

Mysteries

of the

Yōkai 
~ 妖怪の謎 ~



INTRODUCTORY BOOK

Mysteries of the Yōkai



~ 妖怪の謎 ~

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What is Mysteries of the Yōkai?

Mysteries of the Yōkai is a Role Playing Game set in mythical classic Japan. As a player, you will explore a world where the supernatural has begun to overlap with the real world. Investigate hauntings, negotiate peace between humans and *tengu*, or fight to defeat violent monsters.

Mysteries of the Yōkai uses the Tide and Morale system to resolve conflicts of all kinds. Players are not limited to a specific set of actions or attacks; any choice they make can affect the outcome of battles, investigations, debates or exorcisms.

What is a Role Playing Game?

Role Playing Games(RPGs) are a form of cooperative gaming. One of the players takes the role of the Game Master(GM), who helps guide the story and arbitrates the rules, while the remaining players create Characters that they act as inside the world of the game.

What is this Book?

This Introductory Book is meant to give a short look at how the core rules work in Mysteries of the Yōkai. If you have never played an RPG before, this book explains the basics of rolling dice to resolve actions, taking actions with your Characters, and resolving a combat using the Conflict rules. For players that have experience with other RPGs, this book shows some of the differences between other systems, the most notable of these being that Mysteries of the Yōkai doesn't use individual health or "hit points" for each character.

Example Scenario - Pride of the Mountain Oni

Most RPGs are played in sessions that last a few hours, usually an afternoon or evening. These sessions often explore short stories that the Player Characters (PCs) are involved in, much like an episode of a television show or a chapter in a book. These sessions can stand alone adventures, or combined with previous and following sessions to create a story campaign.

The rules for Mysteries of the Yōkai are explained in the following sections using a conflict that could have happened in the course of a standard session. "The Story So Far..." explains how the Characters Hideki and Yukano have ended up in a battle with the oni opponent in the conflict.

The Story So Far...

The Bureau of Supernatural Affairs has a long and varied history, but in this age of increasing supernatural occurrences, most people only know its current face; that of government agents who solve problems that are outside the abilities of most of Japan's citizen.

Hideki of the Kazato clan and Yukano of the Myaku shrine are two veteran Bureau agents that set out to escape the bonds of their respective lives and help those in need. Hideki sought to establish his own name outside of the political fame and power of his family, while Yukano wished to apply her skills in protective magics and the bow in a setting less restrained and delicate than her shrine.

On their current adventure, Hideki and Yukano were approached by the inhabitants of a town suffering from a strange illness that traditional medicine and magic could not find a cure for. If a group of players had played this story in a game of Mysteries of the Yōkai, one player would have acted as the Game Master, while two others took on the roles of Hideki and Yukano. The Game Master would play the NPCs from the town; perhaps a

leader or elder may have approached Hideki and Yukano. A scene between the PCs and NPCs would end with the two Bureau Agents learning about the town and traveling there to help.

The next scene would probably have been longer, and could even fill its own session, depending on the actions of the players. During this time, Hideki and Yukano could see the results of the illness for themselves, question the people of the town, and search for additional clues.

Game Masters set up the world and include many options for the players to explore. For this example story, the PCs eventually met an eccentric Seer that gave them answers in the form of riddles. The agents were told to “Seek out the only snow among red mud in the savage mountain”. After exploring the mountain near the town, they encountered a tribe of oni, all of which had red hair except their leader, who possessed an almost otherworldly pure-white head of hair. Now the agents must decide how they will obtain this oni’s hair, the final ingredient in the cure for the disease.

Role Playing Games allow players to approach situations in any way they can imagine. Hideki and Yukano could have reasoned with the oni or struck a deal in order to obtain its hair. In order to introduce the basics of combat, this book assumes the PCs will need to fight the oni, but the main Mysteries of the Yōkai book shows how the same rules can be used to resolve any kind of conflict, including the above mentioned discussion or negotiation.

Conflict in Mysteries of the Yōkai

There are unlimited sources of conflict waiting for players to confront. Some may be physical confrontations; dangerous monsters, evil humans, and even nature itself may attempt to harm them. Battles of words and idea can be just as dangerous; political intrigue can shape the world far beyond the confines of a battlefield. Earning the respect of a guardian kami through grueling trials could

provide the PCs with a long term ally. And not all conflicts need to be life or death, drama can come from an epic ramen eating contest or a game of Go against a wise yōkai.

As the players explore the game world and the story the GM has prepared, they will describe their actions and make choices for what their characters will do. In many cases, this will be as simple as telling the GM and other players what their Character is doing, but in cases where the action is not guaranteed to succeed, or is opposed by another character, the GM can use the game rules to resolve the actions with an element of uncertainty. This adds the kind of dramatic tension that makes the best stories so fascinating. It can get boring if the heroes always succeed and are never in any danger.

Character Abilities

All Characters in the game are defined by a set of Abilities that determine what they can do, and how well they do it. When a player creates their Character, they receive a resource called Potential which can be used to purchase and upgrade Abilities.

Attributes

Individual Characters will have a variety of Abilities based on who and what that Character is, but all Characters have the nine Abilities called Attributes. These measure the qualities that are universal to all characters, whether they are human, yōkai, or even animals. Attributes are divided into three domains; Body, Mind, and Soul. Each domain has three Attributes.

- ❖ **Body: Strength, Endurance and Agility**
- ❖ **Mind: Intelligence, Discipline, and Perception.**
- ❖ **Soul: Zeal, Resolve, and Insight.**

Taking Actions - Checks and Attribute Checks

Whenever a player wants to take an action that the GM feels shouldn't automatically succeed (either because it may be difficult, or if the chance to fail provides some meaningful benefit to the game's story), the player will make a Check for their Character's action.

Checks

A Check is made by rolling 3 dice and adding any appropriate Modifiers to generate a final Check Result. This number will be compared to another number; another Check Result if the Character is opposing someone else, or a Difficulty Number if the are not.



Making an Attribute Check

Every character has a value for each Attribute that modifies any Checks they make with that Attribute. These values are increased using Potential when creating a character, or between adventures. Whenever a Character is required to make an Attribute Check, they roll 3D6 and add their Attribute Modifier.

Dice

Mysteries of the Yōkai uses standard six-sided dice. These are referred to as 'D6' in the rules. Multiple dice are prefixed with a number, for example '3D6' means 'three six-sided dice'. Modifiers may sometimes be listed with the dice, such as '3D6 + 5', which means 'roll 3 dice, and add 5 to the total'.

Sometimes a rule will require the roll of a 'D3'. In these cases, roll a D6 and halve the result, rounding up.

| Number showing on D6 | D3 Result |
|----------------------|-----------|
| 1-2 | 1 |
| 3-4 | 2 |
| 5-6 | 3 |

Example: Strength Check

Hideki has a +4 Strength Modifier. Whenever Hideki makes a Strength Check, the player rolls 3D6 and adds +4 to the result.

If the dice roll resulted in '2', '3', and '5', the result of the Check would be 2+3+5 (dice) + 4 (modifier) for a total of 14.

Skill Checks

Skills are another type of Ability that Characters can possess. Unlike Attributes, Skills must be chosen individually for each character. Each Skill has an Associated Attribute that defines how the Character performs that skill. This can vary between Characters; a brutal warrior may use the Fighting Skill with Strength, while an elegant one could use Agility, and a crafty one may even use Intelligence.

When a Character makes a Skill Check, they roll 3D6 and add both the Skill Modifier and the Modifier of the Associated Attribute.

Example: Fighting Check

Hideki has a +3 Fighting Modifier, and has Associated Strength with that Skill. Whenever Hideki makes a Fighting Check, the player rolls 3D6 and adds a total of +7 (+3 Skill and +4 Attribute) to the result.

If the dice roll resulted in '1', '1', and '4', the result of the Check would be 1+1+4 (dice) + 7(modifier) for a total of 13.

Contested Checks Example - Archery Challenge

Before approaching the Oni, Hideki and Yukano decide to practice their martial skills, in case the encounter results in a battle. Yukano mastered the Hama Yumi, the ceremonial bow, through years of dedicated practice. Hideki's pride as a Samurai though, encourages him to face her in a test of archery skill. The GM decides to have both players make an Opposed Fighting Check to hit a target.

- ❖ Hideki has a total Modifier of +7, as noted above.
- ❖ Yukano has a +3 Modifier to her Fighting Skill, associated with Agility, with which she has a +3 Modifier, giving her a total of +6 to her Fighting Check.

Situational Modifiers

Besides the Modifiers that are automatically included with Abilities, the GM will often include Situational Modifiers based on what is happening in the story. Hideki is slightly better at Fighting in general, but Yukano is a master of the bow specifically. In fact, Yukano has a Signature Attack (explained later in this book) that uses a Bow, while Hideki usually fights with his blades. In this case, the GM gives Yukano an additional +3 modifier. This brings the total Modifier to Yukano's roll to +9.

Hideki vs Yukano - The Result

Hideki's player rolls 3D6 and gets '2', '3', and '3'. With his +7 Modifier, the total for his Check is 15.

Yukano's player rolls 3D6 and gets '1', '4', and '6'. With her +9 Modifier, the total for her Check is 20.

Yukano has won the Opposed Check. The GM will describe the outcome of Checks, based on how the Characters described their actions before making their Rolls.

Margin of Success

When a Character succeeds at a Check, they receive a bonus for every 3 points the Check exceeds the number needed for success. In the previous example, Yukano would receive a bonus because her 20 exceeded Hideki's 15 by 3 or more. The exact results of the Margin of Success will vary the kind of action being taken. For example, actions that damage an opponent do an additional +1 damage for every Margin of Success.

The Mysteries of the Yōkai Rulebook contains expanded and additional rules for using Abilities and making Checks, including Extended Checks, which are useful when the GM doesn't want to determine the outcome of an important action with a single roll of the dice, but doesn't want to use the full Conflict Rules, which often take more time to resolve.

Conflict Tracker

When a scene calls for more in-depth resolution than just a Check, the GM can use the Conflict Tracker (included at the back of this booklet). The Tracker divides the battle into the Player Side and the Enemy Side. This is an abstraction that allows the players to take any action they wish in order to either help their side or hamper the Enemy side.

Conflict - Rounds and Turns

Conflicts are divided into Rounds, during which each Character gets one Turn to take actions in. There are many kind of Actions; some can be used to inflict Damage on the opposing side, or heal the Character's own side, while others may provide benefits to allies or move the character's position in the conflict. The Mysteries of the Yōkai rulebook contains the full list of actions with the corresponding rules, but this booklet includes some of the more common ones that a player is likely to take.

Attack and Defend Actions

During a Character's Turn, they may take up to one Action that is defined as a Full Action. These kinds of Actions take a lot of time and effort, and each Round in a Conflict represents a short slice of the overall battle. The most common kind of Full Action is an Attack Action.

Attack Actions are made by choosing a target Character on the opposing side, and making an Opposed Check against them. The exact rules and modifiers for this Check will depend on the specific Attack Action, and there are many to choose from. The target of the Attack will make a Defend Action that determines what kind of Check they will make.

Improvised Attacks - The Catch-All Action

There are many Abilities that players can purchase with Potential that give their Character an Attack Action with a specific set of rules. However, Mysteries of the Yōkai encourages players to take any actions during a Conflict Scene that make sense to the story, regardless of whether they have a set of stats in the book. A player can describe any action they can imagine to the GM, if the GM agrees that the action either helps the Player Side or hurts the Enemy Side, it counts as an Improvised Attack. An Improvised Attack is made with a Check based on how the action is described. Usually this will be either a Skill Check or an Attribute Check. The Defend Actions that are allowed will also be determined by the description of the action, but always include the Skill or Attribute used in the Attack.

Improvised Attacks do a base damage of 1 by default (see Tide Damage, later in this booklet), but can often do more due to Margin of Success.

Improvised Attack Example

Previously in their Adventures, Yukano and Hideki were called before a local lord for interfering in the affairs of his land. The two Bureau Agents had taught a village of peasants how to fight off a group of invading yōkai, and the lord was angry that they had made his vassals dangerous. While Hideki could have drawn his sword to fight the lord directly, Hideki's Player chose to avoid a fight and talk their way out.

In a case like this, Hideki's player could tell the GM they wished to make an Improvised Attack against the lord. The Player describes how Hideki argues that having trained peasants is better than the village being destroyed and losing the tax money they pay. In addition, Hideki argues that the lord can now draw from this village when conscripting soldiers.

The GM agrees that this argument works as an attack because it attempts to convince the lord to let the agents go free. Hideki makes a Leadership Skill Check to represent his arguments on the responsibilities of a lord, and the benefits of the village, and the GM makes an Opposed Leadership Check for the lord.

Signature Attacks

Signature Attacks are a category of Abilities that allow players to design their own Attack Actions. By choosing a combination of damage, range, Focus Point and Ki Costs (described later), and then choosing the Skills and Attributes used by these Attacks, players can create any kind of Ability they want, from weapon skills, martial arts, and curses, to an enchanted song that heals or an illusion that terrifies a foe into retreating.

The Mysteries of the Yōkai rulebook contains the full rules for creating Signature Attacks, as well as a collection of pre-made attacks that represent common ones that most Characters could use.

Using Signature Attacks

When a Character uses a Signature Attack, they make a Check using the Associated Skill and Attribute. The target may Defend with a Check that uses any one of the Skills listed under Defenses. If the target does not have any of the listed Skills, they may Defend using one of the listed Defense Attributes.

Signature Attack Example - Oni's Sleep Magic

The oni leader that the Bureau Agents will be facing possess the ability to cast a spell that makes the target drowsy, and may even force them to fall asleep. It has the profile listed below.

When the oni uses the Sleep Magic attack, it rolls 3D6 and adds +4 to the Roll. A target may defend with ZEA, END, Ki Attunement, Medicine, or Survival.

Hideki does not possess any of the three listed Skills, so he must defend with either ZEA or END when he is attacked. Hideki's player will most likely defend with END, as it is the higher stat. Hideki rolls 3D6 and adds his Endurance Modifier to get his Defend Check total result.

Yukano possess the Ki Attunement Skill, so she rolls 3D6+6 (+2 Ki Attunement, +4 ZEA) to generate her Defend Check total result.

| Signature Attack: Sleep Magic | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----|--------------------------|--------------------------|---------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------|--------------------------|
| Damage: | D3, Mind D6 FP Drain | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Associated Skill: | Ki Attunement(+3) ZEA(+1) +4 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Range: | 1 FP: 1 Ki: 3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Defenses: | <table border="1"> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>ZEA</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>END</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Ki Att.</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Medic</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Survival</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | ZEA | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | END | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Ki Att. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Medic | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Survival | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | ZEA | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | END | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Ki Att. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Medic | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Survival | <input type="checkbox"/> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Tide Damage

When an Attack Check succeeds, it inflicts Tide damage to the opposing side. Mysteries of the Yōkai does not use individual health or Hit Points for each Character; instead any damage inflicted against a target pushes the Tide Marker against that Character's side. When the marker reaches a breakpoint (usually '7', but this can change based on the conflict), the Tide Bar 'breaks'. When this happens, the side it was pushed against takes one point of Morale Damage, and the Tide Marker resets to 0.

Most Characters possess some form of protection. Armor is used to reduce Tide Damage, from the unyielding metal plates of Samurai armor that turn aside weapons, to the humble hachimaki that gives the wearer the fortitude to endure mental trials. Each item or ability that provides Armor lists the type and amount of damage it reduces. For example, "Body 2" armor would reduce any Body damage by 2 points.

Morale Damage

Morale Damage is used to force Characters out of a conflict. Every Character has a Morale Threshold value. When the Morale Damage inflicted against a Character's side is higher than that Character's Morale Threshold, the Character must immediately leave the battle (exactly how this happens is based on the current story of the scene) and cannot act in the conflict again unless they Rally.

At the end of a Round, if the Tide Marker is pushed against a side, the Tide Bar automatically breaks and inflicts one Morale Damage on the side it was pushed against.

Rally

Each Character also has a Rally Value. If a Character has been forced out of battle, they may return if their side has inflicted at least as much Morale Damage to the opposing side as their Rally Value. In addition, if the Character's side has already inflicted this much damage, they are not forced out of the conflict when their side's damage exceeds their Morale Threshold.

Damage Example

After two Rounds in battle, Hideki and Yukano have inflicted one point of Morale Damage on the oni, and the oni has inflicted one point of Morale Damage against the Player side.

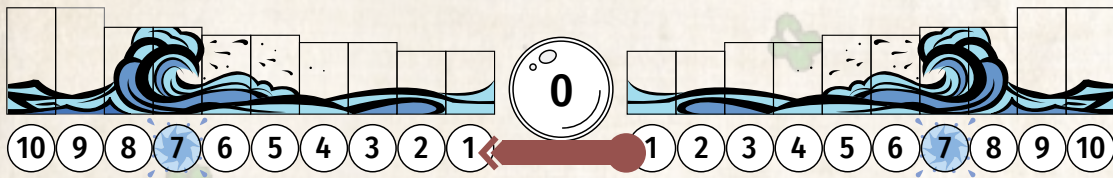
Currently, there is 5 Tide Damage inflicted against the PCs (the Tide Marker is on '5' on the PC side). The oni takes an Attack Action, and inflicts 4 damage to the PCs, breaking the Tide Bar and inflicting one more Morale Damage to the Player side. This forces Yukano out of the conflict until 2 points of Morale Damage (her Rally value) are inflicted on the oni. Hopefully Hideki can inflict a point of Morale Damage and help inspire her return quickly.



Using the Conflict Tracker

The Conflict Tracker is a useful visual tool for tracking Tide and Morale damage during a Conflict. You can place a marker on the Tide Bar, and move it to the left and right as each side takes damage. Any damage inflicted on the PCs moves the marker towards that side by a number of spaces equal to the damage inflicted, and damage done to the Enemy side moves it in the opposite direction.

The marker begins on the '0' space at the start of a new round, is reset to '0' whenever the bar breaks, and must pass through the '0' as part of normal damage. For example, if the marker is currently on the '1' space against the players, and the players inflict two damage, the marker is moved two spaces towards the Enemy side, moving through the '0' and to the '1' of the Enemy side.



Focus Points

Actions take time and effort; this is represented by a Focus Point (FP) cost. Focus Points are an abstraction of both of these things, as well as a balancing factor. For example, an Action may have a high Focus Point cost if it takes an extended amount of time to perform, if it greatly tires the user, or if it inflicts a lot of damage. Characters receive FP equal to their Focus Refresh stat each Round in a Conflict, and start a new Conflict with 3 times their Focus Refresh. These FP are spent to take Actions.

Specific Actions will list their FP cost with their rules. If an action doesn't have individual rules (such as an Improvised Attack, or a Defend action against a Signature Attack), it costs 1 FP.

Ki

Ki is an energy that flows through all things in the universe. Characters can use Ki to perform special actions that include a Ki cost. Unlike Focus Points, Ki is unlimited, but using too much can be dangerous. Each Character has a Ki Pool that is empty at the beginning of a Conflict. Taking an Action with a Ki cost adds that many Ki Points to the Character's Ki Pool. If a Character ever has more Ki in their Pool than their Ki Limit stat, they receive a -1 Modifier to any Checks they make for each point over their Ki Limit. Characters reduce their Ki Pool by D6 Ki at the end of each Round.

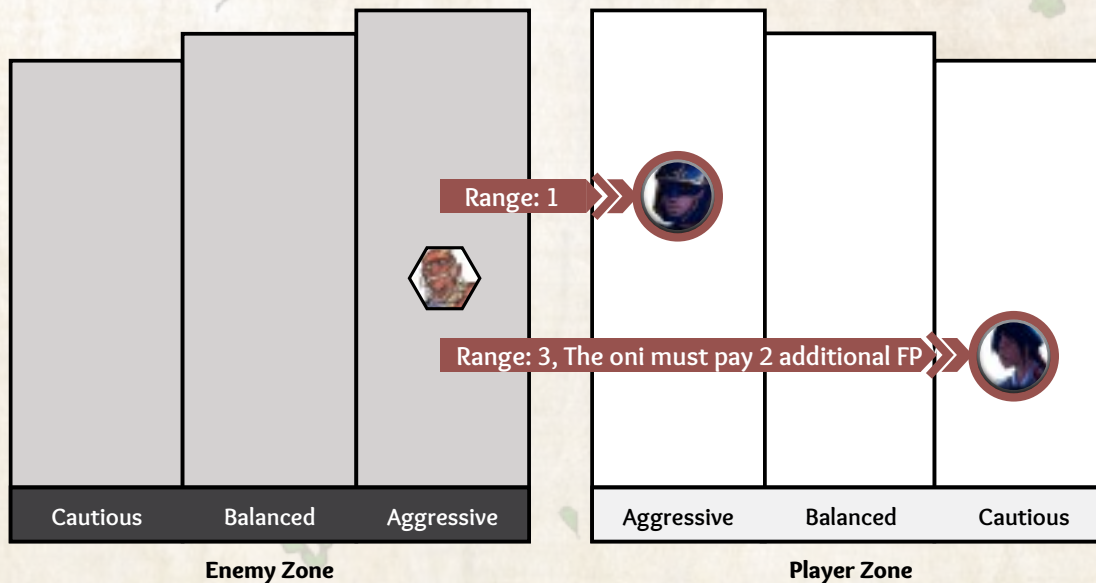
Zones and Range - Position in Conflicts

Like damage and character health, the position of a Character in a Conflict is an abstraction. It doesn't matter where the Character is physically located on the battlefield instead, the game tracks the Character's involvement in the battle. A Conflict is divided into 6 Zones, 3 per Side:

- ❖ **Aggressive:** The Character is actively engaging in the conflict, making it easier for them to attack and be attacked.
- ❖ **Balanced:** The Character is taking an approach to the battle that is somewhere between the two extremes.
- ❖ **Cautious:** The Character is acting in a way that prevents them from being focused on by opponents. It is harder to attack or be attacked while in this Zone.

Each Attack action has a range. Characters may attack any target within range with no penalty, but must pay an additional Focus Point for each additional Zone beyond their Range.

For example, if the oni's attack has Range: 1, it would have to pay an additional 2 FP if Yukano was in the Cautious Zone.



Example Conflict

The following pages give an example of a Conflict. In this case, Hideki and Yukano have been forced to battle the oni, though this is not always the case (see “Role Playing with a Game Master”, later in this booklet). A summary of each Character's stats can be found at the end of the book, along with the game trackers.

Start of Conflict

At the beginning of a Conflict, each Character receives a number of Focus Points equal to three times their Focus Refresh Stat. Both Hideki and Yukano have a Focus Refresh of 3, so they begin with 9 Focus Points, while the oni has a Focus Refresh of 4 and begins with 12 Focus Points.

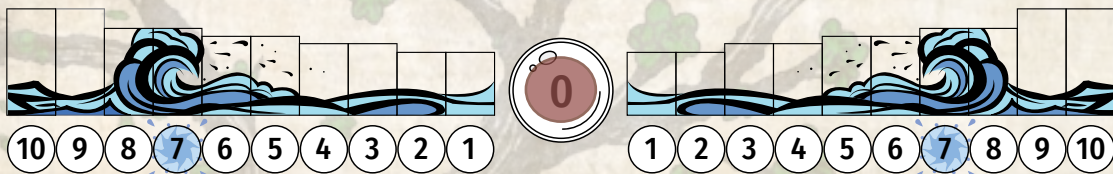


(The Focus Tracker can be used to mark how many remaining FP each Character has.)

Characters begin with empty Ki Pools. The Ki Tracker can be used in the same way as the Focus Tracker, but instead add to the number in a Character's Pool when they use Attacks with a Ki Cost.

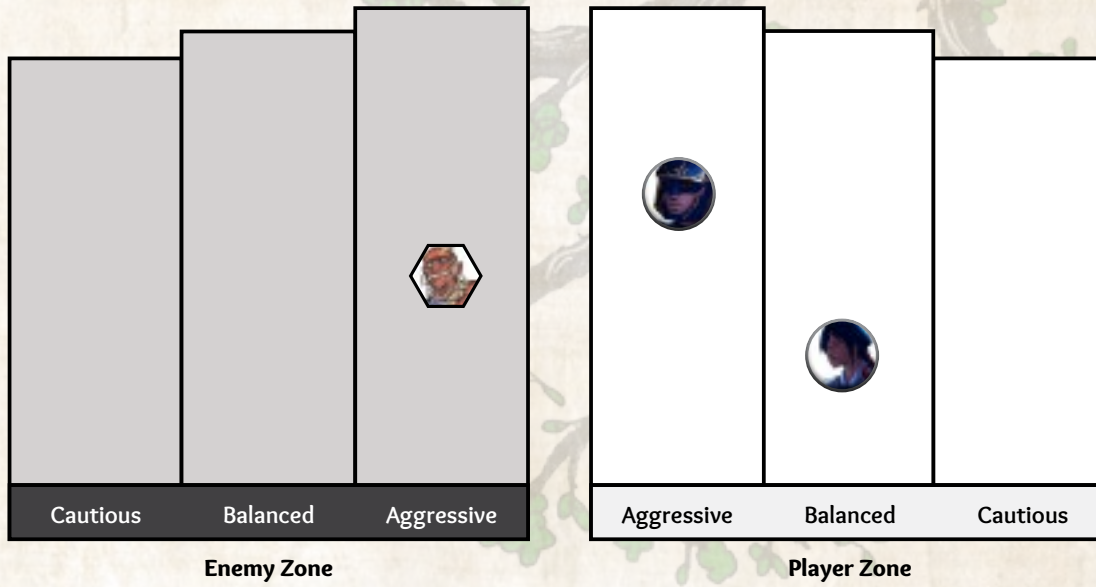


The Tide Marker begins on the '0' space, and no Morale Damage has been inflicted by either side.



(Place a token or other marker on the '0' space, and move it against the corresponding Side whenever Tide Damage is inflicted by Attacks.)

Hideki has moved in close to the oni to engage in melee combat, so he begins in the Aggressive Zone, as does the oni. Yukano has stepped back in order to use her bow, so she begins in the Balanced Zone.



Hideki's Action

Hideki takes the first Turn of the Round. Hideki's player decides to use his Blade Mastery Signature Attack against the Oni. It has a Range of 1; because both Hideki and the oni are in the Aggressive Zone, the oni is within range and Hideki does not need to pay any additional FP.

The Attack uses Fighting Skill, which has a total Modifier of +6 for the Skill and his STR Attribute. Hideki will roll 3D6 and add 6 for his Attack Check.

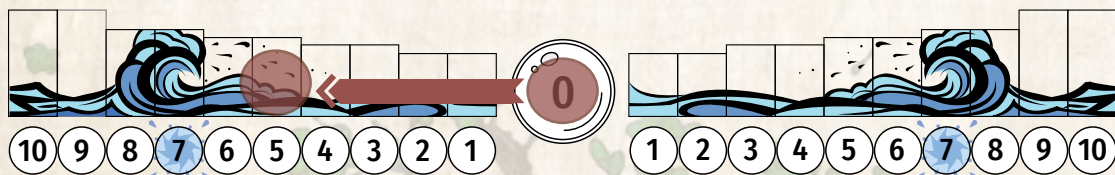
The Attack has the following for allowed Defenses: STR, AGI, Athletics, Evaluate, Fighting. The oni decides to defend with Fighting, and has a total Modifier of +6 (+3 for Fighting and +3 for STR). It will also roll 3D6 and add 6 for its Defend Check.

Hideki rolls '4', '6', and '6', for a total of 22.

The oni rolls '2', '3', and '4', for a total of 15.

Hideki's Attack Check is higher than the oni's Defend Check, so the Attack succeeds. In addition, because it succeeded by more than 3 points, it will do an additional 1 damage for each MoS ($22 - 15 = 7$, or 2 Margin of Success).

Hideki's Blade Mastery lists its damage as D3+2 Body damage, so Hideki rolls a D6 and halves the result (the process for rolling a D3). The die shows a '5', so the Attack does 4 (3 on the die, +2 additional) Body Damage. Since the oni has 2 Body Armor, the damage is reduced to 3, and then finally increased by the Margin of Success bonus for a total of 5 damage. The Tide Marker is moved 5 spaces against the Enemy Side.



Focus Points

Hideki's Signature Attack has a Focus Point cost of 1, so after paying for the Attack he has 8 FP remaining.

The oni paid 1 FP to Defend, so its total is reduced to 11.



Oni's Turn

Realizing that Hideki is his equal (or better) in melee combat, the oni decides to use its Sleep Magic Signature Attack against the samurai.

Sleep Magic uses Ki Attunement, so the oni's Check will be $3D6 + 4$ (its Ki Attunement + ZEA modifiers). Hideki does not have the Ki Attunement, Medicine or Survival skills, so he must defend with only an Attribute, and chooses END, which will modify his roll by +3.

The oni rolls '3', '5', and '5', for a total of 17.

Hideki rolls '2', '4', and '6', for a total of 15.

The Attack is successful. Because it did not result in 3 or more higher than the Defend Check, there is no Margin of Success.

Focus Point Drain

The Sleep Magic Signature Attack does D3 Mind Damage, but also does D6 Focus Point Drain. This additional effect removes the total rolled for it from the target's current Focus Points, and is affected by Armor and Margin of Success in the same way as Tide Damage.

The oni rolls a D3 for Tide Damage. The die result is a '2', so the Damage is 1. Since Damage cannot be reduced below 1, Hideki's Armor does nothing, and the Player Side takes 1 Tide Damage.

The oni also rolls a D6 for the FP drain and gets a '5'. Hideki reduces that value by 1 for his Mind Armor, and then loses 4 Focus Points.

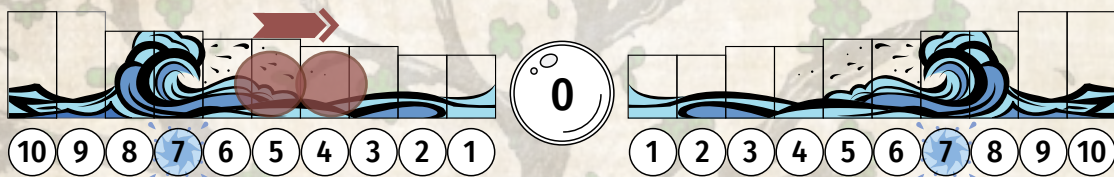
Spending Ki

Sleep Magic costs 3 Ki to use. The oni adds 3 Ki to its Ki Pool. The oni has a Ki Limit of 12, and so is currently in no danger of receiving penalties do to overuse of Ki.



The overall results of the oni's turn are

- ❖ The oni spent 1 FP to Attack, reducing it to 10 remaining FP.
- ❖ Hideki spent 1 FP to Defend, and had an additional 4 Drained, reducing his total to 4 Focus Points.
- ❖ The oni has 3 Ki in its Ki Pool
- ❖ The Player Side took 1 Tide Damage, so the marker is moved 1 towards that side, from the Enemy 5, to the Enemy 4.



Yukano's Turn

Because the Tide Bar automatically breaks at the end of a Round if it is not on 0, Yukano does not need to inflict any damage during her Turn. Even if she breaks the bar with her attack, it will reset to 0 and stay there since no other Characters remain to act this turn. Because of this, she chooses to use her Sealing Tags Signature Attack, which also inflicts Ki Poison

Ki Poison

Attacks that inflict Ki Poison add the total rolled for that part of the Attack to the target's Ki Pool. Like Focus Drain, Ki Poison is affected by Armor and Margin of Success.

Yukano rolls a total of 16 for her Attack, and the oni also rolls a 12. Yukano's Attack succeeds, and will inflict an additional 1 damage and Ki Poison due to MoS.

Since the damage for Sealing Tags is 1, there is no need for Yukano to roll any dice for the Tide Damage part of the attack. The Ki Poison Damage is D6+1, which results in a total of 5 after Yukano rolls.

The Tide Damage is not reduced by Armor because it is already at the minimum of 1, and then is increased by MoS for a total of 2 Tide Damage. The Ki Poison is reduced by 1 for the oni's Soul Armor, and then increased by 1 for MoS, and a total of 6 Ki is added to the oni's Ki Pool.

Both Yukano and the oni spent one FP for their Actions. Yukano spent 3 Ki to use her Attack, and the oni's Ki Pool is increased by 5 as a result of the Attack.

End of Round

At the end of the Round, the Tide Bar breaks because it is pushed against the oni. One point of Morale Damage is inflicted against the Enemy Side, and the Tide Marker is reset to 0.

Characters with Ki in their Pool automatically release D6 points of Ki at the end of a Round. If you plan to continue the battle, roll a D6 for Yukano and another for the oni and remove the result from their respective Pools. This step is important for Characters that use a lot of Ki based Attacks as it prevents them from receiving penalties from exceeding their Ki Limit.

Continuing the Conflict

You can continue the Conflict from this point on using the included Character stats at the back of the booklet. The Conflict ends when one side has taken more Morale Damage than that side's highest Morale Threshold. In this case, either side will lose if it receives 3 Morale Damage.

Because the oni is outnumbered, the PCs have an advantage in being able to inflict twice as much damage, and having more FP to spend. If you want a harder challenge, try fighting the Conflict by allowing the oni to have two Turns in the Round. For an even greater challenge, include a second oni with it's own FP and Ki.

Role Playing Games with a Game Master

The previous section of this booklet included a small look at the core rules for resolving Conflicts in *Mysteries of the Yōkai*, but there is a lot more to RPGs than just rolling dice to inflict damage on opponents.

Most RPGs have one player take the role of Game Master, who arbitrates the rules, and usually creates a lot of the story. They also play all of the Non-Player Characters (NPCs). This means that the other characters in the world are not just a collection of stats that determine what dice are rolled, but can interact with the Players, allowing both sides to act and react in a natural way.

If you want, you can try resolving the story between the Bureau Agents and the oni without a conflict. Have two players each take on the role of either Hideki or Yukano, and another player act as the oni in the role of Game Master.

This discussion can be played out in any way that works best for the group. If the players make compelling arguments, the oni may agree to give up its hair with no conflict at all. Because some players are not as eloquent or experienced in discussion as their Characters, the GM can allow players to describe what their Characters are trying to say and do overall, without needing word for word dialogue.

If the GM isn't completely convinced the oni would agree, they can call for a Skill Check to resolve the story objectively. For example, Hideki may make an argument that the oni should help the village in order to ally its own tribe with them. In this case, the GM could call for an Opposed Leadership Check between Hideki and the oni.

A GM may also wish to resolve the discussion with more than just a single dice roll, in order to keep an import scene from being dictated by the luck of one roll. A full Conflict could be fought with each side only using actions that involved talking or making offers. If the GM didn't want to spend the time for a full Conflict (which can often take an hour or more), they could use the rules for an Extended Check. Extended Checks are explained fully in the main *Mysteries of the Yōkai* book, but they are essentially a Conflict that ends as soon as either side inflicts 1 point of Morale Damage. In this case, Yukano and Hideki would most likely be making Improvised Attacks that modeled their offers and arguments to the oni, while it would do the same for its counter-arguments or rejections. In these cases, most of the Attacks would do only a couple points of Damage, with Margin of Success being an important part of winning. Because the MoS comes from higher totals, this emphasizes applying one's skills and specialties, more than high printed damage values on Signature Attacks. For these kinds of Conflicts, the GM is encouraged to give Situational Modifiers when players have good ideas or role play in a way that makes everyone at the table enjoy the story. These modifiers will increase the MoS damage, rewarding players who help the GM develop the story.

The World of Mysteries of the Yōkai

A World On The Edge of Change

Ancient Japan faces a critical turning point. A grand ritual by the previous Emperor has gone awry. What was meant to unite the world of man and the realm of the spirit has instead created a fractured overlap, and the physical world is open to all manner of spirits and creatures; the yōkai.

The current Emperor, lost at birth and now returned to claim the throne, hopes to unite the two worlds through understanding and common goals. But those who follow the old ways are not so ready to cast off their superstitions and cowardice, and they oppose the young Emperor and his Bureau of Supernatural Affairs. They point to the worst examples of the yōkai's presence; monsters who destroy all they come across, magic that can allow a single onmyo to defeat a dozen samurai, and the pitiful grudges of lingering spirits who are unable to move on from this world.

Humanity still dominates the world, but now it is a world filled with oni and tengu, powerful masters of ki who can perform magical miracles, and even doors to places of power, places that are not of this world. Onto this stage step your Characters. How will you face the challenges of this new world? Will you turn your blade against those who threaten the innocent and helpless (whether they are yōkai or human)? Can you help negotiate peace when the two worlds overlap and tempers flare? Will your skills allow you to find the truth hiding in the darkness before it's too late?

A World of Heroes

There are uncountable threats in this new world, but fortunately there are even more ways for heroes to rise and push back the danger with their light. The Bureau of Supernatural Affairs organizes and supplies noble wanderers, asking in return only that they follow their vows to help others.

Ki flows through the land and its people. In a mountain monastery, an ascetic monk contemplates how all life is connected, while in a cheap inn a more worldly monk watches the fourth challenger of the night fall asleep at the table after a sake drinking contest. Ki can be found in the teachings of Feng Shui, the hands of the elementalists who bend nature to protect others, and the masterpiece blades forged by legendary metal-smiths. Ki can be used by anyone, but only the strongest can endure the rigors of shaping the world through one's own will with Ki.

The new emperor has grand plans, but needs allies, both in the court and in the field. Will your Characters help defend the people from renegade onmyo or prevent the traditionalist lords from declaring independence?

A World Where Man Is Not Alone

Humanity is the strongest political body in Japan, but they are not alone, nor have they truly been the only ones here like they once believed. Guardian kami begin to awake and take an active hand in defending their domains. Oni cause havoc across the country, driven by the darkness of the desires that curse them. Tribes of Tengu control land as powerful and influential as any samurai lord. Visiting yōkai join wandering human heroes, becoming legendary champions as noble as any mortal.

A World For Your Story

There are countless legends and myths, but now it is time to forge *your* story. Will you face the world with martial prowess, mastered skills, magical powers, or the strength of your words? You and your allies will step onto the stage, and your choices will shape the future of Japan.

Character Summaries

Hideki



| BODY | | MIND | | SOUL | | BONUS | | DEFENSE | | |
|-----------------|----|-----------------|----|-----------------|----|-------|------------|-----------|---|--|
| ATTRIBUTE BONUS | | ATTRIBUTE BONUS | | ATTRIBUTE BONUS | | | | | | |
| Strength | +4 | Intelligence | +1 | Zeal | +2 | +4 | Athletics | (END + 3) | 1 | |
| Endurance | +3 | Discipline | +2 | Resolve | +2 | +6 | Fighting | (STR + 4) | 2 | |
| Agility | +2 | Perception | +2 | Insight | +3 | +3 | Leadership | (ZEA + 2) | 1 | |

| RESOURCE | | MORALE | |
|----------|---------------|-----------|---|
| 3 | Focus Refresh | Threshold | 2 |
| 9 | Ki Limit | Rally | 1 |

| ARMOR | | |
|-------|------|------|
| BODY | MIND | SOUL |
| 2 | 1 | 1 |

Signature Attack: **Blade Mastery**

Damage: D3 + 2, Body

Associated Skill: Fighting(+2) Assoc. Attribute: STR(+4) Check: +6

Range: 1 FP: 1 Ki: -

Defenses:

| | | | | |
|-----|--|----------|----------|-------|
| STR | | Athletic | Evaluate | Fight |
| | | | | |
| AGI | | | | |

Signature Attack: **Goad**

Damage: D3, Mind
-ZEA(2) to Target's STR

Associated Skill: Leadership(+1) Assoc. Attribute: ZEA(+2) Check: +3

Range: 2 FP: 3 Ki: 2

Defenses:

| | | | |
|-----|--|----------|-------|
| INT | | Evaluate | Fight |
| | | | |
| DIS | | Manip | |
| | | | |

Yukano



| BODY | | MIND | | SOUL | | BONUS | | DEFENSE | | |
|-----------------|----|-----------------|----|-----------------|----|-------|---------------|-----------|---|--|
| ATTRIBUTE BONUS | | ATTRIBUTE BONUS | | ATTRIBUTE BONUS | | | | | | |
| Strength | +1 | Intelligence | +1 | Zeal | +4 | +5 | Interaction | (ZEA + 4) | 1 | |
| Endurance | +2 | Discipline | +2 | Resolve | +3 | +6 | Ki Attunement | (ZEA + 4) | 2 | |
| Agility | +3 | Perception | +2 | Insight | +3 | +3 | Medicine | (INT + 2) | 1 | |

| RESOURCE | | MORALE | |
|----------|---------------|-----------|---|
| 3 | Focus Refresh | Threshold | 1 |
| 15 | Ki Limit | Rally | 1 |

| ARMOR | | |
|-------|------|------|
| BODY | MIND | SOUL |
| 1 | 1 | 1 |

Signature Attack: **Priest's Bow**

Damage: D3+1, Body

Associated Skill: Medicine(+1) Assoc. Attribute: INT(+2) Check: +3

Range: 3 FP: 1 Ki: -

Defenses:

| | | | | |
|-----|--|----------|----------|-------|
| INT | | Athletic | Evaluate | Fight |
| | | | | |
| AGI | | | | |

Signature Attack: **Sealing Tags**

Damage: 1, Soul
D6 + 1 Ki Poison

Associated Skill: Ki Attunement(+2) Assoc. Attribute: ZEA(+4) Check: +6

Range: 2 FP: 1 Ki: 3

Defenses:

| | | | | |
|--|--|-----------|----------|---------|
| | | ZEA | | |
| | | | | Ki Att. |
| | | RES | | |
| | | | | |
| | | Natr. Af. | Survival | |

Oni



| BODY | | MIND | | SOUL | | BONUS | | DEFENSE | | |
|-----------------|----|-----------------|----|-----------------|----|-------|---------------|-----------|---|--|
| ATTRIBUTE BONUS | | ATTRIBUTE BONUS | | ATTRIBUTE BONUS | | | | | | |
| Strength | +3 | Intelligence | +2 | Zeal | +1 | +4 | Interaction | (STR + 3) | 1 | |
| Endurance | +3 | Discipline | +2 | Resolve | +2 | +6 | Fighting | (END + 3) | 3 | |
| Agility | +2 | Perception | +2 | Insight | +1 | +3 | Ki Attunement | (ZEA + 2) | 1 | |

| RESOURCE | | MORALE | |
|----------|---------------|-----------|---|
| 4 | Focus Refresh | Threshold | 2 |
| 12 | Ki Limit | Rally | - |

| ARMOR | | |
|-------|------|------|
| BODY | MIND | SOUL |
| 2 | 1 | 2 |

Signature Attack: **Naginata**

Damage: D6 + 1, Body

Associated Skill: Fighting(+3) Assoc. Attribute: END(+3) Check: +6

Range: 1 FP: 1 Ki: -

Defenses:

| | | | | |
|-----|--|----------|----------|-------|
| STR | | Athletic | Evaluate | Fight |
| | | | | |
| AGI | | | | |

Signature Attack: **Sleep Magic**

Damage: D3, Mind
D6 FP Drain

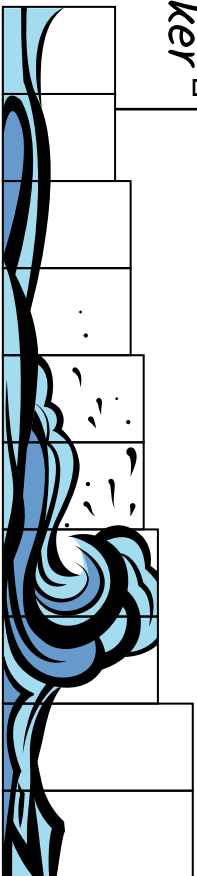
Associated Skill: Ki Attunement(+3) Assoc. Attribute: ZEA(+1) Check: +4

Range: 1 FP: 1 Ki: 3

Defenses:

| | | | | |
|-----|--|-----|----------|---------|
| | | ZEA | | |
| | | | | Ki Att. |
| END | | | | Medic |
| | | | | |
| | | | Survival | |

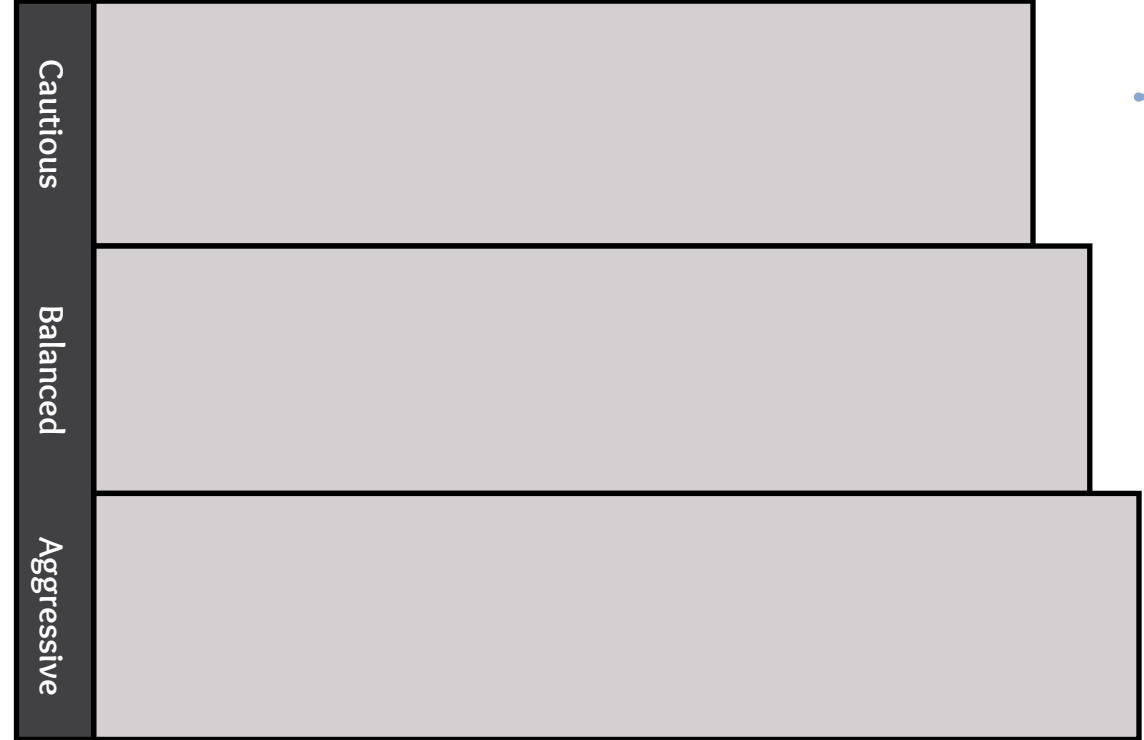
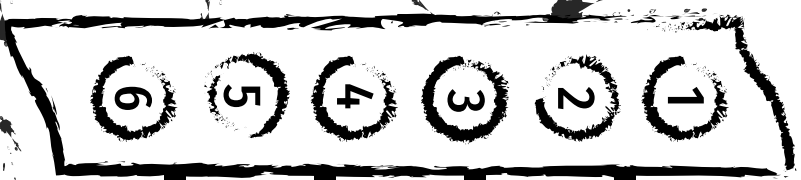
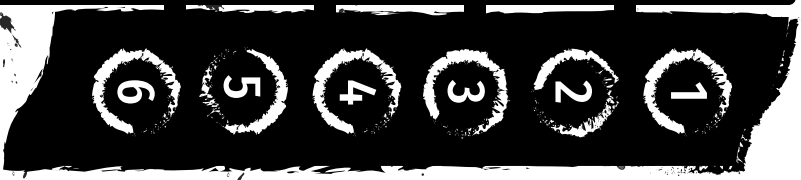
Conflict Tracker



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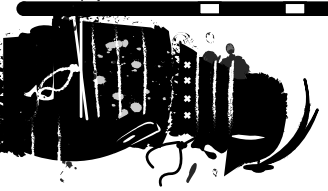
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Enemy Zone

Player Zone



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Focus Point and Ki Trackers



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The story continues in the full **Mysteries of the Yōkai Book**

<http://www.mysteriesoftheyokai.com/>



"The world has become almost a new frontier. Places once familiar shift and change under the fluctuating spiritual climates. Magical phenomena grow more frequent and more dangerous, causing apprehension among the populace. Once decried as superstition, traditions criticized as irrational have become indispensable for supernatural encounters."

~ Misaki Toshonosuke, Head Archivist of the Miwa Central Library

Order the full book at mysteriesoftheyokai.com

- Learn more about the world, characters, and creatures of Mysteries of the Yōkai
- Use the sophisticated character creation system to create your own personalized heroes with a wide variety of options
- Explore different types of conflict resolution to support any style of play, from political intrigue to dungeon crawling
- Hone your Game-Mastering skills with our comprehensive GM tips section that covers important topics like running campaigns, creating story elements and building gaming groups

Mysteries of the Yōkai 妖怪

— 妖怪の謎 —

A TABLETOP RPG INSPIRED BY JAPANESE FOLKLORE

Japanese folklore is filled with mischievous spirits, heroic adventures, and parables of great wisdom. *Mysteries of the Yōkai* is a tabletop role playing game (RPG) set in an alternate version of Classical Japan; one where these epic tales are set to unfold with you as the focus. Your Characters will experience a mythic world, walk the line between man and yōkai, and create new legends of your own.

Players will create and take the role of original Characters; heroes with capabilities that set them apart from the average man and woman of the time. Only together can your Characters solve the problems of a world struggling to reconcile the supernatural and mundane. One player, called the Game Master, organizes play and guides the other players through the unfolding story. The choices you make will shape Nippon's future.

Introductory Book

This book introduces the basic rules for resolving conflicts in *Mysteries of the Yōkai*. Join Hideki and Yukano, brave veteran agents of the Bureau of Supernatural Affairs, as they face off against a powerful oni to save a village in peril. Learn to inflict damage to shift the Tide of battle in your favor and utilize Ki for powerful abilities. Includes resources for playing out a full battle with the Conflict Tracker.

