

Welcome to the BYU Shotokai Karate Club

Club Mission Statement:

We seek tranquility in the midst of conflict or danger and strive to control our bodies, minds, and emotions to be able to avoid conflict when possible, defend ourselves when necessary, and protect others when able.

Dress Code:

As you notice, club members wear a funny looking outfit called a “gi” (pronounced g^{ee} not j^{ee}). A white gi is the traditional dress of karate and allows for freedom of movement while kicking or participating in other activities.

A gi is not required for participation in the BYU Shotokai Karate club. Sweat pants or other loose pants are acceptable. We suggest, however, that club members not wear jeans as they can limit range of motion. Because this is a BYU club, clothing not conforming to the BYU honor code is not acceptable. In addition, shorts should not be worn to practice.

Please do not wear watches, rings, bracelets, earrings, etc. during practice.

Karate Etiquette:

Please keep your fingernails and toenails trimmed to avoid injury to yourself and to your partner.

Please do not talk when exercises are demonstrated or while questions are being answered.

Questions are always appropriate and you should feel free to ask questions whenever you do not understand an exercise. The best time to ask questions is immediately following a demonstration.

Asking your partner questions while practicing is also appropriate. Though, excessive socializing while practicing is not appropriate.

Partners:

In the club, we often work with partners. This is NOT a competition. We are working together to help

ourselves and our partners. You are not trying to trounce your partner.

A Typical Practice:

Warm-Ups and Stretching: We warm up and then we stretch.

Seiza: This is a time to relax and forget about homework, exams, boy/girlfriends, lack of boy/girlfriends, etc.

Club Mission Statement: We recite our club mission statement at the beginning of each practice.

Kata: We often practice kata, or forms, at the beginning of practice to begin to develop a relaxed body condition. Kata are also used to develop focus and technique.

Kihon: Various exercises and demonstrations will follow. These exercises are designed to develop skill in proper distance, timing, speed, and body condition.

Kumite: We then apply what we have practiced in kihon exercises in more realistic situations. Kumite may take various forms depending upon the level of the participants

We will then bow to end the practice.

Frequently-Asked Questions:

Q: Where do we get some of the highly fashionable white PJs? [Gi] **A:** At the beginning of each semester, our instructor places an order for equipment.

Q: Why don't you shout when you punch? **A:** The technical term for the shouting is kiai. Many styles of martial arts use the kiai to focus attention and strength in punches and kicks. In Shotokai, we are taught more appropriate ways of focusing each strike.

Q: In what ways is Shotokai different from other martial arts? **A:** There are differences and similarities between Shotokai and other martial arts. Similarities include the fact that, like many other styles of martial arts, Shotokai employs punches, kicks, and blocks. We are different primarily because, unlike many styles of martial arts, Shotokai is self-defense oriented. This means that we do not

participate in competitions of any sort and that our primary goal is to develop the ability to realistically protect ourselves when necessary. Because of these self-defense goals, in Shotokai we concentrate on technical aspects of the martial arts such as proper muscle control, timing, distance, speed, and power more than many other styles of martial arts.

Q: When do we get to beat on each other? **A:** As we recite in our club mission statement, we try to avoid conflict when possible.

Q: Why don't we get to beat the snot out of each other yet? **A:** In our club we are very concerned that the proper body condition is developed so that our techniques are conducted correctly. Because of this, we are very cautious in introducing exercises that are too advanced (such as advanced sparring situations). Before more dynamic exercises can be introduced, the necessary groundwork to advanced techniques must be mastered.

Q: Is this safe, or are people going to beat the snot out of me on a bi-weekly basis? **A:** Shotokai karate is fairly safe. The most severe accident we have had in the history of the club is a broken toe, and this occurred when the victim was goofing off. The most pain you are likely to experience in club is the aching muscles in your legs you'll develop after a hard practice.

Q: Do you compete? **A:** No.

Q: What kinds of techniques do you practice normally? **A:** kicks, blocks (and various counterattacks), punches, and avoiding attacks.

Links

• Official American KDS Website...

<http://www.shotokai.org/>

• BYU Shotokai Karate Club...

<http://clubs.byu.edu/shotokai/>