Shin Megami Tensei : Devil Summoner =

Shin Megami Tensei : Devil Summoner (Japanese : ? ? ???? ??????? , Hepburn : Shin Megami Tensei Debiru Saman?) is a role @-@ playing video game developed and published by Atlus . Forming part of the Megami Tensei series , it is the first title in the Devil Summoner subseries . It was first released for the Sega Saturn in December 1995 , and received a port to the PlayStation Portable in December 2005 . Despite reports of it being planned for localization , neither version has been released outside Japan .

Set in the city of Hirasaki in modern @-@ day Japan , the story follows a college student whose death at the hands of demons forces his soul into the body of Summoner Kyouji Kuzunoha . Now in Kuzunoha 's body , the protagonist must investigate the appearance of demons in the town and the activities of Sid Davis , the Dark Summoner responsible for killing the protagonist and Kuzunoha . The gameplay carries over multiple classic elements from the Megami Tensei series , including first @-@ person dungeon navigation , turn @-@ based battles , and negotiation with demons to recruit them into the player 's party .

Devil Summoner began development after the positive reception of Shin Megami Tensei If .... Designed from the outset as a spin @-@ off from the main Megami Tensei series , it drew on elements of detective fiction . It was also the series ' first appearance on fifth @-@ generation home consoles . Regular Megami Tensei staff were involved with the project , including director Kouji Okada , writer Ryutaro Ito , and character designer Kazuma Kaneko . The music was composed by Toshiko Tasaki and Tsukasa Masuko . Upon its release in Japan , the original version garnered positive reviews from Japanese press and strong sales . It went on to spawn both a television series and multiple sequels .

= Gameplay = =

Shin Megami Tensei : Devil Summoner is a role @-@ playing video game in which the player takes control of a silent protagonist that can be named and whose personality is determined by dialogue choices made in the game . Navigation is split into two types : standard navigation through the game 's three @-@ dimensional (3D) dungeons in a first @-@ person view , and navigation around the protagonist 's home of Hirasaki City using a 3D overworld map . During dungeon navigation , the player 's route is automatically mapped , and the map can be viewed in the menu screen . Non @-@ playable characters (NPCs) are represented in first @-@ person navigation with 2D sprites , and their speech is represented with head @-@ and @-@ shoulder portraits above dialogue boxes . Quests are available at a location called the House of Divination , which the player can choose to accept in exchange for rewards . Various stores are scattered throughout Hirasaki City for buying items , weapons and armor , and healing the player 's party and reserves . A key currency in the game is Magnetite , which is used for summoning demons and as currency in some of the stores .

Enemies are confronted on the overworld map and in dungeons through both random encounters and staged battles . Battles are governed by a turn @-@ based system : the player 's and enemy 's parties each get a turn during which they can perform available actions . The player party is arranged in a three @-@ by @-@ two grid , with their positioning effecting how they can attack enemies : for instance , short @-@ ranged attacks are made less effective if the selected party member is in the back row . The player has access to multiple commands in battle : " Sword " , " Gun " , " Magic " and " Extra " . Items can also be used in battle , and the player can choose to escape from most encounters aside from key boss battles . An " Auto " option is also available , where the entire party is commanded using the game 's artificial intelligence . At the end of each successful battle , experience points are distributed among party members depending on the strength of the enemy , and the protagonist is given Ability Points to assign to six different attributes which affect his performance in battle .

Key elements in the game are negotiation with and the fusion and creation of demons . Encountered in battle , demons can be talked with and negotiated into running from the battle , giving money or items , or joining the player 's party . If the negotiation fails , the demon will attack .

Once a demon is won over , they are given a loyalty meter which is influenced by the player 's actions . If the demon is treated well and performs actions in battle it approves of , its loyalty will increase . If the opposite occurs , the demon will begin to disobey the protagonist , then leave . Demons can be fused together at a special location in the game called the Hotel Goumaden , where fusions are supervised by the NPC Dr. Victor . Demon fusion is governed by a comparability system , with more favorable fusions emerging from better demon compatibility . Demons can also be fused with weapons to grant stat boosts , and after a certain point in the game artificial demons called Zomas can be used and strengthened through repeated fusions .

= = Synopsis = =

 Devil Summoner takes place in Hirasaki , a coastal Japanese city that has seen a recent rise in supernatural activity . The player character , an unnamed college student , is asked to accompany his girlfriend Kumiko Hatano to check out a book on the occult for her studies . Going to an amusement park to buy some concert tickers at Kumiko 's request , the protagonist is attacked by demons and saved by Kyouji Kuzunoha , a Summoner belonging to an ancient clan dedicated to protecting Japan from supernatural threats . Shortly after leaving him , Kuzunoha dies under mysterious circumstances . Shortly after this , the protagonist is attacked by a Dark Summoner named Sid Davis . Killed by Davis , he is returned to the land of the living by Charon . Upon waking , the protagonist finds himself in the body of Kuzunoha , who was also killed by Davis . Now trapped in Kuzunoha 's body , the protagonist is forced to work in his place to investigate the reasons behind Sid Davis ' activities alongside Kuzunoha 's partner Rei Reiho : he does this to both protect the city and return Kuzunoha and himself to their original bodies .
 During his investigations , the protagonist and Rei learn of multiple demon @-@ run criminal organizations causing chaos in Hirasaki including factions of the Yakuza , all of them connected to Davis . The protagonist 's efforts against the demon threats are hindered by Hideo Momochi , who accuses the pair of being involved in the incidents until the police station is infested by demons and the police chief is revealed to be a demon in disguise . The protagonist also foils an attempt to Kumiko for unknown reasons . After taking down each of the five major demon factions , Davis reveals that the entire affair was orchestrated to break five seals holding prisoner the spirit of Inaruna : once a powerful regional priestess who was executed for resisting the forces of Emperor Jimmu with her magical powers during the unification of Japan , her spirit 's hatred for her conquerors has grown beyond control and she will destroy the city if released . Kumiko , the reincarnation of Inaruna , is successfully abducted by Davis and used as a host for Inaruna 's spirit . Although she is summoned , the protagonist and Rei rescue Kumiko and kill Davis . They then successfully defeat Inaruna . With the city returned to normal , the protagonist remains trapped in Kuzunoha 's body , and can choose either to use his own name or adopt the Kuzunoha title .

= = Development = =

 Shin Megami Tensei : Devil Summoner is the first entry in the Devil Summoner series , which forms part of the larger Megami Tensei series : as with other entries , its narrative takes the form of a modern @-@ day detective story as opposed to the series ' more prevalent post @-@ apocalyptic settings . The concept for Devil Summoner originated during the development of Shin Megami Tensei II and Shin Megami Tensei If ... for the Super Famicom . During the development of II , series producer Kouji Okada considered creating a more imposing sequel , but instead created If ... as a smaller @-@ scale spin @-@ off title . The positive reaction to If ... gave Okada the freedom to realize long @-@ held concepts for a " parallel world " as an extension of the original concept for If .... Odaka was the game 's director , while the script was written by regular Megami Tensei writer Ryutaro Ito . The story and atmosphere drew on themes from detective fiction , particularly the melancholic and hardboiled fiction of Raymond Chandler . One of Ito 's favorite pieces of dialogue was the opening segment , where the protagonist is dragged about by Kumiko on her errands , during which the protagonist 's personality is determined by the player . The name of the game 's

setting , Hirasaki City , was constructed using kanji taken from the names of places in Kanagawa Prefecture . The city 's name also served as a reference to Heijo City , a location in Patriotic Squadron Dai @-@ Nippon .

Devil Summoner was the first Megami Tensei title to be released on a 32 @-@ bit fifth @-@ generation home video game console , and the first Megami Tensei game to feature 3D graphics . The latter presented a new challenge for the development team : while they found adjusting to the new specifications a challenge , they also greatly enjoyed working with the Sega Saturn , the which was unlike anything previously experienced by the team . Among the design staff were Katsura Hashino , who focused on combat , and Shogo Isogai , who focused on coordination between gameplay events . The demon conversation system was conceived by Okada based on experiences with the multiple accents encountered in the Kansai region of Japan . Using this as a base , he created the response system to give demon negotiation a more realistic feeling than previous Megami Tensei games . It was also a means of equalizing the relationship between demons and the player party , which had previously been more akin to master and servant than equal partners . The Zoma demons , which could be freely tailored into different demon types , was created while the team was balancing out the game 's difficulty . The gameplay difficulty , which by later standards would be considered quite high , was toned down from the difficulty of earlier Megami Tensei titles to appeal to a wider audience . This necessitated balancing a more forgiving difficulty with keeping traditional Megami Tensei gameplay elements .

The character designs were created by Kazuma Kaneko . In keeping with the " MegaTen Detective " theme , Kaneko emulated the genre 's hard @-@ boiled elements in his character designs . Kuzunoha 's character design was inspired by the first animated version of Japanese character Lupin III , the main protagonists of Tantei Monogatari and Ace Ventura : Pet Detective , and the titular character from The Adventures of Ford Fairlane . Rei Reiho , who Kaneko later referred to as his favorite female character design , was created to be the main character 's sidekick and consequently was portrayed as a strong character . Her appearance was influenced by Japanese model Kitaura Tomoe . Her choker necklace , which was hung with coins needed to cross the Sanzu River after death , was part of how Kaneko expressed the story 's hard @-@ boiled elements . The character Sid Davis was created as Ito wanted a black character in the game : the star mark on his forehead represented a pentagram , which resulted in him getting the production nickname " shooting star " . The name of true antagonist Inaruna was influenced by Sumerian mythology . She was originally going to be Princess Takiyasha , the legendary daughter of Taira no Masakado : while the explicit details were changed , Inaruna 's character was still influenced by the tales surrounding Takiyasha . Her reincarnation in the form of Kumiko was a conscious reference to the Megami Tensei series ' titular concept of reincarnation . Kumiko 's early portrayal was far gentler than she was in the final game : given a high @-@ class background , she would come across as a Yamato nadeshiko . Supporting character Dr. Victor was based on the titular protagonist of Mary Shelley 's novel Frankenstein . Future character designer Shigenori Soejima worked on the game a sprite designer . Devil Summoner would be his very first work within the Megami Tensei franchise .

The music was composed by Toshiko Tasaki and Tsukasa Masuko , with additional arrangements by Tasaki , Masuko , Taku Iwasaki , Hisaaki Takemori and Don McCow . In their commentary on the game 's music , the two main composers noted that tracks such as " Conduct Record " and " Sid Davis " were composed quite quickly : the latter track was rewritten , but circumstances led to the original version being used in the final game . " Kuzunoha Detective Agency " was Tasaki 's favorite composition . Several environmental tracks were themed after their respective locations . The theme for Dr. Victor 's location , the Goumaden Hotel , made heavy use of the organ despite Toshiko 's original decision against this . The theme for 3D dungeons was re @-@ purposed during debugging into the " level up " theme . The normal battle theme was originally intended to be a sub @-@ boss theme , while the first battle theme to be composed was the main boss theme . The boss battle theme used in the game is a toned @-@ down version of Tsukasa 's original version , which was too large for comfortable use within the game . The final boss theme was divided into two parts : in the first part , Tsukasa made the guitar solo " jerky " , but brought it back to normal for the second half . The staff roll music was composed by Masuko with a strong guitar element . For some tracks , the

team were restricted by the available disc space .

= = Release = =

  Devil Summoner was released by Atlus for the Sega Saturn on December 25 , 1995 . A supplementary release containing bonus material such as the ability to view the game 's demon collection , titled Shin Megami Tensei : Devil Summoner - Akuma Zensho , was released on April 26 , 1996 . In 2005 , it was announced that a port to the PlayStation Portable (PSP) was in development as part of the Devil Summoner subseries ' tenth anniversary celebrations . The port included a demon compendium , adjustable difficulty levels , a save @-@ anywhere option , adjustable screen ratio , and additional bosses and interface alterations for user convenience . Hashino and Isogai returned to the project , this time taking up the respective roles of producer and director . The port was decided upon when it was decided to begin development on the third Devil Summoner game so players who had missed the Saturn original could experience it again . An important element of the port was ensuring short loading times , an issue plaguing other PSP ports of the time . The port was released in Japan on December 20 , 2005 .

= = = Localization efforts = = =

  In March 1996 , it was reported by GameFan that Devil Summoner was being localized for a North American release in June of that year . For unknown reasons , it remained exclusive to Japan . During the run @-@ up towards its release , it was rumored that the PSP port would be picked for a western release in 2006 . Ultimately , the port was not localized . It was speculated that the reason for its continuing exclusivity was that Sony had blocked a localization attempt due to a lack of new content . As part of staff interviews in 2006 relating to the third Devil Summoner game , Atlus confirmed that they had no plans to localize the title for the West , preferring to prioritize new entries in the franchise . It was also said that the " top @-@ secret reasons " for this were unrelated to the game 's content or censorship issues .

= = Reception = =

  In its first week of release , the Sega Saturn version of Devil Summoner sold 264 @,@ 822 copies . As of 2007 , it sold 355 @,@ 656 , becoming the 14th best @-@ selling game for the system in Japan . In contrast , the PSP remake did not appear in the top 500 best @-@ selling titles either for 2005 or 2006 .
  Famitsu gave the original version a positive review , with it scoring 35 out of 40 points : the four reviews gave it scores of 9 , 9 , 9 and 8 out of 10 . SoftBank Creative 's magazine publication Sega Saturn Magazine gave it a score of 24 / 30 points , with the three reviewers giving it respective scores of 8 , 9 and 7 out of 10 . In a feature on the game for GameFan , Casey Loe noted the game 's " clean and crisp " 3D visuals , called the enemy design excellent , and thought the full @-@ motion video sequences were the best to be found on the Saturn system . She ended by praising Atlus ' plans for releasing a title so deep and mature for the Western market . Fellow gaming magazine Game Players , in a feature on upcoming role @-@ playing game releases in North America , thought that the premise and previewed gameplay showed it to be a promising title after its positive Japanese reception . Kurt Kalata and Christopher J. Snelgrove , writing for gaming website Hardcore Gaming 101 , called the game decent despite its slow pacing , an unpolished look , and some aggravating aspects to the demon loyalty system . In a 2015 feature on recommended software produced for the Saturn , Dengeki Online highlighted Devil Summoner as one of the system 's most notable games . The writer ranked it among the best early Megami Tensei titles despite its high difficulty .
  Famitsu 's writers expressed disappointment over how the PSP version 's graphics and screen size had not been changed in comparison to the Sega Saturn version , and of how few adjustments had been made . Despite this , the reviewers positively noted the easier gameplay experience and

praised the battle system . Kalata and Snelgrove appreciated the graphics used in the game 's dungeons , which they found to be detailed and better @-@ looking than ones in previous games in the series ; they also appreciated the battle transitions . On the other hand , they found the graphics for the game 's maps to be " not particularly impressive looking " , and the graphics for the enemies to be lacking and " barely animated " .

= = Legacy = =

The commercial and critical success of Devil Summoner prompted the development of a second game in the subseries . Titled Devil Summoner : Soul Hackers , it was released for the Saturn in November 1997 , and served as an indirect sequel . Two prequels for the PlayStation 2 were released , focusing on the adventures of Raidou Kuzunoha in 1920s Japan : Raidou Kuzunoha vs. The Soulless Army and Raidou Kuzunoha vs. King Abaddon . The third Devil Summoner was the first to be released outside Japan .

A live @-@ action TV series adaptation of the first game , titled Shin Megami Tensei : Devil Summoner , was produced and aired in Japan . Originally only scheduled for one thirteen episode season in 1997 , popular demand prompted the production of a second season , which broadcast in 1998 . The first series follows the plot of Devil Summoner , while the second season follows an original story . For their VHS release , the subtitle Bright Demon Advent was added .