



# USA Karate Kata Competition

## Examination questions for Kata Judges April 2026

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 Kata & Para Karate, 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.

# KATA 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 All athletes must wear a white unmarked Karate-Gi without stripes or piping or personal embroidery.
- 2 Kata team members must all wear the same brand of Karate Gi.
- 3 In Kata competition the sleeves of the Karate-Gi jacket may not be rolled up.
- 4 The Karate-Gi trousers may be slightly shorter so as to only cover half of the shin.
- 5 "Excessive celebration and political or religious demonstrations is considered as disqualification for kumite but not for Kata.
- 6 Female Athletes can, if they want, wear a plain white T-shirt beneath the Karate jacket.
- 7 Hair slides (“scrunchies”) and metal hair grips (“barrettes”) are prohibited in kumite but are permitted in kata competition.
- 8 Although ribbons and other decorations for the hair are not allowed in kumite, they are permissible in Kata.
- 9 A discreet rubber band or ponytail retainer is permitted in Kata competition.
- 10 Only one discreet hair tie on a single ponytail is permitted.
- 11 Kata competition can be organized in several formats.
- 12 A previously performed Kata may be repeated only if used as tiebreaker.
- 13 "Judges should look for correct Kihon of the school being demonstrated.
- 14 Conformance is a consistency in the performance of the Kihon of the style (Ryu-ha) in the Kata.
- 15 "When a team has 4 Athletes, all 4 may be used for any round.
- 16 Female Athletes must wear a plain white T-shirt beneath the Karate jacket.
- 17 The wearing of unauthorised apparel, clothing or equipment is forbidden.
- 18 Strength, Speed and Balance are some of the criteria of evaluation for Kata and BUNKAI.
- 19 "Kata must start facing the Judges.
- 20 Kata performance must be realistic in fighting terms and display concentration, power, and potential impact in its techniques.
- 21 An athlete who participates in an Elite category may not compete in an Advanced category in another category.
- 22 The placement of athletes in the correct skill level is the responsibility of both the athlete and their Coach/Instructor.

- 23 "Team matches consist of competition between teams of 3 or 4 Athletes of which 3 compete at the time.
- 24 A "performance" only refers to an individual's performance of a kata.
- 25 In a matrix, or "Round-robin" competition, a round allows all athletes in a group one performance against each of the other Athletes.
- 26 A "round" is a discrete stage in a competition leading to the eventual identification of finalists.
- 27 In single elimination Kata competition, a round eliminates fifty percent of athletes within it, counting byes as Athletes.
- 28 Variations as taught by the Athlete's style (Ryu-ha) of Karate will not be permitted.
- 29 In all Advanced categories, of every age category, athletes must perform a different kata in the "medal" round.
- 30 Beginner and Novice categories may perform any kata on the "Official Kata List".
- 31 " In assessing the performance of an athlete or team the Judges will evaluate the performance based on all criteria.
- 32 When Intermediate and Advanced categories are combined, the athletes may only perform Intermediate katas from the "Official Kata List," and may repeat the same kata in every round.
- 33 "Team matches consist of competition between teams of 3 or 4 Athletes of which 3 compete at the time.
- 34 Causing injury by lack of controlled technique during BUNKAI is considered a foul.
- 35 Transitional movement is one of the Criteria for evaluation for Kata Performance but not for BUNKAI.
- 36 The members of the team must demonstrate competence in all aspects of the Kata performance, as well as synchronization.
- 37 In USA Karate Signature Events, if sufficient personnel are available, a panel of five (5) Judges for each match shall be designated by the Tatami Manager.
- 38 BUNKAI are to be given equal importance as the Kata itself.
- 39 Officials shall not officiate any athlete with whom their relationship may project an appearance of bias or conflict of interest.
- 40 There are 10 criteria for Kata evaluation.
- 41 Performing a scissor takedown technique (KANI BASAMI) to the neck area in BUNKAI is not prohibited.
- 42 Strength is one of the criteria of evaluation.
- 43 The performance in individual Kata is evaluated from the bow starting the Kata until the bow ending the Kata.
- 44 In Kata competition slight variations as taught by the Athlete's style (Ryu-ha) are permitted.
- 45 Minor loss of balance must not be considered in the evaluation of the Kata performance.
- 46 Performing a movement in an incorrect or incomplete manner is considered a foul.
- 47 Failure to fully execute a block or punching off target is considered a foul.

- 48 Asynchronous movement, such as delivering a technique before the body transition is completed is considered a foul.
- 49 In team Kata, failing to do a movement in unison is not considered a foul.
- 50 The use of audible cues from any other person, including other team members is considered a foul.
- 51 Inappropriate exhalation will be taken into account by the Judges when arriving at a decision.
- 52 Giving a command to start and finish the Kata by a team member is not considered to be an external cue.
- 53 The use of audible cues is not considered a foul.
- 54 Audible cues must be considered very serious fouls by the judges in their evaluation of the performance of the Kata.
- 55 Failure to follow the instructions of the Chief Judge or other misconduct is considered a foul.
- 56 Stamping the feet, slapping the chest, arms, or Karate-Gi, will be taken into account by the Judges when arriving at a decision.
- 57 Belt coming loose to the extent that it is coming off the hips during the performance is a foul.
- 58 Time wasting, including prolonged marching, excessive bowing or prolonged pause before starting the performance is considered a foul.
- 59 Excessive bowing before starting the performance is considered a foul.
- 60 "There are 9 criteria in each Kata evaluation.
- 61 Performing the wrong Kata or announcing the wrong Kata leads to disqualification.
- 62 Not announcing the Kata, is not considered as disqualification.
- 63 A team which does not perform the bow at the beginning and completion of the performance will be disqualified.
- 64 An athlete will not be disqualified if he does a distinct pause or stop in the performance for several seconds.
- 65 Omitting or adding movements - or otherwise substantially changing the performance from its original form is a disqualification.
- 66 If the athlete's belt falls off during the performance of Kata, the Athlete will be disqualified.
- 67 The belt coming loose to the extent that it is coming off the hips during the performance is a disqualification.
- 68 Failure to follow the instructions of the Chief Judge or other misconduct is considered a foul.
- 69 Failure to follow the instructions of the Chief Judge or other misconduct leads to disqualification.
- 70 Exceeding the total time limit of 5 minutes duration for Kata and BUNKAI is considered a foul.
- 71 An Advanced athlete in a medal round who repeats the previously performed Kata is disqualified.
- 72 Exceeding the total time limit of 5 minutes duration for Kata and BUNKAI leads to disqualification.

- 73 Inappropriate exhalation is not an audible cue.
- 74 After the bow the Kata athlete must clearly announce the name of the Kata that is to be performed and then start the performance.
- 75 The athlete must bow at the beginning and the end of their performance.
- 76 If an athlete is disqualified Judge 1 shall cross and uncross the flags (as in Kumite Torimasen signal) and raise the flag indicating the winner.
- 77 In Kata competition no ties are permitted.
- 78 Individual athletes or teams that do not present themselves when called will be disqualified (KIKEN) from that category.
- 79 Individual athletes or teams that do not present themselves when called will be disqualified (KIKEN) from all categories.
- 80 There are 100 Kata on the "Official Kata List".
- 81 In Kobudo the jacket and hakama colors may differ.
- 82 In Kobudo athletes may elect to wear a red, white, blue, or black jacket and hakama.
- 83 In Kobudo if the athlete chooses to wear a Karate-Gi, both the jacket and the trousers must be solid white without stripes or piping.
- 84 Kobudo competition only consists of long-weapons competition.
- 85 Kobudo competition takes the form of team and individual matches.
- 86 Kobudo competition takes the form of only individual matches.
- 87 In Kobudo competition the athletes must perform a traditional Kobudo Kata.
- 88 Weapons must be of traditional design and any decision as to a weapon's eligibility will be made by the Chief Referee and/or Tournament Director.
- 89 In Kobudo competition a panel of three or five (3 or 5) Judges for each match shall be designated by the Tatami Manager before the match.
- 90 In Kobudo if the athlete loses balance completely and/or falls, a foul and not a disqualification is the correct call.
- 91 Para-Karate competitions consist of both Kata and Kumite.
- 92 Intellectual impaired athletes, in Para-Karate, will perform the Kata standing up.
- 93 Visually Impaired Athletes in Para-Karate competition are divided in two categories.
- 94 The straps to fix the legs of wheelchair Athletes in Para-Karate, must be of white color and without logos.
- 95 In Para-Karate, therapy animals or emotional-support animals are allowed in the competition area or its perimeter.
- 96 There are three Sport Classes in Individual Para-Karate Kata Competition.
- 97 In Para-Karate, prostheses, canes, crutches, and other equipment used for physical support are allowed in Para-Karate competitions.