

## **Most Frequently Asked Questions by Parents Interested in KarateKids**

### **What is karate?**

Karate, Japanese for “Empty Hand”, is a self-protection study using the human body and natural movement patterns to prevent and defend against physical assaults. Because it involves a combined effort of mind, body and spirit (i.e., emotion) these lessons can also be applied to dealing with all types of challenges we face in daily life.

### **What is Shorin Ryu? How is it different from other styles of karate?**

The term Shorin Ryu, Japanese for “Small Forest Way”, is a compilation of self-protection techniques, principals and philosophies attributed to the culture of the Ryukyuan island kingdom. The largest of these islands is Okinawa, where many combative arts known collectively as karate originated. The primary characteristics of Shorin Ryu karate are its reliance on natural movement and making use of (as opposed to stopping), the attacker’s force to perform efficient and effective responses.

### **What is your Mission Statement/Philosophy?**

- ❖ *To promote the culture and history of Okinawa, particularly those aspects related to the martial arts, and to embrace all other cultures and their indigenous methods of self-defense.*
- ❖ *To live life daily in a state of excellence and appreciation; to teach others to do the same.*

A brief biography of the senior instructor is available at: <https://pedrobernardy.com/profile/>

### **What is a dojo?**

Dojo is a Japanese term used to denote a training hall or studio. The RyuBuKan Dojo was established by Pedro J. Bernardy as a means of giving back to his instructors and their arts. The name *RyuBuKan* is formed from the Ryukyu culture from which the basis of our studies originate (RYU), the expression of martial art as a way of life (BU), and a home for all who wish to learn and share from these efforts (KAN). The RyuBuKan Dojo is a family affair where lessons are earned by consistent effort and positive attitude. Students come and go but our hope is that the strength and sincerity learned here will carry them through all of life's challenges.

### **What are the goals of karate?**

To build life-long skills such as perseverance, patience, consideration for ourselves and others, that will be used in everyday challenges.

### **How will it benefit my child?**

Physical movement enhances fitness, motor skills such as balance, flexibility and mobility. Our lessons on Asian cultures, particularly from where our style of karate originated, serve as introduction to basic language and history that might not otherwise be a part of their education. Lastly, but just as important, safety tips and other self-protection skills are consistently practiced to improve awareness and avoidance of potential harmful incidents that could occur throughout their lives.

### **Can my child do karate if he or she is not athletic?**

Athletic ability is not a requirement in learning martial art. Each student, regardless of age, level of experience or fitness conditioning learns at their own rate.

**Can my child do karate if he or she has a physical, emotional or mental disability?**

Yes, often a child is introduced to martial arts in order to help improve focus, self-control and body awareness. They also learn to respect themselves and others by engaging in these lessons with their fellow students.

**How do we join and how much does it cost?**

Provided there is room in the class you can join at any time. Each student must be a member of Renaissance Club Sport in order to participate in class held at that location. Monthly rates are \$90 for each child (siblings receive a 10% discount). Adult classes are \$90 monthly.

**Do we pay if we have to miss a class?**

Unless there is a scheduled cancelled you will be charged for each class.

**What is the proper attire and how much does it cost?**

Karate uniforms, known in Japanese as [Gi](#), are not required until the student is ready to test for rank advancement. Students may wear comfortable clothing that allows them to move freely. Shoes and socks are not worn in class. In our children's classes each student must demonstrate a basic set of skills prior to being allowed to wear a gi. These criteria include counting to ten in Japanese and displaying basic blocks, kicks and punching techniques normally taught in every class. Karate gi may be purchased from the instructor for \$45 (children sizes) or \$65 for adults.

**Is there a charge for rank advancement?**

Rank advancement is typically held every 8 to 10 weeks. Students who participate and successfully complete their specific requirements are given certificates of their new rank and belts and/or stripes depending on their respective level of achievement. The fee for rank advancement is \$25 and is paid directly to the instructor.

**Are there other additional costs?**

Custom made dojo patches worn on our karate gi are available for \$25 but are not required. This fee is paid to the instructor.

**What are the times and days when the classes meet?**

Classes at Renaissance Club Sport are conducted in Studio B every Tuesday and Thursday as follows:

**Ages 4 to 5 at 3:30 PM to 4:15 PM**  
**Ages 6 to 8 at 4:30 PM to 5:15 PM**  
**Ages 9 to 12 at 5:30 PM to 6:15 PM**  
**Adults at 6:30 PM to 8:00 PM**

**Are classes held on holidays?**

Classes are typically cancelled on holidays. Notification is sent prior to any scheduled cancellation.

**How large are the classes?**

We try to maintain a class size that is safe and productive, using well-trained assistant instructors as needed. Class size will generally be kept at 15 students. A waiting list is provided for members that wish to join when a slot is opened. This list is managed by Kids World along with our student roster and all class billing activity.

**Is there a contract?**

There are no contracts but each student must be a member of Renaissance Club Sport.

**What if I cannot be there?**

Unless you request to be removed from our active roster you will be billed. Requests for removal from our roster must be made in writing to the instructor and/or to Annie Schneider, Junior Programming Director.

**What are the belts (ranks) and how long does it take to reach them?**

A complete list of ranks and potential testing criteria is available in our KarateKids Student Handbook. A copy of this manual can be accessed at: <https://pedrobernardy.com/references/>

**How often is rank advancement?**

Rank advancement is normally conducted every 8 to 10 weeks.

**Is there class during rank advancement for those not advancing?**

Yes, normal class activity will be conducted in conjunction with rank advancement.

**Do the students participate in tournaments?**

Students do not compete in tournaments due to our focus on practical self-protection skills and to minimize the risk of injuries.

**How often should my child practice?**

Students are encouraged to practice daily. These practice periods can be very short (e.g. 5 to 15 minutes), or longer if the student is having difficulty with their subject matter or preparing for rank advancement.

**Are private lessons available?**

Private lessons are available at the discretion and availability of instructors. These lessons are billed separately from our weekly classes in either 30 or 60 minute sessions. Please speak to the senior instructor for further details.

**Are there home assignments and/or family participation?**

Students are often asked to research a particular topic or perform additional work that is done outside of class. These assignments are meant to encourage interest and participation in our lessons, and to further the involvement of family members.

**What is the structure of the class? What is the experience like for my child?**

Classes are typically conducted as follows:

- Greeting of students – warm up exercises –basic techniques
- Following these activities the students are often grouped by rank or experience and taught lessons at their respective levels by individual instructors.

- Lastly all students return to participate in games and other activity that help reinforce their primary lessons.

Our intention is to provide each student with a positive experience and functional skills that can be used in everyday life. Students often relate these experiences with us in class that span from improved interaction with family and friends, better report cards and appreciation of their formal education, and enhanced awareness of the safety tips we discuss in every class.

### **How do we address the instructor(s)?**

The Japanese term, [Sensei](#), is used to address an instructor, typically followed by the instructor's name. In our KarateKids classes we asked students to refer to us as Sensei.

### **What are the dojo rules?**

Rules, or *Dojo Etiquette*, are defined in our student handbook available at:  
<https://pedrobernardy.com/references/>

### **Why isn't my child advancing?**

Generally all students are eventually invited to participate in rank advancement. Occasionally a child will not be asked to test for rank due to inconsistent attendance, lack of attention and participation in class, or because the student has reached a rank that requires more time between tests to satisfy the requirements. A common example of this last point is a senior student (i.e., Green, Brown or Black belt level) that must learn more complex techniques, write essays, and help teach classes for junior students prior to being invited to test. In any case you should discuss this concern with the senior instructor to ensure the best course of action for your child.