

-fingernails are to be kept short with NO fingernail polish other than transparent.

**Your partner is not an opponent.** Techniques are learned through him and with him. It should be a pleasure to be Uke as well as Nage. Each movement in Aikido teaches the principles and spirit of Aikido and should be practiced sincerely.

Care should be taken to **be aware of the ability of one's partner so that no injuries may occur.** Nage should always be watchful for signs that Uke is in pain. Uke's attack should always be under his full control and Nage should respond likewise. Uke's "job" is to attack sincerely and then follow sincerely, without resisting while maintaining as safe a posture as possible. Nage's "job" is to: 1) move off the line of attack, 2) redirect Uke's momentum via a technique, and 3) peacefully resolve the attack with the appropriate blow or pin.

**At the end of class,** students should straighten up their uniforms and line up in order of rank. The instructor and students bow to O-Sensei's picture and then the students formally thank the instructor while bowing to him. After that, the students remain in seiza until the instructor leaves the mat. At this time it is proper to bow to each student with whom you have practiced.

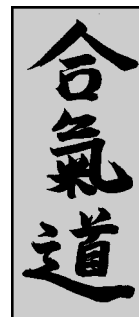
It is **the responsibility of the higher ranked students (sempai)** to see that the rules of etiquette are understood and followed by the members of the dojo. The members of higher rank should also assist the beginners in learning proper bowing techniques, beginning exercises, and ukemi.

It is the **responsibility of each member of the dojo** to ensure that the various needs of the dojo are met. These include, paying dues promptly, sweeping or vacuuming the mat after class, making sure the mat and the dojo are clean and presentable, restocking various dojo supplies, etc. Fulfilling these needs should be anticipated, not prompted by the instructor. They should be carried out cheerfully, without complaint. Taking care of the dojo oneself should generate a feeling of pride in doing things to the best of one's ability. This too is as much a part of our training as is repetition of techniques, suburi or ukemi.

This brochure covers only the basic etiquette. You will make many mistakes and be corrected. Accept this as part of your training. No one walks in the door knowing the etiquette. It is part of your ongoing training. There are many more questions that will come up during your practice, and you will need to ask senior members or Sensei when these arise. As with all techniques, we need partners to learn.

Welcome to Aikido of Austin!

Visit the AOA student web pages: [www.austinaikido.org/student.html](http://www.austinaikido.org/student.html)



**AIKIDO of AUSTIN**

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## Rules During Practice

*- Posted at the Headquarters Dojo in Tokyo.*

- 1) One blow in Aikido is capable of killing an opponent, obey your instructor, and do not make the practice period a time for needless testing of strength.
- 2) Aikido is an art in which one person learns to face many opponents simultaneously. It therefore requires that you polish and perfect your execution of each movement so that you can take on not only the one directly in front of you but also those approaching from every direction.
- 3) Practice at all times with a feeling of pleasurable exhilaration.
- 4) The teachings of your instructor constitute only a small fraction of what you will learn. Your mastery of each movement will depend almost entirely on individual, earnest practice.
- 5) Daily practice begins with light movements of the body, gradually increasing in intensity and strength; but there must be no over-exertion. That is why even an elderly person can continue to practice with pleasure and without bodily harm; and why he will attain the goal of his training.
- 6) The purpose of Aikido is to train both body and mind and to make a person sincere. All Aikido arts are secret in nature and are not to be revealed publicly, nor taught to hoodlums who will use them for evil purposes.

# Dojo Reigi

**The following procedures of dojo reigi (etiquette) are meant to be manifestations of the Aikido (and Budo) spirit of love. They should reflect love for your Sensei, your fellow students, your dojo, and finally, yourself. This should be as much a part of your training as any technique performed on the mat. Please use your best common sense in all aspects of courtesy and etiquette.**

**Upon entering and leaving the dojo**, students bow in the direction of O-Sensei's (Morihei Ueshiba) picture on the shrine. This is a tradition to show respect for the founder of Aikido. When entering or leaving the mat, do a FORMAL bow. Formal means full seiza. Bow only low enough that your hips do not have to rise up from your heels. It is better to bow shallow and properly than to bow deep and poorly.

Students should **assemble quietly for meditation at least five minutes before class** is scheduled to start. They should arrange themselves in a straight line in proper rank order (higher rank on the side nearest the front door). Meditation calms the mind and it is required that everyone in the dojo, spectators and students alike, be silent during this time. It is suggested that all students kneel in formal position, seiza, (the best alternative is "Indian style") and await the instructor's arrival on the mat. When the instructor comes onto the mat, he and the students bow to O-Sensei's picture and then bow to the instructor, formally opening the class. During the formal bow-in, please bow from seiza. It is considered rude to bow from a cross-legged position. If this is not possible, please discuss with Sensei.

The **instructor should be referred to as "Sensei"** during class instruction and not by his surname or first name. Never call for the instructor across the mat or beckon for instruction. If the instructor is close by, quietly raise your hand and wait to be acknowledged. Then, bow and say "one-gaishimasu" ("I make a request.") **When Sensei is teaching another couple**, it is not necessary to sit down and watch them unless he says to watch. It is preferable to keep on practicing with a minimum amount of talk. **If Sensei comes to help you and your partner individually**, it is best to sit seiza and watch attentively; unless Sensei is having you do the technique. Once Sensei is done helping you and is leaving, a seated bow and verbal thank-you are appropriate. Always do a formal bow to him, even if he walks away and appears as if he wouldn't notice.

**When the instructor claps**, students should sit down promptly and listen and watch attentively. When the instructor indicates that practice is to resume, students bow to the instructor and promptly resume practicing. **When changing partners during class**, one should acknowledge the partner you are leaving as well as your new partner with a seated bow.

**When a student arrives late for class** he should quickly do a few warm-up exercises off the mat and then bow in and sit seiza on the edge of the mat. Wait for the

instructor to admit you to the class. If the class is already in progress, the member should come and sit in front of the shrine awaiting permission to join the class. After being admitted, bow to O-Sensei and then to the instructor. Students must ask the instructor permission to leave the class early or to leave the mat for any reason; common sense excludes injuries. It is not permissible to leave the mat for a drink of water or for rest unless given permission. Students should stay on the mat until class is over.

## The SHOMEN

(the area at the head of the mat with the picture of O-Sensei):

-Never walk between Sensei & the shrine--even if it means doing a convoluted detour. It is disrespectful since you are symbolically breaking the "line" between Sensei, O-Sensei and Doshu. The exception to this is while you are actually practicing and your PRACTICE is between Sensei & the Shrine. If you stop your practice to watch Sensei, then immediately position yourself clearly out of the "line".

-Never face the shrine when you are straightening your Gi/hakama. Turn partially away (but do not put your back to the Shrine)

-Never turn your back completely toward the shrine except while practicing.

## CLOTHING/grooming

-Shoes are to be taken off at the entrance to the mat area and zori (sandals or thongs) worn in the mat area if space permits. Zori should be lined up at the lower side of the mat (facing outward) during class instruction.

-Zori (sandals worn ONLY inside the dojo), appropriate in everyday practice, are not to be worn during seminars because of the limited aisle space.

-Do not wear torn/tattered Gis/hakama: any holes or tears need to be repaired. Wear only freshly washed Gis. Be sure that your gi is worn properly: right side out, left side folded over the right; and belts tied in square knots.

-All kyu ranks should wear a white belt.

-ALL women (by the third month of practice) and ALL Yudansha need to wear hakama. No one else should wear hakama.

-Women are to wear a white t-shirt under their gi (with NO print)

-Men who wear t-shirts under their gi also need to wear white with no print.

-Don't wear a hachi maki (head-band) while bowing.

-NO JEWELRY or metal of any kind, including hair clips. If you cannot remove a piece of jewelry for some reason, put athletic tape over it.

