



How to Choose a Martial Arts School

How do you choose a martial arts school that meets your needs and is one of which you can feel proud?

The following steps will help you find the right school for you:

1. Check your telephone directory to see what kinds of schools are listed within a reasonable distance.
2. Phone the schools and ask whether they're affiliated with a larger organisation. If not, standards and methods for your development may be inconsistent.
3. Determine your martial arts goals. Are you interested in tournament forms or self-defence? Do you want to become a black belt or simply to attend classes for the exercise?
4. Visit several dojo to watch classes. Many schools have an observation area, so you can watch during class. Ask permission first.
5. Ask for permission to talk with students and instructors. Find out what the students experience with the school have been and whether the style taught at the dojo will support your goals.
6. Assess the quality of teaching. What is your impression of the head instructor? Do instructors expect and show respect and courtesy? What is their experience?
7. Determine the school's emphasis. Does it advocate control or heavy contact? Does it stress tournament competition? How formal or informal are the classes?
8. Ask friends and work associates whether they've heard anything about a martial arts school you're interested in joining.