

MASS EFFECT 1-3 GUIDE

(To a Happy and Healthy Shepard and Friends)

MASS
EFFECT™

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1. Introduction

This is my guide for Mass Effect 1. This game is the most “RPG” out of the three, and shows its age the most. That being said, I believe it holds up in standards of writing and narrative, though voice acting and audio mixing is hit or miss. It also introduces you to some of the best companions out of all three series. (My personal top three in ME1 go to Garrus, Tali, and Wrex).

This is just my guide for what I think is the happiest and most emotionally touching and fulfilling story. But ultimately, he/she’s your Shepard, so if there’s something you really want to do differently, go for it. Everything I say is a recommendation, and whilst you would be SMART to listen to me you are well within your rights to ignore everything I say.

A few rules of thumb:

1. Choose the paragon options. You’ll want to max out your paragon as soon as you can in all three games. Thankfully, part of your paragon and renegade score carries over to the next game, so you don’t have to completely start from scratch.

2. Talk to your crewmates. They want to talk to you, unless they’re Jacob, then they don’t deserve anything because he’s the most boring crewmate to ever crewmate, but it’s okay because he’s in ME2, so you’re good for now. Just try to talk to them after all the major missions, because there are some quests hidden in their conversations.

3. Make sure you have all the side missions you want completed done before the Virmire mission. This mission is very clearly marked as the Virmire mission so there’s no way you’ll accidentally do it. Virmire is the beginning of the Final Act though, and you won’t have access to many side missions after this. And, unlike ME2 there is no post-story gameplay.

4. Play how you like. If the combat gets too difficult for you feel free to reduce the difficulty here. If it was Halo or Skyrim where combat is a large part of the overall experience then sure go for the harder combat experience. But in Mass Effect combat isn’t really why you’re playing. You’re playing because it’s a Bioware game and you want a good story. Also, you want to date Garrus. So yeah, feel free to make it easy if you want, that’s up to you.

5. Invest in your charm level. These give you access to your blue paragon dialogue options. By saying paragon things in normal conversations or doing paragon actions, you gain paragon points which unlock higher paragon levels, which then allow you to invest in more charm with your skill points, which then allow you to use the blue speech options in dialogue which often change the outcome of a conversation.

6. Paragon almost always is the best option. If it’s blue, good for you. If it’s red, Shepard’s gonna make someone dead. However, sometimes there will be renegade options you

might wanna choose, in order to avoid not getting a quest or stuff like that (for instance, shutting down whichever human squadmate is hitting on you. Usually it's pretty clear so I'll leave that to your discretion.

7. KAIDAN: Yes this boy gets his own thumb rule too. Reallllly try not to lead him on. (You can romance Garrus in the next game) I'm pretty sure there's a conversation you can have in a cutscene by the lockers before the Ilos mission where you can shut him down for good if he somehow gets the idea that you like him, but try not to get to that point if you can avoid it. You'll have to be almost a little antagonistic sometimes in order to get it into his thick skull that you don't want to romance him. If you do want to romance him, you may do so. It may make events in future games a little awkward however.

8. Pay attention to Saren. This isn't a walkthrough thing or anything, just pay attention to his motivations and stuff. His character is more than meets the eye and he's more sympathetic of a villain than you realize. Personally my favorite villain in the series. ALSO, try to choose all the blue paragon options in your dialogue with him, in order to unlock a special cutscene in his boss battle that's actually really cool and kinda sad.

9. Don't feel like you gotta rush through the game. Take your time and enjoy it. The first time through I kinda rushed through so I forgot a lot of the side characters. Second playthrough I really got a sense of all the characters that show up more than once in the games and it's great.

10. This is Editor Paul. Mass Effect's dialogue system is as follows: on the dialogue wheel, options on the left are usually investigative, good for building up your codex and getting xp. The right side of the wheel tends to end conversations earlier (and possibly lock you out of important quests or information). The top end of the wheel is where paragon dialogue lies, the bottom is renegade. This is just a template, however, as sometimes Mass Effect decides to mess with its wheel. I tend to stick to the top left of the dialogue wheel to get the most information.

2. Crewmates

You've got a great team, and all of them play a huge part in the next games. Even boring starter human Kaidan has an important role (albeit his role can be traded with Ashley depending on certain circumstances). So I'm going to give a brief summary of what you should look out for with each of them. Overall, you'll usually be able to learn something more about them every major time you talk to them, which unlocks more investigation options. Also some of them give you quests.

Kaidan: This guy has a thumb rule, you've already read that (hopefully). Just don't romance him lol.

Ashley: She isn't Kaidan and she's kind of annoying. However she does develop somewhat over the trilogy. If you are a male Shepard, Kaidan's rule of thumb applies to her.

Liara: All you need to know about Liara is that she has a crush on you (regardless of your gender) and will ask you about it after a few times talking to her. Thankfully she's very respectful and you have a clear chance to shut her down nicely, if you wish to do so. There is no chance for confusion there.

Garrus: Choose paragon options to make him more paragon. This might mean you disagree with him, but he'll start to come around and realize that you're right and he'll thank you. Also, he will give you a quest after a few conversations. Do that, choose the paragon choices, spare the target, and that'll wrap up his narrative.

Editor Paul: Garrus emulates your personality based on your choices. Act paragon and he'll act more paragon. Act renegade and he'll follow suit. He models himself after you, so keep that in mind.

Wrex: Same thing except being paragon does not change his personality that much. He'll give you a quest, I don't think there are any choices. Just do the quest to pick up his family armor and he'll like you more. (He's a teddy bear)

Tali: She also has a quest, but it is disguised in another side quest. You won't unlock it until later in the game when you are able to go to the Armstrong Nebula. Here is a full guide for that quest as they describe it better than I can. Just be sure to give her the data afterwards and you will have helped her complete her pilgrimage. As opposed to what the article says, the quest isn't actually that long.

https://www.ign.com/wikis/mass-effect/Geth_Incursions

3. The Beginning

Make your character, background, and class. Class does not matter much in the long run. Background changes some dialogue and optional missions. Earthborn gives you a slightly criminal past, Colonist gives you a tragic backstory where your parents died, and Spacer gives you a mother who you can talk to several times throughout the series.

For the second choice of backgrounds, war hero will make you an accomplished hero, ruthless will give you a “ruthless” reputation, and survivor will give you a tragic backstory where your unit died, and you were the only one left.

I tend towards Spacer and Survivor most playthroughs (as an example).

The first mission goes by easily. Afterwards you will visit the Citadel for the first time.

4. Citadel

Visit the Council Chambers in the tower, and when talking to Captain Anderson, use the left investigating options after the council meeting to learn about Barla Von (you’ll want to talk to him later.)

The next section has you explore the Citadel and recruit Garrus and Wrex. Follow the clues given to you to find both of them (i.e., speak to Harkin in Chora’s Den then Dr. Michel for Garrus, and Barla Von then C-Sec for Wrex). Note: after recruiting either of them, visiting Chora’s Den triggers the next story beat. I recommend recruiting both of them before starting this.

Once you have both of them, you can take down Fist and you will then recruit the Quarian, Tali.

This will conclude your quest on the Citadel.

Before you leave though, make sure you talk to Conrad Verner in the ward upper markets (by the top of the stairs).

5. Therum

You are tasked with finding Liara in the Artemis Tau Cluster. Specifically, she is on Therum in the Knossos system. There is nothing you have to know about her mission.

6. Citadel (Second Visit)

This isn’t super important. Just make sure you continue Conrad Verner’s “The Fan” Quest sometime during the game. You can talk to him three times during the game, doing so will finish his quest and have him return in later games.

7. Noveria

Bring Liara. This is important. Bring Liara. She's important.

For most of Noveria it's pretty basic. Do what side quests you want. Help Gianna Parasini with her investigation and talk to LORIK!

PARAGON CHEAT: THIS IS INCREDIBLY USEFUL

You can max out your Paragon on Noveria. It's super easy. This loophole has been in the game since its first release and Bioware never fixed it this entire decade so clearly you have a duty to do it. When you help Lorik Qui'in, Gianna asks to talk to you in the bar right before you finish his quest. Do that, then talk to Lorik. You can convince him to testify against Anoleis for Gianna's quest. When you do that, you choose the blue option to convince him. This gives 24 paragon points. Once the conversation is over, you can talk to him again. Ask him another question like about Matriarch Benezia or something, then ask him to testify against Anoleis again, and you get another 24 points. Do this over and over again until you max out your paragon. It shouldn't take too long. This is incredibly useful. Enjoy.

Besides that, the rest of Noveria is pretty straightforward. Help the people holed up in the lab with all their quests. Look up guides if you really need them but it should be okay. Meet Benezia, deal with all that, and uh, I gotta say this without spoilers.

You're gonna meet an important side character who is not humanoid. Spare them. They will keep their word. Congrats that's Noveria!

8. Citadel (Third Visit)

Just in case you haven't wrapped up The Fan or have anything else you wanna do. You will still be able to return later.

9. Feros

You get there, you get to the human camp, you take all the sidequests and do them. Those side quests will be found in the next series of tunnels. They're pretty easy to complete. They should be fixing the water, killing the alpha varren, destroying the geth signal, and picking up a power cell from a crashed vehicle. This should help the colony be successful again.

Now that that's taken care of, continue with the main story and go up the elevator and proceed. You'll find this camp of scientists. They don't matter too much yet. One or two of them have a

side quest though you can finish while you're moving ahead. Do Gavin Hossle's side quest. Then in the lab go through all that story stuff and come back to the scientists. Convince the irritable scientist to help the Feros colony via Paragon options, then go back all the way to the colony.

EQUIP THE THORIAN GRENADE MOD

And use it on the mind-controlled enemies. Do not kill them. There should be 16 colonists left the entire way through the mission. Make sure that number does not go down.

Continue, do the story stuff, spare the asari lady, boom you're done.

Congrats, Feros is done!

10. Side quests to do before Vormire

This is when you should wrap up all the side quests you have left. I will list all the side quests I suggest you do.

Companion side quests: Listed in the crewmates section.

Hades Dog's Saga (Missing Marines-Cerberus-Hades Dog): Obtained by talking to Admiral Kahoku in the Citadel Council Tower (after Spectre Inauguration)

Rogue VI: obtained from Admiral Hackett contacting you via the galaxy map.

Geth Incursions: Obtained same way, this is the Tali quest

Asari Diplomacy: Obtained by talking to Nassana on the Citadel. Choose paragon

Bring Down the Sky (DLC) (Asteroid mission): Go to the asteroid and do it, it's easy, choose Paragon (it's very obviously the right choice and if you choose otherwise I will hate you forever).

If you haven't completed these and don't know where to find them, look them up so you can complete them before the point of no return.

11. Virmire

You are quickly approaching the endgame. If you're doing Virmire, then you're done with all the grinding of the side quests and all that. You're in the endgame now. Not much you need to know for Virmire. Except for a few things.

First: CALM WREX DOWN. He's gonna be angry for reasons I won't spoil, and if you don't calm him down, either you or Ashley will have to shoot him. I'm spoiling that specific plot point because it's so important he doesn't die. IF he dies, the events of the second and third game are greatly affected, and it's much much much less cool. Basically, go talk to him when you're supposed to and use paragon options to calm him down. Because of his prior mission you did for him he'll be a little easier to calm down.

Second: SPOILERS. This is a massive spoiler, so skip this paragraph if you don't want to know this bit. I'm including it so you are aware and can create your best outcome but it is a big spoiler.

Basically, have the person you want to live between Kaidan and Ashley go with Kirrahe. This choice early on doesn't really matter. The only reason I say this is because later on you're gonna have to choose to go to Kaidan or Ashley, and whoever you didn't send with Kirrahe will require you to backtrack in order to save them. So, if you send the one you want to live with Kirrahe, you don't have to backtrack and you get to go forward without any interruption (and save Kirrahe).

Third: NO SPOILERS. You're safe now. Now, the actual assault. After you meet Kirrahe and start the assault, you will have opportunities to help Kirrahe. This is important to keep him alive. He's a really cool recurring character. He doesn't matter much but he's just pretty awesome. So basically, destroy the satellite, destroy the rocket drones, and don't use the security systems to harm his troops. This specifically I'm giving you a link for as it is not easy to describe.

https://www.ign.com/wikis/mass-effect/How_to_Save_Kirrahe

Meeting Saren again: with big bads, try to use the left options when you can cuz it can give you more info and open up conversation choices. Go with the blue conversation options again and you'll be good.

12. Ilos

Alright, from here on there's not much to tell you. I don't wanna spoil what happens so I'll keep all this to a minimum. You're gonna go back to the Citadel. The only choice I can think of that I prefer is having Anderson use Udina's terminal. You'll know when you know.

This is the endgame, so use what teammates you want. I always go Garrus and Tali for endgame stuff as they have the most interesting perspectives imo, but you can go with whoever you feel like.

13. The End

Save the Council. That's all. Choose whoever you'd prefer to be the council member. The choice is obvious, but you do you.

Sweeeeet you're done!

Now you've got ME2 next

Mass Effect 2

(Rooty Tooty Point and Shooty)

The Official Guide to a Happy and Healthy Shepard and Friends: Part 2



Welcome back to Mass Effect

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I. Introduction:

You made it to ME2! If you followed this guide up till now, you'll have saved Wrex, possibly Kirrahe, and the Council, you'll have a pretty good reputation. It's time to squander that big time.

Up till now you've been cruising along, chasing Saren and fighting the Geth non-stop. Mass Effect 2 shakes things up a little. ME2 really got me hooked on the series. It took the best parts of ME1 and rolled with that, while eliminating a lot of the annoying boring parts (*shudders in Mako*). ME2 is generally considered to be the best in the series (with ME3 being a very close second). This guide is specifically tailored to a paragon Shepard with all the best outcomes.

These are only suggestions, of course, but for a lot of this, unlike ME1, they're very *strong* suggestions, as certain choices in this game can severely affect ME3 and your overall outcomes. Still, the choices and prerequisites for the best outcomes in ME2 are more self-explanatory than

ME1's "don't tell don't show" behavior (i.e., Tali's pilgrimage being completed by the Geth Incursions quest). So without further ado, let's get to the guide.

II. Rules of Thumb:

Yes, there are some here as well

1. There's a new mechanic in cutscenes called "interrupts". These are paragon and renegade prompts that show up as a little quick time event occasionally. Paragon interrupts, marked by the blue wing symbol, appear on the screen, and are activated by the "aim" button (left trigger for console and right mouse for pc). Renegade interrupts are marked by the red star and activated by the "shoot" button (right trigger for console and left mouse for pc). They're super easy and usually there's a lot of time for you to press them. Paragon interrupts will cause Shepard to interrupt and do something good, Renegade will have Shepard do something bad or cool. Press ALL Paragon interrupts, as they have only good effects on the story and some of them can be important to your success. Renegade interrupts are more up to your judgement. Sometimes they can be cool like Shepard sabotaging a mech or shooting a drone, and other times they can be Shepard shooting an innocent person in the face :/ So be careful with those.

2. Crew interactions are a lot more fun now. You also are going to have a lot of squad mates. Like a lot a lot. Be sure to invest in all of them a lot. When you talk to them, press the option that's something like "I want to talk about you" to have a personal conversation that pushes their story forward a bit. You'll have to do that a certain number of times to get their loyalty missions, which makes them your best buddy really. It might sound complicated but its super easy, just talk to them as much as you can. If they have nothing to say, then come back in another mission or two, or after you've completed something for their story.

3. The Suicide Mission

The last mission in ME2 can kill some of your squad mates permanently, meaning they won't be in ME3, which can realllly screw up things for you. If you only decide to follow one thing in this guide, follow the Suicide Mission guide to avoid losing as many people as possible. If you follow it, no one will die, and you'll feel much better.

4. Mining

Ughhh it can be such a choreeeee. But, to get the best ending, you will need to mine enough planets for at least 3 different upgrades. You won't have to mine too much, but it is something you should keep in mind.

5. Paragon Point Growth

Invest your skill points into your personal trait ledger (for me it was Defender). Once you've gotten all four levels of that, your paragon gets doubled, along with paragon production. There will be two options for a perk you can get. Go for the one with the higher paragon/reputation benefit.

6. Pets

You can now buy pets on the citadel, including a pet hamster and some fish. Be sure to feed the fish after every mission, or they will die. The hamster doesn't need to eat tho. He's just a cutiepie. More fish become available for purchase as the game progresses. Also buy model ships to spice up your cabin. If you keep talking to Kelly Chambers after every mission and acquiring each crewmate, she'll have dinner with you and offer to feed your fish. This means you can stop feeding them and she'll keep them for you for when you come back for them in ME3. Editor Paul: it turns out you might have to flirt with Kelly Chambers as much as you can in order to get this to trigger. Flirting with her does not lock you out of any relationship so there's no penalty for doing so. It is also the only way for her to show up in ME3.

III. Act I

1. You're Shepard again woohoooooo. Import your ME1 character (should be an option at the beginning) and you're good to go. I will do my best to avoid any big spoilers. The first couple missions before you're thrown out into the galaxy map are easy and without any big decisions. Just make sure you answer paragon to start building up that sweet sweet goodness bar. The top sections of dialogue are still the paragon options, and the left options are still the investigating "more info please" options (I tend to shoot for left and all the top options for normal dialogue).
2. Team Building Time. It is time for you to build up your roster. First you can take a quick pit stop at the Citadel to reclaim your specter status from the Council. You'll have six dossiers that tell you to go find four potential crewmates. Kasumi Goto is on the Citadel, and because she is a dlc squad member she will join you as soon as you talk to her, because you agreed to do her loyalty mission (eventually). After that, my suggestion is to start with the three on Omega. First will be Zaeed (the other dlc squad member who joins you immediately). After talking to the leader of Omega, you can go after either Archangel or the Doctor first. My suggestion is Archangel (you'll find out why). Each recruitment of a squad member is accompanied by a full mission (besides the two dlc members). After Archangel, you can pick up the doctor after doing his mission. From there, go after either the Warlord or the Criminal. You can also do any side quests you have available before these (I always get rid of the Firebreak quests early because they're super short and boring).

3. After you collect all these members, the Illusive Man will tell you where to go (you are taken there automatically). Play through the mission as any paragon would, and there should be no complications.

IV. Act II

1. More team building. You will have three more dossiers (I always go after Tali first). They are all rather straight forward and fun. You will end up visiting Ilium, where you meet an old friend. Help her with whatever she needs, but don't tell her you want to go find the shadow broker yet. If you do, she'd then go to her apartment and following her starts that dlc. We don't want that yet. It's not the end of the world if she does go as you aren't forced to follow yet, but just for the sake of story cohesion. Other Ilium things: do Conrad Verner's quest in the bar (if you finished his quest in ME1). Also, when you go through the door under your friend's office and go all the way to the end, you'll get to a market/docking area. Talk to the Krogan and Asari who are there. They're not really important, but they're adorable and I love them.
 2. Loyalty mission time. After getting those three dossiers completed, you probably will only be able to complete 2 loyalty missions, because a mission timer started when you finished up act I. After a certain number of missions (around 5 in this case), you will play the next major story mission. Loyalty missions are obtained by talking to a squad mate enough after missions.
 3. When you've done enough quests, the Illusive Man will call again, and you'll do another mission (this one is interesting). After this, however, things get more interesting.

V. Act III

1. Do all your loyalty missions. Like all of them. Make sure you gain every member's loyalty. I will now include a brief explanation for each of them.
 - A. Jacob- This ratbag of a human being has a decent loyalty mission. Bring Mordin for unique dialogue.
 - B. Miranda- Nothing too crazy about this mission. Jack has one line if you bring her. No one else has any.
 - C. Garrus- This is one of my favorite loyalty missions, unsurprisingly. This is the ultimate step in teaching Garrus to be a good person. There's not really any unique dialogue for anyone.
 - D. Grunt- Bring Garrus to your talk with the krogan leader for some good dialogue.
 - E. Mordin- Make sure you SAVE MAELON'S DATA. It's important. Also bring Garrus for some funny dialogue.

F. Zaeed- You can do it early on, but there is a paragon dialogue choice at the end if you're acting paragon, so be sure to have some paragon reputation, otherwise he will not be loyal. Still, I usually have enough paragon when I do it in Act I.

G. Kasumi Goto- Not much to note about this. It's just a fun mission. At the end you're given a choice on the shuttle ride back. In this case it's one of the few times I choose renegade because even I gotta admit it's a little unhealthy and not good for her at all to do otherwise. Plus in ME3 she brings it up.

H. Thane- Be paragon and bring Garrus for some fun dialogue. If you don't update Thane on the politician's location, then he will not be loyal, but it's super easy and honestly would be rather difficult to mess up.

I. Samara- Mention the specific artists and musicians that Morinth likes. If you don't attract her attention, she won't like you and Samara won't be loyal to you. It's easy to do however so that shouldn't be an issue. In the end, pick the obviously good choice, otherwise you're a monster and I don't want to talk to you.

J. Jack- Miranda has a lot of dialogue for this mission. Do this one later in the list in your playthrough as it really shows how bad Cerberus can be. After this solve Miranda and Jack's fight with the blue paragon option, which requires around 80% paragon (hence the waiting)

K. Tali- Hold that thought and do it much later (I'll tell you when).

If you are intending to romance someone, after you complete their loyalty mission, there will be dialogue in the next few conversations that you can lock into a relationship with them if you want.

Romanceable Squadmates: Garrus (FemShep), Tali (MaleShep), Jack (MaleShep), Jacob (FemShep), Miranda (MaleShep), Kelly Chambers (AnyShep fling), Thane (FemShep), Samara (AnyShep)

Every other side quest. You're about to start the final countdown. Complete all the side quests that you want to now. This would be an excellent place to play the Overlord dlc. It is ridiculously sad and horrific and shows to a greater extent how bad Cerberus is than anything else in the game. Bring whoever you want, as it doesn't really matter. For story purposes I bring Miranda so she can see just how wrong Cerberus can be. For the Arrival and Lair of the Shadow Broker DLC, wait to do those after the end of the game, as they make more sense there.

Reaper IFF- This mission starts off the last countdown till the suicide run. Try to have most of your affairs completed by now and all your loyalty missions besides Tali.

VI. The Final Stretch

After you do the quest, wake up your new passenger and go to Tali's loyalty mission. Bring this new squad member for the most unique dialogue in any of the loyalty missions. DO NOT USE the evidence against Tali's father. This will help her win the trial but she won't be loyal. The best option is to pick the blue paragon dialogue choice to praise Tali's loyalty. Either way, if she isn't exiled and she's still happy with you, then she's good. (Note: If you want to romance Tali, speak to her after this mission, after the next mission, and after the brief segment before the suicide mission in order to lock in a romance).

Next, do your new squad mate's loyalty mission and bring Tali. Choose either option (I always pick paragon).

Then you will be forced to get off your ship, drama will ensue, and then you have to get ready for the Suicide Mission. DO NOT LAUNCH any other missions, as doing so will result in crewmembers dying. You can spend as much time as you want walking round the ship, just don't launch any other quests.

How to Survive Suicide: For Dummies

Step 1: Make sure you have the Hull, Shield, and Cannon upgrades

Step 2: Make sure everyone is loyal

Step 3: Have Tali be the vent tech expert. Garrus, Jacob, or Miranda can lead the fireteams. I pick Garrus for both fireteams. Use Jack for the biotic shield. Make sure the crew has a loyal squad member guide them to the ship (I usually pick Mordin). For the last portion after the vent and biotic sections, bring Miranda and then whoever your love interest is for the SECOND squad member slot. Pick paragon options if you're not a monster. After that? You're done. You successfully completed the Suicide Mission unscathed. Congratulations!

VII. Post-Game Fun

You're not done yet though. You can still play after you've finished the story. Everyone compliments you for beating the bad guys, but you can still do whatever side quests you have left. This would be the best place to do the Shadow Broker and Arrival dlcs. Do Arrival LAST.

Besides that, remember to explore the Shadow Broker's lair once your friend takes over, cuz there's a lot of fun stuff there. Congratulations! You're done! Feed your fish, salute your hamster, and pat yourself on the back. Mass Effect 2 is conquered. Now time for your heart to shatter in Mass Effect 3 :)

My Squadmates ranked:

1.Garrus

2.Tali

3.Mordin

4.Thane

5.Legion

6.Grunt

7.Jack

8.Samara

9.Miranda

10.Zaeed(Would be higher if given a more prominent role)

11.Kasumi(Same here)

12.Jacob



Mass Effect 3 Guide

By Pedro Raldbthar Befufflefumpter III

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I. Introduction

Congratulations! You've made it to Mass Effect 3, the last installment in the trilogy. Maybe people will die? Who knows, probably. On that note, we will do our best to minimize losses to make sure that the deaths that do occur count. As always, your playthrough is up to you, these are just helpful tips/details that might be helpful to know during the playthrough

II. Rules of Thumb

1. Conversations are less tedious now. When you go to talk to a squadmate, there may be a cutscene where you talk to them, but a lot of the time they will just speak dialogue in-game. For instance, when talking to Garrus, instead of entering a "dialogue wheel-esque" conversation, he might just say something random about a mission or how he's feeling as you're standing in the room. Shepard will often reply obviously. This is just letting you be aware that you won't be hearing anything like "Can it wait for a bit? I'm in the middle of some calibrations." Instead, you'll exhaust them of their dialogue by pressing the talk button over and over until they have nothing left to say, which is loads of fun.

2. Side quests are set up a loooooooooooooottt differently. Items for fetch quests are acquired usually by either scanning planets or finding them on other quests. For instance, this Volus ambassador might want a totem from his home planet and is talking to his friends about how he misses it. All you have to do is fly over to his planet, scan it, and take it to him. Not only that, but the map tells you how much you've scanned of each system. If you've scanned, say, 3 out of 4 anomalies, it'll say 75%. It's super helpful and so much easier than ME2.

3. Apart from scanning, some items for side quests will be found during other missions. For instance, there are Cerberus side missions that are pretty short and inconsequential (do them still). These items will be on these missions. Unfortunately, they can be hard to locate in the mission sometimes. Thankfully, though, the Spectre Requisitions Terminal exists now. On the Citadel (and on your ship once you've used the Citadel one once), you can buy spectre gear AND any quest items you didn't pick up in missions, with only a few exceptions. It's soooo nice.

4. War Assets. You need them. They're a point system that determines how good of an ending you will get. For the best ending, you will need a war asset score of 7800. Don't worry, you can definitely make it with this *ahem* amazing guide. All the side quests and missions typically give you war assets.

5. Interrupts still exist, and sometimes they can be really important. So be watching for those paragon and renegade symbols (I'll try to point out some big ones).

6. Squadmates have a lot to say. Gone are the boring quests in ME2 where no one talked. Now everyone talks all the time. So bring whatever squamates you would like to hear talk. (For instance, I bring Liara and Garrus on side quests that might have Wrex, since they have history). You can take whoever you want on any quest though, so feel free to think them all through and see which characters you think would fit best on those missions.

7. ILLUSIVE MAN TALKS- Whenever talking to the Illusive Man, always use the left dialogue options to investigate more and then the blue dialogues in order to get the best outcome in the end.

8. You're going to get invites from characters to meet up places. Do those, cuz they're fun and important. You can meet Kelly Chambers in the refugee area in the first act. She'll give you back the fish you collected in ME2 and will present you with a choice. Be kind to her. Later she'll ask another question. Take the renegade option and tell her to change her identity, otherwise she will die.

III. The Beginning

Have fun, cry a lot. There aren't really any notes for this bit. It's pretty straight forward. HOWEVER, there is an Illusive Man Conversation in the Mars mission. Use the left, top, and blue options.

When at the Citadel, be sure to explore and talk to everyone you can. Check on Kaidan/Ashley and all of them. On your map, each section will show if there are any people you can or should talk to. In the Spectre office you will find a terminal with Spectre data on it. Check in regularly, as you can authorize certain orders that can be important for quests (authorizing an investigation into hanar activity, authorizing the return of Gabby and Ken to your ship, etc.)

When back on the ship with the ability to move freely, obviously talk to your crew (as you should in between all missions), but you may not want to go to Palaven first. There is a dlc side mission that I think fits best here. Travel to Eden Prime to do that short mission and acquire a very unique squadmate (you want them early so you can get their dialogue on everything). While on Eden Prime, there is another side quest to help the colonists by checking these three terminals. One of them is in the buildings at the beginning (Liara will say something once you use them). The second one is in the building on the left once you cross the bridge. The last terminal is in the building right past this one. The building should have a big 2 on it as well as a ladder. Go into the bottom floor of this building and explore it for the last terminal. That ties up this side quest.

Once done with all this, head to Palaven and all that.

IV. Totally Tuchanka

The first segments build up to a final mission on Tuchanka. ALERT: THIS IS IMPORTANT. Do not do this until you are done with everything you want to get done. Make sure to do the Krogan scout mission in the Ninmah Cluster beforehand, the Grissom Academy mission, the Tuchanka Turian Platoon and Bomb missions beforehand as well, as these and any other missions will disappear after you do the final Tuchanka mission.

Try to tie up all the Citadel side quests that you can. Make sure you've scanned all the systems to completion that you can (some systems have nothing to be scanned, so they won't have a percentage of completion that ever shows up (Ninmah Cluster, Annos Basin, etc.)).

Talk to Cortez a lot. Meet him when he goes to the Citadel, and make sure you get him to the point where he goes to the Memorial wall with you before you do the Tuchanka Priority Mission. (This is so he has the will to live, surprisingly enough).

DLC missions like the Docking Bay D24 meeting that leads to the Omega DLC and the Dr. Bryson lab that leads to the Leviathan DLC's do not have to be completed at any specific time, so don't worry about that. In fact, I typically place them later in the story in order to make the most sense narratively.

Once all your quests are in order, feel free to do the Priority: Tuchanka mission.

V. Citadel Catastrophe

Yep, stuff happens. No notes for the mission, but afterwards, the Citadel will be a little different and most the npcs and side quests will be new, so get a handle on that.

At this point, I usually do the Omega DLC with Aria T'Loak, as there isn't something too pressing at the moment, and you're pretty pissed with Cerberus at this point, so it makes sense that you'd want to strike back.

OMEGA DLC

There are three side quests

1. Hack three terminals in the mission to go find the Talons. Be thorough and you should be able to find all three before you reach the first Talon outpost where Nyreen shows up.
2. Find the mechanic part at the big Talon outpost base at the end of the Talon mission. This is really easy, it's just behind some crates at the Talon base. This isn't the Talon outpost where Nyreen shows up. This is the base where Nyreen takes charge and makes plans and stuff.
3. Harrot wants a soggy couch. Harrot wants a soggy couch. After fighting the adjutants and going through the mining drill thing, fighting past the red shield core thingamajig, resisting the renegade interrupt button after talking to the Cerberus dude, FINALLY you will be with Aria, and you'll come across a water section with a dam that you can put up in order to get across. Once you put up the dam, you can go down into the now waterless pit and tag the couch.

VI. Quarians aren't that bad, right? ... wait oH LORD NO

Again, do all the side quests that you can before doing the last big Rannoch one. Especially the Asari Colony one. That one has a special friend and has a very important paragon interrupt at the end.

You will have a mission or two assigned by Legion and one or two by the Quarians. Do those before you finish off with Priority: Rannoch. There is not a big cutoff for Citadel missions like there was after Tuchanka, so you don't need to worry about getting all those in. However, you don't want the Quarians or Geth to die. So, like, there's some criteria you're going to have to hit.

1. Have Tali's loyalty in ME2
2. Win her case in ME2 without using her father's evidence.
3. Kill the heretic Geth in Legion's loyalty mission in ME2 (I didn't do this)
4. Do Legion's and the Quarian side quests in ME3 (the AA guns, Geth fighters, Admiral Koris)
5. Save Admiral Koris

You need the majority of these in order to be able to have a peaceful ending to their war. Use the blue paragon option after having Legion start uploading the data in the final mission.

VII. Thessian't

BRING JAVIK AND LIARA

Liara because duh, Javik because he's got a great perspective, but also because they have an important argument. There's another conversation with the Illusive Man. Use the left and paragon options again.

When you get back to your ship, Javik and Liara will be fighting. Settle their fight paragonly and have Javik apologize. Eventually (possibly here), Javik will want to view his memory shard. **DO NOT LET HIM USE THE MEMORY SHARD.** This will cause him to decide that he will commit suicide after the war because he feels so alone. So yeah go renegade and tell him not to use it.

VIII. Horizon't

The Horizon mission is pretty important, but there aren't really any big choices you have to make. There might be an important paragon interrupt at the end though.

After this, tie up the rest of your missions and quests. You shouldn't continue the main story, as the next mission is the point of no return.

Leviathan DLC: I usually do this somewhere around here, as it's got a lot to do with Reaper origins and feels like something you should do late game, but it doesn't really fit well anywhere in the story so do with it what you will.

Citadel DLC: This should be the last thing you do in ME3 before assaulting the Illusive Man's base. It's amazing and you should enjoy every part of it. Do it last so you can have as many squad mates as possible. It also feels like a great unofficial goodbye to Mass Effect before the actual end. Update: it makes me want to cry in a good way.

IX. The Final Stretch

You do the last two missions, the Cerberus Assault and then the Assault on the Earth. There's nothing you need to know for this. Enjoy it. When you talk to the Illusive Man, use those left Paragon dialogue options. Besides that, you've done it. Choose your ending (my personal suggestion is Destroy for a number of reasons (it's the best ending for Garrus and friends)).

That's Mass Effect. You've done it. Hope you enjoyed it. I sure did. I'm probably replaying the trilogy as you read this. But I just have an issue. Still, Mass Effect means a lot to a lot of

people, and I think you might see why now. So, thanks for giving it a try. Anyways, now go cope with not having Garrus. Congratulations on completing the Mass Effect trilogy!