

Belt System and its Philosophy

The **Dee** (belt) is one of the three parts of the **Do Bohk** (uniform). The belt system consists of 7 colours (locally 8) which with each colour designating the degree of proficiency possessed by the one wearing the belt.

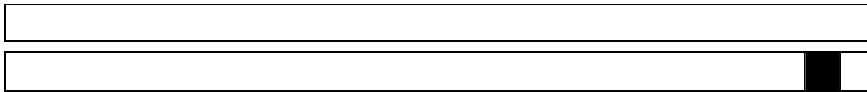
As a practitioner progresses, a colour belt is worn which not only the degree of achievement, but which exhibits their authority and dignity as well.

Tang Soo Do adopted the colours of white, orange, green, brown, red, dark blue and black, and each has its own philosophical meaning. Each belt colour represents the cycle of the seasons and the cycle of life; each colour stands for a specific stage of achievement – spring, summer. Autumn and winter, or as a life cycle – birth growth, maturity, and death, which allows for recycling into a new birth.

YU GUP JA (GUP STUDENTS)

Gup grades consist of 10 grades, plus Cho Dan Bo (Black Belt Candidate) level.

WHITE : 10th (beginner) & 9th Gup (TSKKIA Shotokan – White; White with Red Stripe & Yellow)

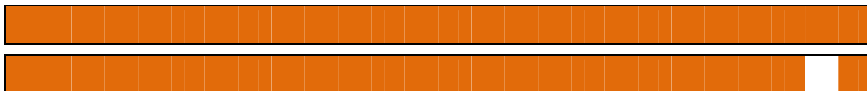


Or yellow



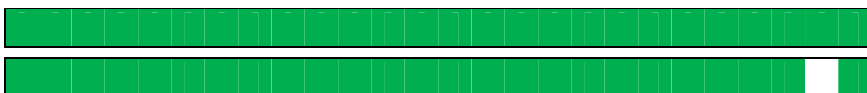
White is the colour for purity and initiation. It represents a primitive stage of achievement such as the seed as it lies dormant beneath the snows of winter.

ORANGE : 8th & 7th (TSKKIA Shotokan – Orange, Blue 1 & Blue 2)



Orange signifies hope, happiness, expectation and challenge. It represents new growth which appears in spring. Our Tang Soo Do knowledge begins to reveal itself.

GREEN : 6th & 5th (TSKKIA Shotokan – Green 1 & Green 2)



Green signifies youth, excitement, prosperity, and growth. It represents the speedy development of youth as summer arrives.

BROWN : 4th & 3rd (TSKKIA Shotokan – Purple 1 & Purple 2)



Brown represents power, stability, agility, weight, and wisdom. This is a stabilizing stage, both mentally and physically, and is analogous to the plants which curtail their growth and prepare to flower in late summer.

RED : 2nd & 1st (TSKKIA Shotokan – Brown 1, Brown 2, Brown 3)



Red represents blood, life, energy, attention, and control. The student's power and techniques begin to bloom and ripen.

DARK BLUE : Cho Dan Bo (Black Belt Candidate – Minimum 1 year training)

(TSKKIA Shotokan – Pre-Black / Junior Black 1, Pre-Black 2 & Pre-Black 3)



Dark blue represents maturity, respect, and honour. The student must now prepare mind and body for the final step needed to attain black belt.

YU DAN JA (BLACK BELT HOLDERS)

Yu Dan Ja means black belt holder, and consists of 1st Dan, 2nd Dan and 3rd Dan.

Cho Dan



E Dan



Sam Dan



Black represents maturity, calmness, dignity, and sincerity. The first degree of black belt is the final stage of one life cycle and the beginning of the next. Thus, we see that it is not only the end of one stage but, more importantly, the beginning of a path which leads up through the ranks of the higher black belts to true mastery.

KO DAN JA (SENIOR DAN HOLDER)

Sah Dan



Important – Note:

In the **World Tang Soo Do** system, there are 10 degrees of black belt, however 9th Dan as the highest attainable rank. This philosophy is within the ancient oriental concept that nine is the final number of achievement, and 10th level means perfection itself. While we should always strive to better ourselves, we must accept our human limitations. As such, the 10th level will be symbolic of a new beginning of yet another cycle.

MASTER BELT



Traditionally, full professorship of teaching the art of Tang Soo Do was given to an individual who reached this level. The title in Korean is Sah Bum Nim. “Sah” literally translated means teacher, “Bum” means example, and “Nim” is a title of honour. This recognition is given to a profound and respected teacher. These high ranking achievers train diligently and are dedicated to developing inner power (Nae Kong), meditation and spiritual growth. A masters belt consists of a red line through a black belt, which which designates mastery of the requirements of every previous belt level and, most importantly, the mastery of Nae Kong (inner strength).

Tang Soo Do Ranking	TSKKIA All-Styles Ranking
Cho Dan Bo – Instructor Trainee Jo Kyo Sah Nim	
Cho Dan (1 st) – Assistant Instructor Boo Kyo Sah Nim	Sho Dan (1 st) – Assistant Instructor
E Dan (2 nd) – Class Instructor Kyo Sah Nim	Ni Dan (2 nd) – Class Instructor
Sam Dan (3 rd) – Chief Instructor Boo Sah Bum Nim	Sam Dan (3 rd) – Head Instructor
Sah Dan (4 th) – Sah Dan Instructor Sah Bum Nim	Yon Dan (4 th) – Chief Instructor
Sah Dan Master (4 th Dan Master) – Master Instructor Sah Bum Nim	Go Dan (5 th) – Master Instructor
Oh Dan Master (5 th) – Senior Master Instructor Sunim Sah Bum Nim	Roku Dan (6 th) – Senior Master Instructor
Yuk Dan Master (6 th) – International Master Instructor Kookjae Sah Bum Nim	Nana Dan (7 th) – International Master Instructor
Chil Dan Master (7 th) – Senior Int’l Master Instructor Sunim Kookjae Sah Bum Nim	Hachi Dan (8 th) – Senior Int’l Master Instructor
Pal Dan Master (8 th) – Assistant Grandmaster Boo Kwan Chang Nim	Kyuu Dan (9 th) – Pre-Grandmaster
Ku Dan Master (9 th) – Grandmaster Kwan Chang Nim	Juu Dan (10 th) – Grandmaster