

INSIDE

# NINJUTSU

NINJUTSU, BUJINKAN & JAPANESE MARTIAL ARTS MAGAZINE | SPECIAL ISSUE | AUG 2024

## Understanding the UK Ninja Sword Ban

- ➔ Legal definition
- ➔ How the law affects dojos
- ➔ New penalties

WHY THE BAN WAS  
INTRODUCED

TRAIN  
WITHOUT  
BREAKING  
THE LAW

**BANNED**

Impact on  
Martial Arts  
Practitioners

# FOREWORD



## SPECIAL ISSUE

*The art of ninjutsu has always been shaped by **adaptation** — by responding to the world as it is, not as we wish it to be. In 2025, practitioners in the UK face a significant change: the outlawing of “ninja swords” in both public and private possession. This is not just a matter of policy; it is the result of a deeply tragic event that shocked a community and accelerated government action. In these pages, we aim to explain the new law, the reasons behind it, and — crucially — how ninjutsu practitioners can continue to train and preserve the art within the law.*

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## DISCLAIMER

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A person dressed as a ninja, wearing a black hooded robe and a black face mask that leaves only their eyes visible. They are holding a katana sword with both hands, pointing the blade towards the viewer. The background is solid black.

**NINJA  
SWORDS  
BANNED  
IN THE UK**



**What the  
UK ninja  
sword  
ban  
means  
for you**

# The Case That Changed the Law

## A Tragedy in Wolverhampton That Sparked a National Crackdown

On a summer evening in Wolverhampton, 16-year-old Ronan Kanda walked to a friend's house to buy a PlayStation controller. He never made it home. In a case of mistaken identity, he was attacked and fatally stabbed with a ninja sword purchased online. His attackers, teenagers Prabjeet Veadhesa and Sukhman Shergill, were later convicted of murder.

Ronan's killing sparked national outrage. Politicians, campaigners, and the media focused on the ease with which a teenager could buy such a weapon online and bring it to the streets. Calls for reform quickly turned into legislative action.



# Understanding the UK Ninja Sword Ban

From this month onwards, it is illegal to possess one even in private. The maximum penalty is currently six months' imprisonment, but this will rise to two years under strengthened measures. Carrying any bladed weapon in public already carries a sentence of up to four years. The ban also prohibits the sale, supply, and importation of these swords.

## NINJA SWORD DEFINITION

The new law defines a "ninja sword" as having:

A straight cutting edge

A blade between 14 and 24 inches in length (35–60 cm)

A tanto-style point

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## Why the Ban Was Introduced

The Home Office cites public safety as the driving force. In the past decade, knife crime in England and Wales has risen by 87%, with 54,587 offences recorded in 2024 — a 2% increase from the previous year, and one of the highest rates in Europe.

Police forces have already seen significant weapon hand-ins during amnesties: West Yorkshire Police received over 80 bladed weapons, including 66 ninja swords; Devon and Cornwall Police took in 287 ninja swords.

Officials argue that these weapons have become attractive to teenagers due to their portrayal in popular culture, and that limiting access is a necessary step to prevent further tragedies.

# Impact on Martial Arts Practitioners

For ninjutsu dojos, collectors, and performers, the ban brings immediate challenges. Straight-bladed shikomizue-style swords used in kata, demonstrations, or display now fall under the prohibition if they match the defined dimensions and point style. While exemptions exist for museums and certain theatrical productions, these require specific conditions and proof that the weapon cannot be misused. For most practitioners, the focus must shift to safe, legal alternatives.



## Safe & Legal Training Alternatives

Martial artists can still train effectively by using tools that replicate the handling and feel of the banned sword without breaching the law. Alternatives allow practitioners to keep their kata authentic while respecting both safety and legal boundaries.



# FAQ for Practitioners

## ANSWERS



### Can I keep my current sword?

Only if it does not meet the legal definition, or if it is an antique or display piece under exemption.



### What if I blunt the edge?

A blunted steel sword may still be illegal if it matches the dimensions and point style.



### Does the law affect re-enactment groups?

Only if the weapon meets the defined criteria and is not covered by a legal exemption.

## Curved Samurai Swords

On April 6th 2008 a law came into effect banning samurai and other curved swords with a blade length of 50 cm or more.

## Closing Reflection

Weapons laws change, but the heart of martial arts remains constant. In adapting to the ninja sword ban, practitioners can demonstrate the same qualities the art has always prized — ingenuity, discipline, and respect for life. The steel may be gone from our dojos, but the spirit remains unbroken.

# How To Train Legally

## Safe & Legal Training Alternatives

- ✓ Wooden bokken crafted with a straight edge to match historical proportions
- ✓ Polypropylene training swords with realistic weight but no sharpened edge
- ✓ Blunted steel replicas registered and kept under display exemption rules
- ✓ Foam or padded trainers for sparring and youth classes







# FEATURES

1. Explore Ancient Wisdom: "Inside Ninjutsu" serves as your gateway to the ancient world of ninjutsu and traditional Japanese martial arts. Delve into centuries-old wisdom, techniques, and philosophies preserved within the pages.
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MARTIAL ARTS MAGAZINE

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As a dedicated platform for the Bujinkan community, our magazine provides exclusive insights into this renowned martial arts organization. Learn about its history, practices, and the global Bujinkan community.

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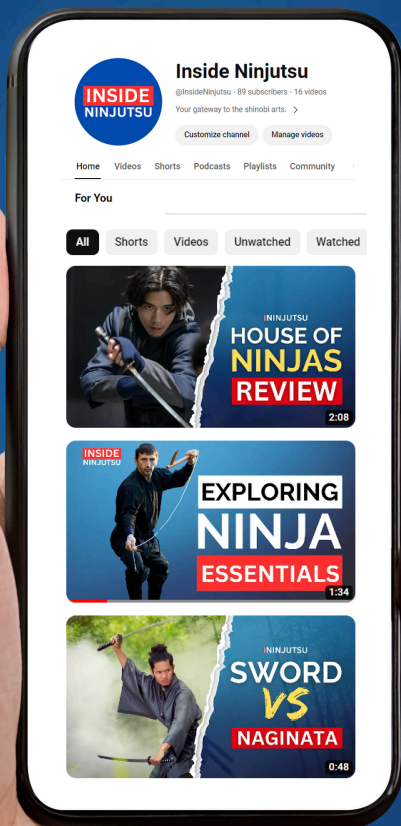
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