



## Meaning Of Taegeuk Poomse (Patterns)

**Poomse:** Taekwondo poomse (pattern) is essentially a routine with a theme. It is a combination of techniques of block and attack performed consecutively while moving in certain directions. These are a series of poomses designed to correspond with each learning level from beginner to advanced. The proper way to learn, practice poomse is to first know the name of the poomse then determine the three components of each movement in the order of

### 1) Direction

### 2) Stance

### 3) Technique of block or attack.

The Taekwondo poomse is unique. It can be practiced individually or with a group. Individual practice is an excellent opportunity for creating artistic expression or to contemplate peacefully. This inspires independence. Group practice is both challenging and fun. This practice inspires cooperation. Since you can practice poomse anywhere, inside, outside, at home or on vacation, it is a valuable exercise package you should continue to practice as a source of better health and inner peace.

The **World Taekwondo Federation** has 8 colored belt forms and 9 black belt forms. The colored belt forms are all numbered one to eight and are called Taegeuk. "Taegeuk represents the most profound Oriental philosophy from which Oriental philosophical views on the world, cosmos, and life are derived."

### ***Taegeuk 1 (ill) Jang: Keon - Symbolizes haven and light and has 18 movements.***

The first Taegeuk poomse is composed to accommodate Yellow belt, and is characterized by two kicking actions, one in the 14<sup>th</sup>, and one in the 16<sup>th</sup> steps. It includes the ready stance, the elemental walking movement, and both the forward and extended forward stances. Being the first poomse, its actions are associated with the first concept of the Book of Changes, which is called keon. Keon is the creative force, which inhabits all physical forms. Keon is powerful and aggressive, and it is represented by heaven and light.

As a Yellow Belt student, you are urged to consider this concept as you do this first poomse, and to allow it to influence the styling of your movements. The effect of these thoughts on your performance may be extremely subtle, but to the eyes of an expert, it is quite noticeable, and indeed, traditionally corrects.

*"Haven provides rain and the sun provides light and together they make things grow. It is the basis of all things."*

### ***Taegeuk 2 (ee) Jang: Tae - Symbolizes joyfulness and has 18 movements.***

The Second poomse in the Taegeuk series is composed for the training of students of 7<sup>th</sup> Gup Student. In addition to the actions presented in the previous poomse, this poomse introduces the front punch, which is directed toward the head of the imagined adversary as a new technique.

Philosophically, this poomse correlates to the concept of Tae, which means joy. Tae is of a spiritually uplifting nature, but it is not aggressive. It is serene and gentle instead.

In compliance with these characteristics then, the actions of this poomse should be performed with ease and fluidity; without the sense of struggling against your limitations, but nevertheless, living fully within them. Tae is symbolized by the image of a lake. It is the state in which one's mind is kept firm and ostensibly appears gentle so that smile and virtue prevail.

***Taegeuk 3 (Sam) Jang: Ri - Symbolizes fire and sun and has 20 movements.***

As with the previous poomse, proficiency in performing Taegeuk Sam Jang is required of students of 6<sup>th</sup> Gup rank and higher. The three moves incorporated here, however, are more varied, and demand variety in quickness and strength on the part of the person performing as well. Ri is the philosophical correlative of this form; and Ri means fire and the sun. The sun causes fire. Man knows how to use the fire that gives light, warmth, enthusiasm and hope.

So, the movements of this poomse must emulate the qualities of fire – that of flickering energy, of unpredictable pace and styling, and of quiet followed by great excitement or great passion – but continually moving, burning. In this poomse, many moves are combined in quick succession, such as front kicks followed instantly by double front punches. This poomse also introduces the outward middle block with a knife hand and the knife hand strike as new techniques.

***Taegeuk 4 (Sa) Jang: Jin - Symbolize thunder and has 20 movements***

Taegeuk Sa Jang applies the principles of Jin, which stands for thunder – the element of fear and trembling which occasionally enters our lives. Because Taekwondo is comprised exclusively of virtuous actions, Taegeuk expresses fear and trembling in the only way that virtue can – stoically, as a passing thunderstorm that nourishes the soul. Virtue, therefore, defines fear as courage. This form, as a consequence, contains many postures that display composure and strong balance such as blocks in combination with strikes and, front kicks that require the performer to kick with force but immediately recover into back stances. Students of the 5<sup>th</sup> Gup rank and higher are required to master this poomse.

*" Thunder and lightening are the objects of fear and trembling. This principle suggests that we should act calmly and bravely even in the face of danger and fear. Then the blue sky and bright sunlight will appear again. "*

***Taegeuk 5 (Oh) Jang: Seon – Symbolizes wind and has 20 movements.***

This group of Taegeuk actions expresses a concept called seon, the fifth of the eight concepts in the great circle of Jooyeok, the Book of Changes. Seon encompasses the characteristics of wind; gentle and strong; invisible, yet manifesting, in concrete terms, the interplay of the um and yang taking place beyond time. The concept of seon is of subtle nature, but pure, without evil intent; it is a state of being, the state of being like the wind.

A sweeping hammer fist strike, and a leap forward into the cross-legged stance are introduced for the first time in the Taegeuk series of forms. The powerful elbow strike is also used, as are quick following combinations. Students of the rank of 4<sup>th</sup> Gup are required to be proficient in this and the preceding forms.

*" There are such horrible winds as typhoon, storm, and tornadoes, but the nature of wind is gentle. Spring breeze caresses weeping willow. Wind symbolizes humble state of mind. It*

*expresses repetitive good-natured actions. Actions proceed sometimes gently and monotonously as breeze but sometimes as forcefully as storms."*

***Taegeuk 6 (Yook) Jang: Gam - Symbolizes water and has 23 movements.***

The dramatic expressions of Taegeuk Yook Jang are defined by the concept of gam – water, flowing, shapeless, always true to its nature, incorporation all obstacles in its path in its own sense of flow. It is important for the practitioner to recognize this as a type of confidence, of always knowing whatever difficulties or hardships he/she may encounter in life, or in the practice of his/her art, there exists no doubt of over coming them as long as he/she retains the qualities of acceptance, flow, and natural integrity. This set of movements must be performed with fluidity, and the feeling that every action is exactly what is called for to overcome the situation at each particular instant. Students of the rank 3<sup>rd</sup> Gup are required to be proficient in this and the preceding forms.

***Taegeuk 7 (Chil) Jang: Gan – Symbolizes the mountain and 25 movements.***

The seventh series of Taegeuk actions applies a concept called gan, meaning "top stop," the seventh of the eight concepts of the Book of Changes. The Taegeuk forms interpret gan, symbolized by the image of a mountain, as the principle of stability. This stability is defined as the structural soundness, which results from having resolved one's ambition to touch heaven into the limitations of excellent form. This resolution is of a notable and majestic character; thus, the image of the mountain.

The tiger stance, in which most of your weight is settled on the back leg expresses this peculiar stability which also contains ambition. These actions use the tiger stance repeatedly.

*" We should stop when we should and we must go forward when we must. Man must learn the stability of mountain. We should not act in a hasty manner."*

***Taegeuk 8 (Pal) Jang: Gon – Symbolizes the earth and has 24 movements.***

This last group of Taegeuk actions is guided by the principle called gon, which is defined as the quality of being receptive. Its metaphysics is pure yang, and it is symbolized by the earth, providing the substance into which the heavenly light and energy of Keon enters to produce physical forms.

Taegeuk Pal jang is intended as a summation and a review of all the previous forms for the student on their way to attaining the rank of black belt. Those of the 1<sup>st</sup> Gup are required to be proficient in this as well as the preceding forms.

*" The earth is the source of life. Things take life from it and grow on it, drawing limitless energy from it. The earth is where the creative force of heaven is embodied. The earth is always wordless; it hugs and grows everything."*

## Black Belt Forms

**Koryo** is the **first of the black belt forms** practiced by 1<sup>st</sup> Dan and above. It has 30 movements and is the name of the ancient Korean dynasty (A.D 918 – 1392) in which the English word Korea was derived from. This poomse is significant as it symbolizes the great fortitude displayed by the people who were persistently defeating the aggression of Mongolians who were sweeping Asia at the time. This poomse, therefore, represents the cultivation of a strong conviction, and unyielding spirit.

**Keumgang** is the 2<sup>nd</sup> Dan poomse and has 27 movements. It has the meaning of being too strong to be broken. In addition, the name has two connotations applicable to Taekwondo: one poetic, and the other spiritual. The Korean people have named the most beautiful mountain in their land Keumgang-san; and hardest substance, the diamond, they have called keumgang-seok. These dual qualities of hardness and beauty are therefore associated with the name. Buddhist thought also professes a concept of hardness, which is that quality of spirit impervious to mortal agony; it is the capacity to shun one's physical suffering. This poomse, in turn, being called Keumgang, is intended to fuse these qualities with one's martial skills, and in doing so, grace them with virtue.

The diagram of the poomse is similar to the Chinese character for mountain.

**Taebeak** has 26 movements. This is the name of region of Korea where, according to legend, Korean nation was founded more than 4300 years ago. This region is now Mount Baekdoo, but the word Taebeak, still identifies the source of Korea, and the majesty of Mount Baekdoo, and so it is associated with light, this being the source of life, and sanctity because the mountain is close to perfection. This form is named taebaek because it is meant to portray these abstract qualities. Black belts of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Dan are required to be proficient in this as well as the preceding forms.

**Pyongwon** has 25 movements and practiced by 4<sup>th</sup> Dan and above. It is performed in a straight line and symbolizes the plain. The open plain is vast and majestic and gives us food.