

BASSAI DAI

Bassai (pronounced *Patsai* in Okinawan) is most often translated as "To Penetrate a Fortress," meaning that one must exhibit the power and spirit required to break through an enemy's castle. This is particularly evident in the kata's first movement, when the karateka launches forward with *soete-uchi-uke*. The word *Dai* means "big," describing the kata's larger movements, contrary to its counterpart *Bassai Sho*. *Bassai*, *Kanku*, and *Gojushiho* are the three Shotokan kata that each have two versions, a *Sho* version (small) and a *Dai* version (big). Most translators agree that *Bassai* can more accurately be translated as "To Extract From a Fortress." *Bassai Dai* is believed to have been created by Sokon Matsumura. Much of the *bunkai* focus on breaking the opponent's balance and defenses against grabbing attacks. Like many Shotokan kata, *Bassai Dai* is practiced in many styles of karate, having several variations. The JKA version has 42 movements.

Bassai Dai is usually the first *Sentei* kata to be learned and is the most popular choice as *tokui* kata by 1st *kyu* examinees for black belt. It is characterized by many switching arm blocking combinations, making effective use of the *hanmi/gyaku-hanmi* positions. Performance of *gyaku-hanmi* in *Bassai Dai* is substantially more difficult than in H2 because in *Bassai*, the front stance should not be shortened to accommodate *gyaku-hanmi*. Many techniques are seen for the first time in this kata such as *tate-shuto-uke*, *sukui-uke*, and *hasami-uchi*. The *ryosho-tsukami-uke* & *gedan-sokuto-kekomi* combination is unique to *Bassai* kata (both versions), while the powerful *yama-zuki* can only be found in *Bassai Dai* and *Wankan*. It is interesting to note that one of the most basic blocking techniques, *chudan-soto-uke*, is first used in this kata, and then never seen again.

#		Translation	Stance	Target	Notes
1	Soet`e-uchi-uke (bassai-uke)	added hand inside block	kosa-dachi	chudan	
2	uchi-uke	inside block	zenkutsu-dachi	chudan	
3	uchi-uke	inside block	zenkutsu-dachi	chudan	gyaku-hanmi
4	soto-uke	outside block	zenkutsu-dachi	chudan	gyaku-hanmi
5	uchi-uke	inside block	zenkutsu-dachi	chudan	
6	sukui-uke & soto-uke	scooping block & outside block	zenkutsu-dachi	gedan chudan	sukui natural speed
7	uchi-uke	inside block	zenkutsu-dachi	chudan	gyaku-hanmi
8	ryoken-koshi-kamae	both fists hip posture	hachiji-dachi	--	natural speed
9	tate-shuto-uke	vertical knife-hand block	hachiji-dachi	chudan	slow speed
10	tsuki (choku-zuki)	punch (straight punch)	hachiji-dachi	chudan	
11	uchi-uke	inside block	hizakutsu	chudan	
12	tsuki (choku-zuki)	punch (straight punch)	hachiji-dachi	chudan	
13	uchi-uke	inside block	hizakutsu	chudan	
14	shuto-uke	knife-hand block	kokutsu-dachi	chudan	
15	shuto-uke	knife-hand block	kokutsu-dachi	chudan	
16	shuto-uke	knife-hand block	kokutsu-dachi	chudan	

17	shuto-uke	knife-hand block	kokutsu-dachi	chudan	
18	ryosho-tsukami-uke (bassai-uke)	both palms grasping block	ashi-zenkutsu	chudan	slow speed gyaku-hanmi
19*	sokuto-kekomi / ryosho-tsukamiyose	sword-foot thrust kick / both palms grasping-pulling	ashi-dachi	gedan --	
20	shuto-uke	knife-hand block	kokutsu-dachi	chudan	
21	shuto-uke	knife-hand block	kokutsu-dachi	chudan	
22	morote-age-uke	double-hand rising block	heisoku-dachi	jodan	natural speed
23	ryo-kentsui-hasami-uchi	both hammer-fists scissors strike	zenkutsu-dachi	chudan	
24	tsuki	punch	zenkutsu-dachi	chudan	yori-ashi
25	soto-nagashi-uke / shuto-uchikomi & gedan-uke / uchi-uke (manji-uke)	outside flowing block / sword-hand thrusting strike & down block / inside block (swirling block)	ashi-zenkutsu ashi-zenkutsu heisoku-dachi heisoku-dachi	jodan gedan gedan jodan	manji-uke slow speed
26	gedan-barai / fumikomi	down block / stomp kick	kiba-dachi	gedan	
27	kake-uke	hooking block	kiba-dachi	chudan	slow speed haishu variation
28	mikazuki-geri & mae-empi-uchi	crescent kick & front elbow strike	ashi-dachi kiba-dachi	chudan --	
29	gedan-uke / zenwan-mune-kamae	down block / forearm chest posture	kiba-dachi	gedan chudan	
30	gedan-uke / zenwan-mune-kamae	down block / forearm chest posture	kiba-dachi	gedan chudan	
31	gedan-uke / zenwan-mune-kamae	down block / forearm chest posture	kiba-dachi	gedan chudan	
32	ryoken-koshi-kamae	both fists hip posture	ashi-zenkutsu	--	
33	yama-zuki	mountain punch	ashi-zenkutsu	jodan gedan	
34	ryoken-koshi-kamae	both fists hip posture	heisoku-dachi	--	slow speed
35	yama-zuki	mountain punch	ashi-zenkutsu	jodan gedan	
36	ryoken-koshi-kamae	both fists hip posture	heisoku-dachi	--	slow speed
37	yama-zuki	mountain punch	ashi-zenkutsu	jodan gedan	
38	sukui-uke	scooping block	hizakutsu	gedan	
39	sukui-uke	scooping block	hizakutsu	gedan	
40	shuto-uke	knife-hand block	kokutsu-dachi	chudan	
41	jotai-sonomama	upper body as is	kokutsu-dachi (gyaku-kokutsu)	chudan	slow speed
42*	shuto-uke	knife-hand block	kokutsu-dachi	chudan	