



講道館護身術  
極の形

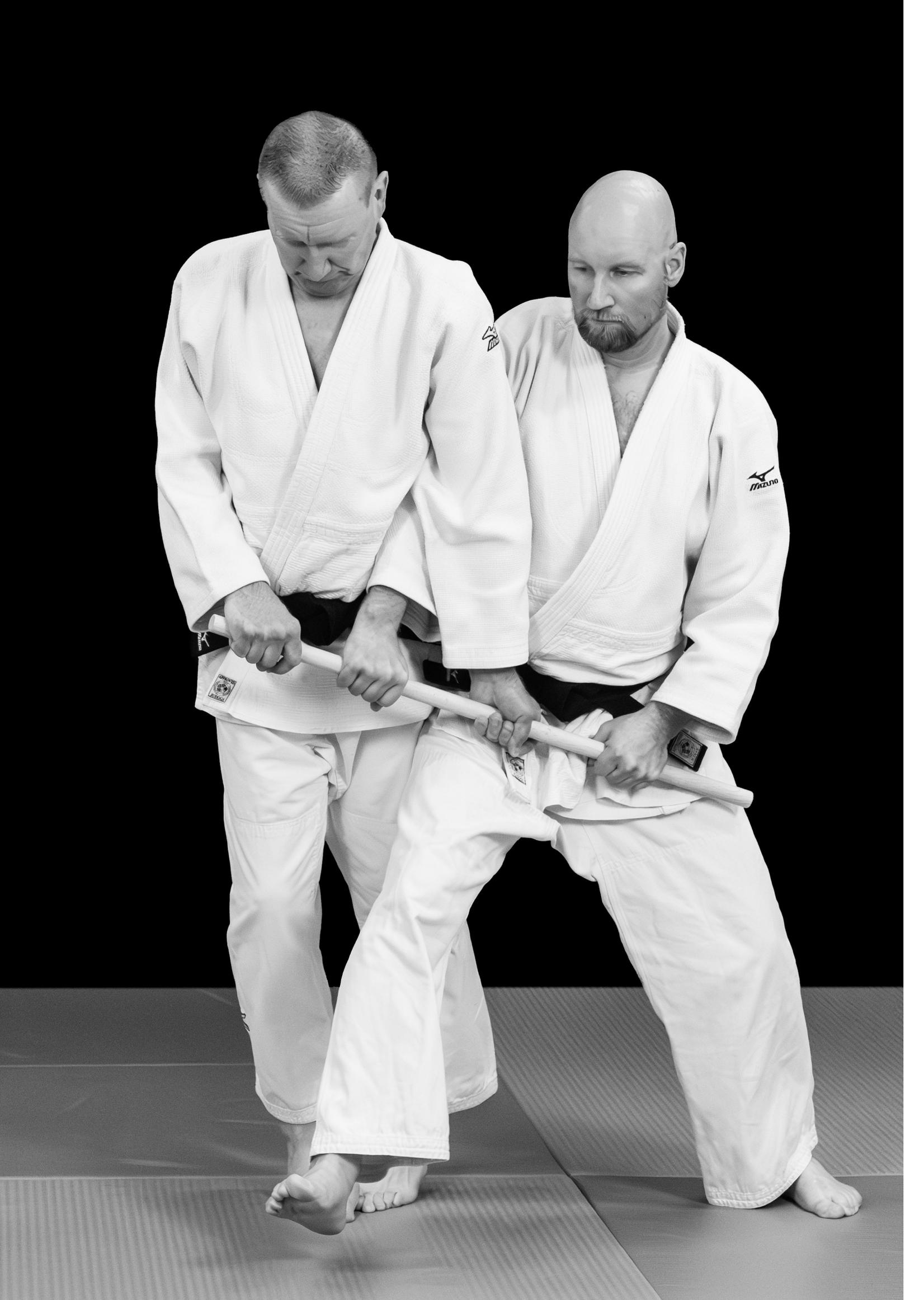
JORMA PAASI

# JUDO

SELF-DEFENCE KATA

KIME-NO-KATA AND KODOKAN GOSHIN-JUTSU

## JUDO SELF-DEFENCE KATA



JORMA PAASI

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KIME-NO-KATA AND KODOKAN GOSHIN-JUTSU

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Dedicated to  
Veera, Simo and Laura



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## FOR THE READER

This book contains descriptions of judo's remaining major self-defence kata: Kime-no-kata and Kodokan Goshin-jutsu. Also included is a brief description of the lesser-known katas Kime-shiki and Joshi goshinhō, the women's self-defence kata.

Jigoro Kano's vision for judo was very expansive. While his ultimate objective for judo was educational, his primary stated objective was to teach attack and defence. These skills could only be achieved by learning the appropriate techniques. Kata was the only way to practise safely in situations where an opponent would attack with strikes, kicks or weapons. It also gave the judoka an idea of how situations that seemed safe in free practice (*randori*) might change when the attack came from a distance. By practising kata, the judoka learned how to use strikes and kicks (*atemi*) to defend himself. Only by actively practising the skills could the judoka reach a level that was useful. Kano was convinced that learning these skills also improved other aspects of judo and randori skills.

The purpose of the book is to serve as a guide and introduction to an aspect of judo that is unfamiliar to most judoka who focus on competition and randori. When an opponent does not follow the agreed rules, the importance of distance perception, unbalancing (*kuzushi*), movement (*tai-sabaki*) and control are particularly emphasised. These are all needed from the first dodge to the end of the situation. Learning the kata covered in this book is not just a privilege for black belt holders, but can be learned by anyone with an interest in judo in general. To get to know and learn these kata, it is sufficient to have a basic knowledge of judo and how to fall safely (*ukemi*).

The variety of ways of attacking and defending oneself is practically unlimited. The developers of kata have chosen attacks and defences to represent typical situations and solutions to them. Each chosen technique follows a set of underlying principles. These models can be applied to a wider range of similar situations. Often these principles have not been highlighted in teaching or literature and have therefore remained hidden. Teaching and learning has focused on how movements should be made. This book also seeks to answer the question *why*. Kenji Tomiki's comments in the original Kodokan Goshin-jutsu manual have been a great help in this.

The general section on kata describes the background to kata and introduces the general principles that are common to all techniques.

For each technique first a basic model of each technique is presented. This section answers the question *how*. The beginning summarises ATTACK, DEFENCE, ATEMI, KUZUSHI and IMPORTANT. This is followed by the EXECUTION, which describes how kata should be performed according to the current guidelines of the IJF and the Kodokan. This is based on Kodokan textbooks, Kodokan videos, judging criteria and kata literature. If the reader's motive is only to study the requirements for the next grading examination, it is best to focus on this part of the book.

*Yoko-uchi, Nordic Judo Kata Open Tournament 2024. Judges Staffan Lindgren and Theodore Schwalm.*

! After the basics of each technique, the section marked with an exclamation mark seeks to answer the question *why*. Why does Tori need to perform kuzushi? Why does Uke's arm need to be controlled, and so on? These clarifications are relevant for those who want to understand kata deeper or compete in kata.

\* The study of kata is also intrinsically linked to the learning of kata. These text points are marked with an asterisk. They are intended to broaden the understanding of what lies behind the techniques. This kind of studying gives further answers to the question *why*. Here the focus goes beyond the kata performance itself to consider different options for situations: what are the different possibilities for counter-attacks by Uke, and how can Tori protect against them? What happens if there is no control of Uke? What should Tori do if Uke does not stay in the agreed role, but continues the attack with another technique? In a changed situation, Tori can choose whether to use another technique from the same kata, a technique familiar from another kata, or some other solution appropriate to the situation. This, in my opinion, is the main point and the essence of all kata learning. Once you understand the underlying principles, you can apply them widely to other aspects of judo. In this section, possible limitations and risks associated with applying this technique to self-defence are also considered.

The last chapter offers general guidance on the risks involved when techniques are applied with full force. Legislation on what is permitted in self-defence situations varies greatly between countries. In most cases, common sense indicates what is appropriate.



## SPELLING AND NOTATION

Japanese words are romanized in accordance with Kodokan practice. Compound words are separated by hyphens, as in uki-goshi and Kime-no-kata.

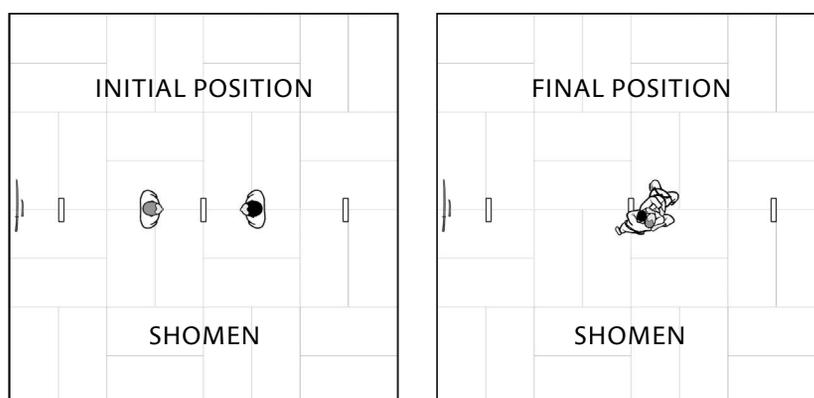
Goshin-jutsu (護身術) is the Japanese word for self-defence techniques or skills. Kodokan Goshin-jutsu is, for simplicity, called Goshin-jutsu when there is no risk of confusion with the general meaning of the word.

Words commonly used are spelled without special characters, such as Kodokan, judo, Jigoro Kano and o-soto-gari, although the more accurate spelling is Kōdōkan, jūdō, Jigorō Kanō and ō-soto-gari. Where there is a desire to emphasise the Japanese pronunciation or the difference in meaning of similar words, long signs have been used.

The kata area is either 8 × 8 m or 10 × 10 m. Usually the bowing positions and the centre are marked with tapes. The bowing positions are at a distance of six metres from each other. These are referred to in the text as the six-metre line. The centre point is referred to as the centre line. There are two kata axes. The longitudinal kata axis is the line joining the six metre lines. Most of the kata's movements occur along the longitudinal kata axis. This is referred to as the kata axis when there is no risk of confusion. The transverse kata axis runs away from the shomen (the front of dojo) at the centre line.

The direction of movement is always referred to in relation to the shomen. What is on the right in the photograph taken from the direction of the shomen is also on the right in the text. For example, 'Tori is on the right and Uke on the left'.

The starting position and the situation after the technique are shown in the drawings. Tori has darker hair in the photos.





## SAMURAI ERA

The early history of Japan was a very warlike time. This led to the emergence of a military class and the development of weapons and military skills. In the beginning, the military class was known as *buke* or *bushi*. The name *samurai* (to serve or guard) came into wider use after the 11th century. The developments that began in the mid-9th century brought to power clans led by military families, which in turn meant constant wars. Military clans ruled their own territories with their strong armies. The warlike period lasted until the end of the 16th century, after which things began to calm down. Before this time, the boundaries between social classes were not so strict, and anyone with ability could become a soldier and rise to a very high rank. Often the soldiers were farmers who would become soldiers when required. An extreme case was Toyotomi Hideyoshi, the son of a peasant woodcutter, who rose to become the head of his clan and eventually the second of the "Great Unifiers" of Japan.

From the early 17th century until 1867, Japan was under the rule of the Tokugawa military family. This long period of peace is known as the Edo or Tokugawa period, and it lasted for over 250 years. The country was governed by a military dictator, the *shōgun*. Under him were the *daimyō*, powerful feudal lords who administered semi-autonomous domains (*han*). Right from the start, four social classes were created: the samurai class, farmers, craftsmen and merchants. Moving from one class to another was almost impossible. Samurai status passed from father to son. Towards the end of the Edo period, social mobility did occur, particularly from the increasingly wealthy merchant class into the samurai class.

Samurai made up a large proportion of the population, with around 6-7% of the population belonging to the samurai class. In the 1889 census, Japan's population was 40 million, of which 2 million were samurai. There were about 250 daimyo at that time.

On the left: Two samurai,  
Felis Beato 1860's.

On the right: Japanese Embassy,  
Navy Yard, Washington,  
DC. Mathew B. Brady.

SOURCE: METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART





Onoe Matsusuke as a Samurai of the Fujiwara Clan 1782

SOURCE: METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART



Samurai wearing straw coat 1879.

Drawing V. Andrén. Source: VEGA'S

TRAVEL ROUND ASIA AND EUROPE, PART II.

NORDENSKIÖLD: DIGI.KANSALLISKIRJASTO.FI

Within the samurai class, there were several subdivisions or ranks. The number of levels varied from han to han. These were also grouped to “higher samurai” and “lower samurai” ranks. At the top were the closest subordinates of the daimyō and at the bottom were the ordinary footsoldiers. Some of the lowest rank samurai could be very poor. It was difficult to move up the hierarchy, especially between higher and lower ranks and marriages were usually arranged between samurai families of roughly equal rank. Outside this classification were the masterless samurai, rōnin.

Samurai life was governed by the shogunate’s set of laws, *buke shohatto*, and the moral code *bushidō* (the way of the warrior). The purpose of the buke shohatto was to strengthen the shogunate’s power. It stated rules for daimyo and members of the samurai class. Among other things, it stipulated that literature and martial arts must be practised at all times and that samurai are to live a frugal and simple life. All costumes were also to be appropriate to the wearer’s rank.

The origins of bushidō can be traced back to around the 12th century. At the beginning of the Edo period, it took on a new form and evolved from a combat-focused doctrine into a more general moral code. Religions—particularly Neo-Confucianism—played a significant role in this transformation. The moral code provided guidelines for how a samurai should behave. It emphasized absolute loyalty to one’s lord and defined concepts such as honour and shame. The samurai was expected to serve as a moral example to others. However, the content of the code varied regionally, and individuals interpreted it in different ways. It was never formally codified as an official set of rules. The understanding of bushidō came from upbringing, culture, and various literary sources. Later literature on bushidō romanticized the concept. During the Meiji era and afterward, it was used to support nationalist ideologies. When discussing bushidō, it is important to consider which historical period’s version of it is being referred to.

Samurai education was well organized, and especially higher-ranking samurai were well educated. Schools were maintained by the shogunate, the domain, and some private bodies. The curriculum included reading, writing, mathematics, literature, calligraphy, music, and martial arts, that is, *bujutsu*. The martial arts taught included swordsmanship, archery, gunnery, spearmanship, horsemanship, swimming, and later, *jujutsu*. During the long period of peace, many samurai served as officials in the administrations of the shogunate or the domain. After the Edo period ended, samurai continued in administrative roles and contributed to Japan’s modernization.

All samurai were armed with a sword (*katana*) and a short sword (*wakizashi*). Together these are called *daisho*. The katana was the samurai’s most important and most valuable piece of equipment – the samurai’s soul. Only samurai were allowed to carry it. Others were forbidden to do so on pain of death. On entering the house, the katana was left in the hall in a special rack. The wakizashi was allowed to remain at the waist. It was also the weapon used by the samurai to commit ritual suicide, *seppuku*, also known as *harakiri*. By the end of the Edo period wakizashi was allowed to be carried by commoners on long journeys.

In combat, however, the daisho was used as a back-up weapon to support the longer-range weapons. Other weapons used by the samurai, depending on the task, were the bow, the spear and various armoury weapons such as the *naginata*. A *naginata* is a weapon with a curved blade attached to the end of a long stick. Many women of samurai families were skilled in the use of the *naginata*. Training was also given in many imaginative weapons, such as chains and steel fans. Firearms were also used, but due to Japan's isolation, they were outdated. On the other hand, shooting another did not require any special skill, and was therefore not in accordance with the warrior code.

The samurai wore *yoroi*, a type of armour. There were different types of *yoroi* depending on their use. The *yoroi* could weigh up to 30 kilos. *Koshiki-no-kata* is a reminder from those days, when samurai had to be able to move and fight while carrying *yoroi*.

*Yamaguchi Bisū, 1848: From series Illustrations Showing the Wearing of Arms and Armor (Katchū chakuyōzu).*

SOURCE: METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART



*"Evacuation of the Ladies," from the series The Inner Precincts of Chiyoda Castle (Chiyoda no Ōoku, Otachinoki). Female guards, garbed in black robes carry naginata spears.*

SOURCE: METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART



During the Edo period, and especially at the beginning, martial arts, both armed and unarmed, reached their peak. All of these gave rise to different schools of martial arts (*ryu*). The *ryu* was a system of martial arts developed by a particular master. Its skills and knowledge were passed down from generation to generation through the lineage. Only an unbroken line of succession gave the authority to pass on the skills. Women were also at the head of some of the old schools, especially in situations where the continuity of the family line was at risk. The teachings of the old jujutsu schools are called *koryū*. They are still practised in many countries.

The skills were handed down from masters to apprentices, who had to take an oath of obedience before joining the school. This custom was also used in the early days of Kodokan. However, as judo spread, secrecy was abandoned and Kano did not add the stamp of *okuden* (secret or hidden) to any judo kata.

The schools had written scrolls (*densho*) containing the most important teachings (*kuden*) of the school. The most important secrets were revealed by the masters only to their closest students. These were given a certificate of learning and the most secret scrolls. Some of the scrolls were cryptic and could only be understood if the key to interpreting them had been passed down through oral tradition.

Yōshū Chikanobu 1897: *Kenjutsu practice. Chiyoda Castle (Album of Men)*

SOURCE: METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART



*'The teacher can only show the method of practice;  
true understanding is born from the  
student's own effort and ingenuity.'*

Jigoro Kano

**Judo • Self-Defence Kata** is a comprehensive work on the self-defence kata of Judo: the *Kime-no-kata* and the *Kodokan Goshin-jutsu*. The roots of *Kime-no-kata* run deep in Japan's samurai era. *Kodokan Goshin-jutsu* was officially introduced in 1956 to better address modern threat situations. Together, these kata teach the fundamental principles of self-defence and provide models for defending against various attacks. The book also includes brief introductions to the lesser-known Judo kata, *Kime-shiki* and the women's self-defence kata, *Joshi Goshinhō*. These four kata feature techniques belonging to Judo that are prohibited in competitive matches, such as strikes, kicks, and wrist locks.



The book contains over 800 photographs and illustrations that demonstrate the execution of *Kime-no-kata* and *Kodokan Goshin-jutsu* according to the latest Kodokan and IJF models. In addition, the text covers the principles that should be followed in self-defence situations and explains what makes techniques effective. The book also briefly addresses the suitability of the techniques for self-defence from a legal perspective.

**Judo • Self-Defence Kata** is a guide and resource for those studying these kata, preparing for grading examinations, Judo instructors, kata competitors, and generally those interested in martial arts and self-defence.



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