

# 510 JUDO STUDENT HANDBOOK



SAN LEANDRO CALIFORNIA

# OFFICIAL STUDENT HANDBOOK



**JUDO • JIUJITSU • WRESTLING**

**1029 Macarthur Boulevard  
San Leandro, California 94577**

**510-560-JUDO  
info@510judo.com  
www.510judo.com**

Founded as Oakland Judo in 2012  
Moved to San Leandro and renamed 510 Judo in 2019

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# Welcome

Congratulations! You have started your judo journey. Along the way you'll become stronger, both physically and mentally. You'll learn to defend yourself and stay out of dangerous situations. You'll meet lots of interesting people, some of whom will become lifelong friends.

## Etiquette

Etiquette means a system of rules for human interaction, with the end result of a smoothly functioning society. At 510 Judo, we have some basic rules everyone should follow. Most of these rules are the same at dojos and training halls all over the world, although there are always local variations.

1. No shoes on the mat - basic rule for hygiene
  - a. Corollary: no bare feet off the mat - wear shoes or sandals everywhere except the mat.
2. Bow in the direction of the mat before getting on the mat AND before getting off the mat.
3. Greet your sensei and your teammates when you arrive
4. If you arrive late (after class has started), bow on to the mat and wait until the sensei acknowledges you before joining the class. It's important for the sensei to know who is on the mat - do not try to get on the mat unnoticed.
5. Bow to your partners when beginning and ending an exercise
  - a. Use common sense when making an exception to this rule - during a fast paced drill involving many partners, for example, it doesn't make sense to stop and exchange bows before and after every interaction.
6. No talking during instruction - if you have a question please raise your hand.
7. Please be humble and be aware of your limitations when working with classmates. It's fine to offer suggestions, especially if you have more experience than your partner, but keep in mind you may be completely wrong. Don't attempt to be the sensei unless you are the sensei.
8. **HYGIENE:** Please keep your body clean when coming to practice, especially your hands and feet. Please don't get on the mat with dirty feet and hands, it's unsanitary and disrespectful to your classmates.
  - a. Parents! Please double check your young child until they get in the habit themselves, please don't send them to class with dirty feet and a dirty uniform.
  - b. Fingernails and toenails must be short. Long nails can scratch your partners, sometimes even drawing blood. Long nails can also catch on clothes and potentially get ripped off, which can be painful.
  - c. Please remove all jewelry before getting on the mat, including wedding rings. If you have permanent jewelry it must be covered by athletic tape.
  - d. Long hair should be put up above the collar - otherwise your partners may grab it accidentally.

## Respect and Safety

Respect and safety are the most important aspects of our practice. Please show respect for your sensei, for your teammates, and for yourself. If you follow the rules in the section above on etiquette, you'll be keeping it safe and respectful.

## Seiryoku Zenyo

The founder of judo, Jigoro Kano, wrote about two principles that are fundamental to judo. The first is *seiryoku zenyo*. This translates as “minimum appropriate amount of effort, to obtain the maximum result” or more simply, the most efficient use of physical and mental energy. This principle guides our practice and using it leads to the most beautiful judo throws, the ones that feel almost effortless.

## Jita Kyohei

This second principle translates as “mutual welfare and benefit.” Simply put, you cannot practice judo by yourself. We tried during the covid lockdowns, and it's very difficult! Therefore, please keep in mind the idea that everyone should be getting something out of practice. If you just come in to throw everybody as hard as you can, never take falls and have a competitive attitude during class, you will soon find yourself without any training partners. Being a good training partner is one of the most important skills to master.

In a larger sense, judo should be used to improve yourself and your community. We have our little community here at 510 Judo, but you're also part of a family unit, a city, a state, a nation. Jita kyohei to me means to give before taking and to try to improve your community rather than just looking out for yourself.

## Basic Knowledge

### Vocabulary

Japanese	English
Tori	The person doing the technique
Uke	The person receiving the technique
Kuzushi	Off balancing
Tsukuri	Fitting in
Kake	Finishing a throw
Tachi Waza	Techniques applied from a standing position -

	mostly throws
Ne Waza	Ground techniques - mostly pins, chokes and armbars
Nage Waza	Throwing techniques
Shime Waza	Choking techniques
Kansetsu Waza	Joint Locking techniques
Osaekomi Waza	Pinning techniques
Te Waza	Hand throws
Ashi Waza	Foot throws
Koshi Waza	Hip throws
Sutemi Waza	Sacrifice throws
Shizen Hontai	Natural posture - feet shoulder width, knees slightly bent, back straight, shoulders relaxed
Kenka Yotsu	Between two judoka, a Right vs. Right or Left vs. Left gripping situation
Ai Yotsu	Between two judoka, a Right vs. Left gripping situation
Shiai	A judo competition
Ippon	Single point. In shiai, ippon is a match ending score.
Wazari	Half point. Two wazari equal one ippon.
Hajime	Begin or start
Matte	Stop
Soremade	That is all - the match is over
Osaekomi	When said by a referee during shiai (with an accompanying hand signal), it indicates that one player has achieved a pin and the scoring table should start the pin clock
Toketa	When said by a referee during shiai (with an accompanying hand signal), it indicates a player has escaped a pin and the scoring table should stop the pin clock

Shido	A penalty, given during a judo shiai. There are a variety of penalties given to discourage unsafe techniques, stalling or defensiveness.
Hansokumake	A match ending penalty, equivalent to a disqualification. The third shido given to the same player of any match is always a hansokumake.
Randori	Literally "to pick from chaos" - in general usage it means judo sparring.

## Nage Waza - Throws



This is what judo is most well known for - taking an opponent from a standing position to the ground with force and control, while retaining a good position for follow up. A good throw utilizes the principle of *seiryoku zenyo* by not opposing an opponent's force, but going with it and redirecting it.

There are three major parts of a throw.

1. *Kuzushi* - "breaking" or off balancing
2. *Tsukuri* - fitting in, or getting in position for the throw
3. *Take* - finishing the throw

Throws can be categorized a number of ways. One way to categorize them is by the main body part used.

- **Te Waza - Hand Techniques**
  - Examples: Tai Otoshi, Ippon Seoinage, Morote Gari
- **Ashi Waza - Leg Techniques**
  - Examples: De Ashi Barai, Okuri Ashi Barai, Hiza Guruma
- **Koshi Waza - Hip Techniques**
  - Examples: O Goshi, Harai Goshi, Koshi Guruma
- **Sutemi Waza - Sacrifice Techniques**
  - Examples: Tomoe Nage, Sumi Gaeshi



## Pinning Techniques - Osaekomi Waza



Pins are a method of controlling and limiting the movement of an opponent on the ground. In a judo contest, pinning is one of the four major methods of winning. There are four major pins:

1. Kesa Gatame - Scarf hold
2. Yoko Shiho Gatame - Side Four Corners Hold
3. Kami Shiho Gatame - Upper Four Corners Hold
4. Tate Shiho Gatame - Top Four Corners Hold

There are many many variations of the four pins listed above, and there are also many other pinning techniques, too many to list here. You can even invent your own pin! As long as the shoulders are controlled, uke is on his back and the legs are not entangled, it's a pin.

During shiai, holding an opponent in osaekomi for 20 seconds earns a match-ending score of ippon. Holding an opponent for 10 to 19 seconds earns a score of wazari.

## Grappling Techniques - Katame Waza

Grappling techniques are used to progress the contest towards a pin, choke, or armbar finish. This category of technique does not have a formal system of Japanese names like other categories such as throws, chokes, and armbars, or if it does I'm not aware of it. In English some of these techniques are known as:

- Turnovers - taking an opponent from a prone position (laying on his front) all the way to his back and finishing with a pin
- Sweeps - during newaza, going from a bottom position to a top position
- Guard pass - when an opponent is on his back and using his legs to prevent you from finishing the contest, the act of passing the legs to a superior pinning position is known as a guard pass
- Anything else during newaza, offensive or defensive, that is not a pin, choke, or armbar.



## Choking Techniques - Shime Waza

Choking techniques are used to restrict the flow of blood or air in an opponent. When applied quickly and skillfully, the end result is unconsciousness. This can be very useful in a self defense situation, as it gives you time to get away or call the police, or both.

In practice, shime waza is drilled slowly and carefully until uke feels the effect, at which point uke should tap twice to indicate they give up.

The "tap" is something of a misnomer - it's done with the full palm, not the fingertips, and in terms of force it's halfway between a gentle pat and a strong slap. The best place to tap is on your partner's body, so they can feel it. If that's not possible, you can also tap by kicking your feet on the mat strongly. You can also verbally tap by simply saying the word "tap." In a contest, tapping is the same as giving up, and hands the win to the other person.

Chokes fall into two basic categories - lapel chokes, which are done by gripping the lapel and wrapping it around uke's neck, and non lapel chokes, in which tori's arms or legs are used



to finish the choke. Some examples of non-lapel chokes are the triangle choke (*sankaku jime*), the head and arm choke (*kata gatame*), the rear naked choke (*hadaka jime*), and the guillotine.

Shime waza techniques are only allowed in competition judo for ages 13 and up. At 510 Judo we may begin training shime waza before age 13 so that competitors will be ready.

## Joint Locking Techniques - Kansetsu Waza



Kansetsu waza, or joint locking techniques, apply pressure to a joint in order to produce pain. If the lock is taken all the way through, it can produce serious injury such as broken and twisted ligaments, tendons, and bones. Because of the potential for injury, joint locks are usually only taught to adults (ages 17 and up).

In a self defense situation, pain compliance may be useful. In judo competition, joint locks are only allowed for black belts. However, you can train to use joint locks in the dojo at any belt level, as long as great care is used in training. Applying joint locks slowly and carefully until your partner taps is the way to train safely.

In judo, we only train to attack the arms using techniques such as juji gatame or ude garami. However, theoretically you can apply a lock to any joint in the human body. To learn a greater variety of joint locks, come to our jujitsu classes.

## Prohibited Techniques

Some techniques are dangerous or tricky enough that there is a general prohibition on even practicing them until a person has reached a certain age or a certain level of experience. In most cases, moves are prohibited for the safety of the uke. The following tables detail which specific techniques are prohibited.

**GENERAL GUIDANCE:** If you have never been taught a certain technique in person in a live class with a black belt instructor, you are not allowed to practice it! These prohibitions are

flexible and the supervising instructor may sometimes make an exception if the situation warrants it.

### Youth Program - Ages 16 and Under

Technique	Prohibited For	Reason
Shime Waza - choking techniques	Age 11 and below	Risk of injury - competition rules forbid it until age 13
Kansetsu Waza - joint locking techniques	Age 16 and below	Risk of injury - competition rules forbid it until advanced levels
All Sutemi Waza - sacrifice techniques.	All below orange belt	<p>Sacrifice techniques are special and should be used as a backup only. If you rely on sacrifice techniques too early your overall judo game will suffer.</p> <p>When you are thrown with a sacrifice technique, there is an increased risk of injury, especially if you're not familiar with that particular technique.</p>

### Adult Program - Ages 17 and Up

Technique	Prohibited For	Reason
Sutemi Waza - sacrifice techniques	All belts below brown - white, yellow, green.	<p>Sacrifice techniques are special and should be used as a backup only. If you rely on sacrifice techniques too early your overall judo game will suffer.</p> <p>When you are thrown with a sacrifice technique, there is an increased risk of injury, especially if you're not familiar with that particular technique.</p>

## YouTube Sensei

When I was a kid back in the 1990's, watching judo videos was difficult. The internet had only recently been invented, and there was no such thing as smart phones, YouTube, social media, or any kind of streaming video. I ordered a VHS tape (look it up) of the 1991 World Championships from a warehouse in Atlanta, saved up birthday money to pay for it, and waited six to eight weeks for it to arrive in the mail. When I put it in, it was super grainy and hard to see.

Nowadays you can pull up crystal clear judo technique videos from World and Olympic champions, and you can watch endless highlight videos on any platform. Generally speaking this is a great thing, but there is a down side.

### Potential Pitfalls of Online Videos:

1. You watch a video that looks good to you, but you don't have the experience to recognize bad technique. You may be learning bad technique from a bad teacher.
2. You watch a video of a good technique from a good teacher, but the technique is too advanced for you. You attempt it during class and injure yourself or your partner.
3. You mix up something between judo and jiu-jitsu and attempt something that is illegal - for instance a leg lock during judo class, or a big judo throw during your jiu-jitsu class on someone that doesn't know how to fall.

The rule of thumb is: watch all the videos you want for educational purposes, BUT before you attempt any technique from a video, send the video to your sensei and ask them "can I try this in class?" or "what do you think of this, is it safe?"

If you are shodan or above (first degree black belt) this rule is lifted. By that point you should be able to pick up new techniques or new approaches to techniques you already know on video and apply them. But it's never a bad idea to share the video with your sensei and ask what they think.

## For Juniors - Age 17 and Under

### The Difference Between Judo and other Martial Arts

Congratulations! Your parents (or grandparents, or somebody) has signed you up for judo. Judo is truly one of the best martial arts that any young person can do. However, it's also a bit more difficult than other martial arts.

In judo, you must not only control your own body, but you must also control someone else's body. You must keep your balance while unbalancing someone else enough to put them on the floor.

Many other martial arts for young people involve kicking and punching the air, or kicking and punching a pad. This is great, and will develop strength, flexibility, and athletic ability. Some of these martial arts include light contact or no contact sparring, which again is great. But it's much different than grabbing someone by the collar and taking them to the ground in a controlled manner, or knowing what to do when someone rushes you and grabs you by the head, waist, or legs.

THEREFORE, it is actually difficult to get a black belt in judo. It's not meant to be easy. There is no way to make it easy. However, you will make progress, and lots of it. You will get stronger. You will become more confident in yourself. You will develop very useful skills.

You won't get a black belt in three years (anything is possible, but it's not likely). YOU CAN earn a black belt in judo, and you should aim for it. But first, you should aim to become a blue belt.

### Grading and Promotion

Skip to the end of the handbook to see the full belt list!

In between each belt you will earn stripes on your belt. There are four stripes to each belt. Once you've earned your fourth stripe, you will soon be eligible to test for your next belt.

Belt tests are done four times a year, so if you miss one, there is another one coming right up. The testing process is meant to be difficult - you will be pushed to your limit physically, and we will expect you to demonstrate the required techniques competently.

510 Judo utilizes a rotating curriculum, which means that you will be tested on the techniques taught during the previous three months.

### Blue Belt Goal - Junior Sankyu

As you can see from the promotion chart at the end of this document, you can earn a number of belts as a young person at 510 Judo. The "kyu" ranks are all the belts below black belt, and start at number 11, ju-ichi-kyu (this literally means 11th kyu).

The rank of sankyu, or 3rd kyu, is a significant achievement. Although not a black belt, it is an advanced belt. When you receive your sankyu blue belt, you will have a considerable amount of experience, and if you are at least 14 years old you will be eligible to become a paid assistant instructor for some of our kid's classes.

## After Sankyu - The Black Belt

After sankyu, there are three more steps to becoming a black belt. Nikyu or second kyu is a half blue/half purple belt. Ikkyu or first kyu is a purple belt. Shodan is the first degree black belt.

Promotions slow down at this point - it usually takes one year between each step. Becoming a black belt in judo is not just about your technical skill, although that is certainly one of the main criteria. In addition to throws, pins, and submissions, you will also have to learn some basic referee skills, how to lead a class and teach techniques, and show your leadership skills on the mat.

## Competition

A judo competition, also called shiai, is where people from different judo clubs get together and have matches. Competitors are grouped together by age, weight, and judo rank, and there are usually medals or trophies for first, second, and third place.

Once you know how to fall correctly and know a little bit of judo (usually after about six months of training), you can enter a judo competition.

If you like competing, you can do it a lot, and get really good at competitions. Some of our kids have become junior national champions, and you can too.

But just doing a few local competitions a few times a year will be a great benefit to your judo. That way, you can really see what works and what doesn't work, and what you need to improve on.

## For Adults - Age 18 and Up

### The Good News and the Bad News

The good news is, you just started judo! The bad news is, you JUST started judo.

Whenever you start a new hobby, particularly one with as steep a learning curve as judo, you may experience the feeling of "if only I had started this 5/10/20 years ago!" Yes, this is true, but there are certain advantages to starting as an adult - you have better focus than an 8 year old, you're bigger and stronger than most eight year olds, and you don't have to ask your mom and dad for permission.

For those of us who are no longer in our athletic prime, is it possible to get good at judo? The answer is a resounding YES, but you have to be smart about it.

Recovery is one of the most important aspects of athletic training. Recovery from what? From your last training session, and from the cumulative effect of multiple training sessions over the course of days, weeks, and months. When you're a young person, let's say up to 25 years old or so, recovery is a breeze. You can train hard for many days in a row, sometimes without even getting proper sleep or nutrition. Work all day, train hard in the evening, go out with friends afterwards, and repeat the next day.

As you get older, this becomes more and more difficult. Muscle soreness and stiffness, little injuries that take longer and longer to heal, low energy, lack of motivation, all could slow

you down. Add in a 40 hour work week and raising children on top of that, and it might seem like skipping judo practice is a good idea.

HOWEVER! Don't skip judo practice. My recommendation is to arrange your life in such a way that you can go to judo practice 2-4 times per week, even as a working adult with children. To pull this off, you need to be very disciplined with your sleep habits, nutrition, and general health. But the payoff will be huge. Increased strength, more energy (not just for judo, for everything in life), increased judo skills, and the satisfaction of a job well done.

## Black Belt Goal - Shodan

Generally speaking, you will always make more progress if you have a clear goal in mind. If you're unfamiliar with goal setting, here are some things to remember:

1. Start with the end in mind. Set a clear goal without at first worrying about how you'll get there.
2. The more specific the goal is, the more likely it is you will reach it.
3. A goal must always have a timeframe - a goal without a deadline is called a daydream.
4. Goals should be regularly revisited so you can check your progress and adjust your strategy as necessary.

I recommend that you set a goal of becoming a first degree black belt (shodan) in five years. You can always adjust for your specific circumstances, but this is the path I recommend.

## Competition - is it for me?

Athletic competition in general always carries with it certain risks, both physical and mental. You could get injured. You could lose, and you might feel bad if that happens. In one on one combat sports, the risk of injury to your ego is even higher - if someone beats you in a fight, even a fight with rules and a referee, it's easy to get down on yourself.

But this is exactly why I recommend it to everyone, even adult beginners (as soon as you understand the rules and have some basic competence, usually 6-12 months in). It's what used to be called a character building exercise. Get out there and see what happens. You might really enjoy it. You might win! Someone has to.

If you like winning, you can climb up the ladder to bigger and more challenging tournaments and see how far it takes you. Maybe you set a goal to be a national champion. Maybe you want to represent the USA in international competition. Or maybe you just want to win the local tournament and stand on top of the podium. It's up to you. We have had several age category national champions from 510 Judo.

Also, as an adult, you have to look beyond your own development as an athlete. In the future, you will be a teacher, a coach, a referee, or a sensei. How can you help people prepare for a judo tournament if you've never done one yourself? This goes back to the concept of jita kyoei, mutual benefit. Even if you never want to be a sensei or lead a class, how are you helping your teammates if you don't develop your skill to the highest level possible? Or are you only here to help yourself?



In the age category of 30-plus, 40-plus and 50-plus, it may be harder to find matches, and that's okay. Kids can go to any tournament and usually get three to four matches with someone right around their own size, age, and belt level. For adults, it's harder to find a dance partner, so I wouldn't expect you to rack up a huge number of matches every year. Just be ready for the opportunity! At national events, it's usually easier to find competitors in your age category.

## Judo Kata

Kata is a set of pre-arranged movements. In martial arts like karate, kata is important from the very beginning as a learning tool for basic movements. In judo, kata is usually not taught until later in the journey, when someone is about to become a black belt.

Judo kata preserves some of the less commonly used techniques and some of the techniques that are illegal in competition. It's also very valuable to help learn how to be a good uke.

## Teaching, Coaching, Refereeing

As part of your judo journey, you will be required to dip your toe in each and every aspect of the judo world. That includes some teaching, some coaching, and some refereeing. Competition we've already covered in a separate section.

Teaching generally means in the dojo - at a certain point you will be asked to teach some judo techniques, either to other adults or to kids. You will always be supervised and coached on your teaching - we won't just drop you out there with no support. It can start with something as small as three minutes teaching a variation to the technique of the week, all the way up to leading a class from start to finish. You will find that teaching increases your mastery of a technique, because you have to think about it in a different way. You get deeper into all the techniques when you teach them, and it's actually very fun to help people.

Coaching is the process of preparing people for judo competition. That means learning the rules, staying up to date on rule changes, being in the loop about competitions happening nearby, recruiting people for competitions, and more. On the actual day of a competition, the work of coaching changes to more procedural and morale boosting - it's too late to learn new techniques the day of.

Coach duties on the day of a tournament include making sure that all your competitors are in the right pools (not over- or under-matched in terms of size and skill), being matside for as many matches as possible (not always possible to get to all of them) and offering some encouragement and suggestions based on your careful observation of their matches.

Refereeing is another crucial part of judo that not many people think about. Without referees, we can't have competitions! Everyone must learn the basics of refereeing and referee a few matches, at least in our in house competitions. It's a tough job, and you don't know how tough until you give it a try. I would also encourage you to pursue refereeing at a higher level if it interests you.

## Beyond Black Belt - Higher Dan Ranks

What does it mean to be a black belt? As a shodan or first degree black belt, it means you have basic competency in most areas of judo. No one expects you to be a “master” of judo at this point, but you have shown that you have the potential to become a master.

What about higher ranks? What does it mean to be a nidan, sandan, or higher?

The answer is, we’ll find out! As of January 2023, your sensei Jonah Ewell holds the rank of sandan, or third degree black belt. I used to not be too concerned with ranks beyond black belt, and considered “belt chasing” to be beneath my dignity. It’s still not my highest priority, but I have committed to keep pursuing higher dan ranks, only because I am the head sensei of 510 Judo and it’s my responsibility to do so.

USA Judo, the organization we are a part of, has a promotion committee that reviews promotions to 4th degree black belt and higher, so whatever criteria they are looking for I will have to satisfy. Beyond a certain degree of technical skill, there are also time in grade requirements that increase with each dan rank - for instance, you have to be a sandan for several years (4-6) before you can be considered for 4th degree.

USA Judo also wants you to be involved with the judo community. For example, on the promotion form, they want to know how many people you bring to national tournaments. Have you produced any top competitors? Do you throw tournaments? Do you throw clinics? Have you served on a USA Judo committee? And so on.

Maybe I’ll get to sixth degree, look back and say “you know what guys, it’s not worth jumping through the hoops, don’t bother, just practice in the dojo and have fun, don’t worry about dan ranks.” But, how will I know unless I go there?

From my personal research, I know that 9th and 10th degree dan ranks (the famous red belt) are usually only awarded to someone who has dedicated their whole life to judo, and usually only when they are in their 80’s or 90’s.

# 510 Judo Junior Rank System

For ages 16 and below

11th Kyu - Juichikyu - White Belt



10th Kyu - Jukyu - White/Yellow



9th Kyu - Kukyu - Yellow



8th Kyu - Hachikyu - Yellow/Orange



7th Kyu - Nanakyu - Orange



6th Kyu - Rokkyu - Orange/Green



5th Kyu - Gokyu - Green



4th Kyu - Yonkyu - Green/Blue



3rd Kyu - Sankyu - Blue (Junior Brown)



2nd Kyu - Nikyu - Blue/Purple (Junior Brown)



1st Kyu - Ikkyu - Purple - (Junior Brown)



1st Dan - Shodan - Black



# 510 Judo Senior Rank System

For ages 17 and up

6th Kyu - Rokkyu - White



5th Kyu - Gokyu - Yellow



4th Kyu - Yonkyu - Green



3rd Kyu - Sankyu - Brown



2nd Kyu - Nikyu - Brown



1st Kyu - Ikkyu - Brown



1st Dan - Shodan - Black



2nd Dan - Nidan - Black

3rd Dan - Sandan - Black

4th Dan - Yondan - Black

5th Dan - Godan - Black

6th Dan - Rokudan - Red/White

7th Dan - Shichidan - Red/White

8th Dan - Hachidan - Red/White

9th Dan - Kyudan - Red

10th Dan - Judan - Red

