

KOZERIAI

Skirmishing in Old Japan



STONE PAPER
SCISSORS

KOZERIAI

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Version 1.01

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INTRODUCTION

In designing this game I was faced with the usual dilemma concerning personal combat rules in trying to reflect the detail of using the colourful variety of exotic weapons to be found in Japan. Games which try to cater for a blow by blow resolution of combat are usually slow moving and unwieldy - and rarely cope well with group actions as a result.

For these rules I decided to concentrate instead on movement and positioning and reduce the clash of blades to a simple comparative die roll.

To do well in this game you need to ensure that you understand the strengths of your own weapon and the weaknesses of your enemy's - proper positioning is vital, outnumbering essential. In an equal man-to-man fight the results are usually very unpredictable, and can swing very suddenly and fatally one way or another.

It is important to note that the combat I have tried to reflect here is based on the sources available in English and my own practical experience with some of these weapons. Outnumbering is a serious disadvantage for all but the best fighters.

As mentioned above the rules ignore the close detail of weapon handling because I do not think it can be adequately handled in an abstract game.

If you want to experience the minutiae of combat I suggest you join a fencing class or Kendo school - it is by far the best way!

Jim Wallman
Folkestone 2022



PLAYING THE GAME

This is a game intended for face to face play using miniatures. The playing area is a hex map, with one hex representing the space a single figure occupies.

The game is entirely suitable for multiple-player games (in fact these are by far the best sort of games).

Each player commands a group of figures, ideally at least three and no more than eight. The game is intended to be about interactions between small groups and will slow down disproportionately if you try to play with very large numbers of figures. A re-enactment of The Seven Samurai would represent the upper limit of game size.



The game rules are simple and not exhaustive. They are intended for entertaining gameplay among friends for whom the narrative of the game is more important than the simplistic notions of winning or losing. As the proverb goes 負けるが勝ち Makeru ga kachi "To lose is to win."

A note on dice. These rules just use d10 dice. However in a break with the mainstream, the number 0 on the die represents what it shows, i.e. the number zero, not '10' (why everyone else calls '0' a '10' remains baffling).

We realise this might represent an element of wargaming culture shock for many players - but old Japan is a different culture so a bit of cultural dissonance is only to be expected!

CHARACTERISTICS

"A warrior is a person who does things quickly."

Hagakure

Every figure in the game has two characteristics Weapon Skill, and Resilience:

Weapon Skill.

This is a whole number which can be of any value, positive or negative, and represents the relative skill with a given weapon. Normally the number will be between 0 and 10; where 0 is an absolute beginner and 10 a Master. As a general guide, Samurai mostly rate as +3 or +4, ashigaru as +1 or +2 and peasants as 0 or +1.

Resilience

Put in the simplest terms this is how hard they are to kill. Resilience is expressed in terms of 'wounds'. A typical fighter can receive 5 wounds, and on the sixth wound they are considered dead (or at least unable to continue fighting).

Example Character Statistics

Samurai

A samurai is the retainer of a clan and part of an established military structure within that clan. All samurai would have skill in the sword – but some might have specialised in spear or bow as well. For a samurai figure chose the weapon they are best at. Other secondary weapons will have a 2 lower score.

So a samurai specialising in the bow would be **Bow +4, Sword +2 or Spear +2** and with spear would be **Spear +4, bow +2, sword +2** and so on.

Ronin

Masterless samurai could vary very widely in skill and experience. But the lack of opportunities to train means we score their skills are little lower than a samurai belonging to a clan.

Main weapon skill +3, secondary weapon skill +1

Ashigaru Spearman

Ashigaru spearmen were the backbone of most armies and important support for the samurai. From common stock they could become very skilled from the endless wars. Ashigaru would not usually fight with a sword, though some probably did. Ashigaru would not normally use bows (as the bow is a noble weapon and therefore generally kept to the samurai).

Weapon skill : +2 spear +0 sword

Ashigaru Musketeer

In the later periods the musket become the second most common ashigaru weapon, accounting for up to 20% of most armies. Easy to learn how to use and powerful on the battlefield, the musket is perhaps less use in small scale skirmishes.

Weapon Skill: +3 musket and +0 sword

Master Swordsman

Of course, there are some samurai (or ronin) whose dedication to bujutsu is obsessive and whose skills are exceptional. Master swordsmen are rare, but terrifyingly effective.

Main weapon skill +6, secondary weapon skill +4

Warrior Monk

Warrior monks became, at various times, serious military forces. Wandering monks might develop skills in order to protect themselves, or they might be part of one of the more militant temples.

Some orders would not use edged weapons and preferred the staff (Bo).

Main weapon skill +3, secondary weapon skill +1

Shinobi (aka 'Ninja')

The true shinobi would avoid a fair fight, relying on subterfuge and deception to gain an unfair advantage. Not necessarily very skilled in a stand up fight though.

On the whole they didn't much use the exotic weapons of fiction relying instead on boring old swords and spears to do the job.

Weapon skill : +3 Shuriken, +1 sword or spear.

Farmers

In extreme circumstances, farmers might arm themselves to defend their village or oppose a cruel tax-collector. Most commonly armed with makeshift bamboo spears and random agricultural implements their main strength will lie in numbers. Farmers cannot use bows or swords.

Weapon skill : Zero in everything.



MOVEMENT

"He who makes the first false
move is certain to lose the game."

Japanese proverb



Movement is on a hexagon grid.

All figures are placed facing a hex-side and movement is from hex to hex through the hex sides.

Each player is able to move the figures under her command on her turn.

When all players have moved their contingents, combat starts.

Order of Movement.

Each players take it in turns to move all their figures each turn.

It is up to the players to decide by agreement the order in which everyone takes their turn. This could be alternate players on each side, or all the players on one side followed by all the players on the other side, or by order of age of the players, or whatever you all agree to.

Shooting and combat are adjudicated for a contingent once all their movement actions have been completed.

Actions

Each turn, each figure in a player's contingent can take **one** of the following actions:

- Move one hex forward and change facing by up to 60° (in any order)
- Change current facing by up to 180°, and not move.
- Remain stationary.
- Sidestep one hex forward left or right, keeping current facing.
- Sidestep one hex back left or right, keeping current facing.
- Move one hex back, and change facing by up to 60° (in any order)

- Do a reload action (most missile weapons require multiple turns to reload). This can be done in conjunction with **any of the actions above** in this list (but **not** those below).

- DASH 2 or 3 hexes forward on current facing.
- Shoot bow, throw a dart or shuriken or fire a musket
- Stand up or lie down, no movement.
- Mount or dismount from a horse (there are more rules on horses later)
- Open / Close a door
- Change a horse's current activity.

Moving Horses

A horse always occupies two hexes.

A rider cannot change the horse's activity and aim an attacking blow in the same turn.

HORSE ACTIONS:

Move 4 hexes straight ahead without turning (GALLOP).

Move 3 hexes, with up to ONE 60° turn (CANTER).

Move 2 hexes, with up to ONE 60° turn (TROT).

Move 1 hex, with up to ONE 60° turn (WALK).

Move sideways one hex, no turns (SIDESTEP).

No movement & Move front of horse through 60° (TURN).

Move back one hex, no turns (BACK).

Horses may only change speed by a maximum of 2 hexes per phase.

Horses are only halted by collisions with other horses, solid objects, or by choice.

Figures on foot do not stop horses - they are always run down by them.

Cantering or galloping horses may attempt to jump obstacles, Roll 1d10 (0=zero), score in the table below to fail (i.e. refuse).

Any score higher than the score in the table means the jump was successful and the horse can continue on its way.

Obstacle	Refuse & Rider thrown	Refuse
Low Hedge	0	1
High Hedge	0	1 or 2
Barricade or collision	0 or 1	2, 3, or 4
1 hex gap	-	0
2 hex gap	0	1
3 hex gap	0 or 1	2 or 3

If the horse refuses it will stop immediately. Unhorsed riders fall to the ground immediately.

Tripping Over

The chances of a figure on foot tripping over depends upon their actions, roll 1d10 to trip if one of the following occurs:

Action	Trip Roll (D10)
Pushed back into a hex containing a body on the ground	3 or less
Forced back by combat into an obstacle (ie a hedge) or entangled by a barbed restraining weapon	4 or less
Jumping a low obstacle	5 or less if un-armoured 6 or less if armoured
Forced back by combat uphill or up steps	4 or less
Engaging in combat this phase on a slippery surface (ie. mud or snow):	3 or less

BOWS AND BULLETS

"If the bow is drawn hard enough
the arrow can pierce anything."
Japanese proverb

Skill with the projectile weapons is measured by a weapon skill factor, as it is with all other weapons. Weapons skill factors are weapon-specific.

Preparation for shooting

Time taken to reload depends upon the user's **Weapon Skill** with the weapon.

Weapon Skill:	Less than 2	2 or 3	4 or 5	More than 5
	Reload time in turns			
BOW	4	3	2	1
Hand thrown object	3	2	1	0
Musket	15	15	13	10

Shooting

"The bow is tactically strong at the commencement of battle."

Miyamoto Musashi

Weapons can only be used on the user's action phase. No other action is permitted in that phase. Roll 1d10 (0=0) add the Shooting Factors and score the number in the table or higher to hit.

A natural '0' is always a miss regardless of additional factors.

Range:	Up to 20 hexes	Up to 40 hexes	Up to 80 hexes	Over 80 hexes
Bow	5	7	9	12
Hand thrown object	7	12	-	-
Musket	9	9	11	14

Whenever a musket is fired roll 1d10(0=0) to see if it went off properly. A roll of zero means the musket didn't work, and the firer can try again next phase. -2 if it is raining.

Shooting Factors

[+] Add character's weapon skill for that weapon.

[+] For each complete move spent aiming at a designated target that can be seen, up to a maximum of three moves : +1 (Does not apply to muskets or hand thrown weapons).

TARGET IS...

Galloping	-1
Minimally visible	-2
Partly obscured	-1

SHOOTER IS...

On stationary or Walking horse	-1
On trotting or cantering horse	-2
On galloping horse	-3
Wounded (per wound)	-1
Distracted, Per Distraction	-1
Being shot at	-1

EFFECT OF HITS

For each hit Roll 1d10 (0=0): Take the score as the number of wounds, modified as follows:

- 2 if the hit was from an arrow
- 4 if the hit was from a shuriken or sariken
- 1 target unarmoured
- 2 target in partial armour
- 3 target in armour
- 4 target in full armour



THE CLASH OF BLADES

"Waiting for luck is like waiting for death."
Japanese proverb

Exchanging Blows

"A man's life is as fragile
as the morning dew."
Japanese proverb

Each figure may only make **one** attacking stroke per turn.
The figure can make any number of defensive parries in a turn.

An attacking stroke is the only action that can injure or push back an enemy.

A successful defensive parry cannot push back or injure an enemy. For example a swordsman attacked by a spear at range would only be able to deflect the spear, not harm the spearman. (However, not the Closing Rule below).

The clash of blades is resolved by throwing 1d10 (0=0) per combatant per blow or parry.

The highest score after all the modifiers have been applied, wins.

Roll the die for each exchange of blows.

ADD to each die factors for personal skill, situation and position, and the highest score is the winner. The each outcome of the clash of blades depends upon the difference in the final scores, as follows:

NO DIFFERENCE : No result. Attack is parried. If both attacking simultaneously then both parried.

DIFFERENCE of 1 : The winner has pushed back the loser by one hex, as far as possible directly away from the attacker. No wounds have been inflicted.

DIFFERENCE more than 1 : The difference in scores is the number of wounds inflicted on the loser. The loser is also pushed pack.

A figure must engage, at least defensively, all figures aiming attacking strokes at them unless unable to defend (this is the case for certain specialised weapons).



Closing Rule

Where a weapon outreaches the opponent (see Combat Engagement Zones) the longer weapon always has a chance to attack to prevent the shorter weapon wielder closing the range, even if this is not on their action turn. This is to reflect the difficulties caused by being outreached – especially when fighting with a sword against spears or naginata.

If a shorter weapon user deflects the longer weapon by a difference of 3 or more, then they can **immediately** either turn to face (in the case of being attacked by the longer weapon from a disadvantageous direction) OR move one hex towards the enemy if they are in the forward arc . This does not count as an action.

Bring Out Your Dead!

Dead bodies must be marked on the hex-grid where they fall, preferably with counters or similar cut out markers. A dead body occupies ONE hex.

There are four classes of combat modifiers: weapons skill, relative weapon factors, tactical factors and combat engagement zones.

Weapons Skill

Add the figure's weapons skill to the die roll.

Relative Weapon Factors

These are fundamental differences between classes of weapon and their systems of use.

vs	Unarmed combat	Close-in weapon	Short weapon
Standard weapon (sword, spear etc)	+2	+2	+1
Short weapon (short sword)	+2	+1	
Close-in weapon (dagger)	+1		

Tactical Factors

Wading in water	-2
Standing in a body hex	-2
On rough ground	-1
Lying on ground	-2
Stuck in undergrowth	-3
Every 2 wounds	-1
Each distraction	-1
Entangled by restraining weapon	-3
Drawing sword, changing or recovering weapon this phase	-4
Outnumbered 2-1 by unengaged enemy	-2
Outnumbered 3-1 by unengaged enemy	-3
Outnumbered 4-1 by unengaged enemy	-4 (and so on...)
DASHING	-3

Armour

There was a wide and colourful range of armour types in classical Japan. This has been greatly simplified here into four categories. The effect of armour is to permit the wearer to ignore some of the wounds inflicted from each attack.

Unarmoured. No protection. All hits count.

Part Armoured. Some armour, in any combination - usually just a breastplate and helmet. Most ashigaru would fall into this category.

Partially armoured figures ignore ONE wound from each attack.

Armoured. The most common level of samurai armour. This would include a helmet, breastplate, tassets, shoulder-guards etc. The main vulnerable areas are protected. **Armoured figures ignore TWO wounds from each attack.**

Fully Armoured. All of the body is protected, including face mask, hand and leg armour. Because of the limitations imposed by full armour, figures so protected lose 1 level of Reaction Speed. **Fully Armoured figures ignore THREE wounds from each attack.**



Note that the armour has no effect upon who wins or loses in an exchange of blows, only on the number of wounds inflicted.

COMBAT ENGAGEMENT ZONES

"The naginata is inferior to the spear on the battlefield."

Miyamoto Musashi

Each weapon has its own reach, and weak points. The following section shows the engagement zones of the common weapons.

Katana (Sword)

Also use this chart for:

Wakizashi

Bokken

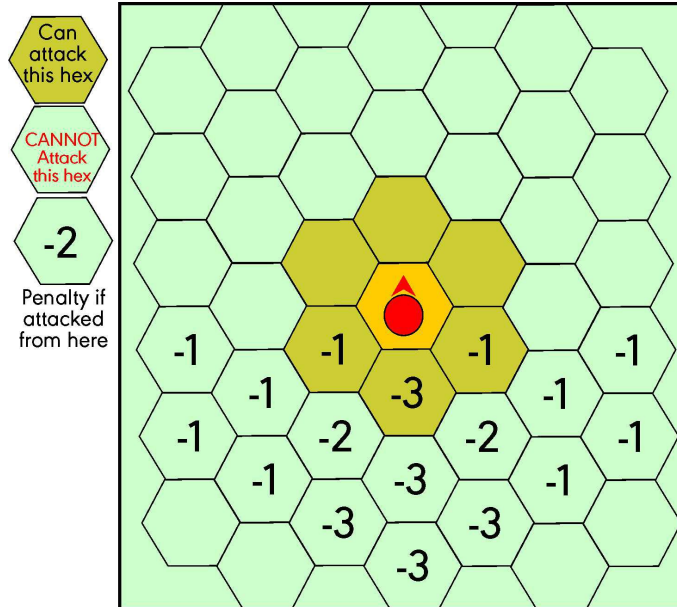
Jo

Tonfa

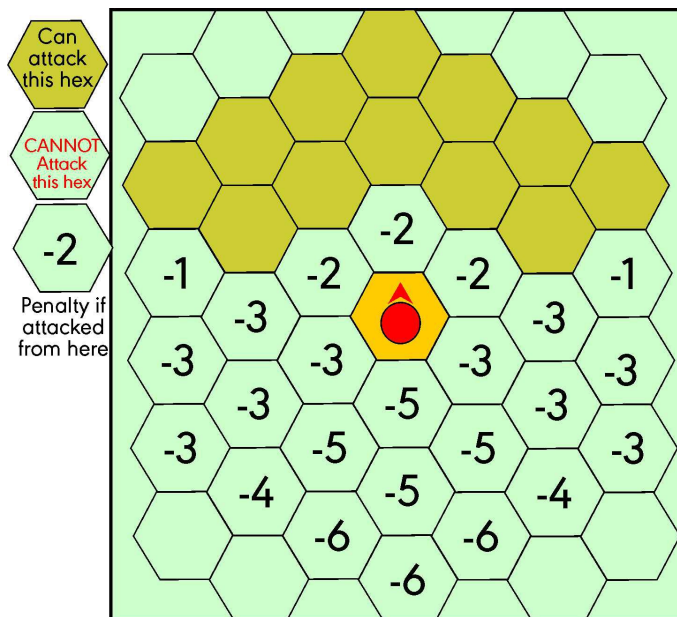
Nunchaku

Shorinje-kempo

Jujutsu



Yari (Spear)



Naginata (Glaive)

Also use this chart for:

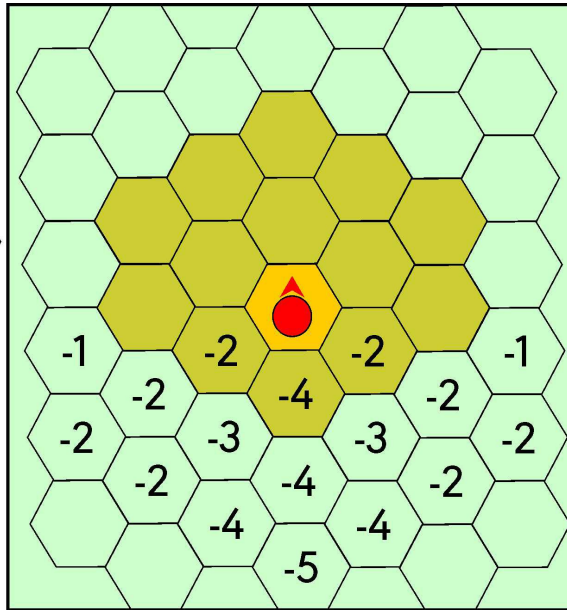
Nagamaki

Can attack this hex

CANNOT Attack this hex

-2

Penalty if attacked from here



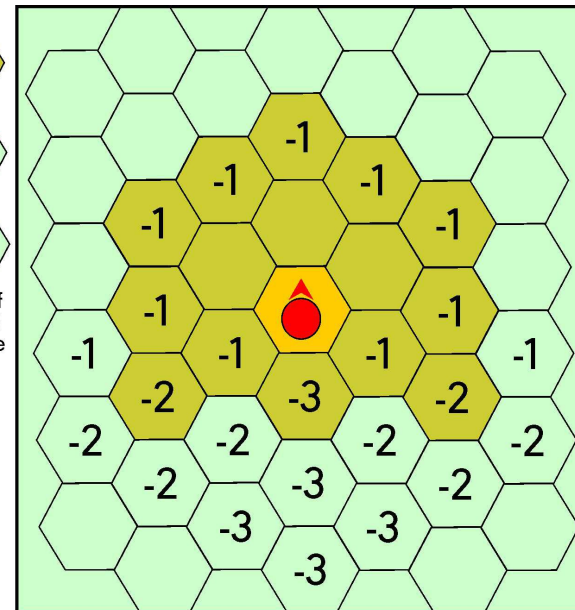
Bo (Staff)

Can attack this hex

CANNOT Attack this hex

-2

Penalty if attacked from here



Tetsubo (Iron Staff)

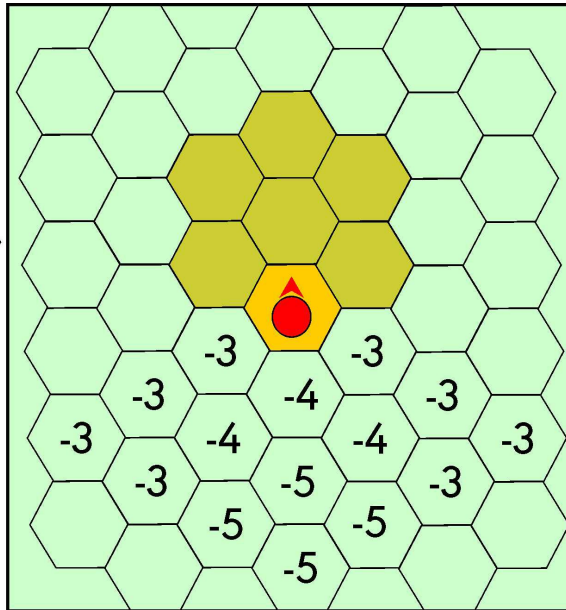
Also use for
Konsaibo
Ono (war hammer)

Can attack this hex

CANNOT Attack this hex

-2

Penalty if attacked from here



Tessen (War Fan)

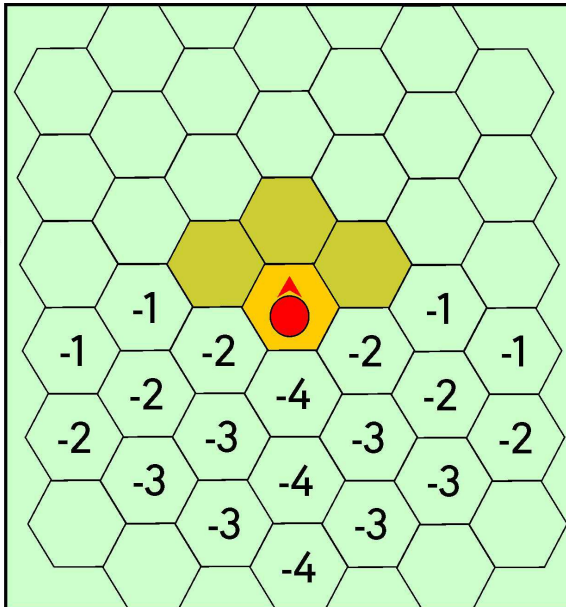
Also use for clubs and
daggers.

Can attack this hex

CANNOT Attack this hex

-2

Penalty if attacked from here



BLUNT WEAPONS

These do not inflict wounds in the same way as the edged and pointed weapons.

Roll for the clash of blades in the normal way, but instead of wounds, the weapon inflicts **DISTRACTIONS**.

A figure is Knocked out when it has received 6 distractions.

Distractions do not combine with wounds for this purpose. However the combat modifiers of wounds and distraction are cumulative.

Unlike wounds **DISTRACTIONS** are cumulative and may be recovered from at a rate of one per complete **move** (that is several phases) - provided that the figure is neither moving nor fighting.

Some of the heavier blunt weapons deliver extra **DISTRACTIONS** if they hit:

ONO or KONSAIBO +1

TETSUBO +2

HORSES IN COMBAT

"Horses should walk strongly."

Miyamoto Musashi

Under normal circumstances combat will be between the rider and the opponent.

The only weapons that can attack the horse in preference to the rider are those with a reach of two or more hexes. The rider will still attempt to defend the horse.

The speed of the horse also has an influence on all opponents in the forward 120° arc of the horse, giving a further bonus in combat:

Cantering	+1
Galloping	+2

Collisions. A horse at a canter or gallop that collides with a figure will knock them down.

The rider may engage the victim in a clash of blades if possible before the horse hits.

At slower speeds, the figure may throw themselves aside. Riders cannot engage figures fallen under the horse.

If horses collide, throw 1d10 to see if the rider is unseated using the table on page XXX.

Horse Combat Engagement Zones

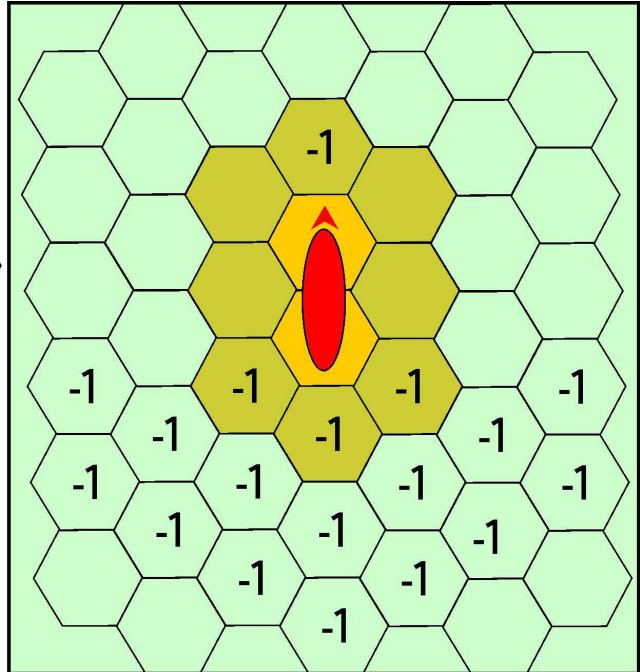
Can attack this hex

CANNOT Attack this hex

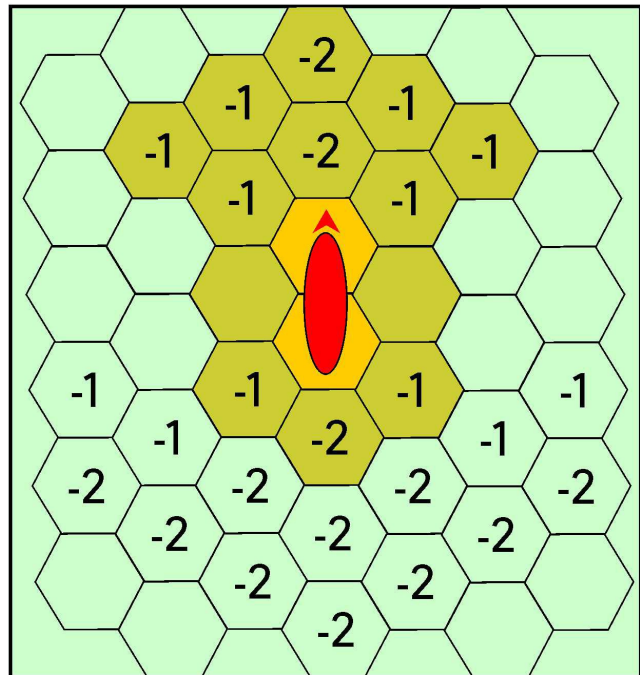
-2

Penalty if attacked from here

Katana or Naginata armed rider



Yari armed rider.



ADDITIONAL COMBAT RULES

"It is said that even after one's head has been cut off, he can still perform some function."

Hagakure

This section contains optional additional rules that cover some of the more unusual types of combat, and esoteric or exotic weapons.

Body Charges

Any figure may body charge.

The defender can make a strike with their weapon as the figure closes in.

Charging to contact figures may DASH without taking the combat penalty for dashing.

Charging is considered as movement into the same hex as the defender. If the attacker is beaten, then the charge is stopped. If it is not stopped then the target is pushed back one hex. Roll 1d10 for falling over:

Defender stationary	Both Moving	Result
8-9	7-9	Both fall
7	5-6	Defender falls
6	4	Attacker falls
0-5	0-3	Neither fall

Figures making a body charge may not make an attacking stroke on that phase.

The defender on the receiving end of a successful body-charge takes 2 distractions.

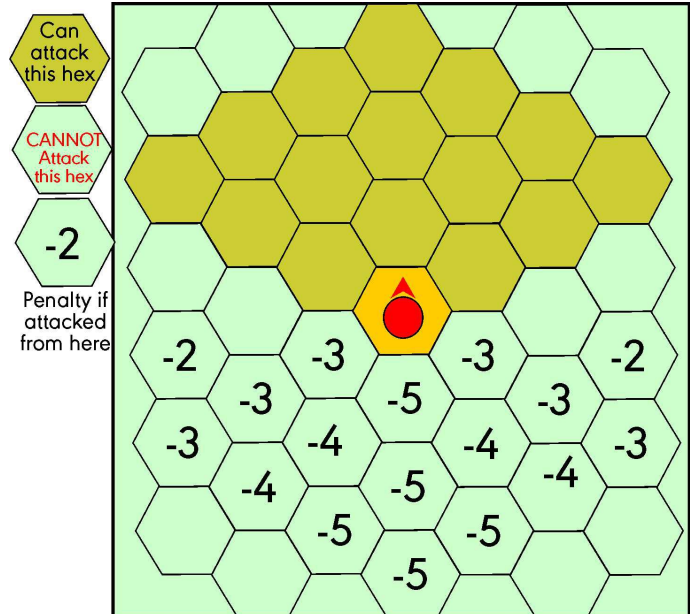
Once a successful body-charge has been made, both may elect to grapple on their next action phase.

Feruzue

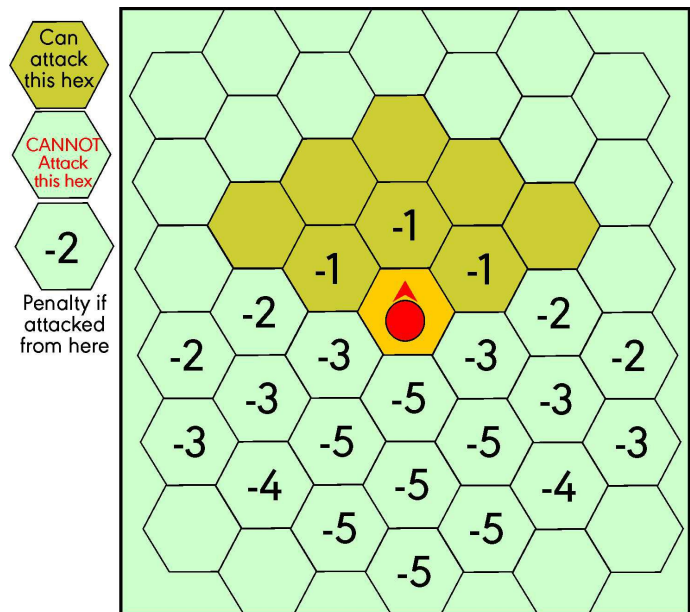
This is a composite weapon comprising a spear and a weighted chain.

It can be used either as a short spear or as a chain striking weapon with a reach of 3 hexes (but not as an entangling weapon).

Chain Attack. An attack with the chain can only be made every other phase. (the chain has to be recovered after an attack). The engagement zone is given in the next section.



Short Spear attack



In addition, the chain part of this weapon can be concealed in the shaft of the spear and used in a surprise chain attack. On first use, it gets the +2 surprise attack bonus.

Grappling

Figures attempting to grapple must have performed a successful body charge (see above). Assess the results of melee in the normal way as if it were unarmed combat, the loser is thrown to the ground and takes 2 distractions.

During grappling neither combatant can defend themselves against other external attackers - if attacked by outsiders, the hit may hit either combatant - 50:50 chance either way.

Only CLOSE IN class weapons may be employed during grappling, all others are rendered useless. The winner of a round of grappling may always choose to break off.

Grappling does not result in push-back results like the normal clash of blades.

Iaijutsu

This is the specialised technique of cutting at the same time as drawing the sword. It was practiced by only a few, and was possible only after prolonged study - and should therefore only be permitted to Samurai or Ronin of skill +4 or more.

This is given its own skill level, like a separate weapon skill. Roll 1d10 and score the skill level or less to succeed with the draw.

If the draw is successful, then the figure may ignore the 'drawing sword this phase' penalty.

If using Iaijutsu for the first time, then the user gets an additional +2 surprise bonus in the first round of combat.

Kawa-Nawa

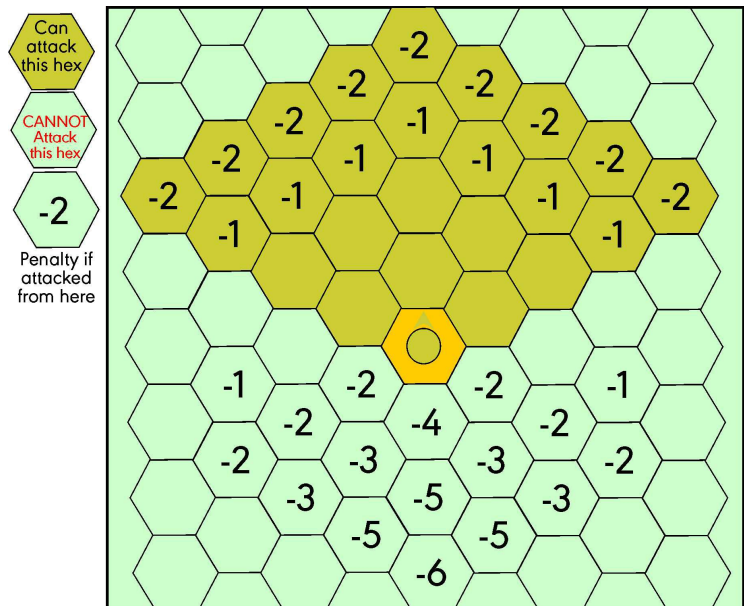
This is a grappling hook and rope used as a weapon.

It has a reach of 4 hexes and two types of attack, Striking or Tripping. This must be specified before making the attack.

Only one attack at range 3 or 4 may be made every other action phase to allow time to recover the weapon.

For tripping, the wielder must win by 3 or more to trip opponent. Loser takes 2 distractions.

For striking, count this as a Blunt Weapon attack.

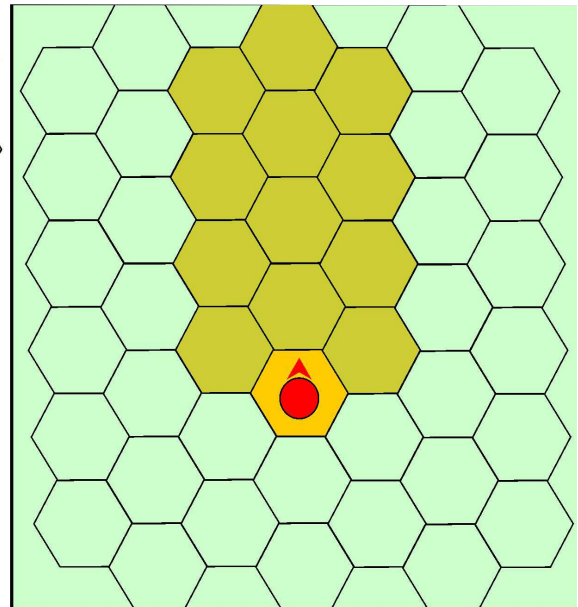


Ki-Ai

This is an esoteric ability to dominate or even defeat an enemy by force of martial spirit (ki) expressed by a loud shout or **Ki-ai**. As with weapons this has a skill rating, but the shout as a weapon will only be available to the best warriors and will be pretty rare.

Note that when shouting, ALL figures in the marked area are affected. This makes Ki-ai a sort of area weapon.

The shouter cannot move or defend whilst using Ki-ai, so any attack on a figure while they performing a Ki-ai attack will be treated as if there is no attempt at defence (-6 on the die roll).



Roll 1d10 for everyone in the affected hexes (see diagram). Score shouter's Weapon Skill in Ki-ai or less to 'hit'. Each 'hit' causes a push-back result and 4 distractions on the target. If a target is also skilled in Ki-ai, they may subtract their Ki-ai skill from the shouter's skill.

Kumade

This is a simple grappling hook (without the rope) used in combat. Counts as a blunt weapon attack, but range only 1 hex. Use the Katana combat zone.

Kusarigama or Nagegama

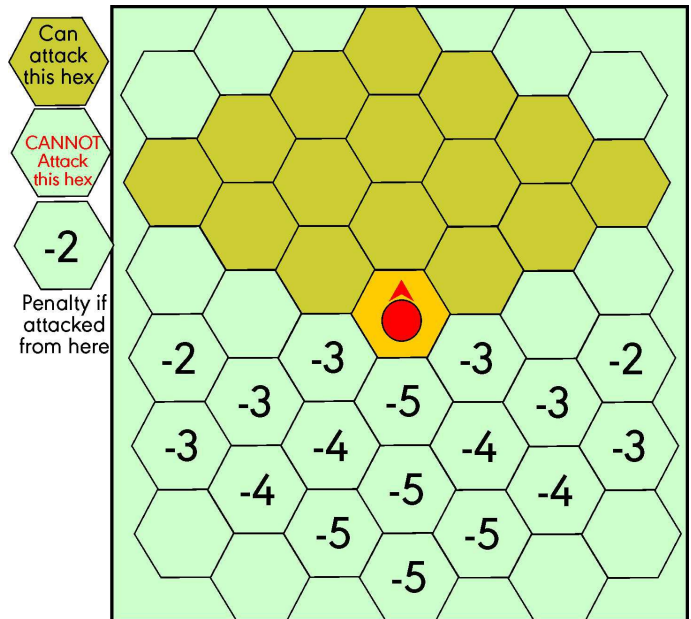
This is an exotic chain and sickle weapon, usually only available to those with the time and expertise needed to master them. It was difficult to master.

This is a composite 3 in 1 weapon, comprising a flail, and entangling weapon and a short sword. It can be employed in each of the three ways:

A Flail. The chain can reach out as shown in Section 6 to make a chain attack

An attack as a flail can only be made every other phase. (the chain has to be recovered after an attack).

Entangling Weapon. The maximum entangling range is 3 hexes. Roll combat dice as normal. If the wielder wins by 3 or more, the loser is entangled and must dice to see if they trips and falls (see 'Tripping Over' above). If subsequently attacked, the loser will take the 'entangled' combat penalty also.



The sickle part of the weapon can be treated as a short sword for combat. Obviously, if the opponent has been entangled already (see entangling above) then the user can quite effectively close for the kill with the sickle.



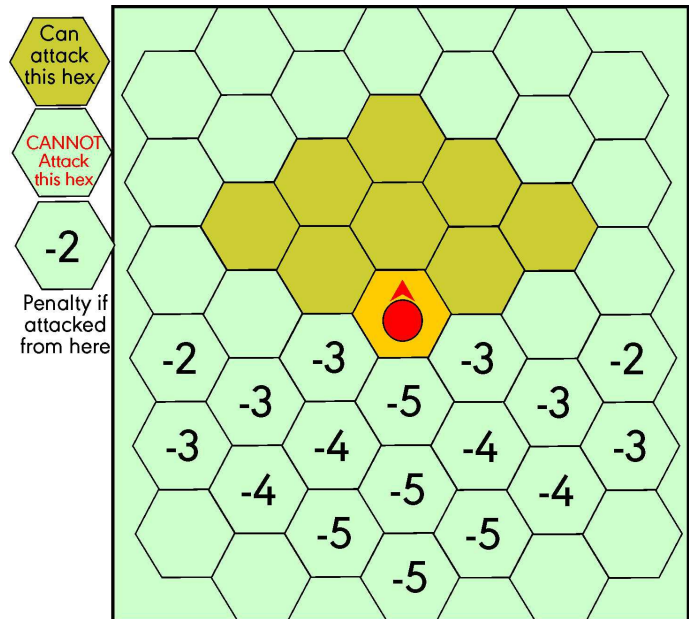
Manrikigusari

This is a chain restraining device, similar in concept to the Kusarigama, but lacking the complexity. It has a reach of 2 hexes. Win by 3 or more to entangle the opponent. When first used in a fight, it has a +2 combat bonus for its surprise value.

An attack can only be made every other phase. (the chain has to be recovered after an attack).

The chain is easily hidden, and was mainly used as a concealed weapon in places where overt weapons were forbidden.

It can also be used as a restraining device.



Mojiri and Sodegarami

These are pole-arms used by urban constables for the restraint of burglars, ninja or drunken samurai. The barbs & spikes on the end of the weapons were caught in the wrongdoer's clothing and twisted, thus restraining them out of sword reach. Obviously, if several weapons were used on the same target this was even more effective.

The engagement zones are the same as for YARI.

To entangle their opponent they must win the combat by 3 or more. If they are successful the entangled victim must dice for tripping over.

If the victim remains on their feet they may attempt to tear free on the next action phase (subject to 'entangled' deductions).

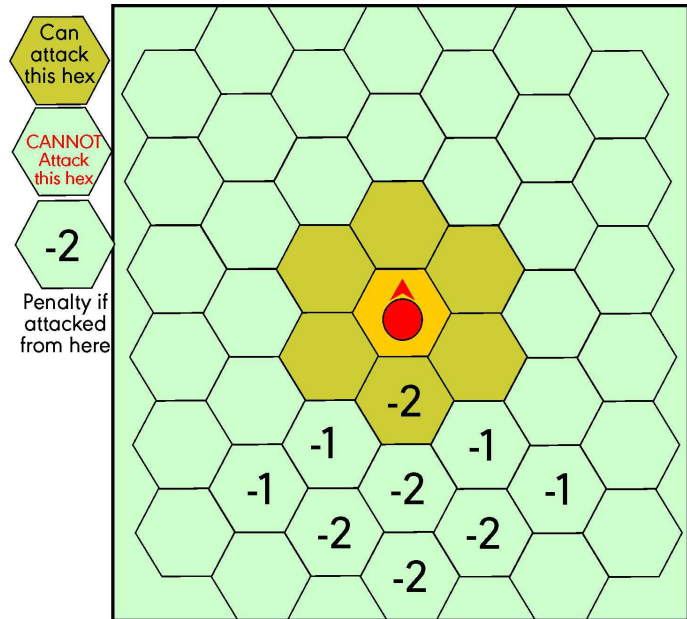
These weapons may also be used to injure rather than restrain.

Use the engagement zones and rules for BO (long staff).

Ni-Ten Jitsu

This is the art of using both the long and short sword together in combat. Although the Samurai carried two swords, they rarely actually used both when fighting. The use of two swords is difficult and tiring. This technique has its own skill level.

Because attacks are one-handed, reduce effect of successful attacks by 1 wound. Because the user has two weapons, it improves his ability to defend. Count an additional +2 when defending only. If simultaneously attacking and defending, the bonus only applies to the defending rolls.



The ability to cover a wider defensive arc is reflected in a revised combat engagement zones shown here.

Yadomejutsu (arrow deflecting)

This is a specialised technique whereby the user deflects incoming arrows in mid-air with their personal weapon. It can be done with the following weapons:

- | | | | |
|----------|-------------|----------|-----------|
| BOKKEN | DAISHO | JUTTE | KATANA |
| KODACHI | MAKURA-YARI | NAGINATA | JO |
| NAGAMAKI | TESSEN | UCHI-NE | WAKAZASHI |

Or any unarmed combat technique (except against Sariken & Shuriken).

This technique does not work against musket bullets.

Characters are given a skill rating in Yadomejutsu, for a specific weapon - a yadomejutsu skill with Katana is not the same as a skill with Naginata.

Roll 2d10 (add the scores) and score the skill level or less to deflect the arrow.

+1 to die for every arrow after the first being deflected in same phase

+4 if attempting to deflect shuriken or sariken

OPTIONAL RULES

Exhaustion

Warriors cannot fight flat out indefinitely, especially against multiple opponents.

Each figure is given a certain number of STAMINA POINTS.

Typically this will be between 15 and 25, depending on your assessment of the overall ability of the character.

The stamina points are consumed at the end of each **move** at the following rates:

- 1 Every move that character moves more than 5 hexes on foot.
- 2 Jumping or climbing an obstacle
- 1 Wearing Armour and fighting this move
- 2 Wearing Full armour
- 1 Each wound
- 1 Each attack or defence made in move
- 2 Each move using heavy weapon to fight.

Stamina points are recovered at the following rate:

- 1 point per complete move taking no action, standing up.
- 1 Additional point for every 5 complete moves sitting or lying down.

A character that has zero stamina points cannot attack or move, except to turn a maximum of 60° per action phase.

Characters may accumulate negative stamina points, up to the character's stamina total, i.e. a character with a stamina of 20, could fall to a maximum negative stamina of -20. Once this limit is exceeded, the character collapses unconscious, and recovers at the above rate until reaching a positive stamina total.

Heroic Super Samurai

If you want to add the sort of master samurai depicted in sword movies, then here are some suggest modifications to the rules.

Obviously the Master Samurai will have very high weapon skills, but avoid making them more than about +6.

In addition, they ought to be able to move more rapidly than their opponents, so on their turn they can two TWO actions from the list.

And because they are able to turn their body at the last moment to dodge blows, they can always ignore ONE wound (in addition to any protection armour may give).

Variable Wounds

The typical six wounds / distractions per figure used in the main rules can be modified if you wish to reflect particularly strong or weak individuals.

Use the following scale:

Puny weaklings	3 wounds / distractions
Unfit non combatants	4 wounds / distractions
Average person in the street	5 wounds / distractions
Tough fighting man/woman	6 wounds / distractions
Hard case (l.e. mountain men etc)	7 wounds / distractions
Exceptionally large or tough individual	8 wounds / distractions (= maximum)



WEAPONS GLOSSARY

**"Where there is an advantage there
is also a disadvantage."**

Japanese proverb

Classical Japan was bristling with all manner of weird and wonderful weapons. A complete list would fill a book on its own (and has in fact filled several!).

Here I have included only the commonly known ones. It should be borne in mind that by far the most common weapons were the sword, spear, bow and naginata (in roughly that order).

The other weapons tended to be minority interests and merely add a little local colour.

WEAPON	DESCRIPTION	CLASS
AIGUCHI	Small dagger, easily concealed and could be poisoned. It was also used as a thrown weapon.	Close in / Missile
BO	Long staff (6-7 feet long).	Standard
BOKKEN	Hardwood sword used for sword practice.	Standard
DAIKYU	Long war-bow.	
DAISHO	Pair of swords, one long and one short which are always carried by the samurai as a mark of their rank and status. Low-status bushi (such as ashigaru) might carry only one sword.	Standard
DOSHI	Dagger.	Close In
FERUZUE	A special spear with a ball and chain on the butt end. A highly specialised and uncommon weapon and very difficult to use effectively.	Standard
FUTAYAMA-YARI	This is a spear which has a barbed hook behind the head. It was often used to dismount horsemen by entangling them.	Standard
GEKKEN	Half-moon bladed spear.	Standard
INOSHISHI-NO-YARI	Boar spear (with cross-bar below head).	Standard
JUJUTSU	Multi-disciplined technique of unarmed combat.	Unarmed Combat
JUTTE / JITTE	Forked iron truncheon, much favoured by officers of the law because it enabled them to trap a sword-blade in the fork, helping them restrain unruly samurai without having to kill them. It later became the badge of office of the Tokugawa police.	Short
JO	Hardwood Staff (about 4-5 feet long).	Standard
KAGE-YARI	Hooked spear.	Standard
KAMA	Short-handled sickle.	Short
KAMA-YARI	Sickle-headed spear.	Standard
KATANA	Long sword. The most common and highly regarded weapon of the bushi.	Standard
KAWA-NAWA	A grappling hook and rope. Strange as it may seem, there was a	Standard

WEAPON	DESCRIPTION	CLASS
	whole system of combat based on this weapon. It was, of course very difficult to learn and use effectively.	
KISERU	An iron tobacco pipe - probably developed originally as an improvised weapon of the moment.	Short
KODACHI	Short sword.	Short
KONSAIBO	Heavy, metal studded, staff about 6 feet long.	Standard
KUMADE	Grappling hook or anchor. Used as a weapon in sea battles - mainly because it happened to be handy.	Standard
KUSARIGAMA	A composite weapon composed of a chain and sickle. This was very effective in the hands of an expert, but a disaster in the hands of anyone else.	Standard
KYU	Bow.	Missile
KYUSEN	Bow and arrows.	Missile
MAGARI-YARI	Three-bladed spear.	Standard
MAKURA-YARI	Pillow spear. Usually only about 2-3 feet long, it was literally kept by the pillow as a last ditch defence against assassins.	Short
MANRIKIGUSARI	Weighted chain. Particularly used as a concealed weapon and much used for restraining swordsmen. Not a weapon for beginners.	Short
MOJIRI	Long barbed pole for catching and restraining criminals by entangling their clothing. Usually used by police in groups of two or three.	Standard
NAGAMAKI	A long-bladed glaive.	Standard
NAGINATA	Glaive. A popular weapon with the warrior monks.	Standard
NAGEGAMA	Another version of the KUSARIGAMA.	Standard
NINJATO	A straight-bladed sword.	Standard
NI-TEN JUTSU	Not really a weapon as such, this is the school of swordsmanship that places strong emphasis on the use of both the long and short swords (or two long swords) at once in combat.	Standard
NODACHI	An unusually long sword.	Standard
NUNCHAKU	A short, 2-sectioned staff linked by a short chain.	Short
ONO	Axe or poleaxe. Very rare.	Standard
OTSUCHI	War mallet.	Standard
O-YUMI	'Great Crossbow' or type of catapult.	
SAI	A short spike weapon with large quillions. Usually used in pairs.	Short
SATSUMATA	Fork-bladed spear.	Standard
SARIKEN	Hand-thrown metal dart.	Close In
SHAKUJO-YARI	Staff with a spear concealed within it.	Standard
SHUKO	Hand-held weights or gauntlets used as a sort of 'knuckle-duster' in unarmed combat.	Close in
SHURIKEN	Metal throwing star.	Missile
SODEGARAMI	Barbed restraining pole.	Standard
SU-YARI	War-spear.	Standard

WEAPON	DESCRIPTION	CLASS
TACHI	Another name for a Katana.	Standard
TANTO	Dagger	Close-in
TAKE-HOKO or TAKE-YARI	Bamboo spear.	Standard
TEPPO	Matchlock musket	Missile
TEPPO-YUMI	Crossbow. A Chinese weapon, generally unpopular and little used.	Missile
TESSEN	Iron fan. Used by commanders and generals as a badge of rank, and often a weapon of emergency defence.	Short
TETSUBO	Iron staff (6-7 feet long)	Standard
TONFA	Jointed staff. Often used in pairs.	Close In
UCHI-NE	Short javelin. Similar to the MAKURA-YARI, but designed primarily for throwing. Not suitable for melee. An unusual weapon.	Missile
WAKAZASHI	Short sword, the companion sword to the KATANA. This weapon would be retained by a samurai at all times.	Short
YARI	Spear.	Standard
YARI-NAGE	Another short javelin or throwing spear like the Uchi-ne, but this is suitable for use in a clash of blades as well as for throwing.	Standard
YUMI-YARI	A bow with a spear-head on one end. Rarely ever used in combat.	Standard
YAWARA	Small wooden dumbbell-shaped weapons used in certain unarmed combat techniques.	Close-in

