

# Yet Another Weapon Guide - Hammer

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## Intro

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Hammer is the more offensive of two Impact-type weapons in the game, mainly dealing damage based on different hitzones than most other weapons. Hammer has the ability to KO or Stun monsters with repeated strikes to the head, and mastery of Hammer play will see you be extremely effective on monsters with exposed heads. Plus, it just feels great every time you land a golf swing, right?!

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## Purpose

This guide is meant for new players of Monster Hunter Generations Ultimate (MHGU) or for people who wanna bash monster's skulls in with Hammer for the first time. 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 Hammer controls, commentary on Hammer styles and combinations, recommendations on progression Hammers, and a final note on matchups against most monsters in the game.

## At A Glance

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### How Do I Play Hammer?

- Press and hold R to charge. Charging takes up Stamina while you're charging, and different levels of charge will be different moves. Furthermore, the moves will be different if you're moving or if you're idle when you release R.
- From idle, X will deal more damage, and more Exhaust, but A will give you super armor for the entirety of your combo and deals more KO. Choose based on whether or not you'll be tripped when you're mid-combo.

- KO will, in general, only apply to the head of the monster. Hit that to rack up KO damage.
- KO will decay over time, which means if you take too long to head over to another area or don't hit the head consistently, the monster will slowly recover from the built-up KO damage.
- The most basic form of headsniping is attacking just as the monster turns to face you.
- The third and final X attack is the most effective in general. Try to adjust your angle so that it'll hit the head head-on, as the attack's hitbox is angled.

## Hot Tips

1. Unlike Bow, **Hammer doesn't want to charge all of the time**. Each of Hammer's charge attacks is important in some way, so you'll need to figure out which one you need, based on the current and near-future situation.
2. **The most versatile and common charge attack is Charge 2's moving attack**. It strikes straight-on with a moving uppercut, and it moves you a fair distance. It's most commonly used as a gapcloser.
3. **The next most used attack is Charge 1, utilized as a combo extender**. You can opt to either tilt the Control Stick to move slightly in a direction, or not if you're already close to the monster.
4. **The best Charge 3 attack is from idle**, as it'll dish out a fair amount of damage. If you use the moving Charge 3 attack, you should get out of that as soon as possible, as it doesn't deal much damage and it's somewhat hard to get out of the way of an attack if you do happen to use it.
5. **You can cancel any charge attack by rolling**. If you don't have enough stamina to cancel a roll, then you won't be able to roll out of a charge attack.
6. **You can also use Charge Attacks in midair**, so long as you're charging from when you were on the ground. Charge 3's midair attack is incredibly effective, as you follow it up with a golf swing.

## Meta Stuff

- **Hammer, like Great Sword, is especially effective when you can reliably predict where and how the monster will move**. Take off your Palicos, if you have any enabled, and try to play solo.
- **In practice, Charge 3 Attacks are especially rare**, except when used from a ledge. If you're charging to Charge 3, then it's usually in your best interest to cancel yourself.

- **Counting KO Values can let you attack more than you normally would.** Strong predictions, as well as knowledge of the monster's KO thresholds and current KO modifier, will benefit advanced players, though you'll tend to get a feel for when monsters will be KO'd after a while of playing Hammer.
- **Counting stagger and exhaust values are much in the same vein as keeping track of KO values,** but is more difficult than KO. The former relies on knowing how much damage you're dealing and the latter relies on knowing your Exhaust damage of each of your moves.
- **In general, the most used style is Guild.**
- Striker loses the golfswing, which is a big no-no, and Hammer's HAs are mediocre.
- Aerial and Adept are used in specific situations, like if you can't reach the head normally or if the monster attacks frequently.
- Valor's ability to chain together charge attacks sees some use where you can be particularly aggressive.
- Alchemy's ability to generate Earplugs and to not use the Spin Attack is surprisingly decent.
- None of Hammer's arts particularly stand out. **Most setups just use Absolute Evasion and Absolute Readiness for the most part.**
- Spinning Meteor deals damage and Exhaust decently enough, and Typhoon Trigger is more focused on KOs.
- Provoke is only useful in multiplayer, and only gives you a slight buff to your Attack and Defense otherwise.
- Impact Press's shockwaves are cool, but the effect is only slight.
- **Earplugs and HG Earplugs are both useful since they let you ignore roars.** Roars usually keep the monster's head still, which means you can slam the monster's head more than you usually would. Remember to check if the monster you're hunting needs what grade of Earplugs, or even if you need them at all.
- **Razor Sharp isn't really needed on Hammer.** Use Sharpness+1/2 depending on what you need instead.
- **Focus isn't really needed either,** as you need to keep control over what charge attack you use.

## Cool Stuff

- Need to slightly readjust where you're attacking? Use the Charge 1 attack and press in the direction you need to.
- If the monster's head is especially squirmy while it's down, try facing the monster head-on. Heads usually squirm vertically, but not horizontally!
- Charging gives you immunity to wind pressure, once you've started. Use this to hit a monster's head as they're landing!
- The golfswing has a larger hitbox than you think. Much like HH's attacks, try facing a different angle to adjust for how close to the ground the head is. Face to the left for lower to the ground, and face to the right for higher off the ground.
- Ever have pesky Long Sword users or Lance users near *\*your\** head? Golf swing them or Charge 3 Slam them to establish and keep dominance.

## Controls & Style Rundown

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### Guild Style

Two Hunter Art slots (1 SP Art), unlimited access to Charge Attacks.

- X - **Strong Pound**
- While sheathed and moving, X - **Draw Swing**
- A - **Side Swing** (*gives Super Armor*)
- Strong Pound/Side Swing, X - **Weak Pound**
- Weak Pound, X - **Golf Swing**
- R (hold) - **Charge**
- While Charging, release - **Charge Attack** (*the length of time you charge changes the attack*)
- Charge, release immediately - **Charge Attack Lv. 1**
- Charge Attack Lv. 1, X - **Charge Attack Lv. 1 Followup**
- Charge until the first flash, release - **Charge Attack Lv. 2** (*adjust direction with Control Stick*)
- Charge until the second flash, release while not moving - **Charge Attack Lv. 3 (Overhead Smash)**
- Charge until the second flash, release while moving - **Charge Attack Lv. 3 (Top Spin)**
- Charge Attack Lv. 3 (Top Spin), spin for 1-3 times, X - **Spinning Hook**
- Charge Attack Lv. 3 (Top Spin), spin for 4-6 times, X - **Spinning Golf Swing**
- Charge Attack Lv. 3 (Top Spin), don't press X - **Charge Attack Lv. 3 Finisher**

**Guild Style** is the most popular and most reliable of all of Hammer's Styles. Most of the time you'll be waiting just outside of the range of the monster near the head and waiting for an opportune time to

perform a gapcloser on the head and start a combo. Despite the small moveset, Guild can also extend its combos by feeding into another charge attack, generally Charge Lv. 1.

#### **Recommended Hunter Arts:**

- Absolute Evasion
- Absolute Readiness

#### **Gap-Closing Combo**

Hold R until first flash, release, X, X.

*This combo provides a measure of closing in on the monster's head easily. This is your bread-and-butter combo for neutral play, so use it often.*

#### **Downed Monster Combo**

A, X, X, Hold R, release, (repeat)

*This combo is best for small monsters. The initial A attack provides Super Armor, protecting you from pesky Long Sword users while making the combo faster, and the final charge attack allows you to loop the combo.*

#### **Striker Style**

3 Hunter Art slots (1 SP Art), auto-Focus, but loses Golf Swing.

- **Can no longer perform Golf Swing.**
- **Can no longer perform Spinning Golf Swing.**
- Auto-Focus on Charge. -20% Charge thresholds.
- Weak Smash, X - **Striker Power Pound**

**Striker Style** loses the golf swing, easily the best part about Hammer. It gains an HA slot, but Hammer's HAs aren't anything particularly special either and auto-Focus to charge up faster isn't really worth it. If you want to Overhead Smash, use Alchemy instead.

#### **Recommended Hunter Arts:**

- Absolute Evasion
- Absolute Readiness
- Spinning Meteor

#### **Extended Gap-Closing Combo**

Hold R until first flash, X, X, (repeat)

*This combo is similar to the Guild combo, but omits the final pound.*

#### **Aerial Style**

1 Hunter Art slot (1 SP Art). Use the Aerial Hop to jump off of monsters and bash with the A attack to attack twice. Loses the Charge Lv. 3 variations.

- **Can no longer perform Charge Lv. 3 (Top Spin) or Charge Lv. 3 (Overhead Smash).**
- Charge until the second flash, release - **Charge Attack Lv. 3 (Dash Attack)**
- B (forward) - **Aerial Hop**

- Post-Aerial Hop, X - **Aerial Smash**
- Post-Aerial Hop, A - **Aerial Double Down** (*If you miss this attack, you'll stumble when you hit the ground*)
- Post-Aerial Hop, R - **Charge**

**Aerial Style** is quite solid ironically. It maintains the Golf Swing and loses Charge Lv. 3 altogether, which means you always have the Dash Attack to gapclose. Being Hammer however, you will be using a lot of Stamina, so keep an eye on it. Furthermore, if you want to use Aerial Double Down, be sure you're hitting the monster, as if you miss you'll have greater recovery frames when you hit the ground.

#### **Recommended Hunter Arts:**

- Absolute Readiness

#### **Hop Spam**

B, then after successfully Aerial Hopping, A, B (sideways), Hold R until first or second flash, release towards monster, (repeat)

*This combo's effectiveness relies on how exposed and static the monster's head is. Exchange the A attack with X attacks if you're not confident landing the A hit.*

#### **Adept Style**

1 Hunter Art slot (1 SP Art). Use the Adept Dodge to roll through monster attacks and use enhanced Charge Attacks.

- **Can no longer perform a Charge Lv. 1 Followup.**
- Charge until the first flash, release - **Charge Attack Lv. 2 (Rushing Swing)**
- Charge Attack Lv. 2 (Rushing Swing), X - **Charge Lv. 2 Followup**
- Post-Adept Dodge, X/A - **Adept Rushing Swing**
- Post-Adept Dodge, R - **Adept Strong Charge**
- Adept Strong Charge, release - **Adept Strong Charge Lv. 1 (Upswing)**
- Adept Strong Charge until first flash, release - **Adept Strong Charge Lv. 2 (Strong Upswing)**
- Adept Strong Charge until second flash, release while idle - **Adept Strong Charge Lv. 3 (Strong Overhead Smash)**
- Adept Strong Charge until second flash, release while moving - **Adept Strong Charge Lv. 3 (Quick Overhead Smash)**
- Adept Strong Charge, release in midair - **Adept Jumping Charge Lv. 1**
- Adept Strong Charge until first flash, release in midair - **Adept Jumping Charge Lv. 2**
- Adept Strong Charge until second flash, release in midair - **Adept Jumping Charge Lv. 3**

**Adept Style** is quite solid since you don't really lose much, only the Charge Lv. 2's Rushing Upper-cut. You still maintain Charge Lv. 1's gapclosing ability and Charge Lv. 2 also becomes a slightly stronger Charge Lv. 1 so you're not completely gimped in terms of being able to close in on a monster. You do get the ability to perform Strong Charges after you Adept Dodge, and if you use these well you can really put the smacking on a monster.

### Recommended Hunter Arts:

- Absolute Readiness

### Strong Charge Strike:

B, then after Adept Dodging an attack, Hold R until second flash, release while idle, B (sideways)

*The typical Post-Adept Dodge attack. You should vary up the charge levels depending on how idle the monster is, or will be.*

## Valor Style

1 Hunter Art slot (1 SP Art). Use an especially powerful Valor Swing to charge up the gauge quickly and use chaining charge attacks.

In any state:

- **Can no longer perform a Golf Swing.**

Outside of Valor State:

- **Can no longer perform a Charge Lv. 1 Followup.**
- **Can no longer charge to Charge Lv. 3 (nor perform its attacks by extension).**
- **Charging to Lv. 2 takes a long time.**
- Y - **Valor Sheathe**
- Valor Sheathe, X - **Valor Stance Hook**
- Valor Sheathe, A - **Valor Side Swing**

While Valor State is active:

- B - **Valor Dash Step**
- R - **Valor Charge**
- Valor Charge, release - **Valor 1st Charge 1**
- Valor Charge until flash, release - **Valor 1st Charge 2**
- After any Valor 1st Charge attack, R - **Valor Charge 2** *(Can evade right after you start charging, and retain charge.)*
- Valor Charge 2, release - **Valor 2nd Charge 1**
- Valor Charge 2 until flash, release - **Valor 2nd Charge 2**
- After any Valor 2nd Charge Attack, R - **Valor Charge 3**
- Valor Charge 3, release - **Valor 3rd Charge 1**
- Valor Charge 3 until flash, release - **Valor 3rd Charge 2**

**Valor Style** puts a heavy focus on chaining together Charge Attacks in order to forcefully and quickly put the nails on a monster, and to KO them even faster. Thanks to the Valor Stance Hook, you can charge it up extremely quickly, and you can even neglect to charge the first two attacks in the chain to get to Lv. 3 quickly as well. It's no wonder that it's the second-most popular style for Hammer.

### Recommended Hunter Arts:

- Absolute Readiness

### Valor Gauge Charge

Y, then X.



*The main way you'll charge up Valor. This attack is very, very slow, so it, and Valor Hammer in general, will only see use on slower monsters.*

### **Valor Gauge Quick Cancel**

Y, A, X.

*The faster, but slower way to charge up Valor. If you're stuck fighting a faster monster, try using this.*

### **Valor Charge Strong Chaining**

(While in Valor Mode): Hold R until flash, release, Hold R until flash, release, Hold R until flash, release while idle, B (sideways)

*The more powerful variant of Valor Charge Chaining. In practice you won't usually get to perform this attack, but if you hold your charges this can be nice.*

### **Valor Charge Quick Chaining**

(While in Valor Mode): Hold R, release, Hold R, release, Hold R until flash, release while idle, B (sideways)

*If you really want to get to that 3rd attack fast, this is the way to do it.*

## **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.

- **Can no longer chain into a Charge from Golf Swing.**
- **Can no longer perform Charge Attack Lv. 3 (Top Spin) and its related attacks.**
- Charge the Alchemy Gauge quickly by performing **Charge Attack Lv. 3 (Overhead Smash)**
- B (forward) + Y - **Alchemy Barrel** (can also access via the item bar normally)

**Alchemy Style** is actually quite solid aside from the inability to extend your combo from Golf Swing. You retain the Golf Swing in comparison to Striker and you lose the pesky Top Spin, making the Overhead Smash quite accessible and more usable. Furthermore you can use the Alchemy Barrel to generate Alchemy Earplugs, giving you immunity to the next monster roar.

### **Recommended Hunter Arts:**

- Absolute Evasion (SP)
- Absolute Readiness (SP)
- Spinning Meteor III OR Typhoon Trigger III (SP)

### **Alchemy Fast Charging**

Hold R until second flash, release.

*A pretty basic way to speed up your Alchemy gauge. Not always possible, though.*

### **Alchemy Single Combo**

Hold R until first flash, release towards monster, X, X.

*The Guild combo, but you can't infinite it. Shame.*

The Style hierarchy is Guild > Valor > Adept/Aerial > Alchemy/Striker. Guild has the basics of Hammer on its side without any gimmicks, and so is used the most. Valor Hammer has the ability to chain together multiple charges, and so is effective for monsters with long periods of vulnerability. Adept and Aerial Hammer are effective within their niche but are too gimmicky for normal use. Alchemy and Striker have the worthless 3rd HA slot, and so, the other styles are seen as upgrades to these ones.

## Hunter Arts

### Spinning Meteor

When activated, your hunter begins to spin your Hammer vertically, continuously striking the monster. After this initial windup, your hunter smashes down, dealing a brief setup hit before finishing it off with a giant hit. This HA is focused on dealing damage and Exhaust, but not so much KO.

HA Rank	To Charge	MV	KO	Exhaust
I	830 (1196 SP)	$(20 * 2) + 15 + 110 = 165$ MV / 4 hits	55	70
II	920 (1304 SP)	$(20 * 3) + 15 + 125 = 200$ MV / 5 hits	70	85
III	1100 (1520 SP)	$(20 * 4) + 15 + 165 = 260$ MV / 6 hits	85	110

This is one of two damage arts for Hammer, and a quite solid one too. Despite not being versatile, styles with 3 HA slots can definitely use this when the monster's KO'd to make the most of their big openings. Styles without 3 HA slots can go without this, as combo extensions via golf swing are more popular, and deal more KO if the monster's just been tripped. As always, you can get knocked out of this art by monster attacks.

### Provoke

Execute a short swing upward, then makes your hunter more likely to be attacked for a brief duration.

HA Rank	To Charge	Effect Duration	Additional Notes
I	670 (1004 SP)	30 seconds	
II	750 (1100 SP)	60 seconds	Grants +20% Defense.
III	830 (1196 SP)	60 seconds	Grants +15 Attack. <i>Yes it's flat Attack.</i>

*Swing deals 45 MV, 15 KO, and 15 Exhaust.*

Provoke is an art only really useful in multiplayer or when you're playing with Palicos... which slightly defeats the main point of Hammer in the first place, which is to hog the aggro anyway to hit the head. The stat buffs don't really make up for the HA slot usage either. Furthermore, the effect ends prematurely if you area transition. This is a pretty niche art, all considered. Remember that, like other HAs with casting times, if you're affected by damage or roars, then you'll lose the effect and lose the HA charge, so make sure you're okay before casting this.

## Typhoon Trigger

Once activated, your hunter starts to spin horizontally while charging. Pressing X while you're charged will let your hunter do a devastating uppercut, dealing a bunch of KO damage. Increasing levels of Typhoon Trigger will allow you to charge up more by spinning more.

HA Rank	To Charge	Charge Levels
I	250 (500 SP)	1
II	330 (596 SP)	1-2
III	420 (704 SP)	1-3

Attack	MV	KO	Exhaust
Swings 1-3	5	2	4
Swings 4-6	5	2	2
Setup Swing	20	40	10
Finisher I	50	60	20
Finisher II	60	100	25
Finisher III	80	125	30

Typhoon Trigger's the fastest Hammer HA to charge up, perhaps speaking to the frequency with which it should be used. The issue is that the Golf Swing is usually much more reliable and faster to use than this art and the damage dealt as well as KO and Exhaust is fairly balanced. Plus you can just waste the HA's charge and damage by either overcharging or by getting knocked out of it, and why do that when you could simply use the Absolutes instead.

## Impact Press

After a brief cast time, charge your hammer to perform additional animations which cause shockwaves to appear at the location of your attack. The higher levels of charge, the more shockwaves appear.

HA Rank	To Charge	Effect Duration
I	670 (1004 SP)	80 seconds
II	750 (1100 SP)	100 seconds
III	830 (1196 SP)	120 seconds

*Each shockwave has a MV of 6, and deals 12 KO and 4 Exhaust damage.*

Like the other buffing HAs, if you get interrupted during the (fairly lengthy) cast time, you'll lose the effect and the HA Charge. Otherwise, this HA is... okay? It helps you deal a lot of KO making stunning monsters easier to do, while the damage is negligible otherwise. Remember that increasing levels of charge attacks will increase the amount of shockwaves that are sent out upon attacking.

## What Hammer To Use?

You want to choose hammers with high amounts of raw and hammers that have a decent amount of sharpness as well. The nature of hammer is that you aren't gonna hit monsters especially frequently, or well, not as much as DBs, so element isn't gonna be a priority, nor is a high amount of Sharpness. However, you can get away with using an amount of element, as monster's heads usually receive elemental damage somewhat well. But most people and builds prefer higher raw.

## Progression Recommendations

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

- **Petrified Hammer**

The default Hammer you can get happens to strike a good balance between sharpness and raw damage. It's a good idea to maintain and upgrade too, as it'll eventually upgrade into the Obsidian Hammer, which is a good Hammer for late High Rank hunts.

- **Feather Hammer**

Is decent for just a blip in early Low Rank, supporting slightly more sharpness and raw than Petrified for the briefest of periods. It sadly falls off later than that, but at least this Hammer's easy to make.

- **Hidden Breaker**

Sports high Sharpness for a Hammer, even reaching Blue before you leave LR, and supports it with decent raw and a bit of Affinity as well. Though it'll be neglected through HR, you can upgrade it with Narga parts early on in G-Rank and it'll do work for you while you're progressing through mid-G-Rank.

- **Fated Four Hammers (Purity Hammer, Giant's Hammer, Emerald Beater, Scorching Isshata)**

All of these Hammers are pretty good to be honest. Just match up the hammer to the elemental weakness of the monster that you're gonna be fighting. Though the Giant's Hammer might be used the least. They all have a good amount of green Sharpness and decent raw for Low Rank transitioning to High Rank. Scorching Isshata in particular is great because it's upgradable fairly early on into High Rank.

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

- **Scorching Isshata**

This Hammer in particular can be upgraded after fighting a few Kut-Ku to sport 160 raw and quite a bit of green Sharpness early on in High Rank, which is quite valuable. You can use this Hammer for quite a few things in early High Rank.

- **Obsidian Hammer**

This Hammer needs a little bit of upgrading to get it past the power level of the Scorching Isshata, but once you get it past that point, you don't need any other Hammers for the rest of High Rank, unless you prefer auto-sharpening.

- **Matraca Hammer/Seditious Hammer**

The Seregios Hammers, despite being nerfed from 4U, still are quite solid as mid-High Rank Progression weapons. Due to the sharpness restoration ability, you can maintain their sharpnesses quite easily, since you're already likely incorporating rolls into your playstyle as Hammer. It'll be up to you whether or not to go with Seditious to focus on more Sharpness or with Matraca for more raw, though.

### G-Rank (Hub G1-G4\*)

- **Elder Hammer**

A really easy Hammer to make that boasts impressive raw and Sharpness despite being one of the first Hammers you can make in G-Rank. Because of that, this Hammer will usually surpass anything you can make even in late High Rank, and even keeps its worth through the majority of early G-Rank too.

- **Avidya Breaker**

By G3 you can max the Narga Hammer out, and it's probably the best Hammer you can get before you can fight Ahtal-Ka. It has a lot of Purple Sharpness and backs a solid 290 raw with 45% Affinity (!).

## Endgame Hammer Recommendations

- **Fatalis Destroyer**

Crimson Fatalis's Hammer. It's the prime Hammer of choice for most situations due to it only needing Sharpness +1, having triple slots, blast, and an above-average raw of 330. This is a great all-purpose Hammer for all situations.

- **Ba'alat Gebal**

The Hammer of Ahtal-Ka is quite solid, having a good amount of raw - 330 - and having a maintainable amount of Sharpness at base levels, allowing you to just run Razor Sharp. Though this Hammer is basically overshadowed by Crimson Fatalis's Hammer in every way, this Hammer's a good alternative for when you haven't unlocked Crimson yet.

- **Ächtungsblick**

This Gore Magala Hammer has all of the traits of its cousins - solid raw, good Affinity, a decent amount of Dragon, and the ability to get Purple with Sharpness +2. It even has 2 slots for set flexibility. Useful in sets with Earplugs, and for monsters weak to Dragon.

- **Elderfrost Grandslam**

Like practically every Elderfrost Blademaster weapon, this really only kicks in when you have both Sharpness +2 and Razor Sharp, but when you do have those, the monstrous 370 raw really mauls monsters. Use if you don't have to use Earplugs and can instead just run the sharpness skills.

## Elemental Hammer Recommendations

*Disclaimer: You may be slightly slower with Elemental Hammer due to the mechanics of element not favoring Hammer that much. If you're fighting monsters weak to the element then these may be up for consideration, but usually will be slower than the general hammer recommendations above.*

- **Shamash Starbuster**

This is Silver Rathalos's Hammer. Gains Purple Sharpness when you use Sharpness +2 and packs an absolutely lethal amount of Fire with 50 points of it. Plus it has 2 slots for that set flexibility, and it doesn't sacrifice too much in terms of raw either, with 310 raw. It even has 15% Affinity! Useful for Barioth, Gore, or other Fire-weak monsters.

- **Diviner's Soulrock**

Deviant Boost. Purple Sharpness at Sharpness +2. 310 raw, 35 Water, and 15% Affinity to boot. Easy to build since it comes from Soulseer. This is a pretty solid Water Hammer to be running around with. It even lights up when you charge it up, which is neat. Great to use against stuff like Uragaan, Silver Rathalos, or Glavenus.

- **Thundergod Hammer**

Like Diviner's Soulrock, Thunderlord's Hammer boasts many of the same attributes. Deviant Boost, Purple Sharpness, decent raw... but the requirement to upgrade it 15 levels before you

get to this point can be a turn-off for some players. Nevertheless, this Hammer is quite solid for bashing in Gold Rathians or Tigrexes.

- **Opressor's Sway**

Opressor's Sway is the next-best option for people who don't want to do Thunderlord at all. Has higher raw than the Deviant version and a slot, and it also gains usable Purple at Sharpness +2. Losing the Deviant boost doesn't mean much either. This can be used on the same monsters as the Thundergod Hammer.

### Status Hammer Recommendations

*Super Disclaimer: Status Hammer is really ineffective due to how rarely Hammer hits consistently.*

- **Occult Effusion**

The Garuga Hammer has the best raw capabilities of the Poison Hammers and it has triple slots too. 25% Affinity is nice too, so that you can crit a lot with crit-focused builds.

- **Armored Megagogue**

Honestly, this Volvidon Hammer has the best raw out of the Paralysis Hammers. The other Hammers generally lose way too much raw to get higher Paralysis capabilities. Even this Hammer only caps out at White Sharpness and has no Affinity nor slots.

- **Shadow Nerdige**

Nerscylla's non-Hyper Hammer. The only Sleep Hammer that isn't a joke, both in terms of design or damage. Upsides: This Hammer has natural Purple and a maxed out Sharpness meter and it's got a spare slot. It also has some natural Affinity to work with. Downside: You're still dealing less damage than traditional Hammers.

## What Skills Should I Use?

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We'll go over skills and armor sets for progression in this section. In general Hammer can forego some of the typical Blademaster skills, such as Razor Sharp, since Hammer is on the slower end of hit count. Depending on the Hammer, you might need to run Sharpness + skills but those situations are few and far between. Late-game, you'd ideally build some mixed set built for the Hammer (and monster) you have in mind, so I'll give you an idea of what sort of skills you may or may not want.

### 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. You can't go wrong by using this. Remember that it's Bulldrome Cap, then Jaggi and Bulldrome alternating, and add some Attack Decorations on top of that.

- **Ceanataur**

If you're feeling an upgrade past BuJaBu is appropriate at this point and you don't mind losing Attack Up, then Ceanataur's a good alternative. Though slightly weaker for Hammer it does carry Razor Sharp regardless, so it'll make it easier to maintain sharpness in Low Rank a little bit better.

- **Rathalos**

Classic Rathalos will get you a bunch of damage-focused skills, particularly Weakness Exploit which will bump up your damage a ton when you're striking weak spots, which you're usually doing as Hammer. This is generally used to get through to High Rank due to the ease of creation.

- **Rathalos Mixset**

A set that uses Rathalos Cap/Rathalos Mail/Ceanataur Braces/Rathalos Faulds/Bnahabra Boots to get Weakness Exploit, Razor Sharp, and Attack Up (S). This set is better though slightly annoying to get due to the use of Bnahabra Boots. If you can assemble it though, the minor loss in attack is compensated for by the addition of Razor Sharp, and extends the usefulness of the set. You will also lose some Defense in comparison to full Rathalos though, so it's your call which one you use.

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

- **Ceanataur S**

If you really want to upgrade from Rathalos due to the fear being put in you by a certain fish, then Ceanataur S is your answer. You'll lose the damage from Weakness Exploit and Attack Up, but you'll keep Razor Sharp if you opted to go for the mixset variation of the Rathalos armor.

- **Rathalos S**

Much in the same vein as Rathalos armor is, this is just more damage with Weakness Exploit and Attack Up. Not much to say besides that.

- **Rathalos Mixset S**

Basically just the same as the LR version but with High Rank parts. Use this if you're comfortable with sacrificing defense for additional Razor Sharp functionality.

- **Silver Sol**

Silver Rathalos armor that gives you Critical Boost instead of Attack Up. Unlike the Rathalos Mixset, I don't believe that you can mix this with the same parts and get the same skills.

- **Hayasol**

The legendary Hayasol mixed set from Gen. If you're dedicated enough to clear most of LR Village's quests then you'll unlock the Hayabusa Feather after a particularly tough Village Quest. Getting this headpiece means that you can also get this set, which basically was the



singular armor set used in Gen lategame. This set can even carry you through HR Break. If you happen to have the Hayabusa Feather, then go ahead and make this set.

### **G-Rank (Hub G1-G4\*)**

- **Hayasol**

This set's skillset is good enough to get you through to HR Break, or that's what I've heard. I wouldn't recommend it because armors in G-Rank start to get more lucrative defense offerings and skill offerings, but if you're good enough you could legitimately get through G-Rank with just Hayasol on your back.

- **Ceanataur X/GX/XR**

Ceanataur X is just more of the same when it comes to Ceanataur armors -- Critical Eye and Razor Sharp. GX is slightly further down the road since it makes you get Pristine Ores from Mewstress but it provides a different skillset -- namely Sharpness +1, Critical Eye +1, and Repeat Offender, which is slightly more useful than the Razor Sharp you get from Ceanataur X. Ceanataur XR isn't available until G3, and only when you've cleared all of the keys there. But if you do manage to get it and farm up it, it provides both Sharpness +1, Critical Eye +3, and Razor Sharp, all of which are more or less useful. And you can recycle some of the parts to use later in Jho Ceana.

- **Rathalos X**

Rathalos once again is the next big stepping stone in terms of armors, and it even offers Hearing for the Hammer users; you just have to gem the skill in.

- **Jho Ceana**

The frequent Jho Ceana build recommended (Esurient XR/Ceanataur XR alternating) is a general Blademaster set, and works well enough for Hammer if you don't have a specific Hammer set yet. I'd still use other armor set searchers to make more specific sets tailored for Hammer though.

### **Skill Recommendations**

- **Weakness Exploit**

Most monster weakspots are on their head, and since you're aiming for the head anyway this skill is gonna take effect a lot of the time. Remember to check Impact zones for weakspots!

- **Sharpness +1/2**

The use of this skill will honestly depend on which Hammers you decide to take, but getting this skill is really easy at endgame due to the existence of Esurient XR. Generally, take only Sharpness +1 if the length of the sharpness grade is 'long enough'. See: Crimson Fatalis Hammer for a good reference.

- **Razor Sharp**

Generally doesn't need to be used unless you're using a Hammer which only has a tiny sliver of Sharpness, like Elderfrost's Hammer. In those cases though, it really helps your Sharpness game out a bunch.

- **Critical Boost**

What can I say, with Weakness Exploit you're boosting your damage by an additional 7.5% just by putting this skill on. Stacking this with other Affinity-related skills will provide the most benefit.

- **Critical Eye**

Standard Affinity boosting skill with standard Critical-focused set, nothing to see here.

- **Earplugs/HG Earplugs**

Since monsters usually stay still while they're roaring, Earplugs will give you a great opportunity to hit their heads that normally wouldn't be available otherwise. But remember that HG Earplugs won't protect you from associated damage that the roar can cause, like Tigrex's roars. And some monsters won't roar either. Keep those in mind and you should be able to make sets catered towards countering specific monsters.

- **Challenger +1/2**

Monsters enrage frequently in G-Rank, and you're in a perfect position to make the most use of this skill as your skillset as a Hammer user is generally lighter than others. Just make sure you don't overload on Affinity when you're using this.

## Monster Matchups

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**Please note that this section is mostly based on personal opinion and should not be taken at face value. Matchups can vary wildly between skill levels and even between individuals.**

In this section I'll be going over monster matchups in the order that the monsters are arranged in the Hunter's Notes, except for one monster, which I'll talk about at the end in order to avoid spoilers.

I'll be using a /10 rating system for this, the higher the number the better the matchup is for you, with 10 being a great matchup for you and 0 being a pretty bad matchup. Oh and keep in mind that this is based off of Guild/No Arts as a baseline, because you can tapdance over most things with Adept or Valor. This section won't cover in detail the monster either.

### Neoptorons and Temnocerans

**Seltas: 10/10 (No Earplugs Req.)**

Even if it's in the air you can knock it down relatively easy thanks to the Rushing Uppercut. Once it's on the ground, the horn counts as part of the head, so it can be stunned easily. Other than that it's dodging a series of horn attacks and projectiles, both of which can be just maneuvered around.

**Seltas Queen: 8/10 (No Earplugs Req.)**

Seltas Queen's head can be high off of the ground especially with larger variations of Seltas Queen. When she puts her head guard up, it can also be quite the task to try to get around her defense. Taking advantage of her charging mucus shot is the key to bashing her face in, that and avoiding her Seltas thrall's Stamina-draining shots.

**Nerscylla: 8/10 (No Earplugs Req.)**

Unlike Seltas Queen, Nerscylla's face can be high off of the ground most of the hunt. Take advantage of when it performs the super poison bite to attack her mandibles, and when it's tripped, attack her juicy and quite vulnerable head. Aerial Style can be useful here to most constantly hit the head, even when she's not down.

**Piscine Wyverns****Cephadrome: 9/10 (No Earplugs Req.)**

If you have a Cephadrome that's constantly swimming in the sand, bring a fistful of Sonic Bombs to knock it out of the sand. That will give you a large opening to slam n' jam its face in. Otherwise stick to the side of its face to avoid the projectile attacks.

**Plesioth: 3/10 (No Earplugs Req.)**

Uh..... I honestly don't know how you're gonna bash Plesioth's face in. Its body is just not built for that sort of thing, and Aerial style doesn't even work as well here. You could possibly, maybe attack its face while it's doing its forward water jet attacks but that's somewhat risky. And even when you're not trying to bash its face in, you're faced with a whole new can of worms when trying to attack its legs, since that'll leave you open to tail whips and hip checks. This is gonna be a really hard hunt, so strap yourself in.

**Lavasioth: 8/10 (No Earplugs Req.)**

As long as you're smart about it, you can hit Lavasioth's head with Uppercuts, and if you time it right, golfswings too. Taking advantage of when it pops its head out of the lava and when it's shooting projectiles can also go a long way into smacking this fish in the head. Iframing and positioning correctly can handle the rest of the right relatively well, though I do caution looking out for the super body slam which comes out fast and furiously.

**Bird Wyverns****The Dromes: 10/10 (No Earplugs Req.)**

The Dromes are more annoying than actual threats. Their heads are quite small and they're quite mobile but if you land the stun on them you can finally lock them down and show them what for.

**Great Maccao: 10/10 (No Earplugs Req.)**

Great Maccao's much in the same boat as the other Dromes, but it likes to backstep and perform its kicking move a lot more. The plan's the same though, trip him with charge attacks, stun him, and then whale on him.

**Yian Kut-Ku: 9/10 (No Earplugs Req.)**

Spend too much time trying to bash its face in and you're gonna eat a charge or a tail whip. Weave in and out of its range, attacking just as it turns its head towards you. If you keep doing that it'll go down quickly.

**Gypceros: 9/10 (No Earplugs Req.)**

The same advice goes for Gypceros as Yian Kut-Ku: Weave in and out of its attack range while sniping at the head when it turns around. Unlike Yian Kut-Ku though, you'll have to especially focus on the head, since otherwise it's quite resilient to Impact damage anywhere else.

**Yian Garuga: 7/10 (Earplugs)**

Yian Garuga is quite dangerous for Blademasters mostly because of its pesky tendency to one-frame charge, and it also does it normally when he's regularly turning around. Plus, Garuga can be much, much larger than your average wyvern, and it keeps its head fairly off the ground, making it hard for you to hit him. Your only opportunities only really come when you either trip or when he's using a fireball attack, which causes him to lower its head and is a great window of opportunity for you to hit him. It also takes more KO damage than usual, making it easier for you to KO him.

**Deadeye Yian Garuga: 8/10 (Earplugs)**

Deadeye's more predictable and less spastic than regular Garuga by several miles. That said, it is still dangerous for you to hit its head mostly because it still has Garuga's annoying beakslam and pecks. Keep your distance, and when you see him either using fireballs or turning around, that'll be your chance to hit him. Deadeye also takes more KO damage than normal, like Garuga.

**Malfestio: 9/10 (Earplugs)**

Malfestio's really trivial... except when you get into G-Rank. The wingslams it gets in G-Rank are absolutely terrifying with their large hitbox, and the damage it deals is no joke. Recognize when it can combo into it and stay away from him when it can combo into those wingslams. If you happen to see it come, dodge towards its left side (your right if you're facing towards him). If you're far enough to the left then you should be okay. The wingslam also has a high recovery time, which means that if you can position correctly that should be a prime time for you to slam and jam its head.

**Nightcloak Malfestio: 9/10 (Earplugs)**

Much like Malfestio except it can go invisible... but if you do your job and hit the head it can't even do that properly. Keep a watchful eye out for the super dive attack and keep track of where it is while he's invisible and it should go down quickly.

**Fanged Beasts****Bulldrome: 10/10 (No Earplugs)**

Will it do one paw at the ground or four? Or... 0? Who knows, only Bulldrome does. its head is large though, so you can easily apply your hammer directly to its forehead. Watch out for the frame-one headshaking thing Bulldrome does, since that also lingers.

#### **Kecha Wacha: 9/10 (Earplugs)**

Like most of the monkeys in this game, sometimes you'll hit the giant arms instead of the head, and that goes especially true for Kecha Wacha. You can take advantage of when it decides to reposition though because you're immune to Wind Pressure while you're charging.

#### **Lagombi: 8/10 (No Earplugs)**

The P3rd Fanged Beasts have really small heads and they usually don't let them down that easily, which means tough times abound. You could hit Lagombi on the butt or something but it's just not the same. It's really rare for you to get KOs on Lagombi anyways since Lagombi likes to do that dash attack when he's on all fours.

#### **Snowbaron Lagombi: 7/10 (Earplugs)**

Snowbaron will make you suffer the same problems as Lagombi but even more so due to its liberal use of projectiles. You can throw Sonic Bombs to make it recoil for a bit but try to take advantage of when it lifts up the giant snowball to Sonic him out of it and make its head vulnerable for a few seconds.

#### **Arzueros: 8/10 (No Earplugs)**

Small head, big bear, tendency to not bring it down often... this has the makings of a monster that doesn't want to be KO'd that much. You can get behind it easily to dodge the chain swipes though.

#### **Redhelm Arzueros: 7/10 (Earplugs)**

A monster that's weak to status and yet you're playing Hammer against it. Bad times. Yeah you're not gonna get out of this one easily especially since Redhelm's hitzones are more or less real bad. I'd suggest Valor for this one since you're gonna need to give Redhelm a severe beating. At least you can dodge its attacks easily.

#### **Congalala: 10/10 (Earplugs)**

Congalala's delayed turning reaction makes hitting him in the head real easy and real consistent. Just watch out for the backstep -> breath that it sometimes does.

#### **Blangonga: 6/10 (Earplugs)**

Blangonga's a douche. Frame-one charges, clotheslines, ice breath, and tremor -> super slam combo, plus he's a monkey so you can't hit the head as consistently as you would like, especially when he's down. I highly suggest using Valor to dodge its attacks.

#### **Volvidon: 9/10 (No Earplugs)**

Try golfswinging a Volvidon when he's rolling - he's super vulnerable during the rolls, but only to Impact or Cut attacks. If you can master the timing you can make Volvidon a jumbo-sized golfball.

Otherwise, he's somewhat annoying due to him standing on its hind legs and its tongue attacks knocking you all over the place.

### **Rajang: 7/10 (Earplugs)**

Rajang's one of the few monsters who's more resistant to KO damage, only having 50% on the head, so taking Hammer is generally a personal preference rather than a stun-focused thing. Rajang's really readable but only if you have enough experience with him to learn its patterns. Trip him and focus on just dealing damage, because Rajang KOs are rare enough.

### **Furious Rajang: 6/10 (Earplugs)**

Furious Rajang is in the same boat as regular Rajang, but is just enraged all the time. It also has the same KO resistance as normal Rajang, so don't expect to KO Furious much either. Overall Furious is a much faster paced fight than regular Rajang, so adjust your strategy as such.

### **Gammoth: 9/10 (Earplugs)**

Gammoth's head is usually out of your reach for the majority of the fight, and using Aerial Style too recklessly may lead to you eating a trunkslam in midair (ouch). You'll have to try to snipe her trunks if she's not doing anything else. Above all, try to bait out the trunkslam attack as that leaves a wide window of opportunity to attack her head and trunk.

### **Elderfrost Gammoth: 8/10 (Earplugs)**

Elderfrost Gammoth is more or less the same as normal Gammoth except she has more Area of Effect attacks, and she spams them a lot more. KOing her will be harder than normal Gammoth because of the attacks and her sheer size. Baiting out her trunkslam is also harder because you can get caught by the super-quick to use snowblower attack, which also has massive range. If the head isn't available, you can always attack the front legs, I guess.

## **Amphibians**

### **Tetsucabra: 10/10 (Earplugs)**

Tap the froggo in the head, but not when he's carrying around the rock. When he's powerlifting, you should go around to its backside and attack its tail. Otherwise, this fight is easy, just stay away from its sides.

### **Drilltusk Tetsucabra: 10/10 (Earplugs)**

Drilltusk is mostly the same as normal froggo, just with more death potential. Watch out for the rock suplex that they can do in G-Rank too.

### **Zamtrios: 9/10 (Earplugs)**

Sharky-boy here isn't that threatening. If it puts on the armor you can break it relatively easily, especially with a Fire Hammer, and every time you do that, it trips, letting you get more stun damage on its head, which leads to *another* trip. When it puffs up you can just land a bunch of extended combos on its belly without getting punished much too. The only thing you do have to watch out for is

the ice beam, which can cover quite an area in front of him. If you see it coming though, you can just maneuver around it.

## **Carapaceons**

### **Daimyo Hermitaur: 9/10 (No Earplugs)**

Sometimes Daimyo can be too large for you to hit its head constantly, but other times it's at the perfect height for a few golf swings. Either way, you can slam n jam this guy to make crab cakes out of him.

### **Stonefist Hermitaur: 8/10 (No Earplugs)**

Stonefist's head is too high for Guild Hammer, so Aerial Hammer's a fine choice against Stonefist. If you don't wanna run Aerial, then you can try to trip the guy by attacking and breaking its legs. Once he's down, you should go for the head. You're a Hammer user after all, no need to care about the giant pincer.

### **Shogun Ceanataur: 9/10 (No Earplugs)**

Shogun are generally short enough so that you can land your Hammer hits on its head consistently and frequently. All you really have to worry about are its frontal-focused claw sweeps and the occasional roundslash. You don't have to worry about the jumping slash attack it gets in G-Rank either because you're usually close enough to just go behind him when it does that anyway. If the head area is too hot, then try to either trip him by going for the legs, or by going for the backshell, which is weaker to Impact than to Cut anyway.

### **Rustrazor Ceanataur: 8/10 (No Earplugs)**

Rustrazor's water beams aren't that threatening to Blademasters since they all miss when you're close to him. its melee attacks in Glavenus form are more lethal to Blademasters though due to the frequency with which it can pump them out. However, Rustrazor still has the same weaknesses as normal Ceanataur, so the strategy is more or less the same. Hit legs to trip, and golfswing its head when you can.

## **Leviathans**

### **Royal Ludroth: 9/10 (No Earplugs)**

Banana's head can be too high for you to hit sometimes and its quick frontal-focused moveset can be a pain. Just maneuver your way around him and slam its face when it performs a turn.

### **Agnaktor: 6/10 (Earplugs)**

The positioning of Agnaktor's head can psych out newer Hammer users, and him having multiple attacks that shift and move its head around don't help much either. Attacking Agnaktor's head is like trying to grab a tiny seed in a mountain of fondue. It's hard, frustrating, and it keeps moving around. That said if you can overcome its noodly head (and maybe attack its chest maybe?) it still is annoying as heck because of all of its melee attacks. I'd take Valor if I were you.

**Nibelsnarf: 10/10 (No Earplugs)**

Nibelsnarf's got a giant head. You've got a giant Hammer. I'm sure I don't need to explain further. Just don't get bitten and slam its uvula when you get the chance.

**Lagiacus: 6/10 (Earplugs)**

Lagi's similar to Agnaktor in that it has a lot of attacks centered around its body and its head is about 5 feet off of the ground. You could snipe him with golfswings, and there are a few poses it takes where its head is at a particular position. Rely on those to hit its head and you should be okay, ish. Just don't eat anything laced with Thunder.

**Mizutsune: 8/10 (Earplugs)**

Mizu's head is closer to the ground than other Leviathans and is definitely not as noodly. The issue here is Mizu's high mobility rather than how wiggly the head is. Mizu can move from one side of an area to another, which is a pain if you're trying to hit the head quickly. Rely on the moments after it attacks, such as when it uses the water beam, or trying to tail slam you, to strike at the head.

**Soulseer Mizutsune: 7/10 (Earplugs)**

Soulseer requires you to play its game of forcing it to enrage in order for you to hit other body parts. The head is incredibly dangerous to stand in front of normally, due to the explosive bubbles and the severity of the attacks that it does from the front. Soulseer's more dangerous attacks also dramatically move its head around, making the head all but unhittable under normal circumstances. Break the front legs when they're all purple to break 'em, then break its head. The opportunities you used against regular Mizu also work here to an extent, but the clawslam attack is usually followed up by one of Soulseer's more powerful attacks.

**Snake Wyverns****Najarala: 8/10 (HG Earplugs)**

Najarala isn't very engaging to fight since its head is usually out of reach and its frontal-area attacks cover a very wide area. Stunning scale explosions also make the area a minefield to walk around in. Your goal is to slam n jam the tail, then beat on the squishy squishy head when it trips. This should be easy to do for Blademasters, it's just a matter of making the Najarala cooperate.

**Brute Wyverns****Barroth: 9/10 (Earplugs)**

The most important note is that only Impact damage will blow Barroth's crown off of him, so it's your job to snap that thing off while you're slamming him in the head. Fortunately the head of a Barroth is kinda large, even if sometimes too far off the ground to hit normally. It is important to note that Barroth's head is really tough to Impact damage, and its actual weakspot for Impact is its front claws. Hit those, then when you have an opportunity, hit the head to KO.

**Deviljho: 8/10 (HG Earplugs)**



Pickle boy here has a surprisingly small head, considering its body shape and size. it also tends to backstep a bunch, and its head-focused attacks don't make anything easier. it also doesn't normally head turn like most other monsters do either. This hunt will be a definite chore. Try to trip him and then hit its head. However, the rare cases where it keeps its head still are when it stomps with its right leg. Now, if only you could hit him while a tremor effect is going off...

### **Savage Deviljho: 6/10 (HG Earplugs)**

Faster, stronger, head about the same size as normal Deviljho. Even more dangerous especially since Savage doesn't really stomp all that often. Savage can really put the screws into Blademasters too, so I suggest taking Valor to protect yourself from the attacks it can do. If you don't plan on hitting the head that much, take a Thunder-element Hammer to really exploit its weakness.

### **Uragaan: 9/10 (Earplugs)**

This hunt is Hammer vs Hammer. Watch out for its rolls and Uragaan's own head slams, but you can really take the hurting to him by hitting its head. If you break it, then it makes it even softer to damage. To break it quickly, take Blast, Water, or Dragon. From there it's a simple matter of attacking its head to expose the weakspot, and then KOing him to heck and back.

### **Crystalbeard Uragaan: 8/10 (Earplugs)**

Like Barroth, Crystalbeard's head can only be broken via Impact damage. Breaking its head exposes a great weakspot for every damage type, including your own, and Crystalbeard lets you stand under him for the majority of its attacks. Watch out for its rolling attacks, especially the super explosive roll and the rolling sleep burst attack, and you should be fine. Also maybe consider getting Tremor Res for some of its attacks.

### **Duramboros: 8/10 (HG Earplugs)**

Duram's got a big head, but it's not likely that it'll even leave it open for you to smash. If you've got good positioning though you can catch its head by just going to the side where its head is looking at. Also, when it does the spinny spinny attack, you can just go under its legs and take a crack at them -- it'll trip pretty easily, leaving its head and its humps open.

### **Brachydios: 7/10 (HG Earplugs)**

Brachydios's head is fairly high up, so most often you won't be able to hit it particularly well. Even if it is within striking range, its fists usually come up first. If you want, you can try to Aerial him and try to hit its head that way. Just be careful of its frequent melee attacks and the blasts that occur while he's enraged.

### **Raging Brachydios: 4/10 (HG Earplugs)**

Now this guy is definitely too big for you to hit normally with Hammer. its explody parts will also hurt you a lot if you just go whacking at them without a care in the world, so make sure you go in and go out before the blast explodes. If you're insane, you could go Aerial style and attempt to its head that way, but beware of explosions in the sky and being whacked out of the sky in general.

**Glavenus: 9/10 (Earplugs)**

Glavenus's tendency to leave its head relatively still means easy KOs and easy explosions, if its head is heated up. You can iframe most of the stuff it throws out, and he's easy to read too. The only remotely hard part about this fight is positioning properly to punish its head quickly.

**Hellblade Glavenus: 8/10 (Earplugs)**

Hellblade is a bit more difficult to fight, if only due to the explosions of the tail, leaving you less opportunities to whack at the head. its projectiles are also real dangerous too. This fight is more or less like original Glavenus though.

**Flying Wyverns****Nargacuga: 7/10 (Earplugs)**

Narga's mobility and friskiness makes it hard for you to consistently hit its head, especially in G-Rank. Occasionally it'll leave it open for you to hit but that's just before it'll perform a tail-related attack, or a swipe. You can hit the head when it turns once though, but unless you're quick about it, Narga's head will just fly over to the other side of the area.

**Silverwind Nargacuga: 5/10 (Earplugs)**

Silverwind's even worse to fight because it actively tries to get away from you. And it has projectiles. And its Full Moon Slash tosses around Blademasters like no one's business. This guy is dangerous, so make sure you're on the ball, or Silverwind will pop the ball from under you.

**Barioth: 7/10 (Earplugs)**

Barioth, being a Narga clone, also has a tiny head and also refuses to stand still. If you stand in front of him for too long you'll also eat a charge, or a tail whip. You could try to break its arms but you can't really take advantage of the delays as Hammer unless you have both godlike prediction skills and great positioning.

**Rathian: 10/10 (Earplugs)**

Pretty much Hammer fodder. Her head is nice and squishy and she turns like most normal wyverns do. Watch out for the insta charges though, and especially when she does the triple charge when she's enraged. Her fireballs are a prime time for setting up a golfswing on her head, and when she lands normally, she doesn't even move her head much. This is pretty much the monster to learn Hammer on, after you learn the controls.

**Dreadqueen Rathian: 7/10 (HG Earplugs)**

Very poisonous Rathian is more or less the same thing as normal Rathian up until you get into G-Rank, where she gets her WyvernsFire. This is very dangerous and Dreadqueen combos you into it using Wind Press, so if you're not charging, you're gonna eat a firebreath. Her other attacks are also somewhat dangerous, but you should be able to get around them by rolling under her.

**Gold Rathian: 5/10 (HG Earplugs)**

Rathian, except more dangerous, more damage, and her head bounces pretty much everything in G-Rank. This will be annoying, up until you break her head, so you should consider either spamming charge attacks on her head or attacking her feet instead. If you're going to try to break her head, then bring a Thunder-element Hammer to break it faster.

#### **Rathalos: 8/10 (Earplugs)**

Rathalos flies a lot, so its head will be in the sky more often than other wyverns. If you position right and Rathalos is small enough you could maybe possibly golfswing its legs or even its head if he's small enough. Be sure to not eat a fireball while you're under him though.

#### **Dreadking Rathalos: 6/10 (HG Earplugs)**

Significantly more dangerous than a normal Rathalos to try to hit the head on. Fire breaths, great balls of fire, and Dreadking's size and flying ability will restrict your ability to land hits on the head by a lot. Try Aerial if you really want to take him down a few pegs, or something.

#### **Silver Rathalos: 7/10 (HG Earplugs)**

Much like Gold Rathian except it also flies more, and fires napalm down whenever it feels like it, or when it combos into it by doing the flying claw. its head also bounces your attacks if they aren't charge attacks. Like Goldian, you can choose to go for the head to expose it, or you can go for the legs and trip him. If you elect to go for the head, use a Water hammer.

#### **Basarios: 9/10 (HG Earplugs)**

You'll definitely bounce off of a Basarios's head, and you can't break it either. You can KO it, definitely, but you're not gonna be doing much if you do that. Just go for the legs/belly and break the belly to expose the weakness. Basarios has nothing threatening of note otherwise.

#### **Gravios: 8/10 (HG Earplugs)**

You're not gonna KO a Gravios, much less reach the head most of the time. Heck, I don't even know why you brought a Hammer to this fight in the first place. Look, you should bring a Water Hammer and try to break its belly and its legs, and don't try to go for the head. It's almost a fruitless effort. Other than that, watch out for the gas explosions that occur sometimes as well as its various body slams and hipchecks and you should be fine.

#### **Khezu: 8/10 (HG Earplugs)**

Notoriously annoying for early Blademasters, that doesn't really change in G-Rank. The electric aura and its tail whips are still as annoying as ever, though you can still punish the electric projectile attacks extremely well. Take your time and don't be too greedy. Also, try Valor or Adept style against this guy.

#### **Tigrex: 6/10 (HG Earplugs+)**

Tigrex likes to charge more than it likes to turn its head normally, making Tigrex somewhat of a struggle to hit the head on. You can dodge the charges by rolling under its left leg as it starts to

charge, though. If you feel that it's not safe to attack the head normally, go for its hind legs to trip him. Watch out for its spin attacks too.

#### **Grimclaw Tigrex: 5/10 (HG Earplugs+)**

The mechanics of Tigrex combined with even more frontal attacks make any Hammer user unhappy. Grimclaw rarely gives you a break either, so this will be hard for the Guild users. I recommend using Valor style for this hunt.

#### **Seregios: 8/10 (Earplugs)**

Seregios is another flighty wyvern, though it does leave more opportunities for you to hit the head than the other jumpy ones. its Crescent Sweeps are painful and cover a large area and the fight is really frantic, but you can land a lot of hits on the head if you position and time your attacks well.

#### **Astalos: 10/10 (Earplugs)**

Bashing Astalos's head in is real easy once it's charged up, and you can roll under him to get around most of its attacks. Make sure you know what attacks can come out at any one time and you should be fine.

#### **Boltreaver Astalos: 8/10 (Earplugs)**

Boltreaver is much more dodgy than standard Astalos is, and its attacks are more threatening, especially its Boltblade. It's more or less the same song and dance as Astalos though, so you can use many of the same tricks.

#### **Diablos: 9/10 (HG Earplugs)**

You'll bounce off of Diablos's head, and you won't stop bouncing, even when both the horns are broken. Your best bet is to attack the legs and keep attacking around that area when Diablos trips. Other than that, as long as you aren't too greedy, you should be able to dodge Diablos's attacks.

#### **Bloodbath Diablos: 6/10 (HG Earplugs)**

Bloodbath Diablos hurts a lot more, and unlike other monsters where HGE is just a nice thing to have, dodging poorly against Bloodbath's roar to charge combo is literally a matter of life and death. Furthermore, Bloodbath's Impact hitzones aren't the best out there, having few Weakness Exploit-able places for you to hit. You'll also bounce off of the head before you sever the horn, so watch out for that.

#### **Akantor: 7/10 (HG Earplugs+)**

Like a giant Tigrex that can also inflict Defense Double Down and is also really big. Did I mention its size? Because of its size, hitting its head normally is a very poor option to take. Try to trip him, or else you're gonna eat a giant charge.

#### **Ukanlos: 7/10 (HG Earplugs+)**

Much like Akantor except icy. Has the same problems as Akantor, but it can jump and charge somewhat more quickly than Akantor, though it can't chain together charges. Also watch out for the followup attack that it sometimes does too. Also, know how to dodge the swim.

???

#### **Gore Magala: 9/10 (HG Earplugs)**

Gore doesn't move its head around like the traditional wyverns do, but it leaves its head still more often than other wyverns. You can punish him more easily, but it does have a frame one charge you need to watch out for. Otherwise, this is a pretty typical fight. Oh, and try to knock him out of Frenzy Mode as soon as possible.

#### **Chaotic Gore Magala: 9/10 (HG Earplugs)**

Chaotic's a lot like Gore, but it can go use Shagaru's attacks sometimes. Learn when it switches from mode to mode, and take advantage of its frequent roars to whack at its head. Though rare, you should knock him out of its Frenzy Mode when it eventually gets into it.

### **Fanged Wyverns**

#### **Zinogre: 10/10 (Earplugs)**

Zinogre's head is hard to hit since it's so small and it's far up on its body. You can sometimes golfswing its head, but on larger Zinogre, that's not gonna happen. When this happens, you know what to do, right?

#### **Thunderlord Zinogre: 8/10 (Earplugs)**

Instantly stunning attacks and dangerous claw slam moves make Thunderlord a real doggo to hunt down. Just trip him and attack its head, since you usually wouldn't be able to attack its head normally. Fortunately, Thunderlord, like regular Zinogre, takes additional KO damage on the head.

### **Elder Dragons**

#### **Kirin: 10/10 (No Earplugs)**

Kirin's head is basically right there and is nearly always accessible, so long as you watch out for the thunderbolts and the rare Kirin melee attack. Kirin also trips a bunch, meaning free golfswings. Just make sure to angle yourself in the right direction to hit the head with the golfswing when it's down.

#### **Shagaru Magala: 9/10 (HG Earplugs)**

Shagaru's way more mobile than Gore is, and the breath attacks it throws out means that you don't have many times to hit the head. Hit either the forelegs or the hind legs to trip then hit the head safely, or use the ledges in Sanctuary to execute jumping charge attacks. You can also take advantage of after Shagaru roars to hit the head, since Shagaru lands in a predictable way everytime.

#### **Valstrax: 8/10 (HG Earplugs)**

If you park yourself in front of Valstrax's head then you should be safe to most of its attacks, since they usually have a large deadzone in front of its face. Sometimes the attacks will connect, but you should simply be able to either back off when you see them coming or iframe them. Regardless, Valstrax is a jumpy boy, capable of high mobility and easily being able to move from one side of the area to another. You'll probably be chasing him if it isn't staying still, which is a major pain.

#### **Kushala Daora: 6/10 (Earplugs)**

Kushala's gonna be flying in the air for most of the time, and the black wind will blow you away, unless you use poison, or mount him. He's also mobile as heck, so you'll be chasing him across the area. Suffice to say, this will be annoying as heck, and don't expect to get many KOs here, much less damage.

#### **Chameleos: 8/10 (No Earplugs)**

Chameleos's head is too high off of the ground for you to hit at all, so forget about that. I really hope you brought a Fire-element Hammer because you aren't gonna be of much use otherwise in this hunt. Stay to Chammy's sides and watch out for the poison counterattack, as well as the poison blast.

#### **Teostra: 8/10 (Earplugs)**

Teostra's head is huge and if he's enraged it'll sometimes leave its head open for attack. Take advantage of those times to whack at its head. If you do this enough it'll actually be stunned out of enrage, so whack the heck out of the head. Watch out for the frame one charge and the super nova and you'll be fine.

#### **Lao-Shan Lung: 5/10 (HG Earplugs)**

Can anyone say Tremors? Yeah Lao has a lot of tremors, and it's not fun to nip at its legs when you're getting tremor'd every 2 seconds. You could also try to attack its head, but Lao goes on two feet sometimes too. Just use the artillery and fixed weapons to kill Lao your first time and don't look back.

#### **Alatreon: 6/10 (HG Earplugs)**

Great Hammer players can head snipe the absolute heck out of Alatreon, and you can too, just need to try it out for a bit. Still, even with great headsniping techniques, it can be dangerous to fight Alatreon because of its endless onslaught of attacks and the great damage they deal. Prepare yourself for a long fight.

#### **Amatsu: 8/10 (Earplugs)**

Amatsu floats around with ease, making him harder to hit for Blademasters in general. Amatsu's head is kept nice and low to the ground however, making him prime Hammer material. its attacks may disagree with your agenda, but as long as you don't face tank the tornado or the super hydro pump, you should be fine.

#### **Nakarkos: 9/10 (HG Earplugs)**

You can't KO Nak, so you're taking Hammer because you want to take Hammer. This is a pretty average matchup considering all those. Just break the tentacles and attack the weakspot on its back whenever you can really, and watch out for the powerful tentacle slams.

#### **Ahtal-Ka: 9/10 (Earplugs)** *(True family: Neopteron)*

Ahtal-Ka's head is usually blocked by her foreblades unless you trip her, which is easy to do if you attack her while she's picking up stuff. Ahtal Ka also has a lot of weakspots, namely her legs, foreblades, and her head, so it'll be easy to get her to the mech phase. Once you get there, it's a simple matter of golfswinging the foot weakspot to trip it, then climb it and break your way through the cocoons. Rinse and repeat until you slay her.

#### **Fatalis: 9/10 (HG Earplugs)**

You can't KO Fatalis, so you're limited to nipping away at its knees. Not the funnest thing to do, but at least you're safe there. Being a Blademaster, you don't really care for most of Fatalis's attacks, since dodging them usually means getting under or going to the side.

#### **Crimson Fatalis: 9/10 (HG Earplugs)**

If you stay on the outside of Crimson's right leg you'll be able to hit without much fear of taking a meteor to the face. The fight is much like a standard Fatalis's using that strat.

#### **Old Fatalis: 7/10 (HG Earplugs)**

Fatalis, but it makes you bounce when it becomes enraged. They really want you to use the Castle Shrade fixed rools in order to hurt him like this, because I'm sure you don't want to spam charged attacks on him while he's enraged. If you do trip him, its entire upper body is vulnerable. If you really want, you could maybe possibly use Aerial Hammer here to ignore the bouncy zones on its legs when he's enraged, but I advise against it, lest you become a lightning rod.

## Final Thoughts

Unlike in MH4U, Hammer's niche isn't completely obliterated by Charge Blade, due to the fact it was nerfed. Hammer itself is still the solid KO machine it was, but HAs don't do very much for it, aside from the vanilla ones which are shared with every weapon. The Styles Hammer has mostly gave it gimmicks that obstruct normal usage as well, though some of the gimmicks are better than others. The matchups Hammer has mostly favor it if the head is relatively safe to hit and if the monster can be KO'd. Otherwise, the more Golf Swings, the better. Hammer is best with experience, since you can more easily predict the monster's movements, but you'll be able to get away with more simple gameplay, by hitting a monster's weakspot.

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