

## JAPANESE TERMS USED IN AIKIDO

This is an informal guide. Please be aware that many of these words express subtle ideas not fully contained in these English translations. Included here are primarily technical terms; words having profound philosophical meaning are not dealt with extensively.

**Ai** - meeting, joining, harmony

**Aikido** - the way of being one with energy

**Ai hanmi** - mutually agreeing stance (both uke and nage lead with same foot)

**Aikidoka** - person who practices Aikido Aikitaiso -mind-body coordination exercises

**Atemi** - strikes, used as a part of Aikido technique **Awase** - meeting or coming together

**Ayumi ashi** - normal stepping, as in walking

**Bo** - wooden staff, usually 72"

**Bokken** - wooden sword

**Bokken dori** - sword-taking technique; also called tachitori

**Bokuto** - wooden sword

**Bu** - martial

**Budo** - martial way

**Budoka** - a practitioner of budo

**Bushi** - warrior class

**Bushido** - way of the warrior

**Butsudan** - "Buddha shelf," a Buddhist shrine, often placed at the front of a dojo influenced by Buddhist tradition

**Cho** - chief or head, as in dojo-cho

**Chudan** - middle position

**Dame** - incorrect, bad

**Dan** - black belt ranks

**Do** - way or path, same word as the Chinese Tao

**Dogi** - training uniform

**Dojo** - place of enlightenment; training hall

**Doshu** - master of the way; currently Moriteru Ueshiba

**Eri** - collar

**Fudo** - immovable; e.g. fudoshin, immovable mind; fudo no shisei, immovable posture

**Gaeshi** - reversal

**Ganmenuchi** - thrust to the face

**Gedan** - low position

**Gi** - training uniform

**Giri** - obligation to another

**Gokyo** - fifth teaching; an elbow-locking technique

**Gyaku** - reverse or opposite

**Gyaku hanmi** - mutually opposite stance (nage and uke lead with different feet)

**Hakama** - divided skirt

**Hanmi** - half-body stance

**Hantachi** - half-standing (kneeling position)

**Hanmi hantachi waza** - techniques performed by a kneeling nage against standing uke  
**Hantai** - opposite or reverse  
**Hara** - the lower abdomen; the seat of correct breathing and of internal power  
**Hasso** - a stance with the bokken or jo held to one side of the head, extending up from the shoulder  
**Heiho** - strategy, martial science  
**Henka waza** - "changing technique;" changing from one technique to another  
**Hidari** - left  
**Hiji** - elbow  
**Hitai** - forehead  
**Hito e mi** - one layer of the body; a description of distance relative to an opponent  
**Hiza** - knee  
**Ho** - method  
**Hoho** - cheek  
**Hombu** - headquarters  
**Ii** - good  
**Iie** - no  
**Ikkyo** - first teaching; an arm-controlling technique  
**Irimi** - entering  
**Iriminage** - entering throw  
**Isshin den shin** - from mind to mind; the way in which knowledge is said to be transmitted from teacher to pupil  
**Jiyu** - free (as in free technique)  
**Jo** - short wooden staff (usually 50")  
**Jodan** - upper position  
**Jo dori** - jo-taking technique  
**Jo nage** - throwing with the jo  
**Joseki** - upper (senior) side of mat area; facing shomen, joseki is the right side  
**Joza** - upper seat, where the instructor sits  
**Jiujinage** - crossed-arms throw; literally "number ten" throw, referencing the cruciform shape of that character in Chinese writing  
**Kaeshi waza** - counter technique; applying a technique against the person attempting to apply one to you.  
**Kaiso** - founder  
**Kaitenage** - rotary throw  
**Kakari geiko** - group practice  
**Kamae** - stance or position  
**Kami** - deity, spirit, divine being; a Shinto term  
**Kamiza** - "god seat;" shrine or front of the dojo, if Shinto-influenced  
**Kan** - house or hall; also Romanized this way is a different word meaning intuition  
**Kata** - shoulder; also, a different word meaning a form used in training; e.g. bokken kata  
**Katatori** - grasping the shoulder or lapel  
**Katate** - forearm area  
**Katate ryotetori** - one wrist grasped by both hands  
**Katame waza** - pinning technique

**Katana** - a type of long sword, worm edge upwards  
**Ken** - sword  
**Kenshusei** - "student who strives for mastery through polishing;" in the Association, students committed to a more intense study of Aikido  
**Ki** - spirit, vital force, energy  
**Kiai** - explosive projection of energy in the form of a shout or yell; also refers to the general energy level of a person or thing  
**Kihon** - basic technique  
**Ki musubi** - linking one's energy with that of the opponent  
**Kiri** - cut  
**Kirigaeshi** - a suburi exercise of continuous *yokomen* and *gyaku yokomen* strikes  
**Kohai** -junior  
**Kotai** - movement to the rear  
**Kote** - forearm or wrist  
**Kotegaeshi** - "wrist-turning;" a throwing technique  
**Kokyu** - animating breath; also used to imply timing  
**Kokyudosa** - breath or timing exercise  
**Koshi** - hip  
**Koshinage** - hip throw  
**Kuden** - oral instruction  
**Kubi** - neck  
**Kubishime** - choking the neck  
**Kumitachi** - sword against sword  
**Kumijo** - jo against jo  
**Kyu** - ranks below dan grade  
**Ma-ai** - distance  
**Mae** - front or forward  
**Meiso ho** - meditation exercise  
**Men** - head  
**Migi** - right  
**Misogi** - purification practices; often refers specifically to a breathing technique  
**Morote tori** - see *Katate ryotetori*  
**Mane** - chest  
**Mane tsuki** - thrust to the chest  
**Mushin** - "no-mind;" a state of mind free from obstruction or attachment to thoughts or happenings  
**Nage** - throw; also, the person executing the throw  
**Nikyo** - second teaching  
**No** - an article indicating possession or connection; e.g. *chudan no kamae*: "stance of middle position"  
**Ni** - a directional indicator; e.g. *shomen ni rei*: "bow to the front"  
**Obi** - belt  
**Omote** - front  
**Orenaite** - unbendable arm  
**Osae** - pin; e.g. *ude osae*: arm pin  
**O'Sensei** - "venerable teacher;" refers in Aikido to Morihei Ueshiba

**Oyo waza** - advanced or applied technique  
**Randori** - multiple person attack (lit. "seizing chaos")  
**Rei** - bow  
**Ritsurei** - standing bow  
**Ryote** - both hands  
**Ryotetori** - grasping both hands  
**San** - suffix, expression of respect  
**Sankakutai** - triangular stance  
**Sankyo** - third teaching  
**Sayu** - side  
**Seika no itten** - the "one point;" see *tanden*  
**Seiza** - formal kneeling position  
**Sempai** - senior  
**Sensei** - instructor (lit. "born before")  
**Shikko** - walking on the knees  
**Shihan** - teacher of teachers  
**Shihonage** - four corner throw  
**Shime** - choking or strangling  
**Shimoza** - lower seat; place where students sit; the wall opposite from kamiza or shomen  
**Shimoseki** - junior area of mat; facing shomen, the left side  
**Shinken** - a live, steel sword; figuratively, implies seriousness and commitment  
**Shinken shobu** - a fight to the death; figuratively, implies a situation requiring total abandon and concentration. The spirit of good practice should be shinken shobu.  
**Shinto** - the native Japanese religion  
**Shisei** - posture, body alignment  
**Shomen** - front; the wall towards which students bow  
**Shomenuchi** - overhead strike to the front of the head  
**Shugyo** - intense physical/ internal training to perfect character and realize one's true nature  
**Shuto** - cutting strike with the edge of the hand  
**Sokumen iriminage** - side of the head entering throw  
**Suburi** - "empty swing;" individual striking practice with a weapon  
**Suburito** - a heavy bokken used for suburi, and sometimes for kumitachi  
**Sumi otoshi** - corner drop, a throwing technique  
**Suki** - opening or weakness, mental or physical, in an opponent's defenses  
**Suriashi** - sliding foot  
**Suwari waza** - technique with both uke and nage in kneeling position  
**Tachi** - a type of long sword; technically refers to swords worn edge downward  
**Tachitori** - see Bokken dori  
**Taijutsu** - unarmed body arts  
**Tai sabski** - body movement; e.g. irimi, tenkan  
**Tanden** - (Chinese: *tan tien*); the "one point," the center of the body's gravity and source of spiritual power, located two inches below the navel in the center of the hara  
**Tanto** - knife  
**Tanto dori** - knife-taking techniques

**Tatami** - mat  
**Tegatana** - "hand sword;" the manner in which the arm and hands are used in Aikido to move and strike  
**Tekubi** - wrist (lit. "throat of the hand")  
**Tekubitori** - wrist grab  
**Tenkan** - "spinning change;" a turning body movement  
**Tenchinage** - "heaven-and-earth throw"  
**To** - sword; also, the article "and"  
**Tori** - to grab or seize; also, the nage or defender  
**Toshu** - without a weapon  
**Tsuba** - sword hilt  
**Tsuki** - thrusting attack, with fist or weapon  
**Uchi** - strike  
**Uchideshi** - "inner disciple;" students living in a dojo and committed to full-time training, 24 hours a day  
**Ude** - arm  
**Ude garami** - arm-entwining technique  
**Uke** - one who is thrown (lit. "One who receives")  
**Ukemi** - "receiving body;" the art of falling and receiving techniques without injury  
**Undo** - exercise  
**Ura** - behind  
**Ushiro** - from behind or rear  
**Ushirotori** - any rear attack; often refers specifically to bearhug. Other rear attacks include ushiroeridori, ushirotekubitori, ushirokubishime, ushirohijitori, ushirokatatori, etc.  
**Waza** - technique  
**Yame** - stop (a command)  
**Yoko** - side  
**Yokomenuchi** - a strike to the side of the head or temple  
**Yonkyo** - fourth teaching  
**Yubi** - fingers  
**Zanshin** - "remaining mind;" a continued extension of concentration, energy and awareness at the conclusion of a technique and immediately afterward; the "follow through" of the technique  
**Zen** - (Sanskrit: "*Dhyana*"; Chinese "*Ch'an*"); literally "meditation;" a school of Buddhism emphasizing personal, intuitive experience of reality, and having a strong influence on Japanese thought and the martial arts  
**Zori** - sandals