



Blackburn Shukokai Karate

Newsletter

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Unit 1/11 Mary Street Blackburn Vic 3130 Ph) 0398944344
 Website: www.shukokaikarate.net

What is BUNKAI ?...

Bunkai (分解), literally meaning "analysis" or "disassembly", is a term used in [Japanese martial arts](#) referring to the application of fighting techniques extracted from the moves of a "form" (*kata*).

If you already know your kata, then this is an excellent way to learn it off by heart. Break it down and practice the bunkai step by step exploring each movement and it's application (notice that quite often there is more than one bunkai that fits).

Three to four movements are much easier to remember than fifty. So practice each sequence with a partner. One person does the attack and one does the defense, then switch. Proceed through the entire kata performing and perfecting each part.

You will find that actual kata movements will vary depending on the size and shape of your opponent. Notice that sometimes a bunkai will fit like a hand in a glove - and other times, well, the glove might not fit so great.

That's perfectly ok - don't think that the bunkai therefore doesn't work and is useless. Rather think of it as a guide as to what you are doing. Bunkai sometimes needs a little modification to work perfectly.

Three reasons for this are -

1. Kata movements are sometimes made to "look nice" for competition and therefore the bunkai may not be an exact fit for the movements. That's ok - work with what you've got and make sure you realize the difference.
2. Some kata movements are hidden or are very subtle and not immediately apparent. In this case be sure to explore all possibilities and ask yourself how it might make sense.
3. People of different heights, shapes and sizes will have different techniques in terms of angle and distance. This in turn forces a necessary change to the distance between you and your partner and also the defensive bunkai movement, in order for it to work properly.

Practice your bunkai thoroughly and you'll gain a deep understanding of what you are actually doing. Then when it comes time to do the kata by yourself, you'll be able to easily imagine the attack. Visualizing an opponent in front of you and striking and moving as though they were really there will boost your skills.

Article by Sensei Jason Stanley 4th Dan Shukokai Karate



From all the instructors at BSK we wish you and your family a Merry Christmas and a safe and happy New Year.

Stay fit and we will look forward to a great 2010.

Quote:

"When you look at life think in terms of karate, but remember, karate is not only karate, it is life"

Gichin Funakoshi

Founder Shotokan Karate

Want to grade to the next level?

Ask some questions of yourself?

1. Have I trained enough?
2. Do I know my combinations?
3. Do I know my kata's?
4. Are my techniques/basics solid?
5. Is my sparring good?
6. Has my impact got better?
7. Is my fitness good enough?
8. Am I mentally prepared?
9. Have I really improved?

If you answered no to any or all of the questions from 1 to 9, then perhaps you should ask this question of yourself?

10. Am I ready to grade?

