

DEFINITION OF TAEKWONDO

TAEKWONDOA way of life. What exactly is the meaning of Taekwondo?

To put it simply, Taekwondo is a version of unarmed combat designed for the purpose of self-defense. It is more than just that, however.

It is the scientific use of the body in the method of self-defense; a body that has gained the ultimate use of its facilities through intensive physical and mental training.

It is a martial art that has no equal in either power or technique. Though it is a martial art, its discipline, technique and mental training are the mortar for building a strong sense of justice, fortitude, humility and resolve. It is this mental conditioning that separates the true practitioner from the sensationalist, content with mastering only the fighting aspects of the art.

This is one of the reasons that Taekwondo is called an art of self-defense. It also implies away of thinking and life, particularly in instilling a concept and spirit of strict self-imposed discipline and an ideal of noble moral rearmament.

Translated literally "Tae" stands for jumping or flying, to kick or smash with the foot. "Kwon" denotes the fist- chiefly to punch or destroy with the hand or fist. "Do" means an art or way, the right way built and paved by the saints and sages in the past. Thus taken collectively "Taekwondo" indicates the mental training and the techniques of unarmed combat for self-defense as well as health, involving the skilled application of punches, kicks, blocks and dodges with bare hands and feet to the rapid destruction of the moving opponent or opponents.

Taekwondo definitely enables the weak to possess a fine weapon together with a confidence to defend him or herself and defeat the opponent as well.

Of course, wrongly applied, Taekwondo can be a lethal weapon. Therefore mental training must always be stressed to prevent the student from misusing Taekwondo.

As for women, they will undoubtedly find Taekwondo an invaluable asset in attacking and driving away wolves, so to speak. When one is informed of the many instances where frail women effectively protected themselves, they may sound unbelievable. But really, they have been able to do so because they are well versed in the art of self-defense.

The feats of Taekwondo are great in number. To mention a few is probably pertinent: For instance, flying over a mounted motorcycle, or eleven persons in line, to attack a target with the foot; using the foot to break an inch thick pine board placed at a height of ten or eleven feet; breaking two pieces of red brick with an open hand or knife- hand; smashing seven or eight pieces of two inch thick pine board at a single blow with the fist- attacking two targets with the same foot in succession while flying and so on.

To the layman, such feats may sound impossible, but to the serious students of Taekwondo and the exponents of this art, it is quite ordinary. Of course, by mastering this art it does not mean that you will be asked to do acts of impossibility, particularly if someone should challenge you to kill a wild bull with your bare hands.

Therefore it is clear that equivalent demonstrations of such effective use of pure somatic force are not to be seen in other forms of physical combat technique.

Regular training is essential to keep oneself in top form and physical condition. In training, all the muscles of the human body will be used.

From the use of one's muscles, it will be possible to harness all available power generated by every muscular contraction. It will then be necessary to deliver such power to the human target especially to where the most vulnerable points or vital spots of one's opponent are located, in particular when the opponent is in motion.

Vulnerable points or vital spots of one's opponent are located, in particular when the opponent is in motion. At this point, it is necessary to remind the students of Taekwondo that this art of self-defense is specifically designed for swift retaliation against the moving aggressor.

Similarly by using the attacker's force of momentum, the slightest push is all that is needed to upset his or her equilibrium and to topple him or her.

In the case of the students of Taekwondo who have been in constant practice or the experts themselves, they spend no time thinking; as such an action comes automatically to them. Their actions, in short, have become conditioned reflexes.

Even if Taekwondo is practiced for the sake of exercise alone, the enjoyment derived will justify the time invested and spent. As an exercise, it is equally suitable for the old and young, male and female.

In any field of study as diverse as Taekwondo, there are bound to be many styles and interpretations that comprise the whole. Each style has its strengths and weaknesses, focusing on some aspect that its practitioners feel are more important than the rest. It could be sparring, forms, or self-defense. While one might think that this would lead to these differing styles splitting off from the whole, it must be recognized that there are certain essential elements that run through every version and it is these elements that unite Taekwondo.

The rigorous nature of Taekwondo necessitates that certain qualities be present in the practitioner. These qualities, while necessary in a small amount in the beginning are such a large part of the art itself that their growth soon becomes an integral part of the continued success of the practitioner. Without the continued development of these elements the path to excellence in Taekwondo will be blocked. It is much like a tree. The tree needs the sun, the rain and the earth in conjunction to continue its growth. While the tree might be able to survive for a short time without any one of these elements, it will ultimately die a premature, stunted death, never reaching its full potential of beauty, never having its full impact on the surrounding landscape. I feel that the essential elements of Taekwondo are respect and tradition.

There are two basic forms of respect at work in Taekwondo: Respect others and one's self, and respect the art. They are both of equal importance because each depends upon the other for strength and development.

Many beginners lack self-respect. In an upper-belt they see the embodiment of rising to the challenge, both physically and mentally. One does not have to personally know the individual to respect the accomplishment of his rank. You know that they have risen to the standard of challenges that rank requires. As the beginner advances, meeting his/her own challenges, a respect for the self is slowly cultivated. This respect is mirrored by the lower belts. It becomes a cycle that is not only beneficial to the individuals, but also necessary to the teaching method of Taekwondo. Due to the dynamic nature of Taekwondo, it is not something that is conducive to a static method of instruction. It would be impossible to glean many of the subtle nuances of the movements from a book. Personal instruction is necessary. Without respect for the teacher's abilities, the learning process would breakdown. This respect comes from two things: Respect the instructor's rank and commands, and the respect the art.

There is respect for the power of Taekwondo. As the student advances, he learns to respect the power of the techniques that he is being taught. One experiences first hand, the destructive capabilities of these techniques. This respect ensures that the student will use the techniques only when the situation demands.

Just as respect has an important impact on the teaching of Taekwondo, so does the reliance on traditions. This necessary method of teaching has had a profound effect on the way Taekwondo is taught today. In almost every other educational situation the emphasis is on books as the main conduit of knowledge. Students are encouraged to take what they have learned and try to expand upon it, experiment other methods and to explore new ideas. This is completely the opposite of the educational system in Taekwondo. The traditions rule the teaching. Without the traditions that provide the backbone of the art, the continuity would be lost. There is a chain that links all practitioners of Taekwondo. That chain is found in the traditions that have been passed on and on. That is the only way to know whether things are being done correctly. It is also the only way to know, for sure, whether you will ever be able to reach the goals that are there. It is analogous to having someone lead you through a dense forest who knows the way to the other side. If you disregard his directions and set off on your own then how will you know if any step you take will be in the correct direction.

TAEKWONDO TERMINOLOGY

ANATOMY (The Body Parts)

Korean Term	English Term
ahp-chook	ball of foot
olgul	face upper body (i.e. head and neck)
ip	mouth
son	hand
momtong	body "middle" body (trunk)
bal	foot
ky	ear
ahre	lower body (i.e. legs and feet)
mo-li	head
mok	neck
myung chi	solar plexus
sonmak	wrist
nulro	groin
tuck	chin
ko	nose
joomock	fist
sonmock	wrist
bal-nul	knife foot
noon	eye
murup	knee
pal	arm
palkoop	elbow
dari	leg
jumok	fist
palmok	forearm

NUMBERS (COUNTING)

Korean Term	English Term
hana	one
dul	two
set	three
net	four
dasot	five
yasot	six
elgub	seven
yodol	eight
ahob	nine
yol	ten
yoe hanna	eleven
yoe tul	twelve
yoe set	thirteen
sue mool	twenty
sue mool hanna	twenty one
sue mool tul	twenty two
suelun	thirty
mahoon	forty
sheen	fifty
yosoon	sixty
ilhoon	seventy
yudoon	eighty
adoon	ninety
bak	hundred

NUMBERS (LISTING)

Korean Term	English Term
il	first
ye	second
sam	third
sa	fourth
oh	fifth
yuk	sixth
chil	seventh
pal	eighth
koo	ninth
sib	tenth
sip il	11th
ye sip	20th
ye sip il	21st
sam sip	30th
sam sip il	31st
sah sip	40th
oh sip	50th
yook sip	60th
chil sip	70th
pal sip	80th
koo sip	90th
il bak	100th

MOVEMENT DIRECTIONS

Korean Term	English Term
maggi	block
cha-gi	kick
kyorugi	sparring
chi-gi	strike
twi	jumping
hosinsool	self defense
jirugi	thrusting

Korean Term	English Term
ahp	front
yop	side
ahre	low
backat	out (outer)
dwi	back
dolryo	round
ahn	in (inner)
anuro	inward
bandae	reverse
bakuro	outward
wen	left
oeroen	right