

Black Ships

November 12–14

Rules and Scenario

The following are the rules for *Black Ships*, a real-time, real-space roleplaying game sponsored by the MIT Assassins' Guild. You are responsible for knowing these rules. Many of them are nigh-impossible to enforce and rely upon the honor system. Do not cheat. Do not abuse loopholes. Play fair. Be your own harshest critic.

The **gamemasters (GMs)** run the game. If you have any problems or questions concerning the game, contact a GM. Rulings they make are final. They may violate the letter of the rules to preserve the spirit. The GMs promise to be as fair and reasonable as possible. Neither they nor these rules are perfect.

This game is intended to be fun. Getting into character, roleplaying, being dramatic, and playing competitively can all increase the fun of the game. Do not take the game too seriously. Even if you are losing, keep a good attitude. When the game is over, the real winners are the players with the best stories.

This is only a game. Everyone involved should act with courtesy, sportsmanship, patience, and taste. The GMs may expel anyone they believe to be violating the spirit of the rules or the game. Emotions may run high. If you think things are crossing the line from game to reality too much, or if you are just getting too stressed, calm down and maybe take a break. Stay in control. Use common sense. Always, play safely, then play to have fun.

This game is a work of fiction. Although it may refer to things in the real world, it does so only for the sake of the scenario. It does not represent the opinions of the GMs or the MIT Assassins' Guild. These rules are modifications of those used in previous games. This game and all materials thereof are copyright 2010 by Xavid, Jess Hamrick, Paul Baranay, Andrew Clough, Greg Lohman, Piper Hunt, and the MIT Assassins' Guild.

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1 Scenario

It is the summer of the 25th year of the Tokugawa Shōgunate of Japan, July 1853 by the calendar of the Europeans. For centuries, the Empire of Japan has known peace, wisdom, stability—and has been closed to the world. The Shōguns of the Tokugawa family have wisely kept Japanese society pure and ordered by the principles of Shintō and Confucianism. Foreign influences, both ideas like Christianity and goods such as guns, whisky, and foreign literature are banned, with violators subject to harsh punishments of forced labor, torture, or death. Trade with foreign countries has been limited to China, Korea, and the Netherlands, and even those countries may only dock their ships at tightly controlled trading posts in Nagasaki. No foreigner is permitted to enter the country, and no Japanese may leave, on pain of death.

Then, three days ago, a fleet of black-hulled warships flying the American flag arrived in Edo harbor, and refused to leave.

1.1 Black Ships

An emissary was sent to the ships to instruct them to proceed to Nagasaki, where all foreigners seeking trade must go. Commodore Matthew C. Perry, the commanding officer of the American fleet, refused, stating he would not go until he had met with formal representatives of the Japanese government in Edo. He gave the emissary two white flags, and sent him back to shore. He was told that when the Japanese were willing to let the American landing party come ashore, to raise the flags.

Shortly after the emissary left, Perry opened fire. The large numbers of cannon on his ships had a devastating impact on Edo's coastal areas. Yesterday, the Shōgun ordered the flags raised. Today, the American delegation arrives. They demand Japan sign a treaty opening Japan to trade and more with the United States, and the leaders of the various Samurai clans have hastily arrived in the capital to open negotiations. If these negotiations fail, it will mean war, and almost certainly Japan's destruction.

1.2 Japanese Society

Japanese society is structured on the principles of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Shintō, with every man and woman knowing his place in the greater order. The samurai class sit atop the social order, paragons of virtue for the lower classes to emulate. The samurai swear fealty to their Daimyō, or lord, who serves as clan head. The Daimyō of the Tokugawa clan, the Shōgun, is the effective ruler of Japan. Together, the Daimyō and the Shōgun rule in the name of the Empress Chikako in Kyōto.

Below the samurai are ranked the peasants, the producers of food and thus the cornerstone of society. Beneath them, the artisans, who produce non-essential goods, and below them, the merchants, who gain money without producing anything at all. Rank in society is thus determined by purity and moral value, not wealth or temporal power, though the samurai class tends to have all these things. The growing economic influence of the merchant class cannot be ignored, however, and the samurai clans are no longer able to ignore the needs and desires of the lower classes as they once did; some have even begun to stoop to trade themselves, which a generation ago would have been unthinkable. This in turn has led to forms of popular entertainment, such as the Kabuki theatre, to have a surprising amount of influence.

There are many samurai clans, headed by a Daimyō, that each rule one of the feudal domains into which Japan is divided and command many sworn samurai. House Tokugawa, the ruling clan under the Shōgunate, has ruled Japan for centuries, keeping the other clans under control by requiring regular travel between Edo and their domains for clan leadership (an expensive obligation) and by keeping at all times family members as hostages in Edo. However, the other clans still hold significant political power and have sent their leadership and other important members to Edo in time to meet with Commodore Perry. The most influential of these are:

Tokugawa The clan of the Shōgun, first amongst the Daimyō. They have the largest presence in Edo, both military and political, of all the clans present.

Ito A fairly powerful clan known to frequently disagree with the Tokugawa.

Nagare A clan that is known to be wealthy.

Yagami A clan that is known to be prestigious.

The dominant faiths in Japan are Shintō and Buddhism, with strong influences from the Chinese philosophy Confucianism, Taoism, and other imported beliefs. These belief systems are not seen as contradictory, and it would be seen as extremely strange to not incorporate elements of both faiths into daily life and participate in rituals and festivals for both. Shintō, the Way of the Gods, is Japan's native religion, predating Chinese influence, and is focused on worship of *kami*, animistic spirits and deities that dwell throughout nature, from mountains and waterfalls to trees and boulders to the sea and sky. Shrines have been built throughout the country to honor the myriad *kami*, and regular offerings are made to them there. Ritual purity is a very important concept in Shintō, and many of its practices and rituals focus on avoiding or removing pollution. Buddhism, on the other hand, came to Japan from the mainland many centuries ago, and is concerned with the development of the soul and aiding those seeking enlightenment. Buddhism teaches that we are all caught in an endless cycle of birth and death, doomed to always suffer due to our desires. The only way to avoid this cycle of reincarnation is to abandon desire and achieve enlightenment. Generally, Shintō practices are focused on daily life, prosperity, and group solidarity, while Buddhist traditions have more to say about personal development, death, and emptiness.

On the fringes of these organized religions, tales of the supernatural are common among the Japanese. To hear the stories, Japan is full of fierce ogres called *oni*, goblin tricksters (*tengu*), shape-shifting badgers (*tanuki*), and illusion-crafting foxes (*kitsune*). When one falls ill, it is common to call for a Shintō purification, chant Buddhist sutras, take Chinese herbal concoctions, to seek the aid of miracle-working hermits, or all of the above. While the stories get a bit more wild in remote villages, even in bustling Edo tales of encountering a demon on the street corner after a late night drinking or following a beautiful women home only to wake up in a cesspool are common.

Western religions, especially Christianity, are banned.

1.3 History

The history of the world in Black Ships is pretty similar to that of the real world, though most characters are fictional. You can find an excellent introduction to the real world events our setting is based on at http://ocw.mit.edu/ans7870/21f/21f.027/black_ships_and_samurai/. There are some differences that may or may not become relevant. Notable divergences include:

- Commodore Perry's two visits to Japan have been combined into one.
- Japanese tradition holds that Amaterasu first gave rule over Japan to her granddaughter, not her grandson.
- There is no language barrier.
- Kabuki never became an all-male form of theatre, and has been mixed-gender for centuries. The military and samurai hierarchy remains all-male.

1.4 Game Logistics

Game Times: Game runs in four four-hour time blocks: 8pm to midnight on Friday, 2pm to 6pm Saturday, 8pm to midnight Saturday, and 2pm–6pm Sunday. Surviving PCs are expected to be in-game for the entirety. Game may end early. Cleanup and wrapup will immediately follow the end of game.

Gamespace: Game takes place on all publically-accessible portions of Buildings 24, 26, 34, 36, 37, 38, and 39. Do not leave gamespace or go out of game during game times unless explicitly instructed to by a mechanic. Game action is not allowed in Athena clusters. Don't hide in them, either. You may not use Athena or phones for any in-game purpose.

The **GM Control Room** is room 24-407. You may leave personal items with the GMs. The **Common Room** is the Nihonbashi Market in room 34-303. Do not leave food, trash, or personal items in the Common Room overnight. The **Box Room** is in room 24-402. Check your folder in the box before gamestart each cycle. Folders for various mechanics are also in the box room. Don't interact with other characters in the box room, and don't ambush people outside the box room or GM room.

Notable Locations

- Kanagawa Council Chambers (34-301)
- Sensōji Buddhist Temple (24-307)
- Kanda Shintō Shrine (38-166)
- Samurai Training Ground (36-4 Lobby)
- Nakamura Theatre (37-212)

- Chiyoda Castle (26-3), home to the Tokugawa and the Shōgun
- Ito Mansion (24-1)
- Nagare Residence (37-4)
- Yagami Estate (36-M)
- Yokohama Harbor (34-1), where the American ships are anchored
- Sumida River (26-1)

2 Getting Started

2.1 Character Packets

Your character packet is a big manila envelope. It contains your role: who you are, what you're up to; everything about your part as a **player-character (PC)** in the game. Read all the contents and generally keep them with you during the game. If you are missing something or find something which doesn't seem to belong to you, tell one of the GMs. Character packets are confidential. Game materials which cannot be given to other players are marked "Not Transferable," whereas things which can be given to others are marked "Freely Transferable" or "Game Item."

Name-Badge: A name-badge with your player name, character name, and character description. It shows that you are in the game; wear it visibly while you are playing. It represents your character's body in-game. See the *Character Bodies* section for more details.

Character Sheet: Your character sheet describes who you are and what you are up to. It contains a list of everything else that should be in your character packet. Do not show or read your character sheet to other players.

Bluesheets: A bluesheet describes information common to members of a group. When in conflict, character sheet information overrides bluesheet information. Do not show or read a bluesheet to other players.

Greensheets: A greensheet describes and expands abilities, mechanics, or in-game knowledge. Do not show or read a greensheet to other players. Some greensheets are public; they describe mechanics that are available to everyone, but won't necessarily be used by everyone.

Stat Card: Your stat card lists your statistics. You might not know what all of your stats mean. Do not show your stats to others. The reverse side is a **death report**; fill it out and give it to the GMs when your character dies.

Ability Cards: An ability card explains a special ability your character has. The front side describes the effects; show it to players when you use the ability. The reverse is the rules of use and must not be shown to other players.

Memory Packets: A memory packet is an envelope or stapled piece of paper with a **trigger** which describes when to open and read it. If the trigger is a description, open the packet when you see something that matches. If it's a quoted phrase, open when you hear or read it in-game. Do not take game action based on an unopened trigger. Do not show or read a memory packet to other players.

Items: In-game items may be transferred from character to character, and should be marked as such. See the *Items Etc.* section for more details.

2.2 Reality and Game Reality

There is a big difference between reality and game reality. Players must treat each other with courtesy and explain to each other what their characters perceive in confusing situations; e.g. “My character’s hands are covered in blood,” an **out-of-game** statement. Characters are under no such restrictions, and may do what it takes to further their goals; e.g. “Uh, hi Bob. Just got back from the butcher shop,” an **in-game** statement.

Metagaming is inferring in-game knowledge that is inappropriate for your character from out-of-game information. Do your best to not metagame and especially to prevent the risk of metagaming. Be your own harshest critic.

Halts: A halt pauses game action. To call one, say “game halt” in a clear and audible voice; other players around a corner should hear you, but you shouldn’t scare some poor grad student. End a halt by saying “three, two, one, resume.” Call a halt for one of only three reasons: because a rule instructs you to, for safety and similar out-of-game issues, or to pause game and fetch a GM (which you should avoid).

Not-Here: You may go not-here by turning your name-badge around so the “I’m Not Here” side is showing (or by removing your badge entirely, if you are leaving game). Putting a hand on your head, visible from a distance, helps if you’re near other players. Go not-here for one of only two reasons: because a rule instructs you to or to fetch a GM while in a halt (which you should avoid).

When you are not-here, your character is not there. Your character cannot see, hear, or remember any game actions or information you (the player) happen to encounter. Avoid other characters, common game areas, game signs, or any sort of game interaction.

Non-Players: Use tact and common sense when dealing with non-players (**NPs**). You are encouraged to spread the gospel of real-time, real-space roleplaying; however, many NPs prefer to sleep, study, or work undisturbed.

NPs may not knowingly affect the game. They and their rooms may not be used to hold items or information. They may not help you kill. Do not use the presence of NPs to hide from rampaging mobs that want your blood.

Avoid conspicuous or threatening game actions in front of NPs. Shooting your friend outside of a classroom one minute before class lets out is a bad idea, as is screaming bloody murder down a hallway. If, despite your most valiant efforts, some NPs do get upset, call the GMs who will help calm them down.

If NPs are present during a period of intense action such as a running gunfight, call an “NP Halt.” Pause game action until the NPs have cleared the area. Resume on a three count and continue from the states and positions you were when the halt was called.

Observers: An observer is someone not playing the game who has agreed to watch. Observers wear a white or yellow head-band. Observers have traditionally been called “ghosts.” They should stay out of the way; you can always ask an observer to leave. If a friend who is not playing wants to observe game, send them to the GMs.

Non-Player-Characters: Non-player-characters (**NPCs**) are characters in the game’s universe not played by a full-time player. They are minor characters, bit parts, or random people.

Mechanics: Many actions your character can take, such as walking, talking, and general interaction with other characters, are represented by you doing them. Others, like combat, are performed via abstract mechanics, which are described in ability cards, greensheets, and rules. The abstract information for mechanics (like item numbers) may not be discussed in-game. If you want to do something special for which there is no mechanic, ask a GM.

Become familiar with your mechanics before game starts, especially those which occur under time-pressure (like combat). Game action will not stop for memory packets, greensheets, or such.

A **kludge** is something impervious to logic and cleverness, usually for game-balance. You can’t affect a kludge without a specified mechanic.

Zone of Control (ZoC) is a rough distance measurement. You are within ZoC of someone if your outstretched fingers can touch their outstretched fingers. Double-ZoC is twice this distance, triple-ZoC is three times, etc.

Headbands represent obvious visual effects; wear them visibly on your head. If you see a headband and don't know what it represents, ask. If you are wearing a headband, tell people what their characters see.

Safety: This is a game. Real violence is unacceptable. Game action should cause no real-world damage, either to people or property. If something dangerous is happening, call a halt. Stay in control, use common sense, and do not endanger yourself or others. You should not run or otherwise force your way into or through someone else's ZoC, and you should not make physical contact with another player without permission.

2.3 Basic Strategy

Make sure you understand the rules. If you are completely confused, get a GM who will try to help you out. Make sure you know enough about your character to role-play him or her when you start talking to other people. Read through your entire packet a couple of times, and skim through it again right before game starts. If you don't know something about your character, ask a GM.

As a character, your first priority should be to open lines of communication. Contact people, show up at meetings, and chat. Try to be easy to get in touch with. Ask people questions on relevant subjects. They'll probably lie, but you may find something out.

There are no guarantees that you can trust anyone, but since cooperation is the key to accomplishing things, you will be forced to trust people anyway. The most trustworthy people are probably those who need you.

3 Items Etc.

Many in-game items are represented by little white cards with a number and description. Item cards may be shown to others, passed around, stolen, etc. The **item number** on the card is not in-game information and may not be discussed. Not all in-game items have cards or numbers; whatever they are represented by should be clearly marked "in-game item" or "freely transferable."

Use common sense. You can't carry a hundred rocks in your pocket, fold a sword in half, or hide a life-sized statue in a fire hose. You can't stop a bullet with a set of blueprints or rip apart a metal safe with your bare hands. Even if your bag can carry a shovel in it, the shovel noticeably sticks out ("you see a shovel sticking out of my bag").

Written Information: If you write in-game information down on a piece of paper, that paper is now an in-game item and must be clearly marked as such. Don't write in-game information on out-of-game documents (character sheet, etc.). Don't write out-of-game information (like memory packet triggers) on in-game documents.

Envelopes: Some items and locations may have an attached envelope (or just be a labeled packet or folded paper). The envelope may include directions for when to open these ("open packet if you press the big red button" or "open packet if you eat this"); otherwise you may only open them if instructed or you know you can (you have an ability that lets you open all alpha packets, for example). Close packets when you are done. Open and close packets gently.

Signs: Some locations and other game materials are represented by signs or packets posted throughout game area. You may read any signs and must follow any rules printed on them. If a sign or packet doesn't have some sort of in-game description (it only has out-of-game mechanics information, like a number or just a colored dot), then your character doesn't even see it or know that anything unusual is there. Some signs may allow you to generate item cards. Follow the instructions on the sign and write your own item card.

Bulkiness: A bulky item is too big or heavy to be carried or concealed freely. Bulkiness is measured in **hands** or **dots** (how many hands it takes to carry it). If you are carrying a bulky item, make it clear to onlookers (hold the card). A hand carrying a bulky object may do nothing else. You may carry one extra dot of bulkiness than you have hands of carry by dragging it at a slow pace. Move no faster than a slow walk in this case.

Props: Some items may have props (physical representations or **physreps**) associated with them. The card and physrep should be kept together. If they are separated, the card is the real item.

Character Bodies: A body is **three** hands bulky and usually represented by a name-badge. It must be willing or unable to resist for you to carry it. Carry the badge conspicuously. Onlookers can't tell if it's dead without close examination, unless it would be obvious (like headless).

Unstashable Items: Unstashable items can't be hidden or left behind. They look too important, valuable, or interesting; NPCs will not let them stay there. This is a kludge. If you're not leaving an unstashable item in another PC's care, and you want to leave it behind, give it to a GM or observer. You may leave it in plain sight in a public area if there are other PCs around.

Unstashable items can be kept in Shadowruns (see the "Shadowrunning" public greensheet).

3.1 Searching, Stashing, and Stealing

Places: To search a place, search it. Normal items can be stashed in any reasonable, legal place. Don't put items behind locked doors, inside ceilings, in construction sites, or in hacking locations; consequently, don't go rummaging through such places for game items. Don't stash or search in places that are not in-game; see the *Game Areas* section for more information. Don't stash bulky items in places that could not reasonably fit the item.

People: All searches of characters or their belongings are conducted via player dialogue. Someone must be willing or unable to resist for you to search them. You need at least one free hand to search someone. Anyone within ZoC of either you or your victim can prevent the search by saying "I stop you" or an equivalent phrase.

You can perform a **pat-down search**, which will only reveal the presence of weapons. This takes as much time as it takes your victim to tell you what you find. If you're the victim, do this at a reasonable pace.

A **total search** is an invasive, complete search of a character's clothing. This reveals all in-game items, and takes as long as your victim spends handing over possessions. If you're the victim, hand over items at a reasonable pace.

Bags: Don't store in-game items in a bag or other container unless you're going to keep it on your person at all times. Items in a bag you have count as on your person for the purposes of searching.

4 Violence, Damage, and Death

4.1 Health States

Characters have five possible states, concerning health and damage. When you are **fine**, you may act freely. When you are **restrained**, you are helpless and may do nothing but talk. When you are **knocked out**, you will wake up in five minutes. When you are **wounded**, you are unconscious, bleeding, and will die in five minutes. When **dead**, you are dead.

When knocked out or wounded, fall down and drop anything you are holding. Just lie there. You won't be doing much of anything until you wake up. Do not listen to conversations going on.

Dead men tell no tales. If dead, do not give out any information about your character or death to any players. You may remain on the scene to play the part of your corpse; describe obvious information to onlookers (“I have a gunshot wound in my back”). When you leave, place the front of your name-badge with a description of the body’s obvious state. Take the “I’m Not Here” side to wear. Stack your items with your body. Fill out your Death Report. Make sure the GMs know about your death. If your death becomes generally known to the other characters, you may be able to become an observer. Until the game is over, you may not convey game information to any player.

4.2 Weapons

All weapons have both a physrep and an item card; keep these together. Weapon effects are on the card. To use a weapon, you must have it in your hand and unobstructed. Display it in an obvious manner. You cannot hold more than one weapon in a hand. You may only use one melee weapon at a time.

4.3 Killing Blow

A killing blow will kill a helpless victim. Your victim must be within ZoC and either unconscious or restrained. You must use a weapon (melee or ranged). Clearly incant “killing blow one, killing blow two, killing blow three” at a reasonable pace. During the incant, if you are attacked or if someone within ZoC says “I stop you” or an equivalent phrase, you are stopped. To stop a killing blow, either attack the person doing it or say “I stop you” within ZoC.

4.4 Ranged Combat

Ranged combat is real-time and mostly based upon player skill at firing and dodging physreps. Keep it safe. Hits to anywhere on the body count the same; don’t aim for the head. If a projectile hits clothing or long hair such that it would not hit the body when passing through, it doesn’t count. Hits to an item you hold count as a hits on you, not the item. If there is a conflict over whether or not a projectile hit, the shooter calls the shot.

Bullets, represented by foam larami darts, can be fired by various types of guns. If and when you are hit by a foam dart, you become wounded. Ammo is unlimited, but certain weapons may require a specific mechanic to reload; check the item card. Disc guns and spell packets are used by military mobs (see below), and have no effect on normal PCs. Similarly, dart gun darts are used for samurai doing flashy duels, and don’t affect people not involved in the duel.

4.5 Martial Combat

All characters have a **Combat Rating (CR)** stat. This represents your basic skill in martial combat; you use the same number for attacking and defending. Someone with a CR of one can’t fight very well. Someone with a CR of three is somewhat burly or skilled. When using this stat, you may pull your punches by using a lower number.

To martial-attack someone, clearly state your attack and CR (“Knock Out 2”, “Wound 2”, etc.) from within ZoC. Your attack must resolve before you make another; otherwise, you may act freely. If an ally directs **Assist** at you after you attack, you may, within 2 seconds, restate your attack with the Assist’s CR added (“Wound 3”, “Assist 2”, “Wound 5”). Assist does not change your CR for defense. You may ignore an Assist.

When martial-attacked, resolve by comparing the attack against your CR. If your CR is lower, take the effects; else, say “**resist**” and the attack has no effect. If you neither say “resist” nor state your own attack within two seconds of the incant’s end, you are surprised and the attack just works. The attack begins when the incant begins; until you resolve, all of your actions other than martial attacks are interrupted; serial attacks don’t prevent simple actions (talking, weapon-drawing, ranged attacks) in-between. Resolve all attacks alone, in the order they occur; choose the order if it is unclear. If you are attacked with “**waylay**” instead of a CR (“Knock Out waylay”), the attack just works.

Martial Attack Abilities: Here is a list of attack abilities. Everyone has Knock Out, Wound, Assist, and Restrain. Knock Out and Wound require weapons; 1-hand-bulky blunt clubs are freely available.

Knock Out You can knock someone out as an attack. This requires a **blunt** weapon. Say “Knock Out” and your CR.

Wound You can wound someone as an attack. This requires an **edged** weapon, such as a sword. Say “Wound” and your CR.

Assist You can assist someone else’s attack. You must be within ZoC of both the attacker and target. Within two seconds of an attack, direct this at the attacker, saying “Assist” and your CR.

Restrain You can restrain someone as an attack. Say “Restrain” and your CR. You may freely drag, attack, or (if you have a weapon) killing-blow them. To do anything else, or if your health state changes, incant “release” and let them go.

4.6 Dueling

Formal duels use a dart gun-based mechanic. You can only participate in these duels if you have the appropriate greensheet. Duels may be interrupted by ranged or martial combat.

4.7 Stealth

Stealth abilities represent sneaking up on a victim with obvious intent to invade their personal space, probably to attack them by surprise or to pick their pocket.

To use a stealth ability, you must be within ZoC of your victim. Form the sign of the devil (index and pinky fingers extended, thumb holding other two fingers down) and extend it along the direct, unobstructed line from your shoulder to the victim’s head. Hold this position for the time specified by your ability. Before this time is up, the ability is thwarted if anyone attacks you or if the victim notices the symbol. If they react in any way to the symbol, they have noticed; you (the attacker) make the call.

If you notice someone using a stealth ability on you, make it obvious. “I notice you” is unambiguous; use it if you can. Once a stealth ability is finished, you may not retroactively have noticed.

Waylay: You can attack by surprise as a stealth ability. You must hold the symbol for five seconds. If you succeed, you may replace your CR with “waylay” for a single immediate martial attack on your victim.

5 Miscellaneous

5.1 Headband Colors

A white or yellow headband represents an observer. A brown headband represents a small furry animal. A green headband represents a group of workers following someone around. A red headband represents an organized group of soldiers following someone around. Ask from a distance for more details or if you see a different color.

5.2 Rope

Rope is freely available. Make an item card for it. To tie someone up, they must be either willing or helpless. If you get tied up with rope, you become restrained. If you are conscious and left alone, you can wriggle free in five minutes.

5.3 Auspicious Days

The Japanese calendar uses a six-day cycle, and each day has particular significant connotations, which are relevant to rituals, ceremonies, and other major undertakings. The four cycles of game happen to fall upon the following four days:

Friday: Butsumetsu an inauspicious day associated with the death of Buddha. Bad for all ceremonies other than funerals.

Saturday Afternoon: Shakkō generally unlucky; fire and sharp objects pose a danger.

Saturday Evening: Tomobiki a positive day for companionship, trials, and competitions. Inappropriate for funerals.

Sunday: Daian an auspicious day, good for ceremonies and major undertakings of all types.

5.4 Mobs

Some characters can command military units: organized groups of armed peasants, foot soldiers, or riflemen, represented by red headbands. There are also mobs of unarmed laborers, represented by green headbands. When not active, these mobs are represented by small signs with several stats. You may only take a mob sign if its Loyalty stat refers to you or a group bluesheet you have. Mobs also have Strength; mobs with positive strength use red headbands, and those with zero strength use green headbands. If you see someone in a red or green headband, you may ask them what sort of mob they are commanding.

Armed mobs can wield spell packets (representing melee weapons) and disc guns (representing guns), and can absorb a number of hits from either of these projectiles equal to its strength before dispersing. Peasant militias will be on the order of 1-3, organized units of melee troops 4-6, and disciplined units armed with muskets or rifles can be higher still. Recall that disc guns and spell packets do not affect individual PCs.

While wearing a red or green headband, you cannot move faster than a walk, and cannot enter classrooms. You also cannot initiate or be affected by Martial Combat, use non-mob-related abilities, or use personal ranged weapons. You are immune to larami darts. You can, however, while wearing a red headband, direct your unit to capture any non-mob-leading character within ZoC, and freely restrain, knock out, wound, or kill such a character. Mobs are not stealthy; don't try to sneak up on a character with a military mob to capture them or otherwise abuse the capture rules.

Zero-strength mobs instantly disperse if anything violent happens within line of sight, even an ineffective martial or ranged attack.

The next cycle after a military mob disperses, you can reconvene it at one lower strength at any shadowrun you have access to. If its strength is now zero, it stops being a military mob and can no longer attack.

Mobs are unstashable; they may be left at signs for public locations or shadowruns whose access matches their loyalty.

There exist **Macro** items in game. These items are too heavy to move without a mob. If you have a mob, you may carry one macro item at a time. Macro items are unstashable. A mob not carrying a macro item can carry any number of hands of bulkiness.

5.5 Herbs

Herb item cards represent carefully-picked herbs that retain their full essence. While there are various sources of herbs in game, you need skill to pick them without losing this essence.

5.6 Shadowrunning

Shadowrunning is explained on the public greensheet. Anyone may attempt shadowruns as described in that document.

5.7 Public Opinion

Public opinion can be influenced as described in the public greensheet.

5.8 The Treaty

The process of preparing a valid treaty is described in the public greensheet.

5.9 Research

Some people have research projects in advanced stages. These will be represented by research notebooks. Notebooks are non-transferrable and not in-game items. Additional information on research can be found in the public greensheet.

6 Closing Notes

These rules are imperfect. The GMs may violate the letter of the rules to preserve the spirit. We hope these rules are reasonably clear, but if you have any doubts about your interpretation, talk it over with us in advance. We should also add, as much as we hate to admit it, we GMs are human: when all of our carefully laid plans are going haywire, we may lose our cool. The best way to deal with people is remaining calm and friendly, especially when everyone is tired and hungry.

We hope you have lots of fun. Good luck.