

What Is Tae Kwon Do?

Tae Kwon-Do is a modern Korean martial art, characterized by its fast, high and spinning kicks. Tae Kwon-Do is derived from several Korean martial arts with the main influence being 'Tae Kyon', a very traditional form of Korean foot fighting. There are multiple interpretations of the name Tae Kwon-Do.

Tae Kwon-Do is often translated as 'The Way of Foot and Hand'.

Tae Kwon-Do written in Korean characters (Han'gul)

'Tae' means to jump or smash with the foot.

'Kwon' means to punch or destroy with the hand.

'Do' means art, way or method.

Tae kwon-Do is an art of self-defense which aims at a noble moral rearmament, high degree of intellectual achievement, graceful techniques, formidable power and beauty of physical form, it can (therefore) be considered as a part of one's daily life, just as are breathing and thinking.

Gen. Choi Hong Hi (1918-2002) The Founder of Tae Kwon-Do

Tae Kwon Do History?

Although the origins of the martial arts are shrouded in mystery, we consider it an undeniable fact that from time immemorial there have been physical conditions involving the use of the hands and feet for purpose of self-protection. If we ere to define these physical actions as "Taekwon- Do", any country might claim credit for inventing Taekwon-Do. There is, however, scant esemblance between Taekwon-Do, as it is practiced today, and the crude forms of unarmed combat developed in the past.

Modern Taekwon-Do differs greatly from other martial arts. In fact, no other artial art is so advanced with regard to the sophistication and effectiveness of its technique or the over-all physical fitness it imparts to its practitioners. echnically, 1955 signaled the beginning of Taekwon-Do as a formally recognized art in Korea. During that year, a special board was formed which included leading master instructors, historians, and prominent leaders of society. A number of names for the new martial art were submitted. On the 11th of April, the board summoned by Gen. Choi Hong Hi, decided on the name of Taekwon-Do which had been submitted by him. This single unified name of Taekwon-Do replaced the different and confusing terms; Dang Soo, Gong Soo, Taek Kyon, Kwon Bup, etc.

In 1959, Taekwon-Do spread beyond its national boundaries. The father of Taekwon-Do and nineteen of his top black belt holders toured the Far East. The tour was a major success, astounding all spectators with the excellence of the Taekwon-Do techniques. Many of these black belt holders such as Nam Tae Hi, President of the Asia Taekwon-Do Federation;

- Colonel Ko Jae Chun, the 5th Chief of Taekwon-Do instructors in Vietnam;
- Colonel Baek Joon Gi, the 2nd Chief instructor in Vietnam; Brigadier
- Gen. Woo Jong Lim; Mr. Han Cha Kyo, the Head Instructor in Singapore
- Mr. Cha Soo Young, presently an international instructor in Washington DC

In this year, Choi was elevated to two illustrious posts; President of his newly formed Korea Taekwon-Do Association and deputy commander of the 2nd Army in Tae Gu. In 1965 Ambassador Choi, retired two star general, was appointed by the Government of the Republic of Korea to lead a goodwill mission to West Germany, Italy, Turkey, United-Arab Republic, Malaysia, and Singapore. This trip is significant in that the Ambassador, for the first time in Korean history, declared Taekwon-Do as the national martial art of Korea.

This was the basis not only for establishing Taekwon-Do Associations in these countries but also the formation of the International Taekwon-Do Federation as it is known today. In 1966, the dream of the sickly young student of calligraphy, who rose to Ambassador and the Association President of the most respected martial art in the world came true. On the 22nd of March, the International Taekwon-Do Federation was formed with associations in Vietnam, Malaysia, Singapore, West Germany, the United States, Turkey, Italy, Arab Republic of Egypt and Korea

Brief History of ITF

Apr. 11, 1955

“Taekwon-Do” invented by Gen. Choi Hong Hi

Mar. 22, 1966

ITF inaugurated in Seoul, South Korea

The International Taekwon-Do Federation was formed with associations in Vietnam, Malaysia, Singapore, West Germany, the United States, Turkey, Italy, Arab Republic of Egypt and South Korea as founding national members.

Jan. 1972

ITF Headquarters moved to Toronto, Canada

Gen. Choi fled to Canada with his ITF Headquarters in 1972 due to the political discord with South Korean President and Government of military dictatorship at that time and to facilitate the spread of TKD to the whole world.

1985

ITF Headquarters moved to Vienna, Austria

Jun.15, 2002

Gen. Choi Hong Hi, the Founder of Taekwon-Do and 1st President of ITF, passed away

Sep. 22, 2002

Prof. Chang Ung, IOC Member, was elected as ITF President