

## WHEN GREETING OR DEPARTING A SENIOR

- Juniors should not offer their hand to the senior - Wait for them to present theirs first.
- Shake hands using your right hand while placing your left hand under the right elbow, with you palm facing up
- Perform a bow of respect whenever you shake hands.
- For very personal greetings, some seniors may shake your hand, using both of theirs, by grasping your hand and placing their other one on top of both your hands
- For a very formal or very respectful handshake, place your left hand directly under your right elbow. The further your left hand is from your right, the more respect you show to the senior.



## UNIFORM AND BELT

- Uniform should be clean and pressed at all times
- Uniforms should be worn only while training or competing; not as casual wear
- Belts should never touch, be dropped or placed on the floor
- When adjusting your uniform or belt, turn to the side so as not to face the senior or turn your back on them
- It is considered extremely rude to touch a senior's belt or uniform
- Avoid "playing" with your belt or uniform
- No jewellery may be worn while you are in your dobok
- Hats should not be worn when wearing a dobok

*"Many years ago, the Father of Taekwon-Do, General Choi Hong Hi, was the guest of honour at an incredible demonstration performed by many exceptionally talented instructors and black belts. Once the demonstration had finished, General Choi was asked "What did you think of the demonstration Sir?" Hoping for praise for a job well done, the practitioners were both shocked and delighted to hear General Choi proclaim "Very Good, They displayed excellent courtesy". The pleased with the demonstration, what impressed General Choi the most, was the polite, disciplined and respectful manner in which the practitioners behaved."*

This story shows the importance we place on the Tenets and Protocols of Taekwon-Do. This guide describes some of Protocols necessary in various situations. Although not a definitive guide, this document will help you to better understand some of the ways we use Protocol to show respect, discipline and compassion to everyone.



*Confucius Asking Lao Zi about Etiquette*

*Lao Zi sits with crossed legs on a stone stool, with his long grey hair bound at the back. His moustache and eyebrows are all white. Confucius stands with cap in hand showing great respect and modesty, with both hands folded together in front and bowing to Lao Zi.*



General Choi, Hong Hi  
Father of Taekwon-Do

1918 - 2002

## Tenets

Courtesy  
Integrity  
Perseverance  
Self Control  
Indomitable Spirit

## Student Oath

I shall observe the Tenets of Taekwon-Do.

I shall respect the Instructors and Seniors.

I shall never misuse Taekwon-Do.

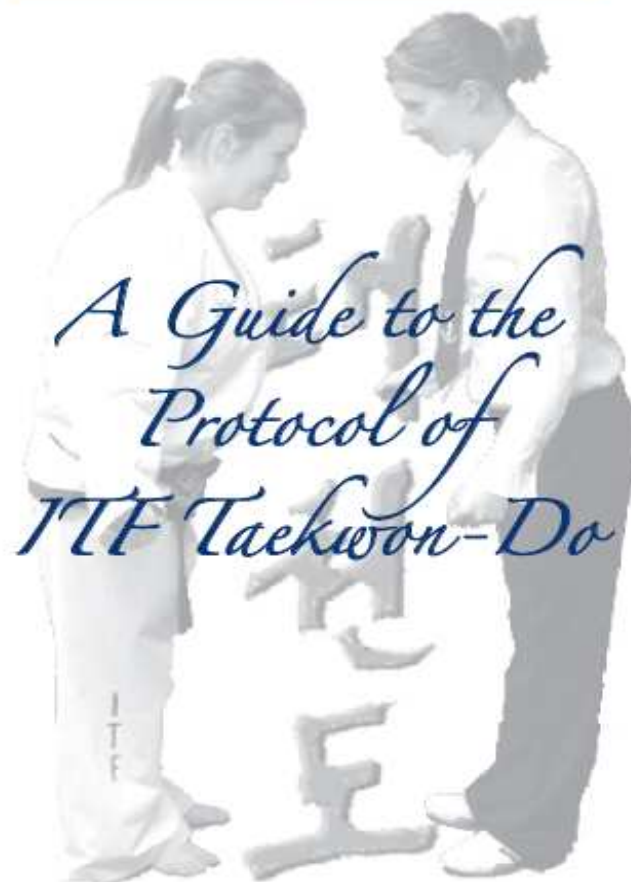
I shall be a champion of Freedom and Justice.

I shall build a more peaceful world.

Visit our website  
[www.tkd-itf.org](http://www.tkd-itf.org)



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*Provided with the Compliments of the  
2007 ITF World Championship  
Organizing Committee  
Quebec, Canada*

## What is "Protocol"?

**PROTOCOL** refers to the rules or guidelines we follow to show respect for other people and for ourselves. Protocol is based on thousands of years of traditions and philosophy; it is the actions of treating our seniors with respect, using good manners and common courtesy. It is the "Do" in Taekwon-Do.

Protocol should be followed at all times, not only when it is convenient or necessary. We should behave the same in private as we do in public; demonstrating discipline, integrity and respect. Protocol is not only for juniors to show to seniors. Seniors should lead and teach by example, showing the appropriate protocols and respect to juniors as well.

Many practitioners practice excellent protocol at competitions or seminars, yet not anywhere else. Some think that it is not important; as long as they are not in class or wearing a dobok; they do not need to follow protocol. This is not correct; we do not change how we behave, just because we change our clothes! We are always practitioners of Taekwon-Do, an oriental martial art, and should behave according to our Tenets and Protocol.

Practicing Taekwon-Do can develop lifelong benefits. Perhaps the most beneficial is the discipline, self control and respect that we earn by following Protocol.



### BOWING

Bowing is a very traditional way of showing respect, self control and discipline in the martial arts. Bowing takes time to do correctly. It comes from the heart, and is done out of honour and respect, not out of necessity or obligation. If we are in a rush when we bow, then we are only doing it because we should, and not because we truly mean it. Taking the time to stop, bow correctly and slowly, and then rise up into our greeting or conversation, shows that we sincerely mean and feel the respect we are giving.

Like all things in Taekwon-Do, there is a correct way to bow:

- Stand up tall, with heels together, toes turned out 45°.
- Arms slightly extended at sides, hands closed, palms facing downwards on an angle.
- Bow forward from the waist, (25°), not the neck
- Bowing from the neck only is considered impolite; a proper bow requires time
- Always look the other person in the eyes when bowing
- Juniors should begin their bow first
- The greater the difference in age or rank, the deeper the bow
- Juniors should hold their bow until the senior has returned upright
- The longer we hold our bow, the more respect we show
- Always bow before and after addressing a senior
- Always bow before entering or upon leaving a dojang
- When a senior walks into the room or passes by you, take the time to turn, acknowledge their presence and bow
- If you are seated and a senior walks by or towards you, stand up and bow, it is considered impolite to remain seated
- Always remove your hat before bowing

### INTERACTING WITH SENIORS

Protocol helps us all treat each other with respect and courtesy. It is especially important when we interact with seniors outside of the dojang. By following proper protocol when in public we are setting an example for everyone. Many people will see the respectful actions and think of us with a similar respect.

- Seniors should be addressed as either "Sir/ Ma'am" or "Mr./Mrs."
- Always use their last name or title, never their first name.
- Bow when approaching the senior, prior to making contact
- Always use appropriate language, no profanities
- Try not to ever turn your back on the senior
- When departing, take three steps backwards, execute a bow; then turn and depart
- When a Senior enters the room always stand up and bow
- When giving or receiving an item, remember to always use two hands and perform a bow of respect
- Remember to say "Thank you Sir / Ma'am" and "Yes Sir / No Ma'am"
- A junior may disagree with their senior as long as they do so respectfully and politely
- It is impolite to interrupt a senior, instead, raise your hand to indicate your desire to speak
- Open and hold all doors for seniors, including the car door
- If the senior is carrying something in their hands/arms, politely take it and carry it for them
- When seated, such as during a class, seminar or tournament, avoid showing the bottoms of your feet to your seniors
- Avoid asking for opinions or impressions from a senior, especially when in a public setting



### DINING

- Always wait for the Senior to be seated first
- The Senior should sit at the head of the table, (or center) all others to each side according to rank
- The host should always sit beside the senior
- Spouses or companions are always welcome to sit by your side, regardless as to if they are in Taekwon-Do or not.
- Patiently wait for the senior to open their menu and place their order first
- Once the beverages or food have arrived, allow the senior to take the first drink or taste their food first
- When making or receiving a toast, ensure your cup is lower than your senior's – always use two hands (like when shaking hands)
- The senior should never pour his/her own drink, rather the junior should pour it for them
- Juniors should fill a seniors glass whenever it is low, especially prior to taking more beverage for yourself
- If the senior needs something it is the junior's responsibility to attend to it
- Always ask permission to leave or approach the table
- Whenever a senior approaches or departs the table you should stand up
- Use good table manners – do not slouch or place elbows on table

