



## Details of Phases zero to 3

### Phase zero – preconditions for learning Nage-no-kata

Introduction of concepts in Phase zero as a part of basic Judo-training include:

- **etiquette:** *za-rei, ritsu-rei*
- **posture:** *shizentai, jigotai (migi/hidari)*
- **footwork and walking:** *tsugi-ashi, ayumi-ashi, suri-ashi*
- **gripping and distance:** *kumi-kata (migi/hidari), maai*
- **ukemi:** *zenpo-kaiten, yoko-ukemi*
- **collaboration:** Tori-Uke interaction

Beside the importance of all basics in the list, special care must to be taken in teaching *ukemi* in this stage. *Ukemi* today often does not seem to receive adequate attention in basic judo teaching. If *ukemi* are not taught and executed well, there is a risk of pain and injury, very often followed by limited progression in Judo. If learners experience pain or injury they will likely in future try to avoid falling, because of fear and lack of self-confidence.

Accordingly phase zero includes special attention on mastering *ukemi* progressively from simple *ukemi* to *ukemi* games, which can be used at the beginning and at the end of training sessions.

Many of the preconditions are part of Kodomo-no-Kata, a collaborative project of IJF, Kodokan and the French Judo-Federation (<https://youtu.be/FhwV1BjPYJQ>).

### Phase 1

This is the beginning of systematic learning of Nage-no-Kata. The learners are usually around 11-12 years old and/or green belt. They should have mastered *ukemi* to the extent that there is minimum risk to get injured when being thrown. In this phase the learner (or his/her teacher) will choose **three techniques** out of the total nine *te-waza*, *koshi-waza* and *ashi-waza* included in Nage-no-kata. In this very early stage the freedom of choice is big and the judoka will (presumably) choose the techniques he/she likes most.

The learner studies and practices to perfect the techniques with the correct explanation of *riai* to help them understand the key points as Tori and Uke. Often it is better to start from static positions to learn parts of the technique and later execute the technique with Tori and Uke moving together. Students should learn to execute all techniques on right and left sides. Techniques can be practiced with “lift only” and later with throwing, as long as



Tori has good control over Uke. For more advanced judoka, it is highly recommended to practice as early as possible from moving situations.

As the main focus should be on the final outcome after Phase 3, there should be some flexibility for teachers to choose the most appropriate way to teach techniques to their students in earlier stages.

## Phase 2

This phase is generally for judoka of 13-14 years old and/or blue belt. These learners are supposedly more experienced and have better overall technical skills. Now they will be asked to choose **six techniques** from the nine available. Of course, it is assumed here that the three techniques that they have chosen in Phase 1 are already “mastered”. Naturally, the learner will choose three new techniques in addition to the previously learned.

As in phase 1, the judoka studies and practices to perfect the techniques with the correct explanation of *riai* to help them understand the key points of the technique as Tori and Uke. The instructor should insist on execution of all six techniques from movement of both Tori and Uke on both sides with full balance and control. For more skilled judoka, the execution of some or all of the chosen techniques in Nage-no-kata form is strongly recommended.

## Phase 3

This phase is generally for students of 15-16 years and/or brown belt. These students should be more mature than those in Phase 2 in terms of experience and technical skills, physical development and capacity to understand more complex techniques. Now they are ready to learn **all nine techniques** of the first three Nage-no-Kata series.

This is the stage where more details of *kata* concepts and techniques will be explained to them with the goal of eventually executing the techniques by series (*te-*, *koshi-* and *ashi-waza*).

The last three missing techniques are taught by the instructor, who explains the basics and key points of each technique for correct understanding and execution. While there may be exceptions, generally the three most difficult techniques will be taught in phase 3: *uchi-mata*, *tsuri-komi goshi*, *kata-guruma* (from our point of view).

All the concepts around *kata* should now be learned, including *reiho*, distances (*maai*), *atemi*, presentation/demonstration etc.



## Recommendations of techniques for Phases

Technique	Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
<i>Uki-otoshi</i>	X		
<i>Seoi-nage</i>	X		
<i>Kata-guruma</i>		(X)	X
<i>Uki-goshi</i>	X	X	
<i>Harai-goshi</i>		X	
<i>Tsurikomi-goshi</i>			X
<i>Okuri-ashi-harai</i>		(X)	X
<i>Sasae-tsurikomi-ashi</i>	X	X	
<i>Uchi-mata</i>		(X)	X

The above table shows that each of the three series include techniques that are highly recommended for Phase 3 and that there are also techniques in each series, that are recommended for Phase 1.

**In conclusion we strongly recommend teaching techniques in a flexible order rather than being strictly slavish to the order in Nage-no-kata series.**