

# Glossary of Terms in Kendo

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October 25, 2018

## DOJO COURTESIES

### *Domo-arigato-gozai-mashita* :

どうも有賀とご座いました “Thank you” (very polite context).

*Onegai-shimasu* : 御願います “Please” (do me the said favor).

## DOJO COMMANDS

*Hajime* : 始め Begin/start.

*Kamae-to* : 構え刀 Assume your stance.

*Men (wo) tsuke* : 面を付け Put on your **men**.

*Men (wo) tore* : 面を取れ Take off your **men**.

*Mokuso* : 黙想 Begin meditation.

*Osame-to* : 納め刀 Put away your weapon.

*Otagai ni rei* : お互いに礼 Bow to your peers.

*Seiretsu* : 整列 Line up.

*Seiza* : 正座 Assume **seiza**.

*Sensei ni rei* : 先生に礼 Bow to the **sensei**.

*Shomen ni rei* : 正面に礼 Bow to the **shomen**.

*Sonkyo* : 蹲踞 Assume **sonkyo**.

*Tai-to* : 帯刀 Bring your weapon to the ready position at your hip.

*Yame* : 止め Stop.

*Yasume* : 休め Break/rest period.

## SHIAI TERMS & COMMANDS

*Chuken* : 中堅 Third player on a team match.

*Encho* : 延長 Overtime. Encho is “sudden death”, i.e., the first point wins. There is usually no time limit during encho.

*Fukushin* : 副審 A sub-referee in a court during **shiai**.

*Fukusho* : 副将 Fourth player on a team match.

*Fusen-gachi* : 不戦勝ち Player wins a match by default or disqualification.

*Gogi* : 合議 Judges conference. Players **osame-to**, step back to the outer edge of the court and assume **sonkyo** in **tai-to** until the gogi is over.

*Hajime* : 始め Begin a match.

*Hansoku* : 反則 Penalty. Match stops, and players return to their starting positions. Judges will announce the offense.

*Hansoku nikai* : 反則二回 Second penalty. A second penalty results in one point being awarded to the opponent and the penalty count is reset.

*Hansoku ikkai* : 反則一回 First penalty.

*Hantei* : 判定 Judges decision.

*Hikiwake* : 引き分け Match is a tie. (applicable to team matches)

*Jiho* : 次鋒 Second player on a team match.

*Jikan desu* : 時間です The time keeper’s signal to indicate to the **shushin** “time-up”. Players return to starting positions.

*Mejirushi* : 目印 Colored flag worn on the backs of the players. Also termed a “tasuki”.

*Nihonme* : 二本目 Begin round two.

*Senpo* : 先鋒 First player on a team match.

*Shinpan* : 審判 A judge or referee in a tournament.

*Shinpan-shunin* : 審判主任 The court specific referee director.

*Shinpan-cho* : 審判長 The referee director of the tournament; the head referee.

**Shobu** : 勝負 Begin final round of a match.

**Shobu-ari** : 勝負あり Match point. Players assume **sonkyo**, **osame-to**, **ritsu-rei**, and exit the court.

**Shushin** : 主審 The lead judge in a court during a match.

**Taisho** : 大将 Fifth player on a team match.

**Tasuki** : See **mejirushi**.

**Wakare** : 分かれ A command to separate players back to **issoku itto no maai**, but maintaining relative positions in the court.

**Yame** : 止め Stop the match. Players return to starting positions.

## GENERAL TERMS

**Age-to** : (上げ刀) “Raised sword”. A **katate** variant of **jodan no kamae**.

**Ai** : (1) (prefix) 相 “Mutual, balanced, joint”. (2) (suffix) 合い “Union, integration, match (together)”.

**Ai-uchi** : 相打ち “Mutual strike”. Commonly translated as “simultaneous strike(s)”.

**Ai-kakari geiko** : 相掛稽古 “Mutual attack practice”. Two **kendoka** do **kakari geiko** simultaneously.

**Ai-chudan** : 相中段 “Mutual chudan (kamae)”. Both opponent’s face each other in **chudan no kamae**.

**Ai-te** : 相手 (lit.) “Mutual hand”, interpreted as “opponent”.

**Ashi** : 足 “Foot” or “leg”.

**Ashi-sabaki** : 足捌き (lit.) “Handle” or “deal with” the “foot/leg”. A term used to refer to “footwork” of any type. See **ayumi-ashi**, **fukumi-ashi**, **fumi-komi**, **hiraki-ashi**, **nusumi-ashi**, **okuri-ashi**, **suri-ashi**, and **tsugi-ashi**.

**Ashi-gamae** : 足構え “Foot Position”. This term refers to the position of ones feet.

**Ayumi-ashi** : 歩み足 “Walking foot”. This refers to the normal walking motion where the right and left feet pass each other in an obvious right, left, right succession.

**Bogu** : 防具 “Kendo armor”. Consisting of the **men**, **kote**, **do**, and **tare**. See **kendo-gu**.

**Bokken** : 木剣 “Wooden sword”. See **bokuto**.

**Bokuto** : 木刀 “Wooden sword”. The **bokuto**, **tachi** and **kodachi**, are primarily used to practice **nihon kendo no kata**. The **tachi** is used to practice **bokuto waza** and can also be used to practice basics.

**Bokuto waza** : 木刀技 “Wooden sword techniques”. A shortened term used to refer to the **bokuto ni yoru kendo kihon keiko ho**, these are a series of forms created to practice fundamental **shinai** techniques with **bokuto**.

**Bokuto ni yoru kendo kihon keiko ho** : 木刀による剣道基本稽古法 “Practice of kendo fundamentals using bokuto”. See **bokuto waza**.

**Budo** : 武道 “Martial art” or “martial way”. Budo are martial arts where the focus is placed on bettering oneself instead of pure combative victory.

**Bujutsu** : 武術 “Martial art” or “military art”. Bujutsu is a martial art where the focus is placed on effective combat skills for defeating an opponent.

**Bushi** : 武士 “War/military gentleman”. A **samurai**. Often translated simply as *warrior* however this translation overlooks the meaning of the character **shi** 士: one who serves or does in a *polite* context.

**Bushido** : 武士道 “The way of the samurai”. A code of ethics, morals, and conduct for **samurai**.

**Chiisai** : 小さい “Small”.

**Chiisai waza** : 小さい技 “Small techniques”. A term used to refer to small strikes.

**Chika-ma** : 近間 “Short interval”. A distance (from your opponent) that is shorter than **issoku itto no maai**.

**Chi no kamae** : 地の構え The “kamae of earth”. See **gedan no kamae**.

**Chudan hanmi no kamae** : 中段半身の構え A variant of **chudan no kamae** used in the **kodachi kata**. See **hanmi kamae**.

**Chudan no kamae** : 中段の構え “Mid level stance”. Chudan is known as the “kamae of water” due to its adaptability for offensive and defensive **waza**. Chudan is the fundamental **kamae** in **kendo**.

**Connection** : “En” 縁 in Japanese, meaning a “bond, link, relationship, or connection”. In **kendo** this implies a mental and physical connection to the opponent. The mental connection implies one has a perception as to how the opponent will act, their intents, their level of focus, **ki-ken-tai-ichi**, and **zanshin**. The physical connection allows one to respond to physical movements, maintain distance, adjust **kamae**, etc... A connection allows you to manage the opponent, keeping a balance, until a **suki** is found or created.

**Daito** : 大刀 The name used to refer to the “long sword” when using **nito**.

**Dan** : 段 “Step” or “level”.

**Dan-i** : 段位 “Rank”. This refers specifically to the set of **dan** ranks in **kendo**, commonly equated with the rank of “black belt”. Dan ranks range from first to eighth.

**Datotsu** : 打突 A “strike” or “thrust”. **Shinai kendo** is a datotsu style of fencing as compared to a **zantotsu** style if a **katana** were used.

**Datotsu-bui** : 打突部位 “Striking position”. Portion of the **bogu** where one may strike.

**Datotsu-bu** : 打突部 “Striking section”. The portion of the **shinai** strikes are made with; the **mono-uchi**.

**De** : 出 “Start, beginning; (just) coming out”, i.e., something is being initiated or started.

**Dead** : A term used to describe one’s weapon when the ability for offensive and defensive techniques has been eliminated. This can be the result of improper grip or striking technique, but most commonly this is caused by one’s strike being effectively parried via some type of defensive technique.

**Dead hands** : Similar to your weapon becoming **dead**, however in this case it is caused specifically by your hands or forearms being in an improper position to control one’s weapon or strike/cut effectively.

**Debana** : 出ばな “Coming out, start, beginning”.

**Debana waza** : 出ばな技 Techniques used to strike as the opponent’s attack is just being initiated.

**Do** : (1) 道 “Do”, as in kendo: “the way”, i.e. a “way” of enlightenment, or of bettering oneself. (2) 胴 “Do”, as in **bogu**: the abdomen target/protector.

**Dojo** : 道場 “Practice hall”. A place where one practices **budo**.

**Do-kawa** : 胴皮 The lower portion of the **do**; the striking area of the **do**.

**Do-mune** : 胴胸 The upper chest portion of the **do**.

**Do-himo** : 胴紐 The two sets of cords/strings used to tie the **do**.

**Do-chikawa** : 胴乳皮 Leather loops on the **do-kawa** used to attach the **do-himo**.

**Domo-arigato-gozai-mashita** :  
どうも有賀とご座いました “Thank you” (very polite context).

**En** : 縁 A “bond, link, relationship, connection”. See **connection**.

**Enbu** : 演武 A “martial arts demonstration”.

**Enzan no metsuke** : 遠山の目付け “Fixing your eyes on a distant mountain”. See **metsuke**.

**Four sicknesses** : The four sicknesses (shi-kai), or admonitions, are ku 恐怖 “fear”, gi 疑 “doubt”, kyu 驚 “surprise”, and waku 惑 “confusion”.

**Fukumi-ashi** : 含み[ふくみ]足 “Hidden” footwork. This type of footwork is where one advances forward

unnoticed by their opponent, while maintaining their **ashi-gamae**. It is done by slowly creeping toward the opponent by, e.g., curling and uncurling the toes, to “pull” oneself forward. This is an advanced application of footwork.

**Fumi-komi** : 踏み込み The shortened, and almost exclusively used, term for *fumi-komi ashi* meaning “stepping” or “rushing into footwork”. Fumi-komi is a large, lunging **okuri-ashi** style step where one momentarily forgoes using **suri-ashi** as the leading foot leaves the ground near the end of the fumi-komi step. This type of footwork is well known as the one that makes the stomping sound as the foot claps the floor.

**Furi-kaburi** : 振り被り “To hold aloft (e.g. a sword); to brandish.” This refers to raising one’s weapon overhead, preparing to strike.

**Gedan hanmi no kamae** : 下段半身の構え A variation of **gedan no kamae** used in the **kodachi kata**. See **hanmi kamae**.

**Gedan no kamae** : 下段の構え The “low level” **kamae**, also known as the “kamae of earth”. **Gedan** is considered a physically defensive **kamae** but a strong and aggressive spirit is required for its success.

**Geiko** : 稽古 See **keiko**.

**Gi** : 着 The traditional practice jacket worn in **kendo**. Also known as a *kendo-gi*, *do-gi*, or *keiko-gi*.

**Go sen no sen** : See **mitsu no sen**.

**Gyaku** : 逆 “Reversed” or “opposite”.

**Gyo** : 行 “Stream”. See **shin-gyo-so**.

**Ha** : 刃 The “blade/edge” of a sword.

**Hajime** : 始め “Begin/start”.

**Hakama** : 袴 The traditional practice pants in **kendo**.

**Hanmi** : 半身 “Half body”.

**Hanmi kamae** : 半身構え “Half body stance”. Referring to ones torso, when assuming a **hanmi kamae** it is turned such that only half of it is exposed to the opponent.

**Hara** : 腹 The “intestines” or “gut”. Located three fingers width below the navel.

**Harai** : 払い From the verb Harau: to “sweep away” or “brush off”.

**Harai waza** : 払い技 “Sweeping aside” **waza**. A **waza** where one pushes the opponents weapon aside, breaking their **kamae**, to create a **suki**.

**Hasaki** : 刃先 A sword’s “cutting edge”.

**Hasso no kamae** : 八相の構え **Hasso** is known as “the *kamae of wood*” or the “*eight position stance*” and is a variant of **jodan no kamae**.

**Haya suburi**: 速素振り “Quick” or “swift” **suburi**. Commonly referred to as jumping suburi, this exercise is a standard warm-up and endurance drill in all **dojos**.

**Heijoshin**: 平常心 “Common” or “everyday mind”. A basic definition of this is keeping one’s mind in a normal state, unaffected by things around you; your mindset during regular or common situations.

**Hidari**: 左 “Left” (direction).

**Hidari-te**: 左手 “Left-hand(ed)”.

**Hidari shizentai**: See **shizentai**.

**Hiki**: 引き (lit.) “Pull”.

**Hiki-waza**: ひき技 “Pulling (away) techniques”. Techniques where one strikes while moving backward. Also called *hikibana waza*.

**Hiki-age**: 引き上げ (lit.) “Pulling rise”. Hiki-age refers to somebody pulling up their hands upon hitting a target. This is considered improper as the **shinai** is no longer in the correct position to emulate a cut. A subtle exception is a **hiki-waza men**; the **zanshin** for hiki-men brings the shinai up into **migi jodan no kamae**. However, this is done *after* the **kendoka** has made their cut, i.e., one moves backward with the shinai in the proper cutting position *first*, then assumes jodan as they continue their zanshin.

**Himo**: 紐 “String”, “cord”, or “strap”.

**Hi no kamae**: 火の構え The “kamae of fire”. See **jodan no kamae**.

**Hira-uchi**: 平打ち To strike with the flat side of a blade. In modern **kendo** this is used to refer to incorrectly striking with the side of the **shinai** instead of the blade.

**Hiraki**: 開き From the verb hiraku meaning “to open” or “unfold”.

**Hiraki-ashi**: 開き足 “Opening foot”. This is a semi-circular step to the left or right.

**Hyo-ho**: 兵法 “Strategy, tactics, art of war”. Also written as *hei-ho*.

**Iaido**: 居合道 (lit.) “The way of the state of being present”. Interpreted as “the way of mental presence and immediate reaction”. As an oversimplification, iaido is a forms based martial art focused on the drawing, striking with, and sheathing of a real sword, in an optimal way, while maintaining focus and **zanshin** throughout.

**Ichidan suburi**: 一段素振り “One step” **suburi**.

**In-yo**: 陰陽 The Japanese reading of the Chinese concept of **yin-yang**.

**Ire-zuki**: 入れ突き “Entering thrust”. See **nayashi ire-zuki**.

**Iri-mi no kamae**: 入り身の構え (lit.) “Entering body

stance”. This is the position taken when invading the opponent’s **maai** through **iri-mi**; the **kodachi** is in **chudan no kamae**, blade downward, and the **kensen** directed toward the opponent’s throat.

**Iri-mi**: 入り身 (lit.) “Entering body”, often translated as “entering directly”. This is the fundamental intent and mindset while using the **kodachi**. The action of spiritually threatening and physically moving into your opponents **maai** to attack.

**Issoku itto no maai**: 一足一刀の間合 The “one step, one sword distance”. The distance where one can launch, or evade, an attack by taking one step. This is the fundamental **maai** of **kendo**. While there are approximations to what this maai is, usually described as the distance where you and your opponents sword tips cross, each individual will have their own *unique* issoku itto no maai simply due to the fact that each person will have a different “one-step” distance. Issoku itto no maai also changes depending on the opponent as well.

**Ji-geiko**: 地稽古 “Foundation practice”. Free sparring practice allowing the student to work on their own strengths, weaknesses, and spirit. See **keiko**.

**Jin-bu**: 刃部 The “blade edge” of the **shinai**.

**Jishu-geiko**: 自習稽古 (lit.) “Self-learning practice”. Perhaps more appropriately “self motivated study”. To actively learn by watching, reading, contemplating what was taught, etc.

**Jo-ge buri**: 上下振り “Up-down swing”. A very basic form of swing practice used to teach the beginner how to swing in large motions along their centerline. It is also often used as a warm-up to help loosen up the shoulders.

**Jodan no kamae**: 上段の構え The “high level” **kamae**, jodan is known as the “kamae of fire”. As jodan is very spiritually aggressive, the terms **ten no kamae** and **hi no kamae** are its other names used to describe the spirit required. It is said the spiritual component of this kamae determines its success much more so than ones physical prowess.

**Kaeshi**: 返し “Return, reversal”.

**Kaeshi waza**: 返し技 “Return” techniques. These are techniques where one momentarily receives the opponent’s strike with the side of their **shinai**, or the **shinogi** of their **bokuto**, and then *immediately* counter attacks.

**Kakari-te**: 掛手 (lit.) “Attacking hand”. **Kakari-te** is the one who attacks or who is striking during drill practice.

**Kakari geiko**: 掛稽古 “Attack practice”, i.e., an “all out” sparring practice. This drill is very common in as it builds endurance and spirit. **Kendoka** attempt to attack as quickly and as continuously as possible while still maintaining proper form and **zanshin**. With kakari geiko the zanshin is to be more spiritual than physical.



**Kakegoe** : 掛け声 “Yell”. Although having very different meanings, in **kendo** this is often interchanged with **kiai**.

**Kamae** : 構え “Stance” or “position”. In **kendo**, this term has an obvious physical meaning, but it also has mental or spiritual implications. Kamae doesn’t mean to just hold your weapon in a certain position but that you must also assume a certain spiritual attitude; both together is what makes an effective kamae.

**Kamae-to** : 構え刀 Literally “stance sword”, this is the term used to indicate one should bring the sword into **kamae** if in a relaxed position. It also refers to drawing the sword from the **tai-to** position.

**Kamae-otoku** : 構えを解く To “untie, unfasten, undo” one’s **kamae**. This term is used to refer to the breaking of kamae at the end of each of the **nihon kendo no kata** or **bokuto waza**.

**Kane** : 金 “Metal”.

**Kane no kamae** : 金の構え The “kamae of metal”. See **waki-gamae**.

**Kan-kyu-kyo-jaku** : 緩急強弱 “Slow-quick-strong-soft”. This refers to various aspects of a **waza**: timing, power, tension, speed, etc..., that come together to give a technique its rhythm. This is not an artificial rhythm that is imposed, but that each technique has its own unique rhythm in accordance with the opponent, their attack, and the waza being used.

**Kata** : 形 See **nihon kendo no kata**.

**Katana** : 刀 “Sword”. Also pronounced as **to**.

**Katate** : 片手 “One hand”.

**Katate waza** : 片手技 “One handed” techniques.

**Katsugi waza** : 担ぎ技 “Shouldering the sword” technique. The purpose of the shouldering motion is to create a **suki** in your opponent while still being in an effective position to attack.

**Keiko** : 稽古 “Practice”, “training”, or “study”. This term is most often used by **kendoka** to imply sparring practice in **bogu**. Replaced with **geiko** depending on context as part of Japanese pronunciation rules.

**Kendo** : 剣道 “The way of the sword”.

**Kendo-gu** : 剣道具 “Kendo protective equipment”: See **bogu**.

**Kendoka** : 剣道家 A **kendo** practitioner.

**Ken o korosu** : 剣を殺す “Kill their sword”. See **san-sappo**.

**Kensen** : 剣先 “Tip/point of a sword”. The tip of the **shinai** or **bokuto**; also called the **kissaki**.

**Ken-tai-ichi** : 懸待一致 (lit.) “Attack and waiting in unison”. This is a complex idea that relates to the ap-

plication of **seme** toward the opponent in order to set up an opportunity to strike. Simply put, one pressures the opponent through **seme** (attack) and then holds to see their reaction (waiting), preparing to either counter attack or initiate an attack depending on the result, i.e., **seme-tame**. This becomes more complex as one can put their body or **kamae** in an attacking posture, but keep their mind calm in a waiting posture or one can have their mind in an attacking posture, but keep their kamae in a waiting posture. The end results are equal in that it gives one an opportunity to strike.

**Kera** : けら Horizontal padding on the fist of the **kote**.

**Ki** : 気 “Mind”, “spirit”, or “energy”.

**Kiai** : 気合い “Energy integration”. The vocal expression of a unified mental & physical intent. Although one’s “fighting spirit” can be expressed through yelling, **kakegoe**, **kiai** and **kakegoe** are not the same thing.

**Kiarasoi** : 気争い “Spirit of mutual combat”. Overcome an opponent through a vigorous spirit, pressing forward to break their guard.

**Figurai** : 気位 “Noble presence, bearing, pride, dignity”.

**Kihaku** : 気迫 “Spiritual force”.

**Kihon** : 基本 “Fundamental”.

**Kihon bokuto waza** : 基本木刀技 See **bokuto waza**.

**Kikai** : 気海 “The sea of energy”.

**Ki o korosu** : 気を殺す “Kill their spirit”. See **san-sappo**.

**Ki-ken-tai-ichi** : 気剣体一致 “Spirit, sword, body, as one”. The unified action of the spirit, sword, and body of a **kendoka** is a fundamental principle in **kendo**.

**Ki-atari** : 気当たり (lit.) “Spirit/energy hit/prediction”. Displaying an offensive stance or intent to strike, then observing or anticipating the opponent’s reactions.

**Kiri-otoshi** : 切り落とし “Knock down while cutting”. A **waza** for when two strikes occur in a potential **ai-uchi**, one strike pushes the other aside with the **shinogi**, by the act of cutting, and lands on the opponent.

**Kiri-oroshi** : 切り下ろし “To cut downward” (with a sword). This is the basic, large overhead cut used in **iaido** which aims to cut the opponent from the head down to the navel. This cut is also used in the **nihon kendo no kata**.

**Kiri-kaeshi** : 切り返し “Returning cuts”. A coordinated practice of **men**, **tai-atari**, and **sayu-men** with an opponent. This is one of the most important drills in **kendo**, often done as both the initial and final drill of a **kendoka**’s **bogu** practice.

**Kissaki** : 切っ先 See **kensen**.

**Kobushi** : 拳 “Fist”.

**Kodachi** : 小太刀 The “short sword” used in the **nihon kendo no kata**.

**Kodachi kata** : 小太刀形 A subset of the **nihon kendo no kata** using the **kodachi**.

**Ko-dare** : 小垂 Small inner flaps on the **tare**.

**Kohai** : 後輩 A “junior”. This is a relative term relating to experience and not necessarily ones age.

**Koken-chiai** 交剣知愛 : (lit.) “Mixing swords-know love/compassion”. This is translated as bettering oneself by learning compassion and understanding of humanity through the practice of **kendo**. This is one of the ideals underlying the “Mindset of Kendo Instruction”, p.??.

**Kokoro** : 心 “Spirit” or “mind”.

**Kokoro no kamae** : 心の構え A “spiritual” or “mental stance”; a mindset or attitude.

**Komono** : 小物 (lit.) “Small part”. This refers to the small piece of leather sometimes attached to the **tsuru** used in tying the **tsuru** to the **tsuka-gawa** of a **shinai**.

**Koshi** : 腰 “Hips, waist, or lower back”. Koshi is often translated as simply “hips” however it has a broader meaning than this and perhaps a better translation is the term “core”.

**Koshiita** : 腰板 “Back” or “waist plate”. The firm plate on the back of the **hakama**.

**Kote** : 小手 “Forearm”. (1) The protective gloves in **kendo**, (2) name of the forearm target.

**Kote-gashira** : 小手頭 (lit.) “Top/head of the kote”. The hand portion of the **kote**.

**Kurai** : 位 “Rank” or “level” of something. Also an “amount” of something.

**Kurai-zume** : 位詰め (lit.) “Level (of) rebuke”. Pressure the opponent into disadvantage through physical and/or spiritual intimidation. To seize with superior poise and spirit. In **tachi kata** #3 **kurai-zume** refers to the **shidachi** invading the **uchidachi**’s **maai** with the feeling of being unstoppable.

**Kyo-jitsu** : 虚実 (lit.) “Truth and illusion”. A complex term with many interpretations, but the most basic is that when one is in a state of **jitsu** 実, “truth, preparedness, reality” they are prepared, and when unprepared they are in a state of **kyo** 虚, “unpreparedness, falsehood, fake”. Opportunities to strike occur when one is in a state of **jitsu** and the opponent is in that of **kyo**. A more complex situation of **kyo-jitsu** is that one can present a weakness or expose an opening *purposely* as a lure to the opponent (**kyo**) but the true intent is to strike as they react (**jitsu**). Or one can have their outward **kamae** or posture be in a state of **kyo**, again as a lure or deception, but keep their mind in a state of **jitsu** in order to take advantage of the opponent’s actions. These complex examples are directly linked to **seme**, **tame**, **ken-tai-ichi**,

and the **mitsu no sen**. Both the basic and advanced use of **kyo-jitsu** requires a **connection** to the opponent.

**Kyu** : 級 “Rank”, “class”. In **kendo** this is used as a ranking system for beginners, i.e., those who are below the **dan** ranks. Kyu ranks usually begin at sixth kyu advancing up to first kyu, however in some **dojo** younger **kendoka** may begin at tenth kyu.

**Ma** : 間 “Space”. Used in terms referring to distance or spacing.

**Maai** : 間合 “Spacial integration”. Usually interpreted as “distance”, **maai** takes into account many different factors than just distance. Your speed, opponent speed, reaction time, power, distance to opponent, **kamae**, etc...are all factors.

**Mae** : 前 “Front” or “forward”. **Mae** refers to a direction, e.g., moving forward.

**Mae-obi** : 前帯 “Front belt”. See **tare-obi**.

**Maki** : 巻き (v) To “roll up”, “hoist”, “lift up”.

**Maki-kaeshi** : 巻き返し The **kaeshi waza** used in the fourth **nihon kendo no kata**. The **waza** is done by lifting the **bokuto** upward from underneath the incoming thrust; the **bokuto** begins on the right hand side of the thrust and ends on the left, at which point the counter strike is made.

**Men** : 面 (1) “Mask; face guard”; the helmet worn in **kendo**. (2) The name of the target struck when attacking the head in **kendo**.

**Men-yoko-gane** : 面横金 The horizontal bars of the **men-gane**.

**Men-tate-gane** : 面縦金 The large vertical bar of the **men-gane**.

**Men-himo** : 面紐 Strings used to tie the **men**.

**Men-gane** : 面金 The metal grill that covers the face in the **men**.

**Men-dare** : 面垂 The large flaps of the **men-buton** which protect the shoulders.

**Men-chikawa** : 面乳皮 The small leather loops used to attach the **men-himo** onto the **men**. There are two types of **men-chikawa** used depending on the method used for wearing the **men**.

**Men-buton** : 面ぶとん The pressed cotton portion of the **men** covering the top and sides of the head.

**Metsuke** : 目付け “Point of observation”. The full term is “**enzan no metsuke**” or “fixing your eyes on a distant mountain”. This refers to where one should look while engaging an opponent. In essence you liken looking at your opponent to looking at a mountain with the opponents eyes being the peak. Focus directly on just one point and that is all you see, look *toward* the peak the

entire mountain comes into view.

**Migi** : 右 “Right” (direction).

**Migi-te** : 右手 “Right-hand(ed)”.

**Migi shizentai** : See **shizentai**.

**Mitori geiko** : 見取り稽古 “Observational practice”. Quite literally, learning by watching.

**Mitsu no sen** : 三つの先 “The three sens.” This refers to the three initiatives giving your attack an advantage. The first, *sen sen no sen* 先々の先, refers to having prior knowledge of your opponents intentions and, using this knowledge, draw out their attack capitalizing on it. The second, *sen no sen* 先の先, refers to attacking at the very moment your opponent is about to attack. Third is *go sen no sen* 後先の先. This refers to counter-striking your opponent after they have made their attack. The opponent is countered as in *sen sen no sen*, but knowledge of the opponents intentions are not known beforehand.

**Mizu no kamae** : 水の構え The “*kamae of water*”. See **chudan no kamae**.

**Mogito** : 模擬刀 “Practice sword”. Mogito are blunt metal swords with a sheathe used in formal demonstrations of the **nihon kendo no kata**.

**Moku no kamae** : 木の構え The “*kamae of wood*”. See **hasso no kamae**.

**Mokuso** : 黙想 The “*meditation*” done at the beginning and end of a **kendo** practice.

**Mono-uchi** : 物打 “Hitting part”. The upper ¼ length of a **shinai** measured from the **kensen** down. See **datotsu-bu**. For a **bokuto** (**tachi** or **katana**), “the part of the blade of a sword which cuts the best, said to be about 10cm from the tip”.

**Morote** : 諸手 “Two handed”.

**Motodachi** : 元立ち (lit.) Moto, “origin or cause”, *tachi*, “standing”. The *motodachi* is the one who attacks or creates or an opening for the **kakari-te** to practice striking or some type of **waza**.

**Motodachi geiko** : 元立ち稽古 Also termed **uchi-komi geiko**, this is when a **kendoka** strikes targets offered by an opponent.

**Mu** : 無 “Not” or “no”. A prefix indicating a negation.

**Mu-gamae** : 無構え “No *kamae*” or the “void *kamae*”. This stance expresses a sense of spiritual superiority where an overtly physical **kamae** is unnecessary; one is able to stand ready with their spirit or presence alone.

**Mudra** : The *mudra* (Sanskrit: मुद्र, “gesture”) are hand positions used to symbolize various Buddhist concepts and meanings. There are a number of such hand positions, however in **kendo** we use but one: **zenjo-in**, the *mudra of meditation* during the brief period of **mokuso**

before and after practice.

**Mune** : (1) 棟 The top (blunt) side of a Japanese sword, also referred to as “mine”. (2) 胸 “Chest”. The upper chest portion of the **do**; the **do-mune**.

**Mune-chikawa** : 胸乳皮 Leather loops on the **do-mune** used when tying the upper set of **himo** on the **do-kawa**.

**Mushin** : 無心 “No mind”. In very basic terms, *mushin* is acting with a natural, calm state of mind, i.e., not distracted by over thinking. *Mushin* is directly related to the concept **heijoshin**.

**Nafuda** : 名札 The name tag worn on a **kendoka**’s **o-dare**. Also known as a **zekken**.

**Nagasu** : 流す “Drain, pour, set adrift”. Japanese words can be converted between a noun form and a verb form according to the suffix. *Nagasu* is the verb form, *nagashi* the noun. See **uke-nagashi**.

**Nakayui** : 中結 The leather tie on the **shinai** ¼ the length of the *shinai* from the top.

**Naname buri** : 斜め振り “Diagonal swing”. Similar to **jo-ge buri** but with the strikes angled at about 30°–45°.

**Nayashi** : 萎し From the verb *na(eru)*: “wither, droop; to be lame”.

**Nayashi ire-zuki** : 萎し入れ突き **Shidachi**’s parry and counter thrust in the third **tachi kata**. *Shidachi* first deflects **uchidachi**’s thrust (*nayashi*) and then counter attacks with an immediate thrust of their own (*ire-zuki*) with the intent of invading *uchidachi*’s **maai**.

**Nidan waza** : 二段技 “Two step” **waza**.

**Nidan suburi** : 二段素振り “Two step” **suburi**.

**Nihon kendo no kata** : 日本剣道の形 “The Japanese *kendo forms*”. A set of formal movements and techniques which form the technical basis of modern **kendo**.

**Nito** : 二刀 The common abbreviation when referring to **nito kamae**.

**Nito kamae** : 二刀構え “Two sword stance” where one holds a long and a short sword.

**Nuki** : 抜き To “escape”.

**Nuki waza** : 抜き技 **Waza** where you simultaneously dodge a strike and execute a counter attack.

**Nusumi** : 盗み “Stealing”. From *nusumu*, “to steal”.

**Nusumi-ashi** : 盗み足 “Stealing/stealthy footwork”. This footwork is a variation of **tsugi-ashi**, however the feet are moved in such a way that one can put themselves in a position to cover a large distance without the opponent realizing it. In essence *stealing* the awareness of the distance you can cover from the opponent. This is an advanced application of footwork.

**Obi** : 帯 “Belt”. The obi is a belt that is worn (optionally) with the **hakama** and **gi**. Traditionally the obi is the belt that held the **samurai**’s sword at their waist.

**O-dare** : 大垂 The large outer flaps on the **tare**.

**Oji** : 応じ “To respond”.

**Oji waza** : 応じ技 Counter attacking **waza**, i.e., techniques used in response to your opponents actions.

**Okuri-ashi** : 送り足 “Sending out (the) feet” From the verb okuru meaning “to send out” or “to see off”. The standard footwork used in **kendo** where one makes complimentary steps, most commonly in a “right-left” succession, using **suri-ashi**. The feet are not crossed during the steps; **kendoka** begin and end their step in proper **ashi-gamae**.

**Omote** : 表 “Front”, “outside”, or “visible side”. In **kendo** this refers to the left side of the **shinai** or **bokuto**.

**Onegai-shimasu** : 御願いたします “Please” (do me the favor). In **kendo** this is asking “please practice with me”.

**Orishiki** : 折り敷き “Kneeling”.

**Orishiki do** : 折り敷き胴 “Kneeling Do”. In **tachi kata** #7, a **do** strike is executed followed by kneeling v.s. the usual **okuri-ashi zanshin**. This zanshin is unused in modern **kendo**.

**Osame-to** : 納め刀 (lit.) “Store (the) sword”. Put away or sheathe one’s weapon.

**Rei** : 礼 (1) “Bow”, or the act of bowing. (2) “Manners; etiquette” A term referring to general etiquette.

**Rei-ho** : 礼法 “Bow/thanks law/principle”. The formal systemization of the movements and actions of etiquette and formality.

**Rei-gi** : 礼儀 “Bow/thanks rule/ceremony”. Rei-gi refers to the reasons behind **rei**, i.e., “why”, “who”, and “when” we are to perform the actions of **rei-ho**.

**Renzoku** : 連続 “Continuous, repeating”.

**Riai** : 理合 “Principles behind”. The condition under which an action or actions are rational, purposeful.

**Ritsu-rei** : 立礼 A “standing’ bow” which is done at 15° or 30°, depending on context.

**Ryoku** : 力 “Strength, power, proficiency, ability”.

**Sage-to** : 下げ刀 “Hanging sword”. The relaxed standing position with one’s weapon held at their side.

**Saki-gomu** : 先ゴム Rubber or plastic insert inside the tip of the **shinai**.

**Saki-gawa** : 先革 The leather cap, attached to the **tsuru**, on the end of the **shinai**.

**Samurai** : 侍 See **bushi**.

**San-po-mamori** : 三方守り “Three point defense”. This is a defensive position, popularized in **shiai**, used to block attacks from the opponent toward **men**, **kote**, and **migi do** simultaneously. This usually signifies a momentary loss of **sen**, a break in the **connection** with the opponent, succumbing to one or more of the **four sicknesses**, or unable to endure the opponent’s **seme**. While potentially effective, san-po-mamori leaves **gyaku do** open for attack. More importantly it conveys to the opponent very clearly the state of mind of the user.

**San-sappo** : 三殺法 (lit.) “Three killing laws”. Three methods for overwhelming an opponent using a sword; (1) *ken o korosu*: kill their sword, (2) *ki o korosu*: kill their spirit, and (3) *waza o korosu*: kill their techniques. The basic interpretation of these are that killing the opponent’s spirit implies overwhelming them with your own, causing hesitation and doubt in their attacks. See **shikai**. Killing the opponent’s sword implies removing or controlling their ability to manipulate their weapon for offensive or defensive purposes. Finally, killing the opponent’s techniques implies either being able to counter or anticipate the opponent’s intentions, removing their ability to make any kind of effective attack.

**Sandan suburi** : 三段素振り “Three step” **suburi**.

**Saya** : 鞘 “Sword sheathe”.

**Sayu-men** : 左右面 (lit.) “Left and right” **men**. An angled strike to the upper left or right men. Sayu-men must land above the temple area.

**Seigan no kamae** : 正眼の構え (lit.) “Correct eye stance”. Seigan is often translated as “aiming at the eyes”. A variant of **chudan no kamae**, seigan is normally used in response to **jodan no kamae** as it offers better **kote** protection and facilitates both **seme** and the use of certain **oji waza** against jodan.

**Seiza** : 正座 “Correct sitting” (position). The Japanese formal seated position.

**Seme** : 攻め (n) An “attack” or “offense”. From the verb *semeru* meaning “to attack” or “to assault”, seme is most often interpreted as “pressure”. Seme is a spiritual pressure put on the opponent, the intent of which is to make them focus on your (perceived) imminent attack resulting in a momentary loss of composure. This loss of composure will produce a **suki**, creating an opportunity to strike. Effective seme stems from ones spirit, form, posture, **kamae**, and is the product of many years of diligent practice.

**Seme-kuzushi** : 攻め崩し An “unbalancing” or “disruptive pressure”. **Seme** that disrupts the opponent mentally or physically. Seme-kuzushi can be likened to the *final nudge*, inducing the opponent to respond.

**Seme-komu** : 攻め込む “To invade; to attack”. The forward step taken by **shidachi** to invade **uchidachi**’s **maai**, as a part of **iri-mi**, during the second **kodachi kata**.



**Seme-ai** : 攻め合い (n) “*Union of pressure*”. Seme-ai is the point where opponents actively pressure one another to create an opening to attack. Seme-ai, realistically, only occurs when opponents are in combative range.

**Sen** : 先 (1) “*First move*”, is synonymous with the term “sente” 先手 (n), “*first move, forestalling, initiative*”. Sente in **kendo** refers specifically to an attack used to seize the initiative against the opponent. (2) “*Previous; former*”.

**Sensei** : 先生 (lit.) “*Born previous*”, usually interpreted as “*teacher*”, i.e., somebody older than you and hence has more experience.

**Sen sen no sen** : See **mitsu no sen**.

**Sen no sen** : See **mitsu no sen**.

**Senpai** : 先輩 “*Senior*”. Literally “*previous people*”, a relative term relating to experience in something.

**Shi** : 仕 “*To serve*” or “*to do*” in a polite context.

**Shi-kai** : 四戒 “*Four admonitions*”. See **four sicknesses**.

**Shiai** : 試合 “*Match, game, bout, contest*”. A match where points are scored to determine a winner.

**Shiai-jo** : 試合場 “*Match area*”. The court for a **shiai**.

**Shidachi** : 仕太刀 “*The doing sword*” or “*the serving sword*”. The shidachi assumes the role of the “student” in the **nihon kendo no kata**.

**Shikake** : 仕掛け “*Start, begin, commence*”.

**Shikake waza** : 仕掛け技 Techniques to initiate a strike.

**Shimoza** : 下座 “*The lower seat*” or “*seat at the bottom*”. In a modern **dojo** setting the shimoza refers to two areas: the area where the entrance/exit is located, and the area opposite the **shomen**. Both are considered “low rank” positions.

**Shin** : (1) 心 “*Mind*”, “*heart*”, or “*spirit*”. (2) 真 “*Truth*”. See **shin-gyo-so**.

**Shin-gi-tai-ichi** : 心技体一致 “*The mind and one’s ability as one*”. The ability to put one’s intent into effective action.

**Shin-ki-ryoku-ichi** : 心気力一致 “*Mind, spirit, and waza as one*”. The **shin**, a heart or mind able to predict an opponent’s action through a state of **mushin**, guides one’s **ki**, the dynamic mental state of one’s spirit, which in turn dictates one’s **ryoku**, physical actions in the form of technique.

**Shinai** : 竹刀 “*Bamboo sword*”.

**Shin-gyo-so** : 真行草 ‘Shin’, (lit.) “*truth*”, ‘Gyo’, (lit.) “*stream*”, and ‘So’, (lit.) “*grass*”. The three *feelings* which **shidachi** embodies in the **kodachi kata**. These also correspond to the ideas of three phases or transitions, for example *formal, semi-formal, informal*. Another example refers to shapes or forms where shin is the true shape,

so is the essence of the shape, and gyo is the transition between the two. These feelings also correspond to **shu-ha-ri**.

**Shinogi** : 鑓 The ridge on the side of a **katana** and running along its length. The shinogi is very strong and is the part of a katana used for deflecting or manipulating the opponent’s sword. In general, this should also transfer to deflections in modern **kendo** with a **bokuto** or **shinai**.

**Shinogi o kezuru** : 鑓を削る “*Shaving the shinogi*”. This is done in the fourth **tachi kata** after **uchidachi** and **shidachi** strike ending in an **ai-uchi**. While keeping a sense of combative tension, each fights for center in order to prevent a **suki** on which their opponent can capitalize. This is the essence of **tsuba-zeriai**.

**Shinpan** : 審判 “*Referee, judge*”. A **shiai** referee.

**Shinsa** : 審査 “*Judging, inspection, examination*”. A **kendo** grading examination taken before a panel of judges.

**Shisei** : 姿勢 “*Position*”. Shisei refers to a physical position, e.g., *tai-to shisei* and *sage-to shisei* are terms indicating a *position* often shortened to **tai-to** and **sage-to**.

**Shishin** : 止心 “*Stopped mind*”. This refers to the mind becoming focused on one thing inhibiting free action. Focusing on the opponent’s weapon, plans to find an opening, not wanting to get hit or countered, etc...

**Shizentai** : 自然体 The “*natural body*”. This posture is one where the **kendoka** stands with natural (proper) posture, i.e., standing straight and extending the spine, shoulders back, arms hanging naturally at ones side, feet shoulder width, and the core engaged via a pelvic tilt. **Migi** and **hidari shizentai** is when the right or left foot is forward respectively and the opposite shoulder is pulled slightly backward. This is not to be confused with a **hanmi kamae**; the body is turned *slightly* in a **migi/hidari shizentai** whereas it is turned much more in a **hanmi kamae**.

**Shomen** : 正面 (lit.) “*Front*”. (1) The frontal target area of the **men**. (2) The symbolic head/front of the **dojo**.

**Shoshin** : 初心 “*Beginners Mind*”. In **kendo** one is often reminded to “keep your beginners mind”. This refers to the idea that one should always be open and ready to learn and not lose the initial vigor that is present for something that is new.

**Shoto** : 小刀 The “*short sword*” used in **nito**.

**Shu-ha-ri** : 守破離 ‘Shu’, (lit.) “*protect*”, “*obey*”, ‘Ha’, (lit.) “*detach*”, “*digress*”, and ‘Ri’, (lit.) “*leave*”, “*separate*”. In brief, shu-ha-ri is a term used to describe the various stages of learning or progress in many arts. The first stage, ‘Shu’, has the practitioner obeying the teachers method and ideals in every detail. The second, ‘Ha’, is when the student has learned enough that they are able to incorporate their own ideas. The third, ‘Ri’, is when the student is able to leave their teachings behind them

as the “specific machinery” is no longer overtly needed; all is natural. The **nihon kendo no kata** embody shu-ha-ri in **tachi kata** #1, #2, #3, and in **kodachi kata** #1, #2, #3.

**So** : 草 “Grass”. See **shin-gyo-so**.

**Sonkyo** : 蹲踞 (lit.) “Crouching”. The formal crouching position in **kendo**.

**Suburi** : 素振り “Elementary swing”. A fundamental part of basic **kendo** practice. **Kendoka** will *easily* perform many, many thousands of practice strikes in their training, learning proper technique through repetition.

**Suki** : 隙 “Interval”, “gap”, “opportunity”. Referring to an opening in either in your own or in your opponent’s defense. It also refers to an opening or gap in ones thoughts or actions.

**Suri-otoshi** : すり落とし (lit.) “Slide and knock down”. This **waza** is used during the third **kodachi kata**. **Shidachi** pushes their blade down and to the left, sliding it along **uchidachi**’s, pushing it away.

**Suri-nagashi** : すり流し (lit.) “Slide and ward off”. The motion is often likened to allowing water to “pour off” of something. This **waza** is used during the third **kodachi kata**. **Shidachi** receives **uchidachi**’s incoming **do** strike using the left **shinogi** and redirects or controls it by sliding the **kodachi** down their **tachi** at the same time.

**Suri-komi** : すり込み (lit.) “Sliding step”. This **waza** is used during the third **kodachi kata**. **Shidachi** slides their blade along the **uchidachi**’s, controlling it, as they step into **uchidachi**’s **maai**.

**Suri-ashi** : 摺り足 (lit.) “Sliding foot/leg”. **Kendoka**, regardless of the type of footwork, will most often be sliding their feet as they step. There are exceptions but the fundamentals of **kendo** always use sliding footwork.

**Suri-age waza** : すり上げ技 A “rising slide” **waza**. Used to deflect an attack by sliding your weapon along the opponent’s making a small, half-circle motion as you lift your weapon into the path of the attack. This rising-slide motion is not to be confused with hitting or knocking the opponent’s weapon out of the way.

**Suri-age** : すり上げ (lit.) “Sliding rise”.

**Sutemi** : 捨て身 (lit.) “Sacrifice/abandon body/self”, often translated as “body abandoning”. Usually interpreted as “all or nothing”, this term refers to the mentality, derived from combat with actual swords, needed in order to make a effective strikes. That is that one will either kill or be killed during the strike attempt. Only by placing one’s life on the line and giving their all can a strike become truly effective.

**Tachi** : 太刀 The “long sword” used in the **nihon kendo no kata**.

**Tachi-ai no maai** : 太刀合いの間合 The distance

**kendoka** are separated before engaging in each of the **nihon kendo no kata** or **bokuto waza**; approximately nine steps apart.

**Tachi kata** : 太刀形 A subset of the **nihon kendo no kata** using the **tachi**.

**Tai** : (1) 体 “Body”. (2) 待 “Wait”. (3) 帯 “Belt/sash”.

**Tai-so** : 体操 “Gymnastics, calisthenics”, i.e., a warm-up.

**Tai-to** : 帯刀 “Sword at belt”, i.e., where one would wear an actual sword. In **kendo** the **shinai** or **bokuto** is held at a 30°–45° angle at the hip in preparation to draw it.

**Tai-atari** : 体当り “Body blow”, “ramming attack”, or “suicide attack”. A technique used by **kendoka** to create a **suki** in their opponent by upsetting their balance via a push. It is crucial to understand the difference between **tai-atari** and simple pushing or shoving.

**Tame** : 溜め (lit.) To “store, amass, accumulate”. All Japan Kendo Federation [1] defines **tame** as “the condition of being composed both mentally and physically and maintaining a spiritually replete state despite the tense situation”. **Tame** is the continuation of **seme** required for it to be *effective*. When applying **seme**, one waits to see the opponent’s reactions while maintaining their attacking spirit. This short period of waiting is **tame**.

**Tanden** : 丹田 “Energy farm/field”. In Eastern martial arts this is where one develops **ki**. Also termed **kikai-tanden**, **ge-tanden**, or the **sei-tanden**, it is a point about three fingers width below the navel, at the center of gravity of the human body. **Tanden** is often somewhat incorrectly interchanged with the word **hara**.

**Tare** : 垂 (lit.) The “skirt of a coat”. The waist/groin protector worn in **kendo**.

**Tare-obi** : 垂帯 The waistband of the **tare**. Also known as the **mae-obi**.

**Tare-himo** : 垂紐 The thin, long belts attached to either side of the **tare-obi**.

**Te-no-uchi** : 手の内 “Palm, skill”. In **kendo** this is how one handles their **shinai** or **bokuto** upon striking. **Te-no-uchi** allows one to transfer power to the **kensen** while maintaining control over the strike during the moment it impacts the target. It also allows one to stop their strike at the desired position whether impacting a target or not.

**Ten** : 天 “Sky”, “heaven” or “point”.

**Ten no kamae** : 天の構え The “kamae of heaven”. See **jodan no kamae**.

**Te-no-uchikawa** : 手の内皮 The palms of the **kote**.

**Tenugui** : 手拭い “Hand towel”. The cloth towel worn underneath the **men**.

**To** : 刀 “Sword”. A Japanese sword; **katana**.

**To-ma** : 遠間 A distance that is longer than **issoku itto**

**no maai.**

**Tobi-komi waza** : 飛び込み技. Suddenly making a powerful attack the moment the opponent's spirit falters.

**Tobi-komi** : 飛び込み “Burst into”.

**Tokui waza** : 得意技 “Strong point” or “specialty technique”, refers to one's strongest **waza**.

**Tsuba** : 鐔 The “sword guard” on the handle of a **shinai** or **bokuto**.

**Tsuba-zeriai** : 鐔迫り合い (lit.) “Urging/forcing (while) *tsubas* are joined together”. The position when two **kendoka** are in close proximity, **tsuba** against **tsuba**, attempting to create an opening to strike.

**Tsuba-dome** : 鐔止め “Stopper” holding the **tsuba** in place.

**Tsugi** : 継ぎ (lit.) “Patch, join, successor”.

**Tsugi-ashi** : 継ぎ足 “Adding/extending/elongating” footwork. This style of footwork is a variation of **okuri-ashi**, where the **kendoka** brings both feet side by side before taking the **okuri-ashi** step. This motion helps to build momentum and is often used to cover very large distances.

**Tsuka** : 柄 The “hilt” or “handgrip” of the **shinai** or **bokuto**.

**Tsuka-himo** : 柄紐 The “cord” or “string” at the top of the **tsuka-gawa** used to anchor the **tsuru**.

**Tsuka-gawa** : 柄革 “Leather” covering the **tsuka** of the **shinai**.

**Tsuka-gashira** : 柄頭 “Top/head of the *tsuka*”. This refers to end of **tsuka**.

**Tsuki** : 突き “Thrust”.

**Tsuki-dare** : 突き垂 The throat protector.

**Tsuru** : 弦 The string on the top side of the **shinai**.

**Tsutsu** : 筒 “Cylinder, pipe, tube”. Area of the **kote** one may strike. Also called the **kote-tsutsu**.

**Uchi** : 打 (1) “To hit; strike”, (2) “to present something”.

**Uchi-otoshi waza** : 打ち落とし技. Techniques for striking the opponents weapon downward, midway through their attack, redirecting it.

**Uchi-otoshi** : 打ち落とし “To knock down”.

**Uchi-komi** : 打ち込み Striking practice using **fumi-komi**.

**Uchidachi** : 打太刀 “The striking sword” or “the presenting sword”. **Uchidachi** assumes the role of the “teacher” in the **nihon kendo no kata**.

**Uke** : 受け “Accept, take, receive”. (1) One who is receiving strikes during practice drills. (2) Momentary block of

an incoming strike prior to a counter attack.

**Uke-nagashi** : 受け流し “Receive and ward off”. This **waza** is used during the first and second **kodachi kata**. The **uchidachi**'s attack is received using the **kodachi** while at the same time redirecting it by making it slide off the **kodachi** via the **shinogi** and **hiraki-ashi**.

**Ura** : 裏 (lit.) “Inside”. The right side of the **shinai** or **bokuto**.

**Ushiro** : 後 “Backward”. **Ushiro** refers o a direction.

**Waki-gamae** : 脇構え “Side stance”. This is known as the “*kamae of metal*” and is a variant of **gedan no kamae**.

**Waza** : 技 “Technique(s)”. Fencing techniques used against an opponent.

**Waza o korosu** : 技を殺す “Kill their *Waza*”. See **san-sappo**.

**Yin-yang** : An idea from Chinese Taoism dealing with opposites and/or duality; the definition of one thing is dependent on the definition of its opposite. See **in-yo**.

**Yoko-men** : 横面 “Sideways” or “horizontal” men. A sideways **katate** strike to the right or left side of the **men**. Some use this term to refer to a **sayu-men** strike.

**Yokote** : 横手 The area on a **katana** where the tip ends and the blade proper begins.

**Yokote-kosa** : 横手交差 “Intersection of the *yokote*”. The position **kendoka** meet at when they will perform formality based motions, e.g., **kamae-otoku** or **sonkyo**, in the **nihon kendo no kata** and **bokuto waza**.

**Yuko-datotsu** : 有効打突 “Effective strike”. In **kendo**, **yuko-datotsu** is (International Kendo Federation [2]) an accurate, i.e., made in the same direction as the **jin-bu**, strike or thrust (1) onto the **datotsu-bui** of the opponent's **kendo-gu** with the **shinai** at the **datotsu-bu**, (2) in high spirits and correct posture, and (3) followed by **zanshin**.

**Za-zen** : 座禅 “Seated Zen” (meditation).

**Zanshin** : 残心 “Remaining mind”. In the context of **kendo** this is, simply put, interpreted as sustaining both mental and physical alertness with every action.

**Za-rei** : 座礼 “Seated bow” from the **seiza** position.

**Zantotsu** : 斬突 “Cut” or “thrust”. Similar to **datotsu**, however **zantotsu** applies to *cutting*, e.g., with a sword, where as **datotsu** refers to *hitting*, e.g., with a **shinai**. Modern **kendo** is a **datotsu** style, however the mentality and intent should mimic that of a **zantotsu** style. This is made explicit in the *Concept & Purpose of Kendo* by “...application of the principles of the *katana*.”

**Zekken** : ゼッケソ Name tag worn on the **tare**. Also termed a **nafuda**.

**Zen** : 禪. See [za-zen](#).

**Zenjo-in** : 禪定印 “*Zen meditation hand position*”. See [mudra](#).



*References*

- [1] All Japan Kendo Federation. *Japanese–English Dictionary of Kendo*. 2nd Edition. All Japan Kendo Federation, 2011.
- [2] International Kendo Federation. *The Regulations of Kendo Shiai and Shinpan*. March 2003 revision, 2nd printing. International Kendo Federation, 2005.