

Inscrutable – One page Oriental Fantasy Roleplaying Rules – Third Edition

Introduction

This variant of the Dead Simple RPG Rules places the players in medieval Nippon. A land of honour, mystery and intrigue.

Hero Creation

To create a new Hero follow these rules.

Attributes (player's choice)

New Heroes have ten points to divide between the four attributes below.

Each attribute must be given between one & four points.

Strength STR **Dexterity** DEX
Intellect INT **Ki** KI

Skills (calculate from Attributes)

Skill	Aptitude*	Examples
Agility	DEX	Climb, Leap, Swim
Craft	[DEX + INT]/2	Make, Repair
Fighting	[STR + INT]/2	Kill, Maim
Knowledge	INT	Lore, Magic
Manhandle	STR	Lift, Push, Drag
Perception	[INT + SPT]/2	Spot, Hear, Smell
Persuasion	SPT	Charm, Con
Shooting	[DEX + INT]/2	Sniper
Speed	[STR + DEX]/2	Run, React
Stealth	[DEX + SPT]/2	Sneak, Hide, Stalk
Toughness	[STR + SPT]/2	Grit, Courage

* Round down any fractions.

Training (player's choice)

New Heroes are *Trained* in two skills & *Familiar* with three others of their choice.

The remainder are *Untrained*.

Training level	Bonus
Untrained	-1
Familiar	+0
Trained	+1
Competent	+2
Experienced	+3
Mastered	+5

Once a skill is mastered it cannot be improved further.

Skill Check

Score 15 or more on 1D20 modified by the relevant Skill Level, by equipment and the situation.

A roll of 20 is an automatic success and a roll of 1 is an automatic failure.

Gender (player's choice)

Only male Heroes can be Samurai.

Female Sohei are Buddhist Nuns.

Profession (player's choice)

Samurai: Well armed & armoured the Samurai is often the leader of a party of Heroes.

Fighting +2, Swift Blade, any Armour. He can use Honour points to buy the Shugenja spells: Dodge, Enchant Weapon (Katana) and Terrify.

Shugenja: The master of magic, he starts with three spells of his choice in his spellbook. *Knowledge +2, Spells, Speak with Spirits, no Armour.*

Ninja: This is the burglar & scout of the party. He stops his friends getting killed by traps & ambushes.

Craft +2, Shadow Warrior, Burglary, only Light Armour. He can use Honour points to buy the Shugenja spells: Fade to Black & Mask.

Sohei: An agile and pious martial monk. *Agility +2, Perception +2, Speed +2, only Light or Medium Armour. He can use Honour points to buy the Shugenja spells: Dodge & Haste.*

Gakusho: A powerful ally against Spirits & Demons and the only Hero who can heal their

friends wounds. *Persuasion +2, Holy Light, Healing Touch, only Light Armour. He can use Honour points to buy the Shugenja spells: Befriend & Illuminate.*

Professional Abilities

Swift Blade; A Samurai can attack twice in a turn if he has not moved, but only against opponents in adjacent squares.

Shadow Warrior; A Ninja gets +3 to stealthy movement & hiding. Enemies can use Perception to spot him.

Speak with Spirits; Shugenja know the language of the dead and can speak to spirits.

Burglary; Ninja can use his Craft skill to pick locks, or to find & disarm traps. He needs tools.

Holy Light; As long as the Monk stands still & holds up his hand this light will prevent Spirits or Demons approaching closer than 10'. If they are attacked by the Heroes the effect ceases.

Healing Touch; A Gakusho's touch makes a KO'd figure just wounded, or a wounded one whole.

Improving Heroes

During an adventure the DM may award points of Honour (On) to the players for successful or 'right' actions. They can then spend some of this to improve their heroes.

Cost	Improvement
10	Improve an Attribute by +1
5	Improve a Skill's training level by +1
20	A new spell

Heroes can also improve by buying better equipment, or by finding & using magical armour, weapons & other stuff.

Equipment

All new Heroes begin with a set of suitable clothes, & a pack containing: *a Bedroll, Rope (30'), Flint & Steel, Knife, Flask of Oil, Lantern & Water-flask.*

In addition Hero will have:

Samurai: Light Armour, Katana & Wakizashi.

Shugenja: Staff, Spellbook.

Ninja: Ninja-to, Shuriken x3, Burglary Tools.

Sohei: Light Armour, Bo Staff

Gakusho: Tanto, Holy Scriptures

They may also choose up to three items from the following list: *Belt Pouch, Chalk, Chopsticks, Tanto, Hammer, Small Mirror, Pick, Pole (8'), Pot of Grease, Spade, Iron Spikes (x6), Tent, Writing Set, or a Potion of Healing (works as Gakusho Healing).*

Shugenja Spells

Befriend: One person likes you for five minutes. He will help & defend you, but not do anything suicidal. What would your best friend do for you?

Blind: Enemy is blinded for 3 turns. Range 30'

Curse: If Shugenja can see victim this automatically causes 3 damage (i.e. no armour can stop it). Victim still gets a Toughness check. Range 30'.

Dodge: Reduces the Combat skill of anyone who attacks the Shugenja by 1 for 3 turns.

Dragon Scale: Shugenja has equivalent of Heavy Armour for 3 turns. Doesn't work with Dodge. Doesn't slow the Shugenja down.

Enchant Weapon: Touch a Weapon to give it +1 to Fighting/ Shooting skill for 3 turns. A weapon can only have one enchantment at a time.

Fade to Black: Shugenja cannot be seen for 3 turns unless he attacks an enemy in any way.

Float: Touch person or self to let them float up/down 30' during movement for three turns.

Haste: Caster can move again in this Magic phase.

Ignite: Touch an inflammable object to set it alight. Does not work under water.

Illuminate: Create a floating ball of light for 5 minutes. It stays put or follows Shugenja if he wants.

Lock & Bar: Touch holds a door shut against anything except an Open Says I spell. Lasts as long he keep touching door or he casts another spell.

Mask: The Shugenja, or someone he touches, takes on the likeness of a person the Shugenja has closely observed. It lasts for five minutes.

Open Says I: Touch opens a locked door or lid.

Teleport: Shugenja disappears, & then reappears at any point he can see within 60'.

Terrify: Any enemy must pass a Toughness check to attack Shugenja. Lasts 3 turns.

Rules of Play

When things get interesting the game is played in Turns of about ten seconds in length. Use a surface marked in squares (20-25mm or 1").

Each turn follows the sequence below:

1. Movement

Heroes can choose to move before or after their enemies. Note that squares are 5' across.

They can move up to 3 + Speed in squares, -1 if in Medium Armour, -2 if they are in Heavy.

You cannot move through a solid object over waist high or a square containing another figure (unless they let you). You can climb over or up an object but this is at half speed. Swimming and Stealthy movement is also at half speed.

2. Use Magic

A Shugenja can cast one spell from his Spellbook in a turn. Spells can be cast repeatedly. Casting a spell requires a successful Knowledge Skill check. To cast a spell on an enemy you must be able to see him.

A Ninja, Monk, Gakusho or Samurai can cast one spell from his limited repertoire as above. These appear as supernatural abilities not spells.

A Gakusho can use Holy Light or Healing once in a turn, but not both.

3. Bloody Combat

Heroes & monsters can attack once each in a turn. (Except Samurais with Swift Blade).

You can only engage another figure in close combat in a square next to your own (including diagonally).

You can shoot at any figure that is in line of sight & range, even if they are fighting.

The Heroes always attack first.

The attacker makes a Fighting or Shooting skill check minus their opponent's DEX.

If there is more than one attacker attacking a single opponent in close combat each one gets +1 to their Training Level. A Ninja gets +2 because they are opportunists.

The difference between what the attacker needs & what he scores is the damage.

If his weapon is a Katana, Naginata, Daikyū, Yari or Tetsubo he gets +1 to damage.

Armour stops the first few points of damage. Light Armour stops one point, Medium two, Heavy three. If the hero has a Jingsa or Kabuto helmet this stops another point of damage.

If his armour doesn't stop all the damage the defender must make a Toughness skill roll.

He must roll less than his Toughness minus the remaining damage, or he becomes Wounded.

A Wounded figure takes a -3 penalty to all rolls..

If wounded a second time he is knocked out.

A KO'd figure can be easily killed or captured.

4. Use other Skills

Anything not listed above can now be done.