

Shogun: Gekokujō – Core Rulebook

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Introduction

This document presents a modernized update of the 1986 Milton Bradley classic, "Shogun." Our goal is to fix the structural flaws of the original game to create a fairer, more strategic experience.

We have removed the luck of the dice from the economic system. Instead, success now depends on careful planning and logistics. This is a game about the burdens of command: managing resources, leading armies, and navigating fragile alliances. It is designed for players who believe that a secure supply line is just as powerful as a sharp sword.

Game Parameters

- **Players:** 4-5 (Deviations compromise balance).
- **Playing Time:** 2-4 Hours.
- **Age:** 14+ (Requires arithmetic proficiency).

Component List (The Daimyō's Kit)

Per Clan (5 Sets):

- **3** Daimyō Figures (Key Leaders)
- **69** Bushi Figures (Infantry)
- **1** Clan Reference Sheet
- **1** Player Screen (to hide Koku)

General Supply:

- **Koku** (Tokens) representing Rice/Gold
- **10** Castle Pieces
- **Ninja** Figure (Black)
- **Ronin** Figures (Neutral/Mercenary)
- **30** Province Cards
- **12** Battle Markers (Blue arrows)
- **5** six-sided dice (d6)

§ 0 Golden Rules

§ 0.1 Rule of the Highest Source

When multiple modifiers of the same type apply to a single action:

- The single largest **bonus** applies.
- The single largest **penalty** applies.
- Bonuses and penalties are summed to determine the net modifier.

Clarification: Types are defined by their target (e.g., "defense roll bonus"). All bonuses to defense rolls are treated as a single type, regardless of source.

§ 0.2 Module Priority

Rules contained within an Optional Module supersede Core Rules in the event of a contradiction.

§ 0.3 Component Scarcity

Component limitations are absolute. If the general supply of a specific component (e.g., Bushi, Castles) is exhausted, no further units of that type may be introduced until stock becomes available.

§ 0.4 Definitions

- **Province States:**
 - **Controlled Province:** Contains units from a single player.
 - **Contested Province:** Contains units from multiple players. Yields **zero** income.
 - **Neutral Province:** Contains no units.
- **Control Types:**
 - **Sole Control:** Controlled by the player with no allied units present.
 - **Friendly Province:** Controlled by the player or a signatory of an active **Honor Pact**.
- **Timing:**
 - **Simultaneously:** Actions performed by all players concurrently, resolving effectively at the same instant.

§ 0.5 Information States

- **Public Information:** Board state, unit counts, Province Cards held, number of Koku *pledged* in alliances.
- **Hidden Information:** The exact amount of Koku held in a player's treasury. This should be kept behind the Player Screen.

§ 1 Victory Conditions

§ 1.1 Primary Objectives

The game concludes immediately at the end of any phase if a player fulfills one of the following conditions:

- a) **Province Control** (see § 1.2)
- b) **The Shōgun's Mandate** (see § 1.3)

In case of a simultaneous fulfillment, the priority is:

1. Shōgun's Mandate
2. Province Control

§ 1.1.1 Timing of Victory Check

Victory conditions apply only at the end of each phase.

§ 1.2 Victory by Province Control

You win if you control a certain number of provinces:

- **4 Players:** 20 provinces
- **5 Players:** 18 provinces

§ 1.2.1 Tie-Breaker

In the rare case of a tie, a clear winner is determined by the following sequence:

1. **Economic Strength:** The tied player with more **Koku** wins.
2. **Leadership Preservation:** The player with the most **Daimyō** remaining wins.
3. **Strategic Prestige:** The player who controls the most **Mandate Provinces** wins.
4. **Initiative:** The player who would have acted **earlier in the next round's turn order** wins.

§ 1.3 Alternative Victory: The Shōgun's Mandate

You win if you have sole, undisputed control over the three Mandate Provinces at the end of any phase:

- **Yamashiro (Kyoto)**
- **Settsu (Osaka)**
- **Sagami (Edo)**

Condition: There must be no units from allies in these provinces for you to claim this victory.

Special Rule: When defending in Yamashiro (Kyoto), your units receive a **+1 bonus** to Defense Rolls, reflecting the defensibility of the capital.

§ 2 The Laws of War

The resolution of conflict is deterministic in probability but chaotic in outcome. This section defines the mathematical framework used to resolve battles.

§ 2.1 The Anatomy of Power

Conflict is resolved via simultaneous dice rolls (d6).

Unit Type	Dice Pool	To-Hit (Attack)	To-Hit (Defense)
Bushi (Infantry)	1 Die	5, 6	6
Daimyō (Commander)	3 Dice	4, 5, 6	4, 5, 6
Ronin (Mercenary)	1 Die	5, 6	6

§ 2.2 Modifiers

Modifiers alter the target number required for a successful hit.

- **Defense Bonus (Structures/Terrain):** Increases the Defense Value (e.g., a **+1 Bonus** changes the target from 6 to 5+).
- **Global Malus (Sabotage/Dishonor):** Subtracts the value from the die result (e.g., a **-1 Malus** turns a rolled 4 into a 3).

§ 3 The Tools of War

Players acquire these assets during Phase 1b (Reinforcement) to manipulate the probabilities defined in §2.

§ 3.1 Structures (Fortifications)

- **Constraint:** Maximum one structure per province.
- **Castle (5 Koku):** Grants **+1 Defense Bonus** to all friendly units in the province.
- **Fortress (3 Koku Upgrade):** Grants **+2 Defense Bonus** for one round. Reverts to Castle status subsequently.
- **Destruction:** If an enemy player gains **control** of a province containing a Castle or Fortress, the fortification is immediately removed from the board.

§ 3.2 The Ninja (Asymmetric Deterrence)

- **Cost:** 3 Koku.
- **Placement:** Placed openly in *any* province (own, enemy, or neutral).
- **Function:** Acts as a deterrent, not a combat unit. The owner may remove the Ninja to execute one operation:
 1. **"Deny Passage!"** (Trigger: Movement into province). The active player must

immediately choose: **Pay 3 Koku** to continue OR **Retreat** (Cancel movement).

2. **"Sow Discord!"** (Trigger: Battle). The target suffers a **-1 Malus** on all die rolls (Attack or Defense) for this single battle.
3. **"Burn Supplies!"** (Trigger: Battle). The target must immediately **pay 3 Koku** or suffer unit loss via Bankruptcy (§ 7.2).

§ 4 Preparation

§ 4.1 The Eve of War: Clan Selection

To ensure a balanced and strategically engaging conflict, the great clans are selected through a draft. This guarantees a wide geographic distribution of power, preventing strategic isolation.

§ 4.1.1 Strategic Regions

The nine great clans are grouped into three strategic regions.

The West	The Center	The East
Mōri (Aki)	Chosokabe (Tosa)	Hōjō (Sagami)
Otomo (Bungo)	Oda (Owari)	Takeda (Kai)
Shimazu (Satsuma)	Tokugawa (Mikawa)	Uesugi (Echigo)

§ 4.1.2 The Draft Procedure

1. Step 1: Determine the Pick Order

Determine a random starting order for the players (e.g., by rolling dice). The player who would act last in this random order gets to pick their clan first. The clan pick order is the reverse of the randomly determined player order.

2. Step 2: Make Your Picks (with one restriction)

Starting with the first player in the pick order, each player chooses one available clan.

- **The Regional Restriction Rule:** The first three players picking must each choose a clan from a different, unclaimed **Strategic Region** (West, Center, or East). Once all three regions have been chosen from, this restriction is lifted for any remaining players.

§ 4.2 Initial Setup

- **Place Starting Units:** Each player places three Daimyō and **one** Bushi in their clan's starting province.
- **First Turn Exception:** On the first turn of the game only, players do not pay the Unit Maintenance cost.

§ 5 Clan Doctrines (Asymmetry)

Clan	Home Province	Strategic Doctrine
Chosokabe	Tosa	+1 Income per 2 Coastal Provinces controlled (Max +2).
Hōjō	Sagami (Edo)	Constructs Fortresses for 3 Koku. Fortresses are rebuildable. Starts in a Mandate Province.
Mōri	Aki	Pay 1 Koku to transport Daimyō + 5 Units between owned Coastal Provinces.
Oda	Owari	+1 Attack Bonus on all dice when an Oda Daimyō is present.
Otomo	Bungo	Pay 2 Koku before dice are rolled to re-roll all failed attack rolls for your Bushi units.
Shimazu	Satsuma	+1 Income per Coastal Province controlled (Max +3).
Takeda	Kai	Daimyō + 6 Units may move 3 provinces if ending in battle or friendly territory.
Tokugawa	Mikawa	Fiscal Immunity to Mountain Provisions costs.
Uesugi	Echigo	+1 Defense Bonus in provinces held since the <i>start</i> of the round.

§ 6 Chronology (Round Structure)

The game creates a cyclical pressure of Logistics (Spring), Expansion (Summer), and Attrition (Winter).

§ 6.1 Phase Sequence

- **Phase 1a: Administration** (Income, Maintenance, Player Order, Diplomacy)
- **Phase 1b: Reinforcement** (Recruitment & Construction)
- **Phase 2: Campaign** (Movement & Combat)
- **Phase 3: Winter** (Mountain Provisions)

§ 6.2 Unit Limit per Province (Stacking Limit)

A province can sustain a maximum of 7 units belonging to a single player.

- **Clarification:** This limit applies to **all unit types** (Bushi, Daimyō, Ronin, etc.). The limit is checked after any game effect that changes unit count is fully resolved (recruitment, movement end, combat).
- **Exception - Pass-Through Movement:** Units may move through a province that already contains 7 of their own units. The stacking limit is checked before movement begins and after movement ends, but not during movement itself.

§ 7 Phase 1a: Administration & Diplomacy

§ 7.1 Income, Unit Maintenance & Gekokujō (Sequential)

1. **Collect Income:** All players simultaneously gain **3 Koku base income + 1 Koku per controlled province**.
2. **Pay Unit Maintenance:** All players simultaneously pay **1 Koku for every 2 Bushi** units (rounded up). Daimyō are free. (*Skipped on Turn 1*).
3. **Determine Player Order (Gekokujō):** Only after income and maintenance, the player order is determined. The player with the **fewest provinces** acts first. Ties broken by: 1st - less Koku, 2nd - fewer total units, 3rd - clan name alphabetically.

§ 7.2 Bankruptcy (Insolvency)

A Daimyō is bound by their word. If a player is unable to pay a required cost (Unit Maintenance, Winter Mountain Provisions, etc.) at any time, they must immediately remove two of their Bushi units (player's choice) from the board for every 1 Koku they cannot pay. A clan cannot go into debt.

§ 7.3 Political Play: The Honor Pact

Timing: After Turn Order is determined.

An **Honor Pact** is a formal alliance between two players.

- **The Proposal:** In player order, a player may propose a pact.
- **Cost: 1 Koku** (Paid by the Initiator to the supply).
- **The Pledge:** If accepted, **both players must immediately place 2 Koku each** into a

shared, locked "Pledge Pool" on the table. This money is the bond of their word.

- **Restriction:** Each player may only be part of one Honor Pact at a time.

§ 7.3.1 Benefits of the Pact

1. **Access:** Units may move through each other's provinces.
2. **Joint Occupation:** Allies may occupy the same province. *Restriction:* The total number of units from all allied players in a single province cannot exceed **10**.
3. **Non-Aggression:** They cannot attack each other. An attack is an act of betrayal.

§ 7.3.2 Betrayal (Breaking the Pact)

A pact is broken immediately as soon as a player attacks their ally. The consequences are instantaneous:

1. **Forfeiture:** The betrayer forfeits their share of the pledge. The victim receives the **entire pledge pool (4 Koku)**.
2. **Dishonor:** The betrayer suffers a **-1 malus on all attack rolls** for the remainder of the round.
3. **Blood Feud:** The victim declares a permanent '**Blood Feud**' against the betrayer. For the rest of the game, the victim receives a **+1 bonus on Attack AND Defense rolls** against that specific player.

§ 7.3.3 Peaceful Dissolution (The Ritual)

A pact persists until actively dissolved during the Diplomacy Step.

- **The Ritual:** Both players take a hidden Koku coin in their hand (or an empty fist). They reveal simultaneously:
 - **Empty / Empty:** The Pact continues.
 - **Coin / Empty:** The Pact ends. The player showing the coin is the Initiator.
 - **Coin / Coin:** The Pact ends. The Gekokujō tie-breaker determines the Initiator.
- **Consequence:** The pledge is returned (2 Koku each). The Initiator must immediately retreat their units from any shared provinces to their own territory (using normal movement rules).

§ 8 Phase 1b: Reinforcement

In Player Order, players spend Koku to acquire the assets defined in § 3.

§ 8.1 Recruitment

- **Bushi (1 Koku):** Deploy to any province controlled at the **start** of this phase.
- **Ninja (3 Koku):** Deploy to **any** province on the map. See § 3.2.

§ 8.2 Construction

- **Castle (5 Koku):** Deploy to a controlled province. See § 3.1.
- **Fortress Upgrade (3 Koku):** Convert an existing Castle.

§ 9 Phase 2: Campaign

The Campaign phase proceeds in player order. On your turn, you complete **all movement** first, then resolve **all battles**.

§ 9.1 Movement Operations

- **Range:** Bushi move 2 provinces; Daimyō move 3.
- **Contact:** Movement halts immediately upon entering a province containing enemy units (unless an Honor Pact permits entry).
- **Planning:** If a move results in combat (entering an enemy-controlled or contested province), place a **Battle Marker** on the border to indicate a pending engagement.

§ 9.2 Combat Resolution

Battles indicated by Battle Markers are resolved sequentially.

1. **Mercenaries:** Attacker, then Defender, may hire **Ronin** (1 Koku/Unit).
 - *Limit:* Max 1 Ronin per friendly Bushi.
 - *Fleeting Loyalty:* **Ronin are removed from the board immediately after the battle resolves**, regardless of the outcome.
2. **Sabotage:** Ninja owner may reveal a mission (e.g., Sow Discord). See § 3.2.
3. **The Engagement:** All units roll **simultaneously**.
4. **Attrition (Assign & Remove):**
 - **Part A (Assign Hits):** Attacker assigns total hits to Defender. Then, Defender assigns total hits to Attacker.
 - **Part B (Remove Casualties):** All players simultaneously remove the assigned casualties.
5. **Status:** Determine Control.
 - **Attacker Only:** Province Conquered. The victor immediately claims the corresponding **Province Card**.
 - **Both/Neither:** Province becomes **Contested** (Neutral).

§ 10 Phase 3: Winter

§ 10.1 Seasonal Attrition

Mountainous terrain imposes a logistical tax.

- **Cost:** Pay 1 Koku per **Mountain Province** controlled.
- **Surcharge:** Pay +1 Koku per **3 Units** (any type, rounded up) located within Mountain Provinces.
- **Target Provinces:** Etchu, Hida, Kai, Kozuke, Mino, Shinano.

§ 11 Fealty (Vassalage)

§ 11.1 Succession Crisis

The loss of the last Daimyō does not mean elimination. It marks the transition to Vassalage.

1. **Subjugation:** The player inflicting the final blow becomes the **Liege Lord**.
2. **Tribute:** The Vassal chooses and hands over **one province** to the Liege Lord. 3 Units convert to the Liege's color.
3. **Status:** The Vassal remains in play but is ineligible for victory.

§ 11.2 The Path to Restoration

The Vassal's status is determined by their first offensive action of the round.

- **Loyalist (External Attack):** Earn 3 **Merit Points** (Kōseki) via conquest to regain independence.
- **Rebel (Attack Liege):** Capture a province from the Liege to regain independence. **Failure results in Immediate Elimination.**

§ 11.3 Player Elimination

A player is eliminated if they lose their last province while having no Daimyō on the board.

§ 12 Glossary

- **Blood Feud:** A permanent combat bonus (+1) granted to the victim of a betrayal.
- **Contested Province:** Occupied by multiple factions. Yields 0 Income.
- **Gekokujō:** The principle that weakness grants initiative. The player with the fewest provinces acts first.
- **Koku:** Standard currency unit (Rice/Gold).
- **Mandate Provinces:** Yamashiro (Kyoto), Settsu (Osaka), Sagami (Edo).
- **Stacking Limit:** 7 Units per player per province.
- **Upkeep:** The recurring cost of military readiness (1 Koku per 2 Bushi).

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Detailed Timing Structure

A. Round Sequence (The Cycle of the Year)

Phase 1a: Administration & Diplomacy (Spring)

1. **Collect Income:** All players simultaneously gain **3 Koku (Base) + 1 Koku per Controlled Province**.
2. **Pay Unit Maintenance:** All players simultaneously pay **1 Koku for every 2 Bushi** (rounded up). Daimyō are exempt. *Note: Skipped on Turn 1.*
3. **Determine Turn Order (Gekokujō):** Count provinces. The player with the fewest acts first. Tie-breakers: 1. Fewest Koku, 2. Fewest Units, 3. Alphabetical.
4. **Diplomacy:** In turn order, players may propose **Honor Pacts**.
 - Initiator pays 1 Koku.
 - Both parties pledge 2 Koku to the pool.
5. **Pact Dissolution:** Existing pacts may be dissolved via "The Ritual" (Coin/Empty Hand).

Phase 1b: Reinforcement (Summer)

In player order, each player performs all their purchasing actions:

1. **Recruit Bushi:** 1 Koku each. Place in provinces controlled at the *start* of this phase.
2. **Hire Ninja:** 3 Koku. Place in *any* province.
3. **Construct/Upgrade:** Build Castle (5 Koku) or Upgrade to Fortress (3 Koku).

Phase 2: Campaign (Autumn)

In player order, the active player completes their entire turn:

1. **Movement Step:**
 - Move any number of units (Bushi 2, Daimyō 3).
 - Movement halts upon entering enemy/contested territory.
 - Place **Battle Markers** where combat will occur.
 - Check Stacking Limit (Max 7) at end of movement.
2. **Combat Step:**
 - Resolve all marked battles sequentially (Active player chooses order).
 - See "*Combat Sequence*" below.
 - Claim **Province Cards** for any conquered territories immediately.

Phase 3: Winter (Attrition)

1. **Mountain Provisions:** All players simultaneously calculate costs.
 - Pay 1 Koku per Mountain Province controlled.
 - Pay 1 Koku per 3 Units located in Mountain Provinces.
2. **Bankruptcy Check:** Remove 2 Bushi for every 1 Koku of unpaid debt.
3. **Victory Check:** Check for **Dominance** or **Shōgun's Mandate**.

B. Combat Sequence (The Anatomy of Battle)

1. Preparation

- **Identify Forces:** Verify units in the contested province.
- **Hire Mercenaries:** Attacker may hire **Ronin** (1 Koku/Unit). Then, Defender may hire **Ronin**. *Max 1 Ronin per friendly Bushi.*

2. Sabotage (Ninja Phase)

- If a **Ninja** is present, the owner may declare a mission (e.g., "Sow Discord").
- Apply effects immediately (e.g., -1 Malus to enemy rolls).
- Remove Ninja from board.

3. The Engagement (Dice Roll)

- **Calculate Dice Pools:**
 - Bushi & Ronin: 1 Die each.
 - Daimyō: 3 Dice each.
- **Roll:** Attacker and Defender roll **simultaneously**.

4. Resolution

- **Determine Hits:** Check results against target numbers (Standard: Attack 5-6, Defense 6). Apply modifiers (§ 2.2).
- **Assign Casualties (Sequential):**
 - Attacker assigns total hits to Defender.
 - Defender assigns total hits to Attacker.
- **Remove Casualties (Simultaneous):** Both sides remove their own units to satisfy the assigned hits.
 - *Note:* Ronin are removed immediately after this step (Fleeting Loyalty).

5. Conclusion

- **Check Control:**
 - **Attacker Only:** Province Conquered. Take Province Card.
 - **Defender Only:** Defense Successful.
 - **Both/Neither:** Province becomes **Contested** (Neutral). Return Province Card to supply.