

Martial Arts Suggested Reading Syllabus

An Educational Guide to History, Strategy, Philosophy, and Mechanics of Combative Arts

Category 1: Foundations of Karate & Striking Arts

Technical excellence, dojo culture, and the lineage of traditional stand-up arts.

- **The Karate Dojo** — Peter Urban

A colorful exploration of Okinawan and Japanese Karate tradition, outlining the culture of dojo life.

- **Introduction to The Original Isshinryu Karate System** – Harry G. Smith

A first-generation student of Tatsuo Shimabukuro, founder of Isshinryu Karate-do, is sharing his remembrances, knowledge and insights. Shihan Harry G. Smith (9th dan Isshinryu karate) studied with the founder of Isshinryu karate in Okinawa from 1956-1958.

- **Dynamic Karate** — Masatoshi Nakayama

Masterclass on Shotokan mechanics, body alignment, and the physics behind maximizing striking power.

- **Karate-Do: My Way of Life** — Gichin Funakoshi

Autobiography of Gichin Funakoshi, the "Father of Karate-do," detailing his life and his philosophy on the art.

- **Okinawan Karate: Teachers, Styles and Secret Techniques** — Mark Bishop

Features in this Okinawan karate book include historical tables and vital striking point charts, as well as detailed historical information and an account of the contemporary karate and kobudo.

- **Tae Kwon Do: The Korean Martial Art** – Richard Chun

Authoritative work has been the guide for Taekwondo practitioners for over 50 years.

- **The History of Karate and the Masters Who Made It: Development, Lineages, and Philosophies of Traditional Okinawan and Japanese Karate-do** – Mark Cramer

Explores the social, cultural, and political lineages of traditional karate. It is widely praised for debunking common martial arts myths.

- **The Way of Kata: A Comprehensive Guide for Deciphering Martial Applications** – Lawrence Kane and Kris Wilder

This groundbreaking book unveils these methods, not only teaching you how to analyze your kata to understand what it is trying to tell you but also helping you to utilize your fighting techniques more effectively—both in self-defense and in tournament applications.

- **The Weaponless Warriors: An Informal History of Okinawan Karate** – Richard Kim

Explores the history of Okinawan Karate told through vignettes about its most famous practitioners.

Dojo Note: All titles listed are fully in print and can be ordered directly through our official online student bookstore page found in www.isrhonbudojo.com/ISR Book List.

Category 2: Foundations of Grappling, Throws, & Ground Fighting

Essential texts covering leverage, balance, positional dominance, and submission mechanics.

- **Jiu-Jitsu University** — Saulo Ribeiro

The gold standard for ground survival and defense. Organized by belt color.

- **Breathe: A Life in Flow** — Rickson Gracie

A historic memoir charting the evolution of modern Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu

- **Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu** — Renzo Gracie, Royler Gracie & John Danaher

A comprehensive overview of jiu-jitsu and the mechanics of modern ground fighting

- **Kodokan Judo: The Essential Guide to Judo** — Jigoro Kano (Founder of Judo)

Outlines the principles of balance, off balancing (Kazushi), through throwing and takedown techniques.

- **The Way of the Fight** — Georges St-Pierre

How a traditional Karate foundation can be evolved with cross-training.

Category 3: Real-World Self-Defense & Tactical Mindset

Bridging the gap between dojo training and real-world environmental awareness.

- **Meditations on Violence** — Rory Miller

Contrasts dojo sparring and martial sports against the psychology of real-world criminal violence.

- **The Gift of Fear** — Gavin de Becker

Teaches students how to recognize danger signs and avoid a conflict before it becomes physical.

Category 4: Philosophy, Mind-Body Unity, & Everyday Living

The spiritual and mental disciplines that transform martial techniques into a lifelong way of living.

- **Zen in the Martial Arts** — Joe Hyams

Concepts like breathing, timing, and focus apply to overcoming daily stress and personal obstacles.

- **The Art of Peace: Teachings of the Founder of Aikido - Morihei Ueshiba, founder of Aikido**

Teachings that show the way of the warrior is based on compassion, wisdom, and fearlessness.

- **Living the Martial Way** — Forrest E. Morgan

How to adapt bushido ethics, personal honor, and rigorous warrior discipline into contemporary daily life.

- **Striking Thoughts: Bruce Lee's Wisdom for Daily Living** — Bruce Lee

Bruce Lee's aphorisms on fluid thinking, individual expression, & breaking free from rigid stylistic dogmas.