



Grading Syllabus



5th Kup - 4th Kup (Blue tab - blue belt)

- Long stance - Low section X-block
High section X-block
Assisted outside forearm block
Assisted elbow strike
- Back stance - Double fist guarding block
Double knife-hand guarding block
Single knife-hand guarding block, long stance, reverse punch
Single fist guarding block, high stance, rising elbow strike
- Horse stance Side punch
- Sparring stance –
Roundhouse Knee-Strike
360 half turning kick
Reverse turning kick
Jumping side kick

Double hand Grab

- Elbow press lock
- Outside wrist lock
- Reverse wrist lock
- Under armpit press lock
- Inward spinning lock
- Hip throw wrist lock

Taegeuks 1,2,3,4,5

1 step sparring x 5

Non-contact, technical free sparring

Semi-contact competition sparring

Destruction

Here we start to introduce much stronger blocks, designed to do more than deflect an attack. These are designed for maximum strength and the control position which follows. Also introduced at this stage is the movement between different stances, showing what these stances are designed to do and the ease by which you can move from one to another, changing the distance of the fight.

The kicks in this set are now high impact kicks, designed for maximum effect.

Ready Position

Preparation for action. This is the physical movement, to trigger the mental switch to “battle readiness”.

Taekwondo Techniques

Long stance

Stable fighting position. Designed for maximum strength and impact in the technique.

Low section X-block

Essentially, this is a low block but with the other arm backing it up, for additional strength. The low block arm is the lower of the two, with the arms crossing just behind the wrists. Not only does this ensure additional strength to the block, it also allows you to “catch” the incoming kick. Once the kick has been caught, you can lift the leg, breaking your opponent’s balance and opening up the knees and the groin for counter-attack.

The chamber position for this block is an “X” position just below the chest on the opposite side to that where the block completes. This is a similar position to the chamber position of the standard low block. Once the first block has been performed, your arms do not lose contact. Your arm position changes by “rolling” around the wrists, keeping in contact all the time.

High section X-block

Similarly to the low X-Block, this is a standard high block, backed up by the other arm for strength. Again, the lead arm is the high block arm, the other coming in behind. Again, this is designed to catch the incoming attack, this time a punch to the face, allowing you to control your opponent’s arm in order to apply a lock. Like the low version, the arms do not lose contact as you perform each block. The chamber position is an “X” position in front of the chest. The wrists cross in front of the solar plexus.

Assisted outside forearm block

This is a standard outside forearm block, with the non-blocking arm providing additional strength to the block. At the chamber position, the non-blocking arm makes contact with the blocking arm with the palm heel at the centre of the forearm and the fingertips almost at the wrist. As the block is executed, the “backup” arm slides down the forearm until the palm heel is at the elbow, with the fingertips at the centre of the forearm.

Assisted elbow strike

Again, this is the standard technique but with the other arm providing additional strength to the attack. The fist of the striking arm is clenched, with the non-striking hand wrapped around it. The strike is aimed at the jaw.

Back stance

A much more defensive stance, allowing you to adjust the position of your body, away from an incoming attack, without sacrificing your foot position.

Double fist guarding block

The traditional guarding position. The front arm is, essentially, performing an outside forearm block but with the wrist facing outward. The rear arm is protecting the solar plexus. It is also chambered, ready to launch a counter-punch. The rear arm must not touch the body, as this will allow any impact to be transferred through to you. The wrist is about 3cm (1") from the solar plexus and facing upward. The elbow, and fist of the rear arm form a straight line with the fist of the lead arm. After the first block, the hands stay the same distance apart, throughout the movement.

Double knife-hand guarding block

This is the same as the previous block, only with the hand in knife-hand position. Again, the hands remain the same distance apart throughout the technique.

Single knife-hand guarding block, long stance, reverse punch

This movement is to highlight the ability to turn a defensive movement (in a defensive stance) into a counter attack, with the appropriate stance change. The arms cross, in front of your chest, with the blocking arm outermost and the blocking hand in knife-hand position. The blocking arm then performs the guarding block (essentially, an outside forearm block). The non-blocking arm pulls back to the hip, to open up the chest and hips, to provide more power to the block.

Once the block has been performed, either the front foot steps out, to create the necessary width for a long stance or the rear foot pivots on the ball. Either way, it allows you to turn the stance into a long stance, as the length is the same for both stances. As the stance change completes, perform a reverse punch while pulling the blocking hand back to the hip.

The punching hand then becomes the blocking hand for the next set of movements.

Single fist guarding block, high stance, rising elbow strike

This set of movements is also meant to highlight the change from very defensive movements to a counter-attack. In this case, the countering technique is a short range strike. The stance needs to change accordingly.

In this case, the back foot needs to be moved, to turn a back stance into a close range (high) stance. Then throw the rising elbow strike from the "reverse" arm. Again, the striking arm becomes the blocking arm for the next set.

Horse Riding stance

A sideways-on version of the Horse Riding stance outlined at the very beginning. This time, the stance is designed to be a more effective stance as it is used to drop under an opponent's attack, to launch an attack of your own to your opponent's ribs. Because of this, the stance is expected to be deeper than the original version.

Side punch

This punch is aimed at the ribs. There is no other possible target, as the stance has taken you underneath your opponent's attack.

As your front foot touches down, turn your body as square-on as you can. This ensures that the punch will truly be thrown as a punch, instead of a hammer-fist strike. As the punch is thrown, turn your body sideways on. This drives the hip power into the technique.

Sparring stance

Very flexible stance, based around a sprinter's starting block position. This allows you to move in all directions as fast as necessary. It also allows you to adopt one of the other stances, depending on technique.

Flying front kick

A "scissor" kick. This technique, along with the jumping side kick, which follows, was originally designed to kick a mounted opponent off of their horse but has been adapted, over time, for use with a standing opponent. The kicking leg is the front leg in the guarding stance. The rear leg lift generates the height in the technique. Once the knee lift has taken you off of the ground, the kicking leg can perform the technique. This kick should be performed to face level.

Jumping side kick

The chamber position for this kick is basically the same as that of the standing side-kick. However, in this case, the chamber also generates the lift. As the kicking leg extends, the "standing" leg retracts, so that your heel almost kicks yourself in the behind. It then extends again, in time to execute the landing as the kicking leg retracts.

Reverse turning kick

The "£50 note kick" !

This kick is only ever aimed at the head. Any other target will put too much strain on your knee, potentially causing injury to you. It is also only ever thrown as either a counter-attack or as part of a combination. It takes too long to launch this kick as a single attack, giving your opponent plenty of time to avoid and counter. In its most basic form, the kick can be thrown straight-legged. As you continue to work on the technique and assess the balance of the kick, you can start to use the knee more.

Imagine that you are standing on a £50 note, with your rear foot. In order to pick up that note, you need to lift this rear foot. Pivot on the balls of both feet, so that you are now facing in the opposite direction. Reach for the £50 note with your lead hand, as you lift the rear leg. If you keep the same body line, from your head to your rear foot (now the kicking foot), this foot will "scoop" up to head level. Continue to turn your head, to see the target.

As the foot reaches maximum height, open out the hips, to take the kick "through" the target. This will also affect your balance – deliberately. It is the speed of the recovery, back to your guarding position, which adds to the speed, power and impact of the kick. Be aware that the balance recovery also brings your head back up quickly. Potentially, this makes it a target, if the kick has not landed on-target.

Once you become more proficient at the basic kick, you can start to speed it up by using the knee, in both stages of the kick. Punching the kick out, at the lifting stage, speeds the kick to the target quicker. Hooking the knee again, at the point of impact, again speeds up the movement of the foot as it lands, thus increasing the impact levels. It also allows you to control the recovery better.

The same kick can also be thrown while jumping, should you need to increase the height and / or speed of the kick or if you need to adjust the distance.

Ideally, you want to land this kick with your heel but, if you pull the foot back, to lead with the heel, you not only reduce the amount of foot you could potentially land with but you also tense the leg, slowing down the kick. By pointing the toes, the heel remains in the same position so will still have the same impact if it lands. But, you increase the chances of the kick landing by increasing the amount of the foot you could land with. The sole of the foot will still make some major impact with an opponent, just not quite as much as the heel.

Pointing the toes also relaxes the leg muscles, speeding the kick up and increasing the chances of it landing at all.

Hapkido Techniques

Double-Hand Wrist Grab

Elbow press lock

Rotate your trapped arm upwards and inwards toward your free arm, trapping your opponent's arms. Your free arm then puts pressure on the elbow joint, similar to "Ikkyo", as you grip your opponent's wrist with your previously trapped hand. Step across your opponent's stance (or spin behind) to increase the pressure.

Outside wrist lock

Variation on "kotogaeshi". Reach over with your free hand and take your opponent's hand (thumb between the knuckles, 2 fingers in the "meat" of the palm). Roll the hand outwards. When possible, break your arm free and use it to exert more pressure on the wrist. Step back as you do so, to increase the pressure further.

Reverse wrist lock

Using your free hand, reach across and take the nearest of your opponent's hands – thumb between the two major knuckles and fingers in the meat of the palm. Step across your opponent while lifting their arm. Twist under the arm while grabbing your opponent's thumb. Lift, to exert pressure on the wrist, while stretching the fingers.

Under armpit press lock

Similar to Outside Wrist Lock but, this time, pull the hands toward your chest to lock them in position, step forward and roll your trapped forearm over the opponent's elbow. Grip with the trapped hand, too. If you can hit with the elbow strike, that's a bonus !

Inward spinning lock

Similar to "Shihonage". Lift your trapped hand (rolling inwards), to grip your opponent's hand. Grip the opposite side of the same arm, with your free hand. Then lift your arms in a big circular motion, the opposite way, stepping under the arm and throwing your opponent as you twist.

Hip throw wrist lock

Lift the trapped hand inward, to grip your opponent's arm / wrist. Roll the arm back out, across your opponent's body as you step across them and execute a hip throw (belt throw).

One Step Sparring

This is to demonstrate your mastery of the basic techniques and their application. It shows your ability to turn defence into attack, under controlled self-defence conditions.

The "sparring" begins with both partners within punching distance. The "attacking" partner attacks with a straight punch to the face, in long stance. Firstly from their right hand, then the left. On each occasion you need to defend the attack, either by avoiding or blocking, then turn the defence into counter-attack. You are not limited to competition legal techniques.

Technical Free-Sparring

The point of technical sparring is to show that you are able to use the basic kicks and punches in a combat situation. It shows that you can blend with a partner, recognising a target and knowing what technique to use. Technical sparring is all about showing off your ability, not about trying to land high impact strikes. Work with your partner, do not treat them as an opponent.

The sparring will be under modified WTF competition rules. The targets are the same but, without the body armour, the contact levels are reduced.