



**PHOENIX**

MUAYTHAI•KICKBOXING  
MARTIAL ARTS WITH GRIT

**FORGED IN FIRE**

# THE WARRIOR GRADING SYSTEM

**Phoenix Muay Thai-Kickboxing Grading System for Children.**

- **Mighty Warriors**– 5 > 8 years.
- **Junior Warriors** – 9 > 11 years.
- **Warriors** – 11 > 14 years.



## PHOENIX MARTIAL KIDS PROGRAM – The Warrior Grading System.

### Muay Thai – Kickboxing – Martial Arts with Grit.

#### OVERVIEW

Martial Arts to be true must be a contact sport. For any martial program to teach self-defence we must focus on learning to defend realistic strikes and what is required to defend yourself against someone who does not respect you and may try to hit you, hard. It is developmental and we progress slowly and safely to ensure the kids are capable and confident. We teach a reaction-based skill development system that incorporates the emotional challenges of conflict and dealing with someone trying to be violent to you. Mental strength can be linked to demanding physical training and we teach kids to be stronger and safer in life. To never be a victim. Not every class will be fun, and we will push kids physically.

Everything is earned and nothing is given for just turning up. It is a keep up program.

Your child may come home disgruntled, tired and may have had a hard time physically and mentally. Classes are energetic, positive and fast paced. We do not fill classes with positive feedback, and group hugs. We may discipline children for slackness, rudeness, rolling eyes and disrespect by giving them physical exercises or making them repeat it until they get it right. We will balance pushing kids with encouragement and if the kids are being soft, quitting or just coming up with excuses and being sooky, we will push them and encourage them to work harder. We want your kids to fit, strong, healthy and resilient but we are not here to be their friends. We aim to develop personal pride, self-respect and self confidence in every child. That comes from within and from achievement. Martial Arts is discipline based and respect is valued.

Please work as a team with our coaches and always feel free to discuss your child's development with us at any time.

#### THE GRADINGS.

Children are graded at formal gradings. Every level is earned. We coach kids to fight so they don't have to. If they have to, they can. We want kids to be strong and safe and be able to stand up for themselves and fight for what is right. Children can also grade outside of these events if Phoenix believes the child should be progressed. Gradings are special events and if your child doesn't attend they are unlikely to grade. Please also remember we have a 'keep up' system based on competency. Attendance alone is not the major factor of grading. Our minimum standard is effort every class and that isn't graded, it is expected. Level 1, 2 and 3 are based on attitude and participation more than ability however each student must demonstrate they have improved in their skill and fitness. From Level 4 on, competence is a major factor. Real martial skills require contact, power and speed to be effective. The look is less important than the intent and application. Grading to level 9 and 10 must come with competence under pressure in unstructured, random, physically challenging situations. The character of each child is factored in, and we aim to reward character and behaviour in conjunction with competence. The kids don't have to win, but they cannot quit or winge about losing either. They learn from hard setbacks and improve.

Phoenix encourages lifestyle integration so Phoenix is a part of everyone's life, never their life and it should contribute to other sport, school, and family. Grading should never be the main goal as many kids benefit from just constant participation and will improve over time as they grow and develop. Some kids actually get worse as they go through puberty and other growing up issues. People have their limits at everything and should be proud of whatever level they reach and that of the other children.



## WHAT IS A GRADING.

A grading is an event to test and showcase a student's ability. The grading system is constant during each class and not just at a grading. Gradings may also be held at specific special times or even a different location. Unlike many modern martial arts, we do not charge an extra fee to grade. We also do not grade people in little increments or grade people in what they can remember and perform without pressure and often without a partner. Muay Thai is real, and competency based not performance based. We are confident you have made the only choice for your child for practical reality and fighting skills for life. We are happy having the hardest grading system a child can do and we are proud to assist in the development of your child.

## THE GRADING LEVELS

Mighty Warrior is for 5 > 8-year-old. The grading system for this age group is animal groups for progression and behaviour. Level Grading though a system of 1 to 10, commences in Junior Warrior from 8 years and continues until 15 years, where students grade across into the Adult System. Kids should transition to Adults from 14 years. The Adult grading system applies for children that regularly participate in the adult class from 14+ and can overlap the junior system. Merit Badges overlap the system and may be given for specific performance in certain areas as earned.

Each grading test requires a noticeable improvement in and all the requirements of the previous grade in addition to new skills, improved fitness, and enhanced class participation.

**MY CHILD DIDN'T GRADE?** Gradings are never a sure thing and must be earned. That anything worth achieving is hard to achieve. Early levels still require standards to be met and attendance alone is only one small factor. Behaviour, 'turning up' and constant effort without a coach's constant badgering are important. When a child does not grade, they often need help understanding why. It just means they are not ready yet and have to work harder. Never compare your child to the others at a grading. Everyone starts in a different place; many kids train twice a week but some train 6 days a week. Gradings are not comparisons and individual improvement is required. Entitlement, unrealistic expectations, low standards for technique with fitness and Muay Thai, inconsistent attitude, poor teamwork, good physical skill but not consistent effort, quitting under pressure, winging, will factor in to not grading. Also, gradings are when the kids often shine but have trouble performing to the same level consistently. This will affect grading as we look at the regular classes strongly.

If your child does not grade, trust the reason, and ensure they come back to try harder, learn and persist.

**TRAINING ALWAYS MAKES YOU FEEL BETTER**

## PHOENIX MARTIAL KIDS PROGRAM – The Warrior Grading System.

### THE MIGHTY WARRIOR PROGRAM. 5-8 YEARS.

This program utilises merit badges for achievement in the program. Badges include improvement, diligence, achievement, and effort. In addition to badges the children are put into groups for their age to facilitate learning and class structure. Grouping is based on age, attitude, ability, attendance and coachability. Each group is designed to have children of the same ability, concentration, effort, paying attention, fitness, and level of learning – roughly grouped, for ease of class structure. It is also an early way to recognise developmental differences between children at different ages. Children may grade to different groups as they improve their class participation, concentration, effort, and ability. Age is a guide but not the main factor. Exceptional Mighty Warrior may grade in the Junior Warrior grading system.

Mighty Warrior groupings are based on animals for easy recognition. Grouping is done during the trial class and may change at any time based on the child's performance.

1. **Monkey.** Usually the younger children, 5 years. Need assistance lining up, paying attention, and following instructions requires regular attention from a coach.
2. **Tigers.** Usually children 7-8 years. They can line up and pay attention most of the class, consistently. They try to learn and improve and show signs of developing motor skill with fitness and skills. They can lead a line, are keen and like to try hard for the entire class. Tigers can learn and do partner work cooperatively.
3. **Eagles.** Children who can participate with older kids, concentrate well and follow the class structure with maturity. They always give a strong effort, are capable of partner work and follow instructions consistently. They can find their own partner, line up, take turns and listen without encouragement. Eagles are children that also look like they are grasping the physical skills and have the behaviour requirements consistently demonstrated.

### THE WARRIOR GRADING SYSTEM LEVELS – From Junior Warriors (8 years+)

All students from 8 years, start with no level and are ungraded unless they are moving from Mighty Warriors. They may be designated an animal group as required prior to grading. All students will progress differently. Some will take time to grasp the system and may stay at a level for months, even years, if standards are not achieved. The system is developmental and factors in attitude, attendance, ability, coachability and development. The primary grading aspect is competency balanced with attitude and attendance.

Older students may skip grades to line up better with the physical maturity, responsibility, and athleticism for their age. Children with a strong athletic aptitude and solid consistent behaviour may also skip grading levels. There is no time measurement for grading. Many children above level 4 will not grade every grading and may take 12+ months to move between levels. Level 1-4 is about participation, effort, behaviour measured with skill and fitness development. Level 5-8 is where we move into pass/fail criteria and learning to persist, overcome and earn rewards based on effort, ability, competency, and improvement. Level 6-10 have the demands of sparring and emotional development also considered to measure each participants ability to cope with the demanding physical and mental challenges faced in a conflict/challenging situations. Level 9 and 10 are rare and based on long term effort, competence, excellence, teamwork, and diligence.

**Everything you overcome that is hard is what forges you, to be who you are.**



### LEVEL 1 - White

Level 1 is a recognition of learning how to participate in classes on a regular basis. Level 1 students can follow instructions and attempt the basic skills and fitness. Level 1 students have a go at everything and participate consistently. Level 1 is a recognition of the consistent effort to grasp the basics of the structure of the class and show routine effort at everything in a class.

### LEVEL 2 - Yellow

Level 2 is a recognition of the ability to demonstrate all core the basics in a class and make a disciplined effort at improving themselves. To achieve Level 2 students must demonstrate discipline and class participation including consistent good behaviour and effort. Level 2 requires regular classes and the ability to participate in all aspects of a class. Level 2 Students have effective technique at the basics and try hard on every drill, every class to improve.

### LEVEL 3 - Orange

Level 3 is recognition of training for on a regular basis and consistently demonstrating effort in all basics with an ability to perform clear and effective technique. They are developing fitness and have good technique, performed consistently. Level 3 is where the student must demonstrate effort and apply intent into their motions, so they look and are effective. Power, speed and actual contact competency has to be evident. Level 3 Students can participate in partner work as an effective partner and perform both attack and defensive aspects of basic Muay Thai. Fitness requires effort and improvement, and skills start to look natural. Good behaviour is consistent and physical effort, courage and determination should be evident. Ability to partner multiple people and adapt to work with others is important.

### LISTED REQUIREMENTS FOR LEVEL 4.

TECHNIQUE	TECHNIQUE	TECHNIQUE
Fighting stance	Jab & Double Jab	L & R Rib Kicks
Solid head guard	Straight & cross	Switch kick
Linear footwork	Push Kick & front kick	Boxing strikes – 6 angles. Body, upper and hook.
Checking rib & leg kicks	Leg Kick. In & out	Over top punch
Cover/brace against ALL Kicks	Driving Knee & running knees	Spin back fist/Elbow
Dodge leg kicks	Elbow strikes 4 angles. Lift, hook.	Catching rib kicks & take down
Parallel footwork with punches	3 by 2 min effective bag work	3 by 2 min Shadow Sparring with clarity
Push up, sit up, star jumps. 5,4,3,2,1.	Enduro Kicks, knees, punches, checks – 40	20 Burpees & 50 sit ups.

All previous levels build towards this competency. A child MUST ask if they don't know something here, before the grading)

A selection of above will be tested when grading but all is required over classes in routine training. Other techniques may be given priority as it will depend on class focus and club development and following the 'what works' principle.

#### **LEVEL 4 – Light Green**

Level 4 students have accountability of technique. Level 4 students are good examples to beginners and have the characteristics to reach higher levels if they persist, train consistently and practice. Level 4 students are expected to improve on coaches' instructions and focus on corrections. Level 4 students can lead lines and assist new members with partner work and basics. Level 4 students can do good technique in front of a class correctly and are good at demonstrations. Level 4 students are ready to practice sparring and can-do random drills.

#### **LEVEL 5 – Light Blue**

Level 5 students are learning about the demands of contact and stress of random drills and coping. Contact required in defensive work, body sparring, and basic clinching. Level 5 students start to show the use of power, speed and intent in all offensive motions. Their defensive motions are realistic and work in class scenario training. They can demonstrate technique to a class as they are proficient in the skill. The big step here is competency in random situations not just programmed scenarios. Level 5 student need to do sparring to progress to level 6.

#### **LEVEL 6 – Navy Blue**

Level 6 students' complete classes with enthusiasm, participate with effort in all classes and have consistently demonstrated good discipline and effort to learn and improve at their fitness and skills. Level 6 students can be relied on to set an example regardless of age. Their fitness and technique look confident and effective and is applied with intent. Level 6 students can learn, and practice sparring and have the ability and skills to do partner work effectively. Level 6 students have intent and effort in all technique across all sessions and can effectively defend themselves against basic attacks with courage and skill. Level 6 students can do intermediate training and Adult Classes with an appropriate partner. Level 6 students are coachable and follow more intermediate and complex corrections.

#### **LEVEL 7 – Lime Green**

Level 7 is a recognition of ability to perform all the basics to a high standard and the ability to do all fitness exercises 'correctly' and with effort. Self-Discipline and self-assessment must be evident. An understanding of achieving through constant effort with humility to inspire others with good behaviour at all times. Level 7 requires honing basics and learning advanced skills. Level 7 requires ability to apply defences and offences in unstructured scenarios. Application of the skills taught is essential. Level 7 requires confidence, courage, ability and humility plus the ability to work hard to achieve difficult things and make small improvements in major areas. Level 7 has experienced sparring and challenges over come from sparring more skilled students.



## LISTED REQUIREMENTS FOR LEVEL 8.

(All previous levels build towards this competency. A child MUST ask if they don't know something here, before the grading)

TECHNIQUE	TECHNIQUE	TECHNIQUE
Open fighting stance	Front arm angle punching	Rib kicks with real power
Free clinching	Rear body hook and close short punches.	Roll up kicking
Linear & circular footwork	Kick catching & counters with takedowns & strikes.	Slipping & countering
Checking in 1-1 kick drills. All angles.	Back leg & inside leg kicks.	Regular Sparring Classes
Hover checking	Jump, driving, drag & swinging knees.	Regular Intermediate Classes
Lean backs and dodging to counters.	Elbow strikes in combination & clinching	1 Basic clinch takedowns & 1 kick catch takedown.
Diagonal footwork punching	Power elbows off folding punches.	Free clinching with posture. Head control and elbow defence.
Over hook, body lock. Doing & escaping.	Get up drill & basic ground kicks.	3 by 2 min Shadow Sparring with clarity
Drills 1 & 2. Plus, Block and counters of all basic strikes.	Enduro Kicks, punches, knees, checks – 80	50 Burpees & 100 sit ups, 50 push ups. In sets of 10.
5 by 2 min effective bag work	Pad Work basics 3 by 2 min rounds. Holding and doing.	X catching and working off kick defences.

A selection of above will be tested when grading but all is required over classes in routine training. Other techniques may be given priority as it will depend on class focus and club development and following the 'what works' principle.

### LEVEL 8 – Purple

Level 8 is recognition for being an advanced in the Kids program. Competency is the key. Capability in sparring and ability to work with new and more experienced students. Level 8 requires many years of training and is only for students who set a great example, demonstrate consistent competence and consistently perform at a high level of technique and fitness. Level 8 requires excellent and effective technique with consistent good role model behaviour and courage to defend themselves. Level 8 fitness should shine above the class and their effort is obvious. Level 8 students MUST be able to do correct free body exercises in addition to intent and application in all technique.

## LEVEL 9 - Red

Level 9 is recognition of persistence at an advanced Level. Improvement, diligence and consistent effort for at least 12 months beyond level 8. Level 9 students have the ability to spar at a competition level and adapt to the level of more and less experienced students and regularly participate in intermediate training including partner work, pad work, sparring and adult classes. They must be able to adapt to other students and be emotionally and physically self-aware of the other children's levels when sparring. Level 9 students have adaptability and problem-solving skills in sparring and can train with more senior, larger, smaller and older children. Level 9 students can conduct a warmup, basics and help a Coach with portions of the class and help new people.

Level 9 students, regardless of age routinely do adult classes at an intermediate level.

## LEVEL 10 - Gold

Level 10 is the pinnacle of the Children's program and will take many years of effort and regular commitment. For a child this will be an extremely challenging achievement and a rare performance. Level 10 requires the consistent sparring and a demonstration of mental and physical toughness. Overcoming adversity in life and facing challenges is important. Diligence and a strong work ethic over many years is required and we also look to achievement in other areas outside of Phoenix.

A level 10 student is an inspiration to others and has all the qualities to be a future champion in life and success at whatever they set their minds to. A Level 10 student routinely does Adult Classes at an Intermediate Level and does so with effort, courage, humility, and teamwork on a consistent basis. A level 10 Student has demonstrated excellence over many years including the ability to face setbacks and the resilience to perseverer.

A Level 10 student has assisted with classes as a coach and can conduct warmups and basics training.

## SUMMARY

Thank you very much for participating in the Phoenix WARRIOR program. Please feel free to give feedback or discuss any aspects of our program with the coaches. We constantly aim to improve and be useful. If the program works for your child and meets your expectations, we like to know.

