



Black Belt Testing

Requirements and Study Guide





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PART I: Nine Steps to Becoming a Black Belt

Step 1: Leadership

You will need to know and be able to demonstrate the forms SongAhm 1-5 and InWha 1 and 2.

Red/Black belt students earn a stripe on the left side of their belt for perfecting each of the following forms: SongAhm 1 – 5 and InWha 1 & 2 for a total of seven stripes. After the first three stripes have been earned, the student may be asked to “defend” any of their stripes by demonstrating that form to their instructor. If the form is not perfect, the student will “lose” that stripe by moving it over to the right side of their belt. The student must then earn back that stripe by perfecting that form again and demonstrating it to their instructor. Students will also be required to “defend” stripes by demonstrating their leadership requirements at a color belt testing every eight weeks.

Step 2: All or Nothing Test

When all seven stripes have been earned, the student may test for their All-or-Nothing stripe. At this point, the senior instructor will randomly choose several of the forms and have the student demonstrate them. If these forms are perfect, the student earns their All-or-Nothing stripe and can no longer lose any stripes. If the forms are not perfect, the student loses all their stripes and must earn them back during a re-attempt for their All-or-Nothing stripe.

Be very confident in everything that you do, especially during your all or nothing test. If you make a mistake, keep going and keep smiling!

Step 3: Black Belt Form

Throughout earning and losing stripes you will need to be learning and practicing the black belt form, Choong Jung 2. You will not be asked to perform this form during your all or nothing test, but at black belt testing it should look amazing. Students will be required to demonstrate Choong Jung 2 at a color belt testing every eight weeks.

Step 4: Ambassadorship

You will need to perform a demo in your community. This is your ambassadorship. The demo should represent Taekwondo, the ATA, your instructor, and most importantly, yourself. There should be included in the demo the physical skills you have learned throughout your journey to black belt.

Step 5: Volunteerism

You will also need to have donated 6-8 hours of community service to a local non-profit organization. Some examples: picking up trash in your school every afternoon for a month, volunteering at Habitat for Humanity, and reading to the elderly at the Life Care center. Be creative and choose something that means a lot to you. Remember this is your time to help the community.

Step 6: Korean Language & Belt Meanings

At black belt testing you will need to know a number of Korean words. You will also need to know all the meanings of the Color Belts and Black Belts. Study resources are available online at ATABlackBelt.com in the student resources section.

Step 7: Korean Philosophy

This is divided into three parts.

- 1) All Karate Kids need to memorize and recite the Hwa Rang Code of Chivalry.
- 2) You will have three written assignments.
 - a. Life Skills
 - b. Your goals beyond black belt in both Taekwondo and your personal life.
 - c. Custom Korean history assignment to be memorized and recited at testing.

Samples of past Korean history assignments are:

- Explain who the Wha Rang were and their importance in Korean history.
- Explain what the different colored belts, including black belt mean.
- Explain the elements and symbolism of the Paragon patch
- Explain the various symbols on the Korean and American flags.
- Describe the Bee Reong and the Bee Reong Bong.
- Recite a brief history of the ATA and its leaders.
- Explain how a black belt achieves power. Begin by explaining the Theory of Power.
- “Knowing others is wisdom. Knowing the self is enlightenment. Mastering others requires force. Mastering the self needs strength. A good Taekwondo technician measures his technique not only by whom he defeats, but rather by his defeat of his own imperfections in technique and training.” How does this proverb differentiate an athlete from a martial artist?

Most of this information can be found online at ATABlackBelt.com and in The Way books. You are encouraged to do additional research on you own. Upon mastering a section of knowledge juniors may approach your instructor to test for a knowledge star.

Step 8: Free Sparring

Black belt candidates spar at their black belt testing with a high rank. This will allow them to reveal their advanced level material that they have learned.

Step 9: Board Breaking

You will be required to break a wooden board at your testing with either a (1) jump reverse sidekick or a (2) running jump sidekick over one obstacle.

“The journey is far more important than the destination.”

Enjoy your journey. There are many who have gone before you and many who will follow, but no one will follow your same path. When you put on your black belt, it is our desire that you, your family and your instructors have no hesitation that this part of your journey is truly behind you.

If you have any questions about the path to black belt, please ask any of the staff-- they are dedicated and anxious to share your journey.