



Slay

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Introduction

Slay is a game for 2 to 6 human, or intelligent computer players. The object of the game is to capture the whole of the island by killing all of your enemies' people and capturing their land. To start a new game click on one of the tree icons or select "File" and "New challenge game..." or "New friendly game..." from the menu.

Playing the Game

The land that you own is divided into territories of adjoining hexagons. Each territory of two or more hexagons in size will have its own capital, shown by a house. The money that a territory has is kept in the capital.

At the beginning of each of your turns a waving flag will appear over the capitals of any territories which have enough money to buy new peasants or castles. Click on the capital and its information will be shown in the Information window. If there is either a peasant or a castle shown in the window you can then click on one of them and move it onto an empty hexagon in the capital's territory. Once you have bought a piece you cannot sell it back.

If your men have neither captured an enemy hexagon nor chopped down a tree during this turn they will jump up and down to show that they can still be moved. You can pick up a jumping man and move him as many times as you want within his own territory, but he can make only one attack per turn onto an enemy hexagon adjoining his territory or chop down one tree in his own territory. He may not attack enemy hexagons if the hexagon is too well defended by enemy pieces. If you want to attack a hexagon which is well defended you can combine two of your men to produce a single, stronger man.

Jumping men and capitals with enough money to buy new things are highlighted in the Map window by flashing red dots.

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Money

At the beginning of every turn your territories will gain 1 for each hexagon which is in the territory that does not have a tree on it. However, the territory has to pay wages to the men that are in it. The costs for different men are (the more expensive men are created by combining the cheaper ones):

	Peasant	2
	Spearman	6
	Knight	18
	Baron	54
	Castles	cost nothing to maintain.

If a territory does not have enough money to pay its people, it will go bankrupt and all its men will die, turning into gravestones. Next turn, a tree will grow on the grave.

You can see the financial state of one of your territories in the Information window by clicking on its capital.

Trees

Trees grow on your hexagons at the beginning of your turn. You do not collect any money from hexagons which have trees on them. The two types of trees are:



Pine trees

Grow on empty hexagons which are surrounded by two or more pine trees.



Palm trees

Grow on hexagons on the coast which are next to another palm tree.

Attacking

Each of your men can chop down a tree in their own territory, or they can make one attack on any hexagon adjoining the territory that they are in, provided that it is not too well defended by an enemy man.

Men, capitals and castles defend the hexagon that they are standing on and all the hexagons immediately surrounding them in their same territory. Capitals defend at the strength of a peasant and castles defend at the strength of a spearman. If a capital is destroyed a new one will be formed but all of its money will be lost.

To make a successful attack, the attacking piece must be stronger than the enemy's defence (to make stronger men you must combine two of your existing men). For example:

A peasant could not take a hexagon which has an enemy peasant on it nor any of the hexagons that the enemy peasant is defending.

A spearman could kill the peasant or take any of the hexagons surrounding the peasant as spearmen are stronger than peasants.





It takes at least a knight to capture an enemy castle, or a hexagon defended by it.

If you capture a hexagon which links two of your territories together, the capital of the smaller territory will disappear and its money will be transferred to the larger territory's capital.

Combining Men

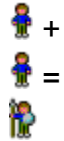
You can create stronger men by placing one of your men on top of another one in the same territory. The strength of the new man that you create will be the sum of the strengths of the two individual men.

The different men are:

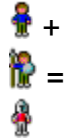
	Peasant	strength 1
	Spearman	strength 2
	Knight	strength 3
	Baron	strength 4

For example:

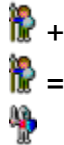
If you put a peasant (strength 1) onto another of your peasants (strength 1) you will produce a spearman (strength 2):



If you put a peasant (strength 1) onto one of your spearman (strength 2) you will produce a knight (strength 3).



If you put a spearman (strength 2) onto another spearman (strength 2) you will produce a Baron (strength 4).



Stronger men cost more money to maintain.

The Information window

The information window shows you a territory's finances:

- its savings left over from the last turn
- its income
- what it paid the men that it owns
- how much money it has left.

If the territory has enough money to buy a peasant or castle, a picture of one will be shown. To buy it, simply click the mouse on the picture and the mouse pointer will turn into what you have bought. You can then place this piece in the territory that you bought it for. Once you have bought a piece you cannot sell it back.

Click on the "End Turn" button when you have bought and moved as many men and castles as you want to for this turn.

Hints

- On your first turn buy as many castles and peasants as possible to defend your existing hexagons.
- Try to link your territories together, as one large territory is much more powerful than two small ones.
- Don't let trees get out of control in your territories as you don't collect any money for a hexagon which has a tree on it.
- Be careful with combining men as the territory may not be able to afford the more expensive ones.
- Be careful not to over extend your lines. If your territory is cut in half, one half may not have enough money to afford all its men and will go bankrupt.
- Try to prevent enemy territories from growing too large by taking their hexagons and by cutting them in half.

New Game

You can play either a friendly game or a challenge game:

Friendly Games

Friendly games allow you to play against other human players or play against fewer than five opponents but the outcome of the game is not recorded.

Challenge Games

On challenge games you always play against five computer controlled opponents and you always have the first move. Every challenge game that you win is recorded with an icon depending on what level you set the computer's intelligence to (a peasant for "Very Stupid", a spearman for "Stupid", a Knight for "Clever" and a Baron for "Very Clever") along with the number of days it took you to win. In this way you can play the same island again until you master it and you can compare scores with other Slay players.

Computer Intelligence

There are four levels of computer player's intelligence which can be selected when you start a new game:

Very Clever

- All the computer pieces are moved each turn.
- Attempts to link its territories and form secondary "safety" links.
- Chops down trees intelligently.
- Defends territories' borders and uses spare men for extra protection.
- Tries to form less "stringy" territories.
- Takes safe hexagons guarded by its own castles to create a buffer.
- Doesn't build castles on a border of an enemy territory which has a knight.
- Saves up to buy castles on very good sites.
- Careful about not over-extending an attack.
- Careful about not leaving men vulnerable on the borders.
- Careful about not buying too many expensive men.

Clever

- 80% of the computer pieces are moved each turn.
- Attempts to link its territories and form secondary "safety" links.
- Chops down trees intelligently.
- Defends territories' borders and uses spare men for extra protection.
- Tries to form less "stringy" territories.
- Takes safe hexagons guarded by its own castles to create a buffer.
- Doesn't build castles on a border of an enemy territory which has a knight.
- Saves up to buy castles on very good sites.
- Careful about not over-extending an attack.
- Careful about not leaving men vulnerable on the borders.
- Careful about not buying too many expensive men.

Stupid

- 60% of the computer pieces are moved each turn.
- Attempts to link its territories.
- Defends territories' borders.
- Chops down trees intelligently.
- Careful about not over-extending an attack.
- Careful about not leaving men vulnerable on the borders.
- Careful about not buying too many expensive men.

Very Stupid

- 40% of the computer pieces are moved each turn.
- Chops down trees intelligently.
- Careful about not leaving men vulnerable on the borders.
- Careful about not buying too many expensive men.

The computer players do not cheat in any way! They get the same amount of money for their territories and pay the same for their men as a human player would.

Credits

Written by:
Sean O'Connor

Graphics:
Liam O'Connor

Thanks to:
Bandy
Chris Dawson
Iona Dawson
Patrick Welche
Kieran O'Connor
Jon Williams
Guido Barzini
Pamela Ridding
Geoff Hubbard

History Of The Game

Atari ST basic version

I originally wrote "Slay" in STOS Basic on an Atari ST in 1989. It was called "Battle Hex" and had up to just four human players. All the main ideas of the game were there though, such as 4 different strengths of men, castles and money.

Atari ST Assembler version

The next version was written in 68000, again on the Atari ST, in 1990. The game was renamed "Empire" and included several new ideas. Each territory had a capital where its money was kept, (and if you captured a capital you gained all of that territory's hexagons) there were trees and mountains, and men jumped and flags waved to attract the player's attention. There was also the option for computer controlled opponents, although they weren't very intelligent (not easy to do in 68000!) The world was bigger than the screen size so a "World Map" was needed to view different areas. Also, each player had a time limit to make their moves (this was to give the computer players a chance as they were quite thick).

Windows 3.1 version

This version was written in 1994 using Borland C++. It was renamed as "Slay" as there were already games written for the PC called "Empire". The main improvements were that the computer player's intelligence is vastly better than the Atari version, there is a much better random island generator, a new "Rankings" window and the computer players offer to surrender when they feel that they have lost. There are no mountains, as I found that they didn't add anything to the game, only two frames of animation for moving sprites as opposed to 4 on the Atari, and the time limit was taken out as it was unnecessary.

Windows 95/98/ME/2000 version

Recompiled in Microsoft's Visual C in May 1996, but essentially the same game as the earlier Windows 3.1 version except that the computer players' intelligence has been further improved, there is an option for making the computer automatically move the rest of your pieces, the capital of the currently selected territory flashes to remind you which territory you are using, and there is a very useful 'undo' feature. Lots of little problems with the original Windows version have also been tidied up.

Windows CE version

In early 2001 I did a conversion for Windows Handheld and PocketPC.

Themes

All the graphics and sounds used in Slay are contained in a "Theme". The default theme is called "Medieval" but you can download or create your own and change then change the theme used in the "Options" menu.

You can create your own custom themes by simply making a copy of the "Medieval.skn" file and the "Medieval" directory. Edit your new .skn file (it's just a text file so Notepad will do) so that the entries point to files in your newly created directory.

All the graphics are stored in a single .bmp file within the directory. The 4 different types of men each have four different frames of animation. You must also create a "mask" picture of your new graphics (the black and white pictures at the bottom of the .bmp). Basically you want to change every colour pixel in your new image to a black pixel in its corresponding mask image, and every white pixel in your new image to a white pixel in its mask. It's also a good idea to have an outline of an extra black pixel around the mask image to make it stand out better. Do not change the size or layout of the .bmp file!

You can create your own .wav files for sound effects. Just put them in your new directory and make sure that the entries in your .skn file point to them.

You can also modify the default hexagon colour scheme by setting the Red, Green and Blue colour values for each of colour1, colour2,... colour6.

See <http://www.windowsgames.co.uk/slayThemes.html> for new Themes which you can download for free.

Registration Form

To receive a full copy of "Slay" either see <http://www.windowsgames.co.uk> to order over the Internet with a credit card at a discounted rate, or send:

UK and Europe - sean@spto.demon.co.uk
£20 per copy to Sean O'Connor,
62 Whitney Drive, Stevenage, Herts, SG1 4BJ, England.
send cash, cheques or Eurocheques in UK pounds

USA - cade@roux.org
\$30 per copy to Cade Roux,
10391 River Road, Ama, LA 70031, USA.
send cash or cheques in US dollars

Denmark and Scandinavia - Eurovga@ibm.net
200DKK per copy to Henrik Paludan-Moerk,
Creative IT, c/o Henrik Paludan-Moerk, Kildedalen 76, Dk-3400 Hillerod, Denmark.
send cash, cheques or Eurocheques in Danish crowns or credit card

Australia - feke@powerup.com.au
\$A50 per copy to Peter Fiechtner,
11 Fischle Street, Chermside Qld. 4032, Australia.
send cash or cheques in Australian dollars

New Zealand - admin@jayworks.co.nz
NZ\$55 per copy to Jen Gibson,
Jayworks Ltd, P O Box 13118, Tauranga, North Island, New Zealand.
send cash or cheques in New Zealand dollars, or credit card

Name: _____

Address: _____

Out of interest, where did you see the demo version of "Slay" (please specify)?

- Magazine _____
- Web site _____
- Shareware CD-ROM _____
- Other _____

*If you have a printer, this form can be printed out by clicking on **Print Topic** from the **File** menu.*

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| <input type="checkbox"/> | Revolution | @ NZ\$40 |
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Sean O'Connor's Windows Games

Demo versions of all of these games can be downloaded from the web page:
<http://www.windowsgames.co.uk>

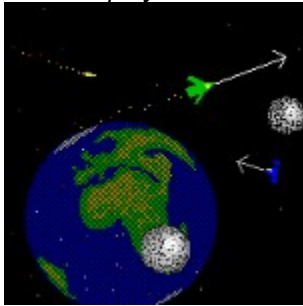
Rats!

Kill off all the rats using a variety of weapons before the males and females get together...
"Ugh! Rats! They're everywhere" - PC Review, August 1994.



Critical Mass

A strategy/shoot-em-up game set in the future.
"...more playable than many multi-million dollar productions." - PC Review, January 1996.



Mother Of All Battles

A strategy game for 2 to 6 human or computer players.
"If you're into strategic simulation games, you're going to love playing this one." - Personal Computer World, October 1995.



Revolution

Imagine Tetris, but with the blocks falling inwards towards the planets of the Solar System.

"Revolution is the rotating Tetris-style game that everyone will be playing in the future." - CD ROM User, October 1995.

