

An Aikido Overview

Welcome to our brief overview of Aikido.

Provided by <http://www.junshinkan.co.uk>

A Brief History of Aikido

Source: <http://www.junshinkan.co.uk/aikidoarticles/a-brief-history-of-aikido/>

A Brief History of Aikido

The name aikido is formed by the combination of three characters in the Japanese language. Ai, which means joining; ki, which means spirit and do, which means way. These three words actually summarize the essence of aikido as a form of martial art- the joining of the spirit to find the way. It was only in the period from 1930s to the 40s that the name aikido was officially accepted as the name of the martial arts form.

Aikido uses techniques that do not damage or kill unlike other forms of martial arts. The movements and skills being taught are just meant to divert attention or immobilize people. This is perhaps the reason why most people prefer aikido, because of it's focus on peace and harmony as opposed to aggression and conflict. In fact, aikido developer Morihei Ueshiba believes that to control aggression without causing any injury is the art of peace.

Ueshiba, who is also called Osensei, which means Great Teacher, created aikido from the principles of Daito-ryu aiki-jujutsu. He incorporated the techniques of the yari, the spear; the juken, which is a bayonet; and the jo, which is a short quarterstaff). But what ultimately separates aikido from other forms of martial arts is the fact that its practitioners can attack while empty-handed. Practitioners need no weapons for protection.

As a young child, he was much into physical fitness and conditioning. This is because of his vow to avenge his father's death. Eventually, his studies and activities brought him to the discipline of the different martial arts. He studied all. He even has certificates, fencing, fighting with spears, etc. He has learned it all. This is perhaps the reason why aikido is such a diverse and multi-disciplinary form of martial arts.

Yet despite his know how, he remains dissatisfied. He felt that there is still something missing. It was then that he turned to the religions. He studied under a spiritual leader, Onisaburo Deguchiof the sect Omoto-kyo in Ayabe. Deguchiof taught him to take care of his spiritual growth. He then combined his spiritual beliefs and his mastery of the different martial arts. Aikido was born.

His association with this charismatic spiritual leader Deguchiof also paved the way for his introduction to the elite political and military people as a martial artist. Because of this connection, he was able to establish aikido and even transferred the teachings to students, who have in turn developed their own styles of movement in aikido.

Aikido is a combination of the different styles of jujitsu as well as some of the techniques of sword and spear fighting, of which Ueshiba is an expert. To get an overall picture, aikido combines the

joint locks and throws techniques of jujitsu and the movements of the body when fighting with sword and spears.

Oriental in origin, it was brought to the west by Minoru Mochizuki when he visited France in 1951. He introduced the aikido techniques to students who are learning judo. In 1952, Tadashi Abe came to France as the official Aikikai Honbu representative. Then in 1953, Kenji Tomiki toured through the United States while Koichi Tohei stayed in Hawaii for a full year where he set up a dojo. Aikido then spread its influence in United Kingdom two years after and in 1965, it reached Germany and Australia. At present, aikido has centers all over the world.

Want to find out about [campanula muralis](#), [campanula pyramidalis](#) and other information? Get tips from the [Gardening Central](#) website.

Article Directory: [Article Dashboard](#)

The Origins of Aikido

Source: <http://www.junshinkan.co.uk/aikidoarticles/the-origins-of-aikido/>

The Origins of Aikido

Aikido is a name which is created by linking three characters in Japanese. Ai means joining, Ki refers to spirit and do means way. By taking these three terms together you get the essence of the art of aikido. Aikido can then be defined as a form of martial art which joins the spirit in order to find the way. In the 1930's – 1940's this was officially accepted as the definition as the true name of this martial art.

Aikido emphasizes techniques that do not damage or kill people unlike other different forms of martial arts. These skills and movements which are taught are created in order to divert a person's focus or immobilize that person. Most people prefer this discipline because it is a peaceful and harmonious compared to aggression and conflict. Morihei Ueshiba who developed the martial art believed that the control of aggression without any resultant injury was the art of peace.

Ueshiba is also O sensei, which translates to Great Teacher in English. He created aikido from the founding principles of Daito-Ryu -Aiki-Jujutsu. He also made use of the different techniques of the yari, the spear; the juken, (a bayonet); and the Jo, (a short quarterstaff). Something that separates Aikido from other different martial arts is that Aikido uses hands as weapons and the individual has no use for weapons.

When Ueshiba was a child he focused a lot on physical fitness and conditioning due to the fact that he had vowed to avenge the death of his father. He studied different martial arts including those with weapons and those without. This is one of the reasons why this particular far eastern martial art is such a diverse and multi-disciplinary field.

Despite all his knowledge Ueshiba wasn't satisfied because he felt that something was missing. This was where he found religion in the hands of Onisaburo Deguchiof the leader of the sect of Omoto-Kyo in Ayabe. It was Deguchiof who taught him to take care of

his spiritual self. With the combination of the spiritual and his cumulative knowledge of martial arts led to formation of Aikido.

By associating with Deguchi of he also go to meet the ruling and military elite as a martial artist. Due too this connection he then established a spiritual discipline and transferred this teaching to different students. These students over time developed their different styles and additions to Aikido.

Aikido is a diverse m?lange of the various styles of Jujitsu and some other techniques of other arts such as sword and spear fighting. Ueshiba was an expert in all these arts. This martial art combines certain joint locks and techniques which are employed in Jujitsu and movements that the body goes through whenever you're fighting with swords and spears.

Aikido was brought to the west by Minoru Mochizuki when he came to France in 1951. He introduced the aikido techniques to students who were learning judo at the time. In 1952, Tadashi Abe came to France as the official Aikikai Honbu representative. In 1953, Kenji Tomiki made a tour through the United States while Koichi Tohei stayed in Hawaii for a full year where he set up a dojo and taught Aikido. Aikido then spread its influence in United Kingdom. In the year 1965 this Japanese discipline was introduced to Germany and Australian and now it exists all over the world.

Darren Williger is an over-caffeinated, low carbohydrate eating, winemaking enthusiast who writes for AikidoPages.com, CoffeeZen.com, and PrimeYoga.com.

Article Directory: [EzineArticles](#)

A Simple Aikido Guide

Source: <http://www.junshinkan.co.uk/aikidoarticles/a-simple-aikido-guide/>

A Simple Aikido Guide

One of the most unique martial arts in existence is Aikido. Aikido focuses on the combination of the powers of the mind and body as well as the forces of nature. The art respects the energies of life and nature and directs these energies physically by channeling them harmoniously. Aikido was founded by Morihei Ueshiba of Japan sometime around the earlier parts of the 20th century. The art is based on circular movements as well as the talents of Morihei Ueshiba who was an extraordinary swordsman and a skilled practitioner of the martial art of Daitoryu Aiki-Jujitsu.

Aikido isn't just a form of physical defense but rather a way of life. By defining your life through this martial art you gain better skill, dexterity, concentration and a long lasting sense of peace of mind. The art of Aikido makes the physical use of body movements as well as an internal energy known as Ki rather than focusing on the use of energy and brute strength to protect yourself from your attacker. Aikido is often seen as a form of defense since its primary aims are created in order to protect you from harm and keep you free from trouble. However the techniques of this art are quite powerful and efficient at the same time.

Primarily four basic techniques exist in the practice of Aikido. The first of these techniques is the katai technique, this one focuses on your basic body movements and breathing patterns, the second is the Yawarakai which teaches the defendant how to properly deflect attacks and how to use the power of the attacker in order to control the events that occur. The third technique is the ki-no-nagare which places an emphasis on teaching the defendant on how to protect

themselves and align properly with the movements of an attacker before the attacker makes contact. Ki is the final Aikido technique and it focuses on linking the ki or spirit of the defender and the attacker.

Anyone who is training for Aikido requires a sparring partner. The practice and training in Aikido takes two people and these are the Uke and the Nage. The Uke is seen as the initiator of the attacks while the Nage is the person who defends from any incoming attacks.

Some of the basic Aikido techniques that are included in training include the Ikky which is carried out by putting one hand on the elbow and the other by the wrist. By doing this you give the defender the opportunity to wrest the attacker towards the ground. The next move is the niky and this move provides the Nage with the ability to grip the Uke by using a wristlock and drawing in. Sanky makes use of a rotating technique in order to manipulate the entire arm including the elbow and shoulder region. The Yonky is a technique for controlling the shoulders by making use of both hands in order to grip the forearm region. One other technique is the Goky which is the variant of Ikky technique.

Darren Williger is an over-caffeinated, low carbohydrate eating, winemaking enthusiast who writes for AikidoPages.com, CoffeeZen.com, and PrimeYoga.com

Article Directory: [EzineArticles](#)

A Primer On Aikido

Source: <http://www.junshinkan.co.uk/aikidoarticles/a-primer-on-aikido/>

A Primer On Aikido

In a fight, the person can make a counter attack in the hopes that the individual will be subdued. There is another way of course without resorting to force, which is the technique one can learn in aikido.

This martial art cannot be learned by merely watching others do it in the movies or in television. There are some who even show the step by step process in a magazine but nothing still compares to learning it from a Sensei.

The person must first become a student in order to be called a master. This means learning the basic rules from entering the dojo until the class is over. The person will surely feel some pain after falling down a few times on the mat but this is not to torture the pupil.

This is all part of the training, which the student must also do properly in order to move into the more advanced classes.

One of the secrets is being able to know when to use it since timing is everything. There is a bit of hand to eye coordination just like in sports but here, the individual will merely redirect the same force back to that individual.

Another secret in using aikido has to do with the wrist. The person should be smooth enough to put one hand over the opponents to be able to make the technique work and counter the attack.

It takes a certain amount of energy to be able to perform certain moves. The individual will learn the various breathing exercises that will increase the heart rate and slow it down especially in the heat of the action.

The student should bear in mind that the breathing exercises also serves as a unifying force between the physical and the emotional aspect of the person.

The most important secret in mastering aikido is being consistent with the technique. The arms will surely feel heavy after some time or a certain amount of energy is drained after a few moves. By being able to do the same thing despite these difficulties, anyone can truly be called a true martial artist.

People who want to check on how well one is doing can sign up for Tomiki Aikido. This is a competition held by various clubs in which the student will compete among some of the best in the country.

Those who do well here can move up to the next skill level just like in karate where a student moves from one belt to another. If after many years, that student has learned all the secrets that go with aikido, this is the only time one can be called a master and even open a dojo.

M. Clark is a feature writer for [Coffeepolis](#). Outside of writing she enjoys martial arts and traveling.

Article Directory: [Article Dashboard](#)

Aikido Secrets Revealed

Source: <http://www.junshinkan.co.uk/aikidoarticles/aikido-secrets-revealed/>

Aikido Secrets Revealed

Aikido's circular movements can be employed in order to redirect the attacks of an aggressor back to that person. The techniques in Aikido are solely defensive. A person only has a split second to decide to dodge or block the move of an attacker. The point is not to think of how it happens but to be able to stop it. During the fight a person can make a counter attack and hope that the aggressor will be subdued. Another way that you can achieve your aims of self preservation without the use of force is by the use of Aikido.

Aikido is a martial art which relies on the use of the hands to block any moves that an opponent makes. People who wish to learn Aikido may not be able to move as quickly as experts such as Steven Siegal but they are a whole lot more effective during combat. You can't learn Aikido just by watching other people on TV. People may choose to learn it from a book or magazine but the best thing is usually to learn the art of Aikido from a Sensei.

Before you become a master you must first of all be a student. What this means is that you should focus on learning the basic moves in the dojo until you have completed the class. A person might initially feel some pain from falling a few times but it isn't excruciating and it is all part of the learning process and it is required for advancement.

In Aikido timing is everything, a certain amount of hand to eye coordination is required as with all other sports but in Aikido the primary emphasis is to redirect the same force to the aggressor. One other secret is that Aikido has top do with the wrists. You should have the skill to be able to put your hand over the opponents own in order to make your technique perform and in order to counter the attack of your adversary.

Energy is required in order to perform certain moves. Certain exercises in breathing will increase your heart rate and still reduce it especially during action. A student should also take the time out to understand that breathing exercises are a unifying force between both the physical and emotional aspects of an individual.

Other than these secrets the most important of them all is to employ consistency in whatever technique that you practice. Arms may feel heavy after an amount of time or after being drained with some little

moves. If you're able to overcome these difficulties and do the same thing over and again you can easily become a true martial artist.

If you want to assess your performance you can easily sign up for the Tomiki Aikido. This is essentially an inter-club competition which allows you to compete against some of the best Aikido experts in the country. If you do well here you can easily proceed to the next level as in other martial arts where one person proceeds from one grade to another. After successfully gaining all the required secrets after years of training, a student can then become a master and even open their own dojo.

Darren Williger is an over-caffeinated, low carbohydrate eating, winemaking enthusiast who writes for [CaffeineZone.com](#), [MyLowCarbPages.com](#), and [HomemadeWine.com](#)

Article Directory: [EzineArticles](#)

Aikido

Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aikido>

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia



The version of the "four-direction throw" (*shih#nage*) with standing attacker and seated defender (*hanmi-handachi*). The receiver of the throw (*uke*) is taking a breakfall (*ukemi*) to safely reach the ground.

Focus

Country of origin

Creator

Parenthood

Olympic sport

No

Aikido(###aikid#) is a [Japanese martial art](#) developed by [Morihei Ueshiba](#) as a synthesis of his martial studies, philosophy, and religious beliefs. Aikido is often translated as "the Way of unifying (with) [life energy](#)"¹ or as "the Way of harmonious spirit."² Ueshiba's goal was to create an art that practitioners could use to defend themselves while also protecting their attacker from injury.

Aikido is performed by blending with the motion of the attacker and redirecting the force of the attack rather than opposing it head-on. This requires very little physical energy, as the *aikid#ka* (aikido practitioner) "leads" the attacker's [momentum](#) using entering and turning movements. The techniques are completed with various

[throws](#) or [joint locks](#).³ Aikido can be categorized under the general umbrella of [grappling](#) arts.

Aikido derives mainly from the martial art of [Dait#-ry# Aiki-j#jutsu](#), but began to diverge from it in the late 1920s, partly due to Ueshiba's involvement with the [#moto-ky#](#) religion. Ueshiba's early students' documents bear the term *aiki-j#jutsu*.⁴ Many of Ueshiba's senior students have different approaches to aikido, depending on when they studied with him. Today aikido is found all over the world in a number of styles, with broad ranges of interpretation and emphasis. However, they all share techniques learned from Ueshiba and most have concern for the well-being of the attacker. This attitude has been at the core of criticisms of aikido and related arts.

Etymology and basic philosophy

The word "aikido" is formed of three [kanji](#):

- <#> - *ai* - joining, unifying, harmonizing
- <#> - *ki* - spirit, life energy
- <#> - *d#* - way, path

The term [d#](#) connects the practice of aikido with the philosophical concept of [Tao](#), which can be found in martial arts such as [judo](#) and [kendo](#), and in more peaceful arts such as [Japanese calligraphy](#) ([shod#](#)), [flower arranging](#) ([kad#](#)) and [tea ceremony](#) ([chad#](#) or [sad#](#)). The term [aiki](#) refers to the martial arts principle or tactic of blending with an attacker's movements for the purpose of controlling their actions with minimal effort.⁵ One applies aiki by understanding the rhythm and intent of the attacker to find the optimal position and timing to apply a counter-technique. Historically, aiki was mastered for the purpose of killing; however in aikido one seeks to control an aggressor without causing harm.² The founder of aikido declared: "To control aggression without inflicting injury is the Art of Peace."⁶ A number of aikido practitioners interpret aikido metaphorically, seeing parallels between aikido techniques and other methods for [conflict resolution](#).⁷⁸⁹¹⁰¹¹ These kanji are identical to the Korean versions of the characters that form the word [hapkido](#), a Korean martial art. Although there are no known direct connections between the two arts, it is suspected that the founders of both arts trained in [Dait#-ry# Aiki-j#jutsu](#).

History

Aikido was created by Morihei Ueshiba ([## ##Ueshiba Morihei](#), 14 December 1883–26 April 1969), referred to by some aikido practitioners as ("Great Teacher").¹² Ueshiba envisioned aikido not only as the synthesis of his martial training, but also an expression of his personal philosophy of universal peace and reconciliation. During Ueshiba's lifetime and continuing today, aikido has evolved from the [kory#](#) (old-style martial arts) that Ueshiba studied into a wide variety of expressions by martial artists throughout the world.³

Initial development

Ueshiba developed aikido primarily during the late 1920s through the 1930s through the synthesis of the older martial arts that he had studied.¹³ The core martial art from which aikido derives is [Dait#-ry# aiki-j#jutsu](#), which Ueshiba studied directly with [Takeda Sokaku](#), the reviver of that art. Additionally, Ueshiba is known to have studied [Tenjin Shin'y#-ry#](#) with Tozawa Tokusabur# in [Tokyo](#)

in 1901, [Got#ha Yagy# Shingan-ry#](#) under Nakai Masakatsu in [Sakai](#) from 1903 to 1908, and [judo](#) with Kiyochi Takagi ([## ## #Takagi Kiyochi](#), 1894–1972) in [Tanabe](#) in 1911.¹⁴

The art of [Dait#-ry#](#) is the primary technical influence on aikido. Along with empty-handed throwing and joint-locking techniques, Ueshiba incorporated training movements with weapons, such as those for the [spear](#) (<#>), short [staff](#) (<#>), and perhaps the [bayonet](#)([# #j#ken](#)). However, aikido derives much of its technical structure from the art of swordsmanship (<#>).²

Ueshiba moved to [Hokkaid#](#) in 1912, and began studying under Takeda Sokaku in 1915. His official association with [Dait#-ry#](#) continued until 1937.¹³ However, during the latter part of that period, Ueshiba had already begun to distance himself from Takeda and the [Dait#-ry#](#). At that time Ueshiba was referring to his martial art as "Aiki Bud#". It is unclear exactly when Ueshiba began using the name "aikido", but it became the official name of the art in 1942 when the Greater Japan Martial Virtue Society (<#>) was engaged in a government sponsored reorganization and centralization of Japanese martial arts.³

Religious influences

After Ueshiba left Hokkaid# in 1919, he met and was profoundly influenced by [Onisaburo Deguchi](#), the spiritual leader of the [#moto-ky#](#) religion (a neo-[Shinto](#) movement) in [Ayabe](#).¹⁵ One of the primary features of [#moto-ky#](#) is its emphasis on the attainment of [utopia](#) during one's life. This was a great influence on Ueshiba's martial arts philosophy of extending love and compassion especially to those who seek to harm others. Aikido demonstrates this philosophy in its emphasis on mastering martial arts so that one may receive an attack and harmlessly redirect it. In an ideal resolution, not only is the receiver unharmed, but so is the attacker.¹⁶

In addition to the effect on his spiritual growth, the connection with Deguchi gave Ueshiba entry to elite political and military circles as a martial artist. As a result of this exposure, he was able to attract not only financial backing but also gifted students. Several of these students would found their own styles of aikido.¹⁷

International dissemination

Aikido was first brought to the West in 1951 by [Minoru Mochizuki](#) with a visit to [France](#) where he introduced aikido techniques to judo students.¹⁸ He was followed by [Tadashi Abe](#) in 1952 who came as the official [Aikikai Hombu](#) representative, remaining in France for seven years. [Kenji Tomiki](#) toured with a delegation of various martial arts through fifteen continental states of the [United States](#) in 1953.¹⁷ Later in that year, [Koichi Tohei](#) was sent by Aikikai Hombu to [Hawaii](#), for a full year, where he set up several [dojo](#). This was followed up by several further visits and is considered the formal introduction of aikido to the United States. The [United Kingdom](#) followed in 1955; [Italy](#) in 1964; [Germany](#) and [Australia](#) in 1965. Designated "Official Delegate for Europe and Africa" by Morihei Ueshiba, [Masamichi Noro](#) arrived in France in September 1961. Today there are aikido dojo available throughout the world.

Proliferation of independent organisations

Further information: [Aikido styles](#)

See also: [List of aikid#ka](#)

The biggest aikido organisation is the [Aikikai Foundation](#) which remains under the control of the Ueshiba family. However, aikido has many styles, mostly formed by Morihei Ueshiba's major students.¹⁷

The earliest independent styles to emerge were [Yoseikan Aikido](#), begun by [Minoru Mochizuki](#) in 1931,¹⁸ [Yoshinkan Aikido](#) founded by [Gozo Shioda](#) in 1955,¹⁹ and [Shodokan Aikido](#), founded by [Kenji Tomiki](#) in 1967.²⁰ The emergence of these styles pre-dated Ueshiba's death and did not cause any major upheavals when they were formalized. Shodokan Aikido, however, was controversial, since it introduced a unique rule-based competition that some felt was contrary to the spirit of aikido.¹⁷

After Ueshiba's death in 1969, two more major styles emerged. Significant controversy arose with the departure of the [Aikikai Hombu Dojo](#)'s chief instructor [Koichi Tohei](#), in 1974. Tohei left as a result of a disagreement with the son of the founder, [Kisshomaru Ueshiba](#), who at that time headed the Aikikai Foundation. The disagreement was over the proper role of *ki* development in regular aikido training. After Tohei left, he formed his own style, called [Shin Shin Toitsu Aikido](#), and the organization which governs it, the [Ki Society](#) (*Ki no Kenkyukai*).²¹

A final major style evolved from Ueshiba's retirement in [Iwama, Ibaraki](#), and the teaching methodology of long term student [Morihiro Saito](#). It is unofficially referred to as the "[Iwama style](#)", and at one point a number of its followers formed a loose network of schools they called [Iwama Ryu](#). Although Iwama style practitioners remained part of the Aikikai until Saito's death in 2002, followers of Saito subsequently split into two groups; one remaining with the Aikikai and the other forming the independent organization the Shinshin Aikishuren Kai, in 2004 around Saito's son [Hitohiro Saito](#).

Today, the major styles of aikido are each run by a separate governing organization, have their own headquarters (#####honbu d#j#) in Japan, and have an international breadth.¹⁷

Training

In aikido, as in virtually all Japanese [martial arts](#), there are both physical and mental aspects of training. The physical training in aikido is diverse, covering both general physical fitness and [conditioning](#), as well as specific techniques.²² Because a substantial portion of any aikido curriculum consists of [throws](#), the first thing most students learn is how to safely fall or roll.²² The specific techniques for attack include both strikes and grabs; the techniques for defense consist of throws and [pins](#). After basic techniques are learned, students study freestyle defense against multiple opponents, and in certain styles, techniques with weapons.

Fitness

Physical training goals pursued in conjunction with aikido include controlled [relaxation](#), [flexibility](#), and [endurance](#), with less emphasis on [strength training](#). In aikido, pushing or extending movements are much more common than pulling or contracting movements. This distinction can be applied to general fitness goals for the aikido practitioner.²

Certain [anaerobic fitness activities](#), such as [weight training](#), emphasize contracting movements. In aikido, specific muscles or muscle groups are not isolated and worked to improve tone,

mass, and power. Aikido-related training emphasizes the use of coordinated whole-body movement and balance similar to [yoga](#) or [pilates](#). For example, many dojo begin each class with warm-up exercises (#####junbi tais#), which may include [stretching](#) and [break falls](#).²³

Roles of uke and tori

Aikido training is based primarily on two partners practicing pre-arranged forms ([kata](#)) rather than freestyle practice. The basic pattern is for the receiver of the technique ([uke](#)) to initiate an attack against the person who applies the technique - the ## [tori](#), or [shite#](#) #, (depending on aikido style) also referred to as (#####nage (when applying a throwing technique), who neutralises this attack with an aikido technique.²⁴

Both halves of the technique, that of *uke* and that of *nage*, are considered essential to aikido training.²⁴ Both are studying aikido principles of blending and adaptation. *Nage* learns to blend with and control attacking energy, while *uke* learns to become calm and flexible in the disadvantageous, off-balance positions in which *nage* places them. This "receiving" of the technique is called *ukemi*.²⁴ *Uke* continuously seeks to regain balance and cover vulnerabilities (e.g., an exposed side), while *nage* uses position and timing to keep *uke* off-balance and vulnerable. In more advanced training, *uke* will sometimes apply reversal techniques (#####kaeshi-waza) to regain balance and pin or throw *nage*.

Ukemi(##) refers to the act of receiving a technique. Good *ukemi* involves a parry or breakfall that is used to avoid pain or injury, such as joint dislocations.

Initial attacks

Aikido techniques are usually a defense against an attack; therefore, to practice aikido with their partner, students must learn to deliver various types of attacks. Although attacks are not studied as 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.²

Many of the strikes (##*uchi*) of aikido are often said to resemble cuts from a [sword](#) or other grasped object, which indicates its origins in techniques intended for [armed](#) combat.² Other techniques, which appear to explicitly be punches (*tsuki*), are also practiced as thrusts with a [knife](#) or sword. [Kicks](#) are generally reserved for upper-level variations; reasons cited include that falls from kicks are especially dangerous, and that kicks (high kicks in particular) were uncommon during the types of combat prevalent in feudal Japan. Some basic strikes include:

- Front-of-the-head strike(#####sh#men'uchi) a vertical [knifehand strike](#) to the head.
- Side-of-the-head strike(#####yokomen'uchi) a diagonal knifehand strike to the side of the head or neck.
- Chest thrust(#####mune-tsuki) a [punch](#) to the [torso](#). Specific targets include the [chest](#), [abdomen](#), and [solar plexus](#). Same as "middle-level thrust" (#####ch#dan-tsuki), and "direct thrust" (#####choku-tsuki).
- Face thrust(#####ganmen-tsuki) a punch to the [face](#). Same as "upper-level thrust" (#####j#dan-tsuki).

Beginners in particular often practice techniques from grabs, both because they are safer and because it is easier to feel the energy and lines of force of a hold than a strike. Some grabs are historically derived from being held while trying to draw a weapon; a technique could then be used to free oneself and immobilize or strike the attacker who is grabbing the defender.² The following are examples of some basic grabs:

- Single-hand grab(####*katate-dori*) one hand grabs one wrist.
- Both-hands grab(####*morote-dori*) both hands grab one wrist.
- Both-hands grab(####*ry#te-dori*) both hands grab both wrists. Same as "double single-handed grab" (####*ry#katate-dori*).
- Shoulder grab(####*kata-dori*) a shoulder grab. "Both-shoulders-grab" is *ry#kata-dori*(####).
- Chest grab(####*mune-dori* or *muna-dori*) grabbing the (clothing of the) chest. Same as "collar grab" (####*eri-dori*).

Basic techniques

The following are a sample of the basic or widely practiced throws and pins. The precise terminology for some may vary between organisations and styles, so what follows are the terms used by the Aikikai Foundation. Note that despite the names of the first five techniques listed, they are not universally taught in numeric order.²⁵

- First technique(##*ikky#*) a control using one hand on the elbow and one hand near the wrist which [leverages](#) *uke* to the ground.²⁶ This grip also applies pressure into the [ulnar nerve](#) at the wrist.
- Second technique(##*niky#*) a [pronating wristlock](#) that torques the arm and applies painful nerve pressure. (There is an [adductive wristlock](#) or Z-lock in *ura* version.)
- Third technique(##*sanky#*) a [rotational wristlock](#) that directs upward-spiraling tension throughout the arm, elbow and shoulder.
- Fourth technique(##*yonky#*) a shoulder control similar to *ikky#*, but with both hands gripping the forearm. The knuckles (from the palm side) are applied to the recipient's [radial nerve](#) against the [periosteum](#) of the forearm bone.²⁷
- Fifth technique(##*goky#*) visually similar to *ikky#*, but with an inverted grip of the wrist, [medial rotation](#) of the arm and shoulder, and downward pressure on the elbow. Common in [knife](#) and other weapon take-aways.
- Four-direction throw(####*shih#nage*) The hand is folded back past the shoulder, locking the shoulder joint.
- Forearm return(####*kotogaeshi*) a [supinating](#) wristlock-throw that stretches the [extensor digitorum](#).
- Breath throw(####*koky#nage*) a loosely used term for various types of mechanically unrelated techniques, although they generally do not use joint locks like other techniques.²⁸
- Entering throw(####*iriminage*) throws in which *nage* moves through the space occupied by *uke*. The classic form superficially resembles a "clothesline" technique.
- Heaven-and-earth throw(####*tenchinage*) beginning with *ry#te-dori*; moving forward, *nage* sweeps one hand low

("earth") and the other high ("heaven"), which unbalances *uke* so that he or she easily topples over.

- Hip throw(####*koshinage*) aikido's version of the [hip throw](#). *Nage* drops his or her hips lower than those of *uke*, then flips *uke* over the resultant [fulcrum](#).
- Figure-ten throw(####*j#jinage*) or figure-ten entanglement(##*j#jigarami*) a throw that locks the arms against each other (The [kanji](#) for "10" is a cross-shape: #).²⁹
- Rotary throw(####*kaitennage*) *nage* sweeps the arm back until it locks the shoulder joint, then uses forward pressure to throw.³⁰

Implementations

Aikido makes use of body movement (*tai sabaki*) to blend with *uke*. For example, an "entering" (*irimi*) technique consists of movements inward towards *uke*, while a "turning" (*tenkan*) technique uses a pivoting motion.³¹ Additionally, an "inside" (*uchi*) technique takes place in front of *uke*, whereas an "outside" (*soto*) technique takes place to his side; a "front" (*omote*) technique is applied with motion to the front of *uke*, and a "rear" (*ura*) version is applied with motion towards the rear of *uke*, usually by incorporating a turning or pivoting motion. Finally, most techniques can be performed while in a seated posture (*seiza*). Techniques where both *uke* and *nage* are sitting are called *suwari-waza*, and techniques performed with *uke* standing and *nage* sitting are called *hanmi handachi*.³²

Thus, from fewer than twenty basic techniques, there are thousands of possible implementations. For instance, *ikky#* can be applied to an opponent moving forward with a strike (perhaps with an *ura* type of movement to redirect the incoming force), or to an opponent who has already struck and is now moving back to reestablish distance (perhaps an *omote-waza* version). Specific aikido *kata* are typically referred to with the formula "attack-technique(-modifier)".³³ For instance, *katate-dori ikky#* refers to any *ikky#* technique executed when *uke* is holding one wrist. This could be further specified as *katate-dori ikky# omote*, referring to any forward-moving *ikky#* technique from that grab.

Atemi (###) are strikes (or [feints](#)) employed during an aikido technique. Some view *atemi* as attacks against "[vital points](#)" meant to cause damage in and of themselves. For instance, [G#z# Shioda](#) described using *atemi* in a brawl to quickly down a gang's leader.³⁴ Others consider *atemi*, especially to the face, to be methods of distraction meant to enable other techniques. A strike, whether or not it is blocked, can startle the target and break his or her concentration. The target may also become unbalanced in attempting to avoid the blow, for example by jerking the head back, which may allow for an easier throw.³² Many sayings about *atemi* are attributed to Morihei Ueshiba, who considered them an essential element of technique.³⁵

Weapons

Weapons training in aikido traditionally includes the short staff (*j#*), wooden sword (*bokken*), and knife (*tant#*).³⁶ Today, some schools also incorporate firearms-disarming techniques. Both weapon-taking and weapon-retention are sometimes taught, to integrate armed and unarmed aspects, although some schools of aikido do not train with weapons at all. Others, such as the Iwama style of Morihiro Saito, usually spend substantial time with *bokken* and *j#*, practised

under the names [aiki-ken](#), and [aiki-j#](#), respectively. The founder developed much of empty handed aikido from traditional sword and spear movements, so the practice of these movements is generally for the purpose of giving insight into the origin of techniques and movements, as well as vital practice of these basic building blocks.³⁷

Multiple attackers and *randori*

One feature of aikido is training to defend against multiple attackers, often called *taninzudori*, or *taninzugake*. Freestyle ([randori](#), or *jiy#waza*) practice with multiple attackers is a key part of most curricula and is required for the higher level ranks.³⁸ *Randori* exercises a person's ability to intuitively perform techniques in an unstructured environment.³⁸ Strategic choice of techniques, based on how they reposition the student relative to other attackers, is important in *randori* training. For instance, an *ura* technique might be used to neutralise the current attacker while turning to face attackers approaching from behind.²

In [Shodokan Aikido](#), *randori* differs in that it is not performed with multiple persons with defined roles of defender and attacker, but between two people, where both participants attack, defend, and counter at will. In this respect it resembles judo *randori*.²⁰

Injuries

In applying a technique during training, it is the responsibility of *nage* to prevent injury to *uke* by employing a speed and force of application that is commensurate with their partner's proficiency in *ukemi*.²⁴ Injuries (especially those to the joints), when they do occur in aikido, are often the result of *nage* misjudging the ability of *uke* to receive the throw or pin.³⁹⁴⁰

A study of injuries in the martial arts showed that while the type of injuries varied considerably from one art to the other, the differences in overall rates of injury were much less pronounced. Soft tissue injuries are one of the most common types of injuries found within aikido although a few deaths from repetitive "*shih#nage*" have been reported.³⁹⁴⁰⁴¹

Mental training

Aikido training is mental as well as physical, emphasizing the ability to relax the mind and body even under the stress of dangerous situations.⁴² This is necessary 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.²² Morihei Ueshiba once remarked that one "must be willing to receive 99% of an opponent's attack and stare death in the face" in order to execute techniques without hesitation.⁶ As a martial art concerned not only with fighting proficiency but also with the betterment of daily life, this mental aspect is of key importance to aikido practitioners.⁴³

Criticisms

The most common criticism of aikido is that it suffers from a lack of realism in training. The attacks initiated by *uke* (and which *nage* must defend against) have been criticized as being "weak," "sloppy," and "little more than caricatures of an attack."⁴⁴⁴⁵ Weak attacks from *uke* cause a conditioned response from *nage*, and result in underdevelopment of the strength and conditioning needed for the safe and effective practice of both partners.⁴⁴ To counteract this,

some styles allow students to become less compliant over time but, in keeping with the core philosophies, this is after having demonstrated proficiency in being able to protect themselves and their training partners. [Shodokan Aikido](#) addresses the issue by practising in a competitive format.²⁰ Such adaptations are debated between styles, with some maintaining that there is no need to adjust their methods because either the criticisms are unjustified, or that they are not training for self-defence or combat effectiveness, but spiritual, fitness or other reasons.⁴⁶

Another criticism is that after the end of Ueshiba's seclusion in Iwama from 1942 to the mid 1950s, he increasingly emphasized the spiritual and philosophical aspects of aikido. As a result, strikes to vital points by *nage*, entering (*irimi*) and initiation of techniques by *nage*, the distinction between *omote* (front side) and *ura* (back side) techniques, and the practice of weapons, were all deemphasized or eliminated from practice. Lack of training in these areas is thought to lead to an overall loss of effectiveness by some aikido practitioners.⁴⁷

Alternately, there are some who criticize aikido practitioners for not placing enough importance on the spiritual practices emphasized by Ueshiba. The premise of this criticism is that "O-Sensei's aikido was not a continuation and extension of the old and has a distinct discontinuity with past martial and philosophical concepts."⁴⁸ That is, that aikido practitioners who focus on aikido's roots in traditional [jujutsu](#) or [kenjutsu](#) are diverging from what Ueshiba taught. Such critics urge practitioners to embrace the assertion that "[Ueshiba's] transcendence to the spiritual and universal reality was the fundamentals [*sic*] of the paradigm that he demonstrated."⁴⁸

Ki

The study of *ki* is a critical component of aikido, and its study defies categorization as either "physical" or "mental" training, as it encompasses both. The original [kanji](#) for *ki* was # (shown right), and is a symbolic representation of a lid covering a pot full of rice; the "nourishing vapors" contained within are *ki*.⁴⁹

The character for *ki* is used in everyday Japanese terms, such as "health" ([##genki](#)), or "shyness" ([##uchiki](#)). *Ki* is most often understood as unified physical and mental intention, however in traditional martial arts it is often discussed as "life energy". G#z# Shioda's [Yoshinkan Aikido](#), considered one of the "hard styles," largely follows Ueshiba's teachings from before [World War II](#), and surmises that the secret to *ki* lies in timing and the application of the whole body's strength to a single point.³⁴ In later years, Ueshiba's application of *ki* in aikido took on a softer, more gentle feel. This was his [Takemusu Aiki](#) and many of his later students teach about *ki* from this perspective. Koichi Tohei's [Ki Society](#) centers almost exclusively around the study of the [empirical](#) (albeit subjective) experience of *ki* with students ranked separately in aikido techniques and *ki* development.⁵⁰

Uniforms and ranking

Aikido practitioners (commonly called *aikid#ka* outside of Japan) generally progress by promotion through a series of "grades" ([ky#](#)), followed by a series of "degrees" ([dan](#)), pursuant to formal testing procedures. Most aikido organisations use only white and black belts to distinguish rank, but some use various belt colors. Testing requirements vary, so a particular rank in one organization is not

- Edison, New Jersey: Castle Books. pp. 23, 356–359. [ISBN978-0785810735](#).
38. ^ ^{ab}Ueshiba, Kisshomaru; Moriteru Ueshiba (2002). *Best Aikido: The Fundamentals (Illustrated Japanese Classics)*. Kodansha International. [ISBN978-4770027627](#).
 39. ^ ^{ab} Aikido and injuries: special report by [Fumiaki Shishida](#) Aiki News 1989;80 (April); partial English translation of article re-printed in Aikido Journal [\[1\]](#)
 40. ^ ^{ab}Pranin, Stanley (1983). "[Aikido and Injuries](#)". *Encyclopedia of Aikido*.
 41. ^ Zetaruk, M; Violán, MA; Zurakowski, D; Micheli, LJ (2005). "[Injuries in martial arts: a comparison of five styles](#)". *British journal of sports medicine* (BMJ Publishing Group) 39 (1): 29–33. [doi:10.1136/bjism.2003.010322](#). 15618336. [PMID15618336](#). [PMC1725005](#). Retrieved 2008-08-15.
 42. ^ Hyams, Joe (1979). *Zen in the Martial Arts*. New York: Bantam Books. pp. 53–57. [ISBN767-8300450](#).
 43. ^ Heckler, Richard (1985). *Aikido and the New Warrior*. Berkeley, California: North Atlantic Books. pp. 51–57. [ISBN978-0938190516](#).
 44. ^ ^{ab}Pranin, Stanley (Fall 1990). "[Aikido Practice Today](#)". *Aiki News* (Aiki News) 86. Retrieved 2007-11-02.
 45. ^ Ledyard, George S. (June 2002). "[Non-Traditional Attacks](#)". [www.aikiweb.com](#). Retrieved 2008-07-29.
 46. ^ Wagstaffe, Tony (30 March 2007). "[In response to the articles by Stanley Pranin - Martial arts in a state of decline? An end to the collusion?](#)". *Aikido Journal*. [www.aikidojournal.com](#). Retrieved 2008-07-29.
 47. ^ Pranin, Stanley (1994). "[Challenging the Status Quo](#)". *Aiki News* (Aiki News) 98. Retrieved 2007-11-02.
 48. ^ ^{ab}Shibata, Minoru J. (2007). "[A Dilemma Deferred: An Identity Denied and Dismissed](#)". *Aikido Journal* ([www.aikidojournal.com](#)). Retrieved 2007-12-09.
 49. ^ YeYoung, Bing F.. "[The Conceptual Scheme of Chinese Philosophical Thinking - Qi](#)". *Literati Tradition*. Retrieved 2007-02-12.
 50. ^ Reed, William (1997). "[A Test Worth More than a Thousand Words](#)". Retrieved 2007-08-11.

External links

- [AikiWeb Aikido Information](#)—a site on aikido, with essays, forums, gallery, reviews, columns, wiki and other information.
- [AikidoFAQ](#)—an informational aikido website, including articles, tips, and multimedia.
- [Aikido Journal](#)—Online magazine. Provides articles, interviews, and discussion of techniques.
- [Aikido Student dot Com](#)—Online video tutorials. Provides technical video demonstrations of many traditional Aikido techniques.