

Frequently Asked Questions

Can I stay to watch practice?

ABOSLUTELY! We actually encourage families to stay. That is how you learn the sport and how you can support your child. We only ask one thing. When you stay to watch, allow the Coaches to control the class. Do not come to the edge of the mat to talk to your child or call to your child from the spectator area when your child is on the mat. If you think your child needs something, get a Coach's attention and let us know that there is something we need to address.

I want my child to learn discipline, how will you help me with that?

Judo is a very disciplined sport, and we strictly follow Judo tradition on respect. Above all, we must ensure the safety of all students. When any behavior threatens the physical or emotional safety of another student, we will address it immediately. Children are expected to respect the dojo (the training room), the coaches, their families, their teammates, their school teachers, their school classmates, and themselves. Children will be taught what this means. If children continue to show lack of respect, they will be told to sit on the edge of the mat, or if the lack of respect was significant, they will be told to leave the mat and sit in a spectator chair. When this happens, a coach will talk to you and the child together to explain what happened and what the child needs to do to prevent it from happening again. If your child is having trouble with respect at home or at school, we ask that you do not use missing judo as a punishment, but we will support you if this is your decision. We do ask that you let us know what is happening and we will talk to your child. Judo is a way of life not only practiced in the dojo, but also in the home and community. We are here to support your child in learning how to be a good citizen.

What is the uniform that the kids wear and when can my child get one?

The uniform is called a Judogi (Joo Doe Gee), or just Gi for short. We like to wait about a month before ordering a Gi for new students to make sure they like the sport. The cost is around \$35, give or take a few dollars depending on the height of the child. Until your child gets the Gi, he/she needs to wear a long sleeve t-shirt and long sweat pants or track pants with no snaps, zippers, or other type of metal.

Can I get my child a Gi without going through the Club?

It is not recommended. Marion PAL Judo has a wholesale agreement with an authorized martial arts vendor. We can purchase the Gis at a very low cost compared to what you would pay if you bought one on your own. We do have a limited supply of used Gis. If we have one in your child's size, we will make sure it is offered to you.

I see some kids wearing Blue Gis. Can my child get one?

White Gis are required for ALL competition, which is why all Judo students have White Gis. Blue Gis are only required for National and International competition, but not for local, state, or regional competition. It is the policy of Marion PAL Judo to not allow Blue Gis for children who have not competed in a National competition. A Blue Gi is earned.

How will I know when my child is ready to compete?

The coaches will let you know when your child is ready to compete. Ready to compete means that your child has an understanding of the rules for safety, has a few techniques that can be performed with some skill, and is able to fall correctly to prevent injury if thrown. Please remember that ready to compete does NOT mean ready to win. Judo is a difficult sport to master and most children do not begin competition by winning matches.

Does my child have to compete?

No, Marion PAL Judo does not require any child to compete, but we do recommend it. With support from Family, most children want to compete, have fun, and do well. Please remember to stress to your child that competition is about the learning and growing, and not always about the winning. Children who feel pressured to always win are the children who most often quit the sport, as no one can always win. Marion PAL Judo's motto is "Do Your Best and Have Fun!"

What is the cost of competition?

The entry fees for most local and state tournaments are between \$35 - \$45. Marion PAL Judo has some funds to help pay for local and state tournaments. These funds come from fundraisers. Our main fundraiser is our tournament called the Red, White and Blue Classic that is held every November. We ask all families to help find sponsors for this tournament. We also have sponsorship letters we can give you to take to local businesses to help pay the entry fee costs. Some of our past athletes have used sponsorships, and the community is very happy to help. If you need a sponsorship request letter, let a Coach know.

What happens if my child is participating in another activity that conflicts with Judo class time?

Marion PAL Judo coaches support children who want to be active in other sports or other school and community activities. Sometimes this means they will miss a Judo practice. All we ask is that you let us know when this will happen. We also ask that you help your child understand that they may have to work harder to catch up when they come back to judo. This can be a difficult "reality check" for some children who find that their Judo teammates are progressing faster than they are.

Is there anything I can have my child do at home to help with Judo?

We stress that no throws or pins can be practiced anywhere except the dojo under the supervision of a Coach. At home, children can practice warm-up exercises like forward rolls, sit ups, push ups, etc. They can also do Tandoku Renshu, which they will learn the first few months of class. Anything that works on core strength and balance is great, such as riding bikes, swimming, going to a playground, or just running around outside.