

Riglord Saga 2 (Import) FAQ/Walkthrough

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Riglord Saga 2 FAQ

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I. Overview:

Riglord Saga 2 is a turn-based strategic RPG published by Micro Cabin as the sequel to the original Riglord Saga on Sega Saturn. Unfortunately this game is not translated into English and is never published in North America. It is an old favorite of mine, and since I cannot find an English FAQ anywhere on the internet I decided to contribute one.

In the game you start playing as Mieu and Rusty (not a great name is it?) Your home land is attacked by some mysterious guy and in no time you are sent for help. Can you gather a force to stop the conquest and save the world?

The game mainly consists of two parts: battle and exploration. In battle you and the enemy move alternatively. The goal of the battle can either be to defeat certain boss, to reach a certain place, or to kill all the enemy. The exploration consists of moving on the map or in town, getting information, and shopping.

The game is almost linear but not strictly; there are side quests which can give you items and characters that need not be completed in strict order or even be completed at all. The plot, however, is predetermined and one can only follow it.

II. Battle System:

The battle field consists of plaquettes. Every unit occupies one plaquette. In the battle, you can control all your characters (up to 8 of them) in any order in your turn. You first move the character (the maximum distance is determined by the move power of the character) and then you can choose an action. The action must be from the character's skill trees and some of the skills would require some remaining move power to be used. Any skill must have a target in range in order to be used.

The effect of the actions can either be immediate (such as an attack),

lasting until the next turn (defensive skills), or durational (supportive magic). The skill can take effect on either the party, the opponent, or in the rare case both. Some skills affect the ground as well. The range of the action can be classified as follows:

1. single: a single target within a certain distance from you.
2. surround: all targets within a certain distance from you.
3. straight line: multiple targets on a straight line with a certain length, in one of the four directions.
4. 3 straight lines: 3 straight lines instead of one.
5. bomb: first you choose the landing point of the bomb within a range, then all targets within a certain distance to the landing point will be affected.
6. self: only act on the character himself.

All the distances mentioned above are given specific to different skills.

Another factor which affects the range of the skill is the level of penetration. There are three levels:

- A. up to an enemy: the range stops at an enemy.
- B. up to an obstacle: the range stops at treasure boxes or walls.
- C. throughout: the range does not stop.

One last factor that affects everything: the height and slope. In the battle field every point would have a height index. It would require a larger amount of move power to go across a larger ascend/descend. If the slope is too great then it can be either that only flying units can go through or even nobody can go through. If you stop on a plateau with too large a slope you will slide down after you finish the action. Sliding down will hurt ground units. (Interestingly flying units would also slide down but they would not be hurt.) There are falling regions as well, where flying units can just traverse and ground units are forbidden. If a ground unit somehow ends up in the falling region, it will fall and results in instant death. A flying unit will fall as well if it is frozen. The height and slope can sometimes be altered by supportive magic and certain skills. For some skills the damage, hit rate and the range are also affected by the height.

III. Characters and Skills:

All skills belong to some skill tree. Every character has a number of skill trees and they are free to use the skills in the skill tree up to their technical level in that skill tree. There are two levels associated to a skill: the learn level and the use level. The former is the level that the skill can be learned. If a skill is learned by any party member then it can be used by other party members who share the skill tree and have a technical level equal or higher than the use level. In the game only the use level are explicitly shown.

There are also skills which do not have a learn level; those skills cannot be learned. Some of them can be stolen from enemies (using the female thief), while the remaining has to be created via "fusion".

Fusion is the process to combine one physical attack and one magical attack to form a new skill, each with a certain elemental property. One can try and error, or take advantage of the "skill combination books" that one can find throughout the game. What the book did is that it told you the right combinations which can produce fusion skills and also keep some skills off if they have already been used. With the skill books the time spent trying can be significantly

reduced. Although in the end the combination is fixed and can just be provided here, I found it more interesting for one to try out themselves. Here I would just list the right combination of elemental property (the former would be the property of the physical attack while the latter would be the property of the magical attack.)

Wind+Thunder
Thunder+Water
Water+Earth
Earth+Fire
Fire+Wind

Light+Darkness
Darkness+Spirit
Spirit+Mind
Mind+Star
Star+Light

As one can see they form two independent cycles. All the strongest attacks are fusion skills so one should spend some time to get them. Also, Note that the attacks without any elemental property cannot be used to fuse.

Now let me turn back to the skill trees. I will list all the every of them and comment:

Sword skills
user: Mieu, Hawkeye
Short range physical attack. Range is ok. Hard to train in the initial stage. The most useful attack probably is the stolen "the dance of swords" which has a range of surrond 4 and penetration B.

Archery skills
user: the female thief, Nazuna
Long range physical attack. The hit rate depends a lot on the relative height. The damage is in general lower than the short range attacks but the coverage is a lot better, especially at higher levels.

Ninja skills
user: Asuka
Short range physical attack. Easier to train than the sword skills (see chapter VI, however) The range of the skills are comparable to the sword skills, but Asuka seems to have higher strength and thus making the Ninja skills appear more powerful.

Dragon skills
user:Mieu
Short range physical attack. The range is among the smallest. Due to the nature of the dragon it is pretty powerful. Mieu's attack is far more powerful using the dragon skills than the swords.

Bird skills
user: Camue, Hawkeye
Mainly short range physical attack, but some supportive/healing skills as well. Not as powerful as sword or ninja skills.

Bear skills
user: Camue
mainly short range physical attack. It is weak and the hit rate is low.

Thief's skills

user: female thief

stealing and supportive skills. One can steal items, skills, money, HP, MP, and even level from the enemy. One can also throw items or money at an enemy to cause damage. Last but not the least, one can throw HP or MP at other party members to recover.

Cannon skills

user: Tatara

Ranged attack and some mind attack. I never feel that mind attack is useful in anyway (kill them all is quicker and harder to miss); the ranged attack does good damage but is somewhat easy to miss. It requires a lot of moving power as well.

Book skills

user: Anju

Hybrid, with both attack/healing magic and physical attack. The physical attack is not impressive (due to the STR of Anju) and one mainly uses the magical attack.

Spirit spells

user: Camue

Hybrid, with attacks and healing/supportive magic. Camue can use it to transform to either a bird or a bear. Not really useful as Camue is better in his animal forms.

Attack Magic

user: Rusty, King

magical attack. Unlike physical attack, magical attack has a 100% hit rate (unless the target uses the magic shield then the hit rate is 0% for any magic.) Also, you never need moving power to perform magic. In general it is quite powerful, but very hard to level up in the beginning (due to low earned exps per use and the limitation of MP) and the starting range is nothing to brag about. However, the range of the higher level skills are the best in the game. The hell fire, for example, learned at LV 20, has a range of surround 6 and penetration C. Nevertheless, in the later stage of the game, as the power of magical attacks are determined by adding up a certain amount to your magical attacking power, will start to appear to be dominated by physical attacks where the power is your strength multiplied by certain factor. (physical attacks can often kill the undefended enemy with one single hit whereas magical attack requires two hits.)

Holy Magic

user: Rusty, King

Healing and some magical attack, with light elemental property. It is the only efficient way to recover multiple characters' HP at the same time. The magical attack has good power as well. It's easier to train as exps are given more generously and you can use it on your own party.

Support Magic

user: Mieu, Nazuna, King

Some mind attacks and supportive magic. In my opinion, the most important skill in the game that often get ignored. The mind attacks are of no practical use, but the protect shield and the magic shield are very effective defenses when your characters are busy killing/recovering. With the help of enlarge (or even better, multiple-enlarge), the enemy can hardly hurt you and non-boss enemy is very likely to be killed by a single hit.

Let me elaborate. Enlarge is a very unbalanced skill. It make your character into the "big" status, where strength, defense, magical attack, and magical defense are all boosted. There is a even better version, multiple-enlarge, which works on plural party members. It is a skill which I would use from the start to the end.

The support magic is comparatively easy to level as the usage of MP, unlike other magic, does not grow as you get to higher-level skills.

Defense

user: all

Defenive skills, only works on himself. There are 4 types of them: physical defenses, magical defenses, attack booster, and recovery. The only magical defense, the magic shield, is 100% effective, but all the physical defenses either works partially or by chance. The best physical defense, speedy dodge, can only be stolen from the enemy. The attack booster works in the next turn.

Now let me list the characters and discuss what they are supposed to do:

Mieu

skill tree: sword, dragon, support magic, defense (omitted from here on)

She cannot use the sword skills when being a dragon and vice versa. She has much higher HP, strength and defense being a dragon (although she can't wear either weapon or armor as a dragon so this might level a bit at late stages) and moves better, so the dragon form is almost always preferred. The problem is that with half of the HP gone she would be forced to transform back to human, so she is still not good as a tank. I would say she is a main attacker+supporter.

Rusty

skill tree: holy magic, attack magic

He's physical defense is weak and magical defense is strong. Under normal play (see chapter 6) the main use of him would be healing. The attack magic would be useful if properly trained, though.

Asuka

skill tree: ninja

He's physically capable and will be one of the main attackers.

Nazuna

skill tree: archery, supportive magic.

Her strength is not so good and I often find myself using her mainly for the supportive magic, enlarge to be specific.

Female thief (sorry don't know her name)

skill tree: theft, archery

She is the better archer, and large range physical attack has its uses. The more obvious reason of carrying around would be that she is the only person who can steal skills from the enemy, which is very important when facing new enemies. She can provide some MP in emergency as well.

Camue

skill tree: spirit spells, bird, bear

He is a druid. He can only use one of the skill trees (except defense), depending on which form he is in. He is meant to be a scout in the bird form and a tank in the bear form. While for the former he did a decent job, the latter didn't really hold up. Again with half HP gone he would be forced to transform back to human, and he cannot wear any armor or weapon in animal forms. Adding those together, the attack power of the bear is mediocre, and the durance is not so good either. The only benefit of using him as a tank could be that he will recover some HP (like 20% or so) every turn in animal forms.

Tatara

skill tree: cannon

He's strength and defense is quite good, but has a weakness of fire which is horrible. He does not move well, either. The cannon skill tree has a lower hit rate than the sword or ninja, thus make him less usable. He's range is better though, if you don't move him much.

Anju

skill tree: book

She is more toward a sorcerer than a warrior. Her magic attack power is decent, with some healing she comes in handy. She's never a decisive role of any battle, though.

King

skill tree: attack magic, holy magic, support magic

He's magical attack power is among the best. In addition, he can use all kind of magic, what else can I say?

Hawkeye

skill tree: sword, bird

He's a good attacker with some supportive skill from the bird's skill tree. He is usable and balanced, but since his appearance is late one may not bother.

Among all the characters, I think Nazuna, Tatara, and King are optional. They may not join the party if certain action are done differently. See the walkthrough for details.

IV. Story and Walkthrough:

Here I would outline the battles and the story. Let me divide them into chapters.

1. Departure from home land

1A. practice battle for Mieu and Rusty:

Mieu and Rusty are practicing under the supervision of Mieu's father. An easy fight meant to make the battle system familiar.

1B. Fight at the border

Some soiders at the border hold them up. Time to illustrate how to take advantage of the terrain! (see chapter 6)

1c. on the leave

Talk to the woman/captain in the port to be transported to the Japanese contry.

2. Save the ninja

2A. Battle when arriving the ninja village. Save Asuka.

2B. On the road to the ninja house, there is a canyon in between. Use the "float" magic to go through or use the dragon to carry others.

2C. Battle in the ninja house. Be careful to the traps and the mind attack.

3. Gathering fellow team members

Here the order can be chosen at will. One can go west and get the druid or go east to get the thief. The cave which Nazuna sleeps in can be explored any time too.

3A.(i) The druid village: save Camue and his girl friend. The women and children of the village are kidnapped. Let's go up the mountain and save them!

(ii) the mountain road. Beware of the falling region.

(iii) the star fortress. Be sure to get all the treasue boxes before killing all the enemy or rescue the hostage. Enter again for the kids and boss fight.

(iv) talk to one of the villager to get a skill combination book.

3B. (i) go to the pub and talk. You would be drugged and get prisoned. The female thief would come to rescue.

(ii) fight in the courthouse. Be sure to steal the "bounce back" defensive skill from the boss.

(iii) fight on the bridge. The bridge is set on fire. The party has to break out in limited time.

3C. Nazuna's cave. Use the float magic. one of the treasure box contains another skill book.

4. The hidden village and the cannon man

4A. go through the mountain road near the courthouse. This time a female ninja would show up. Defeat her to get the necessary item to go through. The treasure box at the far south contains "Jade of the Gods", which would replenish 10% HP at the start of every turn.

4b. fill the water bucket

Talk to the girl in the village and she would ask you a favor. Fill the water bucket in the weapon powder warehouse.

4C. The enemy sneak attacked the warehouse and set up a fire. destroy the bucket and set off the water before the fire hit the big explosive. If succeed, Tatara would join. If you retreat in this fight, Tatara would die in the factory and he cannot join. One of the treasure box contains another skill book.

5. Go through the barrier and face the first big boss!

5A. the cave of barriers contains three barriers. They can be broken by beating the 3 bosses from the ninja house, the courthouse, and the star fortress. Therefore technically one can completely ignore the previous chapter and come here. Notice the reinforcement points. It is the nastiest thing in the game, as enemies coming in can move immediately, making staying close to those points very dangerous.

5B. Fight against Galzard

The first floor of the fortress shouldn't be hard. Go upstairs and face Galzard, the bad guy attacked the dragon kingdom in the beginning. With protect and magic shield on it should be a piece of cake. Remember to steal the speedy dodge from him.

5c.walk to the port, talk to the same female captain and sail to

another continent. After the fight, Galzard was called and escaped, while Mieu followed him on her own and was captured.

6. Run away from the seven wise men's tower.

In the prison she met Anju, the daughter of the curator of the great magic library.

6A. Escape from the tower. Easy fight.

6B. Another mountain road. Ignore the left side for the time being as we would come back later. Among those treasure boxes there may be a skill book, but I am not sure.

6c. Go to the port and have the reunion.

6d. Go to the library. Anju would have a fight with her father.

7. The legendary sorcerer

Here we have some freedom as well. The main storyline tells us to go back to the tower. Nevertheless, we can find another companion which would strengthen the party quite a bit before that.

7A. The deadly desert

Here everyone loses 10% HP at the start of the turn. Note the dragons here have high defense and have strong defense against fire, so be prepared to have some dog fight. They would also use the concave magic and make it very hard to walk. Try to make to the exit at the South end as fast as possible.

7B. The maze of the magician

There are some constraints about this battle. Firstly, the legendary sorcerer is somehow trapped here and is transformed to look exactly like the evil magician, so you cannot hit all the dummies as they may just be him. In fact, what always happens is that you would kill him when you killed the second dummy. On the other hand, the rule specifies that you cannot go outside the track that was scammed through before the battle begins. If you do that 4 times you are also out. You can retreat any number of times you want though. To beat the challenge is actually very easy. You just wait in the beginning position, maybe move forward a little bit (on the track of course) and wait for the real magician to come. Use the magic shield (the defense skill) all the time than he has no way to hurt you. Once he isn't near enough, use arrows to finish him. Don't worry about his magic skill; you have plenty of time to steal it from others later.

7C. The deadly desert... again. Just go back to where we are from. As soon as possible.

8. Final fight against Galzard!

8A. the mountain road

Now you can push the trunk and go to the left side.

8B. The 7 wise men's tower, front entrance

This may easily be the hardest fight in the whole game, if we disregard the trial dungeons. 4 reinforcement points, all at the position that can directly do damage, with archers on the aisle on the second floor, shooting down. Slowly moving forward with patience. I would use 4 members of the party just to block the reinforcement points and use the remaining to get to the treasure boxes, all after cleaning up the archers of course.

8C. Facing Galzard, one last time

This time his skill are boosted quite a bit. Be sure to steal "the dance of the swords" from him, as it is easily the most useful skill in the sword skill tree. Again with both shields on, it shouldn't be difficult.

It happens that the 7 wise men have just left for something, and Galzard is what we could get here. However as we went out, all the people in the port are killed. How can we catch up and what are they

aiming at?

9. Awaken the Wing of Light

9a. look out in the library. We would find there is a secret passage in his office, behind the bookshelf. down stairs, we can find a skill book in the treasure box, and another one on the near book shelf. just look at the book shelf for a couple of times. The surprising here is that there is another dungeon/secret passage in the library.

9B . Walk through the secret passage

Head in and walk through. All the switches here would turn on a bridge connecting various islands. You have to use a flying character to get to the switch though. The easiest way, still, is to use float again.

9c. At the other end of the tunnel we returned to the world map. There is a town near by. Talking to the Elder in the town, he would give you information about the Wing of light, which is supposed to be a flying ship, and an ancient key, which can open the door of the pyramid.

There is a magic ball or something hidden in the pyramid that is essential to start up the Wing of Light.

9D. The deadly desert again... now head to the right.

9E. The pyramid... it seems to me that one has to enter the pyramid two times to get the treasure, as try to open one of the door would open the other instead. Inside the treasure box there is another skill book. On the upper middle part of the map, there is a steep stair step and nobody seems to be able to go across. Use either the concave or convex magic near by and see how it can work. On the second floor you will have to face eight statue at the same time. Now you can see how enlarge can be a very troublesome magic for the opposing side... destroy them with care.

9F. Hurry back through the library, enter the temple of the seabed.

In the temple there are a few floors which can move up or down by adjusting the corresponding devices. The quickest way to get to all of the treasure boxes and through would be to align all the floors at the height above the entrance. Try a bit and you would know what I mean quite easily. Put the magic ball on the avatar and the Wing of Light is awakened!

As a side note, there is one very interesting creature here, which uses a dark attack magic that affects both sides. It seems the effect is to kill anyone within the range with the lowest HP. Nevertheless, unless some party member is somewhat injured, what we could see is that the creature is killing its companion or worse, itself. How funny. As another side note, you may already find out at this point that there is no single dark magic that could be learned. Indeed all the dark magic has to be stolen from the enemy. Since the fusion skills need those magic one had better get them all.

10. Getting back the dragon castle!

10a. with the Wing of Light we immediately fly back to the Riglord continent. However, there are some strange things happening, a door appearing on the top of the mountain, and the Wing of Light loses power and crashes. On the way back to the castle, villagers just hate us as they thought we were traitors, or at best, cowards who escaped.

10B. Fight in the castle

Notice the girl there won't take any magical damage, even skills with elemental properties. Other than this the battle should be quite straight forward. In the basement we meet a boss we don't know. Just get the treasure and get rid of him.

11. Meet Hawkeye and going across the canyon

11A. Go through the canyon, you would find very few enemies and at the end of the battle, you ended up at the port and Hawkeye showed up and

explained the illusion. He has a way to clear it but we must get back the port first. (Nowadays there is indeed something called Hawkeye... quite intriguing)

11B. Fight at the port

Nothing special, just remember to get to the treasure. One skill book resides here.

11C. Go through the canyon again. Now it becomes a little bit more challenging. Beware of the large range mind attacks.

11D. East and west forest

There are just some treasure boxes in them. Go and get them and retreat if you like. in the west forest there is another skill book.

12. Recovering Queen's land.

12a. Go into the Ragrose tower through the town. Talk to the people in the house and you can get another skill book.

12B. Beat Ragrose! This one is actually easier than the 7 wise men's tower as the reinforcement points are pretty far away. Get the treasure (another skill book) and go inside. Inside there is a real tower. You can try to make the archer fall as it is pretty fun.

Anyway, Ragrose, the green guy, is good at magic, so take out your magic shield (the magic one, not the defense) and it should be a piece of cake.

13. Fixing the Wing of Light.

In order to get to the 7 wise men who are at the strange door, we need a way to get there. We had a way some time before... As Hawkeye's brother is a scholar expertised in ancient magic, we might as well find him for help. He is now in the ancient remains.

13A. The ancient remains Fight in (and steal the skills!) You can take several looks at the statue inside but nothing interesting seems to happen.

13b. we found Hawkeye's brother and brought him to the Wing of Light. He said he needs the blue print of the ship which should resides in the library. Get to the library, read the shelf where previously we found the skill book, and it would say that it requires two constituents. One we can found in the secret passage (just walk in, no fight) and the other one, after getting back to Hawkeye's brother, is at the Samorsa island. Go to the port and take a ship there by, again, talk to the same person.

13C. Samorsa island

get all the treasure boxes, then enter the cave at the top. Inside the cave remember to go to the deepestplace and get the second constituent.

13d. Go back to the Wing of Light and boom! it is now revived and fully functional! One can press x to call it and press c to land. two secret towns with trial dungeons and one secret mine are now available to explore. One can also set to find the best weapon for Asuka.

14. Hunting down the 7 wise men

14A. If you are ready, go through the door of dimensions in the mountains. The graphics here is really ugly so we should try to leave as soon as possible. Here the enemy are quite strong and it is best to attack their weakness. Find it out by using the female thief's failed fusion skill.

As yet another side note, there is a monster which uses the great dragon shock waves, which only affects ground units. In this battlefield normal people would be floating. How funny.

14B. Path to the altar (two parts)

Nothing special, just collect the treasure, steal the skills if you haven't already.

14C. The chaos avatar

The seven wise men conjure up 7 monsters to fight. They are somehow linked as you kill the monster, the corresponding man dies. Notice that the monster knew the strongest attack magic skill which has a range of surround 7 and penetration C. It is a must-get, although we won't have much use for it...

The last side note: those monsters can only use one physical attack: the earth-cracking punch from the ninja skill. It only affects ground units so...

15. The real bad guy and the final fight

15a. for some unknown reason after coming back saving the world, Anju suggests us to go to the library. This is really the only place where she suggests anything. Go to the library, and we would find the curator is actually behind the seven wise men! (Oh my, who cares?) As he jump into the lava, strangely he didn't die and became a spirit. It turned out the 7 wise men are not dead enough and the force of chaos is out of control. We must go back into the chaos crystal and finish them once and for all.

15B. The final fight

Again 7 bosses. But now they can use both the strongest attack magic and the strongest holy magic. Fortunately they can't do omegahealing otherwise it could be a long fight... (well, even that may not be a problem if you finish the trial dungeon and get all the treasure. With the items and proper training Asuka can kill them in one hit...) With both shields on, this can only be a lengthy battle, not a hard one. And congratulations! You 've just beat the game!

V. Treasure and Equipment

In this section I would discuss the generals of buying equipment and hunting for treasure. It turns out that most of the treasure are found in the treasure boxes in the battlefield. Only a few of them are obtained via talking with someone or investigating certain places, and I shall list them here:

1. Talk with a villager in the druid village after rescuing the women and children. You can get a skill book.
2. investigate the book shelf in the secret room in library (ie, the room with treasure boxes) and after several times of investigation you can get another skill book.
3. Talk in one of the houses in queen's land just before entering the Ragrose tower and you can get another skill book.
- 4a. Get the treasure box in the courthouse on the apex. You cannot get it unless you have all three flying units in your team. use grab and drop to put people up and line your men to avoid sliding down.
- 4b. Talk to a guy in the druid village. He would say he can make the legendary sakura snow samurai sword from the metal you get from the treasure box, but he would need a burning stove with high temperature.
- 4c. Now go to Tatara's village and investigate the stove. Go back to the druid village and talk to the same guy again. The samurai sword will be ready.

Note that all the item listed above has some time constraint; before or after the time frame the item would be gone forever.

Now we turn to equipment. The first thing to notice is that the dragon and the bird/bear can only equip the special item-- armor and weapon are meaningless for them. Therefore, when you consider purchasing, put them to the lowest priority.

On buying equipments, I would recommend not to buy any if possible.

The worst thing to do is to upgrade whenever you can, as this depletes your cash too quickly. While the cash is not useful unless you use it to buy something, it is better used later, on the armor that you could use toward the end. If you must buy something, buy the most expensive ones instead a bunch of crappy armor for everyone. Chances are you would be throwing them away very soon.

In general, if we have to make a choice, I would recommend that we equip to boost the stats that are already strong for any character, instead of making up their weaknesses. I usually find that if a character, say, Rusty, who's defense is weak in the first place, does not benefit much even if we try to boost his defense. However, if we boost his magical defense further then many magical attacks just cannot hurt him and we can focus his defense strategy on physical defenses. However, if a character has an elemental weakness (for example, Tatara is afraid of fire), it is best to find an equipment which enhances the defense to that element. Otherwise, he would be very likely to be killed in one turn with an attack of that elemental property.

Some armor contain special effects. Sometimes they boost magical attack, sometimes they boost magical defense, sometimes they even lower your stats. Beware of those cursed items. Some weapon have serious side effect that we can only tell from the description (or by experimenting.) Be sure not to use them any more if you accidentally wear them. (Some drain your life as you attack and some make you fall asleep... lol)

If you find a certain battlefield hard, it may be worthwhile to change all the equipment to be of the elemental property that is common in the attacks of the creature there. I think it is a 50% reduction or something like that, so it is very effective.

Now we come to the special item. In the early stage of the game, you may find all the special item mediocre and does not make much difference. However, as the story goes on you would get some useful items. Let me list them below:

Dragon fang: +20% critical hit

The heart of an expert: +20% hit rate

The Jade of Gods: recover 10% HP every turn

The Stone of Sages: recover 10% MP every turn

Bracelet of the Rapid: +30 speed

Substitute talisman: would be destroyed as a substitute when you die

Something I can't read #1: immune to mind attack

Something I can't read #2: enemy would escape from you

foot trainer: when you move ten times your speed increase by one permanently

hand trainer: when you defend ten times your strength increase by one permanently

There are +str, +def, +matk, +mdef items as well. There is always the common version and the rarer, better version. Many of the good items can only be found in the trial dungeons.

Note that speed is an attribute that very easily gets ignored. It increases the dodge rate and the rate of critical hit. It seems to me that the dodge rate increases by one for every 5 points of speed and the critical hit rate 3 for every 4 point of speed. Unfortunately the speed attribute is capped at 127 points.

I have been avoiding hinting on what level or skill level one should get to at certain stage of the game in the walkthrough. I did this for a reason. I feel that if I give the advice it would change the gaming experience completely, and it would be better if one can manage the pace on his own in the first time. So this part is a real spoiler. I recommend reading it after you at least have played the game for some time.

So, what would be the optimum way to level up, both in character level and skill level? To answer this question, we have to understand how the game react to the levels. Firstly, the enemy would adjust their level correspondingly in a certain range, so it won't do you too much good unless you really level your character a lot, and be higher than the upper cap. On the other hand, the exp you get from the battle would significantly decrease if the enemy are at a lower level than your characters. Those are reasons that you shouldn't level your character too much, if at all. However, as you may experience in the game, that some battles would be hard and it really helps to level up a little bit. This is because that the damage of the physical attack skills scales better than HP with character levels, and at higher level you can do more damage, despite that the enemy are at higher level as well. Therefore the normal strategy involves minimum level ups, only required if you found some battle too hard.

On the other hand, how about the skill levels? There is no penalty in game for leveling up the skills, so in principle one should level up as much as possible. However, of course, the price is time. It is even more time consuming to level up skills, compared to characters. But here is a catch. The game would adjust your companion's skill levels to match yours when they join your party. Therefore, if you train even before Asuka joins, your load would be significantly less.

Of course, before one really does that, one has to question what really is the benefit, as training in that early stage is indeed quite boring. The answer lies in the magic. The attack magic and the support magic. As mentioned earlier, the high level attack magic has an incredible range. (specifically, hellfire, and thanks god it is learnable!) What we should realize is that it also have incredible damage if our character level stays low. The damage of the magic is calculated by adding a given amount to your matk, insted of a multiplier, so when the amount is much larger than your matk, the magical attack would dominate. There are very strong support magic at higher level as well.

This is really the solution to everything. With the high level attack magic at hand, you cannot feel that the battle is too hard in early game. Therefore you don't have to raise the level. And the magic stays strong. Also by leveling up your skills early, every new companion would have nearly all their skills available and you don't need to train any more.

In some sense, the powerful long range attack magic breaks the balance of the game. The mechanism in the game to keep this from happening is to make the attack magic extremely hard to train. Well, at least under normal circumstances. The attack magic drains MP very quickly and if you didn't train on purpose you can hardly level it up. Even if you practice it as hard as other skills the progress is slower due to the lack of exp.

What I propose, therefore, is to train at 1B. Retreat whenever you have killed 5 enemies. You should be able to use the attack magic to take out 2-3 of the 5 soidiers. You should also practice other skills, including the dragon skill and the support magic. The ideal case would be to max out the support magic and get the attack magic to lv 20 and learn hellfire. If at the same time you can manage to get the dragon skill to lv 20, good, otherwise it doesn't hurt. It should take 5-6 hours of training here. But think you won't really have to train any more later!

With hellfire at hand, all the early battle becomes very simple. Take the boss fight in the ninja house for example. One just has to use the protect shield or defend the first turn, then enlarge-hellfire kills all the enemies at once. Now we can maintain our low character level and play more efficiently. This way, one can beat the game, maximizing all the skills in 30 hours (without finishing the two trial dungeon), or finish everything in 40 hours.

For the trial dungeons, try them out yourself. It would be fun. :)

VII. References and Special Thanks

I should say thanks to a strategy guide that I own a long time ago. Although I didn't have it with me any more, I can still remember some of the combination of the fusion skills. Also, <http://www.geocities.co.jp/Milkyway/2027/saturn/riglord1.html> here contains some interesting/useful information I can't find anywhere else. I am not sure I understood everything as I read it using a translator.