



## Zanshin Karate Academy Grading Syllabus

The aim of Zanshin Karate Academy is to teach students effective and pragmatic martial arts skills for dealing with modern violence.

As the definition of violence changes so shall we. Never held back by tradition and always open to new ideas and practises, we will strive to incorporate the best of what the global Karate and wider martial arts communities have to offer.

**N.B. This is a reference guide and grading criteria can, and will, change depending on various factors**

# Important Concepts for Combat

## The Rules of Combat

As defined by Vince Morris in his book "Rules of Combat, The Development of Warrior Tactics", ISBN: 0 9539325 0 8.

1. Always use methods of distraction
2. Control the fighting distance
3. Never retreat (unless it is safe to do so, or as a tactic)
4. Never stop until it is over
5. Always move to a position of advantage. Do not simply rely upon blocking an attack, but move at the same time
6. Use the attacker's strength against them (unbalance, deflect)
7. Never fight at the same speed as the assailant
8. Show no fear (unless as a tactic)
9. Control your own breathing
10. Do not rely upon any one technique or blow to win the fight
11. Do not fixate upon one attacker, there may be more
12. Remember that a hold or a lock is often a prelude to control or finish, the the control or finish itself
13. Prepare a psychological 'switch' in your head and be prepared to use it
14. Maintain a 'stone' face
15. Do not give way to anger, which is much an enemy to fluid natural movement as fear
16. Do not fix your attention on any one particular aspect of your opponent
17. If you are truly concerned to develop effective martial skills, then your practice must be as realistic as possible, not ritualistic
18. Train to combat the most likely forms of attack first
19. Action beats reaction!
20. Hands do only two things in a fight - they protect you and harm your enemy!
21. KISS (Keep It Simple, Stupid!)
22. Use the kyusho or vital (vulnerable) areas or points whenever humanly possible

## OODA Loop

### *Observe-Orient-Decide-Act*

The OODA loop is the cycle observe-orient-decide-act, developed by military strategist and United States Air Force Colonel John Boyd.

Boyd developed the concept to explain how to direct one's energies to defeat an adversary and survive. Boyd emphasized that "the loop" is actually a set of interacting loops that are to be kept in continuous operation during combat. He also indicated that the phase of the battle has an important bearing on the ideal allocation of one's energies.

## Cooper Color Code

- **White:** Unaware and unprepared. If attacked in Condition White, the only thing that may save you is the inadequacy or ineptitude of your attacker. When confronted by something nasty, your reaction will probably be "Oh my God! This can't be happening to me."
- **Yellow:** Relaxed alert. No specific threat situation. Your mindset is that "today could be the day I may have to defend myself". You are simply aware that the world is a potentially unfriendly place and that you are prepared to defend yourself, if necessary. You use your eyes and ears, and realize that "I may have to shoot today". You don't have to be armed in this state, but if you are armed you should be in Condition Yellow. You should always be in Yellow whenever you are in unfamiliar surroundings or among people you don't know. You can remain in Yellow for long periods, as long as you are able to "Watch your six." (In aviation 12 o'clock refers to the direction in front of the aircraft's nose. Six o'clock is the blind spot behind the pilot.) In Yellow, you are "taking in" surrounding information in a relaxed but alert manner, like a continuous 360 degree radar sweep. As Cooper put it, "I might have to shoot."
- **Orange:** Specific alert. Something is not quite right and has your attention. Your radar has picked up a specific alert. You shift your primary focus to determine if there is a threat (but you do not drop your six). Your mindset shifts to "I may have to shoot that person today", focusing on the specific target which has caused the escalation in alert status. In Condition Orange, you set a mental trigger: "If that person does 'X', I will need to stop them". Your pistol usually remains holstered in this state. Staying in Orange can be a bit of a mental strain, but you can stay in it for as long as you need to. If the threat proves to be nothing, you shift back to Condition Yellow.
- **Red:** Condition Red is fight. Your mental trigger (established back in Condition Orange) has been tripped. "If 'X' happens I will shoot that person" — 'X' has happened, the fight is on.

# Habitual Acts of Violence

**N.B. This list is not conclusive**

- Push to the chest followed by swinging punch to the head
- Swinging punches to the head
- Lapel grab followed by punch to the head
- Double lapel grab followed by head butt
- Double lapel grab followed by knee to the groin
- Bottle, glass or improvised weapon to the head
- Kick to the groin or lower legs
- Broken bottle/glass jabbed to the face
- Slashing, hacking or stabbing with an edged weapon
- Headlock
- High or low tackles
- Throat grab, single or double hand
- Hair pull
- Wrist grab, single
- Wrist grab, double
- Single or double hand shove
- Bear hug
- Biting

## Recommended Reading

*N.B. This list is far from exhaustive and students are encouraged to explore further and wider than what is presented below*

The Rules of Combat - Vince Morris

Meditations on Violence - Rory Miller

Facing Violence - Rory Miller

The Little Black Book of Violence

From Shotokan to the Street - Andi Kidd

The Gift of Fear - Gavin De Becker

Creepology - Anna Valdiserri

# 9<sup>th</sup> Kyu (white belt going for red)

Grade aim: Hit, and learn to hit hard!

## Basics and Applications

To be performed solo, with partner (movement) and on pad (movement and force):

### Core Skills

- Gedan barai (at 45 degree angle), step oi zuki
- Age uke, age enpi, hiza geri
- Shuto (block and strike on the inside), switch and hiza geri

### Sporting

- Jab, cross
- Front kick (with front leg), reverse punch
- Reverse punch, front kick (rear leg, stepping through)

## Sparring and Live Practise

- Drill/spar combative principles and methods from Heian Shodan
- Blocks and counter attacks from random wrist and lapel grips
- One minute sparring

## Additional Pad Work

- Palm strike
- Hammer fists
- Elbows
- Knees
- Front kick

# 8<sup>th</sup> Kyu (red belt going for orange)

Aim: Angles, offlining, adapting range

## Basics and Applications

To be performed solo, with partner (movement) and on pad (movement and force):

### Core Skills

- Gedan barai (at 45 degree angle), step oi zuki
- Age uke, age enpi, hiza geri
- Shuto (block and strike on the inside), switch and hiza geri
- Shuto (trapping and striking at 45 degree angle on the outside)
- Uchi uke (at 45 degree angle), mae geri, gyaku zuki
- Frame head, enpi and hiza geri

### Sporting

- Jab, cross, hook, uppercut
- Front kick (with front leg), reverse punch
- Reverse punch, front kick (rear leg, stepping through)
- Jab, cross, roundhouse

## Sparring and Live Practise

- Drill/spar combative principles and methods from Heian Nidan
- 2 x 2 minute padwork
- 2 x 2 minute sparring

## Additional Pad Work

- Counter assault, cover, crash
- Continual, forward assault
- Stop hit - opponent advancing

## Kata

- Heian Shodan

# 7<sup>th</sup> Kyu (orange belt going for yellow)

Aim: Taking balance and throws

## Basics and Applications

To be performed solo, with partner (movement) and on pad (movement and force):

### Core Skills

- Gedan barai (at 45 degree angle), step oi zuki
- Age uke, age enpi, hiza geri
- Shuto (block and strike on the inside), switch and hiza geri
- Shuto (trapping and striking at 45 degree angle on the outside)
- Uchi uke (at 45 degree angle), mae geri, gyaku zuki
- Soto uke (at 45 degree angle), elbow lock

### Sporting

- Jab, cross, hook, uppercut
- Front kick (with front leg), reverse punch
- Reverse punch, front kick (rear leg, stepping through)
- Jab, cross, roundhouse

## Sparring and Live Practise

- Drill/spar combative principles and methods from Heian Sandan
- Folding screen topple (plus variations)
- Neck ring (plus variations)
- Iriminage (plus variations)
- Clinch / throw sparring (randori)
- 2 x 2 mins pad work
- Adaptive range sparring 2 x 2 mins

## Additional Pad Work

- Counter assault, cover, crash
- Barrage assault - multiple strikes moving forward
- Single attacker simulation drill with random responses

## Kata

- Heian Nidan

# 6<sup>th</sup> Kyu (yellow belt going for green)

Aim: Clinch / in-fighting, taking the back and multiples

## Basics and Applications

To be performed solo, with partner (movement) and on pad (movement and force):

### Core Skills

- Gedan barai (at 45 degree angle), step oi zuki
- Age uke, age enpi, hiza geri
- Shuto (block and strike on the inside), switch and hiza geri
- Shuto (trapping and striking at 45 degree angle on the outside)
- Uchi uke (at 45 degree angle), mae geri, gyaku zuki
- Soto uke (at 45 degree angle), elbow lock

### Sporting

- Jab, cross, hook, uppercut
- Rising elbow, round elbow, dropping elbow
- Front kick (with front leg), reverse punch
- Reverse punch, front kick (rear leg, stepping through)
- Jab, cross, roundhouse

## Sparring and Live Practise

- Drill/spar combative principles and methods from Heian Yondan
- Two attackers, continuous attempts at double lapel grab. Deflect and offline.
- Two attackers, continuous clinch drill working on active stacking. Clinch / throws sparring (randori)
- 2 x 2 mins pad work
- Adaptive range sparring 2 x 2 mins

## Additional Pad Work

- Counter assault, cover, crash
- Barrage assault - multiple strikes moving forward
- Dual attacker simulation drill with random responses

## Kata

- Heian Sandan



# 5<sup>th</sup> Kyu (green belt going for purple)

Aim: Combative mindset

## Basics and Applications

To be performed solo, with partner (movement) and on pad (movement and force).

**N.B. Students expected to proficient on both sides:**

### Core Skills

- Gedan barai (at 45 degree angle), step oi zuki
- Age uke, age enpi, hiza geri
- Shuto (block and strike on the inside), switch and hiza geri
- Shuto (trapping and striking at 45 degree angle on the outside)
- Uchi uke (at 45 degree angle), mae geri, gyaku zuki
- Soto uke (at 45 degree angle), elbow lock

### Sporting

- Jab, cross, hook, uppercut
- Rising elbow, round elbow, dropping elbow
- Front kick (with front leg), reverse punch
- Reverse punch, front kick (rear leg, stepping through)
- Jab, cross, roundhouse

## Sparring and Live Practise

- Drill/spar combative principles and methods from Heian Godan
- Ground holds - mount / in guard, scarf hold, side hold
- Ground escapes from back
- Halfwheel throw
- Throat press
- Two attackers, continuous attempts at double lapel grab. Deflect and offline and counters
- Two attackers, continuous clinch drill working on active stacking and counters
- Any previous

## Additional Pad Work

- Striking with pad holder feedback for effectiveness
- Branching striking
- Attrition striking

## Kata

- Heian Yondan

# 4<sup>th</sup> Kyu (purple belt going for purple and white)

Aim: Restricted striking, working from a position of disadvantage

## Basics and Applications

To be performed solo, with partner (movement) and on pad (movement and force).

**N.B. Students expected to proficient on both sides:**

### Core Skills

- Gedan barai (at 45 degree angle), step oi zuki
- Age uke, age enpi, hiza geri
- Shuto (block and strike on the inside), switch and hiza geri
- Shuto (trapping and striking at 45 degree angle on the outside)
- Uchi uke (at 45 degree angle), mae geri, gyaku zuki
- Soto uke (at 45 degree angle), elbow lock

### Sporting

- Jab, cross, hook, uppercut
- Rising elbow, round elbow, dropping elbow
- Front kick (with front leg), reverse punch
- Reverse punch, front kick (rear leg, stepping through)
- Jab, cross, roundhouse

## Sparring and Live Practise

- Drill/spar combative principles and methods from the Heian system
- Restricted striking - drills from seated, ground, kneeling, etc.
- All content from previous gradings

## Additional Pad Work

- Round the clock drill

## Kata

- Heian Godan

# 3<sup>rd</sup> Kyu (purple and white belt going for brown)

Aim: Principles of Violence - pre incident

## Basics and Applications

- All previous combinations and additional variations at grading panel's discretion

## Sparring and Live Practise

- Kata / practical based sparring
- Sporting based sparring

## Kata

- Tekki Shodan

## Principles of Violence

This is a huge and far reaching topic that can, and should, mean different things to different people. The violence that we are at risk of not only changes between people but also changes as we travel through life. Students should have an understanding of this and of their own risk profile, as well as the risk profiles that others might be subject to, and be able to speak around the subject from their own point of view incorporating topics such as:

- Deescalation
- Red flags
- Awareness
- Fight precursors
- Cooper Color Code
- Behaviour and security screening

## Additional

- Deliver a functional warm up

# 2<sup>nd</sup> Kyu (brown belt going for brown and white)

Aim: Principles of Violence - incident

## Basics and Applications

- All previous combinations and additional variations at grading panel's discretion

## Sparring and Live Practise

- Pre-scripted simulations

## Kata

- Bassai Dai

## Principles of Violence

- Range control
- Contact management
- OODA loop
- Pre-emption / counter assault
- Force levels
- Multiple assailants
- Weapon awareness (including ad-hoc weapons)

## Additional

- Design and deliver a simple scenario drill from Tekki Shodan to demonstrate a practical skill / concept

# 1<sup>st</sup> Kyu (brown and white belt going for brown and two whites)

Aim: Principles of Violence - post incident

## Basics and Applications

- All previous combinations and additional variations at grading panel's discretion

## Sparring and Live Practise

- Scenarios

## Principles of Violence

- Escaping to safety
- Talking to authorities
- Justification of force
- Understanding of physiological and psychological factors
- Awareness of repercussions

## Kata

- Tekki Nidan

## Additional

- Design and deliver a simple scenario drill from Bassai Dai to demonstrate a practical skill / concept

# 1<sup>st</sup> Dan

Aim: A complete demonstration of acquired skills and knowledge

## Basics and Applications

- All previous and variations at grading panel's discretion

## Sparring and Live Practise

- Pre-scripted simulations
- Scenarios

## Sparring and Live Practise

- 3 sets of one and a half minutes sparring
- Focus mitts – Up to four strike combination (hands and feet) pad holder calls numbers
- Kickshield - Front kick, roundhouse and sidekick
- Focus mitts - Cover, crash, clinch and counter using applications from Heian Yondan
- Focus mitts – Two on one drill. Pad holders swim in with haymakers, defenders have to cover, crash, clinch, move and counter
- Reactive drill - attacker three choices of how to react against first punch
- Restricted escape from being pinned against wall / into corner

## Kata

- Kanku-Dai with demonstration of bunkai
- Performance of previous kata
- Demonstration of three pieces of bunkai for each heian kata
- Design and deliver a simple scenario drill from Tekki Nidan to demonstrate a practical skill / concept

## Principles of Violence

- Understanding of the principles of all three phases, pre-fight, in-fight and post-fight

## Additional

- Within reason, candidate must have participated recently in external courses / seminars and should be able to demonstrate learning acquired from these outside of this syllabus
- Significant active participation in at least one of the club online chats
- In depth explanation of three combative principles that make for an effective technique and why they qualify

# 2<sup>nd</sup> Dan

Aim: Self analysis

## Core Skills

- **Any previous grading material of the grading panels choice**
- Demonstration of continued personal development
- Kata of choice from Karate Do Kyohan

## Additional

- Two areas of improvement - grading panel's choice
- One area of improvement - students choice

# 3<sup>rd</sup> Dan

Aim: Analysis of others

## Core Skills

- **Any previous grading material of the grading panels choice**
- Demonstration of continued personal development
- Kata of choice from Karate Do Kyohan

## Additional

- Regular coaching of others
- Demonstration of understanding of skills and techniques for analysis of, and coaching of others



## **4th Dan**

This grading and its aim will be bespoke for the candidate. All aspects of practical karate training and theory will be in scope and the grading can include any additional complementary subjects (e.g. self defence skills, martial arts research, etc.) at the discretion of the grading panel.