

Belt Promotion Guidelines

Eastern Defensive Arts Academy



Policies and procedures for rank advancement
at Eastern Defensive Arts Academy



INTRODUCTION

This manual was created to answer the many questions students and parents have regarding the belt promotion protocol here at Eastern Defensive Arts Academy. If there are ever any further questions or concerns, please feel free to ask Master Mike directly.

The colored belt ranking system used in most martial arts schools today serve as a visible indication of the students' progress. It gives a sense of purpose and presents achievable goals for the student to work towards. The ability to set goals and achieve them through perseverance and commitment is an important life skill. Working through the challenges as well as enjoying the rewards of progress is an important part of a student's Taekwondo education.





BELT COLOR & RANKING

All new members and beginners start as a white belt. The colors generally get darker as the student progresses through the belts until they reach the rank of Black Belt.

Popular legend states that many years ago, before there were modern colored belts, practitioners of martial arts wore only one belt to hold their clothing together. A white belt. As the student trained for a period of time, this belt became dirtier and therefore darker from the vigorous training. The dirtier or darker the belt, the longer that person was probably training in the martial arts and the more skilled they were. Whether this is legend or fact is debated, but the concept of 'lighter to darker' representing proficiency lives on today.

The first modern use of colored belts originated in the early 1900's with Kano Jigoro, the founder of the art of Judo.

The color belt ranking at Eastern Defensive Arts Academy uses 10 grade or "geup" levels.

	White Belt (10th geup / grade level) New member rank.
	Advanced White Belt (9th geup / grade)
	Yellow Belt (8th geup / grade)
	Advanced Yellow Belt (7th geup / grade)
	Green Belt (6th geup / grade)
	Advanced Green Belt (5th geup / grade)
	Blue Belt (4th geup / grade)
	Advanced Blue Belt (3rd geup / grade)
	Red Belt (2nd geup / grade)
	Advanced Red Belt (1st geup / grade)

The belt colors may be different between the various martial arts styles, and even various martial arts school of the same style.

In the United States, most schools follow the color system recommended by "USA Taekwondo", the National Governing Body of Taekwondo.

Testing Procedure

The actual belt test is referred to as “Belt Stripe Review”. This is held during the regular scheduled class, and is typically the first Monday & Tuesday of the month. Please check the school calendar on the wall in the viewing area of the school or the 12 month Calendar of Events for dates.

During the designated “Stripe Night” you will see a table set up at the front of the training floor where one or more instructor will be sitting. They will be scoring the member’s technique.

Each member will have a small review sheet that the black belts fill out. This is just an easy indication of where the student’s strength and weakness are. This also serves as a test of the instructor. If everyone is having trouble with a certain area of training, it is most likely an indication that an adjustment to the instruction is in order.

As you can see, “Belt Striping” is not just a review of the student, but a review of our whole program!

A score of “3” is where a student should be. That means they are doing fine and are on their way to black belt. Any score above that is an indication of above average ability. Any score below is just an area where improvement should be given.

At the end of the “Belt Stripe” review class, the student is given one black stripe on the belt. This not only shows some seniority, but serves as a quick indication of how long they have been at that belt rank.

Eastern Defensive Arts Academy Belt Stripe Test Evaluation January 2012							
Name:	_____					Rank:	_____
Minimum Class Requirement Met:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	_____ Classes				
Promote This Month:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No					
Hand Techniques	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A	
Kicking Techniques	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A	
Forms	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A	
Sparring	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A	
Breaking	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A	
Ki-Hap	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A	
Discipline	1	2	3	4	5	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A	
<p>Legend: 1 = Needs Improvement. 2 = Fair. Can use a little more work. 3 = Good! Right where you should be for your level. 4 = Above Average. 5 = Outstanding. Exceeded Expectations.</p>							
Notes or Comments: _____							
						Reviewer's Initials: _____	

Eastern Defensive Arts Academy Serving our community since 1988	
JUNIOR Class Belt Graduation Form	Eastern Defensive Arts Academy 250 N South West Blvd Quakertown, PA 18951
Phone: 215-234-8871 E-mail: eda@edafad.com Web: www.edafad.com	
Belt Graduation Saturday January 21, 2012 11 am - 12 Noon Speakers & Guests Welcomed	
Name: _____	
Date of Birth: _____ Phone Number: _____ E-mail: _____	
Current Belt Color: _____	
Belt Size (Must Circle One): <input type="radio"/> 0 <input type="radio"/> 1 <input type="radio"/> 2 <input type="radio"/> 3 <input type="radio"/> 4 <input type="radio"/> 5 <input type="radio"/> Don't Know <small>Note: Usually the same as uniform size</small>	
Dear Parents and Teachers, Our main objective at Eastern Defensive Arts Academy is to develop well rounded athletes, both at our martial arts school and in society. Our school teaches the principles of Black Belt Excellence. Not only do our students become black belts in martial arts, but they learn to become students, black belts, and eventually coaches, black belts and black belt employers. We use the black belt as a metaphor for personal excellence. In order to measure our student's progress towards these goals, we respectfully request that you complete the following:	
<p style="text-align: center;">FARENTS</p> My child has been behaving in a responsible manner and cooperating at home: Agree <input type="checkbox"/> (circle one) <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree	
Parent's Signature: _____	
<p style="text-align: center;">ACADEMIC SCHOOL TEACHER</p> This student has been behaving in a respectful manner, paying attention in class, and receiving passing grades: Agree <input type="checkbox"/> (circle one) <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree	
Teacher's Signature: _____ School: _____	
If our students do not meet any of these qualifications, either at home, school or in our classes, we will hold the student's ranking until they have been satisfactorily improved. Thank you for your cooperation.	
Master Michael Sakky Eastern Defensive Arts Academy www.edafad.com	

If the member has the required minimum number of classes AND has the required understanding of the skills, they are given a brown stripe on the belt and invited to the belt graduation. For the juniors, this is the “Intent to Promote form.”

This form needs to be filled out with the required information, such as name, current rank, belt size (same as uniform size) and signed by the parent / guardian and the academic school teacher.

Both the parent / guardian and teacher must indicate that the student is behaving well and acting with good character.



GRADUATION

When a member receives the brown stripe on their belt during stripe review, that indicates that they have met all the requirements and will be promoted to their next belt rank. For the adults, attending the graduation ceremony is not required. Adults will receive their new belt rank during class.

Juniors attend the fun and exciting belt graduation ceremony held on a Saturday after stripe testing. Please check the school calendar for the date. The graduation starts at 11:00 am. The students, family and friends are encouraged to arrive earlier. The school will open at 10:15 am on testing day. Spectators are welcome and chairs are set up for seating. If a child cannot attend the graduation due to family obligations, illness or vacation, that is not a problem. They will receive their belt during the next scheduled class.

For the graduating student, uniforms should be clean and wrinkle free. Bring any sparring gear if you own any (head gear, chest protector and so on). The students will perform some basic kicks, their form, sparring, break a board and then receive their new belt and certificate. It typically takes no more than 1 hour for the whole event.

SOME COMMON QUESTIONS

- What if I miss the belt stripe review?

No problem. Just bring it to the attention of the instructor, and he will catch you up at the next class.

- What if I cannot attend the belt graduation?

No problem. Your belt will be awarded to you at the beginning of the next class you attend.

- Why must I complete the class requirement if I already know my forms really well?

The class requirement is designed to make sure the student develops the best in their talent and ability. If you are that talented, instead of promoting when you are 'good enough', you are promoting when you are the 'best of the best'. Instead of someday being an average black belt, you may be the exceptional black belt leader. Remember, 'good enough' is the nemesis of excellence!

- Why do some people promote when they don't know the forms very well.

The intent of the martial arts is for the individual to be the best that they personally can be, and not compare yourself to others. Everyone has different strengths and weaknesses. Many in our school live with challenges that others may never realize. Students with ADD, aspergers syndrome, and other challenges are not uncommon in both junior and adult classes. Our goal is to make sure the student is the best that they can be, and that varies from person to person.

- I've seen a student promote when they didn't have enough classes... What's with that?

We often have students join that are from other schools and styles. It is not unusual to have someone that already holds a high rank (blue, red or black belt) join our school, and we will start them at a lower rank (yellow or green) but allow them to promote as soon as they learn the required forms. This is allowed until they catch up to their original belt color. After that, they must follow the regular guidelines.

- Why is the graduation so many days after the stripe test?

That 11 or 12 day time allows the student to refine their forms so they perform well in front of their friends and family at the graduation. It also gives time for the kids to return their "Intent to Promote form". It also allows for the instructor to order belts and boards if needed.

- For the juniors, why must I do the “Intent to Promote” form?

The students attitude and behavior at home and in academic school is extremely important to us. It is required that the student is behaving and cooperating at home. It is also important that the student acts respectfully, pays attention and receives passing grades in school. If the Parent / Guardian or academic school teacher disagrees with this, the student must wait until the next month to graduate.

- Why must we go through this? I have a friend who goes to a karate school and all they have to do is complete 30 classes and they automatically promote!

It seems that some parts of society give easy wins to the youth, and shield them from any inconvenience, challenge or failure. There are elementary schools where they don't allow “musical chairs” to be played because someone is out every round. Youth sport competition where everyone get a trophy because “everyone is a winner”. Academic students who can take a test over again until they pass. This may be fine in some circumstances, but the world does not work this way. It would probably be better ‘business’ if we gave easy passes to everyone, but we are in it for the personal development. We prepare the students to set goals. Meet challenges and mistakes with perseverance. Realize that a failure is often an exciting challenge to overcome and improve. To take consistent action and understand that a black belt is only a white belt who never gave up.