

MOMO'S

3.X NINJA GUIDE

[Youtube](#)



Introduction

I would like to share with all of you, the information I've gathered about Ninja so far, and also my thoughts & opinions on how to play the job as I do. This guide will only cover the PvE aspect of Ninja since I have no expertise in PvP.

Everything I do is from the process of my radical thinking or through thorough discussions with other top tier players. Keep in mind this guide is aimed at Ninjas already at level 60 and have some understanding on the fundamentals of Ninja and melee jobs in general.

We will be covering ~~basic knowledge such as abilities and mudras and what they do~~ but that will not be the main focus. I will try to focus on things not spoken about much in other guides, such as if you only had one GCD left to use on the boss, trick attack optimizations, multidotting, and maximizing your GCDs under Blood for Blood. Towards the end of the guide, I will compare each melee class and give me opinions on each.

At the end of this guide I hope this guide will improve your overall DPS and understanding of Ninja. If you see a mistake, let me know and i'll write an annotation for it. The text version of the guide will be in the description so make sure you read it!

Ninja is a melee DPS job released during patch 2.4. Once you have a level 30 Rogue and level 15 Pugilist you can become a Ninja. Ninja has a complex weave of skills to maximize their DPS and after adding mudras to the equation, puts the class at a pretty high skill cap.

Ninja played optimally has a very high DPS ceiling, comparable to Dragoons. A big reason Ninjas are preferred over other melees is because of them being unrivaled when it comes to utility. They bring Goad, Trick Attack, Shadewalker and Smoke Screen, Slashing Debuff, Mantra, and a stun/silence making them sort of all-stars in teams where they can utilize their skill set.

Having played MNK, DRG and NIN in a high level raid environment, out of the three melee Ninjas are the most flexible. They have the easiest time adjusting to mechanics and certain situations like changing between targets. They also have the easiest time adjusting to downtime mechanics since the main buff they have to keep maintained is on a 70 second duration that you can refresh every 3 GCDs for 30 seconds. In top tier teams a Ninja can make or break them depending on how they utilize the class.

Was fun :) <3

- Momo Kun/Kyun/Sama

This guide will cover the following topics in order

1. Abilities

2. Openers and Rotations

> Aeolian Edge Opener

> Shadow Fang Opener

> Mutilate Opener

> High SKS/Fey Wind Opener

- > **Priority Rotation**

3. DPS Optimization

- > **Cooldown Alignment**
- > **Trick Attacks**
- > **Multidotting**
- > **Raiton vs Fuma**
- > **Increasing Uptime (Shukuchi)**
- > **Synergizing with Party Members**
- > **Advanced DPS optimizations**

5. Utility Optimization

- > **Shadewalker and Smoke Screen**
- > **Goad**
- > **Slashing Debuff**
- > **Mantra**
- > **Kiss of the Viper/Wasp**
- > **NIN vs MNK vs DRG**

6. Miscellaneous Stuff

- > **Macros** > ~~Racial Stats~~ > **BiS** > **Personal Tips**

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Section 2: OPENERS

There are a few different openers you can use depending on the fight and how long each phase will last after that opener is complete. After each opener is complete use all your offensive oGCDs the second they come off cooldown. Blood for Blood is a special case which is discussed later on into the guide. The title of the opener will lead to FFXIVRotations and the Video Demonstration will lead to Youtube.

[Aeolian Edge Opener - Video Demonstration](#)

After the Aeolian Edge opener your basic GCD rotation will be as follows...

DE/AE > SF > MU > AC/AE > DE/AE (Opener Over) > SF > AC/AE > MU > SF > DE/AE > AC/AE > SF > DE/AE > MU > AC/AE > SF > DE/AE... and repeat.

Pros of the Aeolian Edge Opener:

- Highest Burst during the Opener
- Easier rotation for beginners to learn
- Best opener to use if no WAR (replace AE with DE) in party
- Buffed Shadow Fang and Mutilate in opener

Cons of the Aeolian Edge Opener:

- Lower PPS overtime compared to other openers
- Rotation can get funky at higher skill speeds
- Low trick attack synergy

Shadow Fang Opener - Video Demonstration

After the Shadow Fang opener your basic GCD rotation will be as follows...

SF > MU > DE/AE > AC/AE > SF (Opener Over) > DE/AE > AC/AE > MU > SF > DE/AE > AC/AE > SF > DE/AE > MU > AC/AE > SF > DE/AE > AC/AE... and repeat.

Pros of the Shadow Fang Opener:

- Strong lineup of GCDs under Trick Attacks
- Maximizes efficiency with Party Utility
- Quicker application of DoTs
- Excels in phases that last in multiples of 48 seconds #
- Benefits from high Skill Speed

Cons of the Shadow Fang Opener:

- Lower burst during the opener
- Strict GCD uptime (missing a GCD can mess the rotation up overtime)
- Lower PPS opener if no WAR is in the party
- Harder to execute with high ping
- Overall harder rotation to maximize as a newer player

Mutilate Opener - Video Demonstration

After the Mutilate opener your basic GCD rotation will be as follows...

MU > SF > DE/AE > AC/AE > SF > DE/AE > MU > AC/AE > SF > DE/AE > AC/AE > SF > MU > DE/AE > AC/AE > SF > DE/AE > AC/AE... and repeat.

Pros of the Mutilate Opener:

- Excels in phases that last in multiples of 30 seconds
- Strongest lineup of GCDs under Trick Attacks

- Quick application of DoTs

- Benefits from High Skill Speed

Cons of the Mutilate Opener:

- Slow Start
- Unbuffered Mutilate in opener
- Harder to maximize with high ping

- Strict GCD Uptime

- Only useful in fights where the extra mutilate ticks make up for loss of potency during the opener

SF + Delayed MUT Opener - Video Demonstration

After the Fey Wind opener your basic GCD rotation will be as follows...

SF > DE/AE > MU > AC/AE > SF > DE/AE > AC/AE > SF > MU > DE/AE > AC/AE > SF > AC/AE > DE/AE > AC/AE > MU > SF > DE/AE > AC/AE > SF > DE/AE > MU... and repeat.

Pros of the Fey Wind Opener:

- Highest PPS overall
- Flexible with oGCDs during the opener
- Buffed mutilate in the opener
- 2nd Shadow Fang under Potion

Cons of the Fey Wind Opener:

- Only works with Fey Wind/High SKS/Low Ping
- Any clipping will usually mean the potion won't affect the 2nd SF
- Hardest opener to execute

> PRIORITY ROTATION

Ninjas don't really follow a set rotation. Overall, you have more like a priority system instead. I'm going to go over two priority system here: **A single target priority rotation and aoe priority rotation.**

Starting with the single target priority system.

1. Is Dancing Edge falling off? Will the Warrior be able to get it? If not, Dancing Edge.
2. Is Shadow Fangs timer about to fall off? Shadow Fang combo.
3. Is Mutilate about to fall off? Mutilate.

4. Are Shadow Fang and Mutilate both about to fall off (e.g: SF has 5 seconds, Mutilate has 4 seconds? Refresh Shadow Fang first [Remember that shadow fang requires 2 GCDs so if SF is at 5 seconds and Mutilate is at 4 use Shadow Fang to get those extra ticks off]
5. Is Huton 40 seconds or below? Do you have an buffs up/Trick Attack? If no Armor Crush, if yes Aeolian Edge.#
6. Is Everything on cooldown and Huton and DoTs don't need to be refreshed? Aeolian Edge.
7. Is Trick Attack off cooldown? Suiton and Trick Attack between GCDs.
8. After your opener use your 90 seconds in an order of Dream Within A Dream (300 PPS) > Jugulate (240 PP)> Mug (140 PPS) while throwing in Duality before your Aeolian Edge.
9. Is Kassatsu off cooldown? Is Trick Attack the next mudra? If not use it with Raiton/Fuma, if so save it for Trick Attack and use Raiton.

AoE Priority System

1. Are there 2 or more enemies? Will they live longer than 21 seconds? If no use Katon, if yes use Doton.
2. Are there 3 or more enemies? Will those enemies live for 30 seconds? Multidot with mutilate and Death Blossom if yes, if no Death Blossom.
3. Are there more than 4 enemies? Death Blossom while weaving Katon/Doton.

AoE Rotation: DB > IR + B4B > DB > Doton/Katon > DB > Kassatsu > DB > Katon > DB > DB > DB... and just spam DB.



Section 3: DPS Optimizations

> ALIGNING COOLDOWNS

This is something I don't see talked about often in guides (*probably due to the fact that a lot of players have different opinions on what is 'right'.*) I'm going to explain what I feel is the right way to handle your buffs which revolves around getting an extra buff vs. lining it up with outside buffs like Hypercharge. On a basic level, I believe you should only use Blood for Blood if all your 90 second cooldowns are at 19 seconds or below, and only using it before your Shadow Fang or 3rd tier combo (which should be Aeolian Edge.) The reasoning for this is due to the fact that if you use Blood for Blood before a Shadow Fang or Aeolian Edge you should get 2 Shadow Fangs or 3 Aeolian Edges under each B4B. This only applies if your 90 Second Cooldowns are offset by your 80 second cooldowns by 30 seconds or less.

An example being your Blood for Blood comes off cooldown in a GCD but your Duality is coming off cooldown in 30 seconds, so you would hold your Blood for Blood till Duality is at 19 seconds. For Internal Release I believe you should use it before your Shadow Fang, Mutilate, or 3rd Tier. Depending on your rotation (and the fight), you should be able to refresh both sets of DoTs and get the initial hit of Trick Attack under most Internal Releases. Generally you'll always want to prioritize Trick Attack every 3 Mudras or every 60 seconds but you'll want to avoid holding Internal Release for it. You can ignore this if you have knowledge of when the fight is going to end however.

In most cases you'll always want to have a Trick Attack up for Battle Litany, Potion, and Hypercharge windows, no questions asked. So try to time your Tricks around buffs such as those even if that means delaying them slightly.

For explaining a more advanced cooldown alignment i'll use A9S. So let's give the fight a kill time of 3:30. With this information in mind, we know that we'll only get a maximum of 3 Blood for Blood's, 4 Internal Releases and 3 Trick Attacks in the fight, as well as 2 Battle Litany, and 2 Hypercharge. Now that we know how many potential skill uses we can get in, we can start mapping. Assuming we get one of each buff off in the opener that leaves us with 2 more B4Bs and TAs, 3 more IR, and 1 BL + HC.

Since we're only getting one more Battle Litany and Hypercharge we're going to want to hold both of those cooldowns till after the Full Metal Faust dies to get the most potency out of them, this means we need to have our last Blood for Blood and Internal Release line up at least by 3:05 at the latest.

So, now we know we can get 2 Internal Releases and 1 Blood for Blood + Trick attack between our 1st opener and the opener after faust dies. Assuming we use our Internal Releases on cooldown at 1:02 and 2:02 it will naturally lineup with our last opener. That just leaves our Blood for Blood and Trick Attack. Blood for Blood should be coming off cooldown at 1:20, which gives us 20 seconds of free room to use it. You can use your 2nd Trick Attack between 1:16 - 2:00 otherwise it will be delayed during your reponer on the boss after faust.

I hope this kind of explains my thought process behind my cooldown management. I basically just look at where we want bursts during specific parts of the fight and adjust my cooldowns accordingly.

Something else to note on is that losing a use of Blood for Blood/Internal Release isn't always a negative thing. What I mean by this is in fights like A6S and A7S your Blood will be coming off cooldown during or right before a timed phase where you can't actually hit the boss. In A7S, your 3rd Blood for Blood will come off cooldown a few seconds before he flies into the air. Using it here will waste it on the adds that appear. The reason it's wasted is due to the fact that killing the adds faster doesn't mean he's going to come down faster and the faster you kill the adds the more downtime there's going to be till he is attackable again. It's much more efficient to save B4B and pair it with IR and Battle Litany after he comes back down.



A9S Clear @ 3:24 ~ Ninja PoV (3290.81 DPS)



> MAXIMIZING TRICK ATTACKS

Sometimes using trick attack on cooldown isn't the most optimal thing to do. The best examples for this are A10 and A12. In A10S, for most groups, your 2nd trick attack will be back up during the add. Using Trick Attack here is inefficient since party members will be split between the two enemies. If you push it back a mudra it will line up with your B4B + 90 second cooldowns as well as aiding everyone in your party. This also sets up your third and fourth trick attack nicely. The third one being after the Steam Roller being paired with Battle Litany. And having the 4th trick attack line up with your Pot, B4B, IR, and Hypercharge after the 2nd add dies.

In A12, after the 2nd stasis you'll have the opportunity to use Trick Attack here, and generally you want to do so if you're going to limit break inside timegate. However, if you aren't going to limit break in the time gate, it might be better to save Trick attack for the add inside time gate assuming you need it and since it won't be up for the add you're attacking and you won't get the full effect of trick attack on any of the other 3 assuming you're doing 4 man time gate. Once you leave time gate you'll have the opportunity to do another trick attack but it's better held till after 1st inception and paired with hypercharge, battle litany, and potion. Other examples are more obvious ones where holding trick for party bursts like in A9S holding your third trick attack and using it after the faust dies, pairing it with Hypercharge, Litany, B4B, etc.

There are times where you will have to hold your ninjutsu for a few seconds to get in an extra Trick Attack during fights e.g A12S after 2nd Inception. Even if doing this means missing an extra mudra. And I know what you're going to say, "Momo, is it really worth missing an entire mudra just for a Trick Attack?" In my opinion, yes. Some people may not agree with my standpoint here and that's fine.

You're free to do whatever you wish. I, however strongly believe it's worth getting in an extra trick attack even if it means missing a Fuma/Raiton. Here's my reasoning; I'm going to use A11S as my example. In a raid environment, at the time of holding the mudra, I would be doing a Fuma Shuriken instead of a Suiton and I would be missing a Fuma Shuriken right before he does Limit Cut. So two Fuma under no buffs would be 633.6 Potency. Now you would be missing that last Fuma but instead gaining a Trick Attack. So, it would be Suiton's potency + Trick Attack which is 580 potency combined. Now, add in the 4-5 GCDs everyone gets under the Trick. (For reference, my GCDs would be GS + AE + SE + SF + SE which gives me a potency of 126 when calculated under trick attack.) This gives the total potency of the trick attack 834 beating out the double Fuma by 200.4 potency. Depending on the potency

of the skills you're putting out under the Trick Attack, it may or not be better for your personal DPS as well but it is definitely better for a raid wide increase.



> MULTIDOTTING

Let's talk about multidotting. This is a subject I don't see mentioned often in guides, most likely due to the fact that there aren't many places to do it and it's kind of complicated to explain but easy to execute once you understand it. So starting off lets see how many GCDs there are in between each refresh of shadow fang and mutilate.

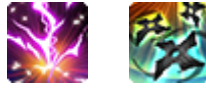
At a 2.08 GCD there are 8-9 GCDs between each Shadow Fang. 8 GCDs if you have to refresh at 2-4 seconds and 9 GCDs if you have to refresh <2 seconds. For Mutilate there are 13-15 GCDs between each refresh. 15 GCDs if you have to refresh after it has fallen off (like the 2nd mutilate refresh doing the SF opener), 14 GCDs if you refresh at 1-2 seconds, and 13 GCDs if you refresh at 3-4. So, now that we know how many GCDs we need to count between each SF and MUT, that means we can get 3 GCDs of attacks in before you're forced to refresh shadow fang and 6 GCDs of attacks between each mutilate refresh (with shadow fang refreshes) you need to refresh mutilate.

Let's look at the potency per GCD for each of these skills. MUT only takes 1 GCD to put up so it has a potency of 366 on the target with Slashing Debuff and 360 on the one without. Shadow Fang requires 2 GCDs to put up, so we have to take spinning edge which is 165 potency and add that to Shadow Fang's full duration which is 440 and we get 590 divide that by 2 and we get 312.5 (assuming you hit spinning edge and shadow fang on the target with slashing debuff.)

So, Shadow Fang has a potency 302.5 on the target without slashing and 312.5 on the target with slashing. Now let's take a look at the potency per death blossom GCD. Death blossom is 110 potency each (121 with slashing debuff) and assuming there's only going to be slashing on the main target death blossom will have PPS of 231 on two targets, 341 on 3 targets and 451 on 4 targets.

Now that GCDs are out of the way let's talk about mudras. Katon has a potency of 250 (275 under foes), and Doton has a potency of 320 (352 under foes) (full duration, 280 1 tick less than full). 9/10 times you will be using katon but if you get into a fight like A3S/A8S/Nidhogg where adds will be left alive long enough for Doton to tick 21 seconds then it's better to use doton in this situation.

tl;dr of this is: If two targets Keep up Shadow Fang and Mutilate on both targets, if three targets keep up Shadow Fang on slashing debuff target and Mutilate on all 3 targets (assuming it will tick 27 seconds) and death blossom in between shadow fang GCDs, if 4 targets just spam Death Blossom.



> RAITON VS FUMA

A very controversial subject with Ninja is the discussion of what's better Raiton or Fuma Shuriken. It's a common misconception that Raiton is always better than Fuma. Which is understandable, if you are just reading potency numbers you may find that Fuma Shuriken is 240 potency and Raiton is 360. However since Fuma Shuriken is classified as a physical attack it is buffed by not only the poison you are wearing but the slashing debuff on the boss as well. This puts it at a potency of 316.8, still not as strong as Raiton but Fuma is also buffed by Hypercharge. This puts Fuma Shurikens potency at 348.8 when the buff is activated. So we have Raiton which is 360 and Fuma Shuriken which is 316.8 potency (348.8 under HC). Raiton is buffed by Foe's Requiem which gives it a potency of 396 comparing Fuma Shuriken to Regular Raiton, we have a difference of 52 potency. If Battle Voice is up Raiton then has a potency of 432, which is now a difference of 115 potency.

Sometimes you'll find that a lower potency attack is better under certain situations, Fuma Shuriken is a perfect example of this. The reason Fuma Shuriken can be better than Raiton even if it still doesn't beat Raiton under Hypercharge is due to the clipping Raiton delivers. When a damage animation is activated, there is 0.075 seconds before you can start an oGCD action. When calculated with a two sign mudra, the time needed to cast it is 2.50 seconds, longer if you have worse ping than myself, while a one sign mudra only takes 2.00 seconds to activate. That's a disparity of .5 seconds each time I use Raiton over Fuma, a difference between getting a GCD or not at the end of a phase.

tl;dr:

- If Nothing is up use Fuma Shuriken
- If B4B/Trick Attack is up use Fuma Shuriken
- If Foes is up use Raiton. If under the effects of Arrow use Fuma Shuriken
- If Hypercharge is up use Fuma Shuriken #
- If Foes Req is up and Hypercharge is as well use Fuma
- If BV Foes Req is up and Hypercharge is as well us Raiton

> INCREASING UPTIME (THIS MIGHT BE A LITTLE CONFUSING SINCE IT WAS MADE WITH A VIDEO BEING ON WHILE EXPLAINING)

First things first, learn how to utilize Shukuchi. In my opinion you should macro this skill. You are able to macro this skill without having any issues in any fight (besides A11S if you don't position correctly for the Propeller Wind)

Examples of places you can use Shukuchi in fights to increase uptime overall are:

The Steam Roller in A10S, Jumps in A10S Out Charge in A10S, Propeller Wind in A11S, Add Phase in A12S, Temporal Stasis in A12S, and Inception in A12S

Getting into actually increasing uptime via movement is kind of complicated. First, you need to understand how mechanics and damage work in this game. Every Boss ability in this game either locks your position in right as the cast is finished or locks your position in as the animation of the bosses said skill goes off. It's just a matter of figuring out the timings after that. This also doesn't mean go out and wipe your group. I would only test things during progression or optimization runs. The best way to explain what I mean is through examples. I'll use Propeller Wind and The In/Out Charges as examples for attacks that lock your position in as the cast finishes. For attacks that lock you in range as the animation goes off, I'll use Steam Roller and Sacrament.

See as I Shukuchi right as the cast bar is about to finish and I'm in range of the wind as the animation goes off, it locks my position in right as the cast finishes so I don't get the confuse debuff even though I actually am in range of the wind. The same thing goes with the In and Out Charges. As you can see, I should have gotten hit but due to the way this attack works I can move freely as soon as the cast bar is over even if the animation hasn't gone off.

Now for attacks that lock your position as the animation is hitting:

Watch how the Steam Roller cast finishes and I am still in range of the attack down, but move barely out of range before the actual animation hits. The same goes for Sacraments. Even though the cast finishes when I'm inside the range of the sacraments hitbox, I make it out right before the animation goes off and am not affected by it.

Another way you can increase uptime via movement is by knowing boss patterns and using that to your advantage. In A10 you know the boss is going to jump to the Ice Trap after the 1st charge. In A5 you know the boss is going to dash to it's prey target. In A7S you know the boss is only going to target two people during Merry Go Round for AoEs so there's no point moving with the group. I usually look at mechanics such as these and think to myself 'how can I manipulate this mechanic so I don't lose as much uptime as other players' Every boss has these little tiny optimizations like this. Other than that just make sure you're always getting your auto attacks off, always spamming your next GCD, and always attacking the boss as soon as possible.

> SYNERGIZING WITH PARTY MEMBERS

Have a grasp on your party members job abilities and utility and where they are using them during the fight. When playing at a high level, you are going to want to be able to adjust your Trick Attacks around a DRGs Battle Litany or a BRD/MCH Hypercharge/Foe's Requiem. Knowing when Tricks are essential for raid DPS versus places where you can delay them slightly.

Figure out where your other DPS are burning all their cooldowns during phases and boost the damage even more. A lot of players are under the assumption that holding your Ninjutsu is bad which is normally the case for your personal damage but if you need to hold your Ninjutsu so you can get your Trick Attack in at selected point in the fight then it's better for raid dps if you delay your Ninjutsu for a small amount of GCDs. Remember that Suiton is a 10 second buff.

Being knowledgeable of all tank swaps going on during the fight so you can plan your Shadewalker and Smoke Screen ahead of time. Be ready to smoke bomb A DPS if they are getting close to pulling aggro and if you know they have an opener coming up.

Being alert on others TP during long fights or if there is deaths and communicating beforehand if players want goads at certain spots.

Using Dancing Edge if your Warrior needs to drop Storm's Eye so he can put up Storm's Path to help out the healers. Try to coordinate all your tools to your party's need.

> ADVANCED DPS OPTIMIZATIONS

< GETTING THE MOST OUT OF YOUR BUFFS >

Normally if Huton is at 41 seconds or more you would want to prioritize Aeolian Edge but under certain situations you will want to Armor Crush even if that means you're not getting the full duration of the extension onto Huton. The reason behind this is you have buffs like Trick Attack, Blood for Blood, or Internal Release coming up you want to maximize the effects of these said buffs. You'll want to use Aeolian Edge under them as much as possible.

Another example of you wanting to clip your huton with Armor Crush would be if you are stockpiling your buffs for certain occasions.

For example, In A12S before the 1st inception you're going to want to pool your buffs and save them till after it and combine it with party wide raid buffs like Hypercharge and Battle Litany. You're not going to want to waste potency doing an Armor Crush with potency increasing buffs up, so you should refresh Huton with it before the 1st Inception even if you have to clip it by a few seconds. Another scenario in A12S is if you have to do 3 man time gate; Since you have to Limit Break one of the adds and do an opener on the next if you go in with under 50 seconds on your Huton chances are you will likely drop it or have to suffer potency loss because you had to use Duality with Armor Crush.

The last condition where you'll want to Armor Crush over Aeolian Edge is if there's going to be a long period of downtime before the boss will be targetable again so you'll either need to reset Huton manually with a mudra or with Armor Crush. A Good example of this is in A11S during the active time event, if your mudra is up before you have to get on the ship and you can't use it on the boss you can refresh Huton with a mudra and your mudra will be back up before the boss is targetable again.

There are also fights where you can map out your GCDs to get the most out of buffs like Balance. In A12S I refresh my Huton at 1 second or below to get the most of the balance there. Doing this lets me get two extra Aeolian Edges under the Balance instead of wasting it under Armor Crush. In fights like A10S and A11S it's harder to map out GCDs due to all the mechanic skips but once you start skipping consistently you should be able to map out your GCDs in certain phases.

< Your last GCD on the boss >

So, let's say the boss is about to die or disappear for a long period of time, and your GCD is fresh (no combo or anything.) Which GCD would you use? Well I'd imagine most players would say spinning edge. However, if you have 1 GCD to use and no combo, the best GCD to use is actually Aeolian Edge. Aeolian Edge is a 180 potency attack uncombo'd from the back, where as Spinning Edge is 150. Now let's put us in a scenario where you're forced to the side of the boss and can't hit the back. Well, in this situation Armor Crush is still 10 potency more than Spinning Edge uncombo'd.

So now let's add another GCD into the equation. Now we have 2 GCDs before the boss is going to be untargetable and we have no combo started. Now what do we do? Well, we Aeolian Edge twice! Instead of doing Spinning Edge into Gust Slash we will doing back to back uncombo'd Aeolian Edges which is still 10 potency stronger than the SE > GS combo.

$$150 + 200 = 350$$

$$180 + 180 = 360$$

<Clipping DoTs>

Clipping reduces the amount of ticks your previous use could have. If you clip Shadow Fang at 3 seconds, you receive five ticks instead of the actual six ticks you can get. Implementing your DoTs and knowing when you can refresh them are crucial to your DPS. Normally, you'll only want to apply Shadow Fang if it will last for 4 ticks (9-12 seconds) and Mutilate if it will last for 5 ticks (12-15 seconds).

It's generally advised to avoid applying a DoT effect while it is still affecting the enemy. However we can take this a step further in DPS optimization by refreshing those DoTs early under buffs such as Trick Attack/B4B/IR or any other type of ability that adds to it's damage if it means a phase in the fight or the fight itself is ending and you'll get the full duration of them. It's also acceptable to clip DoTs early when the boss is about to take less damage and DoTs will snapshot with the IR original potency.

SECTION 4: UTILITY OPTIMIZATION

> Shadewalker and Smoke Screen



It's crucial that you keep in mind that Shadewalker and Smokescreen are not only used at the start of a fight. Using these 2 skills for aggro control/tank swaps will give your tanks a LOT more room to DPS. In an optimal raid setting, the Warrior will almost always be pulling since they generate more aggro than a DRK can in a short period of time without losing DPS.

Doing this method gives you more room to hold shadewalker for certain tank swaps if need be instead of just spamming it on the DRK praying they don't lose aggro or forcing them to do extra power slashes. Popping a Smoke Screen on a tank during tank swaps or a DPS/Healer during their openers or situations where Boss enmity resets is another good way to execute this skill.

As a Ninja, it's your job to communicate with your tanks, especially in a top level environment. For tanks to reach their maximum DPS potential and uptime in a high skill level groups you need to coordinate with them and talk out the most optimal times to use these skills. Some tank busters require you do tank swaps to hit higher DPS, using these skills as a support move will help them greatly.

For Example, in A12S, after 1st stasis I will Smoke Bomb our WAR, this smoke screen is to assure that he doesn't pull aggro with Berserk since the DRK isn't using Power Slash here. And then using Shadewalker on the WAR after the 2nd Stasis where the WAR will provoke the boss and take the next tankbuster. Doing this allows him to provoke with a debuff combo whether it be Eye or Path. If no shadewalker was here he'd have to combo cancel after maim and do a butchers block combo. The 3rd Shadewalker, Smoke Bomb comes after the 2nd inception. Our WAR will provoke after 2nd inception and I will shadewalker him here, after the tankbuster the DRK will provoke back and I will smoke bomb the WAR. Every group does things differently, coordinate with your tanks and ask how they want to handle tank swaps.

For fights with "no breaks" like A9S and A10S you should use it when you have buffs up so it generates more aggro.

> MIN/MAXING SHADEWALKER

Most players are unaware that any buffs casted on yourself and other players such as Internal Release, Blood for Blood, and Goad actually generate aggro, a small amount, 172 enmity to be exact, but aggro nonetheless. Second Wind and Max Potions generate the most aggro and can be used to maximize Shadewalker potency if you are free to use them.

If you're using a Max Potion to compliment Shadewalker make sure you are not going to be needing a Dexterity Potion for another minute and 7 seconds.

Second Wind: $(\text{healing done}) \times 0.5 \times 0.8 = (x)$, for example a 6320 crit gives 2528 enmity

Max Potion: $2400 \times 0.5 \times 0.8 = 1152$ enmity generated (useful for fights where there's long breaks in between Stat Potions like A12S after the 2nd Temporal Stasis so it where it'll help the healers a little bit as well)

Mantra: 344 Enmity when hitting both yourself and tank with Shadewalker / 177 Split

> GOAD OPTIMIZATION

Goad is practically an invigorate that instead of giving a set amount of TP in one instance is instead given over time. The most optimal way to use this skill is to use it during the first 30-45 seconds of the fight, preferably after the selected players opener is over. Doing this lets you get more uses of the skill out of the fight.

Say you're killing A9S in a time of around 4 minutes and 30 seconds. If you use goad during the first minute instead of when the player actually needs TP you'll get an extra goad in before the fight is over. The exception to this is if you and the player you're goading have mapped out when they want Goad. Take A12S for example, usually you'll want to Goad the DRG right before adds so he can AoE more and not run TP dry. Never cast Goad on a job that uses MP as its primary resource.

> SLASHING DEBUFF

More often than not, your Warrior will be keeping the slashing debuff sustained on the boss. However there are sometimes points in the fight where you'll have to use Dancing Edge to apply the debuff so the WAR can cover Storm's Path or use an aggro combo to secure enmity. Storm's Path is usually only the case for progression raiding, however there are fights like A11 and A10 where sometimes the WAR may not be able to apply Slashing to the EDD or Lamebrix Strikebocks.

If the Warrior can't reapply it before it falls off, or apply it in the first place, he should communicate that with you so you can prepare ahead of time. Another situational problem that can occur are fights where you and the Warrior are attacking different mobs so he can't apply slashing debuff for you. This happens in A12S during the Generals Might and Time, and in A11S during Lapis Lazuli phase.

> MANTRA

Cross Classed Mantra is an undervalued skill. Nothing like the traisted mantra which Monks have access too but still extremely powerful when used with coordinated healers. Best used during boss AoEs where healers are throwing out Regens and AoE heals. Listed are good places to use mantra to help out healers... [insert bunch of fights here] Even if you're not coordinating mantras with your healers it doesn't hurt to keep it on cooldown and use it rather than to let it sit on cooldown.

> KISS OF THE VIPER/WASP

Ninjas have access to probably one of the more flexible stuns/silences in the game along with Bards Blunt Arrow and Machinists Head Graze. You can freely switch between each either stance every 5 seconds.

The majority of the time you'll want to have Kiss of the Viper on instead of Kiss of the Wasp. Reason behind that is due to lack of stun mechanics in Savage and the and you may as well take the free self heal mug gives you every 90 seconds. However there are times where you'll want to switch to Kiss of the Wasp during specific fights. In A3S you can stun the Pistons in phase 3, and during A6S progression if you needed to stun the beta orbs in Brawler phase during progression. There are an abundance of mechanics that can be silenced however, ranging all the way from BcoBs Turn 1 High Voltage to SCoBs Turn 9 Earthshock to A6S and A8S's Mind Blast. And those are just a few to name off. Long story short; Use Kiss of the Viper unless you need to stun something.

> NINJA VS MONK VS DRAGOON

Ninja is the weakest melee DPS when compared to Dragoon and Monk, however Dragoons and Monks also pale in comparison to a Ninja's utility. Ninjas bring a 10% vulnerability up debuff for 10 seconds every 60 seconds. Two enmity control skills, one where you can dump your aggro onto a player and the other reducing enmity gained on the player used on. A TP restoration ability that ticks for 40 TP every 3 seconds for 30 seconds on one party member every 180 seconds. A 10% Slashing Resistance down debuff (nulled by having a Warrior in the party), A stun/silence, and an AoE ability that increases healing received by 5% for 15 seconds every 120 seconds.

Dragoons bring Battle Litany, an aoe skill which increases the party Critical Hit rate by 15% for 20 seconds every 180 seconds. Disembowel which reduces the target's piercing resistance by 10%, a constant damage up if a BRD/MCH is in the party, and Mantra, an AoE ability that increases healing received by 5% for 15 seconds every 120 seconds. Dragoons have two stuns as well.

Monks bring Dragon Kick which puts a 10% INT down and 10% Blunt Resistance down on the target (nulled by Dark Knight) and Traited Mantra, an AoE ability that increases healing recieved by 20% for 15 seconds every 120 seconds. Monks also have two abilities that can stun and a silence which can be complicated to use at certain spots of a fight.

In terms of self healing, Dragoons and Monks have access to more abilities that can help them survive. Dragoons can use Bloodbath and Second Wind, Monks can use Bloodbath and Traited Second Wind and Ninja unfortunately can only use Second Wind.

Out of the three melee, Ninja is the most flexible in my opinion, barely ahead of Monk in terms. Dragoon is stuck in a linear combo and has little room for switching targets quickly without losing DPS, Monks can put their debuff on a new target quickly but the Monk may have to struggle at times to hit his positionals on the target (A4S, A3S, A5S, A7S, A11S, A12S). NINs however, don't have as many positional requirements as MNK does and can switch targets with ease using Dancing Edge.

SECTION 6: MISCELLANEOUS STUFF

> MACROS

[Pastebin Link for Macros](#)

> BiS

[Crit Build \(739 Acc\)](#)

[Shire Head Build \(714 Acc\)](#) < Preferred BiS

[Risk it for the Biscuit Build \(696 Acc\)](#)

> PERSONAL TIPS

A lot of players are under the assumption that the top tier players are taught by others when a large percentage of them - or at least the ones I know - are self taught.

For improving your self play. I used to hit a dummy for hours on end and I mean HOURS. I probably have around 70 hours just hitting a dummy getting a feel for my rotations and adjusting them little by little. Be able to do your rotation without looking at your keyboard or controller. Get a feel for your keyboard, know where each GCDs keybind is. I have my keybinds set up so that I don't have to move my hand at all which is really convenient. Count your GCDs when hitting a dummy! I know between my 1st and 2nd Trick Attack there are 34 GCDs and between my 2nd and 3rd Trick Attack there are 31 GCDs. Being able to know where you are in your rotation helps out alot. Mapping out your cooldowns for a fight

goes a long way as well. If you can record your fights, watch them over and over again and map out each cooldown. You can use a timeline to mark each cooldown if you need to.

Another thing that really helps a player's self improvement is watching PoVs! The main reason I even upload my clears is for people to watch and learn from them. Now I don't want people just copying what I do since some of the things that I do might not be 100% optimal. However, if you can watch my videos and think "Hmm, okay so he does this and this because of this. How can I adjust this to my own group's strategy?" Then you're already on the right step. This is a key point in a lot of top tier players in my opinion. Being able to watch someone's game play and take little things they do and adapting it to your own style.

I also use FFlogs to look through players cooldown usage and the timeline of their casts. If they do something different then i'll try to figure out why they do it and if it's an increase or not. If it's an increase i'll look through my PoVs and see how I can somehow adapt what they do to my own playstyle. I can't stress enough how important these two are for self improvement.

Back in Gordias I would watch Saobucks and other MNKs PoVs to try to learn different thing. In Midas I would watch hours of other DRGs footage like Wegente Leth, and Liz Lawine. Sometimes after raid I will just get some food and a drink and play the raid over at 1.5 - 2.0x speed and just see where I can do better and adjust certain cooldowns for more raid DPS. I've spent so many hours watching videos and analyzing logs.

Here are some other Words of Wisdom from other great and inspirational players.

"If you're are not satisfied with your group, think about what you could be doing better instead of putting the blame only on your team. Self-criticism is the first step towards improvement. Also, if you find someone that outputs higher DPS than you, question yourself on the reason instead of coming up with excuses. Is it because of their group composition? Do they have better gear? Or are they straight-up better at playing the class? Remember: 5-item level difference on a weapon doesn't make up for 300 DPS."

-[Wegente Leth](#) of Angered

"Some of the best players in the game have one characteristic in common: They are reckless. When learning a fight, they will do dumb ass things and take dumb ass risks, taking extra damage, sometimes killing themselves or the entire party in the process. And for what? Maybe to get a couple extra GCDs of damage in? They're not afraid to make mistakes and they'll often get punished for it.

Sounds like a bad thing, right? So, why does being reckless make them good players? It's because they constantly push their limits. A player will never know where their limits are until he crosses them.

Take Titan EX for example. During the final phase, Titan drops three rows of bombs, the last row being "the safe row". If the safe row is on the opposite from Titan, melee has to step away from the boss and lose DPS. Then you got the one crazy guy who stays in melee range and tries to get off all his positionals while dancing and weaving through the consecutively-exploding bombs and 5-way Landslide. The first several times he tries this, he'll get hit, maybe he'll die for it and get yelled at by the party. Eventually, with enough practice, he masters it and can now say "fuck the safe row" and stay in melee range and land most of his positionals regardless of where the bombs and landslides land. He thinks of every little optimization he can make, and that's why his DPS is untouchable.

Every class in every boss fight has these little tiny optimizations like this that only the radical thinkers will discover. Then when learning time is over, he can turn his reckless switch off, apply everything he's learned and absolutely crush the boss."

Average players only know the safe and conservative play. The best players expose themselves to danger for small advantages, make some mistakes and learn from them. They know where their limits are because they've already crossed all of them. Don't be afraid to get that extra cast off before avoiding a mechanic. Memorize the fights and plan for every mechanic.

There are two ways of screwing up mechanics. A. You are clumsy or B. You are greedy with DPS. If it's the former, then you just need to keep doing those fights over and over till you get more comfortable with them. If it's the latter(Casting between double plumes on Titan EX, Casting between Earthshakers on T13, etc.) then keep trying over and over till you get the hang of it. Making mistakes and learning from them for the sake of improving your DPS is a good thing."

- [Bokchoy McNuggets](#) of 7th Heaven Bakery

A player will never know where their limits are until he crosses them.