

Tab 1



Happy Little Accidents

A 7.3 PvP Pictomancer Guide by Tal'ke Rainare
(Mostly For Crystalline Conflict But Possibly Useful In Other Modes?)

Changelog

| | |
|----------|---|
| 12/01/24 | 7.11 changes added |
| 03/25/25 | 7.2 changes added |
| 11/17/25 | 7.3 and 7.31 changes added, corrected values, retested combos, realized I can't do math |

Foreword

This guide assumes you have some knowledge of PvP related jargon, such as “burst” or “cleave”. If these terms don’t make sense to you, there’s many beginner friendly resources and mentors happy to answer your questions in [PvP Revival](#), and I fully recommend you make note of anything that doesn’t make sense, and go ask while or after reading this guide.

What is Pictomancer?

Pictomancer (PCT) is a caster job designed around a “motif” mechanic, where the player takes a moment to paint the “muse” that carries out their next large damaging attack.

Motifs have cast time (in theory, more on this in “Notes & Tips”) and each muse can be stocked indefinitely after preparation, but one cannot move on to the next motif without first expending the muse.

Muses have no cast time and damage occurs to the target after the end of each animation.

Action Overview

For clarity, actions have been split into the following categories.

Potency is noted in raw numbers: buffs (both personal and from the party) will change these values.

Utility

| | Name | What do? | Notes & Tips |
|---|---------------------|---|--|
|  | Subtractive Palette | Press to go into Subtractive Palette ("Sub"). Doing this changes Red/Green/Blue into Cyan/Yellow/Magenta, and Holy into Comet. Press again to get out. | oGCD, meaning you can press it in between your damage rotation buttons (if you're not casting) |
|  | Smudge | Yeet yourself 15 yalms in the direction you're facing. | You get 4 seconds of increased movement after the jump is done, so it's an extremely useful movement tool. Also oGCD. More importantly, using Smudge makes your next Motif cast instantaneous . This makes it one of your most valuable damage dealing and survival tools. |
|  | Tempera Coat | Gives you a personal shield with a 12,000 heal potency. | When the barrier is consumed (meaning it's been hit and the entirety of its potency taken out), the recast time for Tempera is cut by 5 seconds. |
|  | ↓ Tempera Grassa | Pressing Tempera a second time will remove Coat and instead "spread" a smaller Tempera shield worth 8,000 potency to party members within 30 yalms of you. | |

Damage ("Filler")

| | 1-2-3 Combo | | | "Finisher" (2 charges) |
|----------------------------|---|---|--|---|
| RGB (out of sub) |  |  |  |  |
| Instant cast | Fire in Red | Aero in Green | Water in Blue | Holy in White |
| | 5,000 potency | 6,000 potency | 7,000 potency | 9,000 potency 12,000 potency self-heal on hit |

| | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|---|
| CYM (in sub) 1.44s cast |  Blizzard in Cyan |  Stone in Yellow |  Thunder in Magenta |  Comet in Black |
| | 7,000 potency | 8,000 potency | 9,000 potency | 12,000 potency 2 charges |

You can move in and out of Subtractive at ANY point during these combos. This makes it possible for you to, for example, start a combo with Red into Green, then move to Magenta and Comets for higher finishing value.

Motifs (“Prep Buttons”)



Motifs always follow the same order; there’s no way of skipping ahead to a specific motif. Remember that these have cast time UNLESS you use Smudge beforehand to get Quick Sketch. However, as of patch 7.11, both their cast and recast times have been shortened by a second.

Muses (“Big Damage”)





Mog of the ages
12,000 potency + silence



Retribution of the Madeen
12,000 potency + stun

Here's the fun part of the Motif mechanic! Your muse rotation is mostly split in two cycles, the "Mog cycle" and the "Madeen cycle". This is because unlike the muses, you can sit on both Mog and Madeen and combo them in interesting ways instead of using them immediately after Winged or Fanged. Madeen will, however, overwrite Mog, so make sure you use it before using Fanged.

Keep in mind that although muses go off instantaneously, you have a maximum 2 charges of Living Muse, and each charge takes 16 seconds to recharge. This means you can only go through 2 muses + 1 follow up in quick succession before needing to wait until the next Muse charge is up.



LB: Advent of Chocobastion

Drops a fat chocobo in front of you, knocking any enemies back within 15 yalms of you and creating a circular safe area (the Chocobastion) where damage taken is mitigated by 25% and healing is boosted by 25% for 15 seconds.



On usage, the LB button will change to Star Prism.

This is a very powerful button both in terms of damage and utility:

- It hits your target for 16,000 damage
- It heals all your party members within 30 yalms for 16,000 HP as well
- It increases your party's damage by 15% for 10 seconds

On paper, PCT's LB should be very useful to your party (specially when you're trying to hold a point or shove people off an objective), **but it has a lethal flaw in the form of an animation lock that is almost 2.2 seconds long**. From the moment you press LB to the moment your character finishes the animation and spreads their arms to the sides, you cannot move and are extremely vulnerable (do not forget that Pictomancer has the lowest HP pool in PvP; so being unable to use Holy or Smudge away is a death sentence for us).

This means that unless you have plenty of party support (such as shields or a PLD guarding you) you have to be very mindful about where you drop the Chocobastion, and not necessarily always go for the cheeky "middle of point" or "move people off the Crystal" plays, although a well timed bastion knockback scam can sometimes win you a game. Using a safe corner or wall to line-of-sight while casting is a common strategy; sometimes outright abandoning the Bastion somewhere safe and just using LB to unlock Star Prism is also not unheard of, though I personally do not recommend this because you're completely abandoning the mitigation and heal up utility it brings when you do this.

Strengths and weaknesses

Cons

- At its core, Pictomancer's damage and party utility is mostly gated behind its Muse charges, which gives people the impression that it's a job with a lot of downtime if one does not make use of the RGB/CYM combos.
- It can be incredibly frail and does not want to be caught in the mosh pit without defensives and a quick way out, which makes it a job where map and situational awareness pays out in spades.
- Dying is also very punishing for Pictomancer because besides delaying your already long LB timer, it sends you back to Pom Muse; while this is not the end of the world, it makes you wait even longer down the match to hit your damage peaks, reducing your kill potential and your usefulness to your team.

Pros

- Its RGB combo grants it nearly instant poke damage in short bursts and unparalleled mobility, and CYM also offers good pressure while waiting for a Muse to come up.
- Smudge's Quick Sketch effect makes it so that in theory you should always have a Muse ready to fire, since Smudge is on a very short cooldown (though keeping Smudge for

safety is a good practice, and stopping to cast a Motif is perfectly respectable if one isn't under pressure).

- While Picto doesn't want to be in the middle of a team fight, it is actually irritatingly difficult to kill in a 1v1 or even a 1v2 if it has Purify, Smudge, Tempera and Holy in White charges available. A skilled Pictomancer is perfectly capable of leading people on a wild goose's chase to split an enemy party in half if it wants to.
- It absolutely thrives supporting aggressive frontliners that give it the space to use RGB/CYM while waiting for Muses to come off cooldown; while Tempera isn't a massive shield, it makes staying on the field a bit longer less scary, and the kill confirm potential behind Mog/Madeen cannot be overstated.

So how on earth do I play this job?

While the concept of the Motifs and Muses can make this job a bit confusing at first, the nature of Muse's cooldown timer makes it so that you actually don't have to think much until you unlock Mog and Madeen.

With that said, like many other CC jobs, it rewards observation and patience: have your Muses primed and ready to go even before the charge cooldown is up, and prioritize hitting targets when their guard and purify is down so your motifs hit for full damage and the increased damage, heal potency down, stun or silence increases the possibility of a KO.

An important note on counterplay: since every motif has a large linear or circular cleave, Samurais with LB up are a very big potential threat to pictomancer (as to most other casters), as you may be targeting someone else entirely and still accidentally hit Chiten; some smart samurai will actually put themselves in the deathball in the hopes of this happening. While it is technically possible to survive Zantetsuken if you time Tempera Coat right and have some recuperate charges left, be hyperconscious of a SAM's cooldowns on screen if you don't want to take that risk—you can move into casting RGB/CYM on your main target when you see Chiten is up (or simply waiting it out if the risk is too great, you don't trust yourself to hit the right target, or have unfortunate ping).

To a minor degree, Nebula and Sheltron are similarly irritating to “nick” with your cleave (Nebula because it hits back, Sheltron because it buffs up the PLD). Because of this, you might notice that skilled players used to tracking cooldowns will temporarily move to cast RGB/CYM on separate targets to avoid cleaving into these skills.

Save or spend the “finishers” without Muses?

Like with anything in CC, whether a call is the right or wrong one depends on the circumstances of the match, so I cannot give absolute advice in this regard. However, I am of the opinion that when you can use Comet to confirm a kill, you absolutely should, regardless of which Muse

you're at or even if you have one up. The animation snapshots fast enough that you can still hit someone turning a corner even in 7.2, and the payoff for KOing and staggering the enemy party far outweighs the need to wait for your finishers to recharge.

Surprisingly, even though Comet snapshots on its target quickly enough that it will still go off on someone who's turned a corner, its actual damage registration happens very late into the GCD cycle. This means you can press Comet before your muse to sync up your muse timing with the comet and get an instant 20k, since your muse's damage will register first and your Comet second. This works with every muse save for Fang (because its damage registration is slower than Comet's); it does not, however, work with Mog, Madeen or Star Prism, because they share Comet/Holy's GCD and cannot be weaved.

Beyond using them to confirm a KO, I will usually be sitting on my Comet charges for added damage during a combo, or Holy as insurance during a withdrawal.

Which Tempera flavor do I use?

In solo queue or ranked ladder, I favor solo shield over group shield unless I know the habits of the people I'm playing with. A 12k shield is nothing to be sneezed at and it gives me some leeway and safety in surviving the initial engagement if I get focused early on.

In light party or custom games where communication is available, however, my Tempera usage is very dependent on context. I will usually be preparing Tempera for spreading as soon as a target is called, in order to support my frontline's push; depending on the circumstances, I will either recast it on cooldown if the push continues or eyeball when to spread it to give my teammates a fighting chance on a withdrawal.

How do I not Smudge myself into the arms of certain death?

Corners and long walls are your friends.

Combos

The following combo damage values are calculated with self-buffs applied (Pom and Claw): the actual numbers in your matches will vary with other party buffs, such as BRD and AST LBs, as well as enemy mitigations.

| COMBO | DAMAGE VALUE | NOTES |
|-------|--------------|-------|
|-------|--------------|-------|

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|--|---|
|  |  | 19,200 | Precast Smudge before dropping Pom | | |
| POM+WING | | | | | |
|  |  |  | 33,600 | Have Smudge precasted before Mog goes off and get Wing off immediately to follow up. | |
| POM+WING+MOG | | | | | |
|  |  | 22,000 | | | |
| WING+MOG | | | | | |
|  |  | 23,400 | | | |
| CLAW+MOG | | | | | |
|  |  |  | 32,200 | A smaller combo than CMFM which you can still use for big damage if you want to withhold Madeen for LB combo. | |
| CLAW+MOG+FANG | | | | | |
|  |  |  |  | 49,800 | This is a somewhat advanced combo, harder to set up because you need to have two Muse charges available and Smudge available before starting. (Props to Masietro for the combo revision!) |
| CLAW+MOG+FANG+MADEEN | | | | | |
|  |  | 26,400 | | | |
| FANG+MADEEN | | | | | |
|  |  | 28,800 | | | |
| MADEEN+POM | | | | | |
|  |  |  | 50,880 | More comfortable to get off than PWM or CMFM since there's no need to line up your next Muse. Only in this case, Pom goes before Madeen instead of after it because you're looking to buff and maximize Madeen damage (ordinarily you do it the other way around to facilitate weaving). | |
| STAR+POM+MADEEN (LB COMBO) | | | | | |

The damage values do not take into consideration additional damage from Comet in Black. They also do not consider external buffs from other party members.

For the combos that require Quick Sketch, remember you can Smudge and then hold the buff for 10 seconds before it goes away. This means you can use it beforehand for most combos if you're already sitting on a Muse; however, for some of them it might be comfier to weave it mid combo.

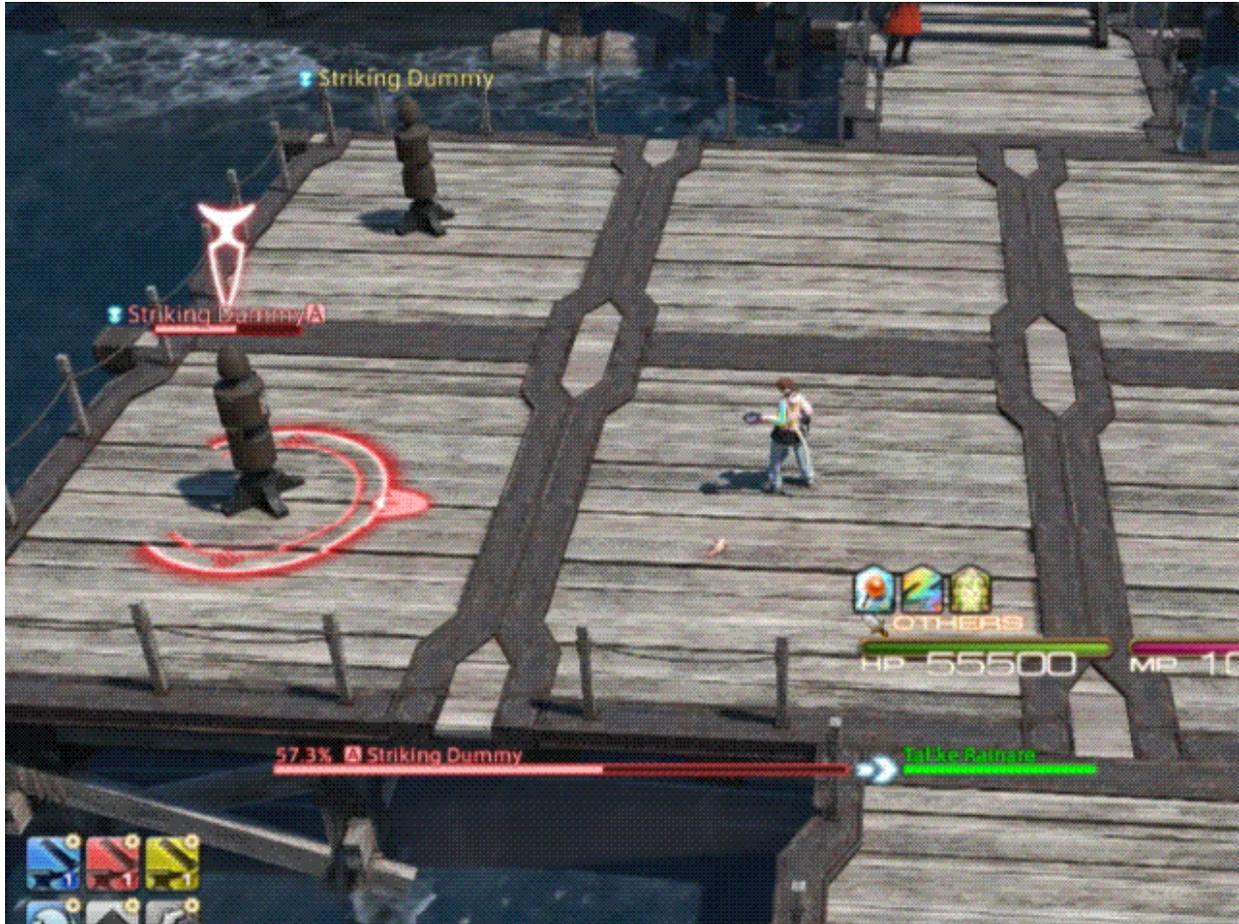
The "John F*cking Madeen" Combo



This advanced combo is quite probably the hardest to set up due to the need to have LB available, sit on Madeen and cycle back into Pom before starting, as well as the tightest buffed combo as well. However, at a total **91,700 dmg** (without counting a second unbuffed Comet at the end IF you have both comet charges), and allowing next to no breathing space for the target between a stun and a silence, it's also a tide changer.

You can afford to cast LB in a safe place to gain access to Star Prism, but remember you only have 10 seconds before losing it, so do not hesitate once you start it.

Speaking realistically, this whole combo takes about 6 GCDs from start to end so it's basically impossible to pull off in Crystalline Conflict, but it's an absolute threat in Frontline maps where you can afford the prep.



Advanced Optimizations

These are a few tips that are mostly necessary in higher level play but will generally improve the quality of your games.

- Do not sleep on stepping in and out of Subtractive as needed. It's easy to fall into the habit of favoring either one or the other, but in truth they have different applications at different times of the match, and the ability to mix one palette with another means you can change with no penalty to adapt to the situation. RGB allows for sustained pressure after the opener as well as uninterrupted damage if you get harassed on the way to a potion (essentially giving an enemy with low mobility a reason to think twice whether they want to continue a chase where you can keep attacking but they can't). CYM is more favorable in situations where you're allowed to turret and cause heavier damage.
- This really falls into a more "general PvP advice" category, but be very mindful about sending your Muses into guarded targets, since splash damage and DoT calculations

happen based on the main target. This is terrible for all cleave abilities but especially harmful for Maw, since even when it hits an entire enemy party, its DoT can basically become negligible damage.

- If you have good reactions, you can usually smudge out of Zantetsuken range consistently since your damage registrations happen quite late, especially if you cut a corner.
- Tempera benefits from pom healing boost, and not tested but probably also from LB healing boost. LB > Pom > Star Prism > Tempera Grassa is a hefty team survivability boost.
- On the same line, try using Pom + Tempera before a risky LB cast. Chocobastion remains for a long time, the 12k shield helps you tank through things, and then Star Prism nearly tops you up afterwards from the healing boosts.
- Jumping before LB casting will snapshot the Chocobastion around where you casted. It can be very situational but you can micro adjust to a safer position while still getting a fat middle-of-crystal LB if you eyeball it right. A visual example of how this looks:



Credits & Special Thanks

The following people reviewed this guide, called me out on my bullshit, and are just generally awesome people and PvP mentors.

- **Masietro** - For reviewing combo order, suggesting the John Madeen combo, and dmg values and catching several early errors. Find them on Youtube (<https://youtube.com/Masietro>) and Twitch (<https://www.twitch.tv/masietro>)!
- **Menshir** - For general review and offering some very important information regarding Comet damage registration. They go by the same name on PvP Revival.

- **TJ** - For offering great feedback, cast-time correction and being the Recuperate mentor we need but don't deserve.



About me

I'm just a lizard who likes to tryhard and meme, more often than not at the same time. Some crazy people consider me NA's PvP journalist (<https://www.youtube.com/@TalkeXIV>). I sometimes stream PvP content and tournaments to Twitch (<https://www.twitch.tv/talkerainare>).