

# HARTO-RYU KATA CLASSIC

# 2025

IMPACT OF KENJUTSU

MEET THE  
NATIONAL KARATE  
TEAM

**The Perfect Karate Breakfast**

The Misunderstood  
Power of Uechi-Ryu Karate

**WHEN TO USE IT?**

*Amarriah  
Vaughans*

**SHOTOCUP**

SEPTEMBER 2025







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# 2025 Events

HARTO-RYU KATA CLASSIC

Opening Ceremonies

Remarks

Adult Kata Divisions

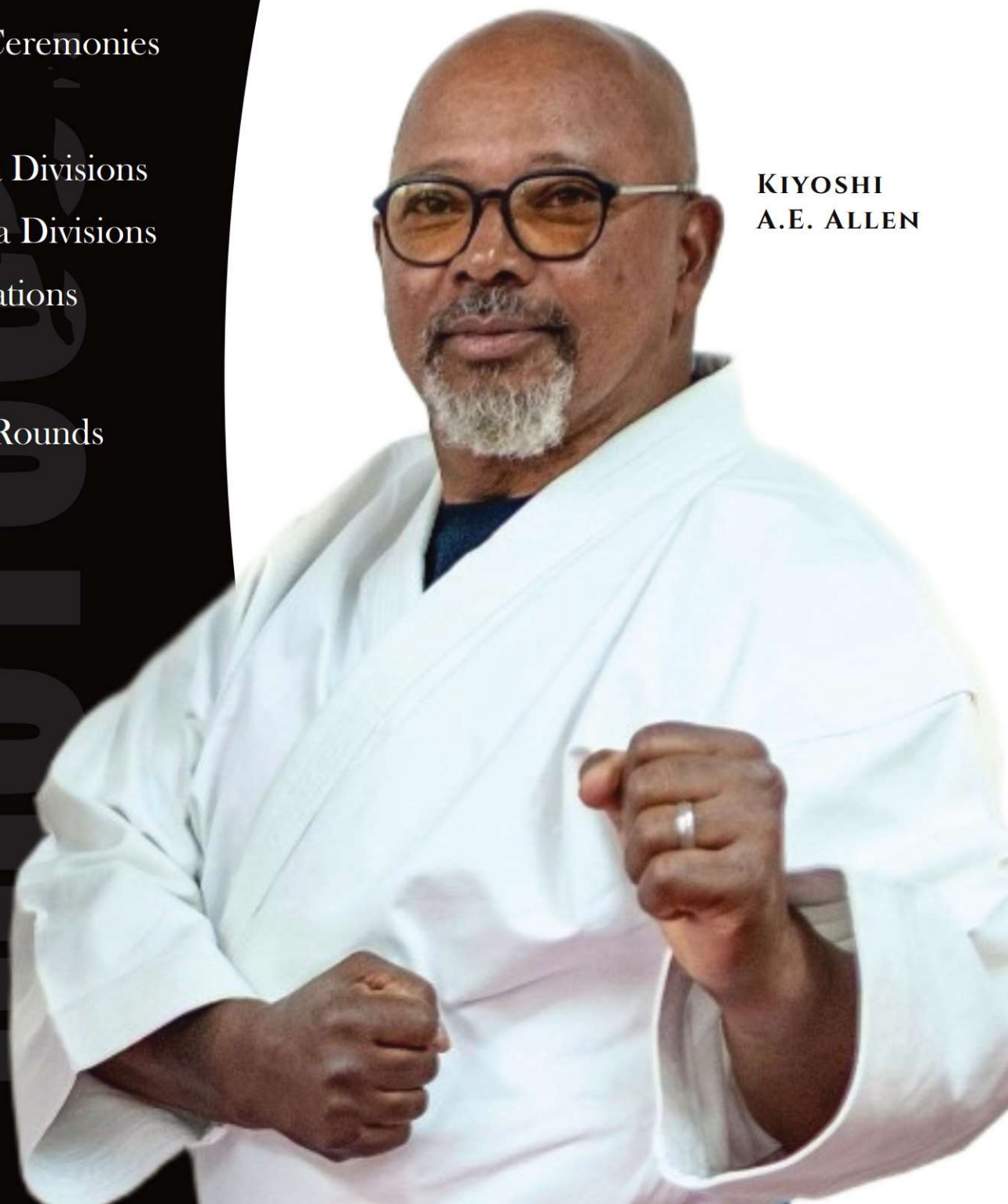
Youth Kata Divisions

Demonstrations

Kobudo

Combine Rounds

KIYOSHI  
A.E. ALLEN





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# HARTO-RYU DOJO



## COBBS HILL WARWICK

### WHERE TRADITION MEETS POWER

*Founded in 1982, Harto Ryu Karate Dojo has been Bermuda's home for authentic Shotokan training for over 40 years. Rooted in tradition and driven by a passion for discipline, respect, and self-confidence, we welcome students of all ages, from curious five-year-olds to dedicated seniors.*

*Located at 68 Cobbs Hill, Warwick West, our vibrant dojo community trains weekly on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. Each class is carefully designed to support personal growth and skill development at every stage.*

*Join a legacy of excellence that continues to shape lives and strengthen communities. Whether you're stepping onto the tatami for the first time or returning to deepen your practice, Harto Ryu is where tradition meets transformation.*







# MEET THE SQUAD



The Bermuda Karate Federation proudly presents its Youth National Team, a group of young martial artists who carry the future of karate on the island. Chosen through a demanding selection process, these athletes dedicate countless hours to training while balancing school, family, and personal commitments. Under the guidance of coaches Nigel Williams, Talia Fox, and Arnold Allen, their



sessions focus on kata, conditioning, sparring, and teamwork, building both technical skill and mental strength. What makes this team stand out is their bond. Training is not only about drills and discipline but also about respect, encouragement, and shared experience. They push each other through challenges, celebrate progress together, and transform every session into a collective journey.

Whether perfecting a kata, preparing for competition, or

cheering on a teammate, their unity creates an energy that fuels growth far beyond the dojo. Each member adds something distinct. Dash Bailey, Khwai Mendoza, Oden and Dylan Flanagan, and Talaya Sousa show unwavering discipline and consistency.

Amarriah Vaughans and Alessia Vianello bring sharp focus and drive. Zoe Talbot stands out with commanding presence and precise execution. Dual-role leader Talia Fox inspires through leadership and dedication, while newcomer Chan Simons has already proven his humility and potential, fitting seamlessly into the group. Rooted in the BKF values of integrity, perseverance, and unity, this Youth National Team is more than competition-ready. They are an example of what happens when discipline meets community, and proof that the future of karate in Bermuda is in capable hands.







# The Perfect Karate Breakfast

When you train in Karate, your body becomes a tool, one that must be fueled with precision. The perfect Karate breakfast isn't just about filling your stomach it's about preparing your mind and body for control, speed, and stamina. Whether you're gearing up for sparring or a full day of kata practice, what you eat in the morning matters.

Today's breakfast is packed with clean energy, plant and animal-based proteins, and zero guilt ideal for athletes who want to stay sharp and light on their feet.

## THE DRAGON BOWL

Ingredients (1 serving):

### Base (Complex Carbs + Fiber)

½ cup quinoa (cooked in vegetable broth for extra flavor)

½ cup roasted sweet potatoes (diced, tossed in olive oil, sea salt, paprika)

### Protein Power

2 soft-boiled eggs (or pan-fried in avocado oil if preferred)

½ cup edamame (steamed and lightly salted)

2 tbsp hemp seeds (sprinkled on top for an extra boost)

### Healthy Fats & Brain Boosters

¼ avocado (sliced)

1 tbsp tahini drizzle (blend tahini with lemon juice, garlic, and a splash of water)

### Fresh Energy (Vitamins & Antioxidants)

½ cup steamed spinach

¼ cup grated carrots (raw or lightly sautéed)

A few thin slices of fresh ginger or pickled ginger on the side

### Optional Kick (For the Fighters)

**Dash of cayenne pepper or chili flakes**

Sprinkle of sesame seeds

A squeeze of lime



# 上地流 The Strength and Misunderstood Power of Uechi-Ryu Karate

In the world of martial arts, some styles captivate with flash—high kicks, flying elbows, cinematic flair. Others carry their strength more quietly, like a mountain hidden in morning fog. Uechi-Ryū Karate is one of those styles: powerful, rooted, and often misunderstood.

## A Warrior's Journey from China to Okinawa

Uechi-Ryū, pronounced “way-chee-roo,” traces its lineage to Southern China. Its founder, Kanbun Uechi, left Okinawa in 1897 to escape conscription and ended up in Fuzhou, a hotspot of Chinese martial knowledge. There, he studied a hard-soft (half-hard, half-soft) system called Pangai-noon, a blend of the explosive power of the tiger, the precision of the crane, and the focused intention of the dragon.

Years later, he returned to Japan and reluctantly began teaching. His son, Kanei Uechi, would go on to formalize the style, giving us the system known today as Uechi-Ryū.



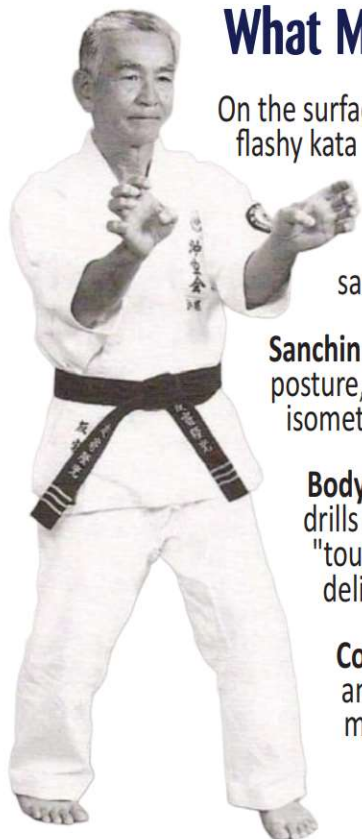
## What Makes Uechi-Ryu Different?

On the surface, Uechi-Ryū can seem minimalist. It lacks the multitude of flashy kata found in other systems. It emphasizes close-range strikes, rooted stances, body conditioning, and circular blocking. But beneath that simplicity lies a depth of control and internal strength that few styles demand or develop in the same way.

**Sanchin Kata:** The foundation of the system. It builds breath control, posture, tension, and awareness. Done correctly, it is a full-body isometric workout and a meditation at the same time.

**Body Conditioning (Kitae):** Students routinely engage in partner drills that condition the forearms, legs, and core, not just to “toughen up,” but to understand how to absorb, redirect, and deliver force effectively.

**Combat Efficiency:** Uechi-Ryū’s techniques are tight, efficient, and designed for real-world application. There’s little wasted motion. Everything is geared toward close-quarters survival.





# The Strength and Misunderstood Power of Uechi-Ryu Karate

## Why It's Misunderstood

To the untrained eye, Uechi-Ryū looks rigid. Some criticize it for lacking variety or fluidity. Others don't understand why so much emphasis is placed on Sanchin a kata where practitioners move slowly and with visible tension. But these criticisms usually come from a lack of depth.

What seems rigid is actually the sharpening of structure. What looks repetitive is the forging of instinct. The "hard" visible in practice is paired with internal control yin and yang in motion.

## A Style of Steel Wrapped in Cotton

The true spirit of Uechi-Ryū isn't loud. It doesn't need to be. It's found in the steady, grounded stance of a practitioner who won't be moved. In the calm breath during chaos. In the sharp snap of a forearm deflecting a strike, not with force, but with bone alignment and precision.

Uechi-Ryū doesn't chase beauty. It cultivates resilience, clarity, and intent. It's a warrior's art, passed from teacher to student not just through form, but through contact iron sharpening iron.

## Legacy and Relevance Today

In a world obsessed with fast solutions and external validation, Uechi-Ryū offers something rare: mastery through simplicity and repetition. Its practitioners don't just learn how to fight. They learn how to stand physically, mentally, and spiritually. And that may be the most misunderstood power of all.

## MASTER AL WHARTON PATRIARCH OF UECHI RYU IN BERMUDA

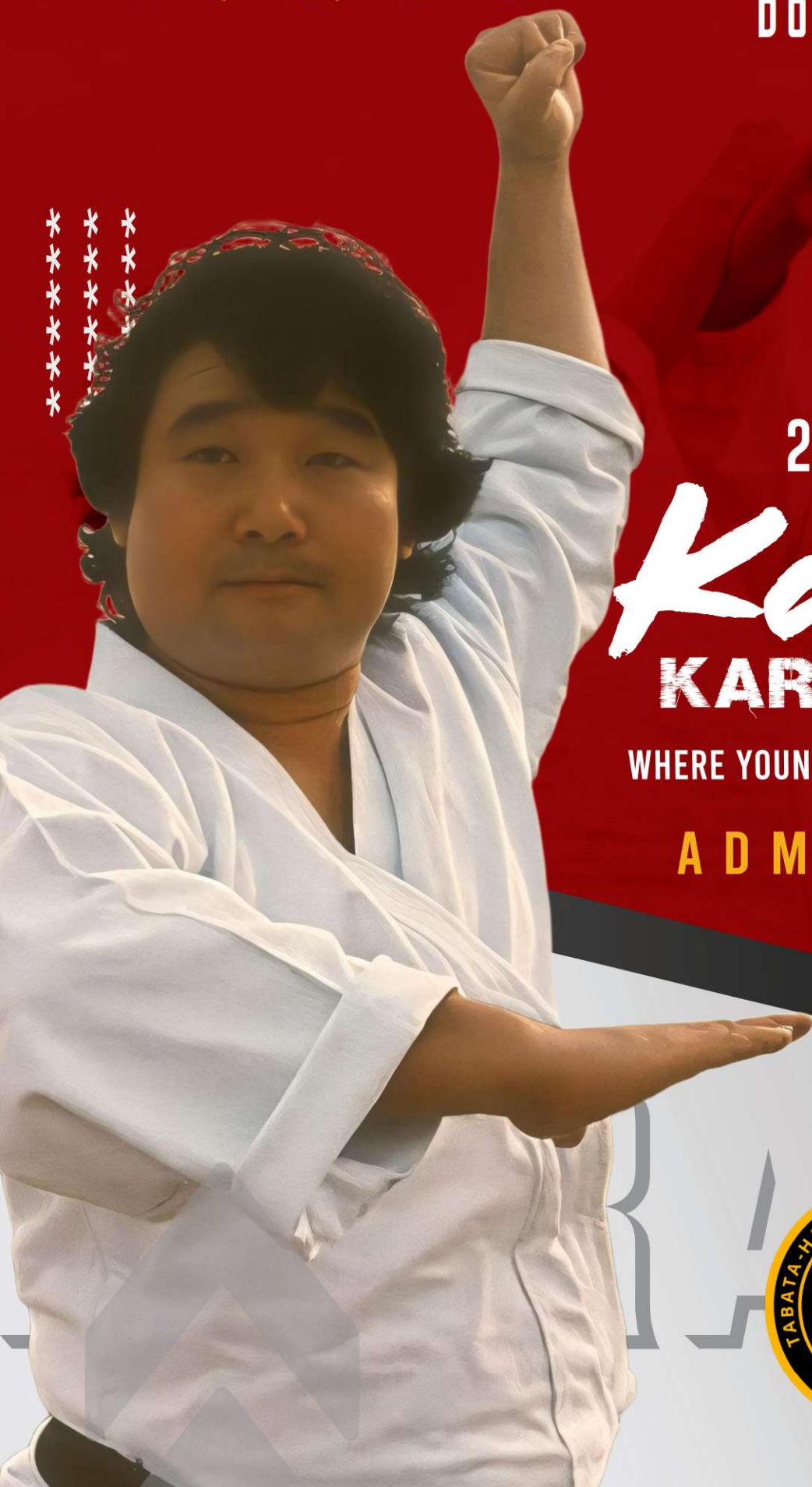
Master Al Wharton is revered as the patriarch of Uechi Ryu Karate Do in Bermuda, a title earned through decades of dedication, mastery, and cultural stewardship. In 2024, he became the first Bermudian to receive the 10th Dan (Judan) from the International Uechi Ryu Karate Federation, a landmark recognition that affirms his global stature and lifelong commitment to the art.





A DOJO TABATA-HA DOJO TABATA-HA DOJO TABATA-HA DOJO TABATA-HA DOJO TABATA-HA DOJO TABATA-HA

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# Cutting Through Form

## THE PHILOSOPHICAL IMPACT OF KENJUTSU ON KARATE KATA

Martial arts, at their core, are not merely systems of combat they are expressions of discipline, self-awareness, and refined perception. Among these traditions, kenjutsu, the classical art of Japanese swordsmanship, offers profound philosophical undercurrents that can illuminate and elevate the practice of karate kata.

### INTENT OVER MOTION: THE POWER OF ICHINEN

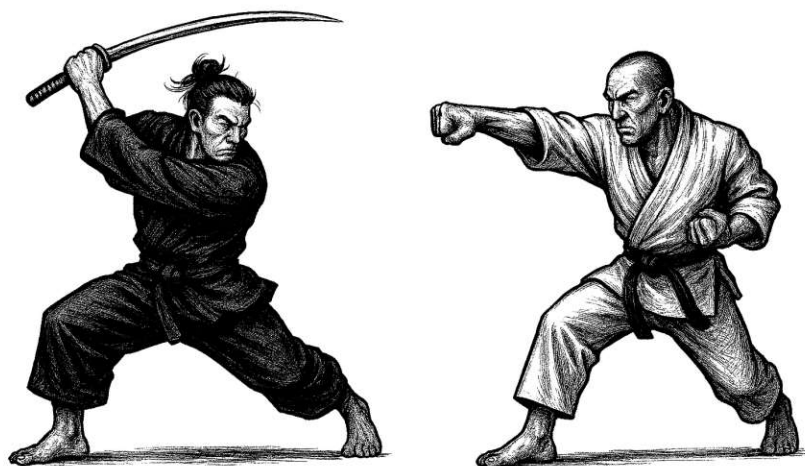
In kenjutsu, *ichinen* the singular focus or will behind a sword cut defines the purity and effectiveness of technique. A cut isn't just a movement; it's a declaration. Similarly, kata isn't a dance of memorized steps but a vessel for transmitting intent. When a karate practitioner embraces *ichinen*, each strike, block, and stance becomes purposeful echoing the sword's razor focus.



arts, at their core, are not merely systems of combat they are expressions of discipline, self-awareness, and refined perception. Among these traditions, kenjutsu, the classical art of Japanese swordsmanship, offers profound philosophical undercurrents that can illuminate and elevate the practice of karate kata.

### MAAI: THE PHILOSOPHY OF DISTANCE AND TIMING

Kenjutsu warriors live and breathe *maai*, the ever-shifting harmony of space and time between themselves and their opponent. It's not static; it's intuitive. Kata often feels rigid, but with kenjutsu's understanding of *maai*, even structured forms come alive. Practitioners begin to sense the imaginary opponent's presence, adjusting posture and rhythm as if truly engaged in battle.





# ZANSHIN: THE UNBROKEN MIND

Zanshin is the lingering awareness after an action, the spiritual readiness that persists beyond the final cut. In kenjutsu, this prevents complacency; the fight is never over until the practitioner is safe and aware. Kata can benefit deeply from this mindset. The final bow isn't just ceremonial; it should echo the presence of zanshin a readiness to continue, to evolve.

# KU: EMBRACING EMPTINESS AND FORMLESSNESS

Kenjutsu teaches that the sword is an extension of self, but also that self must become empty to truly see. Kata often traps students in rigid form. Through k $\ddot{u}$ , the emptiness that invites flow, karate can become more adaptive and less mechanical.

# A BLADE WITHIN THE FIST

Kenjutsu's silent teachings, clarity of mind, integrity of action, depth of timing are not confined to swordplay. They seep beautifully into karate kata, enriching the practitioner's journey with sharper insight, deeper meaning, and transcendent awareness.

By internalizing the sword's philosophy, the karateka's hands become blades of purpose. Kata becomes not only physical discipline but philosophical exploration. The fist remembers the sword and finds new precision in its punch.



BY EDMOND JOHNSON



# KARATE KATA TIER LIST

武道

S

## S-RANK : SUPREME MASTERY

Unsu, Suparinpei, Kanku Dai, Chinto, Gojushiho Dai, Seisan, Nipaipo, Kururunfa, Sanseiru, Gojushiho Sho, Meikyo, Kakuyoku Shodan, Anan, Chatanyara kushanku

Symbolism: acrobatics, breathing mastery, and philosophical depth.

A

## A-RANK : ADVANCED EXCELLENCE

Bassai Dai, Seipai, Jion, Shisochin, Gankaku, Rohai, Wanshu, Hangetsu, Sochin, Matsumura Rohai, Anan, Seienchin

Symbolism: Crane stances, fortress-breaking power, internal vs. external flow

B

## B-RANK : INTERMEDIATE FOUNDATION

Heian Nidan, Pinan Sandan, Saifa, Tekki Shodan, Pinan Yondan, Naihanchi, Bassai Sho, Jitte, Matsukaze, Chinte, Fukyugata Ni

Symbolism: Transitional power, lateral movement, and bunkai development

C

## C-RANK : BEGINNER FORMS

Heian Shodan, Pinan Shodan, Gekisai Dai Ichi, Taikyoku Shodan, Fukyugata Ichi, Pinan Nidan, Kihon Kata Dai Ichi

Symbolism: Rooted in fundamentals. The first step on the path

D

## D-RANK : TRANSITIONAL & RARE

Heian Godan, Gekisai Dai Ni, Pinan Godan, Tensho, Taikyoku Nidan, Taikyoku Sandan, Kihon Kata Dai Nii

Symbolism: Rooted in fundamentals. The first step on the path





# When to Use It

## MARTIAL ARTS BEYOND THE DOJO

Martial arts isn't something you turn on only when you're in uniform, on the mat, or in a sparring ring. It's a way of moving through the world. The question every student eventually asks is:

*WHEN SHOULD I USE IT?*

### SELF-DEFENSE: THE OBVIOUS ANSWER

The clearest time to use martial arts is when you need to protect yourself or others from harm. But even in that moment, there is balance. The purpose is not to "win" a fight, but to survive, to reduce danger, and to find a way to walk away safely if possible. Martial arts training builds the confidence to stand firm, the skill to defend effectively, and the awareness to act with control. It also develops the wisdom to recognize when violence is unnecessary, and to understand that the best fight is the one that never needs to happen.



### EVERYDAY TASKS EFFICIENCY

You'd be surprised how often martial arts training shows up in daily routines and ordinary tasks. Carrying groceries from the car uses the same stance, balance, and weight distribution practiced in drills. Climbing stairs or lifting boxes engages posture, breathing, and controlled movement that echo the discipline of forms. Even simple desk work connects back to training, with martial awareness encouraging relaxed shoulders, a tall spine, and smooth movement instead of strain. Walking through crowded spaces, maintaining awareness of your surroundings, or even stretching before bed are all influenced by the habits built in martial practice. What starts in the dojo gradually shapes how you move, breathe, and carry yourself everywhere else.





# MARTIAL ARTS BEYOND THE DOJO

## THINKING LIKE A MARTIAL ARTIST

The deeper level of “using it” is in how martial arts reshapes your thinking. You learn patience from holding a stance, resilience from sparring, and humility from every time you fall and stand back up. Decision-making becomes sharper, you learn to read a room like you read an opponent, noticing small details and anticipating movement.

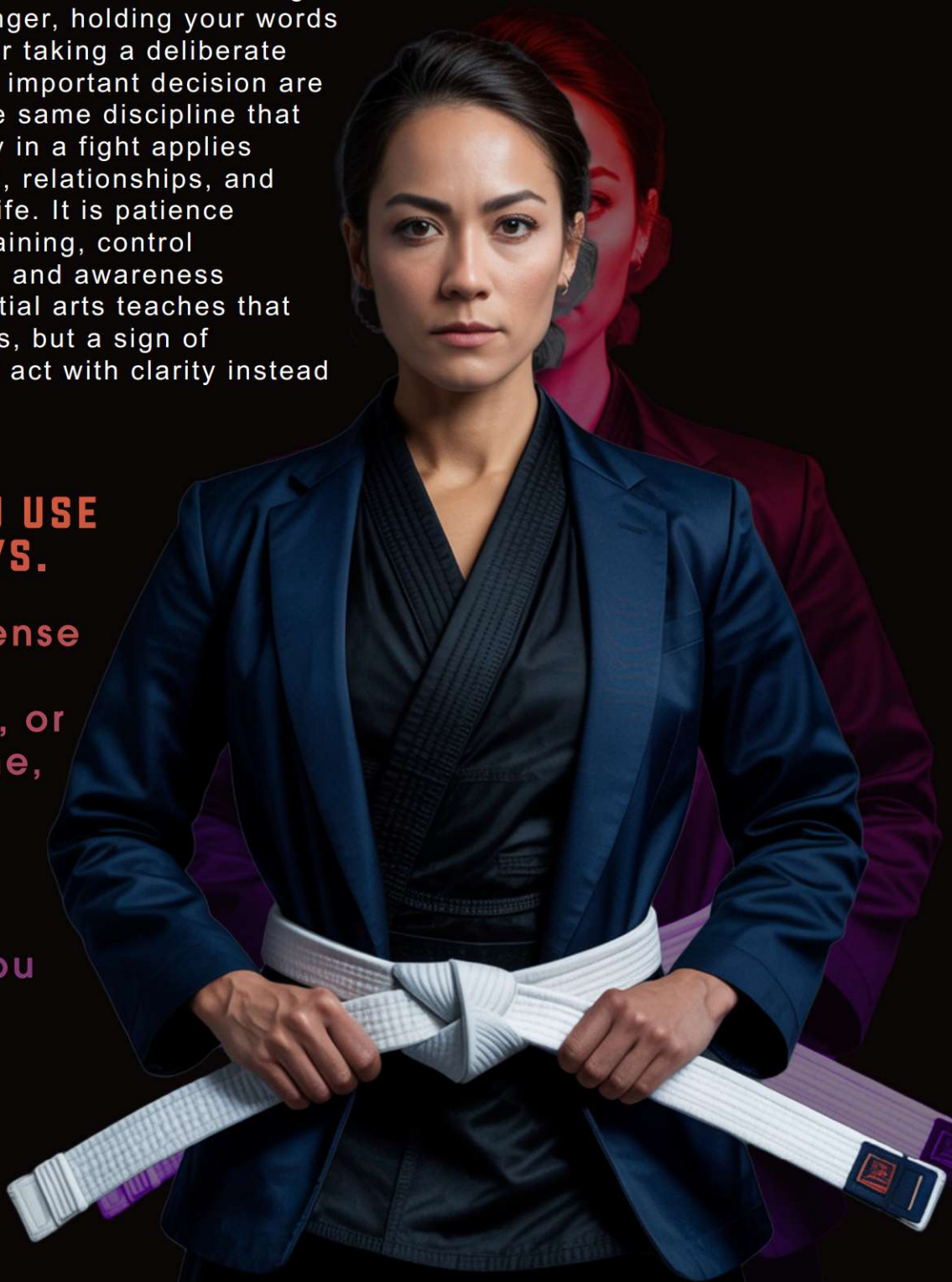
## THE QUIET USE: SELF-CONTROL

Sometimes the greatest use of martial arts is found in what you choose not to do. Resisting the impulse to lash out in anger, holding your words during heated conflict, or taking a deliberate pause before making an important decision are all martial moments. The same discipline that keeps your guard steady in a fight applies equally to conversations, relationships, and the daily challenges of life. It is patience strengthened through training, control sharpened by repetition, and awareness shaped by practice. Martial arts teaches that restraint is not weakness, but a sign of mastery, allowing you to act with clarity instead of reaction.

## SO WHEN DO YOU USE IT? 100% ALWAYS.

Whether it's defense on the street, balance at work, or patience at home, martial arts isn't just something you practice.

It's something you live.







# KARATE ON THE BEACH

WHY BERMUDA'S SHORELINE IS THE PERFECT DOJO

## BEACH BOUND & READY

Karate training on Bermuda's beaches is a full experience that develops strength, focus, and discipline in ways a normal dojo cannot. The shifting sand tests every stance. Each punch, block, and kick demands more stability and control. Training here builds stronger legs, sharper balance, and an adaptable body prepared for real combat where conditions are never predictable.

The ocean breeze carries focus into every drill. It sharpens awareness, clears mental clutter, and locks the mind into the present moment. Breathing becomes steady and deliberate, timed with the rhythm of the waves. What begins as kihon or kata evolves into moving meditation, where body and mind align. Natural resistance becomes the hidden partner in every session. The wind challenges speed and precision. The incline of the shore strengthens endurance. Uneven terrain forces footwork to adjust and transitions to flow with purpose. Kata performed on sand is a test of truth. Weaknesses rise to the surface, habits are broken, and technique is reforged under pressure.

The training does not end with the final bow. The sea itself completes the ritual. Entering the water after practice restores the body. Muscles recover faster, fatigue fades, and the cold clarity of the ocean refreshes the spirit. It is both recovery and reflection, a chance to process the work done and the growth gained. Beach training is more than exercise. It connects tradition with nature. Each session writes itself into the legacy of the martial artist. The tide, the sand, and the air become partners in the journey toward mastery.



# BEACH

## BOUND & READY

### KATA ON THE BEACH

Performing kata on the beach is more than repeating forms. The sand changes every movement, forcing each step to be deliberate and controlled. Stances sink deeper, turns require stronger hips, and transitions must be smoother to stay balanced. Even small errors in posture or technique show right away. This makes the beach an honest training partner, revealing flaws and sharpening precision. The sound of the ocean and the open space also add a meditative quality. Each sequence becomes a rhythm of breath, movement, and awareness. Over time, kata on the beach improves focus, balance, and mental clarity, turning practice into both conditioning and reflection.



### LUNGES AND STANCE WORK IN SAND

Lunges and stance drills in sand challenge the body in ways that flat floors never can. The shifting ground demands more effort from the legs, engaging muscles that are often overlooked in regular training. With every lunge or horse stance, the legs must adjust, stabilize, and push harder to stay rooted. This builds endurance, power, and the ability to adapt when footing is uncertain. Practicing stances in sand also strengthens the joints and improves alignment, since the body must constantly correct itself. The result is a foundation that holds steady under stress, whether in sparring, competition, or real-life self-defense.



### UPPER BODY STRENGTH IN THE SAND

Strength training on the beach takes familiar exercises like push-ups, planks, or dips and makes them more demanding. The soft surface shifts under the hands and arms, forcing stabilizer muscles to engage. Push-ups become not only a chest and arm workout, but also a test of core strength and balance. Adding variations like wide-arm push-ups, explosive claps, or inclined push-ups on the dunes increases the challenge. Sand resistance also reduces impact, making it easier on the joints while still building power. Consistent upper body training in this environment develops stronger punches, tighter guards, and better posture. It builds the kind of functional strength that translates directly into martial performance.





# NOTES



"PRECISION IS NOT BORN—IT'S  
PRACTICED. EVERY FRAME, EVERY  
FORM, EVERY FAILURE REFINES THE  
STORY WE CHOOSE TO TELL."

# PRECISION





# FROM STAGE TO DOJO

## *How Kabuki Lives On in Modern Kata*

BY EDMOND JOHNSON

In the world of martial arts, kata is often seen as a blueprint for combat, a codified sequence of strikes, blocks, and stances. But beneath the surface of its tactical utility lies something deeper: a performance. And if you look closely, you'll find echoes of Japan's most flamboyant theatrical tradition of Kabuki is woven into the very fabric of kata. This isn't coincidence. It's cultural inheritance.

### Kabuki: The Blueprint of Expressive Movement

Kabuki, born in the early 1600s, is a theater of transformation. Actors don elaborate costumes, strike dramatic poses (mie), and move with stylized precision. Every gesture is intentional, symbolic, and emotionally charged.

- **Mie Poses:** Freeze-frame expressions of power or anguish, held mid-performance to captivate the audience.
- **Kata of Movement:** Yes, Kabuki has its own kata—ritualized walking, turning, and gesturing that convey archetypes.
- **Rhythmic Timing:** Movements sync with music and vocal cadence, creating a hypnotic flow.

**KABUKI ISN'T JUST ACTING—IT'S EMBODIED STORYTELLING.**





## *Kata: The Ritual of Combat and Character*

Karate kata, while rooted in combat, is also a performance. Practitioners move through sequences with deliberate rhythm, sharp focus, and expressive energy. The best kata isn't just technically correct, it's emotionally resonant.

Here's where Kabuki's influence shows up:

**Dramatic Pauses:** Just like the mie, kata often includes moments of stillness that amplify intensity.

**Symbolic Gestures:** Blocks and strikes aren't just defensive they represent narrative shifts, emotional beats.

**Audience Awareness:** In demonstrations, kata is performed with theatrical awareness, stance, gaze, and timing all crafted to engage.

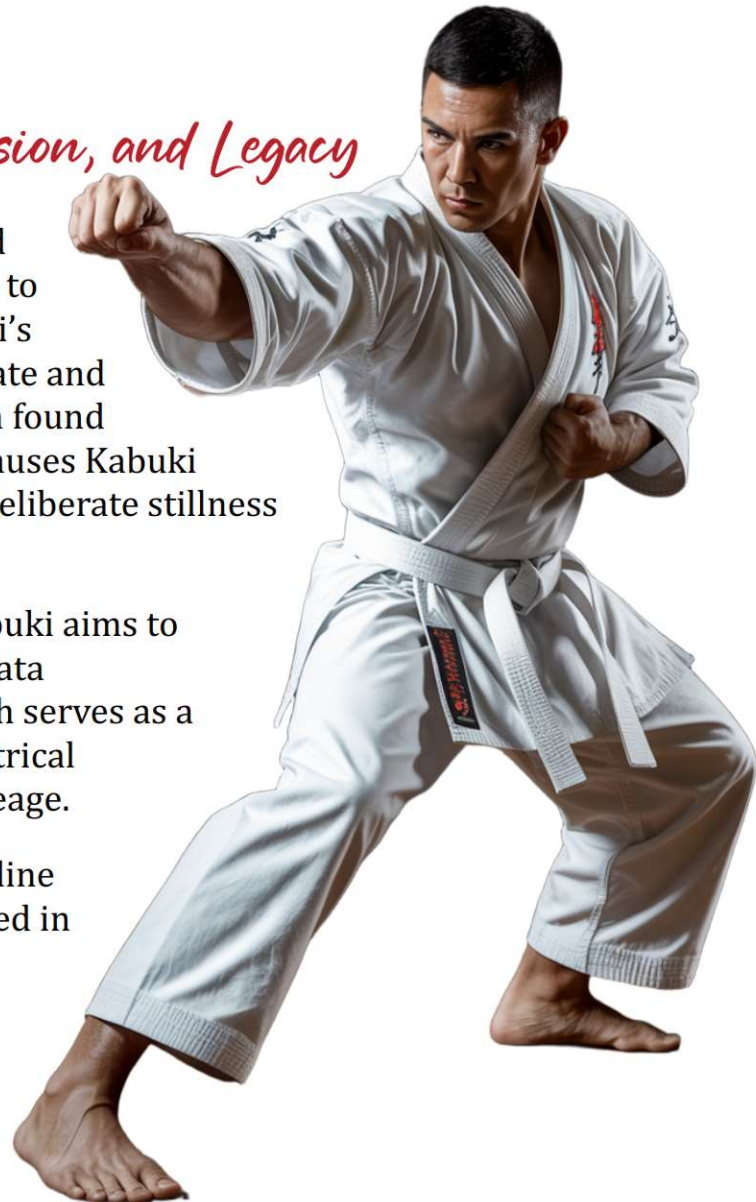
Even the bow at the beginning and end of kata mirrors Kabuki's reverence for ritual and stage presence.

## *Shared DNA: Performance, Precision, and Legacy*

Kabuki and Karate, though distinct in purpose and form, share a surprising kinship in their approach to movement, expression, and cultural legacy. Kabuki's stylized, symbolic gestures are designed to captivate and evoke emotion, much like the expressive precision found in Karate kata. Both disciplines utilize dramatic pauses Kabuki through its iconic mie poses and Karate through deliberate stillness between strikes to heighten intensity and focus.

The impact on the audience is central to both: Kabuki aims to mesmerize through theatrical flair, while Karate kata demonstrates mastery and control. Culturally, each serves as a vessel of heritage, Kabuki preserving Japan's theatrical traditions, and Karate safeguarding its martial lineage.

Together, they reveal that performance and discipline are not opposites, but complementary forces rooted in ritual and legacy.





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