

---

# MYOBUKAI

## SUGAWARA BUDO WASHINGTON D.C.

---

### STUDENT INFORMATION

“The Art of War (兵法; heihō) is the Art of Peace (平法; heihō);  
no man should remain ignorant of this matter.”

Iizasa Chōi-sai Ienao (c.1387–c.1488)  
Founder – Tenshin Shōden Katori Shintō-ryū

#### 1) GENERAL INFORMATION

- a) *Tenshin Shōden Katori Shintō-ryū* (“TSKSR”) was founded in the late 1400’s by Iizasa Choisai Ienao. A very good place to begin studying the history of this *ryū* is to lookup the following Wikipedia article:

Link: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tenshin\\_Shoden\\_Katori\\_Shinto-ryu](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tenshin_Shoden_Katori_Shinto-ryu)

- b) There are several lineages of TSKSR, and the one practiced at Myobukai is led by *Sugawara Tetsutaka Sensei*, who resides and teaches in Machida, Japan. Sugawara Sensei studied with and received his menkyo from Otake Risuke *Sensei*. After a number of years, the twentieth-generation headmaster, Iizasa Yasusada, gave Sugawara Sensei permission to teach TSKSR.

#### 2) ADMISSION TO THE DOJO

- a) Every prospective student must:
- i) Observe an entire practice.
  - ii) Then complete a short interview with one of the instructors.
- b) If you wish to proceed further, you may join practice as a prospective student. You must sign a Release Form prior to stepping on the mat. As a prospective student, you only need to come prepared with loose, comfortable clothing appropriate for exercise. We have loaner weapons available for your use.
- c) During your period as a prospective student, you should get to know the members of the school and ask them any questions you have about the practice. At some point on or after the third week as a prospective student, you may receive an invitation to take Keppan and join the school.
- i) *Keppan*: This is an oath to abide by the rules of the tradition. Many *ryū* were once closed societies, and techniques were their stock in trade; hence, those techniques were not taught without requiring certain moral and ethical responsibilities from members. In many traditional *ryū*, this oath was a written one, and the prospective member was required to obey a Code of Conduct and sign his name in his own blood. The Keppan under Sugawara Sensei only requires an oath to obey a Code of Conduct and one’s handwritten signature. Please be aware that Sugawara Sensei takes this oath very seriously, as do we here at Myobukai.

- ii) In addition to Keppan, you will need to complete a Registration Form for *Sugawara Sogo Budō* (Sugawara Martial Arts Institute) – This is simply *Sensei*'s way of knowing who you are and signifies your joining his organization. The membership fee of \$80.00 (to accompany the Registration Form) is a ONE-TIME fee for lifetime membership in Sugawara Sensei's organization.
- d) Once the above is completed, you will be introduced to the *Dōjō* as a full member and begin your training in TSKSR.
- e) TSKSR is a very demanding martial art. Prospective students who cannot regularly attend class or lack time to engage in meaningful self-training at home may take longer to receive an invitation to join the school. While each prospective student is considered for membership on an individualized basis, a serious applicant should attend at least one class a week for three consecutive weeks.

### 3) DOJO ETIQUETTE

One of the joys of training in TSKSR is the building of friendships with colleagues. As these relationships develop, please remember that within the dojo you are going to be in one or more of four relationships with other members.

#### a) *Kyoshi* (*Sensei*)

*Kyoshi* will have, by definition, a teaching license (*menkyo*) from Sugawara Sensei. Only *Kyoshi* may teach, and, when Sugawara Sensei is on the mat, only he will be teaching. Only a *Kyoshi* may initiate the teaching of new *kata* (forms).

#### b) *Mokuroku* (*Senior*)

TSKSR does not have ranks aside from that of *Kyoshi*. However, those who have been taught a certain portion of the ryū may be given a *mokuroku* (which means “catalogue”).

#### c) *Sempai* (*Relative Senior*)

*Sempai* is a relative term that refers to anyone who joined the dojo before the comparative subject. Thus, for example, it is possible for a *Mokuroku* to be *Sempai* to a *Kyoshi*. *Sempai* should feel a moral obligation to protect and look after their *Kohai* (juniors).

#### d) *Kōhai* (*Relative Junior*)

*Kohai* is a relative term that refers to anyone who joined the dojo after the comparative subject. Thus, for example, it is possible for a *Kyoshi* to be *Kohai* to a *Mokuroku*. *Kohai* should feel a moral obligation to protect and look after their *Sempai* (seniors).

### 4) CONDUCT OF CLASS

#### a) *Training Flow*

A TSKSR class is quite vigorous. Within a class you will get to train with multiple partners. In order for everyone to get the most out of their training, during class, the following rules should be observed:

- i) *Rotation* – Everyone has favorite training partners, and things they like to work on. Regardless, during class you should change training partners often, and work with many different partners. In general, you should do one side of a set of *kata*, then switch training partners. During the average class you should have worked with most, if not all of those present. Under normal circumstances you should not spend

extended amounts of time with any one person.

- ii) If you are senior to the person you are working with, you have an obligation to guide and assist the junior student. Moreover, you should seek out juniors to work with, and a substantial portion of class should be spent training with them.
- iii) If you are a junior member of the *dōjō*, it is your obligation to seek out and train with senior members. While seniors are there to help you, there is a long tradition of juniors having to “steal” technique from seniors. This concept will become clearer as you gain experience.
- iv) You should only study and practice *kata* and techniques you have been taught by a *Kyoshi*. It is considered improper to self-study *kata* you have not been taught or to learn by simply imitating more senior students.

## 5) TRAINING EQUIPMENT

TSKSR requires a variety of training weapons. These should be of good quality – we will ask that you have all your training weapons approved by one of the instructors prior to using them in class. There are a lot of inexpensive and unacceptable substitutes around. These are generally, unreliable, badly balanced, easily broken, and hence rather dangerous.

### a) Wooden Weapons

- i) *Bokken* (wooden sword)

In the beginning you will only need a bokken. The *dōjō* has a few loaners for new students, but it is your responsibility to acquire what you need, and we ask that you do so quickly. *Katori* uses a *bokken* with a weight and dimensions within certain parameters, and it is best to follow these guidelines. *Bokken* should be made of Japanese white oak, or impact grade hickory and not have a *tsuba* (guard).

- ii) Long Weapons (*bo*, *naginata*, *yari*)

It will be some months before you practice with long weapons. While you may wish to purchase your own for private practice, the *dōjō* normally provides these for member use in class.

- iii) General considerations

Please note, it is considered extremely rude to use someone else’s *bokken* (or weapons) without their express permission.

It is also considered improper to step over a weapon or to lean on your weapon with your body weight.

Regardless of where you get your *bokken*, *jo*, *bo*, etc, you should also have the following:

- (1) Sandpaper in the following grits, 80, 120, 220, 320 – 400
- (2) Some sort of wood oil, such as Tung, or Watco oil. (Do NOT use linseed oil, unless it is refined.)
- (3) The more you use your weapons, especially if you are junior and tend to bang them against other people’s weapons, the quicker the cellulose will begin to break down. If you want your weapons to last it is important to sand and oil your weapons on a regular basis. This takes away splinters and strengthens the cellulose so that the weapon lasts longer. If you run your fingers along the working edges of your weapons and you feel a lot of dings, or worse yet splinters, then you should sand and oil the weapon at your earliest opportunity. Splinters are dangerous to both you and those

you practice with. Should a student's practice weapon fall into disrepair, a *Kyoshi* may instruct that student to remove those weapons from practice.

**b) Metal Weapons (*Iaito, Shinken*)**

- i) *Iaitō* (modern metal practice sword, without a cutting edge)

For *Iai* (sword drawing practice) most people use an *iaitō*, or training sword. While they have the same fittings (handle, scabbard, wrapping) as a real sword, the blades are usually an alloy blend, and are neither sharp, nor capable of being sharpened. There are however, some steel *iaitō*, which are very durable, but are not to be considered real swords. Because a serviceable *iaitō* will be an investment of several hundred dollars, it is perfectly fine to use your bokken in the beginning. When you do purchase an *iaitō*, be very aware of cheap practice *iaitō*. Because something looks like metal, has a handle, and comes in a scabbard, that does not mean it is appropriate for practice. Be patient and wait until you can spend a little more.

*Note:* A *Kyoshi* must approve your *iaitō* before it is used for training in class.

- ii) *Shinken* (live blade, with true cutting edge)

A true *shinken* will be hand made by a smith in the traditional Japanese fashion, be differentially tempered, quite beautiful, and rather expensive. Regardless of how your blade was made, due to safety issues with the training area and other students, you **may not practice** with a sharpened (live edge) blade in a class setting.

**c) Clothing**

Normal attire for TSKSR practice consists of:

- i) *Keiko-gi* (*keiko* means practice, *gi* means dress or clothes) or uniform top – these are normally indigo in color, and many people simply use Kendo gi tops. You may also use a white *gi* top.
- ii) *Hakama* – black or other material (e.g., tetron) that won't bleed on the mat. If you already practice *aikidō*, and have a *hakama*, you are ready to go. Please note, if you do not have a *keiko-gi* we will ask that you acquire one within 30 days of beginning training. Good quality attire can be had relatively inexpensively and hence is a modest commitment to studying *Katori*.

The above attire shall be worn by students for all scheduled classes.

**d) Training Equipment Suppliers**

<b>E-bogu</b> <a href="http://www.e-bogu.com">http://www.e-bogu.com</a>	<b>Seido Shop</b> <a href="http://www.seidoshop.com/">http://www.seidoshop.com/</a>
<b>AOI Budogu</b> <a href="http://www.budo-aoi.com/index.php">http://www.budo-aoi.com/index.php</a>	<b>Tozando</b> <a href="http://www.tozandoshop.com">http://www.tozandoshop.com</a>

## 6) MONETARY DETAILS

- a) For new, prospective students, the first three classes are free. Thereafter, prospective students should pay fees according to Capital Aikikai's schedule below (subsection c).
- b) After you have taken Keppan, the membership fees for Myobukai are as follows:
  - i) The ONE-TIME registration Fee is **\$80.00** to set up a new student with both Myobukai and with Sugawara Sensei's organization, *Sugawara Sogo Budō*.
  - ii) Annual membership fee of **\$150 per year** to pay for vital expenses and sustain the organizational needs of Myobukai. We do not charge a monthly fee or a mat fee. (*Currently all mat fees go directly to Capital Aikikai who owns and maintains the dojo space in which we train*). Membership fees are due in January. For new individuals who begin their application process in October or later, the annual fee need not be paid for that year.
- c) Myobukai is generously hosted by Capital Aikikai. Aside from the yearly registration fee, all dues and mat fees go to them. Your monetary obligation to Capital Aikikai will be one of the following:
  - i) IF you are already a member of Capital Aikikai there are no mat fees to study TSKSR. Your *Aikidō* dues cover your mat fees (but not your yearly registration). (Please do be aware though that TSKSR is NOT *Aikidō* weapons, and does require a separate and somewhat substantial commitment.)
  - ii) IF you are a visitor, i.e., anyone who comes less than twice a month, we will NOT ask you to pay another *dōjō* membership, but you will be required to pay a mat fee of **\$15.00 per class**. Mat fees are customary when studying at another *dōjō* and Myobukai uses the mat courtesy of Capital Aikikai. Please remember to pay your mat fees and make any checks out to Capital Aikikai.
  - iii) IF you are not a member of Capital Aikikai, you will be asked to pay the \$80.00 monthly fee to them. This fee will not only allow you to practice with us, but you will have access to all classes offered at Capital Aikikai.
- d) Whatever your fee structure, you may pay Capital Aikikai's tuition/mat fees by putting money in a box on the wall of the *dōjō*. Capital Aikikai also has a PayPal link which can be found on their web site which is:
  - i) <http://www.capitalaikikai.org>
- e) Please remember, being current with tuition and/ or mat fees is your responsibility.
- f) NOTE: While Capital Aikikai graciously allows us to use their *dōjō*, and membership in Capital Aikikai exempts you from paying mat fees for Katori Class, please note that TSKSR is a separate martial art and that membership in Capital Aikikai does NOT mean you automatically have a right to membership in Myobukai. All students must complete the Admission Process described above.