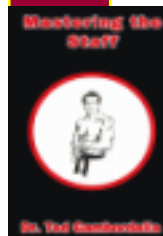


# Mastering the Staff



**Dr. Ted Gambordella**



# Introduction

I began my training in the martial arts over fourteen years ago in the little town of Alexandria, Louisiana. From the first I was interested in weapons, but I had great difficulty in finding any but a handful of people who knew anything about weapons. For many years I was only able to acquire little bits of weapons training from various teachers here and there. I tried to learn all that I could from books, but found that the number of books on weapons is almost as short in supply as the number of instructors with a knowledge of weapons. I also found that most of the books about weapons were written by the same man and were incomplete in their depth, for no books were available on the tonfa or the yawara, and only a few were available on the staff, the bo, and the knife. There seemed to be numerous books on the nunchaku, most poorly done, and a few books on the sai; but all in all the books available for the martial art student who was interested in weapons were few and far between.

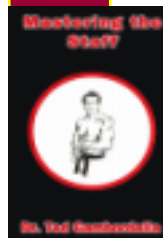
So I decided to write my own books. I spent the last four years doing research and training with weapons, learning their use and applications. I was able to achieve a fourth degree black belt in weapons (kubojitsu), I had already written four other books and a movie script, "The Leopard," so I was familiar with what was necessary to write a good book. I wanted my book to have techniques that a beginner could learn, but that a teacher could also benefit from. I wanted to make the book easy to follow by avoiding any overuse of photos or confusing text. I wanted to include a basic practice Kata for each weapon, as well as techniques for the weapon's offensive and defensive use. Finally, I wanted to write a book that would serve as a manual on weapons for years to come—a book that a student or a teacher would be proud to own and would refer to whenever they had a question on weapons or wanted a new technique.

I feel that I have accomplished all of these goals in this book, The Complete Book of Karate Weapons. It is a book that I am proud of and one that you can be proud to have in your library. If you will read this book with an open mind and follow the techniques and exercises described herein, you can make yourself one of the few experts with weapons in the world today.

I could never have written this book without the help of many friends and fellow martial artists who appear with me in the instructional photos, both as technique partners and technical advisers. These men, some of the most outstanding black belts in the South, include: **Keith Yates:** fourth degree black belt. Winner of many kata championships and weapons kata championships at the top tournaments of the South. A master artist who also designed the cover of the book.

**James Toney:** fifth degree black belt. Teacher extraordinaire and tournament champion for many years. One of the most respected teachers in Texas.

continued...



**Barry Guimbellot:** third degree black belt. Probably the most successful teacher in Dallas, an outstanding example of character and leadership in karate.

**Steve Weiss:** second degree black belt. A modern jiu-jitsu expert who is also an expert in karate.

Ross Comerski: first degree black belt. A giant of a man and a giant of a teacher.

Finally, I must thank all of my teachers through my years of training for their help and knowledge, such great men as: Soke R. Sacharnoski, Soke A. Church, Soke K. Marx, Master HeYoung Kimm, Shihan B. Pearson, Dr. J. Marler, and Sensi B. Hathorn. These great men and excellent teachers gave the knowledge and training that enabled me to get to where I am today. I am forever grateful to them and their arts.

Last, let me take a moment to thank the most important force in my life, my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, Who gives me the strength and ability necessary to write this book and to share my knowledge with my fellow martial artists.

Dedication To Keith Yates, Jim Toney, Barry Guimbellot, Steve Weiss, Russ Comerski, and Steve Rich, without whom this book would never have been written.

Photos by Steve Rich

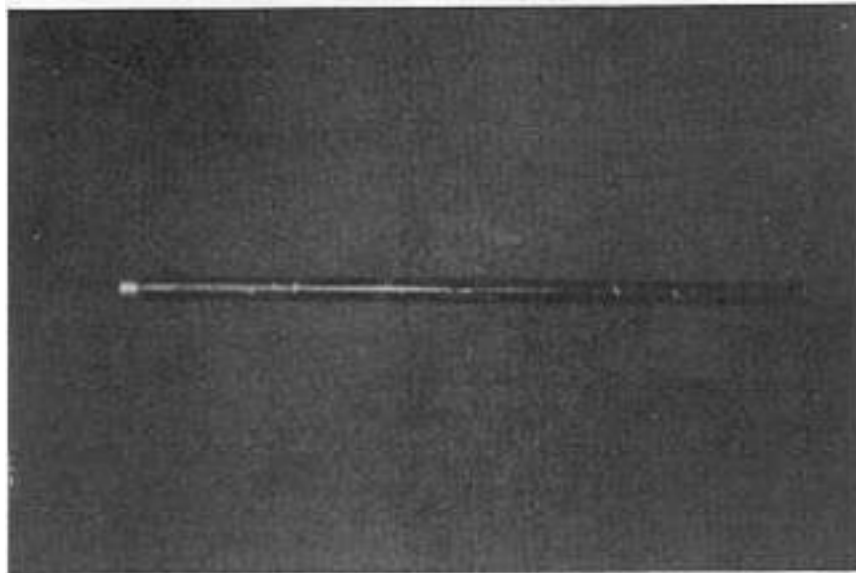


## The Staff

The staff is called by many names, the baton, the jo, the night stick, the bat, but all refer to a stick of wood that is approximately two to three feet in length. It is a very common weapon of defense and is carried by most of the police in the world because of its effectiveness.

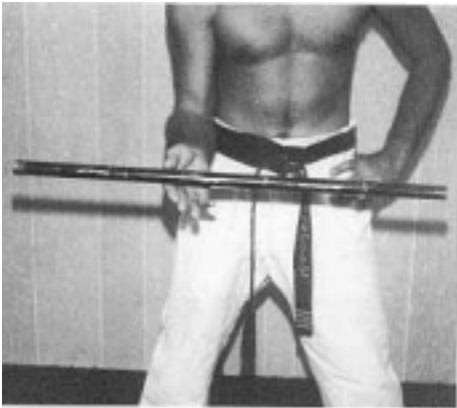
It can be used to strike, to block, to jab, to hold, and to throw an opponent and is easily made and maintained. With a little practice you will be able to twirl the stick in your hands and around your body and make yourself into a formidable weapon of defense.

Because the staff is hard, and because most of the strikes go to soft and vulnerable areas of the body, I recommend that you practice most of your techniques with a rubber stick or hollow tube until you have mastered your basics and acquired enough control for safety.





## Holding the Staff



The staff should not be held in the middle but rather held so that much more of the stick extends out one end of the hand than the other. Usually this can be done by holding approximately twelve inches, then the grip, and the other twenty four inches extending out.



Grip the staff holding it with all four fingers wrapped around it and the thumb riding on the top, or wrapped around the fingers. Here we see the staff being held out in front of the body (where the thumb is wrapped on top)...

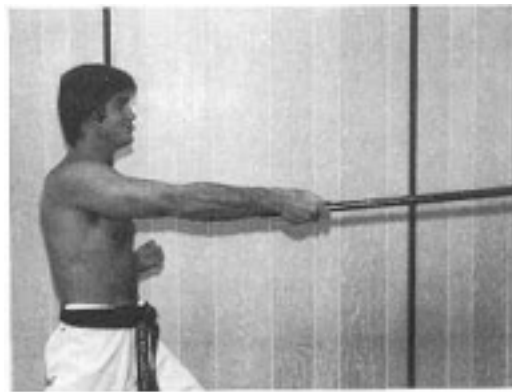


...and held to the side (where the thumb is around the fingers) -

## Holding the Staff



Holding the staff behind for striking and blocking, using a closed grip. The staff extended out for a strike or a block.





## Blocking Positions



The two-handed groin block or X block: snap the staff down in front of the groin with both hands holding the staff.



The groin block (open): Here the staff snaps to block the groin, but the arms are not crossed.



The two-handed side block: snap the staff across the body and block the chest area (front view of front block) -

The side block.





## Blocking Positions



The high block or rising block with two hands: snap the staff up to block the head with both hands holding the staff.



The one-handed rising block: snap the arm up to block the face with the staff held down the forearm.



The groin-striking block: swing the staff down in front of the groin with both hands to effect a swinging block.

The front-rising block: snap up the staff with one arm to block the front of the body holding the staff down the forearm.







## Blocking Positions



**The swinging or striking low block:** swing the staff down across the leg to block a kick.



**The middle-striking block:** snap the staff in front of the chest to block the abdomen.



**The striking rising I . snap** and in front of the body to block kicks and punches.

**The striking groin block:** snap the staff across the front of the lower body to block the groin.





## Blocking Demonstrated



The rising block with two hands:  
the staff is snapped up to block the strike.



The middle block with one hand:  
the staff strikes the punching arm.



The double groin block: the staff snaps down  
to block the kick to the groin.

## Blocking Demonstrated



**The side two-handed block:**  
the staff snaps to the side to  
block the kick.



**The side block with one hand:** the staff  
swings down and strikes the kicking leg.



**The middle block with one arm:**  
the staff swings across the body to contact  
and block the punch.

## Striking Areas



Thrust the end of the staff into the throat.



Thrust the end of the staff into the eye.



Smash the side of the face with the staff.

Smash the collarbone with the staff.



## Striking Areas



Smash the back of the neck or spine with the staff .



Smash the ribs (floating) with the staff.



Smash up into the groin.



Smash the kneecap with the staff.

## Striking Areas



Smash between the eyes with the staff -



Smash the throat with the staff.

## Striking Positions



To develop proper power when striking with the staff always swing the hips, just like on a punch. Ready for smash to the front.



Flipping the staff sideways for a front strike.



Smash the staff across the body and to the front. Notice the hip swing.

Notice the wrist flips the staff around to the front.



## Striking Positions



**Thrusting the staff forward.**



**Front view.**



**Jabbing with the staff. Side view.**



## Striking with the Staff: How to Get More Power & Greater Range

Often when striking with the staff a simple block can stop your attack, so the following techniques can overcome these blocks and still effect a strike that will disable.



You attempt to do an overhead strike to the head of an opponent...



...but he blocks with a rising block.



To overcome this, simply flip up on your wrist and this will cause his block to fall short

Closeups of why the new strike works to give greater distance.

The first strike is blocked...



The wrist is flipped up, and the second strike hits the target





## Striking with the Staff: How to Get More Power & Greater Range



You attempt to strike the side of an opponent's head...

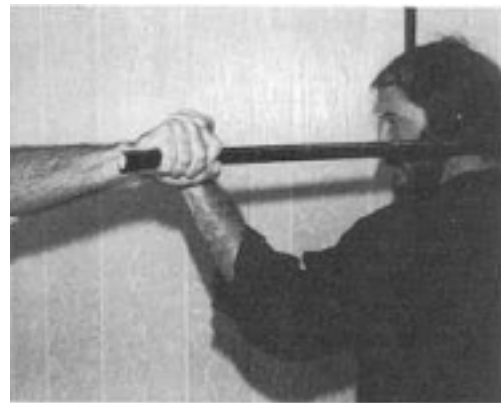


...but he counters with a forearm block.



Simply flip out and extend the wrist, and you can still strike the head despite the block.

The second strike hits the head, because the wrist is flipped out to the side to give greater striking distance.





## Techniques of Using the Staff for Defending oneself Against an Unarmed Opponent



**Technique 1: ready position, staff is concealed down the right leg.**



**As he strikes, you smash the staff down onto his striking arm...**



**...then grasp the left hand.**

**Smash the staff onto his knees, causing him to drop to the ground.**



**Finish with a smash to the head.**



## Techniques of Using the Staff for Defending oneself Against an Unarmed Opponent



Technique 2: ready for strike, with staff concealed down right leg.



As he strikes, smash his left elbow with staff.



Come back and around with staff and smash staff into his kidneys.

Finish by smashing his neck with staff.





## Techniques of Using the Staff for Defending oneself Against an Unarmed Opponent



**Technique 3: ready for strike, standing left with staff hidden down right leg .**



**As he strikes, block across with left hand and grasp wrist.**



**Now take both hands and jab end of staff into his eyes.**



## Techniques of Using the Staff for Defending oneself Against an Unarmed Opponent



**Technique 4: ready position for grabbing attack, staff hidden down right side.**



**As he reaches, thrust out staff into his solar plexus...**



**...then up with right smash across the side of his face.**

**Finish by kicking snap-kick to groin, then smashing staff down into throat and side of neck.**





## Techniques of Using the Staff for Defending oneself Against an Unarmed Opponent



**Technique 5:** as he prepares to strike you this time, you hold staff in left hand under arm.



When he starts his strike, thrust staff out into his throat...



...then flip up into his face.

Now, smash staff down into his knee, which is exposed, causing him to lean...



...and you strike his neck as he falls over.





## Techniques of Using the Staff for Defending oneself Against an Unarmed Opponent



**Technique 6:** as opponent reaches from behind you to grab you, you are ready with staff down right side.



**Flip staff up straight over your head, striking his head with staff.**



## Techniques of Using the Staff for Defending oneself Against an Unarmed Opponent



**Technique 7: opponent is reaching from behind you to grab you; you have staff in left hand.**



**Step to the left side and thrust backwards with the staff into his abdomen.**



**Finish with back kick into groin.**



## Techniques of Using the Staff for Defending oneself Against an Unarmed Opponent



**Technique 8: using the staff for a throw and break; opponent is preparing to strike you, hold staff down right leg.**



**Now, throw backwards and snap arm by pulling up very hard on staff as you throw.**



**As he strikes, smash into elbow area of his attacking arm...**

**...then reach up and lock arm with staff.**





## Using the Staff to Block and Counter an Attack with the Bo



**Technique 1: Opponent prepares to strike at you with the bo. Hold staff in front of body with both hands.**



**As he strikes with bo, bring staff up with double-hand block and stop the bo.**



**Now continue to come across and strike the back of his head with the staff...**

**...then come down and smash his knee.**





## Using the Staff to Block and Counter an Attack with the Bo



**Technique 2: Opponent prepares to strike with bo. Staff is held behind with one hand.**



**As he strikes, swing staff across and contact bo away from body on your left side.**



**Finish with a side kick to the side of his head.**



## Defenses Against the Staff



**Opponent prepares to strike you with an overhead strike.**



**Block up before his strike gets too far down with a rising block near his wrist.**



**Now lock your hands on his arms...  
...throw him to the ground.**

**After throwing him to the ground,  
break his arm by snapping up on it...**



**...take the staff and smash into his  
throat to finish him.**



## Defenses Against the Staff



Opponent prepares to jab your stomach with the the staff.



As he thrusts, do an X block out in front of your body.



Closeup of wrist-locking technique.

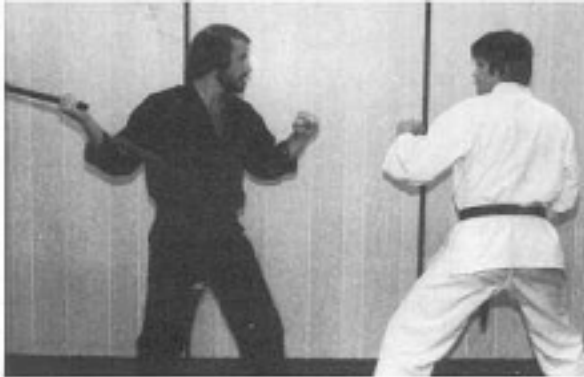
Throw him to the ground.



Take the staff and smash in the back of his head.



## Defenses Against the Staff



Attacker prepares to smash the staff into the side of your body.



Move quickly and stop his arm before he can get too close to your side by striking his arm near the elbow and upper arm. Use both hands to stop his movement.



Now grab around his head with your right arm and pull his body to you...

...throw him to the ground using a hip throw.



There you can finish him with a stomp to the throat.



## Defenses Against the Staff



**Attacker attempts to smash a backhand into your face.**



**Block using both hands, the left near the elbow and the right near the wrist.**



**Continue to hold his wrist with your hands and drop to one knee. Moving over and down with your hold, throw him to the ground.**

**Finish him with a smash of the staff to the face.**





## Blocking the Staff with Kicking Techniques



1. Attacker attempts to jab at your stomach.



Sidestep and thrust a left side kick into his groin and rib area.



2. Attacker attempts to smash at your side with staff.



Block the staff with a crescent kick using your right foot.



Then, with the same foot, snap your leg back up and into his face and throat to finish him.

## Blocking the Staff with Kicking Techniques



An attacker attempts to strike your head.



Come up with a high front snap and stop his arm.



Now, snap a front groin-kick up with the right leg and finish him.



## Blocking the Staff with Kicking Techniques



**You are being choked from behind with the staff: two escapes and counters.**



**Lift both arms up and grasp the staff to relieve the choking pressure...**



**...then smash the elbow of the right arm down and into his stomach. Finish him with a kick.**

**Or, hold the staff and pull down to relieve the choking pressure.**



**Then throw him over your head to the ground and stomp him to finish him.**



## Using a Jumping Spin-Kick to Stop an Attack with the Staff

*(Note: this is a beautiful kick but takes a very long time to master.)*



As the attacker attempts to strike your leg with the staff, jump straight up.



Then turn your back and spin all the way around 360 degrees.



Come down across his face with the heel of your foot and disable him.



## Kata



## Kata







## Kata





## Kata

