



## Lesson 1. Kamae | Stance Structure

### Terminology

**Kamae.** Standing position. The body formation for achieving Aikido goals, which is technically expressed in the positions of feet, pelvis, legs, spine and shoulders (arms). Suomin Aikido Academy term for this concept is the (mobile) stance structure. Usually, arms are also included in the mixture, but we treat this element as a separate concept.

**Uke.** Practice Partner. The one who honestly imitates attack or performs other functions (like in this lesson, where uke helps with presence to describe positioning). The concept “honestly” will be considered more thoroughly in the coming lessons.

**Nage.** Aikido Practitioner. The one, who performs an Aikido technique or an exercise.

**Marubashi.** Imaginary rope. The attack line. A single log bridge. Marubashi translates as bridge of life. Marubashi is a basic Japanese swordplay concept taken from one of the Japanese Schools of Swordsmanship and, therefore, not unique to Aikido. The idea of Marubashi is that two swordsmen meet on a log over an abyss. You cannot retreat or deviate to either side. You have to face your opponent.

We use this term to describe inevitability of conflict. Although you must avoid conflict at all costs, Marubashi says that there is a situation when you will have to experience attack.

**Gedan.** Lower part of the body, from belt area and beneath. At Suomin Aikido Academy, “Gedan” is also the name for the exercise, which is practiced to develop the appropriate stance structure.

**Funekogi Undo.** Exercise for center development. This exercise (taiso) has different names, serving different purposes. There is an opinion, that this exercise takes its origin from Misogi (purification with cold water) practice, which is known in Japan. This taiso is like a warm up exercise before cold water spilling on oneself. The Founder of Aikido used to practice Misogi, and adapted it into practice. An Aikido practitioner has to understand the reason for such adaptation. We use this exercise from the perspective of the center development, not as a warm up exercise or any other reason, serving for Misogi practice.

**Taiso** - *tai* (body) + *so* (hardening). This is a generic Japanese term for conditioning or an exercise. It can vary from stretching to very serious conditioning. Basically, it is any activity that helps you get (safely) prepared for some other activity.