

Pinner Aikido Club

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Beginner's Guide to Training

Pinner Aikido Club London - Aikido Training



ONE AIKIDO

Aikido is a defensive martial art. Training attacks include strikes and grabs whilst the defense consists of throws and pins. Training is therefore performed on matting for obvious reasons!

As a large portion of the aikido curriculum consists of throws, the first thing that students learn is how to fall and roll safely. Every class begins with warm-up exercises, which include stretching and breakfall practice. Aikido training is based primarily on two partners practicing pre-arranged techniques eventually leading towards freestyle practice.

The normal training pattern is for the receiver of the technique (uke) to initiate an attack against the defender (tori), who then neutralises the attack using an Aikido technique. Both halves of the technique, that of uke and that of tori, are considered essential to Aikido training as both are studying the aikido principles of blending and adaptation. Tori learns to blend with and control attacking energy, while uke learns to become calm and flexible in the disadvantageous, off-balance positions in which tori places them. Uke continuously seeks to regain balance and cover vulnerabilities (e.g., an exposed side), while tori uses position and timing to keep uke off-balance and vulnerable. This helps to achieve controlled relaxation, flexibility and endurance.



TWO AIKIDO

Only pushing or extending movements are used in Aikido in contrast with the pulling or contracting movements found in strength enhancing systems like weight training. There is absolutely no emphasis placed on building up physical strength, but instead on the use of coordinated whole-body movement and balance, similar in a way, to yoga or pilates.

In order to practice Aikido with their partner, students must learn to deliver various types of attacks. Although attacks are not studied thoroughly as in striking-based arts, 'honest' attacks (a strong strike or an immobilizing grab) are needed to study correct and effective application of technique. After basic techniques are learned, students study freestyle defense against multiple opponents, and some techniques with weapons.



THREE AIKIDO

Freestyle practice with multiple attackers is a key part of most curriculae and is required for the higher level ranks. It exercises a person's ability to intuitively perform techniques in an unstructured environment. Strategic choice of techniques, based upon how they reposition the student relative to other attackers, is also important. Aikido training is mental as well as physical, training the ability to relax the mind and body even under the stress of dangerous situations. This is necessary in order to enable the practitioner to perform

the bold 'enter and blend' movements that underlie Aikido techniques, wherein an attack is met with confidence and directness.

Aikido practitioners or aikidoka, generally progress by promotion through a series of kyu grades, followed by a series of dan grades, awarded after satisfactory completion of formal testing. Testing requirements vary, so a particular rank in one organization is not always comparable or interchangeable with the rank of another.

The uniform worn for practicing Aikido (aikidogi) is similar to the training uniform (keikogi) used in most other martial arts; simple trousers and a wraparound jacket, usually white. Both thick 'judo-style', and thin 'karate-style' cotton tops are used. Aikido-specific tops are also available with shorter sleeves, which reach to just below the elbow. A pair of wide pleated black or indigo trousers called hakama may be worn. In many styles it is reserved for black belt practitioners, while others allow all practitioners or female practitioners to wear it regardless of rank. Here at Pinner Aikido Club, a hakama may be worn after achieving 4th Kyu (Orange belt).



An important point to note about the training, is that Aikido techniques can be practised fully since they do not require injury to the training partner. This is in contrast to some other martial arts where the techniques must be simulated in order to avoid injuring ones training partners.

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