



THINGS THAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT YOUR BELT

Because the belt plays such a significant role as the icon of our system of rewards it is not surprising that there is an etiquette surrounding its use and presentation.

When the belt is worn it is a symbol of what we have achieved and who we are in the hierachial order. Not surprisingly it draws peoples attention to us and as such, places an onus on the way we present ourselves and the belt itself.

When people look at us, both in the Dojo and in our working lives, they judge us, firstly on the way that we present ourselves and then, if we meet with their standards, on the way we express ourselves. Consequently the belt needs to be tied correctly, because a laxness here may be interpreted as a laxness in character and this may give people the wrong impression. This seems a pretty obvious statement but I have personally seen students, attaining brown belt, tie the knot incorrectly. Although this makes them look sloppy it is more a direct statement about their teachers standards. For the whole time that they have been training to date nobody has taken the time to correct the fault and the student hasn't been trained to notice the difference. So the first thing to deal with here is the way that the belt should look when tied.

The knot we use should be tied in the following fashion.

Take the belt and halve its length. Holding the centre fold place the crease in the centre of your abdomen and take the two ends separately around to the back. Cross them over and then bring them back to the front. Keep the belt taut as you extend the two ends out in front of you. The left end should extend a few centimeters longer than the right. Pass the left length over the right and then slip the end underneath both strands in between the belt and your gi. Pull the knot tight. The right length should now be a few centimetres longer than the left. Take the right length over the left and tie a simple knot by pulling the end through the loop and continuing on towards the left side. Make sure that the folds of the belt fall neatly as you pull the knot tight. You should now have a knot with two folds that enter in towards each other and the ends should be exactly the same length.

Crossing the belt again in front emphasises the fact that what goes on behind ones back can go on under our nose as well, and that we must be prepared for adversity wherever it comes from. Bringing one end of the belt up under the waist and the other down serves to remind the student of the only two directions in which we can travel and the importance of continuing on and upwards in an effort to improve ourselves.

Everytime we tighten the knot we should be reminded of how important it is to tighten our resolve. Finally, we should make sure that the ends of the belt are perfectly even. We should pay attention to the details at the finish of all things.

NOW THAT THE BELT IS TIED CORRECTLY LETS LOOK AT SOME OF THE ETIQUETTE INVOLVED

If your belt becomes untied then you should and must attend to this as soon as is practicable. To do this you put your left leg forward and put your right knee to the floor. Adjust yourself and then stand. The act of kneeling is the students recognition that they are ill presented and as such they should humble themselves until they rectify their appearance.

When you first achieve Brown belt and then again at Black belt, there is a tradition that we wear the belt for twenty four hours. Regardless of what we do - sleep, shower, work or play, the belt must stay around your waist. The reason for this is to remind you of your achievement and the work that went into it, but more importantly this belt and everything that it represents is now a part of you.

You should never leave your belt lying around. This is a symbol of your achievements and if you are so indifferent about those achievements that you don't take care of your belt then why should anybody else care about your belt or your achievements. You can see here that the desire to strive for higher belts might break down if there is nothing special about getting them. It might be that you are fiercely proud of your belt. If you leave it lying around and somebody comes along and moves it, or picks it up to look at it, then you might become upset. Don't blame them if you left the belt lying around in the first place.

KARA	空	EMPTY
TE	手	HAND
DO	道	WAY
CHE	赤	RED
AHLOONG	龍	DRAGON
PEI	流	SYSTEM