

## Kyudo – Putting On a Kake

### Concept:

Kyudo, or Zen Archery, is a moving meditation that has been taught for hundreds of years. There are several different schools of Kyudo, each with a slightly different set of movements for shooting a yumi, or bow. The equipment is very similar between different schools of Kyudo.

Kyudoka, or practitioners, are required to wear a kake, a three-fingered leather glove, on the right hand for shooting. The kake is an “open” glove, that is, it is not closed by a seam like a winter glove for example. The glove has three fingers. The thumb is a wooden, leather-covered enclosure. There are leather coverings for the index and middle fingers. The right hand ring and little fingers are not covered by the glove.

A kake is usually worn with a separate cotton liner, or shitagake.

It is traditional for kyudoka to put on and take off their kake while facing either a makiwara, or target, or the shrine. Kyudoka may be kneeling or standing.

### Task:

These figures will be referred to by the instructions below.



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6



Figure 7



Figure 8

NOTE: If you will be changing clothes before shooting be sure to get dressed before putting on your kake.

NOTE: If you need to use the restroom before shooting, do that before putting on your kake.

WARNING: Never touch inside of the kake fingers with your bare hands. The oils from your hands will transfer to the leather and create a slick surface. This will be dangerous for shooting. Use rosin on your kake to make sure you have a solid grip between the thumb and middle finger.

Follow these steps to put on a kake in preparation for shooting.

1. Your kake may be stored and wrapped in a manner similar to that in Figure 8.
2. Grasp the kake with your right hand on the wrist leather, with your thumb in the same direction as the fingers of the kake with the kake thumb down.
3. Loosen the purple himo and unwind it with your left hand without moving the kake. Allow the strap to gently drop. The kake will now be open as in Figure 1.
4. You should now put on your shitagake, see Figure 2. If you are kneeling you may place the kake on the floor in front of you to put on the shitagake. If you are standing, while holding the kake with your left hand at the intersection of the strap and the kake, put on the shitagake.
5. Continue to hold the kake with your left hand at the intersection of the strap and the kake. Spread open the kake and insert your hand into the kake between the himo and the glove, see Figure 3.
6. Make sure your fingers are securely in the kake, see Figure 4.
7. Pull on the himo to tighten, you want it to be secure but not overly tight.
8. Wrap the himo around the wrist maintaining enough tension to secure the kake, see Figure 5.
9. When you have about 10" to 12" of himo remaining, tuck the himo under the wrapping, all layers, in the fingers to wrist direction, at a right angle to the first wrist wrapping, see Figure 6.
10. Continue to wrap the himo around the first wrapping until you have 6" to 8" remaining.
11. Finish the wrap by pulling a little extra himo for a loop on the top of the wrappings and a little extra himo to make a small loop at the wrist. The point of the himo is pointing towards the fingers, see Figures 7 and 8.

The kake is now securely on your right hand and ready for shooting.

**Reference:** [this glossary is more expansive than needed for just this concept so that the glossary can be reused]

**Glossary:**

ashibumi	aligning the feet and body with the target in preparation for shooting
dozokuri	setting the body, stabilizing and verifying the alignment of the body from shoulders to hips to feet, notice and align your posture
gi	shirt, part of the uniform; not required
hakama	skirt, part of the uniform as skirt or split skirt; not required
hikitori	drawing the bow; push, pull, push, pull about 70% push, 30% pull
himo	kake strap
hanare	the release
kai	the position of full draw
kake	glove, right-handed, required for shooting, also known as yugake
kyudo	Japanese or Zen archery, Way of the Bow
kyudoka	expert kyudo practioner, in America we call everyone kyudoka, even newbies
makiwara	target; indoor, close-range target, traditionally a hay bale
seven coordinations	a term used for the combination of these movements: ashibumi, dozokuri, yumigamae, uchiokoshi, hikitori, kai, hanare
shitagake	cotton liner to wear under kake
tsuru	yumi string
uchiokoshi	raising the yumi
ya	arrow
yumi	bow
yumidaoshi	lowering of the yumi
yumigamae	readying the yumi
zanshin	a moment of reflection after the release

[The images I've used here are my own.]