

GLOSSARY OF AIKIDO TERMS

PRONUNCIATION KEY

The pronunciation of Japanese words is very simple in that there are only about fifty syllables in the entire language. Consonants are usually pronounced as those in English. The vowels are pronounced as follows.

A -	"ah"	as the <u>a</u> in father
E -	"eh"	as the <u>e</u> in net
I -	"ee"	as the <u>i</u> in marine
O -	"oh"	as the <u>o</u> in oboe
U -	"oo"	as the <u>u</u> in rule

AI - Harmony, Union, Love

AI HANMI - Stance where the attacker and defender have the same foot forward. (See also GYAKU HANMI).

AIKI - Blending physically and mentally with the attacker.

AIKI BUDO - The term O'Sensei used to describe the art between the late 1930's and early 1940's.

AIKIDO - Translated means "The Way of Harmony of the Spirit" or "The Way of Peace." (lit., "Ai" means harmony or coming together; "ki" is spirit or energy; "do" means a path or a way)

AIKIDOKA - Student of Aikido.

AIKI JO - The staff used in Aikido (approximately 4 feet long).

AIKI JUJUTSU - A term used to refer to the jujutsu form taught by O'Sensei in the 1920's and early 30's. Today it is understood to be Aiki techniques performed in a hard jujutsu-like manner, in contrast to the softer, rounded techniques of Aikido.

AIKIKAI - The largest Aikido Association in the world, affiliated with Hombu headquarters in Japan.

AIKI KEN - The sword used in Aikido, influenced by the sword of the KASHIMA SHINTO RYU.

AITE - One's training partner. (lit., "ai" reciprocal or together; "te" hands)

ARIGATO - Thank you.

ATEMI - Punches and other sorts of strikes that are designed to distract and to weaken the defenses and/or balance. (lit., "ate" a strike; "mi" the body).

AWASE - To blend or move together. (verb, "awaseru") Used to emphasize harmonizing or blending with the movements of one's partner. For example, partner practice with weapons may be done either "stop-start" or awase.

AYAGAESHI – Step often used in Yokomen uchi practice. From MIGHI HANMI, the left foot (back foot) steps forward while the right foot (front foot) steps back. Hanmi changes from MIGHI to HIDARI while stepping off-line from an attack.

BOKKEN – A wooden practice sword, usually made of oak. There are many different styles of bokken. (lit., "boku" wood; "ken" sword)

BU – Martial.

BUDO – The path or way of martial arts. (lit., "do" the way; "bu" [of] neutralizing aggression)

BUDOKA – Martial practitioner; martial artist; student of Budo.

BUKI WAZA – Weapons techniques in Aikido, referring to techniques executed with the AIKI JO and AIKI KEN.

BUSHIDO – The Feudal-Military Japanese code of behaviour; the way of the warrior or samurai.

CHUDAN KAMAE – Middle stance. Refers to the position where the sword is held extended out from the center and almost parallel to the ground.

DAITO-RYU-JUJUTSU – An early martial art disseminated by Master Sokaku Takeda until 1943. Morihei Ueshiba received his Daito-Ryu-Jujutsu teaching certificate in 1922.

DAME – Wrong, bad, incorrect.

DAN – A black belt ranking such as shodan, nidan, etc. (lit., level)

DANKAI TEKINI – In Ken Awase, refers to the 'step-by-step' method of performing the awase.

DO – The Way. In Japan, any art that is practiced to develop both technique and spiritual maturity is considered a "DO."

DOGI – Practice uniform. Also GI or KEIKOGI.

DOJO – A training hall for traditional Japanese arts, including aikido and other martial arts (lit., "jo" the place [of]; "do" the way)

DOJO-CHO – Director of the Dojo.

DOMO-ARIGATO-GOZAIMAS(U) – Thank you.

DOSHU – Leader of the Way. The official curator of the art of aikido. The title means literally, "shu" the master or owner [of] "do" the way. The present Doshu is Moriteru Ueshiba, grandson of the founder of Aikido. He will be succeeded by his son, and so on.

DOZO – Please. (Used at the beginning of a sentence).

ERI – Collar, lapel.

ERI DORI – Collar or lapel grab.

FUTARIGAKE – Defense against two opponents.

GAESHI – To turn, as in KOTE GAESHI (a technique applied to the wrist) or GEDAN GAESHI (a turning movement of the JO).

GEDAN – Lower. From the lower-held sword position (or GEDAN NO KAMAE).

GI – traditional uniform, usually white, worn during the practice of Japanese martial arts. Also known as a DOGI.

GOKYO - 5th pinning technique in basic Aikido, usually used against knife attacks.

GYAKU – Reverse, opposite.

GYAKU HANMI – Reverse or opposite stance; the situation in which the attacker and defender form a mirror-image.

HAI – Yes.

HAI – DOZO – Yes, please do this technique.

HAKAMA – A traditional Japanese divided skirt. The traditional Japanese equivalent of dress pants. More durable types of hakama, usually blue or black, are worn for martial arts practice. In aikido the hakama is usually worn only by black-belt holders (although in some DOJO's women wear the hakama sooner).

HANMI – Half stance. A way of standing in aikido so that the feet form a "T-stance" and the body is turned at an angle. AI HANMI (harmonious hanmi) is when partners each have the same foot forward. GYAKU HANMI (opposite hanmi) is when they have different feet forward. (lit., "han" half; "mi" body)

HANMI HANDACHI – Half standing stance. Techniques executed from a kneeling position against an attacker who is standing. (lit., "hanmi" half body; "han" half ; "dachi" standing)

HAPPO GIRI – An exercise with the sword in which you practice turning the hips and cutting in at least eight directions. (lit., "hachi" eight; "po" direction; "giri" cutting)

HARA – Stomach, abdomen. Used to describe the center of concentration and energy.

HAYAI-GAESHI – Literally means "fast turn." Step as in YOKOMEN UCHI practice. From MIGI HANMI, the left foot (back foot) steps forward while the right foot (front foot) steps back. HANMI changes from MIGI to HIDARI while stepping off-line from an attack.

HENKA – Variation. (lit., "hen" unusual; "ka" change)

HENKA WAZA – Variations on the way a standard technique is completed. It may refer to either a variation of the same technique or an alternate technique when the first technique was unsuccessful.

HIDARI – Left.

HIDARI HANMI – HANMI with the left foot forward.

HITO-E-MI – "Making the posture small." This stance refers to a ready posture similar to HANMI, but where the rear leg is moved further left or right away from the center line. This stance is used in AIKI JO technique.

HOMBU DOJO – Headquarters' training hall. Although this term is used by many organizations, in Aikido, it usually refers to AIKIKAI HOMBU DOJO located in the Shinjuku Ward of Tokyo, Japan.

IKKYO – Fist teaching, or first principle. In Aikido, refers to a basic technique in which the attacker is unbalanced through the application of pressure on the elbow and shoulder of his outstretched arm, followed by a pinning movement that immobilizes the opponent's arm at a 90° angle to his body with pressure applied to both the elbow and the wrist.

IRIMI – Entering movement. Direct inward movement by the defender in front or to the rear of the attacker prior to execution of a technique.

IRIMINAGE – A technique where the defender enters primarily behind the attacker and seizes him by the collar or neck with one hand while entering under the chin with the other open hand and then downward to execute the throw.

IWAMA – A small town northeast of Tokyo where O-Sensei lived and taught during much of the later part of his life, from the early 40's. Ueshiba's Dojo is attached to the founder's home and was under the care of Saito Sensei between the founder's death in 1969 and Saito's death in 2002. It is currently under the care of Saito's son, Hitohiro Shihan.

IWAMA RYU AIKIDO – An informal term referring to the style of Aikido taught in Iwama by Morihiro Saito, one of the closest student's of the founder. Technically it includes an emphasis on the relationship between AIKI KEN and AIKI JO movements.

JIYU – Free; unstructured. For example, jiyu keiko (unstructured training) and jiyu waza (free techniques).

JO – A short staff, about as long as the distance from the floor to just under the armpit. See AIKI JO.

JODAN – Upper position.

JODAN-NO-KAMAE – Upper stance. Refers to a position where the sword is held above the head, ready to strike.

JO DORI – Techniques designed to defend against the staff. (lit., "jo" staff; "dori" taking)

JUJI GARAMI – Cross-entangling method. Refers to the technique where pressure is applied against the attacker's elbows as they are brought to a crossed position.

JUJINAGE – JUJI GARAMI.

KAISO – Founder.

KAESHI WAZA – Counter techniques. (lit., "kaeshi" to turn back/return; "waza" techniques)

KAITEN NAGE – Rotary throw or "wheel throw." A technique where the attacker is thrown with pressure applied on the head or neck while his/her arm is raised over the head.

KAMAE – Posture; initial ready position.

KAMI – Deity; Divine being. Can be translated as “God” but not in the Judeo-Christian sense.

KAMPAI – Cheers! “Bottoms up!”

KATA – Form. A series of pre-arranged movements done individually or in a group. May be performed either with or without weapons. These kata are specially designed to teach basic movements. In aikido two jo kata are commonly taught. They are called the thirty-one jo kata (sanju ichi no jo) and the thirteen jo kata (ju san no jo).

KATA – Shoulder.

KATADORI – Shoulder grab; a basic attacking method in Aikido.

KATANA – Steel sword.

KATATEDORI – One hand grab.

KEIKO – Training in a traditional Japanese art like aikido, flower arranging, tea ceremony, etc. (lit., “kei” contemplation/exploration; “ko” [of] the old/traditional)

KEIKOGI – Training uniform which is usually made of cotton.

KEN – A Japanese sword, usually curved. (See also BOKKEN).

KENJUTSU – Combative sword arts or technique.

KEN NO KAMAE – Ready stance for Aiki no Ken practice in Buki Waza. Ken no Kamae is a natural position in which the back leg is allowed to relax and bend slightly while the hips are turned 45°.

KEN TAI JO – a weapons partner practice involving the sword (ken) against (tai) the short staff (jo).

KI – a difficult to define term, roughly translated as spirit, energy, ming, intention, etc.. The character with which it is written is a pictogram representing the vapors rising from cooked rice, and eventually it came to mean invisible movement/unseen force/spirit etc.. Ki is an important concept in much of Chinese and Japanese philosophical thought.

KIAI – a loud shout accompanying the execution of martial arts techniques. (Lit., the meeting (ai) of energy/spirit (ki))

KIHON – basic techniques, as opposed to flowing techniques or variations.

KIMONO – Japanese robe.

KI NO NAGARE – techniques done in motion, as opposed to those done from a static position. (Lit., the flowing (nagare) of energy (ki)).

KOHAI – a student of relatively less experience or rank. See also SEMPai.

KOKYU – (Lit., breath or respiration). The power of “breath” arising from the center. The word KOKYU also has the meaning of “the secret” or “the knack”, and also “timing”.

KUDEN – an oral teaching, usually of a more secret nature. (Lit., oral (ku) transmission (den)).

KUMI JO – partner practice with short staves. (Lit., to cross/entwine (kumi) staves (jo)).

KUMI TACHI – partner practice with swords. (Lit., to cross/entwine (kumi) swords (tachi)).

KYU – a system or ranking before one attains black-belt level.

MAAI – the relationship between you and your partner(s) in terms of space and time. (Lit., interval (ma) relationship (ai)).

MAE – forward; front.

MIGI – right. For example, migi hanmi (right hanmi).

NAGE – the partner who executes the technique. (Lit., throw; thrower).

OBI – belt or sash.

OMOTE – front. Moving in front of your partner. See also URA.

O-SENSEI – (Lit., the Great (O) Teacher (Sensei)). Used to refer to the Founder of Aikido, Morihei Ueshiba (1883 - 1969)

RANDORI – a movement exercise used to develop calm and efficient blending with the power and movements of multiple attacks.

SAITO SENSEI – was the longest practicing direct disciple of O-Sensei. He was a ninth degree black belt and taught in Iwama, Japan. Saito Sensei was the doicho of the founder's dojo and guardian of the Aiki Shrine. (1928-2002)

SASOU – to draw out your partners; for example, to make them raise their arms or move forward, and soon. (Lit., to invite, call forth, lure, etc.).

SEIZA – a formal sitting position with the knees and legs folded under the body. Sitting cross-legged is called **AGUA** and is considered more informal. (Lit., correct (sei) sitting (za)).

SEMPAI/KOHAI – a pair of terms describing the relationship between people with more and less experience. Senior (sempai)/Junior (kohai) is a good English rendering. In Japan, how one behaves towards others is dictated largely by one's status in terms of seniority, from martial arts Dojos to school to workplaces.

SENSEI – In Japan, a title used to address or refer to a teacher. (Lit., born (sei) before (sen)).

SHOMEN – the alcove at the front of the Dojo, considered a sacred space, to which we pay respect in Aikido-practice. (Lit., correct (sho) side (men))

SOTO DESHI – students who do not live at the Dojo. (Lit., outside (soto) apprentice (deshi)). See also **UCHI DESHI**.

SUWARI WAZA – sitting techniques. (Lit., sitting (suwari) techniques (waza)).

TACHI DORI – sword (tachi) taking (dori) techniques.

TACHI WAZA – standing techniques. (Lit., standing (tachi) techniques (waza)).

TAIJUTSU – empty handed martial arts techniques which do not involve the use of weapons. (Lit., body (tai) technique (jutsu)).

TAI NO HENKO – one of the three exercises practiced at nearly every Aikido class. Your partner grabs your wrist and you practice blending with the force of the grab and turning off to the side. (Lit., the changing of direction (henko) of the body (tai)).

TAKEMUSU – The martial technique that emerges and harmonizes spontaneously after years and years of repetitive training. The Aikido that springs forth without preconception or intellectual thought. (Lit. martial art (take) and birth/creation (musu)).

TANTO DORI – knife (tanto) taking (dori) techniques.

UCHI DESHI – students who live at the Dojo and train intensively. (Lit., inside (uchi) apprentice (deshi)).

UKE – the partner who is thrown or receives the technique. See also **NAGE**.

UKEMI – the art and skill of rolling, falling, etc. as a means of protecting the body from injury during the execution of Aikido techniques. (Lit., to receive (uke) through the body (mi)).

URA – back; behind. Moving around or behind your partner. See also **OMOTE**.

WAZA – technique or skill.

YUDANSHA – a black-belt holder. (Lit., have (yu) rank (dan) person (sha)).

PHRASES COMMONLY USED IN THE DOJO

DAME – “Bad!” or “Wrong!” or “Mistake!”

DOMO ARIGATO GOZAIMASHITA – “Thank you very much.”

HAI – “Yes.” A convenient answer to use when Sensei gives you a correction or asks you to perform some task.

HAJIME – “Begin!”

MATTE – “Wait!”

MAWATTE – “Turn around!” or “About face!”

ONEGAI SHIMASU – A phrase used to ask a favor of someone, often “Will you please train with me?” (Lit., I humbly make a request).

REI – “Bow!”

SUWATTE – “Sit down!”

TATTE – “Stand up!”

YAME – “Stop!”

YOROSHIKU ONEGAI SHIMASU – A more formal version of “onegai shimasu,” used as the equivalent of “welcome to the Dojo.”

NUMBERS IN JAPANESE

Depending on what is being counted, there is a corresponding Japanese counting system. The table below shows the counting system used most frequently in Aikido as in, for example, counting the movements in weapons Kata.

1 Ichi	11 Jyu-Ichi	21	Ni-Jyu-Ichi
2 Ni	12 Jyu-Ni	22	Ni-Jyu-Ni
3 San	13 Jyu-San	23	Ni-Jyu-San
4 Shi (Yon)	14 Jyu-Shi (Jyu Yon)	24	Ni-Jyu-Shi (Ni-Jyu-Yon)
5 Go	15 Jyu-Go	30	San-Jyu
6 Roku	16 Jyu-Roku	40	Yon-Jyu
7 Shichi (Nana)	17 Jyu-Shichi	50	Go-Jyu
8 Hachi	18 Jyu-Hachi	100	Hyaku
9 Kyu	19 Jyu-Kyu	1000	Sen
10 ju	20 Ni-Jyu	0	Zero

TECHNIQUE STRUCTURE

After demonstrating a technique, Sensei will often say the name of the technique in Japanese. It is essential to memorize which name goes with which techniques. Aikido students usually pick up these terms naturally over time. But, in order to make it a little easier and more rational, we offer the following analysis of the Japanese words used to name techniques.

Generally, technique names are composed of two main parts: the first part describes the type of attack, and the second part indicates the method by which the attack is neutralized.

For Example: Shomenuchi Shihonage

Shomenuchi means front-on (shomen) strike (uchi).

Shihonage means 4-direction (shihon) throw (nage).

In addition, most techniques can be executed by moving either to front or around behind your partner. Techniques moving to the front are called OMOTE (front) WAZA (technique). Techniques moving to the rear are called URA (back) WAZA (technique). Thus, the full name of a typical technique might go something like this:

Shomenuchi Shihonage Ura Waza
Front-on strike 4-direction throw technique.

NAMES OF ATTACKS

Striking Attacks (UCHI, TSUKI)

SHOMEN UCHI – straight-on attacks to the front, usually the head. Like a downward strike with a sword. (*Shomen* means front of the face/mask).

YOKOMEN UCHI – attacks coming from a direction slightly to one side or the other, usually as a “chop” to the side of the head. (*Yokomen* means side of the face/mask).

MUNE TSUKI – a horizontal attack such as a straight punch or a straight thrust with a knife, sword, staff, etc. (*Mune* means chest; *tsuki* means a thrust or stab).

Grabbing or Seizing Attacks (DORI, TORI, SHIME)

KATA TE TORI – grabbing the wrist on the same side, e.g. facing your partner and grabbing their right wrist with your left hand. (*Kata* means on one side; *te* means hand).

GYAKU TE TORI (KOSA TORI) – grabbing the wrist opposite your partner's body, e.g. grabbing their right hand with your right hand. (*Gyaku* means opposite or diagonal; *te* means hand).

RYO TE TORI – grabbing both wrists, one in each hand. (*Ryo* means both or two; *te* means hand.).

MORO TE TORI – using two hands to grab one wrist. (*Moro* means many, multiple, or two; *te* means hand).

KATA DORI – a grab to the same side shoulder. (*Kata* means shoulder).

RYO KATA DORI – grabbing both shoulders, one with each hand. (*Ryo* means two or both).

KATA MENUCHI – grabbing the shoulder with the same side hand and striking the face. (*Kata* means shoulder; *me* means face or mask).

MUNE DORI – grabbing the clothing in the chest area. (*Mune* means chest)

ERI DORI – grabbing the collar, usually from behind. (*Eri* means collar).

HII DORI – grabbing the arm at the elbow. (*Hiji* means elbow).

KUBI SHIME – attempting to choke a person at the throat from behind while holding on to one of the wrists. (*Kubi* means neck; *shime* means to tighten, strangle, or wring).

Additionally, many of these attacks may be done from behind. These are called **USHIRO** (behind) **WAZA** (techniques). For example, **USHIRO RYO KATA DORI** or **USHIRO KUBI SHIME**.

NAMES OF TECHNIQUES

IKKYO – Involves controlling your partner's center through the arm, as well as pinning the arm flat on the mat. (Literally, first teaching or first principle).

NIKKYO – Involves manipulating the wrist and pinning the arm vertically. (Lit., second teaching or second principle).

SANKYO – Involves twisting the wrist and arm in a third way, pinning the arm vertically, and torquing the hand and wrist. (Lit., third teaching or third principle)/

YONKYO – An arm pin involving leverage on the underside of the arm and elbow, while applying pressure to a nerve point there. (Lit., fourth teaching or fourth principle).

GOKYO – Similar to **IKKYO** but with a change in the position of the hands. (Lit., fifth teaching of fifth principle).

KOTE GAESHI – involves throwing the partner by folding the hand back over the wrist. (Lit., small hand (*kote*) cut, turn over (*gaeshi*)).

SHIHO NAGE – a throw in which the partner may be thrown in any direction by stepping under the arm. (Lit., four (*shi*) direction (*ho*) throw (*nage*)).

IRIMI NAGE – a throw involving entering through an attack to get behind your partner and take their balance. (Lit., to enter (*iri*) body (*mi*) throw (*nage*)).

KOSHI NAGE – throwing your partner by rotating their body over the back of your hips. (Lit., hips (*koshi*) throw (*nage*)).

KAITEN NAGE – throwing your partner with their hand moving across their back as if they were a big wheel. (Lit., rotation (*kaiten*) throw (*nage*)).

JUJI GARAMI or **JUJI NAGE** – pinning or throwing your partner by using leverage on their crossed arms. (Lit., cross (*juji*) throw (*nage*)).

TENCHI NAGE – throwing by extending your arms around and behind your partner's body one down towards the mat, the other up towards the ceiling. (Lit., heaven (*ten*) earth (*chi*) throw (*nage*)).

KOKYU NAGE – any sort of throw that relies essentially on blending and flowing with your partner's movement and upsetting their balance, rather than any specific pinning technique. Often used for throws that have no specific name. (Lit., breath (*kokyu*) throw (*nage*)).

DOJO ETIQUETTE

To benefit and enjoy training in Aikido, to create an atmosphere of mutual respect among the students and teachers, and for safety, there are certain rules of etiquette that are followed in the dojo.

Upon entering and leaving the dojo you should do a standing bow towards the shomen.

Bow towards the shomen when stepping on or off the mat.

Class is begun and closed with a formal bow towards the shomen and then the Sensei (Instructor).

You should be on time for class, preferably early; but if you must be late please bow in alone.

During the class the instructor should be addressed as Sensei.

Before beginning and after training with your partner, they should be thanked with a standing or sitting bow, the same also when the teacher gives you instruction.

Please remove all jewelry and keep your toenails and fingernails short.

Make sure your feet are clean before stepping on the mat.

Aikido is more than just a physical form of self-defense. It is a physical, mental and spiritual path for growth and development; therefore the greatest understanding is gained when each motion is done with your whole body, mind and spirit.