SAKE 酒侍 & samurai

A few samurai warriors are sitting at a table in a small inn, talking and bragging about swords, women and honour. Sake flows freely, but not even the cellars of Bishamon, the God of War, could quench the thirst of Japan's greatest swordsmen. Servants run for cover, knowing full well where all this is going. Suddenly an eerie silence fills the common room. On the table, only one full cup remains. Who will get the last drink? Will it be the elder of the group, or shall the greatest warrior have it? Time seems to stretch to infinity, until one hand makes a move towards the cup. Such insolence! This insult shall not be tolerated! The elder goes for his sword… We shall never know whether the bold samurai was taking the cup for himself or only to hand it over to his venerable companion. It does not matter: all warriors take offense and draw their katanas, joining the fight at the call of "SAAKEEE!"

Better to have your Sake or drink it?

In SAKE you are a fierce and thirsty samurai warrior, willing to do anything to get the last cup of Sake. The winner is the most drunk samurai (in game terms, the player who has collected the most Sake drink counters) at the end of the Sudden Death round. Be wary, though, for drinking too much will dull your wits and sword mastery. Each drink of Sake prevents you from using one of your resources, be it a weapon or an item, or even your personal skill! You must always be wary not to drink too much or you risk becoming a defenseless soak in the hands of your enemies. On the other hand, you will be able to burn up some of the Sake you have drunk to obtain significant bonuses which may well save your life. Show yourself as the wise warrior you are and balance your strategy with care, not burning up too much Sake, thus finding yourself in the rear at the end of the game, when the Masu is empty and the Sudden death round begins. Those who will succumb to their enemies' blows won't be eliminated from the game, but will become Spirits of Enma, the thirsty god of death, and team up with the other Spirits to attack the living, aiming to steal their Sake. Raise your glasses (and your katanas)!

COMPONENTS

1 Rulebook
102 game cards
(40 Event,
10 Minion,
40 Weapon/Item,
8 Interrupt
4 Location)
8 Reference cards
8 Samurai boards
1 origami Masu
8 Sitting counters
28 Steps counters
20 Sakè drink counters

SYMBOLS

Setup

Before starting the game, each player receives one random Samurai board and places it in front of himself. He then places a *Sitting* tile in the Stance box for *Samurai is sitting.* All remaining Samurai boards are put back into the box and will not be used in the game. Each player then receives one katana card, which he places in the *defense* area of his Samurai board, indicating it is being **wielded**. All cards are then shuffled and each player is given one card per Life Point of his samurai, plus 4. Without looking at them, the player chooses 4 cards that will form his hand, then puts the rest face down in the Life area of his board to indicate his Life point total. 3 *step counters* are placed between each samurai and each of of his adjacent opponents.

Step counters indicate the distance that separates the samurai from his two neighbours. All remaining cards are then put face down to form the draw pile at the centre of the table, beside the Masu, which must contain 2.5 Sake drinks per player, rounded up (for example, with 5 players the Masu will contain 2.5 x 5 = 12.5, rounded up to 13 Sake drinks). The older player will take the first turn. From now on, all other players will have to address him respectfully adding "*san*" at the end of his name.

Samurai Board

The valiant warrior you incarnate in the fight for the last drop of Sake!

Each Samurai board contains:

- A Description of your personal skill
- The Life Points area, indicating your starting Life Points
- The Wounds area, where you place the Life Point cards, rotated 90° clockwise, that you lose whenever you take damage
- The Defense area, where you place the weapon you are **wielding**
- The Stance box, where you place the *Sitting* counter at the beginning of the game.

All Samurai have 2 stances: *standing* and *sitting.* You are sitting at the beginning of the game and as long as the *Sitting* counter is present in the Stance box. You are *standing* after making the first *move* (remove the *Sitting* counter from the box). Once you stand up, you will never sit down again, *not at least while your enemies are still breathing.* While *sitting*, you may use the special **iaido** action. The back of the board shows the dead Samurai transformed into a **Spirit of Enma** and is used only after the Samurai is killed in combat.

Turn order

Each turn is composed of four phases:

1. Playing cards
2. Minions move and attack
3. Draw 2 cards
4. Wielding

Phase 1. Playing cards

During this phase you may play up to 2 cards. Depending on the situation, you will consider either the **four action boxes** OR the **card text.**

If you play a card for the **four action boxes** you cannot use its **card text**, (and vice versa).

The cards

The cards have two specific and independent characteristics: the **action boxes** and the **card text.** Cards have three possible backs (*troublesome, quarrelsome, drowsy*), which you will use once you die and become a *Spirit of Enma.*

Action boxes

Each card contains 4 **action boxes**, each containing a value for:

- Attack
- Defense
- Movement
- Drinking, used to take Sake drinks!

Card text

There are four different kinds of card text:

1. *Event:* the card describes its effect.
2. *Weapon & item:* Weapon cards show a picture and the name of the weapon and its values for Attack, Defense and Steps (distance to hit). Item cards contain the description of the item's effect, which can be *permanent* or *on activation.*
3. *Minion:* Minions and servants of the Samurai, each with his own values for Attack, Defense, Steps (distance to hit) and Movement.
4. *Interrupt:* may be played during an opponent's turn to trigger the described effect, they do not count for the limit of cards you may play during your turn.

Performing an action

During **your turn** you may perform one of four possible actions: play a card from your hand and check the value indicated in the box **corresponding to the action you wish to perform.** Once used, place the card on the discard pile. The four actions are:

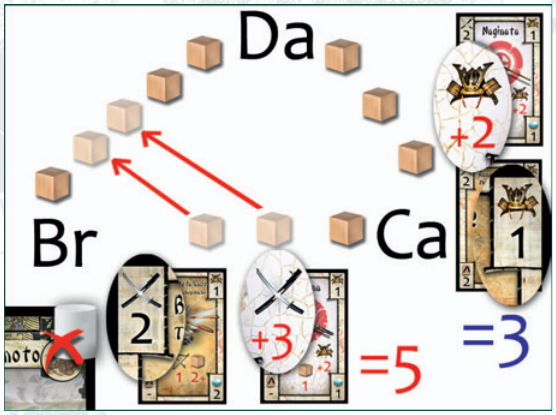
Attack: the value indicates how much damage you inflict on your target. If you are not wielding a weapon, you must be 1 step away from your opponent and the damage you deal is indicated by the attack action box of the card you played. If you use a weapon, you need to be at the exact distance indicated on the weapon card to add the weapon's attack value to your attack (see "*card text*" below). Each hit dealt to the target will cost him 1 Life Point.

Move: the value indicates up to how many steps you may take toward the opponent to your right or left. Once you decide on how many steps to

take, move the correct number of Step counters from the side you wish to move towards to the other (when you step closer to one opponent, you get farther from the other). **Remember**: you can never have less than 1 Step counter between you and any of your opponents, and you can never take someone's place by overtaking him. *Samurai never give way!* The first time you perform a move action, you stand up: remove the *Sitting* counter from the Stance box. Once standing, you will not sit down again.

Iaido: *Samurai are experts in Iaijutsu, the art of drawing the sword in one swift movement.* If you are *sitting* you may combine an attack and a movement into the same action: remove the *Sitting* counter from the Stance box and play a card, checking only the attack action box value. **Iaido** grants you a free movement up to 2 steps, and you may then attack following the rules above.

Drink: at the cry of "*SAKE!!*" you may take the amount of Sake drinks from the Masu as indicated by the corresponding action box. *Kanpai!*



Bruno is 3 Steps from Carl and decides to attack using Iaido. He plays a card from his hand using its Attack action box value of 2, he removes the Seated counter, makes a free 2 Step move towards Carl (he removes 2 Step counters from those between Carl and him, and places them to his left, between David and him) and attacks with his katana for a total Attack power of 5 (2 for the action box, 3 for the weapon). Carl is wielding a Naginata and plays a card with a Defense action box value of 1, thus defending with 3 (1 for the action box, 2 for the weapon). He receives 2 hits (5 for the attacker – 3 for the defender) and moves 2 cards from the Life Points area to the Wounds area of his Samurai board.

During an opponent's turn you may play one of the cards from your hand to *defend* yourself from an attack: play a card to subtract its Defense action box value from the damage you are receiving. You may also add the Defense value of your **wielded** weapon, but only when defending against *melee* attacks (you cannot use your weapon when defending from *ranged* Attacks).

The card text

During your turn, you may play a card to use its text as described below.

Events

Playable during your turn, apply the effect of the card when you play it.

Weapons & items

Place a weapon or an item card in front of you: it remains in play and can only be discarded by applying the effect of an event card. You may own as many weapons and items as you like, but you may never have in play two identical weapons or items.

Weapons

Each weapon card shows values for *Attack*, *Defense* and *Steps*.

The *Steps* value indicates the exact number of Step counters which must separate you from your target in order for the weapon to be effective. A "**+**" sign after the Steps value indicates that you must be at least at the indicated distance from your target.

When attacking, add the corresponding value of your weapon to the *Attack* value in the action box of the card played to attack. This is your attack strength.

When defending, Add the corresponding value of your weapon to the *Defense* value in the action box of the card played to defend. A weapon may never be used to defend against ranged attacks.

David wishes to attack Bruno, who moved away and is now 5 Steps away from him. He plays a Yumi weapon (he may, because he is at 5 Steps away and the weapon requires the target to be at 4+) and attacks by playing a card with an Attack action box value of 2. Bruno is wielding a Katana, but he may not use it, because David is performing a ranged attack. He plays a card with a Defense action box value of 2 and receives 1 hit (2 for David's action box + 1 for his weapon – 2 for Bruno's action box). Bruno moves a card from the Life Points area to the Wounds area of his Samurai Board.

Items

An item card contains the description of its effect, which may be permanent or on activation. Permanent effects apply for the rest of the game, or until the card is removed from play, while on activation effects are applied only when their cost is paid during your turn (the cost is indicated before the "**=**" sign).

Minions

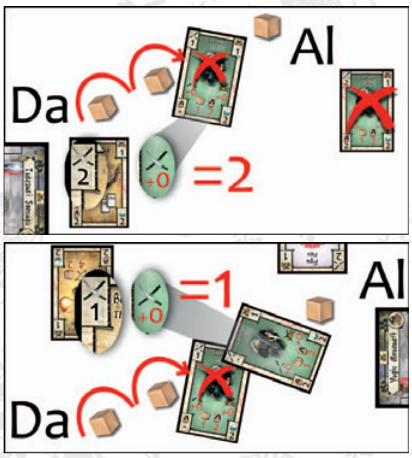
Every Samurai is full of Followers. Play a Minion on one side of your Samurai board, depending on which opponent you want him to attack. At the beginning of your *Minions* phase, the Minion moves at most 2 steps (place it between 2 step counters, with the card base pointing towards you) in one direction, trying to get to a distance of 1 step from one opponent or one Minion. As soon as he reaches this distance, the Minion immediately performs an attack: draw a card and check its Attack action box value. When the Minion is under attack, draw a card and check its Defense action box value.

Keep in mind that Minions are not battle hardened heroes as their Samurai masters and have therefore only 1 Life Point.

Minions also block the movement of opponents, but not their ranged attacks. Also, if you make a move while standing behind one of your Minions, you will push him forward. Keep the Minion beside the Samurai board, as though you had just played it.

Minions will eagerly sacrifice themselves for their masters: when hit, you may discard a Minion from your hand to avoid getting any damage!

Note: you may make *ranged attacks* through both Samurai and Minions.



As a second card, David plays a Minion and places him at his side, finishing his card-playing phase. He activates his Minion, who moves 2 Steps towards Albert and, finding himself 1 Step away from an opponent, attacks. David draws the top card from the deck and checks its Attack action box value: it's 2. The Follower's attack strenght is 2 (Followers start with 0 attack strenght of their own). Albert, though, discards a Follower from his hand and takes no damage. David draws 2 cards and his turn ends. Play moves on to Albert, who retaliates by playing a Follower of his own against David and a Pipe item card in front of himself. Albert's Follower is now activated, who does not need to move, having David's Follower at 1 Step, and immediately attacks. Albert plays the top card from the deck: its Attack action box value is 1. Next David takes the top card from the deck, but its Defense action box value is 0, so his Follower takes 1 hit and is eliminated.

During an opponent's turn, you may play:

Interrupt

Apply the effect of the card and discard it. *Fast reflexes are of the utmost importance:* if more than one Samurai play interrupts from their hands, the first to be declared will be applied first. If you are uncertain on which was declared first, then the first to be applied is the closest to the player in turn, going clockwise around the table.

Albert is 1 Step away from Bruno and is sitting. He could attack without using Iaido. However, in the last turn he has wielded the No-Dachi weapon, which hits at 2 Steps and may thus not be used against Bruno. Albert decides to attack using Iaido. He plays a card using the Attack action box value, which is 1. He removes the Seated counter and makes a free 1 Step move away from his opponent (he moves 1 Step counter from his right to his left, where Bruno is) and attacks Bruno with the No-Dachi with a total attack strenght of 6 (1 for the action box and 5 for the No-Dachi). Bruno has two interrupt cards in his hand: Blurred Vision and Falter. Should he play Blurred Vision, Albert would make his move but his attack would be canceled. Should Albert use Falter, he would cancel Albert's move, but the latter would still be 1 Step away and might attack with his Katana instead of the No-Dachi. Should the latter be the case, had Albert not had the Katana he would have been unable to both move and attack. In both scenarios, though, Albert's Seated tile is removed and he will not be able to use Iaido again, for the remainder of the game. Bruno must now decide on the best course of action.

Hand limit
At any time, if you have more than 4 cards in your hand you must immediately discard down to 4.

Phase 2. Minions move and attack

All your Minions are automatically activated and they move and attack following the rules above.

Phase 3. Draw 2 cards

Draw 2 cards. When the draw pile is empty, shuffle the discard pile into it!

Phase 4. Wielding

In the last phase of your turn, you have the opportunity to decide which weapon you want to **wield** during your opponents' turns. Place the chosen weapon in the Defense area of your Samurai board. Should you lose that weapon during the turn of an opponent, you may immediately **wield** another from those you have in play. A weapon with a Sake drink on it cannot be used and is not lost.

General Rules

Burning your soul
At any time, even during the turn of an opponent, you may decide to draw one or more cards from your Life Point stack and put them in your hand. You may do this only once per turn, and before drawing cards you must declare exactly how many of them you will take. You will then have to draw the stated amount, no more, no less! Cards drawn this way can never be placed back onto the Life Point or Wounds stacks. *The Samurai burns his own soul to win!* You may never take all cards from the Life Points stack: you **must** leave at least one.

Drinking Sake
When you take a Sake drink from the Masu, immediately place it on a card in front of you or on your board. Once placed, Sake drinks may never be moved and may be removed only when **burned up** (see below).
You may place only 1 Sake drink on each of your weapons and items on your Samurai board. *Alcohol affects memory:* a Sake drink on a card makes you forget how to use that card: thus, the card may not be used until you remove the counter from it. You may also place 1 Sake drink on your Life Points stack. *Alcohol dulls pain!* If you have a Sake drink on your Life Points stack, it increases your total Life Points by 1. When wounded, remove the Sake drink counter first. The downside is you won't be able to draw cards from your Life Points stack as long as there is a Sake drink there.
Lastly, you may place 1 Sake drink on your Samurai board, but this will prevent you from using your Samurai's personal skill, and will force you to speak like a drunkard as long as the counter is on your board.

Burning up Sake
Burning up 1 Sake drink is an instant action which you may perform at any time and it allows you to:
- **Draw** 1 card (during your turn or an opponent's) , **OR**
- **Play** one additional card (only during your turn, to exceed the 2-cards limit)

Sake drinks burnt up this way are taken from the cards they were on and removed from the game. If a card with a Sake drink on it is discarded, remove that Sake drink from the game.
Remember: you may not burn a Sake drink to play the card directly below it. To play a card, there must be no Sake drink counter on it.

Carl begins his turn by playing a Rice Bowl item in front of him. He then plays a card using the Drinking action box value, which is 2, and takes 2 Sake drinks from the Masu. One he places on his Life Points stack, the other on his Katana. He wants to keep his new Rice Bowl, in order to be able to use it should the need arise (he could not play the Rice Bowl if the Sake drink was on the item), and his Naginata, which he will use to make an attack against one of his opponents (who doesn't have any Sake drinks). He also won't place a Sake drink tile on his Samurai board, because it would prevent him from using his personal skill. At the end of his turn he wields his Naginata, placing the card in the Defense Area of his Samurai Board (the Katana may not be used, due to the presence of the Sake drink tile on the card). It is David's turn, and he decides to play Drunken Purchase on Carl's Naginata. Carl discards the weapon card and places the Katana instead. David now attacks Carl, who burns up the Sake drink on his Katana to draw a new card, and thus makes the weapon available again. Now he can play a card using the Defense action box value and add this to his Katana Defense value of 2.

Life Points and Wounds
The left side of the Samurai board contains the Life Points area, where the Life Points stack is placed at the beginning of the game. On the right side it contains the Wounds Area, which at the beginning of the game is empty. For each hit you take, move one card from the Life Points stack onto the Wounds stack, rotated 90° clockwise. Every time you recover a Life Point, move one card back to your Life Points stack.

Killing Samurai
When there are no more cards in your Life Points stack, you are dead and you become a cruel **Spirit of Enma**. Remove all your Sake drinks from the game and discard all cards from your hand. Look at the Step counters at the left and right of your Samurai, and remove all Step tiles from the side that has the highest amount (for example, if there are 5 Steps between you and the player on your left, while there is 1 Step between you and the player on your right, remove the 5 Step counters on your left). If this affects one or more *Minions* of another player, he must put them back in his hand. Take all cards from your Wounds stack (they will become your new hand) and turn over your Samurai board.
Note: if only two Samurai remain alive, keep only the lower amount of Step counters among those at the sides of the two survivors. Movement will be performed by adding or subtracting Step counters.

Spirits of Enma
Enma, the cruel god of death, is jealous and thirsty of Sake. While Samurai face each other for the precious liquor, the dark god lurks nearby, ready to snatch the spirit of the fallen and make them his slaves: only through them will he be able to taste the delicious Japanese liquor.
When you die, you become a **Spirit of Enma**. Your hand is made of all cards present in the Wounds stack when you die, but you will play them backside.
Note: a Spirit is not a Samurai, and cards/skills affecting Samurai will have no effect on Spirits.

- Spirits and Actions
Spirits can use neither weapons nor items and, since they are ethereal beings, they don't move around the table. Also, they use their cards backside: their objective is to steal Sake drinks. Spirits have one limitation: they may only play cards the back of which is the same as that of the top card of the draw pile
During your turn, as a Spirit you will follow these steps:
1. Use the *power of Elation*,
2. Draw the top card from the draw pile;
3. *Torment* a Samurai **OR** *Steal Sake* from the Masu
When attacked, you may *fade*, taking no damage.

- Elation
At the beginning of your turn, you use the *power of Elation*, depending on which card back is visible on top of the draw pile:

Troublesome: add or remove a Step counter

Quarrelsome: take one Sake drink from any card of any Samurai and place it on any other card of the same Samurai.

Drowsy: take one card from the hand of any Samurai and give it to another.

After using the *Power of Elation*, **draw** the top card from the draw pile and put it in your hand.

- Stealing Sake from the Masu

You may choose to take a Sake drink from the Masu and put it on your board.

- Tormenting a Samurai

Instead of taking a Sake drink from the Masu, you may choose to *torment* any one Samurai: to do this, declare your target and play as many cards as you want from your hand, the backs of which must all be the same as that of the top card of the draw pile. The number of cards you play determines how many Sake drinks you steal from the target. Distance and weapons are not taken into account: you may hit any Samurai. *Spirits help each other out:* every other Spirit may play cards with the same back to allow you to steal one additional Sake drink per card. The target Samurai may defend himself by following the *Defense* rules, cancelling out the loss of Sake drinks as though they were hits.

The target Samurai chooses which Sake drinks to remove. You may place the stolen Sake drinks on the boards of any spirit, including yours, even dividing them among any number of spirits.

Note: *tormenting* is a special action of the Spirits and is not considered an *Attack* for skill purposes.

- Fading

A Samurai may attack a Spirit to make him lose his Sake drinks. A Samurai may always attack a Spirit, regardless of the Steps indicated on his weapon card. When attacked, as a Spirit you may avoid taking damage by playing a card with the same back as the top one of the draw pile. If you do not, you must remove from the game one Sake drink you have for each hit received. *Spirits help each other out:* when you're under attack, any other spirit may play one of his cards to help you *fade*.

David has just been killed by Carl. David discards his hand, his items and weapons and picks up all cards present in his Wounds area. At the beginning of his turn, he activates the power of Elation. The top card of the deck shows the Quarrelsome backside, and David uses its power on Carl, moving the Sake drink tile the latter has put on his Life Points pile to his Katana. David then decides to torment Carl. The top card of the deck now shows the Drowsy, of which David has 2 in his hand. He plays both of them, attacking Carl who may not defend himself with his Wikizashi, since he is already wielding a Katana, even though he may not use this weapon due to the Sake drink which David has just moved onto it. Bruno, himself also a Spirit, helps David by playing one more Drowsy card. Carl tries to defend himself, playing a card from his hand and using the Defense action box value, which is 2. David successfully steals one Sake drink from Carl, which he gives to Bruno who, having more cards in his hand, has more chances to defend himself. It is now Albert's turn, who attacks Bruno with his Katana, for a total attack strenght of 4, but Bruno plays one more Drowsy card and dematerializes, avoiding all damage. Albert, however, attacks again with a total power of 3, and this time Bruno cannot defend, since he has no more Drowsy cards in his hand, and must remove 3 Sake drinks in his possession. Since he only has 2, he removes them both.

Sudden death round and End of the game

When the last Sake drink is taken from the Masu, it is turned upside down and the sudden death round begins. Players have one last turn to kill off their opponents. The sudden death round begins at the exact moment in which a player flips the Masu upside down, whenever in the turn this happens. Once every player has taken one last turn, the drunkest surviving Samurai (i.e. the player with the most Sake drink counters) is declared the winner *Seppuku:* Should two or more Samurai tie for the highest number of Sake drinks at the end of the sudden death round, all others survivors – because of dishonour and shame – perform the rite of **Seppuku** and take their own lives. Additional sudden death rounds follow until only one samurai stands on his feet, the winner.

Victory of the Spirits of Enma

All spirits team up and may win only as a team: if at the end of any sudden death round the total number of Sake drinks owned by all spirits is greater than that of any surviving Samurai, they have honoured their lord Enma and all Spirits win the game. Note: the **Seppuku** rule also applies to **Spirits**... *Pride does not vanish after death.*

Locations

Japan is full of evocative places and Samurai drink Sake wherever they get the chance. If you're bored of fighting in a smoky inn, fight somewhere else! At the beginning of the game you may decide to set the duel in any one location represented by Location cards. Each contains special rules that may modify the general rules of the game.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF CARDS

Samurai are men of few words, and this is why cards contain little to no text, while everything is depicted by symbols. In order to avoid any confusion, here follows a brief description of the effect of cards:

Event cards

Throwing Chopsticks: perform 2 strenght 1 ranged attacks, at 2 or more Steps: you may hit two different Samurai

Burning Ramen: perform a strenght 2 ranged attack at 3 or more Steps.

Strategic Stench: add 2 Step counters to the game, anywhere you like, taken from the game box.

Riceballs in the face : A Samurai at 4 or more Steps must discard 2 cards of his choice from his hand.

Sakuragi: draw 2 cards.

Drunken purchase: discard a weapon or item of your choice from any Samurai.

Weak Stomach: remove 1 Sake drink from any card of an opponent.

Fake Wounds: recover 2 Life Points.

Roar (Burp!): spend 1 Sake drink to perform a strenght 4 ranged attack at 2 Steps.

Turned-off Lanterns: remove 2 Step counters from anywhere.

Interrupt cards

Falter: cancel an opponent's movement (or Iaido movement).

Blurred vision: cancel an opponent's attack (or Iaido attack).

Weapon & Item cards

Pipe: Spend 1 Sake drink to have all other Samurai discard a card.

Sandals: add 1 to your movement.

Makeshift armour: add 1 to your Defense.

Flagon: spend 1 Sake drink to draw 2 cards.

Rice Bowl: spend 1 Sake drink to recover 2 Life Points.

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