

# Kendo Beginners Course



**WEEK 2**  
**MEN!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**  
**YOSH!**

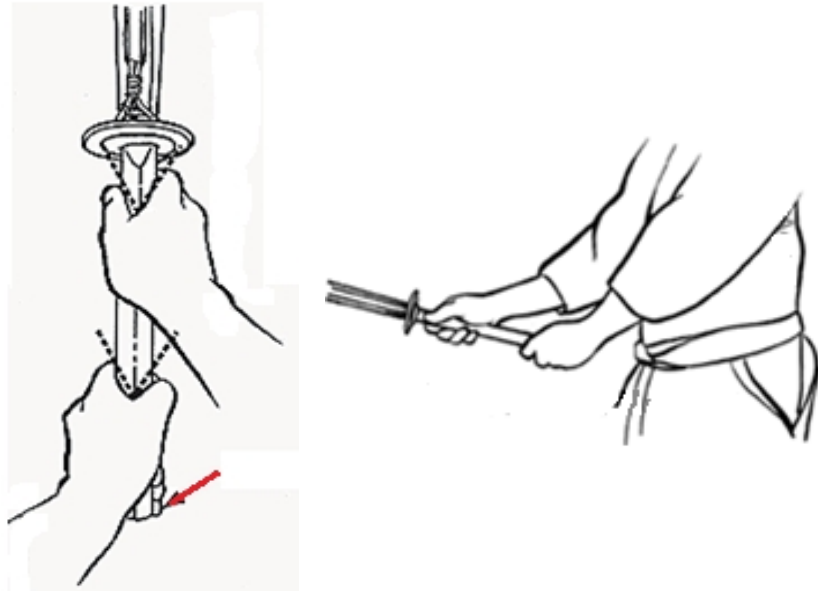
Hi, this week we are going to finalise the first "tier" (level) of the beginners course. This is what you will be learning this week:

1. Correct grip of the shinai.
2. Posture:           **Chudan No Kamae** – (Basic fighting posture)
3. Footwork:       **Ayumi Ashi** – (Normal walking with sliding foot)  
                          **Okuri Ashi** – (Sliding step, right foot leading)
4. How to cut.
5. Basic Kendo terms.
6. Points to score in Kendo.
7. Training program

Be dedicated in all you do and you will find success! The harder the work, the better the results.

## 1. Correct grip of the shinai

### How to hold a shinai



Good kendo is all about details. Properly holding a shinai will allow you to strike with strength and accuracy. The illustrations above show the proper angle and positioning. Grip the shinai more tightly with your left hand than your right, and with more pressure using your last three fingers of the left hand. Position the shinai near your belly button about one fist away from your body. Point the tip of the shinai at the face of your opponent.

## 2. Posture:

### Chudan No Kamae – Basic fighting posture (water form)

【中段の構え:ちゅうだんのかまえ】

**This is the stance you will be using in your life from now on:**

**Chūdan-no-kamae**, occasionally chūdan-gamae, or simply chūdan as it is shortened to in many Japanese martial arts schools that instruct in the use of the katana (sword). Chūdan-no-kamae translates to "middle-level posture." In most traditional schools of swordsmanship, and in the practice of kendo, chūdan-no-kamae is the **most basic posture. It provides a balance between attacking and defensive techniques.**

Stand straight up, with no part of your body or sword slacking. Be ready and always on guard. Your left foot must be behind you and your right foot in front of you. **Your LEFT heel must be off the ground** and your right heel floating just above the ground. In Kendo its best to fight on your toes, this makes you faster and gives you better response time. Both legs should be straight. When attacking or moving forward, push from your left foot and slide forward. See Okuri Ashi later on in Footwork and see good chudan in picture below.



### 3. Footwork

**Ayumi Ashi** – Normal walking with sliding foot.

**Okuri Ashi** – Sliding step, right foot leading

Doing Kendo should be like walking around in your house. It will take some time to get use too, but it should become natural after a few months. Keep on practicing your footwork daily, and you will ace your Kendo.

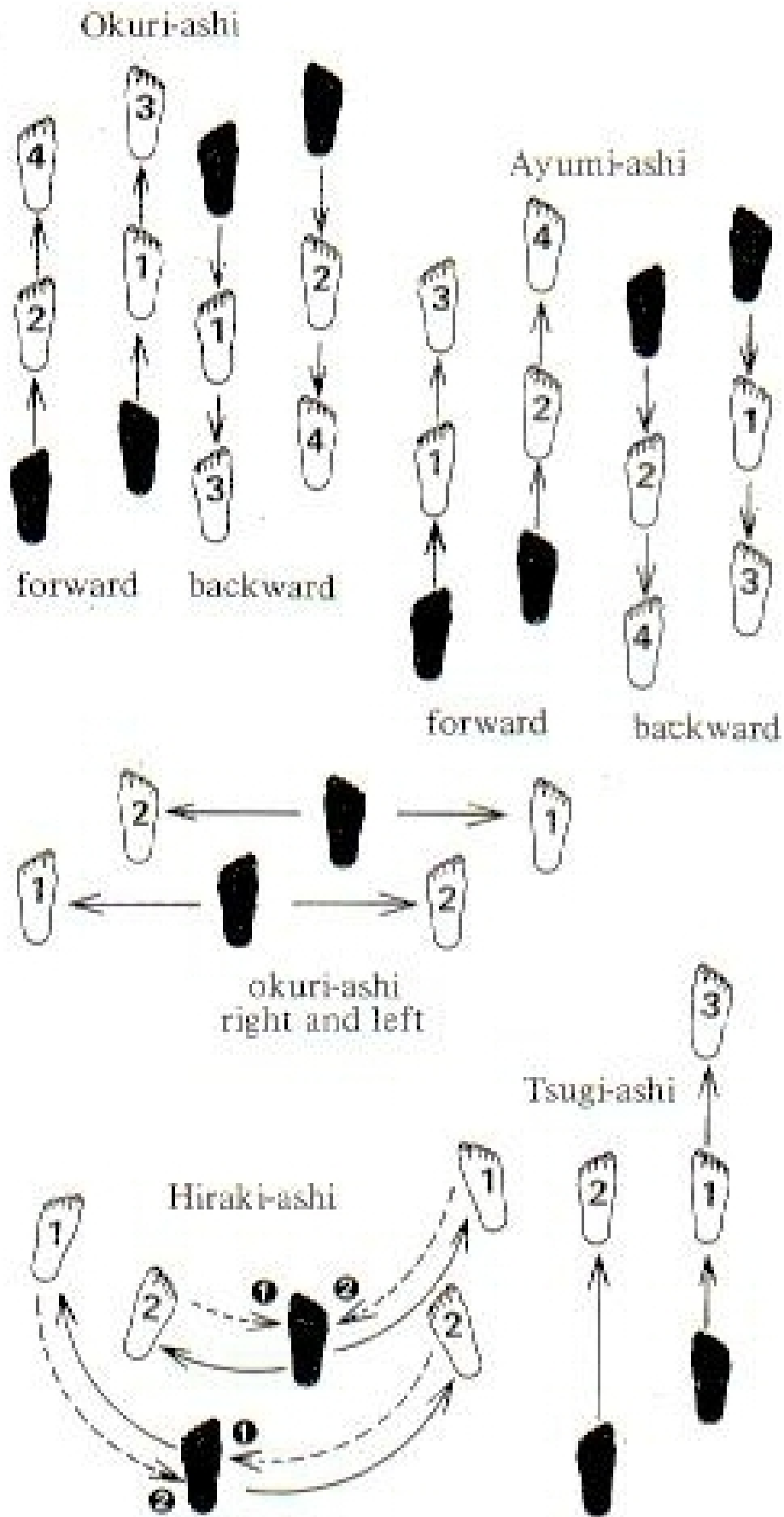
The first footwork you need to know is ayumi-ashi & okuri-ashi.

**Okuri-ashi** – Out of chudan-no-kamae, sliding feet, push from the left leg forward. Move right leg forward and let the left leg follow. Always letting the left leg stay behind.

**Ayumi-ashi** – Out of chudan-no-kamae, sliding feet, move your right leg forward and then the left past the right leg. Like normal walking, just sliding your feet. Never leaving the ground.

See the diagram on next page. AND please study it!

For now you only need to know Okuri and Ayumi. You will be learning the rest later on in Kendo.



## 4. How to cut.

Your mind should be still, peaceful and aware. Your body should be relaxed. From choudan use your SHOULDERS ONLY and push up your arms without moving your arms or hands or sword one bit. Push up until your lowest hand is below above your head. As soon as you hit the top pull down with your shoulders and punch your hands forward in a strait line from your shoulders. Your arms will go naturally with your hands. On the end of your punch, squish your hand inwards to control your blade for the cut. The squish should be from your thumbs over the top of your sword inwards. Like twisting a wet cloth with both hands. (You can do extra training by twisting wet cloths)

It should be as if you are holding a fishing rod and throwing in your line as far as possible. This is also a good way to practice your cutting skills. Take a break and go catch some fish this weekend. See how far you can throw your line. You will see, power only goes so far. The less you try to forcefully through it and the more shoulder energy you use, the softer your throw will be but it will go further. In other words less is more. This also uses less energy, which means you can fight for longer. Tiring out your opponent with strong, fast cuts.

The next think to work on, and also the first thing is to USE YOUR LEFT HAND to cut. The right hand is only there to point the sword in the right direction and to "catch" the sword if the cut misses the target. The left hand, arm and shoulder are your powerhouse where the cut must come from. The reason is because your left hand is below the right hand, holding the sword. Also because your footwork is with the left leg behind. Decades of studies and fighting in Japan have proven that this is the hardest way to fight, mentally and physically. Most people are right handed and think with their left brain. Now they need to use the left side of their body and think with their right brain. This balances out your lifestyle and make you extremely smarter than your average human partner.





## 5. Basic Kendo Terms

- Ashibaki - Footwork
- Hajime - Begin
- Ippon - One point
- Kendoka - A kendo student or practitioner
- Mate - Wait, pause, stop
- Rei - Bow
- Sempai - Seniors
- Sensei - Honorific expression used by students in addressing their teacher or instructor
- Shidachi - The defender in a kendo kata
- Uchi Dachi - The aggressor in kendo kata
- Yame - Command to stop or finish

### Directions

- Hidari - Left
- Mae - Forward
- Migi - Right
- Ushiro - Backwards

### Meditation Terms

- Seiza - Formal sitting
- Mokuso - Command to close the eyes and begin meditation

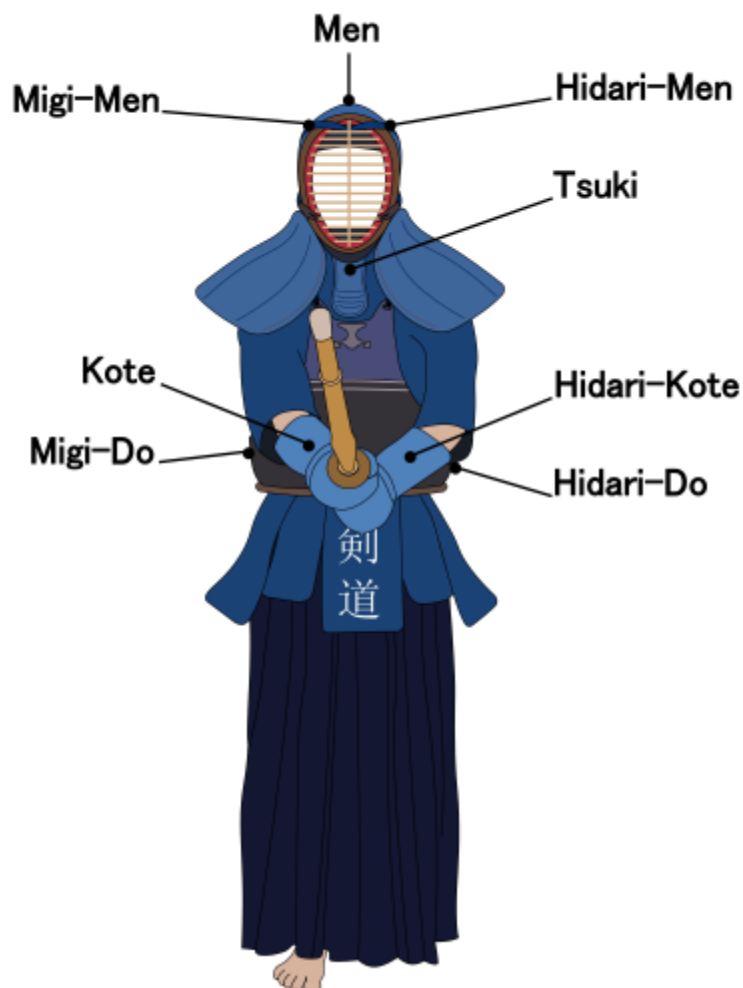
### Training Terms

- Hayasuburi - Striking practice where sword strikes are done quickly while moving towards and away from the target
- Kirikaeshi: The repetition of strokes of the shinai, often done as an opening exercise-  
Issoku-Itto No Ma: The basic combatant distance in kendo where one step forward will bring the two participants into striking range
- Sage To - Carrying sword posture, the position used to carry a sword into the practice or performance area
- Sonkyo - A crouching position used at the opening of kendo bouts wherein partners show one another respect before starting
- Suburi - Repetitious practice of basic sword strokes as in kendo
- Tenouchi - Gripping the shinai
- To Ma - A distance of more than one step (in order to strike) from an opponent
- Tsuki - A thrust to the throat that is a target area

## 6. Points to score in Kendo

The reason why these cuts were created as points was they are the hardest to score out of all the ways you can cut someone. It is much easier to cut someone's foot of than to try and get past his sword and cut off his hand.

### Legal points to score in Kendo Competitions



## 7. TRAINING PROGRAM

It doesn't matter what time in the morning or evening you practice this program. Some of us get up at 5am and other at 10am. Do the exercises before starting your day. Evening classes can fall in between any time from 15:00 up to 00:00. I don't want you running outside with a sword at 12 at night! The reason why you should practice morning and evening? Your body will built up a good muscle memory. Friday evening we are starting the meditation sessions, when meditating, never blank out your mind. Build "walls" up and keep it active. Think of all that you have learned the and think on what you want to improve on in the future. Take a few deep breaths and relax.

**Morning training please focus on strength and speed**

**Evening training focus on technique only**

| Date/Time      | Monday  | Tuesday   | Wednesday   | Thursday  | Friday  |
|----------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| <b>Morning</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Warm-ups</li> <li>• Men cuts x20</li> <li>• Do cuts x20</li> <li>• ayumi-ashi &amp; okuri-ashi x15 each</li> <li>• Men cuts x21</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Warm-ups</li> <li>• Men cuts x25</li> <li>• Do cuts x30</li> <li>• ayumi-ashi &amp; okuri-ashi x15 each</li> <li>• Men cuts x25</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Warm-ups</li> <li>• Men cuts x20</li> <li>• Do cuts x20</li> <li>• ayumi-ashi &amp; okuri-ashi x15 each</li> <li>• Men cuts x10</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Warm-ups</li> <li>• Men cuts x30</li> <li>• Do cuts x30</li> <li>• ayumi-ashi &amp; okuri-ashi x15 each</li> <li>• Men cuts x50</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Warm-ups</li> <li>• Men cuts with okuri-ashi x30</li> <li>• Do cuts with okuri-ashi x20</li> <li>• Men cuts x35</li> </ul>                                     |
| <b>Evening</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quick warm-up</li> <li>• Men cuts x25</li> <li>• Do cuts x30</li> <li>• ayumi-ashi &amp; okuri-ashi x30 each</li> <li>• Men cuts x20 with okuri-ash</li> <li>• Do cuts x10 ayumi-ashi</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quick warm-up</li> <li>• Men cuts x25</li> <li>• Men cuts x25 with Okuri ashi</li> <li>• Do cuts x20 with Ayumi-ashi</li> <li>• Men cuts x20 with okuri-ash</li> <li>• Do cuts x20 ayumi-ashi</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quick warm-up</li> <li>• Men cuts x25</li> <li>• Men cuts x25 with Okuri ashi</li> <li>• Do cuts x25 with Ayumi-ashi</li> <li>• Men cuts x25 with okuri-ash</li> <li>• Do cuts x25 ayumi-ashi</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quick warm-up</li> <li>• Men cuts x40</li> <li>• Men cuts x30 with Okuri ashi</li> <li>• Do cuts x30 with Ayumi-ashi</li> <li>• Men cuts x30 with okuri-ash</li> <li>• Do cuts x30 ayumi-ashi</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quick warm-up</li> <li>• Men cuts x50</li> <li>• Men cuts x30 with Okuri ashi</li> <li>• Do cuts x30 with Ayumi-ashi</li> <li>• Meditate 5 minutes.</li> </ul> |

| Weekend | Saturday   | Sunday       |
|---------|--|--------------|
| Morning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Warm ups</li><li>• Men cuts x25 x2 times (20 second rest in between)</li><li>• Men cuts x30 with Okuri ashi</li><li>• Men cuts x30 with ayumi ashi</li><li>• Do cuts x30 with Ayumi-ashi</li><li>• Do cuts x30 with Okuri-ashi</li></ul>   | No practice. |
| Evening | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Quick warm ups</li><li>• Men cuts x60</li><li>• Men cuts x40 with Okuri ashi</li><li>• Men cuts x40 with Ayumi ashi</li><li>• Do cuts x30 with Ayumi-ashi</li><li>• Do cuts x30 with Okuri-ashi</li><li>• Meditate 5 minutes</li><li>• Warm downs, enjoy your evening!</li></ul> | No practice. |



DOMO ARIGATO GOZAIMASHITA!