

Platte City Aikikai

Home Dojo Etiquette

Attire & Safety

If you have a gi, please wear when training otherwise wear clothing that will not limit your movements and still provide protection during practice.

Please keep your training attire clean and maintained.

Please also keep your hands and feet clean when on the mat.

Keep fingernails and toenails trimmed and refrain from wearing watches or jewelry while training. This will keep cuts and scrapes to a minimum.

- If you are cut or scraped during class, notify your partner and/or the instructor, bow off the mat, and get a Band-Aid.
- If you have an Injury, whether from training or from outside of the dojo, please let the instructor and your training partners know by placing a strip of colored tape on the injured area.
- Always let your partners know when you're experiencing pain or discomfort.

While time is allotted at the beginning of every class for stretching and warming-up, all students are encouraged to get on the mat before class and do their own extra stretching. No one knows your body better than you do, thus it is wise to give yourself extra time to tend to your own individual stretching needs as you see fit.

Conduct & Etiquette

Aside from the basic safety guidelines above, all students should adhere to the rules listed below of conduct and etiquette, specifically bowing. Bowing (rei), is a show of respect and acknowledgement of another individual similar to the western handshake.

- Enter the dojo as early as possible, before class is scheduled to start, and assist in getting the dojo ready for class by ensuring the mats are positioned correctly and the **kamiza** is setup.
- Always bow to the **shomen** whenever entering or exiting the dojo, and also when stepping onto or off the mat
- If you arrive late, perform a kneeling bow like normal; turn towards the instructor, wait until the instructor invites you to train, and respond in return by saying **onagai shimasu**
- Follow the examples of senior students on the mat.
- Do not lean against the wall at any time.
- Remove your shoes and line them up neatly near dojo entrance or designated area.
- Neatness matters, this is the first impression dojo visitors have.
- In the winter please wipe your shoes well to keep sand and water out of the dojo.
- Do not wear shoes on the mat.
- Always wear shoes when outside of the dojo. Remember that our faces go where your feet have been.
- Place weapons in the designated area. If you own weapons you should bring them to the dojo for every practice.
- Place other bags and materials in the designated area.
- Ask the highest ranking colored belt if you can help with anything like setting up the dojo or cleaning the mats. If you are the highest ranking then ask the lowest ranking black-belt what needs to be done.

- It is always best to save face for your instructor. Do not correct them. If you think you received conflicting instructions then discreetly ask a higher ranking person to clarify or talk to Sensei after class or during a break.
- When the instructor tells you to practice, bow and say **Onegai shimasu** with purpose.
- Bow to your partner before and after engaging in practice.
- Pick your partner quickly. You should run/walk up to them and bow. Do not bow across the mat. Try to practice with every person on the mat at least once per class unless otherwise instructed. Every person is unique; over time this uniqueness will help you develop intuition about your partner and his or her movements.
- When sensei or a senior student helps you during class, thank them with a bow.
- During training, the person with higher rank is **nage** first.
- If training with three people, the third person should wait at the edge of the mat: when it is their turn, they will enter as **uke** first.
- Minimize the amount of talking you do on the mat.
- If you have to be excused for any reason during class, please notify the instructor first.
- Always be aware of your partner's needs & limitations.
- When doing warm ups or weapons practice, follow the instructor's lead and pace so that everyone moves together and in the same direction.
- After taking **ukemi** during group exercises, quickly get up and move to the back of the line, out of the way of the next incoming **uke** and/or the students next to you.
- If you accidentally bump into others while training, please acknowledge and say **gomen nasai**.
- Always be aware of your immediate surroundings on the mat.

The last rule is that any of these rules can be overwritten by Sensei at any time. Part of Aikido is to learn to adapt. Don't complain - just change your mindset, take the correction, and learn. Also, some dojos will vary from this outline. Respect the dojo's specific rules. Watch the higher ranks. If corrected, then accept the correction gracefully.