

COVINA KENDO DOJO



Beginner's Packet

Intro

Welcome to Covina Kendo Dojo. We are a member dojo of the SCKF (Southern California Kendo Federation), and the AUSKF (All United States Kendo Federation). Kendo can become a lifelong activity; it is easy to start, but takes a lifetime to master. Come join us for some fun, as we learn the “way of the sword”!

Want to Join Kendo?

The best way to start kendo is to observe one of the practice sessions first. After all, you need to know what to expect and what will be expected of you.

Covina Kendo Dojo’s head instructor is generally present at the Tuesday and Thursday sessions. To join kendo, it is highly recommended that you observe both Tuesday and Thursday practices.

Try to stay through the entire session if you would like to get a good understanding of the full spectrum of practices. If you arrive late or leave early, you may miss out on some of the important aspects or etiquettes required.

After the session, you may approach the head instructor or ask one of the students about approaching the instructor for permission and instructions on how to join.

Classes

Covina Kendo Dojo holds practices at the East San Gabriel Valley Japanese Community Center (ESGVJCC) 2 times a week.

East San Gabriel Valley Japanese Community Center (ESGVJCC)

Location: 1203 West Puente Ave; West Covina, CA 91790

Time: 7:30 pm to 9:00 PM

Tuesday – Social Hall

Thursday - Gym

Must be a member of SCKF or other AUSKF affiliated dojo with insurance.

Instruction: Beginner, Advanced

Basic Costs/Requirements

To practice at Covina Kendo Dojo, there are some fees along with some equipment that you are required to purchase.

Fees*

You will be responsible for the following fees:

- Covina Kendo Dojo Tuition Fee
- AUSKF & SCKF Member Fee for insurance purposes
- Additionally, because we use space at the ESGVJCC, all members must also join the ESGVJCC community center.

Dojo Tutions Fees (2025 rates, subject to change yearly)	
Standard Plan	
Monthly	\$ 35 / Month
Quarterly or Annually	\$ 100 Quarterly or \$400 per year
Family Plan	
First Member	
Monthly	\$ 35 / Month
Quarterly or Annually	\$ 100 Quarterly or \$400 per year
Second Member and Beyond	
Monthly	\$ 18 / Month per person
Quarterly or Annually	\$50 quarterly or \$200 per year
Student Plan	
Monthly	\$ 18 / Month

Quarterly or Annually	\$ 50 Quarterly or \$200 per year
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AUSKF & SCKF Combined fees (as of 2024, subject to change yearly)	
ADULTS (Not full-time student)	\$110 (yearly fee)
ADULTS (Full-time student 18 years +)	\$80 (yearly fee)
Under 18 Years of Age	\$60 (yearly fee)
AUSKF New Member Registration	\$50 (one-time fee)

ESGVJCC Fees (as of 2024, subject to change yearly)	
Individual (18 + Years)	\$50 / year
Family**	\$75 / year
Senior (75 years or over)	\$45 / year

*Covina Kendo Dojo is a Non-Profit Organization. All tuition is used for operation purposes (ie Rent, Event coordination).

**Any Individual who is minor cannot join as an Individual for ESGVJCC membership, they are required to join as a family.

Equipment

All you need to start is a bamboo sword called the shinai: You can purchase online from a kendo equipment shop, or you may purchase one directly from the dojo (while supplies last). Shinai from the dojo are \$38.

No other equipment is necessary to start for beginners. Just wear comfortable work-out clothes.

IMPORTANT: As you progress, and when the time is right, advanced beginners would be asked to look for uniforms and bogu.

It is on a case by case basis, and the head instructor will let you know ONLY when you are ready for the next step.

Etiquettes

At Covina Kendo Dojo, instructors teach on a voluntary basis. As such, we ask that you observe basic rules in the dojo.

The basic etiquette is known as reigi, and while different martial arts may have different protocols, the idea of reigi is universal.

ETIQUETTE (REIGI) (taken from the SCKF 1996 AUSKF Team Commemorative Booklet)

Etiquette is an extremely important part of Kendo. The basic rules come from the formal, highly stylised social system of Japan. Simply stated, Kendo etiquette is based on respect -- for one's Sensei, seniors, equipment, etc.

In practice, it is not that simple. There is a prescribed method for virtually every action, and failure to adhere to proper behaviour may be taken as a sign of poor instruction or, in some cases, as a severe insult. It is essential to know basic etiquette in Kendo. Basic

Etiquette in the Dojo

1. Never deliver the traditional courtesies in a casual, off-hand manner.
2. Stop and bow when entering or leaving a dojo.
3. Greet your seniors and fellow Kenshi at the first opportunity, especially the Sensei. Examples: ohayou gazaimasu (good morning), kon'nichi wa (good day), konban wa (good evening).
4. When addressing instructors, use the title Sensei.
5. Be attentive; listen carefully to instructions, and respond promptly.
6. Be aware of senior members and follow their lead. Do not sit down, finish bowing, or remove your equipment before your seniors. When lining up, position yourself relative to your seniors. Example: when seated, line up your men and kote, as well as your knees, to those of your senior.
7. Be aware of junior members and take care of them.
8. Always sit or stand properly when in the dojo. Do not slouch or lean against anything. In Particular, do not lean on your shinai. Do not crawl to adjust your position when in seiza, or sonkyo; instead, stand up and move.
9. When taking the seiza position, put the left knee down first. When rising from the seiza position, raise the right knee first. Do not use your hands to assist in raising or lowering yourself.
10. Avoid walking in front of Sensei, or in front of Kenshi seated in the seiza

11. Pay respect to your seniors and fellow Kenshi when departing, especially to the sensei. Examples: oyasumi nasai (good night), sayounara.

Basic Etiquette Regarding Apparel and Equipment

1. Always handle your apparel and bogu respectfully. Make sure they are packed neatly, without dangling strings or straps.
2. Always handle your shinai respectfully. Do not lean on it, rest it on the floor, twirl it, or drag it. Make sure it is well maintained, free of splinters and with tightened tsuru (string) and nakayui (leather strap).
3. Avoid stepping over Shinai and Bogu when it is lying on the ground e.g. during Seiza etc. Walk around instead if possible.
4. Wear your keikogi and hakama neatly. Make sure the keikogi is smooth, not bulging, in the front and back. When putting on the hakama, put your left leg in first; when removing the hakama, remove your right leg first.

Basic Etiquette During Practice

1. When practising with your senior, thank him or her by saying "onegai shimasu" at the beginning and "arigatou gozaimashita" at the end.
2. Practice diligently. Do not sit down during practice unless you are fixing your equipment. Do not engage in idle conversation. Do not let a sensei remain idle when he or she is available for practice.
3. Do not wear jewelry during practice.
4. Perform ritsu rei (standing bow) and za rei (seated bow) properly. Do not bend or arch your neck or back. Hold the bow briefly before returning to your original position.
5. To draw the shinai: First perform ritsu rei toward your opponent. Bring your left hand to your hip and take three big steps forward. Draw the shinai; assume the chudan no kamae position and go down into the sonkyo position. Keep your back straight and look forward at all times.
6. To put away the shinai: assume the chudan no kamae position, go down into the sonkyo position, and return the shinai to your left hip. Stand and take five small steps back; drop your left hand, and perform ritsu rei. Keep your back straight and look forward at all times.

Addendum:

Member/Parental Responsibilities

OBJECTIVE: The Covina Kendo Dojo would like to strongly encourage the participation of the parents in all of the Dojo activities. This will help to promote a better bond of friendship and support within the Dojo. We would like to request participation of the parents in the following areas. These include, but are not limited to:

1. Monthly refreshments (assigned by the Hospitality committee)
2. Toban duties: Facility Preparation (Thursday nights)
 - a. Turn lights on - gym and stage (change area)
 - b. Sweeping floor
 - c. Setting up tables/chairs
 - d. Preparing the dojo flag
 - e. Putting away the dojo flag, resetting tables, etc at the end of practice.
3. Volunteering at the various off site tournaments assigned by the tournament committee.
 - a. Time keeping
 - b. Meijirushi (tatsuki)
 - c. Scoreboard
 - d. Donation table
 - e. Refreshments table
4. Event Volunteers (ie Aki matsuri)
 - a. Sushi booth (assigned by the Hospitality committee)
 - b. Chicken teriyaki booth (assigned by the President)
 - c. Game booth (assigned by senior Kenshi)
 - d. Setup
 - e. Clean up
5. Monthly Dojo Tournaments
 - a. Same requirements as the off site tournaments

To the parents:

Parents are highly encouraged to volunteer, especially for tournaments. It is a great learning experience, not only to further understand the concepts of Kendo, but also to meet other parents of the kendo community, and to see first-hand how youth are developed through kendo. If there are not enough volunteers, you may be asked directly to help. It is not fair for the same parents to be asked to assist each and every month.