

Safety Rules for Accident Prevention

Absolute Rules

- 1) Shooting must never be performed without permission of the instructor.
- 2) Never draw the bow when you see someone in the Yamichi or anywhere beyond the tip of your arrow.
- 3) Even without an arrow nocked on, never open the bow towards people.

Safety Precautions inside the Dojo

- Before doing Yatori, display the red flag, inform the Shajo vocally of your entering the Yamichi and make sure that you have heard the response "Dozo" before actually stepping into the Yamichi.
- Beginners should perform shooting at positions which are closest to the centre of the Shajo.
- The distance between archers should be 1.8 metre.
- Makiwara Training:
 - a. The distance to the Makiwara should be 2 metres.
 - b. The distance between multiple Makiwara should be a minimum of 1.6 metre.
 - c. A wall should be made behind the Makiwara to stop stray arrows and prevent them from bouncing back.
 - d. Overused Makiwara should not be used. (There is a risk that the arrow may bounce back.)
If in doubt, advice should be sought from the instructor.
 - e. When waiting for your turn, stay at 2 metres or more behind the person who is using the Makiwara.

Equipment Check

- Do not use an arrow with a damaged shaft or with a Hagi-ito that is unravelling.
- Do not use an arrow that is warped.
- The arrow should be 15 cm longer than one's draw length.
- Never use a Makiwara-ya for target shooting.
- The standard brace height for a Yumi is 15 cm. Do not set the brace height too low.
- One should choose a bow strength that is suitable for him or her. Advice should be sought from the instructor.

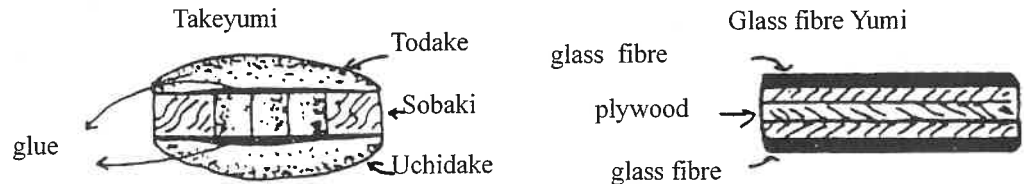
Clothing

- During practice, kyudogi should be worn as a rule.
- If practice has to be done in every day clothes, choose something that will not catch the string.
E.g.: A T-shirt with no chest pocket or any buttons.
- People with long hair should wear it in a way that will not interfere with the string.
E.g.: Keep long fringes out of the way of the string, secure the hair using hair pins, wrap a Hachimaki around your head, etc.

Kyudo Equipment Care

The minimum equipment necessary for Kyudo comprises the Yumi, Ya, Tsuru and Yugake (or Kake).

- ① *Yumi* ⇒ As the *Yumi* is strung by reversing its natural curve to increase the mechanical stress and launch the *Ya* with maximum power, poor care of the *Yumi* may lead to irreversible damage. The structure of *Takeyumi* (bamboo *Yumi*), which are made of wood and bamboo glued together, and glass fibre *Yumi* is shown in the diagrams below.



Yumi are sensitive to moisture, especially when the temperature is high. Therefore, in Japan, special care should be taken during the rainy season that the *Yumi* is not exposed to humidity, and moisture be removed by wiping the *Yumi* with a dry piece of cloth. (Rubbing the *Yumi* down with oil is also a good way to prevent it from absorbing moisture.) *Vegetable oil should be used.

Additional Explanation

- 1) The length of the *Yumi* is proportional to the size of the body, but nowadays the *Namihoko* with a standard size of 2.21 m (7 *shaku* 3 *sun*) is used by most people. (Taller people over 1.6 m use a *Yumi* which is called *Nisun-nobi* and is 2.27 m (7 *shaku* 5 *sun*) long.)

- ② *Ya* ⇒ A *Ya* is made of one stalk of bamboo and three feathers.

The *Ya* which are used nowadays are either traditional *Takeya* (bamboo *Ya*) or metal *Ya* (made of aluminium). (More recently, there are also arrows made of glass fibres or carbon fibres.)

Like *Takeyumi*, *Takeya* are sensitive to moisture and should be rubbed thoroughly until hot with a dry piece of cloth to prevent moisture from setting in.

(As for the *Yumi*, oil may be used as a sealer.)

(*Ya* can withstand strong longitudinal stress but get easily damaged by radial stress, so care must be taken while rubbing them.)

It is preferable to use *Ya* that are on the longer side for safety.

Additional Explanation

- 1) *Ya* are divided in two types: *Haya* and *Otoya*. One *Haya* and one *Otoya* are used together as a pair called *Hitote*. *Yotsuya* refers to two pairs of arrows (*Hitote*) used together. When nocking the *Hazu* on the *Tsuru*, *Hashiriba* must be on top.
- 2) For the Japanese terms above, refer to the « *Kyudo Equipment Terms* » section.

- ③ *Tsuru* ⇒ *Tsuru* can be divided in *Asazuru*, the traditional type made of hemp fibres, and synthetic (Kevlar) *Tsuru*, the use of which is more recent. Traditional *Asazuru* are made of thin strands of hemp fibres spliced and twisted together. The *Tsuru* are then filled with *Kusune* to make them stronger, this is why they are slightly sticky.

Synthetic *Tsuru* are made of long synthetic threads twisted together. They are then strengthened with adhesive resin (similar to *Kusune*).

Asazuru become fluffy and prone to beaking as they dry. Therefore, they should be rubbed with *Waraji (Magusune)* each time the *Yumi* is strung.

Use energetic downward motions when rubbing the *Tsuru* with *Magusune* so as to keep with the direction of the twist. The *Nakajikake* also should be wrapped in the same direction as the twist of the *Tsuru*.

Additional Explanation

Kusune : Pine sap mixed with oil and boiled gently to a soft consistency.

It is applied on *Asazuru* to reinforce them. (This is not necessary on synthetic *Tsuru*.)

Magusune (generally called *Waraji*) : used to add *Kusune* to the *Asazuru*. Heated by the friction with the string, the *Kusune* melts and fills in the *Tsuru*. (Do not use it on synthetic *Tsuru*, it is counterproductive: the *Tsuru* will get fluffy.)

Nakajikake (usually called *Shikake*) : a string serving used to locate the nocking point and protect the string from wear. It can be made with strands of fibres taken from broken *Tsuru*.

- ④ *Yugake* ⇒ *Yugake* are made of soft deer hide and are most sensitive to moisture.

If a *Yugake* is worn directly on the skin and absorbs sweat, or if it is accidentally put in contact with water, it will become hard and unusable. Therefore, a *Shitagake* should always be worn under the *Yugake*. Moreover, in wet weather, the *Yugake* naturally absorbs moisture from the air and should be set to dry. (Warning: do not dry under sunlight or use heat.) Dry the *Yugake* in airy shade. Be careful that the *Tsurumakura* does not lose its shape. For proper friction with *Giriko*, the *Bôshi* must be kept dry and care should be taken that the middle finger or the ring finger which is placed on top does not become sticky with sweat.

Additional Explanation

Shitagake : a cotton cloth worn under the *Yugake* to absorb sweat (usually white).

Tsurumakura : the place where the *Tsuru* is hooked on the *Yugake*.

Bôshi : the hard part of the thumb of the *Yugake*.

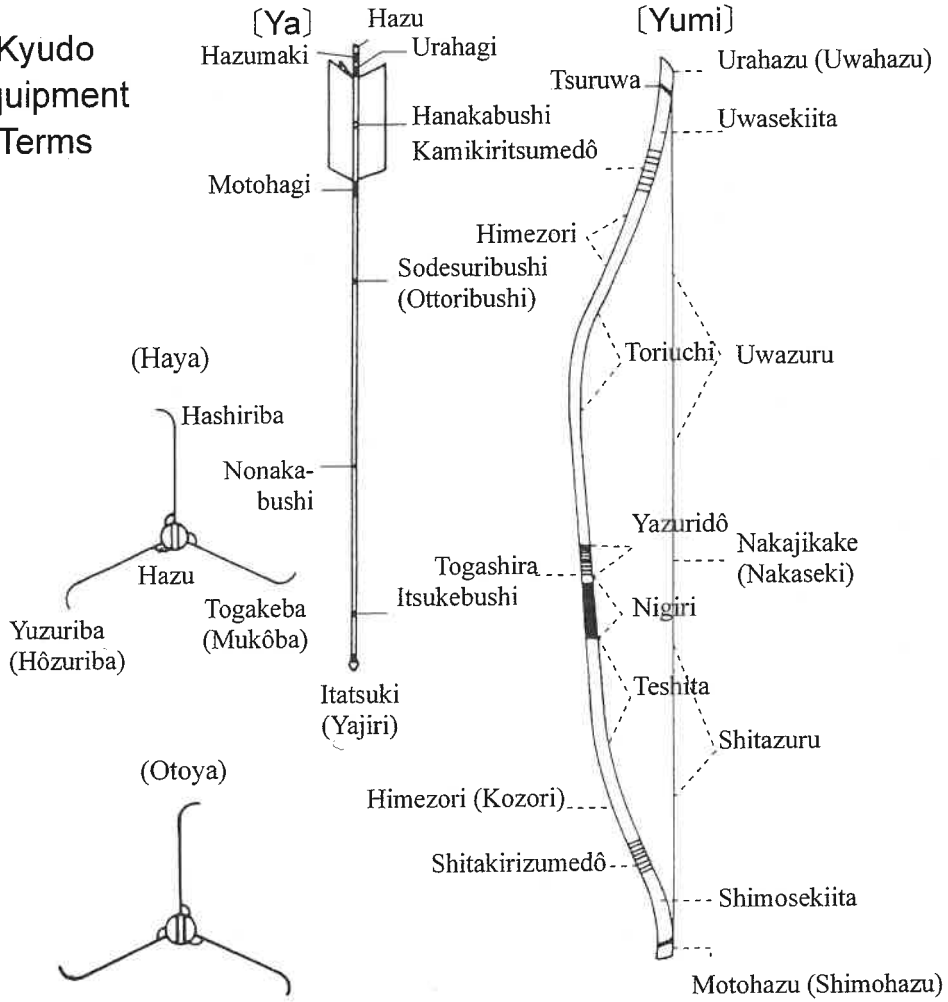
Giriko : a non-slip powder made from pine sap boiled down until almost all the oil has evaporated.

Additional Explanation

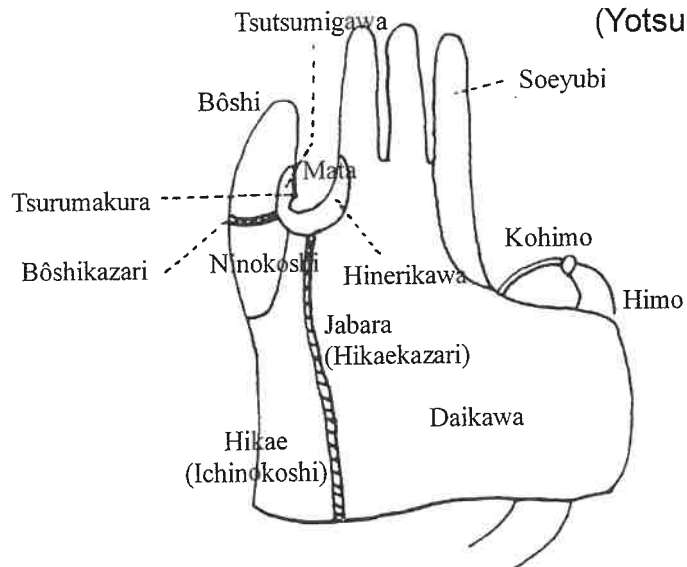
1) The usual types of *Yugake* are *Mitsugake*, *Yotsugake* and *Morogake*.

Beginners may use a special type of *Yugake* called *Yawaraka-Bôshi* ("soft *Bôshi*").

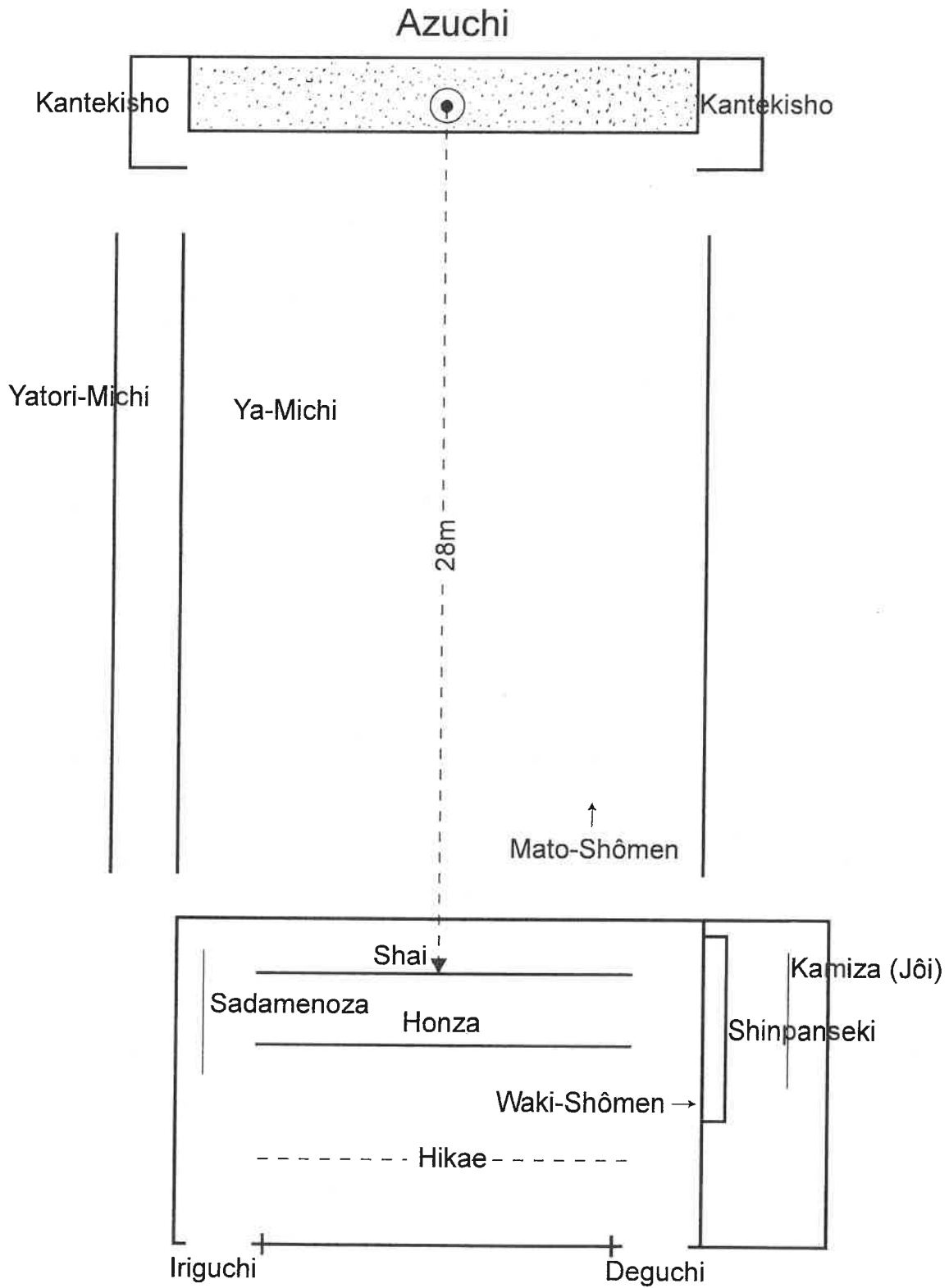
Kyudo
Equipment
Terms



[Yugake]
(Yotsugake)



Terms for the Parts of the Kyudojo



Rules regarding the movements in Shōmen Uchiokoshi and Shamen Uchiokoshi

- Shōmen Uchiokoshi: may use either Reishakei or Bushakei method.
- Shamen Uchiokoshi: only Bushakei method should be used.

	Reishakei	Bushakei
Holding the Ya	Hold the Itsukebushi	Hold by hiding the Itastsuki
Yatsugae	Push the Ya in one motion	Push the Ya in two motions
Carrying Otoyā (during Yatsugae)	Between the ring and small fingers	Between middle and ring fingers
Ashibumi	Open in one step	Open in two steps
Closing Ashibumi	Close in one step	Close in two steps

(From "Kyurei Kyūhō Mondōshū", ANKF, p.18)

N. B.: Consistency is required in the method chosen.

Kihon no Dōsa (8 movements)

It is fundamental that all movements be coordinated with the breathing (and start on an inhalation).

1. Standing Up

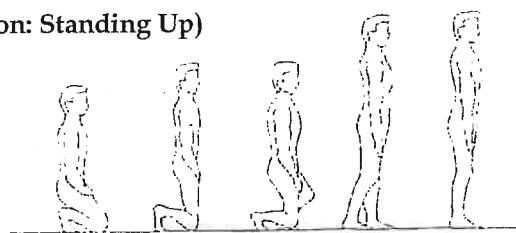
Care must be taken not to collapse the fundamental posture.

When sitting in Seiza, first move to Kiza posture and stand up as shown on the illustration below.

2. Sitting Down

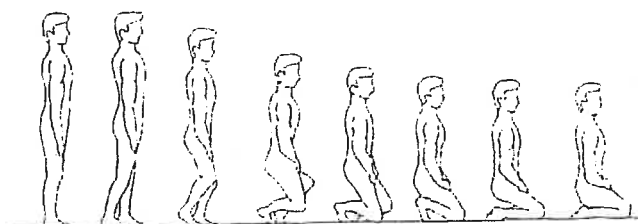
Sit down in Kiza first and move to Seiza posture.

(Illustration: Standing Up)



Kiza

(Illustration: Sitting Down)

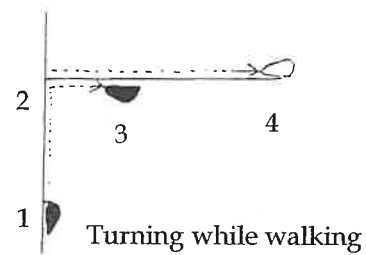


Kiza

Seiza

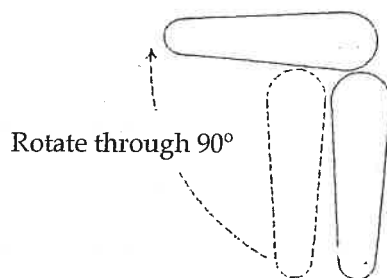
5. Turning While Walking

When you make a right turn, step firmly with the left foot, use the left heel as a fulcrum and move the right foot through an L-shaped turn. While turning, the right foot should brush the left heel.

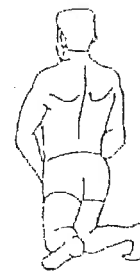


6. Turning in the Kneeling Position (Hirakiashi)

From the Kiza posture, bring the hips forward with the body raised vertically onto the knees, and turn as shown in the diagram by rotating the hips. While turning, the lowering of the hips and the closing of the feet should be done in one motion and be completed at the same time.



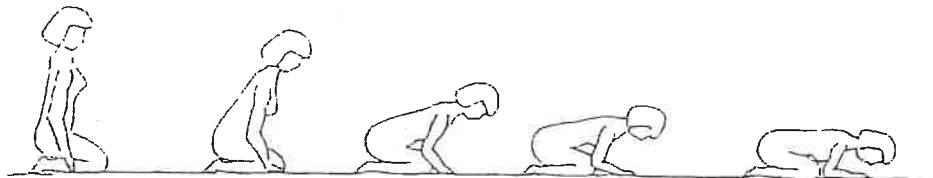
Hirakiashi
(right turn)



7. Rei (Za-Rei, Ritsu-Rei)

Bowing must be the expression of our respect and love towards others. The upper body correctly stretched, focus your attention on the person you want to bow to, and slide your hands as you bend your upper body forward. The bowing action should be synchronized with the breathing: bend forward on an inhalation, exhale in the bowed position, and raise the body back on an inhalation (Mi-Iki: three breaths).

The angle of the bow shall depend on the status of the person receiving the bow:

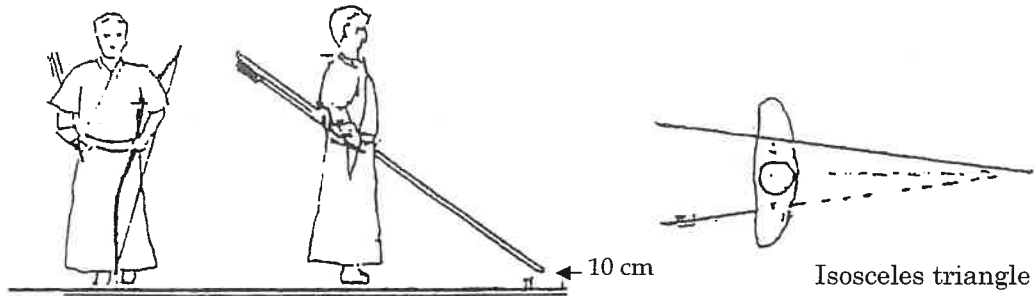


Shiken-Rei	Sesshu-Rei	Takushu-Rei	Sôshu-Rei	Gôshu-Rei
	Fingertips aligned with the kneecaps	Forehead at about 24 cm above the floor	Forehead at about 15 cm above the floor	The fingertips touch with the elbows on the floor

In the standing posture, bend the upper body forward with the hips as a rotation axis and slide the hands down the thighs. The normal angle of bending the body should be about 45°, which can be taken as a standard.

Toriyumi no Shisei (bow holding posture)

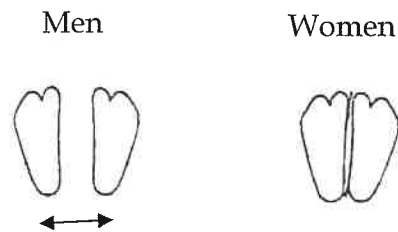
In standing position or in Kiza posture, hold the Yumi in the left hand with the string facing outward and the Ya in the right hand, and set the fists on the hips. This posture is called 'Toriyumi no Shisei'.



Urahazu on the floor when sitting

N. B.: Position of the feet

Men should keep the feet 3 cm apart.
Women should place them together.



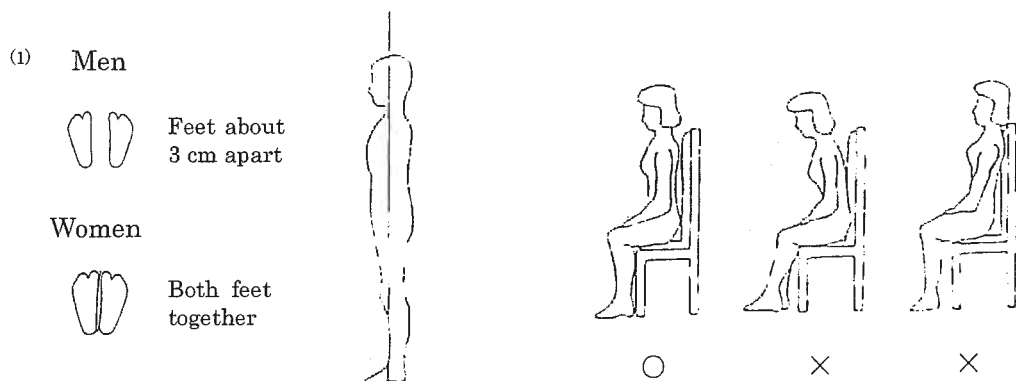
Kihon no Shisei (4 postures)

1. Standing

Place the feet parallel to each other⁽¹⁾, stretch the spine and the nape of the neck vertically and stand naturally, with the center of gravity to the front of the soles of your feet. Close the fingers and place the hands slightly to the front of your thighs without strain. The gaze passes along the bridge of the nose to a point about 4 meters to the front.

2. Sitting on a Chair

Sit as deeply into the chair as possible, stretch the spine and the nape of the neck vertically and keep the arms and shoulders relaxed. Place the hands on top of the thigh joints with the fingers closed and pointing inward. The gaze passes along the bridge of the nose to a point about 3 meters to the front.



3. Sitting on the Floor (Seiza)

The big toes placed on top of each other, stretch the upper body vertically but without strain. Place both hands on top of the thigh joints with the fingers closed. The gaze passes along the bridge of the nose to a point about 2 meters to the front. Men should keep the knees about on fist's distance apart, and women should keep the knees as close together as possible.

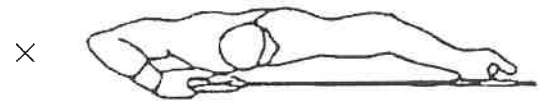
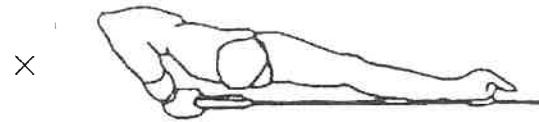
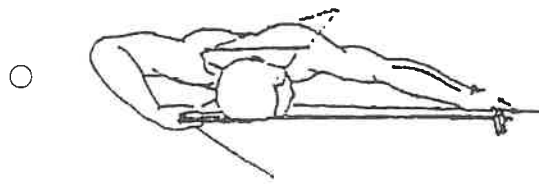
4. Half-Sitting on the Heels (Kiza) and Haunches (Sonkyo)

Kiza:

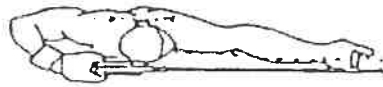
Sit on your heels with the toes tucked under your body and make the knee active on the side holding the principle implement. (The space between the kneecap and the floor should be about a palm's thickness.) Keep the heels together.

Sonkyo:

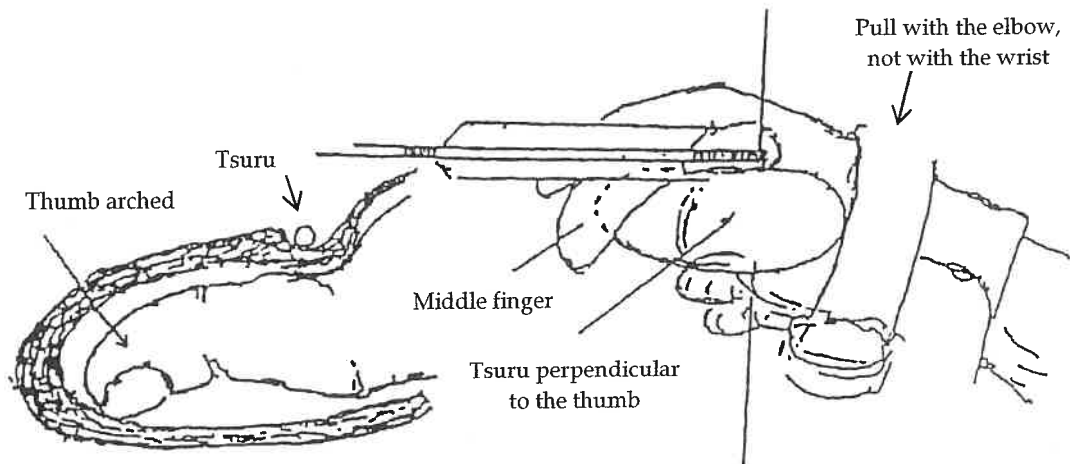
Squat with both feet together on tiptoe, with the knees raised from the ground, and keep the upper body correctly. The standard spacing between the knees should be a distance of two fists' width.



Correct Mato picture (Matozuke) / Aiming (Nerai)



The Tenouchi of the Katte (the hand with the Kake on) has an in Hanare. The thumb should be arched inside the Bôshi. The middle finger prevents the thumb from opening. The fore finger is simply placed on top of the middle finger and the ring finger is bent naturally.

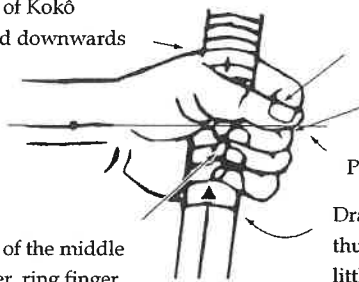


N.B. :

The Tenouchi of Oshide

Very important! To be mastered!

Skin of Kokō
rolled downwards



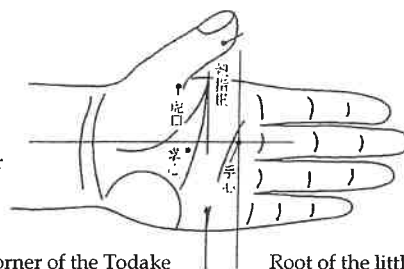
Thumb straight and
pushing forward

Do not let the thumb separate
from the middle finger

Pulse aligned with the middle finger

Draw the root of the
thumb and the root of the
little finger together to
push the thumb forward
and open the Shōshin

Tips of the middle
finger, ring finger
and little finger
aligned together
and pressing lightly



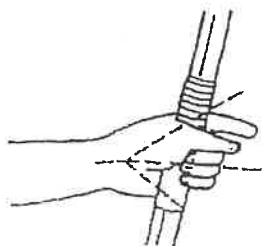
Left corner of the Todake

Root of the little finger

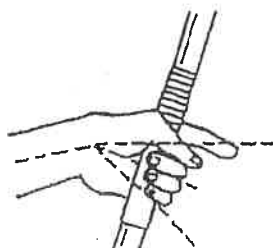
Right corner of the Todake

Place the Tenmonsuji against
the left corner of the Todake

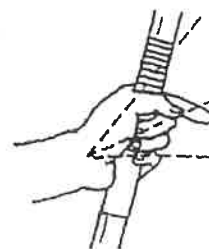
N.B.: The Tenouchi of the Oshide (the hand holding the Yumi) is as important as it is difficult. It has an influence on the shooting form and on the Tekichu. (See the diagrams below.) Make sure that the thumb does not separate from the middle finger.



Nakaoshi (correct)



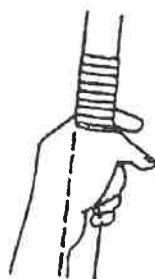
Uwaoshi



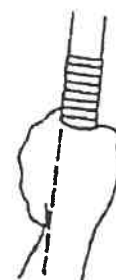
Betaoshi



Correct

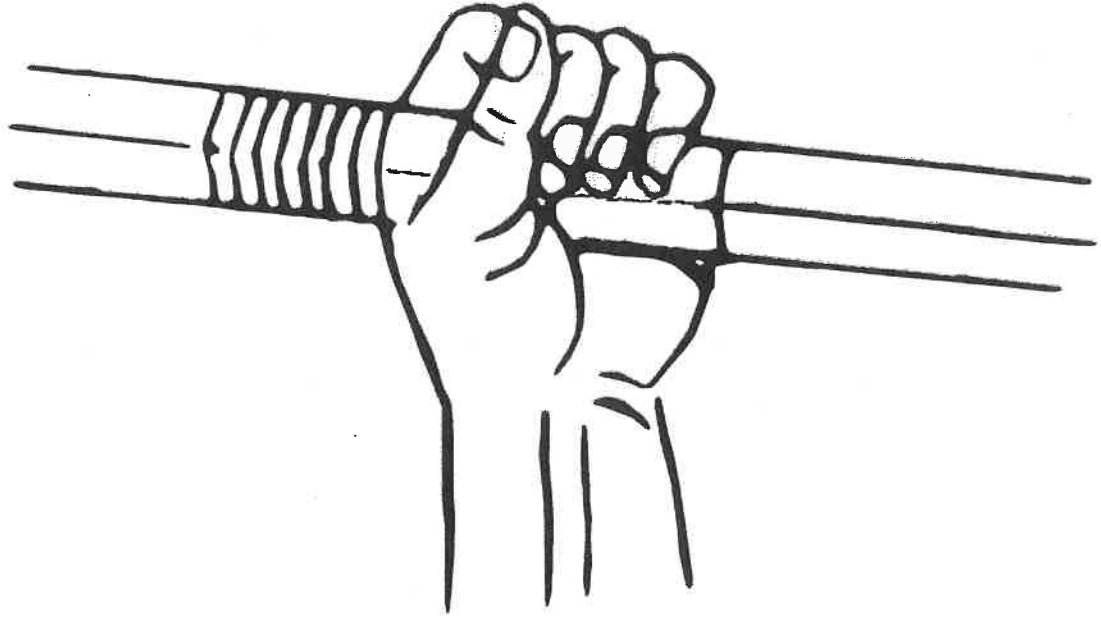


Not engaged enough



Engaged too much

Method for Arranging the Tenouchi – 1



In Yugamae, including Habiki, arrange the Tenouchi the way you want it to be in kai.

It is crucial that no changes are made up to Kai.

However, the skin inside the hand should be allowed to move together with the Nigiri as the bow rotates. This is called Shibori.

The tension generated by doing Habiki is essential to set the Tenouchi correctly without gripping the bow.

In Yugamae, equal attention is required on both sides' Tenouchi, including the elbows and shoulders which are also involved when performing Habiki.

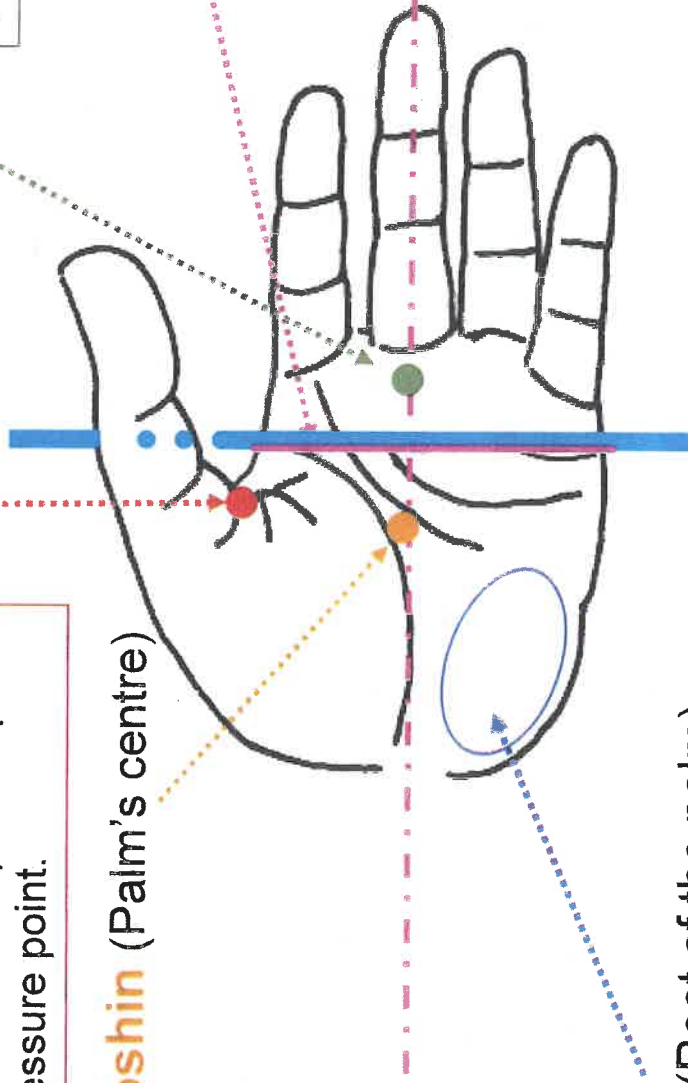
Method for Arranging the Tenouchi - 2 (Terminology)

Kokô
Literally translating as « tiger mouth », Kokô refers to a most dangerous, or most important place. Primary pressure point.

Shushin (Hand's centre)

The centre line of the hand should make a right angle with the bow.

Shôshin (Palm's centre)



Tenmonsuji

A line running vertically across the palm of the hand.

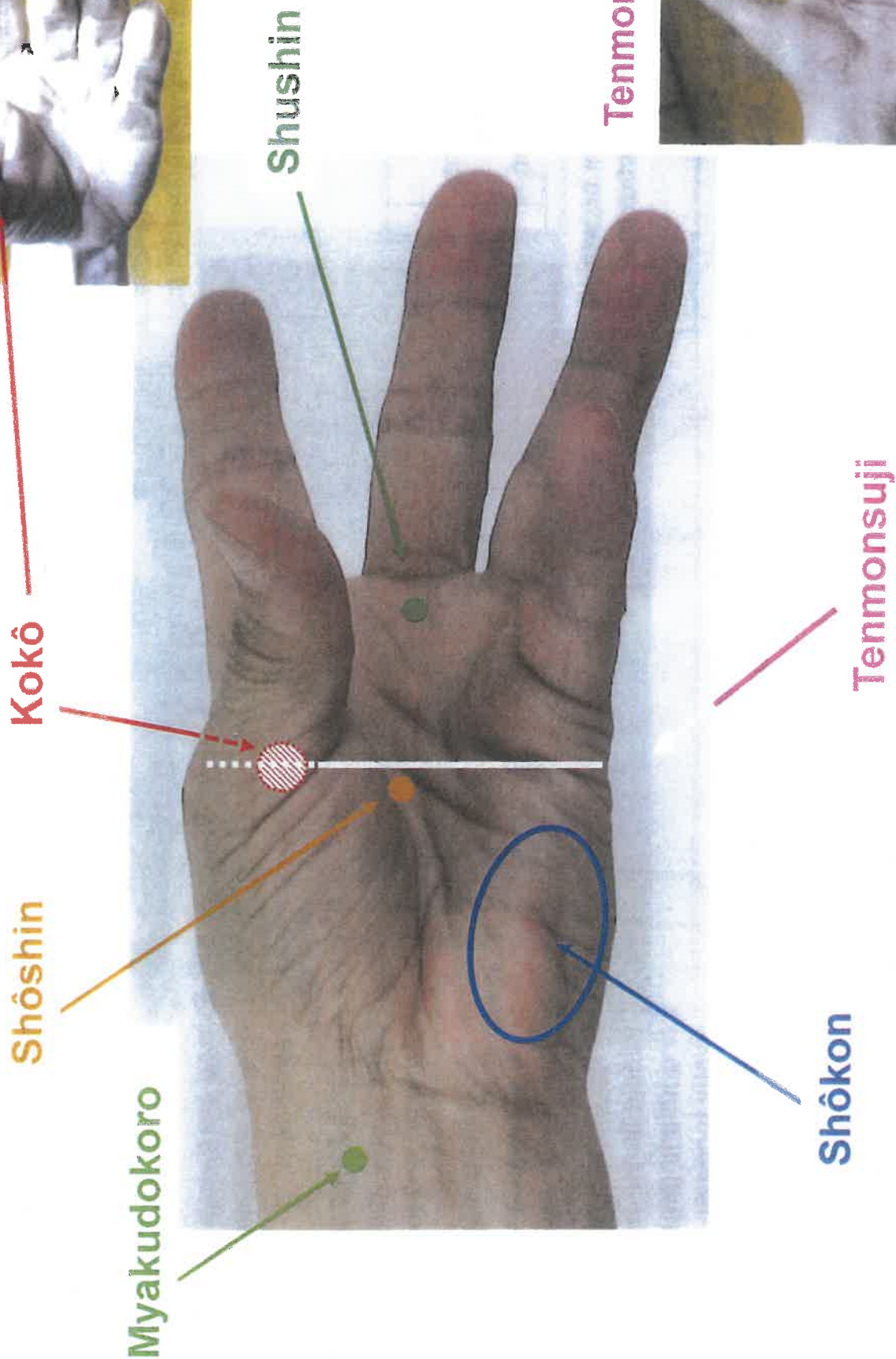
Shôkon (Root of the palm)

Assists in pushing the bow.

Left corner of the Todake

Should be placed so as to coincide with the Tenmonsuji.

Method for Arranging the Tenouchi- 3 (Pictures)



Left Hand's Tenouchi in Kai

The skin of Kokô is rolled downward.

- This contributes to Shibori.
- The shape and size of the grip, as well as the choice of the material are crucial.

If the forefinger bends downward:

- Uwashi will be too strong and the arrow will go down.
- This is sometimes referred to as Osaeru (pressing down).

The forefinger may either be bent or straight, but it must not be allowed to bend downwards.

Extend the thumb forward.
The tip of the thumb should not be bent.

The thumb and the middle finger should be kept well in contact together, with no gap in between.

If they separate:

- It becomes Betaoshi.
- Nakaoshi is impossible.

The Tenmonsuji must be well in contact with the left corner of the Todake.

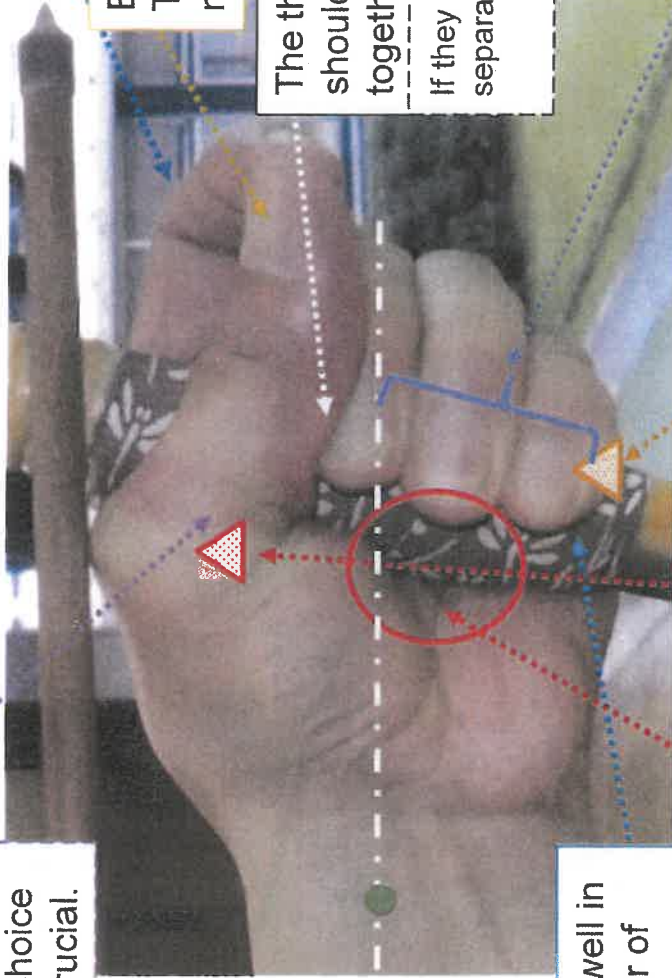
- The bow feels more stable.
 - The Shôkon can be used properly.
 - The work of Shitasuji can be more effective.
- This will not be true, however, if the elbow is straight.

A horizontal line passes through the Myakudokoro ● and the middle finger.

Keep the tips of the middle finger, ring finger and little finger closed tightly together, and apply a gentle pressure on the grip.

Extend the thumb forward while drawing the root of the thumb ▲ and the root of the little finger ▼ together.

- Shôshin** is hollowed
- This makes the hand smaller and allows for Nakaoshi.
 - This also allows for stronger pressure on Kokô.



Method for Arranging the Tenouchi – 4

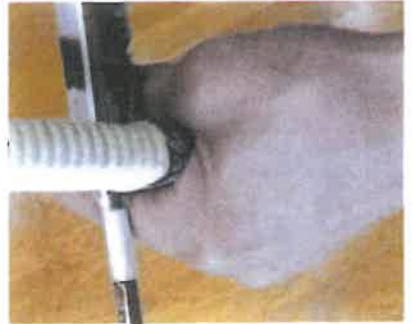
- ① Place the inner side of the Tsunami (thumb) on the belly of the grip, and the Tenmonsuji on the left corner of the Todake.
- ② While doing ①, move the root of the little finger as high as you can on the grip. If you flatten the thumb and draw its root and the root of the little finger together, a gap should open between Shôshin and the grip.
- ③ Curl the three bottom fingers around the right side of the grip (adjust their position as needed).



Close-up Look of Tenmonsuji and Todake



- ④ Place the thumb (Tsunami) on top of the middle finger.



- ⑤ By doing Habiki, a small gap is created between the root of the forefinger and the grip.

