

# SWJA Ranks & Promotions

*Judo Grading System (from the IJF website)*

One important aspect of the world of judo is its grading or ranking system, because it represents how the institution of judo - through its various organizations and members - recognizes the development of knowledge in a person, as well as his or her contributions to the sport and discipline of judo. Using this system, the various ranks of judo are conferred on students upon attainment of this knowledge and through contributions, as evidenced through many areas of the student's life. These include competition performance, daily practices, contributions to the dojo and to others, contributions to the organizations of judo, and the like. Rank, in turn, is symbolized in judo through the various colors of the belt.

The ranking system in judo includes two types of ranks -kyu and dan grades. The dan grades are the more senior grades of judo, and are signified by the wearing of the black belt. High dan holders from 6th to 8th dan have the option of wearing a checkered red-and-white belt instead of their black belt; 9th and 10th dan holders have the option of wearing a red belt.

The kyu grades are signified by non-black belt colors. The original system of judo developed in Japan included 6 kyu ranks. In current-day judo around the world, however, each country is recognized to have its own ranking system, and its own promotion policies and criteria. Thus, different organizations have different numbers of kyu ranks. In addition, different countries and organizations have different belt colors for the various kyu ranks, and these may differ for juniors and seniors. The only common denominator across countries and organizations is that all beginners begin at white belt, and all dan holders wear a black belt.

Kyu ranks go backwards as rank increases. Thus, 6th kyu is a lower rank than 1st kyu. Dan ranks, however, go up. Thus, 5th dan is a higher rank than 1st dan. While there are variations across countries, many use these guidelines in conferring different colored belts to each of the ranks.

While each country and organization has its own criteria and policies for the conferral of rank, there is a general consensus that the change from kyu to dan, that is, from 1st kyu to 1st dan, represents a qualitative development in the student. The student awarded the black belt has developed some degree of proficiency in the various techniques of judo. In particular, he or she will have developed one or several tokui waza, and will have demonstrated its effectiveness in competition against same rank opponents. More importantly, this student will have shown enough maturity, commitment, and fortitude to be a serious student of judo, having internalized some of the values and ethics of the educational system of judo. While the general public often believes that wearing a black belt means that one is an expert, in reality the

awarding of the 1st degree black belt in judo signifies instead that the student is now truly ready to begin learning judo.

### **Promotion and Rank at Southwest Judo Academy**

At Southwest Judo Academy, rank promotion is at the sole discretion of the Sensei, and in general it is considered poor manners to ask to be promoted. Students will be given the promotion exam study guide to know what will be expected and covered. Under normal conditions, a Sensei will nominate a student for a particular rank or color belt, and gain consensus from other Sensei's based on:

Age and time in current rank (white belt is considered a rank)

Juniors (<17 years old) – Attendance, attitude, participation, techniques and knowledge

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Juniors (< 17 years old) - attendance, attitude, participation, techniques, and knowledge.

How many classes have you attended or how long have you been at your current rank?

What is your character or behavior while at the dojo and in class?

we follow the USA Judo colored belt grading system.

**Kyu - Junior / Senior** (non-black belt rank). Typically, the interim two-color belts are used as an incentives and indication of progress for junior students.

- White – junior / senior
- White / Yellow
- Yellow
- Yellow / Orange
- Orange
- Orange / Green
- Green
- Green / Blue

- Blue
- Purple (Sankyu, Nikyu, Ikkyu)
- Brown (Sankyu, Nikyu, Ikkyu) – junior / senior

**Dan – Junior / Senior** (black belt rank)

- Shodan                    1<sup>st</sup> degree      Black belt
- Nidan                    2<sup>nd</sup> degree      Black belt
- Sandan                  3<sup>rd</sup> degree      Black belt
- Yodan                    4<sup>th</sup> degree      Black belt
- Godan                    5<sup>th</sup> degree      Black belt
- Rokyudan               6<sup>th</sup> degree      Black belt or Red & White alternate stripes
- Shichidan               7<sup>th</sup> degree      Black belt or Red & White alternate stripes
- Hachidan               8<sup>th</sup> degree      Black belt or Red & White alternate stripes
- Kudan                    9<sup>th</sup> degree      Black belt or Red belt
- Judan                    10<sup>th</sup> degree     Black belt or Red belt

**Promotions**

Promotion is a function of time in grade, tournament record, verbal and technique knowledge, ability to execute techniques and katas, attendance, participation, and contribution to further the sport of judo. In the earlier ranks, it is based more on attendance, participation, ability to demonstrate what has been taught. As judoka (judo students / practitioners) advance to higher ranks, then more emphasis will be placed on tournament records, katas, and contribution.

In order to provide a systematic and objective means for promotion, SouthWest Judo Academy will hold quarterly promotion testing. Test dates will be posted. Our instructors will meet quarterly to recommend students for promotion, will notify those selected, and provide them the required test materials (see below).

Testing will be conducted during class session for kyu ranks and separately for dan ranks. For kyu ranks, a single Sensei will conduct the test, while with dan ranks, a review board will oversee the test.

Promotion forms and fees will be completed and submitted after the successful completion of the test.

**Promotion Test Study Material**

**VOCABULARY**

Rank	English	Japanese
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Rokyu - 6th	Begin	Hajime
(White/Yellow)	Stop	Matte
	Judo instructor	Sensei
	Judo school	Dojo
	Attention	Kiotsuke
	Bow	Rei
	Technique	Waza
	Count to 10	Ichi, Ni, San, Shi, Go, Roku, Shichi, Hachi, Ku, Ju
Gokyu-5th	Sitting formally	Seiza (kneeling)
(Yellow)	Sitting cross-legged	Anza (legs crossed)
	Judo uniform	Judo gi
	Judo player	Judoka
	Judo mat	Tatame
(Yellow/Orange)	Person throwing	Tori
	Person falling or receiving throw	Uke
	Falling methods	Ukemi
	Forward rolling fall	Zempo Kaiten ukemi
	Side fall	Yoko ukemi
	Backward fall	Koho or Ushiro ukemi
Yonkyu-4th	Tournament	Shiai
(Orange)	Prearranged forms of practice	Kata
	Hold down	Osaekomi
	Hold down broken	Osaekomi Toketa
	Full point	Ippon
	Half point	Waza ari
	Quarter point	Yuko
	That is all	Sore Made
Sankyu-3rd	Normal walking	Ayumi ashi
(Green)	Sliding foot walking	Tsugi ashi
	Minor infraction or penalty	Shido
	Disqualification	Hansokumake
	Decision	Hontai
	Don't move	Sono Mama
	Continue	Yoshii
	Throwing techniques	Nage waza
	Hand / Hand techniques	Te / Te waza
	Foot / Foot techniques	Ashi / Ashi waza
	Fundamental natural posture	Shizen Hontai
	Fundamental defensive posture	Jigo Hontai

(Green/Blue)	Big or Major	O
	Small or Minor	Ko
	Hip / Hip Techniques	Goshi / Goshi waza
	Sweep	Gari
	Outside	Soto
	Inside	Uchi
	Internal force or energy	Ki
	Shout to gather inner strength	Kiai
	Favorite technique	Tokui waza
Nikyu-2nd	Repetitive attacking practice w/o throw	Uchikomi
(Blue)	Repetitive throwing practice w/o resistance	Nage komi
	Side	Yoko
	Non-black belt ranks	Kyu grades
	Black belt degree ranks	Dan
	Black belt rank holder	Yudansha
	Non-black belt rank holder	Mudansha
Ikkyu-1st	Kneeling bow	Zarei
(Purple)	Standing bow	Ritsurei
	Knee	Hiza
	Wheel	Guruma

### General Questions

Rank	Question	Answer
Rokyu - 6th	Who was the founder of Judo?	Jigoro Kano
(White/Yellow)	Which country did judo start?	Japan
	What was the name of the judo school he started?	Kodokan
	What martial art did judo come from?	Jujitsu
	What 3 things are important for your promotion?	Attitude, Attendance, Participation
Gokyu-5th (Y)	In what year was the school started?	1882
(Yellow/Orange)	For how many years were martial arts practiced?	600-1000 years
Yonkyu-4th (O)	Name the 3 parts of a judo throw in Japanese/English	Kazushi/Off-balance, Tsukuri/Entrance, Kake/ Execution

Sankyu-3rd (G)	Name 2 divisions of judo techniques in Japanese/English	Nage waza/Throwing, Katame waza/Ground or Mat
	Name 4 division of standing techniques in Japanese/English	Koshi waza/Hip, Te waza/Hand, Sutemi waza/Sacrifice, Ashi waza/Foot
(Green/Blue)	Name 3 divisions of ground techniques in Japanese/English	Osae waza/Pinning, Shime waza/Choking, Kansetsu waza/Armlock
Nikyu-2nd	What are Jigoro Kano's two basic principles for judo?	Jita Kyoei/Mutual Benefit and Welfare; Seiryoku Zenyo/Maximum Efficiency
(Blue)	In what year was Men's judo introduced in the Olympics?	1964 - Tokyo, Japan
	In what year was Women's judo introduced in the Olympics?	1992 - Barcelona, Spain
	Name the four men on the first US Olympic team	Paul Maruyama-lightweight, Jim Bregman-middleweight, George Harris-Heavyweight, Ben Campbell-Open
Ikkyu- 1st (P)	See above	

## Demonstration

Rank	Ukemi Waza
Rokyu - 6th	Ushiro / Koho ukemi (backward); Yoko ukemi (side)
(white / yellow)	Yoko ukemi – L & R
Gokyu-5th (Y)	Zempo Kaiten ukemi - stay down (forward rolling fall)
(Yellow/Orange)	Zempo Kaiten ukemi – stay down (L&R)
Yonkyu-4th (O)	Zempo Kaiten ukemi – to stand up position
(Orange/Green)	
Sankyu-3 <sup>rd</sup> (G)	Zempo Kaiten ukemi – to stand up position (L&R)
Nikyu-2 <sup>nd</sup> (B)	Mai ukemi – kneeling (front fall)
Ikkyu-1st (P)	Mai Ukemi (front fall – standing)
Rank	Nage Waza

Rokyu - 6th	O Goshi Major-big hip throw
(White/Yellow)	
Gokyu-5th (Y)	Ippon seoi nage / One arm shoulder throw
(Yellow/Orange)	O soto gari / Major-Big outside reaping
	O uchi gari / Major-Big inside reaping
Yonkyu-4th (O)	Morote seoi nage / two arm shoulder throw
	Ko uchi gari / minor-small inside reaping
	Koshi guruma / hip wheel - headlock hip throw
Sankyu-3rd (G)	Uki goshi / floating hip throw
	Tani otoshi / valley drop-counter throw
	Deashi harai-barai / advancing foot sweep
	Tomoe nage / circle throw
(Green/Blue)	Okuri ashi harai-barai / sliding sideways foot sweep
	Tai otoshi / body drop
	Sasae tsurikomi ashi / supporting foot lift pull
	Combination Ippon seoi nage to O soto gari
Nikyu-2nd (B)	Hiza garuma / knee wheel
	Ko soto gari / Minor-small outside reaping
Ikkyu-1st (P)	Combination - Ippon seoi nage to Ko uchi gari
	Combination - O soto gari to Sasae tsuri komi ashi
	Combination - Ouchi gari to Ko uchi gari
<b>Rank</b>	<b>Katame Waza</b>
Sankyu-3rd (G)	Leg entanglement escape from Kamishiho gatame
	Tate shiho gatame / lower four corner-straddle
(Green/Blue)	Sankaku gatame / triangle hold
Nikyu-2nd (B)	
Ikkyu-1st (P)	Sankaku gatame turn over to hold down

