

## Aikido Of Berkeley Dojo Etiquette

1. Upon entering and leaving the dojo, make a standing bow. When stepping on or off of the mat, always bow in the direction of the shomen and the picture of the founder of Aikido, O'Sensei.
2. Training uniform (gi) should be clean and mended with belt tied securely. New students may wear loose, comfortable clothing until a gi is purchased. All adult kyu ranks wear white belts, regardless of rank.
3. Maintain good personal hygiene. Keep nails trimmed and long hair tied back. Bandage and/or tape any open cuts or wounds. Remove jewelry (unless secured) to prevent injury to yourself and to others.
4. It is recommended that you notify the instructor of any pre-existing injuries or health conditions that may affect your training. If an injury occurs during training, notify the instructor if you need to leave the mat or need medical attention.
5. Before practice begins, you should be seated formally in seiza and in quiet meditation. The class is opened and closed with a formal ceremony. It is important to be on time and participate in this ceremony.
6. If you arrive late to class, bow to the shomen, step onto the mat and sit in seiza until the instructor acknowledges you, then bow in. If you need to leave early, notify the instructor and bow out before leaving.
7. The proper way to sit on the mat is in seiza. If you have an injury, you may sit cross-legged, but never sit with legs outstretched or lean against a wall. It is important to remain alert and attentive at all times.
8. When addressing Feder Sensei, our chief instructor, always address her as Sensei. Other instructors should be addressed as Sensei only during their classes.
9. When the instructor is demonstrating a technique, sit quietly and attentively in seiza unless otherwise directed by the instructor. After the demonstration has ended, bow to the instructor and then to a partner and begin practicing. When the instructor signals for a new demonstration to begin, stop practicing immediately, bow to your partner, and quickly line up with the other students to watch.
10. Do your best to follow what the instructor has demonstrated. This shows respect for the instructor, helps to establish consistency among all students, and minimizes confusion for newer students.
11. When receiving personal instruction during class, watch intently and always thank and bow to the instructor when he/she has finished. When the instructor is teaching another student, you may stop your practice to watch, sit in seiza, then bow when the instructor has finished.
12. Respect everyone's learning process. Never argue about technique or force your ideas on others. If you know the technique and are working with someone who does not, do your best to lead by example, non-verbally and with humility. Remember what it was like when you first started training.
13. When class size is large, group practice may be conducted which requires greater awareness. Make sure not to linger in the "active" zone and be aware of surrounding activity to avoid accidents.
14. Do not leave the mat during class except in the case of injury, illness, a necessary break, or leaving early.
15. Keep talking on the mat to an absolute minimum. Aikido is a practice that must be felt.
16. Do not lounge around on the mat before or after class. The space is for students who wish to train. When folding hakamas, move to the perimeter of the mat to allow space for other students to train if they wish.
17. The mat should be swept after every class and as needed. In our dojo, this is typically done by mudansha (kyu ranks) out of respect for sempai although anyone may help out.
18. No eating, drinking, smoking, or gum chewing is allowed on the mat during class. Training under the influence of alcohol or any mind altering substance is prohibited.