

# Rhynst's General Newbie Guide v1.0

From AAwiki

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## Contents

- 1 Introduction
- 2 The Mechanics
  - 2.1 Stats
    - 2.1.1 Strength
    - 2.1.2 Dexterity
    - 2.1.3 Constitution
    - 2.1.4 Intelligence and Wisdom
  - 2.2 Skills
    - 2.2.1 Axe
    - 2.2.2 Club
    - 2.2.3 Curved Blade
    - 2.2.4 Exotic
    - 2.2.5 Flail
    - 2.2.6 Knife
    - 2.2.7 Longsword
    - 2.2.8 Polearm
    - 2.2.9 Rapier
    - 2.2.10 Shortsword
    - 2.2.11 Spear
    - 2.2.12 Staff
    - 2.2.13 Two Handed Axe
    - 2.2.14 Two Handed Sword
    - 2.2.15 Unarmed
    - 2.2.16 Marksmanship
    - 2.2.17 Two Weapon
  - 2.3 Abilities
    - 2.3.1 Combat Related Abilities
    - 2.3.2 Semi Useful Abilities
    - 2.3.3 'Fun' Abilities
  - 2.4 Defend, Aim and Attack
    - 2.4.1 Dodge
      - 2.4.1.1 The opponent's dexterity
      - 2.4.1.2 Your own dexterity
      - 2.4.1.3 Your own weight
    - 2.4.2 None
    - 2.4.3 Parry and Riposte
    - 2.4.4 Block
    - 2.4.5 Berserk
  - 2.5 The Guilds
    - 2.5.1 The Knights of Drin
    - 2.5.2 The Courts of Chaos
    - 2.5.3 The Monks of Antana
    - 2.5.4 The Scythe
    - 2.5.5 The Eldar
    - 2.5.6 The Black Bear
    - 2.5.7 The Raven
    - 2.5.8 The Snowfolk
- 3 The Classes
  - 3.1 Cleric
    - 3.1.1 Class Abilities
    - 3.1.2 Defensive abilities
    - 3.1.3 Offensive abilities
    - 3.1.4 Skills
    - 3.1.5 Races
    - 3.1.6 Levelling your first Cleric
    - 3.1.7 Playing a Cleric
    - 3.1.8 Is a Cleric for you?
  - 3.2 Fighter
    - 3.2.1 Class Abilities - General
    - 3.2.2 Offensive Abilities
    - 3.2.3 Defensive Abilities

- 3.2.4 Skills
- 3.2.5 Races
- 3.2.6 Levelling Your First Fighter
- 3.2.7 Playing a Fighter
- 3.2.8 Is a Fighter for you?
- 3.3 Mage
  - 3.3.1 Class Abilities
    - 3.3.1.1 Spells: Magic (General)
    - 3.3.1.2 Spells: Alteration
    - 3.3.1.3 Spells: Invocation
    - 3.3.1.4 Spells: Drowgar
    - 3.3.1.5 Spells: Conjunction
  - 3.3.2 Offensive Abilities
  - 3.3.3 Defensive Abilities
  - 3.3.4 Skills
  - 3.3.5 Races
  - 3.3.6 Levelling your first Mage
  - 3.3.7 Playing a Mage
  - 3.3.8 Is a mage for you?
- 3.4 Necromancer
  - 3.4.1 Class Abilities - General
  - 3.4.2 Offensive Abilities
  - 3.4.3 Defensive Abilities
  - 3.4.4 Skills
  - 3.4.5 Races
  - 3.4.6 Levelling Your First Necromancer
  - 3.4.7 Playing a Necromancer
  - 3.4.8 Is a necromancer for you?
- 3.5 Paladin
  - 3.5.1 Class Abilities - General
  - 3.5.2 Offensive Abilities
  - 3.5.3 Defensive Abilities
  - 3.5.4 Skills
  - 3.5.5 Races
  - 3.5.6 Levelling your first Paladin
  - 3.5.7 Playing a Paladin
  - 3.5.8 Is a Paladin for you?
- 3.6 Ranger
  - 3.6.1 Class Abilities - General
  - 3.6.2 Offensive Abilities
  - 3.6.3 Defensive Abilities
  - 3.6.4 Races
  - 3.6.5 Levelling your first Ranger
  - 3.6.6 Playing a Ranger
  - 3.6.7 Is a ranger for you?
- 3.7 The class that doesn't exist
  - 3.7.1 Class Abilities - General
  - 3.7.2 Class Abilities - Offensive
  - 3.7.3 Class Abilities - Defensive
  - 3.7.4 Skills
  - 3.7.5 Races
  - 3.7.6 Levelling your first Freedom Fighter
  - 3.7.7 Playing a non-entity
  - 3.7.8 Is a non-entity for you?
- 3.8 Shapeshifters
  - 3.8.1 Class Abilities - General
  - 3.8.2 Class Abilities - Offensive
  - 3.8.3 Class Abilities - Defensive
  - 3.8.4 Skills
  - 3.8.5 Races
  - 3.8.6 Levelling your first Shapeshifter
  - 3.8.7 Playing a shapeshifter
  - 3.8.8 Is a shapeshifter for you?
- 4 Miscellaneous
  - 4.1 Equipment
    - 4.1.1 Containers
    - 4.1.2 Weapons
    - 4.1.3 Armour
      - 4.1.3.1 Jewellery
      - 4.1.3.2 Helmets
      - 4.1.3.3 Heavy Body
      - 4.1.3.4 Light Body

- 4.1.3.5 Hands and Feet
- 4.1.3.6 Neck
- 4.1.3.7 Shields
- 4.1.3.8 Other

## Introduction

Ancient Anguish (AA) allows us to all create multiple characters. I believe it is an essential part of enjoying and learning more about the game to at least try out every class. AA boasts five races and eight classes (9 including adventurers), giving a choice of 40 unique combinations. If you're getting a little bored of your current character or just want to play the game through a completely different slant, this will guide you on your way to finding the combination that you'll enjoy creating and playing the most.

This guide will walk you through some basics generic to all classes first. I'll explain the mechanics of the stats, skills and abilities systems – it's hard to analyse the classes without first knowing what each attribute does and how they compare to each other. A brief discussion of the guilds in the game will provide a brief interlude, before a detailed look at every class follows – I'll discuss what each class is good at, what races are good for each class, and fun things unique to certain combinations. Finally miscellaneous afterthoughts will round out the guide, and I'll add other things into that section later when I figure out what else needs explanation.

## The Mechanics

### Stats

AA has a fairly simple system of stats. We all know that they are Strength (Str), Dexterity (Dex), Constitution (Con), Intelligence (Int) and Wisdom (Wis). Not any one stat is completely useless for any class, but some are just a lot more useful than others for certain characters. I'll give a much better explanation of what each one does than the in-game help files.

#### Strength

Strength is generally speaking needed for any character. It determines a few essential things:

- Almost all weapons have a minimum strength requirement.
- How much damage you deal upon a successful hit.
- Strength determines how much you can lug around in your inventory.
- Success for smashing doors, chests, etc (in conjunction with the amount of weight you're carrying in the inventory).
- Indirectly affects how quickly you gain weapon skills – it's a widely held belief that harder hits gain you skills faster than softer hits.

As you see, it's a stat for grunts. Almost all characters would rely upon physical damage as a substantial source of their damage, and strength is a huge part of the equation for the physical damage you will deal out. Another thing to note is that many of the high end weapons in the game require 16 strength – a character with a maximum strength less than that would miss out on many fun weapons.

Notable characters who don't need so much strength are non-alteration mages, necromancers and shapeshifter drakons. They deal the majority of their damage with skills that are unrelated to strength.

#### Dexterity

Dexterity is another skill useful for every class. It affects:

- How much your physical attacks hit their mark, and how often you get hit back
- How well you dodge
- How often some mage spells hit, notably acid arrow, flame dart, magic missile, fireball and venom spit
- The success rate of a ranger's strike ability
- Accuracy with various shapeshifter abilities (though not enough experience with those to be 100% sure about this).
- Accuracy with a bow, and thrown weapons
- Dodging various traps and avoiding falling off bridges around the MUD.
- Some weapons (rare) have a minimum dexterity requirement.
- Also indirectly affects skilling rate – the more you hit, the faster you'll skill. This is especially noticeable at low dexterity, when raising things like two handed axe, two handed sword, etc.
- Hypothetically, if thieves existed, more dextrous ones would hypothetically steal better, and more dextrous characters will be harder to steal from

Dexterity is great, for every point of dexterity, you hit more often and get hit less. Or conversely, if what you're hitting loses a point of dexterity then the same benefits apply. I highly recommend carrying around a boomerang for all characters – the benefits from having just one more point of dexterity over the opponent are very noticeable.

#### Constitution

Constitution is a no brainer, it gives you more hit points. It:

- Gives you 8 hit points for every point of constitution.
- Speeds up (slightly) your natural hit point regeneration rate.
- Determines how much you can drink and eat.
- Determines how vulnerable you are to poison.

The more constitution you have, the harder you are to kill, and the more you can eat and drink – adding up to how good you are at taking damage. Anybody who plans to do a lot of tanking would need a character that has 15 or more constitution. With that being said, constitution isn't quite as important as strength and dexterity for a fighting character, especially if you're just going to bash in parties a lot.

## Intelligence and Wisdom

Intelligence and Wisdom are similar in some ways, and different in many others. I'll list what they have in common first:

- The higher of the two determines your spell points pool. As with constitution, it's 8 hit points per stat.
- They both have an effect on the rate your weapon skills go up, especially noticeable when your skills are high and don't go up very often any more.
- The higher of the two determines your spell point regeneration rate (again, almost unnoticeable).
- Necromancers' ritual lists are determined by the sum of their intelligence and wisdom – both stats are equally important to them.
- The intelligence + wisdom sum also determines the ability of lower level characters' ability to tell how injured something is – that is, while a smart cookie can see the difference between 'slightly hurt' and 'seriously wounded', all a new character would see is 'battered'.
- Some (rare) weapons have a minimum intelligence + wisdom requirement.

Attributes unique to Intelligence:

- This is a very important attribute for mages, almost all of their spells' effectiveness depends on the value of their intelligence.
- Shapeshifter Drakons also appear to do more damage with more intelligence.
- It plays a small part in enhancing a paladin's smite and harm damage.
- It plays a part in the accuracy of a fighter's evaluations of equipment.
- Hypothetically, if thieves existed, intelligence helps you notice them.
- Hypothetically again, there are unconfirmed rumours that smarter hypothetical thieves would steal better.

Attributes unique to Wisdom:

- Wisdom is very important to clerics – it determines the success rate of their prayers, their effectiveness, and what prayers they have access to in the first place.
- For rangers with bonded wolves, wisdom determines the maximum size it grows to.
- For rangers who tame their wolves wild, wisdom determines the max size of the wild wolf they can attempt to attempt.
- For paladins, quite a factor in their damage from their spells.
- For mages, rumoured to affect the effectiveness of the Power Word: Heal and Power Word: Harm spells.

## Skills

AA operates under a fairly straightforward skills system. Every single skill is a weapon skill, determining how good you are with that class of weapons. The amount of skill you have in a particular type of weapon determines how well you can wield various weapons – that is, a big bad two handed axe requires at least 70 skills in it for you to hit consistently with it. Your class is the largest influence on how fast you will skill with various weapon categories – raising marksmanship with a ranger is a breeze, yet a paladin can't even use thrown weapons or bows.

Another thing that class affects when it comes to skills is where your skill caps out at, for your level. For example, a level 3 fighter can only get his club skill to 20, no higher. For every single character, the skill cap at best is 5 times the character level, plus 5 (so for a level 13 character,  $5 \times 13 + 5 = 70$ ). However for many non-fighters, the cap is a bit lower (eg, a mage's initial staff skill cap seems to be  $4 \times \text{level} + 4$ ) – if you're playing a very low level character and your skills aren't going up, despite Zhou's constant assistance, then this is probably why. It'd appear that the skill cap is raised to 100 once you hit level 19 – however it's quite unlikely for non-fighters to hit the skill-caps past the first 5 or 6 levels, unless they deliberately delay levelling.

I'll discuss every one of the 17 weapon skills, their general pros and cons and 'weapon progressions' I like to use for them, and also the high end choices for each. I'll list what classes raise the various skills fastest, it'll be assumed that fighters raise every one fast. Marksmanship, Two Weapon and Unarmed will be treated separately as they're quite unique to the other 14.

### Axe

- Rating: D
- Attack Type: Chop, Pierce for picks and stalactites
- Fast for: Ranger
- Viable for: Cleric, Paladin

Uniques: None

- Pros: Common, easy to get, dwarven mining pick is good to dual wield
- Cons: Low damage, nothing exceptional

High End Choices: The two above are the only high end choices – stalactites are very heavy but seem to hit marginally harder than the picks.

Skill progression:

- 0 – 15 'A pickaxe' from Nemaset the dwarf in the park (use attack crush for this), or a small worthless pick from the scythe camp.
- 15-30 Bigbladed axe from Ravel Village.
- 30-45 Sharp Axe from Guardian of underground forest.
- 30-100 Stalactite from Star Caverns.
- 60-100 Dwarven Mining Pick from Dwarven miner.

### Club

- Rating: A+

- Attack Type: Crush
- Fast for: Cleric
- Reasonably fast for: Non entities, Shapeshifter, Paladin, Ranger

Uniques: Krakadoom, Stone Smasher Maul, Onyx, Destructor, Hammer of Gralain

- Pros: Common, big damage
- Cons: Heavy, bad parry

High Ends: The hjem is very popular, but inferior to the other high clubs. Krakadoom is still probably the most damaging weapon in the game. A word of warning about the Stone Smasher Maul – when you first wield it, it'll look great - +1 strength and giving you bone crushing messages all the time: unfortunately, those messages aren't real bonecrushes and only do about 8 damage. The Destructor is only really good for dwarves.

Skill Progression:

- 0-20 Fishing poles from Salty John, 'Hammer' from random hobbits in Hobbitat, frying pans.
- 20-30 Gnarled Club from Delair.
- 30-60 For clerics: mace of crushing from Drow Caverns. For everyone else, long-hafted sledgehammer from underground forest, or Warclub from Anasazi.
- 60-100 Heavy Jewel Encrusted Mace (hjem) from Orc Mountain.
- 70-100 Huge Warhammer or Krakadoom from Frost Giant Steading, Destructor (for dwarves) from Blor's Hideout. Stone Smasher Maul from Massive Stone Giant.

## Curved Blade

- Rating: B-
- Attack Type: Slash
- Fast for: Non Entities
- Viable for: Ranger, Paladin

Uniques: Sword of Sethic

- Pros: Decent mix of damage and parry and lightness, dual wields well
- Cons: Rare, mediocre damage

High End Choices: The katana has pretty nice parry, and the sabre does reasonable damage, but neither are exceptional. I haven't played around with the only unique – the Blade of Sethic, from another quest area. It is two-handed and from all reports nothing special.

Skill Progression:

- 0-20 Snickersnee from orc minions.
- 20-30 Shiny Scimitar from nomads area down south.
- 30-50 Long Katana from underground forest.
- 50-100 Katana from Zhammar.
- 60-100 Orcish Sabre from Delair or Drakhyra.

## Exotic

- Rating: A
- Attack Type: Differs. Elemental orbs good with everything.
- Fast for: Ranger
- Viable for: Paladin, Cleric

Uniques: None

- Pros: Nowadays very common, very good to dual wield, easy to hit with, extra damage against certain NPC's
- Cons: No high-end single wielding choice

High End Choices: The orbs are the only choice for the high end. They come in two flavours – fire and cold, and both ignore enemy armour when determining damage dealt and chance to hit. Fire orbs do exceptionally good damage against frost giants, while cold orbs do extra damage to some select NPC's around the game. The armour-piercing property make these extremely good off-hand weapons when raising another skill, the Two-Weapon skill.

Skill Progression:

- 0-20 Weeding hook from Nepeth.
- 20-30 Dual wielded weeding hooks.
- 30-100 Elemental orbs, then dual wielding elemental orbs.

## Flail

- Rating: B
- Attack Type: Crush
- Fast for: Cleric
- Viable for: Paladin.

**Uniques: Morning Star**

- Pros: Decent damage, high-end ones easy to get
- Cons: Heavy, uncommon

High End Choices: Morning star gets a very nice bonus when hitting humans, and does reasonable damage anyway. The vicious looking flail is just your average high end non unique.

**Skill Progression:**

- 0-20 Iron Shackles from Drow Caverns.
- 20-30 Light Flail from Delair.
- 30-50 Heavy Morningstar from underground forest.
- 40-70 Ball and chain from Ravel.
- 60-100 Vicious looking flail from Scythe camp
- 70-100 Morning Star from Zhammar.

**Knife**

- Rating: D
- Attack Type: Pierce
- Fast for: Ranger, Paladin, Non Entities
- Viable for: Mage, Necromancer, Shapeshifter, Cleric

**Uniques: Shadowspawn, Gemmed Rondel Dagger**

- Pros: Extremely common, light, easy to dual with, raises very quickly
- Cons: Very little damage

High End Choices: The nailfile is heavy and not easy to get. Its damage isn't exceptional, but blows all the other knives out of the water. Stone daggers are incredibly good against the stone golems, but fairly useless apart from that. The Main Gauche doesn't do very good damage but it has very nice parry.

**Skill Progression:**

- 0-20 Rusty knife from newbie ship, or anything you like. It all raises very fast anyway.
- 20-40 Elven dagger, Sai, Whittling knife, anything around that level. Rondel dagger and Gemmed Rondel Dagger are pretty good here also.
- 40-100 Gigantic Nailfile from Zhammar.
- 60-100 Stone Dagger from Tharanack, Main Gauche from flaw.

**Longsword**

- Rating: A+
- Attack Type: Slash
- Fast for: Paladin, Ranger
- Viable for: Non entities, Cleric

**Uniques: Starblade, Bloodred, Pendragon, Evil Blacksword, Diablo, Sword of Virgis**

- Pros: Extremely versatile, fairly common, very good balance of parry, weight and damage
- Cons: A little less damage than the other A+ weapon classes, hard to dual

High End Choices: There is a wealth of choices at the high end. Starblade is very good for a tank, especially a non entity – high parry and +20 to all your resistances, and also a free light source. Exquisite rune swords are very common, do solid damage and parry reasonably well, fine broadswords sacrifice some of this damage for better parrying. Pendragon has a bonus for human wielders and the good aligned, and is only good for those. Outstanding sword is one of the most damaging non-uniques in the game, but comes with mediocre parry and is very heavy. Diablo does nice damage and has very nice parry, but seems to be way slower than usual weapons for raising your skills. The Sword of Virgis isn't easy to get, does average damage, but does come with a nice +15 Longsword skill.

**Skill Progression:**

- 0-40 Dark Longsword from Drow Caverns.
- 30-40 Golden Sword from Fub's.
- 40-100 Diablo from Proud Knight.
- 40-60 'A longsword' from all over the place, silver longsword from Neville.
- 50-70 Rune sword from Zhammar and Vorpall Blade from the lich.
- 70-100 Exquisite rune sword from Burnham and Proud Knight, Starblade from Star Caverns, Pendragon from Nepeth, fine broadsword from Scythe camp, Sword of Virgis from Amazons.
- 80-100 Outstanding sword from Brunswick.

**Polearm**

- Rating: B+
- Attack Type: Slash, Chop for Poleaxe
- Fast for: Paladin
- Viable for: Ranger, Cleric

Uniques: Awesome Scythe, Orcish Poleaxe

- Pros: Solid damage
- Cons: Rare, hard to dual wield

High End Choices: The poleaxe is one-handed, while the scythes require both hands. They all do pretty good damage.

Skill Progression:

- 0-30 Hoe from paladin estates.
- 30-50 Halberd from Stronghold.
- 50-60 Huge Halberd from Scythe camp.
- 60-75 Orcish Poleaxe from Delair, decent scythe from Scythe camp.
- 70-100 Awesome scythe from Scythe camp, Sharp Poleaxe from retreat.

## Rapier

- Rating: A-
- Attack Type: Pierce
- Fast for: non entities
- Viable for: Paladin

Uniques: Sword of Gilian, Crystal Blade

- Pros: Very good at disarming and parrying, powerful uniques for tanks, pretty common, very good to dual wield
- Cons: Lower damage than other A category weapons

High End Choices: All three high end choices have very good parrying abilities, with +2 dexterity from crystal blade and +2 constitution from Sword of Gilian. They're very good for dual wielding or tanking with as a non entity.

Skill Progression:

- 0-10 Stick from Tantallon sewers.
- 10-20 Turquoise dart from Ravel.
- 20-30 Sewing needle from Andeli.
- 30-50 Thin rapier from Neville.
- 50-60 Silver rapier from elven tombs.
- 60-70 Very fine rapier from Nepeth
- 70-100 Jeweled Dwarven Rapier and Sword of Gilian from Tharanack, Crystal Blade from Zhammar

## Shortsword

- Rating: C
- Attack Type: Pierce or Slash, roughly equivalent
- Fast for: Ranger, Paladin, Non Entities
- Viable for: Cleric, Mage, Necromancer, Shapeshifter

Uniques: Blade of Losoth, Ebonblade

- Pros: Very common, decent to dual with, raises quickly
- Cons: Low damage, nothing exciting whatsoever

High End Choices: The wolfblade is really the only high end choice. You can insert a gem into it, which gives it a little extra damage and makes it a free light source. It has reasonable parry, does reasonable damage, but is nothing exciting.

Skill Progression:

- 0-20 Wooden sword from Nepeth, Slim sword from fairy ring.
- 20-40 Worn sword from Fort Vagn, Blade of Losoth from Drow Caverns.
- 40-70 Plain sword from Fort Vagn, Quality Shortsword from Marika.
- 70-100 Wolfblade from Start Caverns, or if dual wielding Wakizashi from Zhammar or Blackened Gladius from Knight's Retreat.

## Spear

- Rating: C+
- Attack Type: Pierce
- Fast for: Shapeshifter, Ranger, Paladin
- Viable for:

Uniques: None

- Pros: Decent damage
- Cons: High end ones are rare, and in general they're mediocre

High End Choices: Golden Trident is your only choice, but at least it does pretty good damage.

Skill Progression:

- 0-20 Well used hay fork from Nepeth.
- 20-50 Quaker Trident from Star Caverns.
- 50-70 Marlinespike from Lighthouse, Diamond spear from Monolith.
- 70-100 Golden Trident from Amazons.

## Staff

- Rating: B+
- Attack Type: Crush
- Fast for: Cleric, Ranger
- Viable for: Mage, Necromancer, Shapeshifter, Non Entities, Paladin

Uniques: Glimmer, Staff of Azakath, Glimmer, Oaken Staff

- Pros: Common, fairly versatile
- Cons: Damage somewhat lacking

High End Choices: For mages still learning spells, Glimmer is the single best item in the game. Azakath and Tetsubo are also good for those mages and necromancers with the skills and strength for them. Carved staff and white iron stick are decent when you can't find those uniques. Tetsubo is the only real choice for fighter-types, but it does pretty good damage.

Skill Progression:

- 0-15 Crooked staff from Belob.
- 0-100 Glimmer from Alton's Caverns (for mages).
- 15-30 Old staff from Drow Caverns.
- 30-50 Snake staff from Drakhyra.
- 40-60 Pine staff from Academy, Elven Quarterstaff from Elven Defence Forces.
- 50-70 White iron stick from Ravel.
- 60-100 Staff of Azakath from Mount Kresh, Tetsubo from Zhammar, Carved Staff from lizard village.

## Two Handed Axe

- Rating: A
- Attack Type: Chop
- Fast for:
- Viable for: Ranger

Uniques: Great Mithril Axe, Rakar

- Pros: Reasonably common high ends, very nice damage, best damaging non-unique in the game
- Cons: Slow to raise, especially at low skills, heavy.

High End Choices: Crescent does very good damage, as does Mighty Battleaxe. The two uniques are roughly the same as these two. The top 4 axes are all roughly the same.

Skill Progression:

- 0-40 Bronze Axe from Ilderia.
- 40-60 Woodsman's Axe from Music Man's Manor.
- 60-80 Wicked Half Moon Bladed Axe from Carcera.
- 70-100 Mighty Battleaxe from Chaos Tower, Crescent and Rakar from Frost Giant Temple, Great Mithril Axe from underground zombie area.

## Two Handed Sword

- Rating: A-
- Attack Type: Slash
- Fast for:
- Viable for: Paladin, Ranger, Non Entities

Uniques: Elvenheart, Powersword

- Pros: High damage, reasonable parrying
- Cons: Heavy, rare, slow to skill, especially at the start

High End Choices: Elves and half-elves obviously should wield Elvenheart – making a puny character one of the highest physical damage dealing. Shadow sword does exceptionally good damage, and Powersword isn't much worse.

Skill Progression:

- 0-40 Sword of Frost or Stone-Cutter sword from Giant's conference.
- 40-60 Large Sword from Frost Giants' Steading.
- 60-100 Shadow Sword from Razar, Elvenheart from Fort Vaughn, Powersword from Asvyan's Domain.



## Unarmed

- Rating: E
- Attack Type: Crush. Some Shapeshifter forms, like cats, have slash as marginally superior
- Fast for: Shapeshifter, Ranger, Non Entities, Paladin
- Viable for: Mage, Necromancer, Cleric

Uniques: Brass Knuckles, Slap Gloves, Reflective Bracers

- Pros: Um...it's free....and at least you do some damage whenever you forget to wield your weapon
- Cons: It does even less damage than knife, if that were possible

High End Choices: ...as if

Skill Progression:

0-100 What do you think?

Unarmed is unique in that there's only two ways you can raise this skill – hitting stuff unarmed with it, or wielding something in the off-hand, to be attacking with a fist with your primary and something else in the secondary. The 3 uniques give you various stat boosts – but even with those your damage is quite low. There's simply no reason to raise this except boredom, or if you're a shapeshifter. Related intricately to unarmed is the brawl 'skill'. You gain these by training with Trough in Tantallon, for a small fee. You must wait increasing amounts of time in between each lesson, with 10 lessons in total. Higher brawl skill also makes your unarmed damage much better.

## Marksmanship

- Rating: A
- Attack Type: N/A
- Fast for: Ranger, Non Entities
- Viable for: Everyone else but paladins

Uniques: Crossbow, Silver Longbow

- Pros: Can be used concurrently with other weapons, extremely high damage, useful for everybody
- Cons: Very heavy to carry around, some NPC's really dislike having things thrown at them

High End Choices: Varied, read below

Skill Progression:

- 0-20 Catty from Willim. You can only get this at level 5 or below, so if you plan on getting a head start on marksmanship, get your hands on one before you hit level 6.
- 20-100 Crossbow from Hermit. The only other 'pure' marksmanship weapon in the game.

Marksmanship isn't like normal skills, in that there's only 2 weapons that you actually 'hit' with to get skills with – the catty and the unique Crossbow. Otherwise, you get skills in it by throwing various thrown weapons, or by using a normal bow. These other options allow you to get skills in Marksmanship 'on the side' while actually wielding something else – that is, you only have to be throwing a boomerang every so often while wielding a big axe to get marksmanship skills every so often. It's a very useful skill to have a bit of proficiency in, just for the occasions when you're using throwing knives or boomerangs, you only need 20-40 to do OK with throwing weapons.

Various thrown weapons can also be acquired in the game, this is a rough ranking according to how much damage they do:

Dart, barbed dart, boomerang (Sanal), roses (Amazons), bolas, shuriken, throwing knife, hurlbat, well-balanced dagger (Drute's tombs), runes (Frost Giant temple), flasks of oil, javelins, hunga-mungas.

Darts do about 2 damage and hunga-mungas about 37 at 100 thrown weapon ability. If you don't have 100, you'll do less. Thrown weapons generally have very consistent damage, especially hunga-mungas. As far as I know there's no 'progression' as such with the thrown weapons, so if you can afford to throw around throwing knives at 0 skill and ability, there's no reason to use darts instead.

Bows are the other way you can raise marksmanship. It's hard to hit consistently with bows unless you have decent dexterity and high marksmanship skill. The damage dealt by your arrows depends on the quality of your bow (obviously) and your archery ability. The bows, in rough order of quality, are:

Fine, hand crafted bow (Marika), short bow (rangers), elvish bow (Listhalia), silver longbow (non-unique, Lelyia), fine short bow (Brannon), long bow (rangers), fine long bow (Brannon), Great bow (Drakhyra), Dark bow (carcera), Silver longbow (unique, Lelyia)

Bows range from about 15 max damage to almost 40 per arrow, and are some of the highest damaging weapons around. Once again, there seems to be correlation between the quality of a bow and how well you hit with it, so if you can get a dark bow at 10 skill, there's no reason not to use it. Also, the quality of the arrows you use seem to only affect how often they break, not the damage. Archery ability also plays a big part in the damage you'll deal out. I'll discuss archery further in the abilities section.

## Two Weapon

- Rating: A
- Fast for:
- Viable for: Ranger, Non entities, Paladin

Uniques: N/A

- Pros: Very nice damage, fun to use, good to raise multiple skills with at once
- Cons: Extremely slow, especially for non fighters.

High End Choices: The most damaging weapons to dual wield are: elemental orbs, the high end rapiers, orcish sabres, dwarven mining picks, high end shortswords. The most damaging of the lot is dual fire elemental orbs, and the most versatile is Crystal blade with an orb.

Skill Progression:

There's no progression as such. The first skill from 0-1 is usually the hardest to get – just grab a light weapon which you have high skill in (70+) and wield it in your off-hand and hit stuff until you get that skill. Then, hire a mage to cast enhanced skill on your Two Weapon skill, and go from there – always have enhanced skill on it until you get about 30 or 40 and it's not so essential.

For non-fighters, I highly recommend first raising exotic to about 40. Elemental orbs are excellent in the off-hand, doing nice damage, and more importantly, the armour piercing property means it hits more – making your Two Weapon skill go up faster. For non-fighters, this will be a very long and hard road – expect up to 2 hours per skill. To not get bored, try using a knife in the main hand, an orb in the off-hand, and throw boomerangs and barbed darts at whatever you kill. You can potentially skill in 4 disciplines (5 if you don't re-wield fast enough) and that might keep you interested. Raising it with a friend also helps immensely.

This skill only really starts to shine after about 50 skills, when your off-hand starts to hit reasonably often. However after that, it starts doing as much, if not more damage, than the big normal weapons – Krakadoom, Crescent, etc.

People are still unsure about whether it's better to start off with an easy weapon in the off-hand at low two-weapon skills or if that matters at all. What is apparent is that you only get Two Weapon skills when your off-hand lands a hit, and presumably like other weapons, the harder it hits the more it advances your skill. Your level of Two-Weapon skill determines how often you even get to attempt to use your off-hand in an attack – that is, someone with 0 skill almost never swings their off-hand weapon whereas people with 100 do it every round.

Thus, to raise this skill quickly, it's important to hit as much as possible – making boomerangs and Crystal blade and their dexterity modifying effect very useful, along with elemental orbs and their armour piercing. Having bolas as a ranger, and utilising trip to its full as a non entity also help immensely. Needless to say, fighters should berserk while raising this. As mentioned before, for the first bunch of skills, enhanced skill is almost essential for non-fighters.

Also, since your 'attack' style can at times dramatically affect the damage you deal out, when dual wielding, use two weapons with the same attack style – two piercing weapons, two crushing weapons, etc. a special note about elemental orbs. They do equal damage whatever 'attack' mode you're using, which is also part of the reason they're so popular as off-hand weapons.

## Abilities

Separate from 'skills', AA also has a set of 'abilities', most of which you can't actually actively raise. I'll separate them into 'directly combat related', 'sometimes useful' and 'fun (impractical)'. Every race gets a different base amount of abilities, and I think your class also modifies your starting abilities (especially paladins, who get a substantial poison resistance bonus). Some abilities go up with stats and levels, others you have to go out and raise yourself – rather like weapon skills.

### Combat Related Abilities

These are the four resistances – fire, cold, magic and poison, the two defences – block and parry, and the two marksmanship abilities – archery and thrown weapon.

The resistances are quite important for anyone doing heavy tanking or fighting magic users. I prefer the extra 20 resistances from a Black Robe to the extra armour class from Strangely Patterned Cloak because while a mob doing 30 damage with a physical hit instead of 20 won't kill you, an unexpected 60 damage spell from a magic caster can surely knock you out.

Fire and Magic are the most important, followed by cold, and poison is almost useless. This is due purely to the inordinate amount of monsters on the game that use fire attacks.

According to GhanimX, dexterity affects cold, fire and magic resistance. Fire and cold resistance are also modified by constitution and wisdom. Magic resistance also takes into account intelligence, while poison resistance goes up with strength and constitution.

There are many pieces of equipment that give resistance boosts. The most commonly used are:

Light Body: Black Robe from Nepeth, Magic Surcoat from Stronghold and Weird Looking Blue Robe from Ebonbane Manor. These all give substantial boosts, while having reasonable armour class anyway, and are always well worth wearing, in my opinion.

Weapons: Starblade from Star Caverns gives a nice 20 to all resistances boost as well, extremely handy. To a much smaller extent, so does wolfblade.

Heavy Body: Armour of Gaius from Geographic Society and Dragon Platemail from Lizard Village have slightly less comprehensive boosts. Star Armour from Star Caverns gives minor resistances.

Shields: Wigwog Skin from Easthaven is fairly light, has decent block and comes with some small resistance bonuses – good to use as a shield, or just wear for extra resistances for characters who don't need their off-hand.

Jewellery: Medallion of Night from Drow Gardens and Silver Pendant from Floral Being area. Random Rings from Zarkan, Garnet ring from Drute's Tomb. These are light and essentially bonus equipment.

Generally, I prefer to use the above equipment to get myself at least +40 to my resistances when I'm tanking. Keep in mind however, the resistances are completely useless unless you are actually killing spell casters.

The defences play a large part in how well we use those defences. Dexterity plays a large part in how well we block or parry, and now that we can level above 19, additional levels also affect defences – unlike resistances. Some characters quickly have gotten 100 blocking or 100 parry after this change.

Only one item instantly raises a defence skill as such – the Shield of Gralain from Gralain's tombs, which gives +10 blocking to dwarves and +5 to humans. It's pretty heavy and despite the +10 blocking, is probably still worse than the other high end shields.

Otherwise, there is no real way to affect your blocking or parrying skills, apart from class-specific skills, which I'll discuss later.

The marksmanship abilities are the damage modifiers for our thrown weapons and bows. They go up randomly when you're using a bow or thrown weapon, and not that quickly (but definitely a lot faster than real weapon skills). Archery can only be raised when using bows, but there is a bit of a lazy way to raise thrown weapon. In the Scythe camp, there is a throwing dagger game that allows you to throw about 30 knives every reset, each one having a small chance of raising your thrown weapon skill. On average you'll probably get 2 points per reset. As you probably already know, these two abilities don't go up or down with deaths or levelling.

Note that you can actually in the same round, make a physical hit with your real weapon, throw a knife, cast a spell or use some special class ability, wield a bow, nock an arrow, shoot it, unwield the bow and reload your weapon all in one. This strikes me as rather silly, but it is technically legal and is quite useful for dealing out a lot of damage very quickly.

Also note that quite a few high end monsters are rather unappreciative of having arrows shot at them or knives thrown at them, and will 'turn' to attack you instead of your tank, if you're using them while bashing.

## Semi Useful Abilities

I put into this category charm resistance, climbing, swimming, searching, the languages, trade and traps.

Charm Resistance, to the best of my knowledge, can only be gained from easy treasure hunts that feature satyrs, wood nymphs and the like. Also to the best of my knowledge, it's only useful in those treasure hunts. It goes up when you get charmed by them and eventually break out of it. When you eventually get 100 in resistance, those treasure hunts are much less annoying (but then you'll be so high level you won't even run into them any more).

The Languages don't have much practical use, but certain areas and quests and items require proficiency in various languages to understand. If you need a boost in a certain language, ask a helpful mage to cast magic mouth or comprehend languages on you, or get the ring of tongues from the Academy. Humans generally end up with 100 or almost 100 in all languages, Orcs are bad with Elvish, and vice versa, and so on. Your languages go up with intelligence and wisdom, and funnily enough, deaths. Therefore, an elf who dies a lot can even have 100 Orcish.

Trade helps you get higher prices when selling and lower when buying at certain shops, most notably Hobbitat, but its effect isn't large enough to make a practical difference. It goes up with strength, intelligence and wisdom. Unlike languages, the temporary boost in trade ability seems to be lost over time.

Traps is an ability that as far as I know, can only be gotten by using fine tools from the fence in Neville to 'disarm' treasure hunt chests. Higher ability in traps presumably increases your chances to successfully disarm these chests and avoid damage. It goes up pretty slowly, and is of course independent of levels and stats.

Climbing and Swimming are two movement-related skills. Several areas have a minimum climbing or swimming ability requirement before characters are allowed to get into them. You can temporarily raise these two abilities by buying appropriate potions from Shanni in Nepeth. Similarly, many pieces of random treasure hunt items give you boosts to these two. If thieves existed, they'd probably have thieves' dens, which would probably have various climbing-enhancing pieces of equipment. But that's just speculation. Logically, strength and dexterity determine how high these are.

Generally speaking, the less you're carrying, the better you will climb or swim. Some rivers are almost impossible to swim out of when loaded up with equipment, similarly for walls and climbing.

Searching rounds out this category. This is used for finding, guess what, hidden objects and ahem, people. Not that any of the classes can hide, no, not at all. Many items have a minimum searching ability requirement before they can be found. Silver amulets from the Tantallon magic shop raises this ability temporarily. Intelligence and Wisdom modifies this ability.

## 'Fun' Abilities

There are also a lot of abilities that simply have no practical use. They all work rather like weapon skills – independent of stats and levels, and go up when you use them. These are fishing, prospecting, weaving, first aid, pottery, tossing and seduction.

Fishing is one we've probably all run into. Buy a net or fishing rod from Salty John, find a nice stretch of water and fish away. The fish range from little carps to sharks to giant squids (which are worth 9000 or more experience). You'll have to beat the fish to death, then you can treat it like ranger meat – can be salted, cooked or eaten raw. The squids don't turn into Calamari rings. Fishing nets seem to pull up smaller fish than poles, but you can get more than one at a time, and also various random items, like puzzles, trash, and potions. It's something interesting to do while waiting for the Atlantis or Lizette, or while just chatting

First aid is raised from using bandages from Drakhyra. Unfortunately, these bandages are inferior to normal medicinals as they fall off the second the bandaged person enters combat.

Tossing is from the fun dwarf/chicken/cow etc tossing game down in Scythe camp. It'd appear strength and dexterity and timing govern how well you toss the critters. Try it out, it's a bid of sadistic fun.

Pottery is gained from moulding things from clay. The clay can be obtained from Hopkins' area. You can mould all sorts of things, 'crush' it, and start again. Every bit of clay can be used several times before it dries up and becomes useless.

Weaving actually can be raised in three ways. First, find Fae in Arcadia, who will teach you the basics of weaving – up to 29 skill. Then, the slow way to raise weaving further is by mending fishing nets with fids. Otherwise, get spider silk from the freaky spider area and weave rings out of it. There's a possibility that weaving ability actually makes some Drowgar spells better – those that involve weaving, like spider armour and spider pack. When you

have ample silk, this skill goes up quickly – the problem is getting hands on the silk in the first place – the area producing it has a maximum level requirement.

Seduction is raised when being...affectionate to various orcs in Drakhya. There's no real use for it, but while your tank's busy buying lambs at the tavern, you might as well have some fun with the dancing girl, eh? It goes up pretty quickly.

Prospecting goes up incredibly slowly and is incredibly brain numbingly boring. You raise it by finding Dubo near the ranger camp, getting a prospecting pan and spending hours sitting around waiting for gold – rather like a real prospector, I'd imagine.

## Defend, Aim and Attack

These three things are rather trivial for most characters, but I'll quickly go through what they do. The various defences will be given a much more in-depth treatment.

Attack sets the attack style you will be using with your weapon(s). I've already set out the attack type you should use in the skills section. Some weapon classes, like staves, are only able to do one type of damage – crushing damage. Thus, they'll do a lot less damage if you set your attack type to something like chop, or even just leaving it at random. Others, like longwords, can do all of crush, pierce, slash and chop, and this doesn't matter quite so much – though of course you should still set the correct one.

Aim is simply where your character will attempt to hit. Most people aim for the head, and change the aim when fighting things with helmets – various guards, etc. Note that some monsters don't have heads and will automatically change your aim to body – if you like to always aim at the head you'll need to change it back after the kill.

The defences are much more interesting – while some classes are restricted to only one real option, some have important choices. I'll just go through how each one works.

### Dodge

Every character can use dodge. For shapeshifters, mages and necromancers, it's either dodge or nothing. To see an indepth analysis of dodge for mages, refer to my mage guide. For practicality, only mages and shapeshifters with more than 15 dexterity can use it to any degree of success. Its big advantage is that it's free – you don't have to buy any fancy equipment to use it.

Dodge (to the best of my knowledge) is based solely on 3 things: your opponent's dex, your own dex, and the amount of weight you're carrying. So how do we maximise dodge's effectiveness, and to what extent is it 'worth it'?

Generally speaking, a character with 15 or more dexterity carrying little in their inventory, fighting a monster with a black eye from a boomerang, can dodge it pretty well. When I say 'pretty well' I mean that overall you'll save hit points, compared to if you just used defend none. This is despite that when dodge does backfire sometimes - ie 'x monster predicts your attempt to dodge!', and you get hit harder than usual.

It's a lot better versus more trivial monsters, and extreme high end monsters are very good at hitting you even if you're highly dextrous – Illarin, Iannis, etc. Here are some ways of affecting the 3 factors in how well dodge works:

#### The opponent's dexterity

There's only so much you can do about this. If you're indiscriminately massacring the mud, you're not going to skip a few high dex kills just because you can't dodge them as well.

The easiest way you can impair the opponent's dexterity is through the humble oak boomerang. This item is your best friend for under \$300 a pop, and its -1 dex penalty to the opponent quickly adds up as time passes.

Related is the barbed dart from the dalair weapon seller. I personally don't bother with the way it breaks all the time, and that the seller is dead half the time, that it's not as convenient as the boomerang. However, if you're admirably keen with these things, then -2 dex on an opponent is huge.

In most circumstances an oak boomerang is all you can do in this field... make sure you have one or more at all times.

#### Your own dexterity

This of course is also something that is largely unchangeable. Your race will determine the amount your dexterity will max out at, so your race is probably the largest factor overall in determining whether you use dodge or none.

#### Your own weight

This is the part you have most control of. To dodge reasonably well, you need to absolutely minimise the amount of stuff you carry – ideally a weapon (or none at all for shapeshifters), a pipe, and a golden amulet. And that's all. The only things you should allow in your inventory must be worth their weight, if it will gain you either more experience, money or skills. Otherwise it'll just cause you to take more damage for no good reason, and is thus inefficient.

The essentials are obviously

1) Your weapon and 2) Your pipe.

If faced with 2 roughly equal weapons, take the lighter one if you're going to be doing some dodging. Now feel free to add to that any weightless items that are neat or help – of note is the leather sheath or black scabbard – adding to leg protection for no weight addition. Of course, extra stuff like hooded falcons, pet snakes and whatnot are weightless and do nothing, so feel free to get them if you like them.

Next are the items you'd probably get despite the fact that they hamper your dodging. Namely

1) Golden Amulet 2) Good Zarkan rings. 3) Whitegolden Rings

Golden amulet provides some protection to every single part of your body for the cost of 1 weight – ‘Only the best piece of armour in the whole game’ – Lunger, mid 2004. The same sort of argument applies for the Zarkan and whitegolden rings.

Following this are the situational items. These are

1) Black Robe/Magic Surcoat 2) A runed breastplate 3) Robe of Turkey feathers 4) Sturdy ring.

1) A black robe or magic surcoat depends on whether or not you're fighting magic hurling monsters – if you're even only occasionally taking one on, by all means it's worth it.

2) A runed breastplate, at last checking, weighed one, gave +20 to two resistances, and evaluated as ‘good’ for the body. If that is still the case, and you can get your hands on one, then go for it.

3) The robe of turkey feathers depends entirely on whether you believe that the rumours concerning it. As the robe gives you a blue aura, which some say means the robe actually gives you the spell effect of blur, either higher armour class or dodging. I'm on the side that thinks the rumours unsubstantiated, and as such wouldn't take the robe. If you do believe the rumours to be true, then by all means take it. Otherwise, it's not worth the weight for its protection.

4) The sturdy ring is the same idea. If you believe it lets you do more damage, go for it.

I'm sure I've missed a few important items. If it's going to make you more experience/skills/coins than the experience/skills/coins you're going to lose by taking more damage by it reducing the effectiveness of your dodging, then take it. Otherwise, chuck it in a trashcan.

Remember, every extra item makes quite an impact in the long run.

Now you ask – how am I going to carry any of my stuff around? Mages, refer to my mage guide. Dodging drakons should drop their containers while in combat, to minimise their inventory load, then pick the containers back up when leaving the room. Have a nice alias system for streamlining this process.

## None

Some classes simply take more damage from dodging (due to its chance of failure) than if they stood still and took the hits, and have no other choices. These are some mages, necromancers and shapeshifters.

Also, fighters who want to use their new fury ability are forced to use defend none.

For a discussion of whether dodge or none would work better for you, refer to my mage guide.

## Parry and Riposte

Parry and riposte are similar skills – they both utilise your weapon to deflect incoming blows. As such, generally speaking, only bladed weapons and some staves and spears are good at it. These defences are available only to fighters and ah...alternative fighters. With these new levels, the ability can easily go above 100, and coupled with alert combat, my alternative fighter gets 100 (+139) parrying ability. This makes for an extremely good way of preventing damage altogether.

Riposte is less likely to succeed in preventing damage than parry. Every time you do parry, however, there is a chance that you'll counter-attack, a free hit. Virtually nobody uses this ability, as the increase in damage taken in not using parry far outbalances the increase in damage dealt in the occasional free hit. Also, alert combat raises the riposte ability significantly less than the parrying ability (about ¼ as much).

Its pros are:

- No additional weight of a shield
- Your off-hand can still be used to wield a second weapon, or wear Wigwog Skin for extra resistances – or even a two-handed weapon
- It's generally regarded as superior in success rate to block

Its cons are that your primary weapon hugely determines these defences' effectiveness. Most people feel they take too much damage if their weapon's parrying is below ‘splendid’.

Some of the most common and damaging parrying weapons (this is definitely not a complete list of them, just the best ones) are:

- Absolutely perfect: Crystal Blade (+2 dexterity), Sword of Gilian (2 constitution)
- Nearly Perfect: Jeweled Dwarven Rapier, Very Fine Rapier, Starblade (+20 to all resistances), Bloodred, Sword of Virgis (+15 Longsword skill for females), Fine Broadsword, Vorpal Blade, Wolfblade, Elvenheart (+4 str for elves, +3 for half elves, extra healing powers), Powersword, Katana
- Splendid: Thin Rapier, Blue Steel Rapier, Exquisite Rune Sword, Rune Sword, White Iron Stick, Main Gauche

As you see, it's dominated by longswords and rapiers. As non entities commonly use these two weapon types, and have fencing, parry is absolutely essential to use. If you're newer to the game, stay with the absolutely or nearly perfect weapons at first. As you get used to getting hit hard, the ones below don't seem so bad. Generally speaking, harder hitting weapons have worse damage than their better-parrying equivalents.

## Block

Block is available to paladins, fighters, clerics and rangers. For paladins, the shield is almost essential, whereas experienced clerics and rangers can usually do well without shields. I recommend newer players take full advantage of this good source of damage reduction.

Block's effectiveness depends heavily on how good your shield is. This is especially so for paladins' turtle ability – the better the shield, the better boost to their blocking ability.

The advantages and disadvantages to block are:

- Shields tend to be quite heavy – at least 2 or 3 bottles weight. This used to be pretty important, but with the extra carry ability above level 19, it's not quite so critical.
- Unique shields however, tend to be pretty light or weightless. Also, a 2-3 weight shield certainly mitigates more damage than any other 2-3 weight piece of armour (say, a helmet).
- With these new levels, 100 blocking is attainable by higher-dexterity characters, and makes it almost comparable to parrying in effectiveness
- However, your off-hand is taken up, and so you can't dual wield or use two handed weapons
- One point of flexibility is that your main weapon can be whatever you like, and it won't affect your blocking

Sometimes it's better or more fun to pass on the shield. Usually, this requires you to have very nice other equipment to pull off, otherwise the extra damage taken from the lack of shield is hard to offset. With the right equipment however, the extra damage output is much more fun than the decrease in damage taken. Rangers also spend part of their time not getting hit at all – hiding behind their wolves, making the blocking less critical. Refer to my ranger guide for that.

The best shields are:

- Nearly Perfect: Polished Silver Goblin Shield (weight 4), Fancy Shield (weight 4, better block bonus than silver goblin shield)
- Splendid: Flying Shield (weight 1),
- Very Good: Wigwog Skin (weight 2, comes with +10 cold and fire resistance), green shield, black shield, spiked shield, dwarven shield (all weight 3), Shield of Gralain (weight 4, but it comes with +10 blocking for dwarves and +5 for humans),

## Berserk

This is fighter-only. It increases a fighter's chance to hit, and damage dealt by each hit, significantly, all for free. I'd estimate the total damage increase to be between 50 and 100%. A lot of players are of the opinion that fighters should just be berserking all the time – tanking, bashing or soloing. This is mostly the best choice, but sometimes berserking through everything isn't the best choice, that's up to you to find out.

## The Guilds

One thing that a lot of newer players get confused over is the guilds system of Ancient Anguish (how can I be a fighter and also a knight??). The guilds of AA are really just a collection of social people of similar classes, races, alignments and views to the world, separate from your class or race, and having very little influence on your combat.

The guilds of AA are the Knights of Drin, the Courts of Chaos, the Monks of Antana, the Scythe, the Raven, the Black Bear and the Eldar. Each have specific requirements for joining, and over time have developed into tight knit groups.

### The Knights of Drin

- Directions: 13n, 6w, 13n
- How to Join: Go to the class hall while not evil or nasty, and join up
- Races Allowed: Dwarf, Human, Elf, Half Elf
- Classes Allowed: Fighter, Cleric, Paladin, Ranger
- Alignment: Good
- **Guild Perks: Low**
- Storage System: High Security
- Personal Storage: High Security, but small
- Newbie Friendliness: High
- Title System: Based on killing, the 'credits' system
- Corpse Disposal: Taking the ear as a trophy, then burning

The knights are a good place to start for a new player. They have friendly players, a nice shop for basic equipment when logging in, storage racks to share equipment between guild members, and a straightforward guild title advancement system. The drawback is that you have to stay nice or better, or King Drin will start spamming you and threaten to kick you out.

### The Courts of Chaos

- Directions: 16w, 4n, 2w, n
- How to Join: Get a mentor from the guild, and join at the hall
- Races Allowed: All
- Classes Allowed: Cleric, Mage, Necromancer, Non entities, Ranger
- Alignment: Evil
- **Guild Perks: Medium**
- Storage System: High Security
- Personal Storage: None
- Newbie Friendliness: Medium
- Title System: Based on killing and donating items and money, with 'karma'
- Corpse Disposal: Feeding the corpse to forces of chaos

Chaos is pretty much the opposite in ideology to the Knights, a haven for evil spellcasters and sub-fighters. They get the rather unique abilities of channel – where one guild member inefficiently transfers her spell points to another guild member, and also a dark temple to sacrifice corpses, to fix your alignment. To join the guild, you need to find someone within the guild already willing to mentor you into it.

This is a good guild for your first necromancer, as there are often corpses in their storage system, the vaults, and the sacrificial temple is good for helping you keep your alignment up.

### The Monks of Antana

- Directions: 13n, 3e, 4n, e, 2n, enter waterfall
- How to Join: Turn up and join
- Races Allowed: Elf, Half-Elf, Human
- Classes Allowed: Paladin, non entities, fighters, clerics, mages, rangers
- Alignment: None

- **Guild Perks: Medium-High**
- Storage System: High Security
- Personal Storage: None
- Newbie Friendliness: High
- Title System: None, but there is a points system with 'mana'
- Corpse Disposal: Burying

The monks are right now a very scarcely populated guild, and there will be rarely more than 2 or 3 mortal monks on at a time. However the ones that are on are usually very friendly, and happy to help. This guild gives you 'mana' points for burying corpses and disposing of trash in trashbags. 'Mana' can then be used for buying useful heals like wine and salve (very good), or for using the 'mpray' command, which directly transfers sps into hps, or vice versa. Mana is very powerful, but of course hard to come by.

### The Scythe

- Directions: 9w, 5s, walk
- How to Join: Get a corpse of something high level than you, a nasty alignment, and join
- Races Allowed: Human, Dwarf, Orc
- Classes Allowed: Mage, Fighter, Cleric, Ranger, non entities, Shapeshifter
- Alignment: None

- **Guild Perks: Medium**
- Storage System: None
- Personal Storage: High security personal room
- Newbie Friendliness: Low
- Title System: None, no points system
- Corpse Disposal: Eating

The Scythe are the barbarians of AA, with no title system, no storage vaults, and a hate for all things Elven and the mortal enemies of the Knights. The guild is the most active when it comes to high level parties and power-playing. The Scythe members can buy a private room for storing things throughout the reboot, which is very useful, and they also get access to a bar which sells good quality heals, close to Tantallon. Beware newer players, questions deemed 'newbish' usually get laughed at, made fun of, or at best, ignored. This is a good guild to join once you have a decent grasp of the game and want to be involved in big parties more often.

### The Eldar

- Directions: 11s, all w, 6s, e, s, sw, say pass, n, e
- How to Join: turn up and talk to the NPCs
- Races Allowed: Human, Elf, Half-Elf
- Classes Allowed: All
- Alignment: None

- **Guild Perks: Medium-High**
- Storage System: None
- Personal Storage: High security personal locker
- Newbie Friendliness: Medium
- Title System: None, with a superfluous points system based on corpses
- Corpse Disposal: Magic

The Eldar are known as the chatty guild. Many of their members happily chat away on the guild line about all kinds of things, including answering your questions. They have one of the best perks of any guild in the game with the tea that their tavern sells – this is a form of healing that does not fill you up nor make you more drunk, and does not increase your tolerance like potions either. This is a good guild for people who are also chatty.

### The Black Bear

- Directions: 31n, 9w, 2n, 2w, 2s
- How to Join: Get a bear pelt and turn up, or get sponsored by a bear member
- Races Allowed: All
- Classes Allowed: Mage, Fighter, Cleric, Ranger, Shapeshifter
- Alignment: None

- **Guild Perks: Low**
- Storage System: High security
- Personal Storage: None
- Newbie Friendliness: High
- Title System: Based on killing and another cheating way
- Corpse Disposal: Shamanistic

The Black Bear is probably the currently biggest guild. It is very newbie friendly, with friendly members. They have a title system similar to the knights', with the exception of being much harder to advance up. They often are the leading guild in the Geographic Society recently, which makes available to their members the best non unique container in the game, the knapsack. Their storage racks, though liable to be liberated by freedom fighters, often hold a few good items. All in all, quite a good guild to be in for all types of players.

## The Raven

- Directions: shhh
- How to Join: I can't tell you
- Races Allowed: All
- Classes Allowed: Non entities
- Alignment: None

- **Guild Perks: Low**
- Storage System: High Security
- Personal Storage: None
- Newbie Friendliness: Medium
- Title System: None
- Corpse Disposal: Butchering

The Raven are like the monks, a struggling guild. They provide a good haven for when running from the law, and at the moment, for little else.

## The Snowfolk

*Added by AAwiki*

- Directions: 31n, 9w, 10n, 8w, 25n, 10e, 6s, 6e, 2s, 4e, 3n, 'enter igloo'
- How to Join: Turn up
- Races Allowed: All
- Classes Allowed: All except necromancer (also SK members are not allowed)
- Alignment: None

- **Guild Perks: Low**
- Storage System: High Security, large hide crate, communal
- Personal Storage: High Security, deep freezer
- Newbie Friendliness: High
- Title System: None
- Corpse Disposal: Freezing

The Snowfolk are a group of people living in harmony in a giant igloo far to the north. Their powers and skills have been shaped by the proximity to the cold lands, but their hearts are warm. The Snowfolk welcome anyone (other than necromancers and those who enjoy killing others) into their ranks.

# The Classes

This is the meat and bones of this guide. I'll give a general description of what each class' abilities are, how they tend to be played, what they're good at, what races are good for them and general tips on how to get ahead with them.

## Cleric

Dir: 3w, n, e, n, e

- Learning Curve: Low
- Damage Dealing: C
- Damage Absorption: A+
- Soloing ability: A



- Bashing ability: B
- Tanking prowess: A
- Famous clerics: Zordax, Defarge, Bazhi, Caillet, Nine, Hektor, Ivanhood

## Class Abilities

Clerics' unique powers are their prayers: they get increasingly powerful prayers as they raise their wisdom. Here's a table of their prayers:

Wisdom	Prayer	Prayer Cost(sps)	Effect
2	Light	10	Holy symbol becomes a light source for about 10 minutes
3	Cure	20	Heals 15-30, more on others
4	Wound	25	Deals about 10 damage
5	Detect	20	Detects if something's cursed, pretty useless
	Purge	20	Reduces potion tolerance in another player, you'll use this one a lot
	Tolerance	20	To find out how bad the tolerance in another player is
6	State	20	Find out about a monster's alignment and weak points and other information
	Transform	Varies	Transforms water into various types of alcohol. Not 100% sure it's at 6 wisdom.
7	Slow	25	Cures poison slightly
8	Uncurse	75	Uncurses items, not that many items are cursed, and most of those come from Zhammar.
9	Fix	50	Heals 30-85 or so, you'll be using this one a lot.
10	Cold	20	Adds 15-35 to cold resistance for about 15 minutes.
	Fire	20	Adds 15-35 to fire resistance for about 15 minutes.
11	Turn	50	Something useless
12	Dispel	25	Similar to cold and fire, for magic resistance
	Waterwalk	40	Not too sure it's 12 wisdom. Allows players to walk across water.
	Purify	50	Better version of purge, but damages the recipient
13	Hammer	40	A damage spell that does about 30 damage
14	Curse	100	Curses an item – a cursed item can't be unwielded or removed. Mostly used in player-killing
15	Bless	50	Gives equipment a nice boost in quality
	Disinfect	85	Fixes up diseases, plagues, etc
16	Neutralize	100	A better version of slow
17	Cleanse	120	A better version of purify
18	Destruct	100	Deals some damage to every undead in the room, better clerics do this better. This is only really useful for some treasure hunts with multiple undeads in the same room.
19	Heal	180	Fixes all things wrong with a player, including pinkies.

## Defensive abilities

Clerics are most well known for their healing prayers, which on average all heal more than 1 hit point per spell point. They also get a range of prayers that increase their resistances by about 30 each (random), and bless, which increases the quality of their armour. This makes clerics perfectly suited to tanking.

The line of prayers related to purge are essential for other characters to remove their tolerance. Tolerance is the effect of potions becoming less and less potent as you use more and more of them. You can't purge yourself, so seek out another cleric via 'who class' to offer to 'swap purges'.

## Offensive abilities

Clerics also have offensive prayers – but these are generally quite inefficient compared to equivalent mage and necromancer offensive spells. However, wrath is still very useful to grab some equipment with after reboot. Once you're geared up, vast majority of the time, your spell points are better spent on healing spells.

## Skills

Clerics are very good with clubs, flails and staves. They also get longsword and polearm skills acceptably quickly. All of these are fairly high damage weapon classes. This makes them also good bashers, as any tank appreciates extra healing, higher resistances and solid damage. These same qualities make them very good at soloing as well – as long as you fight monsters within your abilities, you'll simply outlast them.

One special note for clerics is the mace of crushing – this 30-70 skill club is excellent for all clerics as it comes with a bonus to-hit for clerics, highly recommended when raising club.

## Races

These qualities, along with a reliance on wisdom, makes dwarves the long-time favourite class for clerics. Their high wisdom and constitution makes them very effective punching bags, the high strength letting them wear all the armour they need and wield very heavy weapons, making them one of the most solid characters in the game. The Destructor also offsets one of the deficiencies of the dwarf, by providing dwarves +1 dexterity, and in the hands of a dwarf does fairly nice damage. The cons of dwarf are the low dexterity and intelligence – my level 26 dwarf cleric still has below 90 blocking, and these 2 low stats make him gain weapon skills very slowly. However, Bazhi is a dwarf. This is the tried and true path for clerics.

Half elves have a higher wisdom than dwarves, but much less strength and constitution. This makes them a fair bit less solid, and a worse tank. I feel that

the cleric should be a damage-soaker, and the half elves just sacrifice too much to fit that role. The 15 strength also cuts the half elf off top end weapons like Krakadoom and outstanding sword. The advantages of half elves are that they have high intelligence, and skill very fast compared to dwarves. They also have a fairly powerful wrath, if you want to play a cleric like a mage.

Elves are, unfortunately, even worse than half elves in the front line role. They have less wisdom, constitution, and strength, for 2 more dexterity. There's little reason to play an elf cleric.

Humans are a happy medium between dwarves and half elves. They have decent amounts of each stat. They're a little bit worse than dwarves at doing everything cleric-related, but their skills raise much faster, so in that sense they're for people who like to see skills flash up. The little sacrifice in quality they make isn't too large, and they can still tank about as well as a dwarf. The post-level 19 increase in weight capacity also offsets the sacrifice of strength somewhat. If I were to make a cleric tomorrow, it'd be human.

Orcs are the dark horse in this field. They are actually better than dwarves at the front line role – 2 more dexterity and 1 more constitution for 2 wisdom and 1 strength. The strength matters little now – the weight capacity issue is offset by the post-level 19 increases, and the damage decrease is offset by hitting more with the 2 dexterity. The orc still has enough wisdom to get access to all the useful prayers. The downsides are that skills come slowly and prayers fail a little bit more.

## Levelling your first Cleric

Clerics are one of the easiest classes to level up. It's a simple process of grabbing a weapon (recommended club for new players), sticking to it, armouring yourself up, and whacking things around your level until you hit level 19.

Levels 1-10: get yourself a few thousand coins first, through CX, picking up rusty chainmails in the forest, taking free items like fire gems and helmets and ladders from various areas, begging, etc. Then buy a fishing pole from Salty John (2e, n), check your real life time, go to Zhou (26n, e), train with him, go to your favourite low level area and whack things with your pole for the next 12 minutes. Heal when hurt with either the free sleeping room in the manor, or if you're rich (5000+ coins), just heal with medicinals while you're killing. Get stats and levels as you can, until you have exactly 15 club (probably around level 3). When you get the 15, stop killing things immediately, get 1 or 2 packages of medicinals, and re-train with Zhou (wait for the previous session to run out if necessary). Then spend as much time in combat as possible in the next 12 minutes – it shouldn't be hard with medicinals and the cure prayer. This should get your club skill to somewhere between 18 and 25.

Now it's time to get a gnarled club – either find one in the shops, or kill for one yourself with your pole – find an orc in a dalair hovel (16w, 4n, w, n, if dead, try 2s, if that's dead, try n, 2w, n, etc etc) smack it down. Spend your time up to level 10 just whacking things with your club, building your bank account through selling things that your kills drop (spirits in the ghost ship are good for this), and raising the club skill. Don't neglect intelligence as a stat – just max out dexterity while levelling, and then get the cheapest stat available after that (unless there's something you really need, like the next prayer). By level 11, as long as you've been raising your int and wis well, as well as hitting things around your level, you should have at least 25 club, hopefully 30 or more.

Levels 10-15: These are the levels where you start getting your most important prayers. Notice that when you first get some of the prayers, they often fail and aren't very good – this is because your wisdom is still quite low – as a consequence, even though you do have fix, it's probably better to use cure since it's much more reliable.

The most important thing for you at these levels is to get your hands on the mace of crushing – suitable for 30 skill onwards. A cleric with a mace of crushing deals about twice as much damage as one without at these levels. If you're lucky, there'll be one in the shops or your guild's storage, and if not, it's time to beg, steal, bully your way to one. Then get some light affordable armour (cuirboilli leathers and radiant armour are good choices), a light shield (a green or black shield, a fine hoplon shield), smokes, medicinals, and take kills that are easy and have some equipment to sell – messengers and soldiers in the Burnham woods, brigands, packrats and dalair soldiers initially. As you level up and get more skills, Andeli knights, Zhammar and Drakhya guards, zombies in the underground forest, and kills of that quality should be good. As you are able to carry more and more, get more armour – amulets and rings are a priority, then helmets and robes and the like.

When you get the bless prayer, keep your body armour and jewellery blessed. Keep your hit points above 30, don't take unnecessary risks, and you should in due time hit level 15. You should have at least 45 club by the end of level 15, hopefully closer to 60.

Level 16+: unlike most other classes, at around level 16, your character is pretty much 'fully functional'. It's a case of starting off at level 16 on the easier 'real kills' – fairy dragon and queen, wyvern and general, etc, getting better stats and ability to carry more heals and equipment, moving up to the bread and butter kills – bulette and hermit, riognach, evil cleric and bonebreaker, etc. Eventually reaching the peak of your powers, you can solo all but the most difficult mobs, by simply outlasting them.

## Playing a Cleric

Killing things with a cleric is pretty simple. Grab the best armour and shield you can find and carry, wield the biggest weapon you can find, and grab the best pack you can find. Get a load of standard heals, find something to kill, and simply fix yourself whenever you're less than 70 hit points from maximum. Refill on heals as you run low, pray for the appropriate resistances as the situation demands, and don't go too low on hit points. This is one of the simplest classes to kill stuff with easily.

When bashing, your job is to be quick with your 'pray fix tank' alias while providing modest damage. The tank will either tell you to monitor his hit points yourself, and heal him once he goes below x hit points – in which case it's time to turn on party awareness 'help paware'. Alternatively, he'll ask you to fix on his command, which is time to pay attention and quickly hit your alias every time he yells out for a lifesaver. Some tanks are inattentive about how many spell points you have – notify them every time you're down below 100 spell points. You'll probably be also required to 'do the heals'. Always be smoking and bound, and bind your tank as well. Don't be afraid to drink alcohol every so often, as long as you don't get too drunk to bind your wounds. Purge your tank if they're using potions every so often, and also pray the appropriate resistances. Do this well and most tanks will love you.

## Is a Cleric for you?

Clerics are good for those learning the game, those wanting to learn to tank or bash, and people who appreciate good solid grunt characters. If you feel your mage lacks some toe-to-toe ability, give this class a try.

## Fighter

Class hall dir: 2n, w

- Learning Curve: Low
- Damage Dealing: A+
- Damage Absorption: E
- Soloing Ability: D
- Bashing Prowess: A
- Tanking Ability: D
- Famous fighters: Too many to mention. Check out the 1700 skillmasters on the scroll in the fighters hall, Undeadguy was the first to 1600 back when Two Weapon wasn't in, and several others who made 1600 but don't \*play any more like Annihilator and (er...I'm stuck).

### Class Abilities - General

Fighters don't get many unique abilities, but they sure are powerful. These are berserk, fury, disarm, outflank, will, sharpen and evaluate.

You get them all at level 1.

Sharpen is a neat new ability that allows you to make edged and pointed weapons marginally better, sometimes turning an 'average damage' weapon into a 'greater than average'. You'll need a whetstone (get a ranger to forage one up for you, polished whetstones are the best). Sharpened weapons can then be honed using a strop (again, ranger-made). The sharpening will wear off over time, but re-honing renews the sharpening. Sometimes, the sharpening backfires and you're left with a useless weapon. Also, a weapon can only be re-sharpened 3 times before it's 'too thin to sharpen'.

Evaluate is a useful tool used to determine how well suited various weapons are for you and others. It also gives information about the quality of armour. Use it to determine the sort of weapons that are good for you. However, be aware that it isn't always spot-on, some weapons that get a bad rating are still pretty good.

### Offensive Abilities

Berserk is an ability you'll be fully aware of already. It's what sets fighters apart from others, and is what gives fighters the A+ in damage output. It is also very good for your skilling speed, as you hit so much more and harder. It's already been explained enough in the 'defences' section.

Fury is the newest addition to fighters. You must have Defence: None on to utilise it. It drains 2 spell points per round, and gives you an occasional extra hit (about twice every three rounds) and also randomly does a special hit, which does upwards of 150 damage (as shown so far anyway). There hasn't really been enough playing around with this yet to form a definite opinion on it, but it would appear berserk is overall more convenient and damaging at this stage for the average fighter.

### Defensive Abilities

Fighters don't have any particularly powerful defensive abilities, however they're better than nothing.

Disarm is the most useful one. It does what it says, costing only 10 spell points for an attempt. Success rate depends on your weapon (rapiers and other bladed weapons are generally the best disarming weapons, blunts and axes poor), your dexterity (big difference between dwarves and elves), the opponent's dexterity (boomerangs and barbed darts can make all the difference) and the opponent's weapon (eg, Venletta is harder to disarm when she has Mace of Darkness than her normal mace). Carry around a boomerang all the time and maximise the use of this very good ability.

Outflank is most useful when soloing. It is an ability that can only be used when fighting multiple opponents – you can 'outflank' one of the opponents you're not attacking and they'll stop hitting you for a few rounds. Success depends on your dexterity, and the opponent's dexterity and intelligence. It's of limited use for tanking fighters since those monsters will just proceed to hit your bashers instead after a while. When bashing, 2 places of note for outflank are Delair and Orc mountain. A fighter who enters combat quickly against the lieutenant will often get hit by the captain – an outflank allows the tank to only have to tank one monster at a time. A fighter can also begin combat on the orc mountain guards, outflank one, and have the tank rescue him/her, and once again the tank will only have to take one guard at a time. It's fairly useful for a solo fighter, however, as quite a few areas have multiple opponents in the same room.

Will is an inherently risky ability. You convert all of your spell points into temporary hit points. Once your will power runs out, you return to 1 hit point, unless you didn't lose many of your temporary hit points. You now get tell-tale warning messages before your willpower runs out too. For most players, this is a panic button – when bashing, you should go into will mode before doing something drastic like quitting out. For fighters without much to lose with a stable connection and a good knowledge of where the safest areas are, it's a pretty useful ability to help when soloing. Just be aware that even in the safest seeming areas, a loose feral wolf could still wander in and finish you off. Also, never will when you're poisoned.

### Skills

A fighter is good in all skills, and generally raises every skill faster than any other class. The exceptions would be marksmanship (rangers and maybe freedom fighters are faster), and maybe unarmed (shapeshifters). A levelling fighter should choose 2 or 3 skills to raise, as it gives them more flexibility when playing, and also it's a lot easier to get 3 skills to 70 than 1 to 100, and there isn't a huge difference between having 100 or 70 skill in something.

As a fighter, you can raise all the tough skills relatively fast, so your best policy is to go for those. Pick at first club, two handed axe/sword or longsword. When you're higher level with time on your hands, branch out to two weapon, exotic and all the other smaller skills that you'll require to raise two weapon.

### Races

As a consequence of the fighter's exclusive dependence on physical damage, and disarm's high dependence on dexterity, dexterity and strength are easily the most important stats for a fighter. Taking humans as the standard, orcs get the same strength, 1 more dex and 1 more constitution, while dwarves get 1 more strength, 1 less dex and 2 more constitution. Though perhaps once upon a time dwarf would have been the best for raw damage, with the advent of

the two weapon skill, in my opinion the orc is now the undisputed fighter when it comes to dishing out damage. To boot, it also comes with high dexterity to disarm better. Dwarves are still perfectly viable, however.

On the other end of the spectrum is the half-elf. If your goal was to get as many skills as quickly as possible, this would be the race for you. Half elves at 16 strength can wield (almost) all the top end weapons, and have the highest int + wis combination of all the races, thereby letting them wield whatever they like, and skill insanely fast. However they obviously will do less damage than dwarves, humans and orcs.

Elvish fighters are often argued as the best fighters, due to 2 factors: their highest dexterity, and the Elvenheart unique. I think this is garbage – though an elvish fighter with Elvenheart gets 19 strength and 17 dex (1 more strength and 1 more dex than an orcish fighter), therefore probably dealing the most damage of any fighter, that all rides on having Elvenheart. Having the viability of your entire character ride on one unique is pretty pathetic. Without it, an elf has 3 less strength than an orc for 1 more dex – which means a huge list of good weapons are unavailable to you – Shadow sword, one handed outstanding sword, crystal blade, awesome scythe, etc etc. As such, elves are good for trying out Elvenheart, and that's about it.

Once again, humans are the happy medium – they do average damage, skill fairly fast, can wield almost everything, don't get auto-attacked due to their race in any area, etc.

## Levelling Your First Fighter

Fighters are easy to get off the ground, but much harder for newer players to go all the way to level 19 with, when soloing, due to their fragility at the high levels.

Level 1-5: pick a easy to hit with, useful later weapon – rapier, club, polearm or axe, get the easiest one, Zhou it up to 15 using berserk, and Zhou it from 15 again – you should get about 20-25 at the end of this session.

Also a good idea is to get a catty from the blacksmith, to get marksmanship to this sort of level before you reach level 5 and can no longer get the catty any more.

Level 5-10: Once you get dexterity up to 6 or 7, you can start working one of the skills that are harder to hit with – two handed axe, two handed sword or longsword. Do the same routine as before. Also, start watching out for boomerangs and kill sanal for it when you run into him – this will slowly raise your marksmanship skill and also get some thrown weapon ability for you, not to mention the immensely useful dexterity penalty to the opponent.

Don't neglect your intelligence or wisdom – having them too low reduces your skilling rate significantly – it's a lot better to be at level 10 with a dozen more skills than with maximum strength/constitution/dexterity.

By level 10, you should have 1 or 2 primary skills (eg club or two handed axe) in the 30s or 40s, with 1 or 2 backup skills (eg longsword, rapier or marksmanship) in the 20s or 30s.

Level 10-15: it is through these levels that your primary skill turns into a monster damage dealer. If you plan on partying your way to level 19, then feel free to raise the big weapons like two handed sword, two handed axe, etc from here – then simply join a party of the right level and get your experience.

If you're going to be doing it solo, you have to be much more versatile. If you haven't received any financial assistance to this point, then you're going to have to be careful about not taking too much damage with berserk, and use all your abilities to full effect.

Firstly you need a versatile weapon to be your primary weapon – it needs to be one handed so you can use a shield, or alternatively parries well, disarms well and does respectable damage. This means longsword, club, polearm, curved blade or rapier. Since fighters have high strength, wear a lot of armour (but leave enough space for loot and heals). If your primary weapon isn't much good at disarming, grab something that disarms well and keep it in your inventory (rapiers and the carved whittling knife). Then have an alias system like:

- 8 = unwield primary weapon
- 9 = wield disarming weapon
- 10 = disarm
- 11 = unwield disarming weapon
- 12 = wield primary weapon

Set your defence to block or parry, and kill things that you can disarm – your typical NPC guard in Zhammar, Andeli, Drakhyra, Balan, Dalair etc are all very good for this. Carry around a boomerang and maybe even barbed darts to make them easier to disarm. If you end up with 2 things attacking you, be sure to outflank one of them. As long as you keep the enemy from damaging you too much, your skills will keep flying up. Some kills are quite the kittens when disarmed, so feel free to turn back into berserk mode once you liberate them of their weapon. Also some kills do the majority of their damage through magical means instead of physical – such as the orcish sorcerer in Dalair, and the witch in the newbie manor – it's best to berserk these ones.

Using will is a risky business, and best done only in areas you're very comfortable in. You should first get a feel of how long it lasts, and then before you use it, you should have a safe room nearby in mind. Once these conditions are fulfilled, it's a very good way of getting a few more rounds out of combat before you have to run away. Also, since the temporary hit points won't be lasting long anyway, it's probably a good idea to turn on berserk while you're using will too. Also, don't use will while poisoned.

Needless to say, it's a good idea to have an alias for defend berserk, and another alias for defend block or parry.

By the end of level 15, you should have one skill in the 60s or 70s, and one or two more not too far behind.

Level 15+: if you're going to party your way to level 19, then just keep going.

If you're going to keep soloing, a fighter could kill very quickly, or quite slowly, depending on how much money you're willing to spend, and whether you're using your ace skill, or just working another one.

If conserving money, keep on doing the same sort of thing as just before, only killing harder guards, while mixing in the occasional easy kill like wyvern or fairy ring.

The expensive way to play is just grabbing the biggest damaging weapon you can find, loading up on heals, using berserk, and picking monsters with not a lot of hit points to kill quickly (evil cleric, old sage, lich of merrick, riognach, wigwog) etc, and just burning through heals and kills very quickly. This will

net you a lot of experience quickly, but obviously will cost a lot, and you'll need a cleric on hand to purge your building tolerance to all the potions you'll be chugging.

A fighter will inevitably hit level 19 as long as they don't take too many risks and use will at bad times.

## Playing a Fighter

The sad truth is that the most efficient way to play a fighter is in a party. Though potentially you can get more experience soloing, having a tank is a lot cheaper, safer, easier and most of the time, faster. This makes the fighter the ideal class for someone learning how to party. Incidentally, although fighters are one of the best bashing classes, they also do not have to do much while bashing compared to other classes while bashing (mages, rangers). This means the learning basher has a lot of time to concentrate on the basics of bashing (attacking quickly, learning the areas, grabbing the loot quickly, etc), while the learning tank has a lot of time to observe what the tank is doing, why they're doing it, where they're going and the other important things. Bashing is easy to get started on – get a good weapon, 2 containers (ideally you can wear both), a few cigars to smoke when you get hurt, a set of medicinals if your tank wants you to be the medic, and just follow the tank around, attacking what he does, and grabbing the loot when the monster dies.

When working a low or mediocre skill, do what I describe you do at levels 10-15 above.

However every so often a fighter should go on a blitz. If you get your hands on some high quality unique armour – ichor, star armour, armour of gaius, dragonplate, and a big weapon like Crescent or Krakadoom, it's time to let hell loose. With that sort of protection and firepower, you'll still be hurting, but the NPCs will be hurting worse. Carry plenty of food, drinks and potions with you – but if there's a safe room close and a safe route to it, then don't be afraid to use will when the NPC is near dead. Once the NPC dies, take time to let will wear off, heal up again, and release the fury on the next kill. Don't rush too much when you're low on potions – a fighter who is extremely stuffed and drunk and therefore can't heal himself is fairly pathetic. You should be able to take out a 6k or 9k every 3-5 minutes – do that and you'll be pulling in somewhere between 100k and 250k experience in an hour.

Tanking fighters are rare. They usually need the very best equipment and bashers to do well, and if you're good enough to tank successfully as a fighter, then you don't need my guiding words for it.

## Is a Fighter for you?

Fighter is a fairly plain class, and therefore excellent for learning the basics of the game with. For those who like accumulating skills, this is definitely the class to be. A lot of people also find bashing very enjoyable, and coupled with the goal of getting every skill to 100, the game has seen many of its best players also spend a lot of time on the fighter class.

## Mage

Class hall dir: 3w, s, w, u

Since a mage's different schools change greatly how well she does various things, this rating system is a little different:

	Conjuration	Invocation	Alteration	Drowgar
Learning Curve	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium-High
Damage Dealing	B-	C	Variable	B
Damage Absorption	D	C-	D+	D
Soloing Ability	A-	B+	C	A-
Bashing Ability	C+	C	A	B-
Tanking Prowess	D+	C-	B	C-

Famous Mages: Thothamon, Greystar, Dooku (incidentally, all alterers)

## Class Abilities

Mages' unique abilities are all in their spells, and there is a dizzying array. For a complete description of all things mage, especially the spells, check out my mage guide.

The spells list is below. All study hours costs are out of school, halve the number if you're in-school. However the spell point cost is the in school cost, to get the out-of-school cost, simply multiply the number by 1.5. This was done deliberately as you'll be spending most of your time looking at buying out-of-school spells, but casting in-school spells.

A mage gains spells by learning them, with her study hours, which are gained through gaining experience (or hitting things with the Glimmer unique staff). You get 1 study hour per 30 experience gained.

## Spells: Magic (General)

Name	Study hours cost	Casting Cost	Description
Light	1	20	duh
Cantrip	3	10	A noncombat party trick
Identify	5	10	Tells you secrets of items
Mark	10	10	Sets a target for teleports and gates
Flame Dart	20	Variable (15ish)	Basic fire based damage spell
Know Alignment	35	15	Finds alignment of a character

Blur	50	55	Basic armour spell, rumoured to help dodging
Knock	80	25	Attempts to unlock locks
Rope Trick	100	15	Makes ropes stand up, or teleports you up a room
Charm	150	30	Attempts to stop something attacking you
Comprehend Languages	200	50	Increases your language abilities
Scry	300	25+Garlic	Gives you a view of the room your target is standing in
Magic Missile	400	32	Second attack spell, about 10-60 damage
Ice Flurry	450	Variable (35ish)	Alternative ice based attack spell, chance to reduce enemy dex
Locate Object	500	20	Locates a previously marked object
Protection from Elements	700	55+parsnip	Raises fire and cold resistance
Fear	750	80	Attempts to make the opponent run out of the room

### Spells: Alteration

Name	Study hours cost	Casting Cost (In School)	Description
Uglify	1800	70	Adds ugly descriptions to target
Stoneskin	2200	Variable (62ish+Parsnip)	Self-cast only armour spell
Burning Hands	2600	Variable (25ish)	Very bad damage spell
Frost Touch	3000	Variable (40ish)	Decent ice spell, chance of –dex to opponent
Lock Portal	3200	35	Opposite of knock
Tongues	3800	70+parsnip	Raises all languages to 100
Enhance Magic	4400	70+parsnip+lotus	Extends the duration of other already-cast spells
Strength	5000	110	+2 bonus strength
Dispel Magic	6000	100+clover +ginseng	The opposite of enhance magic
Power Word: Harm	7000	Variable (30ish)	A weak offensive spell, undeads immune
Enhance Skill	8000	75+parsnip +ginseng	Raises the target skill on the target person
Deepockets	9000	90+parsnip+lotus	Creates a huge weightless self-use only container
Teleport	10000	60+clover	Teleports yourself to a marked area or character
Haste	12600	90+lotus	Doubles the amount of attacks every round of the target
Permanency	18000	180+clover+lotus +nightshade	Extends the duration of target spell until end of reboot

### Spells: Invocation

Name	Study hours cost	Casting Cost (In School)	Description
Continual Light	1800	35+parsnip	Strongly lights up the specific room for a while
Alarm	2000	70+garlic	Puts a 'tripwire' in a room which tells you when someone enters it
Gust of Wind	2400	35	Gets rid of smog like darkness and cloudkill
Fireball	3200	Variable (30ish)	Decent fire damage spell
Iceblast	3600	Variable (40ish)	Generic ice damage spell
Solid Fog	4200	70+clover	Darkens a room
Anti-Magic Shield	5000	95+clover	Immunizes you from mage spells, raises magic resistance
Magic Mouth	5600	60	Like an alarm, except it says your message to the intruder
Cloudkill	6000	110+lotus	Casts a cloud that slowly damages everything in the room
Globe of Invulnerability	6600	70+garlic	Creates a bubble around you that nobody can get through, including you
Power Word: Heal	7000	Variable (25ish + parsnip)	Heals you about 20 hit points
Lightning	8000	Very Variable (0-70 +parsnip +clover)	Deals a very variable amount of damage – anything from 10 to over 150
Mystic Sword	14000	110+ginseng +lotus	Creates a exotic sword for you, and adds 50 to exotic skill
Dimension Door	20000	120+lotus	Creates a 2 way teleporting portal to the marked room

### Spells: Drowgar

Name	Study hours cost	Casting Cost (In School)	Description
Web Hands	1500	40	Raises climbing ability
Poison Shield	1800	55	Raises poison resistance
Web Ladder	2400	25	Creates a ladder
Silk Armour	3000	51	Self-cast only armour spell
Silk Pack	4000	30	Creates a medium sized pack
Spider Legs	5000	Variable (65ish+ginseng)	Sprouts spider legs which attack in addition to normal hits
Web Wall	5600	45+ginseng	Creates a barrier between 2 rooms for characters

Expose Hidden	6000	25+parsnip	Brings non entities in the room out
Venom Spit	7000	Variable (35ish+garlic)	Primary direct high damage attack spell
Spider Bite	9000	Variable (50ish + garlic)	Summons a spider who bashes for you for just one kill
Web Shield	10000	65+ginseng	Supposedly stops missiles from hitting you, seems very bad at it
Web Defender	14000	41+clover+lotus	Spawns a few shadows who try to protect you and fail miserably
Web Mouth	18000	150 + lotus +nightshade	Stops a player from being able to vocalise

### Spells: Conjuration

Name	Study hours cost	Casting Cost (In School)	Description
Armour	1800	Variable (65ish)	Increases armour class of target
Hero's Feast	2200	70+ginseng	Creates a banquet of low efficiency heals
Tiny Hut	3600	55+clover	Creates a little shelter for hiding
Flame Arrow	4000	Variable (25ish)	Very bad attack spell
Ice Spear	4500	Variable (40ish)	Generic Ice spell
Wizard Eye	4600	68	Creates a floating eye which observes and tells you the happenings in a room
Choke	5600	70+parsnip	Similar to spider legs but inferior
Secret Chest	6000	72+ginseng	Creates an invisible chest for storage
Acid Arrow	7000	Variable (35ish +garlic)	Primary high damage direct damage spell
Secure Shelter	8000	95+parsnip+clover	A bigger tiny hut
Instant Summons	10000	55+ginseng	Teleports a marked item from your secret chest to you
Gate	14000	80+parsnip+clover	Creates a 1 way portal to the marked area
Find Familiar	18000	100+parsnip +ginseng+lotus	Creates a non combat familiar who can spy for you

The general abilities that all mages eventually get are: easy light sources (light), clues on various items' secrets (identify), high mobility (rope trip, gate, teleport and dimension door), easy ability to unlock most locks (knock), ability to find anyone lower level than you (screy), ability to get 2 bonus strength (strength), a very big weightless container (deeperpockets), and a few other miscellaneous abilities.

### Offensive Abilities

Offensive spells often define what mages are all about in fantasy games, and on AA it's no exception. The offensive spell that you'll use the most depends on what school you're in – acid arrow for conjuration, haste for alteration, venom spit and spider legs for drowgar and fireball and lightning for invocation.

In general, all the offensive spells apart from haste and spider legs is a simple conversion of about 1 spell point for somewhere between 1.5 and 2 damage for the enemy – this is a very consistent, efficient ratio that downs most monsters quickly, as long as you keep up the spell point pool.

How good haste is depends a lot on what you're hasting – it's mediocre when you're hasting yourself as an elf mage, but godly when hasting a fighter wielding 2 fire orbs while killing in the frost giant steading. This is the spell that makes mages often welcome in parties, as it makes hard kills die much faster, and the hasted person skills faster too. Spider legs is a nice physical damage supplement on the side for a Drowgar mage, sort of like a half-haste.

One offensive spell which is rather unique, and annoying to many players, is cloudkill. This spell releases a swarm of poisonous gas in a room which slowly kills anything inside it, with only a few monsters having the hit points to outlast the duration of the spell, and only a few other monsters immune to it. This makes it very popular for getting hard-to-get pieces of equipment, and making money.

### Defensive Abilities

Mages have few defensive abilities. The most commonly used are the armour spells – armour, stonesskin and silk armour. They give a general boost to armour class, don't cost too much to cast and last for a while, so it's a good idea to cast those spells if you're going to be taking damage.

Protection from elements and anti-magic shield are similar boosts for various resistances, which can be useful when you're expecting to take heavy magical damage (when tanking, perhaps).

Finally there's power word: heal, which is basically a weak and expensive and slow version of the cleric's cure prayer, only useful for invokers.

### Skills

A mage really only has one choice for the primary weapon – staff. Though knife probably raises faster, staff simply has many more high end choices – Glimmer is a tremendous help for gathering study hours, Azakath does far more damage than any knife, and Tetsubo even more so, while there are quite a few reasonably damaging non uniques too like the carved staff.

As a secondary skill, marksmanship is quite good for having your boomerangs hit more, and for hunga-mungas when you're bounty hunting or taking a particularly tough NPC. Crossbow with 30 odd marksmanship skill does OK damage too when desperate.

Mages also raise knife and shortsword somewhat quickly, but those skills don't do much damage and don't have high end good uniques.

### Races

The best race for your mage depends heavily on what you want to do with it, and what school you're planning on joining. For a detailed discussion, check out my mage guide. In general, the elvish races are better for conjuration and invocation, the stronger races better for alteration, and the drowgar is a happy middle ground where anyone can excel. In the past, being elf was important for joining alteration because it allows you to cast their marquee spell, permanence, without needing special equipment – however now with the bonus spell points past level 19, humans can do that at level 20, totally

outclassing elvish alterers.

## Levelling your first Mage

Levelling a mage can be a complex matter, please refer to my mage guide for that.

## Playing a Mage

Once again, my mage guide has a much more detailed guide to how to play a mage. The play style of a mage depends a lot on your school – a conjurer or invoker is a zippy mage who spends little time in combat, but deals a big punch while in it, an alterer fights more like the conventional classes (fighters, clerics), while a drowgar can do both.

When soloing, the zippy play style demands a constant re-supply of spell points – this means constant trips to the monks' meditation area, ruthless exploitation of efficient heals, medicine, tea and potions, and even resorting to bedrolls and inns when you get 'cut' from all those. Conversely, alterers play much like a cleric, getting heavy armour, lots of heals, and standing in the room bashing things to death with a big hasted staff.

Bashing, all mages need to do is keep the sps coming – this means alcohol, smokes and medicinals, and additionally hero's feast for conjurers. Then they need to use their offensive power against the tough kills – with some practice, you'll know which kills need you to drain your sps pool on and which kills only need your staff whacking at it.

The most viable school for a tanking mage would be alteration. You'll need the very best equipment, with bashers who both deal big damage and help reduce the damage you take – rangers/freedom fighters, clerics, fighters with disarming weapons. The premise is that if you kill something really fast, you won't take much damage – so use most of your spell points hasting the hardest hitting fighter, with some occasionally going into power word heal. A word of advice: get good at tanking with the other classes first before trying this.

## Is a mage for you?

A mage is a very versatile class. If you like to do a bit of everything – partying, soloing, treasure hunting, bounty hunting, unique hoarding, exploring and many other things, then mage is your best bet. It's also for those who like partying but are getting a bit bored of their fighters, and being probably the class most suited for exploring, good for those who want to become a wizard.

## Necromancer

Class hall dir: 16w, 4n, 3w

Learning Curve	High
Damage Dealing	A+
Damage Absorption	A
Soloing ability	A+
Bashing ability	C
Tanking prowess	A

Famous necromancers: Lunger, Sinister, Peblo, Sauruman

## Class Abilities - General

A necromancer gets all its abilities from its rituals. Rituals become available to you as you get more intelligence and wisdom. The main ones are the undead pet rituals to raise a helper, rot to do direct damage, lifesteal to heal and do damage, empower to get spell points even faster, and renewal and preserve to keep the pet alive. Here's a list:

Wisdom	Ritual	Sps Cost	Description
2	Detect Good	5	Figures out the alignment of an NPC
	Skeleton	50	The most basic undead pet
	Nettle	5	Um...nothing? Triggers bugs on some NPCs
3	Summon	20	Calls your undead to you when it gets lost
	Wisp	10	A non-combat, light source pet
4	Lifedrain	Variable (30ish)	The lesser of the 2 lifestealing spells, more effective when the opponent is healthier, but doesn't return sps to you
5	Renewal	Variable (about 70 for big undeads)	All pets need to be renewed every half an hour or so, or they'll automatically die.
6	Zombie	66	The second combat pet, marginally better
	Preserve	25	Heals your undead
7	Chill Touch	Variable (35ish)	The first pure damage ritual, rather inefficient compared to mage spells, but better than nothing
8	Hold Undead	10	Temporarily stops undeads from attacking you
9	Warts	78	Rather like a mage's uglify, no real use
10	Shade	82	The next undead pet, this one actually is serviceable, but can't carry anything at all



11	Feign Death	30	A party trick that looks like you have died
12	Lifesteal	Variable (40ish)	The bigger lifesteal spell, very good for fixing your alignment and healing your hit points quickly
14	Pox	98	(Very) slowly damages the enemy even when you're out of the room, pretty useless
15	Weakness	102	Reduces the strength of a target for 5 minutes, again pretty useless
16	Mummy	106	The next pet, pretty good when you just get it
17	Darkness	10	A very annoying spell that makes a room dark
	Disease	114	A stronger version of the pox
	Fetch	122	The first of the endgame undeads, much stronger than mummy
	Empower	15	This dangerous but highly efficient ritual converts all your hit points into spell points – watch out
	Rot	Variable (55ish)	A direct damage spell, decent damage (about 1:1 sps:damage ratio), very good for fixing alignment
	Insect Plague	138	A spammy spell that calls upon the foe a dozen very weak insects, no use outside of PK
	Mindkiller	146	An assault on a player's mind, to cause him to damage himself, little use outside of PK
	Revenant	154	One of the two endgame choice undeads for the necromancer – this one can't wear armour but does very high physical damage
	Pestilence	162	The final and fastest acting disease
	Lich	170	The final undead, does slightly less damage than revenant, but can wear armour
	Doom	170	A ritual that creates an NPC of sorts which haunts an NPC, dealing constant damage to it while you're out of the room. If you or anyone else stays in the room, the NPC will simply kill the creeping doom.

## Offensive Abilities

A necromancer's biggest asset is the undead. A lich or revenant of a good level 19 kill dishes out as much damage as an average cleric or non entity, and coupled with the necromancer's physical hits and occasional rots, which do about 60 damage and never misses like mage spells, makes the necromancer the most consistent damage dealer in the game.

The main thing curtailing a necromancer is the alignment – a necromancer can't issue his undead any commands or perform any rituals when their alignment is neutral or better. This means you have to pick your kills well, not killing too many evil things, and rotting and life stealing often to keep the alignment on the nasty side of neutral.

## Defensive Abilities

The necromancer's defensive abilities are lifesteal, the undead meat shield, and preserve for healing the meat shield. Whether you do the majority of the tanking or the undead does depends on whether you're using a revenant or lich – it's better to tank for a revenant and bash for a lich.

Lifesteal is a pretty efficient healing spell, you often get better than a 1:1 ratio of hit points healed : spell points used, and the enemy takes some damage and you get a little more evil to boot. In this sense, preserve is even more efficient – healing your undead probably around 150 hit points for just 25 spell points, but that's offset by the fact it costs you a 500 coin ritual component to do this every time (salve).

As a result of being able to switch around who tanks, efficient healing and liches being able to carry and wear very heavy armour, necromancers are also very strong defensively.

## Skills

A necromancer's skill choices are much like a mage's – the only realistic choice is the staff, for much the same reasons – much more damaging and more higher end choices. The same comments for mages also apply for marksmanship, knife and shortsword.

## Races

The best race for a necro is a matter of preference, after all, the 3 most successful necromancers are all different races (half elf Lunger, human Peblo and orcish Sinister).

Since orcs and dwarves don't have enough int+wis to get the lich ritual without special equipment, if you're going to prefer the safer undead-tanking style of play, then those 2 races are out of the question. Orcs also get the worst rots of any race, while dwarves get slightly better ones, and also have a much bigger spell point pool (high wisdom). On the other hand, those 2 races are the best at damage absorption due to their high constitution, and the orc's high dexterity, so they would be best for someone who will only be using revenants. Their high hit points and low spell points also makes using empower slightly safer and more efficient.

Half elves get the most int+wis, and this translates to the biggest hitting rots, faster skills (though not being able to wield tetsubo, they can't ever do substantial physical damage). They're a little fragile compared to the other races, but still a pretty solid choice.

There is little reason to be an elvish necromancer since it has less int+wis than its half elvish cousins, and less strength and constitution than the stronger races, and high dexterity isn't as important for a necromancer as for the other classes.

Humans get the best of both worlds, enough int+wis to get all the rituals, enough hit points to survive comfortably, enough strength to hit hard and to wield tetsubo. For their all-round power, my personal preference for a necromancer is human.

## Levelling Your First Necromancer

Necromancers were long the masters of powerlevelling, but changes to how low level undeads work have changed all that, bringing them back to the field.

Levels 1-5: your goal here is to scrounge out some money and get yourself some staff skills with Zhou. CX is a good way of making some experience and money here. The pets available at this area, skeleton and zombie are very weak and almost useless, but still good for temporary hit point shields for you, when you have spare spell points. Kill nice aligned or neutral things – fairy ring, ravel, newbie manor, and kick down the signposts in the game to fix your alignment if you hit neutral. Hopefully you can get to level 5 with about 10 staff skill.

Levels 5-10: shade, mummy and fetch become available here, and they are slightly better creatures – raise corpses of things as you go. Carry around with you some ice to toss out the occasional ice touch, when you get spare spell points. Your goal is to get your staff to over 15 here, and then get yourself a decent bank account for later. Take your time, kill things you'd usually kill around these levels, and conserve money. Treasure hunts are good for money and hobbits are good ways to keep your alignment intact through these levels. Use medicinals to heal your undeads – salve is much too expensive at this stage.

Start to prioritise intelligence and wisdom – you want to have access to fetch (20 int+wis) and rot (22) as soon as possible.

You should finish up here with about 17 staff skill, at least 10k coins and the fetch and rot rituals.

Levels 10-13 or 14: Now that you have just gotten rot and fetch, it's time to make yourself a decent undead. If you're pretty rich (20k+), then it's time to go on a spending splurge to get through these levels very quickly, if not, then these levels will still go by pretty fast.

Fetch actually is able to soak damage from mid level kills reasonably well, so get yourself a good one. Grab yourself 2 alcoholic drinks, a bunch of your usual food heals, and a few red potions. Pick a decent kill (but that's not too hard and thus life threatening) to fetch – Balfor, Blor's Guard, Evil Cleric to rot to death – your rot is still pretty pathetic at this stage, so it will take a while – run to the monks to meditate for spell points a lot, to speed the process up.

Once the fetch is up and running, get it some armour – buy high quality stuff if you're rich, or if you're poor, kill a hobbit sheriff or neville watchman for a cuirboilli leather, or the song mage for radiant armour, kill the goblin alchemist for his shield, get the free stone helmet, and the orc sorcerer's robe. Try to find an elemental orb for it in the shops, but if none are available, midlevel weapons like halberds, dwarven hammers and longswords will suffice.

Your fetch is hardly invulnerable, but with sensible kill selection and careful watching out, it will take punishment from the easier 4ks to 6ks for you. The majority of your damage will come from rots – try to only use spell points for rots in battles, and heal the undead afterwards – if you can't finish a kill in 1 or 2 goes like this, then you've chosen one that's too hard.

A typical kill at these levels (wyvern, fairy queen) will start with you doing the tanking, and tossing out rots every round, while eating heals and drinking alcohol to heal up more to rot more. Once your hit points are a bit low, let the fetch rescue and keep tossing out rots. If you run out of spell points before the thing's seriously wounded or worse, then it's time to go to the monks and meditate up to full again, and kill it in the second go. After this, do a few softer kills to shore up the finances – rots, heals and salves aren't cheap. When you're sober and hungry again, you can kill another 6k.

Done this way, you will very steadily get to revenant.

Levels 14-16 or 17: If your intention all along was to use a revenant and to tank for it, then you've basically reached your goal already. Revenants can help you take a few hits near the end of a fight, but they are fragile, and you with armour and lifesteal are much better at absorbing damage than it is. Grab the revenant the best weapon you can find – since it parries, two handed swords are very good choices – one with a outstanding sword or shadow sword does amazing damage. Since you probably prioritised your intelligence and wisdom, when you first get revenant, you will have very bad dexterity and constitution – don't worry, that means they are cheap and will be respectable again soon enough. Simply pick your first few kills carefully, wear some basic light armour like radiant armour and a whitegolden ring and whatever else you can carry, and prioritise dexterity and constitution from now on (don't forget strength if you're having trouble carrying all your heals). This prioritisation is valuable for even people intending to use lich as it will help you get there faster, and in the meantime you might decide that you like the revenant play style better anyway.

Once your strength, dexterity and constitution are respectable, slap on more and more armour. Use lifesteal on easier kills and rots on harder ones to make them die faster. If you're in Eldar, use tea to help you tank.

Levels 17-19: if you're a revenant user, then just keep going on as before.

For those unhappy with revenant, here's the final undead. Liches are strong and have tons of hit points – slap on it as much armour as you can, since you'll be doing most of the loot-lugging anyway. Most of the time you'll want it to use a shield too, but if a weapon that's just too good to turn down like shadow sword around, then it lives fine without it too.

The lich will require occasional maintenance with a salve, costing 25 spell points – but other than that, the rest of your spell points should go into rotting. Rot when you're facing something tough and when you're hovering near neutral. Experiment with empower if you're a human with a lich – it's a pretty good way to convert hit points you were unlikely to lose (while behind a lich) into more rots and better alignment.

## Playing a Necromancer

Playing a necromancer is about finding a balance of good and evil kills to take, and then killing them quickly.

The main question is – do you want to use a lich or a revenant? Both undeads have their advantages: Liches have a lot of hit points and take a lot of punishment, and allow you to concentrate more on keeping your spell points up and tossing out rots to speed up the fight on tougher kills. Revenants on the other hand, do more damage, and can't wear armour, so take a lot more damage too. The lich is the safer and slow and steady option, but the revenant will probably pull in more experience for you. Ironically, the revenant player is probably less likely to die since they'll be the ones with the armour. Having the lich do the tanking makes tougher kills easier since it takes damage from them better, while the revenant is better with more mundane kills since it deals out damage faster, and since you have to tank for it on the tougher kills, they're slightly more risky. With a half elf or elven necromancer, it's easier to use a lich, while dwarves and orcs can't even raise a lich without special items, and humans are very flexible.

Either way, to get started, grab the usual starting gear, 2 alcoholic drinks, enough food to fill yourself to extremely full, a few red potions, and head over to your favourite pet NPC and rot it to death. Armour either yourself or your undead up, depending on who will be doing the bulk of the tanking, grab some salves, a bunch of dirt and worms, and destroy the NPCs with your raw damage.

The main trick is to keep your alignment above neutral – you have to toss in a few rots every few kills, mix in good aligned areas regularly (Nepeth, Mount Kresh, etc), perhaps join chaos to sacrifice corpses for alignment boosts, and when desperate, snipe down some easy-to-kill-saintly things like Intep and

the doctor.. It will be easier for revenant-users to keep their alignment near evil, since almost all of their spell points will go into offensive evil spells like rot and lifesteal, while the lich-user has to split the spell points used between rot and preserve.

Once you have the hang of keeping your alignment in check and yourself and your undead alive, you can add in more kills to your route and put the foot down on the accelerator – it isn't that hard to pull in 200k experience every hour with a necromancer.

Tanking as a necromancer is usually quite inefficient compared to soloing as one, but that doesn't mean they're bad at it – it's just that they're so good at soloing that the basher usually slows them down. Essentially tanking as a necromancer is the same as soloing, except you have more hanger-ons. Be more inclined to use lich as you get more bashers, since the extra damage a revenant does isn't so important if you have 2 other people also doing damage. Also note that when your bashers are getting hit, it's probably better to rescue them yourselves, and then getting your pet to rescue you – there appears to be some sort of bug that occasionally makes the undead turn feral on you when you ask it to rescue a party member directly.

A bashing necromancer is extremely rare, mainly because it's a pain to keep their alignment at nasty when someone else is leading.

### Is a necromancer for you?

A necromancer is good for one thing – killing things fast. Clone 20 copies of any non undead, non demon NPC, and the necromancer will be the best class for killing that thing the quickest. If that appeals to you, then this is the class for you. A necromancer gains skills the slowest out of any class, isn't really good for anything other than killing things very fast, so if variety and skills are what you're looking for, then this isn't the class for you.

Necromancers can get 'ready to roll' fairly quickly, so it's well suited for people with not much time who want to just log in, kill a lot for an hour or two and log off.

## Paladin

Class hall dir: 16n, 2e, enter hall

Learning Curve	Medium-High
Damage Dealing	A-
Damage Absorption	A
Soloing ability	A-
Bashing ability	B
Tanking prowess	A-

Famous paladins: Druenarri

### Class Abilities - General

With such power in all fields, it's a wonder that paladins aren't more popular. This is probably due more to their restrictions, rather than their kick ass abilities. Paladins can't use marksmanship weapons – no boomerangs, throwing knives or bows, which most players like to have in their repertoire. They can't attack anything nice or better, which is a pain when gathering equipment, soloing or tanking for clueless bashers. They have very restricted choices for guilds, not being able to join 2 of the more popular ones, bears and scythe. They can't fall below nice, or they won't be able to use any of their unique abilities. To level up, they have to do a set of chores, or missions, which are rather boring.

However they have some of the most powerful and unique abilities in the game, which become 'unlocked' as you gain levels, here's a list:

Level	Ability	Sps cost	Description
1	Detect	3	Works out the alignment of an NPC
2	Turtle	2/round	Raises your blocking ability substantially
5	Call	All sps	Gets you a pet horse, which does pretty good damage, but can't go indoors
8	Cure	30	Heals another living being, can't heal yourself
10	Charge	30	Opens combat when wielding a spear or lance, when mounted for extra damage
11	Aura	75	Rather like the mage's stonewall spell, also provides free light, lasts about 12 minutes
14	Harm	max sps	Deals direct damage to undeads, and razer, very powerful
17	Smite	1/3 max sps	Direct damage to any nasty or worse thing, even more powerful, but more alignment based
18	Retribution	All sps	The second aura, which reflects damage dealt to you back to undeads
19	Sense	30	Sniffs out an evil being for the paladin – gives you approximate direction and distance to it

One other ability of paladins is that they have exceptionally high poison resistance for some reason.

### Offensive Abilities

The paladin's most obvious offensive abilities are smite and harm. The other offensive-related abilities are call warhorse, charge and retribution.

A called warhorse gets better with your alignment and level. As you can only get one of them every reboot, it's best to use it purely for offensive purposes, instead of letting it take damage. A warhorse does very nice damage, probably more than an average ranger wolf – it's useful to have it around with you for when you take the occasional outdoors kill (ogres come to mind). Don't leave your warhorse alone for too long however, there are many horsekillers in the game who take pleasure in taking out a warhorse left alone for just a few moments.

Though charge also belongs in this area, not many paladins wield spears (because they do little damage and the good ones are two handed), and you have to be outdoors to use it, and it's not that great anyway.

Retribution is in theory an offensive ability too, as it reflects damage back to undead. However in my testing, this damage reflection is miniscule. Considering that you can only have one aura at a time, that you won't be fighting undeads a lot of the time, it lasts a very short amount of time and that retribution costs ALL of your spell points to cast, it seems vastly inferior to the normal protection aura. Why the ability was passed in its current pitiful form, and being a level 18 skill at that, is beyond me.

Harm is the first ability you get, at level 14. It allows you to do a fair chunk of direct damage to an undead foe of any alignment. The more saintly you are and the more evil the opponent is, the more effective it is – however it isn't quite as strongly dependent on alignment as smite is. This makes it a good choice to use when you find yourself fighting undeads with only nice alignment..

Smite doesn't become available until level 17, and is quite expensive, but worth every single spell point – for 1/3 of your spell point pool, you can do well over 100 damage. A saintly paladin can take down meateater (a 4000 experience kill) with just 4 smites. Of course, this ability only works on the wicked, and is strongly alignment dependent. A saintly paladin with a good flow of spell points can take down any evil monster twice as fast as any other class.

## Defensive Abilities

The paladin only gets 3 defensive abilities, and only 2 can be used on himself, but boy are they good ones.

Turtle is the first one at level 2 – it costs 2 spell points every round to use turtle mode, which gives you a substantial boost to your blocking ability. This bonus depends largely on your level, dexterity and quality of shield – the most controllable factor being the shield. It is therefore important for paladins to always get the best shield possible, regardless of its weight. Fancy shields and polished silver goblin shields are therefore the best options.

At level 5, paladins get a decent cure ability, healing someone else about 30 hit points for 30 spell points.

At level 11, paladins get the aura ability. This is basically an overall boost to armour class, seemingly better than any of the mage protections (note: you can get a mage armour on top of the aura – add on some decent equipment and turtle, and you'll be nigh on invulnerable). As an added bonus, it's also a light source.

## Skills

Paladins are very quick in almost all the skills, apart from marksmanship which they're not allowed to touch. The best choices are longsword and polearm to start with – they're high damage, fast and one handed to allow for a shield. Longsword is slightly superior as they're more common, have more one handed uniques and the outstanding sword does very nice damage.

Once you have a primary skill down, you can branch out to almost any of the others. Ones which are reasonably quick and power are club, two handed sword and spear. Obviously some of the weapon classes aren't great for a soloing paladin since you can't use a shield.

## Races

The best race for a paladin depends on your playing style – whether you plan on playing the paladin like a mage or a fighter, whether you'll be partying a lot or soloing, working lots of skills or just massing experience using smite.

A paladin's smites' power depends largely on his wisdom, and to a lesser extent on intelligence. This makes the half elf's smites the most powerful of all the paladins. The half elf also has 16 strength, enough to wield all the big weapons, and also allows it to skill very quickly. A half elf paladin is the best for someone wanting to take out the big evil kills with smite, drinking potions, using monks' meditation a lot, and aren't too fussed about weapon skills. A half elf isn't quite as good as the stronger races in a party since it doesn't do damage quite as consistently, but it is still nevertheless serviceable, and quite good with the Elvenheart unique.

The orc on the other hand, is the most fighter-like paladin. He gets 18 strength, 15 dexterity and very low intelligence and wisdom. This basically makes an orc a highly defensive fighter who can toss out an occasional blast of goodness. Considering orcs can't join any guilds, have poor skilling rates and don't smite as well as some of the other classes, it is one of the weaker paladins. It is better in a party than solo since its high constant damage and ability to take damage makes it a valuable asset.

Dwarves are very popular choices for paladins. They have almost as much wisdom as a half elf, the highest strength of all the races, and lots of constitution to allow them to consume more heals, to get even more spell points to smite with. They're quite versatile as paladins, and can play like a mage or a fighter, and are good at soloing, tanking or bashing.

Humans are worse than dwarves in every way except skilling speed at being paladins, while elves are quite bad for the same reason that elven fighters aren't much good.

## Levelling your first Paladin

A paladin starts off as nothing spectacular, but gains momentum towards the end and becomes a powerhouse by level 17.

Level 1-5: it's a good idea to raise either polearm or longsword as your primary skill, as a paladin. If you choose polearm, try to get your hands on a hoe, Zhou it up, and just keep hitting things with it. If you want to raise longsword, it's probably a good idea to get 4 dexterity first, either by CX or just hitting things with other skills – otherwise a dark longsword will miss too much. Once you get some dexterity, Zhou it up.

You should hopefully have about 20 skill by level 6.

Level 5-10: through these levels, you're just basically a fighter without berserk. Turtle is not great at this stage, and cure can only be used on others. Call yourself a warhorse, and patiently kill things outside with it – make dexterity and wisdom priorities, to raise your skills faster, as this is very important to get through the next few levels.

This might be a good time to start raising a secondary skill too, whether it be longsword or polearm, or the slower skills like club.

You should have by level 10 a skill of 30-40 in your primary.

Levels 10-14: through these levels, I have always found it tough going without either good equipment, or a friend to level up with. With good equipment,

slap on your newly gained aura, put on turtle, and just whittle away things that are in your skill range— ogres, underground forest zombies, drakhyra guards, delair guards, etc.

With a levelling buddy, more opportunities open – you can use cure, and you can also fight non-evil things. With your aura and turtle, you're still better off doing the tanking, but you'll inevitably get into a situation where you have about 120 spell points and 40 hit points – this is time for your buddy to rescue you, and for you to cure them when they take the hits. When you run out of spell points and they're badly hurt, the NPC should either be dead already or you will have sobered up enough/gotten hungry enough to heal yourself back up a bit again.

In this way, if your buddy does reasonable amounts of damage, you should be able to kill quite a few seemingly tough things for characters that low level like meateater, fairy queen, general, etc.

If you don't have good equipment or a levelling buddy, then it's just a process of getting yourself some armour, slapping the aura on, grabbing the horse and patiently getting experience. Don't despair, freedom is near.

You should have about 50 skill by level 15.

Levels 14-17: you just got the harm ability. It's time for the undead of the world to quake. What I like to do during these levels, is to work on two kills at the same time – one undead, and one non undead to gain skills on. I get equipped up, pick an undead, and harm it with all my spell points – this will probably drop it down to hurt. Then, I'll run off to the other kill, and whack it with my weapon, eating food and drinking alcohol while my hit points go down. Once I fill up on spell points again, I go back and finish the undead off. This way I make both skills and experience, at the risk of someone coming along and killing the mob.

When you really need an undead to die fast, just go to monks' meditation and fill up on spell points again. Also, if your harming got the undead to seriously wounded or something, it's probably better to just quickly heal up and finish it off before leaving.

Good harm-whack pairs are: lord merrick/mound, sati + phantom/wyvern+general, meateater/temple guards+demonic priest, windmill guards+bonebreaker, anasazi spirit/guard. Of course, be careful with some of the nastier undeads, as they can very easily kill a level 14 paladin.

By the end of this, you should have anywhere between 55 and 70 skill in the primary, depending on how enthusiastic you were with your harming.

Level 17+: now you have the major ability, smite. It's another step up from harm, and gives you much more choice in what to kill quickly. You could one of two ways. One is the expensive way – concentrating hard on getting as many smites out as possible – turning turtle off, using lots of potions, teas, meditating, etc This will get you a lot of experience, and not many skills.

The second way is the slow n steady – put on turtle, move from kill to kill, playing like a cleric, and as you get excess spell points, chuck a smite to speed up the kill. This is slower but gets you more skills and money.

With good equipment and good skills, a paladin can do whatever it likes and succeed in world populated by evil. It won't be long before you hit level 19.

## Playing a Paladin

Paladins can be played tanking, bashing or soloing all pretty well. The way to solo with a paladin has been already outlined above in the levelling section. An additional note is that a good fun way to raise middle-low weapon skills in the midlevels is to roam around with a scalping knife near the ranger camp, killing ogres with your horses – the scalps pay for your heals, and the scalping counts as missions for levelling up (wooo!)

A bashing paladin plays much like a cleric basher. You should ask your tank early on whether he wants you to smite the opponents or cure him. Generally speaking, if your tank is plenty good at healing anyway – clerics, or freedom fighters with very good equipment, or another paladin, then smite is good, otherwise cure will make the tank's job a lot easier. If the cure option, then just monitor the tank's hit points, and 'top him up' – when he's about 50 or 60 hit points from max, just toss in a cure so he doesn't have to drink a potion, and is never near dangerous levels of hit points.

A tanking paladin is quite an interesting character, as they can potentially be the very best tanks. With aura, turtle and a permed armour, the paladin probably takes the least damage of any tank. Of course, unlike a cleric, he can't heal himself. To tank as a paladin, you firstly need at least one quick basher who can quickly attack nice or good aligned kills for you to initiate combat for the party. Otherwise, the party will be quite slow.

Other than that, get the best shield and armour you can, put on aura and turtle, and toss out smites when you have spare spell points, while keeping a watch on your alignment – don't do heavily good aligned areas like Nepeth and Mount Kresh unless there's something you really need. One special mention goes out to the Armour of Ichor – ironically the best piece of armour for a tanking paladin. Its ability to drain corpses to heal your hps and sps means you can toss twice as much smites, making tough evil kills a breeze.

## Is a Paladin for you?

Paladins are a very powerful class. They're not too good at exploration since they often can't attack things that you might want to get past, and can be a pain to solo with after you get used to your other characters, as many of your favourite kills are actually alignment barred. However when it comes to things they can kill, (and there are a lot more evil monsters in the game than good ones) they are an unstoppable force of good. Paladins are for those who are a bit bored of their plain old clerics, fighters or mages, and want something similar but with a twist. Paladins are very powerful after reboot to gather equipment from evil aligned mobs, in a party and also soloing.

## Ranger

Class hall dir: 31n, 9w, 10n, 16e, s, enter camp

Learning Curve	Low-Medium
Damage Dealing	A
Damage Absorption	C+
Soloing ability	A
Bashing ability	A+

Tanking prowess     B

Famous rangers: Clemeth, Zwr, Thorn, Chun, Roxxie

## Class Abilities - General

For a more complete ranger guide, check out my bigger one.

The ranger gets a lot of a lot of abilities. Most are non-combat woodcrafting abilities that allow them to create things out of raw materials they gather – wood, pelts, sinew, foraged foods and herbs, etc etc. This is one of the few ways a character on AA can gain experience without going into combat. Rangers also get to tame wolves, companions who help attack things with you, and take damage for you when required. Other than that, strike is the only directly combat related skill. Every single ability is available at level 1, though many require a decent amount of woodcraft to do with any degree of success. Here's a list of all those abilities:

Name	Argument	Cost	Reward	Description
Glance	<character>	2	N/A	Gauges difficulty of target
Observe	<character>	30	N/A	A much more detailed glance
Skin	corpse	N/A	Size of pelt *15 + 5 xp	Skins you a pelt for making into other things from a corpse
Gut	corpse	N/A	N/A	Extracts some sinew from a corpse
Carve	corpse	N/A	~190 xp for a huge hunk	Gets you some instant food from a corpse
Pluck	corpse	N/A	N/A	Gets you some feathers
Forage	none	2	N/A	Surveys the room for gather-able materials
Cut	'help Cut'	Variable	N/A	Cuts some of the wood in the room into staves, spears, etc
Gather	'help gather'	Variable	N/A	Gathers herbs, foods, seashells, stones from the room
Cook	Meat, fruit, egg, etc	N/A	N/A	Makes raw food much more edible
Distill	Herbs, flowers etc	N/A	N/A	Distill medicine, perfume, alcohol from herbs, grains etc
Whittle	'help whittle'	Variable	Variable	Makes firewood into pipes, toys, whistles, etc
Braid	none	Don't do it	Society Damnation	Don't do it
Make	'help make'	N/A	Variable, ~20 xp/pelt piece	Makes pelts and sinews and feathers into armours, bedrolls, etc
Sharpen	staff, beam	55(staff), 5(beam)	N/A	Makes staves into spears, beams into stakes
Impale	corpse	N/A	N/A	Impales a corpse as a girsly warning to others
Build	'help build'	N/A	N/A	Builds structures and snares from basic materials
Repair	'Help repair'	N/A	N/A	Repairs what we built above
Survey	None	2	N/A	Peeks at the surrounding 8 rooms
Scan	None, or <direction>	5 per direction	N/A	Finds all the living things in direct line of sight in the target direction
Memorize	<name>	10	N/A	Adds the location to your 'bearings' list
Bearings	None	3	N/A	Shows the general direction and distance from your memorized places
Track	<target>	10, +3/room	N/A	Sniffs out the general direction and distance of the target
Elude	None	Variable	N/A	Stops monsters from hunting you
Mark	<symbol>	5	N/A	Makes a trail marking for fellow players
Strike	None	6	N/A	Attempts to get an extra hit in during combat

## Offensive Abilities

A ranger only has 2 directly offensive abilities – his wolf and the strike ability, and one indirect – the bola.

The ranger's wolf in combat helps him deal a little more damage, a typical maxxed out wolf would do the sort of damage an elven non entity might do with a rapier. It's always a good idea to get the wolf into the fray as soon as possible.

Strike is the only way a ranger can use his spell points in combat to deal more damage, and thus every ranger with spare spell points should always be striking at every opportunity – it's like half a haste, allowing an attempt at an extra hit every 2 rounds.

The bola is an item which anybody can use, which trips up humanoids, until they stand up a dozen rounds later, or when it uses a bladed weapon to cut the bola. However they break regularly, and only rangers can repair them. It costs 3 sinew to repair, and so the bola has become a ranger item. A ranger with over 100 sinew and 2 bolas can kill any humanoid faster than a necromancer, especially if the humanoid doesn't wield a bladed weapon.

## Defensive Abilities

A ranger doesn't really have any defensive abilities – the bola helps opponents deal less damage to him, and the wolf is a useful meat shield on easier (3k or less kills who don't wield weapons) NPCs. Instead a ranger has to rely on the ability of wolves to heal by medicinals and being fed meat, and the ranger's own blocking to survive. Check out my ranger guide to see how to fully utilise the wolf to absorb damage better.

## Skills

Rangers are very good with almost all skills, second only to fighters. Since wolves share half the tanking, shields aren't absolutely essential for rangers either (though always use one if your off-hand is otherwise free). This gives you a lot of choice for what to use.

The fastest skills for ranger are axe, spear, shortsword, knife, marksmanship and unarmed. These all go up very fast, but only marksmanship does good damage, the rest are rather pitiful against 6k and 9k monsters.

Good first choices for rangers are longsword and two-handed axe. These go up a little slower, but do a lot more damage. Half elves should be more inclined to use two-handed axe first, and the others longsword, since a half elf will be hiding behind his bigger wolf more often, and the other races need a shield to take the extra hits that their wolves won't be able to.

All the other skills go up reasonably well, barring flail, rapier and two weapon. However two weapon can do very nice damage later on if you can be bothered spending millions of experience raising it.

## Races

- copy and pasted from my ranger guide\*

Rangers don't really have a 'best' race, it's all preferences. However, if you're not interested in maxxing wolves, and like to kill stuff and wield big things, I'd recommend against half elves and especially elves.

A few questions are relevant when choosing a race. Do you plan on just getting the character to level 19 and not playing again? Do you want to get hundreds of skills? Do you like wielding big smashy smashy weapons? Do you want to tank or bash or solo more?

In general, if you're going to get to level 19 or a maxxed wolf and forget it about it, half elf and orc is the way to go. A long term player who is patient with waiting for skills should use dwarf or orc, whereas a long term player who wants to see skills come up as quickly as possible should use human. Here's a better explanation:

Half elf is probably the most popular race amongst rangers. A half elf finishes up with the highest wisdom, the highest wisdom/intelligence combination, and the biggest wolves. This means your 'finished' half elf will have high skills, a big scary wolf...but can only wield 3 weapons of any worth – Elvenheart, greath mithril axe and Crescent. That, and bows. If you're happy with only getting to such a limited range of good weapons, and like big wolves, then this is the race for you. Lazy half elves also have a viable option in not bonding a wolf. Thorn is probably the most famous half elf.

Orc gets up to an enormous wolf – though it's at the lowest 'mini-level', elves and humans have level 2 enormous', and dwarves get a level 3 one. In my opinion a level 1 enormous is good enough, my own wolf dies so much most of the time I use it at huge, and it's adequate to get me all I need. The orc has a dismal int+wis, so if you're impatient and you want to raise some of the slower skills like club and exotic, this isn't the class for you. However, if you are patient, this is the best class for pure damage at the end – 2 more dex than a dwarf, 1 more than a human, the orc can wield everything in the game (except the Sword of Gilian) and destroy anything with it. See Chun.

Dwarf gets the biggest enormous wolf. They also get the most strength, which means flexibility with equipment. Its dismal dexterity (14) and mediocre int+wis means it takes a very patient player to raise skills with this character. Once a skill gets high however, the dwarf will hit just as hard as the orc, or very close to it. Lazy dwarves can also just go with non bonded wolves. Dwarves and orcs are fairly similar – a question of whether you like dexterity or strength, similar to the choice facing most fighters. Famous dwarves are Harp, Thorn (sometimes), and Ebot. Their popularity has diminished since these bonded wolves.

Humans are a nice halfway point between the orcs, dwarves and half elves. They have reasonable int+wis, so they skill pretty quickly, have solidly sized wolves, and can wield anything worth wielding. Mine's of course human, and I recommend this for long term players who just like to see skills and bonecrushes pop up as much as possible. Naturally, an orc or dwarf ranger with 100 in some skill would hit harder than a human with 100 in that skill who'd hit harder than a half elf, but sometimes it's a question of getting to that 100 skill, or being able to wield that big weapon. Famous humans are Clemeth and Zwr.

Elves I see as simply inferior to humans and orcs. They have similar skilling rates to humans, have the same sized wolves, yet can't wield anything decent (not even exquisite rune sword). They have the best dexterity (for archery), but orcs only have 1 less dex and a lot more strength and constitution. 13 strength for a fighter-based class is just painful to play. There are no famous elf rangers, and I think there's a good reason for that.

## Levelling your first Ranger

How to level your first ranger depends on whether you're happy to take it slow or you want to get it to level 19 as fast as possible.

For the slow route, it will involve bonding a pup to you, and waiting for it to grow with your character – your character would usually advance a lot faster than the pup. The fast route just uses non-bonded wolves until they're high level, then if they want a bonded wolf, the ranger will go tame one then.

- copy n pasted from ranger guide\*

Level 1-10: There isn't much to this. If you're going to bond a wolf, just get the biggest one you're allowed (sylvanthic pups are very popular). Some advocate getting a smaller wolf or dog because their abilities are more advanced at any given stage than the larger dogs. That is, if you started with a little doggy instead of a medium sized pup, despite the fact it'll be one size smaller than the other at any stage, it'll be just as good at carrying, dodging etc. While this may or may not be true, the bottom line is idling is boring, and the two wolves will end up exactly the same anyway.

Since wolves are so dependent on time taken, just chill out, kill stuff slowly, watch that it doesn't feral (it's very frustrating). Since you'll have so much time to burn, some things you could do to keep interested is – watch television while doing it, just leave a big pile of meat for the wolf to eat for itself from the ground, idle while at work (if you're that lucky) or when doing other more important stuff, raise all your skills with Zhou to 16+, Geocclaim. Anybody should be able to get up to level 10, but there's no rush as you'll need a very large sized one for the mid levels.

When at levels 1-5, get a catty from the smithy, and train that marksmanship skill up to 15+. It's a lot easier than waiting for a boomerang to get those initial skills. After that, just throw boomerangs all the time. It'll also allow archery to be easier to use when at midlevels, should you choose to go that path.

If you're not going to bond a wolf, just get a reasonably sized doggy, wield your primary weapon, and power your way to level 10. Don't neglect intelligence, and you should be able to hit level 10 with about 30 in longsword or two handed axe, more for the easier weapons, less for the others.

Levels 11 – 16: Hopefully now you've got a healthy amount of skills (30ish in your primary, and about 20 in several other backup ones, especially marksmanship). If you choose to use marksmanship (archery) to get yourself to level 19, then the wolf won't be so important – just don't let it feral. For those choosing this path, just follow the general directions in the archery section.

For the rest of us, this is unfortunately a period of time where you're going to have to live in harkke, star caverns etc, as the bonded wolves at those levels

are a bit crappy and fragile. Good areas to patrol are burnham woods (the animals), star caverns, harkke, Anasazi, the tundra and the area around ranger camp. I'm sure everybody knows how to pelt things.

Be sure to mix in the occasional bison or unicorn or elephant seal when clearing out those areas, or else you'll end up with a rather bad skills, and have trouble killing real stuff.

For those using non-bonded wolves, just use those wandering timber wolves near ranger camp and snow wolves once you have the wisdom for it. Use Graddam before killing them off, and take bigger things like moose and polar bears. These levels should be a lot easier for you than someone using bonded wolves.

Level 17+: It is around this time that your bonded wolf is finally huge – enough for it not to be massacred by real kills. Your longsword or two handed axe skill should be around 60 now, and if you didn't listen to me and used the easier weapons, you'll start noticing they're pretty crappy about now.

Start off with slightly easier 'real kills', fairy dragon, wyvern, general, unicorn, baby dragons and whatever should all be reasonably easy. Just take it slowly at first as you get accustomed to killing normal things with a \*gasp\*.

By level 19 and a maxxed wolf, all but the hardest kills (things of the Razar, Illarin, holocaust spirit ilk) should be fairly easy for you.

For those who used a non bonded wolf, because you killed slightly better stuff in the earlier levels, you'll have a higher skill than the bonded wolf equivalents. Taking whatever you like with your disposable wolves should be simple.

## Playing a Ranger

Ranger play can pull in anywhere from 50k experience an hour to 300k in an hour in a normal session, depending on what you kill. There is no skill to being level 19 with a maxxed out wolf and a 70 odd weapon skill, killing packrats and unicorns and pelting them for your experience.

What's much more interesting and rewarding is going out and killing level 18 and 19 kills. Basically you need to grab a big weapon, some sinew, a bola or two, a suit of armour and a nice collar for the wolf. Start combat with a humanoid, strike every 2 rounds, and if it's unarmed, throw the bola at it, or if not, throw the bola when it's seriously wounded (so it doesn't cut it before it dies). Have the wolf attack as soon as possible, and share the tanking with it – tank more on the tougher kills, and let it take the easier ones. The best kills for rangers are those that yield sinew and those that trip and can't cut bolas – fairy dragon, wyvern, bulette, general, evil cleric, orcish chieftain, hawkeye, evil cleric, sage, etc. The worst are high hit point untrippables – Holocaust spirit, chaos warrior, etc. You'll learn a lot about keeping track of inventory weights, your health, your wolf's health, resets, sinew, and many other things if you solo well as a ranger.

A bashing ranger can be easily more valuable than a fighter in a party. Your job is essentially the same as the fighter's, except you have to also throw bolas every fight at appropriate times, sometimes help out the tank by letting your wolf tank, strike every 2 rounds, have the wolf join the fight and keep your own spell points coming. It's a lot to do at once, but once you get used to it, tanks will love to have you around tripping things up and dealing massive damage.

Tanking as a ranger is much like soloing – you don't have much in the way of damage mitigation, so you need a lot of good equipment, and to have a good grasp of how to share the tanking with the wolf. Don't be surprised if you're guzzling down potions rapidly on some kills, and avoid that kill next time – a ranger tank is not a power tank, but still can be quite fast.

## Is a ranger for you?

Rangers are easy to learn, hard to master. They are essentially mediocre at first glance, but once you understand the links between how the character works, it leads to the sort of character that has recently been branded as 'overpowered'. A ranger is good for new and older players alike. The ranger is a very self sufficient class, being able to make its own heals, weapons, armours, money out of scratch, and has innate abilities to find its way around, so it's very good for new players. For more experienced players, it's a great alternative for a basher bored of his fighter, or someone who likes to solo and see skills go up, or people who really liked tamagotchi. Rangers are a versatile, powerful class that has a bit to offer everybody.

## The class that doesn't exist

Learning Curve	Medium
Damage Dealing	B
Damage Absorption	A-
Soloing ability	A
Bashing ability	B-
Tanking prowess	A

Famous non-entities: Bleys, Capet, Delaney, Tequilla, Lunarcee

## Class Abilities - General

Non entities (NE) have a range of unique abilities. The non combat ones are cityspeak, liberation, lock repair, herbalism, invisibility, night vision, judge, and inconspicuous shadowing and storage. They also have a few very nifty combat abilities – backrub, fencing and 'oops, watch the floor, it's slippery'.

Almost all of these abilities are related to NE-only abilities that can be raised in their class hall. These abilities start off at 0, and raise in increments of 4 at a time when you put 'training hours' into them – very similar to the mage's study hours. The abilities get more expensive to raise as they get higher.

NEs are the social elite, can choose to speak to other NEs in their own language, cityspeak, which is very sophisticated and upper class – the common rabble cannot comprehend such art

NEs are also freedom fighters, liberating the mortals of their worldly burdens, to make them cleaner and more pure. Liberators who are more dextrous do



so more discretely, heroically not even letting their targets thank them for the service. Of course, more dextrous and intelligent mortals are more likely to become aware of the assistance rendered, and report to the authorities the good that is being done by the said NE. Of course, a successful liberation mission is awarded with a little experience.

Naturally, some NEs have a bit of an exhibitionist side, and like all gentlemen, have their own calling cards. These cards are given to the liberated discretely, to help them learn the lessons of freedom.

As a consequence of their experience in the field of worldly burdens, NEs have gotten quite good at judging how heavily mortals are burdened by their worldly possessions, and who needs liberating the most. They are also best able to judge the most burdensome items, and the ways of disposing of them best.

Of course, selfless NEs believe that it is best for those they help to not see their benefactors. After much training, they can blend into the surroundings of any area, gracefully moving from room to room without mortals ever seeing the faces of these heroes.

To also assist their ability to help those who most need liberating, NEs have developed the art of inconspicuous shadowing – allowing a NE to follow a mortal inconspicuously, to keep track of their problems, and to relieve them when the time is ripe.

After a liberation, NEs often take upon themselves to carry the burdens of the mortal world for the liberated. They often store such goods on their own person, hidden in their own clothes, to prevent others seeing the sacrifices they make for society in such a deed.

NEs are incredibly diligent at protecting the citizens' basic freedoms of movement – sometimes doors and chests' locks get...jammed, and they're always there to fix this up.

As a consequence of all these good deeds, the gods have awarded NEs with the ability to see better in the dark, for the services rendered to society. Although not true night-vision, NEs can adapt to the conditions in the darkness in just a few moments, and with a little effort, see much better than their mortal cousins.

Finally, as all sophisticated gentlemen do, NEs have taken up a somewhat unrelated hobby – herbalism. They are mostly interested in the uses of the oft-misunderstood nightshade, in its ability to bring people closer to god, and are able to spread the effects of this herb to many items.

### Class Abilities - Offensive

Despite the noble goals of this upper class of society, there are many ignorant buffoons in the world who do not understand this. In the past, NEs have tried to evade these people, bringing a peaceful resolution with no bloodshed. However such a tact led to many of their own falling to cold blooded murder, and as such NEs have developed a unique brand of fighting to protect themselves, and to dispatch the buffoons quickly before they draw too much attention to the scene.

Provoked NEs can jump from their camouflaged positions, giving the ignorant and soon-to-be-dead buffoon a deadly backrub, dealing upwards of 60 damage in one hit. Trained NEs are master masseurs, rarely missing, with only the most dextrous and lucky mortals able to dodge this deadly self-defence technique.

Once in the open, NEs fight in the way of a true gentleman, with the parry and riposte of fencing. Many NEs carry a smaller blade in their off-hand as a secondary weapon, and in fencing mode, the master fencer is often able to find openings the opponent's defences, striking gracefully and quickly.

Finally, NEs are masters of their terrain, and very good at avoiding falling over precarious stumbling blocks on the ground. Their opponents, however, are often less sure-footed and are as clumsy with their feet as they are with their brains. Mesmerised by the blades of the NEs, many opponents simply find themselves falling over the many slippery patches on the world of AA while fighting a NE. This naturally makes the NE's job in dispatching the buffoon very much easier, allowing them to deal damage faster, and also be hit less. Those most strong and dextrous are better able to mesmerise their opponents.

### Class Abilities - Defensive

As a result of being targetted for their good deeds, the numbers of NEs are not what they once were. To combat this problem, NEs have developed their fencing skills to minimise damage taken in combat. With a good secondary, experienced NEs can often double their parrying ability, avoiding many blows that they would otherwise take. They are often better at parrying than even paladins are at blocking, and this makes up for their inability to heal or cast protective incantations over themselves.

Since the new level additions, parry bonuses go up very high and vary as you get higher in levels. Also, different races get different bonuses. As a result, the following table takes main gauche as an arbitrary standard, and the other knives' parry bonuses compare to it:

Name	Parry Bonus	Other Abilities
A sharp butcher's knife	+10 (not a typo)	
Gemmed Rondel Dagger	+3	+20 fencing, +20 backrub, -20 liberation, unique
Draqisfang	+3	Unique
Main Gauche	0	
Mirrored Knife	0	
Stone Dagger	0	Weights 3
Shadowspawn	-3ish	+2 strength when fed corpses, Unique
Sai	-4	
Knife of the Defender	-6	
Hunga-Munga	-8	Can be thrown too

### Skills

Due to their reliance on parrying, NEs are proficient in bladed weapons. Knife goes up the fastest, however it does very little damage.

Rapiers and curved blades are the most popular choices, with rapier possessing the best parrying and two very nice uniques – the downside being its damage is mediocre. Curved blades also raise quickly, and do a bit more damage, but are rarer and heavier and parry a little worse.

People with more time can raise longsword and club. They go up at about the same rate, and do more damage than the aforementioned choices. Longsword parries a little worse than rapier, but does substantially more damage, while clubs parry badly but does the most damage of all.

NEs of elvish ilk with a lot of time on their hands may also be tempted to try two-handed sword for the Elvenheart unique. Though it doesn't go up particularly quickly, an elvish NE with Elvenheart would indeed deal great damage with her blows, also masterfully distracting the opponents into falling over very successfully.

Finally, being masters of the quick kill, NEs are very quick with marksmanship as well, quite possibly more adept at the art than fighters.

## Races

NEs are mostly orcs and elves. The elves are master liberators, out there assisting the needy, rarely seen by the liberated themselves. Orcs, on the other hand, are master defenders of the society, proficient in dispatching the many buffoons who oppose the work of the NE.

If you're one with a pure heart, egalitarian ideals, and a selfless spirit for helping others, then elf is your race. With their highly dextrous hands and feet, elves are very good at evading detection while doing their work, and doing their work quickly. However they are very weak and fragile, and once detected, are seldom able to put up much of a fight.

Orcs are only slightly less dextrous, and so are pretty good liberators. However their true strength lie in their training in the weights rooms and combat floors. They can wield all weaponry (except a couple of staves) and are tough and uncompromising in combat. They are masters of mesmerisation, often putting their opponents down on the floor. Orcs are rather slow in learning their skills, but this is made up by their supreme prowess in combat.

With such a reliance on dexterity, the other races are all a bit inferior. The human and half elf gain skills faster, but the half elf can't even wield crystal blade without strength boosters, and humans do so at the cost of combat prowess when compared to orcs. Dwarves are the slowest, not great at parrying, mesmerising or liberating.

## Levelling your first Freedom Fighter

NEs are actually fairly easy to level up, due to their ability to mesmerise almost all the humanoids at their level.

Level 1-5: it's best to level up using rapier or curved blade. Pick one, and Zhou it to around 20 by level 6. Also get a catty sometime before level 5 and Zhou it to as high as you can get it. Don't use fencing since you'll be pretty bad at it until level 15 or so and your weapons at this stage suck at parrying. Always max out dexterity, then raise the stat that is the cheapest, unless there's another one you really need. Always try to mesmerise your opponents when you can. By level 3 or 4, you should be able to mesmerise the zombies and skeletons in the newbie ship, which are great for you at that level.

While levelling, your first priority with training in the class hall is the fencing ability.

Level 5-10: Stick with your primary weapon, and hunt down from now on only humanoids. Fairy ring fairies, skeletons and zombies in the newbie ship, the various humanoids in the newbie manor, the little orcs in dalair, hobbits, the knights' training area should keep you busy here. NEs are very powerful during these levels compared to other classes. As long as you haven't neglected intelligence or wisdom, you should come out of this with about 30-40 in your primary skill.

Level 10-15: It's the same here, just incorporate some armour into what you take around with you, and always check for boomerangs to help your mesmerising. Upgrade what you kill to Burnham messengers and soldiers, Neville shopkeepers and watchmen and peasants, Dalair soldiers, Andeli humans, Drakhyra townspeople and guards, brigands, ogres, packrats – there are a lot of humanoids for you to hunt down – as you find your fencing gets better, feel more free to use it on harder NPCs or when you have excess spell points. Finish up here with about 50-65 skills.

Level 15+: It all starts to come together for the NE here. You can raise your other detection-avoiding abilities now, your fencing reaches its peak, you're able to mesmerise even the best monsters. Wear full (but light) armour, use a good parrying weapon and good secondary, keep fencing on, and hunt down mostly humanoids, mixing in the occasional big humanoid like the evil cleric, orcish chieftain, sage, etc. If you're making a lot of money, you might as well carry around a few hunga-mungas too, to finish kills off even faster. A fully-fledged NE is a very powerful and fast solo character.

## Playing a non-entity

The way to solo a NE is already described in the level 15+ section above. One other thing that you could try is archery – since NEs can always re-enter a room undetected, hit and run archery is a (infamously legally touchy) quick way for NEs to raise marksmanship and get some quick equipment and experience. You'll need to grab the best bow you can, about 4 quivers of arrows (or 2 quivers with a weapon to switch to), and all the armour you can carry. Give the victim a backrub to get started, then hit and run arrows until it dies.

NEs don't make good bashers, as the upper class wasn't born to be led by another. However if forced into it, you should wield something damaging – a club or longsword or curved blade, have a secondary, and always keep your sps coming. Since you mesmerise opponents even better when you're not in combat with them yet, and backrubs always work better on mesmerised people, you should mesmerise humanoids before backrubbing when bashing. When you have too many spell points, turn on fencing mode for some extra damage from the off-hand.

NEs make quite good and fast tanks, however. Their ability to deal out 60 damage right off the bat and ability to mesmerise opponents helps the whole party kill very quickly. Always have fencing on when tanking, and always mesmerise when there is an opportunity to. You'll probably have to guzzle quite a few potions – but this can be controlled as long as you steer clear of things that have many hit points and are hard to mesmerise – chaos warrior, huge dragon, etc.

## Is a non-entity for you?

A NE is good for people looking for a powerful tanking character as an alternative to their cleric, and people who want to help their fellow mortals redistribute their wordly burdens. It is a class very suited to soloing as well, also able to raise many different skills quite well, including two weapon. It's in my opinion one of the most fun and interesting classes on AA.

## Shapeshifters

Class hall dirs: 11s, all w, 6s, e, s, 10e, 10s, 3e, s, 2e

Since each of the primary clans within a shapeshifter greatly change how good a shapeshifter is at doing various things, this rating system is a little bit different, like the mage rating above.

	<b>Drakon Xaerre</b>		<b>Treant</b>
Learning Curve	Medium Low		Medium-High
Damage Dealing	B	B+	C
Damage Absorption	A-	C	A+
Soloing Ability	A	B-	C
Bashing Ability	B	B+	F
Tanking Prowess	B	C	D

Famous Primaries Serin Gyn

### Class Abilities - General

Shapeshifters are a very complex class. Their main ability is obviously to be able to change into another form – opossums, frogs, rocks, cats, lizards and trees. Each form has its own special abilities. More complicated forms constantly lose spell points to represent the effort it takes to stay in the form. For a more detailed description, check out Moot's website (<http://uk.geocities.com/mootshovel/shapeshifters.html>) and Venom's (<http://sio.midco.net/shapeshifters/>).

To get these forms, you learn them from various characters in the class hall. Each form typically has 5 levels, each one more powerful than the last. To advance in form, you have to gain experience (which does not have to be gained while in the form you are trying to advance in), as well as time spent in form (which does have to be spent in the appropriate form). There are a total of 59 forms, taking about 20 days(!) of character age to max out all the forms.

The first advanced form you learn (cat, flower, chameleon) determines your primary clan, and the second the secondary. This affects how long it will take for you to gain levels in the secondary and tertiary clans – a tertiary clan form takes much much longer than a primary clan form.

Opossum is the most basic form for all shapeshifters, which is mandatory to learn. It is very weak, uses its claws to attack, and unlike most of the other lower forms, is able to pick things up. it's a good idea to spend only as much time in this form as you have to.

Frogs are the next basic form, which isn't compulsory. Frogs simply walk across rivers and lakes, which gives it nice mobility. They attack better than opossums but can't pick things up.

The Rock formations are odd forms with no use as they cannot attack and basically can't be attacked either. They take ages to max out, to move around, and to do anything. Very strange and useless form.

Once past the general forms, there are then a further 3 'branches' to choose from. They are the feline, reptile and forest clans, each boasting 3 linked main forms that are progressively more powerful, with 5 levels of each. Typically it takes level 3 in the previous form before you can advance to the next powerful form (ie level 3 chameleon is required before you can get level 1 nelitos dragon).

The reptile clan is the most popular. You start off as a chameleon, which can blend into its surroundings, and eat small insects to heal. They get damage bonuses against insects and spiders.

The chameleon then can become a nelitos dragon, which is a slightly tougher version that gets a 'bite' ability to do minor damage for 10 spell points.

Finally the nelitos dragon is able to morph into a drakon. Drakons are very tough, with high natural armour class, and get a progressively powerful breath attack, eventually turning into something even more powerful than the mage's venom spit or acid arrow. They have a very pathetic physical attack, so the majority of their damage comes from the breath.

The feline clan is more offensive than the reptile clan. The cat is the basic form, which does slightly more damage than the reptile.

The cat soon upgrades into a panther, which often is able to land several hits in the one round. It also comes with a bite attack similar to the nelitos dragon's, and all this makes it the most damaging shapeshifter in the mid levels

The final feline form is the xaerre, a half man half lion, which is able to wield conventional weapons. They are also able to wear armour on their neck, hands and arms, light body armour, jewellery and containers. However they don't have much natural armour, and are much worse than reptilians at taking damage. Xaerres also come with a claw ability, which costs 20 spell points, and is similar to the bite ability, dealing about 35 damage per hit.

Finally there is the forest clan, which is rarely chosen as a primary clan. Forest clan starts their initiates off as flowers – non combat forms which heal rapidly in the sun (and at night for moonflowers), but which are very vulnerable. To advance from flower, you will need to gather your experience while in other forms.

Trees are the next form, and they move incredibly slowly around, and cannot go indoors, which you will have to quickly get used to. It heals quickly in the rain, and has very high armour class, but attack less than normal characters, and it takes a lot of damage from fire attacks. They can pick up items, and wear packs.

The final form is the treant, which moves at a normal rate (but still can't go indoors), gets even more armour class, is able to wear containers, but loses the rain-healing ability. They have a 25 sps entangle ability which lowers greatly the opponent's armour class, and prevents it from leaving the room. They

occasionally get 3 attacks in the same round.

Moot has compiled a very useful time/experience table for shapeshifters: <http://uk.geocities.com/mootshovel/shapeshifters.html> .

### **Class Abilities - Offensive**

Drakons only have one decent offensive ability – their breath attack. At over level 19, this does about 65 damage for only about 35 spell points. In addition Drakons get free hits with their tail – which does about 5 damage, and can choose to attack with their tail as well for about 10 spell points – very useless. Drakons have very poor physical damage. With armour, drakons are able to wear only jewellery (and the Wigwog skin shield, for some reason), which is an important thing to boost the armour class. Essentially they are elven conjurers which more armour class and more damage, but less versatility.

Xaerres are the only shapeshifters able to wield weapons. They deal out respectable damage, similar to clerics with clubs and staves. In addition they get some bonus damage from claw – all up it doesn't compare to fighters or rangers, but it's the best shapeshifters have to offer as a basher.

Treants' entangle ability lowers the enemy armour class greatly, helping herself and the whole party to destroy the monster faster. As mentioned, they also occasionally get multiple attacks in the same round.

Panthers and Nelitos dragons also get 'bite' attacks, which cost 10 sps and deals about 10 damage.

Chameleons also get combat bonuses against insects and spiders, making them at least twice as good at fighting them.

### **Class Abilities - Defensive**

The most prominent defensive ability for most shapeshifters is natural armour class. Drakons' armour class is akin to wearing star armour, while treants get even more. This makes some of the forms very easy to get going with after logging in, as there is no need to find armour.

Drakons don't have to carry much equipment at all, so a good idea is to use dodge. You should keep just your pipe in your inventory during combat, putting everything else in a container and dropping the container. A dodging drakon takes very little damage from most things.

A sort-of-defensive ability for midlevel shapeshifters is the corpse eating healing of cats, chameleon and panthers, which heal them slightly for eating certain types of corpses (critters, insects, etc)

A shapeshifter in rock form is the ultimate defender, attackers automatically ceasing their attacks 1 round after starting combat.

### **Skills**

For all forms but xaeerre, unarmed is all there is to it. This skill goes up incredibly quickly for shapeshifters, and there is little choice but to raise it.

Xaerres are fast with clubs, staves and spears, with clubs and staves dealing quite respectable damage. Clubs have better high end choices than staff, while spear only has the golden trident to recommend it.

Xaerres should also look into raising marksmanship with archery, to gather experience with while they're waiting for the more advanced xaeerre forms, as bows do substantially more damage than the otherwise piddling damage than low xaerres do.

### **Races**

The best race for a shapeshifter depends a lot on what you plan on doing with it, and what form you want to spend most of your time in.

Drakons use dodge a lot, so the dextrous races are best for it – elves and orcs. If you plan on tanking more, use orcs for their superior constitution, or if you're just going to solo or bash, then the elves' higher spell point pool and int/wis allows it to do better with the breath attack.

Xaerres are most like fighters, so they should be orcs, humans or dwarves, so they can wield the big clubs and staves which require 16 strength.

Treants also dodge a lot, so orcs and elves are good here again. Since they have slightly more focus on physical damage than drakons, humans are also reasonable here.

### **Levelling your first Shapeshifter**

A shapeshifter takes a very long time to raise, mainly because of the time requirements before advancement of forms. However the first 10 levels or so still go by reasonably quickly

Levels 1-4: get the opossum form, and zhou unarmed up. If you plan on being a xaeerre later on, then go into your normal form before level 5, get a catty from the blacksmith, and get marksmanship up as well. Kill in the normal newbie areas, and hopefully reach level 4 with opossum level 3 and ready to pick a primary clan, with 20 or so unarmed.

Levels 4-10: pick between the cat or the chameleon as your first form. The chameleon will be more sufficient, the cat better as a basher in a party. Once you learn the first advanced form, that clan automatically becomes your primary clan.

If you chose chameleon, then use your new attack bonuses against insects to the maximum – the spiders in the manor, butterflies in the fairy ring, random crickets in the forest, the huge swarm of insects in ravel, etc.

As a cat, it's just like levelling up a typical other class like paladin, just kill in the normal newbie areas and watch things die.

Keep advancing your primary forms, and as you near level 10, get the first flower form so you can heal for free outdoors when injured.

With both forms, be sure to be regularly hitting up the training academy in Tantallon to be raising your brawl ability.

You should hit level 10 with 30-40 unarmed skill, and level 3 in your cat or chameleon form, perhaps enough experience for the panther or nelitos forms.

Levels 10-15: Chameleons should spend their times switching between chameleon and nelitos forms. In chameleon form, hunt down slightly harder insects like the ants on the southeast isles, spiders in the drow and manspider areas, etc. When they are all dead, turn into a nelitos and use bite and physical damage to take things within your level range – preferably ones without weapons or armour, like harkke wolves and unicorns, Burnham and Anasazi animals, intep, etc, while healing using inns like the eastroad and the wayfarer's rest. Do this for a while until the insects respawn, then back into chameleon form you go.

Felines should spend their time in panther form. They deal reasonable damage, and with bite can take down slightly harder kills than nelitos dragons. Go for the same sort of kills as mentioned above, healing using inns and flower form when too stuffed/drunken.

There is no rush to kill things that fast here, as the time requirements start getting very very high around now.

Unarmed skill should be flying now, but frankly it doesn't really matter any more – drakons do very little physical damage, and xaerres will soon be wielding real weapons instead.

Level 15+: Here you start getting your final form. Unfortunately, at first, they are not really much better than the previous form, though you can now at least carry equipment and heals, and wear some armour.

Since the natural armour class is still poor, a drakon should seek out amulets and rings to wear as soon as possible, and also a permed armour spell would be very helpful. You still deal very little damage, so it's a good idea to get someone to bash for you, as otherwise you kill very slowly for a level 15. However if you're in no rush, then killing things slowly is a decent way to while away the otherwise long idling times anyway. Once again, the best targets for a small drakon are the unarmed types like unicorns.

Once your drakon reaches level 4 or 5, then it's time to break out the whoop ass. With fire breath, hunt down the various frost giants in the game in the steading, and in rune, then take the easier 6ks like the fairies and wyvern and bulette. Once you reach level 5, all the boundaries are gone, and you can kill almost everything with the breath.

A xierre can spend the first form or two just working up club, staff, spear and marksmanship. Once a few of those are at a decent level, 50 or so, you should be close to xierre 4 anyway.

Once there, your xierre plays much like a solo fighter or cleric, so start off just killing things appropriate to your primary skill – 2ks at 40 skill, 4ks at 60 and 6ks and 9ks at 70 and beyond. You're a little fragile still, so avoid high damage dealers, but the damage output from a good club or staff later coupled with claw is quite reasonable.

## Playing a shapeshifter

Venom has gathered some detailed information for soloing as a shifter - <http://sio.midco.net/shapeshifters/> , under the 'powerplaying' tab.

When bashing as a shapeshifter, drakons should just attack promptly, grab loot quickly, keep spell points coming and use their breath on harder mobs – very similar to bashing as a conjurer or drowgar.

Xaerre bashers play much like a fighter, with the additional use of extra claw attacks on harder kills. Treant bashers are very impractical due to their movement restrictions.

Tanking as a xierre is quite hard, since you are very bad at mitigating damage. However, a drakon is quite good at it. Get a golden amulet and a ring, hopefully blessed, and a permed armour, and find some hard hitting bashers. You mitigate damage about as well as a freedom fighter, so there is little fear for you on most kills in the game. Carry your own heals, and 2 containers to fit them in. Every battle, drop all the containers first, and have good alias' for picking them up at the end (1=get all container, 2=get all meat, 3=get all potion, 4=get all berry, etc). Breath attack the harder kills. If your bashers have a clue and you're already decent at tanking as other classes, then drakons should be an interesting alternative for you.

A treant tank is very restricted in their movements, but if you get used to where you can go and get a route down, then it plays much like a drakon tank. Try to entangle everything you kill (unless it's very easy) since the armour class reduction benefits your whole party.

## Is a shapeshifter for you?

Shapeshifters are for those who desire a change of pace, and want to play the game in a totally different way. They're not the most powerful class, but are still reasonably good at fighting in their different forms. Shapeshifters make a good class to read boards with and to chat with since the time spent reading or chatting while in form goes into your total pool of time. For those true perfectionists, getting every single form is something achievable by even newer players, as long as they have the time to put into it.

# Miscellaneous

## Equipment

Many newer players are not clear about what equipment is most essential, what the best equipment is for various parts of the body, and what are simply not worth it. I'll try to correct this by telling you what the best 'standard' bits of equipment are for each part of the body.

There are 3 main types of equipment: weapons, armour and containers.

## Containers

Past the first half dozen levels, containers are essential for everybody, to help you carry all the heals and loot around. The quality of a container is measured by 2 factors – how big it is, and its compression factor (weight of items + container divided by weight of items in the container). Though the biggest container in the game is a chest – which fits 40 bottles, it has a shockingly bad compression factor, which makes it rather useless.

The best containers in the game are (all stats for worn pack, unless otherwise specified, in bottles):

Name	Base Weight	Size	Compression Factor
Belt of the Giant	2	30	2.67
Rugged Knapsack (Worn)	1	22	2.56
Rugged Knapsack (Unworn)	1	22	1.53
A Large Silk Pack	1	20	1.91
Soft Sack	1	18	1.9
Canvas Pack	1	16	1.6
Knights' Pack	1	16	1.6

Since most characters only need one container, simply get the best on the list that you can get – notice that even though unworn rugged knapsacks are still large, they are very heavy. If you need more than 1 container, then it's much better to have 2 containers which you can both wear – usually this means a worn rugged knapsack with a soft sack, or a large silk pack with a soft sack, or 2 soft sacks.

## Weapons

Weapons are usually a choice best made with respect to your skill, which is discussed in the skills section above. The only times you may not use the idea weapon is when you really need to parry better, or when you really need a shield, or when you need to disarm better – this is something for yourself to consider.

## Armour

Armour can be judged on 3 bases – quality, weight and resistances provided. Though there are hundreds (if not thousands) of different armours in the realm, only a few dozen pieces are really worth the time.

## Jewellery

Most important of the armours is actually the jewellery. Jewellery provide a global armour class bonus to many parts of the body. The most important piece of jewellery is the amulet, and the best is the semi-unique golden amulet – always try to get one. Failing that, the Medallion of Night is not too bad, and the non unique gold amulet is also worth its 1 weight, especially when blessed. After the amulet, rings also provide protection. If protection is not important, the Spidermedallion unique takes up this slot, giving no protection but +2 intelligence, often superior to the golden amulet for mages.

A mage in Nepeth called Zarkan randomly spawns with rings of different metals which sometimes have glows on them. The metal determines what the rings protect, and the glows determine the magical characteristics of the item:

Metal	Effect
Mithril	Full body Protection
Platinum	Body Protection
Elecrum	Arm/Leg Protection
Copper	Protection of something minor
Other	Vulnerability

  

Glow	Effect
Blue	Cold Resistance
Yellow	Magic Resistance
Green	Poison Resistance
Red	Fire Resistance
Violet	Slow Regeneration
White	Holiness (raises your alignment over time)
Pink	Vulnerability and Frog Curse (random chance of turning you into a frog)

Without a glow however, a ring has none of its protection properties. Whitelighter rings are a good alternative when Zarkan rings are unavailable.

## Helmets

The currently best helmet in the game is the Helm of Hanza, a 3 weight helmet which comes with a map and also has a random chance of further reducing damage dealt to the head, even after the initial armour class is taken into account. Following that is a 'banded mail helm of the ghost', which is fairly similar to the Helm of Hanza, except non unique and without a map. From memory, this also weighs 3. The standard other helms which are still good at blackcrowns and stone helmets, which weigh 2 and are usually the best helms available.

## Heavy Body

Heavy body armour is very common, and there are many top end choices.

The best is arguable, with the lightweight and high quality Star Armour covering the whole body, also acting like a light source, but only low boosts to resistances (+5 to each). There's also the Dragonplate, much heavier, covering less, it evaluates well, and with slightly better resistances. There's the Armour of Ichor, which is very heavy, with no resistances, but evaluates well, and has the ability to 'drain' corpses to heal the user of the armour for free. Finally there's the Armour of Gaius, which evaluates the worst of these high end unique choices, but can be blessed, and also comes with good resistances, and has a random chance of fully deflecting a blow and reflecting its damage back to the opponent. You're in good shape if you manage to get ahold of any of these.

For the non unique choices, a suit of radiant armour is easily the best choice – evaluating the best, while also being lightweight. Fine platemails, orcish platemails and shiny platemails also weigh well, but are all heavier.

For a lower level character, the cuirboilli leathers are lightweight and evaluate reasonably.

### Light Body

The highest evaluating robe is the unique strangely patterned cloak, but it comes with no resistances.

The magic surcoat evaluates worse, but comes with +30 and +20 to all resistances, which is a great help when fighting magic casters.

A black robe is very similar, with 10 less resistance in each type than the magic surcoat.

The weird looking blue robe is another unique robe which is big on resistances.

The nightblue cloak gives a +2 intelligence boost, and evaluates quite badly, but is very useful for spellcasters and people looking to skill faster.

For the non-unique versions, the robe of turkey feathers easily evaluates the best, and weighs the least.

### Hands and Feet

Gloves and boots can easily be foregone in most situations, only needed when heavily tanking and needing every bit of armour class possible. The best gloves are the brawl arena uniques, but most of the time for gloves and boots, the best are the ones worn by the Dalair orcish captain and lieutenant – easily distinguishable because they cost 666 coins each.

### Neck

Like the above, neck protection isn't essential. The best is the collar worn by Zubin, Marika's companion.

### Shields

The shield area is strange in that the non uniques actually evaluate better than the uniques – though the uniques are typically lighter and come with other abilities.

- Nearly Perfect: Polished Silver Goblin Shield (weight 4), Fancy Shield (weight 4, better block bonus than silver goblin shield)
- Splendid: Flying Shield (weight 1),
- Very Good: Wigwog Skin (weight 2, comes with +10 cold and fire resistance), green shield, black shield, spiked shield, dwarven shield (all weight 3), Shield of Gralain (weight 4, but it comes with +10 blocking for dwarves and +5 for humans),

### Other

Sheaths give protection to your leg, while weightless, so pick one up when you remember to.

In summary, your typical non unique ideal set-up should look like this:

```
Worn armour: Head: a stone helmet
Neck: a fine leather collar
Heavy body: a suit of radiant armour (bonded)
Light body: a robe of turkey feathers
Legs: a suit of radiant armour (bonded)
Feet: some high leather boots
Arms: a suit of radiant armour (bonded)
Hands: some black leather gloves
Other: a gold amulet
A whitgolden ring
Shield: a silver goblin shield
```

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