

To AJKA-International
AJKA-I of PA
Instructor Trainee's Report #3

Subject: **“Body Parts Used in Karate Techniques”**

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Virtually every part of the human body is capable of the execution of karate techniques. For example, from the fist to the fingertips there are more than ten striking surfaces. Throughout their training the karateka learns to use the wrist, arms, elbows, knees, head and feet as weapons. Through years of practice a karateka forges each body part into a karate weapon. However, without proper training the body parts will be nothing more than parts of the body.

Techniques which use the parts of the hand as striking surfaces are the fore fist (*seiken*), the back fist (*riken*), the bottom fist (*tettsui*), the one-knuckle fist (*ippon ken*), the middle-finger one-knuckle fist (*nakadate ippon ken*), the fore-knuckle fist (*hiraken*), the ridge hand (*haito*), the back hand (*haishu*), the bear hand (*kumade*), the tiger-mouth hand (*koko*), the two-finger spear hand (*nihon nukite*), the one-finger spear hand (*ippon nukite*), the knife hand (*shuto*), and the spear hand (*shihon nukite*). Parts of the arm used as striking surfaces are the forearm (*ude*), used in downward sweep (*geden barai*) and inside forearm block (*uchi ude uke*); the wrist (*tekubi*), used in bent wrist block (*kakuto*) and the chicken-head wrist block (*keito*); the palm, used in palm heel strike (*teisho*) and ox-jaw hand (*seiryuto*); and the elbow (*empi*).

Some of the basic Hand Techniques that we use routinely are:

- Oi Zuki:** Stepping or lunge punch. Targets are the face, body and groin. This technique can be used at many different distances to attack your opponent.
- Gyaku Zuki:** Reverse punch; the signature move of Shotokan practitioner. Targets are the face, body and groin. This technique is used when your opponent is close and usually done after creating an opening to the face or body
- Kizami Zuki:** Jab punch off front hand. This technique can be used either when you are close to your opponent, or used in a combination sequence to close distance and create an opening.
- Shuto Uke:** Knife hand strike, but it can also be used as a block. This strike can be executed to the face (jaw line), neck or shoulder. The Block can be executed to the arm. This should be used as a close in technique.
- Uraken:** Back fist strike. The target is usually the head, torso, or face. This is a close range technique which can be used in combination.
- Empi Uchi:** Elbow strike. This is a close-range smashing technique in which the target is usually the torso. It can be used in four (4) different directions – you must not use the tip of the elbow.

Techniques which use the parts of the leg as striking surfaces are the knee (*hittsui*), the foot including the instep (*haisoku*), the foot edge (*sokuto*), the sole (*teisoku*), the heel (*kakato*), and ball of the foot (*koshi*).

Some of the basic leg techniques that we use routinely are:

Mae Geri: Front kick. The first kick learned in Shotokan. It is used to cover large distances and can target the entire body (groin to face).

Mawashi Geri: Roundhouse kick. This kick is used to cover both medium and large distances. The kick can target anywhere on the body from the opponents legs to head.

Yoko Geri Keage: Side snap kick. This is a medium range kick used to strike upward and hitting opponents ribs, arm pit, or jaw.

Yoko Geri Kekomi: Side thrust kick. This kick can be utilized in both medium and long distances depending on the body shifting. The target area is the head, body, or legs.

Mikazuki Geri (ushi and soto) Crescent kick. This kick can be used as a block or strike. It is best used in medium range distances. This kick can be very effective in a combination by creating openings in your opponent's defenses. The kick can move your opponent's hands/arms or as a fake to land another kick such as ushiro geri. The striking areas are arms, head, and torso.

Kage Geri Hook Kick. This kick is used in short range distances. The kick targets the head or torso.

Ushiro Geri: Back kick. This kick is best used in medium range and targets the torso.

Tobi Geri: Jump kick. This kick is used in long range distances. The target area for this kick is the face or upper-body.

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