

GKR KARATE JOURNEY

KUMITE TIPS

1. Use Angles To Attack

The ability to use angles to launch an attack is something that can be implemented into your kumite very early on. In fact, once you have a sound grasp of your linear attacks you can start to develop your ability to attack on angles. Having said that, its not the most vital skill for self-defence which is why we gave you other priorities to work on previously. We are introducing this here because by now you are likely coming up against better kumite exponents and this can be a useful tool for getting the upper hand over quality defenders and people who love to use the pick off techniques.

The advantages of this senjutsu (combat strategy) is two-fold:

- i. Tunnel Vision. We have discussed numerous times how real life combat results in a PSCR (Psycho Chemical Stress Response). The adrenalin dump in our body gives us tunnel vision, therefore a person who can break this line of vision - even slightly- will be momentarily unseen.
- ii) Linear Trained. Most of your opponents are so used to people who attack in a straight line, they will habitually develop a tunnel-vision-instinct. Anything that comes towards them in this line of vision is easily disposed of without thought (reflex blocking and counter-striking). The moment an opponent breaks this line however, their mind quickly registers something out of the ordinary and they must switch back to their conscious brain for an appropriate response. This process will slow them down giving you the advantage.

Attacking on angles can be done by stepping outside the line and kicking, or by stepping out of the line and quickly stepping back in with a hand strike.

2. Develop Your Defensive Scissor-Take-Down Sweep

This sweep is described as a scissor because it has two opposing forces, from two directions meeting in the middle. The upper force is where you push your opponent's shoulder to one side. The lower force is where you bring the back of your lower calf behind your opponent's front leg and pull it in the opposite direction of the push.

Black Belt (3rd Dan)



For the opponent: Having your upper body pushed to one side while your front leg is pulled in the opposite direction will leave you very quickly on the ground.

» This technique works by waiting for your opponent to lunge their front foot forward with an attack, and as they do, shifting your weight slightly so your back foot can take your weight, then simultaneously bringing your front foot behind their front leg and sweeping, and pushing against their shoulder.

» This is an advanced kumite technique, so to find success with this technique, be sure to study the following:

a) Be Side On. To get your foot to the outside of their front leg, you need to be side on. You don't have to be completely side on, but at least more than 45 degrees.

b) Be Sure To Block With Your Rear Hand. Don't forget, they are attacking you, so don't be so focused on the sweep that you forget to defend the attack. During the process of your sweep, still commit to blocking. However, be sure to block with your rear hand, as your front hand needs to be free to push their shoulder.

c) Create Momentum With Your Sweeping Leg. This technique is often executed after their front foot has landed, so you need to be sure it has a lot of power.

Move your front leg across and allow your knee to raise up slightly as this will allow you to generate momentum for the sweep.

d) Use Your Weight. If you try to sweep solely using your leg muscles you will unlikely be strong enough (unless your timing is perfect). As you affect the sweep (pulling your leg back), simultaneously lean your body forward slightly thus creating a swinging motion (creating more momentum).

e) Practise Against An Imaginary Opponent. Sweeping is difficult to learn with a real opponent. Practise your sweeps during shadow sparring often. This is where you will fine-tune your technique, weight distribution and speed. Once you have this down pat, practicing on opponents will develop your timing.

3. Develop Your Offensive Scissor-Take-Down Sweep

The Scissor Take Down Sweep is much easier to execute as a defensive technique because you don't have to be moving. You can sit poised and wait for your opponent to come to you. This means you only have to shift your weight slightly (to your back foot) and execute the technique.

» As an offensive sweep, it requires you to move forward towards your opponent and affect the sweep while moving.

» The principles and technical aspects behind the technique are exactly the same, only it must be done on the move. To find success with this technique, be sure to study the following:

a) Start Side On. Once you have honed the technique you can execute it from your natural fighting stance. However, while learning, it is much easier to start completely side on - almost in full kiba dachi. This side on position will allow you to get behind your opponent's front leg with the back of your calf.

b) Step In Like A You Are Executing A Side Kick Off The Front Leg. This means you bring your back foot up behind your front foot. The back foot must land completely flat on the ground and be able to catch your weight (just as though you were about to side kick off your front foot). Instead of side kicking though, your front leg will circle behind your opponent's front leg and pull. The hands will push their shoulder in the opposite direction.

c) Be Sure To Block With Your Rear Hand. Considering you are moving in, it is highly likely they will anticipate your attack and throw a strike your way. Don't be so focused on the sweep that you forget to defend this strike. However, be sure to block with your rear hand, as your front hand needs to be free to push their shoulder.

d) Use Your Weight. If you try to sweep solely using your leg muscles you will unlikely be strong enough (unless your timing is perfect). As you affect the sweep (pulling your leg back), simultaneously lean your body forward slightly thus creating a swinging motion (creating more momentum).

e) Practise Against An Imaginary Opponent. Sweeping is difficult to learn with a real opponent. Practise your sweeps during shadow sparring often. This is where you will fine-tune your technique, weight distribution and speed. Once you have this down pat, practicing on opponents will develop your timing.

4. Develop Limitation Kumite

Keeping in mind that kumite aims to equip you with various skills required for self-defence, it can be advantageous, from time-to-time, to place self-imposed limitations on yourself while sparring. This will allow you to better prepare yourself both mentally and physically for various types of real-life combat.

» The following are just two examples of self-imposed limitations you may practice during kumite:

One Arm Kumite

Why We Develop This:

There can be a number of reasons why a person may find themselves in a self-defence situation with only one arm. They may have one arm hit by an object, or they are tackled to the ground and land heavily on one shoulder, or they shield themselves with one arm from an incoming bat or metal bar.

How We Develop This:

Keep one arm down by your side during an entire kumite bout. Do not block or strike with it, rather allow it to lay completely dormant. This puts the onus of striking and blocking on your other arm. Be sure to practise both arms. Note that your goal is still to win the bout as your goal in real life is to also succeed. This becomes a mental challenge also as you must overcome self-doubts.

Results:

- You will develop fast twitch muscles in your arms.
- You will develop better economy of movement as excess movement when striking or blocking will slow you down.
- You will develop new strategies to suit the new environment.

Confined Space Kumite

Why We Develop This:

There are countless reasons why a person may find themselves in a confined space in self-defence. They may be in a crowded bar, in their kitchen, standing between two cars in a car park, being cornered in an alley etc.

How We Develop This:

There are a number of ways you can develop this. You can create an imaginary line behind you and decide that no matter what you will not step behind this line. This will force you to hold your ground or break to the sides whenever your opponent attacks. You may also wish to confine your space to a corner, where you create an imaginary corner, leaving you with the option to only move to one side. Finally, you can create an imaginary 1 meter square all around you and



decide, that no matter what, you will not vacate this space. This will force you to completely hold your ground with no escape in any direction.

Results:

- You will develop sound confined-space senjustu (combat strategies).
- You will develop better blocking skills.
- You will develop a stronger stance.
- You will develop close quarter evasion skills.
- You will develop the ability to block and counter at close range.
- You will develop the ability to create a powerful strike at close quarter.

There are countless examples and ways of practicing self-imposed limitation kumite drills. The idea is to extend your kumite knowledge and appreciate that when it comes to real life self defence, anything can and will be possible.

» As with any of the strategies like this one, it is important that the student who is looking to practice this is working with a partner who is of the same/similar grade, as it is a high level training exercise.

