

# About the Instructor

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Kyle Johnson holds the rankings of *shichidan* (7th degree black belt) in Kodokan judo, *rokudan* (6th degree black belt) in ju-jitsu, and *rokudan* in kenjutsu (the art of sword-fighting). He began studying judo at the Charleston, SC YMCA in 1977 at the age of 4 and gained his *shodan* (1st degree black belt) in judo at the age of 15.

Kyle studied seasonally for 8 years at the Kodokan Institute in Tokyo, Japan under Master Toshiro Daigo, who is one of only 15 people to reach *judan*, or 10th degree black belt in judo, the highest ranking in martial arts. He was a quarter-finalist twice in the All Japan Judo Championship and a semi-finalist once, in 1994.

From 1990 - 1996, Kyle competed internationally through the International Martial Arts Federation, a full-contact, multi-disciplinary circuit. He won 3 tournaments during this time and was ranked in the top 10% of fighters every year. In 1996 Kyle was invited to the US Olympic Trials based on his ranking with the International Judo Federation.