



# **ITF NZ**

# Taekwon-Do

## **MARSHALLING**

**An essential skill required by all ITF NZ Black Belts**

***An essay on Marshalling for ITF NZ Black Belts, per the grading requirements for ITF NZ members wishing to grade for Third Degree Black Belt.***

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# MARSHALLING

## Introduction

As a marshal you are there to help and guide gradees in the right direction. Your personal instruction, enthusiasm and energy can directly influence the tone of a grading. Marshalling is not a skill that comes naturally to all and like all things will improve with practice. The information contained within is to help guide you the Black Belt in guiding the gradees; our future Black Belts.

## Responsibility and Obligation

Before becoming a black belt, students should have already considered what being a black belt means. A senior coloured belt would have already had experience in being a role model. You will have already had the opportunity to help junior coloured belts in the right direction, and possibly have instructed already. As a marshal it is your responsibility to lead the coloured belts by example. "Always set a good example for lower ranking students. It is only natural that they will attempt to emulate senior students"\*.

As a first kup student you will have completed nine coloured belt gradings and perhaps attended many more. You will have had marshalling done for you, and have seen marshalling being done. It is your obligation to repay that debt, and return the favour.

Upon becoming a black belt, it is your duty to marshal and officiate at as many ITFNZ events as possible.

"As an ITFNZ black belt you are expected to:

- Support your instructor and club in all of its events.
- Support ITFNZ events either as a participant, official, or organiser.
- Attend and marshal at coloured belt and black belt gradings"\*.

Therefore, you should do your utmost in this matter. I frequently find that many black belts neglect to do so. My advice is, if you are not prepared to accept the obligations of becoming a black belt, do not become a black belt. For those who are already black belts, and who are not as committed as they should be, please make an effort to carry the responsibilities and obligations you have already accepted.

## Preparation

- Know your techniques. Remember that the grades the coloured belts are testing for are grades you have already passed, and should already be competent at.
- Know your theory.
- Bring a mouth guard. A mouth guard may be necessary if you are called up to spar. This is especially applicable if you are intending on marshalling at a black belt grading.
- Bring a list of the required syllabus for all of the grades testing.
- If you are unfamiliar with marshalling, ask an experienced marshal/black belt to guide you through what will be required of you, before the grading date.
- Once you understand what will be required of you, practice, practice, practice. Pre-grading is a great time to test yourself. Ask your instructor if you can marshal.
- Make sure you have the correct uniform.
- Have a clear mind and be calm and ready.
- Know where all the equipment that may be needed for the grading is kept.
- Marshals who will be helping with the destructions should practice together.

## The Examiner

- Ask the Examiner questions if you are unsure of the instructions given to you.
- Angle yourself so that you can see both the Examiner and the gradees.
- Pay special attention to the Examiner at the end of gradees' patterns, or if the Examiner has called stop/guman. This is usually when the Examiner will look to address you with what he/she requires next. Try to keep track of what parts of each group are still to be examined, so you know when to tell the gradees to "move back and sit down".
- Always show respect and courtesy from the moment the examiner arrives to the moment the examiner leaves.

## Forming Up

- Pay attention
- When everyone is to form up, Black Belts especially should run. The whole class relies on the Black Belts being ready first. Do not dawdle, and proceed to wonder why the coloured belts are taking so long.
- Also, once your line is ready, turn and instruct only the line directly behind you, then tell that line to turn and help the next one. The fewer voices telling people what to do, the better. Before the grading starts the front line should

check the belts of those behind, especially the white belts, to see that they are correctly tied.

- Know as many students' names as possible.
- Know all of the spot numbers
- If there is a need to adjust the gradees when they are called up, run to them to instruct and guide them. If you call and point, all of the gradees will think you are talking to them, and the chaos increases.
- When running to adjust the back line of gradees, run behind the front line, not through them.
- When gradees are instructed to face each other, the person at spot 2 moves to their partner at spot 1, and the person on spot 3 moves to their partner at spot 4 (see figure 2 below).
- When a group larger than four is called up, arrange the students so that the Examiner can see all of them.

*Below in Fig.1 is the spot numbers*

*Below in Fig.2 is a diagram that depicts the direction the gradees move to face each other.*

*Below in Fig.3, and Fig.4, are ways in which you can arrange a group larger than four.*

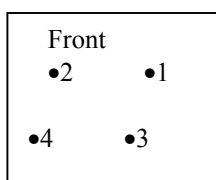


Fig.1

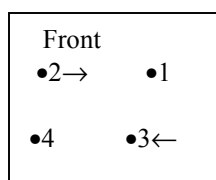


Fig.2

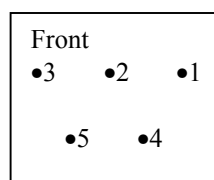


Fig.3

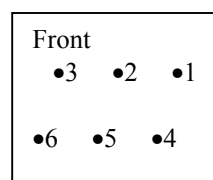


Fig.4

## Warm Ups

- Fast, simple, invigorating. Make students feel comfortable and warm.
- No cold stretching, joint rotations are advisable.

## Basics

- Use the colour-belt syllabus to remind you of what is required for each grade (handbook or your own list). Try not to go back to the list in the middle of their basics. If you really get stuck do go back to the list. However it is better to at least know which pattern is for each grade, and pick techniques out of it for use in the basics, or, remember where the major changes are within required syllabus, E.g. green stripe has side piercing, back piercing, front snap kick, and turning kick, while blue belts perform these in the air.
- After you have called the first set of techniques, and are counting gradees through it, be thinking of the next set of techniques.
- Make sure that the technique you have requested makes sense. Can you do the kick you have requested in the stance you have requested, at the height

you have requested in the direction you have requested with the leg requested (front/back, left/right)?

- Know the directions, A, B, C, D, E and F.
- Use grade appropriate techniques. Students are being graded on their own syllabus, so use techniques at their grade level or below. E.g. Flying twin-foot front snap kicks for green belts are not appropriate, even if the students are capable.
- Use only techniques that you can demonstrate yourself.
- Demonstrate every technique you request of them.
- Do not hesitate too long.
- Start off with slightly easier techniques from their syllabus. E.g. for red belts start with knife-hand guarding blocks, and palm pushing blocks, then move on to mid-air kicks.
- If you are a little unsure and inexperienced, let the more experienced marshals go first, watch what they do.
- In addition if some marshals are a little unsure, the senior marshals could marshal the senior coloured belts, and the junior marshals could marshal the junior coloured belts.
- If you are very unsure, do not get up to marshal. It looks REALLY bad to have a marshal unsure of what to do next (or even changing instructions) in front of students, and it is unfair to those grading if instructions are unclear/confusing.
- If you are an experienced marshal, allow those less experienced to marshal later or not at all.

## Speaking

- Speak slowly, clearly loudly. Be encouraging. The easier you are to hear and understand the better.
- Be confident. Shoulders back stand tall and head high. Gradees will look to you for instruction and guidance; the more confident you are, the easier it is for the gradees to follow your lead.
- Use terminology that is grade appropriate. If you are marshalling for white belts, it is better to use English, and the simplest terms possible. This is especially important if the gradees are unfamiliar with you, as your accent or pronunciation may confuse them.
- Use correct terminology. Ensure that the terminology you use has the correct names for stances, height, direction, technique, and it is in the correct order. E.g. walking ready stance, not a ready walking stance.
- When you require gradees to start basics, and you have called the required technique, it is better to say Start or Sijak, rather than any other command. All gradees should be familiar with this term
- When you want gradees to repeat the technique you have just started them on, it is better either count in English or Korean, or say again/tashi.
- Do not be harsh because you are nervous, or on a power trip.
- Never shout directly at any gradee!

## **Conduct**

- No laughing, unless everyone is laughing. Gradees may assume you are laughing at them.
- If you need to communicate with the other marshals, do so as quickly, quietly, discretely, and seriously as possible.
- Sit still, upright, with feet parallel or ankles crossed, with hands either folded on your lap or on knees hands open or closed.
- If gradees waiting/sitting at the back are becoming noisy and sitting untidily, go and instruct them to be quiet, cross their legs etc. If it is necessary to correct gradees at the back repetitively, suggest they will receive suitable punishment if it continues to happen, and follow through if need be.
- Stand still. Stand formally in a parallel stance with your hands behind your back unless you need to come to attention stance to bow or answer a question from the Examiner etc.
- Do not at any time turn your back on the Examiner, except when taking warm ups and such.
- Pay attention at all times; be alert to your surroundings, the gradees, the Examiner and the other marshals.
- Be sure to shout “yes sir/ma’am” if instructed by the Examiner to do anything.
- Remind gradees at the back to warm up or stretch away from the main grading area. This is to prevent other students and/or the Examiner being distracted.

## **Dress**

- Wear the correct uniform, with the correct badges. Not only will the Examiner, Instructors and students be watching you; the public will be there. It is also a sign of respect in oneself and ones art, and it reflects upon Taekwon Do as a martial art.
- Have your uniform clean and ironed.
- Hair should be tidy. Long hair tied back and facial hair shaven or groomed in a tidy manner.

## **Sparring**

- The marshal controls the round/bout, so be aware of the level of contact and keep the gradees within the grading area.
- If one of the gradees' belts has fallen off during a sparring bout, remove it from the floor if you can do so quickly and safely, and either hold onto it, or put it down on the outside edge of the grading area.

## **Bowing**

- When becoming the current marshal, you will need to bow to the Examiner
- When changing marshals both the current marshal and the next marshal will need to face the Examiner and bow and then face each other and bow.
- When gradees have been called up to grade, you will need to bow them in.
- When gradees bow, the marshal does not, otherwise the gradees may be confused about whom they are bowing to.
- If the Examiner calls up a gradee, who is not currently grading, (to help) you will need to bow them in.
- When gradees are instructed by the Examiner to face each other, you will need to instruct them to bow to each other.
- When the Examiner instructs gradees who are facing each other to stop/guman, check for a signal/nod from the Examiner. Examiner may want to see gradees perform another activity before finishing with their partner. Then you will need to instruct them to bow to each other.
- When the Examiner has finished examining the current gradees, the marshal will need to instruct them to bow, and to move back and sit down.
- When the Examiner calls for all gradees who are doing destructions, you will need to bow in both them and the board-holders.
- When the Examiner calls for a gradee to do their destructions, you will need to instruct them to bow again.
- When gradee has finished their destruction you will need to instruct them to bow to the Examiner.
- When the Examiner has seen all the gradees complete their destructions, you will need to instruct them to bow to the Examiner, then to move back and sit down.

## **Equipment**

- Ensure that you know where all of the equipment that will be used is. E.g. Re-breakable boards.

## **First-Aid**

- Marshals should determine (if they do not already know) who amongst them has an up to date first-aid certificate in case the need arises.
- Marshals should find out where the first-aid equipment is kept.

## **Conclusion**

As stated in the introduction – as a marshal you are a guide and a very real influence on the spirit and energy within a grading. I hope you take the information you have read and enjoy the opportunity to give a small part of yourself back to ITFNZ and Taekwon-Do. Good Luck.

## **\*Reference(s)**

McPhail, P Colour Belt Handbook, Blue stripe theory: d Student/Instructor Relationship (Students)

McPhail, P Black Belt Handbook, Appendix: Black belt responsibilities