

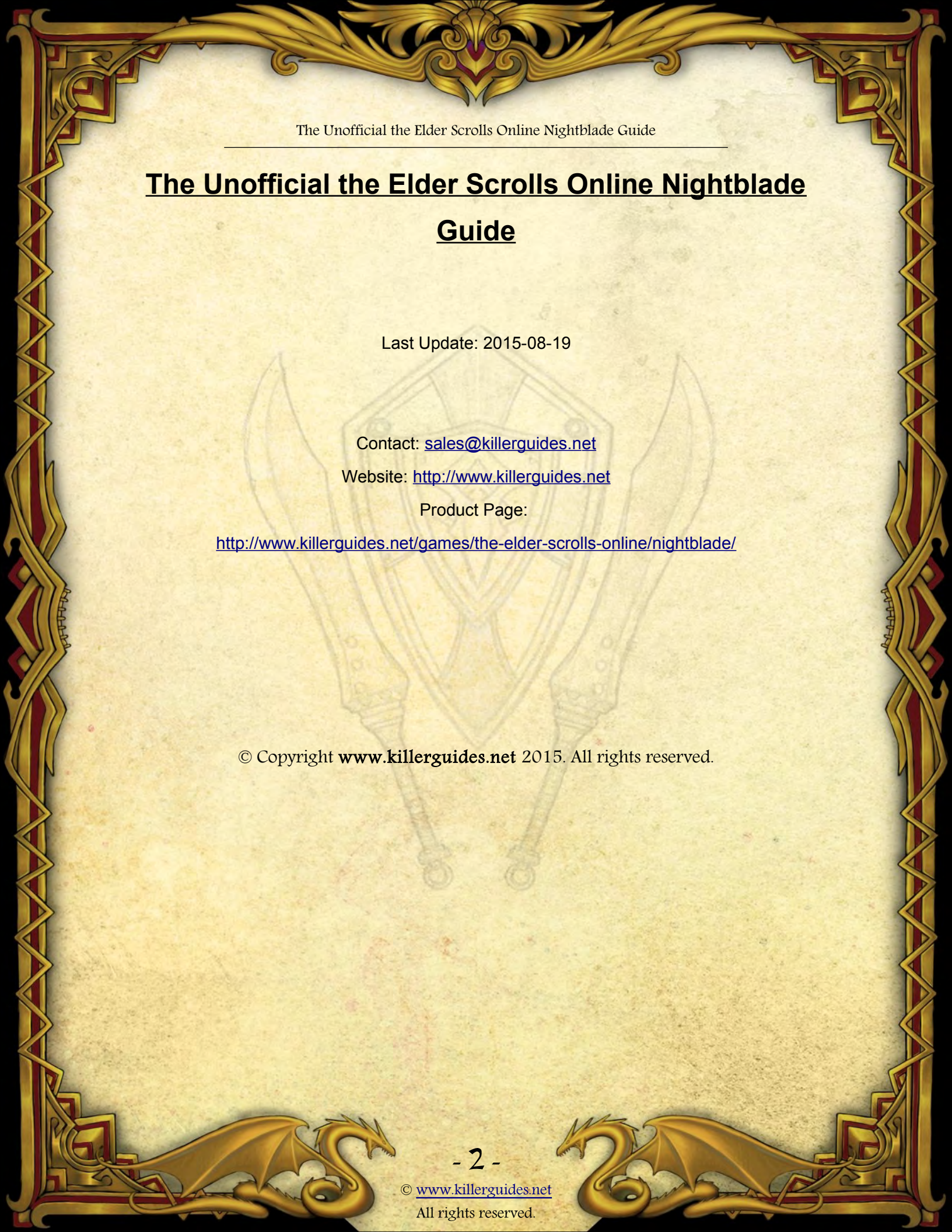


Professional strategies and insider tips!



THE UNOFFICIAL THE ELDER SCROLLS ONLINE NIGHTBLADE GUIDE

Our unofficial strategy guides are sold exclusively on
www.killerguides.net



The Unofficial the Elder Scrolls Online Nightblade Guide

The Unofficial the Elder Scrolls Online Nightblade Guide

Last Update: 2015-08-19

Contact: sales@killerguides.net

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

Product Page:

<http://www.killerguides.net/games/the-elder-scrolls-online/nightblade/>

© Copyright www.killerguides.net 2015. All rights reserved.

IMPORTANT

The Short Version.

This document is a single-user license. Please don't copy or share it.

The Long Version.

This document is seeded. In cases of copyright infringement this information will be used to track down the user ID that was used to acquire the document.

Upon your purchase of the document you agreed to the Terms and Conditions of Killer Guides (<http://www.killerguides.net/terms-and-conditions>). In case you redistribute this document or parts thereof without our written permission a contractual fine of up to \$10,000 applies.

If you bought or received this document free of charge from any other party, you can report them on our contact page (<http://www.killerguides.net/contact>). We reward reports that help to track down a case of copyright infringement with **up to \$100**.

© Copyright **www.killerguides.net** 2015. All rights reserved. The Elder Scrolls Online is a registered trademark of ZeniMax Media Inc in the U.S. and/or other countries. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners.

Table of Contents

Important.....	3
The short version.....	3
The long version.....	3
Skills Analyst.....	6
The Assassination Skill Line.....	6
Active Skills.....	6
Passive Skills.....	9
The Shadow Skill Line.....	11
Active Skills.....	11
Passive Skills.....	14
The Siphoning Skill Line.....	15
Active Skills.....	15
Passive Skills.....	18
The Nightblade Skill Rotation.....	20
BUILD GUIDE.....	22
Attribute Guide.....	22
Example Active Skill Sets.....	23
Build 1: Dual Wield/Bow Nightblade.....	23
Build 2: Two-Handed Weapon/Restoration Staff PvP Nightblade.....	24
Build 3: Melee/Ranged Nightblade Leech Tank.....	26
Build 4: "Warlock" Caster Nightblade.....	27
Suggested Nightblade Passive Abilities.....	28
Leveling Tips.....	31
General Leveling Tips.....	31
Skill Lines and Attributes.....	31
Weapon and Armor Types.....	32
Combat.....	33
Miscellaneous.....	34
from 1 - 10.....	34
Weapon Styles and Types.....	35

The Unofficial the Elder Scrolls Online Nightblade Guide

Attributes.....	35
Combat.....	36
Questing.....	38
From 11 - 20.....	38
Nightblade Dungeon Tips.....	39
Combat and Grouping Tips.....	40
Nightblade Build, Ability and Weapon Tips.....	41
Guild Quests.....	42
From 21 - 30.....	42
Nightblade Combat/Build Tips.....	43
Questing and Exploration Tips.....	45
From 31 - 40.....	46
Instanced Dungeons.....	46
Nightblade Combat/Build Tips.....	47
Questing Tips.....	49
General Tips.....	50
From 41 - 50.....	50
Dungeons.....	50
Nightblade Combat/Build Tips.....	51
Questing Tips.....	51
General Tips.....	53
PvP Tips.....	55
Nightblade PvP self-healing options.....	57
Nightblade PvP crowd control options.....	57
Veteran Content.....	59
Veteran Zones.....	60
Nightblade Endgame Gearing.....	64
Crafting Options.....	65
Other Gearing Options.....	66

SKILLS ANALYSIST



Within The Elder Scrolls online, the Nightblade provides players with a rogue archetype, and it delivers flexibility through subtlety, stealth and dark magic. A master of crippling single opponents with bursts of damage, the Nightblade is ideal for players looking for ambush.

The Assassination Skill Line

The Assassination skill line utilizes strategy and high-hitting melee actions against enemies to gain a high DPS output. The Assassination skill tree also utilizes utility skills based upon avoidance, and it grants the Nightblade a significant survival increase through heavy fights.

Active Skills

1. Death Stroke(Ultimate)

Deals damage while reducing healing received by 50%. Damage increases as player's Ultimate charge increases, up to 275%.

- Obtained at skill level: 12
- Cast time: Instant
- Range: 5 meters
- 50 Ultimate

Morphs into: Incapacitating Strike (Stuns if caster has lower health than target) or Soul Harvest (While slotted you gain more Ultimate from kills)

The Nightblade's Assassination Ultimate skill is called Death Stroke. Death Stroke essentially lowers an opponent's healing when struck, and its overall output is delivered through the Nightblade's Ultimate pool.

2. Assassin's Blade

Deals magic damage. Low health targets take 300% additional damage.

- Obtained at skill level: 1
- Cast time: Instant
- Range: 5 meters
- 25 Magicka

Morphs into: Killer's Blade (Heals you when ability kills a target) or Impale (Ability may be used at range)

Assassin's blade delivers a decent amount of damage and features an increased damage multiplier when used against opponents with low health. Assassin's Blade is useful in most situations, but players should be wary about wasting it against enemies with moderate health remaining.

3. Teleport Strike

Player moves through the shadows, appearing next to the target. Deals magic damage to enemies and stuns monsters for 1.5 seconds.

- Obtained at skill level: 4
- Cast time: 0.75 seconds
- Range: 22 meters
- 53 Magicka

Morphs into: Lotus Fan (Deals AoE damage and snares enemies) or Ambush (Your next attack against enemy deals extra damage)

Teleport Strike blinks the Nightblade to their target, and it delivers damage while stunning the opponent for several seconds. Teleport Strike is an excellent opener, and it may be exploited mid-fight to stun-lock enemies. However, the Nightblade must gain distance before activating Teleport Strike, and they should be aware of crowd-controlling effects before jumping to an opponent.

4. Blur

Enemies have 15% miss chance when attacking you.

- Obtained at skill level: 20
- Cast time: Instant
- Duration: 20 seconds
- 49 Magicka

Morphs into: Mirage (Enemies have a chance to be set off balance when attacking you) or Double Take (Miss chance increased on activation)

Blur is a self-buff that increases an enemy's chance to miss. Overall, Blur is effective in most cases, and it's great for Nightblades focusing on low-armor and high-DPS outputs within toe-to-toe environments.

5. Marked Target

Marks a target for death. Player's attacks ignore 75% of target's armor and spell resistance, and target's attacks ignore 75% of player's armor and spell resistance. Killing a marked target restores player's healthy by 40%.

- Obtained at skill level: 30
- Cast time: Instant
- Range: 50 meters
- Duration: 60 seconds
- 70 Magicka

Morphs into: Piercing Mark (Reduced cost and you can see target if they stealth or go invisible) or Reaper's Mark (Gain damage bonus and a bigger heal when killing marked target)

This skill places a marker upon high-health targets, and it grants the Nightblade extra damage against said targets. When the opponent is defeated, it delivers health to the Nightblade. This skill is semi-restrictive to situations, but, overall, is useful for healing-specific Nightblades.

6. Haste

Increase attack speed with light and heavy attacks by 30%.

- Obtained at skill level: 42
- Cast time: Instant
- Duration: 17 seconds
- 49 Magicka

Morphs into: Focused Attacks (Adds stamina regeneration) or Incapacitate (Your weapon attacks immobilize enemies)

Haste increases the Nightblade's normal and power attack speed against enemies within a moderate duration, and it's effective against enemies surprised by the Nightblade.

Passive Skills

1. Master Assassin

Increases weapon damage while using invisibility or stealth by 5%. Successful crouched attacks stun for a longer duration.

- Obtained at skill level 8

Master Assassin increases the Nightblade's damage when they're invisible or stealthed. Additionally, sneak attacks are granted an increased stun duration. Master Assassin is specific to Nightblades focusing on stealth, but it isn't effective for overt Nightblades with hybrid skill-sets aiming towards overt combat.

2. Executioner

Killing an enemy with an Assassination ability restores Magicka over 6 seconds.

- Executioner: Obtained at skill level 14

Executioner grants the Nightblade Magicka whenever an enemy is slain with an Assassination ability, but it's essentially useless for other Nightblade killing strokes.

3. Pressure Points

Increases critical strike rating by 1.5% for each Assassination ability slotted.

- Obtained at skill level 22

4. Hemorrhage

Increases bonus critical strike damage by 5%.

- Hemorrhage: Obtained at skill level 39

The Hemorrhage skill increases the Nightblade's total critical strike bonus damage through Assassination skills placed upon the hot-bar. However, its effects are only maximized when the player fills their hot-bar with a maximum amount of Assassination skills.

The Nightblade's Assassination skill tree is the "bread and butter" of stealth-minded player. While the Shadow skill line is ideal for stealth mechanics, applying Assassination skills supports the Nightblade with fantastic burst damage.

Assassin's Blade will be the Assassin Nightblade's go-to skill, and its execution perk is a great finisher for combo-minded players. Teleport Strike is useful for rushing enemies, and it can turn the tide of battle for Nightblade's caught in a pinch. Blur closes the gap between Nightblades and other melee-heavy classes, and its boost to evasion is needed for low-health players, and Nightblades focusing on tanking will find Blur an incredible asset.

Meanwhile, Death Stoke may be one of The Elder Scrolls Online's best self-healing benefits for damage dealers, and it's a Nightblade's top asset when attempting to burn out healing enemies. The Nightblade's passive tree within Assassination, overall, is a benefit to its active line. Passive skills grant stealth-based damage bonuses, and stacking skills is promoted through both line's synergy.

The Shadow Skill Line

The Nightblade's Shadow line offers fantastic utility skills to pair with the Nightblade's Assassination line, and it offers a wealth of spells capable of benefiting the Nightblade in critical ways during fights.

Active Skills

1. Consuming Darkness(Ultimate)

Creates an area of darkness for 12 seconds. Enemies in this area are snared 70%. Nearby allies take 30% less damage and caster gains an additional +100% of this value. Grants allies in the area Slip Away, granting them invisibility.

- Obtained at skill level: 12
- Cast time: Instant
- Radius: 5 meters
- Duration: 12 seconds
- 200 Ultimate

Morphs into: Bolstering Darkness (Synergy now heals allies) or Veil of Blades (Enemies in the area take damage over time)Ultimate

The Shadow skill tree offers Consuming Darkness as its Ultimate skill. Consuming Darkness grants total invisibility to the Nightblade, and it offers a synergy option to deliver invisibility to nearby allies. Consuming Darkness is, however, location-specific, as it's an AoE spell.

2. Shadow Cloak

Gives player invisibility for 2.5 seconds.

- Obtained at skill level: 1
- Cast time: Instant
- Radius: 35 meters
- Duration: 2.5 seconds

Morphs into: Shadowy Disguise (Increase critical strike chance for next attack) or Dark Cloak (Removes negative effects)

Shadow Cloak grants the Nightblade invisibility for a short period. While the duration is short, it's perfect for granting invaluable escape opportunities.

3. Veiled Strike

Deals magic damage. If stealthed, attack sets enemy off balance and stuns them for 4 seconds.

- Obtained at skill level: 4
- Cast time: instant
- Range: 5 meters
- 35 Magicka

Morphs into: Surprise Attack (Reduces enemy armor on hit) or Concealed Weapon (Increases stealthed movement speed while slotted)

4. Summon Shade

Summons a shade to attack enemy target enemy for 17 seconds. Attacked enemies deal 15% less damage for 4 seconds.

- Obtained at skill level: 42
- Cast time: Instant
- Range: 28 meters
- 35 Magicka

Morphs into: Dark Shades (Summon 2 shades) or Shadow Image (You may teleport to Shade)

Summon shade spawns a minion capable of de-buffing opponents, and it saps their total damage output. Summon Shade is useful for toe-to-toe situations where the Nightblade is in danger against high-damage-output foes.

5. Path of Darkness

Enemy targets in front of player take magic damage every second for 20 seconds. Paths may only be seen by player and increases movement speed 50% for the duration.

- Obtained at skill level: 20
- Cast time: Instant
- Duration: 10 seconds
- 53 Magicka

Morphs into: Twisting Path (Affects a larger conal area and deals more damage) or Refreshing Path (You heal while on the path)

Path of Darkness delivers damage within the area directly in front of the Nightblade, and it increases the Nightblade's total movement speed within the location-specific pathway.

6. Aspect of Terror

Induces fear in 2 nearby enemies for 4 seconds.

- Obtained at skill level: 30
- Cast time: Instant
- Radius: 6 meters
- Duration: 3.2 seconds
- 60 Magicka

Morphs into: Mass Hysteria (Enemy snared has reduced power when effect ends) or Manifestation of Terror (Creates a trap that fears nearby enemies)

Aspect of Terror scatters nearby enemies, and its Fear de-buff is great for crowd control.

Passive Skills

1. Refreshing Shadow

Increases Stamina regeneration by 15% for 6 seconds when a Shadow ability is activated.

- Obtained at skill level 8

Refreshing Shadow boosts stamina regeneration whenever a Shadow ability is activated, and it's great for utilizing primary and charged attacks within the initial burst-damage phase of a Nightblade's combat.

2. Shadow Barrier

Increases armor and spell resistance by 17 for 4 seconds when coming out of stealth or invisibility.

- Obtained at skill level 14

Shadow Barrier reduces the Nightblade's damage from enemies within the first few seconds following their reveal from invisibility and stealth.

3. Fortitude

Increases max health by 2% for each Shadow ability slotted.

- Obtained at skill level 22

The Fortitude skill increases the Nightblade's overall Health, and its effectiveness is based upon the Nightblade's collection of slotted Shadow abilities. Fortitude is an asset for overt Nightblades focusing on head-to-head combat with melee fighters rather than burst-damage Nightblades preferring stealth.

4. Dark Veil

Increases duration of Shadow abilities by 8%

- Obtained at skill level 39

Dark Veil increases the Nightblade's Shadow abilities, and it's the topper for any Shadow-specified Nightblade.

While any class can stealth within The Elder Scrolls Online, the Nightblade's Shadowcloak sets the class apart. Shadow Cloak grants the Nightblade an opportunity to re-stealth mid-battle, and it's the perfect lead for a massive combo array.

Veiled Strike, while requiring stealth, can be stacked with the Master Assassin passive skill, and it's ideal for players focusing on stun-centric builds. Additionally, the Nightblade's Summon Shade skill is very helpful during raids and group dungeon scenarios.

Path of Darkness, meanwhile is multifaceted enough to provide utility for unique play-styles, and it's useful for closing distance between enemies, catching runners and avoiding zergs.

Aspect of Terror is great for interrupting spell-casters due to its incapacitation aspects, and the Nightblade's overall collection of Shadow passive abilities increase the Nightblade's survivability and overall effectiveness within objective-based scenarios.

The Siphoning Skill Line

While the Assassination skill line creates high-damage outputs, the Siphoning skill tree focuses on wearing out enemies through damage-over-time spells, self-healing skills and an array of crowd control skills.

Active Skills

1. Soul Shred(Ultimate)

Nearby enemies take X magic damage and are stunned for 4.5 seconds. An ally may activate the Soul Leech synergy imitating a high damage life-stealing attack.

- Obtained at skill level: 12

- Cast time: Instant
- Radius: 6 meters
- 150 Ultimate

Morphs into: Soul Siphon (Siphon your health into nearby allies) or Soul Tether (Also deal high damage over time to a single enemy)

The Nightblade's Siphoning Ultimate skill is called Soul Shred, and it delivers AoE damage to nearby enemies—stunning them. It also engages a Leeching Strike synergy for nearby allies, granting them renewed health from landing blows.

2. Strife

Deals magic damage and heals player for 25% of the damage inflicted every 2 seconds for 10 seconds.

- Obtained at skill level: 1
- Cast time: Instant
- Range: 28 meters
- Duration: 0.5 seconds
- 35 Magicka

Morphs into: Funnel Health (Also heals a nearby ally) or Swallow Soul (Receive more healing while ability is slotted)

Strife places a damage-over-time spell upon an opponent, and it heals the Nightblade for the de-buff's duration. Strike is a go-to spell for Nightblades within opening stages of combat, but it shouldn't be relied upon as a quick heal.

3. Agony

Stuns enemy for 12 seconds, effect is broken from any source. After effect ends enemy takes magic damage over 5 seconds.

- Obtained at skill level: 4
- Cast time: 1.5 seconds

- Range: 28 meters
- Duration: 12 seconds
- 42 Magicka

Morphs into: Prolonged Suffering (Deals damage for longer and more overall damage) or Malefic Wreath (Deals area damage when effect ends)

Agony essentially applies a damage-over-time de-buff to enemies while stunning them, but its effect may be ended when an enemy suffers additional damage. Agony is very conditional, but it can be effective for Nightblades gaining distance for re-stealth combo-openers.

4. Cripple

Siphons movement speed from enemy and gives it to player while dealing magic damage over 8 seconds.

- Obtained at skill level: 20
- Cast time: Instant
- Range: 28 meters
- 42 Magicka

Morphs into: Debilitate (Enemy's weapon attacks are slower) or Crippling Grasp (Immobilizes and damages on impact)

Cripple places a damage-over-time spell upon an opponent and decreases their overall movement speed while buffering the Nightblade for a proportional speed bonus. Cripple is great for long-lasting combo maneuvers, and it increases the Nightblade's survivability.

5. Siphoning Strikes

While toggled, basic weapon attacks restore 4% Magicka and Stamina, but reduce weapon and spell damage by 25%. 10% chance on basic weapon attacks to restore 15% Magicka and Stamina.

- Obtained at skill level: 30

- Cast time: Instant

Morphs into: Leeching Strikes (Attacks also restore health) or Siphoning Attacks (All attacks have a chance to restore Magicka and Stamina)

Siphoning Strikes reduces the Nightblade's weapon damage and restores their Magicka and Stamina whenever a hit is landed.

6. Drain Power

Deals magic damage to nearby enemies and increases weapon damage by 6% for each enemy damaged.

- Obtained at skill level: 42
- Cast time: Instant
- Radius: 8 meters
- 46 Magicka

Morphs into: Power Extraction (Increases power bonus and max targets) or Sap Essence (Also heals nearby allies)

This skill reduces enemies' attack power, and it increases the Nightblade's overall power for every affected opponent within the area. Drain Power, while underpowered within one-on-one fights, is a massive asset within large-scale battles.

Passive Skills

1. Catalyst

Increases potion effectiveness by 10%.

- Obtained at skill level 8

The Catalyst passive skill increases the Nightblade's use of potions, and it's a great asset for PVE or rogues capable of utilizing potions during PVP encounters, too.

2. Magicka Flood

Increases max Magicka by 4% while a Siphoning ability is slotted.

- Obtained at skill level 14

Magicka Flood increases the Nightblade's maximum Magicka threshold when a Siphoning ability is placed upon the Nightblade's action bar.

3. Soul Siphoner

Increases healing from Siphoning abilities by 8%.

- Obtained at skill level 22

This passive skill increases the overall healing received whenever a Siphoning ability is used, and it's a great Passive ability for survival-minded Nightblades.

4. Transfer

Bestows 1 Ultimate when dealing damage with a Siphoning ability.

- Obtained at skill level 39

Transfer grants the Nightblade Ultimate points whenever a Siphoning ability is used. However, as with several of the Nightblade's Siphoning Passive skills, Transfer is only effective, and maximized, when the player focuses on a Siphoning-specific skill-set.

Siphoning Nightblades are very effective for PVE DPS, and their Cripple ability gives them an edge in PVP encounters against melee-based adversaries. The overall increase in speed granted is a great asset for Nightblades, and Siphoning Strike may be utilized as a main source of damage, rather than the Nightblade's primary and power-placed weapon blows.

When it comes to effective Passive abilities, gaining Magicka is always essential, and the Nightblade's Siphoning skills offer fantastic healing to accommodate the Nightblade's Strife skill. However, Transfer's effectiveness relies upon damage-over-time de-buffs placed upon enemies, and its initial application may seem ephemeral if not taken care of with follow-up attacks.

Regardless of skill tree selection, the Nightblade has great potential for cross-skill-tree combinations, and each of its three skill lines contains essential pieces to the puzzle. The Nightblade, more than other classes within The Elder Scrolls Online, will experience the most cross-class builds.

The Nightblade Skill Rotation

There are no set rules for properly performing a Nightblade rotation due to the vast number of weapon skills available and builds available. There is, however, good reason to utilize a mixture of active abilities from each of the three skill lines. Pure damage abilities are important, as are crowd control abilities and stuns. Self-heals and damage mitigation cooldowns/DPS cooldowns are also important.

Here is one example rotation for opening combat with a standard group of two enemies (assume a fairly high Magicka build with a melee setup):

- Begin from stealth.
- Open with Veiled Strike on a ranged caster.
- Use Teleport Strike on the secondary mob.
- Use a heavy attack or light attacks if needed to bring secondary mob to low health.
- Finish off secondary mob with Assassin's Blade.
- Teleport Strike back to the primary (caster) mob.
- Interrupt any spells while performing heavy/light attacks.
- Finish off caster with Assassin's Blade.

Notes:

Shadow Cloak can also be used mid-fight to add additional DPS.

Strife and Cripple are decent for longer fights and/or fights where you know you'll need self-healing.

Weapon/Armor/Guild/World active abilities can also be used as filler, as openers, as cooldowns or as finishers.

Here's another example rotation against a mini-boss enemy that has a large chunk of health (assume you're solo):

- Open from stealth using Teleport Strike.
- Use Haste/Mark Target (be careful about Mark Target around a particularly hard-hitting mob, however).
- Use Strife/Cripple if you have either.
- Make sure to dodge ground effects and block/interrupt as necessary.
- Use your Ultimate after using Shadow Cloak (Death Stroke is your best single-target Ultimate).
- Use heavy attacks as filler.
- Use Shadow Cloak/Assassin's Blade if you have plenty of Magicka to do so.
- Use Blur or Summon Shade if needed for survivability cooldowns (using Blur while Mark Target is up also isn't bad idea).

BUILD GUIDE

There are a vast variety of possible Nightblade builds that are effective for every area of the game. This section will go over some possible options for skill builds, attribute builds and weapon setups-- including both active and passive skills-- that will serve you in the best way possible. All builds can and should be adjusted for personal playstyle.

Attribute Guide

Since attributes can be completely reset with a visit to a shrine and some gold, it's possible to use one attribute set for leveling and another upon reaching level 50 and/or finishing veteran ranks. After reaching veteran rank 14, you'll have access to 62 attribute points total.

For the most part, you'll want to focus on Stamina or Magicka—whichever suits the types of skills you use. Putting points into both Stamina and Magicka is not advisable for a Nightblade.

Since Stamina affects weapon damage as well as Stamina regeneration, Nightblade builds that rely heavily on weapon abilities and heavy/light attacks will want to prioritize Stamina. This includes most skills (if you've played since the game's launch, most Nightblade weapon-based skills now scale with Stamina). Bow users, dual wielders, and two-handed weapon users will want to focus on Stamina.

Nightblade builds that use a destruction staff or restoration staff will want to favor Magicka.

Health is useful for all builds and especially important for players who PvP.

While you can place all of your points into one attribute, it can often be a good idea to favor a balanced setup. This allows you to be more flexible when it comes to gear later on. It also gives you more health.

For a bow/dual wield Nightblade, for example, one good setup is to use 32 points in Health and 30 in Stamina. While leveling, you can simply try and equalize both stats. For a destruction staff Nightblade, this simply flips to 32 Magicka and 30 Health.

Example Active Skill Sets

Since each character will have two weapon sets to choose between beginning at level 15, it's possible to mix and match any of the below active skill sets you wish. In this manner, you can build a Nightblade that's versatile in a variety of areas: Damage options, crowd control, healing/tanking utility, PvP utility, survivability, group support or maximum DPS.

Reminder: Due to the super flexibility in the Elder Scrolls Online, these are examples only! Feel free and make up your own build and figure out what works for you. Along with active skills, suggested attribute point allocation, Boons and gear/rune selections will be provided.

Build 1: Dual Wield/Bow Nightblade

- **Roles:** DPS, solo, dungeons, leveling, PvE, PvP
- **Pros:** Excellent damage, able to stealth everywhere in the game, fantastic for surprise attacks as well as all areas of endgame and PvP
- **Cons:** Lack of self-heals, not a lot of survivability
- **Suggested Attributes:** 32 health, 30 Stamina
- **Suggested Rune/Gear Priority:** Maximum Stamina, + Poison Damage
- **Suggested Boon:** The Warrior
- **Suggested Armor:** Medium

This setup is one of the best for Nightblades who wish to go pure DPS for PvP and dungeon/raid purposes. By switching from dual wield daggers to a bow when necessary, this build can attack from range and from melee. A typical solo pull will have you starting from range and finishing off your target in melee. This build makes great use of stealth so it's ideal for both PvP and PvE.

First Weapon Set: Bow

- Mark Target > Piercing Mark (Assassination skill tree)
- Blur > Double Take (Assassination skill tree)
- Poison Arrow > Venom Arrow (Bow skill tree)
- Grim Focus > Merciless Resolve (Assassination skill tree)
- Snipe > Focused Aim (Bow skill tree)

Ultimate : Dawnbreaker > Flawless Dawnbreaker (Fighters Guild skill tree)

Second Weapon Set: Dual Wield

- Teleport Strike > Ambush (Assassination skill tree)
- Drain Power > Sap Essence (Siphoning skill tree)
- Blade Cloak > Quick Cloak (Dual Wield skill tree)
- Whirlwind > Steel Tornado (Dual Wield skill tree)
- Assassin's Blade > Killer's Blade (Assassination skill tree)

Ultimate : Meteor > Shooting Star (Mages Guild skill tree)

Build 2: Two-Handed Weapon/Restoration Staff PvP Nightblade

- **Roles:** PvP, solo, leveling
- **Pros:** Decent damage, good survivability, excellent mobility, decent self-heals and group heals

- **Cons:** Lacking a bit of DPS, won't be an excellent group healer due to attribute allocation
- **Suggested Attributes:** 42 health, 20 Stamina
- **Suggested Rune/Gear Priority:** Maximum Stamina, Disease Glyph on weapon
- **Suggested Boon:** The Warrior
- **Suggested Armor:** Medium

This setup is rather unique. Meleeing in PvP battles can be a little rough, so this build is a good way to survive while PvPing and still put out some decent damage at the same time. With the help of the restoration staff, you can quickly switch to heals as well. You'll generally want to make use of stealth to pick off enemy casters. When you receive heavy fire, switch to the restoration staff and keep yourself up while disabling opponents however you can.

First Weapon Set: Two-Handed Weapon (Mace is recommended)

- Teleport Strike > Ambush (Assassination skill tree)
- Veiled Strike > Surprise Attack (Shadow skill tree)
- Assassin's Blade > Killer's Blade (Assassination skill tree)
- Bone Shield > Spiked Bone Shield (Undaunted skill tree)
- Shadow Cloak > Shadowy Disguise (Shadow skill tree)

Ultimate: Death Stroke > Soul Harvest (Assassination skill tree)

Second Weapon Set: Restoration Staff

- Steadfast Ward > Healing Ward (Restoration Staff skill tree)
- Vigor > Resolving Vigor (Alliance War Assault skill tree)
- Evasion > Shuffle (Medium Armor skill tree)
- Summon Shade > Shadow Image (Shadow skill tree)
- Aspect of Terror > Mass Hysteria (Shadow skill tree)

Ultimate: Soul Shred > Soul Tether (Siphoning skill tree)

Build 3: Melee/Ranged Nightblade Leech Tank

- **Roles:** Solo, dungeons, leveling, PvE, endgame
- **Pros:** Excellent survivability, able to tank all leveling dungeons and endgame dungeons with ease, great for group play, able to tank melee and ranged enemies (AoE or single target), plenty of self-healing via leeches, mobility
- **Cons:** Low-ish DPS, but enough to still solo/level
- **Suggested Attributes:** 40 health, 22 Stamina
- **Suggested Rune/Gear Priority:** Maximum Health, + Healing Taken, + Block Mitigation
- **Suggested Boon:** The Lover
- **Suggested Armor:** Heavy

This setup is for Nightblades who wish to tank full time. Using one-handed weapon and shield for both weapon sets and heavy armor, this build can tank most of the hardest content in the game—including veteran content. High mobility and excellent Health/Stamina leeching abilities make this one of the best tanks for dungeons and environments where self-sufficiency is a must.

First Weapon Set: One Hand and Shield

- Puncture > Pierce Armor (One Hand and Shield skill tree)
- Siphoning Strikes > Siphoning Attacks (Siphoning skill tree)
- Path of Darkness > Refreshing Path (Shadow skill tree)
- Drain Power > Sap Essence (Siphoning skill tree)
- Low Slash > Heroic Slash (One Hand and Shield skill tree)

Ultimate: Soul Shred > Soul Tether (Siphoning skill tree)

Second Weapon Set: One Hand and Shield

- Inner Fire > Inner Beast (Undaunted skill tree)
- Siphoning Strikes > Siphoning Attacks (Siphoning skill tree)
- Strife > Swallow Soul (Siphoning skill tree)

- Shield Charge > Invasion (One Hand and Shield skill tree)
- Defensive Posture > Defensive Stance (One Hand and Shield skill tree)

Ultimate: Consuming Darkness > Bolstering Darkness (Shadow skill tree)

Build 4: "Warlock" Caster Nightblade

- **Roles:** Solo, dungeons, leveling, PvE, PvP, endgame
- **Pros:** Excellent damage (especially damage over time), excellent at both AoE damage and single target, master of picking off PvP enemies and tagging PvE mobs, excellent mobility, excellent crowd control via stuns, etc., minimal self-heals and group heals
- **Cons:** "Class canon" type of build (low survivability)
- **Suggested Attributes:** 22 Health, 40 Magicka
- **Suggested Rune/Gear Priority:** + Elemental Damage, + Magicka
- **Suggested Boon:** The Apprentice
- **Suggested Armor:** Light

This setup is for Nightblades who want to engage in ranged combat 100% of the time and want to feel more like a caster than a typical Nightblade. It uses a fire-based destruction staff and a restoration staff. Most abilities used in this build are DoT effects and AoE spells which makes the spec function similar to a warlock essentially. Specifically, this build excels in PvP due to its high mobility and large amount of crowd control effects. If you want to play a caster with high mobility, look no further.

First Weapon Set: Destruction Staff (Fire)

- Destructive Reach > Flame Reach (Destruction Staff skill tree)
- Force Shock > Crushing Shock (Destruction Staff skill tree)
- Veiled Strike > Concealed Weapon (Shadow skill tree)
- Cripple > Crippling Grasp (Siphoning skill tree)
- Shadow Cloak > Dark Cloak (Shadow skill tree)

Ultimate: Meteor > Ice Comet (Mages Guild skill tree)

Second Weapon Set: Restoration Staff

- Annulment > Harness Magicka (Light Armor skill tree)
- Steadfast Ward > Healing Ward (Restoration Staff skill tree)
- Regeneration > Rapid Regeneration (Restoration Staff skill tree)
- Blur > Double Take (Assassination skill tree)
- Summon Shade > Shadow Image (Shadow skill tree)

Ultimate: Soul Shred > Soul Tether (Siphoning skill tree)

Suggested Nightblade Passive Abilities

These passive abilities are the best the Nightblade has to offer and should be taken if at all possible. Even if they may not seem immediately useful for the weapons you are currently using, you never know when you may decide to try out a new spec. When first getting started, make sure to prioritize grabbing the passives which are the most useful for the abilities you plan on using.

Assassination:

Master Assassin (II), Executioner (II), Pressure Points (II), Hemorrhage (II)

Shadow:

Refreshing Shadows (II), Shadow Barrier (II), Dark Vigor (II), Dark Veil (II)

Siphoning:

Catalyst (II), Magicka Flood (II), Soul Siphoner (II), Transfer (II)

Suggested Armor and Weapon Passive Abilities

Some weapon and armor passive abilities are more useful to the Nightblade than others. The passive abilities listed below assume you are using that weapon set. In general, you should only take passive abilities for weapon sets and armor types that you commonly use.

- **Dual Wield.**
Slaughter (II), Dual Wield Expert (II), Controlled Fury (II), Ruffian (II), Twin Blade and Blunt (II)
- **Bow.**
Long Shots (II), Accuracy (II), Ranger (II), Hawk Eye (II), Hasty Retreat (II)
- **Destruction Staff.**
Tri Focus (II), Penetrating Magic (II), Elemental Force (II), Ancient Knowledge (II), Destruction Expert (II)
- **Restoration Staff.**
Essence Drain (II), Restoration Expert (II), Cycle of Life (II), Absorb (II), Restoration Master (II)
- **Two-Handed.**
Forceful (II), Heavy Weapons (II), Balanced Blade (II), Follow Up (II), Battle Rush (II)
- **One Hand and Shield.**
Fortress (II), Sword and Board (II), Deadly Bash (II), Deflect Bolts (II), Battlefield Mobility (II)
- **Light Armor.**
Evocation (III), Recovery (II), Spell Warding (II), Prodigy (II), Concentration (II)
- **Medium Armor.**
Dexterity (III), Wind Walker (II), Improved Sneak (II), Agility (II), Athletics (II)

- **Heavy Armor:**

Resolve (III), Constitution (II), Juggernaut (II), Bracing (II), Rapid Mending (II)

Suggested Other Passive Abilities

These are passive abilities found in guild skill lines, world skill lines and racial skill lines. Some are more useful to Nightblades than others. Others are optional. These are the ones that are generally considered the best. Note: Some of the active abilities are quite useful for Nightblades as well.

- **World:**

- Soul Magic: Soul Summons (II), Soul Lock (II)
- Vampire: Supernatural Recovery (II), Undeath (II), Dark Stalker (I)
- Werewolf: Pursuit (II), Blood Rage (II), Devour (I), Savage Strength (II), Call of the Pack (II)

- **Guilds:**

- Fighters Guild: Intimidating Presence (I), Slayer (III), Banish the Wicked (III), Skilled Tracker (I)
- Mages Guild: Persuasive Will (I)

Note: Other Mages Guild passive and active abilities may be useful for Nightblades who are dabbling in Magicka-heavy builds such as the Restoration Staff build or Destruction Staff build.

- **Undaunted:** Undaunted Mettle (II)

- **Racial Passives:**

- Some of the racial passives are very strong for Nightblades. You will only have access to these if you happen to choose that race, however. That said, the strongest racial choices for most Nightblade builds that utilize Stamina, sneaking and physical combat include Khajiit, Dark Elf, Imperial, Orc, Redguard and Wood Elf.

LEVELING TIPS

General Leveling Tips

These tips are designed to give you a few broad suggestions to make leveling a Nightblade a little bit easier. These tips will focus on the entire range from levels 1-50 and will primarily focus on advice for players who are new to Elder Scrolls Online but familiar with other Elder Scrolls games or MMORPGs.

Skill Lines and Attributes

For the most part, it pays to take a balanced approach to placing points in skill lines as well as attributes while leveling. When choosing active skills you'll want to focus on three areas: damage, survivability and control.

1. **Control.** With 10 active abilities total as well as two ultimate abilities after you reach level 15, dedicate a portion of your abilities to stuns and other crowd control abilities like Teleport Strike, Summon Shade, Scatter Shot (for bow users) and Veiled Strike. Your two ultimate abilities should be different as well, ideally.
2. **Survivability.** Dedicate another portion to survivability boosts and self-heals like Killer's Blade and Blur/Mirage. Abilities that enhance sneak and grant you invisibility (like Shadow Cloak) fall into this category as well.
3. **Damage.** Finally, don't forget about your damaging combat openers and finishers. Every fight needs a little burst damage. DPS cooldowns like Haste and Mark Target are some of the most powerful DPS cooldowns in the game.

Similarly, it's also a good idea to balance out which resources you commonly use. Weapon skills such as the abilities in the Dual Wield line use Stamina while class abilities like Assassin's Blade use Magicka. Use a mixture of weapon/class abilities to reduce downtime between fights.

Tailor your attributes to which resources you commonly run out of while fighting. If you use a large number of class abilities, pump more points into Magicka. The same goes for weapon abilities and Stamina. Stamina is also vital if you plan to mostly focus on light/heavy weapon attacks. Health is important, but generally fairly secondary unless you're a tank or avid PvPer.

It's a good idea to balance out your attributes instead of placing all of your free points into one stat. This is due to the fact that each attribute has a soft cap that acts similar to a diminishing return. Try and keep the balance similar to a 3:2:1 ratio if at all possible where the first attribute is the one you primarily use.

You don't need to slot passive skills at all, so even if you plan to switch your roles or weapon styles around, you should grab any passive skills that look useful. You'll gain plenty of free skill points by the time you hit level 50 if you actively search out Skyshards (which you definitely should). Balance survivability with dealing damage here, too.

Weapon and Armor Types

Get used to keeping more than one type of weapon on-hand, at least for leveling. There will be times when you'll want to use a ranged weapon as opposed to a melee weapon. While it's possible to dedicate both of your weapon sets (after reaching level 15) to one weapon type, it's generally better to use two types of weapons in order to be more flexible.

Nightblades are strong DPSers, of course, but they also make extremely viable tanks and healers throughout all areas of the game. Don't be afraid to experiment with either role while leveling.

What armor type you use should depend on your preferred attributes and playstyle. Medium armor is the "traditional" setup for Nightblades due to the fantastic Stamina bonuses and sneak bonuses, but if you mix things up and try tanking, casting spells or healing, you may wish to consider donning heavy armor or light armor (or a combination!). Pay attention to the passive armor abilities.

As a general rule of thumb the following guidelines are true.

- Medium armor: Stamina-heavy builds and characters who utilize sneak often (both ranged and melee).
- Heavy armor: Tank builds and beefy melee builds who want to survive well under pressure and take a serious beating.
- Light armor: Magicka-heavy builds that are more "glass cannon" in nature and most likely prefer to stay at range.

Combat

Combat gets progressively more difficult as you level. Mob groups also become larger. This is where your stuns will come in handy. Try and open up a difficult fight with a stun or disorient effect like Teleport Strike then focus on killing enemies one at a time. Nightblades do not gain a lot of area-of-effect moves, so you will want to focus on single target DPS whenever possible.

For self-heals, Nightblades get a few tricks that come in handy. Killer's Blade, a morphed version of Assassin's Blade, is one great option. Siphoning abilities like Strife/Funnel Health and Leeching Strikes are also powerful. Don't forget about potions!

Learning to watch enemies for combat cues to know when to interrupt/stun, dodge ground effects or block heavy melee blows is essential to getting the hang of leveling. This is especially the case if you wear medium or light armor or are in melee range.

Melee enemies "wind up" a heavy attack with a white, vortex-looking animation that means it's a good idea to perform a block. Caster enemies have an obvious casting animation that's often red in color and can usually be interrupted. These animations will vary based on the type of mob. Boss mobs often have completely unique animations. When in doubt, take a minute to watch your enemy and figure out which attacks are doing the most harm.

Practice interrupting and blocking as often as you can throughout the early levels in order to get plenty of practice at watching for enemy cues. Successful blocks and interrupts disorient enemies which can help you take down difficult packs of mobs without taking excess damage. Follow up a disorient combo with a heavy attack for an extra effect that can knock some enemies down.

Miscellaneous

Keep your gear as updated as possible. New quest rewards, crafted items and dungeon drops can often make the difference between struggling with a rough fight and being victorious. If you are having trouble with a particular mini-boss or quest, don't be afraid to seek help or try another quest until you gain a level or two or obtain better gear.

Remember to explore as much of Tamriel as possible while leveling. Discovering new areas grants you large chunks of experience as well as new side quests. Look for black icons on the map surrounded by a white outline for landmark areas that you have not yet completed (completed areas will show up as a white icon with a black outline) and stick to the roads to discover new side quest NPCs.

From 1 - 10

While leveling a Nightblade, the first 10 levels will be primarily focused on getting a feel for Elder Scrolls Online, the introductory areas of Tamriel and the systems of the game. Combat starts off simple and gets progressively more difficult as you near level 10.

Here are some Nightblade-specific tips to make getting through those first 10 levels simple.

Weapon Styles and Types

During the Coldharbour introduction, you should concentrate on getting through it as quickly as possible. It's extremely linear, and while you can find a few goodies by exploring, your main focus should be to get through it, pick a weapon style and get to the main area of the game.

Choose a weapon type that suits your desired playstyle. Remember that the sky's the limit-- even for a Nightblade. If you love to heal but love to sneak around, make a Nightblade healer! Whatever build you can dream up is completely viable with the help of a well-made build.

Don't hesitate to experiment with different weapon types and skills as you level. You will gain a large amount of skill points by the time you reach the level cap and beyond, so now's the perfect time to experiment. If you are melee, you may wish to keep a ranged weapon on-hand at all times. Some of the quests nearing level 10 are considerably easier with a ranged option such as a bow or destruction staff.

As a Nightblade, don't forget to make use of sneak to receive combat bonuses. Nightblades get a significant amount of combat bonuses when attacking from sneak/while using abilities like Shadow Cloak. The first 10 levels are a good time to practice using sneak. If you enjoy using sneak, you may wish to primarily wear medium armor.

Attributes

While leveling, your attributes should be fairly balanced and be tailored to the types of abilities you commonly use. If you use mostly weapon attacks and light/heavy attacks, you will probably want to place most of your points in Stamina. Building up Stamina is also one of the most straightforward ways to build a Nightblade since Stamina is also used for sneak.

Health is also important-- for all Nightblade builds. You can reset your attributes at any time, so if you feel you are squishy in combat, pump some points into Health to make leveling easier.

Magicka, surprisingly, is very useful for many Nightblade builds. If you use a lot of class abilities such as the abilities found in the Assassination tree or are experimenting with staff weapons, you may find you run out of Magicka quickly. In this case, it may be wise to place more points in Magicka.

Combat

Combat will seem incredibly easy at first as a Nightblade, but as you near level 10, mobs have more health and will appear in packs of two or more. This is where you'll need to start prioritizing the abilities you use and think about self-healing and survivability.

Your goal with most multiple-mob packs should be to kill one target as quickly as possible. This can be done by stunning (Teleport Strike and Veiled Strike work well) or crowd controlling an enemy and quickly taking it down or by crowd controlling the secondary enemy and taking down the first. Nightblades do not have a lot in the way of area-of-effect damage, so remember that doing as much single target damage as possible while prioritizing kill targets is often your best bet. Squishy targets like casters make ideal primary targets.

Stuns and other crowd control elements come in extremely handy while leveling. Make sure to slot a couple of abilities that stun, disorient or otherwise impair enemies. Suggestions: Teleport Strike, Veiled Strike, Agony and Soul Shred).

You may find that it's best to save your Magicka for stuns and other crowd control ailments while using your Stamina for weapon attacks. As you gain levels this may not prove as necessary, but for these early levels it's quite common for Nightblades to have issues with Magicka regeneration during long fights.

You should also slot a couple of abilities that serve as survivability cooldowns or self-heals. Blur works well, as does Strife. Strife can be placed on multiple enemies to leech extra health. Killer's Blade, which is the morphed version of Assassin's Blade, is also a great way to gain health by finishing off opponents.

Make sure to also make heavy use of dodge, block and interrupt. Save some Stamina during combat for this purpose. Ground effects should always be avoided if possible. You'll need to learn to watch for cues from enemies for when to block or interrupt. Melee attackers "wind" up heavy attacks that can be blocked and casters will visibly ready a spell to interrupt.

When you succeed in blocking an attack you'll disorient an enemy which makes it easy to quickly take them down. If you follow up the disorient with a heavy weapon attack, the enemy will also be knocked down again. Utilizing this combo is a great way to take down an enemy without taking damage from it.

Heavy and light attacks should both be used to effectively take down enemies as a Nightblade. Heavy attacks make great openers and followers to disorients as noted above. Light attacks are great for finishing off an enemy with a sliver of health or for killing adds that do not have much health. Also, if you need to move while attacking such as to avoid ground effects, you can spam light attacks while running. Simply tap your attack key while strafing.

When you gain access to your ultimate ability, you should try and save it for fights that prove difficult such as large packs of monsters or mini-boss fights. Use Death Stroke to finish off the first mob of a difficult pack or use Soul Shred to stun an entire group.

Make sure to slot health potions. Bring up your quickslot bar by holding "Q" (PC players only) and drag potions to this bar. You can use them in combat by pressing "Q" again.

It's possible (as a Nightblade) to use invisibility during combat to take less damage. You won't drop out of the combat, but gaining invisibility helps you move around the battlefield to set up stun attacks, etc., without getting hit by dangerous attacks. Use Shadow Cloak to your advantage.

Questing

Exploration is a big part of Elder Scrolls Online. Take the time to do any side quests you come across before moving on to the next area once you leave Coldharbour. Depending on what alliance you are a part of, these are the areas you'll want to fully explore.

- **Ebonheart Pact.** Bleakrock Isle
- **Daggerfall Covenant.** Stros M'Kai
- **Aldmeri Dominion.** Khenarthi's Roost

If you move too quickly through these areas, you may find yourself behind on experience.

Stick to the roads when looking for side quests and seek out the landmarks marked on the map with houses or towers. These are generally areas ripe for side quests.

Make sure you also pick up any Skyshards you come across. Some side quests also grant you skill points which is another reason side quests are important for leveling.

Upon reaching level 10, you gain access to Cyrodil, which is ESO's raid vs. raid PvP zone. You can gain experience and levels in Cyrodil (and even complete quests and gather Skyshards), so if you ever need an alternative to leveling, you can try your hand at Nightblade PvP. Nightblades tend to do very well in PvP with the right build due to the fact that they can pick and choose their battles.

From 11 – 20

This is the level range where combat difficulty picks up a notch but also gets more interesting due to the ability to swap to a secondary weapon set at level 15. This is also the level range where you'll get to do your first three dungeons. These become available at level 12 and are great way to experience the multiplayer aspect of ESO from the level ranges of 12 to 15.

Nightblade Dungeon Tips

You can use the in-game group tool to find a group or make one yourself in the zone chat channels. As a Nightblade, you're able to queue as a tank, healer or DPS, but in order to efficiently heal, you'll probably want to be fairly skilled with a restoration staff as one of your weapons. In order to tank, you most likely will want to have a sword and shield for one of your weapon sets and slot a few abilities toward tanking.

There are three dungeons for this level range.

- **Fungal Grotto.** Levels 12-15 - Located in Stonefalls
- **Spindleclutch.** Levels 12-15 - Located in Glenumbra
- **The Banished Cells.** Levels 12-15 - Located in Auridon

Even if you are not belonging to the alliance where the dungeon takes place, you can still access the dungeon using the group finder. You'll only be placed with players belonging in your alliance.

The three dungeons are fairly story-based and are a solid introduction to learning how to work with other players. They each take roughly an hour to complete and may be a bit of a challenge-- but still doable-- if you're newer to MMORPGs.

When taking part in dungeons with other players, keep in mind that the holy trinity (tank, healer, DPS) isn't 100% set in stone in ESO. When first engaging, tanks will primarily have to concentrate on the toughest enemy while DPS players take down the lesser enemies first. All players should use self-heals and support abilities when it's a good time to do so. Help your group as much as you can with stuns and interrupts. Nightblades are one of the best classes to interrupt due to their naturally high Stamina regeneration.

Combat and Grouping Tips

This is the level range where you'll want to start using food and drink buffs, especially when grouping up with other players. You can only use one food or drink buff at a time, but they do last through death. Nightblades will want to use whichever food/drink helps the most based on their particular build. Health recovery/max health is often the safest bet if you're solo.

Dark Anchors become more prominent during these level ranges. You'll often see players asking for assistance at them. These spawn in particular locations and are based around players grouping together.

Unfortunately you don't receive the full rewards for closing a Dark Anchor until you close all of the ones that spawn in the area. For this reason, it may be best to do Anchors when you've explored most of the zone you're questing in.

It's also possible to group up with other players in elite areas. These are generally marked on the map with skull icons or skull-and-crossbones icons and are dynamic in nature. Some of the areas even have world bosses which can drop blue-quality items. The world boss in the Soulfire Plateau area of Auridon, for example, drops a blue helm.

If you need more self-healing during fights, don't forget about **Strife**, which is found in the Siphoning skill line. Strife's morphed abilities are also extremely nice for both soloing and grouping with other players. Since Strife's heals are based off your damage done, it's best used as an opener or right before another powerful attack.

After using your dodge roll ability to escape from a nasty ground AoE effect, **Teleport Strike** is a great way to get back into melee range if you're a melee Nightblade.

Nightblade Build, Ability and Weapon Tips

This is a good level range to experiment with multiple secondary weapon sets to see what style suits your playstyle and build. You can either decide to use a secondary weapon set to give you more flexibility or use the same type of weapon with a different set of abilities. If you're using a melee setup as your primary weapon set, setting up a ranged set isn't a bad idea. You can also experiment with tanking and/or healing with your secondary set.

Saving your Ultimate ability for tough fights becomes crucial during this level range. Two of the Nightblade Ultimates are great for different reasons. Death Stroke is fantastic for bringing down bosses or single mobs extremely quickly while Soul Shred is fantastic for groups of three or more enemies where a well-timed group stun can really save the day. Swap between the two for maximum effect or have both slotted on different weapon sets.

Don't forget about picking up your passive abilities. Spend some well-earned skill points to grab Nightblade passives, weapon passives and armor passives. Some of the medium armor passives are extremely good for Nightblades. The same goes for the Dual Wield passives, the Two-Handed passives, the Bow passives and the Assassination passives in particular. Pressure Points and Executioner are exceptional when these become available. Nightblades do best with plenty of Critical Strike Rating.

Even if you're planning on using full medium armor, it's not a bad idea to equip both a single piece of light armor and a single piece of heavy armor while leveling. This will allow you to gain experience in all three types of armor, which will let you be more flexible if you decide to go a different route later.

Similarly, you should slot at least one ability from each of the three Nightblade class skill lines in order to gain experience in all three. Overall, a build balanced with abilities from each of the skill lines works better in regards to many of the Nightblade passive abilities anyways.

Guild Quests

Make sure to stay current with your main story quests and both the Mages Guild quests and the Fighters Guild quests.

For the Fighters Guild quest called "Anchors from the Harbor" where you're tasked with defeating Doshia, this fight can be a little rough as a Nightblade depending on your build. Make sure to avoid her frontal sweeping attack that's prefaced by a blue lightning effect in front of her. Run behind her or completely to the side when she does this animation.

Also, be sure to use light attacks to quickly dispatch the orbs that spawn around her. There are four orbs per spawn wave. When the orbs reach her, they heal her, so kill these ASAP. Skills can be used to kill them, but light attacks fire off quick and let you save Magicka/Stamina for the boss herself.

To have an easier time seeing the orbs and other adds during fights, go under Settings -> Interface and switch the setting "Enemy NPCs" to "ON". This will place a health bar above all enemies. You can also set similar health bars to friendly players and NPCs which makes navigating Tamriel a little easier.

You may also want to grab the passive skills Persuasive Will (Mages Guild) or Intimidating Presence (Fighters Guild) around this level range. You'll start seeing quests where either can often be used to skip steps or even save you a bit of coin. You can even grab both.

From 21 - 30

During this level range you should concentrate on familiarizing yourself with both of your weapon sets as well as getting used to how to play with other players in a team environment. There are three more dungeons to explore during this level range as well as plenty of public dungeons, Dark Anchors and world bosses that provide a great opportunity to work on perfecting your Nightblade playstyle.

The three new dungeons introduced during this level range are:

- **Elden Hollow.** Levels 20-23 - Located in Grahtwood (Aldmeri Dominion)
- **Darkshade Cavern.** Levels 20-23 - Located in Deshaan (Ebonheart Pact)
- **Wayrest Sewers.** Levels 20-23 - Located in Stormhaven (Daggerfall Covenant)

All three dungeons become available in the Group Finder Tool beginning at level 19, but most groups will generally ask for players to be around levels 21-23. The difficulty of these three dungeons ramps up from the beginning three.

Nightblade Combat/Build Tips

If your secondary weapon set is considerably behind your primary set as far as its level, you should equip the secondary set when turning in quests. Experience counts for weapons, armor and skills, so every time you turn in a quest you get a large chunk of experience for everything.

Remember to keep your weapon(s) as upgraded as possible. Obtain a new weapon every three levels or so if possible. A good weapon makes a huge difference in your DPS.

If you find yourself below the suggested level for the area you're questing in, you can group up with friends, take some time to explore other areas you may have missed or run more dungeons to catch up. You can also try your hand at questing/killing and see how well you do.

It's possible to comfortably complete quests that are 3-4 levels above your own level as a Nightblade. Remember to utilize health leeches like Strife and stuns like Ambush to help reduce and negate the extra damage you may take.

For tough single mobs such as the Troll mobs in Grahtwood (especially if you're below the recommended level), it may be easier to defeat them using a ranged weapon instead of a melee weapon. This may also be true for packs of mobs. This is due to the fact that it's easier to kite mobs as ranged. Kiting allows you to avoid a large portion of ground AoE effects naturally while still doing damage. Bows are ideal Nightblade ranged weapons, of course, but staves can also be used depending on your build.

When kiting mobs, you can utilize the Bow/Destruction Staff snares while slowly moving backwards as the enemies approach you. This lets you keep moving out of ground effects. You can spam light/heavy attacks while moving backwards, even while using a staff. This lets you focus on keeping enemies away from you while watching out for attacks to block and avoid. Just be sure to not back into any additional packs of mobs while kiting.

Mob packs of three or more enemies can hurt quite a bit, especially if you're using a melee build. Slotting Soul Shred/Soul Tether (Siphoning) as one of your ultimates can be extremely useful for these pulls. Also be sure to remember to block/interrupt when dealing with a large pull. It's sometimes safer to prioritize blocking that nasty hit before finishing off an add.

You'll fight quite a few mobs during this level range that summon adds. You can often interrupt the channeled summon. You can generally also finish off the main monster to have the summoned mob despawn as it dies.

Slotting a secondary type of crowd control that uses a different resource is highly recommended during this level range. If you primarily use Magicka, for example, slot a powerful stun/knockback like Uppercut (Two-Handed) or Scatter Shot (Bow) to give you more control during a long fight if you run low on Magicka.

Remember to slot abilities and passives that increase your survivability. The armor passives and racial passives (such as the Khajiit's Robust ability) have some excellent options for health regeneration and armor that can make an overall large difference in how well you handle large pulls.

Having some type of ability that does passive area-of-effect (AoE) damage or active area damage can help quite a bit on fights with adds. Many dungeons and public dungeons also have large packs of mobs where AoE can help. Some solid options for Nightblade: Volley (Bow), Whirlwind (Dual Wield), Forceful (Two-Handed passive), Lotus Fan (morphed Teleport Strike), Soul Shred (Siphoning's ultimate) and Unstable Wall of Elements (Destruction Staff).

Questing and Exploration Tips

If you haven't done so already, be sure to place one point in Persuade (Mages Guild passive) and Intimidate (Fighters Guild passive). These allow you to skip certain quest steps and save a bit of coin. Different quests make use of different options, so having both is ideal.

To see whether you have explored everything on the map or not, take a look at the icons on the map. All landmark icons-- even icons for buff shrines and crafting stations-- are outlined with either a black line or a white line. If the line is black, that means you have fully explored the area and/or completed all objectives. If the line is white, that means you haven't explored it and/or completed all objectives. Doing so will give you a chunk of experience as well as count towards an achievement.

Public dungeons, also known as delves, are worth exploring. These are marked with torch icons. By fully exploring a delve you'll be rewarded with an achievement and a quest at some point. Each delve also has a Skyshard located within as well as a mini-boss. To receive the achievement for fully exploring each delve, you'll need to kill the mini-boss inside.

Some public dungeons reward extra experience in the form of bonus group experience. With a few players inside, it's possible to kill enemies extremely quickly without needing to group up. Players also often "camp" mini-bosses inside public dungeons to farm drops and experience. Keep a few quick-tagging AoE abilities handy for large public dungeon groups as mentioned above.

It pays to explore everything on the map including crafting stations and points of interest. There are not only achievements attached to exploring everything but also large chunks of experience. The shrines also grant combat buffs which last through death.

For the final part of the Grahtwood quest (Aldmeri Dominion) called Flipping the Coin (Level 22), you'll have to fight General Endare and her clone. As a Nightblade, it's easiest to defeat her and her clone by bringing each down to low health while using the "E" ability to freeze the other. Switch targets and DPS both down together when they're close to dying. This stops additional clones from being summoned.

For the Rivenspire quest called The Blood-Splattered Shield (Daggerfall Covenant - Level 26), you'll need to defeat four waves of enemies in order to protect the tower. Make sure to save your Magicka/Stamina throughout all four waves and use your ultimate for the last wave which consists of four enemies. Prioritize any caster mobs and use Soul Shred if you have it to lock down the entire group.

From 31 - 40

During the levels of 31 to 40, the main storyline of Elder Scrolls Online continues to unfold while group teamplay and exploration continue to be important aspects of the game. By this time Nightblades should feel comfortable with at least two different types of weapons and with various combat styles that help them solo efficiently, PvP effectively and assist their teammates in a dungeon environment.

Instanced Dungeons

There are six new instanced dungeons to take part in during this level range. The first three are intended for players between the levels of 28 to 30, but it's worth doing these dungeons all the way up to level 32 or so due to the rewards and experience offered.

The second set of dungeons begins at level 34. Here's a list of all six.

- **City of Ash:** Levels 28–32 – Located in Greenshade (Aldmeri Dominion)
- **Arx Corinium:** Levels 28–32 – Located in Shadowfen (Ebonheart Pact)
- **Crypt of Hearts:** Levels 28–32 – Located in Rivenspire (Daggerfall Covenant)
- **Tempest Islands:** Levels 34–37 – Located in Malabal Tor (Aldmeri Dominion)
- **Dire Frost Keep:** Levels 34–37 – Located in Eastmarch (Ebonheart Pact)
- **Volen Fell:** Levels 34–37 – Located in Alik'r Desert (Daggerfall Covenant)

Nightblade Combat/Build Tips

Around this level range is when you should keep a close eye on your attributes to make sure none are becoming overcharged. When you place too many points into any one attribute while leaving the others with too few points, this means that the statistics will show up in red and that it becomes overcharged. When an attribute is overcharged you will see diminished returns in the value of any additional points.

To avoid overcharging, don't place all of your points into any one attribute. If your build uses a lot of Stamina, for example, you should probably place a few points into Health if you have not done so already. This will allow you to still focus on Stamina but get the most value out of all your attribute points. As a bonus, Health will increase your survivability.

It's sometimes beneficial to switch between your primary weapon set and your secondary weapon set in order to keep both at around the same level. Remember to switch to the weapon that needs the most experience directly before turning in a quest. This is an easy way to keep both weapon sets at around the same level.

Keep an eye on your passive abilities when you place new skill points as you gain them. Around this level is when you'll be able to start placing more than one rank into many of your passives which can make a surprisingly large amount of difference in your survivability and DPS. Keep an extra close eye on the Siphoning passives, the Assassination passives and your weapon type passives especially.

When you are taking on groups of three or more enemies, it helps to begin combat with an area-of-effect stun like Soul Tether or an area-of-effect snare like Lotus Fan (morphed version of Teleport Strike) or Arrow Spray. This keeps enemies at bay for that extra bit of time that will let you kill off your first target. It's often best to save ultimate abilities for tough packs of mobs.

If you are using invisibility skills like Shadow Cloak/Shadowy Disguise, these are best used immediately prior to using your opening attack. Use Shadowy Disguise right before Teleport Strike/Lotus Fan or Arrow Spray and your opening attack will do more damage. Both should also be used right before your ultimate for extra damage.

Marked Target/Reaper's Mark is a great skill to use for boss fights in dungeons or mini-boss fights while out questing. Use it at the beginning of a fight to make the most out of all your damaging abilities and use your ultimate during this time period as well. Death Stroke/Soul Harvest is your best ultimate for boss fights.

Make sure to always prioritize mobs that heal. Monsters begin to gain more abilities as you gain additional levels and this includes mobs that heal and mobs that deal long-lasting stuns. You'll be able to notice the healing enemies since they'll generally be in the back, wear robes and channel spells that emit golden healing beams. Do everything you can to kill these casters first. Their heals can be interrupted. Stuns and knockbacks also work well.

If you get stunned or crowd controlled by an enemy player or mob, you can break free from it by pressing and holding both mouse buttons at the same time. This uses half your Stamina pool and gives you eight seconds of immunity to all crowd control effects. This tip is especially useful in Cyrodil and for enemy mobs that utilize stuns. Stuns can be extremely deadly, especially in a pack of two or more mobs.

Questing Tips

The questing zones for this level range are all fairly straightforward.

- **Aldmeri Dominion. Malabal Tor (levels 31–39)**

If you have not completed all of Greenshade you should finish up this zone first. After finishing up in Malabal Tor, you'll be sent to Reaper's March.

- **Ebonheart Pact. Eastmarch (levels 31–39)**

If you have not completed all of Shadowfen you should finish up this zone first. After finishing up in Eastmarch, the next zone is The Rift.

- **Daggerfall Covenant. Alik'r Desert (levels 31–39)**

If you have not completed all of Rivenspire you should finish up this zone first. After finishing up in Alik'r Desert, the next zone is Bangkorai.

For the shared Mages Guild quest called "Chateau of the Ravenous Rodent" (Level 33), you will have to light a set of heirloom crystals. Each separate crystal lights a specific beam while causing other beams to extinguish. The solution is simple. Click the leftmost crystal followed by the rightmost crystal.

For the Malabar Tor (Aldmeri Dominion) quest called "The Summer Site" (Level 33), you need to run around and close the tears, but keep in mind that after closing a tear, a pack of mobs will spawn from the center area (marked by a fire). These packs spawn on time-based intervals. Keep an eye out for spawns and kill them as they run toward you. If you wait too long to kill them you may get overwhelmed.

General Tips

Many of the crafted items around this level range are especially good for Nightblades. If you know a crafter who can make you an epic-quality bow or whatever weapon type you primarily use, this can make a large difference in your DPS and ability to complete quests quickly. Remember that you can often help crafters make high quality items by providing them with raw materials, items to deconstruct and items to use for improving crafted goods.

If you need a break from straight questing, you can often join groups of players who are looking to farm or grind out straight experience in the form of slaying mobs. These farming groups tend to become more popular around this level and take place in areas where mob concentration is high and enemies respawn quickly. The public dungeons are also another good area for farming. Ask in zone chat to see if anyone has a group forming.

From 41 – 50

Thus begins the last leveling stretch! During this level range Nightblades will have a myriad of options to gain that last bit of experience. Questing, of course, will be the primary way to advance in the main story as well as earn new rewards. Farming mobs in public dungeons or areas with quick respawn times continues to be a viable source of experience. Keep in mind, however, that you'll need to finish the main story quests after hitting level 50, so you may wish to keep current with the quests.

Dungeons

There are four instanced, 4-man dungeons to take part in during this level range.

- **Selene's Web.** Levels 40-44 – Located in Reaper's March (Aldmeri Dominion)
- **Blessed Crucible.** Levels 40-44 – Located in The Rift (Ebonheart Pact)
- **Blackheart Haven.** Levels 40-44 – Located in Bangkorai (Daggerfall Covenant)
- **Vaults of Madness.** Levels 47-50 – Located in Coldharbour (All three alliances)

Vaults of Madness, in particular, has some very decent rewards for this level range. You should consider running this dungeon a time or two if you feel your gear is lacking somewhat.

Nightblade Combat/Build Tips

While running dungeons you may notice that 99% of your time in dungeons is spent killing AoE "trash" pulls. Large packs of enemies in between bosses means that most classes will pull out their plethora of area-of-effect spells in order to kill these mobs quickly.

Nightblades do not have a ton of AoE (area-of-effect) abilities within their arsenal, but they do have a few options. Some of your best options include Volley/Scorched Earth (bow), Arrow Spray/Acid Spray (bow), Wall of Elements/Unstable Wall of Elements (destruction staff), Impulse/Elemental Ring (destruction staff) and Soul Shred/Soul Tether (Siphoning Ultimate). Impulse/Elemental Ring is especially strong.

You may wish to add more AoE abilities to your hotbar when taking part in dungeons or mob farming. Using single target attacks on high-priority targets such as enemy healers is also an option.

When it comes to maximizing your buffs, you'll probably want to use the Mundus Stone buff that increases either your total Magicka (Mage) or Stamina (Tower) pool. Pick whichever resource pool your build revolves around. Remember you can go to Cyrodil to find all of the Mundus Stones. The Thief stone which adds critical hit chance isn't as good as it may sound on paper for Nightblades unfortunately. The added amount is simply too small.

Questing Tips

The questing zones for this level range are all fairly straightforward.

- **Aldmeri Dominion**

Reaper's March (levels 40-44) and Coldharbour (levels 43-50)

These two zones should comfortably get you to level 50. Fill in with dungeons if need be. Coldharbour is shared between all three alliances.

- **Ebonheart Pact**

The Rift (levels 40–44) and Coldharbour (levels 43–50)

These two zones should comfortably get you to level 50. Fill in with dungeons if necessary. Coldharbour is shared between all three alliances.

- **Daggerfall Covenant**

Bangkorai (levels 40–44) and Coldharbour (levels 43–50)

These two zones should comfortably get you to level 50. Fill in with dungeons if need be. Coldharbour is shared between all three alliances.

Upon reaching level 50, you will be given the main story quest entitled God of Schemes. This quest must be completed before you can gain access to any of the Veteran content which includes the ability to explore the other alliances' zones as well as Veteran Rank dungeons.

This final fight with **Molag Bal** can be a little difficult if you are not prepared. Maximize your gear as much as possible with dungeons drops and crafted items. It's often a good idea to focus on increasing your survivability as opposed to increasing your straight DPS.

Make sure to keep a ranged weapon as one of your weapon slots whether it be a bow or destruction staff. Using a restoration staff is also an option for your secondary weapon if you have it leveled. If you are primarily a melee Nightblade, you will have to take turns rushing in and dealing damage and kiting Molag Bal while avoiding his devastating attacks. Use this time while kiting to regenerate your health and Stamina/Magicka.

When you need to kill multiple Titan enemies, play it safe and focus on one at a time while prioritizing your survivability. A one-handed weapon and shield isn't a bad combo for this part of the fight, especially. It might be best to use your Soul Tether Ultimate here if you have it slotted. Funnel Health/Swallow Soul are both also extremely important during all stages of the fight.

A restoration staff is nice since you can use it to heal yourself as well as to regain your Magicka if you have enough points in the skill line to gain Magicka upon using a heavy attack. Make sure to go into the fight with health potions and food/Mundus Stone buffs.

General Tips

If you find yourself behind on experience at anytime during this level range, you may find it necessary to spend a little time exploring areas you may have missed in the last three zones as well as Coldharbour. Remember to go to any landmarks on the map that are not marked with a black-lined icon. This includes world boss areas and Mundus Stones. All of these areas grant experience upon discovery.

If you'd like to become a Vampire or Werewolf, this level range is the perfect time to undertake the task. The quests are scaled for players at around levels 38-42. Here's a short guide on how to get started.

- **Werewolf** – You need to get bit by another player or by a Werewolf mob. The Werewolves you need are located in Bangkorai, Reaper's March and The Rift. After you receive the bite you'll have to go to the ritual site where you'll start a series of quests.
- **Vampire** – You need to get bit by another player or by a Bloodfiend mob. These mobs spawn in particular areas in Bangkorai, Reaper's March and The Rift during the nighttime hours. After you've received the bite, you'll need to go to the ritual shrine to begin a series of quests.

Don't hesitate to try and find the best gear possible at this point to help you reach level 50 quicker and easier. Some of the best gear includes dungeon gear, set pieces and crafted gear. Crafted gear, especially, becomes extremely good the closer you get to level 50. Make friends with a few crafters and join a couple of trading guilds if you haven't already to take advantage of guild stores.

If you have gear crafted for you, you may wish to stick with primarily Infused and Divine traits. These are the best two options for levels 40-50 and throughout most of endgame. Divine traits grant you a bonus from your Mundus Stone buff which you should have up at all times. This effect stacks when placed on multiple gear slots. Infused traits grant a bonus to the enchantment that is on the item.

For all of your item enchantments, you will most likely find it best to stick with pieces that up your Stamina, Magicka or Health. This works best most of the time, especially when combined with Infused traits.

PVP TIPS



yrodil, the campaign-focused, raid vs. raid PvP zone in ESO, opens at level 10. You can join anytime by going to the Alliance War tab and selecting a campaign. The first time you join you'll be presented with a series of quests that reward a skill point as well as some experience. After that you'll have the option of completing daily PvP quests, exploring other areas (including dungeons!), searching out Skyshards and, of course, taking part in all the PvP you could hope for.

Nightblades tend to do fairly well in PvP due to their bonuses to sneak and invisibility, but here are some tips to help you make the most out of your time spent in Cyrodil.

If you enter Cyrodil before level 50, you may experience a rough time against players who are already level 50. The automatic bolstering/scaling PvP system works pretty well except when it comes to the differences between level 50 players and players who are level 49 and below. Still, taking part in PvP during these early levels is good experience as well as a good source of skill points.

Defeating guard NPCs and taking resource objectives, etc., becomes a lot easier in a smaller group once you hit level 50. Cyrodil was made for level 50 players, remember, so if you're taking part before then you may need to be patient and stick with a larger group of teammates.

When you go up against large groups of enemy players, you may find it best to stick to a ranged weapon and use it to try and pick off squishy targets. You can sneak around to the flanks of the enemy pack and take out stragglers efficiently with a bow. Leaping right into the fray as a melee Nightblade can be fairly suicidal, but if it's a smaller group you're up against, you may live to tell the tale.

If you want to take on enemy players with a melee Nightblade build, you may wish to use a bit of heavy armor and invest in additional health and health-increasing passives. Also, consider using a one-handed weapon and shield for one of your weapon sets. This will not only raise your survivability but will let you utilize strong combos (using Puncture primarily) that help you do more damage. The one-handed weapon and shield combo also lets your Bash (interrupt) do additional damage with the Deadly Bash passive.

When running around solo, it's probably safest to stay in sneak mode most of the time. Go out of your way to avoid large groups of enemy players while alone, especially if you are below level 50. When in doubt, take the long way around. You can also climb walls to get a good view of your surroundings before journeying through an area.

Don't forget to run to a **Mundus Stone** and choose one of the buffs that is the best for your build while in Cyrodil. These are the shrine-looking stones marked on your map. These are permanent buffs that can even be used out of Cyrodil. Each has a different effect.

Buying siege weapons and resurrection point tents/forward camps for your team can be an extremely useful strategy that many players aren't incorporating yet. Forward camps cut down on the time it takes to ride back to your team after dying which can make a world of difference in a large battle.

Soul Gems are also an important part to ensuring your team holds their ground during a large fight. If you have extra Soul Gems (building a stock of them becomes much easier at level 50), don't hesitate to use them to revive teammates as they die. This keeps them from having to run all the way back.

Nightblades make excellent scouts in Cyrodil. You can stay near your team while sneaking around and looking for enemy ambushes and opposing scouts. Choose your battles carefully, however, especially if you suspect an entire enemy group might be nearby. While scouting, the Magelight active ability (found in the Mages Guild skill line) comes in quite useful, as it can be used to detect enemies who are sneaking. Just be sure to avoid enemy Magelights!

Make sure to always slot some type of self-healing abilities as well as plenty of crowd control (CC) and/or stun abilities while taking part in PvP. PvP is all about control and reacting to control. Here are some of the strongest options for Nightblades.

Nightblade PvP self-healing options.

- Strife -> Swallow Soul (or Funnel Health for group play)
- Siphoning Strikes -> Leeching Strikes
- Drain Power -> Sap Essence
- Assassin's Blade -> Killer's Blade
- Marked Target -> Reaper's Mark
- Consuming Darkness -> Bolstering Darkness
- Path of Darkness -> Refreshing Path

The restoration staff skill line also has numerous self-healing options. The Vampire skill line is another option. Finally, the Undaunted skill line and the Alliance War skill lines offer a few more choices.

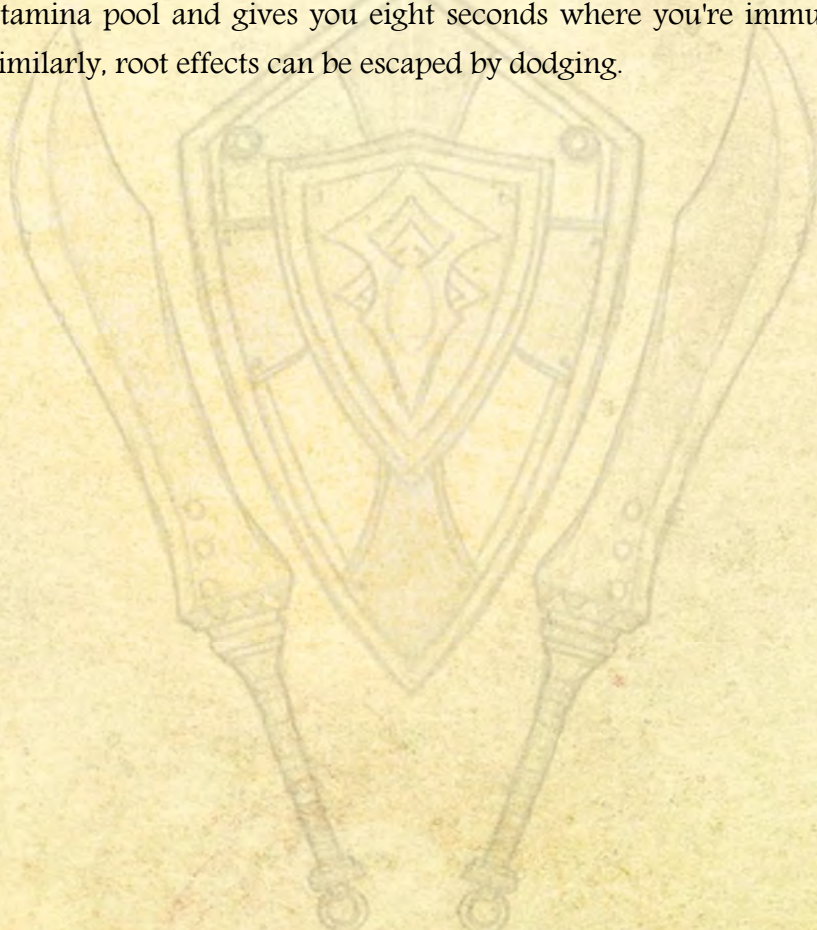
Nightblade PvP crowd control options.

- Teleport Strike -> Lotus Fan/Ambush (stun/snare)
- Blur -> Mirage (off-balance)
- Surprise Attack -> Concealed Weapon (off-balance/stun)
- Aspect of Terror -> Mass Hysteria (fear/snare)
- Soul Shred -> Soul Tether (AoE stun)
- Agony -> Malefic Wreath (stun)
- Cripple -> Crippling Grasp (slow/immobilize)

All weapon skill lines also include great CC/snare options for PvP. Some of the best include the bow line, the destruction staff line, the one-handed weapon and shield line and the two-handed weapon line.

Mitigation/survivability cooldowns such as Blur and Dark Cloak (morphed version of Shadow Cloak) are also extremely powerful in PvP. The armor active abilities like Evasion -> Shuffle (medium armor) and Immovable -> Unstoppable (heavy armor) are also fantastic.

If you get crowd controlled by an enemy player using a hard CC such as a stun, you can try and break free from it by pressing and holding both mouse buttons at the same time. This uses half your Stamina pool and gives you eight seconds where you're immune to all crowd control effects. Similarly, root effects can be escaped by dodging.



VETERAN CONTENT



After reaching level 50 Elder Scrolls Online takes on a new dimension of gameplay that's commonly known as the endgame phase in most MMORPGs. In ESO, however, it's a little different. Instead of climbing your way up a ladder of different and better gear, you're faced with an interesting task-- one involving additional levels that are referred to as veteran ranks or VR. There are currently 10 veteran ranks in the game with more being added in a future patch.

Veteran ranks are much slower to gain than normal levels. You need increasingly more experience to gain each veteran rank. After completing the final story quest to kill Molag Bal you will be rewarded with the first veteran rank level (VR1). You'll then be able to explore and quest in both of the faction areas you did not explore while leveling through the first 50 levels as well as take part in veteran dungeons. This phase of content is what's commonly referred to as "veteran content".

As mentioned above, once you defeat Molag Bal and reach VR1, the game takes on a new dimension that's more challenging but also more rewarding. It takes a great deal more experience to climb through 10 veteran ranks in comparison to gaining the first 50 levels. This was an intentional move to give veteran players a greater challenge after reaching level 50.

Just as an example of this larger experience curve, it takes over 400,000 experience to go from VR1 to VR2. This is roughly three times the amount of experience that it takes to go from level 49 to 50. It takes 900,000 experience to go from VR2 to VR3. Finally, it takes a whopping 1,368,000 experience to go from VR3 to VR4. This steep experience curve continues and will most likely continue as more content is added to ESO.

That said, veteran ranks are supposed to be a challenge. They're not meant to rush through, but it is entirely possible to level through them fairly quickly with a group of friends and a couple days of dedication. There is no simple way to fast forward through the veteran rank process.

Gaining veteran ranks is optional, of course, since the game's story technically ends after the downfall of Molag Bal. The game's most challenging content awaits players who do decide to climb the veteran rank ladder, however. All forms of veteran content are more difficult than their normal leveling counterparts. This includes all aspects of questing through and exploring veteran zones and veteran dungeons.

Veteran Zones

With everything being a little more difficult in veteran zones, Nightblades will have to be more careful about how many enemies they engage as well as the build they are using. All veteran builds should have an option or two for self-healing. While it's possible to level from 1-50 without any self-healing options, the veteran content almost requires all classes to have a couple of options as far as self-heals and self-survivability are concerned.

The best self-healing options for Nightblades include Strife (morphed into Soul Tether), Siphoning Strikes (morphed into Leeching Strikes), Assassin's Blade (morphed into Killer's Blade), Drain Power (morphed into Sap Essence), Bat Swarm (morphed into Devouring Swarm) from the Vampire skill line, Entropy (morphed into Degeneration) from the Mages Guild skill line and a large percentage of the skills from the restoration staff skill line.

Don't overlook the potency of Strife and many of the other abilities from the Siphoning tree. Even if you are a pure DPS Nightblade you should have one weapon set with a few self-heals and survivability cooldowns. That is simply how the game works, especially during veteran content. Flexibility is your best asset. This is true for every single class in the game. It also doesn't take very long to grab an extra skill point to pick up Strife and use it for a while in order to morph it.

If you are having trouble surviving difficult pulls in a veteran zone you should think about building up a third weapon set instead of resetting your skill points and attributes. If you are using dual DPS weapons, you should try out leveling the restoration staff skill line or even the one-handed weapon and shield combo. It's cheaper to slowly work on a third weapon set instead of taking the time reset your skill points and attribute points. It's also a good way to keep leveling fresh.

One of the issues with questing in the veteran zones is that many players will have their main builds already complete by the time they reach level 50. This means that many will be unsure of where to place their free skill points during the veteran zones. Leveling a new weapon set is the perfect way to know what to do with those extra points if you are in that position. Alternatively, place skill points into any passives that seem beneficial to you at all.

Don't forget about the Fighters Guild passives and active abilities if you might have overlooked those during the normal leveling process. The Fighters Guild passives come in handy in many areas of the game. Silver Bots is also incredibly useful, especially if you pick up its morphed version. Silver Shards, its AoE-focused morphed version, comes in quite handy for Nightblades during many areas of endgame. Some fights require an extra boost in regards to area-of-effect damage.

You should also make sure to always have at least one survivability cooldown slotted while exploring veteran zones. Solid Nightblade options include Blur (morphed into Mirage), Summon Shade (morphed into Dark Shades), Evasion (morphed into Elude or Shuffle) from the Medium armor skill line, Immovable (morphed into Unstoppable) from the Heavy armor skill line and Mist Form (morphed into Elusive Mist) from the Vampire skill line.

Crowd control abilities remain to be extremely important as well. If you often felt that enemies during the normal leveling process died too quickly, you may be happy to know that enemies in veteran zones take longer to die. The more stuns and similar crowd control effects you can fire off the healthier you will remain.

Solid options for stuns and crowd control options during veteran content include Teleport Strike (morphed into Ambush), Veiled Strike (morphed into Concealed Weapon or Surprise Attack), Aspect of Terror (morphed into Mass Hysteria or Manifestation of Terror), Soul Shred (morphed into Soul Tether), Agony (morphed into Prolonged Suffering), Scatter Shot (morphed into Magnum Shot) in the Bow skill line, Arrow Spray (morphed into Bombard) in the Bow skill line, Uppercut (morphed into Dizzying Swing) in the Two-Handed Weapon skill line and Drain Essence (morphed into Invigorating Drain) from the Vampire skill line.

Be careful about when and why you use your ultimate ability while exploring veteran zones. You'll need to save it for mini-bosses quite often. Other times you will need it to take down troublesome packs of three or more enemies. Make sure to slot two different ultimates between both weapon sets. This lets you switch between them as needed depending on if you are facing a group of enemies or a single target. In most cases, Death Stroke (morphed into Soul Harvest) is the best Nightblade ultimate for single target while Soul Shred (morphed into Soul Tether) is your best area-of-effect ultimate ability.

In general, it's much safer and more beneficial to run around with a friend or two while exploring veteran zones. Veteran content is more difficult which means that teamwork will be extremely useful. It also becomes far easier to complete public dungeons and world bosses with a leveling partner.

When grinding out veteran experience with a friend or two it also becomes easier to dive back and forth between group content in veteran zones and farm experience instead of merely quest. You can effectively make circuits within zones that allow you to hit all of the public dungeons, Anchors and world bosses that will allow you to farm decent chunks of experience without having to worry about quests and phasing. This is also a solid way to earn gold, equipment and crafting materials obtained from deconstructing items. Make sure to keep the 10-minute timer in mind when farming mini-bosses inside delves, public dungeons and world boss areas, however.

If you don't have anyone to explore veteran zones with, you will definitely want to make sure you have one weapon set dedicated to either self-heals or self-survivability. Having your secondary set dedicated to tanking or healing is not a bad idea at all. In fact, this is the easiest way to guarantee your survivability in many cases. ESO is built with solid teamwork and flexibility in mind, remember, so never be afraid to step out of your comfort zone and strap on a shiny staff if it means you'll live to survive another day.

Self-survivability and self-heals are important while exploring veteran zones primarily because of the issue of repair bills. Repair costs are quite high at level 50 and above. On the flip side, the quests you complete in veteran zones do not reward you with more gold in comparison to their level 1-50 counterparts. This means that unless you are careful or make a significant amount of gold by selling items or trading with other players, you may find yourself quickly running out of repair funds if you have trouble surviving.

Make sure to always have a Boon (Mundus Stone buff) active that's of the most use for you. Most Nightblades will prefer to use The Mage (increases maximum Magicka) or The Tower (increases maximum Stamina) in order to maximize their DPS and utility potential, but The Lord (increases maximum Health) is also a solid idea for veteran content if you notice you are having trouble living through large enemy pulls.

Consumables are extremely important while exploring veteran zones. You should always keep the highest quality food with you that increases either your maximum Stamina, Magicka or Health. Use whichever type you need the most. Again, if you are having trouble surviving tough pulls you may wish to try using food that increases your maximum Health. It never hurts to increase your survivability for solo content, especially when it comes to veteran content.

NIGHTBLADE ENDGAME GEARING

Due to the increased difficulty of veteran zones and veteran dungeons, gear becomes increasingly important after reaching VR1. It also takes longer to gain each veteran rank which means the gear you have will likely last you a longer period of time, making it extra important. By this time you should have your basic build solidified so you should have an understanding of which attributes you need on your gear and which enchantments work the best for your build.

When it comes to endgame gearing you essentially want to worry about one thing--maximizing your resource pool. This is true for most classes in ESO but is especially the case for Nightblades due to how important Stamina and/or Magicka are to both our DPS and utility skills such as sneak. You will generally want to pick up gear that has increased maximum Stamina or Magicka for the most part, depending on what build you're using. Remember, if you're using primarily class abilities and/or magical spells from a destruction staff, etc., you want Magicka. If you're using primarily light/heavy attacks and weapon skills, you want Stamina. If you're a tank or PvP a great deal, Health is also extremely valuable.

One other thing to keep in mind is that the actual differences in DPS between one piece of gear and another are relatively minor, especially when it comes to veteran rank gear. Often it's more important to pick up a piece of gear that has the right enchantments for your build rather than a few extra damage numbers. This also means that once you obtain some nice veteran rank gear you won't likely need to replace it until later. If you happen to pick up an epic-quality weapon or pair of weapons, for example, you may not even need to replace them at all until you reach VR10.

Crafting Options

One of the best sources of endgame gear for Nightblades is crafted gear. Since gear lasts longer and becomes more valuable at this point, crafted gear also becomes more valuable at this point. Some of the best pieces of endgame gear are also made by crafters. If you haven't already done so, make sure to join a crafting/trading guild or two where you can ask about purchasing upgrades and utilize the guild store. You can join up to five guilds at a time.

When requesting crafted gear or searching for ideal jewelry pieces, make sure to have an idea of what you want as far as enchantments and traits are concerned. Enchantments are the baseline attribute bonuses or additions on gear. As mentioned above, this is where you'll primarily want to focus on resource management as a Nightblade. Increased maximum Stamina/Magicka is generally what you should look or ask for. Increased Magicka/Stamina regeneration is also decent.

If you are a tank, you will want to look for increased maximum Health, Health regeneration and anything that will reduce the costs of block/bash. You have more options when it comes to weapon enchantments, but one solid option is to go for armor penetration or magic penetration, depending on your build of course. Most of the damaging proc enchantments on weapons are not very good.

As far as traits go, you will want to focus on two different traits when it comes to Nightblade endgame gear:

- **Infused** - Increased item enchantment effect for chest, head and legs. These traits should be placed on all three possible items in order to maximize the effect of your enchantments. The effect stacks.
- **Divine** - Increased Mundus Stone effect for all other armor slots. The Boon (Mundus Stone) buff is an extremely important part of the game. This buff is permanent, so always have the best one available. You can find all Mundus Stones in Cyrodil. These traits also stack.

When you have gear crafted, you should also try and get the highest quality of items as possible. Crafters can improve the quality of items by using rare components obtained by breaking down other items. You can often help a crafter create an endgame set by providing them with items to break down for improvement materials.

Other Gearing Options

Aside from crafted gear, most of the endgame gear will come from veteran dungeons and from some of the veteran quests which have gear rewards attached to them. You'll also randomly find veteran pieces of gear while exploring veteran zones, of course. For the most dependable source of gear it's hard to beat veteran dungeons, especially if you run with a tight-knit group of friends.

The mini-bosses located within public dungeons and in world boss areas continue to be a decent source of gear options, but these drops are also very random. Make sure to take any upgrade you can as you progress through veteran ranks. Even though the upgrades are minor, every extra bit can sometimes make a big difference in your DPS or survivability.

In future patches of Elder Scrolls Online Bethesda is going to be adding in instanced 12-man Trials that are ESO's version of large-scale raids. These are intended for players at VR10 or higher and reward players with loot off each of the bosses as well as an award for scoring on the timer-based leaderboards. Trials will likely be an excellent source of gear.

Craglorn, ESO's first adventure zone, will also be added to the game at this time. Craglorn is a small group zone intended for groups of four players who are VR1 and above. The quests, mini-bosses and delves will likely contain gear that's better than most other options currently in the game. If you plan on taking part in Craglorn or Trials, it may be best to simply concentrate on reaching VR10 and picking up any gear you can along the way. Gear upgrades are important, but obtaining veteran ranks is slightly more important due to upcoming content releases.