



# SHOHEI JUKU AIKIDO CANADA

## Aikido Etiquette

Etiquette is as important as the study of the physical techniques of Aikido – without etiquette, a dojo cannot function properly. Please read and digest the following:

Bowing is performed to show respect to Sensei, the dojo and your fellow students.

The kneeling bow is performed:

- When first stepping on to the mats, and when finally leaving the mats.
- At the formal beginning and ending of the class.
- To your partner, when beginning and ending practice of a technique. .

A standing bow is performed:

- When entering and leaving the dojo.
- When temporarily leaving and returning to the mats.

Be punctual - it is understood that sometimes you cannot help being late but do try to be on time – it shows respect to Sensei. (However, we prefer you to turn up late than not turn up at all.)

If you are late, please wait for Sensei to acknowledge you and give you permission to join the class. Ensure that you perform a suitable warm up before you start training.

Leaving the mats during class - ask Sensei for permission so that Sensei is aware of what is happening.

Treat your training partner with care and respect. New students need to be treated more gently/caringly than the more experienced, so be aware of your partners abilities and apply the right amount of energy to the technique you are practicing.

Be aware of other students on the mat. If you aren't, it can be dangerous to you and other students and injuries may occur. Remember, that part of martial arts training is to be aware of your surroundings.

Do not wear jewelry during practice as it may be damaged and/or can be dangerous if accidentally grabbed or caught in a dogi.

Use footwear when not on the mats - sandals or similar are preferable. No shoes on the mats.

Personal hygiene - cleanliness is a reflection of your respect and attitude towards Aikido, your teacher, and your fellow practitioners. To minimize the chances of cutting yourself or other students, keep your fingernails and toenails clean and short. Wash your dogi regularly. If you perspire heavily, bring a towel with you.

If you become sick, overtired, or injured then let your partner know. INFORM SENSEI before leaving the mat. If you just need a short rest, bow to your partner and move to the edge of the mats and sit quietly while watching until you are ready to resume practice.

Do not sit on the mats with your back to O-Sensei. Also, do not lean on the walls or sit with your legs stretched out. - sit in seiza or cross-legged.

Medical problems - If you have a medical condition that may affect your practice, notify Sensei before the class starts.

Do not bring food, gum, or beverages onto the mat.

Carry out the directives of Sensei promptly. Do not keep the rest of the class waiting for you. If you are having trouble with a technique, do not shout across the room to Sensei for help. First, try to figure the technique out by watching others. Observation is a skill you should strive to develop. If you still have trouble, approach Sensei at a convenient moment and ask for help. Avoid teaching other students. It is the sensei's role to teach and the student's role is to practice.

When Sensei demonstrates a technique, you should sit quietly and attentively. After the demonstration, bow to sensei and then to a partner and begin practicing the technique.

If you know the movement being studied and are working with someone who does not, you may lead the person through it. But do not attempt to correct or instruct your training partner if you are not of senior yudansha level. Respect those who are more experienced. Never argue about how to do a technique.

When the end of a technique is signaled, stop immediately. Bow to your partner and quickly line up with the other students.

You are in class to learn Aikido, not to gratify your ego. Do not engage in roughhousing or needless contests of strength during class. Avoid conversation with your partner; Aikido requires focus and physical practice to hone your skills. Do not talk when sensei is explaining or discussing a technique.

Never stand around idly on the mat. You should be practicing or, if necessary, seated formally, awaiting your turn.

Respect your training tools. Weapons should be in good condition and in their proper place when not in use. Never use someone else's weapons without permission.

The mat should be swept before and after practice. It is everyone's responsibility to keep the dojo clean and tidy.

### **Etiquette for Observing Class**

Sit respectfully, never with legs propped up on the furniture or in a reclining position.

Do not talk to anyone on the mat.

Do not talk or walk around while the instructor is demonstrating or talking.