

BEING AN AIKIDO STUDENT AT AIKIDO OF SAN DIEGO

**Orientation information and reference material
from Dave Goldberg Sensei
for all dojo members**



A MESSAGE FROM SENSEI TO ALL NEW COMMUNITY MEMBERS...

Hello! And welcome to Aikido of San Diego :-) Lets get right to it...

“Do,” the last character in “Ai-Ki-Do,” means a way or a path. But a path to what? In your relative and specific sense, this is yet to be seen. However, because of the evolved paradigm that Aikido was founded on (that will get clearer as you read on), there are some generalizations we can count on.

Have you ever paid attention to what it is that you *long* for? I mean, really the bottom line once you get past all your material desires. If you haven't, do it now. What you'll find is that your answers will be remarkably similar to the other seven-billion peoples' out there. That is not an accident.

Peace and security? Power and freedom? Fulfillment, oneness, a flow with conflict and life as it is? Keep going... Acceptance? Inclusion? Oneness, ease, and compassion? Does any of that feel familiar to you? Of course it does. We know that's our nature, but too often we just can't seem to connect with it through the perceived mucky-muck of living, and the conflicts that arise in life. It may be one of the reasons you are reading this handbook right now—because you innately know that something isn't quite congruent in the experience of life—that there's somehow a disconnect—and Aikido somehow speaks to it.

From my perspective, Aikido is a martial instrument for living in closer congruence to all of that—that which you long for. It is a path or way, modeled in a fresh and sensible paradigm, that cultivates more of what you actually want out of life. However, this path is pointless without your participation. And, as your participation makes it an experiential journey, I prefer to think of Aikido practice as that—a great journey into your own depths, potential, and relationship with life.

If you're new to Aikido then you are about to embark on that journey—one which is probably unlike any other you've taken. What makes it unlike any other is that Aikido is not rooted in the conventional paradigm of life that almost all of us are accustomed to. What I'm talking about is our conventional conditioning. It tells us that life is an either-or, this-or-that proposition that leads to fulfillment, peace, and security *only until* the next “this-or-that” situation comes up. That is to say, *it doesn't work*. What's more, it says that conflict is a competition, and what happens “out there” is separate from me “in here.”

That same conditioning reduces what people believe about martial arts practice to a win-lose deal, and it creates a tendency to hook into ego-based fantasies about what it means to be martial. This is highly limiting. Aikido challenges that paradigm and offers a path towards a more whole, inclusive, effective, and unlimited reality. Aikido places life and conflict in clearer light, and I find, illuminates limiting assumptions with no basis in reality, e.g., more violent or aggressive means more “real,” etc.

I am here to help, through this (r)evolutionary practice, to guide you on this journey. So, welcome to Aikido, and...welcome to a new paradigm!

If you are not new to Aikido then you are very welcome at our dojo, too. It's very likely that your previous experience with Aikido will be somewhat different than your experience here. Sometimes that is not easy. I ask that you pay attention to the values that are emphasized at Aikido of San Diego, and let your sensibilities take care of the rest.

Whether you're new to Aikido or not, I'd like you to know where I'm coming from. I define Aikido as, “The way of unifying with life energy.” Where I choose to take the dojo community is always intended

to be congruent with that. How I do it day to day is based on the simple question, “*Me being who I am, how can I best bring a fully embodied Aikido practice to people as they are, and a world as it is?*”

I’m not inspired to lead a dojo based on unquestioned boundaries of “style” and lineage, institutional beliefs and assumptions, or Japanese cultural norms. If you’re new to the dojo but not new to Aikido then this may be different from your previous experience in terms of culture and direction. I request that you approach your practice here with a fresh mind and heart regardless of your rank or experience.

What follows here is a current collection of tips for success from me to you, dojo policies, and reference material regarding “Aikido-ese” and our system of graduating levels. I hope you find it useful. Most of all, though, I hope you find your experience at Aikido of San Diego to be fulfilling, powerful, insightful, and supportive. Oh, and don’t forget to enjoy the ride!

Sincerely,
Dave Goldberg

ON BEING AN AIKIDO STUDENT

Aikido has no secrets, but here’s a few for you anyway...

1. Inquire

This is about personal clarity. Before you even begin, and at any other stage along the journey, ask yourself clarifying questions. Here’s a few for you to start with. Others will come up along the path. In fact, many important questions are included in our promotion process. Take them seriously, and be okay with whatever comes up:

What do you want from Aikido?

No, no, no... I mean *really* want. Just be honest with yourself. If your answer is still, “To be like Steven Seagal,” then ask yourself what you would get out of that. Keep going until your answers can’t be reduced any more.

What assets do you already bring with you on this journey?

You most certainly have strengths and other assets that have served you well up until now. Be grateful for them. They’re gifts. Call on them when they’re needed in your practice, and remain open to discovering other gifts you never knew you had!

What do you need to let go, and/or, what are you willing to let go of in order to get what you want?

Don’t make this about sacrifice (unless you really want to). It’s not about suffering for something better, or being your own personal hero. It’s about knowing yourself, and making space for something new to emerge. Be brave, but also be reasonable.

2. Be Here

Sounds kind of obvious, doesn't it? But it's obviousness really isn't complete until we give it the attention it deserves. There's two things to look at here. One is showing up, and the other is being here when you're here. Make sense?

Lets look at a hypothetical situation. Two beginners start Aikido at the same time. One of them (Student A) has a "plan" to show up for training on the evenings that he/she could fit it in, and when he/she isn't too tired from the work day. The other (Student B) has scheduled particular times in the week that he/she is going to class as part of their weekly/monthly routine. If only one of those students will still be around a year later and moving forward in their training, it will be Student B almost one-hundred percent of the time. Even if you have a work schedule or lifestyle that is unpredictable, there is still some level of commitment you can make to simply showing up. Frequency is not as relevant as the established commitment itself. Establish it and stick to it. If it needs to change then so be it. Change it, and then incorporate that into the pattern of your life. Sharing the news of your commitment with family, friends, and co-workers is also very helpful. When other people know about your commitment, you're more likely to remain on track.

Okay, so you showed up. All that means, though, is that your "meat suit" is now inside the space of the dojo and perhaps on the training mat. Now your awareness needs to be here, too, and not elsewhere. So what does that mean? Basically, that means to be in your current experience. You are not at work now, with your family, or anywhere else. There may be current thoughts of those other places and situations, but you choose whether or not to make them relevant right now. This is an important point to recognize—that there is your experience, and there is something else *about* your experience. Recognize that one is real, and the other is a storyline. Allegedly, you're doing this as an investment in yourself, so be with it when you're here. Drop down into your experience with practice, recognize when you're sucked into a limiting, dramatic storyline *about* the practice (or anything else), and move on without punishing yourself over it. That's life, and we all find ourselves there, which is not here, until we don't.

3. Open Up & Let In

This is about receptivity and humility—qualities that people in our culture are often seriously challenged by. It's no wonder with so much societal emphasis on leadership, power, and action, that we'd find ourselves out of balance in those realms. We are generally an impatient people. You'll get more out of Aikido if you put the cart where it belongs—after the horse. Here's what I mean:

The best way to start is by focusing your practice on qualities that are receptive in nature like feeling, listening, watching, allowing, and relaxing. Fixating on more active qualities like asserting, doing, and throwing is putting the cart before the horse. It requires some self-awareness, but that's one of the "secrets" to effective training (and living)—that quality *action* comes out of quality *being*. Receptivity precedes implementation. Consider that a simplistic formula for mature engagement.

"Do-be-do-be-do."

—Sinatra

"Be-do-be-do-be."

—Goldberg

4. Engage & Contribute

This is a good time to discuss the heart of how Aikido is fundamentally practiced—through a training partnership that I’ll call, “The Uke-Nage relationship.” This partnership also points directly to that paradigm model I mentioned earlier. The Uke-Nage relationship is a way of engaging with conflict that includes *and transcends* the win-lose, offense-defense, right-or-wrong mentalities.

Uke, which literally means “One who receives,” and Nage, which means “One who throws,” have an important place in Aikido training. If you have some familiarity with Yin and Yang then you can think of those two roles in that way. Unlike many martial arts modeled to work *against* an attack or “opponent,” Aikido teaches us to effectively work *with* the energy of attack and the person from where it’s coming. There is no competition in Aikido—no pitting of one person against another. Instead, you are partners in conflict and each of you is half of a whole. Uke and Nage represent two perspectives of a single event unfolding towards resolution, and both are equally important. It’s helpful to remember that as Uke, you’re going to give sincerely before you receive the technique, and as Nage, you’re going to receive sincerely before you apply the technique. Both Uke and Nage are doing Aikido—not just the one who’s executing the technique. The better you understand the Uke-Nage relationship, which is to say Yin and Yang, the more possibility you open yourself up to as you work towards forging yourself as a genuine and effective expression of the art.

When you are sincere in your roles, you are contributing to the development of everyone involved. These roles, though, are only there for practice. They help us stay grounded in better ways to meet adversity, life, and other people. There is not actually something called an Uke and a Nage. But we can use the roles to inform ourselves about graceful and effective engagement, and what we’d like to contribute to the world and to life.

ON BEING A DOJO MEMBER

The dojo is more than a training space. It’s also a community of people. When you join the dojo you are a member of this community, and a larger family of Aikidoists all over the world. The dojo exists so we may develop together with a support system and guidance. Its quality depends on all of us.

Please make yourself available for help in the dojo when it’s needed, be sure your membership billing information is up-to-date, support the spirited atmosphere in which we all train, and pass the good news of our community on to your friends. Unlike a spa or gym, the dojo is an extension of our collective intent to develop ourselves in body, mind, and spirit. Your support of the dojo is your support of an ideal in practice that benefits you, and those around you.

I’m always grateful when you show up to train in good spirits. If everyone did only that, though, it wouldn’t be enough to serve the needs of the dojo at large. The facility needs to be cared for, new people need to be introduced to our community, and projects and events need to be supported. Sorry, but I can’t do it all by myself. It starts with my leadership, but the fact is that *we* are the dojo and the community, and it flourishes and declines on *our* contributions collectively and individually. There are several simple and important ways in which you could serve the dojo:

Help out with cleaning and maintenance.

Each and every training day the dojo needs to be swept and vacuumed at minimum. Some days there will be more to do. There may be some mopping, bathroom cleaning, dusting, organizing,

etcetera. Please feel free to take initiative with it. If it looks like something needs to be done, announce it, solicit some help if it's needed, and just get on it. The bar for cleanliness in the dojo should be high.

Help out in children's classes.

If you have at least a few months experience and you're ever available during children's class hours, assistance is needed and appreciated. Our children's program plays a big part in keeping the dojo vibrant and viable. In other words, we are able to keep our great facility for adult classes to be scheduled nearly every day *because* we have a successful youth program 2-3 days a week. It needs to be cultivated, and you can help with that. It's very helpful to me and the kids, and gives you the opportunity to practice clarity and sensitivity in your technique, and patience and understanding in your manner. It's also pretty fun.

Volunteer and participate in events.

True to being a community, the dojo does all kinds of things apart from training. We host events, we have celebrations, we do service activities, and internal projects, etcetera. Please offer your help in supporting these things and making our activities successful.

Put the dojo out there.

If you're excited about what you're doing at Aikido of San Diego, share it on social media. Both posting your own stuff and sharing our public posts (please "like" our public Facebook page) are sincerely appreciated. We have a presence on all the major social media platforms. Putting the dojo out there helps perpetuate our good work, and enhances our security as we move forward.

Another great thing to do is to invite a friend to come one evening. If they're interested, you can even invite them to train in a class with you. That must be scheduled in advance with me. It's a member's privilege not extended to the general public.

Keep yourself informed.

We have a secret group on Facebook that is strictly for current members. It's used for all the inside communication and information that the public has no use for. It is the primary communication portal for the dojo community's activities. Please go to the following link and request to be included:

<http://www.facebook.com/groups/aikidosd>

Since it is exclusively for dojo members, you will be removed from the group should you ever decide to end your membership (unless requested otherwise). If you're not on Facebook, I encourage you to join it just for access to the group. It's used quite a bit, and hey, you can ignore everything else in Facebook Land.

SOME GUIDELINES FOR CLASS TIME

Please mark the days you train on the roster.

It's my only way of tracking your time on the mat. Mark an "X" for one complete class, and a "2" for two complete classes trained per day (no other marks please). By association rule, time on the mat is counted by training days—not hours or classes. I do, however, take those numbers into consideration when I'm considering demos for promotion.

We use a simple bow to acknowledge simple and important things.

Gratitude. Inclusion. Respect. Appreciation. Recognition. These are all things that are extended by a simple, heartfelt bow. If this is too challenging for your current belief system then please just use traditionally clear and considerate language with supportive body language until you get over it.

We recognize the founder and each other with a bow whenever we begin and finish a class. The words you hear associated with it are, "**Onegae-shimasu**," which means "Please" (as in "Please do me the favor of..."), and "**Domo-arigato-go-zai-masu**," which means "Thank you very much." If you're late for class, simply wait for the instructor to invite you on the mat. Bow towards the Shomen (the front of the dojo where O'Sensei's picture hangs), and join the class in progress.

Anytime you engage someone to partner with, please bow to one another. When you're finished practicing, bow again and thank your partner. Also, if/when you receive individual instruction during class, it's polite to bow and thank the instructor.

A plain white training uniform and appropriately designated belt is worn in class.

Please keep your uniform clean—at least clean enough that it doesn't smell. Also, no jewelry should be worn, and long hair should be contained with a hair tie. Hakama are worn by those of Dan ranks (black belts). I consider it optional.

Please—train with a clean body.

It's respectful and it simply makes it more pleasant for everyone. Also make sure that your feet are clean before you get on the mat, and that your fingernails are short, and body is free of any perfumed products.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION, PROCEDURES, AND POLICIES

Current dojo information having to do with class schedule, events, and ranking is available on our website at www.aikidosd.com. Our public Facebook page also is kept up-to-date with dojo community information. This handbook is also available on our website.

If you ever need to contact me, the number is 619-993-2454. To contact the facility during class hours (you may want to pass on to spouses, etc.), the number is 619-977-2454. My email address is sensei@aikidosd.com, or just use any email link on our website.

Water is made available at the dojo for those who don't bring their own. A \$1 donation is expected if you need bottled water. Place it in the container on top of the refrigerator. Payments for events and demo fees may also be left there when I'm not readily available.

Please don't leave anything at the dojo after training. That includes your uniform, water bottles, glasses, shoes, clothes, children, etc. Take everything home with you every day.

Minors must be picked up by class ending times. Please do not adjust your pick up time at all. Rides are expected to be there when class ends—no exceptions.

It is each student's responsibility to know what material is on their demonstrations for promotion and how much the fee is. The up-to-date information is always available in our latest handbook (available on our website). It's also posted on the dojo bulletin board.

Membership fees are not refundable. When you pay for your initial membership or monthly membership fees, you are committing to those months no matter how often or seldom you choose to train. All policies regarding fees and billing are clearly outlined on the receipts in your membership folder and are administered “by the book.” The policies are intentionally simple, transparent, and set up to protect each individual member and the dojo entity. They are not negotiable.

OUR SYSTEM OF GRADUATING LEVELS

Rank. It's a word I don't like very much. It seems to immediately conjure up fantasies about where one stands, where one wants to stand, and how you're going to levitate like a Japanese buddha once you reach a certain rank. Let go of it. Unfortunately, we don't have a lot of other words in English that truly capture what our system of levels is all about. With that said, a system does exist at Aikido of San Diego so that there's a dimensional process with which every student can demonstrate their growth, and draw out the best in each of us.

In a nutshell, five levels precede black belt. Once you qualify for any level the process of preparation begins, and you will be scheduled to do your demonstration for promotion. Each level requires a period of dedicated preparation, an inquiry to be shared, and the actual demonstration itself. Here's the details:

Qualifying for any new level is based on:

1. Your number of training days. It's normal for minimum days required to be far surpassed.
2. Your current expression of the art.
3. Your history of participation in dojo-sponsored seminars and events.
4. Your contribution to the community, and spirit of participation.

Here's how the process works:

Once your qualifications are clear, I will approach you with an offer for a demonstration for promotion and it will be posted on our blackboard. Demonstrations for rank are administered every four months or so, and dates are announced well in advance.

After receiving a date, you must ask someone senior to you to mentor you through the process of preparing. They will also be your primary partner on your exam (be sure to run it by me). Mentors share responsibility for your preparedness and success, and likewise, also have the responsibility of informing me of any issues that may warrant a postponement. A mentor normally works with only one person per test period. Sometimes he/she may mentor a small group of people who are doing the same demo. A mentor should be secured at least one month prior to demo date, and generally be two ranks senior to the examinee (sometimes one is fine). * **Please do not procrastinate on this** *

After accepting a demo date, you are expected in the prior weeks to attend classes as frequently as possible. For your first three demos you should be prepared to demonstrate all techniques as both Nage and Uke.

Your material, which is on the following page, includes a simple inquiry. Your response to the inquiry must be posted on our secret Facebook page for the community to read in the week before your demo. If you're not on Facebook then email it to me and I'll post it on your behalf. Your exam fee, paid by cash or check, is also due before your demo date, please.

For your first level, the “Primary Demo” (5th Kyu):

It’s possible that one of our senior staff will be the one to offer you a demo date. If that happens, it will be scheduled during a regular class several weeks down the road. The seniors will administer your demo at the beginning of the class. Immediately after, they will team-teach the remainder of the class based on what they saw—strengths, challenges, and so forth. It’s all about you that evening :-)

DEMONSTRATION CONTENT

All of the requirements for each level through black belt are listed below. The technical content represents only a basic core of what is practiced in regular classes, and doesn’t represent our entire vast body of technique. They are there because I consider them fundamental, and important to spend time with. The variations of techniques you demonstrate are expected to be “classic” variations. Please leave any highly interpretive work to your free sections and freestyles.

Primary Demo (5th Kyu)

Minimum 50 training days, \$40 exam fee

**Reflect on your experience with Aikido so far. What can you share?*

Rolling: front & back
Shomen-uchi: turning/entering, ikkyo (o/u)
Katate-dori: sumi-otoshi, kokyū-ho, kokyū-nage
Bokken: 1st suburi
Jo: 1st suburi (choku-tsuki)
Freestyle: uke & nage (grabs only)

Intermediate Demo (3rd Kyu)

Minimum 200 total training days, \$40 exam fee

**In what ways has Aikido informed you?*

Shomen-uchi: nikyo (o/u)
Mune-tsuki: kote-gaeshi
Yokomen-uchi: shiho-nage (o/u), ikkyo (o/u)
Katate-dori: kaiten-nage (uchi/soto)
Morote-dori: kokyū-ho
Bokken: 4-5 suburi
Jo: 6-10 suburi
Freestyle: uke & nage
Free choice: 1 minute maximum

Blue Belt Demo (4th Kyu)

Minimum 120 total training days, \$40 exam fee

**What is Aikido to you, and what does it mean to be a student of the art?*

Shomen-uchi: irimi-nage
Kata-dori: nikkyo (o/u)
Katate-dori: shiho-nage (o/u)
Gyakute-dori: kote-gaeshi
Ryote-dori: tenshi-nage
Bokken: 1-3 suburi
Jo: 1-5 suburi
Freestyle: uke & nage

Brown Belt Demo (2nd Kyu)

Minimum 350 total training days, \$50 exam fee

**What does it mean to be a “senior student?”*

Shomen-uchi: sankyo (o/u), 2 techniques
Ushiro-ryote-dori: ikkyo (o/u), 2 techniques
2 classic techniques from each of the following:
mune-tsuki, yokomen-uchi, ryote-dori, gyakute-dori, morote-dori
Bokken: 6-7 suburi, 2 take-aways
Jo: 11-20 suburi, 2 take-aways
Freestyle: uke & nage
Free choice: 2 minutes maximum

Advanced Demo (1st Kyu)

Minimum 450 total training days, \$50 exam fee

**How has Aikido facilitated change in your life?*

Shomen-uchi: yonkyo (o/u), 3 techniques
Kata-dori-menuchi: ikkyo (o/u), 2 techniques
3 classic techniques from each of the following:
mune-tsuki, yokomen-uchi, katate-dori, ryote-dori,
gyakute-dori, morote-dori, ushiro-ryote-dori, ushiro-
ryokata-dori
Tanto-dori: tsuki kote-gaeshi, yokomen-uchi gokyo
Bokken: 3 take-aways
Jo: 3 take-aways, 31 kata
Freestyle: 1-2 attackers
Free choice: 2 minutes maximum

Black Belt Demo (1st Dan)

Minimum 650 total training days, \$50+association fee

**Essay on Aikido topic of choice, or alternate project*

Ikkyo—Yonkyo: variations from shomen-uchi, ushiro-
ryote-dori, yokomen-uchi, kata-dori (menuchi)
4 classic techniques from each of the following:
shomen-uchi, mune-tsuki, yokomen-uchi, kata-dori-
menuchi, katate-dori, ryote-dori, gyakute-dori,
morote-dori, ushiro-ryote-dori, ushiro-ryokata-dori
Koshi-nage: 2 variations (1 head under/1 hip under)
Freestyle: 1-2-3 attackers
Tanto-dori: tsuki, yokomen, slash, at back/throat
Bokken: 5 take-aways, 1 partner practice
Jo: 5 take-aways, 1 partner practice
Free choice: 3 minutes maximum

REFERENCE

It should be understood that no one at Aikido of San Diego is expected to perfect the use of Japanese language in their training. With that said, they're just names, as good as any English names, and we do use them. "Aikido-ese" is widely understood worldwide. People seem to pick it up quite easily simply by being around. The following is not meant to be something memorized. It is simply available for your reference.

Names of Basic Techniques

Gokkyo: 5th pinning technique.

Ikkyo: 1st pinning technique.

Irimi-nage: Entering throw.

Kaiten-nage: Rotary throw.

Kokyu-ho: Breath power technique (executed from uke's front side).

Kokyu-nage: Breath throw (executed from uke's back side).

Koshi-nage: Hip throw.

Kote-gaeshi: Wrist turning technique.

Nikkyo: 2nd pinning technique.

Sankyo: 3rd pinning technique.

Shiho-nage: Four direction throw.

Tenshi-nage: Heaven and earth throw.

Yonkyo: 4th pinning technique.

Understanding Technique Names

Techniques are named in the following way:

ATTACK + TECHNIQUE + DIRECTION (if it's relevant) = Full Technique Name

For instance: "Shomen-uchi, Ikkyo, Omote-waza" means... Frontal strike, 1st pinning technique, to the front side.

Names of Basic Attacks

Gyakute-dori: Cross-hand grab (right to right, left to left).

Kata-dori: Shoulder grab.

Kata-dori-menuchi: One shoulder held with a frontal strike.

Katate-dori: Wrist grab (mirror image).

Morote-dori: Forearm/wrist held with both hands.

Mune-tsuki: Chest or stomach thrusting strike (punch).

Ryokata-dori: Both shoulders held.

Ryote-dori: Both wrists are held.

Shomen-uchi: Strike to the top of the head.

Ushiro-ryokata-dori: Both shoulders grabbed from behind.

Ushiro-ryote-dori: Both wrists grabbed from behind.

Yokomen-uchi: Strike to the side of the head.

Counting in Japanese

Sometimes you'll hear technical work counted in Japanese. You're not expected to do it yourself, but it's nice to understand it. It's quite simple actually. Just memorize one through ten and the rest will fall in place:

1	2	3	4	5	5	7	8	9	10
ICHI	NI	SAN	SHI	GO	ROKU	SHICHI	HACHI	KYU	JYU

Ten through nineteen becomes 10+1, etc. Therefore, 11 is jyu-ichi, 12 is jyu-ni, etc... Twenty through twenty-nine becomes 2x10+... Therefore, 20 is ni-jyu, 21 is ni-jyu-ichi, 22 is ni-jyu-ni, etc...

Names of the 20 Jo Suburi

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Choku-tsuki | 11. Katate-gedan-gaeshi | 19. Hidari-nagare-gaeshi-uchi |
| 2. Kaeshi-tsuki | 12. Katate-toma-uchi | 20. Migi-nagare-gaeshi-tsuki |
| 3. Ushiro-tsuki | 13. Katate-hachi-noji-gaeshi | |
| 4. Tsuki-gedan-gaeshi | | |
| 5. Tsuki-jodan-gaeshi-uchi | | |
| 6. Shomen-uchi-komi | 14. Hasso-gaeshi-uchi | |
| 7. Renzoku-uchi-komi | 15. Hasso-gaeshi-tsuki | |
| 8. Menuchi-gedan-gaeshi | 16. Hasso-gaeshi-ushiro-tsuki | |
| 9. Menuchi-ushiro-tsuki | 17. Hasso-gaeshi-ushiro-uchi | |
| 10. Gyaku-yokomen-ushiro-tsuki | 18. Hasso-gaeshi-ushiro-barai | |

Glossary of Common Aikido Terms

Ai-hanmi: Mutual stance. Partners stand facing one another with the same foot forward.

Atemi: A strike to unbalance or fill space.

Bokken: Wooden sword.

Budo: Warrior way. The group of arts that teach martial arts and spiritual development.

Dan: Black belt rank.

Deshi: Student, pupil, disciple.

Dojo: Training hall

Gi (short for Do-gi): Training uniform.

Gyaku-hanmi: Opposite stance. Partners stand with opposite feet forward like a mirror image.

Hakama: A divided, pant-like skirt. It's worn by those of Dan rank.

Hanmi: Bisecting stance.

Hanmi-handachi: Nage is kneeling and Uke is standing.

Irimi: Entry.

Jiyu-waza: Freestyle practice.

Jo: Wooden staff

Kamae: Stance.

Kata: Shoulder

Kata: Form (different kanji character from "Kata" meaning shoulder).

Keiko: Practice or training session.

Ken: Japanese sword.

Kiai: A piercing scream.

Kihon: Basic form of a technique, usually static.

Ki-no-nagare: Fluid form of a technique.

Kohai: Junior student.

Kumi-jo: Partner practices with jo.

Kumi-tachi: Partner practices with swords.

Nage: To throw, or the person who throws.

Omote: Front

Randori: Multiple person freestyle practice.

Rei: Bow.

Sempai: Senior student.

Seiza: Formal sitting posture. Knees underside.

Shomen: Front. Head of the dojo where a picture of the founder is kept.

Suburi: A basic ken or jo strike.

Suwari-waza: Sitting techniques.

Tachi-dori: Sword take-aways.

Tai-jutsu: Body arts. Techniques done without weapons.

Tanto: Knife.

Tsuki: Thrust, punch.

Uchi: To strike.

Uke: To receive. The person who attacks, receives a technique, and falls.

Ukemi: The art of falling and receiving.

Ura: Rear direction.

Ushiro: Back, behind, rear.

Waza: Technique.

Yudansha: Person holding a Dan rank.