

# The 17 basic techniques

o d i k i A i k i j i k i z o i

Aleksey Shchepikhin

**HANDBOOK SUPPLIED**  
WITH SCHEMES AND COMMENTS



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## About the Author

Aleksey Shchepikhin, the director of Kursk regional sport organization «The Way to Harmony», is one of the chairmen of Russian aikido association (RAA) and wields the 3<sup>d</sup> dan of Japanese aikido association (JAA).

After years of training under the guidance of Igor Dmitriev he got the first prize in the First International Tomiki Aikido Festival in Moscow in “tanto randori” contest (2000). The same year became the starting point in his coach's career as well he began running his own Tomiki aikido school in Kursk State Medical University.

The year of 2004 was marked by the author's visit to Japan where he took master-classes from Uno Kenshi (7<sup>th</sup> dan) and other masters.

In 2005 his students (17 adults and 8 children) successfully passed the 1<sup>st</sup> dan examination.

Alongside with the sport activity Aleksey Shchepikhin also works as an anesthesiologist in one of the town's hospitals.

# Preface

«To live lead by aikido means to be happy and have many friends...»

These are the words that I heard from the shihan of Japanese aikido association Uno Kenshi (7<sup>th</sup> dan).

In that very moment he hardly resembled a proud and invincible warrior, more likely the opposite: he looked like a genial caring host welcoming his most desired guests. Then I failed to grasp the secret message of the master.

He acquainted us with his dearest people: his wife and children and grandchildren telling us about all their merits and triumphs as if we had known them for ages. We came to see those people for the first time but all the same their sincere smiles left none of us indifferent. They were interested in our daily life, our work, studies and leisure. There was not even a hint of any special etiquette or ceremonious bearing.

When in dojo which was looking more like a huge shrine our teachers were strict and demanding. But the trainings over they turned into close reliable friends by all means willing to do everything possible for us to have a good time.

Such abrupt changes in the behaviour lead me into thinking about the real nature of the master. Was he real while training or at home? Which one was the mask? The teacher solved the puzzle himself. He said:

«Aikido is usual life. What one needs is to be sincere with himself and others every single moment.

If you fight then you are a warrior and must bear yourself accordingly.

If you are having fun then let the glee fill you and give no heed to troubles.

If you are crying, don't be ashamed of it and let your feelings burst out.

To be who you really are is to master the sacred essence of Aikido».

Gradually I come to realize the teaching of the master: the more natural one is the closer he is to the sacrament. Remember the words from the bible: «Be like small children for it belongs to them, the kingdom of heaven...» I do believe that in aikido's respect that means to be yourself and exclude any hypocrisy. However one should not interpret it as yielding to your weaknesses and getting used to your flaws. We all must struggle to become better. Aikido is one of the ways of improving yourself. Results are reached by means of physical and mental exercises, employing every moment of life.

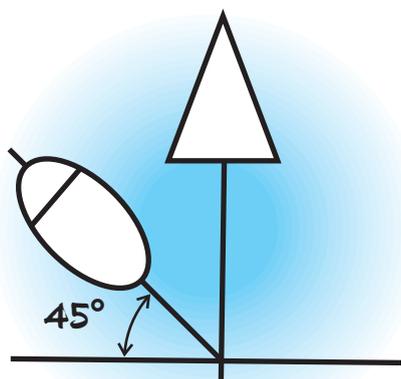
## Instructions of handbook use

Dear reader, this book is aimed to give instructions to practitioners of all ages, both children and adults. It is designed so that without any outer help even a pre-school child could study the basic 17 techniques which constitute the foundation of emulative aikido. Dwelling upon my many years coach activity I have tried to involve the most effective and simple methods of explaining the material.

- ⇒ Firstly, all the wazas are overviewed from the minimum of two perspectives (view A and view B) so that no detail could escape the attention.
- ⇒ Secondly, the starting point of every explanation (point A) is that of your standing behind the coach and being able to mimic him as a shadow.
- ⇒ Thirdly, details of special difficulty (grips and holds) are viewed more closely enabling to catch all the nuances of the techniques.
- ⇒ Finally, every technique is accompanied by a scheme of footwork, every step being commented.

To ease the perception of the material let's agree on some points:

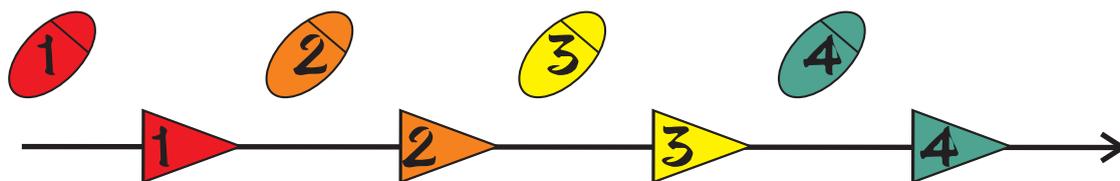
① all the techniques start from the right stance (the right foot is the leading one). Let's call it *zero position*. Its peculiarities are as follows:



The right foot (denoted as a triangle) watches forward.

The left foot (an oval) watches 45° left.

2. All steps are numbered and marked by different colours.



Step 1 is red, Step 2 - orange, Step 3 - yellow, Step 4 - green, Step 5 - blue

(for the convenience of use just remember the colours of the rainbow).

3. The solid arrows show the way of the leading foot (the one stepping first)

### **ATTENTION!**

One foot moving, the other always follows it (no «broad» kamae).

4. The dashed lines show the direction of your impact.

5. The given photos are numbered in accordance with the footwork schemes: *zero position* - 0, *Step 1* - 1, *Step 2* - 2, *final position* - F.P.

The success in studying the techniques totally depends on you. Be you an adult or a kid, the only thing that does matter is your desire to master them.

Bright impressions leave an imprint on us. So let this book be one of them.

Train with pleasure as aikido is the smile of your soul!

Aleksey Shchepikhin  
(director of Kursk sport organization  
«The Way to Harmony», 3d dan JAA)

# THE SACRED SECRET OF AIKIDO TECHNIQUES

Every aikido waza has its own secret. Not knowing it you will fail to apply the technique. Such secrets were carefully kept for the unworthy not to know them. Subtleties of certain techniques were passed from master to student in case of absolute mutual trust. The one who wielded the arcane knowledge had supernatural powers...

Nowadays the approach to teaching aikido has been revolutionized. Many secrets turned into common knowledge. Nevertheless the sacred mysteries still belong to the selected few.

But can an «ordinary» man be let in? The answer is surprisingly simple:

«If you keep rapping at the door they may once let you in...»

In other words, those who cravingly search will be granted a find. God helps them who help themselves and encourages persistence (it is true not only about aikido).

I had been emaciating my whole self with trainings for many years before I got the chance to visit Japan and train with the direct descendants of the founder of the style. There I had the luck to come to possess some of the secrets of that infinite ocean of unknown called aikido. Here are some of them;

1. Balance loss point (Sato point, see the following page for detailed treatment);
2. Every technique resembles a sword cut (you grip the hand as if it were a sword hilt; the movements of your arms while striking or thrusting are that of swordsmanship; moreover your arm is as firm and «unbendable» as a samurai sword); while gripping, your thumb and pointing finger are loose;
3. The ultimate purpose of aikido is not the fight but happiness.

## SATO POINT

### /BALANCE LOSS POINT/

To spot Sato point is very easy: a person is stable when his centre of gravity is between his feet, then

«SATO» POINT IS THE CENTRE OF GRAVITY OF A PERSON WHO HAS LOST BALANCE.

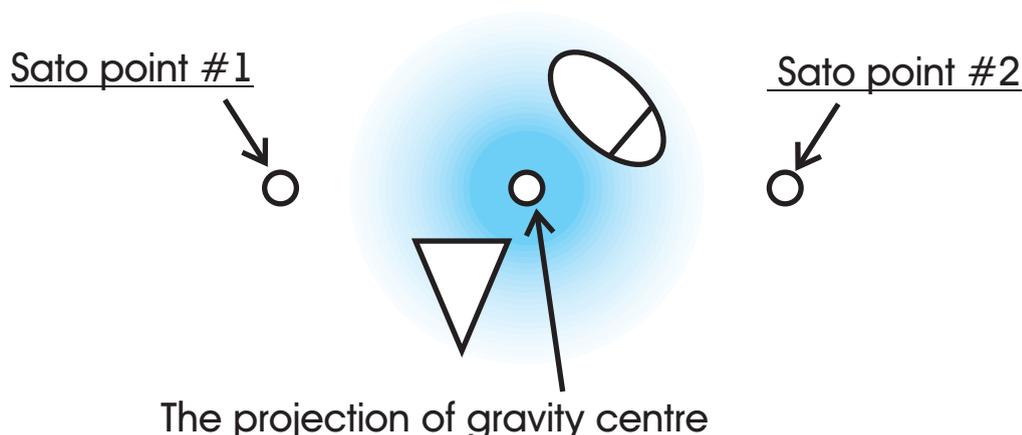
It is really hard to make a person lose balance if he does not want to lose it.

However there are methods of getting the opponent out of balance:

1. Make a step off the line of his attack gripping him by the wrist and pulling him at once. He will start making some hasty steps to follow you and will lose balance for a moment.
2. Having gripped his wrist make a sudden squat with your back straight. He will bend thus losing balance.
3. If the opponent is pressing forward, suddenly make a way for him. Meeting no obstacles he is sure to lose balance.
4. Follow a retreating opponent and give him a push.

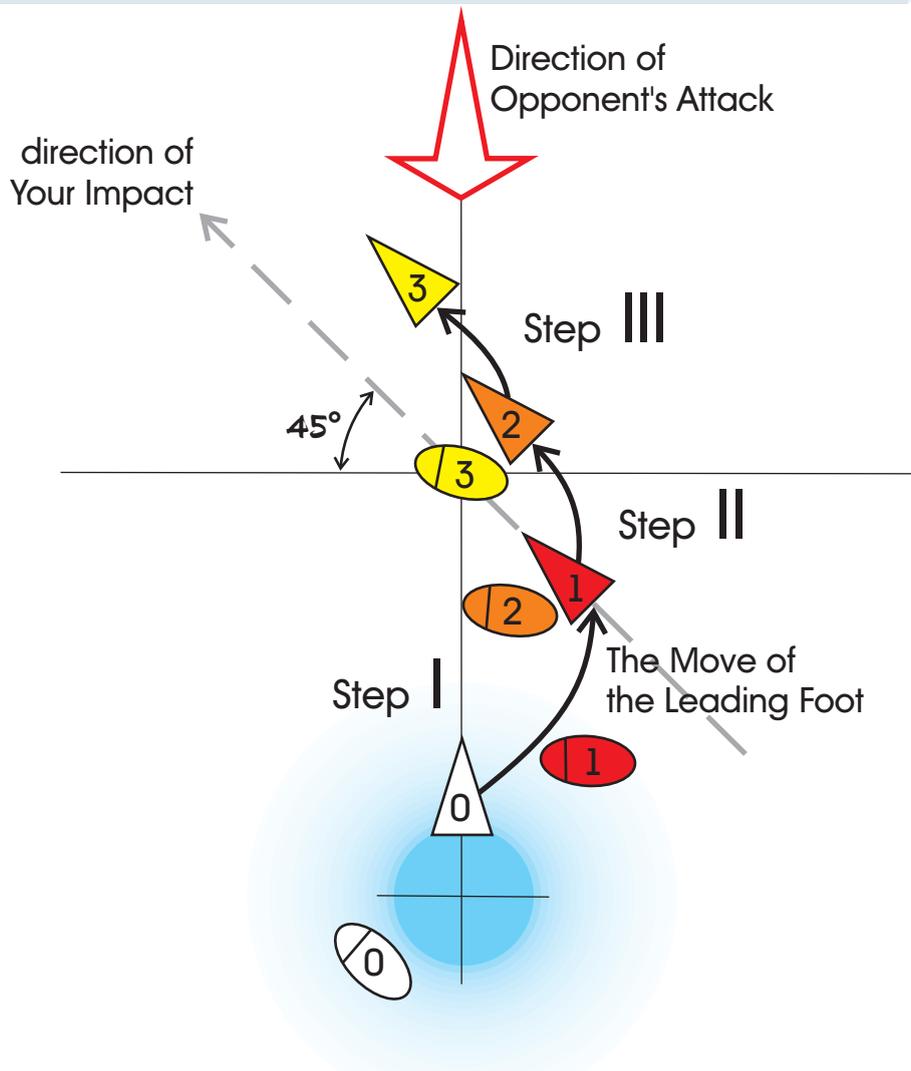
There are other ways you can invent yourself being aware of the main principle:

THE OPPONENT MUST  
SUDDENLY  
LOSE BALANCE



# Technique #1

## SHOMEN ATE



**Step 1** The right foot treads forward and to the right (tai sabaki). The right hand wards off the tanto hand, the left grips the same hand by the wrist.

**Step 2** The right foot treads  $45^\circ$  left the direction of opponent's attack, between his feet. The right hand pushes upward in the chin with the palm. The left hand holds the opponent's wrist not letting him fall.

**Step 3** The right foot makes another step in the same direction. The right hand continues pushing in the chin, the left hand lets the opponent go and he falls on his back.

### ATTENTION!

The second foot (here the left one) always follows the leading one. Further it will not be mentioned but still implied.

The final position (F.P.) is the right foot stance, arms stretched toward the opponent (F.P. is hold for 2 seconds after making any technique).