

SUMO

Object of the game: Make your opponent touch the ground with any part of their body other than their feet or force them out of the ring.

Setup

Use a standard deck of playing cards.

Pick a King to use as your sumo wrestler (rikishi).

Put the 4 Jacks face-down and sideways in a line below the rikishi. This is the dohyō, or sumo ring. There are 3 spaces in the ring that the rikishi can occupy: Center, Left, and Right. Rikishi start in the Center space. The sumo ring should look like so:

[K] [K]
[♠][♠][♠][♠]

Gather only the A-5 of each suit (totaling 20 cards). Put the other cards back in the box, we don't use them at all. Shuffle and deal 8 cards to each player. Put the extra 4 cards to the side; we won't use them this match. Players do not look at their hands yet.

Tachi-ai

This will determine who goes first in the bout. Without looking, players quickly flip over the top card of their hand and shout "hakkeyoi!"

The player with the higher number card will play first; suit doesn't matter in the tachi-ai.

If there is a tie, players flip their next card over and shout "hakkeyoi!" louder and with more feeling.

Keep doing this until one player wins the tachi-ai, then players pick up the remainder of their hands and begin battle! Tachi-ai cards stay on the table; do not pick them back up.

Gameplay (FIGHT!)

The player who won the tachi-ai goes first. They are the attacker and have "control."

The attacker plays a card from their hand. The other player is the defender and **must follow suit with a card from their hand if they have one**. If the defender can't follow suit, they may play a counter if able (detailed in the next section), otherwise they must play any card. After players play their cards, the player who has the higher card of the led suit wins the trick (A is lowest, 5 is highest), and their sumo move is carried out:

♠ **Push** - Move your opponent one space back. Example:

[K] [K]
[♠][♠][♠][♠]

Here, the left rikishi has moved the right rikishi one space back, into the Right space. One more push and he's out of the ring!

♥ **Grab** - You grab your opponent. Tilt your card slightly and cover your opponent's rikishi card with the top corner of yours to show that you are grabbing. If both players are

grabbing, both rikishi cards are tilted. If you're already grabbing and you grab again, you move your opponent back one space.

◇ **Throw** - You throw your opponent to the ground. You must grab first in order to attack with a throw. If you win a throw trick while defending and not grabbing your opponent, you don't throw them down, but you still gain control.

♣ **Slap** - Your opponent discards a card **facedown** (in addition to having to play one). This symbolizes being disoriented from the slap! You automatically stop grabbing if you attempt a slap by leading a club or if you win a slap trick as a defender.

After the sumo move is carried out, whoever won the trick gains control and attacks next turn. The cards played stay on the table so players can keep track. Play subsequent cards on top of older cards.

Counters

Counters can occur when the defender has no cards of the played suit and meets a set of criteria. Because counters are not attacks, players can't counter a counter. Here is a list of counters:

Push ♠ Counter: If your rikishi is about to get pushed out of the ring and you have no spades, you may play the A♥ to regain your balance, grab the opponent, and take control.

Grab ♥ Counter: If your rikishi is about to be grabbed and you have no hearts, you may play a *matching club* ♣ card to slap away his grab attempt and take control. (Your slap card takes effect; he must discard a card now.)

Throw ◇ Counter: If your rikishi is grabbed and about to be thrown to the ground while you have no diamonds, you may play the A and 2 of spades ♠ to push your opponent back 2 spaces and take control. (You may win with this counter!)

There is no Slap ♣ Counter. However, if your opponent keeps slapping you around, see *Hikotoshi* below.

Regular Kimarite (Winning Moves)

These are the more common ways to win:

Yorikiri: You have your opponent grabbed and you push them out of the ring with a push ♠.

Oshidashi: You don't have your opponent grabbed and you push your opponent out of the ring with a push ♠.

Uwatenage: Your opponent is not grabbing you and you throw ◇ him to the ground.

Yaguranage: Your opponent is grabbing you and you throw ◇ him to the ground.

Tsuridashi: You have your opponent grabbed and you grab ♥ them again at the edge of the ring, lifting them by the mawashi and carrying them out.

Special Kimarite (Instant Wins)

There are ways to win instantly! But all the conditions must be right...

Hatakikomi: If your opponent attacks with a push ♠ and you have no spades, you can counter with *any 3 clubs* ♣ to slap his hands away and slap him down to the clay!

Kimedashi: If you manage to push your opponent out of bounds with the Throw ◇ Counter described above, you lock his arms up and drive him out of the ring!

Hikiotoshi: If your opponent attacks with a 3rd (or more) slap ♣ this bout, you may counter with a *matching throw* ◇ and use his momentum against him, pulling him down to the clay!

Hansoku: If your opponent has all 4 Aces in their hand after the Tachi-ai, their mawashi comes untied and you win!

Koshikudake: If your opponent must play a card but doesn't have any cards left, they trip over themselves and fall down!

Uwatedashinage: If you have no grabs right after the tachi-ai, you can play *any 3 throws* ◇ to sidestep your opponent (henka) and toss him to the ground!

Amiuchi: If you throw your opponent right after performing the Push ♠ Counter above, you win by this spectacular Fisherman's Throw!

Tsukite: If your opponent is not grabbing you and tries to attack with a throw ◇ (maybe that's all they have left in their hand) they stumble in their illegal throw attempt and fall to the clay, touching the ground with their hands!

5-of-a-Kind Ultimate Technique: If you have all 5 of one suit after the tachi-ai, you can perform an Ultimate Technique!

5×♠: Steamroller!

5×♥: Kuma Crusher!

5×◇: Seismic Toss!

5×♣: Thousand Slaps!

If both players have 5-of-a-Kind in their hands, the player who won the tachi-ai gets to perform their Ultimate Technique and wins the bout.

Fusen (Absent): An ultra-rare occurrence where the tachi-ai lasts 8 cards. Whoever has the highest number on the final card wins; his opponent didn't even show up for the match!

Rematch

If neither rikishi has won and all cards are played, a rematch is needed. Reset this bout without recording a winner.

Bashō (Tournament)!

Sumo tournaments are usually played over 15 days, with each rikishi having one bout per day. You and your opponent will face-off in a bashō where the first to 8 wins (called kachi-koshi or "winning record") wins the yūshō trophy!

Make a sheet called a banzuke which will be used to record the results of each match. Make spaces for the names of both rikishi, whether they won or lost, and the name of the winning technique they used in the match. Use an open circle for a win ○ and a filled-in circle for a loss ●. For example:

Rikishi	Kimarite	Rikishi
○	Yorikiri	●
●	Uwatenage	○

What is Your Rank?

Using your final record, determine your rank after you win!

8-7: You just made it! You get to stay in the rank of **Maegashira**.

8-6 or 8-5: You have a decent winning record. You are promoted to **Komusubi**.

8-4 or 8-3: Your record is great! You're promoted to **Sekiwake**.

8-2 or 8-1: What an amazing bashō for you! You are promoted to the second highest rank, **Ozeki**.

8-0: A perfect winning record. You are the greatest rikishi in the land! You are loved by all, **Yokozuna**.

If you wish to play a shorter game, try playing best of 7.

Sumo Cheat Sheet

*****You must follow suit if you can.*****

1st things to look for after the tachi-ai

- All 4 As: Hansoku, instant loss
- No ♥, 3 ◇: Uwatedashinage, instant win
- All 5 of a suit: Ultimate Technique, instant win

How to counter/instant win. If your opponent plays:

♠ - You're on the edge, play A♥ to grab and gain control
- Play any 3♣, Hatakikomi win

♥ - Play matching ♠ to gain control (they still discard)

◇ - Play A♠+2♠ to gain control and push back 2 spaces. You can win Kimedashi this way

♣ - If it's opponent's 3rd+ ♣, play matching ◇, Hikiotoshi win