

Answers to the most commonly asked questions about Doshikai!

1. What is the rank of the instructors and how long have they been studying martial arts?

Mr. Poitras has been studying and teaching Shotokan Karate-do for over 25 years. In that time he took a big interest in the art of Japanese swordsmanship. He joined the Boston Kendo Club back in 1989 when he began working in the Boston area. After moving out to Acton in 1992, he founded the Doshi-Kai Kendo and Iaido Club in 1994. He currently holds the rank of Yondan (4th Degree Blackbelt) in kendo and Godan (5th Degree Blackbelt) in Iaido. Several members of the Doshi-Kai Dojo hold Dan ranks in kendo and Iaido, as well as many other disciplines such as Aikido, Karate-do, Kyudo, Jodo, and Naginata. Doshi-Kai and all of the students are members of the All United States Kendo Federation under the regional direction of the Eastern United States Kendo Federation.

2. What times and days do you meet, and how much do the instructional classes cost?

We currently have several locations to choose from: See our web site for exact locations and schedule times.

All evening classes are priced per month, per individual. Call for current pricing or look on the web site.

3. What kind of equipment do I need to get started?

To start, all you need is loose fitting clothing (sweat pants, T-shirt, Karate/Judo Gi, Aikido Hakama and Keiko Gi), a Bokken (Wooden Sword), and a Shinai (Bamboo Sword). We get these items at wholesale prices. You may pick up your own at local martial arts stores, but beware that you will most likely pay retail. Also you may want to check with me on the quality of an item before you purchase it. Many a student has been very disappointed to find out that not only did they pay more than they should have, but they need to replace a piece of equipment a short time after due to poor craftsmanship.

4. Do I need armor to practice Kendo?

No. Not at first. There are plenty of basics to learn without the armor. Of course eventually you will want to go out and purchase a set so that you can participate in the sparring portion of art. I encourage all students to try Kendo for a while to see if this is something that they are going to continue with, otherwise you are just wasting your money. Again, we get these items at the wholesale prices from several sources. We were getting high quality Iaito (Japanese made unsharpened swords) from Japan during sale price times from around \$ 300.00 to \$ 450.00 each. We are getting high quality Japanese made Bogu (Kendo Armor) and Hakama/Keiko Gi (Kendo & Iaido uniforms) from e-bogu.com. Bogu for \$ 400.00-800.00 and uniform for approximately \$ 230.00. Very high quality Bogu and Uniforms are available at higher prices.

5. How long do I have to wait before I can get my armor?

I leave that up to each individual student. There is no set time limit at Doshi-Kai. Again, the most important point to remember is to first try Kendo out for a while, if you enjoy it then you may purchase a set.

6. Do you promote your students?

No. We will do everything within our power to teach you traditional, strong basics in both arts, but the judgment of your rank will be by a panel of judges of the Eastern Regional Organization of the All United States Kendo Federation. These are some of the highest ranked sensei in the country (5th Dan - 8th Dan), and are extremely qualified individuals. There are at least two promotions each year, and most are held in Manhattan, NY.

7. Are there any competitions?

There are approximately 4 Eastern Regional tournaments each year. Most of these are held in

New York City due to the centralized location and amount of Kendo & Iaido practitioners. We at Doshi-Kai try to have 1 local tournament in Acton each year in the spring. The tournaments have individuals broken down by rank, as well as 5 person team competitions.

8. Is there a membership fee?

The only annual fee is from the All United States Kendo Federation, which is approximately \$ 50.00 per year depending on your age. With this membership you are able to promote, compete, attend seminars, and participate in all A.U.S.K.F. events.

9. Is there an age limit?

At Doshi-Kai we have limited the Kendo & Iaido enrollment to 13 years and over. Although Kendo is practiced by many children throughout the world, I have limited it due to time restrictions.

10. When can I start? Any time. Just drop in and take a class.