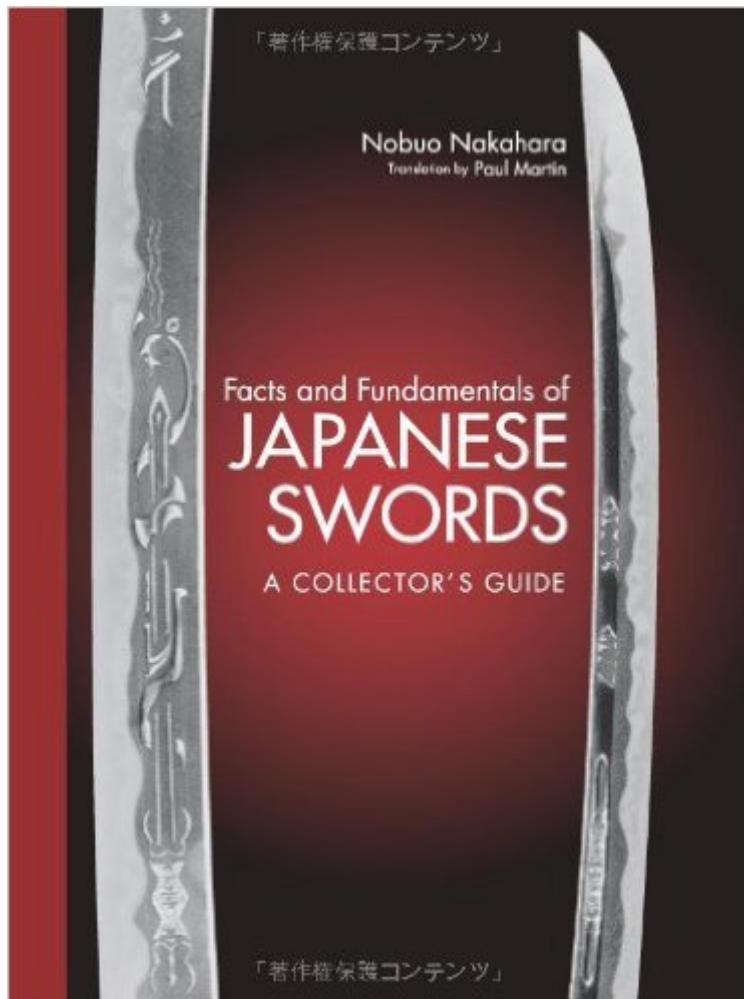


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Facts And Fundamentals Of Japanese Swords: A Collector's Guide



Synopsis

Facts and Fundamentals of Japanese Swords is a practical, comprehensive volume that offers information, along with 300 photos and illustrations, enabling collectors to evaluate the veracity and quality of swords that they are considering acquiring or already have in their collections. The book is divided into three sections: An Overview of the Japanese Sword, The Forged Sword, and Consequences of Modification and Wear. Each section provides very specific, useful lessons by the author that serve as virtual hands-on experiences. With easily understandable examples, the author precisely instructs readers on how to discern and obtain a "healthy" blade, while avoiding fakes or potentially problematic blades. In addition, he shows not only the difference in styles and shapes of blades, but explains what the differences mean and how to interpret them from a buyer's/collector's point of view. Paul Martin, a Japanese sword researcher and curator, is a former member of the Department of Japanese Antiquities at the British Museum, London. He has translated the text, and drawn on his extensive experience and expertise in the field to adapt the author's theories and discussions, making them more accessible to Western readers.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

As I've noted in other reviews, the appreciation of nihonto (Japanese swords) for those who don't speak or read Japanese is a bit of a challenge owing to a relative dearth of widely available books on the finer points of studying these antique weapons and works of art. We are fortunate to now have several different introductory books in print (by the likes of John Yumoto, Leon Kapp/Yoshindo

Yoshihara, Kazan Sato, Clive Sinclair, and Colin Roach), some recent museum exhibition catalogues from exhibits of nihonto in the U.S., and now this latest welcome addition, "Facts and Fundamentals of Japanese Swords: A Collector's Guide." This book is an English-language revision and translation of a Japanese-language book by Nobuo Nakahara, a researcher and expert on nihonto. Unlike most other books out there, this is not so much an introductory overview that focuses on history, culture, or over-arching basics with pretty color pictures, but more of a specialty text that focuses on some finer details of studying nihonto (i.e. the sword itself). And unlike the similarly translated encyclopediac work, "The Connoisseur's Book of Japanese Swords" by Kokan Nagayama, this is a much slimmer volume (191 pages) written in a less dense and more accessible, conversational style. The book is divided into four main sections: An Overview (covering blade types, parts, and historical development), Fundamental Elements (covering specific aspects of the sword such as hada, hamon, kissaki, nakago, horimono, etc.), Sword Appreciation (discussing etiquette and kantei-sho), and an appendix featuring many different pictures of various blades.

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