

Handbook to use the

“Didactic Mat”

Karate Skills
Demo Version



I introduce myself...

My name is Silvia Marotta and I am 5° Dan Sensei of Traditional Karate.

I teach children, teenagers and adults since 1991.

I am President and Technical Director of the A.S.D. Moving Club Karate Crema, affiliated to F.I.K.T.A. and I therefore follow the guidelines of Sensei Hiroshi Shirai.

I am an I.S.E.F. graduate, I have a Physical Education University Degree with Master in Posturology and I manage since 2001 a gym that performs, in addition to karate, various types of activities and disciplines.

In 2014 I created an educational learning program of the karate motory schemes for children 4-6 years, reserving them a specific course.

To speed up and simplify the learning, I designed and “built” the Didactic Mat - Karate Skills, with materials available in the area. The result, already from the first weeks, was surprising. Also comparing two different working groups (one lesson group with Mat and the other without) the differences in learning were really important.

Unfortunately the materials used, had various drawbacks (huge weight of the Mat, glue that melted with summer heat, need for frequent “repair” interventions). So I looked in Italy for a site being able to produce the Mat with a suitable material, able to meet the requirements.

After very long research, I finally found it and I must say that the result is exactly the one I wanted.

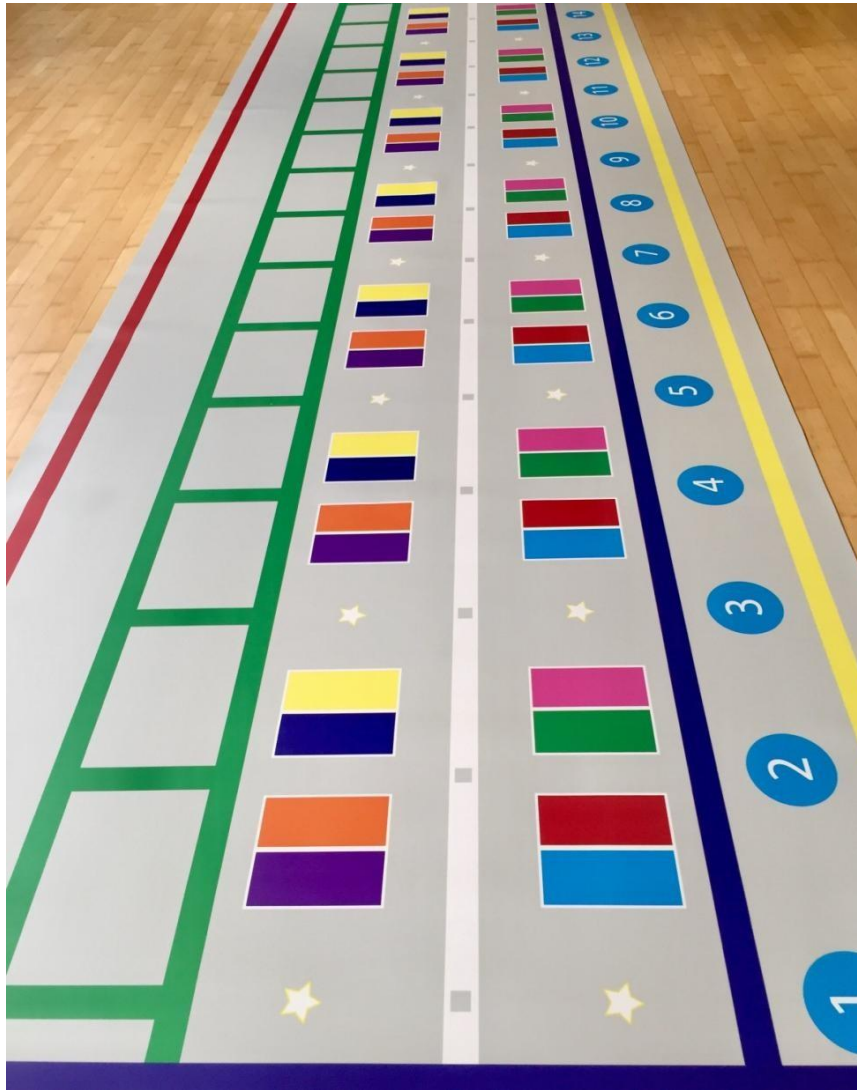
Now, given the many requests received from other Karate Schools, I am spreading it together with the guidelines for use and with the possibility of holding presentation and/or training stages, wishing that it can be of help to many other Sensei and their young students.

Demonstration video available on the ASD Moving Club YouTube Channel

For further informations and training stage:

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THE DIDACTIC MAT

The didactic mat consists of a polypropylene strip (about 2,5 mm. thick) 6 meters long and 2 meters wide, on which various elements are represented:

- 2 Baby tracks and 2 Junior tracks
- 4 lines
- 1 ladder
- 28 two-colored tiles (7 kumite stations, up to 14 students at the same time)
- 15 numbered circles
- 16 star points
- 15 little squares

THE TRACK

The track, consisting of two parallel lines arranged along the 6 meters of the mat, is the basis for learning the gait.

The mat, provides 4 tracks:

- 2 Baby (red-green and yellow-blue) suitable for the width of the hips of children from approximately 4 to 6 years;
- 2 Junior (green-white and white-blue) suitable for children of approximately 6, 7, 8 years.

In this area of the mat, the children experiment with the different footing of the feet passing from one line to the other until they learn the motory schemes that will lead to the execution of the first fundamental positions of karate (zenkutsu-dachi, kiba-dachi).

Once the schemes on the lower limbs have been learned, you can move on to coordination with the upper limbs.

Exercises:

- move from one line to the other advancing along the track:
 - With one foot at a time and with both feet (jumped zig-zag)
- going forward in zenkutsu-dachi with fists to the hips: it is important to insist on the “foot that passes near the other foot” to obtain the typical “semicircle” movement.
- going forward in zenkutsu-dachi with execution and coordination of all attack and parry techniques
- as for going on, the same exercises can be done going backwards.
- in pairs: one child moves forward, the other step backwards; once the basic scheme has been learned, it is possible to perform the sanbon-kumite and the gohon-kumite on the track
- going forward in **quadrupedia** along the track: right foot and right hand along the green line, left foot and left hand along the red line
- same exercise executed going backwards
- lateral movement in **quadrupedia** using the double track: feet on the white line and hands on the yellow line

THE LINE

The 4 lines (red, white, blue, yellow) allow you to work simultaneously with the students arranged in 4 rows. They are the basis for coordination and balance exercises.

Exercises:

- “rope walk”: go forward/backward putting in line one foot after the other
- same exercise but with a different footing of the feet: forefoot, heels, inner edge, outer edge
- lateral gait: with approach of the foot (propedeutic for tsugi-ashi) and with forward crossing of the foot (propedeutic for moving in kiba-dachi) or backward (propedeutic for kosa-dachi); this exercise can also be performed in pairs on the track, with the hands in contact with those of the partner
- lateral movement in kiba-dachi
- front and lateral "gallop"
- gait in kokutsu-dachi

To be continued.....

THE TWO-COLORED TILES

The 28 colored tiles are arranged at specific distances that make them adaptable to the step of children from 4 to about 8 years.

Allow learning the basics of kihon-ippō kumite, based on colors.

They are very useful especially in the process of lateralization and space-temporal organization.

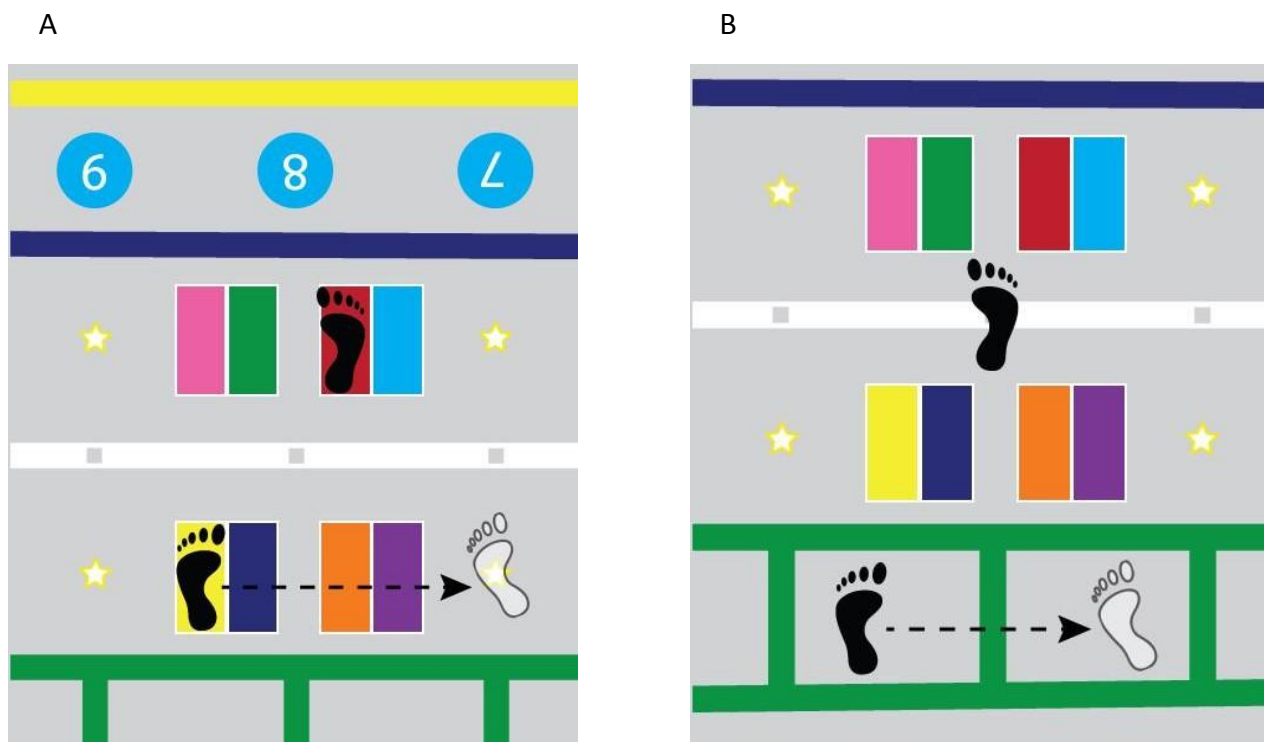
Exercises:

- *Color jump*: starting at the beginning of the mat, near the white line, the student calls one of the 8 colors of the tiles and immediately after jumps on the corresponding tile (with one foot or two feet, depending on the difficulty chosen by the Sensei)
- *call color* (training for reaction speed): in pairs, in seiza one facing the other with hands on the thighs (a mate behind the blue line and the other behind the green line): the Master calls one of the 8 colors and the athletes must place their hand on the color before the front mate; to the command "Kiai" the athletes try to place the hand on the central square before the mate, accompanying the movement with the kiai
- *the color race*: run in a scattered way around the gym, when the Sensei call a color the students occupy the corresponding tile as quickly as possible (if the children are more than the colors, those who remain outside can perform a little "forfeit")
- "switch" (the "frozen" leap): left foot on yellow, right foot on green (older children can perform it from the lunge position, with back footing on the forefoot); perform with a fast jump the change of footing, bringing the right foot on the blue and the left foot on the pink "blocking" ("freezing") immediately the new position not to swing. At the next command return to the starting footing. Try to keep the pelvis at the same distance from the ground, during the jump. Older children (greater width of the hips) will position themselves with their feet on the colors suitable for their height.

Technical exercises:

- **propaedeutics kihon ippon kumite:**
 - Students in front of the light blue/pink - yellow/purple tiles. Start getting confidence with positions. "Pink foot back": the student assumes the position of zenkutsu-dachi keeping his left foot on the light blue and bringing his right foot back; "step forward on the blue": the student moves his right leg by taking a step forward in zenkutsu-dachi until he places his right foot on the blue tile; "yame": the student returns his right foot on the pink tile. After a few repetitions, the exercise is performed from the opposite side (right zenkutsu-dachi) and from the opposite position

To be continued.....



THE NUMBERED CIRCLES

The 15 light-blue numbered circle are a very valid tool to help children in the management of the space and in the formation of an ordered line (perfect for the moment of greeting at the beginning and at the end of lesson).

Also in this case the games/exercices that can be organized are many and involve different motory schemes and abilities.

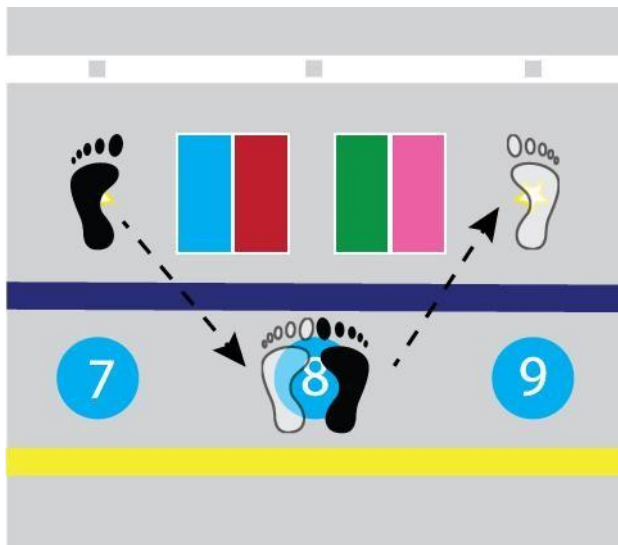
To be continued...

Technical exercises:

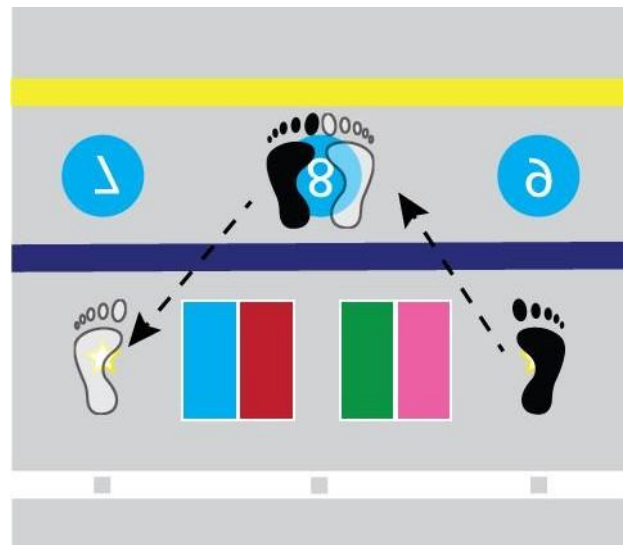
- movement yori-ashi: from the yellow-blue track, left foot on the blue line in correspondence of the n°3 and right foot on the yellow line in correspondence of the n°1 (the length of the zenkutsu-dachi will vary according to the height of the child); slide by pushing with the back leg until bringing the left foot in correspondence of the n°4 while the right foot recovers at n°2; continue by moving on all the numbers. Repeat with front right leg.
- movement tsugi-ashi: from the yellow/blue track, left foot on the blue line in correspondence of the n°3 and right foot on the yellow line in correspondence of the n°1 (the length of the zenkutsu-dachi will vary according to the height of the child); advance with the back foot (right) up to the height of n°3 and move the left foot up to the height of n°5; continue by moving on all odd numbers. Repeat with front right leg.
- lateral movement in kiba-dachi
- propedeutic exercise to Kirikaeshi:
 - The "V": starting from one of the even numbers, perform left zenkutsu-dachi bringing the left foot on the corresponding star. Do the change of position by returning the left foot on the number and moving the right foot on the corresponding star (image A). Continue several times by performing the changes consecutively.

To be continued...

A



B



SQUARES AND STARS

From the slalom between the squares to the classic “bell” game (jump with open feet on the stars and jump on one foot on the following square... and so on until the end of the mat) the agility, balance and coordination exercises that can be performed by exploiting these small symbols placed at strategic distances, are really many. When combined with the other elements of the mat (tiles, tracks, ladder, numbers) are a useful reference for the execution of more complex schemes and for the positioning of external elements in the “3D Program”.

To be continued...

FUNCTIONAL EXERCISES FOR THE "TAI-SABAKI"

The Didactic Mat is an excellent aid for the acquisition of the schemes related to non linear movements where the body moves sideways or with circular movements.

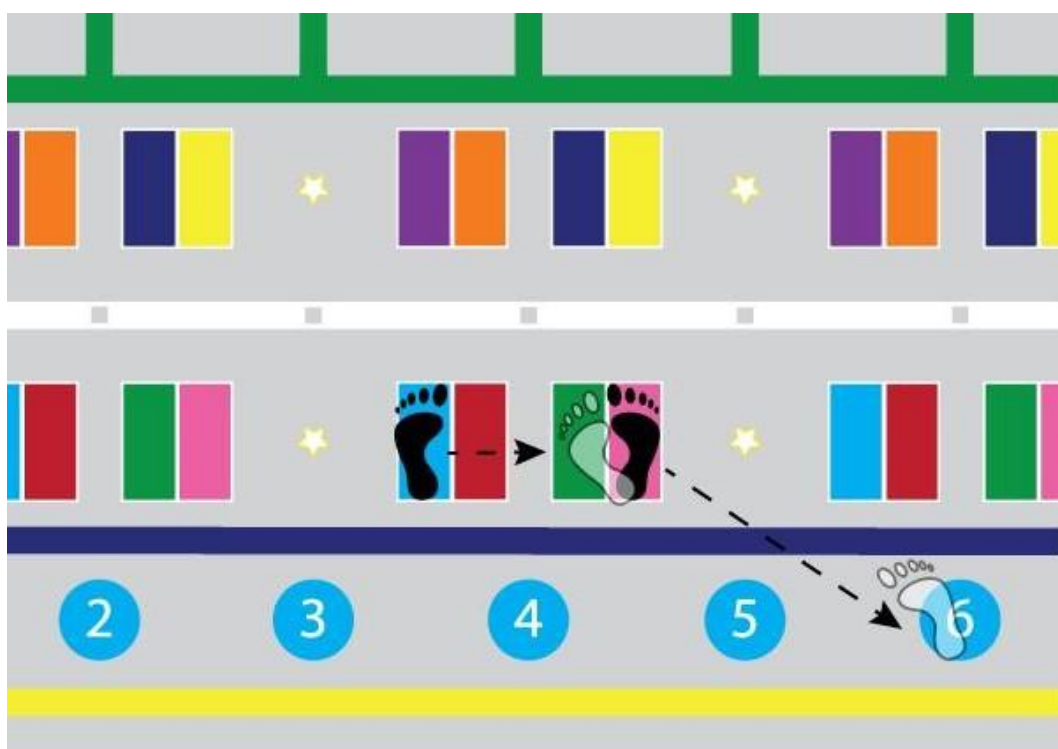
These exercises are aimed at older students who have already consolidated the basic movements.

Once the exercise is learned on one side, will be trained the movements from the opposite side.

Let's give two examples from the Kumite Station 4.

Exercise 1:

The change of position can be done with the sequentially footing of the feet (tsugi-ashi), first moving the left foot from light-blue to green/pink and then the right foot from pink to n°6, or with the yori-ashi movement, always with the same reference points.



Once the scheme has been acquired, you can integrate the movement with the upper limbs (parry and counterattacks) and then perform the kihon ippon kumite in pairs.

To be continued...

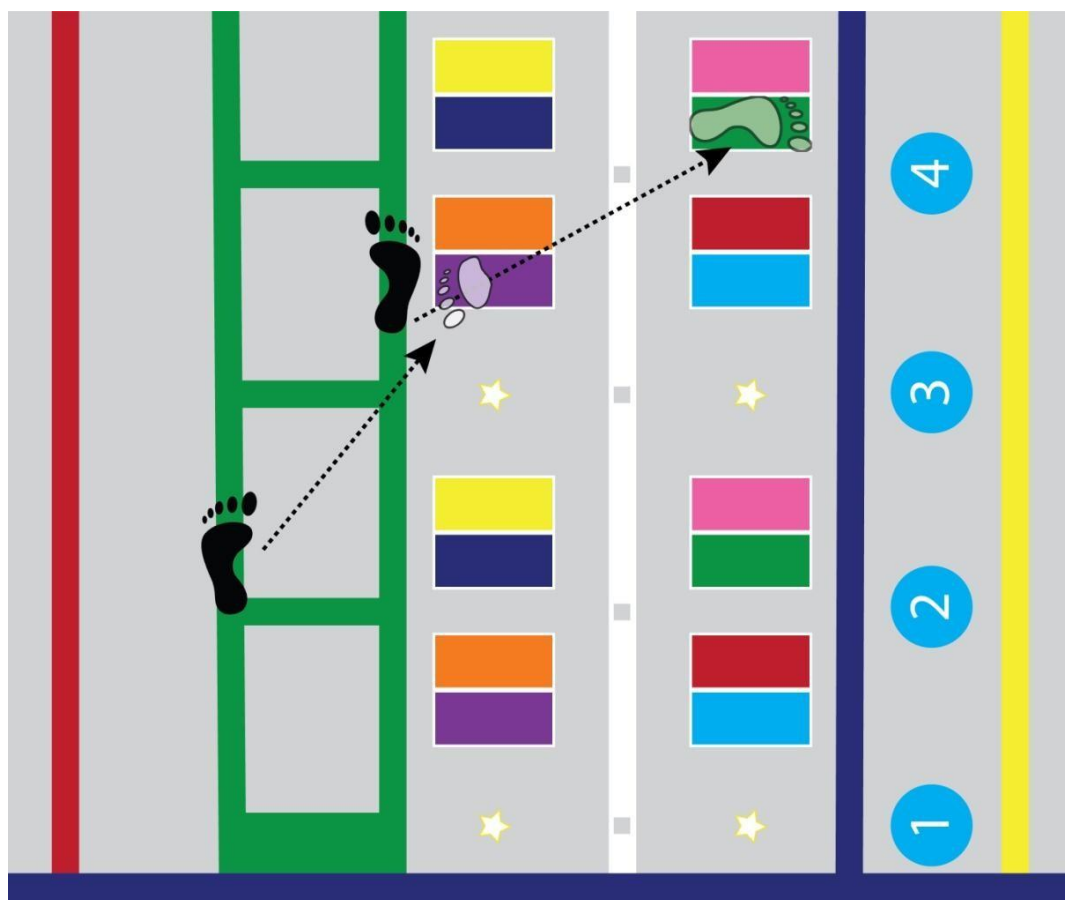
FUNCTIONAL EXERCISES for KATA ROTATION

In the example, the exercise is proposed in “omote” execution. Once this scheme is learned, it is possible to propose “ura” execution.

"THE SPINNING TOP"

Basis for the acquisition of the 90° rotation scheme of the kata.

Before executing the complete movement , the individual steps must be repeated several times separately.

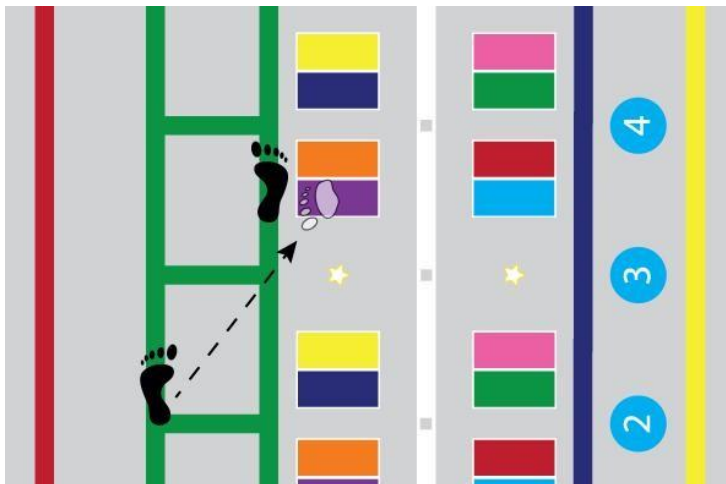


From right zenkutsu-dachi on the track-ladder, with right foot near the purple tile:
1- position the left forefoot on the purple tile crossing behind the right

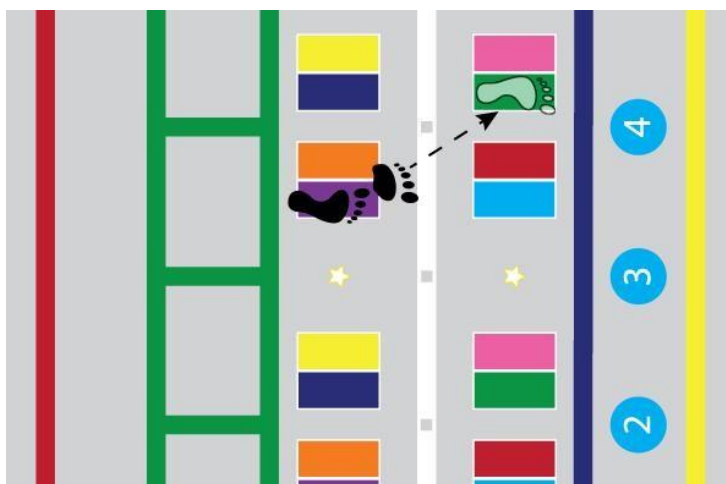
foot;

- 2- rotate feet and body up to the "tiger position" (as neko-aschi);
- 3- perform left zenkutsu-dachi bringing the left foot on the green tile.

Step 1:



From Step 2 to Step 3:



It is important to let students learn first the “step of the tiger” using the track, to accustom them to shift the weight from one leg to the other and perceive the new balance that derives from it.

Useful for this purpose, for example, the exercise of the “farmer” (sowing/harvest) presented in the 3D Program Handbook.

To be continued...

THE MIXED PATH

The exercises on the Didactic Mat can be used in the circuit.

For example, starting from the numbered circle "1" the blue track can be used for the advancement in zenkutsu-dachi - return to the colored tiles with the "color-jump" - proceed along the ladder with the "open-close" exercise - return along the red line with the balancing exercise on the forefoot - reposition at the start.

Next to the Mat, (and sometimes on the Mat itself) an additional path may be arranged in which children can experience basic physical and psychomotor skills (running, jumping, climbing, rolling, crawling, etc...).

The playful approach, both for the study of technical elements and for the performance of basic motory exercises, is fundamental. Involving the child's imaginary in situations that helps him to represent the motory action to be carried out more easily in his mind, it is extremely important for achieving objectives.

For example, next to the Mat can be placed an area tatami or mattress.



The typical exercises that I propose in the mixed path are the following:

- THE GAITS OF THE ANIMALS: the animal world has always fascinated the child. Some shiftings and gaits are ideal for learning some types of change of position and improving strength, coordination and agility.

For example: Caterpillar, Elephant, Little Donkey for elasticity and coordination; big and small Gorilla for the reinforcement of the wrists and for learning the correct closure of the punches; Crocodile, Frog, Rabbit, Duck to train strength and explosiveness; Crane for balance.

- THE JUMPS: for the development of jumps I use rubber-foam emicylinders and padded little obstacles that can also be arranged along the Didactic Mat in order to exploit the reference elements.

However, any type of obstacle can be used, provided it is obviously not dangerous for children.

- THE ROLLS

Rolls and flips are performed on the tatami.

- FUNCTIONAL EXERCISES

Most of the exercises proposed in the lesson with the Didactic Mat have the purpose to create motory schemes functional to the future development of the specific techniques of Karate. For example, placing little obstacles of about 20 cm. along the green ladder at a correct distance, it is possible to make the child proceed by performing the leg movement of the mae-geri (right and left) over the obstacle and then overcome it and move on to the next one (see “ 3D Program”).

With imagination it is possible to create endless exercises to involve different skills and abilities. In the "Handbook to the use of the Didactic Mat 3D" basic and functional exercises are presented with the use of integrative teaching tools (small objects, obstacles, little mattress, etc...) to be placed on the Mat.



The full version of the Handbook will be sent after purchase of the Mat.

Technical Characteristics of the Mat:

- in polyester (15%) coated in pvc (85%) - thickness: 2,40 mm
- anti-slip (positionable on wood, tiles, tatami)
- easy ground installation, simply placing the Mat on the ground (without the need for bio-adhesive or other systems that affect the flooring)
- flame retard class Bfl/S1
- scratchproof
- waterproof
- can also be used for outdoor settings
- washable (sponge with warm water - no chemical detergents and abrasive products)
- rollable, for easy transport
- weight: about 12 kg

Description

- White PVC coated polyester woven fabric
- UV and Latex inks

Composition

85% PVC - 15% polyester

CHARACTERISTIC	SPECIFICATION	METHOD
Thickness (mm)	2.20 ± 0.20	
Total mass (g/m ²)	1000 ± 100	EN ISO 2286-2
Fabric mass (g/m ²)	145 ± 10	EN ISO 2286-2
Breaking load (daN/50mm)	L.: 160 / T.: 90	EN ISO 1421
Breaking extension (%)	L.: 20 / T.: 25	EN ISO 1421
Tear strength (daN)	L.: 3.0 / T.: 3.0	EN ISO 4674-1B
Coating adhesion (daN/50mm)	Min. 5.0	EN ISO 2411
Dimensional stability (%)	L.: < 2.0% / T.: < 2.0%	6h at 80°C
Slip resistance	Class DS	EN 13893
Burning behaviour	B _{fl} - s1	EN 13501-1

L - Along T - Across

Produced in Italy