

ROKKAKU

ASSEMBLY AND FLYING INSTRUCTIONS

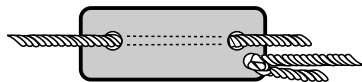
The Rokkaku (pronounced roke-cock-coo) is a traditional Japanese bowed kite design. A basic hexagon in shape, it features six corners, a long center spine, and two cross spars. The bridle connects at four points.

ASSEMBLY

STEP 1: Unfold the kite and lay it with the bridle side down. Two cross spars should be fixed in place by the edge pockets, with the ends of the bridle lines extended through the sail and looped around the rods.

Step 2: Attach the center spine.

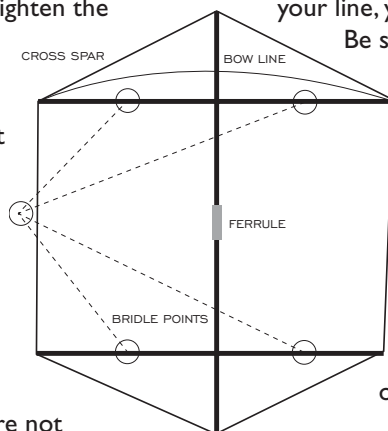
Connect the two pieces together using the metal ferrule. Then insert the spine into the pockets at the top and bottom of the kite. Note that the spine goes *under* the loose bow lines that are attached near the cross spars. Fix the spine in place using the ties.



Step 3: Bow the kite for flight by moving the sliders to tighten the two bow strings.

Without some arch in the sail, your rokkaku will not fly. The amount of arch depends on the amount of wind. Usually two inches of arch works for light wind and four inches for stronger winds. Make sure the top and bottom of the kite are bowed equally. Take care not to bend the spars too much and break them.

Step 4: Attach a flying line to the bridle on the front of the kite and go fly! Use 75 - 150 pound line.



Rokkaku Tuning

You can adjust a rokkaku's stability and maneuverability by changing the bridle or bow of the kite.

Bridle Adjustments - For heavier or lighter winds, adjust the point where you connect your flying line to the bridle. Slide the ring up or down along the two bridle lines. This changes the flight angle of the kite. Make sure your bridle is balanced. This means the lines on the left side should be the same length from the top of the kite as the lines on the right.

Bow Adjustments - Less bow in light winds and more bow in strong winds will improve performance. Some fliers like equal tensions in both bow lines. Others prefer more bow in the bottom. Experiment! But be careful not to bow the kite so much the spars break!

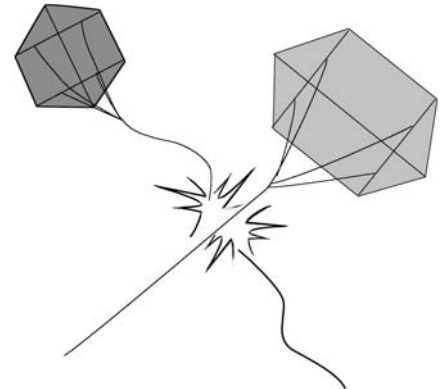
Combat Fundamentals

Rokkakus can be used for fun flying, or for traditional kite fighting. The object is to ground other kites using either your line, your kite, or the wind.

Be sure the kite fliers you fight with all agree to the game!

Once your kite is cut or touches the ground for any reason, you are out. There are two basic techniques for grounding an opponent's kite.

Tipping - Tipping is the easiest and safest way to ground an opponent. By catching one of the kite's six corners with your flying line and then quickly moving position, you are often able to tip or up-end an opponent. They may recover and come after you or they may crash.



Cutting - When two kitelines come in contact, the one moving the fastest will cut, melt, or burn through the other. **Don't use blades or glass!** The object is to concentrate the friction in one particular point on an opposing line. Try pumping your line an effort to saw through an opponent's line.

Safety, Safety, Safety!

Battles are great fun - but only if they are done carefully and everyone follows basic safety rules.

Gloves are recommended to protect your hands. All intentional physical contact should be strictly prohibited including pushing, tripping, or purposely running line around people. The object is to make the kites fight - not the people. Cutting implements other than flying line should not be allowed. Make sure there is good space for the contest and for the kites to fall to the ground. Make sure you don't infringe on any kites not in the battle. And most important, make sure you have fun!

For official rules on kite fighting, visit the web page of the American Kitefliers Association at www.AKA.kite.org.