

DOJO ETIQUETTE

Courtesy and respect are key elements in karate training and conduct. How we act is how others perceive us. Here are some general rules of conduct:

1. Bow upon entering and leaving the Dojo. This should be accompanied by an effort to change to a more serious and focused attitude. (The dojo is any place we practice, even if it were an open field.)
2. Treat the Dojo with respect. Help other students clean the floor if needed. Do not bring food, drinks, or items that might spill, into the dojo. If you notice a mess, clean it up even if you did not make it.
3. The instructor is always addressed as "Sensei". It is Japanese for "one who has passed this way before" or "teacher". The most senior student is addressed as "Sempai".
4. Adhere to the training schedule and try not to be late. However, if the delay is due to circumstances beyond your control, join the class, and make the Sensei aware of the reason at the end of the class.
5. If you are late and the class has begun, stop at the door, kneel in the Seiza position, or stand straight with the feet together, and await acknowledgement from the Sensei or Sempai before joining the class.
6. Similarly, if you have to leave the class early, advise the Sensei before the class starts. Then, at a logical break in the training, move to the door, standing with feet together, and await Sensei's acknowledgment before leaving.
7. A similar procedure is used if one unexpectedly needs to leave the class (for illness, toilet, etc.)
8. When the Sensei enters the dojo, the students should recognize him with "Oss" and/or a Rei (bow). This is a sign of respect that your Sensei deserves.
9. Give respect to all karate participants, whatever the grade or age. Bow to Dan grades in order of seniority.
10. Always keep your training Gi clean and tidy.
11. When class begins, line up quickly, with lower ranks to the left. Form a straight line with the person on your right. Face front.
12. When the Sempai calls for "Mokuso" (meditation), close your eyes, breathe deeply from the lower abdomen, and try to achieve concentration.
13. There should be no idle talking during class. It is disrespectful, and distracting to the Sensei and other participants.
14. When you are listening to Sensei making an explanation during training, stand quietly and attentively, with the hands at the side or behind. Never lean against the wall, or place hands on the hips. This shows disrespect. Acknowledge the Sensei's instructions with "Oss Sensei".
15. Make your maximum effort during class.
16. Do not chew gum during class.
17. Keep your finger and toe nails short to prevent injury to other participants. Hands should be clean.
18. Do not wear jewelry in the dojo. If rings cannot be removed, they must be taped to prevent injury to others.
19. It is customary for all visitors and spectators to stand while the class lines up and bows at the beginning and ending of class.
20. Remember that training is not only in the dojo. No unnecessary violence inside or outside the dojo.