

Yags Bushido

Yags Bushido contains genre specific rules for playing characters in feudal Japan or similar settings. However, it also includes extended rules for unarmed combat skills - commonly known as *martial arts* (though technically, *all* combat skills, regardless of whether they use a weapon or not, are martial arts). This makes *Yags Bushido* also of use to those playing in a Western or Modern setting. Because of this somewhat wider remit, this article also covers specifically Western combat sports such as *Boxing*.

The Martial Arts

By default, *Yags* uses a single skill (*brawl*) to cover all unarmed and close weapon combat. Though its name may suggest unskilled drunken bar room fights, a high level of *brawl* represents a high degree of training and expertise, on par with a 'traditional' martial arts such as Karate.

In a sense, *brawl* represents no style and no constraints - pretty similar to the style of fighting favoured by Bruce Lee. It's aim is to take down the enemy with a minimum of fuss, and is the skill favoured and taught by modern special forces and police units in the West.

By comparison, the specialist martial arts tend to concentrate on a single style of attack or defence, and though may be better in their given area, are weaker for all round combat. Many of them also teach a philosophy and etiquette (who to bow to, the meaning of the belt colours, who the current masters are) as well as combat skills. Some (such as Judo, or Boxing) are more suited to controlled fights in a sports hall and tend to be very limited on a battlefield.

Character Generation

There are no character generation rules specific for *Yags Bushido*. It is suggested that some form of the Modern rules are used.

2 Bushido Characters

Traits

The following *traits* are suggested for a setting where honour and duty are important.

Honour/Dishonour

Honour is about saving face and the reputation of yourself, your Lord and your family.

Duty/Disloyalty

Duty is towards your Lord, and commands you to fulfill your responsibilities to the best of your abilities.

Harmony/Corruption

Harmony is sought by priests, who seek to understand the balance of the universe and align themselves towards the Celestial Order. Those who stray from the path, and seek to undo Order are said to be Corrupted.

Bravery/Cowardice

Ferocity/Restraint

Bushido Characters 3

Skills

Skill list

Artistic

Calligraphy - *Artistic writing.*

Ikebana - *Flower arranging.*

Tea ceremony (Etiquette) - *The skilled art of making tea.*

Combat

Aikijutsu - *Unarmed combat specialised in throws.*

Boxing (Brawl) - *The sport of boxing.*

Iajutsu (Kenjutsu) - *Ritualised sword duels.*

Jeet Kune Do - *A modern style invented by Bruce Lee.*

Judo - *The sport of judo.*

Jujutsu - *Unarmed combat specialised in throws and holds.*

Karate - *An aggressive unarmed combat style.*

Kenjutsu - *Skill with Samurai weapons.*

Kobujutsu - *Weapon skill specialised in sticks and chains.*

Kyujutsu - *Using bows*

Ninjutsu - *Attack by stealth and surprise.*

Niten - *Two sword Samurai style.*

War fan - *Using a war fan in combat*

Wing Chun - *A ancient variation of kung fu.*

Craft

Lore

Shinto - *Matters of the soul.*

Social

Tea ceremony (Etiquette) - *The skilled art of making tea.*

Skill descriptions

Aikijutsu

COMBAT, MELEE, BUGEI.

Requires: Brawl-2

A style of unarmed combat which concentrates on throws and locks. It is designed for real combat, and has a number of techniques to get your opponent into a position ready to be thrown or grabbed.

You gain a +1 to your agility for all trip attacks and defences, and always use *agility x Aikijutsu* for such manouevres. If fighting from the prone position, you suffer no penalties. It can otherwise be used in place of *Brawl* for punches, kicks, dodges and other unarmed combat moves.

If using a weapon, you gain the damage bonus of the weapon and suffer a +1 increase in the fumble chance.

Boxing

COMBAT, MELEE, SPORT.

Defaults to: Brawl

Boxing is a specialised form of *brawl*, which is designed for use under particular sporting conditions. Though it can be used as a combat skill, it is not designed to be, and can be ineffective outside of the boxing ring. Knowledge of this skill grants knowledge of the rules and etiquette of the game, as well as skill at fighting.

Boxing is used like *brawl* to attack and defend. You have +1 to your agility for purposes of defence, but the penalty for making multiple defences is increased by 50%. You get

a bonus to punching damage equal to your *Boxing* skill.

Calligraphy

ARTISTIC.

The skill of writing artistically. With calligraphy you are able to draw beautiful letters.

Iajutsu

COMBAT, MELEE, ARMED MELEE, BUGEI.

Defaults to: Kenjutsu

Requires: Kenjutsu-2

The skill of fighting a duel specialised in the fast draw of a katana aiming to kill with a single blow. It covers the meditative and psychological aspects of the duel, as well as actually being able to land a blow.

Ikebana

ARTISTIC.

Being able to collect and arrange flowers artistically is considered a respectable skill.

Jeet Kune Do

COMBAT, MELEE.

Requires: Brawl-4, Wing Chun-4

Jeet Kune Do is a modern style of fighting which aims to take the best of many other styles. It's speciality is that it has no speciality - it emphasises flexibility and spontaneity.

Judo

COMBAT, MELEE, SPORT.

Judo is more of a sport than a style of fighting designed for the real world, however it can be used in real world conditions. *Judo* emphasises defence rather than attack, and is specialised in throws and trips rather than punching or kicking.

Judo is used like *brawl* in combat, though does not teach the use of weapons. If a weapon is used, the usual wrong-style penalties apply, plus you only get the damage bonus of the weapon.

When using *Judo*, you gain a +1 bonus to agility for defence (which can affect the maximum number of defences) and grab or trip attacks. However, you suffer -1 to agility for all other attacks. Attacks aimed to directly damage (such as a punch or kick) have a -4 penalty to damage.

Jujutsu

COMBAT, MELEE, BUGEI.

Requires: Brawl-2

A particular style of unarmed combat that is designed for use in real combat situations. It is specialised in making throws and trips, but unlike *Judo* is also effective in attack.

Jujutsu may be used in place of *Brawl* for all unarmed combat manouevres. When making *strength* checks for grapple and trip *attacks*, you may use *agility* instead, and also gain a +1 bonus to either attribute in each case.

Use of a weapon with this skill gives you the damage bonus of the weapon, but not the attack or defence bonuses unless it is a brawling or longshaft weapon.

Karate

COMBAT, MELEE.

Requires: Brawl-2

Karate is one of the popular (or at least, well known) styles

4 Bushido Characters

of unarmed combat in the modern world. It is specialised in attack rather than defence. Though it is often used as a sport, it is effective in a real fight as well.

It is used in the same way as *brawl* in combat, though it does not teach the use of weapons. When fighting unarmed, you gain a bonus to damage equal to your skill, but suffer a -1 penalty to agility for defence rolls.

Kenjutsu

COMBAT, MELEE, ARMED MELEE, BUGEI.

The Samurai art of fighting, with weapons such as the Katana and No-dachi. This skill covers using either a single one handed weapon or a two-handed weapon, as long as they are those commonly used by Samurai. Commonly, this includes the katana, ninja-to, no-dachi and wakizashi.

Uses *dexterity* for both attack and defence, and adds the attack, defence and damage attributes of the weapon to rolls.

Kobujutsu

COMBAT, MELEE, ARMED MELEE, BUGEI.

This weapon skill was developed in Okinawa, and favours the use of weapons such as Bo staves, Jo sticks, nunchuka and the sai - basically weapons adapted from peasant tools.

Kyujutsu

COMBAT, MISSILE, BUGEI.

The skill of shooting a bow. With Kyujutsu you know how to use all types of bows common to a Bushido setting. Kyujutsu teaches that the firing of a bow should be a single fluid action, and is based on *agility* rather than *perception*.

Ninjutsu

COMBAT, MELEE, ARMED MELEE, BUGEI.

Requires: Brawl-4

The infamous combat style taught by the Ninja, its focus is on surprise and taking out the enemy quickly and quietly. It does not perform well in an open battle, but most practitioners seek to avoid open battles so that is not often a problem. It has a mixture of armed and unarmed melee, plus some ranged combat.

If the target is surprised, then you may add your *Ninjutsu* skill to damage done. It also adds to all *Stealth* rolls.

Niten

COMBAT, MELEE, ARMED MELEE, BUGEI.

Requires: Kenjutsu-2

The traditional swords of the Samurai are the katana and wakizashi, and all Samurai carry both. However, it is normal practise to fight with only one of the blades at a time. Those who practise the *Niten* style are skilled at using both blades at once. You may use a wakizashi and either a katana or ninja-to with this style. It is highly specialised, not suited to other weapons.

Uses *dexterity* for both attack and defence, and adds the attack, defence and damage attributes of the primary weapon, plus the full attack *or* defence attribute of the secondary weapon to rolls. Choose which at the start of the round.

Shinto

LORE.

Knowledge of religious and spiritual matters. Provides knowledge of the Celestial Court, as well as the philosophy of *Shinto*.

Tea ceremony

ARTISTIC, SOCIAL.

Defaults to: Etiquette

The making and serving of tea is considered a high art form, and being able to arrange a perfect tea ceremony is considered of high importance.

War fan

COMBAT, MELEE, ARMED MELEE, BUGEI.

The war fan is a heavy type of metal fan used for signalling in battles. It can be used as a weapon.

Wing Chun

COMBAT, MELEE, BUGEI.

Requires: Brawl-2

Wing Chun is specialised in close fighting, and as well as unarmed attacks makes use of the knife, longstaff and butterfly sword (the latter is often used in pairs). It is good at counter strikes and fast punches.

When using *Wing Chun* you use *agility* in both attack and defence, and gain a +1 attribute bonus when making *free strikes* or *counter strikes*.

Other skills and styles

The above list of skills includes a small number of combat styles which are meant to provide a broad sample of those available in the real world. Given the level of abstraction in the skill system, it's difficult to provide a more detailed list without repetition.

Obviously, it will be possible to meet ancient masters of less popular (or long forgotten styles). In which case they can be modelled on those provided. The real difference is that a specific *Melee tactics* technique will need to be learnt for each one. This gives a small advantage to rare skills.

It is technically possible for a character can invent a fighting style of their own. Though no rules are currently given here, it is suggested that a minimum skill of 10 is required in a suitably similar skill before such can be even attempted.

Techniques

Summary

Aikijutsu defence (2; Aikijutsu) - *Counterstrike with a trip.*
Aikijutsu grapple (4; Aikijutsu) - *Counterstrike with an armlock.*
Aikijutsu throw (6; Aikijutsu) - *Specialisation in throws.*
Attack is defence (4; Karate) - *A good attack is a strong defence.*
Fast attack (6; Karate) - *All attacks are fast.*
Karate blow (8; Karate) - *Can kill in a single blow.*
Master of karate (10; Karate) - *Use techniques with brawl*
Daisho (4; Niten) - *Bonus to defence.*
Unexpected blade (6; Niten) - *Second attack if strike first.*
Unhindered attack (8; Niten) - *No attack penalties for multiple defences.*
Unstoppable strike (10; Niten) - *Free strikes become automatic strikes.*
Dodging defence (2; Boxing) - *Bonus to soak.*
Sheltered attack (4; Boxing) - *Improved aggressive and defensive stances.*
Jujutsu blow (2; Jujutsu) - *Punches are more effective.*
Strike and fade (4; Jujutsu) - *Bonus to defence if hit opponent.*
Improved strike (6; Jujutsu) - *Free strikes become automatic strikes.*
Revenge strike (8; Jujutsu) - *Counterstrike on good defence.*
Master of Jujutsu (10; Jujutsu) - *Use techniques with brawl.*
Samurai's honour (6; Jujutsu) - *Honour gives you re-rolls in a duel.*
Strike of the serpent (4; Kenjutsu) - *Focus and channel energy into an attack.*
Bite of the serpent (6; Kenjutsu) - *Kill with one blow.*
Defence of steel (8; Kenjutsu) - *Bonus to base to be hit.*
Many strikes (10; Kenjutsu) - *Strike many times.*

Descriptions

Aikijutsu defence (Cost 2): Aikijutsu.

Prerequisites: Close combat.

If you make a *good* defence whilst using Aikijutsu, then once a round you may counterstrike with a trip attack. Automatic.

Aikijutsu grapple (Cost 4): Aikijutsu.

Prerequisites: Aikijutsu defence.

The difficulty of trip and grapple manouevres when using Aikijutsu is reduced by one level - for example, instead of a *good* attack to initiate a grapple, you only require a moderate attack.

Aikijutsu throw (Cost 6): Aikijutsu.

Prerequisites: Aikijutsu grapple.

When performing a trip manouevre, gain an additional +1 to your *agility* for both attack and defence.

Attack is defence (Cost 4): Karate.

Prerequisites: Close combat.

Halve penalty to attack for multiple defences. Ignore the *free strike* against you if you do not defend against the person you are attacking. Automatic.

Bite of the serpent (Cost 6): Kenjutsu.

Prerequisites: Strike of the serpent.

If you ever make a *good* attack which causes damage, then you may be considered to have made a *deadly strike*. Combining this with *deadly strike* has no extra effect. Automatic.

Daisho (Cost 4): Niten.

Prerequisites: Way of the sword.

By keeping at least one blade ready at all times, you can ensure that you are defended on all sides. In any round that you are using *Niten* to attack, you make add your skill to your base chance to be hit for any attacks that you are aware of, regardless of whether you have declared a defence or not. Automatic.

Defence of steel (Cost 8): Kenjutsu.

Prerequisites: Bite of the serpent.

You may add your *kenjutsu* skill to the base chance to be hit whenever you are fighting with the *kenjutsu* skill that round. Automatic.

Dodging defence (Cost 2): Boxing.

If you defended against an attack using *Boxing*, and failed, then you get a bonus to your soak equal to your *Boxing* skill. Automatic.

Fast attack (Cost 6): Karate.

Prerequisites: Attack is defence.

Normal attacks are *fast* when using *Karate*. Aggressive and defensive stances are unaffected. Automatic.

Improved strike (Cost 6): Jujutsu.

Prerequisites: Strike and fade.

You are trained to make best advantage of the mistakes of others. Whenever you have declared a *Jujutsu* attack against someone, then any *free strikes* you gain against them that round become *automatic strikes*.

Jujutsu blow (Cost 2): Jujutsu.

Whenever you make a *good* openhand attack with *Jujutsu*, and cause damage to your target, then the target gains at least one *stun*, even if you do less than half the target's current *stuns*. Automatic.

Karate blow (Cost 8): Karate.

Prerequisites: Fast attack.

When you attack you may concentrate your strike on the vital organs of the target, aiming to kill them in a single strike. This is an aggressive attack which uses up a defence slot. If the target is injured by the attack, they must make a size x health check against a target of 10 + 5 x levels or immediately drop to fatally wounded. If they succeed their check, then they take one less damage level from the attack than normal.

Many strikes (Cost 10): Kenjutsu.

Prerequisites: Defence of steel.

You may swap any number of defences for attacks in a round. You suffer the usual penalties for making multiple defences, and suffer the usual penalty for not declaring a defence against a target if you do not do so. Declared.

Note that this does allow you to strike twice at no penalty (since you can use your normal free defence), however this leaves you totally open to attack.

Master of Jujutsu (Cost 10): Jujutsu.

Prerequisites: Revenge strike.

By mastering the style of *jujutsu* until it becomes second nature, you are able to use its techniques with any unarmed combat skill (either *brawl*, or one with a prerequisite of *brawl*). You also gain a +1 bonus to attack and defence rolls for such skills per 2 points of *jujutsu*. Automatic.

Master of karate (Cost 10): Karate.

6 Bushido Characters

Prerequisites: Karate blow.

By mastering the style of karate until it becomes second nature, you are able to use its techniques with any unarmed combat skill (either brawl, or one with a prerequisite of brawl). You also gain a +1 bonus to melle attack and defence rolls for such skills per 2 points of karate. Automatic.

Revenge strike (Cost 8): Jujutsu.

Prerequisites: Improved strike.

If you ever make a *good* jujutsu defence against an attacker, then you gain a jujutsu *counterstrike* in response.

Samurai's honour (Cost 6): Iajutsu.

Prerequisites: Iajutsu strike.

In an Iajutsu duel, you may re-roll any iajutsu skill check, damage roll or soak roll. In a single duel, you may re-roll a number of times equal to your Honour. You may also add your Honour score to all these rolls as well.

Sheltered attack (Cost 4): Boxing.

Prerequisites: Dodging defence.

Declare this when taking an aggressive or defensive stance when using the Boxing skill. You ignore all penalties to attack and defence from the stance (though still act fast or slow as normal, and still get the bonus).

Strike and fade (Cost 4): Jujutsu.

Prerequisites: Jujutsu blow.

You are able to strike at a foe to put them off balance preventing them from hitting back at you. If you ever succeed in an attack on a target, then any attacks they make against you for the rest of the round give you a +1 bonus to your agility for Jujutsu defence. Automatic.

Strike of the serpent (Cost 4): Kenjutsu.

Prerequisites: Way of the sword.

When making an aggressive attack, you may focus your energies into a single devastating blow. For every full two points of skill, you may gain +3 to both the attack and damage rolls. However, each +3 causes you to gain one point of fatigue. Declared.

Unexpected blade (Cost 6): Niten.

Prerequisites: Daisho.

If you have declared a defence against a target, and your first attack happens before their action, then on a successful hit you may swap your defence for a second attack. If you fail to kill your opponent, they get a free strike as if you hadn't declared a defence.

Unhindered attack (Cost 8): Niten.

Prerequisites: Unexpected blade.

If you declare multiple defences in the round, you do not suffer any penalties to your attacks due to this when using the *Niten* skill. Automatic.

Unstoppable strike (Cost 10): Niten.

Prerequisites: Unhindered attack.

Whenever you get a free strike, it automatically becomes an automatic strike.