

Weapons in Aikido

Aikido is one of the traditional forms of martial arts that combine both the body and the mind. It does not only emphasize the use of physical skills but also the spirituality of practitioners and those who wish to learn the art.

Aikido is a technique that incorporates moves that are more defensive than offensive. In fact, it seeks not to injure but to prevent or stop a person. This is perhaps why there is rarely a weapon used in the sport. The martial arts is made up mostly of movements and techniques. Still, there are some, who are already advanced, that go into weapons training. Weapons that are used in aikido are the tanto, the wooden jo and the bokken. Often, techniques in taking weapons from opponents and keeping the weapon practitioners are using are taught.

More than specific weapons, practitioners of aikido rely mostly on the moves that they are being taught with. Their mastery of these movements are their weapons against people who wish to do them harm.

Below is a rundown of the movements and techniques taught in aikido.

Ikkyo

This is the most basic movement in aikido. In fact, it is the first to be taught. Ikkyo makes use of control in the grip by applying hand grip on the elbow and near the wrist. The grip can apply pressure on the ulnar, a medial portion of the arm.

Atemi

Atemi are feints or strikes that are used as attacks against the vital points of the body. This movement is meant to cause much damage; so it is rarely being used in aikido. Still, if there is a need, one can use atemi in fighting your way out of brawls. It can also be used as a form of distraction. Atemis can take your opponent by surprise and break his concentration by providing a startling incident. When used the right way, it can also ruin your opponent's balance, which can provide an opportunity for you to strike or to run away.

Another form of strikes that can be used in aikido is the kick. This is however not used as often. Aikido does not encourage the use of kicks because injuries brought on by these kinds of movements may be too dangerous. Also, kicks are not so common in feudal Japan, where aikido originated.

Here are some forms of strikes that are often used.

face-thrust - Although the aikido name, Ganmen-tsuki, can be quite complicated, it is basically a punch directed to the face.

Front-face - Called Shomenuchi in aikido language, it is characterized by a vertical knife strike to the head of the opponent.

Side-face - Also termed Yokomenuchi, this strike is done by making a diagonal knife-hand strike at the side of the neck or the side of the head of the opponent.

Chest-thrust - Called Mune-tsuki, this is basically a punch to the torso, targeting the chest, the solar plexus and the abdomen

Attacks

Although attacks are basically not encouraged in the study of aikido, teachers still see the need for it should circumstances warrant a more offensive technique. One example of an attack used in aikido is the immobilizing grab, which is often used when opponents wield weapons.

Grabs

This is one of the most basic techniques in aikido. It is considered safer and easier to do. It is a technique used to free one's hand, rid your opponents' of their weapon or to immobilize a person.