

# Easy to Understand Kendo Grading

## (わかりやすい剣道段級審査)

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V 1.1 (August 28 2011)

## Preface

Due to the lack of Kendo literature in the western hemisphere and the relative “freshness” of Kendo in countries outside Japan, I took the liberty of translating Kouda sensei’s grading guide in hopes that people, myself included, would have a better understanding of the general expectation at each Dan/Ikkyu level. I refrained from translating the whole book due to time constraints and simply because it would be unfair for the author to have all of his work translated and freely available on the internet. If you liked this translation, have some slight interest in Japanese and would like to show your gratitude, then please purchase the original book.

At the time of writing, Kouda sensei currently holds the rank of Hachidan Kyoshi and is serving as the Director of Tsukuba University Kendo Club. In 1975, he won the All Japan High school Kendo Tournament (Individuals). In 1985, he won the 6<sup>th</sup> World Championships in Paris. In this book, he covers almost all grading aspects, starting with the etiquette, dress, practical exam, kata (kendo no kata & Bokuto no waza keikohou) and finally the written exam. I have translated the practical exam points & dress code and arranged them in sequential order. I hope that you find this information useful not only for grading preparations, but for developing your Kendo as well.

Any mistakes or mistranslations in this document are purely my own. I have attempted to translate this book to the best of my ability. If you suspect any error, or if you have any general inquiry, comment and/or suggestion, feel free to contact me at *will.blades@gmail.com*

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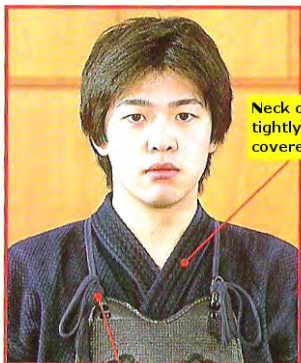
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## Wearing your equipment



Neck collar  
tightly  
covered

Do-Himo knots  
should be  
symmetrical

Do should be  
balanced on both  
sides & at an  
appropriate height

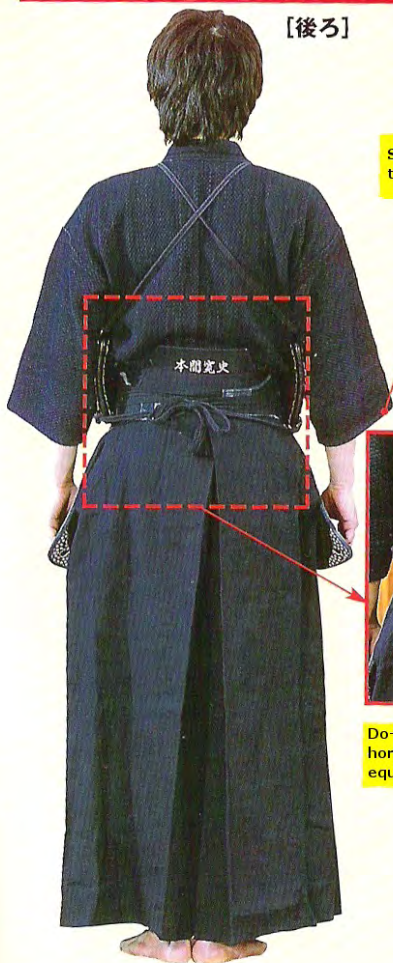
No holes or  
tears at the  
bottom of the  
Hakama

[前]



## Wearing your equipment

[後ろ]



Sleeves long enough  
to cover the elbows

Koshi-ita  
should be  
above the Tare-  
himo



Do-himo hanging  
horizontally on  
equal lengths

## Wearing your equipment

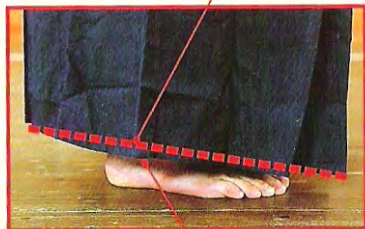
[横]

Collar of the Gi should be sticking to the back of the neck

The Gi from the back is not expanding outwards

No holes or tears at the cuffs

Hakama should be dropping downwards from the front, and rising up from the back




Hakama should be long enough to cover the ankles



## Wearing your Men

[前]



Your eyes should be positioned to see clearly (Between the 6th of 7th bars of the Men-gane from the top, the spot where the men is a bit wide)

Both Men-himo should be lined together

The Men-himo knot should be at eye-level

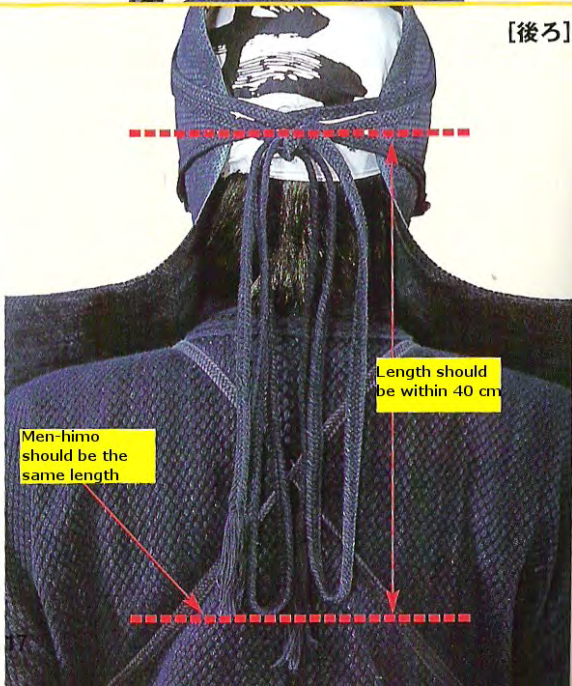
[横]



[後ろ]

Length should be within 40 cm

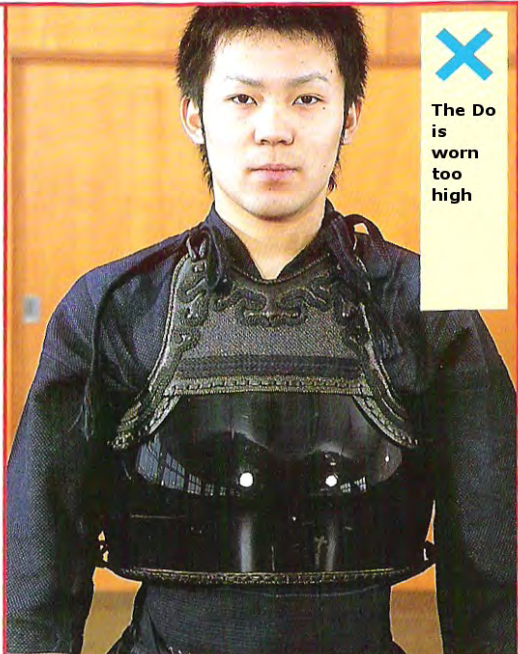
Men-himo should be the same length



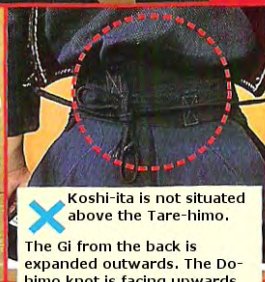




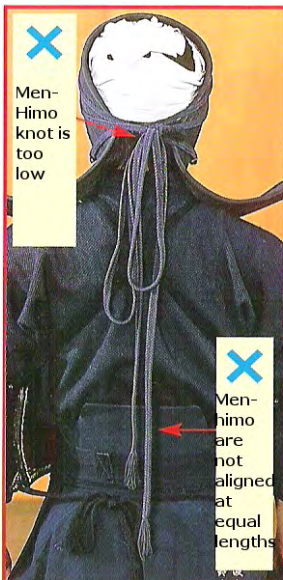
The Do is worn too high



The hakama is rising up from the front

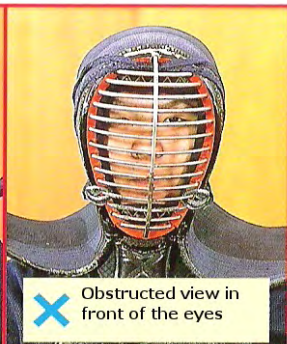


Koshi-ita is not situated above the Tare-himo.  
The Gi from the back is expanded outwards. The Do-himo knot is facing upwards



✕  
Men-Himo knot is too low

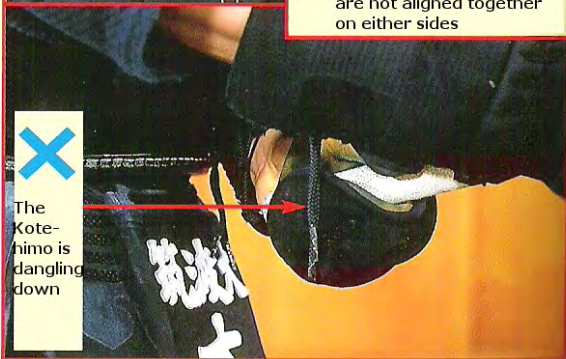
✕  
Men-himo are not aligned at equal lengths



✕ Obstructed view in front of the eyes



✕ The Tenugui is bluing out of the men. The Men-himo are not aligned together on either sides



✕  
The Kote-himo is dangling down

## Ikkyu &amp; Shodan

## Points on executing wazas



## 審査で注目される主な点

6

5

4

3

2

1

- (1) Are you able to do a loud Kiai (Kakegoe)?
- (2) Are you capable of holding a proper Chudan no Kamae?
- (3) Are you able of correctly hitting and receiving Kiri-Kaeshi?
- (4) Can you strike aggressively from Issoku Itto no maai?
- (5) Can you perform a correct men uchi, kote-men, or any other Nidan (2-step) waza?
- (6) Can you seize a datotsu opportunity?

## (1) Are you able to do a loud Kiai (Kakegoe)?

You should yell as loud as you can in order to raise your Kiai level. Make sure your voice isn't released from your throat, but from your abdomen (Hara); all while maintaining a proper posture.

A Kakegoe yell is not "Meeeen", but rather a short, quick, "Mennn!" released in one breath. By taking advantage of such deep breaths as you strike, your arms can swing faster and perform quicker datotsu.

1

大きな発声（掛け声）が出る

一級・初段のポイント

## (2) Are you capable of holding a proper Chudan no Kamae?

Holding a correct Chudan no Kamae is one of the fundamental basics. Here are some pointers to attend to during the exam:

- If you extend a line from you Kensen to your opponent, it should point to the area between his eyes.
- Both arms shouldn't be stiff
- Left fist should be in front of the belly button. The first joint of the thumb should be situated as if it's heading towards the naval, in effect causing the left fist to slightly slip to the left
- The left leg shouldn't be bent
- Extend your backbone, relax your shoulders and tighten your lower abdomen

2

正しい中段の構えができる





*There are many important points in Kiri-Kaeshi*

### (3) Are you able of correctly hitting and receiving Kiri-Kaeshi?

The main points that require attention during grading are as explained earlier in page 34. It is important to know Kiri-Kaeshi as it includes several key movements. As you practice Kiri-Kaeshi, practice how to turn the wrists (Tekubi no Kaeshi), how to apply Tenouchi, how to regain balance after hitting and Ashi-sabaki in order to develop a correct, solid Kiri-Kaeshi. When you switch to Motodachi, make sure you receive the strikes properly and using the correct movements.

3

切り返しの正しい打ち方、  
受け方ができる

### (4) Can you strike aggressively from Issoku Itto no maai?

4

一足の間の間合いから、  
積極的に打ち込んでいる

Issoku Itto no maai is the range in which if either you or your opponent is to take one step closer and strike, he will reach his target. That is why it is important to come with substantial amounts of (aggressive) feelings before entering Issoku Itto no maai. Furthermore, once you enter Issoku Itto no maai, you may initiate or strike as your opponent moves, but do that as you hold sen. Strike as soon as you see an opportunity to hit datotsu, and always be aggressive.



**(5) Can you perform a correct men uchi, kote-men, and/or any other Nidan (2-step) waza?**

It is important that your physical posture doesn't break before or after hitting men-uchi. In particular, do not leave your hips behind as you strike. For Shodan & Ikkyu levels, a men-uchi should be a basic, straight-forward strike. Furthermore, you should be aggressive in performing any attack that is based on men-uchi such as "kote-men", "men-men" or any other Nidan waza. You shouldn't be planning to do a Nidan waza from the beginning, but rather use your momentum from your initial attack when it fails and continue your attack.

5

正しい正面打ち、小手・面などの  
2段打ちができる

一級・初段のポイント

If you extend your spine when you strike men, your hips will naturally flex forward

正しい正面打ち

Correct Men-uchi

Use your lower body to lunge deep and strike men

Example of a common mistake at grading



Strike men using just the upper body

審査でよく見る悪い例



Nidan uchi example

## Kote Men

2段打ちの例



If you quickly pull back your left leg after hitting kote, your posture will remain stable.



If you look downwards when hitting kote, you'll break your posture



Proceed to strike men following kote without breaking your posture



Preform Renzoku-waza, just like Nidan-waza, aggressively

小手・面のポイント

## (6) Can you seize a datotsu opportunity?

6

打突の機会をとらえて打つ

一級・初段のポイント

When facing your opponent during grading, you shouldn't be hitting randomly. Instead, seize an opening (suki) while focusing at your opponent's movements and strike during that short interval. The following points cover the most common striking opportunities.

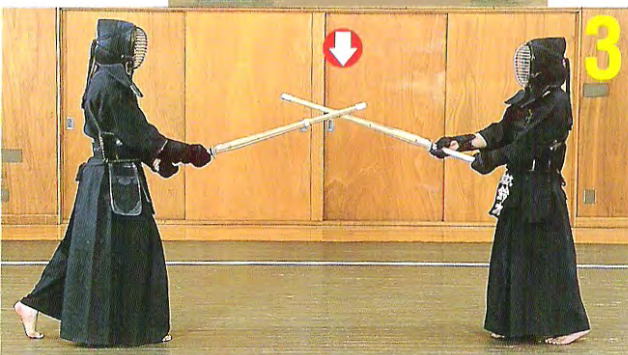
- From the position where both Kensen are in contact with each other, Hit datotsu as the opponent steps into Uchima (distance were both shinai cross each other)
- Strike when the opponent steps back
- Strike when the opponent attempts to parry your waza (etc.)



*Striking during a moment's opening while paying attention to your opponent's movements is one of the kihon (basics) of acquiring a datotsu opportunity.*

Datotsu opportunity

1. Strike when your opponent is heading forward



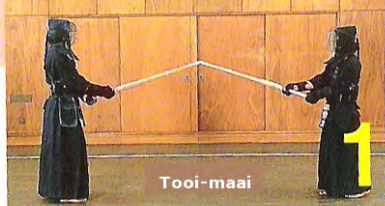
As both shinias intersect each other, both opponents enter Uchi-ma. From there, hit the moment your opponent enters his striking distance



打突の機会

1 相手が出てくるところを打つ

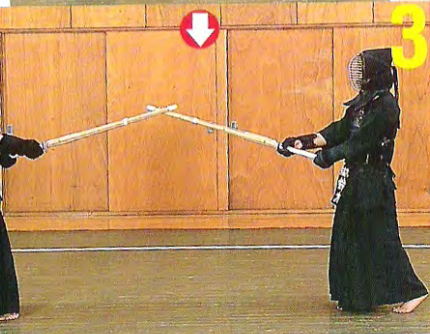




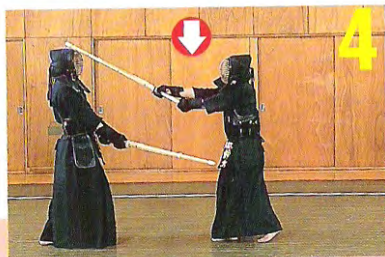
Tooi-maai



Kendoka on the right applies seme by entering Issoku Itto no maai



Strike the moment your pressured opponent steps back



打突の機会

2

相手が下がるところを打つ

一級・初段のポイント

Datotsu opportunity

Strike when your opponent moves backwards



## Datotsu opportunity

3. Strike when your opponent attempts to parry  
your waza

打突の機会

3

相手が技を受けとめたところを打つ



Hit men when your opponent  
tries to block kote



Hit Kote when your  
opponent tries to block men

## Nidan

### Points on executing wazas



### 審査で注目される主な点

5

4

3

2

1

- (1) Are the components of a strike (speed, skillfulness, accuracy) better than Shodan level?
- (2) Have your movements become smoother, and are you striking less ineffective strikes?
- (3) Is the lower back/hips (koshi) stable?
- (4) Is there a display of "Uchi Ai Tsunagi" within the exchange of strikes?
- (5) Are you sufficiently comfortable using Shikake waza?

**(1) Are the components of a strike (speed, skillfulness, accuracy) better than Shodan level?**

Your ability to seize the correct strike opportunities and the qualities of your strike (speed, accuracy, tenouchi ) should combine together to form a smoother datotsu than Shodan level. Tenouchi is achieved by holding your shinai lightly and avoid applying power with both hands as you strike.

A good datotsu is not possible if you attempt to strike using your hands, as your arms and upper body will become tense accordingly. Instead, use your legs & hips and picture yourself hitting with your lower body half. That way, neither your upper body nor your arms become tense and your strikes become smooth and fast.

**(2) Have your movements become smoother, and are you striking less ineffective strikes?**

During grading, it is important not to attack recklessly as if you're doing Kakari geiko but rather minimize the amount of useless strikes and focus on striking at critical opportunities. Just as introduced in Page 44, seize the opportunity to strike when you notice an opening as you're focusing on your opponent's movements and never let it slip by.

Furthermore, your movements shouldn't be stiff or you won't able to take advantage of any favorable opportunity or strike properly. Your body should remember the fundamental (Kihon) Ashi-sabaki and Tai-sabaki in order to execute wazas and move smoothly.

1

打ちの内容(スピード、正確さ)が高まってきたか  
正確さが高まってきたか

二段のポイント

2

動きが滑らかで、無駄打ちが少なくなってきたか  
動きが滑らかで、無駄打ちが少なくなってきたか

### (3) Is the lower back/hips (koshi) stable?

Do not use your arms or upper body to hit during grading. Instead, try using your lower body half (with your hips tucked in) to generate your strike. A large angle between the armpits and the upper body at the moment of impact implies only the upper body was used to strike. To strike using your hips, hit with the feeling of extending your back muscles.

3

腰が安定してきたか

二段のポイント



腰の入った打突

Datotsu with hips tucked in

*You can strike with your hips tucked in if you stretch your spine*

If you consciously extend your spine at the moment of impact, withdrawing your left foot back to position becomes naturally faster.

Datotsu without tucking hips in

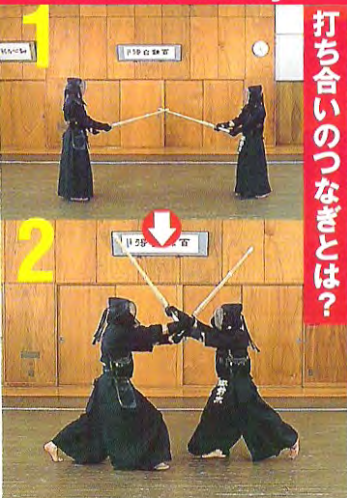
*The hips aren't tucked in and you hit using only your hands when you lean your back forwards.*



腰の入っていない打突



What is "Uchi Ai no Tsunagi" ?



After a simultaneous strike, both players separate from each other



Hold Kamae and Sen, be ready for your next move before your opponent. This is what defines "Uchi Ai no Tsunagi"

打突後に相手よりも先に残心を取り、次の動きに備える

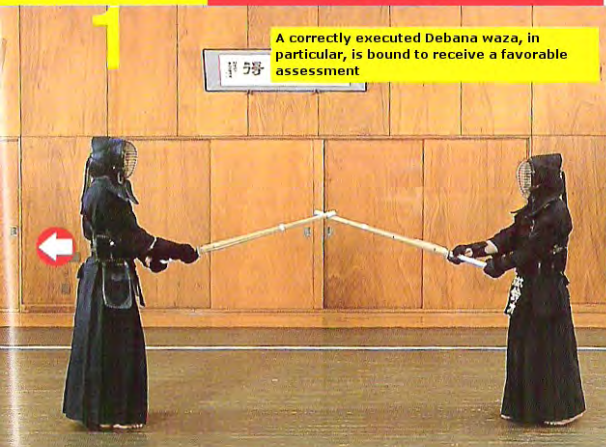
#### (4) Is there a display of "Uchi Ai Tsunagi" within the exchange

"Uchi Ai Tsunagi" is not letting your guard down after you strike, quickly seizing Zanshin & Sen, and being in a ready Kamae before your opponent. Seizing Zanshin quickly implies being able to pressure your opponent immediately after you strike and acquiring his Sen. Right after your datotsu strike is over, do not let go of your feelings, but get into an attack-ready posture and kokorogamae as soon as possible.

4

打ち合いの「つなぎ」に、  
攻め合いができるようになってきたか





仕かけ技の例

出ばな面のポイント

*Thoroughly pressure your opponent using your Kiai and Kensen*

### (5) Are you sufficiently comfortable using Shikake waza?

Once the Tachi Ai has begun, take initiative by applying pressure to your opponent and aggressively executing Shikake waza.

#### Acquiring Sen?

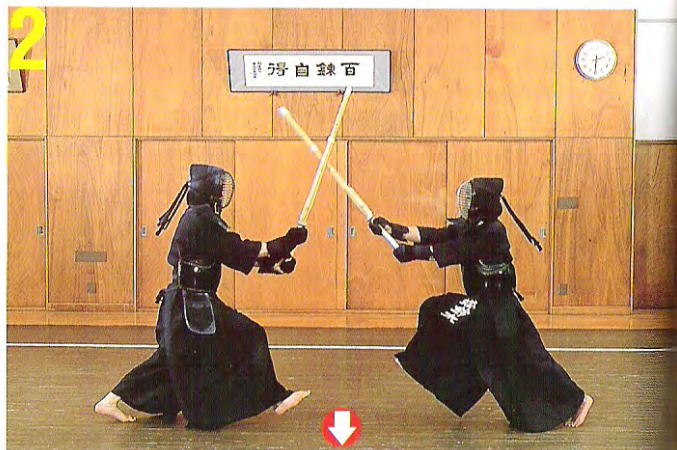
"Acquiring Sen" implies maintaining an aggressive mindset at all times. In the case of Shikake waza it is "Sen Sen no Sen" and in the case of Oji waza, it is "Go no Sen"; always being psychologically superior to you opponent before you strike.

It would be difficult to apply "Sen Sen no Sen" (Shikake waza) to your opponent if your posture lacks the feeling of "Acquiring Sen".

5

仕かけ技が十分にこなせる  
ようになつてきたか

二段のポイント



Acquire sen. Once you notice your opponent has initiated his move, strike men



Debana Men and Debana Kote are very effective in regards to moving opponents

## Sandan

### Points on executing wazas



### 審査で注目される主な点

6

5

4

3

2

1

- (1) Can you execute a correct datotsu strike from seme ai?
- (2) Have you become skillful in utilizing maai, and can you seize a striking opportunity?
- (3) Is your spiritual energy higher than Shodan and Nidan levels, and can you hold tame (reactive waiting) before striking?
- (4) Can you utilize "sen " and "go"?
- (5) Is your tokui waza (specialty waza) flowing naturally from your body?
- (6) Is your hips/lower back (koshi) stable ?

**(1) Can you execute a correct datotsu strike from seme ai?**

Seme ai is not just heading towards & launching an attack at your opponent. Rather, Seme is established by causing your opponent to tremble, exposing him for an attack. This can be achieved by a variety of means such as using Kiai, Kensen, Tokui waza, etc. to invoke a reaction from the opponent.

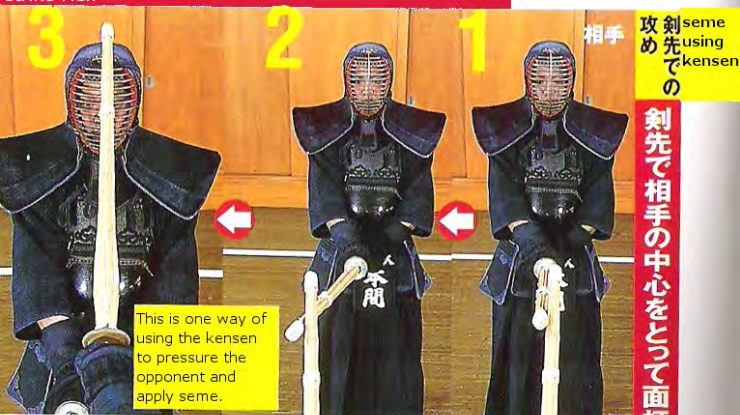
As soon as you notice a reaction or trembling from the opponent, seize the opportunity and attack. Eventually, as you level up in your rank, the focus of future grading will not be on "winning after striking", but "winning before you strike".

seize your opponent's centre using your kensen and strike Men

1

攻め合いから正確な打突ができるようになってきているか

三段のポイント



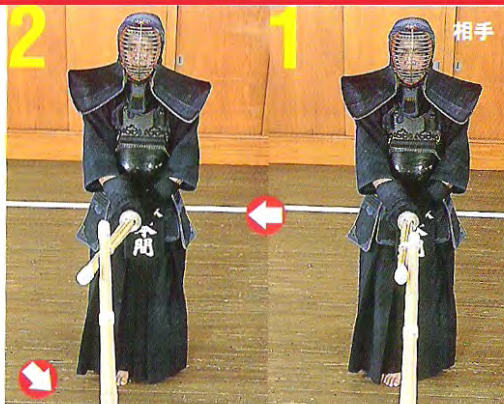
攻め  
剣先での  
seme  
using  
kensen

剣先で相手の中心をとって面打ち

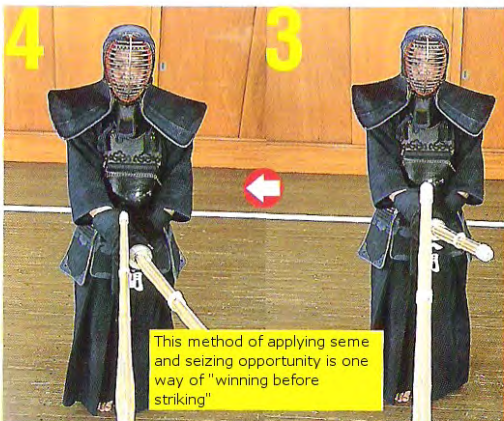
Open your opponent's shinai to the left. The moment you achieve centre, go for Men.

Attack in order to get the opponent's centre





As you push your opponent's shinai to the left, he will attempt to retake pressure in to get your opponent's centre by pushing back to the right



This method of applying seme and seizing opportunity is one way of "winning before striking"

The moment your opponent pushes your shinai back, raise your shinai above his and lower it quickly to hit kote.

剣先での攻め

## 三段のポイント

剣先を押し返してきた竹刀をかわして小手打ち



**(2) Have you become skillful in utilizing maai, and can you seize a striking opportunity?**

Your ability to respond from Issoku itto no maai, uchi ma, etc. will be questioned. Skillfully utilizing maai implies not only knowing your opponent's range, but also how to use a distance where a datotsu opportunity can be achieved. Otherwise, breaking through your opponent's defense wouldn't be possible.

The ideal maai would be the distance where the opponent feels is far away yet close enough for you. In order to realize your ideal maai, use issoku itto no maai as a reference to measure your maai. It is important to make sure your body remembers your ideal distance once you realize its range.

**(3) Is your spiritual energy higher than Shodan and Nidan levels, and can you hold tame (reactive waiting) before striking?**

*correct posture and kamae are crucial for holding tame*

Tame is when an ample amount of Ki is collected in the abdomen and explosively released with the strike once a favorable datotsu opportunity arises. Big Kakegoe (yell) is considered Kihon, however, it is important to collect your Ki in the abdomen (namely the solar plexus) as you hold kamae and move at all times. If either the posture and/or kamae are incorrect, you wouldn't be able to collect power in your abdomen, and consequently; holding tame becomes infeasible.

2

間合いの使い方がうまくなり、  
機会をとらえて打突するよ  
うになっているか

3

初段、二段よりも気力が  
充実し、溜めて打ちが  
できるようになっているか

#### (4) Can you utilize "sen" and "go"?

At Sandan level, you're expected to initiate wazas by yourself; namely "sen sen no sen" (shikake waza), "sen" (debana waza) and luring the opponent using seme "go no sen" (oji waza). Those can have any form, what's important is creating the opportunity to strike.

In the case of "Go no sen", apply seme as if you're holding a sense of sen. The opportunity to strike arises once the opponent becomes uncomfortable with your seme and recklessly launches an attack. Do not counter after the opponent attacks and always carry a sense of sen in your seme; otherwise your oji waza will not work.

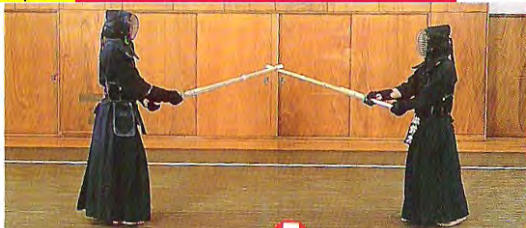
4

先と後の打突の機会が  
できているか

三段のポイント

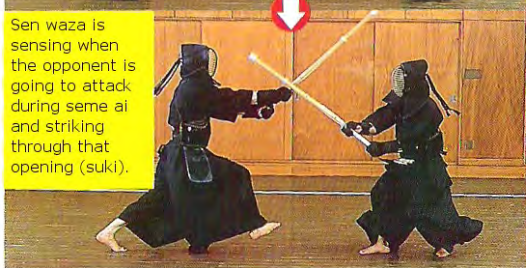
sen waza (debana waza) example

#### Debana kote



先の技(出ばな技)の例

Sen waza is sensing when the opponent is going to attack during seme ai and striking through that opening (suki).



出ばな小手

Do not lose sight of the moment your opponent initiates his movement, and hit kote while maintaining your sen.

# 1章

## 実技審査を受ける 三段のポイント

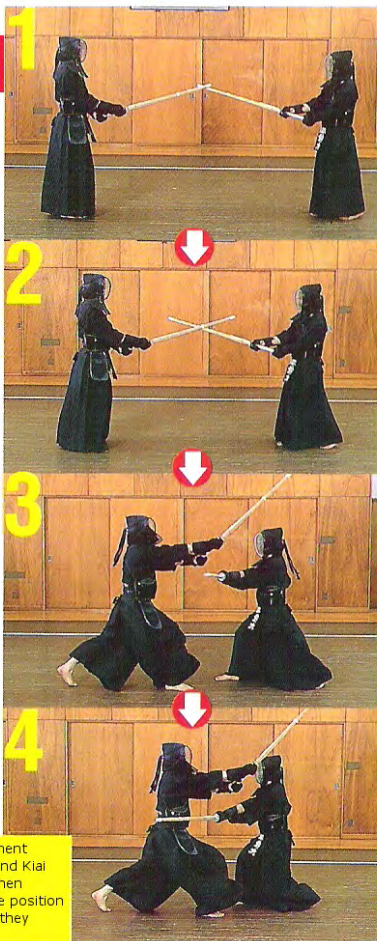
Go no sen (oji  
waza) example

### Men Nuki Do

Apply seme to your  
opponent using your  
Kensen and Kiai

Strike Do at the spot  
your opponent steps  
into to hit men while  
you evade using Tai-  
sabaki

Pressure your opponent  
using your kensen and Kiai  
until they tremble, then  
confidently strike the position  
they arrive to when they  
attack.



後の先(応じ技)の例

めん  
ぬき  
どう  
面抜き胴

## (5) Is your tokui waza (specialty waza) flowing naturally from your body?

Applying seme using your tokui (specialty) waza is one form of seme in Kendo. At Sandan level, not only should you remember a variety of wazas but you should seek developing your own tokui waza. Pressuring your opponent using your tokui waza and throwing them off balance will place you in an advantageous position during grading.

In order to discover your tokui waza, be attentive in your keiko and note the wazas that are executed well. Once found, refine its accuracy as you train. Even if your opponent is being vigilant, aim for a good datotsu using your tokui waza.

If your waza was sufficiently effective, it will shake your opponent and create openings for you; even if he anticipates your tokui waza.

5

得意技が身につけているか

三段のポイント

6

## (6) Is your hips/lower back (koshi) stable ?

腰(下半身)が安定しているか



*Shake your opponent as you pressure using your Tokui waza and aim to stand on an advantageous position*

Your lower abdomen should be more stable while striking than Nidan level.



## Yondan

## Points on executing wazas



## 審査で注目される主な点

6

5

4

3

2

1

- (1) Can you realise a datotsu opportunity and never let it slip away?  
Do you know your distance and is your Tai-sabaki is on a sufficient level?
- (2) Are you capable of expressing effective seme ai using your kensen?
- (3) Are your Tenouchi and Oji waza developed to a sufficient level?
- (4) Is your body naturally expressing Zanshin?
- (5) Is there ki ken tai ichi in your datotsu strikes?
- (6) Are you showing Kigurai and character?

**(1) Can you realise a datotsu opportunity and never let it slip away? Do you know your distance and is your Tai-sabaki is on a sufficient level?**

On Yondan level, wazas should be more refined and the amount of futile strikes should be fewer than Sandan level. For that to happen, the opportunities for a datotsu strike should be appropriately seized and at the same time, you are also expected to strike after creating your own favourable opportunities.

Furthermore, a solid grasp on Maai (distance) is crucial. A solid understanding of maai doesn't imply a sudden movement into striking distance, but rather the process of achieving an entry to striking distance. Keep an eye for sufficient Seme from issoku itto no maai and striking from your own striking distance.

1

打突の機会を知り、これを逃さない。間合いを知り、体さばきが十分できているか

四段のポイント

**Datotsu strikes from chikai maai are not appreciated**

Uchima (striking distance) is between issoku itto no maai and right before entering chikai maai. Any strike executed beyond that is considered as a strike from chikai maai (which is not appreciated). That is because chikai maai is called shi no maai (distance of death); if you extend your hands you will hit your opponent and vice versa.

A proper datotsu strike should come from the lower body, especially from the hips/lower back. For that purpose striking from issoku itto no maai is important.

In regards to the desired Tai-sabaki at Yondan level, you should be able to move freely by utilizing Ashi and Tai sabaki as your opponent initiates an attack. For example, moving your body through Hiraki ashi as you apply an oji waza, or smoothly responding to an opponent's attack, etc.

**(2) Are you capable of expressing effective seme ai using your kensen?**

Applying effective seme ai using your kensen implies Ki (spirit) that could be felt from a kensen at kamae, and at all times, be able to achieve centre from the opponent. Expressions such as "power coming from the kensen" or "kensen feels alive" are used to describe such state.



2

剣先のきいた攻め合いが  
できているか

For that to happen, be conscious of your left wrist as you move in for seme and make sure your upper body is stable (unwavering posture). Try to view yourself as meddling with your opponent's centre using your left fist. Make sure you tighten your left armpit and not to sway your left fist back and forth from position.

*When applying seme through the kensen, the left fist is always positioned on the centre line.*

### (3) Are your Tenouchi and Oji waza developed to a sufficient level?

Having flexible arms and being naturally relaxed (ie: no tension) after striking are key in developing tenouchi sharpness. In order to develop sharpness in tenouchi, it is crucial that the armpits aren't lifted before or after striking datotsu. If the armpits were tight, the left fist position could be maintained and a correct datotsu would be possible.

Furthermore, Oji waza should be adequately developed, so when drawing a pressuring opponent, you can confidently seize a good striking opportunity from the target the opponent is aiming to strike.

3

手の内も冴え、応じ技も十分にこなせるようになってきているか

四段のポイント

### (4) Is your body naturally expressing Zanshin?



打突から残心までの動きを、自然に滑らかに行う

Body movement from the point of striking datotsu to assuming Zanshin has to be naturally fluid. As introduced in the Nidan points (page 51), Zanshin is the crucial motion of acquiring the opponent's sen. As such, you should practice striking datotsu and expressing Zanshin together as one fluid movement during keiko.

4

残心が自然に身についているか



**(5) Is there ki ken tai ichi in your datotsu strikes?**

The Ki in Ki Ken Tai refers to spiritual energy at its peak. Each strike should be struck with such spirit (kisei). The Ken refers to datotsu executed with the monouchi of the shinai, using the right Hasuji and the correct part of the shinai (datotsubu). Tai refers to proper Taisei (posture), were the lower half of the body is used to strike.



A solid Ki Ken Tai is established when all of these elements are expressed at the same time during every strike. When correct Zanshin is added, the conditions for yuukou datotsu become complete.

**(6) Are you showing Kigurai and character?**

*As you refine your shuugyou, your character and Kigurai will begin to show from your kamae and posture.*

When spiritual energy is at its peak and an atmosphere can be felt from your posture and kamae, your character begins to reveal Kigurai. As you cultivate your Shuugyou (martial arts study), you should be able to let beginners & those with little experience feel your calmness and spirit – from reihou to the way you execute wazas.

As you pack your Shuugyou in usual keiko, technically and spiritually speaking, Kigurai will eventually become second nature. Even if you forcefully try to display it during your grading, you cannot deceive the grading panel.

5

気剣体の一致した  
打突ができて  
いるか

6

風格、気位があるか

## Godan

### Points on executing wazas



### 審査で注目される主な点

4

3

2

1

(1) Are the wazas executed naturally and for a reason (riai) within the offensive & defensive exchange with the opponent?

(2) Are you aware of distance (maai), opportunity for a datotsu strike, and capable of executing a datotsu strike with ki ken tai ichi?

(3) Are Tai-sabaki (body movement) & Ashi-sabaki executed effortlessly with a firm zanshin?

(4) Are you standing in a leading position within the mutual offense /defense exchange (seme ai), and capable of showing an effective datotsu strike?

Simply put, a waza that matches *riai*, can be understood as a waza that conforms to the principles of Kendo. To be more specific, "at the moment the *kensen* seizes the opponent's centre after *seme*: If the opponent lowers his *kensen* or opens up, strike *men*. If the opponent raises his *kensen*, strike *kote*".

*Seme ai* at Godan level is not the attempt to hit targets obscurely, but rather what kind of *seme* was used within the process leading to hitting a *datotsu*, and whether the *datotsu* executed suits the *seme* used.

**(1) Are the wazas executed naturally and for a reason (*riai*) within the offensive & defensive exchange with the opponent?**



*As you skillfully use *maai* and not letting favorable opportunities slip away, you should execute a strike with solid *ki-ken-tai*.*

At Godan level, *maai*, *datotsu* opportunity and *ki ken tai ichi* of higher dimensionality than lower grades is required.

1

相手との攻防の中で、技が理合に合わせて自然に出せているか

五段のポイント

2

**(2) Are you aware of distance (*maai*), opportunity for a *datotsu* strike, and capable of executing a *datotsu* strike with *ki ken tai ichi*?**

間合いを知り、打突の機会を知り、気剣体一致の打突ができていますか

**(3) Are Tai-sabaki (body movement) & Ashi-sabaki executed effortlessly with a firm zanshin?**

It is necessary that Tai-sabaki and Ashi-sabaki flow naturally, and a high level movement is expressed. If Either or both Tai & Ashi sabaki are not executed correctly, the posture after a datotsu strike will collapse and a smooth zanshin couldn't be expressed.



*Tai-sabaki, Ashi-sabaki and smooth Zanshin should flow effortlessly.*

**(4) Are you standing in a leading position within the mutual offense/defense exchange (seme ai), and capable of showing an effective datotsu strike?**

It is desired that at all times, you should take sen, apply seme to your opponent and win. If done correctly, you should be in an advantageous position; and from such position be able to strike a yuukou datotsu.



*Take the opponent's sen and strike from a favorable position.*

3

体さばき、足さばきが  
無理なくでき、打突後の  
残心もしっかりとれているか

五段のポイント

4

相互の攻防(攻め合い)で  
主導的な立場に立ち、  
有効的な打突が  
表現されているか