



# AIKIDO

## Beginners Guide

**AIKIDO:** is composed of three ideograms, **AI** which means union or meeting, **KI** which can be interpreted as vital energy and **DO** which means path.

Morihei Ueshiba was born on December 14, 1883 in Tanabe, a town in the prefecture of Wakayama, Japan. After having studied numerous martial arts during his youth and being marked by several encounters, Morihei Ueshiba whom his students often called O'Sensei (which means Great Teacher) because of his great expertise in martial arts gave his training a new direction by eliminating the notion of enemy and winner of a fight. He envisioned Aikido not only as the synthesis of his martial art training but as an expression of universal.

## Etiquette

In all martial arts, the code of conduct is very important and Aikido is no exception. This guide summarizes practical information to help new students.

Respect is one of our DOJO's (practice location) main values. Please respect each other's differences.



## TO REMEMBER:

- ⑩ Please be punctual;
- ⑩ Make sure that your GI (kimono) is clean and does not smell at all times;
- ⑩ Bow to O'Sensei (picture of the founder of Aikido) before entering the practicing room;
- ⑩ Bow to O'Sensei before entering the TATAMI (mat surface);
- ⑩ If you are late, please wait outside until the instructor gives you the authorization to access the mat surface;
- ⑩ A few minutes before the class starts, sit in SEIZA (on your knees) forming a line in front of the picture of O'Sensei (the founder of Aikido). The student with the highest rank sits on the extreme left of the line and the most junior student sits on the extreme right of the line;
- ⑩ Before each class bow to O'Sensei and then to your instructor;
- ⑩ At the end of each class bow to your instructor and then to O'Sensei.
- ⑩ Bow to your partner before training with him;
- ⑩ When your instructor shows you something during the class, sit in SEIZA and thank him after the demonstration by bowing to him;
- ⑩ At the end of the class, bow to all students with who you have trained during the class;
- ⑩ When training with a partner make sure not to injure him;
- ⑩ Keep your toe and finger nails short;
- ⑩ Do not wear jewellery during class;
- ⑩ If you wish to leave the TATAMI (mat surface) during class, please ask your instructor's authorization;
- ⑩ Do not leave the TATAMI during class to drink;
- ⑩ If you sweat a lot while you are training, keep a handkerchief on you;

The well being of each student is very important for us, therefore, if there is anything which bothers you, please talk to one of your instructors about it. ENJOY TRAINING!!!



# Terminology

## Numbers

- |                  |                    |                 |
|------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Ichi (一)      | 5. Go (五)          | 9. Ku (Kyu) (九) |
| 2. Ni (二)        | 6. Roku (六)        | 10. Ju (十)      |
| 3. San (三)       | 7. Sishi /Nana (七) |                 |
| 4. Shi / Yon (四) | 8. Hachi (八)       |                 |

## Clothing and equipment

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| ⑩ <b>Bokutō</b> 木刀, Bokken 木剣 - Wooden sword                  | ⑩ <b>Shitabaki</b> - 下穿, Mashita - 股下 - Pants |
| ⑩ <b>Gi</b> - 衣 - Uniform (Aikido-gi - 合気道衣 - Aikido uniform) | ⑩ <b>Tantō</b> - 短刀 - Wooden knife            |
| ⑩ <b>Hakama</b> - 袴 - Wide pleated trousers.                  | ⑩ <b>Tatami</b> - 畳 - Practice mat            |
| ⑩ <b>Jō</b> - 杖 - Wooden stick                                | ⑩ <b>Zōri</b> - 草履 - Sandals                  |
| ⑩ <b>Obi</b> - 帯 - Belt                                       |   |

## Manner

- ⑩ **Rei** - 礼 - Bowing (appreciation and respect)
- ⑩ **Ritsurei** - 立礼 - Bow standing
- ⑩ **Zarei** - 座礼 - Sitting bow

## Roles

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| ⑩ <b>Nage</b> - 投げ <sup>※</sup> - The person who does the technique | ⑩ <b>Sensei</b> - 先生 - The instructor                                  |
| ⑩ <b>O sensei</b> - 大先生 - The founder of Aikido                     | ⑩ <b>Uke</b> - 受け <sup>*</sup> - The person who receives the technique |



## Posture

- ⑩ **Ai hanmi** - 相半身 - Partners face each other, each with the right or the left foot forward (right/right or left/left)
- ⑩ **Gyaku hanmi** - 逆半身 - Partner face each other, one with the right foot forward the other with the left foot, or vice-versa (right/left or left/right)
- ⑩ **Maai** - 間合い - Proper distance between the two partners facing each other.
- ⑩ **Seiza** - 正座 - Kneeling position, sitting on the heels with back straight.

## Falls (Ukemis)

- ⑩ **Kojo kaiten** - Back roll
- ⑩ **Mae ukemi** - Forward roll
- ⑩ **Tobu ukemi** - 飛ぶ受け身 - Break fall
- ⑩ **Ushiro ukemi** - Back roll
- ⑩ **Zempo kaiten ukemi** - 前方回転受け身 - Forward roll

## Warm up

- ⑩ **Haishin undo** - Final back stretch
- ⑩ **Ryote tori senobashi undo** - Final back stretch

## Category of movements

- ⑩ **Tachi waza** - Standing technique
- ⑩ **Hanmi handachi waza** - Technique done with uke standing and nage sitting
- ⑩ **Suwari waza** - Sitting technique
- ⑩ **Omote waza** - Entering movement in front of uke, considered positive
- ⑩ **Ura waza** - Entering movement behind uke, considered negative
- ⑩ **Soto kaiten** - Outside turning movement
- ⑩ **Uchi kaiten** - Inside turning movement
- ⑩ **Irimi** - Entering movement going toward uke
- ⑩ **Tenkan** - Turning movement
- ⑩ **Tenshin** - Nage steps back



## Attacks

- ⑩ **Kata tori** - Shoulder grasp
- ⑩ **Katate tori** - One hand grasp of a wrist
- ⑩ **Morote tori** - Two hand grasp of a wrist
- ⑩ **Ryokata tori** - Two shoulders grasp
- ⑩ **Ryote tori** - Two wrists grasp from the front (one hand per wrist)
- ⑩ **Shomen uchi** - Descending strike to the top of the head
- ⑩ **Tsuki** - Thrust punch
- ⑩ **Ushiro ryokata tori** - Two shoulders grasp from behind
- ⑩ **Ushiro tekubi tori** - Two wrists grasps from behind
- ⑩ **Yokomen uchi** - Sideways strike to the head

## Techniques

**Ikkyo** - Arm pin

**Sankyo** - Wrist control by twisting it

**Shiho nage** - Four corners throw

**Kote gaeshi** - Throwing by turning out uke's wrist

**Kokyu ho** - Breathing exercise

**Nikkyo** - Wrist control by turning it inwards

**Iriminage** - Entering throw

**Tenshi nage** - Heaven (ten) and earth (shi) throw

**Kaiten nage** - Throwing by pushing diagonally on one of uke's arm while holding his head down



## The founder

**Morihei Ueshiba** was born on December 14, 1883 in Tanabe, a town in the prefecture of Wakayama, Japan.

After having studied numerous martial arts during his youth and being marked by several encounters, Morihei Ueshiba whom his students often called O'Sensei (which means Great Teacher) because of his great expertise in martial arts, gave his training a new direction by eliminating the notion of enemy and winner of a fight.

He envisioned Aikido not only as the synthesis of his martial art training but as an expression of universal peace

and reconciliation.

In 1927, he opened his first dojo called Kokuban. Today it is known as Aikikai Hombu Dojo and is located in the neighborhood of Shinjuku in Tokyo.

Morihei Ueshiba first taught most of Daito Ryu Jujutsu's curriculum which Sokaku Takeda had passed on to him. He combined it with techniques of Kenjutsu and Jojutsu adapting them to form a more "peaceful" martial art.

He named his style Daito Ryu Aiki Jutus until Takeda forbid it in 1922; he then named it Ueshiba Ryu Jujutsu until 1924, Ueshiba Ryu between 1925 and 1926, and finally Aiki Budo from 1927 onwards as well as Kobu Budo and Aikinomichi.

The Aikido Morihei Ueshiba was practicing in this early period was still very close to Daito Ryu but some authors also mention a Chinese influence. It was a more violent style than the one he developed in later years.

In 1940 O'Sensei had a second vision. Discarding all techniques he learnt until then, he envisioned them under a different angle, not only as means to project or immobilize an opponent but as a vehicle to opening up to life, to knowledge, virtue and to common sense. During the final years of O'Sensei, the Aikido of flowing circular movements was born.

In 1942 he decided to call it Aikido. In the same year he opened a dojo in Iwama and dedicated a temple to Aikido which has been reconstructed at the beginning of 1960.

After the Second World War, there was a hiatus on all Japanese Martial Arts and in 1952 Aikido was the first Martial Art which could be taught again in a school.

Since Morihei Ueshiba always considered his martial art as a gift to humanity, he did everything he could, even though he only spoke Japanese, to promote it internationally by sending emissaries to several European countries and to America. He also accepted foreigners who



wished to train in Japan and who had the required determination.

During the years following the Second World War O'Sensei started to give public demonstrations of his art which largely contributed to its visibility among the Japanese public.

The founder of Aikido did not worry about transmitting his art. He retired at the end of the war to a little village called Iwama and only visited some dojos of his former students. He considered it being the responsibility of his most advanced students to spread Aikido around the world.

Each student's technique, physical constitution and attitude while training is a different aiki and all these forms are within the principle, of aiki "way" of Aikido.

Ueshiba said; *"There is no form or style of Aikido. It is the movement of nature and it's secret is deep and infinite"*.

In January 12, 1968, O Sensei gave his last public demonstration.

In 1969, even though he seemed to be vigorous, his health deteriorated. He died peacefully on April 26, 1969. On June 14th of the same year his son Kisshomaru Ueshiba was designated as his official successor of the new Aikikai Foundation.

