

Keikogi and Hakama Guide

Introduction

In kendo, the manner of wearing our equipment ([chakuso](#)) is an integral part of etiquette ([reiho](#)). The way a kendoka wears their equipment reflects their attitude and skill. We must strive to look presentable at all times. Ensure that proper care is given with folding, storing, and wearing your gear to avoid wrinkles and looking disheveled. It takes a lot of work and discipline to not skip out on proper equipment care but it is easy to spot those who take the time and effort versus those who do not.

NOTE: Click the blue, underlined words to follow the link for more information.

Wearing

Just like anything in Kendo, the proper procedure of wearing and folding the keikogi and hakama takes a lot of practice. Investing the time and effort in learning them properly now will benefit you throughout your time in Kendo.

Video guide: [How to Put Kendogi and Kendo Hakama On \(HD Quality\)](#)

Rough photo guide: see next page

Putting on the Kendo Clothes

1

Fasten the front of the keiko -gi left over right, tying the mune-himo (chest string) in a bow.



2

Step into the hakama, and place the mae-himo the at waist level.



3

Pass the two mae-himo around the back, cross right over left and bring round to the front.



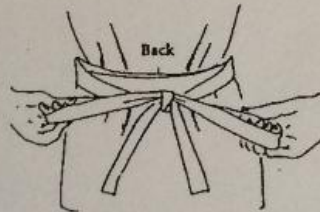
4

Cross over in front, and pass once again around the back.



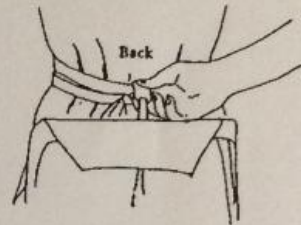
5

Tie in a bow at the back.



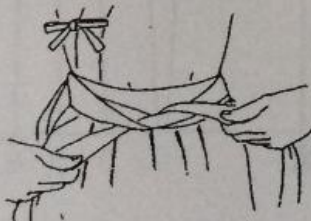
6

Insert the koshiita (plastic-spatula) from above into the mae-himo.



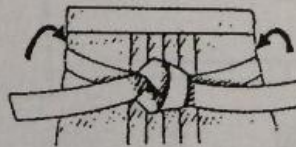
7

Bring the ushiro-himo around to the front and cross in the center.



8

Pass the left part of the ushiro himo underneath and through the mae-himo, and tie at the center of the pelvic region.



9



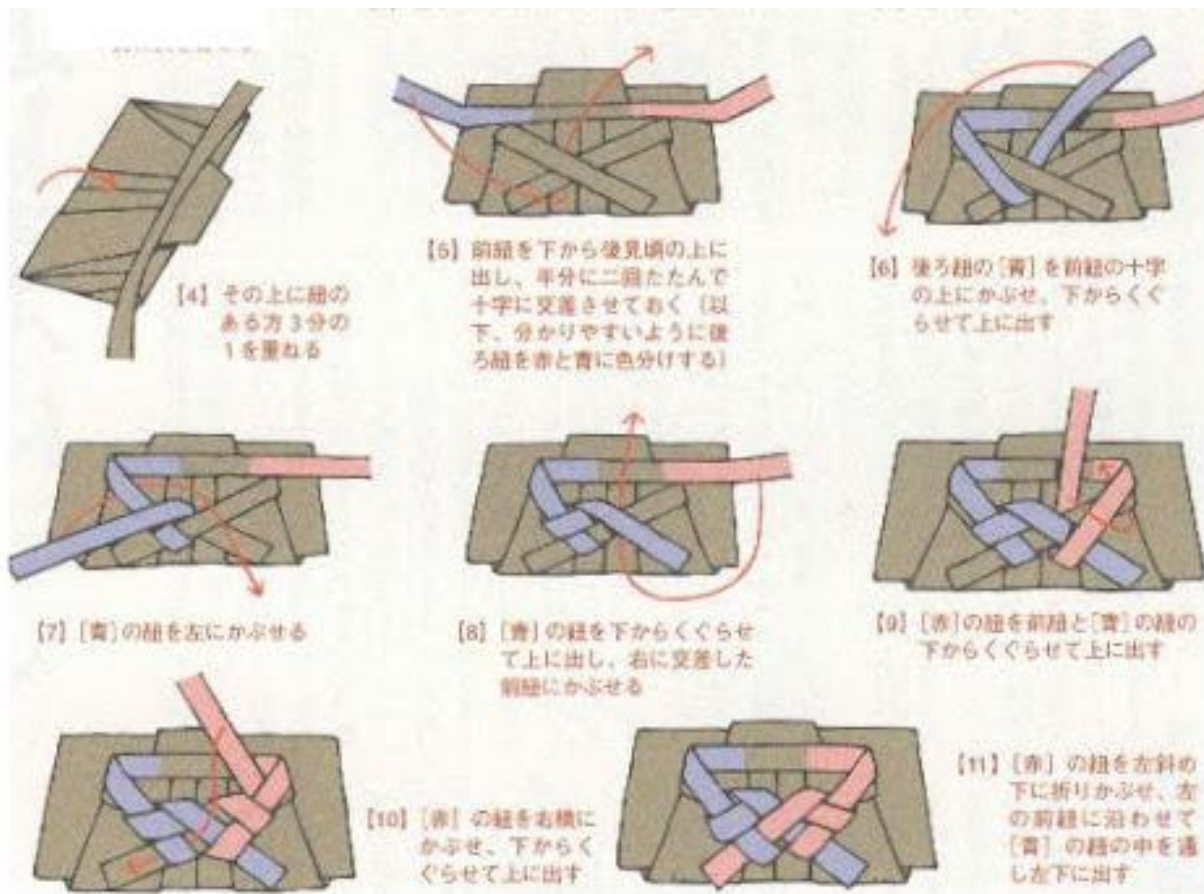
Folding

Learning how to fold your equipment properly will avoid unsightly creases and wrinkles. This is especially important for maintaining the pleats of the hakama because of their significant [symbolism](#).

Video: [Kendo101: How to fold Hakama and Kendo gi \(Keikogi\)?](#)

Step-by-step with photos: [How to fold the hakama](#)

How to tie the hakama strings (himo) knot:



Storing

Hanging it at home after practice is recommended. It allows your gear to air out. Sweaty equipment makes for a suitable environment for fungi and bacteria to grow. If left in the bag after practice, your gear will start smelling foul. In extreme cases, it may show visible fungal growth. Hanging it outside is good but avoid direct sunlight to prevent fading.

There are hangers specifically made for [hakama](#) and [keikogi](#) but they are quite expensive. However, regular hangers and clothespins work just as well.

NOTE: Turn keikogi inside out to air out

CAUTION: Avoid direct sunlight.



Washing

The main concern is maintaining the pleats and not causing any unnecessary creases. If the pleats are not taken care of, they will disappear and your hakama will look horrible.

CAUTION: The following steps are for **SYNTHETIC** materials only. Do **NOT** use a washing machine for **COTTON** keikogi and hakama. It would cause significant fading and the dye will bleed all over the machine.

Materials:

- Laundry mesh bags like this one from [Walmart](#).
 - Large, old pillowcases would work too.
- Detergent made for dark colored clothes like [Woolite](#) (or generic brands)
- Hangers
- Clothespins (lots of them)

1. Carefully place keikogi and hakama in separate laundry bags.

NOTE: If the laundry bag is small or if using an old pillow case, fold the hakama to make it fit.



2. Place it in the washing machine.
3. Use cold water. Run in the **lowest, most gentle** setting.
4. Immediately proceed to hanging when done.

CAUTION: Avoid leaving it sitting in the washing machine after the spin cycle. It will acquire wrinkles.

Hanging

1. Hang the keikogi and hakama the same way mentioned previously in the “**Storing**” section.
2. Place a clothespin at the corner of each pleat in order to pinch the fold in place. This helps to maintain them.

CAUTION: Avoid direct sunlight.

NOTE: Ironing is not necessary

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