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EK Guide: Raiding Basics

Introduction

You've decided you want to raid - that's great news! Raiding can be an incredibly rewarding experience but it can also be a big challenge. We hope this guide will help you get off to a great start!

What are your goals for raiding? This is an important question to consider when starting. It plays a big part in finding a raid team. Also, it plays a part to determine the level of raiding you desire.

If you're mainly looking to finish the storyline of the raid tier, and aren't worried about loot, Looking For Raid (LFR) will accomplish your goal. As far as raid difficulty, LFR is very minimal, but it does come with its challenges based on the people that join.

If you're looking for some challenge, but find you are more interested the social aspect, and just being part of a raid, then Normal difficulty is a good choice. Normal has a few mechanics you need to be aware of regardless of your specialization, but it is not usually too punishing and most raids can survive if people in the raid die. Normal tier raiding can be a very laid back, and a fun experience that can give you nice gear and good memories.

If you're looking for a good challenge that requires good raid awareness, and good coordination between raid members, then Heroic difficulty can provide that challenge. There are more mechanics that can many times instant kill you, and it becomes a lot harder for a raid team to succeed when players start to die regardless of spec. Good communication, knowledge of the fights, and solid raid awareness are excellent tools when you step into Heroic content. Proper use of your personal cooldowns for both healing and damage reduction become very important when raiding in the Heroic tier.

If you're looking to tackle the hardest level of raid difficulty, then Mythic is where it's at. There are many things to take into account when you want to get into Mythic content. There are many different types of Mythic raid teams. You have the most highly competitive teams that want to clear the raid tier as fast as possible, typically going for World rankings and Realm First achievements. You have the teams that want to earn the Cutting Edge achievement that is available until a new raid tier is released. And then there are teams that want to progress as far as they can in Mythic content but are not going to push beyond their players' comfort level. With Mythic content it can be challenging to gain entry into some guilds as they may have require specific gear, voice communication, proof of experience, combat logs proving your abilities, and more.

In all levels of raiding you're going to have teams with differing levels of focus and accountability. It may take time to find a team that is right for you. Just be patient, and communicate with the guild's leadership before and after joining to ensure you have the same goals.

Raid Awareness

What is Raid Awareness? Sure part of it is not standing in fire, or knowing when to run to avoid an instant death mechanic. Those are the easy parts though. Being raid aware includes many other things, such as knowing when to use a cooldown to reduce personal damage, being aware of whether you are in range of healers, knowing when there is an add attacking you which tank to run it to, prioritizing the right targets, or knowing if and when to interrupt a spellcast. Many of these scenarios become easy through experience, others through communication with your team, and some through research outside of the raid. Raid Awareness is a skill and everyone learns skills in different ways. You need to determine what works best for you to learn this skill.

DPS

Always remember that a Living DPS can do more damage than a Dead DPS. When beginning to raid and/or learning a new fight it is better to learn how to survive the fights than to lead the meter for the first 2mins of a fight but be dead the remaining 3mins ending on the bottom. As you become familiar with the fights your DPS will rise, it always does, both from downing bosses and getting gear and learning the best ways to utilize your class's tool kit.

Tanks

The point of being a tank is to take the heat off the DPS and the healers. There are a number of fights where bosses do frontal damage that needs to be faced away from the group or adds that need to be picked-up and tanked. It is very important these things happen when they need to or the raid will wipe. Thankfully, in a raid setting, you aren't solely responsible for handling everything. You need to communicate effectively with your co-tank to make sure you both understand when you need to trade taunt the boss and who is picking up the adds. You also need to plan out when to use your damage mitigation abilities and don't be shy about asking a healer for help by calling for an external.

Healers

As a healer your main job is to keep everyone alive. To be a good healer you must know your spells and cooldowns thoroughly. You need to understand what your class brings to the table i.e., an aoe stun or an interrupt as well as when and where to use them. A good rule of thumb to follow as a healer is to always be casting something. Whether it's a healing spell or a dps spell, be doing something. Knowledge of fight mechanics helps when thinking about healing as well.

In a raid setting it is good to coordinate healing cooldowns with other healers to maximize the team's ability to cover multiple hard hitting abilities done by raid mechanics. Overlapping of cooldowns happens when coordination of the cooldowns fail and this can lead to wipes. Remember it's a team effort.

Healing has changed over the years and in Legion players don't need to be at max health all the time, just have enough health to be able to survive incoming damage. But this is tricky if they are inexperienced with fight mechanics and take excessive damage due to "standing in fire."

If you enjoy playing a healer make sure to find someone that plays your class to get any tips or tricks that they have learned. Having a healing addon like clique, vuhdo or healbot helps as well.

Raid Composition

You are not expected to know every class in the game and how they play. This skill takes years to acquire and abilities are constantly changing as Blizzard makes adjustments to the different classes. It is helpful, however, if you pay attention to what some of the more useful abilities are and which classes have them. For example, if a tank dies, who can fill in and taunt the boss if needed? Which classes have higher mobility? Which classes can resurrect dead players while in combat? Which classes can negate damage temporarily? If you play a class with a utility such as this, your raid leader may call on your for one of these abilities in a pinch and you need to be ready to step up to the plate with very little notice.

Think Ahead

Good raiders stay ahead of the fight. They stay aware of what mechanic is coming next. You can do this by keeping an eye on the timers that DBM displays on your screen. Also, be thinking, if I have to move, where will I go? Some mechanics require you stack with people, others require you to distance yourself. What is a safe path you can take without hurting others?

Conduct/Etiquette

Conduct and Etiquette as a whole are going to vary between raid teams. Some teams are very professional and want little to no unrelated talking in raid and other teams are like Spring Break in Cancún and anything goes, and obviously the vast majority fit somewhere in the middle. Generally you want to try to be polite, positive, and professional and then adapt from there to fit each individual team.

Raiding can be challenging, that is a big part of the allure to being a raider, that rush of excitement when you finally down that boss that has been a massive wall to you and

your team. Always remember that if you wipe you're not the only person that may feel frustrated whether it's the first time you wiped or the 50th time on the same boss. Everyone reacts differently to frustration, but try to stay positive, stay focused, and keep communication going.

Post out

If you can't make it to raid, let your team leadership know well ahead of time. Most teams have a forum thread or discord channel where you should post. Giving your raid lead an early head's up allows them to plan the raid composition accordingly and ask for help if it is needed. Last minute post outs, or worse, no shows, can set the raid back, especially in mythic where 20 people are required to progress on the fights

AFKs

Don't go afk if there isn't a break timer up. When you aren't there and ready to pull, everyone else in the raid is waiting on you, and that's just not cool.

Preparation

No matter the personality of your raid team, it is your job to show up ready to raid.

Learn the fights

There is a lot of information available about each fight, make sure you look it up. Many people make videos. Type the name of the boss in google, and you will bring up lots of resources to review. Right now some good sources are Fatboss, Line-of-Sight gaming and Signs of Kelari.

Read the Dungeon Journal in game. Start with the overview and familiarize yourself with the overall fight description. Then go to the abilities tab. Every ability cast by the boss and its minions is described there. Familiarize yourself with the abilities, make special notes of the ones that affect you. Plan to come back and read this again once you've seen the fight a couple of times. While you're in the Dungeon Journal, review the loot and figure out what you want to spend your bonus rolls on.

Consumables

Being ready to raid means coming with all the necessary consumables. Some teams help you with these, others do not, but when it comes time to pull trash, you should have enough of everything in your bag for the night. This means enough of your best food to last the raid time, enough flasks for your hours of raiding, and enough potions (for dps, 2 per pull). You should also have enough health potions for the entire time - 1 per pull. For most people, warlock healthstones are not as beneficial as healing potions. Some teams also require augment runes. And don't forget to have your gear gemmed and enchanted prior to raid.

Personal Readiness

Get your drinks and food ready and whatever else you need to be comfortable for the time you raid.

Addons

Great raiders use a lot of different tools, but there are a couple that are universal. This section will describe some addons no raider should be without.

To get your addons, go to <https://www.curse.com/>. Here you can download an app for your computer that makes it easy to manage all of your addons in one place. You can also use their web browser version.

DBM: Deadly Boss Mods is by far the most popular addon on Curse. It provides timers and alerts for every raid boss. Every. Single. Raid. Boss! You just download it and it works. This addon is crucial to your raid awareness.

GTFO: By far the most annoying addon, GTFO honks, buzzes, beeps and yells at you for standing in stuff. This is an indispensable tool for a new raider. However, your raid awareness goal should be to never hear it.

Skada/Details: Skada, Details, or other meter-type addons track you and your group's damage or healing output, as well as other things like damage taken, interrupts, etc. Meters are great for a simple self-evaluation for how efficiently you can execute your rotations (with logs providing a more detailed look).

Weak Auras 2: While Weak Auras can be a little intimidating to learn at first, it is an amazing resource that can do a variety of things, from giving you simple visual or audio reminders that an ability is off cooldown, to prompting you to use a defensive cooldown if your health falls too low. The best part of weak auras are that they are sharable, so if you create one to track an important boss ability, you can share it with your raid as well!

[Wago.io](https://wago.io) is an amazing resource for pre-made Weak Auras ranging from class specific to boss specific to item specific.

Clique: More than just an addon to handle simple mouseover macros, Clique (or a raid frame addon like Vuhdo) will allow you to set mouseover spell bindings that take effect regardless of your normal keybinding. This is especially useful for healers, as you can keep the boss targeted, casting damaging spells, and then mouse over a friendly raid frame and cast a healing spell using that same keybinding! All of this could be accomplished with some macro knowledge as well, but Clique can make it that little bit easier to get everything set just the way you like it.

Don't forget to update your addons before you raid!

Logs

Logs are a great way to track your personal progress and look for places where you can improve. For example, you can use logs to find out how you died and determine a better way to avoid that death in the future. As a tank or healer perhaps you can better plan a cooldown rotation or as a DPS you can plan where you need to be moving during a particular portion of a fight.

You can also use Logs to see where you stack up against other people playing your class. You may have already heard people talking about their “parses” but how can you use this information to help improve? By comparing your rotation and your talents to another player who is performing better, you may gain some insight into why one ability should be cast more often than another or which talents work best against which bosses.

Additional Resources:

Class / Spec / Role -

[Icy Veins](#)

[Simcraft](#)

Class Discord Servers: Death Knight: <https://goo.gl/jNsnAD>
Demon Hunter: <https://goo.gl/yDLIMY>
Druid: <https://goo.gl/VoRO6a>
Hunter: <https://goo.gl/lJdmwp>
Paladin: <https://goo.gl/hE2n1a>
Priest: <https://goo.gl/ScSjl6>
Rogue: <https://goo.gl/UYsb9b>
Shaman: <https://goo.gl/u7t7Wo>
Mage: <https://goo.gl/EcMW0x>
Monk: <https://goo.gl/weajbt>
Warlock: <https://goo.gl/sJCfF9>
Warrior: <https://goo.gl/jSMjpB>

Raid Specific -

[FatbossTV](#)

[Line of Sight Gaming](#)

Lastly... HAVE FUN! You may be in a raiding team, but you should still have fun playing a game. If we take the fun out of it it becomes a chore and no one wants that. Take time and really enjoy not just the game, but playing with your raid team and the guild around you.