



Lenape Aikikai Dojo Etiquette

Proper observance of etiquette is as much a part of your training as is learning techniques. In many cases observing proper etiquette requires one to set aside one's pride or comfort. Nor should matters of etiquette be considered of importance only in the dojo. Standards of etiquette may vary somewhat from one dojo or organization to another, but the following guidelines are nearly universal. Please take matters of etiquette seriously.

1. When entering or leaving the dojo, it is proper to bow in the direction of O-sensei's picture, the Kamiza, or the front of the dojo. You should also bow when entering or leaving the mat.
2. No shoes on the mat.
3. Be on time for class. Students should be lined up and seated in Seiza approximately 3-5 minutes *before* the official start of class. If you do happen to arrive late, sit quietly in Seiza on the edge of the mat until the instructor grants permission to join practice.
4. If you should have to leave the mat or dojo for any reason during class, approach the instructor and ask permission.
5. Avoid sitting on the mat with your back to the picture of O-sensei. Also, do not lean against the walls or sit with your legs stretched out. (Either sit in Seiza or cross-legged.)

6. Remove watches, rings and other jewelry before practice as they may catch your partner's hair, skin, or clothing and cause injury to oneself or one's partner.
7. Do not bring food, gum, or beverages onto the mat. It is also considered disrespectful in traditional dojo to bring open food or beverages into the dojo.
8. Please keep your fingernails (and *especially* one's toenails) clean and cut short.
9. Please keep talking during class to a minimum. What conversation there is should be restricted to one topic - Aikido. It is particularly impolite to talk while the instructor is addressing the class.
10. If you are having trouble with a technique, do not shout across the room to the instructor for help. First, try to figure the technique out by watching others. Effective observation is a skill you should strive to develop as well as any other in your training. If you still have trouble, approach the instructor at a convenient moment and ask for help.
11. Carry out the directives of the instructor promptly. Do not keep the rest of the class waiting for you!
12. Do not engage in roughhousing or needless contests of strength during class.
13. Keep your training uniform clean, in good shape, and free of offensive odors.
14. Please pay your membership dues promptly. If, for any reason, you are unable to pay your dues on time, talk with the Dojo Cho (Dojo Manager or person in charge of dues collection). Sometimes special rates are available for those experiencing financial hardship.

15. Change your clothes only in designated areas (not on the mat!).
16. Remember that you are in class to learn, and not to gratify your ego. An attitude of receptivity and humility (though not obsequiousness) is therefore advised.
17. It is usually considered polite to bow upon receiving assistance or correction from the instructor.
18. During class, if the instructor is assisting a group in your vicinity, it is frequently considered appropriate to suspend your own training so that the instructor has adequate room to demonstrate.
19. Before and after class, when time permitted work on your techniques with your kohai/Sempai or peers. Bow and request help with it.
20. Always assist visitors on or off the mat when needed, make them feel welcome to your home dojo.
21. After class and/or when requested by the instructor participate in maintaining your Dojo clean; Kamiza dusting, mat, walls, weapons, dress rooms, bathrooms, collecting and disposing trash in trash baskets, etc, etc.

If you have any questions regarding a etiquette protocol not address here ask Sensei or any one of your instructors. You are also encourage to ask among your Senpai's for guidance when your instructors are not available.