

Judo training and spirit

Part 1

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Basic judo concepts

Principles and aims of Kodokan Judo

Physical education and training

The ways in which persons train their bodies are many and varied, but they fall into two general categories: sports and gymnastics.

It is difficult to generalise about sports, since there are so many different types, but they share one important characteristic: they are competitive in nature.

By contrast, gymnastics rate highly as physical education. Practice is not injurious to the body, is generally beneficial to health, and promotes the balanced development of the body.

Three types of training

- Tandoku-renshu (practice by oneself): Practicing movements without a partner.
- Sotai Renshu (Partner practice): Practicing techniques with another person.
- Shiai (competition): Competitive form of judo that is held under strict rules and regulations.

Training the mind

Both kata and randori are forms of mental training, but of the two, randori is the more effective because randori in to engage in a complex mental-physical relation between contestants.

In randori, one must search out the opponent's weaknesses and be ready to attack with all the resources at his disposal the moment the opportunity presents itself, without violating the rules of judo. Practicing randori tends to make the judoka earnest, sincere, thoughtful, cautious and deliberate in action. At the same time, he or she learns to value and make quick decisions.

Ethical training

Judo can help people who are easily angered by teaching them to control their temper.

Judo can help people who lack confidence by teaching them to focus on finding the best possible course of action and that worrying is a waste of time.

Judo can help people who always blame others for their problems by teaching them to take responsibility for their actions and choices.

Aesthetics

Doing judo brings many pleasures. It feels good to exercise muscles and nerves, and it's really satisfying to master new moves. There is also the beauty of performing or witnessing graceful, meaningful techniques. This is the essence of the aesthetic side of judo.

Practice regularly

The more you practice, the better you will become.

Find a good training partner

A good training partner will help you to improve your technique and conditioning.

Be patient

It takes time to develop skills in judo.

Have fun!

Judo is a great way to get exercise and learn self-defence.

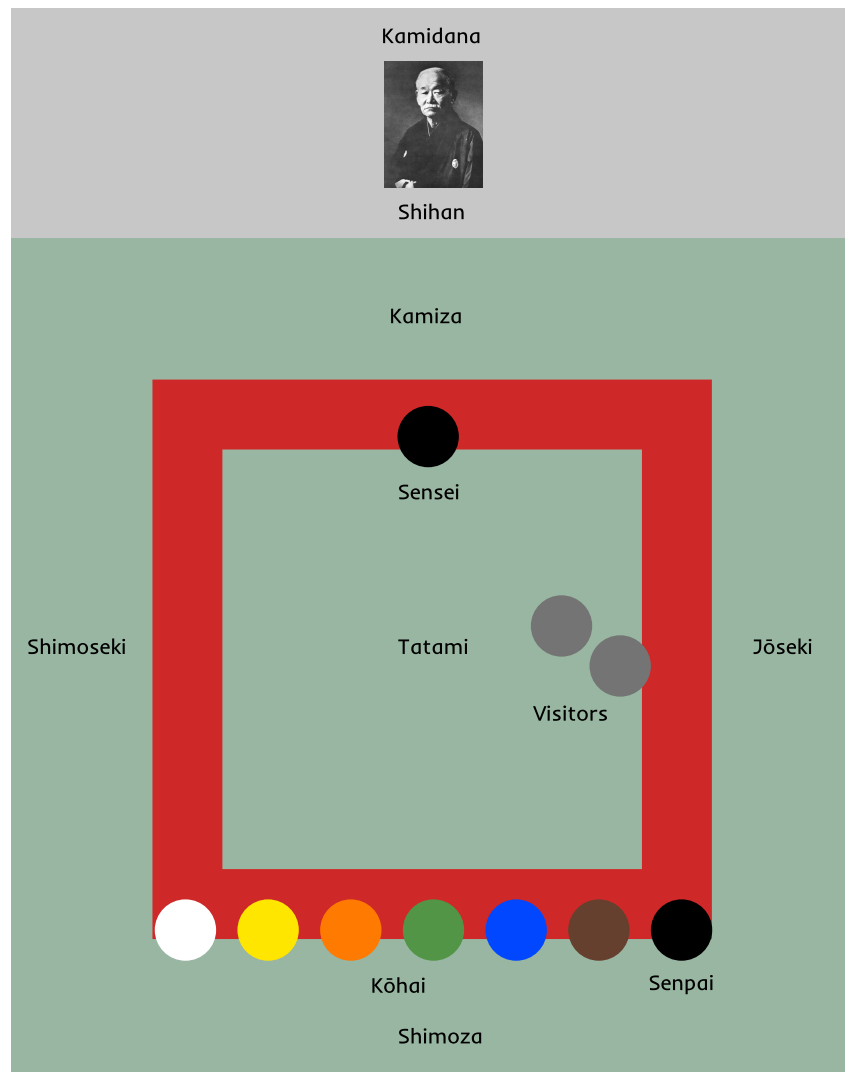
Practice to win is an error

Practice for practice's sake, not for the sake of winning.

Practice with beginners

Practice with someone poorer at judo offers the opportunity to perfect self technique while taking falls to help teaching techniques.

The Dojo



Shimoseki (下座)	"lower seat", is the term for the lower ranking seat in a dojo.
Shimoza (下座)	describe the seat of a junior student or someone of lower rank.
Jōseki (上座)	"higher seat" or "main seat", is the term for the higher ranking seat in a dojo.
Kamiza (神座)	"god's seat" or "altar" in a dojo.
Kamidana (神棚)	"god shelf" or "household shrine" is a small shelf on which a kamiza in Japanese home.
Shihan (師範)	means "master teacher" and is a high-ranking title in traditional Japanese martial arts.
Sensei (先生)	means "teacher" and is a respectful term used to address teachers or instructors.
Senpai (先輩)	means "senior" or "elder" and is a term used to refer to someone who is more senior than oneself.
Kōhai (後輩)	means "junior" or "younger", is a term used to refer to a student who has been practicing judo for a shorter period of time than another student.

The Judogi

The uniform

The judogi is a uniform composed of the uwagi (jacket), a shitagi (pant) and the obi (belt).

Wearing the judogi

To wear the pant, identify the position of the lace hook, step into the pant with the hook at the front. Make sure the judo pants are snug but not too tight. Tie the lace on self preferred side of the hook. That is to avoid loosing up the knot while practicing.

Put the jacket on in the normal way, left side folded to the right then right side folded to the left.

The classic way to wear the belt is to extends it the center across the abdomen at waist level and out to the front. Begin the knot by crossing one end over the other end. Pass one end of the belt between the back and the jacket. Finish tying the knot. Tie it as flat flat as possible.

Wear it with dignity, wash it regularly.

Folding the judogi after practice

photos to come

The Judogi

The connexion

Care

The choice of a judogi is a personal one, influenced by various factors that reflect one's preferences and style. For instance, material plays a significant role. 100% cotton offers durability, while polycotton provides comfort.

When selecting a size, it's important to consider shrinkage. For 100% cotton judogi, a slight increase of 5 to 7 cm is recommended to accommodate shrinkage after the initial washes. Material thickness also influences the judogi's characteristics. A stiffer judogi provides greater resistance to gripping, potentially hindering an opponent's hold. However, it also adds weight.

The color choice – white or blue – has evolved over time. In my early days, white was the standard for training, while blue was exceptionally worn by instructors for visibility purposes aside from competitions. Today, preference is more open, with some preferring blue due to its perceived lower visibility of dirt and grime.

Upon receiving a new judogi, always try it on first to ensure a proper fit. After that, proceed to wash it thoroughly in hot water (60°C for 100% cotton only) using only soap, avoiding fabric softener. This first wash helps to set the fibers and shrink the judogi slightly. After drying it completely, notice the change in the fit and feel of the judogi. The second wash, again in hot water (60°C for 100% cotton only) with soap only, further sets the fibers and ensures the judogi maintains its shape. This second wash also removes any lingering creases or wrinkles from the first wash.

With the judogi now properly shrunk and shaped is ready to hit the mats. Wash the judogi every 2 or 3 training sessions to maintain its cleanliness and prevent odor. Hot water (60°C) and soap only are still the recommended cleaning methods, as fabric softener can alter the judogi's material and affect its performance.

Blue judogi

The origin of the blue judogi can be traced back to the 1980s, when the International Judo Federation (IJF) introduced the practice of using two different-colored gi (white and blue) in international competitions. The contrast between the two colors made it easier for referees and judges to track the action and make accurate decisions. Thus, helping to eliminate any confusion between the two competitors, particularly during close calls or complex maneuvers. Eventually, it enhanced viewing experience for spectators.

Honour and spiritual meaning

The white gi is a symbol of tradition and respect, and it is still the most common color of gi worn by judokas. The white gi, introduced by Jigoro Kano, is designed to be simple, humble, and pure, and it reflects the seriousness of the practitioner. The gi ensures that everyone is dressed the same, everyone is equal. It allows colours for the ranking system since the only way to stand out is to excel.

The condition of the gi is a reflexion of the state of the martial artist mind. The white gi is simple, humble and pure it should reflect these qualities on the judoka. It also encourages maintaining cleanliness and respect toward the dojo.

A practical reason for a judoka to wear white is the same reason nurses started wearing white in the 1900s. We wear white in the dojo so bloods stand out and injuries can be immediately attended to.

The judogi is a judoka's first partner. From its stiffness, its durability and also the thickness of its lapels, the judogi is here to protect and help the judoka in its practice. Therefore, one should respect and take care of self judogi.

The mindset when one puts on self judogi, the integrity – doing what is right even when no one is looking – with which one trains and seeks to improve, in the end, has a profound impact on self development and on self judo.

The belt of a judoka does not only represent a rank but also one's commitment to the martial art, one's respect for their teachers and fellow judokas, and self connection to the history and tradition of judo. Tying the obi is a ritual that signifies self dedication to practicing judo and self willingness to learn and grow. The obi is a constant reminder of the principles of judo, such as respect, discipline, and perseverance.

When a judoka enters the dojo, one bows to their teachers and fellow judoka, and one always bows when tying and untying self obi. This act of respect is a reflection of humility and understanding of the importance of etiquette in the martial arts.

The awarding of belts up to brown is left to the exclusive discretion of the Sensei. It is he who follows each practitioner in one's progress and commitment to the art. A belt is not a right, but it rewards work and technical skills. Therefore, the obi is passed down for generations as the unbroken chain of Sensei and students. It is a privileged and unique relationship with Sensei and judo.

To maintain the respect and dignity of the judogi, one should only wear it within the space of the dojo. The outside world is a messy place, and one doesn't want to bring its dirt onto the mats. After a vigorous training session, we are covered in sweat and grime, and one wouldn't want to subject others to self body odor or the imprint of my dirty judogi. It's a matter of respect for our fellow judoka and the purity of our practice to keep our judogi clean and confined to the dojo.

Etiquette in the dojo

Saluting

Before and after practicing judo or engaging in a match, opponents bow to each other.

Bowing is an expression of gratitude and respect. In effect, you are thanking your opponent for giving you the opportunity to improve your technique.

Bowing is done either **sitting** or **standing**.

Bowing is marking a beginning and an end, it is understanding the need to respect rules because without rules, the exchange becomes impossible and anarchy is ready to take over.

When we step on the tatami, we have an obligation to be aware of others and to respect them for who they are and what they have lived. It is because we bow that we can express our inner nature, demonstrate our physical worth and apply our mental capacity, to perfect our soul steadfastness, without ever finding ourselves in the role of victim.

If the bow is therefore a framework for the practice of judo, it also influences it. Once we bow to each other, we enter a world where all blows are not allowed, in a universe where the opponent is as important as the self. To mark this breathing time, is to show humility despite the intensity of the fight that is ahead.

In that sense, the bow of the judoka is much more than a barrier gesture. Bowing has the power to allow us to express ourselves completely, in accordance with the rules and with total freedom of movement and intention.

Bowing is an expression of gratitude and respect. In effect you are thanking your opponent for giving you the opportunity to improve your technique.

Jigoro Kano, Founder of Kodokan Judo

Examples of salutes for judokas

Moment	Stepping in or out of the tatami	Before and after a practice	Greeting, acknowledging, expressing gratitude
Who	Shihan and the dojo	Instructor, uke or fellow judoka	All
Meaning	<p>To enter shinto shrine, basically holy land, to practice by the judo rules.</p> <p>To remind that self ego remains off the tatami.</p> <p>Pay respect to Shihan and the dojo.</p>	<p>By this posture of respect, with empty and free hands, without defence, we become aware of the other and show our consideration, demonstrating self-control.</p> <p>Show gratitude for the teaching, the partnership and the contribution to self improvements</p>	<p>To bow to each other is to illustrate in a simple and powerful way the bond of brotherhood that links all judoka.</p>

Etiquette in the dojo

Respect, courtesy, and consideration for others

Judokas are expected to exhibit proper decorum in the dojo. The dojo is not the place for idle talk or frivolous behaviour. In practice or in a match, students should go all out, and when resting they should watch others practice; by doing so they may learn something.

Eat-ing, drinking and smoking are not tolerated in the dojo, and students are urged to keep it neat and clean.

Bowing is marking a beginning and an end, it is understanding the need to respect rules because without rules, the exchange becomes impossible and anarchy is ready to take over.

Personal hygiene is also important. Judokas should be clean and keep their fingernails and toenails short to avoid injuring others. The judogi should be washed regularly. To get the most out of training, one should always practice moderation in eating, drinking and sleeping.

Respect the dojo

Keep the dojo clean. Proactively contribute to its maintenance.

Be tidy and respect practitioners' space in the changing area.

Bow to Shihan, Sensei and the dojo when entering and leaving the tatami.

Maintaining composure and sportsmanship

Respect others

Be quiet to respect the teaching of Sensei and the practice of others.

During line up, sit down on your knees by the visitors area if you are on the tatami.

Gently explain judo rules to non judoka. (Ex: Non stepping with shoes on the tatami)

Personal hygiene

Judoka work in contact with each others.

Keep your fingernails, toenails, beard, underwear and gi clean.

Do not wear anything else than your judogi to prevent injuring others.

Mind your judogi and show respect to others by wearing it in the dojo only. Outside is dirty, don't bring dirt in. After practice you are sweaty, the world does not need your odour or body print.
