

Martial Arts - Which Type is Best for You?

By [Jennifer Wasilewski](#)

If you are considering martial arts as a wellness activity, congratulations! Evolving your self or your children in a martial arts program is an excellent way to improve physical, mental, and spiritual health. Many new comers to this activity often assume that karate is one of their only options. Fortunately, there are many practices that fall under the umbrella of martial arts, therefore, involvement in these arts can vary greatly. Below you will find a simple summer of the top 4 martial arts practices which will enable you to make the best choice for your needs.

Karate:

Karate, which originated in Okinawa, Japan, is the most well known and widely practiced martial art in North America. The ancient tradition as is a form of self defense that teaches those who practice it to use their hands as weapons. Perhaps one of the best description of Karate is derived from it's name which means "open hand." Those who practice karate work to focus their energy to defeat a opponent or win a challenge. Physical benefits of karate include an over all sense of wellness as well as an improved upper body strength.

Judo:

Judo is a martial arts practice derived from Jujitsu and means the "gentle way." While it's name suggests something lacking in power, in actuality, Judo is widely used to train women and individuals of small stature how to defend themselves. Instead of using brute force, Judo trains followers to gain strength and ability by strategically gaining the advantage. Judo often engages individuals in grappling throwing and rolling move that help you to achieve the upper hand in a combat situation. Like Karate, judo stimulates the body and helps to achieve an over all physical wellness.

Taekwondo:

Taekwondo (also known as Tae Kwon Do, Taekwon-Do and Tae Kwon-Do) as was created some time during the 1950's in Korea making it relatively new to the world of martial arts. While it is slowly gaining popularity in the united states, it is Korea's national sport. Taekwondo is based on the simple assumption that the longest and strongest part of the body should be considered the weapon, making the leg the major focus of this practice. Considered by most to be a derivative of Karate, Taekwondo is similar to karate but emphasizes the lower body and kicking as opposed to the upper body. Those who are looking to build their lower body strength will find that Taekwondo can offer a method to do so.

Kung Fu:

Kung Fu is probably one of the most widely used martial arts practices on television and movies. Most people are familiar with this practice due to Hollywood favorites like Jackie Chan. With its visually appealing display of kicks, strikes, punches, and throws, Kung Fu is one of the most physically demanding forms of martial arts. This is excellent for individuals who are interested in taking part in martial arts but want to pursue an action packed practice that really gives you a complete cardio workout.

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