

Design Document: [Irelia] by JynxVer

Updated to: 10/10/2024

Special thanks to: Riot Phlox for the overview and the hundreds of Irelia community members for the feedback!

CHAMPION & ABILITIES



Irelia is a hybrid between a skirmisher and a diver

She boasts high mobility, damage and sustain, at the cost of durability and a high skill requirement

Passive



- Damage
- On-Hit
- Attack Speed

Q



- Damage
- Mobility
- Sustain

W



- Defense
- Set-up
- Damage

E/R



- Q Extension
- Set-Up
- Utility
- Mobility

PERCEIVED ISSUES

• Unsatisfactory Kit-power distribution (Toplane)

As it currently stands, Irelia suffers from her power being allocated to unsatisfactory parts of her Kit that do not fully support the fantasy of the Champion and actively contribute to her feeling underwhelming, especially Toplane. Citable examples are:

1. Q Dealing excessive amounts of burst damage, allowing Irelia to immediately dispatch any squishy target in an Assassin-y manner, at the cost of her sustained damage against beefier opponents. This is aggravated by Toplane having surprisingly few such characters.
2. Q/E/R granting insanely high amounts of mobility and power during teamfights and skirmishes, at the steep cost of 1v1 power. Making her unable to duel other TOPs.
3. Overreliance on Item effects to deal any significant amount of damage, such as On-Hits. This greatly narrows her item choices, as AD Bruiser items are often quite underwhelming on her, due to AD itself not being particularly valuable. Forcing Irelia into either extreme Glass-Cannon On-Hit builds or Tank-Builds

• Unsatisfactory Powercurve (Toplane)

Irelia has, since her 2021 Midscope, a Pyramid-like powercurve. With relatively weak early Game, very strong Midgame and extremely weak late game. Notable issues:

1. Irelia's Midgame feels un-earned and arbitrarily strong, at the cost of everything else
2. It is often nearly impossible for the Irelia player to force themselves ahead against any other Fighter, as she's extremely out-statted early on. Leaving the Champion and Player at the mercy of her opponents, with little to no agency
3. Irelia's weak early game forces the Champion to play extremely safely and excessively disincentivizes her from "Going In" during Lane, even though her Kit works and feels the best when surrounded by Minions, like during Laning Phase, and playing very aggressively.
4. Irelia's generally bad Sidelaning due to relatively poor 1v1 potential and Splitpush capabilities present similar issues

• Excessive Matchup Sharpness (Toplane)

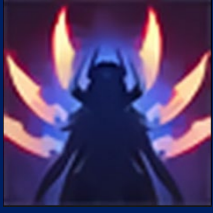
Irelia has extremely polarizing matchups, more so than most other Toplaners. This often leaves little in the way of "Skill expression" both in her positive and negative ones.

Whilst some amount of counterpicking is expected and inevitable, Irelia is a very skillful and demanding Champion, as such Player Skill should be the main driving factor in a Win or Loss in most situations, it should not be arbitrarily decided during Draft-Pick

OVERALL GOALS

1. Restore Irelia's status as a: Fun, Rewarding & Satisfying Toplaner
2. Better align Irelia's Kit and its incentives/play pattern, with her Power Curve, to improve Champion cohesiveness and feel
3. Shift power back into 1v1s and away from Teamfighting
4. Shift power back into Early with Mid/Late being more directly dependent on it
5. Shift power away from XP/Item effects and back into Gold/AD
6. Reduce Irelia's matchup sharpness and significant disparity in effectiveness between Ranged vs Melee champ

CHANGES & INTENT



PASSIVE "Ionian Fervor"

- **Attack Speed:** 30%-100% >>> 40%-80%
- **On-Hit:** 10-61 +20% bAD >>> 12-30 + 10%-35% tAD
- **New:** Half-Refreshes on structures and deals 50% Damage
- **New:** Max "Marked" enemies: Unlimited >>> 2 + 1 Per R Rank

The Attack Speed and On-Hit changes aim to allow Irelia to play a more proactive and aggressive Lane, by increasing initial base numbers.

The increased AD Ratio (Gold Scaling) and lower Base Damage scaling (XP Scaling) specifically aim to reward and push Irelia into building AD and push her to correctly leverage her newfound early power to get herself ahead and snowball into a win

Passive working on structures hopes to allow Irelia a slightly better experience when pushing for a turret, and it is consistent with other similar effects such as Jax, Riven or Gragas abilities, only applying with 50% effectiveness

The "Mark Limiter" aims to introduce a new balance lever to adjust and mostly nerf Irelia's extreme mobility in teamfights/skirmishes at various points in the game, to free up power for more 1v1/Early Game oriented changes



Q "Bladesurge"

- **Damage:** 5-85 + 60% tAD >> 5-45 + 80%-100% tAD
- **New:** Now deals True Damage to Minions

Similarly to her passive the Q changes aim to make the ability stronger early and more generously favor Gold Scaling via the AD Ratio over the XP Scaling via base damage, to better support her snowball potential via AD purchases

Minion Damage swap to True Damage is a Small Buff which main goal is to lower Irelia's worthlessness when trying to fight in a Baron/Super wave

I would have loved to add a penalty for Multi-Q Damage on the same target to reduce burst, but it felt a bit in antithesis to her E/R marks, so the hope is for the number changes to be enough and for the AD Ratio to not incentivize weird full AD One-shot builds



W “Defiant Dance”

- **New:** Hitting a Champion with the Recast causes the effect to linger for 1.5 seconds at 50% effectiveness

This addition aims to add some nuance to Irelia’s W, whilst keeping added complexity relatively low

The goal is to make it a more worthwhile use outside of minion Setup and a more active contributor to Irelia’s longer fights

The lingering reduction should also hopefully synergize well with Lifesteal, and should provide an interesting usage choice between using W for Setup purposes or for its defensiveness



E “Flawless Duet”

- **Damage:** 80-260 + 80% AP >>> 80-160 + 80% AP
- **Blade Convergence Time:** Flat 0.25s >>> 0.1-0.4s based on both blades’ total distance from Irelia

The reduced late game damage keeps in line with the goal of removing excessive XP scaling from Irelia’s Kit

The newly re-added ability for Irelia’s E convergence time to vary based on cast distance hopes to flatten out its effectiveness disparity between usage on Ranged vs Melees

It also tries to avoid the old issue of it being an AOE Insta-stun, by having the calculations be based on both blades, instead of only the second blade, completely avoiding the possibility of “E2 under your feet to Insta-Stun someone”



R “Vanguard’s Edge”

- **Damage:** 125-375 + 70% AP>>>125-275 + 70% AP
- **Q Cooldown Reduction:** 0.5-1.5>>>Removed
- **New:** Increases max number of “Marked” targets by 1 per R Rank

The reduced late game damage keeps in line with the goal of removing excessive XP scaling from Irelia’s Kit

Removal of Q CD Reduction aims to make Irelia Q usage more stringent and to more actively punish misuse. This is targeted at reducing Irelia’s ability to (too) freely Q targets during teamfights, without having to worry about resetting Q CD, which greatly increases her teamfighting prowess

This should be less impactful in early 1v1s and Sidelaning, as Q CD refund isn’t active at all until level 6 and Minions are usually around and available for Irelia to play around in those instances

FINAL NOTES

I've reserved these final notes to express my feelings about the Champion as an Irelia player instead of as an aspiring Riot Designer.

The Champion genuinely feels quite underwhelming and somewhat “out of place” in Toplane, mostly due to her inability to duel almost any fighter in the early game

An Unsolved issue I firmly believe my changes don't fully address, is Irelia inability to even walk up to the wave level 1 against most Fighters, thus getting zoned from XP and that scenario quickly snowballing out of control

It is very bad, it FEELS very bad, and gets worse the higher ELO Irelia is in, I've personally left it mostly untouched on purpose, as I feel it does play a big role in keeping Irelia at bay, but it is something that I've had hundreds of players point out

The Riot Balance team gets a lot of criticism from fellow players for being “Bad at balancing Irelia”, but from my point of view, the balance is totally fine, it just feels like Riot has a very different agenda and perspective on what Irelia should & should not be able to do, compared to what WE, the Irelia players, may wish for.