

4d6 TRAITS	OCCUPATIONS	SURNAME	NAME	AGE
4	Dishonest	Beggar	Abe Aiko (f)	18
5	Tolerant	Servant	Sato Akemi (m)	20
6	Rude	Burglar	Suzuki Chiharu (f)	22
7	Kind	Miner	Takahashi Daisuke (m)	24
8	Narcissistic	Sailor	Tanaka Eiko (both)	26
9	Optimistic	Peddler	Watanabe Fujita (both)	28
10	Talkative	Smuggler	Ito Gin (f)	30
11	Disloyal	Artisan	Yamamoto Hachiro (m)	32
12	Fair	Farmer	Nakamura Hideko (f)	34
13	Mean	Shopkeeper	Kobayashi Jiro (m)	36
14	Sincere	Cook	Kato Keiko (f)	38
15	Pessimistic	Tradesman	Yoshida Ken (m)	40
16	Bold	Soldier	Yamada Mayumi (f)	42
17	Greedy	Policeman	Sasaki Mamoru (m)	44
18	Patient	Teacher	Yamaguchi Mei (f)	46
19	Cruel	Shinto Priest	Saito Tomiko (f)	48
20	Honest	Buddhist monk	Matsumoto Takai (m)	50
21	Unforgiving	Production worker	Inoue Uta (m)	52
22	Playful	Factory officer	Kimura Utano (f)	54
23	Obnoxious	Liberal pro.	Hayashi Yukio (m)	56
24	Perfectionist	Govt. official	Shimizu Yuri (f)	58

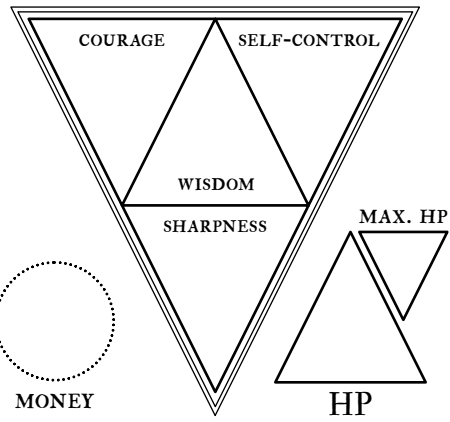
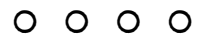
2d8 EQUIPMENT	OBSERVATIONS & EFFECTS *One use per unit.
2	Onigiri* Recover 1 HP.
3	Hyontan Gourd canteen. 700 ml.
4	Oil lamp 6 hours of light (15' radius) per flask of oil.
5	Rope 50 feet / 15 metres.
6	Matches* Box of 50.
7	Tool Saw, pickaxe, hammer, pliers, etc.
8	Loaded dice Two loaded 6-sided dice for playing Cho-han.
9	Nothing
10	Omamori* Regain [bonus] CURSE RESISTANCE points.
11	Shenfu* Drains [bonus] HP off a <i>yokai</i> when attached.
12	Sling Range: 200 meters. Reload: 10 seconds.
13	Pocket knife Easy to hide.
14	Tanto Short sword (15-30 cm blade).
15	Tanegashima Range: 100 meters. Reload: 60 seconds.
16	Revolver Range: 100 meters. 6 shots. Reload: 20 sec.

NAME _____ **AGE** _____

LOOK _____

BACKGROUND _____

CURSE RESISTANCE



EQUIPMENT _____

ITEM BONUS _____

YOKAI HUNTERS SOCIETY



A RULES-LIGHT PEN & PAPER RPG
ABOUT MONSTER HUNTERS IN MEIJI JAPAN

Hunter's Pamphlet

HUNTER CREATION

Roll 4d6 on the table or choose your name, gender, age, two traits, and occupation. Describe how you look. As a hunter you utilize four paths to solve any given situation: COURAGE, SELF-CONTROL, SHARPNESS and WISDOM.

Distribute 4 points between these paths. Your starting HEALTH POINTS (HP) are equal to 8 plus your COURAGE points. Your CURSE RESISTANCE TRACKER starts with 2 plus your SELF-CONTROL points.

BACKGROUND

As a member of the *Tokai Hunters Society*, you took an oath to help cleanse the world of *yokai*. Hunters work discreetly and never abandon their obligations. They live seemingly normal lives until they receive a splint with engraved spirals—then the hunt begins. Try to capture your BACKGROUND in a single sentence following this structure:

*I'm a [TRAIT] and [TRAIT] [OCCUPATION]
who [SOMETHING FROM YOUR PAST] and seeks [A GOAL].*

ADVANCEMENT

Every time you successfully complete a mission, you'll receive 2 points to increase any of your paths, your maximum HP or obtain curse resistance points. You'll also write a simple sentence about the last mission as a new entry in your background. Only one path of your choice can reach a maximum of 5 points—the other three can be increased up to 4, 3, and 2 points respectively. A hunter's maximum HP can never exceed 15. Once hunters have reached their stat maximums they must rely exclusively on experience, items, and knowledge. Reflect further development through additional lines in your character BACKGROUND, not through stats.

WORDS & LAYOUT BY CHEMA GONZÁLEZ (AKA PUNKPADOUR)
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EQUIPMENT

You can carry up to 8 small to medium-sized objects before becoming encumbered. For each item over 8, you must subtract 1 to the result of any COURAGE or SELF-CONTROL roll. When you use an object to assist a task, it gives you a roll bonus. This bonus is set by rolling WISDOM when you acquire or create the item. On a 10 or less, the bonus is +1. For each point above 10 on the WISDOM roll, the item gets an additional point. Your hunter starts the game with 3 free items: two of them must be related to their OCCUPATION while the third is chosen by rolling 2d8 on the EQUIPMENT TABLE. Roll WISDOM for each free item to set their bonuses.

RESOLVING ACTIONS

The Grandmaster (GM)—who controls the world and plays every non-player character (NPC)—describes the situation you are facing, followed by you declaring what you want your hunter to do and how. Then the GM tells you if you succeed automatically, if a task is clearly impossible, or if you need to make a roll to determine a success or failure. If you need to roll, the GM will indicate which path you should follow, applying your hunter's path score to the resulting roll: COURAGE (for actions that involve impetuosity or anger), SELF-CONTROL (for actions in which it is necessary to remain calm and control one's impulses), SHARPNESS (for actions that involve any of your senses), WISDOM (for actions that require certain knowledge or prudent and thoughtful behaviour). With those paths in mind, roll 2d6 and add to the result the points from the relevant path. If you are using an item to perform the action, add the item's bonus as well.

- ✠ On a 10 or above, you succeed.
- ✠ On a 9, you succeed but suffer a consequence.
- ✠ On an 8 or less, you fail and the situation escalates. Just how much the situation escalates is left to the discretion of the GM.

ADVANTAGES & DISADVANTAGES

Should an action has something to do with your hunter's BACKGROUND, if another hunter is giving you a hand, or if the current circumstance has you in a favourable position, roll an extra d6 and ignore the lowest result. If, on the contrary, there is something that puts you in an unfavourable situation, roll 3d6 and discard the highest roll.

ANTAGONISTS

The difficulty score in most situations is 10. When you face an antagonist, however—human, animal or *yokai*—the target number may be greater depending on their level. The GM may or may not disclose an antagonists' level to a hunter. Regardless of level, if you roll a 9 you still succeed with dire consequences. Any other result below an antagonist's difficulty score means that you don't reach your goal.

DAMAGE & HEALTH

If a situation presents a physical risk to you or the target of your action, the difference between the total result of your roll and the difficulty score is the amount of damage you take (under) or deal (over). To recover 1d8 HP, you need a night of good rest and a good meal. If a hunter loses all of their HP in a situation, they die.

CURSED DIE

You may risk your soul to potentially improve a single action adding a CURSED DIE (1d8) to your roll and discarding the lowest result. If the result on the CURSED DIE is greater than your actual CURSE RESISTANCE points, you attract bad luck and lose a point—no matter if you succeed or fail. The CURSED DIE cannot be used with advantage and a hunter cannot have more than 4 CURSE RESISTANCE points. Should you lose all your points, you cannot use the CURSED DIE and are doomed to make every roll with disadvantage. To get rid of the curse and regain 1d3 CURSE RESISTANCE points, you must visit a sacred place and pay the cost of the cleanse.

2d8	MISSION	LOCATION
2	Make someone “disappear” who is getting too close to the secrets of the Society.	The surroundings of a lake, pond or river
3	Investigate the disappearance of several kids, a noble, a bureaucrat, or another hunter.	A forest
4	Retrieve an ancient artifact or valuable documents.	A cave
5	Deliver an important letter, artifact, or information.	A small island
6	Escort a noble, a bureaucrat, or a member of the Council of Elders.	The house of a peasant
7	A cleansing job.	A noble’s European-style mansion
8	Get the support of a wealthy merchant, monk, or politician.	A teahouse
9	Investigate why people are suddenly contracting a strange disease.	A small town in the mountains
10	Intercept a package or person being transported by the army.	The Hanamachi district (Geisha houses)
11	Investigate rumours that connect a senior US Navy officer with strange disappearances.	An izakaya (Japanese-style tavern)
12	Investigate strange attacks that keep occurring overnight.	A coal mine
13	Investigate why policemen on night patrols are losing their minds.	A Buddhist temple
14	Investigate the whereabouts of a group of samurai who disappeared while trying to “hunt”	A theater
15	Raise funds for the Society by any means necessary.	A castle
16	Root out a mole or rogue hunter within the Society.	A Black Ship (Western vessel)

ID10	YOKAI	DESCRIPTION
1	Rokurokubi	A cursed woman whose neck stretches incredibly far in search of lamp oil to lick while her body sleeps. The origin of the yokai’s curse is usually some kind of sin.
2	Kappa	Humanoid amphibian the size of a human child that inhabits rivers, lakes, and ponds. It loves cucumbers but also feeds on human entrails.
3	Amazake baba	An emaciated old woman who, on winter nights, walks through the villages knocking on the doors and asking for amazake (Japanese sweets). Those who respond, no matter how, fall terribly ill.
4	Kotengu	A <i>yokai</i> that has the appearance of a large bird of prey with human traits and wears hermit robes. Lives in natural areas like mountains or forests and feasts on humans after torturing them.
5	Sarugami	A <i>yokai</i> that resembles a fierce wild monkey of enormous size but is intelligent and able to speak. They live in the mountains but sometimes go down to the villages to kidnap women.
6	Nure onago	A completely soaked young woman covered with dry leaves and dirt that appears on roads near rivers, lakes, or ponds. She will follow those who return her smile for the rest of their lives.
7	Nekomata	A huge, two-tailed feral cat with powerful abilities such as summoning fireballs and controlling corpses. They are able to speak and despise, enslave, and feed on humans.
8	Oni	A kind of ogre or demon of great size and red or blue skin that has horns and sharp fangs. They can be found in caves, mountains, ruins and islands, and enjoy alcohol as much as human flesh.
9	Nuppeppo	A piece of shapeless flesh with legs that dwells in ancient temples and cemeteries. It is elusive and usually does not attack humans. No one knows what it feeds on or if it eats at all.
10	Tatsu	Serpentine dragons with prominent beards. They have a very strong connection with water and inhabit impressive underwater palaces where they horde countless riches. They rarely get involved in human affairs.

YOKAI HUNTERS SOCIETY



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Grandmaster’s Pamphlet

THE MEIJI RESTORATION

The year is 1889. After months of deliberation, a Constitution is about to be approved, giving absolute power to Emperor Meiji. In the last two decades, there have been profound political and social reforms that have cleared the way for “modernization:” the abolition of feudal privileges, the establishment of European-style political, police, and judicial systems, restructuring of the army, etc. But not everyone is happy with these changes.

In these convulsive years, *yokai* sightings and encounters have increased tremendously. Some blame the barbarians, others accuse nostalgics of the *bakufu* times, and a few even dare to hold His Majesty responsible. The truth is nobody knows the reason behind the uptick in sightings for sure.

THE YOKAI GARI KAI

Yokai are supernatural beings that adopt a wide variety of forms, including humans, animals, plants, objects, and even natural phenomena. As these monsters generally hide their true nature until they are ready to act, most people dismiss them as superstition that dwell in the world of fairy tales. Nothing could be further from the truth. The YOKAI GARI KAI, or YOKAI HUNTERS SOCIETY, has been around for centuries, gathering brave people from any social stratum willing to fight these abominations that lurk in the shadows. All hunters wear traditional masks while on missions both as protection against the spirits and to help them keep their identities secret if necessary. All masks share the same spiral engravings, but each mask presents a custom design so that hunters can recognize each other.

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RUNNING THE GAME

As GM, you will have to answer a lot of questions before and throughout sessions to help shape the world for your players, develop plots, bring life to characters, find the right tone for your game, and pose challenges for hunters to confront. Most of the time, players will make decisions that you had not even imagined let alone foreseen, so you will have to improvise and adapt. Is not your job to antagonize players, but rather to work with them to create an amazing story and an enjoyable experience for everyone.

To help you create some adventures, I have included tables with ideas for random missions, locations, and *yokai* for you to further flesh out. Before you start rolling dice, though, you have some questions to answer in order to shape the general scenario:

- ✠ Is there anyone behind the growth of the *yokai* activity?
- ✠ How intense is the *yokai* problem? Are these isolated cases or are they becoming a real problem for the population?
- ✠ Does the Emperor know about the SOCIETY?
- ✠ What about the bureaucrats surrounding Him?
- ✠ Is the general population aware of what is happening or do they think the SOCIETY is nothing more than a myth?
- ✠ How do people see the hunters? Are they heroes or outcasts?
- ✠ Do hunters receive any kind of payment?
- ✠ Who is part of the COUNCIL OF ELDERS that runs the Society?
- ✠ Do the hunters have direct access to the COUNCIL OF ELDERS?
- ✠ Is the SOCIETY's headquarters located in Tokyo, or in a city where the *yokai* activity is even higher?
- ✠ What kind of building is it?

NPC CREATION

The GM never rolls for an NPC. Instead, hunters roll to react to antagonists' actions. The only stat the GM needs for an NPC is their level so that they can add that number to the usual difficulty score of 10. For humans and animals that result is also their HP, which means their difficulty score will decrease as they receive damage. *Yokai* have 10 + 1d3 per level HP, and their difficulty score won't start decreasing until their HP match their difficulty score number; e.g. a level 3 *yokai* will have between 13 and 19 HP (depending on the roll) and a difficulty score of 13. Once its HP is equal to 12 or less, its difficulty score will match. If you think an NPC is key to the plot and needs more detail you can always use the hunter creation rules and play them like a character for resolution purposes. Numbers don't make characters interesting, though, but rather their personality, motivations, wishes, and fears. For *yokai*, this also includes special abilities or powers. Give them a couple of singular attacks you can exploit during encounters as well.

TIME AND TURNS

The way you track time in-game will depend on the needs of each scene. If the hunters are travelling but nothing interesting is supposed to happen, you may want to flash forward hours, days, or even weeks and give them a brief description of what happened during the journey. If the time spent traveling may turn into something challenging or cool, though, or limited resources play an important role in travelling, you should measure it in turns. In this case, adapt the time span of the turns to the duration of the trip. A single investigation and exploration scene turn covers about 10 minutes of in-game time, allowing one action to each hunter per turn. As for combat and encounters in general, rounds last 10 seconds during which each hunter and NPC can move 10 meters (30 feet) and perform a single relevant action.