

*TRADITIONAL
KARATE NORTH
CENTRAL REGION
TOURNAMENT
RULES*

for Kyu Rank Competitors

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Traditional Karate North Central Region | AAKF

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide a set of rules and procedures for kyu rank competition. By having kyu rank students competing in a tournament format, the students will learn to manage stress from competition, train harder to prepare for the competition, see how they progress in their training comparing to others, build teams and team-work skills, develop more self-confidence, making friends, build character, and becoming a better person. This is the essence of training in traditional karate-do.

Competition Events and Format for Kyu Ranks

Events

These are the recommended events for kyu rank competition: Individual Kata and individual Kumite, team synchronized kata and enbu.

Format

Competition Area

The competition area shall be the area marked with tapes per the World Traditional Karate-do Federation (WTKF) requirements.

Divisions

The kyu competitors are divided into 4 division levels. Each level can be separated by gender and age if there are enough competitors to make up a pool. Otherwise, they can be mixed if agreed by the coaches and competitors.

Level 1 division is a group of 8th kyu, 9th kyu and white belt

Level 2 division is a group of 7th kyu and 6th kyu

Level 3 division is a group of 5th kyu and 4th kyu

Level 4 division is a group of 3rd kyu, 2nd kyu and 1st kyu

Division and Matches

A division can have more than one pool and each pool can have up to 6 competitors competing in a round robin format or double elimination format. Each pool will start out with kata matches and then kumite matches.

Judging

A kata match will have 2 competitors performing the kata at the same time. At the end of the performance the winner is the one with the most flags from the judges. There will be a minimum of 3 judges per match (shushin and 2 fukoshins) and up to 5 judges per match (shushin and 4 fukoshins.)

A kumite match is judged based on the specific level requirements and the winner will be declared by the main judge (shushin) at the end of each match.

Kata Events

Individual Kata

The competitor can choose to perform the allowable kata for a division per round in a pool. Example, a level 2 competitor can do Heian Sandan on the first round then do Heian Yondan on the second round or Heian Sandan again. Two competitors will compete at the same time and the winner will be the one with the most flags declared by the court judges.

Procedure

Each competitor is designated as aka (red) or shiro (white). The competitors wait outside of the competition area on the designated color side. The head judge (shushin) will signal the competitors to enter the competition area and stop at the designated position. The shushin will signal the competitors to bow to the shushin by announcing “rei”. Then the competitors will turn and face each other and bow. Both competitors turn back and face the shushin in shizen-tai (ready position). The shushin points to aka competitor and announces “kata” and the aka competitor replies by announcing the name of the kata to be performed. The shushin will repeat the kata name to confirm. Then the procedure is repeated for shiro competitor.

The shushin will start the match by announcing “hajime” or “begin”. When a competitor is done performing the kata, the competitor returns to ready position and wait. When both competitors are at ready position, the shushin will ask for a judgment by blowing a long whistle then a short whistle. At this point, all judges will raise the color flag of the competitor they believe was the better of the two competitors. The competitor with the most flags will be declared winner by the shushin.

Once a winner is declared, the competitors will face each other and bow, then turn and face the shushin and bow. The shushin will signal the competitors to step backwards and move out of the competition area. Once out of the competition area, the competitors must bow once more before moving away.

Judging Considerations

The court judges must decide the better competitor by choosing the appropriate Red or White flag when the shushin asking for the judgment at the end of the match by blowing a long whistle then a short whistle. After the short whistle, the corner judges must immediately raise the decided flag. No penalties are to be considered.

Factors to consider for deciding which competitor is better:

- Form (stances, punches, blocks, hips position in blocks/punches, snaps in kicks, target of technique)
- Transition (proper path of the arms or leg from starting position to ending position, proper turns, balance)

- Body dynamics (breathing, body contraction & expansion, pressure to the floor using muscles contraction)
- Power (acceleration of each technique, proper muscle contraction at end of technique, total use of body for every technique, proper form)

Acceptable katas per division is listed below:

Level 1 division – Heian Shodan, or Heian Nidan

Level 2 division – Heian Sandan or Heian Yondan

Level 3 division – Heian Godan or Tekki Shodan

Level 4 division – Basai Dai, Jion, Empi, or Kanku Dai

Team Synchronized Kata

Each team will perform a kata specific to a division and will receive a total score from the judges after each performance. The team with the highest score in a division will win the team kata competition for that division. Each judge will give a score based on the following criteria.

- Synchronization of the team
- Form and proper transition of each competitor from one move to the next
- Body dynamics and power of each technique
- Skill level impression and budo spirit

Individual Kumite Event

This is a modified type of sparring event for kyu rank competitors. It is designed to allow participants to gradually improve their techniques, confidence, and experience in a kumite match and ultimately transition to black belt level free sparring kumite.

Main points of consideration

- Budo spirit (fighting spirit, etiquette, appearance)
- Form and transition — posture, eye vector, balance
- Body dynamics and power – use of floor, breathing, muscles contraction
- Todome-waza — proper technique, kime, and zanshin
- Timing — proper rhythm of attack or counter
- Ma-ai — technique applied at the appropriate distance

Format of Competition

There is an attacker and defender designation for each exchange. Red (Aka) side attacks first, then when all red side attacks are finished, White (Shiro) side becomes the attacker.

Level 1 - 8th, 9th Kyu and white belt (youth and adult)

At this level all competitors are starting to learn proper body control and timing. The purpose is to build better body control and learn to react with good timing. Therefore, distance in attacking and defending is not emphasized or penalized. **Proper form and reaction are the deciding factors.**

Exchanges – (jiyu dachi – fighting stance)

There are **6** exchanges (3 for each side attacking) (**ippon kumite**.) The attacking techniques are:

1. Jodan (face) level shifting jab (kizami-tsuki jodan).
2. Chudan (body) reverse punch shifting into the body (gyaku tsuki chudan).
3. Chudan (body) front kick (from the back leg).

The competitors are in fighting stance (jiyu dachi) and move forward with the purpose to establish proper distance and timing for their actions. Once proper distance is established, competitors remain stationary.

Note: Switching of the leading leg in the stance is not allowed.

Procedure

1. Both competitors stand in ready position (Shizen-Tai) at their designated starting positions.
2. **First Attack:** Chief referee (Shushin) announces “**Aka jodan tsuki - hajime**” or “Red side punching head level - begin” and both competitors step forward in fighting stance (jiyu dachi).
3. The attacker must get into proper distance for the attack and execute the announced attack within **5 seconds**. The defender moves with the attacker to maintain proper distance (the competitors are within **3 ft apart** measuring front foot to front foot) and to be able to block and counter with the proper timing and form.
4. Both competitors go back in ready position (Shizen-Tai) at their designated starting positions.
5. **Second Attack:** Chief referee (Shushin) announces “**Aka chudan tsuki - hajime**” or “Red side punching body - begin” and both competitors step forward in fighting stance (jiyu dachi).
6. Both competitors go back in ready position (Shizen-Tai) at their designated starting positions.
7. **Third Attack:** Chief referee (Shushin) announces “**Aka chudan geri - hajime**” or “Red side front kick body - begin” and both competitors step forward in fighting stance (jiyu dachi).
8. Both competitors go back in ready position (Shizen-Tai) at their designated starting positions.
9. The above procedure is repeated with Shiro (White) side as the attacker and aka (red) as the defender
10. Once the attack/defense procedure is completed, the shushin follows the standard kumite procedure to end the match and designate a winner, e.g., aka/shiro no kachi. If there is tie, the shushin will immediately use the hantei (judgement) procedure to request the corner judge’s decision. The winner is the one with the most flags (red or white side) and will be declared by the shushin.

Constraints

- The defender must defend with a reverse punch using **go-no-sen** timing, i.e., the defender must allow the attacker to initiate the attack. The goal of the defender is to evade and/or block the attack, and counterattack.
- Each attacking punch or kick technique cannot make contact and must be at least **1 foot** from the face or body. Distance is not important at this level.

- The attacker must **hold their position** after executing the attack, providing a stationary target for the defender (similar to Kihon Ippon kumite, and Jiyu Ippon kumite).
 - Due to this constraint on the attacker, there is no Ippon (full point) awarded at this level
 - Any contact (except accidental) perpetrated by the attacker or defender may result in disqualification.

Scoring

- The attacker can score 4 points (wazari) by performing the attack with the proper form and timing and the defender couldn't execute a **block and counter**.
- The defender can score 4 points (wazari) by executing a block and reverse punch, with the proper timing (block immediately after the attacking technique finished) and form (correct block, stance, and body structure).

Penalty

Unless there is contact, no penalty will be considered for level 1. If the attacker attacks after the 5 seconds, the exchange is void without any points awarded. If there is contact, the shushin can disqualify the competitor making the contact and award the match's winner to the other competitor.

Level 2 - 6th and 7th Kyu (youth and adult)

The purpose of level 2 kumite is to help the competitors build better timing, form, and distance. This level also introduces the ability of the defender reacting to undefined attacking techniques with known target. The competitors will learn to move freely and adjusting their distance and timing for an attack or a defense. Distance in the attacking and defending is not emphasized or penalized. Both competitors must maintain **3 feet separation** (front foot to front foot). Proper reaction, form, and countering is the deciding factors.

Exchanges – (jiyu dachi – fighting stance)

There are **6** exchanges (3 for each side) (**ippon kumite**). The attacking techniques are:

1. Jodan (face) punching attack, either **jab** (kizami-tsuki jodan), **stepping in punch** (oi-tsuki jodan).
2. Chudan (body) kicking attack using a **front kick** (back leg only) to the body (mae geri chudan), or a **roundhouse** kick (mawashi geri, back leg only).
3. Chudan (body) any attacking technique using either **stepping in punch** (oi tsuki), or reverse punch (gyaku tsuki), or front kick (back leg), or roundhouse kick (back leg).

The competitors are in fighting stance (jiyu dachi) and are moving with the purpose to establish proper **distance and timing** for their actions.

Note: Switching of the leading leg in the stance is **not** allowed.

Procedure

1. Both competitors stand in ready position (Shizen-Tai) at their designated starting positions.
2. **First Attack:** Chief referee (Shushin) announces "**Aka jodan tsuki - hajime**" or "Red side punching head - begin" and both competitors step forward in fighting stance (jiyu dachi).
3. The attacker must get into proper distance (leading hands are within **3 feet**) for the attack and execute the announced attack within **5 seconds**. The defender moves with the attacker to

maintain proper distance and to be able to respond with the proper timing and distance (**within 1 foot from body or face but not closer**).

5. After the exchange both competitors go back in ready position (Shizen-Tai) at their designated starting positions.
6. **Second Attack:** Chief referee (Shushin) announces “**Aka chudan geri – hajime**” or “Red side kicking body – begin” and both competitors step forward in fighting stance (jiyu dachi).
7. Same attack/defense procedure as step 3.
8. After the exchange both competitors go back in ready position (Shizen-Tai) at their designated starting positions.
9. **Third Attack:** Chief referee (Shushin) announces “**Aka chudan waza**” or “Red side punching or kicking body – begin” and both competitors step forward in fighting stance (jiyu dachi).
10. Same attack/defense procedure as step 3.
11. After the exchange both competitors go back in ready position (Shizen-Tai) at their designated starting positions.
12. The procedures 1 through 9 are repeated with Shiro (White) side as attacker.
13. Once the attack/defense exchanges are completed, the shushin follows the standard kumite procedure to end the match and designate a winner, e.g., aka/shiro no kachi. If there is tie, the shushin will immediately start a hantei (judgement) procedure to obtain judgments from the fuku-shins. The winner is then announced, e.g., aka/shiro no kachi.

Constraints

- The defender can use only a single reverse punch technique to the body for the counter.
- The defender can **only use go-no-sen** timing (block then counter after the attacker started a technique.)
- The defender **must counterattack using a reverse punch** after blocking (or evading.)
- The attacker can **block the counterattack** to prevent the defender from scoring. No counterattack from the attacker after the block.
- The attacker **cannot feint** (fake) an attack and must commit within 5 seconds.
- All punches and kicks must be **no closer than 1 foot** from the body or face.
- No face or body contact is allowed resulting from any technique. The shushin has the option to disqualify a competitor for making contact.

Scoring

- A wazari (4 points) is given to the **attacker** if the defender couldn't properly block and counter plus the attacker's has proper form and timing of the technique.
- A wazari (4 points) is given to the **defender** if the blocks and reverse punch with proper form, timing, and the attacker couldn't block.
- If the 5 seconds is expired without engagement, then the exchange is over. No point is awarded.

Penalties

- A chui (4 points) if the attacker or defender makes body or face contact. The shushin has the option to stop the match and award the offended competitor as the winner.
- A keikoku (2 points) penalty against the defender for starting the counter before the attacker initiates the attacking technique.
- A keikoku (2 points) penalty to either competitor for unsanctioned techniques as described in the Level 2 exchanges section.

Level 3 – 4th and 5th Kyu (youth & adult)

The purpose of level 3 kumite is to prepare the competitors for kogo kumite by learning to attack different targets using different techniques combining punching and kicking. It also prepares the defender to move with the attacker and adjusting distance and timing to mount a defense after evading or blocking the attacks. The attacker is required to execute a combination of 2 techniques. Attacker and defender must maintain **3 feet distance** measuring front foot to front foot while moving. All attacking or defending techniques **must not be any closer than 6 inches** from the body or face.

Exchanges – (jiyu dachi – fighting stance)

There are **six** exchanges (three for each side attacking). The three attacking exchanges are:

1. Arms only exchange - **two punching attacks**, any sequence, targeting jodan (face) or chudan (body). Defender can counter with one technique using either a reverse punch or kick from the back leg (mae geri or mawashi geri). Attacker can block a counter and counterattack with a reserve punch and the defender can block the attacker's counter to prevent a scoring.
2. Arm and leg exchange - **one punch, one kick (mae geri or mawashi geri, using front or back leg)**, in any sequence, targeting jodan (face) or chudan (body). Defender can counter with one technique using either punch or kick. Attacker can defend a counter with an arm or leg technique and the defender can block the attacker's counter.
3. Free exchange - attacker attacks with **any combination of two techniques (kick-punch, punch-kick, punch-punch, kick-kick)**. The defender responds with one counter technique using punch or kick. Attacker can defend a counter with an arm or leg technique and the defender can block the attacker's counter to prevent a scoring.

Note:

- The **defender** must **counterattack after blocking (or evading)** in each exchange.
- The defender can counter after the first technique of the attacker's combination if the timing is good.
- Switching of the leading leg in the stance **is allowed**.

Procedure

1. Both competitors stand in ready position (Shizen-Tai) at their designated starting positions.
2. **First Attack:** Chief referee (Shushin) announces “**Aka tsuki renzoku waza - hajime**” or “Red side punching combination - begin” and both competitors step forward in fighting stance (jiyu dachi).
3. The attacker must get into proper distance (leading hands are within **one foot**) for the attack and execute the announced attack within **5 seconds**. The defender moves with the attacker to maintain proper distance (3 feet from front foot to front foot) and to be able to respond with the proper timing and distance (**no closer than 6 inches** from body or face.) The exchange is

judged based on kumite rules, with the possible award of Waza-ari (half point) or Ippon (full point), penalties, or neither (tora-nai) to either side.

4. After the exchange both competitors go back in ready position (Shizen-Tai) at their designated starting positions.
5. **Second Attack:** Chief referee (Shushin) announces “**Aka tsuki geri renzoku waza - hajime**” or “Red side punching kicking combination - begin” and both competitors step forward in fighting stance (jiyu dachi).
6. The attacker must get into proper distance for the attack and execute the announced attack within 5 seconds. The defender moves with the attacker to maintain proper distance and to be able to respond with the proper timing.
7. After the exchange both competitors go back in ready position (Shizen-Tai) at their designated starting positions.
8. **Third Attack:** Chief referee (Shushin) announces “**Aka renzoku waza - hajime**” or “Red any two techniques combination - begin” and both competitors step forward in fighting stance (jiyu dachi).
9. The attacker must get into proper distance for the attack and execute the announced attack within **5 seconds**. The defender moves with the attacker to maintain proper distance and to be able to respond with the proper timing.
10. After the exchange both competitors go back in ready position (Shizen-Tai) at their designated starting positions.
11. The procedure is repeated with Shiro (White) side as attacker.

Once the attack/defense exchanges are completed, the shushin follows the standard kumite procedure to end the match and designate a winner, e.g., aka/shiro no kachi. If there is tie, the shushin will immediately use the han-tei (judgement) procedure to determine the winner. The winner is then announced, e.g., aka/shiro no kachi.

Constraints

- The allowable kicks are front kick (mae-geri), or roundhouse kick (mawashi geri) using front or back leg.
- The defender can **only use go-no-sen** timing (counter after the attacker started a technique.)
- The **defender** must **immediately counterattack** after blocking (or evading).
- The **attacker** can **counterattack** after blocking (or evading) the counter from the **defender and the defender can only block the counter from the attacker to prevent scoring.**
- Contacts are not allowed from both competitors and all techniques must be **no closer than 6 inches.**

Scoring

Superior timing and reaction, together with a decisive technique (Todome Waza) can potentially lead to the award of Ippon (full point) for either side. Scoring considerations are the same as kogo kumite. The attacker must execute 2 techniques (no more and no less) to be considered a scoring technique. A single counter technique (punch or kick) can be considered for scoring.

Penalties:

- Keikoku (2 points) penalty against the defender if escaping too far to be able to execute a proper counterattack.
- Saki (2 points) penalty against the defender for initiating a counterattack before the attacker starts the attacking combination.
- Ni-ten (2 points) is awarded to the **defender** if the attacker fails to execute 2 consecutive combination techniques (one or more than two techniques.)
- Chui (4 points) penalty if either competitor makes contact to their opponent's face or body resulting from an attacking or counter technique (unless the contact is accidental and minor/light.) The shushin along with the court judges can issue a hansoku (disqualification) to the offending competitor and award the winner of the match to the competitor that was hit (aka/shiro hansoku, ni-yori shiro/aka no-kashi.)
- If there are no exchanges after 5 seconds the match is voided with no points award.

Level 4 – 3rd, 2nd, and 1st Kyu (youth & adult)

Level 4 kumite is using WTKF Kogo kumite match and rules. This will prepare the participants to be comfortable and skillful in regular free sparring matches. Both competitors are freely moving and adjusting distance and learning how and when to attack or defend and counter. Distance of stances and techniques are judged along with power from the floor using proper body dynamics and timing are considered for possible Todome Waza finishing blow. Each side will take turn as an offense and initiates the attacks. Strategies are learned and used to attack and defend. The match is much quicker than the standard free sparring match.

YOUTH - Brown and black Belts

1st, 2nd, 3rd Kyu, Shodan 14 and Under – Kogo kumite per WTKF Rules

Black Belt 15 - 17 - Kogo or Free Kumite (or both) per WTKF Rules

ADULT - Brown Belts

1st, 2nd, 3rd Kyu - Kogo Kumite per WTKF Rules

World Traditional Karate-do Federation (WTKF) Kogo Kumite Rules (summary)

Kogo kumite was developed by Master Hidetaka Nishiyama to allow competitors to experience the format of free parring but in a controlled engagement. The kogo match is composed of 3 independent sparring mini matches and is quicker than a normal free sparring match. Kogo kumite requires the attacker and defender to use strategies in each engagement. Each mini match lasts no more than 10 seconds. The defender is required to look for an opportunity to counter and score. If the defender just only escaping and avoiding the attack, then a penalty will apply to the defender.

Engagements – Jiyu Dachi (Fighting Stance)

There are six engagements, and they are mini one-point matches, three for each side (Aka or Shiro). Aka will start first as the offense side initiating attacks for 3 mini matches than Shiro becomes the offense side for 3 mini matches. Any technique can be used at only allowable targets as defined by the standard kumite rules. All techniques (punching or kicking) must be controlled, stopped before making contact and not “go through” a body or face. Contact to the body and face is not allowed and could result in a disqualification. A technique must be within 2 inches from the face and 1 inch from the body to be considered a possible scoring opportunity.

Procedures

1. Both competitors stand in ready position (Shizen-Tai) at their designated starting positions.
2. **First Attack:** Chief referee (Shushin) announces “**Aka ko-geki ik-kai- Shobu Ippon Hajime**” or “Red attacking first time – one point match begin” and both competitors step forward in fighting stance (jiyu dachi).
3. The attacker must get into proper distance and execute the attack within **10 seconds**. The defender moves with the attacker to maintain proper distance to respond with a counter. The engagement is judged based on kumite rules, with the possible award of Waza-ari (half point) or Ippon (full point), penalties, or neither (tora-nai) to either side.
4. After the engagement both competitors go back in ready position (Shizen-Tai) at their designated starting positions.
5. **Second Attack:** Chief referee (Shushin) announces “**Aka ko-geki ni-kai- Shobu Ippon Hajime**” or “Red attacking second time – one point match begin” and both competitors step forward in fighting stance (jiyu dachi).
6. The attacker must get into proper distance for the attack and execute an attack within 10 seconds. The defender moves with the attacker to maintain proper distance and to be able to counter with the proper timing.
7. After the engagement both competitors go back in ready position (Shizen-Tai) at their designated starting positions.

8. **Third Attack:** Chief referee (Shushin) announces “**Aka ko-geki san-kai- Shobu Ippon Hajime**” or “Red attacking third time – one point match begin” and both competitors step forward in fighting stance (jiyu dachi).
9. The attacker must get into proper distance for the attack and execute an attack within 10 seconds. The defender moves with the attacker to maintain proper distance and to be able to counter with the proper timing.
10. After the engagement both competitors go back in ready position (Shizen-Tai) at their designated starting positions.
11. The procedure is repeated with Shiro (White) side as attacker.

Once the offense/defense engagements are completed, the shushin follows the standard kumite procedure to end the match and designate a winner, e.g., aka/shiro no kachi. If there is tie, the shushin will immediately call all of the court judges (shugo). Once the winner is agreed by the court judges, the shushin use the han-tei (judgement) procedure to determine the winner. The winner is then announced, e.g., aka/shiro no kachi.

Constraints

- Defender cannot initiate an attack unless the leading hand of the attacker is within touching distance without reaching of the defender’s leading hand. Then the defender can tap the attacker’s leading hand and initiate an attack.
- Attacker’s leading hand cannot be lower than the elbow and cannot be close to the body or hiding behind the body.
- A feint from the attacker using the arms is considered a start of an attack.
- A feint from the attacker using body shifting is considered a start of an attack.
- All attacking/counterattacking techniques must be continuous with no pause in between.
- Offense can’t execute more than 4 continuous techniques.
- A maximum of 4 offense/defense exchanges of techniques.
- All offensive/defensive techniques must be continuous without pause.
- Each mini match lasts 10 seconds
- **Allowable target areas**

- Jodan (face)

Face target is defined as the area from eyebrow line to top of the ear, but not including the ear, down and around the chin and up to the top of the other ear.

- Chudan (body)

From the waistline to the armpit and across the chest not including the side of the body.

- **Prohibit targets:**

- Eyes, Ears, throat
- Top and head and base of head

- Groin
- Knees (front, side, and back)

Scoring

Standard kumite scoring rules applies. Superior timing and reaction, together with a decisive technique (Todome Waza) can potentially lead to the award of Ippon (full point) for either side. Judges look for the following criteria from scoring opportunities.

Ippon (execution of Todome Waza)

- Have maximum energy delivered to the appropriate target using pressure from the floor with both feet. Combining with sharp and total body muscular contraction to produce maximum shocking power (kime).
- Body must be stable with proper stance and momentum to absorb shock of impact (balance).
- Have total mental and physical equilibrium after executing the technique (Zanshin).
- Perfect timing of executing the technique when the opponent is mental and/or physically disrupted (Kyo).
- Correct distance and not making unnecessary contact, 2" from the face and 1" from the body (Ma-ai)

Waza-ari (half point)

- Timing is slightly off but technique is effective
- Power and stance is slightly off but technique is effective.
- Distance is too close or slightly too far.

Penalties

Standard kumite penalties apply in addition to the following.

- Jikan – 2 points awards to the defender. When 10-second time expired without an engagement from the offense side.
- Kakushi – 2 points awards to the defender. When the offense side drops or hides the leading hand so that the defender can't touch before the attack begins.
- Saki – 2 points awards to the offense side. When the defender starts the attack before the offense side initiates.
- Nige-tai – 2 points awards to the offense side. When the offense initiates a combination of attacking techniques and the defender only evade and escape without trying to counterattack.
- Tendo – 1 point awards to the side causing the fall, or not falling, if a scoring opportunity is not available.