



DOJO RULES AND ETIQUETTE

Aikido is a martial art and not a sport. It is a discipline and educational process for training the mind, body and spirit (Budo). An Aikido dojo is not a gymnasium. It is the place where the discipline of the Way is revealed. Physical technique is not the final objective, but a tool for personal refinement and spiritual growth. The correct attitude of respect, sincerity and modesty, and the proper atmosphere are essential to the learning process. And as Aikido is a martial way, they are essential to the safety of each individual. The following rules are necessary to the maintenance of this atmosphere and vital to your study of Aikido.

This dojo follows the traditional rules of proper conduct. Its spirit comes directly from the Founder of Aikido and it is the place of the succession of his teachings. It is the responsibility of each student to act appropriately and to honor those teachings.



Dojo Rules

- It is each student's responsibility to assist in cleaning the dojo on a daily basis.
- The dojo is not to be used for any purpose other than regularly scheduled classes without the approval of the board of directors.
- It is the responsibility of each student to pay dues on time (1st of each month).
- Monthly dues are the same regardless of the number of days one trains each month. Do not ask for a refund or credit because you only attended one or two classes.
- Respect the Founder, his teachings, the dojo, your training tools, and each other.



Training Rules

- Follow the instructions of the person leading the class, no matter their rank or skill level.
- Receive instruction and carry out suggestions for training sincerely and to the best of your ability. There is no room for argument on the mat.
- It is the moral responsibility of each student never to use Aikido technique to harm another person or as a way to display his or her ego.
- There will be no competition on the mat. The purpose of Aikido is not to fight and defeat an enemy, but to fight and defeat your own aggressive instincts.
- Be aware of your limitations. The strength of Aikido is not in muscular force, but in flexibility, timing, control and modesty.
- It is your responsibility to cause no injury to your training partner or yourself.
- There will be no power struggles within the dojo. The dojo membership is one family, and the secret of Aikido is harmony.



Dojo Etiquette¹

- Upon entering and leaving the practice area of the dojo, make a standing bow. This includes bowing when stepping on or off the mat in the direction of the shomen (center of the dojo).
- Keiko Gi (practice uniform) should be clean and mended. Weapons should be in good condition and in their proper place when not in use.
- Never use someone else's Keiko Gi or weapons without permission.
- Never step over someone else's, or your own Keiko Gi, Hakama or weapons.
- Never walk in front of someone without being acknowledged.
- If you are late for class, here are the proper steps to join the class:
 1. Wait quietly at the edge of the mat and await for the instructor to signal that it is ok to cross the mat.
 2. Before you cross the mat make a standing bow to the shomen.
 3. Cross the mat to enter changing room.
 4. Change clothes quickly and quietly.
 5. Stand or sit in seiza by the edge of the mat until the instructor signals for you to join the class.
 6. Make a seated bow towards the shomen, after which you may join the practice or warm-up without further ceremony.
- The proper way to sit on the mat is in seiza (formal sitting position). If seiza is physically difficult for you, please sit cross-legged. Never sit with legs outstretched, reclined, or leaning against the wall.
- Do not leave the mat during class except in case of injury or illness. Please also see the blood policy.
- When the instructor is demonstrating, sit quietly and attentively in seiza. Afterward, bow to the instructor, then to a partner and immediately begin to practice.
- When the end of a technique is signaled, stop immediately, bow to your partner and line up.
- Never stand idly on the mat. You should be either practicing or seated and waiting for your turn.
- Do not fix your attire in the middle of the mat. Move to edge of the mat, turn away from the center and fix your Keiko Gi. Also, please fix your Gi prior to bowing out at the end of class.
- Respect those more experienced; never argue about technique. Respect those less experienced; do not push your ideas on others.
- Keep talking on the mat to an absolute minimum. Aikido is experiential.
- Fingernails and toenails must be short. Feet must be clean. Shoes or sandals are never allowed on the mat.
- Wash your Keiko Gi (uniform) often. Do not wear a torn or dirty uniform to practice.
- No eating, drinking, smoking or chewing on or off the mat during practice.
- No jewelry should be worn during practice, including rings and pierced earrings.
- Never drink alcoholic beverages while still wearing your Keiko Gi.

If you are off the mat while a class is in session, note the following:

¹ New York Aikido Society, Inc. (d.b.a. Bond Street Dojo). These rules are adapted from the ASU Training Handbook (Jan 2019)

- **Do not talk to anyone on the mat while class is in progress.**
- The door to the office/changing room area should be closed and talking kept to a minimum and with only lowered voices.
- Do not talk or walk around while the instructor is demonstrating, or during the opening and closing ceremony.
- Sit respectfully, never with legs propped up on the furniture or in a reclining position.

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