

# Blade and Soul Beginner Guide

Compiled by Frey#2912

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**NOTE: I am not playing the game anymore so the guide probably won't be updated as often, or at all, as of 2020/01/20.**

## 1. Introduction

I have decided to compile this guide after spending the past two years in the BNS Academy Discord server, answering the same kinds of questions multiple times every week. Unfortunately, there doesn't seem to be an up-to-date online resource for reading up on the game mechanics.

This guide attempts to answer some frequently asked questions, while providing general information about various topics relative to the game. The guide will be updated over time. Most of the information in this guide was gathered through personal experience and conversation on the BNS Academy Discord server (check the Further resources section for an invite).

### How to use this guide:

This guide was written mostly as a “companion” resource to be searched when needed, and to be used in tandem with the [new player walkthrough by Toraso](#), which will explain what to do when you start out.

The guide covers a lot of material, but some sections are more important than others:

- Basic gameplay mechanics should be read to “not die” in PvE encounters
- The Soul Shield section is very important since most people overlook the importance of Soul Shield reinforcement
- Events help with gearing up quickly so it's good to have an idea of how they work

### Disclaimer:

The game undergoes rebalances and large content updates quite often, so while I'll try to keep this guide as updated as possible, there might be some minor mistakes due to changes that I don't notice.

### Who am I?

My main character is a Force Master called [Freya Bright](#) (which is why people know me by the handle Frey at this point). All my characters are on the EU server Jinsoyun. I've started playing during release and I've gone through all the content that's been released since then (with somewhat mixed results). I'm mostly a PvE player, but I play 6v6 PVP at times.

## 2. Glossary

Here you'll find a list of common abbreviations used by the community loosely grouped by context, together with their possible meanings.

Terms related to dungeons (usually found in Cross-server chat)	F8	Cross-server lobby: accessed by pressing the F8 key (hence the name). More info in the Dungeons section of the guide
	CS	Cold Storage
	HM	Heaven's Mandate/Hard mode (when written together with another dungeon e.g. CCHM)
	EM	Easy Mode
	MOML	My Orb My Loot. Heaven's Mandate requires an Orb of Ascension in order to fight the boss. Cold Storage requires the same Orb to spawn the second boss (not needed for daily quest). At times people will post this message when they recruit for the dungeon. This means they'll use the orb as long as nobody bids on the loot dropped by the boss.
	Tomb/DT	Desolate Tomb
	EC	Ebondrake Citadel
	NF	Naryu Foundry
	NS	Naryu Sanctum
	IF	Irontech Forge
	EL	Ebondrake Lair
	SSM/SM	Starstone Mines
	HH	Hollow's Heart
DD	Drowning Deeps	
RT	Ransacked Treasury	

	SST	Sandstorm Temple
	TSM	The Shadowmoor
	DST	Dreamsong Theatre
	BC	Brood Chamber
	WC	Warped Citadel
	CC	Cathedra Cliffs
	H0	Hangar 0
	SP	Stonescale Passage
	HH/HaHi	Halcyon Hills
	Koldrak	12-man instance that opens up only in specific moments of the day
Solo instances	Naksun	Floor 15 boss in Mushin's Tower
	Yunsang/F20	Floor 20 boss in Mushin's Tower
	Outlaw/Yeo	Outlaw Island, solo instance in Mushin's Tower whose boss is Yeoharan
	Hong/CoS	Circle of Sundering, solo instance in Ajanara Temple (Solak). Its boss is Master Hong.
	Den/DotA	Den of the Ancients, solo instance in Ajanara Temple (Solak). Its boss is M'ao
	TOI	Tower of Infinity. Solo instance in Mushin's Tower
Open-world instances	CB	Celestial Basin, open world area in Gunwon City
	SSP	Soulstone Plains, open world

		faction area in Silverfrost
Raids (mostly seen in Faction chat or when talking about Soul Shield sets)	MSP	Midnight Skypetal Plains, found in Zaiwei
	BT	Black Tower (from the KR name), in NA/EU it was translated as Skybreak Spire, found in Khanda Vihar
	VT	Vortex Temple, in NA/EU Temple of Eluvium, found in Dasari Palace Gardens
	SK	Scion's Keep, found in Celestial Basin
	TT	Twilight Temple, in NA/EU Nightfall Sanctuary, found in Emperor's Tomb
	ET	Eternity Temple, in NA/EU Temple of Succession, found in Dasari Palace
	IA	Iron Ark, in NA/EU The Steelbreaker, found in Silversteel Base Camp
	Pleb raids/weeklies	Any of the following
	DKV	Dawn of Khanda Vihar, found in Khanda Vihar
	FAS	Fallen Aransu School, found in Dasari Palace Gardens
	SJF	Snowjade Fortress, found in Dasari Palace Gardens
	TT Pleb raids/Halls	Hall of the Keeper and Hall of the Templar, found in Emperor's Tomb
	ET Pleb raids	Botany Center and Titan's Chamber, found in Dasari Palace
ToO	Throne of Oblivion, weekly	

		raid in Emperor's Tomb
<p>Party skills. All lines in this section are applied to all members of the party. Check the Party Protection section of this guide for more info.</p>	SB	Soulburn, offensive buff given by Warlocks and Wardens
	BW	Blackwing, upgraded version of Soulburn obtained by using the mystic badges dropped in the VT raid.
	BB	Blue Buff, offensive buff given by Kung Fu Masters and Assassins
	HM Block	Defensive buff, absorbs 5 attacks while letting players move. Blade Masters and Blade Dancers
	Stealth	Defensive buff. Gives all party members a one second iframe. Assassins and Summoners
	Ice/Sheath/Freeze	Defensive buff. Protects party members from all attacks for up to 5 seconds, but characters are frozen in place and cannot use skills for the duration. Force Masters and Destroyers
	AC, reset	Alpha Call. Resets party buffs and removes cooldown debuffs. Gunners
	Ress/Cat ress	Party resurrection. Soul Fighters and Summoners.
<p>Battlegrounds</p>	SI/BR	Shattered Isles, Battle-Royale mode that opens in specific moments of the day
	BG/6v6	Battlegrounds mode, accessible through F8
	WWV	Whirlwind Valley
	Beluga	Beluga Lagoon

	Nova	Nova Core
Miscellaneous	AoE	Area of Effect. Any AoE skill will apply its effects (damage and CC) in its area
	CC	Crowd Control
	KD	Knockdown (one type of CC)
	KB	Knockback (another type of CC)
	A3+ (or A followed by a number)	Aransu weapon with the corresponding stage
	R+	Raven weapon with its stage
	DF	Usually Dragon Forge weapon (PVP weapon). Sometimes it may refer to Dawnforged (PVE weapon).
	GC	Grand Celestial weapon
	TB	Thornbreaker weapon
	Dawn/Rift	Dawnforged/Riftwalk weapons
	SS	Soul separation (PVE mechanic) or Soul Shield or Soulstone or backstep (activated by pressing S twice) depending on the context
	Joint CC	CC to be applied by multiple party members on the same boss
Miscellaneous	DC/dailies	Daily challenge
	Range Check	During their attack rotation, bosses will periodically check the distance between the tank and themselves. If the tank is further (or closer, in some cases) than allowed,



		the boss will usually perform some kind of attack on the tank, or straight up cause a wipe. Range checks should always be avoided.
	CM	Challenge Mode, ranked mode for parties where the objective is obtaining the highest score possible in a specific dungeon.
	Rotation	The order and set of skills you should be using in PvE to maximize your DPS. The rotation changes depending on you spec
	To Charm	To use one of the “charm” items. In raids it usually means “to use a raid resurrection charm”.
	Buff food	Items that provide temporary stat boosts (e.g. Spicy Dumpling, Meat Dumpling, Mild Dumpling)
Equipment	Short soul	Short cooldown soul,
	Long soul	
Gems	Square	Square gem (usually refers to Gilded Square gems)
	Penta	Pentagonal gem
	Hexa	Hexagonal gem
	Hepta	Heptagonal gem
	Octa	Octagonal gem
	Tri/Gilded Tri	Gilded Triangular gem
	Square/Gilded Square	Gilded Square gem
	Dyad	Dyad gem (gem obtained by fusing two Gilded Square

		gems)
	Powder/Gem powder	Hongmoon gem powder
Materials	Bound material	One of the four crystal variants: they can be moved from one character to the other on the same account, but they cannot be used in some crafting and transmutation recipes and cannot be sold on the marketplace
	Unbound material	The “sealed” version of bound materials. They can be converted in bound materials (be careful, bound materials cannot become unbound), they can be sold on the marketplace and they can be used to craft tradable materials
	SSC	Soulstone Crystal
	SS	Soulstone
	MSC	Moonstone Crystal
	MS	Moonstone
	SC	Sacred Crystal
	SO/orb	Sacred Orb
	Ely/EC	Elysian Crystal
	Elysian Orb	Elysian Orb
	Evolved/Volvo/Evo stone	Evolved stone
	Oil	Sacred oil/sacred vial
	DGS	Divine Grace Stone
TS/STS	Transformation Stone	
PTS/PSTS	Premium Transformation	

		Stone
	TOI tokens	Tower of Infinity Tokens, used to buy Soul badges or other items
Solo dungeon currencies	Beads	Yunsang beads, currency dropped by bosses in F16-F20
	Outlaw token/fragment	Currency dropped by bosses in Outlaw Island
	Hong token/fragment	Tranquillity emblem, currency dropped in Circle of Sundering, required for purchasing the bracelet needed to upgrade Starbreaker/Divinity/Battalion bracelets
	Mao token/fragment	Alpha emblem, currency dropped in Den of the Ancients, required for upgrading Prophecy/Kingmaker necklaces
Currencies	Gold	Common currency used to buy items on the market place and to upgrade gear
	BP	Battle points, awarded by playing in Battlegrounds
	Zen beans	Currency awarded by playing in 1v1/3v3
	Peaches	Currency obtained by farming Celestial Basin
	PP	Prestige Points, awarded by various means in faction contested territory
	HM Coins	Hongmoon coins. This currency allows to purchase items on the Cash Shop.

		They can be acquired as a season rewards for high ranking in ladders, by selling gold through the currency exchange and
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### 3. What class should I choose?

Unlike other MMOs, in Blade and Soul there are no dedicated tanks/healer/DPS classes. All classes can perform the DPS/Tank role and healing is not as important thanks to the fact that gear and class skills help a lot with healing.

That being said, some classes are definitely more suited to tanking than others, mostly because they are provided with more iframes and (usually) a spamable block or counter. "Dedicated" tank classes also have a skill that temporarily increases their threat.

Class	Role in a party
Blade Master	Tank, defensive party buff (HMB)
Kung Fu Master	Tank, offensive party buff (BB)
Destroyer	Melee DPS, defensive party buff (Sheath)
Force Master	Ranged DPS, defensive party buff (Sheath)
Assassin	Melee DPS, offensive party buff (BB), defensive party buff (Stealth)
Summoner	Ranged DPS, defensive party buff (Stealth), heal, party resurrection
Blade Dancer	Melee DPS, defensive party buff (HMB)
Warlock	Ranged DPS, offensive party buff (Soulburn)
Soul Fighter	Melee DPS, heal, party resurrection
Gunslinger	Ranged DPS, offensive party buff (Alpha Call)
Warden	Tank, offensive party buff (Soulburn)
Zen Archer	Ranged DPS, offensive party buff (Alpha Call)

## **Important note**

All classes are viable in PvE, so choosing a class you don't like because "it does more deeps" is the worst thing you can do if you want to keep on playing the game for a long time. Whenever people ask "what class should I choose?" the best answer is always "play what you enjoy": this game is all about the combat system, so if you pick a class you don't like you will have a miserable time.

Unfortunately, the game will put any newly created character through the main quest, which will take about 20-25 hours to complete at the very least, so testing different classes is quite time-consuming. Luckily, however, it is possible to get a limited idea of how a class will behave in PvE thanks to the training room.

When you create your character, you will get the option of starting from lv 50 rather than from lv 1: doing this will put you in the training room, where you will get the chance of testing the different rotations and checking out some dungeon bosses. While not that accurate (items such as soul badges and mystic badges can alter how a class plays substantially and cannot be equipped when creating the character), it is still an acceptable preview of how a class will play out when all skills are available.

It is not necessary to purchase a LV55 Voucher to access the training room in this way.

## **Ranged or melee?**

The first thing that should be considered when choosing a class is whether you want to play as a ranged or as a melee character.

The main difference between the two is the fact that ranged characters can avoid most boss attacks, while melee players need to take them into consideration while doing their rotation. For this reason, melee gameplay is usually more hectic and more "engaging" than ranged gameplay.

On the other hand, in many dungeons and raids mechanics rely on marking people that are far from the boss, which means that ranged players will usually have mechanics to do.

Another thing to note is that all high-tier dungeon bosses will perform range checks. This means that, regardless of their class, the aggro holder will need to stay in melee range to tank successfully. A consequence of this is that, as a melee character, it is more likely that you will have to tank in PUGs.

## **Low ping or high ping?**

Blade and Soul combat is extremely ping reliant: this means that some classes (and elements) perform much worse when played with high ping, or become straight up unplayable: it will become hard if not impossible to do the rotation properly, thus the DPS will take a big hit. If your ingame ping is very high, you'll have to take it into consideration. Fire Force Master, Destruction Gunslinger, Guardian Warden and Thorn Summoner perform decently when played with high

ping. There will still be a dps loss, however it will be less impactful than when using other classes and specs.

### **What's the best class in PvE?**

All classes are viable and required for Endgame content, however some classes will have a harder time finding a raid than others. For example, there is a very large number of low-to-mid geared Gunslingers and Wardens compared to other classes, so it may be harder to find a spot in a raid as one of those classes. Other classes, such as Assassins and Soul Fighters, are way less prevalent in the playerbase and will have an easier time finding a slot. Soul Fighters are very useful in progression raids thanks to their revive, however they become way less important once a raid starts clearing reliably.

### **What's the best class to get ranked on?**

All seasonal rankings are class-based, so all players of different classes reaching the same rank will earn the same rewards. Low-population classes such as Destroyer, Assassin and Soul Fighter have an easier time reaching higher ranks because of the smaller pool of players.

If you think about ranks, you should be aware of the following issues:

- The 1v1 ladder is dominated by high rank players making multiple alts and climbing the ladder on them
- The 3v3 queue opens only in some limited times each week
- To achieve a high ranking in 6v6 it is necessary to have a good PvP gear, which will require a large investment of money and/or time.
- The same applies to Tol and PvE rankings: as a new player, it is impossible to achieve any good result in those ladders without spending a huge amount of money or through an insane amount of grind.

## **4. Your first steps in the game**

Your first 20 to 30 hours in game will most likely be devoted to completing the story. Story will provide you with everything you'll need to start playing the actual game: at the end of the story you will receive a set of hexagonal gems, your first accessories and a complete set of Tier 1 legendary Soul Shields.

### **You should NOT skip story.**

Linked below you'll find a very good walkthrough of what new players should do at different gear stages. I advise to follow the guide as it will help you find what should be done for most of your "training period".

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1oj668\\_QHGstJNKf2jYeR5vsSbACoz5HPj-ZxH3FTRI/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1oj668_QHGstJNKf2jYeR5vsSbACoz5HPj-ZxH3FTRI/edit?usp=sharing)

Once you complete the Awakening quest (it unlocks when your character will reach Lv 60 HM 8), you should spend some time in the training room and complete the basic training: it should

give an idea of how the class plays and will explain where your CC skills are and how to avoid attacks using the built in iframes.

## Game interface

### UI Customization

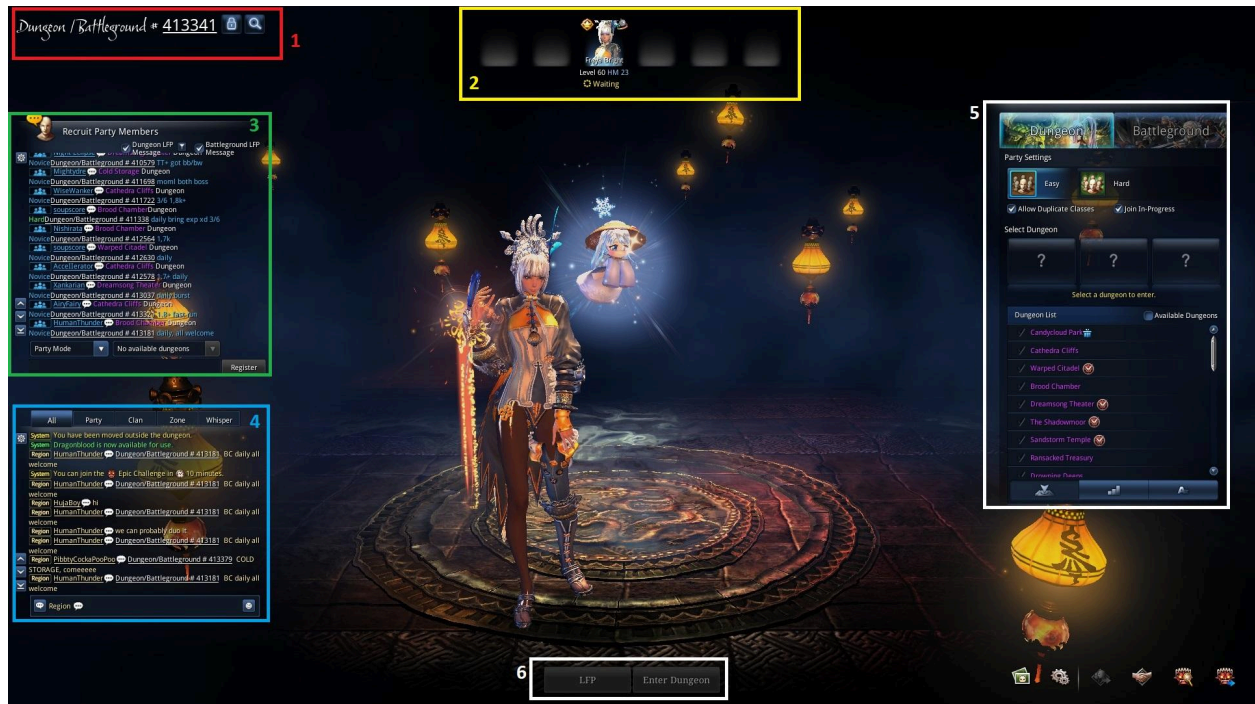
It is possible to change the game UI by pressing Shift + F1 and by moving the interface boxes where it's more convenient to you. As an example, here is the UI I am using when playing:



I moved around a lot of boxes so it will definitely look different from what your UI looks like, and that's fine. Every player ends up tailoring their UI in such a way that it's the most comfortable to them.

It is also possible to customize chat tabs, moving them around and tweaking what kind of messages should be contained by each tab. In my case, I have a chat tab reserved to clan conversations, one reserved to party and raid and one reserved to faction chat.

## Cross-server lobby



Dungeon Lobby (aka Cross-server, or F8 from the key you need to press to access it) lets you enter all dungeons in the game without moving to the appropriate region in the world.

As you can see from the picture above, there are a few different sections you should pay attention to.

1. The number in the top left of the screen is the lobby number. It's possible to share this number in chat by clicking on it: it will be automatically copied in the current chat channel. Anyone can join the lobby by clicking on the link. You can also join a lobby directly by clicking on the magnifying glass on the right of the number and writing the lobby number in the field
2. On the top of the screen you can see the portrait of every character currently in the lobby, as well as their class and their HM level
3. The recruitment chat on the left lets you join a lobby created by other players or advertise your own lobby. To advertise your lobby you'll have to select the party mode and the dungeon. You can also add a custom message (for example, the number of players in your party or preference for classes). After clicking on "Register", your message will be automatically posted every minute.
4. The bottom left chat box lets you write messages in the region chat. Here you can advertise again your lobby, but the dungeon name will not be shown so you should write it in the recruitment message together with the difficulty. This also works as a normal chat tab for party and clan messages.
5. On the right side of the screen you can choose the "destination" of your lobby. The lobby should be by default on the "Dungeon" tab, but you can enter the Battlegrounds by clicking on the relative button. In the Dungeon tab you can choose the difficulty of the



dungeon (either Novice or Hard) and pick up to three different dungeons by clicking on their name in the bottom half of the window. On the side of the name, the red symbol means that the dungeon counts towards that day's Daily Challenge. A gift icon means that the dungeon is part of the current Event. You might see a lock symbol on the left of some dungeons: that means you can't enter them at that time (either because you haven't unlocked them yet, or because you've already completed them for that day).

6. Finally, on the bottom of the screen you can find the LFP and Enter dungeon buttons. Clicking on the LFP button will put you in a matchmaking queue which will match you with other players looking for the same dungeon. You'll enter the dungeon when the party is full, or after the lobby owner clicks on the "Enter dungeon" button. It is possible to click on the Enter dungeon button at any time, provided that everyone in the lobby is ready. You can also enter dungeons alone.

## 5. Basic gameplay mechanics

Whatever the game mode, for the most part your objective when playing this game will involve killing enemies in the most efficient way possible. When fighting bosses in PvE, mechanics revolve around two concepts, boss attacks and crowd control.

### Iframes

- Iframes are skills that will let you become invincible (hence the name, i(nvincibility) frame)
- They will let you resist damage (so you will not lose hp) and status effects (so you will not be stunned)
- Some skills will give the entire party iframes, so that the entire party will be invulnerable to damage and status effects
- Iframes are different for each class, however all classes have a variation of "backstep", which can be activated by pressing the S key twice in rapid succession
- Iframes are extremely important both in PvE and PvP, so knowing which among your class skills provides them is fundamental to survive any encounter in the game

### Boss attacks

- Bosses have two types of attacks, "Yellow attacks" and "Red attacks".
- "Yellow attacks" can be blocked, parried or countered and doing so will prevent any additional effect from being activated
- "Red attacks" cannot be blocked, parried or countered and must be avoided by using an iframe
- Failing to avoid attacks can have different effects:
  - You take damage from the attack
  - Boss will apply some sort of debuff on you
  - Boss will CC you
  - A combination of the above

## Range checks

- Most bosses perform a “range check” between each attack. This means that between each attack they measure the tank’s distance from the boss. If the tank is not at the correct distance, the boss will perform some kind of “range check” attack, which may include
  - Jumping on the tank
  - Pulling the tank
  - Dashing to the tank
  - Stopping rotation and repeating the same AOE attack until the tank returns to the correct distance
  - In some cases, the tank may be killed by the range check
  - Most range check attacks cause a map-wide aoe CC
- In most cases, the tank is supposed to remain closer to the boss than a specific distance. Some bosses, however, require a “range tank”
- Range tanks, as the name suggests, must tank the boss while staying further away from the boss than some distance (usually 10 meters). General Moyun in BT3, Flame Asura in VT1, Shieldbearer in TT2 require range tanks as part of their mechanics.

## Crowd Control

- Crowd control describes skills that can apply a debuff on enemies. There are different kinds of Crowd Control: soft CC and hard CC.
- Soft CC includes slows, roots and pulls. Soft CC may hinder your movement, but will still let you use most of your skills.
- Hard CC will prevent you from using all your skills with the exception of your escape skills. Stun, knockdown, daze are hard CCs.
- You can escape knockdown and daze by using your “F-roll” skill within a second of being CC’d, while Stuns require a different escape.
- When applying a CC on a boss, the CC bar underneath the boss health will change color depending on what CC has been applied:
  - Stuns are blue
  - Knockdowns are green
  - Dazes are red
  - Knockbacks are yellow
- When a boss is under the effect of a CC, it is not possible to apply a different CC:
  - For example, if a boss is being stunned, applying Knockdown skills will not have any effect

## Crowd Control in PVE

- Most PvE Boss mechanics involve using the right CC at the right moment

- In some cases applying any CC is enough, in other cases different CC's change the boss' behavior
- Joint CC's are required to fully CC a boss: to perform a Joint CC it is necessary to apply multiple CC skills within a second after the application of the first CC
- In some cases, the correct CC to be used is color coded: for example, on M'ao the mechanic requires applying two CC's in order and the color on her shield will show which one is needed (green is knockdown, blue is stun, as above)
- When applying a CC would trigger a mechanic change (there are lots of examples: Naryu Sanctum, Sandstorm Temple, Fallen Aransu School, BT2, VT2, TT1, TT2, TT4), using a stun will CC the boss without triggering a change in the mechanic, while Knocking down the boss will change its behavior

### Party protection

- Party protection is another major part of PvE encounters and it involves the use of party-wide skills that defend the party from a boss attack
- There are three kinds of party protection: Hongmoon Block (aka HMB, HM Block or simply Block), Stealth and Freeze (aka Sheath or Ice)
- After applying a party protection, a party-wide debuff will be applied on all members in range of the protection. The debuff will prevent the application of the same protection before its expiration.
- Its duration is usually equal to the cooldown of the party protection skill
- This means it is not possible to use the party protection skill multiple times if a reset occurs
- Alpha Call can remove the debuff and allow the reapplication of the party protection, but this is almost never done
- Since very often a boss rotation will involve multiple attacks that require party protection, it is necessary to rotate between different party protection skills to cover all attacks (e.g. an attack will be covered by stealth, then HMB will be used next and finally freeze will be employed)
- Some boss attacks will apply debuffs that cannot be avoided unless an iframe is used, and in some cases using the wrong party protection will not protect you from the debuff (e.g. ice can be used to protect from Sword Dance in SK, however it should be triggered by the first attack and being late will protect from the damage but not from the debuff)
- In almost all cases, it is possible to use a self protection instead of a party protection, however this is not always reliable. Being able to use party protections as needed is extremely important in raids

### Martial Tome (a.k.a. Skill book)

The **skill book** (opened by pressing K) is the window that you will use to choose a specialization, change the effects of your skills and enhance some of them.

The first thing you will have to choose is your **specialization** (spec from now on). It is your "build", and it will change most of your skills. Different specs change drastically how a class is played, usually have different requirements (some specs need a good connection and a good

PC to output the maximum amount of dps) and different dps output. All specs are viable in PVE, however some will perform much better in some conditions than others.

Some specs are better at PvP than others: for example, Fire spec for Force Master is not as good as Ice spec in PvP, so it is convenient to switch to Ice when playing in PvP game modes.

Below you'll see a series of pictures that show what the Martial Tome looks like.

## Talents



In the figure above you can see the **Talent page** for a Flame spec Force Master. At the top of the picture it is possible to choose the spec you want to play. The third tab labeled as ??? is the third spec, which will arrive in a future update. At the time of writing, only Blade Master and Kung Fu Master have a third spec, with Destroyer and Assassin set to arrive within the year.

The "Talents" part of the window lets you choose different functions for some of your skills, and is the main way you have for customizing your gameplay. By tweaking this page, it is possible to set up your skills to be used in PvE or PvP encounters.

All classes have 5 different “Talents” that can be modified. This means that all builds can be described very quickly by writing the chosen talent for each row. For example, the Talent page above is “3-2-3-2-2” since the third element of the first row was selected, the second of the second row was selected and so on.

Changed what talents are equipped is free and can be done at any time, as long as you’re out of combat.

## Skills



By clicking on the “Talents” bar it is possible to browse through the skills that can be used when in the given class and spec.

By default, the box “View Enhanceable Skills” is ticked, so that only some skills are shown. “Enhanceable skills” are skills that can be made more powerful (i.e. deal more damage) by investing some of the **Hongmoon points** that are obtained by purchasing skill books (the items that used to be necessary to unlock the old **Hongmoon Skills**) and by reaching the level 60.

To maximize dps, Hongmoon points should be put in the correct skills. As a rule of thumb, points should be put in whichever skills deal the most damage in your rotation. In this example, I put all

my points in Blazing Beam, Inferno and Awakened Dragonchar as they are the most important skills when playing as a Flame Force Master in a Raid.

It is possible to have multiple different skill pages by purchasing Training Expansion Tickets from the Services tab in the Hongmoon Store. These additional skill pages will allow you to store presets for different situations. For example, in the picture there are 4 different skill pages: one for PvE in Flame build, one for PvE in ice build, one for Battleground in Ice build and one for Battleground in Flame build. Skill pages save Hongmoon points allocation as well.

### **Disabling Skills**

For some classes and specs, it may be beneficial to **disable some skills** because they might interfere with the normal rotation (Shadow Gunslingers, for example, disable the Bulletstorm skill because it results in a DPS loss), or might be triggered by mistake and cause problems. A very common issue, for example, is using skills that throw bosses in the air when they are CC'd: this disrupts melee classes since they cannot dps enemies in the air. It's very common for players to disable such skills to avoid issues. Skills that cause knockback can cause problems too.

In the picture below you can see the skill "Glacier" (one of the Force Master Ultimate Skills) with a red cross on the left: that means I've disabled the skill in this particular skill page. Up to 5 skills may be disabled by clicking on the blue tick mark on the left of the skill icon. To re-enable them, click on the red cross.

Disabled skills are skill page-dependent: this means that it is possible to disable different skills on different skill pages. In my PVP pages, for example, the Glacier skill is enabled since it can be very useful when in PVP.



## Experience and Hongmoon Points

In Blade and Soul, your experience level is reflected by two numbers: the “normal” character level and its Hongmoon (HM) level. The first is capped to 60 and can be reached simply by completing the story quest. Once you’ll reach Level 60, your experience will start counting towards your HM level.

A character’s HM level is the most accurate indicator of the amount of time spent on that account, but not of its dps: unlike most RPGs, experience in Blade and Soul has little bearing on your actual DPS in fights, and will not unlock additional skills after reaching level 60.

By increasing your HM level you will unlock **Hongmoon Points**. Hongmoon Points can be assigned in the Profile window (P). Depending on your points allocation, you will receive either major offensive or defensive bonuses in the form of raw stats, together with some other situational bonuses.

HM points are a very useful tool for adapting you build quickly and for free. In some raids, for example, it may be convenient to have more HP to avoid dying because of a DOT, while in other (very specific) cases additional Movement Speed may be useful. Threat may also be important if you want to tank but cannot deal more DPS than someone else.

In PVE, the typical points distribution depends on your HM level. The typical points allocation is 50 points in Offense, then the rest split between HM Focus and defense if you think you might need more HP. After reaching at least HM16, if possible you should put all the points in Offense

for the 80 points bonus and then allocate the rest as you prefer. Beyond HM16, points should be placed in HM Focus until maxing it.

## DPS rotation

Your DPS depends on two things: gear and rotation. Gear is (relatively) self-explanatory: better gear leads to better DPS. Given the same gear, however, a poor rotation will always lead to lower DPS.

Perfecting the rotation is a major part of learning how to play a class in PvE and something you should focus on if you plan to maximize your damage output.

Rotation depends on your class skills (of course) and for that reason you should check up a guide for your class to know what skills should be used and when.

It's important to note that your rotation is heavily influenced by 4 major mechanics:

- Soul cooldown
- Weapon resets
- Bracelet uptime
- Party buffs

**Soul cooldown** revolves around knowing when your soul will be on cooldown and when it will be active, and how to play around the two timings. Indeed, in general (see later) you should use your burst skills when your soul is active, even if that means delaying their cast. This is especially important when you're playing a class that benefits from using a long soul, since mistiming key skills means losing DPS over an entire minute cycle, rather than a ~8s seconds cycle. After activating, the soul will provide flat bonuses to most of your offensive stats for a short time, boosting your damage output by a lot.

*NOTE: long soul is in general truly beneficial only when it's at least of True Transcendent tier, so if you're reading this guide you'll probably be very far from that point. So, use a short soul instead.*

**Weapon resets** rely on the fact that all legendary PVE weapons can randomly trigger an effect that stacks up to 5 times every time an attack hits. Weapon stacks provide bonus stats and once they reach 5 stacks they transform in a stronger buff that lasts 10 seconds and that resets most cooldowns once it expires. Some skills (party buffs and some self buffs) cannot be reset.

Very important: party protection skills are reset by weapon resets, but the debuff that prevents their application is not. This is very important: it is not possible to reset a party protection that has been used too early without using Alpha Call.

All hits from all attacks have a chance of triggering the weapon stack. This also means that classes with a high hits/s ratio tend to trigger resets more often.

It's very important to play around weapon resets, as they will let you use high damage/high cooldown skills more often. What you should try to do is use all the skills you know will be reset



during the 10s countdown to “not waste” them. An added bonus is the fact that the 5-stack buff will give you 100% flat critical chance, further encouraging you to use as many DPS skills as possible over that time.



In the picture on the left you can see that the soul is currently active (red outline) and that there is a single weapon stack (yellow outline). In the picture on the right, instead, the soul is on cooldown: 8 seconds remain until it triggers again.



The picture on the left shows that the soul is active and will remain active for the next 6 seconds, that the weapon is fully stacked and will reset all cooldowns in 7 seconds and that the bracelet is active for the next 6 seconds. The same buffs are shown (with different icons) on the buff bar as shown in the two pictures above. Personally, I never pay attention to the bar on top and rely completely on the three circles on the bottom to play around cooldowns.



Finally, above you can see the effect of a fully-stacked Grand Celestial Stage 9 weapon: note that the critical rate receives a flat 100% crit bonus, so all hits will be critical during the effect.

**Bracelet uptime** is provided by using some skills while equipping the proper bracelet (both in PVE and PVP). When the bracelet skill should be used depends on a specific class' rotation. In general, bracelet uptime should be maximized: this means that you should try to use the skill that activates your bracelet in such a way that the bracelet buff is on as long as possible. In other words, in general it's not optimal to spam a skill that triggers your bracelet when you can instead use it after the bracelet effect is over. This does not apply to all classes and specs, however: in some cases, it may be better to save the skill that triggers the bracelet effect until some other skills are ready.

Finally, **Party buffs** (Soulburn and Blue Buff) change your rotation by changing some skills and heavily buffing your stats. Party buffs have a base cooldown of 1 minute, which may be reset by using Alpha Call. You should therefore try to keep track of that cooldown and adapt your rotation to make use of the stat boost as much as possible. The active effect of your talisman has a 1 minute cooldown, so it can be timed with party buffs.

### **Simple mode**

Simple mode lets you give to the game control over your rotation: instead of managing some of your skills, simple mode will use a preset sequence of skills when certain conditions are satisfied (skills are off cooldown, you're in a specific stance, a specific skill has been used).

Simple mode varies drastically in performance from spec to spec even within the same class: in some cases, simple mode will perform very poorly compared to a fully manual rotation (for example, some skills are used in the wrong order, or not at all); in other cases, simple mode performs in the same way as manual does.

Something to note is that, in some cases, simple mode will cast all skills as soon as they're off cooldown. This may not be optimal, since it may be better to wait until soul is off cooldown, or a weapon reset is ready to make use of those buffs.

There exist addons that modify skill bindings and the sequence of skills in the simple mode rotation, but I don't know anything about them besides the fact that they exist. For more info you should check the BNS Buddy Discord (linked in the Further Resources section).

I personally use simple mode on my alts because I don't play enough on them to spend the time necessary to perfect the rotation on them. Simple mode helps a lot with that, since using a bad simple mode is usually more dps than a completely wrong rotation. Whether you want to use simple mode or not is ultimately up to you, however be aware that manual rotations (or macros, for some classes) are almost always better in terms of DPS.

### **Parsing**

It is possible to check if a rotation is correct or not by observing the skill ratios in a DPS breakdown. To see the breakdown it is sufficient to hover over a player's name in the DPS meter: the meter will then show a window that contains the number of hits for each skill used, the % of critical hits for each skill and how much damage did each skill do. There is also a timer that shows how long the player has been fighting the boss for and stats on the number of missed hits.

The screenshot displays a game's interface. On the left, a list of equipped items is shown, including 'Grand Celestial Bangle - Stage 9' (5/100), 'Awakened Celestial Emperor Ring - Stage 3', 'Awakened Celestial Emperor Earring - Stage 2', 'Awakened Prophecy Necklace - Stage 3', 'Awakened Starbreaker Bracelet - Stage 3', 'Skybreaker Belt - Stage 10', 'Skyreach Gloves - Stage 10', 'True Tiger Soul', 'True Champion's Heart', 'Awakened Ultimate Pet Aura - Stage 1', 'Awakened Wyvern Talisman - Stage 1', and 'Awakened Ancestral Soul Badge - Stage 1'. On the right, a 'Training Dummy' window shows a DPS of 2,447,907/sec. Below it, a 'Detailed Battle Records' window displays the following data:

Detailed Battle Records			
Accumulated Dmg.	1,000,000,000	Boss Blocking Rate	0.00%
Dmg. Participation	100.00%	Boss Evasion Rate	0.00%
Battle Time	6 min. 48 sec.		
Skill Name	Accuracy (Critical)	Accumulated Dmg.	
Blazing Beam	351 (93%)	473,988,907	(47%)
Inferno	235 (94%)	168,969,022	(16%)
Blazing Wall	512 (93%)	130,010,833	(12%)
Smoldering Ash	154 (91%)	57,433,032	(5%)
Blazing Palm	382 (93%)	42,165,968	(4%)
Meteor Shower	129 (93%)	37,224,867	(3%)
#AttackEffect#	1 (0%)	31,740,208	(3%)
Dual Dragons	62 (93%)	26,064,480	(2%)
Frost Palm	385 (93%)	12,820,119	(1%)
Shock Fire	52 (96%)	10,626,549	(1%)

All classes have certain *ratios* that should be maximized in order to achieve the best DPS output possible. These ratios describe the number of times a skill has been used over the entire fight and are a very good indication of whether your rotation is correct or not: having suboptimal ratios means that you're not using as many skills as you can, and this translates into a loss of DPS. What ratios to maximize and how is something that depends on your spec. Some parse calculators are also available: they usually are spreadsheets that you can fill with your skill counts and combat time and that will show how good your ratios are compared to what's the highest that can be reached.

It is possible (and strongly recommended) to practice your rotation by doing parses. You "parse" by going in the training room (F12 key), selecting the Training Dummy as an enemy and either killing it or spending some time DPSing it down (it has 1 billion HP, so if your gear is not good it will take a very long time to kill). Once you're done, you can hover your mouse over the DPS

meter and take a screenshot of the window that will appear. Very often, people will ask you for a parse if you ask how to improve your DPS.



In my opinion, practicing your rotation in the training room is a very good habit, especially if you plan to not use simple mode. By spending a lot of time in the training room performing the proper rotation will become automatic, which will take a thing off your mind when performing mechanics in dungeons or raids.

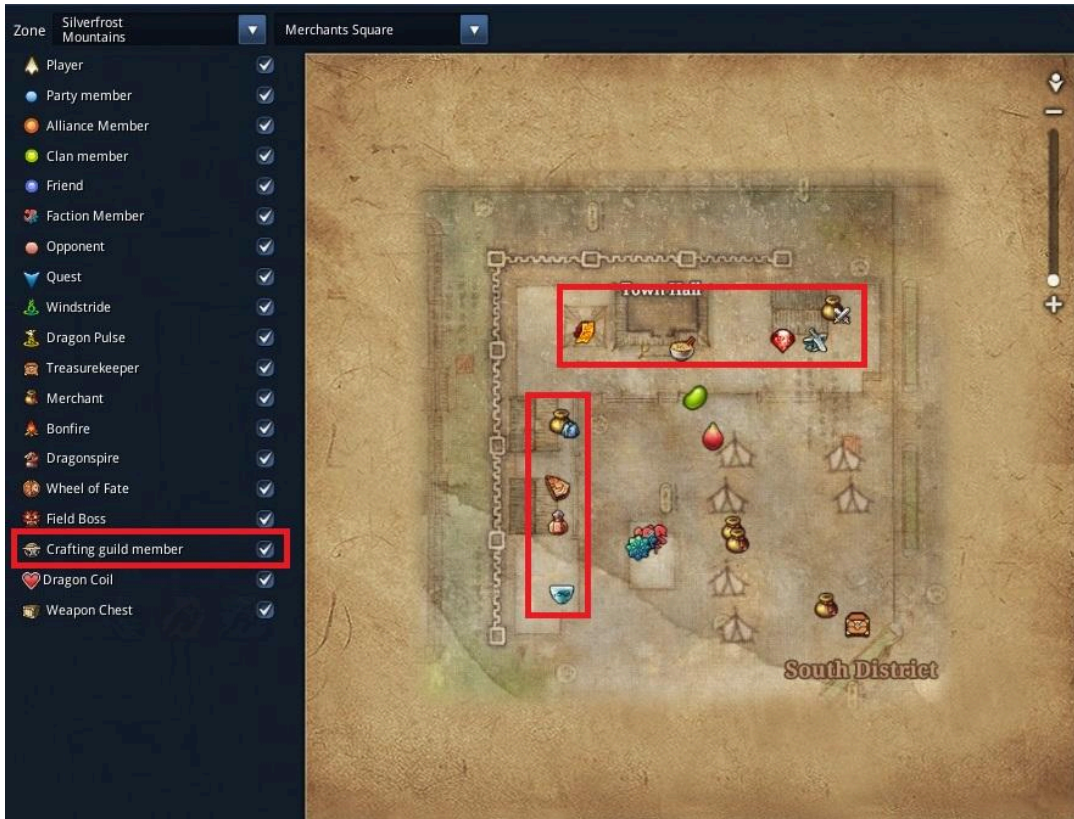
## 6. Crafting

**NOTE: this section needs to be updated to reflect the changes made to crafting professions.**

Crafting in Blade and Soul is a very simplistic procedure, but is still very important because it allows to produce items that are used to improve your gear, or to buff you for PvE or PvP.

You can pick up to two different crafting professions on each of your characters with whatever combination you may want (they have to be different from each other, however). To join a crafting profession, you will have to go to one of the crafting profession reps in all the hub cities and talk to them.

You can find the crafting guild reps by following their icons on the map.



## Crafting recipes

To unlock new recipes you will have to level up your profession level and this is done by crafting low level recipes.

Most recipes will have 5 different durations (some high tier crafts may have only one or two), with the first two being highly inefficient material-wise and the latter two being inefficient time-wise. The latter two are still worth using for leveling up professions, since they yield a very large amount of profession experience while saving some materials you may be needing to upgrade your gear.

In most cases, it's not advisable sell crafted materials on the marketplace, because it is more profitable to simply sell unbound materials rather than crafting them and selling the crafts.



### Which professions should you choose?

Most of the basic materials can be mailed to different characters, while other crafting recipes cannot be moved from the character that received them. For this reason, it is very common to have alts that craft account-bound materials while the main character crafts those items that cannot be moved.

An example of an efficient craft distribution is the following

Main	Earthseers	Silver Cauldron / Acquired Taste
Alt 1	Forgekeepers	Soul Wardens
Alt 2 (if needed)	Acquired taste	Anything

This distribution lets you craft Experience charms, Elemental charms and Cooldown reset charms on your main character, as well as high end potions or food. Forgekeepers craft

Transformation stones (which are tradable and used in a lot of upgrades) as well as empyrean stones (used to upgrade from one weapon tier to the next). Soul wardens can craft Soul Shield primers to infuse additional stats: both blue (artisanal) and purple (masterwork) primers are account bound. Acquired taste may be left on an alt since all the basic buff foods are account bound. Cooldown Reset Charms have become Bound to Account, so Earthseers may be placed on a different character if needed (and if all you're interested in is those charms).

## 7. Upgrading gear

### Gear pieces



Different gear pieces will provide different kinds of bonuses to your character, such as dps buffs, defense buffs and additional effects to skills.

### Offensive gear

I describe as “offensive gear” all gear pieces that provide primarily offensive stats. In the picture above, the items in the red outline are accessories, while the items in the white outline are other offensive gear pieces that behave differently from regular accessories.

- Earring, ring and necklace are dropped both in raid and PvE dungeons. In almost all cases, raid earring and ring outperform their dungeon equivalent. They provide a pretty big increase in dps.
- At the highest tier currently in the game, some classes use the raid necklace (dropped by ET, Temple of Succession) while all others use the Prophecy necklace.
- Bracelet is one of the most important pieces of equipment: it modifies one of your skills (in the FM case, Dual Dragons or Avalanche) so that a different skill will deal more damage (such as Blazing Beam or Arctic Blast). Bracelet should always be maxed as soon as possible.
- Gloves provide a somewhat small increase in dps. They are not particularly important, so upgrading them has a lower priority than maxing Raid accessories.
- Soul and heart are items that require major investments in materials but provide significant buffs in return. They are very long term upgrades, so it is good to take your time with them.

### Defensive gear

- Defensive gear includes Belt, Pet and Talisman
- Belts provide minor defensive buffs in the form of HP and defense buff.

- Belt in PvE is a minor upgrade that should not be prioritized as its defensive buffs are not very useful
- In PvP, the additional HP is more useful and the Set bonus may provide an additional boost in your stats, so it's a better upgrade if you spend a lot of time in Battlegrounds
- Pets are a major source of HP and defensive stats. Higher Pet stages provide a buff that procs on being hit by the enemy. The buff is mostly defensive, with the highest Pet stages providing a large HP shield that is especially useful in PVP.
- Talisman is the latest piece of gear added to the game. It is different from other gear items because it is activated by the player (by default, Shift + E). When activated, it provides an offensive and defensive buff. It also provides some passive stats (mostly HP).

### **Very rough upgrade priorities**

WIP

It's hard to write a "simple" upgrade timeline since different classes have different upgrade priorities and may take alternate paths compared to the average. There are some common guidelines, however.

- Try to get your basic soul badge as soon as possible. Most classes benefit a lot from soul badges.
- Find out if you should fuse your soul badge as soon as possible, or if you can stick to the basic version for a while
- All classes use Skybreak/Celestian rings and earrings
- Most classes use Prophecy necklace, some classes use Thornbreaker
- Try to get a Divinity/Starbreaker/Battalion bracelet ASAP, then max it as soon as possible.
- After maxing out
- Gloves and belt have lower priority

### **Mystic Badges and Soul Badges**

- Badges are a major piece of gear that alters one or more skills in your Spec by adding effects to them.
- Each class requires different Soul and Mystic Badges, so ask around to know what's the proper combination for your spec.

### **Soul Badges**

- Most soul badges have one of the following two effects:
  - Using a skill applies a damage buff to a different skill
  - Using a skill reduces/resets the cooldown of a different skill



- The effect of Soul Badges can alter heavily how a class is played, so Soul Badges usually are a major part of your gear. However, some classes and specs benefit more than others.
- All specs have a “best in slot” Soul Badge, however some specs may use different Soul Badges in different conditions. Refer to a class guide to know what badge to use when.
- Soul Badges may be acquired by purchasing them through the Dragon Express for Solar Energy, or they may be farmed in Tower of Infinity (for example, the ongoing season at the time of writing Tower of Infinity is the Liberty season, so it is possible to farm for the Liberty/Songbird badges).
- Some combinations of two Soul Badges may be fused together. The fused Soul Badge will combine the effects of the two original Soul Badges.
- It is possible to split a fused Soul Badge by using gold and an Empyrean Spirit Stone, however this should be avoided to not waste materials. It’s often easier/cheaper to purchase unfused badges again.
- Fused Soul Badges can be Awakened by using Divine Grace Stones and Sacred Vials to add Critical Damage and Boss AP to their stats. Each Awakening Stage requires 3 Sacred Vials and 3 DGS and a badge may be awakened up to Stage 8.
- Most Soul Badges are spec-exclusive, so they will buff only skills that belong to a specific spec. Other Badges (some PVP Badges, for example) buff skills that are present in multiple or all specs.

### **Mystic Badges**

- Mystic badges usually add a new effect to a skill, so that it will deal additional damage and in some cases modify the rotation
- Mystic badges vary in rarity and in how they can be obtained
  - (BT) Mystic badges are given for free by one of the quests you’ll receive after completing the story
  - They may also be bought using Peaches
  - VT Mystic badges are acquired mostly by running the VT raid. A VT badge is a guaranteed drop from the first boss of the VT raid and a RNG drop from Scion’s Keep.
  - They may also be obtained by buying the badge material on the marketplace
  - Some Cash Shop events may give VT badge materials as a RNG reward
  - Some events may also feature VT badges as potential rewards
  - ET Mystic badges are acquired by running the current endgame raid, ET (aka Temple of Succession)
- Mystic badges can be Awakened in the same way as fused Soul Badges
- Mystic Badges cannot be fused

### **Soul Shields**

- Soul Shields are the main source of HP, Critical, Accuracy, Critical Defense, Defense and Piercing (through Fusing, which will be explained).
- Soul Shields consist of 8 parts (usually called slices), labeled by a number in 1-8

- All Soul Shields have one or more “set bonuses”, which provide additional effects such as bonus stats or more damage/cooldown reduction for some of your skills.
- Soul Shields should **ALWAYS** be used as a set. It is more beneficial to use a proper set of a lower tier Soul Shield than a bunch of higher tier Soul Shield pieces mixed in such a way that they do not provide their set bonus.
- Set bonuses are among the biggest sources of DPS and alone are more influential than most other upgrades.
- Each Soul Shield slice will increase a character’s HP and two other statistics, depending on the shield set and slice number.
- Soul Shields may be acquired through raids, by running dungeons as random drops or by buying them either from Dragon Express (for Premium users only), some NPCs or from Trove.
- Before opening a Soul Shield piece it is possible to see what statistics may be chosen by looking at the tooltip of the sealed Soul Shield
- The stats to look for in a PvE Soul Shield are Critical and Accuracy: Critical should be on all pieces, Accuracy on all pieces except 1, 3, 7 on all Soul Shield sets starting from VT.



The picture on the left shows a piece of VT Soul Shield for Force Master (each class has their own sets of shields, boosting class-specific skills). You can see from the numbers under the HP value that this piece (and all pieces 1) can roll 2 random stats among Critical, Block, Evasion and Defense.

On the right there is the same piece, after unsealing it. The stats we got were Block and Defense.

Since it is a shield piece to be used in PVE, rolling Critical would have been better.

Under the Set Effect section you can see what kind of bonuses you will get by wearing a set of that particular Soul Shield: some skills will be boosted by increasing their damage, other skills will instead receive a reduction of their cooldown.

There are two ways of improving Soul Shields: **Fusion** and **Reinforcement**. Both should be used in order to maximize the amount of stats that can be obtained from a single Soul Shield piece.

### Soul Shield Fusion



Taking as an example the Soul Shield piece I unsealed before, Soul Shield fusion is performed by “fusing” Soul Shield Primers on the Soul Shield piece you want to improve. This will add a random amount of stats that depends on the Primer tier (higher tier primers provide more stats). This is shown in the upgrade window and in the screenshot shows 178-254: how much of the “critical” stat (in this case) will be a random number in that range.

Fusion doesn't stack: this means that if you fuse a blue primer like the one in picture you might get 216 critical from the operation. By fusing another blue primer, the amount of the stat increase will overwrite the old one, so you might end up with more crit (e.g. 254) or lose some (e.g. 178).

Shields can be fused up to a maximum amount that depends on their Tier and on the piece they are. Using again our shield as an example, the maximum amount of stats that can be fused on a

piece 1 of the Elemental Soul Shield set is 340: **the maximum amount of a stat that can be fused on a Soul Shield piece is equal to the “Max” value shown on the tooltip.**

### Soul Shield Reinforcement

The other way of improving soulshields is through Reinforcement. All Legendary Soul Shields can be improved through reinforcement. Going once again back to the VT slice we opened before, one of the tabs that can be chosen from the Soul Shield window is the Reinforcement one and looks like this:



To reinforce a Soul Shield slice it's first necessary to obtain another copy of the same slice: in this case, the slice is piece 1 so it is necessary to have 2 copies of piece 1. Once the copy is available, it is possible to reinforce a target piece by sacrificing the copy. The statistics that are in common between the two pieces will be increased. In this case, since HP and Defense are in common between the two, they will be improved by reinforcing. Block, instead, isn't in common between the two and as such it will not be improved.

### **PVE Soul Shields**

For PVE, all classes and specs should use Soul Shields dropped by the different raids, starting from the MSP Soul Shield set that is given during the Main Quest, then switching to BT Soul Shields, then VT Soul Shields and eventually TT Soul Shields. There might be some exceptions (e.g. Dawnbringer Zen Archers use Nova Soul Shields because the skill boost is more useful than the one on regular PVE Soul Shields), so you should check if your class is one of them.

The main statistics sought after in PVE are Critical Chance (crit from now on) and Accuracy (Acc). Some slices will never roll accuracy, in those cases Defense is the preferred stat.

By completing the story you will receive a full set of Midnight Skypetal Plains Soul Shields, while one of the quests given at the end of the story will give you the first 3 slices of the BT set. You can get a full BT set by killing the second boss in the BT raid (you should be doing the entire raid anyway to get accessories and gold) and/or buying it with Raven Feathers.

Soul Shields are a huge part of a character's damage output: the multipliers they give to some skills can change the way a class is played and may be the single largest damage increase you can get at a given gear level.

### **PVP Soul Shields**

For PVP the best Soul Shield set depends on class and situation. Most classes will use a 5-set Nova Core Soul Shield and the remaining 3 pieces will either be a PVE shield (either raid Soul Shields or sets from SSM or SST, which give bonus Piercing and Critical Defense), or simply the remaining 3 Nova Core slices. PVP Soul Shields are designed to maximize survivability and buffing some skills. The preferred stats for PVP are Critical Defense, Piercing, HP and Accuracy.

PVP Soul Shields can all be purchased from the Battleground Trader for Bloodstones or Incinerator stones (depending on tier).

### **Reinforcing Soul Shields**

All Soul Shields from MSP onwards can be Reinforced so that their base statistics increase by "feeding" them copies of the same slice with similar stats.

For example, imagine you wanted to reinforce a slice 1 from the VT set. Your VT 1 slice rolled both Critical and Defense: congratulations! You have a perfect piece 1. In order to reinforce your piece 1 you will have to find additional slices 1 (either by dropping them in VT or by buying them

from a vendor) that have either Critical, Defense or both statistics and “sacrifice” them by fusing them in the original piece. Once you’ll find a suitable slice, you will be able to reinforce your perfect piece by clicking on it and then on the “reinforce” icon. Once this is done, the statistics on the reinforced piece will increase by a random amount, up to a cap.

You can only reinforce a piece by using other copies of the same slice (i.e. you can only reinforce a piece 1 with other pieces 1). Moreover, those copies will have to have at least one statistic in common with the one you want to reinforce and will be lost in the reinforcement process.

Reinforcement is an important step when minmaxing a character to obtain the best possible set of statistics.

### **Fusing Soul Shields**

Fusing is the second way of improving statistics through Soul Shields. It is not an alternative to Reinforcing: both methods should be used to maximize the potential of a shield set. Indeed, the statistics obtained by reinforcing a shield will stack with those obtained by fusing.

Fusing statistics on a Soul Shield requires Soul Shield Primers, which are items that can be obtained through Crafting by starting a contract with the Soul Wardens guild or by buying them on the marketplace. The latter option should be avoided, if possible, because crafting primers is quite cheap and gold should be saved for other uses.

Shield bases can then be used to purchase primers from Dragon Express or from some NPC vendors. There are primers for enhancing Critical, Accuracy, Piercing, Defense, Critical Defense, Health, Defense, Evasion and Block. The only primers you should care about are those that provide Critical, Accuracy (for PvE), Piercing and Critical Defense (for PvP). No other primers are worth using.

After a primer has been purchased, it can be “fused” on a regular Soul Shield to add more statistics on it. The amount of Critical (or Accuracy etc.) given by a piece will be a random amount in a range that depends on the quality of the primer: blue primers will add up to 254 of each stat, purple primers 296 and so on. It is not guaranteed that a primer will roll the maximum amount, so it may be necessary to use multiple primers on the same piece in order to obtain the maximum amount of the given stat. Rolls do not stack: if you roll 216 with the first primer, it may happen that the next primer will roll 178 and this will be the final value.

### **Gems**

Gems are items that increase your AP and cause some additional effects to proc by socketing them in your weapons. Starting from Gilded Triangular tier, gems provide additional stats as well, each gem providing different stats depending on its type.

### **Optimal gem setup**

For PvE, the optimal gem setup requires **Diamond, Aquamarine, Ruby, Amethyst, Garnet, Obsidian** and two filler gems. In normal play, the effect of the last two gems is negligible, so just pick the two gems that give the largest amount of AP.

Dyad gems are gems created by transmuting two Square gems and fusing them: the result will be a gem that gives the same type stats as the two fused gems, although a lower amount of it,

as well as providing the same effect as the base gems. Transmuting Dyad gems is extremely expensive and provides minor gains only, so it should only be attempted at very high gear level. Once Dyads enter the equation (this should only happen if you're extremely lucky and drop one from some RNG F10 item), the most optimal setup for PvE becomes Diamond, Aquamarine, Garnet, Obsidian and as many Dyad ruby gems as possible: since Rubies give 3 critical attacks with no cooldown, having multiple rubies causes the bonus to trigger more often, increasing the overall crit rate.

### Gem tiers

There are numerous different tiers of gems:

- **Triangular**
- **Square**
- **Pentagonal**
- Hexagonal
- Heptagonal
- Octagonal
- Gilded Triangular
- Gilded Squares
- Dyad Triangular
- Dyad Squares

The first three tiers have been almost completely discontinued and cannot be obtained anymore (the only exception being the square obsidian, which can be bought for 10 solar energies in Dragon Express).

There's an important distinction between **Hongmoon gems** and **non-Hongmoon gems**, i.e. gems that do not have "Hongmoon" in their name: gems that belong to the first category can be used in transmutation recipes to upgrade their tier (3 hongmoon hexagonal gems can be transmuted to a hongmoon heptagonal gem), while non-Hongmoon gems cannot be improved beyond their tier.

### Acquiring gems

By the end of the main quest and after completing all orange quests you should have a full set of hexagonal gems.

To acquire most gems there are three main sources:

- Exchanging solar energy in Dragon Express for Hexagonal Hongmoon Gems (8 solar energies per gem)
- Purchasing Heptagonal gem tickets from the Dragon Express for event currency
- Farming open-world instances such as Celestial Basin and Moon Refuge (these gems are non-Hongmoon, however, so they cannot be upgraded)

Garnets and Obsidians cannot be acquired using the methods described above. Instead, they can be purchased in the following ways:

Gem	Location
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Square obsidian	Dragon Express for 10 solar energies
Pentagonal obsidian	Exchange for a Trascendent Engine in Celestial Basin. Trascendent Engines have been discontinued, so they cannot be dropped anymore. It is still possible to exchange them.
Hexagonal obsidian	Exchange for an Awakened Trascendent Engine. Awakened Trascendent Engines drop in Irontech Forge or Ebondrake Lair.
Heptagonal obsidian	Exchange for Imperial Mark (dropped in Ransacked Treasury ) in Emperor's Tomb. Exchange for 40 Hong Tokens in Ajanara Monastery.
Hexagonal Garnet	Exchange for 60 Koldrak Scales, or random drop in Koldrak chests.
Heptagonal Garnet	Random drop in TSM Hard Mode
Hexagonal Dueler Garnet	Purchase for 10k BP from Battleground Trader.

### Common materials

Material	Use	Possible Sources
Soulstone	Convert to SSC, ingredient for transmutions, crafting ingredient	SSP, 1v1/3v3, Marketplace
Soulstone crystal	Upgrade of all accessories and weapons, transmutation, crafting, Soul Shield fusion	Converting soulstones, material chests
Moonstone	Convert to MSC, ingredient for transmutions, crafting ingredient	Battlegrounds, Marketplace
Moonstone crystal	Upgrade of accessories and weapons, transmutation, crafting	Converting moonstones, Battlegrounds, Naksun, material chests
Sacred orb	Convert to SC, ingredient for	Material chests, Marketplace

	transmutations, crafting ingredient	
Sacred Crystal	Upgrade of all accessories and weapons, transmutation, crafting	Converting sacred orbs, material chests
Elysian Orb	Convert to EC, ingredient for transmutations, crafting ingredient	Material chests, Marketplace
Elysian Crystal	Upgrade of all accessories and weapons, transmutation, crafting	Converting elysian orbs, material chests, BT drop, VT drop
Raven Feather	Upgrade BT accessories, purchase BT Soul Shields, purchase BT Shield Primers	BT, DKV, events, dragon express, salvaging BT Soul Shields, Daily Dash
Raven King's Soul	Upgrade Raven weapon, transform in Raven Feathers	BT bosses 3 and 4, events, Dragon Express
Hive Queen's Wing	Upgrade VT necklace, purchase VT Soul Shields, purchase VT Shield Primers	VT, events, FAS, SJF, Dragon Express
Hive Queen's Heart	Upgrade Aransu weapon, transform in Hive Queen's Wings	VT boss 4, events
Grand Celestial Wing	Upgrade Celestial Emperor accessories, purchase TT Soul Shields, purchase TT Shield Primers	TT, events, Hall of the Keeper, Hall of the Templar
Grand Celestial Steel	Upgrade Grand Celestial weapon, transmute to Grand Celestial Wing	TT Boss 3 and 4, events
Bloodstone and Bloodstone fragment	Purchase PVP Soul Shields, psyches, HM skills, upgrade PVP weapon up to Dragonforge 9	PVP, events
Vengeance orb	Upgrade Incinerator weapon	PVP
Blackstone	Upgrade Raven weapon, heart, dungeon accessories, purchase BT accessories	Daily quests and dungeon drop in NS, IF, EL, SSM, HH

	from merchant in DKV	
Silver scale	Upgrade Aransu weapon, heart, dungeon accessories, purchase VT necklace from merchant in DKV	Daily quests and dungeon drop in DD, RT, SST, TSM
Onyx scale	Upgrade Shadowforge weapons, Grand Celestial weapons, Imperial tier accessories, Heart, Soul	Daily quests and dungeon drop in DST, BC, WC, ET raid
Elder Scale	Upgrade Lionroar/Wingsong weapons, Thornbreaker weapons, Sovereign tier accessories	Daily quests and dungeon drop in CC

## Unity



Unity is an account-wide “experience bar” that tracks the completion of quests over all your characters. Most repeatable quests count towards your Unity level (obsolete dungeons do not provide any Unity): this includes Dynamic quests, Daily Dungeon quests and Weekly Dungeon quests.

The amount of Unity provided by a quest depends on the quest and dungeon: weekly raids provide a large amount of Unity, low tier dungeons award less Unity than high tier dungeons. Some Daily Challenge and Weekly Challenge completion tier provide additional Unity rewards.

There is a daily cap on unity (currently 500k), which means that, once this limit has been reached, no more Unity is awarded by completing quests for that day. This is something you should keep in mind if you tend to complete multiple Weekly Challenges on the same day (this

happens to me during the weekend since that's when I usually do Weeklies on my alts): it's possible to avoid losing the additional Unity by claiming quests on a different day.

Increasing your Unity level is *very important*: higher Unity levels will provide large stat boosts to all characters and will unlock more slots to equip Radiance Stones in.

## Unity Stones



While bonuses given by Unity are account-wide (so all characters will benefit from them), Unity Stones are strictly character-bound: this means that all stones gathered on a character will remain on that character.

Unity stones give even larger stat boosts than what your Unity level provides, so it's important to optimize them. Increasing your Unity level will unlock more stone slots, thus allowing you to equip more of them and benefit from the stats they provide and from the stat bonus given by equipping them.

Unity stones are divided by type (which changes the shape of their icon) and by main stat (which changes their color).

There are two types of Unity Stones: Ascension stones and Radiance stones.

- Ascension stones boost the damage of one of your skills, chosen among three. Different specs prefer different Ascension stones. Only one Ascension can be equipped for each color. Ascension stones increase your hp and their color's stat.
- Radiance Stones give a flat increase to a random stat and their color's stat.

Unity Stones can take one of 3 "colors", each of them boosting a specific stat.

- Stellar (Blue) stones improve your AP stat
- Earthen (Red) stones improve your Critical Damage stat
- Life (Yellow) stones improve your Mystic stat

Since Mystic > CDmg > AP in decreasing order of importance, you should try to fill the rows starting from the bottom (yellow) row, then the middle row and finally the top row.

Unity stones have also different rarities, with better bonuses coming from higher rarity stones. Higher rarity stones provide more points both for the Unity Set bonus and for refinement.

Unity Stones can be acquired through various means:

- The main source is the merchant that spawns in Cold Storage after defeating Winter Mane, and that will trade Frozen Feathers for Ascension and Radiance stone chests
- Completing 4 dungeons in the daily challenge will reward you with a chest from which you can choose either an Ascension or a Radiance stone
- Some events or Cash Shop offers may include them

### **Steps towards perfecting your Unity stones**

- When you get a Challenger's Splendor Chest, choose the Ascension stone. It's the only (RNG) source of purple rarity Ascension stones.
- **Ascension stones cannot be refined: they will turn into Radiance stones**
- The most desirable stats are Boss AP > Crit > Accuracy/HP
- You can save Piercing stones for PVP

1. Fill all Ascension stone slots with any stone
2. Once they're full, start filling the Radiance stone slots without worrying about the stat
3. Always buy Ascension stones from Daily and Weekly reward chests

4. Try to fill your Ascension stone slots with stones that boost the most important skills in your build
5. Start refining spare Radiance and Ascension stones to reroll their stats until you have all or most of your stones with Boss AP or Critical
6. Start refining spare blue rarity stones to upgrade their rarity to Purple (this is a RNG chance and may take you a lot of tries to achieve)
7. Finally, reroll your purple rarity stones to get Boss AP on as many as possible and hope for Legendary stones

## **8. Battlegrounds**

## **9. General advice**

- Finding a clan will speed up your progress considerably, since you will not have to rely on faction chat to find BT or VT raids. This will let you obtain some basic gear for cheap (or for free). You might also get help with clearing some of the higher tier dungeons, which as a new player may be very challenging.
- Create and level up alts. Alts are extremely beneficial in this game for a variety of reasons:
  - Additional crafting slots
  - Farming for events
  - Gathering additional materials by doing weekly challenge
  - Farming gold through dailies and raids
- Don't open tradable materials (Elysian Orbs, Sacred Orbs, Moonstones, Soulstones) unless you need few of them for an upgrade. It's always better to save them for crafting or for selling them later.

To improve FPS, try the following settings:

### Graphics Quality

Optimize for Combat

Auto Options

Apply to All

Texture  3

Shadow Visibility  5

Shadow Level  1

Character Visibility  1

Object Display/Visibility  4

Terrain Visibility  1

Effect Visibility  3

Personal SFX Quality  2

SFX Quality for Others  2

Monster Effects Quality  1

Background Effects Quality  1

Extra Effects  1

Volumetric Lighting

Depth of Field

Bloom

Ambient Occlusion

Motion Blur

### Special Effects

High Quality Physics Effects

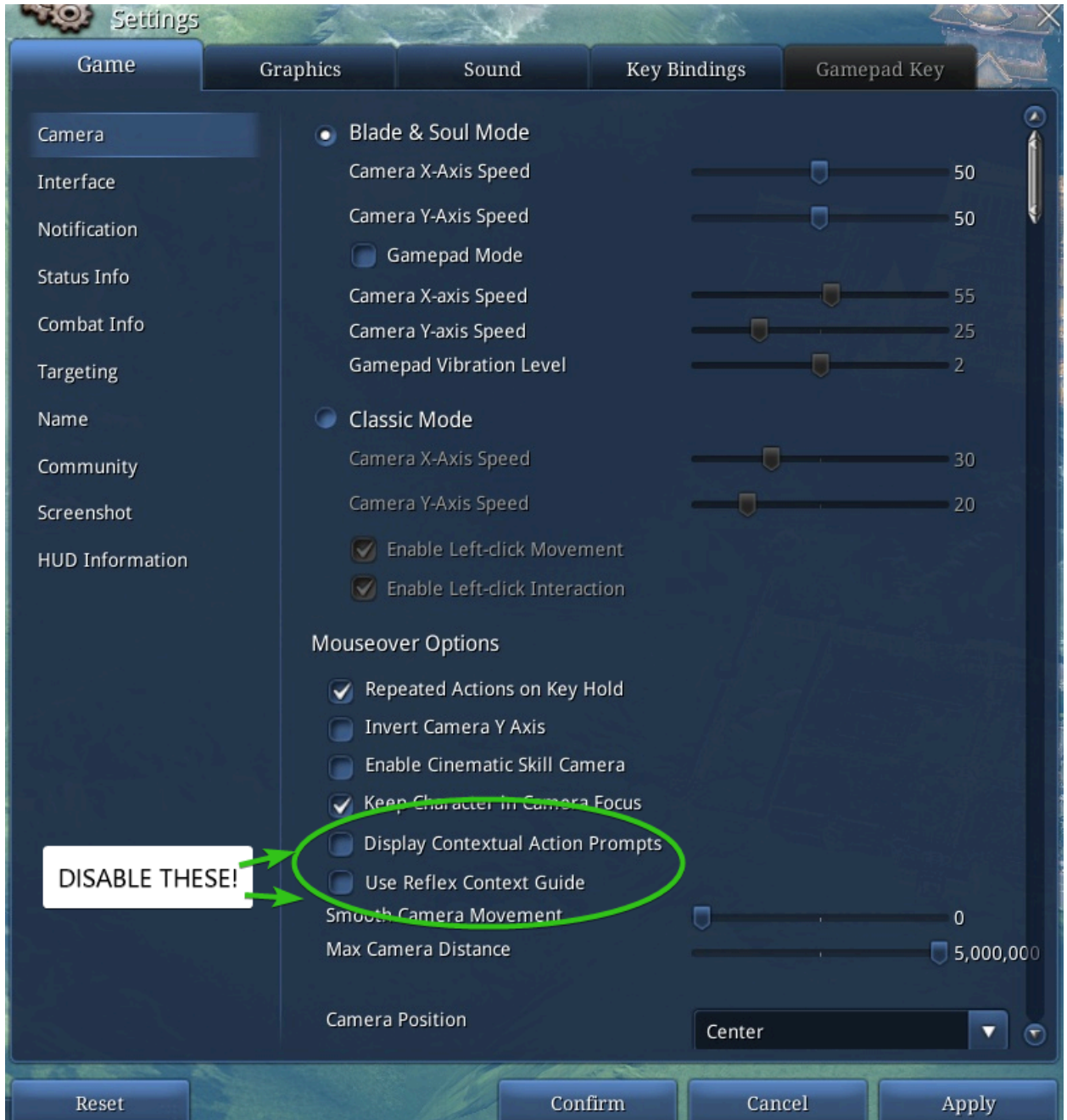
High Quality Terrain Recognition

Water Effects

High Quality Motion Blur

High Quality Lighting





## 10. Events

Whenever you play Blade and Soul, there will be at least one event of some kind. Events are a way for the playerbase to acquire rare items and cosmetics by completing quests every day. All information regarding the ongoing event are always reported on the Blade and Soul website, so refer to those to know how the current event plays out.

With few variations, all events use some kind of currency that can be exchanged for cosmetics or materials such as Sacred Vials, Pet Packs, Gems, Legendary Jewels or Elements and so on:

some of these materials are always present in all events, together with other items that can only be used during the redeeming period for that event.

Events can be farmed on multiple characters at the same time and the progress (i.e. the number of coins) on each character is independent of all others. This means that you cannot move event coins from one character to another. Farming an event on multiple characters is very beneficial and is usually a very efficient way of spending your time if you plan on gearing up quickly.

### **Obtaining event currency**

Event currency can be farmed in different ways depending on the event. Some of the possible ways are the following:

- Completing the Daily Challenge
- Completing the Weekly Challenge
- Completing the Dynamic quest in dungeons and raids with lockout(Cold Storage or weekly raids)
- Completing some daily quests in normal dungeons
- Completing an event dungeon
- Purchasing a free event coin on F10 (once per day and per account)

Events always feature a combination of the methods above. Resetting the progress in raids with lockout allows to obtain more currency.

### **Exchanging event currency**

In most events (there may be some exceptions) items can be purchased by exchanging the event currency in a Dragon Express tab specific to that event.

The redeeming period (i.e. the period of time during which items can be traded and used) usually starts with the beginning of the event itself and ends a few weeks after its end (this very often coincides with the end of the next event, but there are some exceptions).

For events that feature alternative upgrade paths, the items that are needed for those paths will be available over the course of the redeeming period and will expire at the end.

The event currency is always unique to each event: this means that it is not possible to use currency from previous events.

### **Which items should I buy with event currency?**

This depends on your situation. In most cases, Sacred Vials are the best value for money. Events are by far and large the best source of Sacred Vials for all players, and farming some events on multiple characters may net tens of oils at the end.

This, however, does not apply to all players. For example, during events that feature an alternate path for upgrading your weapon you should focus on those items that let you save materials on upgrades: these events are relatively rare and will let you save quite a lot of money and materials on upgrades you will eventually have to make.

Outfits are, of course, up to you: only you may know if the event outfit looks good on your character and whether it's worth the amount of event coins it requires. Do consider the fact that event outfits can only be obtained during the event and may or may not come back at a much later date (usually, at least one year).

Other items (such as legendary jewels, grand celestial wings and so on) are usually too expensive for their value, so unless you really need some of them for an upgrade, it's better to save the coins and buy a Sacred Vial instead.

## 11. Hongmoon Store (Cash Shop)

### Premium

#### Is it worth buying?

If you are planning to play every day, purchasing Premium is definitely worth the price. Receiving additional gold from all dailies means that running dungeons every day will pay itself off through that. Moreover, you will get bonuses for farming Battle Points, Zen Points and Celestial Peaches: this stacks with clan bonuses so it is highly beneficial. Finally, Premium provides additional Quality of Life changes such as remote storage, an additional storage tab, reduced fees for upgrading gear, one free Trove key each day and other bonuses.

### Bundles

If you're thinking about buying some NCoins, then the first thing you should purchase is the Mastery Bundle, available from the Bundles section in F10. The Mastery bundle is by far the best value for money you can find in the Hongmoon store and for that reason is claimable only once per account. Think carefully about what character you want to claim the content of the chest on, since soul and pet cannot be moved after claiming them.

The **Mastery Bundle** contains a lot of materials, 100 gold, two Octagonal Gem Chests, a Vindicator True Ascending Soul and an Unleashed Hongmoon Vindicator Pet Aura. The latter two are equivalent to the first legendary tier of Soul and Pet respectively. The presence of these items will let you save a lot of time and materials that should instead be invested in getting them to the baseline for late content. Both pet and soul can be upgraded after the purchase.

The **Duelist Bundle** is another very good one-time purchase, geared towards players interested in engaging in OWPVP or Battlegrounds. It contains a large amount of Bloodstones (needed for the upgrade of PVP accessories and PVP weapons), upgrade materials, a weapon skin and two training tickets. The training tickets can be used to add new pages to your martial tome (K), thus letting you switch quickly between different builds. For example, on my main character I have a page set up for normal PVP, a page for Battlegrounds and a page for 1v1 PVP: this lets me change from one to the next quickly and without forgetting skills or talent points allocation. Training tickets won't save gear presets, so it's still necessary to swap weapon, accessories etc. to switch to BG build and gear.

Every so often (once per year, usually), the mastery bundle will be updated to reflect changes in the average gear to contain more up to date materials. When that happens, previous purchases are reset: this means that it's possible to purchase all bundles again even if they had been purchased previously.



## Trove

Trove is a recurring event that “coincidentally” syncs up with major updates every season. An explanation of how trove works is posted every time before it begins and I suggest reading the news article as trove has changed multiple times over time. Here I’m linking the latest article (at the time of writing).

<https://www.bladeandsoul.com/en/news/cherry-blossom-treasure-trove-available-march-13>

## Notes on trove

- Opening slots on one character will not unlock them on other characters.

- Do not open trove boxes just before the daily reset, as you may risk losing a roll because of it.
- This also means that you only have one day to redeem items before the roll is lost.
- Very often the NCSOFT Website remains down for maintenance during the first day of trove, preventing you from buying NCoins.
- During trove, both F9 rates and market prices drop. This means that it is possible to hoard materials for a much lower price than usual, or buying gold for a similarly cheaper price.
- There's a limit of 20 keys per day when purchasing them with HM coins. No such limit is in place for keys purchased using NCoins.
- Premium users receive one additional trove key each day: this key counts towards the crit meter.

### **Should I trove?**

If you're reading this guide, probably not. Trove is a net loss in most cases, and requires a fair amount of gold to purchase most materials. As a new player (assuming a F2P start), you won't have much gold to spend, and it would be better spent by upgrading gear and/or buying cheap materials on the marketplace.

If you plan to buy NCoins for the first time, you should purchase the Mastery Bundle instead of trove keys, as it has way better value for your money.

### **Should I open more slots?**

If you are planning to do anything more than simply opening trove once a day, the first thing you should do before opening even the first chest is buying expansions to unlock all slots. Opening chests without unlocking all slot is a waste of keys.

Even if you're not going to buy additional keys, it may happen that you'll get a lucky crit on one of your characters: in recent troves you will see the rarity of a roll displayed as a number of stars, either one, two or three. If you see a crit, then searching for it on either the Blade and Soul subreddit (a megathread will be opened for the duration of the event), or in one of the Discord servers linked below is a good idea. If you can recognize your crit and think it's worth opening more slots for, you can do so by selling your gold on F9 and buying the expansions by using HM coins.

### **Where should I open slots?**

Ideally, you should open slots on whatever character you want to keep bound materials on: while the majority of items in trove are bound to account, some currencies and items can only be used on the character that redeems them (this applies, for example, to Tol tokens, solo dungeon tokens, raid materials, Soul shields, mystic badge materials and so on).

Therefore, unless you want to gear multiple characters at the same time (however ill-advised that may be), you should open slots only on your main character.

## 12. Noobtraps

By noobtraps I refer to any kind of mechanic that may lead to undesired or inefficient results. In most cases the consequence is a waste of materials that could be spent in more effective ways.

The list below is not ordered by importance, it should rather be taken as a heads up. If you have doubts about what's in the list, you should ask someone before proceeding.

- Do not upgrade obsolete accessories: check the upgrade path window (ctrl + i) to see if the accessory you're planning to upgrade has a superior version to be acquired
  - Divinity/Starbreaker/Battalion bracelets are a major exception to this rule: they should still be maxed ASAP even though a new tier of bracelet is available
  - Skybreak Spire accessories should not be upgraded. Instead, it's better to buy Emperor accessories (from Nightfall Temple) and upgrade those instead.
- If you have an obsolete accessory on stage 10, do not Awaken it: it's a waste of jewels that should instead be saved to upgrade top tier accessories.
- Awakened accessories in general are an endgame upgrade, so you should not use your materials on that
- The same goes for Awakened Soul and Mystic Badges. Save your oils for upgrading soul and heart.
- Do not upgrade your weapon if it has fewer than 7 slots. Keep on buying Dawnrift chests until you find a weapon with 7 or 8 slots, then upgrade that.
- The green soul shield primers that can be bought from some merchants are a waste of gold. Artisanal (blue) soul shield bundles can be purchased for a similar price (per piece) and are better in every way.
- Many of the featured bundles in the Hongmoon Store are worth much less than their price in NCoins. You can either do the math yourself and find the value in gold of the bundle or ask if it's worth purchasing.
- Never upgrade a weapon to S1 (example: Raven 7 to Aransu 1): it's a loss of dps. If possible, try to skip 6 stages at once (example: Raven 9 to Storm Dragon 6 and then into Aransu 6) to save on materials. The increase in dps coming from lower stage upgrades is somewhat minor.
- Peridots and Sapphires are shit. Don't waste Hongmoon chests on Peridots or Sapphires.
- Ambers are PVP only gems. They bring no useful stats in PVE.
- It's not possible to obtain higher rarity Ascension stones through Refinement: refining Ascension stones will yield Radiance stones instead

## 13. Further resources

<https://www.reddit.com/r/bladeandsoul/> - Blade and Soul subreddit, for news about the game and a lot of complaining

<https://discordapp.com/invite/zU8vTm4/> - Blade and Soul Academy Discord server, a Discord server maintained by the community where members can ask for help in learning about their classes and the game in general. Also the main location for basic class information (which won't be found in this guide). Come and say hi!

<https://discord.gg/bnsrecruitment> - Blade and Soul Raid Recruitment server. The largest and most used server when looking for raids and for clan recruitment.

<https://next.bnstree.com/> - Mostly used for looking up player characters and check their gear and stats

<https://bnstools.info/> - Website for checking marketplace prices and crafting recipe prices

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1DbHgNlej01lkqgJJQJr8pOv0ikSz5xr9> - Location of all BNS Academy dungeon and raid guides

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1oj668\\_QHGstTjNKf2jYeR5vsSbACoz5HPj-ZxH3FTRI/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1oj668_QHGstTjNKf2jYeR5vsSbACoz5HPj-ZxH3FTRI/edit) - New players guide edited by Toraso, a very good walkthrough on what to do and what to prioritize as a new player

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCdZ\\_vbPUXSCg1p2nHeFad3Q](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCdZ_vbPUXSCg1p2nHeFad3Q) - Youtube channel of Eckogen, for good dungeon and raid guides

<https://www.youtube.com/user/EvilDoUsHarm> - Youtube channel of EvilDoUsHarm, for more video guides about the game

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCZBWXfAyyD9GqRMREuQkd0g> - Youtube channel of Keroppi, for yet more guides and content about the game

## 14. Changelog

19-12-2018 - Started guide

22-12-2018 - Added common materials and some glossary entries

28-01-2019 - Started working on Soul Shields section

07-03-2019 - Added section on choosing a class

11-03-2019 - Added sections on Trove and Events

18-03-2019 - Added section on Gems

25-03-2019 - Updated section on CC

29-07-2019 - Added section on bundles

31-07-2019 - Reworded section on CC and iframes, added section on UI

01-08-2019 - Completed section on skill book

04-08-2019 - Reworking Soul Shield section

09-08-2019 - Added section on party protection

12-08-2019 - Guide was published

13-08-2019 - Started working on Badges section and Exp section

24-08-2019 - Added some more resources

29-08-2019 - Added section on rotation

07-10-2019 - Added section on noobtraps (still WIP)

06-11-2019 - Completed section on F8

## 15. TODO list

- Soul badges, mystic badges
- Experience
- Battlegrounds
- Soul/Heart
- Noobtraps
- Hongmoon skills
- Hongmoon points
- Stats priority
- Update crafting