

Iki

A game for 2-4 players by Koota Yamada. Condensed rules for 3-4 players by Eric Postpischil, <https://edp.org>.

Introduction

Iki is set in the main street of a market in the Nihonbashi area of the city of Edo (later named Tokyo).

The board shows 4 Nagayas (longhouses) each with 2 shop actions (scrolls). Each shop action has 2 stalls behind it.

Each player's Oyakata meeple (big) walks counterclockwise in the 8 spaces in front of shop actions and stall pairs.

Iki are points. Pink 5-petal flowers score Iki during the game. Red many-petal flowers score Iki at game end.

Firefighting power:

- When advancing on the firefighting track, put your marker on top of any at its destination.
 - When advancing from space 10, move to the top of the stack on that space.
- Markers in the same space have decreasing firefighting power (for turn order) from the top down.

Character cards show:

- Hiring cost at top left. Some show a 1-2 firefighting power hiring bonus just below the cost.
 - Skill (action performed for player using the card) at the bottom.
 - Occupation (name of card) above skill. This can be used to look up the card in the rulebook.
 - Card type icon at bottom right and corresponding color strip along right edge.
 - There are 17 yellow, 15 brown, 12 purple (1 of which is wild), 9 red, and 7 blue characters.
 - Experience and salary track inside color strip. A top space is outlined in red is a retirement bonus, not a salary.
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Setup

Put the board on the table 3-4 player side up (marked at corner to left of pink-flowers score track).

Put the calendar marker in month 1 of the calendar track (across board from score track).

Stack the 4 fire tiles facedown on the marked spot below the score track (below 15-16). (They are randomized later.)

Put 1 Oyakata meeple (big) for each player in the start spaces between two Nagayas in random order.

Stack 1 firefighting marker for each player in 0 of the firefighting power track in the same order, first player on top.

Put a score marker (flower) for each player on 0 of the score track and their "30/60" token on 30 of the score track.

Give each player a player board, 1 Ikizama meeple (medium), and 4 Kobun meeple (small) in a color.

Give each player 1 rice, 1 sandal, and 8 mons (money, in 1-mon and 4-mon coins).

Separate the 56 non-start character cards by season (tiny number on back). Shuffle each set. Put facedown by board.

Separate the 24 fish, pipe, and tobacco pouch tokens by season (tiny number on back). Place the spring (1) tokens in their marked spaces on the board and stack the others in their marked spaces in the calendar track.

Select 6 of the 10 building cards randomly. Display face-up by board. Remove rest from game.

Display the 4 start character cards face-up. In reverse turn order, each player drafts 1, puts it in an empty outermost stall of their choice, and puts 1 of their Kobun meeple (small) on the card's lowest worker space.

- With 3 players, remove the leftover card from the game.
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Play 12 Months

Deal 4 character cards from the current deck (spring, 1, to start) to face-up by the board, adding to any already there.

Phase A—Way of Life

In decreasing firefighting power order, each player puts their Ikizama meeple on an empty Ikizama space (below scores 0-11) to indicate steps their Oyakata will move ("1-4" for a later choice or 1, 2, 3, or 4 for a fixed number).

Phase B—Actions

Each player takes a turn in order left-to-right on the Ikizama track ("1-4" first, then 1, 2, 3, and 4).

- (Left-to-right is correct. A statement in the 2021 rules to start with the "rightmost" space is an error.)

If you are on the "1-4" space, take 1 mon. If you are on another space, either take 4 mons or hire 1 character:

- Choose a character card from those by the board. Pay its cost (top left). Coins on the card may be used to pay.
- Take the card and any coins remaining on it. Put the card in an empty stall on the board.
 - For a corner stall at the central intersection, pay 2 mons.
- Put 1 of your Kobun meeple (small) on the card's lowest worker space.
- If the card shows a hiring bonus (just below its cost, 1 or 2 firefighting power), take it.
 - If the card has a hiring bonus and you have the Fire Watchtower building, also gain 3 Iki.
- If the hiring cannot be completed (money, meeple, and empty stall), you may not hire the character.

Move your Oyakata 1-4 steps according to your Ikizama selection. Move 1 further step for each sandal you pay.

- If you complete a circuit, move the Kobun on each of your character cards up 1 space. Characters might retire:
 - If the Kobun leaves the top rectangle space, return it to your board. If the top space has a red circle, take the token shown (see "Retirement Tokens"). Tuck the card above your player board, organized by type (color).

Iki

You may perform the shop action your Oyakata is at and/or 1 of its stall actions, in either order.

- If you do business with another player's character (not yours), their Kobun advances as above.
- Shop actions are, in order from the market entry:
 - Pay 2 mons to gain 2 sandals.
 - Pay 3 mons to gain 2 rice.
 - Gain 1 firefighting power.
 - Buy 1 tobacco pouch and/or 1 pipe at the prices shown on the tokens.
 - Each tobacco pouch awards game-end Iki (some calculated) and is doubled if you have at least 1 pipe.
 - Each pipe instantly awards 1/2 firefighting power, 1 rice, 2 sandals, Kobun experience, or 1 Koban (gold).
 - Pay 1 rice to gain 4 mons or pay 1 sandal to gain 4 mons.
 - Pay 1 mon to gain 1 rice or pay 1 mon to build a building:
 - Pay the cost shown on a building card, put it in an empty stall, and put a Kobun meeple on it. For a central corner stall, pay 2 mons. (Some buildings give an ability, shown in a scroll. All offer game-end Iki.)
 - Buy 1 fish. You may buy only 1 fish per season. The more expensive fish awards extra game-end Iki.
 - Pay 6 mons to gain 1 Koban (gold), pay 10 mons to gain 2 Kobans, or gain 2 mons.

Move your Ikizama meeple from the Ikizama track back to your board.

Phase C—Events

In month 3, 6, or 9, remove unsold fish, pipe, and tobacco tokens and place the coming season's tokens on the board.

In month 12, each player removes their Oyakata meeple from the board.

In month 3, 6, 9, or 12:

- Remove unhired character cards from the game and return money from them to the bank.
- Each player collects salary from each of their character cards, including retired characters.
 - Working characters earn the salary shown in the space above the Kobun. Retired characters receive the top salary. If the top space is circled in red, it is a one-time retirement bonus, and there is no salary.
- A player with the Imperial Villa gains 2 mons per character of their most recruited type, including retired.
- Award harmony bonuses separately for each longhouse and the 4 central corner stalls:
 - Each character card of a type (color) that appears 2/3/4 times in the group (longhouse or 4 corners) earns its owner 2/3/4 Iki. (Example: Player A has 1 brown card, player B has 2. A gets 3 Iki, and B gets 6.)
- Each player pays 1 rice for each character on the main board (not for retired characters or Kobuns on buildings). A short player chooses unfed characters to remove from the game. Displaced Kobuns return to the player board.
 - A player with the Farmhouse building gains 2 Iki per Kobun they fed.

In month 5, 8, or 11, a fire of strength 5, 8, or 10 (not 11), respectively, breaks out:

- Select a random fire tile. A fire breaks out in the outermost stall of the Nagaya it shows.
- The fire spreads inward losing strength by 1 per stall until it is extinguished or reaches the Nagaya's end.
- If the firefighting power of the owner of a card in a stall is at least the current strength, the fire is extinguished.
- Otherwise, if the stall is occupied, move the Kobun to its player board and remove the card from the game.

Put 1 mon on each unhired character card by the board. (There will be none in month 3, 6, 9, or 12.)

Advance the calendar marker 1 month. If not past month 12, start the new month with revealing 4 character cards.

Last Month and Game End

After month 12 and its events, each player, in decreasing firefighting power order, puts their Oyakata in any space and performs its shop action and/or 1 of its stall actions.

- As usual, if you do business with another player's character (not yours), their Kobun advances as above.

Move all characters from the main board to their matching columns of the player boards (for scoring types).

Add to Iki awarded during play:

- 1/4/9/16/25 Iki for having 1/2/3/4/5 different character types (colors). Additional cards of a type have no effect.
- 3/6/10/15 Iki for 1/2/3/4 fish.
- Iki shown on fish (1 or 7 shown on more expensive fish of each season, none on cheaper fish).
- Iki shown on tobacco pouches, doubled if you have at least 1 pipe. Additional pipes have no effect.
- Iki shown on buildings.
- 3 Iki per Koban (gold), 1 Iki per wood, and 1 Iki per 4 mons. (Rice and sandals are worthless.)

Most Iki wins. Ties are broken by most firefighting power.

Retirement Tokens, by Character

Monk (spring): Recruiting characters costs you 1 mon less.

Ox Cart (spring): You may move your Oyakata 1 additional space during the Actions phase.

Yamabushi (spring): You may discard this token for one of your characters to survive a fire.

Shrine Maiden (summer): You may discard this token for one of your characters to survive a fire.

Puppeteer (autumn): This character may be any type (color) for scoring.