

All About Karate



Karate is a **martial art** that has developed from many different cultural fighting methods and classical **Japanese** martial arts. "Karate" means "**empty hand**" in Japanese. It is called a striking art because it involves **punching, kicking, knee strikes, elbow strikes, and open-handed techniques**.

There are many different areas of Karate training. Karate training can include the areas of (1) "**kihon**" (**basics or fundamentals**), (2) "**kata**" (**forms**), and (3) "**kumite**" (**sparring**).

The sport of karate can help to improve fitness by increasing **power, agility, and flexibility**. Karate also teaches **perseverance** (continuing an activity even when it may be hard), **fearlessness**, and **leadership** skills.

Karate is *not* an official Olympic sport; however, there are many competitions held around the world each year. Karate competitions can either involve sparring (kumite) or empty-handed martial art forms (kata). The winner of a sparring competition is determined by a **referee**. Before a sparring match starts, karate competitors are often divided by **weight, age, gender, and experience** to ensure a fair competition. The winner of a Kata competition is determined by many **judges**.