

IAIDO TRAINING CAMP INSTRUCTIONS

The sensei training camp is traditionally our training year's main event. Our own training camps are relatively relaxed events outside of the ceremonies, but when Takada-sensei is present, budo etiquette should be followed closely. This document highlights the main guidelines for participation in a sensei training camp.

AT THE BEGINNING OF EACH TRAINING SESSION

1. **Each participant's training outfit** must be clean, intact, and ironed. Do not forget your Hakama.
2. **Don't be late.** Training lines must be ready when the sensei enters the hall.
3. At the beginning of each session, **the sensei enters the hall** and walks directly to his seat under the Shinzen (the small altar situated in the center of one of the hall's long walls). Trainees located on the sensei's path make room for him, turning towards each other – their backs should never be turned to the sensei. As the sensei walks past them, trainees in his way lightly bow to him. Others stand in line in the basic position, facing the Shinzen wall.
4. **Line formation** is done starting with the older trainee at the right end of the line.
5. If the row is short (like in some special exercises), the row is organized symmetrically in front of the sensei. The younger trainee is placed at the far left end of the line as far from the sensei as the older trainee is on the right end. The others spread evenly between them.
6. At the beginning of the first practice in the morning and in the afternoon, the sensei will conduct **a warm-up**, during which swords are placed behind one's own training place at a suitable distance (approx. 1 m) so that they are not stepped on. Swords should not be set along the walls at this moment.
7. Practitioners start **their bow** a little before the sensei, and finish it after the sensei.
8. If, for some reason, a trainee **is late** for the start of the exercise, he or she must let others complete the opening ceremonies (do not rush to line up while others bow). The late trainee will bow to his or her sword in a corner of the hall, then move with the least commotion possible to a place where he or she will not disturb the training of others. The sensei probably won't notice the whole episode.

TRAINING SESSION

1. **The exercise starts** with *shoden* (or another series depending on the exercise program), with one or two repetitions depending on the sensei's orders. Normally the sensei will order one of the older trainees to operate as leader (*motodachi*) – or he might in exceptional cases lead the training himself. Trainees should watch the *motodachi* and do their series at the same pace.
2. If there are many trainees, the group is either **divided** into *dans* and *kyu* separately, or the division is made between the first and second *kyu* levels.
3. When you settle down **at your training place at the beginning of the training**, look carefully at how you choose it. In principle, trainees in a row position themselves at equal intervals, but you should regularly check the position of others around you and correct your position accordingly. Especially for those in the front row, it is important to choose a suitable place: rows behind you will position themselves according to you so that no one is directly in front, but at the same time you should be able to practice without hindrance.

4. Once the right place has been found, you should **stay there**. When training with a large group at the same time, you should not move in the hall: the movement of each trainee immediately affects other trainees nearby, eventually disrupting the whole group. You must always be aware of your surroundings. You can change position a little, for example for safety reasons (e.g. because someone else has moved). In that case, you must check that you do not place yourself within the reach of anyone's sword or interfere with another's training. You should not stand directly in front of anyone, even if this other person is further away. There might be such a crowd training that those in the first and last trainee rows would be forced to line up. Even then, those in the back row should try to settle down slightly askew from the trainees in front of them, so that you don't have to make *kiritsuke* directly towards the back of your partner.
5. If the sensei instructs a trainee in a technique, his instructions must be listened to in **seiza**. Trainees next to you can also **stop to listen**, but they have to turn towards the sensei and sit in *seiza*.
6. When sensei wants to change the group of trainees, he commands "**kōtai**". The trainees will then rush to line up along the wall, and the new group will line up for training.
7. While **waiting** along the wall, sit either in *seiza* or in the tailor's position (preferably with your feet covered under the hakama - at least the soles of your feet should not point towards the sensei). Other positions are not possible. If you have knee problems, you can also stand along the wall. Discussion is not allowed, nor is note-taking during the practice session (notes during breaks are recommended).
8. Photography and video recording during training is **prohibited**.

PAUSE

1. If the break is a **short drinking break**, the sensei may stay at his place in the hall. Then it isn't polite to turn your back on him. Try to do what you are doing so that you are sideways or half turned away. In general, according to Japanese practice, you shouldn't drink in the hall.
2. If the sensei **leaves the hall** for a break, those along his path and at the door make room for him and turn politely bowing towards him as he passes.
3. Right at the door is the location for the sensei's **sandals**: this space should be left empty.

AT THE END OF EACH TRAINING SESSION

1. The instructions given above for start and break behavior apply to the end of each training.
2. You should oil your sword and tie your *sageo* in **seiza**.
3. Do not remove your **hakama** before the teachers have left the hall.
4. When the training is **over** and the sensei has put his swords in their bags and is about to step out of the hall, everyone should sit down and bow in his direction.

MEETING THE SENSEI OUTSIDE THE HALL

1. When meeting the sensei for the **first time** in the morning, bow and say "*Ohayo gozaimasu*" ie. good morning. If you don't remember the Japanese words, you can say good morning in any language whatever.

2. If a trainee is **moving** towards the same door as the sensei, he or she should slow down and wait for the sensei and his entourage to catch up and go ahead. One should then wait for a little before going through the door after the sensei's group.

DINNER AND CELEBRATIONS

1. The sensei always **sits** at the place of honor (which, according to his vantage point, is in the middle of the table farthest from the door). Around him (beside and in front) are the interpreter and the older students, not the youngest trainees.
2. Those sitting closest to the sensei make sure that his glass doesn't get **empty**.
3. The sensei will take the initiative in demanding **toasts**. The extension of a personal toast from the sensei is an honor, and the sensei chooses himself those with whom he will toast.
4. If the sensei suggests a joint toast with the word "**Kampai**", everyone must participate in it. So you shouldn't let your own glass empty completely, no matter what the drink. During the toast, do not rise your glass too high, as the sensei's glass should always be the highest.
5. In **social interactions**, and despite the sensei's friendliness, the trainees should remember to keep their distance, not act too familiar, and keep relations with the sensei dignified. You should remember that the sensei is not your friend.
6. Those sitting at the sensei's table should **socialize** with him, and listen to his stories attentively.
7. When the event **ends**, everyone stands and waits for the sensei to leave the place first.