

Ishin no Arashi FAQ/Strategy Guide (JIS)

by LastBossKiller

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Ishin no Arashi (Famicom)
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---Viewing This Document---

This document contains Japanese text. To view it correctly, set your browser or word processor to view "Shift-JIS" format. For example, if you are using Internet Explorer, using the dropdown menu, go to View -> Encoding -> More -> Japanese (Shift-JIS). You could, instead, open this document with Microsoft Word, and it will ask you about the encoding automatically, allowing you to select Shift-JIS.

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- - - = = = ===== Intro ===== = = = - - -
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Ishin no Arashi (or "Storm of the Restoration") is a strategy game for the NES/Famicom developed and published by KOEI in 1990 and only released in Japan. It is a simplified version of the same game released originally for PC in 1988. If the name KOEI makes you yawn, don't judge so quickly! This game is more similar to Uncharted Waters than Romance of the Three Kingdoms, so if you liked Uncharted Waters, you might like this.

Sequels to this game have also been produced even quite recently. Ishin no Arashi Bakumatsu Shishiden was released for the PC and Playstation in 1998 and 1999 respectively, and Ishin no Arashi Shippuu Ryoumaden was released for the Nintendo DS in 2010. These games maintain features from this original game, and of course many of the characters since they are historically based.

The game takes place during the Meiji Restoration, probably the most significant era in Japanese history (see the "Story" section below for some detail). The country is divided into three political parties. Your goal is to persuade influential figures (such as the daimyo) to agree with your political ideology. If you manage to convert each region of Japan to your ideology, you will have unified the country and beat the game. This requires engaging in conversations with other characters that are done in a similar manner to a turn-based RPG battle. In addition to these conversations, you can actually attack other characters and kill them, or invade their castles with your army, but these tactics are pretty cumbersome compared to the conversation tactic.

The game is obviously quite Japanese language heavy. Hopefully, this guide will help you wade through the game without any Japanese knowledge.

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- - - = = = ===== Story ===== = = = - - -
- - - = = = ===== = = = - - - [sec1]

For most of Japan's recorded history, it has been a nation at war with itself. Warlords from all over Japan would continually battle against each other in a seemingly endless cycle of violence. This continued until nearly the end of the 16th century, when Oda Nobunaga managed to nearly conquer the entirety of Japan. Killed before achieving a complete conquest, his loyal supporters eventually managed to achieve the unification of Japan in his place. Tokugawa Ieyasu gaining the central authority, he established the Tokugawa shogunate. He and his descendants would rule as the shogun, the ruler of Japan, for the next 250 years. During that period, Japan would experience a new age of peace. At the same time, the emperor of Japan would always exist, but had no real power.

Finding the ways of the Western people distasteful, the Tokugawa shogun declared trading with foreigners to be illegal. The result was that Japan was essentially shut off from the Western world for the entire Tokugawa shogunate era. While most of the world was transformed through the industrial revolution, Japan remained oblivious, yet peaceful, and fell behind in terms of modern technology.

In 1853, Commodore Matthew Perry of the United States navy commanded four warships to land on the Japanese coast near Edo (old name for Tokyo). His mission was to begin a trade route with Japan. Yet Commodore Perry was well aware of Japan's policy of turning foreigners away, and thus he acted strategically. He wanted Japan to feel that his presence was menacing and that their presence must not be taken lightly. The sight of the warships horrified the Japanese who had no concept for the technological advances that had occurred during the past two centuries. After several days of camping on

the Japanese shoreline, he delivered a letter stating that he wanted to open a trade route and that he would return with an even greater fleet next year to receive their answer.

Japan immediately erupted into chaos. It was clear that it could not defend itself against such foreign powers. The Tokugawa shogun was blamed for the nation's helplessness. The truth was that the shogun was the ruler of Japan in name only, and that 80% of Japan refused to pay taxes or succumb to the wishes of the shogun. The major political figures all realized that Japan had to truly be unified and work together to create a modernized nation.

Three distinct political ideologies emerged: (1) The Tokugawa shogun should claim absolute control of Japan, (2) the division of power should remain the same between the shogun, the emperor, and the daimyo, but a structure should be put in place for all the regions to work together to improve technology and come together in times of war, and (3) the shogun should be abolished and all power returned to the emperor of Japan. This sets the tone for the game *Ishin no Arashi*. From this point on, you will be a character from one of these political ideologies. It is your mission to unite the country under the policy you believe is best.

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- - - = = = ===== Starting Characters ===== - - -
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This game is much more enjoyable if you know something about the characters involved. The people you can play as played important roles in history. Of course, only one side could win, which was the side claiming loyalty to the emperor. Below, I'll show the playable characters and try to give you a flavor for why they are considered important figures of the Meiji Restoration. But a lot of information can easily be found on each of these people if you are interested in learning more.

---Supporters of the emperor (尊王)-----

Saigo Takamori (西郷隆盛)

Available during scenario: 1 and 2

Class status: Samurai of Satsuma (薩摩藩士)

Starting stats:

Leadership (先) - 68

Education (学) - 136

Fighting skill (武) - 118

Description: Saigo Takamori is probably the most legendary figure of the Meiji Restoration era. He formed a secret alliance with samurai of the Choushuu area, and using the name of the emperor as a symbol to rally behind, they were able to gain enough support to defeat the shogun's army in Edo. After this period, he became upset at the changes that were to occur in Japan, which was incorporating more and more Western influence, and making his class, the samurai, less and less relevant. He eventually led a revolt against the new government that he helped to create and committed suicide on the site of the battlefield at which his revolt was overthrown.

Playability: Saigo Takamori is a lowly samurai, so he will have trouble interacting with the daimyo who will generally ignore him, making an added difficulty in selecting him as your player. His leadership is also very low, so he will need to study before being able to persuade characters with higher leadership statistics.

Katsura Kogoro (桂小五郎)

Available during scenario: 1 and 2

Class status: Samurai of Choushuu (長州藩士)

Starting stats:

Leadership (先) - 52

Education (学) - 148

Fighting skill (武) - 163

Description: Better known by his later name Kido Takayoshi, Katsura Kogoro was one of the three samurai involved in the secret alliance between Satsuma and Choushuu that eventually led to the overthrow of the Tokugawa shogunate. He became one of the most influential members of the new Meiji era government, doing what he felt was best for his country by including many aspects of the Western world to modernize Japan. He visited the United States and Europe, paying careful attention to the technological advancements and methods of government and incorporated them into the new Japan.

Playability: As a lowly samurai, Katsura Kogoro will have difficulty interacting with the daimyo. His leadership is also very low, so he will have to study a lot in order to become sufficient at persuading other characters.

Yoshida Shoin (吉田松陰)

Available during scenario: 1

Class status: Samurai of Choushuu (長州藩士)

Starting stats:

Leadership (先) - 98

Education (学) - 187

Fighting skill (武) - 108

Description: Yoshida Shoin was known as a highly educated man, who made it his duty to educate other revolutionaries, and led several revolts against the shogunate. He was executed in prison for an assassination attempt before the overthrow of the shogunate occurred.

Playability: As a lowly samurai, Yoshida Shoin will have difficulty interacting with the daimyo. However, his very high leadership and education statistics will make him very successful at persuasion and makes him the best starting character if you want to play as an emperor supporter (the good guys, basically).

Takasugi Shinsaku (高杉晋作)

Available during scenario: 2

Class status: Samurai of Choushuu (長州藩士)

Starting stats:

Leadership (先) - 76

Education (学) - 128

Fighting skill (武) - 149

Description: Takasugi Shinsaku introduced the idea of using commoners as military soldiers. Before that time, only samurai were allowed to carry weapons. He also introduced Western weapons and military tactics to the Choushuu domain, since he believed they could not stand against foreign powers otherwise.

Playability: As a lowly samurai, Takasugi Shinsaku will have difficulty interacting with the daimyo. His leadership and education are decent, but not great.

---Supporters of unified shogun, emperor, and daimyo (公議)-----

Sakamoto Ryoma (坂本龍馬)

Available during scenario: 1 and 2

Class status: Samurai of Tosa (土佐藩士)

Starting stats:

Leadership (先) - 62

Education (学) - 115

Fighting skill (武) - 150

Description: A key figure in establishing the alliance between Satsuma and Choushuu. He was heavily inspired by the phrase "all men created equal" as he had heard said exists in the United States and wanted to remove the feudal class system in Japan.

Playability: As a lowly samurai, Sakamoto Ryoma will have difficulty interacting with the daimyo. His leadership is fairly low as well, so he will need to study to become useful at persuasion.

Katsu Kaishu (勝海舟)

Available during scenario: 1 and 2

Class status: Shogunate retainer (幕臣)

Starting stats:

Leadership (先) - 140

Education (学) - 160

Fighting skill (武) - 94

Description: Katsu Kaishu was a high ranking naval officer after Japan began to modernize while still under the reign of the Tokugawa shogunate. Although always loyal to the shogun, he was sympathetic to the anti-shogun movement, and helped ease the transition of power after the shogun resigned by being a negotiator between the two factions.

Playability: As a shogunate retainer, Katsu Kaishu is approximately on the same level as the samurai and unable to converse easily with the daimyos. However, his exceptionally high leadership and education levels are amongst the highest of any starting character, making him a powerful debater.

Shimazu Nariakira (島津斉彬)

Available during scenario: 1

Class status: Satsuma Daimyo (薩摩藩主)

Starting stats:

Leadership (先) - 112

Education (学) - 164

Fighting skill (武) - 122

Description: Considered one of the wisest daimyos of his time, Shimazu Nariakira devoted much of his life to improving education to the people under his domain. He felt especially strongly that people should learn about what the Western world had to offer as a form of this education.

Playability: Shimazu's class status as a daimyo makes it so he can attempt to converse and persuade anyone in the game. Since his leadership and education are so high, he is probably the best starting character in the game.

Matsudaira Yoshinaga (松平慶永)

Available during scenario: 2

Class status: Senior statesman of Fukui (福井重臣)

Starting stats:

Leadership (先) - 90

Education (学) - 170

Fighting skill (武) - 113

Description: Considered one of the wisest daimyos of his time, Matsudaira Yoshinaga spent much of his political carrier trying to peacefully unite the shogun and the emperor.

Playability: Although Matsudaira Yoshinaga became a daimyo in reality, he begins his scenario as only a senior statesman (just above a samurai), so he will have trouble interacting with the daimyo. His stats are very good, however.

Oguri Tadamasa (小栗忠順)

Available during scenario: 1 and 2

Class status: Shogunate Administrator (奉行)

Starting stats:

Leadership (先) - 120

Education (学) - 173

Fighting skill (武) - 127

Description: Oguri Tadamasa was instrumental in helping the shogunate begin to modernize Japan. He visited the United States and implemented much of what he learned upon returning to Japan. After the overthrow of the shogunate, he was apprehended and killed by part of the anti-shogun faction. According to legend, he hid the shogun's treasure stores in the Japanese hillside, which has never been found.

Playability: Although Oguri Tadamasa's class ranking is above the samurai, it is still too low to converse with most of the daimyo. His stats are all very high, however, so he's a great character for persuasion.

Matsudaira Katamori (松平容保)

Available during scenario: 1 and 2

Class status: Aizu Daimyo (会津藩主)

Starting stats:

Leadership (先) - 92

Education (学) - 131

Fighting skill (武) - 106

Description: Matsudaira Katamori was a loyal daimyo to the shogun and fought against the anti-shogunate movement. Upon the overthrow of the shogun, his life was spared, and he went on to live his life as the Chief Priest of the Nikko Toshogu shrine.

Playability: Matsudaira Katamori's class status as a daimyo makes it so he can attempt to converse and persuade anyone in the game. He also has decent stats, so he is one of the better starting characters.

Ii Naosuke (井伊直弼)

Available during scenario: 1

Class status: Hikone Daimyo (彦根藩主)

Starting stats:

Leadership (先) - 80

Education (学) - 150

Fighting skill (武) - 92

Description: Ii Naosuke was one of the most powerful members of the shogunate. He was the one who signed the treaty allowing the United States access to Japanese ports. His assassination was seen as a major symbol of the downfall of the shogunate.

Playability: Ii Naosuke's class status as a daimyo makes it so he can attempt to converse and persuade anyone in the game. He also has decent stats, so he is one of the better starting characters.

Kondo Isami (近藤勇)

Available during scenario: 2

Class status: Shinsengumi (新選組)

Starting stats:

Leadership (先) - 56

Education (学) - 86

Fighting skill (武) - 177

Description: Commander of the Shinsengumi, a special task force of soldiers ordered to protect representatives of the shogunate.

Playability: Although not quite at the rank of a daimyo, Kondo Isami's class status is quite high. His fighting skill is very high, but the more important leadership and education stats are very low, so he'll have to get some education before he can persuade effectively. He starts at the Shinsengumi headquarters in Kyoto, although this location doesn't seem to offer any real purpose.

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- - - = = = ===== Game Mechanics ===== - - -
- - - = = = ===== = = = - - - [sec3]

---Overview-----[sec3a]---

When you begin a new game, you will choose a character who is a member of one of the three political factions. You can access a map from the menu screen which will show all of the castles in the country and their color will signify what political faction is controlling that region. To win the game, you must convert all of the castles (except the grey ones) to your faction's color. If you are playing as an emperor supporter, you can also win the game by capturing Edo castle.

You lose the game if your main character is converted to a different faction or is killed. You also lose the game if the date reaches some very late date since Japan was not unified in time to become modernized, and a foreign nation is able to conquer it (I read this somewhere, but I can't find where, so sorry I can't give you the exact date, but it's so long I don't think you need to worry about it at all).

The three political ideologies are:

尊王 - Supporters of the emperor.

公議 - Supporters of unifying the shogun, emperor, and daimyo.

佐幕 - Supporters of the shogun.

To convert regions to your political ideology, you must engage in debates with other characters. These debates occur much like an RPG turn-based battle. If you are successful during the debate, the character's favor for your political ideology will increase. And if it increases enough, this character will become a member of your faction. Generally, persuading the daimyo of the region will be enough to convert the region, but sometimes you have to convert other high ranking people as well.

You can also use the persuasion tactic to convert people to your party, making them a new controllable character. This is especially important if your starting character is not a daimyo, because you will want to obtain a daimyo as one of your party members so that he can converse with the other daimyo who will just ignore your non-daimyo characters.

If you have a daimyo as one of your party members, you will be able to control the army of his feif. You can convert castles to your faction by defeating them with your armies, but this takes much more work than to focus on the persuasion tactic. You will also be able to distribute the income of the daimyo's feif, which is mostly centered around making his army stronger.

You should spend some time increasing the stats of some of your weaker characters by spending money in the major cities to study. You will need to make money to afford this and to travel by ship to other Japanese islands.

This completes the summary of the game. It is really not as complicated as you might think. If you can master the persuasion aspect of the game, you will know just about everything that you need in order to win.

---Getting Started-----[sec3d]---

When you first startup the game, you will see two options:

あたらしく ゲームをはじめる - "Start new game"

とちゅうから ゲームをはじめる - "Begin mid-game". Load a saved game.

If you start a new game, you will see two different scenario options:

新時代の幕開け 安政五年 - "Beginning of the new era"

1858年6月19日

明治維新の戦乱 文久三年 - "Wars of the Meiji Restoration"

1863年5月10日

The only difference between the two is that some of the playable characters will be different, and there will be some different characters wandering around the game.

After selecting a scenario, you will have to choose which of the three political ideologies you want your character to represent:

尊王 - Supporters of the emperor.

公議 - Supporters of unifying the shogun, emperor, and daimyo.

佐幕 - Supporters of the shogun.

After selecting one, you will see a summary of what the ideology represents. Choose "Y" (by pressing "A" or "Left") to confirm this choice, or choose "N" (by pressing "B" or "Right") to change your mind.

After choosing an ideology, you will see three characters to choose from that represent that faction. See the "Playable Characters" section above for details.

After choosing a character, you will see a summary screen of his stats. Select "Y" to confirm the choice, or "N" to change your mind.

After confirming your character choice, you will see a summary of all your choices thus far. Choose "Y" to continue, or "N" to start over. The game will then begin and you're free to explore the Japan!

---Passage of Time-----[sec3c]---

Each day is divided into four sections:

あさ - "Morning"

ひる - "Noon"

ゆう - "Evening"

よる - "Night"

The current section is indicated at the top of the lower-right window of the main screen, next to the date. The date is indicated as Year/Month/Day.

Your player can take one action per section of the day. So each character can take four actions per day. However, if your character walks off the edge of a screen, his turn will end for that day. Also, if your character rests at an inn or pays to embark on a ship, his turn will end for that day.

---Traveling-----[sec3d]---

To make your character move, select the option 移動 ("Movement") from the command options in the lower-right window of the main screen. Then use the direction arrows to change the direction that the on-screen arrow faces and press "A" to take a step forward. Regular characters can take five steps per turn, and armies can take four steps per turn. Press "B" to stop moving if you want to take less steps. You can also press "B" at any time to skip your turn.

Walking drains your Strength (体) stat. The amount your Strength is drained depends on what type of terrain you are walking over. Here is the list of terrain and how much it drains you:

Path: 5

Grass: 8

Mountains: 12

Trading post: 10

Houses within town: 12

Ship: 12

If you don't have enough Strength left, then you won't be able to move for that turn. However, your strength stat is replenished at the start of every new day.

In addition to walking, you can also travel by ship. To do so, stand on a ship and select the 特別 ("Special") option. It will tell you where the ship is headed (the destination for a particular ship will always be the same for the entire game), so select "Y" to pay 20 gold and head there, or select "N" to decline.

The way the game map is layed out might be confusing at first. You will start within a city. If you walk off a particular side of the screen, you will end up on the second screen of the city, since each city is composed of two screens. But if you walk off a different edge of the screen, you will be asked if you want to leave the city. Say "Y" to leave, or "N" to stay. If you leave, you will begin the next turn on the countryside map, where you can wander around Japan. The cities look a building with a blue roof.

---The Map-----[sec3e]---

To view the map of Japan, select the option 情報 ("Information") from the main menu. It will open up a new menu screen full of more options. You will see a map of Japan littered with castles of different colors. The colors and which ideology they represent are shown in the upper-right part of the map. Yellow/orange is supporters of the emperor, blue is supporters of a unified emperor/shogun/daimyo, and green is supporters of the shogun.

Grey castles represent major cities of Japan, such as Kyoto, Oosaka, and Edo. You cannot convert these cities to one of the three factions. They are simply always neutral and you don't have to worry about them. It seems weird, but I didn't make the game, so don't blame me.

If you select the option せいりよくず ("influence illustration"), you will be able to move a cursor around the map. Press "A" when over a castle and you will see the region's name in the top of a new window, and it's current political faction at the bottom.

---Locations-----[sec3f]---

The game consists of city maps and the countryside map. The locations you can visit will be different based on if you are in a city or not, so I divide these two categories and explain them each below.

City:

Inn - Pay 25 gold to have your maximum Strength (体) restored by ~20 and your Spirit (心) restored by ~80. Your actions will end for this day.

Appearance: Has the symbol 宿 ("Inn") in the lower-left corner.

Study hall - These look different and have different effects depending on the city. They always cost 3 gold to use. In Hizen (肥前), Satsuma (薩摩), and Tosa (土佐), which are located on the islands in the Southwestern part of Japan, the schools look like buildings with some green steps in

the middle. Studying there will increase your Education (学) stat, but also increase your affinity for the 公議 ideology (supporters of unified shogun/emperor/daimyo). There is also one that looks like a harbor in Hizen, with an anchor icon out front. The same effects occur there, but you will also occasionally get an increase in your Leadership (先) stat. In Kyoto (京都) (located in Yamashiro - 山城 fief) and Oosaka (大坂) (located in Settsu - 摂津 fief), the study halls look like they have big neon green windows with bar graphs in them. Using those will potentially increase your Leadership and Education, and it will also increase your affinity for the 尊王 (emperor supporters) ideology. Finally, the study halls in Edo (江戸) (located in Musashi - 武蔵 fief) look the same as the ones in Kyoto/Oosaka. However, studying there may increase your Leadership and Education and it will increase your affinity for the 佐幕 (shogun supporters) ideology.

Swordsman school - Pay 3 gold and you may get an increase in your Fighting Skill (武) stat.

Appearance: Has two barred windows on the left and right sides of the building.

Merchant - You can sell goods here that you've purchased from the trading posts on the countryside map. You will be quoted a price at which you can sell your goods, next to the symbol 金. Select the number of goods you want to sell at this price.

Appearance: Has a blue spherical shape in the lower-right corner of the building.

Restaurant - Pay money to restore Strength and Spirit. The options are:

並 ("Medium") - Costs 10 gold. Increases max Strength (体) by ~10 and Spirit (心) by ~30.

上 ("Large") - Costs 20 gold. Increases max Strength (体) by ~15 and Spirit (心) by ~50.

Appearance: Has what looks like the letter "C" on the middle of the door.

Geisha house - Pay 30 gold to have your Spirit (心) completely restored.

Appearance: Completely red, including the roof. Door in lower-right corner.

Doctor - Pay the quoted price (around 50 gold) to have your max Strength (体) restored by ~60 and your Spirit (心) restored by ~50.

Appearance: A plain looking house with a door on the left and a window on the right that kind of looks like a "B".

Gambling den - Choose "Y" twice to bet. Select 丁 ("Even") or 半 ("Odd"), then select an amount of gold to bet between 1 and 50. Two numbers will be chosen (shown as Japanese kanji), and the "Even" symbol if the sum is even, or the "Odd" symbol if the sum is odd. If you guessed correctly, you earn double the value of your wager. If you guess incorrectly, you lose your wager. Select "Y" to bet again.

Appearance: Located only in Kyoto, on the second screen (Southern half of town), in the Southwest part of the screen just left of a merchant.

Castle - A place where the daimyo and his statesmen usually congregate. There is usually an army stationed here as well.

Appearance: Classic Japanese style castle. White building and layers of blue roofing.

Countryside:

City - Appears as a single house with a blue roof, but walk onto it to enter a major city.

Trading post - Appears as a single house with a brown roof. Can have one or more of the following options:

医者 - "Doctor". Same as the doctor in the city (see above section).

宿屋 - "Inn". Same as the inn in the city (see above section).

商い - "Trade". Buy goods for the stated price next to the 金 symbol.

Say "Y", then choose the number of goods you want. Alternatively,

choose "N" and you will be able to state your own price. If it's too low, you get kicked out, but if it's accepted, you will be asked to choose how many goods you will buy at your newly haggled price. The number of goods you have is entered in the とくさんひん ("Special product") row of your status screen. These can be sold at merchants in the city maps (but not the countryside maps). The purpose is simply to try to make a profit.

Ships - Pay 20 gold to travel to another location. A particular ship will always take you to the same location.

Beautiful scenery - These are hidden and will completely restore your Spirit (心) simply by walking over the location. You will see some artwork of the scenery to signify this has occurred.

Castle - Same as in the city map (see above section).

Gold mine - Looks like an entrance to a mine. Here, you can dig for gold. You are very rarely successful, but when you are, you will get ~500 gold. Digging drains a large amount of your Strength (体), about ~45.

Border crossing - Looks like a wooden gate. A guard allows you to pass. No real purpose as far as I could see.

Special locations:

In Kyoto, on the first screen (Northern part of town), you can see the emperor's palace near the water and Emperor Komei (孝明天皇) inside. It seems like you cannot interact with him at all though.

In Edo, on the first screen (Northern part of town), you can see Edo Castle surrounded by water, and the shogun, Tokugawa Iemochi (徳川家茂). It seems you cannot interact with him at all. However, if you capture Edo Castle with an army while controlling an emperor supporter character, you will beat the game. This is an alternative ending, although more accurate to the actual history.

---Persuasion-----[sec3g]---

Understanding the persuasion mechanics is the most important part of the game. Once you're comfortable with this, you will be able to cruise through the game. It's not very hard, but it is much different than any other game you've played, so it takes a little getting used to, especially since it's in Japanese.

There are three different kinds of persuasions. The first is to try to convince someone to agree with your political ideology. If you are successful, their affinity for your ideology will increase and the others will decrease. Second is the comrade persuasion, in which you convince someone to trust you, and it can lead to them becoming a controllable character. Finally, there is an "interview" option which causes your character to copy the ideology affinities of another character. Below is a full explanation of each.

---Ideology Persuasion:

This persuasion tactic attempts to increase another character's affinity for your ideology. If you manage to increase their affinity so that it is higher than any other political ideology, that character will then become a follower of your ideology.

Select the command 説得 ("Persuasion"), then move onto the same square as the person you want to persuade. Press "B" to stop moving, then choose 説得 again. Next, choose 思想 ("Ideology"). Choose the person's name from the list that appears and the debate will begin. However, if the person you want to persuade is at a higher social class than you, then you may not be able to attempt to persuade him since he will ignore you. It will say:

身分がちがう、
でなおしてまいられよ

"Wrong social standing. Come again."

When the debate begins, the opponent will be the person facing the screen. In the upper-left corner of the screen is a meter that is half blue and half green. If you are winning the debate, the meter will be more blue. More green means you are losing. There are 10 actions that can be taken in each debate, and the current action number will be tallied at the top of this meter. Note: it is very rare, but the computer might initiate a debate with you. If it does, then the meter colors will be reversed (you want it to be green then), and you will be the person facing the screen.

You want to keep track of your opponent's mood. In order of happiest to angriest, the opponent's graphic will be:

1. Laughing with eyes closed
2. Smiling
3. Sitting with no expression
4. Frowning and arms crossed
5. Shaking his fist at you

The higher up on this list the opponent's mood is, the more likely you will be able to increase the blue portion of the meter. If his mood is toward the bottom, you are more likely to have the meter shift green.

When the debate starts, you can choose your mood. The choices are:

- にこやか - "Smiling"
- ふつう - "Normal"
- きびしく - "Stern"

The worse your mood, the harder it will be for your opponent to shift the meter to the green. But if you choose "Normal" or "Stern" as your starting mood, the opponent is also more likely to start in an angry mood.

On the first turn, you will be able to choose between two types of conversation topics:

- しそう - "Ideology"
- ぞくじ - "Worldly affairs"

You choose "Worldly affairs" if you want to try to improve the opponent's mood, and "Ideology" if you want to try to shift the debate meter to more blue.

If you choose "Worldly affairs", you will get a list of topics. There are options separated into three columns. The first column has the options:

- 冷静 - "Calm"
- 熱心 - "Enthusiasm"

Choosing enthusiasm spends more Spirit (心) points, and can cause your turn to be more effective in moving the debate meter. However, when it comes to worldly affairs topics, choosing calm or enthusiasm seems to have the same effect, so stick with calm. Next, you choose the topic from the options:

- 恋愛 - "Love"
- 酒 - "Alcohol"
- 金銭欲 - "Want of money"

Finally, choose your stance on the topic:

- 否定 - "Denial"
- 肯定 - "Affirmation"

Depending on who you are talking to, your choice of topic and stance may cause the opponent's mood to improve or degrade. You will have to experiment. Write down good combinations for characters if it helps you remember. A good combination should improve your opponent's mood by two notches on my mood list above.

Choose "Ideology" if your opponent is in a good mood. I recommend having the opponent at moods 1 or 2 on my mood list, but occasionally 3 is fine as well. The ideology option also has three columns of options, the first given by:

冷静 - "Calm"

熱心 - "Enthusiasm"

Again, enthusiasm drains your Spirit more. This time, your Strength (体) is also drained by both options, and even more by the enthusiasm option.

Choosing enthusiasm will cause the debate meter to move more, so I highly recommend using that option.

Next, you can choose which ideology to discuss:

尊王 - Supporters of the emperor.

公議 - Supporters of unifying the shogun, emperor, and daimyo.

佐幕 - Supporters of the shogun.

Finally, choose your stance on the ideology:

否定 - "Denial"

肯定 - "Affirmation"

Obviously, choose "denial" for the opposing ideologies and "affirmation" for the one you represent. Usually, I choose the one I represent every time, but denying other ideologies works well too, so you can experiment amongst these options.

After choosing the starting topic, you might have to wait awhile to get another chance to act. It depends on your opponent's stats and how much Spirit energy he has. As his Spirit decreases, his aggression will slow down as well, giving you more turns. When your turn comes around again, the game will ask if you want to change the topic. It depends on what your opponent was just talking about. If he was talking about ideology, it will ask わだい (ぞくじ) を かえますか(Y/N)? - "Change topic (ideology)? (Y/N)".

In this case, choose "Y" to change to worldly affairs, or "N" to talk about ideology. If you choose the same topic that you discussed on your last turn, it will ask if you want to change from that topic. Choose "Y" to change it, or "N" to reuse the same three debate options you used last time.

Your success in these debates will depend on how high your Leadership (先) and Education (学) stats are compared to the opponent. You also will have trouble if your Spirit (せいしん) value (shown on the left side of the screen) gets low. If the debate meter is over 50% blue, the opponent's affinity for your ideology will increase. The more blue, the more the increase. If their affinity becomes larger than any other ideology, then they will switch to being a supporter of your ideology.

---Comrade Persuasion

You can only do this with characters that share the same ideology as you. This form of persuasion works identically to the "Ideology Persuasion" described above in terms of debate mechanics. The goal is to get the opponent to like you. His fondness for you is indicated by the stat しんらい ("Trust") on the left side of the screen. It increases if you end the debate with the meter more blue than green, with an amount that is larger for ending the debate with higher percentages of blue. When Trust is 80 or higher, you will be asked:

(Opponent name)を同志にしますか(Y/N)? - "Make (opponent name) your comrade?"

Say "Y" to accept or "N" to decline. Upon making this character your comrade, you will be able to use him just as if he were your starting character. But he cannot recruit new comrades. Also, you will lose control of him if his ideology changes to one that is different than yours.

To engage in this type of persuasion, select the command 説得 ("Persuasion"), then move onto the same square as the person you want to persuade. Press "B"

to stop moving, then choose 説得 again. Next, choose 信賴 ("Trust"). Choose the person's name from the list that appears and the debate will begin.

Some of the topics are different than the "Ideology persuasion". Instead of the "Ideology" (ぞくじ) topic options, you will have the topic category "Ability" (のうりょく), with the following options:

学問 - "Education"

先進性 - "Leadership"

武芸 - "Martial arts"

You'll notice these topics are the same as your character's stats. So it seems that the most effective option is probably the one that your character has the greatest stats for, although I could be wrong. My character had a large Education stat, so I used the Education option almost exclusively during my playthrough during these debates and it was very successful.

If you manage to end the debate with greater than 50% of the meter blue, your Trust value will increase for this "opponent". Note, it is also possible for the opponent to run away during the debate.

---Interview

Using this option will cause your character to copy the ideology affinities of another character. Be careful, because if you copy someone that follows a different political ideology, then you will get an instant game over when your character changes ideologies. The point of this command is to use it on someone who shares the same ideology as you, but has a higher affinity for it, so you will become even more entrenched in your ideology. I mostly used this after first converting a new character to be a controllable character. I would then increase his affinity for my ideology by Interviewing my starting character since these new characters often barely had the preference for my ideology.

To use this option, select the command 説得 ("Persuasion"), then move onto the same square as the person you want to persuade. Press "B" to stop moving, then choose 面会 ("Interview"). Choose the person's name from the list that appears. You'll get an overview of the character's beliefs. Choose "Y" to copy his affinities, or "N" to refuse.

---Stats-----[sec3h]---

During gameplay, you will see your character's stats on screen. They are represented by kanji, but if you open the status menu, the same stats will be represented by hiragana, so I list both representations below. To see the status menu, choose the 情報 ("Information") option from the main menu, then choose じぶん ("Yourself").

身 (みぶん) - "Social class". The number of icons shown next to this symbol during gameplay tells how high your status is. The maximum possible is four icons, which means you are a daimyo. On the status screen, your specific social position will be given specifically (see "Class System" section below for more details).

先 (せんしんせい) - "Leadership". An important stat for making you successful during persuasion event.

学 (がくりょく) - "Education". An important stat for making you successful during persuasion event.

武 (ぶりょく) - "Fighting skill". Determines how much damage you will deal or receive during one-on-one battles.

体 (たいりょく) - "Strength". This value is shown as two numbers: #/#. The number on the left is your current strength. The number on the right is your maximum strength. If your maximum strength reaches zero (from fighting), then you will die. It's ok if your current strength reaches zero, though. Your current strength is replenished up to your maximum

strength at the start of every new day. Your maximum strength can be as high as 200 and is increased by resting at inns among other things. Your current strength is depleted by taking several actions, such as walking and digging for gold, and you need to have enough to be able to attempt these actions.

心 (せいしん) - "Spirit". Determines your ability to control the conversation during persuasion. If it's low, the opponent will do all the talking.

金 (きん) - "Gold"

There are other statistics shown in the status menu as well. At the top of the screen is your character's name (in the boxed region). On the left, you will see, next to the phrase もくてき ("Goal") your character's current political objective. It's just based on which ideology he is following.

Below is shown the affinity your character has for the three ideologies:

尊王 - Supporters of the emperor.

公議 - Supporters of unifying the shogun, emperor, and daimyo.

佐幕 - Supporters of the shogun.

Whichever one has the higher value is your character's current ideology.

In the upper-right corner of the screen is shown your character's age, next to the word とし ("Years").

Finally, in the lower-right corner is shown how many goods your character is carrying, next to the word とくさんひん ("Special products"). These are meant simply for selling to make money.

---Class System-----[sec3i]---

There are several different social classes in the game. Your character's social class rank is shown next to the symbol 身 during gameplay. On the status menu, you can see your character's specific class position. Here are some social positions and where they rank:

Rank 1:

藩士 - Samurai.

幕臣 - Shogunate retainer.

Rank 2:

重臣 - Senior statesman.

奉行 - Shogun's administrator.

Rank 3:

家老 - Daimyo's minister.

新選組 - Shinsengumi.

Rank 4:

藩主 - Daimyo.

Higher ranks:

天皇 - Emperor.

将軍 - Shogun.

Often, you will not be able to converse with a character of a higher social class than you. This makes playing as a samurai much harder than playing as a daimyo. So you will want to persuade people of higher social ranking to your side and make them a controllable character when you get a chance. You want to have at least one daimyo eventually.

A character's social class can be increased at the end of each month. If you have a daimyo in your group, you can promote people to higher rankings that are from within your fief. The computer can also promote people since it is

controlling most of the daimyo. The computer never promoted any of my characters for me. I don't know if there is any way to make this happen faster or if you just have to be patient.

You can get an idea of a person's class ranking by the colors of the robes they wear while walking around the map. If they are wearing dark blue robes, they are a rank 1 or 2 character. If they are wearing red robes, they are a rank 3 or 4. There are other robe colors that are more rare, but they also signify specific social positions.

There are several more social positions than those listed above. For example:

町人 - Merchant.

商人 - Merchant.

学者 - Scholar.

志士 - Patriot.

朝臣 - Courtier.

大臣 - Cabinet minister.

老中 - Shogun's council of elder's member.

I did not check where these positions rank, although I think you can probably guess pretty easily from the titles.

---Making Money-----[sec3j]---

First of all, note that you will start with more money if you choose a starting character that has a higher social rank, like a daimyo. Also, you will get money at the end of each month that will be higher for characters of higher social class.

Otherwise, there are a few other ways to get money:

---Gold mines

First of all, you can dig for gold in the mines on the countryside map. The downside of this is that it is very rare that you find anything. But when you do find something, you will gain ~500 gold. So unless you want to reset the game a lot, you will be digging in the mines for several days until you find something. Personally, I like this method since it's kind of lazy.

---Trading

You can make money by purchasing goods in the brown houses on the countryside map, then selling them at the merchants in the cities. See the "Locations" section above for details. This takes a little luck and patience since the prices fluctuate quite a bit. Anything below 30 gold is a great price to purchase goods, and obviously you want to sell them for as high as you can. The best course of action is probably just to buy some goods whenever you can get a cheap price, but not to spend a lot of time searching around the map for deals. This would probably take a lot more time than the lazy gold digging method.

---Gambling

There is a gambling den in Kyoto (see the "Locations" section for details). If you don't mind resetting and reloading over and over, you can easily make a lot of money quickly.

---Battles-----[sec3k]---

You can attack other characters if they are on the same square or on one adjacent to your character. To do so, select the command 攻撃 ("Attack") from the main menu, then select the character you want to attack from the list of names that appears.

After initiating the battle, there is a chance that the opponent will be able

to convince you not to attack them, and the battle will immediately end. However, if the battle commences, your stats will be shown in green, in the lower-left corner of the screen, and the opponent's in blue in the upper-right.

Each round of battle, the amount of Strength (体) you lose from battle damage will be shown in the lower-right window in green, and the opponent's in blue. This is a decrease in your maximum Strength, and you will die if your maximum Strength reaches zero.

The battle will proceed automatically for a few rounds, and then it will end. Usually, the computer opponent will run away after this, making it hard to kill anyone. It is possible to track them down and attack them multiple times by resetting and reloading the game when they get too far, but it isn't really worth the effort. There is no reward for killing someone. Mostly, I find the battles to be useful simply for chasing away enemies who are trying to persuade someone of your ideology.

The computer will occasionally try to engage in battle with you. When it does, you will see the following options which are meant to help you try to prevent the battle from happening:

むし - "Ignore". Usually this just results in the battle beginning.

あやまる - "Apologize". This has a good chance of preventing the battle, but you will give the enemy money (~5 gold) in doing so.

なだめる - "Soothe". Often prevents the battle from starting, but not as good as the apology.

にげる - "Run".

If you are unable to escape the battle, the battle will begin in the exact same manner as if you initiated it, except your position on the screen will be reversed, meaning your stats will be represented by the blue lettering and the enemy's in the blue.

---Fief Maintenance-----[sec31]---

If you have a daimyo as a controllable character, then at the end of every month, you will be able to control a few things about your fief such as the strength of the armies, and class rank promotions. The game will go through the fiefs in order, and when a fief you control comes up, you can select "Y" to adjust these options, or "N" to skip it for this month.

If you chose "Y", then you will get a series of options to spend your resources on. The stat 金米 ("resources") represents how much you can spend on your fief maintenance. You will gain more resources each month, but at a pretty slow rate. Here are the series of options you will have to spend your resources on, in order of presentation:

- (1) Increase 石高 ("Yield") - Spend 0 to 300. Increases the number of resources that this fief produces each month.
- (2) Increase 共感 ("Sympathy") - Spend 0 to 300. I don't understand the effect of this stat, but it has something to do with your soldiers...
- (3) Increase 第一隊 ("First squadron") - Spend 0 to 300. Increases the number of soldiers in the first squadron army unit of this fief. By increasing the number of soldiers, you decrease the values of these other stats: 石高, 共感, and 武装, which is obviously a result of having more mouths to feed and people to pay and outfit with weapons.
- (4) Increase 第二隊 ("Second squadron") - Spend 0 to 300. Increases the number of soldiers in the second squadron army unit of this fief.
- (5) Increase 武装 ("Weaponry") - Spend 0 to 300. Needed for your army to deal damage during battle. It is decreased as you fight battles.
- (6) 第一隊 training. Spend ~20 gold to increase the 訓 ("Training") of the first squadron, which makes them more effective during battle.

- (7) 第二隊 training. Spend ~20 gold to increase the 訓 ("Training") of the second squadron.
- (8) Next you can promote people within your fief's government. In the upper-left window you are shown people and their current class status. Choose "Y" to make changes, or "N" to skip this. If you choose "Y", you will see a list of class positions, such as:
- 家老人事 - "Daimyo's minister personnel"
 - 重臣人事 - "Senior statesman personnel"
- After choosing a class position, you will see the follow options:
- (Rank)に しょうかく - "Raise to (Rank)".
 - (Rank)に こうかく - "Demote to (Rank)"
- After choosing to raise or demote someone, you will get a list of eligible characters to apply this action to.

---Army Units-----[sec3m]---

For every daimyo you control, you will get to command two army squadrons. There is always a 第一隊 ("First squadron") who stays to guard the castle and you can never make leave, and a 第二隊 ("Second squadron") that you can move wherever you please and even attack other castles. Note, you don't have to spend money to use the ships on the countryside map when using an army unit.

You can increase the strength of your army by using the fief control options at the end of each month (see the section directly above). Each squad has the following stats:

- 兵 (へいしすう) - "Number of soldiers"
- 武 (ぶそう) - "Weaponry". Needed to damage the enemy. Is drained over the course of battle.
- 訓 (くんれん) - "Training". Increase the effectiveness of your troops during battle.
- きょうかん - "Sympathy". I don't know what this does.

---Attacking Castles-----[sec3n]---

You can attack castles with your army units, but only if that castle is represented by a different ideology. Move an army unit onto the enemy castle and select the 攻撃 ("Attack") option, then select the enemy unit you want to attack. A battle screen will pop open, with your soldiers' stats on the left side in green text, and the enemy's on the right in blue (if you are getting attacked, you will be on the opposite side in blue instead).

At the bottom of the screen are four attack options:

- つうじょう - "Normal"
- ほうげき - "Bombardment"
- とつげき - "Assault"
- かんこく - "Recommendation"

The bombardment one always seems to work the best for me.

If the enemy engages you in combat, then you will have these options instead:

- 攻める - "Attack"
- 守る - "Defend". Minimize your loses.

I usually find defending is best.

Since each castle usually has two army units on it and you can only send one per daimyo, you'll have to recruit multiple daimyo so you can use all of their armies together to assault castles effectively. This is the only way to hope to capture Edo Castle to get the historically accurate ending.

---Walking Menu-----

On the main gameplay screen, you will see some of or possibly all of the following command options depending on where you are:

移動 - "Movement". See the "Traveling" section for details.

説得 - "Persuasion". See the "Persuasion" section for details.

攻撃 - "Attack". Initiate a battle with a nearby character.

情報 - "Information". Opens up the map screen menu. See below for details.

指示 - "Instructions". Only your starting character can use this option.

Shows the submenu options:

藩兵 - Brings up a list of army units under your control (if you have any). Next to a unit, it will say しゅっぺい ("Dispatch") if the unit is placed on the map somewhere, or たいぎ ("Standby") if you want the unit to be in the castle and unshown. To toggle between these options, select a unit, then choose either 待機 ("Standby") or 出兵 ("Dispatch").

同志 - Brings up a list of your comrades (other controllable characters). Select one and it will ask if you want to let him take his one course (e.g., you stop controlling him). Say "Y" if you agree, or "N" if you do not.

特別 - "Special". Use this option to interact with locations or people that are on the current space you occupy, such as merchants, inns, etc.

---Map Menu

After selecting the **情報** ("Information") command from the walking menu, you will see a map and the following menu options:

ようじん - "Important people". Lists all the characters that are on the same screen as you. Select a name and press "A" to see the character's stats. Press "A" again and you will be shown where the character is located on the screen.

はんへい - "Fief soldiers". Lists all the army units on the current screen. Select a unit and you'll see their stats. Press "A" again to be shown where the unit is located on the screen.

はんのようす - "Fief status". Shows stats about the fief located on the current screen. In the top window, you see the fief name on the left side, next to the word 藩名 ("Fief name"). In the middle window, on the left hand side, you will see a list of the governors of this fief, including, most importantly, the daimyo (藩主). On the bottom of the left hand side, you see the fief's current ideology. On the right hand side, you see these other stats:

金米 - "Resources"

共感 - "Sympathy"

石高 - "Yield"

武装 - "Weaponry"

せいりよくず - "Influence map". Allows you to move a cursor around the map, selecting regions to see their name and current ideology.

じぶん - "Yourself". See your character's statistics.

しんらい - "Trust". Brings up the options:

あたえている**信頼** - "Trust given". Shows characters that you have given some trust to.

もっている**信頼** - "Trust obtained". Shows characters that trust you to some level.

HEX - Allows you to move a cursor around your current screen and select squares to see who is on them.

---Select Menu

During play, press "Select" to open the following menu:

きろく - "Record". Select this, then "Y" to save your game.

おと - "Sound". Brings up the options: ならず ("Chime"), とめる ("Stop").
ひょうじ - "Display". Tells you current text display speed. Choose "N" to
change it. Then select 1 to 10, with 10 being fastest.
おわり - "End". Quit the game. Choose "Y" twice to quit.

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I can't really give you a walkthrough for a game like this that's different every time you play, but I can certainly give you some pointers.

- (1) If you want the game to be as easy as possible, choose one of the daimyo as your starting character. See the "Starting Characters" section for info. For the greatest challenge, choose one of the "emperor supporter" characters and aim for the capture of Edo Castle. For the record, I chose Oguri Tadamasa, who is not a daimyo, and I managed to finish the game just fine. But it would've been much much faster to have a daimyo. I did not capture Edo, and that seems like it would be crazy time consuming.
- (2) You need to get used to the persuasion mechanics, so just go around looking for characters with low Leadership (先) and Education (学) stats, which will be the easiest to have success against. Either convert people from a different ideology to your ideology or convert people of your ideology into your comrades, or do both to the same person. You will run low on Spirit (心) pretty quickly. This can be refilled in various ways, but I prefer to walk onto a "pretty scenery" square, which are hidden on the countryside map. It instantly refills your Spirit. So if you are trying to persuade people near one of these, a refill will be convenient. I have posted a map as a separate file on gamefaqs that lists all of these squares (at least all the ones I found).
- (3) Recruit a few comrades. It doesn't matter how good their stats are. Obviously, higher stats are better, but then they are harder to persuade. If their stats are low, make them visit a study hall after you recruit them and spend some time and money upgrading their stats. Make sure you visit the right study hall, because it is possible to have your ideology changed by studying in the wrong place (see the "Locations" section for details).
- (4) If your main character didn't start with very good stats, you may need him to visit a study hall to upgrade his stats too before you can start persuading characters with higher stats.
- (5) It's time to start thinking about "conquering" Japan. To change a fief into your ideology, you will usually have to persuade the daimyo of the fief to be of your ideology. But you usually cannot speak with a daimyo unless you are a daimyo yourself. So you need to recruit a daimyo to be your comrade and have him do the persuading for you. As Oguri Tadamasa, I was able to speak with the daimyo Tokugawa Yoshikatsu (徳川慶勝). I'm not sure why I was able to speak with him and not most of the other daimyo, but once I figure out I was able, I followed him around and persuaded him like mad to make sure he didn't get away, converting him to my ideology, and then into my comrade. I saved often to make sure he didn't get away. From then on, Tokugawa Yoshikatsu was my guy for persuading all of the daimyo of the fiefs to join my ideology.
- (6) If you have a daimyo in your party, then the conquest of Japan isn't

so difficult. Look at the map screen and see what fiefs are not your ideology. Then go there and persuade the daimyo if he's at his castle. If not, then you may still want to take the time to persuade any of his ministers that might be there. Use the はんのようす ("Fief status") option on the map screen to see who are the ministers (shown on the left side of the screen). Sometimes you have to persuade the ministers since persuading the daimyo may not be enough. But it's never a waste of time to persuade anyone, since the more people are of your ideology, the less there are wandering around converting people from your ideology to another. But ultimately, just keep looking for the daimyo, who may be wandering around some random part of Japan, and keep persuading them until all of the fiefs are of your ideology. You can ignore the grey colored fiefs since they don't count for some reason. Once all of the castles correspond to the color of your ideology, the screen will flash, and you'll receive a message telling you that you have unified Japan. You win!

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I hope you found this guide useful. If you have information that you'd like to contribute or other suggestions for how the guide can be made better or if you find any mistakes, please send it to lastbosskiller@gmail.com. I will give you the proper credit for your help.

Thanks to the NES FAQ Completion Project regulars for providing a fun environment for exploring old, obscure games!

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