



Frequently Asked Questions...

0751 7437 300 info@lctkd.com

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What exactly is LCTKD?

LCTKD is a specialist martial arts and wellbeing school which provides public, private and tailored instruction in a range of martial arts and related subjects. Founded in London Chinatown at the end of 2004, it now has classes in London, the Cotswolds, Warwickshire and Worcestershire, and connections around the world. LCTKD has a teaching team of over 20 highly qualified instructors and tutors, who not only teach but also write books, produce videos, and advise schools, companies and organisations.

The one thing that brings all our students together is a desire to change their lives: to become healthier, more confident, more knowledgeable, calmer, focused - and in many cases better qualified. Of course, people do come to us because they've heard what we do is fun, or because they'd like to get some exercise, lose weight, or learn some self defence; but whether that was their initial feeling or not, almost everyone who comes to us wants to make a commitment to something very unique and life changing.

What do you teach?

First of all, we teach a number of martial arts. There's the superfit art from the Korean military, TaeKwonDo, which is the world's most popular martial art, famous for its high kicks. Its energetic style makes it popular with those looking to lose weight and gain fitness, and its traditional, disciplined but still pacey approach makes it a good choice for children. Specifically for older teens and adults more interested in the combat side than the traditional, there is kickboxing, and through specialist instruction there is DFS – the Algerian “Desert Fox” fighting system. Ensodo, our martial art for grown ups, is aimed at older students who want real self defence and a more formal martial arts structure - but without the flying kicks. Our Tai Chi looks at martial arts from a gentler, non-combat perspective, with a focus on the healing qualities of the movements, and for those in search of true stillness we teach the Zen inspired Japanese sword art, Mugai Ryu.

Through our own specialists, we teach other martial arts and related subjects, and offer specialist courses in martial arts related topics. We support activity based work experience, residential and other placements for people on academic and vocational training programmes. We also have great experience in supporting our teenage students through their Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme levels from Bronze to Gold.

Who do you teach?

Our range of martial arts and activities provides something for everyone, and so not surprisingly our students are aged from under 4 to over 90. 50% of our fighting arts students are female (that's about 7 times more than most martial arts schools). Many people train with us together as families, sometimes with family members doing the same activities, and other times with different family members doing different things, and still taking advantage of our discounted family rates. You don't have to be fit to start, and indeed many of our students come to us not only unfit, but with illnesses and disabilities: we work with you according to your individual needs.

How will your martial arts help me (or my child)?

Our aim is to combine our skills and experience with your commitment, and to help you over time to become healthy, focused, disciplined, calm, and confident. In addition to the obvious benefits these things bring, LCTKD's younger students use their qualifications and achievements to help them in applying for schools, teenage students in completing their Duke of Edinburgh Awards and applying for University places, and adults students in applying for jobs – where the vocational qualifications, work experience opportunities and LCTKD references make a big difference. Advanced students have the chance to visit other countries to study martial arts, and are supported in becoming instructors and setting up their own clubs, if they want to. Of course, sometimes our students have had to use their martial arts knowledge to defend themselves from violent attack: not only could your time with LCTKD change your life, it could also save it.

Do you teach anything else?

At LCTKD, we are a specialist martial arts and wellbeing school, and we aim to be the very best at what we do. In order to achieve that, we make sure that our instructors are focused on the teaching of martial arts and directly related activities, so we steer clear of the sorts of money-making distractions that you might see elsewhere. We don't do parties, paintballing, or boxercise. We do teach special classes and courses in related things which are helpful to our students, such as stretching, breathing, relaxation and meditation, using instructors with experience and qualifications in related subjects, such as yoga. We offer specialist support to martial artists interested in competition. We offer a whole set of specialist courses in teaching martial arts, from Junior Leader up to Chief Instructor, and courses targeted at instructors and assistant instructors, like first aid, or teaching martial arts to children. Most of our courses carry formal qualifications certified by the Institute for Advanced Integrated Martial Arts. We also offer special short courses and tasters which help people get an insight into particular topics, such as weapons, or street self defence, and we offer specialist advice to organisations on practical self defence and personal safety.

How long does it take to get a black belt?

Our martial arts TaeKwonDo, DFS, Ensodo and Mugai Ryu offer the opportunity to progress through the belts to black belt or equivalent and beyond. It usually takes five years or more of hard work to reach black belt, though some people manage it in less time. It is not compulsory to take the gradings or assessments for new belts in any of our martial arts, and some students choose not to. That's fine.

Can I do more than one martial art?

Most people begin with one, and later add others. Our different subscription levels allow you to choose what you want to be involved in, and if you want to add more martial arts to your subscription, that's easy to do.

What should I wear?

For Tai Chi or Kickboxing, you can get t-shirts and martial arts trousers from our shop. For TaeKwonDo, Ensodo and Mugai Ryu there is formal clothing, which you get from us. You don't need that straight away, but it's compulsory for your first grading or assessment. You should get the clothing for your martial art as soon as you are settled in. In TaeKwonDo, we offer a deal where your first grading examination fee is included when you buy your suit.

How do I get started?

Anyone can come for a free trial class. After that, it takes just a few minutes to sign up. Just go to our page: www.letkd.com/start and follow the instructions, or ask your Instructor.

What's in a Starter Pack and do I have to get one?

For our TaeKwonDo and Kickboxing students only, a starter pack covers your training fees for the first month, your essential safety sparring gear, and a TaeKwonDo handbook. In all, this saves you about £50, and it gets you started off safely too. Not surprisingly, a starter pack is most people's favourite way to start TaeKwonDo or Kickboxing, but you don't have to get one. You can just register and set up your monthly subscription, and pick up sparring gear and your handbook as soon as you are ready. It's up to you.

Frequently Asked Questions About Costs...

How much is it?

What it costs depends on what martial arts you do, where you do it, your income, and how many people from your family are training with us. People at some classes, such as after school clubs, classes supported by Worcestershire County Council's Adult Learning, and some beginners courses (especially in Tai Chi), don't pay by subscription, but by the course. You can see the course costs when you book. Everyone else pays by monthly subscription. The subscriptions table we provide at www.lctkd.com/start sets out the different subscription charges.

What do I get for my payment?

Whether you pay by subscription, or you pay by course, you can come to any subscription class appropriate to what you are studying, your age, and your experience, without paying any more. What is more, the fee that you pay regularly also gives you access to our certificated training courses, work experience placements, specialist classes and seminars, competitions and events, and our on-line learning, which is often not available to people outside LCTKD. We are able to offer this because we have a large number of students, and most of our students stay with us a long time, and a strong body of qualified Instructors and Tutors. This enables us to offer very good value regular fees, which are much cheaper than other martial arts schools, sports clubs, and gyms, and a range of top quality additional activities not available elsewhere.

The Starter Packs are very cheap. What's the catch?

We don't make any money on the Starter Packs available to TaeKwonDo and Kickboxing students, but it works for us for two reasons. Firstly, if people have their safety sparring gear right away it helps them feel part of the LCTKD family from the start, and that's important to us. Secondly, with us subsidising sparring gear for new starters, it helps us maintain our excellent safety record – another thing that is important to us.

What if I can't afford it?

Not only are our rates better value than anywhere else, we also offer family discounts, and if you are on a low income, you can take advantage of our low income rates. Gradings and assessments for families and people on low income are discounted too. If the outlay is too much in one go, you don't have to buy a Starter Pack, and you can pick up things you need as you go along, checking with us what's available second hand if that helps.

How do I pay?

Follow the instructions at www.lctkd.com/start to set up your monthly payments quickly and easily, or to begin with a starter pack for TaeKwonDo or Kickboxing. Or ask your Instructor to help. It is also possible to buy an annual subscription in our online shop. You pay in advance, and because you do that the fees work out very much cheaper.

What if I haven't been to class – do I still have to pay?

Just like signing up at a gym, a spa, or the golf club, your subscription pays for your membership. You can do lots of classes, so the best way to get the best value is to come to lots of classes! If you miss classes, just like at a gym, spa or golf club, your membership fees still apply. Note that your subscription cost is spread throughout the year, so you continue paying it every month, even if your classes are termly.

Can I just pay by cash?

We have a lot of students, and we want those students to get the maximum time doing martial arts, so we make sure that every minute of our weekly classes is for learning, and keep the administration out of class. So we don't work on a pay by class basis, and we don't accept subscription payments in cash.

What if I leave?

There's no contract to lock you in, so if you stop, you simply stop paying your subscription. If you do leave, please remember to cancel your subscription - otherwise your membership will continue. Note that if you pay for an annual membership, that is not refundable if you leave, but can be extended if you are ill or injured.