

## Kama

Okinawan and Chinese weapons that resemble traditional farming devices similar to a [scythe](#). It was originally a farming implement, used for reaping crops. During the annexation of Okinawa by the [Satsuma](#), all traditional weapons were outlawed. This led to the development of the kama and other [Kobudo](#) weapons.

When a ball and chain are attached to the end of the Kama, it becomes a [kusarigama](#), a formidable (if hard to master) weapon because its range makes it extremely difficult for opponents to approach the wielder.

## Nunchaku

"Two section staff", also sometimes called "**nunchucks**", "numchuks", or "chain sticks" in English) is a martial arts weapon of the [kobudo](#) weapons set and consists of two sticks connected at their ends with a short chain or rope.

Although the certain origin of nunchaku is unknown (as with most weapons in history), it was invented in Okinawa; and according to the History Channel they were created in their current incarnation for the movies. The Japanese word nunchaku itself comes from the [Min Nan](#) word ng-chiat-kun. When viewed etymologically from its Okinawan roots, *nun* comes from the word for twin, and *chaku* from [shaku](#), a unit of measurement. The popular belief is that the nunchaku was originally a short [flail](#) used to thresh [rice](#) (separate the grain from the husk); rice, however, can be broken if treated this way, so it would be more appropriate if it had been used to break open the ripened pods of soybean. An alternative theory is that it was created by a martial artist whose staff was broken in three pieces in combat and then strung together, creating what is commonly known today as a [three section staff](#), and that nunchaku were derived from that weapon. It is also possible that the weapon was developed in response to the moratorium on edged weaponry under the Satsuma [daimyo](#) after invading Okinawa in the 17th century, and that the weapon was most likely conceived and used exclusively for that end, as the configuration of actual flails and bits are unwieldy for use as a weapon. Also, peasant farmers were forbidden conventional weaponry such as arrows or blades so they improvised using only what they had available, farm tools such as the oar. Regardless of the origin of the nunchaku, the modern weapon would be an ineffective rice flail.

The nunchaku as a weapon has surged in popularity since martial artist [Bruce Lee](#) used it in his movies in the 1970s. It is generally considered by martial artists to be a limited weapon. Complex and difficult to wield, the nunchaku lacks the range of the bo (quarterstaff) and the edged advantage of a sword. It is also prone to inflicting injury on its user. Nonetheless, the nunchaku's impressive motion in use and perceived lethality contributed to its increasing popularity, peaking in the 1980s, perhaps due to its (unfounded) association with [ninja](#) during the 1980s ninja craze.

## Bo Staff

A **bō** or *kon*, is a long [staff](#), usually made of wood or [bamboo](#), but sometimes it is made of metal or plated with metal for extra strength; also, a full-size bō is sometimes called a *rokushakubō*. This name derives from the [Japanese](#) words *roku* meaning "six"; *shaku*; a Japanese measurement equivalent to 30.3 centimeters, or just under 1 foot; and bō. Thus, *rokushakubō* refers to a staff about 6 *shaku* (181.8 cm, about 6 ft.) long. Other types of bō range from heavy to light, from rigid to highly flexible, and from simply a piece of [wood](#) picked up off the side of the road to ornately decorated works of art.

The martial art of wielding the bō is [bōjutsu](#). The basic purpose of the bō is increasing the force delivered in a strike, through leverage, and to benefit the wielder from the extra distance this weapon affords. The user's relatively slight motion, effected at the point of handling the bō, results in a faster, more forceful motion by the tip of the bō against the object or subject of the blow; thus enabling long-range crushing and sweeping strikes. The bō may also be thrust at an opponent, allowing one to hit from a distance. It also is used for joint-locks, thrustings of the bō that immobilize a target joint, which are used to non-fatally subdue an opponent. The bō is a weapon mainly used for self-defense, and can be used to execute several blocks and parries. Martial arts techniques, such as kicks and blocks, can also be combined with weapon techniques when practicing this martial art to enhance its effectiveness

Although the bō is now used as a weapon, its use is believed by some to have evolved from non-combative uses. The bō staff is thought to have been used to balance buckets or baskets. Typically, one would carry baskets of harvested crops or buckets of water or milk or fish, one at each end of the bō, that is balanced across the middle of the back at the shoulder blades. In poorer agrarian economies, the bō remains a traditional farm work implement In styles such as [Yamani-ryū](#) or [Kenshin-ryū](#), many of the strikes are the same as those used for [yari](#) (spear) or [naginata](#) (glaive). There are stick fighting techniques native to just about every country on every continent The word "bō" is merely the Japanese word for wooden staff weapons.

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