



Semi-Contact Rules

Chapter 3



WAKO Rules - Semi-Contact

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Art. 1. Definition

Semi-contact is a fighting discipline where two fighters fight with the primary goal of scoring greater points using controlled legal techniques with speed and focus. The main characteristics of semi-contact are delivery, technique and speed. The competition in semi-contact should be executed in its true sense with light and well-controlled contact. It is a technical discipline with equal emphasis put on hand and foot techniques from an athletic viewpoint. Techniques (punches and kicks) are strictly controlled. At each valid point (a point that is awarded, with a legal part of hand or foot to legal targets and with legal technique), the central referee halts the fight and at the same time as the two judges, shows with his/her fingers the number of points in the direction of the fighter who is being awarded points.

Art. 2. Fighting Rules

Fighters will enter the tatami and touch gloves. They will then step back and assume a fighting stance and wait for the command FIGHT from the referee.

The time will only be stopped on the command of the referee, by calling TIME toward the area control table. Time is not stopped to award points or penalties unless the referee feels it is necessary. The referee is not allowed to talk to the fighters during the match unless he has stopped the clock.

A fighter may have one coach and one second in his corner during the match. Both must remain in the coach's box throughout the match. No coach will be allowed to enter the fighting area while a match is in progress and no coach will be allowed to interfere with any referee or judge. No coach will be allowed to make derogatory remarks about a referee or judge.

Only the referee may ask for time to be stopped. A fighter may request the clock to be stopped to adjust safety equipment or check an injury. The referee does not have to stop the clock if he feels it will take away the advantage from the other fighter. Time-stops shall be kept to a minimum.

If the referee feels a fighter is using time-stops to rest or to prevent his opponent from scoring, a warning will be given and the fighter may, following discussion with the judges, be disqualified for delaying the match or refusing to fight.

After the referee commands "STOP", fighters must return onto their starting place on the tatami and the fight is continued from there after the referee's command "FIGHT".

Art. 3. Competition Commands

- TIME
Forming the letter T with hands, to give order for time keeper to stop the clock until the referee says the command FIGHT. When the central referee says TIME he must give his reason for stopping the clock.
The referee will give the order TIME on the following occasions:
 - when he gives a warning to a fighter (whose opponent must immediately go to a neutral corner)
 - when a fighter asks for stoppage of time by rising his right hand (the opponent must immediately go to a neutral corner)
 - when the referee sees it's necessary to correct a fighter's equipment or uniform
 - when the referee sees that a fighter is injured (the maximum time for the doctor's intervention is 2 minutes for seniors and juniors and 1.5 minutes for boys/girls and cadets)
- STOP
The fight is interrupted immediately and the fighters must return onto their starting place on the tatami. The fight is continued from there after the referee's command "FIGHT".
- FIGHT
To begin the bout/fight or after an interruption of the fight.
- NO POINT
When there is no majority decision about scoring, central referee, after having stopped the fight, declares "no point" crossing his arms in front of him.
- POINT
When there is a majority decision about scoring, central referee, after having stopped the fight, declares "point" for the scoring fighter.
- SHAKE HANDS
At the beginning and at the end of the fight



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Art. 4. Legal Target Areas

The following parts of the body may be attacked using authorized fighting techniques:

- **Head**
Face, side, back and forehead.
- **Torso**
Front and side
- **Leg**
Below mid-calf (Foot Sweeps are allowed)

Art. 5. Illegal Target Areas

- Top of the head
- Back of the torso (kidneys and spine)
- Top of the shoulders
- Neck: Front, sides, back
- Below the belt (except for Foot Sweeps)

Art. 6. Legal Techniques

- **Kicks**
Front, Side, Back, Roundhouse, Hook (Sole of the foot only), Crescent, Axe (Sole of the foot only), Jumps, Spins.
- **Hands**
Punch, Back fist, Spinning back fist, Ridge hand, Hook
- **Foot sweep**
To score with a foot sweep the attacker must remain on his feet at all times. If during the execution of a foot sweep the attacker touches the floor with any part of his body other than his feet, no score will be given. A score will be awarded to the attacker if his opponent touches the floor with any part of his body other than his feet.

Art. 6.1 Special Note

It is extremely dangerous to strike with the back of the heel. It must be strictly emphasized that the attacking fighter must extend his foot in such a manner that the sole (bottom) of the foot is used as the striking area when executing the following kicks: Axe, Hook and Spinning Hook kick

Art. 7. Illegal Techniques and Actions

- Attacks with any technique other than those mentioned in section 6.
- Avoiding or refusing to fight
- Falling or dropping to the floor without due cause.
- Leaving the fighting area (exit)
- Attacks with malicious or excessive contact.
- Unsportsman-like conduct. A fighter shall have only one warning, then the normal procedure for penalty and disqualification shall be followed. However, in the case of gross unsportsman-like conduct, the fighter may be disqualified on the first offence, depending on the severity of the infringement.
- Grabbing/holding is not allowed
- Attacking or verbally abusing an official either inside or outside the tatami. Pushing, grabbing without any other purpose, spitting or even attempting any of these actions shall result in immediate disqualification. In the event that any of these actions are made by a penalized fighter or his coaches, the person involved may be removed from the hall or tournament site and the matter turned over to the WAKO Referee Committee.
- **Ground Attacks**
A fighter cannot attack an opponent on the ground. The central referee is responsible for stopping the match immediately when one of the two fighters touches the floor with any part of the body apart from his feet. Stomps to the head or body of a downed fighter can lead to minus points or disqualification (judges decide by majority decision).
- All blind and uncontrolled techniques in general are forbidden
- Bending down below the belt



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Art. 8. Scoring Criteria

Any legal technique striking a legal target creating contact with "reasonable" power, focus, speed, balance. The authorized striking area of the hand or foot must make "clean / controlled" contact. The referee and judge must actually see the technique strike the target. Awarding points based on the sound of the strike is not allowed. The fighter must be looking at the point of contact when executing the technique.

All techniques must be used with "reasonable" power. Any technique that simply touches, brushes or pushes an opponent will not be scored.

If a fighter jumps in the air to attack, he must land inside the fighting area to score, and he must keep his balance. (It is not allowed to touch the floor with any part of the body except feet).

If a fighter loses his balance due to his own instability following a score and touches the ground with any part of his body other than his feet, the score will not count.

If a fighter loses his balance following a point score outside his control (pushed or tripped) then the score will stand.

Art. 8.1 Calls Referees and Judges may make (Points)

Referees and judges will decide only according to their opinions based on what they have seen. Nobody can change a referee or judge's decision. Even if a referee or judge makes a mistake, the Chief Referee on duty of the area (one of two chief referees) cannot change the decision, but can change referees or judges for future matches if appropriate.

The Observer of the area (one of the two chief referees) can change a referee or judge's decision only when the referee or judge made a "material mistake". A material mistake is:

- an incorrect summation of points from people on duty at the table
- an incorrect summation of exits
- if the referee gave a point to a fighter who dropped down or stepped out after receiving the point score was awarded to the wrong side
- for a mistake in awarding points(1 instead of 2 for a kick to the head)
- when a minus point is not taken away after third exit
- when fighter is not disqualified for 4th exit

The two Chief referees of the area should be vigilant to ensure that the judges are doing their jobs properly. The referee cannot award a point by himself.

Art. 8.1.1 Score

An arm is raised to indicate the fighter who scored. To award a score there must be a minimum of two concurring decisions by the referee and judges.

If the referee and one judge show two raised arms (a point for both fighters) and another judge points to one fighter, the referee's decision must be one point for both fighters.

If the referee shows two points (kick to head) and one judge shows one point, the referee must ask both judges what they really saw and decide accordingly to what he saw.

In situations where there are the same number of arms raised, both fighters shall be awarded a score. Judges and referee must take into consideration only the first valid technique of fighters

Art. 8.1.2 No Score or no point

Arms crossed in front of the referee or judges at waist level means the referee or judge could not see the technique strike a legal target area.

If the referee or a judge indicates a score and the other two signal they did not see a score, there can be no score awarded.

If one of the fighters does not get a minimum of two arms, no score can be awarded.

Points scored after the command "stop" of the referee not only are "no points" but they can lead to warning.



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Art. 8.2 Points

- Punch 1 pt
- Kick to the body 1 pt
- Foot sweep leading the opponent to touch the floor
with any other part of the body apart from feet) 1 pt
- Kick to head 2 pts
- Jumping kick to body 2 pts
- Jumping kick to head 3 pts

Art. 8.2.1 Awarding Points

If the referee sees an action that he considers to be a valid point, he will command STOP and immediately signal the point, as do the judges. The referee counts the decisions and awards the score to the appropriate fighter. Each judge must make an immediate decision following the command of the referee.

If one of the judges sees an action he considers to be a valid score, he must signal to the referee immediately who will command "STOP" and the referee and judges must at that time signal their point decisions.

In any case, only a simple majority can award a point.

Art. 8.2.2 Overviews awarding points

After every recognized score the command STOP will be given and an immediate vote to indicate who scored will be given by the referee and the two judges.

The winner will be the fighter with the most points at the end of time. In the case of one fighter gaining a 10-point margin, he will be declared the winner.

Other methods of winning:

- Disqualification, Exits
Simultaneous expiration of time and score
The officials shall call for a vote to determine if the score landed before or after time expired. Time should be indicated by a soft object being thrown onto the tatami or shouting to the centre referee.

Art. 9. Penalty – Exits (Warnings, Disqualifications and Exits)

Warnings should be given in a loud and clear voice so that both the fighters and coaches can hear and understand the warning. The referee should stand facing the offending fighter and give the warning.

To award a penalty point the referee must first request the time to be stopped. He must face the score-keeper and state that a penalty point is to be awarded by pointing at the Fighter who is to be penalized and stating in a loud, clear voice why the fighter is being penalized.

Warnings will be carried over throughout the match to all rounds. When the referee is giving warnings or a penalty (minus) point, he must stop the clock.

1 st violation or exit	Official Warning or 1 st exit Verbally communicated to athlete/coach/table with hand signal
2 nd violation or exit	Official Warning or 2 nd exit Verbally communicated to athlete/coach/table with hand signal
3 rd violation or exit	Penalty point given (-1 point) Verbally communicated to athlete/coach/table with hand signal
4 th violation or exit	Disqualification Verbally communicated to athlete/coach/table with hand signal

Art. 9.1 Disqualification

A referee cannot disqualify a fighter by himself, apart when a fighter is disqualified for 4 exits.

In case of important infringement of rules by a competitor, if disqualification is called for, the referee shall confer with the judges and with the observer of the area (one of the two chief referees) to ensure all the proper procedures are being used.

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Art. 9.2 Exit

Leaving the Fighting Area.

If a fighter leaves the area (EXIT) without being pushed, kicked or knocked out by his opponent, it will be seen as a "voluntary exit" and he will receive a warning from the referee. On the third exit the fighter will lose one point. At the fourth exit the fighter leaving the area shall be disqualified.

Stepping out (EXIT) means

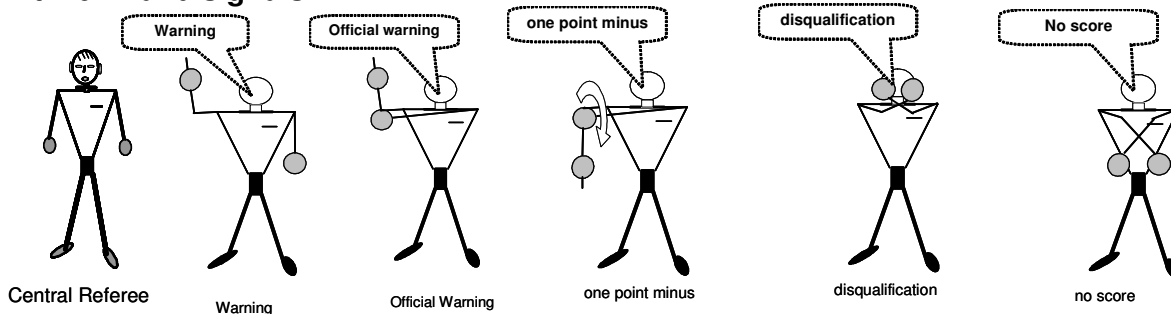
Stepping outside the line, even with only one foot. The whole the foot must be outside the designated area.

Stepping on the line should not be considered as stepping out. If the fighter is pushed out by the other fighter, or he went outside the line as a result of a hit or kick, it is not classed as a voluntary exit.

The fact of stepping out is stated by the judges by majority decision.

Warnings for leaving the area will be kept as a separate issue from warnings for other offences. All exits will be indicated to the fighter and officials' table.

Art. 10. Hand signals



Art. 11. Violations of rules

- Using illegal techniques
- Avoiding fight
- Turning around
- Unnecessary dropping down to waste time
- Commenting on referee's decisions
- Behaving in an unsportsman-like manner
- Loud commands of coach
- Coach entering tatami in case of injury

For any violation of rules by a coach, the referee will give penalties to his fighter.

Gross and serious rules violations may be handled immediately with a penalty point or even disqualification in extreme cases. Anytime a referee thinks that a disqualification is necessary, he shall confer with all the judges and the Observer of the area (a chief referee) at the event to ensure that the proper procedures are being applied.

A fighter cannot receive a point and a warning at the same time.

Art. 12. Stopping the match (Time-out)

Only the referee has the power to stop the match. When the referee is giving warnings or a penalty (minus) point, he must stop the clock.

A fighter may request a time-out raising his arm to check an injury or correct/fix his safety equipment. The referee does not have to grant a time-out if he feels it would be an unfair advantage or that it may in any way take away the advantage from the other fighter, unless the request is related to a health and safety issue. Time-outs shall be kept to a minimum. If the referee feels that a fighter is using time-outs to rest or to prevent the other fighter from scoring, a warning shall be given for delaying the match. Only the observer of the area (a chief referee) may interrupt the match from outside the tatami. He shall attract the attention of the referee who shall call time-out.

If a coach wishes to lodge a complaint or protest, he shall notify the Chairman of tatami sports. He may, if possible, handle the protest without stopping the match.



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Art. 12.1 Reasons for Time-out

- Injury (see rule on injuries and treatment)
- For the referee to confer with judges or Responsible of the Fighting Area (a chief referee)
- For the referee to converse with a fighter or his coach
- To ensure safety and fair play

Time-Out is not called to award points. The referee should do this quickly to ensure that each fighter has the benefit of the complete fighting time allowed for the match.

Referees who are not proficient in administering the match quickly and fairly may be replaced by the WAKO Tournament Chairman of tatami sports.

Art. 13. Injuries

In the case of an injury to one of the competitors, the match shall be stopped only long enough for the paramedic/doctor to decide whether or not the injured fighter can continue. Once the paramedic/doctor arrives on the tatami, he shall have only two minutes to decide if the injury requires treatment. All treatment must be completed within two minutes.

If the injury is serious it must be treated by the medics/doctor on duty who are the only ones who can determine if the match must be terminated.

If the match must be stopped because of injury, the referee and the two judges must decide:

Art. 13.1 Who caused the injury?

- Whether or not it was an intentional injury
- Whether or not it was the fault of the injured fighter
- Whether or not the injury was caused by an illegal technique

- If there were no rules violations by the uninjured fighter, that fighter shall win by forfeiture
- If there was a rules violation by the uninjured fighter, the injured fighter wins by disqualification
- If the injured fighter is declared fit to continue by the medic/doctor, the fight shall resume

If a fighter is injured in a fight, the doctor is the only person that can evaluate the circumstances.

If a kickboxer remains unconscious, only the referee and the doctor in charge will be allowed to stay on the tatami, unless the doctor needs assistance.

Art. 14. Procedure for KO, RSC, RSC-H, Injury

A kickboxer who has been knocked out due to a head-blow during the fight (or if the referee has stopped the fight due to severe head trauma which prevents him continuing) will be examined by a doctor immediately afterwards and accompanied to hospital by the ambulance on duty or to any other adequate facility. The aforementioned kickboxer will not be allowed to take part in another competition or bout for a period of at least **8** weeks after the KO.

If kickboxer has been knocked out due to a head-blow during the fight or if the referee has stopped the fight due to severe head trauma which prevents him continuing two times in a period of 3 months, he will not be allowed to take part in another competition or bout for a period of at least 3 months after the second KO or RSC-H.

A kickboxer who has been knocked out due to a head-blow during the fight, or who is unable to continue because the referee has stopped the fight due to severe head trauma three consecutive times in a period of 12 months, will not be allowed to take part in a competition or a bout for a period of one year after the third KO or RSC-H.

To the above mentioned quarantine periods the on-site doctor can extend the quarantine period if necessary. Also doctors at the hospital, owing to tests/scan of head results, can further extend the quarantine period.

A quarantine period means that a kickboxer cannot take part in any competition in kickboxing no matter what the discipline is. The quarantine periods are "minimum periods" and cannot be overruled even though a head scan shows no visible injuries.



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The central referee will tell the jury to mark KO or RSC-H or RSC on their score sheets, when he has stopped the bout due to the kickboxer's inability to resume the fight because of head blows. The same has to be reported by the chief referee on duty at that tatami on the fighter's WAKO SPORT PASS. This is also the official result of the fight and it cannot be overruled.

Before resuming kickboxing after a ban, as described in the above paragraphs, a kickboxer, after a special medical examination, will have to be declared fit to take part in competition by a sports doctor.

When suffering a KO or RSC-H defeat, a kickboxer must get a CT-Scan before returning to competition.

Art. 14.1 Procedure for injuries in general

In case of injuries besides KO or RSC-H, the doctor can give a minimum quarantine period and recommend treatment at hospital. A doctor can require immediate treatment at hospital.

Art. 15. Grand Champ and Team Competition

Art. 15.1 Grand Champ

In tournaments like World Cups, International Opens, a so-called Grand Champ competition can be arranged where fighters meet each other under the definition of no weight class. A Grand Champ competition can be organized as follows:

Art. 15.1.1 Original Grand Champ

Only winners of the weight classes are to participate. There are free drawings for the fights.

Open Grand Champ

All competitors can participate, but have to enroll in advance during the tournament. There are free drawings of the fights with all weight classes included.

Matches in a Grand Champ competition are 1 round of 3 or 2 minutes. No time-outs are to be used by the fighters.

Rules and equipment are the same as in ordinary semi-contact matches.

The types of Grand Champ competitions organized for a tournament must be stated in the invitation. No Grand Champ matches are organized at European or World Championships.

Art. 15.2 Team Competition

Art. 15.2.1 World/European Championships

- Team: 3 men and 1 woman
- All fighters are prepared with all equipment in their corner.
The female matches are the last in the team competition.
- There are no weight-class definitions.
The female fighter can only meet another female fighter.
- The team must be composed of national fighters only. No mixed teams with fighters from different countries.
- Each fight: 1 round of 2 minutes
- No timeout can be used during the round
- The extra match will be on 1 round of 2 minutes.
- If still in a draw after last 2 minutes a draw is declared
- The team with the most total points accumulated is the winner.
- All exits and warnings carry forward to the next fighter. This is to encourage an active contest. A fighter cannot be disqualified for exits in a team event; if he/she continues to exit, one point is taken off his/her team after each exit following the third exit.

If the score is a draw, a toss of the coin is used to select who sends out a fighter first, with the winner selecting their fighter to enter the tatami. If the winner of the toss selects a female fighter, she must be matched against the other female fighter. If a male is selected any other male fighter from the opposing team may compete against him.



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Art. 15.2.2 Exceptions in Team at World Cups, International Opens

A team may consist of the following formats, depending on the promoter's preferences. The team members may be from different countries or continents.

- 4 fighters (3 Male and 1 Female)
- 5 Fighters (Four Male and 1 Female)
- 5 Fighters (Five Males)
- 3 Fighters (Three Females)

Art. 16. Handshake / Touching of Gloves

Before and after a bout, the kickboxers will shake hands/*Touch Gloves* as a sign of a purely sporting and friendly rivalry, according to kickboxing regulations. Handshake takes place before starting the first round and after the decision. No handshake is allowed between the rounds.

Art. 17. Use of Drugs

WAKO follows the WADA Code of Conduct and its lists of prohibited substances which may be amended from time to time. Consult WAKO Anti Doping Rules and procedures.

Any kickboxer refusing to submit to a medical examination or doping test before or after a fight may be immediately disqualified or suspended pending a full hearing.

The same will occur in the case of an official encouraging such a refusal. The use of local anesthetics is allowed, if agreed upon by a doctor from the Medical Committee.

WAKO refers to and adopts WADA Doping Rules in all cases.

Note

For better readability the text sometimes uses masculine pronouns only. However, all references to persons apply to both genders.