

Consumer Awareness Guide

How to Find the Best Martial Arts School For Your Child



What Karate Schools
DON'T
Want You to Know
Before You Join!

The 3 Dangers of Choosing the Wrong Martial Arts Program for your child

How to Avoid the 4 Biggest Martial Arts Rip-Offs!

4 Costly Misconceptions About Martial Arts

The 3 Deadly Secrets About Martial Arts Schools

3 Mistakes to Avoid When Choosing a Martial Arts School

7 Reasons Why Every Child Should Study Martial Arts

4 Steps to Getting Your Child Started in Martial Arts

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About Denny Strecker's Karate

Who I am:

My Name is Denny Strecker and I have helped hundreds of people improve their confidence, self-esteem, fitness level and goal setting. I have been in the martial arts since 1987 and I have earned multiple degrees of Black Belt in four different styles.

How long I've been in business:

I have been teaching martial arts since 1992 and have been located in the same plaza in Warren, Michigan since 1997.

A little more about my background and my experience:

I always had the feeling that there was more to martial arts than just blocking, punching and kicking, but in 1987 (when I first started karate) that type of training did not exist. Over the years, I have developed a system to help teach students skills that I knew would benefit them every single day of their life – skills like goal setting and time management. I have spent thousands of hours

studying the best of the best – Tony Robbins, Zig Ziglar, Dr. Ruth Peters and Keith Hafner.

Problem I solve:

I help children improve their self-confidence so they are able to enjoy life. I also help them learn about making good choices so they are not influenced by things like peer pressure. I also teach them about goal setting so they are always striving to do better at anything they want to do. I help adults reduce the level of stress in their daily lives while improving their physical fitness levels and flexibility.

Proof-awards, recognition, testimonial:

It is my firm belief that it is our responsibility to take care of our community. Students in my karate school are always looking for opportunities to help others. We have done multiple fund raisers and brought thousands of dollars to non-profit organizations that needed help. We have adopted families during the holidays who were struggling to survive, and we have

conducted self-defense classes and bully prevention seminars to the community at no charge several times a year.

Special offer for YOU:

If you would like to learn more about my program and see firsthand how it works, visit my website www.KarateForChildren.com and see my special offer that gives you an entire month of classes for **FREE!**

“The 3 Dangers of Choosing the Wrong Martial Arts Program for Your Child”

1) **Wasted Money** - All too often, parents run down to the closest school - or worse, look for the cheapest school - and enroll their child, only to find that weeks later their child doesn't want to go any more. Now, they have wasted their money on a program that did not meet their needs or expectations.

2) **Trying New Things** – As a parent, you know how difficult it can be to introduce something new to your child. Once they have had a negative experience with anything, it is twice as difficult to get them to try it a second time. If a child does not like their martial arts program, they will believe **ALL** programs are the same, so they will not want to try any other activities.

3) **“Life Skills” Education** - By not getting your child into a quality martial arts school, they are going to miss the opportunity of “Life Skills” training that is not given any place else – Listening, Goal Setting, Time Management, Leadership and Public Speaking. Imagine your child is at a job interview and it is down to two people – your child and one other candidate. Both have equal schooling and skills, but your child brings up they have skills in Leadership, Time Management, Public Speaking, Commitment and Goal Setting. Who do you think the boss will want to hire?

Do You Want Your Kids to Have
Rock-Solid Ethics, Strong Self-Esteem,
and Bubble Over with Confidence
and Enthusiasm?

“How to Build Rock Solid Kids”
by Keith Hafner can do that
and so much more...

[Click Here to Learn More and Get Your Copy](#)

How to Avoid the 4 Biggest Martial Arts Rip-Offs!

1) Promises of What You Want to Hear – Not all martial arts schools are created equal! Do your research. There are a variety of teaching methods and styles. Call all of the schools in your area and more importantly, visit them! Schools have been known to make all kinds of promises over the phone. By visiting the school, you can truly SEE what their program teaches and if they are going to be able to benefit your child.

2) Don't Sign a 24 Month or Longer Contract – Just about every school will offer an Introductory Membership. This can range from 1 free class to a discounted 1 month program. The bigger question is, "What happens next?" A non-professional school will want you to sign a 2 year, or even longer contract, right away. The reason behind this is due to the fact that your child will not want to come back after a month or two of classes, but you end up paying the school for years. A school that offers month to month agreements is just as bad. The trouble with month to month agreements is twofold. First, the school can raise its rates **ANY TIME** it wants to. So you could sign up for a low rate, but within six months that rate could be doubled. Second, if there are not enough students paying for the month, the school will not be around for long. A professional school will generally offer a standard 12 month program for new members. This locks in your rate for 12 months so it cannot be changed.

3) Being “Nickeled and Dimed” – Some karate schools will offer a very low price to get you in the door and then pile on fees and “must haves” after you sign up. Some schools require that you bring in a friend and they sign up in order for you to promote to your next rank. Some schools will charge you for extra help (private lessons) if your child does not understand something in class. Other items could include registration fees, annual association fees, mandatory participation in school tournaments, mandatory sparring gear and training aids, and anything else the school decides to charge.

4) Testing Fees - Some schools charge an additional fee when you take an exam to move to another belt. These testing fees can run as high as \$40-\$85. Some schools are charged a testing fee from their association, who in turn, supplies the school with certificates. These certificates, for the most part, are irrelevant to the student as they are only recognized within the association. You might ask if you can avoid testing fees by not getting your certificate. A certificate from an association for the colored belts leading to black belt has little if any transfer power to another school.

The only test fee that virtually all schools do charge for is a black belt test. A black belt test is a much more involved exam and often has a number of expenses tied to it for the school. For that reason you can expect to pay \$150 - \$300 for a black belt exam. This money offsets the additional preparation the school has to make in order to promote someone to black belt and is a fair charge.

Are Concerned That Your Child May Have ADHD?

There is a lot of controversy over what treatment, if any, should be pursued when dealing with someone with ADHD. Many schools would be happy if all ADHD children were medicated, while some parents prefer a less radical approach.

Check Out “**Understanding ADHD**” and learn everything you need to know before making a decision you could regret for the rest of your child’s life.

[Click Here to Learn More](#)

4 Costly Misconceptions About Martial Arts

1) **Thinking one school is just like another** – This could not be any further from the truth. Each school is going to be set up and run in its own fashion. There is no standardization from one school to the next. Don't settle on your child's education. Make sure you find the school that best suits your needs.

2) **Martial Arts teaches children to fight or be aggressive** – Martial Arts doesn't teach children to be aggressive – Television does! Children watch TV shows and watch cartoon characters or super heroes punch and kick the “bad guys” and destroy them. It isn't any wonder that these same children then go to school and use similar techniques on another child that has been mean to them. Quality schools will teach children several non-violent Conflict Resolution techniques so that they don't have to punch or kick another child.

3) **Martial Arts takes a lot of time out of the week** – Basic Martial Arts classes meet twice a week on average. Classes should range between 30 to 45 minutes. Anything longer (child psychologists agree) isn't beneficial and the class tends to become boring and drawn out. In a quality martial arts school, a student should be able to reach Black Belt in 3 to 4 years training two days a week.

4) **The instructor has to be a “World Champion”**- It is next to impossible to look at an ad or talk to a school where the Instructor is **NOT** a world champion of something. The key to remember is that the rank of the instructor, or the world titles they have won, doesn't mean that they can teach your child. The analogy I like to use for this is Mike Tyson. He may be one of the greatest boxers in history, but I would never let him near my children – let alone teach them boxing.

3 Absolutely MUST KNOW Secrets About Martial Arts Schools

1) **Most schools don't have a teaching background** – For all too long, the standard for teaching has been that the highest rank belt would teach the class. There are hundreds of instructors teaching a class simply because they were the highest belt rank available. Some have gone through a very short seminar on teaching and then are left to fend for themselves. Make sure your instructor is not only physically training, but continuing his or her teaching education as well.

2) **Instructors that have not earned a rank** – With no standardization in martial arts, there are schools that take advantage of that fact. A person with little (or no) martial arts training can open a school and call themselves a “Grandmaster” and be elevated to 8th Degree Black Belt. Can you imagine if your elementary school teacher didn't have to get a degree, and instead decided one day to become a teacher? They just walk down to the local elementary school and sign up to be a teacher. How effective would they be? I certainly would not bet my child's future on them. Don't be afraid to ask questions about the instructor's history and rank. A great instructor will not have any problem giving you his martial arts credentials. At the same time, don't be overly impressed if the instructor has a long pedigree of training – that still does not mean that they will be a great instructor for your child.

3) **5 schools close and 5 new schools open every month** – Too many people have the belief that **just** because they have earned a Black Belt, they now can open a school and teach martial arts. My analogy for that is just because you graduate from high school, doesn't make you a high school teacher! Be careful of any school that is “brand new” to the area. While it may be exciting to join – or they may be offering a deep discount – you have no reassurance that they will be open 4 months down the road.

"Are You Tired of Seeing Bad Grades on Your Child's Report Card?"

Does it become World War III trying to get your child to do their homework?

Do you wish your child could get more homework done in less time?

Check out www.BestSchoolYear.com for a complete Study System.

3 Mistakes to Avoid When Choosing a Martial Arts School

1) **Shopping strictly on price alone** – If a school is charging \$40 per month, there is a reason. Professional schools will charge between \$129 and \$199 a month. If you are not interested in “Life Skills” education, the \$40 to \$80 a month school or program will be all right. But, if you want a better education, you will want to find a higher quality school. Also, just because a school is the most expensive doesn’t mean it is the best. Shop by the value you are getting from the school, not just the cost of the program.

2) **Choosing a school simply because it is the closest to your home** – This is one of the worst reasons to select the school that is going to educate your child. Don’t fall into the trap of thinking just because the school is close, you won’t have any trouble making classes. If your child is not having fun, it doesn’t matter if the school is across the street or a couple of miles away.

3) **Choosing a school that doesn’t have a “family atmosphere”** – It is easy to tell what type of clientele a school caters to simply by watching classes. If the school is full of adult males in their early twenties, the school is probably pretty militaristic and hardcore. This would not make for a good match for a young child. Look to see if multiple family members train. Are there programs and classes for everyone interested? A professional school will be able to offer a variety of age appropriate programs under one roof for the entire family to enjoy.

7 Reasons Why Every Child Should Study Martial Arts

There is a reason why Oprah, Dr Phil, Dr Laura Schlessinger, Jillian Michaels (Biggest Loser), Tony Robbins, pediatricians, child physiologists, and educators the world over all have alluded to the fact that Martial Arts is one of the most valuable things you can involve your child in.



It goes way beyond self defense and can help a child in nearly every aspect of their life. Improved health and fitness, athletic enhancement, increased confidence, better concentration, better behavior, more courteous and respectful; martial arts can help in all these areas.

Does this sound too good to be true? It's not. As a matter of fact, many experts agree that in this day and age of escalating childhood obesity, increased playground violence and deteriorating family structure, if you do nothing else for your child, you should make sure that they learn how to swim and they learn martial arts. Let's discuss why.



Self Defense – “Practice the fight so that you don’t have to” is a phrase that is often used to describe the self defense benefits of martial arts training. It refers to the fact that as a child becomes more confident in their ability to defend themselves thru martial arts training, the need to defend themselves automatically decreases. This is because they unconsciously begin to carry themselves in a more confident manner and that confidence is projected to those around them, making them

less vulnerable to predatory behavior. On top of that, martial arts training includes strategic self defense as well as actual self defense. Children are taught how to recognize a potentially dangerous situation and how to avoid confrontations.

Athletic Enhancement – There is a reason why virtually every professional sports team in virtually every major sport supplements their training with martial arts. Martial arts training offers several advantages. It is amazingly effective in enhancing general coordination because it uses every part of the body in a balanced way. Upper body, lower body, right side, left side, forward movement, lateral movement, rotational movement - it's all included in martial arts training.

Fitness - The three pieces of the fitness puzzle are strength, flexibility and endurance. Martial arts training demands a balance between the three. Therefore, a child who trains in martial arts will find their deficiencies greatly enhanced. Also, because of the balance in the three pieces of the fitness puzzle, they are less likely to injure themselves while participating in other athletic endeavors.

Health - Martial arts training is a proven link to better health for people of all ages, but especially children for several reasons: First off, it is great exercise. But because it is fun, kids don't mind doing it. Discussing diet and lifestyle habits with students is a part of martial arts training, so children who grow up training develop healthy habits that will stick with them for life.

Did you know....75% of elementary school age children in the United States are overweight.

Concentration - Very few activities engage the mind, body and spirit more than martial arts. Because of this, a child's ability to concentrate is greatly enhanced by their martial arts training and this concentration tends to be easily transferable to other activities.

Respect and Courtesy – Due to the fact that martial arts teaches techniques that could be harmful to others if applied, martial arts instructors are obliged to stress the importance of respect, courtesy, and restraint. It has been proven time and again that children who are skilled in martial arts tend to be extremely respectful, considerate and composed.





Confidence - Martial arts virtually always leads to increased confidence in children for a couple of specific reasons: First off, there are no bench sitters - every child participates and is judged not against others, but more importantly, against their own potential. Secondly, the structure of martial arts is built on the concept of setting children up for success by giving them a series of realistic, short term goals that they can attain quickly while keeping them focused on an exciting, long term goal. Each time they experience success, their confidence improves until they tend to believe that with hard work and dedication, they can accomplish just about anything.

4 Steps to Getting Your Child Started in Martial Arts

- 1) **Make a commitment to act** – Many people say they are going to start something, but they never take the first step, which is finding the schools in your area.

- 2) **List your objectives** – Start a list of the most important objectives. Examples would be: helping your child become more self-confident, finding positive role models for your child, finding an activity to help your child lose weight, or any of a hundred other reasons. Make sure the school is going to meet these objectives.

- 3) **Ask questions** – Have a list of questions prepared ahead of time. Don't rely on your memory. You are going to be gathering a lot of information. I can't tell you the number of times I have had a parent say to me in a consultation "There was something else I was going to ask, but I forgot what it was." Remember, you are the customer – make sure you are an educated customer by getting all of your questions answered.

- 4) **When you find the right school, act** – Similar to step #1, once you find the school that is right for your child, get them started. A professional school will have open enrollment which means new students can join at any time. Start on an Introductory Program which can be 2 to 4 weeks of classes.

Frequently Asked Questions

How early should you start your child in the martial arts?

While the martial arts are an enjoyable and very worthwhile activity for children, it should be recognized that progress will take consistent class attendance, some practice and support from the family (kids can't drive themselves to class).



How early to start a child really depends on the individual child and their level of interest and maturity. Many professional schools have age specific classes and curriculum programs for children as young four, five or six years old. These programs are very popular and can be a great way for a child to learn concentration, self-control and to start to develop more coordination.

Programs for children of this age usually are less demanding than mainstream martial arts programs and bypass much of the serious self-defense training in favor of more age appropriate and fun activities.

What style should I choose?

The only style that really matters is the teaching style of the instructor. Yes, styles vary and you may prefer one style over another, but martial arts style should be a secondary consideration. The first priority is finding an instructor that you feel comfortable with and who can motivate you to come to class twice a week.

All martial arts styles have their strengths and weaknesses. While it would be nice to say that your body type or flexibility should match up with a certain style, it's more important to match up with the right instructor and school.

What kind of facility should I look for?

Here it's important to trust your first impressions. The modern martial arts school is clean, well lit, spacious and has good family atmosphere. The mirrors are polished, the floor is clean and the dressing rooms in good order. On the wall you might see photographs of recent school events and outings and there should definitely be an area for parents or family to sit and watch the classes. Beware of any school that doesn't allow you to watch the class. Particularly if you are a parent looking for school for your kids, you should have real concerns about a school that doesn't allow you to watch them work with your child. An instructor might say that they don't want the child to be distracted by the parents, but the truth usually is that the instructor doesn't want to be accountable to the parent.

Conversely, professional instructors will practically insist that you stay and watch. They know that once you see the positive lessons they are teaching your child, that you'll be even more supportive of the training. The truth is that the instructor who encourages you to take the time to watch your child in class is doing you and your child a great service. In today's busy world, the tendency to drop off a child and not take the time to share the experience of learning a new skill is all too prevalent. I've always found that the kids whose parents were in class and supportive seemed to do much better and be more well adjusted than the drop off kids. Children, more than anything else, want their parents to take an interest in them and be proud. Martial arts, taught by a professional, has a series of "victories" for each child ranging from a new belt or stripe on their belt to other forms of recognition for the child. That recognition is greatly enhanced when the parent is there to share in the pride. Consider a professional martial arts instructor as a part of the team whose goal is to instill a strong sense of self-pride and confidence in your child. As a parent, your presence in that classroom is critical to the success of the team.

What should I do if my child wants to quit after they have started classes?

There will come a time when your child says, "I'm too tired to go to class today." This is a critical point in a child's training. This is when you help teach them about follow through and the "never-quit" attitude.

Don't be concerned about "pushing it on your child." This is hogwash. Children wouldn't go to school, brush their teeth or clean their room if you didn't "push it on them." There's a big difference between helping a child follow through on a goal they agreed to and forcing something unpleasant on a child.

When you begin the classes, agree with your child on some short-term goals such as green belt or brown belt, with the understanding that there will be no quitting until the goal is achieved. The real goal in the training should be black belt, but until you've had a chance to really understand what it takes to earn a black belt, it's best to set a more reachable initial goal. Once you've determined that black belt is your goal, commit to it with full enthusiasm.

However, it's unrealistic to expect a child not to (at some point) rebel against the effort. This is natural and should not lead to quitting. Quitting can quickly become a bad habit. Facing these types of challenges is part of the training inherent in the martial arts.

How can I motivate my child to continue?

Staying with a goal without quitting is an integral skill that has to be instilled by the parent. This is the very foundation of goal setting and achievement. Quitting is the very foundation of under-performance and failure. The world is full of great starters. Teach your child that it's the ability to set goals and see them through to their completion that's most important.

When you've been attending with your child and know exactly what's been happening in class, you can help re-motivate your child by reminding them of how much they enjoyed the last class and that they can look forward to seeing their friends in class.

How much do martial arts lessons cost?

While the actual cost per month will vary widely from market to market, this question has to be approached from a slightly different perspective than money alone. In seminars around the country, I ask the black belts a simple question, "If I could give you \$10,000, would you be willing to sell me back your black belt and the impact that martial arts has had on your life? Would you be willing to erase your martial arts experience from your life for \$10,000? For \$20,000? How about \$50,000?"

In speaking before thousands of black belts, never has someone offered to accept my hypothetical offer. The point is that whether you are paying \$40, \$70 or \$100 a month, the value of earning a black belt far exceeds the investment. What is it worth to walk out to your car with a loved one late at night after a show and know that if something happens, you have the skill to deal with it? What is it worth to a parent to know that their child is developing the self-pride and inner confidence to avoid negative peer pressures? What is it worth to any of us in today's violent world to empower ourselves or our children with the skills to handle a confrontation?

It's worth a lot more than it costs to gain the knowledge. With the huge variance in the instructors, facility, and atmosphere of one school to the next, you should never shop for the martial arts based upon price. Schools tend to charge what they think they are worth. If a school is charging \$40 per month, there is a reason. Professional schools will charge between \$129 and \$199 a month. If you are not interested in "Life Skills" education, the \$40 to \$80 a month school or program will be all right. But, if you want a better education, you will want to find a higher quality school. Also, just because a school is the most expensive doesn't mean it is the best. Shop by the value you are getting from the school, not just the cost of the program.

What's interesting is that, in most cases, the schools that charge a little more for the quality of their instruction tend to be bigger and have many more students than the bargain-basement schools that charge apologetically. Most good schools will charge anywhere from \$129 to \$199 per month with a small registration of about \$199. This registration might include your first month dues and, possibly, your uniform.

Do I have to sign a contract?

This depends on the school and your situation. Many schools do not require any contract or agreement. However, signing a contract for lessons is not always a bad idea. One advantage to signing a contract is that you are locking in the tuition at the current rate and can avoid increases. The key is to not sign for more than you're confident you can follow through on. Since earning a black belt should take three to four years, you should avoid any kind of long term agreements over four or five years.

However, if you know you want to earn a black belt, it makes perfect sense to lock in the lowest tuition possible for that time period. There are some additional items to consider when faced with an agreement for lessons. Check with the local Merchants Association, Better Business Bureau and Consumer's Affairs or Consumer Protection agency to see if the school has a history of litigation or complaints.

However, it's perfectly reasonable for a school to employ a tuition billing company to process your payments. This is very different from selling them your contract. In this case, the third party billing company simply accepts your payments, keeps a small percentage as a fee and then sends the school the remainder.

What if I like the school, but the school insists on having me sign a contract?

If you are uncomfortable signing a contract for yourself or your child, tell the school that you're uncomfortable and seek out an alternate arrangement. Most schools will work with a student in order to provide the training. However, other schools will turn the student away if he is not willing to commit to training more than a month at a time.

Also, state laws can effect what type of arrangement a school can make, so find out ahead of time what to expect from a school.

What if the instructor wants me to pay in advance for lessons?

There is a big difference between being offered the option to pay for, say a year in advance for a discount, and being told that advance payments are the only option. If a school insists that you must pay for more than 30 days in advance, do not enroll. This is a school, usually, that has a very high drop-out rate and they know you may not stick around for long so they are going to try get as much money as possible from you before you leave.

Most schools have a standard payment plan and then a small discount of 15% - 20% if you want to pay the amount in full in advance. This is a reasonable option that is simply that - an option. Many people prefer to pay in advance and that option should be available.

However, if you decide to pay in advance, make sure you have a written agreement that is signed by the instructor as to what is being paid for and what would constitute cause for a refund. This is an example where signing a contract may be in your best interest. For instance, if you are in an automobile wreck or are transferred, is that cause for a refund? Your attorney would have the answer based upon the state you live in so be sure to investigate that and protect your investment before making advance payments.

What belt rank should my instructor be?

In most styles of martial arts, there are ten degrees of black belt. A new black belt earns a first degree and then it works up from there to tenth. The problem is that with the lack standardization in the arts, what defines a fifth degree black belt or a seventh degree black belt varies so drastically, that the rank doesn't really convey a meaning to the general public. There is a saying by Joe Lewis, one of the legends of American martial arts. Lewis, when asked what degree black belt he was, would answer, "There are two types of black belts. Good ones and bad ones. I'm one of the good ones." The point of the statement is that beyond earning a black belt, rank has little if anything to do with quality of instruction.

This is a critical point to understand. Just because someone has received a high rank within an art doesn't make him or her a good teacher. Indeed, sometimes the opposite is true. Some black belts are more focused on their own achievements instead of helping the student achieve.

It's very hard to say what rank beyond black belt a professional martial artist should be. Clearly, a school owner or chief instructor should be a black belt or the equivalent depending on the art. Also, if your goal is to earn a black belt, then you have to have an instructor who is at least a second or third degree, so they promote you to first-degree black belt. A first-degree black belt cannot promote someone to first-degree black belt. In most systems you have to be one or two degrees higher to promote someone. For instance, an instructor would have to be a third degree or fourth degree to promote a student to second-degree black belt.

Beyond that, the rank of the instructor will actually mean very little to your classroom experience or the quality of your classes. In fact, when choosing a school, you should probably avoid schools that use their ads to tell you all about the ranks the instructor has. What he has accomplished is not as important as what he can do for you, so don't be misled by claims of grand master or 10th degree black belt. That's not as important as finding an instructor who cares about his students and makes that his focus instead of seeking all the attention himself.

Should I find a "champion" instructor?

Looking at the phone-book ads, it's almost impossible not to find a champion. It seems harder to find an instructor that doesn't claim to be a champion of some sort. Like rank, tournament titles mean very little if anything to your experience. Just because someone has won an event, doesn't mean they can teach you or your child. In fact, the hard-core competitor often has a difficult time toning the training down for the novice or for kids. For instance, John McEnroe is a great tennis champion, but I don't know if I would want him as my child's tennis coach. That's not to say titles are a bad thing. It's just not an important aspect to look for or be concerned with. Since just about everyone in the phone book is a champion of some sort, simply ignore the claims and focus on what they can do for you.

How often should I go to class?

For the first few months, resist the urge to go more than two times a week. Most professional schools will restrict your attendance in these early stages to twice a week while you evaluate your training. Then, after you've trained for a few months, they may make more classes available for you as part of a special program such as the Black Belt Club.

This is a good method for both the student and the instructor. The student is prevented from overdoing it at first and this helps him to avoid injuries and burnout. Then, as the student gets in better shape and understands the training, the instructor can better determine if the student should be given the opportunity for additional training. This is usually a privilege reserved for students who have made the commitment to earning a black belt.

How long are classes?

This usually will depend on the age of the class. For most classes targeting 4-6 year-olds, the class should run 30-45 minutes at the most. For classes targeting 7-12 year-olds, 45 minutes is usually about right. Adult beginners classes can be 45 minutes up to an hour.

Schools that are still running two-hour classes tend to burn their students out very quickly. In today's world, it's just very difficult to devote more than an hour to an activity for any length of time and studies on attention spans have shown that 30-45 minutes is about the max for most people depending on their age.

How risky is martial arts?

Past insurance ratings ranked martial arts over golf in the number of injury claims. That doesn't mean you're not going to get sore or occasionally bruised, it just means that serious injuries are not very common in the martial arts in most schools.

Most schools are very safe and go to extreme lengths to insure the safety of their classes. Other schools are rougher and can have a military-like atmosphere where only the strong survive. These schools can be recognized by an almost exclusively adult male student body and a gym-like atmosphere.

Any school you attend should have age-specific classes and utilize all possible safety equipment when sparring. The striking pads should be new and in good shape.

While claims against schools are very rare because the training is very safe, many schools are not insured, which is a mistake. Make sure your school is insured and the instructors are attending seminars and workshops on teaching.

What can I expect my child to learn?

This is an exciting question. Contrary to the media's image of a tough drill sergeant-like martial arts instructor, today's professional is well schooled in positive motivation, modern training methods and character development.

The schools will have special programs built into the curriculum on goal setting, self-confidence, how to avoid violent confrontation and other personal development goals.

This emphasis on personal responsibility and successful attitudes was introduced into the martial arts classroom in the mid-1980's and has come as a pleasant surprise to many students who feared that martial arts would be an "only the strong survive" experience.

Students of all ages and athletic abilities are now able to train in the martial arts without the fear of injury and humiliation associated with the so-called "dungeon" schools of the past.

What kind of physical training does the martial arts teach?

In terms of the physical aspects, there are two primary areas of physical training in the martial arts. First is the traditional arts and techniques of the style taught at the school. This is known as "Do," or, "The Way." These techniques and forms are not made up by the school, but are passed down from instructor to student through the years. Students honor the art by adhering to its traditional principles.

Traditional training is the most difficult to understand and to execute. However, the process of traditional training develops outstanding discipline, self-control and coordination. The other aspect to physical training is a more modern, practical science of self-defense. Here the focus is less on adhering to an ancient arts than practicing what works and discarding what may not work as much.

There is tremendous scientific data that comes to us at a phenomenal rate these days, which continually improves our understanding of how the human body works. And with that understanding of how the body works comes a better philosophy and (hopefully) better practices about how to condition the body so that you're not hurting it. This is the basis of the modern method of martial arts training.

What is better training? The modern or the traditional method?

Modern training is much more adaptable to an individual's needs since the training can serve the student rather than the student serving a particular style. While this may sound more appealing, many of these schools are more gym-like than school-like. With the lack of traditional ideals, there can be a lack of decorum within the school. While this is certainly not always the case, respect, courtesy and discipline are important elements of the martial arts experience.

Most professional schools have a very effective mix of the traditional arts and modern applications. The school's exams and lesson plans will be balanced between the traditional forms and basics and the more modern self-defense and fighting applications. The atmosphere is warm and family oriented with a strong sense of courtesy and respect throughout the student body.

So, you can look forward to learning the foundational techniques of a traditional style, the practical applications of the modern strategies, and the personal development skills of self-discipline that work as the glue that holds it all together and makes a black belt.

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Resources

Denny Strecker's Karate: www.WarrenKarate.com (586) 573-3881
denny@warrenkarate.com

["How to Build Rock Solid Kids"](#) by Keith Hafner

[Free Bonus Report: 100 Ways to Positively Reinforce Your Child](#)

["Successful Parenting"](#) by Denny Strecker

["Understanding ADHD"](#) by Denny Strecker

[Best School Year Study System](#) by Denny Strecker

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