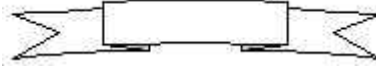


## Belt Levels and Significance



### White Belt

**Represents purity.** The innocence of an individual about the art itself and about the specific system that each particular Master teaches. It represents the **open-mindedness** that a student must have to learn anything new; to be able to understand the myriad of complexities of daily life.

The white belt is symbolic of an empty cup that has nothing in it but is always ready and able to receive. The white belt has no preconceived thought to hinder any new thought being absorbed. There is abundant room for learning. A white belt is like a piece of white paper allowing anything to be written on it. There is total trust and faith in the Master that he will guide the student towards optimal development. In order to learn anything in life, an individual must possess the curiosity, openness and intensity of a white belt.



### Yellow Belt

Is representative of gold, which means **truth**. It is important that an individual be truthful with himself as it eliminates egotism and creates personal contentment.

The concept of the seed is additionally symbolized by the colour yellow. It is only a quality seed that can grow into a quality plant. However, the foundation has to be solid so that future growth is possible. The planted seed cannot expect to grow into something that it is not. An apple seed cannot grow into an orange tree – we have to accept who we are as individuals and try to excel to the best of our abilities.



### Green Belt

The green belt signifies **growth**. Since we live for the future, growth is necessary and essential for living. Growth is normally associated with changes and we must accept those changes even though they may cause feelings of insecurity.

Memory of our own achievements in Taekwondo serves many functions. As a green belt, it must serve as a reference for our development, but must not hinder our progress. For example, being a gold medallist in last year's competition should not deter you from training even harder for the next competition, so that your performance will be more polished and refined than when the gold medal was won. Therefore, growth is reflected in the individual.

Green in a plant usually represents life. It reminds us that we are living, and living is experiencing the future as little bits of "presentness" occurring one after another. Re-experiencing the past continuously is not living; it is a state of stagnancy, a state of rigidity, a state of death.



### Blue Belt

The blue belt is **symbolic of the sky**. Although our naked eye can see only a portion of the vast heavens, it does not represent all that there is.

The color of blue representatively depicts the mind and the mental depth or maturity potential of an individual. Like the sea, we cannot see how deep the water is nor the continuously moving current underneath the calm surface. It is our determination that gives us the ability to conquer difficult tasks. Therefore, we should train ourselves to be strong mentally as well as physically. Tough times don't last, but a tough mind does.



### Red Belt

The red belt **represents the sun** - the brightness and the energy that it projects - and the **physical acts** of the individual. It is only through physical activity that an individual is given identity through his or her mental depth and capabilities. It is through the physical training in Taekwondo that an education of the mind and re-evaluation of self occurs. By overcoming physical setback through perseverance and determination, the **development of the indomitable spirit** takes place – the ultimate goal of Taekwondo.

Acquiring the indomitable spirit through the art's physical training and the internalization of the individual's mental attitude enables the student of Taekwondo to deal with setbacks and difficult situations. Through our indomitable spirit, we are capable of evaluating, conquering and bouncing back from disillusion or disappointments. The red belt also represents **limitation**, which is the opposite of the limitless blue belt. In contrast, limitation permits the individual to evaluate their progress. It prepares us to reach our short term goals which, in turn, leads to achieving an ultimate goal.



### Black Belt

**The black belt combines all of the belt colors and thus represents all of the different concepts of the proceeding colors.** It represents the commitment to the value system of the colors and dignity, which comes from pride in oneself. However, pride in oneself is achieved only by overcoming difficult tasks through physical achievement, mental determination or a combination of both.

Degree of black belt represents the different levels of mental intensity of an individual and the ability to use these for successful living.