

What is Taekwondo?

Taekwondo is a system of symmetrical body exercises or techniques designed for self defense and counterattack in unarmed combat, making use of the hands and feet as weapons and defenses. However, Taekwondo is not merely a physical skill, it is also a way of thought and life. Through strict discipline, Taekwondo trains both the body and the mind placing great emphasis on the development of moral character. On other words, control of the mind, self discipline, kindness, and humility must accompany the physical grace.

Taekwondo training consists of hardening the body through practice of the various attack and defense forms. This system of unarmed combat involves the skillful application of punching, jumping, kicking, dodging, blocking, and sparring actions; directed toward the goal of neutralizing an aggressor. It's techniques are primarily hard style kicking, punching, and blocking, but also include the use of circular hand movements, throwing and falling techniques. An essential characteristic used in meeting an opponent's attack is the mastery of breathing and the development of *jipjung* (power gathering) to unify your force.

Why do we train Taekwondo?

Everyone has their own reason for training in Taekwondo. People train for physical reasons such as: exercise and conditioning, strength, self-defense, sport, etc. People also train to strengthen personal qualities like self-discipline and self-esteem. Other mental benefits include inner calm and focus. Of course most people train for combinations of these reasons, and many others.

Advantages of Taekwondo

HEALTH:

No doubt one of life's most treasured assets is good health, however we don't always respect this gift. Wealth, power, fame, and the blessings of physical beauty are all relatively unimportant if one does not possess good health. An individual owes it to themselves and their families to maintain and improve their health.

TAEKWONDO AND PHYSICAL FITNESS:

The study of Taekwondo offers several unique advantages to the physical fitness of the student. The training is usually performed in almost any setting without the use of weights or special equipment; it may be practiced individually or in groups. Since the body sets its own limits, injuries or strains are rare and the physical condition of the student paces them automatically. The entire muscle system of the body, from the fingers to the toes is brought into play.

Taekwondo's high repetition, low resistance movements develop a longer, leaner more flexible musculature. Such muscles have more of the areas close to blood supply routes, thus producing maximum endurance and well being.

Other characteristics include:

Muscular strength, flexibility, increased energy, peripheral vision, concentration and the ability to avoid distractions.

It can be seen that the study of Taekwondo is recommended for men, women and children. It may provide benefits in organization, vision, body development, and mental awareness. The goal of this martial art is to give a sense of self-esteem, knowledge of self-defense, heightened mental and physical well being. These assets attribute to a common goal of harmony.

The preceding texts entitled "Definition of TaeKwon-Do" and "Advantages of TaeKwon-Do" are adapted from publications of Dion's TaeKwon-Do, Prim Road, Colchester, Vermont 05446.