



*Fitness. Fun. Empowerment.*

## Student Handbook

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# Introduction

## Welcome Message from Dr. Yoendry Torres

Welcome to Taekwondo Wellness where the goal is to teach an ancient martial art that has transformed into a modern sport and to promote healthy living through psychological education. By deciding to join Taekwondo Wellness, you have joined millions of practitioners across the world striving to improve themselves physically, mentally and spiritually through the art of Taekwondo. The handbook will be your guide to Taekwondo rules, requirements, history and philosophy, sport psychology, and curriculum. I hope that you will find the information within this handbook useful for your development as a Taekwondo student and/or competitor.

It is worth mentioning that research has shown that martial arts schools that focus on competition (i.e., fighting) solely increase aggression while traditional martial arts schools that teach its martial arts history, philosophy, meditation, self defense, sparring, as well as competition decrease aggression overtime in addition to aiding in stress management, helping manage weight, lowering anxiety, promoting self-esteem and confidence, improving concentration and increasing self-reliance and optimism.

I look forward to teaching you what knowledge I have learned from my instructors and hope one day that you too will continue the legacy of Taekwondo by sharing what you have learned with future generations. Please feel free to ask me any questions that you might have after reading this handbook. You may also email me at: [MasterTorres@TKDwellness.com](mailto:MasterTorres@TKDwellness.com). Let me know if there is anything I can do to better your Taekwondo experience.

Sincerely,

*Yoendry Torres, Psy.D.*

(AKA: Master Torres; AKA: Dr. Torres; AKA: Sir; AKA: Coach)

## Taekwondo Wellness Mission

Our mission is to improve the mental, physical, social, and emotional health of our community through teaching Taekwondo and psychological education.

## Meaning of Taekwondo

Taekwondo comes from the three Korean words: Tae: meaning foot or striking with foot; Kwon: meaning fist or striking with hand; and Do: meaning the way or the art of. Thus Taekwondo means the art or way of striking with the feet and hands.



## Taekwondo Wellness Memberships

- **USA Taekwondo** is the national governing body of Taekwondo for the United States Olympic Committee and thus an official member of World Taekwondo. World Taekwondo is the international federation governing body for the sport of Taekwondo and it reports that a total of 209 member nations are part of this federation. World Taekwondo oversees the rules of the sport, which include sparring, poomsae, and board breaking. Taekwondo Wellness is a local member of USA Taekwondo that is committed to promoting healthy, active, and joyful lives among youth, adults, and families through training in Taekwondo.
- **Kukkiwon** is the World Taekwondo Headquarters for instructor education and dan certification. Kukkiwon sets black belt promotion test regulations and dan certificates are recognized internationally & required for Olympic competition. Taekwondo Wellness black belts will be obtained through Kukkiwon.



**KUKKIWON**  
WORLD TAEKWONDO HQ



# Rules & Regulations

## Dojang Rules

Please review and follow the rules for safety and to remain loyal to Taekwondo culture. It is important for parents to review these rules with your children to ensure proper understanding.

1. Respect masters & instructors and follow their directions. Demonstrated by:
  - Respond "Yes/No, Sir, or Ma'am" in conversation with instructors.
  - Bow when entering and leaving the training area.
  - Face away from the Instructor and flags when tying belt or fixing your uniform.
  - Ask permission to enter class if student arrives late for training.
2. Respect fellow students and parents. Demonstrated by:
  - Have fun but avoid unnecessary conversation.
3. Respect yourself. Demonstrated by:
  - Maintain a clean uniform and good hygiene as it is a reflection of the student's pride.
  - Encouraging and being kind to your self.
4. Report all injuries to the Instructor.
5. Students are to use martial arts skills learned in Taekwondo Wellness for protection only.

## Competition Rules

Taekwondo Wellness is a proud member of USA Taekwondo, which means that Taekwondo Wellness students will learn and are required understand and follow USA Taekwondo rules and regulations when competing at USA Taekwondo sanctioned tournaments. Competition can be fun and a great way to build confidence and put to test the skills learned. The specific rules for each can be found at [worldtaekwondo.org/rules/](http://worldtaekwondo.org/rules/).

## Gear Requirements

Parents, please note that children's uniform and gear should fit them well and not be oversized with excessive material, particularly the uniform pants as it creates a tripping hazard. Gear and uniforms can be purchased at [TKDWellness.com/proshop](http://TKDWellness.com/proshop). The following are the gear requirements for Taekwondo Wellness students by rank:

- **White Belt:** Beginning students are not required to purchase a uniform if taking classes just for fun or for fitness; however, if student decides they want to promote up the Taekwondo ranks then a white v-neck uniform is required.
- **Green Belt:** Green belt students will continue to use a white v-neck uniform. Sparring gear requirements include: Head protector, foot/shin protector, hand protector, Trunk protector, cup, and mouth guard are required beginning at green belt, which is when sparring training begins.

- **Red Belt & Recommended Black Belt:** Students who are red and recommended black belts require a poom (red/black) v-neck uniform and will continue to use same sparring gear as purchased as a green belt.
- **Black Belts:** Students who are black belts require a black v-neck uniform and will continue to use same sparring gear as purchased as a green belt.
- **Competition & Demo Team:** Yellow belts students and above will have the option of joining the competition & demo team. Students who choose to be part of the competition & demo team will be required to sign a team agreement and obtain and maintain an annual USA Taekwondo athlete membership as well as attend special events throughout the year to showcase their skills at public demonstrations. In addition, team members will get extra conditioning and training seminars to prepare them for competitions and demonstrations. Students who choose to compete in USA Taekwondo tournaments will also be required to purchase sanctioned equipment that includes sparring gear for sparring athletes and a competition uniform for poomsae athletes. To purchase sparring gear online, please visit [TKDWellness.com/proshop](https://TKDWellness.com/proshop) or gear can also be purchased onsite at TKD Wellness.

### Promotion Test Requirements

As the saying goes, “A black belt is a white belt that never gave up.” It is important to know that it takes a lot of dedication, sweat, and passion for personal development in order to promote up the Taekwondo ranks. The focus of training should not be only to obtain a black belt instead the focus should be on the daily steps taken on your journey towards growth, excellence and personal improvement.

Promotion tests are by invitation only but all students and their friends and family members are invited to come support students who are testing. The instructor will inform students once they have demonstrated proficiency of belt level requirements and earned their belt strips. The belt strips are monthly tests of proficiency for 1) basic knowledge, 2) Poomsae, 3) One Step & Board Breaking and 4) Sparring.

Promotion tests at Taekwondo Wellness are offered every quarter of every year in March, June, September and December. Students are typically ready to promote after 3 months of training twice weekly. Once a student has been invited to promote, they are required to register online for the promotion test prior to test date. Students are encouraged to invite their friends and family to come watch them test and demonstrate what they have learned.

# Taekwondo History

Much to my surprise, the history of Taekwondo is actually a controversial topic with officials from Kukkiwon and many others stating that Taekwondo dates back to the Three Kingdoms period (discussed below) while others argue that Taekwondo was first derived from Japanese karate around the time of the Korea liberation from Japanese colonial rule. To be honest, I am not a historian nor do I claim to be an expert on this topic. So to be fair, I will offer both points of view to the best of my ability.

According to Kukkiwon, “Korean martial arts faded into obscurity during the late Gojoseon Dynasty, the first state on the Korean peninsula, B.C. 2333 and developed during the Three Kingdoms period.” The three kingdoms period consisted of:

1. Silla Kingdom: Silla, which was founded on the Kyongju plain in 57 B.C., was credited with spreading marital arts throughout Korea. During this kingdom, martial arts was mainly used as a sport and recreational activity.
2. Koguryo Kingdom: Koguryo, which was founded in the Yalu River Valley in 37 B.C, is the birthplace of martial arts and Tae Kyon is considered the earliest known form of Taekwondo.
3. Paekche Kingdom: Paekche, which was founded in the southwestern area of the Korean peninsula in 18 B.C., favored barehanded fighting as a fighting art.

Hwarang-Do warriors were martial arts trained warriors who became known for their bravery and fighting skill. Also, they soon supplied the leadership to defeat both the Paekje and Koguryo kingdoms and unify Korea into one country known as the Koryo kingdom. The guiding principles of these warriors were loyalty, filial duty, valor, and justice. The Warriors education was based on the 6 codes of conduct:



- |                                |                                      |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Loyalty to your country     | 3. Respect your brothers and sisters |
| 2. Faithfulness to your spouse | 4. Respect your teachers             |

## 5. Indominable spirit

## 6. Finish what you begin

The Koryo Dynasty (918 AD to 1392) was a time for growth and development for martial arts. During this kingdom, unarmed combat gained great popularity and Tae Kyon evolved as new kicking techniques developed and was designed as a fighting sport than a discipline. The soldiers learned and practiced these forms of martial arts, and throughout their travels throughout different kingdoms they spread the study of these martial arts.

The Yi Dynasty (1392 AD to 1910) experienced a change from following Buddhism to Confucianism. This change brought about a change to martial arts as people began to lose interest over martial arts. In fact, the study of martial arts, including weapons, was banned except for the military.

After the Yi Dynasty, Japanese took control of Korea and during Japanese control, only the military could practice martial arts. Japanese combat techniques were introduced to Korea at this time and it became popular. Moreover, due to the peace treaties between Japan and Korea, Japanese education and martial arts were introduced into Korean schools. Once again, martial arts began to flourish in Korea and Japan and Korea began to exchange combat techniques. In 1945, Korea was freed and Korea could now practice its form of martial arts.

During the 1960s after Korea got independence from Japanese control, modern Taekwondo was born, influenced by Japanese Karate at the very least. Dojangs appeared, such as Chung Do Kwan, Songmugwan, Mudukgwan, Joseon Yeonmugwan kwonbubbu. Moreover, the Korea Taesudo Association (the name was later changed to Korean Taekwondo Association) was founded on September 16th, 1961.

During the 1970s, Kukkiwon was founded as the KTA central dojang on November 30th, 1972. Kukkiwon devotes itself to spread Taekwondo culture, spirit and history worldwide, increasing the best competitive power of Taekwondo as a martial art in life. Kukkiwon preserves Taekwondo's roots and development, controls Dan testing and Dan testing requirements, and promotes the study of Taekwondo all over the world.

In 1973 the World Taekwondo Federation was officially established at the Kukkiwon. During the 1980s, Taekwondo started becoming popular in universities as a major or a study. Taekwondo later became a demonstration sport in 1988 during the 24th Seoul Olympics and then became an official Olympic sport at the 103th IOC Assembly in Paris, France. At the same time, the Korean language became the official language for the Olympic Taekwondo games. Taekwondo made its first Olympic appearance during the Sydney 2000 Olympics. According to World Taekwondo, as of 2017 the global membership for World Taekwondo stands at 209 member nations across five continents.

# Taekwondo Philosophy

The philosophy of Taekwondo represent the principles of changes and movements in human beings. It can be explained in several ways but here we will explain it simply with the principle of “Sam Jae” (three elements) and that of “Eum” (Negative or Darkness) and “Yang” (the positive and the brightness). “Sam Jae” refers to “Cheon” (the heaven), “Ji” (earth), and “In” (the man). In oriental countries, the philosophical principles of Taekwondo are recognized as the central principle that explains changes of everything in the world.

## The Five Tenets of Taekwondo are:

1. **Courtesy (Ye Eui):** Courtesy is behavior that demonstrates consideration, cooperation, respect, and generosity towards others and towards oneself.
  - **Examples:** Bowing at beginning/end of class; Saying thank you; Doing chores; Greeting parents/teachers; Positive self-talk; Maintaining good/positive physical/mental hygiene.
2. **Integrity (Yom Chi):** Integrity is being able to define right from wrong, stand incorruptible and have the conscience, if wrong to feel guilt and apologize. Integrity also applies to being honest with ourselves.
  - **Examples:** Never cheating; Not lying; Never stealing; Avoiding self-deception; Admitting to self when upset; Admitting wrong/mistake; Apologizing.
3. **Perseverance (In Nae):** Perseverance is the ability to persist in pursuing something in spite of obstacles or opposition and to have the patience to do so. Moreover, having perseverance is having a belief that traits can be developed with effort and hard work (growth mindset) and grit (passion + perseverance = grit).
  - **Examples:** Never giving up on your passion; Persisting through difficulties; Continuing training even if you are tired; Refusing to quite even when there are difficulties/obstacles.
4. **Self-Control (Geuk Gi):** Self-control is the ability to control our responses to our emotions as well as having control of body. Self-control is also exercising restraint over one's impulses, also known as self-discipline.
  - **Examples:** Thinking before acting; Not hitting others or self out of anger or frustration; Maintaining focus during meditation; Performing techniques with proper execution and accuracy; Practicing poomsae with coordination, balance, power, speed, etc.
5. **Indomitable Spirit (Baekjul Boolgool):** Indomitable spirit, commonly referred to as courage, describes a spirit incapable of being subdued or overcome and is associated with being modest and honest. It persists in spite of fear and hesitation to demonstrate courage.
  - **Examples:** Telling parents about problems; Seeking help; Telling someone how you truly feel; Competing in a tournament; Saying no to friends; Acting with integrity when others do not or when no one is looking.

# Poomsae: Forms

Poomsae is an integral part of almost every martial art as it was the way the art/style itself was passed down from one generation to the next. Poomsae includes great theory of offense and defense mentally and physically and unifies the essentials of the spirit of Taekwondo. The overall purpose of poomsae is to control the breathing to be synchronized with actions, and to maintain the center of gravity and balance while executing techniques requiring great speed and power.

In order to standardize the practice of forms in Taekwondo, World Taekwondo developed a set of forms called the Taekgeuk Poomsae. When these forms were being created, all of these movements, techniques and projected meanings were based on the 8 Trigrams, with each one of the Taegeuks representing a different Trigram. To practice the Taegeuk forms properly and to convey their intended meaning, it is necessary to combine both the physical and mental aspects of the Taegeuk forms.

When practicing poomsae, strive for:

- Stance: Elegance and stable line, pattern of poomse
- Gaze: Offense and defense direction of movements
- Balance: Maintaining good connection of each movement
- Velocity: Control for speed of all movements
- Intensity: Control for strength of all movements
- Direction: Memorized for pattern of engagement
- Breath: Internal and external energy
- Expression: Mentally, physically, emotionally

Taegeuk, the spirit of Taekwondo, is derived from the words “Tae” meaning largeness and “geuk” meaning eternity. Moreover, the idealisms of Taegeuk are: Pacifism, Unity, Creative spirit, Future spirit and Eternity.

Taegeuk poomse follows different theories and implements them into methods of attack, defense, forward movement and retreat, control of the speed of the movements, and the intensity of the actions. A couple theories include the Yin Yang theory, the destructive theory, the great absolute theory, and the Ohaeng theory. The destructive theory claims that fire melts metal, metal cuts wood, and the earth blocks water. The “Yin Yang theory” (the law of nature) describes the negative and the positive, and the male and female. Another theory claims that the elements of metal, water, wood, fire, and earth are believed to help each other to be produced; fire from wood, wood from water, water from metal, metal from earth, and earth from fire.

Palgwe represents the heaven and sky, water (lake, marsh etc.), fire, sun, light, thunder, wind, wood, water (springs, streams), mountains and hills, and the earth. It also represents the eight cardinal and the intercardinal directions (North, South, East, West, Northeast, etc.). The 8

symbols of “Gwe”, originating from Taegeuk/created from the male and female which is the root of all creation, represents the direction and lines of movement. The other “Gwe” were created from other direct creations of Taegeuk. The 8 symbols of “Gwe” (Palgwe): Keon, Tae, Ri, Ji, Seon, Gam, Gan and Gon.

Poomsae	Palgwe (Gwe)	Meaning	Definition
<b>Taegeuk 1:</b> Il Jang (18)	Keon	“Heaven”	Keon is the powerful, the mother of all, the pure Yang, the father, and the initial molding force that guides the future actions and outcomes in forms.
<b>Taegeuk 2:</b> Yi Jang (18)	Tae	“Lake”	Tae is the state of mind (serene and gentle yet firm). The movements mainly show that even though there are boundaries that control our actions, we can overcome them.
<b>Taegeuk 3:</b> Sam Jang (20)	Ri	“Fire”	Ri is meaning of warmth, enthusiasm, and hope. Since fire is important for survival but can cause catastrophes, the techniques of this form should be done in a rhythmic way with occasional outbursts of energy.
<b>Taegeuk 4:</b> Sa Jang (20)	Ji	“Thunder”	Jin means fear and suggest we should act calmly and with courage when facing danger. Since thunder reaches down to the earth in a hurry and seeks the shortest route when reaching the highest point, this form should be performed by seeking the shortest path to the desired goal but not losing the ability to react to surrounding influences.
<b>Taegeuk 5:</b> Oh Jang (20)	Seon	“Wind”	Seon can be as gentle as a breeze and as destructive as a raging storm. Since the wind (predominantly Yang) can be both gentle and destructive, this form should be performed with elegance while containing the ability to cause mass destruction with a single movement.
<b>Taegeuk 6:</b> Yook Jang (23)	Gam	“Water”	Without it, nothing can survive. As with water, we can overcome all difficulties with confidence and persistence. We can bend, but not break, flowing continuously. This form should be performed in accordance with the dual nature of water.
<b>Taegeuk 7:</b> Chil Jang (25)	Gan	“Mountain”	The mountain show us when to proceed and when to rest. It shows that it is important to eliminate wasted energy and motion. Since all mountains (predominantly Yin) share the same grandeur and majesty despite the physical dimensions, this form should be performed with the feeling that your movements should receive highest praise and esteem.
<b>Taegeuk 8:</b> Pal Jang (24)	Gon	“Earth”	Life exists because of the earth and the earth nourishes and eassures us with the patience of the mother. This is the completion of one cycle and the higher forms. Gon is pure Yin ( the end of the beginning, the dark side, the evil element of all that is good), but even in a state of complete darkness there is still light to be found and should be performed keeping this in mind.

Black Belt Poomsae	Definition
<b>Koryo</b> (Korea) -30 moves 1st Dan Poomsae	Poomsae Koryo, a name of an ancient dynasty (AD 918-1392) in Korea, is one's posture of cultivating himself in which he may follow the wisdom and unyielding spirit of the man of conviction.
<b>Keumgang</b> (Diamond) – 27 moves 2nd Dan Poomsae	Since the most beautiful mountain in the Korean peninsula is named Keumgang-san and the diamond (the hardest know substance) is named Kuemgange-seok, Keumgang in Taekwondo means movement based on spiritual strength that is as beautiful as the mountains (has a sharp and majestic spirit) and as hard as the diamond.
<b>Taebaek</b> (Mountains) – 26 moves 3rd Dan Poomsae	Since Mount Baekdoo is the loftiest and grandest mountain in Korea, and the word "Taebaek" has the meaning of light and is being looked upon as sacred by the Korean people, every motion of this poomse should be in accordance with these principles.
<b>Pyongwon</b> (Plain) – 25 moves 4th Dan Poomsae	Since the plains give us food but at the same time gave us a feeling of majesty, the core of this poomsae is to be found in the potential strength and flexibility as well as in the majestic spirit of the vast plain.
<b>Sip Jin</b> (Decimal) – 39 moves 5th Dan Poomsae	Sip Jin, a master form; largest form, represents the "Sipjangsaeng", the longest living things (the sun, mountains, water...) and is based on nature worship, and the decimal system that makes eternal numbers. It has various changes (slow action and moderation are necessary). It is also important to devote the power slowly within the 1st, 3rd, 9th, 23rd, and the 27th movements. When executing horizontal Twin Side Punch (Chetdari Jireugi), practice carefully because it consists of two kinds of stances, the Forward Stance (Apkubi) and the Back Stance (Dwit Kubi) Sipjin Poomse consists of 31 Poom and 39 movements.
<b>Jitae</b> (Earth) – 37 moves 6th Dan Poomsae	Since the Jitae (earth) is the place to find peace for all life, it symbolizes desire and the coming out of the earth. The use of hands and blocking is emphasized in this Poomse. Devote power slowly within the 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 4 <sup>th</sup> , 8 <sup>th</sup> , and the 10 <sup>th</sup> movements. The Diamond shape Front Punch (Geumgang Apjireugi) blocks strikes to the face, and simultaneously delivers a punch. The 21 <sup>st</sup> movement requires a long period of time and practice to learn. Execute the Side Kick (Yeop Chagi) so that the foot lands in its original position, and at the same time execute the Wrist Low Section Block (Palmok Area Makki) then assume the Crane Stance (Hakdari Seogi). Maintain even balance of power. There are 28 Poom and 37 movements

<b>Cheongwon</b> (Sky) -38 moves 7th Dan Poomsae	<p>Cheongwon symbolizes the meaning of the sky (is the origin of all life) and slow action and moderation are important for this Poomse. New movements include: The Spread Off Wing (has the appearance of an eagle flying through the air). The Double Knuckle Fist Spring Strike (Bamjumeok Soseum Chigi). The Push Mountain Shape (Taesan Mllgi). Devote the power slowly within the 5<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup>, and 27<sup>th</sup> movements when executing the Side Punch (Yeop Jireugi) while pulling the opponent after executing the Hugh Section Block (Eolgul Makki) 23<sup>rd</sup> movement. A high jump must be made prior to the 360-degree turn to the left, then the Right Target Kick, and the Diamond Shape Side Punch may be executed. Consists of 23 Poom, and 38 movements</p>
<b>Hansoo</b> (Water) – 33 moves 8th Dan Poomsae	<p>Hansoo represents water (creates life and allows growth, may be stronger and more dangerous, is extremely adaptable, formless and flexible). New movement includes: The Arc Hand Neck Strike (Akeumson Mok Chigi). There are 23 Poom and 33 movements</p>
<b>Ilyo</b> (Oneness) -29 moves 9th Dan Poomsae	<p>Means that the mind (spirit) and body (material) are the same. Follows the philosophy that mind and body are as one. This philosophy is emphasized within the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, and 21<sup>st</sup> movements. Ilyo Poomse consists of 23 Poom and 29 movements. When Side Kick (Yeop Chagi) within the 19<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> movements, flex the balance leg toward the kicking leg</p>

# Kyukpa: Board Breaking

Taekwondo is known for its demonstration of power through board breaking. At Taekwondo Wellness, board breaking is practiced as a measure of a student's power, accuracy, focus, courage, technique and speed. Board breaking is also a requirement for rank promotion tests (see Taekwondo Pedagogy/Curriculum for specific board breaking requirements by rank). It is important to remember that students are breaking real wooden (usually pine) boards, which can cause bruising, swelling, or even cuts/bleeding. Regardless of that fact, many students find board breaking fun and exhilarating and a source of great pride.

Board breaking is also a competitive sport called “creative breaking competition.” Students of all ranks can register for creative breaking divisions at USA Taekwondo sanctioned tournaments. For USA Taekwondo creative breaking competition guidelines, please visit: <https://www.teamusa.org/USA-Taekwondo/V2-Events/Competition-Rules>. Additionally, TKD Wellness' competition and demo team members will get additional practice breaking boards with advanced techniques and performing them during live demonstrations.

## **Basics of Board Breaking:**

1. Learn the proper technique. Then drill, drill, drill to master it.
2. Perform strengthening and speed exercises to build appropriate muscles and conditioning.
3. Practice techniques on heavy bag, other conditioning equipment, to build strength, timing and accuracy.
4. Aim for the center of the board and plan on going through the board rather than stopping at the front of the board in order to easily demolish boards.
5. Ki-hap simultaneously as you strike the board and tense your muscles at impact.
6. Practice techniques on re-breakable boards starting with the easiest one first.
7. Remember to be confident in your technique after putting in all that hard work and effort.



# Kyorugi: Sparring

There are several styles of sparring in Taekwondo from one-step (or two or three or instinct) sparring, to no contact or light contact free sparring, to competition sparring using appropriate gear, to full contact. At Taekwondo Wellness, one-step sparring and no contact or light contact sparring using necessary gear is required for promotion tests. For students interested in competition, sparring typically consists of light to moderate contact using all appropriate gear, following USAT competition rules and with the focus of scoring points without getting scored on. For complete USA Taekwondo sparring competition rules, please visit: <https://www.teamusa.org/USA-Taekwondo/V2-Events/Competition-Rules>. Below are a few basic sparring rules taken directly from their manual:

1. Competitors must wear v-neck uniform in good condition.
2. Competitors must wear approved protective gear including trunk protector, head protector, groin guard, gloves, forearm protectors, shin/in-step protectors and mouth guard. One competitor wears red trunk protector (Hong) and the other blue trunk protector (Chung).
3. Contestants are not allowed to wear any kind of metallic articles or hard objects, such as rings or eyeglasses necklaces, watches, bracelets, earrings, etc.
4. All competitors must maintain the highest standard of personal hygiene, keep their nails cut short, and groom their hair neatly. Pony tails must be tucked inside the headgear
5. Permitted techniques include straight punches using knock part of a tightly clenched fist and foot techniques using any part of the foot below the ankle bone.
6. Punches and kicking techniques are permitted on the areas covered by the trunk protector but not on the part of the spine. Only kicking techniques are permitted to the head.
7. The valid points are as follows:
  - One (1) point for a valid punch to trunk protector
  - Two (2) points for a valid kick to the trunk protector
  - Four (4) points for a valid turning kick to the trunk protector
  - Three (3) points for a valid kick to the head
  - Five (5) points for a valid turning kick to the head
  - One(1) point awarded for every Gam-jeom (penalty shall be counted as one (1) additional point for the opposing contestant)
8. Prohibited acts: The following acts shall be classified as prohibited acts, and “Gam-jeom” shall be declared:
  1. Crossing the Boundary Line
  2. Falling down
  3. Avoiding or delaying the match

4. Grabbing or pushing the opponent
5. Lifting the leg to block or/and kicking the opponent's leg to impede the opponent's kicking attack, or lifting a leg or kicking in the air for more than 3 seconds to impede the opponent's potential attacking movements, or aiming a kick below the waist
6. Kicking below the waist
7. Attacking the opponent after "Kal-yeo"
8. Hitting the opponent's head with the hand
9. Butting or attacking with the knee
10. Attacking the fallen opponent
11. Following misconducts of contestant or coach:
  1. Not complying with the referee's command or decision
  2. Inappropriate protesting of officials' decisions
  3. Inappropriate attempts to disturb or influence the outcome of the match
  4. Provoking or insulting the opposing contestant or coach
  5. Unaccredited doctor/physicians or other team officials found to be seated in the doctor's position
  6. Any other severe misconduct or unsportsmanlike conduct on the part of a contestant or coach



# Taekwondo and Psychology

There are several benefits specific to our physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing that can be achieved through regular Taekwondo practice. In this section, we will discuss how Taekwondo Wellness practice can aid in stress management, teach healthy coping skills, and learn about other important topics in psychology such as “grit,” “growth mindset,” “goal setting,” “negative self talk” and “deliberate practice.”

## **Stress Management**

First, let's define stress management. Stress management is our ability to deal with the day to day stressors and challenges as well as our resilience to or in the face of crisis. In other words, the term stress management is used to describe strategies people incorporate into their lives to cope with daily stress and acute stressors. Taekwondo, and other martial arts for that matter, are a great way for people to manage their stress because traditional training methods include rigorous physical exercises, stretching and meditation. All three of these training methods have been shown to help reduce stress and maintain our wellbeing.

It is important to mention that there are two general ways of maintaining wellbeing. There is coping as an intervention and as a preventative lifestyle. Coping as an intervention is when one uses a specific strategy to reduce intensity of emotions when experiencing an acute stressor. While, coping as a preventative lifestyle are the many activities we do on a regular basis that promote resilience and wellbeing.

## **Grit**

Grit has been defined as the combination of perseverance and passion. In other words, grit is when someone is so passionate about something that they do not give up. Grit has been shown to be a factor that separates those people who go on to accomplish great things compared to those who do not because they gave up. Grit is about cultivating the courage to stick with problems, mistakes, failures, etc that ultimately leads us to success. Martial Arts is about personal improvement, achievement and often involves failing, self evaluation and trying again, which are vital pieces for success. This in turn teaches students about grit. Setting goals is also an important part of grit as is growth mindset and the other psychology topics discussed below.

## **Growth Mindset**

Taekwondo and growth mindset go hand and hand. In that, the thought is that every Taekwondo class is an opportunity to improve ourselves and get stronger than the previous one. Growth mindset is about seeing failures, mistakes, etc as opportunities to learn and get better. Growth mindset theory states that there are two types of mindset: fixed and growth. Fixed mindset is the belief that ability is a fixed trait while growth mindset is the belief that traits can be developed with effort and hard work. A fixed mindset discourages students from taking up a challenging task as students believe that success is attributed to talent and intelligence. Taekwondo is a form of martial arts that is structured on the basis of incentives (belts) that are associated with performance and effort. This promotes growth mindset in students because it teaches students that success can be achieved through hard work, positivity, perseverance, and by learning and getting stronger through failures.

## **Deliberate Practice**

Deliberate Practice is what many masters and experts at the top of their fields attribute to their success. Deliberate practice is the how to learn from mistakes when we have a growth mindset. In other words, when we identify a mistake and are able to perceive it as an opportunity to learn, then we practice deliberately the skills needed to improve that weak area. Deliberate practice is an activity that involves both quality and quantity to achieve success. Thus, it is not just practice that makes perfect but perfect practice that makes perfect. Thus, as a human being striving for excellence, constant practice and learning from our failure is what leads to skills and eventually master. Training in martial arts is an endless journey in grit and with a growth mindset, it can lead to exemplary success when deliberate practice is applied.

## **Goal Setting**

Goal setting is a crucial skill that helps us determine if our deliberate practice is having an impact. Let me explain, in Taekwondo, smaller goals are set in place to help the students achieve a larger objective (black belt). In Taekwondo, we set goals (the series of belts) in order to achieve the highest goal. There are even smaller goals such as the belt strips for basics, poomsae, and one-steps. However, when setting a goal, the child must establish why he/she set a particular goal or why (this is the passion part of the grit equation) they want to attain the black belt which in turn helps the students face challenges easier, put immense effort, and become more motivated and demonstrate grit. Goals come in different sizes as we saw above: Low, mid and high ambitions. The high ambitions can be considered like the end goal, while the mid goal are the steps to get to the end goal. The low goals are all the daily activities such as sufficient rest, daily stretching, practicing poomsae 5 times a week, etc that will help us accomplish the mid goals. Interestingly, working towards goals isn't easy but it teaches people how to be "gritty."

## **Positive Self Talk**

Positive self-talk is about recognizing the truth, in situations and in yourself by simply not believing the first thought that comes to mind. Thus, positive self-talk is the ability to counteract negative thoughts in your life with thoughts that are either positive, instructional, or at least neutral. Positive self talk replaces a negative thought by simply changing a negative thought (e.g., "I'll never get it") with a positive thought (e.g., "I got this"). An neutral self talk would be something like "I've done it before" while an instructional self talk would be like "chamber my kick, then snap it out and back, with a loud kihap." Positive self-talk helps students maximize efforts, reduce anxiety, improves confidence, and helps with focus which in turn improves the student's performance. Positive self talk can and should be practice throughout our daily lives and not just in the dojang. In Taekwondo Wellness class, negative self-talk is often challenged and replaced by positive self talk that expresses a growth mindset for example, by saying "I'll practice my poomsae five more times because I don't have it memorized yet."

## **Imagery**

The human brain is amazing! Did you know that if you are able to recall a happy memory in great detail, then those same brain regions activate in the present moment recreating the same feeling. The same is true if you are able to visualize in your mind yourself performing a specific activity like poomsae, then the same brain regions activate as if you were actually

performing that activity. Thus imagery is a technique used to practice mentally and refine our skills and is an important skill used by many olympic champions. So try visualizing yourself perform you favorite kick, poomsae, or even board break in as much vivid detail and you will be literally training and improving that skill.

### **Mindfulness Meditation**

Meditation is another mental exercise that has been taught and practiced in both traditional and sport Taekwondo schools across the world. Meditation has also been featured in countless martial arts movies such as The Karate Kid and USA Taekwondo has written articles about “Clearing Your Mind Using Meditation.” It’s important to know that there are various styles of meditation but mindfulness meditation is the stye taught to students at Taekwondo Wellness.

“Mindfulness means paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally.” ~ Jon Kabat-Zinn.

Thus, mindfulness meditation is the practice of intentionally paying attention to the present moment without judgment or criticism. Mindfulness can be practiced both formally and informally. Formal practice is done by setting aside a specified amount of time (e.g., 5, 10, 30 minutes per day, etc) to practice mindfulness while informal practice is done throughout one’s day by simply paying attention at various moments during one’s day (e.g., while eating, showering, walking, training, etc). Mindfulness meditation is practiced at the end of every Taekwondo Wellness class.

### **How to Practice**

1. For formal practice: Get into a comfortable position. Can be sitting with legs crossed, sitting in a chair or even laying down. For informal practice simply do steps 2-3 throughout your day for moments at a time.
2. Close your eyes and inhale. Focus your attention on your breath. Notice if your shoulders, chest, or abdomen move as you inhale or exhale. Continue to breathe in and out at your natural rhythm.
3. You will soon notice that our mind naturally begin to wonder and experience all sorts of thoughts and feelings and our senses are heighten. For example, you may notice sounds that were in the background that you hadn’t noticed before. This is normal. The task is to simply notice your experience without judgement or criticism and return your attention to your focus of attention (usually one’s breathe but can also be to other things like our sense of sound).

### **Reasons to Practice**

1. Relaxation is a major benefit of this sort of meditation practice. Sport psychologists have shown that anxiety decreases performance in their research. Thus, if you’re nervous before a promotion test, a competition or even a challenging drill in class, meditation is the antidote!
2. Meditation helps regulate our energy levels. Research has also found that people have an optimum level of energy where they perform at their best. However, if one’s energy is too high, it becomes difficult to concentrate whether it is poomsae, sparring or breaking.

Meditation practice lowers our heart rate, which in turn lowers our energy levels allowing us to concentrate and perform better.

3. Focus is another added benefit of a regular meditation practice. Let me explain, in how to practice step 3 above, the mind wanders and the task is to return to our chosen focus of attention without judgment. This exercise of being distracted and returning attention, followed by being distracted and returning attention gives us the power to focus our attention to what we choose rather than what the brain wants to experience at that moment. This is vital whether it is in a self defense situation or a competition as one would want to focus on the actions that will lead to the desired outcome rather than on emotions such as fear that may leave us frozen in place.
4. There are many more evidenced-based benefits to mindfulness, just see this article by the [American Psychological Association](#). For example: Reduced rumination, stress reduction, boosts to working memory, focus, less emotional reactivity, more cognitive flexibility and relationship satisfaction are benefits demonstrated through research.

### **Energy Management**

Energy management is the concept that people, or Taekwondo Athletes in this case, perform at their best when they are at their “optimum” level of energy. The idea goes that someone with excessive energy is having racing thoughts, might be jittery and just too much energy to focus and attend the task at hand. Whereas, someone with too little energy is sleepy and lethargic also unable to perform the task well. Thus the best performance may be achieved at the “right” level of energy. Not surprisingly, the right level is a bit different for everyone but it’s usually not at either extremes but somewhere closer to the middle. Our heart rates can regulate energy levels as can our thoughts. Thus, the goal with energy management is for one to discover what energy level they perform best and proactively regulate their energy so that it stays within their “optimum” level. Below are a few ways to up-regulate or down-regulate:

**Up-Regulate:** Use when energy level is too low.

- Increase heart rate by doing some exercise like jumping jack, running, dance etc.
- Practice “dragon breath” or fast rhythmic breathing to evaluate your heart rate.
- Listen to fast beat music to help increase mood.

**Down-Regulate:** Use when energy level is too high.

- Decrease heart rate by stretching,
- Slow your heart rate down by practicing deep slow rhythmic breathing.
- Listen to slow calming music to help calm mood.

# Taekwondo Pedagogy/Curriculum

Taekwondo curriculum is the “what” we teach while Taekwondo pedagogy is the “how” we teach. Taekwondo curriculum consists of teaching striking and blocking techniques, Korean terminology, poomsae, one-step sparring, free sparring (green belts and above), and board breaking. Taekwondo is typically taught to students in developmentally appropriate aged groups sometimes in separate classes, other times within the same class. Training at Taekwondo Wellness uses periodization training blocks that include a rotating curriculum so that students focus on developing one curriculum skill (e.g., basics, poomsae, one-step) per month and then switch to a new skill. It is important to note that at Taekwondo Wellness we continue to review all skills, while spotlighting one, because a strong foundation is essential for any martial artist.

## Taekwondo Wellness Curriculum

- **Relaxation:** Exercises such as neck rotations, deep breathing, or static stretching can be used at home to relax and release tension
- **Stretching:** Stretching not only improves a range of emotions, but it also been found to have physical and stress relieving benefits such as improve circulation and promoting relaxation
- **Body Awareness:** In order to treat stress, one must be able to be aware that they are stress; Through the practice of stretching and meditation, one becomes aware if they are stressed or not
- **Deep Breathing:** It helps relax the body by controlling one’s breath and in turn lowering one’s heart rate and blood pressure in addition to helping one regulate their mood
- **Meditation:** Meditation has many psychological benefits including stress management, pain reduction, improve attention and mood management
- **Exercise:** In addition to strengthening one’s muscles and cardiovascular system, exercise has been shown to reduce anxiety and depression as well as helping in general stress management
- **Poomsae:** Helps improve power, speed, and balance while striving for self-refinement
- **Sparring:** Helps develop good sportsmanship, coordination, balance, self-control, and self-reliance
- **Board Breaking:** Helps overcome fear to achieve feats of strength and build confidence

## Taekwondo Wellness Belt Ranks & Promotion Test Requirements

Taekwondo Wellness tests students each month on a particular skill, depending on the block of the periodization schedule. Each month students test for their basics stripe, poomsae stripe, or one-step/breaking strip. The reasoning for this monthly test is to make sure that students are learning the skills required for their promotion tests and thus allowing for deliberate practice on the skills needing improvement. Promotion tests are conducted once per quarter (4 times per year) that way all students have opportunities to promote even if they start half way through a

training block. If the student does not pass the belt strip test on their first try, he/she should not be discouraged and instead consider what they can learn that can help them improve even more. Thus students should practice more and take a makeup test prior to the promotion test in order to be considered for rank promotion. Students are also allowed to retest until they pass. Moreover, one important thing to remember is that 3 belt strips are required before being invited to the promotion test. Below are the belt meanings and promotion test requirements:

Belt Type	Belt Meaning & Promotion Test Requirements
<b>White belt</b> (9 <sup>th</sup> kub)	<p>Meaning: Purity and Potential. The Seed is hidden under the winter's snow.</p> <p>Requirements: Taegeuk Cho Don. 3 one-step sparring techniques (1. low block, punch; 2. outside block, punch; 3. high block, punch), breaking (front-snap kick, straight punch), and verbal basic questions such as school rules or count 1 to 10 in Korean; report cards.</p>
<b>Yellow Belt</b> (8 <sup>th</sup> Kub)	<p>Meaning: Warmth of the winter sun melts the snow and allows the seed to germinate; birth of conscious and purposeful action.</p> <p>Requirements: Taegeuk 1; 2 one-step sparring techniques (1. low block, front kick; 2. inside block, punch); breaking (side kick, palm), verbal questions such as Taekwondo tenets/meaning, school rules, count 1 to 20 in Korean, basic Taekwondo terminology etc.; report cards.</p>
<b>Orange Belt</b> (7 <sup>th</sup> Kub)	<p>Meaning: Same meaning as yellow belt.</p> <p>Requirements: Taegeuk 2; 2 one-step sparring techniques (1. inside block, sidekick; 2. outside block, roundkick); breaking (Step-side kick, elbow), verbal questions such as Taekwondo tenets, school rules, count 1 to 20 in Korean; report cards.</p>
<b>Green Belt</b> (6 <sup>th</sup> Kub)	<p>Meaning: Color of the new sprout; represents the spring when there is growth and activity.</p> <p>Requirements: Taegeuk 3; 2 one step sparring techniques (1. outside knife hand block, punch; 2. slide back, jump front kick, punch, punch), free sparring; breaking (Back kick, knife hand), verbal questions such as Taekwondo tenets/meaning, school rules, count 1 to 20 in Korean, Taekwondo technique terminology, etc. report cards.</p>
<b>Blue Belt</b> (5 <sup>th</sup> Kub)	<p>Meaning: Color of youth, ambition, and rapid growth.</p> <p>Requirements: Taegeuk 4; 2 one-step sparring techniques (1. inside block, back fist; 2. high knife hand block, knife hand strike); free sparring; breaking (Jumping front kick, Back fist); verbal questions such as Taekwondo tenets/meaning, school rules, count 1 to 30 in Korean, more Tae Kwon Do terminology, etc.; report cards.</p>

**Purple Belt (4<sup>th</sup> Kub)**                      Meaning: Same meaning as blue belt.

Requirements: Taegeuk 5; 2 one-step sparring techniques (1. knife hand, grab, elbow; 2. high block, side kick, elbow); free sparring; breaking (Jumping side kick, ridge hand); verbal questions such as Taekwondo tenets, school rules, count 1 to 30 in Korean, more Tae Kwon Do terminology etc.; report cards.

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**Brown Belt (3<sup>rd</sup> Kub)**                      Meaning: The seedling is reaching maturity it will soon be harvested

Requirements: Taegeuk 6; 2 one-step sparring techniques (1. knife hand strike, grab, round kick; 2. outside block, punch, front kick, punch; 3. inside palm block, palm strike, back fist); free sparring; breaking (Axe kick, downward knife hand); verbal questions on Korean Taekwondo terminology; report cards.

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**Red Belt (2<sup>nd</sup> Kub)**                      Meaning: Represents the summer's sun that swelters with the intensity of the flowering arts.

Requirements: Taegeuk 7; 2 one-step sparring techniques (1. double knife hand block, punch, front kick; 2. double knife hand block, elbow, back fist; 3. double outside block, knee, double uppercut); free sparring; breaking (Jumping back kick, hammer fist); verbal questions on Korean Taekwondo terminology and written test/essay (500 words) on history of Taekwondo; report cards.

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**Deputy Black Belt(1<sup>st</sup> Kub)**                      Meaning: Represents the twilight of fall's sun.

Requirements: Taegeuk 8; 10 one-step sparring techniques of students choosing; free sparring (optional: full sparring gear); breaking (Spinning roundhouse, knife hand & elbow); written test/essay (1000 words) on tenets of Taekwondo; verbal questions on Korean Taekwondo terminology and written test/essay; report cards.

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**Black Belt 1 Dan**                      Meaning: Combination of all colors. This completes a cycle that now begins again.

Requirements: Taegeuk 1 to 8, Koryo; 10 one step sparring techniques of students choosing; free sparring with two or three on one in addition to regular one-on-one; breaking (instructors' choice); written report (1500 word) on how Taekwondo has changed your life; 20 teaching hours; elementary and high school students must have passing school report card grades (no exception); 2 wallet or id size pictures of applicants.

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### **Long Term Athlete Development Framework (LTAD)**

Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD) is a vehicle for change and provides a framework that identifies an optimal pathway for excellence in Taekwondo and a road to the olympics or life-long involvement in Taekwondo. LTAD was developed by Sport for Life, a Canadian organization and takes into account the physical, mental, emotional and cognitive development of children and adolescents. The Long-Term Athlete Development Framework is as follows:

Stage Name	Age Range	Description
Active Start	Ages 3-5	Provides an initiation to fundamental movements by exploring Taekwondo skills
Fundamentals	Males 6-9, females 6-8	Continues to develop movement skills, and introduces motor skills involved in balance, agility, and coordination
Learn to Train	Males 10-12, females 9-11	Provides window of accelerated adaption for motor skills and coordination.
Train to Train	Males 12-16, females 11-15	Provides opportunities to enhance physical factors depending on growth and maturation, and to consolidate sport specific skill
Train to Complete	Males 16-18+, females 15-17+	Provides opportunities to optimize fitness and strength, refine skills and tactics, and begin to emphasize consistent performance in competition
Learn to Win	Males 18-21+, females 17-19+	Provides opportunities for the athlete to gain international experience against senior level competitors
Train to Win	Males 21+, females 19+	Enables athlete to focus on consistent performance in international competitions
Active for Life	All ages	Fosters lifelong involvement in Taekwondo

LTAD states that there are 10 Key Factors Influencing Long-Term Athlete Development:

- |  |                                     |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Physical Literacy                           | 6. Periodization                    |
| 2. Specialization                              | 7. Competition                      |
| 3. Developmental Age                           | 8. Excellence Takes Time            |
| 4. Sensitive Periods                           | 9. System Alignment and Integration |
| 5. Mental, Cognitive and Emotional Development | 10. Continuous Improvement – Kaizen |

\* The complete LTAD Long-Term Athlete Development Framework can be downloaded for free at: [http://sportforlife.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/LTAD-2.1-EN\\_web.pdf?x96000](http://sportforlife.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/LTAD-2.1-EN_web.pdf?x96000)

# Taekwondo Terminology

Taekwondo terminology is an important part of learning Taekwondo, as Korean is the official language for Taekwondo at the Olympics, allowing students to train and compete across the world regardless of the language spoken in the host country. Here's commonly used terms:

## The Basics:

Master: Kwan Jang Nim	Uniform: Do Buk	Black belt grade: Dan
Instructor: Sa Bum Nim	Belt: Ti	Color belt grade: Kup
Thank you: Gamsa Hamnida	Blocking: Makki	Begin: Sijak
Attention: Charyut	Punching: Jireugi	Stop: Geu Man
Bow: Kyung Neh	Kicks: Chagi	1-Step Sparring: Hoshinsul
Ready: Joon Bi	Forms: Poomse	Sparring: Kyorugi
Yell: Ki Hop	School: Do Jang	

## Numbers:

1. Hana	11. Yeol Hana	30. Soreun
2. Tul	12. Yeol Tul	40. Maheun
3. Set	13. Yeol Set	50. Sheen
4. Net	14. Yeol Net	60. YeSoon
5. Tasot	15. Yeol Tasot	70. IlHeun
6. Yosot	16. Yeol Yosot	80. YuDoon
7. Ilgob	17. Yeol Ilgob	90. AHeun
8. Yudol	18. Yeol Yudol	100. Bak
9. Ahop	19. Yeol Ahop	
10. Yeol	20. SeuMool	

## Stances: Seogi

Parallel stance: Naranhi Seogi  
Ready stance: Pyonhi Seogi  
Walking stance: Ap Seogi  
Forward stance: Apkubi Seogi  
Back stance: Dwikubi Seogi  
Horse riding stance: Juchum Seogi  
Tiger stance: Beom Seogi  
Twisted stance: Koa Seogi

## Blocks: Makki

Low block: Arae makki  
Inside middle block: Momtong an makki  
Outside middle block: Momtong bakkat makki  
High block: Olgul makki  
Knifehand block: Sonnal makki  
Palmhand block: Batangson momtong makki  
Mountain block: Santeul makki  
Scissor block: Kawi makki

## Hand Strikes: Jireugi, Chigi

High punch: Olgul jireugi  
Middle punch: Momtong jireugi  
Low punch: Arae jireugi  
Reverse punch: Baro jireugi  
Lead punch: Bandae jireugi  
Face back fist: Olgul bakkat chigi  
Turning Elbow: Palkup dolly chigi  
Choke punch: Khaljaebi

## Foot Strikes: Chagi

Axe kick: Naeryo Chagi  
Back kick: Dwi Chagi  
Crescent kick: Bandal Chagi  
Front kick: Ap Chagi  
Hook kick: Huryeo Chagi  
Push kick: Mireo Chagi  
Roundhouse kick: Dollyo Chagi  
Side kick: Yop Chagi  
Spinning hook kick: Dwi Huryeo Chagi

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Notes: