

Empower Martial Arts Kajukenbo Karate



Parent/Student Handbook

Empower Martial Arts & Fitness

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Discipline
Respect for Others
Courage
Self Confidence
Concentration
Focus
Emotional Control
Manners
Better Study Habits
Improved Grades
Physical Fitness
Good Health

Welcome to the Empower Martial Arts program! Thank you for giving us the opportunity to make a positive impact on your life. Our goal is to enhance the physical, mental and emotional aspects of all our student's lives!

Dear Students and/or Parents:

My name is Tim Rochford and since 1982, I have been helping karate students of all ages dramatically improve the quality of their lives. Parents, you are about to give your child some of the greatest “gifts” a parent can give – physically, mentally and emotionally healthy activities that provide a strong foundation for success in life.

It Will Be Fun!

For all of us, one thing is important – FUN! If we don't enjoy an activity, we will not fully participate in it nor will we even continue it. Students in our program normally have a great time in class (as long as they follow the proper behavior), while the instructors work hard to make sure our program has lasting value for each student! The exciting physical drills that are taught and performed capture the student's attention while opening the door for improvements in confidence, self-discipline, and self-control.

Self Confidence

Every activity we use in class helps to build a foundation of self-confidence for each student. The belt promotion system is the most obvious tool we use. Each student begins as a white belt and then earns his/her way to the ultimate goal of Black Belt. The preparation necessary to earn each belt results in numerous physical, mental and emotional enhancements. Each succeeding belt presents a new challenge that each student learns to meet and exceed – thus continually adding to the foundation of the many benefits experienced! The responsibilities placed on each student serve to enhance his or her levels of confidence and self-sufficiency! These people, especially the kids learn to take care of themselves!!!

Self Control

Parents really appreciate the improvements seen in a child's discipline and self-control. This works for adults, as well. Students are taught to act like “Black Belts” before actually earning a Black Belt. This behavior represents “excellence.” We discuss “how to act like a Black Belt” for different situations our students may encounter in school, at home, at work and in social circles. These valuable life lessons help make the world a better place!

Self Protection

For children, basic level self defense skills are taught in a non-threatening way. We make sure the students discuss the use of physical self defense techniques with their parents. We encourage kids and parents to openly discuss what actions are acceptable and when. This training progressively becomes more realistic as a student advances in belt level. For teens and adults, realistic, effective and practical self defense is a major part of the training. We teach self defense in 4 steps:

- How to avoid a conflict
- How to talk your way out of a conflict
- How to exit from a conflict
- How to physically defend yourself in a conflict

What To Expect!

Students are grouped according to age, experience and skill level. In the beginning, a student may work one-on-one with an instructor until he or she is comfortable in a larger class environment or until the instructors suggest such a move. We do not want to overwhelm any student by placing them into an environment that is intimidating. Nor do we want to hold back any student by not challenging them enough.

White and Orange Belts - you can expect a lot of repetition in order to help the student quickly “master” the basic techniques and concepts – allowing them to promote quickly and gain confidence in themselves. We try to

“hide” the repetition so students don’t get bored. But, this is a critical time for students to develop good habits and to gain the belief (**confidence**) that they can be successful in the training. Most of the focus is directed at preparing each student for the next belt promotion.

Yellow Belt - it gets a bit tougher and the promotion requirements are slightly more complex. Students are still experiencing a lot of basic technique repetition, but we begin to add in new drills and skills to keep students progressing and motivated. There is still a focus on teaching the specific skills needed for the next belt promotion (to Green Belt).

Green Belt - once a student begins to prepare for Green belt, the challenges are greater **and** more rewarding. A wide variety of new activities and skills replace the repetitive instruction used in the beginner level classes. More learning opportunities become available to the student! Because there is so much more to learn and remember (beginning at this level), it is very important that **parents continually provide your child with encouragement and support** – help them practice! Consider purchasing the Curriculum DVDs and Manuals available.

IMPORTANT! Green belt is the first big hurdle for any student – child or adult – to get past. By this time, a student has a pretty good idea whether or not they “like” karate. When students stop training at this stage, it is usually because they feel overwhelmed and not confident they can handle all the necessary “hard” work ahead of them. The following belts are not easy to earn. But, that is the beauty of it – if a student continues, eventually earning that Black Belt, the sense of accomplishment he or she experiences will have a profound effect on his/her life forever! The physical training that each student will have to participate in brings numerous benefits through the course of their lives because of the healthy habits ingrained into daily routines.

Blue Belt to Purple Belt – each level presents new challenges AND huge rewards. The training begins to focus more on preparation for Black Belt testing, especially at Purple Belt. Students receive less proactive guidance from instructors, as far as telling them what to do and when. This is the time when we want to see students, of all ages, begin to demonstrate the discipline and self-motivation required to achieve a major goal in life (in this case, Black Belt). We want to see students set goals and make plans for belt promotions. We want to see students proactively practice and refine the required skills and knowledge. We want to see students proactively approach us with questions or request for help, instead of us telling the student they need help or need practice.

Brown Belt – the three degrees of Brown Belt are mainly “check-up” tests for Black Belt. Students must get very serious at this point in their training. This is also the last major hurdle, as far as retaining a student. Many students begin to get cold feet, now that Black Belt is within easy sight! Believe it or not, some students decide to quit at this stage – they are satisfied with reaching Brown Belt level! Here is where I hope a parent will really step in and say, “finish what you started”. Why put all that effort, time and money into martial arts training – and then stop short of Black Belt!

Black Belt – hopefully, we can convince students to continue training once they earn a Black Belt.

- **For teens & adults** - Once a student reaches this level, the pressure is off (for awhile – at least 2 years) to learn new things. This is the time period where those who continue training focus their efforts on the martial arts skills they enjoy the most (kata, sparring, self defense, weapons kata, etc).
- **For children** – now the training becomes a bit more detailed and intense. Realistic self defense training becomes a larger and more important part of the child’s training. **Junior Black Belts in the Samurai Warrior program are invited to participate in the Junior/Adult classes** in order to continue their progress and expanding their skills and knowledge.

Summary

We are very happy to have the opportunity to help all students learn the many skills that can help them throughout their lives. There are very few programs that offer such a complete package of mental, emotional and physical benefits! Becoming a part of the Empower Martial Arts “team” is a kick & punch in the right direction! But, remember, this is a process – it takes time to realize some of the benefits. Don’t expect overnight miracles, but at the same time do not be surprised if you see or experience some immediate, positive changes! Your feedback and input are invaluable to us! We want to hear from you. If there is a question you have or a situation you think we can help you deal with, please, talk to Sensei Tim at any time!

Sincerely,

Tim Rochford
Owner & Chief Instructor
Empower Martial Arts

P.S. I would like to encourage you, if you like our program, to get the word out about us! Our best form of advertising is word-of-mouth – testimonials from those who actively participate in our program. We have a Reward System (Member Referral program) for those who refer people to us – so check it out and start earning your rewards right away!

EMPOWER MARTIAL ARTS PROGRAM GUIDELINES & POLICIES

The following information provides parents and students with the guidelines and tools necessary to comfortably participate in the Empower Martial Arts program. It is my hope, because it is almost impossible to cover every possible situation or question that may arise for an individual, that each of you will come directly to me with any questions or concerns that are not covered within this handbook! I am here to support parents and students in any way I can!

BECOMING AN EMPOWER MARTIAL ARTS STUDENT

1. Once you make a decision to enroll into our program, there are 3 forms you must fill out:
 - Waiver form
 - Medical History form
 - Photo Release form
2. The registration fee and initial monthly fee is paid.
 - Registration fee is a one-time fee paid to enroll in the program. This fee gets the students first karate uniform and Student Manual.
 - The Registration fee must be paid again if a student drops out or misses a month of payments. **Discuss this policy with Sensei Tim so you have a clear picture of the requirements.**
3. We do a few things:
 - Enter your information into a database so we have contact information, birthday information, etc.
 - Complete an Attendance Record for you so we can track your attendance.
 - Enter your name and e-mail address into our Karate E-Mail Group. Your information is kept private. The only time we will give out your information is if you give us written permission.
 - Give you a Student Manual that contains information that the student needs, like belt promotion requirements, etc.
 - Determine the color (white or black) and size of the free uniform for the student.

CLASS ATTENDANCE & PARENT/CHILD OBSERVATION

1. **Students are expected to:**
 - Keep fingernails and toenails trimmed to prevent the risk of injury to other students.
 - **Boys in the Green belt and higher class must ALWAYS wear groin cups.**
 - No jewelry may be worn during class. Pierced ears can be taped.
 - Wear clean and neat karate uniforms. Belt must always be worn to class (except in Friday Night classes).
 - **Bring water for your own personal use.**
2. Be on time for class. Late class arrival (the class has already bowed in) requires 10 pushups before entering.
 - Parents are encouraged to watch their kids in class:
 - We always want you to see what we are doing with the kids.
 - If you see what we are doing, you can help your student practice.
 - Parents may bring their kids to the school no earlier than 15 minutes before class time unless approved by Sensei Tim prior to the day.
 - Parents must pick their child up from class within 15 minutes of the end of class unless arrangements are made with Sensei Tim ahead of time. Parents must come into the building to pick their child up – we will not let a child walk out to the parking lot without a parent or approved guardian.
3. Students are asked to sign in (**first and last name – clearly**) each time they attend class.
 - If you do not sign in first and last names clearly, you will NOT be given credit for that class time towards your belt promotion requirements.
4. Before entering the workout floor, the student must face the floor and bow.
5. Before leaving the workout floor, the student must turn and face the floor and bow before leaving.
6. Students are encouraged to use the bathroom before class.
 - If a student needs to use the rest room during class, he/she must ask an instructor before leaving the workout floor.
 - Students are asked to wear shoes when going into the rest rooms.
 - Students 6 years old or under must be accompanied by parents to the rest room.
7. If observing class, family members must be quiet. I want parents to watch class so they can help their child practice at home, but I need to ask you to:
 - Keep talking at whisper level.

- No coaching (verbally or with hand signals) your child during class.
 - Keep other children from interrupting class. They **must remain seated** and quiet, with you.
 - Parents must accompany young children (6 years old or under) to the bathrooms.
8. Missing classes for more than 1 calendar month results in loss of accumulated time for the next promotion.
9. Missing two (2) or more consecutive calendar months:
- All accumulated class time towards the next belt promotion is lost, and
 - The student's current belt status must be discussed with Sensei Tim.
10. Private lessons and open workouts are considered class hours.

STUDENT MANUAL

1. Students receive a free Student Manual after enrolling in the Empower Martial Arts program.
2. Student Manual replacements are \$10.
3. The Belt Requirements are available on the Empower web site (www.empower-usa.com)

MONTHLY TUITION PAYMENT, REFUNDS, CREDIT & MAKE UP CLASSES

Monthly Membership Plans

1. Students may choose different Membership Plans each time they sign up.
2. Attendance is NOT restricted to a certain number of classes per week. Students are only restricted to a certain number of **classes per month**.
3. Students are NOT restricted to attend class only on a certain day(s) of the week. Students may come to any class (on any day of the week) that is appropriate for his or her age and skill level.

Monthly Tuition Payment

See the current Fee Structure Schedule for the most current information.

Missed Classes & Make Up Classes

See the current Fee Structure Schedule for the most current information.

Refunds for Monthly Tuition

See the current Fee Structure Schedule for the most current information.

PRIVATE LESSONS

1. Must be scheduled with Sensei Tim. Students must have a goal for the lesson.
2. Private lessons may be conducted with 1 to 4 students.
3. See the current Fee Structure Schedule for the most current information.

UNIFORMS

1. **Uniforms, once acquired, must ALWAYS be worn to class.**
2. **Belts must be worn and tied correctly.**
3. Uniforms must be kept neat and clean. Tears, holes, and rips are not allowed.
4. Traditional tops & pants are to be worn unless otherwise approved by Sensei Tim.
5. **Empower t-shirts or PLAIN white** t-shirts may be worn when approved (Summer) by Sensei Tim.

EQUIPMENT AND UNIFORM ORDERS

1. Students are encouraged to support their martial arts school by ordering products through the school.
2. Payment for all orders must be made prior to being placed.

BELT PROMOTION TESTS

1. **When to test for a belt - Guidelines:**
 - Orange and Yellow Belt test - We typically suggest to a student when it is time to take these tests.
 - Green belt and beyond, we want the student to take the initiative and determine if they are ready and when they will test.
2. Students testing for Orange and Yellow Belts do **NOT** need a partner (Uke pronounced OO-KEY) for the test.
3. Students testing for Green Belt and Higher **MUST** have a partner (Uke) for the test in order to perform the self defense series and free style self defense.

- An Uke (partner or attacker) must be an Empower Martial Arts student who is the same belt level or a higher belt level than the testing student.
 - The testing student and the Uke should practice together several times before the actual test.
 - It is the student's responsibility to find and arrange for an Uke for a belt test.
4. There is a calendar published for Belt Tests. This can be found in the school and on our web site. Tests are scheduled. Conflicts may be discussed with Sensei Tim.
 5. Review the **Belt Promotion Procedure** for information about the forms required for testing, the testing fee and the proper process for applying to test. This procedure is located in the Student Manual and can also be found on the web site.
 6. The three forms and the testing fee are required to be **turned into Sensei Tim by the specified testing date. NO EXCEPTIONS!** These forms are also located on the web site (Martial Arts Student Info page).
 - Test Request (or Test Application)
 - Intent to Promote – must be signed by school teachers and parents.
 - Fitness Log
 7. Test payment is not refundable if the test is not passed, but may be applied towards the re-test.
 8. Re-test fee is \$10 if completed within one calendar month of the unsuccessful test.
 - If not completed within one calendar month, the full test fee is required.
 9. Students receive a certificate upon successful completion of the promotion test.
 10. The students are expected to know the requirements for the specific rank being tested. **Please, help your child review the belt requirements.** Each belt level requires that a student remember and improve on all the previous requirements.
 11. **Pre-tests** are available – see Sensei Tim. Pre-tests are NOT lessons. The instructor will simply ask the student to perform each physical skill listed on the Belt Requirement sheet. This does demonstrate if a student is ready, as well as provides an exact summary of what the student needs to work on.

Web Site – www.empower-usa.com

- We encourage you to explore our web site in order to learn about all that we have to offer.

Curriculum Resources

Students learn all the skills and information needed to successfully complete each belt promotion requirement. Sometimes, it is difficult for a parent to help a child practice or know if the child is performing the skill correctly – even if they do observe the classes. This is why I have produced a video series that contains all the physical skills required to take the Samurai Warriors to Junior Black Belt and the Juniors/Adults to Black Belt.

These video (DVDs) are available for purchase:

1. **Basic Technique** – teaches execution of all the individual punches, kicks, blocks, etc.
2. **Basic Technique Series** – teaches all the Kicking Series (and some variations) and Blocking Series (Yellow, Green and Blue).
3. **Basic Self Defense Series** – teaches all of the First Self Defense Series, Second Self Defense Series, Escape Series and Outside Series (7 of the 14 techniques).
4. **Kata** – teaches all 13 empty-hand Kata

There are also written manuals that accompany each video, providing written explanations and descriptions for skill performance.

These curriculum DVDs/manuals may be purchased separately or as a package. See Sensei Tim for more information.

Japanese Terminology

We try to use the required Japanese terminology in class in order to help the students remember the words. There is a Japanese Terminology sheet located in each Student Manual. We recommend that students and/or parents make notes of phonetic spelling for each word in order to help your student learn and use these words, as required for the different belt levels.

Sparring

1. Students are NOT required to compete in tournament sparring.
2. Students are required to learn and participate in Sparring within the Empower classes in order to test for Green Belt (see the Belt Requirement sheets) and higher.
3. Students need to have the following Sparring equipment (minimum):
 - Soft Foam Head Gear (with or without Face Guard)
 - Soft Foam Gloves
 - Soft Foam Boots
 - Shin Pads – soft foam or cloth-covered soft pads
 - Mouth Guard
 - Groin Cup (boys)
4. Equipment can be purchased through Empower Martial Arts.
 - You won't have to pay shipping, and
 - If there is a problem with the order, we take care of it.

Fitness Logs

The idea behind this requirement is to help students build healthy habits for everyday life. By getting students to regularly perform certain basic exercises, we are also building their confidence levels. For help on how to do the exercises and how to complete the Fitness Log information, see Sensei Tim.

Bad Weather and Class Cancellations

If there is inclement weather and you want to find out about potential class cancellations, there are 3 sources:

- Web Site – What's New page
- E-Mail – I send out messages to the appropriate e-mail group.
- Call me 630-882-8583 or on the most current cell phone number provided to you.

Questions & Feedback – never be afraid to ask questions or request feedback on student performance!