



CUONG NHU TRADITION AND PROTOCOL FOR STUDENTS AND INSTRUCTORS

Tradition and etiquette is of the highest importance within a dojo. This is a ~~secret~~ space and one should always be mindful and treat the dojo with respect. Conduct yourself with courtesy toward others and be mindful of proper decorum in all areas of training. Etiquette is a vital part of training and instructors should put special focus on communicating with their students and each other about the proper attitude and training ethic that one should maintain. The following guidelines reflect the proper protocol that should be maintained inside the dojo:

ALWAYS TREAT THE DOJO WITH RESPECT

BOWING IN:

Leave your ego and shoes at the door.

Always bow onto the main floor using your Cuong Nhu bow.

Bow to the highest-ranking instructor if you are late. Remember to do pushups if you are late as pre-determined by your instructor. This is discipline, not punishment. Be courteous and quiet if class has begun.

If you are late, and there are others late as well, everyone should try and bow in together, so that the instructor does not have to keep bowing in a string of latecomers.

Place your belongings and shoes neatly in their places. Avoid cluttering the entrance area of your dojo.

Do not undress in the foyer of your dojo. Use the dressing rooms or bathroom to change into your uniform. For women t-shirts, tank tops, and sports bras are appropriate attire. For men T-shirts and tank tops should be worn under the gi top. Cups should not be worn on the outside of your gi. All students should observe proper modesty.

BOWING OUT:

If you have to leave the dojo or class early, bow out to your instructor and bow off the main floor. Be courteous and quiet as you leave.

LINING UP

Command given to line up
Command given to turn left

- ◆ students turn left
- ◆ Chief instructor remains facing front
- ◆ Black belts and dans turn right
- ◆ All ranks straighten their uniforms

Nghiem |
Nghỉ |

- ① ◆ Everyone meditates
- ◆ Natural Stance; everyone turns toward O'Sensei's picture and the flag

Nghiem | Chao |

- ◆ Instructors turn to face students

Nghiem | Chao |

- ③ ◆ Everyone bows

Gang |

- ④ ◆ Means "effort" and is shouted at the end of the bow

ADDRESSING SENIOR RANKS AND INSTRUCTORS

It is respectful and appropriate for individuals to be called by the title that has been bestowed them by their instructor and the style. This applies in the dojo and during seminars and formal events where the individual is in uniform. Rank is a privilege and one should always take care to behave in an appropriate manner inside and outside the dojo.

HOW TO ADDRESS:

TITLE

Senior students above brown belt	Sempai + their name (first or last)
Black Belt Instructors	Sensei
Dan Ranks	Sensei
Dan Ranks 6 th Degree and above	Master
Head of Style	Grandmaster
Founder of Style	O'Sensei

WHEN LINING UP:

Instructors: When lining up in front of other ranks, black belts and dan ranks should line up behind the chief instructor.

Students: Should line up according to rank and seniority, starting from the far left.

UNIFORM PROTOCOL

Caring for the uniform is paramount. Place your patch over your heart and your name on the other side. A school patch can go on the sleeve. You should maintain a clean gi with no rips, or torn patches. Keep it laundered and in clean condition. If you perspire excessively, wear a T-shirt under your gi top. Personal hygiene is an important part of your preparation for training. Gi tops should be long enough so that they stay inside of the belt during regular workouts.

Care should be taken to carefully fold the gi after each class. It is not appropriate to wad up your uniform and stuff it into your gear bag. Do not throw your gi on the floor. Proper respect for your obi (belt) is important as well. Avoid draping your belt around your neck or throwing it on the floor.

Do not wear your gi top or belt out of the dojo

TRAINING ETIQUETTE

Attend all your classes with a complete uniform. No jewelry, chewing gum, profanity or alcohol is appropriate during or related to training.

The dojo and instructors are not responsible for your valuables, please secure them or leave them at home.

Be mindful and grateful by using the *Cuong Nhu* bow with your partner before and after working out with them. Bowing represents our manners and attitude toward training. It is courtesy and says thank you. It is disrespectful to slap your thighs with your hands when bowing.

If you cannot make it to class, please notify your instructor. Do not rely on the message being passed along for you.

Your posture in class is representative of your attitude and appropriate behavior is important. Always train with an open mind. Do not stand with your arms folded across your chest or hands on your hips. Cross them at the wrists, in front or behind, or hold them naturally at your side.

It is appropriate to ask polite questions regarding techniques, training or etiquette you do not understand. However talking back to the instructor(s) or expressing your opinion on techniques or losing your temper in class is not recommended. It is not polite to talk when the instructor is speaking. Students should not argue over minute details about ongoing training or techniques. These arguments are always non-productive.

Calling attention to yourself by saying "I learned this directly from 'x' instructor" is not correct behavior. Our style is constantly evolving and your comments may not be appropriate.

Loud shouting or gestures, stamping your feet, yelling at someone outside of class and tapping on your cup are not appropriate behaviors. If you injure someone acknowledge your inappropriate behavior and calm the situation by withdrawing and doing pushups.

During class don't lean against the walls, columns or another person. When an instructor calls students to gather, they should be prompt in their response. During seated instruction, do not slouch, lean back on your arms, or lay down on the floor. If the instructor is talking, or giving technique instruction, listen and concentrate. It is impolite to watch other classes while receiving instruction.

When classes are in session, walk behind those working out. If someone is on the dojo floor doing kata or practicing with a weapon, walk behind him or her and be mindful of their space.

After class, clear the floor so those that would like to continue to work out or spar may do so. Socializing should be conducted off the floor.

SPARRING PROTOCOL

When lining up with sparring equipment, students should leave the equipment neatly on the left side at their feet. Sparring equipment should be well maintained so as not to injure yourself or another student.

Do not strike another student harder than you wish to be hit. When sparring with a lighter weight person you must scale down your strength. If you should strike your partner too hard or cause them to fall, you must withdraw turn away and sit quietly in seiza until your instructor indicates whether you are to do push-ups or provide assistance.

Maintain proper control when sparring. Horseplay is not appropriate behavior. Do not execute techniques that you have not mastered in training or execute blind techniques.

BOWING ON /OFF THE MATS

Shoes are not permitted on the mats. You should bow on and off upon entering the mat space.

TESTING ETIQUETTE

APPROVAL FOR TESTING:

It is not appropriate for you to decide that you are ready to test. This Responsibility lies with your instructor. They will inform you if you have trained sufficiently and possess the maturity to handle testing and promotion at this level.

STUDENT PROTOCOL:

Always bow to head testing instructor before and after breaking boards, public speaking and demonstrations. When a candidate is board breaking, wait until all sets are complete and the candidate has bowed out before applauding their performance. It is the candidate's responsibility to remove all boards and debris from the floor after breaking.

A clean white uniform with the Cuong Nhu patch over the heart area and your name, horizontally positioned on the opposite side, is appropriate for testing. Avoid placing an abundance of images or patches all over your gi.

Students should never walk out of a testing situation for any reason. Pass, fail or probation, students should stay for promotion, as this also forms a part of the test. By withdrawing without a valid excuse the candidate automatically fails the test.

While waiting for test results students should remain quiet.

SPECTATOR COURTESY:

Spectator's should be quite during classes or when students are testing, Do not talk to students who are training.

PROMOTION CEREMONY ETIQUETTE

STUDENT PROTOCOL:

When you are called up front to receive your rank, quickly walk to line up across the front facing your instructors and wait until all those receiving the same rank have lined up with you. Candidates will salute the head instructor and kneel down on their right knee to accept their rank with both hands.

If you are receiving a belt change, upon kneeling, take off your old belt, fold it in half and place across your knee. Accept your new belt from your instructor with both hands and carefully tie it around your waist. Do not hurry, because this is a special moment for you. When your instructor has tied your old belt in a knot and hands it back to you, accept this it both hands and place inside your gi.

INSTRUCTOR PROTOCOL:

The highest rank will bow candidates in.

Designated instructors will approach the candidate and attach a cloth stripe on the belt, left side two fingers from the bottom or from the stripe on the belt. Candidates should sew on their stripe by next class.

Instructor will take the old belt from off candidate's knee and fold it in half again and into a careful overhand knot, (Take the two ends and cross them, then take one of the ends and pull through the hole, knot will end up in a "V"). Hand in back to the candidate to place inside their gi top.

All candidates will rise from kneeling and salute instructors, then turn behind and salute their classmates and return to their lines. Congratulations, hand shakes and hugs should be done AFTER all ranks have been promoted and the swear in ceremony, with the reading of the code of ethics has taken place.

SPECTATOR PROTOCOL:

Guests in the dojo during testing should feel welcome and free to move around. They should not interfere with actual ceremonies, but should feel free to move as close as necessary to take photographs.

BLACK BELT ETIQUETTE

Black belts regardless of rank should not give seminars on topics they have not mastered or are not certified to conduct. You represent the style, your dojo and yourself. If you have not trained with a high degree of proficiency, you and the style lose credibility.

WEAPONS

Keep your weapons maintained. Discard frayed tambos and do not allow metal weapons to become rusted. Keeping your weapons in a weapons bag is appropriate. If you retrieve a weapon from the rack in your dojo. Turn, present the weapon and bow to O'Sensei. When returning your weapons to the rack, bow to O'Sensei and replace weapon. Never throw your weapons on the floor. If you should drop your weapon in training or have it accidentally hit the floor, it is required that you perform 20 pushups with the weapon held or placed carefully beside you.

When passing a weapon to another person use both hands and perform a bow to show respect and seriousness. Bladed weapons should be handed with the blade facing you. Receive a weapon handed to you with both hands and a bow.

STRIKING TARGETS

Always discard worn out and frayed targets. Senior students should retrieve the targets when an instructor needs them for class and return them to their home when the drills are finished or at the end of class. Students should not throw targets to the ground or across the room. Avoid slapping your targets together when working on a drill with your partner.

HANDLING CONFLICT

Try to resolve conflicts through open communication. Listening and remaining non-judgmental are invaluable skills. Communication and understanding should happen directly with those with whom you are having difficulty or are in conflict.

Within the school the highest active rank has the final say on the validity of all technical matters. Active means the person works out, teaches and attends seminars on a regular basis. If this does not resolve conflicts within the school, the regional Master shall mediate.

SUPPORTIVE LEADERSHIP

Leadership should be positive and supportive. As instructors we should always be respectful of students and fellow instructors. Your own respect will flow from the examples that you set for your students.

