

Dojo Etiquette and Courtesy

The use of dojo courtesies and Japanese customs in the karate school is absolutely deliberate. The attention to these humble actions allows us to let go of ego and embrace the culture from which karate comes from. Everyone treats one another with mutual respect and understanding during and after training and makes every effort to carry that into their everyday lives. Respect and etiquette make everyone a better person and allows students to always be learners but also people of great character.

Dojo members who demonstrate these courtesies and humble attitudes are more likely to be treated like a student by their sensei rather than a participant.

- 1) Always bow before and after walking into or out of the dojo.
- 2) If you are a student of the dojo, arrive before class begins. If you arrive late, bow in at the dojo door and sit seiza until the head instructor gives the command of "yoroshii" to enter. Please stand, bow and line up in the back of the last row until the first break and then join your ranks.
- 3) Students rei (bow) anytime a Black Belt approaches (especially if the Black Belt chooses you for demonstration, he bows to ask you and to thank you for being his assistant, in the same token you bow to accept and to thank him for allowing you to be a model in the demonstration). You should always bow to a Black Belt before you ask a question and after they have answered. Do not bow if you are in street clothes.
- 4) During the session, students must work with a serious attitude and complete concentration. Therefore, laughing, chewing gum or asking questions not relevant to what is being taught is not allowed. Silence and seriousness are two rules that must be followed if a high level of training is going to be sustained.
- 5) No jewellery of any kind is to be worn while in class.
- 6) When not in class, students should train and stretch quietly while awaiting their class to start.
- 7) When in class, utmost respect and attention will be given to those instructing the class.
- 8) If a student must stop working during a session, they must report to Sensei Spence or the senior student.
- 9) You have one sensei. When he is present on the floor, make sure that you ask him questions about techniques, kata, etc.
- 10) If a Black Belt is using you to demonstrate a technique, it is a very great mark of disrespect to move. If you move, you are implying that you do not trust him.
- 11) Keep your uniform clean.
- 12) There is NO kumite for anyone without the supervision of Sensei Spence or a Black Belt.
- 13) Your obi is a symbol of your effort, even if it is white. You should not disrespect your belt by allowing it to drop to the floor.
- 14) There is absolutely no horseplay in or outside the dojo.

15) Visitors from other martial arts schools and disciplines will be treated with the utmost respect.

16) Anyone who is higher rank than you is considered your sempai (senior) and should be treated with respect. Your sempai (higher ranking students) have reached their ranks through dedication, spirit and attitude. If you have questions about class, go to them first for the answers. 18) Arrogance, bad attitudes or malicious behavior will cause a student to be expelled Students are required to train diligently both in and out of the dojo