

NIPPON/SAMURAI TRIAL RULES
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BACKGROUND:

I have based these rules on historical Japan c1550-1600, commonly called the Sengoku civil war period, which most people equate with Japanese feudal warfare. Firearms are gaining more and more popularity, though some traditional daimyo still refuse to give up their bowmen. Samurai are a dying class, being replaced with the cheaper civilian soldiers, called the ashigaru ("fleet of foot"). Horses for cavalry are always in short supply. Ninja are real beings, but their action occurs unseen behind the lines, well out of the way of the masses of military troops. Some daimyo offer tribute to local monasteries for the help of fanatical monks. Plus there have been reports of some daimyo recruiting mystical shugenja, casting their arcane spells thought long forgotten. Reports have also been filtering in about strange races threatening invasion, while other conquest-thirsty daimyo are sailing to other lands in search of new lands to subjugate. All in all, it looks to be a long civil war, with only the boldest daimyo rising to the rank of shogun.

ARMY LIST:

Troop	Type	Stats	Size	Pts	Mn/Mx	Note
Samurai Warriors	Infantry	A4 H3 S5	3	75	1/-	*1
House Guard	Infantry	A4 H4 S4	3	105	-/1	*2
Ashigaru Warriors	Infantry	A3 H3 S6	3	45	2/-	*3
Ashigaru Teppo	Infantry	A3/1 H3 S6	3	80	2/4	*4
Elite Ashigaru Teppo	Infantry	A3/1 H3 S6	3	85	-/1	*5
Ashigaru Skirmishers	Skirmisher	A2/1 H3 S0	3	55	-/-	*6
Ashigaru Yumi	Infantry	A3/1 H3 S6	3	70	-/-	*7
Peasants	Infantry	A3 H3 S0	3	30	-/2	*8
Sohei (Fanatic Monks)	Infantry	A5 H3 S0	3	70	-/1	*9
Ronin	Infantry	A3 H3 S6	3	35	-/-	*10
Samurai Cavalry	Cavalry	A4 H4 S4	3	150	-/1	*11
Siege Cannon	Artillery	A1/2 H2 S0	2	85	-/2	*12
Daimyo	General	A+2 C9	1	125	1	*13
Taisho	Hero	A+1 C8	1	80	-/2	*14
Shugenja	Wizard	A+0 C7	1	85	-/1	*15
Shogun	General	A+2 C10	1	175	*	*16

NOTES & SPECIAL RULES:

Samurai General Rules: Because Samurai come from the noble class and represent the older traditions of Nippon warfare, they have some special rules. Every unit with the word "Samurai" in its troop name must follow these rules. All Samurai units, as a result

of their honor-driven bravery, cannot be driven back by missile fire. In their desire for field promotions, Samurai units must pursue and advance in combat whenever possible. As a matter of honor, Samurai units will only brigade with other Samurai units.

1. Samurai Warriors are well-trained, honorable, and disciplined soldiers in heavy armor marching boldly into battle. Units will be armed solely with either naginata, yari (spears), or katanas. Use Pendraken PMSAM5, PMSAM6, or PMSAM17.

2. House Guard are honored and trusted Samurai, or occasionally Ashigaru, foot soldiers that have sworn their lives to protecting the Daimyo. As a result, they only take commands from the Daimyo. Because special message runners (hikyaku) are reserved especially for these units, the Daimyo receives a +1 command bonus when issuing commands to his House Guard units. Samurai Special Rules do not apply to House Guard units. Use Pendraken PMSAM5, PMSAM6, or PMSAM17 for Samurai. Use PMSAM8 for Ashigaru units.

3. Ashigaru means "light feet" or "fast legs" and form the backbone of the army during this period. They are typically peasants or lower class members without a family name, pulled from their daily lives, and trained as soldiers in a Daimyo's army. Even the poorest Daimyo attempts to equip their Ashigaru troops with basic armor. Ashigaru Warrior units will be armed solely with either naginata or yari spears. Use Pendraken PMSAM8.

4. Teppo are the Japanese version of the Spanish arquebuses (handguns), which were introduced in Japan in the mid-1500s. Some Daimyo are enamored with teppo, while others refuse to stop using the traditional bow (yumi). In fact, Japanese perfected volley fire before the Europeans. As a result of their favored status, there is a minimum of two units per 1000 points and a maximum of four units per 1000 points, which is higher than the Empire Handgunners but not unlimited like the Dwarf Handgunners. Count enemy Armor values as one worse when shot by Ashigaru Teppo units, as per Empire/Dwarf Handgunner rules. Use Pendraken PMSAM9.

5. Ashigaru Elite Teppo are elite sharpshooter units and add a +1 to their dice rolls when making a Shooting attack.

6. Ashigaru Skirmishers. Daimyo who do not own an abundance of firearms will create units of skirmishers comprised of teppo and yumi bowmen, who will harass the enemy. If the enemy gets too close for comfort, the skirmishers will "retreat" behind the friendly units. Skirmishers are allowed to shoot before they move. They can shoot even before they move on initiative. When they shoot before they move they cannot shoot in the shooting phase. The drive back is still resolved at the end of the ordinary shooting phase. When a unit that has been shot at by skirmishers is charged, it will not be driven back, but has still to roll the appropriate number of dice to see if it is confused. Range 15cm. Shoot all around. Use Pendraken PMSAM9 and PMSAM8.

7. Ashigaru Yumi are armed with long bows named yumi. Use Pendraken PMSAM7.

8. Peasants are rarely recruited for service anymore, but when they are they are unarmored and equipped with whatever utensils happen to be available to them. Always receives a -1 Command penalty when given an order, unless brigaded with a unit of ashigaru. May not charge on its own initiative, but may evade. Receives no attack bonuses on charges. Use Pendraken PMSAM11.

9. Sohei in game terms are fanatic monks from sects such as the Ikko-Ikki. They might be trained in the martial arts or use a variety of weapons available to the samurai and ashigaru. Sohei function exactly like Empire Flagellants and follow all rules for those units.

10. Ronin are disenfranchised samurai who owe no allegiance to any daimyo. As a result of loosing their honor, Ronin tend to be shunned by regular troops, though other troops will fight along side them. Simply put, they are headstrong and rebellious mercenaries and will ally themselves to the daimyo with the largest purse. They will usually be lightly armored and equipped with a mixture of naginata, yari, and katanas. Due to their nature, they must charge on initiative. Unlike their samurai brothers, Ronin suffer drive backs from missile fire like normal troops. Due to a Ronin's headstrong and shunned nature, Ronin units or brigades containing Ronin units will always suffer a -1 Command penalty when issued an order. Cheap but troublesome units. Use Pendraken PMSAM5, PMSAM6, or PMSAM17 mixed with a few monks to represent unarmored ronin.

11. Samurai Cavalry are heavy cavalry and are accompanied by either samurai or ashigaru foot soldiers. The foot soldiers tend to protect the unarmored and smaller-than-normal horses that the samurai use, while giving protection to the mounted samurai themselves, except during charges, when the cavalry will advance faster than the infantry. Cavalry will be armed with either naginata, yari, or katanas. (Bows were out of fashion for mounted samurai by this period.) For game balance issues, Samurai Cavalry may brigade with ashigaru units. However, Samurai Cavalry units cannot be driven back by missile fire. In their desire for field promotions, Samurai Cavalry must pursue and advance in combat whenever possible.

12. Cannon. Due to manufacturing difficulties, cannon are rare commodities for use in the field, plus their bulky mounts and weight make getting them to the battlefield very difficult. As a result, there are no Field Cannons. However, cannon are extremely popular psychological weapons for siege warfare in this period. (Place a cannon, do not move the cannon tends to be the pattern in siege warfare!) Siege Cannon have a movement pace of 0"; in other words, you cannot move them one placed on the battlefield. May only be used in siege scenarios.

13. Daimyo are the generals of the army. They usually tend to remain in the rear of the action, issuing orders from their tent. However, during desperate times, they have been known to join units on the front line, adding a huge boost to the troops' morale, often turning the tide of a battle.

14. Taisho are captains, heroes in game terms.

15. Shugenja are spell caster sorcerers. At the moment, only whispers are being heard about their renewed existence. Until such rumors are confirmed, players may not take shugenja as characters.

16. A Shogun may only be used in 2000 minimum point games, anything less would be dishonorable. The shogun replaces the daimyo in such games.

SPELLS:

(I have included five spells because I just could not figure which extra spell to delete. Since these are trial rules, I leave it up to you to decide which four spells you think should be standard.)

SOW CONFUSION

5+ to cast.....Range: 30cm

The Shugenja sends out ninja warriors who silently infiltrate the enemy's line of communication, resulting in false orders and general mayhem.

The spell can be cast on one enemy unit within range. That unit receives a -1 Attack value for the duration of the turn. A unit can only have one Sow Confusion cast upon it per turn.

SPIRITS OF THE DISHONORED

5+ to cast.....Range: 30cm

The Shugenja calls upon the restless souls of samurai who died dishonorably in battle and await a time when they can cleanse their souls and family name of their eternal disgrace. These are the toshi warriors who temporarily possess their "victims" during battle, filling them with a rage unknown to the living until the battle has been won or lost.

This spell can be cast on any friendly unit engaged in combat within range, whether the Shugenja can see the unit or not. Every stand in the unit adds +1 to its Attacks value during the following Combat phase. A unit can only have one Souls Of The Dishonored cast successfully on it at a time.

GIFT OF THE WIND

5+ to cast.....Range: 30cm

The Shugenja calls upon the spirits of the wind, who descend upon the battlefield, giving speed to those who receive them.

If the spell is successful, the unit can be moved as if it had received an order in the Command phase. A unit can only be affected by one Gift of the Wind in a turn. The Gift

of the Wind affects only one unit, never a brigade and only the unit itself will be affected, not characters who might have joined it.

SILENCE WITHIN SOUND

6+ to cast.....Range: 30cm

Though the battle rages around them, a sudden strange silence fills the air. Mouths move but no sound can be heard. Weapons meet weapons but only silence.

The spell lasts throughout the enemy's following turn. One enemy unit within 30cm of the Shugenja cannot receive an order due to the silence surrounding them.

GIFT OF THE CRANE

4+ to cast.....Range: Contact

An ancient Nippon poet once wrote, "White crane, watches silver prey below the shimmering surface, swift strike." The Shugenja calls upon the crane's spirit to imbue the troops with the gift of long life.

One unit with which the Shugenja is in contact may reroll failed armor rolls from combat through the current turn. A unit can be affected by only one Gift of the Crane in a turn.

SAMPLE HISTORICAL ARMIES:

(Since this is the civil war period, both forces could be competing daimyo; therefore, both players would create armies using these trial rules.)

A typical 1000 point army based on Matsuura Kakemono's army for the Korean campaign:

- 1 Daimyo 125
- 2 Taisho 80x2
- 1 Samurai Cavalry 150
- 1 Samurai Warriors 75
- 3 Ashigaru Teppo 80x3
- 1 Ashigaru Yumi 70x1
- 4 Ashigaru Warriors 45x4

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1000 points

Variant of the above:

- 1 Daimyo 125
- 2 Taisho 80x2
- 1 Samurai Cavalry 150
- 1 Samurai Warriors 75
- 4 Ashigaru Teppo 80x4
- 3 Ashigaru Warriors 45x3
- 1 Ronin 35x1 OR 1 Peasant 30x1 OR 1 Skimisher 25x1

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c1000 points