

### Samurai House Rules

The Ashikaga Period (1336-1573), was full of unrest and violent changes. Warfare destroyed cities and countryside. The shogun ruled with the support of wealthy warlords, called daimyo. Their success depended on their military prowess and social connections.

Within their provinces, daimyo **developed their own local rules**. The daimyo ruled the local population, often fighting over territory and allies. There were approximately 250 daimyo domains at the end of the Ashikaga Period.

Samurai served a lord or shogun if they were rewarded well. They might leave if the reward wasn't good enough.

## An excerpt from Hojo Soun's *Twenty-One Articles*

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I. First of all, you should believe in the Buddha(s) and the Gods.

VII. You should do your hair early [as soon as you rise]. I need not tell you that this rule applies when you are to attend on your lord; but even when you must stay at home because you are not well or have urgent business to do, you should do your hair early, for you must not be seen in an ungroomed state by others.

XII. If you have a little leisure, read books. But hide your reading matter in your breast-fold; in general, you should not let people see you read. But whether in bed or up and about, you must always practice writing; otherwise, you will forget how to read and write characters.

XV. It is boorish and vile to have no poetic sensibility or skill, and you should study the art of poetry.

XVI. In your off-duty hours, practice riding. First you should become skilled in the essentials, and then practice the standard techniques for guiding the horse.

XXI. It is not necessary to write here about the "Arts of peace and War, including Archery and Horsemanship," for to pursue these is a matter of course. From of old, the rule has been, "Practice the Arts of Peace on the left hand, and the Arts of War on the right." Mastery of both is required.