



US Budo Karate

National Championship 2026

Event Dates

May 2nd - 3rd, 2026

Registration Deadline

April 17th, 2026



2026 National Championship Information Packet



Welcome to Saint Louis



2026 National Championship Information Packet



February 2026

Dear Athletes, Family, and Friends,

The Missouri Karate Association is honored to host the **2026 US Budo National Championship**, featuring athletes from across the United States.

The US Budo National Championship offers an excellent opportunity for traditional karateka seeking high-level competition, experienced judging, and no affiliation requirements.

Open to traditional karateka of all ages, ranks, and organizations, the championship includes a **Kōhai Tournament** for younger karateka, a **Senpai Tournament** for older karateka, and a **Judges Seminar** led by experienced international judges. All competition will follow traditional karate rules as outlined in the [ITKF Rule Book](#).

Please watch this special introduction by Rokah Sensei: [Kumite Scoring](#)

Sincerely yours,

Barry Power

Barry Power
Championship Director
Founder, Missouri Karate Association





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Action Items *and* Deadlines

Action Item	Applies To	Due Date/Time
Book hotel room	All participants	<i>immediately</i>
Make travel arrangements		<i>(as fitting)</i>
Register for the Championship (LINK). <i>Please register early so that we can best plan this Championship for you.</i>	All athletes	Register online today
Check-In for Judges' Seminar	All participants	'At the door' before the event





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Location

The Championship will be held at the [Chesterfield Athletic Club](#) gymnasium in Chesterfield, Missouri. This facility is **conveniently** physically connected to the DoubleTree hotel.



Chesterfield Athletic Club
at the DoubleTree Hotel
16625 Swingley Ridge Rd
Chesterfield, MO 63017



The DoubleTree hotel and adjoining Chesterfield Athletic Club

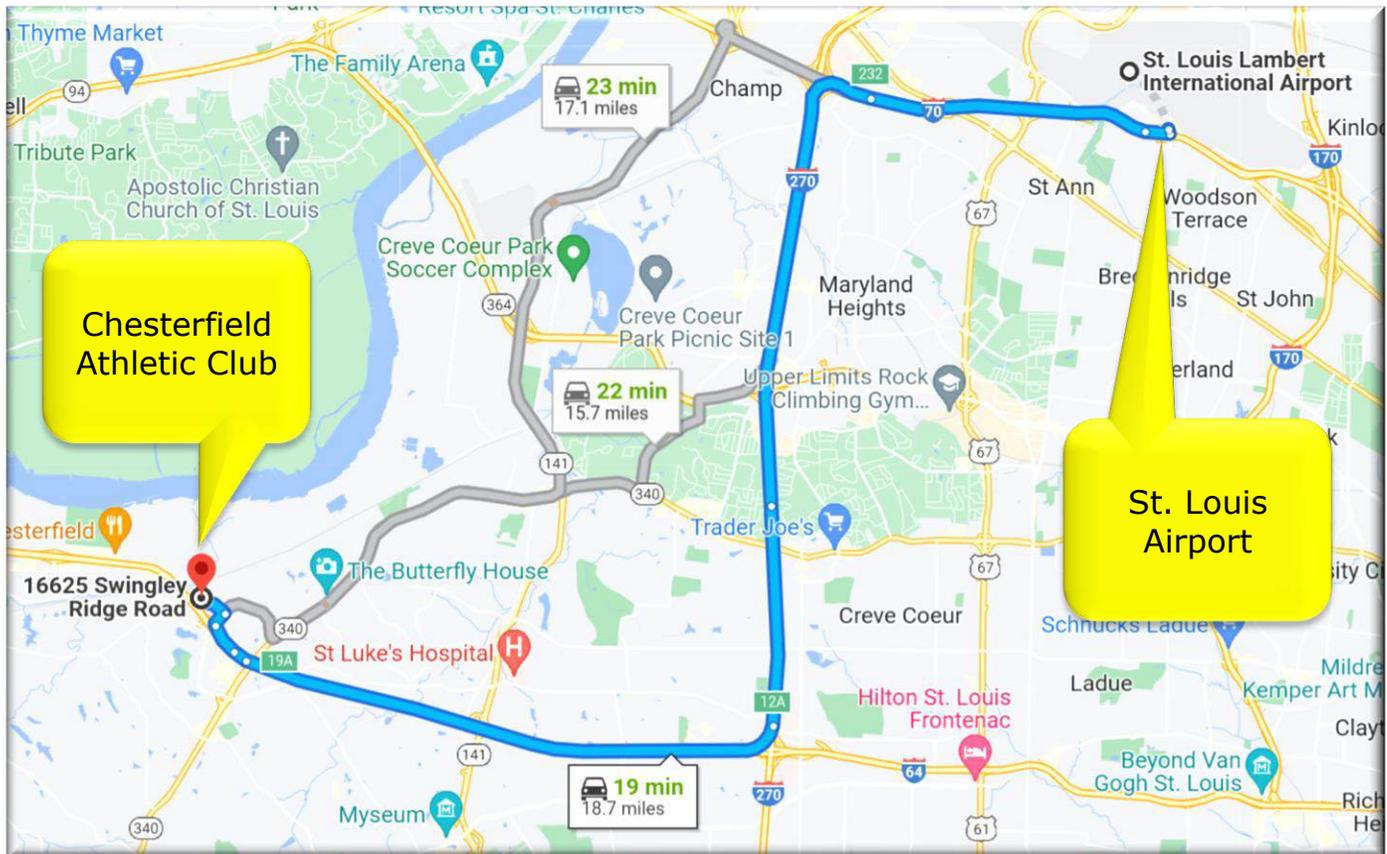


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Travel

The closest conventional airport is STL ([Saint Louis Lambert Airport](#)). The airport is approximately 20 minutes away from the Championship site (Chesterfield Athletic Club). The drive is all interstate highway (I-70 West → I-270 South (or West) → I-64 / US-40 West).



Saint Louis Lambert Airport is 20 minutes away – all highway drive



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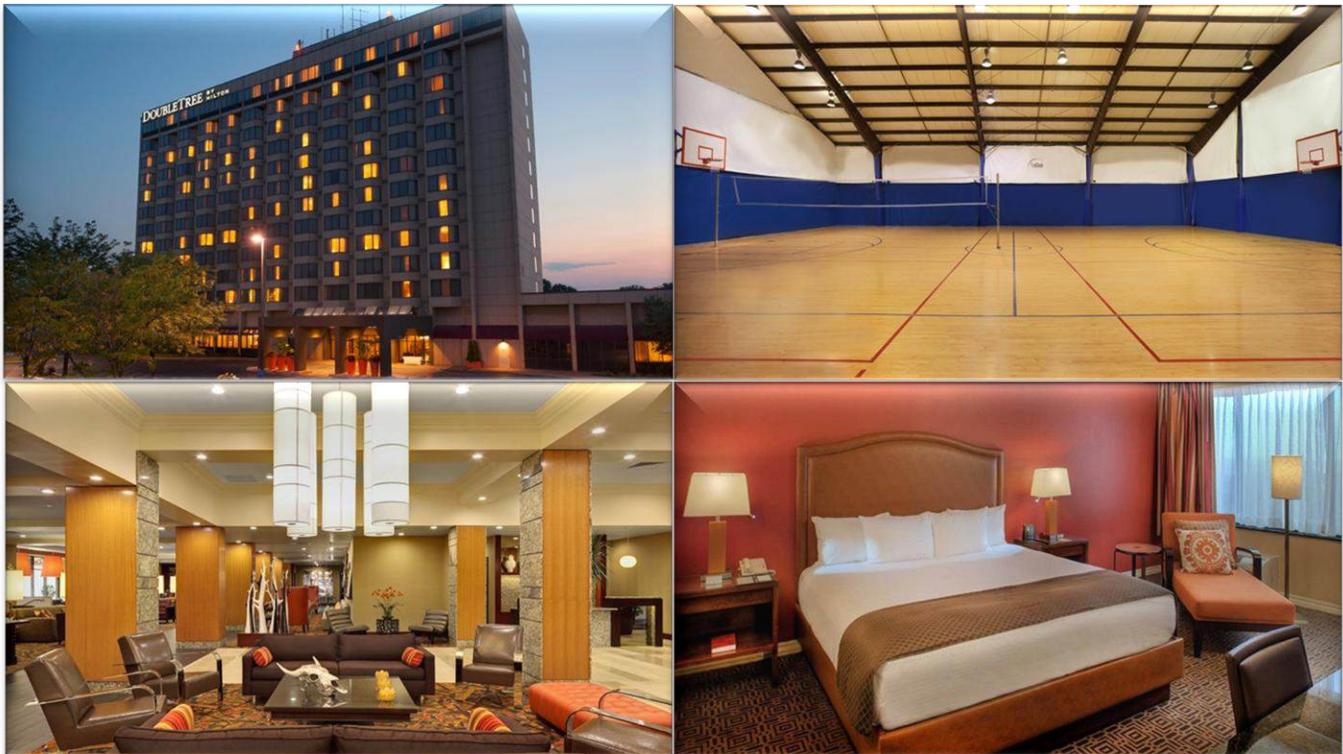


Lodging

If you seek the convenience of having your room in the same physical structure as the Championship, consider the physically adjoining DoubleTree hotel.

[DoubleTree by Hilton](#) (recommended)

16625 Swingley Ridge Rd
Chesterfield, MO 63017
800.222.8733





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Other Hotels

Hotels, less expensive than DoubleTree, near the Chesterfield Athletic Club include:

	<p>Drury Hotel</p> <p>1.2 miles away</p> <p>355 Chesterfield Center East Chesterfield, MO 63017</p>
	<p>Hyatt Place Hotel</p> <p>1.2 miles away</p> <p>333 Chesterfield Center East, Chesterfield, MO, 63017</p>
	<p>Hilton Garden Inn</p> <p>1.8 miles away</p> <p>16631 Chesterfield Grove Rd Chesterfield, Missouri, 63005, USA</p>



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Restaurants and Shopping

The DoubleTree Hotel is less than 10 minutes away from the largest open-air retail center in the nation¹ – [Chesterfield Commons](#) shopping area (aka 'the Valley') with many more restaurant selections such as Olive Garden, Red Lobster, The Old Spaghetti Factory. For outlet shopping, see [St. Louis Premium Outlets](#). The novel [The District](#) offers entertainment, dining, and drink.

Here are some [links to restaurants](#) in the [Chesterfield](#) area.



St. Louis
Premium
Outlets

Chesterfield
Commons
(The Valley)

Chesterfield
Athletic
Club

Chesterfield Valley and Outlet mall shopping are within 10 minutes

“¹ “Chesterfield Commons, the largest open-air retail center in the nation, is in Chesterfield, along Highway 40. With over 2 million square feet of retail space, Chesterfield Commons is 1.5 miles long and has more than 130 stores available to shoppers and over 30 restaurants available to diners”.



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Other Things to Do

If your travel arrangements permit, take advantage of the many things that St. Louis has to offer, many of which are within a short 20 to 30-minute drive.

The St. Louis Zoo

“Voted America's [top free attraction](#), the [Zoo](#) is located on 90 acres in beautiful Forest Park, and home to more than [450 species of animals](#) – many of them rare and endangered. It is one of the few free zoos in the nation.”

[Saint Louis Zoo, One Government Drive, St. Louis, MO 63110 314.781.0900](#)

Missouri Botanical Garden

Hosting: [Chinese Culture Days](#)
May 2, 2026 - May 3, 2026 9:00 am - 5:00 pm

“Immerse yourself in awe-inspiring Chinese cultural performances, music, art, and history while enjoying authentic cuisine.

Since 1996, the Garden has collaborated with the Chinese Culture Education and Services Foundation to produce an event to celebrate Chinese culture. Hundreds of community volunteers work towards producing a weekend filled with colorful Chinese pageantry, art, music and dance, history and legends, and of course, wonderful food!”

“Founded in 1859, the [Missouri Botanical Garden](#) is one of the nation's oldest botanical gardens in continuous operation and a national historic landmark.

The Garden is a center for botanical research and science education, as well as an oasis in the city of St. Louis. The Garden offers 79 acres of beautiful horticultural display, including a 14-acre Japanese strolling garden, historic architecture, and one of the world's largest collections of rare and endangered flora.

For over 163 years, the Garden has been an oasis in the city, a place of beauty and family fun—and also a center for education, science, and conservation.”

[4344 Shaw Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63110 \(314\) 577-5100](#)



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The Butterfly House

“[The Butterfly House](#) opened its doors to the public on September 18, 1998 and provides educational opportunities to a diverse visitorship. In 2000 the outdoor area known as the Butterfly Garden was dedicated. The Butterfly House offers education programs, special events, lectures and, of course, the chance to witness butterflies in two habitats, one native and one tropical. “

[Faust Park, 15193 Olive Blvd. Chesterfield, MO 63017 636.530.0076](#)

Missouri Wine Country

“Missouri has a storied history of [wine-making](#) that dates back to the 1850s. Missouri's wine industry at one time was one of the most sophisticated in the world... until Prohibition brought it to a grinding halt in the 1920s. Thankfully, the rebirth of Missouri wine began in the 1960s, and today the future has never looked brighter for Missouri wine lovers.”

Six Flags – St. Louis

“[Six Flags St. Louis](#) and [Hurricane Harbor water park](#) combine two great parks in one great place for the perfect family getaway.

Six Flags St. Louis is the Coaster Capital of Missouri with nine heart-pounding roller coasters including three wooden and six steel, and combined they feature over 22,700 feet of roller coaster track.

Hurricane Harbor features fun in the sun for the whole family. From the multiple water slide complexes and our interactive kid's area to the lazy river and wave pool, this tropical island paradise is the perfect place to spend a hot summer day. Best of all, it is included with your theme park admission.”

[4900 Six Flags Rd, Eureka, MO 63025](#)

Closest Casinos

[Hollywood Casino](#)

[777 Casino Center Dr.
Maryland Heights, MO 63043](#)

[Ameristar Casino](#)

[1 Ameristar Blvd.
St. Charles, MO 63301](#)



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Schedule

Briefly, here is the basic schedule for the Championship:

Saturday, May 2 nd			Sunday, May 3 rd	
Judges' Seminar	Senpai Tournament + Kōhai team events 	Dinner	Kōhai Tournament	Dinner
9 am – 11 am	1 pm – 7 pm	<i>(when done)</i>	9 am – 5 pm	<i>(when done)</i>

The specific timings are as follows:

Saturday May 2 nd		
9 am – 11 am	Judges' Seminar	MKA Dojo 
1 pm – 7 pm	Senpai Tournament + Kōhai team events 	CAC gymnasium
<i>(when done)</i>	Non-hosted Dinner	
Sunday May 3 rd		
9 am – NOON	Kōhai Tournament (starting with 9 th kyu)	CAC gymnasium
NOON – 12 ³⁰ pm	<i>QUICK non-hosted LUNCH</i>	
12 ³⁰ pm – 5 pm	Kōhai Tournament (ending with dan)	CAC gymnasium
<i>(when done)</i>	Non-hosted Dinner	

Special Note

	All Kōhai Tournament team events (Groups A, B, C, D, Cadets, and Juniors) will take place on Saturday, May 2 .
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The MKA Dojo is located at 15475 Clayton Rd, Ballwin, MO 63011 ([link](#))



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Competition Events

The competition events for the Championship[†] are below:

Competition Event	Description
形 KATA	Demonstration of traditional karate kata Blackbelts will need to compete with two katas (one for elimination, a different one for final)
団体形 TEAM KATA	Three athletes perform a synchronized kata Mixed gender acceptable for Kōhai competitions but same gender required for Senpai competitions.
組手 KUMITE	A match between two athletes employing free sparring without contact. Please watch: Kumite Scoring For 9 th kyu through 7 th kyu, kumite will be Jiu-Ippon For 6 th kyu and higher ranks, kumite is Jiu-Kumite
団体組手 TEAM KUMITE	Kumite between two three-athlete teams – the winning team is that with the highest cumulative score Jiu-Kumite; only for 3 rd kyu and higher ranks
複合 FUKUGO	Combines Kumite and Kata (using Kitei Kata as the competition kata), and Jiu-Kumite as the kumite portion. Athletes first compete in kata. Winners advance to compete in kumite. Winners advance to compete in Kata, and so on. Final round is Kumite to determine the overall winner.
演武 ENBU	Two athletes perform a choreographed demonstration of offense/defense techniques Only for 3 rd kyu and higher ranks

[†] See additional rules in "[World Championship Qualification](#)" for interested athletes.



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Championship Structure

2026 Championship			
Senpai Tournament 2008 and older		Kōhai Tournament 2009 and younger	
SENIORS	YOUTHS	JUNIORS	CADETS
		GROUP D	GROUP C
		GROUP B	GROUP A

Groups

Groups (age groups) are based on birth year, not specific age.

Senpai Tournament

YOUTHS (2006-2008)

Compete on **Saturday**, May 2, 2026

SENIORS (2005 & Older)

Compete on **Saturday**, May 2, 2026

Kōhai Tournament

GROUP A (2019 & Younger)

Compete on **Sunday**, May 3, 2026

GROUP B (2017-2018)

Compete on **Sunday**, May 3, 2026

GROUP C (2015-2016)

Compete on **Sunday**, May 3, 2026

GROUP D (2013-2014)

Compete on **Sunday**, May 3, 2026

CADETS (2011-2012)

Compete on **Sunday**, May 3, 2026

JUNIORS (2009-2010)

Compete on **Sunday**, May 3, 2026

Special Note



All Kōhai Tournament (GROUP A, B, C, D, CADETS, and JUNIORS) **team** events will take place on **Saturday**, May 2.



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Categories

Competition categories are defined by breaking each age group by rank. Ranks are organized into three levels:

8 kyu – 7 kyu: Beginners
6 kyu – 4 kyu: Intermediate
3 kyu - dan: Advanced

GROUP A (2019 & younger)

8 kyu – 7 kyu Individual Kata, Jiu-Ippon Kumite
6 kyu – 4 kyu Individual Kata, Team Kata, Jiu-Kumite
3 kyu – dan Individual Kata, Team Kata, Jiu-Kumite

GROUP B (2017-2018)

8 kyu – 7 kyu Individual Kata, Jiu-Ippon Kumite
6 kyu – 4 kyu Individual Kata, Team Kata, Jiu-Kumite
3 kyu – dan Individual Kata, Team Kata, Jiu-Kumite

GROUP C (2015-2016)

8 kyu – 7 kyu Individual Kata, Jiu-Ippon Kumite
6 kyu – 4 kyu Individual Kata, Team Kata, Jiu-Kumite
3 kyu – dan Individual Kata, Team Kata, Jiu-Kumite, Enbu

GROUP D (2013-2014)

8 kyu – 7 kyu Individual Kata, Jiu-Ippon Kumite
6 kyu – 4 kyu Individual Kata, Team Kata, Jiu-Kumite
3 kyu – dan Individual Kata, Team Kata, Jiu-Kumite, Enbu

CADETS (2011-2012)

8 kyu – 7 kyu Kata, Jiu-Ippon Kumite
6 kyu – 4 kyu Kata, Jiu-Kumite
3 kyu – dan *(eligible for Worlds)* All Events (1-6) (Jiu-Kumite)

JUNIORS (2009-2010)

8 kyu – 7 kyu Kata, Jiu-Ippon Kumite
6 kyu – 4 kyu Kata, Jiu-Kumite
3 kyu – dan *(eligible for Worlds)* All Events (1-6) (Jiu-Kumite)

YOUTHS (2006-2008)

8 kyu – 4 kyu All Events (1-6) (Jiu-Kumite)
3 kyu – dan *(eligible for Worlds)* All Events (1-6) (Jiu-Kumite)

SENIORS (2005 & Older)

8 kyu – 4 kyu All Events (1-6) (Jiu-Kumite)
3 kyu – dan *(eligible for Worlds)* All Events (1-6) (Jiu-Kumite)



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World Championship Qualification

For athletes wishing to qualify for the World Championships, please note the specific rules that apply.

Team Event Age Group Mixing Rules

The following age groups are allowed to mix within their listed ranges:

- GROUP A and GROUP B
- GROUP C and GROUP D
- CADET and JUNIOR
- YOUTH and SENIOR

Team Kata Rules (gender composition)

- GROUP A and GROUP B: same or mixed gender allowed
- All other age groups: same gender only

Enbu Rules

Enbu teams must be Male|Male or Male|Female

Team Qualification

Only one team per age group will qualify for Worlds. That team must be formed according to all rules listed above.

Individual Event Rules

Two competitors from each age group will qualify for each individual event at the World Championships.

Children's World Cup Eligibility

All competitors in GROUPS A through D who participate in the National Championship may compete in the Children's World Cup, regardless of placement.

GROUP D and PRE-CADET Clarification

GROUP D and PRE-CADET are the same age category

They may:

- Compete as GROUP D at the World Cup without qualifying
- Compete as PRE-CADET at the World Championships *if they qualify*

If they qualify for Worlds, they may compete in both tournaments, if they choose.

Rank Requirements

- PRE-CADET, CADET, and JUNIOR athletes must hold a brown belt or higher
- YOUTH and SENIOR athletes must hold a black belt



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Competition Schedule

In general, both the Kōhai and Senpai Tournaments begin with the youngest athletes and progress from the lowest to the highest ranks. As a result, younger athletes will compete earlier in the day, while older athletes will compete later.

Within each age group, events proceed from the lowest rank, beginning with white belts, to the highest ranks, ending with black belts.

Exact event times depend on several factors, but this ordering can help athletes and families estimate when they will be called to compete. The typical event sequence is Individual Kata, Individual Kumite, Team Kata, Fukugo, Team Kumite, and Enbu. Exceptions may occur, so this order may not be followed strictly for every division.

Following the successful approach used by Sensei Peer Halpern at the 2025 Championship, kata and kumite events will be ordered with the expectation that most athletes competing in kata will also compete in kumite.

For this reason, athletes should bring all required kumite equipment, including mouth guards and gloves, and be prepared to compete in kumite immediately after completing kata.

Team Events

Teams can form as they please for the National Championships but note that the team will compete in the age category corresponding to the oldest team member and rank category of the highest-ranking team member.

(For teams seeking to qualify for the World Championship, please review the rules in the [World Championship Qualification](#) section.)



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Judges

Judges' Seminar

The Judges' seminar is a specialized seminar for judges; therefore, all participants should have read the competition rule book and have a working knowledge of the ITKF competition rules. The ITKF competition rulebook can be [purchased on Amazon](#).

Judging

- Judges must be qualified judges who have completed the Judges' Seminar (refresher course) offered on Saturday, May 2nd.
- Final judge selection will be made during the Judges' seminar
- The standard uniform for judges is a white traditional karate gi with a hakama ([link](#))
- Judges wear no socks or shoes when judging.
- Senpai Tournament judges should report to event by 12:30 pm on Saturday
- Kōhai Tournament judges should report to event by 8:30 am on Sunday

Athletes

- Traditional white karate gi – no rolled or cuffed pants or sleeves will be allowed
- Kumite athletes must have a mouth guard
- Kumite athletes must use competition gloves with padding (~4oz) << [link here](#) >>
- For medical safety, hand protectors may not be shared between athletes
- Athletes may wear groin protection (men) or chest protection (women)
- No eye glasses or safety glasses permitted during kumite (free sparring)
- No jewelry of any type will be permitted to be worn by athletes (male or female)
- Only soft hair accessories will be permitted
- Fingernails and toenails must be trimmed short
- Hair must not impede the vision of the athlete
- No headgear, footpads, shoes, shin guards, or hard plastic/metal braces may be worn



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Resources

The following are links to resources referenced in this document.

Register for the Championship	JOTFORM
US Budo website	US Budo Karate
ITKF Rule Book	ITKF Rule Book (Amazon)
MKA website	Missouri Karate Association
DoubleTree Hotel	DoubleTree Chesterfield
Chesterfield Athletic Club	Chesterfield Athletic Club
Saint Louis Lambert Airport	St. Louis Lambert International Airport
Taxi	Taxi Fare Finder: St. Louis Airport to Chesterfield Athletic Club
Uber	Uber
Shopping	Chesterfield Commons
Restaurants	Yellow Pages for Chesterfield
Kumite gloves	<<link>>
Hakama	KI International