

Class (physical training or fighting ability of the characters)**Class 1:** non-combatant.**Class 2:** peasant or villager, armed labourer or servant, occasional bandit, young recruit...**Class 3:** ashigaru, veteran bandit...**Class 4:** good fighter, simple member of the samurai class, ninja under training, warrior monk...**Class 5:** well-trained samurai, very experienced ninja...**Class 6:** sensei – exceptional master of arms (optional category for some scenarios).

More differences can be made in a scenario: young ashigaru recruits class 2, a bandit may have been a class 4 soldier earlier in life, etc.

Characters may also progress in a campaign or if they accomplish glorious feats, a well-seasoned ashigaru sergeant may become class 4, etc.

Clothing or armour**Light clothing:** no protections or almost none. Movement on foot 20 cm.**Armour 3 (optional) :** bits of metal armour on a leg or arm or shoulder. It does not protect from shooting, but may help in case of simultaneous hits in melee.
Movement on foot 20 cm.**Armour 4:** good protection on the upper part of body, may have some protections on arms and legs too. Movement on foot 16 cm.**Armour 5 (Sengoku samurai):** complete armour worn by samurais of the Sengoku period (somewhat lighter than the heavy ō-yoroi armour of precedent period). Movement in Sengoku armour is faster (16 cm) than in European knight's armour, but protection from arrows is slightly less effective.**Weapons** (ignore what you don't need in your games)**Katana, nunchaku, wakizashi:** short weapons (no difference in the game).**Knife:** very short weapon.**Yari** (thrusting spear): long weapon.**No-dashi:** half-long light weapon, wielded with both hands (no bonus to the die roll).**Naginata:** long weapon. +1 in melee if handled with both hands on foot. If used mounted, or by infantry in close order, it has only the effects of a thrusting spear.**Kanabō** (if two-handed): half-long heavy weapon (+1 in melee).**Nagae yari** (pike): very long weapon, used by infantry units formed in close order (allowed in loose order or alone in the first turn of a melee).**Shuriken** (throwing weapon), **fukiya** (blowgun), **kunai** (throwing blade), no difference in the game between these small missiles.**Sling** not often mentioned.**Yumi** (asymmetric bow): on foot, immobile. Samurai can use it mounted, without penalty for shooting in movement mounted.**Teppō, tanegashima arquebus:** on foot, immobile; one game turn immobile to reload.**Bajō-zutsu:** short arquebus for cavalry.**Ōzutsu:** heavy arquebus, shoots immobile on foot, two game turns to reload alone.**Tan-zutsu:** matchlock pistol.

Shooting

The shooting tables mention the conditions of weapon use, the dice modifiers when shooting at armoured targets, and the result needed to hit (depending on range). Roll 1D6 per weapon shooting (except ōzutsu). Two natural 6es equal 6 and 7. Three natural 6es equal 6, 7, 8 (see page 8 of the generic rules).

Ammunition is not counted, we suppose there is enough for everybody (except for special scenarios if wished). But an ammunition carrier can be needed for large archer units, and for arquebuses firing by salvos.

Yumi traditional asymmetric bow

The traditional Japanese bow is not very powerful but is accurate. It encourages actions close to the enemy.

The bowman must be on foot and immobile. However, samurais can shoot mounted, and even shoot while moving mounted without a negative modifier for movement.

Left: mounted samurai armed with a bow (US Library of Congress)

Right: three ashigaru archers shoot at castle defenders who appear behind a wall, above the heads of their friends raising ladders to attack (but will not be able to shoot at enemies who will be in contact with their friends reaching the top of the wall).

Painting and picture: Euthanasor



yumi bow

can shoot once per game turn, on foot, immobile / samurais can shoot mounted without movement modifier

*die modifier
at armour 4*

**at armour 5
Sengoku**

0 - 10 cm

10 - 20 cm

20 - 40 cm

-1

-1

5 - 6

6

7 ext.

ext. : this bow must be outdoors to shoot at long range (20-40 cm), not from a window or arrow-slit.

If different contexts are mixed, this bow suffers a -2 modifier to hit a heavier armour 5 (ō-yoroi armour of the previous period, or European or med-fan).

Very strong Japanese bows (optional suggestion)... There may be speculations about the actual strength of Japanese yumi bows, there are mentions of samurais using powerful bows. If a scenario or a campaign needs it, a **special ability** may be given to rare characters:

- A **very strong** samurai, **using his own bow** crafted for personal use, has no negative modifier to shoot at armour 4 or at armour 5 Sengoku.
- A **very skilled** samurai shooter, on foot, can decide to aim precisely at one character within a group; **or** to shoot with +1 modifier at a group, or couple, or isolated person (*not both advantages at once for a same shot*). This is also called “elite shooting” in the more generic rules.

This is an adaptation of an usual optional rule. A same character cannot be both a “very strong shooter” and an “elite shooter” or sharpshooter. A player cannot do more than one “elite” shooting in a game turn, even if more than one elite skilled shooters are available.

Shuriken, fukiya, kunai...

Some missiles can only be used by ninjas or by some other characters who have a reason for such training: **shuriken** (throwing weapon), **fukiya** (blowgun), **kunai** (throwing blade)... Rather *than counting* how many they carry it is simpler to restrict their use to **one throw per game turn per player**. It is also more spectacular when it happens (and it would be difficult for members of a same faction to throw them exactly at the same moment).

In narration we imagine that the choosen weapon fits the situation: a shuriken if in movement, a throwing blade if immobile with enough room, a blowgun if hidden immobile. It's not necessary to know which ninja has which of these weapons when a game begins (unless players want to describe very precisely the equipment of their characters).

Characters able to throw a shuriken, but not very well trained to do it, have a -1 modifier. People who do not know how to handle it do not try at all.

shuriken, fukiya, kunai		<i>die modifier at armour 4</i>	armour 5 Sengoku	0 - 10 cm
	<i>one per game turn per player can be thrown in movement without mov. modifier</i>	-1	-2	5 - 6

Optional: a character who receives such a missile from a trained ninja, and is saved by armour, is surprised, stops, and cannot do anything till the end of the same game turn (so, if it happens at the beginning of the game turn or during moves, one enemy can be immobilised).

Sling

The sling is known in Japan, but not in wide use. It needs a long training to be used with effect.

Slings must do an ample gesture to shoot: **they have no protection** from enemy shootings from terrain, mantlet, or other characters, in the same game turn.

sling		<i>die modifier at armour 4</i>	armour 5 Sengoku	0 - 10 cm	10 - 20 cm	20 - 40 cm
	<i>can shoot once per game turn on foot and immobile; no terrain protection</i>	-1	-2	5 - 6 ext.	6 ext.	7 ext.

Matchlock pistol

Some rare characters may own a matchlock pistol. Contrarily to wheellock and flintlock European pistols, a matchlock pistol cannot fire in movement, nor if its bearer was in contact with an enemy at the beginning of the game turn (because the match needs to be ready). Firing in movement mounted is possible with -1 modifier.

tan-zutsu matchlock pistol		0 - 10 cm	10 - 20 cm
	<i>shoots immobile on foot, or mounted / firing in mov. mounted is possible with -1 modifier reloaded in one game turn immobile</i>	<i>(short range)</i> 5 - 6	<i>(long range)</i> 7 -1 at armour 4, 5

Horo



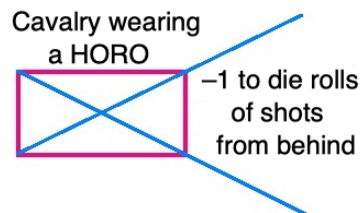
Picture: the horo carried by the third cavalryman gives him a -1 modifier to shots coming from behind (except firearms).

Painting and picture: Euthanasor

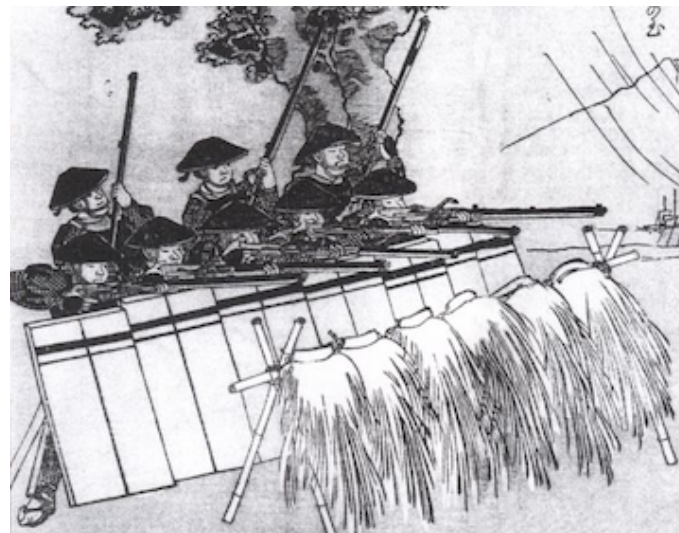
A **horo** is a large bag made of several strips of silk fixed on a wicker frame.

Carried on the back of a mounted character in movement it fills up with air and gives -1 to die rolls of enemy missiles coming **from behind** (but not from firearms).

It can be worn by messengers or by some important characters.



Tate mantlet



A **Tate** is a wooden mantlet protecting infantry (especially archers and arquebusiers) from enemy shots and from cavalry charges.

It can be fixed to wooden posts, or carried by a bearer if there is enough workforce.

A character who is standing behind a mantlet has -1 protection from enemy shots (except from ōzutsu heavy arquebus). This protection may also apply to second person just behind.

Old engraving: the mantlets can be of man height or smaller. A light barrier can be placed in front to hamper the first enemy contact.

A mantlet bearer is only armed with a short weapon. The movement of a character carrying alone a mantlet is reduced by -8 cm (and they cannot do anything else).

Avoiding arrows

An ability to deflect arrows with a movement of the arm or with a weapon (*as in movies...*) has been suggested for samurais and monks.

Optional suggestion: well-trained samurais, monks, and ninjas, are protected from shots (except firearms) by their class as if it were an armour (*examples: class 4 protects them as an armour 4; class 5 as an armour 5 Sengoku*).

If the enemy shooters are spaced from more than 90° (from their target's point of view) the character cannot try to avoid all their projectiles, he or she must choose which ones. And it does not protect from surprise shooting.

Exceptional: a class 6 sensei has the protection of a fantasy armour 6: -1 from all shots, firearms included, added to the protection of a Sengoku armour 5 (*see the table of fantasy armour protection on last page*).

Japanese arquebus

Three different, complementary, tables are suggested. *Ignore what you do not need in your games. The first table is sufficient for simple games.*

– First table: **Infantry arquebus**, applies when Japanese smiths have well understood the production process and soldiers know well its tactics.

arquebus tanegashima, teppō	at Sengoku armour 4 or 5	0 - 20 cm	20 - 30 cm	30 - 40 cm
on foot, immobile reloaded in one game turn immobile	<i>-1 modifier at long range (more than 30 cm)</i>	<i>(short range) 5 - 6</i>	<i>(medium range) 6</i>	<i>(long range) 7 -1 at armour 4, 5</i>

– Second table (*optional*) **salvo shooting**, allows massive, more effective shooting, by salvos or rolling fire.

fire by salvos	at Sengoku armour 4 or 5	0 - 20 cm	20 - 40 cm	40 - 60 cm
on foot and immobile salvos at a group, ordered by an officer reloaded in one game turn immobile	<i>-1 modifier at long range (more than 40 cm)</i>	<i>(short range) 5 - 6</i>	<i>(medium range) 6</i>	<i>(long range) 7 -1 at armour 4, 5</i>

Salvos are only considered against a group (or against characters partly protected by a solid construction).

The arquebusiers must be at least three, already in **close order** (or positioned in a fortress or defending a wall or behind a man-made protection intended for this).

An unit forms close order in one game turn immobile. Units in close order are limited in movement.

A **teppō taishō** (arquebusier officer) must give orders **within earshot** (≤ 20 cm, if not the table does not apply). An ammunition carrier / provider must also be in the group (probably sitting just behind with his large ammunition box).

These two characters cannot do anything else at the same time. The ammunition box is a heavy object, it reduces movement -4 cm.

– Third table (*optional*) **early arquebus** for the first years or decades after the introduction of this weapon in Japan; also covers the **bajō-zutsu**, a short arquebus intended for cavalry (that can shoot in movement mounted with -1 modifier).

early arquebus, & bajō-zutsu short arquebus	at Sengoku armour 4 or 5	0 - 10 cm	10 - 20 cm	20 - 40 cm
on foot and immobile cavalry can fire bajō-zutsu (with -1 modifier if in movement) reloaded in one game turn immobile	<i>-1 modifier at long range (more than 20 cm)</i>	<i>(short range) 5 - 6</i>	<i>(medium range) 6</i>	<i>(long range) 7 -1 at armour 4, 5</i>



Ōzutsu heavy arquebus

The **ōzutsu** or **big arquebus** is a heavy, encumbering weapon: carrying it reduces movement -4 cm. It is **reloaded in two game turns** immobile by a single person, or in one game turn immobile with the help of someone else who knows well the job (*and would also carry more ammunition and powder*). The character must stay immobile, and hold the weapon strongly, to fire. Roll **one red die and one white die**. If the red die fails, there's no hit at all (*ignore the result of the white die*). If the red die hits, it kills someone or damages a structure (depending on the target) and if the white die also succeeds it causes another damage or casualty.

*Priority when aiming at a **building** with people inside (or at a guarded door, defended battlements, ship): the red die, if it hits, damages the structure; the white die if it also hits kills a character.*

Destruction of structure : decide a solidity level for the structure. Roll a similar die for each damage received. Example: if the door of a castle or of a wall has 4 in solidity, roll 1D4 after each damage. The structure is destroyed if the die rolls 1 after the first damage, 1 or 2 after the second damage, 1 or 2 or 3 after the third damage, etc. (so it's impossible to predict in advance if the next hit will have an effect).

-1 modifier to both dice against a lone character (or an isolated couple). +1 to both dice against an unit in close order. Protections of terrain apply normally. A double natural 6 equals 7 (red) et 6 (white). A light protection (tate mantlet, light fence) does not count, a hit destroys it and cause one casualty behind.

heavy portable gun ōzutsu	1D6 (red) and 1D6 (white)	0 - 20 cm	20 - 40 cm	40 - 60 cm
shoots on foot, immobile no modifier at armour -1 to both dice at a lone character	heavy object, movement -4 cm reloaded in two game turns immobile (one game turn with help) +1 to both dice at an unit in close order	(short range) 5 - 6	(medium range) 6	(long range) 7

The same weapon or a similar one, then called **hiya zutsu**, can fire a **large incendiary arrow** called **bo-hiya**. Choose a precise target to set on fire (wooden building, door or window in a stone building, ship, etc.)

If the red die hits but not the white die, the arrow hits the target and gets stuck in it; if no-one interferes a fire will begin in "some time" (see generic rules page 39) but before that the arrow can be extinguished in a full game turn. If both dice succeed a fire begins immediately.

If the red die fails and the white die succeeds, the arrow does not hit the target but falls elsewhere at random amongst other buildings or places (not in the same yard if it's a castle, but it could be another house, or a heap of straw...) ()*

Terrain protection applies as usual (see reference sheet) but it's possible to fire an arrow straight inside a building if in contact with an opening.

incendiary arrow bo-hiya fired from a heavy arquebus	1D6 (red) and 1D6 (white)	0 - 10 cm	10 - 20 cm	20 - 80 cm
shoots on foot, immobile no modifier at armour -1 to both dice at a lone character	heavy object, movement -4 cm reloaded in two game turns immobile (one game turn with help) +1 to both dice at a building of large size	(short range) 5 - 6	(medium range) 6	(long range) 7

(*) If wished (depending on gaming habits of the players) a scatter die (with arrows) may be rolled to decide in which direction the rocket goes.

Melee *(reminder of the generic rules, and obviously logical adaptations)*

The character with the longest weapon (*weapon category, not figure size*) strikes before opponent.

pike > long weapon > half-long weapon > short weapon > very short weapon > bare hands

It helps to distinguish the different sorts of fighters, but should not be an incentive to give longer weapons to everyone. Each character or unit has the usual weapon for their job.

We accept that, in most cases, duels between samurais on foot are done with weapons of same length (katanas) even if the figures are represented differently. *But some characters may be renowned for their use of a no-dashi.*

Half-long weapons, long weapons, and pikes, have no advantage of length inside a building (or if fighting to enter a building or through a man-sized door or through a window).

A **lancer in second rank** can strike above the shoulder of the first rank (*except if the friend of the first rank wants the advantages of a naginata or no-dashi*) whatever the formation (or lack thereof). A **lancer in a third rank** can strike above the two first ranks only if the unit is in **close order** and facing the enemy. **Pikemen** not in **close order formation** lose their length advantage after they have been in contact with an enemy in the previous game turn (*it means they have the length advantage in the first turn of melee only*).

Weapons swung with **both hands** (*naginata, no-dashi, heavy tool*) prevent friends in a second rank to strike above the shoulder of the wielder, and cannot be used from a second rank (*naginas can be used as thrusting spears instead*). **Naginas** and heavy two-handed tools do not have their +1 bonus if in **close order** or inside a building (or fighting to enter a building or through a rather narrow door).

Characters **class 2** and/or fighting with a **tool or improvised weapon** or with their bare hands have -1 modifier in melee. Striking with bare hands is not lethal, if hit the opponent stays stunned one game turn (*except if hit by a sensei master class 6, if he wants to, and who doesn't suffer the -1 penalty for bare hands*).

Exceptional fencing in melee

Rare samurais or ninjas (often player characters or NPCs) can strike with their katana as fast as with an half-long weapon, or with a knife as fast as a katana, or with a no-dashi as fast as long weapons; and/or strike twice in a game turn; or even thrice (with a progression in many adventures).

Simultaneous hits when fighting vs two or more enemies

When someone fights two or more enemies, the lone fighter must first choose who they want to strike. It is sometimes accepted (if the ruleset is well known and if everyone agrees) that if enemies strike at the same time (with weapons of same length than the lone character) a hit on both sides means a casualty on both sides (although the usual ruleset suggests that, in a duel, when simultaneous hits happen the result is decided by class, armour, etc. as below):

Result (die + modifiers) **higher than class** of opponent: hit (= killed). **Equals class**: opponent recoils. **Smaller than class of opponent**: missed.

If the **armour of the opponent is higher than their class**, the result must also exceed their armour to hit; if not, the opponent recoils.

Natural 1 die roll: always miss (*even with good modifiers*). **Double natural 6 = 7** (*except in disorder*). **Triple natural 6** in Melee: always hits.

*When two opponents simultaneously roll a "hit" result (or "recoil" result) only the **higher class** one kills their enemy (or forces their enemy to recoil). If same class, the **best armour**. If same class and armour, the **highest natural die** rolled for this fight. If it was also the same, the **highest total of modifiers**.*



Picture above: isolated pikemen lose their length advantage after one game turn in contact. Painting and picture: Euthanasor

Surprise or ambush

Characters hidden from view, or disguised, or believed to be friendly, can do a surprise action (*secretly written in advance, or planned with the game master*).

The surprise or ambush is **announced after the movement and shooting phases**, when all normal moves and shootings are finished. The surprising character or group can **move** and come to contact an enemy if close enough (*but may be delayed or blocked if they were hiding in difficult terrain*) while shooting or not; or stay immobile and **shoot**; or run away. Other characters cannot react, nor shoot back nor strike back, in the same game turn.

Also, if the target is **totally surprised and was not suspecting anything** they cannot try to protect themselves: shooting by surprise, or striking them by surprise in melee, has a **+1 modifier** to all dice. *Test: Roll 1D6 for each group or unit ambushed:*

- Die result exceeds their perception: noticed nothing at all, don't suspect anything.
- Die result equals perception: suspects something if a character with a highest perception notices the danger (and shouts a warning within earshot, ≤ 20 cm).
- Die result smaller than perception: these characters noticed a danger, the attackers do not have the +1 surprise modifier.

Characters' perception is usually equal to their class, but ninjas and monks add +1 to their perception, and everyone has -1 in perception to detect hidden ninjas (including other ninjas). A natural die roll of 1 is always successful for this test.



Above: a small group of ninjas, previously hidden in the vegetation of a river bank, suddenly appears and cross a stream. Even if their enemy is too far for contact, they can make a whole move, nobody else can move nor shoot (the movement and shooting phases being over).

Terrain, painting and picture: Denez, Euthanasor



Left: a female samurai with a naginata, who was hidden behind the corner of a wall, suddenly appears and attacks an important character who had wronged her family. This character and his guards were not suspecting anything...

Right: the woman has hit and killed the merchant in melee with the advantage of surprise.

In the next game turn the movements and actions will be done normally; what will happen then (reaction of guards, etc.) will depend on the context, scenario, and negotiations (if any).

Painting and pictures: Euthanasor

More than one group (or isolated characters or couples far from each other) taking part in a same ambush cannot attack exactly at the same time: they act when given an acoustic signal (musician, shouts, or firearm shot from any side) or a visual signal (banner or flag, or viewing a chief advancing). Only one group, or an isolated character or couple, can begin the ambush, the others will appear and act one game turn later and still benefit from the surprise effect.



Budget (optional, for information only; its calculation is not compulsory, troop composition is usually decided by the GM if any).

Basic cost (in budget points) equals class. **Officer, ashigaru sergeant, or musician**: twice their class.

Cavalry character on warhorse: twice their class. Thus, a cavalry officer or cavalry musician: thrice the class.

Bow (yumi) 4 points. **Arquebus** or **bajō-jutsu**: 4 points. **Matchlock pistol**: 6 points. **Heavy arquebus**: 8 points. **Light thrusting spear (yari)** 2 points. **No-dashi, kanabō**: 2 points (reserved to some characters). **Naginata**: 3 points (reserved to some characters). **Pike**: 2 points (close order training included).

Shuriken or other small ninja missile: included in the cost of the ninja or provided by scenario. **Sling**: 2 points. **Half-long tool** 1/2 pt, **heavy** 1 pt.

Armour 3: one point. Armour 4: 2 points. **Sengoku samurai armour 5**: 3 points (fighting samurai only). **Horo**: one point (reserved to some characters).

All fighters class 3 and higher, villagers and peasant draft called for duty by a lord, and bandits, have some sort of **short weapon** (cost free) even if it does not appear on the figure. All villagers and civilians may have a **very short weapon** (knife, free).

Pack horse: 2 pts. **Warhorse** in reserve at stable: same cost as usual rider (a rider mounting a horse of lesser value is no better in melee).

Negative modifiers of Japanese ranged weapons on strong fantasy creatures

This Argad samurai extension can be used with Argad fantasy documents. This table of shooting modifiers includes the equivalents skin+armour for fantasy contexts (the thick hide of some monsters upgrade their armour). *The European or fantasy armour 5 is heavier than armour 5 Sengoku.*

	skin + armour = 4	armour 5 Sengoku	skin + armour = 5	skin + armour = 6	skin + armour = 7
japanese yumi bow	-1	-1	-2	-3	-4
shuriken, ninja missiles	-1	-2	-2	-3	-4
sling	-1	-2	-2	-3	-4
matchlock pistol (see shooting table for the different ranges)	-1 at long range	-1 at long range	-1 at long range	-1 at short range except before contact -2 at long range	-1 before contact -2 at short range except before contact -3 at long range
arquebus (see shooting table for the different ranges)	-1 at long range	-1 at long range	-1 at long range	-1 at short and medium range except before contact -2 at long range	-1 before contact -2 at short and medium range except before contact -3 at long range
heavy arquebus both dice hitting a creature who has more than one life point cause two wounds	—	—	—	-1 at long range H2 and H3 large creatures do not count as lone targets	-1 at short and medium range except before contact -2 at long range H2, H3 don't count as lone targets

All Argad Sengoku tables and rules are fully compatible with other Argad rules suggested for any historical or fantasy contexts.

This extension of [Argad generic ruleset](#) is completed by the reference sheet and cards for this period.

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