



Lakewood Budo Kai

Jujitsu, Karate, and Women's Self Defense



Etiquette and Dojo Courtesy

Background

Martial arts teaches you how to defend yourself, and others, from a physical threat. Our school, Lakewood Budo Kai, uses a traditional approach to the martial arts that teaches you not just physical self defense techniques, but also the traditions and codes of honor that have been passed down from instructor to student for thousands of years.

A Samurai warrior showed his dedication and desire to learn by following basic procedures and proper etiquette. In exchange, the instructors and superiors saw that the student was worthy of training and ready to learn new techniques.

Lakewood Budo Kai students are fortunate to learn ancient martial arts techniques passed down through a close and unbroken lineage. By following proper etiquette, you learn martial arts in the purest, most historically accurate manner possible, as passed down from generation to generation many years ago.

The Dojo

Your training begins in the Dojo (training hall). It is the place where we sweat, train, and practice with our fellow dojo mates. It is the place where we learn techniques and work through challenges. By training hard, we show respect to our Dojo and those that came before us. The way we treat the place in which we learn has significant importance both to us, our fellow Dojo partners, and our instructors.

During our daily training we always try and leave the room in better condition when we leave than when we first arrived. If we arrive before the room is prepared for training, we move any furniture (if needed), sweep the floor, and lay down the mats (if we will be using them). If we used mats during the workout, we help after class by returning the mats to their proper location and ensure they are secured.

Preparing for Training

In traditional martial arts, our training begins before we arrive at the Dojo. We respect our uniform by repairing any rips or holes prior to the start of our next class. We allow plenty of time to reach the Dojo and are in uniform 10 minutes before the start of class.

By wearing shoes to class, our feet are clean prior to working out with fellow students. If our hands or feet are dirty, we wash them prior to the start of class. We leave any valuables at home and do not wear jewelry in class.

Class begins when the instructor starts class. By arriving early, we show the instructor that we are ready to receive instruction. We also ensure that we don't interrupt a class already in progress. If we arrive late to class, we stand at the edge of the mat or workout area and wait for the instructor to acknowledge us and accept us into the workout.



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We inform the instructor if we know in advance that we must leave before class is concluded. We notify a black belt before each class if we have any mental or physical limitations that may restrict the techniques that are safe for us to receive and/or perform on others.

Sensei

All students begin their training as a white belt. After a period of time, the student reaches a certain level of proficiency and development and is promoted to a new rank. This process continues until, after many years of hard work and dedication, the student is promoted to black belt. In this manner, all of our black belts have experienced the same challenges and joys that you now experience. It is for this reason that we address our black belts as Sensei, which means "one who has gone before".

Each class is taught by an experienced black belt instructor with many decades of martial arts experience. We do not ask when we will get tested for our next rank. We learn new techniques and receive promotions when the instructor sees that we are dedicated to our training, the instruction we receive, our Dojo, fellow training partners, and achieved the required level of proficiency.

Students who have reached the rank of black belt continue their training and learn new techniques from our head instructor. Over the past 30 years, we have promoted a number of students to the rank of black belt and we are fortunate to have many black belts continue to train with us today.

Our black belts are role models and a positive influence on our students, our Dojo, and our local community. With many years of training, each one of our black belts is happy to help should we need assistance.

Respect in the Dojo

Our instructors have many years of martial arts knowledge, skill, and dedication as a teacher. These individuals have been significantly affected by the martial arts and have chosen to share these benefits with our students by providing individualized attention and constructive feedback.

In our Dojo, everyone is treated with respect and courtesy. The most senior instructors and black belts are the most humble and respectful. They understand that respect is not something one can demand, but is earned by continually showing respect to others.

Discipline and respect play an important role in our training. Higher ranking students aid lower ranks while lower ranking students follow the direction and guidance of our higher ranks.

Talking in the Dojo during class is always kept to a minimum and usually performed only by instructors or black belts when leading class or by a student when asking a question.



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Bowing

The Japanese word for bow is "Rei". It is a method of showing respect or greeting another person. It is not a religious meaning or significance, instead, it is a form of recognizing and paying respect to a person or entity:

- Dojo - when bowing as we enter the Dojo, we give thanks that we have a place to work out.
- Mats – when bowing just before we step on the mats, we are thankful that we don't have to work out on the hard floor.
- Instructor – we bow at the beginning of class giving thanks to the instructor for what we are about to learn.
- Partner(s) – we bow to our partner prior to working out. Without a partner, wouldn't be able to practice our martial arts techniques.

After we are finished working out, we also bow when we are done with our partner, to the instructor when class finishes, just before leaving the mats, and just as we leave the Dojo. Bowing at the end thanks the person or entity for the time we spent in the Dojo.

In traditional martial arts, the instructor's goal is to train the student both mentally and physically. Every time we bow, we demonstrate our proficiency the old fashion way – through hard work, discipline and respect.

There is a mutual respect that exists between our teachers and students. We as students bow to the teacher, the teacher in return bows back to us. It goes without saying that lower ranking students should bow longer and deeper to a person of higher rank. When in doubt, assume you are the lower ranking person.

During class there are times when it is not necessary to bow. Examples include, before and after warm-up exercises with a partner (sit-ups, leg stretches, etc.), to a higher ranking assistant who taught a small group, and when leaving the mat storage area.

Dojo Safety

Our instructors have perfected training techniques to minimize student injuries. It is the responsibility of all students to help reinforce and maintain a safe environment. If we feel uncomfortable, are unable to do a technique, or are aware of a safety risk, we raise our hand to get the immediate attention of an instructor.

Our instructors teach us how to fall without getting hurt. In addition, our training partners stop applying a technique as soon as we tap our self, partner, or the mat two times in quick succession. If we are incapable of tapping, we Kiai to indicate submission.

If there is an injury, we notify the closest black belt. We **DO NOT LEAVE THE MATS** without first getting the head instructor's permission.



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We don't want to develop bad habits or get injured so, for the first month, we do not practice outside of class what we have learned in class. After the first month, most students are given permission to practice at home if they so choose.

Black Belt Responsibilities

Our head instructor is part of a direct lineage to ancient martial arts masters. Each and every one of our black belts received personal training from our head instructor. As a result of this unique training, all of our black belts have the knowledge and experience to teach self defense techniques and run class.

As leaders in our Dojo, our black belts are respected for their knowledge and experience. Not only do they teach us techniques, they guide and support us when we are challenged both mentally and physically.

Most students assume that black belt responsibilities are limited to the time spent in the Dojo teaching and helping our students. While teaching and helping students is important, black belts are assigned additional tasks to help our Dojo grow and prosper.

Want to be a black belt? It takes a commitment to our students, helping and encouraging us when we encounter challenges. It also takes a commitment to the Dojo, helping us grow so that we can help others.

Guiding Principles

We are not permitted to show anyone else the techniques that we've learned. Our friends and family can receive the same benefits we do by learning the techniques from qualified instructors at our Dojo.

The physical techniques we learn are to be used for self defense only. We do not show or demonstrate the techniques to others unless we are in immediate danger. We also keep in mind the first rule to avoid situations that require self defense.

Training, respect, and etiquette don't begin or end in the Dojo. They are on-going and apply both inside and outside of the Dojo.