

Braindead Black Prior Guide for Season Pass Owners and 200 IQ Gamers

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Hello all. This is a guide similar to my guide on Warden that is currently sitting in the resources tab. I hope that I can tell you how to play one of the most braindead and gormless characters ever added to For Honor, the Black Prior, also known as Vortiger. As Black Prior is very new, information that I'm iffy about is marked with an asterisk.

Vortiger's Stats:

Core stats:

- HP: 130 (oof. That's kinda small.)
- Stamina: 120
- Sprint speed: Feels faster than Shugoki but not as fast as Warden.
- As a Heavy, he gains renown faster through assists, defending points, and assisting and reviving allies.

Attacks:

- Black Prior's opening lights are 500ms, and deal 15 damage. The start-up to the attack has superior block frames. If Black Prior blocks an attack during the start up of his light attacks, his light attack becomes unblockable, and deals 20 damage.
- Black Prior's follow-up lights are also 500ms, and deal 20 damage. Black Prior's follow-up lights are the lights used after a shield bash, so that he can't endlessly chain bash into light attack forever.
- Black Prior's initial side heavies are 800ms, and deal 30 damage. They have no special properties, but it's worth noting here that all of Black Prior's side attacks have decent horizontal hit boxes, making them useful for both minion clearing and also hitting targets out of lock.
- Black Prior's initial top heavy is 900ms, and deals 35 damage. It has no special property, and cannot be landed on an opponent who has been guard broken. Due to the amount of ending lag on his throws, this attack is useless for anything other than baiting out a light parry attempt.
- Black Prior's chain heavies on all sides are 800ms, and deal 40 damage. They are also undodgeable, making them useful for hitting opponents that are trying to dodge the post-light attack bash.

- Black Prior has a forward dash heavy that comes in at 600ms and deals 20 damage. It has superior block for the start up, becoming unblockable. It lacks the undodgeable property, and thus can't catch rolls or dashes at all. It's quite bad.
- Black Prior's chains are:
 - L>L
 - L>H
 - H>H
 - H>L

Black Prior's basic attacks are very good, and deal a lot of damage, but his chains are simple. It's worth noting that he has basically 0 recovery on any of these attacks, since he can cancel the recovery of any light or heavy with his Bulwark Stance.

Bashes:

- Black Prior has a short range bash from his forward dodge that is 500ms. It guarantees a light follow-up and deals stamina damage. It can be delayed, but has poor tracking, meaning it can be dodged very easily with a bit of practice. The bash deals very high damage for a bash, and is safe on an opponent dodging. This bash is the same bash that can be used after a light attack. Unlike every other character with a bash after a light attack, it's still 500ms, and since it's safe, is a very good option for trying to guarantee the full 35 damage light combo in duels.
- Black Prior can soft-feint a heavy attack for another bash, coming in at 700ms. It has a longer range than his forward dash bash and his zone attack, but is very reactable. It also only guarantees a light attack follow up. This attack exists to mind-game opponents who try to parry every heavy thrown at them, but since this bash is slow, it is easily avoided with a bit of practice. It, unlike his forward dash bash, is unsafe on dodge*.
- Black Prior's zone attack is a 600ms bash that deals no damage :). It guarantees a 20 damage light attack and is notable in that it's got decent horizontal tracking and doesn't cost half a stamina bar to use. It's ok.
- All of Black Prior's bashes cost 15 stamina and drain 20.

Bulwark Stance:

- By pressing down on the control stick, you enter Black Prior's version of all block: Bulwark Stance. You can smoothly transition to Bulwark Stance from any attack's recovery, but not bashes, and from blockstun, either from a heavy attack or a light one.

- Bulwark Stance, unlike every other form of all-block in For Honor, lacks enhanced guard. Enemy heavies that impact your guard will continue the chain, and you cannot punish enemies who do swing a heavy and you block it with Bulwark Stance.
- Bulwark Stance doesn't change Black Prior's locked on movement speed that much. He's shockingly speedy compared to Warlord's lack of movement, and Conqueror's very slow movement while in all-block.
- Bulwark Stance has 200ms of start up and 100ms of recovery when you cancel it, making it difficult to Bulwark Counter lights on reaction. It can still be done on read, though.
- Bulwark Stance leaves you vulnerable to guardbreak. It can be let go fast enough to catch most feints.
- From Bulwark Stance, you have two options. The first is the unblockable heavy. The unblockable heavy from Bulwark Stance is 800ms and deals 30 damage. It has decent horizontal tracking, but is slow. Due to the ability to cancel any attack's recovery into this attack, it basically acts as Black Prior's real chain finisher, from every angle. It also only comes from Black Prior's right side. It has a very wide hitbox, like his other attacks, but the purely horizontal nature of the attack and it being a somewhat fast unblockable makes it useful in teamfights.
- The second option from Bulwark Stance is the Bulwark Counter. Bulwark counter has 200ms of start up, lasts for 300ms, and has 500ms of recovery. If any offensive action that isn't a guardbreak hits you during the 300ms Bulwark Counter is active, you flip the enemy over your head and immediately execute an unblockable heavy that deals 30 damage. Like the unblockable heavy attack, it always comes from the right, but since the person you're locked onto can't parry while being flipped, this version isn't parryable. It also has a very wide hitbox, making it a useful tool in teamfights and ganks, should the enemy try to attack with a wide hitting attack, like Jiang Jun heavies or Nobushi's zone attack.
- Bulwark stance costs 10 stamina to enter, but doesn't cost any stamina to maintain. Instead, each attack that you block costs stamina to block. This synergizes well with his second feat, as well as makes his ganking playstyle very obvious.

Black Prior's Playstyle:

Black Prior has a pretty defensive playstyle, similar to Conqueror, with his fast shield bash and powerful all-block, but unlike Conqueror, he lacks the option selects that make Conqueror a defensive powerhouse, and, in exchange, has a much more varied offense that doesn't involve "Dash forward and press the Square button." With easy access to a

fast unblockable, a variety of bashes with different timings, as well as decent lights and heavies, he's a very well designed character that's fun to play.

1v1s

His playstyle in 1v1s involves reversing and applying pressure with his full block and his bashes and unblockables. Since he has many mix-ups with different timings and counters. On paper, nothing he does is uncounterable, but he has many tools that can be used from neutral to apply pressure.

Broken! Black Prior's currently, and obviously, broken. His bash is very safe for it's speed and the amount of damage it does, even if it can be dodged easily at a single timing. His other tools are mediocre by comparison, and what should be a character with many equally viable options at all times is a character with one starkly overpowered option over every other options. He can dodge to guard in any direction with no delay, and his post-light shield bash is still too fast to dodge if you correct your guard after getting hit. They recently removed his ability to guarantee a shield bash on out of stamina opponents and after his crushing counter, but he's still a collection of broken offensive and defensive tools that put him above pretty much every other character in the game. Lastly, if you correct your guard *after* being hit by a Black Prior light, you cannot dodge the shield bash due to the guard switch delay, and unlike previous iterations of this bug, this even effects Assassins, Conqueror, Kensei, Tiandi, Shaolin, Valkyrie, and other Black Priors.

Personal Tier List Placement for 1v1s: S tier. He's currently one of the best duel characters in the game, and the lowest I'd put him, if his broken stuff were fixed, would be low S tier.

2v2s

He plays a similar role to Conqueror in that you exist to punish attacks from people who aren't locked on to you. However, his lack of range and the fact that Bulwark Counter is a very easily read and counterable move in 2v2 leads him to being just a bit worse than Conqueror at defending and enabling his teammates. This is assuming 2v2 tournament rules where there isn't any revenge.

Personal Tier List Placement for Tourney 2v2s: Mid-low A-tier. He's not a bad pick, but Conqueror outshines him in nearly every defensive aspect, and he can't protect his teammates as effectively as Conqueror.

4v4s

His 4v4 role is weird. He doesn't have the movement speed to roam adequately. His perks are geared towards holding a point (read: bitch duty). His minion clear is above average. His teamfight presence is good but his gank potential is poor. His feats are geared towards assisting teammates by giving them shields or by removing enemy shields. His chase potential doesn't exist. He really shines in outnumbered fights due to his low recoveries and insane amount of sustain, especially once he gets to his Tier 3 feat. His role is roaming and he gets big advantages when holding down a point. If your team has a designated mid-clearer like Kensei, Nobushi, or Jiang Jun, you don't need to hang out in mid between fights, but if you don't, you're good enough at clearing mid that you shouldn't avoid it. Just don't glue your ass to point A when your teammates are getting picked off one-by-one. You aren't so good at ganks that winning a 1v4 is anything more than a fluke.

Personal Tier List Placement for 4v4s: Mid-low A tier. He's not outstandingly overpowered like JJ or Nobushi but he's not an active detriment to your team's success like some of the other heroes in the game.

General Notes:

Black Prior is a very uncomplicated character where the skill in playing him is *supposed* to lay in getting an idea as to how his multitude of tools works and how to use them to apply pressure or beat defense, even if none of them *should* be overpowered in comparison to the rest. The problem is that he's got a fundamentally broken offensive tool in a safe, 500ms, 20 damage shield bash with admittedly poor range, and a fundamentally broken defensive tool in his dodge-based guard switching having 0ms of delay between dodge and block. Fixing these would make him a balanced hero with a clear weakness that should honestly be compensated for if these were nerfed, like by making his dash forward heavy undodgeable, and increasing the range on his normal, dodge-forward shield bash just a bit to compensate, because this character feels like the T-Rex arms version of T-Rex arms.

Feats

Black Prior has a good set of feats that really make him feel like a fully completed character rather than one with a bunch of bonuses that don't really synergize that well. Unlike my Warden guide, I think there's only two good set-ups for Black Prior, which I'll detail below:

Best Set-up:

- Tier 1: Sinister Shield: Sinister Shield grants a 45 HP shield to your ally at the cost of 25 HP. It's very good for turning losing ganks into won teamfights when you do arrive, and synergizes well with his tier 2 and tier 3.
- Tier 2: Healing Ward: This is Black Prior's best healing feat, a passive that activates when you enter Bulwark Stance, allowing you to heal HP at a rate of 5 HP per second. It shouldn't have to explain why this is the best in slot for tier 2 and outpaces both Doom Banner and Inspire, both of which are lackluster since Black Prior's biggest strength in 4s is his sustain, which he needs his feats to be good at.
- Tier 3: Tough As Nails: The wording on this feat is poor and I hope it becomes much more common knowledge that this feat is always active when unlocked, not only active while you are out-of-lock. Anyway, you get an additional 35HP. Synergizes well with Sinister Shield and his perks to make him very tanky, now that he has a solid 165 HP before perks.
 - Tier 3 Alternative: Oath Breaker: Remove all shields from an opponent and prevent them from gaining shields for 10 seconds. This feat fucks with people in revenge but the cooldown is too long to nudge it past Tough As Nails. That said, there's still a lot of use in Oath Breaker that makes it a not-totally-bad option.
- Tier 4: Morale Booster: Morale Booster gives all allies currently alive an additional 50% damage buff until either they die, you die, or for 30 seconds. Very useful for closing out the game or for helping teammates win fights that they may be struggling with.
 - Tier 4 Alternative: Umbral Shelter: For a brief time, you give off 3 waves of 100 HP shields that don't stack with other shields. This is only useful if you're running with a Warden, Tiandi, or another Black Prior that already has Morale Booster, but following up Morale Booster with another one is still advantageous. This feat has a shorter shield duration than Phalanx, so if you have a Centurion on your team or a JJ with Phalanx, running this perk is pointless, since I doubt you'll lose 100 HP so fast that the pulsating waves are necessary. That said, it still has use if you want to use it, or if someone else on your team is running Morale Booster. Also unlike Phalanx, it only affects allies within 16 meters of you that pass a Line-of-Sight check.

Perks

Finally, a character with some interesting perk choices, since Black Prior's intended role is unclear, he can actually benefit from some perks that are useless on the other

heavies. Here's my recommended set-up, with some alternatives for changes. Bold Perks are the best choices, but other options are presented for differing playstyles.

- Perk 1: Remedy or **Bulk Up**. 10 HP on kill is never bad, and since this is his default perk, you're free to stick with this up until the higher levels where you'll start getting the gear with enough perk points to run 2 or 3 perks at the same time. Bulk Up is useful for making you borderline unkillable regardless of how you play, since it's a +16 to HP for each renown level you gain. Just hope none of your perks get locked, or else you might be waiting for the HP boost longer than you'd expect. Pairs up well with Tough-As-Nails since your total HP after that feat and this perk will be 177, up to 181 if you get your 4th feat.
- Perk 2: **Bastion** or Feline Agility: The 10% defense granted on a point makes him that much harder to kill when he's on the point, and combined with his excellent survivability perk Tough-As-Nails and his decent ability to win when being ganked, bitch duty becomes a bit easier, especially in outnumbered scenarios. If you prefer the roaming playstyle or mid-lane, Feline Agility lets you make up for the primary part of Black Prior's kit that makes roaming impractical: his slow move speed.
- Perk 3: **Vengeful Barrier**: There are other interesting perks you can experiment with here, but Vengeful Barrier making you borderline unkillable against uncoordinated foes, especially if you're good at blocking opponents out of lock, is just too good to pass up, even for the neat perks like Endurance, or Rising Sun.

Executions:

He only has 4 at the time of writing. Use all of them. The best is the one that's default mapped to your Square button: Limb Remover, for it's incredibly fast kill time and decent HP recovery.

Punishes:

- Guard Break: Side heavy - 30 damage.
- Heavy Parry: Dash-bash into light - 20 damage + 20 stamina damage.
- Light Parry: Top heavy - 35 damage.
- Throw: DO NOT THROW ANYONE WITH STAMINA AS BLACK PRIOR. His throw recovery is so long that he has basically no consistent wall punish.
- OOS Parry: Side heavy into any heavy - 70 damage.
- OOS Throw: Side light into any heavy - 55 damage. If your angle is top, you'll always whiff the light, even if you OOS throw them into a wall. Unlock if you forget to switch your guard angle mid-GB.

Final Notes:

This character is pretty braindead to play and is perfect for people who bought the season pass or people with double digit IQs, a Venn diagram that certainly has a wide degree of overlap. That said, I quite like him, he's fun to play and effective enough at most points in the game that playing as him isn't a complete ass pain if you mainly 2v2 or play Breach or Dominion.