

# Sesshin at Dai Bosatsu Zendo: What to Expect

Sesshin literally means to collect one's heart/mind. We hold six sesshins a year. Each offers a unique opportunity free from distraction so we can focus our attention on the practice of meditation. Most people find sesshin a rewarding, as well as challenging part of their practice.

We sit zazen approximately 10-12 hours a day. Each period is 40 to 50 minutes in length. The duration and intensity of sitting during sesshin can cause discomfort and pain for even the most experienced and physically fit participants. If you do not have an established sitting meditation practice, it is best to attend an Intro to Zen Weekend before registering for sesshin.

Wake-up is at 4:30 AM and we sit until 10:00 PM each evening. Many participants begin sitting before the wakeup bell and continue past the end of the structured schedule. There is virtually no free time except for breaks after the meals. We maintain silence during sesshin, avoiding all verbal and non-verbal interactions with other participants. We endeavor to stay quiet in all our activities. Other than emergency situations we have is no contact with the outside world.

Part of the profound sesshin atmosphere comes from each individual's efforts to act in concert with others. As we all observe the same Zendo and eating forms, harmony is increased and distraction is reduced.

Dokusan is a formal, one-to-one meeting with Abbot Shinge Roshi. Each participant has three opportunities a day for Dokusan. Part of the preciousness of sesshin comes from the personal instruction given during these meetings. The intensity of sesshin comes from the potent combination of zazen, silence and frequent Dokusan.

Students attending sesshin at Dai Bosatsu Zendo for the first time participate in a traditional ceremony of Shoken, where they formally ask to begin a teacher-student relationship with Shinge Roshi. The Shoken ceremony occurs on the first full day of sesshin. From that point forward, first-time participants are considered Shinge Roshi's students, and as such they are admitted into all Dokusan. To celebrate the significance of this first meeting, Shoken students make a \$25 incense donation, which is used to purchase ceremonial incense.

Sleeping accommodations at the monastery are small, simple bedrooms with futons, often shared with one to three other participants. We provide linens. You can request a private room for an additional \$50 fee. Call two to three weeks ahead of time, always subject to availability.

# Dai Bosatsu Zendo Kongo-ji

## Sample Sesshin Schedule

(please be aware the specific sesshin you attend may have a different ending time)

### Arrival Day

4:00pm	Orientation for First-Time Sesshin Participants
6:00	Formal Supper
7:20	Shinrei (go to Zendo)
7:30	Formal Tea, Opening Exhortations and Sesshin Cautions, Zazen
~9:00	Kaichin (Closing) Dokusan Orientation Yaza (unstructured sitting)

### Days 1 – 5 or 7

4:30am	Kaijo (wake up bell, be in Zendo <b>before</b> 4:50)
4:50	Fast Kinhin (walking meditation)
5:00	Choka (morning service), Kinhin (walking meditation), Sarei (formal tea), Zazen Unstructured Dokusan (one-to-one meetings with the Roshi)
7:30	Shukuza (formal breakfast)
8:15 – 9:00	Nittensoji (monastery cleaning)
9:20	Shinrei
9:30	Sutra Chanting, Zazen, Kinhin, Dokusan
12:00pm	Saiza (formal lunch)
1:30	Sarei, Zazen
2:30	Teisho by Shinge Roshi or Dharma Talk
4:15	Zazen, optional yoga in library
5:00	Yakuseki (formal supper) Optional showers: Women: Days 1, 3, 5 Men: Days 2, 4, 6
6:50	Shinrei
7:00	Teidai Denpo Chanting, Zazen, Kinhin, Dokusan
10:00	Kaichin (closing) Yaza (unstructured sitting)

### Departure Day

4:30 am	Kaijo (wake-up bell, be in the Zendo <b>before</b> 4:50)
4:50	Fast Kinhin
5:00	Choka, Sarei, Zazen, Unstructured Dokusan
7:30	Shukuza (formal breakfast)
8:00 – 8:40	Nittensoji (monastery cleaning)
8:50	Shinrei
9:00	Sutra Chanting, Zazen, Dokusan
~12:00	Closing Ceremony, Sozarei Room Cleaning
~1:00	Informal Lunch
	Meal Cleanup
~2:00	Departure

You are welcome to stay overnight.