

Kendo: Common Terms and Glossary

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1 Courtesies

- **Arigato Gozaimashita** : “*Thank you*” (for practicing with me).
- **Domo Arigato Gozaimashita** : “*Thank you*” (very polite context).
- **Onegaishimasu** : “*If you please*” (practice with / teach me).
- **Otagai ni Rei** : “*Bow to your peers*”.
- **Sensei ni Rei** : “*Bow to the Sensei*”.
- **Shomen ni Rei** : “*Bow to the Shomen*”.

2 Commands

- **Hajime** : “*Begin / start*”.
- **Kamae-To** : “*Assume your stance*”.
- **Men-Tore** : “*Take off your Men*”.
- **Men-Tsuke** : “*Put on your Men*”.
- **Mokuso** : “*Meditation*”.
- **Osame-To** : “*Put away your weapon*”.
- **Seiza** : Assume **Seiza**, the formal sitting position.
- **Seretsu** : “*Line up*”.
- **Sonkyo** : Assume **Sonkyo**, the formal crouching position.

- **Tai-To** : Bring your **Shinai** to the ready position at your hip.
- **Yame** : “*Stop*”.
- **Yasume** : “*Break / rest period*”.

3 Glossary

- **Age-To** : A **Katate** variant of **Jodan no Kamae**.
- **Ai** : (1) Prefix: “*Balanced*”, (2) suffix: “*integration*” or “*union*”.
- **Aite** : “*Opponent*”.
- **Ai-Kakari Geiko** : “*Balanced attack practice*”. Both **Kendoka** perform **Kakari Geiko** simultaneously.
- **Ai-Uchi** : “*Balanced strike*” or more commonly interpreted as a “simultaneous strike” between two opponent’s.
- **Ashi** : “*Foot*” or “*leg*”.
- **Ashi-Sabaki** : “*Footwork*”. This is the general term to refer to “footwork” of any type.
- **Ayumi-Ashi** : “*Walking footwork*”. This style of footwork refers to the normal walking motion where the the right and left feet pass each other in an obvious “right-left-right” succession.
- **Bogu** : Kendo Armor¹. See **Men**, **Kote**, **Do**, and **Tare**.

¹Full bogu along with hakama and gi are collectively referred to as “kendogu”.

- **Bokuto**² : “*Wooden sword*”. In **Kendo** the **Bokuto** is used exclusively to practice **Kata**.
- **Bokuto Waza** : A series of forms created specifically to practice **Kendo** fundamentals with the **Bokuto**. They are also a means through which the **Kendoka** can understand the link between **Shinai Kendo** and a **Katana**.
- **Bushi** : “*Warrior*”.
- **Bushido** : “*The way of the warrior*”. A code of ethics, morals, and conduct designed for the samurai class.
- **Chikama** : A distance (from your opponent) that is shorter than **Issoku Itto no Maai**.
- **Chisai** : “*Small*”.
- **Chisai Waza** : “*Small techniques*”.
- **Chudan no Kamae** : The “*mid positioned*” **Kamae**. **Chudan** is known as the “*kamae of water*” due to its adaptability for both offensive and defensive **Waza**. **Chudan** is the most fundamental **Kamae** in **Kendo**.
- **Chudan Hanmi no Kamae** : A variant of **Chudan no Kamae** while using the **Kodachi** in the **Nihon Kendo no (Kodachi) Kata**. See also **Hanmi no Kamae**.
- **Connection** : A mental and physical connection with the opponent. The mental connection implies one must have a perception as to how the opponent will act to a given situation, their intents, as well as perception of their level of focus, **Ki Ken Tai no Ichi**, and **Zanshin**. The physical connection allows one to react to physical movements, maintain distance, adjust **Kamae**, etc...A **Connection** allows you to “mirror” the opponent mentally and physically, keeping a balance until a **Suki** is found or created by oneself or one’s opponent.
- **Daito** : The long **Shinai** used in **Nito no Kamae**.
- **Dan** : “*Step*” or “*level*”. Most often used to refer to one’s rank in **Kendo**, commonly interpreted as “black belt”.
- **Datotsu** : A “*strike*” or “*thrust*”.
- **Datotsu Bu** : The portion of the **Shinai** that strikes are made with, i.e., the upper $\frac{1}{4}$ length above the **Nakayui**; the **Monouchi**.
- **Datotsu Bui** : Portion of the **Bogu** where one may land a strike.
- **De** : “*Coming out*”, i.e., as something is being initiated or started.
- “**Dead**” : A term used to describe one’s weapon when its effectiveness for offensive and defensive techniques has been eliminated. Usually the result of improper grip or striking technique, or if one has had their strike effectively parried via some type of defensive **Waza**. One’s weapon can also become “**Dead**” if they do not have proper **Zanshin**.
- “**Dead Hands**” : Similar to your weapon becoming “**Dead**”, however in this case it is exclusively caused by your hands / forearms being too close together during or after striking. More specifically, the spacing required between your forearm and the **Tsuka** for proper **Kamae** is lost and the wrists are fully arced forward. Often when one has “**Dead Hands**” the left hand will be level with, or worse above, the right wrist during a strike.
- **Debana Waza** : Techniques where one strikes as the **Aite’s** strike is being initiated or “just coming out”.
- **Do** : (1) “Do”, as in **Kendo**: “*the way*”, i.e. a “way” of enlightenment, or of bettering oneself. (2) “Do”, as in **Bogu** or protective gear: the abdomen target / protector.
- **Do-Chikawa** : Leather loops on the **Do-Kawa** used to attach the **Himo**.

² “*Bokuto*” (wooden katana) is often interchanged with “*bokken*” (wooden sword). However “*bokken*” is not a proper synonym as this term is normally used to refer to a (child’s) “toy sword”.

- **Do-Mune** : The upper chest portion of the **Do**.
- **Do-Kawa** : The lower portion of the **Do**; the striking area.
- **Dojo** : “*Practice hall*”. The place where one practices **Kendo**.
- **Enzan no Metsuke** : “*Fixing your eyes on a distant mountain*”. See **Metsuke**.
- **Four Sicknesses** : The four sicknesses, or “restrictions”, in **Kendo** are *fear*, *doubt*, *surprise*, and *confusion*. Some may refer to the “six sicknesses” of **Kendo** by adding *ego* and *anger* to the previous list.
- **Fumi Komi** : “*Lunging footwork*” practice. During **Fumi Komi** one uses a large, lunging **Okuri-Ashi** style footwork. This type of footwork is one of the exceptions where a **Kendoka** will, at least partially, forgo using **Suri-Ashi** as the leading foot will often momentarily leave the ground near the end of the **Fumi Komi** step. This type of footwork is well known in **Kendo** as the one that makes “the stomping noise”. Also referred to as “Fumi Komi Ashi”.
- **Gedan no Kamae** : The “*low positioned*” **Kamae**. **Gedan** is known as the “*kamae of earth*”. **Gedan** is considered a physically “defensive” **Kamae** however a strong and aggressive spirit is required for it to be successful.
- **Gedan Hanmi no Kamae** : A variant of **Gedan no Kamae** while using the **Kodachi** in the **Nihon Kendo (Kodachi) Kata**. See also **Hanmi no Kamae**.
- **Geiko** : See **Keiko**.
- **Gi** : The traditional practice jacket worn in **Kendo**. Also called known as a “*kendo-gi*” or “*do-gi*”.
- **Gyaku** : “*Reversed*” or “*opposite*”.
- **Ha** : The edged portion of a Japanese sword.
- **Hakama** : The traditional practice pants in **Kendo**.
- **Hanmi** : “*Half body*”.
- **Hanmi no Kamae** : “*Half body stance*”. Referring to one’s torso when assuming a **Hanmi no Kamae** as it is “turned” or “twisted” such that only half of it is exposed to the opponent. A **Hanmi no Kamae** is a defensive position used to minimize exposure, i.e., targets, to the opponent.
- **Hara** : The “*intestines*” or “*gut*”. Located “three fingers width” below the navel.
- **Harai** : From the verb Harau: to “*sweep away*” or “*brush off*”.
- **Harai Waza** : “*Sweeping aside*” **Waza**. A **Waza** in which one strikes the opponent’s **Shinai**, breaking their **Kamae**, in order to create a **Suki**.
- **Hasaki** : The “*cutting edge*” of a sword.
- **Hasso no Kamae** : **Hasso** is known as “*the kamae of wood*” or the “*eight position stance*” and is a variant of **Jodan no Kamae**.
- **Haya Suburi** : “*Quick*” or “*swift*” **Suburi**. Commonly referred to as “jumping **Suburi**”, this exercise is a standard warm up and endurance drill in all **Dojo**’s.
- **Hi** : “*Fire*”.
- **Hi no Kamae** : The “*kamae of fire*”. See **Jodan no Kamae**.
- **Hidari** : “*Left*” (direction).
- **Hiki Waza** : Techniques where ones strikes while moving backwards. Also termed “**Hikibana Waza**”.
- **Hiraki** : From the verb hiraku meaning “*to open*” or “*unfold*”.

- **Hiraki Ashi** : “*Opening Footwork*”. This type of footwork is a circular side step to the left or right.
- **Hirauchi** : To strike with the flat of the **Shinai**.
- **Hodoku** : A Japanese verb meaning “*to loosen*”. This term is used throughout the text to refer to the breaking of **Kamae** at the end of each **Kata**.
- **Huhree** : Korean equivalent of **Do**.
- **Ichi Dan Suburi** : “*One step*” **Suburi**.
- **In-Yo** : The Japanese reading of the Chinese concept of **Yin-Yang**.
- **Ire-Zuki** : Ire-Zuki ni Nagashi. Pulling back the arms to parry / redirect an incoming thrust, as in the third **Tachi Kata**.
- **Iri-Mi** : “*Entering directly*”. In **Kendo** this is the fundamental intent, mindset, and motion of one using the **Kodachi**. The action of spiritually threatening and physically moving into your **Aite’s Maai**.
- **Issoku Itto no Maai** : “*The one-step-one-sword distance*”. The distance at which one can launch an attack (or evade one) by taking just one step. This is the fundamental **Maai** of **Kendo**. While there are approximations as to what this **Maai** is, usually described as the distance where you and your opponent’s sword tips cross, each individual person will have their own unique **Issoku Itto no Maai** simply due to the fact that each person will have a different “one-step” distance. This distance is found through diligent practice while continuously focusing on attacking one’s opponent from as far away from them as possible. The maximum distance you can be away from the opponent, while still being able to take one step in and hit effectively, is your **Issoku Itto no Maai**.
- **Ji-Geiko** : Free sparring practice. See also **Keiko**.
- **Jin-Bu** : Portion of the **Shinai** below the **Monouchi**.
- **Jishu-Geiko** : “*Self-study*”. Perhaps more appropriately “self motivated study”. To actively learn by watching, reading, contemplating what was taught, etc.
- **Jodan no Kamae** : The “*high positioned*” **Kamae**, **Jodan** is known as the “*kamae of fire*”. As **Jodan** is very spiritually aggressive, the terms **Ten no Kamae** and **Hi no Kamae** are its other names specifically used to describe the spirit required for a successful **Jodan**. It is said that the spiritual component of this **Kamae** will determine its success much more so than one’s physical prowess or ability.
- **Joge Buri** : “*Up-down*” **Suburi**. A very basic form of swing practice used to teach the beginner how to swing in large motions along their centerline. Often used as a warm up to a **Kendo** practice.
- **Kaeshi Waza** : “*Returning*” **Waza**. These are techniques such that one receives the **Aite’s Shinai** with their own with a temporary block and then *immediately* counter attack.
- **Kakari Geiko** : “*Attack practice*”, i.e., an “all out” sparring practice. This drill is very common in **Kendo Dojo’s** as it builds endurance and spirit. The **Kendoka** attempts to attack as quickly and as continuously as possible while still maintaining proper form and **Zanshin**. With **Kakari Geiko** the **Zanshin** is to be more spiritual than physical.
- **Kakari-te** : “*Attacking hand*”. In **Kendo**, the **Kakari-te** is the one who attacks or who is striking during drill practice.
- **Kamae** : “*Stance*” or “*position*”. In the context of **Kendo**, when one assumes a **Kamae** the term has an obvious physical meaning, but it also has mental or spiritual implications. Meaning, assuming a **Kamae** doesn’t mean to just hold your **Shinai** in a certain position but that you must also assume a certain spiritual attitude. Proper physical and spiritual “position” is what makes effective **Kamae**.

- **Kane** : “Gold” or “metal”.
- **Kane no Kamae** : The “*kamae of gold/metal*”. See **Wakigamae**.
- **Kata** : See **Nihon Kendo no Kata**.
- **Katate** : “One-handed”.
- **Katate Waza** : One-handed **Waza**.
- **Katsugi Waza** : “Shouldering the sword” technique. The purpose of the shouldering motion is to create a **Suki** in your opponent while still being in an effective position to attack.
- **Katzu** : The equivalent of a **Kiai** shout used to awaken oneself spiritually (in a Zen sense). Also often referred to as a “*kwatz*”.
- **Keiko** : “Practice”, “training”, “study”. Interchangeable with **Geiko**, this term is most often used by **Kendoka** to imply sparring practice in **Bogu**.
- **Kendo** : “The way of the sword”.
- **Kendoka** : A **Kendo** student.
- **Kensen** : The tip of the **Shinai**.
- **Kera** : The padded area on the back of the palm of the **Kote**.
- **Ki** : “Mind”, “spirit”, or “mental energy”.
- **Ki Ken Tai no Ichi** : “Mind / spirit”, “sword”, “body” (as) “one”. Simultaneous action of the spirit, sword, and body of a **Kendoka**. A fundamental principle in **Kendo** related to striking properly and effectively.
- **Kiai** : “Energy integration”. Expression of spirit through your voice.
- **Kiarasoi** : “Spirit of mutual combat”. Overcoming an opponent with a vigorous spirit, pushing forward (physically) to break his guard.
- **Kigurai** : “Noble presence, bearing, pride, dignity”.
- **Kihaku** : “Spirit”.
- **Kihon** : “Basic”, “fundamental”.
- **Kihon Bokuto Waza** : See **Bokuto Waza**.
- **Kikai** : “The ocean of energy”.
- **Kiri Kaeshi** : “Returning cuts”. A coordinated practice of **Shomen**, **Taiatari**, and **Sayu-Men** with an **Aite**. This is one of the most important drills in **Kendo**. Often done as both the initial and final drill of a **Kendoka**’s **Bogu** practice.
- **Kisei** : “Spirit”, or “vigor”.
- **Ko-Dare** : The small inner flaps on the **Tare**.
- **Kobushi** : “Fist”.
- **Kodachi** : The short sword used in the **Nihon Kendo no Kata**.
- **Kohai** : A “junior student”. This is a relative term relating to experience in **Kendo** and not necessarily one’s age.
- **Kokoro** : “Spirit” or “mind”.
- **Kokoro no Kamae** : A “spiritual” or “mental stance”. This refers to a mindset, or attitude.
- **Koshiita** : “Back or waist plate/board”. The firm, trapezoid shaped plate on the back of the **Hakama**.
- **Kote** : The “forearm” target, glove.
- **Kote-Gashira** : The finger portion of the **Kote**.
- **Kuraizume** : To seize with superior poise and spirit. In the **Kata** this refers to the act of invading your opponent’s **Maai** with the feeling of walking forward in an unstoppable thrust.
- **Ma** : “Space”. Used in terms referring to distance or spacing.

- **Maai** : “*Distance integration*”. Usually interpreted as “distance” in **Kendo**, proper **Maai** actually takes into account a number of different factors than simply physical distancing. Speed (your own), speed of the opponent, reaction time, power, distance to opponent, and **Kamae** are all factors of **Maai**.
- **Mae** : “*Front*” or “*forward*” (direction).
- **Men** : Helmet, head target.
- **Men-Buton** : The cloth portion of the **Men** which covers the head.
- **Men-Dare** : The large flaps of the **Men-Buton** which come out over the shoulders.
- **Men-Gane** : The metal grill that covers the face in the **Men**.
- **Men-Tate-Gane** : The large, vertical bar of the **Men-Gane**.
- **Men-Yoko-Gane** : The horizontal bars of the **Men-Gane**.
- **Metsuke** : “*Point of observation*”. The full term is “*enzan no metsuke*” or “fixing your eyes on a distant mountain”. This term, in **Kendo**, refers to “where you should look” while engaging an opponent. In essence you liken looking at your opponent to looking at a mountain with the opponent’s eyes being the “peak”. If you simply focus on just the peak, you’ll not be able to see an entire mountain. Instead, if you look “toward” the peak the rest of the mountain easily comes into view.
- **Migi** : “*Right*” (direction).
- **Mine** : See **Mune**.
- **Mitsu no Sen** : “*The three sen.*” This refers to the three “initiatives” in which to react to your opponent.
- **Moku** : “*Wood*”.
- **Moku no Kamae** : The “*kamae of wood*”. See **Hasso no Kamae**.
- **Monouchi** : “*Hitting part*”. (1) The upper $\frac{1}{4}$ length of a **Shinai** measured from the **Kensen** down. See also **Datotsu Bu**. (2) “*The part of the blade of a sword which cuts the best, said to be about 10cm from the tip*”.
- **Morote** : “*Two-handed*”.
- **Morote Waza** : Two-handed **Waza**.
- **Mototachi** : “*Origin/source sword*”. In **Kendo** the **Mototachi** is the one who creates or offers an opening for the **Kakari-te** to practice some type of **Waza**.
- **Mu** : A prefix indicating a negation in the Japanese Language.
- **Mudra** : The **Mudra** are hand positions used to symbolize various Buddhist concepts and meanings. There are a number of such hand positions, however in **Kendo** we use but one: the “mudra of meditation” during the brief period of **Mokuso** before and after practice.
- **Mugamae** : “*No kamae*” or the “*void kamae*”. This “stance” expresses a sense of spiritual superiority where an overtly physical **Kamae** is unnecessary; one is able to stand ready with their spirit or presence alone.
- **Mune** : (1) The top (blunt) side of a Japanese sword, also referred to as **Mine**. (2) “*Chest*”. The upper chest portion of the “**Do**”; **Do-Mune**.
- **Mune-Chikawa** : Leather loops on the **Do-Mune** used to attach the **Himo**.
- **Mushin** : “*No mind*”. In very basic terms, **Mushin** is acting on natural reflex alone, i.e., not thinking about what to do or the effects of an action.
- **Muhree** : Korean equivalent of **Men**.
- **Nakayui** : The leather tie on the **Shinai** $\frac{1}{4}$ the length of the **Shinai** from the top.

- **Naname Buri** : “*Diagonal*” **Suburi**. Similar to **Joge Buri** but with the strikes angled at about 30° to 45°. Also used as a warm up to a practice.
- **Nidan Suburi** : “*Two step*” **Suburi**.
- **Nidan Waza** : “*Two step*” **Waza**.
- **Nihon Kendo no Kata** : “*The Japanese kendo forms*”. A set of formal movements and techniques which form the basis of modern **Kendo**. Also termed the **Nippon Kendo no Kata**, or simply **Kata**.
- **Nito Kamae** : “*Two sword*” **Kamae**. In **Kendo** one uses two **Shinai**; the **Daito** (long sword), and the **Shoto** (short sword).
- **Nuki** : From the verb nukeru: to “*escape*”.
- **Nuki Waza** : **Waza** where you simultaneously dodge the **Aite**’s strike and execute a counter attack.
- **O-Dare** : The large outer flaps on the **Tare**.
- **Oji Waza** : Counter attacking **Waza**, i.e., techniques used in response to your opponent’s actions.
- **Oki** : “*Big*”.
- **Oki-Waza** : “*Big techniques*”.
- **Okuri-Ashi** : From the verb okuru meaning “*to send out*” or “*see off*”. The standard footwork in **Kendo** where one steps “right-left” in succession using **Suri-Ashi**.
- **Omote** : “*Front*”. In **Kendo** this refers to the holder’s left side of the **Shinai**.
- **Rei** : (1) “*Bow*”, or the act of bowing. (2) A term which indicates formality or etiquette in general.
- **Renzoku** : “*Continuous*”.
- **Riai** : “*Principles of / behind*”. The condition under which an action or actions are rational, purposeful.
- **Ritsu Rei** : **Rei** from a standing position.
- **Sage-To** : “*Hanging sword*”. The relaxed standing position with the **Shinai** held at ones side.
- **Sakigawa** : Leather cup on the end of the **Shinai**.
- **Sakigomu** : Plastic insert inside the tip of the **Shinai** under the **Sakigawa**.
- **San Dan Suburi** : Three step **Suburi**.
- **San Satsu Ho** : Three “laws” for defeating an opponent.
- **Sayu-Men** : An angled strike to the upper left or right side of the **Men**.
- **Seigan no Kamae** : “*Aiming at the eyes*” **Kamae**. A variant of **Chudan no Kamae**, **Seigan** is normally used in response to an opponent in the **Jodan no Kamae** as it offers better **Kote** protection and facilitates the use of certain **Oji Waza** against strikes made from **Jodan**. One will often “cycle” their **Kamae** between **Chudan** and **Migi / Hidari Seigan** when against an opponent in **Jodan**.
- **Seme** : (noun) “*Attack*”, “*offense*”. From the verb semeru meaning “*to attack*”, “*to assault*”. **Seme** is often interpreted as “pressure”. This refers to a spiritual or mental pressure, not an actual physical force. If a **Kendoka** can pressure their opponent spiritually, they will be able produce **Suki** in their opponent creating an opportunity to strike. Effective **Seme** stems from one’s “presence”, form, posture, **Kamae**, and is the product of many years of diligent practice.
- **Sempai** : “*Senior student*”. This is a relative term relating to experience in **Kendo** and not necessarily to one’s age.
- **Sen** : “*First move, forestalling, initiative*”. An abbreviation of the term “*Sente*”
- **Sensei** : “*One who came before*”. Commonly used to mean “teacher”.

- **Shiai** : A **Kendo** match where points are scored.
- **Shidachi** : “*The doing sword*” or “*the serving sword*”. The **Shidachi** assumes the role of the “student” in the **Kata**.
- **Shikake Waza** : Techniques to initiate a strike.
- **Shin** : “*Mind*”, “*heart*”, or “*spirit*”.
- **Shin-Gyo-So** : Three *feelings* which the **Shidachi** embodies in the **Kodachi Kata**. ‘Shin’, lit. “*truth*”, ‘Gyo’, lit. “*stream*”, and ‘So’, lit. “*grass*”. These also correspond to the ideas of three phases or transitions, for example *formal*, *semiformal*, *informal*. Another example is referring to shapes or forms where ‘Shin’ is the true shape, ‘So’ is the essence of the shape, and ‘Gyo’ is the transition between the two. These feelings also correspond to **Shu-Ha-Ri**.
- **Shinai** : Bamboo practice sword.
- **Shinogi** : The ridge on the side of a blade and running along its length, usually closer to the **Mune** than the blade’s edge.
- **Shinogi o Kezuru** : “*Shaving the shinogi*”. This is done in the fourth **Tachi Kata** after the **Uchidachi** and **Shidachi** launch a strike and end up in **Ai-Uchi**. While maintaining a sense of combative tension, each one must fight for center in order to prevent a **Suki** on which their opponent can capitalize. This is the essence of **Tsubazeriai**.
- **Shisei** : “*Position*” or “*stance*”. This term, while having a similar translation with **Kamae**, has a completely different connotation. **Shisei** refers to a physical position only whereas **Kamae** has an associated *spiritual* element. For example, *tai-to shisei* or *sage-to shisei* are common *position* terms which are shortened to simply **Tai-To** and **Sage-To** in **Kendo**.
- **Shizentai** : “*Natural standing posture*”. The posture indicated here is one where the **Ken-**
doka stands with “proper” posture, i.e., standing straight extending the spine, shoulders back, arms hanging naturally at one’s side, feet shoulder width, and the abs engaged via a pelvic tilt.
- **Shomen** : (1) The center or front of the **Men**. (2) The symbolic head of the **Dojo**.
- **Shoshin** : “*Beginner’s Mind*”. In **Kendo** one is often reminded to “keep your beginner’s mind”. This refers to the idea that, like a beginner, one should always be open and ready to learn, be ready to find faults in their own technique, and most importantly to practice with all of their energy in everything they do. It is a common fault after practicing for some time to believe that one is able to do something without the potential for improvement or correction. It is also common for one to lose the initial vigor that is present for something that is new. Always maintain your **Shoshin** and practice accordingly.
- **Shoto** : The short **Shinai** used in **Nito no Kamae**.
- **Shu-Ha-Ri** : ‘Shu’, lit. “*protect*”, “*obey*”, ‘Ha’, lit. “*detach*”, “*digress*”, and ‘Ri’, lit. “*leave*”, “*separate*”. In brief, **Shu-Ha-Ri** is a term used to describe the various stages of learning or progress in many arts. The first stage, ‘Shu’, has the practitioner loyally obeying their teachers methods and ideals in every detail. The second, ‘Ha’, is when the student has learned enough that they are able to incorporate their own ideas. The third, ‘Ri’, is when the student is able to leave their teachings behind them as the “specific machinery” is no longer overtly needed; all is natural. The **Nihon Kendo no Kata** embody **Shu-Ha-Ri** in **Tachi Kata** 1, 2, 3, and in **Kodachi Kata** 1, 2, 3.
- **Son Mok** : Korean equivalent of **Kote**.
- **Suburi** : “*Swing / strike practice*”. This is the fundamental drill of a **Kendo** practice. Over the years **Kendoka** will *easily* perform tens or even hundreds of thousands practice strikes in

their training, perfecting technique through repetition.

- **Suki** : “Interval”, “gap”, “opportunity”. In **Kendo** this term is usually used to refer to an opening in ones defense, either in your own or in your opponent’s. It also refers to “an opening” or “gap” in ones thoughts or actions, due to hesitancy or distraction for example.
- **Suriage Waza** : “Rising slide” **Waza**. These techniques are used to deflect an opponent’s attack by sliding your own weapon along the opponent’s making a small, “half-circle” motion as you lift your weapon into the path of the incoming strike. This “rising-slide” motion is not to be confused with hitting or knocking your opponent’s weapon out of the way, as with **Uchiotoshi Waza**, as it is a controlled deflection.
- **Suri-Ashi** : “Sliding footwork”. **Kendoka**, regardless of the type of footwork being used, will most often be sliding their feet as they step. There are exceptions of course, but the fundamentals of **Kendo** always use sliding footwork. This term is often used by many **Dojo**’s to refer to **Okuri-Ashi** itself, however this text maintains the distinction.
- **Sutemi** : “Body abandoning”. Commonly interpreted as “all or nothing”, this term is referring to the Samurai’s “final strike”. Meaning they will be attacking their opponent with the feeling of “all or nothing”; they will either kill the opponent with this strike, or be killed in the attempt. The essence of **Sutemi** to be learned in modern **Kendo** is that of having an imperturbable, focused intent while striking.
- **Tachi** : The long sword used in the **Nihon Kendo no Kata**.
- **Taiatari** : “Body blow”, “ramming attack”, or “suicide attack”. A technique used by **Kendoka** to create a **Suki** in their opponent by closing in on them and upsetting their balance via a push. It is crucial to understand the difference between **Taiatari** and simple pushing or shoving.
- **Tai-To** : “Sword at Body”, i.e., the position where one would wear the sword. In **Kendo**, **Tai-To** is the position where the **Shinai** is held at a 45° angle at the hip in preparation to “draw it”.
- **Taiso** : “Gymnastics” or “calisthenics”, i.e., a warm up.
- **Tare** : Waist protector.
- **Tare-Himo** : The belts of the **Tare**.
- **Tare-Obi** : The waist portion of the **Tare**.
- **Te-no-Uchikawa** : The palms of the **Kote**.
- **Ten** : “Sky/heaven” or “point/item”.
- **Ten no Kamae** : The “kamae of heaven”. See **Jodan no Kamae**.
- **Tenegui** : “Towel”. The cloth towel worn by **Kendoka** underneath their **Men**.
- **Tenouchi** : “Skill”. Often explained as “wringing out a wet towel”, **Tenouchi** refers to how a **Kendoka** holds their **Shinai** at the moment of impact. Proper **Tenouchi** allows a **Kendoka** to execute strong and balanced strikes while maintaining control over the **Shinai** during the moment it impacts the target. **Tenouchi** allows one to, properly and with control, *stop* their **Shinai**. Without **Tenouchi**, the force of the striker’s **Shinai** will (1) upon impact cause the striker to lose control of the **Shinai** delivering a poor and ineffective strike, or (2) the **Shinai** will fully connect with the target but the force of the **Shinai** will be improperly directed to the opponent on impact. Aside from being ineffective, this strike will most likely hurt your opponent and must be avoided.
- **To** : “Katana”. A Japanese sword.
- **Tobikomi Waza** : “Dive into” or “jump into” **Waza**. These **Waza** are where one launches an attack at their opponent with strong spirit at the moment their opponent’s spirit falters.

- **Toma** : A distance (from your opponent) that is longer than **Issoku Itto no Maai**.
- **Tsireum** : Korean equivalent of **Tsuki**.
- **Tsuba** : The thumb guard of the **Shinai**.
- **Tsuba-Dome** : Rubber stopper that holds **Tsuba** in place.
- **Tsubazeriai** : “*Close fighting*”. The position when two **Kendoka** are in close proximity during **Keiko**, **Tsuba** against **Tsuba**.
- **Tsugi-Ashi** : “*Thrusting footwork*”. This style of footwork is a variation of **Okurai-Ashi**, where the **Kendoka** brings both feet side-by-side before taking the **Okuri-Ashi** step. This motion helps to build momentum and is often used to cover very large distances, allowing the **Kendoka** to potentially launch an attack from **Toma**. It can also be used to apply **Seme** to your opponent by threatening them with an attack via the “pre-step”.
- **Tsuka** : The handle of the **Shinai**.
- **Tsuka-Gashira** : The very bottom of the **Tsuka**.
- **Tsuka-Gawa** : Leather covering the **Tsuka** of the **Shinai**.
- **Tsuki** : Throat target.
- **Tsuki-dare** : Throat protector.
- **Tsuru** : The string on the top side of the **Shinai**.
- **Tsutsu-Bu** : The forearm area of the **Kote**; the striking area.
- **Uchidachi** : “*The striking sword*” or “*the doing sword*”. **Uchidachi** assumes the role of the “teacher” in the **Kata**.
- **Uchi Komi** : Striking practice using **Fumi Komi Ashi**.
- **Uchiotoshi Waza** : Techniques for striking the **Aite’s Shinai** down and to the left or right, mid-way through their attack.
- **Ura** : “*Back*”. In **Kendo** this refers to the holder’s right side of the **Shinai**.
- **Ushiro** : “*Backward*” (direction).
- **Wakigamae** : “*Side stance*”. **Wakigamae** is known as the “*kamae of metal*” and is a variant of **Gedan no Kamae**.
- **Waza** : Technique(s).
- **Yin-Yang** : An idea from Chinese Taoism dealing with opposites and duality. Good-bad, light-dark, movement-stillness, weak-strong, male-female are all examples of opposites; a duality where one can have no existence without the other. This concept is depicted in the **Yin-Yang** symbol.
- **Yoko-Men** : “*Side*” (of the) **Men**. A strike to the right or left oblique side of the **Men**.
- **Yokote** : The area on a Japanese sword where the curved tip ends and the blade proper begins.
- **Yokote-Kosaten** : The “*intersection of the yokote*”. This is the “distance” at which to **Kendoka** should be separated when doing formality based motions in the **Kendo no Kata**.
- **Yuko Datotsu** : “*Effective strike*”.
- **Za Rei** : **Rei** from the **Seiza** position.
- **Zanshin** : “*Follow through*”. In the context of **Kendo** this is, simply put, interpreted as sustaining both mental and physical alertness with every action.
- **Zazen** : The practice of Zen, i.e., seated meditation.
- **Zekken** : Name tag worn on the **Tare**. Also termed a “nafuda”.