



USA Karate Kumite Competition

Examination questions for Kumite Referees & Judges January 2025

The answer paper must be returned to the examiners if the test is taken at a USA Karate Signature Event. All answers must be entered on a separate answer paper only. You must ensure that your name and other required information are entered on the answer paper.

You may not have additional papers or books on your desk while taking this examination. Speaking to another candidate or copying another's paper during the examination will result in suspension and automatic failure. If you are unsure of the correct procedures or have questions about any examination aspect, you should speak only to an examiner or the RC Secretary.

The questions in this document are based on the USA Karate Rules of Competition (USA Rules). The USA Karate Rules consist of the World Karate Federation (WKF) Competition Rules for Kumite, modified by USA Rules. Consult the WKF Rules first, then the USA Rules. Where the USA Rules are more specific or address a subject not addressed by the WKF Rules, the USA Rules are applied.

KUMITE KARATE EXAMINATION

“TRUE OR FALSE”

On the answer paper, put an “X” in the appropriate box. A question's answer is true only if it can be held to be true in all situations; otherwise, it is considered false. Each correct answer scores one point.

- 1 The USA Karate Rules of Competition shall be used for all non-elite divisions at USA Karate Signature Events
- 2 The bout duration for all non-elite USA Karate bouts is one minute thirty seconds.
- 3 A competitor who has trained for more than four years but less than five years is placed in the intermediate division.
- 4 A competitor who has trained for under four years but has achieved the rank of 1st kyu, must be placed in an advanced division.
- 5 The competition area must be an eight-meter matted square.
- 6 The competition area must be a ten-meter matted square.
- 7 The competition area may be elevated to a height of up to one meter above floor level.
- 8 The competition area may be elevated to a height of up to two meters above floor level.
- 9 If the competition area is elevated the safety area shall be increased to a minimum of two (2) meters.
- 10 If the competition area is elevated the safety area shall be increased to a minimum of three (3) meters.
- 11 Competitors, Officials and Coaches may only wear religious headwear that has been approved by USA Karate.
- 12 All competitors may wear a white unmarked Karate-Gi without stripes or piping or personal embroidery.
- 13 One competitor must wear a red belt and the other a blue belt. The red and blue belts must be around five centimeters wide and of a length sufficient to allow fifteen centimeters free on each side of the knot and not longer than three-quarters thigh length.

- 14 The Karate-Gi jacket must be more than three-quarters thigh length.
- 15 The Karate-Gi jacket, when tightened around the waist with the belt, must be of minimum length that covers the hips, but must not be more than three-quarters thigh length
- 16 At the beginning of a bout Jackets without ties can be used.
- 17 A competitor does not need to change the jacket if ties are torn off during the match.
- 18 The maximum length of the Karate-Gi jacket sleeves must be no longer than the bend of the wrist and no shorter than halfway down the forearm.
- 19 If a competitor's Karate-Gi jacket sleeves are too long and a suitable replacement cannot be found in time the Referee can allow him to turn them up on the inside.
- 20 The Karate-Gi trousers must be long enough to cover at least two-thirds of the shin and must not reach below the ankle bone.
- 21 The Karate-Gi trousers must be long enough to cover at least half of the shin and must not reach below the ankle bone.
- 22 Hair slides ("scrunchies") are prohibited, as are metal hair grips ("barrettes").
- 23 Mouthguards are required in all divisions.
- 24 Competitors under the age of 16 must wear a USA Karate approved helmet.
- 25 Competitors may wear glasses at their own risk.
- 26 If a competitor comes into the match area inappropriately dressed, the competitor shall be given two minutes to remedy matters.
- 27 Competitors that appear at the competition area with unauthorized equipment or irregular Karate-Gi will be given one minute to correct the attire, and the Coach will automatically lose the right to coach that bout.
- 28 If the competitor is identified as inappropriately dressed, the competitor automatically forfeits the presence of their Coach during that match.
- 29 Cameras and phones may not be used while Coaches are on the competition floor
- 30 Disqualification by KIKEN means that the competitors are disqualified from that category, although it does not affect participation in another category.
- 31 Male teams must have at least three competitors, and female teams must have at least two competitors.
- 32 Male teams must have at least four competitors, and female teams must have at least three competitors.
- 33 In team matches, the fighting order may be changed each round.

- 34 A team shall be disqualified (HANSOKU) if any of its members or its Coach changes the team's composition without submitting the written fighting order before the match.
- 35 In the four judge system, the Referee Panel for each bout shall consist of one Referee, four Judges and one Kansa.
- 36 In the four judge system, the Referee Panel of a Kumite bout shall consist of a Referee, four Judges, a Kansa and a Score Keeper.
- 37 At the start of a kumite match, the KANSA will line up together with the Referee and the Judges.
- 38 In team matches, provided that the entire Panel holds the required qualification, the positions of Referee and Judges must be rotated between each bout.
- 39 In team matches, provided that the entire Panel holds the required qualification, the positions of Referee and Judges may be rotated between each bout.
- 40 The scorekeeper shall give signals by a clearly audible gong or buzzer indicating "15 seconds to go" or "time up."
- 41 An audible signal will be given by the timekeeper 15 seconds before the end of the bout and the Referee will announce "ATOSHI BARAKU".
- 42 The Kansa shall give signals by a clearly audible gong or buzzer indicating "15 seconds to go" or "time up."
- 43 Competitors are not entitled to a period of time between matches, equal to the standard duration time of the match, for purpose of rest.
- 44 Competitors are entitled to one minute thirty seconds (1:30) between bouts for the purpose of rest and equipment changes. When the color of equipment is being changed, the time is extended to three minutes.
- 45 Competitors are entitled to one minute thirty seconds (1:30) between bouts for the purpose of rest and equipment changes. When the color of equipment is being changed, the time is extended to five minutes.
- 46 KIKEN is the decision given, when a competitor or competitors fail to present themselves when called, are unable to continue, abandon the bout, or are withdrawn on the order of the Tournament Doctor.
- 47 Forfeiture by KIKEN means that the competitors are disqualified from that category and they may not participate in another category during the tournament.
- 48 The competitors must bow properly to each other at the start and the end of the bout.

- 49 A competitor who establishes a clear lead of eight points is declared the winner.
- 50 The first competitor to score 8 points will be declared the winner.
- 51 The referee and the four judges will immediately give the signal after the Referee calls for "HANTEI" when he/she blows the whistle.
- 52 The Referee shall call "YAME" when a competitor has contravened the rules.
- 53 The Referee will call YAME when one or both competitors are off their feet following a fall or attempted throw and begin to wrestle.
- 54 In the four judge system, the Referee shall call "YAME" when two judges indicate a foul.
- 55 When a competitor seizes the opponent, the Referee will give several seconds for the competitor to perform a throw or technique.
- 56 The Referee will call YAME when a competitor seizes the opponent and does not perform an immediate technique or throw.
- 57 The Referee will call "YAME" when both competitors seize or clinch with each other without immediately succeeding in executing a throw or a scoring technique or respond to WAKARETE.
- 58 The Referee shall call "YAME" when he/she sees a point scored.
- 59 The Referee shall call "YAME" when a score is indicated by two or more Judges for the same competitor.
- 60 The Referee shall call "YAME" when requested to do so by KANSA or the Tatami Manager.
- 61 A competitor who is hurt through their own fault and exaggerates the effect should receive a warning or penalty for MUBOBI or exaggeration but not both.
- 62 A fast combination of CHUDAN GERI and TSUKI each of which score in their own right will be given IPPON.
- 63 If a competitor scores with more than one consecutive technique before the bout has been stopped, the competitor will be awarded the successful scoring technique of the higher point value.
- 64 If a competitor scores with more than one consecutive technique before the bout has been stopped, the competitor will be awarded the successful scoring technique of the lower point value.
- 65 Only the first correctly executed technique of a combination will score.

- 66 In Senior matches a light “glove touch” to the throat need not result in a warning or penalty provided there is no actual injury
- 67 A technique that lands on the shoulder blades may score
- 68 Ippon is awarded for any scoring technique delivered on an opponent while any part of the opponent’s body, other than their feet, except for Hiza-Gamae (one knee touching while executing a technique), is on the tatami.
- 69 IPPON is worth three points.
- 70 WAZA-ARI is worth two points.
- 71 YUKO is worth one point.
- 72 There are five criteria to be met in determining a score.
- 73 There are six criteria to be met in determining a score.
- 74 Strength, speed and balance are the only criteria considered in evaluating a score.
- 75 Good form means delivering a technique when it will have the greatest potential effect.
- 76 A loss of breath by the recipient of a blow indicates a lack of control.
- 77 For competitors age 16 and older, techniques to the JODAN area can score when stopped within 5 cm of the target for kicks and 2 cm for hand techniques but may be delivered with light touch (skin touch) without causing impact.
- 78 For competitors age 16 and older, techniques to the JODAN area can score when stopped within 10 cm of the target for kicks and 5 cm for hand techniques but may be delivered with light touch (skin touch) without causing impact.
- 79 For 12-14 to 15-year-old competitors, “skin touch” is allowed for kicks only. Hand contact to the head will be penalized.
- 80 Skin touch is defined as touching the target without transferring energy into the head or body.
- 81 A technique that is executed after the time-up signal or the Referee calling “YAME” is invalid.
- 82 A technique even if effective, delivered after an order to suspend or halt the bout shall not be scored and may result in a penalty being imposed on the offender.
- 83 An effective technique delivered at the same time that the end of the bout is signaled is considered valid.
- 84 No technique, even if technically correct, shall be scored if it is delivered when the two competitors are outside the competition area.

- 85 A technique, delivered by a competitor who is lying on the ground, may be awarded if it meets all six scoring criteria.
- 86 Divisions for 13 and under are not permitted to attempt leg sweeps of any kind.
- 87 A kick in the groin will not result in a penalty provided the offender did not do it intentionally.
- 88 Techniques executed after “WAKARETE” but before “TSUZUKETE” has been called are prohibited.
- 89 If a competitor has been physically propelled from the area, Jogai will be given.
- 90 JOGAI occurs when a competitor's exit from the competition area (JOGAI) is not caused by the opponent.
- 91 Passivity cannot be given if there is fewer than 15 seconds left in the match.
- 92 Grabbing the opponent with both hands is never allowed during the match.
- 93 Grabbing the opponent’s arm or Karate-Gi with one hand is prohibited unless the competitor immediately attempts a scoring technique or takedown.
- 94 Simulated attacks with the head, knees, or elbows are offenses.
- 95 A competitor can be given SHIKKAKU if the behavior of the coach or noncombatant members of the competitor’s delegation is considered to harm the prestige and honor of Karate-do.
- 96 There are two types of informal warnings.
- 97 TSUZUKETE, unless preceded by WAKARETE, is not used if there is fewer than 15 seconds left of the bout.
- 98 TSUZUKETE is used any time during the bout to encourage the competitors to commence activity.
- 99 An otherwise correctly executed technique will not be given a score if executed at the same time as WAKARETE has been called.
- 100 There are two degrees of official warnings.
- 101 HANSOKU-CHUI is given for more serious infractions that reduces the other competitor’s chances of winning.
- 102 CHUI is given, up to three times, for smaller infractions.
- 103 HANSOKU CHUI cannot be given if three CHUI have not already been given.

- 104 HANSOKU is imposed for serious rules infractions.
- 105 Where contact is considered by the Referee to be too strong, but does not diminish the Competitor's chances of winning, a warning (CHUI) can be given.
- 106 A competitor who refuses to follow the orders of the Referee will automatically receive HANSOKU.
- 107 There are a total of six penalties that can be issued by the Referee (three Chui, Hansoku-Chui, Hansoku, and Shikkaku).
- 108 SHIKKAKU can only be imposed after a warning has been given.
- 109 If a competitor acts maliciously, HANSOKU is the correct penalty.
- 110 If a competitor acts maliciously, SHIKKAKU and not HANSOKU is the correct penalty.
- 111 A competitor who acts maliciously or commits an act which harms the prestige and honor of Karate will be given HANSOKU.
- 112 A competitor who acts maliciously or commits an act which harms the prestige and honor of Karate will be given SHIKKAKU.
- 113 When a situation appears to possibly warrant a disqualification the Referee can call one or more of judges for a brief consultation (FUKUSHIN SHUGO) before announcing any decision.
- 114 Where contact is considered by the Referee to be too strong, but does not diminish the competitor's chances of winning, a warning (CHUI) may be given
- 115 Any technique, which results in an injury, unless caused by the recipient cause a warning or penalty.
- 116 A competitor may be penalized for exaggeration even when there is an actual injury.
- 117 An obvious display of exaggeration will receive a CHUI.
- 118 An obvious display of exaggeration will receive a HANSOKU CHUI.
- 119 A serious exaggeration may receive a HANSOKU.
- 120 Any instance of feigning an injury, however slight, will receive a minimum warning of HANSOKU CHUI.
- 121 Any instance of feigning an injury, however slight, will receive a minimum warning of CHUI.
- 122 An obvious display of any feigning such as staggering around, falling on the floor, standing up and falling down again, and so on, will receive SHIKKAKU directly.

- 123 Any feigning of an injury from a technique that in fact has been determined by the judges as a point will, as a minimum, result in HANSOKU CHUI.
- 124 Any feigning of an injury from a technique that in fact has been determined by the judges as a point will, as a minimum, result in HANSOKU.
- 125 A “skin touch” to the throat is only allowed in Senior competition.
- 126 Holding a competitor with two hands is never permitted.
- 127 Holding on to the opponent’s Karate-Gi with one hand is permitted to break a fall.
- 128 A competitor who delivers a scoring technique and then exits the area before the Referee calls “YAME” will be given the value of the score and JOGAI will not be imposed.
- 129 If AO exits or has exited as AKA’s score is made (with AKA remaining within the area), then both AKA’s score will be awarded and AO’s JOGAI will be imposed.
- 130 A warning or penalty for MUBOBI is given when a competitor is hurt or injured through his or her own fault or negligence.
- 131 There are no circumstances in which a technique that has made excessive contact can be given a score.
- 132 Passivity can be given to any competitor at any time.
- 133 Passivity cannot be given during the first 15 seconds of a bout.
- 134 Avoiding combat with fewer than 15 seconds of the bout (ATO SHIBARAKU) will, as a minimum, result in CHUI and loss of SENSHU.
- 135 Avoiding combat with fewer than 15 seconds of the bout (ATO SHIBARAKU) will, as a minimum, result in HANSOKU CHUI and loss of SENSHU.
- 136 “Avoiding Combat” refers to a situation where a competitor attempts to prevent the opponent from having the opportunity to score by using time wasting behavior.
- 137 A competitor who refuses to follow the instructions of the Referee or displays a loss of temper will automatically receive SHIKKAKU. This penalty may be imposed before, during or after the bout.
- 138 Any excessive celebration, such as falling on one’s knees etc., political, or religious expressions, during or immediately after the bout or match, are prohibited and may be subject to a fine equal to the protest fee determined by the USANKF Board of Directors.
- 139 If physically able to do so, the injured competitor should be directed off the mat for

examination and treatment by the doctor.

- 140 When a competitor is injured during a bout in progress and needs medical treatment three minutes will be given in which to receive it, after that the Referee will decide whether the competitor will be declared unfit to fight or whether more time will be given.
- 141 If a competitor does not regain his or her feet within ten seconds, the Referee will announce “KIKEN” and “KACHI” to the opponent.
- 142 In the event that a competitor falls, is thrown, or knocked down and does not regain his/her feet immediately, the Referee will call the doctor, and at the same time start a count to ten indicating his/her count showing a finger for each second.
- 143 The Tatami Manager must notify the Chief Referee (or central table) when a competitor has been stopped from further competition based on the 10-second rule.
- 144 When the "10 second" count has expired, the Judges will immediately signal their decision for Kiken, Hansoku or Shikkaku.
- 145 When the "10 second" count has expired, the Referee will decide the winner on the basis of Kiken, Hansoku or Shikkaku.
- 146 In team matches if two competitors injure each other and cannot continue and the points score is equal the Referee will announce HIKIWAKE.
- 147 An injured competitor who has been declared unfit to fight by the Tournament Doctor cannot fight again in that competition.
- 148 If two or more Judges signal a score for the same competitor, the Referee must stop the bout.
- 149 If one competitor has a score indicated by more than one Judge and the score is different between the Judges, the lower will be applied.
- 150 If there is majority, but disagreement, among the Judges for one level of score, the majority opinion will always overrule the principle of applying the highest score.
- 151 If a bout ends in a tie with no Senshu, and if the number of IPPONs and WAZA ARIs are equal, the winner will be decided by HANTEI.
- 152 In any bout, if after full time the scores are equal, but one competitor has obtained “first unopposed score advantage” (SENSHU), that competitor will be declared the winner.
- 153 By “first unopposed score advantage” (SENSHU) it is understood that one competitor has achieved the first instance of scoring on the opponent without having the opponent also score before the signal.

- 154 Where both competitors score before the signal, no “first unopposed score advantage” (SENSHU) is awarded and both competitors retain the possibility of SENSHU later in the bout.
- 155 In individual categories a bout can be declared a tie.
- 156 If there are no points at the end of a bout in team matches the Referee will call for HANTEI.
- 157 In any individual bout, with equal score, and no SENSHU by either Competitor, the first criteria of the decision will be made based on the higher number of IPPON scored in the bout.
- 158 At HANTEI if three Judges signal victory for AKA and the fourth Judge signals victory for AO, the Referee must give victory for AKA.
- 159 The Referee declares the winner; “AO (AKA) NO KACHI”, and if necessary, breaks the tie in case of HANTEI.
- 160 The Referee breaks the tie in case of HANTEI.
- 161 If SENSHU is withdrawn when there is fewer than 15 seconds left of the bout, no further SENSHU can be awarded to either competitor.
- 162 The winning team is the one with the most bout victories, excluding those won by SENSHU.
- 163 In team matches, if after the extra bout there are no scores, or if the score is equal with no SENSHU, the match will be decided by HANTEI.
- 164 In Female team matches if a team wins two bouts, then the match is over at that point.
- 165 The competitor’s Coach is the only one allowed to make a protest.
- 166 The competitor's Coach can protest about a judgment to the members of the Refereeing Panel.
- 167 When an official protest is lodged the ensuing matches must be delayed until the result of the protest is given.
- 168 The Coach will request the official protest form from the Tatami Manager.
- 169 The failure of a Coach to deliver a protest in a timely manner can lead to its rejection.
- 170 The information of officials implicated in the protest is completed by the Tatami Manager.

- 171 The Referee will give all commands and make all announcements.
- 172 If three Judges signal a score for AKA, the Referee must stop the bout even if he believes they are mistaken.
- 173 The Referee can stop the match and award a point without receiving the Judges' support.
- 174 The Referee can stop the bout even if the Judges do not signal.
- 175 In the four Judge system when the Judges see a foul, they will immediately signal with their flags.
- 176 When the Judges see a score, they will immediately signal with their flags.
- 177 When the Referee wants to give SHIKKAKU he/she may call the Judges for a brief consultation.
- 178 If the organizer has a check-up of equipment before line-up, it is still KANSA'S responsibility to ensure that the equipment is in accordance with the rules.
- 179 It is always KANSA'S responsibility to ensure that the equipment is in accordance with the rules before each bout.
- 180 It is the duty of the KANSA to ensure before each match or bout that the competitors are wearing the approved equipment.
- 181 The KANSA does not need to interfere if the Referee gives a score to a competitor and exaggeration to the other.
- 182 The KANSA needs to blow the whistle if the Referee gives a score to a competitor and MUBOBI to the other.
- 183 The KANSA does not need to interfere if the Referee gives a score for a technique done after the time is up.
- 184 A correctly executed technique executed after the time-up signal is valid.
- 185 The KANSA must remain silent if the referee gives a warning or penalty for passivity during ATOSHI BARAKU.
- 186 If the Referee does not call the doctor in a 10 second rule situation, the KANSA must blow the whistle.
- 187 The KANSA has to blow the whistle if the Judges are holding the flags in the wrong hands.
- 188 The KANSA has no vote or authority in matters of judgments such as whether a score was valid or not.
- 189 In the event that the Referee does not hear the time-up bell, the KANSA will blow his/her whistle.
- 190 ATOSHI BARAKU means "10 seconds of bout time remaining."

- 191 In the two Judge system, the Corner Judges will assist the Referee by giving signals for JOGAI, excessive contact, and skin touch for categories where this contravenes the rules.
- 192 In the two Judge system, the Referee remains autonomous in applying warnings and penalties.
- 193 In the two Judge system, if the two Judges, or one Judge and the Referee, show different points for the same competitors, the higher will be given.
- 194 In the two Judge system, if the two Judges, or one Judge and the Referee, show different points for the same competitors, the lower will be given.
- 195 In the two Judge system, if both judges signal a point, but for a different competitor, the Referee will break the tie and award a point as he/she deems appropriate.