

History of the Samurai

Main Rules

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0. Introduction

This game recreates the turbulent 500 year period of Japanese history starting from the 12th century end of the Heian period to the beginning of the Edo period in the 17th century. Each player becomes a historical figure, controls their generals, and tries to rewrite the 20th century history books by having the most influence throughout time.

This game, like the Avalon Hill "History of the World", is designed to be playable by 2-6 players, but the rules are written for a standard game of 5 players. Refer to chapter 9 when a number other than 5 players are playing.

1. Game contents

1.1 Counters

In addition to each player's combat strength counters, there are castle, capital, city, and Sakai/Hakata markers. The front of combat strength counters show samurai cavalry, and the back are the same, but with 'past' written on them in Japanese. The combat strength counters come in 6 colors, and are also often called army counters (usually when specifically referring to them being using to conquer land provinces). If you run out of any counters, feel free to use spare pieces in their place. The front side of combat strength counters are for current daimyos, and the back side for past daimyos.

Combat strength current (front)	Combat strength past (back)	total points marker	total combat strength marker	epoch marker
capital marker	city marker	castle marker	Sakai marker	Hakata marker

1.2 Cards

There are daimyo cards (42 total) and event cards (54 total) in the game.

1) There are daimyo cards for epochs 1-7, with 6 daimyo cards for each epoch. However, the 1st epoch's 'Samurai division' card is only used in a 6 player game, and is removed for a 5 (or fewer) player game.

2) There are event cards in 9 different colors, 6 of each color.

Daimyo card (back)

Init. Daimyo combat prov. value, specials

Daimyo card (front)

Red number is combat strength
Blue ship indicates navy
Red star indicates capital
Daimyo special rules

(Regional daimyo would be so listed in parentheses under the initial province)

Event card (back)

Playable -> epochs

Event card (front)

Event number
Event name
Event description
When usable

1.3 Map

There are provincial areas and sea zone areas on the map. All of the provinces of the same color are collectively called regions. There are 7 sea zones; other unlabeled sea/ocean areas are not used in the game.

- The thick reddish brown borders of certain provinces represent difficult mountain terrain that is impassable in the game, and provinces connected by such a border are not considered adjacent.
- The borders with a series of dashes are passable mountain terrain that still provides a defensive terrain benefit to the defender when crossed by the attacker.
- Provinces that meet only at a single point are not

considered adjacent.

4) Chikuzen and Nagato are considered adjacent with defensive terrain from either direction, but a daimyo with naval combat strength in West Seto between them is not considered as having defensive terrain.

Also, various charts are printed on the map, and there is a victory point track for indicating each player's current victory points and total combat strength.

2. Preparation

2.1 Preparing the counters

Each player chooses a color and takes the combat strength counters of that color, as well as their total combat strength and victory point markers. The other counters are used by all players, and should be placed where everyone can easily reach them.

2.2 Preparing daimyo cards

The daimyo cards are separated into 7 piles, 1 for each epoch.

2.3 Dealing event cards

There are event cards in 9 different colors, 6 of each color. Each player is randomly dealt 1 of each color. If less than 6 players are playing, all excess cards are set aside unused for the game, and are not viewable by any player.

Received cards are kept secret from other players until used. There is no way to receive extra cards during the game.

3. Game Sequence

The game progresses by playing through epochs. There are 7 epochs, and the game ends when everyone has finished the 7th epoch. Each epoch proceeds in the manner described below.

3.1 Determining daimyos

1) In the 1st epoch, each player randomly draws a 1st epoch daimyo card, and plays that daimyo for the 1st epoch. Starting with the 2nd epoch, determine daimyos as below.

2) Each player totals up the combat strength of all the daimyo cards (as written on the cards) they have played up until that point (Honganji counts as 4 combat strength). Combat strength from lesser daimyos, revolts and similar event cards are not counted. The player whose cumulative combat strength is the lowest draws their daimyo card first. The tiebreakers of who chooses first are in the order: least victory points, most event cards played, and first to play in

the previous epoch.

Note: The Japanese rules have most VPs choosing first in ties, but that doesn't match the 'weakest player first' intent.

3-a) Once the selection order is determined, each player in order, 1 at a time, draws 1 of the new epoch's daimyo cards. That player can either keep the daimyo card to play themselves, or give it to any player they wish (the receiving player may not look at it).

3-b) If the player wishes to play the daimyo themselves, they declare as such, and place the daimyo card face down in front of them. If it is given to another player to play, it is placed in front of that player face down.

3-c) The next player in the order determined above then draws a daimyo card in the same way, and decides who will play it. If a player was already given a card to play by another player when they draw a daimyo card, they cannot choose to keep the card, but can look at it and decide which player gets it. A player may never give a daimyo card to a player who already has a daimyo card placed face down in front of them.

3-d) Continue in this way until all players have 1 daimyo chosen.

A player may not look at a daimyo card placed in front of them by another player until all players' daimyos for that epoch have been chosen. There is 1 extra daimyo card not used in a 5 player game; it is set aside unused and secret from all players throughout the game.

3.2 Each player's turns

Once each of the players have determined which daimyo they will play that epoch, play continues with each player's turn. The order of play is dependent on the red number (from 1 to 6) written on the upper right of each player's daimyo card. Beginning with the player with the lowest number, each player performs their entire turn for that epoch before play continues to the next player. This continues until the last player has taken their turn, which is the end of the epoch.

One player reads out the turn order. If a player has the daimyo that plays at that time, they announce as such, become the 'current player', and play their turn. If nobody has that card, proceed to the next daimyo in turn order. However, daimyos that are skipped due to no player having them are still considered to have finished their turn for the purposes of special abilities (such as daimyo cards that state 'This daimyo does not become a past daimyo until the ____ clan has finished their turn').

The turn:

1) Perform events

Event cards with 'Play before turn' written on the bottom of the card can be performed by the current player. Only 2 event cards (including 'before' and 'during' cards, but not 'after epoch' cards) can be played during each epoch per player.

2) Ready combat strength

The current player prepares combat strength counters equal to their current daimyo's combat strength (the red number on the lower left of the card) for use in military actions that turn.

3) Military actions

First, 1 of the combat strength counters is placed in the initial province indicated on the daimyo card. After that, combat strength counters are placed with that province as a starting point. Further combat strength counters can be placed in any provinces containing at least 1 combat strength counter of the current daimyo, or any province adjacent to one (with exceptions for some daimyos).

Including the initial province, anytime there is another non-identical combat strength counter in the province, there is an immediate combat. In this case, a combat strength counter of the same player's color but of a past daimyo is considered an opposing combat strength. If the current player wins, 1 of the opponent's (defender's) combat strength counters is removed, and if the current player (attacker) loses, the combat strength counter they placed is removed.

As long as stacking limits are followed (see 4.1), multiple counters can be placed in the same province.

A daimyo with naval ability can place combat strength counters in the same way in sea zones, but a daimyo without naval ability cannot.

When all prepared combat strength counters are used, military actions for that player's turn are done.

At any point during military actions, event cards indicating 'Play during turn' can be played, but as noted in the 'perform events' step above, only 2 event cards per player can be played during an epoch.

4) Receive victory points

Victory points are collected, and the total points marker is moved on the victory point track to indicate the current total. The total combat strength marker is also moved on that track to show the cumulative combat strength of that player's daimyos.

5) From current daimyo to past daimyo

Other than daimyos with special rules that exclude them, the current daimyo's counters are flipped over and become past daimyo counters.

3.3 End of epoch events

When all players have finished their turn, the epoch ends, and any event cards with 'play when all players are done with the ___ epoch' written on them can be played. These cards do not count towards the 2 event card per player per epoch limit.

4. Placing counters

4.1 Stacks

1) The number of counters that can be placed in one province is as follows; all of them can exist in 1 province at the same time:

Combat strength counters: 3

Castles: 1

Capitals or Cities: 1 (not both)

Sakai or Hakata: 1 (not both)

2) In a sea zone, up to 2 combat strength counters can be placed. No other counters can exist in a sea zone.

3) Different daimyo's armies cannot remain stacked in the same province or sea zone. When it happens, combat must occur. This is true even of current and past armies of the same player.

4) Once placed, a combat strength counter cannot be moved. It remains in its province or sea zone until removed (such as when losing a battle).

4.2 Castles, capitals, and cities

1) Castles

During military actions, a castle can be placed in a province instead of 1 of the current daimyo's combat strength counters (you can think of it as 'buying' the castle for 1 combat strength counter).

2) Capitals

A daimyo that has a capital (indicated by a red star on the daimyo card) receives a capital marker. At the end of military actions, the daimyo can place the capital marker in any province with at least 1 of that daimyo's current army markers.

If the capital is placed in the province listed by the red star on the daimyo card, there is no penalty. If the capital is placed elsewhere, it is placed after receiving victory points for that epoch; that player does receive victory points that epoch for that capital. However, all capitals, regardless of whether they were placed in the province listed on their daimyo card, will give victory points if they remain in future epochs.

3) Cities

A daimyo that does not have a capital (including a lesser daimyo from an event card) places a city in their initial province.

5. Combat

5.1 Basics of combat

If combat occurs, both players roll dice, and the one that rolls higher wins. The losing side removes 1 counter. If both sides roll the same number, it is a draw, and both sides remove 1 counter.

In general, a current daimyo counter rolls 2 dice, and a past daimyo counter rolls 1 die. When a player rolls multiple dice, only the highest die roll amongst them is used.

If the attacking side wins, but there are still defending combat strength counters remaining, the combat must be continued.

5.2 Terrain effects

1) If the current player places combat strength counters such that they must cross defensive terrain, or if entering a province from a sea zone, the defender (the non-current player) receives 1 extra die in combat.

2) If there is a castle in the defending province, the defender adds 1 to their highest die roll result.

3) Players may receive extra dice due to daimyo special rules and/or event cards. The 3 dice when daimyos that state 'can use 3 dice in combat' are before modifiers due to other cards.

4) A regional daimyo often rolls 1 fewer dice in combat (see 6-2).

The defending player cannot use event cards, but if it is still their current daimyo (only possible via daimyo special rules), the daimyo's special rules can have an effect. If both sides have the same effect, they offset (cancel each other out).

5.3 Automatic victory

A daimyo automatically wins without rolling dice when attacking their initial province.

As a current daimyo and a past daimyo of the same color (belonging to the same player) are considered different powers, a combat occurs when both are in the same province, but in this case, the player can choose to have the past daimyo counters automatically lose to the same color current daimyo counters.

5.4 Sacking and pillaging

When the last combat strength counter of the defending side is removed, if there is:

- * a castle, it is removed.
- * a capital, it becomes a city.
- * a city, it is removed.

If there is no combat when a combat strength counter is placed (i.e. the province is empty), the above is not performed. Automatic victories count as combat for this purpose.

Once placed, 'Sakai' and 'Hakata' are never removed.

Military actions example:

Here is a sample turn of a player performing the military actions of the Hatakeyama clan daimyo card in the 4th epoch. The player takes 6 combat strength counters to carry out Hatakeyama's military actions, and uses them as below:



1) To start, the first combat strength counter is placed in the daimyo's initial province of Etchuu. The past daimyo counter in Etchuu is automatically removed (see 5.3)

2) The current player hopes to capture Miyako this turn, and so places the 2nd combat strength counter in Kaga. There is a past daimyo counter in Kaga, which, as it belongs to the current player, can be removed without rolling the combat dice (see 5.3)

3) The 3rd counter is placed in Echizen, but loses in combat to the past daimyo counter there, and is removed. Because of this, if another counter is lost, the current player will be unable to take Miyako.

4) The 4th counter is also placed in Echizen, and is victorious. The past daimyo's counter is removed.

5) The 5th counter is placed in Oumi. There are 2 past daimyo counters there, but the current player gets 2 consecutive victories and takes Oumi without damage.

6) The last counter is placed in Miyako. As it is the last counter, if it is lost, the current player will be unable to take Miyako. Luckily, they win the combat and take Miyako.

6. Daimyos

6.1 Information written on all daimyo cards

Appearing epoch: The epoch the daimyo appears in is written here.

Turn order: The red number on the upper right of the card.

Power and general name: Usually has no effect on the rules, but is used in interaction with some daimyo special rules.

Initial province: Province where the first combat strength counter is placed.

Combat value: The red number written on the lower left of the card.

6.2 Information written on some daimyo cards

Regional daimyo: A daimyo with this written on their card is a regional power. As long as the regional daimyo does not have supremacy (see 8.1) in the region their initial province is in, that daimyo receives 1 fewer dice in combat when attacking other regions. A sea zone is not considered a different region for the purposes of this rule. All lesser daimyos are regional daimyos.

Naval: If there is a blue silhouette of a ship by the combat strength on the daimyo card, that general has a navy (has naval ability). Only daimyos with a navy can place combat strength counters in sea zones.

Capital: A daimyo with a red star in the lower right of their daimyo card has a capital. A daimyo that does not have a capital instead has a city placed in their initial province.

6.3 Additional special rules

Minamoto no Yukiie and Southern Dynasty: When either of these daimyos attack a non-adjacent province, the defending side receives a defensive terrain bonus (regardless of whether any exists in the province). The Southern Dynasty can place combat strength counters in any province, but Minamoto no Yukiie cannot cross over sea zones when placing counters.

7. Event cards

1) Event cards are discarded when used. Cards that do to indicate a time or duration have only 1 instantaneous effect (although placed combat strength remains as past daimyo counters). When 'current daimyo' is written, it lasts for that daimyo's turn.

2) Event cards that have a restriction on the time that they

can be played cannot be played at any other time.

3) Each player can play up to 2 event cards during each epoch. This includes 'before turn' and 'during turn' cards, but not 'after ___ epoch' cards.

4) Additional explanations:

Lesser daimyos: Daimyo rules apply as normal to lesser daimyos, provincial daimyos, and provincial revolts. As soon as a lesser daimyo's military actions are completed, they become a past daimyo. Lesser daimyos can use event cards as normal. However, none of these apply towards a player's 'total combat strength' (for determining daimyo card drawing order). All lesser daimyos are regional daimyos.

Surprise attack: For each enemy combat strength removed in combat while using this card, the current player receives 1 bonus victory point.

Revolts: A current daimyo's combat strength counter can be placed in any single province containing at least 1 enemy combat strength counter. If victorious, the revolt combat strength immediately becomes a past daimyo counter. Ikko-ikki (warrior monk) revolts are the same, except that 3 combat strength counters are placed, and then combat is resolved.

8. Winning and losing the game

At the end of the game, the player with the most victory points wins the game. Charts on the map indicate the victory points players receive for having combat strength counters in the various regions of the map.

8.1 Receiving end-of-turn victory points

In each player turn's 'receive victory points' phase, the current player receives victory points as follows:

1) Regional control status

Victory points are received for each region where the player has armies (combat strength counters) as follows:

Presence (Base points x1): Having an army in at least 1 province in the region (including past daimyos)

Influence (Base points x2): Having an army in at least 3 provinces in the region (including past daimyos)

Dominance (Base points x3): Having armies in more than half the provinces in the region (including past daimyos)

Control (Base points x4): Having armies in all provinces in the region (including past daimyos)

Supremacy (Base points x5): Having current daimyo

armies in all provinces in the region.

The base points for each region range from 1-3, and are written on the map. There are 7 values written on the map, 1 for each epoch (the base points for a particular region varies from epoch to epoch). As Miyako is a region with only 1 province, a player with an army there always has control or supremacy. When multiple control conditions for a single region are fulfilled, only the points for the highest level of control are received.

2) Control of sea zones

1 victory point is received for each sea zone the player has at least 1 combat strength in (including past daimyos).

3) Control of political centers

1 victory point is received for each of these provinces that a player has at least 1 army in (including past daimyos): Sagami, Miyako, and Chikuzen.

4) Capitals and cities

2 victory points are received for each province that contains a capital that the player has at least 1 army in (including past daimyos).

1 victory point is received for each province that contains a city that the player has at least 1 army in (including past daimyos).

5) Sakai or Hakata

1 victory point is received for each province that contains either a Sakai or Hakata marker that the player has at least 1 army in (including past daimyos).

8.2 Receiving victory points at other times

Unlike above, the victory points for fulfilling the following conditions are received the moment the conditions are fulfilled:

1) Taking a province with a castle through combat: 1 victory point (automatic victories not included)

2) Points from using event cards: As indicated on the card

3) Points from a daimyo's special rules: As indicated on the card.

9. Playing with other than 5 players

Ignore this section when playing with 5 players. The changes for playing with different numbers of players are listed here; all other rules are applied as normal.

9.1 Games with 6 players

The 'Samurai division' daimyo card is added to the 1st epoch. The player who plays the 'Samurai division' goes before the Matsuura player. The Samurai division player

places 1 combat strength counter in the province of their choice, without a city or capital. Starting with the 2nd epoch, play continues as normal, but as no generals are left out, there can often be violent changes on the board.

9.2 Games with 4 players

1) These do not appear: 'Matsuura', 'Minamoto no Yukiie', 'Kikuchi clan', 'Shouni clan', 'Ootomo clan', 'Ryuuzouji clan' and 'Shimazu clan'. Remove these daimyo cards from the game before play.

2) The 'Mongol invasion' and 'Provincial daimyo' that appears in Hyuuga event cards are not used; remove them from the game before play.

3) On the map, the Kyuushuu region and the Ariake Sea are not used, and no power can enter them.

4) The Ashikaga clan is treated as appearing in the otherwise out of play Chikuzen province, and proceeding to West Seto and/or Nagato. All Ashikaga combat strength counters can be placed in the usable part of the map, there is no need to place an army in Chikuzen.

9.3 Games with 3 players

1) This is played the same as the 6 player game. However, each player takes 2 colors. Each player keeps track of their 2 colors' worth of daimyo cards, event cards, victory points, and total combat strength separately.

2) When choosing daimyos, a player cannot give a daimyo card to the other color they're playing, unless they have no choice but to do so.

3) At the end of the game, each player compares their 2 colors' victory points, and the lower color's victory points become their victory points.

9.4 Games with 2 players

In general, play the same as a 3 player game, but each player takes 3 colors (scoring the lowest points of the 3).

Producer's comments

This game is the 2nd edition of an amateur game from many years ago. The 1st edition was basically 'History of the World' in Japan with identical rules. Compared to that, there are no major changes to the basic system, but various minor rules were changed or added. Determining victory points is slightly more complicated, but a chart to help was made to simplify it, so please give it a chance. Those who want to can perhaps get family or school students interested in history by playing this game.

If you have any questions about the game, Game Journal is happy to answer any questions or comments in Japanese (English questions can be sent to matt@wolfgames.com)