

# AIKIDO VOCABULARY

A partial list of terms you will come across in training:

## Aikido

The word 'Aikido' is made up of three Japanese characters: AI – join or harmony, KI - spirit or universal energy, DO - the Way. Thus Aikido is 'the Way of Harmony with Universal Energy.'

## Ai Hanmi

Paired stance where uke and nage each have the same foot forward.

## Ashi Sabaki

Footwork. (tsugi ashi = slide, ayumi ashi = step)

## Atemi

Strike directed at the attacker for purposes of unbalancing or distraction.

## Budo

Martial Way.

## Chushin

Center, especially, the center of one's movement or balance.

## Dan

Black belt rank.

## Do

Way/path.

## Dojo

Literally 'place of the Way.'

## Domo Arigato Gozaimashita

Japanese for 'thank you very much.'

## Doshu

Leader of the Way (currently Ueshiba Moriteru Doshu, grandson of Aikido's founder, Ueshiba Morihei O-Sensei).

## Gyaku Hanmi

Paired stance where uke and nage have the opposite foot forward.

## Hanmi

Triangular stance. (Literally 'half body')

## Hombu Dojo

A term used to refer to the central dojo of an organization. For us, this usually designates Aikido World Headquarters in Tokyo.

## Hidari

Left.

## Irimi

Entering movement.

Kaiso

The Founder of Aikido, Ueshiba Morihei. Also called O-Sensei.

Kamae

A posture or stance. Although 'kamae' generally refers to a physical stance, there is an important parallel in Aikido between one's physical and one's psychological bearing.

Kamiza

A small shrine, especially in an Aikido, generally located in the front of the dojo. One bows in the direction of the kamiza when entering or leaving the dojo, or the mat.

Kata

A 'form' or prescribed pattern of movement. Also 'shoulder'.

Keiko

Training. The literal translation of the characters is 'to study the old'.

Keiko Gi

Training uniform.

Ki

Energy.

Kohai

A dojo member who joined after oneself. (Literally, "after companion")

Kokoro

'Heart or mind.'

Kokyu

Breath.

Kuzushi

The principle of destroying one's partner's balance. In Aikido, a technique cannot be properly applied unless one first unbalances one's partner.

Kyu

Any rank below shodan.

Ma Ai

Proper distancing or timing with respect to one's partner.

Mae

Front, as in mae ukemi or falling forward.

Migi

Right.

Mokuso

Meditation. Practice often begins or ends with a brief period of meditation. The purpose of meditation is to clear one's mind and to develop cognitive equanimity.

Nage

The person being attacked. Also Tori or Shite.

Obi

A belt.

Omote

'The front,' entering to the front.

Onegai shimasu

Literally, 'I make a request.' This is said when initiating practice or asking for instruction.

O-Sensei

Literally, 'Great Teacher,' i.e., Morihei Ueshiba, the Founder of Aikido.

Reigi

Etiquette. Observance of proper etiquette is as much a part of one's training as the practice of techniques. Also Reigi saho.

Sensei

Teacher. It is usually considered proper to address the instructor during practice as 'Sensei' rather than by his/her name. If the instructor is a permanent instructor for one's dojo or for an organization, it is proper to address him/her as 'Sensei' off the mat as well. (Literally, 'born before')

Seiza

Sitting on one's knees.

Sempai

A dojo member who joined before oneself. (Literally, 'before companion')

Shikko

Knee walking.

Shodan

First degree black belt. (Literally 'Beginning Dan').

Shomen

Front or top (of head, body, room, etc).

Soto

Outside.

Tai Sabaki

Body movement.

Taninsugake

Training against multiple attackers.

Tegatana

'Hand sword', i.e. the edge of the hand.

Tenkan

Turning movement.

Tenshin

A movement where Nage moves 45 degrees away from the attack.

Uchi

'Inside.' Also 'strike'.

Ueshiba Kisshomaru  
The son of the Founder of Aikido and Second Aikido Doshu.

Ueshiba Morihei  
The Founder of Aikido.

Ueshiba Moriteru  
The grandson of the Founder and current Doshu.

Ueshiba Mitsuteru  
The great-grandson of the Founder, current Assistant Dojo Cho of Aikido Hombu Dojo.

Uke  
Person attacking and receiving the technique. Role is to provide honest attack.

Ukemi  
Literally 'receiving with the body'. The development of proper ukemi skills is just as important as the development of throwing skills and is no less deserving of attention and effort.

Ura  
'Rear.'

Ushiro  
Backwards or behind, as in ushiro ukemi or falling backwards.

Waza  
Technique.

Yudansha  
Black belt holder.

Zanshin  
Literally 'remaining mind/heart.' Even after an Aikido technique has been completed, one should remain in a balanced and aware state.

### **Aikido Techniques**

Tachi waza  
Standing Technique.

Suwari waza  
Seated Technique. Also ZAGI.

Hanmi handachi waza  
Technique where NAGE is seated and UKE is standing.

Osae waza  
Pinning Technique.

Kansetsu waza  
Joint technique.

Jiyu Waza

Free-style practice of techniques.

Ikkyo

First teaching. Also UDE OSAE (arm pin).

Nikyo

Second teaching. Also KOTE MAWASHI (wrist/forearm rotate).

Sankyo

Third teaching. Also KOTE HINERI (wrist/forearm twist).

Yonkyo

Fourth teaching. Also TEKUBI OSAE (wrist pin).

Goyko

Fifth teaching. Also UDE NOBASHI (arm stretch).

Iriminage

Entering Throw.

Shihonage

Four Way Throw.

Sumi Otoshi

Corner Drop.

Kokyunage

Breath Throw.

Kotegaeshi

Wrist/forearm Reversal.

Kaitennage

Circular Throw.

Tenchinage

Heaven and Earth Throw.

Kokyuho

Breath Method.

### **Aikido Attacks**

Tori/Dori

Grab

Uchi

Strike

Keri/Geri

Kick

Katatedori

One hand grabbing one hand (mirror image).

Kosadori  
One hand grabbing one hand (right to right or left to left).

Morotedori  
Two hands grabbing one hand.

Ryotedori  
Two hands grabbing two hands

Katadori  
Shoulder grab.

Ushirodori  
Grab from behind.

Shomenuchi  
Strike to the front or top of the head.

Yokomenuchi  
Strike to the side of the head.

Tsuki  
Punch or thrust.

### **Counting in Japanese**

One	Ichi
Two	Ni
Three	San
Four	Shi or Yon
Five	Go
Six	Roku
Seven	Shichi
Eight	Hachi
Nine	Kyu or Ku
Ten	Ju
Eleven	Ju-ichi
Twenty	Ni-ju