

ADVANTAGES OF TAEKWON-DO

1. POPULARITY

Young and old, male and female, and in some cases even handicapped persons are able to practice Taekwon-Do. Physical strength, weight and body build are of no consequences. A 60 year old, 85 pound, one armed woman can derive as much personal satisfaction, along with marked improvement in her mental and physical state of health, as an 18 year old Olympic decathlon champion.

Patterns may be chosen according to a students' limitations and since Taekwon-Do boasts a myriad of techniques, those best suited for an individual student can be chosen or modified. A word of encouragement for those who are physically underdeveloped the majority of Taekwon-Do masters today were not initially endowed with physical strength or natural coordination. In fact, an instructor usually prefers an underdeveloped student not only because of the personal challenge, but because this type of student will usually work much harder and become the most dedicated student.

In some ways, Taekwon-Do is similar to gymnastics. A student merely has to repeat what the instructor has demonstrated with occasional corections on proper technique. Also a student with even limited training can introduce another beginner to techniques the student himself has already mastered.

2. ECONOMY

Although a practice suit is a prerequisite in classroom training as an aid for mental and spiritual conditioning, one can just as easily train in shirts, track suit, or even street clothes.

To train or harden an attacking or blocking tool, straw rope wound around a piece of wood, a bag filled with sand or a piece of cloth or paper suspended by a string can suffice if the regular training aide is not available.

Since Taekwon-Do can be practiced in a cleared space in your backyard or even public park in the absence of training hall, the student has the convenience of training by himself any time it suits him.

3. TENACITY

There are two pitfalls all students regardless of rank, should avoid:

A. Boredom

There is a common tendency among beginners to tire of repeating the same techniques over and over. Boredom will usually set in between the third and sixth month for a beginning student. This is the period when a student is building his Taekwon-Do foundation by learning fundamental technique and building power.

Impatience, lack of self-confidence, inability to perceive improvement, and just plain physical fatigue combine to cause a psychological and physical ennui. After the seventh month, however, the student develops physically and fatigue is reduced. The student begins to learn techniques that he can use to gauge his rate of

advancement; and through breaking techniques and sparring the student develops confidence. The best way to combat boredom is to attend classes regularly and develop resolve to attain a specified goal.

B. Lack of thoroughness

Too often the students sacrifice thoroughness in the learning process, because they tend to lose patience and insist on progressing to a higher technique before mastering the previous one. Students should realize that it is extremely important for them to know thoroughly one single technique until it becomes reflexive before advancing to the next.

The secret of becoming a black belt is a simple one; learn thoroughly each technique, especially patterns, step by step, not only developing a physical reflexive action, but developing mental concentration as well.