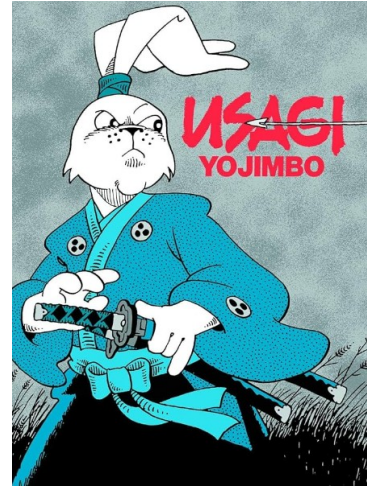


## Samurai Warrior: The Battles of Usagi Yojimbo

Usagi Yojimbo or its full name; ‘Samurai Warrior: The Battles of Usagi Yojimbo’ is a game released in 1988 for the commodore 64 platform. The game is based on the comic book series written by Stan Sakai and published by Dark Horse Comics. Player controls a rabbit samurai as he navigates through various levels filled with enemies or friendly characters. The comic series is an anthropomorphic type where human attributes are placed on animals which create the environment and the world. The game is a 2D side-scrolling combat game yet as a combat game there not only is combat but socializing aspects when it comes to the interaction with the world.



### **A Short Background:**

The comic book series takes place in Edo period Japan where the main character is a rabbit rōnin named Miyamoto Usagi who is partially based on the famous swordsman Miyamoto Musashi. As a rōnin Miyamoto Usagi wanders the land on a warrior's pilgrimage, where he offers his services as a bodyguard in exchange for money.

### **The Character:**

The character as stated before is a rabbit rōnin who is white in colour and wears a blue robe and blue hair tie with black pants. He is armed with a katana and can draw or holster the weapon on demand.



### **Movement:**

Movement as a side scroller naturally has to be mainly towards one side or opposite and in this case the movement base is towards right side of the screen. One important thing to note is that in this game there is no going back so, if we scroll and the environment moves with our player one cannot move to the left to see the environment and the character will stop once he reaches the border. If the player wants to jump one has to be in combat mode so player must consider to not be seen as a threat.



Figure 1: Miyamoto Usagi running in combat stance.

## Environment:

Environment usually consists of a green landscape decorated with trees and distant mountains including the occasional close mountain that is white in colour. There not only is nature but also bridges and villages as well both are made out of wood. The player can also get in certain buildings the get services such can be food to restore health or gamble for a quick Ryo gain.



## Combat Elements:

The combat mechanics are rooted in simplicity yet demand quick reactions. Usagi's swordplay relies on well-timed strikes and defensive manoeuvres. The controls offer a sense of responsiveness, allowing players to quickly respond to enemy actions and use offensive and defensive strategies. The combat is revolved around the only weapon that the player has which is a katana. As the game is not taking place in a battlefield rather in a civil environment reason for only the katana existing is self explanatory. Outside of combat the player has to appear civil and not threatening thus, one has to holster the weapon or player will be engaged by guards or be seen as threatening by other non-player characters.

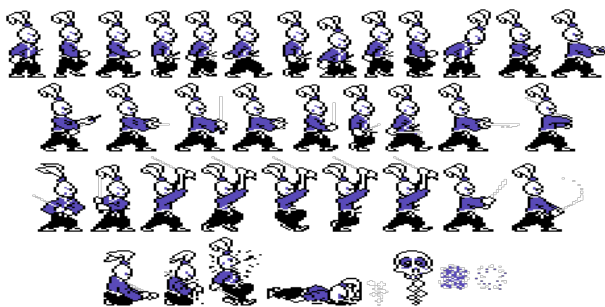


Figure 3: Miyamoto Usagi's Animation Sheet

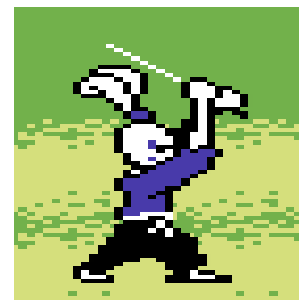


Figure 2: Miyamoto Usagi In high Attack Stance.

## Enemies:

Miyamoto Usagi will come across many enemies during his adventure which there are multiple and some optional enemies which are much more powerful than they may seem. There are the basic enemies which are ninjas and are tasked to kill Usagi whether the player is threatening or not. Ninjas can and probably will hide before ambushing or confronting Usagi and they also can disguise themselves leading to suspicion for the player as ninjas can pass the player then turn around and follow the player for a chance of attack. Hiding ninjas can be told to player if the karma points are high as villagers will choose to help Usagi. There also are mystical creatures as enemies such as dragons.



## Karma Points:

The game has a karma system where the player must keep their karma score high. If the karma score goes below 0, Usagi will commit seppuku which is the act of killing one self, ending the game there. Other than that the karma score will effect the ending of the game or impose penalties while playing the game.

The ways to increase or decrease karma score are based the choices made during interactions and engagements with non-player characters (NPCs), enemies. Winning the engagements will grant karma score while losing or running away will deduct. Also, attacking neutral NPC's will deduct karma but if the players win the engagement karma will be gained meaning a net gain but not too much gain will be there.

Karma level also influences how Usagi interacts with other characters and how other characters react to him. High karma points may lead to friendly interactions, assistance in general or information that is critical. High karma points may even lead to villagers revealing a hidden treasure location. On the other hand low karma points will lead to hostile interactions, distrust, etc. Low karma point can close off quests or hints offered by villagers.

One thing to note is that every interaction even if it is gambling will increase Karma as it is considered socializing can be considered not so normal in western culture.

## Currency:

As currency the game has Ryo which acts as a resource that the player can use to engage with villagers to buy services such as buying food to restore health or gamble to potentially gain more money.

Usagi can use the currency for buying services most services cost 1 Ryo. Getting food costs 1 Ryo and is acted by showing the weapon which will trigger the purchase event. Food restores 5 health and can be purchased multiple times. After purchasing Usagi will be handed the food bowl then Usagi will crouch to the ground and eat the food only after the animation has finished will the player be restored 5 health points.



One can also gamble to gain Ryo which also costs 1 Ryo but if the player wins they will be rewarded 1 Ryo. If the NPC loses they will denote sentences such as:

OH NO! I WILL STARVE! OH, A  
SAD LIFE TO BE A PEASANT

## Music:

Music in a mechanic sense is very simple as in when not in combat stance, weapon is holstered, the music is a catchy yet relaxed tune. This changes when the player gets in to combat where the music becomes very aggressive more filled with energy.

## UI and Game Screen:

As a comic book series inspired game the UI carries aspects of comic book style elements. Health of both enemies and player is displayed in bottom of the screen where left side is reserved for the player and right side of the place is reserved for the enemy.

There also the face of Usagi at the top left corner which displays the state Usagi is in, first one is when Usagi is eating, second one is neutral and the third one is combat.

At the very top of the screen there is the Ryo and Karma counters which is also housing the text box for conversations etc.

