

***VICTORIAN IAIDO SHIAI, SHINPAN
REGULATIONS & GUIDELINES***

Effective and amended: Apr-2026

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1. Introduction

This document is to be used as a guide for all practitioners of laido in Victoria. It contains reference material and information regarding:

- 1) What is expected in the Dojo
- 2) Points to consider when judging or participating in a grading
- 3) Information to assist in increasing the overall standard of laido

The aim of this document is to collate all relevant information from the MODs and the accumulative knowledge obtained required for Grading/Competition.

Most of this information can be found in the MODs for laido published by the AKR or translated from the Japanese *laidō Shiai, Shinpan Kisoku Regulations* documentation. All other references can be found at the end of this document.

Where opportunity arises, attendance of seminars is an integral part of your own development in laido and is strongly advised.

The Roles and Responsibilities of the VITC:

The role of the Victorian laido Technical Committee (VITC) is to promote and facilitate the study of laido in Victoria increasing the overall standard of laido being practised from a state level. These roles include:

- Conduct and co-ordinate laido Championships and Grading examination.
- Improve the level of Shinpan skills in Victoria.
- **Improve the level of laido instruction in Victoria.**
- Distribute any published material or information, which will contribute to the overall goal.
- Promote fellowship among laido students for the mutual benefit of all.
- Develop Goodwill Competitions and encourage participation.

2. Dojo Etiquette

Dojo Etiquette is the manner in which each student and teacher expresses discipline and respect when training in the Dojo.

We practice etiquette at all times to build character and integrate as a group to better focus on our training.

Etiquette is displayed to the training hall, your teacher, and to each other.

Below are several key forms of etiquette when training:

Preparation

- Where possible, all jewellery must be removed before class, including rings, necklaces, earrings, and piercings. This is both a matter of tradition and safety.
- Smartwatches and fitness trackers are not permitted, even for tracking exercise. Phones must be silenced and kept off the dojo floor.
- Students are expected to help clean the dojo before and after each class.

Entering / Exiting the Dojo

- Training is performed without shoes, though *tabi* socks may be worn. Please leave your shoes at the door upon entering the dojo.
- Before stepping onto the dojo floor, remove cap or hat and bow toward the *shomen*.
- When leaving the dojo floor, reverse the procedure: bow, then step off backwards.
- If required to leave the dojo floor early, please respectfully wait for the sensei's attention and bow before leaving.

Sword Etiquette

- When holding your sword in the *obi*, always place your left hand on the sword and keep your left thumb on the *tsuba*.
- When carrying a sword outside your *obi*, hold it in your right hand with your right thumb on the *tsuba*. Holding it in the left hand is an aggressive posture and should be avoided.
- If you must leave the dojo during class (e.g. for restroom or water), remove your sword and place it at the side or back of the room.
- When placing a sword down, do so at the back or side of the room. The tip (*kissaki*) and edge (*ha*) should face away from the *shomen*.
- Never step over a sword lying on the ground.

During Class

- Avoid unnecessary talking/breaks during class.
- Class time should be focused on training. If you have a question, quietly ask the instructor or a senior student off to the side. Do not interrupt the flow of instruction.
- Try not to be late for class. If you are late, kneel by the side of the dojo floor and wait until the instructor invites you to join. Thank the instructor with a bow before stepping onto the dojo floor. If you missed the warm-ups, stretch briefly at the back before joining a group and ask permission before joining.
- Responses to instructors should be brief and respectful. “Hai” (yes) is appropriate.
- When sitting cross legged in class do not show the soles of your feet. This is considered extremely rude and where possible sit in *seiza* or cover the feet with the *Hakama*.

- Always report any injury to the instructor, no matter how minor.
- When walking behind someone who is training, wait for an opportunity which will not put either of you in danger and then use the phrase “*Ushiro Torimasu*” to alert the person that you are moving behind them.
- If you must walk in front of someone, especially if they are in *seiza*, bow slightly and extend your right hand downward in front of you.
- When lining up for *Seiretsu*, form up in rank order with the highest rank at the front of the dojo (in most cases closest to *Shomen*). If you’re unsure, ask the people next to you what rank they are. If this is your first class, line up at the far end.

Respect and Culture

- Always respect your own equipment and that of others.
- Never ask another student to handle or examine their sword.
- In traditional sword arts, a practitioner’s sword is considered an extension of their spirit and training. Asking to handle another person’s sword is disrespectful unless they offer it. If you’re curious, simply note the style or craftsmanship and let them choose whether to share it.
- Be considerate and aware of space when practicing.
- A *senpai* is a senior student based on their length of time training in the dojo not necessarily their rank. Treat all *senpai* with the appropriate respect, even if your own rank is higher.

3. Dojo Registrar Role and Requirements

Before the grading day, the Dojo Registrar must generate all Grading Application Forms and ensure all necessary payments have been made by all participants. This includes making sure all Grading examination papers are available for the judging panel on the day.

The Registrar is required to:

- Issue Grading numbers to candidates ensuring the numbers match with the Master Registration Form.
- Collect written exam papers from Dan candidates and pass them to the judging panel for review.
- Issue Grading Examiners Forms to the panel members for completion
- Collect and tally the results in the Grading Workbook issued by the VKR Registrar.
- Once Grading has concluded, post the grading results on a noticeboard using the candidates allocated grading number.
- Complete the Grading Workbook and send to the VKR Registrar.
- Arrange with the VKR Registrar to repay Registration fees to failed students or withdrawn candidates.

4. Dojo Steward/Tachiai Role and Requirements

The Dojo steward is required to set up the court, manage etiquette, and ensure the smooth running of the Grading.

The Dojo Steward/Tachiai must:

- Be at least *Shodan* level.
- Confirm the court area is set up correctly according to the Grading & Panel Layout (Fig. B). Including placement of tables/chairs etc.
- Provide candidates with clear guidance on the procedures for preparing for the examination. This includes approaching the start line, exiting after completion and removing the Grading number at the end of the examination.
- Oversee each line of candidates to ensure the Examiners experience no delays.
- Keep eye contact with the Chairman so as to call candidates to the start line when the panel is ready to start.

- Deliver all calls requested by the Chairman during the grading in a clear, audible voice.
- Standing up-right, call "*Nyujō*" for candidates to proceed to the start line. Call "*Taijō*" when all candidates have finished and to leave the court area. Generally the Chairman will call "Hajime" to start for each group of candidates.
- Be dressed in the proper uniform (Suits or *Keikogi*).
- Ensure candidates are lined up in numerical order from left to right facing the panel.
- Collect the grading numbers from the candidates upon completion of the examination and return them to the Registrar.

5. Grading Panel Requirements

Examiner:

- Should be a minimum of two grades above those being examined.
- Approved by the Victorian Technical Iaido Board to examine.
- Have attended National/Development seminars.
- Are current in their understanding of the requirements for the grading being conducted.
- Be dressed in the proper uniform determined for the panel (Suits or *Keikogi*).

Trainee:

- Be at least *Shodan* level.
- Be approved by the Chairman of the Grading Panel.

Results of Grading panel trainees are not to be used in the final decision for the grading and are for training purposes only.

Obligations of Examination Panel Members

Please read in conjunction with the AKR Mod, Standard rules for Dan and Kyu examinations.

Examination panel members must be impartial, fair and square at any examination level. Panel members are required to fulfil the following the obligations:

- Attend a pre-examination meeting to establish a shared understanding of requirements or clarify any requests.
- Must not receive any form of financial or material benefit that could be suspected of favouritism.
- Must not present any behaviour or statement in a way which grading members may be suspected of partiality.
- Must not enter other examination areas without legitimate reasons.
- Must abstain from conversing with other panel members in a way which fairness can be questioned.
- Must not exchange opinions before being seated, during the examination or after leaving the examination table.
- Must not interfere with other panel members or influence their decision.
- Must not interfere with Administrative Management or influence their decision making.
- Must not present or imply his/her views to applicants or to other panel members.
- To protect the integrity of each panel member, sufficient seat spacing between each panel member should be maintained.

On the day of the grading, all grading panellist should go to the meeting room (if available) upon arrival at the venue and avoid interaction with grading candidates. If there are more than one panel of examiners on the day, the panel in waiting should remain in the meeting room.

Grading Panel Organisation

- 4 weeks prior to grading date, send email to the VKR laido members seeking for volunteers to be panel member, trainee, tachiai and administrative duties.

- 1 week prior to grading date, send email to those members who have been selected as panel members, trainee, tachiai and administrative duties to confirm their availability.

Fig. A: Sample Grading Panellist and Assistants Worksheet

	NAME	CLUB	GRADE	Role for eg 21/3/2026
Grading Panel	PPP	ABC	5 Dan	Panel
	CCC	XYZ	5 Dan	Panel
Reserve/Trainee	MMM	EFG	3 Dan	Reserve panel
	ZZZ	XYZ		Trainee panel
Tachiai	SSS	DEF	2 Dan	Tachiai
Assist/Reserve	AAA	EFG	1 Dan	Assist
Admin Assistant	Tba	Tba		VKR admin
Grading Management	CCC	VITC	6 Dan	Grading management

Grading Attire

Grading panel members should wear business like attire:

- An appropriate business shirt.
- A moderate colour tie;
- A business suit; and
- A pair of dark colour socks.

Tachiai/Dojo steward and Admin personnel assisting with administration and directions of candidates should wear:

- A white shirt
- Tie
- Grey pants
- Navy blue jacket
- Dark colour socks

Time in Grade

AKR Grading Regulations specify that candidates become eligible to attempt a Grade must have trained for 3 months or more at the time of grading and must be registered as an AKR member (with an AKR number) at the time of submitting the grading application or achieving the previous Grade as in the below table:

Grade to be Examined	Time interval between gradings	Minimum age
Kyu	3 months or more	NA
1 Dan (Shodan)	3 months or more after granting of 1 Kyu	13 years
2 Dan	1 year or longer after granting of Shodan	NA
3 Dan	2 years or longer after granting of 2 Dan	NA
4 Dan	3 years or longer after granting of 3 Dan	NA
5 Dan	4 years or longer after granting of 4 Dan	NA

These requirements assume that the candidate has trained continuously during the specified periods. The Club instructor have the responsibility to decide whether the member has attended sufficient training sessions and able to show the required standard before they are allowed to attempt the next Grade.

6. Grading Requirements

Selection Of Kata

The selection of Kata for the relevant candidate level is normally confirmed by the Chairman of the Technical Board organising the examination.

ZNKR Kata Names

1	Ipponme	Mae
2	Nihonme	Ushiro
3	Sanbonme	Ukenagashi
4	Yonhonme	Tsuka-ate
5	Gohonme	Kesagiri
6	Ropponme	Morotetsuki
7	Nanahonme	Sanpogiri
8	Happonme	Ganmenate
9	Kyuhonme	Soetetsuki
10	Juhonme	Shihogiri
11	Juipponme	Sōgiri
12	Junihonme	Nukiuchi

Standing Kata

If the candidate is unable to kneel, the Chairman will arrange for ALL candidates to do the same kata.

As there are no official ZNKR standing versions of the kata 1-4, Kanagawa prefecture have outlined their way of performing these at various seminars hosted in Australia.

KYU Grading Requirements and Procedures

- Grading exams are to be held in accordance with the AKR Standard Rules for Grading.
- Beginners should be members of the AKR for at least 3 months prior to their first grading examination.
- Kyu grades used shall be from *Rokkyu* (lowest) to *Ikkyu* (highest).
- Applicants for Grades *Rokkyu* to *Ikkyu* shall be examined on the basic movements and shall perform up to five pre-selected kata combining *Reiho* etiquette.
- A written test is not required.
- The examiners qualification, size of examination panel and consent criteria is detailed in the AKR Standard Rules for Grading, Examiners Qualifications.
- It is not necessary that the applicant be promoted one grade at a time. If their ability warrants, and by agreement of the examiners, the applicant may progress by more than one grade to a maximum of two grades. i.e. *Gokyu* to *Sankyu*. However, to obtain *Shodan*, the applicant must have held *Ikkyu* for at least 3 months. Jumping grades should not be encouraged unless exceptional standards are achieved.
- The guidelines for Kyu grading technical requirements (listed in para 3.3.2.1 to 3.3.2.6 of the AKR MANUAL OF DOCUMENTS SECTION Three Iaido Board) are listed for the use of State Renmei as a guideline to continuity between states of the minimum standards required at each level.
- State Renmei may determine what number of Kyu grade levels they wish to operate within their Renmei but they should correspond with the appropriate national technical level i.e. They may choose to operate a three Kyu system where the first examination is for *Sankyu*.

Kyu grades are required to perform the designated kata.

KATA REQUIREMENTS FOR EXAMINATION

Grade being taken	Graded on
Rokkyu	1 & 2 only
Gokyu	1, 2, 3 & 4
Yonkyu	1, 3, 4, 5 & 6
Sankyu	1, 3, 5, 7 & 8
Nikyu	1, 6, 7, 9 & 10
Ikkyu	1, 4, 8, 11 & 12

Kyu Grade Observation Points

- Lower kyu level candidates must demonstrate a basic understanding of *reiho* and movements thus establishing a foundation for further development.
- Middle kyu level candidates are expected to show reasonable *reiho*, cutting, *chiburi* and *noto* skill.
- Higher kyu level candidates must meet all checkpoints outlined in the syllabus, with particular emphasis on correct foot placement, cutting technique and *reiho*. These candidates must demonstrate a deeper comprehension of the purpose and application of the kata.

DAN Grading Requirements and Procedures

KATA REQUIREMENTS FOR EXAMINATION

Dan Grading Kata is selected by the Chairman of the Technical Board on the day of the examination. These Kata will be announced at the beginning of the examination at the venue. Dan grading consists of the following requirements:

- *Shodan, Nidan, Sandan:*
 - 5 Zenkenren kata selected from katas 1 to 12 with written paper. Not timed.
- *Yondan, Godan:*
 - 5 Zenkenren kata selected from katas 1 to 12 with written paper. Timed 6 minutes.
- *Rokudan, Nanadan:*
 - 6 Zenkenren kata selected from katas 1 to 12. Timed 7 minutes.

Dan Grade Observation Points

From *Shodan*, there needs to be a clear difference in demonstration of kata/ technique. Ability to control the sword and the body to show consistency throughout the kata.

From *Nidan*, this ability becomes more noticeable and smoothness appears. As well as timing, and presence of enemy.

At *Sandan* to *Yondan*, *ki-ken-tai-ichi* and *Jo-ha-kyu* play important roles. The kata demonstrated should not be wooden, with more focus on timing. Cuts must be sharp and no placement of the sword.

From *Godan*, the technique is more refined. The presence of an 'enemy' is undeniable and must be shown. Cutting ability is now also refined. Balance and accuracy in technique can clearly be seen. *Ki-ken-tai-ichi* and *Jo-ha-kyu* are also refined. Pauses between movements and the subtle differences in intent become more noticeable.

7. Judging Criteria for Gradings and Taikai

1. Technical capability. Each movement should be executed correctly and in the proper order. The student needs to be consistent, making sure that all cuts of the same kind have the same angle and finish at the same spot. Differences within a kata or between katas show a lack of practice.
2. *Maai* refers to the proper distance or spacing maintained between you and your opponent during combat.
3. Smooth movements. All movements should appear smooth and natural. There should be no abrupt pauses or disruptions, especially during actions like the cut. With enough practice, every motion should look effortless and feel comfortable.
4. Timing. Students need to build a strong sense of timing, which goes beyond executing movements at a single, consistent pace. Some techniques call for steady, controlled speed, while others rely on quick bursts of acceleration or intentional slowing to gain a tactical edge.
5. Composure. Regardless of distractions or the severity of a mistake, the performer must maintain unwavering focus, without any visible lapse in concentration.

6. ***Muda, mura, and muri.*** Ensure that every movement in the kata has a clear and practical purpose. Avoid including any action that serves only to look impressive. If a movement does not have functional meaning or application, it should be removed. Kata is not about appearance; it is about effective technique expressed through form. No unnecessary movement.
7. ***Seme (pressure).*** A sustained projection of threat toward the imaginary opponent is essential throughout the kata to maintain proper *seme*. Movements lacking offensive intent are inefficient and detract from the performance. The *tsuka kashira* (pommel), *kissaki* (tip), and *monouchi* (cutting edge) must be consistently aligned toward the opponent, reinforcing dominance and control. Any deviation from this focus, such as unnecessary hand adjustments, purposeless foot shifts, erratic eye movements, or extraneous head tilts and rotations, signals a breakdown in *seme* and reduces the kata's effectiveness.
8. ***Kaso teki (imaginary opponent).*** The performer should always be fully aware of the opponent's location and movements throughout the performance.
9. ***Metsuke (gaze).*** The gaze is essential for controlling and neutralizing the opponent. The eyes should stay firmly fixed both on the opponent and on the exact imaginary point that represents their position. Even a brief blink disrupts concentration and can cause a missed strike, so blinking is strongly discouraged during performance.
10. ***Shisei (posture).*** Striking with power is impossible without proper balance, and lacking it leaves you open to counterattacks. Your posture must remain stable and centered at all times during the kata. The head and back should be aligned directly above the hips, which are positioned between the knees or feet. The rear foot should be placed to allow forward drive, even when the rear leg is fully straightened.
11. **Breathing.** The performer's breathing should remain entirely discreet, invisible and inaudible to the judges.

8. Using the Grading Papers

Fig. B: An example grading paper used by the VKR.

Examination Date: _____ Examiner: _____ Grade: _____

Location: Kenshikan, West, Melbourne, VIC

Requirement	Grade Attempt														
	6K	5K	4K	3K	2K	1K	10°	20°	30°	CANDIDATE					
Seteri Kala	e.g. SK1									e.g. SK2			e.g. Candidate SK2 did the wrong Kala		
1	X	X	X	X	X	X									
2	X	X													
3		X	X	X											
4		X	X	X		X									
5			X	X											
6			X		X										
7				X	X										
8				X		X									
9					X										
10					X										
11						X									
12						X									
Written Exam							X	X	X						

Legend: Pass = O Fail = X

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- Candidates are numbered on the top of the Candidate section. (e.g. 5K1, 5K2, 5K3 etc)
- After making the decision to pass or fail the candidate, the bottom rectangle in the same column as the candidate is marked with an overall Pass (O) or Fail (X) including a section for comments to be added if required. (See below)
- If a Fail is given to a candidate, the Examiner must provide relevant comments to support the decision.

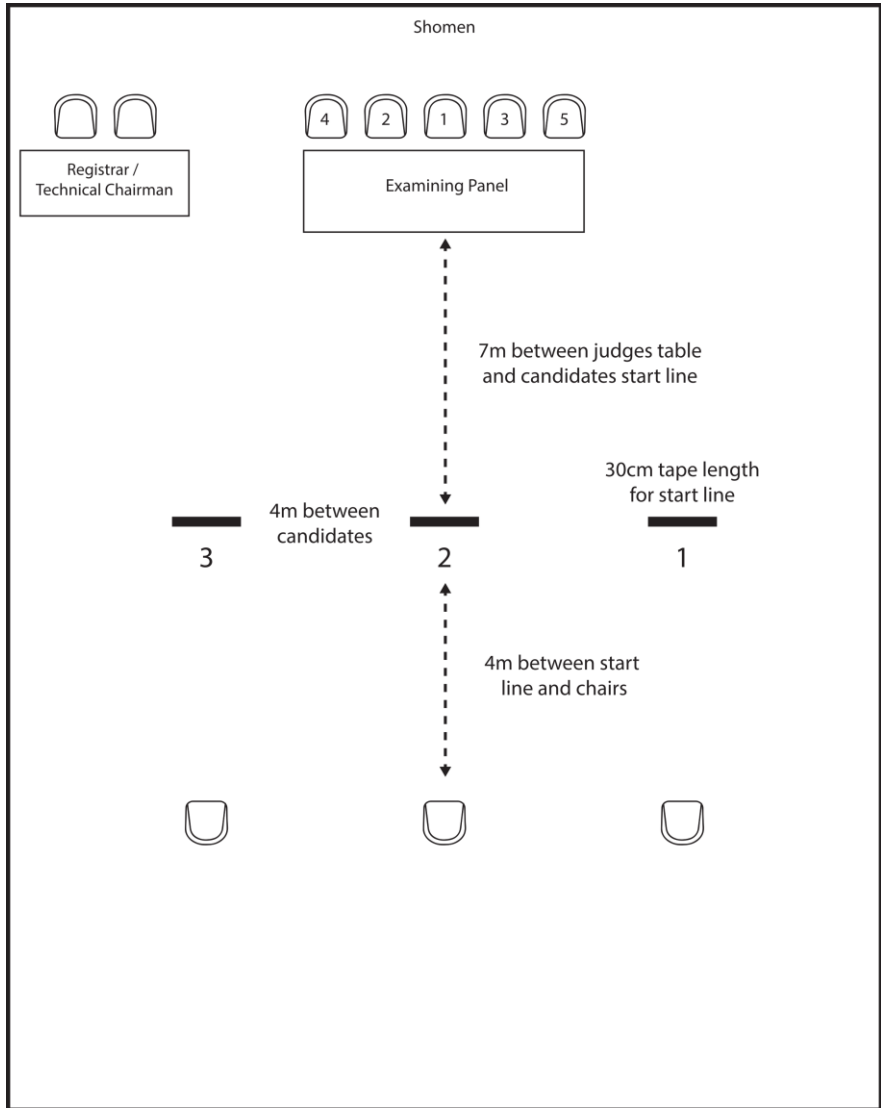
CANDIDATE			
<i>e.g. 5K1</i>	<i>5K2</i>	<i>5K3</i>	<i>e.g. Candidate 5K2 did the wrong Kata</i>
1K1	1K2	1K3	Comments
			*Candidate 1k1 performed kata number 7 instead of kata number 8 - also missing checkpoints for kata not demonstrating understanding of the technique

Legend: Pass = O Fail = X

O	O	X
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9. Grading & Panel Layout

Fig. C: An example of a grading & panel layout.



10. Iaido Shiai and Shinpan - Regulations & Guidelines

Below is an English translation of the main sections from the Japanese document *Iaido Competition and Judging Regulations*.

Purpose of Regulations:

The purpose of these regulations is to ensure that Iaido competitions under the All Japan Kendo Federation are conducted in accordance with the principles of the sword, in a fair and just manner, and that judging is performed appropriately and impartially. The following regulations and guidelines are intended to be used alongside Table 1: Competition Guidelines

Competition Area:

The standard for the competition area is as follows:

- The floor should preferably be wooden.
- The area is a rectangle, including boundary lines, with a length of 7 meters and a width of 3 meters.
- The length and position of the starting lines are specified in the detailed rules. (Fig. D)
- There should be 1 meter between match courts.

Japanese Sword:

The sword used must be either a *bokken* with *saya*, (for lower grades), an *iaito* or *shinken*.

- It must be made with sufficient quality as to avoid injury.
- The names of each part are specified in a diagram. (Fig.E)

Attire:

- Attire should be either kendo or Iaido *gi* and *hakama*.
- The uniform should be black or white.
- The *gi* and *hakama* should be of the same colour.
- *Nafuda* are to be worn on the left chest.
- *Tabi* are only allowed with permission of the Chairman of the Grading Panel.
- *Obi* should match the colour of the *hakama*.

Judging Flags:

- Specifications for judging flags are provided, with the flagpole diameter set at 1.5 cm as a standard.
- *Shimpan* flags (red & white) are 25cmx25cm square
- The Timekeeper flag (yellow) is 25cmx25cm triangle

Starting Line:

Regarding the line when grading, the candidate should:

- Stand 30-40cm behind the start line (depending on the length of the legs).
- Ensure that when sitting in *seiza* for starting *torei*, the knees are behind the line.

Entry/Exit and Etiquette:

- Entry, exit, and etiquette are to be conducted as specified by the tournament.

Judging Criteria:

- Depth of training
- Etiquette (proper attitude and manners)
- Technique:
 - Correct *nukitsuke* (drawing), *kiritsuke* (cutting)
 - Proper *Sayabanare* (sword release), *hasuji* (blade angle)
 - Correct *chiburi* (blood shake), angle
 - Proper *noto* (sheathing)
 - Mental attitude:
 - Calmness
 - Focus of gaze
 - Spirit, *zanshin* (remaining mind), timing and *maai* (distance)
 - Unity of spirit, sword, and body - *Ki-ken-tai-ichi*
 - Rationality as a martial art
 - Reference to the judging points of the All Japan Kendo Federation laido.

Competition Victory Decision:

- The winner is determined by most victory flags.
- In Teams competition, the team that has the largest number of winning players in individual matches OR the team that has the largest number of points in individual matches, shall be declared the winner, at the discretion of the judges.
- Judging is based on proper etiquette, a strong spirit, correct posture, and technical superiority in accordance with the principles of swordsmanship.
- If a designated technique is performed incorrectly, the one who made the mistake loses after deliberation by the judges.
- The maximum time for 3 x kata is 4 minutes.
- The maximum time for 5 x kata is 6 minutes.
- If the timing of the competition so requires, it can be announced that opening and closing *reiho* are conducted outside the *Shiai-jo*.
- If the determined time is exceeded, the one who exceeded time loses after deliberation.
- If both players have exceeded the match time, the decision shall be made according to the section 'Judging Criteria'.
- Time begins when the command *Hajime* is given by the Chief Referee and ends when the player is in *teito* position after the bow to *shomen*.

Prohibited Substances and Acts:

- Use or possession of prohibited substances, or use of prohibited methods, is forbidden.
- Disrespectful behaviour towards judges or staff is prohibited.
- Other prohibited acts include:
 - Using anything other than the specified Japanese sword
 - Leaving the competition area during the match
 - Making unjustified requests to stop the match
 - Any other acts contrary to these regulations

Definition of Leaving the Area:

- Leaving the area means one foot completely outside the boundary line .

Time Keeper:

The duty of the Time Keeper is to:

- Monitor the determined match time according to the 'Competition Victory Decision' section.
- If the time has gone over, make a signal by standing up and holding up a flag (yellow triangle).

Penalties:

- Violators of prohibited acts are declared losers, the opponent is awarded three victory flags, and the violator is ordered to leave.
- Disqualified individuals forfeit any rights acquired up to that point.

Injury or Accident:

In case a player is unable to continue the match due to an injury or an accident, Referees shall determine whether to continue the match or not. As a general rule, there will be a decision made within five minutes.

- In case a player is unable to continue the match due to an injury, the incapacitated player shall lose the match.
- The player who has been injured may be reinstated in the remaining matches if the referees allow him or her to do so.

Injury Supporters:

- The use of supporters is permitted only when medically necessary and must not be unsightly.
- Any injuries that could affect the candidate's performance are to be reported to the registrar prior to grading or competitions.

Default:

The player who has defaulted a match shall become the loser and be prohibited from reinstatement in the remaining matches. Default occurs when a player retires from the match at his/her own will, because of health or other reasons.

Protests:

A *hantei* decision made by the Referee is final. The team manager may file a protest with the Referee Director (*shinpan cho*), before the players stand in *teito* position at the end of the match period.

The protest shall be filed in the following manner:

- The manager shall make a signal for the filing of a protest
- The manager shall state the contents of the doubt to the Referee Director (*shinpan cho*)

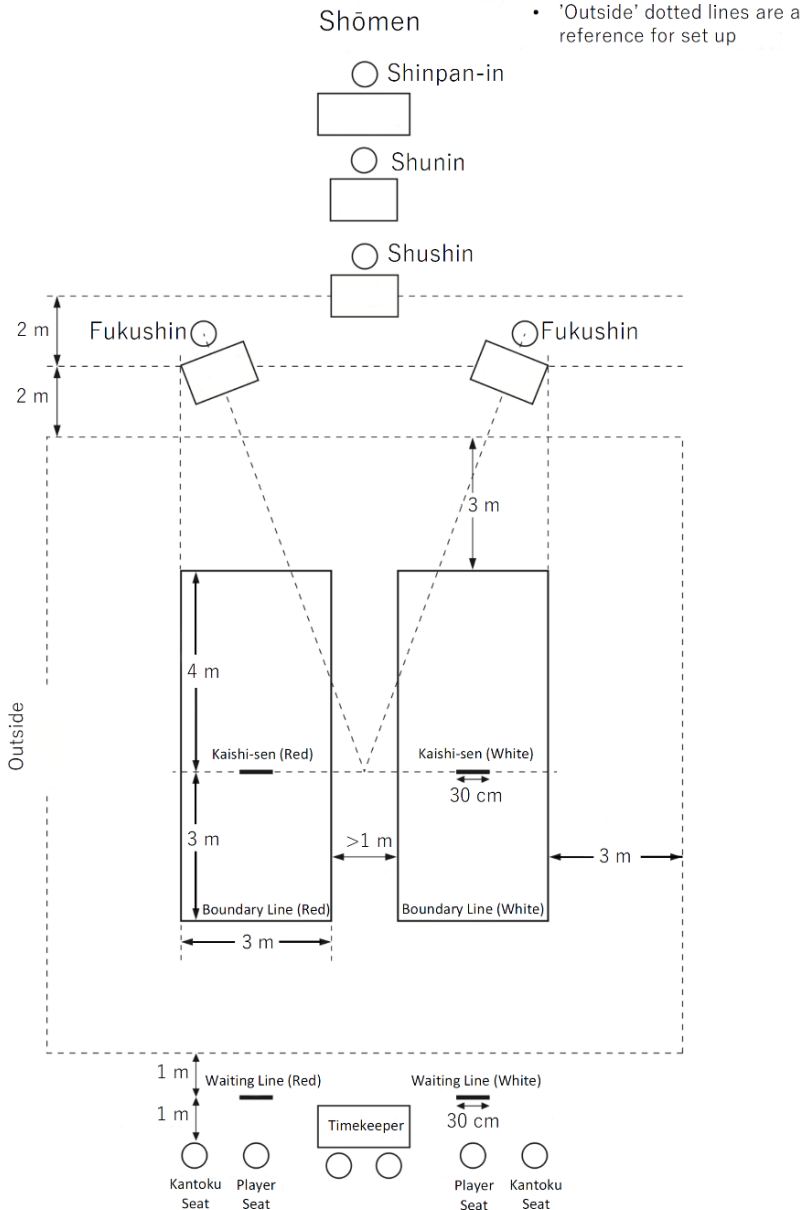
Pronouncements & Signalling by Flags:

Referees shall pronounce the beginning, ending, victory, etc. in the manner prescribed in the attached table. (Table 2)

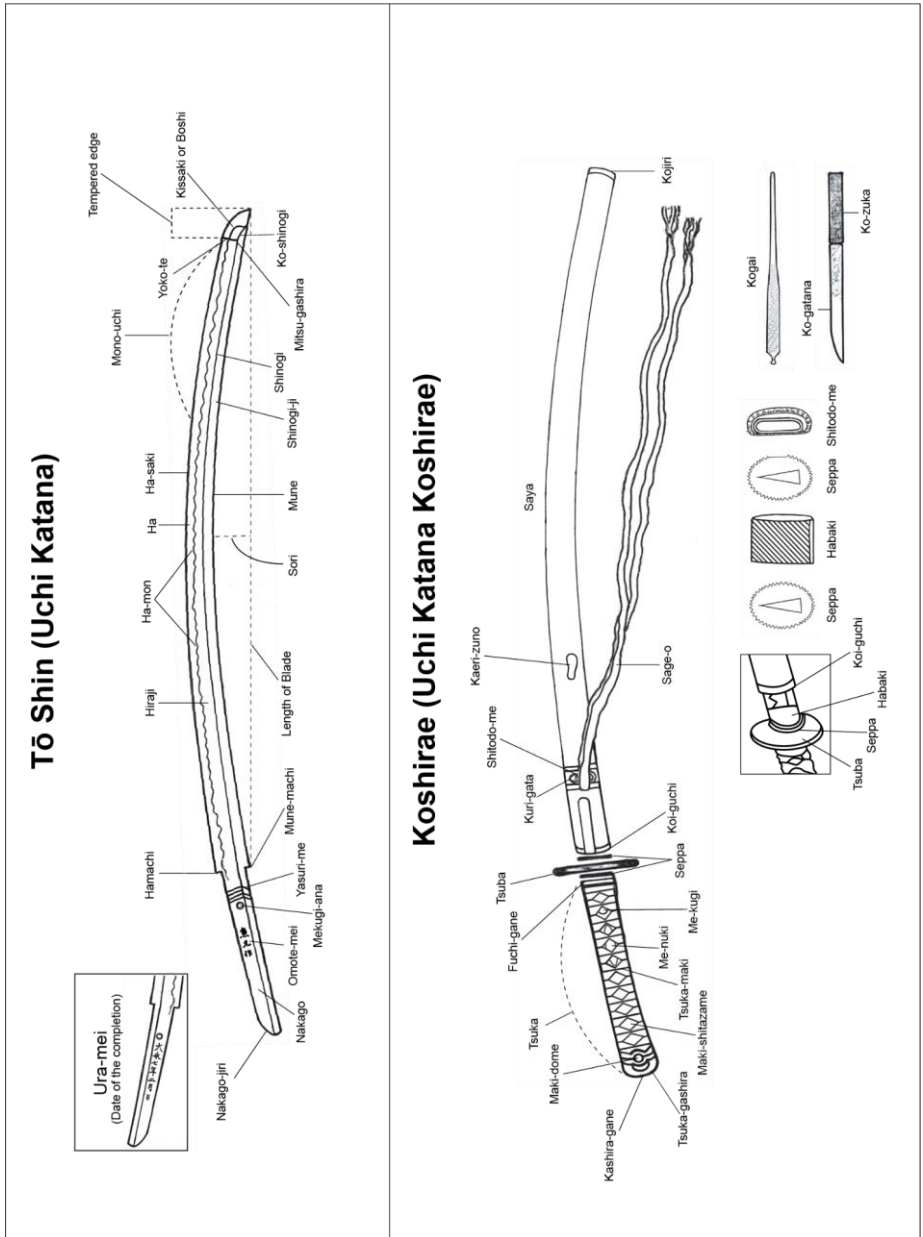
Discretion:

If an issue lies beyond the Regulations, the Referee Director will determine the course of action and may permit exceptions if full compliance is impractical.

11. Fig. D: Shiai-kyō (Reference)



12. Fig. E: Names of Each Part of the Nihon-tō & Koshirae



13. Table 1: Competition Guidelines

THE PLAYERS	THE REFEREES
1. ENTERING THE MATCH COURT	
<p>The players shall wait near their match court and when signalled shall enter the match court in <i>teito</i> posture and move to the starting line.</p>	<p>When the Referees enter the match area the Chief Referee shall be in the center. The Referees shall hold the flags in the right hand, line up and bow to <i>shomen</i>. Then they shall move to their positions. The Referees shall place the flags on the desk. During alternation of Referees, the flags shall remain on the desk. When the Referees alternate, they shall bow to each other, line up with the Chief Referee in the center, bow to <i>shomen</i> and leave the match area.</p>
2. <i>REITO SHOMEN</i>	
<p>The bow to <i>shomen</i> and the bow to the sword (<i>tore</i>) shall be part of the match. At the end of the match, the players shall bow to their sword and to <i>shomen</i> and then stand on the starting line in <i>teito</i> position.</p>	<p>The Referees, when entering or leaving the match area, shall line up with the Chief Referee in the center and bow to <i>shomen</i>.</p>
3. BEGINNING	
<p>At the beginning of the match, the players shall stand on the starting line in <i>teito</i> position and start the match at the Chief Referees' announcement of <i>hajime</i>.</p>	<p>The match shall begin at the signal of the Chief Referee.</p>

4. REQUEST FOR A BREAK	
<p>Players shall motion to the Chief Referee by raising a hand to request for a break of <i>shiai</i>, and explain the reason immediately.</p>	<p>Upon a player's request for a break, the Chief Referee shall suspend the shiai and request the reasons for the break. In case the Chief Referee deems the request for a break to be unjustified, <i>gogi</i> shall be called.</p>
5. SUSPENSION	
<p>When a Referee pronounces <i>yame</i>, the players shall immediately stop <i>shiai</i>, return to the starting line in <i>teito</i> position to receive announcement or instruction of the Chief Referee.</p>	<p>The Referee shall suspend shiai in case of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Hansoku</i> • Injury or accident • avoid danger • loss of control of the sword by a player • filing a protest • <i>gogi</i>
6. GOGI	
<p>Upon the Chief Referee's announcement of <i>gogi</i>, the players shall wait on the starting line in <i>teito</i> position in case <i>gogi</i> is called during <i>shiai</i>, and in <i>teito</i> position at the end of the <i>shiai</i>.</p>	<p><i>Gogi</i> shall be called in the following cases:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mistake in the specified technique • exceeding the match time • prohibited acts • protest filed by the coach <p><i>Gogi</i> held by the Referees shall be as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • announce <i>gogi</i> and let both players stand at the starting line in <i>teito</i> position and let them wait. • In case a Sub Referee has announced <i>yame</i> and called <i>gogi</i>, the Chief Referee shall immediately stop the match and announce <i>gogi</i>. • In case it is necessary to call <i>gogi</i> during a match, the match shall be stopped and <i>gogi</i> held as above.

7. RESUMPTION	
When resuming the match after a suspension, the players shall stand on the starting line and resume the match at the signal of the Chief Referee.	The resumption of a match after suspension shall be conducted in the same manner as the beginning of the match.
8. FILING A PROTEST	
When the coach (<i>kantoku</i>) files a protest, the players shall wait in the same manner as in <i>gogi</i> .	<p>The Referees handle a protest in the following manner:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Referees shall immediately suspend the match. • The Referee Director shall have the Referees discuss the protest in <i>gogi</i>. • The Referee Director shall inform the coach of the decision of the Referees.
9. DECISION	
After ending their <i>enbu</i> , the players shall perform <i>torei, rei</i> to <i>shomen</i> and wait for the decision in <i>teito</i> position, while standing on the starting line.	The Referees shall indicate the winner with a flag upon pronouncement of <i>hantei</i> by the Chief Referee. A draw or abstention is not permitted.
10. INCAPACITATION	
In case of victory due to incapacitation, the players shall act in the same manner as above.	In pronouncing victory due to incapacitation, the Chief Referee shall pronounce the victory and at the same time indicate the winner by a motion of the flag.

11. DEFAULT	
<p>In case of victory due to default, the player shall proceed to the starting line, stand in <i>teito</i> position, receive pronouncement of the Chief Referee and return to the original position.</p>	<p>The Chief Referee shall pronounce victory for the winner while signalling by the flag.</p>
12. ENDING	
<p>At the end of the match, the players shall stand on the starting line in <i>teito</i> position, receive the pronouncement of the Chief Referee, and return to the waiting line outside the <i>shiaijo</i>.</p>	<p>When the players have finished their <i>enbu</i> and stand in <i>teito</i> position on the starting line, the Referees shall make a signal with the flags simultaneously with the pronouncement of the Chief Referee.</p>
<p>At the end of the competition or at a changing over of judges</p>	<p>The Referees shall roll up the flags with the white one inside and the red one outside, hold the flags in the right hand, line up with the Chief Referee in the center and leave the area after <i>Rei to shomen</i>.</p>
13. OTHER	
<p>The players' uniforms should be clean and tidy. Attention has to be paid to safety and the <i>mekugi</i> shall be checked carefully.</p>	
<p>The players shall not enter the match court before the Referees have taken their places after a rotation.</p>	
<p>The next players shall move into the match court from the waiting line when the previous players have finished their <i>shiai</i> and are leaving from the starting line.</p>	

14. Table 2: Pronouncements and Flag Signalling by Referees

The following table is intended to be used alongside Section 16: Use of Flags.

	Situation	Announce	Flag Signal	Ref.
Basic Posture			Flags are placed open on top of table	Fig 1
Start Stop Gogi	Starting the match	"HAJIME" Starting first and last match	Flags are placed open on top of table	Fig 3 Fig 2
	Suspension of a match	"YAME"	Raising flags straight above – both hands	Fig 6
	Calling a conference by a Referee	"GOGI"	Raising flags straight above by the right hand	Fig 7
Decision	In case of 3 red/white flags	"HANTEI, SHOBU ARI"	Raising straight the red/white flag about 45 degrees up on the side.	Fig 4
	In case the Chief Referee indicates red/white victory and the 2 Sub Referees indicate white/red	"HANTEI, SHOBU ARI"	The Chief Referee lowers the red/white flag that he has raised and then raises the white/red flag.	Fig 4
	In case one player has mistaken the specified technique (<i>shitei waza</i>). The player who has made the mistake continues the match till the end.	"GOGI" "HANTEI, SHOBU ARI"	Raising both flags straight above by the right hand. Raising straight a flag about 45 degrees up on the side.	Fig 7 Fig 4

	In case both players have mistaken the specified technique (<i>shitei waza</i>). Both players continue the match until the end. (Match is judged according to normal standards.)	"GOGI" "HANTEI, SHOBU ARI"	Raising both flags straight above by the right hand. Raising straight a flag about 45 degrees up on the side.	Fig 7 Fig 4
	In case one player has exceeded the match time. (Match is judged according to normal standards).	"GOGI" "HANTEI, SHOBU ARI"	Raising both flags straight above by the right hand. Raising straight a flag about 45 degrees up on the side.	Fig 7 Fig 4
	Victory by default.	"SHOBU ARI"	Raising straight a flag about 45 degrees up on the side.	Fig 5
	Incapacitation in a match due to injury or accident.	"SHOBU ARI"	Raising straight a flag about 45 degrees up on the side. Raising flags straight above.	Fig 5
	Abuse of drugs, discourteous utterances or acts.	"YAME" "GOGI" "SHOBU ARI"	Raising flags straight above by the right hand. Raising straight a flag about 45 degrees up on the side.	Fig 6 Fig 7 Fig 5
	Use of a sword that is not permitted.	"GOGI" "SHOBU ARI"	Raising flags straight above by the right hand. Raising straight a flag about 45 degrees up on the side.	Fig 7 Fig 5

15. Use of Flags

Figure 1: Basic posture

- The flags are placed open on the table, the red flag on the right side, the white flag on the left side, with a 10cm space between them.
- The Referee sits on the chair

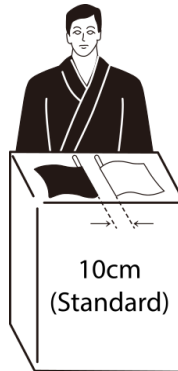
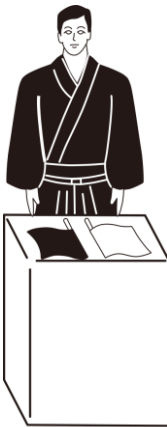


Figure 2: When the start of the first match or the final one is pronounced.

- The flags are placed open on the table, the red flag on the right side, the white flag on the left side, with a 10cm space between them.
- All Referees stand up.



(Chief Referee)



(Sub Referee)

Figure 3: When the Chief Referee pronounces start, resumption or *Hantei*.

- The flags are placed open on the table, red flag on the right side, white flag on the left side, with a 10cm space between them.
- The Chief Referee stands up; the Sub Referees are seated.



(Chief Referee)



(Sub Referee)

Figure 4: Deciding Victory or Defeat

- The Chief Referee stands up and raises the flag diagonally 45 degrees.
- The Sub Referee are seated and raises the flag diagonally 45 degrees.



(Chief Referee)



(Sub Referee)

Figure 5: When pronouncing Victory or Defeat (e.g. in case of Default)

- The Chief Referee stands up and raises the flag diagonally 45 degrees.
- The Sub Referee are seated.



(Chief Referee)



(Sub Referee)

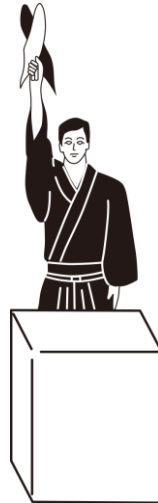
Figure 6: When pronouncing suspension

- The Referee stands up and raises both flags.



Figure 7: When pronouncing *Gogi*

- Referee stands up and raises both flags straight up in the right hand.



16. Table 3: Seitei laido Matrix

All Japan Kendo Federation Seitei Iai - Waza

#	Waza	Position	# teki	Teki's Attack	Type of Response	Initial Move						
						Nuki Tsuke	Nuki Uchi	Uke Nagashi	Tsuka Ate	Kesa Giri	Nuki Age	Chiburi
1	Mae	Seiza	1	Premeditated	Kisen	1						Down kesa diagonal line
2	Ushiro	Seiza	1	Premeditated	Kisen	1						Down kesa diagonal line
3	Uke nagashi	Seiza	1	Sudden				1				None
4	Tsuka ate	Iai hiza	2	Premeditated					1			Open to right
5	Kesa giri	Walking	1	Upswing						1		Down kesa diagonal line
6	Morote zuki	Walking	3	Premeditated			1					Open to right
7	Sampō giri	Walking	3	Premeditated			1					Down kesa diagonal line
8	Gannen ate	Walking	2	Premeditated					1			Open to right
9	Soete zuki	Walking	1	Premeditated	Kisen		1					Open to right
10	Shihō giri	Walking	4	Premeditated	Kisen				1			Down kesa diagonal line
11	Sō giri	Walking	1	Premeditated	Kisen			1*				Open to right
12	Nuki uchi	Standing	1	Sudden							1	Open to right

* - not a block

Glossary

Ashi Sabaki - Footwork or movement of the feet.

Bokken / Bokuto - A wooden shaped sword usually made from Japanese oak.

Boshi - The tempered edge near the tip point of the blade.

Chakuza - Sitting down from a standing posture. See *Seiza & Tatehiza*.

Chudan No Kamae - Basic posture of holding the sword in the middle position.

Fuchi - The collar fitting around the head of the handle.

Fukushin - A sub referee. There are normally two in any laido competition.

Furikaburi - The action of raising the sword overhead to prepare for a downward strike.

Furi Oroshite - To swing the sword down from above the head.

Gedan No Kamae - Basic posture where the sword is lowered just below the knee level.

Gogi - The act of temporarily suspending a match for consultation

Ha - The cutting edge of the sword.

Habaki - Collar on to the blade before placing *Seppa* and *Tsuba*.

Hajime - A Japanese word used to mean start or begin.

Hakama - Pleated trousers worn for practicing Japanese martial arts.

Hamon - The temper-line along the edge of the blade.

Hantei - The announcement by the main referee calling for a match decision.

Hasso No Kamae - Basic posture of holding the sword near the shoulder.

Hasuji - The cutting line of the sword blade.

Jodan No Kamae - Basic posture where the sword is held above the head.

Jo-ha-kyu - Progression of movement with increasing intensity.

Kamae - General word or term given to mean posture or stance.

Kashira - The butt end of the handle.

Keito Shisei - Refers to the position whereby the sheathed sword is held on the left hip.

Ki-ken-tai-ichi - The synchronization of the spirit, sword and body.

Kissaki - The tip point of the blade.

Koiguchi - The mouth or opening of the sword sheath or *Saya*.

Kojiri - The tip end of the scabbard.

Kurigata - The side knob of the scabbard where the *Sageo* is tied.

Makidome - The final knot of the binding near the end of the *Tsuka*.

Mei - The signature of the maker, usually found on the *Nakago*.

Mekugi - Wooden peg for securing the handle to the blade.

Mekugi Ana - The hole in the *Nakago* where the pin is inserted.

Menuki - Ornamental fittings found under the handle binding.

Metsuke - Correct positioning or looking with the eyes.

Mizouchi - See *Suigetsu*.

Morote - The action of using both hands to grip or hold the sword.

Morote Zuki - The act of thrusting the sword using both hands.

Mune - The back edge of the Japanese sword. Also called *Mine*.

Nakago - Tang handle part of the blade.

Nihon To - Generally meaning a sword made in a Japanese way.

Noto - Act of placing the sword in the sheath.

Obi - A long narrow sash worn around the waist to support the sword.

Okuri Ashi - Basic footwork where the right foot is kept forward.

Reiho - Formal etiquette, bowing, and conduct.

Sageo - Usually silk or cotton used for securing the *Saya* to the *Hakama*.

Same - Rayskin used as a coating on the wooden handle under the binding.

Saya - Scabbard or sheath for holding the sword.

Seiza - Sitting with the knees in line and the shins and the tops of the feet on the floor with the buttocks resting on the heels. A formal way of sitting in Japan.

Seppa - Metal spacers placed either side of the *Tsuba*.

Shiai - A match between individuals or teams that accords with defined regulations.

Shiai Jo - A match court or area where matches are held.

Shinken - An actual or real sword with a cutting edge.

Shinogi - The back ridge of the blade.

Shinogi Ji - The flat side of the blade.

Shinpan/Shimpan - The act of judging the outcome of a match.

Shinpan Cho - The chief judge.

Shinpan In - A referee.

Shobu Ari - Announcement made to signal a decision.

Shomen - A word meaning the front. For example *Shomen E No Rei*.

Sori - The depth of curvature of the blade.

Suigetsu - The area below the sternum. Referred to as the solar plexus or *Mizouchi*.

Taikai - Commonly refers to competition.

Taito - The act of placing the sword in the *Obi* or on the left hip when using a *Bokuto*.

Tatehiza - Sitting on the left leg with the right knee raised off the floor.

Tenouchi - Using the hands effectively to cut, hold, and adjust the grip on the handle.

Tsuba - Sword guard.

Tsuba Moto - The area of a sword blade near or next to the sword guard.

Tsuka - The handle of a sword.

Tsuka Gashira - The very end of the sword handle.

Waki No Kamae - Basic posture where the sword is placed to the side and rear of the body, obscuring it from the front opponent's view.

Yame - A Japanese word meaning stop or halt.

Yokote - The part of the blade tip point where the *Boshi* ends and the *Monouchi* begins.

Zanshin - Alert posture and mindset, ready to react immediately after a cut.

References

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