

Star Ocean: The Second Story Skills FAQ

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Star Ocean: The Second Story
PlayStation

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Developed by Tri-Ace Co. and Links
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Special Skills Information
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---Updates---

Revision 1 - 07/03/99
* 100 skill point trick for uncovering hidden talents
* secret "Float" combat skill and how to get it
* recommended skills to max out

Revision 2 - 07/16/99
* commands to use for unlocking hidden talents
* skills to use for developing the specialty commands

Revision 3 - 07/22/99
* more hidden talents

---Talents---

These are natural talents possessed by a character. These are given at random when a game begins, so no two Claude Kennis or Rena Lanfords will be exactly alike talentwise. These talents give them the ability to perform certain tasks, called Specialties. Of course, doing a special task while one doesn't have the talent for it, may unlock a hidden talent, allowing them to better perform that task.

- * Originality - The ability to modify things with one's own creativity.
Useful for making art or sculptures.
- * Dexterity - The gifted talent of being able to move one's finger tips exactly as one wishes.
Useful for tasks that demand the use of one's hands, like metalwork or alchemy.
- * Writing Ability - The talent of being able to put one's feelings into words.
Useful for writing books or composing music.
- * Pitch - The ability to grasp musical tones well.
Useful for composing music.
- * Sixth Sense - The private ability to sense things that cannot be expressed with words.
Useful for the Scout command.
- * Sense of Taste - The gift of judging what tastes would please anyone.
Useful for making good foods.
- * Sense of Design - The creative talent for the arts.
Useful for making fine jewelry and paintings.
- * Sense of Rhythm - The ability to perfectly grasp musical rhythm.

Useful for playing music.

* Love for Animals - Animal lover. More than anything, more than anyone.

Useful for summoning animals.

* The Blessing of Manna - The innate magical power.

Only those with the blessing of Manna can use Heraldry magic.

---Skills---

Skills are acquired abilities. You can increase a character's ability in a certain skill by distributing Skill points (a la Shadowrun), which are earned by increasing your characters' levels. By learning certain skills, you can then perform Specialties.

* Sketching - The ability to grasp and reproduce objects. Technical skill.
Develops the Art skill.

* Musical Notation - Knowledge about musical notation.

(Agility + 1% x skill level)

Develops the Musical Talent command.

* Music Instrument - The ability to play a musical instrument.

Develops the Musical Talent command.

* Tool Knowledge - Knowledge about different tools and weapons.

(Item sale price + 3% x skill level)

Develops the Identify command.

* Mineralogy - Knowledge of minerals and diamonds.

(Intelligence + 3% x skill level)

Develops the Identify, Metalwork and Alchemy commands.

* Herbal Medicine - Knowledge about medicinal herbs.

(Recovery by blueberries and blackberries + 3% x skill level)

Develops the Identify, Compounding and Survival commands.

* Craft - The ability to do jobs that demand manual dexterity.

(Agility + 2 x skill level)

Develops the Customize and Metalwork commands.

* Esthetic Sense - the degree of maturity that enables an understanding of love and beauty.

Develops the Art and Metalwork commands.

* Writing - The intellectual ability to create literature.

(Dexterity + 2 x skill level)

Develops the Authoring command.

* Effort - The willpower needed to achieve one's goal.

(Experience points needed for next level is reduced.)

Develops the Practice command.

* Perseverance - The willpower to continue effort.

(Skill point consumption is reduced.)

Develops the Practice command.

* Patience - The willpower to endure difficulties and sadness.

(Constitution + 2 x skill level)

Develops the Practice and Survival commands.

* Danger Sense - A feeling, high sensitivity to murderous intent.

(Stamina + 3 x skill level)

Develops the Scout command.

* Biology - Knowledge about the science of life.

(HP + 10 x skill level squared)

Develops the Compounding command.

* Mental Science - Knowledge about the mysterious powers of the mind, etc.

(MP + 5 x skill level)

Develops the Compounding command.

* Kitchen Knife - The ability to use a kitchen knife, essential to any respectable chef.

(Strength + 20 x skill level)

Develops the Cooking command.

- * Recipe - Knowledge about cooking ingredients.
(Effects vary depending on whether or not favorite foods are eaten.)
Develops the Cooking command.
- * Good Eye - The ability to choose good cooking ingredients.
(Recovery by eating foods increases.)
Develops the Cooking command.
- * Whistling - The ability to put fingers in mouth and whistle loudly.
Technical skill.
Develops the Familiar command.
- * Animal Training - The ability to tame and train animals to do things and obey. Technical skill.
Develops the Familiar command.
- * Metal Casting - the ability to cast metals. Technical skill.
(Dexterity + 2 x skill level)
Develops the Customize command.
- * Scientific Ability - the ability to use laboratory equipment, such as a still. Technical skill.
(Strength + 10 x skill level)
Develops the Alchemy command.
- * Fairyology - Knowledge about fairies and the origins of life.
(Intelligence + 1 x skill level)
Develops the Alchemy command.
- * Radar - Supernatural powers that enable reception of messages from unknown beings. A gift from heaven!
Develops the Oracle command.
- * Piety - Knowledge about faith and the gods. Skills increase somewhat.
Develops the Oracle command.
- * Playfulness - An open mind to forgive the God of Creation for thinking up silly things. A gift from heaven!
Develops the Oracle command.
- * Functionality - the ability to balance beautiful form with function. A feeling.
(Strength, Dexterity, Agility, and Intelligence + 6 x skill level)
Develops the Customize command.
- * Courage - If you have courage you won't be nervous even in a large crowd of people.
Develops the Pickpocketing command.
- * Poker Face - The ability to keep a straight face under any circumstance.
(Guts + 3 x skill level)
Develops the Pickpocketing command.
- * Copying - The ability to grasp the true character of things and make them your own.
Develops the Reproduction command.
- * Mech Knowledge - Knowledge about machines.
Develops the Machinery command.
- * Mech Operation - The ability to operate machines successfully. Technical skill.
Develops the Machinery command.

---The following are skills used in combat.---

- * Below the Belt - The ability to ignore an enemy's defense when attacking.
- * Strong Blow - The ability to blow away the enemy.
- * Flip - The ability to flip around the enemy and attack from behind.
- * Counterattack - The ability to counterattack when attacked by an enemy.
- * Feint - The ability to improve aim.
- * Mental Training - The ability to increase attack power.
- * Motormouth - Reduces the time it takes to cast Heraldic spells.
- * Body Control - Prevents fainting.
- * Spirit Force - Increases defensive powers.
- * Parry - Increases ability to parry the enemies' attack.
- * Cancel - The ability to eliminate the gap between normal attacks and immediately use a killer move.

- * Gale - Increases one's combat speed.
- * Provocation - The ability to use the SELECT button to taunt the enemy during combat.
- * Float - The ability to deliver a powerful blow to the enemy and knock them into the air. See "More About Special Skills" section.

---Specialties---

Specialties are commands that one is good at doing. These require particular knowledge of one or more skills. Some allow you to create items, while others increase your fighting ability. The higher the specialty rating, the more successful you will be when performing it.

Success: what happens when you succeed at a specialty

Failure: what happens when you fail at a specialty

Requirement(s): skills required to use the specialty

- * Art - Making items by investing a soul into pictures and statues that you make.

Consumes Magic Canvas to make pictures, and Magic Clay to make sculptures.

Success: gives you valuable portraits, or dolls that give off weird effects when used in combat.

Failure: Useless Decorations, Scribbles.

Requirements: Sketching, Esthetic Sense.

- * Oracle - Gives you helpful (?) messages from Tria, the God of Creation.

Requirements: Radar, Piety, and Playfulness.

- * Musical Talent - composes and plays music.

To compose music, you need at least one Feather Pen and a musical instrument, such as a Piano or a Violin. To play music, you need to first compose a song, and you also need to use one Conductor's Baton.

Success: songs that enhance your abilities for a set period of time.

Failure: nothing happens.

Requirements: Music Instrument and Musical Notation.

- * Customize - modifies weapons into your own original type.

Consumes one Smith's Hammer and a metal, such as Iron or Gold. You also need to choose a weapon you want to customize.

Success: gives you a more powerful weapon, depending on what metal you used.

Failure: Scrap Iron or a useless weapon (like a Stick or Worn-out Sword).

Requirements: Craft, Metal Casting, and Functionality.

- * Identify - Identifies unknown items indicated by a question mark (?) at the start of their names.

Uses Spectacles.

Success: identifies the item.

Failure: item remains unidentified.

Requirements: Tool Knowledge, Mineralogy, and Herbal Medicine.

- * Metalwork - Makes jewelry and equipment out of jewels and precious metals.

Success: jewelry that gives protection against magical attacks.

Failure: Weighty Rings, Gaudy Earrings, Scrap Iron.

Requirements: Mineralogy, Craft, and Esthetic Sense.

- * Authoring - Maintains a guidebook that gives you the details of your skills as they increase.

Consumes one Fountain Pen for each use.

Success: Special books, like "The Hermes Theory" and "Before Tea's Ready".

Failure: Crumpled Paper.

Requirement: Writing.

- * Practice - Increases your experience points by going through combat with lowered abilities.

Requirements: Effort, Perseverance, Patience.

- * Scout - Allows the user to increase or decrease the probability of enemies appearing.

Requirement: Danger Sense.

* Compounding - Makes medicines by mixing two types of herbs.

Success: better healing herbs.

Failure: nothing.

Requirements: Biology, Herbal Medicine, and Mental Science.

* Cooking - Makes drinks and food with cooking ingredients.

Success: delicious dishes that restore HP, or great-tasting drinks that restore MP.

Failure: disgusting food or bad-tasting drinks that only restore minimal HP/MP.

Requirements: Kitchen Knife, Recipe, and Good Eye.

* Familiar - Sends animals to shop for you when you are deep in a dungeon or other such place.

Consumes Pet Food.

Success: sends bird or stork to buy items for you.

Failure: nothing happens.

Requirements: Whistling and Animal Training.

* Alchemy - Transmutes iron into valuable materials such as metals and jewels.

Success: great metals and protective jewels.

Failure: ordinary Rocks.

Requirements: Scientific Ability, Mineralogy, Fairyology.

* Survival - Finds useful items when in the field.

Consumes 4 MP when used.

Success: finds items.

Failure: finds nothing.

Requirements: Herbal Medicine and Patience.

* Pickpocketing - Used in conjunction with special gloves to steal items with people using the Square button.

Success: steals item from a person. You can find rare items this way. (Don't steal too often while your party members are around, or they'll get mad at you.)

Failure: nothing is stolen.

Requirements: Courage and Poker Face, as well as the Bandit's Glove, which costs 40,000 Fol.

* Reproduction - Makes an item identical to another.

You need to buy a Magical Camera, and some Magical film to take the picture of the item.

Success: a duplicate of the item is produced.

Failure: Blurry Photo.

Requirement: Copying.

* Machinery - Makes machines that help with your adventure.

Success: makes machines and bombs.

Failure: doesn't make anything.

Consumes a Material Kit.

Requirements: Mech Knowledge and Mech Operation.

---Super Specialties---

When all of your characters know how to do a combination of Specialties, then your party can do Super Specialties. These are much more effective than regular Specialties, since everybody is involved, and not just one person.

Success: what happens when you succeed at a super specialty

Failure: what happens when you fail at a super specialty

Requirements: the specialties that everybody needs to know

* Master Chef - makes elegant dishes and drinks with everyone's powers.

Two ingredients are used instead of just one.

Success: extraordinary dishes that restore a lot of HP/MP.

Failure: the same icky food that is produced by bad Cooking ability.

Requirements: Cooking and Compounding.

* Orchestra - makes beautiful melodies and plays them according to the time

designated by a conductor.

Requires each character to have a musical instrument and a song to play.

Requirements: Musical Talent and Art.

* Comprehension - everybody tries to combine their power during combat for increased skill points.

Requirements: Practice and Survival.

* Come On Bunny - sincerely calls the name of a cute little rabbit to have it come to you.

Success: calls a bunny, which allows you to move around without running into enemies.

Failure: keep trying...

Requirements: Familiar and Scout.

* Publishing - writes a book that is good enough to print.

Consumes a Fountain Pen.

Success: a great book starring the chosen character.

Failure: Crumpled Paper

Requirements: Authoring and Machinery.

* Identify All! uses everyone's powers to identify and appraise the value of items correctly.

Requirements: Identify and Metalwork.

* Blacksmith - makes magnificent armor from ore.

Consumes a Smith's Hammer and a metal.

Success: powerful armor, depending on the metal used.

Failure: Perforated Armor, which is useless.

Requirements: Customize and Alchemy.

* Reverse Side - makes dangerous items. Is it ambition that fuels crime?

Consumes Vellum Paper.

Success: items such as Forged Medals, False Deeds, etc.

Failure: produces Bounced Checks, which go down in value over time. Get rid of these quickly.

Requirements: Pickpocketing and Reproduction.

---Questions About Special Skills---

WHAT DO HIDDEN TALENTS DO?

By bringing out a character's hidden talents, you are further demonstrating that character's true abilities. A good person to experiment this on is Celine. If she knows the "Art" command, you can try to make something with her, and even though you may fail, you may receive a message that says "Uncovered Celine's secret talent 'Originality'" or "Uncovered Celine's secret talent 'Sense of Design'." You also give that character an extra 100 skill points to distribute for increasing their abilities.

WHAT KINDS OF HIDDEN TALENTS ARE UNCOVERED?

Like I said before, if you don't succeed at a specialty command that one is not skilled in, you can uncover a hidden talent. Some examples of this are:

* By using the Machinery command, you can develop the Sense of Design or Dexterity talents. This is easiest to do with the machinist Precis, who starts off only with Sixth Sense.

* Cooking a lot will develop one's Sense of Taste.

* If you practice with your Musical Talent, you can improve your character's Pitch or Sense of Rhythm.

* Using the Familiar command will help increase your Love for Animals.

* If you use Metalwork a lot, you can open up a character's Originality and Dexterity. This can be done by just about anyone.

* Practice Authoring to develop a character's Writing Ability.

* Use the Art command and try to mold stuff out of Magical Clay to help a character's Sense of Design.

WHICH SKILLS ARE BEST TO MAX OUT?

In my opinion, you should start with Perseverance. It reduces the skill points needed to increase your skill levels. It only costs 8 skill points at any level. The next thing you ought to max out is Effort, which reduces the amount of experience needed to gain a level. If you're also looking to increase your abilities, you should put skill points into Biology to increase your HP, Kitchen Knife and Scientific Ability for Strength, and Functionality for an increase in Strength, Agility, Dexterity, and Intelligence.

WHY IS THERE A BLANK SPACE IN THE COMBAT SKILLS SECTION?

This blank space is reserved for the "Float" skill, which can not be obtained at any skill guild. This is an extremely powerful skill that allows you to knock your opponent into the air, and it will most likely daze or dizzy the opponent.

HOW DO I GET "FLOAT"?

"Float" is found in the Trial Cave. You have to save at the very last save point (before you fight the final boss, Gabriel), and then you must leave Feenal and return to Fun City. At Fun City, go to the Battle Stadium and talk to an old man dressed in green standing at the back of the arena. He will tell you he can "bring your memories back to life." He'll ask you twice if you want to try it. Say yes both times. He will tell you to close your eyes, and when you open them you will find yourself back in Arlia. There will be a penguin "Penpen" behind you. If you talk to him, he will say something unintelligible, and you can say 1) "I don't understand" or 2) "Stupid Penpen!" If you call him a stupid Penpen, he will kick you back into the arena. In this way, you can travel to and from Arlia and Nede.

However, once you leave Arlia, you will find a Synard waiting for you! Ride on the Synard and travel to the continent in the southwest end of the map you formerly couldn't reach. There you can find the entrance to the Trial Cavern.

You need to fight your way down to the 11th level (The Lair of the Dragon Emperor) and face the Dragon Tyrant boss. Needless to say, this fight will take you a very long time. When you're victorious, you can earn the Float skill.

---Acknowledgements---

Enix Corporation for making a damn good RPG. One of the best RPGs currently available (but for me to say that it is better than FFVIII would be sacrilege).

Jonathan Hensley for stating that characters get 100 bonus skill points for unlocking hidden talents, and what specialty commands unlock hidden talents.

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Ian Kelley's (ikelley@mail.sas.upenn.edu) Star Ocean 2 FAQ for complete information about how to get to the Trial Cave.

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---Disclaimer---

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