



by **Reiner Knizia**
for 2 - 4 players, age 10 and up

Contents

39 Figures - 13 each: High Helmets, Buddhas and Rice Fields
80 Tokens - 20 each in 4 colours
4 Japanese screens
Game board - Japan in 4 parts
Game rules

Overview

At the beginning of the game, the players place the figures on the villages and cities on the board. In the course of play, the players capture these figures using their tokens. Each player has 20 hexagonal tokens, identical except for color. The player who deploys the tokens with the most skill, wins the game.

Preparation

Before the first game, remove the hexagonal tokens and the Japanese screens from the punched sheets. Each player takes one Japanese screen and 20 tokens of the same color. Depending on the number of players, the game is played with:

2 players - Honshu - 7 each High Helmets, Buddhas and Rice Fields

3 players - Honshu, Kyushu and Shikoku - 10 each High Helmets, Buddhas and Rice Fields

4 players - all four pieces - all High Helmets, Buddhas and Rice Fields

Figures and Tokens

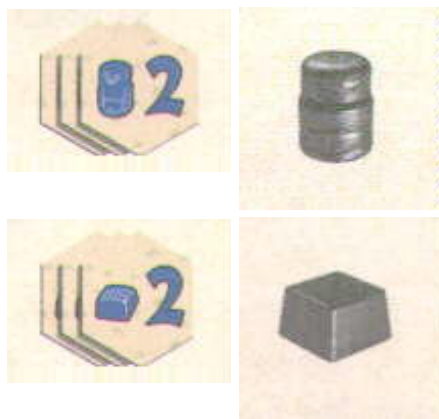


There are 3 different figures: *High Helmet* *Buddha* *Rice Field*

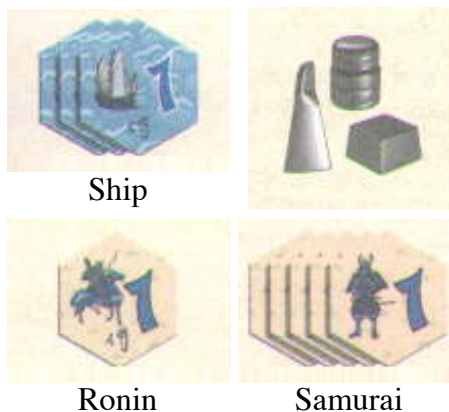
To capture the figures, the players deploy their tokens on the board. Each token influences the capture of 1-3 figure types, but only if the token is on a space adjacent to the figure. When a figure is surrounded, the player who has the strongest force of tokens which can influence the figure will capture it.



Tokens influence the figures shown on the token.



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Samurai, Ship and Ronin affect all 3 figures types.

With one exception (**Figure exchange**, see below), all tokens have a number representing their strength:



A strength 4 token influences the capture of the High Helmet.



A strength 1 token influences the capture of the High Helmet, Buddha and Rice Field.

A token influences the capture of all adjacent figures, of the type(s) indicated on the token:



Both Buddhas are affected; the Rice Field is not.



All 3 figures are affected by the Ronin.



Both figures are affected by the Ship.

The two tokens: **Figure exchange**



and **Token exchange**



With the **Figure exchange** a player can exchange any two figures of any type(s) on the board.

The exchange is not limited by the distance between the two figures.

Using **Token exchange**, a player replaces one of the tokens he has already deployed (one without **Japanese characters**, see below) with the **Token exchange** token. The player immediately deploys the replaced token on the board. The **Token exchange** token has strength 0.



*The **Figure exchange** token is returned to the box and the two figures are exchanged.*



*The **Token exchange** token replaces another token and that token is placed elsewhere.*

Five of the 20 tokens have a Japanese character on them:



A player may play any number of the 5 tokens **with Japanese characters** in a turn:



The other 15 tokens have no Japanese characters.

A player may play only one of the 15 tokens **without Japanese characters** per turn :



In a turn, a player may play tokens from both groups; e.g. 1 Samurai and 2 Ships.

The tokens display their characteristics:

- The **color** indicates which player the token belongs to.
- The **picture** indicates which figure(s) are affected by the token.
- The **number** indicates the strength of the token.
- The **Japanese character** indicates that several tokens of this type may be played in a turn.

How are Figures captured?

If all **land spaces** adjacent to a figure are filled with tokens, the figure is captured. Each player determines the amount of influence his adjacent tokens have on the figure. The player with the strongest influence on the figure captures it and places it behind his screen. With **2 players**, the figures are placed in front of the screen.



Blue captures the High Helmet with strength 3; Red has only strength 2.



In his turn, Red deploys the Ronin and the "2" Samurai. He captures the Buddha on the right and the High Helmet. Green captures the Rice Field. Yellow captures the Buddha on the left and Blue captures nothing.

Exception:

If all adjacent land spaces of a figure are filled with tokens, but 2 or more players are tied with the strongest influence on the figure, the figure is placed beside the board. It does not belong to any player.

Preparation and play of the game

Place the 2, 3, or 4 board pieces on the table as shown in the diagrams on page 1. Simultaneously and without showing other players, all players select 5 of their 20 tokens and place them behind their Japanese screens. The players then thoroughly shuffle their remaining 15 tokens and place them beside their screens.

When first playing the game, players may want to select their starting 5 tokens randomly. As they learn the game, they will want to choose tokens based on the strategies they intend to use.

Next, place the figures on the board. Place one of each figure in Edo, the capital city. Then, place 2 figures in each city and 1 in each village as follows:



The youngest player begins. He chooses a figure and places it on the city of his choice.

In clockwise order the players follow, choosing a figure and placing it in the same or a different city. When all cities are full (with two figures), a player chooses a figure to place in the village of their choice. Players may place any figure in any city they wish with the following restriction: In a city: **the two figures must always be different**. This restriction must be followed when using the **Figure exchange** token during the game.

When all figures have been placed on the board, the game begins.

The youngest player starts, taking the first turn.

During each turn:

1. The player selects one or more tokens from behind his screen, placing each on the board. At least one token must be played.
Ships may be placed only on empty sea spaces and the other tokens only on empty land spaces.
Exception: **Figure exchange** and **Token exchange**.
Tokens may not be placed on Empty villages and cities.
2. When all land spaces adjacent to a figure are filled with tokens, the figure is immediately captured and taken by the player with the strongest influence or placed beside the board if no player has won the figure.
3. The player draws tokens randomly from his face-down supply beside the screen to return his total behind the screen to 5. When a player runs out of tokens to draw, he plays with fewer tokens.

After a player has drawn tokens, play continues with the next player in clockwise order.

Game end

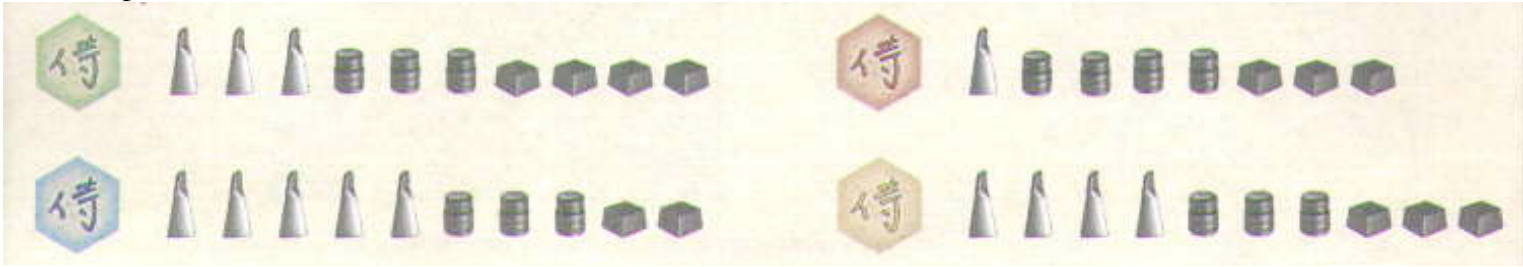
When the last figure of any type (High Helmet, Buddha or Rice Field) is removed from the board (by either capture or set beside the board with a tie), the current player's turn is finished and then the game ends.

The game also ends when the fourth figure is placed beside the board because of removal due to a tie. As before, the current player's turn is completed and then the game ends.

Scoring and determining the winner

- When the game ends, all players remove their screens and count the number of figures of each type.
- If any player has captured the most figures of 2 or 3 types, he is the winner!
- If there is no immediate winner, all players who have captured the most (ties for the most do not count) of one type of figure are eligible to win; players with no "most" cannot win.
- Players with the most of a figure set aside those figures and count the number of other figures they captured. The player with the most other figures is the winner!
- If there is still a tie, the players count all their captured figures; the player with the most is the winner!
- If there is still a tie, the tying players share the victory.

An example:



Yellow does not have the most of any figure and cannot win. Each of the other 3 players could win: **Green** has captured the most Rice Fields, **Blue** has the most High Helmets and **Red** has the most Buddhas. **Green** is the winner as he has more other figures (with 6) than the other players. **Blue** is second with 5 others and **Red** is third with 4 others.

Another example:



Blue and **Green** do not have the most of any figure type (they tie for most in Rice Fields) and cannot win. **Red** has captured the most High Helmets and Yellow has captured the most Buddhas so either could win. Both have captured 3 other figures (Yellow with 3 Rice Fields and **Red** with 1 Buddha and 2 Rice Fields). As they are tied, they count their total figures. **Red** wins with 9 total figures to Yellow's 8. Notice that both **Blue** and **Green** have more total figures than Yellow and **Red**, but cannot win because they do not have any "mosts".



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