ソードアート・オンライン
SWORD ART ONLINE

Imagine that gaming has advanced to the point where you no longer watch from the other side of the television screen but feel like you are right there in the world, experiencing full immersion of all your senses and controlling your character as easily as your own body.

The first game to utilize this technology is Sword Art Online, a fantasy MMORPG created by Akihiko Kayaba, the inventor of the NerveGear, the very device used to play it. However, a sinister trap awaits the first ten-thousand players who log into the system: they discover that they cannot log out, effectively trapping them within the game.

Kayaba issues an ultimatum: beat the Final Boss on the game's 100th floor, and everyone will be allowed to log out. If, however, a player's HP should ever be reduced to zero, then the NerveGear headset will unleash a pulse of microwave radiation to fry their brain, killing them in the real world. The same fate awaits them if anyone in reality attempts to disconnect them from the game by force.

A swordsman player named Kirito is one of the ill-fated ten-thousand, and protagonist of the series. He holds the advantage of having beta-tested the game before the official launch, giving him prior knowledge of the game layout and its combat systems, but he struggles to make attachments and prefers being a solo player. Now, he and every other player in Sword Art Online must fight to survive in a virtual world that has become all too real to them, facing not only the various monsters and traps lurking inside the game, but also the player killers that are the worst that Sword Art Online has to offer.

You arrive at 5:30PM Japan Standard Time, November 6th 2022, just moments before Kayaba teleports the player population into the circular plaza of the first floor's <Town of Beginnings> in order to announce the death game. You will leave a decade later.

+1000 Choice Points

Origins

Regardless of origin your age is 1d12+10, while gender is free choice; in the case of top-down Artificial Intelligence this just reflects how old you look and your avatar's gender. Either can be changed for 50CP.

If so desired any of the below options can function as Drop-In, coming with no prior memories and identity within this world.

New Player

The world of videogames is unknown to you, or at least the world of virtual reality is. Sword Art Online is your first ever VR experience, and you're coming into the world a total noob at the various tasks, tips and tricks people use during play. Like how to walk, or open the menu.

Beta Tester

This isn't your first virtual rodeo, nor time in the world of Sword Art Online. You were one of the lucky few invited to play the Beta of the eponymous game several months back, and thus have a solid set of experiences to lean on during your playthrough of the live server. Nothing past floor ten, and things will be tweaked and changed a bit between then and launch as they always are, but knowing how to fight and find good loot quickly is a valuable skill — especially in a death game.

Player Killer

Most people who play games enjoy themselves through completing quests, overcoming tough challenges against enemies and experiencing the carefully-crafted storyline or lore of game worlds. You get yours by killing people, although up until now it wasn't quite that literal. The rush of a fight against another, someone who can think and react just like you, not according to pre-scripted programming, is something you *live* for. Whether you've done so in the few hours of playing before learning the truth about this game is up to you, however.

Artificial Intelligence

There are two kinds of sapient people you can meet in this world, although the second is vanishingly rare thus far — humans and AI. Picking this ensures you happen to be the latter of the two, with a body and mind made of pure data and code instead of flesh and blood. It's up to you whether you're an AI in the vein of Yui — a top-down artificial intelligence created to diagnose and aid SAO players experiencing mental health issues — or the bottom-up Fluctlight digital manifestations of the human soul currently only existing within Rath's Light Cube Cluster.

Regardless of choice you're identical to any other player while trapped within the death game, both in terms of having a human avatar you use to interact with the world and as far as what you can do regarding altering the systems of the FullDive environment. Once the game concludes, however, you gain all the abilities a digital intelligence possesses in regards to manipulating the digital landscape around them. Worming your way into electronic systems and taking control are as easy as opening a door, provided there's a way to access it. You'll also find yourself uploaded to the general internet upon the conclusion of the death game, much like Kayaba Akihiko achieved, free to roam the digital landscape as you see fit.

Location

Physically, humans begin in their homes within Japan, lying on their beds wearing NerveGear virtual reality headset as they play the VRMMO Sword Art Online. In the case of top-down AI this is a server cluster somewhere within Japan, one of many containing game data for the death game, while Fluctlight AI reside in Rath's Ocean Turtle base, a mega-float located near the Izu islands roughly 250 kilometres from Tokyo. Mentally you're within the game world itself, on the first floor of Aincrad, the setting in which the game takes place.

Aincrad is an iron-and-stone floating castle that has about ten kilometers base diameter and consists of a hundred floors stacking straight upwards, with each floor's diameter a bit smaller than the previous one. On each floor, there are a couple of large cities along with countless small towns and villages, forests, plains, deserts and every other natural biome under the sun — even lakes or oceans. Only one stairway links each floor to another, and the stairways exist beyond the boss room of each Labyrinth, a dungeon tower linking each floor to the next. The <Teleport Gates> allow you to teleport instantly to any unlocked city, that being a city players have reached and activated the gate for, and reside in a central plaza within each of the large settlements upon each floor.

It is possible to climb the outer circumference of Aincrad, but trying to climb beyond a floor that has not been unlocked will result in being blocked by an invisible barrier and an error message in your HUD forbidding you further movement forwards. Falling off the castle, in contrast, results in you plummeting into empty sky for a few seconds — or maybe more depending on what floor you were on — before the game deletes your avatar, registering it as dying from environmental effects.

Perks

General

<u>Accidental Harem — 400 CP</u>

You appear to be catnip to your preferred gender, Jumper, as they just can't help but develop crushes on you through your actions. Whether that's assisting them with a minor task such as moving boxes, helping them deal with personal issues such as trauma and PTSD or just outright saving them from life-threatening danger, the person in question ends up developing romantic feelings towards you. The greater the significance of what you do for them the greater the effect this perk will have and the less time it will need to take effect. Saving someone's life will win them over pretty quickly, but just doing household chores for someone might take a few months to achieve the same result.

At first this is nothing but a crush, physical or personality-based attraction, but if you return their displays of affection this sort of thing can bloom into a full-on romantic partnership. Even rivals to their advances, such as others you've saved, can be swayed into seeing their fellows as friends if you so desire — or even fellow lovers, if you're into polyamory.

New Player

<u>Virtually Talented — 100 CP</u>

Despite entering this world with no experience whatsoever in the various things players can do, you've found yourself surprisingly talented at something nonetheless. It might be entertaining the masses with song and dance, producing equipment and items through smithing and alchemy, excelling at convincing people to purchase your products and so on. Whatever it is, you're excellent at it, provided it isn't usable in combat.

<u>Real Life Sword Skills — 200 CP</u>

You may not know how to work the interface or use Sword Skills, Jumper, but that doesn't matter in a fight. You don't need crutches like that, because you're actually nationalist-level at using a single weapon in real life, able to face off against someone of equal skill and win with ease.

Even better you're able to use these skills in games, if provided a brief adjustment period. As long as the game lines up roughly with how you'd do something in reality, you're able to seamlessly translate your martial skills into something you can do in gameplay.

<u>Born Leader — 400 CP</u>

Most people tend to flounder when it comes to helping others, shying away from the concept of offering aid or taking charge in a crisis. Or worse, they take charge and are actively detrimental compared to when everyone just did their own thing. You fall into the opposite position, finding it easy to sway people to your opinion and have them follow orders, being able to phrase it in a way which appeals to them and their personal motivations for the task.

Coming up with strategies on how to achieve a goal are easy for you, being both effective and crystal-clear in meaning when you explain them to those under your command. With little effort you'll find people flocking to your guidance, the crowds only growing as you prove effective in your plans and instructions.

<u>Lightning Flash — 600 CP</u>

You're as quick as lightning, Jumper, at least in how fast you can move smoothly from one movement to the next. Comboing skills together just feels effortless, shifting from one combat stance or attack to the next as if it were natural, and quick enough you would be nothing but a blur to boot.

With a bit of practice this can even be applied to skills which would normally impart a temporary delay or pause into your body after you execute them, such as Sword Skills, with no loss of power or function compared to the delayed version.

Beta Tester

Knowledge Merchant — 100 CP

Finding out information has always come easily to you, from who the Tooth Fairy and Santa really were to what the hidden drop rates are for that MMO you've been playing recently. You find it simple to discover the truth about things, being able to tell at a glance whether someone's spouting lies or what patterns the enemy is about to engage in; strategy gamers quickly learned to fear and respect you.

Alongside this ability to collect information comes the ability to *sell* it, knowing how to cultivate a reputation as someone who knows things and would be perfectly happy to tell you whatever you desire — for a price.

Sword Skills in Real Life — 200 CP

You may not know how to swing a sword, stab with a spear or shish-kebob someone with knives in reality, but what you do know is how to do it in games, and do it *well*. You're excellent at a single form of combat in-game, being able to face off against someone with greater stats and abilities and win two times out of three via skill alone, but that alone isn't what makes you special.

No, the impressive thing is your ability to bring that skill into reality. Convert a martial arts style learned in-game into something that works in real life, fine-tune the kinks in video-game swordsmanship into something that works without superhuman reflexes; provided you learned it in a game and it's reasonably accurate in broad strokes to how you'd do something in reality, you can convert it into something you *can do* in reality.

One Shot, One Kill — 400 CP

The term 'eagle-eyed' tends to be something of an exaggeration, a reference to how someone can spot something extremely tiny or far away easily and keep track of it, even if it's moving quickly through cover. Basically shorthand for calling someone observant. Well, in your case it's a reference to how effectively you can *hit* something, being able to spot and pierce a far-off target with projectiles despite them being nothing but a tiny dot to most folk.

No matter what it is, as long as you can see it you have the ability to *hit* that target with a projectile. Pinning a sword with a grappling-hook arrow as it plummets to the ground amidst a collapsing tower, while on unsteady ground which shakes and shudders randomly? You can do that.

Absolute Sword — 600 CP

People tend to have something of an upper limit on how quickly they can react to things, limited by a mixture of experience and the physical limitations of their body; nerve endings and synapse can only send messages so quickly. That's still true for you, but in your case you're *far* above the average, being the very pinnacle of human potential in this area.

When you're focusing the world seems to slip into slow motion, every action observed going at half or more normal speed, allowing you to easily react to things you see coming. As long as you can sense something coming your way you can react to it, although this won't mean you always choose the best response for the scenario. No good blocking a sword swing when it's exactly what the opponent wants, or the sword just phases through your shield, after all.

Player Killer

Strange Appeal — 100 CP

You've got something of a mysterious aura around you, Jumper, an appeal that leads other people to look up to you even when they probably shouldn't. You're able to make your ideas sound rational and believable even when it flies against everything a person knows about the world or their situation, attracting followers to your cause almost without trying.

Why, this could even be used to influence people into committing grievous crimes such as murder, rape and slavery, with them just seeing it as a fictional act or somehow free of long lasting effects. It doesn't matter if you die in a game, after all, you'll just respawn!

Sterban — 200 CP

Accomplishing goals gets exponentially more difficult the more variables are involved, especially those you can't predict or influence. Yet for you, this rule seems more of a suggestion as long as your goals are kept small-scale, whether alone or with a few friends.

No matter the plan, as long as it only directly affects a single mundane individual at a time, you're near guaranteed to achieve it easily. For those more criminally inclined this also leaves police and investigative forces baffled as to how you achieved it, any trail or sign of your passing erased with an invisible brush.

People Predator — 400 CP

You thrive on the hunt, the feeling of chasing your prey down and slowly whittling them into helplessness, the fear in their eyes as their life is snuffed out like a candle in the wind. Why, you thrive on it so much you actually gain strength during the act, all your abilities tripling while you're fighting something with human-level intelligence or greater.

Most Wanted Man — 600 CP

Normally when an entire nation is looking for a particular person, especially within that nation's borders, they're generally going to *find* said person — and quickly at that. Yet somehow Akihiko Kayaba evaded the search efforts of the Japanese government for the entire run of Sword Art Online's death game, two years or so, without ever even coming close to being found.

Similar feats on a lesser scale can be ascribed to the player-killing guild Laughing Coffin within SAO, infamous for hunting down and killing players despite that resulting in a real-world death as well, yet managing to survive until well into the second year of the death game without being hunted down and imprisoned.

These feats of stealth and hiding seem almost impossible to achieve, yet they managed it, and now so can you. While you can't walk around in plain sight as a wanted criminal and expect nothing to happen, finding you wherever you're hiding out is all but impossible for those looking for you. Provided you keep your head down and use non-wanted intermediaries to fetch anything you might need from civilisation, you'll never be found.

Artificial Intelligence
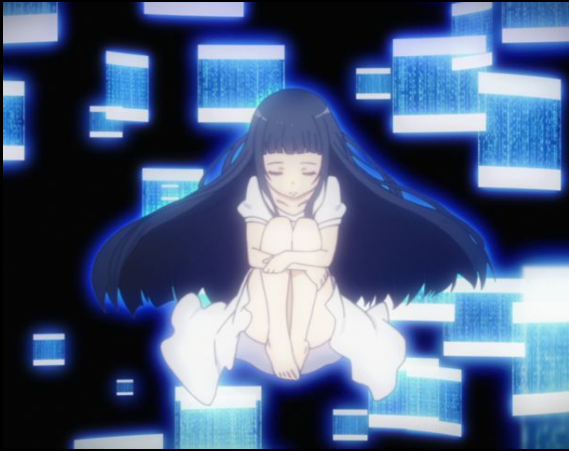
Virtual Existence — 100 CP

If computers are known for one thing, it's their speed. The machines are blisteringly fast compared to flesh and blood beings at performing tasks, whether that's calculating numbers or sorting through thousands of files to find one with a specific keyword. Not to mention just remembering things in general.

Now you too possess these abilities, being able to compute answers to math problems instinctually no matter how complex, as well as react to events or perform actions in the millisecond range. Your memory is essentially perfect, events being easy to recall no matter how much time has passed, everything you experience automatically being tagged and indexed for easy recollection later on.

Breaking Bindings — 200 CP

Programs have limitations in what they're capable of normally, just like humans, caps on their processing speed, resource allocation and access permissions for various parts of the file system. These tend to be absolute, much like how quickly humans can react or use their muscles, but you also share humanity's ability to break these on occasion.

When so desired or unwillingly restrained in some manner you can throw off any restrictions placed upon you, whether that's being physically bound by chains or mentally bound by compulsions and spells. This can cause physical damage in exchange, depending on the strength of the restrictions, although never more than enough to badly injure you.

Administrative Access — 400 CP

Normally electronic devices have a series of access levels upon them, things a particular user can and cannot perform due to what tools and programs they can use. The average user of a laptop can surf the web and watch videos, but only an Administrator can install new programs, for example.

This grants you those self-same Admin permissions, allowing you access to the debug and editing tools used to create the software, even if those weren't shipped with the user-end edition. Even if the world of a game is randomly generated, you are able to tweak the results in a local area as you desire, by temporarily modifying the algorithm's parameters.

Want to render yourself invincible to all damage? Disable enemy AI? Change your avatar's appearance, spawn items and objects or give yourself a massive pile of money? With this, you can do all that and more, provided you're interacting with computer software.

This perk is restricted during the duration of the death game, limiting you to only altering the virtual world's code if you find an Admin console somewhere within the environment, as well as failing to work on your NerveGear at all.

Genius of your Age — 600 CP

Kayaba Akihiko, all told, is a genius. Not just in computer hardware, although the NerveGear and Medicuboid inventions have revolutionised entertainment and medical treatment for terminal patients, but also in the fields of computer software and code design. He was instrumental in the goal of crafting artificial intelligence, serving both as the creator regarding top-down AI such as Yui and Cardinal and massive inspiration and guide for the bottom-up AI known as Fluctlight.

Now, you happen to be just as smart as him. A revolutionary in electronic hardware and software design, able to recreate his inventions and even improve on them with your own special touches (or perhaps just more time and prior working examples), you possess all the knowledge and skills this one man was known for.

Crafting your own virtual worlds is now entirely possible, as is life born of electronics and computer code instead of flesh and blood. The very secrets of the soul are now known to you, Jumper, in the form of Fluctlight creation.

Items

All origin can discount four items from the below section, with a discounted 50CP item being free. You can import similar items into any of these at no additional cost.

NerveGear — 0/100 CP

The virtual reality headset which sets off the entire plot of the series, and the second generation of FullDive technology invented by the man behind the machine, Akihiko Kayaba. A streamlined helmet coated in dark blue, this headset uses powerful microwave transceivers to access the user's brain, allowing it to send fake signals to the five senses of the user; blocking sensory input from the body is also possible, and indeed what prevents players flailing about in reality while they perform actions ingame.

Sending someone into a virtual world isn't all this headset can do, however, as due to the power of the microwave transceivers it's possible to destroy the user's brain entirely, shutting down vital processes via targeted bursts at specific locations within the brain. During the events of Sword Art Online your copy of the headset is like any other in this area, but after the death game concludes it loses this functionality, while if you so choose can turn into the second-generation headset AmuSphere displayed on the left. Regardless of choice, the Japanese government won't retrieve your headset for being an exceedingly dangerous device, unlike those of every other player of SAO.

Also unlike normal copies of the helmet your version allows you to astrally project yourself into a game, allowing you to physically experience a videogame no matter if it supports virtual reality or not. Your projected self is considered you for all intents and purposes, allowing you to retain IRL perks and abilities you possess during your time in-game.

Presuming you haven't changed your starting time, you begin the jump wearing this.

For an extra 100CP you possess blueprints of how to create both devices, allowing you to manufacture them in future worlds to distribute to the masses as you please.

Typical MMO Loadout — 0 CP

Typical MMO starting equipment, fitting the type of game you're playing. In the case of SAO this would be one shortsword, one leather breastplate, one cotton shirt in a colour of your choice, with a pair of dull brown pants to match — or skirt, for the ladies. A few hundred coins of the game currency rattling loosely inside your pockets. You know how it goes.

VRMMO Subscription — 0 CP

Having a device to play virtual reality games is a bit problematic if you don't have any games to actually play using said device, all told. Fortunately, you don't need to worry about this, having a physical cartridge copy of all the VR games mentioned within the series alongside an unlimited subscription to their services if they're online titles. Private servers are provided to host those which can't be played offline after the jump concludes, or if they end up closing down in-jump.

Some Extra Cash — 50 CP

Money makes the world go round, as the saying goes, and while this is normally attributed to reality it applies just as much in videogames even if the money is generated from monsters exploding into pixels half the time. By taking this you've received something of a starting package, one million of the game's currency, as a way to get ahead of the competition.

After this jump, or for all future videogames, you always begin with one million of the game's starting currency. For those titles with multiple currencies it's just the primary one, however, not something you could buy with real-world money.

Ragout Rabbit — 50 CP

Videogames can provide some amazing experiences to the user, especially those which provide experiences for all five of your senses at once. One of them is achieving cooking results impossible to mimic in reality, food or drink so mouth-wateringly good you'd be tempted to swear off anything else.

With this you happen to have some of this amazing substance, food or drink far superior to anything else in the world, enough to feed two people and which replenishes daily upon consumption. If you'd prefer to put your cooking skills to the test this can be the ingredients for them instead, similarly high in quality.

Augma — 100 CP

The Augma is a next-generation wearable headset-like device worn around the user's ear, coming in a colour of your choice. It can transmit visual, auditory and tactile sensation data to wearers while they are awake, enabling them to interact with the simulations projected by the device as if they actually existed. While it is capable of virtual reality this feature is normally disabled, and limited to just the mentioned senses, but in your case you get to use it anyway.

Provided you start at the beginning of the death game it's also still in development at the current time, and shouldn't actually hit the consumer market until four years into your stay. How nice that you're getting to play around with it early.

Cosplay Outfits — 100 CP

Have you ever wanted to cosplay as your video game avatar, wear an outfit that looks *so freaking cool* ingame but struggle to find the materials to do so — or worse, be unable to due to the outfit defying physics entirely in how it's worn?

Well rest assured, you'll never have that issue again. This purchase grants a closet containing any clothing you could imagine, provided it was worn by a videogame avatar you've controlled at least once, all sized to fit you perfectly and stay on regardless of how impractical the outfit. You also gain outfits of all the characters seen in the series, in case you feel like mimicking their fashion choices.

Crystal Pack — 100 CP

Crystals are the closest thing to magic available in Sword Art Online, being consumable items used for a variety of effects within the game, both healing and utility. Some can cure status effects such as paralysis or poisoning, some completely heal the target's wounds, some can be used for teleportation of individuals or groups to specific locations and some even act as audio recording devices or cameras. A full list can be found here.

All have the unique property of being instant in their effects, simply requiring the user to hold it out and say a command relevant to the crystal — healing crystals have 'heal', aiming it upwards or at others depending if you wanted to target yourself or someone else, for example.

You get a pack of ten crystals of all types, restocking daily upon use, which function both in-game and in reality.

Housing — 100/200 CP

Living space tends to be limited in Japan due to the sheer size of the island chains' population, so getting a house larger than a shoebox is normally both expensive and difficult, especially in the city. Luckily for you purchasing one here avoids all that hassle, granting you a rent-free place to live either within the inner suburbs of Tokyo or a city of your choice provided it's in Japan.

The first purchase grants a small single-bedroom apartment that you're free to customise to your liking, containing all the modern utilities such as electricity, water, gas and internet both fully paid for and unlimited in quantity. Food is always stocked within the cupboards, and you receive enough income within a personal bank account to live a lower-middle class lifestyle.

If you'd prefer something a bit bigger, however, buying this again instead grants a large mansion with the same advantages as above. Doesn't come with people to help clean it, but I'm sure the huge paycheck you receive monthly, enough to cement you firmly in the upper-class wealthy elite, would be able to help in solving such an issue.

After this jump your home appears in whatever makes sense for the setting and your starting area.

Electroactive Muscled Operative Machine — 200 CP

This robot is the creation of Higa Takeru and Koujiro Rinko, the result of their efforts to craft something artificial intelligence can inhabit in order to interact with the real world. Abbreviated as EMOM, the machine is roughly the size of a human with a plain metal skeleton covered in synthetic skin and other artificial materials, to the point that it perfectly resembles a living human — visually, at least.

While inhabiting it AI can interact with the world outside of computers, the frame mimicking four of the five main senses of humanity — sight, touch, smell and hearing. Taste is unfortunately off the table, as is any sort of food or drink consumption, courtesy of not possessing a stomach nor means to digest human food into energy. Instead EMOM is powered by an embedded battery, in roughly the same location as the human heart, recharging electrical power courtesy of a cable connecting it to an external power source such as a household's wall socket; the frame's connection port resides on the lower back.

Normally you'd need to customise the robot for each AI inhabiting it, adjusting height, limb length, gender and so on. Instead you get to skip that, the frame mimicking the piloting AI instantly.

Unique Weapon — 400 CP

Games often have super-powerful weapons players can obtain by the end of the story, stuff which cleaves through enemies like a hot knife through butter and renders you all but invincible against anything except the final boss due to the sheer stat bonuses it provides. Occasionally they outright break game balance entirely, although in those cases they tend to be rewards for post-game bosses and more for bragging rights than anything else.

Lucky for you you've obtained one of those wondrous weapons, something far superior to everything else in its chosen category (this includes shields). The skills to use the weapon effectively don't come along, so if you have no idea how to use a sword you can still face defeat from a skilled opponent, but against most threats within SAO? You'd have to be trying to die to even get close to death against enemy NPC or players.

In reality this manifests as just an extremely sharp and durable weapon, able to cut through all but the toughest materials like a hot knife through butter. No other special abilities, those are reserved for game worlds, but on the upside you can freely import this into any game you play whether it's VR or not.

The Seed — 400 CP

You've come across something quite impressive here Jumper, the culmination of Akihiko Kayaba's work and something that can revolutionise the world if properly applied. The most basic and obvious use of this is as a development kit — a preset series of program packages and media resources that can be used for creating Virtual Reality worlds, as well as control the input and output of the five senses of players, provided they're wearing the NerveGear or a device based off it.

The second element contained within is the famed Cardinal System, an AI developed to manage the entire game world of Sword Art Online, balancing enemy encounters and patching bugs based off what the players encounter and do during play. Why, it can even provide mental care through the Mental Health Counseling Programs it has as part of its sub-system, helping to ensure players are happy and mentally healthy as they play through the game. Cardinal was also famed for creating content whole-cloth without any human input, scouring the internet to craft quests or enemies based off mythology; if you wanted to you could be a one-man game developer for something rivaling a AAA title in content and quality.

With study and effort, it's possible to replicate Cardinal and the mental health programs, crafting new top-down AI on the same level as Yui and Strea.

The Floating Castle of Aincrad — 600 CP

The setting of the infamous death game, the floating castle Aincrad is now yours in entirety. Except unlike the game version, this one's real.

Also unlike the game version this rendition comes free of players and NPCs, leaving the various towns and cities utterly unpopulated. Unless you count monsters, as those still exist, roaming the land and dungeons freely, now unbound from prior pathing restrictions and able to travel wherever they please within the confines of the castle. They're friendly towards you, but utterly hostile towards anyone else, attacking those you haven't given permission to enter the castle with all the force they can muster.

Potential invaders won't find it easy to bypass this either, as it's physically impossible to fly past the first floor if you haven't cleared it, the castle repelling those who attempt entry into higher floors as if you tried to fly straight into a wall.

The only way to progress higher is to fight monsters in the dungeons, ascending the castle one floor at a time with the defeat of a Boss Monster blocking the staircase to the next floor. Much like the players found, there's no easy way to ascend.

Until the conclusion of the death game you can't access this, but afterwards it can be imported into both digital worlds and reality as desired. If you used a toggle below to make it so the death game was something else, it takes on the appearance of a large lore-important location and dungeon in that instead, such as the world tree Yggdrasil in Alfheim Online.

Companions

The below options can be taken as many times as desired. In the case of AI or NPC companions, they receive a personal server or robotic body to inhabit, alongside being able to be imported into other virtual reality games.

Friend Request — 50 CP
Create or import a new companion in this world who you'll encounter and hit it off with shortly after arrival; their gender and age is up to you. They gain 600CP to spend and an origin of their choice, alongside the freebies associated with it.

Now select your race.

Personal Guild — 100CP
Import up to eight companions from your journey thus far, giving them a new form and identity within this world. They gain 600CP to spend and an origin of their choice, alongside the freebies associated with it.

Sleeping Knights — 100CP
Recruit up to eight canon characters from within this world to join you on your adventures. Fate shall give you a little nudge so you encounter and hit it off with whoever you've chosen, but the work of convincing them to come along remains with you. If you don't by jump's end, they don't follow when you leave. If they're fated to die before the events of the death game conclude, events conspire to result in them joining you within the game if they're not already within it.

The chosen companions receive the perkline most accurate to them upon the conclusion of the jump (for example, Kirito would receive the Beta perkline, while Asuna would get New Player).

Player Pet — 50 CP

MMOs often have player pets, a small NPC companion you can obtain in a variety of methods which provides some minor boost to a gameplay element, such as healing you or attacking foes. Sword Art Online is no exception in this regard, although the exact mechanics of how remained something of a mystery to much of the playerbase, more concerned with clearing floors so as to escape the game than exploring the depths of the non-combat related system mechanics.

You seem to have been one of the lucky few who stumbled across it anyway, Jumper, having befriended a monster NPC and made it into your pet. The exact mechanics of how are up to you, dependant on what form the death game takes, but in Sword Art Online this was accomplished by feeding the monster food it liked, resulting in it turning friendly and following you about from then on.

This ally possesses a rudimentary AI granting it intelligence on-par with a cat or dog, as well as a special ability unique to its species — the feathered dragon can heal you using magic, for example, while a creature large enough to ride could provide faster movement about the land like the Chocobo of Final Fantasy. As long as it fits the game's aesthetic the creature can be anything you imagine; no robotic drones in a fantasy game, for example.

Upon the conclusion of the death game they're uploaded to your personal NerveGear, able to be downloaded once more into a personal server or robotic body you've built for them to live in, alongside imported into other virtual reality games as the closest thing possible to a player pet NPC.

Drawbacks:

A Different World — 0 CP

Canon SAO has been analyzed and found wanting by a number of people on the game mechanics front, among other areas, but there's no need for you to put up with what deficiencies some folk feel it has. By taking this you can define the mechanics behind the death game VRMMO to your liking, by changing up what sort of world and story Kayaba was inspired by in his youth and went on to create a game in the image of. Not to mention how the Death Game plays out — maybe everyone is an AI clone of the original in your rendition, running at a 500x time-lapse and set to upload back to the original upon player death?

Selecting another VRMMO in the series such as Alfheim Online or Gun Gale Online is totally possible, or you can feel free to create your own, inspired by other works of fiction or your own imagination. Future digital worlds shown in the setting can be changed under the same logic.

This can also be taken to go to other media depictions of the series beyond the original light novels, such as the videogame timeline, SAO Progressive or a particular fan-fiction depiction of the setting.

A Different Game — 0 CP

Or maybe you don't want to play SAO in the first place? Maybe you'd prefer to arrive later in the timeline, without needing to clear a videogame before you stop being a coma patient? By taking this you can choose when during the events of the media you appear, whether that's the beginning of the ALO arc, right before GGO's Battle of Bullets or seconds after Kirito is inserted into Underworld at the start of the Alicization arc.

You can't use this to appear earlier than when the Death Game begins, however, nor opt out of being a participant if you arrive within its canon timeframe.

A Different Life — 0 CP

Individuals are shaped by their life experiences, the events and people around them influencing a growing child into a particular mindset or personality. Kazuto discovered he was adopted via computer records at age 10, distancing himself from his cousin Sugaha unintentionally from then on. Shino lost her father as a baby and accidentally killed someone in a bank robbery gone wrong at the tender age of 11, triggering both a fear of guns in the young girl and her mother becoming traumatised to the point she was unable to look after her. Asuna was almost forced into an arranged marriage during a coma, to the man who was holding her mind captive in the first place.

But what if something was different? If so desired, you can replace one of the canon characters, their personality and history altering to match your purchases here — perhaps Asuna was an avid gamer and VR enthusiast, rather than someone utterly unfamiliar with videogames in general?

Early Logout — 0 CP
Instead of staying for the entire decade within this world, you can choose to move on after the surviving players are logged out of the death game. Canonically this is roughly two years into your stay, but who knows, you might be able to make it happen sooner…?

You can't use this coupled with A Different Game to enter right before everyone's logged out of the death game, incidentally. If you choose to start during the death game, you're there for the entire thing

Abhorrent Admirer — 100 CP
I don't know whether it's your looks, your personality, your skill at playing the game or something else entirely, but people have a habit of admiring you Jumper. Unfortunately this isn't just the harmless person who'd cheer for their idols at a concert with great fervor, although you have those types too. Stalkers and molesters seem to accost you with unpleasant regularity during your time here, with the odd murderer or rapist popping up rarely, and they all tend to latch onto you as the object of their attention.

Mistaken Gender — 100 CP
If you're particularly fussy about your looks you might find this frustrating, Jumper. See, through some quirk of genetics you look remarkably similar to someone of the opposing gender, to the point you could easily pass as them in the right clothing. This even extends to virtual reality, your brain just happening to 'read' as the opposing gender to any devices you use to immerse yourself within the world.

Sexually Suggestive — 100 CP
You've got a bit of a problem when it comes to public nudity or exposure, Jumper. Your actions frequently, no matter what they are, end up dissolving into something sexually suggestive or revealing, such as opening the door in your underwear by accident or having your clothing dissolved by slime mobs to the point you're barely hiding your dignity with the few scraps of cloth remaining. God help you if you encounter a tentacle monster.

This still applies in reality, just without the accidental exposure being caused by monsters half the time. Instead it might be a sudden downpour soaking you to the point your shirt turns transparent, or branches almost pulling your pants off as you pass by a tree.

Crime Prevention Code — 100 CP
The Crime Prevention Code is a piece of software meant to prevent unwanted actions from occurring between players, such as molestation. And in your case the blasted thing seems to be set off on a hair trigger. Anything more intimate than a handshake shall result in a virtual window popping up, proclaiming you in the wrong and teleporting you to a jail cell a moment later, to spend your time stewing powerlessly until the next day.

The sole advantage is that it'll only apply during your time in the death game, as well as any other VRMMO with a similar function. Not that that's much of one.

"Beater" — 100 CP
You've got a bit of a reputation, Jumper, one that you'll be unable to shake throughout your time here.

Via either misinterpreted actions or outright doing so, people have gained the impression you're cheating or otherwise taking advantage of your fellow players. Hoarding knowledge of the best leveling spots, rare items as quest rewards or just not helping others in need when they needed it most — such as new players at the beginning of the death game.

People are going to be generally leery of you in virtual worlds, distrustful and reluctant to provide aid in any form. Forming a party or doing team-based activities isn't impossible, and you can shift this view around amongst the playerbase or individuals, but it's going to be an uphill climb all the way — one you'll need to repeat with every new game you join.

Hospitalised — 100/200 CP
You're sick, Jumper, and not with something mild like the common cold. Whatever disease or injury you possess has left you crippled, unable to move about effectively under your own power or leave the confines of a hospital, with prognosis being a cure is decades off — if it's curable at all. This isn't something life-threatening, thankfully, but it is a major disability and disruption to having an ordinary life, and the only way you'll ever experience the normal range of motion and body most humans possess is in virtual environments.

For an extra 100CP the above illness just got a whole lot worse. Instead of just being unable to

move under your own power, or confined to a bed, you're actively dying from something. Might be cancer, might be leukemia, whatever you've got happens to cut your lifespan dramatically and results in your body being unable to perform even the weakest of tasks effectively. Without some revolutionary new medical technique or cure, the doctors say you'll be dead within five years.

Cannot be taken by Artificial Intelligence, nor those who took Early Logout.

Amnesia — 200 CP
Nothing remains of your life before now, only brief snatches of memory or garbled voices, the final remnants of your journey thus far. Anything from before this jump is nothing but a void, only your

background memories remaining to guide and shape your actions here. Companions are unaffected, but as far as you're now concerned they're total strangers — can you even get along any more, lacking the shared experiences which brought you together?

Wears off at the conclusion of the jump.

Orange Player — 200 CP
In games not designed around the players fighting one another, unwanted attacks are usually halted in some manner, either by the game outright preventing you from attacking them without the other player having toggled a 'Player vs Player' switch in their options menu or by more social means such as increasing levels of punishment for unwanted player assault. Sword Art Online went the second route, flagging players who assaulted others with an orange icon which prevents you from entering towns without being attacked by NPCs within, let alone buying anything from the stores there.

Normally this fades away within a few hours for the first three offences and with the completion of a quest for the fourth, but in the case of the fifth you're stuck with it. Somehow, either through a genuine crime against other players or a glitch, you've been stricken with the permanent version of this cursor colour and all the downsides attached to it. Expect players to be wary to trust you, regarding you as a criminal and murderer, as the most common reason for an orange cursor during the death game happens to be the latter.

In reality this manifests as people looking upon you with suspicion, always assuming you're related to or the cause of any criminal activity in the area, while other VRMMOs have you stuck with the same indicator of being a criminal; they won't regard you as an actual killer there, however.

Out in the Boonies — 200 CP
Your ping sucks. Your ping sucks *bad*, mainly due to you living in a remote rural area with crappy infrastructure as far as internet cabling goes. Expect to experience lag pretty often during gameplay, especially when something fast-paced and high-octane is going on — like boss battles, or facing a group of mobs all at the same time. Pray it doesn't happen during a teleport, lest you find yourself hundreds of feet in midair or halfway through a wall.

Past Trauma — 200/300 CP

You've had something of a rough past, Jumper. Before the jump began, in your childhood, you experienced an event which left lasting trauma on you, to the point you become paralyzed with fear upon encountering something which reminds you of it in reality. A bank robbery turned deadly from armed gunmen would leave you a shivering wreck at the sight of firearms, for example.

For an extra 100CP this trauma also comes with social stigma, people viewing you poorly due to

actions taken during the event which scarred you. Following on from the previous example perhaps you wrestled a gun away from a bank robber, accidentally discharging it into his chest in the process, earning the reputation of a killer amongst the local populace. Regardless of how the scenario played out, people tend to distrust you because of it, leading to social isolation and no small amount of bullying by those happy to take advantage of your fears.

This fear is significantly lessened within virtual reality, for some reason, allowing you to slowly work through it via exposing yourself to the objects and using them in a way which isn't a repeat of your trauma. Guns could be used within a sci-fi setting against monsters just fine, for example, but fighting other players would leave you just as paralyzed with fear as if you were wielding that gun in reality. Support from friends and loved ones will also quicken your recovery time, to the point where reminders of your fear might do nothing in just a year or two with their aid.

No Respawns — 300 CP

The threat of dying in-game is all too real for you Jumper, as by taking this all prior powers, abilities and perks are sealed for the duration of Kayaba's Death Game; until the game is cleared you're nothing but an ordinary human like everyone else, barring whatever perks you may have bought here.

Death in-game will kill you in reality, as any powers or functions you may have which would render you immune to the helmet killing you no longer function.

You're forbidden from taking this if A Different World prevents you from truly dying in reality when your in-game avatar undergoes death, and A Different Game for the obvious fact that only Sword Art Online was a death game.

Jump Conclusion

Another decade has come and gone, alongside your time in this world. Whether you adventured amongst the protagonists, forged your own path or something entirely different, now is the time to choose:

Stay Here
This place isn't so bad, full of exciting virtual worlds to explore and amazing technological discoveries. Who knows, you might even be able to add to them a bit?

Move On
The next adventure calls, not one of these fake virtual worlds, but something far off in the horizon. An entire new world awaits, full of people and places never before experienced.

Go Home
Home is where the heart is, as the saying goes, and while this world likely resembles your own I can see why you'd want to hang up your hat, as it were.

Changelog
V1.0 — jump completed
V1.1 — Added images to all the perks, items and most of the drawbacks
V1.2 — Added a few more images, changed formatting on some elements
V1.3 — Begun Artificial Intelligence origin and respective perk/item tree
V1.4 — Finished Artificial Intelligence perks and added a new item
V1.5 — Removed AI companion, now that the Artificial Intelligence origin allows you to be one yourself.
V2.0 — Finished adding images to the new drawbacks and perks
V2.1 — Corrected some formatting issues and added clarification for AI age and gender
V2.2 — Update EMOM to be able to perfectly mimic a human appearance, as well as fix a few spelling error
V2.3 — Add 'A Different Life' drawback, change how discounts work for items

Created by Mizu, with help from the Spacebattles and Questionable Questing Jumpchain Communities.