

Washington Karate Academy

Student Information Packet



Welcome to the Washington Karate Academy! Thanks for joining our tradition of high quality training in traditional martial arts for personal development and self-defense. This packet contains basic information about the history of our system, expectations for training, history and general knowledge.

Please read this entire packet and bring your questions to class.

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HISTORY OF UECHI-RYU KARATE



Kanbun Uechi was the founding grand master in whose honor the Karate system of Uechi-Ryu (Pronounced Way-chee-Roo) Karate was named. Kanbun studied at the Central temple in the Fukien Province of Southern China during the years 1897-1910. The Chinese name for this system of Karate is Pwang-gai-noon, which means half-hard-half -soft. Kanbun was the first Okinawan to study this system. Kanbun studied under a Chinese teacher named Shishiwa, the last known instructor of Pwang gai noon in China.

Kanbun Uechi was born on May 5, 1877, in Izumi, a small farming village in Northern Okinawa. Through his youth, he learned to farm the land of his ancestors and studied some of the martial arts forms available at the time.

Kanbun's reasons for leaving Okinawa were twofold. Probably the main reason was to learn the superior art of Chinese fighting. During the 18th and 19th centuries, most of the great Okinawan teachers went to China to study the ancient art of self defense.

Since 1879, under Japan's rule, Okinawan youths were forced to serve in the Japanese army. The older generation, which included Kanbun's parents, fearful of inviting invasion from Japan's enemies should an armed force be maintained in Okinawa, strongly opposed this military conscription. Women prayed daily at the Shinto Shrine and Buddhist temples that their husbands and sons would be unfit for military service. Encouraged by his parents, Kanbun quietly left the Island of Okinawa, bound for unknown adventures in China, early in 1897.

Although little is known of Kanbun's 13 years in China, he occasionally told his students stories relating to his travels and study of Karate. His son Kanei did say that Kanbun directed all his energies toward the Mastery of Karate. He learned not only the physical art, which included Chinese medicine, but also the underlying philosophy of the art which made such a lasting impression on him.

After ten years of study, Kanbun obtained permission to open his own school. With great initial difficulty, Kanbun set up a school in the province of Nansoue. Kanbun was warned not to open the school there as others had tried and failed. Kanbun replied by saying that he wished to test his Karate ability by teaching there, because he liked the area. In time, despite a few run-ins, his reputation grew until he finally had a successful school with many students, including Mr. Gokenken, who was the one who told Kanbun that it was not a good idea to open a school there. Kanbun Uechi had the distinction of being the only Okinawan to have actually taught in China and to be accepted as a teacher.

Kanbun was quite happy in this village and was doing well as a teacher when unfortunately, one of his students, who by nature was quiet and unassuming, was provoked into an argument over a boundary dispute. The opponent viciously attacked the student who instinctively defended himself and accidentally struck his attacker with a fatal blow. The village people blamed his death on Kanbun, since he had instructed the student. It was then that the respect of the village turned to distrust and hatred against Kanbun. Kanbun had been teaching in China for three years before returning to Okinawa, vowing never to teach Karate again or ever speak about it.

There are many versions of the story of how Kanbun Uechi began his teaching career once again; most are partially true. The following story was told by Kanei Uechi (Kanbun's son) and confirmed by Kanbun's first student, Ryu Ryu Tomoyose.

Kanbun Uechi returned to Okinawa in 1910, married and began farming in the southern part of the island near Naha. Life was uneventful for Kanbun during these years. Then about two years after Kanbun's return to Okinawa, Mr. Gokenken, a Chinese tea merchant and former student of Kanbun, visited Okinawa on business. Mr. Gokenken urged Kanbun to resume teaching but with no success.

Gokenken became involved in a fight with a Naha Karate teacher. When Gokenken defeated the teacher, many other teachers challenged him, but none were able to defeat Gokenken. Then many young men visited him, asking that he instruct them in his style of Karate. Gokenken would tell them that there lived in Okinawa a truly great Karate expert who had even been his teacher in China. Soon Kanbun's reputation grew and spread, even though no one had ever seen him perform. Many young men visited Kanbun, asking that he teach them, but he would reply that they must have mistaken him for somebody else. Finally the townspeople confronted Kanbun with Gokenken. After that confrontation, Kanbun was unable to deny the stories, but he still refused to discuss Karate or demonstrate a Kata.

Every year the Motobu Police department had a large Celebration and all of the Karate Schools demonstrated their skills. The other teachers who were anxious to see proof of Kanbun's ability, asked the mayor of Motobu to request that he demonstrate at the Celebration. They would see that Kanbun attended and was seated so near the stage if he refused the mayor's request, he would lose face. The plot worked, for when the mayor asked Kanbun to demonstrate, the other teachers were standing close by and playfully pushed Kanbun on stage. Eyes glaring, Kanbun performed the Kata Seisan very fast and beautifully, with such strength and power that after he had finished, jumped down from the stage and proceeded home, the Karate part of the Celebration had ended, for no one else wished to follow Kanbun's demonstration.

Kanei Uechi, son of Kanbun, learned karate from his father and became grand master and head worldwide of all Uechi-Ryu Karate schools after his father Kanbun died on November 25, 1948. Kanei died on February 24, 1991. After Master Kanei Uechi's death several of his senior students created various associations on Okinawa to teach and promote the art and spirit of the late grandmasters.

The art of karate is based on three main principles: technique, speed and strength. Technique is the most important factor in learning and mastering karate. The only way one can develop technique is through constant devotion and daily practice. Speed and strength are developed as one learns technique and develops skills.

If you become a student of Uechi Ryu karate, you will belong to a unique group of individuals. Regardless of the type of training you pursue or for whatever reason, be it self-defense, a way to improve your physical condition, or to learn a new sport, you will be offered challenges and rewards that cannot be found anywhere else.

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

DOJO CONDUCT

Everything in the martial arts begins and ends with courtesy and respect.

Be sure to bow when entering and leaving the dojo.

During practice always follow the directions of your instructor and seniors.

Whistling, singing, and the like are improper behavior in the dojo.

Drinking and smoking are prohibited in the dojo.

Make the best while in the dojo. When tired, rest in a place away from the activity of others.

Show respect for seniors and elders. Treat lower ranks and juniors with courtesy and compassion.

The term "Sensei" refers only to the chief instructor. While some black belt students help instructing, there is only one "sensei" of the dojo. [In our dojo we prefer everyone be called by their first name, including instructors. However, students who wish to use the term sensei are welcome to do so.]

Always have a clean uniform.

Always act with propriety whether in or outside the dojo.

PRINCIPLES OF PROPER TRAINING

The purpose of karate training is to discipline the mind and body and to master the art of self-defense.

A karate practitioner must never, even after drinking, call upon his strength in a quarrel, speak harshly, act roughly, or become troublesome to others.

A karate practitioner must never bring shame upon himself or his school in either speech or action.

A karate practitioner must never speak arrogantly, fall into laziness, or act conceitedly. He should endeavor to work diligently at training and improving himself.

A karate practitioner should respect decorum and the martial arts, maintain the fine traditions of karate, and contribute to society.

BASIC KARATE FORMALITIES AND COURTESY

1. Remove shoes when entering the dojo or training room.
2. Bow when entering and leaving the dojo.
3. Each student should keep himself and gi (uniform) clean and fingernails and toenails trimmed.
4. Jewelry should not be worn during the workout.
5. A ceremonial bow is used at the beginning and end of each formal class.
6. Bow to your partner before beginning paired exercises.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

1. Uechi- Ryu is pronounced "WAY-Chee RYU".
2. The Chinese name for the style Kanbun Uechi studied in China is Pwang gai noon.
3. Animal movements used in Uechi-Ryu are from the tiger, crane, and dragon.
4. Belt ranks used in adult promotion are white, yellow, green, brown, and black.
5. Sanchin is the first and most important of the eight katas.
6. Students are required to have proper protective gear (mouthpiece, cup) for fighting

JAPANESE TERMINOLOGY

Dogi - uniform, also called karate gi
Dojo - training room
Keri - kick (prefix: Shomen, Mawashi, Yoko, etc.)
Karateka - karate student
Kata - form
Kiba Dachi - horse stance
Kotekitae - arm conditioning
Jiyu Kumite – free fighting
Obi-karate belt
Oyo Bunkai – free form application of technique
Nekko Ashi Dachi – cat stance
Rei - bow
Sensei-instructor
Sanchin Dachi - sanchin stance
Uchi - strike
Uke-block
Yakosuko Bunkai – prearranged application of technique
Yakosuko Kumite – prearranged fighting
Zuki-punch

JAPANESE COUNTING

1. ichi 3. san 5. go 7. sichi 9. ku
2. ni 4. chi 6. roku 8. hachi 10. Jiu

HISTORY AND BACKGROUND QUESTIONS

1. What is the name of the style you are studying? Okinawan Uechi Ryu Karate-Do
2. What was Uechi-ryu originally called? Pwong Gai Noon
3. In what year was the term "Uechi-ryu" first used? 1940
4. Who was the Grand Master of Uechi-ryu? Kanbun Uechi
5. Who was the next Grand Master? Kanei Uechi, son of Kanbun
6. What is the Okinawan organization of Mr. Ken Nakamatsu? Ji Tekki Jiyu Kyu (Follow your true path)
7. How many years did Kanbun Uechi spend in China? Thirteen: 1897–1910
8. Where did Kanbun Uechi study in China? Fukien Province, Southeastern China
9. Who created the Sanchin kata? Bodhi Dhama, an Indian priest
10. Where was Master Uechi's dojo? Okinawa City, Okinawa, Japan
11. Who was the first to bring Uechi-ryu to the USA? George E. Mattson, 9th dan, in 1958
12. What three animals are in Uechi Ryu? Tiger, Crane, and Dragon
13. What are the four main techniques used in Uechi Ryu? Shoken one-knuckle strike, Wauke block, Toe kick, Spear hand

14. What are the three main kata? Sanchin, Seisan, and SanSeirui
15. What five kata did Kanei Uechi create? Kanshiwa, Kanshu, Seichin, Seirui, Kanchin
16. What are the ten kyu ranks? Jukyu, Kyukyu, Hachikyu, Sichikyu, Rokkyu, Gokyu, Yonkyu, Sankyu, Nikyu, Ikkyu
17. What are the five Black Belt ranks? Shodan, Nidan, Sandan, Yondan, Godan
18. What are the five Master ranks? Rokudan, Nanadan, Hachidan, Kyudan, Judan
19. What is the name and current rank of the founder of the Washington Karate Academy? Bob Kaiser, Hachidan—8th degree Master black belt
20. Who is Bob Kaiser's teacher? Frank Gorman, Hachidan—9th degree Master black belt. Frank Gorman's teacher is Mr. Ken Nakamatsu, Kyudan—9th degree Master black belt. Mr. Nakamatsu was a direct student of Kanei Uechi
21. What is your present rank?
22. What does the word 'karate' mean? Empty hand/Open hand/Chinese hand
23. What does Ban-gun-yoon (Pwang Gai Noon) mean? Half-hard, Half-soft
24. What does 'Sanchin' mean? Three steps or three conflicts
25. What are the five purposes of Sanchin? To make the body hard as nails; to consolidate the basic stance; to master the proper breathing method; to develop penetrating eyes/acute insight; to foster the spiritual concentration
26. What does the word 'Ryu' mean? Style, system, or method
27. What does the word 'Do' mean? Way or path
28. What is a karate school called? Dojo
29. What are a karate uniform and belt called? Gi and obi
30. How do you say 'Right foot forward'? Migiashimae/Migimae
31. How do you say 'Left foot forward'? Hidariashimae/Hidarimae
32. What does 'Go kura sama' mean? Thank you for working hard
33. What does 'Domo arigato gozai mashta mean? Thank you very much
34. What is forearm conditioning called? Kotekitae

UECHI RYU- KARATE FUNDAMENTALS

PRELIMINARY WARM UP EXERCISES—JUNBI UNDO

Throughout this series, focus on bringing your attention to the part of your body you are warming up. This will result in increased blood flow and focus your attention on what you are doing. Try not to let your mind wander.

Ashi saki o ageru undo (Heel pivot) - Hands on hips, heels together, toes apart, lift ball of right foot off floor & pivot outward on heel of foot.

Kakato o ageru undo (Heel lift) - Hands on hips, heels together, toes apart, raise heel off floor (keeping leg straight & using hip to lift) as high as possible turning heel to outside.

Ashikubi o mawasu undo (Ankle circle) - Hands on hips, heels together, toes apart, lift right leg up (thigh parallel to floor, lower leg bent 90 degrees at the knee). Make four circular motions to the outside with lower leg & foot, then four circular movements to the inside. Tilt the foot up & down as you perform this exercise, flexing the ankle joint. Repeat with left leg.

Hiza o mawasu undo (Knee circle) - Heels together, toes apart, bend at the waist. Place both hands on knees. Bend knees making two circular movements to right. Push knees backwards twice while bending forward at the waist. Repeat in other direction.

Ashi o mae yoko ni nobasu undo (Leg lift and turn) - Heels together, toes apart, hands on hips, lift right leg up & extend it straight out in front, turn leg 90 degrees to the right, return to front, bend it, & set down on floor. Foot should stay at belt height while turning. Repeat with left leg.

Ashi o mae uchi naname ni ageru undo (Straight leg kick) - From left sanchin stance, swing right leg up over right shoulder, then over left shoulder (keep leg straight when swinging). Change into right sanchin stance & repeat with left leg.

Tai o mae ni taosu undo (Waist scoop) - Heels together, toes apart, hands at sides in sanchin ready-double thrust position, bend at the waist (while keeping legs straight), make four scooping motions letting hands brush the floor. Stand. Bring both arms up in front (as if holding an imaginary beach ball). Twist twice to the right side, and then twice to the left side (stretch everything between feet & shoulders).

Koshi no nenten (Trunk stretch) - With feet far apart bend at the waist touching right foot. Make a 360° degree clockwise circle returning to, & passing by, the right foot, going to the left knee. Reach from left knee to right foot twice. Go to left foot & repeat in opposite direction.

Ude o mae yoko shita ni nobasu undo (Double arm strike) Heels together, arms at your sides in sanchin ready-double thrust position, thrust straight out in front, squeeze into tight fists & return to sides. Open in ready thrust position & thrust straight out to sides. Squeeze into tight fists & return hands to hips, opening hands into sanchin opening-double thrust position. Thrust straight out in front keeping hands parallel to floor & palms facing each other. Squeeze into tight fists & return to sides as in starting position.

Kubi o mawasu undo (Neck circle) - Heels together, toes apart, hands clasped together at waist, lower chin to chest. Rotate head on 90 degree angles clockwise returning chin to chest. Lift head as far back as possible while keeping the chin tucked, return to chest & repeat in opposite direction.

Shin kokyu (Deep breathing) - With feet shoulder width apart, Inhale deeply through the nose into the lower abdomen while slightly contracting the abdomen and stretching the arms up and out then exhale through the mouth slightly expanding the abdomen and relaxing the arms along with the rest of the body. Three to ten repetitions.

BASIC TECHNICAL DRILLS—HOJO UNDO

Throughout this series, focus on being consistent and explosive in your performance of each technique. Your aim should be for every blocking motion to utilize your entire body and for your strikes to land in the same place every time. Envision disrupting the balance of your opponents and delivering devastating strikes to the correct location. Try not to let your mind wander.

Snap Side Kick—SOKUTO KERI

Right foot fwd. = right circle block, right side kick, left circle block, left side kick. Five repetitions.

Left foot fwd. = left circle block, left side kick, right circle block, right side kick. Five repetitions.

Front Kick—SHOMEN KERI

Right foot fwd. = right circle block, right front kick, left circle block, left front kick. Five repetitions.

Left foot fwd. = left circle block, left front kick, right circle block, right front kick. Five repetitions.

Hook punch—MAWASHI ZUKI

Right foot fwd. = left circle block, right hook punch, right circle block, left hook punch. Five repetitions.

Left foot fwd. = right circle block, left hook punch, left circle block, right hook punch. Five repetitions.

High Strike, Punch Straight, Outside Strike, Punch Straight—HAJIKE UCHI HIRAKEN ZUKI Right foot fwd. left hand post position, high block, then punch straight, outside block while snapping wrist out - punch straight all with right hand flat fist. Five repetitions.

Left foot fwd. = right hand post position, high block, then punch straight, outside block while snapping wrist out - punch straight all with left hand flat fist. Five repetitions.

Straight Punch, Block, Punch—SHOMEN ZUKI

Left foot fwd. = left circle block, right punch, left guide block, right punch. Five repetitions.

Right foot fwd. = right circle block, left punch, right guide block, left punch. Five repetitions.

Chop, Back Fist, one Knuckle Punch—SHUTO UCHI URA UCHI SHOKEN ZUKI

Right foot fwd. = Left circle block, chop, back fist, one knuckle punch with right hand. Five repetitions.

Left foot fwd. = right circle block, chop, back fist, one knuckle punch with left hand. Five repetitions.

Elbow, Side, back—HIJI ZUKI

Right foot fwd. = left circle block, forward strike, side strike and back strike with right elbow. Five repetitions.

Left foot fwd. = right circle bloc, forward strike, side strike and back strike with left elbow. Five repetitions.

Block Off Back Leg, Kick Off Front Leg—TENSHIN ZEN SOKU KERI

Left foot fwd. = from front center step 45 degrees to left, block off back (left) leg, kick off fwd. (right) leg, step then turn 45 degrees from front center in opposite direction, circle block off rear (right) leg, kick off front (left) leg. Ten repetitions.

Block Off Back Leg, Kick off Back Leg–TENSHIN KOSOKU KERI

Left foot fwd. = from front center step 45 degrees to right, circle block off back(right) leg, Kickoff back leg, step then turn 45 degrees from front center in opposite direction, circle block off back (left) leg, kick off back leg. Ten repetitions.

Block Off Back Leg, One Knuckle Punch, Block Off Fwd. Leg, One Knuckle punch–TENSHIN SHOKEN ZUKI

Right foot fwd. = from front center step 45 degrees to left, circle block off back (left) leg, one knuckle punch off fwd.(right) leg, circle block off fwd. leg, one knuckle punch off back (left) leg, step then turn 45 degrees from front center in opposite direction, circle block off back (right) leg one knuckle punch off fwd.(left) leg, circle block foot fwd. (left) leg, one knuckle punch off back leg. Ten repetitions.

Eye Strike–SHOMEN HAJIKE

Right foot fwd. = shuffle fwd. two hand eye strike, shuffle back, two hand eye strike. Ten repetitions.

Wrist Block–KOY NO SHI PO UCHI TA TE UCHI

Left foot fwd. = hands parallel in front, block with wrists upward, block with wrists downward, block outward parallel to the floor in opposite direction with wrists, together with palm block.

Block To Sides With Wrists–KOY NO SHI PO UCHI YOKO UCHI

Right foot fwd. = hands parallel in front block with wrists from side to side. Ten repetition.

Deep Breathing Exercise–SHIN KO KYU

With feet shoulder width apart, Inhale deeply through the nose into the lower abdomen while slightly contracting the abdomen and stretching the arms up and out then exhale through the mouth slightly expanding the abdomen and relaxing the arms along with the rest of the body. Three to ten repetitions.

RANK REQUIREMENTS

Adult Rank Material

The Washington Karate Academy uses a ten kyu, or ten rank system for belt requirements. The time frames noted here are guidelines and the actual time to reach each rank may vary. Students are tested at the recommendation of their teacher and should not ask to be tested. Students may, however, ask about their progress at any time, and are encouraged to do so.

1. **Kyu - Jukyu (white belt)** All new students are automatically white belts upon enrollment. New Students may practice the first ten hojo undo exercises, Sanchin stepping, turning, and the wauke block.
2. **Kyu - Kyukyu (white belt + one green stripe)** - Sanchin kata and first eight hojo undo exercises. Balance while standing on one foot. Slow motion fighting.
3. **Kyu Hachikyu (white belt + two green stripes)** - Sanchin kata, all of hojo undo, arm rubbing and pounding, leg and body conditioning, introduction to gami (hand strength) training. Improved balance and connection to the ground for power.
4. **Kyu - Sichikyu (white belt + three green stripes)** - Sanchin kata, all of hojo undo, arm rubbing and pounding with increased contact, leg and body conditioning with increased contact, Kanshiwa kata, fundamentals of moving off the line of force, Yakosuko kumite one through five. Semi-slow motion fighting with light contact.
5. **Kyu - Rokyu (white belt + green belt tip)** - Sanchin kata, all of hojo undo, arm rubbing and pounding and body conditioning with greater contact, Kanshiwa kata, Yakusuko kumite one

SANCHIN: The Foundation of Uechi Ryu Karate

In Uechi-Ryu, the kata Sanchin is the foundation for all that follows. It is truly the most important of the eight Uechi-Ryu kata studied today. As everyone knows, a structure without a good foundation will weaken and fall apart within a very short time. Sanchin, practiced as a dynamic tension kata, builds, strengthens, and hardens all muscles of the body.

According to legend, the kata Sanchin was developed by Bodhidharma (Japanese know him as Daruma Taishi) sometime around the 13th century. This kata has withstood the test of time and is practiced in other martial arts styles as well as Uechi-ryu. Uechi-Ryu students focus on the following **five** elements to achieve the most from Sanchin:

- Make your body hard as nails (Temper the body to be supple, unified, and well conditioned)
- Consolidate the basic stance (To give yourself the most leverage and use the ground for power)
- Master the proper breathing technique (Know when and how to breathe and use air to connect the body)
- Penetrating eye (Glare in the eyes and development of peripheral vision)
- Develop spiritual concentration (Think only of what you are doing in the moment and have clear intent)

Although Sanchin is the first kata learned in Uechi-Ryu, as one becomes a black belt he or she finds themselves still working on perfecting the movements. Periodically, a student is tested physically in Sanchin. Tests can be soft or hard. During this testing the instructor will push or strike key areas of the body checking the students ability to balance forces and to control the breathing, maintain an inflated core and low center of gravity, and to focus certain muscle groups as a protective armor and to develop the soft tissues of the body including ligaments, tendons, and fascia.

Sanchin's three battles are often stated as "body, mind, and spirit". The three can also be read as **earth** (the connection to the ground and the power that comes up from the ground), **heaven** (the body weight power going down to the ground, and **the middle**, that include many concepts such as the instinctive/subconscious mind, the executive/conscious mind, and the physical center (tanden in Japanese) that connects the other two.

through five with improvement in controlling distance and partner's balance, Kanshiwa bunkai, and medium speed fighting with light contact.

6. **Kyu - Gokyu (green belt) 25** – All previous material, greater contact on body conditioning exercises, increased hand strength, fundamentals of the use of opposing forces, medium speed fighting with moderate contact.
7. **Kyu Yonkyu (green belt + one brown stripe)** – All previous material with greater proficiency, kanshu kata, gami training with increased body awareness and control, medium/fast speed fighting with medium contact.
8. **Kyu Sankyu (brown belt)** – All previous material with greater proficiency, fundamentals of the use of circular forces, Seichin kata, medium/fast speed fighting with medium contact.
9. **Kyu Nikyu (brown belt with one black stripe)** – All previous material with greater proficiency, fundamental principles of pre-emptive striking, Yakosuko kumite 1-10, seisan kata, additional body conditioning, fast speed fighting with medium contact
10. **Kyu Ikyu (brown belt with two black stripes)** – All previous material with greater proficiency, seisan bunkai, fast speed fighting with strong body contact.

Shodan (first degree black belt) - Shodan is typically reached in 3 to 5 years. All previous material performed with greater proficiency. At this stage the student achieves the character of the tiger in Uechi-ryu: tenacious and powerful. Students promoted to Shodan receive a registered diploma from Master Nakamatsu, 9th Dan and direct student of Kanei Uechi from Okinawa, Japan.

Nidan (3-5 years) – All previous material with greater proficiency, graceful transitions from circular to linear power, Kanei Uechi's Dan kumite and seiryu kata. At this stage the student achieves the character of the crane in Uechi-ryu: balanced, graceful, precise.

Sandan (4-6 years) – All previous material with greater proficiency, graceful transitions from high to low stances, ability to consistently disrupt opponents balance and intent, devastating power, Konchin kata. At this point the student achieves the character of the dragon in Uechi-ryu by fluidly using all techniques within the system to consistently overwhelm opponents.