



Warrior Mace/Shield, Greatsword Roaming Guide

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Introduction

Warrior gets a lot of hate for being easy and forgiving to play, therefore people think that it's a boring class, but I disagree. I strongly believe that at a fundamental level, every class has the same amount of depth and that difficulty is a complete non-factor. At the end of the day, we all play the same game with the same rules. It's not about how many buttons you have to press but about what buttons to press at the right time. And I happen to believe that warrior has really fun buttons!

I think it's a misconception that warrior is a flowchart class, especially when roaming in WvW. The class actually struggles quite a bit against a lot of meta builds because of how open the map is and how easy it is to be kited as a warrior, making it a fun challenge to fight players of equal skill. Sure, WvW is completely unbalanced, but it shouldn't be taken seriously and should only be played for the fun of it. You can hardly judge anyone's skill level by fighting them once or twice in a WvW setting. Just find a build you like, go out there and have fun.

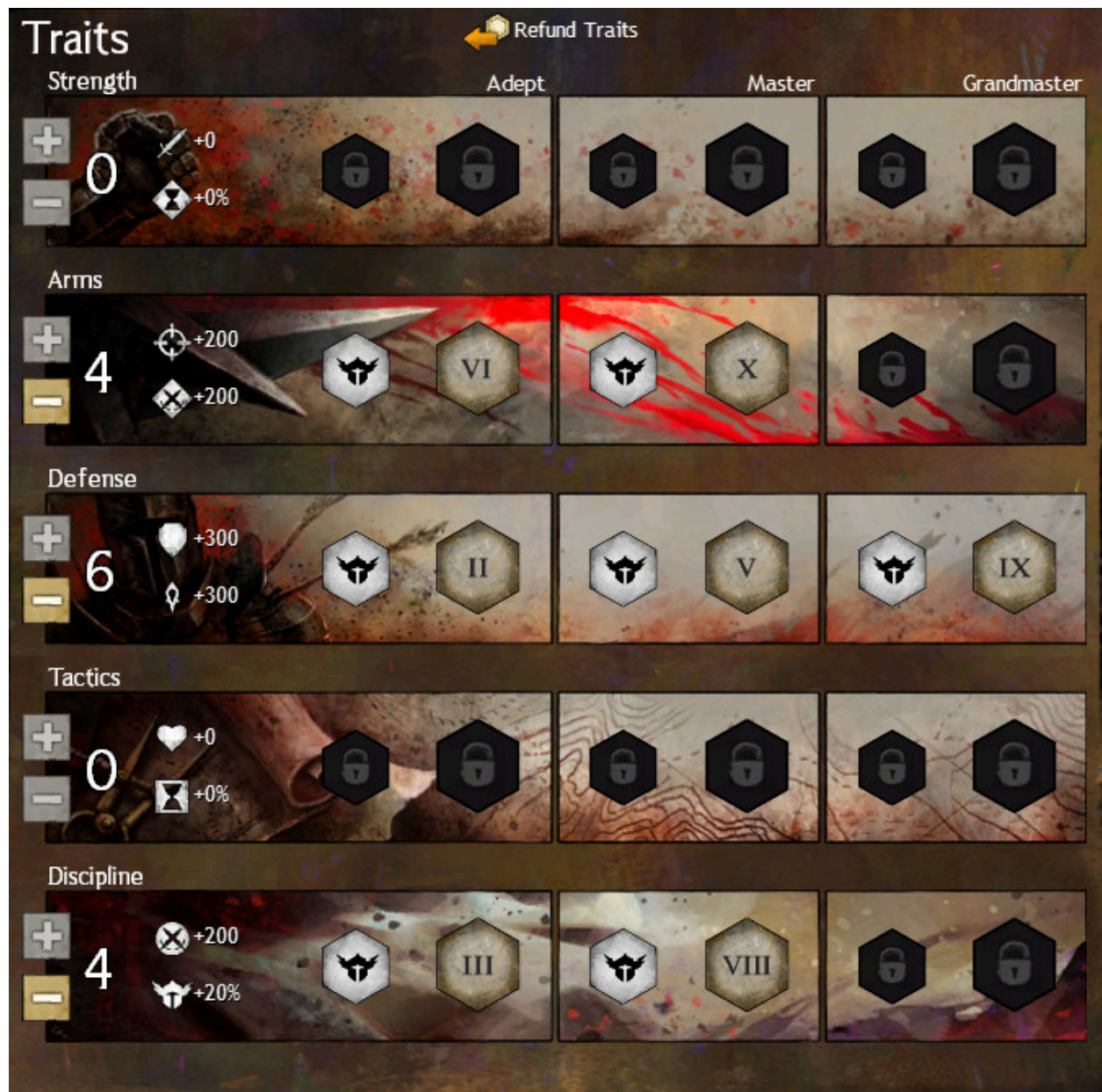
Mace/Shield rewards good decisions and is punished if played in a flowchart way against players who know what mace/shield can do. Therefore, you need to rely mostly on your mechanics and knowledge of the game. That's why I like it so much.

I don't claim to be the best warrior out there, but hopefully this guide will help you get started on making your own mace/shield build!

Build Rundown

Warrior has the luxury of being quite versatile in terms of traits and gear choice. First, I'll give a quick rundown of what I personally use and then list a few viable variants. I wish I could tell you this is the best build out there, but in reality it mostly comes down to preference.

[My Setup](#) (gw2skills.net)



Traits:

Arms

VI Furious Reaction:

Good trait if you consider how much damage there is in WvW and how often this can proc. At 10 seconds of vigor I think it outclasses every other adept traits in this line.

X Forceful Greatsword:

This is the kind of trait that is really hard to pass if you've played with it for a while. It makes a huge difference in your survivability and your DPS potential.

Defense

II Dogged March:

With how strong +% condition duration food is, this is a no-brainer for me. Without it, you are very easy to kite. With it, most soft-cc's will be brushed off like nothing.

V Missile Deflection:

This is a personal preference for me because of how often you'll get to use it in WvW. It's a great outplay tool which this build is all about.

IX Cleansing Ire:

Warrior is very dependent on this trait to cleanse conditions. It's not nearly as strong without a longbow, but still necessary in almost all warrior PvP builds in my opinion. It's also great to build adrenaline while you're getting kited as you can't build it by just running around.

Discipline

III Warrior Sprint:

Trying to land **Skull Crack** without this trait can be quite a pain. I think this is near necessary to successfully play this build. Also gives additional mobility while running around on the map.

VIII Destruction of the Empowered:

This is a great damage boost against almost every matchup. It's not hard to get upwards of 9-12% additional damage which is huge.

Gear + Buffs:

Gear

Full Berserker Armor
Full Berserker Weapons
Full Berserker Trinkets

Runes

Full [Hoelbrak Runes](#)

Sigils

Mace: [Sigil of Paralyzation](#)

Shield: [Sigil of Energy](#)

Greatsword: [Sigil of Incapacitation](#) + [Sigil of Air](#)

Food

[Bowl of Lemongrass Poultry Soup](#)
[Potent Superior Sharpening Stone](#)

Build Variants

Build Template

This is a template that has everything that I believe is necessary to make this build work:

<http://en.gw2skills.net/editor/?fJAQNApehiMdYGaAmABpJHFQ3TA-TpACQAgHAW9EAAA>

Everything else is up to you to customize to your playstyle. I highly encourage that you experiment with traits and gear yourself and see what is best for you.

Viable Traits:

Arms

V Rending Strikes:

If you really really want more damage, it's possible to take this over **VI Furious Reaction**, but it's hardly worth it in my opinion.

VII Unsuspecting Foe:

If you go 6 in **Arms**, getting this trait will make you do more damage. If you only have 4 in **Arms**, I think **VI Forceful Greatsword** is more worth it because you already have around 70% crit chance with very high fury uptime. If your gear setup doesn't give you that much crit chance (ie lots of Cavalier), then you can consider this over **VI Forceful Greatsword** (but at that point you might want to just go 6 in **Arms** anyways).

Defense

III Sure-Footed:

Good alternative to **V Missile Deflection**, especially if you go 3 stances instead of **Bull's Charge**.

Tactics

I Leg Specialist:

Not a bad trait especially if you're using **Sigil of Incapacitation**. Not great, but definitely viable.

Discipline

I Mighty Defenses:

This trait can be an alternative to **VIII Destruction of the Empowered**. One stack of might gives you +1.5% damage, so this trait needs to give you a constant 2 stacks of might for it to be equal in damage to the 3% of **VIII Destruction of the Empowered** assuming that every class can have 100% uptime on at least 1 boon. In most cases, **I Mighty Defenses** will not give you as much damage, only in very few instances.

V Vigorous Focus:

Good source of vigor if you're running 3 stances.

VI Signet Mastery:

I think other traits outclass this one in this particular build, but not bad.

X Mobile Strikes:

Always a decent option in WvW. I don't take it because of all the -% condition duration stacked up.

XI Burst Mastery:

Always a useful trait in just about every warrior build, but not as necessary in this one in my opinion.

Alternative Gear + Buffs:

Gear

It's not possible for me to recommend an exact gear setup because everyone plays differently. Unless you want to go full berserker, it's entirely up to you how much damage you want to give up for more survivability. Even with some tankier gear, you can even out the damage by playing with your trait setup (6 in **Arms** for **VII Unsuspecting Foe** for example).

Runes

Full [Runes of Strength](#) if you like to live life on the edge

Full [Runes of Melandru](#) if you feel like you need the extra survivability

Sigils

The greatsword sigils are highly customizable. Good alternatives include:

[Sigil of Fire](#)

[Sigil of Hydromancy](#)

[Sigil of Battle](#)

[Sigil of Doom](#)

[Sigil of Leeching](#)

[Sigil of Impact](#)

Food

[Bowl of Sweet and Spicy Butternut Squash Soup](#)

Weapon Skills & Utilities

Mace:

***BURST* Skull Crack**

Your whole life depends on trying to setup a good **Skull Crack**. The key word here is *setup*. Try to be close to 100% sure it will land otherwise you might have a bad time.

There's all kinds of tricks for this but it mainly comes down to having good mechanics. Count dodges, use mind games, etc...

Auto-attack

This was buffed a little bit ago and it's now comparable to the hammer auto-attack.

Counterblow

Can do absurd damage if it crits. It's a skill that you'll have to learn how to use effectively and not spam as soon as it's up. Paired with **V Missile Deflection**, you can block range attacks for the whole duration of the block as long as you don't get in melee range of something.

▶▶▶ **Adrenaline Rush**

The second activation of **Counterblow**. It does give a nice little chunk of adrenaline so it is possible to use it for that purpose only.

Pommel Bash

This skill goes out VERY fast. It's a great outplay tool as its speed allows you to daze people out of all kinds of telegraphed skills, even stopping people mid air during leaps. Generally good to save it to interrupt a heal.

Shield:

Shield Bash

Your main tool to setup **Skull Cracks**, try to save it for that.

Shield Stance

Pretty long cooldown on this one so you want to try to save it to block skills that lasts a while (ie **Hundred Blades**, **Rapid Fire**, **Whirling Wrath**, **Life Transfer**).

Greatsword:

BURST Arcing Slice

One of my favorite warrior skills since its rework. Can be used very loosely for very high fury uptime or can be saved for a big damage spike when an opponent reaches < 50% health. I often cancel **Hundred Blades** into this near the end to get maximum damage.

Auto-attack

The chain has OK damage. I mainly try to use it to proc the **Sigil of Incapacitation**.

Hundred Blades

This is where you get most of your damage in after a long **Skull Crack**.

Whirlwind Attack

One of the main reasons why you want **X Forceful Greatsword**. Having high uptime on this skill makes a world of difference. Use it to evade, use it for max damage combos, use it to kite, use it to gap-close. Try to stand as close as possible to your target and spin through them so it'll hit more times.

Bladetrail

OK damage and your only range counterpressure tool. I like to engage with it if possible.

Rush

Thanks to the rework, this ability is now not a complete joke! It is now reliable, does good damage and often forces a free dodge.

Heal:

Healing Signet

One of the best healing skills in the game by a long shot. Absolutely necessary.

Utilities:

Berserker Stance

Since the adrenaline change, this skill can actually be used purely to build adrenaline which is a great way to recover if you miss a **Skull Crack**. This skill is always on my skillbar.

Bull's Charge

This comes down to personal preference. The skill is very buggy and doesn't work all the time but I still like to use it.

Balanced Stance

Very necessary. You need at least one stunbreaker and this is the best access to stability warrior has.

Alternative Utilities:

Endure Pain

Always a viable skill that can buy you precious seconds to get in range of your target or give you free pressure.

Signet of Stamina

A lot of people sleep on this skill but it's actually quite effective.

Elite:

Signet of Rage

The obvious choice in most cases. Good boost of damage on quite a low cooldown.

Gameplay

Main Combo

The main combo with a full adrenaline **Skull Crack** is:

[Setup] > Skull Crack > Weapon Switch > Hundred Blades > Cancel before the final attack of HB into Arcing Slice > Whirlwind Attack through target

If you do a 2 adrenaline bars **Skull Crack**, you have to cancel **Hundred Blades** after 4 or 5 attacks.

Skull Crack Setups

The most common one is with **Shield Bash** or **Bull's Charge**, like this:

Shield Bash/Bull's Charge > 1 mace Auto-Attack > Weapon Switch > Hundred Blades > Cancel before the final attack of HB into Arcing Slice > Whirlwind Attack through target

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b7ldLhnsI9k>

However, this is a setup that works on paper. You also have to know *how* to land that setup, so like a setup to setup a setup! It's imperative that you count your opponent's

dodges and that you learn how to predict dodges and bait them. A great trick is to use **Pommel Bash** which dazes for 1 second. After getting dazed, you can almost always expect the opponent to dodge, thus getting an easy **Shield Bash** into **Skull Crack**. General game knowledge is key to predicting and reading your opponents. Mace/shield rewards good mechanics and knowledge because, if played well, it has a solution to most things people can throw at you.

Matchups

WvW is a very volatile environment compared to sPvP. That's why you can only talk about matchups in a very broad sense of the term. People run all kinds of builds that are either good or bad, meta or non-meta. You'll meet players of all skill levels and with different gear setups and buffs. Adding all of those together makes it impossible to be 100% accurate when talking about matchups. Here I will discuss about what my take is behind every matchup assuming equal skill level between you and your opponent, but your experience may vary greatly. Also, I believe warrior is in the lower tier when it comes to fighting a lot of meta WvW roaming builds out there.

Difficulty:

■ Very Easy ■ Easy ■ Even ■ Hard ■ Very Hard

Elementalist

■ ■ Dagger/Dagger:

Can outburst you and outsustain you if you're not careful. Be aware of what attunement they are in. If you block **Burning Speed** you can easily counterpressure for a while. Look at their buffs and see if they are running **Signet of Restoration**. If not, they are probably running **Ether Renewal** so you should save a stun for that. Depending on their trait setup, D/D eles can have absurd protection uptime so they are very hard to burst down, but with key **Skull Cracks** it's possible to bring them down.

■ ■ Scepter/Dagger:

I flagged this matchup as easy but really it can come down to luck. You should have enough blocks and evades that you don't need to rely on luck to dodge air attunement burst, but it can happen that you get caught completely by surprise by it. It's tempting to unleash all your damage on them when you get close

because of how squishy they are, but you have to make sure they blow a cooldown like **Mist Form** before doing so otherwise they might turn around and 1 shot you back.

■ ■ **Scepter/Focus:**

Very similar to scepter/dagger but with a bit more survivability, so that means they have more opportunities to turn around and 1 shot you. Again, the damage is very hard to predict because of **XII Fresh Air**, so it can be a complete 50/50.



Warrior

■ ■ ■ ■ **Power:**

I'm grouping all power warrior builds into one because it all comes down to what utilities they are running. If they run only 1 stability, it's OK. If they run double stability, it's pretty hard. If they run double stability AND **Endure Pain**, you're in for a very long fight where you have to play near perfectly. I suggest changing your utilities around depending on what kind of warrior you're fighting.

■ **Condi:**

The primary damage comes from bleeds and burning, so save your condi cleanse (ie **IX Cleansing Ire**) for when they stack a lot of bleeds on you and try not to stand in the fire field. Reflecting **Pinned Down** will make their life very difficult. All around it's not a hard matchup.



Guardian

■ ■ **Medi Guard:**

This build is extremely strong against anything melee. It's very hard to stay anywhere near a medi guard and their burst can be hard to predict. What really counters you is the amount of blocks and blinds at their disposal. Having tankier gear will help a lot against the burst and make the matchup more forgiving. Try staying just outside 600 range most of the time. Blocking **Leap of Faith** is quite crucial for you to be able to counterpressure at all. If you want to be a bit cheesy, swap one of your utilities for **Signet of Might** which you can pop to stun their heal if you're fast enough, but not super reliable.



Necromancer

■ ■ **Condi**

There are a lot of variations of condi necros out there, so it's hard to say for sure how to counter it. Without knowing what utilities they are running, it's a bit tough to predict them. Try to use **Berserker Stance** and **Balanced Stance** well because if they are running **Corrupt Boon** and strip you of your stability into a fear chain, it can mean a fast death. Try not to panic if you get feared and see what they do after they fear you. A good idea is to not waste your damage while they are in Death Shroud because it will easily eat a full **Hundred Blades**.

■ **Power**

In general not very hard because they can't really kite you too well. All you have to be worried about is the Death Shroud **Life Blast** which can easily crit you for 4-5k damage. Just mitigate as much of their Death Shroud damage as possible and when they get out of it you have about 6-10 seconds to counterpressure very hard. Make sure you don't spend that time chilled, fear or crippled either. If they **Lich Form**, you will need to run for the duration of it.



Engineer

■ ■ **Condi**

Engineer also has a lot of build variations that you can encounter, it's very hard to predict what you'll be up against. You kind of have to react to what they're throwing at you. Some builds are more fitted to deal with warriors than others. If they're in pistol, try reflecting as much as possible to get in range. Most of the grenades aren't too hard to dodge and you can tell which one you want to dodge (mainly the white flashy ones, the icy ones and the green ones). If they're in bomb mode, that's when you want to pop something like **Berserker Stance** and try to stick to them as much as you can and get a good combo in. What is really annoying is how strong **Healing Turret** is and how much of your damage it will heal back and how often it's up. It's also very hard to stun the heal effectively.



■ ■ **Power**

There are some really wacky power engi builds out there but most of them are one-trick-ponies and easy to deal with as long as you don't get hit by key skills. Save a stunbreaker for **Overcharged Shot** if they run rifle because it's impossible to dodge it on reaction. Try as much as possible not to fight under a **Supply Crate** and it shouldn't be hard.



■ ■ **Celestial**

Depending if the engi is running **Elixir S** or not, the difficulty can vary. Celestial loses to big damage so every **Skull Crack** into **Hundred Blades** will hurt. With -% condition duration food it's not very hard to stick to them either. So unless you're completely out of cooldowns, you should be able to have almost 100% pressure uptime on them, as long as you don't get combo'd after an **Overcharged Shot**.

Ranger

Power

This build is a pretty big counter to power ranger. **V Missile Deflection** not only makes their longbow useless but it works against them. Ranger greatsword skills are mostly very telegraphed and easy to dodge. If they **Lightning Reflex** out of your stun, just chase it with a **Bull's Charge**. Don't sleep on the greatsword damage though, as it can easily take off over half of your life in one **Maul** or one **Counterattack**.

Condi

I've seen a few different condi ranger builds, some of them manageable, some of them a complete counter to this build. If you run into the **Entangle + Runes of the Krait** Sword/Torch, Axe/Dagger variant, you will most likely lose very fast if the ranger knows what he's doing. In this case, you can run **Signet of Stamina** instead of **Bull's Charge** and **X Mobile Strikes** instead of **VIII Destruction of the Empowered**. Save **Signet of Stamina** for the **Entangle** and you should do OK. Some of the more manageable ones are just very very hard to kill. The only way to kill them is to stun their **Troll Unguent**. If you can't do it, you'll have to start all over again until you get them low enough that they'll use it again. A good trick to cleanse condis when they kite you is to use a burst skill on their pet to proc **IX Cleansing Ire**.

Thief

Dagger/Pistol

I think this matchup is a little bit in the thief's favor (assuming the thief is a very competent one). You have the ability to mitigate a lot of the thief's damage through blocks, but all the thief needs is 1 good backstab, just like all you need is 1 good stun. So try not to panic even if you get backstabbed or jumped on by a D/P thief, just keep in mind that all you need is 1 good stun. The reason why I

say D/P is a bit in the thief's favor is that a good thief will purposely bait your **Berserker Stance** with blinds, kite you for the duration of it, then go back to blinding you non-stop.

■ **Sword/Dagger**

Mostly the same as D/P but a bit easier since if you block only 1 **Flanking Strike**, the thief will be at a big disadvantage. Be aware of when they cast **Infiltrator Strike** and from where so you know where they'll be when they teleport back so you can keep the pressure going. S/D also has a ton of evades through the **Acrobatics** trait line, so it's very easy to miss a **Skull Crack** on them.

■ **Pistol/Dagger Condi**

Very obnoxious build to deal with as a melee class without teleports. The fact that dire gear exists makes them hard to kill on top of it. Reflecting their **Sneak Attack** is very important to survive the fight. Dodging or blocking a **Shadow Strike** when you get in melee range can drain their initiative very fast. Overall, very difficult matchup.



Mesmer

■ **Shatter**

Clones in general are just very strong against warrior by design. Shatter mesmers can be very hard to deal with because of that. They have extremely high damage potential (easily 100% to 0% you in under 3 seconds) and making mistakes against them is very punishing. The best thing you can do is try to predict where the real mesmer is and where he's trying to go at all times and if you play well enough, it's not an unwinnable matchup because of how glassy these mesmers are sometimes.

■ **PU Condi**

This build is one of the ultimate counters to warrior. All the mesmer has to do is run in circles and the clones will kill you very fast. It's not a matchup you generally want to fight against.

Videos & Links

Official forums discussion about mace/shield

<https://forum-en.guildwars2.com/forum/professions/warrior/My-take-on-the-Skullcracker-build/>

Gameplay videos by [Rx] Noziro

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7tMugRdNOio>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EjaUQIBeZvI>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mK4HMnKIt30>

Shin's Top 10 Tips for New Roamers in GW2

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZIS1IO2BqyU>

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