

STANCES

One of the most important things in karate is to have good stance. If a house does not have a strong foundation, then it can fall. Your stance makes the techniques of your upper and lower body have power, maneuverability, and speed. Here are the stances that are used in Shorin-Ryu Shorinkan Karate and the guidelines to forming them correctly.

STANCE ① HEISOKU DACHI

This stance is formed by putting the feet together, big toe to big toe and having the knees slightly bent.



STANCE ② MUSUBI DACHI

This is the same as heisoku dachi but with the feet opened to a "V" and ankles together.



STANCE ③ YOI DACHI

The "ready stance" or Yoi is formed by moving the left leg out so that the feet are shoulder width apart and toes pointed at 45 degrees. The fists should be at a natural position.



STANCE ④ NAIHANCHI DACHI

Naihanchi dachi is formed by pushing the heels out from ready stance and turning the toes inward. The knees should be bent forward towards the big toe and flexing slightly out. The hips should flex slightly up so that the hamstrings also lock the stance down. This stance is slightly wider than yoi dachi.



STANCE ⑤

SHIKO DACHI

(sumo stance, square stance, hajimonji dachi)

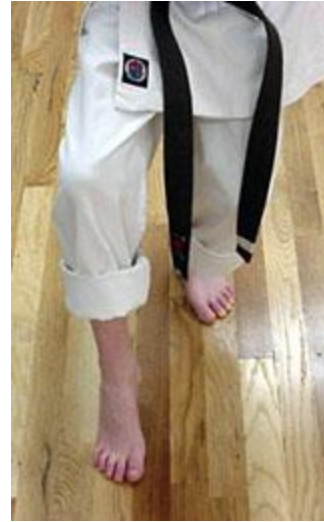
This is called hajimonji dachi in Okinawan Hogen dialect and is found in many kata. The stance should be double shoulder's width and the knees should be pushed outward so that they are over the first and second toe. The knees should NEVER be inside of the legs!! Always make sure that width of your stance allows for the proper alignment with the knees and feet. Lower your hips but make sure your hips do not go lower than your knees. SIT DEEPLY.



STANCE ⑥

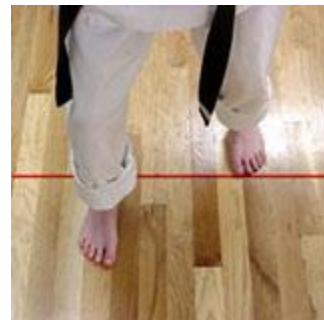
NEKO ASHI DACHI (cat stance)

Cat stance is formed by having your back heel point at forty-five degrees outward from the front and the front foot placed about a foot and a half in a straight line from the back heel. The back knee should be bent deeply toward the toes while lowering your hips deeply without leaning forward or back. The front knee should also be bent with the front heel lifted off the floor about two inches. Keep your back straight as with all stances.



STANCE ⑦

*Natural stance is a forward stance with a length that would be the same as your stride. The easiest measurement of the stance's length is that the heel of the front foot should be in line with the big toe of the back foot. Both knees should be bent and the back should be straight. **VERY IMPORTANT:** When moving forward in this stance, it is necessary to turn the front toes 45 degrees out before you step through. Otherwise keep both feet pointed straight ahead as if standing on train tracks.*





STANCE ⑧

ZENKUTSU DACHI (forward stance)

Forward stance is a shizentai dachi, just longer. The feet should be wider than the shoulders and long enough so that the back heel does not come off of the floor and so that the front knee can be bent over the foot. It is very important that you push the hips forward and the shoulders back.

