# A Comprehensive Analysis of the D/D/D Archetype: Strategy, Combos, and Corporate Conquest

## Executive Summary: An Introduction to the Different Dimension Demons

The "D/D" archetype, an abbreviation for "Different Dimension," represents one of the most complex and rewarding strategies in the modern Yu-Gi-Oh! Trading Card Game. Piloted by Declan Akaba in the *Yu-Gi-Oh! ARC-V* anime, this deck is renowned for its intricate combo lines, high skill ceiling, and unique thematic identity.1 This report provides an exhaustive deep dive into the archetype's mechanics, key cards, combo theory, and competitive standing.

### Clarifying the Name: "D.D." vs. "D/D"

Before delving into the specifics, it is crucial to address a common point of confusion. The "D.D." (with periods) series is an older, largely unrelated collection of cards focused on the banish mechanic, featuring monsters like "D.D. Warrior Lady" and "D.D. Crow".2 This report, however, focuses on the "D/D" (with a slash) archetype and its evolved "D/D/D" forms. These are DARK Fiend-type monsters that constitute a cohesive, modern, and highly synergistic combo deck.3

### Archetype Identity: The Corporate Ladder of Power

The D/D/D archetype is thematically structured as a demonic corporation. Its members are named after influential figures from history and science—such as Kepler and Copernicus—as well as mythological beings and concepts like Genghis Khan, Alexander the Great, and Ragnarok.1 This corporate hierarchy is reflected in its gameplay, which utilizes nearly every summoning mechanic in the game: Fusion, Synchro, Xyz, Pendulum, and Link.5

The core gameplay loop revolves around a high-risk, high-reward mechanic facilitated by the "Dark Contract" Spell and Trap cards. These cards provide powerful, often continuous, advantages, such as searching for monsters or enabling Fusion Summons. In exchange, they inflict 1000 points of damage to their controller during each of their Standby Phases.1 This self-inflicted damage is not merely a drawback; it is a resource that can be leveraged to trigger the effects of certain "D/D" monsters and fuels the deck's relentless, aggressive playstyle.

### The Skill Curve: High Risk, High Reward

The D/D/D archetype is widely regarded as one of the most difficult decks to master.1 The opinions on its competitive viability often vary wildly, with some players describing it as inconsistent and fragile, while others praise its resilience and ability to construct boards with upwards of seven disruptions.6 This disparity is not a contradiction but a direct reflection of the deck's immense skill gap.

Unlike many strategies that rely on linear, memorized "flowchart" combos, D/D/D thrives on non-linear play. A skilled pilot understands the fundamental principles of resource management and can identify multiple pathways to their end goal from a given hand.8 When a primary combo line is interrupted by an opponent's hand trap, an experienced player can pivot to an alternative sequence, often still ending on a respectable board. Conversely, a player who has only memorized a single combo will find their turn cut short by a single, well-timed disruption. Therefore, the perceived power of the deck is inextricably linked to the pilot's ability to improvise and navigate its complex decision trees, making it a formidable weapon in the right hands.

## The Corporate Structure: Key Cards and Their Roles

To understand the D/D/D archetype, it is best to visualize its members as employees within a corporate structure, each with a specific role that contributes to the company's ultimate goal: total board domination.

### The Board of Directors: The Extra Deck Bosses

These are the powerful "D/D/D" monsters that serve as the deck's primary win conditions. They provide the powerful interruptions and board presence that the deck aims to establish on its first turn.

* **D/D/D Deviser King Deus Machinex (The CEO):** As the deck's premier boss monster, Machinex exerts ultimate control over the board. Its quick effect, which is not once per turn but once per chain, allows it to detach two materials or destroy a "Dark Contract" card to attach an opponent's monster to itself as Xyz material.10 This is a powerful form of non-destruction removal that also negates the targeted monster's effects. It is easily summoned by ranking up from another "D/D/D" Xyz monster, making it a frequent and formidable presence.7
* **D/D/D Wave High King Caesar (Head of Security):** This Rank 6 Xyz Monster is the deck's primary defense against monster-heavy strategies. It can negate the activated effects of monsters that would Special Summon, and it can do so twice per turn by detaching its materials.6 When it is sent from the field to the Graveyard, it also provides resource recursion by searching for any "Dark Contract" card from the deck.11
* **D/D/D Cursed King Siegfried (Legal Department):** This Level 8 Synchro Monster is the dedicated Spell and Trap negation for the archetype. Once per turn, it can negate a face-up Spell or Trap card on the field, which is vital for protecting the established board from powerful board-breaking cards like Dark Ruler No More and Evenly Matched.6
* **D/D/D Duo-Dawn King Kali Yuga (The Hostile Takeover Specialist):** Kali Yuga is a game-ending Xyz Monster. When it is Xyz Summoned, it negates the effects of all other face-up cards on the field for the rest of the turn, effectively shutting down the opponent's board.1 It can also destroy all Spell and Trap cards on the field during either player's turn, functioning as a powerful board wipe.1

| **The D/D/D Boardroom: Key Extra Deck Monsters** |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Card Name** | **Summoning Type** | **Primary Role** | **Key Interaction** |
| D/D/D Deviser King Deus Machinex | Xyz | Monster Removal & Negation | Attaches an opponent's monster as material (once per chain). |
| D/D/D Wave High King Caesar | Xyz | Special Summon Negation | Negates up to two monster effects that would Special Summon. |
| D/D/D Cursed King Siegfried | Synchro | Spell/Trap Negation | Negates one face-up Spell/Trap card per turn. |
| D/D/D Duo-Dawn King Kali Yuga | Xyz | Board Lockdown & Wipe | Negates all other cards on summon; destroys all Spells/Traps. |
| D/D/D Flame High King Genghis | Fusion | Combo Extension | Revives a "D/D" monster from the Graveyard when another is Special Summoned. |

### Middle Management: The Combo Enablers

These are the crucial Extra Deck monsters that act as a bridge, connecting the initial plays to the powerful boss monsters.

* **D/D/D Abyss King Gilgamesh (The Gatekeeper):** This Link-2 monster is arguably the single most important card in the modern D/D/D strategy. Upon being Link Summoned, its effect allows the player to place two "D/D" Pendulum Monsters with different names directly from the Deck into the Pendulum Zones.14 This sets up Pendulum Summons and provides access to powerful scale effects. However, this effect is the deck's most significant chokepoint; if Gilgamesh's effect is negated, it can often bring the player's turn to an abrupt halt.7
* **D/D/D Flame King Genghis & D/D/D Flame High King Genghis (HR Department - Recruitment):** These two Fusion monsters are the heart of the deck's extension capabilities. When another "D/D" monster is Special Summoned to the field, their effects trigger, allowing the player to Special Summon one "D/D" monster from the Graveyard.8 This revival ability is fundamental to swarming the field and climbing into more powerful Extra Deck monsters.
* **D/D/D Gust King Alexander (Synergy Coordinator):** The Synchro counterpart to the Genghis Fusions. When a "D/D" monster is Normal or Special Summoned, Alexander can revive a Level 4 or lower "D/D" monster from the Graveyard, facilitating Synchro-climbing combos into monsters like Siegfried or even generic powerhouses like Crystal Wing Synchro Dragon.8

### The Workforce: Main Deck Starters and Extenders

These are the Main Deck monsters that initiate combos and provide the resources needed to build a board.

* **Starters (The Initiators):**
  + D/D Savant Kepler: The deck's primary Normal Summon. When summoned, it searches for any "Dark Contract" card, most often Dark Contract with the Gate, which kickstarts the entire engine.1
  + Dark Contract with the Gate: This Continuous Spell is the deck's in-theme searcher, allowing the player to add any "D/D" monster from their Deck to their hand once per turn.1
  + D/D Swirl Slime: A versatile combo piece that acts as a one-card Fusion Summon from the hand. Its second effect, to banish itself from the Graveyard to Special Summon a "D/D" monster from the hand, provides crucial extension.1
* **Extenders (The Fuel):**
  + D/D Gryphon: Arguably the most versatile and powerful Main Deck monster. It can Special Summon itself from the hand, provides a draw effect when Pendulum Summoned, and, most importantly, searches for any "D/D" card from the Deck when it is Special Summoned from the Graveyard.1 This search effect is the primary method of accessing the deck's powerful trap card, D/D/D Headhunt.9
  + D/D Savant Copernicus: This monster acts as the deck's in-theme Armageddon Knight. On summon, it sends any "D/D" or "Dark Contract" card from the Deck to the Graveyard, setting up plays with cards that have Graveyard effects like D/D Necro Slime or D/D Gryphon.1
  + D/D Necro Slime: The counterpart to Swirl Slime, this monster enables Fusion Summons by banishing itself and other "D/D" monsters from the Graveyard, turning the discard pile into a valuable resource.1
  + D/D Lamia & D/D Orthros: These are the deck's primary Tuner monsters. Lamia can Special Summon itself from the hand or Graveyard by sending a "D/D" or "Dark Contract" card from the hand or field to the GY, while Orthros can be Special Summoned from the hand after taking any effect damage, including from your own "Dark Contracts".1 They are essential for making Synchro plays into Siegfried.

### The Binding Contracts: Spells and Traps

These are the support cards that enable the deck's strategy and provide additional layers of interaction.

* **The "Dark Contract" Engine:** As previously mentioned, these cards are central to the deck's identity, providing powerful effects at the cost of 1000 life points per turn. The most important are Dark Contract with the Gate (searcher) and Dark Contract with the Swamp King (a versatile Fusion Spell that can use materials from the hand, field, or Graveyard).1 Other contracts like Dark Contract with the Eternal Darkness can provide protection by preventing the opponent from targeting your monsters or using them as material for summons.11
* **D/D/D Headhunt (Corporate Espionage):** This is the archetype's searchable Normal Trap. It allows you to take control of an opponent's monster. If that monster was Special Summoned from the Extra Deck, it is treated as a "D/D/D" monster, which can then be used as material for your own summons.1 This is a potent piece of disruption that can be searched by D/D Gryphon.

## The Assembly Line: Core Mechanics and Combo Theory

Mastering D/D/D is less about memorizing specific, rigid combos and more about understanding the underlying mechanics and repeatable patterns that form the building blocks of your plays.

### The Search Network: How D/D Finds Its Pieces

The deck's consistency stems from its dense network of search and setup effects. The primary chains are:

* Normal Summon D/D Savant Kepler to search Dark Contract with the Gate.
* Activate Dark Contract with the Gate to search for any "D/D" monster needed to start or extend a combo.
* Use D/D Savant Copernicus to send a key resource like D/D Gryphon or D/D Necro Slime from the Deck to the Graveyard.
* Revive D/D Gryphon from the Graveyard to search for any missing piece, such as D/D/D Headhunt or an extender.

This high density of starters and searchers is a core design feature that grants the deck immense resilience.15 Cards like Piri Reis Map and Nightmare Throne can also search Kepler, adding even more layers of redundancy.6 An opponent attempting to stop the deck's plays with a single hand trap, such as using Ash Blossom & Joyous Spring on Dark Contract with the Gate, will often find that the D/D/D player has another starter in hand, like D/D Swirl Slime, allowing them to pivot to a different combo line. This forces the opponent to have multiple, specific forms of disruption to effectively halt the deck's momentum.

### The Resource Loop: Mastering the Graveyard and Banish Zone

For a D/D/D player, the Graveyard is not a discard pile; it is a secondary hand teeming with resources.6 The deck operates on a continuous loop of converting resources from one zone to another:

1. **Hand to Field:** Monsters like D/D Swirl Slime and D/D Gryphon Special Summon themselves or other monsters from the hand.
2. **Field to Graveyard:** Monsters are used as materials for Fusion, Synchro, Xyz, and Link Summons, loading the Graveyard.
3. **Graveyard to Field:** The revival effects of D/D/D Flame King Genghis, D/D/D Gust King Alexander, and the Pendulum effect of D/D/D Oblivion King Abyss Ragnarok bring monsters back from the Graveyard.
4. **Graveyard as Resource:** D/D Necro Slime initiates Fusion Summons from the Graveyard, while D/D Swirl Slime banishes itself from the Graveyard for its extension effect.

Understanding and managing this resource loop is the key to playing through disruption and maintaining pressure over multiple turns.

### Pattern Recognition Over Memorization

The most effective way to learn D/D/D is to recognize recurring combo patterns, or "modules," that can be chained together in various ways depending on the hand and game state.8 Three fundamental patterns are:

* **The "Pincer":** This involves using D/D Swirl Slime to get two monsters on the field from your hand. First, use its hand effect to Fusion Summon D/D/D Flame King Genghis. Then, banish Swirl Slime from the Graveyard to Special Summon another "D/D" monster from your hand. This triggers Genghis's effect, allowing you to revive the monster used as Fusion material, quickly swarming the field without using a Normal Summon.8
* **The "Prestige":** This pattern leverages a Genghis in the Graveyard. By using Dark Contract with the Swamp King or D/D Necro Slime, you can use the Genghis in the Graveyard as material to Fusion Summon a new Genghis to the field. This can trigger the revival effects of other monsters on your field, like D/D/D Gust King Alexander, leading to further summons.8
* **The "One-Two Punch":** This sequence uses D/D/D Oblivion King Abyss Ragnarok in the Pendulum Zone. After Synchro Summoning D/D/D Gust King Alexander using D/D/D Flame King Genghis and a Tuner, Ragnarok's Pendulum effect can revive Genghis. Genghis's revival then triggers Alexander's effect, which can revive the Tuner, effectively bringing back both materials used for the Synchro Summon.8

## Executing the Business Plan: Step-by-Step Combo Guides

The following are simplified examples of how the archetype's patterns and resource loops translate into powerful opening plays.

### The One-Card Starter: Dark Contract with the Gate

A single copy of this spell can lead to a board with multiple interruptions.

1. Activate Dark Contract with the Gate; use its effect to add D/D Savant Copernicus from Deck to hand.
2. Normal Summon Copernicus; use its effect to send D/D Gryphon from Deck to Graveyard.
3. Link Summon D/D/D Abyss King Gilgamesh using Copernicus.
4. Activate Gilgamesh's effect, placing D/D/D Oblivion King Abyss Ragnarok (Scale 5) and Go! - D/D/D Divine Zero King Rage (Scale 0) from your Deck into your Pendulum Zones.
5. Pendulum Summon Copernicus from your face-up Extra Deck.
6. Activate Ragnarok's Pendulum effect to Special Summon Gryphon from the Graveyard.
7. Activate Gryphon's effect to add D/D/D Headhunt from Deck to hand.
8. Xyz Summon D/D/D Wave High King Caesar using Copernicus and Gryphon.
9. Overlay Gilgamesh with D/D/D Deviser King Deus Machinex.
10. Set D/D/D Headhunt.

This simple one-card combo ends on a board with Machinex (a monster steal/negate), High King Caesar (two Special Summon negates), and a set Headhunt (another monster steal), totaling four potential disruptions.6

### The Two-Card Power Play: Kepler + Swirl Slime

A stronger hand allows for a more robust end board, incorporating Synchro plays.

1. Normal Summon D/D Savant Kepler; add Dark Contract with the Gate to hand.
2. Activate Gate; add D/D Lamia to hand.
3. Activate D/D Swirl Slime's effect in hand, fusing it with Lamia to summon D/D/D Flame King Genghis.
4. Activate Lamia's effect in the Graveyard, sending Gate to the GY to Special Summon itself.
5. When Lamia is summoned, Genghis's effect triggers, reviving Kepler.
6. Synchro Summon D/D/D Cursed King Siegfried using the Level 1 Lamia and Level 6 Genghis.
7. This sequence can be extended further with other cards in hand to also produce Machinex and High King Caesar, resulting in the full, optimal board.

### Playing Through Disruption: The Art of the Pivot

The true test of a D/D/D pilot is the ability to adapt when a key play is negated.

* **Scenario:** The opponent uses Infinite Impermanence on D/D/D Abyss King Gilgamesh, preventing you from setting your Pendulum Scales.
* **The Pivot:** Instead of passing the turn, the player must assess their remaining resources. If they have D/D Swirl Slime and another "D/D" monster in hand, they can pivot to a Fusion-based strategy. They can summon D/D/D Flame King Genghis, use its revival effect, and potentially end on a board with Siegfried and Machinex, albeit without the Pendulum resources. This demonstrates the deck's fluidity and rewards players who understand its core mechanics beyond a single combo line.6

## The Final Report: The Endboard and Win Conditions

### The Optimal Board State

The ideal going-first endboard for a D/D/D deck aims to establish multiple layers of disruption to control the opponent's turn. The standard optimal board consists of 11:

* D/D/D Deviser King Deus Machinex
* D/D/D Wave High King Caesar
* D/D/D Cursed King Siegfried
* A set D/D/D Headhunt

This board presents a formidable wall of interruptions. It provides a monster effect steal/negate that is once per chain from Machinex, two monster Special Summon negates from High King Caesar, a Spell/Trap negate from Siegfried, and a monster steal from Headhunt. This amounts to a minimum of five high-impact disruptions, capable of dismantling the strategies of most decks in the game.7

### The "Crackback": Resilience and Recovery

A key strength of the D/D/D archetype is its ability to recover even after its board is broken. Because the combo process naturally fills the Graveyard with resources like D/D Necro Slime, D/D Gryphon, and various "D/D/D" monsters, the deck is rarely out of the fight.6 A single top-decked starter card, such as Dark Contract with the Gate or D/D Savant Kepler, can often be enough to rebuild a threatening board in a single turn, making the deck relentless and difficult to put away for good.17

### The OTK (One-Turn Kill) Strategy

When going second, the deck's strategy shifts from control to an aggressive, all-out assault. The "D/D/D" boss monsters boast incredibly high ATK stats, and the deck's swarming capabilities allow it to easily put over 8000 damage on the board. Cards like Go! - D/D/D Divine Zero King Rage can be placed in the Pendulum Zone to prevent the opponent from activating cards or effects in response to attacks, ensuring that the final push for game is successful.12

## Market Analysis: Matchups, Counters, and Synergies

### Favorable and Unfavorable Matchups

* **Strong Against:** D/D/D excels against decks that rely on resolving one or two key monster effects to start their plays, as Machinex and High Caesar can easily disrupt them. It also performs well against slower, backrow-heavy control decks, as it can overwhelm them with summons and protect its plays with Siegfried.
* **Weak Against:** The deck is vulnerable to strategies that can deploy multiple hand traps to hit different chokepoints in the combo. It also struggles against powerful floodgate cards that restrict its core mechanics, such as Skill Drain, Necrovalley (which shuts down the Graveyard), or Dimensional Fissure (which banishes key resources).12

### Identifying and Exploiting Chokepoints

For opponents looking to defeat D/D/D, understanding its chokepoints is critical.

* **Primary Target:** The number one priority is negating the effect of D/D/D Abyss King Gilgamesh. Stopping its effect to set the Pendulum Scales is the most effective way to end the D/D/D player's turn.7
* **Secondary Targets:** Using hand traps on the initial searchers like Dark Contract with the Gate or D/D Savant Kepler can prevent the combo from starting.
* **Key Counter Cards:** Ash Blossom & Joyous Spring, Effect Veiler, and Infinite Impermanence are excellent for negating key monster and search effects. Nibiru, the Primal Being can be devastating if used after the deck has committed five summons but before the negations are established. Droll & Lock Bird can shut down the deck's multiple searches, and Bystial monsters are particularly effective as they can banish key DARK monsters like Gryphon or Necro Slime from the Graveyard in response to their effects.7

### External Synergies: A Purebred Strategy

The user query asks how the archetype interacts with others. The consensus among competitive players is that D/D/D is best played as a pure strategy.21 Its engine is large, requiring significant deck space for its many one-of combo pieces, and many of its key cards, like Gilgamesh, lock the player into only Special Summoning "D/D" monsters for the rest of the turn.21

However, some modern builds have found success incorporating the "Fiendsmith" engine. As fellow Fiend-type monsters, they do not conflict with the deck's typing restrictions and provide powerful extension and board-building capabilities that synergize well with the D/D/D game plan.22 Additionally, if a player can summon a generic boss monster like Baronne de Fleur before being locked into Fiends, it can provide an extra layer of protection for their main combos.16

## Conclusion: Final Verdict on the D/D/D Corporation

The D/D/D archetype stands as a testament to complex and rewarding game design. It is a high-octane, resource-looping combo deck that challenges its pilot to master a vast and intricate network of interactions. Its power is not found in a simple, linear path to victory, but in its flexibility, resilience, and the near-limitless potential that emerges from its complex synergies.

The deck's performance is a direct and unforgiving reflection of its player's skill. For those willing to invest the time and effort to understand its corporate structure, learn its patterns, and master the art of the pivot, D/D/D offers one of the most satisfying and powerful gameplay experiences in all of Yu-Gi-Oh!. However, for players seeking a straightforward, "pick-up-and-play" deck, this demonic corporation may prove to be a hostile and unforgiving employer.

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