

USA Judo Guidelines for Newly Promoted 6th Dans

One of the highlights of any judoka's career is to be awarded the rank of Rokudan – 6th degree black belt. This is only done after they have demonstrated the necessary technical skills, had the required active time in grade, and achieved excellence other areas such as coaching and refereeing. A person awarded this rank may wear a red and white paneled belt or a black belt.

USA Judo and the Rank and Certification Committee, under the leadership of Sensei Patrick Burris, has established suggested guidelines for the proper wearing of the red and white belt.

Once earned the belt has significance beyond what the new wearer might understand. The red and white belt indicates advanced technical knowledge in our sport and signifies the wearer may serve as a teacher and is expected to exhibit increasing levels of leadership in USA Judo and in the international Judo arena.

Your Rank and Certification Committee offers these suggested guidelines for those wishing to wear their red and white belt:

- The red and white belt is never to be worn while competing unless at an actual designated high rank tournament, which is generally not found in the United States.
- If you are the lead clinician (at a judo club or clinic) it is proper to wear your belt; however, if you are participating as a student in a clinic the black belt is more appropriate. The reasoning is simple. All student should have their eyes and ears on the clinician signified by the red and white belt. An exception is made for holders of 9th and 10th Danrank who wear a red belt.
- If you are visiting another club, and the lead coach of that club is ranked below yourself, it is common curtesy to wear your black belt unless you have been invited to teach. An exception is made for holders of 9th and 10th Dan rank.
- At a major clinic where many high-ranking instructors are teaching, you may have a part in the teaching of the clinic. It sends the right message to students if you alternate between your red and white belt and your black belt depending on your role throughout the clinic.
- If you are fortunate to visit the Kodokan in Japan, leave you red and white belt at home and wear your black belt. In the Kodokan, most all sensei wear a black belt with the exception of the 9th and 10th Dan.
- It is common at larger events to have a picture taken toward the event of all high-ranking judoka in attendance. It is appropriate for all Rokudan and above to wear their red & white belt at this time.

Please remember there is no need to boast of your accomplishments. Your actions on and off the mat should speak to your increasing leadership role in Judo.

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