

Another boardgame player aid by

# Universal Head

Design That Works.

Download a huge range of popular boardgame rules summaries, reference sheets and player aids at [www.headlesshollow.com](http://www.headlesshollow.com)

**Universal Head • Design That Works • [www.universalhead.com](http://www.universalhead.com)**

These sheets are intended only for the personal use of existing owners of the game for additional reference. Universal Head makes no claim whatsoever to the rights of the publisher and copyright holder, and does not benefit financially from these player aids. Artwork from the original game is copyrighted by the publisher and used without permission. This PDF may not be re-posted online, sold or used in any way except for personal use.

Game: **NINJATO**  
Pub: **Z-Man Games (2011)**

Page 1: **Rules summary** front  
Page 2: **Rules summary** back  
Page 1: **Play Reference** front  
Page 2: **Play Reference** back

# v1.1

Jan 2012

Print on card (ensure you are printing at 100% scale) laminate and trim to size.

# NINJIATO

## Setup

Each player chooses a color and takes the **shuriken** and **wooden markers** matching his color.

Set the turn order for the first round: put one marker from each player in a container, then randomly draw them 1 by 1 and place them on the **Turn Order track** in the center of the board.

Players' other 2 markers are placed at the start of the **Honor track** at the top of the board.

Shuffle the **Guard cards** and the **Elite Guard cards** into separate facedown stacks. Draw and place 1 guard card faceup on each **house** as its **sentry**.

Take 2 and 4 value *Taira* (red) and 2 and 4 value *Minamoto* (blue) clan tokens and place them on different **Clan Houses**. Place the 6 value *Go-Shirakawa* (green) token on the remaining house. Remaining clan tokens go in a pile next to the board.

Mix up the **Treasure tokens** in the bag and place 3 treasures in each house, red side facedown. Discarded treasure is kept in a pile off the board. If you exhaust the treasure in the bag, put the discards back in.

Take the 3 *Hensojutsu* (Disguise) **Skill Tiles**, shuffle them, and place them in a small facedown stack next to the Sensei area. Shuffle the rest of the tiles and place them in a large facedown stack next to the *Hensojutsu* tiles. Draw a number of skill tiles equal to the number of players from this stack and place them faceup in the Sensei area.

Shuffle the **Envoy cards** and place 4 faceup on the Palace, next to the remaining cards in a facedown deck.

Shuffle the **Rumor cards** and place 4 faceup on the Pavilion, next to the remaining cards in a facedown deck.

Shuffle the **Dojo cards** and deal 4 to each player. Place 3 dojo cards faceup on the Dojo, next to the remaining cards in a facedown deck.

Rumor cards and Dojo cards are the only hidden player information in the game.

Place the white **round marker** on space 1 of the **Round Track**.

## Playing the Game

In turn order, **each player places 1 shuriken on a location** and immediately follows that location's rules. Once all players have placed 3 shuriken, the round is over. The game lasts 7 rounds.

### The Dojo

**Place a shuriken here and take dojo cards** in any combination from the faceup cards or the deck.

If you have no dojo cards, take 4. If you have 1 dojo card, take 3. If you have 2 or more dojo cards, take 2.

Then replace any faceup cards taken with new cards from the deck. If there are no more cards in the deck, shuffle the discards and start a new pile.

If you have over 7 dojo cards in hand, you must discard down to 7.

Always stack your shuriken on top of any previously placed shuriken. At the end of the round, the stack determines player order in the next round: the player with the topmost shuriken goes first, and so on down through the stack.

If a player placed more than 1 shuriken, only his top one counts.

### The Clan Houses

Invade houses to earn treasure. Each treasure is protected by a guard: the **sentry** is the faceup guard; the others will be surprises.

#### Strength or Stealth

To start your attack, **place a shuriken on the strength or stealth side of a house**.



**Strength:** you must play a dojo card that is a *higher* value than the guard. Ties do not win.



**Stealth:** you must play a dojo card that is a *lower* value than the guard. Ties do not win.

A 3 dojo card may be played like a normal dojo card. It may also be played along with another dojo card as a **kicker**—giving +1 or -1 to the card. You may play multiple kickers on the same dojo card.

**Elite** guards that are 2 guards must both be separately defeated.

All drawn guard cards are discarded after encounters except for beaten **elite** guards, which are kept for end of game scoring.

#### Defeating Guards

**Each time you defeat a guard, put a treasure on your shuriken.** Then decide whether to leave, or take on the next guard (and get another treasure). To take on the next guard, call *Banzai*.

If you leave, take all treasures from your shuriken. Remaining treasures are left in the house.

Treasures have a value of 2-5 **honor**. Gold's value is variable but it is the most valuable treasure. The plain side of a treasure token means it is protected by a normal guard, the red side means by an elite guard. As you defeat guards, take the plain treasures first, from least valuable on up, then the red treasures, from least valuable on up.

#### Calling Banzai

Calling *Banzai* tells another player to turn up another guard card. If you cannot defeat this guard, you fail and take only 1 treasure from your shuriken, discarding the rest.

If you defeat *all* guards in a house, take all of the treasure and replace the **clan honor token**.

#### Failing or Leaving

After resolving the treasure on your shuriken, add 1 treasure to the house, plain side up. Leave the faceup sentry on the house. The house may be invaded again this round by any player.

#### Alarm Guards



When an **alarm** guard is turned up, immediately draw 1 treasure from the bag and place it plain side up in the house. Then select the most valuable plain side up treasure in the house and flip it to the red side.

**Alarms are ignored on sentry guards.**

#### Changing Clan Control

The clan **controlling** a house changes when all guards there are defeated. Replace the house's **clan token** with any token of a *different* clan. The house is left empty of treasure until the end of the round; no one may place shuriken there.

## The Sensei

Place a shuriken here and select a skill of any style (snake, tiger, crane) by discarding the dojo card shown on the skill tile. Take the skill and place it faceup in front of you.

? means that you may discard *any* dojo card.

Once you learn a skill of a certain style, you do not have to discard a dojo card to buy more skills of that style.

You may use a skill only once per round (turn the tile facedown). If you learn the same skill twice, you may use each skill tile once per round.

## The Palace

Place a shuriken here to bribe one envoy by discarding the matching treasures. Immediately score the value of those treasures in honor.

Take the envoy and place it faceup in front of you.

When specific treasures are shown on an envoy, those treasures are required.

Other envoys may take various kinds of treasure and thus score varying honor.

Gold may be substituted as any treasure you choose, scoring as that treasure.

## The Pavilion

Place a shuriken here to spread one favorable rumor by discarding the matching treasures. Immediately score the value of those treasures in honor.

Take the rumor and place it facedown in front of you.

Some rumor cards may be bought with any treasure, some require specific treasure.

## Ending a Round

At the end of each round, do the following:

### 1. Move Player Order Markers

The Dojo shuriken stack determines the player order in the next round. The player with the topmost shuriken goes first, and so on down through the stack. Players who didn't place shuriken in the dojo do not change position relative to one another. Afterwards, players take back their shuriken.

### 2. Reset Skills

All players turn their skills tiles faceup.

### 3. Reset the Sensei

Discard any leftover faceup skills at the Sensei. Draw from the large stack skill tiles equal to the number of players and place them faceup.

Any skills left over in the large stack after round 4 are discarded. Round 5 on, draw and place one *Hensojutsu* (Disguise) skill tile faceup from the small stack.

### 4. Reset Cleared Houses

If a house has no treasures (all guards were defeated), draw and place 3 treasures plain side up on the house.

Then place a new guard on the house as the new sentry. If the sentry is an alarm guard, ignore the alarm (do not add an additional treasure to the house for that alarm).

### 5. Refill Palace and Pavilion

If there are less than 4 envoys in the Palace, draw faceup envoys until there are 4. Do the same for the rumors in the Pavilion.

### 6. Scoring Phases

Advance the round marker to the next round.


After rounds 3, 5, and 7, perform a scoring phase as shown below.

After round 7, the end of game bonus scoring follows the scoring phase.

## Scoring Phases

After the 3rd, 5th, and 7th rounds, there is a scoring phase.

For each clan, the first and second place players in **envoy influence** receive a reward. Each envoy in a clan counts as 1 influence in that clan. Ties are won by the player with the oldest envoy in that clan.

First, in player order, players with the *Hensojutsu* (Disguise) skill declare which envoy of theirs that they are targeting. Players may only choose envoys with the  icon.

Players are rewarded in the **clan order** shown on the round track. Reward first place for each clan in order, then second place for each clan in order.

The player with the most envoy influence in a clan has a choice—score the total honor on the clan's houses or get a free rumor card from the Pavilion.

No treasure is used or scored for a free rumor.

After each first place player chooses, the second place player gets whatever the first player left.

Rumors are not scored until the end of the game.

Refill the Pavilion with rumor cards after scoring phases.

## End of Game Bonus Scoring

After the last round ends, following the last scoring phase, complete the **end of game bonus scoring**.

### 1. Rumor Bonus Scoring

Most rumor cards act as a 'multiplier' for something else you collect—a full 'set' is 3.

If you have 1 rumor of a type, the multiplier is x1. If you have 2 rumors of the same type, the multiplier is x2. If you have 3 rumors of the same type, the multiplier is x4. If you collect more than 3 rumors of the same type, you're starting a new set.

### Dishonorable Opponents

*Dishonorable Opponents* cards have no multiplier.

If you are the only player with this type of rumor card, each card scores 6 honor. If 2 players have this type of card, each card scores 4 honor for its owner. If 3 or more players have this type of card, each card scores 2 honor for its owner.

### 2. Unused Treasure Bonus Scoring

You get 1 honor for each remaining treasure you have, no matter the type of treasure.

### 3. Defeated Elites Bonus Scoring

For each elite guard you defeated during the game, you receive 1 or 2 honor as indicated on the elite.

## Winning

The player with the most honor wins.

In the event of a tie, the player with the most envoys wins. If there is still a tie, the player with the oldest envoy (in any clan) wins.

# NINJATO

In turn order, **each player places 1 shuriken on a location** and follows that location's rules. Once all players have placed 3 shuriken, the round is over.

## The Dojo

**Take dojo cards** in any combination from the faceup cards or the deck.

No cards: take 4.

1 card: take 3.

2 or more cards: take 2.

Replace any faceup cards taken. Hand limit is 7.

## The Clan Houses

**Place a shuriken on the strength or stealth side of a house.**



**Strength:** you must play a dojo card that is a *higher* value than the guard.



**Stealth:** you must play a dojo card that is *lower* value than the guard.

Ties do not win. A 3 dojo card may be played as normal or as a **kicker** (+1 or -1 to another card played with it). You may play multiple kickers.

**Elite guards** that are 2 guards must both be separately defeated.

After encounters, normal guard cards are discarded. Keep elite guards for scoring.

**Each time you defeat a guard, put a treasure on your shuriken** (plain treasures first, then red treasures, from least valuable on up). Then leave, or call *Banzai*.

If you leave or fail, take all treasures from your shuriken. Add 1 treasure to the house, plain side up. Leave the faceup sentry. The house may be invaded again this round by any player.

**Call *Banzai*** and turn up another guard. If you cannot defeat this guard, you fail and take only 1 treasure from your shuriken, discarding the rest.



When an **alarm** guard appears, draw and place 1 treasure plain side up. Then flip the most valuable plain side up treasure to its red side. **Alarms are ignored on sentry guards.**

If you defeat *all* guards in a house, take all of the treasure and replace the **clan honor token** with any token of a *different* clan.

**Failing or Leaving** After resolving the treasure on your shuriken, add 1 treasure to the house, plain side up. Leave the faceup sentry. The house may be invaded again this round by any player.

## The Sensei

**Select a skill** by discarding the dojo card shown. **?** means that you may discard *any* dojo card.

Once you learn a skill of a style, you do not have to discard a card to buy more skills of that style.

**You may use a skill only once per round** (turn the tile facedown). If you learn the same skill twice, you may use each skill tile once per round.

## The Palace

**Bribe 1 envoy** by discarding the matching treasures; you earn honor from the treasure.

**Gold** may be substituted as any treasure you choose, scoring as that treasure.

## The Pavilion

**Spread 1 favorable rumor** by discarding 1 or 2 treasure as indicated; you earn honor from the treasure.

## Ending a Round

**At the end of each round:**

- 1. Move Player Order Markers** The Dojo shuriken stack determines player order in the next round.
- 2. Reset Skills** Turn all skills tiles faceup.
- 3. Reset the Sensei** Discard any faceup skills. Place faceup tiles from the large stack equal to the number of players.

After round 4, discard any skills left in the large stack. Round 5 on, draw and place 1 *Hensojutsu* (Disguise) skill tile faceup from the small stack.

**4. Reset Cleared Houses** Houses with no treasures receive 3 new treasures plain side up. Place a new guard on the house as sentry.

**5. Refill Palace and Pavilion** If there are less than 4 envoys in the Palace, draw faceup envoys until there are 4. Do the same for the rumors in the Pavilion.

**6. Scoring Phases** Advance the round marker.

## Scoring and Winning

**After rounds 3, 5, and 7**, there is a scoring phase.

**After round 7**, end of game bonus scoring follows the scoring phase.

**At the end, the player with the most honor wins.**

# Skill Tiles



-2 to a dojo card.



+1 or a -1 to a dojo card.



+2 to a dojo card.



Changes the value of a played dojo card to 0.



Acts as if you played a 2 or a 4 dojo card.



Changes the value of a played dojo card to 6.



Swaps 1 treasure on your shuriken for any treasure in the house.



Flip any skill faceup except *Henojutsu*. The flipped skill may be re-used this round.



Switches your attack from stealth to strength, or vice versa. Can played after a guard card is revealed. The change holds for the rest of the guards.



Gain 1 additional influence from one of your bribed envoys, who must have the mask symbol. If you have more than one *Henojutsu* skill, you must choose different envoys.