

# YASH - Yet Another Samurai Homebrew

Samurai's are warriors originating from nobility, from far, exotic lands. Their main task is to serve their feudal lord as a military commander, or a member of elite combat unit. Beside vassal dependency, loyalty and honor play a very important role in a samurai's life.

**Adventures:** Samurai's main task is to serve his lord, senior, so they don't seek adventures, just complete tasks given. But that doesn't preclude traveling, helping others, or allying with adventures, as far as it helps to complete task they were given.

**Characteristics:** What truly distinguishes a samurai from normal fighter, is his commitment to his lord, house which is showed by samurai's honor, loyalty, and obedience. Good and Evil for Samurai are indifferent, as long as they don't interfere with tasks his lord has given him.

**Alignment:** Samurai's life is determined by rigorous list of rules of feudal lord-vassal relationship, which only lawful characters can cope with.

**Religion:** Samurai's generally don't worship any gods, because their lord provides all the answers they need. If they do, then they follow lawful militant gods like Heironeous, Hextor, or Saint Cuthbert.

**Background:** Samurais come from noble families, connected, in one way or another, to the local ruler. But there are instances where honor of becoming a Samurai, is awarded for heroic deeds of an ordinary warrior.

**Races:** Only lawful races can cope with strict and rigorous rules of being a Samurai. Dwarf, with their clan structure, and lawfulness are ideal materials for samurais. Elves, and humans often become Samurais too.

**Other Classes:** Samurai can cooperate with almost anyone, if the task at hand, his senior requires it. Of course with classes that also live by some code, like paladins, or monks, it's easier than with, for example, rogues.

**Role:** Samurai serves role similar to Fighter. Maybe less versatile, in terms of fighting, but he makes up for his shortcomings with education, and additional abilities.

## Game rule information:

Samurai have the following game statistics.

**Abilities:** Since the Samurai is a melee fighter, Strength is most important for him. Dexterity and Constitution help him being more effective as warrior. Charisma governs his special abilities, so it's important too.

**Alignment:** Any lawful.

**Hit Die:** d10.

**Starting Gold:** 6d4 x 10 (average 150 gp)

### Class Skills

The samurai's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Diplomacy (Cha), Gather Information (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (history) (Int), Knowledge (local) (Int), Knowledge (nobility and royalty) (Int), Ride (Dex), Sense Motive (Wis), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str).

**Skill Points at 1st Level:**  $(4 + \text{Int modifier}) \times 4$ .

**Skill Points at Each Additional Level:**  $4 + \text{Int modifier}$ .

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Saving Throw			Special
		Fort.	Ref.	Will	
1	+1	+2	+0	+2	Ancestral heritage, Bonus feat, Kata 1/day, Kata (Sude), Loyalty, Strength of personality
2	+2	+3	+0	+3	Ibuki (nonlethal), One with the sword (disarm)
3	+3	+3	+1	+3	Fearless, Kata (Torippingu), Kiai shout (self)
4	+4	+4	+1	+4	Samurai's charge (turn)
5	+5	+4	+1	+4	Ibuki (fatigued), Kata (Chansu), One with the sword (toughness)
6	+6/+1	+5	+2	+5	Bonus feat, Kiai shout (target)
7	+7/+2	+5	+2	+5	Kata (Shinkei), Samurai's charge (attack)
8	+8/+3	+6	+2	+6	Ibuki (status), Kata 2/day, One with the sword (will)
9	+9/+4	+6	+3	+6	Death before dishonor (charge), Kata (Shōten),
10	+10/+5	+7	+3	+7	Spirit sight
11	+11/+6/+1	+7	+3	+7	Bonus feat, Kata (Higai), One with the sword (commune)
12	+12/+7/+2	+8	+4	+8	Death before dishonor (disabled)
13	+13/+8/+3	+8	+4	+8	Kata (Mekura shi)
14	+14/+9/+4	+9	+4	+9	One with the sword (intelligent)
15	+15/+10/+5	+9	+5	+9	Death before dishonor (dying), Kata 3/day, Kata (Kiun)
16	+16/+11/+6/+1	+10	+5	+10	Bonus feat
17	+17/+12/+7/+2	+10	+5	+10	Kata (Yo keru)
18	+18/+13/+8/+3	+11	+6	+11	
19	+19/+14/+9/+4	+11	+6	+11	Kata (Gunshū)
20	+20/+15/+10/+5	+12	+6	+12	

## Class Features

**Weapon and Armor Proficiency:** Samurai is proficient with all simple and martial weapons, Katana (masterwork bastard sword equivalent), Wakizashi (masterwork short sword equivalent, that deals slashing damage), with all armor (heavy, medium, and light), but not with shields.

**Ancestral heritage:** Samurai begins play with two swords - a katana and a wakizashi. The Katana is a samurai's main weapon and a symbol of his status, his pride, losing which has some unpleasant consequences. The Wakizashi is a backup sword, used when the katana is too cumbersome, or not available (e.g. left outside house as according to custom).

If katana is stolen, destroyed, etc., samurai suffers a -4 penalty to his Charisma score, and a -2 to attack and damage rolls until he recovers it or acquire a new one from head of his house, his lord.

When dealing with a character that understands the meaning of loosing a katana (eg. other samurai), the samurai who lost it suffers an additional penalty to Diplomacy and Gather Information check equal to half his Samurai level.

Both weapons are martial weapons for a samurai.

**Bonus feat:** At 1st level, and every 5 levels thereafter, the samurai gains a bonus feat. He chooses them from the fighter bonus feat list. He can choose feats that are reserved only for the fighter (like Weapon Specialization), by substituting his samurai levels instead of the required fighter one.

**Kata (Ex):** A samurai constantly improves himself through exercises called Kata. They improve both his muscles and mind. Samurai gains his first kata at his first samurai class level. Every 2 levels thereafter he gains a new kata. Each kata grants some bonus, and each kata improves as samurai gains levels, but he needs to activate them first, and can have only a limited numbers of katas active simultaneously.

To gain kata bonus, samurai needs to spend at least 20 minutes exercising for each kata he wants to activate. Associated bonus remains active for 24 hours.

Initially samurai can have only one kata active, but it increases by 1 every 7 levels, to a maximum of 3 kata bonuses at 15 level.

Abilities, bonuses from *Sude*, and *Mekura shi* kata are always active, and don't count against the maximum number of katas active.

"Level", "levels" mean samurai in question samurai class levels.

**Sude:** at 1st level, samurai learns basic attack and defense technique which allows him to make unarmed attacks without provoking attacks of opportunity. They still deal nonlethal damage.

Additionally, samurai gains a bonus to his unarmed damage, equal to his level. It's still non-lethal damage.

**Torippingu:** at 3th level, samurai's training improves his motor coordination which manifests as a +1 bonus to trip checks to resist being tripped.

Bonus improves by +1 every 3 levels above 3th level.

**Chansu:** at 5th level, samurai's heightened by constant training senses grant him +1 dodge bonus to AC against attacks of opportunity.

Bonus improves by +1 every 5 levels above 5th level.

**Shinkei:** at 7th level, further motor coordination training grants samurai a +1 circumstance bonus to Reflex saving throws.

Bonus improves by +1 every 3 levels above 7th level.

**Shōten:** at 9th level, thanks to rigorous weapon training samurai gains a +1 bonus to attack rolls made with katana or wakizashi, but only if he uses the weapon with both hands.

Bonus improves by +1 every 2 levels above 9th level, and stacks with the one granted by *Weapon Focus*, *Greater Weapon Focus*.

**Higai:** at 11th level, further weapon training grants samurai a bonus to damage rolls made with katana or wakizashi, equal to the damage dice of said weapon (e.g. +1d10 for medium sized katana), but only if he uses the weapon with both hands. Bonus improves by +2 points of damage every 2 levels above 11th level, and stacks with the one granted by *Weapon Specialization*, *Greater Weapon Specialization*.

**Mekura shi:** at 13th level, samurai's senses are so keen and adept in cooperating, that he gains *Blindsight* out to 20 feet.

**Kiun:** at 15th level samurai's keen reflexes allow him to perform additional number of attacks of opportunity. He can perform total number of attacks of opportunity per round, up to number of his attacks per round, and isn't limited by one attack of opportunity per one target rule.

**Yo keru:** at 17th level samurai's superhuman mobility grants him a +5 dodge bonus to his armor class. Bonus improves by +1 every level above 17th level.

**Gunshū:** at 19th level samurai had seen and participated in so many battles, that he knows not only how to fight in a crowd, but also how use it to his benefit. This manifests as +2 bonus to attack rolls and armor class per opponent in a 5 feet radius. Additionally flanking creatures don't gain the +2 attack bonus against him, but he still can be flanked.

**Loyalty (Su):** The Samurai gets a saving throw bonus against charm, or dominate spells, effects or abilities that are created by characters other than ones that can command him (e.g. not the head of his house, his senior, etc.). The same amount is applied as a penalty when it's done by someone who can command him. The amount equals to one third his class level (minimum 1)

**Strength of personality (Ex):** Instead of Wisdom, samurai can use his Charisma modifier on Will saving throws.

**Ibuki (Ex):** Ibuki is a breathing technique that allows samurai to get rid of some negative effects.

At 2nd level after spending one minute on meditation and breathing, samurai can daily heal the amount of nonlethal damage equal to his samurai level × his Charisma bonus. He doesn't have to use it all at once, but unused points are wasted.

In other respects, it works like paladins *Lay on Hands* ability.

At 5th level after spending 10 minutes on meditation and breathing, samurai can ignore the effects of being Fatigued for number of hours equal to half his samurai level.

Any effect that would make samurai exhausted, instead renders him fatigued, and he can only become exhausted by already being fatigued and being victim to another exhaustion effect.

At 8th level after spending 10 minutes on meditation and breathing, samurai can cancel, dispel, etc., one of the following effects that are affecting him, per 10 minutes of meditation:

- Confused,
- Dazed\*,
- Dazzled,
- Nauseated,
- Sickened,
- Stunned.

**One with the sword (Su):** For a samurai, the katana is something more than just a sword. It's a pride of his and his house, a part of himself with which he has a mystical connection. One with the sword works only with katana that belongs to samurai using this ability.

Unless noted otherwise, this ability is always active, but parts each ability can be suppressed, and reactivated at will.

At 2nd level samurai can add his Charisma bonus to disarm checks to avoid being disarmed. This bonus works with any other forceful methods of removing samurai's katana (*Teleport Object* for example).

At 5th level he can add his Charisma bonus to his katana hardness.

At 8th level each +1 katana enhancement bonus, can grant samurai who's wielding it a +1 bonus to Will saving throws.

At 11th level by communicating with his ancestors via the katana (swift action), samurai can get an insight bonus equal to half his samurai level, to one of the next following checks:

- any craft check,
- any knowledge check,
- critical confirmation roll,
- initiative roll.

At 14th level samurai can "awake" his katana, which then becomes an intelligent item with the following characteristics:

Alignment same as samurai's; Intelligence, Wisdom score equal to 10 + samurai's Intelligence, and Wisdom bonus respectively, Charisma score equal to samurai's Charisma score; Telepathy; 120 ft. blindsense; Ego score 0

*Lesser Powers:* *Comprehend languages* at will, *fog cloud* 3/day

*Greater Powers:* *Haste* 3/day

*Personality:* Awaken katana's personality is similar to the samurai which created it, but it's completely loyal, and subservient to him. Only goal it may have, is to serve his samurai, and it will never try to dominate him.

If katana becomes intelligent it stays intelligent (i.e. you can't suppress it like other abilities), but in the hands other than the samurai who awoke it, such katana is considered non-intelligent.

**Fearless (Su):** A samurai of 3rd level or higher, is immune to fear (magical or otherwise).

**Kiai shout (Su):** As a swift action, the samurai can use a special shout to strengthen himself, or to dishearten opponents. Samurai can use this ability times per day equal to 3 + his Charisma bonus.

At 3rd level samurai can add his Charisma bonus to melee weapon damage rolls for one round.

At 6th level samurai can use this shout against others. Enemies in a 30 feet radius who can hear it must make a Will saving throw with DC equal to 10 + half samurai's level + samurai's Charisma modifier, or become Shaken for number of rounds equal to samurai's Charisma bonus (minimum 1).

**Samurai's charge (Ex):** Samurai of 4th level or higher can perform an improved charge.

At 4th level during a charge he can turn number of times equal to his Dexterity modifier (minimum 1), but any one turn can't be greater than 90°

At 7th level, the samurai may make attacks along the length of his charge in addition to the normal attack at the end. The samurai may make one additional attack at his highest base attack bonus against any one creature he can reach before he reaches his target. At 11th level, the samurai may make two such additional attacks. At 16th level, the samurai may make three such additional attacks. These additional attacks provoke attacks of opportunity from anyone other than the intended target.

**Death before dishonor (Ex):** For a samurai dishonor is a worse fate than death. Because of that, he can act when other characters can't.

At 9th level samurai can charge even when Fatigued, but suffers 1d4 nonlethal damage for every 5 feet he runs.

Additionally, he dies when his negative HP are below or equal to 10 + Constitution score.

At 12th level he can disregard being Disabled, and act like he wasn't, but still loses HP if performs strenuous actions, and instead losing 1 HP, he loses 2.

At 15th level while having negative HP samurai can act like he was Disabled (it can't be disregarded by this ability previous entry), but instead losing 1 HP due to strenuous activities, he loses 1d4.

**Spirit sight (Su):** Samurai of 10<sup>th</sup> level or higher has sight so keen, that he can see both invisible, and ethereal like when using *See invisibility*, and see through disguises like when using *Discern Shapechanger*, but you don't need to concentrate when doing the later. This ability is usable as a standard action, with duration of 1 minute per samurai level, number of times per day equal to 3 + his Charisma bonus.

### Ex-Samurais

Samurai which stops being lawful, or who incurs dishonor (running from the battlefield, killing an unarmed, for example), or who blatantly opposes his senior will, losses all of the samurai abilities that require Charisma, and also Loyalty, Fearless, Death before dishonor. He may not progress any farther in levels as a samurai until he atones for his violations (like with the Atonement spell for example), provided his senior allows such atonement (sometimes only a ritual suicide can be the only way of doing this).

### Human Samurai Starting Package

**Armor:** Chainmail (+5 AC, armor check penalty -5, speed 20 ft., 40 lb.).

**Weapons:** Katana (1d10, crit 19-20/x2, 4lb, one-handed, slashing).

Wakizashi (1d6, crit 19-20/x2, 2lb, light, slashing).

**Skill Selection:** Pick a number of skills equal to 4 + Int modifier.

Skill	Ranks	Ability	Armor Check Penalty
Diplomacy	4	CHA	-
Ride	4	DEX	-
Spot	4	WIS	-
Knowledge (history)	4	INT	-
Knowledge (local)	4	INT	-
Sense Motive	4	WIS	-
Intimidate	4	CHA	-

**Feat:** Power Attack.

**Bonus Feat (Human):** Improved Initiative

**Gear:** Backpack with waterskin, one day's trail rations, bedroll, sack, flint and steel.

**Gold:** 2d4 gp.

### Appendix: Samurai's gear

**Katana:** iconic samurai's sword. For him much more than just a weapon - a part of him, his house, which could have been passed down for generations.

In mechanics terms, katana is a masterwork (+1 bonus on your attack rolls) bastard sword. Samurai can use it one-handed without any additional feats. He can also use the *Weapon Finesse* feat with it.

**Wakizashi:** samurai's backup sword, used when katana can't be.

In mechanics terms, wakizashi is a masterwork (+1 bonus on your attack rolls) short sword, that deals slashing damage.

<b>Katana</b> (exotic one-handed melee weapon)						
Cost	Dmg (S)	Dmg (M)	Critical Range	Increment	Weight	Type
400 gp	1d8	1d10	19-20 x2	-	4 lb.	Slashing
<b>Wakizashi</b> (exotic light melee weapon)						
Cost	Dmg (S)	Dmg (M)	Critical Range	Increment	Weight	Type
300 gp	1d4	1d6	19-20 x2	-	2 lb.	Slashing

**Dō-maru:** is just a part of the Ō-yoroi armor, used as a whole. It's meant for ordinary soldiers, infantry, for which mobility, low weight is more important than protection. Most often comes in form of a lammeral cuirass.

**Ō-yoroi:** is an armor that's a status symbol of a samurai, similar to katana. Rarely a non-samurai wears this armor. Full armor consists of parts (most often lamellar) like: helmet, mask, armored shoulder pads and sleeves, cuirass, greaves, etc. Protection wise, Ō-yoroi fits between Banded mail and Full plate, but allows for a greater mobility than either of them.



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Armor	Cost	Armor Bonus	Maximum Dex Bonus	Armor Check Penalty	Arcane Spell Failure Chance	Speed	Weight
<i>Medium armor</i>							
Dō-maru	250 gp	+4	+5	-3	25%	20 ft.\15 ft.	30 lb.
<i>Heavy armor</i>							
Ō-yoroi	1000 gp	+7	+2	-5	35%	20 ft.*\15 ft.*	45 lb.

\* - When running in heavy armor, you move only triple your speed, not quadruple.