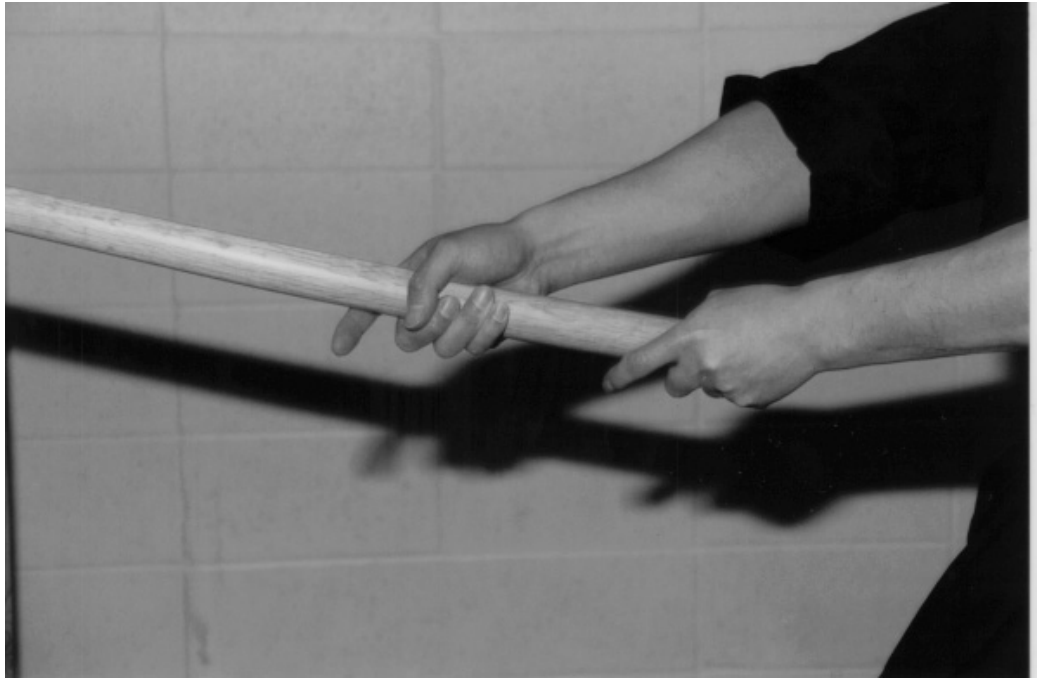


## Holding the Sword

The proper grip of the bokken has the right hand on top of the handle, with the webbing between the thumb and the forefinger directly on the top, or the spine of the sword. The left hand grips the bottom of the handle, with the little finger curled under the pommel. Both hands have the index finger free.



## Stance

The right knee is bent, but not positioned passed the right foot. The left foot is at 45 degree angle. Heels are on the floor. The weight distribution should be 60% on the forward foot and 40% on the rear foot.





## Shomen Uchi

Shomen is done with the rotation of the shoulders and not with the flicking of the wrists. An arch should be scribe with the motion of the cut. The sword should be parallel to the ground at both the highest and lowest level of the cut.



## Yokomen Uchi

Beginning position with the bokken over the head. Bokken should be parallel to the ground, neither pointing upwards nor downwards. Feet are together, not necessarily touching.



Using the shoulders, cut at an angle to your left. Right leg goes back at the same time.



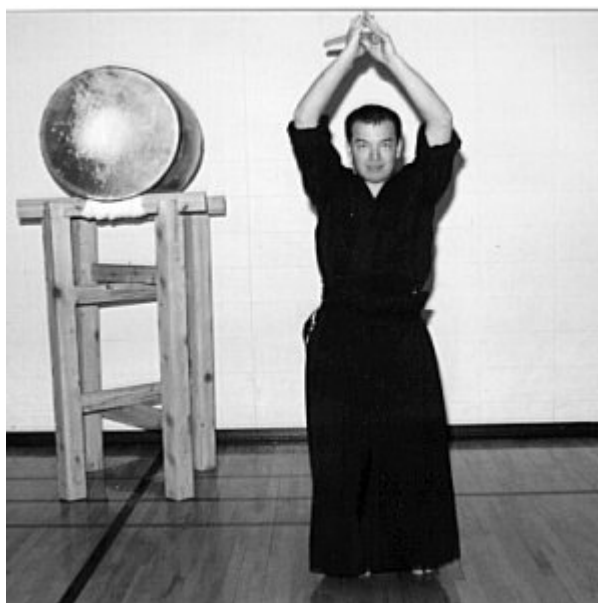
Complete strike at eye level. Do not go beyond your own head. Back leg is extended, and the front leg bent. Weight distribution is 60%-40%, with 60% being on the front leg.



Return the bokken along the same path that was used during the strike.



Complete the return with the bokken in the same position as you had begun. Feet are together, but not necessarily touching.



Using the shoulders, cut at an angle to your right. Left leg goes back at the same time.



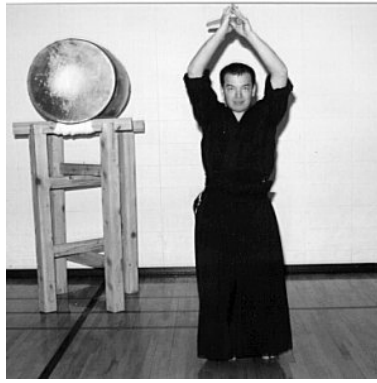
Complete strike at eye level. Do not go beyond your own head. Back leg is extended, and the front leg bent. Weight distribution is 60%-40%, with 60% being on the front leg.



Bring bokken back along the same line.



Begin cycle again.



# Drawing and Sheathing the Sword

1. Sword handle is turned 45 degrees. Left thumb pushes tsuba out. Right hand gently hold handle, fingers extended. The feeling should be like the webbing between thumb and index finger is squeezing the handle lightly but firmly.



2. Draw sword outwards while pulling saya back.



3. Position of sword free from saya.



4. Once cut is complete and chiburi is done, one sheathes the sword (noto). Left hand covers the saya mouth, and the back of the sword is place on left hand.





5. Draw sword along left hand.



6. Once the tip of the sword passes the webbing between the index finger and thumb on left hand gently place the tip into the mouth of the saya. Right hand moves forward 8-12 inches as the tip of the sword is placed in the mouth of the saya.



7. Begin to sheath; right hand places sword inwards while left hand brings saya forwards toward right hand.



8. Continue sheathing.



# Kiri Giri Suburi

1. Partners face each other. Bokken in left hand.



2. Bow.



3. Tori (left partner) position bokken in jodan position. Teki (right partner) in gedan position.



4. Ready position.



5. Tori starts to strike on left shoulder of partner. Teki prepares to receive.



6. Tori sheds strike. Bokken is raised with the point remaining at a 45 degree angle to the ground.



7. The cut down continues, and is shed.



8. The strike continues to the gedan position, and the shedding is continued until the left arm is almost straight.



9. Tori now prepares to deliver a cut. Teki prepares to shed.



10. Strike begins.



11. Teki strikes to the left shoulder. Tori sheds cut.



12. Cut and shed are carried to the full motion.



13. Tori strikes to the right shoulder. Teki prepares to shed the cut.



14. Teki sheds the cut and left continues with a full motion. This suburi exercise continues from left to right.



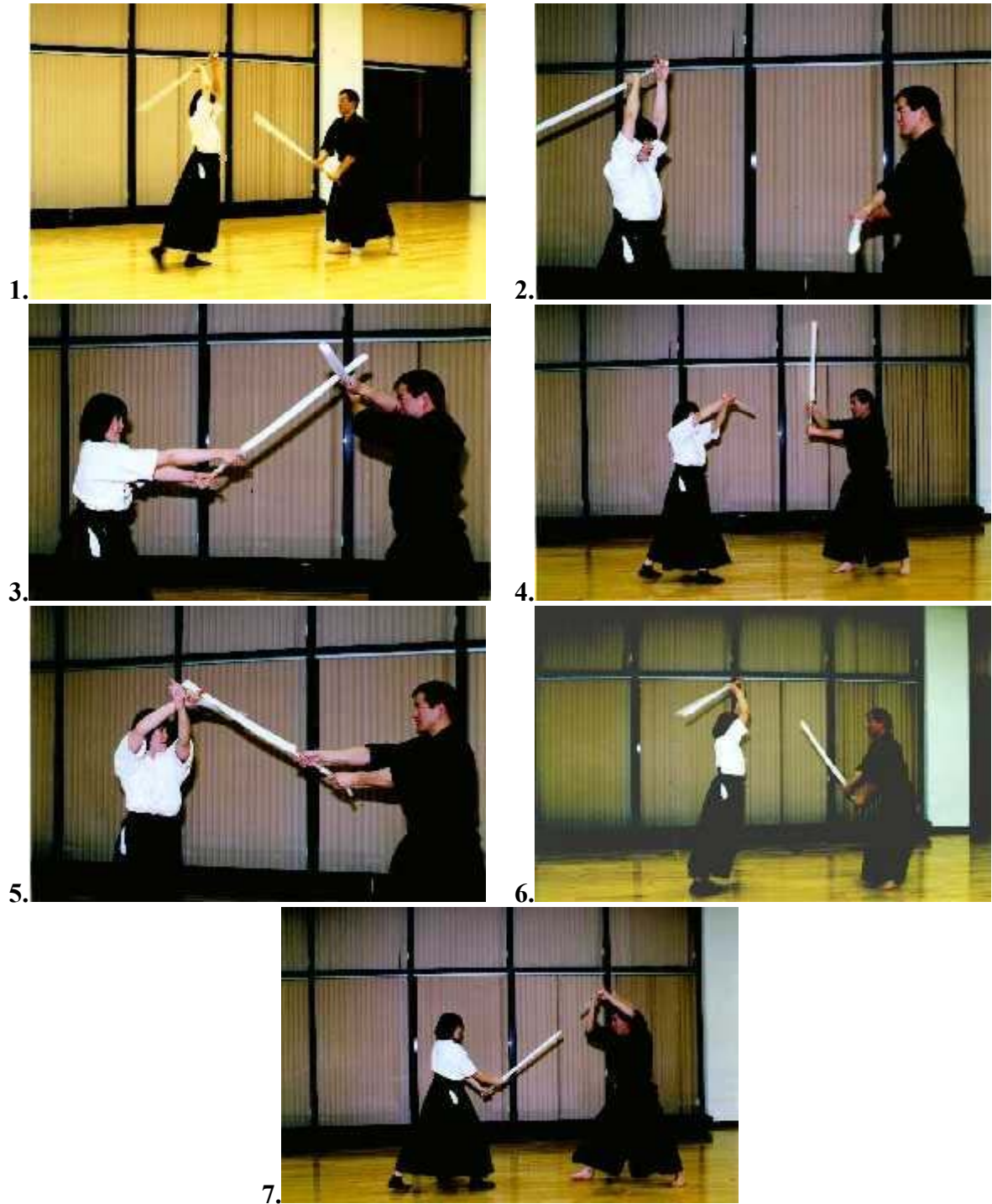
15. Detail of preparing to receive and shed the cut.



16. Detail of the shedding of the strike.



## Fukuro Shinai Suburi





# First Bokken Kata

## Ten Shin

1.- Tori and teki assume chudan no kamae.



2.- Tori steps in and delivers shomen uchi. Teki shifts 45 degree, thus moving off line of attack, and blocks shomen.



3.- Teki shifts forward on right leg and delivers yokomen. Tori shifts back and blocks attack with a shin no kamae using the flat side of the bokken .



4.- Teki steps forward left leg and delivers yokomen. Tori steps back and blocks with yokomen.



5.- Teki steps forward right leg and delivers yokoashi, a strike to the legs. Tori steps back and blocks with yokoashi.



6.- Teki steps forward and delivers yokoashi. Tori steps back and blocks with yokoashi.



7.- Teki steps forward right leg and prepare to deliver shomen. Tori prepares to control the strike.



8.- Teki strikes shomen, tori controls.



9.- Tori controls the shomen.



10.- Tori prepares to deliver shomen uchi, teki prepares to receive shomen uchi.





11.- Tori delivers shomen, teki sheds shomen.



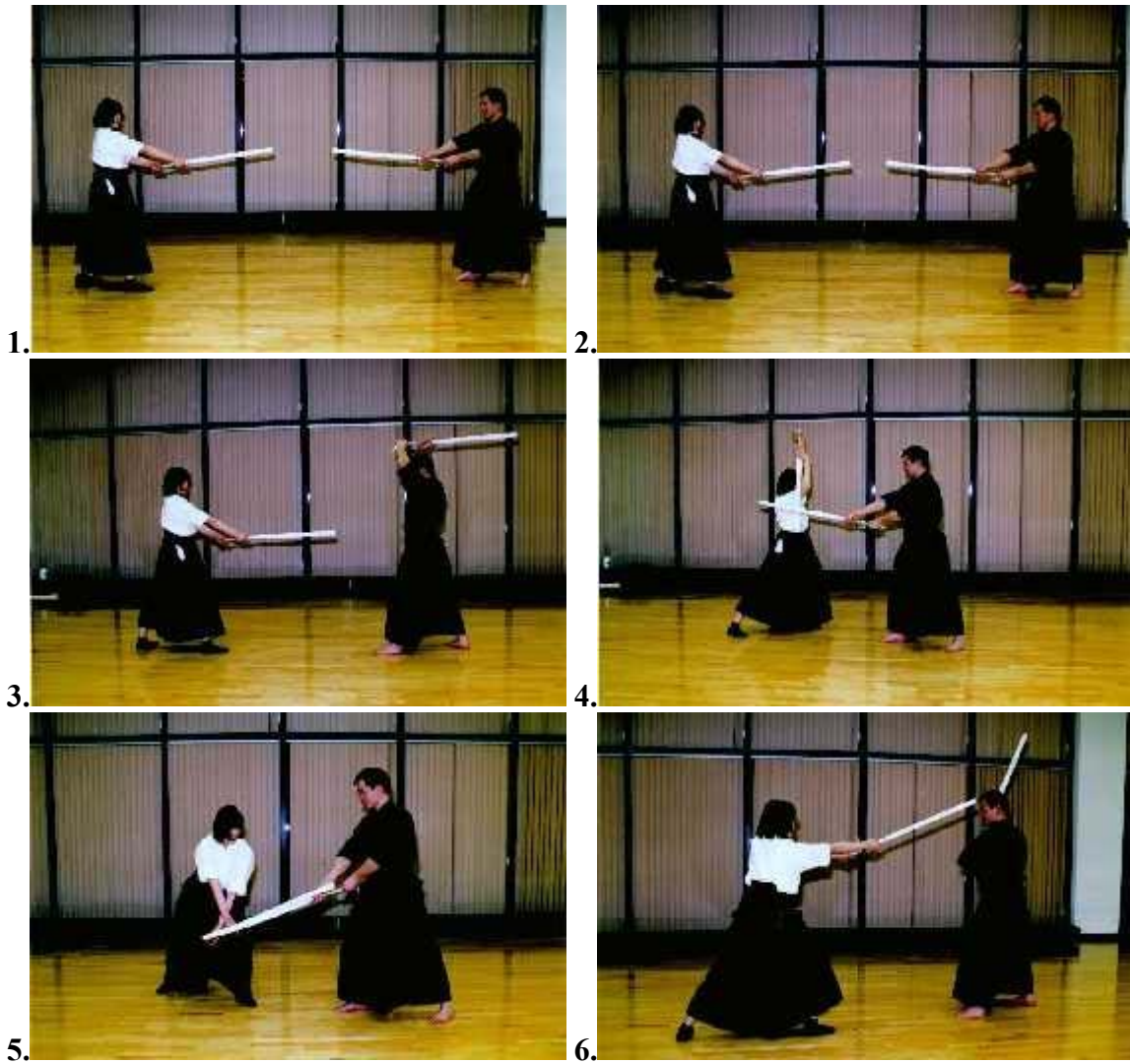
12.- Teki tenkans (shifts 45 degrees) away from attack and delivers yokomen uchi. End of kata.



# First Classical Kata Itto Ryo Dan



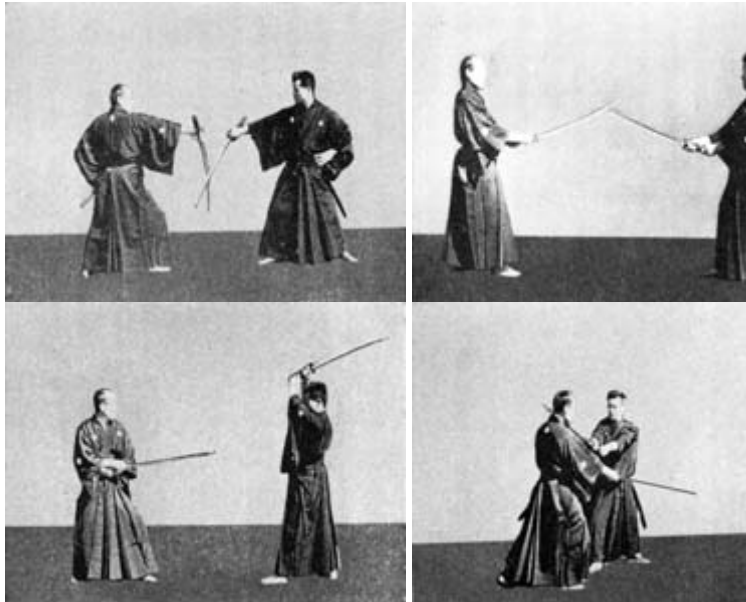
# Zan Tei Settetsu





## Armed techniques (Kenjutsu Ono-ha Ittoryu) [1\5]

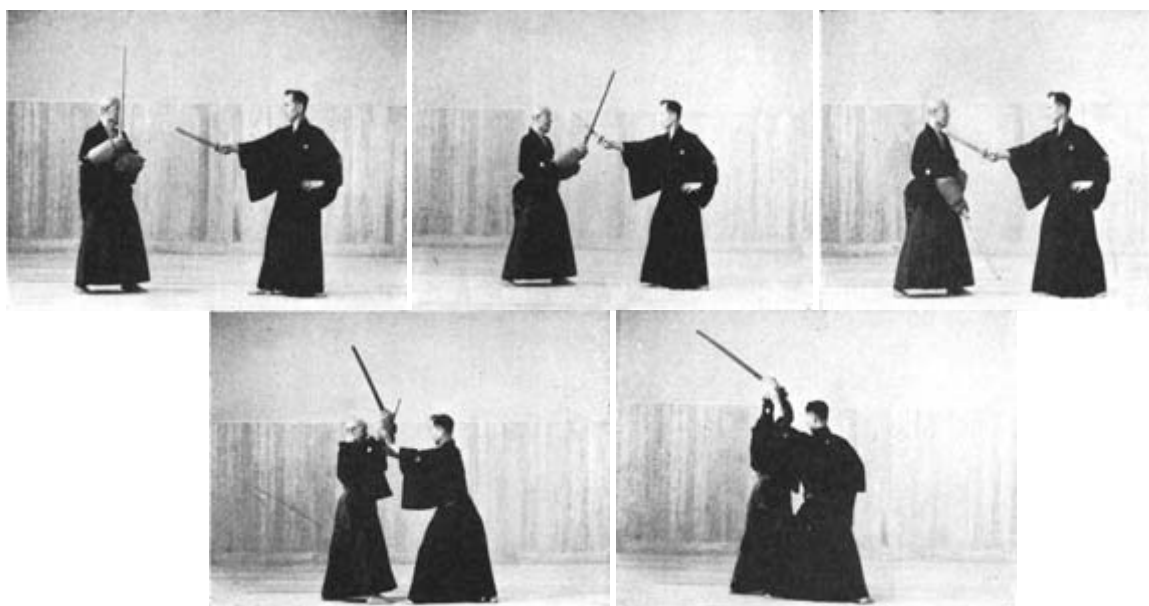
### Battojutsu



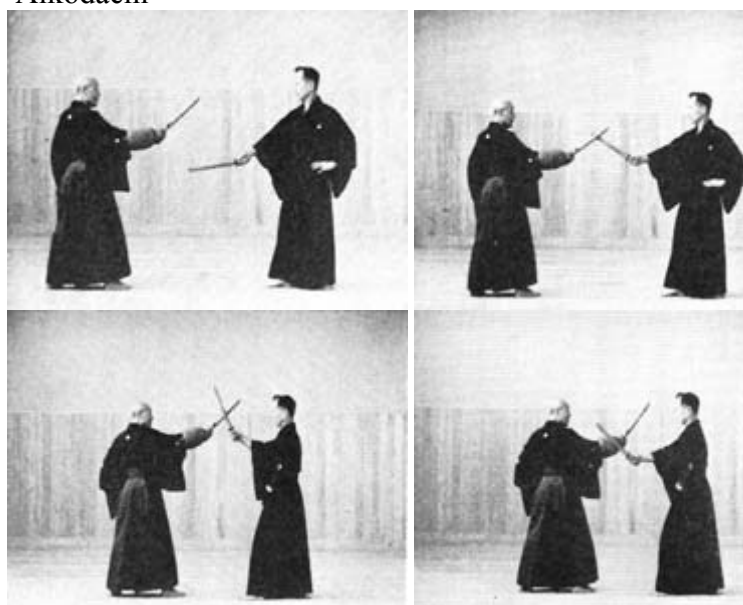
### Odachi



## Kodachi

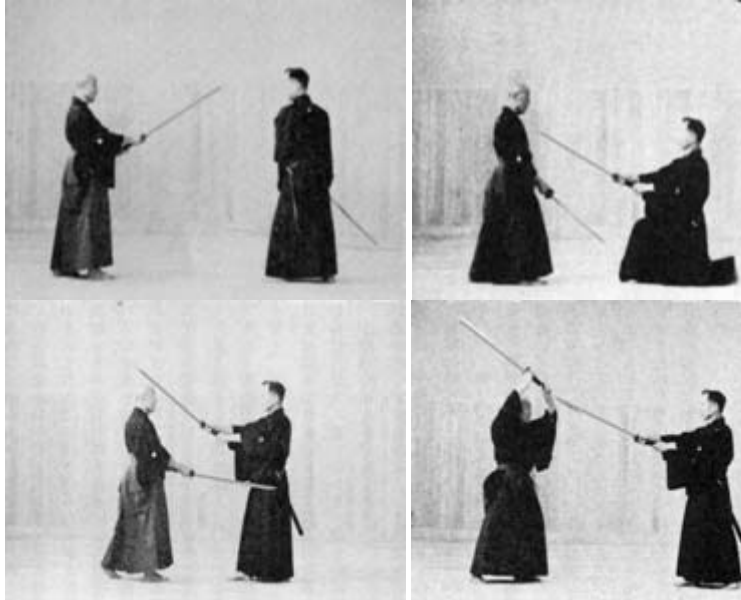


## Aikodachi





## Kojo gokui goten



"Do weapons training as though empty-handed;  
train empty-handed as though with weapons"

Bay Marin Aikido offers students the unique opportunity to train in both Iwama Style weapons and the Ken tai Jo (sword and staff) weapons forms of Sugawara Sensei.

### Iwama Style Weapons

Ken and Jo suburi, kata, and paired forms

O-Sensei, the founder of Aikido, was adept with sword and staff, and he often demonstrated that Aikido techniques could be executed either empty-handed or with the bokken or jo.

His student, Morihiro Saito Sensei, carried on the tradition of executing Aikido techniques identically regardless of whether a weapon was used or not. And he further taught that training with the weapons fostered a precision, power, and keen sense of timing that vastly aided in the learning of empty-handed Aikido.

### Sugawara Sensei's Ken tai Jo

8 paired forms with ken and jo

The sword movements of these eight paired forms come from the 600+ year old Japanese weapons school, *Katori Shinto Ryu*. These are classical sword moves which serve as the basis of all the recognized modern sword schools.

The Jo movements are generally based upon the Iwama Style 31 Jo Kata with some of the movements also based upon the usage of the bo, naginata, and the spear.

The first four forms are in the classic "Omote" fashion. That is, harder in attack and defense with larger more dramatic movements. Originally, these forms were

Saito Sensei made the great contribution of organizing the Founder's weapons training practices into a systematic set of elements that could be preserved and passed on to future generations.

It is important to note that the primary goals of Iwama Style weapons training are not to learn sword fighting or stick fighting for use in combat situations. Rather, the weapons training, both solo and partner practices, are designed to help the student develop a strong sense of timing, spatial awareness, and connection with a partner; to learn to stay in sync with a partner, while the weapon becomes a natural extension of one's own body.

As a certified teacher of Saito Sensei's weapons system, Goto Sensei offers instruction in all of the levels of the Iwama weapons practices. These include:

Fundamental moves, or Suburi, 7 for bokken and 20 for the jo

The 31 and 13 count jo katas

The 31 jo kata partner practice

The set of 10 jo partner practices, or kumi jo

The set of 5 bokken partner practices, or kumi tachi

The Ki No Musubi no Tachi bokken blending practice

A variety of awase, or blending movement, partner practices with both bokken and jo

A variety of empty-handed sword and jo take-away techniques

(Iwama style) Ken tai Jo, bokken and jo partner practices

formulated to study attack and defense while wearing (Japanese) armor.

The second four forms are in the classic "Ura" or 'hidden' form. The movements are smaller, more subtle, and the distance is closer. These forms were formulated to study unarmored attack and defense.

In the practice of these forms, distances are closer and the pace faster. There is more blurring of the roles in attack and defense, rather than having a clearly defined attacker (kogeki) or defender (uke). Most of the footwork requires sure steps and angles, avoiding the step and sliding adjustments students sometimes do.

There is always a rotation of the hips as well as clear movements of the hands and arms. There are always clear cutting and piercing moves at specific targets from both weapons.

The general purpose of these ken tai jo forms is the honing of one's skills in judging critical distance. With practice, speed and accuracy develop naturally along with increasingly correct body movement and footwork.

Unlike Iwama style weapons training, the close relationship of the body movements in both weapons practice and empty-handed aikido is not emphasized. Additionally, the easy interchange from weapon-in-hand to a throw or disarm is not as apparent in Sugawara's Ken Tai Jo.

These forms provide an exhilarating and stimulating weapons practice. One that hones our minds and intent to a razor sharpness nearly as keen as that of the ancient samurai swords.



## Swords

In the modern world it is not common (at least not where I live) to encounter someone armed with a sword. This is a thankful state of affairs! However through historic tradition jitsuka are trained in the very basics of sword techniques or *Ken Waza*.

### What is a sword?

A sword is a weapon that is usually made of metal. It has a 'long' blade and a hilt - usually separated by a pommel. Swords are used in a variety of attacking styles, thrusting, slashing and even bludgeoning.

### A little history

The Japanese are recognised as the first people to create truly sharp swords. Before this swords were rarely able to slice into people rather they were used to bludgeon an opponent into unconsciousness and the sword could then be used to cleave and stab. However the folding of steel and other metals led to stronger swords that retained their sharpness for more than a few blows. It was these swords that the samurai used in their battles and it is these swords that are used in jiu jitsu.

The art of using a sword is an entire martial art (or several) in it's own right. The art of the sword is not one where the blade is swashbuckled around or fenced - at least not with the sword of the samurai, the *Katana*. *Ken Do* (the way of the sword) is the most famous practice of Japanese sword work, but there are many other arts of the sword to learn. The art of *Iai Do* for example focuses solely on the art of drawing the sword from it's sheath, whereas *Tameshi Giri* concentrates on the art of actually cutting with a sword.

### Why train with swords?

In jiu jitsu as with most of the gentle art, only the surface of a set of techniques is touched upon. There is always a life time of study to be spent on each technique. Judoka for instance often spend their entire lives perfecting a single throw. Jiu jitsu aims for an all round coverage of techniques so that no matter what the situation the jitsuka can react appropriately. Therefore whilst there is so much to learn about the sword, jitsu provides some knowledge about swords. After all perfecting a throw such as *koshi guruma* may not be as helpful against a sword as gaining a competency in a much larger range of throws.

### The Katana

The katana is a versatile sword and is only one of several types of Japanese sword, but it was the preferred sword of most samurai. The katana is a fairly long sword normally used two handed, but light enough to be wielded one handed when required.

Katana vary in quality and in price as well as their particular style. Many katana possess ornately carved hilts with dragon heads or gold wire handle. Scabbards are also frequently etched and embossed in a Japanese style. Most of these artistic designs are for ornamental katana which are ineffective in combat, but there do exist some which are not. therefore on the mat do not be complacent in thinking that a katana is not 'real', no matter how it looks. It may well be sharper than you think.

It was not an infrequent occurrence for the Samurai to carry a katana and a wakizashi (see below) into battle, one sword in each hand and fight with both at once. The smaller wakizashi made a good weapon for the off hand, and such a combination was referred to as *diasho* meaning the long and the short.

The katana in the correct hands is a deadly weapon. In the wrong hands it a deadly liability to the person who is attempting to wield it. It is normal practice however to train (at least initially) with a bokken (see below) and then move on to a katana that has been purposefully blunted. Even blunted katanas are dangerous. They won't pierce the skin when pressed gently to it, but they will cut if force is applied. More senior grades (purple onwards) typically spend time learning how to strike effectively with katana. This then allows them to train safely with one another in practicing defences against attacks with a katana.





### The Wakizashi

The wakizashi is a shorter sword than the katana and is of a similar construction. The wakizashi was another preferred weapon of the Samurai and was often used in the off hand to the katana. The wakizashi is not as obvious as a katana, and so whilst not as visually impressive, it can be more easily concealed - making at least equally as deadly if not more so.

### The No Dachi

The no dachi is an impressive two handed sword over five feet in length and very sharp. Much heavier than a katana, the no dachi can easily cause greivous wounds on an attack, but it is not as maneuverable or fast as a katana, and so defences against them tend to be easier - assuming it doesn't hit on the first attack. This sword is not well suited to thrusting attacks, but more to downward slashes, and so the attack is more easily predictable. No dachi are rarely used in jiu jitsu since the katana is at least as challenging a weapon to master.

### The Bokken

Bokken are wooden swords about the size of a katana. They arte essentially practice weapons, and potentially safer than a metal sword. Of course if you are hit by a fast moving three foot piece of solid wood - IT WILL HURT YOU! Bokken are still weapons as much as a baseball bat could be used as a weapon.

the bokken is carved so that it has a slightly cureved katana like blade, and a distinct handle. Between the handle, modern bokken also have a *tsuba* or hilt to protect you when practicing fighting or kata with another. The tsuba is held in place by a rubbery band called a *habaki*.

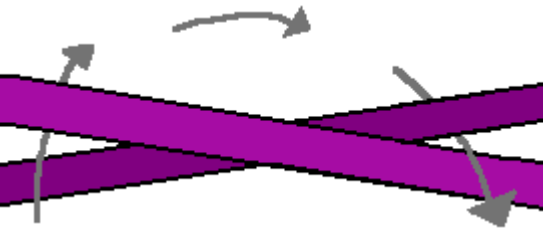
Many other types of swords exist, and may be found in dojos across the world, but the principles of using them are similar, as are the defences against them.

### Using Swords

Swords are highly dangerous weapons. For centuries they were man's primary weapon for close combat on the battle field. Swords should be respected at all times whether they are blunt or sharp, wood or metal.

#### Wearing your sword

The swords used primarily in jiu jitsu are the katana and the wakizashi. Both of these weapons have slightly curved blades, and when they are worn, are worn on the opposite hip to the sword hand with the slicing edge of the blade pointing up. The tsuba is positioned so that it lies next to the knot of the obi. The sword scabbard should slide through between the two bands of the obi. The sword scabbard often has securing tapes on it. These should be looped through and under the obi a few times to make sure that the scabbard



does not slip out from the obi.

If you are using a bokken, this will not have a scabbard, but if you take the overlap of the obi at the back and bring it around to the side where the scabbard would be (this is easily done with a couple of fingers), the bokken can be slid into the cross as shown in the diagram. Up inside the outer band over the inner band, then under the inner band, and over the outer band.

Finally you should always try and keep your off hand on the scabbard of the sword. Place the hand on the upper end and place the thumb over the tsuba. This means that when you rei to someone, your sword does not slide out onto the floor making you look very silly and leaving you practically disarmed.

### Drawing the sword

The art of drawing a sword is Iai Do, and is an entire martial art in itself. In the very basics of sword work, it is enough to focus on drawing the sword smoothly and quickly into the first strike or into a ready position. With a long sword it often helps if you turn your hips away from the direction you are drawing the sword as you are doing it. This will help you get enough distance in your draw to get the tip of the blade out of the scabbard.

In drawing the sword, you should try to follow the curvature of the blade. For a straight bladed sword draw in a straight line. For a curved blade sword draw in an arc the same shape as the curve of the blade. It will also help if you slowly breathe out in a smooth continuous breath as you draw the sword. This will stop you tensing and jamming or jerking the sword in the scabbard.

### Holding a katana

A katana is typically held in both hands with the right most hand nearest the blade. There should be about a finger's distance between the index finger of the right hand and the tsuba. The left hand should grasp the lower part of the hilt away from the blade. The left hand's little finger should lie just beneath the hilt of the sword as though supporting the entire sword.

When preparing to strike, the hand is open, the sword being gripped only by the left hand's little finger and the thumbs & palms of both hands. As the strike is made, both hands grasp the sword fingers curling into place as the strike is made. This gripping strategy may at first feel uncomfortable, but like a true randori judo grip where only a few fingers are used until the attack is made, this allows you to move the sword in a more relaxed and free manner and put the necessary force into the strike at the end when it is needed. This also means that your hands will be able to hold the sword comfortably for a much greater length of time.

### Attacks

There are many types of attack that can be made with a sword. Some more simple attacks to try are:-

- Shomen Uchi - The leading foot is drawn back to a cat stance (90% weight on back foot, 10% on front foot, back knee bent slightly, and front foot up on the ball) as the sword is take directly back over the head so that it points vertically down. Then as you step back to the initial stance, the sword is swung directly over the head into the target. On the strike do not let the tip of the bokken drop below the horizontal.
- Thrust - A simple attack from the initial stance draw the sword hilt back towards you and slightly to one side as determined by the stance. From there push hard off the back foot and let the front foot slide smoothly across the floor. At the same time extend both arms driving a little body weight and shoulder into the thrust. Keep the tip of the sword above the horizontal.

### Defences

Swords are dangerous weapons, but the Samurai realised that they may be disarmed on the field of battle, and may have to defend themselves against a sword armed attacker. To this end jiu jitsu developed several defensive techniques to '*ahem*' obtain ownership of the sword.

As usual if we assume that most people do not intend to attack themselves with their weapon, then the best place to be to avoid being hit by the weapon is where the attacker is. Taking the previously described attacks as examples the following techniques could be used:-

From a vertical attack (or a 45° attack), the jitsuka must move into the attack and try to stand in the same place as the attacker whilst taking control of the sword. The sword will not suddenly stop dead when blocking the arms, so it is better to control the arms and keep the attack moving through. The best example of a technique to do this would be yama arashi. This can allow the jitsuka to lock both arms and because it is a hip throw will allow the jitsuka to assume the position of the attacker and to put them to the floor in one sweeping movement.

If the attack is seen early enough, the jitsuka may be able to rush the attacker. Stepping quickly to the outside and placing a covering hand on the hilt of the sword, the other hand can come forward to take the face and eyes in order to take the attacker's balance backwards causing them to fall - probably onto their own sword.

From a thrust, the jitsuka needs to sidestep the attack. From the side, the jitsuka then must take control of the sword. Because a thrust tends to be for the gut or abdomen, the arms tend to be too low to lock up into something

like arm lock six. Instead the jitsuka should try to focus on the wrists. Covering both hands, the jitsuka should be able to continue the movement of the thrust going and use it against the attacker to then take them into a wrist lock. Whilst putting the wrist lock on it may even be possible to strike the attacker with their own sword by their own hands.

An important thing to remember about swords is that they are long, and whereas a knife that has been 'secured' may not be able to slash you, a sword that is 'secured' may have a lot more movement at its tip than you would at first think. Make sure that when you do take control of the sword you can see the end of the sword. You know where the attacker is... there the one screaming in pain at the other end of the sword. Concentrate on the sword - you can even use it to finish off the attacker or if numbers are a problem the next attacker - *"I'm sorry m'lud, he came at me with this sword and I just turned him round and, well he just stabbed his mate with it."*

## Introduction

The jo is a stout wooden stave fashioned from Japanese oak which was originally used as a substitute for the long sword and the short spear. The principle use for the jo is as a weapon to counter and attack other aggressors who are armed with similar weapons or as a weapon to neutralise an unarmed attacker. Use of the jo is also a very good method of achieving co-ordination of body, limbs and mind, and to this end, many exercises have been developed using it.

## Jo Suburi

Each of the following twenty suburi should be practised carefully and with feeling. Breathing is very important and you should inhale before you start the movements, allowing your breath to pass out of your lungs as you perform the suburi, and exhaling sharply as you finish the final thrust or strike of the suburi. Always check your posture at the beginning and end of each suburi to ensure that you have started and finished correctly. Good posture before and after performance goes a long way towards correct posture during the suburi.

1. **CHOKU TSUKI** - This is the basic thrusting movement which is featured in many of the jo waza (jo techniques). Commence in basic posture, hidari hanmi, with the jo resting on one end vertically on the mat immediately in front of your left foot. Hold the jo with your left hand. Reach down with your right hand to grasp the jo near its base. Your left hand should lift the jo as you do this. Slide your right hand down to the end as you bring the jo to a horizontal position, tsuki no kame. Slide the jo through your left hand back and then forwards, swinging your right hand up to the front of your centre. Both feet slide forwards as you lower your posture during this forward thrust.
2. **KAESHI TSUKI** - This is actually a counter to a thrust from your opponent. Commence in left posture as for the first jo suburi. Grasp the top of the jo with your right hand, thumb downwards. Bring the jo up in a circular motion as you move to your left with your left foot, bringing your right foot around to remain in hidari hanmi. As you move, thrust the jo forwards to your opponents centre, your left hand on top of the jo. Expel your breath explosively as the thrust is performed.
3. **USHIRO TSUKI** - This is a thrust against an opponent who is behind you. Commence in basic posture as for the previous suburi, bringing your right hand to the top of the jo, thumb upwards. Lift the jo placing it along the underside of your left forearm while sliding your left foot back beside your right. Step back with your left foot, thrusting the jo straight to your rear and turning your body to your left as you do this.
4. **TSUKI GEDAN GAESHI** - This is the first of two combinations of movements which incorporate the first jo suburi. Commence in hidari tsuki no kamae, holding the jo horizontally in your left hand with your right hand at its base, your feet in left posture. Swing back with your right hand to make choku tsuki (first jo suburi), sliding your feet forwards. Slide your left hand towards the front of the jo, and step backwards and to the right, remaining in left posture as you push the jo back past your right side through the right hand. Turn your hips to the left, stepping forwards with your right foot, and bring the jo around at knee level to

strike at your opponents lower legs. Your right hand should be behind the jo pushing it round to make contact.

5. TSUKI JODAN GAESHI - This combination introduces the striking techniques which are to follow in the next five suburi. You commence in hidari tsuki no kamae. Swing back with your right hand to perform choku tsuki, sliding your feet forwards. Move backwards and to the right, still in hidari hanmi, bringing the jo up to protect your head (sliding your right hand up to your left). Turn it over your head to the striking position in preparation for shomen uchi strike (right wrist twists, left hand moves to end of Jo). The strike is performed by swinging the jo in an arc over your head and down onto your opponent as you step forwards with your right foot.
6. SHOMEN UCHI KOMI - Commence in right posture holding the jo in front of you with your left hand at the end of the jo and your right hand a quarter of the way up. Step back with your right foot, raising the jo above your head, pointing it towards the ceiling and angled slightly back. As you step forwards with your right foot, bring your hands down and forwards, striking with the jo to your opponents centre.
7. RENZOKU UCHI KOMI - Commence in right posture and perform shomen uchi komi (sixth jo suburi). Having performed the strike in right posture, move your weight forwards on to your right foot and bring your hands up to the front of, and just above, your head with the jo pointing to your right. Step forwards with your left foot, turning your hips into left posture. Bring the jo round to extend behind you and make hidari shomen uchi to complete the suburi.
8. MEN UCHI GEDAN GAESHI - Commence in right posture and perform shomen uchi komi. When the strike is completed, extend your right hand to the end of the jo, sweep it back to your left side and move back and to your left. Step forwards with your left foot. Bring the jo round in a strike to your opponent's knee, keeping your left hand behind the jo to give power to the strike.
9. MEN UCHI USHIRO TSUKI - Commence in right posture and perform shomen uchi komi. As the strike is completed, slide your right hand to the forward end of the jo, turn your hips into left posture and perform a thrust to the rear as in ushiro tsuki.
10. GYAKI YOKOMEN USHIRO TSUKI - Commence in right posture as if you had just completed shomen uchi komi, bringing your hands up to the front of, and just above, your head with the jo pointing to your right. Step forwards with your left foot and perform hidari shomen uchi. Slide your left hand to the front end of the jo, turning your hips further into left posture and perform ushiro tsuki to your right side at chest level.
11. KATATE GEDAN GAESHI - This is the first of the suburi which features one-hand grip and uses wrist movement for successful completion. Commence in hidari tsuki no kamae, sliding your left hand to the forward end of the jo. Push the jo back through your right hand, bringing your body back and to the right as in the fourth suburi. Both hands should now be at the forward end of the jo. Take a long step forward with your right foot, sweeping the jo forwards across an imaginary opponent's face, holding it with your right hand only and catching it with your left hand over your head on the left side after the sweep is complete, finishing in a defensive position.
12. TOMA KATATE UCHI - This movement is used to extend the jo forwards to reach a considerable distance past your normal fighting range. Commence in hidari tsuki no kamae and draw the jo back over your head to your left with your right hand, resting the forward end of the jo on your left forefinger/thumb cleft. Draw your weight back onto your right foot. As you start to swing the jo around with your right wrist, commence stepping forwards with your right foot, swinging the jo at your opponent's head and around to be caught by your left hand down by your left hip.
13. KATATE HACHI-NO-JI-GAESHI - This incorporates a double wrist action to loosen your wrist and serves as the precursor to the hasso techniques that will follow. Commence in left posture. Hold the jo in your right hand on your right side, the end resting on the mat. Turn your wrist forwards, raising the jo and, while stepping forwards with the right foot, sweep the jo across your imaginary opponent's face. Catch the jo high on your left side in your open left hand. Swing your hips back to the right, changing posture into hidari hanmi while stepping back with your right foot as you push the jo across to your right with your left hand. Spin it around your right wrist, catching the short end in your left hand, beside your head on your right side.

14. HASSO GAESHI UCHI - The next five suburi all incorporate the hasso technique which consists of rapidly twirling the jo from a forward position under your wrist and up to above your right shoulder beside your head, as you do to complete the thirteenth suburi. Commence in ken no kamae, sliding your right foot back as you extend your left hand forwards and upwards, letting your right hand slide a little further towards the centre of the jo. As you step back with your right foot, push sharply down with your left hand on the jo to swing it down and up to your rear. Grasp the bottom end with your left hand as it comes to a vertical position at the right side of your head in hasso no kamae. Start to step forwards with your right foot as you bring the jo up to your head changing the grip with your right hand, and complete your step forwards as you strike with shomen uchi in right posture.
15. HASSO GAESHI TSUKI - Commence as in the previous suburi twirling the jo to assume hasso no kamae. From this point, extend your left foot forwards, bringing the jo down to perform a straight thrust to your front. Slide your right hand forwards and perform hasso gaeshi once more, bringing your left foot back a little to finish in hasso no kamae.
16. HASSO GAESHI USHIRO TSUKI - Commence as in the previous suburi by twirling your jo to assume hasso no kamae. From the vertical, drop the top of the jo forwards, extending your left hand to its front end and thrusting the jo to your right rear (migi ushiro tsuki). Finish with your hips facing to the right.
17. HASSO GAESHI USHIRO UCHI - Commence as in the sixteenth suburi assuming hasso no kamae. Turn your hips further to your right and strike down and around to your rear with a round sweeping blow, keeping your feet in the same position as they were in hasso no kamae.
18. HASSO GAESHI USHIRO HARAI - Commence as in the previous suburi assuming hasso no kamae. Turn your whole body to the rear, sweeping your right foot back and round whilst swinging the jo in a sweeping strike to an imaginary opponent who is standing behind you.
19. HIDARI NAGARE GAESHI UCHI - These final two suburi are designed to help improve your body movement as they incorporate a flowing combination of strikes. Commence in ken no kamae (right posture), stepping back with your right foot to perform shomen uchi komi (sixth suburi). As the strike is made turn to your left, bringing the jo around as you extend your left hand forwards to catch it. From here, take the jo back over your head. You should now be facing your rear as you perform right shomen uchi strike to the imaginary opponent who is now standing in front of you.
20. MIGI NAGARE GAESHI TSUKI - Commence in ken no kamae, stepping forwards to perform hidari shomen uchi. As you complete the strike, step back and round with your right foot, turning to your rear to block across your head. Lower your hands into hidari tsuki no kamae and perform hidari choku tsuki to deal with the imaginary adversary behind you.

## EXERCISES FOR IMPROVING ACCURACY WITH JO OR BOKKEN

Paul Findley paf@ioc.co.uk

Here are a few exercises which will help improve your accuracy with a bokken (or jo for that matter).

For shomen uchi: Have a partner hold a jo horizontally in front of you so that the jo is parallel with your shoulders. The jo should be fractionally below the height of your natural cutting action. You should make a few practice cuts to establish the correct height. With the jo in place, cut shomen uchi repeatedly with your bokken, trying to come as close to the jo as possible without touching it. Your partner can indicate how close --- or far away :) --- you are. Aim to cut with the last couple of inches of your bokken. Try not to look down at the jo, look straight ahead instead.

Yokomen uchi: Have your partner sit seiza directly in front of you and hold a jo vertically. With your bokken, cut yokomen uchi alternately to the left and right of the jo. Again, the idea is not to touch, but to come very close.

Once you get the hang of these you can ask your partner to move the jo about a bit. Hopefully your cuts will remain consistent as you adjust your position and posture to cope.

For tsuki (poke): Draw a small circle on the wall at your natural poke height (hmm, sounds disgusting :+()), and try to tsuki inside the circle every time. If it's too easy, make the circle smaller. A wall is probably a bit too solid for this really and you might annoy its owner too, so perhaps fix something with a bit of give to the wall (back to tyres eh?) Paul Findley

### 31-count jo kata and kumi-jo

by Jonathan Diesch

For this transcription, I have tried to avoid using Japanese terms for various techniques, partly because I can never remember them all, and mostly because it will limit the number of ppl who can follow what I'm saying. This is only a description of the kata as I know it, and may bear no relation whatsoever to anything your sensei has taught you.

Throughout this transcription YOU are 'doing' the kata side, HE is 'doing' the "anti-kata". numbers 1-31 are you, numbers 1a-30a are him!

1a: starting L posture, he makes a straight thrust to your chest.

1: Starting L posture, you step off the line to your L and make a reverse thrust over his jo, to the chest.

2a: stepping back, and slightly left, he rotates his jo to cause a deflection of yours, taking your balance to your rear L, and then makes a straight thrust to your face.

2: Stepping to your R, you raise your jo to protect your face, and block upwards, cocking your wrists as you do so, to keep contact, and stop his jo flying off into space. From here rotate your jo from under his to on top, and strike it down, taking his balance to his front R, and...

3: Thrust to his L floating ribs.

3a: keeping the end of his jo low, he steps back into R posture, and turns his hips towards you, blocking your strike with his jo vertical. From here he makes a spiral movement with his jo, that brings on-line with your face, and takes your jo, and your balance, to your rear L. Then he makes a straight thrust at your face.

4: You avoid this thrust by making a BIG step to your R, across the line, raising the jo to protect your face, NOT blocking him! As you bring the jo up, allow your back hand to slide into the middle of the stick, then let go with your front hand so that you can rotate the jo through 180 deg. catch the end again, step forward and...

5: make a straight cut (shomen).

5a: stepping back, he absorbs your cut by making an identical cut to yours, in mirror-image.

6: So drop the end of the jo to your R, step forward, around the end of his jo, and cut again. You should now be in L hanmi.

6a: he makes another identical cut, but is a little slow with it, this time you catch his jo, and send him off-balance to his rear L. He should now be in L hanmi.

7: You now pivot to face the opposite direction, and make a straight cut to an imaginary person's head.

7a: he recovers his balance, and attempts a straight thrust at your back.

8: You step forward, making shomen again.

8a: he raises his jo to hit you on the head, stepping forward into R posture.

9: You are in L posture, L hand forward on the jo. You raise the end of your jo to your front L, and then make (kaiten-ashi) by pivoting on the balls of your feet through 180 deg. then stepping FORWARD with your L foot. As you do this swing the jo round, and down diagonally, to strike at his knees. Ensure that you turn your wrists over so that you PUSH the jo round not pull it. If you pull you cannot stop the jo easily. Do not allow the jo to go further than 90 deg past his knees.

9a: with his jo still raised he steps back (quickly!) then steps in again to strike your head.

10: Step forward on your L foot, bringing the jo up horizontally under his elbows, to prevent him cutting you, IRL you go under his chin, or put the tip straight in his throat.

11: now drop the end of your jo, allowing him to finish his cut, stepping round to your L, and making shomen.

11a: he avoids being hit by drawing back, and meeting your strike,

12: You are now in L posture, so is he. This is a neutral position. Release the jo with your L (back) hand, uncross your hands and grip the jo firmly, pointing towards him maintaining zanshin.

12a: he does the same as 12.

13: Step forward, L posture, and thrust to his chest.

13a: he steps to his R, and spirals under your jo, as in no 2a, then thrusts at your face.

14: Step across to your R, and avoid the jo as in no 4

15: Make shomen as no 5.

15a: he steps back, and makes a mirror image shomen, as no 5a. He is now in R posture, with the R hand forward.

16: To avoid having the end of your jo smashed by his shomen, pull the jo back along your L side. Pull the jo with your back hand, through the front until the end of the jo is in your front hand, then push the jo through the back hand with your front. If you do this in reverse you will get your hand broken! Keep the jo in close to your body, with the front R hand at about chest height. You should be in R hanmi.

17: Now step forward with your L foot, around his jo, and punch it forwards to strike his R knee.

17a: he steps back into L posture, and simultaneously turns his hand over, allowing the end of the jo to drop, he puts his left hand in front of the R, and slides the R hand to the back of the jo. This blocks the knee strike, and exposes you to...

18a: he draws his jo back, and makes a straight thrust at your knee/thigh

18: you step forward and to the R, turn to face him, and rotate your jo through 180 deg. to strike his stick down with the back end, being careful to keep the jo at an upward angle so that he is knocked down and away from you. This also exposes his leg, so...

19: Draw back slightly, and thrust at his ANKLE.

19a: he steps back, drawing his L foot out of the way, and turning to face you, as he does this he lifts the back end of his jo, so that is vertical, and blocks your ankle thrust to the side. At this point he thinks he can hit you on the head, so raises his jo for shomen uchi.

20: You raise your jo to protect your head, but then realise that you can hit his R knee, so step forward and to your R, turning L to face him, and strike to the back of his knee, dropping onto one knee as you do so.

20a: having raised his jo above his head for shomen, he sees you going instead for his knee, so steps back to withdraw the leg, and swings the jo back down to block your strike vertically.

21: You pull you jo back against your side, to avoid it being hit, as in no 16.

22a: he raises the jo to make a straight strike to your head.

22: You are in R posture, sitting on your L leg, you stand up and step forward, bringing the back end of the jo forward, to thrust at his chest.

23a: to avoid this thrust he pivots his lead foot, turning off the line, and facing you. the jo is still raised. He then slides the jo though his hands to thrust downwards at your chest, over the top of your jo.

23: You step to your R side, turning to face him, and rotate the jo vertically through 180 deg. to strike his jo downwards and away from you, exposing his side.

24: You make a straight thrust at his L side.

24a: he pivots to his R, avoiding the thrust, then back to his original position, at the same time he drops the end of his jo under yours, and spirals it over the top, knocking you off balance to your front and L, this is similar to nos 2a and 13a, only upside down.

25: You draw your jo back to regain your posture, and make another straight thrust to his ribs.

25a: he turns to his L again, this time rotating the jo through 180 deg. vertically to strike your stick down. He then makes a straight thrust to your face.

26: You make a BIG step back and slightly off the line to your R pulling the stick back to your R side, as in no 16

27: Now step forward, punching the jo forwards to strike his knee as in no 17. You are now in R posture.

27a: he steps back, dropping the front end of his jo to block

28: Step forward, and to your L, moving past the end of his jo, and raise your jo ABOVE your head, so that you can thrust downwards at his chest/neck, with the lower end.

28a: he lifts the front end of his jo to vertical, and steps back, avoiding the thrust. As he does so, he strikes the end of your jo sideways, and he finishes with the jo held vertically, to side of his head (hasso no kamae (?))

29: When your jo is stuck sideways, allow it to rotate HORIZONTALLY through 180 deg. then drop the jo down to a mid-level position, and...



30: thust at his chest (chudan tsuki).

30a: he steps off the line to his R, and makes a straight strike to the end of your jo.

31: Absorb the force of his strike, letting the jo travel naturally around your body, step forward and to your L, turning to face him, and strike him powerfully across the back of his head, caving in his skull, and finally finishing the whole business!

You should finish in L posture, with your right hand forward on the jo. He should be flat on the floor, bleeding, or alternativley in R posture, with his R hand forward on the jo.

This is not a perfect transcription, many of the techniques are really hard to explain in words, as you have probably seen(!) So dont take this as gospel! (also dont leap down my throat for getting it all wrong!) I am intending to put a pamphlet together with a full set of photos to illustrate this kata at some point, perhaps then it might make some sense :)

The following description is that of the 31 Jo Kumi Jo kata, taught by Saito Sensei.

These words were written by Sensei Paul McGlone (yondan), Traditional Aikido Iwama Ryu GB. To quote Sensei McGlone " The following pages have been compiled .... to provide a basic guide.. these pages should NOT be regarded as an unalterable 'bible', as they have in the past and no doubt will in the future be revised.."

K stands for person doing the Kata, AK for person doing the Anti-Kata (initially attacking), and the Count (1 to 31) is shown in square brackets).

The movements are given in Japanese and if this a problem then I might suggest a revision of the 20 Jo suburi. After all, we should walk before we might try to run ;0)

31 kata no kumijo

K: Basic posture as first JO SUBURI

AK: TSUKI NO KAMAE then make CHOKUZUKI

K: KAESHI ZUKI [1]

AK: Deflect and make CHOKUZUKI

K: Step to right with overhead defence [2] then turn JO over on circular movement to knock partner's JO down and to the left, then enter with CHOKUZUKI in HIDARI HANMI [3]

AK: Steps to right, catching UKE's JO and covering own upper body, then turning JO over in circular movement to sweep UKE's JO down and to the right, then enters with CHOKUZUKI

K: Moves to right, raising JO to catch UCHI's JO and cover own upper body, [4] then enter MIGI SHOMEN UCHI KOMI [5]

AK: Steps back with defensive SHOMEN UCHI in MIGI HANMI

K: Makes HIDARI SHOMEN UCHI KOMI [6]

AK: Steps back with defensive SHOMEN UCHI in HIDARI HANMI

K: Turns to rear to make SHOMEN UCHI [7]

AK: Pauses

K: Makes HIDARI SHOMEN UCHI KOMI [8]

AK: Enters to MIGI HANMI preparing to raise JO for SHOMEN UCHI

K: Turns to rear to make USHIRO BARAI [9]

AK: Steps back into HIDARI HANMI raising JO sharply, avoiding UKE's sweep, then start to make SHOMEN UCHI

K: Moves out to left, raising JO sharply under UCHI's arms to halt attack [10]

AK: Stops SHOMEN UCHI partially executed

K: Enters to make GYAKYU YOKOMEN UCHI [11]

AK: Steps back into HIDARI HANMI and blends with and parries JO

K: Hand change, and settle into TSUKI NO KAMAE [12]

AK: Hand change, and settle into TSUKI NO KAMAE

K: Makes CHOKUZUKI [13]

AK: Steps to left, deflecting UKE's JO to right, then makes CHOKUZUKI

K: Moves to right in HIDARI HANMI, raising JO to catch UCHI'S JO and cover own upper body, [14] then enter MIGI SHOMEN UCHI KOMI [15]

AK: Steps back into MIGI HANMI cutting SHOMEN UCHI in defence

K: Immediately slide JO back to left hand side [16] and step forward making HIDARI GEDAN GAESHI [17]

AK: Step back into HIDARI HANMI moving left hand to front half of JO and using front end to defend knee, then make CHOKUZUKI

K: Step to right in HIDARI HANMI and turn JO end over end to strike UCHI's JO away to left [18] then make GEDAN TSUKI to UCHI's knee [19]

AK: Step back in HIDARI HANMI raising JO in basic defence

K: Step forward with YOKOMEN UCHI KOMI to UCHI's knee, dropping onto own right knee, [20]

AK: Step back into MIGI HANMI, cutting against UKE's JO as defence.

K: Slide JO back to left hand side [21]

AK: Raise JO for SHOMEN UCHI and step forward to strike UKE's exposed head

K: Draw JO across the body with right hand, sliding JO through left hand, at the same time rising up and stepping forwards with left foot, then making TSUKI to UCHI's chest [22]

AK: Step to left with left foot, avoiding UKE's thrust, then sliding right hand up to top end of JO, enter with left foot, thrusting JO over top of UKE's JO to UKE's chest

K: Step to right in HIDARI HANMI and turn JO end over end to strike UCHI's JO away to left [23] then enter in HADARI HANMI making CHOKUZUKI [24]

AK: Allow JO to follow circle created by UKE's strike and step straight back, maintaining HIDARI HANMI and dropping centre, blocking UKE's JO away to right.

K: Again enter in HIDARI HANMI making CHOKUZUKI [25]

AK: Step to right in HIDARI HANMI and turn JO end over end to strike UCHI's JO away to left, then start to make CHOKUZUKI

K: Slide JO back to right hand side, [26] and step forwards into MIGI HANMI making GEDAN GAESHI [27]  
AK: Draw JO back to right side of body then step back into MIGI HANMI making GEDAN GAESHI as defence

K: Draw JO back with left hand, raising JO to chest height, then make TSUKI to UCHI's chest [28]  
AK: Draw JO backwards through right hand until the right hand is about a foot from the end. Step back into HIDARI HANMI sweeping JO up and across to right, striking UKE's JO, then as JO approaches right shoulder, left hand drops to grip lower end, so that you assume HASSO NO KAMAE.

K: Move right hand up and to the left, to blend with strike, then release JO with left hand allowing JO to rotate, and catching free end with left hand above head [29] Enter with MIGI HANMI CHOKU TSUKI [30]  
AK: Strike UKE's JO with a parrying blow turning your right hip forwards as you do so, then step into MIGI HANMI and make CHOKUZUKI.

K: Absorb power of UCHI's cut, then raise JO as in 5th KEN SUBURI, entering with HIDARI HANMI to left of UCHI's JO, avoiding his thrust, and immediately cutting GYAKYU YOKOMEN UCHI [31]

Aikido bokken kata

by [Julian Frost](#)

The purpose of the "kata" is to demonstrate the relationship between swordwork and the eight variations of shihonage that Chiba Sensei regularly teaches. Grab a partner, in Ai Hanmi or Gyaku Hanmi and see if you can see how it works! Which of the 8 techniques above is Ai Hanmi, and which is Gyaku Hanmi is left as an exercise for the reader! :-)

The "Part 2" that I refer to remains the same for each of the 8 parts of this "kata"...

Starts in right posture, chudan kamae:

1. Step back with the front (right foot) and shomen, then ... (part 2) and repeat on other side.
2. Step forward with rear (left) foot and shomen, then ... (part 2) and repeat on other side.
3. Turn tenkan cutting up the vertical line. Continue the cut up, over your head, until you're facing the front again, then ... (part 2) and repeat on other side.
4. Pivot to face the rear, then step forward with the rear (right) foot, cutting up the vertical line. Continue the cut up, over your head, until you're facing the front again, then ... (part 2) and repeat on other side.
5. Step forward with the rear (left) foot from the 6 o'clock position to the 3 o'clock position, at the same time, and in one motion, the tip of the sword drops to guard your right side from attack, then comes over your head and does shomen (you're now facing 3 o'clock). Then ... (part 2) and repeat on other side.
6. Step forward with the rear (left) foot from the 6 o'clock position to a position just in front of your right foot. At the same time, and in one motion, the tip of your sword drops to guard your right side from attack, then comes over your head and does shomen as you step back with the right foot (you're now facing 3 o'clock). Then ... (part 2) and repeat on other side.
7. Step forward with the rear (left) foot to perform irimi-tenkan. The tip of the sword drops during this motion to guard your right side from attack, then as the tenkan is completed, comes over the head to do shomen. Then ... (part 2) and repeat on other side.
8. Slide the front (right) foot over to the 3 o'clock position, then move the left foot to where the right foot was. Pivot so that you're facing 9 o'clock. At the same time, and in one motion, the tip of the sword drops to cover the LEFT side of your body, then comes over the head and does shomen. Then ... (part 2) and repeat on other side.

Part 2

Step forward with the rear foot and thrust chudan. Smoothly raise the hands over the top of your head, pivot on the balls of the feet to face 180 degrees in the opposite direction, and lower the sword back to chudan kamae (you'll have the opposite foot forward to the one you started with).

### 13 Jo kata

as taught by Morihito Saito sensei

Start in jo kamae, (left hanmi, jo vertical in left hand, tip on ground)

1. Choku tsuki - in left hanmi
2. Jodan gaeshi + shomenuchikomi - stepping forward to right hanmi
3. Jodan gaeshi - sliding back, still in right hanmi
4. Choku tsuki - right hanmi
5. Hasso gaeshi - turning 180 deg to right, left hanmi
6. Shomen uchi komi -stepping forward to right hanmi
7. Chudan gaeshi - turning 180 deg to left, right hanmi
8. Choku tsuki - right hanmi
9. Gedan gaeshi - slide back in right hanmi
10. Chudan gaeshi - step forward into left hanmi
11. Jodan tsuki - left hanmi
12. Tsuki kamae - slide back in left hanmi
13. Choku tsuki - left hanmi

### 13 Jo Kata (after Saito sensei)

Uchi	Uke (13 point kata)
Start with jo horizontal	Start with jo on ground
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Choku tsuki (enter to front)</li> <li>2. Choku tsuki</li> <li>3. Choku tsuki</li> <li>4.</li> <li>5. Choku tsuki (from behind)</li> <li>6. Choku tsuki</li> <li>7. Choku tsuki (from behind – original front)</li> <li>8.</li> <li>9. Withdraw, pull jo back, but keep in front of body</li> <li>10. Choku tsuki.</li> <li>11.</li> <li>12. Choku tsuki</li> <li>13.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Choku tsuki (irimi, offline to left to evade thrust)</li> <li>2. Hayashi gaeshi (like jodan gaeshi yokomen uchi with less block)</li> <li>3. Defensive parry to right</li> <li>4. Tsuki</li> <li>5. Hasso gaeshi defense</li> <li>6. Menuchi (moving to right to avoid his thrust)</li> <li>7. Turn, high defense, point of jo up</li> <li>8. Tsuki</li> <li>9. Put jo back behind body</li> <li>10. High parry (like gedan gaeshi, point up)</li> <li>11. High tsuki (spear)</li> <li>12. Strike down jo (move right and reverse jo, striking to left)</li> <li>13. Thrust (ribs)</li> </ol>

## Bokken work

by Bob Whelan, Sandan

What I have tried to do is summarize the instruction I have received from Sekiya Sensei, Inaba Sensei (at the Shiseikan Dojo previously referred to in a Kashima Shin Ryu post), Kanai Sensei, Chiba Sensei (and by extension, with his student Lorraine DiAnne Sensei), Saito Sensei, and Saotome Sensei. Some of this experience is as a deshi while the bulk of it is through consistent attendance at seminars over more than 20 years with the frequency of contact reflected in the above sequence. (It is not intended reflect any judgement of a hierarchy of ability.)

Although there are many nuances of style and application; what I have tried to do is cite only that which all seem to share in common. Consequently, the logic of my personal study is that the "essential points" would be what they all seem to agree upon. These are the things that I am still working on and likely will always need work.

As the sword is a bladed instrument, (rather than a club for example), the goal is to allow the blade to do the work. If free to do so, the edge will find its own path so there is no need for the wielder to do anything extra. Thus the boken is not "hitting" or "sawing" anything, rather it is "slicing". In addition, as one application of sword technique would have been on the battlefield with multiple attackers, this must be done with minimal effort and yet with speed. This would allow the samurai to deal with an indefinite number of opponents rapidly and without fatigue.

Consequently, there should be no tension or strength whatsoever in the shoulders, arms, wrists or hands. The shoulders particularly must stay relaxed in order that they might receive the power that will be generated from the hips and the foundation of a firm center. The hands should grip the boken the way one might hold a live bird; firm enough that the bird cannot escape yet light enough that it will not be crushed in any way. In addition, the grip should be primarily with the little finger and then ring finger with the middle finger somewhat less involved (some note percentages of each but this varies). The placement of the hands on the hilt is in the same manner that one does yonkyo; as this technique is actually an application of the sword grip to the back of an opponent's forearm. Basically, the knuckle of the right index finger is just under where the sword-guard (tsuba) would be and the little finger of the left hand is at the base of the hilt. This leaves a space between the hands which is roughly the equivalent of a hand's width.

The index finger on the right hand could be thought of as "aiming" or directing the blade in a manner similar to how one might point, (although this is more a visualization, as neither index finger should be extended, but instead gently curled around the grip). The little finger of the left hand is used to stop the path of the blade as indicated in each specific cut. (In Kashima Shin Ryu it is actually curled under the hilt to serve as a "stop" during tsuki thrusts, so that the sword doesn't slip back, but this is not the case in Aiki-ken.)

Rather than try and hit something, (like one might with a baseball bat), attempts should be made to extend a clear but relaxed focus (this is hard for me to explain and these words just don't do it exactly but I'm trying) to a point on the blade edge of the boken about an inch or so from the tip. This is where the blade is beginning its cut and will move from here "through" the intended target ,(as opposed to "at" it, as one might hit), until the cut completes itself.

The gruesome reality is that the cut (for example a kesa giri with enters at the juncture where the neck meets the shoulder and exits just above the hip on the opposite side, thus cleaving the opponent in half) must travel through dense muscle and several thick, hard bones. This can't be "pushed". The blade must find its own way.

To maximize power from the hips and maintain the boken as a part, or extension of the wielder, it is necessary to stand erect but not strained. The shoulders are less "thrown back" than the chest is "opened", (again to avoid tightness there). The back of the neck is also straight but not strained, as if you are "holding the sky up with your head". The knees are always bent and "springy". This is both to allow movement of the hips but also to allow the body weight to be transmitted through the "center" to the blade, as the weight shifts with the cut. As the blade falls and "slices", the "center" must also be able to drop in unison with the cut. I have been told (but cannot verify) that in Aiki-ken the turn of the hips into the cut, (from a more perpendicular relationship of hips to blade into a more pronounced hanme) was an innovation of O Sensei. The logic was that, in the event of a "mutual kill" situation resulting in simultaneous thrusts, the swordsman who retreated his hip would avoid the stabbing. In addition the snapping return of the hips to the original position adds extra momentum and power.

The bending of the knees has another very critical and necessary function. It helps unify the center of one's weight with the center of one's height at the "one point". It might be helpful to use the metaphor of how a "range finder" focus works in a camera. In this instance there are two "fuzzy" images that "merge" into a single clear one. In general, the "center" (hara/tanden) is approximately the distance of a fist below one's navel. This is likely be the center of one's weight, but that weight is distributed unequally along the height of the body. Therefore, it becomes necessary to lower one's height, (again in general), to "equalize" the weight distribution and bring the mid-point of one's weight and the mid-point of one's height to a single "focused" point at one's "center". If one keeps the upper torso completely relaxed and pliable then this action will significantly stabilize the hips and add much more substance and "rooting" to one's posture. It applies to ALL technique. Everyone will have to find their own personal center though.

The choice of footwork varies slightly but there seems to be agreement on the purpose. The variations seem to be related to how tight the hanme is (e.g. if you retreat the forward foot does it collide with the rear foot because they are on the same line?) and the timing of the foot placement (e.g. does the step occur during the cut or just before?). The majority opinion seems to be that the step occurs just prior to the cut, however the movement is so close that it is virtually coordinated. The logic is that the blade must swing from a foundation that is "already stable" rather than a foundation in the process of "becoming stable".

The step should never be longer than a shoulder width so that one maintains a "defensive" posture. The feet slide as if one could almost, but not quite, slip a sheet of paper between the sole of the foot and the mat. If one were walking along a straight line, like a seam in the canvas of the mat, then that line would bisect both feet from space between the big toe and second toe (where you would slip the thong of sandals) to a point very slightly to the outside edge of the center of the heel. This will result in both feet turned slightly to the outside and a somewhat narrow hanme. The advantage here is that when you pivot 180 degrees to the rear, as you do in Happo no Giri, you are in exactly the same stable hanme as before and no foot adjustment is required.

Now this is already quite a bit to practice! Training methods used for these details consist primarily of very slow walking along a line with something like a tsuba, or round block of pine, balanced on the top of the head. One first, takes the hanme with awareness of all the factors described above. Then, after checking posture, one places the block on the top of the head on the spot which represents the top of the axis of one's back bone, (as if it extended through the skull). Now, with the block on your head, you practice walking in the method indicated above. After awhile you add the movement of pivoting your relaxed shoulders arms and torso from side to side around this axis, with a very low center and springy knees. This practice progresses to going up and down into seiza while walking, to tenkans, and knee walking added in between periods of walking; all while keeping the block balanced.

If you tie your belt so that the knot is at the spot that you have determined is your personal center, you can add the further refinement of focusing maintaining a hard center throughout the training. This can be initially done by pushing the one point against the knot in the belt. However, one must aim to maintain this focus WITHOUT flexing or straining the abdominal muscles. The visualization is that one EXTENDS from the internal point ultimately to all directions but you can use the belt knot as a starting cue. This is more than a visualization,

however, because you actually can get to a point where you can make the center hard and firm. Once one has this ability it is applied along with an exhale to the completion of any technique.

On top of this foundation one adds the cut. The cut actually emanates from the center. The stance is firm, open and relaxed. The center is deep allowing one's weight to be drop down from it (like a "plumb bob" toward the earth) with the weight more or less equally distributed between the feet. The sense is that one's center extends out as the boken rises and then drops as the boken falls. The blade falls virtually under its own power but accelerated by the momentum transmitted to it from the center of a unified body that is "one with the blade". This movement is timed with an exhale as the center also drops with the blade. The weight shifts slightly to the forward foot via the "spring" in the knees.

A diagram with the footwork for Happo no Giri can be found in one of Saito Sensei's books. Basically though, you apply all of the above. In this instance, start in right hanme, and perform a shomen cut (an overhead cut straight down from one's own middle to slice the opponent in half). With feet in place first cut forward (North), then (still with feet in place) you pivot 180 degrees and cut behind (South). Now using the rear foot as a cue as to which direction to step (in other words, your rear right foot is slightly pointing to the right so move it in that direction into right hanme) you move to your right (West from the starting orientation) and cut. Then you keep your feet in place and pivot as before to cut behind (East from the starting direction). This has given you the first 4 directions. From this position to change direction to give you the final 4 directions.

In this position your rear foot is slightly facing the right again. So now step diagonally to the right (South East from the starting orientation) and repeat all of the above for the next 4 directions. The sequence when starting in right hanme would thus be:

North-South-West-East-Southeast-Northwest-Northeast-Southwest. At the end without moving your feet you pivot back to face North into the same right hanme where you started. As you turn the blade of the sword should be facing the direction of the turn.

At the start and finish of each shomen cut the arms are extended in a natural curve (as in they are in "unbending arm") with the hilt extended from one's center and the point aimed at the center of the throat of an opponent your own size. Thus you can practice the initial "aim" in the mirror.

There are three variations of the stopping place of the upward movement. They are: 1.) point straight up towards the sky, 2.) blade horizontally over the head where the blade and hilt protect the wielder from an over head strike, and the point is aimed behind, 3.) the blade all the way over and behind the head where the point aims down towards the earth. However, they all stop at the same place after the cut is complete. That is the starting position described above. The tip of the blade never drops lower then the hilt, at most it ends horizontally, as this provides an opening for a counter strike.

Don't expect quick progress. One teacher told me that if you do all of these things you will BEGIN to notice a real difference after 2 years!

### Six-part sword exercise

by Chuck Gordon <chuck.gordon@mindspring.com>

Mae

Stand naturally, left hand on sword (thumb/forefinger on tsuba)  
Slide left foot back and grasp tsuka with right hand

Draw the sword directly and point it toward teki's eyes  
Step up (L foot forward) into jodan no kamae  
Step up (R foot forward) cut kiri otoshi  
Keep left hand on tsuka, snap right fist down on tsuka behind tsuba  
Reverse right hand on tsuka and release the left hand  
Reverse the sword and grasp the saya with left hand  
Place the mune of sword lightly between thumb and forefinger  
Bring kissaki to koiguchi and sheathe the sword  
Step forward and pivot 180 degrees

## Age

Drop down onto your left haunch (iaigoshi), right hand grasps tsuka  
(Sword is rolled 180 degrees -- edge down)  
Break koiguchi and slide the sword slowly out about 1/3 of the way  
Crouching, cross-step (L foot forward) and cut up into teki's wrist  
Reverse the cut and cut down into teki's shoulder  
Repeat noto as in Mae  
Step and turn 180 degrees

## Yoko

Stand naturally, right foot slightly advanced  
(Roll sword 90 degrees -- edge out)  
Slide right foot slightly forward and draw the sword  
(A flat left-to-right cut across teki's chest)  
Step up (L foot fwd) to jodan  
Step in (R foot fwd) and drop left knee to mat, cutting kiri otoshi  
Noto, stand and turn as above

## Choku tsuki

Stand naturally, right foot slightly advanced  
Draw and point at teki's eyes  
Step in (L foot fwd) grasping tsuka  
Snap hips into a straight thrust into teki's chest  
(Blade should be flat, tip goes in first)  
Draw back slightly as you withdraw the sword and block  
(Trail kissaki to left at about 45 degrees overhead)  
Step in (R foot fwd) and cut kesa giri  
Noto, step and turn as above

## Ushiro

Stand naturally, right foot slightly advanced  
Draw the sword but keep kissaki pointed back past your left wrist  
Thrust to your rear, with the sword blade flat  
Step in (L foot fwd) and perform an augmented rising block/cut  
(You're checking teki's cut at the wrist)  
Reverse the sword position and perform kesa giri  
Perform noto, step and turn a above



## Katate

Stand naturally, right foot slightly advanced  
Tsugiashi, tsuki with tsuka to teki's face  
Slide back a bit, pull the tsuka almost vertical  
Draw straight up and cut (single hand) down across teki's forearm  
Step in (Lfoot fwd), augment the blade, tenkan and cut across teki's belly  
Step back and perform augmented block/cut as in Ushiro  
Step in and cut kesa  
Noto, step and turn as above

You're done

## Happo Giri (The Eight Cut Kata)

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### Overview

The eight cut kata is a beginning kata for use of the sword in jiu jitsu. It consists of nine distinct strikes, eight of which are cutting strikes, the remaining strike being a piercing thrust. The outline of the kata is as follows.

### Outline

#### 1) Drawing the sword

The kata begins with a standing rei. The jitsuka then steps forward with the right foot drawing the sword into a horizontal strike. The strike should be at about neck height.

#### 2) Thrust

The jitsuka draws back into a cat stance and then thrusts forwards leaning into a thrust at about stomach level.

#### 3) Horizontal right

Draw the sword back in as though for another thrust. Looking to the right, step right and strike horizontally at shoulder height.

#### 4) Vertical right - up

Stepping forward & right with the left foot take the sword blade forward and up in an arc through 270° until the sword points vertically up.

#### 5) Vertical right - down

Rotate the blade through 180° on a vertical axis and then swing the sword down until the tip goes just past pointing straight down.

#### 6) Horizontal left

Looking left step with the left foot out to the left and strike horizontally at shoulder height.

#### 7) Vertical right - up

Stepping forward & left with the right foot take the sword blade forward and up in an arc through 270° until the sword points vertically up.

#### 8) Vertical right - down

Rotate the blade through 180° on a vertical axis and then swing the sword down until the tip goes just past pointing straight down.

#### 9) vertical strike in kiba dachi

Draw the right foot back to the left and then step out to the right into a deep kiba dachi. At the same time drop the

sword vertically around your left shoulder until it lies vertically behind your head. Strike vertically over and down bending the knees a little as you do so.

#### 10) Clean the sword

Step back with the left leg and perform a *chiburi* (to clean the blade of blood).

#### 11) Sheath the sword

Resheath the sword and bring the left leg up to the right to stand with both feet together. Finally with your left foot followed by the right, take a side step to the left and rei.

### Performing the kata

#### General notes

To perform the kata well, the movements should flow smoothly together. This does not mean quickly. In fact the kata is one of precise movement. The tip of the blade for instance should be perfectly still at the end of each strike. There are many small points to the kata which takes a long time to perfect. Knowing the correct foot position and finishing point for each strike takes a great deal of practice.

#### In a grading

When performing this kata during a grading, it is a chance to focus yourself and to have a rest from what are usually hectic and demanding occasions. Breathing through each movement at a steady rate will help you to calm yourself. Focusing on the kata allows you to in effect leave the grading. try to imagine that you are performing the kata for yourself and not for the grading panel. Take your time and try to take this opportunity to relax.

Date: Thu, 12 Jun 1997 09:54:51 -0700

Reply-To: Aikido List

Sender: Aikido List

From: Julian Frost

Subject: Re: Chiba sensei's bokken katas

To: AIKIDO-L@LISTS.PSU.EDU

The "Part 2" that I refer to remains the same for each of the 8 parts of this "kata"...

#### Part 2

=====

Step forward with the rear foot and thrust chudan.

Smoothly raise the hands over the top of your head, pivot on the balls of the feet to face 180 degrees in the opposite direction, and lower the sword back to chudan kamae (you'll have the opposite foot forward to the one you started with).

Starts in right posture, chudan kamae:

- 1) Step back with the front (right foot) and shomen, then ... (part 2) and repeat on other side.
- 2) Step forward with rear (left) foot and shomen, then ... (part 2) and repeat on other side.
- 3) Turn tenkan cutting up the vertical line. Continue the cut up, over your head, until you're facing the front again, then ... (part 2) and repeat on

other side.

- 4) Pivot to face the rear, then step forward with the rear (right) foot, cutting up the vertical line. Continue the cut up, over your head, until you're facing the front again, then ... (part 2) and repeat on other side.
- 5) Step forward with the rear (left) foot from the 6 o'clock position to the 3 o'clock position, at the same time, and in one motion, the tip of the sword drops to guard your right side from attack, then comes over your head and does shomen (you're now facing 3 o'clock). Then ... (part 2) and repeat on other side.
- 6) Step forward with the rear (left) foot from the 6 o'clock position to a position just in front of your right foot. At the same time, and in one motion, the tip of your sword drops to guard your right side from attack, then comes over your head and does shomen as you step back with the right foot (you're now facing 3 o'clock). Then ... (part 2) and repeat on other side.
- 7) Step forward with the rear (left) foot to perform irimi-tenkan. The tip of the sword drops during this motion to guard your right side from attack, then as the tenkan is completed, comes over the head to do shomen. Then ... (part 2) and repeat on other side.
- 8) Slide the front (right) foot over to the 3 o'clock position, then move the left foot to where the right foot was. Pivot so that you're facing 9 o'clock. At the same time, and in one motion, the tip of the sword drops to cover the LEFT side of your body, then comes over the head and does shomen. Then ... (part 2) and repeat on other side.

The purpose of the "kata" is to demonstrate the relationship between swordwork and the eight variations of shihonage that Chiba Sensei regularly teaches. Grab a partner, in Ai Hanmi or Gyaku Hanmi and see if you can see how it works! Which of the 8 techniques above is Ai Hanmi, and which is Gyaku Hanmi is left as an exercise for the reader! :-)

### The Spirit of Kata

The performance of a kata should be alive with tension, electric, and dynamic. It should be invested with a spirit that makes each move seem as if were being executed for real.

When a trainee practices kata, there is a psychodynamic aspect that needs to be maintained. Although kata are, by definition, set pieces in which each move and response is known beforehand, they are choreographed versions of combat. Each attack is meant to deliver a decisive blow. Each defensive move must be executed as if the attack were driven by killing intent. In this regard, the composure and control exhibited is as important as the technique displayed. It is possible for you to stumble technically in kata demonstration and yet successfully complete the performance through the maintenance of spirit and focus.

### The Kendo No Kata

There are ten kata practiced today in Kendo. Unlike the practice in karate, where forms are given symbolic names or names that identify the elements such as judo's *Nage no Kata*-kata of throws, Kendo's kata are more prosaically identified by number. Kendo's kata are divided into two groups: The seven kata are practiced using only the long sword, or tachi. In the final three, the defender uses both the long sword and the short sword, or kodachi. The names of the Kata are as follows:

### Ipponme

This kata illustrates the effectiveness of a nuki technique. In it, both trainees assume jodan no kamae. They move forward to meet. Uchidachi takes the initiative and attacks with a men strike. Shidachi, demonstrating an awareness of the impending attack, steps back a half-step so that the attack misses, then steps in to deliver a men strike. Uchidachi steps back a half-step as if to try again, and shidachi lowers the point of the bokken to uchidachi's eyes. Uchidachi steps back another half-step and shidachi comes forward into left jodan, completely dominating the situation. Both Kendoka then step into chudan no kamae, lower their bokken into hodoku, and step back five paces into their original starting position.

### Nihonme

In this kata, Both Kendoka assume chudan no kamae. They step in to meet. Uchidachi cuts at shidachi's kote. Shidachi evades, in another example of nuki technique, by sliding diagonally to his left, lowering his bokken, and then cutting uchidachi's right kote. Shidachi then steps back into the center. Both assume, lower their bokken to hodoku, and step back.

### Sanbonme

This kata features the tsuki thrust. Both practitioners assume gedan no kamae, the low stance. They step in and raise swords slowly to chudan. Uchidachi steps forward right and attacks with a thrust to the throat. Shidachi takes a half-step back, and parries with the side of the bokken to his left. He then counters with three tsuki, steeping in right, left, and then right. Uchidachi steps back in response, parrying the first two thrusts. The final thrust is not parried. With his sword in uchidachi's face, shidachi takes three small steps forward, dominating uchidachi with the point of his sword. Shidachi then begins to step back. With the sword still dominating uchidachi, he takes two steps back (left,right). He then begins a series of three more steps, lowering his bokken to chudan. At the first step, uchidachi raises his bokken to meet shidachi at chudan, then steps forward on the next two steps. Both are now back in the center. They assume hodoku and step back five steps to the starting line.

### Yohonme

At the starting point, uchidachi assumes right hasso no kamae. Shidachi assumes wakigamae. They take three steps forward. At this point, uchidachi slides forward, leading with his right foot, striking down with the bokken. Shidachi steps forward with his right foot, also striking down. Their swords clash high and are brought down into chudan. Uchidachi then attacks with a tsuki. Shidachi parries the thrust by turning his bokken on his side and pointing it to his right. At the same time, he slides diagonally to his left, then steps in to strike uchidachi's men. Shidachi then moves to the center, both assume chudan, then hodoku, and move back.

### Gohonme

This kata utilizes the suriage technique to deflect and simultaneously attack. Uchidachi assumes left jodan no kamae. Shidachi raises his bokken slightly. Uchidachi attacks men. Shidachi assumes chudan. They step in. Shidachi raises his bokken slightly. Uchidachi attacks men. Shidachi slides his bokken upward, knocking the attack away and to his left, then cuts down to men. Shidachi then assumes left jodan and dominates the situation. Both Kendoka then assume chudan in center, then hodoku, then step back to the starting line.

### 1. Neho Zenshin Zengo-Kiri, Shikko (Knee Walking)

- Right kamae (shikko) in segan
- Inhale, raise sword to jodan; Exhale, step with left knee, cut L
- Inhale, raise sword to jodan; Exhale, step with right knee, cut R
- Repeat

### 2. Neho Zenshin Zengo-Kiri (Tachi Waza)

#### 1st Form -

- R kamae in segan
- Inhale, raise sword to jodan; Exhale, step L, cut L
- Inhale, raise sword to jodan; Exhale, step R, cut R
- Inhale, pivot 180 to L; Exhale, cut L
- Inhale, raise sword to jodan; Exhale, step R, cut R
- Inhale, raise sword to jodan; Exhale, step L, cut L
- Inhale, pivot 180 to R; Exhale, cut R

#### 2nd Form -

- R kamae in segan
- Inhale, raise sword to jodan and step L; Exhale, step R and cut R
- Inhale, pivot 180 to L; Exhale and cut L
- Inhale, raise sword to jodan and step R; Exhale, step L and cut L
- Inhale, pivot 180 to R; Exhale and cut R

#### 3rd Form -

- R kamae in segan
- Inhale; Exhale and step L, thrust L; Step R, thrust R
- Inhale, pivot 180 to L; Exhale and cut L
- Inhale; Exhale and step R, thrust R; Step L, thrust L
- Inhale, pivot 180 to R; Exhale and cut R

### 3. Shiho Giri (Four-Direction Cut)

- R kamae in segan
- Inhale, raise sword to jodan; Exhale, step L, cut L
- Inhale, guard and pivot 180 to R; Exhale and cut R
- Inhale, guard and raise sword to jodan, pivot 90 to L; Exhale, step L, cut L
- Inhale, guard and pivot 180 to R; Exhale and cut R
- Inhale, raise sword to jodan, pivot 90 to R; Exhale, step L, cut L

### 4. Happa Giri (Eight-Direction Diagonal Cut)

- R kamae in segan
- Inhale, raise sword to jodan; Exhale, step L, cut L
- Inhale, raise sword to jodan; Exhale, step R, cut diagonally downward L Cut diagonally upward R following the same line as the downward cut, step L; Pivot 180 to R and cut R

- Inhale, raise sword to jodan; Exhale; step L, cut diagonally downward R Cut diagonally upward L, step R; Pivot 90 to L, step L and cut L
- Inhale, raise sword to jodan; Exhale, step R, cut diagonally downward L Cut diagonally upward R, step L; Pivot 180 to R and cut R
- Inhale, raise sword to jodan; Exhale, step L, cut diagonally downward R Cut diagonally upward L, step R; Pivot 45 (diagonally) to L, step L and cut L
- Inhale, raise sword to jodan; Exhale, step R, cut diagonally downward L Cut diagonally upward R, step L; Pivot 180 to R and cut R
- Inhale, raise sword to jodan; Exhale, step L, cut diagonally downward R Cut diagonally upward L, step R; Pivot 90 to L, step L and cut L
- Inhale, raise sword to jodan; Exhale, step R, cut diagonally downward L Cut diagonally upward R, step L; Pivot 180 to R and cut R
- Inhale, raise sword to jodan; Exhale, step L, cut diagonally downward R < L cut and step L, to (diagonally) 135 Pivot R; upward diagonally>

## 5. Naname Kiri-Sage/Kiri-Age

### 1st Form -

- R kamae in segan
- Inhale, raise sword to jodan; Exhale, step L, cut L
- Inhale, raise sword to jodan; Exhale, step R, cut diagonally downward L Cut diagonally upward R, step L; Pivot 180 to R and cut R
- Inhale, raise sword to jodan; Exhale, step L, cut diagonally downward R Cut diagonally upward L, step R; Pivot 180 to L and cut L

### 2nd Form -

- R kamae in segan
- Inhale, raise sword to jodan; Exhale, step L, cut diagonally downward R;
- Inhale, deflect the descending blade with the back of your blade (diagonally upward L), step R
- Pivot 180 to L and withdraw L foot to the rear
- Exhale, cut diagonally downward L
- Inhale, deflect the descending blade diagonally upward R, step L
- Pivot 180 to R and withdraw R foot to the rear
- Exhale, cut diagonally downward R

## ASU Sword Suburi Crib Notes Shari Dyer

### 1. Shomen Uchi •Segan

- Inhale, raise sword, sliding R foot back to L foot
- Exhale, cut center line, slide into R. kamae

## 2. Shomen Uchi w/ full drop into Shikko

- Segan
- Inhale, raise sword, sliding R foot back to L foot
- Exhale, cut down center line, slid into R. kamae, drop into R. shikko

## 3. Renzuko Yokomen Uchi

(Repeated Cut on Each Side of the Head)

- Migi Hasso Gedan (Sword low on R side)
- Inhale, raise sword to R shoulder, step forward with R foot
- Exhale, cut diagonally down to L
- Inhale, bring sword up to L shoulder, step forward with L foot
- Exhale, cut diagonally down to R

## 4. Renzuko Shomen Uchi w/ High Guard (off line)

- Migi Hasso Gedan
- Inhale, raise sword, step forward to R kamae
- Exhale, cut center line w/ shomen uchi
- Inhale, side-step diagonally backward with L foot, high guard
- Exhale, step forward to L kamae, cut center line w/ shomen uchi
- Inhale, side-step diagonally backward with R foot, high guard
- Exhale, step forward to R kamae, cut center line w/ shomen uchi

## 5. Tsuki, Shomen Uchi

(Thrust with Front Cut)

- Migi hasso gedan
- Inhale
- Exhale, R step, R. thrust , slide forward (same side) for shomen uchi

## 6. Yokomen Uchi, Kiri Gaeshi

(Diagonal cut & reversed path)

- Migi hasso gedan
- Inhale, raise sword
- Exhale, step forward to R kamae, cut full yokomen uchi,
- Reverse cut, stepping forward to L kamae, end in migi hasso jodan

## 7. Shomen Uchi In Place

(Continuous Front Cut, Switching Feet)

- Migi hasso gedan
- Inhale, raise sword
- Exhale, step forward to R kamae,
- Shomen uchi across line of attack
- Inhale, raise sword
- Exhale, switch to L kamae in place (stepping off the line),
- Shomen uchi across line of attack

## 8. Deflection to Yokomen Uchi (continuous)

- Migi hasso gedan
- Inhale, deflect upward from R to L, R foot to L

- Exhale, circle bokken into R yokomen uchi, drop L foot back
- Inhale, deflect upward from L to R, L foot to R
- Exhale, circle bokken into L yokomen uchi, drop R foot back

#### 9. Renzuko Shomen Uchi with Shikko

- Segan
- Inhale, raise sword, slide R foot back to L foot
- Exhale, shomen uchi w/ R kamae, drop into shikko
- Inhale, stand & switch kamae in place, raise sword
- Exhale, shomen uchi w/ L kamae, drop into shikko

#### 10. Musubi Tsuki (Connecting Thrust)

- Migi hasso gedan
  - Inhale
  - Exhale, step forward into R hanmi, thrust (munetsuki)
  - Inhale, step back off the line w/ R foot, bokken at side guard (using flat of blade)
  - Exhale, step forward into R hanmi, thrust (munetsuki), etc.
- this movement is all one motion*

#### 11. Side-Step with Deflection

- Segan
- Inhale
- Exhale, slide L in R kamae extend L hand (grip) to R, bokken deflects to L side
- Cut on return path
- Inhale at Segan
- Exhale, slide R in R kamae, extend L hand (grip) to L, bokken deflects to R side
- Cut on return path

#### 12. Yokomen Uchi Double Cut & Deflection

- Migi hasso gedan
- Inhale, raise sword, step forward into R kamae
- Exhale, short cut diagonally down to the L,
- Circle the sword up behind back, long cut
- Inhale, bring L foot to R foot, reverse path of cut, deflecting up into jodan position
- Exhale, drop R foot back, short cut diagonally down L to R,
- Circle the sword up behind back, long cut

### Suburi - Bokken

#### First Suburi

The first suburi is a basic \_shomen cut\_. From the ready position, raise the sword so that your left hand is on your forehead and the sword is angled slightly back. During this movement your hips should turn from a triangular orientation to a square one. Cut down and out with a wringing motion, as if you were flinging something off the tip of the bokken, and let your hips return to their triangular position. Finish with the sword in front of your



center. The tip should be just slightly lower than the hilt, though you should not allow your wrists to flex up in order to accomplish this. At all times keep the sword within the plane of your centerline. Always cut with a relaxed motion.

## Second Suburi

From the ready position, step back deeply with the right foot and raise the sword so that the left hand is just above the left eye. This position is known as \_hasso kamae\_. Step forward with the right foot and perform a shomen cut.

## Third Suburi

This suburi starts the same as number 2, except the sword raise continues over head in a circular motion until the sword is almost resting on the right hip. This position is known as \_waki kamae\_. Step forward with the right foot and perform a shomen cut, making sure the sword comes directly down the center line.

## Fourth Suburi

From the ready position raise the sword as you bring the right foot back to the left foot. The sword should be directly overhead and your feet should be together. Step forward with the left foot and perform a shomen cut. Now raise the sword as you bring the left foot back to the right foot. Step forward with the right foot and perform a shomen cut. Continue this process while alternating feet.

## Fifth Suburi

Do a shomen strike as in number 1. Rotate the blade clockwise until the edge is up while raising the hilt to your forehead. Simultaneously rotate the left hip back and the right hip forward. This is a \_right parry\_. Let the tip of the bokken drop and continue around behind you in a circular motion as you step forward with the left foot and perform a shomen cut. Rotate the blade counterclockwise until the edge is up while raising the hilt to your forehead. Simultaneously rotate the right hip back and the left hip forward. Your arms should end up in a crossed position. This is a \_left parry\_. Let the tip of the bokken drop and continue around behind you in a circular motion as you step forward with the right foot and perform a shomen cut. Alternate left and right in this way, moving across the floor.

## Sixth Suburi

This suburi is the same as number 5, with one addition; in between each cut and parry shuffle forward slightly and perform a \_tsuki\_ on that side. A tsuki on any side is a thrust to the midsection with the tip of the bokken. Shuffle forward slightly with the front foot and turn the blade so that it faces the opposite side from the front foot, e.g., a right tsuki has the right foot forward and the blade facing left. Again, alternate left and right in this way, moving across the floor.

## Seventh Suburi

This suburi starts from the ready position with a right shomen cut. Move forward with the left foot and perform a left tsuki. Perform a left parry and step forward with the right foot into a right shomen cut. Repeat, moving across the floor.

Kendo Basics for new members of GoDaiKen:

### Training Hall Etiquette

Strict formalities are observed in all phases of *keiko* at GoDaiKen. Included in this is the *Sempai-Kouhai* (senior-junior) relationship. New students of GoDaiKen are to look to their *sempai* to learn proper behavior and techniques. The senior students are relied upon as role models, and are treated with respect. The *Sensei*, or teacher, needs only to correct the senior students, and all others are expected to take the same criticism to heart.

Here are some basic standards of behavior that should be obeyed at all times:

Perform a standing bow before entering or leaving the training area.

Remove your shoes and socks before stepping on the dojo floor.

Start and finish each practice drill with a bow.

Treat every *shinai* and *bokken* as if it were a real sword.

Check your equipment frequently for safety purposes-NEVER practice with a splintered or cracked *shinai*!

NEVER lounge around in the dojo, especially if you're tired from *keiko*.

Always obey the instructor's commands immediately.

If you're not sure what to do, follow the example of the senior students.

NEVER miss practice without letting the captain know ahead of time.

### Before practice

Before practice begins, you should be properly dressed in *hakama* and *keikogi* (sports clothing for beginners). All of your armor and your uniform should be clean and in good repair. Remove all jewelry, especially rings and watches. Inspect your *shinai* closely for cracks and splinters. NEVER use a damaged *shinai* in practice. For directions on *shinai* care, see [Shinai Care and Maintenance](#)

### Junbi taisou (Warm-up exercises)

Practice usually begins with a group warm-up session that touches upon all the major muscle groups.

After a brief warm-up, the group uses the *shinai* or suburito (heavy bokken) for suburi. Suburi exercise combines a basic swing with a rhythmic back-and-forth footwork.

### Reigi

Every *keiko* starts and finishes with a kneeling bow (*zareai*). Students line up according to rank, and go into *seiza*, or kneeling position, following the lead of the senior students. Three bows are performed: One to the *shomen*, or the front of the hall, one to the *sensei*, and one to each other. Students may consider the bow to shomen an acknowledgment of something they personally consider to be worthy of honor. The second and third bow to the teacher and each other is both a show of respect, and a promise to try one's best. When bowing to the teacher and each other, students say *onagai shimasu*, asking to grant them the favor of a lesson.

## *Kihon*

Basic practice (*kihon*) consists of old and carefully refined drills to establish the basic elements necessary to face an opponent:

Posture (*shisei*)

Stance (*kamae*), and proper use of eyes (*metsuke*)

Drawing (*nuki*) and returning (*osame-kata*) of the *shinai*

Footwork (*ashi-sabaki*)

Practice cuts (*suburi*)

Vocalization and breathing (*kakegoe, Kiai* )

Distance and timing (*ma-ai*)

Striking (*uchi*), thrusting (*tsuki*), and receiving (*uke*) technique

Repeated returning strikes (*kirikaeshi*)

Striking with the body (*tai-atari*)

Close-quarter technique (*tsuba-zeriai*)

Mental focus during follow-through (*zanshin*)

These basic drills are performed in every practice by every member of the dojo. Even the most experienced teacher of Kendo will not neglect these fundamental drills, as they provide the basis of all Kendo technique.

## *Suburi*

*Suburi* combines the basic overhead swing with forward and backward movement. The goal is to cultivate a smooth, free swing that is properly timed with one's footwork. Another important goal of *suburi* is to establish the proper posture at the moment one's sword contacts the target.

### *Kirikaeshi*

*Kirikaeshi* is a drill done with a partner that involves a succession of strikes to the men. *Kirikaeshi* was established as a basic exercise around the end of the Meiji era (1868-1912). It teaches a number of important principles including proper distance and timing, accuracy, rhythm, and smoothness.

### *Uchikomi geiko*

*Uchikomi* (single-step striking) practice is designed to allow students to attack a passive receiver. The receiver makes a target available to the student, who strikes and follows through just as if it were a real match. It is in *uchikomi* practice that the student perfects the coordination of sword stroke, body movement, and intent. The goal is to bring all one's physical and mental powers to bear upon the target at a precise moment in time.

## BOKKEN SUBURI

INTRODUCTION. The bokken is a wooden sword traditionally made from white oak and weighing around 700g. Training with the bokken is important because many of the empty hand (or tai jutsu) techniques are derived from sword techniques developed over centuries.

1. ICHI NO SUBURI. Start in *migi kamae*. Raise the bokken straight up, keep the left arm as straight as possible and the bokken will end up lying down the spine. This position is known as centering the weapon. At the same

time, draw the front foot to the back foot and open the hip. Step forward with the front foot and cut straight down, turn in the right hip and clear the back foot round off the attack line as the cut finishes.

2. NI NO SUBURI From migi kamae, raise the bokken so that the hands end up just over the head with the bokken pointing up and back at about 15 degrees. At the same time, step back with the right foot and open the hip (This stance is called HASSO KAMAE). The whole body should now be off the attack line. Look forward past the inside of the left elbow, do not allow the left arm to obscure your view. Extend the left arm up so that the bokken ends up centered down the spine, step forward with the right foot and cut. Finish by clearing the back foot as in ichi no suburi.

3. SAN NO SUBURI Start in migi kamae and perform ni no suburi until you reach the Hasso Kamae position with the bokken pointing up and the right foot back. Move your centre back slightly and bring the bokken down so that both hands are by the right side and the bokken is pointing backwards and slightly down. Move your centre forward and bring the bokken up to the centered position, step forward with the right foot and cut. Clear the back foot.

4. YON NO SUBURI (Step cutting) Raise the bokken straight up by extending the left arm and center it. Step forward with the back foot and cut straight down, remember to clear the back foot at the completion of the cut. Raise the bokken again, step forward with back foot and cut on the other side. Continue walking forward and cutting.

5. GO NO SUBURI Start in migi kamae. Bring the hands up to just in front of the face while keeping the bokken pointing forward and slightly to the right (NB the bokken is angled toward the side of the front foot). Step forward with the left foot and center the bokken. Cut toward the side of the opponents head and at the same time clear the back foot. To cut on the opposite side, bring the hands up in front of the face with the bokken pointing to the left. Step forward with the right foot, center the bokken, cut "yokomen" and clear the back foot.

6. ROKU NO SUBURI Perform go no suburi as described but add a tsuki off the front foot at the end of each cut. Thus the exercise becomes: cut on the right foot, tsuki off the right foot, cut on the left foot, tsuki off the left foot. Make sure you do not retract the bokken between the cut and the tsuki.

7. NAN NO SUBURI Start in hidari kamae. Wind up as in go no suburi and cut yokomen on the right side. Step across the attack line and forward with the left foot and tsuki. Remember to clear the back foot. Repeat the exercise: cut right, tsuki left.

### 8 COUNT BOKKEN KATA

Starting with right foot forward:

- 1) Step forward shomen. Step forward thrust. Pivot shomen.
- 2) Step backward shomen. Step forward thrust. Pivot shomen.
- 3) Turn to the (right first) shomen. Step forward thrust. Pivot shomen.
- 4) Tenkan (cutting up) shomen. Step forward thrust. Pivot shomen.
- 5) Irimi (cutting up) shomen. Step forward thrust. Pivot shomen.

6) Turn to the (right stepping back) shomen. Step forward thrust. Pivot shomen.

7) Irimi Tenkan shomen. Step forward thrust. Pivot shomen.

8) Oblique strike shomen. Step forward thrust. Pivot shomen.

Each movement is done twice, right foot forward then left foot forward. If both movements were done correctly you will always end with the right foot forward.

### EXERCISES FOR IMPROVING ACCURACY WITH JO OR BOKKEN

Here are a few exercises which will help improve your accuracy with a bokken (or jo for that matter).

For shomen uchi: Have a partner hold a jo horizontally in front of you so that the jo is parallel with your shoulders. The jo should be fractionally below the height of your natural cutting action. You should make a few practice cuts to establish the correct height. With the jo in place, cut shomen uchi repeatedly with your bokken, trying to come as close to the jo as possible without touching it. Your partner can indicate how close --- or far away :) --- you are. Aim to cut with the last couple of inches of your bokken. Try not to look down at the jo, look straight ahead instead.

Yokomen uchi: Have your partner sit seiza directly in front of you and hold a jo vertically. With your bokken, cut yokomen uchi alternately to the left and right of the jo. Again, the idea is not to touch, but to come very close.

Once you get the hang of these you can ask your partner to move the jo about a bit. Hopefully your cuts will remain consistent as you adjust your position and posture to cope.

For tsuki (poke): Draw a small circle on the wall at your natural poke height (hmm, sounds disgusting :+()), and try to tsuki inside the circle every time. If it's too easy, make the circle smaller. A wall is probably a bit too solid for this really and you might annoy its owner too, so perhaps fix something with a bit of give to the wall (back to tyres eh?) .

## Aikido and Bokken

### Bokken Parts

Tsuka  
handle of the bokken

Kissaki  
tip of the bokken

Tsuba  
handguard that is sometimes slipped over the bokken

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### Bokken Stances

Seigan-no-kamae / Chudan-no-kamae

Right hanmi with the bokken in both hands directly in front and on the centerline of the body. Weight is centered evenly over both feet and both hands are near the level of your navel. The left hand is on the butt end of the bokken about one fist width away from your body. The blade is tilted slightly to the right to take

advantage of the natural curvature of the blade. The kissaki is at your opponent's throat. Look directly to the front.

#### Jodan-no-kamae

Stand in right or left hanmi and raise your arms until your left hand is in front of your forehead. Your hands are above your eyes and your elbows are out to afford vision to the front. The kissaki is directly above your head to protect those behind you. Your weight is slightly forward.

#### Gedan-no-kamae

Lower the kissaki from chudan-no-kamae, but be ready to raise it at any time. This provides an opening for your opponent to attack. Be ready to step off the line of attack by keeping your weight evenly distributed on both feet.

#### Hasso-no-kamae

Stand in left hanmi, eyes to the front, weight evenly distributed. The bokken is raised vertically with the hands at the levels of your left chest and left shoulder. The tsubo is at the level of your mouth.

#### Waki-no-kamae

Left hanmi bokken lowered on the right hand side.

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### Bokken Suburi

#### Shomenuchi

The sword is raised overhead as you step back with the right foot. The sword is brought down in exactly a vertical line. Strike to the head with good focus then slowly subside to chudan-no-kamae.

#### Shomenuchi

Same as above but slide step forward while striking. Slide step back again after subsiding.

#### Yokomenuchi

Move the left foot off the line of attack. Do this for both with the right foot stepping and without.

#### Gyaku Yokomenuchi

#### Kirigaeshi

Alternate left and right yokomen

#### Shomenuchi front and back

Step forward strike pivot repeat

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### Bokken Tai Sabaki

#### Shomenuchi

#### Yokomenuchi

#### Tsuki

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### Unarmed defenses against bokken (tachidori)

#### Shomenuchi kokyunage

#### Shomenuchi kotegaeshi

#### Shomenuchi tenkan kokunage

#### Yokomenuchi shihonage

#### Yokomenuchi ikkyo

#### Tsuki

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## Bokken Forms (kengi)

- [First Bokken Form](#)
  - [Second Bokken Form](#)
  - [Third Bokken Form](#)
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## Bokken/Bokken (kumitachi)

- [Kumitachi Intro](#)
- [First Kumitachi](#)
- [Second Kumitachi](#)
- [Third Kumitachi](#)
- [Fourth Kumitachi](#)
- [Fifth Kumitachi](#)
- [Sixth Kumitachi](#)

### First Aiki kengi

Facing north initially (n,s, etc. indicate ending direction)

1. shomenuchi (n)
2. step through and tsuki (n)
3. pivot right 180° shomenuchi (s)
4. tsuki with slide step (s)
5. turn left 90° shomenuchi (e)
6. tsuki with slide step (e)
7. pivot right 180° shomenuchi (w)
8. tsuki with slide step (w)
9. turn left 45°, step through with left foot and shomenuchi (se) then 180° pivot right (nw)
10. shomenuchi, then pivot left 90° (ne)
11. shomenuchi 180° pivot right (sw)
12. shomenuchi (sw)
13. keep bokken horizontal and turn to the right 495°. Then step back with the right foot into jodan-no kamae, then step back with left foot and raise bokken into seigan-no-kamae. (n)

### Aiki kengi #2

Originated by K. Tohei, refined by R. Kobayashi.

Facing north initially (n,s, etc. indicate ending direction)

1. Slide off line of attack and raise bokken with U motion (n)
2. step through and strike opponent's right wrist (n)
3. step through and strike opponent's left shoulder (n)
4. step through and strike opponent's right shoulder (n)
5. pivot right 180° shomenuchi to forehead (s)

6. slide forward to thrust to opponent's throat (s)
7. pivot right 180° shomenuchi to forehead (n)
8. slide forward to thrust to opponent's throat (n)
9. leap through, yokomenuchi to left side of opponent's head, immediately turn 180° (s)
10. repeat last step (n)
11. bokken horizontal, thrust forward (n)
12. step through and strike opponent's left shoulder (n)
13. turn 180° to right then raise sword step back with right foot. Then step back with leftfoot and return to seigan (n)

### Aiki Kengi 3

by R. Kobayashi.

Facing north initially (n,s, etc. indicate ending direction)

1. shomen (n)
2. tsuki with slide step (n)
3. reverse yokomen with step (n)
4. 180° turn right strike shomen (s)
5. tsuki with step through (s)
6. 45° turn to left yokomen strike (se)
7. lift bokken blade up into upper jo-like ready position (se)
8. kesa-gakae bounce up and into . . . (se)
9. another kesa-gakae by turning 135° to the right (w)
10. turn 45° to left and be in chudan-no-kamae (sw)
11. slit opponent's throat, 225° to right, jodan-no-kamae (e)
12. shomen (e)
13. 45° right, reverse kesa-gakae, step with left foot (se)
14. kesa-gakae look to nw (se)
15. turn 180° to left, strike yokomen (nw)
16. reverse yokomen (nw)
17. ski look to se (nw)
18. turn 180° to right chudan-no-kamae (se)
19. turn 90° left lifting blade into high guard (ne)
20. reverse yokomen (ne)
21. strike yokomen, udefuri-choyaku-undo 180° to left (sw)
22. lift into high guard and (s)
23. reverse yokomen (sw)
24. yokomen and bounce into . . . (sw)
25. 180° turn to left and then do the zig-zag cut (ne)

### Before Practice

#### Kumitachi

The kumitachi came originally from an old sword school. They were modified to include the concept of Aiki by the Founder, Professor Morihei Ueshiba, who left them as a legacy.

There are many possible variations of the kumitachi. The Founder, when he taught, called these first attack and second attack variations. These variations are naturally used with the ken but are soon adapted to taijutsu.



Consequently, the kumitachi are considered to be the personality of ken, jo, and taijutsu basic techniques. If one does not have a good understanding of suburi, it will be useless to practice the kumitachi. If practice is done everyday on the kumitachi and partner practices, stability of the hips will not be attained, and an important point of practice will be missed. Therefore begin each practice session with the suburi as shown in Volume I. Uchitachi (Attacker) and Uketachi (Defender)

The kumitachi are not to be considered competition. They are practices, and the partners do not vie for an attacking or superior position. It was said that one should be uchitachi for 10 years before being allowed to become uketachi. It was felt that this was the proper way to learn.

Morihiro Saito

First kumitachi

Uketachi	Uchitachi
Chudan no kamae	Chudan no kamae
Jodan no kamae, right foot back	
	Slide step forward, then lower tip
Shomen cut with step (kiai)	Cut obliquely up, bokken point to uke's chest, step out with the left foot and bring up the right
	Gyaku yokomen
Guard (keep elbows close), right foot back, tsuki	
	Right yokomen (kiai)
Defend by cutting down. Settle the hips, tsuki attitude, left foot back	

As written in Saito's book.

Uketachi	Uchitachi
1. Right hanmi	Right hanmi
2. Raise ken above head 3-4. Take one step back with left foot and strike down	Cut obliquely up, extend the ken point to uke's chest, step out with the left foot and bring up the right.
5. 6. Defend by adopting the attitude of tsuki.	Step forward with the left foot and strike.
7-9. Defend by cutting down. Settle the hips and adopt the attitude of a tsuki.	Strike again with renzoku uchikomi

Second kumitachi

Uketachi	Uchitachi
Chudan no kamae	Chudan no kamae
Jodan no kamae, right foot back	
	Slide step forward
Right yokomen with step (kiai)	
	Guard
Gyaku Yokomen	
	Guard, then tsuki without step (kiai)
Guard	

Of course Saito's description bears no resemblance.

Uketachi	Uchitachi
1. Right hanmi	Right hanmi
2. During blending of ki, raise the bokken overhead	same as uketachi
3-4. Defend by moving into hitoemi with the left foot	aim at the opponent's leg and strike down
5. Intending to cut the opponent's wrist, raise the ken. 6. step back with the right foot, adopt hitoemi, parry his thrust, and aim the bokken point at his throat	Follow uke's ken briskly from below as if raised and thrust with the left foot forward.
7.	Follow with a trust stepping with right foot
8. 9. Defend by stepping back with the left foot.	Uchikomi. (Do not let the body cant at this time).
10. Hold the opponent's ken wodn with your own	
11. 12. When the thrust comes, step back with right foot and adopt an attitude of tsuki.	Do not resist uke's bokken, pass your bokken under and thrust stepping forward with the left foot.
13.	step off to the right parry the thrust
14-15. Defend as if cutting down with the bokken. (In practice step back with the left foot.)	Finally, strike with a shomenuchi,

Third kumitachi

Uketachi	Uchitachi
Chudan no kamae	Chudan no kamae
Gyaku Yokomen	
	Guard
Low yokomen	
	Guard low
	Flip bokken up and tsuki (no step)
Guard	

Of course Saito's description bears no resemblance.

Uketachi	Uchitachi
1. Right hanmi	Right hanmi
2. Hold opponent's bokken down lightly 3.	Flow with uke's movement.
4. 5. Defend by stepping back with the right foot. 6. Point your bokken at opponent's centr line.	Step forward with the left foot to the left and respond with an uchi komi.
8-11. Defend in the position of hito e mi.	Strike again with renzoku uchikomi

Fourth kumitachi

Uketachi	Uchitachi
Chudan no kamae	Chudan no kamae
Slide step tsuki	
	Step off the line and slap bokken down
Retreat	
Step through and tsuki	
	Guard, then push back to jodan
	Yokomen
	Guard

Surprisingly, Saito's description follows until the last exchange.

Uketachi	Uchitachi
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1. Right hanmi	Right hanmi
2-3. Step forward on the right foot and tsuki. Move the left foot into the position of hito e mi.	Do a thrust
4-5. Hold your opponent's bokken down.	
6-7. Stand in left hanmi and defend with a tsuki.	Without resisting, flow with uke's movement, bring the bokken around up from below and thrust (left hanmi)
8-11. Step back with the left foot, defend as if cutting down, and adopt the attitude of a tsuki.	Parry his thrust and do an uchikomi

#### Fifth kumitachi

Uketachi	Uchitachi
Chudan no kamae	Chudan no kamae
Jodan no kamae, right foot back	
	Slide step forward, then lower tip
Shomen cut with step (kiai)	Cut obliquely up, bokken point to uke's chest, step out with the left foot and bring up the right
	Gyaku yokomen
Guard (keep elbows close), right foot back, tsuki	
	Right yokomen (kiai)
Guard high	
Rotate clockwise	Rotate clockwise
Low yokomen	
	Guard
	High yokomen
Guard	

Saito's description is not too dissimilar.

Uketachi	Uchitachi
1. Right hanmi	Right hanmi
2-4. Step widely to the left with the left foot and strike down	Shomen uchi komi
5. 6.	Turn the body into left hanmi and defend.
7-8. Defend by stepping back with the	Uchi komi.

left foot.	
9-10. Raise opponent's bokken and move forward to grasp hi bokken.	
11-12. Move into left hanmi.	Do not grasp his bokken but flow moving to the opponent's back and strike his leg.
13-14. Defend by stepping back with the left foot.	Uchi komi.

Sixth kumitachi --- Ki Musubi no Tachi

Saito's description.

Uketachi	Uchitachi
2-3. Blending ki, raise the bokken up over the head breathing in deeply.	Same movement as uke
4-5. Lower bokken to your right side	Same movement as uke
6-7. Step forward with the right foot and strike with shomen uchi. (Be sure to strike down fully.)	Shomen uchi komi
8. Thrust as the opponent raises his bokken. 9. Make a flowing strike to the left. Point the bokken at your opponent for a thrust.	Shomen uchi komi.
11-12. From below, control your opponent's wrist.	In preparation for another strike, raise the bokken up ove the head.
13. Return to initial stance.	Return to initial stance.

Seven Aikiken Suburi For the Rest of Us

November 1996

University of Oregon Aikido Club

## Introduction

The seven suburi are an integral part of our style of aikido. This little document is an attempt to get the beginner's arms and legs moving in roughly the correct form, and as a reminder for those times when memory fails. It is in no way definitive, and any real detail must come from personal instruction.

## Holding the Bokken

Begin by standing in right hanmi. The bokken is held by placing the left hand at the bottom of the hilt with the little finger almost falling off the very end of the hilt. The grip is primarily between the thumb, ring finger and little finger, and is applied with a wringing motion, keeping the arm relaxed. The knuckle of the left hand index finger of the should be halfway between the

top and the side of the weapon. The middle and index fingers should be relaxed and tucked under the bokken. The right hand should be one fist's width above the left hand and it should mirror the left hand grip in all respects. It is important to grip with a wringing motion and to keep the arms and shoulders as relaxed as possible. The bokken should be held out in front of the tanden or center with a feeling of extension. The orientation of the blade is rotated slightly clockwise from the vertical.

## Suburi

All of these exercises start from right hanmi with the bokken held as described above. This will be referred to as a basic ready position.

### First Suburi

The first suburi is a basic \_shomen cut\_. From the ready position, raise the sword so that your left hand is on your forehead and the sword is angled slightly back. During this movement your hips should turn from a triangular orientation to a square one. Cut down and out with a wringing motion, as if you were flinging something off the tip of the bokken, and let your hips return to their triangular position. Finish with the sword in front of your center. The tip should be just slightly lower than the hilt, though you should not allow your wrists to flex up in order to accomplish this. At all times keep the sword within the plane of your centerline. Always cut with a relaxed motion.

### Second Suburi

From the ready position, step back deeply with the right foot and raise the sword so that the left hand is just above the left eye. This position is known as \_hasso kamae\_. Step forward with the right foot and perform a shomen cut.

### Third Suburi

This suburi starts the same as number 2, except the sword raise continues over head in a circular motion until the sword is almost resting on the right hip. This position is known as \_waki kamae\_. Step forward with the right foot and perform a shomen cut, making sure the sword comes directly down the center line.

### Fourth Suburi

From the ready position raise the sword as you bring the right foot back to the left foot. The sword should be directly overhead and your feet should be together. Step forward with the left foot and perform a shomen cut. Now raise the sword as you bring the left foot back to the right foot. Step forward with the right foot and perform a shomen cut. Continue this process while alternating feet.

### Fifth Suburi

Do a shomen strike as in number 1. Rotate the blade clockwise until the edge is up while raising the hilt to your forehead. Simultaneously rotate the left hip back and the right hip forward. This is a \_right parry\_. Let the tip of the bokken drop and continue around behind you in a circular motion as you step forward with the left foot and perform a shomen cut. Rotate the blade counterclockwise until the edge is up while raising the hilt to your forehead. Simultaneously rotate the right hip back and the left hip forward. Your arms should end up in a crossed position. This is a \_left parry\_. Let the tip of the bokken drop and continue around behind you in a circular motion as you step forward with the right foot and perform a shomen cut. Alternate left and right in this way, moving across the floor.

### Sixth Suburi

This suburi is the same as number 5, with one addition; in between each cut and parry shuffle forward slightly and perform a \_tsuki\_ on that side. A tsuki on any side is a thrust to the midsection with the tip of the bokken. Shuffle forward slightly with the front foot and turn the blade so that it faces the opposite side from the front foot, e.g., a right tsuki has the right foot forward and the blade facing left. Again, alternate left and right in this way, moving across the floor.

### Seventh Suburi

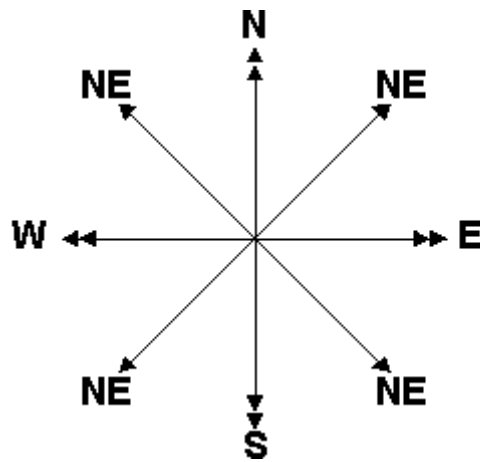
This suburi starts from the ready position with a right shomen cut. Move forward with the left foot and perform a left tsuki. Perform a left parry and step forward with the right foot into a right shomen cut. Repeat, moving across the floor.

## Bokken Kata I

Bokken Kata #1 is a basic exercise where the attackers are approaching from eight directions.

In the following diagram the double arrows represent a Shomenuchi strike followed by a Menutsuki thrust. The single arrows represent a Shomenuchi strike.

When raising the bokken into Jodan-no Kamae you will not step backward. When performing the Shomenuchi strikes you will not step forward.



1. Ready Position: Facing N in Chudan-no Kamae standing in Migi Hanmi
  2. Raise bokken to Jodan-no Kamae (do not step back) and strike Shomenuchi (do not step).
  3. Turn bokken blade to the right, step into Hidari Hanmi as you Menutsuki.
  4. Raise bokken into Jodan-no Kamae as you zengo undo to face S in Migi Hanmi. Strike Shomenuchi.
  5. Turn bokken blade to left, slide forward in Migi Hanmi as you Menutsuki.
  6. Raise bokken into Jodan-no Kamae, turn 90 degrees to the left, stepping into Hidari Hanmi to face E. Strike Shomenuchi.
  7. Turn bokken blade to the right, slide forward in Hidari Hanmi as you Menutsuki.
  8. Raise bokken into Jodan-no Kamae as you zengo undo to face W in Migi Hanmi. Strike Shomenuchi.
  9. Turn bokken blade to the right, slide forward in Migi Hanmi as you Menutsuki.
  10. Raise bokken to Jodan-no Kamae, turn 45 degrees to the left, step into Hidari Hanmi.
  11. Raise bokken to Jodan-no Kamae, zengo undo to face NE in Migi Hanmi. Strike Shomenuchi.
  12. Raise bokken to Jodan-no Kamae, turn 90 degrees to the left, step into Hidari Hanmi facing NW. Strike Shomenuchi.
  13. Raise bokken to Jodan-no Kamae, zengo undo to face SE in Migi Hanmi. Strike Shomenuchi.
  14. Release your left hand from the bokken and allow it to drop to your side. Extend the bokken to you left rear by stretching your right arm across your chest. Perform an "area clearing" by cutting from left to right as you spin 360 degrees, returning to face SE. Without pausing, drop the bokken tip down to the right and spin to the right 225 degrees to face N.
1. Recover to the initial ready position. Facing N in Chudan-no Kamae standing in Migi Hanmi.

Here's how I've learned it (which is not necessarily how it was taught!):

- 1) Right leg forward. Sword in triangular guard position; cut the opponent's left wrist.
- 2) Step forward with the left leg. Cut the opponent's right wrist.
- 3) Step forward with the right leg, strike yokomen.
- 4) Step forward with the left leg, strike reverse yokomen.
- 5) Pivot 180 degrees and knock the opponents attack away with the flat part of the blade.
- 6) Slide forward (right leg forward) and tsuki.
- 7) Pivot back 180 degrees and cut shomen.
- 8) Slide forward (left leg forward) and tsuki.
- 9) Step forward with the right leg, tenkan 180 degrees (pivot on the right leg, and strike yokomen.



- 10) Step forward with the left leg, tenkan 180 degrees (pivot on the left leg, and strike yokomen.
- 11) Step forward with the right leg and strike yokomen
- 12) Slide forward (right leg forward) and tsuki.
- 13) Finish: Step forward with the left leg and turn 360 degrees, cutting a circular swath with the bokken in your right hand and/or clearing blood from the blade.