

ZENDO CONDUCT

- Wear loose fitting clothes in dark, subdued colors and of quiet fabric (different kinds of nylon and zippers or metal attachments can be noisy).
- Long hair should be tied up, off the neck. Hats and other head coverings are not worn in the zendo.
- Remove your shoes and place them on the shoe rack.
- Move quietly and slowly in and around the zendo.
- Handle small and large cushions carefully and quietly with your hands. Do not move them with your feet. Treat all objects with respect.
- During the regular schedule, come to the zendo at the start of the han, 15 minutes before the posted start of Zazen. Wait for direction in where to sit.
- During one-day sittings and sesshin, come to the zendo at two hits on the densho bell (“First Bell” on the posted schedule). Do not try to enter after the “Second Bell” (a single hit on the densho bell), but wait by the shoe rack until after the doshi completes the morning greeting. If you are later than this, sit in the gaitan (hallway) for the period.
- Approach and enter the zendo with hands in shashu (folded over one another at chest height, arms straight, elbow to elbow); take two steps forward and bow with hands in gassho (palms together). Return hands to shashu and walk to your place. Bow toward your cushion, then turn clockwise and bow to the rest of the room. Bow when the person arriving next to you bows to their cushion.
- Keep your feet off of the meal boards (the 8” area along the front of the seating platforms).
- In the morning, after you are seated, the priest opening the period of zazen (the morning doshi) will walk around the entire zendo doing a morning greeting. Please raise your hands in gassho as the doshi approaches, and lower them after he or she has passed you by.
- When the Doshi and attendant pass you in the hallway, it is considered a procession. Please bow when they pass.
- Unless it’s an emergency, don’t leave the zendo during a period of zazen.
- Before leaving the zendo, place your cushion in the center of the mat, and bow to and away from the cushion in gassho.
- After the clappers are struck to begin kinhin (walking meditation), you may leave to use the toilet if necessary. As kinhin starts, move forward to spread out the circle of people evenly. When the clappers are struck to end kinhin, walk quickly back to your seat.
- If kinhin has begun, do not enter the zendo. Do kinhin in the gaitan (hallway) and enter after the 3 bells ending kinhin/beginning zazen. If you sat the previous period of zazen in the gaitan, enter the zendo when the clappers are struck to begin kinhin, and do kinhin in the zendo.
- Handle sutra books with respect, and don’t bend back their covers. Hold them at chest level with both hands while chanting.