

<b>Best Practice Title:</b>	Class Protocols and Class Etiquette
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## **Objective:**

The intention of this document is to describe the class protocols and etiquette of the Han Moo Kwan Tae Kwon Do Club.

## **Background:**

Etiquette has always been an important part of warrior behavior. Eastern warriors carried their swords and drew them from the left side, so they would place their swords on their right side as a symbol of their peaceful intent. This placement made it difficult to draw the sword quickly, thus rendering it ineffective. Failure to complete this customary behavior while in the presence of a superior was a grave breach of etiquette. Western medieval knights also had a strict code of behavior. When greeting each other, they took hold of each other's right hand, the weapon hand, and kept hold while interacting at a close distance.

For centuries, warriors have had strict protocols, such as how to enter rooms, where to sit in a room when superiors or other warriors are present, and how to remove, wear, or handle weapons in the presence of others. These protocols were strictly observed so that a warrior did not appear threatening. Modern warriors have the same protocols. Some say the military salute protocol shows that one's weapon hand is empty and therefore poses no threat.

In Eastern culture, a bow is used similarly to Western culture's handshake. The bow is used as:

- A greeting (as when entering a business meeting),
- A symbol of some sort of combined accomplishment or mutual understanding (such when signing a contract), or as
- A display of gratitude (as when receiving an award).

The Han Moo Kwan Tae Kwon Do Club tries to maintain a club atmosphere, but some protocols are still followed. Bowing is one of those protocols that are retained in the Club.

## **Best Practice:**

### **Bowing Protocols:**

In the Han Moo Kwan Tae Kwon Do Club, students are to be taught the following guidelines regarding use of the bow:

#### **1. Entering and Leaving the Dojang:**

- Upon entering the dojang, bow toward the center of the room. This bow is to show respect for the training space and the Club.
- Upon leaving the dojang, bow toward the center of the room.

## **2. Entering and Leaving a Training Area:**

- Upon entering a training area (such as the mat), bow at the edge of the training area towards the center prior to stepping into the area.
- Upon leaving a training area (such as the mat), bow at the edge of the training area toward the center prior to stepping out of the area.

## **3. Start and Finish of Classes or Testing Session:**

- At the start of each class or testing session, the instructor leading the class will have students line up and bow in.
  - Line up is in order of rank (in intermediate and advanced class).
    - In intermediate class, green belts line up from right to left (as facing the front of the class, then blue belts, then brown, then black belts
    - In advanced class, the most senior black belts line up first, followed by interim black and brown belts
  - Instructor will call “Feet Together”, “Bow”
    - Students will bow towards the instructor
- At the end of each class or testing session, the instructor leading the class will have students line up the same as at the start of the class and bow out.
  - Instructor will call “Feet Together”, “Finish”
    - Students will bow towards the instructor

## **4. When working with a partner.**

- Each time you start working with a new partner, it is proper etiquette to bow to him or her and then bow again when you finish.

## **5. Formal Sparring.**

- Each match begins and ends with a bow. There may be an additional bow to the referee.

### **How to bow:**

- Bend at the waist, keep back straight, and do not bob your head. Bow smoothly, both while descending and ascending, do not jerk back upward.
- Keep arms and hands straight down the sides of the legs
- In class, even though it is a controlled environment, we bow so we can keep our eyes on our opponent (do not bend so far you have to bend the neck to look up).
  - In a social setting in Eastern culture, when bowing as a sign of respect and trust, such as in the traditional bow, the back and neck are kept straight, so the eyes are lowered.
  - Eastern cultures consider looking up with your face when you bow to be rude.
- Normally, you do not speak while bowing

### **Awards Night Ceremony – Receiving Awards Protocol**

- The Club President will call out the name of the student, his or her new belt rank, and numbered score
  - At this time it is very appropriate to applaud with hand clapping

- The student will rise and approach the awards table in the front of the room
- For White Belts only, the first position is in front of their class instructor to receive the Club patch.
  - Execute a bow of respect and verbally thank the class instructor
- The second position (for White Belts) and first position for all others is in front of the Chief Instructor to receive the certificate of rank and the new belt if that applies
  - Execute a bow of respect and verbally thank the Chief Instructor
  - At this point, the Club normally takes a picture and the student and Chief Instructor should turn towards the camera for the photo
- The third position (for White Belts) and second position for all others is in front of the Club President to receive the test sheet
  - Execute a bow of respect and verbally thank the Club President
- The student returns to his or her seat and if the student received a new belt, the old belt is removed and replaced with the new one
- Once the award is given and the member is seated, applauding is again appropriate (hand clapping)

### **General Class Etiquette:**

- Keeping with the club atmosphere, all instructors and students are on a first name basis
- Respectful words and actions are expected of all Club Members at all times
- Personal appearance is kept neat and tidy; uniforms clean
- Students should be punctual to all classes and be prepared to work out when class starts
- Students should raise their hand any time they have a question or need clarification from the instructor
- Any time a student needs to adjust their uniform or belt, they should face away from the front of the class and adjust it quickly
- During open sessions, guests, friends, and spectators are welcome to watch the class
  - Out of respect for the instructors and students, those watching should do so silently and without disruption. For test nights, there will be a zero tolerance for distractions and anyone not able to comply will be asked to leave for the evening
  - Open sessions are indicated by the door to the dojang being open. Open sessions can include, but are not limited to, Monday and Thursday night open class sessions, and Saturday open class sessions
  - Beginner's and Intermediate's Class Test Nights are also considered open sessions and the additional guidelines for those nights include:
    - All persons will enter or leave the room at the natural breaks that occur between each testing group
    - Once a testing groups starts their test, no person should enter or leave the dojang (unless for an emergency)
- During closed sessions, only those that are taking part in the session are allowed (i.e., no guests, friends, spectators, or members not taking part in the session are allowed to enter the dojang without permission)
  - Closed sessions are indicated by the door to the dojang being closed. Closed sessions can include, but are not limited to, Advanced Class Test Nights, Closed Training sessions, and Black Belt Meetings.

**References:**

1. <http://www.tkdutor.com/03School/Procedures/Bowing/Bowing00.htm>

**Summary:**

The Han Moo Kwan Tae Kwon Do Club tries to maintain a club atmosphere, but some protocols are still followed. Bowing is the main protocol retained in the Club.