

Terminology

A

AGE UKE - Upward Block.

AGE ZUKI - Rising Punch.

AKA (SHIRO) NO KACHI - "Red (White) Wins!" The Referee obliquely raises his arm on the side of the winner.

AKA (SHIRO) IPPON - "Red (White) Scores Ippon." The Referee obliquely raises his arm on the side of the winner (as in ...NO KACHI).

ASHI BARAI - Foot Sweep.

ASHI WAZA - Name given to all leg and foot techniques.

ATEMI WAZA - Striking techniques that are normally used in conjunction with grappling and throwing techniques.

AWASE UKE - "Joined Hand Block".

AWASE ZUKI - "U Punch". Also referred to as MOROTE ZUKI.

B

BO -Staff. A long stick used as a weapon (approximately 6 feet long).

BUDO - "Martial way." The Japanese character for "BU" (martial) is derived from characters meaning "stop" and (a weapon like a) "halberd." In conjunction, then, "BU" may have the connotation "to stop the halberd." In Karate, there is an assumption that the best way to prevent violent conflict is to emphasize the cultivation of individual character. The way (DO) of Karate is thus equivalent to the way of BU, taken in this sense of preventing or avoiding violence so far as possible.

BUNKAI - A study of the techniques and applications in KATA.

C

CHOKU ZUKI - "Straight Punch".

CHUDAN - "Mid-section." During the practice of KIHON IPPON KUMITE (one step basic sparring), the attacker will normally announce where he/she will attack JODAN, CHUDAN, or GEDAN (Upper level, Mid-level, or lower level).

CHUDAN ZUKI - A punch to the mid-section of the opponent's body.

D

DAN - "Lever", "Rank" or "Degree". Black Belt rank. Ranks under Black Belt are called KYU ranks.

DO - Way/path. The Japanese character for "DO" is the same as the Chinese character for Tao (as in "Taoism"). In Karate, the connotation is that of a way of attaining enlightenment or a way of improving ones character through traditional training.

DOJO - Literally "place of the Way." Also "place of enlightenment." The place where we practice Karate. Traditional etiquette prescribes bowing in the direction of the designated front of the dojo (SHOMEN) whenever entering or leaving the dojo.

DOMO ARIGATO GOZAIMASHITA - Japanese for "thank you very much." At the end of each class, it is proper to bow and thank the instructor and those with whom you've trained.

E

EKKU - A Wooden oar used by the Okinawans which was improvised as a weapon.

EMBUSEN - Floor pattern of a given KATA.

EMPI - "Elbow" Sometimes referred to as HIJI.

F

FUMIKOMI - "Stomp kick", usually applied to the knee, shin, or instep of an opponent.

G

GANKAKU DACHI - "Crane Stance", sometimes referred to as TSURU ASHI DACHI and SAGI ASHI DACHI.

GASSHUKU - A special training camp.

GEDAN - Lower section. During the practice of KIHON IPPON KUMITE (one step basic sparring), the attacker will normally announce where he/she will attack JODAN, CHUDAN, or GEDAN (Upper level, Mid-level, or lower level).

GEDAN BARAI - "Downward Block".

GEDAN UDE UKE - "Low Forearm Block".

GEDAN ZUKI - A punch to the lower section of the opponent's body.

GI (DO GI) (KEIKO GI) (KARATE GI) - Training costume. In Wado Kai and in most other traditional Japanese and Okinawan Karate Dojo, the GI must be white and cotton (Synthetics with Cotton allowed). The only markings allowed is the Wado-Kai lettering on the left breast area.

GO NO SEN - The tactic where one allows the opponent to attack first so to open up targets for counterattack.

GOHON KUMITE - Five step basic sparring. The attacker steps in five consecutive times with a striking technique with each step. The defender steps back five times, blocking each technique. After the fifth block, the defender executes a counter-strike.

GYAKU MAWASHI GERI - "Reverse Round-house Kick".

GYAKU ZUKI - "Reverse Punch".

H

HACHIJI DACHI - A natural stance, feet positioned about one shoulder width apart, with feet pointed slightly outward.

HAI - "Yes".

HAISHU UCHI - A strike with the back of the hand.

HAISHU UKE - A block using the back of the hand.

HAITO UCHI - "Ridge-hand Strike".

HAJIME - "Begin". A command given to start a given drill, Kata, or Kumite.

HANGETSU DACHI - "Half-Moon Stance".

HANSHI - "Master." An honorary title given to the highest Black Belt of an organization, signifying their understanding of their art.

HASAMI ZUKI - "Scissor Punch".

HARAITE - "Sweeping technique with the arm."

HARM WAZA - "Sweeping techniques".

HEIKO DACHI - A natural stance. Feet positioned about one shoulder width apart, with feet pointed straight forward. Some Kata begin from this position.

HEIKO ZUKI - "Parallel Punch" (A double, simultaneous punch).

HEISOKU DACHI - An informal attention stance. Feet are together and pointed straight forward.

HENKA WAZA - Techniques used after OYO WAZA is applied. HENKA WAZA is varied and many, dependent on the given condition.

HIDARI - "Left".

HIJI - "Elbow", also known as Empi.

HIJI ATEMI - "Elbow Strikes".

HIJI UKE - A blocking action using the elbow.

HIKI-TE - The retracting (pulling and twisting) arm during a technique. It gives the balance of power to the forward moving technique. It can also be used as a pulling technique after a grab, or a strike backward with the elbow.

HITOSASHI IPPON KEN - "Forefinger Knuckle".

HIZA GERI - "Knee Kick".

HIZAUKE - A blocking action using the knee.

HOMBU DOJO - A term used to refer to the central dojo of an organization.

HORAN NO KAMAE - "Egg in the Nest Ready Position." A "ready" position used in some KATA where the fist is covered by the other hand.

I

IPPON KEN - "One Knuckle Fist".

IPPON KUMITE - "One step sparring".

IPPON NUKITE - A stabbing action using the extended index finger.

IPPON SHOBU - One point match, used in tournaments.

J

JIKAN - "Time". Used in tournaments.

JIYU IPPON KUMITE - "One step free sparring". The participants can attack with any technique whenever ready.

JIYU KUMITE - "Free Sparring".

JO - Wooden staff about 4'-5' in length. The JO originated as a walking stick.

JODAN - Upper level. During the practice of KIHON IPPON KUMITE (one step basic sparring), the attacker will normally announce where he/she will attack JODAN, CHUDAN, or GEDAN (Upper level, Mid-level, or lower level).

JOGAI - "Out of Bounds". Used in tournaments.

JUJI UKE - "X Block".

K

KACHI - Victorious. (e.g., AKA KACHI) in a tournament.

KAGI ZUKI - "Hook Punch".

KAISHO - "Open hand." This refers to the type of blow which is delivered with the open palm. It can also be used to describe other hand blows in which the fist is not fully clenched.

KAKE-TE - "Hook Block."

KAKIWAKE - A two handed block using the outer surface of the wrist to neutralize a two-handed attack, such as a grab.

KAKUSHI WAZA - "Hidden techniques."

KAKUTO UCHI - "Wrist joint strike." Also known as "KO UCH."

KAKUTO UKE - "Wrist Joint Block." Also known as KO UKE.

KAMAE - A posture or stance either with or without a weapon. KAMAE may also connote proper distance (Ma-ai) with respect to one's partner. Although "KAMAE" generally refers to a physical stance, there is an important parallel in Karate between one's physical and one's psychological bearing. Adopting a strong physical stance helps to promote the correlative adoption of a strong psychological attitude. It is important to try so far as possible to maintain a positive and strong mental bearing in Karate.

KAMAE-TE - A command given by the instructor for students to get into position.

KAPPO - Techniques of resuscitating people who have succumbed to a shock to the nervous system.

KARATE - "Empty Hand". When Karate was first introduced to Japan, it was called "TO-DE". The characters of TODE could be pronounced. However, the meaning of TODE is Chinese Hand.

KARATE-DO - "The Way of Karate". This implies not only the physical aspect of Karate, but also the mental and social aspects of Karate.

KARATEKA - A practitioner of Karate.

KATA - A "form" or prescribed pattern of movement. (But also "shoulder.")

KEAGE - Snap Kick. (Literally, Kick upward).

KEIKO - (1) Training. The only secret to success in Karate. (2) "Joined Fingertips".

KEKOMI - Thrust Kick (Literally, Kick Into/Straight).

KEMPO - "Fist Law." A generic term to describe fighting systems that uses the fist. In this regard, KARATE is also KEMPO.

KENSEI - The technique with silent KIAI. Related to meditation.

KENTSUI - "Hammer Fist" Also known as TETTSUI. KENTSUI UCHI (Or TETTSUI UCHI) "Hammer Fist Strike".

KERI - "Kick".

KI - Mind. Spirit. Energy. Vital force. Intention. (Chinese chi) The definitions presented here are very general. KI is one word that cannot be translated directly into any language.

KIAI - A shout delivered for the purpose of focusing all of one's energy into a single movement. Even when audible KIAI are absent, one should try to preserve the feeling of KIAI at certain crucial points within Karate techniques. Manifestation of KI (simultaneous union of spirit and expression of physical strength).

KIBA DACHI - "Straddle Stance". Also known as NAIFANCHI or NAIHANCHI DACHI.

KIHON - (Something which is) fundamental. Basic techniques.

KIME - Focus of Power.

KI-O-TSUKU - "Attention". Musubi Dachi with open hands down both sides.

KIZAMI ZUKI - "Jab Punch".

KO BO ICHI - The concept of "AttackDefence Connection".

KO UCHI - "Wrist joint strike." Also known as KAKUTO UCHI.

KO UKE - "Crane Block" or "Arch Block". Same as KAKUTO UKE.

KOHAI - A student junior to oneself.

KOKORO - "Spirit, Heart." In Japanese culture, the spirit dwells in the Heart.

KUBOTAN - A self-defense tool developed by TAKAYUKI KUBOTA. This tool serves normally as a key chain.

KOKEN - "Wrist Joint".

KOKUTSU DACHI - A stance which has most of the weight to the back. Referred to in English as "Back Stance".

KOSA DACHI - "Crossed-Leg Stance".

KOSHIN - "Rearward".

KUATSU - The method of resuscitating a person who has lost consciousness due to strangulation or shock.

KUMADE - "Bear hand."

KYU - "Grade". Any rank below Shodan.

KYUSHO WAZA - Pressure Point techniques.

M

MA-AI - Proper distancing or timing with respect to one's partner. Since Karate techniques always vary according to circumstances, it is important to understand how differences in initial position affect the timing and application of techniques.

MAE - Front.

MAE ASHI GERI - Kicking with the front leg.

MAE GERI KEAGE - "Front Snap Kick". Also referred to as MAE KEAGE.

MAE GERI KEKOMI - "Front Thrust Kick". Also referred to as MAE KEKOMI.

MAE UKEMI - "forward fall/roll".

MAKOTO - A feeling of absolute sincerity and total frankness, which requires a pure mind, free from pressure of events.

MANABU - "Learning by imitating." A method of studying movement and techniques by following and imitating the instructor.

MANJI UKE - A Double block where one arm executes GEDAN BARAI to one side, while the other arm executes JODAN UCHI UKE (or JODAN SOTO YOKO TE).

MATTE - "Wait".

MAWASHI GERI - "Roundhouse Kick".

MAWASHI ZUKI - "Roundhouse Punch".

MAWASHI HIJI ATE - "Circular Elbow Strike". Also referred to as MAWASHI EMPI UCHI.

MAWAT-TE - A command given by the instructor for students to turn around.

MIGI - Right.

MIKAZUKI GERI - "Crescent Kick".

MOKUSO - Meditation. Practice often begins or ends with a brief period of meditation. The purpose of meditation is to clear one's mind and to develop cognitive equanimity. Perhaps more importantly, meditation is an opportunity to become aware of conditioned patterns of thought and behavior so that such patterns can be modified, eliminated or more efficiently put to use.

MOROTE ZUKI - "U-Punch". Punching with both fists simultaneously. Also referred to as AWASE ZUKI.

MOROTE UKE - "Augmented Block". One arm and fist support the other arm in a block.

MUDANSHA - Students without black-belt ranking.

MUSHIN - "No Mind." The state of being that allows freedom and flexibility to react and adapt to a given situation.

MUSUBI DACHI - An attention stance with feet pointed slightly outward.

N

NAGASHI UKE - "Sweeping Block".

NAIFANCHI DACHI - "Straddle Stance." Also referred to as NAIHANCHI DACHI and KIBA DACHI.

NAIHANCHI DACHI - "Straddle Stance". Also referred to as KIBA DACHI and NAIFANCHI DACHI.

NAKADAKA IPPON KEN - "Middle Finger Knuckle".

NAMI-GAESHI - "Returning Wave." Foot technique found in Tekki Shodan to block an attack to the groin area. The technique can also be used to strike the opponent's inner thigh or knee.

NEKO ASHI DACHI - "Cat Stance".

NIHON NUKITE - Two finger stabbing attack.

NIDAN - Second Level, as in Second Degree Black Belt.

NIDAN GERI - "Double Kick".

NUKITE - "Spear Hand".

NUNCHAKU - An Okinawan weapon consisting of two sticks connected by rope or chain. This was originally used by the Okinawans as a farm tool to thrash rice straw.

O

OBI - A belt.

OI-ZUKI - "Lunge Punch".

ONEGAI SHIMASU - "I welcome you to train with me," or literally, "I make a request." This is said to one's partner when initiating practice.

OSAE UKE - "Pressing Block".

OTOSHI EMPI UCHI - An elbow strike by dropping the elbow. Also referred to as Otoshi Hiji Ate.

OYAYUBI IPPON KEN - "Thumb Knuckle".

OYO WAZA - Applications interpreted from techniques in Kata, implicated according to a given condition.

R

REI - "Respect". A method of showing respect in Japanese culture is the Bow. It is proper for the junior person bows lower than the senior person.

REIGI - Etiquette. Also referred to as REISHIKI. Observance of proper etiquette at all times (but especially observance of proper DOJO etiquette) is as much a part of one's training as the practice of techniques. Observation of etiquette indicates one's sincerity, one's willingness to learn, and one's recognition of the rights and interests of others.

REINOJI DACHI - A stance with feet making a 'L-shape.'

RENSEI - Practice Tournament. Competitors are critiqued on their performances.

RENSHI - "A person who has mastered oneself." This person is considered an expert instructor. This status is prerequisite before attaining the status as KYOSHI.

S

SAG/ ASH/ DACHI - One Leg Stance. Also referred to as GANKAKU DACHI or TSURU ASH/ DACHI.

SAI - An Okinawan weapon that is shaped like the Greek letter 'Psi' with the middle being much longer.

SANBON KUMITE - "Three Step Sparring".

SANBON SHOBU - Three Point match. Used in tournaments.

SANCHIN DACHI - "Hour-glass Stance".

SASHITE - Raising of the hand either to strike, grab, or block.

SEIKEN - "Forefist".

SEIRYUTO - "Bull Strike." A hand technique delivered with the base of the SHUTO (Knife hand).

SERA - A proper sitting position. Sitting on one's knees. Sitting this way requires acclimatization, but provides both a stable base and greater ease of movement than sitting cross-legged. It is used for the formal opening and closing of the class.

SEMPAI - A senior student.

SEN NO SEN - Attacking at the exact moment when the opponent attacks.

SEN SEN NO SEN - Attacking before the opponent attacks. Preemptive attack.

SENSEI - Teacher. It is usually considered proper to address the instructor during practice as "Sensei" rather than by his/her name. If the instructor is a permanent instructor for one's DOJO or for an organization, it is proper to address him/her as "Sensei" off the mat as well.

SHIAI - A match or a contest (Event).

SHIDOIN - Formally recognized Instructor who has not yet be recognized as a SENSEI. Assistant Instructor.

SHIHAN - A formal title meaning, approximately, "master instructor." A "teacher of teachers."

SHIKO DACHI - "Square Stance". A stance often used in Goju-Ryu and Shito-Ryu.

SHIZENTAI - "Natural Position". The body remains relaxed but alert.

SHOMEN - Front or top of head. Also the designated front of a Dojo.

SHUTO UKE - "Knife-hand Block".

SOCHIN DACHI - "Immovable Stance". Also referred to as Fudo Dachi.

SOKUTO - "Edge of foot". This term is often used to refer to the side thrust kick.

SOTO (UDE) UKE - Outside (Forearm) Block.

SUKUI UKE - "Scooping Block".

SUWARI WAZA - "Techniques from a sitting position."

T

TAI SABAKI - Body movement/shifting.

TATE EMPI - "Upward Elbow Strike".

TATE ZUKI - "Vertical Punch." A fist punch with the palm along a vertical plane.

TEIJI DACHI - A Stance with the feet in a 'T-shape.'

TEISHO UCHI - "Palm Heel Strike".

TEISHO UKE - "Palm Heel Block".

TETTSUI UCHI - "Hammer Strike". Also called KENTSUI.

TOBI GERI - "Jump Kick".

TONFA - A farm tool developed into a weapon by the Okinawans.

TSUKAMI WAZA - "Catching technique." A blocking technique by seizing the opponent's weapon, arm, or leg. Used often for grappling techniques.

TSUKI - A punch or thrust (esp. an attack to the midsection).

TSURU ASHI DACHI - "Crane Stance", also referred to as GANKAKU DACHI and SAGI ASHI DACHI.

TUITE - Grappling skills.

U

UCHI MAWASHI GERI - "Inside Roundhouse Kick".

UCHI (UDE) UKE - "Inside (Forearm) Block".

UKE - Block.

UKEMI WAZA - "Break fall techniques."

URA ZUKI - An upper cut punch used at close range.

URAKEN - "Back Knuckle".

USHIRO EMPI UCHI - Striking to the rear with the elbow.

USHIRO GERI - Back Kick.

W

WAZA - Technique(s).

Y

YAMA ZUKI - "Mountain Punch". A wide U-shaped dual punch.

YAME - "Stop".

YASUMI - "Rest." A term used by the instructor to have the students relax, normally following a long series of drills.

YOI - "Ready".

YOKO - "Side".

YOKO GERI KEAGE - "Side Snap Kick". Also referred to as YOKO KEAGE.

YOKO GERI KEKOMI - "Side Thrust Kick". Also referred to as YOKO KEKOMI.

YOKO MAWASHI EMPI UCHI - Striking with the elbow to the side.

YOKO TOBI GERI - "Flying Side Kick".

YUDANSHA - Black belt holder (any rank).

Z

ZANSHIN - Lit. "remaining mind/heart." Even after a Karate technique has been completed, one should remain in a balanced and aware state. ZANSHIN thus connotes "following through" in a technique, as well as preservation of one's awareness so that one is prepared to respond to additional attacks.

ZA-REI - The traditional Japanese bow from the kneeling position.

ZENKUTSU DACHI - "Forward Stance".

ZENSHIN - "Forward".

ZORI - Japanese slippers.

JAPANESE NUMBERS

1 Ichi

2 Ni

3 San

4 Shi

5 Go

6 Roku

7 Shichi

8 Hachi

9 Kyu or Ku

10 Ju