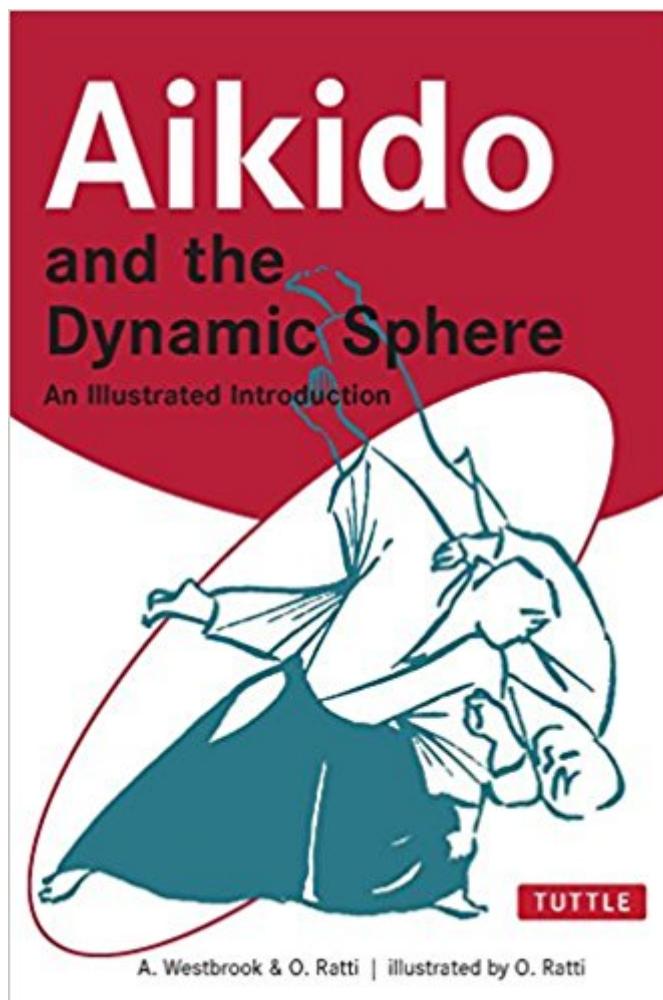


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Aikido And The Dynamic Sphere: An Illustrated Introduction



Synopsis

Aikido and the Dynamic Sphere: An Illustrated Introduction provides a complete foundation in the practice of one of the most distinctive and effective Japanese martial arts. Aikido was created in Japan in the 1920's by Morihei Ueshiba, also known as Osensei. To possess the skills, techniques and attitude of the true practitioner of aikido, one must achieve a very high level of integration of the powers of mind and body, the harmonious combination of physical means and ethical motives. By controlling body position and learning how to harmonize vital physical and mental powers, anyone (regardless of size, strength or weight) can fend off attacks using this sophisticated martial art. Written and illustrated by husband/wife team, Oscar Ratti and Adele Westbrook, Aikido and the Dynamic Sphere, with over 1,200 illustrations, includes many Aikido techniques in chapters such as: What is Aikido? The Foundations of Aikido The Practice of Aikido The Basic Techniques of Neutralization Advanced Practice And more!

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Customer Reviews

If you wish to learn the art of Aikido and could only have one book; this would be it. It is effectively illustrated, better than photos. From history and theory, dojo etiquette and fundamental techniques of defense...all is covered. This book will give you broad overview of the mental and spiritual underpinnings of Aikido as a whole. Must have this book in every library.

Ever since age, 5; I've been an absolutely avid collector of martial arts books; believe me, I've

collected tons; honestly, this one is 'THE BEST!' I brought this book when I was aged, 14/I'm now aged, 36. I go back and refer to this book, at least, once, for every single fortnight of my entire life! The book introduced me to the art of Aikido; it is, truly, the Aikido bible! Explaining Aikido on every possible level, techniques/history/philosophy. It, immediately, got me hooked on Aikido, furthermore. I used to think all martial arts were like beat em up/but, this book taught me, otherwise/martial arts is not about offence/but, self-defence, physical skill based on clear scientific principles/ furthermore, wisdom, deep spirituality; and, finally, enlightenment. I no longer want to beat up people; instead, I now wish only to save them!

This is perhaps best book for bringing the beginner up to speed when practicing Aikido. The many excellent illustrations make for particularly easy understanding of the movements that make up Aikido. This is an important book to have on hand in order to lessen the frustration of early practice and serves to answer some of the questions that the student may have, but may not be able to ask his or her teacher. This book sets itself apart from other works on Aikido in its approach to the philosophical side of Aikido. The western analytical approach is not ignored, and neither is the eastern/oriental. The authors have produced a synergy that makes sense from both an ancient martial arts tradition perspective and the perspective of the American or European student. Key concepts are appropriately highlighted throughout, and there is ample material for advanced practice. The fine illustrations make this an art book of the highest quality. This is a marvelously well rounded book and is highly recommended for both beginners and not-so beginning beginners.

I really enjoy reading this book. Note the present tense here, as this is a book I often pick up and re-read sections of. The first time I read part of it a few years ago, I found it very 'academic' and thought it difficult to understand, but that was before I began to practice aikido. Since then, I still find it a little 'bookish', but now have some physical experience to match with what the authors were attempting to describe. I think that this is one of the only books that attempts to systematize aikido training, or at least systematize some of the various techniques used in aikido. It provides a great under-pinning to ones mat-work by putting a bit of theoretical base and structure to what you learn while on the mat. I only gave this a 3-star because I think it could do with a bit of spruce-up given that it has been over 20 years since it was first published, and much has happened in the world of aikido since then. This is definitely not a work that a beginner will get much out of at first, but should be part of any serious practitioner's collection!

Though I am not an Aikido practitioner I have been involved in Martial Arts for most of my life and most of the instructional books available simply do not convey the necessary information in any usable way. Ratti and Westbrook took the time to make this as thorough as possible and it is the finest instructional manual for any Martial Art that I have ever seen. However, like all books, videos etc. I only recommend this material to someone with a strong Martial Arts background.

Last month I started aikido lessons at age 30, with no previous martial arts experience whatsoever. I chose aikido because of its pacifist nature, which I learned about, albeit superficially, while doing a little bit of internet research. It didn't hurt that the dojo was in walking distance from my apartment. When I stepped into my first class, though, I felt like I was drowning, figuratively. The senior students were throwing around Japanese phrases left and right, and I was embarrassingly ignorant about the rituals. And there are lots of rituals. Believe me. I decided after my first class that I needed a book that would 1) explain the basics of each exercise, 2) have a glossary of Japanese terms used in aikido, and, most importantly, 3) describe the rituals in a typical aikido class and what they're all about. This book has all these things. It turned out to be an ideal supplement to what I'm learning in class. The only thing that prevents me from giving this book five stars, however, is that the, um, excessive style of writing is irritating at points. An example: "The practice then is the way along which a man can proceed from the basic, utilitarian consideration of learning an efficient means of self-defense which will follow certain ethical guidelines, to the 'high country' where the art becomes a Discipline of Coordination [sic] aimed at the harmonizing of opposites or alternates- not an art bent on or resulting in destruction, individual or wholesale." Quickly, someone, take away that man's thesaurus...

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