

Hapkido is a modern martial art originating in Korea after Japanese occupation (1910-1945). “Hap” (united) “Ki” (energy) “Do” (way) is translated as “the way of uniting (or harmonizing) energy.” Hapkido can best be described as a synthesis of different martial arts. Primarily, Hapkido draws its roots from ChungDoKwan TaeKwonDo, Daito-ryu Aikijujutsu and Judo. Its techniques include, but are not limited to, kicking and striking, throwing, joint locks and immobilization.

While Yong-Sool Choi (1904-1986) is considered the founder of Hapkido, the art he originally taught was purely Daito-Ryu Aiki-jujutsu. In fact, the original kanji for Hapkido and Aikido were the same, demonstrating the strong connection between the arts. Choi “founded” Hapkido after returning in 1947 from his stay in Japan as a servant to Sogaku Takeda (1858-1943). Choi opened his first school in 1951 with the help of his first student and began teaching his style of Hapkido, called YuSool in Taegue City.

Choi quickly began to draw practitioners from other martial arts to train with him, most notably from TaeKwonDo (Korean Karate) and Judo. These practitioners were responsible for adding both diversity and depth to the techniques of Hapkido, as well as introducing the art in a modified form to Seoul. Among these early students were Bok Seub Seo, Moo Woong Kim and Jie Han Jae.

By the early 1960’s, Hapkido as a “unified system” had already fractured. After training with Choi for three years, Ji Han Jae formed his own association in 1956 and opened a school in Seoul in 1957. Moo Woong Kim followed suit and founded his own organization in 1961. By 1965, the Korean government wished to create a singular organization and set of standards for Hapkido to mirror what was happening with TaeKwonDo in Korea. President Jung Hee Park commissioned Ji Han Jae to found the Korea Hapkido Association and elected Kim Woo-Joong (President of Daewoo Corp) as its first President.

In 1967, President Park formally attempted to unify the various Hapkido Kwan under the auspices of the Korean Martial Arts Association, but it was doomed from the start due to poor organizational leadership and politics. By 1968, the organization had split in two and by the early 1970’s additional associations had also emerged, most notably the Korean Hapkido Association (1971), the Korea Hapki Association (1972), and the International Hapkido Federation (1974). This trend continued throughout the 1970’s, with new organizations forming and existing organizations plagued by politics and mismanagement. By 1983, the original Korea Hapkido Association became the Korea Hapkido Federation due to political problems and the founding members departing (Ji Han Jae and Myung Jae Nam).

Today, the Korean Hapkido Federation promotes itself as the largest organization in terms of numbers, but there are more than 100 different styles or schools of Hapkido in Korea alone and no unifying standard for the art, techniques, or quality control. While there is no “one system or style” of Hapkido, there tend to be two distinct types in Korea. Hapkido practiced in and around Taegue City is more heavily influenced by Choi’s original teachings and primarily focuses on Daito-ryu-based joint locks, deflections and throws. Hapkido practiced in and around Seoul (and in most of the western world) is more heavily influenced by the striking arts and primarily focuses on punching, kicking, weapons, joint locks and throws.

Our dojo’s founder, Sang Cook Kim, began training with original Hapkido practitioners in Taegue City in the 1960’s and was a top student of Uhm, (President of ChungDoKwan and Vice Chairman of the World TaeKwonDo Federation) and an expert of ChungDoKwan prior to training in Hapkido. His contribution to Hapkido was the in-close kicking and punching of ChungDoKwan as well as the application of techniques in real fighting situations. During the course of his training in both ChungDoKwan and Hapkido, Kim earned his Judo black belt at the Yudo College and quickly rose in stature and influence in the Hapkido community.

In 1970, Kim moved to the United States and founded the Sang Cook Kim Gymnasium, teaching Korean Karate (ChungDoKwan) and Hapkido. Kim continued to travel back and forth to Korea and in 1977 received a 6th Dan from the Korea Hapkido Association. Not long after, Kim was asked to be the President of the Korean Hapkido Federation, a newly formed organization attempting to rise above political problems and focus on quality training. As he cared nothing for rank, power, or politics, Kim was viewed as the perfect choice for President. Kim served in this role until 1985, at which point the decision was made to dissolve the organization due to the continued fracturing of Hapkido in Korea and the proliferation of new organizations.

After dissolving the Korean Hapkido Federation, Kim founded the World Oriental Martial Arts Federation (WOMAF) in 1990 with headquarters in South Korea and the United States. Nam Yyen Herr was appointed as the head of WOMAF in Korea and James Garrison was named the head of WOMAF in the United States. Kim served as President of WOMAF until retiring in 2015.

At Pacific Rim Martial Arts Academy, we practice Ju Sool Kwan Hapkido. Ju Sool Kwan (“school of the soft art”) is a style of Hapkido drawing on our ChungDoKwan roots, but with an emphasis on the principles and techniques of Aikido and Judo. As Hapkido was never a distinct art or style in and of itself, but rather a blending of Daito-ryu Aikijujutsu, Judo and Korean Karate, our philosophy at Pacific Rim is that to truly understand Ju Sool Kwan Hapkido, you must understand its roots. Thus, we not only practice Hapkido as an integrated art, but we continue to offer world-class training in its root arts; ChungDoKwan, Aikido and Judo. In 2018, Kim made Michael Martyn the inheritor of JuSoolKwan Hapkido. Martyn is the Founder of Zen Ei Kan International Association and Head Instructor at Pacific Rim.



## History of Hapkido