

Student Handout

Edo Japan: Gokaido Food & Survival Challenge (1715)

Your Journey

You are a working-class traveler walking the Tokaido Road from Shizuoka to Hakone. The trip will take 5 days. The road is dangerous: thieves, illness, bad weather, and strict checkpoints await you.

Your Mission

Select 5 items to carry on your journey.

- At least 3 items must be food (to sustain you).
- Up to 2 items may be non-food tools or protection.
- You can only carry what fits on your person.

Your goal: Survive the journey with the highest possible score by choosing a smart balance of food, tools, and protection.

Edo Travel Items List

Food Choices

- Onigiri rice balls with pickled plum (umeboshi) – preserved, portable, prevents spoilage
- Dried fish (himono) – protein, salty, lasts days
- Tsukemono (pickled vegetables) – vitamins, keeps well, but not a full meal
- Fresh mochi rice cakes – filling, but spoil quickly in summer
- Dried miso paste – nutritious, lasts long, but needs hot water
- Sake – disinfectant, calories, but heavy and risky at checkpoints

Other Items

- Straw raincoat (mino) – protection from rain, light to carry
- Fishing rod & line – can catch food, but takes time
- Paper lantern – light at night, but fragile
- Short blade (tanto) – protection, but suspicious at checkpoints
- Medicine pouch (herbs, powders) – helps against illness

Rules to Remember

- Choose wisely: food must keep you alive, tools may save you in emergencies.
 - Think balance: too much of one food type could make you sick or weak.
 - Beware checkpoints: some items may draw unwanted attention.
 - Survival first: your choices will be tested by storms, illness, and hunger along the way.
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Your Task

1. Circle or write down your 5 chosen items.
 2. Briefly explain why you picked each one.
 3. Get ready to test your survival against the road ahead...
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Will you reach Hakone in good health...or fail along the way?

Gokaidō Food & Survival Game: Item List

Food Items

1. Onigiri with umeboshi

Preserved rice ball, prevents spoilage; stable calories; widely carried by Edo travelers

2. Himono (dried fish)

High protein, salty, lasts several days even in heat

3. Tsukemono (pickled vegetables)

Vitamins, electrolytes; improves digestion; not filling enough alone

4. Fresh mochi

High-energy, portable, but spoils quickly in summer and can harden

5. Dried miso paste

Long shelf life; full of salt, probiotics, and protein; just add hot water

6. Sake

Calories, sterilization, morale... but heavy and risky at checkpoints

Non-Food Items

7. Straw raincoat (mino)

Critical in rain; lightweight; classic Edo travel gear

8. Fishing rod & line

Provides sustainable food... if you have time and good conditions

9. Paper lantern

Essential for night travel and safety; but fragile and short-lived

10. Short blade (tantō)

Minor protection; extremely suspicious at checkpoints; could reduce points

11. Medicine pouch (herbal remedies)

Useful for stomach issues, fatigue, and minor illness