

Yet Another Weapon Guide - Bow

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Intro

Bow lets you attack from mid-range and apply phial effects! Charge in order to boost your damage and change your shot type while sniping away at a monster's weakspots! Stay mobile while charging, and roll through many attacks!

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Purpose

This guide is meant for new players of Monster Hunter Generations Ultimate (MHGU) or for players who haven't played Gunner in the old-school games, and wish to play as Bow. Note that this guide will not assume any prior knowledge, regardless of games played before in the Monster Hunter series.

Guide Contents

This guide will contain a comprehensive guide on Bow controls, details on arrow types and coatings, commentary on Bow styles and combinations, recommendations on progression Bows, and a final note on matchups against most monsters in the game.

When controls are discussed, this will assume Type 1, with X to charge and R to aim.

At A Glance

How Do I Play Bow?

- To Charge, hold X down, and release to fire.
- To aim, press and hold R. This will generate a trajectoryline, giving you a rough idea of how the arrows will travel. This is slightly misleading for Heavy, Spread, and Rapid-type arrows though, as those arrow types will be affected by gravity as they travel.
- The shot fired will depend on the level of charge you fire at and the Bow you're using. For best results, use Rapid type for most situations.*

- Always try to fully charge your shots.
- Power Shots can be performed with A after you fire a shot in Guild Style, and under different conditions in other styles. When used, Power Shots will fire the shot type one level above your charge level, unless you don't have access to it, in which case, the Power Shot will repeat the shot fired.
- Pressing A while you're charging will fire an Arc Shot. Arc Shots will impact a specific area, and only differ for different Bows. Charging Arc Shots will make them go farther away and increase their damage.
- *Due to the Rapid Bow Bug, Heavy-type arrows, though different from the other shot types, are about as effective as Rapid type arrows on most matchups.

Hot Tips

1. **Bow wants to be charging all of the time**, or at least, as much as possible. **Higher charge levels means higher damage.** So always strive to be charging if you aren't doing much else. Charge while on the move and you'll be able to punish monsters by walking out of the way.
2. **Try to learn and stay within Critical Distance for your attacks.** Remember that Pierce has the longest Critical Distance, followed by Rapid, then by Heavy, then by Spread.
3. **Aim for the monster weakspot.** Learn and remember monster weakspots, so that you can adjust your shots. The difference between hitting a good weakspot and bad weakspots can save you quite a few coatings.
4. **Take Coatings and Coating Combines for your Bow** so long as the Coatings can be used by your Bow. Power Coatings are the most valuable Coatings followed by Elem. Coatings, then by Status-type Coatings.
5. **Abuse monster openings by using Power Shots.** As long as you have the time and safety, Power Shots effectively double (or more) your damage output. Well-timed and aimed Power Shots can make a great difference.
6. **Watch your Stamina** if you aren't using Mega Dash Juices. Stamina management is key when playing Bow, as you can fail dodges if you don't have enough Stamina. Remember that using a Power Shot or simply charging up a shot consumes Stamina, so if you're about to run out of Stamina, think about canceling your charge with Y or B.

Meta Stuff

- **Rapid-type** arrows and **Heavy-type** arrows are usually about equal to each other. Following them up is the more niche but still usable Pierce-type arrow. Finally, Spread-type arrows bring up the rear.
- Try to pick Bows with a **Rapid or Heavy-type shot on the final charge**. Even better, if you're running **Valor Style**, use a Bow which has the **same shot type on Charge Levels 2 and 3**.
- **If your Bow cannot support Power Coatings, then that's usually an indicator of a bad Bow**. Exceptions do exist, but are few and far between.
- **Try to always pick a Bow that supports at least Power C. Lvl 2.** If you want more damage uptime, try to find a Power C+ talisman with at least +10 points on there, so you can get "Use Power C Lvl. 1".
- **Consider running Mega Dash Juices** if you don't have Focus so you can store your charge while walking to dodge monster attacks.
- Style-wise, **Valor tends to be most used**. Valor Bow, when it fills the Valor Gauge, can fire two Power Shots in a row, with the second having a damage bonus.
- **Adept Bow** is also good, since it lets you gain a large amount of charge post-dodge.
- **Guild** tends to be middle of the road with access to both Arc and Power Shots.
- Striker and Alchemy are less used because of their lack of access to Power Shot. Aerial Bow, while fun, tends to be on the worse side because you can't fire Charge 3 shots mid-air, only Charge 2.
- Hunter Art-wise, Bow has okay HAs, with a few standouts. **Haste Rain** tends to be the best due to it enhancing your charge speed and walking speed.
- **Tactical Retreat** is like Absolute Readiness for Bows since it also lets you charge a shot while you're invincible.
- Triple Volley can dish out damage but it takes a while to execute and you're vulnerable for the entire time you're using it.
- Blade Wire is pretty bad and works like Pierce-type arrows, but you can't use phials with it. If you need to sever tails, I suggest using a Bowgun with Slicing S or a Cut-type weapon instead.

- If you must use Bow on certain bad matchups, consider Evasion +1 or Evade Extender in order to mitigate the monster's attacks. Or... Adept and Valor.
- The **Rapid Bow Bug** is a critical bug discovered and confirmed back when GU was still unlocalized, and was still called XX. Essentially, the game ignores one or more hits that occur on the same frame, which happens a lot of the time when you use Rapid-type Arrows. This can translate into up to 10% damage loss, and is the prime reason why Heavy is as used as often as Rapid. Furthermore, this bug also impacts sleep and bomb strategies.

Cool Stuff

- Need to sheath quickly? Standing still and sheathing is much faster than sheathing while moving. Let go of the control stick and sheath in order to perform the faster sheath.
- Need to load coatings and the monster's about to roar? Cancel your loading animation by starting to load the coating. The monster's roar will stop your animation early, and you'll have coatings loaded quickly.
- Once you start combining, nothing can interrupt you. Use this to combine extra phials while the monster roars.
- Once you fire, you can't readjust your shot for Power Shot under most circumstances. Make sure you've got a good line of fire before you Power Shot, and keep in mind the monster's stagger tendencies.
- Aiming with Bow is as easy as 1-2-3: First, move your hunter in the monster's direction, then aim, then aim up and down to adjust for weakspots. Then fire!
- Try fiddling around with the options to make your aiming experience easier on yourself.

Controls & Style Rundown

Guild Style

Two Hunter Art slots (1 SP Art). Unlimited access to Power and Arc Shot.

- X (Type 2) **Aim** (hold), or (Type 1) **Charge** (hold)
- While Charging, Y or B - **Backstep**
- While Charging, A - **Arc Shot**
- While Charging, release - **Fire Shot**
- After Fire Shot, A - **Power Shot**
- A - **Arrow Swipe**
- After Arrow Swipe, A - **Arrow Swipe 2**
- X + A - **Apply Coating**

- B (no direction) - **Backstep**
- After Backstep, B -~~Backroll~~
- After Backroll, X - **Insta-Charge**
- R (Type 2) **Charge** (hold), or (Type 1) **Aim** (hold)
- In midair, X - **Jumping Shot**
- In midair, A - **Jumping Swipe**

Guild Style is generally a solid choice, though it pales in comparison to the “press button and win” styles, Valor and Adept. Make sure to use the backstep and backroll to your advantage, but be careful in using it -- they take a lot of stamina to execute. Used effectively, the backstep and backroll can be a powerful spacing tool, used both for closing gaps and for dodging away from monsters, but in practice they’re not overly useful.

Recommended Hunter Arts:

- Haste Rain III
- Tactical Retreat III / Absolute Readiness

Striker Style

3 Hunter Art slots (1 SP Art), only Arc Shot available.

- **Cannot Power Shot.**

Striker Style is simply underwhelming, due to the lack of Power Shots. Power Shots can easily make up to 30% or more of a Bow’s damage per second, so losing access to that in exchange for Bow’s generally underwhelming Hunter Arts just feels bad. You do still have access to the insta-charge, so you can use that to close in on monsters relatively well.

Recommended Hunter Arts:

- Haste Rain III
- Tactical Retreat III
- Absolute Readiness

Aerial Style

1 Hunter Art slot (1 SP Art). Use the Aerial Hop to jump off of monsters and fire two shots directly downwards.

- **Cannot Power Shot on the ground.**
- **Cannot Arc Shot.**
- Forward + B - **Aerial Hop**
- Post-Aerial Hop, X - **Fire Forward** (*fires Charge Lv.2*)
- Post-Aerial Hop, A - **Fire Downwards** (*fires Charge Lv. 2*)
- After Firing Downwards, A - **Fire Second Shot Downwards** (*fires Charge Lv. 2*)

Aerial Style is absolute trash, and if I see you using it ever you will never be a real Bow user. Something worth noting though is that you can use up to 3 shots in mid-air, by doing X, A, A. It’s not going to make up for the poor damage output, but you can pretend like you’re helping?

Recommended Hunter Arts:

- Tactical Retreat III

Adept Style

1 Hunter Art slot (1 SP Art). Use the Adept Dodge to roll through monster attacks and Insta-Charge.

- **Cannot Arc Shot.**
- **Cannot Backstep.**
- B - **Adept Dodge**
- While Charging, Y - **Forward Roll**
- While Charging, A - **Power Shot**
- Post-Adept Dodge, X - **Insta-Charge**
- Post-Adept Dodge, A - **Arrow Lunge**

Adept Style is fairly solid, with the ability to perform Insta-charges after dodging attacks, and without the sacrifices needed to charge regularly, like some other Adept-style weapons. Since you rarely use Arc Shots anyway, Adept can be seen as an additional safety net to using Bow, which is great for some matchups.

Recommended Hunter Arts:

- Haste Rain III

Valor Style

1 Hunter Art slot (1 SP Art). Use the new Valor Arc Shots to charge your Valor Gauge and enter Valor State to fire off two Power Shots, with the second dealing more damage.

In any state:

- **Cannot Backstep with Y.**
- While charging, A - **Backstep**
- **Cannot Insta-Charge from Backroll.**
- Y - **Valor Sheathe**
- Valor Sheathe, then X - **Charge Valor Arc Shot**

Outside of Valor State:

- **Cannot Arc or Power Shot.**
- **Cannot Backroll.**
- Standing still grants -20% charge thresholds.
- **Moving while charging incurs +20% charge thresholds.**

While Valor State is active:

- Standing still grants -40% charge thresholds.
- Moving grants -15% charge thresholds.
- Backstep, B - **Backroll**
- After firing a shot, A - **Power Shot**
- After firing a Power Shot, A - **Valor Power Shot**
- After firing a Valor Arc Shot, A - **Power Arc Shot**

Valor Style on Bow is easy to charge up, but remember the type of your Arc Shot, as that does matter when positioning to fire those Valor Arc Shots. Once charged, you gain massive charge rate boosts and a 2nd Power Shot to play with that does 30% more damage. Needless to say, TrueShot Up is very valuable on Valor Bow, and even without it Valor Bow performs astronomically well in most matchups. Make sure you aim those Power Shots well and you'll see great returns.

Recommended Hunter Arts:

- Haste Rain III / Tactical Retreat III / Absolute Readiness

Alchemy Style

3 Hunter Art slots (3 SP Arts). Charge the Alchemy Barrel to give you and your teammates useful items and increase your SP Level. Equip the Alchemy Coating to charge HAs faster.

- **Cannot Power Shot.**
- **Cannot Insta-Charge from a Backroll.**
- **Natural Reload Speed +1.** (*Loads all coatings more quickly*)
- After a forward roll, R + Y - **Alchemy Barrel**
- To Charge the Alchemy Barrel faster, **land shots in Critical Distance.**

Alchemy Style on Bow, like most other Alchemy style combos, is fairly underwhelming for the cost of Power Shots. Alchemy Coatings don't actually increase your damage, so solo play can't really get a lot out of this style. Loading Coatings faster may seem good on the Status Bows, but then you realize that Status Bow isn't really super-great. If you must play this however, focus on outputting damage with Power Coatings, then use the stocked-up Alchemy Coatings to provide constant SP-state support to your teammates.

Recommended Hunter Arts:

- Haste Rain III
- Tactical Retreat III (SP)
- Absolute Readiness (SP)

The style hierarchy goes Valor > Adept > Guild > Striker/Alchemy > Aerial. Valor's Double Power Shots are very powerful if abused, while Adept provides a great safety net. Guild has all the basics that Bow provides. Striker and Alchemy lose their Power Shots while not providing much else of value, and Aerial... forces you to use Charge Lv. 2s constantly.

Hunter Arts

Triple Volley

After a brief windup, your hunter launches two piercing shots in the direction you were facing, then charges a third piercing shot for slightly longer.

HA Rank	To Charge	Total Damage
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Rank I	500 (800 SP)	$(7 * 3) + (7 * 3) + (17 * 5) = 127\% / 11 \text{ hits}$
Rank II	600 (920 SP)	$(10 * 3) + (10 * 3) + (20 * 5) = 160\% / 11 \text{ hits}$
Rank III	700 (1040 SP)	$(14 * 3) + (14 * 3) + (23 * 5) = 199\% / 11 \text{ hits}$

This HA has a Critical Distance. The first two shots are fired in the direction your hunter was facing when the HA was activated, but the third can be aimed by holding the R button while you're charging up.

This being the sole damage HA for Bow, Triple Volley is unfortunately not worth running most of the time. This is due to the high execution time, which forces you to stand in one place for quite a while. Unless you somehow manage to trip the monster as Bow, running this HA in solo play is questionable. It's a bit better in multiplayer because you can wait for your buddies to trip the monster then you unload this on the head, but then it's taking up an HA slot for some other better art.

Haste Rain

Fires an arrow above your head, which increases your charge rate as well as your unsheathed walking speed.

HA Rank	To Charge	Effect Duration
Rank I	830 (1196 SP)	30 seconds
Rank II	1000 (1400 SP)	60
Rank III	1080 (1496 SP)	90

Charge thresholds decrease by 20%. Walking speed increases by 50%.

The main reason why this is ran is because it's an additional source of charge rate increase. This and Focus stack additively, which means you can get up to 50% charge rate if you're not running Valor, and if you are, well...

The walk speed increase is also very nice for getting out of attacks and repositioning more easily. 50% increase in speed makes you walk really fast.

Note that sources that cause you to flinch or take damage will take precedence over the casting animation and will make you lose your charge, like all HAs with cast times. If this happens, Haste Rain will be canceled and the charge depleted. Make sure you're safe to apply this HA while it casts.

Blade Wire

After a short cast animation, convert your arrows into special shots that can sever tails. The wires are shot horizontally, but shot vertically if fired from mid-air.

HA Rank	To Charge	Effect Duration
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Rank I	500 (800 SP)	30 seconds
Rank II	600 (920 SP)	60
Rank III	700 (1040 SP)	90

Charge Level	Damage
1	27% (9% * 3 hits)
2	33% (11% * 3 hits)
3	39% (13% * 3 hits)
4	45% (15% * 3 hits)

If you perform a Power Shot, then you'll fire the normal shot. All Elemental and Status damage is also negated on all altered shots for the duration of this HA. Blade Wire arrows cannot bounce back at you if deflected through special effects. The equipped coating is unequipped, and you cannot apply other coatings for the duration of this HA.

Blade Wire sucks less than it did in Gen, because it actually has decent MVs. It prevents you from loading coatings though, and it works like Pierce, so it's still sorta bad. Use some other weapon if you need tails.

Tactical Retreat

After a brief hopping animation, perform a high-speed, high-distance backroll in the direction that the hunter was facing when the HA was used. While you're in the backroll animation, you're completely invincible, and during it, you automatically fire a shot in the opposite direction. You can press and hold X in order to save the shot instead.

HA Rank	To Charge	Effects
Rank I	420 (704 SP)	Fires Level 2 shot.
Rank II	500 (800 SP)	Fires Level 2 shot. +20% Affinity.
Rank III	670 (1004 SP)	Fires Level 3 shot. +35% Affinity.

The shot fired from this HA will automatically land in Critical Distance. Note that if you have Focus or Distraction, the shots fired from this HA may differ.

The big thing to keep in mind when using this HA is that, unlike Absolute Readiness, the initial hop backward does not have invincibility associated with it. So you'll have to preemptively use it instead.

Otherwise, this is exactly like an Absolute Evasion for Bow specifically. If you still prefer the instant pop-ability of Absolute Readiness though, you can use that instead.

If you don't mind charging for a bit afterwards and your setup grants 100% Affinity already, you can just use the Rank I version constantly instead, for a faster charge time.

Arrow Types

Before we talk about arrow types, we'll briefly talk about Charge Modifiers and Critical Distance. Charge Modifiers are as follows:

Charge Level	Raw Modifier	Element Mod.	Poison Mod.	Para/Sleep/Blast Mod.
1	0.4	0.7	0.5	0.5
2	1.0	0.85	1.0	1.0
3	1.5	1.0	1.5	1.3
4	1.7	1.125	1.5	1.3

What charge modifiers generally mean is that **the higher your level of charge, the higher damage you'll deal with the shot**. This is **really important** because just spamming shots doesn't deal much damage, and this also explains why we focus on the last level of charge of a Bow, instead of all of the other levels of charge.

Now, Critical Distance is something common to all Gunners. Critical Distance prevents Gunners from sitting at the end of the map and sniping at monsters at the other end. Critical Distance is as follows:

Range Description	Graphics	Damage Modifier
Normal	Orange	1.0
Critical	Yellow-White + Screen Shake	1.5
Long	Yellow	0.8
Ex. Long	Red	0.5

Being in Critical Distance is very important for all Gunner weapons, as it is a skill-free 50% damage boost. Constantly being in Critical Distance takes time, effort, and experience to learn but knowing when you're hitting in Critical Distance goes a long way.

Standard Arrows

Rapid-type

- Arrows that fire straight towards the monster and disappear on impact.
- Spreads vertically.
- Higher levels mean more arrows are shot at the monster, with weaker MVs on additional arrows.
- Great at dealing both raw and elemental damage to specific monster spots.
- Critical Distance is about 2-3 backsteps from the monster.

Shot Level	Total Damage	Status Damage
1	12%	13
2	16% (12% + 4%)	14 (7 + 7)
3	19% (12% + 4% + 3%)	15 (5 + 5 + 5)
4	21% (12% + 4% + 3% + 2%)	16 (4 + 4 + 4 + 4)
5	22% (12% + 4% + 3% + 3%)	16 (4 + 4 + 4 + 4)

Pierce-type

- Arrows that pierce through the monster's body and are unaffected by gravity.
- Higher levels means longer Critical Distance and more hits.
- Great at dealing elemental damage at a greater distance than other arrow types, though is weaker at raw. Relies on good shot angles to be effective.
- Critical Distance starts from 3 backsteps and continues for a while.
- Longest Critical Distance of all arrow types.

Shot Level	Total Damage	Status Damage
1	15% (5% + 5% + 5%)	15 (5 + 5 + 5)
2	20% (5% + 5% + 5% + 5%)	16 (4 + 4 + 4 + 4)
3	25% (5% + 5% + 5% + 5% + 5%)	20 (4 + 4 + 4 + 4 + 4)
4	25% (5% + 5% + 5% + 5% + 5%)	20 (4 + 4 + 4 + 4 + 4)
5	25% (5% + 5% + 5% + 5% + 5%)	20 (4 + 4 + 4 + 4 + 4)

Spread-type

- Arrows that spread horizontally.
- Higher levels means more hits and higher MV.

- Great at dealing elemental damage and status damage, though suffers at hitting specific areas due to the nature of the shot.
- Critical Distance starts from one backstep and continues for about one more backstep.
- Shortest Critical Distance of all arrow types.

Shot Level	Total Damage	Status Damage
1	13% (4% + 5% + 4%)	15 (5 + 5 + 5)
2	16% (5% + 6% + 5%)	18 (6 + 6 + 6)
3	23% (4% + 5% + 5% + 5% + 4%)	20 (4 + 4 + 4 + 4 + 4)
4	24% (4% + 5% + 6% + 5% + 4%)	20 (4 + 4 + 4 + 4 + 4)
5	26% (5% + 5% + 6% + 5% + 5%)	20 (4 + 4 + 4 + 4 + 4)

Heavy-type

- Arrows that are heavily affected by gravity.
- Higher levels means higher MV.
- Incredible at dealing raw damage and hitting hard-to-hit areas due to the nature of the shot, though is weak at dealing elemental or status damage due to the low hit count.
- Critical Distance starts from the highest point of the arc and never stops.
- This arrow type is very different from other types to use, due to the gravity affecting the arc of the shot.
- Heavy-type arrows have a special property that negates any projectile-nullifying effect, such as Stonefist's large pincer or Teostra's heat aura.

Shot Level	Total Damage	Status Damage
1	11%	14
2	14%	15
3	17%	16
4	19%	17
5	20%	18

Arc Shot

Note that all Arc Shots ignore the base charge of the Bow, always defaulting to 3 levels of charge. They also have Critical Distance.

Arc Shot: Focus

- Lands in a small area, dealing 5 hits, as well as KO and Exhaust damage.
- Good at targeting a monster's head specifically.

Total Damage	KO	Exhaust
15% (3% * 5)	15 (3 * 5)	15 (3 * 5)

Valor Arc: Focus

- Only available in Valor.
- When fired, it travels forward then explodes at a very short distance. Be as close to the monster as possible and charge it up fully to maximize Valor Gauge gain.
- Chargeable.

Arc Shot: Wide

- Lands in a wider area, dealing 5 hits and KO and Exhaust damage.
- Good at pelting a monster's back.

Total Damage	KO	Exhaust
15% (3% * 5)	15 (3 * 5)	15 (3 * 5)

Valor Arc: Wide

- Only available in Valor.
- When fired, launches an arrow that explodes twice on impact. Snipe at a monster's head and charge it up fully to maximize Valor Gauge gain.
- Chargeable.

Arc Shot: Blast

- When the arrow connects with the ground, causes an explosion, dealing a buncha KO and Exhaust damage.
- Will knock away ally hunters.

Total Damage	KO	Exhaust
35 (Fixed)	20	20

Valor Arc: Blast

- Only available in Valor.
- When fired, launches 3 arrows that each cause an explosion when they connect with the ground. Connect the explosions to the monster's body to maximize Valor Gauge gain.
- Will knock away ally hunters.
- Chargeable.

Coating Compendium

Power Coating Lv. 1

- +35% raw when applied.
- 50 Capacity.
- +20 from combines (Fire Herb + Empty Phial, 90% base rate).

A basic coating that nearly all beginning Bows should have access to. On late-game or end-game Bows, consider getting the skill "Use Power C. Lv1" in order to get access to an extended supply of coatings, which means more damage output over time.

Power Coating Lv. 2

- +50% raw when applied.
- 50 Capacity.
- +20 from combines (Nitroshroom + Empty Phial, 90% base rate).

A coating that should be on every useful Bow through High and G-Rank. If a Bow doesn't have access to these coatings, then it very quickly falls behind Bows that can use these. Unlike Power 1 Coatings, getting "Use All Power Phials" requires a pretty good alisman and additional Decoration support, so it generally isn't worth it.

Elem Coating Lv. 1

- +35% Element when applied.
- 20 Capacity.
- +10 from combines (Bitterbug + Empty Phial, 90% base rate).

New coatings introduced in MHGen which increase a Bow's elemental damage. More useful with Rapid or Spread-type Bows with decent Elemental damage.

Elem Coating Lv. 2

- +50% Element when applied.
- 20 Capacity.
- +10 from combines (Gloomgrass Root + Empty Phial, 90% base rate).

Coatings which significantly boost your Elemental damage output. For maximum effect, pair with appropriate Bows and monster weaknesses.

Close Range Coating

- Increase Arrow Swipe sharpness rating from Blue to White.
- Provides Critical Distance at Close Range, similar to Spread's Critical Distance.
- 20 Capacity.
- +20 from combines (Whetfish + Empty Phial, 90% base rate).

Worth noting that Seregios Bows and Bladescale Polish armor skill make C. Range Coatings provide an additional +50% raw boost, effectively duplicating Power Coatings Lv. 2, for up to 40 more Power

Coatings. Stacking the aforementioned effect with Bladescale Hone will increase the effect by 15%, to 65% extra damage.

Poison Coating

- When applied, deals Poison damage instead of the normal alternate damage type on the Bow. Poison damage applied differs per shot type.
- 20 Capacity.
- +10 from combines (Toadstools + Empty Phial, 90% base rate).

Note that the charge modifier for Poison is different from the charge modifier for the other status damage types, making Poison slightly better to apply onto Bows.

Paralysis Coating

- When applied, deals Paralysis damage instead of the normal alternate damage type on the Bow. Paralysis damage applied differs per shot type.
- 20 Capacity.
- +10 from combines (Parashrooms + Empty Phial, 90% base rate).

Certain Bows provide a Coating Boost to this phial and other status phials. When applied, coating boosts deal an additional +20% Status damage.

Sleep Coating

- When applied, deals Sleep damage instead of the normal alternate damage type on the Bow. Sleep damage applied differs per shot type.
- 20 Capacity.
- +10 from combines (Sleep Herb + Empty Phial, 90% base rate).

Remember that a monster's status buildup will deplete over time if you do not reapply the status. Bow is particularly good at maintaining Status damage despite the low carrying capacity of the Status Phials.

Exhaust Coating

- When applied, deals Exhaust and KO damage instead of the normal alternate damage type on the Bow.
- Exhaust: 8 per arrow.
- KO: 4 per arrow.
- 20 Capacity.
- +10 from combines (Mopeshroom + Empty Phial, 90% base rate).

Regardless of hitzone, Exhaust damage dealt will always be 8 per arrow. KO damage can only be dealt to a large monster's head (for small monsters, anywhere will work), and does depend on the monster's KO hitzone. The only notable exception that comes to mind is (Furious) Rajang's head hitzone, which is 50 rather than the usual 100.

Blast Coating

- When applied, deals Blast damage instead of the normal alternate damage type on the Bow.
- 20 Capacity.

- +10 - 30 from combines (Bomb Arowana + Empty Phial, 90% base rate).

Blast Coatings can be quite effective at dealing damage when you're out of Power Phials. You can even have up to 50 total Blast Coatings, so long as you have Mass Combiner. Just note that not many of the good late-game Bows will not pack Blast Coatings naturally.

Paint Coating

- When applied, arrows will apply the Paint status onto the monster, like Paintballs. Note that this will remove the alternate damage type of the Bow while the coating is equipped.
- 99 Capacity.
- +99 from combines (Paintberry + Empty Phials, 90% base rate).

Always nice to have in the back of your pocket in case you're about to lose the monster. Simply apply once at the beginning of the hunt and every time the monster switches areas.

What Bow To Use?

Generally you want to look at the monster's hitzones and attack patterns and decide what type of shot is best to use. For most cases, Rapid or Heavy is best, followed by Pierce in certain unique situations, and Spread is very rarely used, if at all. The monster's elemental hitzones should then be considered, with higher priority given to shots that fire more arrows. Otherwise, sticking to high raw is great. As mentioned earlier in the guide, having more access to Power Phials is better, and having natural access to at least Power 2 Coatings is very important. Power 1 Coatings are nice. Elemental or Status Phials are less important and should be treated as bonuses.

Progression Recommendations

Low Rank (Hub 1-3*, Village 1-6*)

- **Petrified Bow**
The default Bow that you're given at the start of the game packs Rapid-type arrows and access to Power 1 Phials, which should be good enough for most situations at that point.
- **Hunter's Stoutbow**
An alternate version of the starting Bows that you're given at the start of the game. This Bow packs Heavy arrows instead of Rapid, but also upgrades slightly faster at the beginning of the game, letting you have slightly higher raw. It also packs Power 1 Phials.
- **Blessed Rain**
Bow created from Mizutsune materials, packs Rapid arrows and Water damage to boot. At this point, the starting Bows will start to fall behind a bit, and Blessed Rain will start to outdamage them at this point. It'll be more effective on monsters weaker to Water as well. Packs Power 1 Phials.
- **Ashen Wrath**

The Glavenus Bow. Uses Rapid arrows and also has accompanying Fire damage, as well as Power 1 Phials. An overall solid Bow for late Low Rank, it also upgrades fairly early on in High Rank as well, beating out other early High Rank options.

High Rank (Hub 4-8*, Village 7-10*)

- **Ashen Wrath**

As mentioned previously, the Ashen Wrath upgrades fairly early on in comparison to other Bows in High Rank, reaching 200 raw and being the first Bow to do so when you gain access to Lavasioth. It also scales fairly well into G-Rank despite it losing usage to the Teostra Bow in early G-Rank.

- **Blessed Rain**

Starts to fall a little behind Ashen Wrath, especially since Mizutsune weapons in general tend towards lesser raw. Still solid enough to use against Water-weak monsters, especially when it gains access to Power 2 Phials.

- **Scylla Fist**(GU only)

Sees a little bit of usage before Ashen Wrath gets to 200 raw, and its upgrades scale very well into G-Rank. I recommend building this Bow even if you don't want to use it at this point in the game.

- **Bow of Hope & Valor**

The Teostra Bow. Uses Rapid-type arrows, Power 2 phials and has big Blast damage. It alone defined a new meme and for good reason -- in late High Rank, this has great stats, eclipsing all other Bows in late High Rank. However, it's only really worth using when it reaches the first full upgrade as it is slightly underwhelming otherwise. It's so good that it even scales through to G3.

- **Alatreon Bow**

This Bow used to be called the "Gold Standard" for Pierce Bows all the way back in 3U. It still maintains that title here. With natural access to Power 2 and Power 1 phials, you can take this Bow to any Dread Rath and laugh at them. This is also used for a particular fight in G-Rank, so I recommend that you make this Bow even if you don't plan to fight the Dread Raths in High Rank.

- **Beast Thunderbow**

Rajang's Bow. Though not quite as powerful as Alatreon's Bow it still has a niche: Destroying Plesioth. This Bow is also quite useful for a certain fight late in G-Rank, so I'd advise building it now. Oh, and don't upgrade it into the Furious Rajang version. Keep it at normal Rajang.

G-Rank (Hub G1-G4*)

- **Bow of Light & Courage**

The Teostra Bow still scales abnormally well into G3, mostly due to lack of other good options. You'll have to put up with it until at least G2, where you can get Nerscylla materials to gain access to Scylla Fist's better forms, and even then it still competes. Once you get past G2 and gain access to Seltas Queen, you can drop this bow like a sack of hot rocks.

- **Alatreon Commandment**

The prime Dragon Pierce Bow of choice in G-Rank. Used to fight off Lao Shan Lung and later in G-Rank, the Dread Raths.

- **Scylla Weave**

A powerful Rapid-type Bow with access to Power 2 phials. The meta Bow of choice for Rapid-type Bows, it has natural Affinity in addition to being one of the first 300 raw Bows. You can use this throughout G3 and G4 in conjunction with Herald's Battlebow to cover most monsters.

- **Herald's Battlebow**

The meta Heavy Bow of choice with natural access to Power 2 and Power 1 phials. I heavily recommend this Bow for fighting off G-Rank Astalos, as well as any other monster you can do with Rapid. With a little bit of practice, you can find this Bow to be more powerful than Scylla Weave.

- **Beastking Thunderbow**

Rajang's Bow is still useful for fighting off Plesioth or other Thunder-weak monsters which Rapid isn't as great. But even more important is that this Bow can successfully fight off Ahtal-Ka. Due to certain mechanics of the fight, Pierce Bow is *actually useful* on Ahtal-Ka. Build this Bow, get it as high as you can, and fight Ahtal-Ka.

Endgame Bow Recommendations

Non-Elemental:

- **Harbinger's Battlebow**

The Heavy Bow of choice and also the current best bow of the game with natural access to Power 2 and Power 1 phials. Has no slots and no affinity but has a good 350 raw to compensate. Stick some Affinity onto this weapon as well as some practice with Heavy Bow and you'll see faster times than with Rapid in some cases. It's also really easy to make, only requiring some random ore materials.

- **Scylla Webdart**

The prime Rapid Bow of choice for most situations, has about average raw, natural Affinity, and access to Power 2 Phials. The lack of Power Phials means that this Bow may not have as much damage upkeep as other Bows, but is solved easily with "Use Power Phial Lv 1".

- **Wepwawet**

Ahtal-Ka's Bow. In line with other Ahtal-Ka weapons, it usually lacks something in order to compensate for its high Raw, and in the Bow's case it has relatively crappy shot types. You'll need to have Load Up in order to gain access to the Rapid 5 shot, but when you do, this Bow is an absolute house.

- **Deadeye Tragedy**

Deadeye's Bow features both Power 2 and Power 1 access along with slightly lower Raw and half as much Affinity to compensate. Furthermore, Deviant boost is always nice to have. Consider this a good alternative to the Scylla Webdart, as long as you can stand farming Deadeye for 15 levels.

- **Sacred Bow G**

The first Legend of Zelda Bow, introduced as a DLG weapon. Has decent raw and access to many phial types, as well as 3 slots. Requires Load Up to gain access to the Rapid 5 shot, but is a good alternative to the Scylla Webdart. Just hope you have good luck in finding those 4 rare materials you need to max it out.

- **Grimclaw Roar**

Has an absolutely crazy 360 raw with minimal negative Affinity as well as access to Power 2 phials. It also has access to a multitude of Status phials as well, to extend support capabilities. This in conjunction with the Deviant boost makes this Bow stand out, and is yet another alternative to the Scylla Webdart. Just hope you can stand doing Grimclaw 15 times.

- **Beyond the Firmaments**

At first glance this seems to be a weaker Harbinger's Battlebow, and it sorta is. It does have Water damage, which can compensate for the slight loss of raw and loss of Power 1s. Important to note: some sets use Load Up in conjunction with Valor Bow to make use of this Bow's hidden Heavy Lv. 5 shots on Charge 4.

Elemental:

- **Ashen Vainglory**

The only Fire/Rapid Bow, and thus, the best. Slightly below average raw with natural access to Power 2 phials and a bit of Fire means that this Bow is great against Chameleos and any other Fire-weak monster.

- **Scorpion Perforator**

Nibelsnarf's Bow actually starts to outscale Mizutsune's Bow when you first get access to Nibelsnarf in G-Rank. Once you get the G-Rank upgrade, this Bow gains additional slots, and when maxed, has access to 3 slots! Below-average raw is compensated for with decent Water damage and great customizability.

- **Orcus Sagittus**

Zinogre's G-Rank Bow gains Rapid, and in effect, becomes the only Thunder/Rapid Bow worth using. Average raw combined with one slot and decent Thunder means that this Bow has a bit of potential against Thunder-weak monsters.

- **Beastczar Thunderbow**

Rajang's Bow in G-Rank remains useful, albeit niche in usage. Solid for the appropriate situations due to decent raw, good Thunder, and natural access to both Power 2 and Power 1 phials.

- **Behemoth's Bow**

Gammoth's Bow is probably the best Ice Bow, though it's Pierce. Most monsters aren't particularly weak to Ice in this game, and those who are have good raw weakspots. If you need to fight a Nibelsnarf or something though, I'd take this Bow.

- **Magnastar Wil**

One of two Dragon/Pierce Bows, this has access to Power 2 Phials and two slots to play with. About average Raw, though slightly lower Dragon. Good in fighting both Lao Shan Lung and the Dread Raths, and a good alternative to Alatreon's Bow if you find farming him to be too volatile.

- **Altheos Incanonis**

The other Dragon/Pierce Bow, this has access to both Power 2 and Power 1 phials, increasing this Bow's damage uptime, as well as a great 26 Dragon. Like Valstrax's Bow, it's great at fighting off pesky Laos and Dread Raths, though being a bit better than Valstrax's Bow due to the Power 1 access.

- **Triumph and Testament**

White Fatalis's Bow, the initial lack of phials can be seen as troublesome as well as the slightly below-average Raw. The great 35 Dragon it has compensates for that, so all you need is access to "Use All Power Phials" to let this Bow do something useful.

What Skills Should I Use?

We'll go over skills and armor sets for progression in this section. Due to the nature of Gunning in G-Rank, I can't formally mention any particular fullset, due to the near-universal higher quality of mixed sets at pretty much any point past late High Rank. I will provide some ideas, however.

Progression Armor Sets

Low Rank (Village 1-6*, Hub 1-3*)

- BuJaBu

The classic early-game progression set, it provides an early Attack Up (L) for Blademasters. Because you're a Gunner though, you'll only have Attack Up (M) until you get more slots on your weapon. Composed of alternating Bulldrome and Jaggi armor pieces.

- **Rathalos/Mosgharl**

Combining Rathalos and Mosgharl parts (the latter of which you can get by trading plants) will yield some form of Attack Up, Focus, and Weakness Exploit. Focus is really great, especially if you're learning Bow, as it'll speed up your hunts dramatically. You can make this set by using Rathalos Cap/Helm, Rathalos Vest, Mosgharl Guards, Rathalos Coat, and Mosgharl Leggings along with a decent slotted charms.

High Rank (Village 7-10*, Hub 4-8*)

- **BuJaBu S**

A modern form of the BuJaBu set, this one replaces all of the pieces with their appropriate High-Rank equivalents. You'll lose Focus, but you'll gain a little bit of defense, which is nice if you're not feeling confident about your chances in early High Rank.

- **Malfestio S**

A good bridging set between this and full Rathalos/Mosgharl S, this set at least packs Weakness Exploit. You can even try to put in Focus if you want.

- **Rathalos/Mosgharl S**

Replacing the Low Rank Mosgharl parts with High Rank Mosgharl parts also works a little bit, though you might need to have better gem-ins due to the different skill point distributions on the High Rank parts.

- **Rathalos S/Mosgharl S**

This set replaces all of the Low Rank pieces from Rath/Mosgharl with their High Rank equivalents, boosting defense and giving you more leniency on the skill point distribution. Really nice for the mid-game of High Rank.

- **Arc S/Storge S**

The Shagaru set is the first instance of easily-attainable Normal/Rapid Up. It lacks Focus, but by this point you should have some slotted charms which you can use to gem that in. Use this for Nakarkos.

- **Esurient R**

The end of High Rank provides you with the legendary Hyper Deviljho, whose full armor set grants a crap-ton of slots and Normal/Rapid Up. Great for mixing or for use as a full-set.

- **Hayasol Derivative**

Bow users benefit from a slightly-modified version of Hayasol, so long as they don't mind giving up Focus. Simply replace the Razor Sharp for the Shot Type Up skill of your choice.

G-Rank (Hub G1-G4*)

- **Hayasol Derivative/Esurient R**

Unfortunately, due to the relative crappiness of early G-Rank full sets, I recommend that you stick to either these mixed sets or make new mixed sets of your own during this time.

Commonly-used pieces are True Chaos Brigandine, for the triple slots on the chest, Volvidon Vest X for the 4 points in FastCharge and one slot, or Kut-Ku Leggings X for the 6 points in Attack and two slots.

- **Rathalos X/Mosgharl X**

Pretty self-explanatory mixed set, it provides the bareboned basics of a Bow user. Slightly underwhelming though, due to the flat Attack boosts this late in the game, where things like Critical Eye are more valuable.

Skill Recommendations

- **Normal/Rapid Up, Heavy/Heavy Up, Pierce/Pierce Up Pellet/Spread Up**

This skill should be in almost every Bow set. It's a very good 10% increase in damage for Rapid-type, Heavy-type, and Pierce-type arrows, as well as being a 30% increase in damage for Spread-type arrows. It's a sizable damage boost for essentially doing nothing.

- **Weakness Exploit**

Though dependent on matchup, Weakness Exploit is a sizable increase in damage. Because you're a Gunner, you should be able to strike weakspots fairly comfortably on most monsters. Watch your Affinity, lest you overload and waste Affinity though.

- **Focus**

Near-required on Guild, Striker, or Alchemy Bow, not really required on the other styles of Bow. A -20% reduction in charge time is huge and it lets you exploit more openings than you normally would. It also decreases the amount of Stamina used for charging up a shot fully, so long as you fire soon after you charge up. Note that if the fight or your hunting style has you holding a charge for a significant amount of time, then Focus will actually not be worth it.

- **TrueShot Up**

On other Gunner weapons this would be a nice +20% damage on all Internal Shots. Since you're Bow however, this is a great +20% damage on all of your Power Shots! Adept and Valor should prioritize this skill highly, as their playstyles practically revolve around shooting Power Shots. Other styles, less so because they can't maximize this skill's benefits.

- **Critical Boost**

A skill that only gets better the more Affinity you have. Since you usually have Weakness Exploit already, this is a great 7.5% increase in damage by itself! Stack with Bows that have naturally high Affinity to maximize this skill's effectiveness.

- **Repeat Offender**

Do you have a monster with hard-to-hit or even non-existent weakspots? Repeat Offender can solve that problem somewhat, as long as you're using a shot which hits frequently. Even if you don't, this is effectively a free 25% Affinity boost.

- **Ammo Saver**

It's an okay skill, but only as a bonus. Enabling more Power Phials tends to work better than Ammo Saver, but if you can't fit anything else in, this is an okay skill.

- **Elemental Attack Up & [Element] Attack +1/2**

These are okay skills if you use the right bow and exploit the monster's elemental zones well, but in practice these skills add only a few points of resulting damage to your damage output. In general, more underwhelming than adding more crit, but okay skills if you know the matchup and monster.

- **Evasion +1 & Evade Extender**

Nice to have if you're going up against certain monsters that constantly are in your grill and you're Guild. Though you really can't beat Adept or Valor if you're going up against those monsters.

- **Load Up**

Very useful on certain Bows in order to enable a particularly strong shot on that level. The Ahtal, Akantor, and Seregios Bows are the most prominent examples of this. However, this shouldn't be used on all Bows, because sometimes you just won't unlock a useful shot. For example, using Load Up on the Scylla Bow unlocks a Spread-type shot.

- **Use Power Coat Lvl 1**

Specifically this level of the skill can be quite useful on some Bows who don't have Power Coatings Lvl 1 naturally unlocked. It effectively adds an additional 70 phials of pure damage onto your Bow, which can really extend your time of usefulness over the hunt.

- **Challenger +1/2**

Very good on monsters which enrage a lot or are enraged for a long time, though the level 2 version of this skill is expensive.

Final Thoughts

Bow matchups in GU are mostly favorable, with a few standouts that really hate Gunners that stand within a few steps of the monster. Despite the power behind Valor and Adept Bow, in longer hunts, Bow really suffers from a lack of damage upkeep with the coating restrictions. So much so that Bow actually loses in the TA rankings to Prowler in Elderfrost hunts, which is just... bad. The Bow HAS

vary from good to bad but are otherwise solid with the exception of Blade Wire, which just sucks. Bow is a fine weapon to use in this game, but is sometimes slow.

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