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...A Way of Life”

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## Training Secrets

### What is Taekwon-do

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## **What is Taekwon-Do?**

The art or method of kicking with the feet and punching with the fists

***Tae*** - Kicking or smashing with the feet

***Kwon*** - Punching with the Fist

***Do*** - Art or Method

Taekwon-Do is the scientific use of the body for self-defence. A body, that has gained the ultimate use of its facilities through intensive physical and mental training.

## **History**



Modern Taekwon-Do differs greatly from other martial arts, since the theories, terminology, techniques, systems, methods, rules, practice suit and spiritual foundation were scientifically developed and systematised. They were named by General Choi Hong Hi. The physical techniques of Taekwon-do are based on the principles of modern science, in particular Newtonian physics which teaches us how to generate maximum power.

A combination of circumstances made it possible for General Choi to originate and develop Taekwon-Do. In addition to his prior knowledge of Taek Kyon (one of the earliest forms of Korean martial art which he had been studying since he was fifteen), he had an opportunity to learn Karate in Japan during the period when Korea was occupied by the Japanese.

When Korea was liberated in 1945 he was placed in the privileged position as a founding member of the newly formed South Korean Armed Forces. He began to teach Karate to his soldiers as a means of physical and mental training. It was then that he realised that he needed to develop a Korean national martial art, superior in

both spirit and technique to Japanese Karate. He worked tirelessly from that day on until April 11 1955 when he unveiled his new Korean martial art. This new art was named "Taekwon-Do". Although Karate and Taek Kyon were used as references in the course of his study, the fundamental theories and principles of Taekwon-Do are totally different to those of any other martial art.

The emergence of Taekwon-Do as an international martial art in a relatively short period of time was due to a variety of factors. The evils of contemporary society (moral corruption, materialism, selfishness, etc.) had created a spiritual vacuum. For many people Taekwon-Do filled that vacuum, and compensated for the prevailing sense of emptiness, distrust, decadence and lack of confidence. In addition, the increase of violence and violent crime highlighted the need for self-protection and for many people Taekwon-Do filled that need.

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### **Korean Flag**

The Korean flag symbolises much of the thought and philosophy of the Orient. The



symbol, and sometimes the flag itself, is called Tae Kuk. Depicted on the flag is a circle divided equally and locked in perfect balance. The red section represents the Yang (plus) and the blue section the Um (minus), an ancient symbol of the universe, which originated in China. These two opposites express the dualism of the cosmos: fire and water, day and night, dark and light, construction and

destruction, masculine and feminine, active and passive, heat and cold, plus and minus, and so on.

The central thought in the Tae Kuk indicates that while there is a constant movement within the sphere of infinity, there are also balance and harmony.

Three bars at each corner also carry the ideas of opposition and balance. The three unbroken bars stand for heaven; the opposite three broken bars represent the earth; the two bars with a broken bar in-between symbolise fire; the opposite is the symbol of water.

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## **THE PHILOSOPHY OF TAEKWON-DO** **(Taekwon-Do Chul hak)**

In recent years, there has been an upsurge in violence and a loss of morality in all levels of society, especially among the young. There are, of course a number of reasons for this.

Many psychologists today feel that this problem stems from frustration. Analysts, on the other hand, point out that these misguided people are indeed a disillusioned segment of society searching for values and relevance in what they consider deceitful, materialistic, and absurd world of wars and decadence.

Unfortunately, however, instead of constructively channelling their extraordinary energy and potential, far too many strike out in blind anger, destroying rather than building, or merely running away from it all by isolating themselves with drugs and their own worlds of fantasy. Presently, the tendency of "the stronger preying upon the weaker" appears to be at its peak. Frankly, the present world closely resembles a "corrupt age."

It is obvious that this phenomenon of society is not merely because of the struggle for survival, but mainly because of an overdeveloped material and scientific civilization. The former misleads the young to the extreme materialism or egoism, while the latter seized human beings with fear, though playing an essential role in public welfare.

Then what would be the remedy? Needless to say it is the development of moral civilization - the proper mental states of a human being as the lord of creation, enough to prevail or at least keep abreast with the development of material and scientific civilization.

The utmost purpose of Taekwon-Do is to eliminate fighting by discouraging the oppression of the weak by the strong, with a power that must be based on humanity, justice, morality, wisdom and faith, thus helping to build a better and more peaceful world.

All men, regardless of age, have felt that death is a shame, and lamented that they cannot live as long as the pine trees or the turtles that seem to live a thousand years. Righteous men, on the other hand, deplore the fact that justice does not always triumph over the tyranny of power. However, there are two ways to deal with these problems: The former, through mental discipline, the latter, through physical training. It is my firm belief that through Taekwon-Do, anyone can garner enough strength to become a guardian of justice, to challenge social disunity and, to cultivate the human spirit to the highest level attainable. It is in this spirit, I am dedicating the art of Taekwon-Do to the people of the world.

The philosophy of Taekwon-Do is based on the ethical, moral, and spiritual standards by which men can live together in harmony, and its art patterns are inspired by the ideals and exploits of great men from Korean history. Korea's famous military and civil leaders who in nearly five thousand years of Korean history have never invaded their neighbour yet who fought bravely and made great self-sacrifices to defend their homeland against invading

enemies. I also include the names of patriots who willingly gave up their lives to regain Korea's freedom and independence from the Japanese occupation.

Each Tul (pattern) of Taekwon-Do expresses the thoughts and the actions of these great men, so the students of Taekwon-Do must reflect the true intentions of those whose name each Tul bears. Therefore, under no circumstances should Taekwon-Do be used for any commercial or political purpose whatsoever.

I have set forth the following philosophy and guidelines, which will be the cornerstone of Taekwon-Do and by which all serious students of this art are encouraged to live.

1. Be willing to go where the going may be tough and do the things that are worth doing even though they are difficult.
2. Be gentle to the weak and tough to the strong.
3. Be content with what you have in money and position but never in skills.
4. Always finish what you begin, be it large or small.
5. Be a willing teacher to anyone regardless of religion, race or ideology.
6. Never yield to repression or threat in the pursuit of a noble cause.
7. Teach attitude and skill with action rather than words.
8. Always be yourself even though your circumstances may change.
9. Be the eternal teacher who teaches with the body when young, with words when old, and by moral precept even after death.

Taken from "Taekwon-Do" (The Korean Art of Self Defence) also known as The Condensed Encyclopaedia.  
Fifth Edition 1999

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### **The Tenets of Taekwon-Do (Taekwon-Do Junshin)**

Taekwon-Do aims to achieve:

Courtesy (Ye Ui)

Integrity (Yom Chi)

Perseverance (In Nae)

Self-Control (Guk Gi)

Indomitable Spirit (Baekjul Boolgool)

Taekwon-Do aims to bestow these qualities in its practitioners. Through the rigorous training and tradition all of these virtues will become a part of your character. In fact it is essential that they do. For a student to progress through the ranks of Taekwon-Do they must master all of the Tenets. Each Tenet has been linked with a different colour belt. You must have mastered the corresponding Tenet if you're to grade for that belt.

**Yellow** – As the foundation is being laid, the student will learn to be **Courteous**.

**Green** – As the skills of a student develop, so must the students' **Integrity**.

**Blue** – The very fact that a student has reached the level of blue belt is a testament to **Perseverance**.

**Red** – The student that cannot exercise **Self-Control** is not worthy of a Red Belt.

**Black** – To be a Black Belt is to have **Indomitable Spirit**.

### Explanation of Tenets

Needless to say, the success or failure of Taekwon-Do depends largely on how one observes and implements the tenets, which should serve as a guide for all serious students of the art.

**Courtesy** Taekwon-Do students attempt to practice the following element to courtesy.

1. To promote the spirit of mutual concessions.
2. To be ashamed of one's vices, contemplating those of others.
3. To be polite to one another.
4. To encourage the sense of justice and humanity.
5. To distinguish instructor from student, senior from junior and elder from younger.
6. To behave oneself according to etiquette.
7. To respect others' possessions.
8. To handle matters with fairness and sincerity.

**Integrity** In Taekwon-Do integrity is defined as the following to be able to see the difference between right and wrong, to feel guilt, instances where integrity is lacking:

1. The instructor who teaches improper techniques due to lack of knowledge or apathy.
2. The student who misrepresents himself by "fixing" breaking materials before demonstrations.
3. The sabum who camouflages bad techniques with false praise to students.
4. The student or instructor who is jealous of others.
5. The student who feels ashamed to seek opinions from his/her juniors.
6. To refrain from giving or accepting any gift when in doubt.

**Perseverance** There is an old Oriental saying, "Patience leads to virtue or merit". To achieve something, whether it is a higher degree or the perfection of a technique, one must set the goal, then always persevere.

**Self-Control** This tenet is very important in and outside the Dojang, whether conducting oneself in free sparring or in one's personal affairs. A loss of self-control in free sparring can prove disastrous to both student and opponent. An inability to live and work within one's capability or sphere is also a lack of self-control.

**Indomitable Spirit** A serious student of Taekwon-Do must at all times be modest and honest. If confronted with injustice, he or she will deal with the belligerent without any fear or hesitation at all, with indomitable spirit, regardless of whomever and however many of number may be. As history has proven, those who have pursued their dreams earnestly and strenuously with indomitable spirit have never failed to achieve their goals.

### **Tae Kwon-Do Oath**

As a member of Tae Kwon-Do, I do solemnly pledge to abide by the rules and regulations of the association. I strive also to be modest, courteous and respectful to all members in particular my seniors and put the art in use only for self defence, defence of the weak and never to abuse my knowledge of the art.

### **International Tae Kwon-Do Oath**

As a student of Tae Kwon-Do:

I shall observe the tenets of Tae Kwon-Do.

I shall respect the instructor and seniors.

I shall never misuse Tae Kwon-Do.

I shall be a champion of Freedom and Justice.

I shall build a more peaceful world.

## System of Rank Belts

### **System of Rank (Dan Gup Jedo)**

In Taekwon-Do character development, fortitude and tenacity are graded as well as individual capability. The promotional scale is divided into 19 ranks – 10 grades (Kup) and nine degrees (Dan). The former begins with the 10<sup>th</sup> grade as the lowest and ends at the first. Degrees begin with the first grade as the lowest and ends with the ultimate, ninth degree.

There is of course, certain significance in the numbering system. With degrees, the number 9 is not only the highest among one digit numbers but is also 3 multiplied by 3. In the orient 3 is the most esteemed of numbers and its  $\equiv$ , represents, heaven on top, mortals in the centre and earth being the bottom line. It was believed that the individual who was successful in promoting his country, his fellow man and God, and able to reach an accord with all three would aspire to be king. 3 by 3 is 9, the highest of the high; therefore ninth degree is the highest of the high-ranking belts.

It is also interesting to note that when any other single digit multiplies the numeral nine and the resultant figures added together, the answer always equals nine.  $9 \times 1 = 9$ ,  $9 \times 2 = 18$   $1 + 8 = 9$ , and so on up to  $9 \times 9 = 81$   $8 + 1 = 9$ . Since this is the only single digit number having this feature it again points to the number nine as being the most positive.

Taking the use of 3, one-step further, the nine degrees are further divide into three distinct classes. First through third Dan are considered novice stages of black belt. At fourth Dan the student crosses the threshold and enters expert class. Seventh through ninth is composed of Taekwon-Do masters – those who fully understand all the particular of the art, mental and physical.

There is perhaps one question that remains. Why begin with the lowest of the two digit numbers 10? Why not begin with the lowest one digit number and proceed from 1<sup>st</sup> grade to ninth and again for degrees? Though it would be certainly more logical the 10 to 1 and 1 to 10 numerical system in the orient is ageless. It would be impossible if not a bit impertinent to change this. In any case the number 10 is the lowest of the two digit numbers consequently a beginner must start at this number instead of say 11 or 12.

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## Belts

Students must grade through the following belts in this order and will not be allowed grade unless they have studied for the required amount of time and are up to standard.

### **Colour Belt Grades**

10 <sup>th</sup> Kup	White Belt
9 <sup>th</sup> Kup	White Belt / Yellow Tip
8 <sup>th</sup> Kup	Yellow Belt
7 <sup>th</sup> Kup	Yellow Belt / Green Tip
6 <sup>th</sup> Kup	Green Belt
5 <sup>th</sup> Kup	Green Belt / Blue Tip
4 <sup>th</sup> Kup	Blue Belt
3 <sup>rd</sup> Kup	Blue Belt / Red Tip
2 <sup>nd</sup> Kup	Red Belt
1 <sup>st</sup> Kup	Red Belt / Black Tip

### **Black Belt Rank**

1 <sup>st</sup> Dan/Degree	
2 <sup>nd</sup> Dan/Degree	Novice
3 <sup>rd</sup> Dan/Degree	
4 <sup>th</sup> Dan/Degree	
5 <sup>th</sup> Dan/Degree	Expert
6 <sup>th</sup> Dan/Degree	
7 <sup>th</sup> Dan/Degree	
8 <sup>th</sup> Dan/Degree	Master
9 <sup>th</sup> Dan/Degree	Grand Master

### **Definition of the Belts are as follows:**

**White Belt** Signifies innocence, as that of a beginning student who has no previous knowledge of Tae Kwon-do.

**Yellow Belt** Signifies the earth from which a plant sprouts and takes root as the Taekwon-do foundation is being laid.

**Green Belt** Signifies the plants growth as the Tae Kwon-Do skills begin to develop.

**Blue Belt** Signifies the heaven towards which the plant matures into a towering tree as the Tae Kwon-Do training progresses. It also signifies the sky.

**Red Belt** Signifies Danger - Cautioning the student to exercise control and warning the opponent to stay away. It also signifies Fire.

**Black Belt** Opposite of White, therefore signifying the maturity and proficiency in Tae Kwon-Do. It also indicates the wearer's imperviousness to darkness and fear.

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**Title and Function**

This has been written so that everyone knows the correct procedure when addressing each other, especially in the Dojang.

Too many people are detracting from the importance of the achievements of those who have studied hard and taken many years to achieve their qualifications. False claims of Master Status from 4<sup>th</sup> Degree upwards, do nothing to enhance someone's reputation when they do not have the experience to back up the title. Too many people try to boost their own egos without regard to the damage being done to those people who are entitled to use the "Master" title properly. Some people use the title of Master because they are simply not aware of the fact that a Master is someone of 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> Degree, however ignorance is no excuse.

We ask all Degree holders to use the appropriate titles:

1 <sup>st</sup> to 3 <sup>rd</sup> Degree	Boosabum	Assistant Instructor
4 <sup>th</sup> to 6 <sup>th</sup> Degree	Sabum	Instructor
7 <sup>th</sup> to 8 <sup>th</sup> Degree	Sahyun	Master
9 <sup>th</sup> Degree	Sasung	Grand Master

1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> Degree will only be called Assistant Instructor when their National Organisation has duly qualified them. 4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> Degree will only be called Instructor when they have been qualified by the I.T.F. to International Instructor.

This rigid structure is in place to ensure the quality of the Art remains. To falsely claim a title is as detrimental to Taekwon-Do as allowing students to achieve grades they do not deserve. As such, those that have earned their titles are deserving of respect and should be spoken to accordingly. An example of the correct terminology of how to use at the commencement of class, the senior student will say:

Charyot (Attention); Sabum Nimgeh (Respect for the Instructor); Kyong Ye (Bow).

The title of course will change depending on the seniority of the person being shown the respect.

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## **What is Expected of a Student**

For those new to Taekwon-Do some of its practises may seem strange. You will learn as you progress that each procedure has a reason and nothing is done without cause. For you to last as a student you must familiarise yourself with all the rules and learn what is expected of you. Unlike a sport, you must carry Taekwon-Do with you outside of training times and therefore must choose to act as you have been taught and make Taekwon-Do, its goals and philosophy a part of your life. Your actions reflect on it as it reflects on you. Those students that only wish to learn how to fight do not last.

### **Rules of the Dojang**

1. Do not enter or leave the class without permission from the instructor. All students must bow on entering or leaving the Dojang.
2. Prior to class all students must bow to black belts that enter the hall. This applies to lower ranked black belts when higher degrees enter.
3. If you arrive late for class, you must first attract the attention of the instructor by raising your hand, approach, bow and give your reasons.
4. Students must always bow at the proper distance before speaking to the instructor and must always treat them with respect by addressing them as Sir/Miss.
5. Raise your hand and request permission before speaking out in class. Students should always bow before leaving their line.
6. All jewellery incl. watches, earrings, rings, bracelets, neck chains must be removed before training starts. All mobile phones must be turned off.
7. Loud conversation, laughing in excess, eating (including chewing gum) and drinking have no place in the Dojang.
8. Your Dobok should be clean and well pressed.
9. Wearing of shoes inside the Dojang is prohibited except for Taekwon-Do approved shoes.
10. Any substitute instructor is to be treated as your regular instructor.
11. Students are not allowed to give demonstrations or to teach Taekwon-Do without prior approval.
12. Do not engage in any activities that might degrade Taekwon-Do or the reputation of the class or its instructor.

### **Students (Jeja)**

1. Never tire of learning. A good student can learn anywhere, anytime. This is the secret of knowledge.
2. A good student must be willing to sacrifice for his art and instructor. Many students feel that their training is a commodity bought with monthly dues, and are unwilling to take part in demonstrations, teaching and working around the Dojang. An instructor can afford to lose this kind of student.
3. Always set a good example to lower ranking belts. It is only natural that they will attempt to emulate senior students.
4. Always be loyal and never criticise instructor, Taekwon-Do or the teaching methods.
5. If an instructor teaches a technique, practice it and attempt to utilise it.
6. Remember that a student's conduct outside the Dojang reflects on the art and the instructor.
7. If a student adopts a technique from another Dojang and the instructor disapproves of it, the student must discard it immediately or train at the gym where the technique was learned.
8. Never be disrespectful to the instructor. Though a student is allowed to disagree, the student must eventually follow the instructor whether he is right or wrong.
9. A student must be eager to learn and ask questions.
10. Never break a trust.

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## Patterns

### **Patterns**

A Pattern or Tul is a series of fundamental movements, most of which represent either attack or defence techniques against an imaginary opponent, set to a fixed and logical sequence.

The ancient law in the Orient was similar to the law of Hamurabi, “an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth”, and was rigorously enforced even if death was caused accidentally. In this type of environment, and since the present system of free sparring had not yet been developed, it was impossible for a student of the martial arts to practice or test his individual skill of attack and defence against actual moving opponents. Individual advancement was certainly hindered until an imaginative practitioner created the first patterns.

The student systematically deals with several imaginary opponents under various assumptions, using every available attacking and blocking tool from different directions. Thus pattern practice enables the student to go through many fundamental movements in series, to develop sparring techniques, improve flexibility of movements, master body shifting, build muscles and breath control, develop fluid and smooth movement and gain rhythmical movements. It also enables the student to acquire certain exercises for sparring.

#### **Interpretation of Patterns**

There are twenty-four patterns in Taekwon-Do. Each Taekwon-Do pattern is named after a significant figure or group in Korean history.

Patterns are various fundamental movements, most of which represent either attack or defence techniques, set to a fixed logical sequence. In patterns the student systematically deals with several imaginary opponents under various assumptions using every available attacking and blocking movement from different directions. Thus, pattern practice enables the student to go through many fundamental movements in series to develop sparring techniques, improve flexibility of movements, master body shifting and gain rhythmical movements. It also enables the student to acquire certain exercises for sparring.

#### **The reason for 24 patterns**

The life of a human being, perhaps 100 years, can be considered as a day compared with eternity. Therefore we mortals are no more than simple travellers who pass by the eternal years of an aeon in a day.

It is evident that no one can live more than a limited amount time. Nevertheless most people foolishly enslave themselves to materialism as if they could live for thousands of years. Other people strive to bequeath a good spiritual legacy for coming generations, and this way, gain immortality. Obviously, the spirit is perpetual while material is not. Therefore, what we can do to leave behind something for the welfare of mankind is, perhaps, the most important thing in our lives.

### **The Diagram of a Pattern**

The diagram of a pattern is the directional plan of the pattern. It should be followed closely as all patterns should start and finish at the same spot. In the individual pattern text, the position "X" is the starting point of the pattern.

### **Points for Performing Patterns**

1. Patterns should begin and end at the same spot.
  2. Correct posture and facing must be maintained at all times
  3. The muscles of the body should be tensed or relaxed at the critical movement in the exercise.
  4. The exercise should be performed in a rhythmic manner with an absence of stiffness.
  5. Movement should be accelerated and decelerated at the appropriate times.
  6. Each pattern should be perfected before going on to the next.
  7. Know the purpose of each movement.
- Perform each movement with realism.

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## Gradings

### **Promotional Gradings**

Gradings in the Taekwon-Do system are done so that the student can distinguish senior grade from junior grade, black belt from instructor.

The grading is a reward for the hard work, both mentally and physically, that the student has demonstrated over the weeks and months. It cannot be gained purely on a time scale. The student must always be seen to be trying to improve their standard.

There is certain criterion that exists for the student to be accepted for promotion.

1. The student must be of the required standard.
2. The student must have knowledge of Taekwon-Do theory.
3. The student must be courteous and respectful to his/her instructor, seniors and fellow students wherever they are.
4. The student must realise that now they are a student of Taekwon-Do and their actions outside the Dojang will reflect on Taekwon-Do and the instructor.

Taekwon-Do is a martial art for all ages and sexes and therefore it would be unfair to adopt one grading standard for all students.

### **Grading Etiquette**

A promotional grading is a formal event and certain points have to be adhered to. If the grading is large, there may be long periods of sitting down prior to your test. Students wishing to participate must be able to sit quietly.

For all gradings, the following points must be adhered to:

1. Ensure that you have done enough studying and know all the material you will be examined on.
2. All grading application forms, completed in full, must be returned to your instructor, accompanied with the appropriate fee at the last class before the grading.
3. Doboks must be clean and pressed with belts tied correctly.
4. Hand and toenails should be short and clean.
5. Long hair should be tied up neatly so as not to impede the student.
6. No laughing, drinking, eating, talking, inside the Dojang while the examination is taking place.
7. All jewellery must be removed before the exam begins.
8. Mobile phones must be turned off.

### **Grading Format**

1. The grading official will demonstrate all techniques that you will have to perform.
2. Students will line up to pay respect to the examiner and to recite the Taekwon-Do oath. Students will then be dismissed to the rear of the class, where they will sit crossed legged until called.
3. When your name is called, answer politely, "Present Sir" and go to your designated cross on the floor. The number of students demonstrating at one time will vary from one to a maximum of five, depending on the size of the grading and the grade of the student.
4. Once, at your cross you will be called to attention and bow to the examiner. Whilst attention you will raise your right hand and identify yourself by saying your name and grade, an example is "John Smith 10<sup>th</sup> Kup Sir". (No tenth Dans please).
5. The final part of the grading will be the theory. This is conducted at the table with the examiner. All questions must be answered courteously. After you are dismissed you must bow before you leave the table. Do not turn your back on the examiner, as it is very discourteous. Always face the examiner as you return to your position.

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## **TRAINING SECRETS OF TAEKWON-DO**

An old proverb says that even heaven cannot make a diligent worker poor. However, in Taekwon-Do, diligence or intensive training alone does not produce quality techniques. On the contrary, instructions from a false or unqualified instructor would be worse than not being taught at all because unscientific movements not only reduce the power but also require a tremendous amount of time to correct. On the other hand, under the proper guidance of a competent instructor, a student who trains earnestly with dedication will learn the true techniques of Taekwon-Do in a comparatively short period of time with less effort.

Students should keep in mind the following secrets:

- 1) To study the theory of power thoroughly.
- 2) To understand the purpose and method of each movement clearly.
- 3) To bring the action of eyes, hands, feet and breath into one single coordinated action.
- 4) To choose the appropriate attacking tool for each vital spot.
- 5) To become familiar with the correct angle and distance for attack and defence.
- 6) Keep both the arms and legs bent slightly while movement is in motion.
- 7) All movements must begin with a backward motion with very few exceptions. However, once the movement is in motion it should not be stopped before reaching the target.
- 8) To create a sine wave during the movement by utilizing the knee spring properly.
9. To exhale briefly at the moment of each blow excepting a connecting motion.