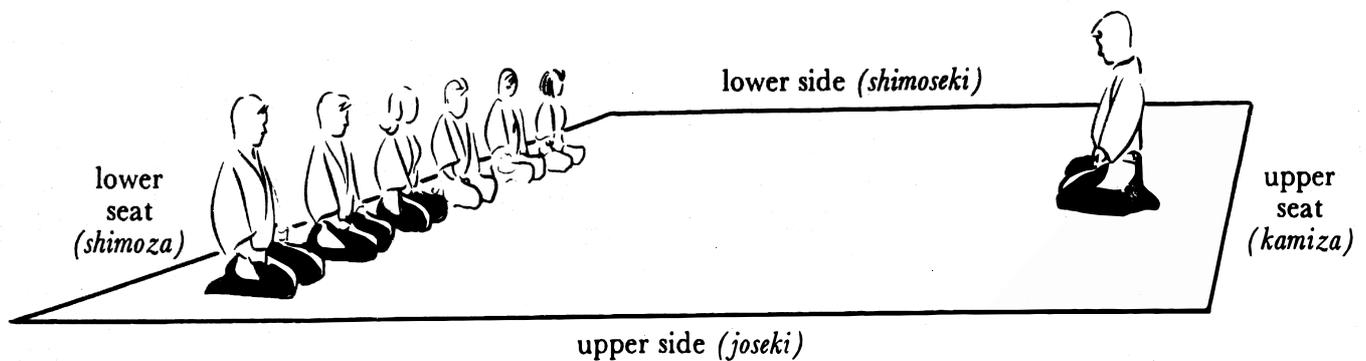


# Dojo etiquette



The word dojo literally means “place of the way”, and traditionally is a place to train in an atmosphere of calm and serenity. Aikido training requires total concentration. The dojo is a place of learning. It is a place to respect, to keep clean and to care for. The dojo is a place to be made special for practicing a special art. In an Aikido dojo, the observation of basic forms of etiquette is integral to the creation of a respectful and attentive atmosphere, which is conducive to learning.

Adult students expect and enjoy the “get away from it all” feeling during practice. As children and pets are disruptive during adult classes, it would be appreciated if alternative arrangements could be made for the care of children and pets at those times you wish to attend classes.

The following are a few simple rules, which enable us to train together in the spirit of Aikido.

## Your attitude

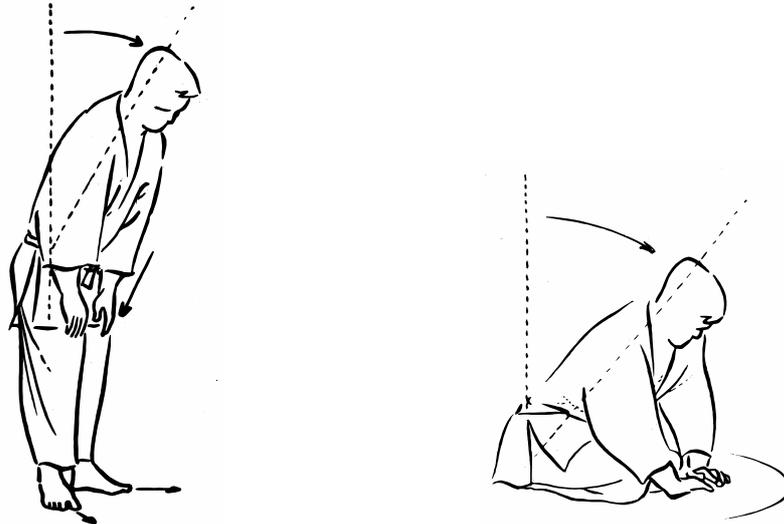
- Always enter the dojo with an empty mind and with positive Ki. If you think you know already, it is difficult for you to learn.
- Never come to train when you have ingested any type of drug or alcohol.
- Any negative feelings you might be harbouring must be left outside the dojo. There is no place for them inside.
- Always arrive at the dojo with plenty of time to sign in, change into your gi, and enter the mat area at least five minutes before class is to begin.

## Dress and cleanliness

- The dojo should be kept spotless. If you see something that indicates otherwise, for example, rubbish or dirt on the floor, don't wait for someone else to correct it. This is part of your training.
- Always see that toilets, showers, and dressing areas are kept clean.
- Treat your training tools with respect. Your gi should always be clean and mended. Your bokken, jo and tanto should be in good condition and in their appropriate place when not in use.
- Your body, and in particular your feet, must be very clean before you step onto the mat. Keep fingernails and toenails trimmed.
- T-shirts and singlets are not to be worn by male students during training. Only female students are allowed to wear a white T-shirt or singlet under their gi.
- No rings, watches or jewellery of any kind should be worn during practice.
- Do not wear heavily scented perfume or cologne in the dojo, although a deodorant might be appreciated by your fellow students.
- Mobile phones must be switched off.

# Bowing

Bowing is an appropriate way of showing gratitude and humility, while at the same time placing one's mind in a state of non-dissension, which is necessary for the right training.



- Bow when entering and leaving the dojo.
- Bow when stepping on and off the training mat.
- At the beginning of each training session, the class lines up and bows first to kamiza (higher seat) and then to the instructor, saying “onegai shimasu”, which translates as “thank you for what we are about to do” or “I place myself under your teaching”.
- At the end of each training session, bow again to kamiza, then to the instructor, saying “arigato gozaimashita”, which translates as “thank you for what you did”.
- Bow when requesting personal instruction from an instructor.
- When receiving personal instruction, remain quiet until the instructor has finished, then bow.
- After the instructor demonstrates a technique, bow, choose a partner quickly, bow and begin to practice.
- When the end of a particular practice is signalled, stop immediately, bow to your partner(s) and line up in seiza (formal kneeling position) for further instruction.

## During class

- If you are late for class, wait at the side of the mat until the instructor signals that you may join the class. Then bow and enter the mat.
- All participants should be sitting in seiza with quiet attentiveness when the instructor steps onto the mat to begin class.
- The formal sitting position on the mat is seiza. If you have an injury, check with the instructor, and if the instructor suggests, you may sit cross-legged, but do not sit with legs outstretched, lean against posts or walls, or lie down during class.
- Do not leave the mat during class without first obtaining the permission of the instructor.
- Never interrupt the class to question unnecessarily. Learn as much as possible through intent observation and concentrated practice. If you must ask a question, wait for an appropriate moment.
- Do not call out or interrupt the instructor while teaching.
- There should never be conversation of any kind while the instructor is demonstrating. When training with your partner, speak only when necessary.
- For reasons of safety, respect and courtesy, it is essential that the instructions of the teacher be followed exactly. Many techniques are dangerous if not practiced properly.
- Never argue about a technique. If there is a problem that cannot be resolved, ask the instructor for help.
- Never interrupt another student's training to ask for assistance. Wait until the instructor is available to help.
- It is inappropriate for a student (including a black belt) to offer instruction during class unless he or she has been specifically requested to assist by the instructor.
- Never be idle during practice. You should be training or, if necessary, seated formally awaiting your turn.

# The Sensei

- The instructor is referred to as Sensei during class.
- Treat every instructor with respect at all times.
- Never compare one instructor with another. Every Sensei has something unique to offer - your job is to discover it.
- A Sensei should never have to fold his or her own hakama after class.



# Health issues

To protect the dojo family against disease, we have adopted the following policy intended to minimise the risk of transmission of HIV, Hepatitis B and other blood-borne pathogens during training.

A number of blood-borne infectious diseases can be transmitted during body contact and collision sports. The more serious include Hepatitis and HIV (AIDS) infections. These diseases may be spread by contact between broken skin or mucous membranes and infected blood or saliva.

For the transmission of HIV through blood to occur during sport, the blood of an infected person must contaminate the lesion/wound or mucous membrane (for example, the eye or mouth) of another person. The risk of such transmission is very low, with few cases reported in the international literature. The following are principles recommended to help further reduce the low possibility of HIV and Hepatitis transmission while participating in sports, which involve direct body contact.

Finally, there are other diseases and illnesses aside from those transmitted through blood. You are reminded that you are responsible not only for your own health and safety, but the health and safety of others with whom you train. If you know or suspect that you have any illness or disease, which might infect others, refrain from training until you are no longer a risk to others. This self-defence and consideration of yourself and your fellow students is your responsibility and part of your training. It is embodied in the spirit of the art we study.

- Be responsible: maintain strict personal hygiene.
- Keep your fingernails and toenails trimmed so you don't scratch, cut or otherwise break the skin of others.
- Don't share cups.
- Use paper towels for drying and dispose of them in the bin provided.
- If a wound occurs during training, leave the mat and wash the wound with soap and hot water, apply antiseptic cream and a bandage. Keep the wound covered until you receive medical advice, if required.
- Similarly clean and cover any existing lesion or open wound before training.
- If you notice that someone else has an open cut or sore, remind them of their obligation before training with that person.
- Clean any spill of blood on the floor covering or furnishings immediately. Use disinfectant, which is usually available in first aid kits.
- If you are assisting someone with a bleeding injury, wear gloves, located in the change rooms. Wash your hands with soap and hot water as soon as you remove the gloves.
- All used gloves, bloody dressings, rags and so on must be placed in a leak-proof plastic bag and disposed of carefully.
- If anyone's blood gets on your skin, leave the mat immediately and wash the blood off thoroughly with soap and hot water.