CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY
KARATE CLUB

CUKC for Beginners: The Ultimate Guide

[Last updated: 05/10/2025]

By Lukas Rossmanith

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/rDe432A8aTxhVnpu5

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

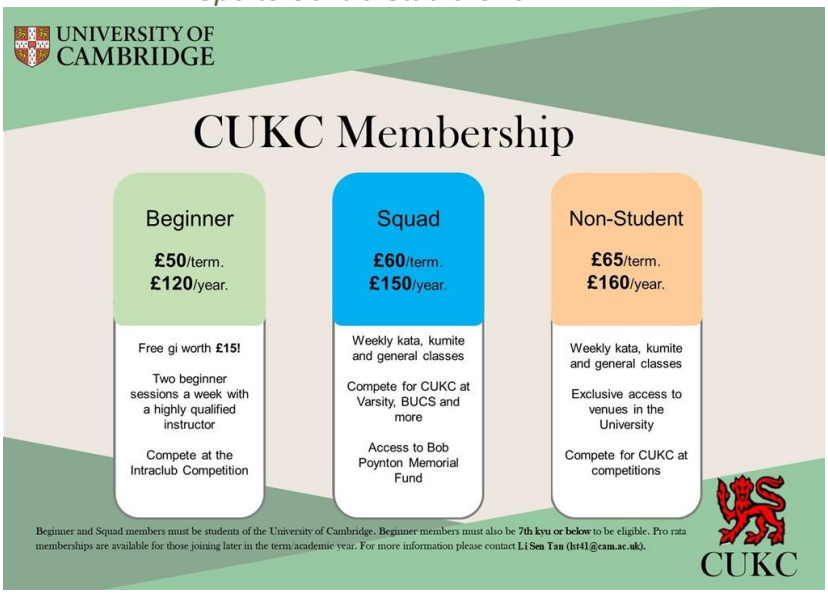
There are lots of different platforms we use to communicate with our members, you do not have to be involved in all of them and the mailing list is the most important one as this is central to the circulation of all important information.

- We have an **Instagram page** (@camunikarate) where we advertise the club and its achievements and events!
- 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** 19:30-21:25
    - Kumite
    - *Sports Centre Studio One*
- **Tuesday** 19:00-21:00
    - Beginners kihon training
    - *Newnham Jane Harrison Room*
- **Thursday** 19:30-21:30
    - Kata training
    - *Chesterton Sports Centre*
- **Sunday** 15:30-17:25
    - General training
    - *Sports Centre Studio One*



Michaelmas term sessions will run from the 12th of October to the 1st 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:

"Welcome to CUKC! I am Lukas and on behalf of all of us on committee are excited to have you join our wonderful club! CUKC has a proud history of **50 years** of training and **18 consecutive** Varsity wins! Come join us to and be part of another year of fun, exciting training, community and competition. On top of that our Social Secs are getting the party going by planning a bunch of different cool socials! Whether you're a seasoned Karateka, dying to compete and raise the Varsity trophy with us, or a keen beginner, wishing to climb up the ranks, we're the club for you! In all my time at CUKC I've made many friends and loved the community and I hope you will too. See you at the trainings and our amazing socials!! ^^"

- Lukas Rossmanith [President of CUKC 2025-26]

Any Qs, please don't hesitate to contact:

President (Lukas Rossmanith):
lhwr2@cam.ac.uk

Men's Captain (Dani Lucini):
dl722@cam.ac.uk

Women's Captain (Angela Shang):
cs2213@cam.ac.uk

Want to learn more?

Follow our ig @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.