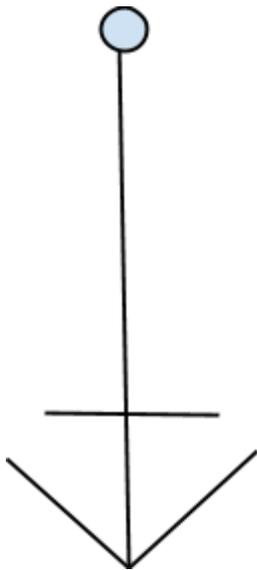
12. Spin left 360 degrees, tekki stance, right spear-hand behind back, left elbow strike
13. Left snap back-fist, tekki stance
14. Spin left 180 degrees right straight punch, right front stance, yell kiai
15. Turn 180 degrees left into point stance, hands on hips
16. Right crescent kick to 90 degree left turn, foot stop to tekki stance
17. Avoid punch on right, right backfist, return hand to hip
18. Left crescent kick to 180 degree turn right to tekki stance

19. Avoid punch on left, left backfist, return hands to hips
20. Right crescent kick to 180 degree turn left to tekki stance
21. Avoid punch on right, right backfist, return hands to hips
22. Right outside knife-hand block to deep right front stance
23. Left straight punch
24. Spin left 180 degrees to tekki stance, high right punch to left and low left elbow strike to left, yell kiai
25. High left punch to right and low right elbow strike to right, yell kiai
26. Step in right to normal stance, step in right to point stance, bow
27. Step right to normal stance

####

Heian Yondan

1. Normal stance, right foot into point stance, bow, right foot out to normal stance
2. Look left, look front
3. Spin into left back stance, knife-hand oval block low
4. Swing knife-hand oval block high into left back stance
5. Spin right into left back stance, knife-hand oval block low
6. Knife-hand oval block high into left back stance
7. Turn left into right cat stance, step forward into left lower cross block
8. Step to right forward stance, right reinforced outside block reinforced



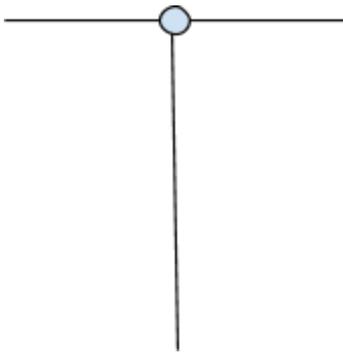
9. Point stance, right-side hidden weapon, look left
10. Left snap side kick with left back-fist, land right-facing horse stance
11. Right elbow strike to left hand, left front stance
12. Point stance, left-side hidden weapon, look right
13. Right snap side kick with right back-fist, land left-facing horse stance
14. Left elbow strike to right hand, right front stance
15. Look left, draw left leg back to point stance, right hand to upper knife-hand block (palm up), right hand to middle knife-hand block (palm down)
16. Step left to left front stance, left hand upper knife-hand block, right hand knife-hand middle strike (palm up)
17. Right lapel grab, pull into right straight kick, land in right back stance
18. From left upper block to left reverse mid-level palm blow

19. Step forward hard to right cat stance and right back-fist, yell kiai
20. Spin left 225 degrees to left front stance, forearms rising to crossed in front
21. Pry apart the lapel grab, right straight kick, to right front stance, to right snap punch
22. Quick left reverse punch to right snap punch
23. Draw right foot back to cat stance, hands drawn to sides
24. Spin right 45 degrees, step forward to right front stance, forearms rising to crossed in front
25. Pry apart the lapel grab, left straight kick, to left front stance, to left snap punch
26. Quick right reverse punch to left snap punch
27. Step left 45 degrees to left front stance, left outside block reinforced
28. Step forward to right front stance, right outside block reinforced
29. Step forward to left front stance, left outside block reinforced
30. Grab head, pull down into right knee strike, yell kiai
31. Spin left 180 degrees into left knife-hand back stance
32. Step forward hard into right knife-hand strike into low right front stance, yell kiai
33. Draw back into normal stance, right leg into point stance, bow, step right to normal stance

###

Heian Godan

1. Normal stance, draw right foot into point stance, bow, right foot out to normal stance
2. Look left, look front
3. Turn left to left front stance, left outside block
4. Right reverse punch



5. Draw right leg to point stance, left arm to front middle set ("flowing water") facing forward, look right
6. Turn right to right front stance, right outside block
7. Left reverse punch
8. Draw left leg to point stance, right arm to front middle set ("flowing water") facing forward, look forward
9. Step forward to right front stance, right outside block reinforced
10. Step forward to left front stance, lower cross block fists
11. Rise to upper cross block knife-hands
12. Rotate wrists (clockwise) pulling down to mid-level pressing block (upper palm down, lower palm up)
13. Left knife-hand snap strike, step forward hard to right straight punch, yell kiai
14. Spin left 180 degrees rising right fist to overhead ready position
15. Right leg crescent kick to foot stomp, into horse-stance, right down block, upper hammer-blow ready
16. Face 180 degrees left, into left knife-hand outside block
17. Right crescent kick to left palm, land left-facing horse-stance
18. Step left leg behind right, with right elbow strike into left palm
19. Step right leg into right cat stance, right backfist strike reinforced, yell kiai

20. Jump, spinning 180 degrees, land legs crossed into lower cross block
21. Turn right 90 degrees, right front stance, right outside block reinforced
22. Turn left 180 degrees to tekki stance
23. Grab to front, turn right to right front stance, swinging hands down to parallel to floor
24. Draw left leg back to point stance
25. Step right leg forward to tekki stance
26. Grab to front, turn left to left front stance, swinging hands down to parallel to floor
27. Draw right leg back to normal stance
28. Bow

####