

## MARTIAL ARTS CERTIFICATION

# Q & A



Throughout the years, the number of questions regarding martial arts certification has increased. Here, we shall list out the key areas of concern, referring to HapKiDo and TaekwonDo as martial arts in particular.

### What are the things to watch out for regarding suspect certification?

The cert is given out by a panel or committee of lower Dan ranks. The cert is signed by someone with suspect certification. The cert is in the name of a "paper" organization, probably headed by an unqualified head with an impressive title. The cert is in the name of a recognized organization but the design and contents are different from the original.

If the cert is in the name of a recognized organization and looks real, you can still contact the issuing body to verify its authenticity. Any real Master or Examiner will not object to you verifying his or her status, just ask politely.

### Why is proper or premium certification important?

Firstly, certs demonstrate minimum competence or mastery of set identifiable basic levels of ability in the art. They help prepare one for greater responsibilities with a renewed emphasis on training by setting another world goal to achieve. This is in line with the spirit of continuous learning and achievement.

On the individual side, a cert demonstrates one's drive, initiative and spirit of accomplishment, in addition to building one's self-esteem and confidence. It can also identify outstanding practitioners of the art, and demonstrates accountability to a governing body.

For the professional, certs help establish credentials, improve career opportunities and advancement, enhance professional recognition from peers, build trust and respect from students and the public, and demonstrate an individual's commitment to the art and profession.

### What certification should I get?

Aim for the best, or get certified by someone who has been certified by the best. Some governing bodies may be famous in one particular aspect of the Art, so you may have to research to find out about the others.

The KukKiWon is the governing body for Olympic TaekwonDo (WT), but the original Kwans are seen as the authorities in traditional TaekwonDo. For HapKiDo, the Korea KiDo Association and Korea HapKiDo Association control over 80% of HapKiDo in Korea between them. Membership to either body is very prestigious and virtually mandatory to have standing with one's peers.

### Why are there so many Dan levels?

In general, 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> Dan is a reflection of having achieved a mastery or grasp of the physical basics of the art. 3<sup>rd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> Dan is normally given to those who have achieved a complete grasp of the advanced physical requirements of the art. 5<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> Dan normally means that they have achieved mastery of the art, and 8<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> Dan are normally honorary grades given for loyalty and contribution to the art.

### At what Dan level can we teach, or be a Master?

Dan is a term for rank achievement in general via skill and knowledge. It is not a mark of instructional or intellectual ability, let alone capability. Instructor status can be awarded to deserving candidates who satisfy the requirements, normally via a set curriculum given at a course that lasts 1 day to 2 weeks. Assistant instructors can be from 3<sup>rd</sup> Geup level onwards.

Full instructors are from 1<sup>st</sup> Dan. International instructors can be certified from 4<sup>th</sup> Dan. Master instructors can be certified from 5<sup>th</sup> Dan (Junior Master level), although they are normally awarded from 6<sup>th</sup> Dan (Senior Master level). Grand Masters (GM) can be recognized from 8<sup>th</sup> Dan. GMs are traditionally awarded to those who not only have mastered the art, but also understood, enriched and contributed in the art's continued development and promotion.

### Who can issue certification?

Normally one needs to be a Master to grade (6<sup>th</sup> Dan). Some organizations allow 4<sup>th</sup> Dan to recommend, but normally a minimum of 6<sup>th</sup> Dan is required to sign and authenticate the grade. One can normally grade up to one level below one's own, that is a 6<sup>th</sup> Dan can grade up to a 5<sup>th</sup> Dan, a 7<sup>th</sup> Dan can grade up to a 6<sup>th</sup> Dan and so on.

To add further weight to the rank, it helps if the issuing body is one of the recognized world bodies (ITF, WTF, KiDoHae, KHIF) or one of the founding bodies of the art (ChungDukwan, MooDukKwan, SungMookKwan etc). Obviously, the Examining Master himself or herself should hold credible and genuine certification from at least one of these bodies.

For more information/ please contact:  
Class locations in the Klang Valley are:  
Tel: 011-222-9999 (toll free)  
Puchong (03-870 1930)  
An Ampang (03-4277 7147)  
http://www.kid.com



# TREVOR

IS A

SINGER

IN A BAND.

HE'S ALSO

THE LEAD

GUITARIST.

AND

DRUMMER.

AND

PIANIST.

AND

CYMBALIST.

AND

TAMBOURINE

PLAYER.

BY DAY, HE'S A

REMISIER.

HOW?

