

Weapons Protocol

What is a weapon?

In this protocol the term weapon refers to any implement, with or without a blade, that is created to inflict injury on another person and is used in martial arts training.

Training equipment

Only use appropriate and good quality training equipment.

Learn how to select, test, use and maintain your equipment.

Check equipment before and after each practice session, note any changes in condition and repair or destroy as appropriate.

Do not use damaged or weakened equipment when practising with or near other people.

Store and maintain equipment well, so that it will stay in good condition.

When not in use, secure equipment appropriately.

Even when using a wooden weapon, the same weapons safety protocols apply.

When a *live blade* is used (whether or not the edge is sharp) an even higher duty of care should be applied.

Weapons Handling

When using weapons in either a training or demonstration capacity, always maintain an appropriate and safe distance between the weapons and any other person – whether it is other members of the club or members of the public.

Instructing weapons

Only qualified persons should instruct others or conduct classes using weapons.

Check your insurance policy to confirm it covers you for the use of weapons training.

The training should be appropriate to the experience and ability level of the students.

Where available, wooden weapons should be used for general class practise.

Individual responsibility

Weapons training in martial arts is a serious martial pursuit requiring individual responsibility, understanding and integrity. Always exercise your commonsense when handling weapons of any sort.

Maintain familiarity with the IMAC weapons safety protocol as it may be updated from time to time.

Check your insurance policy to confirm it covers you for the use of weapons training.

Always comply with your instructor's instructions and guidelines.

Always maintain a serious and courteous attitude in training.

Maintain an exceptional level of awareness of the space and people around you.

Do not lend your weapon to another person, unless you know the person to whom you are lending it and that they are also trained in it's use and know and understand the *Weapons Safety Protocol*.

Do not pass your weapon around for 'viewing' unless it is in a controlled training environment and the *Safety Practice Rules* have been first explained.

Repair or dispose of weakened or damaged weapons which become damaged in training. Never use a weapon that is weakened or damaged.

Observe the club/dojo rules about who is permitted or when it is permitted to do weapons training.

Never use or borrow equipment without the owners permission.

Transporting weapons

When carrying weapons in public they must be carried in a secure bag or case; they must be as concealed as is practical (depending on the weapon) and they must be packed in such a manner to ensure that they cannot be drawn in haste or anger – by either the owner or any other person.

If weapons are being transported, every effort should be made to ensure that they are in transit for the shortest practical time.

The use of weapons in public demonstrations is not recommended except by or under the direct supervision of senior instructors. Use of weapons in public may require Garda notification.

Persons going abroad with training weapons must acquaint themselves with the carrier's rules and regulations for the transportation of weapons.

Persons going abroad should acquaint themselves with the law of their host country as it may differ from Irish Law. Ignorance of the Law either at home or abroad, is no defence for irresponsible or illegal behaviour.

Please note that this protocol is not an interpretation of *Irish Law* and is not a substitute for seeking professional legal advice.

THE FIREARMS AND OFFENSIVE WEAPONS ACT, 1990 PART 3 OFFENSIVE WEAPONS

9.- (1) Subject to subsections (2) and (3) where a person has with him in any public place any knife or any other article which has a blade or which is sharply pointed, he shall be guilty of an offence.

(2) It shall be a defence for a person charged with an offence under subsection (1) to prove that he had good reason or lawful authority for having the article with him in a public place.

(3) Without prejudice to the generality of subsection (2), it shall be a defence for a person charged with an offence under subsection (1) to prove that he had the article with him for use at work or for a recreational purpose.