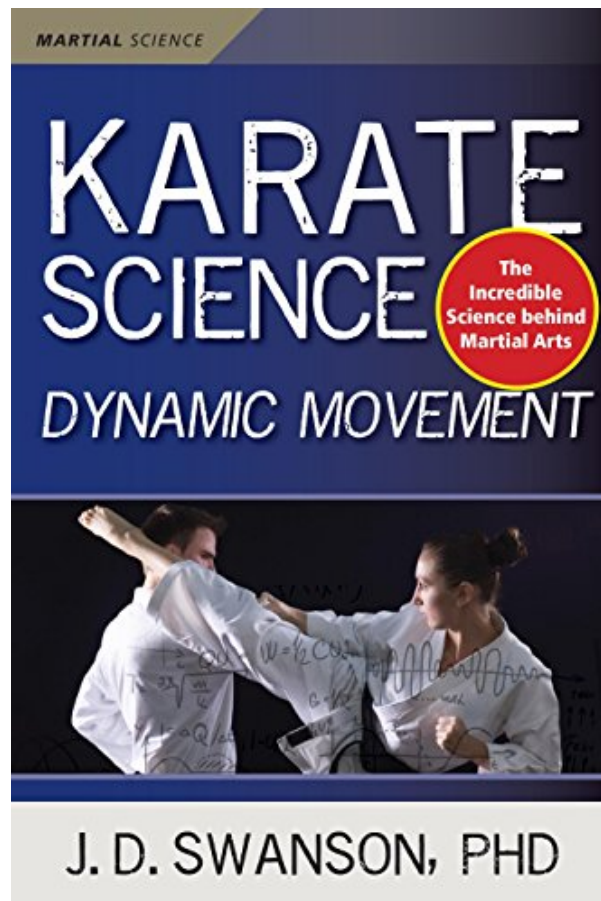


KARATE SCIENCE: DYNAMIC MOVEMENT (MARTIAL SCIENCE) BY J. D. SWANSON



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Review

An informative guide for those looking to enhance their karate training. Swanson's debut is a scientific guide to the stances, movements, and techniques of karate. Swanson, a professor of biology and biomechanics at Salve Regina University, uses his scientific training to help teachers and students better understand the tenets of karate. The many illustrations (ably provided by Nigro) show everything from proper alignment of a striking surface (say, a fist or a foot) to how one's body should move from the beginning to the end of a thrust. The first part of the book focuses on technique, with sections on stances, thrusting, kicking, striking, and blocking. The guide does more than demonstrate how positions should look; Swanson takes the time to explain how each should feel and which muscle groups should be engaged throughout the process. The second part explains the science behind how our joints and muscles work as well as how the body keeps its balance. This section also includes a brief primer on "the application of kinesiological principles to karate," which outlines ways to get more force into moves by increasing mass and, crucially, speed. The last section deals with the notion of "internal movement," essentially a system of muscle retraction and counter moves that aid in perfecting efficient and powerful techniques. While many students mistakenly think of this process as simply hip wiggling, Swanson shows that the process is more focused on intra-abdominal pressure, and he explains how the proper tensioning and contracting of certain muscles are key to quick and powerful movements. Swanson's writing is clear and informative, and his pure love of the art shines through. This book is not for karate neophytes, and the terms used will be confusing to unfamiliar readers. But for teachers and students who want to not only perfect techniques, but also understand the biology behind them, the book will be an invaluable aid. (Indie Editors Kirkus Reviews, 15 January 2017)

About the Author

J. D. Swanson holds a PhD in integrative biosciences and a fifth-degree black belt from the International Shotokan Karate Federation. He is an official ISKF instructor, examiner, and judge, having studied under both Okazaki and Yaguchi sensei. Swanson began his martial studies in 1980 in his native New Zealand. He moved to the United States in 1998. He is a professor in the Department of Biology and Biomedical Sciences at Salve Regina University and the head instructor of the Shotokan karate clubs at Brown and Salve Regina Universities. J. D. Swanson resides in Portsmouth, Rhode Island.

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Dynamics, motion, and sensation are karate's connective tissue?and they are the heart of this book.

As a lifelong student of martial arts, J. D. Swanson, PhD, had searched through piles of books on form and function. Stand here, they said. Step there. But where movement was concerned, not one of them went deep enough. No one discussed dynamics?the actual feeling of the moves.

Martial instruction, both in print and in person, tends to focus on stances and finishing positions. But dynamics, motion, sensation . . . they are karate's connective tissue?and they are the heart of this book.

Karate Science: Dynamic Movement will help you understand the mechanics of the human body. Swanson describes these principles in incredible detail, drawing on examples from several styles of karate, as well as aikido, taekwondo, and judo. Whatever your martial background, applying this knowledge will make your techniques better, stronger, and faster.

- Understand the major types of techniques, including their outward appearances and internal feelings.
- Master the core principles behind these feelings.
- Learn the biomechanics and dynamics of core movement.

Karate Science: Dynamic Movement is filled with examples, anecdotes, and beautiful illustrations. Although Shotokan karate is the author's frame of reference, the principles of human mechanics translate to all martial styles.

This book features

- Clear and insightful explanations of dynamic movement.
- Over 100 illustrations.
- Profound but accessible analysis of the kihon, or fundamentals of Shotokan karate.

“Karate Science: Dynamic Movement is rooted in the teachings of the masters,” Swanson says. “This book nucleates that knowledge, clarifying and distilling the key principles behind movement dynamics. This is the next evolution of karate books.”

- Sales Rank: #13971 in Books
- Published on: 2017-03-04
- Original language: English
- Dimensions: 8.90" h x .60" w x 6.00" l, .0 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 240 pages

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Truly, a must read! This book stands out and is a must have for any karate enthusiast.

By S, S & S

I have the privilege of training with Swanson sensei at Brown University. He leads an amazing dojo. He is, far and away, the most knowledgeable instructor I've ever had in 12 years in the martial arts. His background in science, his experience in karate and his passion are some of the reasons this book stands out and is a must read for everyone at every level.

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