



# Slay

© Sean O'Connor, May 1996

<http://www.cityscape.co.uk/users/gx96/>

## Introduction

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

## Playing the Game

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

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

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

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

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## Money

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

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

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

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

## ***Trees***

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



Pine trees

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



Palm trees

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

## Attacking

On the first turn no attacking is allowed. On subsequent days each of your men can chop down a tree in their own territory, or they can make one attack on any hexagon adjoining the territory that they are in, provided that it is not too well defended by an enemy man.

Men and castles defend the hexagon that they are standing on and all the hexagons immediately surrounding them in their same territory. Castles defend at the strength of a spearman. Capitals do not defend the hexagons surrounding them, but it takes at least a spearman to destroy the capital. If a capital is destroyed a new one will be formed but all of its money will be lost.

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

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

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





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

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

## Combining Men

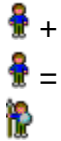
You can create stronger men by placing one of your men on top of another one in the same territory. The strength of the new man that you create will be the sum of the strengths of the two individual men.

The different men are:

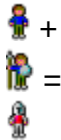
	Peasant	strength 1
	Spearman	strength 2
	Knight	strength 3
	Baron	strength 4

For example:

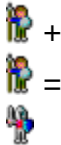
*If you put a peasant (strength 1) onto another of your peasants (strength 1) you will produce a spearman (strength 2):*



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

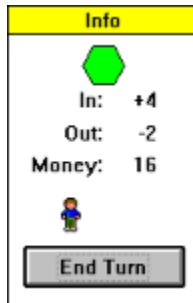


*If you put a spearman (strength 2) onto another spearman (strength 2) you will produce a Baron (strength 4).*



Stronger men cost more money to maintain.

### *The Information window*



The information window shows you a territory's finances: its income, what it paid the men that it owns and how much money is left.

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

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

## Hints

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

## ***New Game***

### **Full Version**

If you have a full copy of the game, you can then select whether any of the 6 players will be human or computer controlled or not in the game by clicking on the "radio" buttons. You must have at least 2 players in each game.

There are three levels of intelligence that each of the computer controlled players can be set to.

### **Demo Version**

If you have the free demo version of the game you can only play with the default settings and the default island until you order the full version.



## Computer Intelligence

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

### **Clever**

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

### **Medium**

- 75% of the computer pieces are moved each turn.
- Attempts to link its territories.
- Defends territories' borders.
- Chops down trees intelligently.
- Careful about not over-extending an attack.
- Careful about not leaving men vulnerable on the borders.
- Careful about not buying too many expensive men.

### **Stupid**

- 55% of the computer pieces are moved each turn.
- Chops down trees intelligently.
- Careful about not leaving men vulnerable on the borders.
- Careful about not buying too many expensive men.

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

## **Credits**

Written by:

*Sean O'Connor*     *spto@cityscape.co.uk*

Graphics:

*Liam O'Connor*

Thanks to:

*Bandy*

*Chris Dawson*

*Patrick Welche*

*Kieran O'Connor*

*Jon Williams*

*Guido Barzini*

## ***History Of The Game***

### **Atari ST basic version**

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

### **Atari ST Assembler version**

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

### **Windows 3.1 version**

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

### **Windows 95 version**

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

## Order Form

The full copy of Slay allows you to choose games of between 2 and 6 computer (with 3 levels of intelligence each) or human players on a randomly generated island. To order a full copy of Slay, please send:

**UK orders:** (spto@cityscape.co.uk)

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

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