



# Frequently Asked Questions

## ***How can karate help parents?***

Ryukyu Academy offers citizenship checklists during testing and graduations. The checklists must pass by teacher and parent approval before students can earn their next belt. This portion of testing encourages every martial artist to be at their best *outside* of the dojo in their everyday life with focus on respect, self discipline and perseverance.

## ***How long will it take to become proficient?***

That largely depends on the student, however after approximately 6 months participants should have a feel for the motions and start to really understand the concepts.

## ***How long will it take to become a black belt?***

In our school it will take approximately 3.5 years to become a black belt. There is no way to speed up that process. Martial artists have to successfully master a series of skills in many different areas that simply requires time, training and persistence. The black belt is the mastery of the basics. Time off and/or inconsistent attendance will lengthen the process (beyond 3.5 years) of obtaining a black belt.

## ***How often should I attend class?***

We recommend two days a week to ensure quality, consistent education and practice with a qualified instructor. Proper development in one's martial arts education can be accomplished in one day of training per week, however it will also require hard work and dedication.

## ***How often should I practice?***

Daily practice is a sure way to make sure what is learned turns into a foundation for more material. It doesn't have to be long everyday, 10 or 15 minutes can be ample for most people.

## ***Will my child want to fight?***

Absolutely not. We instill that martial arts are for SELF-DEFENSE only! They should not be used on friends, family, teachers, acquaintances, or ANYONE unless the student is in great peril. In fact, many students become calmer because they have an outlet for their energy.

## ***What age can kids begin learning?***

Our martial arts classes begin at age 4. The motions they go through develop coordination and balance and will be the foundation of their self-defense later in life.

## ***Is karate safe?***

We take steps to ensure that safety is a top priority. Karate training under qualified instructors with protective gear and equipment in a friendly manner ensures the safest environment.

## ***Why do people bow?***

Bowing in Japan was a sign of respect and a sanitary greeting. When you bow to a room when you have entered it shows respect for the room and it greets those in the room. Bowing into a dojo is also a sign of respect for what that place is used for and the art that is practiced there.

## ***How do I tie my belt?***

Starting with the center of the belt at your midline, circle the belt behind you and around each side to the front again. The right side will go over the top of the left behind you and continue around to meet in the front. The belt should make 2 loops around you at this point. From here the right side goes over the left and wraps around the left side and the center together. Pull tight and adjust so that the belt is even. Then, the current left side goes over the right side only and pulls tight. You should be able to fit your left pinky into a small hole left in the belt knot.





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## ***Why participate in weapons class?***

Weapons class builds a phenomenal amount of coordination, dexterity, and power. Doing weapons class adds an extra dimension to the martial art that will not only look cool, but will help your open hand martial arts become more proficient.

## ***Do you attend tournaments?***

Not at this time.

## ***What are the ranks/belts?***

We have a 15 belt system to the black. We have 10 ranks of black. Getting to the black belt is only the beginning, that's when you are a master of the basics and are able to start really learning!

## ***When is testing?***

Belt testing is in class during the 2 weeks prior to belt graduation. Regardless of if it is mentioned by the instructor in class.

## ***When is belt graduation?***

Belt graduations are scheduled on a regular basis approximately every 10 weeks. The schedule will be posted online at [www.StarsandStripesKids.com](http://www.StarsandStripesKids.com).

## ***What is the testing based on?***

Testing is based on everything you have ever learned in Ryukyu Academy! Testing is primarily based off of the following:

- Attendance, 2 days per week recommended but not required, and time spent overall
- Effort for student, 100%... 100% of the time
- Discipline, students must respect others at home and at school
- Students are responsible for bringing their own equipment to class
- Focus, students must pay attention and not disrupt class
- Knowledge, students must be proficient for their rank
- Attire, students must wear the academy gi and patches to all classes

## ***Are there costs for belt graduation?***

Yes. The cost for belt graduations is \$25; this cost includes the student's new belt, a board to break and a certificate.

## ***When am I ready to test?***

Participants are ready to test when the instructor says they are ready to test. Very rarely will we have a student who is not ready to test. In the case of this happening an instructor will let participants know ahead of time. It is important to respect the instructors decisions on testing. For one to proclaim they are ready to test, shows disrespect toward their instructor.

## ***Are there belief systems in martial arts?***

There are belief systems in a few martial arts, but there need not be. We here at Ryukyu Academy strive to teach serious traditional martial arts, no more no less.

## ***Who do I go to if I have a question, comment, or concern?***

Stars & Stripes staff members have their own e-mail address in order to communicate with parents. You may locate a specific e-mail address on the "meet the staff" page on our website [www.StarsandStripesKids.com](http://www.StarsandStripesKids.com). Our Stars & Stripes Business Office is also able to send any communication to your child's instructor via e-mail for you. If you have **questions regarding payment and general administration** you can speak to any of our office staff at the Stars & Stripes Business Office. We can be reached by e-mail at [clarkston@StarsandStripesKids.com](mailto:clarkston@StarsandStripesKids.com) or by phone at (248)625-3547. Please avoid speaking to instructors while they are teaching or after class about billing, account questions, and class times as they are not able to readily access the data needed to answer your questions. Our Stars & Stripes Business Office will be happy to help.

(248)625-3547

[www.StarsandStripesKids.com](http://www.StarsandStripesKids.com)



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# Frequently Asked Questions

***My sensei is better than your sensei!***

Of course he is! He's MY sensei!

No sensei is better than any other sensei. The style and methods in which they teach are different. Some methods would be better suited to your needs as a student, some would not. The trick is finding a good instructor that works for you and how you need to learn. If you don't like the personality of the instructor then you will probably have a hard time learning from them. Find a nice, friendly, understanding instructor who's teaching style matches the best ways you learn.

***My school is better than your school!***

Of course as well!

Schools are composed of many different elements: instructors, students, training area, business, and community. You have to find a school that best fits your needs and wants. Again there is no ultimate school or everyone would be there!

***What can I do to help my child stay motivated to get their black belt?***

The chief instructors are always available to give motivation and guidance when students lose sight of the big picture.

