



History of Taekwondo

Taekwondo is a martial art independently developed **over 20 centuries ago** in Korea. Over the many years it has become a popular international sport. The main feature of Taekwondo is that it is a free-fighting combat sport using the bare hands and feet to repel the opponent. **Taekwondo literally means the way of kicking and punching.** It consists of sharp strong angular movements with free flowing circular movements to produce a balance of beauty and power. With the addition of Taekwondo's trademark kicking techniques it is a complete system of self defense and personal improvement. All of its activities are based on the **defensive attitude** that originally developed for protection against enemy attacks.

The most important fact about Taekwondo is that it is not only a superior art of **self-defense**, but of the mind as well. It gives its practitioners **self-confidence** that provides an advantage over weaker opponents. This mental characteristic along with the physical ability is **beneficial to the mental life** of individuals as well as to their families and friends. With its practical means of self defense, its complete regiment of physical conditioning, and its aid to improved concentration and mental performance, Taekwondo offers a **total fitness program integrating body, mind and spirit.**

Today, Taekwondo is the most recognized Korean Martial Art. Taekwondo first came to be recognized as a system of self-defense in the 1950's when a group of leading Korean martial artists came together and unified their various art forms under a single style of hand and feet fighting. They named their style Taekwondo, and in the last 30 years have developed it into one of the most effective styles of unarmed self-defense in the world today. The popularity for Taekwondo is international and its evolution and development as an international amateur sport have grown quickly.

Internationalization of Taekwondo

November 30, 1972	Construction of Kukkiwon was completed.
May 25, 1973	The first World Taekwondo Championships were held (biannual event).
May 28, 1973	The World Taekwondo Federation was established.
October 18, 1974	The first Asian Taekwondo Championships were held (biannual event).
October 5, 1975	The World Taekwondo Federation became an affiliate of the General Association of the International Sports Federation (GAISF).
April 9, 1976	CISM (Counseil International Sportive Militaire) Executive Committee adopted Taekwondo as an official sport.
July 17, 1980	The World Taekwondo Federation was granted recognition by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) at its 83rd General Session in Moscow.
July 24, 1981	Taekwondo was one of the primary events in the World Games (non-Olympic events) held in Santa Clara, California.
February 5, 1982	Taekwondo was adopted as a demonstration sport for the 1988 Seoul Olympic Games at the IOC Executive Board Meeting.

September 28, 1984	Taekwondo was formally adopted as a Demonstration Sport in the 1988 Olympic Games at the 90th session and Executive Board of IOC held in Berlin.
July 3, 1986	The First World Cup Taekwondo Championship was held in Colorado Springs, Colorado.
September 30, 1986	The 10th Asian Games Taekwondo Tournament was held in Seoul with 17 participating nations.
November 29, 1986	First World University Taekwondo Championships were held.
August 9, 1987	Taekwondo was included in the 10th Pan-American Games held in Indianapolis, Indiana.
October 7, 1987	The first Women's World Taekwondo Championships were held in Barcelona, Spain.
September 17-20, 1988	A Demonstration Sport of the 24th Olympiad, 192 players from 25 nations (male) and 16 nations (female).
August 14-17, 1991	Taekwondo was included in the 11th Pan-American Games held in Havana, Cuba.
August 3-5, 1992	A Demonstration Sport for the second straight Olympiad, in Barcelona, Spain.
2001	Official Sport in the 2000 Olympics - September 27th - 30th, Sydney, AUSTRALIA