



laido Etiquette

It is the intention of the instructors of the laido class to teach "traditional" laido, including etiquette, which is an important part of this practice. Students should bow upon entering and leaving the dojo, perform a standing bow to shomen and a sitting bow to the sword. Careful handling of the sword should be practiced to ensure safety - check your equipment before class to ensure its soundness. Etiquette includes proper attitude and demeanour, respect for the sword and for your fellow students.

Attire and Equipment

Uniform

Initially, any type of loose clothing is acceptable, although an obi (wide belt) and kneepads are recommended. As soon as possible, the student should acquire a proper laido or Kendo uwagi (top) and hakama (Pant/skirt). Students should note the following:

- The hakama and uwagi should be black, dark blue or white;
- The back, front and sides of the uwagi should not bulge;
- The neckline at the front should meet close to the base of the throat and should not loosen;
- T-shirts may not be worn but an under-gi (juban) is permissible;
- The uwagi should be long enough to cover the leg at the side of the hakama;
- The hakama should be the proper length (just touching the top of the foot);

- The obi should match the colour of the hakama;
- Clothing should be clean and unwrinkled;
- Name tags are encouraged but not required and should be attached to the left chest;
- No jewelry or "badges" are permitted.

Swords

Initially, the student may use a bokken or bokuto (wooden sword). Eventually, the student should acquire a proper laito (non-sharp Japanese training sword). Ornamental and western swords are not acceptable. At lower grades, shinken (sharp blades) are not permitted. A sageo (cord) must be used at all dan levels and ikkyu. At kyu grade levels below ikkyu it is preferred but not strictly required.

Ranks and Grading

The Canadian Kendo Federation conducts examinations for laido students every December (Eastern Canada). Kyu gradings are also held every May in Guelph at the annual long weekend seminar. Students may challenge ikkyu as soon as they are fully familiar with the etiquette and the Zen Ken Ren Iai techniques. They must also have proper attire, iaito and sageo.