



In memory of

**General Choi Hong Hi**

Founder of Taekwon-Do

1918 - 2002

# **Taekwon-Do Protocol**

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2008

With thanks to the **Taranaki Taekwon-Do** Club,  
especially the instructor Mr Neill Livingstone, 5<sup>th</sup> Dan.

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# Taekwon-Do Protocol

Etiquette for practitioners of Taekwon-Do,  
from beginners to instructors

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2008

Offered as a thesis towards grading to 3<sup>rd</sup> Dan.

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### **Korean terms used in this booklet:**

<b><i>Charyot</i></b>	Attention
<b><i>Kyong Ye</i></b>	Bow
<b><i>Si jak</i></b>	Begin
<b><i>Kukki e tae hae</i></b>	Face the flag
<b><i>Boosabum nim kke</i></b>	Face Instructor (up to 3 <sup>rd</sup> Dan)
<b><i>Sabum nim kke</i></b>	Face Instructor (4 <sup>th</sup> to 6 <sup>th</sup> Dan)
<b><i>Sahyun nim kke</i></b>	Face the Master (7 <sup>th</sup> or 8 <sup>th</sup> Dan)
<b><i>Saseong nim kke</i></b>	Face Grand Master (9 <sup>th</sup> Dan)
<b><i>Taekwon</i></b>	greeting, acknowledgement
<b><i>Do jang</i></b>	Training area
<b><i>Dobok</i></b>	Training uniform
<b><i>Ko mup sum neda</i></b>	Thank you
<b><i>Kihap</i></b>	Shout
<b><i>Hae san</i></b>	Dismiss
<b><i>Do</i></b>	Way (of life)
<b><i>Ye</i></b>	Etiquette or propriety
<b><i>Gup</i></b>	Rank of coloured belt, from 10 <sup>th</sup> (white belt) to 1 <sup>st</sup> (black stripe)
<b><i>Dan</i></b>	Rank of black belt, from 1 <sup>st</sup> Dan to 9 <sup>th</sup> Dan.

## Taekwon-Do Protocol

### **Taekwon-Do Protocol**

An integral part of the martial art Taekwon-Do is courtesy, the etiquette of behaviour. This book will attempt to be a guide for the student in all situations, from the start of training to dining with a group of Black Belts and a Master.

Training in Taekwon-Do is mental, as well as physical.

In addition to self-defence techniques, students learn to build self-control, discipline, and respect for other people. As a part of the training, certain traditions and formal behaviours are observed (protocol). These behaviours do not have any type of religious symbolism, they show respect for the oriental cultural base of Taekwon-Do.

#### **For beginners:**

At the beginning of each class when the instructor commands "Form up" the class will quickly form lines facing the front of the training area (usually where the ceremonial wall is located), with the seniors at the front and in each line the more senior students standing at the right. So a beginner should expect to stand in the back line, to the left of other students in that line.

Many instructions in Taekwon-Do are given in Korean. Only a few words need be known at the beginning.

#### ***Charyot***

means Attention and students should stand with heels together, feet out at an angle of 45°, hands at side with fists lightly clenched, elbows slightly bent.

#### ***Kyong Ye***

means Bow. The body is bent forward just 15°, while keeping the eyes looking up at the instructor.

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At the beginning of each training session the class will stand at attention, face the flag ( *kukki e tae hae* ) and bow.

The senior student will lead the class with "Raise the right hand, repeat the Student Oath. *Si jak* (Begin)"

### **Student Oath:**

I shall observe the tenets of Taekwon-Do

I shall respect the instructor and seniors

I shall never misuse Taekwon-Do

I shall be a champion of freedom and justice

I shall build a more peaceful world

The **Tenets of Taekwon-Do** are:

Courtesy

Integrity

Perseverance

Self-control

Indomitable Spirit

The senior student will then tell the class to face the instructor (*boosabum nim kke* if he or she is 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> Dan, *sabum nim kke* if 4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> Dan, *sahyun nim kke* if a Master with 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> Dan, and *saseong nim kke* if a Grand Master, 9<sup>th</sup> Dan). Relax, you are not expected to remember these commands yet, just what to do when you hear them. You face the instructor and bow, saying "**Taekwon**" as you do so.

It is customary to say **Taekwon** whenever you bow to a person in Taekwon-Do, whether to an instructor or a fellow student.

Different clubs may have a slightly different procedure but in many clubs the second most senior student will



## Taekwon-Do Protocol

now tell the class "Face senior member. **Kyong ye.**"  
You say "**Taekwon**" as you bow.

The instructor will now start the class.

Students are expected to obey all instructions given by instructors or senior members. They should not raise any objection or arguments, or make any unnecessary noise or disturbance while training. They should not leave the training area without permission.

<b><i>Do jang</i></b>	Training area
<b><i>Dobok</i></b>	Training uniform

At the end of the session the class will again face the flag and bow, bow to the instructor and to the senior member on command. **Hae san** means "Class dismissed". It is customary to clap at the end. Follow what is done at your club.

### **Preparation for training:**

Cleanliness of body and uniform is a courtesy. Nails should be cut short for safety. Hair should be short or tied back, watches and jewellery removed. Rings that cannot be removed will be taped over for safety.

Doboks should be clean and pressed and worn correctly, with a belt of the correct colour wrapped once around the waist and tied in a reef knot so the ends of the belt hang equally. Many clubs have the ruling that students should show respect for the countless hours and effort to attain each rank by never letting his/her belt touch the floor.

Doboks should not be worn outside the do jang unless traveling directly to or from training or on special occasions as specified by the instructor.

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Students may wear a white singlet or T-shirt under their dobok top with the permission of their instructor.

All students should arrive at least 10 minutes before the start of class and be prepared both physically and mentally. Do personal warm-up or stretching.

If you are unavoidably detained or late for class, the instructor may assign you warm-up and/or exercises, as appropriate.

### **Entering the do jang:**

If several students are entering, allow seniors in first.

Bow when entering or leaving the do jang.

Remove footwear.

Bow to instructor and seniors.

Children should bow to adults.

### **Inside the do jang:**

All members must treat each with courtesy.

Junior members are responsible for setting up and clearing away flags and equipment.

All instructions issued by instructors or seniors must be obeyed without comment or complaint. Never argue with your instructor.

The dobok should be kept well-adjusted at all times. Turn away from the instructor, ceremonial wall, higher rank student, or opponent when adjusting your uniform or belt.

When wanting to speak with an instructor or senior, a student should stand at attention and wait until spoken to.

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Bow to instructors before addressing them and bow again when the conversation is finished.

Address instructor by title or sir/ma'am.

When asking the instructor a question, say "Excuse me sir/ma'am" and wait for a response.

Questions or answers should end with "Sir" or "Ma'am" and if you are called upon or are told to do something by the instructor, answer "Yes sir" or "Yes ma'am!"

Members of a Taekwon-Do club should address one another courteously, with appropriate titles. Black Belts, regardless of age, are to be referred to as Mr., Ms., Mrs. or Dr.

Never laugh at, or make fun of, a fellow student.

No profanity, foul language, or derogatory remarks are allowed or tolerated.

No weapons are permitted in the do jang except as specifically authorized by the instructor.

Members should ensure that newcomers or visitors are treated with courtesy, introduced to the instructor, provided with seating, or given advice or assistance as necessary.

All members present should acknowledge visiting instructors or seniors as they enter the do jang. (The senior member present will call others to attention and to bow).

## Taekwon-Do Protocol

Members should not smoke, eat or drink in the do jang (although eating or drinking may be permitted at the instructor's discretion).

Always show self-discipline while in the do jang.

Always show proper respect to senior students and to each other.

Do not wear make-up, perfume or jewellery (except wedding bands) to class.

You should not wear hats, sunglasses or shoes, or have gum, food, or drinks (except water) in the do jang.

Taekwon-Do is only to be used as a means of self-defence and personal enrichment. Usage outside of these criteria may be grounds for expulsion.

Never be disrespectful to your instructor. Although a student is allowed to disagree with the instructor, the student must first follow the instruction and then discuss the matter later.

### **Safety:**

Students must exercise physical and emotional self-control at all times, for everyone's safety.

Free sparring is allowed only under the supervision of an adult Black Belt instructor.

Students must wear proper safety equipment when sparring. Students must understand that training in the martial arts is a contact sport and that all students have a responsibility to train with the safety of their fellow students as their primary goal.

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### **Visiting another do jang:**

Students training at another Taekwon-Do club should seek permission of their own instructor and that of the instructor of the branch being visited beforehand.

Behave with great courtesy as you represent not only yourself but your club and your instructor.

Modesty is a fine attribute. The better the martial artist, the more modest is the person.

### **Outside the do jang:**

A student's conduct outside the do jang reflects on the art and the instructor, therefore each student should attempt to follow the tenets in everyday life.

Taekwon-Do is not just a sport, it is a way of life.

### **Shaking hands:**

Always have both hands in view. Either a two-handed shake, or with the left hand facing downwards and placed under the right forearm, depending on common usage in your club.

Although in many clubs a bow and the word Taekwon is enough for greeting, acknowledgement and thanks, in other clubs hand-shaking is more common and after sparring or practicing with another student they will shake hands and say the Korean phrase for Thank you

***Ko mup sum neda.***

### **Respect:**

Taekwon-Do practitioners always show respect for Taekwon-Do, the do jang, the instructor, higher-rank belts, fellow students, and themselves.

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Remember respect works both ways. If you want to be respected as a student, you must respect the instructors. Without the instructors, class would not be held. Show respect everyday in class and outside of class as well to parents, teachers, friends, and strangers.

### **Bowing:**

Bowing is the universal sign of respect in the martial arts community.

Students should always bow when:  
Entering or leaving the training area.  
First seeing the head instructor or assistants.  
Bow to them again when leaving the do jang.  
Beginning and ending a class session.  
Beginning and ending practice with a partner.  
Exchanging training equipment with a partner.

Normally you do not speak while bowing except for statements such as "Yes sir" or "Thank you ma'am" etc.

When facing an opponent, even in a controlled environment such as in class or a tournament, you should maintain a warrior spirit that is prepared for battle by only bowing at 15° so you may keep your eyes on your opponent. In a combat bow, you are still bowing as a sign of respect, but you watch the opponent. "Trust, but verify."

### **Why the bow is used:**

In Taekwon-Do, we use the bow to:  
Honour Taekwon-Do's Korean heritage, by using the Asian cultural display of respect.  
Show respect to a person or to their position or rank.  
Show respect without and humility within.

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Indicate the start of formal class and entry into the "world of Taekwon-Do."

Indicate a willingness to learn from teachers and fellow students.

Remind you that your partner is a person — not a practice dummy.

Indicate the end of class and re-entry into the "ordinary world."

Each time you step into the training area, bow toward the center of the training area as an indication that you are ready to forget everything in your life and are entering your training frame of mind. Each time you step out of the training area, bow toward the center of the training area as an indication that you are exiting your training frame of mind

Although it varies from school to school, there are typically one or more formal bows given at the beginning of class. Usually the first bows are toward the ceremonial wall as a sign of respect to Taekwon-Do, its founders, and those who have come and gone before you. Then bows are made in respect to the instructors. Sometimes a bow is made as a sign of respect to fellow students. All these bows signify that you are ready to train. Although it varies from school to school, there are typically one or more formal bows given at the end of class. These bows signify that the training session is over.

Each time you start working with a new partner, it is proper etiquette to bow to him or her and then bow again when you finish.

When passing a piece of equipment to another student, offer (and receive) it with both hands and both students should bow.

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In sparring each match begins and ends with a bow as a mark of respect to one's partner.

### **Student attitude:**

This includes consistently giving one's best effort in class, being eager to ask questions and learn, being willing to volunteer when asked, being helpful to the instructors, showing initiative, demonstrating proper etiquette and, of course, being respectful to all guests, students and instructors.

Never tire of learning, anywhere, any time; this is the secret of knowledge. Be eager to ask questions and learn. Appreciate the thrill of learning. Respect the skills you are learning, and the efforts it took to bring them to you.

Never be disrespectful to the instructor. Follow the instructor's instructions to the best of your ability. Always be loyal to the instructor and his or her teaching methods. If you disagree with any procedure or technique, discuss it privately later with the instructor.

Practise what you learn and try to perfect your techniques to the best of your abilities. This includes spending spare time doing conditioning exercises at home.

Discard any technique you have learned from another school if your instructor disapproves of it.

Always set a good example for lower belts. Remember they will try to emulate senior students. Help other students to learn and succeed, remember that you all share common goals and interests.



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Remember that your conduct inside and outside the do jang reflects upon Taekwon-Do and the instructor. With your Taekwon-Do skills comes responsibility.

Behave honourably and always be polite.

Students should memorize and observe both the five tenets of Taekwon-Do and the student oath.

Try to live by the tenets of Taekwon-Do.

Do not try any techniques until the instructor has shown them to you.

Do not teach any techniques without the instructor's permission.

Do not free-spar without the permission of a do jang black belt who will directly monitor the sparring.

Students are encouraged to practise their Taekwon-Do techniques daily, however misusing Taekwon-Do outside the do jang (or in a self-defense situation where it is necessary) is strictly prohibited.

Taekwon-Do techniques are not to be used outside the do jang, unless your safety or the safety of others is in danger.

Always treat other persons and their property with courtesy and respect, inside or outside the do jang.

No horse-play (running or wrestling). Respect and order should be maintained at all times.

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Set a good example for the other students, especially for lower belts.

To maintain order in a group of students there must be strict discipline and enforcement of the rules of etiquette. A moral and modest attitude is important and etiquette is an essential part of Taekwon-Do training.

Students must constantly be guided by a deep respect for Taekwon-Do and the do jang, and for all members of the do jang. Good manners, politeness, courteous behaviour, and maintenance of formal etiquette are part of training.

Report all injuries to the instructor.

### **Show respect for the Instructor or assistants:**

Concentrate totally on the instructor's directions.

Keep quiet while the instructor is speaking or demonstrating techniques.

Attend classes regularly. Notify the instructor if you will be unable to attend for more than one week.

If you will be absent or late, notify the instructor as soon as possible.

If learning a new technique proves difficult, first try to figure it out by watching others, then ask the instructor for help.

Pay tuition fees promptly. It is not polite or respectful to expect a school or instructor to wait for payment.

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Your conduct, in and out of class, reflects upon Taekwon-Do and the instructor.

### **Show respect for higher-rank & fellow students:**

Use control in free-sparring and step-sparring.

Seek assistance from your seniors when the instructor is not present or is otherwise occupied.

Higher belts may instruct you (although they are not black belts). When they are instructing you, give them the respect and attention you would to any instructor.

Never display bad temper toward an instructor or fellow student.

### **Show respect for lower-rank students:**

Use control in free-sparring and step-sparring. This is most important – you have more skills, you should have more control. It would be wrong to intimidate a junior.

If a junior displays a lack of knowledge of a rule or technique, it is the responsibility of the senior to inform, clarify, or teach.

Seniors should advise juniors of correct protocol where needed, and lead by example with their etiquette.

### **Visitors:**

Parents and visitors are welcome to watch class.

Parents should not talk to their children during class and they should leave coaching to the instructor.

Students are responsible for their guests.

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During class, visitors may observe quietly from the seats provided and leave during breaks or at the end of class.

### **Sparring:**

All sparring must be well controlled.

No sparring before or after class unless supervised by an instructor.

If you have sparring gear you should ensure it is brought to every class and that it is kept clean.

### **Class protocol:**

Class protocol is learned gradually. Do not expect to remember it all after the first class. Senior students will assist you and explain the steps as you progress in your training.

As you earn higher-rank belts, you must know and practise the protocol and set an example for the lower-rank belts.

If you do not understand class protocol or you have any questions, ask your instructor at an appropriate time or after class.

Help keep the training area and changing rooms clean.

### **Class etiquette:**

If you arrive late, move quietly towards the front at the side of the class, waiting in Charyot position until the instructor notices you and you both bow, then the instructor will either invite you to join the class or to do warm-up exercises at the back until there is a break in activity.

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If the student intends to participate in class out of uniform, he should request permission from his instructor beforehand. Shoes are not to be worn in the do jang.

Request permission from the instructor if you must leave the training area before class ends.

Show enthusiasm, spirit, and good sportsmanship at all times.

Display a respectful, humble, and receptive attitude toward Taekwon-Do and your instructor.

When told to be seated, either kneel or sit cross-legged. Do not lie on the floor, lean on walls or sit with legs outstretched towards the instructor.

Out of courtesy, avoid stepping over people as much as possible.

If you are called to go to the front of the class, say "Yes sir/ma'am" keenly but do not run through the lines of other students. Step back and move to the side of your line and then go quickly to the front.

No un-sportsmanlike conduct.

A humble student is able to learn more quickly.

No extraneous conversation once the class begins. NEVER talk in class unless the instructor talks to you and NEVER fool around with others during class.

### **Home practice expectations:**

All material learned in class should be practised at home regularly.

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Repetition promotes a strong foundation in the basic techniques.

Your basics provide the foundation for more advanced techniques. A proper foundation also reduces the risk of injury as movements become more complex.

Stretching exercises are useful in developing flexibility.

Practising at home requires the same focus as in class. Practice aids are usually available through your instructor. Printed sheets, Internet sites, DVDs. The onus is on you to learn from what is available.

When in doubt, ask your instructor. Practising incorrectly does more harm than not practicing.

It is the student's own responsibility to learn all the theory appropriate for their belt level.

### **Taking part in tournaments:**

Although not a major part of Taekwon-Do training, there is opportunity to attend tournaments to test your skills in a safe competition environment.

All sparring competitions are touch-contact, which minimizes the possibility of injury.

Patterns (set sequences of movements) are also contested at tournaments. While not at all compulsory, it is highly recommended that everybody enters at least one tournament to see if they enjoy that side of Taekwon-Do.

Why should I compete? This question varies with the individual. An important reason is that it teaches the individual to perform under uncertain conditions,

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similar to what would happen in an attack situation. It also teaches us about public performances and prepares us for other forms of public appearances. For others, it's just a love of competition.

Part of a student's progress in Taekwon-Do should be to assist at tournaments. Gaining experience and qualifications as a marshal, corner judge or referee is a good way to assist those who are coming after you.

### **Combined training, camps and seminars:**

You will probably have many opportunities to attend combined training sessions and seminars with members of Taekwon-Do clubs from all around your region and country. These are a great opportunity to learn more about Taekwon-Do, to meet other people in Taekwon-Do, and to learn from different instructors. It is highly recommended that you attend as many of these extra activities as you can. At higher belt levels you have to have earned a number of "participation credits" from such events to be eligible to grade to the next belt.

### **Gradings:**

Usually three times a year coloured-belt students may have the opportunity to progress to the next level. (Black belts have to wait a defined number of years between their Gradings.)

This is the students' chance to show that they have learned the appropriate patterns, the techniques and the theory. It can be nerve-wracking, but well-prepared students should relish the opportunity to demonstrate the skills that they have worked so hard to attain.

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### **Coloured belt Grading (Gup Ranks):**

Your instructor will decide when you are ready for a promotional exam.

Attitude and enthusiasm are as important as the acquisition of new skills. Students may be held back from grading until the instructor is satisfied with their progress.

Grading application forms must be filled out completely and given to your instructor in a timely fashion to be approved for grading.

Students must meet the minimum number of classes required for each belt exam. Consult your instructor for details on class requirements for testing. This information may also be available on the club website.

In the interest of fairness to all, no student shall be allowed to test unless tuition payments are up-to-date.

Pre-testing will be conducted in class by your instructor. Students must be pre-approved in order to attend the grading.

If a student misses the grading for any reason, they must wait until the next grading to be tested for promotion.

### **Before the Grading:**

Bring all equipment and full uniform.

Arrive 30 minutes prior to starting time.

Stretch and warm up to avoid injuries.

No horseplay in testing area.



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### **Conduct of the Grading:**

A senior will conduct the warm-up before the examiner arrives.

Members should be instructed on where to be seated and advised as to proper conduct, when to go to the restroom etc.

Chief examiner arrives (someone will be nominated to watch for his arrival). Class stands at attention.

Instructors will be dressed in the official dress uniform (unless required in dobok for the testing).

The Instructors wait outside for the examiner. They walk in with the Examiner in accordance to their seniority with the Examiner at the front of the line. The Instructors line up at the front, facing forward with the students grading.

All face the flag and bow (the senior student gives the commands).

The Student oath.

Bow to the chief examiner, bow to the instructors.

The host Instructor introduces the examiner and instructors and advises people of the event.

Those grading move back and are seated while the examiner is introduced to the instructors and guests if any. Black belt students are to be seated at the side of the venue. Instructors need to be seated where practical near the examiner for consultation.

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Grading begins.

Instructors only are permitted to be seated at the examiner's table. If your student is being examined, then sit next to the examiner so comments can be passed.

All Black Belts of the school testing are to be present at the grading in the correct dress unless excused by the chief examiner.

Black belts are to be seated in a suitable manner on the seating provided, share the task of ushering the students, remain alert and maintain the correct standards/discipline among the students testing.

The grading finishes with a speech from the examiner and notices from Instructors.

Final procedure: The senior gives the commands as usual for the end of class.

### **During Grading:**

All students stand at attention when judges enter and listen to instructions from Senior Student.

Students should answer with a loud "Yes sir" or "Yes ma'am" when called upon.

Enter and exit grading floor quickly. Walk around fellow students as best as possible. Avoid stepping over people for both courtesy and safety. When dismissed, move back quickly and quietly, without turning your back on the examiner.

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When a technique (step sparring or self defence) requires a **kihap**, shout with strength and vigour.

Do not move around while others are being graded.

Applaud fellow students energetically and without bias.

Students should never approach the Black Belt Board, nor ask questions of the Chief Instructor during test. Students may ask to have a question repeated, if:

1. Student didn't hear the question.
2. Student has made a mistake on a technique during testing, in which the student may respectfully ask the Chief Instructor for permission to do the technique over again.

Answer questions loudly and clearly.

Listen politely to announcements and thanks.

Do not leave until dismissed.

### **After the Grading:**

There is usually some refreshment after a Gup Grading, with adults to assist. Students should ensure that they continue with protocol and offer polite assistance to visitors.

The highest ranking person will leave the room first when the ceremony is over, followed by the others in order of rank.

Dan (Black Belt) Gradings are often celebrated with a dinner or some formal event.

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### **Meaning of the white belt:**

White signifies innocence, as that of a beginning student who has no previous knowledge of Taekwon-Do.

### **Meaning of the yellow belt:**

Yellow signifies the earth from which a plant spouts and takes root as the Taekwon-Do foundation is being laid.

### **Meaning of the green belt:**

Green signifies the plant's growth as the Taekwon-Do skill begins to develop.

### **Meaning of the blue belt:**

Blue signifies the Heaven, towards which the plant matures into a towering tree as training in Taekwon-Do progresses.

### **Meaning of the red belt:**

Red signifies danger, cautioning the student to exercise control and warning the opponent to stay away.

### **Meaning of the black belt:**

Opposite to white, therefore signifying the maturity and proficiency in Taekwon-Do. It also indicates the wearer's imperviousness to darkness and fear.

### **Character shown by belt colour:**

The belt worn is a representation of not only the student's commitment and skill level, but his or her character as well.

The student's character outside the do-jang reflects upon the art of Taekwon-Do and the instructor. Only those of worthy character are able to wear a belt of

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advancing rank. The student should set a good example and always demonstrate through decisions, choices, and actions the tenets of Taekwon-Do and the student oath.

A major purpose of grading is to build self-confidence.

### **Skill level shown by belt colour:**

It may be thought that belt color or rank represents a certain level of proficiency or ability and that the higher the rank then the higher the skill level compared to those of lower rank. In terms of intellectual knowledge/skill, this is true. However, in terms of actual physical skill level, this may not be the case. Examiners at a Grading will consider the candidate's Age, Gender, Physical Status and Intellectual Status.

Breaking boards are required for many Gradings (not all). The size and thickness of the board will depend on the age, size, and belt level of the student as well as the difficulty of the breaking technique

### **Knowledge shown by belt colour:**

Students are expected to have a good grasp of the required knowledge and theory and rules of conduct associated with each rank level.

Belt test etiquette is an integral part of Taekwon-Do protocol. Etiquette is a person's behaviour that expresses their respect for another person.

Gradings help students to set intermediate goals on their path to a Black Belt and instil in them a desire to reach the Black Belt. This desire will show itself in other areas of a student's life as he/she strives to meet and surpass all the goals they set in their lives.

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### **Black Belts as role models to the rest of us:**

*The dream of every Martial Arts student is to become a Black Belt.*

The image of a Black Belt brings to mind a fearless leader with indomitable spirit and courage to face any challenge that comes his way, who pits his strength against the forces of evil and thus, someone who needs to be treated with respect and honour.

The wearer of a Taekwon-Do Black Belt is bound to uphold the standards of honesty, integrity, courtesy, high moral code and indomitable spirit, to value and carry on the Martial Arts tradition with dignity and respect, and to continue mental, physical, emotional and spiritual growth to the highest level, to lead by example, and to share what they learn with others.

Black Belts integrate the Tenets of Taekwon-Do into their lives - Courtesy, Integrity, Perseverance, Self-control and Indomitable Spirit.

Black Belts are taught there is no challenge that is beyond them and that they need to overcome obstacles through dedication and perseverance. Sometimes students learn particular techniques easily while another technique will be more difficult to grasp. They find that negative words like "can't" and "quit" are forbidden and react to challenges with hard-earned perseverance and patience, which is part of their mental growth. If you think about it, there will be many instances where a little more patience on your part would have achieved a better outcome for everyone concerned. Most likely, either anger or stress triggered your response. A Black Belt develops "mental muscles" through focused concentration

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exercised during training, reducing anger and stressful tensions and bringing to play more self-control.

The Black Belt journey prepares a person to successfully tackle other challenges in life and it becomes a symbol of personal growth and achievement. Black Belts learn to improve concentration, dexterity, flexibility and the control of their actions, which helps them develop physical and mental self-control.

Black Belts are always positive thinkers. Nothing is impossible to them. Even in the bleakest situation, they will always find a ray of hope, a way out of hopelessness. They are also "Risk Takers", enjoying the excitement and the challenge of "making things happen" and "grabbing the bull by the horns". An effective Black Belt is a good communicator and respectful, sensitive, compassionate and considerate of the feelings and concerns of others. Black Belts generally end up as leaders in various areas of life because they have built enough confidence in themselves to lead. Being honest with themselves, they know what they are capable of and recognize their limitations too. This makes them act with a sense of responsibility towards themselves, towards others and to society in general.

A Black Belt is a highly disciplined individual. Discipline is more than good behaviour. It is an internal attribute that is crucial for a successful, happy life.

Discipline shapes students' attitudes and colours their view of life and of the people around them. Discipline is a powerful tool which allows them to enjoy a good quality of life and to achieve all their goals.

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It is important that your "**do**" or "way of life" is to set an example of restraint in your own actions and words so other people may see that you actually live the **do**, the way, in a martial arts sense. This is a black belt's obligation to keep our art pure and on a path towards excellence.

Black Belts become role models for the rest of society, because their training places their mental discipline above that of the average person and the path they take along their training is greater than themselves. For them, the path is the destination, for they are following in life the highest mental qualities man sets out to achieve.

For all those who have the goal to become a Black Belt you are following a difficult but worthwhile path. If you follow the expectations of excellence stated above, you will be able to achieve anything you want. You will be justifiably proud to say "I have a Taekwon-Do Black Belt."

### **Responsibilities of the Black Belt:**

One of the greatest misconceptions within the martial arts is the notion that all black belt holders are experts. It is understandable that those unacquainted with the martial arts might make this equation. However students should certainly recognize that this is not always the case. Too often, novice black belt holders advertise themselves as experts and eventually even convince themselves.

The first degree black belt holder has usually learned enough technique to defend himself against a single opponent. He can be compared to a fledgling who has acquired enough feathers to leave the nest and fend



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for himself. The first degree is a starting point. The student has merely built a foundation. The job of building the house lies ahead.

The novice black belt holder will now really begin to learn technique. Now that he has mastered the alphabet, he can begin to read. Years of hard work and study await him before he can even begin to consider himself an Instructor and expert.

A perceptive student will, at this stage, suddenly realise how very little he knows.

The black belt holder also enters a new era of responsibility. Though a freshman, he has entered a strong honourable fraternity of the black belt holders of the entire world, and his actions inside and outside the training hall will be carefully scrutinised. His conduct will reflect on all black belt holders and he must constantly strive to set an example for all grade holders.

Some will certainly advance into the expert stages. However, far too many will believe the misconception and will remain as novices, mentally and technically.

As a black belt holder you are expected to support your Instructor and club in all of its events, as a participant, official or organiser.

You are expected to attend and act as marshal at all Gradings in your region.

### **Senior belt etiquette:**

A senior must become a model of respectability and personality, remembering that every word and act is watched closely and imitated by juniors.

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A senior should be prudent not to speak ill of his fellow instructors or other seniors in front of the students.

The students must be infused with a positive attitude at all times.

The attitudes of the chief instructor and assistant instructors should always be clear and candid.

Any lie or gossip should be avoided.

A black belt should not be talkative about personal issues in front of juniors.

The instructors should pay attention to the students' technical issues and grades, in order to help them improve their Taekwon-Do training and life education.

Seniors should rely more on consulting than on commanding (be kind and considerate to all students).

Taekwon-Do practitioners should endeavour to practise what they have learned about mental cultivation and attitudes such as ethical life, justice, faith, modesty and non- betrayal in their daily lives.

Work towards improving attitudes and techniques within your class.

Only learn the forms and requirements up to and including your rank. To learn higher is to show disrespect for the ranking system and senior ranks.

### **Instructor etiquette:**

The instructor should draw a line between official and personal affairs.

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Instructors should refrain from extreme luxury, vanity, drugs, gambling and overdrinking and show a modest and productive life.

Instructors should take the initiative to contribute to the development of the community and society.

Instructors and seniors should endeavour to practise attitudes such as ethical life, justice, faith, modesty and non- betrayal in their daily life.

If considering opening an academy or seeking Taekwon-Do employment, permission should be asked first, and if denied, that should be respected.

Confucian values form the base for the Taekwon-Do student-instructor relationship. These values teach that children must remain obedient and loyal to their parents throughout their lives. Likewise, students are to always obey and respect the instructor. In return, the instructor teaches students to perform Taekwon-Do properly, helps them become physically and morally strong, and helps them build good character.

A dedicated and sincere instructor is an absolute necessity for proper Taekwon-Do training; and the instructor needs equally dedicated and sincere students.

Each junior should support their instructor and seniors by being careful about etiquette and discipline.

The student-instructor relationship is based upon mutual respect. The instructor must always exemplify the highest level of integrity both inside and outside the do jang. Students must never do anything to dishonour the instructor or the do jang

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An Instructor shall provide an up-to-date and thorough training curriculum in a nondiscriminatory manner.

An Instructor shall always conduct him or herself in accordance with the law and in a professional manner.

An Instructor shall always set a good example for students and never attempt to defraud them.

An Instructor shall make every effort to protect the student from conditions harmful to health and safety.

An Instructor shall only disclose confidential information about individuals when required to by law.

An Instructor must put the development of the student above commercialism.

An Instructor should not exploit students. The only purpose of an Instructor is to produce both technically and mentally excellent students.

An Instructor shall follow proper Taekwon-Do etiquette and protocol.

An Instructor shall take reasonable disciplinary action when exercising authority, to provide an atmosphere conducive to learning.

Instructors should understand and clearly communicate to lower ranks what the "**do**" of Taekwon-Do means. It means a "way of" - in our case a way of foot and fist, but more importantly the do of Taekwon-Do means "a way of life", a way of living; the correct exercise of mind and body, also a way of living

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with modesty, not going to extremes. Also "do" means "a way of morality" and good living, with good character development.

To motivate and get the best that a student can produce often takes real patience and dedication but the pleasure you get seeing a person who lacks confidence become more positive, or a student who is arrogant and boastful become more aware of their wrong attitude and become more tolerant and calm, these are the rewards which make teaching this art so stimulating and satisfying.

Instructors need to have a strict discipline, but they must learn to judge human nature within each student, and to have compassion in decision making. The main aim of Taekwon-Do is to make a better human being by developing a stronger mind and body.

To become a complete martial arts expert, we all have to analyse our weaknesses and strengths, then work hard to improve on our weak areas, and instructors must have the foresight and at times the fortitude to assist students to overcome their weaknesses.

An Instructor shall not use professional relationships with students, parents and colleagues to private advantage.

An Instructor shall delegate authority for teaching responsibilities only to suitable seniors.

An Instructor shall not knowingly falsify or misrepresent records or facts relating to their own qualifications or to other Instructors' qualifications.

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An Instructor shall not knowingly make false or malicious statements about students, fellow Instructors or any Taekwon-Do organisation.

An Instructor shall never let personal prejudices, animosities or friendships influence any decision.

### **Dress for seniors:**

To attend Gradings, tournaments or other Taekwon-Do events, seniors when not wearing a dobok should wear black jacket and trousers or skirt and a white shirt (buttoned, not a T-shirt). Shoes should be black, or white training shoes where suitable (e.g. to protect the floor of a do jang). Ties should show Taekwon-Do allegiance if possible. Suitable Taekwon-Do badges may be worn. Jewellery should be kept to a minimum.

Neat clean cut hair and clean footwear are a must for all students. Everyone should ensure that his looks and dress will not show disrespect to seniors or elders.

For a formal occasion, such as meeting or dining with a Master, jackets should not be removed until the Master indicates that it is permitted.

Even among juniors, some care should be taken with appearance at any Taekwon-Do event. Cleanliness is a must, and dress which is too casual implies a casual attitude.

### **Seating arrangements:**

Whether for a group photograph or for seating at the Examiner's table at a Grading, or around a table for a meal, the rule is the same.

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The most senior sits in the middle. To his or her right sits the next most senior, and to his or her left sits the third. The fourth place is again at the right, etc.

So if you look at a Taekwon-Do group photograph, the order of seniority (with 1 being the highest) will be:

.. (6) (4) (2) (1) (3) (5) ..

### **Seating in a car:**

In a car such as a taxi, the senior will be seated in the back on the opposite side of the chauffeur's seat, the second senior just behind the chauffeur, the third in between the two and the last in seniority just beside the chauffeur. In a private car driven by a Taekwon-Do person, the seat beside the driver has the first priority for a senior. At the time of getting in a car, one of the others should help the senior enter the car first, and at the destination, also attend the senior by getting out first.

The designated driver for a formal occasion always opens the car door for the superior.

However, in the rear seat, the lower ranking individual gets into the car first, so as to allow the superior to depart the vehicle first once they have reached their destination.

### **Dinner table etiquette:**

Maintain proper seated position while eating.

Wait for the senior member to start first.

Do not stand or leave the table while eating without seeking permission to be excused.

Attempt to finish at about the same time as the senior.

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When finished with the meal place utensils side by side, not crossed.

### **At social occasions:**

One should always be especially careful in using the correct title (a Master should not be called Mr., just as a Professor should not be called Mr., since Master is a hard-earned title).

Introductions are governed by three basic rules: Introduce a male to a female, introduce an adult to a much older one of the same sex, & introduce a lower rank to a higher rank.

Introductions should be brief & not wordy or awkward. The host always shakes the hands of the guests upon arrival & departure. Females always have the choice to shake hands or not. Males should always shake hands with other males to whom being introduced, unless it is awkward to do so, for example leaning across others while seated at the dinner table.

You may shake hands only when the senior shows first his willingness to do so. In shaking hands, a tight grip should be avoided.

Conversation should be restrained and respectful.

Do not take uninvited guests to a party.

When a Grandmaster/Master enters everyone should rise and bow showing proper etiquette. Even among friends, all visitors should be treated with etiquette.

It is a rule of courtesy for juniors to pour drinks for their seniors. The juniors have to keep paying



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attention not to leave a senior's glass empty, unless he or she has specified otherwise.

When a senior offers a beverage, you must receive the glass with both hands (one hand on the side and one beneath). You should not smoke in front of a senior unless you have been given permission.

When a toast is being made, juniors should endeavour to hold their glass at a lower level than seniors.

It is best not to drink alcohol to excess, or to smoke. Do not drink and drive!

### **When visiting:**

Do not conduct surprise visits. Give plenty of notice before your intended visit.

Avoid visiting early mornings or late nights, unless previously arranged.

If when visiting, your host gives you indirect hints to leave (e.g. looking at his watch etc) be considerate and leave.

When visitors leave, see them from the premises by accompanying them to the gate or car. Await their departure before returning inside.

### **Email:**

Ensure that you use the correct and appropriate language.

Do not send unwanted jokes or emails to your seniors.

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Do not provide seniors' or other Taekwon-Do students' email addresses to others without their permission.

### **Summary:**

"**Ye**" (etiquette) is an essential spirit in Taekwon-Do training. Taekwon-Do practice must begin and end with etiquette.

**Ye** denotes the way that all humans should follow.

It is the fundamental base on which human spirit stands. It shows respect for humanity.

Etiquette is an expression, through actions, of respecting another person's personality, abilities, achievements and potential.

A code of etiquette is aimed at encouraging Taekwon-Do students to behave as a person of high moral standing, cultivating a character worthy of respect.

Children especially need discipline and order. The child's overflowing enthusiasm can be tempered only through moral education, which starts by the training of etiquette.

Decent and respectful speech, graceful conduct, upright and moderate attitudes are all the essentials of etiquette, the source of harmony and solidarity in personal and community life.

## **Taekwon**