

Irish Aikido Federation - Ireland Aikikai

Weapons Protocol

Training in the use of weapons is an aspect Aikido training.

The Founder O-Sensei Morihei Ueshiba left a legacy of weapons training in Aikido:

- in the existence of tantodori, bokkendori, jodori and josabaki techniques
- among his recorded demonstrations
- in many of his writings
- among his disciples and students, many of whom have weapons training systems as an inherent part of their teaching method and/or made significant study of other (Ko) Budo .

It is also true that in the development of Aikido at Aikikai Hombu dojo that training in weapons has not been made a significant feature of the teaching syllabus and it has been said that *"training in weapons is not necessary for the perfection of Aikido"*.

Since the earliest days of the teaching lines which are represented in the Aikido training of Ireland Aikikai there has been training in the basic use of tanto, bokken and jo.

Weapons are a means of protection and a source of danger.

IN training accidents arise from lack of proper information, errors in technique, excess of enthusiasm, irresponsibility/carelessness, violence, overestimation of ability, faulty equipment, bad luck and unforeseen circumstances.

Risk exists in all activities. To minimise risk awareness of safety is essential.

"For Practice Safety is Necessary, For Safety Practice is Necessary"

Safety Practice Code

a. Equipment

1. Only use appropriate and good quality training equipment.
2. Learn how to select, test, use and maintain equipment.
3. Check equipment before and after each practice session, note any changes in condition,
4. Do not use damaged or weakened equipment when practising with or near other people.
5. Store and maintain equipment well, so that it will stay in good condition.
6. When not in use secure equipment appropriately.

b. Instructing Weapons handling skills.

1. Only qualified persons should instruct others or conduct classes using weapons.
2. The training should be appropriate to the experience and ability level of the students.
3. Skills and reliability can only be developed by thorough mastery of the basics by frequent and regular practice.

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c. Individual responsibility

1. Never Forget the Practise of the Safety Code.

Weapons training in Aikido is a serious martial pursuit requiring understanding and integrity.

2. Obey the instructor.
3. Have a serious and courteous attitude in training.
3. Maintain an exceptional level of awareness of the space and people around you.
4. Do not use weakened or damaged weapons, discard weapons which become weakened or damaged in training.
5. Observe the club/dojo rules about who is permitted and when it is permitted to do weapons training.
6. Never use or borrow equipment without the owners permission.
7. By the Law of Ireland when carrying weapons in public they must be carried in a secure bag/case.
8. The use of weapons in public demonstrations is not recommended except by or under the direct supervision of senior dan ranks.
9. Always exercise your **commonsense**

Aikido & Weapons training

1. Sword swinging exercises and basic jo movements can be an excellent and appropriate way of individual discipline, physical and co-ordination training.
2. Sabaki exercises with weapons develop, speed, accuracy, concentration and focus.
3. Always keep a good posture (with relaxed shoulders and extended spine), transfer weight softly through ankles, knees and hips to the koshi/tanden in co-ordination with the breath.
4. Keep the source of movement, tanden and centre of gravity as one.
5. The psychological posture in weapons training should be light and sharp, clean and clear without emotional or ideological colouring.
6. Be moderate in training: not too much, not too many; but often. Real skill comes after you can handle a weapon with the familiarity of a spoon or pencil.

7. *Practise and Study*

8. **SHINKENSA:**<Mind Sword Intention> Have a serious attitude. Be honest. In a martial art if you were to e.g. use a real sword the result might be painful. In taijutsu it is easy to lose seriousness but it is the same attack. You must attack and defend as if you were holding a real sword.
9. **REINOKOKORO:**<Respect(ing) spirit> Have a respectful attitude for your opponent, sensei, everybody. eg [Trua le gach duine].

10. "**Inherited Wisdom:**" *he who lives by sword, dies by the sword*".

Weapons in the hands of individuals by: use, intimidation, image or evocation of violence against oneself or others is contrary to the spirit of Aikido.

The Spirit of Aikido is properly expressed as "SHIN BU FU SATSU " lit. divine bu no killing.