



CUKC for Beginners: The Ultimate Guide

[Last updated: 05/10/2024]

By Callum Reid

Firstly, welcome!

Congrats on your great taste in being interested in Cambridge's best sports club! This is a little guide to hopefully answer all your questions about joining us, who we are and what we do.

What is CUKC?

The Cambridge University Karate Club is the most successful sports team in Cambridge with 18 consecutive varsity wins and a national (and international) reputation for our achievements.

However, we don't just focus on the kind of success marked by our extensive trophy and medal haul, we also pride ourselves on the progression and development of our members. We are honoured to have taken many people on the journey all the way from white belt to black belt during their time at university.

How to get involved

To get involved all you need to do is turn up to training, however there's multiple ways you can get involved in the club beyond training:

- We have weekly **socials** (drinking and non-drinking) which tend to yield a large turnout from all our fab members.
- We have **competitions** and **gradings** for members to progress and achieve further in the club.
- **Committee** positions open at the end of Lent every year- do consider running, it's good fun!

IMPORTANT ADMIN: There are also some more boring bits- after your first two (free!) training sessions, if you decide you want to progress more with CUKC then please fill out our membership form: <https://forms.gle/Mzmb46owL4hiiqz6>

This form mentions a JSKA license. The JSKA is the organisation we are associated with (which is a part of the JKA WF England) and so having a license with them helps our insurance stuff and means you are registered as a karateka and are therefore able to grade and compete!

How to find out more

There are lots of different platforms we use to communicate with our members, you do not have to be involved in all of them and the mailing list is the most important one as this is central to the circulation of all important information.

- We have a **Facebook page** where we advertise public events (CUKC Events)
- We have an **Instagram page** (@camunikarate) where we advertise the club and its achievements.
- We have a **Facebook group** where committee and other members of the club circulate useful and important information (Cambridge University Karate Club)
- We have a **WhatsApp group** with a large number of our members, the invite link is frequently circulated on the weekly bulletin.
- We have a **website** www.cukc.org
- All important information is distributed through our **mailing list** so do sign up.
 - https://lists.cam.ac.uk/sympa/subscribe/soc-cukc?previous_action=info

Training times

Your first two training sessions are completely free of charge! (As are all socials):

- **Monday** 19:30-21:30
 - Kumite
 - *Sports Centre Studio One*
- **Tuesday** 19:30-21:30
 - Beginners kihon training
 - *Newnham Old Labs*
- **Thursday** 19:30-21:30
 - Kata training
 - *Emmanuel Squash Courts*
- **Sunday** 15:30-17:25
 - General training
 - *Sports Centre Studio Two*

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CUKC Membership

Beginner	Squad	Non-Student
£50/term. £120/year.	£60/term. £150/year.	£65/term. £160/year.
Free gi worth £15! Two beginner sessions a week with a highly qualified instructor Compete at the Intraclub Competition	Weekly kata, kumite and general classes Compete for CUKC at Varsity, BUCS and more Access to Bob Poynton Memorial Fund	Weekly kata, kumite and general classes Exclusive access to venues in the University Compete for CUKC at competitions

Beginner and Squad members must be students of the University of Cambridge. Beginner members must also be 7th kyu or below to be eligible. Pro rata memberships are available for those joining later in the term/academic year. For more information please contact Elizabeth Li (edl29@cam.ac.uk)

CUKC

Michaelmas term sessions will run from the 10th of October to the 3rd of December but do keep your eye on the mailing list & website for updates as there are occasional deviations from the above! Training outside of term is more flexible and, again, you'll need to keep your eye on the website or mailing list for more updates.

What do I need for training?

You don't need a Gi (the white karate uniform) to train, for your first couple weeks you can just turn up in whatever you're comfortable with. You're unlikely to be the only one in your sports kit. After a while you may want to order a Gi and you can do this through the club or externally.

For kumite sessions we do require mitts and a gumshield to be worn.

I'm a total beginner, what should I do:

Come to training! Just come along, train, attend the socials you want to attend, (you can be as involved with CUKC as you wish). Gradings will occur at the end of each term allowing you to progress as far as you want, as well. (As we mentioned before, we have been able to take people from white belt to black during their time at university.)

We have some awesome instructors for our beginner's classes, so we really hope you enjoy! Karate is a really fun skill to learn, and people do so for all sorts of reasons- whether that's self-defence, fitness, to learn something new or just to be a part of the awesome community that is CUKC (and we can't wait for you to join us!).

I have done karate before but I'm coming back from a long break:

Welcome back! Don't worry, actually a large percentage of CUKC consists of people who left karate having achieved a certain grade and restarted at Cambridge with CUKC. Even though we are a Shotokan club we welcome all styles. Transfers (especially of kyu grades) are usually possible without great difficulty. Most people pick it back up pretty quickly, but you can dive back in at whatever pace you wish.

We have kihon (basics) classes, kata classes (the level of which will vary each week) and kumite classes. (The kumite squad sessions are more intense than the general kumite sessions so consider easing yourself back into it with the general sessions then join the squad sessions when you feel ready.

What does CUKC even do?

CUKC competes, trains, grades, and has fun. Many of our socials are notorious, our championship titles are envied and our reputation as an open and friendly club frequently precedes us. We have people on the England Squad, with international titles, in our club and we have a number of kyu (coloured belts) grades that we're equally proud of, for their persistence and dedication. We have a huge variety in standards in our club so we're able to accommodate you- no matter your background.

Whether you want to grade occasionally and have fun at our socials or want to train four times a week and compete at every national championship; we support you and can't wait to have you on board.

We really love this club, and we hope you will too.

A note from our Pres to you:

"Hi all, and welcome to CUKC! I'm Callum, the President for 2024-25, and I want to encourage you all to try something new and give karate a go, come to our training sessions and socials, and revel in being a part of Cambridge's most successful sports club (18 consecutive Varsity wins)! We're lucky to have such a fantastic committee and set of instructors this year, and a range of sessions on offer (kihon, kata, kumite, etc.), so whether you're a complete beginner or a karate veteran, CUKC offers something for everyone! I look forward to seeing you all soon!!! :)"

- Callum Reid [President of CUKC 2024-25]

Any Qs, please don't hesitate to contact:

President (Callum Reid): cmr67@cam.ac.uk

Men's Captain (Nirmay Jadhav): nj356@cam.ac.uk

Women's Captain (Ayako Frellesvig): af853@cam.ac.uk

Want to learn more?

Follow our ig [@camunikarate](https://www.instagram.com/camunikarate) or check out our website <https://www.cukc.org/>

Words mentioned above that you may not have heard before:

Varsity - The annual match between Oxford and Cambridge (if you compete and do well you can be a karate blue!)

Kihon - The basic movements of karate

Kata - Combinations of moves to demonstrate technique and strength.

Kumite - Fighting

Kyu grade - coloured belts

Dan grade - black belts

Mitts - the gloves we wear to protect each other and ourselves when fighting

Socials- When we meet up outside of training to do something fun; these range from post-training pub trips to karaoke nights to welfare events.