

Karate Terminology

This is a small list of Japanese terms used in karate and martial arts, not specifically Shotokan. These are always useful when attending other schools or competitions. Some schools teach entirely in English, while others use virtually none.

Blocks (Uke)

Gedan Barai - Downward Block
Soto Ude Uke - Outside Forearm Block
Uchi Ude Uke - Inside Forearm Block
Shuto Uke- Knife Hand Block
Kakiwake Uke - Wedge Block
Juji Uke - X Block
Tate Shuto Uke - Vertical Knife Hand Block
Morote Uke - Augmented Block
Sukui Uke - Sweeping Block
Age Uke - Upper Rising Block
Ashikubi-Kake Uke - Ankle Hooking Block.
Haishu Uke - Back Hand Block.
Haito Uke - Ridge-hand Block.
Haiwan Uke - Back Arm Block
Kagi Uke - Hooking Block.
Kaisho Uke - Open Hand Block
Kake Uke - Hooking Block
Nagashi Uke - Sweeping Block
Nami Ashi - Inside Snapping Block.

Punches (Tsuki or Zuki)

Gyaku Zuki - Reverse Punch
Oi Zuki - Lunge Punch
Age Zuki - Rising Punch
Kizami Zuki - Jabbing Punch
Tate Zuki - Vertical Fist Punch
Ura Zuki - Uppercut Punch
Dan Zuki - Consecutive punching (same hand)
Yama Zuki - U Punch
Choku Zuki - Straight Punch
Awase Zuki - Wide U Punch
Heiko Zuki - Parallel Punch
Ren Zuki - Alternate punching

Kage Zuki - Hook Punch
Sanbon Zuki - A series of three punches
Ippon Ken - One Knuckle Fist
Hiraken - Flat Fist or Fore knuckle fist
Seiken - Fore fist, Regular Fist
Morote Zuki - Augmented Punch
Mawashi Zuki - Roundhouse Punch

Kicks (Geri)

Mae Geri - Front Kick
Yoko Geri Keage - Side Snap Kick
Yoko Geri Kekomi - Side Thrust Kick
Mawashi Geri - Roundhouse Kick
Ushiro Geri - Back Kick
Mikazuki Geri - Crescent Kick
Ushiro Mawashi Geri - Reverse Roundhouse Kick
Mae Tobi Geri - Front Jumping Kick
Kakato Geri - Heel kick
Hiza Geri - Knee Kick
Ashi Gatana - Foot Sword
Fumikomi Geri - Stamping kick
Ashi Waza - All leg and foot techniques
Nidan Geri - Double Kick
Ren Geri - Consecutive Kicking
Tsumasaki Geri - Kick using the tips of the toes
Mae Geri Kekomi - Front Thrust Kick
Keage - 'Kick Up'
Mae Geri Keage - Front Snapping Kick

Strikes (Uchi)

Seiken - Forefist
Uraken - Backfist
Tettsui - Hammer Fist
Nukite - Spear Fist
Haito - Ridge Hand
Teisho - Palm Heel
Haishu - Back Hand
Shuto - Knife Hand
Keito - Chicken Head Wrist
Kakuto - Bent Wrist

Stances (Dachi)

Heisoku Dachi - Informal Attention Stance
Zenkutsu Dachi - Front Stance
Hachiji Dachi - Open Leg Stance

Heiko Dachi - Parallel Stance
Shiko Dachi - Square Stance
Kosa Dachi - Crossed Feet Stance
Renoji Dachi - L Stance
Kiba Dachi - Horse Riding Stance
Neko Ashi Dachi - Cat Stance
Kokutsu Dachi - Back Stance

Smashes (Ate)

Empi Ate - Elbow Smash
Hiza Ate - Knee Smash

Parts of the Body (Karada)

Ashi - Foot or Leg
Ashikubi - Ankle
Ashi Yubi - Toes
Empi - Elbow (also called HIJI)
Gan - Eye
Haiwan - Back Arm
Hiji - Elbow
Hira Kote - Level Forearm
Hiza - Knee or Lap
Hizagashira - Knee Cap
Kakato - Heel (of the foot)
Kami - Hair
Kansetsu - Joint
Karada - Body, Physique
Komekani - The temple area of the head
Matsukaze - The side of the neck
Sokko - Top Of The Foot
Sokutei - Sole of Foot
Zenshin - Whole (entire) Body

Kata (Forms)

Taikyoku Shodan (Kihon) - Heavenly
Heian Shodan - Peaceful Mind No.1
Heian Nidan - Peaceful Mind No. 2
Heian Sandan - Peaceful Mind No. 3
Heian Yondan - Peaceful Mind No. 4
Heian Godan - Peaceful Mind No. 5
Tekki Shodan - Iron Horseman No. 1
Tekki Nidan - Iron Horseman No. 2
Tekki Sandan - Iron Horseman No. 3
Bassai Dai - Storm the Fortress (major)
Bassai Sho - Storm the Fortress (minor)

Jion - Named after the temple
Jiin - Named after the saint
Jitte - Ten Hands
Enpi - Flying Swallow
Kanku Sho - View the Sky (major)
Kanku Dai - View the Sky (minor)
Gojushiho Sho - 54 Steps (minor)
Gojushiho Dai - 54 Steps (major)
Gankaku - Crane on a rock
Meikyo - Mirror of the soul
Unsu - Cloud Hands
Hangetsu - Half Moon
Wankan - Crown of a king
Chinte - Incredible Hands
Sochin - Preserve Peace
Nijushiho - 24 Steps

Directional

Age - Upper
Barai - Sweeping
Chudan - Middle
Gedan - Lower
Gyaku - Reverse
Hanmi - Side Facing
Hidari - Left
Jodan - Upper/High
Kage - Hook
Mae - Forward
Mawashi - Round
Migi - Right
Otoshi - Downward
Tate - Vertical/Upward
Tobi - Jump
Ushiro - Backward
Yoko - Sideways

Other Terms

Chudan - Middle
Jodan - Upper
Dojo - Place of training
Sempai - Senior
Sensei - Teacher
Shihan - Master
Tai Sabaki - Body Shifting
Kime - Focus

Kiai - Shout used to help Ki and Physical Power
Ki - Spirit, Inner Power
Obi - Belt
Mawate - Turn
Bushido - The way of the warrior
Budo - Martial way or path
Gi - Karate Uniform
Jiyu kumite - Free sparring
Karateka - practitioner or student
Kamae - Fighting stance; on guard
Kata - Fixed sequence of training exercises
Nage-waza - Throwing techniques
Rei - Command to bow
Shomen Ni Rei - Bow to the front
Sanbon Kumite - Three step sparring
Jiyu Ippon - Semi free one step sparring
Gohon kumite - Five step sparring
Yoi - Ready command
Enoy - Relax
Yame - relax command
Kietsuke - Attention