

Heian

HEIAN: Peaceful Mind

There are five heian kata, containing a great variety of techniques (waza) and almost all of the most basic stances. Having mastered these five kata, one can be confident that they possess the tools to defend themselves competently in most situations. The meaning of the name is to be taken into this context.

HEIAN SHODAN is composed of basic blocking techniques – down, rising and knife hand blocks and the mid section punch. The stances are the front and back stance. Also included is the method of countering when your wrist is grasped by a strong opponent. The most important things to master in this kata are reversing direction and leg movements. 21 movements at about 40 seconds, embusen is of the “I” shape.

HEIAN NIDAN includes additional waza such as a front kick, inside middle block, simultaneous attack with back fist and side snap kick. For the attack to be effective, the “Kime” in movement #7 must be perfect. It is also important to master reversing directions and taking the reverse – ½ forward stance from the same position. 26 movements at about 40 seconds, embusen is of the “I” shape.

HEIAN SANDAN consists of changing blocks from middle level to lower level, hammerfist, spear finger, elbow blocking along with stomping kick. Especially important are training in the straddle leg stance and mastering the unique TAI SABAKI of sliding the feet. 20 movements at about 40 seconds, embusen is of the “T” shape.

HEIAN YONDAN employs the X block, middle level augmented block, roundhouse knifehand strike, horizontal elbow strike, reverse wedge block, and knee strike. The difficult cross leg stance should be perfected. Movements 1 & 2 should be done slowly, but hands and feet must move in unison. 27 movements at 50 seconds, embusen is of the “plus – minus” type.

HEIAN GODAN includes the flowing water position, upper level X block, middle level pressing block with both palms, down block to the side in straddle stance, middle level hooking block to the side, crescent kick and cross feet stance after jumping. In going from the middle level reverse punch from the back stance to the informal attention stance – flowing water position (movements 2-3 and 5-6) Head, arms, and legs must move in coordination with hip rotation.

When this is mastered, movements 10, 11, and 12 can be executed continuously. In movement 19, the crossed feet stance after jumping must be strong. This stance occurs often in kata.

23 movements at about 50 seconds, embuesn is of the “T” shape

