

Creating Koshi

written by Dan Penrod - May 23rd, 2005

I love koshinage, the hip throw. I used to throw koshinage into as many classes as possible regardless of the theme for the night. A student once wrote me an email asking how I seem to know so many variations of koshinage and how she could ever be expected to learn that many variations. Not just learn them, but remember them and be able to reproduce them on demand.



I wrote back and discussed the method I'd stumbled on to years ago. The day this method dawned on me it was like a flash of satori... the earth shook, bathed in golden light, I was suddenly enlightened. Okay... so I wasn't really *enlightened*... but koshis *were* a little bit easier. What follows is basically my email I reply to her.

Essentially there's a core set of koshinage that you find by virtue of *well-known techniques*. This is by no means an exhaustive list of koshinage techniques, but these koshi are easily found through common techniques such as ikkyo, nikyo, sankyo, etc... It's important to note, I've associated the koshi variations with *techniques*, not *attacks*. The premise is that you can do basic techniques, like ikkyo for example, from any attack; shomen uchi, yokomen uchi, tsuki, katate dori, kosa dori, kata dori, ryote mochi, ushiro ryote dori, ushiro kubi shime, etc, etc... because this is kihon waza that you are regularly tested on. Therefore, if you can do an ikkyo from any of these attacks... and you learn the ikkyo style koshi... it follows that you can do an ikkyo style koshi from any attack... which is kind of cool. This principle extends on to the rest of the koshi; nikyo koshi, sankyo koshi, yonkyo koshi, kotegaeshi koshi, iriminage koshi... and is ultimately limited only by your own imagination.

The mistake that most people make (and the genius of this principle) is that people usually puzzle over how to do the koshinage based on the *attack*. *How do I*, for example, *perform koshinage from ryotedori* (two handed grab)? Then they proceed to try to memorize one

koshinage for every attack. When they try to recover these memorized techniques during the stress of a test they invariably stumble as they try to recall the specific koshinage waza for the particular obscure attack requested. By thinking, instead, in terms of the technique (ikkyo, nikyo, sankyo, yonkyo, kotegaeshi, iriminage, etc...) you can easily discover, not just 1, but 2, 3, 4, 5, or more koshinage responses to every attack.

Examples of several of koshinage discussed below, including straight koshi, sankyo koshi, kotegaeshi koshi and ikkyo koshi can be observed on our [YouTube Koshinage video](#) from 2001.

Let's begin by looking at some fundamental aikido movement and the associated koshinage.

- **Straight Koshi:** This is the simplest koshinage to visualize as well as execute. The movement involves simply stepping inside the attack and rotating the hips into position. It's often referred to as [O-Goshi](#) or *Big Hip* in judo and refers to simply reaching your hand back around your partner's waist (on the belt), loading your partner onto your hip, and throwing. This is easily received from a shomen or yokomen strike using the standard inside forearm to receive the attack allowing the other hand to slip around the back of your partner's belt. It's easy to imagine how this would be similarly received from a katatedori wrist grab or katadori / mune dori (collar or sleeve) grab. This hip throw is in the category of omote koshi or front-side koshi.
- **Ikkyo Koshi:** To visualize this koshi, imagine receiving a shomen attack and performing ikkyo (irimi omote) tipping Uke at the waist. Allow Uke to regain posture and slip your hip under Uke's abdomen... your feet between Uke's feet... free hand slips around Uke's back on the belt line. Load on the inside (near) hip and throw. In other words, you use the inherent off-balancing of ikkyo to create the opportunity to slip into the same basic O-Goshi described above. A really nice variation on this is to do the same thing, but as Uke recovers, encourage their natural recovery movement to come up and over-compensate, bending now in the other direction, rotate your hips 180 degrees and throw on the opposite hip. Once you begin to understand how easy these two koshis are from ikkyo you can start to discover how to use ikkyo from every other attack to set up the exact same two koshinage.
- **Nikyo Koshi:** This one might be received from a shomen or chudan or jodan tsuki. Receive the attack with the cross-hand reaching over the top of the attacking punch, cutting down. As you place your right hand over the back of your partners punching right hand and begin to bend your partners wrist you've secured an irimi nikyo. Lead Uke's elbow up and over, bending their waist. This is very similar to ikkyo movement except you have the back of their hand rather than pressing from the front of their hand

as in ikkyo. Simply execute the same two koshinage described under ikkyo koshi, enter and fit for the throw as Uke raises to correct his posture while the free hand goes to the belt line.

- **Sankyo Koshi:** This technique can be entered into in a number of different ways. From a shomen you can take it from ikkyo, then into sankyo. Alternatively you can step to the outside and connect with cross-hand into sankyo, ducking under your partner's arm. From a tsuki thrust you might go to nikyo described above and then into the sankyo. From katatedori wrist grab you might go into katatedori ikkyo, then into sankyo. Finding the sankyo from any attack is left as an exercise to the reader, but basically falls under kihon waza (basic technique). In each of these cases, leverage the sankyo to lead Uke behind you for this ura-style koshi



- variation. The goal is to lead Uke over your lower back hips, behind you, positioning Uke's spine to be perpendicular to your own spine. Your arms stretch out at right angles to yourself, parallel to your partner, stretching your partner over your back into the fit.
- **Yonkyo Koshi:** Yonkyo style koshi is easily found from ryotedori, katatedori, and kosadori. Essentially, as Uke grabs your wrist you should turn your wrist to receive the grab palm up so you can catch your partner in the yonkyo grip. Next, you turn your back to Uke while at the same time waving yonkyo past your forehead, effectively slipping under their arm and stretching them over your back. This is an ura-style of koshinage.
- **Shihonage Koshi:** The shihonage koshi is nothing more than fitting for a shihonage and then rather than throwing as usual, the objective is to fit your hips into place, catching the front of Uke's hip... not the back of their hip. This koshi can make for very tricky Ukemi and a lot of people don't like this throw for that very reason. The throw is safe if you're throwing a confident Uke... so long as you throw them correctly. Be very careful not to throw them over their backs by accidentally fitting to the back side of their hips.
- **Kotegaeshi Koshi:** Taken commonly from a mune tsuki thrust attack, the fit is setup with a one-handed kotegaeshi nage movement. The free hand circles around Uke's waist just like we did in the ikkyo koshi. The kotegaeshi opens your partner up, exposing his waist to your koshi as you take his balance. As with all the previous techniques, the attack shouldn't matter. Your objective is to find the kotegaeshi from whatever attack is provided and then slip into this koshi.

- **Iriminage Koshi:** Classic iriminage (tenkan), found from any attack, is used here. At the point before the throw in a classic irimi nage you encourage Uke to turn in toward you, presenting his front hip for you to attack with your koshi. Again, one hand slips behind the waist. This koshi is really a form of henka waza (recovering a technique) when your partner foils your irimi nage by turning to face you or you fail to stay behind your partner. Imagine Uke's surprise when they think they've blocked your irimi, only to fall into your koshi.



Here are a couple of important things to consider...

- Most of the koshi throws discussed here are done by fitting with an omote (across the front) movement with the exception of the sankyo and yonkyo koshi which can be thought of as ura (behind) relative to yourself. There are basically front koshi's (omote) and rear koshi's (ura). A rule of thumb: if your partner's face flies past your face as you're throwing him in koshi... it is most likely an omote-style koshi. In contrast, if your partner's face flies behind your head as you're throwing him... it's likely an ura-style koshi. Sankyo almost always sets up an ura-style koshi, but any technique where you're ducking under an arm will generally result in an ura koshi.
- All of the omote-style koshi's outlined here use the O-Goshi (Big Hip Throw) technique, where we wrap the free hand around our partner's belt line. There are judo variations where we move through our partners shoulder (under the armpit) or over the shoulder, through the head or neck. These variations can be very compelling (if not downright scary) when moving quickly, but I usually prefer the basic mechanics and leverage of using the waist.



- Because we often focus on about 4 primary generic attacks; shomen uchi, yokomen uchi, tsuki, and katate dori, it's useful to familiarize yourself with the kihon waza allowing you to perform the standard techniques (shomen uchi ikkyo, nikyo, sankyo, etc...) from these attacks. By sufficiently generalizing these attacks we then discover the similarity and relationships of more secondary attacks, such as kosa dori (cross hand grab), ryote dori (2 on 2 hands), ryote mochi (2 on 1 hand), ushiro ryote dori and kubishime. For example...



- The movement of **kosa dori** is closely related to **shomen uchi**. Imagine a kosa dori ikkyo and a shomen uchi ikkyo to see this relationship.
- **Ryote dori** is clearly a variation of **katate dori**, but with both hands. This effectively doubles your opportunity for katate dori techniques.
- **Ryote mochi** is a variation of **katate dori** and **kosa dori** at the same time, providing opportunity to respond to either type of attack, both on one hand.
- Most **ushiro** techniques are variations of **kosa dori** and can be treated as such.

Understanding these relationships should provide the backward connection to finding the koshi from all attacks.

There are many more possible koshinage throws available to explore. This doesn't begin to explore the variations of koshi nage found, for example, in judo.

Hiroshi Ikeda Sensei's DVD, entitled simply "**Koshi**", is an excellent reference of koshinage techniques and principles.



However, this article makes a good starting point... a subset to focus on to understand the foundation of discovering koshi. Good luck with your own exploration, discovering the hidden opportunities of koshinage.