

Learning to Train

Judo for children aged 10-11 & 12-13



U12 Learn to Train I U14 Learn to Train II

Introduction and Guiding Principles

Judo programs for U12 (Children ages 10 and 11) and U14 (Children ages 12 and 13)

INTRODUCTION

This combined manual for U12 and U14 follows previously published Judo Canada manuals for U8 and U10 (please visit www.judocanada.org). Children in the U12 and U14 age groups are considered to be judoka at the beginner or intermediate level and follow many of the training priorities set out for children in U8 and U10 age groups.

However, the U12 and U14 categories mark the beginning of the “Learn to Train” phase of development. During this phase, children are still acquiring and improving fundamental movement skills but they are also much more capable of learning higher-level skills with complex movement patterns. Therefore, providing U12 and U14 judoka with opportunities to learn both fundamental skills and judo techniques is a key priority.

For judoka who have evolved through the U8 and U10 levels, the “Learn to Train” phase is ideal for exploring basic fundamental movement skills such as tsugi-ashi, ayumi-ashi, tai sabaki, kuzushi in motion, kuzushi on the ground, tsukuri, etc. and applying these to newly acquired judo techniques, e.g. single throws, combinations, ne-waza, etc.

For newcomers to judo, instructors should teach basic fundamental movement skills and assess their capacity to learn more complex movement patterns and judo techniques before increasing both scope and intensity of learning. For example, some newcomers to judo have developed a proficient base through participation in other sports such as gymnastics, wrestling, or ice hockey.

A majority of judo experts believe that U14 is the best time for children to start judo. Statistically (data until 2000), over 88% of medal winners at the Olympic Games and World Championships, started judo at the age of 11 or later.

We must always respect the principles of development when training children in the U12 and U14 age groups. While a specific focus on athletic abilities such as strength and power is not encouraged, every time a child works on speed, (s)he also improves maximum strength and power. For example, some strength training methodologies are very specific in terms of prescribing the load, the number of repetitions, the number of sets, the work to rest ratio, the frequency of training etc. We do not use such specific methodologies at this age, thus we do not focus on the development of a specific ability.

It must be pointed out, however, that children can benefit from other kinds of training such as the use of callisthenic exercises which require both strength and endurance. Some children are observed to make dramatic gains in strength and endurance as a by-product of such exercises where the direct intent is on other aspects such as warm-up.

Instructors who may need refreshers and tips on developing basic athletic capacities in their children can consult the catalogue of exercises presented in the U8 and U10 manuals.

For the U12 and U14 development stages, and in particular during the U14 stage, the programs need to introduce a focused approach to develop athletic capacities such as cardiovascular and muscular endurance. The catalogue also features examples of exercises focusing on cardiovascular and muscular endurance development using the appropriate methodologies.

The volume of judo-specific training for 12 year olds should be 4 X 60-90 minutes sessions per week. The volume of training done by children between the ages of 11 and 12 will often determine whether they develop the capacity and habits to evolve on the High Performance path later on in life. Remember, there is nothing wrong if the child reaches the training volume requirements by practicing more than one sport.

U12 and U14 are considered to be the pre-specialization stage of development in the sport of judo which means that programs should not focus on competitive results nor on the acquisition of competitive strategy or tactics. The only aspect of training that resembles a somewhat more specialized approach is the volume of training recommended for children 12 years old (and older).

An important point worth noting is that, while most athletes at this age are in the pre-pubescent stage of their biological development, some individuals enter puberty sooner, even in the 10th year of life. Instructors must be very cognizant of this fact and be prepared to apply a more specific approach to the physical and psychological dimensions. The transition to puberty signals a shift away from the influence of parents and friends towards self-motivation. Children at this stage are highly sensitive to the judgment of others, will seek out role models, and will make more autonomous decisions with respect to the types of activities they wish to pursue.

It is believed and demonstrated in research, that if the proposed development path is applied in late specialization sports, the optimal results will be achieved at national and occasionally international levels at 18 years of age and later (constant performance standards, elite levels and the road to excellence). Such approach also results in fewer injuries, thus longer sports careers and are culminating in a complete cycle – coming back to the sport after their competitive career is over.

It has been demonstrated that subjecting athletes to a training regimen that is too strenuous at too young an age can have negative consequences from the LTDM perspective. Most “children” champions in judo reach their maximum performance potential at the age of 13-14 with rapid progress in performance at regional and, sometimes, national levels. Early success resulting from inappropriate training can also leads to irregular performances, disappointments, and an eventual drop out of judo before the end of the puberty.

Finally, and most importantly, the U12 and U14 judoka are still children and they have to have fun while doing judo. By following the LTDM principles, we will build a successful foundation for a development including self-esteem.

***FUN in learning the fundamentals
is still the name of the game.***

THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THIS PROGRAM ARE BASED ON THE JUDO CANADA LTDM:

- Keep Judo programs FUN for the participants, i.e. 9 to 12 year olds are still children and love to play. We compete for the same client (children and parents) with other sport programs and judo must be seen as an equally or more attractive choice compared to other programs and activities.
- Remember – we are not specializing yet. LET’S DEVELOP AN ATHLETE FIRST AND THEN MAKE A JUDOKA FROM THAT ATHLETE.
- Growth and development must be considered at all times and particular attention must be placed on detecting PHV (peak height velocity), the onset of puberty. PHV occurs in girls aged 11-12 years but it also may happen to some early maturing boys.
- Address the windows of trainability as determined by the PHV chart. It is unlikely that children of this age group will need to focus on the development of different athletic skills/capacities, than what is recommended by following the ABC’S of athleticism.
- Instruction should be kept short and simplified to 1-2 key learning points. Tactical training cannot extend for children of this age beyond various applications of kumi-kata while learning technical skills. More advanced tactical training should start only with the beginning of specialization, which starts no sooner than at the age of 12 or 13 years.
- Try as often as possible to allow childrens’ natural instincts to guide their learning through play.
- Employ a variety of games that incorporate all aspects of training: relaxed atmosphere, development of judo as well as fundamental movement skills.
- Judo Programs for 9 to 12 year olds offer much more time for technical development than programs for younger judoka. The increase is related to both - increased volume of training and (more importantly) the increased capacity of children to concentrate for a longer time. Children may work in segment durations of 5-10 minutes and occasionally 15 minutes.
- Recommended to have 2-3 judo sessions per week (60 minutes max. each) for 9 and 10 year olds and 3-4 judo sessions per week (60 minutes max. each) for 11 and 12 year olds with an occasional 90 minutes session.
- The overall development of physical literacy (ABC’S - Agility, Balance, Coordination and Speed), should be equally emphasized along with using judo-specific skills at this stage. With the increased training time, both of these priorities can be adequately addressed.
- The growth in performance capacity (both physical and mental) requires different teaching/learning techniques such as guided technical exploration, where the athlete can combine or sequence various moves in a creative manner.
- Deliver the program in a dynamic fashion. Whenever possible, introduce and practice skills in motion as opposed to in static format. The three required learning steps for children of this age are initiation, acquisition and consolidation. Regardless on which learning step the child is at, the dynamic teaching methodology offers a better environment for learning.
- Explore childrens’ increased capacity to employ lateralization (differentiation between left and right) through general exercises and judo-oriented games.



- Encourage children involved in your programs and their parents to participate in different sporting and non-sanctioned physical activities. It is important to emphasize that for quality physical development, a child of this age needs 2-3 hours per day of exercise. Even those kids who do judo 4 times per week get at best half of what they need in terms of physical activity.
- The pedagogical principles of teaching skills remain as for the younger participants in sport:
 1. skills should be introduced in order from the simplest to the most complex, gradually building on each other.
 2. the learning process cannot be rushed. In order to commit movement to muscle memory, a sequence of exercises need to occur twice a week over an 8-week period.
 3. introduce limited tactical options in order to reduce confusion with the overall task elements . However, children at this development stage should be encouraged to experiment with using acquired skills (gripping, direction of movement, etc).
- The general learning process for technical skill happens in five basic steps: initiation, acquisition, consolidation, refinement and creative variation. Most children of this age rarely progress beyond the first two learning steps. Remember that step four (refinement - which includes automation – e.g. uchi-komi) and step five (creative variation., e.g. creative exploration of combination techniques) are designed for a competing athlete. Thus at this pre-specialization development stage the use of static uchi-komi should be minimized.
- Use positive reinforcement to help create a positive self-image for the athlete.
- During puberty, adolescents tend to become more independent in thought, communications, and actions. Children at this age are more easily influenced by peers and role models and we need to give them enough “space” to evolve their thinking and social perspective. Ultimately, our goal is to create a healthy and safe environment within which these children can mature and grow through judo.

What is Trainability and the Peak Height Velocity (PHV)?

Trainability is one's capacity to adapt to a training stimulus. Trainability differs from individual to individual because it depends of genetic endowment and the context or social environment. Trainability also depends on the stage of individual development and it differs at various stages of growth and maturation.

Window of trainability – defines a **critical period for development of** specific athletic capacity when training has an optimal effect. The specific “window of opportunity” to develop a number of athletic capacities occurs in the early stages of life and become relevant around the onset of puberty where there is rapid growth spurt. The maximum rate of growth in the individual's stature is defined as **peak height velocity (PHV)**.

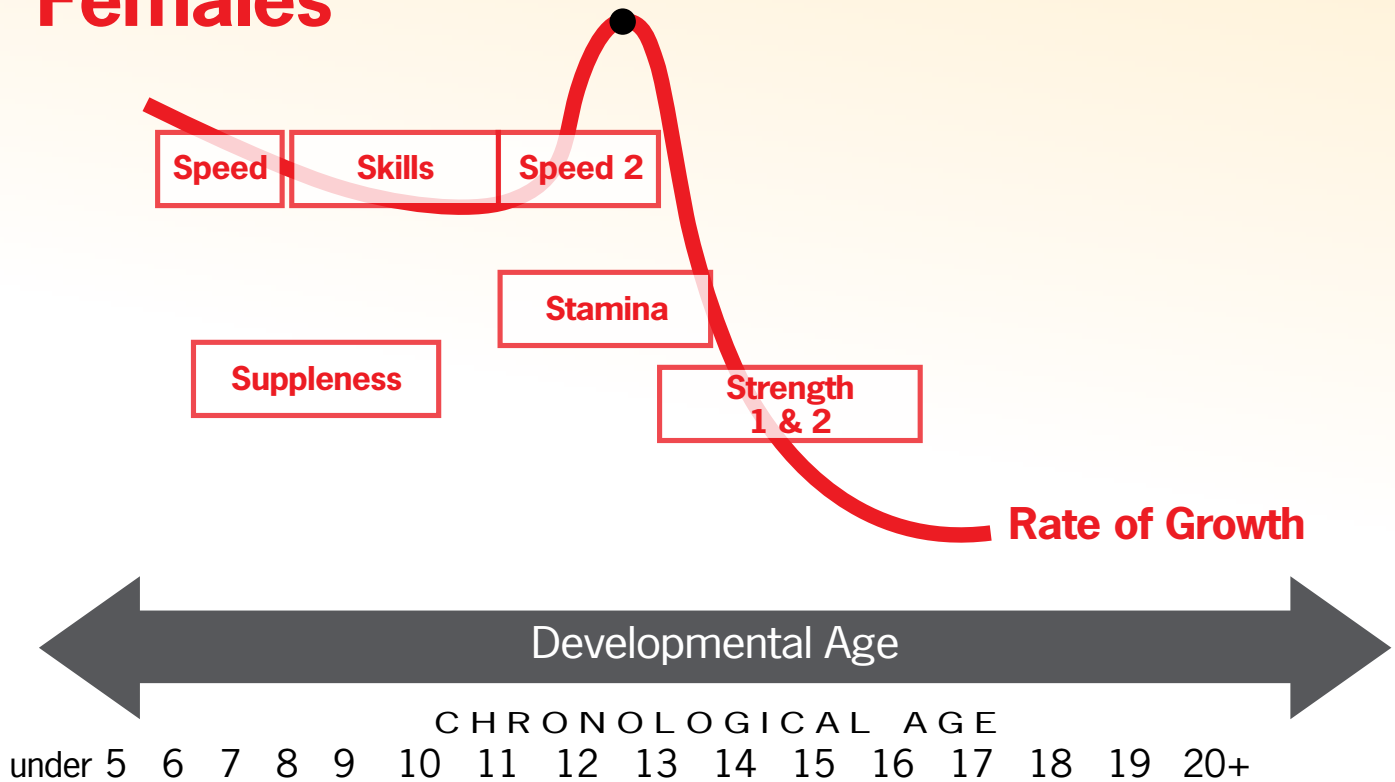
Earlier in life, about age 7 for girls and age 8 for boys, the first defined window of opportunity is related to readiness to learn how to move quickly. This is why in sport programs there is a focus on speed exercises for children under 9 years of age.

Some windows of trainability last for a relatively long time while others last only a year or so. In some cases, missing a window may preclude an individual from developing to his or her full potential. According to research, the window for speed development occurs more than once in a life time, each lasting for several months, while the window of trainability for Agility, Balance and Coordination is much longer and lasts for 2-4 years between the ages of 8 to 12. As it is promoted in this manual, acquisition of the ABC's remains a top priority.

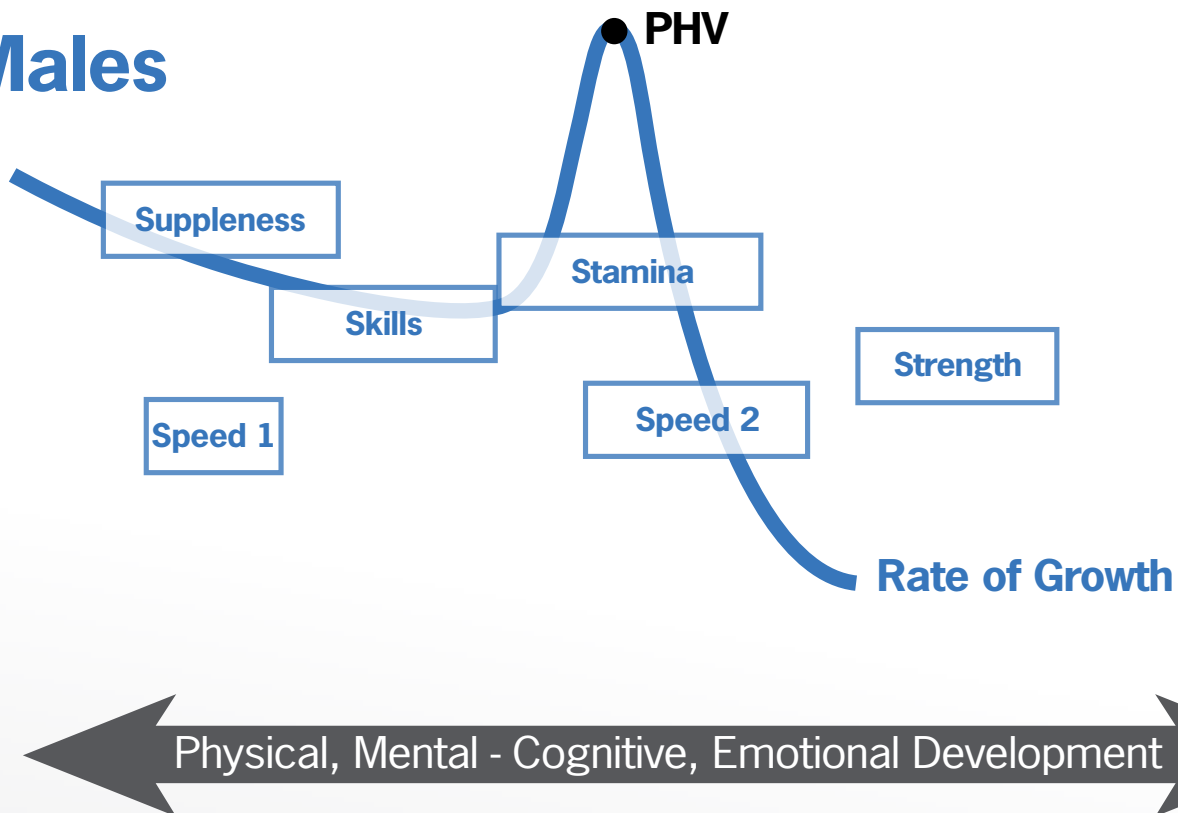
As illustrated in the table below, the U11 and U13 age groups raise another challenge – as children enter into their rapid growth phase, other windows of trainability open up. Instructors must pay attention to this challenge and ensure that a proper stimulus is applied during every training session.



Females



Males



U10 – General objectives as per the Judo Canada's LTDM Athletic Aspects of a Program.

- Focus of the judo program is still development of **fundamental movement skills** (running, jumping, throwing, swimming, etc.), however, during this stage around age 10/11, the **fundamental movement skills that are judo specific** (moving in a variety of ways -forward, sideways, backward with judo specific steps, crawling, falling, rolling, tumbling, kicking, blocking, etc.) take an equally important role.
- Continue focusing on **ABC'S** of Athleticism (agility, balance, coordination, **speed**).
- When a child enters the PHV (**Growth spurt**), part of the training needs to focus on the development of **aerobic endurance**. The window of trainability for endurance opens up right at the beginning of this period and lasts for two –three years.
- No focus on other athletic abilities (strength, power).
- Continue to develop **suppleness** (flexibility)
- Coordination, agility and balance to be accomplished through general exercises, games and increasingly through a variety of judo specific tasks that will challenge the increased capacity for development of complex movement patterns.
- In addition to complex judo skills, use acrobatic gymnastic exercises to develop **spatial- temporal orientation** and **body awareness**.
- **Right and left lateralization**, simple-to-complex coordination exercises, reaction time, rhythm, dexterity, spatial-temporal orientation, capacity to adapt and re-adapt to a specific object and environment.
- Natural strength continues to develop as a function of increased neuromuscular coordination. No equipment is necessary for this to occur. Body weight and obstacle courses will do the job.
- Short duration **speed** games and speed agility exercises should be incorporated in every training session. Although the first speed development window of trainability is no longer the target, these games help develop agility and coordination. However, at the ages of 11-12, most females will enter the second window of trainability for Speed development.
- Short duration **aerobic** efforts for the 9-10 year olds while still allowing for spontaneous effort. For girls aged 11-12 years more structured aerobic exercises are needed as they enter the “window of trainability for endurance”.
- Exercise to increase flexibility must remain a priority especially when rapid growth begins accompanied by rapid changes to the length of bones. A focus on flexibility will help maintain suppleness during this period of change.
- It is recommended that the athlete at this age participate in 60-75 minutes of physical activity per day in addition to a well-structured activity such as judo which should not exceed 90 minutes per day.
- Parents' involvement in the process at this development stage is very important. Parents need to be educated on the development process including goals and values if they are to provide support and encouragement for their children.



Judo-Specific Objectives.

- The Learn-to-Train stage is a pre-specialization development stage. Above all, children must feel like they are having fun.
- During this development phase, (at the age of 11 or 12) **the judoka** usually chooses between two different paths: **elite development** OR **recreational judo**. It must be noted that the technical, physical, psychological and cognitive aspects of the program remain the same for either of these choices. The main difference lies with the amount of time dedicated to training. The **recreational judoka** will train a maximum of twice per week while the **elite-oriented judoka** will train 3-4 times per week. It is important to take the judoka's level of motivation towards training into consideration in order to provide them with the right guidance, e.g. ask the judoka questions such as: "Do you like competition?" or "Do you like to fight?" If interest and motivation are lacking, it will be very difficult for the judoka to pursue further elite athletic development in judo.
- Fundamental judo movement skills remain a priority over the acquisition of specific techniques.
- Tactical concepts can be introduced only in relation to gripping and not as a reference to winning competitive matches.
- Introduce the concept of "Maximum efficiency with minimal effort". Children need to understand this concept in both theory and practice and be able to apply it to motion rather than static skills, e.g. movement with partner, resulting in kuzushi, followed by a tsukuri and kake with a minimal use of force.
- The most advanced 10 year olds may progress as far as green belt.
- The most advanced 12 year olds may progress as far as blue belt.
- For the beginner, an introduction to basic principles in standing judo – *jigotai, shizentai, tai sabaki, ayumi ashi, tsugi ashi*. Children starting judo at this age, will learn these basic judo fundamental skills faster than younger children. However, even the fast learner needs at least 8 sessions with repetitions before he can move from the initiation to the acquisition learning phase. It is understood that children at this stage of development cannot be expected to join more advanced judoka in at the same skill level since they are still learning the basics.
- For the beginner, an introduction to basic judo-specific postures and movements, with and without partner, standing, on the ground, forwards, backwards, lateral, linear, leapfrogs, etc.
- For the beginner, an introduction to the concept of using movement to accomplish the task of breaking the balance of the partner (*kuzushi*) both in tachi-waza and ne-waza.
- For the beginner, an introduction to basic Break falls and rolls (basic *Ukemi waza*); basic roll overs of the partner on the ground from both prone and supine positions; basic immobilization techniques and escapes: *Kesa-gatame; Yoko-shiho-gatame and Tate-shiho-gatame (osae-komi-waza)*.
- *Randori* – modified if necessary (for the judo newcomer) – both *ne-waza and tachi-waza*.
- Introduce basic self-defence concepts, e.g. trapping the leg, and overcoming these basic defensive concepts and positions in ne-waza.
- Basic throwing techniques: performed initially without lifting then performed with movement. If necessary, these moves can be performed in a static format with a lower starting position – Uke on one or both knees; (according to the *nage-waza* Kyu syllabus of Judo Canada).
- The increased neuromuscular coordination and a capacity for cognitive participation in learning should be explored by challenging both beginner or intermediate level judoka with more complex technical skills – combinations (i.e. o-uchi-gari to o-soto-otoshi).

- The level of difficulty should be increased even further for the 11-12 year olds by introducing combinations requiring changes in direction of movement, e.g.. o-uchi-gari to seoi-nage.
- Technical skills required by the kyu syllabus but not allowed for these age groups in competition or randori, are excluded from the requirements for grading to a given belt colour.
- Introduction to the concept of Action/Reaction.
- Increased volume of repetitions when initiating a new skill as well as when consolidating a skill. While U10 children could sustain up to 3-4 minutes of focused exercise, the U12-U14 age groups may be able to double that time.
- Introduction to values: partnership, respect, self-confidence, self-esteem, overall well-being, and being part of a group.
- Learning and developing traditional judo etiquette.
- Introduction to a variety of mental training techniques that should be incorporated in teaching of technical tasks, games, etc. However, not many children of this age are able to conceptualize beyond the physical realm so they may need help understanding the mental training aspect.
- Present the athlete with the possibility of pursuing a high-performance judo career.
- Introduce simplified combat rules and refereeing as needed for the specific age group.
- Introduce children to competitions as per the modified Judo Canada regulations.
- Participation in competition is for training and development purposes; there is no emphasis on winning.
- Intermediately advanced judoka need to develop knowledge on how to perform warm-ups – to get ready for competition.
- In competition, the intermediate judoka must be able to execute a throwing technique and control well both the partner and their own body. On the ground they must be able to control their opponents in an osae-komi -waza or escape from a well applied hold-down.
- Quality of performance in competition should be considered only as an indicator of the athlete's acquired judo-related knowledge and used to enrich their self-confidence and self-esteem.
- Randori (combat exercise) is an essential educational component in learning judo. It is important to remember that judo is a combat sport and randori is a tool to teach the concept of opposition.
- For intermediately advanced judoka, it is important to learn simple and complex technical combinations and to increase the volume of practice where such combinations are repeated in a creative and self-directed fashion.
- The athlete must strive to perfect certain techniques as outlined in the Judo Canada syllabus.
- The athlete is now mature enough to participate in establishing his or her own short- and long-term goals. The instructor must involve these young children in this process.

A competent judo instructor must take charge of the athlete's overall development. At this development stage judoka decide whether they will pursue the recreational – active for life path, or will they embark on the High Performance path. The choice should be made by about the age of 12-13 years. The elite path differs from the Active-for-Life path in terms of volume of training and this difference is crucial to the development of a performance capacity in the young athlete.

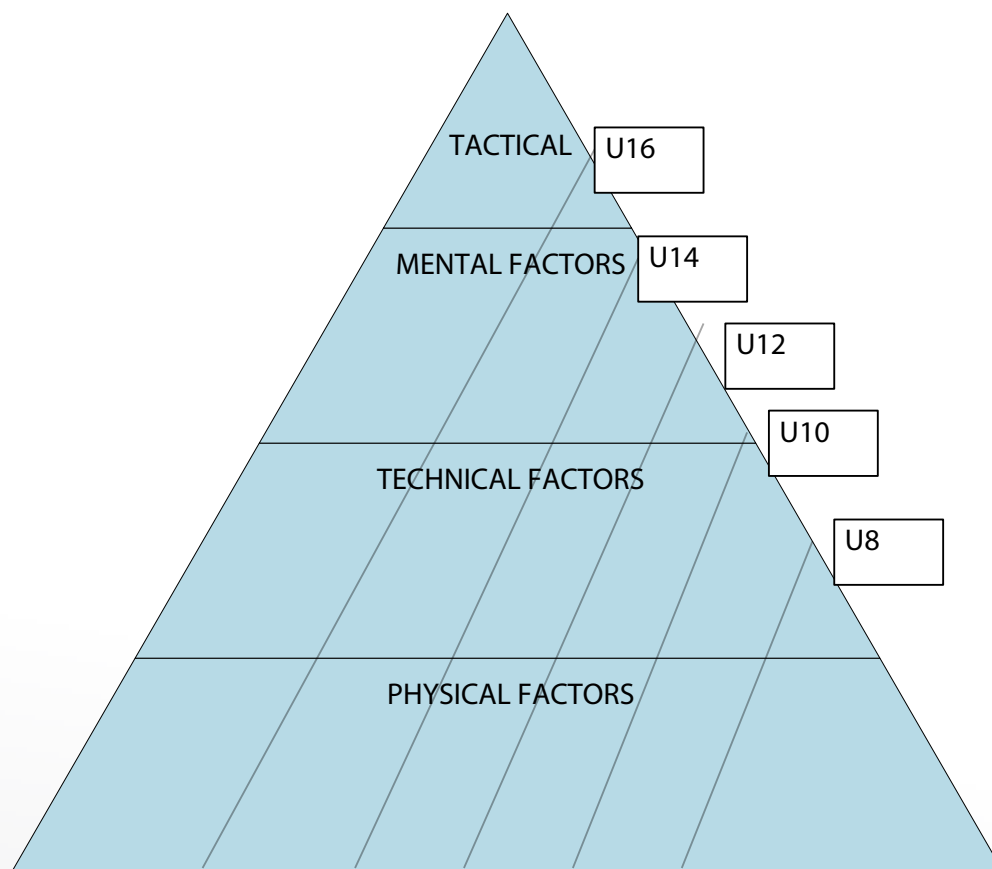
Children in the U13 elite stream are expected to practice judo for a minimum of 44 weeks and experience 260 plus hours of judo training per year (6 hours per week). At this stage of development, it is critical for children to access this volume of training. It is unreasonable to expect children who practice less to have the capacity to join the elite stream later where the training demands are much greater.

At this development stage children are introduced to a “regular” competition format with modified rules. Athletes who compete yet train below the identified volume threshold are considered to be in the recreation stream. There is nothing wrong with this approach. It is quite obvious that most judoka in most communities in Canada will choose, or will have no other option than to continue on, the Active-for-Life path. Yet, as educators, we have an obligation to project a true and honest picture of the reality of high performance judo. Most sports are not that different. If a 13 year old child playing competitive hockey needs to train 4-5 times per week to keep up with the demands of the sport, why would a judoka need less work? To put it into the Canadian contextual reality: the fact is that statistically it is just as difficult to make the NHL as it is to make the Olympic Judo Team.

Remember, at the U14 age level judo is still at a pre-specialization development stage. The athlete development model stipulates that it takes 10 years on average to develop expertise in any given field. The average age of the world’s top judo performers is between 23-26 years. Thus, starting specialization at the age of 12-13 years gives athletes enough time to be on the top of their game physiologically and mentally for peak performance

Pre-specialization means – focus on athletic development and not on judo-specific skill development. However, athletic development can be accomplished easily in combination with the development of technical judo. Moreover, judo skills complement the focus on the ABC’s. When there is a need for a focus on endurance, both cardiovascular and muscular, there is no better exercise for this than randori.

Pre-specialization also means that children can (and should) be involved in more than one sport. In fact, where elite training cannot be offered due to lack of resources (space, qualified instruction, access to a dojo, number of partners, etc), participation in more than one sport can actually help a child to pursue the elite development path, even if the volume of judo-specific training is somewhat compromised.



PROGRAM COMPONENTS AND FRAMEWORK

- U11 practice 2-3 times per week; 60-90 minutes of practice maximum; 50/50 tachi-waza/ne-waza; 4 modified format competitions in a year; 40 weeks of judo training.
- U13 practice 3-4 times per week; time of training as above; up to 60/40 tachi-waza/ne-waza ratio; up to 6 tournaments per year - need 20 to 25 bouts of competitive experience
- The indicated above training times apply to intermediate judoka, minimum yellow belt, at both U12 and U14 ages. Beginners (white belts), may be exposed to the same volume of training, but are not permitted to participate in competitions. Their tachi-waza/ne-waza training must respect the 60/40 ratio.
- In sessions where there are children of different age groups, development stages, and skill levels, only generalized part of the session is offered to all at the same time. For the judo-specific training, children should be separated into subgroups at the appropriate age and skill level.
- A training ratio of twelve to sixteen students to one instructor is acceptable. Subsequent numbers may increase by a factor of 10 students per one assistant.
- Any session targeted to a specific subgroup based on skill level or age needs to be well-planned and delivered.
- Instructors need to be competent and understand the development needs of children.
- Instructors must apply a variety of educational tools to address the various learning styles of children.
- Instructors must be able to effectively communicate with children and with parents. This competency is linked with the National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP). Instructors must be a minimum NCCP Dojo Assistant trained or NCCP 1 certified.
- Instructors must provide a secure area to practice judo, have an Emergency Action Plan in place, and ensure that a first aid kit is readily available.
- All participants are required to be members of their Provincial/Territorial judo associations.
- Periods of rest must also be allowed to correspond to the attention span of children as well as to their physical needs.
- Mental training techniques are frequently introduced as parts of regular practice. Increased capacity to focus, relax, re-focus, control emotions, etc will be natural outcomes of these exercises.
- Sessions should be designed in order to help challenge children to perform to their full potential.
- Physical capacities should be benchmarked and individual goals and objectives set for each child. An improvement target of 10% every 3 months is realistic and achievable.
- Technical progress should be measured against the Kyu syllabus - U12 maximum green belt, U14 maximum blue belt.
- Modified shiai rules can be based on technical competency, selected directions of throw, destabilization of the opponent, control, use of right and left-handed techniques, etc.

PROGRAM COMPONENTS – CRITICAL REFLECTIONS

- As is the case with earlier development stages, many judo programs face the challenge of accommodating the learning needs of both returning members and newcomers on a regular basis.
- Most successful judo programs minimize the mixed skill practice or combined age group practice as much as possible. In the mixed environment, the “more advanced” and capable children (or adults), will not be challenged to the extent they need for their optimal development.
- However, if mixed skill programs are necessary, instructors still have an obligation to deliver a challenging training stimulus to all participants. Challenging in this context means designing mixed skill training sessions focused on the development of fundamental movement skills, e.g. the ABC’s. A series of tips is presented in the U7 and U9 manuals.
- At this development stage the ne-waza to tachi-waza ratio moves from 50/ 50 at U12 to 60/40 at U14. However, this principle does not apply to the newcomer to judo. Children belonging to the U12 and U14 groups who start judo need to develop a solid base of fundamental judo movement skills, including rolling and break-falls including koho-ukemi (falling backwards). It is not uncommon for children at these ages to lack the core strength and body coordination needed to adequately control their heads when falling, in particular to the back. Thus, until these skills are adequately developed, the ratio of ne-waza to tachi-waza should be 70/30. The practice of ne-waza forces children to develop core strength and body awareness much faster and safer than with tachi-waza.
- At the beginning of each class, the instructor should take 3-5 minutes to establish contact with students and to set up expectations for the practice, e.g. extend a welcome, provide an overview of the class, bow in and give general instructions.
- Warm-ups must progress from simple movements with easy effort to more sophisticated movements that are more physically challenging. A general rule of thumb is that warm-up activity should consume no more than 30% of total practice time, e.g. 20 minutes of warm-up for a 60-minute practice, 30 minutes of warm-up for a 90-minute practice, etc. Warm-ups must address the development of both judo-specific and non-judo specific fundamental movement skills. The use of games can greatly enhance warm-up activity.
- The technical part of the session should be designed by taking into account the students’ ability to concentrate, capacity to retain information, and ability to correctly perform techniques. Since about 30% of practice time is allotted for the technical part, instructors need to creatively design their drills to maintain interest, to reduce boredom, and to build on previously learned skills.
- The technical randori part of the session should last for 10-15 minutes (20%) per session for the U12 and up to 20 minutes (30%) and occasionally longer per session for the U14.
- A “reward” or recreational activity should always be incorporated into each class. This game or activity should be done ideally towards the end of the class and it should last 5 -10 minutes.
- The closing part of the session should include a brief cool-down period with the aim of reducing the stress caused by the active periods within class. It is the time to focus on flexibility with stretching of a targeted joint. It is also a good time to practice some relaxation and visualization techniques, e.g. yoga, , mental imagery, etc.

Talent Recognition

Talent may be generally defined as unusual innate ability in some field or activity. In some sports, talent is fairly obvious, e.g. some sprinters are just naturally faster than others. In other sports, scientific methods can be used to help identify raw talent in younger years.

For example, in rowing, where the known average age of best performance is in the middle twenties, scouts look for teenagers and young adults with the right anthropological parameters (arm span, height, weight), and other physical abilities such as aerobic endurance which can be tested with a simple VO2 max. test. Once it is determined that the tested individual possesses unusually high endurance capacity, is of the right size, and wants to row an aggressive training regime can be applied.. It is not uncommon to see such individuals winning medals at the World Stage within a relatively short time (3 to 4 years).

In judo, there is no scientifically validated method of talent identification. Judo offers a complex set of options to an individual trying to find the best strategy in aligning and maximizing personal capacities, and physical capacities, e.g. fighting, tactical solutions, etc. Anthropometric data is subject to the same challenge. For example, at the 2007 World Championships, two World Champions were of the same height – one of them won the -60kg and the other +100kg. However, regardless of this reality we know that to progress one must be constantly challenged. Since judo is a contact, combative sport, the challenge will come from finding enough sparring partners at the appropriate level in order to provide the best progress possible. The same principle applies at every stage of development.

The purpose of talent identification is to systematically test all individuals and direct them to the sports for which they appear best suited by virtue of body size and shape, skill potential, or physiological response. In Canada, we recognize sport as an important contributor to the development of individuals as productive members of society and thus we look for motivation, discipline, involvement, persistence, tenacity, etc. All these virtues must be present in order to develop talent to its full potential.

One more thing – very important for judo: to be successful in a tough combat, contact sport, one has to like fighting..



FITNESS TESTING

General Considerations

Similar testing procedures have been recommended in the Judo Canada kyu syllabus. The testing protocol presented below has been validated by the Kinesiology Department of the University of Montreal with data from a very large population. The results obtained from these tests should serve two purposes: 1) as a base line for setting improvement goals and objectives; and, 2) as an indication of fitness level of judo students in comparison to the rest of the population.

This type of testing is designed for the general population as well as for athletes of any age. Its results have been validated for individuals 6 years of age and up. The testing measures the endurance of different muscle groups by determining the number of repetitions of specific exercises (push-ups, sit-ups and squat thrusts or burpies) that can be performed while following an imposed rhythm.

The major limitations of this test are related to the quality of execution of the movements, and the capacity of the participant to follow the imposed rhythm. These two variables can have an impact on the results. Other factors that may influence the results include the motivation of the participant, and finally and most importantly, the level of fitness.

Equipment needed

- a metronome or sound device that can set the appropriate pace for the exercises; A scoring card; Adequate athletic clothing and footwear must be used by the participants. A metronome may be downloaded for free from the Internet.



Procedure

Subjects must perform as many repetitions as they can of the following exercises at the following rates.

- **Sit-ups:** 40 repetitions per minute,
- **Push-ups:** 50 repetitions per minute,
- **Squat thrusts (burpies):** 25 repetitions per minute,

Note: If the athlete is able to perform a greater number of repetitions than the maximum indicated for the age group, the test may be stopped. Such a performance would indicate that that individual is extremely fit in this particular movement pattern. No exercise should continue beyond 100 repetitions.

Specific guidelines pertaining to each exercise are provided in the following pages.

Normative data are presented for each exercise, and for male and female children of this age group.

SIT-UPS (Men and Women)

For the starting and ending positions ("DOWN"), subjects:

- Lie on their back, with the head and elbows on the floor.
- Bend their knees at 90 degrees and spread their feet 15 cm apart.
- Have their feet held to the floor by a partner or stall bars.

For the "UP" position subjects:

- Touch their knees (not their thighs) with their elbows (not their arms, forearms or head).
The back is slightly rounded.
- Must ensure their hands remain crossed during the test, and keep their thighs parallel, not open.

It is also recommended to clearly indicate the down and up positions throughout the test. Participants must not bounce when going down.



Down Position



Up Position

PUSH-UPS

The starting and ending positions are the same. Many subjects begin the test with a sound position, but correct form may tend to deteriorates progressively throughout.

Women and Girls

For the starting and ending positions ("DOWN"), female subjects:

- Lie on their stomach, with feet spread by 10 cm.
- Keep their hands as close as possible to the body and in line with the shoulders.
- Keep their chest and head facing the floor, and the hands facing the front.

For the "UP" position subjects:

- Keep both their knees and feet on the floor, and extend their arms completely without "locking" their elbows.
- Must ensure their body remains straight throughout the test, and

Subjects must not bounce when going down, and go all the way up at every repetition.

Men and Boys

The guidelines are the same as for female subjects, except that the rear support is provided by the toes instead of the feet and knees. Therefore, in the Up position, the head, torso, buttocks, knees and feet are completely aligned, as shown below.



Up Position (females)



Down Position



Up Position (males)

SQUAT THRUSTS (MEN AND WOMEN)

The sequence of movements is described below. In each phase of the movement, a key word should be provided to participants to give them some focus during the execution, and to ensure the proper cadence is maintained:

- Starting position **"Standing"**: Upright stance, arms and hands hanging, feet 10 cm apart.
- Squatting position **"Hands"**: Feet resting on the toes, heels touching the buttocks (knees fully bent). Hands on the floor on each side of the body, parallel to the shoulders and 20 cm from the feet.
- Push up position **"Feet"**: Legs are kicked to the rear, fully extended; the subject is supported by his or her toes and hands. The body is straight and the feet are still 10 cm apart.
- Squatting position **"Hands"**: See above.
- Ending position **"Standing"**: See above.

The figure below shows the proper sequence of movements for this exercise.

Correct Sequence of Movements for the Squat Thrust Exercise



Standing



Hands



Feet



Hands



Standing



FOR PUSH-UPS WITH AN IMPOSED RHYTHM OF 50/MIN

CATEGORY	%	9 Y		10 Y		11 Y		12 Y	
		M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
EXCELLENT	95	28	41	31	44	32	41	36	41
	90	22	32	24	38	30	35	27	36
	85	20	30	21	34	24	32	23	32
	80	17	26	20	32	22	30	21	30
V. GOOD	75	16	23	17	30	21	28	21	27
	70	15	22	16	27	19	26	20	24
	65	13	21	15	25	17	23	18	22
	60	12	19	13	22	15	22	16	21
AVERAGE	55	11	16	12	21	14	21	15	20
	50	10	15	11	19	13	20	14	19
	45	9	13	10	17	11	18	12	17
POOR	40	8	12	9	15	10	15	11	15
	35	7	11	7	14	9	14	9	15
	30	7	10	7	12	7	13	8	13
	25	5	9	6	11	6	11	6	12
V. POOR	20	4	6	5	10	5	10	5	11
	15	3	4	4	8	4	10	4	10
	10	1	3	3	6	3	5	3	9
	5	0	1	1	3	0	3	2	3



FOR SIT-UPS WITH AN IMPOSED RHYTHM OF 40/MIN

CATEGORY	%	9 Y		10 Y		11 Y		12 Y	
		M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
EXCELLENT	95	56	56	64	60	79	64	85	69
	90	48	48	55	52	68	55	73	60
	85	43	42	49	46	60	49	65	53
	80	39	37	44	41	54	44	58	48
V. GOOD	75	35	34	40	38	49	40	53	44
	70	32	30	37	34	44	37	48	40
	65	29	27	33	31	40	33	42	36
	60	26	24	30	28	36	30	38	33
AVERAGE	55	24	21	27	25	32	27	34	29
	50	21	18	24	22	28	24	30	26
	45	20	17	23	21	27	23	29	25
POOR	40	19	16	22	20	25	22	27	23
	35	18	15	21	18	24	20	26	22
	30	17	14	20	17	23	19	24	21
	25	16	13	18	16	21	17	23	19
V. POOR	20	15	12	17	14	19	16	21	17
	15	13	10	15	13	17	14	19	15
	10	12	9	13	10	15	12	16	13
	5	9	6	10	7	11	8	12	9



FOR THRUST - SQUATS WITH AN IMPOSED RHYTHM OF 25/MIN

CATEGORY	%	9 Y		10 Y		11 Y		12 Y	
		M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
EXCELLENT	95	56	56	64	60	79	64	85	69
	90	48	48	55	52	68	55	73	60
	85	43	42	49	46	60	49	65	53
	80	39	37	44	41	54	44	58	48
V. GOOD	75	35	34	40	38	49	40	53	44
	70	32	30	37	34	44	37	48	40
	65	29	27	33	31	40	33	42	36
	60	26	24	30	28	36	30	38	33
AVERAGE	55	24	21	27	25	32	27	34	29
	50	21	18	24	22	28	24	30	26
	45	20	17	23	21	27	23	29	25
POOR	40	19	16	22	20	25	22	27	23
	35	18	15	21	18	24	20	26	22
	30	17	14	20	17	23	19	24	21
	25	16	13	18	16	21	17	23	19
V. POOR	20	14	12	15	13	16	14	18	15
	15	12	10	14	12	15	13	16	14
	10	12	10	12	10	14	12	14	12
	5	10	7	10	8	11	9	12	10

Competition Format

Judo is a competitive, combat sport and young judoka should be exposed to the competitive experience. For younger children we emphasize that the competition format must be different from the regular format. See the U9 manual.

According to the Kodokan “Shin, Gi, Tai” judo philosophy, teens are entering the “Corporal” (Tai) development stage in the life of a judoka. During this period, they begin to apply judo principles in combat situations. This period lasts into the late twenties/early thirties and throughout this time judoka must compete to progress. Without this competition experience judoka will not be able to progress to a high grade in judo.

However, how the child internalizes the first competitive experience(s) will have a huge impact on attitudes toward competition. Thus, the first experience must be positive. For this reason, the regulations for U11 and U13 are still modified to ensure maximum benefit from the point of view of technical development and safety.

White belt judoka are not permitted to compete in the regular judo competition format. They are allowed to compete in ne-waza events only.

U12

Mixed Gender Events are allowed.

Age Minimum: 9 years

Age Maximum: 10 years

Rank Minimum: 5th kyu (yellow)

Time Duration: 2 minutes. No golden score.

Up to and including 23kg
+23 kg up to and including 25 kg
+25 kg up to and including 27 kg
+27 kg up to and including 30 kg
+30 kg up to and including 33 kg
+33 kg up to and including 36 kg
+36 kg up to and including 39 kg
+39 kg up to and including 42 kg
+42 kg up to and including 45 kg
and over 45kg

Mixed gender competition is allowed. The competition should provide the participant with a minimum of three bouts in a Round Robin format.

Each judoka is having three to four two minute bouts. Only in cases when one of the competitors dominates by scoring three ippon's in a row, the judge will break this bout. The grip is allowed only at the front of the judogi. The shiai is judged by one judge only based on the following:

- technical proficiency (chosen directions, ability to destabilize the opponent, control, usage of left and/or right-handed techniques) – up to 10 points;
- desire to compete up to 10 points;
- fair play up to 10 points;

The total number of points are added for all bouts for each child and this is their score for which they get a prize.

The following actions and waza are forbidden and will be penalized by a shido after a second attempt (The first attempt is not penalized and the judge will explain to the judoka that such an action is not allowed):

- kansetsu and shime waza
- Head locking with a grip over or around the neck
- All drop down techniques, which start on one or both knees.
- Tani otoshi
- makikomi waza
- sutemi waza.



BOYS	U 14	GIRLS
Age Minimum: 11 years Age Maximum: 12 years		Age Minimum: 11 years Age Maximum: 12 years
Rank Minimum: 5 th kyu - (Yellow)		Rank Minimum: 5 th kyu - (Yellow)
Time Duration: 2 minutes. No GS		Time Duration: 2 minutes. No GS
Up to and including 30 kg +30 kg up to and including 34 kg +34 kg up to and including 38 kg +38 kg up to and including 42 kg +42 kg up to and including 46 kg +46 kg up to and including 50 kg +50 kg up to and including 55 kg +55 kg up to and including 60 kg More than 60 kg		Up to and including 28 kg +28 kg up to and including 32 kg +32 kg up to and including 36 kg +36 kg up to and including 40 kg +40 kg up to and including 44 kg +44 kg up to and including 48 kg +48 kg up to and including 52 kg +52 kg up to and including 57 kg more than 57 kg

Preferred tournament format – Round Robin; Pool system or Modified Double Elimination.

The grip is allowed only at the front of the judogi.

The following actions and waza are forbidden by the NSO and will be penalized by a shido:

- kansetsu and shime waza.
- Head locking with a grip over or around the neck
- All drop down techniques, which start on one or both knees.
- Tani otoshi
- makikomi waza

Notice that this is the youngest age group where the Sutemi Waza is allowed.



Typical Training Session with samples of exercises

LEGEND:

Total Duration: I.e 90 (min) - the symbol > is used for “up to”

Key Points (Objectives, Guidelines, Safety)

GENERAL INFORMATION:

- This part is intended as an exercise catalogue enhanced by a number of coaching tips.
- Objectives for proposed exercises are indicated, however, users of this manual should not forget that a change of intensity of a given exercise is often enough for the objective to change as well.
- Planning of sessions is crucial to the success of your program
- Calculate how much randori is needed. I.E. 12 years old child participates in six competitions in a year (4 hours per competition); judo practice 3/week for a total of 5 hours; season is 36 weeks long. This represents 24 hours in competition and 180 hours of practice for a total 204 hours. 30% of 204 is 72 hours of which 24 we already met. The remaining 48 hours need to be randori, which represents approximately 85 minutes of randori a week.
- Once you develop your first plan, later planning seasons and sessions becomes a routine.
- Do not hesitate to use given samples of exercises, verify them, create new, etc. Training can not get stagnant. It is boring for the participant.

Sample General Objective(s): develop aerobic endurance – during this development stage some participants (girls in particular), will enter the PHV phase. The window of trainability for endurance will open for them. To address this need training focused on a long (20+ minutes), continuous exercises at moderate to high intensity are employed. Randori is a good judo specific exercise to meet this objective, however, to keep 11/12 years old engaged in randori lasting this long, we may need to employ some tricks – frequently exchange Tachi waza and ne waza; use intermission games that keep the intensity up; etc. We should also encourage or practice with children running, swimming, skating or cycling games that serve this objective.

Sample Specific Objective: learn Tai otoshi (session number 2 of 6 where this topic is the main tachi waza learning objective) For a beginner judoka and for an intermediate judoka of the same age, involved in the same program. Exercise is performed in motion with a cooperation of uke.

For the beginner – (initiation phase of learning) the objective is to move from tsugi ashi into the tai otoshi (tsukuri) as smoothly and efficiently as possible and brake uke's balance (kuzushi) in the process.

For the intermediate judoka (in the acquisition or consolidation phase of learning), the objective is to learn how to move into tai otoshi fast, throw effortlessly, explore somewhat different body positions, etc.

General tips for Instructors:

- You are partially responsible for your athlete's development and overall progress.
- Take charge of the group by getting the students attention in calling "mate" or other means;
- Personally thank the students for their attention.
- Ensure a healthy balance between training and rest periods.
- Proceed with a traditional judo etiquette. Bow in while kneeling or standing.
- Emphasize the importance of respect in the judo culture.
- Increase effort levels by introduction of various exercises and not be appealing to children's consciousness.
- Reproduce technical aspects through competitive conditioning – randori.
- Employ a variety of mental training exercises in a routine technical teaching. I.e. focus on... one point at a time. Or concentrate on.... ; or relax now... ;
- Inspire the desire to compete by telling stories, celebrating success etc.
- Always use positive reinforcements to nurture a positive self-image for the participant.
- Always have back-up plans, etc.

INTRODUCTION - >3 minutes

Take the attendance record; preferably each judoka raises their hand or confirms their presence verbally with an audible and controlled "Yes"; he or she must then stay silent and calm until the roll-call is finished. Beginning of the class this way provides an opportunity to positively reinforce the need for their cooperation.

Always tell the group what are the planned activities for the session;

If necessary, give instructions or pass along messages to the parents.

Be playful and energetic so children can feed of it.



WARM UP

TIPS and KEY POINTS

- Warm-ups of 15 to 25 minutes; but for this age group can take up to half of the allotted time of the session.
- At this development stage, the general objectives of development are still the Agility, Balance, Coordination and Speed but pending the level of judo expertise of your students, you may use a variety of means to accomplish this tasks. You may use generic Fundamental Movement Skills to address these objectives or you may use Fundamental Judo Movement Skills to address the same objective and at the same time get your students “specifically” ready for a technical part of the session.
- Employ exercises in a progressive fashion – from easy to more difficult. i.e. speed can be trained with a maximum speed running or with a maximally fast crawl on the stomach. Speed in judo should now be trained almost always in combination with coordination and agility.
- Continue to emphasize how to do falling backward without touching the mat with the head. Head trauma in young children is very difficult to detect, but it happens!
- Stimulus for a maximum speed development should be applied relatively early in the session, but after the body is warm enough to move at a max. speed safely i.e. between the 15th and 30th minute of the session.
- Demonstrate whenever possible – not just explain - exercise that children are not familiar with. Demonstration should inspire children so it has to be of a good quality.
- If demonstration is not possible, use a clear and simple explanation: sitting, lying down; either on their backs or stomachs, etc.
- Emphasize what we are working on: coordination, agility, static and dynamic balance. Make sure that if explanation is used, the instructions are very short and precise.
- When incorporating mental training techniques in exercise, make children aware of what do they work on. i.e. This exercise requires concentration, vigilance and speed on the part of participants.
- Pay attention to the posture in simple exercises in standing position (jumping, running, steps, balancing, sweeping), etc must be performed with flexed knees. Develop this habit first before you ask children to learn i.e. seoi nage.
- Speed movements in variety of exercises and directions (left right, forward, backward, sideways, etc) are at this age more a function of coordination than strength;
- As with younger age group children, if a child is not able to perform an exercise that is for others relatively easy to do, modify the exercise for that individual child so they can succeed. Do not set a number of repetitions task but rather a time limit and ask all participants to do their best.
- Relay games remain a strong ally of a good training of mobility, speed, coordination, cooperation, etc. Divide the group into teams in order to do a relay race along the sides of the tatami (mats); the relay must include all designated members of each respective team. The goal is to finish before the opposing teams; however, ensure that there are no teams that will win all the time and all the races.

General & Specific warm-up (15 - 25 minutes)

- Warm up exercises used for children of this age group are not much different from what we employ with younger children. The difference here is the quality of movement which is much more precise now, the speed of execution, etc.
- For this reason, the basic exercises listed here are often the same as in the U10 manual, but often objectives of these exercises are different.
- A “shrinking exercise” which is considered a judo fundamental movement skill on the ground, may be listed with an objective of “learning” this very skill, but once this skill is learned (consolidated), by the child it may be used for a training of agility, speed or even endurance.... Thus a different objective.
- Many children begin judo at this development stage, joining programs of children who already practice judo for some time, so not all participants in our program poses the same level of skills that can be used in a warm up to accomplish the intended objective.
- Below you find examples of over 60 minutes of typical warm up exercises. Use these in conjunction with a number of games listed in the U10 and U8 manuals and you can plan your warm up session with such a variety of options that the child will never be bored.



EXERCISES

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jogging around mat; side shuffling; cross step; running; running in circles (> 4 minutes) 	<p>Objective – to improve cardiovascular readiness of the body. Intensity - start at low and increase to medium and high.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When children are familiar with the following: <i>ayumi ashi</i>, <i>tsugi ashi</i>, <i>tai sabaki</i> employ these in the warm up. Until they are familiar with these movements pattern, they should be learned in the main part of the session. 	<p>Objective – Same as above. This example illustrates that judo-specific skills can be used to warm up and to accomplish other than specific objectives. In example, if children are comfortable with <i>tsugi ashi</i>, this movement pattern can be used in development of speed; or development of agility in slalom motion.</p>
<p>GENERAL LOOSENING EXERCISES</p> <p>In general, 15 to 20 repetitions of movement within a joint should be performed to reach the readiness of a muscle group tendons and ligaments or joints. Start with the top of the body – neck, shoulders, elbows, wrists, fingers, torso, pelvic area, knees, ankles, toes (>4 minutes).</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seated three way loosening – legs flexors and extensors, abdominal muscles, lower and upper back, arms flexors and extensors, neck, etc (> 5 minutes), these exercises can be used to accomplish the goal of “loosening” 	<p>Objective – to increase mobility of all the joints in the body;</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once children are familiar with the following: Crawling on the ground in prone and supine position both forward and backward; “shrinking” both head forward and legs forward; rolling; etc (>2 minutes) 	<p>Objective – Same as above. This example illustrates that the same general objective of preparing the joints and muscles for more intense exercise can be accomplished with judo-specific movement providing that this movement has been learned by the participant.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A variety of callisthenic exercises - push up; judo push up; sit up; leg rises; crunches; squats; burpees; etc – performed in a timed fashion i.e push ups for 20 seconds – as many as one can do to allow for individual differences and challenge. The 11 and 12 years old should start working on muscular endurance, so callisthenic for this age group is a perfect tool to accomplish this objective. (> 10 minutes with a work/rest ratio of approx. 1 to 1 but remembering to work on antagonist muscle groups every next exercise.) 	<p>Objective – to improve the coordination, agility, endurance.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Once children are familiar with judo-specific exercises that allow to accomplish the same objective as when generic Fundamental Movement Skills are used, these exercises should be frequently and interchangeably used in this part of the warm ups to enhance the variety of training experiences. I.e. Ayumi ashi followed by zempo kaiten, tai sabaki 180 degrees, ayumi ashi backwards and koho ukemi. (>3 minutes) 	<p>Objective – to improve the base for technical development in judo as well as coordination, agility, endurance, . This example illustrates that the same general objective of improving coordination and agility, can be accomplished by application of exercises that are more judo-specific. It is important to remember that each of these exercises can be employed to accomplish a different objective, i.e. improvement of strength endurance, so we need to be mindful of how this exercise is performed by any individual child.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mimicking games (>5 minutes): move like a bear – on four limbs; move like a rabbit – challenging jumping motion utilizing the arms; move like a cat; move like a monkey; move like a ... etc 	<p>Objective – to improve imagination, visualization, agility and coordination.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basic gymnastic tumbling (>5 minutes)– cart-wheels, round-offs, etc. Once learned use in conjunction with jumping spins, breakfalls, etc 	<p>Objective – to improve spatial orientation, body awareness, self image and confidence, coordination and agility.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Game of a frozen tag (> 3 min) 	<p>Objective – to relax the children; to improve their agility, coordination and concentration; chose a various tasks they have to perform to free a “frozen” participant; ensure that they are aware of the multidirectional movement all around them; etc.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relay races; > 10 minutes - variety of different positions; Short sprints – various steps running; races in crab positions, forward and backwards; races in rolling sideways, forward, backwards; races in shrimping; 	<p>Objective – to stimulate speed development.</p> <p>To provide an environment for a short bursts of max. speed movement</p> <p>To teach discipline and cooperation by adhering to rules of the game and not allowing the benefit of winning by not following the set rules.</p> <p>Easily adjustable athletic outcome by increasing or decreasing the number of children in each relay team. When working on speed, ensure that the work to rest ratio is at least 1 to 6. (5 seconds of speed exercise followed by 30 seconds of relaxed rest time.)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rolling exercises – i.e. gymnastic roll forward, backward, break-falls forward, backwards, sideways; pending the level of skill of the child; (>10 minutes) 	<p>Objective – To improve the coordination; agility; confidence in rolling movement in various directions; breakfall technique; to increase readiness for judo-specific exercise</p>

MAIN PART (>30/45 minutes)

TIPS and KEY POINTS

- At this development stage randori becomes one of the most dominant forms of training. 30% of judo practice (in that we include competition), should be either competition or competition specific training. Randori is a form of competition specific training.
- 12 years old needs approximately 85 minutes of randori a week. With two 90 minutes sessions and one 60 minute session, the distribution of randori is important. I.e in the 60 minutes session 20 minutes of randori split into two 10 minutes of ne waza and tachi Waza; in the 90 minutes session # 1 30 minutes of randori with half ne waza and half tachi waza; in the 90 minutes session # 2 35 minutes of randori with 15 minutes ne waza and 20 minutes tachi waza.
- For safety and **physiological** reasons, for a beginner judoka randori ne waza should always be performed first in the session plan – before randori tachi waza. For intermediate and advanced judoka, randori ne waza should be planned at the end of the session.
- This part of the lesson must be concise. In cases where the group is split into subgroups (different skill level), specific plans for each subgroup must be prepared in advance of the session. Consideration must be given to children's ability to concentrate, capacity to retain information and ability to correctly perform techniques.
- Children are easily bored when asked to repeat something they do not enjoy or can't comprehend.
- With children who start judo at this age we teach the fundamental Judo movement skills first. This skills include movement (tsugi ashi, ayumi ashi in the tachi waza; roll over in a variety of positions in ne waza) with a cooperating partner in a variety of directions and moving into a throwing position (tai sabaki into tsukuri) concept of movement, that will allow to perform a number of techniques rather, than one technique at a time.
- Children intermediately advanced in judo, the training method may be the same but performance quality must be different and this is what the instructor must pay attention to. For Intermediate judoka movement are being consolidated and will require more precision, speed and mental focus on the final outcome and not on the exercise itself.
- In early stages of the program repeat frequently the safety rules: no headlocks or hands to the face, etc.
- Teach the concept of partnership versus opposition. Children must understand that in judo progress will not happen without a good partner. Learning cooperation is one of the fundamental skills in judo.
- Continue previous lessons - build up on previously learned skills in a systemic fashion.
- Demonstrations for this age children may be somewhat longer than the 1 minute recommended for the U7 and U9, however, shorter we keep it the more benefits we give to the practicing children. Still we emphasize one key point at a time.
- The attention span of children of this age usually increases and judoka in general are able to increase the complexity of movement learned. Implementation of combination of techniques and more sophisticated technical elements of ne waza should be introduced.

MAIN PART (>30/45 minutes) *continued*

- As with the younger age groups, we allow the child to experiment with his/her own way of doing things for as long as it is safe and no biomechanical principles are violated.
- When teaching hold downs, teach escapes as well. Demonstrate how these exercises relate to movement skills practiced in the warm up part of the session i.e. shrimping or shoulder bridges to the escapes from YSG, Kesa Gatame etc.
- Observe the body language of children. They will not tell you that they are bored, but you will see it in their body expression. Wandering eyes, yawning, easily distracted, concentrating on a wrong thing, fidgeting, bored facial expression. When detecting symptoms of boredom intercept your judo-specific activity with a game that will re-energize the group. It is good to ask for an advice on what game the person who is the most “disinterested”.
- Standing exercises: Use a variety of exercises to train fundamental athletic abilities (agility, balance, coordination, etc.). Employ a fundamental movement skills but also (once they are well learned) fundamental judo skills (break falls, *tsugi ashi*, *tai sabaki*, *tsukuri*).
- Introduce throwing techniques only when children are very comfortable with break-fall skills.
- Remember that although less dangerous than for the younger U9 children, throws to the back are still greater challenge for this age group, than forward throws. Reason is the same – not well developed trunk, neck and abdominal musculature result in a higher probability that the child’s head will hit the mat when falling back.
- Continue teaching the principles behind *kuzushi* rather than a throwing technique. For children *kuzushi* should always be associated with movement. Children of this age do not have the strength to unbalance the partner or opponent from a static position.
- When faced with a “fear of falling” in a dynamic (moving) situation, alter the form to static with uke on one or both knees. When applying this method, still emphasize the *kuzushi* this time executed with *tori*’s circular movement and almost simultaneous with *tsukuri*.
- If the child is hesitant to roll even from the static kneeling position, introduce the double sleeve grip and perform this roll over in a very controlled fashion. Instructor helps by volunteering for both *uke* and *tori* roles until the child is comfortable with falling (rolling).
- A number of techniques of the basic nage waza curriculum (up to green belt) will be performed by children in variety of ways, some of which will require some use of a lifting motion. For as long as such action comes easy to the child, let it continue. Step in only when a deliberate force application is obvious. If so happens ask them to go back to the basic movement form.
- ***A number of techniques of the curriculum are not allowed in competitive judo for this age children or are at this point of time not allowed in judo i.e. morote gari, kata guruma, koshi guruma, tani otoshi, kuchiki taoshi, uki waza, all shime and kansetsu waza. These techniques should not be taught to this age group children and they can not be allowed in randori.***

MAIN PART (>30/45 minutes) *continued*

- For beginners however, regardless of how athletically inclined they are, do not allow throws that require lifting. Athletic children will do it with ease and thus may not have a chance to develop a good understanding of the principle of “Maximum efficiency with a minimum effort”.
- In application of Ne Waza techniques, in particular Osaekomi waza, use of the body weight to hold uke in place – as oppose to strength. Tori/uke; surfing: stay on the wave without being overturned, etc. Allow children experience what works best. Lead them to discover it on their own.
- Allow regular randori only to children (applies also to adults) with enough basic judo knowledge, which includes safety rules (which are sometimes different in arts similar to judo whose adepts sometimes join judo programs and because of their different experiences, they may be unsafe to your students).
- Exercises described in the U9 and U7 manuals are applicable to this age group as well, so do not hesitate to look for them if you need inspiration.
- Below you find examples of over 95 minutes of typical exercises used for this age group children during the Main part of the session. Use these exercises, modify them and PLAN your sessions. (Games not included in this manual but in the U9 and U7 manuals). Please prioritize your session. You can not do all of the basic parts of the session during each practice. If you concentrate on ne waza, the Tachi waza will include only randori or only the technical part. And vice versa.



EXERCISES

- Review of previously learned skill in *ne waza* – i.e. Uke in supine “guard” position; Tori approaches in kneeling position from the leg side and walks between the legs of uke. Tori gets through the legs in a proper way, and applies Yoko Shiho or Mune Gatame. Both partners perform in an Uchi Komi format.

Objective – to consolidate a previously acquired skill

Demonstration with a key point > 1 minute

Practice > 5 minutes.

- Introduction of a new *ne waza* skill or element of a skill. I.e. Starting position as described in an exercise above. When one leg of tori is still entangled by legs of Uke, the roles of Tori and Uke reverse. Now the person on the bottom takes the initiative and becomes tori. The Tori (still on the bottom) being now in danger of getting immobilized, twists underneath to a side of the body into a shrimp-ing position with the chest facing the opponent. Eventually, tori will bridge and flip the opponent from the top to the bottom, thus reversing the situation whey were in a moment earlier.

Objective: to learn a new movement skill; to open up children’s imagination to an unlimited number of options of fight in *ne waza*.

Demonstration with a key point > 1

Practice > 4 minutes

Re-demonstration with a key point > 1

Practice > 4 minutes

Behavioural (Block) versus Decision (Concept) Teaching Theory.

The research shows that Behavioural teaching brings faster results than Decision teaching, however, what we are interested in is what are the learning consequences of these teaching methods. It turns out that what was learned as a consequence of a behavioural teaching is much faster forgotten than what has been learned as a consequence of a Decision teaching methodology. In the LTDM we promote the Decision teaching methodology in every aspect of judo. Since judo is a very complex sport, the learning of judo specific techniques may not be as fast as if the behavioural teaching methodology was applied, however, the long term outcomes show that this is the right way to go. This is why we promote the “in motion” learning of movement patterns rather than specific techniques. In the exercise above we deal with the same concept. Children are asked to explore possibilities offered to them by their level of skill, fitness, flexibility, imagination, etc. They are not given the “skill on a plate” and asked to imitate it with attention to lot’s of details. Instead they are asked to move their body in the best possible way, their body allows them to do. They are given a shell of a movement and must explore it to find the final product. There will come a time when they will need to pay attention to learning details. The time is not at the initiation stages of learning.

- Ne waza* randori – starting position could be seating back to back; in case a specific skill or continuation of skills were reviewed and learned earlier during that session, the randori may start in the particular practiced position.
Three rounds of 3 minutes or 4 or 2 minutes with change of a partner; > 1 minute break in between rounds.

Objective: To explore the newly acquired movement pattern in a real fighting environment; to understand the principles and the objective of a judo fight on the ground. To learn to concentrate on the task to perform. To develop further basic athletic and judo skills. If the randori was extended (I.e. some sessions for the 12 years old) to 20+ minutes, the objective would also include development of aerobic endurance.

INTERCEPTOR – considering that the next part of the session will be performed in Tachi Waza it is advisable to use this interceptor to introduce children to standing movement patterns to challenge their coordination, agility, focus, etc. Well learned exercises combined in a chain of tasks are greatly suited for this goal - I.e. run, zembo kaiten followed by an aerial 360 spin and finished with a cartwheel. Etc.

> up to 3 minutes

- Review of a Tachi waza skill/technique. I.e. in motion o uchi gari into o soto gari combination. *DECISION (concept) TEACHING: review in motion. Uke moving back, Tori moving forwards and attacks with o uchi gari. If Uke can not step over the attacking leg and escape that attack, Tori will finish with the O Uchi gari throw. If Uke steps away from the attacking leg, ukes' other leg is now close and exposed to the attacking Tori who will finish this action with the O Soto Gari attempt. Such a dynamic environment requires contact decision making by Tori.*

> 5 minutes

Objective – improve technical competency, cooperation, coordination, agility, understanding of kuzushi.

- Review of technique – different option: for intermediate judoka. Sute Geiko in motion. Tori and Uke change roles every 2 throws. Throws must be done in motion and one to the left one to the right. No throwing technique can be repeated more than twice.

> 5 minutes

Objective – improve technical competency, develop decision making, focus, self – confidence, cooperation, coordination, agility, etc.

Introduction of a new tachi waza skill/technique.

Harai goshi. Intermediate judoka – green belt throw. Demonstration in motion (Tori moving backwards). Question – what is similar in this throw to other know throwing techniques? (movement pattern, upper body action, leg action until the tai-sabaki (tsukuri) is completed). What is different? (this is the first throw learned in Judo, where tori has rotated fully (180degrees) and is throwing uke standing only on one leg and using the other leg to block-sweep Uke's leg.

Demonstration > 2 minutes.

- Practice with partner in defined (back and forth) motion. Movement allows a natural exploitation of external forces to perform the kuzushi.

Objective – To initiate (the first 2 to 4 sessions) learning a new skill; to develop coordination; to develop cooperation.

> 10 minutes.

DECISION (or concept) TEACHING. Start teaching in motion –**tori** backwards and **uke** forward to allow for a natural use of forces associated with movement. Pay attention to the “big picture only” No details are important at this time for as long as safety of participants calls for them. **Kata** form of **kuzushi** and **tsukuri**; **Tsukuri** must be defined as easily as possible. **Kake** should be defined as a natural outcome of the previous steps. Other interpretations of the throwing techniques must be corrected.

If learning in motion does not work for some judoka, ask them to do a technique that is based on similar principles and they already know it. I.e. when learning harai goshi which require tori to finish the action standing on one leg, use an example of a similar movement pattern with which the student may be already familiar with - like tsuri komi goshi. The difference between these two throwing techniques is the final action of the legs. It is very likely that some children will have a great difficulty to maintain their balance when asked to use only one leg as a support so by giving them a chance to understand the pattern of movement we may increase their learning ability.

Stay away from a static teaching of technique at this stage of development. Static form is a typical example of a behavioural (block) teaching which is not the preferred option. Furthermore, performance of a kuzushi in a static format requires a use of strength which we are trying to avoid. Static form should be used only if a child is afraid to fall. If needed the kneeling form (one knee or both knees) should be used to help overcome the fear.

- *tachi waza randori*; emphasize the principles of *randori* – it is not a *shiai*; no leg grabs and head (neck) “hugs”. Traditional *kumi kata* only;
 > 15 minutes – with individual rounds no longer than 3 minutes; breaks between rounds > 1 minute
 >20 minutes – for intermediate judoka who practice more than twice per week, once a week the Tachi waza randori should be this long.

Objective – Try the technical skill against resistance; Improve cooperation, coordination, agility, balance; for children entering the endurance window of trainability (some 11 to 12 years old girls approaching the growth spurt) against resistance the techniques learned this far.

Objective – mental training – practice respect; try to perform a perfect technique (visualize, attention) ; choose a challenging opponent; one good throwing technique per randori is a great success; remember what you did well, cherish it and visualize.

- **Interceptor:** A “reward” activity, entirely recreational, should always be given during each class. This game or activity should be done at the end of the class and it should last about five minutes. However, the interceptor may be as short as 2 minutes if it is needed to bring children focus and attention to the task. Do not hesitate to break the *randori* session if you see that the intensity of it and the interest of kids is diminishing.
 Concept: By intercepting training sessions with a variety of different activities, we introduce a concept of mental training. Children are unconsciously learning to focus then relax then focus etc.

Objective – To introduce mental training techniques without formally teaching it. To explore the growing cognitive capacity of children without forcing them into “disciplined” behaviour of which they understand nothing and comply only because of external pressure.

Cool down - pending the objective

> 5 minutes (no stretching) or >10 minutes if stretching is a part of the plan.

- Cool-down exercises are important and can not be neglected.
- Relaxation exercise: think about applying a yoga exercise which can be adapted to children: stretching while lying down, letting go, breathing and slight movements to stretch lower/upper limbs.
- Ask the students to visualize what they liked most about the class when they are calm or in a relaxed state.
- Ask the students, on a voluntary basis and by raising their hands, what exercises they liked working on the most.

Static stretching in seating position, with an emphasis on increased range of motion. Breathing exercises combined with the stretching.

>10 minutes

Increased suppleness; Choose one joint per training session, on which the stretching is being applied – 3 to 4 stretches of 20/30 seconds each. Other joints are just loosened up.

relaxation – all children on the mat in relaxed prone position with eyes closed and limbs outstretched.

>2 minutes

Objective – Learn a basic relaxation technique ; focus on the necessary

Conclusion

Mukuso, rei and praise the students (individually, but as many as possible) for a job well done.

Objective – make them end the session with a good feeling about themselves. Be aware that some who are not shining among the others may need a mention as well.

Find a reason to give them what they need.

> 1 minute

