

JKA  
COMPETITION RULES

## Competition Rules

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### Chapter 1. General Rules

#### Article 1. Purpose

The purpose of these rules (hereafter "Rules") is to enable smooth and fair administration of competitions.

#### Article 2. Application of the Rules

1. In the Rules, a competition may be organized by one of the following groups.

- 1) Class D group            Branch or club.
- 2) Class C group            Organization or joint group of a prefecture.
- 3) Class B group            Organization or joint group of a region.
- 4) Class A group            Foreign national J.K.A representative
- 5) General head office

#### Article 3. Manners of participants

Competitions shall be held fairly on the basis of the Karate spirit, with competitors showing proper respect for all opponents.

#### Article 4. Miscellaneous

If a question arises regarding matters not specified in the Rules, such matters shall be decided by the chief referee.

### Chapter 2. Administration of competitions

#### Article 5. Organization of Competitions

1. A representative of the association organizing a competition shall publicly announce the requirements of the competition before it begins, and notify all concerned.
2. When holding a competition, the following staff shall be appropriately positioned:
  - 1) time keepers
  - 2) score keepers
  - 3) co-ordinators
  - 4) first aid.
3. When holding a competition the venue must be chosen with the competitors safety and security in mind. Medical insurance must also be arranged beforehand.
4. When holding a competition, the following officials shall be selected and positioned.
  - 1) chief referee
  - 2) referees & judges
  - 3) arbitrators

#### Article 6. Chief Referee

1. The chief referee shall aim to administer a competition fairly and smoothly.
2. The chief referee shall give appropriate guidance or make a decision in the following cases:
  - 1) If he perceives a violation of the Rules or inappropriate conduct.
  - 2) If he is asked by a judge to give some advice.
  - 3) If a question arises regarding matters not specified in the Rules.

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- 4) If an accident happens during a match.
3. The chief referee may take the following steps when he thinks it necessary, in order for the competition to run smoothly:
  - 1) Give guidance;
  - 2) Dismiss a competitor;
  - 3) Disqualify a competitor.
4. The chief referee should be the director of the Technical Committee of the groups concerned. If not, a person appointed by him. A vice referee may be selected if necessary.

### Article 7. Referees & judges

1. A referees runs each match and makes the necessary judgement.
2. The authority of a referee covers all aspects of the match of which he takes charge.
3. The judging and direction of a match shall be done only by referees & judges. Nobody can change their decision or protest it directly, except when the authority of an arbitrator is put into effect.
4. A referee administers a match and declares the result with his judgement.
5. A judge assists the referee.
6. On the basis of the Qualification Rules, the host association selects referees & judges from the people eligible.

### Article 8. Arbitrator

1. An arbitrator shall be appointed for a match.
2. The arbitrator's task is to make sure everyone adheres to the competition/judge rules.
3. The arbitrator shall give appropriate guidance to referees and judges, time keepers, score keepers, etc., in the following cases:
  - 1) If he perceives a violation of the Rules or inappropriate and unfair conduct.
  - 2) If a coach protests or asks a question.
  - 3) If a judge asks a question or advice
  - 4) If a tournament doctor gives an advice
4. The arbitrator may ask for an explanation from a judge and/or anyone concerned as the occasion demands.
5. The arbitrator shall be appointed and delegated, from people eligible on the basis of the Qualification Rules, by the technical director of a higher order.

### Article 9. Competitors

1. A host association cannot refuse people who satisfy the conditions of participation based on the requirements of a competition unless there is a specified reason. Nor shall it force them to participate in a competition.
2. In principle, a competitor must be a member of the Japan Karate Association or of an officially authorized organization.

### Article 10. Coaches

1. A coach may escort a competitor or team during a match.
2. A coach may protest or ask questions through the arbitrator.
3. A coach may give instructions to a competitor at a given place.

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4. A coach should have instructor status and judge status.

### Article 11. Time keeper

A time keeper shall measure the length of each match and notify it to the referee according to the given procedure.

### Article 12. Score keeper

A score keeper shall register and announce the score and the result of each match, and notify them to the referee as the occasion demands.

### Article 13. Co-ordinator

As a liaison, co-ordinators shall take care of communicating with the competitors and executives during a match. They shall do their best to ensure a smooth match.

### Article 14. First aid staff

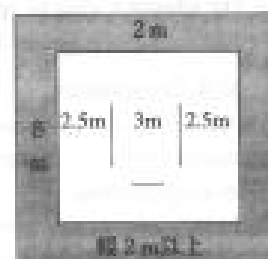
1. First aid staff shall assist a competitor who is injured or suddenly taken ill in order to ensure a safe match.
2. At least one of the first aid staff should be a doctor or a qualified nurse.

### Article 15. Clothes

1. A competitor shall wear a karate-gi, and if necessary, each competitor shall wear a red or white belt around his waist as an indicator.
2. A competitor must wear a previously issued badge or number for a given court.
3. A competitor shall use safety equipment as specified.
4. A competitor may wear soft-contact lenses only if it is necessary.
5. A competitor shall use nothing except the specified safety equipment except when a referee or judge finds it necessary.
6. An arbitrator shall wear the arbitrator's emblem for a given court.
7. Judges and arbitrators shall wear the clothes which the J.K.A. specifies, with an ID card indicating that he is a judge for a given court.
8. Executive's and assistant's uniforms should be the same and should be easily distinguishable in the stadium.

### Article 16. Court

1. A court shall be 8m square, and have a border which is wider than 4cm.
2. To begin a match, both competitors stand at their respective lines. The lines are 1m long and 3m apart in the center of the court. In principle, the left line should be white, and the right line should be red, when facing the front of the court.
3. The position of the referee is indicated by a line 2.0m behind the center point when facing the front of the court.
4. For safety, the difference in level between a raised court and the floor shall be less than 1m, and there shall be a safety zone of more than 2m around the court.
5. The court must be level and should be made of board, resin, cloth, tatami mats, urethane mats, etc.



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### Article 17. Competition events

1. A competition shall be classified into two categories, Individual competitions and group competitions are held respectively in each of the following :
  - 1) Kumite
  - 2) Kata
2. The following competition methods may be used:
  - 1) A league tournament. Each competitor competes against every other competitor. The winner being the one with the least losses.
  - 2) A knockout tournament. A competitor continues until he is eliminated.
  3. A host association may have other kinds of events.

## Chapter 3. Kumite Match

### Article 18. Competition requirements

1. In a Kumite match, both competitors may use their techniques freely within the court in a given time to demonstrate their superiority. The following types of kumite match are used:
  - 1) "Ippon Shobu" aims to get Ippon (One point) first within a given time.
  - 2) "Sanbon Shobu" aims to get Sanbon (Three points) first within a given time.
  - 3) "Saikidori Shobu" aims to get Ippon or Wazaari first within a given time.
  - 4) "Jiyu Shobu" aims to get as many points as possible within a given time.
2. In a match Tsuki, Keri, Uchi, etc. must be sufficiently controlled and a relaxed posture maintained which enables the next attack to be made against the opponent.

### Article 19. Group match

1. The number in a team shall be odd.
2. A maximum of 2 substitutes are acceptable.
3. The team turnout should be at least half.
4. The result is determined by the number of wins obtained in each match.
5. If the competitor's order is changed from the originally reported one, the team will be disqualified.
6. A group match can be divided into the "No. of wins method" or the "knockout tournament method".
  - 1) The "No. of wins method" is used to decide the victory or defeat of a team according to the number of wins. But in cases where the number of wins is the same between the two teams, the team who has more wins by "Ippon", secondly by "Awase-waza (2 waza-ari)" and thirdly in "Hantei gachi(judge's decision)", shall be deemed as the winning team; in cases where the points still remain the same between the two teams an extension between representatives of each team shall be carried out to obtain a result.
  - 2) In the case of an extension one competitor may participate twice in the match.
  - 3) The "knockout tournament method" is where a winner continues to participate in each match until the opposing team's members have all lost.

### Article 20. Judgement of techniques

1. Attack objectives are as follows:
  - 1) "Jodan" means the neck and head.

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- 2) "Chudan" means the front, side and back of the body.
2. The criteria of judgement are as follows:
  - 1) Correct stance and good attitude
  - 2) Strong spirit
  - 3) Suitable distance and timing
  - 4) Correct grasp of objective
  - 5) Course of techniques and target
3. "Ippon" is given when one of the techniques such as Tsuki, Keri, Uchi, etc. has simultaneously satisfied all of the above criteria.
4. The following cases may be deemed as "Ippon" even when the criteria have not been totally satisfied:
  - 1) Cases where a competitor pre-empted the beginning of his opponent's attack.
  - 2) Cases where a competitor destroyed his opponent's balance or opponent's posture.
  - 3) Cases where one of the techniques was used together with throwing the opponent.
  - 4) Cases where a series of attacks have reached the objective.
  - 5) Cases where the opponent has become defenseless.
5. "Waza-ari" is given when a valid technique almost equivalent to Ippon has been executed.
6. Two "Waza-ari" equal "Ippon".
7. "Ai-uchi" is when both of the competitors have simultaneously executed their techniques with similar validity.

### Article 21. Judgement of competition

1. In the case where neither of the competitors has got a full score within the given match time, a general evaluation based on all the judgements shall decide which competitor is the winner.
2. In cases where both of the competitors have been injured or where another factor has made the continuation of the competition impossible, a general evaluation based on all the judgements given up to that moment shall decide which one is the winner.
3. The judgement factors in a competition are as follows:
  - 1) Presence or absence of Waza-ari.
  - 2) Presence or absence of warnings of a foul.
  - 3) Presence or absence of warnings of Joga.
  - 4) Skill and power of technique.
  - 5) Fighting spirit.
  - 6) Tactical superiority.
  - 7) Etiquette.
4. The final judgement, based on a majority decision among the referee and judges, shall be made by the referee.
5. "Hikiwake"(draw) shall be declared in cases where both of the competitors are deemed as having the right to be the winner.

### Article 22. Extensions

1. If there are no regulations specified, the winners are decided using the following methods.
  - 1) In the case of Hikiwake, an extension may be held. An additional extension may be held in cases where the first extension ends in a draw. The referee may order "Sakidori Ippon Shobu" (a method

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where the first point scored decides the winner) in the case of an additional extension.

- 2) In an extension, warnings shall be carried over from the previous match. The referee should confirm these warnings to the competitor before the extension.

### Article 23. Fouls

1. The following are forbidden in a competition.
  - 1) To make a real physical intentional attack on an opponent.
  - 2) To bite or to scratch.
  - 3) To meaninglessly grasp or to meaninglessly tackle.
  - 4) To carry out a dangerous throwing technique.
  - 5) To attack toward eyes or groin.
  - 6) To attack by Nukite, Kaishu(slapping) or Zutsuki(using head to attack).
  - 7) To waste time or to show lack of fighting spirit by not attacking.
  - 8) To use provocative or ridiculing speech or actions toward an opponent.
  - 9) To try a technique after the declaration of "Yame"(Stop) or "Jogai" (Over passing the court boundary).
  - 10) To go against a judges signal.
  - 11) To behave against the Rules.
2. In cases where a competitor violates one of the above forbidden items, one of the following judgements will be made:
  - 1) When he is considered to have explicitly violated one of the above forbidden items, "Hansoku chui" (Warning of disqualification) shall be given to him, and in cases where "Hansoku chui" is repeated twice, he will lose by disqualification, and the judges shall declare his opponent the winner.
  - 2) In cases where his violation is considered to be slight and does not injure his opponent, he shall be given "Keikoku"(Warning). "Keikoku" is not a factor of judgement, but it may be considered as "Hansoku chui" if he repeats it.
  - 3) In cases where his violation can be considered grave and vicious, or causes considerable injury to his opponent, "Hansoku"(Foul) shall be given to him, and the judges shall declare the opponent the winner.
3. In cases when the competitor wins by the opponent's fouls, if injured, the competitor cannot continue without the doctor's permission.
  - 1) A competitor who wins twice by opponent's fouls may not continue.
  - 2) A competitor in a team tournament who wins twice by fouls may not continue.

### Article 24. Out of court

In cases where part of a competitor's body touches outside the line of the court, the judges shall declare "Jogai" (Over passing the court boundary). 2 times "Jogai" will be "Jogai chui" (Warning), and three times "Jogai" will be "Jogai hansoku" (Disqualification), and the judges shall declare the opponent the winner.

### Article 25. Defenselessness

1. In the following cases, a competitor shall be called "Mabobi"(Defenseless), and his opponent shall be
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given "Waza-ari" or "Ippon".

- 1) In cases where it is evident that the success of a technical attack was due to the defenseless state of the opponent.
  - 2) In cases where it is evident that a competitor has lost his fighting spirit.
2. Even in cases where a competitor has been hit by his opponent's attack, a referee shall give him "Keikoku" or "Mubobi chui" (Warning on defenselessness), when the referee considers his condition dangerous. When "Mubobi chui" is given to a competitor twice, his opponent shall be the winner.

### Article 26. Dismissal from competition

1. In the following cases, a competitor shall be declared "Shikkaku" (Dismissed) to make his opponent the winner.
  - 1) In cases where a competitor does not follow the referee's order.
  - 2) In cases where a competitor makes speech or actions contrary to the Karatedo spirit.
  - 3) In cases where valid reasons are found making the continuation of the match impossible.
2. In cases where a violation is committed by a team in a group match, that team shall be declared "Shikkaku", and the opposing team shall be the winner.
3. The length of the dismissal shall be fixed by the referee on the basis of deliberation among the judges.

### Article 27. Withdrawal

1. In cases when a competitor leaves the competition place without reporting.
2. In cases where a competitor withdraws from a match, his opponent shall be given the match. In a group match, the opposing team shall be the winner.

### Article 28. Injuries

1. If it is impossible for one or both competitors to continue a match, one of the following judgements shall be made:
  - 1) If a competitor is injured accidentally or unintentionally, the referee shall declare him unable to continue (kiken) and award the match to the opponent.
  - 2) If a competitor is injured as a direct result of the opponent's actions, the opponent shall be disqualified and the injured competitor awarded the match.
  - 3) If both competitors cannot continue due to accidental injuries, the match shall be declared a draw (hikiwake).
2. If a competitor wins by kiken he may not continue to his next scheduled match unless he receives tournament doctor's permission.

### Article 29. Judges

A "Kumite" competition is governed by the following referees & judges:

- 1) 1 referee
- 2) 4 judges

### Article 30. Match time

1. A competition shall be 2 minutes or 5 minutes.
2. The time of a match shall be defined as each time interval beginning with the referee's order "Hajime" (Start) or "Tsuwakete hajime" (Start again and continue) and ending with the referee's order



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"Yame"(Stop) or "Jogai" and shall not include the time when a match is suspended.

### Article 31. Match process

1. Both competitors, facing each other at the starting line, must begin immediately after the referee's order "Hajime" or "Tsuzukete hajime".
2. The order "Yame" or "Jogai" shall suspend or end immediately the match, and then the competitors shall return to their starting positions in order to receive the referee's decision or other instruction.
3. The referee shall give a decision "Yame" or "Jogai" immediately after an act requiring it, and suspend or end the competition in one of the following cases:
  - 1) In cases of "Waza-ari" or cases of a technique equivalent to "Ippon".
  - 2) In cases where it is necessary to permit a competitor to tidy himself up or to give him other instruction.
  - 3) In cases where a competitor has committed an evident foul.
  - 4) In case where a competitor is injured or an accident has happened.
  - 5) In cases where an arbitrator has given an instruction for a match suspension.
  - 6) In cases where a judge has indicated his opinion and the referee upholds it.
  - 7) In cases where the match situation is considered dangerous.
  - 8) In cases where part of a competitor's body has touched the outside of the court.
  - 9) In cases where the end of the match time is signalled or the bell has rung to signal it.
4. An arbitrator or a judge shall end the match immediately by means of his whistle when there is no declaration from the referee.
5. The referee may call judges, deliberate with them or give them his instructions in cases of necessity, always in the presence of an arbitrator. In cases where judges can not agree, the referee shall give his definitive decision based on a majority.
6. Both competitors shall immediately reopen their match upon the instruction "Tsuzukete hajime".
7. A competitor may ask "Time"(Competition suspension) from the referee when he has an accident or injury or is suddenly taken ill if the referee does not himself notice it.
8. Each judge shall give his decision by means of his flag, under the referee's order "Hantei"(Decision) or his signal by whistle.
9. The referee shall notify the competitors of his decision based on all of the decisions made by the judges.
10. A time keeper, with a stopwatch and at a given position, shall measure the match time, and notify to the judges, by means of a bell as follows:
  - 1) The bell shall be rung once to announce the final 30 seconds of the match.
  - 2) The bell shall be rung twice to announce the end of the match.
11. A score keeper shall register the result of the decision on a score sheet as to the referee's judgement.

### Article 32. Match equipment

1. A whistle shall be held by each referee & judge.
2. A red flag and a white flag shall be held by each judge.
3. A stopwatch.
4. A bell.
5. Score sheets.

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6. A red belt or a white belt shall be worn by competitors as an indicator. The length and width shall be appropriate, so as not to obstruct their movements and should be easily distinguishable.

## Chapter 4. Kata match

### Article 33. Match method

1. A Kata match consists of the performance of Kata demonstrated within the court, which shall be judged in superiority as follows:
  - 1) "Kohaku hoshiki" (Red and white method) consists of the performance of the same Kata simultaneously by both competitors and shall be judged on superiority.
  - 2) "Tensu hoshiki" (Point method) consists of the judges' scoring the Kata of each competitor to decide the result on points.
  - 3) In a team kata match, a team of 3 perform the same kata synchronized and shall be judged using the points method.
2. A Kata shall be chosen from the following, based on those which have been established by the Technical Committee of the Head Office:  
Heian-shodan, Heian-nidan, Heian-sandan, Heian-yodan, Heian-godan, Tekki-shodan, Tekki-nidan, Tekki-sandan, Bassai-dai, Bassai-sho, Kanku-dai, Kanku-sho, Enpi, Jion, Jim, Chinte, Unsu, Meikyo, Wankan, Jitte, Gankaku, Hangetsu, Sochin, Nijyushiho, Gojyushiho-dai, Gojyushiho-sho.
3. A Kata match is classified into the following types:
  - 1) "Shitei-kata" consists of the demonstration of one of the following Kata, chosen by the referee: Heian-nidan, Heian-sandan, Heian-yodan, Heian-godan, Tekki-shodan.
  - 2) "Sentei-kata" consists of the demonstration of one of the following Kata, chosen by the referee: Bassai-dai, Kanku-dai, Enpi, Jion.
  - 3) "Tokui-kata" consists of the demonstration of one of the given Kata, freely chosen by a competitor.

### Article 34. Judges

- A Kata shiai shall be carried out with the following judges:
- 1) 1 referee
  - 2) 4 or 2 judges in the case of Kohaku hoshiki, 6 or 4 judges in the case of Tensu hoshiki.

### Article 35. Match judgement

1. Match judgement shall be based on the following criteria:
  - 1) Correctness of the order of the Kata, and correctness of the course of techniques.
  - 2) Presence of the 3 elements; strength, elasticity of body and speed control of techniques.
  - 3) Correctness of demonstrating lines and smoothness of foot movements.
  - 4) Use of a technique with understanding of its meaning.
  - 5) Good unity and good characterization of a technique.
  - 6) Correct aim at the target, correct method of breathing.
  - 7) Presence of power in basic techniques and its correct use.
  - 8) Presence of a strong spirit.
  - 9) Completeness of Kamae and Zanshin.

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- 10) Good manners and attitude.
  - 11) Feet and Hands in correct form.
  - 12) Correct grasp of objective.
  - 13) Absence of exaggerated movement.
  - 14) Absence of un-natural speed control.
  - 15) Good control and unification of the demonstration, in the case of a group match.
  - 16) Correct course for tsuki, uchi, keri and uke.
  - 17) Correct standing posture.
  - 18) No reduction of points even though competitor over passed outside of court in individual / group competitions.
2. Tensu hoshiki consists of marking a score based on a method of decreasing by 0.1 points from a maximum scale of 10 points. The points given by all the judges, including the referee, shall be totalled leaving out the maximum and minimum points given.

### Article 36. Loss of points and disqualification

The following cases shall cause disqualification:

- 1) Cases where a Kata was discontinued.
- 2) Cases where a competitor changed his declared kata or performed a kata other than the declared one.
- 3) Cases where a competitor makes speech or actions contrary to the karatedo spirit.
- 4) Cases when karate Rules are violated.

### Article 37. Additional match

1. In the case of a draw in a match based on the Kohaku hoshiki, the referee shall choose a different Kata by which the match shall be finalized.
2. In the case of a draw in a match based on the Tensu hoshiki, an additional match shall be held. In cases where the additional match cannot be finalized, a judgement shall be made by adding the lowest score of all the judging points. If it still cannot be finalized, a judgement shall be made by adding the highest score. Finally, another additional match may be held if the result is still a draw.
3. After two additional matches, the judges must decide the winner.
4. Kata performed in an additional match may be the same one as performed in the initial match. However, in the second additional match it has to be changed.

### Article 38. Match process

1. In the case of Shitei-kata, the referee shall notify to a competitor the name of a Kata specified at random by the referee himself out of all of the cards of specified Kata, and the competitor shall immediately begin his demonstration under the referee's order "Hajime" or his signal by whistle.
2. In the case of Tokui-kata, a competitor shall stand at a point appropriate for the completion of the Kata inside the court, declare loudly the name of the Kata to be carried out, and after the referee has repeated the name, the competitor shall begin his demonstration without any order or signal by the referee.
3. In the case of Sentei-kata, a demonstration shall be carried out on the basis of one of the above 2 processes. (Set by the tournament committee)
4. After the demonstration of Kata, the competitor shall return to his initial position and receive a

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judgement.

5. The referee may call the judges for deliberation or give his instruction to them in one of the following cases:
  - 1) In cases where it is evident that a competitor has committed a foul or an error.
  - 2) In cases where an injury or another accident has happened to a competitor.
  - 3) In cases where an arbitrator has given an instruction.
  - 4) In cases where a question has arisen about scoring
  - 5) In cases where a judge has indicated his opinion and the referee upholds it.
6. In cases where the judges disagree in deliberation, the referee shall rule on the basis of the majority.
7. A judge shall indicate his opinion by means of his whistle when he notices one of the above cases.
8. A score keeper shall record the name of Kata to be performed by a competitor on his score sheet.
9. In the case of a judgement by the Kohaku hoshiki, each judge shall indicate his decision by means of his flag, under the referee's signal by whistle. Judges may not put their flags down until the referee's next signal.
10. In the case of a judgement by the Tensu hoshiki, each judge shall lift up his score board in order to indicate his judgement points, under the referee's signal by whistle. Judges may not put their boards down until the referee's next signal.
11. One of the score keepers shall read loudly the points indicated by the judges, starting from the referee and proceeding clockwise. The other score keeper shall record them on his given score sheet in order to count the total points according to a given counting method.
12. One of the score keepers shall notify the total points to the referee, who shall repeat it.
13. A competitor may leave the court only after the judgement or notification of the score is made by the referee.

### Article 39. Match equipment

1. One whistle shall be held by the referee and each judge.
2. One pair of red and white flags shall be held by the referee.
3. One score board shall be held by referee and each judge.
4. Equipment for score keeping.
5. One set of cards for Shitei-kata and one set of cards for Sentei-kata shall be held by the referee.
6. A red or white belt shall be worn by each competitor at his waist to distinguish groups. The length and width shall be appropriate, so as not to obstruct and yet be easily distinguishable.

## Chapter 5. Supplementary Rules

### Article 40. Junior match

Rules for children shall be separately specified.

### Article 41. Revision of the Rules

Revision of the Rules requires the approval of the Technical Committee by a majority vote of the Board of Technical Directors.