

DOJO ETIQUETTE

Upon entering and leaving the dojo, **students bow** in the direction of Morihei Ueshiba O'Sensei's picture on the shomen (front of the dojo.) Before getting on & off the mat, students again bow respectfully. This is a tradition of showing appreciation and respect to the Founder of Aikido.

Cleanliness is essential! You should leave your slippers neatly in the rack by the door and check that your feet are clean every time you enter the dojo area. Your whole body must be clean, as well as your uniform (or other clothing worn). If you step out into the hallway during class or between classes, always put on your slippers to keep your feet clean.

Students should assemble quietly at least five minutes before class is scheduled to start. It is recommended that all students kneel in meditation and await the instructor's arrival on the mat. Meditation calms the mind and it is required that everyone, spectators and students alike, in the dojo be quiet during meditation.

To formally open class, instructor and students bow to O'Sensei's picture, then to each other.

Students must ask permission of the instructor to practice when arriving late for class, or for permission to leave early.

When approaching the instructor on the mat, whether you ask or are called upon, bow first and at the end. Never yell out "Sensei" and/or beckon with your fingers for instruction. Approach and bow, saying "**Onegai shimasu.**"

When the instructor is teaching a couple, it is not necessary for others in the class to sit down and watch unless told to. It is usually preferable to keep practicing.

Practice only aikido in the dojo and do not dabble in other techniques. Watch attentively when Sensei demonstrates and do your best to duplicate what you've seen when you practice with your partner.

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

When changing partners during class, one should acknowledge both the partner he or she is leaving, as well as the new partner, with a bow.

Care should be taken to be aware of the ability of one's partner so that no injuries occur.

At the end of class, the instructor and students bow to O-Sensei's picture, then the students bow to the instructor. After that, students are to remain in their formal sitting position until the instructor leaves the mat area, then bow to each other.

Any instructor should always be addressed as "Sensei" in the dojo and Klein Sensei should be addressed as "Sensei" at all times (even in informal situations).

A few DONT'S: lie on the mat...lean against the walls...sit with your back to O'Sensei...have long finger and toenails...wear jewelry or make-up... wear dirty uniforms...chew gum...wear headbands when bowing...sit with legs stretched out...

Keep in mind that Dojo refers not only to the mat, but to the entire area in and around the practice hall. Maintaining quiet and practicing courtesy in the Dojo pertains to all this area. Please, no running or loud talking in the hallways. Be courteous to our class and our neighbors.

When observing class, all spectators should remain quiet out of respect for the instructor and practicing students.