

Soryūji
Green Dragon Temple
Green Gulch Farm Zen Center

Residential
Guidelines of Conduct



“Just sit and see what happens... Following the rules lets you find yourself... The rules are not something to restrict you, but something to support your practice.”

- Shunryu Suzuki Roshi



The basis of Zen practice and community life at Green Dragon Temple is our understanding of the Sixteen Great Bodhisattva Precepts—the Three Refuges, the Three Pure Precepts, and the Ten Essential Precepts. These Precepts are the expression of our vows and meditation practice in our work and relationships. All Green Dragon Temple residents are asked to engage in study of the Precepts. For a discussion of them, please see the document Ethical Principles of San Francisco Zen Center.

Three Refuges:

Refuge in Buddha, Refuge in Dharma, Refuge in Sangha

Three Pure Precepts:

Embracing and sustaining right conduct

Embracing and sustaining all good

Embracing and sustaining all beings

Ten Essential Precepts:

A disciple of Buddha does not kill

A disciple of Buddha does not take what is not given

A disciple of Buddha does not misuse sexuality

A disciple of Buddha does not lie

A disciple of Buddha does not intoxicate self or others

A disciple of Buddha does not slander

A disciple of Buddha does not praise self at expense of others

A disciple of Buddha is not possessive of anything

A disciple of Buddha does not harbor ill-will

A disciple of Buddha does not disparage the Three Treasures

Typical Practice Period Schedule

4:30 am	Wake-up bell
5:00	Zazen
5:40	Kinhin
5:50	Zazen
6:30	Morning Service
7:00	Soji (cleaning)
7:20	Breakfast (silent)
8:10	Class / Study Hall
9:10	Work Meeting
12:15 pm	Mid-day Service
12:30	Lunch
1:15	Work
3:00	End Work
5:15	Zazen
5:50	Evening Service
6:00	Dinner
7:30	Zazen (or class)
8:05	Kinhin
8:15	Zazen
8:50	Three Refuges
9:00	Firewatch / Lights out

Zendo Practice

Like the schedule, the guidelines for how we move and act in the zendo can help create an environment that supports our practice. When we commit to practice traditional Zen forms, we may be more likely to notice and be present with what we are doing.

General Zendo Guidelines

- Please make a commitment to completely follow the zendo (meditation hall) schedule. This means attending morning zazen at least five days a week, morning service, soji (pre-breakfast temple cleaning), lectures, and all special ceremonies. Please attend evening zazen and service as appropriate to your program and work responsibilities. Attendance at zazen and other formal practice events is one of the primary criteria for acceptance into practice period.
- If you cannot attend an event because of work or illness, write a note on the Tenken (attendance taker's) pad by the zendo entrance or tell the Ino (Head of the Meditation Hall). Due to work responsibilities, some crews will need to miss some zendo events.
- Be on time for all scheduled events: allow enough time to arrive and settle at your seat before the Doshi enters and offers incense.
- If you are not in the zendo by the end of the second round of the han, you are late. Wait until the Tenken opens the door before entering the zendo.
- Maintain quiet in and around the zendo. Do not speak in the zendo or in Cloud Hall once the han has started. Do not make eye contact with others in the zendo.
- Move quietly and slowly in the zendo. Walking, bowing, sitting, and rising from your seat should all be done silently. Muffle sounds such as coughing, sneezing, blowing the nose, yawning, and clearing the throat.

- Make sure your hands and feet are clean before entering the zendo.
- Do not place your feet on the meal boards.
- Do not leave the zendo during zazen, except for dokusan or practice discussion, or in case of an emergency.
- Handle zendo cushions carefully and do not move them with your feet.
- Place your palms together when the Doshi passes behind you for the greeting at the beginning of morning zazen.

Zendo Attire

- Wear loose fitting clothes in dark subdued colors, covering shoulders and knees for all zendo activities.
- Skirts or pants should be below the knee in length. Shirts should have sleeves over the shoulder. It may help to designate particular clothes to wear only in the zendo.
- Always wear at least one layer of clothing under your robe if you are wearing a sitting robe.
- Change in and out of robes and sitting attire in private.
- Keep robes and sitting attire clean and in good repair.
- It is traditional for priests to shave their heads. Laypeople are requested not to do so.
- Do not cover your head. Long hair should be worn up and off the neck.
- Do not wear scented lotions or perfume.
- Do not wear jewelry, watches, or malas in the zendo.
- In cold weather, neutral colored socks may be worn in the zendo, and then removed for zazen.
- White socks (or bessu or tabi) may be required for special ceremonies.

Entering the Zendo

- Remove shoes before stepping on to the wooden floor of Cloud Hall and place them on the shoe rack.

- Carry okesa, rakusu, or oryoki one at a time. Carry them at heart level outside the zendo and at eye level in the zendo using both hands.
- During the han or obonsho, enter through the doors in Cloud Hall. On Sundays at lecture, you may use the side doors. Step over the threshold with the foot closest to the hinge-side of the door. Take two steps forward and bow in gassho.
- Do not cross in front of the altar.
- Cloud Hall is the entryway to the zendo as well as a residential space. When the han begins for zazen or the obonsho bell for ceremonies, any other activity in the common area should stop. At other times the space may be used for quiet activities such as stretching or yoga, sewing or study, but not for computer use. At times the space is also used for training for zendo jobs or rehearsal for ceremonies, and it is the location for study period during practice period.
- Be in the zendo by the end of the second rolldown on the han or obonsho.
- If late, stand outside the Cloud Hall zendo doors and wait for the Tenken. If the Tenken has already entered the zendo, it is too late to enter. Sit in Cloud Hall and note that on the Tenken pad.

Kinhin

- Stay in the zendo for kinhin unless it is necessary to use the restroom. Do not make coffee or tea during kinhin. This is a time for walking meditation.
- Maintain an upright walking posture, raising and lowering your foot with your breathing. Eyes are cast down and hands in shashu.

- Walk in the same order in which you are seated. Maintain the same pace as others, spacing yourself evenly between those in front and behind.
- When the clackers are struck to end kinhin, walk quickly back to your place.
- If you leave the zendo during kinhin or are not in the zendo at the start of kinhin, return to Cloud Hall and practice kinhin there. You may re-enter the zendo after the three bells that signal zazen.
- Do not enter or leave the zendo during kinhin.

Service

- Attend service unless you have been assigned work during this time.
- If you are late, enter through the Cloud Hall door. Do three bows on the tan behind the altar before going to your place.
- Fill in the empty seats on the floor.
- If you are sitting on the front or back tans, move to the side tans filling in the empty seats on the floor first.
- “Chant with your ears,” i.e., listen to and blend in with others and to the pace set by the mokugyo.

Zendo Meals: Oryoki Practice

- Formal meals in the zendo are a part of our practice. Practice period students and those participating in one-day sittings and sesshins attend all zendo meals unless sick.
- Receive the food that is offered unless you have an allergy.
- Priests use traditional Soto Zen oryoki. Lay practitioners use three nesting bowls with white cloths. All wiping cloths are solid white. Setsus are wood with cloth tips.
- After the Buddha tray has been offered it is too late to enter the zendo.
- Use oryoki bowls and utensils quietly.

- Keep oryoki and cloths clean and change setsu tip, as necessary.
- After serving in the zendo, attend servers' meal. During one-day sittings and sesshins, these meals are formal, otherwise they are informal.

Soji Practice

Temple cleaning takes place each morning directly after service. Assignments are given out by the Guest Student Manager in Cloud Hall. All residents are requested to participate in temple cleaning. Some crew members have crew-related soji assignments. Stop soji when you hear the sound of the han.

Temple Jobs

All residents participate in maintaining the temple by performing a temple job. These include Jisha and Anja (attendants for Senior Dharma Teachers) or zendo related jobs. Training for and assignment of temple jobs (Tenken, Doan, Kokyo, Shoten, Chiden, meal server) are given by the Ino.

Dokusan & Practice Discussion

- Formal and informal interviews (practice discussion) with practice leaders are central to our life at Green Dragon Temple. Practice leaders are senior residents who have been head monk (Shuso) during a practice period. Meetings with the Abbot, Senior Dharma Teachers, Godo, and Tanto are available to all residents by appointment.
- The Abbot, and Senior Dharma Teachers are available for dokusan. Practice leaders are available for practice discussion. A list of practice leaders is posted on the bulletin boards in Cloud Hall and outside the dining room.

Students at Green Dragon Temple should feel that they can carefully explore the Dharma and “study the self” in an atmosphere of trust. San Francisco Zen Center teachers and practice leaders will not disclose information they receive in dokusan or practice discussion when confidentiality is requested and agreed to, unless serious harm may result to individuals or to the Sangha if the information is not disclosed. Even when there is no specific request for confidentiality, such information will not be shared casually by the people involved in the conversation. In the collaborative teaching process at San Francisco Zen Center, however, consultation among teachers regarding matters that are not strictly confidential may be appropriate. All those who engage in such consultations make every effort to ensure it is done in a sensitive, compassionate, fair, and respectful manner.

Kitchen Practice

- It is our practice to accept the food offered by the kitchen. If you have special dietary needs or need to use the kitchen, speak with the Tenzo (Head Cook) to make arrangements. Do not take food from any storage areas without permission from the Tenzo.
- Wash your hands before serving or handling any food, or doing any kitchen work.
- Between meals, fruit, bread, etc., are available in the snack area, as well as leftovers and items designated by the Tenzo.
- Please eat in the dining room, the small dining room (when available), or on the deck. Do not eat in the kitchen, the student lounge, the library, or conference venues.
- If you don't have a kitchen or a kitchenette to clean dishes, please do not eat in your room.
- Sit down while eating or drinking. Please do not eat while standing or walking.

- Usually breakfast is silent, and lunch and dinner are silent for the first ten or fifteen minutes. There is a table in the dining room designated as a silent meal table.

Work Practice

- Be ready for work by the second roll-down of the work meeting and go directly to the work meeting.
- At work meeting, work and practice related announcements will be made by appropriate members of senior staff and those designated by them. If you have concerns about what others may be doing, please discuss your concern with the appropriate staff member and, if an announcement is appropriate, that person will make it. Please limit your announcements to personal requests such as errands, rides, job trades, and so on, or activities for which you may be directly responsible, such as movie night.
- Attend morning work meeting dressed for work and ready to go to work directly afterwards. Wear clothing and footwear appropriate for the work crew to which you are assigned. Farm, garden, grounds, and kitchen all require sturdy, closed-toe shoes.
- Practice silence during work time except for work-related speech.
- Do not bring food or drinks to work meeting.
- Always clean and return tools and equipment at the end of work.
- Do personal work during free time.
- There is a 15-minute break in the morning during which crew members may have a snack.

Illness Practice

- When sick, after washing your hands, you may get your own food, and eat silently in the dining room. If you need food, hot water, or other help, inform the Ino. If you are

running a fever, or coughing and sniffing, ask someone to serve you rather than touching serving utensils.

- Wash hands frequently.
- Begin with a zendo or dharma event when returning to the schedule, rather than work.
- Inform the Director immediately of any serious injury.

Relationship Practice

In order to support new students in finding their practice without the distractions and complications of forming new sexual or romantic relationships, Green Dragon Temple has the following guidelines. Not following these guidelines may result in being asked to leave and/or not being accepted to Practice Period:

- Refrain from beginning a new sexual relationship, at any time, in which either person has not practiced at Green Gulch for at least six months, or in which either person is under 18 years of age. This includes refraining from expressing your romantic or sexual interest to that person.
- Zen Center recognizes that harm and confusion can result from relationships which entail power inequalities. Consultation with, and in some cases approval from, leadership is required when people of unequal authority or seniority, or who are in a supervisory work or practice relationship, consider engaging in a romantic or sexual relationship. For more details and guidance related to sexual conduct, please refer to the discussion under the third precept of the *Ethical Principles Statement of SFZC*.
- If you are part of a couple, please maintain behavior that supports a calm, mindful environment. Do not isolate yourself from the community, respect silent times, and be sensitive about public displays of affection.
- Do not engage in non-committed or casual sexual relations.

- Be aware of how sexual energy is communicated through speech and nonverbally through touch, eye contact, body language, and attitude.
- Having followed these guidelines, those considering starting a new relationship are asked to see a practice leader for help in reconciling the often conflicting demands of a new relationship and the Green Dragon Temple practice schedule and to consider the impact of the new relationship on the community.
- Please talk with a practice leader if you are challenged or preoccupied with this guideline. Those not able to follow this guideline may be asked to leave.

General Community Practices

Safety

- Due to great fire danger, candles and incense are not permitted in communal housing.
- Notice the location of fire extinguishers, so that you may locate them quickly if necessary.
- The use of tobacco is discouraged. Smoking inside buildings or the garden or farm is prohibited. Smoking is allowed in the outer parking lot. Be aware of fire danger.
- Possession or use of alcohol or illegal or other inappropriate drugs is not permitted. Their use or possession is grounds for being asked to leave.
- Before going on a hike, notify someone regarding the trail and expected return time. Do not go on unfamiliar trails alone.

Student Housing

- Cloud Hall is a practice space. Conversations at all times should be quiet. Please be aware that sound carries quite easily from one room to another.

- Silent time begins with the start of the evening han (7:15 or 7:30 pm) during practice periods and at 9:00 pm otherwise. It lasts through breakfast the following morning, except on days without morning zazen.
- Rooms are provided with basic furnishings. Please do not move furniture to another room. Please do not hang anything outside your room. Check with the Guest Student Manager before making any changes in the physical space, including hanging pictures on the wall.
- Keep your room clean.
- Storage space at Green Dragon Temple is limited and is available for staff only. Take all your belongings with you when you leave. Green Dragon Temple is not responsible for anything left in storage.
- When leaving or moving to another room at Green Dragon Temple, thoroughly clean your room for the next person.

Other

- Apprentices should plan to stay at Green Dragon Temple during the first month of your apprenticeship. If a medical or personal emergency arises, speak to the Tanto and the Director for permission to leave and for help in travel arrangements. Inform the Ino if leaving.
- Bow, when possible, when passing other residents on the path.
- Do not run in the central area.
- Do not run or ride bicycles in the central area.
- Please do not park bicycles on walking paths.
- Do not call to others from a distance.
- Turn off all lights and heaters when you are the last to leave a room.
- Please do not use electronic media devices – with or without headphones – in central, public areas, including the garden and the common area of Cloud Hall.

- Musical instruments may not be played in Cloud Hall, Stillwater Hall, or in the central area of Green Dragon Temple, except at designated times and places. Please speak with the Director for more information.
- Computers may be used in the library and new student lounge. Please do not use laptops in other public spaces such as either the large or small dining rooms, garden, zendo deck, main lawn and common area of Cloud Hall.
- Please respect the library and other common and shared spaces by removing all of your personal items when you leave the area.
- When using the telephone or other phone devices, please use an office, phone booth, or private area where others will not hear.
- Do not bring food or drinks to the library, or to dharma events or classes.
- Do not bring personal pets to Green Dragon Temple.

If you have questions about, or difficulties with any of these practice guidelines, please speak with a practice leader.



“The assembly of practitioners in the hall should blend like milk and water to support the activity of the Way. Although now for some period you are guest and host, later you will be Buddha Ancestors equally throughout time. Therefore, you should not forget the feeling of gratitude. It is rare to meet one another and to practice what is rare to practice. This is called the body and mind of Buddha-Dharma.”

- Eihei Dogen Zenji

2023