

Karate Vocabulary List and Pronunciation Guide

<u>Japanese</u>	<u>Pronunciation</u>	<u>English</u>
一 (いち)	ichi	one
二 (に)	ni	two
三 (さん)	san	three
四 (し)	shi	four
五 (ご)	go	five
六 (ろく)	roku	six
七 (しち)	shichi	seven
八 (はち)	hachi	eight
九 (きゅう)	kyuu	nine
十 (じゅう)	jyuu	ten
黙想 (もくそう)	mokusou	meditation
礼 (れい)	rei	bow
用意 (ようい)	youi	preparation
構い (かまい)	kamai	into position / prepare
変えて	kaete	change (direction)
始め	hajime	begin
止め (やめ)	yame	stop
休め (やすめ)	yasume	rest
気合 (きあい)	kiai	kiai/loud yell
最後 (さいご)	saigo	last (technique)
上段 (じょうだん)	jyoudan	upper level
中段 (ちゅうだん)	chuudan	middle level
下段 (げだん)	gedan	lower level
前屈立ち (ぜんくつだち)	zenkutsu-dachi	front stance
後屈立ち (こうくつだち)	koukutsu-dachi	back stance
騎馬立ち (きばだち)	kiba-dachi	horse stance
不動立ち (ふどうだち)	fudou-dachi	immovable stance
自然立ち (はちじだち)	hachiji-dachi	natural stance
下段払い (げだんばらい)	gedan-barai	downward block
上げ受け (あげうけ)	age-uke	rising block
腕受け (うでうけ)	ude-uke	forearm block
鉄い受け (てついうけ)	tetsui-uke	hammer block
手刀受け (しゅとううけ)	shutou-uke	knife-hand block
順突き (おいづき)	oi-zuki	front punch
逆突き (ぎゃくづき)	gyaku-zuki	reverse punch
前手 (まえて)	maete	jab
裏拳 (うらけん)	uraken	backhand

前蹴り (まえげり)	mae-geri	front kick
廻し蹴り (まわしげり)	mawashi-geri	roundhouse kick
横蹴り蹴上げ (よこげりけあげ)	yokogeri-keage	side up-kick
横蹴り蹴込め (よこげりけこめ)	yokogeri-kekome	side thrust-kick
三日月蹴り (みっかづきげり)	mikkazuki-geri	crescent kick
踏み込み蹴り (ふみこみげり)	fumikomi-geri	stomp kick
形 (かた)	kata	kata / forms
基本 (きほん)	kihon	basics
組み手 (くみて)	kumite	sparring
三本組み手 (さんぼんくみて)	sanbon-kumite	3-time sparring
一本組み手 (いっぽんくみて)	ippon-kumite	1-time sparring
自由組み手 (じゅうくみて)	jiyuu-kumite	free sparring
自由一本組み手 (じゅういっぽんくみて)	jiyuu-ippon-kumite	free 1-time sparring
平安初段 (へいあんしょだん)	heian-shodan	Tranquil mind 1
平安二段 (へいあんにだん)	heian-nidan	Tranquil mind 2
平安三段 (へいあんさんだん)	heian-sandan	Tranquil mind 3
平安四段 (へいあんよだん)	heian-yodan	Tranquil mind 4
平安五段 (へいあんごだん)	heian-godan	Tranquil mind 5
鉄騎初段 (てつきしょだん)	tekki-shodan	(Iron) Horse riding 1
鉄騎二段 (てつきにだん)	tekki-nidan	(Iron) Horse riding 2
鉄騎三段 (てつきさんだん)	tekki-sandan	(Iron) Horse riding 3
抜塞 (ばっさい)	bassai	To penetrate a fortress
観空 (かんくう)	kwankuu*/kankuu	To look at the sky
慈恩 (じおん)	jion	Jion (proper noun)
十手 (じゅって)	jyutte	Ten hands
燕飛 (えんぴ)	empi	Flying swallow
半月 (はんげつ)	hangetsu	Half-moon
岩鶴 (がんかく)	gankaku	Crane on a rock

*Note: The pronunciation “kwankuu” is used by our organization in particular.

A primer on the pronunciation of Japanese words:

In the vocabulary on the previous pages the Japanese words are written with a combination of kanji and hiragana, as well as hiragana only (in parenthesis) to aid in reading the kanji. Kanji are Chinese characters used to write the Japanese language. Hiragana, a syllabic alphabet, is used both to show the reading of the kanji and also for purposes such as indicating verb conjugation. Each Japanese syllable contains one vowel or one consonant followed by one vowel indicated by one hiragana symbol. The only exception to this rule is that the “n” sound can be added to the end of a syllable and is indicated by a separate hiragana symbol (ん). By pronouncing each syllable evenly and steadily, you are on your way to pronouncing Japanese words properly.

The Japanese syllables consist of 5 vowels (a, i, u, e, and o), which exist by themselves or are preceded by a consonant (k/g, s/z, t/d, n, h/b/p, m, y, r, w). The consonants j and f appear in special combinations. The chart on the following page shows all such combinations along with the hiragana symbols and the standard romanization.

The vowels have the following pronunciations (the same as in Spanish if that helps):

a – makes the “ah” sound like the “a” in “arc”

i – makes the “ee” sound as in “tree”

u – makes the “oo” sound as in “too”

e – makes the “ay” sound as in “hay”

o – makes the “ow” sound as in “snow”

The consonants are the same as in English except for the following:

r – This makes a sound somewhere between the “r” and “l” in English. Try the following: Say the word “ray” and then say the word “lay”. On the “r” of “ray”, your tongue should hit the roof of your mouth and on the “l” of “lay” it should hit your teeth. Now try saying “ray” or “lay”, but direct your tongue so that it hits in between the two spots where it would normally. This should produce a sort of soft “r” sound.

f – This only appears in the combination of “h” and “u”. This is not a true “f” and depending on who you’re talking to they may pronounce it differently. Try combining an “h” and “f” sound to something like “hfu”.

Any consonant followed by “i” can be combined with the “y” sounds (ya, yu, and yo) to produce a compound sound. For example, combine “ki” with “yu” to make “kyu”. As expected, to pronounce this, simply replace the “i” with “yu” as written.

Any word romanized with a double consonant (written with a small っ preceding the consonant to be doubled in hiragana) has a tendency to get “stuck in your throat”, that is you hold your tongue in place for longer than usual as you pronounce it. Two vowels in a row are pronounced with double the length as well.

Finally, the vowels “i” and “u” when placed between voiceless consonants (these are k, s, t, and h) or after a voiceless consonant at the end of a word are generally omitted. For example, the word for one, “ichi”, is actually pronounced like “ich” and “roku” is pronounced like “rok”.

	A	I	U	e	o
∅	あ(a)	い(i)	う(u)	え(e)	お(o)
k	か(ka)	き(ki)	く(ku)	け(ke)	こ(ko)
g	が(ga)	ぎ(gi)	ぐ(gu)	げ(ge)	ご(go)
s	さ(sa)	し(shi)	す(su)	せ(se)	そ(so)
z	ざ(za)	じ(ji)	ず(zu)	ぜ(ze)	ぞ(zō)
t	た(ta)	ち(chi)	つ(tsu)	て(te)	と(to)
d	だ(da)	ぢ(ji)	づ(zu)	で(de)	ど(do)
n	な(na)	に(ni)	ぬ(nu)	ね(ne)	の(no)
h	は(ha)	ひ(hi)	ふ(fu)	へ(he)	ほ(ho)
b	ば(ba)	び(bi)	ぶ(bu)	べ(be)	ぼ(bo)
p	ぱ(pa)	ぴ(pi)	ぷ(pu)	ぺ(pe)	ぽ(po)
m	ま(ma)	み(mi)	む(mu)	め(me)	も(mo)
y	や(ya)	-	ゆ(yu)	-	よ(yo)
r	ら(ra)	り(ri)	る(ru)	れ(re)	ろ(ro)
w	わ(wa)	-	-	-	を(wo)

n	ん(n)
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