



STUDENT'S HANDBOOK

1. WELCOME TO THE DOJO!

We are happy that you have joined us. This handbook will acquaint you with our Dojo and help you get the most out of your practice. Even if you have been training in Aikido or Taichi the information contained herein will be useful to you. Please read it carefully and do not hesitate to ask Sensei for clarification.

2. ABOUT AIKIDO

Aikido is a non-competitive martial art that promotes non-violent conflict resolution. The techniques are low-impact, circular and executed from a balanced center.

The Founder, Morihei Ueshiba, often referred to as *O Sensei*, had several skilled students who went on to spread Aikido around the world. The one who has been with him the longest (23 years) and who was entrusted with the care of the Aiki Shrine, was the late Saito Morihiro Sensei, 9th dan, from Iwama, Japan. Saito Sensei has traveled the world to spread O Sensei's teachings, sometime referred to as the Iwama style of Aikido.

Other main lineages of Aikido are Ki Aikido, Yoshinkan, and Yoseikan.

3. ABOUT TAI CHI

There are four main Taichi lineages, namely Chen style, Yang style, Wu style and Sun style, each focused on one particular aspect of Taichi. We teach the Wu style, founded by Wu Jien Chuan, as passed down to us through Bruce Kumar Frantzis. The Wu style is not focused on combat as the Chen style, but is most conducive to health practice and internal energy work, and is more compact than the Yang style.



Our Taichi curriculum is comprised of four elements: Basic Chi Kung; Short Form; Long Form; and Push-hands. These four elements are interwoven in the classes; we conduct workshops quarterly to focus on specific aspects of these elements.

4. ABOUT THE DOJO

A dojo is a place where dedicated students practice the Way, as different from a gym or club where members come and go as they please. Our mission at Aikido Institute Davis is to increase world peace and harmony through the promotion of Aikido and related arts, such as Taichi. The style of Aikido that we promote was handed down by Saito Morihiro Sensei, a direct student of the Founder for 23 years.

Saito Sensei emphasizes the constant practice of basic and firm techniques (*kihon waza*) to build a solid base from which *Takemusu Aiki* (spontaneous expression of Aikido) can spring forth.

Hundreds of other dojos in the world are dedicated to the same goal of spreading Saito Sensei's teaching. They have come together under various associations, such as the Iwama Ryu of Europe, the California Aikido Association Division I and the Takemusu Aikido Association. Aikido Institute Davis is a member of the latter association, which is recognized by the Aikido World Headquarters in Tokyo, Japan (Hombu Dojo)

Howard Hoa Newens, 7th dan, is the chief instructor and Sensei of the Dojo. Newens Sensei was the former chief instructor of Aikido Institute Oakland for several years. He studied with Dang Thong Phong Sensei, the late Seiichi Sugano *Shihan* and the late Morihiro Saito *Shihan*. He began Aikido training in 1967 at the age of 12 and has been teaching since 1972. Sensei personally selects the staff instructors based on their maturity and experience. Sensei's wife, Phoebe, helps him manage the business operations.

Newens Sensei also trained in, and teaches Chi Kung and Wu Tai Chi, which are best known for increasing energy and health.

5. ABOUT THE PROGRAMS

The Aikido program includes on-going classes for adults and juniors and leads to ranks recognized by Aikido World Headquarters. The Aikido curriculum is spelled out in detail in the Rank Requirements posted in the Dojo and on our web site. Our programs are generally described below.



Aikido for Children & Teens - The Children program includes two classes per week. Regular attendance is essential. If you are in the Teens program plan to attend any three classes a week on a regular basis. The purpose of the 3-class limit is to allow adequate time for academic homework. We also recommend that all students attend the seminars that are usually held in fall and spring. Regular attendance counts toward eligibility for promotion.

Aikido for Adults - The adult program includes five weekly regular classes and two weekly basic classes. We recommend regular attendance in at least three classes per week and individual training during open mat times. Kyuu and dan examinations are held as needed. The monthly Advanced Classes are reserved for students ranked 2nd Kyuu and above.

Deshi Program – Serious students who are interested in a concentrated training program under Sensei’s personal guidance during a specified period (six months minimum) can apply for admission into this program. Discuss with Sensei if interested.

Tai Chi & Chi Kung Program – Students learn the Wu Tai Chi short-form & long-form together with a simple yet effective form of Chi Kung, at their own pace. Students are expected to attend both weekly classes and quarterly workshops.

6. GETTING THE MOST OUT OF YOUR TRAINING

We offer the following advice to help you to optimize your training.

- a) Set personal goals. Remember the reason that you enrolled into the Dojo. It is helpful to often review the requirements for the next rank and use them as training goals.
- b) Adhere to a regular training schedule. We recommend three or four times a week. Avoid lapses of more than one month. Get in some additional training before and after class at the Dojo.
- c) Participate in all activities sponsored by the Dojo. Attend all examinations and seminars. These sessions are opportunities for immersion into training. Plan to participate also in the semi-annual dojo clean up days and the occasional movie nights.

7. RANKING AND EXAMINATIONS



In Aikido programs a ranking system based on *kyuu* (ranks below black belts) and *dan* (ranks for black belts) is used to measure progress in learning. This system and the corresponding requirements are consistent with those of the Takemusu Aikido Association and the Aikido World Headquarters in Japan.

The normal progression for a student is as follows:

Junior: 9th *kyuu*-8th-7th-6th-5th-4th-3rd

Adult: 6th *kyuu*-5th-4th-3rd-2nd-1st-1st *dan*-2nd-3rd-4th-5th-6th-7th

The rank requirements, posted on our web site are stated in terms of minimum attendance, technical ability and behavioral requirements.

We hold *kyuu* and *dan* examinations throughout the year, as needed. Based on personal observation and attendance records, Sensei determines students' eligibility for testing. Names of eligible students are posted one month before the exams. An eligible student should ask a *sempai* for guidance on how to prepare for the exam.

In Taichi, there is no rank system used.

A core tradition in a dojo is that the *sempai* (senior student) leads the way and takes care of the *kohai* (junior student) who follows and supports the *sempai*.

Get to know the hierarchy in the Dojo as soon as you can because it helps you relate with other students with the proper etiquette.

8. CODE OF ETIQUETTE

The Code of Etiquette consists of a set of practical rules that are further expression of the Dojo Motto and are designed to ensure a safe and harmonious environment for training. We expect all students to adhere to the following rules of etiquette.

1. Follow Sensei's instructions carefully.
2. Sempai go first. Follow their examples.
3. Upon entering the Dojo, focus your mind on training.
4. During class focus solely on the technique at hand.



5. Do not distract others who are training.
6. Take care of injuries timely and report to Sensei immediately.
7. Do not train when you are ill or have a contagious disease.
8. Keep the Dojo and mat clean always.
9. Ensure that hands, feet and gi are clean before using the mat.
10. Do not wear sharp objects while training.
11. Train with all with an open mind and do not engage in contest.
12. Train according to the best of yours and your partner's abilities.
13. In the Dojo, do not engage in any activity that is inconsistent with the Dojo's mission and motto. When in doubt, ask Sensei.

9. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

The lighter our administrative work, the more energy we can devote to serving our students' needs. We use a software (Zen Planner) to manage our business. Students can do the following to help:

- Comply with the Code of Etiquette as well as posted health and safety rules.
- Make reservation for the classes that you want to attend, through Zen Planner.
- Check in through Zen Planner each day you come to train. This will help us maintain up to date records to determine eligibility for examination.
- Pay dues on time, that is, by the first day of every month. We do not bill. This main source of income supports the on-going operations of the Dojo. Enroll in autopay so you do not forget dues payment.
- Keep your contact information up to date in Zen Planner: postal address, e-mail, phone number.
- Inform Sensei when you need to be absent from class longer than a week. Note that students pay monthly dues as long as they intend to remain enrolled, irrespective of breaks in training. Absence of more than three months will result in automatic removal from the roll.

10. SPIRIT OF SERVICE



Consistent with the mission of the Dojo, an integral part of training is service to the community and the world. We provide opportunities for students to develop this spirit of service by serving our little community in the Dojo. To this end, students will enrich their training by helping to welcome beginners, helping *kohai* train for their tests, sweeping the mat after class, bringing flowers for the *shomen*, helping to clean the dojo, helping with certain administrative tasks, etc. We encourage you to volunteer for these activities as appropriate. Remember that the Dojo is a place for self-transformation and growth, not a gym or a sports club.

11. IN CASE OF INJURY AND ILLNESS

Let the instructor know immediately upon sustaining an injury in class. Stop, check the injury and care for it before resuming training.

If you are recovering from an injury or an illness or have any physical limitations, let the instructor know before class and let your training partners know before you engage in the training. Listen to your body and do not ignore pain.

Some muscular soreness in the first few weeks of training is normal.

Let Sensei or any the instructors know immediately upon contracting a contagious disease and stay home until all symptoms have cleared.

12. GLOSSARY

Bokken: Wooden sword.

Chi Kung: A form of exercise that increases *chi* circulation in the body and thus increases health.

Deshi: A personal disciple of the teacher.

Dojo: Place for training in the path.

Dogi or *gi*: Training outfit.

Domo Arigato Gozaimashita: Thank you very much.

Gasshuku: Intensive seminar in which students live and train together.

Gomen nasai: I am very sorry.

Hajime: Begin!



Hakama: Skirt worn by dan-ranked students.

Jo: Wooden staff.

Kohai: Junior student (in relation to a sempai).

Nage: Person who executes the attack in a technique.

Onegai shimasu: I am requesting the favor of (training with you).

O Sensei: Great Teacher, referring to the Founder.

Sempai: Senior student (in relation to a kohai).

Sensei: Teacher. Usually refers to the chief instructor.

Shidoin and *Fuku-Shidoin*: Instructor and assistant instructors; titles conferred upon formal training.

Shihan: "Master", honorific title conferred to worthy teachers usually ranked 6th dan and above.

Shomen: The front of the dojo (toward which we bow).

Suburi: Set of single moves for bokken or jo practice.

Takemusu Aiki: Refers to the ultimate level of Aikido training in which techniques are executed effortlessly and spontaneously to fit any situation.

Uke: Person who executes the technique during paired training.

Yame: Stop!

AIKIDO INSTITUTE DAVIS
638 Cantrill Drive, Ste B
Davis, CA 95618
dojo@aikidodavis.com
www.aikidodavis.com