

DOJO PRINCIPLES

1. **“Grow in the martial arts and in life.”** Do this by continuously learning, setting goals, creating a plan, working hard, staying focused and being supportive of loved ones and your dojo.
2. **“Defend my honor and my principles.”** Defend yourself, your loved ones and your country. Martial arts tournaments and demonstrations are things we participate in to promote our art. This should not be confused with **“revealing our art”** which actually means to defend ourselves or others with force when necessary. Never allow your dojo or your instructor to be disrespected or harmed in any way.
3. **“Never wash my belt or let it touch the floor.”** Your belt is a symbol of many things that include your knowledge, your hard work and the level of rank recognition you have achieved. Always face away from the front of the dojo and away from other people when you put your belt on or adjust it. Respect the symbols of your effort.
4. **“Bow”** Bow when entering and leaving the dojo. If you are late for class, bow into the dojo and kneel inside and to the right of the entrance. Make a “seiza” bow and wait to be invited to join the class. Always bow when the highest ranked black belt enters the main floor of the dojo. Demonstrate your appreciation and respect for their knowledge, history and skill.
5. **“Punctual and Enthusiastic”** Tardiness, absenteeism, non-payment or late payment and minimum effort are signs of disrespect whether you mean it to be or not. Obviously schedules change or things come up that are out of our control. The wise know that anything worth doing is worth doing well without excuses or laziness.
6. **“Clean and safe”** When you attend class or any martial arts function, you should be hygienically clean and your uniform should be clean and unwrinkled. A plain wedding band is an acceptable piece of but necklaces, watches, and any type of body piercing can be dangerous for you as well as those training with you. In some cases a band aid may be placed over a piercing and you should check with your instructor about this. Do not touch weapons in the dojo you have been trained to use or that belong to someone else without their permission.
7. **“Salute” (acknowledge)** Students will use the proper greeting inside and outside the dojo regardless of rank, age, gender or any other classification. Instructors of black belt rank are addressed as “Sensei” and their first name inside and outside the dojo at all times. Senior students who are given the title of “Sempai” will be addressed the same way. Black belts should be greeted by offering the right hand with the left hand placed under your right wrist with your palm facing down for the handshake. When greeting Kaiso Sensei Charles Buckner; bow, pay respect, and then the handshake. NOTE: We refer to Sensei Charles Buckner simply as “Kaiso.”
8. **“Respect”** Don’t interrupt an instructor who is speaking. Always pay attention in class and stay focused on what you are doing. Never lean against walls, sit down (unless instructed to do so) or slouch during class. Small talk and horseplay are not acceptable or productive during class. You should not be preoccupied with age or gender when a student above you in rank is teaching you something. Be helpful and respect those around you at all times. No shoes, food, gum, candy or drinks (other than water) are allowed on the dojo floor without permission from the instructor. There is no spitting, cursing or any other disrespectful gestures allowed inside or around the dojo. You should check with your instructor before participating in martial arts functions outside of your own dojo.
9. **“Communicate”** Schedule changes, special events and questions or concerns are a few of the reasons to maintain good communication with your instructor at all times.
10. **“Practice”** Create and stick to a regular schedule you can use at home that is realistic and easy to follow. This will ensure that your skills improve and training classes will serve their purpose which is to teach you more to practice.

As a martial artist, wherever you go, your art is with you. Show humility and self respect and people will be drawn to respect you. Serve your dojo and instructors with loyalty, honor, and integrity out of respect for those who have trained in the past, train today and those who will train under you in the future. Never allow despair or obstacles to stop you from achieving your goals. The only limits you have are the ones you create for yourself. Always remember, the only failure is in quitting.