

Yudansha Examination Package

Shodan (1^o) through Godan (5^o)



**Approved by the TAA Board of Directors
January 1, 2019**

SECTION 1: Purpose of This Document

The purpose of this document is to establish the composition of the black belt examination panels, guidelines for *dan* rank promotion and certification, and associated administrative fees for such promotions. The TAA is committed to maintaining consistent testing standards throughout the organization.

SECTION 2: Minimum Requirements for Examination

All candidates for *yudansha* (black belt) rank must meet the following requirements:

- Active TAA membership of at least two (2) calendar years immediately prior to the exam.
- Documented *kyu-level* training of at least two-hundred forty (240) hours in a dojo teaching Tomiki Aikido consistent with the standards observed by the TAA and other national and international Tomiki (sport) Aikido organizations.
- Written recommendation from a TAA-certified instructor *or* a waiver from the TAA Technical Director for those transferring from a non-TAA dojo.

SECTION 3: Pre-Examination Procedure

- The components of a complete Application for Examination shall be:
 1. General Candidate Information
 2. Certification and Affidavit of Training Hours (completed by instructor)
 3. A substantive written paper or video presentation dealing with an aikido-related subject for the review of the judging panel (shodan-yondan).
 4. The appropriate testing form with candidate's information completed.
- The complete Application shall be submitted to the candidate's instructor who will pass it on to the Chief Technical Director (CTD) or his appointed representative. Upon receipt, a date and time shall be set for the examination, generally at a TAA-sponsored regional or national event.
- The candidate and instructor shall be notified when the date and time are set.

SECTION 4: Authority to Conduct Examination Panels

SHIHAN: The authority to establish Examination Panels is vested in the Shihan Division of the TAA (hereafter, "Shihan Division"), which consists of the senior ranking members of the TAA who have been given authorization by the TAA Board of Directors to promote candidates independently within the TAA as a Shihan.

Members of the Shihan Division may appoint other senior ranking instructors of the TAA to act as their authorized representatives on special occasions (*shihan-dairi*).

INSTRUCTORS: A TAA-certified *dan* rank instructor is someone who has been duly promoted to his/her *dan* rank by the TAA and has been a dues-paying member of the TAA for at least two (2) years prior to the date on which the exam is conducted.

PANEL COMPOSITION: Any member of the Shihan Division of the TAA has the right to test candidates for promotion, without need for other *dan* rank representatives being present. However, it is recommended that examination panels generally be constituted of more than one ranking instructor of the TAA. The following section, "Examination Panels" outlines the authority the Shihan Division has delegated to TAA-certified *dan* rank instructors.

SECTION 5: Examination Panels

Candidates meeting all the minimum requirements will be required to test in front of a panel of TAA-certified instructors that meet the testing board requirements. *Testing shall be conducted only if the pre-examination procedure is followed and a complete Application for Examination has been submitted.* In addition to the Application for Examination, the test will consist of, at minimum, demonstration of all physical curriculum requirements for the appropriate grade and any material within the portion of the curriculum the candidate has previously completed.

Each black belt Examination Panel must have a specific composition. The highest ranking black belt on the panel shall act as the **testing officer** (CTD representative) ensure the panel is composed properly and follows these published procedures.

Examinations for *shodan* through *sandan* may be recorded, but recordings do not need to be submitted to the *Shihan Division*.

1. *Shodan and Nidan:* recommended three (3), but no less than two (2), TAA-certified *dan* rank instructors. Of these panel members at least one (1) member must be two ranks senior to the rank being tested for (e.g., a *sandan* for a *shodan* promotion, *yondan* for *nidan*, etc.); and the other members must be at least one rank above the candidate. One member must be from a different TAA club than the person being tested.
2. *Sandan:* A minimum panel of three (3) TAA-certified *dan* rank instructors is required, including two (2) members who hold the rank of *godan* or above and are members of a different TAA club than the person being tested.

For *yondan* through *rokudan*, unedited video recordings of the testing shall be forwarded to the *Shihan Division*, which shall have the right to accept or deny the results of any test. The granting of these ranks is via the *Shihan Division*.

3. *Yondan:* A minimum panel of three (3) TAA-certified *dan* rank instructors is required including two (2) members who hold the rank of *rokudan* or above and are members of a different TAA club than the person being tested.
4. *Godan:* It is required that the candidate test before a panel including one or more members of the *Shihan Division*, although this panel could be comprised solely by any one member of the *Shihan Division*.

SECTION 6: Technical Requirements for Candidacy

Shodan (1^o) *More than 100 hours practice after ikkyu; minimum age of 16*
Randori kihon waza (all 17, both sides, against *tanto*)
Koryu goshin no kata (first 16 techniques, *suwari waza, hanza handachi waza, tachi waza*)
Tanto randori (2 minutes as both *tori* and *uke*. This requirement may be waived or modified by the examination panel in appropriate circumstances due to physical limitations.)

Important points for randori:

- Correct timing is essential for effective *atemi waza*
- Good *tsukuri* is essential for effective *kansetsu waza*

Koryu nage no kata (14 techniques - *omote* and *ura*, in the case of waiver of *tanto randori*, as listed above.)

Nidan (2^o) *More than 200 days practice after shodan*
Must attend two (2) TAA-approved seminars/clinics and participate in two (2) regional/national/international tournaments. (See Section 7 below for more information.)

Randori kihon waza (all 17, both sides, against *tanto*)

Koryu goshin no kata (first 24 techniques, *shodan* requirements as well as *dori*)

Tanto randori (2 minutes as both *tori* and *uke*. This requirement may be waived or modified by the examination panel in appropriate circumstances due to physical limitations.)

Important points for randori:

- Correct timing is essential for effective *atemi waza*
- Good *tsukuri* is essential for effective *kansetsu waza*

Koryu nage no kata (14 techniques - *omote* and *ura*, in the case of waiver of *tanto randori*, as listed above.)

Sandan (3^o) *More than 250 days practice after nidan*
Must attend three (3) TAA-approved seminars/clinics and participate in three (3) regional/national/international tournaments (See Section 7 below for more information.)

Randori kihon waza (all 17, both sides, against *tanto*)

Koryu goshin no kata (all 50 techniques, *nidan* requirements and *tachi dori, yari dori, yari, kumitachi*)

Tanto randori (2 minutes as both *tori* and *uke*. This requirement may be waived or modified by the examination panel in appropriate circumstances due to physical limitations.)

Important points for randori:

- Correct timing is essential for effective *atemi waza*
- Good *tsukuri* is essential for effective *kansetsu waza*

Koryu nage no kata (14 techniques - *omote* and *ura*, in the case of waiver of *tanto randori*, as listed above.)

Yondan (4^o)

More than four (4) years of continuous practice after sandan

Must attend three (3) TAA-approved seminars/clinics and participate in two (2) regional/national/international tournaments

Tegatana no Kuzushi (8 techniques)

- a) jodan no kuzushi 1. aigamae - ushiro ate 2. gyakugamae - ushiroate
- b) chudan no kuzushi 3. aigamae - oshi taoshi 4. gyakugamae - hikitaoshi
- c) gedan no kuzushi 5. aigamae - kote gaeshi 6. gyakugamae - kotegaeshi
- d) kouhou no kuzushi 7. ryote - oshi taoshi 8. ryote - ushiro ate

Goshin ho (tekubi dori)

- a) aigamae katate dori 9. shomen ate 10. gedan ate
- b) **gyakugamae katate dori** 11. shomenate 12. aigamaeate 13. gyakugamaeate

Goshin ho (datotsushu)

- a) shomenuchi 14. aigamae ate 15. oshi taoshi
- b) yokomen uchi 16. aigamae ate 17. tenkai kote gaeshi
- c) shomen tsuki 18. kote gaeshi
- d) mae geri 19. shomen ate

The examinee will be asked by the Examination Panel to also demonstrate techniques from the *koryu goshin no kata*.

Godan (5^o)

More than five (5) years continuous practice after yondan

Must attend three (3) clinics/seminars, one of which shall be taught by the candidate, as approved by a Shihan or the CTD.

Goshin ho (tekubi dori)

- a) aigamae katate dori 1. oshi taoshi 2. hiki taoshi 3. kote hineri 4. kote gaeshi 5. tenkai kote hineri
- b) gyakugamae katate dori 6. hiki taoshi 7. gyakute dori kote hineri 8. wakigatame 9. tenkai kotegaeshi 10. sumiotoshi
- c) katate ryote dori 11. tentai oshi taoshi 12. kote gaeshi
- d) zenpo ryotedori 13. aigamae ate (tenchinage) 14. aigamaeate (tenchinage ura)
- e) kouhou ryote dori 15. tenkai ude hineri nage 16. kote gaeshi 17. tenkai kotegaeshi 18. tenkai gyakutedori kotehineri

The examinee will be asked by the Examination Panel to also demonstrate techniques from the *koryu goshin no kata*.

SECTION 7: Clinic/Seminar/Tournament Attendance Requirements

Any candidate for *dan* rank promotion shall attend TAA-approved seminars or clinics and participate in TAA or WSAF tournaments as published on the TAA website. Participation in a tournament can be achieved by entering any *randori* or *kata* event.

“TAA-approved” means approved in writing by the *Shihan Division*, a *shihan-dairi* or the TAA Technical Director; and such approval can be given only if the event in question is open to all TAA members.

It is understood that this requirement may be waived due to individual circumstances. Such waiver will be made upon presentation of the mitigating circumstances by the recommending instructor and acceptance of the same by a member of the *Shihan Division* or the CTD.

SECTION 8: General Grading Criteria

Test forms will follow a uniform marking/grading procedure. Each technique will be graded as a 1 (below average), 2 (average), or 3 (above average). The average of the total score for all techniques of an exam must be 2 or better to pass. The panel's general grading criteria shall be:

- Timing, Off Balance, Posture, Presence (*zanshin*).
- Uke should be thrown, not fall down or take a dive.
- Speed and pacing of the test may vary, as long as [the three principles and six concepts](#) of Tomiki Aikido, and precision, are apparent.

SECTION 9: Testing Forms and Rank Registration Fees

Only the forms included in this packet should be used for application and testing. Completed test forms *must be* sent to the business office to be scanned and saved for future reference.

Rank registration fees are required to be paid to the TAA only for passing examinations. Payment of these fees can be made through the TAA website – <http://tomiki.org>. Kyu rank registration fees are approved by the Board of Directors from time to time and published on the TAA website. Yudansha registration fees are as follows:

Shodan	Nidan	Sandan	Yondan
\$100	\$200	\$300	\$400

The Board recognizes the continuing support, dedication and instructional efforts of individuals obtaining the rank of *godan* and above. Upon the completion of the prescribed requirements as stated herein, the individual is to make a minimum monetary contribution of \$500 to the TAA upon completion of the examination process.

SECTION 10: TAA Dan Rank Confirmation Petitioning

An aikido practitioner holding a *dan* rank from another Tomiki aikido organization may petition to earn a TAA *dan* rank through the following rank confirmation process. This process will allow for such practitioners to earn up to a *sandan* rank.

The applicant must meet the following requirements:

1. Paid membership in the TAA.
2. Presentation of proof of present *dan* rank in Aikido from another organization.
3. Interview (including demonstration of Tomiki aikido techniques) and approval by a member of the Shihan Division, the Technical Director or by a *shihan-dairi* designated for such interview.
4. Written commitment to:
 - a. Learn the entirety of the TAA curriculum up to and including the *dan* rank being confirmed; and
 - b. Work diligently toward the next *dan* rank promotion as per the TAA curriculum.

This approval and confirmation process is valid for a one-year probationary period during which time the applicant must participate in at least one TAA sponsored regional or national seminar or tournament. Future promotions for such person through the TAA shall be in compliance with the TAA's published guidelines for *dan* rank promotions and will require a good faith effort to learn the balance of the curriculum in due course and at a steady pace, as evaluated from time to time by a member of the Shihan Division, the Technical Director or by a *shihan-dairi*. If the applicant fails to comply with the above requirements, then the Shihan Division or the Technical Director may revoke the probationary confirmation.



APPLICATION FOR EXAMINATION



GENERAL CANDIDATE INFORMATION

Name _____ Birthdate _____

Address _____

Email _____ Gender _____

Current Grade _____ Are you a TAA member? _____

Certificate Date _____ Dojo Affiliation _____

ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTION TO CANDIDATE:

Please attach a current photograph and your essay on an aikido topic to this Application.

CERTIFICATION AND AFFIDAVIT OF TRAINING

Instructor's Name _____ Grade _____

I certify that the above-named candidate has completed the requirements for examination I denote below by circling it.

	Age	Training Time	Seminar/Clinic	Tournaments
Shodan	16 years	+100 hours		
Nidan	18 years	+200 days	2	2
Sandan	20 years	+250 days	3	3
Yondan	25 years	4 years	3	2
Godan	25 years	5 years	3 (teach 1)	

I have further reviewed the candidate's technical knowledge and believe the candidate is prepared to demonstrate this knowledge before an Examination Panel.

Instructor's Signature _____ Date _____

Candidate's Signature _____ Date _____

OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Received _____ Date _____

Tomiki Aikido of the Americas

1st Dan Exam Form

Applicant name: _____

Date _____

Last Promotion Date _____

Judge _____

Rank of Judge _____

Page 1 of 2

Technique	Below Average		Average		Above Average		Comments
	L	R	L	R	L	R	
Junanahon no kata							Uke with Tanto
Shomen-ate							
Aigamae-ate							
Gyakugamae-ate							
Gedan-ate							
Ushiro-ate							
Oshi-taoshi							
Ude-gaeshi							
Hiki-taoshi							
Ude-garami							
Waki-gatame							
Kote-hineri							
Kote-gaeshi							
Tenkai-kote-hineri							
Tenkai-kote-gaeshi							
Mae-otoshi							
Sumi-otoshi							
Hiki-otoshi							

Name

Judge

Technique	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Comments
Koryu Goshin no Kata				1st 16 techniques
Suwaru Waza				
Oshi-taoshi				
Gyakugamae-ate				
Kote-gaeshi				
Ryote-dori Sukui-nage				
Hanza Handachi Waza				
Tenkai kote-hineri osae				
Tenkai kote-gaeshi osae				
Gedan-ate				
Hiji-kime-nage				
Tachi Waza				
Kote-mawashi gyakugamae-ate				
Uchi tenkai-nage				
Gyakugamae-ate				
Hijikime otoshi				
Mae-otoshi				
Ushiro Mae-otoshi				
Kakae dori tenkai-kote-hineri				
Mae-eridori kata-gatame				

Technique	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Comments
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Randori - Kakari geiko				
Randori - Hikitate geiko				

Fail Pass

Comments:

Tomiki Aikido of the Americas

2nd Dan Exam Form

Applicant name: _____

Date _____

Last Promotion Date _____

Judge _____

Rank of Judge _____

Technique	Below Average		Average		Above Average		Comments
	L	R	L	R	L	R	
Junanahon kata							Uke with Tanto
Shomen-ate							
Aigamae-ate							
Gyakugamae-ate							
Gedan-ate							
Ushiro-ate							
Oshi-taoshi							
Ude-gaeshi							
Hiki-taoshi							
Ude-garami							
Waki-gatame							
Kote-hineri							
Kote-gaeshi							
Tenkai-kote-hineri							
Tenkai-kote-gaeshi							
Mae-otoshi							
Sumi-otoshi							
Hiki-otoshi							

Requirement	Below Average		Average		Above Average		Comments
	L	R	L	R	L	R	
Randori - Kakari geiko							
Randori - Hikitate geiko							

Name

Judge

Technique	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Comments
Koryu Goshin no Kata				1st 24 techniques
Suware Waza				
Oshi-taoshi				
Gyakugamae-ate				
Kote-gaeshi				
Ryote-dori sukui-nage				
Hanza Handachi Waza				
Tenkai kote-hineri osae				
Tenkai kote-gaeshi osae				
Gedan-ate				
Hiji-kime-nage				
Tachi Waza				
Kote-mawashi gyakugamae-ate				
Uchi tenkai-nage				
Gyakugamae-ate				
Hijikime otoshi				
Mae-otoshi				
Ushiro Mae-otoshi				
Kakae dori tenkai-kote-hineri				
Mae-eridori kata-gatame				
Tanto Dori				
Ushiro kubi-uchi				
Gyakugamae-ate				
Tentai oshi-taoshi				
Ushiro-ate				
Ude-gatame				
Kote-gaeshi				
Tenkai kote-hineri				
Shomen giri gedan-ate				

Fail

Pass

Comments:

Tomiki Aikido of the Americas

3rd Dan Exam Form

Applicant name: _____

Date _____

Last Promotion Date _____

Judge _____

Rank of Judge _____

Page 1 of 2

Technique	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Comments
Koryu Goshin no Kata				All 50 techniques
Suvari Waza				
Oshi-taoshi				
Gyakugamae-ate				
Kote-gaeshi				
Ryote-dori sukui-nage				
Hanza Handachi Waza				
Tenkai kote-hineri osae				
Tenkai kote-gaeshi osae				
Gedan-ate				
Hiji-kime-nage				
Tachi Waza				
Kote-mawashi gyakugamae-ate				
Uchi tenkai-nage				
Gyakugamae-ate				
Hijikime otoshi				
Mae-otoshi				
Ushiro Mae-otoshi				
Kakae dori tenkai-kote-hineri				
Mae-eridori kata-gatame				
Tanto Dori (defense against knife)				
Ushiro Kubi-uchi				
Gyakugamae-ate				
Tentai oshi-taoshi				
Ushiro-ate				
Ude-gatame				
Kote-gaeshi				
Tenkai kote-hineri				
Shomen giri gedan-ate				

Name

Judge

Technique	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Comments
Tachi dori (defense against sword)				
Mae-otoshi				
Tenkai kote-gaeshi				
Aigamae-ate				
Oshi-taoshi				
Hiji-kujiki				
Yari dori (staff defense techniques)				
Gyakugamae-ate				
Shomen-ate				
Hishigi				
Renraku waza hiji-hishigi				
Irimi mae-otoshi				
Yari waza (staff counter-defense)				
Migi sumi-otoshi				
Migi sumi gori hidari sumi-otoshi				
Tekubi kime gori shomen tsuki				
Mae-otoshi				
Shiho-nage				
Shinage gyaku kaiten nage				
Ude-kujiki				
Kokyu-nage				
Kumitachi waza (sword vs. sword)				
Aiuchi men giri				
Migi yokomen giri				
Hidari yokomen giri				
Kubi tsuki				
Do				
Kote nuki kote giri				
Shiogi uchi kaeshi yokomen giri				
Hasso gamae waza				
Randori				

Fail

Pass

Comments:

Tomiki Aikido of the Americas

4th Dan Exam Form

Name _____ Date _____ Last Promotion Date _____

Judge _____ Rank of Judge _____

Technique	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Comments
Yondan Specific				
Tegatana no kuzushi kara waza				
Jodan no kuzushi aigamae _ushiroate				
Jodan no kuzushi gyakugamae _ushiroate				
Chudan no kuzushi aigamae _oshitaoshi				
Chudan no kuzushi gyakugamae _hikitaoshi				
Gedan no kuzushi aigamae _kotegaeshi				
Gedan no kuzushi gyakugamae _kotegaeshi				
Ushiro ryotedori oshitaoshi				
Ushiro ryotedori ushiroate				
Goshincho tekubi				
Aigamae shomen-ate				
Aigamae gedan-ate				
Gyakugamae shomen-ate				
Gyakugamae aigamae-ate				
Gyakugamae gyakugamae-ate				
Goshiho datotsushu no waza				
Shomen-uchi oshi-taoshi				
Shomen-uchi aigamae-ate				
Yokomen-uchi tenkai-kote-gaeshi				
Yokomen-uchi aigamae-ate				
Shomen tsuki kote-gaeshi				
Maegeri shomen-ate				

Name

Judge

Technique	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Comments
Tachi dori (Sword Techniques)				
Mae-otoshi				
Tenkai kote-gaeshi				
Aigamae-ate				
Oshi-taoshi				
Hiji-kujiki				
Yari dori (Spear Defense Techniques)				
Gyakugamae-ate				
Shomen-ate				
Hishigi				
Renraku waza hiji-hishigi				
Irimi Mae-otoshi				
Yari waza (Spear Techniques)				
Migi sumi-otoshi				
Migi sumi gori hidari sumi-otoshi				
Tekubi kime gori shomen tsuki				
Mae-otoshi				
Shiho-nage				
Shinage gyaku kaiten nage				
Ude-kujiki				
Kokyu-nage				
Kumitachi waza (Sword vs. Sword)				
Aiuchi men giri				
Migi yokomen giri				
Hidari yokomen giri				
Kubi tsuki				
Do				
Kote nuki kote giri				
Shiogi uchi kaeshi yokomen giri				
Hasso gamae waza				

Randori				
Fail			Pass	

Comments:

Tomiki Aikido of the Americas

5th Dan Exam Form

Name _____ Date _____ Last Promotion Date _____

Judge _____ Rank of Judge _____

Technique	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Comments
Goshinno Tekubi				
Katetedori aigamae (One-hand grabs, matching stance)				
Oshi-taoshi				
Hiki-taoshi				
Kote-hineri				
Kote-gaeshi				
Tenkai kote-hineri				
Katetedori gyakugamae (One-hand grabs, opposite stance)				
Hiki-taoshi				
Gyakuto-dori kote-hineri oshi-taoshi				
Waki-gatame				
Tenkai-kote-gaeshi				
Sumi-otoshi				
Morotedori (Two-hand grabs, either 2-on-1 or 1-on-1)				
Tentai oshi-taoshi				
Kote-gaeshi				
Ryotedori aigamae-ate				
Aigamae-ate				
Ushiroryotedori tenkai ude-hineri				
Kote-gaeshi				
Tenkai gyakutedori kote-gaeshi				
Tenkai ude-hineri				

Comments:

Name

Judge

Technique	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Comments
Tachi dori (Sword Techniques)				
Mae-otoshi				
Tenkai kote-gaeshi				
Aigamae-ate				
Oshi-taoshi				
Hiji-kujiki				
Yari dori (Spear Defense Techniques)				
Gyakugamae-ate				
Shomen-ate				
Hishigi				
Renraku waza hiji-hishigi				
Irimi Mae-otoshi				
Yari waza (Spear Techniques)				
Migi sumi-otoshi				
Migi sumi gori hidari sumi-otoshi				
Tekubi kime gori shomen tsuki				
Mae-otoshi				
Shiho-nage				
Shinage gyaku kaiten nage				
Ude-kujiki				
Kokyu-nage				
Kumitachi waza (Sword vs. Sword Techniques)				
Aiuchi men giri				
Migi yokomen giri				
Hidari yokomen giri				
Kubi tsuki				
Do				
Kote nuki kote giri				
Shiogi uchi kaeshi yokomen giri				
Hasso gamae waza				

Randori				
Fail				Pass

Comments:
