



# INDIANAPOLIS MARTIAL ARTS CENTER

## *Dojo Regulations / Rules for Training*

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**Note:** *These regulations and rules of training represent the minimum level of conduct expected by members of any traditional Japanese dojo. Remember, how you conduct yourself in the dojo, and while visiting other schools, or attending seminars, reflects not only on you, but also your dojo, instructor(s), organization, and all budoka in your lineage that came before you. As a student of the Indianapolis Martial Arts Center, you are expected to understand and abide by the preceding rules of the dojo and training regulations. **Failure to do so will result in suspension of your membership or expulsion.***

### **General Dojo Regulations:**

- Perform a standing bow upon entering or leaving the dojo.
- Bow when stepping on, or off the mat in the direction of the shomen or kamiza.
- Respect each other irrespective of age, gender, experience, knowledge, likes, dislikes, or physical differences. Learn to respect others, regardless of their differences or personal beliefs.
- Monthly membership dues support the dojo and are a way in which to show gratitude for the teaching received. Always pay your dojo dues early or on time, unless you make special arrangements with the head instructor.
- Don't be late to class, but if you are, change and sit in seiza on the edge of the mat until the instructor gives permission to join the class (you bow from seiza at this time). If the class is a sword class, always perform torei (bow to the sword) prior to joining class.
- The dojo must be swept prior to every class. It is swept up and down from shimoza to shomen, working from left to right from shimoseki to joseki. If the instructor is sweeping, immediately relieve them. Junior students should also take over for more senior students.
- The positions of a traditional dojo are the Shomen, or Kamiza (where shrine or head of the dojo is positioned); the Shimoza (where the students sit, opposite the shomen/kamiza); the Joseki (to the right of the shomen/kamiza); and the Shimoseki (to the left of the shomen/kamiza). The center of the dojo is called the Embujo. The dojo positions are based on the five elements. The Shomen or Kamiza should only be approached by the head instructor.
- Visitors are welcome to sit and watch a class at any time, but they should sit quietly and respectfully. They should not walk around or talk during the opening and closing ceremony, or when the instructor is demonstrating or lecturing. Cell phones or other devices should be turned off. The visitor should refrain from talking to students when they are engaged in training. If a visitor is disrespectful, the instructor or sempai will ask them to leave.

## Rules for Training:

- Bow to your training partners at the beginning and end of practice with the phrase “*onegai shi masu*”.
- The dojo is the place where you train your mind, spirit, and body through the study of budo. Do not discuss topics unrelated to budo while in class.
- Treat all sword substitutes (i.e., bokken, iaito, shinai, etc.) as a shinken. Do not step on or over them.
- When budoka (martial artists) are seated in seiza (formal sitting position), it is customary to walk behind them. If this cannot be done, extend your right hand and bow slightly as you pass.
- Never use or touch another person’s weapons or training items without asking.
- Uniforms (keikogi) should be clean and mended. Weapons should be in good condition and stored in a weapons bag, or placed on a weapons rack when not in use.
- A few minutes before class time you should be warmed up and formally seated in preparation for study.
- When facing the shomen or kamiza, the most senior student in class is positioned along the shimoza farthest to the right (toward joseki) with junior students lining up in order of rank/time-in-grade to the left (toward shimoseki).
- Whoever is teaching is called “sensei” on the mat. The head instructor should **always** be addressed as sensei.
- Wait until after the instructor (sensei) has bowed and taken seiza prior to doing so.
- Specific etiquette applies for each art practiced in our dojo. Directions for Hajime no Saho (opening) and Owari no Saho (closing) ceremonies will be given in class by the instructor or sempai.
- The only proper way to sit on the mat is in seiza. If you have a knee injury you may sit cross-legged, but never with legs outstretched, or reclining, and never leaning against walls or posts.
- When sensei is demonstrating or talking to the class, you sit in seiza unless they give permission to stand. If sensei uses you as an uke (partner) and he breaks to talk to the class, you take a knee.
- Pay attention when the instructor or sempai (senior students) offers advice or makes corrections to your technique. Acknowledge afterwards with an enthusiastic “*hai*” or “*arigato gozai masu*” and a bow.
- Make any corrections to your technique that the instructor or sempai gives you. Do not simply return to practicing the same way.

- If you have a question during class, raise your hand, or go directly to the instructor and bow respectfully (standing bow). Never call the instructor over to you.
- Do not practice unrelated techniques at any time during class. Any deviation from what is being taught or general disruptions will not be tolerated.
- Do not leave the mat during class without the instructor's approval, except in the case of injury or illness.
- Keep talking on the mat to an absolute minimum.
- No eating, drinking, smoking, or gum chewing on or off the mat during formal practice.
- No jewelry should be worn during practice, including rings, earrings, or piercings.
- Never drink alcoholic beverages while still wearing your practice uniform (keikogi).
- Respect those more experienced. Never argue about technique or engage in horseplay or competitive matches while training.
- Respect those less experienced or new to the dojo. Abuse of authority or technical/physical advantage will not be tolerated.
- If you understand a technique and are working with someone who does not, you may lead that person through it. Do not attempt to correct or instruct your training partner unless you are authorized to do so.