

## Senior Promotion FAQ:

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## Points

### What are competition points?

Competition points are a method of tracking your relative success as a Judo competitor. Points are awarded for shiai wins based on the relative rank of you and your opponent. These points are match based rather than medal based. That is, you could take first place in a competition and earn no points or place out of medal contention and win many points. Points are earned when you win a match, not win a tournament.

### Why do I need to keep track of them?

Competition points may reduce the time in grade required to get to your next rank. If the competition points are useful for your promotion progress, you should keep track of them.

### What if I don't want to keep track of points?

You aren't required to keep track of points. Doing so helps reduce your required time in grade. If you choose not to track your points, you forego the opportunity of the reduction. You are free to track your points or not track your points, but only by tracking them can you get a time in grade reduction.

If you qualify as a D class competitor or above, your points are not considered, so you wouldn't need to track them. (See competitor class below)

### What ranks are affected by competition points?

Senior brown and black belt ranks are all affected by points.

### How many points do I earn when I win a match?

That depends on the rank of your opponent. If you win against an opponent of exactly your rank, you earn one point. If you win against someone of a higher rank, you earn a point and a half. If you win against someone one or two ranks lower than your rank, you earn a half point.

### Can I earn points for getting a medal?

Not directly. To earn that medal, you may have won matches that earned you points. Winning a medal at certain events can change your competitor class which may be even more valuable than the earned points.

### Can I earn points for kata competition?

Yes. Kata competition points are calculated differently. These points are based on how well you placed and the number of teams competing against you. The Shufu Senior Requirements outlines the base points awarded for a medal depending on the type of tournament (international, national, regional, local). The base points awarded for a first place win range from 3 points for international competition to 1 point for local events.

If an event has less than 5 teams competing, you receive only 2/3rds as many points.

### Who keeps track of my points?

You do.

Does Shufu keep track of points?

Shufu keeps track of points awarded at Shufu sponsored events. Typically these points do not reflect all the points won by competitors at all local events as many of the events are not sponsored by Shufu.

I am missing the names and ranks of some of the people I competed against. What do I do?

It can sometimes be a challenge to collect information about other competitors during a shiai. You should contact the tournament director or a tournament official with access to the matchkeeping to get that information. For record keeping purposes, make sure to get a signature confirming your win and your opponent information.

My sensei keeps track of my points. Is that ok?

Each judoka is responsible for their own points. If you have a support network of coaches, sensei, teammates, family or parents to help you, they are just that – help. No one is responsible for tracking your points other than you, but by all means use all the help that is offered you!

I earned a lot of points before my last promotion. Do these points carry over?

No. Your competition points started over when you are promoted. You cannot carry over any points.

I only needed 5 points for my last promotion, but I earned 7 points. Can I carry over the extra 2 unused points?

No. Your competition points started over when you are promoted. You cannot carry over any points.

## Competitor Class

What is a competitor class?

Shufu provides reduced time in grade requirements for competitors who perform well in higher level competitions. These reductions recognize that taking a medal at Senior Nationals is quite a different achievement than taking a medal at a local tournament. Based on the type of event, Shufu recognizes 6 different classes of competitors: A through E and non-competitor classes.

What competitor class am I?

Most people who compete locally in Judo are E class competitors. If you compete at regional, national, or international levels and finish first through third you may be a D, C, B or A level competitor. If you haven't competed since your last promotion, you are a non-competitor.

I don't compete. What does that mean for determining my competitor class?

If you have never competed, you are classed as a non-competitor.

I compete locally but have only a few matches under my belt. What competitor class am I?

If you compete locally, you are at least an E class competitor regardless of the number of matches or wins you have recorded.

How do I get to be a D class competitor?

Under the 2009 Shufu Senior Rank Requirements, you are a D class competitor if you placed 1<sup>st</sup> through 3<sup>rd</sup> at the Senior National Kata Championships or the Senior National Masters Championships since your

last promotion. USA Judo has different standards for determining D class athletes that are not relevant for Shufu Senior Promotions.

[How do I get to be a C class competitor?](#)

Under the 2009 Shufu Senior Rank Requirements, you are a C class competitor if you placed 1<sup>st</sup> through 3<sup>rd</sup> at a regional black belt division (like Liberty Bell) or the National Collegiate, High School Nationals or any non-point qualifying international competition since your last promotion. USA Judo has different standards for determining C class athletes that are not relevant for Shufu Senior Promotions.

[How do I get to be a B class competitor?](#)

Under the 2009 Shufu Senior Rank Requirements, you are a B class competitor if you placed 1<sup>st</sup> through 3<sup>rd</sup> US Senior Nationals and/or any other point receiving international tournament. USA Judo has different standards for determining B class athletes that are not relevant for Shufu Senior Promotions.

[How do I get to be an A class competitor?](#)

Under the 2009 Shufu Senior Rank Requirements, you are a A class competitor if you were a Shiai Team Member of the Olympic, World Championship and/or Pan Am Games OR if you placed 1<sup>st</sup> through 3<sup>rd</sup> at a class A international tournament since your last promotion. USA Judo has different standards for determining A class athletes that are not relevant for Shufu Senior Promotions.

[I qualified for my competitor class before my last promotion. What class am I now?](#)

Your competitor class depends on your activity since your last promotion. If you qualified as a certain competitor class during your time in grade for your previous rank, that qualification does not carry over to your current time in grade.

[I am no longer able to compete, but I used to compete regularly. What is my competitor class now?](#)

Your competitor class depends on your activity since your last promotion. If you previously competed, but have not been able to do so since your last promotion, you are a non-competitor. If you qualified as a certain competitor class during your time in grade for your previous rank, that qualification does not carry over to your current time in grade.

## Time In Grade

[What is a time in grade requirement?](#)

Time in grade is the time you must be in your current rank in order to qualify for promotion to your next rank.

[How do I calculate my current time in grade?](#)

It is the length of time between your last promotion and now. If you were promoted in Spring 2013 and it is currently Spring 2017, you would have 4 years time in grade.

[How do I know what time in grade I need?](#)

You need to know the rank you are rising to (i.e. not your current rank but the rank you wish to be promoted up to) and you need to know how long you have been in your current rank. Each rank has a baseline time in grade requirement for non-competitors.

If you are a competitor you may be eligible for a reduced time in grade because of your performance. If you are an E class competitor, your competition points may reduce the required time in grade. If you are an A through D class competitor, you will have a reduction for your competitor class.

The Shufu 2009 Senior Promotion requirements list time in grade for all ranks and competitor categories. You may also consider the unofficial Shufu Consolidated Time in Grade chart on the DC Judo website which gives the requirements and some examples of how to apply them.

### Discounts for Time in Grade

I am a black belt and have done service work within the Judo community. Are there any reductions in time in grade due to my service?

Yes. Teaching as a head sensei, assistant instructor, referee or kata judge all provide discounts to time in grade as described on pages 2-8 on the USJF Form 20. Life Membership and service as a yudanshakai or USJF officer also contribute to reductions.

How are reductions calculated?

Reductions are a percentage of the time in grade otherwise required for a given rank. If the rank you were rising to required that you were in your current rank for 5 years and you had earned a 20%

Reduction, you would only need to be in rank for 4 years instead of 5.

How do I know what percentage reduction I have earned?

When you complete your form 20, you will have an opportunity to record all your service activities in each category. Your records will help determine what levels of reduction you are eligible for.

Are reductions cumulative or can I only take one category of reduction?

You are eligible for all reductions for which you qualify if you are a non-competitor. The reduction amounts are cumulative up to the maximum possible reduction (30%). Non-competitor can apply the full amount. Competitors can only apply reductions for life membership.

I have a reduction in time in rank because of my competitor status. Can I apply my service reduction to the reduced competitor time in grade for a further benefit?

No. Competitor reductions are generally greater than service reductions. While you cannot combine them, you can choose whichever is more beneficial to you in your particular case. If you are a competitor and a life member, you may take the life membership reduction to your competitor time in grade as a special exception.

### Recognizing Rank from Other Organizations

I earned my current rank from USJA or from USA Judo. Is that rank recognized by Shufu?

Yes. If you have a rank certificate from USJA or USA Judo, Shufu accepts that as your date of rank for your current rank.

I never got a rank certificate, but I was promoted in my previous club. What do I do now?

Contact your previous club or sensei to get a certificate or replacement certificate.

I was promoted in my club but I don't know what my date of rank is. What do I do?

Contact your club or sensei to get a certificate or replacement certificate.

I was promoted many years ago and neither the club nor the sensei can be found. I don't have a certificate of rank. How do I establish my rank and my date of rank?

Contact the national organization of which your club and sensei were members. They may have a record of your rank and promotion – or may have a way to contact your sensei for confirmation.

If not, the next steps depend on your current rank. If you are currently nikyu or below, speak with your current sensei about whether he can affirm your current rank. If your sensei accepts your previous rank, the Board of Examiners often will too.

If you are currently ikkyu or above, contact the Rank Registration Chair to work out a plan for your specific situation.

I was promoted to my current rank outside the United States. How do I document my rank and date of rank?

In most countries, the national Judo organization will document rank or issue rank certificates. You can use a copy of that certificate if you have it. The certificate may need to be translated. If your rank is nikyu or below, you will need a simple translation. If you are an ikkyu or above, the National Office may require a translation from the embassy or consulate of the nation in which the certificate was granted.

Some rank certifications do not use a rank system based on the Japanese model of kyu and dan grades (e.g. "master of sport".) In these cases, contact the Rank Registration Chair to work out the equivalency of your awarded rank.

I was promoted to my current rank in a club that does not belong to any national organization. What do I do? (Unaffiliated club)

This is a more difficult question. The three national organizations in the US have rank granting authority from the Kodokan. While their requirements differ, their authority is the same and so ranks awarded by one are recognized by the others.

Unaffiliated clubs have no rank granting authority that is recognized by the national organizations. Even a rank certificate issued by such a club or organization may not be recognized. Again, work with your sensei if you are ranked nikyu or below, or contact the Rank Registration Chair if your rank is ikkyu or above.

## Promotion Fees

What fees do I need to pay for promotion?

There are three fees that candidates might pay depending on rank:

- Event Registration Fee – varies by the event. Every candidate who wishes to be reviewed by the Board of Examiners must register for the event in order to be considered. If you are not promoted, your registration fee is not refunded.
- Shufu Dan Grade Exam Fee – Shufu charges a \$15 fee to candidates rising to Shodan or above. This fee is payable for all black belt candidates and is non-refundable.

- USJF Rank Registration Fee – USJF charges a minimum of \$125 for candidates rising to black belt ranks. The fee is only due if you are actually promoted and can be paid after your promotion. Failure to pay this fee will halt the processing of your promotion packet. USJF charges an additional \$25 per rank above shodan with additional fees for candidates rising to Rokudan or above.

#### How do I pay the fees?

You pay the event registration fee when you register for the event. Everyone must pay this fee.

You pay the Shufu black belt fee at the event. Checks are made out to Shufu.

You pay the USJF black belt fee either directly to the National Office or by check made out to USJF as part of your promotion packet.

#### Written Exams

##### Why do I need to take a written exam?

The written exam is intended to assess your general Judo knowledge and vocabulary. Passing a written exam is a requirement for all senior ranks.

##### I have a disability that requires assistance when taking a written exam. What do I do?

When you register for the promotion event, make sure to note the type of accommodation you require. Visually impaired judoka can have a proctor/assistant assigned to them to read the questions and record the answers on the student's behalf. Other accommodations are possible based on specific needs.

##### What score do I need to pass the written exam?

That depends on your rank. Higher scores are expected at higher ranks. Check the Senior Promotion Requirements for the passing score for the rank to which you are rising.

##### How do I prepare for the written exam?

Speak with your sensei about the best means for preparing for the written exam.

##### I am not going to be able to make the promotion event. I have had a technical evaluation by a member of the Board of Examiners. Can I take the test online or off-site?

Generally, no. To preserve the integrity of the exams, the exams are given out at the promotional event and collected back by the exam proctor.

##### I'm really good at Judo but not so good at test taking. Can I just skip the test?

No. The written test is part of the Senior Promotion Requirements.

#### Kata

##### What ranks require kata?

If you are a candidate for any rank of Nikyu or above, you will need to complete one or more kata requirements.

What kata do I need to know?

That depends on your competitor status and the rank to which you are rising. Competitors have a lower kata requirement than non-competitors.

You can see the specific requirements by rank in the 2009 Shufu Senior Requirements document or in the unofficial Shufu Senior Requirements Matrix on the DC Judo website.

I am an elite competitor. Can I skip my kata requirement?

No. Performing at a high level in Judo takes time, attention, and commitment. A rigorous training program could compete for time with kata training. Nonetheless, kata is required even for competitors.

I don't have someone who can teach me the kata I need for promotion. What should I do?

Start by asking your sensei for direction and support. You can also contact the Shufu Kata Chair who may be aware of other local judoka looking for kata partners and who might be able to help you learn your required kata.

There are usually about two kata clinics a year in the Baltimore-Washington area in addition to clinics at Senior Nationals and in other regions. Attending a clinic is often the best way to jump start your kata learning process.

I don't have a kata partner. What should I do?

Start by asking your sensei for direction and support. You can also contact the Shufu Kata Chair who may be aware of other local judoka looking for kata partners.

There is really no one in my club who is interested or able to practice kata with me. What should I do?

This question often arises for judoka in smaller clubs. If your sensei or the Shufu Kata Chair can't help you find a local partner, consider travelling to one of the larger clubs. Many of these clubs have teachers or partners who can help you meet your kata requirement.

I have an injury that prevents me from doing kata. What can I do?

Work with your sensei and/or a member of the Board of Examiners to arrive at proposed accommodations that work within your challenges and still meets the kata requirement. If you are completely unable to perform the kata, document the issue so that the Board of Examiners might consider a waiver.

Generally, the Board of Examiners works with candidates who need a special accommodation due to injury. For example, athletes with knee problems might not be penalized for incomplete kneeling bows. Visually impaired athletes can receive accommodations for some movements between techniques, etc.

The kata requirements state that I need to demonstrate Ju No Kata, but I am a man. Is this requirement waived for male athletes?

No. The Shufu Senior Rank Requirements do not have separate requirements for different genders. All judoka must meet the kata requirement as stated.

I demonstrated my kata for my sensei who gave me a passing score. Is that ok?

If your sensei is a member of the Shufu Board of Examiners, then your demonstration with a passing score is fine. You will need to turn in a copy of the complete score at the time your rank is reviewed by the Board of Examiners.

If your sensei is not a member of the Shufu Board of Examiners, then you will need to demonstrate for someone who is a member. Some examiners are willing to travel to your club while others are happy to host you for a visit so that you can demonstrate for promotion.

## Certifications

What certifications are required for rank promotion? What are these certifications?

The rank requirements indicate that candidates rising to senior ikkyu or above may need to have completed certification as a coach, instructor, referee, or technical official. The number required depends on your rank and your competitor status. See the Shufu Senior Promotion Requirements for details or check the unofficial Shufu Senior Rank Requirement Reference Sheet on the DC Judo website.

How do I get a certification?

That depends on the certification. Generally, they are earned through specialized training.

If you referee, you can obtain a letter stating your current standing as a referee (local, regional, national, international).

If you are a coach or instructor, you should have a training certificate for those training programs.

If you have been trained as a technical official, you should have a certificate from that training.

I serve as a coach, instructor, or technical official regularly, but I don't have a certificate document. What do I do?

If you serve in one of these capacities on a regular basis, but don't have an official training for that role, document what you do and how often you do it. The Board of Examiners will consider your documentation on a case by case basis to determine if you have functionally met the requirement.

I'm really just a competitive judoka, so I don't really do any other Judo things. Can my competitive record stand in place of a certification?

No. The requirements call for these certifications to help develop judoka who can be well rounded contributors to the Judo community as they advance in rank. While the final decision is up to the Board of Examiners, this requirement is rarely waived.

## Safesport

What is Safesport training and why do I need it?

Safesport is a training program designed by the United States Olympic Committee (USOC) to address awareness of and methods to prevent physical, mental, and sexual abuse of athletes.

As of March 2017, candidates rising to Shodan are required to show proof that they have completed Safesport training. Certified coaches, teachers, and club head senseis are also required to complete Safesport.

How much does the Safesport training cost?

It's free.

Where can I take the training?

Safesport is available online at <https://safesport.org/>

## Heads Up

What is Heads Up training and why do I need it?

Heads Up is a training program designed by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) to address awareness of and methods to prevent and manage concussions.

As of March 2017, candidates rising to Shodan are required to show proof that they have completed Heads Up training. Certified coaches, teachers, and club head senseis are also required to complete Heads Up.

How much does the Heads Up training cost?

It's free.

Where can I take the training?

Heads Up is available online <https://www.cdc.gov/headsup/youthsports/>

## Form 20

What is a Form 20? Do I need to complete one for my promotion?

The Form 20 is the standard form USJF National Office uses to review your promotion for compliance with USJF requirements. It is only for candidates rising to black belt ranks.

If you are a candidate for a brown belt rank or below, you don't need to complete a Form 20.

Where do I get the Form 20?

You can download the most recent version of the form 20 from the USJF website. Look for the Downloadable Forms menu option and then click the Form 20 link in the Promotions section.

Can I use a paper Form 20?

No. USJF periodically updates the form. Downloading the current electronic version from their site ensures you avoid problems your form being accepted.

You need to complete and submit an electronic copy of the form to the Board of Examiners.

The 2009 Shufu Senior Promotion Requirements document says I need to submit a typed form. I don't have a typewriter. What do I do?

USJF has updated its technology since 2009 and now they provide an electronic form into which you can type your data. Download the Form 20 as an Adobe Acrobat/PDF file and open it in the Acrobat Reader. You will be able to type and save your information in that file.

Some web browsers may attempt to open the file directly in the browser. You will get the best results for typing and saving from opening the PDF file in the Acrobat Reader.

How do I know what to put on the Form 20?

Shufu provides written instructions for how to complete the Form 20. Download those instructions from the Shufu website. You are responsible for completing the form accurately.

I only put down the things I remembered, but there are a lot of things I don't know. Is that ok?

No. You will need to remember or research important information like the club you started in and when you started Judo, your dates of rank, and your competition record and other contributions and achievements. You need to complete all sections of the form.

Can someone else fill my Form 20 out for me?

Yes. That someone would need to know a lot of detailed information about your personal Judo history, but there is no obstacle to you getting help from others.

Everyone pretty much knows me and my Judo record. Why do I need to put this stuff down on paper?

While you may be very well known to the Board of Examiners, your Form 20 is a document that is kept on file at the USJF National Office. A complete copy of your Form 20 is required by the National Office.

Locally, the Form 20 helps establish facts about you that others might not remember completely or correctly. It is required as part of the Board of Examiners review process.

What is an electronic Form 20? How do I get one?

The Form 20 used to be provided as a printed paper form by the USJF National Office. In recent years, this print document has been replaced with an electronic (computer) file. The electronic version allows you to type directly on to the form and then allows you to save what you typed inside the form. This version is available for download at the USJF website. You need to turn in an electronic, editable version of the Form 20 prior to the promotion event at which you are being considered.

How do I save an editable, electronic copy of my Form 20?

When the form is open in the Acrobat Reader, you can select File > Save to save the file.

It may be easier to save a good version of the file using the Acrobat Reader software rather than saving it inside your web browsers. Some browsers may not be entirely compatible with the most recent version of the Form 20 file.

Can I just scan a printout of the Form 20?

No. A scanned printout is not an acceptable submission of your Form 20. You must send an electronic, editable version with your information.

I submitted my Form 20 when I went up for promotion two years ago. Can the Board of Examiners just use that one?

No. Shufu keeps the Form 20s of candidates who are promoted. Shufu does not retain the records for candidates who are not promoted. If you were promoted in the past, then you would need to update your Form 20 with information about your Judo record since your last promotion. Your previous Form 20 would not be suitable for consideration for your next rank.

Should I save a copy of my own Form 20?

Yes. You should save a copy for your own records.

## Batsugan

I beat multiple opponents of my own rank at a major tournament. Am I eligible for a batsugan promotion?

There is no provision for batsugan or skip promotions in the Shufu Senior Promotion Requirements. Defeating a string of same ranked opponents will yield competition points that would likely reduce the time in grade requirement for your next rank. Placing at a high level tournament may change your time in grade requirements if it affects your competitor class.

USJF gives a procedure for Batsugan promotion in their requirements. Does that process apply to Shufu candidates?

When Shufu published requirements are more strict than USJF requirements, the Shufu requirements take priority. When USJF requirements need to be met for black belt promotions, USJF requirements are in addition to the Shufu requirements.

There is no formal process for batsugan promotion under the Shufu Senior Promotion Requirements.

## USJF Rank Certificates

When do I get my rank certificate?

You can receive your rank certificate after your promotion packet is complete, after you have complied with all payments and certifications, and after the National Office has issued the certificate, sent it to Shufu, and it has been signed by the Chairman of the Board of Examiners. This process often takes months to complete.

Does USJF send me the certificate?

No. USJF sends the certificate to Shufu for signature by the Chairman of the Board of Examiners.

Where do I get my rank certificate?

Generally, rank certificates are distributed at Shufu or regional Judo events.

How long does it take to get my rank certificate?

It often takes months for the whole process to complete.

Someone else was promoted at the same time I was. They received their certificate and I haven't. Why not?

Probably there is an outstanding issue with your promotion paperwork. Contact the Rank Registration Chair for help. The current chair is Terence McPartland (terence@dcjudo.com)

Who do I contact if there is a problem with my certificate?

Contact the Rank Registration Chair for help. The current chair is Terence McPartland (terence@dcjudo.com)

## Kodokan Rank

How do I get my rank recognized by the Kodokan?

There is a separate set of Kodokan requirements that are not address by Shufu or within the Shufu Senior Rank Requirements. Contact the US Kodokan representative for information on these requirements and processes.