



Rules of World Taekwondo Style Sparring

Competition Area

Taekwondo Sparring (Kyorugi) may take place in either a square or octagonal area with approved padded mats on the floor. The competition area will consist of a contest area surrounded by a safety area. The contest area should be approximately 8m x 8m.

Uniform and Equipment

Competitors must wear approved white uniforms and appropriate belts. Color belts should wear a white-collared uniform and black belts should wear a black-collared uniform. Competitors must wear an approved chest guard, helmet, mouth guard, groin cup, gloves, forearm guards, shin guards and instep guards. Depending on the tournament, competitors may wear electronic chest guards, instep guards and helmets. The groin cup, forearm guards and shin guards should be worn underneath the uniform. Jewelry, with the exception of religious items, is prohibited.

Divisions

Competitors are divided by weight, gender, age and belt rank.

Duration of Matches

Contests should consist of three rounds of 1-2 minutes with a short rest period between each round. In the case of a tie during the first three rounds, a fourth "golden round" may be conducted or in a "best of three" contest, the judges may render a decision of superiority. The following criteria will be used to determine the winner by superiority:

Most points scored by spinning kicks

Most points scored by high value techniques (head kick > body kick > punch > gamjeom)

Most total hits registered

If all three criteria above are the same, the winner will be determined by a judges decision

Scoring Techniques

Competitors are allowed to punch to the chest guard and kick to both the chest guard and head. Junior divisions may only be allowed to contact the chest guard. Points will be awarded by the ringside judges and/or the electronic scoring system. The following are valid points:

1 point for a valid punch to the chest guard

2 points for a valid kick to the chest guard

3 points for a valid kick to the head

4 points for a valid spinning kick to the chest guard

6 points for a valid spinning kick to the head

1 point awarded for every "Gamjeom" (deduction) given to the opposing competitor



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Prohibited Actions

Prohibited actions will result in a “Gamjeom” (deduction) and 1 point will be awarded to the opposing competitor. Repeated or flagrant prohibited actions may result in a disqualification. The following are examples of common prohibited actions:

Crossing the boundary line of the contest area

Falling down (if a competitor falls while scoring a spinning kick, they will not be penalized)

Avoiding or delaying the match

Grabbing the opponent’s uniform, gear or body

Pushing an opponent with prolonged contact

Pushing an opponent out of bounds or to disrupt an attack

Lifting the leg to block an opponents kick

Lifting the leg in the air for more than 3 seconds to impede an opponent’s potential attacks

Kicking below the waist

Attacking the opponent after the Referee calls “Kalyeo” (break) or “Kumon” (stop)

Attacking a fallen opponent

Striking the opponent’s head with a punch

Striking with any surface other than the foot or the front of the fist

Unsportsmanlike conduct

Knock Downs

A knock down is declared by the referee when any part of a competitors body, other than the sole of the feet, touches the floor due to an attack from their opponent. A knock down may also be declared if a competitor is staggered and does not show the ability to continue. In the event of a knock down, the referee will pause the match and conduct a count of 10. If the competitor cannot demonstrate the ability or will to resume by the count of 8, the referee will stop the contest and declare their opponent to be the winner.

This guide is based on the World Taekwondo Kyorugi Sparring Rules (effective 1/1/26)

Check back on these rules often as they are periodically updated:

<http://www.worldtaekwondo.org/rules-wt/rules.html>