

Deathsmiles Strategy Guide

DEATHSMILES

テスマイルズ





More Than First Expected

It is fairly easy to write off a game which has infinite continues and only eight stages as a short game, but to do so would be to completely miss the most important essence of Deathsmiles.

Tailored for both the core and casual gamer alike, the real incentive of Deathsmiles is to set as high a score as possible in order to work your way up the online rankings board. It sounds easy, but as you will find out, there is far more complexity and challenge than at first sight.

This booklet features some basic tips on how to get those high scores in Arcade and Xbox 360 modes, and provides an insight into the challenges ahead. This isn't your usual shmup where you just hold down the fire button and hope to avoid the bullets.

When used in conjunction with the scoring tips section in the game manual, this should provide you with the basis to achieving a higher rank. But knowing what to do is one thing - let's see how you get on in practice.

For those feeling a little bit more ambitious, why not try the fabled 'one credit complete' - no continues!

Special thanks go to the following for their advice, strategies and general helpfulness in compiling this information:

Will Freeman
Jon Rodgers (CAVE)
Harry Cole

Massive thanks goes to **EOJ**, curator and administrator of **CAVE-STG** forum, who's exceptionally detailed strategy guide is replicated in this document.



Making the Future More Fun

One of the last shooter and greatest shooter developers for the arcade, CAVE has built a loyal user base thanks to its combination of unique visuals, rewarding score systems and at times, nail-biting difficulty. Chronologically, CAVE's first release was the arcade hit "DonPachi", but it was its sequel "DoDonPachi" that saw CAVE create a different dimension of shooting game: fast action, lots of bullets and flashy point bonuses to reward the most dedicated players. Dodonpachi's intricate "chaining" system encouraged players to rapidly destroy enemies in unconventional patterns and combo their way to the end of the stage. Simple controls: laser, bomb, shot, would be carried over into later CAVE games and created an instant usability and familiarity. Combined with a solid difficulty curve, Dodonpachi became a game center phenomenon. Operating in over 1500

arcade locations in Japan, Dodonpachi earned a major arcade award from Gamest and repeatedly entered the top 10 earnings rankings for arcades, a rare feat for an arcade shooter.

Following on this success, CAVE found itself pairing up with several different arcade publishers to release two of their most artistic shooter games: the grim Muromachi period manic shooter "Guwange", and the cartoon WWII mech adventure of "Storm of Progear". Recently re-released on Xbox LIVE Arcade, Guwange takes the chaining intricacy of Dodonpachi to new extremes, while Progear introduced a complex system that transforms bullet patterns into shiny streams of point items.

Following these two releases, CAVE continued to build on the success of "Dodonpachi" with the release of its sequel, "Dodonpachi Daioujou", featuring a ferocious difficulty beyond that of its predecessor and a more engaging score attack. Helicopter-based "Ketsui" followed with a similar reputation for difficulty, and a scoring system that encouraged players to veer close to enemies for huge point bonuses. More arcade hits followed: the beginner-friendly "Espgaluda", the gorgeous yet insurmountable "Mushihimesama", the chubby biker girl shooter "Muchi Muchi Pork" and many more. All of these games characterized themselves among players for their intricate 2D sprite work, impressive soundtracks and addictive scoring systems.



Having built its most successful games into franchises that include merchandising, console ports, sequels and "matsuri" events in Tokyo, CAVE was itself growing as a company. Adding mobile and online development lines, CAVE went public on the Japanese stock market in 2004. Later this mobile development would arrive overseas in the form of CAVE's.

Looking to expand its userbase as the fortunes of the arcade industry shrunk, "Deathsmiles" was CAVE's second experiment in the "horizontal" shooter genre, and proved extremely successful for its combination of gothic imagery, flashy point system and accessible difficulty. Another arcade hit for CAVE, Deathsmiles also became the game's first self-published release for the Xbox 360 in 2009. Having sold over 80,000 units worldwide, Deathsmiles will be published in PAL territories by Rising Star Games this February 18th.



Characters



Windia

Her lock-shot develops in a large ring around her. Her option shoots a crescent projectile when in Laser mode. Her option moves when tapping Shot, but is fixed when holding Laser. A balanced character overall.



Casper

Her lock-shot develops in a large ring around her. Her option shoots a cutter in a boomerang-esque pattern when tapping shot. Her option moves when holding Laser, but is fixed when tapping Shot. Stronger than Windia, but also slower in her Laser mode.



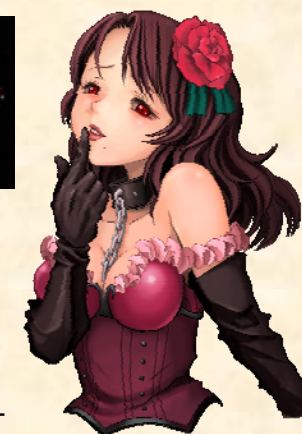
Follett

Her lock-shot develops around her option, locking onto enemies in front of Follett. Her option shoots a wide shot when tapping shot. Her option moves when tapping Shot, but is fixed when holding Laser. Her main strength is her very strong lock-shot that is the easiest to lock-on among all the characters, with a wide firing range.



Rosa

The lock-shot develops around her option, locking onto enemies behind Rosa. Her option shoots a homing rose cluster when holding Laser. Her option moves when holding Laser, but is fixed when tapping Shot. The strongest character, her weakness is her slower speed and the inability to lock-on to enemies in front of her.



Character Speed

The speed in () is when in Power Up mode.

	<u>Windia</u>	<u>Casper</u>	<u>Follett</u>	<u>Rosa</u>
Shot mode	46 (62)	52 (68)	46 (62)	36 (52)
Laser mode	28 (25)	18 (25)	24 (21)	32 (29)
Auto-lock mode	32 (27)	42 (37)	26 (21)	18 (13)

High Scoring Tips

Will Freeman of Develop Magazine and The Observer, and well known shmup fanatic, lists the basics of shooting for the high scores in Xbox 360 and Arcade modes:

1. Shoot things and collect the gems they drop before they hit the ground (using the right weapon on the right enemy produces more)
2. Collect 1000 gems (visible on the 'Power Up' counter, which maxes out at 1,000)
3. Activate 'Power Up' mode (do it at a time when there's a lot of enemies just ahead of you; ideally a busy area of a level)
4. Enemies now produces far more (and more valuable) gems. Let them hit the ground and split into skulls (the smallest gems) before you collect them
5. The 'Power Up' counter counts down. It counts down at different rates depending on the weapon you use. In 'Power Up' mode only contact with bullets kills you. Try to make the counter you see above your character's head in 'Power Up' mode reach 10,000 ('Fever' mode – this is where the points really add up). The counter above your character's head is your '+Value'.

6. Back to point 1

Other Considerations

- The most important thing for scoring is being in 'Power-Up' mode as much as you can and getting the '+Value' as high as possible
- Choose the order of levels so as to make it that the moments when you reach 1,000 time nicely with the moments that are most suitable for activating 'Power Up' mode
- Choosing to do a level at rank 2 or 3 means it's harder, but there's more opportunity to score big.
- Picking rank three five times activates Death Mode for the rest of the game. Suicide Bullets (bullets that appear at an enemy's death and target the player) now appear, these can be cancelled out with the option/familiar to add to the counter. Again – harder, but more scoring opportunity.
- Unlike on the arcade board, in Xbox 360 mode you can choose Rank 1 and 2 as many times as you want in a game.



There's More Than One Way Through...

Stages

MAP TOP :	EX (Canyon)	Castle	
MAP MIDDLE:	A-2 (Graveyard)	B-2 (Swamp)	C-2 (Volcano)
MAP BOTTOM:	A-1 (Harbor Town)	B-1 (Forest)	C-1 (Lakeside)

The letters (A, B, C) each stand for Chapters. The chapters are split in two: one half is in the Map bottom, the other half is in the Map middle. The EX (canyon) stage is not part of any chapter, while the Castle stage has two parts and is Chapter 4.

Stage Select

You can choose any of the bottom 3 stages to start, then you choose any of the middle 3 stages. After this you keep alternating back and forth between bottom and middle stages until you have completed them all (you can never choose 2 middle or 2 bottom stages in a row). When all 6 are completed, you then have the option to go to the EX stage, or go directly to the Castle stage.

There are numerous possible routes, all with similar scoring potentials. This is one of the game's most admirable traits – a great variety in stage paths without sacrificing game balance.

Please refer to the 'Scoring Tips' section in the manual for a recommended survivability route.

Stage Rank Select

You can choose Rank 1, 2 or 3 (and also the insane 999 in MBL) at the start of each Middle and Bottom stages. Obviously Rank 1 is the easiest and Rank 3 is the hardest. Ranks 2 and 3 increase the number of enemies, the number of bullets, the overall difficulty, and the number of boss phases. In addition, depending on the rank and stage path, different items (bomb and life replenishments) will appear within different stages [See section 4.3 for detailed info].

Ranks 1 and 2 are limited – you can choose each only once on each level (middle or bottom) of the map. In other words it's impossible to play all 6 stages all in Rank 1 or all in Rank 2 – you can do a max of 2 stages in rank 1 and 2 in rank 2 - the other two must be in rank 3. There is no limit to the amount of times you can choose Rank 3.

Death Mode

When you choose rank 3 five times, you enter "Death Mode". In Death Mode suicide bullets are fired back at you from each enemy you destroy. These bullets are small, star-shaped, and are absorbable by your option. Once you enter Death Mode, you cannot go back, even if you select Rank 1 or Rank 2 for the sixth stage.

Every bullet absorbed in Death mode is worth 100 points. The +Value (see Section 4.6) is also added to each bullet.

If you choose every stage in rank 3 and go to the EX stage before the Castle stage, then the Castle stage will be at the highest possible rank in the game, called "Death Mode Level 2".

All-Clear Bonus

Your end bonus is calculated by the following equations:

Life bonus: (130 x Remaining lives) x 50,000pts

Bomb Bonus: Remaining bombs x 1,000,000 pts.

Item Bonus: Item counter total x 10,000 points

The totals of each are added together for your total end bonus.

Power Up Mode

To enter Power Up mode, you have to press A+B when your item counter maxes out at 1000. When in this mode, your attack and option strength are increased, and you are only damaged by bullets, so you are free to move through any enemies on screen. Your item counter counts down from 1000 to zero when in this mode. When it hits zero, you revert back to the normal playing mode.

The rate of the item counter's decline depends on whether you are in the stage or in a boss fight, and whether or not you press any attack button. Here are the full details:

In Stage	No button is pressed	-1 for every 4 frames
	Press A or B	-1 for every 2 frames
	Lock-shot	-1 for every 2 frames
During Boss Fight	-1 for every 2 frames (pressing or not pressing any attack buttons has no effect)	
During a Bomb	-4 for every 1 frame	

The conditions can overlap. In the case of the Lock-shot, they always overlap. The lock-shot by itself is -1 for every 2 frames, but since you have to be pressing A and B to be in lock-shot mode, and each of these also reduces the counter by -1 every 2 frames, lock-shot mode effectively has a decrease rate of -3 every 2 frames.

Additionally, if you bomb during a boss fight, the two values are added together ([-1 for every 2 frames] + [-4 for every 1 frame]).

Fever Mode

Once you max your +Value (see Section 4.5) at +10,000, you enter what is called "Fever mode". All enemies produce High Crowns when destroyed in this mode, though you still need to use the right attack type on certain enemies to maximize the amount of High Crowns produced.

Life Replenishment Items



Small (Prine a la mode) : fills up .5 of one life block. Gives a bonus of 100,000 pts.



Medium (Strawberry Parfait): fills up 1 full life block. Gives a bonus of 200,000pts.



Large (Decoration Cake): Fills up 2 full life blocks. Gives a bonus of 500,000pts.

The Decoration Cake is only available during the Chapter 4 final boss fight.

Bomb (“Magic”) Item



The “Magic” item adds one bomb to your stock. You can hold a maximum of 6 bombs. The bombs give no point bonus unless your bomb stock is maxed out at 6, whereupon each successive bomb is worth 300,000 pts.

Item Appearance Chart

STAGE	LOCATION	Chapter 2		Chapter 3	
		Rank 2	Rank 3	Rank 2	Rank 3
A-1	Cyclops (small)	---	---	---	Small life x2*
B-1	---	---	---	---	---
C-1	---	---	---	---	---
A-2	Cyclops (small)	---	Small life	---	Bomb
B-2	Old Car	Small life	Bomb	Small life	Bomb
C-2	Cyclops (small)	---	Small life	---	Medium life
EX (Canyon)	Beast Dog (mid-boss)	Bomb			
Castle	Jitterbug (boss)	Large life (must no-bomb Jitterbug)			

* only during Death Mode

Point Items

Small (Skeleton Ring) : 100pts

Medium (Crown Tiara): 800pts, breaks into 2 Skeleton Rings when it hits the ground

Large (High Crown): 2,000pts, breaks into 2 Crown Tiaras on the first bounce on the ground, then on the second bounce these 2 Crown Tiaras will break into 4 Skeleton Rings.

The Skeleton Rings disappear in 64 frames after being stationary on the ground.

Item Counter

When you absorb any of the point items during the normal mode, they add to your item counter in the following way:



Large (High Crown): +10



Medium (Crown Tiara): +5



Small (Skeleton Ring) : +1

Additionally, every suicide bullet absorbed during Death Mode adds +1 to your item counter.

Item Acquisition Total (+Value)

The item acquisition total, or "+Value", is the core scoring system in the game. When you reach 1000 on the item counter in normal mode, or when you enter Power Up mode, every item absorbed adds to your +Value, which acts as a point bonus added to every item you absorb. It is displayed next to your character as it increases. The maximum +Value is +10,000, which is coloured a bright orange. When you reach this, you enter "Fever mode".

Normal Mode

High Crown +10

Crown Tiara +5

Skeleton Ring +1

As the values clearly show, it is more beneficial to keep absorbing High Crowns here, rather than have them break.

Each suicide bullet absorbed in Death Mode also adds +1 to your +Value. It is possible to max out the +Value without ever entering Power-up mode, simply by playing through the EX and Castle stages in full max 1000 Normal mode. You are then able to ride this +10,000 bonus through to the end (as long as you don't die, as the +Value is reset when you die) for larger gains than can be had from entering Power-up mode. This is the strategy the pros use for their 500-600mil top scores.

Power Up Mode

In Power Up mode all the items are equal, so a High crown will add the same to your counter as a Skeleton Ring. What matters is the +Value. The higher it is, the higher the value each item will add to your +Value. Here are the details:

When +Value is:	0~	+1
	+100~	+2
	+200~	+4
	+500~	+8
	+1000~	+12
	+2000~	+16
	+5000~	+20

Thus, unlike in the normal mode, in Power Up mode it is more beneficial to let the High crowns break into 2, and again into 4, as even at the lowest +Value the High Crown will add +1 but four Skeleton Rings will add +4. At +5000 and beyond the difference is even more pronounced: only +20 for a high crown, but +80 for four Skeleton Rings.

Extends

Point-based extends are given at 20mil and 45mil points. Each one adds an extra life block. There are no other extends in the game, only the life replenishment items that can fill up your life blocks.

Please see the game manual for more information on Extends.

Online Leaderboard

This is your ultimate goal - to work your way up the online Leaderboard and pit yourself against the cream of Europe.

Do you have what it takes?

Please note: Europe will have its own Leaderboard, separate from those of Japan and the US. This is to provide a fair start for European gamers as players in those territories have a head start (screenshot is from the Japanese Leaderboard). An Xbox LIVE Gold account is required to register your score.

LEADERBOARDS

Rank	Score	Avatar	ACH	EX	Player Name	Score
RANK 1	420570909	[Avatar]	All-Clear		ERT	4293
RANK 2	404214321	[Avatar]	All-Clear		chiaki703	
RANK 3	390048345	[Avatar]	All-Clear		HAR	
RANK 4	388028442	[Avatar]	All-Clear		hara0	
RANK 5	387097599	[Avatar]	All-Clear		JOE	
RANK 6	384200275	[Avatar]	All-Clear		inurama	
RANK 7	377872771	[Avatar]	All-Clear		TEF	
RANK 8	367244530	[Avatar]	All-Clear		refu zappa	
RANK 9	355303063	[Avatar]	All-Clear		UNK	
					Just A Souvenir	
					UNK	
					psyvariar0709	
					MZN	
					MOZAN01	
					N-D	
					SYKun	
					OTK	
					Mkn0TK	

EXの有無を設定します。

LIST BACK Friend LT RT LB RB CHANGE

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This document is intended as a guide only, success in the game is solely dependant on the player.

Rising Star Games Limited, Basepoint Business & Innovation Centre, 110 Butterfield, Luton, LU2 8DL, United Kingdom.