

# JAPANESE REIKI TECHNIQUES



Shoden Level

# Introduction

There are two main traditions of Reiki, Traditional Japanese Reiki and Western Reiki. Each has its own characteristics, techniques, meditation, practices, methods etc...

It was not until the mid/late 1990's that Reiki practitioners in the West began hearing about what in time would come to be known collectively as the “Japanese Reiki Techniques” - a number of practices (some, self-development related, others, treatment-related) being used by modern-day Reiki practitioners in Japan, and claimed to have been part of Usui Reiki Ryoho since the early days.

In this eBook, you will find the relevant systems or schools of Traditional Japanese Reiki Techniques. These techniques were developed by master Usui and other Japanese masters and are taught to practitioners as part of the FIRST LEVEL of Reiki: Shoden.

Mikao Usui gave great importance to the use of Reiki as a tool for personal development. For this reason, the techniques listed further are divided into two groups: techniques for personal development, and techniques to treat others.

While not all who teach the “Japanese Reiki Techniques” agree as to exactly which technique should be taught at which level, the following is a basic guide:

- ❖ Gassho Mudra (meditation)
- ❖ Gassho Meiso
- ❖ Gassho Kokyu Ho
- ❖ Joshin Kokyu Ho
- ❖ Kenyoku Ho
- ❖ Makoto No Kokyu Ho
- ❖ Reiji Ho
- ❖ Nentatsu Ho
- ❖ Ketsueki Kokan Ho
- ❖ Zenshin Koketsu Ho
- ❖ Hanshin Koketsu ho
- ❖ Reiki Mawashi
- ❖ Shuchu Reiki
- ❖ Renzoku Reiki (Shodan)

Before moving on to the Level 1 techniques themselves, there are a couple of things the practitioner needs to become familiar with. These are **Seiza**, and the **Seika Tanden**.

**Seiza** is the term for the traditional Japanese kneeling/sitting on your heels posture. The formal version of this posture is used in many meditative and energetic development practices. To properly adopt the seiza position, you will need to remove your footwear. Once seated on your heels, place the big toe of one foot over the big toe of the other (underneath you), and spread your knees apart by approximately two hand-widths. Place your hands, palms down, on your thighs. Stretch your lower back upwards slightly, whilst relaxing your upper body. Tuck your chin in slightly. For certain practices you may need to close your eyes, (however, often it is better to only half-close your eyes as – especially in the early stages of training – this will help prevent you from drifting mentally).

**Seika Tanden**, an energetic point three-finger width below the belly button in the core of our belly (Hara in Japanese), provides a point on which we as practitioners can focus our attention. In Japanese it's variously known as *seika no itten*, *seika tanden* or *kikai tanden*. **Tanden** means “red rice field” or “red field.” This indicates a vast amount of powerful life force since rice is a primary source of nutrition and this is a whole field of it, glowing in red. **Seika** means “below the navel,” stressing the importance of always centering oneself there. Hawayo Takata referred to the Seika Tanden point herself when she wrote in her diary; “It lies in the bottom of your stomach about 2 inches below the navel” and how we must “let the energy come out from within.” Physically speaking it is the body's center of gravity.

# Techniques for Personal Development:

## ✳️ Gassho ✳️

The Japanese word Gassho refers to a mudra or ritual gesture formed by placing the hands - palms together, in the “prayer” or “praying hands” gesture and is the most fundamental and most frequently used of all the in-zou (mudras) in Buddhist practice. Gassho implies recognition of the oneness of all beings and is used variously to: express respect, generate a reverential attitude, prevent “scattering of attention”, bring the self into a state of dynamic balance, express the “One Mind” - totality: congruence of being.

### **GASSHO MUDRA:**

In the formal practice of Gassho, the hands are brought together in front of the face, fingers straight, palms pressing gently yet firmly together. The elbows are raised, forearms at about 30° angles to the floor; fingertips at about the same level as the eyes, but hands roughly a fist's distance in front of the tip of the nose. Eyes focus on the tips of the middle fingers.

Some people also perform Gassho with hands positioned in front of the chest at a level just above the heart. Yet others, with fingers positioned in front of the mouth - the fingertips at a level just below the nose. Yet others still, with the tips of the thumbs at the level of the “third eye”. It is said, “the higher the hands, the more reverential the intent”.

## ✳️ Gassho Meiso ✳️

GASSHO MEISO is generally performed seated in seiza. However, if you are unaccustomed to “sitting on heels”, most practices can be undertaken in other, more comfortably familiar postures such as the Lotus position. Gassho Meiso will train your perception of Reiki.

Close your eyes, let your hands rest in your lap, and center yourself: focus your awareness on your Seika Tanden. For a few moments, simply be - silently and restfully watching the breath: loosely focusing on the natural rhythms of your breathing. There is no interference with the natural process - no seeking to consciously breathe - merely to be aware that you are breathing effortlessly.

When you are ready, keeping your eyes closed, bring your hands together in Gassho. Gently move the focus of your awareness from Seika Tanden to where the pads of the middle fingers touch. Continue silently and restfully watching the breath. Forget everything else.

## ✳️ Gassho Kokyu Ho ✳️

Start by practicing Gassho Meiso. With your body still breathing effortlessly, be aware that as you inhale, the crystal-clear Reiki light is likewise being “breathed” in through your hands and pours straight into your Seika Tanden.

In the moment before your body begins to exhale, be aware of the light: feel it growing stronger and brighter in your Seika Tanden. As your body exhales, be aware that the crystal-clear Reiki light is being likewise being effortlessly “breathed” out from your Seika Tanden - and on out through your hands.

Stay with this process for as long as you feel drawn to so do.

## ✳️ Joshin Kokyu Ho ✳️

This meditation is based on direct work with Reiki energy and intentions. Joshin Kokyu Ho has at least two important effects. First, it can be used to improve the way you channel Reiki energy by opening and cleansing your energy channels. Second, this meditation is an important grounding practice that will build a foundation for your further spiritual development. Joshin Kokyu Ho can be practiced either seated on a chair, stool or bench, or in a cross-legged posture, or in the seiza posture. As with all the developmental practices, choose a time and place where you are unlikely to be disturbed. And wherever you are doing this exercise - indoors or out, make sure (if seated on the floor) the floor/ground is both comfortable and warm. Do not practice this on cold floors/ground, do not practice in the cold, generally.

Sit up straight (comfortably so - no need for rigid military-style posture - this will only impede the technique). Rest your hands, palms up, on your legs / in your lap. Close your eyes, let your hands rest in your lap, and center yourself: focus your awareness on your Seika Tanden. For a few moments, simply be - silently and restfully watching the breath: loosely focusing on the natural rhythms of your breathing. As you breathe in, your tongue touches your palate just behind your upper teeth, as you breathe out, relax your tongue. There is no interference with the natural process - no seeking to consciously breathe - merely to be aware that you are breathing effortlessly. After a few moments - with the focus of your awareness still at your Seika Tanden - in your mind's eye see and feel the Reiki energy flowing down from above, as a stream of crystal clear light. And as you breathe in - naturally, effortlessly - the light floods into your crown, and flows down throughout your body into your Seika Tanden.

In the moment before your body - naturally, effortlessly - begins to exhale, be aware of the light: feel it growing stronger and brighter, radiating throughout your entire body, dissolving and dissipating all trace of stress and negative tension, and supporting the positive energetic integrity of your entire being.

As your body exhales, be aware that you are emanating the light from every single pore - from the entire surface of your being - and the light radiates out in all directions to infinity. Continue in this “awareness of the light” for as long as you feel comfortable.

## ✳️ Kenyoku Ho ✳️

Kenyoku or “Dry Bathing” is an “energy cleansing” or “aura smoothing” practice. Spiritual cleansing is often neglected by many Reiki practitioners, yet it is an essential element of any spiritual practice. While regular self-healing sessions do some sort of “aura cleaning”, there is far more to cleansing than this. As, a stand-alone procedure, it is used to disconnect from people, things, thoughts, emotions, feelings, situations, energies, etc. Kenyoku Ho is focused on cleansing the upper part of your body – your torso, arms and hands, because these are the primary body parts that will interact with another person’s aura, or the energy field. From a more traditional perspective, Kenyoku Ho is meant to cleanse the upper body meridians and support both the healing process and increase the flow of energies, for example, before a Reiki treatment.

Kenyoku can be done either with actual physical contact or can be done “non-contact” just off the surface of the body, in the aura.

While allowing the breath to remain as effortless as possible, inhale through the nose and exhale through the mouth.

First, bring your right hand up to your left shoulder, the tips of your fingers at a point near where your collarbone ends, palm flat and facing the body. Move your hand diagonally down across your body from the left shoulder towards your right hip, in a smooth, measured, sweeping or brushing action

Next, bring your left hand up to your right shoulder, the tips of your fingers at a point near where your collarbone ends, palm flat and facing the body. Move your hand diagonally down across your body from the right shoulder towards your left hip, in a smooth, measured, sweeping or brushing action.

Again, bring your right hand up to your left shoulder, the tips of your fingers at a point near where your collarbone ends, palm flat and facing the body. Move your hand diagonally down across your body from the left shoulder towards your right hip, in a smooth, measured, sweeping or brushing action.

Then, placing your right hand on the edge of your left shoulder - with left arm held straight out in front of you - move your hand along the outside of your left arm, and down over the end of the fingers; repeat this with the left hand on right arm; repeat with right hand on left arm.

## ✳ Makoto No Kokyu Ho ✳

The “Breath of Sincerity”

Makoto No Kokyu Ho can be practiced seated on the floor in either a cross-legged posture or in the seiza posture, or seated on a bench, couch, or other wide surface.

As with all the developmental practices, choose a time and place where you are unlikely to be disturbed. And wherever you are doing this exercise - indoors or out, make sure (if seated on the floor) the floor/ground is both comfortable and warm. Do not practice this on cold floors/ground, do not practice in the cold, generally.

Sit up straight (comfortably so - no need for rigid military-style posture - this will only impede the technique). Rest your hands, palms up, on your legs / in your lap. Close your eyes, let your hands rest in your lap, and center yourself: focus your awareness on your Seika Tanden. For a few moments, simply be - silently and restfully watching the breath: loosely focusing on the natural rhythms of your breathing. After a few moments, gently open your eyes ever so slightly and focus loosely on a point about one meter or so in front of you. This can be either a point on the floor, or in the air - alternatively, prior to beginning the practice, you might like to position yourself so that you are facing a wall about a meter away from you.

### \*Breathing the Light\*

In your mind's-eye see and feel the Reiki energy flowing in towards you from the universe - flowing from every direction, as a stream of crystal clear golden light.

And as you breathe in - naturally, effortlessly - the light floods into you, suffusing your entire body, filling your Seika Tanden. As you breathe out, be aware that you are emanating the light from every single pore - from the entire surface of your being - and the light emanates out in all directions, bathing your immediate surroundings in a golden radiance.

Naturally, effortlessly, let your body repeat the process - the golden light following your breath. Stay with this experience - this “awareness of the light” for about eight or ten breaths; eyes still loosely focused about a meter in front of you.

After a moment, keeping the tips of your thumbs, index and middle fingers in contact with each other, open your hands outward slightly, so that your little (pinkie) and ring fingers separate - Allow your body to maintain its own natural breathing rhythm.

When you are ready, raise your hands from your legs and place your palms together in Gassho - the “prayer position” - fingertips at about the level of your throat. The outer edge of your palms should be at least a couple of inches apart.

Loosely maintaining this “open Gassho” gesture with your hands, smoothly lower your forearms to position your hands in front of your solar plexus.

Let your body “breathe the light” again for three effortless repetitions:

As you breathe in - naturally, effortlessly - the light floods into you, suffusing your entire body, filling your Seika Tanden. And as you breathe out for the third time, smoothly raise your hands up towards your forehead. As you do so, allow your hands

to gradually open even more - only the tips of your thumbs and index fingers remaining in contact - so that by the time you reach your forehead, you are performing a gesture known as the “sun mudra” or “sun-ring mudra” (nichi-rin in): The backs of your hands are opened flat against your brow, you are forming a triangular space between your index fingers and thumbs, and the other fingers are very slightly splayed. The center of the triangle frames your third eye. Coordinate the raising of your hands with your breathing so that your hands reach your forehead just as you complete the exhalation. Continue to let your body “breathe the light”, and as you inhale intone the seed-syllable "Om" (Japanese OM). While doing so, part your hands, moving them out and down to your sides in an arcing motion, bringing your fingertips to rest touching the floor or bench, etc. beneath you-. Coordinate the lowering of your hands with your breathing so that your fingertips reach the surface of the bench, floor etc. just as you complete the inhalation. Let your hands remain in this position while you effortlessly exhale again, emanating the light, bathing your immediate surroundings in a golden radiance.

As your body inhales once more, smoothly move your hands to your abdomen - placing your right hand on your Seika Tanden, your left hand covering your right.

Stay with the sensation for a few moments - let yourself experience it as fully as you are able. When you feel ready, return your hands to their initial position, palms down on your thighs. Repeat the whole process starting at: \*Breathing the Light\* again as many times as you feel inspired to so do.

When you recognize that enough has been achieved for the current session, perform Gassho Rei (the 'Gassho bow') acknowledging the light of Reiki within you.



# Techniques to Treat Others:

## ✳ Reiji Ho ✳

Reiji ('indication/guidance of the spirit') Ho is a practice - a 'ceremony' if you like to see it as such - to awaken your intuitive ability to discern energetic imbalances in a person's body/aura. Apparently, in Usui-Sensei's day, the ability to sense disturbances in this way was a requirement before a student could progress to level II training.

To perform Reiji Ho:

Stand or sit up straight (comfortably so). Rest your hands, palms down, on your thighs/in your lap. Close your eyes and center yourself: focus your awareness on your Seika Tanden. For a few moments, simply “be”-silently and restfully “watching the breath”: loosely focusing on the natural rhythms of your breathing. Perform Gassho and, consciously aware of Reiki, perform Joshin Kokyu Ho-releasing or transforming all negative stresses and tensions. Focused in Seika Tanden, “see” and feel the Reiki pervading and permeating your entire being-know that you are one with the phenomenon that is Reiki. For a few moments, simply “be” in this awareness.

Then, when you are ready, bring your hands up to your forehead in the Gassho position.

Silently ask / pray for healing and wellness to manifest throughout the person's entire being. Invite and allow Reiki to guide / draw your hands automatically to any areas that may need treatment. Allow your hands to move where they are drawn - let go - trust - resist the urge to “do”. When it comes to letting Reiki guide you, different people may receive their guidance in different ways. Some may simply experience pure spontaneous movement - as if being “pulled” magnetically; some may experience images in the mind's-eye of where treatment is needed; others may “hear” where Reiki is needed, and so on. When there are no more areas requiring treatment (or, as is sometimes the case, there are no areas at all requiring treatment) your hands will be guided to rest, palms down, on your thighs / in your lap.

Conclude Reiji Ho by once more performing Gassho.

## ✧ Nentatsu Ho ✧

Nentatsu Ho is sometimes referred to as a deprogramming technique. It is a method for transforming bad habits or inclinations & for “setting” positive intentions - such as focusing one’s energies towards a specific objective.

Close your eyes and center yourself: focus your awareness on your Seika Tanden. For a few moments, simply “be”-silently and restfully “watching the breath”: loosely focusing on the natural rhythms of your breathing. When you are ready, perform Gassho and make a statement of - something to the effect of: "Nentatsu begin", or "I start Nentatsu now"

Cover the client's occipital ridge (the protrusion where the skull meets the spine) with your dominant hand, letting Reiki flow. When you intuit it is time to move on to the next stage, leaving your dominant hand where it is, place your non-dominant hand on the client's forehead (at hairline). Let Reiki flow, and at the same time (silently) repeat an appropriate suggestion or affirmation. (The nature of the issue to be worked on/intent to be set - and the precise wording of the affirmations is something which should be decided upon in discussion with the client prior to treatment.

The suggestions/affirmations should always be worded in a positive sense).

Whatever the nature of the affirmations/suggestions you should mindfully state them, without judgement, and in an attitude of love, gratitude and compassion.

Continue this silent repetition for a few moments until you intuit it is time to desist.

End by performing Gassho once more.

The effects of Nentatsu Ho are cumulative in nature, and a series of treatments at frequent intervals is usually advised.

The following techniques, Ketsueki Kokan Ho, Hanshin Koketsu Ho & Zenshin Koketsu Ho are the so-called “blood-exchange” techniques – or, more properly blood CLEANSING techniques. There are several versions of these cleansing techniques taught in various “schools” of Reiki. Some only teach Hanshin Koketsu Ho & Zenshin Koketsu Ho.

## ★ Ketsueki Kokan Ho ★

It is often called the Finishing or Smoothing technique or Nerve Stroke.

The client should be lying on their front. Stand to one side of the client (which side you choose depends on which is your dominant hand-not necessarily the hand you write with, etc. but the hand you consider to be dominant - Reiki-wise).

You should stand so that your NON-dominant hand is nearest to the client's head.

Place your non-dominant hand flat across the occipital ridge (base of the skull) and place your dominant hand beside it, flat across the top of the client's spine (so that the spine is covered by your palm).

With firm intent - smoothly - and at a steady, even pace, stroke down the length of the spine to the tailbone.

DO NOT apply any pressure to the spine (you may in fact carry out this “sweep” without any actual physical contact - your hand placed some millimeters above the surface of the client's body).

When you reach the tailbone, lift your hand away from the client and return it to the starting position at the top of the spine. DO Not sweep back up the spine, rather, arc away from it.

Repeat the “sweep” another 14 times. On completion of the last sweep, rest your hand on the tailbone for about 15 -30 seconds and let Reiki flow - bringing the spinal energies into balance. This completes the process.

## ★Zenshin Koketsu Ho★

(Full Body Blood Cleansing)

The client should ideally be lying on their front (though the technique can be applied with the client lying on their back).

You will be working on each side of the client in turn. Which side you choose to work on first is up to you.

Place your non-dominant hand flat on the client's shoulder.

With firm intent - smoothly - and at a steady, even pace, stroke along the shoulder and down the length of the arm to the tips of the fingers.

DO NOT apply any pressure to the shoulder or arm (you may in fact carry out this “sweep” without any actual physical contact - your hand some millimeters above the surface of the client's body).

When you reach the fingertips, lift your hand away from the client and return it to the starting position at the top of the shoulder. DO Not sweep back up the arm, rather, arc away from it.

Repeat the 'sweep' another 14 times.

Moving to the other side of the client, repeat the process on their other shoulder and arm.

Next, move to a position close to the client's thigh, and placing your non-dominant hand on the outside of the client's hip, perform a stroke down the outside of their leg and along their foot to the tips of the toes. As with the arms, be mindful not to apply any pressure.

Repeat the 'sweep' another 14 times.

Moving to the other side of the client, repeat the process on their other hip and leg.

## ★Hanshin Koketsu Ho★

(Half Body Blood Cleansing)

The client should be either lying on their front or seated.

Place your hands at the base of the client's neck – one hand on either side of the spine. Each hand strokes outwards and down, tracing the line of the client's shoulders. Returning your hands to a position either side of the spine, though a few centimeters lower than previously, repeat this stroking gesture – hands moving outwards in a slight arc to the client's sides.

In this manner, gradually work your way down the client's back, a few centimeters at a time, stroking outwards from their spine to their sides.

It should ideally take between 10 and 15 sweeps to reach the area of the coccyx.

Next, placing your index and middle fingers (some suggest thumb and index, yet others, only the middle finger) of each hand on either side of the spine at the base of the client's neck, hold your breath and sweep steadily downwards to the clients coccyx.

DO NOT apply any pressure to the spine (the 'sweep' may be carried out without any actual physical contact).

Exhale and pause for a moment before repeating the sweep.

This should be done a total of between 10 and 15 times.

## ★Reiki Mawashi★

Reiki Mawashi is a group-based energy cycling meditation. It can also be used as a means of giving Reiki Treatment.

In the West, Reiki Mawashi is commonly referred to as the Reiki Circle as it involves a group of Reiki practitioners seated in a circle. There are two different practices known as Reiki Mawashi.

One involves the circle of practitioners seated so that each person is facing the back of the person in front of them. Placing their hands on the shoulders of the person in front, a slight pressure is applied with the fingertips, and the practitioners seek to lose themselves in the awareness of the energy flowing in from the person behind them and out to the person in front.

In the other Reiki Mawashi, each practitioner is seated facing in towards the center of the circle holding their left-hand palm up and their right-hand palm down. They place their right hand on the upward-facing left palm of the person to their right and their left hand under the downward-facing right palm of the person to their left. In some versions of this Reiki Mawashi, rather than making actual physical contact with the person on either side, the practitioners keep their hands an inch or two apart.

In this way, all the practitioners are connected, forming an unbroken chain or circle. Perceived as entering the crown of each practitioner, energy flows around the circle, in an anti-clockwise direction, and can frequently build to levels of considerable intensity.

## ✳ Schuchu Reiki ✳

Shuchu Reiki (also called Shudan Reiki) involves a group of Reiki practitioners working together on a single client at the same time. This can make for a shorter treatment time, and the intensity of the treatment is increased as more practitioners are involved. One version of the group treatment familiar in several western styles of Reiki involves an equal number of practitioners working on each side of the client's body, and one working at the head. While symmetry of treatment is the goal here, it is not necessary. If there are not enough people to cover all the positions when working on the front or back of the client, (especially when using a hand placement-set with many positions), then just as in a standard one-person treatment, the practitioners may move on to other positions in succession.

## ✳ Renzoku Reiki ✳

Renzoku Reiki – the Reiki Marathon (sometimes, perhaps more fittingly, also called the “Reiki Relay”) involves several practitioners working in “shifts”, i.e. taking turns at providing Reiki in a continuous treatment session - often spanning many hours, even days - to a single client

Renzoku Reiki may involve only one practitioner treating the client at a time, or alternatively, may involve several practitioners working together on each “shift” (see Shuchu Reiki).

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