

## TOURNAMENT ETIQUETTE

It is important to look sharp and be on your best behavior when attending a tournament. Make sure you go to tournaments with a clean uniform. You must wear the complete uniform, including the jacket and belt and wear the jacket during events. Colored belts, if you are going to wear a T shirt under your jacket, wear a plain white one, or a White Tiger T shirt. Black Belts in our school wear a black T shirt.

Don't wear pink T shirts or shirts with dinosaurs or **I Love New York**, etc. Wear plain T shirts or White Tiger T shirts. If you need to roll up your sleeves or pants, do so well before your event is called and make the rolled up pants or shirts look neat. If possible, wear a White Tiger patch on the left side of your jacket.

Make sure your belt is wrapped and knotted correctly. It is a good idea to ask a friend or higher rank student to check your belt to make sure it has been wrapped correctly. If you don't know how to tie the belt, find a higher rank student to help you.

No jewelry ( rings, necklaces, bracelets, earring, etc. ). If you can't remove these, wrap them with tape so that you protect yourself from injury and also prevent sharp metal or stones from cutting someone else. Trim your nails, both on your hands and feet, since these can cut another person or break, causing you an unpleasant injury.

Do not run around, rough house, or climb on equipment or bleachers. Be on your best behavior. You can be disqualified from events for discourteous behavior at a tournament, even if you are not in a ring. Be polite and courteous to everyone at the tournament, whether they are martial art students, officials, staff, or guests. It also reflects badly on our school if behavior is rude or disruptive.

Do not eat food in the gym. Go outside to eat snacks and clean up after yourself. It is best not to eat heavy food before events. Stick to light food – apples, oranges, or other light snacks until all your events are over. Be aware that if you leave the gym, your event may be called and could even be over before you return. In addition, it looks disorganized if you run in after your event has been called and join your group late.

At tournaments, students should present themselves to the judges in a way that informs the officials of what they are going to do. This should be done in a courteous and professional manner. This impresses the judges and may raise a student's score over those who seem confused, disinterested or even rude. It also shows respect for the tournament and the officials who are donating their time to act as judges.

**FORMS:** When your name is called, you will go to ring and line up with other students called for this event. Sit down close to the ring. While waiting, it is considered polite to watch the other contestants doing their form. You will learn a lot by watching others. Are their moves sharp and clean? Do they do their form at a good pace, one move per second, except for slow moves, which should be down with tension and grace? Are their stances correct, or are their feet pointing in all sorts of directions? You may gently stretch while waiting so that you do not enter the ring with stiff muscles.

When your name is called, say “Yes Sir,” (Or “Yes Mam” if it’s a lady). Stand up, bow, turn around and straighten your uniform. Pull on the ends of your belt to make sure it is tight. Turn back, bow again, and enter the ring. Move quickly toward the judges. Walking slowly is like saying, “I’ll take my time because you’re not important.” Moving slowly shows a lack of respect for the judges and everyone else at the tournament.

Once you reach the judges, bow. Then use the following introduction to inform the judges of what you intend to do.

“Judges, my name is ( State your full name).

I represent White Tiger Martial Arts.

With your permission, I will perform (Name your form).”

**If the judges are men say, “Sir.” If they are women say “Mam.” If the judges are both men and women, say “Sir and Mam.”**

**BOARD BREAKING:** The same approach is used for board breaking. When called up, go to the ring with your boards. Line up, and then sit down when told to. When your name is called, say, “Yes Sir,” or if a woman judge calls you, say, “Yes Mam.” Turn around and adjust your uniform. Turn back, bow, enter the ring. When you reach the judges, bow and say:

“Judges, my name is ( State your full name.)

I represent White Tiger Martial Arts.

With your permission, I will do a ( Name your break), Sir.”

Remember, if the judges are woman, say “Mam.” If the judges are both men and women, say “Sir and Mam.” Make sure and describe your break accurately. If you are doing several breaks describe each one. If your break involves breaking several boards, state how many boards you are breaking for each kick or hand technique. “I will do a stepping behind side kick through four boards.” If you name one break and do another, you will receive a very low score. So don’t say, “Lead Leg Side Kick” and then do a “Stepping Behind Side Kick.”

**SPARRING:** When called, go to the correct ring and line up. Sit down when told to. Watch others as they spar and try and see what techniques they favor. Develop a strategy to deal with these attacks. When called, say “Yes Sir,” or “Yes Mam,” stand up, bow and step into the ring. Go to one of the lines in the ring and wait, facing your sparring partner. The judge will usually say, “**FACE ME.**” Do so and bow and then face your sparring partner and bow. The judge will then order both contestants to assume a fighting stance and on the command “Sejak,” both contestants will cross the line and spar. Unlike Forms and Board Breaking, there is no formal presentation to the judges. During sparring, contestants cannot dispute a judge’s call. But if you’re attacked with an illegal technique, or hit, you can turn around and kneel on the line, facing away from the center of the ring. When the judge comes over, you can explain the situation. If you need to adjust your uniform because your belt is falling off, or there is some other problem interfering with the match, you may also turn around and kneel on your line.

Do not turn around and kneel as your partner is attacking. You must get some distance from your sparring partner and kneel at a time that does not allow him to attack you and score a point.

Always kneel on your starting line. If you see your partner kneel, turn around, go to your starting line and kneel with your back to your partner. Do not kneel for something unimportant or trivial. It has to be for a serious reason.

Tournaments are a chance for you to see how well you are doing in your martial art. If you do well, that is great, but don't become overconfident, continue to work hard to improve your skills. If you did not medal, or do as well as you would have like to, what can you do to improve your score? Hard work and seriously practicing your skills always improves a student's performance. Improving stances, executing techniques with precision and power, chambering and rechambering kicks can all improve a form. Having strategies for sparring and practicing sparring on your own and in class as well as taking the Sparring Class will improve sparring. Practice Board Breaking in class and on your own.

Winning medals is fun and rewarding, but don't become either arrogant or discouraged because of what happened at a tournament. The underlying purpose of a tournament and of martial arts classes is to help you learn to protect yourself. So work to perfect your skills, gaining the benefits of a system of exercise that can keep you healthy for the rest of your life, and also provide you with the means to protect yourself, if that should be necessary.

At tournaments you can truly practice the five tenants of Taekwon – Do: Courtesy, Integrity, Perseverance, Self-Control, and Indomitable Spirit.