

Aikido Of Westchester Rules of Practice

Upon stepping into the dojo, you should leave your problems behind, enter practice with a focused mind and follow proper etiquette.

Etiquette is the heart and spirit of Aikido practice. Being aware is the core principle of etiquette. In a real life situation, being unaware could easily result in simple embarrassment to serious injury or even death. Following proper etiquette keeps you safe from injury while training. It is your responsibility as a student to cooperate in creating an atmosphere of harmony by respecting the founder's teachings as taught by Sensei. Each student must make a commitment to honor and follow those teachings.

Proper Dojo Etiquette

1. Bow upon entering and leaving the practice area of the dojo.
2. Bow when stepping on or off the mat in the direction of the Kamiza and the picture of the founder.
3. Respect your training tools: Your practice uniform, (gi) should be cleaned and mended. Do not forgo washing your gi after more than two practices; weapons should be in good condition and in their proper place when not in use.
4. Class is open and closed with a ceremony; it is important to participate in this ceremony, but if you are unavoidably late, you should be seated beside the mat until Sensei signals for you to join the class. Bow as you get on the mat. It is important that you do not disrupt the class in doing so.
5. The proper way to sit on the mat is in seiza. If you have a knee injury, you may sit cross-legged, but never sit with legs outstretched or lean against walls or posts. You must be alert at all times.
6. Do not leave the mat during practice without first asking for Sensei's permission.
7. You should sit quietly and attentively in seiza when Sensei demonstrates a technique during class. After the demonstration, bow to Sensei and then to a partner and begin practice.
8. When the end of a technique is signaled, stop immediately, bow to your partner, and line up with the other students.
9. Never stand around idly on the mat; you should be practicing or waiting your turn.
10. When receiving personal instruction during class, sit in seiza and watch. Bow to Sensei when he has finished.
11. When sensei is instructing another student, you may stop your practice and watch. Sit formally and bow to him when he is finished.
12. If you know the technique being studied and you are working with someone who does not, you may lead the person through it, but do not assume the role of the instructor. You are here for practice; do not force your ideas on others. At the same time, respect those more experienced.
13. It is everyone's responsibility to keep the dojo clean; the practice area should be kept clean and the mat swept and wiped after each class.
14. There should be no eating, drinking, smoking, or gum chewing on the mat at any time.
15. No jewelry should be worn during practice.
16. If you are unsure of what to do in a particular situation ask a senior student or simply follow his lead. Although at first there will be many forms of etiquette to remember, they will become natural as you continue to train. Please do not be resentful if you are corrected on a point of etiquette.
17. Always train within the ability of your partner. Do not practice so as to injure your partner. You are both responsible for each other.
18. Please be aware at all times of those around you as you take ukemi (falling), or are throwing your partner. Train to develop awareness in all directions.
19. Visitors are welcome to sit and observe a class at any time, but the following rules of etiquette should be followed:
 - Sit quietly and respectfully.
 - No eating, drinking, or smoking while class is in progress.
 - Do not talk to anyone while that person is on the mat.
 - Do not talk or walk around while the instructor is demonstrating.