

5 stances

1. karate stances

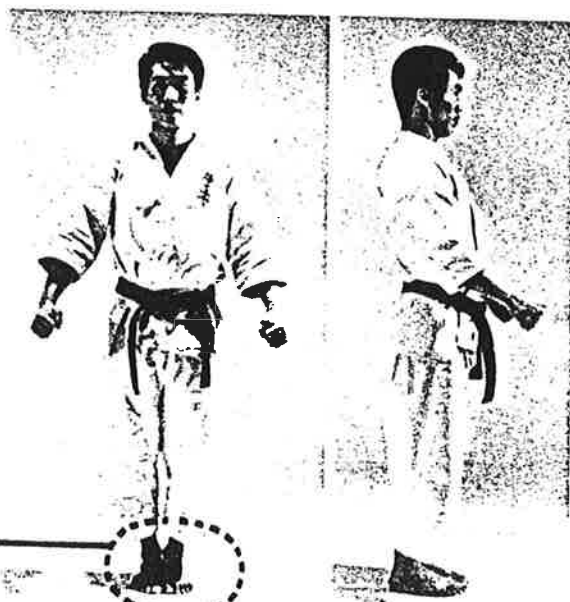
Standing and walking are two of the most important things in human life. Proper walking, the more difficult of these two, depends on proper standing. In turn, in karate, without mastery of stance, walking, kicking and the forms are impossible to perform.

Karate includes a wide variety of stances, each devised to suit the needs of given techniques, and most derived from and classified in Chinese *kempo*. The twelve most vital stances we have included demand complete mastery.

normal stance (*heisoku-dachi*)

Feet together and parallel pointing straight ahead, stand straight.

In the following four stances the upper body remains in the position it is in for the normal stance. Only the positions of the feet change.



open-toes stance (*musubi-dachi*)

Tips of the toes pointed out, heels together; stand straight.



parallel open stance (*heiko-dachi*)

Legs apart about the width of your shoulders with feet parallel and pointed straight ahead.



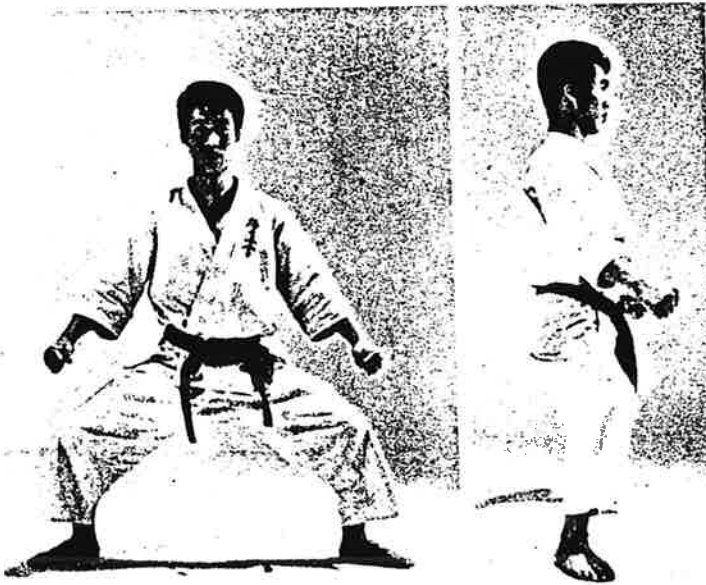
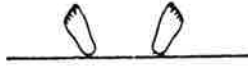
pigeon-toe stance (*uchihachi ji-dachi*)

Feet spread about the width of the shoulders, toes pointed in, and heels out.



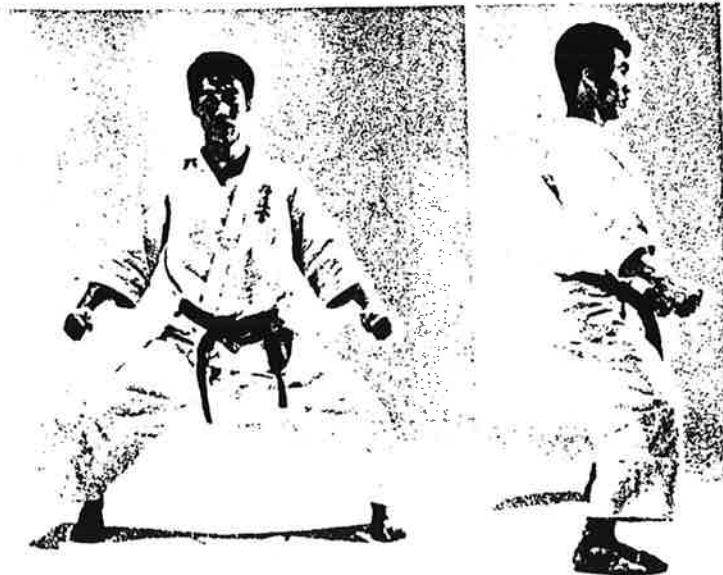
stable or preparedness stance
(*fudo-dachi* or *yot-dachi*)

Feet spread about shoulder width, toes pointed out. This resembles the military parade-rest position for the feet.



sumo stance (*shiko-dachi*)

Feet spread about twice shoulder width and toes pointed out, straighten your legs first, then half squat. The Japanese name of this stance, *shiko-dachi*, derives from the name of a famous stance Japanese sumo wrestlers use.



straddle stance (*kiba-dachi*)

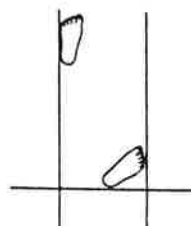
Squat into a position similar to one you might use on horseback. Toes are pointed forward and feet are parallel.





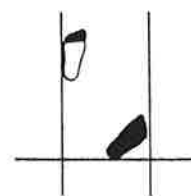
forward leaning stance
(*zenkutsu-dachi*)

Put one foot forward, bend the knee of the forward leg. Lean your body forward, and keep your back leg straight. The forward foot points straight ahead, and the rear foot points slightly to the outside.



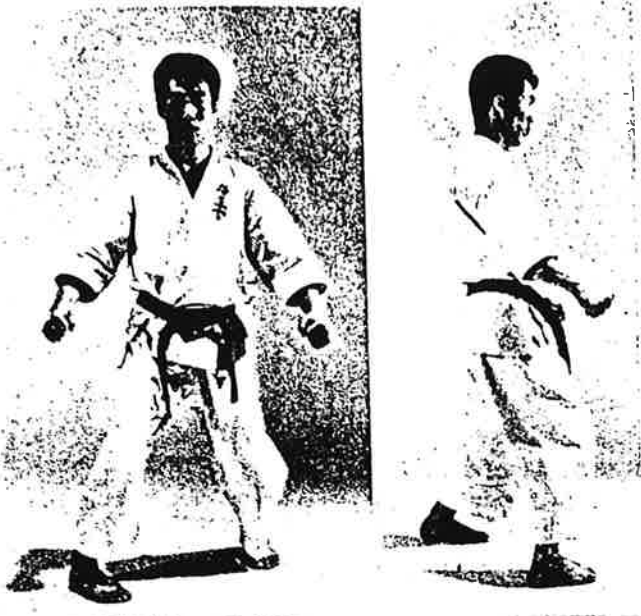
back leaning stance
(*kokutsu-dachi*)

Put one foot forward, tense the toes of that foot, and lean your torso back. The toes of the forward foot are pointed straight ahead. Distribute your body weight 70% on the back leg and 30% on the forward one.



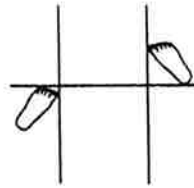
crance stance
(*tsuruashi-dachi*)

The name derives from the position's similarity to the way a crane stands on one leg. Put one foot lightly on one knee so that all of your weight is on the one foot.



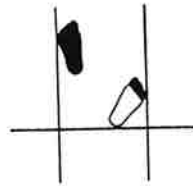
sanchin stance (sanchin-dachi)

This, one of the most frequently used stances, has two versions, the right and the left *sanchin* stances. In the right stance, put your left foot forward, draw your right foot slightly back, and point the toes of both feet slightly inward. The foot position you see in the chart is for a left *sanchin* stance; the right foot is forward.



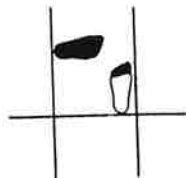
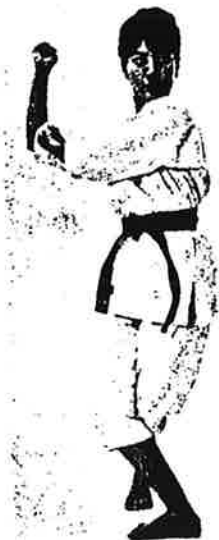
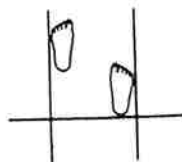
cat stance (nekoashi-dachi)

The foot position in this stance is similar to the shape of a cat's rear feet. Put one foot forward, bend the instep of that foot so that the heel is off the ground. Distribute your body weight 90% on the back leg so that the front foot is always ready for a kick.



hooked stance (kake-dachi)

Hook your left foot behind your right foot. Put most of your body weight on your right leg. Turn the toes of only your left foot in.



one-foot-forward stance (moroashi-dachi)

The feet are spread about shoulder width. They are parallel, but one foot — either right or left — is slightly in front on the other.