

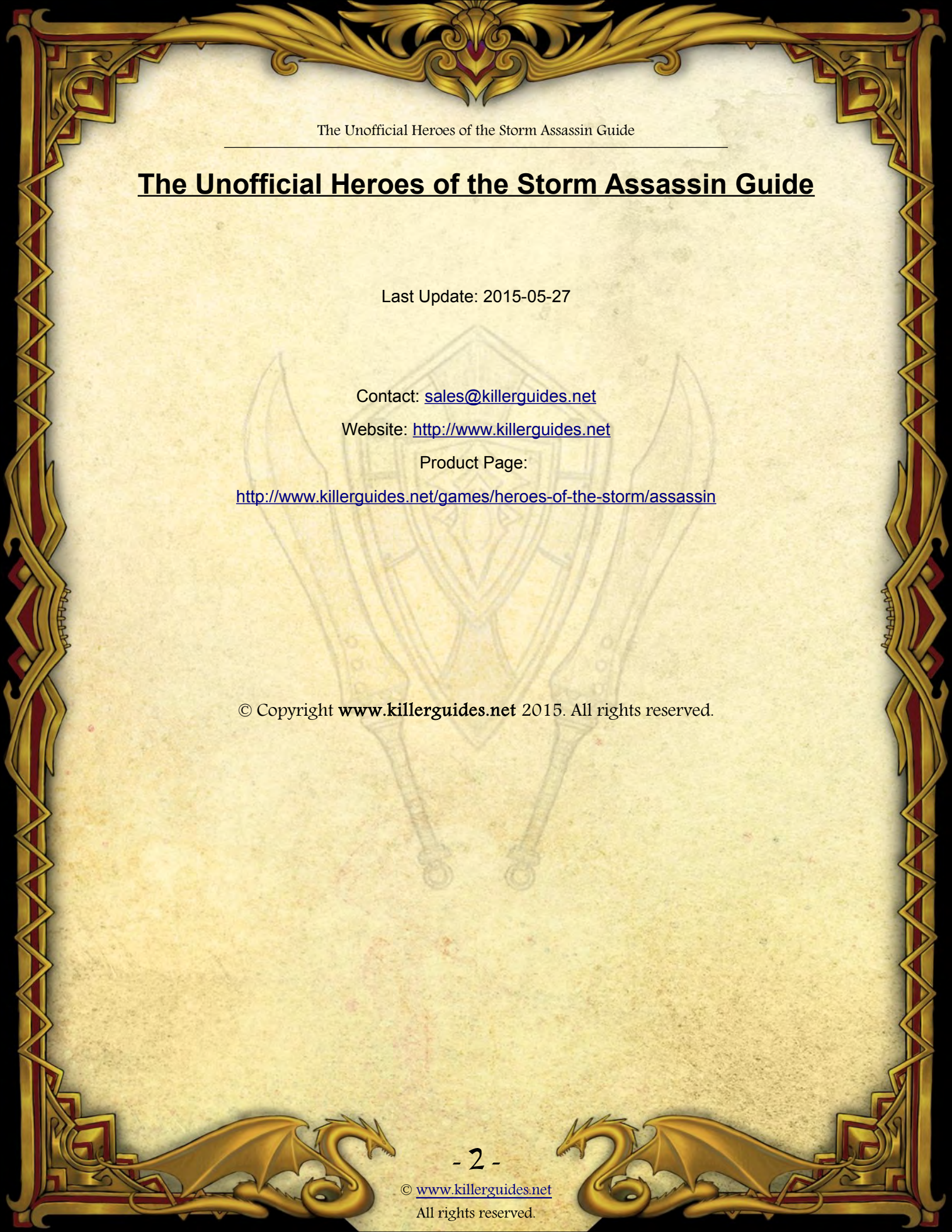
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# **THE UNOFFICIAL HEROES OF THE STORM ASSASSIN GUIDE**

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The Unofficial Heroes of the Storm Assassin Guide

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## **The Unofficial Heroes of the Storm Assassin Guide**

Last Update: 2015-05-27

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Website: <http://www.killerguides.net>

Product Page:

<http://www.killerguides.net/games/heroes-of-the-storm/assassin>

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## HEROES OF THE STORM FEATURE



lizzard is really bringing a ton of great new features to the multiplayer online battle arena (MOBA) genre with their Heroes of the Storm game. Plenty of DotA 2 and LoL players are flocking to the game in droves every month. Regardless of whether you're completely new to the MOBA genre or have years of experience playing Defense of the Ancients or League of Legends, you'll have a ton of stuff to learn when it comes to Heroes of the Storm. There are many differences between it and the older games, so let's take a quick glance at the game and see just what you need to know to get prepared to play.

### Game Mode

Blizzard is very big on giving players the time they need to grow as a player without overwhelming them with possibilities right off the bat. This is an old strategy of theirs and one that has worked very successfully when it comes to commanding huge, loyal player bases. Heroes of the Storm is no different. There are a number of different game modes for a player to work their way through as they become more familiar with the game's mechanics. Let's take a look at each one.

### Tutorial

As soon as you start the game, you'll be given an option to play the tutorial. Even if you're a veteran MOBA player, you should consider giving this a try. It'll immediately show you what differences there are in the game and will give you a nice base upon which to grow. With that said, these can be skipped if you feel you can go without them. They show you the very basics of the game when it comes to controls and mechanics. All in all, you'll receive 1,000 gold for completing the tutorial missions, which is a great boost early on.



## Training

After getting past the tutorial section, you'll be locked into playing training mode for your first match before having access to the other game modes. This is where you'll be put on a team with four A.I. controlled allies that you'll be working with to take down a team of enemy computer players. This is pretty much "single player mode" and will allow you to experiment to your heart's content without worrying about messing up the game for a teammate who wants to focus on winning as soon as possible. You'll receive a small bit of experience for each win but will not be able to get any gold.

## Versus A.I.

The next game mode available is Versus A.I., which features a team of five different human controlled heroes versus all computer opponents. The A.I. will be scaled up in difficulty based on the cumulative sum of the human players' skill (taken from their rating). While this mode is generally quite a bit easier than fighting real people, don't assume you'll be able to just slack off and still win. If you're not careful, the computer team will be very capable of winning the match. Winning one of these games will reward a fair amount of experience along with a bit more gold than what you'd get from a Quick Match loss. You can either search for a random group or create a premade.

## Quick Match

This is where the game really begins to open up for people as they start understanding the mechanics at a bit of a deeper level. This is where you're on a team with four other people and are fighting real human players for dominance. This is the mode you'll want to be playing most of all as you work your way up to meeting the League matches. Wins and losses both offer a good amount of experience with a fair amount of gold (20 for a loss or 30 for a win). You can queue up for this as a solo player or create a group to play together.



## Hero League

Once you've reached level 30 on your 'account' level (this is different from hero level and will be explained in detail in the next section) and have purchased ten different heroes (free to play heroes do not count, as they have to actually be purchased with either gold or money), you'll be able to play in hero league.

Like Quick Match, this will be a game of human powered heroes playing five versus five but there are also major differences. You'll notice at the beginning, you'll have to choose precisely what heroes you want to play, as only one hero is allowed in a match (as opposed to Quick Match allowing the same hero to be played on both sides). In addition to that, the order you choose heroes is back and forth between each team, which gives you the opportunity to choose heroes that are strong against what your opponents have chosen.

These games are ranked and will reward a very good amount of experience and gold upon completion. The idea is to get as high in rank as possible, which means you'll need to fully understand the game in order to win.

## Team League

Like Hero League, Team League requires at least 10 purchased characters but the account level requirement is 40 on this one. This is very similar to Hero League but will feature premade teams on both sides. These will ideally be people who are used to playing with each other and know just how to work as a team to accomplish victory. You'll still be given the opportunity to choose your heroes like in Hero League but at this level, it's extremely important to understand just what each hero is capable of and how well they work together. You'll get a ton of experience and gold for successfully winning a Team League match, as well as a rating in the separate team ranking system.

## Custom Games

This is open at any level and allows you to choose a map and invite people to play against or play with. You can even set A.I. opponents and observers.



## How To Create A Party?

While Versus A.I., Quick Match, and Hero League can be played on your own with a group of random pickups, there are benefits to playing with a premade team (which can be a full part of five players or just a pair queuing up for pickups). For example, having a team member on your friend list means bonus experience at the end of the match. In addition to that, you'll generally be able to work better together if you have played together in the past.

To create a party, you'll want to click on one of the black boxes near the top right hand portion of your screen next to your portrait and invite a player. If you don't know anyone in the game, there are "looking for group" channels that can be joined to find people. You can even use outside of the game resources like the Battle.net forums to try to find somebody to play with. Heroes of the Storm is very much a multiplayer game and aside from the raw benefits you get, it's a ton more fun when you're playing with your Heroes of the Storm is Blizzard's multiplayer online battle arena (MOBA) game. The MOBA genre was founded way back in Warcraft 3 and has had over a decade of refining. The game is a pure PVP tug of war style base race where the objective of the game is to push your side to victory by destroying the enemy's core. Each battle features five players on each side controlling individual heroes and multiple lanes of computer controlled minions for each side constantly streaming back and forth against one another. The bases are guarded and must be broken through in order to push to the core and ultimately win the game.

MOBAs aren't new, but what Blizzard is doing is. They're really bringing a ton of great new features to the genre with their Heroes of the Storm game. Plenty of DotA 2 and LoL players are flocking to the game in droves every month. Regardless of whether you're completely new to the MOBA genre or have years of experience playing Defense of the Ancients or League of Legends, you'll have a ton of stuff to learn when it comes to Heroes of the Storm. There are many differences between it and the older games, so let's take a quick glance at the game and see just what you need to know to get prepared to play.



## Level

We've spoken a bit about levels in the previous section, but it's important to understand just what levels mean in HotS. It can be confusing as there are three different types of levels: in-game levels, hero levels, and account wide levels.

### In-Game Level

Whenever you start a game, the hero you chose to play will be level 1 and will level up throughout the game by gaining experience from mob kills, hero kills, or successfully destroying enemy fortifications. You'll get your last talent at level 20, which is generally the highest you'll see in game, although it is very possible to go even higher.

### Hero Level

After completing a game, you'll receive experience based on how well you've performed. This experience is then put into your Hero Level and your Account Level. The Hero Level experience is a persistent level that you have with a particular hero across all games. It represents how much real world experience you have in playing that particular hero in general. The further you level up, the more prizes you'll get, such as special skins for that particular hero, mounts, or even gold.

### Account Level

After the end of a game, you'll be rewarded with experience based on how well you perform, as we've mentioned in the Hero Level section. This same amount of experience is also applied to your Account Level. Accounts level up much slower than Hero Level and will represent how much you've actually played the game across all heroes. A higher Account Level means access to great gold rewards, special upgrades like Stim Packs, and other enticing things. The cap for this is 40 and is what's used to determine when you can access things like Hero League and Team League.



There are tons of rewards when it comes to each type of level, so we have a table set up that shows you everything you need to know about each level.

## Level Reward

### Player Reward

- Level 2: 1,000 gold
- Level 4: 1,000 gold
- Level 6: Unlock Daily Quests
- Level 8: 2,000 gold
- Level 10: 2,000 gold
- Level 10: 7 Days Stimpack (Level Booster)
- Level 12: Hero Rotation Slot
- Level 15: Hero Rotation Slot
- Level 20: 2,000 gold
- Level 25: 2,000 gold
- Level 30: Hero League
- Level 30: 2,000 gold
- Level 35: 2,000 gold
- Level 40: Team League
- Level 40: 2,000 gold

### Hero level

- Level 2: Unlock Second heroic ability
- Level 3: Unlock advanced talents
- Level 4: Unlock expert talents
- Level 5: 500 gold
- Level 6: Hero portrait/mount variation 1
- Level 7: Skin variation 1
- Level 8: Skin variation 2



- Level 9: Hero master portrait/mount variation 2
- Level 10: Master skin unlocked[2]
- Level 15: 1,250 gold
- Level 20: 2,500 gold

## Game Play Basics

### Heroes

There are almost 40 different heroes in the game and an individual player will be able to choose which one they want to play with each battle they start. The heroes each have their own special abilities to strengthen them and a deep, complex talent system that can be used to buff those basic abilities. They're split into four categories: Warriors (high health tanky heroes), Support (healers and shielders), Assassins (direct damage hero killers), and Specialists (commanders and siegecraft experts).

### Abilities

Each hero will begin a game with three basic abilities that'll be unique to the individual hero. These are what are used to kill enemy minions, heroes, or bases, among many other things. Three basic abilities for each hero means over 100 spells that do different things. Once a player reaches level 10, they'll be able to choose between two ultimate abilities that'll really be able to beat up on the other side.

### Talents

Adding further customization capabilities to the game is the talent system. The basic abilities are good, but with talents, you'll be able to tweak them in certain ways to make them even better. As an example, you might be able to choose between making an ability hit harder or giving it a stun effect, but there are tons of other options available in the game. Understanding this system can be difficult at first but is what the game is built up around.



## Mounts

There are a variety of interesting mounts in the game to purchase that will allow your hero to traverse the battlefield very quickly. One thing a lot of new players seem to forget is that mounts should be summoned virtually every time you're traversing terrain. If they're not, then you're wasting time.

## General Tips

Whether you're new to MOBAs entirely or if you're a grizzled veteran, there will be a ton of new things to learn (and for some, to unlearn). Let's take a look at some good tips to get you started.

- You can't really carry your team. In other MOBAs, it is very possible to simply outplay the other side and single handedly lead your team to victory. Since there is shared experience and there aren't any shops in HotS battlegrounds, this is almost impossible to do single-handedly, although it can help quite a bit. Veteran players ought to use their knowledge to ping and directly tell people what goals they need to be doing in order to succeed. A well organized team is one that wins.
- Map mechanics are incredibly important in the game. These are rather new to the MOBA genre and a lot of people tend to want to ignore them because they don't fully understand them. Getting map objectives consistently is one of the most direct ways to play and can easily allow a losing team to secure a swift victory if the winning side isn't paying proper attention.
- A stealthed hero is not invisible. Many games use 'stealth' to be synonymous with 'invisibility,' but this is not true in HotS. There will be a blurry outline of the stealthed character in the game itself that you can learn to quickly spot. While these stealthed characters can't be directly targeted, they can easily be hit by an AOE ability to uncloak them, which most heroes will have access to.



- Focus fire is a very important aspect of each team fight. Almost every hero in the game has a ton of survivability, so you'll need to eliminate any enemy members in a fight one on one in order to get a solid advantage during a team fight.
- Never ever give up. Some MOBA games are very slippery slope in nature, which means that it's very hard for a losing team to get an advantage over the other side. This is not the case at all with Heroes of the Storm. Map Objectives can easily be taken over and used to win the game by a persistent underdog. If you're low leveled and losing, avoid team fights and go after mercenaries to take the winning team's eyes off of the map objectives in order to get the time needed to regain an advantage. Games can easily be turned around on a dime.
- Listen to your team. If your team is going after one objective when you think they should go after another and you can't get them to listen to you, then follow the others. Playing as a cohesive unit is always better than being separated and open to being picked off by the other team.

Remember to soak experience by having at least one person in each lane. This is particularly true in the early portion of the game where you level up so quickly. Knowing when to split up and push every lane and when to group up to go after challenging obstacles can be a challenging sixth sense to develop in the game, but one that you'll learn with time.



# ASSASSIN HEROES

## Falstad Wildhammer

### Summary

Falstad Wildhammer is a ranged assassin in Heroes of the Storm. Being ranged, he has an advantage over many other assassins because he is able to do high amounts of burst damage from a distance. This makes him a great teamfighter since he's able to stay out of the middle of the fight while still taking out squishy targets. He is also one of the fastest units in the game, making it quite easy for him to split push and get to fights before many other defenders are able to.

#### ◆ Pros.

- High mobility
- Strong duelist
- High burst damage
- Great split push potential due to "Flight"
- Capable of going through terrain for escapes and catching

#### ◆ Cons :

- Squishy to compensate for his high damage
- Bad at fighting tanky opponents
- Requires mana micro-management
- High skill cap
- High cooldowns on his abilities
- Skill shot based abilities



## Abilities

- ◆ **Hammerang (Q)**

*"Throw out a Hammer that returns to you, dealing 290 (62 + 12 per level) damage and slowing enemies by 25% for 2 seconds."*

This is your main ability that you'll be spamming. This is a skill shot that requires you to aim at opponents, and it's important that you don't miss. It has a 20% slow, which not only will help you catch opponents but will allow you to kite to avoid being caught yourself. Due to his high cooldowns, if you miss this you could end up dead.

- ◆ **Thunderstorm (W)**

*"Passively deals 240 (50 + 10 per level) damage to a random nearby enemy every 8 seconds. Activate Thunderstorm to deal 240 (50 + 10 per level) damage to up to 4 nearby enemies."*

This is an amazing passive ability, especially since it doesn't require you to do anything for it to go off. Even if you get Cced, this ability will still get at least some damage out. It's best to use this ability right after the passive goes off to get the maximum amount of damage from it. If you time it right, you can get a lot of burst down on a squishy target.

- ◆ **Barrel Roll (E)**

*"Dashes forward and grants a 375 (90 + 15 per level) point Shield for 2 seconds. "*

This is an important ability for you to master on Falstad. It is not only a great escape, but it provides a small shield to compensate for any abilities that may trail after you. It's important to note that this ability will allow you to go over terrain, making it easy to escape enemies who don't have the same capability. It's also useful as a gap closer, but should never be used to dive headfirst in a teamfight. Remember that you're squishy, and it's your strongest escape tool. When used to go in, there's no coming back out.



- ◆ **Tailwind (Passive)**

*"Gain 20% increased Movement Speed after not taking damage for 6 seconds."*

This is an amazing passive, with the only downside being that it prevents you from using a mount. However, although not stated directly in the original phrasing of the ability, it has an activated effect as well. You can fly over the terrain about halfway across the map, which makes Falstad one of the best splitpushers in the game. When losing teamfights, start splitting to force a member of their team away, and as soon as the 4v4 breaks out use the active effect to rejoin your team forcing it into being a 5v4.

### Heroic Abilities

- ◆ **Aerial Blitzcreig (R)**

*"Deals 960 DMG max to all enemies near Falstad, stunning non-structure targets for 1.5 seconds. "*

I'm really not a huge fan of this ability because of the very short range on it. Falstad is meant to be played from the back line, and shouldn't even be getting close enough to use this ultimate. The stun is nice, but it deals less damage than the other ultimate which isn't really a worth trade-off.

- ◆ **Shock and Awe (R)**

*"After a short delay, deal 900 (311 + 31 per level) damage to enemies within a long line. "*

This is a very heavy damage ultimate ability that you pretty much have to pick up over its counterpart. Not only does it offer huge burst potential, but it's one of the strongest teamfighting ultimates in the game. However, this is a difficult ultimate to land due to the delay, so being able to properly use this will be the deciding factor between a good Falstad and a great Falstad. If you plan on maining Falstad, be sure to take some time just to practice this ability.



## Talents

- ◆ **Level 1**

**Best Choice.** Bribe

This is the best first talent on Falstad. The increased farming potential will really help rush through that early game and get a bit later into your build and levels, allowing you to get that heavy burst damage.

**Situational.** Seasoned Marksman

If you're going for the non-meta marksman build, you have to pick this up.

- ◆ **Level 4**

**Best Choice.** Gathering Power

This is your snowball talent. If you can manage to help out with kills and stay alive, you can get up to 15% increased ability power.

**Situational.** Stormhammer

Stormhammer is recommended for the off-meta auto-based build. It's great for dueling, and can give you some increased damage for when you can't shake someone off of you.

- ◆ **Level 7. First Aid**

**Best Choice.** BOOMerang

This provides quite a bit of extra damage for your Hammerang ability, and added burst is important on a burst based hero.

**Situational.** First Aid

First aid is a wonderful ability, and should be picked up if you find yourself going against strong assassins or heavy lockdown teams that you won't be able to kite.

- ◆ **Level 10. Shock and Awe**

Overall does a lot more damage than Aerial Blitzkrieg, and has a safer use distance.



◆ **Level 13**

**Best Choice.** Rewind

Like mentioned previously, one of the biggest downfalls to Falstad is his long cooldowns. Being able to completely reset those cooldowns is an amazing talent, basically granting him twice his burst potential without counting his ultimate ability.

**Situational.** Giant Killer

For an auto-based build, you'll take Giant Killer. This may even be recommended against tanky teams that you won't be able to burst down.

◆ **Level 16**

**Best Choice.** Overdrive

Pop overdrive and lay down your burst. Everything gets decimated.

**Situational.** Stoneskin

If you're constantly focused down, take Stoneskin. A dead DPS isn't much of a DPS at all.

◆ **Level 20**

**Best Choice.** Call of the Wildhammer Hinterland Blast

The 25% damage bonus and increased range is too big to pass up.

**Situational.** Preparation

Of course if you took the other heroic ability, you'll want to take Preparation to compensate.

## Gameplay Tips

### Early Game

You can't burst anyone yet, so you're relatively not that strong – yet. Mainly, you'll want to stay in lane and farm up, leaving only to get mercenary camps for extra gold and lane assistance once you have Bribe stacks. Try to do short burst trades and then back off, as that's how you'll get the highest amount of damage output without taking much in return.



### Mid Game

Midgame starts once you get your heroic ability, and this is when you really pick up momentum. Now is when you want your team to start forcing teamfights, as you have one of the strongest teamfighting ultimates. Try to group up and force objectives with your team.

### End Game

This is when you have to make a decision. If you've been winning teamfights, that's a good strategy to stay with. However, if you've been losing then you should start split pushing so that you can take advantage of your Flight ability to force unfair fights on the enemy team. This could be exactly what you need to turn these big fights into victories, and push for the enemy base. If the enemy is split pushing, you should be the one defending due to your ability to quickly join a teamfight.

## Illidan

### Biography

Once a Night Elf, his thirst for power and domination led him to become what was described as “neither elf nor demon, but something far worse”. As a demon hunter and unusually skilled sorcerer, his powers grew greatly over time. After absorbing the Skull of Gul'dan, a dangerous yet powerful demon artifact, Illidan became tempted by the shard of a soul that was left behind by Gul'dan. He committed horrendous acts against his own people and all of Azeroth, including aiding the demonic threat during the great third war and creating a corrupted version of the Well of Eternity.

### Summary

Illidan is an assassin type hero that is designed to easily take out squishy classes and be highly skilled in one on one confrontations. He shines in smaller skirmishes, while his weakness stands out in larger battles. While not the hardest hero to play, he requires a bit of skill in order to fight effectively and survive in teamfights well enough to be useful.



♦ **Pros:**

- High mobility
- Strong duelist
- Lane shoving capability
- Map pressure
- Hard sustain and survivability
- Potentially one of the strongest assassins

♦ **Cons:**

- Weak early game, must wait until mid to end game to fight
- Squishy, easy to assassinate when Cced
- Poor teamfighting capability
- High skill cap

### Abilities

♦ **Dive (Q)**

*"Dives at the target, Dealing 50 (+5 per level) damage and slowing the target by 80% for 0.35 seconds. Illidan flips to the other side of the target."*

This ability is Illidan's best gap closer. It is meant to close the gap on an enemy rather than to deal straight damage, so the base damage is rather low. Not only does this ability get you to the enemy, but it puts you behind them often in the direction that they're running that helps you get a few extra autos and prevent escape. The slow combined into this ability makes it devastating to heroes without an escape ability.

♦ **Sweeping Strike (W)**

*"Dashes toward target point, dealing 70 (+10 per level) damage to enemies along the way. If Illidan hits an enemy, his Basic Attacks do 35% more damage for 4 seconds."*



Sweeping Strike is a higher damage gap closer. While it has the same range as Dive, it doesn't place you behind the target and doesn't grant a slow so it's not as great of an initiator. It's important to get as many auto attacks as possible in right after hitting an enemy with this ability to make the most out of the 35% damage buff. Sweeping Strike is also great for escaping when you need to disengage from a fight.

**Combo:** Sweeping Strike doesn't require you to have a targeted hero, but instead you target a position on the map. You can use it to close enough space that will allow you to follow it up with Dive if there is a major gap that you need to close.

♦ **Evasion (E)**

*"Cause incoming base attacks to miss for 2 seconds."*

Illidan is a really squishy hero that deals a high amount of damage, so naturally he is heavily focused in teamfights. This is why it's crucial to know exactly when you should pop your Evasion ability. As soon as focus turns onto you, you should pop Evasion and try to back out of the fight so that you can re-enter once the focus shifts to a tankier player on your team.

**Combo:** Evasion can be used to mitigate the damage Illidan is taking when in a sticky situation, and can then use Sweeping Strike on an area of the map away from his enemies to escape.

♦ **Betrayer's Thirst (Passive)**

*"Illidan's Basic Attacks heal him for 20% of damage dealt and reduce his cooldowns by 1 second."*

Illidan's passive is his bread and butter and pretty much the only reason that he is viable. Not only does it give him sustain to recover in fights when he has taken a lot of damage, but the cooldown reduction allows him to spam abilities when he's able to get a lot of auto attacks in. Since a majority of Illidan's damage is through auto attacks, he uses them often which results in major reductions in the cooldown of his abilities.



## Heroic Abilities

- ◆ **The Hunt (R)**

*"Launch yourself at the enemy, deals 170 (+20 per level, Min. 350 damage). Stuns target for 1 second. Very long range."*

The Hunt may not appear as fancy as Illidan's other heroic ability, but it is actually very useful and can be used strategically. The Hunt has close to a global range and can be used to cover long distances, which is why it's best used with players who prefer to split push. If the enemy team engages on your team while your split, you can quickly join the fight. Should someone on their team decide to come stop your split push and a 4v4 fight breaks out between the teams, you can join the fight from afar leaving the split push counterer alone and turning the fight into a 5v4. It can also be used as an escape, as this ability works on enemy minions as well allowing you to juke enemies and fling yourself back towards enemy minions for a nifty escape.

- ◆ **Metamorphosis (R)**

*"Transforms into Demon form at the target location. Deals 210 (+ 10 per level, Min. 300) damage in the area. Illidan gains 250 max health for each Hero hit and gains 20% increased attack speed."*

This is the fancier heroic ability taken by most players because it's fun to turn into a demon, while also granting great stats. This ultimate is better for players looking for straight teamfights and duels, rather than splitting.

## Talents

- ◆ **Level 1**

**Seasoned Marksman (dueling) or Shadow Shield (teamfighting)**

Seasoned Marksman is better for damage against teams with low crowd control, while Shadow Shield should be picked up for fighting heavy CC teams. Seasoned Marksman is also better for dueling rather than teamfighting.



- ◆ **Level 4**

**Thirsting Blade (dueling) or Immolation (teamfighting)**

If you plan on splitting, Thirsting Blade will give you some better dueling potential and sustain. Immolation gives you some AoE damage for teamfighting.

- ◆ **Level 7**

**First Aid**

First Aid is a huge heal over 6 seconds, and is useful for any situation and should always be taken.

- ◆ **Level 10**

**The Hunt (split pushing) or Metamorphosis (teamfighting)**

The Hunt is good for joining your team when you're split pushing, and Metamorphosis is best for straight up teamfights.

- ◆ **Level 13**

**Giant Killer (dueling) or Sixth Sense (teamfighting)**

Giant Killer will allow you to duel easier, especially against tanky heroes that might otherwise be hard to take down for Illidan. Sixth Sense is useful for providing survivability in teamfights.

- ◆ **Level 16**

**Blood for Blood**

Illidan is an assassin, and this provides extra burst and a slow to secure the kill.

- ◆ **Level 20**

**Bolt of the Storm**

Positioning is vital for assassins, which makes Bolt of the Storm very useful.



## Gameplay Tips

In teamfights, stay on the outskirts of the fight to avoid taking a lot of AoE damage and being focused down. Illidan is very squishy.

Early game is not fun for Illidan, so play safe until you start to spike in power.

If you're losing teamfights, split off to force a member of their team away so that you can either beat them in a duel and force a 5v4, or quickly rejoin your team and leave them in the lane you shoved to set up a 5v4.

The Hunt has a very short cooldown, don't be reserved about using it when the opportunity arises.

Try to force lategame duels.

Crowd Control is not your friend, so avoid taking on champs that can keep you locked down. This is most tanks, which you shouldn't try to duel without taking Giant Killer.

## Jaina Proudmoore

### Biography

Jaina Proudmoore is a strong leader of the Alliance. She was the founder and leader of Theramore Isle before it was destroyed by the Mana Bomb, and also leads the Kirin Tor. She is famously the romantic interest of Arthas Menethil, more commonly referred to as the Lich King later on down his timeline. She is one of the most powerful sorceresses of Azeroth and played a big role in the banishment of the Burning Legion.



## Summary

Jaina is a ranged caster / assassin type of hero that is capable of dealing high amounts of burst damage and slowing enemies to kite and easily pick off. To compensate for her high damage, she is also a rather squishy hero and relies heavily on her frost abilities to keep her alive. She is not only a fantastic duelist, but her AoE potential makes her lethal in teamfights as well.

### ◆ Pros:

- High damage caster
- Consistent slows that help kite and catch opponents
- AoE spells for teamfighting
- Crowd Control
- Burst Potential

### ◆ Cons:

- Squishy, easy to focus down when Cced
- Careful positioning required in order to avoid being caught
- Little to no sustain
- Lots of aimed abilities which require precision for good DPS
- High skill cap

## Abilities

### ◆ Frostbolt (Q)

*"Deal 350 (65 + 15 per level) damage and Chill the target."*

Frostbolt is Jaina's main spell, as it has a low cooldown and high amount of damage. It also has a decent amount of range, so she can cast it from afar. It's major downside is it has to be aimed, so it can be dodged and can sometimes be difficult to land. Will apply the chill effect to grant some extra slowing potential.



♦ **Blizzard (W)**

*"Bombard an area with 2 waves of ice, dealing 365 (61 + 16 per level) damage each. Damaged enemies are Chilled."*

Blizzard is an amazing spell for teamfighting. Not only does it do a lot of damage over a wide area for hitting multiple enemies, but it slows as well which is perfect for allowing your team to either engage or disengage from a fight. I recommend using it to combined with someone else's crowd control ability for massive damage. This ability is best used when you see the enemy team bunched up.

♦ **Cone of Cold (E)**

*"Deal 415 (73 + 18 per level) damage and Chill targets."*

Cone of Cold is another AoE spell, and it's pretty easy to land. You have to be careful when using it though, as it's short range makes you vulnerable to being engaged on by the enemy team. It's recommended that the enemy team be either Cced or focused on a tankier member of your team before you move in to land Cone of Cold.

**Combo.** Pop Blizzard and follow it up with a Cone of Cold for maximum damage. Your passive will increase the damage of Cone of Cold by 50%. Since Cone of Cold does more damage, it's best to Blizzard first to activate the chill effect on a group of enemies.

♦ **Frostbite (Passive)**

*"All abilities Chill targets, slowing Movement Speed by 25% and amplifying damage from your abilities by 50%. Lasts 4 seconds."*

Frostbite is an excellent passive, as it's the only reason Jaina can stay alive in tough situations. It allows you to kite, and slows enemies for being caught. The damage boost is wonderful for burst damage when you quickly combine spells.



## Heroic Abilities

- ◆ **Summon Water Elemental (R)**

*"Summons a Water Elemental at target location, dealing 205 (72 + 7 per level) damage and Chilling nearby enemies. The Water Elemental's Basic Attacks do 170 (56 + 6 per level) damage, splash for 25% damage and Chill."*

This heroic ability is better for teamfighting and consistent damage during fights, as the water elemental will do a lot more damage over a period of time than Jaina's other heroic ability. It also has a slightly shorter cooldown so it has more potential to be up when the next teamfight begins. It provides some extra kiting potential as well with its chilling effect, which also benefits the damage of your other abilities.

- ◆ **Ring of Frost (R)**

*"After a short delay, create a Ring of Frost at target location that deals 680 (224 + 24 per level) damage and roots enemies for 3 seconds. The ring persists for 3 seconds afterward, Chilling any enemies who touch it."*

Ring of Frost provides more burst damage, while also adding the Chill effect to benefit Jaina's abilities. It is a great teamfighting ability because it not only provides a 3 second root, but it will block out other members of the enemy team so that your team can turn it from a 5v5 into a 5v4 or 5v3 for a short period of time. Ring of Frost is recommended over its counterpart due to that hard CC and ability to push enemies out of the fight, but if your team already has hard CC you may want to consider going with Summon Water Elemental due to the heightened DPS.

## Talents

- ◆ **Level 1**

**Deep Chill or Winter's Reach**

Deep Chill allows for Jaina to kite easier and catch enemies. However, against heavy CC teams you should take Winter's Reach to extend your range so you're harder to lock down.



- ◆ **Level 4**

**Envenom**

Gives Jaina some bonus damage for duels, as well as some added burst which Jaina is proficient in.

- ◆ **Level 7**

**Frostbitten**

A 15% damage buff may not seem like much, but with Jaina's already high damage it provides some major damage.

- ◆ **Level 13**

**Sprint**

Jaina is squishy and needs to be able to kite. While slowing enemies is useful, sometimes the better option is to speed yourself up.

- ◆ **Level 16**

**Northern Exposure**

This is the best teamfighting talent Jaina can pick up. It not only enhances her own damage by 25%, but her entire teams. A must have.

- ◆ **Level 20**

**Bolt of the Storm or Wintermute**

Wintermute is best for increased damage if you picked up the Water Elemental, otherwise Bolt of the Storm is recommended for it's kiting potential.

### Gameplay Tips

Jaina has very high DPS, which in turn she is given really low defensive stats. Stay out of the center of combat and deal damage from behind your front line.



She has a lot of slows and CC to catch opponents, allowing you to make awesome set-ups for your team. Taking Bolt of the Storm can help you close the gap on an enemy to ensnare them with your ice.

Endgame, you'll want to teamfight. Jaina is really easy to catch out.

Take Jaina in a solo lane. Her early game is rather strong and she can definitely hold her own. Combined with CC, she'll be really hard to dive.

Mana is something you really have to watch with Jaina. If you're spamming your abilities, you're going to run out of mana quickly. Be sure to micromanage it and only cast spells when necessary.

Improved Ice Block will be a lifesaver against assassins, be sure you know when to use it.

## Kael'thas

### Summary

Kael'thas is a raid boss found in Blizzard's MMO World of Warcraft. He is considered to be one of the hardest bosses in the game, and is ready to make his mark in Heroes of the Storm. Kael'thas has potential to be a powerful duelist as well as an AoE teamfighter. Endgame, he is perhaps the strongest duelist in the game and is very hard to take down in 1v1 combat. He also has a CC ability, which is useful for kiting as well as getting catches for teamfights.

#### ◆ Pros:

- Ability to CC targets
- Strong duelist
- High burst damage
- Great AoE teamfighter
- Very powerful heroic abilities



♦ **Cons.**

- Easy to lock down once his only CC ability is on cooldown
- Skill shot abilities
- Low defenses, susceptible to bursty assassins
- Very mana-reliant
- Delay on damage

### Abilities

♦ **Flamestrike (Q)**

*"After a short delay, deal 474 (94 + 20 per level) damage in an area. Verdant Spheres increases the radius by 50% and deals 711 (141 + 30 per level) damage."*

This is a very high damage ability that not only does massive amount of single target damage, but it hits enemies around them as well. This should be used when your Verdant Spheres active is on to greatly increase it's damage. It has a one second longer cooldown than Verdant Spheres, and so it can always be used with your passive.

♦ **Living Bomb (W)**

*"Deal 420 (78 + 18 per level) damage over 3 seconds to an enemy, then they explode dealing 210 (39 + 9 per level) damage to all nearby enemies. Casting a second Living Bomb on an enemy causes the previous Living Bomb to explode immediately. Verdant Spheres makes this Ability cost no Mana and have no cooldown."*

The Verdant Spheres version of this ability should be used in teamfights since it does such a massive amount of AoE damage. It also makes it have no cooldown so you can get the second living bomb on them quickly and explode the first one before they can move away from their allies. In 1v1 situations, you shouldn't use the Verdant Spheres on this ability because you will lose the burn damage over time.



- ◆ **Gravity Lapse (E)**

*"Stun the first enemy hit for 1.5 seconds. Verdant Spheres causes Gravity Lapse to stun the first 3 enemies hit"*

The Verdant Spheres version of Gravity Lapse should only be used when locking down a kill for your team, or trying to escape. Otherwise, it's best to use your passive to burst your damage instead of an added length on the stun. Gravity Lapse is your only way of escape early game, so use it wisely.

- ◆ **Verdant Spheres (Passive)**

*"Your next Basic Ability is more powerful."*

Verdant Spheres is a tricky passive because you have to know when to pop it. It all depends on the situation, but if you look over each ability it is pretty easy to figure out the situations.

## Heroic Abilities

- ◆ **Pyroblast (R)**

*"After 2 seconds, cast a slow-moving fireball that deals 1600 ( $365 + 65$  per level) damage to an enemy Hero and 800 ( $182.5 + 32.5$  per level) damage to enemies nearby."*

This is one of the most powerful and devastating heroic abilities in the game, but it comes with a cost. The 2 second delay can make it hard to cast against some teams, and it's not very effective against mobile teams who can easily get out of the way. That's why this is such a situational heroic ability. For 1v1 situations, you can Verdant Spheres your Gravity Lapse and follow it with a quick Pyroblast to incinerate your target.

- ◆ **Phoenix (R)**

*"Launch a Phoenix to an area, dealing 170 ( $18 + 8$  per level) damage to enemies along the way. The Phoenix persists for 7 seconds, attacking enemies for 170 ( $18 + 8$  per level) damage and splashing for 50%."*



This is the safer of the two heroic abilities, and it does more AoE damage overall. However, the single target damage is much smaller and so it lowers your dueling potential. The great thing about Phoenix is you will always be able to get your damage off since it doesn't have a casting time and is relatively easy to aim.

## Talents

- ◆ **Level 1**

**Best Choice. Mana Addict**

Mana is your biggest issue, especially in the early game. This will help greatly. After all, if you have no mana you won't be able to do any damage.

**Situational. Convection**

This is the best of the burst talents if you think you'll be able to pick up a lot of kills.

- ◆ **Level 4**

**Best Choice. Gathering Power**

This boosts the damage of all your abilities if you're able to stay alive to build it up.

**Situational. Envenom**

If you're going for more of a dueling build, Envenom is always a strong pick.

- ◆ **Level 7**

**Best Choice. Fission Bomb**

Fission Bomb will greatly increase your teamfighting AoE damage.

**Situational. Sunfire Enchantment**

Once again, this is the better talent for duelers. It gives you a bit more burst.



- ◆ **Level 10**

**Best Choice. Pheonix**

This isn't a set choice and will constantly change depending on the map you are playing and the enemy team. However, Pheonix is always the safest choice if you're unsure and it's great for zoning and dealing massive amounts of AoE. It is also unkillable, and so there isn't anything enemies can do to peel it off of their carries.

- ◆ **Level 13**

**Best Choice. Chain Bomb**

This is perhaps your strongest talent in a teamfighting build. Basically, you get infinite bombs as long as they keep hitting heroes. What more could you ask for?

**Situational. Pyromaniac**

This is a strong dueling talent to reduce the cooldown on your abilities so you can spam them faster.

- ◆ **Level 16**

**Best Choice. Ignite**

An extra living bomb, which you can then follow up with your actual Living Bomb ability for instantaneous burst damage.

**Situational. Arcane Barrier**

A good defensive talent if you're struggling to stay alive.

- ◆ **Level 20**

**Best Choice. Bolt of the Storm**

Should always take this. Kael'thas doesn't have any instant escapes, so it's almost necessary.

**Situational. Arcane Power**

A good general damage boost.



## Gameplay Tips

### Early Game

Kael'thas is good at harassing, but not for very long. He struggles with keeping his mana up, especially in lanes where he's constantly poking the enemy laner. Preserve your mana and use it only when it's most effective. Constantly use wells and orbs to regenerate it so that you can keep up some pressure in lane. Having no direct escapes, you should play your lane fairly safely.

### Mid Game

You've started to build up some power and can hopefully burst down some enemies. In teamfights, stay in the back and spam your abilities on whoever gets close enough to be within your range. By level 7, Fission Bomb should be giving you quite a bit of burst.

### End Game

Lategame Kael'thas is a monster. If he isn't focused, he can shred teams apart. His Living Bomb combination is very powerful, which is why Kael'thas is so strong in close quarter fights. Stay behind your front line and don't let anyone close or it could cost you your life. Focus on throwing out the Living Bombs as often as possible.

## Kerrigan

### Summary

Kerrigan is a high burst assassin with a decent amount of catching potential. She also has some great initiation mechanics for starting teamfights. She is one of the highest skill cap heroes in the game and requires a great deal of practice for her to be effective. She trades best in short bursts and is a decent fighter in longer fights due to her short cooldowns. She can sustain in long fights much better than most other assassins.



♦ **Pros**

- Ability to CC targets
- Strong duelist
- High burst damage
- Great chaser
- Shielding capabilities that allow for team fighting survivability

♦ **Cons**

- Squishy to compensate for her high damage
- Bad at fighting tanky opponents
- A very predictable hero as she's a one trick pony
- High skill cap
- Lack of escape abilities, so easy to focus down
- Skill shot based abilities

### Abilities

♦ **Ravage (Q)**

*"Leap to a target, dealing 450 (70 + 20 per level) damage. If this kills the target, its cooldown is instantly reset. "*

This is Kerrigan's gap closer, and it's quite effective at it. The downside is that it's a targeted gapcloser so you have to be close and can't use it just to get close enough to combo with another ability to lock someone down. In lane, you can use it to last hit a lane creep close to your opponent, resetting the cooldown so you can jump onto your lane opponent.

♦ **Impaling Blades (W)**

*"Deals 1100 (264 + 44 per level) damage to enemies within the target area, stunning them for 1 second."*



Not many assassins have strong lockdown, but this is where Kerrigan shines. This is a targeted ability, and can be used to lock down an opponent long enough to get within Ravage range. It's also an area of effect ability so it has teamfighting potential as well as allowing Kerrigan to fight off several targets at once if they're bunched up.

◆ **Primal Grasp (E)**

*"Pulls enemies within the target area towards you, dealing 310 (63 + 13 per level) damage."*

Potentially Kerrigan's best basic ability, although it's also the hardest to use. This ability pulls the enemy a small distance towards you, which is usually enough to get within range to Ravage and it also helps your teammates get in range as well. The small lack in movement is also a good set-up for an Impaling Blades stun. It doesn't have very long range and a majority of the time you have to catch people on the tip of the ability, so make sure you know the range.

◆ **Assimilation (Passive)**

*"Gain 10% of damage dealt from Basic Attacks and Abilities as Shields for 6 seconds. Shield amount gained doubled against Heroes. Current maximum: 2200 (300 + 100 per level)"*

Assimilation is a strange passive ability for an assassin, but it does give Kerrigan some much needed survivability to make up for her lack of escape skills. This is one of the many reasons that Kerrigan's basic attacks are essential to her kit, as that's where a majority of her damage will be coming from. Assimilation will allow you to build up a shield from these attacks so that you can survive bursts of damage and AoE in teamfights.



## Heroic Abilities

- ◆ **Maelstrom (R)**

*"Deals 150 (55 + 5 per level) damage per second to nearby enemies. Lasts for 9 seconds."*

Maelstrom is the preferred ultimate, although it's not very effective until you hit lategame. The damage is slightly lower than her other heroic ability early game, but the damage scales better into lategame. The biggest reason for taking Maelstrom is due to her passive. This massive AoE builds up a large shield to protect you while it does its work, allowing for you to survive better in teamfights and do large amounts of damage.

- ◆ **Summon Ultralisk (R)**

*"Summons an Ultralisk that attacks the target to deal 200 (48 + 8 per level) damage. Attacks splash to nearby enemies for 50% damage. Lasts for 20 seconds."*

This heroic ability is better early game than Maelstrom, but falls off kinda hard endgame. Not only does the damage scale less, but eventually players will hit the point where AoE damage kills off the Ultralisk, in which case it deals very little damage. However, it does have its endgame use. It can be used for quick split pushing if your team is unable to win teamfights at all.

## Talents

- ◆ **Level 1**

**Best Choice. Sweeping Grasp**

Primal Grasp doesn't have very much range, and this little extra bit is often enough to catch other heroes out.

**Situational. Seasoned Marksman**

Being auto-based, Season Marksman is a great tool to increase your lategame damage.



- ◆ **Level 4**

**Best Choice. Envenom**

Always a good talent to take on a high burst hero. This is a lot of extra damage for just one talent.

**Situational. Focused Attack**

Another burst tool, although usually not nearly as effective.

- ◆ **Level 7**

**Best Choice. Adaptation**

Having zero escapes, this is almost a must-have for Kerrigan. It is her only way to back out of a teamfight when necessary.

**Situational. Searing Attacks**

If you are going for an auto-based build, Searing Attacks is a good way to boost your auto attack burst damage.

- ◆ **Level 10**

**Best Choice. Maelstrom**

Massive AoE damage that procs extra shielding.

- ◆ **Level 13**

**Best Choice. Rewind**

Being able to completely reset your cooldowns is an amazing talent, basically granting him twice his burst potential without counting his ultimate ability.

**Situational. Double Strike**

Another auto-based burst ability.

- ◆ **Level 16**

**Best Choice. Blood for Blood**

Offers extra burst, and some additional survivability.



**Situational. Overdrive**

Should only be taken with Ability Power builds since it benefits your Maelstrom immensely.

◆ **Level 20**

**Best Choice. Bolt of the Storm**

Offers Kerrigan another escape option, as well as an initiation tool.

**Situational. Omegastorm**

Three out of four of Kerrigan's abilities are named after storms, but this one had the coolest name so use this as your secondary option. In all seriousness, this offers some extra survivability in teamfights if you take Maelstorm.

## Gameplay Tips

### Early Game

You should spend most of your time trying to setup ganks. Unfortunately, Kerrigan can't 1v1 very well and has weak early poke, and so she's better roaming. You should pick up Watchtowers along the way. While ganking, walk up to the target and follow up with Ravage AFTER they've used their escape ability.

### Mid Game

You can finally teamfight now that you have Maelstrom. You shouldn't be in the frontline, but you should definitely be putting some pressure on the enemy team. Be ready to dive in on the enemy squishies as soon as the fight breaks down because at the very least you can lock them down while doing some pretty decent AoE damage.



## End Game

Your whole goal at this point in the game is to catch someone, which is a major reason we took that extra 20% range Primal Grasp talent at level 1. If you do manage to get a catch, you can lock them down easily for your team to clean up the kill. In teamfights, focus on locking down the enemy backline while unleashing your own massive AoE from Maelstrom.

## Nova

### Summary

Nova is based off of StarCraft and is played as a ranged assassin in Heroes of the Storm. She is very unique in the fact that she is one of two heroes that has a permanent stealth ability, allowing her to move around the map easily. She is set up to be a sniper, taking out targets from a distance using heavy amounts of burst damage. Her greatest disadvantage is her lack of defensive stats, making her really easy to take down by other assassins and heavy CC heroes.

#### ◆ Pros

- Long Range
- Permanent Cloaking mechanism
- High burst damage
- Some escape potential
- Can be played decently with low skill

#### ◆ Cons

- Very squishy and easy to take out when CCed
- Lacks in mobility, easy to lock down
- No sustain damage, only burst
- Low health pool
- Requires proper positioning in teamfights



## Abilities

- ◆ **Snipe (Q)**

*"Deals 735 (146 + 31 per level) damage to the first enemy hit. "*

Snipe is a long range heavy damage ability. It's downside is that it hits only the first target hit, meaning that tanky frontlines can absorb it making it difficult to focus on squishy targets without really good positioning. It's also not very effective in lane when enemies hide behind monsters. Don't be fooled by it's high damage, it does have it's weaknesses.

- ◆ **Pinning Shot (W)**

*"Deal 240 (50 + 10 per level) damage to an enemy and slow it by 30% for 2.25 seconds."*

Pinning shot is a soft CC ability that has a decent amount of damage and is vital for allowing Nova to kite and escape enemies. It also has long range and can be used to slow an enemy just enough for your team to catch up and take them out. In teamfights, it's best to save it until an enemy starts running at you, as Nova doesn't have any immediate escapes and has to make use of her minor CC to get away.

- ◆ **Holo Decoy (E)**

*"Create a Decoy for 5 seconds that appears to attack enemies. Using this Ability does not break cloak."*

This is my personal favorite ability in Nova's kit because of its versatility. First off, it's a clone that can easily help you juke out enemies. It can also be used to block skillshots, and since the location is targetable you can position it wherever as a blockade. Finally, since it doesn't break stealth advanced players can use it to set up a duel so that the enemy wastes all their cooldowns on the clone before Nova appears to decimate them.



- ◆ **Permanent Cloak, Sniper (Passive)**

*"Cloak when out of combat for 3 seconds. Taking damage, attacking, or channeling reveals you. Basic Attack range is 20% further than other ranged Heroes, and you see 10% further than other Heroes."*

This is kind of a two-in-one passive. First off, it's a cloak that makes you nearly invisible, only leaving a slight shimmer where you are when you're near enemies. It also allows you to auto attack from further away, and gives you enhanced vision which helps avoid possible ganks.

### Heroic Abilities

- ◆ **Precision Strike (R)**

*"After a short delay, deals 2000 (670 + 70 per level) damage to enemies within an area. Unlimited range."*

Precision Strike is the ultimate taken by split pushing Novas that don't intend on directly being in a fight. It can also be used on teams where AoE damage is needed. Not only does it have unlimited range making it one of the only global heroic abilities in the game, but it also has a very short cooldown of only 60 seconds. It does massive amounts of damage in a small area, but is easy to dodge and so it should only be taken when it can be paired with CC from another team member.

- ◆ **Triple Tap (R)**

*"Locks in on the target Hero, then fires 3 shots that hit the first Hero or Structure they come in contact with for 740 (113 + 33 per level) damage each."*

This is the main ultimate taken by most Novas. It does a massive amount of damage to a single target, and being an assassin class hero, that's important. It can be blocked by frontline champions, so it's often best to save and use as a finisher on a relatively low opponenet.



## Talents

- ◆ **Level 1**

**Best Choice. Ambush Snipe**

A large increase to Nova's burst damage, and is really useful in lane for harassing the enemy laners.

**Situational. Psi-Op Rangefinder**

Range is always a plus on Nova since she needs to keep her distance from the enemy team. Against heavy CC, this could be the better choice.

- ◆ **Level 4**

**Best Choice. Envenom**

Adds to Nova's burst, but the downside is that it doesn't have good range. However, it's only the heroes that get close enough that Nova has to worry about anyways.

**Situational. Gathering Power**

It's a bit of a power boost, and can sometimes be the better choice when fighting ranged teams.

- ◆ **Level 7**

**Best Choice. Hot Shots**

Each auto does an enormous amount of damage (330%), but you attack three times as slow. Make use of each shot. This is useful because it gives you more time to move around between shots.

**Situational. Explosive Round Snipe**

If you're going for an AoE teamfight build, this is the better ability.

- ◆ **Level 10**

**Best Choice. Precision Strike**



This is the recommended heroic ability due to the teamfighting meta right now. AoE is key to winning these fights, and many frontline champs have the CC to lock down enemies for you to make use of this powerful ability.

◆ **Level 13**

**Best Choice. Lethal Decoy**

This is an important talent because it not only will increase your damage output a little bit, but since it actually causes damage it makes it look more like the real Nova so it's easier to juke other players.

**Situational. Advanced Cloaking**

Can help you sustain between fights and re-emerge at high health in long, drawn-out fights.

◆ **Level 16**

**Best Choice. Crippling Shot**

This is a damage booster for yourself, and it helps your team do increased damage on a specific target as well.

**Situational. Railgun Snipe**

With Snipe being such a powerful ability, this is useful for reducing the cooldown and hitting multiple targets in a teamfight.

◆ **Level 20**

**Best Choice. Precision Barrage**

Basically doubles the damage on your ultimate since you can use it twice.

**Situational. Bolt of the Storm**

You should really consider taking this talent in fights where you're just getting locked down. Nova doesn't have any real escapes, and so Bolt of the Storm is a lifesaver. A dead DPS is a useless DPS.



## Gameplay Tips

### Early Game

You have two options in the early game. First off, you can abuse your long range to force your opponents out of lane by bullying them. This will reduce their xp and gold in the game, making them a lot less useful. If they're playing too safe, you can also roam using your Cloak ability to setup ganks and decimate other lanes.

### Mid Game

You should now be focused on objectives, and using your burst to quickly take out squishies. In teamfights, you'll want to stay behind your frontline to avoid being taken out. Not many heroes should be able to lock you down for too long just yet, so you should do fine if you play safely. Get off as many autos and abilities as possible from long distance and you will do well in teamfights.

### End Game

At this point in the game, positioning is key. Being a very squishy hero, a single misstep could mean your life and the game. You shouldn't really be trying to catch people out yourself as Nova needs a frontline to be effective endgame. Focus on teamfighting and pushing for objective control. If you can keep consistent damage on the targets closest to you in fights, you should be able to carry with Nova's massive damage. Nova isn't designed to take out squishies in teamfights because most of her strongest abilities can be blocked, so focus on whoever is running at you.



## Raynor

### Summary

Jim Raynor comes from the popular Blizzard strategy game StarCraft, which many of his abilities are based from. Raynor is an all around balanced hero with some high burst ranged damage. He lacks in escape abilities like various other ranged heroes, but he makes up for it in damage and some utility. He's not only a good duelist, but he can pack a punch in teamfights as well. He's also quite effective for taking down structures.

- ◆ **Pros:**
  - Hard to kill without burst damage
  - Strong duelist
  - High burst damage
  - High structure damage
  - Strong teamfighter
  - Long range
- ◆ **Cons:**
  - Very squishy and easy to take out when Cced
  - Requires good positioning skills
  - Not very good at fighting tanky opponents
  - No direct escape abilities
  - Bad at fighting other assassins

### Abilities

- ◆ **Penetrating Round (Q)**  
*"Deals 525 (107 + 22 per level) damage and knocks enemies back."*



Penetrating round is a high damage ability that is also a skillshot. Missing this could cost you your life since it is really Raynor's only escape since he doesn't have anything fancy like Vault or Blink to create distance. It's good for interrupting enemies and knocking back high damage enemies in teamfights.

- ◆ **Inspire (W)**

*"Gain 30% bonus Attack Speed for 6 seconds. Nearby allies gain half of the bonus."*

This isn't the best ability in the world, but it can be really overpowered in high auto-based teams. It can also be buffed with a talent in midgame to give you some sort of escape potential. This is one of those good utility abilities for teamfights and is a small benefit for himself outside of them.

- ◆ **Adrenaline Rush (E)**

*"Automatically activates to heal for 960 (200 + 40 per level) when you are below 30% Health."*

This is the ability that makes Raynor hard to take out unless you're able to burst him at right above 30% health. I personally really like this ability because it's automatic, so it can be a lifesaver in CC situations where you normally wouldn't be able to pop an ability. On the downside, it can't be popped whenever and has a long cooldown for a basic ability

- ◆ **Advanced Optics (Passive)**

*"Basic Attack range is 20% further than other ranged Heroes, and you see 10% further than other Heroes."*

This is a pretty basic, yet quite useful, passive ability. Since Raynor doesn't have very good escape potential, it's helpful to have increased range on his auto attacks. Being able to see enemies from further away also prevents ganks in laning phase.



## Heroic Abilities

- ◆ **Hyperion (R)**

*"Order the Hyperion to make a strafing run dealing 145 (31 + 6 per level) damage a second, hitting up to 4 enemies. Also occasionally fires its Yamato Cannon on Structures for 1740 (372 + 72 per level) damage. Lasts 12 seconds."*

This is the ultimate that is usually taken by Raynor's that want to split and take down structures. It is the very best structure destroying ability in the game, and it can also be useful for teamfighting. It doesn't last very long, but it packs a powerful punch. The biggest flaw with Hyperion though is that it isn't able to target specific players, but instead will go for random ones. This can make you lose a kill easily or leave it focusing on tanks while doing very little damage as a result.

- ◆ **Raynor's Raiders (R)**

*"Summon two Stealthed Banshees that attack an enemy. Each Banshee deals 96 (20 + 4 per level) damage a second and lasts 22 seconds. Can reactivate the Ability to retarget the Banshees."*

Raynor's Raiders is more of a single target ultimate, but it lasts a lot longer (almost twice as long) and does more damage to one target. The biggest advantage that it has over Hyperion is that you choose what they attack instead of it being random. You can also redirect the target should you change your mind or they die.

## Talents

- ◆ **Level 1**

**Best Choice. Seasoned Marksman**

This is basically to make you stronger towards the late game and to improve your overall damage. It's the only direct damage-buffing talent in this set. Essential for this auto-based hero.

**Situational. Give Me More**

Should you think you'll need survivability, Give Me More is a good alternative option.



◆ **Level 4**

**Best Choice. Focused Attack**

The only talent in the set that boosts your auto-based attacks. It gives you some added burst for assassinating targets as well.

**Situational. Activated Rush**

Allows you to actually choose when to activate Adrenaline Rush. You may be able to get Adrenaline Rush off twice in longer teamfights.

◆ **Level 7**

**Best Choice. Revolution Overdrive**

Provides Raynor with some much needed escape/kiting potential, while also boosting his team's escape and initiation power.

**Situational. Hamstring Shot**

A good alternative for kiting.

◆ **Level 10**

**Best Choice. Raynor's Raiders**

This ability is mainly chosen over Hyperion due to the targeting mechanism, as well as the heightened single target damage which helps immensely in duels. They also persist through death, meaning if you get burster your ultimate is still able to dish out high amounts of damage so you weren't completely useless.

◆ **Level 13**

**Best Choice. Giant Killer**

This is a big help for taking out tanks, which you'll often have to focus in teamfights when they're running in your face trying to get off CC.

**Situational. Double-Barreled**

Only take this talent if you took Hamstring shot.



♦ **Level 16**

**Best Choice. Berserk**

A massive boost to your burst damage. Also provides movement speed, allowing you to kite/escape easier.

**Situational. Executioner**

Works well with heavy CC allies and Hamstring Shot.

♦ **Level 20**

**Best Choice. Nexus Frenzy**

Provides a nice attack speed boost for Raynor, as well as added range to help protect him in teamfights.

**Situational. Bolt of the Storm**

Take Bolt of the Storm if you need an extra escape mechanic.

## Gameplay Tips

### Early Game

You should be able to lane pretty easily on Raynor. You're ranged, so you can farm and poke down enemies without having to worry about retaliation too much. However, you have absolutely no escape and so it's best to stay on your side of the lane to avoid being ganked. With your extended sight you should be keeping a consistent eye on the map.

### Mid Game

When you start teamfighting it's important that you are able to position correctly on Raynor, and play it safe. Raynor is very susceptible to burst damage and being locked down in big fights at this point of the game. Stay behind your tanks. If you don't think you have the better teamfighting composition, you can take Hyperion and start split pushing down structures. If followed, just switch lanes and keep up the pressure. Don't try to duel quite yet.



## End Game

You should now be able to kite back enemies pretty well and can actually win most duels. You should stick to fighting heroes that can't jump on you too much and that don't have high burst damage. Use your range to your advantage in both duels and teamfights, as you will now have 40% more range than most other ranged heroes. Stand back and fire away!

## Thrall

### Summary

Thrall is one of the strongest characters portrayed in Blizzard's MMO World of Warcraft. He is not only a good single target bursting assassin, but many of his abilities are capable of dealing large amounts of AoE in teamfights. He is also very good at catching escaping enemies due to his high movement speed. Overall, he focuses mainly on his basic attacks combined with bursting abilities to bring his enemies to their knees.

#### ◆ Pros:

- Ability to CC targets
- Strong duelist
- High burst damage
- Great AoE teamfighter
- Strong basic attacks
- High sustain from his passive

#### ◆ Cons

- Low range for an assassin
- No way of sticking to enemies with direct escapes
- Skillshot based
- High skill cap



## Abilities

- ◆ **Chain Lightning (Q)**

*"Deal 390 (67 + 17 per level) damage to an enemy and half that amount to 2 nearby enemies."*

Good for either single target damage or AoE teamfighting damage. The best part about this ability is you can hit a tank with it, and damage the carries behind them.

- ◆ **Feral Spirit (W)**

*"Send out a Feral Spirit that deals 335 (50 + 15 per level) damage to enemies in its path. Upon hitting an enemy Hero, the wolf stops and roots that hero in place for 1 second."*

This is a must-land ability for Thrall to lock down an enemy. Since he doesn't have any way of jumping onto enemies, he can root them in place while he uses his movement boost to reach them. It is also a good poke before teamfights and may even be able to initiate a fight if you can root a carry on the enemy team.

- ◆ **Windfury (E)**

*"Increase your Movement Speed by 30% for 4 seconds. Your next 3 Basic Attacks occur 100% faster."*

This is a powerful ability so many players build around it. It makes your basic attacks really quick, which is why Thrall makes such a great assassin. The movement speed is good for catching enemies and sticking to them for a few seconds.

- ◆ **Frostwolf Resilience (Passive)**

*"Dealing damage with Abilities grants 1 stack of Frostwolf Resilience. At 5 stacks, you are instantly healed for 660 (90 + 30 per level) Health."*

Frostwolf Resilience is a major reason that Thrall is so good at dueling. It's massive sustain that can quickly turn any fight in his favor.



## Heroic Abilities

- ◆ **Sundering (R)**

*"After a short delay, sunder the earth in a long line, dealing 600 (182 + 22 per level) damage and shoving enemies to the side, stunning them for 1.5 seconds."*

This is a good heroic ability to take when your team is in need of some heavy CC. It also deals massive AoE damage to the enemy team and can really mess up their positioning. You can use it to split them up and so your team can focus on the enemies that are closest without having to worry too much about the further ones.

- ◆ **Earthquake (R)**

*"Summon a massive Earthquake that periodically slows enemies in the area by 70%. Lasts for 10 seconds."*

Earthquake is a good CC ability, but it leaves a bit to be desired. Having no outright damage is bad for an assassin. However, it does help fix Thrall's issue with not being able to stick as tightly to enemies as other assassins, which might be the only reason to take it.

## Talents

- ◆ **Level 1**

**Best Choice. Wind Sear**

Since most Thrall's focus heavily on a Windfury build, this is the best talent of the bunch if you're following meta.

**Situational. Seasoned Marksman**

If you're fighting an endgame team, this is the better talent since you'll be able to farm easier in the early game, and for much longer



- ◆ **Level 4**

**Best Choice. Envenom**

A must take talent on pretty much any assassin.

**Situational. Mana Tide**

If you're having mana problems then you may want to take Mana Tide. If you can't cast abilities, you won't be doing much damage.

- ◆ **Level 7**

**Best Choice. Follow Through**

An awesome boost to your basic attack burst damage. Since Thrall has short cooldowns, Follow Through will constantly be up.

**Situational. Frostwolf's Grace**

A survivability talent if you're struggling to keep your health up.

- ◆ **Level 10**

**Best Choice. Sunder**

Sunder actually does damage, unlike Earthquake. This is the biggest reason to pick up this heroic ability over the other one. It also physically moves other heroes, which interrupts channels and can be used to setup some amazing plays. Sunder may not pack as much damage as other heroic abilities given to assassins, but it's one of the best for teamfighting CC.

- ◆ **Level 13**

**Best Choice. Grace of Air**

Grace of Air is a fantastic sustain talent for Windfury builds.

**Situational. Restless Wolves**

Feral Spirit is your main method of locking down targets, and so having that on a 50% less cooldown is quite beneficial.



◆ **Level 16**

**Best Choice. Tempest Fury**

Another big bonus to Windfury builds. If you're able to get three hits on enemies, you'll definitely want to pick this up.

**Situational. Blood for Blood**

Blood for Blood is better for dueling, and even provides some extra burst. It's another viable option to take, especially against tanky teams.

◆ **Level 20**

**Best Choice. Bolt of the Storm**

Thrall's only gap closer aside from basic movement speed. It's a big help for assassins, especially Thrall.

**Situational. Earthen Shields**

If you do take Earthquake, you pretty much have to pick up Earthen Shields as well. It's the only reason Earthquake is viable, and it's a pretty strong buff for your team against assassin heavy teams.

## Gameplay Tips

### Early Game

Thrall is a great lane bully mainly due to his sustain from his passive. You'll be able to poke down enemies and heal yourself back up after trades. Since you're not ranged, you'll often have to deal with a lot of poke, so it's important to know when you should go in for autos and when you should stand back and wait.

### Mid Game

You'll have some teamfighting potential now and can start doing some serious damage. If you've focused on a Windfury build you'll also be able to outduel almost any other hero at this point in the game, so splitting is a viable option as well. Windfury will help pop your passive much faster, so not even assassins will be able to take you out quick if they try.



### End Game

At this point, Thrall is pretty godly and unstoppable in 1v1 situations. In teamfights, you should be trying to take down the enemy backline without going too far in since you're still squishy yourself. Use Sunder to split enemies towards your team for an easy catch, as it's one of the best initiators in the game. If you're focused in fights, back out and try to survive while your team tears them apart, and once they change focus go back in.

## Tychus

### Summary

Tychus is an outlaw from the Blizzard strategy game StarCraft II. In Heroes of the Storm, he is a very versatile hero with plenty to offer. He has CC, great burst damage, kiting potential, and is even a little beefy. He is also able to AoE pretty well, making him a powerful teamfighter in close quarters. Tychus is no easy hero to mess with.

#### ◆ Pros:

- Ability to CC targets
- Strong duelist
- High burst damage
- Great teamfighter
- Escape potential
- Decent defense for an assassin

#### ◆ Cons:

- Easy to lock down once his only escape is on cooldown
- Skill shot abilities
- Slight delay on some abilities



## Abilities

- ◆ **Overkill (Q)**

*"Deal 280 (+80 per level) damage to the target and 140 (+40 per level) damage to nearby targets over 5 seconds. Reactivate to select a new target. Can move and use Abilities while channeling."*

Overkill is a channeled ability that deals a massive amount of damage to a single target, as well as those that are around them. Although channeled, other abilities can be used, which means that Tychus isn't just a sitting duck while dealing damage. Being able to select a new target also allows him to easily switch focus. This is a fantastic ability for bullying other heroes out of lane.

- ◆ **Lob Grenade (W)**

*"Lob a grenade that deals 60 (+25 per level) damage, knocking enemies away."*

This is a very powerful ability, especially on a kiter such as Tychus. It is a CC ability that knocks enemies away, while also dealing some damage. This has a massive amount of potential, from allowing you to kite enemies back longer or interrupt enemy channels. It is also usable while using Overkill. You can also use this ability to knock enemies forward into you, which is good for setting up catches for your team or preventing an enemy from getting away.

- ◆ **Run and Gun (E)**

*"Charge forward and instantly wind up the Minigun."*

Having an escape/engage ability on a ranged hero is amazing in itself, but Run and Gun even winds up the Minigun passive for him. This gives you some burst damage should you choose to go in on someone with it, while also giving a damage buff when you're kiting other heroes back.



- ♦ **Minigun (Passive)**

*"You attack much faster than other Heroes, but must windup your Minigun briefly before attacking"*

This is a buff and a debuff at the same time. All of Tychus's autos are done through the minigun, which means that whenever you start autoing you have to first wind up your passive. However, the benefit is the large buff in attack speed. This is probably Tychus's greatest downfall. His autos have short range, and so having to spend an extra moment winding them up isn't very good. That's why he has to heavily rely on his abilities, particularly his Q.

### Heroic Abilities

- ♦ **Drakken Laser Drill (R)**

*"Call down a Laser Drill to attack nearby enemies, dealing 310 (44 + 14 per level) damage every second. Reactivate to assign a new target. Lasts 22 seconds."*

This is a basic high DPS heroic ability, which is useful for bursting down single targets or doing a bit of AoE in teamfights. Just like the Q, it can be reactivated to focus a different target, which is nice in teamfights where your main target may always be changing.

- ♦ **Commander Odin (R)**

*"Call down an Odin to pilot. The Odin deals increased Damage, has a 100% longer Basic Attack range, and uses different Abilities. Lasts 23 seconds."*

Commander Odin is a large Tychus buff, where he pilots the Odin to gain enhanced abilities and longer basic attacks. The 100% increase in auto attack range is a HUGE buff for Tychus because his range is short, which is mainly his only downfall. Being able to auto with Minigun from a distance definitely bursts his damage.



## Talents

- ◆ **Level 1**

**Best Choice. Armor Piercing Rounds**

This is the best talent from the set. Tychus's Q is his main damage, and he's forced to use it often due to his delay in auto attacks.

**Situational. Scouting Drone**

Although it doesn't help his damage directly, this can be a nice vision buff when expecting to be camped with ganks.

- ◆ **Level 4**

**Best Choice. Spray 'N' Pray**

Extends the range of your Q, which makes it easier to kite and harder to get locked down from CC.

**Situational. Melting Point**

Melting Point is a good talent to take when you plan on split pushing, as it makes pushing easier and taking down structures much faster.

- ◆ **Level 7**

**Best Choice. First Aid**

First Aid is a strong talent in general, especially for someone who can deal out massive amounts of damage in a small amount of time.

**Situational. Sizzling Attacks**

A large buff to Tychus's burst damage. Should be activated once Minigun is wound up.

- ◆ **Level 10**

**Best Choice. Commander Odin**

The increased auto range is enough to make this the better heroic ability. The ability also throws in enhanced abilities, making it far too sweet not to take.



◆ **Level 13**

**Best Choice. Lead Rain**

This makes Overkill provide you with a 20% slow that stacks up, and since it's AoE this will allow you to even kite multiple targets at once.

**Situational. Relentless**

If you're fighting a heavy CC team and am finding yourself focused, Relentless can be a life saver.

◆ **Level 16**

**Best Choice. Executioner**

Having a slow on them already from the Lead Rain talent combines nicely with Executioner.

**Situational. Stoneskin**

If you're still finding it hard to survive, Stoneskin is a great alternative talent.

◆ **Level 20**

**Best Choice. Bolt of the Storm**

Gives Tychus an extra mobility mechanic should he expend his only escape ability. Also usable in Odin, which it wasn't able to do before.

**Situational. Big Red Button**

Just a general damage boost for the Commander Odin heroic ability.



## Gameplay Tips

### Early Game

Tychus is one of the few assassins in the game that just starts generally strong. This means that unlike most assassins, your early game isn't quite as rough and you can survive lane pretty easily. You should be poking enemies with your Q, and harassing whenever you get the opportunity. Q also pushes the lane though, so try not to use it too much when enemies are standing on minions. You do have some pretty good escape, so feel free to extend a little bit across the lane on Tychus.

### Mid Game

In teamfights, even though Tychus can take a few hits you'll still want to stay behind your front line. Get as many autos and Qs off, and you shouldn't be using your W or E for extra damage. Instead, save these for when you need them. The biggest mistake a Tychus can make is to E in for the Minigun bonus, only to be turned on and have no way of getting back out.

### End Game

Lategame Tychus is pretty much a cooldown dependent DPS. You can play a lot more aggressive now that you have Bolt of the Storm as an added escape. Using Odin, you can stand back behind your team with long ranged attacks, and will even be able to take quite a few hits before anyone can bring you down. Focus on kiting and getting in as much damage in teamfights as possible.

## Valla

### Summary

Valla is a very mobile long ranged assassin. This is a deadly combo, as it allows Valla to kite her enemies back from their team before delivering a powerful burst of damage. She is hard to lock down without some serious CC, but if she is her squishiness makes for an easy death. Many of her abilities are based off the Demon Hunter from Diablo 3.



◆ **Pros**

- Great mobility
- Strong duelist
- High burst damage
- Excellent poke
- Strong kiting potential, especially against no CC

◆ **Cons**

- Squishy to compensate for her high damage
- Bad at fighting tanky opponents
- Requires good player positioning to avoid being caught
- No defensive cooldown abilities early game
- Not as much burst as most assassins

### Abilities

◆ **Hungering Arrow (Q)**

*"Fire an arrow that deals 366 (81 + 15 per level) damage to the first target hit, then seeks up to 2 additional enemies dealing 183 (40.5 + 7.5 per level) damage. Can hit an enemy multiple times."*

Hungering Arrow is a pretty decent ability in jungle fights and out in the open, but it's biggest issue is in fights near minions and monsters. It can potentially lock onto creatures instead of enemy players, so it has to be aimed correctly. It's often best to aim on the side of the player that is away from minions so that it tracks back onto them. This ability is capable of massive damage.

◆ **Multishot (W)**

*"Deal 360 (75 + 15 per level) damage to enemies within the target area."*



Multishot is a strong AoE ability that should be used on cooldown in the laning phase to help harass enemies and shove the lane. It's also able to reveal cloaked heroes, and due to its long range you'll be able to uncloak them before they even get close.

- ◆ **Vault (E)**

*"Dash to the target area."*

This is Valla's main escape ability. An important thing to note is that this ability only lets Valla pass through units, you won't be able to pass through terrain using it. Its main use is to give you some breathing room between yourself and the enemy. It's also really useful for avoiding powerful skillshots and CC abilities. It should never be used to move in on someone unless you're securing a kill and know you're safe from a gank.

- ◆ **Hatred (Passive)**

*"Basic Attacks grant a stack of Hatred, up to 10. Each Hatred stack increases Basic Attack damage by 2% and Movement Speed by 1%. "*

This is a pretty basic passive that rewards Valla for staying in combat for a long time. This is why Valla will want to go for longer trades in lane, and will continually try to get basic attacks off in teamfights.

### Heroic Abilities

- ◆ **Strafe (R)**

*"Rapidly attack nearby visible enemies for 300 (43.5 + 13.5 per level) damage per hit, prioritizing heroes over minions. Valla is able to move and use Vault while strafing. Lasts for 4 seconds."*



This is a large AoE ability that's excellent for teamfighting, but not as good for dueling. She is able to vault and move around while channeling it, although her other abilities and autos are deactivated for the duration of the channel. Compared to other Heroic abilities, Strafe actually has a pretty decent cooldown. The biggest downside is the short range on Strafe, and so it's hard to use effectively.

- ◆ **Rain of Vengeance (R)**

*"Launch 2 waves of Shadow Beasts that deal 560 (123 + 23 per level) damage to enemies within the target area, stunning for 0.5 seconds per wave. "*

Rain of Vengeance is often recommended because of its long range. It's also a good combo with other heavy AoE abilities due to the stun that locks them down for a little longer. Due to it being a shockwave, it should be noted that the closer an enemy is the faster it will be damaged and stunned. While it's beneficial to be closer, it can be used at range as well.

## Talents

- ◆ **Level 1**

**Best Choice. Composite Arrows**

Composite Arrows extends Valla's poke so that she can dominate the laning phase, while also benefiting her range in teamfights.

**Situational. Siphoning Arrow**

If you think you'll be taking a lot of poke in lane, Siphoning arrow can grant you some extra sustain.

- ◆ **Level 4**

**Best Choice. Arsenal**

This is the highest added DPS of this group of talents, and increases her burst damage.

**Situational. Vampiric Assault**



An optional healing mechanism.

◆ **Level 7**

**Best Choice. Repeating Arrow**

Your highest damage basic ability is Hungering Arrow, and getting a free reset on that from Vault is a good DPS increase.

**Situational. Caltrops**

Caltrops is excellent for kiting against tanky enemy teams.

◆ **Level 10**

**Best Choice. Rain of Vengeance**

Longer range than Strife, and more damage in most cases along with a CC lockdown.

◆ **Level 13**

**Best Choice. Frost Shot**

This is one of Valla's strongest talents, as it's a 40% slow on multishot for much stronger kiting potential.

**Situational. Giant Killer**

A good choice against tanky teams.

◆ **Level 16**

**Best Choice. Blood for Blood**

Offers extra burst, and some additional survivability.

**Situational. Tumble**

Tumble is great for kiting and is a really good combo with Repeating Arrow.

◆ **Level 20**

**Best Choice. Bolt of the Storm**

Offers Valla another escape option.



### **Situational. Storm of Vengeance**

If you're doing heavy damage with your ultimate and comboing well, Storm of Vengeance is another good pickup.

## **Gameplay Tips**

### **Early Game**

Early game you should be shoving the lane with Multishot and getting off as much harass as possible. Avoid teamfighting, as you'll easily get bursted down by even the smallest amounts of CC. If your team gets behind, play safe because Valla is an easy early game pick as her only escape is a single Vault that can easily be followed.

### **Mid Game**

You should now be focusing on teamfights/objectives with your team. You now have a strong CC AoE damage ult, which will come in handy. Stay behind your frontline and kite enemies back when they come in on you. You should have quite a bit of damage at this point, so focus on whoever is closest and keep up the auto attacks to proc the most out of your passive.

### **End Game**

By this point in the game you should have several escape mechanics on Valla, and can play a bit more risky. Your damage will be massive, so don't get too carried away. This biggest mistake I see in the endgame is when Valla players get aggressive and waste their escapes chasing down enemies, only to be turned on and not have any way of getting away. You are still a squishy target and need to play like it. Learn how to position to survive in the late game, and use your frontline to your advantage.



## Zeratul

### Summary

Zeratul comes from the game StarCraft and is an assassin in Heroes of the Storm. Zeratul is one of two heroes that has a permanent cloak, allowing for him to sneak around the battlefield without having to worry much about being ganked and being able to sneak up on enemies. He is also one of the highest burst heroes in the game. He is best used to pick off squishier heroes and take out the enemy backline in teamfights.

#### Pros

- Ability to CC targets
- Strong duelist
- High burst damage
- Great chaser
- Escape ability
- Hard to gank due to stealth

#### Cons

- Very squishy and easy to take out when CCed
- High skill cap
- Not very good at fighting tanky opponents
- Mana issues early to mid game

### Abilities

#### ♦ Cleave (Q)

*"Deal 75 (+17 per level) damage to nearby enemies."*

Cleave is a short cooldown AoE damage ability. Although it's not very useful for bursting down squishy targets, it does come in handy with pushing lanes and teamfighting. Cleave does have a limited radius so keep this in mind. Even though it's difficult to miss, in higher MMRs there are players that will easily juke the radius.



- ◆ **Singularity Spike (W)**

*"Flings a Singularity Spike that sticks to the first enemy unit hit. Deals 100 (+20 per level) damage after 1 second and slows the target by 40% for 3 seconds."*

This is your main ability on Zeratul. Not only is it capable of dealing very large amounts of burst damage, but it applies a slow that allows for Zeratul to stick to his targets. This makes setting up for a Cleave much easier as well. Since this is a skillshot based ability, it's often recommended to wait until the enemy has used their escape ability so that you can ensure it lands. If it misses, you most likely won't get the kill.

- ◆ **Blink (E)**

*"Teleport to the target location. Using this Ability does not break cloak."*

Having a short cooldown teleport is very nice, especially on an assassin who usually needs to get into somewhere quickly to secure a kill or get away fast due to their squishiness. It's also useful at dodging enemy skillshots. Blink can also let you jump over terrain. Most of the time you don't want to engage with Blink, but rather run up to the enemy and use it to follow their escape ability.

- ◆ **Permanent Cloak (Passive)**

*"Automatically cloak when out of combat for Trait seconds. Taking damage, attacking, or channeling reveals you."*

Permanent Cloak is what makes Zeratul so unique and is basically what his kit is based around. After a few seconds of not taking damage you not only become invisible, but you become untargetable as well. It should be noted that this ability doesn't make you completely invisible as nearby enemies can see a shimmer in the air, and running or moving in any way makes it more noticeable.



## Heroic Abilities

- ◆ **Shadow Assault (R)**

*"Gain a bonus 20% increased Attack Speed, and Basic Attacks charge enemy units. Lasts for 6 seconds."*

Shadow Assault is an amazing ability that makes it impossible for an enemy to escape, which is why it's often taken into games where the enemy has hard carries that need to be taken out. The biggest downside to this ability is due to the teamfighting meta, so in order to use it you need to either be good at split pushing so you can force duels or be skilled at dodging abilities in teamfights and quickly taking out the enemy.

- ◆ **Void Prison (R)**

*"Slows time in an area to a near standstill, freezing all units for 5 seconds. Zeratul is not affected."*

This is arguably the strongest teamfighting ult in the game. It can be used in a variety of ways, such as peeling enemies out of a fight or locking down squishy units in the enemy team. It's also a nice wombo combo with a lot of teamfighting abilities picked up by allies.

## Talents

- ◆ **Level 1**

**Best Choice. Seasoned Marksman**

This is basically to make you stronger towards the late game and to improve your overall damage. It's the only direct damage-buffing talent in this set.

**Situational. Rapid Displacement**

This shortens the cooldown of Blink by almost 2 seconds. It may not seem like much, but making an already short cooldown that much shorter on an ability as OP as this is amazing.



◆ **Level 4**

**Best Choice. Vorpall Blade**

Makes you even stickier on the target.

**Situational. Focused Attack**

A nice burst tool, although it doesn't provide sustained damage and shouldn't be used against tanky teams.

◆ **Level 7**

**Best Choice. Searing Attacks**

Great burst potential and a low 25 second cooldown.

**Situational. First Aid**

If you are having trouble staying alive in team fights, take First Aid.

◆ **Level 10**

**Best Choice. Shadow Assault**

I recommend Shadow Assault just because it can help you stay on top of carries and take them out easily. However, it's not the better of the two heroic abilities for teamfighting.

◆ **Level 13**

**Best Choice. Assassin's Blade**

Another auto-based damage boost, which procs right after leaving cloak. It also provides a small speed boost while cloaked so you can sneak up on enemy heroes easier.

**Situational. Wormhole**

Wormhole is fun and very useful for juking enemies, recommended only for advanced players.



- ◆ **Level 16**

**Best Choice. Double Bombs**

Not only a damage boost, but keeps the enemy slowed even longer.

**Situational. Executioner**

Works well with Singularity Strike..

- ◆ **Level 20**

**Best Choice. Nerazim Fury**

A big boost to Shadow Assault.

**Situational. Protective Prison**

If you took Void Prison, this ability is a must have so that your allies aren't affected by the CC as well.

## Gameplay Tips

### Early Game

Early game you never want to be in a solo lane because it greatly reduces your ability to roam. Due to Permanent Cloak, Zeratul is a powerful roamer that should be doing so throughout early game to set up kills for other lanes. Try not to gank into any heavy CC, or waste time ganking heroes with easy escapes. Early game you just don't have the abilities and damage to take these targets out.

### Mid Game

You now have a bit of burst and should be able to start taking out squishy targets around the map. You can also push lanes pretty well thanks to your Cleave damage. Objectives are vital at this point in the game and you'll want to turn a lot of your focus towards them. Sometimes, when an objective just spawns you can catch a single player out who is waiting for their team.



### End Game

This is when you really shine. You now should be able to constantly stick to enemy targets, and will have a lot more mobility and burst damage. If the enemy has heavy CC and AoE, focus on split pushing and catching people out because you won't have much use in teamfights. If your team has heavy CC, you should be able to quickly take out any targets that your team pins down. It's important to watch your health and dodge abilities because a single misstep could mean your life at this point in the game.





# BATTLEGROUND

## Blackheart's Bay

The unique objective of this map is Blackheart's ghost ship that bombards enemy buildings if a team acquires the pirate's favour. This is a three lane map. A lot of the objectives having to do with Blackheart are located in the lower part of the map. The upper part shouldn't be overlooked, because there is the grave golem.

This map is revolving around Doubloons, it requires team play to collect Doubloons from various sources and to hand them in to Blackheart to win his favor. Players can expect hefty team fights, mainly in the map's centre while handing or collecting Doubloons for their team.

### Map Objectives

#### Blackheart

Blackheart is a pirate, located in the middle of the map. He is the one to see when handling Doubloons. Handing in your Doubloons takes 6 seconds (channeled), which gives the enemy team the opportunity to interrupt as any damage taken immediately interrupts the six second channel.

The first team to give 10 Doubloons to Blackheart will win his favour and will be granted assistance for a short time. Upon winning his favour, his ship will bombard opposing team's fortifications, dealing massive damage. After 12 shots (3 per building) he is yet again, available and the number of Doubloons required to gain Blackheart's favour is increased by two every time he becomes neutral.

#### Doubloons

The currency that wins you Blackheart's favour. Currently there are three ways to gain Doubloons



- **Heroes**

Heroes that acquire Doubloons can be attacked by the opposing team, which makes them the prime target for killing. You can see the amount of Doubloons a player is carrying above his head. Once the said player is dead, he drops all the Doubloons he's carrying, enabling other players to pick it up. Both your team mates as well as the opposing team can pick them up.

- **Camps**

So called neutral camps are located near the base of each team. Each team only has one and the mobs are easily killable and grant two Doubloons per spawn.

- **Treasure Chests**

There are two chests that contain five Doubloons and spawn in the map's center. The first one is located in the top lane and the other in the bottom lane. These chests can be attacked with basic attacks and each basic attacks will spawn one coin near the chest. When attacked enough times, the chest will explode, spawning Doubloons for anybody.

### **Timers**

- 0:40 – Camps
- 0:50 – Chests
- 1:10 – Blackheart

### **Respawns**

- 2:30 – Skeletons
- 3:30 – Siege
- 4:30 – Bruiser
- 5:00 – Boss
- 2:30 – Chests



## Cursed Hollow

The battleground is a dark realm ruled over by the Raven Lord, within the realm of the Raven Court, set in a haunted forest.

### Map Objectives

The main objective of this map is revolving around paying tribute to the Raven Lord in order to curse the opposing team. The Raven Lord demands tributes, which appear in the forest, in the centre of the map. When a team gains three tributes, the opposing team becomes cursed.

This is a two lane battleground and all the objectives are located in a forest between these lanes. Several watchtowers are located here. They overlook the main path in the forest, mercenary camps, tribute spawn points, so controlling lanes is essential to win this map.

Tributes spawn periodically at one of several spawn points. Do not chase the tributes alone, as the likelihood of you being successful is small. Always be in groups while capturing and try to delay or defend the tribute from the opposing team when interrupted.

- **Tributes**

Tributes are randomly appearing buildings across the map (they have a fixed set of spawn locations, but these are picked every time at random). If you want to capture a tribute, you must cast a channel for six seconds. During this duration, any damage taken or movement will immediately interrupt the channelled spell cast, so the channel needs to start over. Expect getting attacked by the opposing team as soon as you will be channeling, because those six seconds are really long. Sometimes there may be a single opposing team's player that won't be trying to kill you, but rather interrupt your 6 second cast.



- **Curse of the Raven Lord**

Note that collecting a single or even two tributes will not do anything, however, once a team collects 3 tributes (doesn't need to be one after another) the Raven Lord will curse the opposing team, turning their minion's health pool to 1 and disabling towers any attack capabilities. Teams do not lose tributes if the opposing team has been successful with their curse.

While Curse of the Raven Lord is active, be prepared to push and destroy as many towers as you can. The push is the most efficient when you are obviously grouped up. If your team is cursed, try to defend. Again be grouped up, because there is nothing an individual would be able to do while cursed, while the opposing team attacks towers.

- **Timers**

2:00 – All camps spawn

- **Respawns**

3:00 – Siege

4:00 – Bruiser

5:00 – Boss

## Dragon Shire

This is a very large battleground with a lots of gardens, knights, squires, lords, ladies and maidens. It was designed in a clear fairy tale setting.

The Dragon Knight is dormant in the Dragon Altar located in the centre of the map, teams must capture two obelisks at the top and bottom of the map to receive his power.



This is a two lane battleground, with an obelisk next to each lane and the Dragon Altar located in the map's centre, close to the upper lane. There's one watchtower at the centre of the map which covers most of the jungle and enables you vision of opposing team's movements and rotations. Mercenary camps are located in close proximity of each team's forts which is why it is so difficult to take mercenaries of the opposing team.

The Dragon Altar is located in the centre of the map and remains locked until one team captures both Obelisk of the Sun and Obelisk of the Moon. Once are these obelisks captured, the altar becomes unlocked for the team. Once a hero channels the altar for a short time, he becomes immensely empowered and is granted the form of the Dragon Knight that lasts several minutes. Make sure to use the transformation in an efficient manner, for example to bring down opposing team's forts. Be grouped while you are pushing.

### Map Objectives

The objectives of this battleground revolve around capturing two Obelisks in order to become the Dragon Knight, get a power boost and wreak havoc during its duration.

- **Obelisks**

Obelisk of the Sun is located in the upper lane, while Obelisk of the Moon is in the bottom lane. In order to capture an Obelisk, a player needs to cast a channel for a short duration. Any damage taken or movement during channelling will result in the channel's immediate interruption. Note that capturing one Obelisk doesn't mean anything. If both teams have one obelisk they still have a chance to capture the second one.

- **Dragon Knight**

As soon as one team captures both Obelisks, they choose a team member to go to the centre of the map (the Altar) and channel upon it. Once completed, Obelisks become again neutral, but they cannot be channeled upon, until the Dragon Knight is dead or his time expires, since it only lasts for a couple of minutes. The Dragon Knight becomes a fast mobile tank and/or damage dealer, who doesn't have issues with tower tanking.



- **Timers**

1.15 – Shrines

2.00 – All camps spawn

- **Respawns**

2.00 – Shrines from the moment the dragon knight dies

3.00 – Siege

4.00 – Bruiser

## Garden Of Terror

When night falls, horror sprouts in the Garden of Terror. Kill the terrors, collect their evil seeds, and let your green thumb bring victory!

This is a three lane map. When night falls, shamblers will come out in the garden area of the map and all normal mercenary camps will vanish.

Once the royal gardens were a splendor to behold. But lately a shadow has fallen over them...Writhing tendrils creep across the grounds at night, and a number of servants have disappeared while walking its twisting paths. Queen Nightshade claims to be unaware of these incidents, but some are beginning to suspect she has gone mad.

### Map Objectives

This battleground is based on a day / night sequence.

During the day, the main objective for all players is to gather seeds, 100 of which will allow them to summon a Garden Terror in their main space on a patch of fertile soil. This is very similar to Dragon Knight of Dragon Shrine and is a timed summon.



At night, players will want to kill shamblers that spawn all over the map. They are indicated by purple marks on the map. Visibility is reduced during night. Night will not end, unless all shamblers are killed.

- **Shamblers**

Creeps arising at night, all night horrors must be killed to bring back the day. Each night horror drops seeds which can be used to summon the Garden Terror. They spawn in the center of the battleground

- **Garden Terror**

Is a summoned on a patch of fertile soil after collecting 100 seeds, during which the player that moves onto the patch within their base becomes the Terror for a limited amount of time. It will die if a player does not take control of the terror within a minute of it spawning. It has three abilities.

### **Garden Terror Abilities**

#### **Spore Queen's Curse**

After a short delay, enemy heroes in the target area are turned into plant zombies for 5 seconds.

- **Plant Zombies**

Players turned into zombies remain transformed for 5 seconds, while in this form, they have their Movement Speed reduced by 30%, become silenced and are unable to attack.

- **Planet Horror Overgrowth**

Disables and damages all enemy structures within a large area as long as the Horror Overgrowth remains alive. Deals heavy damage to minions within its area of effect.

- **Sprint**

Gives the Garden Terror a temporary boost in movement speed.



- **Timers**

1.30 – Night

2.00 – All camps spawn

- **Respawns**

3.00 – Siege

3.20 – Night

4.00 – Bruiser

## Haunted Mines

This is a two level battleground connected by a mine shaft. The special objective is to collect skulls that spawn inside the mine. The skulls empower the golem of both teams. The Haunted Mines are part of the Raven Court, and fall under the domain of the Raven Lord.

### Map Objectives

Objectives are revolving around collecting as much skulls as possible, to increase your team's golem.

This is a two lane map. Above ground at the end of the map and underground with the mines and many twisting tunnels. To get to the second level, players must wait until the entrances to the mines (second level of the map) open. These are located at the middle of each lane.

- **The Mines**

Mine entrances are located at the middle of each lane. After a short time has passed, mines open up for the players allowing them to enter the mines and kill neutral minions for skulls. Mines have multiple winding tunnels, with a boss room at the far right. When a team obtains 100 Skulls, a grave golem appears for each team, one located in the upper lane and the other one in the lower one.



- **Skulls**

When players collect skulls, your team automatically gets them, so you can't drop anything. The skull count is increased every time you walk over them.

- **Killing Minions to Obtain Skulls**

Minions within the mines are really weak, so there is no need to send the whole team to the mines. It's best when some team members are guarding the entrance so that the enemy players cannot get in. Of course, exceptions apply and sometimes there are really massive team fights within mines. When you are the only one within mines you can usually expect an unpleasant surprise, since most of the time at least two or more players from the opposing team will be in as well. Always try to enter the mines at full health and maximum mana.

- **Grave Golem**

The golem is tough and has a lot of survivability, so it's good to send two or three players, immediately to bring him down. Once dead, he drops lots of skulls, which can be collected, unless the enemies interrupt the process. The more skulls you collect the more powerful with your Grave Golem become. Defend the golem while he is wreaking havoc. Stay grouped up while defending to lengthen the golem's life span.

- **Timers**

2:00 – Mines

2:00 – All camps spawn

- **Respawns**

2:00 – Mines from moment last golem was killed

3:00 – Siege

4:00 – Bruiser



## Sky Temple

Floating above the vast desert sands of Luxoria, the Sky Temple serves as a center of worship for the snake god, Ka. He stores his great powers within the temples, each of them secured by guardians. With such defenses, no warriors would think to seize the god's power for themselves... or would they?

Sky Temple is a battleground with an Egyptian theme.

### Map Objectives

Sky Temple is a vast map, where most of the objectives are located outside of the lanes. Teams must periodically fight to capture the ancient temples, defeat their guardians and use their power to destroy the enemy's forts.

Boss is located in the middle of the map (in the Mosh Pit). This object is dangerous to take, because both teams can easily disrupt the other team's attempts to capture the Boss. It is in your best interest to avoid this objective, unless your team has a huge level difference between the opposing team.

Proper positioning and team management is the way to go here, since the map is really huge, disorganization almost always leads to a lost battle.

- **Temples**

One, two or all three temples can be activated at the same time. To control a temple, a player must be in its ground and it will turn in the team's color. If all of your team mates die or move out of the control zone, you lose control of the Temple. After the five guardians of the Temple are killed, the Temple will shoot five powerful laser shots in the enemy's buildings. Once a temple has run out of ammunition, it will go back into



hibernation for a short time, before it randomly becomes again available for capture. The temples from the top to the bottom are named Crocodile Temple, Snake Temple and Jackal Temple. Temples become active at random, making it impossible to predict which one will be next.

- **Mercenary Camps**

Players will find all three mercenary camps on Sky Temple.

Siege Giants are located near the bottom lane and will push the nearest lane when captured.

Bruisers are located near the top lane and the Boss it near the bottom lane.

- **Watch Tower**

There are three watch towers. Two are at the team's bases, and one is in the centre. Whichever team captures and holds the watch tower can see through the fog of war surrounding the tower, a strategic advantage not to be missed.

- **Timers**

1.30 – Temples (top and mid)

2.00 – All camps spawn

- **Respawns**

2.00 – Temples from the moment the final blast goes off

3.00 – Siege

4.00 – Bruiser

5.00 – Boss



## Tomb Of The Spider Queen

The tomb's grand halls and labyrinthine passages speak to a vast cavernous under-city, which features regal structures, moody lighting, and a host of creepy corners...and spiders. Great riches lie within the tomb.

This is a compact, three lane Battleground that features a dark and moody interior space where you destroy enemy minions to claim the Spider Gems they drop. Turning in enough of these gems will earn you the favor of the Spider Queen, and she will summon a powerful wave of Webweavers to ally with you and attack enemies. You drop any Spider Gems you're carrying when you die, but while your enemies can't pick them up, savvy opponents may deny your teammates the opportunity of retrieving these valuable riches. The gems will disappear after a certain time if not picked up.

This map is the smallest battleground in the Nexus, with the lanes located very close to one another.

### Map Objectives

The main map objective revolve around gaining favor of the Spider Queen.

- **Collecting Spider Gems**

Enemy spider minions and Heroes drop magical Gems upon death. Gather as many as you can. The mechanical spiders that walk down the lanes drop gems upon death. Having early lane presence will allow your team to quickly start collecting these gems for turn in. At the very start of the game, try to be grouped up and collect as many gems as possible.

- **Turning in Spider Gems**

Relinquish your Gems at one of the Spider Queen's Altars or you will drop them all when you die. Deposit the gems you and your team have collected at two designated spots in the map. Once you turn in enough to satisfy the goal, your team will be granted Webweavers.



- **Summon Webweavers**

Whichever team turns in enough Gems first, will unleash the Webweavers to destroy their enemy's forts. Webweavers spawn at your foremost creep wave and will start to push alongside them. Use this to your advantage in order to capitalize on other objectives or siege damage.

- **Webweavers**

These are minions that can be summoned in a wave by turning in 50 gems, and will automatically attack the opposing team, travelling down one of the map's lanes. The number of gems required, is increased by 5 gems for each wave. They will periodically summon melee warrior minions at their location that will as well, automatically attack the opposing team.

- **Timers**

2:00 – All camps spawn

- **Respawns**

3:00 – Siege

4:00 – Bruiser



# BATTLEGROUND STRATEGY FOR ASSASSINS

In Heroes of the Storm, there are currently 7 different playable maps that you can randomly be thrown into. Each map requires different playstyles and mechanics to be successful, which means that as a player you need to be adaptable. Some maps will have plenty of coverage for you to roam around and get easy picks, while other maps will be open and harder to sneak around in. Either way, the right techniques used effectively will overcome each obstacle presented by the different battlegrounds, and will help you make the most of the advantages given to you. In this guide we'll be going over the different strategies used by assassins in each map to take advantage of objectives and dominate your opponents.

## Battlegrounds's Objectives

Before delving into strategy, you need to have a general understanding of the objectives of each map. While objectives have always been crucial on the MOBA scene, they are game winners in Heroes of the Storm. On every map the main objective is to destroy your enemy's core, but in order to reach the core you have to first destroy a multitude of buildings which can be difficult in itself when enemy players have the advantage in defensive situations. Objective control will typically give you a big advantage to allow your team to push and destroy key structures of your enemy base that you wouldn't be able to take out otherwise. Here is a brief overview of every map and the main objectives you should be focusing on as an assassin.

### Blackheart's Bay

This is a pirate themed map with the main goal being to collect doubloons so that you can pay Blackheart to fire his ship's cannons into the enemy base, dealing massive damage to structures and slowly pushing them down. Doubloons are earned by killing mercenaries and skeletons, and picking up treasure chests. As an assassin, your best method of earning doubloons is to kill enemy players and pick up the drops.



### **Cursed Hallow**

Collecting tributes is how you earn the favor of the Raven Lord, who will then put a massive debuff on the enemy team's minions and structures to make it quite easy to push. However, this can be difficult to play for assassins since the tributes are usually in open, contestable areas. When played right, you'll have the advantage at each tribute.

### **Dragon Shrine**

Dragon Shrine is a constant battle for control to take over the Dragon Knight and use its immense power to destroy the enemy base. This is done by controlling both the southern and northern shrine, and then having a player pick up the buff in the center. As an assassin, you should mainly be focused on the middle of the map and preventing the enemy mid laner from seizing that buff, while also taking it for yourself should your lanes win.

### **Garden of Terror**

This map focuses on a constant change between day and night, where horrors rise up during the night. Your goal is to kill as many as you can so that you can collect the seeds that they drop. This is an interesting objective map because both teams are able to get the objective at the same time, which basically summons a giant plant monster to push down the enemy base. As a mobility assassin, you should focus on taking enemy seeds and horrors, while less mobile assassins can help their team burst down horrors.

### **Haunted Mines**

The Haunted Mines acts similarly with Cursed Hallow in the fact that both teams will be able to get an objective. Both teams spawn a golem, but the strength of the golem is dependent on how many skulls the teams were able to collect when the mines open up. This is a very strategic map that assassins can take advantage of, as players never know what's waiting on the other end of the mine entrances.



## Sky Temple

Sky Temple focuses on taking control of alters when they activate, but this isn't so easy. When you stand on an alter they will spawn enemies that must first be dealt with. As an assassin, fighting in the open and having to use your abilities on monsters instead of players means that you often won't have the cooldowns to fight, so this can be a bit of a tricky map if you don't know how to play it right.

## Tomb of the Spider Queen

This is a compact, three lane map that is easy to take advantage of as an assassin. The goal is to collect gems so that you can earn the favor of the Spider Queen, who will then summon an army of webweavers to assist you in attacking your enemies. This is the newest map for Heroes of the Storm.

## Blackheart's Bay Strategy

The best way to damage the enemy base is to use the objective, and so as an assassin you should be focused on taking dabloons. Most assassins are highly mobile and capable of getting to chests and enemy mercenary camps swiftly, and so you should be taking advantage of this. Not only are you earning dabloons for your team, but you're protecting your own base by denying dabloons from the enemy team.

When a player dies, they will drop all the dabloons that they are carrying. This makes Blackheart's Bay a really rewarding map for assassins. Instead of spending the time to collect the dabloons yourself, it's much faster to simply take them from enemy players. There are several chokepoints that you can get easy catches on enemy players from.



First of all, the most obvious chokepoint is near Blackheart himself. There are several areas that you can hide and wait for enemy players with a heavy load of dabloons. It's easy to catch them because they can't take damage for a few seconds in order to actually turn them in, so as long as you're there they won't be able to. You can pick enemies off here with your burst damage and turn in the dabloons for your own team. However, you must be careful because this is in the center of the map, so if you aren't able to pick players off quickly and turn in the dabloons, you'll have the enemy team on you. Sometimes it's more effective to just kill the enemy player and take the dabloons, then rush to safety and wait to turn in the dabloons once it's more safe to do so.

Another strategy is to wait near chests for enemies, although this might not be as rewarding since a lot of the time enemies won't have any dabloons yet. There will almost always be an enemy player that will go for a chest, and if you can get there first you can sit and wait to ambush them. Although you won't always get dabloons, even the times you don't you will secure a chest for your team.

In your spare time, you should consistently take out enemy mercenary camps to steal the dabloons from them. If you're mobile, you'll be able to get out pretty quickly before the enemy team has a chance to react to the theft and catch you.

For ganking, you should mainly focus on taking out the bottom lane. The way this map is setup, the top and middle lane are very close together so it's easy for allies to come to the rescue, whereas the bottom lane is far and secluded. There is also a mercenary camp below the bottom lane that is easy to sneak through and come behind the enemy.



## Cursed Hallow Strategy

Cursed Hallow holds both advantages and disadvantages for assassin heroes. Since all of the objective spawn points are in the jungle area, which is relatively enormous in itself, you have a lot of corners and bushes to play with. On the downside, the tributes themselves are far enough away from cover that it's hard to ambush an enemy without at least a few seconds notice, and escape can be difficult for less mobile assassins that are trying to take objectives. This is where a bit of map awareness makes a huge difference.

As soon as a tribute spawns, you should focus on where the enemy team is currently and which paths they might take to get to the objective. You'll mainly be looking at the squishier carry members of the enemy team. From there, you can find choke points to pick them off before they get to the objective, and when successful you will force 5v4 fights over objectives with the advantage for your team.

When your team does manage to get the three tributes required, you can easily split push by yourself. If you aren't very mobile, make sure you keep an eye on the position of the enemy team and only fight safe 1v1 battles. If you do manage to force several players to your lane, try to hold them there without getting caught, because this allows your other lanes and allies to swiftly push down defenseless structures.

As for ganking, each lane is far from one another so you don't have much risk of a counter-gank when done properly. The downside is that there isn't a whole lot of cover on the outskirts of lanes so you will usually be seen. I wouldn't recommend ganking bottom lane often. Middle lane can best be ganked from the bottom if your team is on the left, and from the top if your team is on the right. Ganking top lane takes a bit of preparation but can be done if you're able to sneak into the top bushes above the lane without being noticed, allowing you to pop out and burst the enemy once they push the lane back.

When roaming, make use of the watchtowers as they are both positioned next to tribute spawn points and can be useful if one of those tributes comes up.



## Dragon Shrine Strategy

For the Dragon Shrine map, as an assassin you should either be focused on the bottom of the map or the middle. The shrine in the top lane is a bit hard for assassins to contest because it's wide open with almost no coverage, which makes it hard to get a pick or hide during cooldowns. The middle of the map doesn't offer a lot of cooldowns either, but this is typically a 1v1 situation which assassins strive in. You also are often able to burst down opponents before they can activate the Dragon Knight buff, which is crucial if both your top and bottom lanes lose their shrines for a few seconds.

Roaming in this map is a little less effective than most maps. For starters, if you leave any of the lanes you are essentially making one of the shrines or the center vulnerable for the enemy to take. There is also less coverage in the jungle of the Dragon Shrine, and so it's harder for you to duel, get picks, and not be seen. This is why it's recommended that you play an assassin that is capable of remaining in lane and winning 1v1s or 2v2s relatively easy.

The biggest advantage that assassin heroes have on this map is the fact that most fights are spread, and you don't really have many 5v5 battles for a majority of the game. Assassins are much stronger in smaller fights.

Counter-ganking is a good strategy on this map since most of the coverage is on the way to lanes. This means that you can often catch enemy gankers before they even get to the lane, and with enough burst you'll take them out before their laner can come to the rescue. This is typically the best strategy to take when the Dragon Knight buff is down and it's safe to step away from lane. You should also keep in mind that both entrances to the southern Dragon Shrine have bushes that enemies have to walk through to get to them, so while it's under your control and baiting enemies you can often get picks if you're patient, while also staying close enough to lane to get gold and experience.



## Garden Of Terror Strategy

As an assassin, it's crucial that you watch the clock in this map because each night is on a timed cycle. You want to be in position as soon as the night starts to take advantage of one of several strategies that you can use. The beginning of each night is when assassins have the greatest advantage.

Each night there will be 6 spawn camps, both teams having two small camps and a golem spawn on their side. While your team handles your own camps, assassins should be more focused on interrupting the enemy team and stealing as many seeds as possible. There are a couple different ways that you can do this. Keep in mind that the first night will begin at 1:30, and each following night will start 3:20 after the last night.

First off, you can do a quick steal of enemy small camps to pick up some of their seeds. I recommend doing this always on the first night because you often won't have enough burst to quickly take out players and if your team gets each of their camps and you steal a single small camp you will be given a garden terror right away. Be there right when the small camp spawns and burst it down as quickly as possible, and then pick up the seeds and retreat to your own team. The enemy team will lose out on 15 seeds, and your team will have just enough for a garden terror in a single night.

Another strategy, which is more useful later in the game, is to assassinate other players. This will better the odds that your team will pick up more seeds since it's 5v4, and you'll get gold for the kill. There are plenty of bushes to hide in between lanes and the camp spawns, so just sit and wait. When night comes, the enemy will walk into or past the bush and you'll get an easy pick. It's all about letting the map do the baiting for you.

The final nighttime strategy is mainly for mobile assassins that can get in and out really quickly. Seeds that drop off monsters are able to be picked up by anyone, even if you didn't participate in the kill. You can wait by the enemy golem and zoom in for some seeds and jump back out before they even realize what's happened.



As for ganking, lane ganking is good since each lane has plenty of coverage around it. You shouldn't have too much trouble sneaking up on enemy laners, and since the jungle has plenty of corners and coverage you'll also be able to take advantage of those fights as well.

## Haunted Mines Strategy

Haunted Mines is one of the best maps for assassins to get picks, so hopefully you're able to get plenty of gold to dominate your opponents in the underground mines. Every now and then the entrances to the mines will open up, but enemies never know what's waiting on the other side of the entrance. The key is to stand and wait by an entrance until an enemy pops their head through, and then burst them. Most of the time they will leave the way they came, so just be prepared to follow instantly so that you can secure the kill on the top side of the map.

As for the objective, you should be able to get plenty of skulls to buff your own team's golem. Assassins have high amounts of burst damage so you can clear and pick up skulls pretty quickly. If you're fast, you'll be able to secure more skulls than the enemy team.

As soon as the golems begin spawning you'll have two options – kill the enemy golem or protect your own. I often recommend protecting your golem for melee assassins, and ranged assassins should focus down the enemy golem. It's easier for ranged assassins to get their high amounts of damage on enemy golems without too much risk, while melee find it a bit more difficult. As for defending, melee assassins will usually have a bit more damage to compensate for their short range, and since the golem will be focused you can pick off enemies to stop them from killing your golem.

This is another good map for lane ganking and jungle ganking since it has lots of coverage. However, the biggest downside is that it's only a two lane map so it's harder to single out a hero without forcing a bigger fight. If you do lane gank, gank the lane with only two people and not three, and make sure your allies know who to focus so the fight doesn't get turned around on you.



## Sky Temple Strategy

Sky Temple is a good map for assassins since the main objectives are surrounded by bushes, making it easy for picks and hiding areas while waiting for cooldowns. The biggest downfall is that you can't take objectives by yourself because it's way too risky, and the most assassins can do is prevent enemies from taking them.

Often, most teams will blow their cooldowns taking down objective monsters, and during this time they will take plenty of damage. If you wait long enough you can get a good gank in and burst down several players of the enemy team, and even steal the monster kills so that your team gets the objective for itself.

There is a boss on this map as well that provides an effective boost to your team's pushing power, and it is also surrounded by coverage. This is a good choke point for catching passing enemies, destroying enemy teams that are taking down the boss, or even jumping in to steal it for yourself.

Lane ganks are easy on this map due to the bushes, although top lane and bottom lane are the easiest to pick off. The bushes in the center lane are a bit further off from the lane so it can be tricky sometimes.

## Tomb Of The Spider Queen Strategy

Tomb of the Spider Queen is the newest map to hit Heroes of the Storm. You will get gems from killing spider minions, and players will drop gems when they are killed. Enemy players aren't able to pick up the gems that are dropped, which makes killing enemy heroes a little less rewarding for assassins. You can still prevent enemies from getting to turn in their gems from killing them, but only if you're able to protect the fallen gems.



For this reason, it's better to focus on collecting gems rather than stopping enemies on this map. The only reason you should be stopping enemies is if their team isn't nearby, as you won't be able to protect the fallen gems very well against a team.

For lane ganking, this map doesn't offer a whole lot of coverage. There are vents near each lane, but they're far enough away from the lane itself that it is difficult to gank from them. There also isn't a lot of jungle area to gank in either. You should focus on laning and taking out enemy spider minions to build up gems. This isn't the best map for assassins and ganking isn't easy, and so farming is usually the most effective route.

There is a boss on the northern part of the map that has three vents near it. This is a good place to catch enemies that are going to setup for the boss, or to even steal the boss if you have some mobility.