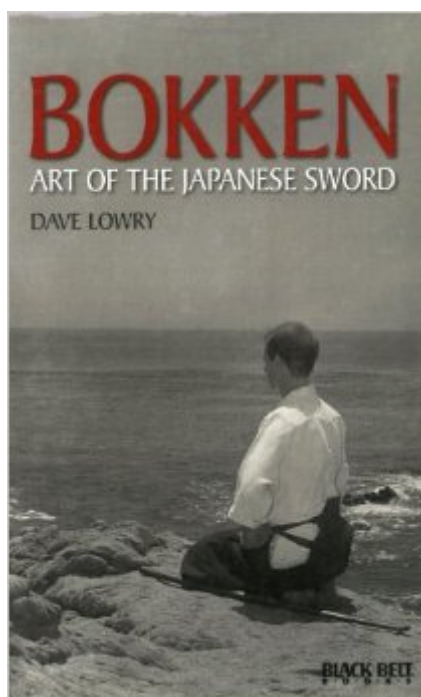


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# Bokken: Art Of The Japanese Sword (Literary Links To The Orient)



## Synopsis

Focusing his expertise on the techniques and history of the bokken—the wooden training sword used by both ancient samurai and today's swordsmen—the author maintains that training with the bokken is important on two levels for the modern practitioner: to build the physical stamina, rhythms, and adroit body movements of traditional swordsmanship and to achieve something of the animating spirit of the traditional swordsman. This history of the bokken combines the author's concise, eloquent writing style with more than 100 photographs to provide the reader with the traditional and modern perspectives of this vital, historically rich practice tool.

## Book Information

Paperback: 192 pages

Publisher: Black Belt Communications (February 1, 1986)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0897501047

ISBN-13: 978-0897501040

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.4 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 12 ounces

Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars— See all reviews (35 customer reviews)

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## Customer Reviews

This book can be taken two ways. First, it can serve as an introduction of safe, practical use of the bokken (patterned after Yagyu-Ryu) to the beginner swordsman. It offers selected waza taught in such a way as to emphasize perfection of sword technique and to maximize the exercise potential of the practitioner (it's a great workout!). The waza are thoroughly explained and are accompanied by many helpful photographs. The second, and probably more significant, point of this book lies in the author's introduction of the term, suburi. Early in the book, he explains the historical ryu system: samurai were expected not only to master the sword, but also empty-handed Bugei, music, literature, and especially, poetry—it was an exhaustively prohibitive commitment to a Renaissance way of life. Even if one today had access to an authentic dojo representing a respected ryu, cultures and social norms worldwide have changed so much since the days of feudal Japan that such commitment to the truly authentic training of the samurai would be impossible, or at the very least,

would wholly lack the practicality to make such a commitment worthwhile in today's complex world. In order to preserve the spirit of Bugei, however, the author offers us an alternative. Suburi is actually a two-fold path of training applicable to all bushi (practitioners of ANY martial art): on one hand, there is the physical aspect of bokken training. The mere exercise offers patience, discipline, stamina, and especially, grace all with which to supplement the style of the reader (be it empty-handed, or otherwise). The second path is a spiritual one. It calls the bushi of today to make a commitment to the study and practice of the philosophical side of the martial arts.

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