



ATA
MARTIAL ARTS
COMPETITOR'S GUIDE

ATA TOURNAMENT TYPES

All ATA sanctioned events are open only to all current ATA members.

Class "C" Tournaments

In-School Tournaments

- Hosted by individual ATA school owners for their own students
- More likely to have wider age, rank, or genders in the same ring
- May be sanctioned or unsanctioned (verify with your instructor)

Class "A" Tournaments

Regional Tournaments with at least 750 competitors or 2,250 event entries

- Hosted by qualifying ATA school owners around the country
- ATA students are welcome to compete at any Regional Tournament in the country

Class "AAA" Tournaments

ATA World Championships

- Hosted by ATA Headquarters
- Usually in Phoenix, AZ in late June-Mid July
- Week-long event consisting of two tournaments:
 - Tournament of Champions (TOC): determines the "World Champion" title for Black Belts only; marks the end of competition season
 - Open Tournament: students of all ranks and ages eligible to compete; marks the beginning of new tournament season



Class "B" Tournaments

Regional Tournaments with less than 750 competitors or 2,250 event entries

- Hosted by qualifying ATA school owners around the country
- ATA students are welcome to compete at any Regional Tournament in the country

Class "AA" Tournaments

ATA National Championships

- Hosted by ATA Headquarters
- Two National events per year:
 - Spring Nationals: location may vary; in Jan-Mid March
 - Fall Nationals: location may vary; in Mid-Late October
- Students of all ranks and ages eligible to compete

* A Few Notes:

Regional Tournaments in Texas (112)

- 5 per calendar year, in varying locations
- Most are Class "A" events
 - Class determined by the numbers of that host's last event. If an event is the host's first, it is a Class "B"

District Championships (South)

- Open to qualifying competitors only
- Determines "District Champion"
- Hosted in Dallas, TX

EVENT CATEGORIES

All competitors may compete in any of the eight ATA events, split between two "categories"

TRADITIONAL MARTIAL ARTS

✓ Traditional Forms

- A pre-arranged series of rank-appropriate movements performed by each competitor
- Judges know each form

✓ Traditional Weapons

- Black Belts perform a pre-arranged series of movements known by the judges
- Colored belts perform an arranged series of traditional weapons movements that may be made up by the student; judges do not know the form
- **Colored Belts have a 30-second time limit**
- **Starting in July 2023, colored belts will be required to perform a set weapon form**

✓ One-Step Sparring

- Simulated no-contact sparring
- **Available to beginners only**

✓ Combat Weapons Sparring

- **Point sparring match with combat weapons**
- **First to 10 points wins**
- 2-minute time limit
- Matches determined by a bracket; byes are given to previous champions according to their uniforms

✓ Traditional Point Sparring

- **Point sparring match (with no weapons)**
- **First to 5 points wins**
- 2-minute time limit
- No-contact techniques may score if there is no attempt to block
- Matches determined by a bracket; byes are given to previous champions according to their uniforms

CREATIVE & EXTREME MARTIAL ARTS

✓ Creative Forms

- A pre-arranged series of movements made up and performed by each competitor
- Judges do not know the form
- May be synchronized to music
- 2-minute time limit
- **No splits, gymnastics, rotating techniques >360° or inverted moves**

✓ Creative Weapons

- A pre-arranged series of movements made up and performed by each competitor
- Judges do not know the form
- May be synchronized to music
- 2-minute time limit
- **No splits, gymnastics, releases, rotating techniques >360° or inverted moves**

✓ Extreme Forms

- A pre-arranged series of movements made up and performed by each competitor
- Judges do not know the form
- May be synchronized to music
- 2-minute time limit
- **Splits, gymnastics, rotating techniques >360° and inverted moves are allowed**

✓ Extreme Weapons

- A pre-arranged series of movements made up and performed by each competitor
- Judges do not know the form
- May be synchronized to music
- 2-minute time limit
- **Splits, gymnastics, releases, rotating techniques >360° and inverted moves are allowed**

COMPETITION FLOW



ORDER OF EVENTS: TRADITIONAL

1 TRADITIONAL FORMS

- The first 3 competitors perform their form without getting scores
- The judges call all three of them up to receive their scores; this establishes the ring's average
- In a tie: all 3 judges become "overall" judges
- Tied athletes re-perform
- Each judge will point to whom they feel won the tie (based on their 2nd form)

2 TRADITIONAL WEAPONS

- **30-second limit (colored belts)**
- The first 3 competitors perform their form without getting scores
- The judges call all three of them up to receive their scores; this establishes the ring's average
- In a tie, tied athletes perform again
- Each judge will point to whom they feel won the tie (based on their 2nd form)

COMBAT WEAPONS SPARRING

Head Strike	2 pts	→ with jump	3 pts
Body Strike	1 pts	→ with jump	2 pts
Weapon Hand/Front leg stab	2 pts	Drop	1 pt. to opponent
Warnings:	→ • Stab to face • Strike between legs		

TRADITIONAL SPARRING

Head Kick	2 pts	→ with jump	3 pts
Body Kick/Punch	1 pts	→ Body kick w/ jump	2 pts
Warnings:	→ • Punch to head • Kick below belt • Punch/Kick to back • Legal move with excessive contact		

WARNING CONSEQUENCES

1st time, no contact	→ verbal warning	2nd time w/o contact or 1st time w/ contact	→ 1 pt to opponent
2nd time w/ contact	→ DQ	Excessive Force, intent to harm	→ DQ

3 COMBAT WEAPONS SPARRING

- Sparring bracket is determined
- Champions wearing Combat Weapons titles will be awarded byes (if they are needed for the bracket). Byes favor most recent titles first
- If no Champion byes, they are awarded by random draw
- Competitors from the same school cannot compete against one another in the first round unless unavoidable
- The first to 10 points wins; 2-minute time limit; majority judge agreement to score
- Single elimination; competitors defeated in semifinals compete for 3rd

4 TRADITIONAL SPARRING

- Sparring bracket is determined
- Champions wearing Sparring titles will be awarded byes (if they are needed for the bracket). Byes favor most recent titles first
- If no Champion byes, they are awarded by random draw
- Competitors from the same school cannot compete against one another in the first round unless unavoidable
- The first to 5 points wins; 2-minute time limit
- Judges majority to score
- Single elimination; competitors defeated in semifinals compete for 3rd

- Center Judges right is "Red"
- No see = neutral, Block = no pt.
- No-contact move may score if no block attempt (judge's discretion)
- Points called to color of competitor

COMPETITION FLOW

- Students will have an opportunity to change into their Black Extreme uniform between Traditional and Creative/Extreme events

ORDER OF EVENTS: CREATIVE/EXTREME

5 CREATIVE FORMS

- **2-minute limit**
- **Created Form (may be to music)**
- **All judges are "overall" judges**
- The first 3 competitors perform then receive their scores to determine the average
- Tied athletes re-perform
- Each judge will point to whom they feel won the tie (based on the 2nd form)
- **Not allowed to do splits, gymnastics, Rotating techniques >360° or inverted moves**

6 CREATIVE WEAPONS

- **2-minute limit**
- **Created Form (may be to music)**
- **All judges are "overall" judges**
- The first 3 competitors perform then receive their scores to determine the average
- Tied athletes re-perform
- Each judge will point to whom they feel won the tie (based on the 2nd form)
- **Not allowed to do splits, gymnastics, releases, Rotating techniques >360° or inverted moves**

7 EXTREME FORMS

- **2-minute limit**
- **Created Form (may be to music)**
- **All judges are "overall" judges**
- The first 3 competitors perform then receive their scores to determine the average
- Tied athletes re-perform
- Each will point to whom they feel won the tie (based on their 2nd form)
- **Splits, gymnastics, Rotating techniques >360° and inverted moves ARE allowed**

8 EXTREME WEAPONS

- **2-minute limit**
- **Created Form (may be to music)**
- **All judges are "overall" judges**
- The first 3 competitors perform then receive their scores to determine the average
- Tied athletes re-perform
- Each will point to whom they feel won the tie (based on their 2nd form)
- **Splits, gymnastics, Rotating techniques >360° and inverted moves ARE allowed**

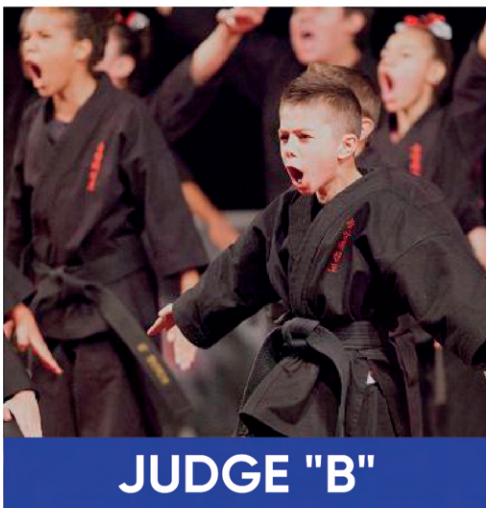


JUDGING



JUDGE "A"

- Sits to the Center Judge's left
- **Forms:** **A C B**
 - Judges correct execution of all kicks and stances only
 - Gives a subjective score (between 1-9) comparative to other competitors
 - In a tie-breaker, becomes an "overall" judge
- **All Weapons Categories:**
 - Judge will grade only consistency of stances, body control/position, and kicks using the following attributes: Base | Posture/Body alignment | Balance
- **Sparring & Combat:**
 - May call "break" and award points at any time
- **Creative & XMA Forms:**
 - Judges overall performance



JUDGE "B"

- Sits to the Center Judge's right ("His right hand man")
- **Forms:** **A C B**
 - Judges correct execution of all blocks and strikes only
 - Gives a subjective score (between 1-9) comparative to other competitors
 - In a tie-breaker, becomes an "overall" judge
- **All Weapons Categories:**
 - Will only grade the use of the weapons using the following attributes: Trajectory/striking lines | Proper weapon grip/joint position | Speed | Control of the weapon | Power
- **Sparring & Combat:**
 - May call "break" and award points at any time
- **Creative & XMA Forms:**
 - Judges overall performance



CENTER JUDGE

- Sits between the A and B Judges
 - Judges correct execution of all techniques as well as overall performance, attitude, and sportsmanship
 - Gives a score (between 1-9) subjective to the other competitors
 - Is the "manager" of the ring
 - Must give incomplete forms a 0 or 1 in Champion Division
- A C B**

TOURNAMENT DIVISIONS



RECREATIONAL DIVISION

- Available to White Belts – 3rd Degree Black Belts
- May perform 1/2 of your Form
- All 8 events held in the same ring
- "Full Ring" = 5-13 Competitors
- Great for new competitors
- Does not award points toward titles (even if a "Champion" competitor accidentally competes in a recreational ring)

**NOT ELIGIBLE
FOR ANY TITLE**

**COMPETITOR DOES
NOT EARN POINTS**



CHAMPION DIVISION

- Available to all ranks besides Tiny Tiger (Ninjas)
- Must perform full Songahm Forms
- All 8 events held in the same ring
- "Full Ring" = 5-13 competitors at Regional events and 16 competitors at National events
- Higher level of competition than recreational rings
- **Must be registered as "ATA Leadership" Member**
- **1st, 2nd & 3rd place finishers earn points toward eligible titles; ATA tracks those points**

**ELIGIBLE FOR TITLES
BY EARNING POINTS**

**MUST BE ATA
LEADERSHIP MEMBER**

STATE CHAMPION

Available to Colored Belts
AND Black Belts

DISTRICT CHAMPION

Available to Colored Belts
AND Black Belts

WORLD CHAMPION

Available to
Black Belts ONLY

OUR COMPETITION PHILOSOPHY

BALANCE EMPATHY & EXCELLENCE IN COMPETITION TO DEVELOP LEADERS FROM THE INSIDE OUT

EMPATHY

Consider all people involved in competition: athletes, competitors and their families, instructors, and judges

EXCELLENCE

Motivate & inspire athletes to be and do their best

INSIDE OUT DEVELOPMENT

The end goal of competition in youth sports is to develop the personal character of the athletes

LEADERSHIP

Leading fellow competitors to greatness by example

KEEP OUR EYES ON THE LONG-TERM PRIZE

✓ **PERFORMANCE DOES NOT DETERMINE IDENTITY OR WORTH**

- React the same way in defeat and success: "I am so proud of you for what you did today!"
- Reinforce to athletes that they already have our approval; their performance doesn't impact it either way
- Praise in public, reprimand in private

✓ **COACHING IS DONE BEFORE COMPETITION DAY**

- Performances are based on muscle memory. Ringside is the place for pep talks, not changes. (Athletes won't remember, anyway)
- Parent/Instructor Coaching is a disqualifying offense
- Instructors will do our best to be present in the ring, but the majority of time, we're judging, too.

✓ **OPEN COMMUNICATION & REFUSE GOSSIP OR TOXICITY**

- Always welcome to meet with us
- Solutions to concerns are found on the other side of a conversation with the coach
- We are open to feedback (in fact, we love it!) and if we don't know an answer, we'll find it.

✓ **LET THE COACHES COACH**

- Songahm Taekwondo is a very specialized sport. The best way to offer athletes support with technique is to repeat things you hear coaches say, but please don't offer outside advice (unless you participate, too).

✓ **NEVER BLAME THE JUDGES**

- The most common issue that arises
- Athletes emulate this behavior immediately
- Judges calls are unchangeable
- Not productive; removes the responsibility and therefore motivation from athlete
- Taekwondo is subjective; objectivity may not be the answer

✓ **WE WORK TOGETHER FOR THE KIDS' GOALS, NOT OUR OWN**

- Our end of season goal is determined by the athlete, not us
- **We're here to help!**

OUR EXPECTATIONS



LEADERSHIP ATTITUDE AT ALL EVENTS

- Attitude & behavior is a reflection of L4L, its instructors, and your family. We expect good attitude & sportsmanship at all times



BEST EFFORT ALWAYS

- We're all investing time, energy, and resources, and sweat into these competition goals. We make the most of it when we all try our best.

RED FLAGS

BURN OUT

- When students train too long or too often, we run the risk of burnout. Short, efficient efforts maximize results; Less is more.
- **If it happens:**
 - **lower the training, but do not discontinue it**

EXCUSES & BLAME GAME

- The post-competition debrief includes excuses or blame on judges/other competitors
- **If it happens:**
 - **Check if its emulated adult behavior (& take responsibility/apologize and course correct if so)**
 - **Ask what they think they CAN do to improve for the next event**

MENTAL HEALTH IS AFFECTED

- Despite the best efforts of adults, athlete equates performance with personal worth
- **If it happens:**
 - **Change from Champion to Recreational**
 - **Only compete in Regional Tournaments**
 - **Only compete at in-school tournaments**
 - **Don't compete**

ANGER/AGGRESSION OR UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT

- They show signs of anger/aggression during performance or have a bad attitude.
- i.e: Eyeball over results, throw gear, etc.
- **If it happens:**
 - **Tell an instructor immediately (we'll find out anyway)**
 - **Sometimes, it's not as concerning as it looks (martial arts invokes fight/flight/freeze)**
 - **Often, a 1-on-1 coach conversation works**
 - **Both Instructor and ATA have the right to refuse competition participation to any athlete**

WHAT TO EXPECT ON COMPETITION DAY

**HARD WORK
BEATS TALENT
WHEN TALENT DOESN'T
WORK HARD**



WEAR

- Competition Team Warm-ups (if applicable)
- White uniform for Traditional with white t-shirt underneath for girls
- Black uniform for Creative and Extreme (will be allowed to compete in white uniform)
- White or black close-toed shoes
- Wear uniform at all times present in competition room
- Change back into warm-ups as you exit

VENUE

- All venues will have a medic available
- Head Table is wear the Masters & Regional leaders sit
- All Regional events ran by same staff. (Not the host)
- Competitors will go to a "Staging Area" prior to being led to a ring. Parents can wait nearby the staging area (but will always see/have access to their child)
- Multiple rings compete simultaneously
- Be prepared for a lot of waiting & ring delays

BRING

- All necessary uniforms (parents, bring jackets!)
- Cash for spectator admission usually around \$10 (most events accept card)
- Appropriate weapons (correct size, not broken)
- All Sparring Gear
- Speaker & cord for Creative & Extreme
- Device to play music for Creative & Extreme
- Competition slips (given to you by instructor)
- Snacks (keep dry snacks in competitors bag)
- Snacks for spectators (if venue allows)
- Entertainment for younger siblings

ETIQUETTE

- Show respect/bow when you see a high ranking official (usually in blue suits)
- If meeting a high rank, wait for them to extend their hand for a handshake first, Use "Sir/Ma'am"
- Never wear your uniform without a belt
- Never let your belt touch the floor or hang around your neck
- Never eat in your uniform
- Be prepared to help Score/time keep
- Respond to commands quickly

ELIGIBLE TITLES



STATE CHAMPION

Colored and Black Belts registered in the ATA Leadership Program who compete in the Champion Division are eligible to compete for the title of "State Champion." This title is awarded to the competitor with the highest number of points accumulated from tournaments throughout the season. Points are awarded by placing 1st, 2nd, or 3rd at an ATA sanctioned event and vary according to the size of both the event and the ring.

TITLE AWARDED TO THE COMPETITOR WITH THE HIGHEST NUMBER OF ACCUMULATED POINTS IN THE STATE AT THE END OF A SEASON



DISTRICT CHAMPION

Colored and Black Belts registered in the ATA Leadership Program who compete in the Champion Division are eligible to compete for the title of "District Champion." Competitors qualify to compete at Districts by finishing the season ranked in the top 10 in their state (by accumulating points for placing at events). The Top 10 finishers from each state within the district compete at the District Championships and the title is awarded to the winner.

TITLE AWARDED TO THE WINNER OF THE DISTRICT CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENT



WORLD CHAMPION

Black Belts registered in the ATA Leadership Program who compete in the Champion Division are eligible to compete for the title of "World Champion." Competitors qualify to compete in the Tournament of Champions by finishing the season ranked in the top 10 in the USA (by accumulating points for placing at events) or by winning the title of District Champion. Qualified competitors from the USA compete against one another and top finishers from other countries and the title is awarded to the winner.

TITLE AWARDED TO THE WINNER OF THE TOURNAMENT OF CHAMPIONS

POINTS

Earn points by placing 1st, 2nd, or 3rd in a "Champion Division" at a sanctioned ATA event

POINT TRACKING

- Point tracking is only needed for competitors pursuing a State, District, or World Champion titles
- Parents are responsible for:

RECORDING POINTS
CHECKING STANDINGS
DISPUTING POINTS

(See next page for details)

POINT ELIGIBILITY

In order to earn points toward titles, competitors must be:

- ✓ ATA Leadership Member
- ✓ Champion Division Competitor
- ✓ Finish 1st, 2nd, or 3rd in the Champion Division at an ATA sanctioned tournament

POINTS PER TOURNAMENT

WORLDS		NATIONALS		CLASS "A"			CLASS "B"		CLASS "C"			
AAA	1+ ppl	AA	1+ ppl	A	5+ ppl	<5 ppl	B	1+ ppl	C	5+ ppl	4 ppl	3 ppl
1st	20 pts	1st	15 pts	1st	8 pts	5 pts	1st	5 pts	1st	3 pts	2 pts	1 pts
2nd	15 pts	2nd	10 pts	2nd	5 pts	3 pts	2nd	3 pts	2nd	2 pts	1 pts	0 pts
3rd	10 pts	3rd	8 pts	3rd	2 pts	1 pts	3rd	1 pts	3rd	1 pts	0 pts	0 pts

POINT CAPS TOWARD STANDINGS

While competing for a title, there is a cap of points each competitor may apply toward their standings. They are as follows:

99 POSSIBLE MAX POINTS, MADE UP OF:

- ✓ 1 Class "AAA" Tournament
- ✓ 2 Class "AA" Tournaments
- ✓ 5 Class "A" or "B" Tournaments
- ✓ 3 Class "C" Tournaments

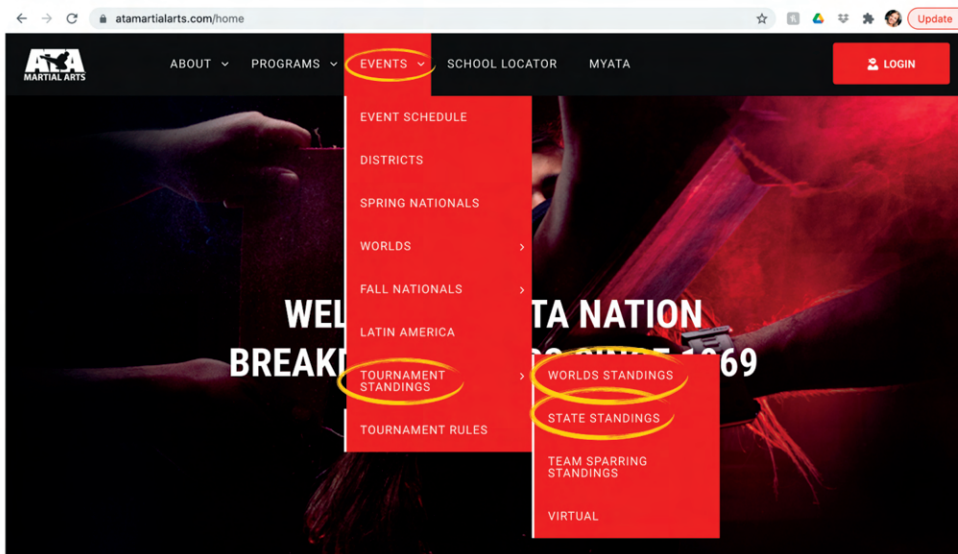


POINT UPDATES

Regularly checking point updates, standings, and disputing points is a **parent responsibility**

CHECK STANDINGS

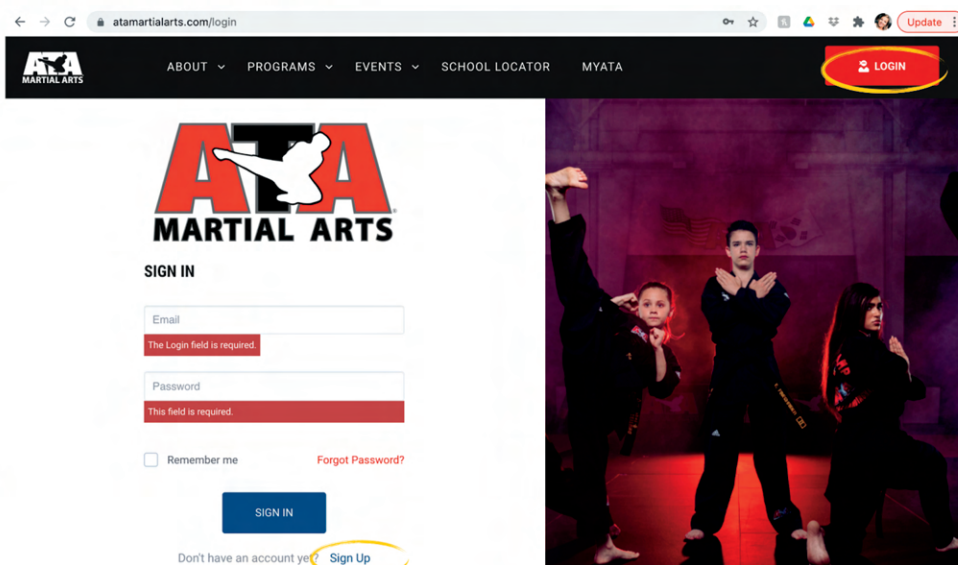
1. Visit atamartialarts.com
2. Click "Events" on the menu bar
3. Click "Tournament Standings"
 - a. "World Standings" only for Black Belts pursuing World Champion (must be ranked in the top 10)
 - b. "State Standings" for Colored or Black Belts pursuing State Title (must be ranked 1st place) or District Title (must be ranked in the top 10)



You can also easily check standings by creating an ATA Profile

ATA PROFILE

1. Visit atamartialarts.com
2. Click Red "Login" button on the menu bar
3. Click the blue "Sign Up" button at the bottom of the page
4. Enter the required information to create an account
 - a. **Each student must have their own profile (with different emails)**
 - b. **You will need their ATA Number to create a profile (see an instructor)**



DISPUTE POINTS

Throughout the year, points earned at tournaments may be entered incorrectly. You may dispute the points and have them corrected by emailing ATA Headquarters

1. Email tournaments@ataonline.com

- a. **Subject: "Point Correction"**
- b. **Body: Competitor's name, rank, DOB and ATA number**
- c. **Explain what points were mistaken.**

2. MUST BE WITHIN 30-DAYS OF POINTS BEING POSTED FOR THAT TOURNAMENT TO RECEIVE CORRECTION

TOURNAMENT REGISTRATION

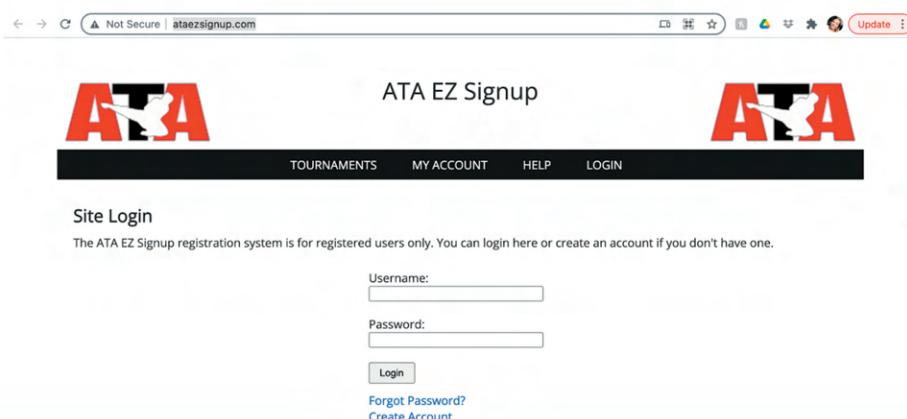
REGISTERING FOR TOURNAMENTS

- Register for Texas Regional Tournaments at your school. Your instructor will register all competitors as a school
- Collect your registration paper from your instructor before the event
- Check the following information on your registration slip:
 - **Name is spelled correctly & Rank is updated**
 - **Correct ATA number & School Number**
 - **Correct Competition Age (their age on December 31st of that competition season)**
 - **Correct Division of competition (Recreational vs. Champion)**
 - **Correct events they are participating in**
 - **Waiver on back is signed by guardian**
- If registered at your school, there is no need to register on-site.
- You will be asked to pay for spectator admission for anyone not wearing their uniform, then you may enter competition area.
- If competing independently at an out-of-region event, register on-site by filling out the registration slip according to the information above (check if online registration is available)
- ATA HQ hosted events must be registered for by competitors independently (Registration available online with discounts for registering early. Register at ataezsignup.com)

ATA EZ SIGN UP

You may register for National and World Championships online at ATAEZSignUp.com. When you create an EZ Sign Up account, you can enter in each competitor's age, height, ATA number, rank, etc. to make registering quick and easy. Families may have each member saved in their account to register all at once, and families with 3 or more members competing receive discounts.

1. Visit ataezsignup.com
2. Click "[Create Account](#)"
3. Enter the required information to create an account
 - a. **You will need each member's ATA Number (see an instructor) and height in inches**



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL ataezsignup.com. The page title is "ATA EZ Signup". The navigation menu includes "TOURNAMENTS", "MY ACCOUNT", "HELP", and "LOGIN". The main content area is titled "Site Login" and contains the following text: "The ATA EZ Signup registration system is for registered users only. You can login here or create an account if you don't have one." Below this text are input fields for "Username:" and "Password:", a "Login" button, and links for "Forgot Password?" and "Create Account".

RECORDING RESULTS

In order to know that your standings are correct, and to help your instructor personalize your training, you'll need to record the results of each tournament.

- **Each Competition Team Member will be provided with a Google Sheet shared with instructor to track scores, points, and placing**