



Saisei Karate  
**STUDENT HANDBOOK**

Version 1.1

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## About Shito-Ryu Karate

### What is Shito-Ryu Karate?

Shito-Ryu is recognized as one of the major traditional schools of karate, alongside styles such as Goju-Ryu, Shotokan, Wado-Ryu, and Kyokushin. The style was founded by Kenwa Mabuni (1889–1952) in Shuri, Okinawa, and reflects his extensive study of both the Shuri-te and Naha-te lineages.

Shito-Ryu is distinguished by its broad curriculum of kata, its focus on applied and effective Kumite, and its characteristic blend of linear power and circular, redirecting movement. Practitioners train to use angled footwork, decisive defensive actions, and structured counterattacks that emphasize precision and control.



The name of the style honours Mabuni's two principal teachers, Ankō Itosu and Kanryō Higaonna, both considered among the most influential martial artists of their generation. Over time, multiple organizations have continued to transmit and interpret Mabuni's teachings, resulting in several branches of Shito-Ryu practiced around the world today.

Shito-Ryu is formally recognized by the World Karate Federation (WKF) and is widely represented in international competition.

### Biography of Kenwa Mabuni (1889-1952)



Kenwa Mabuni, born in 1889 in Shuri, Okinawa, whose lineage traces back to Okinawan nobility, began his study of martial arts at the age of thirteen under the guidance of Ankō Itosu. Several years later, his close friend Chōjun Miyagi – who would later found Goju-Ryu – introduced him to another major Okinawan master, Kanryō Higaonna.

Although Mabuni trained extensively with both Itosu and Higaonna, the two teachers emphasized very different technical principles. Itosu focused on direct, linear, and powerful movement, while Higaonna placed greater importance on circular, deflective techniques. Mabuni integrated these two philosophies into a unified system, which eventually became known as Shito-Ryu.

In 1929, Mabuni left Okinawa for Osaka, where he continued to promote karate and later established his own dojo in 1934. Over the course of his career, he taught many skilled practitioners, including his sons Kenei Mabuni and Kenzo Mabuni.

Following his passing, Mabuni's students and family members continued to preserve and expand his teachings, leading to the development of several Shito-Ryu organizations and branches now practiced around the world.

## Saisei Karate's Instructors

### Liam Marshall Sensei

With over 20 years of experience studying and training in karate, Sensei Liam is a strong advocate of karate – and martial arts in general – as a lifelong journey. He spent 17 years training in Shito-Ryu and an additional five years in Shotokan, developing a well-rounded and adaptable approach to karate.

Throughout his career, Sensei Liam has trained under several highly respected and sought-after instructors in Canada and abroad, including Sensei Akira Sato, Sensei Oliva Seba, and Sensei Allen Tanzadeh. He has also had the opportunity to train in Okinawa under Sensei Hiroshi Akamine, further deepening his understanding of traditional karate.

Sensei Liam earned a bronze medal in Kumite at the 2012 Sato Cup in Burnaby, British Columbia. In 2015, he captured the title of Manitoba Provincial Champion in both kata and Kumite. He also proudly represented Team Manitoba at the Karate Canada National Championships in 2012, 2013, and 2015, competing at national events held in Toronto and Vancouver.

Committed to continuous growth, Sensei Liam consistently seeks to evolve his karate knowledge, strategy, and teaching methods. He has explored cross-training in other martial arts, such as judo, to strengthen his overall martial arts perspective. A firm believer that karate should be accessible, meaningful, and beneficial to everyone, Sensei Liam is dedicated to sharing his experience and knowledge, supporting students of all levels as they progress on their own martial arts journeys.

### Eric Zogbi Sensei

Sensei Eric began his karate journey in France in the late 1990s under the guidance of renowned Sensei Jean-Éric Luqué. After moving to Winnipeg, he continued to develop his skills and had the privilege of training with several nationally and internationally recognized instructors, including Sensei Akira Sato, Sensei Allen Tanzadeh, Sensei Junior Lefevre, and Sensei Oliva Seba.

Sensei Eric strongly believes that karate is for everyone – whether one seeks self-defence, sport, or fitness.

Over the years, Sensei Eric has competed at local, provincial, and national levels, earning medals at prestigious tournaments such as the Sato Cup (2012, 2013, 2014), the Toronto Open (2013), and the Montreal Open (2015). He also holds the title of Manitoba Provincial Champion in Kumite (2013).

As an instructor, he values continuous learning and has broadened his knowledge by gaining experience in other martial arts and sports, including judo, jiu-jitsu, and soccer.

## Dojo Mission

Saisei Karate was founded on the belief that karate should be practiced in a practical and efficient way. At its core, karate is a combative art designed for self-defense. Yet through consistent training, it also becomes a path to personal growth and character development. We believe there is no single “best” style of karate – or martial art in general. What matters most is how it is taught, and how each practitioner chooses to embrace and apply it.

*“Nothing is more harmful to the world than a martial art that is not effective in actual self-defense.”*  
— Choki Motobu (1870-1944), Founder of Motobu-Ryu.

## Dojo Etiquette

The following list should be followed within the dojo and as a rule of thumb when visiting most karate dojos:

1. Always bow when entering and leaving the dojo. It is more than a simple room, it is a place of training.
2. Bow to partners before and after training exercises.
3. Classes start with a short bow-in ceremony and a bow-out ceremony to end class. This is done with the call of “shugo” from the sensei (instructor).
4. Karate gi (uniform) and sparring gear should be kept clean before each training session.
5. Nails must be trimmed and cut to a short length as not to injure others during training.
6. Jewelry should be removed before training or sparring sessions.
7. Leave your ego at the door! In training, we value an open mindset, hard work, and a willingness to learn. Kumite (sparring) can be intense, but it’s important to stay calm, respectful, and focused. Growth happens when we challenge ourselves without letting ego get in the way.

## Techniques

### Stances (Tachi)

Seiza.....	Kneeling stance
Musubi Dachi .....	Bowing v-stance
Heisoku Dachi.....	Feet together stance
Heiko Dachi .....	Feet parallel stance
Shizen or Hachiji Dachi .....	Natural standing stance
Kiba or Naihanchi Dachi .....	Horse riding stance
Shiko-Dachi.....	House stance
Sanchin Dachi .....	Hourglass stance
Moto Dachi .....	Short front stance
Zenkutsu Dachi .....	Front stance
Kokutsu Dachi .....	Back stance
Sagi Ashi Dachi .....	Crane stance
Kosa Dachi.....	Cross leg stance
Neko Ashi Dachi .....	Cat stance
Renoji-Dachi.....	L-stance
Jiyu Kamae.....	Free sparring posture

### Blocking Techniques (Uke Waza)

#### Rakka (hard blocks)

Jodan Age Uke .....	Rising block
Yoko/Soto Uke .....	Inside block
Yoko Uchi Uke or Uchi Uke .....	Outside block
Gedan Barai or Harai Uke .....	Downward sweeping block
Otoshi Uke .....	Dropping block
Juji-Uke .....	X Block
Morote Uke .....	Supported inside block
Empi/Hijiate Uke .....	Sweeping elbow block
Shuto Uke .....	knife hand block
Shuto Barai.....	Downward Knife hand block
Sune-Uke.....	Shin block

#### Ryusui (soft/deflection blocks)

Nagashi Uke.....	Sweeping parry
Osae Uke .....	Pressing block

## Saisei Karate Student Hanbook

Tate-Shuto Uke .....	Swinging knife hand block
Ude Uke .....	Low forearm swinging deflection
Sukui-Uke .....	Scooping block
Nami-Gaeshi .....	Returning wave
Kote-Uke .....	Back hand block

## Punching Techniques (Tsuki Waza)

Shomen Zuki .....	Straight punch
Oi Zuki .....	Lunging punch
Kizami Zuki .....	Jab
Gyaku Zuki .....	Reverse punch
Kage Zuki .....	Hook or "L" punch
Mawashi Zuki .....	Roundhouse punch
Tate Zuki .....	Vertical fist punch
Uraken Zuki .....	Uppercut punch
Yama Zuki .....	Mountain punch
Age Zuki .....	Rising punch
Ura Zuki .....	Low gut punch
Awase Zuki .....	Double straight punch
Mae Tobi Zuki .....	"Superman punch"

## Striking Techniques (Uchi Waza)

Tetsui Uchi .....	Hammer fist strike
Ura Uchi .....	Backfist strike
Yoko Ura Uchi .....	Side backfist strike
Shuto Uchi .....	Knife-hand strike
Teisho Uchi .....	Palm strike
Haito-Uchi .....	Ridge-hand strike
Nukite .....	Spear-hand strike
Mae Hiji Ate .....	Front elbow strike
Yoko Hiji Ate .....	Side elbow strike
Ushiro Hiji Ate .....	Back elbow strike
Mawashi Hiji Ate .....	Roundhouse elbow strike

## Kicking Techniques (Keri Waza)

Mae Geri .....	Front kick
Yoko Geri (kikome).....	Side thrust kick
Mawashi Geri .....	Roundhouse kick
Ura Mawashi Geri.....	Hook kick
Sankaku Geri.....	Three point or question mark kick
Otoshi Mawashi Geri .....	Dropping roundhouse kick
Ushiro Geri.....	Back kick
Ushiro Ura Mawashi Geri .....	Spinning hook kick
Kakato Geri .....	Axe kick
Mikazuki Geri .....	Cresent kick
Gyaku Mawashi Geri (or Ura Mikazuki Geri).....	Reverse roundhouse kick
Kin Geri .....	Groin kick
Fumikomi Geri .....	Foot stomp
Mae Hiza Geri .....	Front knee strike
Mawashi Hiza Geri .....	Roundhouse knee strike
Mae Tobi Geri.....	Jumping front kick
Yoko Tobi-Geri.....	Jumping side kick
Nidan Tobi Geri .....	Jumping double front kick
Ushiro Tobi Geri.....	Jumping back kick
Ushiro Mawashi Tobi-Geri.....	Jumping spinning hook kick
Tobi Hiza Geri.....	Jumping knee strike
Sasori Geri.....	Scorpion kick
Do Mawashi Kaiten Geri .....	Rolling thunder kick
Tatsumaki Geri .....	Tornado kick

## Throwing and Sweeping Techniques (Nage Waza)

Ashi Barai .....	Foot sweep
Morote Gari .....	Double leg takedown
Irimi Nage .....	Entering throw
Tomoe Nage.....	Rolling back throw
Seo Nage.....	Shoulder throw
Osoto Gari .....	Large outer reaping sweep
O Goshi.....	Hip throw
Juji Gatame.....	Arm bar

### Body Movement (Tai Sabaki)

Mae/Shomen .....	Front or forward
Migi.....	Right
Hidari .....	Left
Ushiro/Ato.....	Back
Gyaku.....	Reverse
Hanmi.....	Angled position
Ayumi Ashi.....	Stepping footwork
Tsugi Ashi .....	Shuffling footwork
Yori Ashi.....	Sliding footwork
Kusshin.....	Defensive elasticity
Sonkyo .....	Crouch or duck
Ashikaite .....	Switch guard
Kakate .....	Arm or wrist grab
Kuzushi.....	Off balance opponent

## Syllabus

### Introduction

The following outline presents the kihon (basic techniques), waza (applications), kata (forms), and Kumite (sparring requirements) expected at each belt level. These elements represent the core competencies students should demonstrate before advancing to the next rank. **All grading decisions are ultimately made at the instructor's discretion.**

There is no fixed interval required between examinations. However, as students progress to higher ranks (kyu levels), the period between gradings typically increases due to the greater technical complexity and the broader range of skills to be learned.

It is worth noting that the kyu ranking system was introduced into karate only after the Japanese Ministry of Education began standardizing budō disciplines in the late 1930s. Following this shift, karate adopted a structure similar to judo, incorporating coloured belts to signify stages of student development.

### Belt Order:

1. White Belt (8<sup>th</sup> Kyu)
2. Yellow Belt (7<sup>th</sup> Kyu)
3. Orange Belt (6<sup>th</sup> Kyu)
4. Green Belt 1<sup>st</sup> stripe (5<sup>th</sup> Kyu)
5. Green Belt 2<sup>nd</sup> stripe (4<sup>th</sup> Kyu)
6. Blue Belt (3<sup>rd</sup> Kyu)
7. Brown Belt 1st (2<sup>nd</sup> Kyu)
8. Brown Belt 2<sup>nd</sup> stripe (1<sup>st</sup> Kyu)
9. Black Belt (Shodan)



## White Belt (8<sup>th</sup> Kyu)

### Kihon

Tachi (Stances)	Uke Waza	Keri Waza	Tsuki Waza	Uchi Waza
Musubi Dachi	Jodan Age Uke	Mae Geri	Shomen Zuki	Tetsui Uchi
Seiza	Yoko/Soto Uke	Mawashi Geri	Kizami Zuki	Ura Uchi
Hachiji Dachi	Yoko Uchi Uke	Mae Hiza Geri	Gyaku Zuki	Mae Hiji Ate
Zenkutsu Dachi	Gedan Barai/Harai	Yoko Geri	Oi Zuki	
Shiko Dachi	Uke			
Moto Dachi	Nagashi Uke			
Jiyu-Kamae				

### Kata

- Pinan Nidan
- Renzoku Waza (combination techniques all done in Jiyu Kamae)

### Offensive

- Moving forward with Yori Ashi: Kizami Zuki, Gyaku Zuki
- Moving forward with Yori Ashi: Kizami Zuki, Gyaku Zuki followed by back leg Hiza Geri
- Moving forward with Yori Ashi: Kizami Zuki, Gyaku Zuki followed by back leg Mawashi Geri
- Moving forward with Ayumi Ashi: Kizami Zuki, Oi Zuki, finish with Yori Ashi and Gyaku Zuki

### Defensive

- (Attack is jab) Nagashi Uke, Gyaku Zuki

### Kumite

- Jiyu Ippon Kumite (one step free sparring)
- Jiyu Kumite (free sparring)

## Yellow Belt (7<sup>th</sup> Kyu)

### Kihon

Tachi	Uke Waza	Keri Waza	Tsuki Waza	Uchi Waza	Nage Waza
Neko Ashi Dachi Kiba/Naihanchi Dachi Kokutsu Dachi Heisoku Dachi	Osae Uke Shuto Uke Shuto Barai Nami Gaeshi Sune Uke Hiji Ate Uke	Ushiro Geri Kin Geri Mawashi Hiza Geri	Tate Zuki Ura Ken Kage Zuki	Shuto Uchi Mawashi Hiji Ate Yoko Hiji Ate Yoko Ura Uchi	Ashi Barai

### Kata

- Pinan Sandan
- Renzoku Waza (combination techniques all done in Jiyu Kamae)

### Offensive

- Moving forward with Ayumi Ashi: Osae Uke, Oi Zuki
- Moving forward with Yori Ashi while turning at 45-degree angle: Uchi Uke to opponent's arm with front hand followed by Kage Zuki with backhand, finish with grabbing shoulders and mawashi Hiza Geri with back leg
- With back leg: Ashi Barai followed with Gyaku Zuki

### Defensive:

- (Attack is Gedan Mawashi Geri) Sune Uke followed by Yori Ashi and Gyaku Zuki
- (Attack is Oi Zuki ) Moving sideways in Yori Ashi: Mawashi Geri followed by Kizami Zuki and Gyaku Zuki

### Kumite

- Jiyu Ippon Kumite (one-step free sparring)
- Jiyu Kumite (free sparring)

## Orange Belt (6<sup>th</sup> Kyu)

### Kihon

Tachi	Uke Waza	Keri Waza	Tsuki Waza	Uchi Waza	Nage Waza
Heiko Dachi	Morote Uke Otoshi Uke Ude Uke	Kakato Geri Fumikomi Geri Tobi Hiza Geri	Mawashi Zuki Ura Zuki	Ushiro Hiji Ate Nukite Teisho Uchi	O Goshi Irimi Nage

### Kata

- Pinan Shodan
- Renzoku Waza (combination techniques all done in Jiyu-Kamae)

### Offensive

- Moving forward with Yori Ashi: Kizami zuki, move forward with Ayumi Ashi with Oi Zuki. Finally finish with Tsugi-Ashi Kizami-Zuki and Gyaku-Zuki
- Moving forward with Yori Ashi: Kizami Zuki, move forward with Ayumi Ashi with Oi Zuki, step through and perform Irimi-Nage
- Back leg Mawashi Geri followed by Ushiro-Geri to the body

### Defensive

- (Attack is jab) Shifting 45-90 degree angle, Kizami-Zuki
- (Attack is jab) Moving forward to meet opponent in Yori Ashi: Nagashi Uke followed by Mawashi Hiji Ate
- (Attack is attempted grab) Meet attacked with Jodan Age Uke, step forward to push back follow with Uraken

### Kumite

- Jiyu Ippon Kumite (one step free sparring)
- Jiyu Kumite (free sparring)

## Green Belt 1<sup>st</sup> Stripe (5th Kyu)

### Kihon

Tachi	Uke Waza	Keri Waza	Tsuki Waza	Uchi Waza	Nage Waza
Renoji Dachi	Juji Uke Tate Shuto Uke Kote Uke Sukui Uke	Mikazuki Geri Mae Tobi Geri Sankaku Geri	Yama Zuki	Haito Uchi	Osoto Gari

### Kata

- Pinan Yondan
- Renzoku Waza (combination techniques all done in Jiyu Kamae)

### Offensive

- Tate Shuto with front hand pushing opponent's guard across their body, followed by Oi Zuki
- Mikazuki Geri with back leg to hit opponent's guard hand, followed by Yoko Geri with same leg
- Moving forward with Yori Ashi; Kizami Zuki, continue moving with Tsugi Ashi and Gyaku Zuki while feet are close together. When ending Tsugi Ashi perform Kizami Zuki. Finish with Yori Ashi and Yama Zuki.

### Defensive

- (Attack is Mae Geri) Sukui Uke with lead hand, counter with Gyaku Zuki
- (Attack is Mae Geri) Sukui Uke with lead hand, counter with Yori Ashi and Mawashi Hiji Ate
- (Attack is Mawashi Zuki) Kote Uke with lead hand counter with Uraken

### Kumite

- Jiyu Kumite (free sparring)

## Green Belt 2<sup>nd</sup> Stripe (4<sup>th</sup> Kyu)

### Kihon

Tachi	Uke Waza	Keri Waza	Tsuki Waza	Uchi Waza	Nage Waza
Kosa Dachi	Juji Uke	Otoshi Mawashi Geri			Morote Gari

### Kata

- Pinan Godan
- Renzoku Waza (combination techniques all done in Jiyu-Kamae)

### Offensive

- Fake Kizami Zuki then quickly follow with Otoshi Mawashi Geri
- Fake Kizami Zuki then shoot down for Morote Gari

### Defensive

- Using Sen No Sen opponent moves in for any attack; counter right away with front leg Yoko Geri
- Using Sen No Sen opponent moves in for any attack; counter right away with Ushiro Geri
- Using Sen No Sen opponent moves in for any hand attack; counter right away with Gyaku Zuki

### Kumite

- Jiyu Kumite (free sparring)

## Blue Belt (3<sup>rd</sup> Kyu)

### Kihon

Tachi	Uke Waza	Keri Waza	Tsuki Waza	Uchi Waza	Nage Waza
Sanchin-Dachi		Gyaku Mawashi Geri	Age Zuki		Seo Nage

### Kata

- Kosokun Dai
- Sanchin
- Renzoku Waza (combination techniques all done in Jiyu Kamae)

### Offensive

- Low Mawashi Geri to opponent's leg, once it hits spin back with Ushiro Geri
- Mae Geri with back leg and pull back, followed with Sankaku Geri to body or head

### Defensive

- (Attack is Mawashi Geri) Catch leg to the body and hold on so opponent is off balance. Counter with Jodan Gyaku Zuki
- (Attack is Kizami Zuki and Gyakuzuki) Use Yori Ashi to slide backwards to avoid Kizami Zuki, Use Kusshin with either Nagashi Uke (Jodan) or Osae Uke (Chudan) to evade and parry Gyaku Zuki. Counter with Gyaku Zuki

### Kumite

- Jiyu Kumite (free sparring/grappling allowed)

## Brown Belt 1<sup>st</sup> Stripe (2<sup>nd</sup> Kyu)

### Kihon

Tachi	Uke Waza	Keri Waza	Tsuki Waza	Uchi Waza	Nage Waza
Sagi Ashi Dachi		Ura Mawashi Geri	Awase Zuki		Juji Gatame

### Kata

- Bassai Dai
- Matsumura Rohai
- Renzoku Waza (combination techniques all done in Jiyu Kamae)

### Offensive

- Moving forward in Yori Ashi; Kizami Zuki, Gyaku Zuki. Using Ayumi Ashi attack with Ura Mawashi Geri with back leg.
- Using Ayumi Ashi attack with Irimi Nage, then when opponent is down attempt Juji Gatame

### Defensive

- (Attack is Jodan Kizami Zuki) Sonkyo followed by Uraken or Kizami Zuki (distance depending).
- (Attack is Jodan Kizami Zuki) Drop into Shiko Dachi with front hand using Tate Zuki to opponent's floating ribs.

### Kumite

- Jiyu Kumite (free sparring/grappling allowed)

## Brown Belt 2<sup>nd</sup> stripe (1<sup>st</sup> Kyu)

### Kihon

Tachi	Uke Waza	Keri Waza	Tsuki Waza	Uchi Waza	Nage Waza
		Ushiro Ura mawashi Geri Nidan Tobi Geri			Tomoe Nage

### Kata

- Jion
- Renzoku Waza (combination techniques all done in Jiyu Kamae)

### Offensive

- Attack with Ushiro Geri once then with same leg; attack with Ushiro Ura Mawashi Geri
- Moving forward feint with Kizami Zuki, use Yori Ashi to slide at 45-degree angle. Grab opponent's (Kaka Te) front hand. Pull opponent forward and perform Ashi Barai with front leg. Finish with Gyaku Zuki.

### Defensive

- (Attack is Kizami Zuki followed by Gyaku Zuki both to Jodan area) Using Sonkyo, evade both attacks then, when opponent is close, perform Osoto Gari. Finish with Gyaku-Zuki on downed opponent
- Begin in clinch with opponent, create distance and perform Tomoe Nage or O Goshi. (defender's choice.)

### Kumite

- Jiyu Kumite (free sparring/grappling allowed)

## Black Belt (Shodan)

### Kihon

Student should understand most terminology and be able to perform everything listed in kyu ranks.

### Kata

- Seichin
- Unsu
- Renzoku Waza (combination techniques all done in Jiyu Kamae)

### Offensive

- Student has free choice on what they can demonstrate for attacking combination

### Defensive

- Student has free choice on what they can demonstrate for defensive combination

### Kumite

- Jiyu Kumite (free sparring/grappling allowed)
- 2 vs. 1 Kumite