

United States Bowing Guide (2010)

For Judo Competition

The following Bowing Guide is adapted from the I.J.F. Bowing Guide. A part of the etiquette of Judo, the bow “*rei*”, is a tradition which reflects the respect and discipline that permeates the unique activities of our sport. The guide for bowing, therefore, should be followed in a respectful manner.

All standing bows “*rei*” should be at an angle of 30 degrees as measured at the waist.

1. Initial Bow (*Rei*) – Opening Ceremony

Generally during an Opening Ceremony the contestants line up (one behind the other) in lines (perpendicular to the head table) by Club, facing the *Joseki* or Head Table side of the *Shiai*. The highest ranks should be in front of the lines being sure there is two feet between each contestant so when they bow they do not touch each other. Larger clubs can make a second and third line if they are needed.

The referees should face the contestants in a parallel line (side by side) on the outside edge of the Safety area on the Head Table side of the competition areas.

The announcer at this point welcomes everyone, then basic information is discussed (Scoring System, Contest duration, Feeder System, the Chief Referee is introduced and announces any rule changes or adaptations. The Chief Referee may discuss the *Judogi* requirements. The announcer or Tournament Director may add any other business that the coaches and players need to know. The last matter before the Opening bow is the playing of the National Anthem. In some areas they may have the National Anthem as the second order of business after the welcome.

If there is no picture of Dr. Jigoro Kano or there is no *Joseki*, that is if most, if not all the higher ranking people are in the referee line, there is no need to bow to *Joseki*.

1.1 While the contestants and referees (facing the contestants) are lined up on the competition area, as the last activity of the opening ceremony, the Formal Opening Bow is conducted.

1.2 Referees face the competitors as described. Upon the announcement of “*Kiotsuke* (Attention)” all come to attention, then the appropriate person announces “*Rei*” loudly and the Referee and Contestants bow to each other.

1.3 Then, in order and in accordance with the programmed events, the referees, contestants leave the competition area in the proper manner as directed by the ceremony director so the tournament can begin.

Variant:

When there is a Picture of Dr. Jigoro Kano or there is a true *Joseki* the following bowing procedure is to be followed.

V1.1 While the contestants and referees (facing the contestants) are lined up on the competition area, as the last activity of the opening ceremony, the Formal Opening Bow is conducted.

V1.2 Upon the order of "*Kiotsuke* (Attention)" everyone comes to attention. Upon the order of "*Shomen* (Face front)" the referees will make a half turn counter-clockwise (to the left) facing the *joseki*, then the command "*Ni Rei*" will be announced and the Contestants and Referees will bow to the *Joseki*.

V1.3 After that bow, the command "*O tu gai* (Face each other)" will be announced and the referees will make a half turn counter clockwise (to the left) facing the contestants, then the command "*Ni Rei*" will be announced and the referees and contestants bow to each other.

V1.4 Then, in order and in accordance with the programmed events, the referees, and contestants leave the competition area in the proper manner as directed by the ceremony director so the tournament can begin.

2. Final Rei - Closing Ceremony

Generally at most Tournaments in the United States we do not have a closing ceremony and therefore do not have a closing bow. If there is a closing bow then follow IJF protocol.

3. Initial Formal Bow at the Beginning of a Session (First contest of the day)

At most U.S. Tournaments, the referees enter the competition area from the Timekeeper's table side of the competition area. Therefore the following standardized protocol is recommended for all events.

3.1 The three members of the referee team are to step from the floor onto the outside edge of the safety area to the left (sitting at the table) of the timekeeper's table. The team steps onto the competition area in unison, left foot then right and then they bow in unison. The referee announces "*rei*" in a voice only the judges can hear.

Teams always go on and come off "clockwise" (to the left). It is important that the referee team maintain an **equal** distance from each other to present themselves as a team.

3.2 The first team of designated referees turns to the "left" and walks (in step) on the **outside edge** of the competition area in single file (judge/referee/judge) to a centralized position at the top (side opposite the Timekeepers table) (Far side) of the contest area and then turn and face the *joseki* (Timekeeper/Jury Table). The heels of the three officials should be on the outside edge of the safety area.

Variants for Safety Reasons: If there is an adjoining competition area to the left of the competition area that the referees are bowing onto, for safety reasons the referee team would walk up on the **inside edge** of the safety area. If there is not an adjoining area to the rear (or top of the mat) far side from the Referee Jury table (Timekeepers Table) the referees should go to the **outside edge** of the safety area on the top side as describer in 3.2. If there is an adjoining area on the top side then for safety reasons the referee team would walk (in step) along the **inside edge** of the safety area.

3.3 Once at the centralized position at the outside edge of the competition area, standing side by side, the referee and judges bow towards the *joseki*. The referee announces "*rei*" in a voice only the judges can hear.

3.4 From there the referee and judges walk forward **into the contest area**, approximately one meter. (If *tatami* is used then the referee team should walk in and place the end of their toes on the inside edge of the first *tatami* in the contest area. This would be exactly one meter). This should be done without "obviously" looking down to see when their toes reach the one meter mark. Now that they are in the contest area, the referee team would bow for a second time toward the *joseki* at the referee's command.

3.5 The referee takes a step backwards (**never leaving the contest area**) right foot then left, while the judges turn to face each other. The referee in a voice only the judges can hear says, “*rei*” and they bow.

3.6 The referee and judges take their positions immediately. The judge that reaches the chair first (rear judge) remains standing in front of the chair (facing the center of the contest area) waiting for the other judge and together they sit down in unison. This same seating procedure should be followed after each conference.

4. Changing Referee and Judges (Single Rotation)

In the United States, the referee will change places in most cases using a single rotation system remaining on the competition area judging 4-6 contests then getting up to referee 2 to 3 contests. The following protocol is recommended.

4.1 After the referee does his/her two or three contests (as directed by the Chief Referee), when the contestants bow at the edge of the contest area or leave the contest area if they do not bow, the judge who is next on the assignment list or the next card would stand.

4.2 The referee would then walk to that judge and stop two meters (six feet) from the judge. The referee coming off should be about one foot from the edge of the contest area. When the referee has stopped moving, both will bow to each other. The new referee would then walk to the referee’s central position. The referee who is leaving would leave the contest area moving immediately into the safety area (to the outside). The departing referee may walk along the safety area to the timekeepers table or exit the safety area from the far side (top of the mat).

4.3 During that exchange, the next (on deck) judge would sit in the empty judges’ chair. This on-deck judge need only bow onto the safety area and immediately fill the empty judges’ chair. In this way there is no lost time and the next contest can begin without any delay.

5. Changing Referee and Judges (Team Rotation)

When there are 6 or 9 or 12 referees, a team rotation system can be used. There are three methods which have become standard. They are Top, Bottom and Top & Bottom.

When the Referee Team has completed their shift (rotation), and after the contestants have left the contest area the team should change with the following protocols.

Top Edge (Far side) Change

5.1 The departing referee and judges walk to the outside edge of the competition area (no adjoining area) at the top center edge (farthest from the Timekeepers Table) with their heels on the outside edge of the safety area and bow in unison.

5.2 They then turn left and walk off as described in 8.4 and 8.5.

5.3 As soon as the contestants have left the contest area. The on-deck team should bow in according to 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3. The on-deck referee team should be at the top center edge of the safety area in a timely fashion so as not to delay the competition.

5.4 The referee and judges would bow as required in 3.3 and then go to their positions so the competition can continue.

Bottom Edge (Near side) Change

5.5 The departing referee and judges walk to the bottom edge of the competition area (to the right of the Timekeepers table) with their heels on the outside edge of the safety area and bow in unison and then step off.

5.6 At the same time that bow is being done to the right of the Table, the On-deck team will bow in on the bottom (near side) outside edge of the safety area to the left of the table. The on-deck referee team may bow as early as when the departing referee team begins moving to the right side of the Timekeepers table. This will reduce down time.

5.7 The referee and judges would then go to the respective positions so the contests can continue.

Top and Bottom Change

When the Referee Team has completed their shift, and after the contestants have left the contest area.

5.8 The departing referee and judges walk to the outside edge of the competition area (no adjoining area) at the top center edge (farthest from the Timekeepers Table) with their heels on the outside edge of the safety area and bow in unison. The safety variant (see 3.2) should be used if applicable.

5.9 They then turn left and walk off as described in 8.4 and 8.5.

5.10 At the same time that bow is being done at the top of the competition area. The On-deck team will bow in on the bottom (near side) outside edge of the safety area to the left of the table.

5.11 The referee and judges would then go to their positions so the contests can continue.

6. Changing Referee and Judges During the Medal Contests

At larger events (Senior Nationals, U.S. Open, New York Open, etc.) during the medal contests, the referee teams completely change for each contest. (Similar to Section 5.)

6.1 If there will be a break between the preliminaries and finals then the last referee team on each area should do the formal bow out. This would require the first referee team for the finals to open each area with the formal Bow-In protocol (3.1-3.6). If there was no break then the Formal Closing and Opening can be dispensed with.

6.2 The Chief Referee or Referee Commission will determine which method should be used when changing referee teams. That is Formal, Top, Bottom or Top & Bottom.

6.3 If a referee from the departing team is also a member of the on-deck team then s/he must after bowing off walk quickly to the left of the table join the on-deck team, bow-in in the appropriate manner and take their positions.

7. Contestants Entering and Leaving the Competition Area

Tachi Rei between Contestants

7.1 When the contestants are on-deck (next up) they should both be ready. If only one is ready to come onto the competition area then s/he should wait for the other to be ready. There should never be one athlete standing on the side center edge of the contest area.

7.2 When they are both ready, they should bow (not enforced, however it is recommended) on the edge of the competition area (near or far side depending on where the bracket control table is) as close to the same time as possible. They then walk along the outside edge of the contest area, being sure to **always walk behind the judges' chairs**.

7.3 When they reach the side center position along the outside edge of the contest area they turn and face each other. They then wait to be invited in by the referee.

7.4 The referee then invites them in with the appropriate gesture. The contestants bow in unison to each other or if an individual contestant chooses just walks in. This bow is not mandatory or enforced. They then walk to their blue or white mark.

7.5 The two contestants, stand just touching their toes on their corresponding mark and without requiring any order (command) must (required) bow "simultaneously" towards each other, take a step forward (left foot, then right) and stand in a natural standing position (*Shizen hontai*) while waiting for the referee to announce *hajime*.

7.6 Once the contest is over and the referee has announced *soremade*, the contestants should stand in front of (one step) their corresponding marks to await the result. The contestants should at this point have their judogi in order.

7.7 The referee would step forward one step (left foot, then right) and award the result (maintaining the gesture for 3 seconds). Simultaneously with this announcement the contestants take a step back (right then left foot) to their mark and bow to each other. This bow is mandatory. The referee would then lower their arm gesture and take one step back (right foot then left).

Contestants are required to adhere to the guidelines in this bowing guide and the IJF Refereeing Rules. Contestants who do not bow in accordance with these guidelines will be requested to do so. Those that refuse will be reported to the Sports Director or Tournament Director. Under the authority of the Directors of the event the contestant will be disqualified from further competition and in the case of a medal contest, will be stripped of the medal and/or placement.

7.8 The contestants may shake hands, but then the contestants should move back to the centralized position at the side edge of the contest area and should bow to each other simultaneously or not bow if a contestant so chooses. The contestants would then leave the competition area bowing (or not) on the edge of the contest area to the near or far side of the competition area depending on where the bracket control table is located to report their win or loss. The contestants must **always walk behind the judges' chairs**.

8. Formal Competition Area Closing Bow (Referee Team at the End of the Shiai)

8.1 Following the last contest of each session and after the result has been announced and the contestants have left the contest area, the referee and judges should walk towards the top center edge of the contest area. If *tatami* is used then the referee team should walk in and place the end of their toes on the inside edge of the first *tatami* in the contest area.

This would be exactly one meter inside the outside edge of the contest area. This should be done without "obviously" looking down to see when their toes reach the one meter mark.

Now that they are one meter inside in the contest area, the referee team would bow to *joseki*. The referee would announce "*Rei*" in a voice only the judges can hear.

8.2 The referee would then takes a step backwards (right foot then left) (never leaving the contest area) and the judges turn to face each other. The referee then says “*Rei*” in a voice only the judges can hear and the referee and judges bow to each other.

8.3 The referee and judges then walk backwards towards the outside edge of the competition area to a centralised position, facing the *joseki*, with the referee in the center they bow towards *joseki* on the referee’s command.

8.4 The referee team then turns left and walks (in step) in single file along the outside edge (if no adjoining area) of the safety area, until they reach the bottom edge (near side) of the competition area to the right of the timekeepers table. (**Teams always go on and come off “clockwise” (to the left).**)

8.5 They turn and face the competition area and bow in unison on the referee’s command. They then step off (right foot then left) the safety area.

Variants for Safety Reasons: If there is an adjoining competition area to the right of the competition area the referees are bowing off of, for safety reasons the referee team would walk down on the **inside edge** of the safety area.

If there is not an adjoining area to the far side (or top of the mat) furthest side from the Referee Jury table (Timekeepers Table) the referees should go to the **outside edge** of the safety area on the top side.

If there is an adjoining area on the top side then for safety reasons the referee team would walk (in step) along the **inside edge** of the Safety area.

9. Team Competition

Each contest by two teams is considered as a session of a *shiai*. If there is a time constraint because of a large number of teams then the referee formal opening and closing may be dispensed with. The Chief Referee will make this determination.

9.1 The formal bow should be done at the beginning and end of the entire team competition on each competition area. If there is a time constraint then subsequent Referee Teams should change as described in 5.1-5.4 or 5.5 -5.7 or 5.8-5.11.

In some instances the same team of referees may referee several team contests in a row. The team should still come off for a short rest in between each team contest.

9.2 Before the beginning of each team contest the referee and judges should follow 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4 and 3.5 (Formal Bow-In Protocol) if time allows. If there are many team contests and time is a factor, then the Section 5 bowing protocols (Top, Bottom or Top & Bottom) should be utilized. The referee and judges then step forward to the *Hajime* position. The judges should remain at the referee’s side.

9.3 Before each team contest starts, with the referee and judges lined up next to each other, with the referee in the center and the three officials facing towards the *joseki* approximately 4 feet in from the outside edge of the contest area (*Hajime* position). Each team will be lined up on the outside edge of the Contest area, the heaviest competitor closest to the referee and judges. The Referee may have to direct the teams to stand in the proper positions.

9.4 The referee will gesture for the two teams to bow together onto the contest area. They then move forward to their mark (blue or white), facing each other, the referee orders with both hands straight out and hands facing up and says *Shomen* (face front). Follow the

Japanese with English if Team Contests are not common in your area. Upon this gesture and verbal order, the contestants then turn to face the *joseki* remaining in single file.

9.5 The referee then announces *rei* and the contestants bow. The referee and judges do not bow.

9.6 Immediately after the bow the referee directs the competitors to face each other saying “*Otugai*” (Face each other). Follow the Japanese with English if team contests are not common in your area.

9.7 Again the referee orders *rei*, the teams bow towards each other and then they move back to the edge of the contest area and bow. The referee and judges do not bow. It is understood that the contestants may bow once more at the edge of the contest area before leaving completely. When the teams have moved to the edge of the contest area, the judges go to their chairs. The teams would leave the competition area. Then the first set of competitors (lightweight) would stand on the edge of the contest area to be invited in.

9.8 For each individual contest the contestants should follow 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 7.4 and 7.5 of these guidelines coming onto the contest area and 7.6, 7.7, 7.8 when leaving the contest area.

9.9 After all individual contests are finished the referee directs the two teams to line up inside the contest area on their mark (blue or white) facing each other. The referee and judges, with the referee in the center at the *Hajime* position, line up next to each other facing the *joseki*. The referee is then informed of the results of the team competition. The referee takes a step forward and gestures the winner.

9.10 The referee lowers their arm takes a step back, returning to the original position, and orders *rei*. The teams bow towards each other. The referee and judges do not bow.

9.11 Then the referee with the appropriate gesture and command *Shomen* (Face front) and order as in 9.4, directs the contestants to turn toward the *joseki*, remaining in single file.

9.12 Immediately the referee orders *rei* and in unison the contestants bow toward the *joseki*. The referee and judges do not bow.

9.13 It is allowable for a hand shake and exchange of gifts to take place at this point of the contest prior to their leaving the contest area. After this, the contestants should move back to the edge of the contest area and bow to each other in unison. It is understood that before completely leaving the competition area, the contestants may bow again towards the *joseki*, from the edge of the competition area.

9.14 When all the contestants have left the contest area, the referee and judges will bow in accordance with sections 8.1, 8.2, 8.3 and 8.4, if the full formal bowing procedure is adopted or they may bow according to section 5 if time is a factor.

Summary

The bowing etiquette sets Judo uniquely apart from other international sports. The gestures are of respect, appreciation and courtesy. The referee and judges have a fundamental role in upholding this uniqueness by ensuring that bowing is done according to these guidelines

2010.01 ☸ RETS/USRC (RJC)



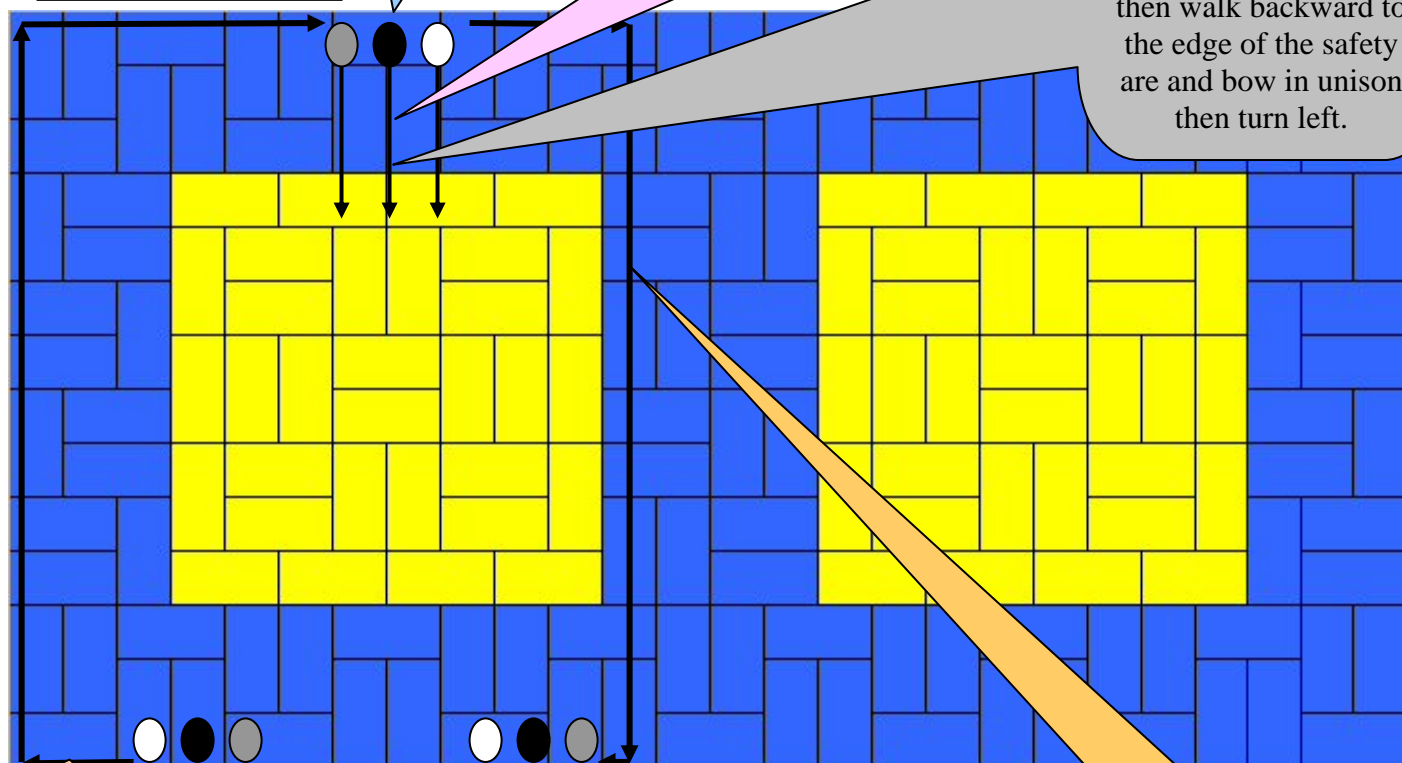
USA BOWING GUIDE DIAGRAM

3 When the referee team reaches the top central position they turn and face the Timekeepers table and bow in unison to the area.

4 The Referee Team would walk one meter into the contest area, bow in unison. The referee would take one step back, the judges would turn and face each other and bow in unison. They would then take their positions.

5 At the end of the session, the referee team would line up one meter inside the contest area, bow to joseki, then the referee would step back, the judges would turn and face each other and bow, then walk backward to the edge of the safety area and bow in unison then turn left.

TOP or FAR SIDE



2 The referee team turns left (clockwise) and proceeds in single file (judge, referee, judge) along the outside edge of the safety area (as long as there is no adjoining competition area. If there is, then they would walk on the inside edge.

1 The Referee Team steps onto the edge of the safety area and bows in at this position.

BOTTOM or NEAR SIDE

7 The referee team stops on the edge of the safety area to the right of the table and bows as a team then steps off the mat.

6 At the end of the session the referee team walks on the inside edge of the safety area if there is an adjoining area as there is in this layout. If there is no adjoining area then they would walk on the outside edge of the safety area.

2010.1 Approved by USA Judo Referee Commission
2010  Referee Education and Training Section