



**LEPPÄVAARAN  
BUDOSEURA**

## Dojo etiquette

An essential part of budo is certain rules of conduct. On the one hand, they aim to enable safe training, and on the other hand, they teach a long tradition related to the arts. Dojo etiquette is mainly learned through practice, but this document describes a few key habits, practices, and rules.

The original language of this document and its appendices is Finnish. This English translation is provided to support understanding. If any part is unclear or appears inconsistent, please refer to the Finnish version.



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# 1. General instructions

Our budo disciplines are practiced in the dojo; In addition to the physical training hall, this means that the space is used for practicing the road, or do in Japanese. Kendo, iaido and jodo each contain the syllable do in their names and these sports are practiced specifically in the dojo. These sports include performing various exercises and refining details, but the most important thing in them is personal development beyond just sword skills. In Japanese budo sports, respect is a central value and behavior.

During and after the basic course, many general instructions related to etiquette are reviewed. Many of these come directly from the guidelines of the Japanese Kendo Federation (ZNKR) or the old traditions of the sports, and they are mainly the same from one dojo to another, in Finland and abroad.

This document does not go into customs and etiquette in detail and comprehensively, but focuses on the most important aspects of Lebudo practice. The actual sport etiquette, reiho, is learned for years as part of training.

## 1.1. Safety

Safety is a priority in the training sessions, and special attention must be paid to it due to the weapons used in the exercises. All swords should be handled as if they were sharp, with due care and respect.

Other practitioners should also be treated with respect. This means physical attention, i.e. not harming them, and appropriate treatment, i.e. not bullying or insulting anyone verbally or otherwise. Ensuring sufficient safety enables a pleasant learning environment and enjoyable hobbies.

The following safety issues must be taken into account in all exercises:

- **Health and hygiene:**
  - You can only participate in training if you are healthy and alert
  - The practitioners must take care of their own hygiene; especially from their feet, because we train barefoot
    - Nails should be cut short
    - The well-being of your feet must be taken care of
    - Nail and foot fungus and warts must be treated, and during the treatment, the exercises must be attended with covered feet
  - Hair should not cover the eyes and long hair should be tied up
- **Equipment:**
  - Jewelry and watches must be removed before training or, if they cannot be removed, they must be taped away
  - You can only participate in the exercises in intact, clean clothes and the right size
  - The training uniform (gi and hakama) must be properly dressed
  - The safety of training weapons must be checked before training



- Wooden and bamboo swords (bokkens or shinai) or wooden sticks (jo) must not be splintered or damaged
- The wooden pin (mekugi) of metal training swords must be securely in place, and no part of the sword may be loose or wobble.
- Kendo pads (bogu) must be intact, appropriate, and properly dressed
- **Space:**
  - There must be enough free space reserved for training. Inform the instructor if you feel that the space reserved for you is too small for safe training.
  - Weapons and equipment are placed in the hall in the designated places or on the floor next to the wall so that they do not interfere with training
  - There must be no objects in the training hall that do not belong there, and there must be enough airspace for training.
  - The floor of the training hall must be dry and clean.
- **Safe conduct:**
  - The training is immediately interrupted by the instructor's loud "stop!" or "yame!" -shouting
  - During the session movement should be predictable and following the walls
  - Another practitioner is passed from behind so that he or she notices the person passing. Attention can be drawn by loudly saying "sorry" (jap. "sumimasen") or similar.
- **Injuries:**
  - As a result of pain that occurs during exercises, training should be stopped to prevent injury
  - Injuries must always be reported to the instructor..

## 1.2. Before practice sessions

- Arriving
  - Arrive on time; Remember to leave time to change into your equipment.
  - If you arrive late for the training, prepare yourself for the training on the side of the gym, i.e. warm up and perform the initial stretching independently. When you are ready, wait for the instructor's invitation to join the exercise.
  - Always give room for visiting teachers in the dressing room and otherwise show politeness by greeting both guests and acquaintances.
  - If you notice any deficiencies in your equipment, please report it as early as possible so that we can try to find borrowed equipment or similar.
  - Remove watches and jewelry. Put your mobile phone on silent for the duration of the sessions.
  - If you know that you will have to leave the training in the middle of everything or if you have an injury or limitation that hinders training, always notify the instructor in advance before the start of the training. In this way, this can be properly taken into account.
  - Remember to bow towards the shōmen when entering and exiting the hall..
- In the dojo before the start of the session
  - Cover your feet outside the hall; Going barefoot outside the gym brings sand and dirt to the floor.



- The hall is cleaned before practice. Especially the lower grades should help with sweeping so that the instructors' and teachers' time is not wasted on cleaning.
- Do not bring unnecessary items to the hall, of course you can bring a bag/valuables.
- Leave your equipment neatly on the edge of the gym. They must not disturb others or cause dangerous situations.

### 1.3. During a session

- Behave in a restrained, dignified manner, and be considerate of others
  - Be polite to teachers and other practitioners.
  - Do not talk about things that are not related to the exercises during the exercises.
  - Avoid talking when the teacher is talking.
  - Follow the instructor's instructions and commands without hesitation, or ask for further clarification if necessary.
  - Direct the questions to the instructor or the most experienced practitioner, not to the person next to you.
  - Do not touch other practitioners without permission.
  - More advanced practitioners will politely advise if the practitioner does not follow the safety instructions or dojo etiquette
- Wait for a break or ask the instructor for permission to leave the line
  - The instructor will inform you when a drink break will be taken. Do not eat or drink in the actual training area.
  - If you need to make changes to your outfit, such as tying the hakama again, ask for permission to leave the row and make the correction outside the hall.
  - When you do an exercise, don't leave it unfinished, but always finish it to the best of your ability.
  - If you are unable to continue the exercises, ask the instructor for permission to stop, if necessary. However, it is advisable to try to finish the exercises when you have started them.
- Line up without delay
  - "Seiretsu!" command is used to line up according to grade. The most advanced ones line up furthest from the front door, and the others line up in descending order of belt rank.
  - If more than one person has the same grade, the one who has held the grade for the longest time is considered "senior". Ultimately, the age order between the practitioners is decisive, and the older person lines up as the senior.
  - During the basic course or soon after, the instructor may move the practitioners in the line up according to the equipment.
- Pay attention to the safe and correct handling of weapons
  - A sword is a sword – not a piece of wood or metal. Treat it as it deserves.
  - Always check the condition of the training equipment (shinai, bokken, iaito, shinken) before training.
  - Store the swords on the floor opposite the shōmen, with the blade pointing away from the shōmen.



- Do not touch other people's weapons or equipment without permission unless they are a danger to others.
- Return the borrowed equipment to the borrower or to the club's equipment bag

## 1.4. Visiting another dojo

- Before the training, introduce yourself to the instructor and tell them your name, grade, the club you represent, any limitations and your skills, e.g. in terms of your proficiency in the ZNKR katas or key exercises
- Attach any nafuda or zekken to your outfit
- Follow the etiquette of the dojo in question, even if it differs from the customs of your own dojo

## 1.5. Art specific instructions

### 1.5.1. Kendo

- Avoid unnecessary queuing during the jigeiko and always look for the most senior practitioner if possible.
- If you see a free teacher, hurry up to practice with him. The teacher must not be left waiting alone, if necessary, stop practicing with another practitioner and go to practice with the teacher so that the teacher does not have to wait for the practitioner. If there are guests at the dojo, act as a host and make sure that they always have someone to face them.
- When the training is finished, the helmet and gloves can only be taken off at the "kote-men-tore" command. The dō and tare can only be taken off when the seiretsu is over. After the free practice, go and thank and ask for feedback from the teachers you practiced with.

### 1.5.2. Iaido

- Avoid unnecessary standing or talking during free practice. Use dojo time for training with dignity.

### 1.5.3. Jodo

- In pair training, only give necessary feedback and keep your feedback to your partner short unless you have been specifically instructed to give feedback.
- Take care of good hand hygiene, as weapons are exchanged between practitioners in jodo exercises



## Change log

Date	Section	Change	Author
13.1.2026		The operating manual was approved at the board meeting.	Board of Directors of the Leppävaara Budo Club