



RULES

A Game by Pedro P. Mendoza



The way of the warrior is known as Bushido. It is a code that guides the life of a warrior, and promotes values of sincerity, frugality, loyalty, and honor. It also requires the mastery of martial arts.

In Bushido, you take on the role of a warrior attempting to navigate the way. You will train your martial arts techniques and choose a weapon that fits your style. But training is not mastery. The only way to know how far you have come is to enter the dojo with a worthy opponent and put your training to the test.

Face your opponent and fight with honor. Only then can you see which of you has most thoroughly mastered the art of Bushido!

Components



5 Evade
Dice



10 Attack
Dice



5 Defense
Dice



2 Hit Tokens



31 Technique
Cards



12 Weapon Cards
(2 Sets of 6 Weapons)



4 Lock Tokens



2 Guard Tokens



2 Life Dice (D12)



10 Torii/Armor Tokens



16 Rage Tokens



2 Player Boards

Goal of the Game

Defeat your opponent in a martial arts duel. The first player to reduce their opponent to 0 Health wins.

Setup

- Place all dice and tokens to the side of the play area creating a general supply.
- Give each player a Player Board, a set of Weapon cards, a Hit token, a Life Die, and a Guard token.
- Set your Life Die at 12 and place the Hit token at 0.
- The Guard token will be placed after the game has begun.

You are now ready to begin the game.



Technique Deck

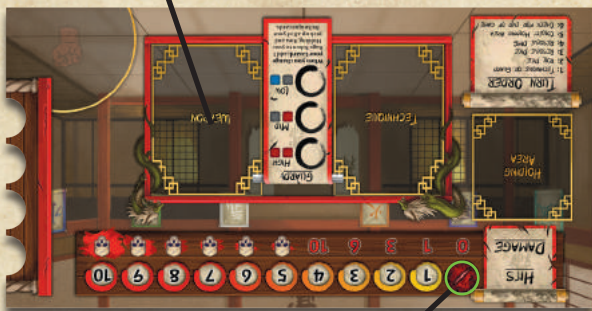


Weapon Area



Set of Weapon Cards

Rage Tokens



Defense Dice



Evade Dice



Attack Dice



Hit Tokens



Life Dice



Lock Tokens



Torii/
Armor
Tokens

Holding Area

Technique Area

Hit Track

Guard Area



Available
Tokens

Rage Pool

Guard Token



Gameplay

Each game of **Bushido** has 3 phases: Train, Arm, and The Duel. A complete game of Bushido begins with Training, progresses to Arming, and then concludes with Dueling. The **Train** and **Arm** phases set the stage for the game. The **Duel** Phase is where most of the action takes place. Do not underestimate the value of training and arming, however. A battle can be won or lost before the fighting ever begins.

Train

During Training, players take turns selecting Technique cards to build their hands for **The Duel**. Randomly decide on a player to start the draft (referred to henceforth as 'First Drafter'). The other player will strike first in **The Duel** (referred to henceforth as 'First Striker').

We recommend flipping a token with the Armor being "heads" and the Torii being "tails" – winner of the coin toss decides who becomes 'First Striker.'

There are 5 rounds of Training. Players alternate who drafts first in each round.

Shuffle the Technique cards and reveal 4, face-up onto the table. The First Drafter selects one of the available cards and places it in front of them.

The First Striker then selects one of the 3 remaining cards and places it in front of them. The 2 cards remaining are discarded and are not used for the remainder of the game.



Repeat the above draft with the First Drafter selecting first in round 1, round 3, and round 5 and the First Striker selecting first in round 2 and round 4.

When each player has 5 cards in front of them, move on to the **Arm** phase.

Arm

Pick up the set of Weapon cards you received during setup. Secretly choose 1 Weapon card and place it face-down in the Weapon area on your Player Board. Discard the other Weapon cards face-down to the side of the play area.

Weapons determine how many tokens you may have available at any given time and each Weapon provides 3 different abilities which are tied to specific Guards. You will have 1 ability active at any given time, based on the Guard you are presently in. Try to choose a Weapon which works well with the Technique cards you have drafted during the Train phase.



Token Limit

Abilities

Note: The Jumonji Yari is a strong all-around Weapon with a 3 token limit and is a very good choice for newer players.

After both players have secretly chosen their Weapons, the First Striker (the player who will attack first) selects which Guard they will start in by placing their Guard token on High, Middle, or Low Guard. After seeing the First Striker's selection, the First Drafter selects the Guard they wish to start on placing their Guard token accordingly.



The Guard you choose gives you a baseline for whether your turns will tend toward being aggressive (High Guard), mixed (Mid Guard), or defensive (Low Guard). This will be explained in greater detail in **The Duel**.

When both players have selected Guards, reveal your chosen Weapons and take your Technique cards into your hands. Take a number of Armor tokens equal to the Weapon token limit defined on your Weapon card and place them in the corresponding slots on your Player Board. Fill the remaining slots with Lock Tokens; these slots will not be used this game.



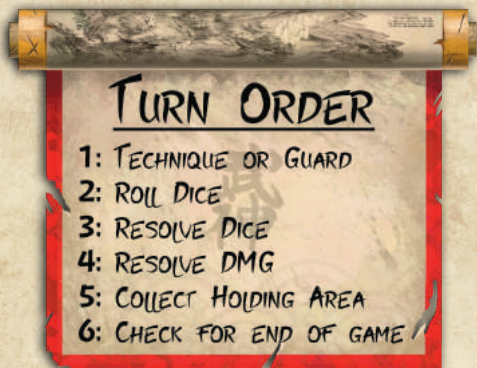
The Duel

During **The Duel**, Players take turns attempting to damage each other and simultaneously prevent themselves from taking damage.

At the end of each player's turn, you must check for game end. If either player (or both) is at 0 health at the end of any player's turn, the game is over.

If your opponent is at 0 health and you are not, you win. If you and your opponent are *both* at 0 health, the game is a draw.

Each turn in **The Duel** has several steps. These are listed on the Player Boards for quick reference and are described in detail in the following pages.



1 Play a Technique Card or Change your Guard

Every turn you **must** take one of these 2 actions:

- Play a Technique card (and resolve its effects)
- or
- Change your Guard and return all previously played Technique cards to your hand.

Playing a Technique

When you choose to play a Technique card, play that card face-up in the indicated space on your Player Board. Cover any previously played Technique cards. Any effects on the card you just played are considered *in play*. Some effects are always active; others must meet certain conditions. Details are indicated on the card.

School Icon



Ability

Dice Provided

Note: Cards from each school generally focus on dice and effects of a specific type as noted below.



Earth - Defense



Air - Evasion



Fire - Aggression



Water - Response



Shadow - Control

Boosting

When playing a Technique card, you may **Boost** the Technique by discarding 1 or more cards of the same School as the Technique you are playing. For each card you discard, you may add 1 die of your choice to the pool of dice you are about to roll (see Roll Dice pg. 15).



Note: Basic Technique cards are not associated with any School. As a result, they cannot be used to Boost. All Basic Technique cards do, however, earn you a Torii token to your holding area. This can be an important advantage. So, despite their inability to Boost, it is unwise to ignore them completely.



Basic - Torii Acquisition

Change Your Guard

When you change your Guard, add 1 Rage token to your Holding Area and then collect all of your previously played Technique cards back into your hand.

You may choose to change your Guard even if you have no previously played Technique cards. If you have no Technique cards left in your hand, you must change your Guard.

When changing your Guard, you must move your Guard token to a different Guard.



2 Roll Dice

After playing your Technique card or changing your Guard, roll the pool of dice to which you are entitled. The pool of dice you roll consists of:

- Dice from your Guard
- Dice from your Technique card
- Dice from Boosting.
- Dice from Technique/Weapon effects.

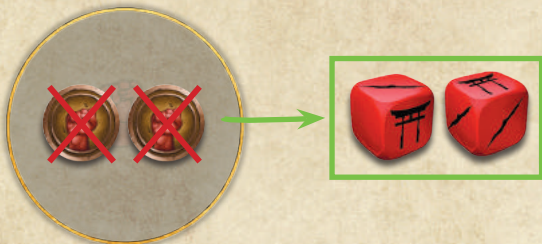
Each Guard has 2 dice associated with it and you will roll these dice every turn. Technique cards also have dice associated with them.

On a turn where you play a Technique card, you will roll the dice associated with the Technique card you played, dice from Boosting, and dice associated with the Guard you are in. Sometimes the effect of your Technique or Weapon will also instruct you to roll additional dice.

On a turn where you change your Guard, you will only roll the 2 dice indicated by your new Guard and associated with any Weapon effects.



(Optional) Before rolling your dice, you may spend any number of available Rage tokens to add dice to your pool. Add 1 red die for each Rage token spent. Rage tokens in your Holding Area are not available to be spent until they have been collected (see **Collect Holding Area** pg. 19).



(Optional) After your initial roll of the dice you may spend a Torii token to reroll as many dice as you like. Torii tokens must come from your available token pool and **not** from your Holding Area. After rerolling, if you are still not satisfied with the result, you may repeat this action. Once you have begun resolving dice, you may no longer use Torii tokens to reroll.

Example: An initial roll yields 5 blank results. The active player spends a Torii token to reroll the 5 blank dice and gets a more favorable result.



3 Resolve Dice

After rolling dice, you may resolve your dice in any order. Dice results have the following effects:



- Increase your opponent's Hit Track by 1.



- Reduce your Hit Track by 1.



- Gain an Armor token to your Holding Area.



- Strike or Focus (decide for each die).

Strike – Reroll the die that triggered the Strike action then add and roll another red die from the supply. If there are no more red dice available in the supply, use a previously rolled red die with a blank result. If there are no red dice in the remaining supply and all previously rolled red dice have a non-blank result, you may choose to only reroll the die triggering the Strike effect.

Focus – Take 1 Torii token from the supply and add it to your Holding Area.

Note: Some Weapon and/or Technique effects may cause you to roll additional dice during the **Resolve Dice** step. This does not cause you to return to the **Roll Dice** step and you may not use Torii tokens to reroll these dice.

4 Resolve Damage

After resolving all of your dice, you must resolve damage. Look at the Hit Track on your Player Board. The number below each space shows how much damage you will receive by taking the indicated number of hits. During this phase you may spend Armor tokens to reduce the number of hits you will receive, thereby reducing the amount of damage you take. For each Armor token you spend, reduce the number of hits on your Hit Track by 1 space (this can greatly reduce the amount of damage you take). Armor tokens must be spent from your available token pool not from your Holding Area.

After spending as many Armor tokens as you are willing and able, reduce your health by the amount shown in the damage row of your Player Board corresponding to the number of hits you have taken. Then reset your hits to 0.



Example: This player will be instantly defeated if they do not reduce their damage. By spending 1 Armor token, this player can reduce their damage they receive to 10. By Spending 2 Armor tokens they can reduce the damage they receive to 6.

5 Collect Holding Area

Move any tokens in your Holding Area to their appropriate areas.

Torii tokens and Armor tokens go to the available token area of your Player Board. The maximum number of tokens you may have available at any given time is shown by your equipped Weapon. If you have more tokens than your maximum, discard tokens of your choice until you are within your limit.

Rage tokens are stored in the Rage Area beneath your available Torii and Armor tokens. There is no limit to the number of Rage tokens you may have.



Example: The active player changed their Guard this turn from High Guard to Mid Guard adding 1 Rage to their Holding Area. Rolling their Guard dice yields 1 blank result and 1 Armor result causing them to add 1 Armor token to their Holding Area. As they reach the **Collect Holding Area** step of their turn, the Rage token and Armor token earned this turn are moved to the available tokens area and are ready for use in the next turn.

6 Check for Game End

Check if either player has 0 health.

If only one player has 0 health, the player with health remaining has bested their opponent in the art of Bushido and wins the game.

If **both** players have 0 health, the players are equally skilled in the art of Bushido and the game ends in a draw. In this case, we recommend you seek more training and test your skills again. (Rematch!)

Note: For your first game, you may want to skip the **Train** and **Arm** phases as it is difficult to make decisions about what Techniques and Weapons you want before you have some experience in **The Duel** phase. For your first game, we recommend using the Starting Decks indicated in the Variants section (see Variants pg.20).



Variants

Starter Decks

Deck 1:

Lightning Strike (Fire)
Whirlwind Blade (Fire)
Focused Dodge (Air)
Enduring Strength (Earth)
Quick Cut (Basic)
Jumonji Yari (Weapon)

Deck 2:

Tortoise Shell (Earth)
Defense Mastery (Earth)
Serpent Strike (Water)
Hidden Blade (Water)
Wide Cut (Basic)
Jumonji Yari (Weapon)

The above decks can be used for your first few games, allowing you to skip the **Train** and **Arm** phases and get right to **The Duel**. Both players begin the game in **Mid Guard** and the player with Deck 1 strikes first.

Advanced Draft

For experienced players, we recommend the following change to the **Train** phase of the game. Instead of the normal draft, each player should draw 2 cards from the face-down deck of Technique cards. Choose 1 of the drawn cards and give the other to your opponent face-down. Repeat this 3 times so each player has 6 cards (3 they chose and 3 that were selected for them).

Look at your 6 cards and choose 1 to discard secretly.

This leaves you with 5 cards in your hand (2-3 of which are known to your opponent).

After this draft, move on to **Arm** as normal.

Note: The advanced draft allows for a bit more surprise for your opponent – they will not know exactly what cards you have or what schools you are strong in. By hiding a key Technique for a crucial moment you may be able to pull off some wonderfully unexpected moves.

4-Player Game

(2 Sets Required)

Sometimes the way of the warrior demands you fight not only for yourself. Bound by loyalty, duty, and honor, you must protect others to truly master the art of Bushido.

Overview:

The 4-Player version of Bushido is a team game that requires 2 sets of the base game to play. The following rules assume you are already familiar with the rules for the core game and will explain the differences in a 4-Player game. If you are not yet familiar with the core rules, please go back and familiarize yourself with those rules now.

Goal of the Game:

Defeat 1 player on the opposing team. The first team to reduce either opponent to 0 health wins.

Setup:

Setup is identical to the setup for the base game. Keep all components from each set separate.



You should sit on the same side of the table as your teammate (beside them) and opposite your opponent (across from them).



Gameplay:

In a 4-player game of **Bushido** you will work with a partner to defeat an opponent from the other team. You will always attack the player directly across the table from you. When a single player is reduced to 0 health, the game will end. The team which still has both players, wins the game. Should 2 opposing players reach 0 health simultaneously, the game will continue with the remaining 2 players finishing the duel. In this way, it is possible to win even after you have been defeated. Teams win or lose together.

Train

Randomly determine which team will draft first and which team will attack first.

Training is identical to the base game, though teammates should synchronize their drafting such that they progress at the same pace. Teammates should openly discuss what they are drafting and both players on a team should draft a card for their respective decks before the opposing players' draft. Teammates draft from separate decks. You draft from a shared deck with an opponent across the table from you, just as in the base game.

There is value for teammates in drafting cards from the same school and additional value in drafting the same Techniques when possible. These advantages will be described in **The Duel** phase.

Arm

Teammates should confer on which Weapons they intend to use and then put them face-down just as in the **Arm** phase of the 2-player game. Teammates can show each other the cards they are playing and discuss them in general terms so as not to give information to their opponents.

Just as in the 2-player game, the First Strikers will pick their Guards then the First Drafters will choose theirs. Teammates may start the game in different Guards and may choose different Weapons.

After all players have selected their Guards, reveal all Weapons, collect the appropriate number of tokens, and proceed to **The Duel**.

The Duel

The dueling phase of the Bushido team game is where the most drastic differences are.

Open communication between players is allowed and encouraged to facilitate powerful attacks and strategic defenses. In this phase, as in previous phases, teammates play and resolve their turns simultaneously.



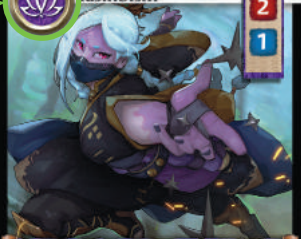
School Synchronization:

When teammates play cards of the same school on the same turn, those cards act to Boost each other. Each player adds a die of their choice to their dice pool before rolling.

Teammate 1





Tashibishi



2

1

When you resolve , your opponent cannot roll .

GUARD



HIGH



MID



LOW



When you change your Guard; add 1 Rage Token to your Holding Area and pick up all of your Technique cards.



+



OR



OR





Remember: Basic Techniques don't belong to any school and therefore do not Boost here.


Teammate 2



Disarming Strike

2



Spend 2  tokens: Your opponent cannot roll dice from their **GUARD**, and must ignore the effects of their **WEAPON**.

GUARD

HIGH



MID



LOW



When you change your Guard; add 1 Rage Token to your Holding Area and pick up all of your Technique cards.



+



or



or



Technique Synchronization:

When teammates play identical Technique cards on the same turn, those cards act to Boost each other and give a post-roll advantage. Each player adds a die of their choice to their dice pool before rolling.

Teammate 1





Lightning Strike 3

Spend up to 3 : Deal 1 DMG to your opponent for each  spent.

GUARD

 **HIGH**  

 **MID**  

 **LOW**  

When you change your Guard; add 1 Rage Token to your Holding Area and pick up all of your Technique cards.



+  or  or 

+ After Rolling



Additionally, after rolling (and optionally using Torii tokens to reroll) each player may set 1 die to a result of



Remember: Basic Techniques don't belong to any school and do not synchronize here.



Teammate 2

 **Lightning Strike** 3



Spend up to 3 :
Deal 1 DMG to your opponent
for each  spent.

GUARD

HIGH  

MID  

LOW  

When you change your Guard; add 1 Rage Token to your Holding Area and pick up all of your Technique cards.



+  or  or 

+ After Rolling



Honorable Defense:

Teammates may play their own Armor tokens to reduce the number of hits coming at a teammate. This only applies to Armor tokens. Torii tokens cannot be played for a teammate.

Collected Wisdom:

- The ability provided by your Technique card belongs to you and you alone (e.g., abilities which trigger by the spending of Armor tokens – as in the case of ‘Serpent Strike’ – activate when you spend a token but not when your teammate spends a token on your behalf).
- You always resolve your hit dice such that they target your opponent (even if the dice are rolled as a result of defending your teammate such as when you have played ‘Graceful Cut’).
- You suffer the consequences of your actions (e.g., when you spend a token to defend an opponent from Rock Slide, you take the damage for the token you spent while your teammate takes the damage for tokens that they spend).

Credits

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