

At the SDKB, instructors teach on a voluntary basis. All costs go towards supporting the facility so that we have a practice space. As such, we ask that you observe basic rules in the dojo.

The basic etiquette is known as reigi, and while different martial arts may have different protocols, the idea of reigi is universal.

## **ETIQUETTE (REIGI)**

(taken from the SCKF 1996 AUSKF Team Commemorative Booklet)

Etiquette is an extremely important part of Kendo. The basic rules come from the formal, highly stylised social system of Japan. Simply stated, Kendo etiquette is based on respect -- for one's Sensei, seniors, equipment, etc.

In practice, it is not that simple. There is a prescribed method for virtually every action, and failure to adhere to proper behaviour may be taken as a sign of poor instruction or, in some cases, as a severe insult. It is essential to know basic etiquette in Kendo.

### **Basic Etiquette in the Dojo**

1. Never deliver the traditional courtesies in a casual, off-hand manner.
2. Stop and bow when entering or leaving a dojo.
3. Greet your seniors and fellow Kenshi at the first opportunity, especially the Sensei. Examples: ohayou gazaimasu (good morning), kon'nichi wa (good day), konban wa (good evening).
4. When addressing instructors, use the title Sensei.
5. Be attentive; listen carefully to instructions, and respond promptly.
6. Be aware of senior members and follow their lead. Do not sit down, finish bowing, or remove your equipment before your seniors. When lining up, position yourself relative to your seniors. Example: when seated, line up your men and kote, as well as your knees, to those of your senior.
7. Be aware of junior members and take care of them.
8. Always sit or stand properly when in the dojo. Do not slouch or lean against anything. Particularly, do not lean on your shinai. Do not crawl to adjust your position when in seiza, or sonkyo; instead, stand up and move.
9. When taking the seiza position, put the left knee down first. When rising from the seiza position, raise the right knee first. Do not use your hands to assist in raising or lowering yourself.
10. Avoid walking in front of Sensei, or in front of Kenshi seated in the seiza position.
11. Pay respect to your seniors and fellow Kenshi when departing, especially to the sensei. Examples: oyasumi nasai (good night), sayounara.

### **Basic Etiquette Regarding Apparel and Equipment**

1. Always handle your apparel and bogu respectfully. Make sure they are packed neatly, without dangling strings or straps.
2. Always handle your shinai respectfully. Do not lean on it, rest it on the floor, twirl it, or drag it. Make sure it is well maintained, free of splinters and with tightened tsuru (string) and nakayui (leather strap).
3. Avoid stepping over Shinai and Bogu when it is lying on the ground e.g. during Seiza etc. Walk around instead if possible.
4. Wear your keikogi and hakama neatly. Make sure the keikogi is smooth, not bulging, in the front and back. When putting on the hakama, put your left leg in first; when removing the hakama, remove your right leg first.

### **Basic Etiquette During Practice**

1. When practising with your senior, thank him or her by saying "onegai shimasu" at the beginning and "arigatou gozaimashita" at the end.
2. Practice diligently. Do not sit down during practice unless you are fixing your equipment. Do not engage in idle conversation. Do not let a sensei remain idle when he or she is available for practice.
3. Do not wear jewelry during practice.
4. Perform ritsu rei (standing bow) and za rei (seated bow) properly. Do not bend or arch your neck or back. Hold the bow briefly before returning to your original position.
5. To draw the shinai: First perform ritsu rei toward your opponent. Bring your left hand to your hip and take three big steps forward. Draw the shinai; assume the chudan no kamae position and go down into the sonkyo position. Keep your back straight and look forward at all times.
6. To put away the shinai: assume the chudan no kamae position, go down into the sonkyo position, and return the shinai to your left hip. Stand and take five small steps back; drop your left hand, and perform ritsu rei. Keep your back straight and look forward at all times.