

Introduction to Karate-Do

[JKA of San Francisco](#)

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Ceremony

Term	Meaning
Rei	Bow
Seiza	Kneel down
Mokuso	Meditation
Mokuso Yame	Stop meditation
Sensei, Onegaishimasu, Rei	Teacher, please train us, bow
Sensei, Arigato Gozaimashita, Rei	Teacher, thank you very much, bow
Tatte	Stand

The Dojo Kun

The Dojo Kun is a five point statement of principles or guidelines for the Karate practitioner's conduct. In Japanese, it hangs on the walls of many Shotokan Karate clubs, and it is often chanted while sitting Japanese style at **the end of training sessions** in Western Karate clubs.

The Dojo Kun of Shotokan in Japanese:

道場訓

Dohjoh kun

人格完成に勤むること

Jinkaku Kansei ni Tsutmururu koto

誠の道を守ること

Makoto no michi wo mamoru koto

動力の精神を養うこと

Dohryoku no seishin wo yashinau koto

礼儀を重んずること

Reigi wo omonzuru koto

1.血気の勇を戒めること

Kekki no yuu wo imashimeru koto

Usual English Version

- 1. Seek perfection of character**
- 2. Be faithful**
- 3. Endeavor**
- 4. Respect others**
- 5. Refrain from violent behavior**

The Japanese doesn't say that. It is not what the Japanese read when they see those characters. It has a different meaning created specifically for Western ears.

Actual Translation of Japanese Words

Strive to complete your character (mature or grow-up)

Protect the road/way of the truth

Foster a spirit of effort

Respect the principles of etiquette

Guard against impetuous courage (suppress boldness of the blood spirit/bloodthirsty spirit)

What Japanese Hear from the Japanese Version:

Learn self-discipline and good sportsmanship

This is the best way to do Karate

Inspire everyone around you to try hard by setting an example

Be polite to other people (whether you actually respect them or not is irrelevant – do the behaviors)

Stay calm, reserved, and detached (whether you are being violent or not is irrelevant as long as you are not embarrassing yourself by losing control)

Counting

Ichi

One

Ni

Two

San

Three

Shi (Yon)

Four

Go

Five

Roku

Six

Shichi

Seven

Hachi

Eight

Kyu

Nine

Jyu

Ten

Shodan

First degree

Nidan

Second degree

Sandan

Third degree

Yondan

Fourth Degree

Godan

Fifth Degree

Terminology used in class

Term	Meaning
Karate	Empty hands
Dojo	Training place
Shihan	Master
Sensei	Teacher
Sempai	Senior (Higher belt)
Dohai	Equal (Same belt)
Kohai	Junior (Lower belt)
Obi	Belt
Keiotsuke	Attention
Hajime	Begin
Yame	Stop
Karate-Ka	Karate student
Karate-Gi	Karate uniform
Otagi Ni	Bow to each other
Rei	Bow
Oss	A word showing respect
Mawatte	Turn around
Kata	Form (an arranged pattern of attack and defense techniques against multiple imaginary opponents)

Useful Resources and Videos

JKA Basics: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_a0LGk-qXfk

FAQ on Karate: <https://www.jka.or.jp/en/faq-en/>