

THE SLAYERS

What do you get when you mix crude bandits, dashing swordsmen, beautiful sorceresses, glittering treasure, demonic Mazoku, a host of restaurants to suit any taste, and the most popular role-playing game system?

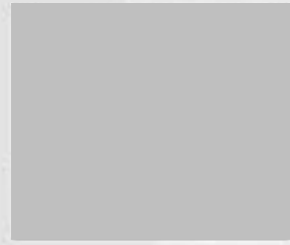
The Slayers d20 Role-Playing Game!

This book covers new races, classes, skills, and feats specific to the *Slayers* television series. It also features a new and innovative magic system that allows players to cast spells like *Dragon Slave* or even the earth-shattering *Giga Slave*.

Compatible with other popular d20 System games, *The Slayers d20* is an essential companion to your epic fantasy campaign.



THE SLAYERS



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DESIGNER'S NOTE

Sick and wrong.

That's bound to be someone's first impression on seeing the rules for Slayers d20. Sick and wrong. I mean, the power scale is way, WAY off. Compatible with other d20 games? Yeah, so long as you don't mind the relationship between the Slayers-based character and the regular d20 characters being something akin to a hero and his trusty servants. Heck, the Mazoku out-dragon the d20 dragons in many ways for sheer nastiness, and the magic system doesn't exactly lead players toward conservation of resources.

There is a reason for everything, though.

You see, our mission was to make the game hew as close as possible to the Slayers anime series, in both letter and spirit. I like to believe that's exactly what we've done.

In a monty-haul, min-maxing sort of game, players find bad guys, beat them up, and take their stuff. In Slayers... well, Lina and company find bad guys, beat them up, and take their stuff. Bad guys also find them. Sometimes the bad guys have no stuff to take, and sometimes the group of treasure-seekers (a valid term for Slayers player characters) just has to be satisfied with having saved the world and getting dinner at the best restaurant Atlas City has to offer. That's the way life is in the Slayers series. Therefore, that's the way the game is too.

Designing the system for Slayers d20 was interesting, because it necessitated taking d20 in a direction it doesn't normally go. We basically took all the rules for d20 game design, looked at them carefully, and began considering whether to toss them out or not in an attempt to bring a comedic, anime feel to a system that is usually far more strait-laced. Most of them we kept, but a few got the boot.

Feats only have a positive effect? That one got tossed early on, and some feats were given comedic "downsides" as well. Prestige classes might be narrowly focused, often tied to an organisation or group with a specific goal? Not possible given the source material, so away that one went too. Limits on spells cast per day? Nope, just cast them until you wear yourself out.

While the game system sounds overpowered or unbalancing in a lot of ways, it really isn't. It is overpowered in many ways as compared to the standard d20 system, but we believe it to be balanced within itself. It is not so much unbalanced as rebalanced — recalibrated and reset to accurately represent the source material from which it was drawn.

In truth, we could have toned down the power level a lot. We could have found a way around giving some feats a negative side. We could have made a larger effort to make the spells fit into the traditional magic system. In the end, though, that wouldn't have been Slayers. That would have been d20 with some Slayers-inspired classes or races. Frankly, if all you want is regular d20 in the Slayers universe, you can do that yourselves. Our job was to give you something more, and that's what we tried to do.

Playing Slayers d20 requires the players and GM to enter into the game in the spirit of high-powered, blow-'em-up-and-let-Prince-Phil-sort-'em-out exuberant play. If you're ready to toss caution to the winds and just have a good time, then we think that you will really enjoy this system. After all, it's all about the good fun, baby. That's why we're here.

In the end, we weren't out to tear anything down, but to transform and rebuild. In the words of the beautiful sorcery genius, Lina Inverse, "The world you want isn't created after destruction. We build it, every day, step by step." Have fun adding your own subdivision; I know we did.

THE SLAYERS HANDBOOK

Where monsters rampage, I'm there to take them down! Where treasure glitters, I'm there to claim it! Where an enemy rises to face me, victory will be mine!

— Beautiful sorcery genius Lina Inverse

Good, you're here! We've been waiting for you and — Hey, hands off that food! That's mine!

Now that we have that straight, we're glad to welcome you to the *Slayers* Universe, a colourful world filled with crude bandits, dashing swordsmen, beautiful sorceresses, glittering treasure, and a host of restaurants to suit any taste. This book covers the rules and guidelines needed to play in the *Slayers* Universe. This product uses the d20 System and requires the use of the *Player's Handbook* and *DMG*, version 3.5.



Slayers is a unique setting in that it seems almost custom made for use with the d20 System. If you're looking for a fun game capable of both low humour and high drama, you need look no further than this book. In the rules that follow, we've attempted to keep true to both the system and setting. Where the two diverge in letter if not spirit, we have gone with the terminology of the setting over the system in order to stay true to the series that inspired us to make this book from the beginning. We have tried to stay close to the core of the d20 System, and yet at the same time bend it into a bit more of an anime-inspired configuration, taking humour from being merely the skin-deep diversion it appears as in many games to a bred-in-the-bone structural component of the system, making it a source of role-playing, character development, and even drama instead of just a passing joke.

This book will cover new races, classes, skills, and feats specific to the *Slayers* setting. It will introduce a new magic system, as well as changes in combat and other areas that will allow a greater role for comedic play. In addition, alignment, religion, money, and equipment will all be discussed, allowing the GM to give his or her game that extra *Slayers* touch. A listing of common monsters will be given as well, giving the GM plenty of baddies to throw at an intrepid group of treasure-seekers... er, upholders of justice, that is.

CHARACTER CREATION IN SLAYERS

Creating a character in *Slayers* is much like creating a character for any other game, except that in the *Slayers* Universe, being based on a stereotype or cliché is a good thing. This is not to say that every *Slayers* character should be



a mere caricature — far from it. It is, however, a good reminder that the world of *Slayers* is based on both humour and drama, and one of humour's primary tools is a broad brush with which everyone can be painted.

Slayers's characters should be a mixture of humorous and serious sides. Characters in this game don't have multi-page backgrounds detailing their lives before the game's inception. Parents, siblings, education, or former lovers rarely rate mention unless they somehow figure into the plot. Treasure hunting, cooking, and getting a good price on that mystical doo-hickey that could save the world are what drive these people, none of which require a detailed history to establish. At most, there will be one significant event that drives a character forward, but even that isn't always necessary. For example, Zelgadis seeks a way to return his body to normal after being turned into a Chimera by his ancestor and nemesis, Rezo. Gourry Gabrier, on the other hand, is just your average 17-year-old swordsman, looking for a pretty girl to impress and a good restaurant with an all-you-can-eat buffet and affordable prices. Both are equally valid concepts for this setting, though the latter is usually funnier than the former.

COMEDY IN CHARACTER DESIGN

When designing a character, one of the most important decisions to make is "how much drama (or comedy) do I want?" As with the example above, Gourry is a far more comedic individual than Zelgadis. Amelia is far more humorous than Sylphiel. The latter two have their moments as well, but they stick more closely to the drama side of the scale than comedy. The difference between the two has as much to do with their concepts as anything else.



Amelia, as an example, is a princess with an over-developed sense of hero worship and a desire to follow in her darling father's footsteps. Her black-and-white philosophy and earnest portrayal of stereotypical "lawful-good" behaviour, combined with her cute appearance and naiveté, make her amusing to watch at all but the most serious moments. Sylphiel, on the other hand, is a shrine maiden who worships the holy tree Flagoon and secretly loves Gourry. She has little to draw her out of the realm of the ordinary as far as her personality goes, allowing her to be overshadowed by the antics of her companions until a dramatic twist brings her abilities to the fore.

Humour is created by making stereotypes and walking clichés, then poking fun at them when they inevitably trip over obstacles of their own making. By incorporating those elements into *Slayers* characters, the player can decide in advance how much comedy or drama a given character will attract, outside of what may be generated by the GM's plot or storyline. Decide what is appropriate for you as a player, then set about making a character that will best suit that style of play.

HA-HA! TIME TO MAKE THE FUNNY!

When creating a comedic character, don't be afraid to include incongruous or oppositional elements in his or her personality or background. Amelia is passionate about justice, but eternally naive about people. Lina is a powerful sorceress who throws tantrums when she doesn't get her way. Gourry is a strong and skilled fighter who is constantly and continuously kicked around by Lina. Including those oppositional elements is one way of creating humour, a natural reaction to seeing the juxtaposition of things that should be at odds, but aren't.

In addition, the clichés or stereotypes that most games urge players to avoid are right at home in *Slayers*, and only serve to increase the humour potential of a character. A big, strong fighter who is dumb as a brick? Check. Wizen old wizard who knows too much? Check. Mind-blowingly intelligent spellcaster with no social skills? Check. Cute thief who'll steal the party blind but can't stand up to a dust bunny by herself? No problem.

Add the two types of elements listed above, and you'll have a guaranteed recipe for funny. Don't over think the concept, and don't be afraid to run with things once you've chosen them. This game (and anime in general) is far more reliant on visual, slapstick humour than it is on clever puns or other word games. Remember to incorporate these things, and a comedic character will be yours in no time.

ANIME CONVENTIONS

In order to keep that anime feel to *Slayers* characters, there are some conventions for the genre as a whole that are useful to keep in mind. These themes below are very prevalent in *Slayers*. They are held true to a greater or lesser extent throughout most comedic anime series, though they are not always present to the same degree.

NAMES (HEROIC VS. VILLAINOUS)

In anime in general, and specifically in *Slayers*, a character's name is intrinsically tied to his or her personality. Heroes have heroic-sounding names, villains have villainous-sounding names. Heroic names tend to use the vowels A, E, I and Y, and are often traditional names or names that sound similar to something that has a heroic connotation. Gourry's last name, for example, is Gabrier — a relatively close match to Gabriel. Villainous names often use V, Z, and R, with vowels of O and U present. As an example, Rezo is