



2026 INDUSTRY REPORT

The 2026 State of Martial Arts

The US industry in 12 numbers — for school owners and operators.

01 — THE MARKET

\$21.2B

US martial arts studio market size, 2026

76,364

martial arts studios in the US (+6.0% YoY)

132,246

people employed in the industry

Studio count has **nearly doubled since 2020** — a 15.3% CAGR in new businesses.

Source: IBISWorld, 2026

02 — THE GROWTH STORY

39,310

2020

76,364

2026

+94%

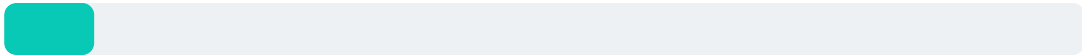
growth in US studio count in six years

Market value is up at a **3.7% CAGR** since 2021, but just **+0.7%** in 2026 — revenue growth is decelerating while studio count climbs, so **competition is rising**.

Source: IBISWorld, 2026

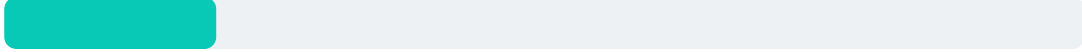
03 — WHAT SCHOOLS EARN

<50 members



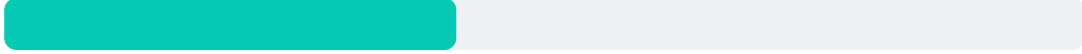
\$30,782

51–100



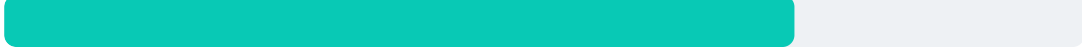
\$72,410

101–200



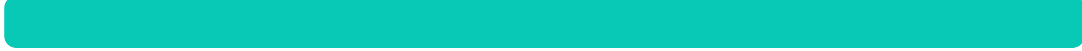
\$154,433

201–300



\$269,962

300+



\$369,209

\$254,083

Highest-earning discipline: MMA

\$74,783

Lowest: kung fu

Average annual revenue per school. Gymdesk platform data, 2022 baseline.

04 — THE RETENTION BATTLEGROUND

66.4%

fitness-industry member retention per year (HFA, 2025)

60–70%

avg. martial arts student retention (Black Belt CRM, 2026)

75–85%

retention at top-performing schools (Black Belt CRM, 2026)

~Half of new members quit within their first six months. Retention is where the money is won.

Source: Health & Fitness Association, 2025

05 — THE KIDS' OPPORTUNITY

65%

of US youth played a sport in 2024 — a record high (Project Play, 2025)

\$1,016

avg. family spend per child on their primary sport, +46% in 5 yrs (Project Play, 2025)

~30M

kids want afterschool programs — 77% are shut out (Afterschool Alliance, 2025)

Run a school that keeps members on the mat.

Gymdesk handles billing, memberships, attendance, and marketing in one place.

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