



WEAPONS PRO

THROWING STAR PRO



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Use Throwing Stars Like a Pro

When you think of the ninja, one of the first weapons that comes to mind is the throwing star. In Japanese these weapons are known as the "shuriken," and the characters spell out shu "hand," ri "release," and ken "blade" which directly translated means the *hand released blade*, or is also known as the *sword hidden in user's hand*. Hollywood portrays this effective Japanese weapon as a throwing tool, but traditionally it was also used for slashing and stabbing. There are many different types of shuriken which require different throwing methods, but the good news is you don't need to be a ninja to learn how to throw one effectively, it just takes a little practice.



Source: http://projektorandom.com.br/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Shuriken_.jpg

Legend of the Shuriken (Throwing Star)

One of the most famous weapons in the ninja's arsenal is the throwing star. Nothing better triggers images of the ninja in your mind as readily as these thin flying blades of steel. You can now purchase these throwing stars at countless martial arts supply stores, which is ironic considering that the use of this weapon was one of the most closely guarded secrets of the ninja families in feudal Japan.

The legends say that a master ninja was able to hit a moving target as small as a dime with a throwing star from thirty feet, and with this level of accuracy it's understandable how the shuriken was considered to be a lethal weapon. In practice however, the throwing stars were mostly used in a secondary role to attack an assailant, because it provides a distraction as you inflict damage or injury from a safe distance. For the ninja, the throwing star was usually the distance weapon of choice. One of the best tricks a ninja could perform with this weapon was to divert an enemies attention from the true attack, just like a modern magician conceals the trick from the audience until the last second. The ninja's in feudal Japan were just as clever and skilled in the art of deception.

The First Shuriken

The original function of the throwing star was for self defense, and the first versions were made from large nails and small knives bound together. Being a small weapon it wasn't effective for a single shot kill, although poison could be painted on the spikes to make it a more powerful weapon. Typically the essence of aconite was used for this purpose, as even just a scratch from a blade tipped with aconite would be enough to kill the target. If poisons were not available, the ninja would bury their blades along with animal feces to infect their weapons, to cause tetanus or other infections following a successful cut.

There are two distinct categories when it comes to the art of shuriken. The first set of weapons are based on the shape of a star, while the other on the design of a spike. Both of these weapons can prove lethal when they are wielded by a skilled practitioner of the art. *Bo Shuriken* is the name given to the straight, spike-like blades that had one or two pointed ends, and varied in size from broad needles to broad knives. A variation of the bo shuriken were *itaken* or the "board blades" which were larger, flat bars of steel that had one or two pointed ends. Those constructed with a spike came in a variety of different styles, and could be pointed on one or both ends, depending on the needs of the particular individual it was crafted for.



The earliest designs of the shuriken were cross shaped, with four, six, eight and ten points, and a host of variations including weapons like triangles and hexagonal discs. The style we are most familiar with today are known as the *hira* "flat" shuriken, which are metal plates with three to eight points radiating out from the center. These weapons are also referred to as *shaken* "wheel blades" because of their spoke-like appearance. The hira shuriken was primarily used to harass the enemy, as the shallow points prevented this weapon from penetrating deeply enough to kill. In the hands of a skilled practitioner, the hira shuriken proved a very effective distraction when thrown into the hands or face of an armed pursuer, especially when caught by surprise.

Overall, the star-shaped shuriken's proved more versatile because they require less skill to throw accurately than the spike. The multifaceted points can be made to stick with every throw after a little practice, making these little weapons a common part of the ninja's arsenal. For accuracy with a spike-shaped shuriken, distance, velocity-to-spin ratio, rotation, and any other aerodynamic interference needed to be judged accurately before they could be thrown with any success in a combat situation.

Because there were no standardized set of rules for the manufacture and use of shuriken (unlike the katana), many different variations of these weapons emerged. Today, there are 40-50 different styles and variations of these throwing tools.

Throwing Star Use

The throwing star proved to be one of the ninja's best weapons for trickery, thanks to their ability to divert the attention of the intended target using this weapon. Stars would be thrown into walls before an attack was launched (to have a target look at the star instead of noticing what the ninja was doing), which would provide the opportunity for a surprise attack from an unsuspecting part of the room, or to sneak out of a situation while the target is distracted.

In a fight the ninja could also add an element of surprise when the throwing star is brought into play, as most targets would hang back, expecting it to be thrown. Most targets were unaware how deadly a throwing star can be when it is used as a hand-weapon, to cut, slash, stab or puncture a target. This can give a split second advantage, where your opponent is unsure of the move you're about to make when you've got a throwing star in your hand.



Source: <http://www.tofugu.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/ninja-710x420.jpg>

The throwing star could also be used in tactical ways, such as buried up to the hilt in the ground so only a single spike protrudes to injure any horses or people who step on it. Fuses were also wrapped around shuriken to enable fires to be started where they land, and there are many references to ignited poison smoke being used with shuriken to inflict damage on a large crowd of targets.

As an offensive weapon, throwing stars were typically flung at any exposed part of the body, like the eyes, face, hands or feet, to cut and injure an unsuspecting target. The use of throwing stars on victims who do not notice where the ninja has thrown it from gave rise to the legends of the invisible swordsman. Glancing slashes from throwing stars meant that the shuriken would continue travelling on and be lost in the dark, which built on the mystery and legends of stealth the original ninjas fed to build fear into their opponents.

The truth however, is that the throwing star was just another tool that helped to serve the ninja's agenda, adding to the mystery that surrounds these ancient warriors but without being mysterious at all. The throwing star was used by both samurai and ninja alike, because of its ability to function like a sword, spear or arrow. It became very convenient for fighting thanks to its portability, light-weight, and the fact it was so easily concealed. The ninja would bring out their throwing stars depending on the situation or to act in their

defense.



Source: <http://img.gawkerassets.com/img/17v713yl49dtsjpg/ku-xlarge.jpg>

Remember that the meaning of the shuriken is a hand released blade, and that the key goal of the throwing star is to distract a target, rather than attempting to kill or maim. Because of their ability to be hidden during an encounter, they can be unleashed at just the right time to

surprise an enemy and catch them off-guard. Once their attention is caught by the new weapon into a situation, whether it is thrown or not, the ninja is then free to do what they had originally planned.

Learning how to accurately throw a star was a hallmark of the Japanese ninja.

Today, there are a number of different martial arts where people still train with throwing stars, in a sport that is very similar to knife throwing. It's mainly associated with the martial art style of ninjutsu, but you can also learn the correct techniques in the Japanese kobudo and sword schools if you would like to begin formal training to throw a star.

Throwing Star Construction

A shuriken was traditionally made from metal objects found around the home, as ninja's constructed small, hand-held blades that they could throw with deadly accuracy. Ninjas would build their shuriken from items like long nails, knife blades, or any other suitable flat pieces of metal. Often they would be crafted from washers and even coins, because their main use was to be a cheap weapon that was effective, yet cheap to construct and therefore readily disposable. Remember the movie where the ninja is able to grab any metal object and launch it successfully at their target?

The true spirit of shuriken-jutsu is that you make use of whatever is available to craft a bladed throwing weapon that can be concealed in your palm. The key was to ensure the size, shape and balance combine into an effective throwing weapon, but what the shuriken was actually made from was of secondary importance. Today, there's a huge amount of choice in materials available for your own shuriken.



One peculiarity all traditional shuriken share is that they are charred. Silk is covered over a heated shuriken to cake the charcoal onto the surface. This forms a layer that prevents the shuriken from rusting, and also makes it less noticeable. An added benefit of this tradition technique was that it makes it easier for poison to be painted on the surface, and gives the ninja a better grip thanks to the gritty face of the throwing star.

Of the 40-50 different types of throwing stars available, the main types are as follows:

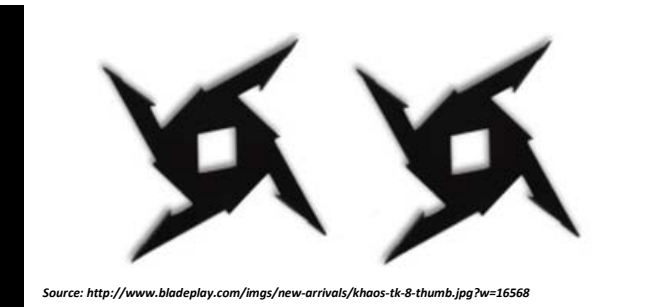
Cross shaped shuriken. These were the most common, where two sharp prongs of metal were fixed together in a cross. The ends were filed into points, and often the edges were also sharpened to ensure they would inflict a deep wound on their intended target. Folding versions of the cross shaped shuriken also exist.



Three and four-pointed shuriken. These throwing stars were originally crafted for this purpose, and have not been re-made from preexisting materials.



Swastika-shaped shuriken. These throwing stars can inflict a large amount of damage on your target, because the angles of this weapon are double edged.



Multiple point shuriken. Because of the amount of spikes these can be very easy throwing stars to get to stick to your target, but these are best used for a distraction or a small injury, rather than an attempt to kill.



Today, throwing stars are typically made from stainless steel and are readily available in many knife shops in North America, Europe or via the internet. In some countries like Canada, Germany and the United Kingdom it is illegal to possess or be carrying a throwing star. In the United States throwing stars are prohibited in some states (like California, New York and Indiana), many others allow them, and in a handful of states there are specific local legislations that must be followed for shuriken owners. Be aware of the local regulations governing throwing stars in your state, to ensure you don't get in trouble for having or using these weapons.

Buying Throwing Stars

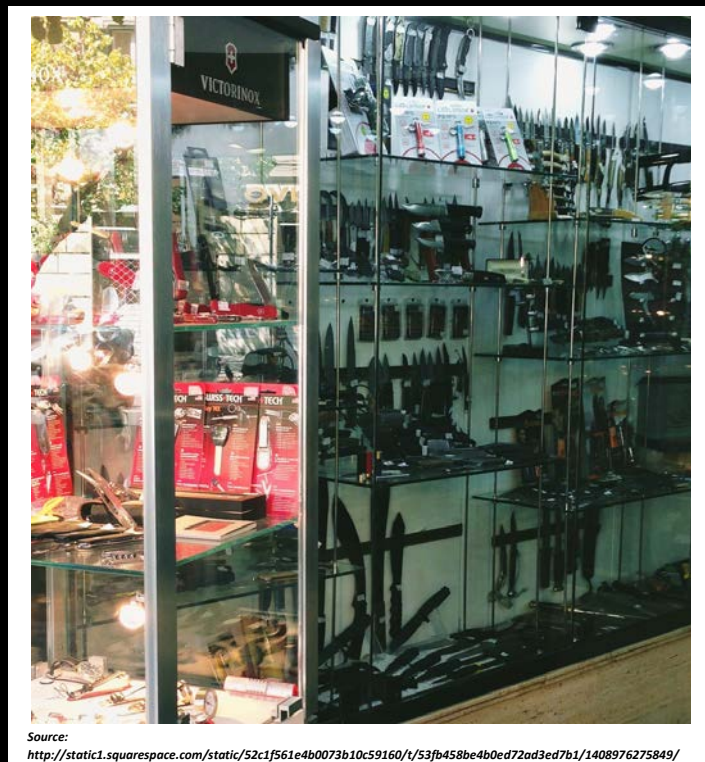
What makes throwing stars a fun sport is that it's relatively straightforward to get started, and you don't need to invest a huge amount of money in equipment. All you need to get started is a set of throwing stars, and something you can practice throwing them into.

Here's what you need:

1. **Throwing stars.** Obviously. There is a huge range to choose from, but when you're first getting started opt for something simple, without all the flashiness. Look for stars that are uniform, solidly constructed, and with 4-6 points to give you a better chance your throws will 'stick' when you're practicing the first few times.
2. **Targets.** You don't need to go for anything fancy on day one, a simply piece of pine board is good enough to give you something to aim at. The wood is soft which makes a great target surface, and you'll have better luck getting your throws to stick in a piece of board than a target like a live tree. We are adamantly against throwing your stars at anything alive, because with enough practice you will eventually kill the tree you're using for target practice. It's better to use an old piece of board instead.

Because this sport has such a low barrier to entry, almost anyone can learn to throw a star. For anyone under the age of 18, please ensure you have close parental supervision as throwing stars are weapons, and they can be very dangerous if they're improperly handled. There's a wide variety of different throwing stars available, with a number of points, shapes and sizes to practice Shuriken-jutsu (the art of throwing a star). It takes effort to be able to consistently hit your target every time, but once you get the hang of it you'll find you can hit the target with accuracy again and again. The only difficulty with finding the perfect throwing stars is that there is not a single source that carries all the different types available. Because they are a specialty item, you need to do your research and discover the pros/cons with each particular model. For beginners remember that you really just need a simple four or six-pointed star to get started.

The best place to find throwing stars are your local specialty stores and knife stores, because you can actually get a feel for each individual star in your hand before you buy. If you have nothing available in your area, as follows are the best places you can look and browse throwing stars online.



Here's where you can find throwing stars online:

- [All Ninja Gear](#)
- [Amazon](#)
- [Blade Play](#)
- [BUDK](#)
- [Cutlery Wholesaler](#)
- [Karate Mart](#)
- [Knife Cave](#)
- [Sakura Martial Arts](#)
- [Swords Knives and Daggers](#)

Choosing the Throwing Star for You

When you're looking at the different types of throwing stars available, there are six main factors to consider. This includes the durability, appearance, throw-ability, stick-ability, cost and what they are made from. It's difficult to find your preference on every aspect, and our advice to any newcomers to this sport is to focus on finding well constructed throwing stars that throw and stick well.

It's understandable that the cheaper your throwing stars are, the higher chances they have been constructed in an inferior manner. This can be great if you're getting started and you can definitely have a lot of fun using cheap shuriken, but remember their durability will be a little less, and they won't quite perform as good as a high quality rolled steel throwing star. What makes this hobby excellent is that for a relatively low investment you can buy a range of different throwing stars before you settle on the one you prefer to throw. No star is right for everyone, and we advise experimenting with 4-5 different types until you find the style you prefer.



Source: <http://www.japanstyle.info/wp-content/uploads/2010/06/shuriken.jpg>

What does cold rolled steel mean?

If you're looking at buying a set of throwing stars, many manufacturers talk about the process that has been used to make the star, and cold-rolled steel is the best. If there is no mention of this, it's probably because they haven't used this technique, which means the product you are buying will probably be cheaper, and will also be less durable. Our recommendation is to always look for cold rolled steel in the construction of throwing stars you intend to use, other metals are fine only if you intend the throwing stars to be display pieces on your mantle.

Safety tips before getting started

Both the ninja and samurai were masters of many weapons, and their ancient techniques are still being practiced to this day. In addition to the confidence boost being able to protect yourself gives, learning to use specialist weapons like the throwing star help you to build muscle memory, forges your intuitive reflexes and hones the natural movement of your body.

But before you can get started, just like handling any weapon, there are a number of safety issues to consider when you're first getting started. Because of all the variation in the types of stars, the best way to hold your own requires some experimentation. Never rest your index finger or any part of your hand on one of the sharpened portions of the blade, this holds true for when you're throwing as well as when you're simply holding your shuriken. Pay particular attention to your index finger, as this one is the most likely to get slashed when you mishandle a sharp throwing star.

It may seem counter-intuitive, but with handling your throwing stars correctly comes the issue of foot safety. Never, ever, use throwing stars with bare feet, because as soon as you drop one you will realize why we recommend that you wear covered shoes. A dropped shuriken is a painful thing to have land on your foot with a spike down. In this same line of thought, remember to keep a wide stance, so that a dropped throwing star lands between your feet if you do happen to drop one.



Source: <https://uproxx.files.wordpress.com/2013/03/archer-injuries-ninjastar.jpg>

Finally, never forget that throwing stars are a weapon. Just like a gun, never aim or point your throwing star at something you are not intending to throw it directly at. Because of the level of skill needed to throw accurately, it is very easy to make a mistake and you should never, ever throw a star if there is another person or your family pet inside the target area.

Learn to Throw a Star

When you have the right equipment and some room to practice it is surprisingly easy to start practicing your ability to throw. After some time you'll begin developing the hand-eye coordination you need to throw any number of common items with an improved proficiency, as the general principles of distance, trajectory and force all remain the same.



Source: http://i.dailymail.co.uk/i/pix/2013/08/07/article-2385881-1B2ED4AB000005DC-422_964x621.jpg

The good thing about throwing stars is that they have a point on every side, so you can toss them at a target without having to be concerned about the revolutions of the weapon, like you would other weapons like knives or throwing axes. Before your practice session, give your throwing stars a quick wipe down with isopropyl alcohol to disinfect the blades. This ensures that if you do make a mistake and cut yourself, you're not going to get a nasty infection from an unclean blade.

Holding the throwing star

The first step is to learn how to correctly grip a throwing star. There are a number of preferred ways that the schools will teach, and the most common is to simply grip one point of the star between your index finger and your thumb. This grip is used for the two most effective throws you will make with a shuriken, the overhead throw, and the horizontal throw.

Depending on the size and shape of the shuriken, you may need to grab it closer or farther from the center. Large shuriken that have a huge number of stars don't try to squeeze it into your hand, you can grab one of the tips to make it easier to throw and give it more power, but it will be less accurate. Gripping it closer to the center makes it more accurate, but it needs extra power put into the throw which makes it difficult to do. Play around with the type of grip that is most comfortable, and the position of the fingers which works best for you and the stars you're planning to throw. Hold the ninja star for a bit before you throw it to get used to the weight and feel.

At first, practice holding your throwing star in the palm of your hand. Aim to keep it firmly enough that you don't drop it, but not holding it so tight that the blades cut your hand. Once you're comfortable with the weight, slip the throwing star from your palm into the position where you are gripping it between your index finger and your thumb. Keep repeating this movement until you're confident you can do

Releasing the Throwing Star

Now that you feel comfortable with the throwing star in your hand, the next step is to practice the motion of releasing the star. Correctly releasing the star at the right moment is what sends the blade in an accurate flight. There are two main methods to throw a star, and the first we will cover is the overhead throw because it is simpler for beginners to learn. The other method is horizontally, and follows the motion of a frisbee.

The Overhead throw

One of the most straightforward throws you can make is the overhead throw, and it is the one where beginners can see almost immediate success. First though, you need to understand you are not following the stereotypical ninja throws you see in the movies where they fling out a dozen stars in as many seconds, this is a basic and fundamental throw to get you started. Our guide will cover the use of a simple four pointed throwing star in our examples.

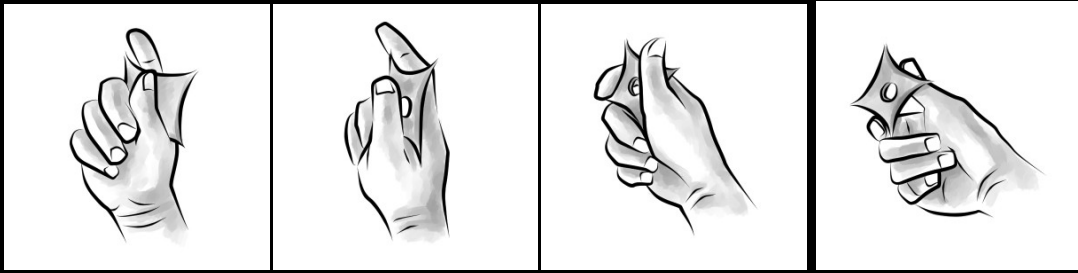
The first step is to hold your throwing star in your dominant hand. For most people this will be your right, so pick up your shuriken while being careful to keep the spikes away from your fingers and any other fleshy parts of your hand. Most four pointed stars are relatively easy to grip without impaling yourself, but it is better to be careful, especially if this is your first time.



Source: <http://www.warrior-concepts-online.com/images/shurikenoverhead.jpg>

As you grip the star, point your index finger up, and curl your middle finger over the star so the weapon sits cradled against your thumb. Practice this hold, as this is the basic grip that will enable you to continually throw your star in an accurate manner. This grip is the basic starting point for the overhead throw, and in addition to accuracy it will help you put a great deal of spin on your star as you throw. The trick is to ensure you really send the star spinning when you release. This is how the shuriken is intended to be thrown, as they are designed to fly better when thrown with a good spin.

Holding the Throwing Star in Your Hand



Source: <http://www.throwninjastar.com/throw/>

The overall motion of this throw is most similar to that of a baseball pitch, however just like the ninja, you need to be much more subtle in your movements than what it takes on a baseball pitch. The real power in your throw will be generated in the wrist, and the movement of your body, not in how hard you can fling your arm. If you put too much force behind the throw and your arm is too far forward when you release you'll drive your shuriken into the ground. Release too early and you'll send it shooting into the sky.

Discipline was one of the most famed traits of the ninja, so your goal here is to keep practicing the flick motion of your wrist, while keeping the remainder of your arm relatively still.

As you practice imagine the movement you follow when you throw a dart. Your arm will move at most 12 inches, and with the shuriken your goal is to use a similar motion, but incorporating a flick of the wrist to send your throwing star spinning out of your hand and at the target. Once you complete the movement your palm will end up facing you, with your thumb pointed straight up in the air. Before you start throwing your shuriken about willy-nilly, practice turning your hand and wrist in a careful manner to ensure your fingers will not slice open as you release the throwing star. Reading it here can make this entire process seem complicated, however with a little bit of practice on getting the movements right initially will enable you to learn quickly.



Source: <http://www.throwninjastar.com/throw/>

To help clarify the amount of movement needed in your arm, the above figures illustrate how far your arm should travel. Start with your hand just above your head, bringing your arm forward about 12 inches before you send the throwing star flying. As you practice the movement slowly (do not throw anything yet), check to ensure your wrist is pointing straight up and down at the second step, with your index finger curled over one of the prongs to help it spin once you release.

Now you're ready to try a few practice throws.

Setup your target, and remember that we only ever practice throwing these stars at inanimate objects. This means no trees, animals, or little brothers. Find a big piece of pine board, an old door, a flattened cardboard box, or anything else that will be able to absorb the impact from your throwing stars, and allow you to get a feel for each throw. Clear the area between yourself and the target, and ensure that there is nothing in the direction you are facing that may become damage if hit with a stray throw.

Start approximately 3-5 feet from the target, and set your feet into position. For the overhead throw using your right hand, plant your right foot forward with your right hand holding the star held up beside your ear. Bend your knees slightly and relax. The trick with a good throw is to remain calm, and not tense up because you over-think the motions. Focus on your target, and do a couple of test arm moves to allow you to properly time when you plan to release the throwing star.

To throw the star, extend your arm downwards from the place it starts from next to your head. You should release the throwing star once your arm is straight out in front of you. This part is easy, but the real trick is correctly flicking your wrist as you extend your arm, sending the shuriken spinning as fast as you are able, directing it in the trajectory you were aiming for. As you throw your arm forward and flick your wrist, release your star. Based on the small amount of movement your arm travels, you will be surprised at how effective your throw will be. Remember, you're making only about 12 inches of forward movement with your hand, so focus on keeping your throwing movements subtle and directed. Right now your throwing star should be spinning towards your target, and now the next step is a massive amount of practice.



Source: <http://i.ytimg.com/vi/hUAXUoHmlx8/maxresdefault.jpg>

Begin by lightly tossing your blade straight into your target, without concerning yourself over the distance or power. Starting off, the target doesn't need to be too far from you. With practice you'll improve, but the first few throws are going to feel awkward. Once you learn the proper technique, you can focus on boosting your distance and power. Both of these come as a result of continued practice and dedication.

Go and give this technique a try, right now. You'll probably find this is actually quite hard. Beginners will often mess up their timing, and it will take time to learn when to release the star so it's "just right," as well as the proper movement to flick your wrist correctly.

Remember that right now we're only practicing technique, so don't start throwing your shuriken as hard as you can. It takes time to perfect the throw, so don't get frustrated if you take a little time to perfect the technique at



first. One of the biggest benefits of throwing stars over knives or a throwing spike is that they have multiple points, which makes your chances of a successful strike much higher. After a few rounds of practice, you should be sticking the majority of your throws. As you get better, start stepping back another couple of feet from the target. The blade should be slipping effortlessly through your fingers and past your fingertips, as you grip the blades firmly but with flexibility in each through. When you manage to get this technique correct each blade will fly in an accurate trajectory.

To improve your abilities even further, (once you're sticking about 80% of your throws), use these tricks to add power and distance to your throwing star abilities:

- **Use your weight to add power.** Start your throw with your weight on your back leg, but as you throw your arm forward transfer your weight forward onto your front leg as you release the star. The rocking motion is exactly the same technique boxers use with planted feet and a twisting hip movement to deliver a stronger punch. Real power and accuracy are generated when you add the motion of your moving body to that of your throwing arm.
- **Rock your body to help you throw multiple shuriken faster.** Rock your body backwards and forwards and coordinate your breathing with each action, breathing in as you rock back, and exhale as you release the blade to add additional force to each throw.
- **Keep your shoulder still.** The real power in your throw comes from a perfectly executed wrist flick, combined with the forward motion of your shifting weight. It does not come from the strength in your arm, so practice the technique and flick your wrist, to add more spin and acceleration on your star as you release it. When you nail this technique perfectly, the throwing star will continue to accelerate just after you release it, making each strike even more powerful.
- **Tense your fingers and wrist on release.** Adding a slight tension at the moment of release will add accuracy to your throws, and continue to work on it until you feel the blade is slipping out of your hand by itself. You should not be flinging or slamming the shuriken into the target with the muscles of your arm. When the blade slips from your grasp at the right instant, the blade will cut through the air with an accurate and deadly trajectory.

- **Increase the distance.** The only way a throwing star can be effective is if you can hit the target, so practice at 5 feet, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30 feet until you're confident in your accuracy and force at a range of different distances. You'll quickly learn the correct amount of force required as the distance increases and with enough practice your muscle memory will be able to kick in making it an almost automatic reaction when you need to throw a star at any distance.
- **Your non-throwing arm.** You can use this to add stability to your stance by holding it in the fighting position in front of you, or you can also use it to hold your remaining throwing stars at the ready. Some people prefer holding their arm in tight, while others like to keep it loose. Practice until you find a position that is both comfortable for you, and enables you to throw with consistent accuracy.

The real key to tossing throwing stars at a target with frightening accuracy is continued practice. Master the movements and you can turn a simply pointed piece of metal into a deadly missile of ninja destruction.



Source: <http://www.ninjaencyclopedia.com/weapon/shuriken.html>

The Horizontal Throw

Both of the grips you have learnt can be used with this throw, either holding the center of the shuriken with your index finger and thumb, or with your index finger straightened and your thumb pinning the star against it. You'll quickly learn which is most comfortable for you as you practice, the key is to find accuracy and power in every throw.

Do not start practicing this throw until you are very confident in your ability to launch an accurate overhead throw. Because of the direction your arm travels when performing this throw, there is much more that can potentially go wrong if you throw incorrectly. When you're practicing the overhead throw, if you release it too early or too late, the star will either shoot straight up in the air, or smack down on the ground just in front of you. There's not much room for something to go wrong, unless you really release it late and send it into your foot. With a horizontal throw however, releasing a star too early or too late and you will send it zooming off to either side of you, causing havoc to anything that may be in your path. You really need to have an entire clear area spanning at least 180 degrees in front of you before you start practicing this throw.

To perform the horizontal throw, start by positioning your left leg forward when holding the throwing star in your right hand. Tuck your elbow in tight to your body, and remember to swing your arm outward as you throw. The motion you want to perform is very similar to the throw you make as you toss a frisbee. Pivot your arm at the elbow, in a reverse motion to the overhead throw, and use the same wrist-flicking motion as your arm reaches a full extension as you release the throwing star. The shuriken should be horizontal as you throw it, but if you want to send it flying over a longer distance you can angle your elbow upwards so the star shoots higher in the air.



Source: <http://i.ytimg.com/vi/OeZb0pQsOso/maxresdefault.jpg>

If you want to generate more power in this throw remember to snap your wrist as fast as you can. Unfortunately, this throwing technique does not let you generate as much power as the overhead throw, but there is one remarkable aspect. Speed. As your confidence rises throwing stars horizontally, there is a new challenge you can take. We're now going to try stacking multiple shuriken so you can fire them off from your right hand in rapid succession.

To learn how to perform this technique with speed, follow these steps:

1. Stand with your left foot forward, and your feet shoulder-width apart
2. Stack the multiple shuriken in your non-throwing hand
3. Holding the shuriken horizontally with your thumb gripping them in the center
4. Use the weight of your body to rock backwards and forwards with each throw
5. After each throw, slide the next shuriken off the top of the stack with your throwing hand
6. Grip the shuriken in the center and throw it towards to target
7. Rock back and repeat the movement with the next shuriken
8. Keep practicing at a steady pace until the movement of your arm and body are in unison
9. Slowly increase the speed of your throws until you can fire off shuriken in rapid succession

This final challenge is one of the most advanced shuriken throwing techniques, and it takes dedication to learn how to do it correctly. Once you do, it's an incredibly rewarding feeling.

As your confidence increases, try increasing the distance to your target, throwing multiple stars as fast as you can, at both moving targets, while you yourself are moving. If you're feeling really brave, why not try using your non-dominant hand to throw instead. This presents a massive challenge in itself, and whilst it is easier said than done, it is a worthwhile goal to strive for in mastering the technique of the throwing star.

Looking After Your Throwing Stars

Once you've got an arsenal of throwing stars and you've been out in the yard throwing them all afternoon, you can't simply toss them back in their box after a practice session if you want them to remain in prime condition. We all miss the target at some point, which results in dirt/mud, and an assortment of grime on your throwing stars (depending on where it actually lands). Wipe off any contaminants with a damp towel, or you could even use a little isopropyl alcohol to break up any grease. Always dry your throwing stars before you put them away, even stainless steel will eventually rust if not taken care of.

If you hit something hard you may nick or dull the edges, so sharpen these with a whet stone to keep your throwing star ready for action. Finally, give them a wipe with a little oil, like WD-40 or 3 in 1 oil, and this will keep them in prime condition ready for your next training session. Remember to give them a wipe off the next time you use them, as any remnants of the oil may cause the throwing stars to become slippery in your hands, and that's when accidents happen.

Sharpening a Shuriken

Just like a kitchen knife, after repeated use your throwing stars will eventually lose their edge. This is easily remedied, but it just takes a little effort. In many cases, you'll actually be able to get a sharper edge than what the stars originally came with, so long as you take the time to do this stage right.

One piece of advice? Never, ever use a grinder to put an edge on your throwing stars. It will do more damage than good, and if you grind off too much metal the stars will become unbalanced. What you need is a sharpening stone, and simple stroke at a 20-25 degree angle, with about 40 strokes on each sharpened edge to get a perfect finish. When you finish sharpening, clean your star with a damp cloth, wipe it dry, and use a little oil to help keep each shuriken in prime condition.

Treating your Throwing Stars with Respect

Remember, that throwing stars are a weapon, and can be just as dangerous in the wrong hand as a gun. Here's five tips to ensure you're using your new weapons both safely, and responsibly.

1. Keep shuriken out of the reach of your children. Of course under the right supervision you can determine when you want to teach your children how to correctly throw a star, but they should never be left alone with these sharp and dangerous weapons. In addition, make sure you store them in a place that your kids cannot reach.



2. When you first buy a set of throwing stars they will usually come from the retailer quite blunt, so invest also in a good quality whet-stone, so you can sharpen your new shuriken when you get home. They must be sharp if you want them to properly stick into a target.
3. Never grip a throwing star tight in the palm of your hand. The star shape combined with the extremely sharp spikes and sharpened edges means it can do significant damage to the soft inner flesh of your hand. The shuriken is designed to be held between your index (or middle) finger and thumb.
4. Don't try to advance too fast. It takes time and patience to learn how to throw a star correctly, and remember not to advance into more difficult throws like the horizontal until you are confidently tossing overhead throws with more than 80% accuracy.
5. Never use a throwing star against an animal or a person. Just like stabbing someone with a knife, impaling them with a shuriken is also breaking the law.

Using Throwing Stars for Self-Defense

To ensure you're ready to use your new set of throwing stars for self defense, you can't simply let them sit in your cupboard collecting dust. Unlike a firearm that (in essence) is simply "aim and shoot," there is a certain amount of skill required to get the technique needed to throw a shuriken effectively. Practice does not involve sitting and watching 100's of hours of old kung fu movies. If you want to safely and responsibly be able to use your shuriken in a self-defense situation, you need to:

- Practice the basic moves, and master the grip and throw to use these appropriately
- Practice how the angle of your wrist affects the way your throwing stars cut through the air
- Practice the amount of force needed to successfully strike at a range of distances

The situations you can use shuriken in your home to protect yourself are limited, as these weapons are meant only to be a nuisance, momentarily distracting an intruder with a noise from another part of the room, or injuring them to cause a split-second break that allows you to escape or perform a more aggressive move. They are not usually lethal enough to be used effectively against an intruder, and once you've exhausted your supply you will be unarmed.



Source: <http://moonshotpr.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/Ninja-Star-CC-Funky64.jpg>

Throwing stars can be very effective in the hands of a trained user, allowing you greater range to harm your opponent, with a versatility that can also be used in hand to hand combat. Shuriken are used best as an additional weapon in your arsenal, giving you an edge in a fight, but should not be relied upon as your only means of defense.

Practice makes perfect, and be sure to keep your skills as well as your shuriken sharp.

