

White, Gold, Orange & Blue Belt Class

SHORIN-RYU KARATE

WGOB

IMPORTANT TERMS:

DACHI *stances*

Yoi dachi *ready stance*Shizen-tai dachi *front stance*Zenkutsu dachi *forward stance*Kokutsu dachi *back stance*Neko ashi dachi *cat stance*Kiba dachi *horse stance*Naihanchi dachi *iron horse*Sagi dachi *crane stance*Kosa dachi *Cross-legged stance*Ashi orishiku dachi *Kneeling*Seiza *formal sitting position*

INTERESTING NOTES:

The Okinawan word for stance is TACHI. But tachi is spelled with a D instead of a T when it follows another word! We normally use the word DACHI in our school regardless of the context.

In Japan they use the word TAI for stance, so certain stances incorporate both TAI and DACHI in their names due to the long evolution of karate-do.

There are no plural nouns in Japanese, so dachi means both stance and stances.

THIS ISSUE'S FOCUS:

Building a Solid Foundation with Dachi *stances*

The literal and figurative foundation of our karate is the dachi, or stance. The best house in the world will crumble if built on a poor foundation!

Think about the purpose of each stance that we practice. There are defensive stances such as the back stance and cat stance, and offensive stances such as the front stance and forward stance.

Then there are stances which can be used for a variety of purposes - horse, naihanchi, and more. And remember that it is possible to attack and defend from any stance - it is all about what makes sense in a given situation!



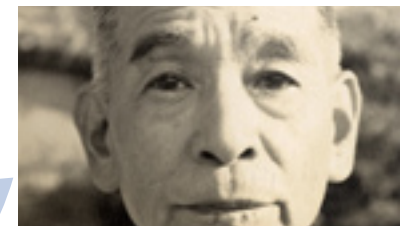
It is important to practice your stances properly so that you develop a feel for when they are right and when they are wrong. Use the mirrors if you are in the large dojo

room. Otherwise, check your stances using the metrics that we discuss in class. The back stance is easy to check by dropping your back knee and seeing where it lands (the back knee should be one fist away from your front heel). Adjust it and then stand back up, pointing your back foot

sideways and bending both knees. Use the metrics about shoulder-widths apart for the others. Like every other aspect of our style, there is no magic - stances just take practice and repetition to master!

When we die, all material things mean nothing. We die with our only true possession. . . our name. We strive to bring honor to our name.

- Chosin Chibana



DEFENSIVE STANCE

Neko Ashi Dachi

Cat stance

Point by Point

Weight: 80-90% rear leg!

Knees: both bent, especially the rear leg

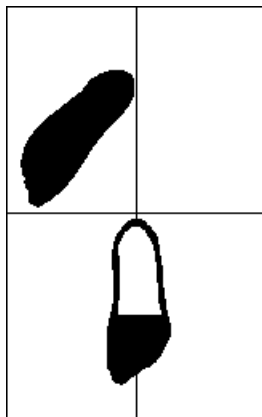
Rear foot: pointed sideways or up to 45° forward. Never point it toward the rear

Front foot: Ball of the foot on the ground; heel completely off the ground; toes pointed forward

Shoulders: oblique to the direction you are facing

Back: Straight - you should be upright, with no curl in your back

Head: face forward, look your opponent in the eye



Metrics

Your feet should be on a line from front to back. There is approximately one shoulder width between your feet.

Comments

Neko is the Japanese word for "cat." A cat will stand on its rear legs so that it can strike with his fastest and most lethal weapons - his front paws. Kicks are stronger than punches, and our fastest

kick is a lead leg kick. But if your weight is on it you can't pick it up. Neko ashi dachi emulates the cat by shifting our weight off our lead leg almost completely to the back leg. This allows us to raise our lead leg quickly to kick. It also allows you to pick it up as a shield, or to feint a kick.

My body is strong but every day my will gets even stronger...

- Shinpan Gusukuma

OFFENSIVE STANCE

Shizen-tai Dachi

Front stance

Point by Point

Weight: 50/50

Knees: only the front should be bent!
Your knee should be directly over your front foot.



Note - The rear leg must never be bent

Rear foot: pointed about 45° forward.

Front foot: toes point forward

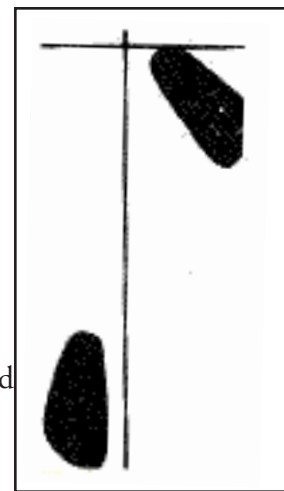
Back: Straight - you should be upright, with no curl in your back

Shoulders: square in the forward direction.

Head: face forward, look your opponent in the eye

Metrics

Your feet should have one shoulder width between them - otherwise you are "walking a tightrope" if both feet are on a line, and you have no balance. There should be approximately one shoulder width from front to back. Increase this front to back distance to two widths, and you will be in a zenkutsu dachi, or (deep) *forward* stance.



Summary

Consider the first three Kihon kata (kihon ichi-dan, ni-dan and san-dan) - they are teaching you to use these two very stances. At first you use shizen-tai dachi to move the attack forward, then you go back defensively three steps using neko ashi dachi.

Kihons yon-dan and go-dan teach you how to transition continuously between these stances. Practice shifting your weight and hitting these stances no matter what, and you are on the road to success -- not only with kata, but with your entire karate-do experience!
- Sensei Grant