



BLACK BELT TEAM HANDBOOK INTERMEDIATE LEVEL SUPPLEMENT

Welcome to the Intermediate phase of your journey to Black Belt Leadership. As a Purple, Blue, and Blue Stripe Belt you will find many changes from your training as a Basic student and you will be introduced to many new and exciting challenges.

Curriculum – you will learn new techniques, combinations, and forms. Specifics are outlined later in this handbook.

Sparring – you will be required to spar in order to promote from one belt to the next. Sparring skills are an important part of complete karate training.

Weapons – you will learn to use Nunchaku and soft swords in KANDO classes.

Life Skills – you will be introduced to new topics during huddle discussions that build on the skills you learned as a Basic student. Specifics are outlined later in this handbook.

Practice – because combinations are more difficult and forms are longer, you will probably need to stretch and practice at home. Ten minutes each day is usually about the right amount of time to practice. Practice can be fun and exciting if you do it with a positive attitude.

Graduations – since the challenges at intermediate level are greater, you will need more practice time to meet them. *You will still earn 4 stripes, but they will come after four or more weeks rather than two.* The instructors will consider you for promotion only after you have been at your belt level for **at least 16 weeks**.

Fitness and flexibility – the more fit and the more flexible you are, the better able you will be to face any challenge or achieve any goal. Stretch at home whenever you can while you are doing other activities like reading or watching television. Stay active by playing hard. Keep your “abs” in shape by doing crunches. And most importantly give your body what it needs to grow and get stronger by eating a healthy diet.

Responsibility – most importantly, you will have to take more responsibility for your actions in and out of the academy. During warm up time before classes, you should focus on quietly getting ready for class. Show respect for yourselves, the academy, and other students on the floor. Basic students will look up to you and follow your example. At home and in school you should use your control and respect skills to show others that you understand what martial arts training really means.

The BBLA staff is looking forward to working with you to reach your new goals.



INTERMEDIATE CURRICULUM

When students complete the Basic Level, they know:

- Kicks – front kick, round kick, hook kick, and side kick – and several variations, like the jump front kick and front leg front kick
- Hand techniques – back fist and punch, middle, high, and low blocks
- Combinations – using the basic kicks and punches
- Stances – attention, *chumbi*, front, horse, defensive, interview, the Stance Set
- Origin parts A-D
- Self-defense escapes – wrist grab, front choke, bear hug, and head lock

During their training at the Intermediate Level they will be challenged with much more complex movements and sequences that build on the basic techniques they learned through Green Belt.

- Kicks – back leg round kick, wheel kick, spin kick, pop-up front & back leg round kicks, offensive side kick, sliding side kick, and others
- Hand techniques – jab, ridge hand, spinning back fist, chop, inside-out and outside-in blocks, single middle and knife hand blocks
- Combinations –
 - Side kick – turn side kick – punch
 - Back round kick – spin kick – back round kick – spin kick – punch
 - Jab – punch – wheel kick – round kick – punch
 - Jab – punch – spin kick – punch
 - Balance combination: Side kick, hook kick, round kick, punch
 - Sparring combination: Sliding side kick – offensive back fist – punch – back leg round kick – punch
 - Offensive jab – offensive front kick – front kick/side kick – back fist - punch
 - X-ray paper kicking combinations like hook kick/round kick
- Stances – back stance, sparring defensive stance, cat stance, switching stances
- Jumps and spins
- Forms – Origin put together, Freedom A-C, and Generation (*Nunchaku* form)
- Sparring – in class drills, open sparring, and point sparring activities
- Self-defense – basic escapes with counter attacks, punch, and rear choke

In order to promote to Advanced classes (Red Belt and above) students will have to demonstrate proficiency in the elements listed above. While there is no absolute standard, students must:

- be able to do a side kick with their toes parallel to the floor or angled slightly down and a spin kick without falling backwards onto their heel
- know their forms by heart and be able to execute the moves to the best of their ability without assistance
- execute the self-defense movement sequences when attacked by an instructor or other student
- demonstrate a willingness to accept challenge by sparring during the required number of sessions

This demanding curriculum, and more sophisticated Life Skills topics, will challenge each student to do his or her best. The curriculum is designed as part of the progression towards Black Belt Leadership, and while it takes different students differing amounts of time to master the curriculum, every student who puts in sufficient effort will be able to succeed.



INTERMEDIATE LIFE SKILLS PROGRAM

Intermediate Students will be challenged to learn more sophisticated and demanding life skills as part of their training for success. They have shown through their efforts thus far that they understand basic Safety Skills and choices, and that they have the self-confidence, self-discipline, and good habits to succeed in anything they choose.

During Intermediate Level Huddle Discussions we will discuss the following topics:

1. Leadership
2. Knowledge
3. Respect
4. Teamwork
5. Perseverance
6. Attitude

Each topic will focus on attitudes and behaviors that students need to be successful leaders in school, at home, on the playground, and in karate.

Some of the concepts and language may challenge the younger students for a while. They may need some additional guidance and explanation from parents so that they understand the topics and know how to apply the advice to various situations in their lives.

It is important for Black Belt Leadership Academy students to know that being a martial artist does not just mean punching and kicking. Rather, they must realize that the life skills they learn are the most important part of their training outside the academy. We encourage you to discuss the issues we raise with your children and help them develop concepts in line with your family's understanding of good character development.

In the pages that follow, the Huddle Discussions are summarized. Your students may wish to refer to them when they are answering questions on their Intent to Promote forms. Encourage them to read the sheets whenever you feel they would be useful.



leadership skills through the martial arts

INTERMEDIATE LIFE SKILLS PROGRAM - LEADERSHIP

What is Leadership?

Leadership is an attitude. It is the desire, and eventually the ability, to make yourself, and those around you, better. A leader is someone that others choose to follow, because he or she is always responsible, positive, and hard working.

Leaders Big and Small

You have to become a good leader of yourself before other people will want to follow your example. First you have to take responsibility for your own actions and attitudes. Second you have to make good decisions, which will help you to become a better person.

Lead, Follow, or Get Out of the Way

We may not always like what others want us to do. If people we trust, like parents or teachers, tell us to do something, we can ask polite questions to find out why, but then we should do it because they have our best interest in mind. In this case we are a smart follower, trying to learn! Sometimes people try to make us do things that we should not do. This is often called peer pressure. Remember, you don't always have to go along with the group.

The Importance of Leadership

You don't always have to tell others what to do to be a leader. **Leaders motivate us to do better than we ever thought we could** and to achieve goals that we didn't think were possible.

Lead Others to Their Potential

The most important function of leaders is to make themselves, and those around them, the best they can be. No one in this academy *gets* a Black Belt – you have to EARN one. The same is true of trust and leadership. **One of the most important ways we can help others is by influence, not authority. The best leaders don't tell others what to do; they help others want to do their best by setting a good example.**

The Key to Leadership

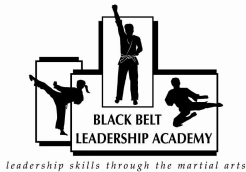
Develop a habit of success. The key that unlocks our ability to make ourselves and those around us better is a **positive attitude**. That means that we approach every challenge knowing that, with time and hard work, we can accomplish our goals.

The Power of Example

People may be bosses, but that doesn't make them leaders. **A leader is someone we want to follow, not someone we have to follow. To be a leader you need to set the best example.**

Black Belt Leadership Starts With You

If you want to become a leader, and lead others to reach their potential, then first you have to **become a leader for yourself**. Your goal must be to be the best you can be – then you can be a leader for others. Keep your positive attitude while you work hard to earn your Black Belt. As a Black Belt Leader it will be your responsibility to always do your best and to help others do theirs. While you are earning your Black Belt, you will develop the good habits it takes to learn and succeed. You have to start by taking responsibility for your own decisions, and becoming the leader you imagine. You have to learn as much as you can, work as hard as you can, and become as positive as you can.



INTERMEDIATE LIFE SKILLS PROGRAM – KNOWLEDGE

Knowledge is

- Learning new things.
- Understanding why things are the way they are, and how they relate to other things.
- Using what you have learned.

Knowledge isn't just memorizing facts or answers – real knowledge is knowing why the answers are right and what the facts may mean. In karate, we need to know why we do moves in a certain way or in a certain order, how to connect techniques, and how to control them when we use them.

Problem solving is one of the most important uses of knowledge. There are two basic steps to solving problems.

1. Define the problem. You have to know what it is that you are trying to solve first. Sometimes people try to solve problems before they understand what is going on, so they don't know where to focus their efforts.
2. Find solutions to the problem. In math this may be really easy – there may only be one answer – but in life finding solutions may be very difficult. You may have to learn new skills, try out several possibilities, and then choose a solution depending on what you think may happen. Every choice has consequences.

Imagination is our ability to understand something we haven't seen before, or perhaps to create something new. We can use our imagination to look at the facts, understand what they mean, and use them to solve problems or discover new facts. Imagination can also help us set goals and stay motivated.

Facts are where knowledge starts. We have to know all the necessary facts before we can understand what a problem is and before we can effectively use our imagination to develop a solution. When we think we know about something before we have the facts, then we are jumping to a conclusion. That's like diving head first into a lake before you know how deep it is. Ouch!

How's and Why's – If we learn how something works, and why it works the way that it does, then we can use our imaginations to help us discover the best way to use our knowledge. In karate, for example, we learned how to do a side kick. Then we learned why we need a good pivot and chamber and re-chamber (so that we have good balance, power and accuracy). Then we used our imagination to create new ways of using our side kick in forms and sparring.

See the Whole Picture – Each little bit of information that you know is like a dot. You need to connect the dots before you can see the whole picture. Each time you learn something new, you should use **logic** and **imagination** to see how it relates to other facts. In karate class, for example, you can think of a form as a series of dots.

You are a dot, too, and everything you do has an effect on others. If you connect well with other people, then you can form a team to problem solve and use everyone's knowledge. Everyone is responsible to do her or his best – but no one stands alone.

Leaders love learning – A successful leader accomplishes things. To accomplish a lot you have to know a lot. The more you know, the more choices you have. When you can choose to do or be what you love, you will lead a happy life. So we should all love learning, even when it is difficult, because learning gives us opportunities to solve problems and make choices.

Use what you know – The more you know, the more you can understand. The more you understand, the more you can imagine. The more you imagine, the more you can do. When you came into karate class for the first time, you might not have known what kind of moves you would be able to do. But now, you are beginning to see the relationships between moves. By the time you earn your Black Belts, you will have created self-defense demonstrations, personal combinations, and maybe more. Hopefully you will use your success in our karate school as a model for the way you learn and use knowledge everywhere.



INTERMEDIATE LIFE SKILLS PROGRAM – RESPECT

Competition – Every time we compete with someone, we have the opportunity to improve ourselves and others. Always treat people against whom you compete – even yourself – with respect. Do your best and expect them to do the same.

R.E.S.P.E.C.T.

Responsibility – each of us is responsible for showing and earning respect. Treat others the way we would want them to treat us.

Expectation – always expect more from ourselves than others would expect of us. This means that we should always do our best – and put in extra effort to get better.

Showing – people believe what they see. We earn respect from others by showing respect for others. It is not enough to think or feel it.

Praise & Encouragement – Giving someone a compliment is a form of encouragement, and it shows that we want others to do better and respect their abilities. We should praise ourselves when we are doing well also.

Caring – we have to care about people and places around us. We should care about helping people, making them feel good about themselves.

Trust – respect is about establishing and building trust. We want other people to trust us, and the best way to earn their trust is to be respectful of ourselves and of them.

Respect Yourself – By respecting yourself you are showing that you care about yourself. If we care about ourselves other people are more likely to care for us, and show us good respect.

Respect Others – in order to earn respect, and to be leaders, we must show respect for other people as well. When we treat others with respect, we show them how we want to be treated. We want people to be respectful towards us, perhaps to be our friends, or our teammates, or co-workers, so we should show them that we value them. Good leaders respect others and show them how to be respectful through their own example.

Respect the Environment – Clean surroundings provide us with a positive place to work and grow. One place we will always be is on planet Earth, so we must use things in the environment wisely. Whenever we waste, we are being disrespectful to people and places around us.

Respect Is An Activity – Do you believe what you hear or what you see? What people say or what they do? If you want people to know that you respect them, you have to show them. Respect is not just an attitude that we have, or something that we feel. It is an activity that we do! We always have to **demonstrate** our respect to others by being honest, by courteous, and helpful.

Earn Respect – The only way to get respect is to earn it. If you show people that you not only respect them, but you also respect their surroundings, you can earn their respect. But remember, it is hard to respect someone else unless you respect yourself. If you do your best every day, you will feel good about yourself, and it will be easier to show respect for others.

Respect Your Parents – Sometimes we forget to show respect to those we see most often and care most about – our families, especially our parents. Your moms and dads know you love them – but it is still important that you show them respect. They show respect for you and your ability to learn by making sure you get to school and karate classes. Show respect for them – and yourself – by doing the most you can with what they help you get. Be a Black Belt Leader in everything you do.



INTERMEDIATE LIFE SKILLS PROGRAM – TEAMWORK

T-E-A-M – A team is a group of people working towards the same goal. Teams are important because “*Together Everyone Achieves More.*” This means that we can accomplish more working with a group of people that we can by ourselves.

Be a good team member

- **Know your team** – know who is on your team, what the team’s goals are, and what your responsibility is to help the team achieve those goals.
- **Be the strongest link!** – As soon as the weakest link in the team doesn’t take care of their responsibility then the whole team fails. To become the strongest link we should always be focused on taking care of our responsibilities for the team, and always trying to make the team stronger and better by doing our personal best, even if this means that sometimes we have to work hard for the team instead of doing things that we want to do for ourselves.

The most important team – we might be on many different teams which all have different purposes – Black Belt Team, sports teams, scouting groups, casts in a play, and even our class in school. But the most important team you are on is **your family**.

Three rules of working together:

1. **Trust** – believe that team members will do the best they can, and show the team that if they give you a responsibility you will do your best to get it done on time
2. **Respect** – if a team member gives an opinion or asks for yours, or asks for help, you have to be courteous and respectful. This means that you have to listen first.
3. **Communication** – give compliments and corrections in a positive way – in a way that reminds someone that you know they are going to do better next time.

Play your part – We need to understand what our role is on the team, and do that the best that we can to fulfill the responsibilities of that role. Then the whole team can accomplish its goal.

Who gets the credit? – A good team member always shares responsibility when things go wrong, and gives the whole team credit when things go well. Sharing makes every team member feel that they have a part, so they will keep trying harder and the team will get better and better.

Leadership attitude – A leadership attitude isn’t about how you can make other people work for you. Rather, it shows when you do as much work as you can, the best that you can, so that the whole team can benefit. Leaders keep their eyes on the goal, not on themselves. They do whatever they can to help the team – and always do their personal best. *And they* respect others and help them do their best so that the whole team can succeed.

Together Everyone Achieves More – If you plan with others, respect what they have to offer, do your personal best, and count on other people to do theirs, then the team will succeed – and everyone on it will become a better leader. Think of that as you decide how to behave at home, at school, and as you progress toward your Black Belt at the academy.



INTERMEDIATE LIFE SKILLS PROGRAM – PERSEVERANCE

Perseverance means never quitting. It means doing what you have to do to reach a goal every day until you succeed. Perseverance is the hard work we do after we get tired of the hard work we already did.

Fitness – Exercise frequently – the more you exercise, the stronger your body gets and the more endurance you develop. Eat healthy foods – your body needs the right building blocks to grow strong and the right fuel to burn during exercise. Fitness is a slow process – and a life long goal. When you are fit, you are ready to do what is necessary to achieve other goals.

Goal Setting – *If opportunity doesn't knock, build a door.* Setting goals is part of our preparation to succeed. Set short-term goals that build to long term ones. Make a chart to keep track of your progress towards your goals and reward yourself when you complete a step.

Effort – Sometimes things come to us quickly, and we accomplish a lot in a very short time. But most of the time we need to work at something for quite a while before we reach our goal. Stay excited about your goals and your progress, and you will be able to persevere. Effort can become a good habit. Laziness can become a bad habit. Then when you take a day off, you won't be lazy. You'll be rewarding yourself for all the hard work you've done and the progress you've made.

Determination – almost every time we try to accomplish a meaningful goal, something gets in our way. We call that an obstacle or a road block. Sometimes the road block is time, sometimes it is other people telling us we won't succeed, sometimes it is our own fear of failure, sometimes an injury. A road block hides the road to success, but if you look past it, you will see the path you want to take on the other side. The effort you exert to overcome an obstacle is often the most rewarding.

Courage – Sometimes we fear what we don't know. We don't want to try new things because we might make a mistake – and that would make us look foolish or create a worse problem. A mistake is a way of finding out what doesn't work so that we can more easily find out what does work. Don't be afraid of getting it wrong. Have the courage to try – or you will never get it right.

Action – Nothing good will happen to you unless someone makes it happen. You are all fortunate enough to have opportunities to grow and learn – in school, at home, and in karate class. But you need to act to use those opportunities – and that action sometimes requires new learning and almost always requires practice. Don't worry about what you think you can't do. Worry about the chances you miss when you don't even try.

Quitting – Every action you take produces an outcome – teaches you something or gets you closer to your goal. But if you quit, you never succeed. Never say “can't.” Remember that everyone who got where they are had to begin where they were.

Black Belt – Earning a Black Belt is not only a goal – it is an opportunity. Anyone who earns a Black Belt from our academy will have proven to themselves that they have courage, determination, and ability – that they can accomplish anything if they persevere. You are ready to move to a new level – to face new challenges in the world and in the academy. As a Black Belt you'll be able to take Masters Team classes – to learn new karate skills, to use weapons like the bo staff and the sword – because you have shown your instructors, your parents, and yourself that you should be given the opportunity to try new and more difficult things. When you are not in the karate school, you will be expected to always be thoughtful to choose what you think is right, to respect yourself and others, and to be a leader.

Both require perseverance – and so does every important goal in our lives.



INTERMEDIATE LIFE SKILLS PROGRAM – ATTITUDE

Count by 1's – Lao Tzu said, “*even a journey of a thousand miles starts with a single step.*” Every step you take gets you closer to your goal. Don’t think about how far you have to go – think about what you are doing at each moment. “I’ll do my best right now – and I’ll do one better tomorrow” That’s the attitude that will get you where you want to go.

YES I CAN is the first step to success. **YES IS WILL** is the second. Know that you will get better every time you put effort into achieving your goal. Promise yourself that you will show the self-discipline to make yourself do what you know you should. Approach every task with a positive attitude, believing in yourself and in your ability to grow and learn, and you will always succeed – even if it is in ways you didn’t expect.

Desire means to want something. It is easier to have self-discipline and make yourself stick to a task if you care about what you are doing and why you are doing it. Since you always want to improve yourself, then you always have an important goal to desire. Remember, even when the going gets tough, the rewards of completing a goal are great.

Bring it on! – The “bring it on” attitude turns every challenge into an opportunity, every difficulty into a chance to learn and grow. What seems to be a problem to people with negative attitudes is an opportunity to someone with a positive attitude. So next time someone asks you if you are ready for a challenge, say BRING IT ON!

Service – A leader tries to give as much or more than s/he takes. Think about all that your parents give to you to make it possible for you to train at the Black Belt Leadership Academy. Think about how much you can give back to them by doing your best every day – and how you can share what they give to you by being useful to others and by being a strong leader. Remember – the greatest leaders are not remembered for what they did, but for what they helped other people do.

Confidence – We have the right to feel good about doing our best – and to be confident that with hard work we can be even better. But confident doesn’t mean “cocky.” Be proud of what you have done, but always remember that others deserve respect for their accomplishments and the potential they have to do more. And remember that you can always learn more and improve yourself as well. Don’t be over-confident. Earn the right to be proud by doing your best every day.

Humility – When you earn a reward to celebrate your accomplishments – like a stripe or a new belt – you should give yourself a new challenge. When you think about how far you have come, you should always realize how far you have to go, how much you owe to others, and how your success brings responsibility. When you honor yourself for doing a good job, you should also respect others who have done their best as well.

Black Belt Attitude – Black Belts know they have to show respect, to be honest and responsible, and to persevere when they decide to do something. Black Belts are leaders – people whom others want to follow. Black Belts never stop doing their best, never stop trying to get better, and never stop leading by example. Black Belts thank people who help them, help others when they can, and always respect themselves. They show this respect by doing what they know is right – and by learning how to do even better next opportunity.

When you tie your black belt around your waist for the first time, you will have earned the right to be proud of what you have accomplished – and you will make many other people proud of you. But that is not the end – it is the beginning of a life with a Black Belt Attitude.