

# LOWER-BODY BASICS



## Lower Body Basics: Kicking Fundamentals:

When preparing to kick, start by lifting the knee into position before executing the kick. This position is known as the "Chamber." All basic kicks return to the chamber position before the foot is set back down.

In all basic kicks, the leg should extend to about 90% before snapping back. (Exception: Mae Konate (#7), a thrust kick that fully extends and locks.) A snap kick should return to the chamber twice as fast as it goes out.

The stance taken before kicking is called the "Ready Position for Basic Kicks":

- Feet in a "heel-toe" alignment, shoulder-width apart, with the right foot behind.
- Hands are open and positioned at the sides, thumbs pointing back.

This stance applies to all basic kicks except Otoshi Geri (#6) and Mae Geri-Ushiro Geri (#9).

The following kicks are explained using the right foot. **Practice them using both legs.**

## Why the Chamber is Important:

The chamber is essential for maintaining balance, control, and proper technique throughout the kick. A well-executed chamber allows for faster, more powerful kicks while ensuring you're ready to defend or continue attacking after each kick.

## Basic Kicks:

### 1. Mae Geri (my) (gary) – Front Snap Kick

- Chamber: Lift the knee to pelvic level, toes curled up.
- Kick: Snap the kick out, making contact with the attacker's pelvis using the ball of your foot. Return the foot to the chamber position, and then back to "Ready Position."

#### Common Mistakes to Avoid:

*Failing to return to the chamber position after the kick.*

*Not pointing the toes upward during the chamber phase.*

*Leaning too far forward when kicking.*

### 2. Soba Konate (sob' ba) (koh-na' tay) – Crossover Kick

- Chamber: Point the knee outward at a 45-degree angle, at obi level. The foot should be two inches above and in front of the left knee, toes curled up.
- Kick: Snap the kick downward at an angle, making contact with the attacker's knee hinge using the blade edge of your heel. Return to the chamber and back to "Ready Position."

#### Common Mistakes to Avoid:

*Dropping the knee too low during chamber.*

*Snapping the kick too slowly without sharpness.*

*Not keeping the foot aligned for proper contact.*

### 3. Hiza Geri (hee' za) (gary) – Knee Strike

- Chamber: Scrape the right foot along the ground as it lifts behind you, with toes curled down.
- Strike: Drive the knee upward to meet the open palm of your right hand (palm down at obi level). Contact the attacker's pelvis with your knee, then return the foot to "Ready Position."

#### Common Mistakes to Avoid:

*Lifting the knee without bringing the foot up properly.*

*Not striking with enough upward force.*

*Failing to reset into "Ready Position."*

### 4. Yoko Geri (yo' ko) (gary) – Side Kick

- Chamber: Lift the knee to obi level, pointing outward at a 45-degree angle. The bottom of the right foot should face the inside of the left knee, toes curled up.
- Kick: Snap the kick to the right side, making contact with the attacker's floating rib using the blade edge of your heel. Return to the chamber, then to "Ready Position."

#### Common Mistakes to Avoid:

*Not lifting the knee high enough for proper height and form.*

*Allowing the foot to rotate incorrectly, weakening the impact.*

*Failing to return to the chamber after the kick.*

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## 5. Soba Geri (so' ba) (gary) - Beside Kick

- Look to the right, sliding the right foot into a "Cat Stance" (right foot on the ball, 10% weight; left foot holds 90%).
- Chamber: Point the knee to pelvic level, toes curled up.
- Kick: Snap the kick, contacting the attacker's pelvis with the ball of your foot, and return to the chamber. Return both feet to "Ready Position."

### Common Mistakes to Avoid:

*Incorrect weight distribution in the "Cat Stance."*

*Not fully retracting the foot after the kick.*

*Failing to rotate back into the ready stance properly.*

## 6. Otoshi Geri (oh-tow-she) (gary) - Drop Kick

- Start with feet parallel and shoulder-width apart.
- Chamber: Slide the right foot out at a 45-degree angle while lifting the left knee and foot parallel to the floor, toes curled up.
- Kick: Snap the kick, contacting the attacker's solar plexus with the ball of your foot. Before setting the foot down, switch hands to the left side and then place the foot slightly forward from its original starting position. Pivot toes to the left at a 45-degree angle and repeat the kick on the other side.

### Common Mistakes to Avoid:

*Not pivoting properly after the kick.*

*Letting the foot drop instead of snapping it back.*

*Failing to align the hips correctly for the kick.*

## 7. Mae Konate (my) (koh-na' tay) - Front Thrust Kick

- Chamber: Lift the knee to pelvic level, toes curled up, with the bottom of the foot parallel to the floor.
- Kick: Thrust the kick fully out, making contact with the attacker's pelvis using the heel of your foot. Snap back to the chamber and return to "Ready Position."

### Common Mistakes to Avoid:

*Not fully extending the thrust kick.*

*Improper hip alignment, reducing the kick's power.*

*Letting the foot drop instead of snapping it back.*

## 8. Sokuto Geri (soh-koo' tow) (gary) - Forward Angle Kick

- Chamber: Lift the knee to obi level, pointing inward at a 45-degree angle in front of your pelvis. The bottom of the right foot should be in front of the left knee, toes curled back.
- Kick: Snap the kick at a 45-degree angle to the right, making contact with the blade edge of your heel, two inches above the attacker's knee. Return to the chamber and back to "Ready Position."

### Common Mistakes to Avoid:

*Allowing the knee to drift out of alignment.*

*Not snapping the kick fast enough.*

*Failing to bring the foot back to the chamber.*

## 9. Mae Geri-Ushiro Geri (my) (gary) (u-she-row) (gary) - Front Kick-Back Kick

- Chamber: Slide the right foot behind the left foot into a "T-Stance" while moving hands into a guard. Lift the knee to pelvic level, toes curled up.
- Kick: Snap the front kick, making contact with the attacker's pelvis using the ball of the foot. Without placing the foot down, look behind you and execute a back kick, making contact with the attacker's solar plexus using the blade edge of your heel. Return to the "T-Stance" and prepare for another kick.

### Common Mistakes to Avoid:

*Failing to maintain balance during the transition between the front and back kicks.*

*Not snapping the back kick quickly enough.*

*Improper chamber positioning before the second kick.*

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## STUDY GUIDE



### Skills Required:

Requirements to earn:



SHICHI-KYU

1. Answer Basic History and Terminology Questions.
2. Be prepared to answer fundamental questions regarding karate history and key terminology.
3. Perform Lower Body Basics (1-9) with Focus and Power:
4. Demonstrate mastery of lower body basics #1-9, showing good focus, strong form, and controlled power.
5. **Demonstrate Self-Defense Techniques Against:**
  - Rear Choke
  - Double Wrist Grab
  - Bear Hug
6. **Ippon Kumite Against:**
  - Hook Punch
  - Sucker Punch
  - Double Punch
7. **Know Contact Points and Target Areas for:**
  - Knee Strike
  - Squat Kick
  - Forward Angle Kick
  - Hook Kick

### Key Terminology:

**Kihon** – Refers to the basics or fundamentals of karate, including basic stances, kicks, punches, and blocks.

**Ippon Kumite** – A form of one-step sparring where the defender blocks or counters a single attack with a decisive technique.

**Rear Choke** – A self-defense situation where the attacker grabs the neck from behind, requiring specific escape techniques.

**Double Wrist Grab** – A scenario where the attacker grabs both wrists, requiring a self-defense response to break free.

**Bear Hug** – A close-range grab from behind or front, where the attacker wraps their arms around the body, often requiring escape techniques involving leverage and striking.

**Hook Punch** – A punch delivered with a bent arm, typically aimed at the side of the head or body, requiring a defensive technique in Ippon Kumite.

**Sucker Punch** – A surprise punch usually delivered when the opponent is not expecting it, necessitating quick reflexes and defense.

**Double Punch** – Two punches delivered in quick succession, often targeting different areas, requiring blocking or countering.

**Knee Strike** – A close-range attack using the knee as the striking surface, targeting areas like the ribs, pelvis, or solar plexus.

**Squat Kick** – A low kick executed from a squatting position, targeting lower parts of the opponent's body.

**Forward Angle Kick** – A kick delivered at a 45-degree angle, typically targeting the opponent's knee or lower body.

**Hook Kick** – A circular kick where the leg arcs inward toward the target, often aimed at the opponent's head or ribs

### Practice Tips:

- Focus on control: It's more important to execute each kick with proper form and balance than to rush through them. Over time, speed will develop naturally.
- Practice safely: When working with a partner, control your kicks to avoid injuries. Precision and form should always come first.
- Target areas: Remember the intended target for each kick. Whether it's the attacker's pelvis, knee, or ribs, knowing the target will improve the effectiveness of your techniques.

*Disclaimer: This curriculum sheet is meant to reinforce information learned in class and is not a substitute for instruction from your teacher. Always consult your instructor for guidance and corrections on your technique.*



Heiko Dachi  
"Parallel Stance"

### HEIKO DACHI

Feet shoulder-width apart.  
Toes aligned on the same horizontal line.



Seisan Dachi  
"Seisan Stance"

### SEISAN DACHI

Feet shoulder-width apart.  
Heel and toe aligned on the same line. Weight should be evenly distributed 50/50.

### "T" STANCE



Forms a "T" with your feet. The front foot points forward, back foot at 90 degrees, with 90% of weight on the front foot. It provides balance and allows quick transitions.