

Sangha Accoutrements

All accoutrements provided through Anattasati Magga Sangha are intended as practical means of training. The Mala, the single Key, the stole and jacket - all of these remind us of our mindfulness practice. In our use and care of them we find opportunities to promote attentiveness, focus and compassionate action.

The accoutrements provide a sameness in which the self is quieted when it seeks uniqueness. When we see ourselves mirrored in other Sangha members, we work to let go of the arising of any desire to be different or special. Also, these accoutrements, when seen on one another, remind us that we are all training and that we support one another in this training.

In general, you may wear the jacket, mala, stole & rakusu:

- In individual time with the teacher (dokusan);
- When the Sangha meets alone;
- When meditating at home;
- When following a retreat schedule at home;
- On Sangha retreats and practice days;
- In on-going Dharma classes;
- When attending another Sangha
- When attending Dharma trainings in other temples, monasteries and meditation centers.

You may (although it is not required) wear the jacket, mala, stole & rakusu to any meditation event where persons other than the Sangha are invited.

The Lay Jacket

You may put it on before any Anattasati Magga meditation.

At Sangha gatherings such as dharma groups, dokusan, retreats and practice days, you may wear the jacket to the gathering or bring it to put on at the gathering. You may continue to wear it as you leave, or you may take it off first. The lay jacket should be removed for messy or rough work.

The jacket is sized to allow for variety of under layers; always wear something dark (purple, gray or black) under the jacket. It is not necessary to button the jacket, and the sleeves may be worn rolled up and down to any point you choose. When wearing your jacket, always wear white, black or no socks. Jewelry should not be worn with the jacket. It is important to keep the jacket clean and in good repair and to put it away with care, either hanging or folded, in a set place.

The Sangha Mala

The Mala may be put on in the morning after the Daily Recitation. It may be worn all day on retreats or practice days, except during messy or rough work. Take it off after the last meditation of the day and place it in readiness for the next Morning Service or Daily Recitation. It is good to have a set place of rest for your Mala.

The Sangha Stole /Rakusu

The stole or rakusu may be put on after the Recommitment Statement in the Morning Service. It may be worn all day on retreats or practice days, except during messy or rough work and when using the bathroom. The stole or rakusu should be shifted to hang down your back for meals and for moderately messy work. Wear your stole or rakusu for dokusan. It is to be taken off after the last meditation and placed in readiness for the next Morning Service. As with the Mala, it is good to have a set place for your stole or rakusu.

The Single Key

You may choose to wear the Key at all times except when bathing. It may be worn under or outside your clothing. If you choose to wear the key outside your clothing, be willing and prepared to truthfully answer questions about what it means to you. The key should be removed for messy or rough work. It is good to have a set place for your Key.



Symbology of the Key

The single Key is worn as the reminder of our willingness to live and train by the Precepts we undertake with Lay Ordination. There is specific symbolism on the Key:

- The overall triangular shape and the 3 diamonds -one in each corner- represent the Triple Treasure of this path: Buddha - awakening; Dharma - the teachings; and Sangha - those who train and study Dharma together.
- The four layers of color - starting from the outside edge of gold and moving inward through black, gold, then white - represent the Four Noble Truths.
- The eight petals of the Lotus denote the Eight-Fold Path.
- The Lotus blossom symbolizes the purity and compassion revealed when attachments to greed, anger and delusion are transcended - the lotus flower blossoms after its stem rises through and above the muddy water in which the plant is rooted.