



Beginners Guide & Members Handbook

Dojo Etiquette

Entering and exiting the dojo

When training in Aikido, upon entering and leaving the dojo, a formal bow is expected in the direction of the shomen as a sign of gratitude and respect for all those who have come before us, to all those who will come after us, to O'Sensei, to give thanks to the art of Aikido, and the opportunity to train in it.

Entering the mat area

The mat space is where all Aikido practice takes place. Before stepping onto the mat make sure that your hands and feet are clean. Shoes should never be worn on the mat. When stepping onto the mat, bow toward the shomen (see figure 1). If class is already in session, stand at the edge of the mat and wait for the instructor to give you permission to enter the class and step onto the mat.

What to do before class starts

Before class officially begins, use this time on the mat to stretch, warm-up and prepare for training. Your instructor will signal when class begins with two loud claps. Once you hear this signal you should line up in seiza (see below) facing the shomen and await instruction. Classes will usually begin with a senior student or the instructor leading everyone in a stretching/warm-up routine followed by formally bowing in to start training.



Sitting in Seiza (formal sitting posture)

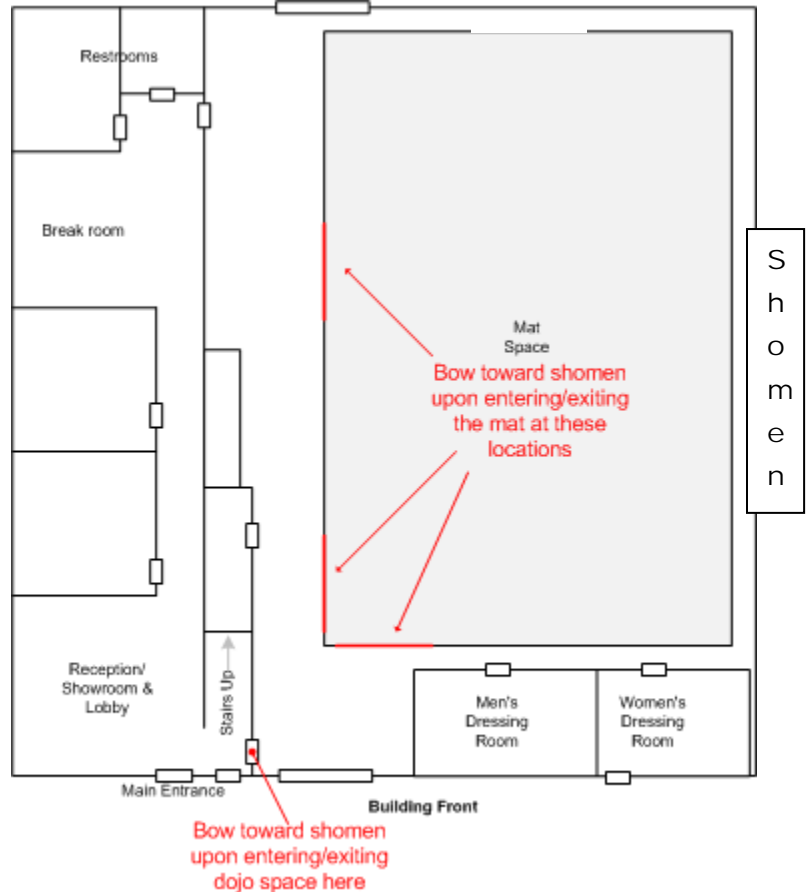


Figure 1

Class begins and "bowing in"

After stretching and warm-up is complete the instructor will signal to the class that it is time to "bow in" with two loud claps. When you hear this it means it is time to line up in seiza along the edge of the training space and facing the shomen. Students will line up, in order of their Aikido rank, with the most senior students closest to the main entry. Students of the same rank should line up in order of age. The process of "bowing in" marks the official start of training and like all bows, is a sign of respect.

Basic Terminology

Fundamental Terms

Aikidoka – one who practices Aikido
Aiki – blending one's ki energy with that of their partner
Nage – Throw or student performing Aikido technique
Uke – the student receiving technique, attacker in Aikido
Waza – Technique
Dori - grab
Bushido – the way of the warrior
Dan – Black belt level
Gi – dress/uniform
Hakama – traditional wide pants used in Aikido
Sensei – teacher
Ukemi – act of receiving a technique, including throw / pin

Types of Techniques

Tachi waza – Standing techniques
Suwari waza – Sitting techniques
Hanmi handachi waza – Nage sitting, uke standing techniques
Omote – technique to the front
Ura – technique to the rear
Ushiro – technique from behind
Gedan – lower
Jodan – upper
Chudan – middle
Jiyu waza – free training
Randori – Free training with multiple attackers
Tantodori – Defense against knife
Tachidori – Defense against sword
Jodori – Defense against staff
Hiji Otoshi – elbow drop

Numbers

1 ichi
2 ni
3 san
4 shi
5 go
6 roku
7 shichi
8 hachi
9 ku
10 ju

Common Expressions

“One-gaishimasu” (pronounced: oh-nay-guy-she-mah-soo) – Please, when asking for something or to start a technique

“domo arigato gozaimashita” (pronounced: doh-moh ah-ree-gah-toh goh-zai-mah-she-tah) – Thank you very much

“Hai” – Yes

“Yame” – Stop

“Hajime” – begin

Stances

Aihanmi – both students have the same foot forward
Gyakuhanmi – students have opposite foot forward (like looking into a mirror)

Weapons

Tanto – Short Sword, Dagger, or Knife
Bokken – wooden training sword
Bo – staff (longer staff than the Jo)
Jo – staff

Attacks

Katate dori – one-handed same-side grip on wrist
Kosa dori – cross hand grab on wrist
Gyaku te dori – same as “Kosa dori”
Ryote dori – uke grabs both wrists
Morote dori – two handed grip on one arm
Mune dori – one-handed grip on lapel
Kata dori – one-handed grip on shoulder
Ryokata dori – grab both shoulders
Tsuki – punch or weapon thrust
Shomen uchi – vertical overhead strike to the head
Yokomen uchi – diagonal strike to the side of head / neck
Ryokata dori – grab both shoulders
Ushiro ryote dori – grab both wrists from the rear position
Ushiro ryokata dori – grab both shoulders from the rear
Kubi shime – Choking position

Aikido Ranking and Examination Requirements

The following are **minimum** requirements for each rank as stated. Students ranked at the minimum requirement of **days and time in grade** should be those students that are deemed exceptional by the dojo cho. One day of training is defined as one day regardless of the number of times trained in that single day.

All beginner students will start with the rank of 6th Kyu (White Belt)

5th Kyu – White Belt

(Minimum 50 training days)

TACHI WAZA

katate dori: tai no henko (omote & ura)
shihonage omote & ura

shomen uchi: ikkyo (omote & ura)
irimi nage

SUWARI WAZA

ryote dori: kokyu ho

UKEMI

forward & back rolls

4th Kyu – Blue Belt

(Minimum 60 training days)

TACHI WAZA

shomen uchi: ikkyo (omote & ura)
nikyo (omote & ura)
irimi nage

kata dori: nikyo (omote & ura)
ryote dori: tenchi nage
tsuki: kote gaeshi
katate dori: shihonage (omote & ura)
yokomen uchi: shihonage (omote & ura)

SUWARI WAZA

ryote dori: kokyu ho

UKEMI

forward & back rolls

3rd Kyu – Blue Belt

(Minimum 80 training days)

SUWARI WAZA

shomen uchi: ikkyo through yonkyo

TACHI WAZA

morote dori: kokyu ho
shomen uchi: ikkyo through yonkyo
irimi nage
kote gaeshi

tsuki: irimi nage
kote gaeshi

katate dori: shihonage (omote & ura)
ryote dori: shihonage (omote & ura)
yokomen uchi: shihonage (omote & ura)

UKEMI

At a level appropriate for the rank

2nd Kyu – Brown Belt

(Minimum 100 training days)

SUWARI WAZA

shomen uchi: ikkyo through yonkyo

TACHI WAZA

shomen uchi: ikkyo through yonkyo , irimi nage , kote gaeshi
kaiten nage

tsuki: irimi nage
katate dori: irimi nage
kote gaeshi kote gaeshi, kaiten nage

ushiro ryote dori: shihonage, kote gaeshi

HANMI HANDACHI

katate dori: shihonage
ryote dori: shihonage

VARIATIONS (3 techniques per attack)

katate dori, hiji dori, morote dori, ryote dori

Jiyu Waza

one person flowing freestyle, any attack

1st Kyu – Brown Belt

(Minimum 150 training days)

SUWARI WAZA

shomen uchi: ikkyo through yonkyo
yokomen uchi: ikkyo through yonkyo
kata dori: ikkyo through yonkyo

TACHI WAZA

shomen uchi: ikkyo through yonkyo
yokomen uchi: ikkyo through yonkyo
kata dori: ikkyo through yonkyo
ushiro ryote dori: ikkyo through yonkyo

shomen uchi: irimi nage
kote gaeshi
kaiten nage

tsuki: irimi nage
kote gaeshi
kaiten nage

yokomen uchi: irimi nage
kote gaeshi
kaiten nage
gokyo

VARIATIONS (3 techniques per attack)

katate dori kata dori menuchi
ryote dori ushiro ryokata dori
morote dori koshi nage

HANMI HANDACHI

katate dori: shihonage
ryote dori: shihonage
shomen uchi: irimi nage
tsuki: irimi nage
kote gaeshi
kaiten nage
ushiro waza: five techniques

JIU WAZA

One person flowing freestyle, any attack

RANDORI

Two person multiple attack.

Shodan – Black Belt

Minimum 200 training days and one year from promotion to ikkyu. (Please note that the dan application form requires the training days to be listed, not the number of years of training.) An Association 5th dan or above must be present to sign the application unless otherwise approved or directed by the Division Head.

Minimum age: 15 years old

SUWARI WAZA
same as 1st kyu

TACHI WAZA
same as 1st kyu

VARIATIONS (5 techniques per attack chosen)

katate dori ushiro ryote dori
ryote dori ushiro ryokata dori
morote dori koshi nage
kata dori menuchi

HANMI HANDACHI
same as 1st kyu

TANTO DORI
tsuki
shomen uchi
yokomen uchi
slash
knife at throat from the front
knife at throat from the back

JIU WAZA
one person flowing freestyle, any attack

RANDORI

Three person multiple attack. Examiners may choose one of the following scenarios:

- begin with one attacker flowing jiuwaza, add uke #2 and then uke #3
- begin with two ukes each holding an arm, add a third uke coming in
- three ukes attack simultaneously

Kids Program – Testing and Requirements

Testing in Aikido is non-competitive. Testing takes place after fulfilling time requirements and when the teachers feel the student is ready. During the test, students are required to demonstrate growth in Aikido technique, basic rolling skills, and etiquette.

Test Etiquette

Beginning your test: when Sensei calls your name shikko to the center of the mat and do a seated bow to the shomen. Turn and do a seated bow to Sensei. Bow to your partner and wait for Sensei to announce what technique to perform. Keep repeating the technique until asked to stop. *Ending your test:* When Sensei signals the end of the test, you and your partner do a seated bow to each other, then to Sensei and finally a seated bow to the shomen. Shikko back to line.

Testing Requirements

Note: Time requirement for rank is a minimum and not a guarantee.

7th Kyu – White Belt

7-1 One Black Stripe

(15 hours)

- Shikko
- Front and back rolls, kneeling
- Kokyu-ho omote and ura
- Kosa Dori Ikkyo, omote

7-2 Two Black Stripes

(15 hours)

- All previous techniques, plus:
- Kosa Dori Ikkyo, ura
 - Kosa Dori Irimi nage, ura

6th Kyu – Yellow Belt

(30 hours)

All previous techniques, plus:

- Escape from wrist grab
- Mune Tsuki Irimi Nage, ura

6-1 One Black Stripe

(30 hours)

All previous techniques, plus:

- Kneeling and standing forward and back rolls
- Kosa Dori Sumi Otoshi, ura
- Mune Tsuki Sumi Otoshi, ura
- Yokomen Uchi Shihonage
- Katate Dori kokyu nage
- Suwari waza Kokyu Ho

5th Kyu – Purple Belt

(30 hours)

All previous techniques, plus:

- Shomenuchi Ikkyo
- Katate Dori Shihonage (omote and ura)

5-1 One Black Stripe

(30 hours)

All previous techniques, plus:

- Ryote Dori Tenchinage
- Mune Tsuki Ikkyo
- Mune Tsuki Kaitennage

4th Kyu – Blue Belt

(50 hours)

All previous techniques, plus:

- Ryote Dori Shihonage
- Kata Dori Ikkyo
- Yokomen Uchi Kokyu Nage

4-1 One Black Stripe

(50 hours)

All previous techniques, plus:

- Yokomen Uchi Sumi Otoshi
- Shomen Uchi Kokyu Nage
- Ushiro Ryote Dori Shihonage
- Ushiro Ryote Dori Ikkyo

3rd Kyu – Green Belt

(60 hours)

All previous techniques, plus:

- Hanmi Handachi: Katate Dori and Ryote Dori Shihonage
- Katate Dori Ikkyo
- Katadori Iriminage
- Yokomen Uchi Ikkyo
- Shomen Uchi Nikyo, Sankyo and Yonkyo

3-1 One Black Stripe

(30 hours)

All previous techniques, plus:

- Ushiro Ryote Dori Kokyunage
- Yokomen Uchi Nikyo and Sankyo
- Suwari Waza Ikkyo from Shomen Uchi and Kata Dori

Please Note

Black belts are only available after the candidate has attained the minimum age of 16. Prior to the age of 15, internal belt ranks through 3rd kyu are attainable. After attaining 15 years of age the student is eligible to join the adult ranks at a rank decided on by the Chief Instructor.