



AFTK

AUSTRALASIAN FEDERATION OF
TRADITIONAL KARATE AND KOBUDO

AFTK TRADITIONAL KARATE AND KOBUDO COMPETITION RULES

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The vision of the Australasian Federation of Traditional Karate and Kobudo (AFTK) Incorporated is to elevate the profile and practice of traditional karate and kobudo throughout Australasia. The AFTK exists to serve its members.

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1.0 ALL EVENTS (KATA & KUMITE)

1.1 UNIFORM

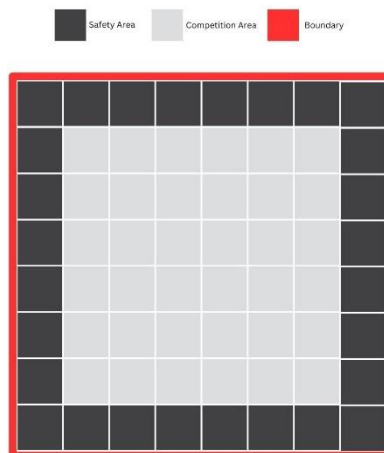
- Students must wear a traditional uniform approved by their club, meeting the following conditions:
 - White or black (or a combination) uniform with their respective belt.
 - Only manufacturer labels and name embroidery are permitted. Additional patches or crests must not be visible during competition.
 - Hakama are not permitted.
 - Shoes are not permitted unless required by express medical direction (pre-approved by the AFTK).
- Officials will wear a standardised polo shirt labelled "OFFICIAL" on the back with AFTK logo on the front chest.

1.2 ETIQUETTE

- Each Dojo will be expected to follow their own in-house Dojo rules. All judges on the day should be referred to as "Sensei".
- All judges' decisions are final. The AFTK endeavours to ensure that officials representing separate clubs officiate all events in the interest of fairness.
- Any protests should be made to the table officials, to be considered by the judges, at the end of the respective round.
- Terminology: to assist with accessibility, terminology will be in English and delivered in simply terms.

1.3 COMPETITION AREA

- The competition area, herein referred to as 'court' will be a minimum of 6 x 6m with a 1m safety area. This area will be outlined and herein referred to as the 'boundary'.



1.4 INJURIES AND FIRST AID

- First Aid will be provided by the nominated official on the day.





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1.5 CATEGORIES: AGE GROUPS AND EXPERIENCE LEVELS

Where possible, and subject to sufficient participant numbers to ensure robust competition, competitors will be divided by age groups and experience levels, or the best attempt made to match them during the initial rounds of competition.

1.5.1 Age Groups

- Standard – aged 30 to 49.
- Veterans – aged 50 and over.

1.5.2 Experience Levels

- Kyu Grades – All competitors below Black Belt rank (beginner to advanced coloured belts).
- Dan Grades – Black Belt competitors (1st Dan (including any provisional black belt level and higher)).

1.6 LIABILITY WAIVER

All competitors acknowledge that participation in martial arts competition carries inherent risks, including but not limited to physical injury. By entering the tournament, competitors voluntarily assume all risks associated with participation and agree that the AFTK, event organisers, officials, referees, and associated personnel are not liable for any injury, loss, or damage sustained before, during, or after the competition. Competitors must ensure they are physically fit for competition and obtain medical clearance if needed.

1.7 COACH AND PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

- Coaches may access the designated coaching area but are not permitted to enter the mats.
- Coaching advice should only be provided before the match or during intermission.
- Verbal guidance and coaching are not permitted from the sidelines during the match.
- Parents must refer any enquiries through their coach. If a coach is not present, enquiries should be directed to the referee directly.
- Complaints and enquiries should be directed to the nominated official on the day or to the referee in the first instance.
- All enquiries must be made at the end of the round but before final awards or results are announced.
- Spectators must not interfere with match proceedings, disrupt officials, or challenge calls during matches.
- Failure to adhere to coaching restrictions may result in warnings for the Competitor or ejection from the event. Actions by Coaches, Parents or Spectators will be considered to be the action of Competitors.

1.8 APPEALS AND ENQUIRIES

- Any appeals regarding match results or rule interpretations must be submitted to the nominated event official within 15 minutes of the match conclusion and before final results are rendered.
- Appeals will only be considered if they pertain to procedural errors, rule misapplications, or significant officiating concerns.
- The appeal will be reviewed by a panel consisting of at least two senior officials who were not directly involved in the match in question.
- The decision of the review panel is final and binding.
- Frivolous or excessive appeals may result in disciplinary action against the competitor or their coach.





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2.0 KATA (FORMS) EVENTS

2.1 KATA TOURNAMENT FORMAT

- The tournament format will be run as a flag double elimination tournament format and will be divided into successive rounds. Each competitor will therefore have two opportunities to perform their kata. The competitor who receives the majority of flags will then proceed to the next round. The competitor who loses their first round will be placed in the L bracket.
- Competitors that are in the L bracket can finish at the highest, in second place. The winner of the W bracket will win the tournament.
- For second place, if the competitor who lost to the winner of the W bracket has already defeated the winner of the L bracket in an earlier round, they will automatically be considered the winner and receive second place. If this criteria is not met, the second-place competitor of the W bracket will verse the winner of the L bracket for overall second place, with the loser placing third.
- Competitors may repeat their form or present a different form in their second round.

2.2 COMPETING

- All competitors will present themselves at the ring when their event is called. If there is a non-attendance, one (1) minute grace will be given before disqualification.
- Competitors may start from whatever point (the “starting point”) in the ring that their style dictates.
- Both red and white competitors align at the boundary of the court, bow to the front, and after bowing to each other, the white competitor awaits at the boundary and the red competitor comes to the starting position.
- The red competitor gets ready on the starting position of their choice within the court, bows to the front, gives the name of kata to be performed, and starts the performance. After the performance ends, the competitor bows, and exits the performance area and waits at the boundary line.
- After the performance of the red competitor, the white competitor takes his/her position to start, and performs in accordance with the provisions of the preceding point.
- After the performance of the white competitor, both competitors line up at the boundary line and wait for the score by the judges. Once a victor is announced, competitors bow to each other, bow to the front, then exit the court.
- The red competitor will be designated by a red sash worn tied to the karate/kobudo belt. Competitors will be assigned based on their level of experience.

2.3 SCORING

- Judges will collectively score students against the areas of those listed below and use these criteria to determine which competitor proceeds to the next round. Difficulty and complexity of kata in relation to their skill-level:
 - Technical expertise, including stances, techniques, transitions, breathing, focus, etc, and Athletic performance, including strength, speed, balance and timing, etc.
- The scoring will be via a flag system, the competitor who receives the most flags will be declared the victor.
- The judges shall indicate the score through a flag based on the whistle of the referee. All judges must render a decision with no ties.
- The referee has the authority to overrule judges if a rule violation occurs.





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2.4 OFFICIALS

- The official judging panel will consist of a minimum of three (3) judges, with at least 2 judges being from different dojo who are participating in the tournament. One judge will be nominated as a referee and responsible for control of the court, and the calling of scores via a whistle. The referee will sit facing the officials table.
- Officials will remain alert and respectful throughout the match.
- The table officials will announce the name of the two next competitors, and be responsible for recording score, and notifying of any timings being exceeded.

2.5 CONTENT

- The form being demonstrated must be “traditional” in nature.
- Forms should meet the following criteria:
 - No flips, acrobatics, or stunts are permitted. Exceptions are made where such a movement is legitimately a part of that style.
 - Plainly apparent combative function of the form.
 - Kiai must be purposeful and controlled, without excessive shouting.
 - No music, or assistance from others.

2.6 TRADITIONAL WEAPONS

- All above rules apply to traditional weapons events, and additionally:
 - All weapons must be in good condition, and will be inspected by an official prior to the event.
 - Weapons must be traditional in nature (ie heavy weight wooden or metal, and will be confirmed as appropriate by officials).
 - Competitor accepts all liability of using weapons.
 - The onus is on the competitor to ensure they have the relevant permits where appropriate.

2.7 PENALTIES

- Any competitor who leaves the court before the score is called and confirmed (during or after their performance) by the table will be immediately disqualified.
- Any competitor who disrupts the performance of another competitor will be immediately disqualified.
- Any competitor’s performance that exceeds four (4) minutes will have their score reconsidered by judges. Exceeding five (5) minutes during kata performance will result in disqualification.
- A distinct performance or stop in the performance will result in serious consideration to score. A distinct pause, stop or restart in the Advanced categories will result in disqualification.
- Belts falling off during performance will result in disqualification.
- Failure to follow the instructions of the judges or other misconduct will result in disqualification.

3.0 FREESTYLE KUMITE (SPARRING) RULES

3.1 DURATION

- Rounds will last 90 seconds.

3.2 KUMITE TOURNAMENT FORMAT

- The tournament format will be run as a flag double elimination tournament format and will be divided into successive rounds. Each competitor will therefore have two opportunities to compete.





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The competitor who receives the majority of flags will then proceed to the next round. The competitor who loses their first round will be placed in the L bracket.

- Competitors that are in the L bracket can finish at the highest, in second place. The winner of the W bracket will win the tournament.
- For second place, if the competitor who lost to the winner of the W bracket has already defeated the winner of the L bracket in an earlier round, they will automatically be considered the winner and receive second place. If this criteria is not met, the second-place competitor of the W bracket will verse the winner of the L bracket for overall second place, with the loser placing third.

3.3 PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

- **Mandatory:**
 - Hand mitts that cover the back of the hand and knuckles in padding.
 - Shin instep protectors.
 - Mouthguard.
- **Optional (based on event discretion):**
 - Open-face head guard.
 - Groin guard.
 - Chest plate for female competitors.

3.4 TARGET AREAS, WEAPONS AND TECHNIQUES

3.4.1 Legal Targets

- **Head:** Face, sides, and top of the head (no throat).
- **Body:** Torso from below the throat to hips (excluding spine).
- **Legs:** Thighs and calves.

3.4.2 Non-scoring target Areas

- Arms, legs (except thighs and calves), and shoulders.
- Strikes to these areas are permitted for distraction but do not score.

3.4.3 Illegal Target Areas

- Throat.
- Spine.
- Groin.
- Joints (eg knees, ankles, elbows).
- Eyes and nose.

3.4.4 LEGAL WEAPONS AND TECHNIQUES

- Fist techniques (eg fore-fist, back-fist, hammer-fist, knife/sword hand).
- Foot techniques (eg instep, shin, sole, heel, ball of the foot).
- Controlled punches, strikes, and kicks to legal target areas.
- Controlled use of elbows and knees to legal target areas.
- Sweeps, provided they are followed by a legal hand technique.
- Controlled throws and takedowns, with immediate follow-up using a legal hand technique.
- After a takedown, competitors may engage briefly to secure points but must avoid excessive groundwork.
- Throws and sweeps must demonstrate control and follow up with a legal technique to count.





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3.5 CONTACT LEVELS

3.5.1. Acceptable Contact Levels

- Head (from throat to top of the head): No contact Techniques must simulate strikes without making physical contact.
- Body (from below the throat to hips): Light to semi-contact permitted, ensuring no contact to the spine.
- Legs (from hips and below): Light-contact permitted, ensuring no contact to the groin.

3.5.2 Contact Levels Index

- No Contact: No physical contact allowed (applies to head strikes).
- Light Contact: A light touch to the body or protective equipment without force.
- Semi-Contact: Controlled contact that does not forcibly push back the target area upon impact.
- Heavy Contact: Impact that forcibly pushes back the target area Prohibited and will result in penalties.

3.5.3 Contact Level

- Strikes must conform to No Contact, Light Contact, or Semi-Contact standards depending on the target area Heavy Contact is not permitted and will result in penalties.

3.6 SCORING

- Victory is determined by:
 - Most successful controlled strikes and throws, while controlling the fight, for the majority duration of the round.
 - Referee decision in the event of a tie.
 - Penalties will impact results.
- The referee has the authority to overrule judges if a rule violation occurs.





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3.7 PROHIBITED ACTIONS AND PENALTIES

- Strikes or techniques targeting illegal areas (eg throat, spine, groin, joints, eyes).
- Uncontrolled or excessive techniques (eg excessive contact, uncontrolled spinning kicks or axe kicks).
- Grabbing, clinching, or pushing without technical purpose.
- Unsportsmanlike conduct by athletes, coaches, or teams.
- Avoiding combat (eg feigning injury or stalling).
- Exiting the competition area intentionally.
- Penalties will be applied as follows:
 - First Infraction: Verbal warning.
 - Second Infraction: Point awarded to the opponent.
 - Third Infraction: Disqualification.

3.8 ADDITIONAL COMPETITOR CONSIDERATIONS

- Competitors must keep their fingernails short and are not allowed to wear any metallic or other objects that could potentially injure their opponents.
- Glasses are forbidden. Soft contact lenses can be worn at the Competitor's own risk.
- Where possible, competitors may be separated into weight categories, subject to participant numbers, and will be determined at the event organiser's discretion. There is no guarantee of competitors being divided into weight categories.





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4.0 GLOSSARY

- Disqualification (DQ): The removal of a competitor for rule violations.
- Flag System: A method of scoring where judges raise flags to indicate the winner.
- Hakama: A traditional Japanese pleated skirt-like garment, not permitted in competition.
- Judge: A competition official responsible for scoring and assessing performances in Kata and Kumite events. Judges determine winners based on technique, form, and execution.
- Kata: A pre-arranged sequence of movements that simulate combat scenarios.
- Kiai: A short, forceful shout used to focus energy during techniques.
- Kumite: Sparring, where competitors engage in controlled fighting techniques.
- Kyu Grades: All competitors below Black Belt rank (beginner to advanced coloured belts).
- Dan Grades: Black Belt competitors (1st Dan and higher, including any provisional black belt level).
- L Bracket (Losers' Bracket): The bracket where competitors who lost a round continue to compete for second place.
- Referee: The main official responsible for controlling the match, enforcing rules, ensuring fair play, and calling scores. The referee signals for judges to make decisions and ensures the safety of competitors.
- Safety Area: A 1m boundary outside the competition court for safety purposes.
- Traditional: Commonly accepted and/or performed in traditional karate/kobudo styles that have a basis or originate from styles such as:
 - Karate: Chitoryu, Gojuryu, Ryueiryu, Shitoryu, Shorinryu, Shotokan, Uechiryu, Wadoryu, etc.
 - Kobudo: Matayoshi Kobudo, Ryukyu Kobudo, Yamaneryu, etc.
- Weapons: Traditional Kobudo weapons (e.g., Bo, Sai, Tonfa) that have a basis or originate from styles such as Matayoshi Kobudo, Ryukyu Kobudo, and Yamaneryu.
- W Bracket (Winners' Bracket): The side of the tournament where competitors remain undefeated.

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