

Welcome to Torbay Aikido.

We are pleased to welcome you to our Aikido community.

Aikido is an inexhaustible source of wonder and enjoyment, but the practice may be very different from anything you have ever done before. The only way to understand Aikido is through physical practice, but this guide will help you begin to develop an understanding of Aikido and the way we practice the art. It will also provide answers to some of the questions that may arise for you as you observe Aikido or begin the practice of Aikido. Once you start practicing, don't feel that you have to memorize the information in this beginner's handbook. It is here to help you, just in case you have some questions. If you have any questions about what you are doing, seeing or feeling as you enter into the world of Aikido practice, ask. Ask the advanced students, or ask the instructors. Asking questions will help you understand what you are practicing.

AIKIDO is a modern Japanese martial art especially suited to the needs of today. It is a non-violent form of self-defense and a discipline of mind/body awareness and integration. Aikido defense techniques consist primarily of joint locks and throws and are based on receiving the attacker with compassion and going along with the power of the attack to defeat aggression. Aikido is not a tool for "winning." There are no matches or competitions. Its smooth, circular, and flowing techniques use body wisdom and inner energy rather than requiring great muscular power and speed. Aikido can be practiced and enjoyed by anyone regardless of age, size or strength. Aikido is an enjoyable learning adventure carried out in a mutually supportive atmosphere. Because students move and learn at their own pace, Aikido is an effective form of exercise and relaxation that people can continue for their whole life.

Aikido offers a practical and effective form of self-defense that aims at protecting yourself without hurting another human being. The goal of Aikido is to learn to move and live in a state of power, gentleness, freedom, and harmony.

Aikido is

- Non-violent self-defense
- Non-competitive movement practice
- Compassionate conflict resolution
- Mind/body awareness and integration
- Relaxation and good exercise
- Beautiful flowing movement
- Fun

AIKIDO

THE WAY OF HARMONIOUS ENERGY

AIKIDO: A Brief Etymology

The word **AIKIDO** is composed of three Sino-Japanese ideographs:



ai, meaning harmony or blending;

ki, indicating the universal life force or energy of the universe; and

do, which means a road or path, and can imply a way or life.

Thus, among its many nuances, is the meaning of a way of life in harmony with the natural life forces of the universe.

AI may be seen as a roof that shelters two other components. The horizontal line is the number “one” and also means a single unit. The square was originally a circle that was also used to indicate a group. The ideograph is a picture of single-family group in its house. Thus, the meaning came to mean, “**to match**” or “**to blend**” harmoniously like the members of a family under the same roof. **KI** has two parts. The upper portion shows three lines that formerly rose vertically from the forth at the left. These represent steam rising from a surface. Without the lower portion this shape is still a ‘picture’ of steam rising from the water or earth. The lower part is the character for rice and displays the grains assembled on a central stalk. For the ancient Chinese, steam rising from cooked rice was the very substance of life because without taking in this ‘**breath of life**’ one would starve. Over time the meaning broadened and ki became a symbol of **vitality** or strength and came to be used in words implying **will**, intention, and **essence**. In oriental philosophy, it came to represent the fundamental energy of creation, the pervading energy of the universe, the very **life force** itself. **DO** also has two parts. The right half shows two lines over another, perhaps eyes and a mouth. The bottom portion is the character for the “self”. When used independently, this combined shape is a picture of the head over the body connected by the “neck”. The curved part at the left with the long tail is actually the character for the foot. The complete character, then, shows the neck supported by the feet. ‘One takes one’s neck down the “**road**” with the feet’ is a story used by children to remember the meaning of this character. As the character began to be used philosophically, it took on the nuance of taking your life into your hands and committing yourself to a particular **path** or vocation. For over a thousand years this word has been used to symbolize the all-encompassing path of religious or moral commitment -- one’s chosen “**way of life**”.

WHAT A TYPICAL AIKIDO CLASS IS LIKE

There are many combinations of attacks and defense techniques to practice. Underlying that practice is the study of body awareness and movement and the study of conflict and harmony. Every Aikido class is different, but there are some typical patterns that you will experience in all the Aikido classes.

Each class will start with warm ups of some kind. These may differ for each class, but there will always be some slow stretching to get the body ready for more vigorous movement. After warm ups, the class will generally move to slow practice of Aikido techniques. This gives people the opportunity to begin moving and centering themselves before having to undertake vigorous practice and harder falls. Once people have begun to get into the flow of the movement, the instructor will have people speed up the movement. Finally as people begin doing full Aikido movement, the practice may take off in different directions.

The instructor will choose the techniques to practice in the class. He may look at different defenses for a single attack or at different attacks that a single defense may work with. Sometimes the organizing idea in a class will be a movement or energy theme. For example, the class may examine how a given spiral of movement shows up in different defense techniques, how the same movement pattern occurs in sword work and unarmed Aikido, or how an energy quality of expansiveness can affect a variety of movements. Aikido is not rote practice of unvarying movements. A unique and important part of Aikido is the process of exploration and personal discovery — both of the nature and meaning of the defense techniques, and of your own personal style of movement and awareness. Important elements to explore are your responses to pressure and the ways you interact with your practice partners.

COMMON QUESTIONS ABOUT AIKIDO

Aikido is completely new for most people, something unlike anything they have ever done in their lives. Most people have questions and anxieties about beginning Aikido. Most of the common questions have simple answers.

- 1) **What kind of shape do I have to be in?** Aikido practice can be tailored to meeting your needs and abilities, so you don't have to be in good shape to start.
- 2) **Do I have to be big and strong to do Aikido?** No, Aikido techniques depend on softness and efficiency of movement, not sheer bulk or strength.
- 3) **Is Aikido good exercise?** Yes, it definitely is, but you will start off practicing slowly and get more vigorous as you learn how to do the movements safely.
- 4) **Are injuries common?** No. Since Aikido is non-competitive and since the techniques are designed to be non-violent, there are relatively few injuries in Aikido.
- 5) **Am I too old to start practicing?** Aikido can be practiced and enjoyed safely by people of any age. If you have any questions about specific medical conditions, check with your doctor.
- 6) **Won't the advanced students be irritated at having to practice with a beginner?** No they won't. We change partners frequently. Everyone practices with everyone else. Advanced students can learn from beginners, and the willingness to help beginners is part of the spirit of Aikido.
- 7) **Is there a religious component to Aikido?** No there is not. There is an underlying philosophy of respect for life, but no religious practices. The founder of Aikido was devoutly religious and expressed his understanding of Aikido in his religious terms, but that is not part of Aikido as such.
- 8) **Do I have to speak Japanese or memorize a lot of Japanese vocabulary?** No. There are Japanese practice terms that are part of Aikido, but they will gradually seep into your memory as you hear them over and over again.
- 9) **How long does it take to get a black belt?** It may take around six to ten years. However, it really depends on how often you practice, how athletic you are, and whether you are ready to deeply examine your movements. Everyone should practice at their own, pace, and the black belt will come when it does.
- 8) **Can I use Aikido to defend myself?** Aikido is a very powerful and effective self-defense art. However, this question is essentially unanswerable. Whether you can defend yourself depends on who will be attacking you and how long you will have been studying. If you have practiced Aikido for three years and someone who has practiced Karate for twenty-five years attacks you, you will probably not be successful in defending yourself. Or you may surprise yourself and succeed.

PRACTICE INFORMATION

PRACTICE ATTIRE

Most students wear a keikogi, the loose, white karate or judo uniform. The judo uniform is the heavy quilted one, and the karate uniform is the plain fabric one. Beginners are welcome to wear any clean, loose clothes that have long sleeves and long trousers.

CLEARING UP

After class, everyone participates in clearing the dojo and putting the mats away. This is not just for reasons of health and appearance, but it is about creating a community feeling for the importance of this practice space in our lives.

INJURIES

Injuries are rare in Aikido. However, if you are injured, make sure to inform the instructor, both of the injury and the circumstances which led to the injury. Make sure to seek appropriate medical care when needed. Be careful not continue to train with an injury when such training would exacerbate the injury or slow healing.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

For safety reasons, you must remove rings, jewelry and such. It is important that you trim your finger and toe nails short. You are responsible not only for your own health and safety but also for the health and safety of your training partners. If you know or suspect that you have any illness which might affect or infect others, or which might impair your ability to train safely, you have the obligation to refrain from training until you are not a risk to others or yourself.

DOJO ETIQUETTE

As a Japanese martial art, Aikido has inherited some aspects of that Asian culture, most noticeably the bow. Aikido makes use of the bow as a gesture of commitment and respect. It is not a form of worship. It is more like a salute. When you enter and leave the dojo (the practice hall), stop at the door and bow to the shomen (the front of the room). Likewise, when you get on and off mat, bow to the shomen. You bow to your practice partner before and after practicing together, and you bow to Sensei (the instructor) before and after he begins to work with you. You should be on the mat, ready to practice a few minutes before the class starts. For the last few minutes before class, you should sit quietly and focus your mind. We start class with a bow. Teachers and students all bow together to the shomen, as a gesture of our working together in Aikido toward the goal of self-understanding and universal harmony. Then the teacher turns toward the students, and the teacher and students bow toward each other and say "Onegai shimasu", which means "I request the favour (of your instruction/cooperation in training)". The instructor bows toward the students as a gesture of respect for their wishing to learn, and the students' bow toward the instructor as a gesture of respect for the teacher's sharing of knowledge. Then class starts. If you're late to class, wait quietly at the edge of the mat until advised to come on, then do a sitting bow to the Shomen, and enter into the practice. When you are on the mat, there are two acceptable ways to sit. The preferred way to sit is in seiza (kneeling, sitting on your heels). Sitting cross-legged is also acceptable if you cannot sit seiza. Sitting seiza is safest in that you can move from that position if someone is thrown toward you, and seiza (as you will experience) promotes mental stability and alertness. Sitting cross-legged (upright, without slumping) is also safe and alert. Please do not sprawl with your legs out or sit back leaning against the wall. At the end of class, the teacher and students bow toward the shomen and then toward each other. The students say either "Thank you" or "Domo Arigato Gozai Mashita", which means, "I am very much/humbly obliged to you."

SEMPAI/KOHAI

Sempai are students senior to you, and kohai are students junior to you. In Aikido, it is traditional for sempai to take responsibility for helping kohai. Before and after class you can approach the senior students for help with technique and questions about your practice. It isn't an imposition to ask sempai for help. It is part of the tradition of sharing and helping in Aikido. And when you are a sempai, you will pay back your sempai by helping your kohai.

SENSEI

Sensei is the Japanese word for "teacher." However, it means more than just "teacher." It literally means "born before" and carries with it a feeling of respect toward those who have walked the path of wisdom before you and are your guides now. It is appropriate to address the instructors as "sensei" on the mat. After sensei offers corrections or help during practice, it is appropriate to bow and say thank you.

AIKIDO AS PHYSICAL EXERCISE

In order to improve physical condition, an overload exercise must be employed, that is, some exercise which places a greater than normal stress on the body. Aikido offers the opportunity to get good physical exercise, but for safety and effectiveness you have to know your limits and pace your practice to fit your needs. Aikido practice can be gentle and mild or very vigorous and strenuous. If at any point during practice or after it you feel dizzy or nauseated, you have been practicing too hard and you should slow down your practice. If there is any question of possible medical contraindications to an exercise program, you should consult a doctor and schedule a health exam.

CENTERED MOVEMENT

Aikido is about moving and being centered. You will hear a lot about this, but some basic ideas will help you understand this key Aikido concept. There are two basic aspects of centering practices, emptying out and filling up. Emptying out is the process of letting go of rigid patterns. Filling up is the process of enlivening the mind body with relaxed strength. Emptying out is releasing energy blocks, and filling up is energy extension. The basic stance in Aikido is "hanmi" the half-body or T-stance. The principles of centered movement can be described in terms of this particular posture. However, being centered really refers to the quality or feel of movement rather than to superficial physical position. Though you will not always be in the basic stance position, you should discover its meaning and maintain its feel. The basic Aikido posture includes the following:

- Head erect. Eyes level and vision expanded.
- Back vertical.
- Shoulders relaxed and even.
- Belly relaxed. Hips even.
- Arms in an open curve.
- Hands and fingers open.
- Knees not locked.
- Feet in Hanmi in full contact with the floor and with equal weight on each.
- Power comes from the legs and hips and is channeled through the spinal column to the arms and hands. Every part of the body is equally involved in every movement.
- Alert and relaxed awareness of yourself and your surroundings.

The energy qualities of Aikido are called "Center" and can be described in terms of a balance and unification of all qualities.

OVERLY SOFT

Limp
 Weak
 Fearful
 Indecisive
 Submissive
 Spaced out
 Dull
 Sloppy
 Leaden

CENTERED

relaxed/firm
 loving/powerful
 careful/determined
 flexible/resolute
 following/leading
 all-embracing/focused
 calm/alert
 casual/precise
 rooted/light

OVERLY HARD

rigid
 brutal
 angry
 fixated
 domineering
 clutching
 keyed up
 stiff
 flighty

AIKIDO PRACTICE

Aikido practice takes years to mature. The essence of Aikido practice is a process of self remembering and self-examination, and it is in that process that you will move closer to centered movement.

THE NATURE OF TECHNIQUE

A difficulty that often arises for beginners is the nature of *kata* and the meaning of Aikido defense techniques. *Kata* is prearranged form, and most Aikido practice is *kata*. Practicing a *kata* with a partner means that there is an agreement about what the attack will be and what the defense will be. It means that the attacker has agreed in advance to “lose”. However, the attack and the defense must still be sincere and effective. If either is empty form without sincere combat intent, the practice becomes worthless. It may become limp repetition or empty physical force, but it won’t be Aikido. In sincere practice, two partners are trying to create together the physical and energetic experience of real harmonizing with an attack. In actual combat, the attacker will certainly be sincere, but s/he will actively try to prevent that harmonizing. In actual combat, the perceptive and Centered Aikidoka will harmonize with the attack, blend with it, lead it and defeat it. In combat, the Aikidoka supplies all the harmony for both people. In practice each person contributes half the harmony a difficulty that often arises in practice is that of forgetting to focus on self-observation. Real Aikido practice focuses on development of a fullness of spirit and body and an awareness of harmony in movement. Correct practice focuses not simply on throwing the attacker but on observing and improving the details of one’s own breathing, energy, and movement. People who are strong can often do good physical movements and make the defense techniques work and yet not be participating in true self-observation and inner work. Simply because a technique works effectively does not mean that it is good Aikido. The flip side of this problem is the experience of practicing sincerely and correctly yet finding that your technique won’t get the attacker down. People often abandon Aiki at that point in favor of physical force simply because force “works”. Just remember that correct practice will eventually produce effective defense techniques, but that may take time. Physical force is simpler than Aiki, but much more limited. In the long run, it is better to practice a more Centered technique that doesn’t work than to do a less Centered technique that “works”. It takes time and practice to develop Aikido skill, and it takes lots of time and practice to develop enough skill so that one’s defense techniques can be used effectively against someone who is bigger and stronger. It takes much more skill to perceive and harmonize with an attacker than it does to control her/him on the basis of size and strength.

MEANINGFUL PRACTICE

Aikido is not practiced solely for the purpose of learning how to perform effective defense techniques. The real meaning of Aikido lies in extending the principles of Aikido into everyday life. Aikido techniques exist for the purpose of giving you a context within which to practice self-observation and improvement. What is the real problem being addressed in Aikido practice? The real problem is fear and anger and the spiritual isolation and alienation created by fear and anger. When the attacker attacks, we harden ourselves and separate ourselves from him or her. Aikido techniques must be done lovingly to be combat effective. The effort in Aikido practice is to remember to observe yourself as you do the techniques and create an inner sense of power, compassion and expansiveness as the foundation for the outer defense technique. That is real Aikido practice, and if you work on that, you will find Aikido affecting your whole life.

NON-VIOLENCE

It is important to differentiate force, even destructive force, from violence. We can define violence as behavior motivated by fear, anger, and the desire to hurt and demean. That would mean that it is possible to fight to protect yourself or another, using force, in a non-violent way. That is the first aim of Aikido practice. If you fight with fear and hatred in your body, you establish a mind/body habit which weakens you. Fighting with love and respect for your enemy, because there is no other option than fighting, is altogether different. At this time in the history of our world, it is important to move beyond habits of violence. We will destroy ourselves and the whole world if we use violent force. But in learning to be capable of using non-violent force to protect ourselves, we become capable of finding non-violent *non-force* ways of handling challenges. It is human to react to a threat by lashing out violently to destroy what is threatening us. In being touched by an “enemy” in Aikido class, we have the opportunity to either react in the spirit of hurtfulness or root out the desire to hurt. Without the attack/defense interaction as a practice format, the seeds of hurtfulness would lie dormant within us, only to sprout when we are really attacked. In class practice, we find these seeds, sprout them, uproot them, and deliberately construct the mind body state of power and love. And hopefully we will react more humanely when it's for real. The ultimate aim of Aikido practice is the ability to find loving, constructive ways of overcoming threats without having to fight at all.

COMMON CHALLENGES

Every student is encouraged to practice at their own pace and level. Beginners are helped to go slowly and practice at a level which is safe and appropriate. However, many beginners will experience some common difficulties that can be part of starting Aikido. The first difficulty is simply being a beginner. Everything will seem strange and difficult, and you will feel clumsy and out of place. Don't worry. Beginners are supposed to be beginners. The advanced people will welcome the opportunity to help you with your practice, just as they were helped when they were beginners. Beginners often feel uncomfortable being attacked or acting the role of the attacker. However, the attack/defense process is a model for all of life's challenges, and learning to handle feelings of discomfort in Aikido is a way of finding harmony in all of life's difficult moments. In Aikido, the attack is a gift which allows us to practice and grow. There is no ill will in the attack or the defense. Some beginners have an opposite difficulty: they feel that Aikido practice is unrealistic. In order to be safe, Aikido must be “unrealistic” to some extent. Aikido practice is *kata* — that is, pre-arranged

attack/defense movement routines. Kata are meant to create a safe practice situation in which you can learn the basics, so that you have general patterns which you can intuitively and spontaneously modify to fit the specific requirements of a real attack. Kata are not meant to be actual combat. Some beginners have a hard time accepting corrections to their techniques. It is hard for people to realize that such criticism is not belittlement but is offered as a gift and comes from a respectful desire to help people understand and improve. This is important. Mistakes are an opportunity to learn, and you will learn best if you enjoy discovering your mistakes. Try not to be ashamed of making mistakes. During practice, the instructor will ask people to help demonstrate the techniques to be practiced. Of course, someone has to act the role of the attacker in order for the instructor to demonstrate the defense. Many people feel shy about demonstrating in front of the class, but everyone gets used to it. It is an opportunity to participate and learn, but you can always ask not to be used if it makes you too uncomfortable. A few people may find that being attacked in Aikido parallels or brings up actual attacks they have experienced. If you feel this kind of discomfort, don't hesitate to ask the teacher for help. Another area of confusion has to do with individual learning styles. Everyone is different, and each person learns and teaches in her or his unique way. You may find that some styles of practice don't seem to "speak" to you and you may feel like avoiding them. Sometimes it is right to follow your intuition and practice the way you know you need to. However, if you avoid everything that is unfamiliar and confusing, you will miss out on new possibilities. Sometimes it is right to practice what you are shown, even when you don't understand it or agree with it. Normally, proper class etiquette is to practice respectfully whatever is being taught in class. If you are engaged in a practice that you feel is more than you can handle, you have options. In most situations, the problem can be solved by asking your partner to "go easier." But if this does not help, you can simply excuse yourself and move to practice with another partner or sit out the particular practice that is difficult for you. At the next immediate opportunity, you can resume normal practice. If there is some part of the practice that is too uncomfortable, talk with the teachers or advanced students about it and they will help you find a way to deal with it. You may wish to put off doing that part of the practice until you have more experience in Aikido. Usually it is possible to modify the training and make it more suitable for your stage of practice. In any case, as a beginner, you will never have to do anything that you don't want to, and you will never be made fun of. If you experience a problem or conflict with a specific person during practice, you could talk with the instructors about it, or you could talk with senior students if you would find that more comfortable. You could also arrange a meeting between you and the other person, with an instructor present to help. If you feel that you are experiencing a problem which affects the whole dojo, you could bring that problem up at one of the dojo meetings. Ask questions. If you have difficulties, talk with a senior student or an instructor off the mat when full attention can be given to your concerns. Most of all, remember that Aikido practice can be a lot of fun, and don't let the difficulties get you down.

AIKIDO VOCABULARY

You don't need to be fluent in Japanese to practice Aikido. You don't need to memorize the following vocabulary, but you will hear these words in the practice. Over time the words will seep into your memory, but having a vocabulary sheet will help you become more comfortable with Aikido practice. The pronunciation of Japanese words is very simple in that any word in the language is made up of one or more short syllables which are generally given equal emphasis. The consonants of Japanese are usually pronounced like those of English except the "R", which is closer to our English "L" mixed with "D". (This "*Raito*" sounds more like "light-oh" not "right-oh.") The vowels are pronounced like those of Spanish or Latin as follows:

A - "ah" as the a in father

E - "eh" as the e in met

I - "ee" as the i in Marine

O - "oh" as the o in oboe

U - "oo" as the u in rule

Each vowel in a word is pronounced, and two different continuous vowels form a diphthong. For example, *maai* is pronounced mah-eye.

GENERAL TERMS

Ai; harmony or love

Ki; spirit or energy

Do; the way or path

Aikido; the path to a harmonious spirit

Kiai; a shout in which or by which one's energy is focused

Bushido; the way or code of the warrior

Jitsu or jutsu; techniques or practices

Budo; the martial way

Samurai; from the verb meaning "to serve" The warrior class of feudal Japan.

Hara. the lower abdomen the center of energy & movement.

Tanden; the hara

Zanshin continuity of concentration, alertness, remaining prepared for the next attack

Shin; mind or heart

Mushin; no mind

Takemusu Aiki; limitless Aikido, spontaneous manifestation of infinite technique

Misogi; purification

Dojo; training hall

Shomen; the front of the dojo

Deshi; student, disciple

Sensei; teacher

O'Sensei literally; "great teacher". Morihei Ueshiba, the founder of Aikido, is known to Aikido students as O'Sensei

Sempai; senior student, one who began Aikido before you

Kohai; junior student, one who began Aikido after you

Aikikai; Aikido Foundation. Japanese umbrella organization headed by a descendent of Morihei Ueshiba, the founder of Aikido.

Shihan; master teacher

Ichi; 1. Ni; 2. San; 3. Shi; (& yon in some 4 combinations). Go; 5. Roku; 6. Shichi; (& nana in some 7 combinations). Hachi; 8. Ku; 9. J u; 10

Kyu; non dan grades

Dan; black belt grades

Shodan; the first black belt grade or a holder of it
Yudansha; black belt holder(s)
Keikogi; practice uniform
Obi; belt
Hakama; black divided skirt/pants
Seiza; formal kneeling position
Rei; bow or salutation
Dozo; please
Onegai Shimasu; (final “u” is silent) I request the favor
Domo Arigato Gozaimashita; I am very much/humbly obliged to you.

WEAPONS

Jo; wooden staff approximately four feet long
Bo; wooden staff approximately six feet long
Tanto; wooden practice knife
Ken or tachi; Japanese long sword. Two handed, curved, single edged
Katana; the Japanese sword
Bokken; wooden practice sword
Shinai; split bamboo practice sword

BODY PARTS

Ashi; leg
Men; face or head
Shomen; top or front of head
Yokomen; side of head
Me; eyes
Kubi; neck
Kata; shoulder
Hiji; elbow
Te; hand
Tekubi; wrist
Kokyu; breath
Kote; back of the hand
Tekatana; little finger edge of the palm, hand blade
Mune; chest and stomach region
Do; trunk
Kuchi; mouth
Hara; lower abdomen
Koshi; lower back

PRACTICE TERMS

Keiko; practice
Waza; technique
Kamae; a stance of readiness
Hanmi; the oblique, T-stance used in Aikido. Literally “half-body”.
Hidari; left
Migi; right
Gedan; lower level of the body
Chudan; middle level of the body.
Jodan; upper level of the body.
Tsugi-ashi; shuffle step entry

Ayumi-ashi; walking step entry
Okuri-ashi; transport step entry
Ai hanmi; both partners with their right or left foot forward
Gyaku hanmi; one partner with left foot forward, the other with right foot forward
Tenkan; turning around to the rear
Irimi; entering in a straight line
Tenkai; pivot from one hanmi to the other.
Hankai, in reverse order
Uke; receiver — a person who receive a technique. It generally refers to the person who attacks and is thrown.
Nage; thrower — a throw or the person who does the throw.
Maai; the distance between uke and nage. It literally means “Harmony of space.”
Kuzushi; unbalancing an opponent’s posture
Kokyu; breathing, breath power

PRACTICES

Ukemi; the art of taking falls, literally “receiving body”.
Sutemi; (pronounced stemmy) a sacrifice technique, in which nage falls down to effect a throw.
Aiki Taiso; Aikido calisthenics
Tai no henko; basic blending practice
Kokyo dosa or kokyu ho; partner ki practice done in seiza, practice for coordinating breath, ki & movement. Literally, “breath power exercise”.
Shikko; knee walking
Hanmi handachi; nage is kneeling and the uke attacks from a standing position. Literally, “half standing, half sitting”.
Suwari Waza; both nage and uke are kneeling
Taijutsu; the unarmed Aikido techniques, body arts
Kata; prearranged attack/defense exercise
Suburi; individual practice of a single movement of the ken or jo
Atemi waza; striking techniques
Henekawaza; switching from one technique to another
Kaeshiwaza; counter techniques
Tanto dori; knife taking techniques
Tachi dori; sword taking techniques
Jo tori; staff taking techniques
Jiyu waza; freestyle defense practice, any technique may be used.
Randori; freestyle attack, any attack may be used
Kumi tachi; 2 person sword practice
Kumi jo; 2 person jo practice

ATTACKS

Attacks are often designated by naming the part of the body which is the focus of the attack and the action intended.
Tsuki; a thrust or punch
Mochi & tori (or dori); a grab or hold
Uchi; a strike
Shime; a squeeze or choke
Kosa dori; cross hand grab
Katate tori; one-handed grasp on one wrist
Ryote tori; two-hands grasp, both wrists grasped
Morote dori & ryote mocha; two-handed grasp on one wrist

Shomen uchi; straight down strike to the top of the head
Yokomen uchi; 45° strike to the side of the head
Mune tsuki (or tsuki); straight punch to the stomach or chest(pronounced moo-net-ski)
Kata tori; shoulder grab
Ryokata tori; both shoulders grasped
Hiji tori; elbow grab
Ushiro; from behind
Eri tori ;collar grabbed from behind
Kubi shime; neck choke
Mae geri; front kick
Mawashi geri; roundhouse kick
Yoko geri; side kick
Thus Ushiro Katatetori Kubishime refers to an attack from behind in which the attacker holds one of the defender's hands and simultaneously chokes the neck.

DEFENSES

The defenses are designated by naming the attack and then the action which constitutes the defense. Thus the name of one complete Aikido technique is Ushiro Katatetori Kubishime Koshinage.

Nage; throw

Irimi; entering in a straight line

Omote; to the front of uke

Ura; to the rear of uke

Osae; a pin

Soto; outside

Uchi; inside

Gaeshi; reverse

Mawashi; rotation

There are six take down-and-pin techniques:

Ikkyo (kote osae) Number one technique. (arm pin.)

Nikyo (kote mawashi) #2. Inward wrist twist. (wrist turning.)

Sankyo (kote hineri) #3. Vertical wrist twist. (wrist twist)

Yonko (tekubi osae) #4. Wrist pin, using pressure on the nerve. (wrist pin.)

Gokyo (ude nobashi) #5. Similar to ikkyo but for knife disarming. (arm stretch.)

Royko #6. Similar to ikkyo but an arm bar to the elbow

There are a number of throws with specific names:

Kote gaeshi; wrist twist

Kaiten nage; rotary throw

Shiho nage; four corners throw

Irimi nage; entering throw

Tenchi nage; “ten” means “heaven” and “chi” means “Earth”. The heaven – earth position of the hand has one hand high and the other low.

Juji garami or juji nage; entwined arms throw

Koshi nage; hip throw

Aiki otoshi; aiki drop,often against a rear bear hug

Sumi otoshi; corner drop

Ude garami; arm entwined lock

The largest number of Aikido throws have no specific names but are known under the heading of kokyu nage:

Kokyu nage breath or timing throw. A throw which depends primarily on blending.