

I've done a number of solo honour mode runs and I figured I'd post my somewhat of a walk through and tips for anyone else planning on doing the same.

My Rules

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Everyone is different with how you'd like to restrict your run. [This game is beatable solo at lvl 1](#), so you're allowed to impose almost any challenge modifier on yourself and can still be assured that the game can be beaten. I'd recommend balancing fun and difficulty.

1. **Honour Mode** - Death is Delete. I make exceptions if a glitch kills me - like the infamous platforms in the Gauntlet of Shar or one time I ran into an invisible wall and fell to my death when flying to a platform in Hope's prison.
2. **Solo...ish** - I won't bring a companion to combat or to solve a dialogue check/puzzle/etc or to just buff me (no camp casting). However I will use temp companions where provided (Nautiloid for example), and will bring a companion if there is unique dialogue that progresses romance/story or earns me a unique item.
3. **Limited Barrelmancy/Bombs/Etc** - I won't pick up and move barrels to a new zone or store for some later encounter. I will explode barrels if they are already there (Zhent Hideout)
4. **Limited Respecs** - I will respec if desired at the beginning of Act 2 to bring a build online, and again Act 3 to dump CON. I may respec earlier if playing as an Origin. I won't respec to a radically different playstyle.
5. **Limited Long Rests** - This is kind of more because it's a benefit to not long rest through much of Act 2/3. But also to limit dumping ALL my resources in every fight then resting. I am only long resting 1-2 times per act.
6. **Limited Vendor Abuse** - I won't spam long rests to steal from vendors, or do most vendor inventory exploits. Sometimes if I plan on killing a vendor I will move all their stuff to a bag so I get it all, but I've really only been doing that recently to boost my gold so I don't need to do as much money management.
7. **Limited Cheese** - This is hard to define. You can hit enemies and run away from battle and repeat to solve almost every encounter, but that's just...not fun. I will take advantage of some pathing, and I will take advantage of some easy mechanics that trivialize encounters, but I'm mostly doing fights the way you're "supposed to". Mostly. I'll mark "cheese" spots in my path that you can make a decision on for your own run.
8. **Do Good...ish** - The generally "Good" path imposes more challenges IMO. You can just walk straight into Act 2 and get all the powerful gear without bothering with any grove/goblin camp/etc...but I'd like to generally save everyone, recruit all companions,

etc. This doesn't mean I restrict myself to strictly good dialogue choices. I won't save Mayrina over taking the Hag Hair, for example.

9. **Kill all Bosses** - Mostly as defined by “they have a legendary action”

Useful Links

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- [My updated encounter checklist](#) - This is somewhat linear for my standard path, but of course you may want to do some encounters in a different order. You can track your remaining XP/inspos here as well.
- [Build Planner](#) - for planning builds!
- [Gear Location Sheet](#) - may be easier to filter and browse than the Wiki
- [Act 1 and 2 Combat Difficulty Tier List And Notes](#) - similar to my encounter checklist, but more details

Overall Tips

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- **All encounters, abilities, dialogue checks, etc are known** and written down plainly on the wiki and in-game if you inspect the enemies. Nothing should surprise you here. You have all the time in the world to prepare before each and every encounter.
- **Solo runs die to 3 things:**
 - **Laziness** - Treat each and every encounter with care - it's super easy to get complacent when you've felt your power spike. It's common to just forget you're wearing lock picking gear or have forgotten to equip some vital item that protects you.
 - **Gravity** - Take care to never stand near cliffs. Take note of which enemies have Thunder Arrows too...trust me you'll learn.
 - **Hold Person** - This ability simply ends your run. Take note of every encounter that has it, and [have protection](#) to deal with it.
- **You don't need high charisma skills** - it may feel like it, but there are relatively few checks that matter or that can't be handled a different way. Inspiration is plentiful, even as solo.
- **You DO want high Perception** - this skill DOES matter in that some key pieces are behind hidden walls that you need to pass a passive perception to see. These are almost always low DC 10 checks, but crit fails happen all the time. Map these out and plan to have guidance and advantage from some source before you approach.

- **High initiative is required** - Alert should almost always be one of your feats, and you should always have high dex even if you aren't doing any dex-based things.
- **High health is required** - you WILL get hit, no matter what. 2 crits in a row is often enough to down you, and every bit of extra max health matters.
- **Un-crittable is required** - at least until you get the Amulet of Greater Health in Act 3, I recommend you build in a way that you can always wear one of the un-crittable pieces of gear, and my pathing has you getting this gear before you even really fight anything.
- **Keep track** - since we're doing a lot of non-linear progress through encounters, it's easy to forget what you have and haven't done. [I've made a checklist](#) that can help you track.
- **Plan your build's breakpoints** - I like [using this tool](#) to plan out my gear and build. There are 3 main breakpoints in this game to build for:
 - Level 6 and Minthara
 - Level 10 and Myrkul
 - Level 12 and Orin

Key Skill Checks

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There actually aren't a ton of checks that truly matter - at worst you miss out a tiny bit of XP or you need to fight something that usually isn't too hard. The checks I consider important are:

ACT 1

- Open Mol's Cave - Perception 10 + Investigation 10. Or you can just pay Donny.
- Save Arabella - Persuasion 10 or Persuasion 15 if you fail the first one.
- Open Zhent Hideout - Intimidation / Persuasion 10
- Khaga - Persuasion 15 + Persuasion / Religion 10, or Hist 5 if you read all 4 plaques (Religion/History 10 each)
- BOOOAL - Persuasion 15
- Gith Patrol
 - As Gith: Deception / Performance 15
 - As Non-Gith: Insight 10 / Persuasion/Intimidation 15 then Arcana 10 and Persuasion / Intimidation 15 if you fail the Arcana
- Necromancy of Thay - SAVING THROWS: Wis 10+15+20. You don't need to pass these to get the buff.
- Ethel - You can always get the Hag Hair even if you fail the check to save Mayrina as well. But you may want to pass the check to get Connor. Intimidation / Deception 20.

ACT 2

- Open Gith Creche - Persuasion / Intimidation 21 or 16 as Gith from the front entrance (no check as Gith in back entrance)
- Zaithisk - SAVING THROWS: Int 12, Wis 15, Con/Int 18

- Mason's Guild Basement - passive Perception 10
- Mason's Guild Secret Room - passive Perception 10
- Malus Thorm - Investigation/Religion 14 OR Persuasion 16 then Persuasion/Intimidation 21 (18 if you read the Sharran's Primer book in his office)
- Thisobald Thorm - Drink = Con Save 14+16+18; Sleight of Hand 18+18+21, followed by Performance 16 x 2
- Gerringothe Thorm - Persuasion 18 + Persuasion/Intimidation/Deception 21 + Persuasion/Intimidation/Deception 21

ACT 3

- Naoise's Rapture Buff - passive Insight 10
- House of Hope Vault - passive Perception 10 + Wis 10 + Arc 20
- Ramazith's Tower Goodies - Arcana 20 each
- Shart's Night Orchid Cave - passive Perception 15
- Mirror of Loss - Read note in Shart's Cave + Religion 25 (or give up Necromancy of Thay)

Path Overview

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If you don't care to go through the details, then here is the overall pathing sections and goals:

1. Nautiloid / Dialogue / Easy-Cheesy Fights

- Get to level 5 without fighting anything that can't be cheesed.
- Get Un-Crittable from Adamantine gear
- Open all Way Points

2. LVL 5 and Un-Crittable

- Clear the entirety of Act 1 + Grymforge EXCEPT fights that have Hold Person
- Get to lvl 6 (or close) and make an Elixir of Guileful Movement before facing Minthara

3. Act 2 Gear and Prep

- Open all Vendors and Waypoints with minimal combat - this should get almost all Act 2 gear right at the start
- Get Ring of Free Action so you can take on skipped fights that use Hold Person
- Complete any fight that has Radiant Retort

4. Act 1 Cleanup and Act 1.5

- Go back and clear Hold Person fights (Ethel, Spider Matriarch, Spectator, etc)
- Clear and resolve the Creche and go through the forced long rest

5. Act 2 No Long Rest

- Get all long rest buffs
- Kill all remaining Act 2 empowered by these buffs - all the way through level 10 and Myrkul

6. Act 3 Prep

- Open all waypoints and vendors
- Buy the Statue and rest at least once to activate the Statue

- c. Open the House of Hope for the Amulet of Greater Health and free long rests in the next section.

7. Act 3 Rapture

- a. Get the Rapture buff
- b. Get level 12
- c. Kill every big bad boss
- d. Defeat Brian

On XP Routing

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- My path optimizes safety by first gathering gear/buffs/etc before engaging with combats. This will put it at odds with more optimal XP routing.
- There are specific exploration points where XP scales with your level, and if you want to be optimal you should save these points until you are as high of level as you can manage. [You can find these points and their XP value on this sheet](#)
- In the path I'm laying out, I am not optimizing several exploration points - especially when it comes to opening up the Creche early. I personally prefer to have the gear you can get from the Creche, as well as open up a longer "no long rest" section with buffs.
- If you optimize your XP you could reach 11 in act 2.
 - Reaching level 11 before Myrkul is easy with good routing, and some amount of murder-hoboing. (I think you can do it with no Murder Hobo strats, depending on how you define Murder Hobo)
 - Reaching level 11 before jumping in to the Colony requires more effort and murder-hoboing
 - Reaching level 11 before the Shadowfell requires very precise optimization and full murder-hobo mode.
 - Reaching level 12 arbitrarily in Act 1 is doable with [Coal Mining](#), but I won't be covering that here
- If you follow my general path below without paying too close of attention to exploration points and without being a murder hobo, you will definately be level 10 before Myrkul and most likely level 10 before the Shadowfell.

My Path

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Nautiloid

- You are immediately faced with a choice of whether or not to use Lae'zel in your solo run. I personally allow temporary companions in my ruleset and use her during this section, however it really isn't important either way
- You can use Lae'zel to free Shadowheart. This uses her Illithid Persuade and not yours for today. This is a relatively small optimization and feel free to skip it if you feel it's not "solo" enough for you right at the beginning of your solo challenge game.
- Kill the Mindflayer. This should be easy with nearby tanks or a well timed snipe. The XP earned for doing so will ensure you're level 2 for the Grove Gate fight. If you kite the Cultists from the prior room in to the helm then the Mindflayer will automatically be hostile - guaranteeing you the XP when it's killed by Zhalk. Beware this could mean you are insta killed by its Mind Blast, however!

Dialogue / Easy-Cheesy Fights

Beach / Grove

- Skip the Intellect Devourers, recruit companions if your rules allow it (strip them and send em to camp), get through the horrid Grove Gate fight...if you can keep Barth alive that's great.
- Buy Str Elixir from Ethel. Even if you don't plan on using them in your build it's helpful to have it for this Day 1 path. Go get the [Silver Pendant](#) nearby (you may have needed the Str elixir to jump up there), then go through all of the Grove dialogue, making sure to open the Mol cave and get friendly with Mol (any of: [side with Meli vs Barth](#), [be friendly when Silfy robs you](#), [save Arabella](#))
- **CHEESE ALERT:** [Shapeshifter's Boon Ring](#) - if you attack the Strange Ox and immediately exit combat by ducking into Mol's cave the Ox will no longer be hostile but will be "unhappy with you". You can then enter a vendor screen and buy the Shapeshifter's Boon Ring, which is super helpful for all these dialogue checks if you have Disguise Self. Otherwise you'll need to kill the Ox (not easy this early) or wait until Act 3 to get the ring.
- **CHEESE ALERT:** Idol Heist - you can steal the Idol now with no consequences by standing some distance away, clicking on it, then warping to camp as it is mid air moving from the pedestal to your inventory. If you aren't fast enough it will trigger the Druid's response, otherwise they won't even notice it's gone. If you don't want to cheese then you must complete this quest after resolving Khaga but before killing the Goblin Camp. [+1 AC](#) is a HUGE benefit and it's worth it to get this ASAP.
- Moving on from the Grove there is more bits of XP available with the dying True Soul, the Selunite Chest in the owlbear cave, recruiting Scratch, discovering hidden Harper

cache, discovering the Wetlands (you don't need to pass the illusion check), etc. [These are listed on the sheet](#)

On Alfira

- If you are a Dark Urge wanting to save Alfira, the time to knock her out is AFTER crossing the bridge towards the Blighted Village.
- If you KO her and rest before doing so you won't get the Quill event. Also if you cross into the Goblin Camp and trigger the protection event from the Artifact then the Dream Visitor scene will preempt the Quill event. Recruiting Karlach after recruiting Wyll also preempts the Quill event.
- So the best time to take your first rest is after crossing the bridge and using your Illithid Persuade for the day, but before going to the Goblin Camp.

Blighted Village / Goblin Camp **with Drow Disguise**

- If you have Disguise Self or are a Drow (Half Drow does NOT work) then you can bypass all goblin checks. Free Barcus and move on to the Goblin Camp.
- Get the camp waypoint (it's easy to miss it), do the chicken chasing (you should have a potion of animal speaking from the Owlbear cave), get branded by Gut (this is important for later!), get Loviatar's Blessing, rescue the tortured adventurer.
- Try to steal the [Ritual Dagger](#) near Abdirak - you'll use this later.
- When you save Volo note that this is the one goblin dialogue check that you can't use Drow to bypass. You can use your Illithid Persuade here, however - you won't really use it anywhere else today.
- **CHEESE ALERT:** Gut Toss - From Priestess Gut's room you can jump up and access the explosives room next door. Place an Alchemist's Fire on the ground near the hole that goes from Gut's room to this room, and scoot a few explosive barrels nearby. Now you can throw Gut (using a STR elixir) through the hole to this room, hitting the Alchemist Fire potion and blowing her to hell. This may not sit right with you if you don't want to use barrels or don't like cheesing an otherwise hard encounter. **But counterpoint:** it's really funny to do.
- Sneak past the Ogre and access the Underdark

Blighted Village / Goblin Camp **WITHOUT Drow Disguise**

- If you don't have Disguise Self you can either use your Illithid Persuade to access Blighted Village or climb up the vines along the cliff near Scratch. If you kill the lone patrolling Goblin then you can move pretty freely around the village - just avoid the

ambush trigger.

- You can spam long rests to restore your Illithid Persuade to save Barcus, access the Goblin Village, and access the Shattered Sanctum...but I am limiting long rests in my ruleset so I generally avoid this. Instead I'll bypass the Blighted Village checks then use Enhanced Leap+Feather Fall to jump into the camp from the cliff that overlooks it. [Rancer](#) may confront you, but you can bypass him with a [TRUE SOUL] dialogue option and this won't use your daily Illithid Persuade. Once in the camp you can move freely.
- You will need to use your Illithid Persuade to get into the Shattered Sanctum. Or at least, this is when I choose to use it - I know you can sneak in through other entrances - but this is the most convenient use.
- This does mean you'll need to pass real dialogue checks to save Volo and rescue the trapped man. These are low enough DC that you can take the risk, or you can simply come back later.

Underdark

- Get the waypoint - another one that's easy to miss and annoying when you realize you've done so
- Trigger the Minotaur attacking the gate event while you're up on the ledge overlooking the entrance. Time it so you use a ranged attack to destroy the crystal when the Minotaur is low health, then finish it off. You get no XP if you let the environment kill it, and it's a fair amount to miss (75xp).
- Get [Phalar Aluve](#) - for XP even if you aren't going to use it. You can pass the checks, or if you fail you just need to bleed a little on it - use that ritual dagger you stole to make yourself bleed on it, or throw a Spike Bomb near yourself for the same effect.
- **CHEESE ALERT:** 2 Minotaurs - These guys are too tough for you right now, but you can kite them back to Selunite gate, close the gate, and snipe them from the ledge. You can ensure they won't jump up to you or attack and destroy the gate by running up the ladder that goes to the ramparts above the gate at the end of each turn. This is...tedious. You can also skip them with sneak or Enhanced Leap + Feather Fall...just make sure you avoid the Bulette triggers.
- After the Minotaurs make your way to the Myconid Village - if you are walking the path beyond the Minotaurs to the mushroom fields then you won't spawn the Bulette (the ground will shake but it won't emerge here)

Myconid Village / Duegar / Arcane Tower

- Get your quests here, especially make sure to give an Antidote to the gnome and get the [Boots of Speed](#). Recruit Glut if you want, but tell him to wait here - even if you plan on

using him now isn't the time.

- Save Baelen - you can double dash w/boots of speed in turn-based mode to move the backpack to him, and do it again to get the Noblestalk. Blow up the mushrooms if you want to get to any other goodies.
- Encounter the Duegar - you can pass without any checks so long as you got Branded - there is a DC 5 Passive Perception check to notice his brand, but you don't even need to succeed this - you will have a "Branded" dialogue option either way. Tell him you "Have the Boots Right Here" - this will let you use his boat, and you still keep the boots!
- If you plan on sacrificing a companion to BOOOAL then you can do so now. You can also try your luck here and burn excess Inspiration, but be prepared to run away if you fail. Passing the checks, sacrificing a companion, or killing them all is 750xp!
- Access the arcane tower - you can use an Invis pot + feather fall to rush past the sentries and jump down to the bottom of the tower. Loot the tower making sure to still attack the pacified sentries as they will reward 40xp each.
- Make sure you read the [Threadbare Book](#) and [Torn-Out Paper](#). These unlock the dialogue that let you bypass Bernard and get the [Guiding Light](#) ring. Make sure to get the [Club of Hill Giant Strength](#) and loot the basement before heading back to the Myconid village to turn in your quests.
- Completing Omelum's quest unlocks his vendor inventory, giving you access to the [Boots of Stormy Clamour](#) and [Pearl of Power Amulet](#). It doesn't matter if you pass the saving throws after eating the mushrooms - you just get poisoned for 10 turns if you fail.
- Saving Baelen and giving the Noblestalk to Derryth makes it so she has several Noblestalk in her inventory each day in Act 3 - these give you a full heal and clear all status debuffs, which is really nice.

Grymforge

- Head to Grymforge. You don't need to pass any dialogue checks - just tell them you're here to give the Sergeant back her boots.
- You don't need to worry about triggering the Nere timer so long as you stay away from the rubble. You can even go up to the vendor [Greydon](#) if he has something you'd like to buy (like the [Shining Staver of Skulls](#)). So long as you don't go near the rubble you can feel free to come and go and long rest as you please.
- You can do some of the dialogue for XP now (Spiders, Stonemason Kith) or come back when you have the [Int helm](#) to help you pass.

- You can get the [Fetish of Callarduran Smoothhands](#) (invisibility on long rest) off one of the dead gnome corpses the Duegar are kicking into the lake. This is a bit of XP even if you don't care for the ring itself. You don't need to pass any dialogue checks - just sneak in turn based mode and nab it when their light cones aren't facing that gnome. This may prompt them to look for a thief, so fast travel to clear.
- You can get to the upper section by jumping the gap near [Brithvar](#) - you're jumping from the weird golden boob looking thing. You can get a small amount of XP by disarming the traps and getting the Idol of Shar. Grab the [Shield Mould](#) if you plan on using it, then use feather fall to jump into the Ancient Forge area - make sure to get the waypoint and your [build's armour mould](#).
- You can avoid fighting the Armours by casting feather fall and jumping in sneak mode up to their platform then down to the area where you can get the [Mithril](#). With feather fall still active you can then jump all the way down to the Lava Elemental area to get the monk's [Sentient Amulet](#) - even if you don't plan on using the item or completing the quest, it gives a fair amount of XP. You don't need to pass any checks. You can fast travel to get out of the area faster and ensure you don't engage with the Elemental.
- You can avoid triggering the Lava Mephits by going into sneak mode. Walk all the way around the table near the Mithril Vein before coming out of sneak to smack it. This won't trigger the Mephits. You can sneak back out or fast travel to the waypoint after getting the [Mithril](#). Now you have both Mithrils – with no combat!
- **CHEESE ALERT:** Grym - there are a lot of methods for handling this. If you want to do it the "normal" way then I recommend avoiding this fight until you are much higher level with better gear - **however you should still sneak to get your adamantine gear now.** If you're OK with cheesing the fight, you can beat it now by camping on the ledge above and throwing the [returning pike](#) or really anything in your inventory at it. The mephits will only attack you if you're wearing a weapon/armour that can be targeted by Heat Metal - so make sure to remove your armour and un-equip your Returning Pike at the end of each turn.
BE WARNED that if the killing blow is coming from falling damage from your pike or whatever you're throwing, you will **NOT get the 875 XP!** Finish off his last bits of health with arrows to be safe.
 Seihoukei also posted a [fantastic demo for how to reliably defeat Grym the "normal way" at level 1](#) with no Class/Gear/Illithid Power requirements and minimal consumables. Make sure to read his notes in the description as the specific sequence and positioning all matters.

Uncrittable and LVL 5

If you killed Grym and resolved the BOOAL event you will be LVL 5 by this point, having done 0 fights where there is a risk that you'll get hit. You will be at least close if you did one or the other. If you skipped both you may have a ways to go, but that's OK - you can start with the really easy fights first to be safe.

Zhent Heist and Gith vs Fist

- Note that I often do these next few sections as soon as I get into the Blighted Village. It's safer to get higher level and adamantine gear first, but I just kind of like doing this before cause it's fun, and because it will give you access to some strong gear for your build. It is NOT 0 risk, so I won't even label this as **CHEESE**.
- You can get the [Missing Shipment](#) without any fight by going through the back entrance to the cave near the Risen Road waypoint. Avoid the boulder traps by jumping up to the wooden platforms near the entrance. Sneak and dash to grab the Shipment without starting the event with Rugen and the Gnolls. Fast travel out of the cave.
- Now go to Waukeen's rest - note that once you notice the Inn is on fire you can't fast travel/rest without ending the event. You can run by, however, to the [Gith Patrol](#).
- From the ledge above try to get a surprise round on the Gith then begin dashing back towards the inn. Note that if you are more than 50m away from the closest enemy combat will automatically drop - which is...annoying. Reach the inn and park yourself on the roof of one of the buildings - when the Gith reach the inn the Fist will join in the fight.
- BEWARE HOLD PERSON from the [Gish](#). Misty Step + Hold Person will kill you. This is why it's vital to get that surprise round to start combat so you can put max distance between you and them. Once they are fighting the Fist they will for the most part not bother with you.
- The Gith are much stronger than the Fist, but are out-numbered...but that does not mean the battle is guaranteed in any way. I've seen the Gith slaughter all of the Fist easily and vice versa. [Baretha](#) seems to be scripted to go invisible on turn 1, which helps a lot here - while invisible she doesn't seem to dash, so she'll end up arriving at the inn much later than the other Gith. HOPEFULLY you and the Fist will have finished off the others before she arrives so you can take her on solo. She can easily kill 2 Fist per turn...very scary.
- If the Fist lose here you can camp on the very top of the roofs and whittle down the remaining Gith. This can be really annoying with Baretha's Parry - scrolls can help
- If you'd like [Svartlebee's Woundseeker](#) for your build then you can engineer it so [Gauntlet Yeva](#) dies in this encounter. If you want extra XP you can also attack the Fist to make them hostile - this will get you XP when they die, even if it's the Gith that kill them.

- Resolve the Waukeen's Rest inn event to save Florrick, and move on to the Zhent Hideout.

Zhent Hideout

- You must pass a DC 10 Intimidation / Persuasion / Detect Thoughts check to pacify Zarys. It's usually important you pass this if you need the special Zhent gear - make sure you have inspiration. If you want to guarantee passing without any checks then you must have fought the Gnolls but allowed Rugen to die - you can use Speak to the Dead to get the passcode from his corpse.
- You must resolve the Missing Shipment quest to get access to the full inventory from the merchant - including the [Titanstring Bow](#). Since the bow is often the best weapon at this point regardless of build I usually am doing this section as early as I can. The [Gloves of Thievery](#) are a huge QoL as well.
- Buying the Artist's freedom nets you a little XP. ~~You are about to kill the merchant so you'll get the money back anyway. So long as you pay the merchant AFTER resolving the Missing Shipment then he'll have the money on his corpse...resolving the quest refreshes his inventory. You can also move all his gold and items into a bag so it will all be on his corpse, depending on how you feel about that cheese.~~ (you won't get your money back post Patch 8)
- Once you have the gear you'd like from the merchant you can shove Zary's off her perch then explode all the smoke powder barrels below. I don't consider this barrelmancy, since all the barrels were there already and it's clear the Devs wanted you to do this. You want to do this, too.

Kill Everything

- From here I am not going to walk through each and every encounter as they're all pretty straight forward and you should be as strong as you can be at this point in the game. [Refer to the spreadsheet](#) to help you keep track.
- We are specifically skipping almost every fight that has Hold Person/Paralyze until we open Act 2 and get the [Ring of Free Action](#) (Redcaps, Ethel, Matriarch, Spectator).
- Do NOT turn in the Sovereign's quest to kill the Duegar just yet.
- Your end goal is to get to Level 6 (or close is fine) and have an [Elixir of Guileful Movement](#) (more on that below). You will reach level 6 before clearing all of the encounters in this section and can choose to come back to finish off any remaining when you have Act 2 gear - you're coming back anyway to deal with the Hold Person fights. Usually I can hit level 6 without killing any of the Duegar in Grymforge, for example, if you want to burn through them a little easier with Act 2 gear you can save them for later.

Minthara and Dror

- If you cleared all other combats and at least some of Grymforge then you will be level 6. You don't NEED to be level 6 - it just gives you a bit more HP and a more online build if you need it for Minthara.
- Minthara is the Final Boss because she is scary scary. Hold Person will simply end your run, and even if you avoid it she can still double smite and one turn kill you. She has Misty Step making it so you can't even kite risk free. This is made even harder if you want to recruit Minthara to your party and need to make sure you don't kill her.
- You must have protection vs Hold Person, but you can't get to Act 2 and the [Ring of Free Action](#) without resolving the Grove event - so that is never an option. However you can craft an [Elixir of Guileful Movement](#) which will protect you - vendors will sell this starting level 6, or you can craft it using the [Ochre Jelly Slime](#) that the [3 Ochre Jelly in Grymforge](#) drop.
- This is the fight to burn any resources you have - boost your health however you can, get a surprise round by attacking from invisible, use your Speed Pots. Arrow of Illmater can help stop her from healing up...unless it's better for you to force her to heal instead of smiting you. You can also recruit Halsin to help soak her smites depending on your own rules for temporary companions - be warned however, she can easily crit and kill Halsin in one turn even through his bear health, which will deny you a lot of XP and a challenging event later.
- You can also choose to do the Grove Defense event instead of taking her here. This will in fact net you more XP, and you can still knock her out instead of killing her to recruit. You still need to be wary of Hold Person and her smites, but the extra meat shields you get from the Tieflings helps a ton. This is more chaotic and less guaranteed of an outcome, however.
- After dealing with Minthara, Dror is considerably easier. One of the goblins in his room can cast Hold Person, but this shouldn't be a problem if you keep your Elixir active. Don't stand near a ledge as he can use Repulsor to knock you pretty far. Dror has a lot of move speed but limited ranged attacks making him easy to handle with the Boots of Speed and ranged attacks (he can throw javelins at you, but just pick them up as you kite him so he can't re-throw)

Paladins of Tyr

- Minthara is the final boss of Act 1, but you also need to make sure you deal with the Paladins of Tyr if you want to keep Karlach in your party - she will leave if you go to Act 2 without killing them.
- [The Merchant](#) has Hold Person, which will end your run without protection. If you still have resources after dealing with Minthara + Dror then you can take on the Paladins too

keeping your Elixir of Guileful Movement active. Otherwise you can burst down the Merchant before she gets a turn - always risky. She does stand in a spot that begs you to shove her down to the path below but be warned that this is NOT enough to kill her and she can cast Hold Person from down there!

- With Hold Person nullified your only risk is Anders, who can smite you down pretty quick similar to Minthara. But he has no ranged attack and low movement speed - you can kite him with Boots of Speed and pick him off pretty easily.

Act 2 Gear and Prep

Goal of this next session is to get basically ALL Act 2 gear with minimal fighting in preparation for a long combat gauntlet.

Open the Creche

- You can open the Creche and get the waypoint and gear now, or come back when you have inspiration.
- The back entrance is easier, especially if you don't pass your dialogue checks and need to fight - you need to disguise as a Gith or pass a DC 21 Intimidation/Persuasion check to avoid combat - not an easy check. Fighting the guards does not make the rest of the Creche hostile.
- You can get a [scroll of Disguise Self](#) a little ways into Act 2 and come back to this if you want to avoid risks.
- You can also invis past the back entrance guards and still get the waypoint so you can just warp past them in the future, making it so you never need to risk a fight to get to the trader.
- If you'd like, you can immediately grab the 3 parasites in the Zaith'isk room and even do the Zaith'isk now if you're ready - be prepared to kill the Ghustil. I usually grab the parasites but save the Zaith'isk for later when I can guarantee advantage on saving throws.
- You can also speak to Kith'rak Therezzyn and tell her you have the Prism to gain access to the Inquisitor's Chamber now. You can move freely in this room and loot anything you need (you may need to use Darkness arrows or something similar to get to some of the chests). The event does not start until you actually talk to W'wargaz and there is no timer or anything stopping you from just walking out after you loot the place.

Absolute Caravan + Harper Shadows

- I like to access Act 2 from the mountain pass first and kill the Absolute Caravan. You should be strong enough to handle this fight head on, or you can snipe/fireball them from

the ledge above. I don't like to summon Kar'niss here, however - we'll do that later - but I do like to handle the caravan now so Kar'niss is solo later.

- You can then get a bit more XP by going back to Grymforge and going to Act 2 through that entrance - this lets you do the Harper vs Shadows event that you would normally miss if you went straight to Last Light from the Mountain Pass.

Last Light and Kar'niss

- Speak to Jaheira at Last Light to enable the Harper Ambush event.
- Get any gear you need from Last Light.
- Do NOT speak to Rolan if you don't want to enable that event yet - I can't figure out why he's sometimes just dead when I approach his event from Last Light, but it seems like he's always alive if I approach the back way from Moonrise. So if you don't talk to him the event won't start - this lets you get the Moonrise waypoint first.
- Follow the Harpers and engage with Kar'niss. If you'd like, you can convince him to give you the lantern, but I like to fight him here when I have meat shields to help and so I don't stumble into his zombie corpse later.
- The Harpers provide excellent meat shields for you, and you can get a pretty quick kill with a thunder wave/thunder arrow to knock him off the roof...but still this fight can be scary and maybe you want to come back when you have more gear and levels. If so you can sneak past the event trigger and move on directly towards Moonrise.

Moonrise

- If you dealt with Kar'niss then you already have the [Pixie buff](#) and can simply waltz right through the Shadow Curse into Moonrise.
- If you avoided him then you'll need to dash through the shadow curse area - starting from the southernmost bridge get enhanced leap + feather fall, double dash and go into turn based mode, then rush to Moonrise. You should be able to get there without taking any shadow curse damage, and you'll automatically get the Moonrise waypoint as soon as you walk in.
- Now you have access to a ton of gear from the 3 vendors - especially the [Ring of Free Action](#), your vital Hold Person protection for the remainder of the game.
- Speak to Z'rell to get access to Balthazar's room and get the Moon Lantern - your protection if you didn't get the Pixie buff yet. You will want this lantern regardless for some future fights.
- Don't worry about Minthara - there is no timer on saving her.

Mason Guild Basement

- We're going to pick up the [Knock scroll](#) (and Disguise Self scroll if you need it) here.
- There are 2 passive DC 10 perception checks here that you must pass - the first to notice the keyhole that gives access to the basement, and the second to notice the secret door on the wall in the basement where you can get the scrolls. Pre-cast Guidance and make sure you're wearing one of the items that gives you advantage to perception checks ([Sentinel Shield](#) or [Halberd of Vigilance](#) - both from Lann Tarv at Moonrise)
- If the Wraith and Shadows are too tough for you at this point you can simply sneak past them. But you should be able to handle them at this point - if you lay down the Moonlight Lantern then you can make it so the Shadows can't go invisible and shadow step near you. Unlike normal light sources the lantern can't be extinguished by the Wraith.

Gauntlet of Shar

- Yes, you can and should open the Gauntlet now! Specifically I want to complete the 3 fights with enemies that have [Radiant Retort](#) now, and gain access to the [Callous Glow Ring](#) if it's part of your build...and it usually is right?
- You can start the first [Umbral Tremor](#) fight with Minor Illusion if you have it - this spawns the enemies so you can take out one of the Umbral Tremor things immediately from stealth. The skeletons should distract the Dark Justiciars long enough for you to kill the remaining Tremors. Then you can kite the Justiciars down the narrow hallway to pick them off or use a Firewall scroll.
- **CHEESE ALERT:** Balthazar vs Shar - this is the reason we grabbed the Knock scroll. Sneak up near Balthazar's door so you don't trigger the Umbral Tremors event, double dash, and use the Knock Scroll to open his door. This will trigger the event and you should have enough movement to open the door so Balthazar himself joins the fight. Now use a magic missile scroll or Ne're Misser's MM or something that hits multiple times on any enemy on Balthazar's side so they are hostile to you (feels like you need 3 instances of damage on a neutral mob in the same turn to get them to go hostile). Pop an invis pot and move somewhere safe where you won't be detected or hit by AoE. Now you can just pass turn while everyone fights everyone and you reap all the XP. The Dark Justiciars don't spawn forever - each portal only spawn 3 before despawning - so this isn't some infinite XP glitch. The Dark Justiciars will win eventually, so try to come out and join the fight when they are weakened but before they've finished off all of Balthazar's side. If you feel this is too cheesy then you can just take on the combat normally - but you'll probably get less XP needing to kill the Tremors quickly so you aren't overwhelmed, and you'll need to plan out the relatively tough Balthazar fight.

- Now clear the Dark Justiciars in the Library. They are the last battle with Radiant Retort - something I want to handle now before we get the Morninglord's Radiance buff later. Nothing too special here - you can place your lantern down on the ground to limit their Shadow Step ability and funnel them into the narrow entrance if you'd like to AoE.
- You can do the 3 trials now if you want (see [here](#) for a consistent Leap of Faith solve), or come back later, it doesn't matter too much.
- ALTERNATELY if you don't want to bother with the trials (the Leap of Faith trial and the platform that brings you down to the Verge of the Shadows are buggy and may just end your run) then you can use feather fall to jump down to the Verge of Shadows and use your Knock scroll here to access the area and waypoint for later. This means you'll need to approach Balthazar differently if you aren't a Wizard with Knock.

Act 1 Cleanup and The Crèche

- We now have the Ring of Free Action, which is vital for all of the Act 1 fights we skipped and for clearing most of the Crèche. I'll say over and over again: Hold Person is a run killer.
- At this point you will be level 7 or 8 fully decked out in Act 2 gear and should breeze through the remaining Act 1 fights...so long as you're wearing your Ring of Free Action. [Refer to the spreadsheet](#) to help you keep track, otherwise there really isn't too much to note other than you should start with Ethel to get the Hags Hair and Heart of Stone potion making the next fights a little easier.
- Work through all the fights in the Mountain Pass and begin slaughtering the Gith in the creche. [Do NOT solve the Blood of Lathander weapon puzzle just yet.](#)
- **The Zaith'isk**
 - Requires Saving Throws: 12 Int, 14 Wis, 18 of whatever your main class stat is.
 - Equip gear that improves your saving throws: [Ring of Protection](#), [Cloak of Protection](#), [Absolute's Warboard](#), [Staff of Arcane Blessing](#). Choose the helm that helps you most here: [Warped Headband of Intellect](#) or [Helmet of Autonomy](#)
 - Get Advantage on all saves with the [Shadeclinger Armour](#) (use an Arrow of Darkness to trigger the effect, or glitch it if you are OK with that). Alternately use the [Amulet of the Harpers](#) for the Wis save specifically
 - Get Bless on yourself by drinking a potion with the [Whispering Promise](#) ring on right before you go in.
 - Finally - now is the time to burn your inspiration if you must. Turning your Illithid powers into a bonus action is really really helpful and you don't want to miss it.
- Your Ring of Free Action needs to be equipped if facing an enemy with the [Gish](#) title and the [Merchant A'jak'nir Jeera](#) - so you're actually fine to un-equip it when facing [Kith'rak](#)

[Therezzyn](#) and [Ch'r'ai W'wargaz](#).

- [Kith'rak Therezzyn](#) can be a scary fight due to her Fear ability making you drop your weapon and eat opportunity attacks while skipping your turn. Burst her down fast by opening with a surprise round - ideally she doesn't get a turn. If you don't think you can get her down quick enough then boost your Wis save gear to try to save vs the fear.
- [Ch'r'ai W'wargaz](#) is a scary fight that you'll want to plan out - depending on your build this will be trivial or extremely scary. I do recommend fighting him before going into the Prism so you can set up the field and use a surprise round. You can kite him back down the path with Boots of Speed if you really need to play this safe - note however you will still be eating opportunity attacks from his swords.

Act 2 No Long Rest

- If you recruited Lae'zel then you will be forced to long rest when trying to leave the Crèche after killing W'wargaz. This is why we completed all this before getting our long rest buffs in this section - otherwise we'd be forced to lose them all.
- You can simply not recruit Lae'zel, or sacrifice her to BOOOAL if you want to get your buffs earlier - and in fact this will net you an extra buff (the Dream Guardian gives you Bless after your meeting that stays until long rest)...however you REALLY need to budget your resources if you're beginning this section any earlier.

The buffs you can get are:

- [Bliss Spores](#) - from turning in the Duegar quest to the Sovereign (+1d6 to all attack rolls and dialogue checks)
- [Morninglord's Radiance](#) - from [solving the weapon puzzle in the Monastery](#) (+1d4 radiant damage to all weapon attacks). We killed the Radiant Retort enemies earlier so we can use this buff with no fear. If you aren't using weapon attacks in your build, then you don't need to go through all that.
- [Dark Lady's Blessings](#) - from passing DC 14 Wis, Int, Char saving throws in the hidden Sharran shrine in the middle of Rethwyn town (+5 to each of these stats)
- [Nightsinger's Favour](#) - from passing DC 14 Religion check at the shrine in the Gauntlet of Shar (necrotic resistance)
- Bless (no Lae'zel) - given by the Dream Guardian after your meeting in the Prism. If you have Lae'zel in your party then you won't keep this for long - you are forced to take a long rest after the meeting. You can keep it if you don't recruit Lae'zel or sacrifice her to BOOOAL. Killing her in your camp or even throwing her down a cliff does not stop the forced long rest. Note that, annoyingly, this Bless can be overwritten by temporary Bless buffs making you lose it early if you utilize the [Whispering Promise](#), for example.

Kill Everything

- Drink your best elixir, buff your weapon with Light and the [Drakethroat Glaive](#) and start the killin.
- [A list of encounters](#) to help you track this section is found on the sheet.
- The goal here is to complete ALL of the remaining Act 2 with these buffs, including Myrkul. You can restore resources with [Potions of Angelic Reprieve](#) (2 sold by Lann Tarv, and you can refresh his inventory a few times with level ups) [Potions of Angelic Slumber](#) (2 avail - 1 from W'wargaz and another in a chest at the Waning Moon), and the Illithid Restore thingy right before Myrkul.
- So long as you aren't burning all your spell slots willy-nilly, you should have plenty of resources to get through everything. I have done this section as a pure caster with no issue - the Angelic Reprieve potions restore level 1 and 2 spell slots, and you can get so many of these that it's fine to be careless using those slots. For higher slots just make a plan for which encounters get which spell slot then time your use of the Angelic Slumber potions well. Same with other classes that have limited long rest resources - like a Barbarian.
- I am not going to walk through every single encounter here, but will give a few notes:
 - **Shambling Mound** - Important to not get surprised here and to have a plan to get through the mound's resistances. The Alert feat is vital here, but you can also use an Elixir of Vigilance or bait out the surprise round with a summon. The Ne're Misser does force damage - not Piercing - which can help with the mound. Note that it has an instant-killer effect ([Devour](#)) that triggers if you are both restrained and fail a save vs [Digestive Sap](#). Ring of Free Action prevents the Restrained debuff negating this threat.
 - **Gith Ambush** - There are no Gish here, so Hold Person is not a concern. They are still scary, however. Approach the bridge from stealth to reveal the gith so you can get a surprise round. As always if you're worried about this fight you can kite them back through the town and pick off from range.
 - **The 3 Thorns** - You can dialogue your way past [Gerringothe](#), [Malus](#), and [Thisobald Thorm](#) if you'd like. If you are choosing to fight them then you need to be extra super duper careful with Gerringothe (the gold lady). [The ability that turns you to gold](#) is NOT stopped by Ring of Free Action, and it's an instant game over. You can shove her from invisibility out of the window she stops at briefly in her pathing, which will buy you a ton of time to kill her minions before she reaches you in her much weakened state
 - **Isobel Event** - You can pre-buff Isobel with Mage Armor and Protection from Good and Evil. It's important that you kill Marcus round 1 before any enemy gets a turn, because Isobel often doesn't survive the first round - Elixir of Vigilance will

ensure you are first, and you can have a Speed Pot thrown on the ground ahead of time you can walk over so you don't need to burn your bonus action. You can bait out Opportunity Attacks from Marcus to make sure Isobel doesn't eat them should you not kill him or lock him down first turn.

- **Halsin Portal Event** - You can prepare the field to make this much easier - cover the space where the Harpers spawn in grease, lay down your Moon Lantern near the portal to limit the teleport from the shadows, and put down a big AoE like Wall of Fire or Evard's Black Tentacles to take care of the bulk of the enemies. Putting a darkness arrow on the portal prevents the Harpers from shooting it.
- **Moonrise** - You don't have to assault Moonrise with the Harpers after resolving the Nightsong quest - you can just take Z'rell and all the guards out one by one until it's clear. The [Paladin types](#) can be scary - they have extra attack and Thunderous Smite and if they hit with both smites in one turn you can easily go down. Note you can clear the rooftop now as well - Ketheric doesn't aggro so long as you don't get close.
- Once you've checked off every encounter (save the tough ones like Isobel and the Portal Event for last), you should be level 10 or close. Resolve the Nightsong event in the Shadowfel and head up to Ketheric and the Illithid Colony
- You will get level 10 in the Illithid Colony even if you missed or skipped some combats - killing the Intellect Devourers in here reward a TON of XP. The Colony itself gets you some 5000 xp - plenty to cover any gap between 9 and 10. You can get level 10 before going into the colony if you did ALL the combats/dialogue checks I list in the spreadsheet, but all that does is refresh vendor loot one last time - which maybe that's helpful if you want a specific scroll or more health pots. If you went complete murder hobo on every living thing you can push this to level 11 - but that is going really far out of your way and doing some exploit-y things (killing Rafael and Elminster) for not much of a benefit. Long walk for a short drink.

Myrkul

- Final Boss time, and the unique challenges in this fight will almost certainly force you to play with a different gear set/style/etc.
- I recommend that you do NOT dialogue past phase 1 because that means you'll need to deal with Myrkul avatar form and the Mindflayer at the same time. Open combat bursting down the mindflayer (bait out an opportunity attack from it so it doesn't Charm you) and freeing the Nightsong with an invisible Scratch (he can drink potions from your inventory!). Clearing all the minions before phase 2 is tough because Ketheric will keep spawning new ones, so don't stress too much about it.

- Phase 2 you'll need to look hard at your build to plan on how to deal with the adds healing him, [finger of death](#), and [the counter attack fear](#) that will root you in his bone chill range (no, Ring of Free Action does not prevent this).
- The conditions you put on him in phase 1 will carry over to phase 2. You can set him up with Wet for example to burst him down with lightning right at the start of Phase 2. You can also use Ability Drain illithid power and low damage melee attacks to drain his Strength so that - combined with high AC - he can't hit you with melee in phase 2.
- Generically the [Doom Hammer](#) (to negate healing), a [Strength Elixir](#) (if you aren't a str character), Arrows of Darkness (so he can't use Finger of Death on you), [Boots of Striding](#) (so he can't pull you close if you don't want to be close), and the [Periapt of Wound Closure](#) can get you through this. Concentrating on [Protection vs Good/Evil](#) is fantastic here because it imposes disadvantage on all enemies and it prevents the Frightened condition imposed by Myrkul's counter attack.
- He enables [Myrkul's call](#) - the condition that makes the Necromites run towards him and heal him - after you do about 100 damage. Plan out pushing him over this threshold - you can setup for the first 100 health and save resources to burst him down potentially, or make sure you have your debuffs fully up, etc.
- Note that the healing happens on the Necromite's turn, so if you are at the top of the initiative and apply debuffs he will get his turn and clear 1 turn of those debuffs before the necromites run in. This means [Arrow of Illmater](#) and [Bone Chill](#) itself - which only applies 1 turn of the [Bone Chilled debuff](#) - aren't actually effective at stopping the healing. The Doom Hammer is different because it applies -2- turns of Bone Chilled.
- There is also a point in the fight where the adds stop spawning - this is like turn 50 or something crazy...have fun with that if it's your plan.
- If you win - congrats, you've passed the most difficult challenge in the game. There is one more challenge left - complete act 3 without restarting as a different build.

Act 3 Prep

We're in the end game, and honestly most of the danger of the run has passed. We're going to do a little setup to another no-long-rest segment

Astral Plane Gith Honor Guard

- You can misty step / arrow of transportation / double dash to the portal to skip the fight in the camp
- The Honor Guard monks themselves are scary. You must have Hold Person protection, and you must beware of getting pushed off the ledge - having [Boots of Striding](#) or your

newly acquired [Reaper's Embrace](#) will protect you from this. May as well dump all resources into this fight as you are forced to long rest.

Rivington

- To be safe you can skip all combats until you have the [Amulet of Greater Health](#)...but I usually don't because it's often not necessary at this point.
- Get the [statue of yourself](#) for the permanent Bless buff. Note that this won't activate until after you long rest. Get any gear you may need from this area/Chult
- Start the [Bhaalist murder quest](#), but don't get the Rapture buff from the nymph at Sharess' Caress just yet.
- You can get the [Helldusk Boots](#) now, but must do so before you speak to Gortash if you want to avoid fighting him. You simply need to fly down from the bridge, head left, and climb the vines to the upper floor of the fortress. Invis past the Steel Watchers and Banites to get to the chest that have the boots. These boots are really helpful to replace your Boots of Striding as push protection - safety from getting shoved or blasted off ledges and from getting knocked prone - which will be very relevant in the House of Hope Prison, Orin, and Ansur fights.
- You can go down to Ansur's area now to loot the [Helm of Balduran](#) (this won't trigger Ansur, and you'll get 5000xp just for accessing the area), but you do need to survive a fight against elementals during one of the trials - again you can wait until you get the Amulet of Greater Health for a much lower risk or [pop a scroll of Globe of Invulnerability](#) to trivialize the event (Globe is 3 turns and the event is 4 - make sure you just tank turn 1 and pop it turn 2, otherwise you'll be vulnerable when there are like 8 elementals up).

Opening the House of Hope

- You can open the House of Hope immediately, and there's really no reason not to. [All materials for the ritual are upstairs](#) - you don't even need to talk to Helsik. I usually fly up from the gate to the locked second story door for quick access.
- Make sure you do not aggro anyone then head straight to the Archive. Juke the Archivist who tends to follow you around in this room then Indiana Jones the Amulet of Greater Health -- place a book on the pedestal before stealing the item. You can do the same with the [Gauntlets](#) if you want them.
- You can next go to the Boudoir and kill/sleep with Haarlep - this won't aggro the rest of the House unless you kite out to the hallway and get seen by others. Beware the knockback from the imps. You won't get XP or the Helldusk Gloves if you sleep with him.
- **CHEESE ALERT:** Fountain of Restoration - you can now use these to restore resources as many times as you want. This lets you buff yourself, buff your summons, and dump all

resources into any fight and simply go back to restore. That may feel like it is more inconvenient than just slamming a long rest, but remember you can get the [Rapture buff](#) and keep it for all fights so long as you don't long rest.

Act 3 Rapture - No Long Rest

Rapture

- Take one last long rest if you haven't done so to activate your Statue buff
- Go back to Sharess' Caress and do the [Mind Flayer event with Naoise](#).
- You must pass a DC 10 passive Insight check in the dialogue to notice that she's aroused by the Mind Flayer - so it's important to buff yourself in any way that you can before speaking with her after the combat (Guidance at least) to be sure you won't miss this check. There is [a ring](#) on the Mindflayer's corpse in the Windmill in Rivington that gives you advantage on Insight checks. If you do miss it you can use Disguise self to try again.

Stormshore Tabernacle

- You should also donate funds to get the [saving throw buff](#) here

Loot the Sorcerous Vault

- Lots of goodies here! In particular you want to get the [Scroll of Artistry of War](#) for the final fight
- Note that if you want the [Markoheshkir](#) staff you need to pass a DC 20 Arcana check and you CAN'T TRY AGAIN if you fail - you need to burn Inspiration. Use your Int Helm at least to help if you aren't Int based.

Get to LVL 12

- For the most part there is nothing special about the non-boss combats in Act 3 - you should breeze through them, especially with your much improved health pool. Beware the Bhaalists that have a Stunning Gaze - but even if this lands you're usually fine with your massive health pool. Ring of Free Action once again saves you here.
- Personally I like to run around getting every way point - including the one to the Bhaalist temple (you can invis past the ambush) - right at the start. This nets you a ton of exploration XP so you really don't have to fight many things to get to max level. You can pretty easily dialogue past [Aelis Siryasius](#) and the grease elementals down in the sewer as well for several thousand XP.
- Once you're 12 you can figure out what you'd like to do in Act 3 before completing the game. You really don't have to do anything but kill Orin to finish the game, however since this is a challenge run I generally want to complete all of the Big Bosses. Some fights are

very straight forward and don't need much in terms of a walk through, so I'm just going to cover a few notables.

House of Grief

- It makes sense to stop here early so you can get the most out of the +2 stat buff and the huge amount of XP (I usually hit 12 after doing this fight). The combat itself is not too difficult - you can kite the enemies through the narrow hallway and use AOE effects to bring them down. You can also use the Moon Lantern trick here to be sure that they can't shadow step on top of you.
- Passing the Mirror of Loss itself only takes a passive DC 15 Perception check - this is what it takes to notice Shadowheart's [secret night orchid alcove](#). There is a [note on the ground](#) here that tells your character about the Mirror of Loss, bypassing the Religion check you'd normally need to pass to understand the Mirror's purpose. Next you can sacrifice your [Forbidden Knowledge buff](#) (from the [Necromancy of Thay](#)) for a guaranteed +2 stat bonus. This does mean you lose your +1 to Wis saves, but that's fine.

Gortash

- This isn't too tough of a fight save for one mechanic - [Tyrant's Curse](#), which he does on reaction and will do 20d10 damage to you after 2 turns! Yikes! You can clear this with Remove Curse, Noblestalk (you did complete that quest for Derryth in Act 1, right?), or just face tanking it with high health and an [Elixir of Universal Resistance](#)
- Before walking into his office you can destroy all of the traps - they are vulnerable to Lightning so lightning arrows will make quick work. Don't destroy the [Deranged Force Curtain](#) trap, as this one helps you
- You can do the widely shared Kidnap-And-Toss-From-The-Ramparts strat as well if you'd like. I can't tell if this is CHEESE or CHEESE-But-Fun-Regardless. Up to you.

Hellfire Steel Watcher Titan

- This also isn't too scary, and is largely trivialized by purchasing [Flashbinder Grenades](#) from the Ironhand Gnomes (you did save Wulbren, right?). The grenades stun the boss even when it goes in to defensive mode, so it will never heal.

Ansur

- This fight poses problems for many builds due to his damage reduction, high damage output, and instant-kill mechanic. If your main damage source is something like Magic Missiles then you'll need to rethink your strategy here because they often won't do any damage.
- Almost any solo build is also going to have relatively slow damage - enough that all of the safe spots in the room get destroyed...when this happens you can dash back into the

entrance doorway to avoid the [Stormheart Nova](#). Make sure you have enough movement to do this if you're about to bring him down to 0 health the first time, [because he will immediately cast Stormheart Nova](#), and you don't want to be caught out in the open with no way to dash to safety having just spent your last action bringing him to 0 health.

Raphael

- You can use Hope (depending on your temp companion rules) to [banish 4 of the adds](#) - she has 2 lvl 5 spell slots, but also has [Divine Intervention](#) to restore them. She can chug an Elixir of Vigilance and Speed Pots from your inventory!
- You can pre-grease much of the area to hopefully knock some of the enemies - including Raphael - on their ass to start. A prone Raphael can't do his legendary action.
- If you're very scared of this fight you can also do the tried-and-true method of just...kiting away and hitting the enemies from range.

Orin

- Scary Fight. I said at the beginning that playing solo is basically prepping for 3 fights: Minthara, Myrkul, and Orin - so we're at the real final boss now. You need to find a way to deal with [Bhaal's Edict](#) and her [Unsettling Visage](#) that causes Fear.
- Beware of being near the ledge in this fight - her attack in slayer form knocks you back a little bit, for an instant game over if you get knocked into the chasm. The Helldusk Boots / Boots of Striding / Reaper's Embrace can prevent this.
- Beware Paralyze from the [Death's Head](#) and Slow from the [Invoker](#). Ring of Free Action to be sure you aren't paralyzed. The Slow can make you go Lethargic if you have haste up.
- Bhaal's Edict says that you must kill someone by the end of your turn or you die. You can stop this from applying to you by forcing Orin to use her [Sanguine Lash](#) (just need to hit her with a melee attack) - this will only stop it from applying and only after the first round, so you must always be prepared to clear the edict by killing a minion at least once on turn 2.
- Also sometimes it just doesn't work for some reason - both baiting out the Sanguine Lash to prevent the edict or killing a minion to clear the edict. It's really buggy. You should approach the fight with the goal to wipe out the cultists as soon as possible - in the first round if you can. You can pre-cast Haste (or throw a potion on the ground and move over it), Black Hole Illithid Power to gather most of the cultists up, and use scrolls of Chain Lightning.

- Note that Orin's [Fear](#) is different from the Frightened effect such that abilities that negate Frightened ([Saverok's Helm](#), [Gortash's Robe](#), [Heros' Feast](#)) **do not work**. The fear landing will be an instant killer as it disables your turn making it so you can't kill a minion or bait out a Sanguine Lash. It is a DC 16 Wisdom save. The best approach again is to clear the cultists IMMEDIATELY so you aren't vulnerable to the Edict if this does land. It's her Range ability so it's possible she won't use it if you're in melee...but I haven't experimented with that much to be sure.
- If you want to have a safe and secure Orin fight - go Durge. If you do so the fight will be a duel to start with you only facing her slayer form and there is no Bhaal's Edict. Very trivial fight from here at this point.

Brian

- Orin was the final boss, the last stretch through the Upper City is pretty trivial so long as you have an answer to [Aegis of the Absolute](#) (immune to damage types from last turn)
 - First I strongly recommend siding with Orpheus here, cause the Emperor is a real shit mindflayer. Really, look at their abilities - Orpheus (and you/Karlach if you go Mindflayer) get WAY better abilities.
 - You can Invis past all fights leading up to the final area. There's no reason to do them.
 - Orpheus can drink Elixirs and other potions from your inventory - an Elixir of Vigilance is fantastic here.
 - At the penultimate fight atop the brain you can let Orpheus go invis and keep him invis until you've at least dealt with the Mindflayers - they are the biggest threat by far with their stun, which can interrupt Orpheus opening up the portal.
 - For Brian himself you can always guarantee a kill regardless of your build by using the [Artistry of War scroll](#) and [Fierce Perilous Strikes](#) (avail only from Orpheus or if you are a Mindflayer). This ability adds +15 damage to your attacks and it stacks - so you can easily stack it 5 times for +75 damage per attack and then unleash your Artistry of War scroll - which is just a beefed up Magic Missile that hits 6 times. $6 * 75 = 450$. Game finished!
- If that feels too cheesy then you can kill Brian the old fashion way - just make sure you have a plan around his immunity to the damage you did last turn. Orpheus can cast scrolls from your inventory to help.