

Term	Definition
Agatsu	"Self victory." According to the founder, true victory (MASAKATSU) is the victory one achieves over oneself (AGATSU). Thus one of the founder's "slogans" was MASAKATSU AGATSU -- "The true victory of self-mastery."
Aikido	The word "aikido" is made up of three Japanese characters: AI - harmony, KI - spirit, mind, or universal energy, DO - the Way. Thus aikido is "the Way of Harmony with Universal Energy." However, AIKI may also be interpreted as "accommodation to circumstances." This latter interpretation is somewhat non- standard, but it avoids certain undesirable metaphysical commitments and also epitomizes quite well both the physical and psychological facets of aikido.
Aikidoka	A practitioner of aikido.
Aikikai	"Aiki association." A term used to designate the organization created by the founder for the dissemination of aikido.
Ai Hanmi	Mutual stance where UKE and NAGE each have the same foot forward (right-right, left-left).
Ai Nuke	"Mutual escape." An outcome of a duel where each participant escapes harm. This corresponds to the ideal of aikido according to which a conflict is resolved without injury to any party involved.
Ai Uchi	"Mutual kill." An outcome of a duel where each participant kills the other. In classical Japanese swordmanship, practitioners were often encouraged to enter a duel with the goal of achieving at least an AI UCHI. The resolution to win the duel even at the cost of one's own life was thought to aid in cultivating an attitude of single-minded focus on the task of cutting down one's opponent. This single-minded focus is exemplified in aikido in the technique, IKKYO, where one enters into an attacker's range in order to effect the technique.
Ashi Sabaki	Footwork. Proper footwork is essential in aikido for developing strong balance and for facilitating ease of movement.
Atemi	(lit. Striking the Body) Strike directed at the attacker for purposes of unbalancing or distraction. Atemi is often vital for bypassing or "short-circuiting" an attacker's natural responses to aikido techniques. The first thing most people will do when they feel their body being manipulated in an unfamiliar way is to retract their limbs and drop their center of mass down and away from the person performing the technique. By judicious application of atemi, it is possible to create a "window of opportunity" in the attacker's natural defenses, facilitating the application of an aikido technique.
Bokken or Bokuto	Wooden sword. Many aikido movements are derived from traditional Japanese fencing. In advanced practice, weapons such as the BOKKEN are used in learning subtleties of certain movements, the relationships obtaining between armed and unarmed techniques, defenses against weapons, and the like.
Budo	"Martial way." The Japanese character for "BU" (martial) is derived from characters meaning "stop" and (a weapon like a) "halberd." In conjunction, then, "BU" may have the connotation "to stop the halberd." In aikido, there is an assumption that the best way to prevent violent conflict is to emphasize the cultivation of individual character. The way (DO) of AIKI is thus equivalent to the way of BU, taken in this sense of preventing or avoiding violence so far as possible.
Chokusen	Direct. Thus CHOKUSEN NO IRIMI = direct entry.

Chudan	"Middle position." Thus CHUDAN NO KAMAE = a stance characterized by having one's hands/sword in a central position with respect to one's body.
Chushin	Center. Especially, the center of one's movement or balance.
Dan	Black belt rank. In IAF aikido, the highest rank it is now possible to obtain is 9th dan. There are some aikidoists who hold ranks of 10th dan. These ranks were awarded by the founder prior to his death, and cannot be rescinded. White belt ranks are called KYU ranks.
Do	Way/path. The Japanese character for "DO" is the same as the Chinese character for Tao (as in "Taoism"). In aikido, the connotation is that of a way of attaining enlightenment or a way of improving one's character through aiki.
Dojo	Literally "place of the Way." Also "place of enlightenment." The place where we practice aikido. Traditional etiquette prescribes bowing in the direction of the shrine (KAMIZA) or the designated front of the dojo (SHOMEN) whenever entering or leaving the dojo.
Dojo Cho	The head of the dojo. A title.
Domo Arigato Gozaimashita	Japanese for "thank you very much." At the end of each class, it is proper to bow and thank the instructor and those with whom you've trained.
Doshu	Head of the way (currently Moriteru Ueshiba, grandson of aikido's founder, Morihei Ueshiba). The highest official authority in IAF aikido.
Engi	(Inter)dependent origination (Sanskrit = pratitya samutpada). In Buddhist philosophy, phenomena have no unchanging essences. Rather, they originate and exist only in virtue of material and causal conditions. Without these material and causal conditions, there would be no phenomena. Furthermore, since the material and causal conditions upon which all phenomena depend are continually in flux, phenomena themselves are one and all impermanent. Since whatever is impermanent and dependent for existence on conditions has no absolute status (or is not absolutely real), it follows that phenomena (what are ordinarily called "things") have no absolute or independent existential status, i.e., they are empty. To cultivate a cognitive state in which the empty status of things is manifest is to realize or attain enlightenment. The realization of enlightenment, in turn, confers a degree of cognitive freedom and spontaneity which, among other (and arguably more important) benefits, facilitates the performance of martial techniques in response to rapidly changing circumstances. (see KU)
Fudo Shin	"Immovable mind." A state of mental equanimity or imperturbability. The mind, in this state, is calm and undistracted (metaphorically, therefore, "immovable"). FUDO MYO is a Buddhist guardian deity who carries a sword in one hand (to destroy enemies of the Buddhist doctrine), and a rope in the other (to rescue sentient beings from the pit of delusion, or from Buddhist hell-states). He therefore embodies the two-fold Buddhist ideal of wisdom (the sword) and compassion (the rope). To cultivate FUDO SHIN is thus to cultivate a mind which can accommodate itself to changing circumstances without compromise of ethical principles.
Fukushidoin	A formal title whose connotation is something approximating "assistant instructor."
Furi Kaburi	Sword-raising movement. This movement is found especially in IKKYO, IRIMI-NAGE, and SHIHO-NAGE.
Gedan	Lower position. GEDAN NO KAMAE is thus a stance with the hands or a weapon held in a lower position.

Gi/Dogi/Keiko Gi	Training costume. Either judo-style or karate-style GI are acceptable in most DOJO, but they must be white and cotton. (No black satin GI with embroidered dragons. Please.)
Gyaku Hanmi	Opposing stance (if UKE has the right foot forward, NAGE has the left foot forward, if UKE has the left foot forward, NAGE has the right foot forward).
Hakama	Divided skirt usually worn by black-belt ranks. In some DOJO, the HAKAMA is also worn by women of all ranks, and in some DOJO by all practitioners.
Hanmi	Triangular stance. Most often aikido techniques are practiced with UKE and NAGE in pre-determined stances. This is to facilitate learning the techniques and certain principles of positioning with respect to an attack. At higher levels, specific HANMI cease to be of much importance.
Hanmi Handachi	Position with NAGE sitting, UKE standing. Training in HANMI HANDACHI WAZA is a good way of practicing techniques as though with a significantly larger/taller opponent. This type of training also emphasizes movement from one's center of mass (HARA).
Happo	8 directions; as in HAPPO-UNDO (8 direction exercise) or HAPPO-GIRI (8 direction cutting with the sword). The connotation here is really movement in all directions. In aikido, one must be prepared to turn in any direction in an instant.
Hara	One's center of mass, located about 2" below the navel. Traditionally this was thought to be the location of the spirit/mind/(source of KI). Aikido techniques should be executed as much as possible from or through one's HARA.
Hasso no Kamae	"Figure-eight" stance. The figure eight does not correspond to the arabic numeral "8", but rather to the Chinese/Japanese character which looks more like the roof of a house. In HASSO NO KAMAE, the sword is held up beside one's head, so that the elbows spread down and out from the sword in a pattern resembling this figure-eight character.
Henka Waza	Varied technique. Especially beginning one technique and changing to another in mid-execution. Ex. beginning IKKYO but changing to IRIMI-NAGE.
Hombu Dojo	A term used to refer to the central dojo of an organization. Thus this usually designates Aikido World Headquarters. (see Aikikai)
Hidari	Left.
Irimi	(lit. "Entering the Body") Entering movement. Many aikidoists think that the IRIMI movement expresses the very essence of aikido. The idea behind IRIMI is to place oneself in relation to an attacker in such a way that the attacker is unable to continue to attack effectively, and in such a way that one is able to control effectively the attacker's balance. (See SHIKAKU).
Jinja	A (shinto) shrine. There is an AIKI JINJA located in Iwama, Ibaraki prefecture, Japan.
Jiyu Waza	Free-style practice of techniques. This usually involves more than one attacker who may attack NAGE in any way desired.
Jo	Wooden staff about 4'-5' in length. The JO originated as a walking stick. It is unclear how it became incorporated into aikido. Many JO movements come from traditional Japanese spear- fighting, others may have come from jo-jutsu, but many seem to have been innovated by the founder. The JO is usually used in advanced practice.
Jodan	

	Upper position. JODAN NO KAMAE is thus a stance with the hands or a weapon held in a high position.
Katsu Hayabi	"Victory at the speed of sunlight." According to the founder, when one has achieved total self-mastery (Agatsu) and perfect accord with the fundamental principles governing the universe (especially principles covering ethical interaction), one will have the power of the entire universe at one's disposal, there no longer being any real difference between oneself and the universe. At this stage of spiritual advancement, victory is instantaneous. The very intention of an attacker to perpetrate an act of violence breaks harmony with the fundamental principles of the universe, and no one can compete successfully against such principles. Also, the expression of the fundamental principles of the universe in human life is love (Ai), and love, according to the founder, has no enemies. Having no enemies, one has no need to fight, and thus always emerges victorious. (see Agatsu and Masakatsu)
Kaeshi Waza	Technique reversal. (UKE becomes NAGE and vice- versa). This is usually a very advanced form of practice. KAESHI WAZA practice helps to instill a sensitivity to shifts in resistance or direction in the movements of one's partner. Training so as to anticipate and prevent the application of KAESHI WAZA against one's own techniques greatly sharpens aikido skills.
Kaiso	A title. The founder of aikido (i.e., Morihei Ueshiba).
Kamae	A posture or stance either with or without a weapon. KAMAE may also connote proper distance (MA AI) with respect to one's partner. Although "KAMAE" generally refers to a physical stance, there is an important parallel in aikido between one's physical and one's psychological bearing. Adopting a strong physical stance helps to promote the correlative adoption of a strong psychological attitude. It is important to try so far as possible to maintain a positive and strong mental bearing in aikido.
Kami	A divinity, living force, or spirit. According to SHINTO, the natural world is full of KAMI, which are often sensitive or responsive to the actions of human beings.
Kamiza	A small shrine, especially in an aikido, generally located the the front of the dojo, and often housing a picture of the founder, or some calligraphy. One generally bows in the direction of the KAMIZA when entering or leaving the dojo, or the mat.
Kansetsu Waza	Joint manipulation techniques.
Kata	A "form" or prescribed pattern of movement, especially with the JO in aikido. (But also "shoulder.")
Katame waza	"Hold-down" (pinning) techniques.
Katana	What is vulgarly called a "samurai sword."
Katsu Jinken	"The sword that saves life." As Japanese swordsmanship became more and more influenced by Buddhism (especially Zen Buddhism) and Taoism, practitioners became increasingly interested in incorporating ethical principles into their discipline. The consummate master of swordsmanship, according to some such practitioners, should be able not only to use the sword to kill, but also to save life. The concept of KATSU JIN KEN found some explicit application in the development of techniques which would use non-cutting parts of the sword to strike or control one's opponent, rather than to kill him/her. The influence of some of these techniques can sometimes be seen in aikido. Other techniques were developed by which an unarmed

	person (or a person unwilling to draw a weapon) could disarm an attacker. These techniques are frequently practiced in aikido. (see SETSU NIN TO)
Keiko	Training. The only secret to success in aikido.
Ken	Sword.
Kensho	Enlightenment. (see MOKUSO and SATORI)
Ki	Mind. Spirit. Energy. Vital-force. Intention. (Chinese = chi) For many Aikidoka, the primary goal of training in aikido is to learn how to "extend" KI, or to learn how to control or redirect the KI of others. There are both "realist" and anti-realist interpretations of KI. The KI-realist takes KI to be, literally, a kind of "stuff," "energy," or life-force which flows within the body. Developing or increasing one's own KI, according to the KI-realist, thus confers upon the aikidoka greater power and control over his/her own body, and may also have the added benefits of improved health and longevity. According to the KI-anti-realist, KI is a concept which covers a wide range of psycho-physical phenomena, but which does not denote any objectively existing "energy" or "stuff." The KI-anti-realist believes, for example, that to "extend KI" is just to adopt a certain kind of positive psychological disposition and to correlate that psychological disposition with just the right combination of balance, relaxation, and judicious application of physical force. Since the description "extend KI" is somewhat more manageable, the concept of KI has a class of well-defined uses for the KI-anti-realist, but does not carry with it any ontological commitments beyond the scope of mainstream scientific theories.
Kiai	A shout delivered for the purpose of focussing all of one's energy into a single movement. Even when audible KIAI are absent, one should try to preserve the feeling of KIAI at certain crucial points within aikido techniques.
Kihon	(Something which is) fundamental. There are often many seemingly very different ways of performing the same technique in aikido. To see beneath the surface features of the technique and grasp the core common is to comprehend the KIHON.
Ki Musubi	KI NO MUSUBI = Literally "knotting/tying-up KI". The act/process of matching one's partner's movement/intention at its inception, and maintaining a connection to one's partner throughout the application of an aikido technique. Proper KI MUSUBI requires a mind that is clear, flexible, and attentive. (see SETSUZOKU)
Kohai	A student junior to oneself.
Kokoro	"Heart or mind." Japanese folk psychology does not distinguish clearly between the seat of intellect and the seat of emotion as does Western folk psychology.
Kokyu	Breath. Part of aikido is the development of "KOKYU RYOKU", or "breath power." This is the coordination of breath with movement. A prosaic example: When lifting a heavy object, it is generally easier when breathing out. Also breath control may facilitate greater concentration and the elimination of stress. In many traditional forms of meditation, focus on the breath is used as a method for developing heightened concentration or mental equanimity. This is also the case in aikido. A number of exercises in aikido are called "KOKYU HO," or "breath exercises." These exercises are meant to help one develop KOKYU RYOKU.
Kotodama	A practice of intoning various sounds (phonetic components of the Japanese language) for the purpose of producing mystical states. The

founder of aikido was greatly interested in Shinto and Neo-shinto mystical practices, and he incorporated a number of them into his personal aikido practice.

Ku	Emptiness. According to Buddhism, the fundamental character of things is absence (or emptiness) of individual unchanging essences. The realization of the essencelessness of things is what permits the cultivation of psychological non-attachment, and thus cognitive equanimity. The direct realization of (or experience of insight into) emptiness is enlightenment. This shows up in aikido in the ideal of developing a state of cognitive openness, permitting one to respond immediately and intuitively to changing circumstances (see MOKUSO).
Kumijo	JO matching exercise (partner practice).
Kumitachi	Sword matching exercise (partner practice).
Kuzushi	The principle of destroying one's partner's balance. In aikido, a technique cannot be properly applied unless one first unbalances one's partner. To achieve proper KUZUSHI, in aikido, one should rely primarily on position and timing, rather than merely on physical force.
Kyu	White belt rank. (Or any rank below SHODAN)
Ma Ai	Proper distancing or timing with respect to one's partner. Since aikido techniques always vary according to circumstances, it is important to understand how differences in initial position affect the timing and application of techniques.
Mae	Front. Thus MAE UKEMI = "forward fall/roll".
Masakatsu	"True victory." (see AGATSU and KACHIHAYABI)
Migi	Right.
Misogi	Ritual purification. Aikido training may be looked upon as a means of purifying oneself; eliminating defiling characteristics from one's mind or personality. Although there are some specific exercises for MISOGI practice, such as breathing exercises, in point of fact, every aspect of aikido training may be looked upon as MISOGI. This, however, is a matter of one's attitude or approach to training, rather than an objective feature of the training itself.
Mokuso	Meditation. Practice often begins or ends with a brief period of meditation. The purpose of meditation is to clear one's mind and to develop cognitive equanimity. Perhaps more importantly, meditation is an opportunity to become aware of conditioned patterns of thought and behavior so that such patterns can be modified, eliminated or more efficiently put to use. In addition, meditation may occasion experiences of insight into various aspects of aikido (or, if one accepts certain buddhist claims, into the very structure of reality). Ideally, the sort of cognitive awareness and focus that one cultivates in meditation should carry over into the rest of one's practice, so that the distinction between the "meditative mind" and the "normal mind" collapses.
Mudansha	Students without black-belt ranking.
Mushin	Literally "no mind". A state of cognitive awareness characterized by the absence of discursive thought. A state of mind in which the mind acts/reacts without hypostatization of concepts. MUSHIN is often erroneously taken to be a state of mere spontaneity. Although spontaneity is a feature of MUSHIN, it is not straightforwardly identical with it. It might be said that when in a state of MUSHIN, one is free to use concepts and distinctions without being used by them.
Nagare	