

Update - Added Legacy DLC video + guide updated for patch 1.02/1.03 (July 30th)

Videos!

I suggest watching in 720p.

[The Ultimate Mage](#)

[Force/Blood Mage - Legacy](#)

[Team Glass Cannon 2.0](#)

[Teach Me How to Force Mage! \(Tutorial Video\)](#)

[Teach Me How to Force Mage! Lesson 2 - No Tank? No Problem!](#)

[Teach Me How to Force Mage! Lesson 3 - Nexus Golem Super Gauntlet \(w/ audio commentary!\)](#)

[The Force Mage Master class](#)

[Team Red Mist Showcase](#)

[Team Glass Cannon Showcase](#)

[Force/Blood Mage - Repentance](#)

[Force/Blood Mage - A Bitter Pill \(NO ANDERS!\)](#)

[Force/Blood Mage - 2:30 Hybris Kill](#)

[Force/Blood Mage - Inside Job/Family Matter](#)

[Force/Blood Mage - Genocide of the Qun](#)

[Force Mage Gameplay](#)

[Force Mage/Team Glass Cannon - Nuclear Warfare](#)

[Force/Blood Mage - Walking Bomb \(and other shenanigans\)](#)

[Force/Blood Mage - Two-Minute Nexus Golem Gauntlet Clear](#)

[Force/Blood Mage - Massacre of the Righteous \(Ser Varnell fight\)](#)

[Dex/Cun Force Mage - Night Lies \(Crit change/dmg test\)](#)

[Force/Blood Mage - Dissent](#)

[Force/Blood Mage - The Mercenary Marathon \(Gamlen's Greatest Treasure\)](#)

Videos blocked in your country? Use [Youtubeproxy](#) to view them!

A Foreword

“Be formless. Shapeless. Like water. You put water into a bottle, it becomes the bottle. You put water into a teapot, it becomes the teapot. Water can flow, or it can crash. Be water, my friend.”

- Bruce Lee

This famous quote by the legendary Bruce Lee is true in spades for the mage class. Mages are the single most versatile class in the entire game, with tools at their disposal to clear any situation with ease. Though this build is slanted towards the damage-dealing aspect, you also have several skills that are as useful for defense as they are offense. Another fact that has to be mentioned is that this build is much more hands-on than most Mage builds; You can't set tactics to use very edge of Pull to get an Elite out of stealth, or use FF spells at just the right time,

angle, and place to ensure that you don't slaughter your companions. This is a team-oriented game, make no misgivings about it, but your success or failure ultimately depends directly on you.

To be successful with a Mage, you must play the game analytically. As you're in combat, ask yourself questions to make sure you're not only using the best options available at the time, but also with the best timing possible. Things like:

- Would it be better to do this now, or hold off to see if I can get more out of it?
- Is this situation worth putting a talent on cooldown over?
- If my current plan doesn't pan out, what are my other options?

Are what should be going through your mind. You may have to work at it at first, but it will eventually become second nature to you as you develop instinct with the class.

So much of Mage comes down to simply having (or building) that sixth sense/intuition for when to do what, that it's hard to truly write a 'guide' for. Part of the reason I believe people think Mages are weak is simply due to not taking full advantage of the tools at their disposal, but the best I, or anyone, can do is steer you in the right direction. The rest is up to you.

With that out of the way, ON TO THE AWESOME!

They want you dead.

A pack of thugs approach from a distance. When they look at you, they see an easy target. A fool with a stick. A pin cushion. A cowering mage just waiting to have their coin forcibly removed from them. Each one eager to be the first to stake their claim over the corpses and their valuables, their pace only quickens.

Then, something goes wrong.

It starts with an irresistible force hurling them backwards, as if struck by a gigantic fist. Then, a blue orb that seems to turn the ground underneath their feet into quicksand, bringing their once frantic sprinting to a near standstill.

Last, the heavens open above them, raining down fire as if the Maker himself tore open the sky in a fit of holy vengeance. Nothing is left, except ashes and smoldering remains. They're not the first to try, and they certainly won't be the last, but their eventual fate will remain the same. You are, a very literal, force of nature.

Nuclear Warfare – I Came to Drop Bombs

Word to your moms. Who doesn't want to lock enemies down and destroy them for free? Completely neutralize Assassins? Not only dish out huge amounts of pain, but set up your companions to do the same? The title of this thread may make you think this setup is a one-trick pony, but that couldn't be further from the truth; nuking is only one piece of the puzzle. An incredibly orgasmic piece, but a piece nonetheless. With this build, you'll have everything you need for offense, defense, and everything in between. Let's get going!

Versatility – A Spell for Every Situation (...except healing)

One of the great strengths of this build is how utilitarian it is; nearly all of your bread-and-butter spells can be used for offensive purposes, defensive purposes, or companion synergy purposes. Take, for example, Pull of the Abyss. With this one amazing little spell, you can:

- Cluster enemies for nuking
- Group enemies for a Cone of Cold BRITTLE to set up your Archer for Bursting Arrow
- Pull enemies into a detonating Walking Bomb
- Save your companions from being overrun
- Interrupt enemy attacks/heals
- SNATCH THAT **** ASS ASSASSIN OUT OF STEALTH (WHAT MOTHER****ER)

Most of your spells work this way. The power is there, but it's up to you to fully harness it. Learn the nuances of your abilities, develop an innate understanding of all the ways they can be used, and you will be absolutely unstoppable.

Elements and You (YOU!)

Simply put, you need opposing element staves (leave physical staves out of this, too many numbers and too much math for my feeble brain) to do any kind of respectable damage with your basic attacks. Mages have fairly long cooldowns on most abilities, so you'll need to keep a good amount of staves handy for you and your other Mage friends to keep the damage output from suffering in the fights that don't end after the initial wave of nuking/Bomb detonations.

Friendly Fire and You (Don't 'IT WASN'T MY FAULT!' me, unless it's Anders, he's an idiot)

As you may know (or will soon find out, if you play on Nightmare), many of your abilities can cause FF (friendly-fire) damage if you aren't careful. This build is a powerhouse, but also assumes that you have good control of your own rudder, and your companions' rudders as well. Don't be afraid to use 'Move to point' or 'Hold Position' if your party gets too close to your circle

of pain. Elemental Aegis and Fire/Spirit Resist runes are an absolute must for your Fenris/Aveline, so you can nuke and Bomb without worry.

Money Management - Get Your Cake Up

Two of the most important items to this build (Robes of Unblemished Cleanliness, 140G Ring of the Ferryman, 110G) are INCREDIBLY expensive, and will put the hurt on your pockets something serious. For this reason, I strongly advise not buying things you don't absolutely need (Runes, Tomes/Elixirs, Companion Armor Upgrades, A+ accessories, armor/robes here and there), and checking out [SuicidalBaby's Money Guide](#) for tips on getting yourself Runes of Fortune early. I know 250G is a LOT, but trust me when I say that I would not tell you to blow so much of your total income playthrough if these items were not one-thousand percent WORTH IT!

Spells

Elementalist

Winter's Grasp/Winter's Blast

This, along with Cone of Cold, will be part of your bread-and-butter spell loadout. Like most of your abilities, it can be used both on the offensive and defensive side of combat. You can use it to put up solid single-target/very closely-packed group damage (it will put the goddamn HURT on a cold-weak enemy), set up a BRITTLE for your Archer, gimp an enemy's movement speed, and pretty much everything in between. Be careful about using it when a companion is in close proximity, as it deals FF damage, and WILL kill them.

Cone of Cold/Deep Freeze

I love this spell. Just like Winter's Grasp before it, it's a multi-purpose monster. It can be used to do everything described above, but with one amazing little bonus: it will hit stealthed Assassins, and I'll be damned if I don't feel like a million f**king bucks every single time I do it. You can't see them, so you'll have to become one with the Force and get your David Blaine (or Criss Angel, if that's your thing...loser) on.

Fireball

Man, leave me alone.

Pyromancer

A great passive ability, which ups your fire damage by 25%. Awesome when used in conjunction with Fire staves, +% Fire damage gear, Firestorm, and that other spell that must not be named.

Firestorm/Apocalyptic Firestorm

This is what you're here for, right? Contrary to popular belief, this spell is AWESOME, even against enemies that aren't weak to Fire. Panics enemies, interrupts attacks, can close off entire portions of the battlefield, what's not to love. You'll want to be opening fights with a Gravitic + Firestorm combo whenever possible and plausible, so get in position, drop the orb, and NUKE THAT **** DOWN!

Elemental Mastery

The culmination of your Elementalist tree investment. Ups your BRITTLE chance, Fire damage, Cold damage, and Mana regen. To truly get the most out of your Elemental, you'll be needing to get this. It's GREAT.

Primal

Rock Armor

Mages are squishy. What better way to make yourself less squishy than, uhh, covering yourself with...rocks? Whatever man, it looks stupid as hell, but it's an awesome sustain that you'll want to keep on permanently, so deal! Be aware that putting Runes of Protection in your armor will also apply to Rock Armor, which helps in making up for your criminally low survivability.

Chain Lightning/Chain Reaction

You all know how dirty this is, so I won't waste much time here. HOWEVER! You shouldn't dismiss it as simply a way to capitalize on a STAGGER, it's much more than that. This ability is GREAT for CC (crowd control), and has a relatively quick cooldown. Use it not just to hit hard off a stagger, but also as a fast way to stop mobs in their tracks.

Force Mage

Fist of the Maker

Not the best ability, but also not the worst. Good to use for stopping a rush, or taking an Assassin out of stealth (which will always be worth the price of admission)

Telekinetic Burst

Same as the above, pretty much. It can be useful as a panic button of sorts, for a quick way to get a tough enemy out of your grill.

Unshakable

Unshakable is the *****. Mages have the same Fortitude issue as Rogues, with constantly being interrupted and thrown around. Thing is, Rogues have to spend an arm and a leg and a first-born to solve theirs, while all you have to do is invest one measly skill point. Suck it, Rogues! They still have their insane single target damage output and awesome abilities, but hey, small victories, right?

Gravitic Ring/Gravitic Sphere

This spell is AAAAAWESOME. I cannot say enough good things about it; it's borderline broken. It slows enemy attack and movement speed to a crawl, with the highest penalties coming at the epicenter of the ring. Use this to set up nukes, block off doors/hallways, cripple Assassins (they can only stay cloaked for 15s, thank you Shep309), and completely debilitate Elites. If you drop this right on top of almost ANY enemy in the game, they are completely immobilized for the ENTIRE duration. Gravitic helps make you unstoppable, bow down and pay your respects to the orb.

Pull of the Abyss/Edge of the Abyss

This tree just keeps getting better! Pull of the Abyss is another totally utilitarian spell. I already listed the amazing stuff you can do with it above, but I'll revisit one, because it absolutely needs to be heard: It PULLS ASSASSINS OUT OF STEALTH. IT. PULLS. THEM. OUT. OF. STEALTH. Oh, hey, Carta Assassin. You sure seem to be in a foul mood today. I'm pretty small too, so I completely understand short man rage. Huh? Backstab? NO, PULL INTO WINTER'S GRASP INTO ARCHER'S LANCE, GET THAT WEAK ASS MUSTACHE OUTTA MY HOUSE. Ahem.

Blood Mage

Blood Magic/Bloodlust

Pretty simple here. Most of your spells have sizable mana costs, and unless you want to be quaffing down lyrium like Samson ('EY! YA GOT ANY DUST? DWARF-DUST? I'M 'URTIN 'ERE!), you'll take Blood Magic, and invest the necessary points into CON/purchase the 1:1 Health/Mana conversion items to keep it up.

Sacrifice/Grim Sacrifice

Since you can't be healed when Blood Magic is up, you'll need an alternate way to regain health, and Sacrifice is just what you want. It takes a portion of a companion's health and restores it to you, so keep the CON on your tank high for the best heals possible. I also use it to force heals on my companions when they're in the 'hurt but not hurt enough to heal' range, and sometimes I just cast it on Anders out of spite. I'm a good person.

Hemorrhage/Paralyzing Hemorrhage

My god, is this skill sexy. It's like Assassinate for Mages! Minus...a tiny bit of damage...but you can still chunk Elites off a STAGGER! It hits like a f**king Mac truck on critical, and you can one-shot every single Elite in the game with it. I suggest using Chain Lightning for the lesser enemies, and saving Hemorrhage for the heavy-hitters. Having both at your disposal means that you will have plenty of opportunities to capitalize on a stagger, sooner than simply using one or the other alone.

Tome/Elixir Locations

Act I

Tome of Technique (+1 Skill)

(Hubert's Fine Goods, Hightown)

Avernus's Experimental Draught (+2 Attribute)

(Dark Epiphany, only if you spared him in Origins DLC)

Act II

Greater Tome of the Mortal Vessel (+2 Attribute)

(Trinkets Emporium, Lowtown)

Tome of Technique (+1 Skill)

(Ilen's Crafts, Sundermount)

Elixir of Heroism (+1 Bonus Level)

(Corpse, before meeting with Orsino during Qunari attack)

Act III

Arcane Tome of the Mortal Vessel (+1 Attribute)

(Korval's Blades, Hightown)

The Black Emporium

Greater Tome of the Mortal Vessel (+2 Attribute)

Greater Elixir of the Mortal Vessel (+2 Attribute)

Elixir of Arcane Technique (+1 Skill, Mage)

Elixir of Physical Technique (+1 Skill, Warrior/Rogue)

You can also get bonus attribute points from:

-Completing the Fade puzzles in Feynriel's dream. (Act II, Night Terrors) Make sure you save before trying them, because if you fail to solve them in the allotted number of moves, you lose your chance at them. Check [this video](#) to see how it's done.

- If you spare Idunna, the blood mage you meet in the Blooming Rose, you will get a quest in Act II called Forbidden knowledge. **Destroy all of the tomes except for the Fel Grimoire (read it), or you will NOT be able to complete this quest/fight Xebenkeck!**

- I won't even list Torpor, because if you take his offer, you are a bad person, and you should feel bad.

Companions

Anders

I almost refuse to give Anders his own section any more. If you've read my other guides, you know that Anders' terrorist ass is a mainstay, a necessary evil. He actually redeems himself a little in this build, because his Walking Bomb setup with Varric/Sebastian is so, So, SO dirty. He's still a ****, but at least he earns his keep. Put his points into MAG, WIL, and CON.

Sebastian

Ah, the archer that doesn't have the Bianca tree. How the hell can he compare? While it is, in fact, true that Varric is better, that doesn't mean Sebastian doesn't have some toys of his own. Guardian Angel is downright AWESOME for losing threat, and Wounding Arrow helps you take down the tougher enemies. His biggest shortcoming is that there isn't a tactic to make NPCs fully exploit a chain before finishing it, but he still does well for himself, regardless. Put his points into DEX and CUN, with a few thrown the way of CON once in a while.

Aveline

I have done a total slide across the Friendship/Rivalry bar for Aveline, I adore her and her granite jaw now. You can nuke her without worry, she has guaranteed staggers for you on Elites, tanks like a champ, and does everything short of make you breakfast and cure cancer. Aveline and I are BFFs. Yes, BFFs. Be sure to give her Spirit/Fire resist runes so she doesn't get destroyed by you and Anders! Put her points into CON, WIL, and STR

Varric

Varric is an absolute god in this build. He instakills any BRITTLE Elite, has straight up RIDICULOUS DPS, helps get the most pain out of your team Walking Bomb setups, has the best personal tree, hands down, and even manages to bring FENRIS close to likable. Varric is

the definition of bro. Put his points into DEX and CUN, throw a few to CON to make him less squishy. You want 30 CUN before the Deep Roads for trap disarming, which will significantly lower his attack, so consider giving him Precision somewhere along the line.

Merrill

Merrill is still as useful and adorable as ever with this build. Her access to the Entropy tree provides the team with powerful debuffs and lockdown abilities, and having her go through the Primal tree is a great compliment to an Elementalist Hawke. Put her points into MAG and CON

Fenris

CRAAAAWLING IIIIIIN MY SKIIIIIIIN, THESE WOOOOUNDS THEY WIIIIIIIIII NOT HEALLLLLLL

Staves - Coming Soon!

Robes - Coming Soon!

Attribute Allocation

Use attribute-boosting items/the Rune of Valiance to meet DEX/CUN Reqs for Rogue Armor, and WIL Reqs for Mage Robes. If you want an easier time, go Pure Mage. If you want to be a hardass, go Glass Cannon and wear Rogue armor.

Pure Mage

Level 1: 3 MAG
Level 2: 2 WIL, 1 CON
Level 3: 2 MAG, 1 CON
Level 4: 3 MAG
Level 5: 2 MAG, 1 WIL
Level 6: 1 WIL, 2 CON
Level 7: 2 MAG, 1 WIL
Level 8: 3 MAG
Level 9: 1 MAG, 1 WIL, 1 CON
Level 10: 1 MAG, 1 WIL
Level 11: 1 MAG, 2 WIL
Level 12: 2 MAG, 1 CON
Level 13: 2 MAG, 1 CON
Level 14: 1 MAG, 2 CON
Level 15: 2 MAG, 1 CON
Level 16: 2 MAG, 1 WIL
Level 17: 1 MAG, 1 WIL, 1 CON

Level 18: 2 MAG, 1 WIL
Level 19: 1 MAG, 2 CON
Level 20: 2 MAG, 1 CON
Level 21: 2 MAG, 1 CON
Level 22: 3 MAG
Level 24: 3 MAG
Level 25: 3 MAG

Bonus Points

Emporium Greater Tome of the Mortal Vessel: 1 MAG, 1 CON
Emporium Greater Elixir of the Mortal Vessel: 1 MAG, 1 CON
Trinkets Emporium Greater Tome of the Mortal Vessel: 1 MAG, 1 CON
Night Terrors Fade Puzzles: 1 MAG, 1 WIL, 2 CON
Fell Grimoire, Forbidden Knowledge: 2 CON
Arcane Tome of the Mortal Vessel (Optional): 1 CON
Avernus' Experimental Draught: 2 MAG

Glass Cannon

Level 1: 3 MAG
Level 2: 1 DEX, 1 CUN, 1 CON
Level 3: 2 MAG, 1 WIL
Level 4: 1 DEX, 1 CUN, 1 WIL
Level 5: 2 MAG, 1 CON
Level 6: 2 MAG, 1 WIL
Level 7: 1 DEX, 1 CUN, 1 WIL
Level 8: 2 MAG, 1 CON
Level 9: 2 DEX, 1 CUN
Level 10: 1 MAG, 2 WIL
Level 11: 1 DEX, 1 CUN, 1 WIL
Level 12: 1 MAG, 1 WIL, 1 CON
Level 13: 2 MAG, 1 CON
Level 14: 1 MAG, 1 DEX, 1 CUN
Level 15: 2 MAG, 1 CON
Level 16: 2 MAG, 1 WIL
Level 17: 2 MAG, 1 CON
Level 18: 2 MAG, 1 WIL
Level 19: 2 DEX, 1 CUN
Level 20: 1 DEX, 2 CUN
Level 21: 2 MAG, 1 WIL
Level 22: 1 DEX, 1 CUN, 1 CON
Level 23: 2 MAG, 1 CON
Level 24: 3 MAG

Level 25: 1 MAG, 1 DEX, 1 CUN

Bonus Points

Emporium Greater Tome of the Mortal Vessel: 2 WIL
Emporium Greater Elixir of the Mortal Vessel: 1 MAG, 1 WIL
Trinkets Emporium Greater Tome of the Mortal Vessel: 2 CON
Night Terrors Fade Puzzles: 1 DEX, 1 CUN, 2 CON
Fell Grimoire, Forbidden Knowledge: 2 CON
Arcane Tome of the Mortal Vessel (Optional): 1 CON
Avernus' Experimental Draught: 2 CON

Hawke Build/Level-up Guide

Respec with a Maker's Slgh as soon as possible, then follow this list:

1. Rock Armor
2. Chain Lightning
3. Winter's Grasp
4. Cone of Cold
5. Fireball
6. Chain Reaction
7. Force Mage specialization, Fist of the Maker, Firestorm (Tome of Technique)
8. Unshakable
9. Telekinetic Burst
10. Gravitic Ring
11. Pull of the Abyss
12. Winter's Blast
13. Pyromancer
14. Blood Mage specialization, Blood Magic, Deep Freeze (Tome of Technique)
15. Sacrifice
16. Elemental Mastery
17. Grim Sacrifice
18. Apocalyptic Firestorm, Hemorrhage (Tome of Technique)
19. Paralyzing Hemorrhage
20. Bloodlust (Elixir of Heroism)
21. Edge of the Abyss
22. Gravitic Sphere
23. Arcane Shield
24. Elemental Weapons
25. Elemental Shield

Teams/Tactics/Companion Builds/Level-up guides

Below are some of my favorite companion combinations, and the tactics setups that make them shine. I'll be updating this as I find better tactics and try out more things, so check back from time to time and see if there's anything new (probably not, I'm lazy). [Click on the character names for the build/level-up guide](#), respec as soon as possible, then follow the guide. Note that Anders builds assume you do his personal quest, Dissent, at level 16, to get Vengeance for free. I'll add my others when I'm not feeling like a hot bag of ass.

Note that as of the current Title update (1.01), Jump to tactic is bugged, and moves you to x-1 of your intended destination. I have compensated for this in the tactics, and will change it when the bug is fixed. Also note that Use Item is bugged as well. Pay attention to your tactics after you change them, and fix whatever problems may come from it.

Team Red Mist (Anders/Sebastian or Varric/Aveline or Fenris)

Anders

1. Self: Health <50% - Deactivate: Vengeance
2. Self: Health >=50% - Activate: Vengeance
3. Self: Health <25% - Jump to: 15
4. Self: Mana or stamina <10% - Use: Lyrium Potion
5. Self: Any - Activate: Heroic Aura
6. Sebastian/Varric: Health <10% - Heal
7. Aveline/Fenris: Health <10% - Heal
8. Enemy: Paralyzed - Walking Bomb
9. Enemy: Clustered with at least two enemies - Glyph of Paralysis
10. Enemy: Paralyzed - Use current condition for next tactic
11. Enemy: Target of Anders - Spirit Bolt
12. Hawke: Any - Haste
13. Enemy: STAGGERED - Chain Lightning
14. Self: Any - Use Potion
15. Enemy: Target of Anders - Attack
16. Self: Health >=75% - Martyr

Sebastian

1. Enemy: Target rank is Elite or higher - Use current condition for next tactic
2. Enemy: BRITTLE - Archer's Lance
3. Enemy: BRITTLE - Bursting Arrow
4. Enemy: Target rank is Elite or higher: Jump to: 17
5. Enemy: Target of Anders - Use current condition for next tactic
6. Enemy: Paralyzed - Fatiguing Fog
7. Enemy: Attacking Anders - Pinning Shot
8. Enemy: Target between medium and long range - Hail of Arrows
9. Self: Health <75% - Guardian Angel

- 10: Self: Health <25% - Use Potion
11. Self: Mana or stamina <10% - Use: Stamina Draught
- 12: Self: Any - Activate: Speed
- 13: Enemy: Paralyzed - Use current condition for next tactic
14. Enemy: Target of Anders - Attack
15. Enemy: Target of Hawke - Attack
16. Enemy: Target of Hawke - Wounding Arrow

Aveline

1. Enemy: Target rank is Elite or higher - Jump to: 13
2. Enemy: BRITTLE Jump to: 12
3. Ally: Health <75% - Taunt
4. Enemy: Target at short range - Cleave
5. Self: Health - 25% Use Potion
6. Self: Mana or stamina < 10% - Bolster
7. Self: Any - Activate: Elemental Aegis
8. Self: Any - Activate: Might
9. Self: Surrounded by at least four enemies - Activate: Bravery
10. Enemy: At least one enemy is alive - Deactivate: Bravery
11. Enemy: Target rank is Elite or higher - Rally
12. Enemy: Target rank is Elite or higher - Shield Bash
13. Self: Mana or stamina <50% - Skip tactics
14. Self: Surrounded by at least four enemies - Activate: Shield Defense
15. Enemy: At least one enemy is alive - Deactivate: Shield Defense

Varric

- Self: Health <25% - Use Potion
- Self: Mana or stamina <10% - Use: Stamina Draught
- Enemy: Target rank is Elite or higher - Use current condition for next tactic
- Enemy: BRITTLE - Archer's Lance
- Enemy: Target of Anders - Use current condition for next tactic
- Enemy: Paralyzed - Fatiguing Fog
- Enemy: BRITTLE - Bursting Arrow
- Enemy: Target at short range - Kickback
- Enemy: Target between medium and long range - Hail of Arrows
- Enemy: Using melee or ranged attack - Pinning Shot
- Enemy: Paralyzed - Use current condition for next tactic
- Enemy: Target of Anders - Attack
- Self: Any - Activate: Bianca's Song
- Self: Any - Activate - Precision

Team Glass Cannon - Anders/Varric/Merrill

Anders

1. Self: Health <50% - Deactivate: Vengeance
2. Self: Health >=50% - Activate: Vengeance
3. Self: Health <25% - Use Potion
4. Self: Mana or stamina <10% - Use: Lyrium Potion
5. Self: Any - Activate: Heroic Aura
6. Varric: Health <10% - Heal
7. Enemy: Paralyzed - Walking Bomb
8. Enemy: Clustered with at least two enemies - Glyph of Paralysis
9. Enemy: Paralyzed - Use current condition for next tactic
10. Enemy: Target of Anders - Spirit Bolt
11. Hawke: Any - Haste
12. Enemy: Clustered with at least three enemies - Chain Lightning
13. Enemy: Target of Anders - Attack
14. Self: Health >=75% - Martyr

Merrill

Self: Health >=50% - Activate: Blood of the First
Self: Health <50% - Deactivate: Blood of the First
Self : Health <50% Use current condition for next tactic
Hawke: Any - Stone's Throw
Self: Surrounded by at least three enemies - Ensnare
Enemy: Attacking Anders - Jump to: 17
Enemy: Attacking Varric - Jump to: 17
Enemy: Target rank is Elite or higher - Use current condition for next tactic
Enemy: BRITTLE - Hex of Torment
Enemy: Clustered with at least three enemies - Wounds of the Past
Enemy: Target between medium and long range - Tempest
Enemy: Clustered with at least four enemies - Chain Lightning
Enemy: Attacking Anders - Misdirection Hex
Enemy: Using melee or ranged attack - Stonefist
Enemy: Target rank is Elite or higher - Petrify
Enemy: Target rank is Elite or higher - Horror
Self: Health <25% - Use Potion
Self: Mana or stamina <10 - Use: Lyrium Potion
Self: Any - Activate: Rock Armor
Self: Any - Activate: Wrath of the Elvhen

Varric

Self: Health <25% - Use Potion
Self: Mana or stamina <10% - Use: Stamina Draught
Enemy: Target rank is Elite or higher - Use current condition for next tactic
Enemy: BRITTLE - Archer's Lance
Enemy: Target of Anders - Use current condition for next tactic
Enemy: Paralyzed - Fatiguing Fog
Enemy: BRITTLE - Bursting Arrow
Enemy: Target rank is Elite or higher - Use current condition for next tactic
Enemy: Target of Merrill - Rhyming Triplet
Enemy: Target at short range - Kickback
Enemy: Using melee or ranged attack - Pinning Shot
Enemy: Paralyzed - Use current condition for next tactic
Enemy: Target of Anders - Attack
Self: Any - Activate: Bianca's Song
Self: Any - Activate - Precision

Patch 1.02/1.03 Build/Tactics/Notes/Updates

Notes? Firestorm = Win. Invest in MAG/CON 2:1 for Hawke, stopping at 225-250 health, which, coupled with how fast things should be dying, should be more than enough to permanently hold Blood Magic with no conversion items on. You do not need to invest a single point into WIL. The highest WIL req (Robes of Unblemished Cleanliness) is 18, which can be met very easily via pre-buffing. From a base of 12(?), you will need 6 points. Recommended items:

Valdelasine (+2 WIL)
Enchanted Silverite Chain Belt (+1 WIL)
Ring of Resilience (+1 WIL)
Meghan Vael's Locket (+1 WIL)
Dull Brass Amulet (+1 WIL)
Vestments of the Mystic (+2 WIL)
Sandals of the Mystic (+1 WIL)

Hawke Build/Level-Up Guide

Respec ASAP, then follow this guide.

1. Winter's Grasp
2. Fireball
3. Rock Armor
4. Pyromancer
5. Firestorm
6. Cone of Cold
7. Force Mage specialization, Fist of the Maker
8. Telekinetic Burst, Winter's Blast (Hubert Tome)

9. Pull of the Abyss
10. Gravitic Ring
11. Apocalyptic Firestorm
12. Elemental Mastery
13. Deep Freeze
14. Blood Mage specialization, Blood Magic, Sacrifice (Ilen Tome)
15. Grim Sacrifice
16. Hemorrhage
17. Paralyzing Hemorrhage
18. Blood Slave, Blood Spatter (Emporium Tome)
19. Bloodlust
20. Edge of the Abyss (Elixir of Heroism)
21. Grave Robber
22. One Foot In
23. Gravitic Sphere
24. Elemental Weapons
25. Arcane Shield
26. Elemental Shield

Companion Builds/Level-up Guides/Tactics

Click on the companion names for level-up guides. Respec with a Maker's Sigh potion, then follow the lists. Companions are set to 'Aggressive' behavior. This is to allow you to place them on hold and still have their tactics fire properly, which would not happen if you were using Ranged.

Team Glass Cannon

Anders

Set to 'Aggressive'. Invest in MAG/WIL 2:1, then MAG/WIL/CON 1:1:1, alternating each level. Health boosting accessories help his survivability early on. If you have the Item Pack DLC, give him Malcom's Honor, only switching vs a spirit-resistant enemy. Build assumes you do Dissent at 15 for free Vengeance.

Self: Health <50% - Deactivate: Vengeance

Self: Health <25% - Use Potion

Self: Mana or stamina <10% - Use: Lyrium Potion

Enemy: DISORIENTED - Walking Bomb

Enemy: DISORIENTED - Glyph of Paralysis

Varric: Health <25% - Heal

Merrill: Health <10% - Heal

Self: At least one enemy is alive - Haste

Enemy: DISORIENTED - Use current condition for next tactic
Enemy: Target of Anders - Spirit Bolt
Enemy: Target rank is Elite or higher - Winter's Grasp
Enemy: Clustered with at least three enemies - Fireball
Enemy: Using melee or ranged attack - Spirit Bolt
Enemy: Target between medium and long range - Firestorm
Self: Health $\geq 50\%$ - Activate: Vengeance
Self: Any - Activate - Heroic Aura
Enemy: Using melee or ranged attack - Attack
Self: Health $\geq 75\%$ - Martyr

Merrill

Set to 'Aggressive'. Invest in MAG/CON 2:1, going straight MAG after she has 250 health. If you're REALLY metagaming hard, her friendship passive is better than the rivalry passive post-patch.

Self: Health $< 50\%$ - Deactivate: Blood of the First
Self: Health $< 25\%$ - Use Potion
Enemy: Target of Hawke - Use current condition for next tactic
Enemy: Target rank is Elite or higher - Hex of Torment
Enemy: Attacking Anders - Ensnare
Enemy: Clustered with at least three enemies - Wounds of the Past
Enemy: Target rank is Elite or higher - Winter's Grasp
Enemy: Clustered with at least three enemies - Chain Lightning
Enemy: Using melee or ranged attack - Stonefist
Enemy: Clustered with at least three enemies - Fireball
Enemy: Target between short and medium range - Tempest
Enemy: Target between medium and long range - Firestorm
Self: Health $\geq 50\%$ - Activate: Blood of the First
Self: Any - Activate: Wrath of the Elvhen
Self: Any - Activate: Rock Armor
Self: Any - Activate: Elemental Weapons
Self: Health $\geq 50\%$ - Skip tactics
Self: Mana or stamina $< 10\%$ - Use: Lyrium Potion
Enemy: Using melee attack - Attack

Varric

Set to 'Aggressive'. Invest in CON and WIL to 15 each, enough CUN to open traps at your current level, and the rest into DEX. Purchase the Emporium skill tome for Varric as soon as possible.

Self: Health $< 10\%$ - Use Potion

Self: Mana or stamina <10% - Use: Stamina Draught
Enemy: BRITTLE - Use current condition for next tactic
Enemy: Target rank is Elite or higher - Archer's Lance
Enemy: Target of Anders - Use current condition for next tactic
Enemy: Paralyzed - Fatiguing Fog
Enemy: Health <25% - Use current condition for next tactic
Enemy: Target rank is Elite or higher - Pinning shot
Enemy: Target rank is Elite or higher - Brand
Enemy: Attacking Anders - Kickback
Enemy: BRITTLE - Bursting Arrow
Enemy: Target at short range - Rush
Self: Any - Activate - Bianca's Song
Self: Any - Activate - Precision
Enemy: Attacking Anders - Attack
Enemy: Using melee or ranged attack - Attack

Other

Fenris (for shameful PC players who shall remain nameless)

Set to 'Aggressive'. Put points in CON up to 250 health, use health boosting accessories to help out past this point, WIL up to 175-200, the rest into STR. Give him Fire/Spirit resist runes in his armor. Can be subbed in for Merrill if you feel like sucking, adjust Anders' Heal tactics to reflect his presence.

Self: Health > 25% - Use Potion
Self: Surrounded by at least three enemies - Taunt
Enemy: BRITTLE - Use current condition for next tactic
Enemy: Target rank is Elite or higher - Rally
Enemy: DISORIENTED - Rally
Enemy: Target at short range - Cleave
Self: Mana or stamina <25% - Second Wind
Self: Mana or stamina <10% - Bolster
Self: Any - Activate: Might
Self: Any: Activate: Elemental Aegis
Self: Health >= 75% - Deactivate: Lyrium Ghost
Self: Health >50% - Activate: Lyrium Ghost
Enemy: Attacking Anders - Attack

Enemy Resistance Chart

(Courtesy of nine-time Mr. Universe recipient, IN1)

Different enemies have different weaknesses and resistances. Keep a few different staves on hand for you and your mages, and use this guide to make sure you're always getting the most out of enemies' elemental weaknesses.

Enemy Type: C(old), E(lectricity), F(ire), N(ature), S(pirit)

Arcane Horror type: C=low, E=low, F=normal, N=low, S=immune.

Carta type: C=low, E=normal, F=normal, N=normal, S=normal.

Coterie type: C=normal, E=normal, F=normal, N=normal, S=immune.

Dalish type: C=normal, E=low, F=normal, N=immune, S=normal.

Darkspawn type (including Emissaries and Ogres): C=normal, E=normal, F=normal, N=low, S=low.

Desire demon and shade type: C=normal, E=low, F=normal, N=low, S=immune.

Dragon type: C=low, E=normal, F=immune, N=normal, S=normal.

Fire Pride demon type: C=low, E=normal, F=immune, N=low, S=normal.

Generic undead type (including corpses, skeletons, Shadow Warrior captains): C=normal, E=low, F=normal, N=immune, S=low.

Golem type (including Gate Guardians): C=low, E=low, F=normal, N=immune, S=normal.

Kirkwall type (including Bloodrager Thralls): C=immune, E=normal, F=low, N=normal, S=normal.

Mabari type: C=low, E=normal, F=immune, N=normal, S=normal.

Mage type (including Blood and Circle High mages): C=normal, E=normal, F=normal, N=normal, S=low.

Mercenary type: C=immune, E=normal, F=normal, N=low, S=normal.

Orsino: C=normal, E=low, F=normal, N=immune, S=low.

Poison Pride demon type: C=normal, E=low, F=low, N=immune, S=normal.

Profane type (including Ancient Rock Wraith): C=low, E=immune, F=normal, N=normal, S=low.

Qunari type (including the Arishok): C=low, E=immune, F=immune, N=low, S=normal.

Rage demon type: C=low, E=normal, F=immune, N=normal, S=normal.

Raider type: C=normal, E=low, F=normal, N=immune, S=normal.

Revenant type: C=immune, E=low, F=normal, N=immune, S=low.

Spider type (including Varterral): C=normal, E=low, F=normal, N=immune, S=normal.

Street thug type: C=low, E=normal, F=immune, N=normal, S=normal.

Templar type (including Meredith): C=low, E=normal, F=normal, N=normal, S=low.

Tevinter (slaver) type: C=immune, E=normal, F=low, N=normal, S=normal.

Recommended Reading - from the Grandmaster of Blood, SuicidalBaby

[NM Blood Mage Compendium](#)

[Money Guide - Fast Rune of Fortune Crafting](#)

[F**KIN' MAGNETS, HOW DO THEY WORK?! \(Advanced Tactics Guide\)](#)

Closing Notes

That's the last of guides from me, I SWEAR! No class is as debated as the mage class, and they like to throw around goddamn numbers a lot, so some things may be subject to slight changes, but nothing too gigantic. Please let me know if you have questions, comments, concerns, critiques, anything, I'm all ears. Feel free to post here, or send me a PM if you need help with something not covered in the guide.

I hope you guys have enjoyed reading the guides as much as I have writing them. Thanks for all the comments, goading, encouragement, and the whole nine yards. You guys are awesome.