

Black Bear **Traditional** *Martial Arts Center*



Student Handbook 2023

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Table of Contents:

[Dojo Guidelines](#)

[About Your Instructors](#)

[Spear Sensei's Instructors](#)

[Shorin-Ryu History](#)

[Sparring Rules](#)

[Vocabulary](#)

[What is Kata?](#)

[Program Change and
Testing Policies](#)

[Shorin-Ryu Belt System](#)

[Bowling](#)

[Guidelines for Partner
Training](#)

[Academic Achievement
Awards](#)

[Emergency Information](#)

We are pleased to have the opportunity to introduce the martial arts of **Shorin Ryu Reiho-Kan Karate-Do**.

As you may know, karate is an effective method of physical training, and is an invigorating form of mental exercise as well. People learn karate for many reasons. Some of the reasons are:

- ❖ Self-confidence
- ❖ To condition oneself mentally and physically
- ❖ To learn a means of self-defense in our sometimes-hostile world.

Karate appears to be the perfect exercise, not only for the body, but to impact the qualities of inner mental strength, to develop a sense of justice, and foster leadership, which is needed to advance in our society.

Karate is an **ART** that implies a way of thinking and promotes a lifestyle which instills a moralizing influence and generates the power for justice.

Karate teaches tenacity and concentration, and it is also conducive for relieving the tensions and the pressures of life. A session of training can refresh the student and help calm and clear the mind - permitting the student to, once again, focus his energies completely on his work or studies.

These are only a few primary reasons why karate should be taught to the young and the young at heart. Karate can help curb tempers and instill a sense of order, discipline, generosity, courage, and humility.

Dojo Guidelines

[Back to Top](#)

Since you are now a karate student and have acquired a new discipline, you should know that there are a few guidelines that will make it easier for you to study karate in a traditional manner.

- Karate practitioners will always behave as ladies and gentlemen.
- All members should strictly adhere to and observe the Student Creed.
- Once you are a member, remember to always address the head instructor as SENSEI.
- Higher belts should always aid lower belts, especially beginners on the path. Lower belts should, and will, follow the instructions of all higher belts.
- ***Junior students should not question senior students on the mat at any time. If a student has a question about material presented in class, the proper etiquette requires the student politely approach the instructor after class. If the information given is unsatisfactory, questions may be brought to Spear Sensei's attention.***
- In karate, your word is your bond. Your integrity is an important part of your training. DON'T BREAK YOUR WORD!!
- Keep in mind that you are one of many. Be neat. Have deep pride in your Dojo and show it by cleaning up after yourself.
- Personal cleanliness is essential. Nails must be clipped, deodorant must be worn, and hair must not interfere with your training.
- No alcohol or drug use before class EVER, and no gum or smoking inside the Dojo.
- No loud talking or profanity is permitted. Remember the Dojo is a place of study.
- Please remember to always remove your shoes when entering the training area. This goes for parents, as well as students.
- Always remember to bow when entering and leaving the training floor. Children (Lion's and Tiger's) are not authorized entrance to the dojo training floor without a senior black belt.
- To prevent disruption, all students are to stay out of the office area--unless invited in.
- All tuition payments should be made in a timely manner. If for some reason they cannot be paid, make the necessary arrangements with one of the staff.
- Please remember to be on time for every class. Should you be late, be sure to observe proper etiquette by not walking into class, but by kneeling at the back of the training floor until formally admitted to the class by the instructor.
- Make sure all your equipment, including your bag, is clearly marked with your name. We are not responsible for any articles lost, stolen, or left in the Dojo after class.
- During class, or while sparring, should your uniform become disheveled, etiquette requires that you turn away from the Shomen and Sensei, and repair your uniform.
- Uniforms are to be kept clean with regular washing and repair of any rips or tears when necessary. Pants should be hemmed to a proper length--not rolled up--for safety reasons.
- ***Parents and siblings should be QUIET while classes are in session. Our younger students are easily distracted, and you are paying for them to learn!***
- Never ask to be tested or to learn a new kata--it is a sign of disrespect.
- When sitting on the Dojo training floor, students are to sit in the proper position--legs crossed or kneeling, and in a respectful manner. Never lean against the walls.

- No one is permitted to leave the training floor without permission. If you must leave early check with your Sensei first.
- Weapons are not toys; they are a part of your serious karate training and should be treated as such.
- All jewelry, watches, etc., are to be removed (preferably left at home) before you start your class.
- Sparring is any form of aggressive physical contact and is not permitted without a Sr. Black Belt present to supervise. Challenging a Black Belt to spar is disrespectful. Don't do it!
- Don't waste the time of the instructors, other students, or your own!! If you are not at the Dojo to train seriously...GO HOME!!
- Never train if you are ill. We do not want to spread any germs.
- Please be punctual in dropping off and picking up students. Let us know A.S.A.P. of any emergency situations or specific time needs.
- If a student is going to be absent for a prolonged period, due to illness, vacation, or any other circumstance, please be courteous and inform us verbally, through e-mail or a voicemail.
- Parents, please check the white board, website, and newsletters for announcements regularly. These are our principal ways of communication. The children do not always remember what has been announced in class.
- Remember the importance of a regular training schedule of at least twice a week and the importance of practicing at home.
- When lining up for class, the highest-ranking student will be to the right, with the longest-in-rank of the same color to the right. If both have the same time-in-rank, then the oldest lines up on the right. Sensei reserves the right to change the line order.
- **If any questions or concerns arise, it is always best to "go to the source" rather than be upset or "gossip" with other parents or students. We will do our best to address any problems and explain our policies.**

The goal of all Black Bear Dojo instructors is to provide a positive training experience every time a student enters the dojo. All Black Bear Dojo students are expected to observe acceptable standards of behavior both inside and outside of the dojo. Misconduct of students, including offsite, may lead to a permanent dismissal. This policy is a detailed description of the actions that will be taken to enforce the Training Agreement Terms and Conditions signed by all parents/legal guardians of minors participating in dojo activities.

THREE STRIKE POLICY (Children under the age of 13)

STRIKE ONE: The misconduct of the minor participant will be identified and brought to the attention of the student. Through an informal process positive feedback as well as intervention techniques will be provided to prevent future misconduct. This action will be taken to ensure compliance with all dojo standards, rules, and etiquette.

STRIKE TWO: The above actions will be combined with a 2-minute dismissal from the training floor. The legal guardian/parent(s) will be informed of the misconduct and their assistance will be sought to reinforce dojo standards, rules and etiquette.

STRIKE THREE: The student will be dismissed from the training floor for the remainder of the class. Continued misconduct may lead to a permanent dismissal from Black Bear Dojo.

THREE STRIKE POLICY
(Teenage & Adult Students 13 & up)

STRIKE ONE: The misconduct of the participant will be identified and brought to the attention of the student. Through an informal process positive feedback as well as intervention techniques will be provided to prevent future misconduct. This action will be taken to ensure compliance with all dojo standards, rules, and etiquette.

STRIKE TWO: The above actions will be combined with a temporary dismissal from the training floor.

STRIKE THREE: The student will be dismissed from the training floor for the remainder of the class. Continued misconduct may lead to a permanent dismissal from Black Bear Dojo.

The aim of this policy is to convey the importance of dojo etiquette as well as continually working to reinforce the responsibility of one's own actions. As always, Black Bear Dojo will consider each student's needs and capabilities. Together we will instill a sense of order, discipline, generosity, courage and humility in every Black Bear Dojo student.

Instructors reserve the right to refuse or revoke admittance or membership to anyone who fails to abide by these rules.

About Your Instructors

[Back to Top](#)

Mark Spear (Dojo Cho) ~

I have been practicing Okinawan Traditional Martial Arts and Classical Japanese Arts for over 43 years. I am a direct student of Nanoubu Ahagon, Hanshi Judan of the Reihokan Association, Okinawa, Japan. I am currently a member of the following organizations:

*Okinawan Shorin Ryu Reihokan Association

*All Japanese Budo Federation Nippon Seibukan Dojo/USA Branch

*Dai Nippon Butoku Kai/International Division/New England Branch

I have studied the following disciplines during my extensive martial arts career:

*Japanese Judo during the mid 70's,

*Pai Lum Kung Fu during the late 70's & early 80's,

*ITF Tae Kwon Do, 80's & early 90's

*Goju Ryu, as well as many sub systems of Shorin Ryu.

After holding teaching positions in the various dojo in which I trained, I was asked to open a traditional Dojo in the CT area. I started writing and planning the current curriculum for a dojo

with a focus on being a traditional Okinawan training hall. In the spring of 2008, a suitable location was found, and Black Bear Traditional Martial Arts Center was opened. Drawing from 43 years of experience, having been exposed to the world's finest Shorin Ryu seniors and instructors, and 31 years of teaching experience, I am currently approached to teach seminars, private lessons and create self-defense programs for public and private entities.

I am one of two senior instructors in the Reihokan Association and has been given the authority to advance and promote students under the name of Ahagon Hanshi. I serve as the lead representative in the State of Connecticut for the DNBK, Japan's oldest and most prestigious martial arts organization under Japan's Ministry of Education. I have instructed for The United States Navy, State of Connecticut, State of Rhode Island, and numerous private agencies. I am currently certified as a instructor with the following associations:

- *American Red Cross
- *American Women's Self Defense Association
- *National Rifle Association
- *Rape Aggression Defense
- *The Town of Westerly, RI

I travel to Okinawa annually to train with my teacher as well as attending numerous high-level instructor seminars with other Okinawan instructors. I have 3 amazing daughters, who were actively involved in the dojo every day making Black Bear a true family business.

Spear Sensei holds the following grades:

- Nanadan (7th Dan), Shihan, Kyoshi - Shorin-Ryu Reihokan Karate-do
- Nanadan (7th Dan), Shihan, Kyoshi - Karate-do (Dai Nippon Butoku Kai)
- Nanadan (7th Dan), Kyoshi - Shorin-Ryu Shorinkai Karate-do (Robert Herten Sensei USA)
- Rokyudan (6th Dan), Shihan, Renshi Shorin-Ryu Reihokan Kobudo
- Godan (5th Dan), Renshi - Karate-do, Zen Nippon Bugei Renmei
- Yondan (4th Dan) - Shorin-Ryu Shorinkan Karate-do
- Yondan (4th Dan) - Shorin-Ryu Shidokan Karate-do

Erin L. Spear ~

Erin L. Kahn grew up in southern Delaware with a passion for horses. At the age of 9 her father gave her the gift of riding lessons from a local instructor. She started teaching horseback riding to young students around the age of 15. While attending the University of Delaware she taught children riding as a part-time job. After graduating from college in 1999, with a degree in Anthropology and History, Erin moved to Connecticut with the hopes of working as an Anthropologist at the Pequot Museum in Ledyard. Unable to secure a job at the museum, Erin took a position as an assistant manager at a local pet store, where she spent many years working with the public on animal care and maintenance. During her time at the pet store Erin had 2 children, Benjamin, and Emily. After having both children Erin took a job as a preschool teacher and eventually started working for 4-H at the University of Connecticut teaching elementary school students in local schools.

When Ben was 6 years old, he asked to start karate. Thinking it would be good for his self-confidence Erin enrolled him at Black Bear Dojo, just a few miles up the road from her house.

Having tried karate as a child and wanting to give it a second chance, Erin decided to become a student as well. Erin has now been practicing Reihokan Shorin-Ryu karate for almost 6 years.

Erin has been teaching at Black Bear Dojo since 2013 when she received her Shodan in karatedo. Having an extensive background, especially in teaching children, Erin has become the primary teacher for both children's classes, Tigers, and Lions, and is assistant teacher with the STORM and Adults classes. She is also the assistant teacher in Kobudo. Erin continues to support her training both in the dojo as a student and participating in seminars around the world. Most recently she was asked to demonstrate with Spear Sensei in the famous Okinawan Budokan in Naha and was part of the Guinness Book of World Records Karate Kata Event. She has visited Okinawa 10 times to train with Hanshi Naonobu Ahagon. Erin is one of the few students that has been tested in Okinawa in front of Ahagon Hanshi.

Erin thoroughly enjoys the Okinawan culture and people. Her love for history has carried over to studying Okinawa and the history of martial arts.

Erin is currently certified with the following associations:

- *Yondan (4th Dan) Shorin-Ryu Reihokan Karate-do
- *Sandan (3rd Dan) Dai Nippon Butoku Kai
- *Sandan (3rd Dan) Shorin-Ryu Reihokan Kobudo
- *American Red Cross
- *Rape Aggression Defense Instructor

Theresa M. Spear ~

Theresa started training in 2003. She was one of the original students at the Okinawan Karate Institute. She was 3 years old when she stepped on the mat to practice the art of Shorin-Ryu karate. She was inspired after watching her sisters train for years, both earning black belts. Since then, she has been actively training for 14 years. Theresa currently has grading in three different associations. Theresa has traveled extensively training with several world-renowned master instructors. She also has numerous traditional Okinawan tournament championships in Fighting as well as Forms and in Weapons.

Theresa has earned 3rd degree black belt in karate and a 2nd degree black belt in kobudo. She has travelled and trained in Okinawa Japan a total of 3 times.

Sandan (3rd Dan) Shorin-Ryu Reihokan Karate-do
Nidan (2nd Dan) Shorin-Ryu Reihokan Kobudo
Shodan (1st Dan) Dai Nippon Butoku Kai Karate-do
Jundan (Jr. Black Belt) Shidokan Karate-do
American Red Cross CPR, FIRST AID, & AED Certified.

Spear Sensei's Instructor

[Back to Top](#)

NAONOBU AHAGON, SENSEI ~

Naonobu Ahagon Sensei was born February 11, 1940 in Kumogi, Naha City Okinawa. Born with a small physical frame and a fragile spirit he wanted to become a strongman (TSUYOSHI). From that motivation at the age of 17 yrs he initiated the study of Karate at a dojo in Nakishi-Cho, City of Naha with Chiosin Chibana O'sensei. After creating a stronger spirit in Karate and becoming very strong he was well known for his great speed, power and intelligence. At the same dojo there were higher ranking students such as Katsuya, Miyahira, Shugoro Nakazato and others who served as shihan and sempai who helped instill all teaching of Karate and discipline, especially the first two named above (Shihan-Dai). After 4yrs of training in the Nakishi-dojō, Chibana, sensei moved to Shuri-tori Hori-Cho, which became the new dojo. Due to the distance for Ahagon, he began to study at Shugoro Nakazato Sensei's dojo in Asa, same city in Naha.

Chibana Sensei delegated responsibility to Miyahira and Nakazato. By then Shugoro Nakazato had Kobudo training and Naonobu Ahagon incorporated Kobudo as part of his training to better his base in Karate-do. This was in May, of 1961 after the passing of Chiosin Chibana Sensei Katsuya Miyahira Sensei automatically became in charge of all students (SHEITOS) at the school of KOBAYASHI-RYU. From August 1970 and September 1974 Ahagon Sensei received promotions to Go-dan and Roku-dan along with the title of Shihan-dai from his instructors Miyahira and Nakazato. During the month of October 1974 Ahagon Sensei starts his new dojo and begins to share his training and knowledge in Karate-do. In April of 1977 Ahagon Sensei was promoted to Go-dan in Kobudo by Shugoro Nakazato. In June 1981 he was chosen (SHUSHIN) arbitrator for the Okinawa Karate-do kumite championship 2nd annual Okinawan Karate Kobudo Kumite Championship.

In September 1981 he received a promotion to Nana-dan (7th) from Shugoro Nakazato Sensei and the title of Kyoshi from The Okinawan Shorin-ryu Shorinkan Kyokai. The following year (1982), he received another promotion to Roku-dan (6th) from the same organization and the title of Shihan-Dai, instructor in Kobudo. In 1984 Ahagon Sensei organizes Karate, Kobudo Tournament for his 10th anniversary of the establishment of his dojo. In 1985 he received a promotion to Nana-dan (7th) and the title of Kyoshi in kobudo. During 1987 he was the arbitrator in the 3rd annual Okinawan Karate Kobudo Kumite Championship. April of 1989 Shugoro Nakazato Sensei promotes Ahagon Sensei to the rank of Hachi-dan (8th) Kyoshi in Karate and Kobudo. July of 1991 he officially establishes the organization REIHOKAN-KYOKAI in KOBAYASHI-RYU shorin-ryu karate-do and establishes himself as director (Dankyu-Incho) and main Chief of the organization (Shinza-Incho) a title that permits him to sign, award and oversee all kyu ranks and dan ranks to instructors. In August of 1993 he attended a Golden Masters Tournament (In Pasadena, CA U.S.A.) in exhibition of traditional techniques of Karate from Okinawa. He was also named as a model example (Mohan-Embu). He also participated in a brilliant Karate, Kobudo demonstration. In February 1994 the Okinawa Kokusai Budo Karate Renmei, granted him the superior rank of Ku-dan (9th) in Kobayashi-ryu Karate-do and the title Hanshi, also the rank of Kudan (9th) Hanshi in Kobudo.

In September of the same year the organization Okinawa-Ken pre-world Okinawan Karate, Kobudo championship (Sekai-Taikai). Ahagon Sensei was named special member of the organization (Senmon-Inkai) they awarded him the title of director of all (Shinpan-Shoku) arbitrators, judges and assistants.

In April of 1995 Kobayashi Shorin-Ryu Reihokan Kyokai celebrated the 20th anniversary of the establishment of Ahagon Sensei's dojo with a tournament and exhibition in Karate, Kobudo demonstration (Embu-Taikai) In October of 1996 a commemorative 100th anniversary of Okinawan immigrants in California, Taikokan (College of Hito Sacramento) were Naonobu Ahagon Sensei gave a outstanding exhibition of manifest, previously more than 30 participants turned out in his seminar in the same place. In May 1997 there was a sports center for kids and students exchange tournament in Naha City, Ahagon Sensei was chief & director (Shinpan-Cho) of tournament. In August of 1997 the Okinawan province organizes a world tournament of Karate, Kobudo in (Kenristu-Budokan) kata, kobudo, and kumite in Naha City Okinawa.

He was a tournament official and carrying out duties as (Shinpan). In February of 1999 from the same organization for kids and students Taikai-Koryu he was (Shinpan-Cho) chief of arbitrators and judges. In August of 1999 the 1st Dekai-Takia Okinawa traditional Karate, Kobudo world championship tournament, he was chief of control and planification. In August of 1999 the Kokusai Budo Karate Renmei is chief and director of all Okinawa Karate-do lineages, Shorin-ryu-, Goju-ryu, and Uechi-ryu. In the union of Karate-do & Kobudo in the City of Naha, he is vice-president currently under all styles of Karate, Shorin-ryu, and Uechi-ryu. He is also a member of the board in Okinawa province Karate-do union.

Shorin-Ryu History

[Back to Top](#)

Karate dates to the sixth century when Bodhidharma's (Daruma), born in India, travels took him to China where he settled at a Shao-lin (Shorin in Japanese) Monastery. The introduction of ch'uan-fa ("fist way") occurred in the late 1300's with the expansion of trade and cultural exchanges between Okinawa and China. Evidence suggests that te ("hands"), in fact, was indigenous to Okinawa, (the birthplace of Karate), developing in the villages of Shuri, Naha and Tomari. Thus, begins the lineage of Shorin-Ryu Kobayashi Karate from the Okinawan Shuri-te system. Takahara Pechin was revered as a great warrior and is attributed to have been the first to explain the aspects or principles of the do ("way"). Pechin was a social class of the Ryukyu Kingdom.

These principals are: 1) ijo, the way-compassion, humility, and love. 2) Katsu, the laws-complete understanding of all techniques and forms of karate, and 3) fo dedication-the seriousness of karate that must be understood not only in practice, but in actual combat. The collective translation is: "One's duty to himself and his fellow man." He was the first teacher of Sakukawa "Tode" Kanga who was too become known as the "father of Okinawan karate."

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Kusanku, also known by Kwang Shang Fu, or Kosokun was a Chinese martial artist who lived during the 1700s. He is credited as having an influence on virtually all karate-derived martial arts.

Kusanku learned the art of Ch'uan Fa in China from a Shaolin monk. Around 1756, Kusanku was sent to Okinawa as an ambassador of the Ming Dynasty. He resided in the village of Kanemura, near Naha City. During his stay in Okinawa, Kusanku instructed Satunuku Sakugawa.

Sakugawa trained under Kusanku for six years. After Kusanku's death (around 1762), Sakugawa developed and named the Kusanku kata in honor of his teacher. Satunuku Kanga Sakukawa (1782 - 1838 or 1862) was an Okinawan martial artist who played a major role in the development of Te, the precursor to modern Karate. In 1750, Sakukawa (or Sakugawa) began his training as a student of an Okinawan monk, Peichin Takahara. After six years of training, Takahara suggested that Sakukawa train under Kusanku, a Chinese master in Ch'uan Fa. Sakukawa spent six years training with Kusanku and began to spread what he learned to Okinawa in 1762. Sakukawa's most famous student, Sokon Matsumura, went on to create the Shorin-ryu style of karate.

Sokon Matsumura (1809 - 1899) was one of the well-known original karateka of Okinawa. He studied Chuan Fa (Kempo in Japanese) in China as well as other martial arts and brought what he learned back to Okinawa, where he taught a select few students and became a well-known master. He was appointed instructor and bodyguard to the king of the Ryukyu Islands. After Japan assumed full control of Okinawa 40 years later, however, Matsumura Sensei moved to Tokyo and taught and developed karate for the rest of his life.

Matsumura was recruited into the service of the Sho family (the royal family of Okinawa) and eventually became the chief martial arts instructor and bodyguard for the Okinawan King. At some point in his career, c. 1830, he went to China and studied the Shaolin style (Shorin-ryu) of Chinese Kempo (fist method) and weaponry. It is also known that he traveled to Foochow in Fukien (Fujian) Province, China on numerous occasions as an envoy for the Okinawan King, as China was co-ruler of Okinawa along with Japan. After his return from China, he organized and refined the Shorin-ryu system of Okinawan Karate (known simply as Te).

Matsumura is credited with passing on the kata or formal exercises of Shorin-ryu Kempo-karate known as Naihanchi I & II, Passai Dai, Seisan, Chinto, Gojushiho (fifty-four steps of the Black Tiger), Kusanku (the embodiment of Kusanku's teaching as passed on to Tode Sakugawa) and Hakutsuru (White Crane). The Hakutsuru kata contains the elements of the White Crane system taught within the Shaolin system of Chinese Kempo. Another set of kata, known as Chanan in Matsumura's time, is said to have been devised by Matsumura himself and was the basis for Pinan I and II. Matsumura's Ryu has endured to the present day and the above-mentioned kata are the core of Shorin-ryu Karate today.



Matsumura was given the title "Bushi" meaning "warrior" by the Okinawan King in recognition of his abilities and accomplishments in the martial arts. In fact, Matsumura fought many times and was never defeated. His martial arts endeavors have been the progenitor of many contemporary karate styles: Shorin-ryu, Shotokan, and Shito-ryu, for example. Ultimately, all modern styles of karate that evolved from the Shuri-te lineage can be traced back to the teachings of Bushi Matsumura.

While Itosu did not invent karate himself, he codified the kata (forms) learned from his master, Matsumura, and taught many karate masters. Itosu's students included Choyu Motobu (1857–1927), Choki Motobu (1870–1944), Kentsu Yabu (1866–1937), Chomo Hanashiro (1869–1945), Gichin Funakoshi (1868–1957), Moden Yabiku (1880–1941), Kanken Toyama (1888–1966), Chotoku Kyan (1870–1945), Shinpan Shiroma (Gusukuma) (1890–1954), Anbun Tokuda (1886–1945), Kenwa Mabuni (1887–1952), and Choshin Chibana (1885–1969).

Anko Itosu was born in 1831 and died in 1915. Itosu was small in stature, shy, and introverted as a child. He was raised in a strict home of the keimochi (a family of position) and was educated in the Chinese classics and calligraphy. Itosu began his tode (karate) study under Nagahama Chikudon Peichin. His study of art led him to Sokon Matsumura. Part of Itosu's training was makiwara practice. He once tied a leather sandal to a stone wall in an effort to build a better makiwara. After several strikes, the stone fell from the wall. After relocating the sandal several times, Itosu had destroyed the wall.

Itosu served as a secretary to the last king of the Ryukyu Islands until Japan abolished the Okinawa-based native monarchy in 1879. In 1901, he was instrumental in getting karate introduced into Okinawa's schools. In 1905, Itosu was a part-time teacher of To-te at Okinawa's First Junior Prefectural High School. It was here that he developed the systematic method of teaching karate techniques that are still in practice today. He created and introduced the Pinan forms (Heian in Japanese, Pyung Ahn in Korean) as learning steps for students, because he felt the other forms (kata in Japanese, hyung in Korean) were too difficult for schoolchildren to learn. The five Pinan forms were created by drawing from two older forms: kusanku (Korean: kong sang koon) and chiang nan (Korean: jae nam) Itosu is also credited with taking the large Naihanchi form (tekki in Japan) and breaking it into the three well-known modern forms Naihanchi Shodan, Naihanchi Nidan, and Naihanchi Sandan. In 1908, Itosu wrote the influential "Ten Precepts (Tode Jukun) of Karate," reaching beyond Okinawa to Japan. Itosu's style of karate came to be known as Itosu-ryu in recognition of his skill, mastery, and role as teacher to many.



After the death of Anko Itosu in 1915, one of Itosu's most senior students, Choshin Chibana, wanted to continue to teach the Shorin-ryu style of karate he learned from his instructor. Chibana named his system Shorin-ryu but using the Chinese characters for "small" and "forest". Chibana lineage schools are commonly referred to as "kobayashi", but this is technically incorrect, as Chibana never used this term to refer to his karate. It was meant to be "Shorin" as tribute to the Shaolin Temple. (Shorin is the Japanese and Okinawan pronunciation of Shaolin). However, he believed strongly that Shorin-ryu was largely Okinawan and purposely modified the first character from the Chinese "Shao/Sho" so it would retain its originality. As other schools later adopted the name

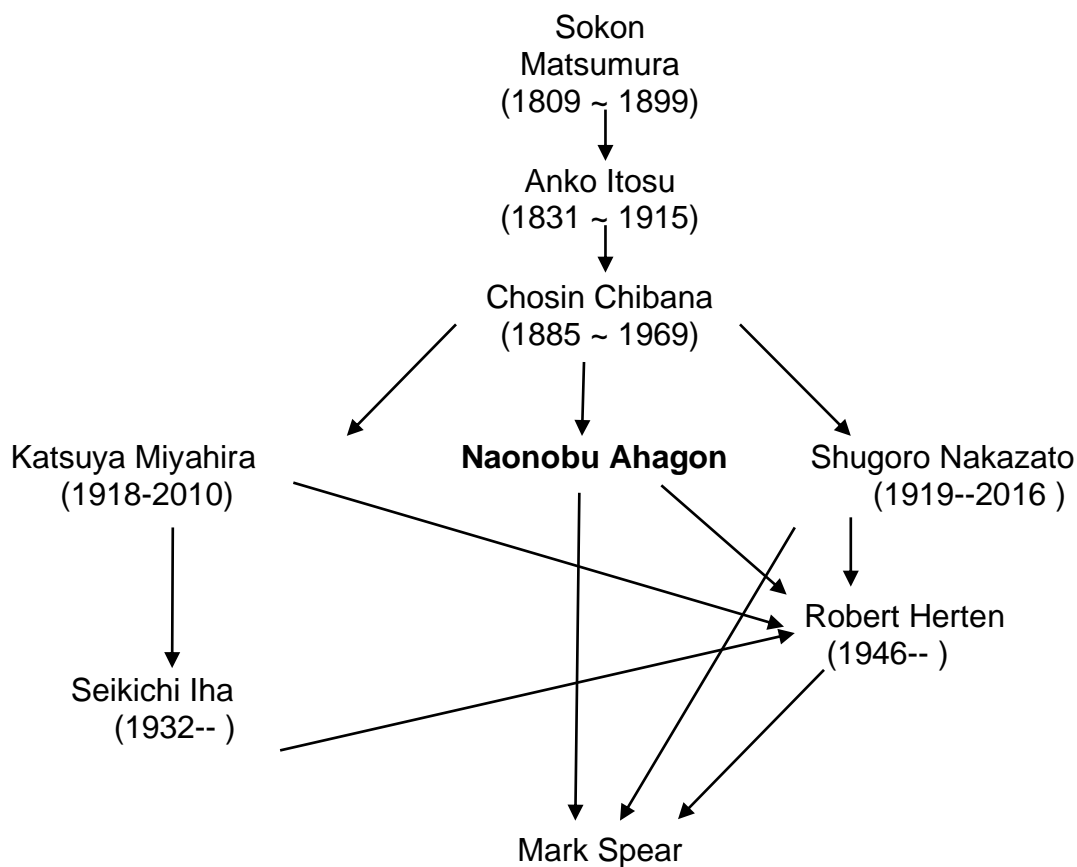
"Shorin-ryu," the term "kobayashi" was probably added to describe which exact characters were used to write the term "Shorin," but was never meant to be the official name of the style.

In 1920, Chibana opened his first dojo in Torihori. Spellings such as "Tottoribori" or "Tottori-cho" are erroneous and incorrect. The old name of Torihori was Tunjumui, so it is unknown where these erroneous names came from. He later taught in places such as Gibo, Yamakawa, Naha, Kumoji and Asato, with the main Chibana dojo being in Yamakawa.

Chibana taught this style of Shorin-ryu until his death in 1969. Each of his top students went on to teach his own branch of Shorin-ryu: Nakama Chozo created Shubokan, Yuchoku

Higa created Kyudokan, Katsuya Miyahira created Shido-kan, Shugoro Nakazato created Shorinkan, Naonobu Ahagon created Reihokan.

GENEALOGY OF TEACHERS



Current instructors are in bold.

Sparring Rules

[Back to Top](#)

(Applicable to ALL styles)

1. Proper sparring gear must be worn at all times:
Headgear with shield
Mouthpiece
Gloves
Protective cup for males
Shin-instep pads
Footgear
Chest protector
2. Proper respect and courtesy must be shown to the Sensei and sparring partner always.
3. **NO** contact is permitted to the face, neck, back, or groin.
4. Light contact to the body and head is permitted.
5. No sparring is permitted unless supervised by a Sr. Black Belt.
6. We always practice the following.
MODESTY SELF-CONTROL
COURTESY PERSEVERANCE
INTEGRITY INDOMITABLE SPIRIT

Vocabulary

[Back to Top](#)

Focus.....Kime	One who has come before.... Sensei	One(1).....Ichi
School.....Dojo	Please Teach Me.. Onegai Shimasu	Two(2).....Ni
Uniform.....Gi	Right.....Migi	Three(3).....San
Bow.....Rei	Left.....Hidari	Four(4).....Shi/Yon
Forms.....Kata	Turn.....Ma-wa-te	Five(5).....Go
Begin.....Hajime	One More Time... . Mo-ichi-do	Six(6).....Roku
Stop.....Yame	Concentration.....Zan-chin	Seven(7).....Shichi/Nana
Spirit Yell.....Kiai	Meditation.....Mokuso	Eight(8)..... Hachi
Okay, Yes.....Hai	Thank You.....Domo Arigato	Nine(9)..... Ku
Line Up.....Narande	Attention.....Kyo-tse-kei	Ten (10).....Ju

STANCES

1. HEISOKU-DACHI: feet together: | |
2. MUSUBI-DACHI: heels together, toes out: ^
3. HEIKO-DACHI: toes in: \ /
4. HACHIJI-DACHI: toes out: / \
5. NAHANCHIN-DACHI: toes forward, shoulder width apart: | |
6. SHIKO-DACHI: toes out, deep stance: / \
7. KIBA-DACHI: toes forward, deep stance: | |
8. ZENKUTSU-DACHI: forward faced fighting stance (front knee bent): \ |
9. KOKUTSU-DACHI: back faced fighting stance (both knees bent): _ |
10. NEKOASHI-DACHI: cat stance (front foot, toes only) knees bent: _ |
11. SHIZENTAI-DACHI: natural stance: _ |

Shorin Ryu Basics

High Block.....Jodan Uke	Front Kick.....Mae-Geri	Reverse Punch...Gyaku-Tsuki
Outside Middle Block..Chudan-Soto-Uke	Side Kick.....Yoko-Geri	Back Fist.....Uriken
Inside Middle Block.....Chudan-Uchi-Uke	Back Kick.....Ushiro-Geri	Knife-Hand.....Shuto
Low Block.....Gedan-Barai	Roundhouse Kick...Mawashi-Geri	Palm Heel.....Shotai
Double Block.....Kosa-Uke	Knee Strike.....Hiza-Geri	Upper Cut.....Ura-Tsuki

What is Kata?

[Back to Top](#)

A kata is a series of fighting movements combining breathing, striking, and defensive techniques to suit innumerable situations. These fighting movements are manifested in the form of choreography, which allows the student to fully express speed, strength, technique, and beauty. Each kata has a particular rhythmical sequence (without which it would be mere movement) and is designed for the imaginary fighting of several opponents.

Katas are the essence of Karate and combine rhythmical movement, breathing, and peak awareness. When one begins to understand them, one glimpses a new world of untold internal riches. The study of kata leads to complete control of all parts of the body. Kata teaches technique, balance, power, accuracy of technique, speed, awareness, and concentration. It helps to develop self-discipline, stamina, tenacity, and fighting spirit. It teaches the martial artist the proper state of mind to respond to an attack with proper technique and spirit.

We practice kata from the following families: Kihon, Fyukyu, Pinan, Naihanchin, Passai & Kusanku, in addition to Chinto and Gojushiho.

Program Change and Testing Policies

[Back to Top](#)

Students will be promoted to the appropriate belt/grade at the very next belt test considering they have met all the necessary curriculum requirements for that belt. It will take the student a minimum of 4 months to advance to the next **belt** rank.

- Students will be required to make a class change from Tigers to Lions upon the month of their 5th birthday.
- Students will be required to make a class change from Lions to STORM upon the month of their 7th birthday.
- Students will be required to make a class change from STORM to DREAM upon the month of their 9th birthday.
- Students will be required to make a class change from DREAM to Adults upon the month of their 13th birthday.

Jr. Black Belt Policy

Students moving through the Tigers, Lions, STORM, and DREAM programs will be tested for Junior Black Belt. After a minimum of 1 year and additional requirements, students are then nominated to take a test for the rank of Jundan.

Jundan Policy

Reihokan Shorin-Ryu does not allow students under the age of 16 to wear the rank of Shodan (adult level 1st degree black belt). After a minimum of 1 year at the rank of junior black belt, students between the ages of 11 and 15 are considered for the rank of Jundan (Transitional Black Belt).

**Extraordinary students between the ages of 15 and 16 may be given special consideration for Shodan. This is determined by Spear Sensei and Ahagon Sensei on a case-by-case basis.

Adult Black Belt and Dan Level Requirements

Shodan: A student must have a minimum of 4 years in training to achieve a Shodan, 1st Degree Black Belt. Students must also be no younger than 16. **Extraordinary students between the ages of 15 and 16 may be given special consideration for Shodan. This is determined by Spear Sensei and Ahagon Sensei on a case-by-case basis.

Nidan: Students attaining a Nidan, 2nd Degree Black Belt must have a minimum of 2 years in grade as a Shodan before becoming eligible for Nidan. Students must be versed in all areas of their Karate training, i.e.: Kata, Yakusoku, and Kumite relative to the curriculum to be eligible. High school aged students are limited to this rank until the last quarter of their senior year.

Sandan: Students attaining a Sandan, 3rd Degree Black Belt must have a minimum of 3 years in grade as a Nidan before becoming eligible for Sandan. Students must be well versed in all areas of their Karate training, i.e.: Kata, Yakusoku, and Kumite relative to the curriculum to be eligible. The minimum age for Yondan is 25 years old.

Yondan: Students attaining a Yondan, 4th Degree Black Belt must have a minimum of 4 years in grade as a Sandan before becoming eligible for Yondan. Students must test in front of Ahagon Sensei. Students must be very well versed in all areas of their Karate training, i.e.: Kata, Yakusoku, and Kumite relative to the curriculum to be eligible. Students must have the ability to teach students lower rank than them in a fair, exceptional manner. Minimum age for Yondan is 30 years old.

Testing / Grading

First, it's not just your form that decides a level of proficiency nor is it your level of skill. Although skill is a very important aspect of your training it's not the only aspect, as progress takes time, and we are totally committed to your success and you becoming the best you can be.

Grading examinations (Belt Testing) can be stressful sometimes particularly if you focus on failure or making mistakes. As you already know '**you receive what you earn**'. Your grading is broken down something like this. However, the order of assessment can deviate depending upon the ability of the individual, normally it is as follows.

- ✓ Ability to perform the appropriate technical sets (katas etc...). We use the term ability with some flexibility regarding how much skill you have. Potential to improve is of paramount importance so we encourage an ongoing commitment to consistent and never-ending improvement.
- ✓ Effort and enthusiasm. During the training classes your progress is monitored, and records are made as to your output in every class you attend. We know everyone can have off days and a grading evaluation is based on overall progress.
- ✓ An understanding of the applications of the technical sets (Katas) and how to incorporate them (Bunkai) into a realistic environment on an ever-increasing level.
- ✓ Regular class attendance. A student's progress is basically down to the number of classes they attend, and you are credited for your commitment to regular practice without undue absence.

Your grades (belts) are based on an individual ability and not on comparison to other students. We would also like to point out that no student is passed without justifiable ability and potential to improve within the realms of a student's current standard.

The main criteria for passing grades, especially in the early stages, are your personal improvement and commitment. As ranks increase, minimum time requirements are strictly enforced.

Ranks at BBTMAC are not simply handed out. Students will be asked to take tests by the instructors. Testing is done in a panel format. The panel will consist of 3-6 senior belts. Students should not inquire about when they will be eligible to take the test. Our attendance monitoring system informs the students when their time requirement has been met, however, time is only one small piece of the pie.

Shorin-Ryu Belt System

[Back to Top](#)

The belt system is designed to evaluate the merit and development of each student. This system is divided into two basic categories: the lower level is called "kyu", implying the idea of "boy or girl"; the upper level is called "dan", implying the idea of "man or woman". As a student of karate develops physically, he is expected to broaden his character accordingly.

The White Belt denotes the beginner. The qualifications to be promoted included: dedication to training (number of hours), attitude, and the student's personal level of performance in Kata, Kumite, and Drills. The students are motivated to do well by a status system. They see that the color of their belt changes as their abilities and accomplishments increase. In the Kyu system, students begin to climb, as White Belts, on a scale that starts with 10th Kyu and advances in descending progression. In our style, the progression is as follows: White, White/Orange Stripe, Orange, Yellow, Blue, Green, Purple (2 ranks), Brown (2 ranks), Jundan-Transitional Black Belt, and Black Belt (which itself has 10 ranks). The Purple and Brown Belts are each broken into multiple levels.

Although each belt level is a reward for the student's progress, the first important accomplishment is the advancement to the Green Belt level. It is with an intense feeling of pride in his/her achievement that a student receives his/her new rank of Green Belt. He/She realizes that he has accomplished the first of a long series of steps leading to the heights he wishes to attain. Training at this level becomes more intense. Their focusing power starts to develop.

The Brown Belt represents the ripening maturity of the developing student. The last level of Brown Belt is the 1st Kyu, which denotes a first-class student. Brown Belts are often the hardest working and most aggressive students. Their main concern is to become worthy of advancement to 1st Degree Black Belt.

Shodan, 1st Degree Black Belt, means "first man" in Japanese. Achievement identification now changes from low numbers to high numbers, the inverse of the Kyu system. The 1st Degree is the bottom of a ladder that progresses up to ten.

Bowing

[Back to Top](#)

What does it mean when a student bows?

Bowing reflects RESPECT for one's soul. It can be considered the ultimate symbol in showing respect that cannot be explained by words. When a student bows to the flags at the beginning or end of class, he is actually saluting the American flag and Japanese flag. He is showing his respect, especially to the flag of Japan where is ancient martial art originated. By no means should the bow be considered to humble or lower a person executing such a respectful

gesture. When a Black Belt or senior student returns the bow, he in turn shows his respect to his junior person who bowed first, therefore, making the gesture equal. It can also be looked upon as being a symbol of recognition of higher authority and/or higher level of knowledge, as would be the case of a student to his instructor.

THE RESPECTFUL BOW:

Hands flat at the sides of the legs, the bow is made at least at a 45-degree angle, then moves slowly upward to the attention position.

THE CHALLENGING BOW:

Clutched fists at sides, looking straight into the eyes of your opponent, the bow is made at a 30-degree angle. This bow may be made when entering a competition and away from one's own Dojo but is not necessarily encouraged as a practice or habit.

"Karate begins and ends with courtesy."

---Karate Precept #1

---Gichin Funakoshi

Guidelines for Partner Training

[Back to Top](#)

In all Karate partner training exercises when attack/block exercises are performed, the rule is: **The person attacking moves at the command of the instructor. The person blocking only moves once the attack has been initiated.**

In partner training such as Ippon Kumite (one-step sparring), typically the person assigned to be attacker, stands in a traditional ready position (*Chudan No Kamae*, middle level fighting posture) or a natural fighting stance (*Shizen dachi no kamae*). The person blocking usually assumes a formal attention stance.

Guidelines for the person attacking.

If it is a new Karate technique that either you or your partner are not familiar with, **perform the first few repetitions at a slow pace**, until you're certain that your partner can properly block your attack without the risk of injury. If your partner is comfortable with blocking your attack, increase the speed and power of your attack. Most importantly, focus your techniques. There is no point in teaching your partner how to block weak or poorly placed attacks.

Sometimes the person defending already positions himself in the way they're going to move when they block. As the attacker, do not co-operate here. If you're meant to aim for the solar plexus, then aim there. You **fix your target at the moment you're given the command to**

attack. Do not follow a moving target once you have initiated the attack (because you're not supposed to know where your partner is going to end up). However, if the person defending has changed the distance between individual repetitions of the exercise, adjust your distance quickly before you attack, instead of overextending your limbs and thus performing an unrealistic attack.

What NOT to do

Do not hit with full speed and power from the word go, rushing in like a bull. Do not continuously hit slow and without commitment, as your strike becomes effectively unblockable because your partner has nothing to block.

Guidelines for the person defending.

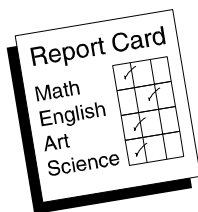
Move only once your attacker moves. In other words, don't start your defensive action until an attack has commenced. When your opponent attacks, block the attack, whether there was a command from the instructor or not. Block every time as if it was a serious attack, regardless of the intensity of the attack - take it seriously every time. Don't adjust your stance or technique because of the shortcomings of your partner who performs the attack.

This is a common problem for new Karate students. They hear the instructor, and they start their blocking technique, regardless of what their attacker is up to. Clearly, a block performed this way is not very effective. If the blocker does his block to the count, the attacker who may have delayed his attack is now pretty much at a loss of what to do. He can contort himself to put his punch where it would have been if it had been properly blocked (bad idea). He can simply ignore the defender's premature movement and continue with the attack undeterred (and thus whack his partner in the nose - very bad idea). He could be tempted to ask the defender to reset his position so the exercise can be properly performed (bad idea too - this will make both partners lose sync with the instructor).

Academic Achievement Awards

[Back to Top](#)

The Academic Achievement Award program was designed to motivate our younger, school-aged students to excel academically, as well as physically. We encourage our students to do their very best in school and to achieve their fullest potential. Awards are given for good grades and also for improved grades. Thus, every student is capable of earning an award throughout the year.



A gold star is given for "Highest Honors"--this requires the student to earn highest possible marks in all major subjects (art, music, etc., are not considered).

A red star is given for "Honors" marks--this requires all second highest marks or better in all major subjects.

Each student earning a star will also earn the "Academic Achiever" bar patch. This patch is also awarded to students who have improved their grades, but not necessarily achieved honors.

Along with these patches, each student receives a "Certificate of Achievement" to acknowledge their success in school.

Details regarding this program are announced during class. It is important to bring your report cards in as soon as possible after each marking period. When our list is compiled and the certificates are printed, the students will be presented with their awards during testing week.

This is just one of the many benefits of karate training. We hope to direct each student in a positive manner so that they are better prepared to face the challenges of life.

Emergency Information

[Back to Top](#)

All Instructors and Assistant Instructors at Black Bear Martial Arts Center are Infant, Child and Adult CPR Certified as well as First Aid & AED certified by the American Red Cross. We are equipped with an AED on-site for emergency purposes.

Weather Information...

In the event that we encounter inclement weather such as Snow, Sleet, Freezing Rain, or Hurricane, etc. Black Bear Martial Arts Center weather policy is to post a notice of cancellation on our social media outlets. We will also contact the student body directly via e-mail. **If the Stonington school system announces a cancellation, the dojo will most likely be closed for that day.** We are very concerned for the safety of our students.

If no communication has occurred or the website states nothing about that particular event, then one of two things has occurred: One, nothing is happening, and classes will be as normal. Two, we haven't decided our action yet and to try again later. Please be sure to read carefully to avoid confusion. Multiple closures may be listed on the same message.

The deadline for notification is as follows:
Messages will be posted for all evening classes no later than 3:00pm and morning classes no later than 7am. If the weather is extreme then message may reflect multiple cancellations, so listen carefully.

Lastly, if you have a question or need any other information, please ask...

Warmest regards.

Mark