

# The Meaning Behind Belt Colors

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Each belt color symbolizes the growth of the student. A beginner, or white belt, knows

nothing about the martial arts and is like a blank sheet of paper. As the student studies and his knowledge increases, the color of his belt darkens. The black belt is a symbol of mastery of the basics and it encompasses all of the previous colors. Although the black belt represents mastery of the basics, it is not the end of the journey. The student must strive to incorporate the martial arts into all areas of life, only then can one be a true master.

Following are some of the ideas behind the individual belt colors of the martial arts:

- White: Starlight, purity, nothingness, fresh soil.
- Yellow: Sunrise, warmth, energy necessary for growth.
- Orange: Morning sun, new growth, youth.
- Green: Mid-day sun, active growth, spring time, plants and trees.
- Blue: Afternoon sky, mature growth, reaching toward higher goals.
- Brown/Red: Evening sun, strengthening of roots, foundation, earth, resolve.
- Black: Night, absorption of knowledge, all colors combined, beginning.

Incidentally, the system of using a colored-belt ranking is fairly new. Traditional martial artists were given only one belt, white. As students worked out and gained knowledge, the belt darkened from the sweat and effort put into each class. They then "lined up" according to the darkest belt. This is why students should not wash their belts, as you wash away your knowledge.