



# False Attack Shido

by

*Saribek (Saro) Balagezyan*

International Judo Federation Referee



powered by dot.



# Table of Context

<b>Preamble</b> .....	<b>1</b>
Purpose and Audience of the White Paper.....	1
Definitions and Principles.....	1
Scenarios and Applications.....	1
Video Materials and References.....	1
<b>Introduction, Definitions, and Approach</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>A Real Potential of a Throw</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>FAS with Candidate and Non-Candidate Techniques</b> .....	<b>3</b>
Non-Candidate Techniques.....	3
Candidate Techniques and Intention.....	4
<i>FAS Intention Recognition</i> .....	4
<i>Determining Real Attacks</i> .....	5
<b>Failed, Fake, or False Attack</b> .....	<b>6</b>
Combinations with Fakes.....	6
Repeat Fakes.....	7
Quick Recovery.....	7
<b>FAS vs. Non Combativity</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>“The Sticker”</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>References</b> .....	<b>9</b>



# Preamble

## Purpose and Audience of the White Paper

The purpose of this white paper is to provide a codified reference for referees, coaches, and athletes to help them better understand the definitions, applications, and schematics of False Attacks in competitive Judo. This document also incorporates added definitions associated with recent rule changes following the 2024 Paris Olympics, thereby ensuring the readers' comprehension of the topic remains complete.

While referees and coaches are the primary audience, athletes will benefit from this knowledge by developing effective fighting tactics that comply with the updated rules. Understanding these concepts is crucial for all parties involved to ensure consistency in judging, coaching strategies, and athlete performance on the mat. By offering a clear and structured presentation of the False Attack Shido (FAS) rules, this document seeks to enhance the overall quality of all involved in a shiai.

## Definitions and Principles

The white paper begins with a detailed exploration of the basic definitions of False Attack Shido (FAS). It delves into the origins of the concept, its significance in the Judo contest, and the underlying principles that guide its application. By establishing a strong foundational understanding, referees, coaches, and athletes can better appreciate the relevant combat situations in Judo matches, discern FAS and use the knowledge effectively.

## Scenarios and Applications

The document provides scenarios that cover a full scope of where FAS is applied. It includes a variety of detailed examples to help readers recognize fighting patterns that typically result in FAS. Each scenario is analyzed with a focus on the technical and tactical aspects, ensuring that referees can make informed decisions, coaches can develop effective training programs, and athletes can avoid committing infractions.

## Video Materials and References

Finally, readers will find a comprehensive list of video materials and references to solidify the learned concepts and use the knowledge to their benefit. These resources offer additional insights and real-world examples, enhancing the reader's ability to understand and apply the rules effectively. The white paper includes links to recorded matches providing a well-rounded educational experience.



# Introduction, Definitions, and Approach

This document explores various situations where FAS applies and provides technical analysis to help identify this penalty.

FAS is likely the most ambiguous penalty in competitive Judo. It is arguably a more complex penalty to discern than the application of non combativity shido, which is subjective and complicated in and of itself.

Let's start by referring to the FAS definition as it is captured in the IJF SOR:

**2. To make an action designed to give the impression of an attack but which clearly shows that there was no intent to throw the opponent (false attack). False attacks are defined as:**

- Tori has no intention of throwing.
- Tori attacks without kumi-kata or immediately releases the kumi-kata.
- Tori makes a single fake attack or several repeated fake attacks with no breaking of uke's balance.
- Tori puts a leg in between uke's legs to block the possibility of an attack.
- Tori has no realistic possibility to throw.

*IJF SOR document Version '01 January 2025', Article 18.1.1, Paragraph 2*

It is challenging to judge intention. However, analyzing the movement and actions of the athletes, you will find significant evidence to help decide for or against the FAS. Some cases of FAS are very obvious, but some actions are harder to decipher to give the FAS.

In this document we will cover:

- types of techniques where FAS may be considered
- types of FAS
- scenarios for considerations when to apply FAS
- FAS comparison to other penalties

The gesture for almost all the FAS cases is



*IJF SOR document Version '22 July 2024', Article 4, Section "False Attack"*



To reap the most benefit of this white paper, readers should attend interactive online and on the mat sessions where we will go through a more detailed analysis of the topics covered here and review various video clips representing all scenarios covered in this document.

## A Real Potential of a Throw

Before we begin analyzing FAS situations and ascertaining the intention of an athletes' actions, we should keep in mind **the real potential or possibility** of a successful outcome from the applied technique. False attacks are forbidden tactical maneuvers judoka use when they do not want to fully commit to taking the risk required to apply a throw; or they intentionally simulate the movement of a true attack while their action lacks the attitude and physical commitment of the real attack. If the attacking athletes' actions resulted in them kneeling or lying on the floor, and did not present a real potential to throw, the action may likely be considered a FAS. Looking at the use of recognizable technique accompanied with the right constructs of the throw will help determine if there is a real potential of a throw. Please see this example video of an attack that has no real potential of a throw and is penalised with FAS:

<https://youtu.be/IPoB-UPbhAk> (FAS blue)

## FAS with Candidate and Non-Candidate Techniques

First, we need to narrow the scope to concentrate on scenarios where FAS mainly applies. These scenarios are identified by the techniques commonly linked to FAS, which we will refer to as **candidate-techniques**. Candidate techniques primarily include Tewaza techniques (e.g., seoi otoshi and other drop techniques) and Sutemi-waza techniques (e.g., tomoe nage, osoto makikomi, and others that rely on the mat for leverage). Additionally, certain modified Ashi-waza techniques (such as drop ouchi gari) and some Koshi-waza techniques (mainly involving bail-outs) may also exhibit susceptibility to FAS. We will consider the latter cases of Koshiwaza and Ashiwaza **non-candidate techniques** for FAS.

### Non-Candidate Techniques

The second point of the definition highlights the absence of *kumikata* (grip) before the attack or the immediate release of grips during the attack. These actions are strong indicators that suggest a lack of genuine intention to execute the throw, which warrants the application of the FAS penalty. This behavior is often referred to as bailing out of a technique. Bail-outs are generally easier to identify and are more commonly seen when non-candidate techniques are involved. For example, if this negative *kumikata* action is observed with a technique like *tsuri-goshi*, it is likely a case of FAS.

To warrant an FAS penalty, the athlete must voluntarily release their grips to abandon the



technique and fall deliberately. This action will clearly demonstrate an absence of intention or the real potential to execute a legitimate technique that can score. In this case, it would be appropriate to classify it as a justified FAS since the execution lacks any *real potential to score*. <https://youtu.be/5ufc707UUEg> (FAS white)

One must consider a variation of this scenario where uke defends against a strong kuzushi from tori and pushes tori with such force that tori loses their grips and, as a result of uke's defense, falls to their knees or even farther. In this case, classifying it as a FAS is not justifiable.

## Candidate Techniques and Intention

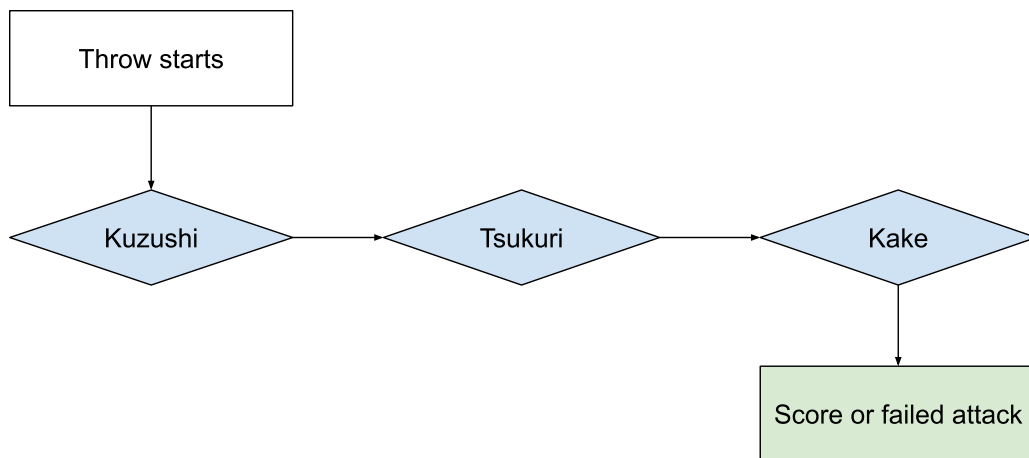
Assessing a FAS associated with candidate techniques based on intention is more complicated. Athletes who aim to perform false attacks that foster negative Judo tend to choose the aforementioned candidate techniques. These false attack techniques are the easiest to execute for negative tactics and can be done conspicuously.

Referees must accurately identify these actions and intentions, discouraging athletes from employing such tactics. In this chapter, we will discuss effective methods to discern athletes' intentions and apply FAS to encourage the use of techniques and intentions that promote positive Judo.

### ***FAS Intention Recognition***

To effectively discuss how we assess the intention behind an attack, or the lack thereof, we must first establish a clear understanding of what constitutes an attack in Judo.

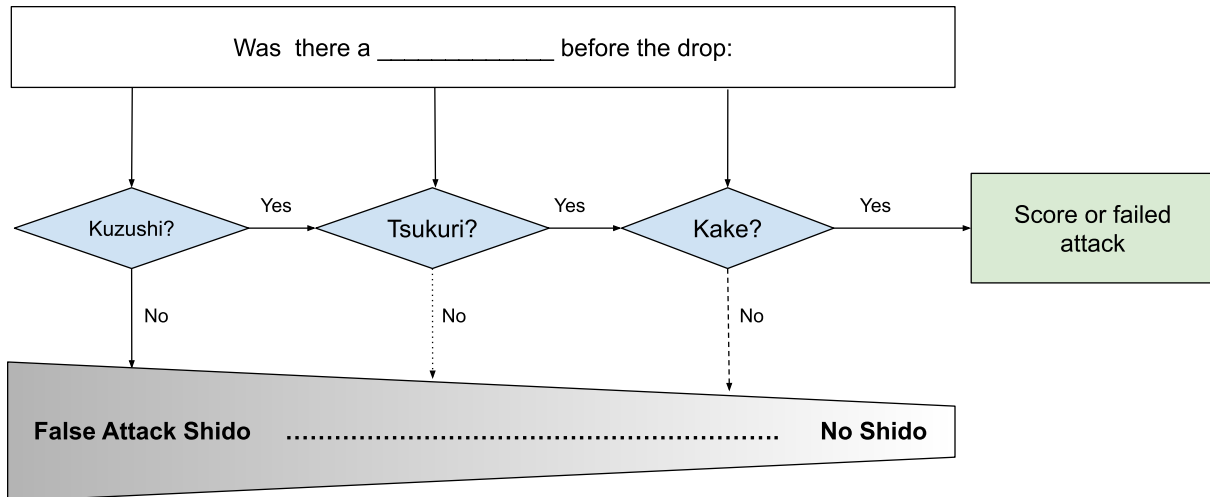
A valid Judo attack must exhibit three distinct stages: kuzushi (off-balancing), tsukuri (setup and entry), and kake (execution and finalization with control). When an athlete executes an attack using these three stages, FAS should not be considered.



*The three sequenced stages of a nage waza*



If these components are not present, strong consideration for FAS is justified. Conversely, positive nage waza occurs when a technique follows the three-step process. If the athlete is found on the floor - either on their knees or fully prone - consider why the tori is on the floor to determine if FAS is warranted:



*Analytical process flow to discern FAS*

If the answer through these steps is a Yes through the stages, the likelihood of FAS progressively diminishes.

Not all attacks showing evidence of kuzushi, tsukuri, and kake result in a throw. While tori pulls to off-balance uke and uses tai sabaki to set up the throw, even an evident kake may still fail to produce a score. For example, tori may end up on their knees in seoi otoshi position or on their back in tomoe nage with a failed throw. If real kuzushi, tsukuri, and kake attempts were observed, it indicates valid intention to execute positive Judo with a real possibility to score. The intention does not guarantee a result. Here, the attack may appear false, but it is actually a failed attack, not warranting FAS. Evident and defensible kuzushi followed by tsukuri and kake for candidate techniques will not be penalized with FAS.

<https://youtu.be/E7HfD9m8jCg> (FAS blue - lacks kuzushi)

<https://youtu.be/2O9FlawDX7I> (FAS blue - lacks tsukuri)

<https://youtu.be/6lhdf7fdSXM> (FAS blue - lacks kake)

## **Determining Real Attacks**

Most of the time, we can identify tori's meaningful kuzushi, tsukuri, and kake by observing uke's reactions. The stronger each part of tori's attack, the stronger uke's reaction. When there is evidence of uke's reaction to kuzushi, tsukuri, or kake, it indicates tori's intention to throw, which is not penalizable by FAS.

However, if tori's intention is not to throw, uke has no reason to react. When uke fails to defend or sees no reason to defend, two outcomes are possible:



1. If tori's attack is genuine, uke will likely be thrown into a scorable position.
2. If tori has no intention to throw, uke will remain unaffected, resulting in FAS for tori.

In either case determining FAS is simpler if referees are able to observe uke's reactions to tori's actions.

<https://youtu.be/y810JCL1UBQ> (No FAS)

## Failed, Fake, or False Attack

According to the definition of FAS, referees will penalize fake attacks or multiple fake attacks done in sequence. However, there are situations where fake attacks are part of positive Judo. Referees must learn to recognize these scenarios and allow for positive Judo to develop.

### Combinations with Fakes

In competition, athletes often resort to deceptive actions to achieve efficient technical Judo with effective results. A good example is when tori feints one attack to set up another. These combinations allow tori to create the right kuzushi and tsukuri to apply a different attack, known as *renraku waza*. Similarly, a fake can be followed by the same technique executed more effectively, referred to as *renzoku waza*.

In both cases, the intention of the fake is to set up a plausible situation for an immediate secondary attack yielding positive results.

A good example of *renraku waza* is to attack with *seoi otoshi* setting up the kuzushi and tsukuri to immediately attack with *kouchi makikomi* for a score. We can also use the *seoi otoshi* as a good example for *renzoku waza*. In this case tori drops for *seoi otoshi* to create the kuzushi and space to then quickly spring up and immediately drop for the second *seoi otoshi* significantly deeper with stronger pull to apply the technique with an effective kake for the score.

Often athletes use these tactics very effectively and produce strong judo throws leading them to victory. At times, athletes use these methods with intentions to leave an impression of positive Judo, but in reality to avoid it. Referees need to notice the high frequency and sequence of these tactics using the initial fakes that yield no results. Such frequent attempts yielding no results warrant the FAS.

The fake attack portion of the combination should be followed with an immediate effective second attack of that combination. That second attack may fail. Such a failed attack does not equate to a false attack on the first try. Referee must observe and assess if the Tori's second attack following the first fake was real or not. If the first attack consistently leaves doubt of intention (fake) followed by an ineffective second attack in the combination and observed frequently and in a sequential manner, it is a good indication of negative intention, which should result in FAS.

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1HTYrJylEvgdit6NxUZZuHW3Wc6B\\_AUoP/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1HTYrJylEvgdit6NxUZZuHW3Wc6B_AUoP/view?usp=sharing) (No FAS - while first attack was ineffective or fake, the continuation was effective)





## Repeat Fakes

Another use of fake attacks is to pretend a positive execution of one throw a couple of times to make an impression on the opponents that it is the throw they like to work with. Usually these are done without a scorable outcome. This action prompts the uke to focus their defense in particular directions as Tori executes the technique. Then the athletes use this general sense of uke's defense and attack with the real attack they had in mind to begin with. This tactic is an effective way to deceive the opponent gaining advantage in the match.

We can again use seoi otoshi as an example to demonstrate this tactic. After multiple few borderline fake seoi otoshi techniques, tori decides to attack with ouchi gari while using the same kuzushi. In this case uke will react backwards, thus creating backwards kuzsuihi helping tori apply the intended ouch gari for a score.

In such a highly tactical exchange of using an effective borderline fake attacks should be allowed to give the tori a chance to execute the chosen tactic they had in mind. However, multiple such fake attacks will result in FAS, especially if not followed by an effective positive attack for a score.

<https://youtu.be/iLG842JtzTM> (FAS white)

## Quick Recovery

When assessing FAS, referees need to assess intention. At higher levels of competition, athletes are very agile and have the ability to recover from fallen positions quickly and effectively. Their intention is to produce sufficient pressure in the match on their opponent and find the right moment to execute an effective throw. Athletes that have an ability to recover from these fallen positions very quickly can stand up immediately to continue positive Judo. These type of actions are permitted and will not be penalized with FAS as long as they are not done too frequently and in a sequential manner followed by the expected positive and effective attack for a score. Otherwise, these actions warrant FAS.

<https://youtu.be/Uig6nb-bXUg> (No FAS white)

## FAS vs. Non Combativity

This chapter covers a situation when one athlete performs a poor attack that borders closely with false attack often immediately after hajime, but does not warrant FAS just yet. In these situations tori often drops into seoi otoshi, for example, right after hajime immediately after taking the grips. Each attack separately comes close to false attack, but just not enough to warrant FAS. This action, if done frequently and in a sequential manner after each hajime, does not allow for a chance for the opponent to attack with any technique. Presumably, the athlete attacking right away after hajime is acting positively even though presenting ineffective technical Judo. It further leaves an impression of the opponent not attacking at all within the time frame of a few hajime/mate cycles.



Referee is faced with a decision to choose to award a non-combativity penalty to the athlete who cannot attack, or FAS to the athlete who just attacks with an intention to appear active on the mat, but in reality behaving negatively. Although statistics do not show evidence of high frequency of this situation in the higher level Judo competition, referees must be aware and recognize how to handle this situation.

One option is to award non-combativity to the opponent who does not have the chance in time to attack in time. It creates an increased pressure for that opponent to find an unlikely chance to attack effectively. However, this call creates an environment where we have an imbalance in fair play. The athlete who attacks in a manner of “almost FAS” is encouraged to keep doing it to get the opponent to get another non-combativity shido, yet the opponent has a very slim window to do any attack. This option does not provide for an equal opportunity environment of fair play and help developing the match to produce positive Judo.

The alternative option is to give the FAS, after the athlete does these “almost FAS” attacks immediately after haijme is called. Doing so, the referee now creates a situation where the athlete is encouraged to attack with an intention to throw and likely giving ample opportunity for the opponent to attack as well. If the opponent starts attacking, now we have an environment where both players choose to compete in a progressive manner with positive Judo. If the opponent continues not to attack, even though the athlete stopped frequent fake attacks, then the referee still has the opportunity to give the non-combativity shido. The second option creates an environment more conducive to encourage athletes to use positive Judo aimed at scoring.

## “The Sticker”

The sticker refers to a tactical action to encourage a set up for an effective attack. Tori places the leg in between or behind the uke’s legs to creating pressure, which should yield a reaction from uke that tori can use to throw. This action is most observed in kenka yotsu gripping stance. The point is to encourage uke to remove the blocked leg, thus giving room to use the space and enter for the uchimata, tai otoshi or another technique. Alternatively, uke may choose to press against the leg and may lose the balance, which then, again, gives tori the opportunity to attack effectively with tsubame gaeshi or other techniques.

The above is a valid action, however if done to no effect and not removed in a timely manner, the tori prevents uke from the opportunity to attack. In this case this action will be penalized with FAS. It is relatively easy to discern this situation if the referee is familiar with the technique and can observe it.

Although this infringement is classified as FAS, the gesture for it is different. Historically, the gesture to show this FAS is for the referee to stick the foot out to the front imitating the penalizable action and give the shido. Note, that the IJF SOR document does not make this distinction in how the gesture should be done for “the sticker” FAS.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/172W2o3NxLcM8-jInSpf2WqVNxMN0wArS/view?usp=sharing> (FAS blue)



## References

- IJF SOR Document - IJF: <https://sor.ijf.org>
- Waza Classifications- Kodokan: <https://kdkjd.org/%e6%8a%80/>
- Waza Demonstrations - IJF Academy:  
[https://rise.articulate.com/share/mgkGB9CIG1C3dXe9\\_6BgM0jx6euzwGtr#](https://rise.articulate.com/share/mgkGB9CIG1C3dXe9_6BgM0jx6euzwGtr#)