

Raiden Project FAQ

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Raiden II Player's Guide Version 1.0
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- Introduction

This game's been out for five years and I haven't found any game information on it. So I decided to share what I know about this very challenging game. This guide was written with the hard version in mind. The PSx port and PC ports are the hard version. The easy machine will be covered in greater detail in the Version Differences section.

- Legal jazz

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I have received a lot of e-mail asking where to find a copy of the game. Be aware that I will provide no assistance in finding, burning, downloading, copying, stealing, or otherwise obtaining any illegal copies of Raiden 2 or any other game. The PC version can be found at computer store. Most likely, it will be in the bargain bin or equivalent.

- What's New

2/25/00 v2.0: Finished enemy listing, added info on levels 6-8, corrected a mistake in the Did you know section, added info on how to find the PC version, added new scoring tidbit, added a new challenge.

7/17/00 v1.9: New E-mail, added location of 1-up in level 6, added another strategy for the level 2 boss. More legal jazz; see above

4/5/00 v1.8: Added more to Enemies section, added something to Did You Know, made some minor changes.

2/27/00 v1.6: Added a Did You Know section, fixed an error in Powerup data, removed tracking bug mystery, started Enemies section, fixed an error in Version Differences, more minor changes.

10/13/99 v1.5: Added the locations of two 1-ups; added the version differences and unofficial soundtrack titles section; added boss hints for levels 4, 6, and 7; covered the level 2 boss in greater detail; added a little info on level 7; added "super secret" in General hints; Credits section expanded; (naturally) made a few other minor and cosmetic changes.

10/5/99 v1.0: The beginning

- Game description

Story? What story? Fly your Raiden Supersonic Attack Fighter across the eight levels and destroy anything that moves or shoots back. Controls are simple. One button fires guns, a second drops bombs, and the joystick moves the fighter. This is a simple vertical shooter; you don't have to worry about crashing into the terrain. Overall, Raiden II is a test of reflexes. You never see who flies the planes. For all anyone knows the pilots could be women, androids, moogles, etc.

- Scoring and mechanics

At the start, your ship is armed with a single shot vulcan and 3 bombs, which is not enough. Grab weapons and missiles to increase your firepower (detailed in the next section). Bombs cancel out enemy shots within their effect area. Anytime you shoot something or grab a power-up, points are gained. When you die, the shrapnel from the exploding ship can damage enemies. Also, several power-ups may come out, you lose all your weaponry, and your next ship starts with the peashooter and 3 bombs (regardless of how many you had when you died). Lose all three lives (four on some machines) and the continue screen comes up. If you continue in solo-player mode, your score and medals reset to zero. Consider yourself good if you score 500000 or higher on your first 3 lives. The high score list will keep track of the top ten scores and the level the player died on. A =C= on the high score list means the player continued after attaining that score.

In two player mode there are twice as many Power Up Carrying Enemies (PUCEs), the game throws in a few more enemies and missile bays, and some of the bosses (particularly in Level 2) seem tougher. Your score and medals carry over if you continue. There is a separate high score list probably due to this difference.

- Scoring Table

End of level bonus: 1000*bombs*medals (Remember: Medals reset to zero

if you continue in solo-player mode.)

Most weapons: 500

Gold medals: 500

Silver medals: 3000

Miclus (looks like a frog to me): 10000 (doesn't count as a medal)

Fairy: 10000

"Extra" power-ups: 5000

Unnecessary P: 10000

8th bomb that is the same type as the other 7: 50000

Mission 1 clear (all 8 levels): 1000000

Mission 2 and up clear: 3000000

- Power up

Guns: These cycle in color from red to blue to purple. These are usually carried by PUCes. Grab them to increase the power level of the primary weapon. Note that changing weapons does not increase the power level. Guns are fully powered at level 8 (weapon levels not game levels). Here are the weapons.

Vulcan (Red): the basic peashooter. Powering it up increases its spread. Useful but lacks power unless you can get close so most of the spread will hit.

Laser (Blue): A straight firing laser. Powering this up will increase the number and potency of beams. This is the strongest in terms of power.

Plasma (Purple): New to Raiden II. At first, it's a lot like the laser but firing until it turns into a single beam will enable it to lock on to what it hits, enabling the player to move freely while still causing damage. Its great for beginners and reduces the amount of aiming that needs to be done but is somewhat unreliable because it doesn't always go where you want it or need it to go. This is not a homing gun; you still need to guide the beam to the enemy which you want to hit. Plus, the lock-on beam is weaker than the straight shot. Despite its weak points, this is the weapon I recommend for a one-player game.

Missiles: These provide support fire and come from underneath the ship. Missiles do work on air targets. You don't start with any. Grab 4 of the same kind for full power. Like weapon power-ups, these cycle between the possible choices. Fired automatically with guns. These are released from Missile Caches.

Nuclear Missiles (Yellow M): These fly straight and are quite powerful. The slow speed can be useful for taking out enemies coming from one part of the screen while the player is blasting things in another. Even at level 1, these are useful.

Homing Missiles (Green H): Guess what these do. In my opinion, not nearly as useful unless fully powered because they're weak and pitifully slow. When fully powered though, they find their targets fast. The preferred missile for levels 3 and 5 due to the many little ships.

Bombs: Bombs cause damage and cancel out enemy shots within the effect area. You can have a maximum of 7 at once; grabbing an 8th will only give 5000 points. These are also carried by PUCes.

Bomb (Red B): A concentrated explosion causes heavy damage to anything

within the effect area. It takes about two seconds to detonate after releasing it so it needs to be timed well.

Cluster Bomb (Yellow B): Although not as powerful, this bomb has wider coverage. In addition, it also comes out faster and lasts longer making it the "panic" bomb. Very useful when you don't know what's coming. New to Raiden II.

P: This fully powers up your gun and missiles (if you have any). These are rare although if you and/or the other player die a lot, they'll appear more often. Just don't forget that you can still be killed by a single shot.

Fairy: It's worth 10000 points. When you die, it will drop some extra power-ups.

1-up: adds one life These are very well hidden.

- Enemies

Enemies fall into three categories: land based, air based, and boss. In general, air based enemies and bosses can kill by direct contact whereas you can safely fly over land based enemies (but beware the shots). I will indicate which levels I remember seeing the enemy in. The level notation only applies to the hard version.

Air-based enemies:

Beige Scoutcraft (Area 1): These just come down about 3/4 of the screen, shoot occasionally, and fly back up the way they came. Not a big threat except in large groups. One shot kills them.

Satellite (all areas): carry powerups and have a triple gun. Takes about 16 bullets worth of damage.

Alpha Warplane (Area 1): Travels straight down firing twin streams of five shots each. If not killed on the first pass, they will return from the bottom and fire a scatter shot if you fly below them. These take about 12-16 bullets worth of damage but are still not very dangerous as they don't fire frequently.

Vulture (Area 2): I call them Vultures because these little ships circle above a bit before swooping in on you. Once they dive in for the kill, they will fire at a fairly rapid clip that is hard to slip through. Try to stay low as they can leave you very vulnerable if they pass below you. They won't fire when they first appear so that's the best time to nail them. One shot will take these down.

Reconnaissance Craft (Areas 2, 4, and 7) When it first appears, it won't fire at you until you destroy one of its boosters which will reveal a gun that shoots straight down. For a quicker kill, aim for the center of the craft. You can destroy the shots of the one in Area 2 but not in the other levels.

Hornet Missile (Area 2): Attacks in droves just before the boss. The boss also launches these six at a time in its first firing pattern. Attacks by ramming. They don't shoot at all and only take one shot to kill.

Beige Attack Craft (Area 3 and 8) Looks similar to the Beige Scoutcraft of Area 1 but are more aggressive. They pause even closer to the bottom of the screen before trying to ram you. Even though they take only one shot to kill, they are quite dangerous if you didn't nail them right away. Because they hover so low, it's hard to shoot them without homing missiles.

Mosquito (Areas 3 and 6): Large ship that looks like one. See Area 3

section for details.

kamikaze plane (Area 4): They descend from the top of the screen and shoot pairs of shots. In the easy version, they don't fire as often but will try to ram you. In the hard version, they stick to their vertical line of descent. Easily killed, three bullets is enough.

Formation V (Area 4): It's the group of 5 large planes near the end of the level. They take quite a lot of punishment to destroy. Shoots infrequently.

Brown Attack Craft (Area 5): Even more persistent than the Beige Attack Craft of level 3, these guys will hound you until killed. They will back up for another assault if their initial attacks fail to nail you. This actually makes them easier as you'll have more room to maneuver under them.

space debris (Areas 6-8): If it crashes into you, you die. It doesn't attack. Comes in several sizes with the bigger rocks taking more damage.

Sweeper (Area 6): I call the little ships of Area 6 by this name because I usually wind up in a corner trying to avoid them and their shots and get shot in the back like a rat. These guys are really fast and always approach from the opposite side of the screen you're on.

When playing solo, it is impossible to hit these things with a forward firing weapon; they never stay on the same vertical plane as your ship. Sentry (Areas 7 and 8): When they first appear, they do nothing. After a few seconds, they fire straight down. If they're still alive, these ships will alternate between firing straight down and at 45 degree angles. They also gain limited horizontal movement when this pattern starts. If destroyed quickly, these ships won't pose any threat.

However, they take a lot of damage and tend to come in numbers.

Phantom Fighter (Area 7): They fly straight down from where they appear and shoot the whole way. The good news is that they die with one hit. The bad news is that they come at least two at a time and sometimes groups of two or four attack in quick succession.

Nuclear rocket (Area 7): A few seconds after it appears, it will turn on its side and spin. If killed while spinning, shots fly in eight directions with one aimed directly at you.

Pod Rocket (Area 7): A large red pod that does nothing for a while. If not killed, the top will blow a release a bunch of mini-rockets. The mini-rockets float in place and fire directly at the player when shot.

The Crystal (Area 8): From the middle of level until the end, it floats back and forth on the top of screen. It doesn't attack. However, it takes a lot of damage. I've never killed it when playing alone. If you're really good, you may make it cough up a 1-up. Try having two players with one pounding the crystal with the guided plasma beam while the other uses laser to take out the Sentry ships.

Ground based enemies:

Tank (Areas 1-6): Run-of-the-mill tank that drives on its preprogrammed path and shoots occasionally. Takes 3-4 bullets to kill.

Turret (Areas 1-3): Stationary gunpod

Tri-Cannon Tank (Areas 1-5): A little tougher than a regular tank and fires a tight cluster of three shots instead of one. Otherwise not really different.

Laser Tank: (Areas 2-4, and 8): Same as a regular tank except it fires larger white shots.

Amphibious Tank (Area 2): See Area 2 section for strategy.

Disc Turret: (Area 2): Same as a turret except for firing destroyable shots and two or three at once rather than one.

Fireball Turret; (Areas 2, 5, 6, and 8): Same old turret, different looking shot.

Mobile Flak Cannon: (Areas 3 and 5): The two at the start of Area 3 are immobile. It periodically fires twin sets of four at a small angle. You are safe from its fire if you are vertically aligned with it. It can fire to the side as well so watch out.

War Barge (Area 3): Consists of a turret on top and two tanks, one of them under a hatch. Except for the first two, they also have flak cannons just like the Mobile Flak Cannons though these only fire forward. In easy, they shoot direct single shots instead. These are indestructable. The turret shoots direct shots in threes. The turret is the target. Taking it out also destroys any tanks on it that are still alive and yields a medal (except for the first two).

Gunboat (Area 3): A boat with a gun on top. Pretty much a tank that can swim.

Boat Hanger (Area 3): The core is flanked by three Fireball turrets. Destroy the core for a medal. The core itself doesn't attack.

Docked Destroyer (Area 3): That gunboat-like thing near the end of the level just before two War Barges. Doesn't move and shoots in threes.

Shadow Hatch (Area 3 and 7): Opens, fires two shots, and closes. Can only be damaged when open. The ones in level 7 only fire one white shot each time they open.

Post (Area 4 and 8): Just sits there in the path of your shots. A few hits will blast it out of your way. It cannot hurt you. In level 8, they give medals.

Statue (Area 4): It takes a decent amount of punishment and leaves a medal when destroyed. Other than that, they are like posts and are dealt with in a similar manner.

Cannon Tower (Area 4): They sit in one place and fire their salvos at set times. The first salvo is a sparse five shot spread; the second has four shots. Both are fired in fixed directions. From a frontal position, dodge to the side slightly to avoid the first salvo and move back to avoid the second.

Railroad Car (Area 5): It fires in bursts of three. They take more damage than tanks but are dealt with in a like manner. As the name suggests, they patrol the rails in level 5.

Watcher Cannon (Area 6): A blinking light rotates around the structure. If it faces you, the Watcher Cannon will fire like a Mobile Flak Cannon. The light resumes its path after firing. This enemy is immobile.

Flak Trap (Area 6 and 8): When the turret spins, it sprays shots every which way. The firing pattern is not aimed so it's a matter of being in the right place at the right time.

Defense Installation (Area 6): The core is surrounded by a pop-up gun at each corner. Like the Boat Hangers, destroy the core to disable it completely.

Concealed Cannon (Area 7): They're not concealed really well; you can spot where one will appear by its pattern on the ground. The timing of their emergence is fixed although it can throw the player off. After appearing, the first salvo always goes straight down. After that, the cannon will aim at you directly. Treat it like any other stationary gun but don't be in front of it when it emerges; the shots are fast.

Rail Battery (Area 7): There are two of them and they have different firing patterns. They don't fire often but be ready to move at any time. They take a lot of damage too.

Disc Hatch (Area 7): It only stays up a second at a time to fires three discs in a line.

Battery Tank (Area 8): A huge tank that fires many shots at once. The firing frequency is low so they're not difficult to deal with.

Laser Cannon Tower (Area 8): Although their firing pattern crisscrosses more, they're not much more dangerous than their relatives in level 4. The real danger is the little ships that also show up.

Bosses

See level sections for strategy.

Area 1: Death Walkers

Area 2: Ichneumon

Area 3: Shadow Submarine

Area 4: Fort Cyclops

Area 5: Dread Bomber

Area 6: Manticore

Area 7: Whisper

Area 8: Cranasian Headquarters

- General Hints

Most enemies shoot directly at you. Therefore, as long as you are moving and not moving towards a gun, you will usually not be hit.

Most enemies come out from the same place. Memorizing the positions will help. (easier said than done)

Don't be afraid of using bombs, especially if you are a beginner. Your stock is reset to 3 regardless of how many you had. I've died with 7 once: very annoying. Conversely, you'll need to become somewhat comfortable dodging through small spaces if you wish to become better.

Don't worry about medals much. Worry about staying alive. It's especially true if you can't even pass the level without continuing.

When the continue screen is up, the screen KEEPS SCROLLING. At times, it may be to your advantage to let it count down before pressing the start button to come back. At bosses however, it's best to come back ASAP if you plan on continuing.

With plasma, sometimes it is better to use the straight shot instead of the beam because straight firing actually does more damage if you can keep on the target.

Nuclear missiles do a lot of damage if you're close to the enemy due to them firing more frequently. Specific places are the bosses in levels 1 and 2.

Try not to change weapons too often unless you're already fully powered. Changing weapons does not increase the power level. Very little is more annoying than grabbing 7 power ups and finding yourself with the starting peashooter.

If a P appears, the ideal tactic is to have some kind of missile before taking it so they'll be powered up as well. Taking a missile after the P will result in weak level 1 missiles.

Power-ups will drift off the screen after a certain amount of time passes (my estimate is 30-50 seconds) so don't wait forever.

Balanced weapon combinations are stronger. Vulcan's wide range but poor power should be augmented by the destructive power of nuclear missiles. Laser should be supported by homing missiles to reach those enemies not in front of you. Purple works fine with either type of missile.

In two-player games, I recommend the players use different weapons. Two people using plasma is not that powerful. My power combo involves the better player using laser and homing. The other player should use vulcan or plasma with whatever missile.

Also in two player games: share the power-ups.

Never insult another player's performance, no matter how much he or she may suck. Even if the other player is bad, the game is usually more fun with them than without.

"super secret": Player 1 begins each life with three regular bombs. Player 2 however, begins with cluster bombs each time. You guessed it. Play on player 2's side when playing solo and you'll probably do better.

- Level data

Because the game relies so much on reflexes, I'm not going to try to write a walkthrough on each level. There are some patterns that are helpful to know which I will include. I will also include my weapon recommendations for solo players, # of PUCes (multiply by 2 if there are two players), and Missile Caches

Level 1:

Recommended weapons: plasma and nuclear missiles

5 PUCes

2 Missile Caches (4 in two player)

Consider this a warm-up level. The fairy is easy to find; just shoot the tree it's in while dodging shots. The Death Walkers are fairly trivial. Most of the time, they will fire shots at the diagonals. That's the time to get close and hose it with missiles. When the turret starts turning, it will fire several shots straight at you when your ship is in it's line of fire. Two spreads of bullets will come out a split second before on each side to make it tricky to dodge. The easy way is to drop a bomb a bit before it fires to cancel the shots. Otherwise, back up and slip through. Watch out for small tanks and Beige Scoutcraft. They come at fixed times. The second Death Walker will do the spread and turret combo continuously when it's nearly dead.

Level 2:

Recommended weapons: plasma and nuclear

6 PUCes

3 Missile Caches

Somewhat more difficult, though manageable. There are some enemies worth noting. The large plane is trivial if you have vulcan or plasma because its shots can be destroyed. Just don't be hit by the tanks. The two Amphibious Tanks later on serve as a sort of mid-boss. They have two firing patterns. In the first, the side cannons try to box you in and the gun holes shoot directly at you periodically. It's not too hard to dodge. The second firing pattern is a wide spread that locks on to your location then fires based on where you were a split second ago. It's almost impossible to go around unless there are two players. If your firepower is weak, it may be better to not do too much damage so they stay in their first firing pattern since you do not have to kill them. Near the end of the level, a car will speed from the right. It is worth 10000 points if you nail it. Plasma or vulcan level 3 or higher is good at the boss. There are three firing patterns. The first is trivial; the wingtips and the twin gun in front will fire five shots at a time straight down. Destroy these so you'll only have to worry about the Hornet Missiles the boss spits out six at a time. After taking enough damage or when enough time passes, the boss will use its second and third firing patterns. The second pattern is not too hard to dodge. I usually use a bomb to escape the third firing pattern as it closes it though. The boss will alternate between the two patterns until it is killed. With plasma, the third pattern can be avoided by flying to the side of the boss while still being able to hit it. Ethan Larson's Raiden FAQ has bullet diagrams for its level 2 boss that may be helpful here.

Solo player strategy (George Montemayor)

"You can kill the level 2 boss without having to dodge the 2nd attack

wave after all little fighters have been exhausted where the bottom guns slowly spread bullets, and without having to use a bomb.

This assumes that you have maximum firepower in both weapons, and you have the nuclear weapons. I recommend to be using the vulcan laser for this. You may have noticed that if you severely damage the boss to quickly, it will release all of its little fighters. The trick is to damage it somewhat, but not severely, until it has 3 batch of fighters left. At that point, it will not release all of them no matter how severely you have damaged it. I suggest you fly right close to it at that point. Stay as close to it as possible even at the start of the 2nd attack wave."

hint: The boss has 14 batches of fighters.

Level 3:

Recommended: Plasma and homing

5 PUCes

3 Missile Caches

Extra power-up: Destroy the stationary gunboat-like enemy near the end of the level just before two War Barges.

1-up: As you leave the large superstructure which opens the level, there will be a hanger on the left which two tanks will come from and an off-colored box with a medallion. Kill the first tank but don't kill the second one or the medallion cache. If you're using homing or high-level red: you'll need to stop shooting, go to the right side of the screen, and use a bomb or two to burn away shots and the little ships unless you're really good. When the tank hits the cache, it will explode and the 1-up will appear. Takes practice to do, especially without bombs. I don't think it's worth the trouble with two players. By the way, you can't die in the process. Besides it being pointless, the shrapnel from your ship is likely to destroy the medallion cache. DragonKnight Zero recommends plasma and nuclear so you can still shoot other enemies. The 1-up will not be revealed if the continue screen scrolls past this point.

This level is HARD. 98-99% of the time, I go game over here. This is the level to beat. If you are still fully powered with plasma and nuclear, switch to homing straight away (unless you're going for the 1-up). It will help immensely versus the flood of little ships that will assault you through most of the level. By the way, they are more aggressive than the little guys in Level 1. With enough firepower, the large mosquito planes can be killed before they fire. Their wings flicker really quickly before firing so if they're not dead, slip through a hole. Their spread isn't aimed at you so it's not difficult to dodge. Be wary of gunboats and little ships though. When gunboats start coming from behind, it becomes really hairy. I usually drop a bomb shortly after the 3rd PUCE appears and the two gunboats are coming from behind. If you survived the first water section, prepare for a welcoming committee of a lot of tanks and ships. The land section before the next water section often kills me because the shots are hard to see at times. The second water section is also insane so don't be afraid to use a bomb if you're feeling overwhelmed. I use a bomb at the end where the two War Barges are docked if I don't have plasma.

Still haven't died? OK, switch to nuclear missiles for the boss. Full homing is good for the little ships if you're not using red though. It is a big boat with a LOT of pop-up guns. Your primary target is the main cannon. The pop-up guns on the side of the main gun will aim for you, the guns in front only fire forward (and their shots can be destroyed). There are some more, but they are not a threat. Other dangers are the Shadow Hatches on the docks and the Beige Attack Craft that will harass you throughout the battle. It's not too difficult

until the cover on the main gun is blown off. Once that happens, there will be the main gun's spread to worry about. It wouldn't be so hard except for those pop-up triple guns in the back, the little guys, and maybe some Shadow Hatches if you were fast. Use your bombs as needed. I have passed this boss without dying only about 3-4 times when playing solo. Another time when I was with another player, I was using fully powered laser and homing and we killed the boss before the screen stopped scrolling. That sure felt good.

Level 4:

Recommended: plasma and nuclear OR laser and homing

4 PUCes

2 Missile Caches (3 with two players)

Extra power-up: Destroy both cannon towers near the end. There is also a missile power-up between them.

There's a hidden fairy in this level. About the time when the first mobile platform shows up, there will be eight targets arranged in a circle on the left side of the playfield. Destroy all of them and then destroy the bush that appears to make the fairy appear. It really helps to have two players for this. Don't bother if you're playing solo, you're on your last life, and you don't plan on continuing. Anyway, I find this level to be a bit easier than the last one. Don't let the peaceful BGM lull you into thinking this will be easy. Switch off red as soon as you can; it will be too weak. There are several dangers of note. For starters, the large plane from level 2 is back. This time, its shots are not destroyable. Tri-cannon Tanks will also come out from under the woods. A bomb is highly recommended if the second plane appears before the first is destroyed though it isn't always necessary. Other dangerous enemies are the mobile platforms. At first they appear to be part of the ground but they'll move out and attack. Beware: they don't show while the continue screen is up but if someone continues, they'll pursue from behind. You'll almost certainly need a bomb or two to survive the section near the end with the third mobile platform and 17-18 kamikaze planes bearing down almost all at once. Also, the formation of 5 planes right after will come back from behind if not destroyed on the first pass.

OK, the level may be slightly easier than the last one but the boss is much harder. The first enemy you see isn't actually the real boss but it must be killed before you can shoot the boss effectively since it will park right in front of it. Both parts can make turrets pop out of places on the ground. More pup-up triple guns here. Take out the first part, then go for the tripleguns flanking the core. Take out the mobile tanks on the sides only after the triple guns are gone because destroying them will automatically expose the core, freeing it to attack and create turrets. If enough time passes, the cover on the core will blow off on its own so don't dawdle. In the easy version, the side tanks will shoot directly at you so be more aggressive about taking them out.

Level 5

Recommended: plasma and homing

7 PUCes

2 Missile Caches

If you haven't noticed already, the enemy shots have been increasing in speed throughout the levels. Anyway, homing missiles are a must for this level. The aggressive little guys are back and they're more tenacious than they were in level 3. The tanks also seem to have multiplied; they are everywhere, especially on the end stretch. No new enemies other than the railroad cars and the fighter near the end. I have made it to the boss without dying with the recommended weapon

combination, and it is one of the hardest things I've survived.

The boss is a three parter. The first part is relatively easy. Stay at the very back and center of the screen and make small movements to dodge shots. If you're afraid of dying it may be worthwhile to use a bomb right away to quiet some of the guns and the thrusters but don't use them otherwise. You can fly through the thruster flames without dying. Part two is a little tougher. It will come out automatically after a set amount of time. Stay vertically aligned with its center at the back of the screen and make small movements to dodge its volleys. The wingtip cannons are not a worry if you're centered. When it sprays shots seemingly everywhere, you really only need to make small movements. Some players may need bombs but for me, it just throws off my timing and I die. Part three is a nasty one. Again back of screen, vertically aligned is the best position for dodging. Once you have a feel for its pattern, it's not really that hard. All these fights are one on one so no other enemies will harass you. Laser is the best weapon if you happen to have it.

Survived? Congratulations. It only gets worse from here on out.

Level 6:

Recommended: full vulcan and nuclear missiles

7 PUCES

2 Missile Caches

1-up: Early in the level, there's a structure with the infamous crystal icon on it. If you can destroy it when it's at the bottom of the screen, a 1-up will appear. Sometimes, it doesn't appear. My guess is that the time interval in which you can uncover the 1-up is similar to the time interval in which you can uncover a bonus medal at the end of each level. (1-2 seconds)

There is a sequence before the level begins where your fighter(s) is launched into space. Once the music changes, it's time to get back to action. Space debris all around here. Full red is actually better than plasma because of the numerous, fast, little ships. If your gun isn't powered enough then use plasma. Otherwise, it will be near impossible to hit any of the little ships and their constant firing will almost surely overwhelm you. Tanks also like to approach from inconvenient angles (often behind) so avoid staying on the bottom of the screen. Near the end, if your next bomb is the nuclear bomb, drop it on the core of the first Defense Installation to knock it out quick.

Boss Strategy (Hisamatsu Tuchi):

"Manticore (the oversized tank at the end of stage six) spends most of its time trying to blast you with its energy cannon, although continually weaving around will get you past the dangerous part. The main problems are the two hatches shooting flak waves, and the advanced attacks which rain projectiles over the front of Manticore. A bomb is usually needed for the first version (both versions are telegraphed by the armor at the base of the energy cannon glowing white). If you move quickly, you can just find a hole in the second version and sit there while the fireballs fall (unless some other weapon finds you, in which case you'd better have a cluster bomb ready)."

Level 7:

Recommended: plasma and any missile

5 PUCES

3 Missile Caches

More outer space madness. Lots of space debris around. Move after destroying a spinning Nuclear Rocket because one of the shots will head towards your ship's position. If you didn't kill the Pod Rockets quick

and they launched their mini-rockets, it may be to your advantage to stop firing momentarily to avoid having a retaliatory shot coming at you if you're cornered. Plasma works well because of all the space debris; you'll usually hit something.

Boss Strategy (Hisamatsu Iuchi):

"Stage seven's boss, Whisper, starts off (after taking off from the battleship) by launching Rail Cannons from the Hangars on its sides, and shooting bursts of flak from its front engines. When a Hangar is destroyed, it launches one last Rail Cannon in retaliation. Things heat up when the Booster Rockets are disengaged (you can speed this up by shooting the Rockets)--the cockpit unleashes a pair of cannons which shoot discs straight down, and fire waves at YOU. It's actually pretty easy once the Hangars and forward flak cannons are destroyed (the latter can only be shot when they're firing)."

Level 8:

Recommended: plasma and homing missiles

4 PUCes

3 Missile Caches

1-up: At some point midway through the level, a crystal will drift around the top part of the screen. If you manage to destroy it late as it is leaving the screen, a 1-up will appear. Pretty much requires mid to high level plasma to do. I haven't verified this personally but it's here for the record.

An interesting thing happened here the first time I played this level. I was waiting for the continue screen to hit 1 and the screen filled up with so many ships that it stopped scrolling. I'm guessing the game hit a limit. The weapon combination isn't really ideal but seems to be easiest. Homing missiles are for the large number of little ships while I chose plasma because you'll constantly be on the move and plasma doesn't require staying in front of the target. It's also ideal for the crystal.

At the boss, remember that tanks will periodically come out from within the structure. It will be a long fight. My big moment of glory was when I survived the level (not the boss) on one life. The other player continued a lot.

Once you complete the 8th level, the game will award you a million points and will restart with the enemy shots being faster (as if they weren't fast enough already). No real ending; that's the worst thing about this game.

- Did You Know?

You cannot earn extra lives through points in this game. The only way is by finding the rare 1-up.

Every 28th powerup is a P. This include powerups released by killed players and fairies. Missiles are not counted in this pattern.

I can't prove this but it seems explosions from large enemies blowing up and the follow-up if they crash on the ground can take out smaller enemies.

There is a medal hidden at the end of every level. Shoot around to find it. Although the location changes, if you follow the same flight pattern, you'll probably find it consistantly. There's about a 1-2 second time interval to uncover and grab the medal before the area clear screen.

- Mysteries

In all seriousness, is there an end to this game? On the PSX version, I've used mission select to start on the third time through and the game goes to a mission 4. Anyone with the home version or their own arcade machine willing to find this out? Whoever solves this mystery as well as any others will be given credit.

When bosses are defeated, a crystal flies out. What's it's purpose?

Robby Morrow suggested that the crystal contains the enemy intelligence, which is put in certain large enemies to halt your progress. Makes sense; where else do those bosses' unlimited supply of firepower come from?

- Challenges

Tests of skill devised by me. I'm not going to make a record table so don't ask.

-Training for those with a home version: Complete the first level, shooting at nothing but the boss and dying no more than twice. If you successfully do this, you will be a much better player.

-At the end of level 1, kill the second Death Walker before killing the first one. To earn bragging rights, this must be completed on the first life.

-Gain a level clear bonus of 100000 or more playing solo, This can be accomplished on any level of choice (except 1, where it is impossible)

-In level 4, survive the section with the third mobile platform and the 17 kamikaze planes without using bombs. Heck, survive the boss without bombs.

Complete the first three levels on one life using the laser and nuclear missiles. Submitted by George Montemoyer

And of course . . .

Highest score in solo player on first credit.

That's all for now. More to come. If I post a submitted challenge, that person will be credited.

- Version Differences

There are two different versions of the arcade machine. They can be identified by the high score screen. The easy version has the Raiden MK-II in color on a black background; the hard version has a sepia shot of an ascending fighter. In general, the level layouts are a little different. The list which follows and all the enemy names within it are by Hisamatsu Tuchi unless otherwise indicated. I have not verified everything on the list since I have never played past level 4 on the easy machine but what I've seen is accurate.

General: NO MICLI IN EASY. Just normal and special medallions.

Stage one:

--In the easy version, after the first Missile Cache, there will be a Beige Battery Tank (its outer shell moves from time to time to fire a wall or cluster of bullets). Two more follow just before the ruined highway. In the hard version, Alpha Warplanes appear wherever Battery Tanks were in the easy version.

--Easy: at the meander, two Alpha Warplanes attack. Hard: Alpha Warplanes replaced by Tri-cannon Tanks and a swarm of Beige

Scoutcraft.

--Easy: At the edge of the swamp right before the first Death Walker boss appears, there's a Subterranean Cannon. It starts out as a flat orange panel with a light cycling around its sides. If the light ever faces you, all four light sections flash, and the Cannon emerges. It isn't present in the hard version (in ANY stage).

--Easy: Both Death Walkers have the same sparse flak density when using the Fire Bow (rotating turret attack). Hard: The second Walker's flak density is MUCH greater.

Stage two:

--A few of the structures from which Laser Tanks (they have a fat cannon that shoots the large, fast laser bullets) emerge in the hard version have only the ordinary Tanks in the easy version.

--In the easy version, when the Amphibious Tanks use their Laser Spread, if you stay exactly aligned with a Tank's bow, and only move vertically, the Spread will miss. You don't have that luxury in the hard version. The hard version also has more supporting normal Tanks.

DragonKnight Zero says: If playing with two players in hard, the Laser Spread is more sparse and easier to dodge. That feature is not in easy.

--Easy: At the entry to the military base, there are some Disk Turrets (destroyable shots). Hard: Medallion Caches instead.

--Easy: Subterranean Cannon, moderate Tank population, and Orange Flak Trap after the base. Hard: Instead, huge, motley population of normal, Laser, and Tri-cannon tanks.

--The Car in the hard version isn't present in the easy version.

--It's not important, but once Ichneumon runs out of Hornet Missiles at the end of the stage, you can hear it retract the missile racks in the hard version, but not the easy version.

DragonKnight Zero says: Actually, the sound of the retracting missile racks is a signal that the next firing pattern is coming. It also seems that the third pattern is easier to dodge in easy.

Stage three:

--A few Mobile Flak Cannons are on the first superstructure in the hard version. Not in the easy version, where you get to tangle with a few Patrol Boats early on.

--The Boat Hangars change a bit in nature. They have three Laser Turrets apiece in hard. In easy, though, there are two Flak Hatches (the same things lining the canal with Shadow Submarine at the end of the stage) and a Cluster Laser (it shoots a tight group of four laser orbs). Also, when you destroy a Hangar's core, you can't see the medallion in easy mode...

--Easy mode doesn't have the HUGE tank population from hard when you reach the beaches (or any Tri-cannon Tanks)--just three or four

before the Satellite (PUCE) appears.

--The side cannons on the vertical War Barges change in nature a little. In hard, they have a fixed pattern of periodically shooting down and diagonally. In easy, they shoot single bullets right at you.

--During the open sea after the beaches, easy pits you against Beta Warplanes (MUCH faster than Alpha, and much quicker shots). None in hard.

Stage four:

--There are no Disc Tanks in easy.

--When you destroy a Statue, the medallion can be seen in hard mode, but not easy.

Stage five:

--In easy mode, the swamped area has a pair of Subterranean Cannons, and there's another at the very beginning. Instead of these, hard mode has several groups of Tanks and Mobile Flak Cannons coming down.

--There are a trio of Silver Battery Tanks right before the railyard begins.

--The Attack Trains shoot quick strings of bullets periodically in easy, not single and frequent like hard.

--The large, beige structure--apparently the railyard's station--is rather well-armed in easy mode. Lots of Disc Turrets, and a Stealth Fighter (with constant, straight-down strings of discs). The Stealth Fighter appears MUCH later (Dread Bomber's hangar) in hard mode.

--In easy mode, it's entirely possible to go above Dread Bomber's second phase, with little risk of getting rammed. The Bomber's third phase isn't as varied in easy as in hard. The overlapping waves of fire aren't complete (the upper portions are gone), and there's only one desperation pattern, the random fireball swarm (not the Fire Arc Switch).

Stage six:

--The Watcher Cannons (silver structures with flashing lights) from hard mode aren't present in easy mode.

--There are Tanks on the runways right before Manticore on hard mode, but not easy. Also, when you actually reach the runways, easy mode has a Greater Flak Trap (like the ones in stage eight) waiting for you.

Stage seven:

--BIG difference in how the Golden Phantom Fighters work. In easy, they move in some downward direction VERY quickly, shooting as they accelerate and, sometimes, as they exit the screen. In hard, they steadily fly at a good clip towards the bottom edge, firing all the while.

- Credits

Hisamatsu Iuchi: Detailed list of differences between the two versions of the arcade game, reprinted in the above section. Also provided the location of a 1-up in level 3; tips and strategy for the bosses in levels 4, 6, and 7; some information on level 7; almost all the enemy names; and a few other terms.

jmangamen: solved the mystery of the crystal that floats around in level 8, also clarified that extra lives don't come from points

George Montemayor: location of 1-up in level 6, more strategy for the level 2 boss.

Rory Benson: informed me that it is possible to obtain a P on the first life

Ethan Larson and his Raiden FAQ: Some of the general hints and names were found in his guide. Also, his boss strategies for levels 1 through 4 are applicable to Raiden 2 to varying degrees.

Lloyd "Pops" Clark, who lends me money to play with him when I am short on arcade funds.

Gamefaqs, for inspiration and being a place to submit this guide to.

Gamepro March 1994: parts of game description

All the people who still play Raiden 2 (so it stays in the arcades)

Anyone else who deserves credit that I didn't mention above.

- This guide's future

I've finished what I've wanted to do with this guide. However, if anyone feels something is still missing or would like to see something added, feel free to e-mail me. I'll still update as needed. My e-mail is at the top of this document

- Unofficial Soundtrack Titles

Hey, the Castlevania (TM of Konami) series has titles for its BGM. So why not Raiden 2. The BGM sounds out of place for a shooter most of the time. Unlike most Squaresoft pieces, the titles here do not reflect the opinions of Seibu Kaihatsu or anyone else beside the people under the Suggested by column. Consider yourself thanked if I or anyone else suggests a title you may have copyrights attached to. I try not to use names that are already in use but I'm no a walking encyclopedia on music.

BGM	Unofficial Title	Suggested by
Level 1	Soaring Into the Atmosphere	DragonKnight Zero
Boss	Battle Stations	DragonKnight Zero
Area Clear		
Level 2 and 8	Weapons of Hope	Hisamatsu Iuchi
Level 3	Noble Struggle	Hisamatsu Iuchi
Level 4	Determination	Hisamatsu Iuchi
Level 5	Sky Dance	DragonKnight Zero
Level 6	Journey to Another World	DragonKnight Zero
Level 7	Where Heroes are Made	DragonKnight Zero
Mission Clear		
Name Entry		

Think you've got something for this section? Send it in.