

USA Karate National Office
1631 Mesa Avenue, Suite A
Colorado Springs, CO 80906



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USA KARATE Dan Certification HOMOLOGATION, TESTING AND PROCEDURES

The following is the testing protocol and statement of requirements for the USA Karate Dan (rank) Certification Program. The goal of the program is to encourage a broad understanding of the different styles which make up modern Karate-do, as well as apply consistent standards for evaluation.

DAN HOMOLOGATION

USA Karate may homologate (grant reciprocity) to persons possessing a valid Dan Certificate from their style/parent karate organization. If a person wishes to have their current USA Karate Dan Grade homologated to the WKF, please visit your Sport80 profile at www.usankf.org and go to Dan Resources, where you can submit the brief application and pay the required fee.

Persons who possess a 1st, 2nd or 3rd Dan from their style/parent karate organization, can apply to have their current Dan certificate homologated. Upon receipt of their existing certificate (submit a picture through email), application and payment, they will be issued an official USA Karate Dan Certificate, and their name will be added to the official USA Karate list of Dan holders. No additional test or action is required. The same applies for Junior Dan certificates, for those karateka under the age of 18.

Persons who possess a 4th or 5th Dan certificate from their style/parent karate organization and wish to possess a USA Karate Dan Certificate, must submit their application and payment. Upon receipt, the National Office will notify the Dan Certification Coordinator. The Dan Certification Coordinator will review the application and documents to determine/verify the validity of the homologation of the 4th or 5th external Dan Certificate OR state that a Dan Test is required. (See Dan Testing and Fees info below)

DAN TESTING

Persons who wish to be tested (either because they do not possess a 1st, 2nd or 3rd Dan Certificate from any other organization, or for 4th or 5th Dan holders who the Dan Certification Coordinator determined need to test), may apply and the following procedure will be



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followed: The applicant must fill out the application and submit payment. Please visit your Sport80 profile at www.usankf.org and go to Dan Resources, where you can submit the brief application and pay the required fee. The National Office will notify the Dan Certification Coordinator and they will assemble a testing panel. The testing panel will consist of 3-4 content experts, in addition to the Coordinator, selected from the official USA Karate List of Examiners. Dan testing will take place 2-3 times a year at USA Karate Signature Events (USA Open, Nationals, etc.), dates and criteria would be published in advance and available on www.usankf.org

Dan Certificates would be awarded in person at these signature events. If an applicant cannot be present to receive their certificate it will be mailed. Please see testing criteria below for more specific information.

HONORARY

In the case of 6th Dans or higher, USA Karate feels these are honorary degrees, and are only given upon the recommendation and approval of the organization. No fee or test required. A candidate for 6th Dan or higher may be recommended by another person or may self-nominate. These nominations are reviewed by the Dan Certification Coordinator, a group of 3-4 Examiners (the person nominated must recuse themselves) and must be approved by the President and/or Board of Directors. These honorary certificates will be given out at the next Signature Event after the approval. In the event the honoree is not able to attend, they will be mailed.

FEES:

1 st , 2 nd or 3 rd Dan:	\$250
4 th or 5 th Dan:	\$500
Junior Dan (under 18):	\$150

Note: if a Junior Dan certificate holder later wishes to get a 1st, 2nd or 3rd Dan Certificate, they need only pay the difference in cost.

THE TESTING PANEL

Upon receiving applications, the National Office will notify the Dan Certification Coordinator and he or she will assemble a testing panel. The testing panel will consist of 3-4 content experts, in addition to the Coordinator, selected from the official USA Karate List of



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Examiners and/or Master's Caucus. The USA Karate Dan Certification testing shall be conducted at USA Karate Signature Events; Junior International Cup, USA Open International Karate Championship, and USA National Karate Championship and/or Team trials.

The USA Karate Board of Directors reserves the right to add or remove examiners from the List of Examiners. USA Karate may establish regional Examining Boards from time to time, to administer testing between Signature Events.

The USA Karate Panel of Examiners may certify an applicant's rank from Junior Shodan (Junior 1st Dan) and Shodan (1st Dan) to Kyu-dan (9th Dan).

THE TESTING PROCESS

Candidates must be members in good standing of USA Karate. Candidates must hold an existing karate rank from their organization and validate that rank by presenting a copy of their karate rank certificate and/or verifiable evidence of current rank. Candidates will submit the USA Karate Dan Certification application online and, if requested, provide other documentation as required for consideration.

Candidates who seek Homologation (reciprocity) recognition for the ranks of Junior Shodan (Junior 1st Dan), Shodan (1st Dan), Nidan (2nd Dan), and Sandan (3rd Dan) and who meet USA Karate Homologation recognition criteria are eligible to receive a USA Karate Dan Certificate without completing performance requirements or taking a test.

TESTING REQUIREMENTS

Candidates seeking **USA Karate Dan Rank Certification** (if they do not possess a rank or certificate from their style and wish to test) and/or those seeking Yondan (4th Dan) and higher shall be evaluated in accordance with the following requirements:

Note for Junior 1st – 5th Dan:

If the candidate opts to demonstrate free sparring, then the Panel of Examiners will select an opponent from the candidate pool to spar with the candidate under examination. The free sparring bout will not exceed one- and one-half minutes running time and will not be stopped and scored. The candidate must demonstrate control, skill, strategy and technique appropriate to the rank.



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If the candidate opts to demonstrate Ippon Kumite, then the candidate shall bring a partner to demonstrate such techniques to the Examining Board. The candidate shall demonstrate 1 Step/Partner- Drill Sparring techniques, which must include varied punching and kicking attacks to the head and midsection.

Junior Shodan (Junior 1st Dan) Level:

- Minimum age 12 and up to 15 years
- Demonstrate/Perform one Kata from candidate's style with skill appropriate to the rank.
- Demonstrate either Jiyu Kumite (Free Sparring) or 5 Ippon Kumite Techniques (1 Step/Partner-Drill Sparring) at the option of the candidate.

Shodan (1st Dan) Level:

- Minimum age is 16 years old
- Demonstrate/Perform one Kata from candidate's style with skill appropriate to the rank.
- Demonstrate either Jiyu Kumite (Free Sparring) or 5 Ippon Kumite Techniques (1 Step/Partner-Drill Sparring) at the option of the candidate

Nidan (2nd Dan) Level:

- Minimum age is 18 years old
- Minimum of two years at Shodan rank to be eligible for promotion
- Demonstrate/Perform one Kata from candidate's style with skill appropriate to rank
- Demonstrate Bunkai of the demonstrated Kata from the candidates style and respond to questions on the application and principles of the Kata
- Demonstrate either Jiyu Kumite (Free Sparring) or 5 Ippon Kumite Techniques (1 Step/Partner-Drill Sparring) at the option of the candidate

Sandan (3rd Dan) Level:

- Minimum age is 21 years old
- Minimum of three years at Nidan rank to be eligible for promotion
- Demonstrate/Perform two Katas from candidate's style with skill appropriate to rank.
- Demonstrate Bunkai of one of the Katas performed and respond to questions on the application and principles of the Kata.
- Demonstrate either Jiyu Kumite (Free Sparring) or 10 Ippon Kumite Techniques (1 Step/Partner-Drill Sparring) at the option of the candidate



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Yondan (4th Dan) Level:

- Minimum age is 25 years old
- Minimum of four years at Sandan rank to be eligible for promotion
- Demonstrate/Perform two Katas: one from candidate's style and another one from another style with skill appropriate to rank.
- Demonstrate Bunkai of one of the Katas performed and respond to questions on the application and principles of the Kata.
- Demonstrate either Jiyu Kumite (Free Sparring) or 10 Ippon Kumite Techniques (1 Step/Partner-Drill Sparring) at the option of the candidate
- Provide written essay explaining history of the candidate's style of Karate and/or lineage

Godan (5th Dan) Level:

- Minimum age is 30 years old
- Minimum of five years at Yondan rank to be eligible for promotion
- Demonstrate/Perform three Katas: two Katas from candidate's style and another one from another style with skill appropriate to rank.
- Demonstrate Bunkai of one of the Katas performed and respond to questions on the application and principles of the Kata.
- Demonstrate either Jiyu Kumite (Free Sparring) or 10 Ippon Kumite Techniques (1 Step/Partner-Drill Sparring) at the option of the candidate
- Provide written essay explaining history of the candidate's style of Karate and/or lineage

Rokudan (6th Dan) Level:

- Minimum age is 36 years old
- Minimum of six years at Godan rank to be eligible for promotion
- Demonstrate/Perform three Katas: two Katas from candidate's style and another one from another style with skill appropriate to rank
- Demonstrate Bunkai of one of the Katas performed and respond to questions on the application and principles of the Kata
- Demonstrate 10 Ippon Kumite Techniques (1 Step/Partner-Drill Sparring) with skill appropriate to rank
- Provide written essay explaining history of the candidate's style of Karate and/or lineage



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Nanadan (7th Dan) Level:

- Minimum age is 43 years old
- Minimum of seven years at Rokyudan rank to be eligible for promotion
- Demonstrate/Perform three Katas: two Katas from candidate's style and one from another style with skill appropriate to rank
- Demonstrate Bunkai of one of the Katas performed and respond to questions on the application and principles of the Kata
- Demonstrate 10 Ippon Kumite Techniques (1 Step/Partner-Drill Sparring) with skill appropriate to rank
- Provide written essay explaining history of the candidate's style of Karate and/or lineage

Hachidan (8th Dan) Level:

- Minimum age is 55 years old
- Minimum of ten years at Nanadan rank to be eligible for promotion
- Demonstrate/Perform three Katas: one from candidate's style and two from two other styles with skill appropriate to rank
- Provide written essay explaining history of the candidate's style of Karate and/or lineage
- Provide written materials summarizing Karate experience, history, and contributions to the Art

Kyudan (9th Dan) Level:

- Minimum age is 68 years old
- Minimum of thirteen years at Hachidan rank to be eligible for promotion
- Demonstrate/Perform three Katas: one from candidate's style and two from two other styles with skill appropriate to rank
- Present/explain general history of the candidate's style of Karate and/or lineage
- Provide written materials summarizing Karate experience, history, and contributions to the Art



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USA Karate Dan Certification Eligibility Chart		
CERTIFICATION LEVEL	ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW	PERFORMANCE/APPROVAL
Cross Rank Certification Process for Jr.1 st through 3 rd Dan Levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USA Karate Member in good standing • Approved credentials consisting of current rank diploma and approved letter from USA Karate recognized member school and/or organization • Completed application • Certification fee payment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance evaluation not required • USA Karate Dan Certification Coordinator and Panel approval required
Full USA Karate Dan Certification for all Dan Levels (Jr. 1 st through 9 th Dan)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USA Karate Member in good standing • Approved credentials consisting of current rank diploma from USA Karate recognized member school and/or organization or your current Karate Dan Certification • Completed application • Certification fee payment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance evaluation required with USA Karate Dan Certification Coordinator • See USA Karate Dan Certification Requirements