

USA Taekwondo Poomsae Athletes' Reference Guide



2009 US National Taekwondo Poomsae Team

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INTRODUCTION: The USA Taekwondo Poomsae Athletes' Reference Guide provides support for USA Taekwondo (USAT) poomsae athletes who are in development for national and international competition. The guide is comprised of the significant aspects of the most current information sources available. It includes the following sections: Compulsory Poomsae, Competition Format, Event Procedure, General Technical Guidelines, Detailed Technical Guidelines, and Deductions.

SECTION 1: COMPULSORY POOMSAE

DIVISION	1 st COMPULSORY POOMSAE	2 nd COMPULSORY POOMSAE
Cadet (10-13)	Taegeuk 2,3,4,5	Taegeuk 6,7,8 Koryo
Juniors (14-18)	Taegeuk 4, 5, 6, 7	Taegeuk 8, Koryo, Keumgang, Taebak
1 st Seniors (19-30)	Taegeuk 6, 7, 8, Koryo	Keumgang, Taebak Pyongwon, Sipjin
2 nd Seniors (31-40)		
1 st Masters (41-50)	Taegeuk 8, Koryo, Keumgang, Taebak	Pyongwon, Sipjin, Jitae, Chonkwon
2 nd Masters (51-60)	Koryo, Keumgang, Taebak, Pyongwon	Sipjin, Jitae, Chonkwon, Hansu
3 rd Masters (60+)	Koryo, Keumgang, Taebak, Pyongwon	Sipjin, Jitae, Chonkwon, Hansu
1 ST Pairs (14-35)	Taegeuk 6, 7, 8, Koryo	Keumgang, Taebak, Pyongwon, Sipjin
2 ND Pairs (36+)	Taegeuk 8, Koryo, Keumgang, Taebak	Pyongwon, Sipjin, Jitae, Chonkwon
1 ST Team (14-35)	Taegeuk 6, 7, 8, Koryo	Keumgang, Taebak, Pyongwon, Sipjin
2 ND Team (36+)	Taegeuk 8, Koryo, Keumgang, Taebak	Pyongwon, Sipjin, Jitae, Chonkwon

Age divisions are based on the year, rather than the date, of the event. For example, a competitor who has her 19th birthday on December 2, 2012, will compete in the 1st Senior Division at all events held between January 1 and December 31, 2012.

Competitors must wear World Taekwondo Federation (WTF) approved uniforms.

SECTION 2: COMPETITION FORMAT

The World Taekwondo Poomsae Championships utilizes the following cut-off system:

In a division of 21 or more competitors, competition begins with a preliminary round.

In a division of 9-20 competitors, competitors proceed to the semi-final round.

In a division of 8 or less competitors, competitors proceed to the final round.

Preliminary Round: Competitors perform two of the 1st Compulsory Poomsae. The competitors with scores in the top half of the group proceed to the semi-final round.

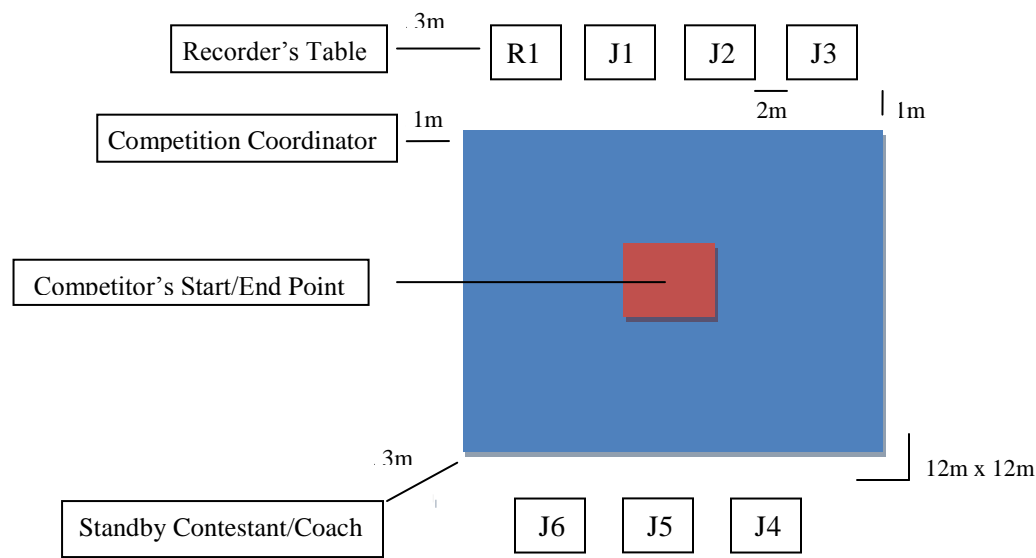
Semi-Final Round: Competitors perform two of the 2nd Compulsory Poomsae. The competitors with scores in the top eight of the group proceed to the final round.

Final Round: Competitors perform two of the 2nd Compulsory Poomsae. The top four competitors are awarded 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 3rd place.

In the case of a tie, the winner is the competitor with the highest presentation score. If the competitors are still tied, they perform a poomsae different than the previous two scored poomsae. If the competitors are still tied, all scores received during the competition are compared.

USA Taekwondo may use a modified version of the WTF competition format and/or various formats, including selection camps, to select the US National Taekwondo Poomsae Team.

Competition Ring Area



Duration of contest of all divisions: 1-2 minutes

Break time between poomsae: 1 minute

SECTION 3: EVENT PROCEDURE

Competitors report to the holding area in accordance with the event schedule. In the holding area, competitors are free to warm-up and practice before their divisions are assembled and escorted to their assigned rings. When called by name, each competitor, pair, or team, in turn, bows to enter the ring, walks to the center of the ring, and responds appropriately to the following competition coordinator commands:

Charyeot: stand at attention

Kyeong-rye: bow

Joonbi: stand in the ready position

Shijak: begin performing the poomsae

Baro: return to the joon bi position

Charyeot: stand at attention

Kyeong-rye: bow

Scoring Criteria: Competitors receive two scores, one for accuracy and one for presentation. The accuracy score range is 0.0-5.0, is worth 50% of the total, and is given as the competitor performs the poomsae. The score is given based on the competitor's ability to perform the accuracy of the basic movements: start/end point, progression of each movement, path of motion, proper targeting, hand/fist rotation, and total movement associated with each poom combination.

The presentation score range is 2.5-5.0, is worth 50%, and is scored after the completion of the poomsae. 30% is based on mastery: volume of movement, balance, power and speed. 20% is based on presentation: coordination of rhythm/tempo, softness/power, and expression of ki (energetic expression).

The lowest and highest from each of the two sets of judges' scores are discarded. Then, the two sets are added together to come up with averages for each competitor in the two categories, accuracy and presentation. These two scores are added together to find the overall total for each poomsae.

This process is repeated for the second poomsae. Finally, the two scores are averaged together for the competitor's overall score.

SECTION 4: GENERAL TECHNICAL GUIDELINES

All poomsae begin and end on, or within one foot length of, the same spot.

All blocks begin with the blocking arm on the outside of the other arm.

Outside to inside hand techniques (e.g., middle block, reverse knife hand strike) end at the centerline of the body.

Inside to outside hand techniques (e.g., outside block, single and double knife hand block) end at the outer edge of the body.

Back fist strikes (forward back fist, side back fist) begin with the striking hand on the inside of the other arm.

The competitor is free to choose the non-blocking/striking arm motion but is advised to maintain consistency. For example, a competitor who extends the left arm in the position of a straight punch to the centerline of the body just prior to executing a right middle block should make the same motion prior to every middle block.

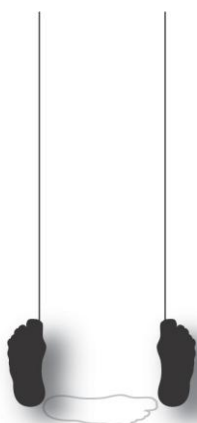
All kicks should be executed toward the head unless another target is specifically defined (e.g., the low side kicks in Koryo, or the jump front kicks in Taegeuk 8). Kicks must include: a chamber, full extension, and retraction as well as proper rotation of the supporting foot, leg, and hips.

Stances fall into two height level categories, those with straight legs as in walking stance, and those with bent legs as in horse riding stance. Transitions between movements should be on the balls of the feet. Feet should glide, not drag, across the surface of the mat. Stance and hand technique execution should be complete at the same moment.

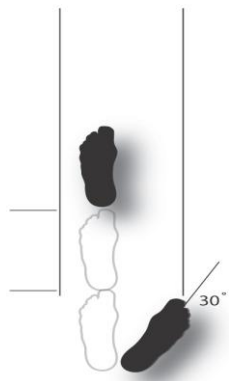
**SECTION 5: DETAILED TECHNICAL GUIDELINES
STANCES**



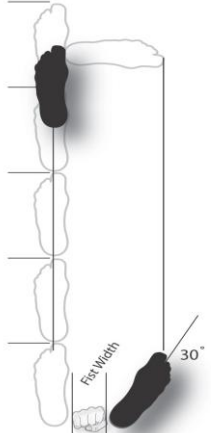
Moa Seogi
(Closed Stance)
Legs straight
Weight centered



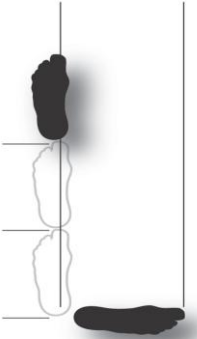
Naranhi Seogi
(Parallel Stance)
Legs straight
Weight centered



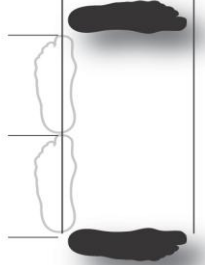
Ap Seogi
(Walking Stance)
Legs straight
Weight centered



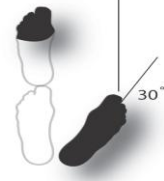
Ap Kubi
(Front Stance)
Front leg bent
Rear leg straight
Approx. 2/3 weight on front foot



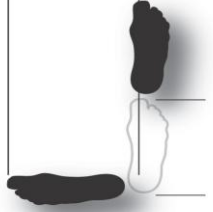
Dwit Kubi
(Back Stance)
Knees bent
Approx. 2/3 of weight on rear leg; rear shoulder, hip, knee on same vertical line



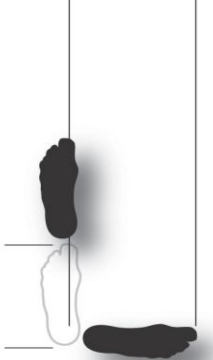
Joochoom Seogi
(Horse Riding Stance)
Knees bent
Knees in line with hips, feet



Beom Seogi
(Tiger Stance)
Rear foot supports all weight.
Knees close together, rear knee bent and in line with toes. Ball of front foot lightly touches floor.



Oreun Seogi
(Right Stance)
Legs straight
Weight evenly distributed



Wen Seogi
(Left Stance)
Legs straight
Weight evenly distributed




Ap Koa Seogi
(Forward Cross Stance)
Front leg at 30-45° bears 90% of weight



Dwit Koa Seogi
(Backward Cross Stance)
Front leg at 30-45° bears 90% of weight.



Hakdari Seogi
(Crane Stance)
Support knee bent as in horse riding stance. Inner arch of foot on inner crook of knee. Lifted knee and foot face forward.



Kyotdari Seogi
(Assisted Stance)
Height same as horse riding stance. Front foot bears 90% of weight. Ball of rear foot aligned with arch of front foot.

HAND TECHNIQUES

Technique	Start Point	End Point	Opposite Arm Motion
Arae Makki (Low Block)	palm towards face and at shoulder level	two fist widths from quadricep	starts partially to fully extended in front of target and counteracts block
Momtong Makki (Middle Block)	shoulder high at 3:00 or 9:00, palm out, takes path from outside to inside	below shoulder level at centerline of body, arm bent 90-120 °	starts as partially to fully extended straight punch at centerline of body and counteracts block
Olgul Makki (High Block)	fist on opposite side of body, palm in, between rib and hip	wrist at centerline of face, one fist width from forehead at 45°	fist starts at shoulder of blocking arm, palm outward and counteracts block
Baro/ Bandoe Jireugi (Reverse/Regular Punch)	fist palm up, chambered between ribs and hip, in direct line with target	solar plexus arm/wrist/ fist straight, elbow in line.	counteracts punch
Olgul Jireugi (Face Punch)	fist palm up, chambered between ribs and hip	philtrum arm/wrist/ fist straight, elbow in line	counteracts punch
Sonnal Momtong Makki (Double Knife Hand Block)	open hand on opposite side of body, chambered between rib and hip, fingers facing rear	outside edge of body fingertips of blocking hand just below shoulder level, arm bent 90-100°, wrist straight	starts extended at shoulder height, turns and moves forward with blocking arm, rests one palm thickness from solar plexus, palm up, elbow bent 90 °
Pyonsonkkeut Sewo Tzireugi (Spear Hand Strike)	open hand, palm up, chambered between ribs and hip	solar plexus elbow rests on back of downward facing non-striking hand	counteracts strike, palm faces downward to allow striking elbow to rest on back of hand
Deungjemeok Olgul Ap Chigi (Forward Back Fist)	fist in armpit of non-striking arm, palm facing downward	philtrum arm bent 90-100 °, wrist straight	fist starts at shoulder of striking arm and withdraws to counteract strike
Palkup Dollyo Chigi (Turning Elbow Strike)	fist chambered between ribs and hip	jaw palm down, upper body rotated into strike	palm meets fist of striking elbow, fingers upward in front of chest
Palkup Pyojeok Chigi (Elbow Target Strike)	fist chambered between ribs and hip meets other hand's open palm	solar plexus fist palm down in front of pectoral muscle	open palm meets striking elbow, fingers facing forward
Palmok Momtong Bakkat Makki (Outside Hammer Fist Block)	fist on opposite side of body, shoulder high, palm in, takes path from inside to outside	outside edge of body just below shoulder level, palm facing outward, arm bent 90-100 °	fist starts at shoulder of blocking arm, palm toward face and counteracts block
Deungjemeok Olgul Bakkat Chigi (Side Back Fist)	fist in armpit of non-striking arm, palm facing downward	jaw arm slightly bent	fist starts at shoulder of striking arm and withdraws to counteract strike
Yop Jireugi (Side Punch)	fist palm up, chambered between ribs and hip	solar plexus arm/wrist/ fist straight, elbow in line	counteracts punch
Jeochu Jireugi (Double Palm Up Punch)	fists palm down, chambered between ribs and hips	ribs elbow bent 90-120°, fists facing upward	not applicable

Technique	Start Point	End Point	Opposite Arm Motion
Khaljaebi (Arc Hand Strike)	fist palm up, chambered between ribs and hip	neck striking hand forms arc shape	counteracts strike
Pyonsonkkeut Arae Jeochu Tzireugi (Upward Flat Spear Hand Thrust)	shoulder level, palm facing down	groin palm up	palm facing down, partially to fully extended, in front of target and counteracts strike
Palkup Yop Chigi (Side Elbow Strike)	fist on opposite side of body, palm down, center of forearm in front of solar plexus	solar plexus	Open palm supports striking elbow, fingers facing upward
Pyonsonkkeut Opeo Tzireugi (Flat Spear Hand Thrust)	opposite side wrist, palm down	solar plexus	counteracts strike

KICKING TECHNIQUES

Technique	Kicking Surface	Support Foot Position	Target
Ap Chagi (Front Kick)	ball	may pivot up to 30°, heel flat on the floor	head
Dubal Dangsung Chagi (Jump Double Front Kick)	ball	may pivot up to 30° during first kick	chest/head head/head
Yop Chagi (Side Kick)	heel	pivots on ball of foot until heel is in line with target	head
Kodeup Yop Chagi (Double Side Kick)	heel	pivots on ball of foot until heel is in line with target	knee/head
Dollyo Chagi (Roundhouse Kick)	ball or instep	pivots on ball of foot until toes face 3:00-6:00	head
Pyojeok Chagi (Crescent Kick)	arch	pivots on ball of foot until toes face target	head
Tweo Pyojeokchagi (Jump Spin Crescent Kick)	arch	preferably, both feet are in air while striking target	head

KIYAPS AND STOMPS

Poomsae	Kiyap(s)	Kiyap Poom	Stomp(s)	Stomp Poom
Taegeuk Sa Jung	1	last punch at 6:00	0	
Taegeuk O Jung	1	back fist at 6:00	1	back fist at 6:00
Taegeuk Yuk Jung	1	2 nd roundhouse kick at 12:00	0	
Taegeuk Chil Jung	1	punch at 6:00	0	
Koryo	2	3 rd khaljaebi at 12:00, khaljaebi at 6:00	0	
Keumgang	2	first stomp on each side	4	each mountain block

Poomsae	Kiyap(s)	Kiyap Poom	Stomp(s)	Stomp Poom
Taebaek	2	last punch 12:00, punch 6:00	0	
Pyongwon	2	1 st back fist strike of each pair at 12:00	2	1 st back fist strike of each pair at 12:00
Sipjin	3	side punch at 9:00, 3:00, back fist at 12:00	1	back fist at 12:00
Jitae	2	hammer punch into palm at 12:00, punch at 6:00	0	
Chonkwon	1	side kick at 12:00	0	
Hansu	2	back fist at 4:30, 7:30	2	back fist at 4:30, 7:30

SECTION 6: DEDUCTIONS

TECHNICAL DEDUCTIONS

0.1 Minor Deductions	0.5 Major Deductions
Incorrect number of motions in one combination	Incorrect number of motions in one combination
Slightly poor balance which affects accuracy of movement	Turn to incorrect direction
Stance and hand technique do not finish at same time	Extremely poor balance
Incorrect motion for correct technique	No kiyap
Incorrect foot position in stances	Kiyap at incorrect time
Poor chamber or retraction of kicks	Incorrect stance/technique
Kick with incorrect part of foot	Additional technique, motion, stomp
Block past midline of body when midline is target	Missed technique, stomp
Block from inside arm rather than outside arm	Repeating poomsae from beginning
Strike from outside rather than inside	End position more than one foot length from start point
Off target block/strike	
Hand wrapped around elbow strike	
Incorrect thumb placement	

PRESENTATION INFRACTIONS

Minor Infractions	Major Infractions
Slight hesitation	Performing poom with incorrect speed/tempo more than twice
Slight imbalance	Robotic performance
Lack of rhythm	Lack of fluency and flexibility at initiation of movement or no power at impact
Lack of flexibility and grace	Improper breathing or eye focus to correspond with the movement
Lack of alternating relaxation and tension	Severe loss of balance
Incorrect uniform	

ADDITIONAL DEDUCTIONS

0.5	1.0
Crossing the boundary line	Interfering with competition coordinator
Exceeding time limit	Extreme undesirable behavior by competitor or coach

Key Sources:

Kang, I., Song, N. (2007). *The Explanation of Official Taekwondo Poomsae*. Seoul, Korea: Sang-A Publishing Company.

Serbin, S., Serbin, V. (2010). *USA Taekwondo Poomsae Scoring Guidelines*.

Southwick, R. (2009). *Improving Poomsae Performance*.

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