

GW2 Elementalist PvE Class Guide by Haviz and Zelyhn

GW2 Elementalist PvE Class Guide written by Haviz and Zelyhn of [rT]. This is the 5th in a series of class guides written by members of [rT], a European dungeon speed clearing guild.

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Introduction

The elementalists is a clever approach to the mage type class, differentiating itself from traditional role-play games' designs by allowing you to master all four primary elements in a martial art fashion. It is a lot of fun to play, but it is also quite demanding. Being a good elementalists is not easy. In this guide we will explain how to perform efficiently in the PvE aspect of GW2.

You are about to learn the most entertaining and most potent class of the game. If you are a new player you will certainly find here more information than you can digest in one read. Do not be afraid. All elementalists have come through this stage. We will expose not just the most efficient ways to play but also the thought processes that lead to our Meta builds. We believe that a simple display of the best practices is of no use unless we teach our readers how and why we make our choices. Our intent is that you learn how to learn. It requires a lot of practice and discipline, but it will make you move mountains if you have the patience to train.

The elementalists is a very complex class. It has so many capabilities, and it faces numerous challenges. In order to outline the path of efficiency through our vast possibilities, we structure our guide in three sections. Section 1 defines the essence of our class. We explain who the elementalists is and what it can do. In section 2 we analyze the tools at our disposal and how we can use them to be efficient. Finally section 3 concludes by explicating the end builds that we construct based on the mindsets exposed in section 1 and the means from section 2.

Terminology

- Auto-attack: an attack without resource cost (no cooldown)
- Cleave: the factor enabling your attack to hit multiple targets (3) in melee range (sometimes further).
- Damage: unless otherwise stated, all damage qualifications are expressed in damage per second terms (DPS), i.e. the nominal damage done by the skill divided by the total time spent from the beginning of the cast until another spell can be used (total cast time).
- Proc: used to describe whenever a random event occurs or random item activates.
- Kiting: an act of movement in order to avoid damage by keeping your enemy at a certain distance and often still being able to attack him.
- Skipping: an act of passing by enemy mobs (sometimes bosses) without a desire to kill them.
- Main weapons: weapons equipped via the equipment panel (as opposed to conjured weapons also known as "conjures")
- Sustain: the ability to withstand pressure by healing health lost and mitigating incoming damage.
- Hard controls: effects that prevents your enemies from using attacks (stuns, knock-downs, daze), commonly known as "CC" (Crowd Control).
- Output: used to describe the effect of our actions in a fight (damage, control, buff, etc).
- Offensive support: the group-wide damage increase provided by the synergetic action of Might, Fury, and Vulnerability.

Section 1: Core concepts

1.1 Profession Overview

The profession-specific mechanic of the elementalists is the ability to attune to elements in order to cast spells. Since each attunement specializes in some aspect of combat, the elementalists has access to a wide variety of output. Versatility is the basis of our profession. However, this is a double-edged sword. Attempting to use all assets at our disposal can make us inefficient with each one of them and not all abilities are relevant for every encounter. Therefore, in order to be efficient we must specialize. We use traits to focus on relevant aspects of combat. But we also have access to another mechanic unique to our profession: conjured weapons. When wielding them we forgo our main weapon skills, that is, we trade our versatility for more focused abilities. Interestingly we can swap attunements while wielding conjures. This double aspect of specialization versus versatility is the complexity of the elementalists. It yields builds that can feel unnatural at first glance, but we are the masters of the elements: we get to decide what is natural and what is not!

1.2 Surviving

This is the toughest challenge for all beginner elementalists. The base stats of the Elementalists are the lowest of all classes for Hit Points and Armour. This implies that our passive defence is the weakest of the game. We cannot sustain direct hits. Instead we have to rely more on active defence: mitigating the enemy attacks before they hit you or avoiding them altogether. Luckily the elementalists has access to decent active defence capabilities. The first and most important of them is dodging. It takes time

and patience to master it. The levelling period is the best time for this. Each enemy in the open world has a specific type that shares similar attack animations and effects at all levels. Learn to recognize them as you gain experience. Train to dodge them when the danger is low and you will be prepared for anything as you adventure into dungeons. In the last section of this guide we disclose a number of builds that are designed to ease the learning of dodging by giving you access to superior sustain abilities. It is also possible to avoid being hit by using movement and distance control. An attack that cannot reach you is an attack that you do not even need to dodge. We have access to numerous offensive conditions. These can be used to control movement (chill, cripple, immobilize) in order to kite, or to directly mitigate incoming damage (blind, weakness, hard controls). Note for example that the combination of Weakness and Protection reduces damage pressure by 50% on average. Active defence is the most efficient way of surviving but it requires attention. We must stay focused in order to dodge properly, as a few mistakes will bring an elemental down. This is why we must do everything we can to shorten the time we are exposed to danger. In layman's terms: kill before being killed! All races of Tyria have lasted long enough to understand this basic principle. In the first sentence of this paragraph we stated that survival is the weak point of the elemental. Damage is our strong point.

1.3 Damage

It comes from two sources: direct damage, and conditions. We have access to both on all main weapon sets. It is very important to understand that direct damage gains synergy from being in a group (might and fury sharing, vulnerability, as well as other buffs) while condition damage has decreasing returns with group size (condition hard caps). Therefore we will focus on direct damage. The elemental is one of the professions that contribute the most to the damage output of a group by both buffing allies and dealing strong personal damage.

1.4 Might

Stacking this buff is a crucial aspect of efficient combat. A full stack of 25 might increases the damage output of your group by at least 33%! The best way to build up might stacks is to lay down a fire field and use blast combo finishers in it. Each might combo gives 3 stacks for 20s to all party members in 360 range of the blast location. As elementals we have some of the best tools to contribute to might stacking: frequent and long-lasting fire fields as well as numerous damaging blast finishers. This is why the role of our profession in most groups is to maintain high might. Note that when performing a blast finisher on multiple fields, it is the oldest field that will be taken into account. Coordinate the stacking phases with your group so that a fire field is always laid down first.

1.5 Melee

It is very important to understand that melee is generally more rewarding than range, if we can survive. In some encounters we will be able to kite, but in most fights we will have to dodge regardless of how far we stand. Ranged attacks are often weaker than their melee counterparts due to a logical balance design. And finally, might combos have a range of effect limited to 360. So if we stand too far from our group we will lose a large part of our potential damage output. For these reasons it is more efficient to fight in melee. Beware that this does not mean "hugging" your enemies. Many of our melee attacks have an extended range, thereby enabling us to often stay out of immediate danger while still benefiting from group buffs. We advise all new elementals to refrain from ranging: only by training in melee will you learn to survive its dangers.

1.6 Managing Resources

You may have noticed that the attunement swapping ability specific to the elemental does not constitute a unique mechanic in itself: it effectively acts as an augmented weapon swapping ability with diverse cooldowns. Many of our skills have long cooldowns by themselves, and the possibility to use these skills is constrained by the attunement or conjured weapon recharge time. Most often our skills will be recharging without us being able to monitor the time left as we can only see five of our numerous weapon skills at once. For these reasons, the main resource that we will be managing as an elemental is the cooldown time of our skills. Using resources such as attunement swapping or conjures in order to access a specific skill and finding it on cooldown is a grave mismanagement. Therefore it is of the utmost importance to train until the recharge time of our abilities becomes intuitive.

1.7 Adaptability

This is one of our most valuable resources. Each class has the ability to re-trait and swap weapons when out of combat, but the elemental excels in adaptability thanks to the wide variety of our output and the complexity of our builds. This is why we must learn to master all weapons, conjures, and traits.

We must be aware of the potential of all our assets in order to make the most efficient choices and best fit to the situations we encounter. Section 3 of this guide will develop on the three main build archetypes for the elementalists. But there are many more viable builds. Making an exhaustive list of all possibilities would be endless and pointless. Instead we give you core concepts and asset analysis to work with, so that you can understand our choices and learn to make your own on the fly. This way you will be able to adapt to each encounter and to all types of groups. It's not just that the fittest survive better, but also they get more loot.

Section 2: Attunements and Weapons

Attunements

The ability to attune to elements is a peculiar skill. It acts as a weapon swap in the sense that it triggers on-swap procs. It is instant, and contrary to other professions weapon swaps it does not interrupt our actions. In fact it can be advantageous to cast a spell and swap attunement during the cast so that its effect takes place under a preferred attunement. Remember that the effect of a spell is calculated depending on our state at the instant of the hit, not when we cast it. This mechanic can be used to maximize the effect of attunement-specific traits (like Air Training) or on-swap traits (Arcane Fury). Note that swapping attunement is considered as casting a spell. It will therefore trigger on-cast effects such as the heal from Signet of Restoration, or the damage from Confusion. The cooldown of each attunement starts when you leave it by swapping to another. In addition to this, the swapping ability is subject to a general cooldown preventing us from swapping for a brief time after attuning. These cooldowns are reduced by points in the Arcana trait line. The trait Fresh Air is the only way to instantly reset the air and the general cooldowns instantly on critical hit. It is important to keep in mind the effect of those two cooldowns when assessing the potency of attunement related traits: since the cooldown of a given attunement only starts after you exit it, and a general cooldown prevents you from swapping at will, the real minimum cooldown of attunements is equal to their individual cooldown (13s base, 10s with 6 points in Arcana) plus the general cooldown (1.625s base, 1.25s with 6 points in Arcana), so 14.625s base and 11.25s with 6 points in Arcana.

Dagger Main-Hand

Fire



Dragon's Claw

A suboptimal auto-attack. It requires being in melee range for all the projectiles to hit a single target. Even when all attacks connect this skill does mediocre damage. Time in fire is better spent casting other spells.



Drake's Breath

Better than Dragon's claw in many respects. This skill can hit up to 5 targets at mid-range for low amount of damage but a substantial burning duration. Burning does low damage in itself, but it enables the effects of a number of traits and skill facts resulting in a DPS increase for your group. If no better skills can be cast while you are in fire then this is the default spell you should be using.



Burning Speed

The signature move of the main-hand dagger. This skill-shot is one of the most damaging spell in our arsenal. There are several facts to keep in mind in order to use this ability as efficiently as possible. This spell moves you forward, it deals strong damage and burn at the final location, and it leaves a fire-combo trail on your way, and evades attacks. The movement factor can help you to reach your targets; but mostly it implies that positioning is key to landing this crucial spell. You must plan ahead. Under no circumstances would you want to miss your target or fall off a cliff! It is ideal to use this skill so that you pass through and end up a little past your target. This will allow the final explosion as well as the fire trail to hit your foes. While your target stands in the fire trail it will suffer from continuous hits, burn, and you can more efficiently execute might combos. Note that the fire trail is composed of small patches that can be stacked if you use Burning Speed against a wall. It may not seem like much, but if all five patches of fire hit your target then the trail deals as much damage as the explosion (and 150% of that damage if Persisting Flames is traited). This will generate many hits in your targets, thereby facilitating procs such as the Weak Spot trait. The evade factor is a bit tricky as the evade frames do not last as long as the total animation of Burning

Speed. The evade comes with a few split seconds of delay after activation of the spell. This makes evading reactively with this spell a difficult task. However the combination of movement and evades gives you agility in battle. Burning speed is therefore a complicated spell with multiple uses and a great importance in terms of damage contribution.

Water



Vapor Blade

This is the highest range attack of the weapon set. It deals low damage but stacks a decent amount of vulnerability. However this requires your target to be hit twice by each blade. The low speed of the projectiles and their small radius can make this a difficult task if your target is moving. In addition, the return part of the projectiles can be cancelled if the initial blade hits terrain. Therefore this spell is barely useful in clear open ground on immobile targets when you must disengage from melee.



Cone of Cold

Very similar to Drake's Breath, it deals low damage but heals you and your allies instead of inflicting burn. The heal is not substantial enough to justify using this spell. However if you find yourself in a situation where your group is under constant pressure then make sure you heal all your allies as you use Cone of Cold.



Frozen Burst

While this skill deals low damage, it is very desirable because of its blast-finisher factor, quick and easy to use.

Air



Lightning Whip

This is our strongest auto-attack of all weapon sets. It is by no mean impressive, but it is our strongest. Compared to most other melee classes, this attack has an extended range. Being able to hit targets further away can be used to your advantage by allowing you to position yourself with less danger exposure and by cleaving a wider area. Note however that this target limit of Lightning Whip is 3. Therefore this auto-attack is not optimal on large groups of enemies. Regardless, lashing your enemies with bolts of lightning is very satisfying if the dark side of the force is deeply rooted in you.



Lightning Touch

A very low damage attack, with a constraining target limit of 3, but the long duration of the weakness inflicted is valuable, especially in high scales fractals.



Shocking Aura

There is little use for the Shocking Aura since we can hardly bear any hits. However this spell allows us to trigger traits such as Zephyr's Boon for self buffing and Powerful Aura can push the synergy even further by extending the boons to your group.

Earth



Impale

This spell deals very low damage. While Impale is never desirable in usual situations, you can use the fact that this spell bypasses terrain, vertical axis, and vision, to hit targets in odd locations.



Ring of Earth

While Ring of Earth deals more damage than Impale, it is still mediocre. However the crippling is instrumental when kiting. A secret fact for this spell is that at the height of its animation (when the rocks have fully emerged) it blocks projectiles for about two seconds. This is particularly useful against bosses like Captain Mai Trin to counter her teleporting shot.



Magnetic Grasp (+Magnetic Leap)

The unblockable immobilize is very useful on some bosses like the Legendary Grawl Shaman to prevent him from reaching villagers in his shield phase. The follow up Magnetic Leap can be used if a fire field is lying between you and your target to gain a Fire Aura, thereby triggering aura-related traits. Note however that you cannot grant auras using Powerful Auras in this way.

Dagger Off-Hand

Fire



Ring of Fire

The largest fire field available to the elemental. This spell is crucial to stacking might, as its duration and size allow the group to reach 25 stacks easily. Bear in mind that the burning is only inflicted if your foes cross the ring, which is very unlikely.



Fire Grab

A highly damaging spell that can sometime be difficult to land if your target is not immobile. It is best to stand at some distance (250-300) range from your foes in order to maximize the likelihood of this spell hitting.

Water



Frost Aura

Hardly useful since we cannot withstand direct hits. The Frost Armour can be helpful against an incoming burst that you cannot dodge.



Cleansing wave

A decent heal and cleanse. The longish cast time implies that you do not want to find yourself in a situation where this is your only survivability option. If you use this spell make sure to heal your allies at the same time.

Air



Ride the Lightning

A very good skipping skill. It is also good to burst single targets in melee, as the lack of distance will make it an instant hit. Note that the cooldown is not halved if your target is dodging, blocking, or if you do not hit. Using this spell is considered a weapon swap for proccing purposes.



Updraft

Knock back is difficult to use as moving your foes can disrupt the damage output of your group. This spell can however be useful for skipping by turning your camera (about face) before casting it.

Earth



Earthquake

A mediocre damage blast-finisher. Useful to control large groups of enemies or to stack might before engaging.



Churning Earth

The long activation time of this spell makes it weak in terms of damage. You should never cast this in combat. Useful to stack might before engaging if you have spare time.

Focus

Fire



Flamewall

Our longest lasting fire field. While its radius is small, this spell is instrumental for might stacking and generating procs on targets thanks to its high number of hits over its duration. Note however that this skill may not hit a target (except buildings) more than once per second. Therefore unlike Burning Speed, Flamewall does not get stronger on larger targets.



Fire Shield

As we can already supply might for ourselves and apply burn easily, this skill is only useful to trigger aura-related effects. It is a shield that does no shielding anyway.

Water



Freezing Gust

This skill is very weak, barely useful for kiting. It does almost no damage.



Comet

Blast finishers are a strong point of the elemental but this one is difficult to use. The low radius and the inability to ground-target it requires your enemies to be immobile for this spell to be effective. Set your target in a fire field with Burning Speed or Flamewall before using

Comet. Note that it is possible to control the landing spot of the comet even without a target: move your camera to look up or down, move forward (or backward) a bit, and then cast the spell; it will land about 300 units in front of you.

Air



Swirling Winds

This is one of the most crucial spell of the Focus. It destroys projectiles, but unblockable projectiles such as Malrona's will not be affected. You can increase the chance of Swirling Winds protecting your group in many encounters by jumping a few split seconds after initiating the cast. This will set the spell higher in the air, thereby catching flying projectiles more effectively.



Gale

While the single-target knockdown of this spell is long, it is usually best used to get rid of Defiant stacks in order to Deep Freeze enemy bosses. You should however use this to interrupt the deadly attacks of normal foes such as the life drain of the cultists in the ascalon fractal.

Earth



Magnetic Wave

There is a lot packed in this spell. In fact, it is almost difficult to make the most out of it due to its high number of skill factors: you rarely have the need for reflect, cleanse, cripple, blast, and damage at the same time! This is one of the best self-survivability skill provided by the focus. It does a much better job at blasting than its off-hand dagger counterpart, Earthquake, thanks to its lower cooldown and instant casting (you can cast Magnetic Wave while casting other spells).



Obsidian Flesh

This is the longest invulnerability available to your class, and unlike Mist Form it lets us use skills. This is a very strong defensive skill. You can use this to survive, but also to increase your damage by sparing the need to dodge for a few seconds, thereby allowing you to spend more time casting offensive spells

Sceptre

Fire



Flamestrike

A very poor attack, single target, long cast time, and low damage even considering the burn applied. Never waste time casting Flamestrike.



Dragon's Tooth

This delayed blast finisher is a strong burst ability for the sceptre. It cannot however be used freely as it requires a target to land accurately. Note that it is possible to control the landing spot of the tooth even without a target: move your camera to look up or down, move forward (or backward) a bit, and then cast the spell; it will land about 300 units in front of you. It is optimal to cast Dragon's Tooth right before casting a fire field at the landing location of the tooth to generate might efficiently.



Phoenix

The Phoenix is an interesting spell. It is used as a blast-finisher and as a burst skill. It is optimal to cast it in melee range by aiming slightly behind your target so that it is hit three times: by the phoenix on its way to the targeted location, when it explodes, and as it passes through your target again to return to you. The addition of these three hits makes this spell stronger than a Fire Grab! Note that the Phoenix follows terrain, as such it will be able to hit targets on terrain lower than you, but not elevated targets as well as enemies standing on some kind of platforms like harpies in Uncategorized fractal.

Water



Ice Shards

A weak single target auto-attack which little value comes from the number of hits it can generate in order to facilitate procs.



Shatterstone

This spell is good to stack vulnerability but its long cast time and delay take away all its value.



Water Trident

A rather quick heal that can be efficient when your allies are stacked in one location. The regeneration can be used in synergy with Cleansing Water to cleanse conditions.

Air



Arc Lightning

This auto-attack is the only of the weapon set that can hit more than one foe, but this requires enemies to stand between you and your target. It is weak in terms of damage (damage displayed on screen is for cumulative hits) and its only value comes from its high number of hits per second, which facilitates procs.



Lightning Strike

An instant spell that deals decent damage. The combination of Lightning Strike and Arc Lightning is still a low damage skill rotation.



Blinding Flash

A blinding skill that can be used proactively to counter an incoming attack. Note that blind is only 10% effective on unshakable bosses.

Earth



Stone Shards

This auto-attack is very slow, and its damage comes mainly from the bleed condition applied, which is suboptimal.



Rock Barrier/Hurl

On level 80 this spell increases your character's toughness by 250. This is good as our armour is low, but this does not constitute a good survivability skill as we can hardly bear direct hits regardless. The follow up skill, Hurl, generates 5 projectile finishers that take effect at the instant of activation.



Dust Devil

Enemies are blinded as this skill pierces through them. Foes may be hit multiple times if cast against a wall. Deals low damage.

Staff

Fire



Fireball

This is the best auto-attack of the weapon set. Note that it is weak in itself compared to other weapon's melee auto-attacks. Its ability to cleave makes it viable for most content, and the aoe allows you to hit targets further than maximum range. The trait Blasting Staff increases the radius of the aoe cleaves by 50%.



Lava Font

This is the strength of the weapon set. This low cooldown spell is not only a fire field by it deals almost as much raw damage as a warrior's Hundred Blades. The combination of Lava Font and Fireball cast on cooldown is one of the highest damaging skill chain in the game, but it requires your targets to be immobile. Even though the skill tooltip indicates no casting time, Lava Font is not instant – its casting time is approximately 0.2 second.



Flame Burst

Virtually dealing no damage. Do not cast this spell unless your group is not able to maintain sufficient burning uptime.



Burning Retreat

The fire trail created is made of 6 patches of fire that will each damage and burn your foes every second. You may therefore stack them by using Burning Retreat against a wall. This will result in a very large number of hits and a very high amount of damage.



Meteor Shower

This skill makes 24 meteors rain on the target area. Blasting Staff increases the radius of each meteor but not that of the shower area, therefore this trait effectively enhances the chance of each meteor hitting a given target standing in the Meteor Shower. The damage of this spell is unpredictable due to the randomness of the meteor falling pattern, but on average it is extremely damaging. You remain immobile to cast this spell. Note that, even

though some meteors will start falling before the channeling time ends during the cast; it is required to stand still almost until the end of the incantation. Interrupting the cast too early will result in a lower amount of meteors falling. It is possible to concentrate the meteors in a smaller area than that of the shower by casting the spell on a small area of solid ground: the meteors will always converge towards a valid landing spot. The second way to achieve that is to cast it from the maximum range and use Lightning Flash to teleport backward as far as possible while casting. Keep in mind that the damage of the meteors depends on your current state as they impact. Therefore it is possible to use Tornado right after casting Meteor Shower for a huge boost in damage, but in comparison the combination of Lava Font and Fireball will deal more damage than the Tornado effect.

Water



Water Blast

This spell is used to deal with constant pressure in melee range. You and your allies must stay in melee range to be affected by the aoe heal from Water Blast. Deals virtually no damage.



Ice Spike

The vulnerability applied by this skill has a long duration. This, in addition to the delay before impact, makes this spell a good option to cast on yourself while pulling enemies: as your foes arrive at your location they will be hit for a decent amount of damage and vulnerability.



Geyser

This heal is decent and useful to relieve the pressure on your group. Make sure to coordinate its cast with your teammates so that they stand in it and blast its water field for additional healing quickly before Geyser runs its short duration (2s).



Frozen Ground

The unblockable skill fact of this spell makes it a good control option, on the Legendary Grawl Shaman's shield phase for example. The ice field in itself is not very useful as the Frost Armour it can generate with combos only stacks up to 5 times and is a weak protection. Although the spell tooltip indicates no casting time, this spell is not instant; its casting time is similar to Lava Font.



Healing Rain

This spell is a very large water field. It is instrumental in dealing with continuous condition pressure. The synergy with the Cleansing Water trait creates a virtually condition-free zone for its duration. Healing Rain heals less than Geyser since it has no direct heal fact, but has a longer duration for healing combos. Note that the radius of this skill is not increased by Blasting Staff trait but only visually: the effect radius actually benefit from the radius increase.

Air



Chain Lightning

While this skill deals mediocre damage, it can hit up to three targets. It is therefore best used against exactly two foes as the lightning will bounce back to your initial target after hitting the second, thereby apply more pressure on your priority target.



Lightning Surge

The long cast time of this spell prevents us from applying blind proactively to an incoming attack. However the damage dealt is decent.



Gust

The pathing of the Gust follows terrain, so it may fail to hit elevated targets for example. The projectile is rather slow but it pierces. It could be used to reposition your enemy or interrupt a slow attack.



Windborne Speed

Useful for skipping. Save this to cleanse movement impairing conditions if you expect enemies on your way to apply them.



Static Field

Useful during skipping phases to save your group from enemies catching up. It is usually best not to cast this spell unless you are already in combat.

Earth



Stoning

This low damage auto-attack is very suboptimal as it is single target and projectile combos are not often useful. It can however keep targets permanently weakened even on bosses

with Unshakeable.



Eruption

This skill can be used as you engage on a target before swapping to fire to cast Lava Font. The resulting delayed blast will take effect in the fire field thereby buffing your team with 3 might stacks.



Magnetic Aura

A personal reflect aura that can be shared with the Powerful Aura trait for a group-wide personal reflect. It is particularly useful against Orrian Turrets in Arah.



Unsteady Ground

It is possible to influence the orientation of the rock wall by turning your camera during the cast time of this spell: the wall will always be perpendicular to the direction your character is facing. This spell is useful when skipping to prevent enemies from catching up with your group but try to refrain from using it if you are not in combat yet.



Shockwave

The projectile is rather slow and follows terrain, it can therefore be difficult to land, but it also pierces and applies Immobilized to up to 5 targets. Shockwave can be useful to keep a boss in place when kiting, but it is rarely optimal to use it as the effect is weak for the time dedicated to the cast.

Lightning Hammer



While wielding it your precision and ferocity are increased respectively by 180 and 75 at level 80 (which give about +8% critical chance and +5% critical damage). The lightning hammer attributes are therefore a strong damage buff by just by themselves, and the lightning hammer skills specialise us even further for more damage. The auto-attack chain is the most desirable skill of this weapon set. You can only use up to 15 attacks (25 with Conjurer trait).



Lightning Swing/Static Swing/Thunderclap

This auto-attack chain is one of the most damaging in the entire game. Its range is slightly above that of usual melee attacks (150). While the first two hits have a target limitation 3, the final blow can hit 5 targets in aoe, applies blindness, and blast at the same time. This is particularly useful against large groups of enemies as you may not be able to dodge all incoming attacks. This cheap and recurrent source of blast finishers is perfect to stack might with the help of fire fields previously laid or provided by your teammates.



Lightning Leap

The combo of this leap-finisher and lightning field will only daze one target. This spell is mainly useful for movement: to go faster or to outsmart certain terrain restrictions.



Wind Blast

A slow interrupt that can be used to throw your targets towards advantageous locations for your group, like against a wall (600 range launch).



Lightning Storm

The damage from this spell is decent only against a large concentration of enemies and against targets with large hitboxes or structures.



Static Field

Unlike its counterpart from the staff skill set, this spell requires the caster to be immobile during its activation time. This greatly limits the utility of Static Field. It can be used to control foes in some event like in the Champion Grawl Shaman encounter to save the villagers from the incoming Grawl veterans.

Ice Bow



While wielding it your healing power and condition duration are increased respectively by 180 and 20% so it's relatively worse than other useful conjures. Usually, it's conjured to either burst enemies with Ice Storm (works great against structures and enemies with large hitbox) or to stun a boss for 5 seconds with Deep Freeze which allows your party to safely burst him (mostly used in fractals). You can only use up to 15 attacks (25 with Conjured trait) but usually after using skills 3-5 it should be dropped. Note that the Ice bow is very quick to conjure, which is advantageous in terms of time management and ease of applying burst damage.



Frost Fan

Best used in melee so that all 7 arrows hit and apply as much chill as possible on your priority target. The arrows pierce therefore more enemies will be hit.



Ice Storm

This is one of our most damaging skills of all weapon sets, even on single targets. Similarly to Meteor Shower, this skill must be cast while stationary and fully channelled for the entirety of the arrows to rain down on your enemies. This is a very strong burst skill, and it gains effectiveness on larger enemies, structures, or large groups as more arrows will hit your foes. Note that this skill can hit up to 24 times in a short period of time. It is therefore a good spell to generate procs such as the Weak Spot trait.



Deep Freeze

This skill achieves the longest possible stun in the game (5s). It is difficult to land due to long cast time and slow projectile; therefore you must plan for its use. Stand in close range if the target is mobile. Coordinate with your group to strip bosses of their Defiant stacks before using Deep Freeze. In fractal level 38 the instability will change the chill applied into protection for your target, so Deep Freeze is not a strong choice at that level. This skill is usually followed up by Ice Storm and occasionally a melee Frost Fan before dropping the Ice Bow.

Earth Shield



While wielding this weapon your vitality and toughness are increased by 180. These attributes are rather desirable but the skill set of the Earth Shield is niche. It's only use could be pulling enemies into one point or getting invulnerability. You can only use up to 15 attacks (25 with Conjured trait) but usually after using skill you wanted, it should be dropped, most of the skill is weak compared to your main weapon skills.



Magnetic Shield

Compared to similar skills of other professions, Magnetic Shield is rather weak: its radius of effect is 600 but the pull is of only 400 units on a maximum of 3 targets. It can be used to control enemies like the Legendary Grawl Shaman in its shield phase because of its unblockable feature.



Fortify

During the invulnerability you may not move, but you can use instant spell such as Lightning Flash for example to move to another location. This spell is interesting to use against Mai Trin to tank her in the electric blue field.

Fiery Greatsword



Commonly used elite skill known by its acronym "FGS" is essential to burst down bosses extremely fast with its iconic Fiery Rush. While wielding it, your Power is increased by 260 and your Condition Damage by 180. You can only use up to 15 attacks (25 with Conjured trait). Be careful not to summon it on the group of enemies before combat since it is the only conjured weapon that deals damage upon conjuration. Best way to use it is to rotate between skills 3, 4 and 5, prioritizing Fiery Rush.



Flame Wave

The 4 projectiles that will be shot during this channelling skill pierce through targets and follow terrain. Each set of four projectiles consumes only one weapon charge. Flame Wave deals high damage, but it is still a low priority spell to use on this weapon as other skills are even more damaging. Use this spell as a filler between more important skills uses.



Fiery Eruption

Applies a long burning uptime (3s) every second over a duration of 6s. This spell is only used when your party has a hard time sustaining a high burning uptime. Note that you can cancel the aftercast animation by moving after the spell has taken effect.



Fiery Whirl

This is a high priority spell for the Fiery Greatsword. It deals high damage on low cooldown and evades for more than a second. You can therefore choose to save this to deal with incoming attacks. Fiery Whirl can hit your target for a maximum of 8 times depending on position, target size and freeness of movement: if used against a wall your enemies will take all hits. It is also possible to use this spell in combination with Lightning Flash by teleporting back in front of your target right after you Fiery Whirl through it thereby effectively striking the target with a double Fiery Whirl.



Fiery Rush

This is the highest priority spell of the Fiery Greatsword. It is potentially the most damaging skill in the game. The most efficient way to use this spell is by deselecting any targets, disabling auto-targeting, and performing a Fiery Rush against a wall. This will stack all fire patches from the trail generated in a single point and any enemy standing at this location will be hit 68 times in a short duration. Procs such as the Weak Spot trait are enormously facilitated by such tactic. Note that the fire trail applies burning, but it is not a fire field. Contrary to Burning Speed, using Lightning Flash while performing a Fiery Rush will end the rush.



Firestorm

As this skill hits 9 times over 8 seconds (first hit being instant after cast), it deals a decent amount of damage and as such it is very desirable. In addition this skill has a target limitation of 10 enemies therefore it is all the more effective against larger groups.

Section 2: Traits

The list below describes traits that are commonly used in PvE as well as traits that have their use in niche situations.

Fire

The fire trait line is generally desirable thanks to the stats it provides. Power is a direct increase to damage, and condition duration helps to control the battlefield.



Conjurer (Adept major)

Obligatory when running conjure builds such as the S/D+LH archetype, otherwise not necessary since conjures are most often used for a few skills before being dropped.



Burning Precision (Adept major)

Helps with upkeep of burning. It is especially good if you want to permanently keep the Burning Rage bonus (as well as that of Rune of the Flame Legion for instance). However, if your team has no problem with maintaining burning on your enemies, then this trait loses its value.



Internal Fire (Adept major)

Mandatory while running staff builds since they imply staying in fire attunement in order to deal optimal damage.



Pyromancer's Alacrity (Master major)

Imperative while using staff builds. Moreover, this trait makes dagger and sceptre builds more fluid and natural by improving possible rotations.



Burning Fire (Master major)

This trait does not have a lot of uses since conditions in PvE are generally not a threat. A possible use would be when running wisps in the Swampland fractal to get a free condition removal if you trigger particular traps (most traps will not trigger it).



Burning Rage (Grandmaster minor)

A desirable 10% damage modifier that is relatively easy to enable, especially when you run with a guardian using his virtue of justice, or in combination with Burning Precision. "Burn them all" – Aerys II Targaryen.



Persisting Flames (Grandmaster major)

A remarkably strong trait that can provide your party with permanent fury, which in turn increases party's dps by a large margin. Furthermore, it increases the duration of your fire fields that gives you more time to blast them. Note that this trait boosts the damage of Lava Font by 50%, making it one of the hardest hitting skills in the game. Persisting Flames fits our might generation role perfectly. This trait gives our profession a lot of value in groups.

Air

The stats provided by this trait line, Precision and Ferocity, are very strong contributor to direct damage. Points invested in Air are therefore very desirable.



Zephyr's Boon (Adept major)

Quite decent when running dagger builds with no Persisting Flames and while skipping but it should not be used normally when you have other sources of Fury and Swiftness.



Quick Glyphs (Adept major)

Can be used for skipping with the Inscription trait to get high uptime of swiftness just from Glyph of Elemental Harmony. This also helps to get a high uptime of the effect of Glyph of Elemental Power, which is useful when soft control is necessary.



One with Air (Adept major)

Yet another trait that finds its use mostly for skipping or running around a map. Granted superspeed overrides combat moving speed cap and together with FGS can make you move really fast. Works even better with Fresh Air to reset it.



Bolt to the Heart (Adept major)

A trait that increases your damage by 6.67% on average. Decent choice when optimizing your damage.



Electric Discharge (Adept minor)

This trait becomes valuable if you can swap to air frequently. Therefore it is a good boost to your single target damage when used in synergy with Fresh Air.



Arcane Lightning (Master major)

Usable with staff or LH builds (there are better traits for dagger builds), duration doesn't stack: casting additional arcane spell simply resets the duration back to 15 seconds.



Inscription (Master major)

In conjunction with Quick Glyphs can be used to gain high uptime of swiftness just from Glyph of Elemental Harmony



Aeromancer's Alacrity (Master major)

This trait finds its application when you need higher uptime of projectile defence while wielding focus as an off-hand. Most of the skills tied to the air attunement have either no cooldown (like Lightning Whip) or don't really need cooldown reduction since there are far better traits.



Air Training (Master major)

A trait that increases your damage by 10 %. Really good for d/x weapon set as well as one iteration of S/X + LH build.



Weak Spot (Grandmaster minor)

This trait does not have any cooldown, this means that we can achieve a strong output of vulnerability by maximizing our critical chance and our number of hits per second. In effect, a single Fiery Rush can bring your targets to 25 vulnerability almost instantly.



Tempest Defence (Grandmaster)

While this trait's defensive part is not something that should be considered worthy in PvE, it also grants 20% damage increase against stunned or knocked down foes. If you want to burst down an enemy, consider using Deep Freeze (it is counted as a stun) in order to trigger the bonus damage. This trait can therefore be a desirable option to switch to when using Ice Bow.



Fresh Air (Grandmaster)

This trait gives us the ability to bypass all attunement cooldowns for the air attunement every five seconds. This is very strong as it allows us to stay in air and simply hop in other attunements to use a few skills before swapping back. It has a strong synergy with on-swap traits such as Electric Discharge and Arcane Fury.

Earth



Elemental Shielding (Adept major)

Should be used with in conjunction with Powerful Aura when running defensive builds. Use only when your team absolutely needs protection buff (e.g. high scale fractals with no guardian).



Stone Splinters (Adept major)

Really solid damage modifying trait. Relatively easy to trigger considering you usually stay in melee range.



Rock Solid (Master Adept)

Fastest recharging stability source that finds it use for enemies like Giganticus Lupicus when your team triggers a lot of Necrid Traps. Otherwise not really needed since enemies in PvE hardly use CC frequently enough to make this trait desirable.

Water



Soothing Mist (Adept minor)

A weaker version of Regeneration but Soothing Mist stacks with the buff. Usually picked when running typical S/X + LH builds, it increases your sustain by a low percentage but also makes easier to stay above 90% HP threshold when using Scholar runes and participating in fights when condition pressure is present.



Cantrip Mastery (Adept major)

Could be used when cantrips can make a difference and save your life e.g. when fighting Giganticus Lupicus.



Piercing Shards (Adept major)

Only used with dedicated LH builds that are specialized in staying most of the time in water attunement.



Vital Striking (Adept major)

A trait that works exactly like scholar rune 6th bonus, very decent for offensive builds but makes staying above 90% HP threshold even more crucial.



Healing Ripple (Master minor)

A support trait that can help defensively built teams. When running S/X + LH builds you ought to stay in water attunement making usage of this trait rather infrequent.



Stop, Drop, and Roll (Master major)

There are not many applications for this trait but it could be used during the Volcanic fractal last fight to quickly remove burning without having to use any of your condition removals.



Bountiful Power (Grandmaster minor)

Strong synergy with water and arcane traits since they give you a lot of different boons.



Powerful Aura (Grandmaster major)

In conjunction with Elemental Shielding or Zephyr's Boon you can use it to spread buffs to nearby allies, decent when playing defensively. Note that auras generated by sources that are not weapon skills, like combos, will not trigger the sharing.

Arcana



Arcane Fury (Adept minor)

Solid trait when running solo or when your party lacks fury. Strong synergy with Fresh Air as every hop out and back to air will give us 4 seconds of fury (base duration) and is repeatable every 5 seconds.



Renewing Stamina (Adept major)

Very good for beginners as well as in harder content like fractals where bosses hit harder and more frequent. Allows you to pay less attention to your endurance resources.



Blasting Staff (Adept major)

A quality-of-life improvement when running with staff. Completely useless with other weapon sets.



Elemental Attunement (Master major)

Really strong defensive support trait that could be used in low-boon parties as well as for inexperienced players. Protection gained from earth attunement vastly decreases incoming damage while Swiftiness gained from air attunement makes skipping easier.



Evasive Arcana (Grandmaster major)

Another strong support trait that should be only used when starting to play an elemental or when your party has problems with low sustain and cannot complete a content. Note however that this trait encourages using dodging less effectively: instead of evading incoming attacks as you spot the danger from your attack animation of your foes, you will likely use dodges just to sustain hits endured that you could have otherwise dodged.

Section 2: Utilities & Heals

Cantrips



Armour of Earth

Only source of Stability for elementalists if we exclude elite transformations and one trait. Fortunately, CC is not prevalent in PvE, making this less desirable. Besides Stability it also grants Protection and breaks stuns.



Cleansing Flame

Removes up to 3 conditions and like Armour of Earth it is generally not needed to have it on skill bar. It could be used when running wisps in Swampland fractal to quickly remove movement impairing conditions.



Lightning Flash

Increases your mobility when skipping and can be used to get better positioning. Useful when want to get out of certain areas enemies put down (e.g. Giganticus Lupicus' Necrid Trap, generally known as a bubble). Allows to quickly move along the z-axis when the game engine allows for it (e.g. just before last boss in the Arah p3, Wraithlord).



Mist Form

Another cantrip that is convenient when skipping packs of mobs. It grants us invulnerability for 3 seconds and increases our movement speed by 66%. Similarly to Lightning Flash, Mist Form allows to get out of Necrid Trap and similar skills. Additionally, it can be used to revive downed team mates without the danger of getting ourselves downed.

Glyphs



Glyph of Elemental Power

It's a stun-breaker but generally shouldn't be used as such. The trigger chance is exclusive for every enemy. Its effect depends on the attunement you were in while using it. Most often you should try doing so while being in air or earth attunement. The former applies a long time duration Weakness which is absolutely vital in high scales fractals while the latter grants virtually permanent uptime of Cripple which is helpful when being at max-melee range (more than 130, but you can still attack with your skills) while fighting certain fractal bosses (e.g. Archdiviner or Mossman).



Glyph of Storms

Generates AoE on 1200 range. The type of the storm depends on the attunement you were while starting to cast in, not the attunement while the spell was finished. It should be almost always used while in earth attunement because of its strong blind effect. It is really good when you need to blind enemies from range and with no delay.



Glyph of Renewal

You can use this skill to revive up to 3 allies while being in earth attunement. Its effect with other attunements is of little value.

Arcane

Arcane spells always score critical hits when dealing damage.



Arcane Wave

Our only utility skill that is a blast finisher. Its casting time is instant meaning you can use it while performing other actions. Use it in conjunction with the Arcane Lightning trait to receive a slight boost to your outgoing damage.



Arcane Shield

A stun-breaker that grants you 3 blocks after which it will explode dealing a small amount of damage. A decent defensive skill, especially when fighting harder bosses. Use it in conjunction with the Arcane Lightning trait to receive a slight boost to your outgoing damage.

Signets



Signet of Air

Can be used to passively increase your moving speed by 25% when your team lacks Swiftiness for skipping (which grants +33%).



Signet of Earth

Passively increases your toughness by 180 points which is seldom needed. Can be used to immobilize Legendary Shoggroth and generally when you really need to kite and you lack soft CC.



Signet of Fire

Frequently used to increase your Precision by 180 points which translates to approximately +8.57% critical chance. Very solid skill when optimizing your damage but if you want to use something else, this signet is generally a low priority utility and should be dropped to make room for other needs.

Elite Skills



Conjure Fiery Greatsword

Since it is a Conjure type elite skill, it is described in weapon skills paragraph 2.2.9.



Glyph of Elementals

Summons an Elemental for that lives 60 seconds after which this skill goes on cooldown for 120 seconds. The Earth Elemental can be used to tank hits from bosses like mossman if needed (he also grants Protection decreasing incoming damage further). Additionally, summon it and hide behind it when fighting Old Tom in Uncategorized Fractal. The other Elementals are quite mediocre, though the Water Elemental can sometimes help when the team is under pressure.



Reaper of Grenth (humans only)

Very situational elite skill that is available only to humans. When fighting Imbued Grawl Shaman in Volcanic Fractal (the last boss) it can be used to apply a very long Chill while the boss is trying to move towards a villager. It works because of its unblockable feature and other elite skills are less desirable during that encounter.

Healing Skills



Arcane Brilliance

Most commonly used healing skill because of its additional effect of being a blast finisher. The more blast finishers we have the better. Alone, this skill is quite weak for a healing skill but when around the mobs it heals for a considerate amount of HP. With just 2 enemies hit, it has similar efficiency as Glyph of Elemental Harmony. As another bonus effect, it triggers Arcane Lightning effect.



Ether Renewal

Decent healing skill with one major flaw of long casting time. Removes up to 8 conditions every 0.5 second which means it's remarkably strong when having issues with them. It grants the highest healing per second in comparison to other healing skills but mostly because of its low cooldown of 15 seconds. Triggers Zephyr's Focus which can give you some additional endurance when desperately needed.



Glyph of Elemental Harmony

Usually shouldn't be picked over Arcane Brilliance or Ether Renewal but its solid when you need swiftiness (especially with Inscription trait). Grants protection in earth attunement but generally it's one of the lowest heal when not using it in water attunement (for additional Regeneration) and should be used by experienced players in harder content seeing as you need to know when to use it for the best effect.



Signet of Restoration

The least commonly used healing skill that's only decent when dealing with steady pressure (allows maintaining scholar runes bonus). Depends on the number of attacks you perform and with enough of them (the case of dagger builds) can achieve similar efficiency to Healing Signet.

Section 2: Gear & Nourishments

This section describes simple choices available to all elementalists. In a future update of this guide a DPS calculator will be published to help advanced players optimize their gear more effectively.

Equipment

Direct damage is a function of three synergetic stats: Power, Precision, and Ferocity. In order to deal optimal damage we must maximize them. The most efficient gear is therefore a complete Berserker set. Such gear is effective in all situations, with all types of groups. It is advised that even beginner elementalists invest in Berserker gear, as defensive stats are an inefficient way of gaining defence. Instead in section 3 we disclose a number of builds making use of defensive assets that can be helpful for new players.

Runes

The choice of runes should be dictated by your eagerness to optimise and of course, by your wallet. Runes prices have the biggest difference between the cheapest and the most expensive ones.



Rune of Strength

Currently the most expensive rune to buy. It focuses on Power boost as well as increasing duration of Might stacks granted by yourself by 45%. Its 6th bonus that increases your damage by 5% is trivial to maintain, mostly because of the 4th bonus as well as prevalence of Might stacks buff in PvE. Use it only when you expect your team to have troubles with generating Might stacks or when you don't want to focus on keeping yourself above 90% HP threshold.



Rune of Hoelbrak

Similar to Rune of Strength in that it focuses on Power boost and additional Might duration. It is slightly cheaper but grants 15% less might duration and +7% damage increases is not present. Instead, it reduces incoming conditions duration by 20% which isn't that needed in PvE.



Rune of the Scholar

Rune that boosts your DPS by the highest amount, in other words, theoretically optimal rune. Increases your Power and Ferocity instead of Might duration. Its 6th bonus is much harder to keep but it's the highest one a rune set can grant.



Rune of the Ranger

Cheap alternative (2-3 times cheaper) to Rune of the Scholar. Instead of Power, it focuses on Precision. Its 6th bonus might look like it was much harder to maintain but it works while your miniature is active.



Rune of the Flame Legion

The cheapest choice of all runes in that list. As all runes here, it focuses on Power but instead of Ferocity or additional Might duration, it concentrates on burning duration. Similarly to Rune of Strength, its 6th bonus is directly tied to its secondary focus. That is, this rune grants +7% damage bonus as long as your enemies are burning which is easy to keep, especially with a guardian in your party.



Ruby Orb

Used to be decent and cheap alternative to Rune of the Scholar (especially when having troubles with maintaining 90% HP threshold) but Ferocity implementation made it even worse. Increases Power, Ferocity and Precision.

Sigils

Elementalists have only 2 sigils to pick, unlike other professions which mean we have a much narrower choice. Sigils that trigger on weapon swap trigger on attunement change for elementalists.



Sigil of Force

Very solid choice when focusing on damage optimisation. Permanent +5% damage boost.



Sigil of the Night

The strongest damage boosts sigil excluding creature-specific sigils. Similar to Sigil of Force but grants +10% damage boost that works only during the night. The viable dungeons are AC, TA, SE, COF and COE and the night fractals are Swampland, Snowblind, Volcanic, Underground and Solid Ocean. Preferably, you should have weapon with this sigil for those dungeons and another weapon with different one for daytime dungeons.



Sigil of Battle

Gives 3 stacks of Might for 20 seconds (just like blasting a fire field) upon an attunement change. Cooldown of 9 seconds makes it easier to use than other profession whose weapon swap cooldown is 10 seconds. This sigil sustains about 6 stacks of Might with no might/boon duration and works remarkably well with Rune of Strength.



Sigil of Energy

Another sigil that triggers upon an attunement swap with 9 cooldown. Gives exactly 50 endurance which is equal to one dodge. Particularly good when you start doing a dungeon you are not familiar with or when you play high scales fractal in melee range or just soloing.



Sigil of Strength

Triggers on critical hit (60% chance on that) which means it should be used only while having relatively high chance to score a critical hit. Grants 1 stack of might for 10 seconds with a cooldown of 10 seconds. Similarly to Sigil of Battle, works very well with Rune of Strength (or Hoelbrak alternative). Because it grants short duration stacks it shouldn't be used when your team stacks enough Might.

Nourishments



Plate of Truffle Steak

This food increases your power by 100 and precision by 70. In many cases this food is actually the most optimal or very close to being the most optimal.



Bowl of Curry Butternut Squash Soup

Once one of the most optimal foods in pre-ferocity era, now it loses often to cheaper food while not being any better. Grants 100 more precision and 70 ferocity.



Bowl of Sweet and Spicy Butternut Squash Soup

Similar to Bowl of Curry Butternut Squash Soup but instead of precision it gives more power, this food lost some efficiency when critical damage was changed. It's the most expensive food right now and usually the difference it gives is not worth spending on it, although the buff that it grants lasts 1 hour.



Plate of Truffle Steak Dinner

200 more power is the largest stat buff food can give. The only issue is that it works only after killing a mob which means it is usually not active during boss fights either because the buff fades out quickly or because we skipped every mob on the path to the boss. Exceptionally good in fractals where you spend a lot of time killing enemy mobs.



Carrot Soufflé

Same as the above one with the exception that it lasts 1 hour and has a French name, this is always nice.



Dragon's Breath Bun

Economical version of the two previous foods. Lasts only 20 minutes but costs only a fraction of their cost.



Omnoberry Pie

Acceptable food when playing casually. Instead of granting power like Plate of Truffle Steak it gives you life steal ability when scoring a critical hit (1 second cooldown). Not only it increases your sustainability by healing you for 325, it also increases damage by dealing 325 more damage whenever the life steal triggers.



Omnoberry Ghost

Same as before but lasts 45 minutes and gives an additional ghostly effect (purely cosmetic).



Slice of Candied Dragon Roll

Similarly to Dragon's Breath Bun, this food is an economical version of two previous ones. Lasts only 20 minutes.



Bowl of Seaweed Salad

This food gives unique effect of increasing your damage output by 10% but only when you are moving. This usually makes it the best food you can take but there is one flaw: it does not affect damage you deal while performing movement skills like Fiery Rush (though it will work once you start moving while fiery trail is still active), thereby making it less desirable. However, whenever you do not intend to use Fiery Rush like against a few bosses in fractals, this food gives absolutely the best damage bonus.



Experimental Remnant

This cheap version of Bowl of Seaweed Salad can be bought for a fixed price since it is sold by NPC after completion of Destroy the Risen broodmother to free Rakkan (Cursed Shore).



Skale Venom

Potion that has a 10% chance to inflict weakness and vulnerability when scoring a hit, with no cooldown. Weakness is always helpful in high scale fractals. Similarly to the Weak Spot trait, Skale Venom can also help with stacking Vulnerability since both have no cooldown.



Powerful Potion of X Slaying

General potions of slaying should be always used whenever possible. They grant the strongest damage boosts as well as reduction of incoming damage.

Section 3: Builds

There are multiple factors that must be taken into account in order to decide on which build to use. We must consider our group composition and optimisation, as well as the type of encounter that we are about to face. A build is a response to a purpose. The profession assets discussed in the previous section must be picked carefully in order to match what we intend to achieve. The following list shows the main PvE aspects we must assess to choose our building assets efficiently:

- Offensive support: can we or our group generate enough Might, Fury and Vulnerability?
- Personal damage: it should always be maximised, but without comprising the group offensive support capability.
- Versatility: is other support and non-damage output required?

In this section we will explain the three main build archetypes that cover all aspects of PvE. Keep in mind that although the builds mentioned here focus on specific weapon sets, it is required to have all weapons available in inventory in order to be ready to face any situation. While we explain the builds' mechanics and their optimal rotations, we advise the reader to refer to paragraph 2.2 in order to better understand how to use each weapon skill. Note that optimal rotations are designed to yield the highest DPS possible while fulfilling the role of each build. However in most encounters we will not be able to perform these rotations perfectly as described due to the need to dodge or because of encounter-specific mechanics. For these reasons a detailed mastery of all assets at our disposal is essential.

Dagger Builds

Dagger/Focus 66200

- [Link to build](#)

Overview

This build has the most natural feeling of all. It is the most general, and it allows us to perform well in all aspects of PvE. It benefits from a high versatility and it is focused on the air attunement for a good damage output. This build revolves around using Fresh Air to deal constant damage with our strongest main weapon auto-attack, while maintaining access to other attunements for their specific purposes. It is therefore best used for challenging content such as fractals or solo encounters.

Mechanics

Lightning Whip is our strongest auto-attack, but it is by no mean impressive in itself. However the clever use of swapping mechanics with fresh air and the potential of other attunements yield a highly efficient mix. While using this build we will be swapping attunements often. The default action is to stay in air, dealing damage with Lightning Whip, waiting for the cooldown of Fresh Air. Every time Fresh Air is up, we may swap to another attunement, use it for its specific purpose, and as we land a critical hit we may instantly come back to the air attunement. Every time we swap we trigger on-swap effects such as Arcane Fury and Electric Discharge for example. This will deal a high number of hits per second on your targets, which facilitates procs such as Weak Spot and Burning Precision. The might stacking role of our profession is ensured by the combo of fire fields from Burning Speed in fire and

blast finishers from the earth and water attunements. With Persisting Flames, our fields last long enough to allow us to swap back to air after laying them, cast auto-attacks until Fresh Air cools down, and then blast them in water or earth. Note that we invest into a trait benefiting the air attunement: Air Training. It is therefore efficient to use clever attunement swapping mechanics (as described in paragraph 2.1) to land our strongest spells in Air. To make this process easier, we may swap out of air during a Lightning Whip cast so that the auto-attack hits in fire for example, cast Burning Speed and instantly swap back to air, so that the explosion part of this strong burst skill lands while we are in our optimal attunement.

Finally, note that while this build also performs remarkably with conjures.

Optimal rotation

Most of our blast finisher spells have cooldowns that are about twice as long as Burning Speed (with Pyromancer's Alacrity) and Burning Speed's cooldown fits the minimum cooldown of our fire attunement (13s, with no general attunement cooldown thanks to Fresh Air mechanics). This is why we split our optimal rotation in two phases. Each phase involves laying a fire field, swapping to air, and then blasting the field with either water or earth depending on the rotation phase, before swapping back again to air.

	Fire	Swap to Fire in the middle of an auto-attack cast so that the hits trigger Fresh Air.
	Burning Speed	Instantly swap back to Air right after you start leaping so that the explosion lands in our optimal attunement.
	Air	
	Arcane Wave	Cast this instant spell in the middle of an auto-attack cast.
 x3	Lightning Whip	
	Earth	
	Arcane Brilliance	
	Magnetic Wave	Cast this instant spell in the middle of Arcane Brilliance cast.
	Air	
 x7	Lightning Whip	You do not need to focus on counting the number of auto-attacks performed: the cooldown of your fire attunement will indicate that Burning Speed is ready.
	Fire	
	Burning Speed	
	Air	



Lightning Whip



Water



Comet



Frozen Burst



Air



Lightning Whip

Variants

66002 – Renewing Stamina

Useful when facing particularly challenging content where endurance is not a luxury. The Arcane Fury minor trait will generate a substantial amount of self Fury.

The following two builds are less optimised for damage, but provide a number of support and sustain abilities that are instrumental when learning how to play our profession. Use these builds if you are a beginner elemental, until you can rely more on dodging and positioning to keep yourself alive.

06260 – Aura Sharing

Instead of superior might and fury stacking, this build offers a shared aura that grants your allies (and yourself) fury, swiftness and protection. This last buff vastly decreases incoming damage but only for 3 seconds (base duration) so use it when needed. Additionally, you now have party wide condition removal and minor heal every time you swap to water, which further increases your sustain potential.

06044 – Elemental Attunement Support

This second defensive variant grants Elemental Attunement that, together with points in Arcana, makes it possible to achieve 55% of protection uptime group-wide with no additional boon duration.

Sceptre Builds

Sceptre/Dagger 64220

- [Link to build](#)

Overview

A highly specialised build archetype. It involves bursting and blasting with the sceptres' fire spells, before sustaining very high damage with conjured weapons wielded in an optimal water attunement. This build excels at generating offensive buffs for the group. It is therefore one of the most efficient builds for speed running dungeon paths and low level fractals.

Mechanics

The S/D gives access to a highly damaging blast finisher burst as well as a large fire field. This enables a fast and efficient might stacking for your group when engaging in a fight. As the sceptres' sustained damage is very weak in all attunements, the strength of this build comes from wielding conjures in the water attunement: the weapon skills of the conjures replace the weak water spells, and they benefit from Piercing Shards.

Optimal Rotation



Dragon's Tooth



Ring of Fire



Arcane Brilliance



Arcane Wave

Cast this instant spell in the middle of the Arcane Brilliance cast, unless the fight is going to last more than 15s, in which case cast Arcane Wave when the Arcane Lightning buff from Arcane Brilliance fades out.



Phoenix



Water

Swap to water in the middle of the Phoenix cast so that this damaging spell lands in our optimal attunement.



Conjure Weapon

Use as described in weapon overview paragraph

This build is intended to end fights within a short time period. As such we will generally not have to use the second weapon conjured. If we were to engage into a long encounter, a second phase of burst blasting should be undertaken before grabbing the second conjure. This build becomes more fluid when the group comprises of two elementalists: on each encounter only one conjuration spell is required to arm both players. This way no conjured weapons are left behind as you move away from a quickly bested encounter.

When might stacking out of combat you may use the blast finishers from earth ( ) before conjuring your weapon.

Variants

There are many possible variants for this build archetype, depending on the PvE aspects described in the opening paragraph of this section. The following are examples of how assets can be used efficiently to respond to group needs.

Off-hand Focus

This weapon generates smaller fire field but provides two blast finishers that are efficient and easy to use. This makes S/F the best weapon set to stack might when our team is able to use a small field or

when our team mates can provide larger fire fields. Swap to earth in the middle of the Phoenix 

cast to use Magnetic wave  while casting Arcane Brilliance , then cast Comet  as soon as you swap to water, just before conjuring weapons.

66200 – Vulnerability

This build is used when your group requires more vulnerability generation. It involves the synergy of Weak Spot and the high number of hits that some conjures generate (Ice Bow: Ice Storm & FGS: Fiery Rush). Wield the conjures in Air instead of Water in order to benefit from attunement specific traits. On

single targets, the instant burst from air skills is worth using: Lightning Strike  and Ride the

Lightning , before conjuring weapons.

Staff Builds

Staff 64220

- [Link to build](#)

Overview

This build focuses on damage by specialising in the fire attunement. It has the possibility to yield the highest main weapon DPS of all builds, if the group provides the necessary offensive support. Since their might stacking ability is not as high as S/D builds, Staff builds are usually used by second elementalists in a group. This build fits highly optimised speedruns.

Mechanics

Although this build has ranged capabilities, you must stay within close range of your targets to benefit from Stone Splinters and your group support, as well as to be able to blast your fire fields with Arcane Brilliance. Cast eruption before using lava font on top of it in order to stack might. Use your arcane spells with 15s intervals in order to keep Arcane Lightning up constantly.

Optimal rotation



Earth



Eruption



Fire



Lava Font



Arcane Brilliance



Arcane Wave

If you expect the fight to last for more than 15s then save this spell for when the Arcane Lightning buff fades off.



Meteor Shower



Lava Font



x4

Fireball

Although Lava Font may come off cooldown while you are casting the 4th Fireball, it is best not to interrupt your auto-attack cast. If we were to dodge in this phase then cast only 3 Fireballs.



+



x4

Lava Font +
Fireball x4

Repeat until target is dead, or Meteor Shower comes off cooldown.

Variants

62222 – Blasting Staff

This build trades some portion of mathematical offensive potential for larger AoEs and improves Meteor Shower damage capability as more AoE mean more meteors will hit smaller targets.

About the Author

Haviz and Zelyhn are dedicated elementalists from Retaliate [rT], a high-end European PvE guild that excels in speedrunning and solo gameplay. Both players are known for their will to push the limits of the profession. They have a passion for challenge and engaging content.

Haviz is the co-leader of [rT], and a recruiter for elementalists. He has taken part in many of the guild's accomplishments, such as the 7 second Giganticus Lupicus speedkill. He has an in-depth expertise of all aspects of GW2 and he has been a key contributor to the <http://gw2dungeons.net/> knowledge database. Zelyhn is a well known theory crafter who has been highly active on elementalists forums and in the dungeon community. Together they have designed the D/F build that is core to this profession.

The authors intend to frequently update and improve this guide. Comments and suggestions are highly welcome.

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