

# ULTIMATE Valorant Guide

by Smolly

Are you ready to transcend the ordinary and rise above the competition? Look no further, as we present to you the definitive Valorant guide that will revolutionize your gameplay and transform you into an unstoppable force in record time.



Unlock Your Full Potential: The Ultimate Valorant Guide Revealing the Proven Strategies, Mind-Blowing Tips, and Game-Changing Tricks to Catapult You to the Top of the Leaderboard!

Are you ready to transcend the ordinary and rise above the competition? Look no further, as we present to you the definitive Valorant guide that will revolutionize your gameplay and transform you into an unstoppable force in record time.

Embark on an exhilarating journey as we unveil the hidden gems of the game, equipping you with the knowledge and skills of the elite. Delve into the depths of our expertly crafted guide, meticulously designed to accelerate your progress and leave your opponents in awe.

Discover the secrets of flawless aim, unveiling the precision and finesse required to outgun your foes. Harness the art of movement, mastering the intricate dance of agility to traverse the battlefield with unparalleled grace and efficiency.

Unleash your tactical prowess as we unveil ingenious strategies and mind-bending tricks that will leave your adversaries bewildered and outmaneuvered. From clever map control to calculated utility usage, you'll possess the strategic edge necessary to dominate every round.

Immerse yourself in the realm of communication, learning the art of effective teamwork and coordination. Harness the power of synergy, transforming a group of individuals into an unstoppable unit that seamlessly executes flawless plays.

But that's not all! Prepare to elevate your game to new heights with in-depth coverage of agent abilities, weapon selection, and economy management. Uncover the intricacies of each agent's unique skill set, allowing you to adapt and excel in any situation.

With our comprehensive guide, you'll fast-track your progression, acquiring the knowledge and experience needed to become a revered legend within the Valorant community. No longer will you merely compete; you will dominate, leaving a trail of defeated foes in your wake.

The time has come to seize your destiny and ascend to greatness. Equip yourself with the wisdom contained within this remarkable guide, and prepare to revolutionize your Valorant journey. Are you ready to embrace the extraordinary and forge your path to victory? The choice is yours.

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## CHAPTER 1

### What is Valorant?

Valorant is a 5 vs 5 multiplayer tactical first-person shooter (FPS) where one team attacks and the other defends in a bomb-planting scenario. Valorant draws inspiration from the Counter Strike series with its strategic and precision-based gun play, with selectable heroes that draw inspiration from Team Fortress 2, Overwatch, League of Legends, Rainbow 6: Siege, and other hero-based games. Developed by Riot Games, Valorant is the perfect blend of exciting, and tactical with each “Agent” donning completely unique tools and abilities to help you outthink, and outplay your opponents.

Matches are up to 25 rounds, with each round lasting only a few minutes. The first team to successfully win 13 rounds overall ends the game as the victors. Rounds are played in phases, with an initial “Barrier Phase” which allows players to position themselves in preparation for the attack, as well as buy armor, abilities, and weapons for that round. Attacker’s objective is to plant a bomb called a “Spike” on one of the multiple bomb-sites each round, and then to defend the spike until it’s timer runs out, and it explodes. The Defender’s objective is to deny the Attackers from either planting the spike until the clock runs out, or by defusing the spike once it has been planted before the timer runs out. Both teams can also win a round if they kill all 5 members of the opposing team before the time runs out. If the bomb is planted, however, defenders must defuse the bomb, even if that means that they must kill all 5 opposing members before they do so. Herein Lies the base of Valorant’s strategic gameplay.

## CHAPTER 2

### Agent Introduction

There are currently 11 agents in Valorant, each with 4 unique abilities that can be used in every mode. However, some agents require you to “unlock them” to begin using them in certain

modes. There are currently 4 classifications of Agent: Duelist, Initiator, Controller, and Sentinels.

**Duelists** are the “fraggers” of the bunch. Their utility generally does not have a profound impact on their team, however they rely on their abilities to help them gain as many kills as possible. Duelists are usually the first ones to enter a plant site. Generally duelists require more game sense and technical skill to be beneficial to their team.

**Initiators** gather information before a fight begins, and force enemy players out of hidden spaces to provide opportunities for their team to have an upper-hand when defending or attacking an area. Initiator’s abilities are very unique and require keen usage to provide the highest chance of winning each round for their team.

**Controllers** are in charge of the flow of battle. Their utility allows them to deter the enemy from traversing certain routes, denies visual contact, and can even stop the enemy in their tracks, making them think twice about blindly pushing onto a bomb site. Controllers also deny defenders from sitting in advantageous positions on the map with their ability usage, forcing the enemy into less-than-ideal situations when defending an area. Controllers require deep knowledge of maps and “Micro” management of their abilities.

**Sentinels** are the most supportive players in Valorant. Sentinels stall, provide valuable information, heal, resurrect, and allow allies to see enemies through obstructions for easy retaliation. Sentinels are the most methodical of the heroes, and require very strong self control to provide the most use to their team.

*Note: I will not be divulging into cooldown numbers/damage/specific information about each character due to the ever changing meta and buffs/nerfs to each character throughout each patch that Riot Games puts out for Valorant.*

*There are currently 4 Duelists in Valorant. They are: Jett, Phoenix, Raze, and Reyna. We are going to dive into each character's play style and description of their abilities.*

## **Jett**

Jett's kit entirely revolves around mobility with a lethal Ultimate ability. Each round as Jett is a high-speed chess game, that requires you to always be 2 steps ahead of your opponent. Jett may be one of the most deceptively complex characters in Valorant. Her simple kit provides diverse situational usage, and allows for you to take bad situations and come out with a favorable outcome. She has escape options, area denial, all terrain abilities, and lethal, non-weapon damage, making her a well rounded character for newer players who want to adapt and overcome any scenario

**Passive:** When Jett is in the air, you can hold down Space to slowly glide to the ground.

**Ability 1: Cloud Burst** - Cloud burst is essentially a quick-flying, but short-lasting smoke that denies visuals to both your team and the enemy team. Cloud burst is thrown out by jett, and can be curved by turning your camera as it flies through the air. You can purchase up to 3 of them.

**Ability 2: Updraft** - When Updraft is activated, Jett will launch herself straight into the air with a loud wind sound. This can be used to reach high places or to see above obstructions to gather information for yourself or your team. You can purchase up to 2 of them.

**Ability 3: Tailwind** - When Tailwind is activated, you will dash in the direction you are traveling for roughly 15 meters. This allows you to sit in unsuspecting corners to catch your opponents off guard without worry that you will be stuck there when under fire. This ability allows you to reposition yourself quickly, get to a location faster than you normally could, and escape unfortunate situations that you may find yourself in. Each round you start with Tailwind (one charge maximum), however if you do not have Tailwind, and you achieve 2 kills, you refill your ability so that it may be used again.

**Ultimate: Blade Storm** - Blade storm is Jett's lethal ability. When it is activated you put away your weapon, and pull out 5 floating kunai knives. Left-Click to throw one knife at a time, and

right-click to throw all of your remaining knives at once in a sort of cluster. Right clicking with Blade Storm is not perfectly accurate and contains minor spread. When you get a kill, your knives refresh and you instantly have 5 again. All of your left-clicked blades are 100% accurate to your crosshair. Each knife does 50 damage to the body, and 150 damage to the head for an instant kill.

## **Phoenix**

Phoenix's kit revolves around giving yourself the highest possible chance of survival. Phoenix can heal himself with two of his abilities, and his ultimate allows him to have two lives for a short duration. Phoenix is a great entry fragger, and perfect as the first line of defense. Players who play Phoenix generally play methodically, however they are not afraid to fall back to ensure their survival. Phoenix players generally play aggressively.

**Passive:** Phoenix's passive ability allows him to heal when standing in his flames!

**Ability 1: Blaze** - Blaze allows you to throw a short wall of fire out in front of yourself, curving to the left or right by looking in said direction while the wall is being cast. This wall damages enemies if they touch it or walk through it, as well as obstructs their vision. Standing in Blaze as Phoenix heals you during its duration. You can only have 1 charge of Blaze.

**Ability 2: Curveball** - Curveball is prepared by clicking the Ability 2 key, and then clicking either MB1 or MB2. If you click MB1 you throw a ball of fire a few meters in front of you that curves 90 degrees to the left, while MB2 curves 90 degrees to the right. When Curveball curves it flashes anyone close by that is looking at the ability. It is primarily used to clear corners or surprise an attacking enemy. You can buy up to 2 charges of Curveball.

**Ability 3: Hot Hands** - Hot hands creates a fireball in hand when Ability 3 is pressed, and throws a fireball that damages allies and enemies who it touches on the ground, similar to a molotov cocktail. Phoenix heals as he stands in the flames.

**Ultimate: Run It Back** - When Run It Back is activated, a small fire is placed right at Phoenix's feet. Phoenix is able to run around and deal damage, grab the spike, plant, defuse, etc for as long as he can. There is a set time to how long your ultimate is activated, which can be ended early if you die, however, never fear! When the time runs out or if you die you return back to your starting fire with full health and you can try to complete your objective again!



## **Raze**

Raze's kit revolves around dealing damage. Each one of her abilities can be detrimental to the enemy (as well as teammates if not used carefully). Her kit allows her to clear corners and flush enemies out of hidden areas, as well as area denial. Her kit can also be used to make her more mobile as well. Raze players generally use their kit to try to deal as much damage as possible before the fight even begins.

**Passive:** Raze does not take damage from her Blast Packs, and moves an increased distance when using Blast Packs.

**Ability 1: Boom Bot** - When Ability 1 is activated a boom bot is pulled out. Left click to throw it on the ground in front of you. The boom bot will travel in a straight line until it hits a wall, and will bounce off of it and continue moving for a set distance. When the boom bot spots an enemy, it turns straight at the enemy and jumps up in the air and explodes for 100 damage. The boom bot does not activate against allies. You can purchase 1 boom bot per round.

**Ability 2: Blast Pack** - When the player clicks the ability 2 button, Raze throws a blast pack out in front of her, the blast pack automatically activates and will explode in 6 seconds, you can detonate it early by clicking ability 2 again while a blast pack is deployed. You can only deploy 1 at a time, however you can purchase 2 charges of it per round. Blast packs hurt allies but do not hurt Raze, Blast Pack also can push agents in different directions based on their proximity to the ability. Good Raze players will utilize Blast packs to become extremely mobile and take the enemy by surprise.

**Ability 3: Cluster Grenade** - When Ability 3 is clicked, Raze pulls out a cluster grenade and pulls the pin. You can throw the grenade by clicking MB1. The grenade travels for a few seconds and explodes, dealing massive damage to enemies and allies nearby. Then it drops 6 mini-grenades which explode a few seconds afterwards causing more damage. The grenade can be used to flush enemies out of corners or catch opponents in tight corridors off guard, giving your team an advantage in health. You can have a max of 1 grenade at a time, which resets each 2 kills.

**Ultimate: Showstopper** - When showstopper is activated, Raze switches weapons to her rocket launcher. Which, for a finite amount of time, can shoot only 1 rocket. This rocket does AOE

damage, killing anyone at the center of impact, and then the damage falls off the further away from the impact you are. Showstopper also pushes Raze backwards and can also be used for mobility purposes.

## **Reyna**

Reyna is undoubtedly the strongest hero in the game... IF you can get kills with her. Half of her abilities rely on using “soul orbs” which only drop momentarily once Reyna kills an enemy. Reyna has the ability to frag like no other, as she can fully heal 4 times, goes invincible for a moment, invisible, blind enemies, and gets a boost in fire rate when her ultimate is activated.

**Passive:** Eliminated enemies drop a soul orb upon death

**Ability 1: Leer** - Leer throws a smokey eye to a set distance in front of your crosshair, even through walls. All enemies within LOS of the ability are Blinded (they can only see a few meters in front of them) during its duration. You can purchase 2 charges of this ability.

**Ability 2: Devour** - Devour shares its pool of charges with Ability 3. You can purchase up to 4 charges before the round, however you cannot use ability 2 or 3 until you kill an enemy and capture their soul orb. Devour heals any damage you take almost instantly and overheals up to 50 health (150 max).

**Ability 3: Dismiss** - Dismiss also cannot be used unless a soul orb is on the field. When Reyna uses dismiss she turns into a ghost momentarily and is “intangible” for a short duration of time. Reyna can use this to reposition or to back away from a fight.

**Ultimate: Empress** - When Reyna’s ultimate is activated she receives an increased fire rate, reload rate, and lasts for a long duration. Every time she uses ability 3 while under Empress she turns completely invisible momentarily, allowing her to better reposition and continue fragging out. When Reyna gets a kill while ulting, ability 2 is automatically activated.

*There are currently 2 Initiators in Valorant, they are: Breach and Sova. Let’s dive into these two characters and their play styles.*

## **Breach**

Breach is regarded as one of the strongest Agents in the game. All of Breaches abilities can reach through walls and causes one of the most devastating effects on enemies in the game; Concussion. Breach players excel at pushing into bomb sites and incapacitating the enemy.

**Passive:** None

**Ability 1: Aftershock** - Aftershock deals damage to anyone caught in it, however it is relatively easy to escape in most situations. Aftershock is cast onto a wall, and builds up a charge of fire that blows up in a cylinder shape on the other side of the wall. Aftershock is primarily used to clear corners and corridors, forcing enemies to fall back or to step out into your line of fire to avoid the blast. You can purchase up to 1 charge.

**Ability 2: Flashpoint** - Flashpoint is utilized the same way ability 1 is, however it activates just a short moment after you use MB1, flashing anyone who looked at the explosion, allowing for easy pushes onto the site against opponents who cannot see for a few moments. You can purchase up to 2 charges.

**Ability 3: Fault line** - Ability 3 can be charged up to travel a further distance. It goes through walls and affects enemies even if they are in the air above the ability. Fault line travels extremely far and causes any enemy caught in it to be concussed for a few seconds. Enemies in this state shoot with a much slower rate of fire, their screen gets blurry, and their entire screen and crosshair wave slowly and uncontrollably. Allies caught in this ability are also affected the same way. You automatically get 1 charge at the start of each round, set on a cool down once used.

**Ultimate: Rolling Thunder** - Essentially a bigger and better version of Fault Line. Hits in a massive cone shape through walls in front of you, without the need of being charged up. Definitely one of the best ultimates in the game.

## **Sova**

A good Sova player is sought after in almost any team composition. Using a high-tech bow and arrow, his abilities have a slight delay, but his ability to scout enemies and gather information is unparalleled. Sova has the ability to give visual confirmation by utilizing his kit to tag, detect, and flush out enemies from a safe distance or area, allowing for minimal risk when executing a play.

**Passive:** None

**Ability 1: Owl Drone** - When activated, Sova throws a drone out in front of him and the player's view is automatically switched to the drone's first person view. The player then pilots the drone as it slowly moves through the air. Players can MB1 to track an enemy and ping their location to the entire team. The Owl Drone only lasts for a few moments before it breaks, and it can be shot out of the sky. The Owl Drone is also very loud so be sure to be in a safe location when using it. The player can exit the drone early by clicking the ability 1 button. You can purchase 1 Owl Drone at the start of each round.

**Ability 2: Shock Bolt** - Sova equips his bow and an arrow that is electrified on the tip. By holding down MB1 he can charge up the distance that the arrow will fly, and by using MB2 he can adjust how many times the arrow will bounce (up to 2 bounces) until it shocks the surrounding area upon impact, dealing a large amount of damage to anyone caught in the area of effect. You can purchase up to 2 shock bolts at the start of each round.

**Ability 3: Recon Bolt** - When used, Sova will equip his Bow and an arrow with a tracking beacon attached to the tip of the arrow. Just like his Shock bolt, this arrow can be charged up, and the bounces can be adjusted up to 2 maximum. When Recon Bolt no longer bounces, and it comes in contact with an object it activates and sends out 3 pulses of tracking radar like waves. If any part of an enemy is within its line of sight (LOS) their silhouette will be outlined and shown to your entire team for a moment. The bolt can be shot and broken before any pulses are made, so try to place your arrow in a location that will be hard to shoot, but still covers a large area of LOS. You automatically start with the maximum of 1 charge at the beginning of each round, and this ability is on cooldown, so it can be used multiple times for free each round.

**Ultimate: Hunter's Fury** - Sova equips his bow and 3 very long ranged, wall piercing, energy blasts that deal a great amount of damage and reveals the location of any enemy who is hit. This ability also damages your allies so be careful of your positioning!

*There are currently 3 controllers in Valorant. They are Brimstone, Omen, and Viper. We are going to dive into each character's play style and description of their abilities.*

**Brimstone**

Brimstone is highly regarded as the most useful of the controllers and generally is the most widely used, as he is free right from the beginning. Brimstone is another very well rounded character with the best smokes in the game, a stim beacon, molotov, and a lethal ultimate that has many viable uses that ensures you will almost always have a great opportunity to use it with great value.

**Passive:** None

**Ability 1: Stim Beacon** - Throw down an immobile and invincible stim beacon that creates a visible area on the floor, that when is stood on, boosts fire rate and reload rate, fantastic tool for peeking a corner giving you the upper hand, especially when paired with the right weapon! Be careful however, if the enemy stands in its effective radius, they also become stimulated! You can purchase 2 charges of this at the beginning of each round.

**Ability 2: Sky Smoke** - After clicking the ability 2 button, Brimstone raises his wrist computer and projects a section of the mini-map onto your screen. You can select up to 3 locations at once to drop a sky smoke, use MB1 to designate where you want them to be placed, MB2 to deploy the designated smokes immediately, and click ability 2 button to cancel the ability. On attack, Brimstone can use these smokes to obstruct the view of the enemy from hard-to-peek angles, allowing ease of access to push onto a site. On defense, Brimstone can use Sky Smokes to deny visuals onto a site, hide himself in order to reposition in a more favorable location, and more. Sky smokes currently last longer than any other smoke in the game. You can purchase up to 3 Sky Smokes per round. You start with 1 each round.

**Ability 3: Incendiary** - Equip a grenade launcher with one incendiary grenade that detonates as it comes in contact with a horizontal surface, leaving a large and punishing area of fire, denying access to an area or flushing enemies out of a hidden location. You can purchase 1 incendiary at the start of each round.

**Ultimate: Orbital Strike** - When Orbital Strike is activated, Brimstone will raise his wrist computer and project a slightly larger area of the mini-map than his Sky Smokes, where you will use MB1 to choose a large area, and MB2 to activate the ability. A large red circle will appear where the Orbital Strike was designated for both allies and enemies to see, which does tick damage while players stand inside of the designated area. This Ultimate can be used for area denial, flushing out hidden enemies, and catching rushing opponents off guard, damaging them before they can escape, putting them in a poor position, and giving you a strong

advantage. You can move and shoot like normal while the ultimate is in effect. My personal favorite usage of this ultimate is after your team has planted the spike, you hide in a nearby and safe location, and the moment you hear the enemy begin to defuse the bomb, you place your orbital strike directly centered on top of the planted spike. If the enemy does not react fast enough, they are caught in the fire and killed. If they are able to react fast enough, it at least forces them off of the spike. When paired with smart peeking and distraction, this method can delay the defusal long enough to win the round in many cases.

## **Omen**

Omen is one of the more unique characters in the game, as his kit revolves around out-smarting your opponent with positional advantages, smokes, and a blinding ability. Omens ultimate is extremely strong, but easily countered if you do not play correctly. Omen players require great game-sense and map knowledge to get the most out of their kit.

**Passive:** None

**Ability 1: Shrouded Step** - Omen teleports from one location to another that is within a short distance. This can be used to reach high locations, position in unsuspecting corners, get behind your opponent, and fake enemies out with the use of teleporters on Bind. You can purchase 2 charges of this ability at the start of each round.

**Ability 2: Paranoia** - When Ability 2 is activated, Omen throws a small ball in a straight line from his crosshair that travels through walls and agents. When an ally or enemy is touched by paranoia they become Blind momentarily. Allowing for an easy mid-ranged advantage on affected opponents. You can purchase 1 charge at the start of each round.

**Ability 3: Dark Cover** - When you use Ability 3 Omen puts away his weapon and holds a smokey orb in his hands, which projects in front of the user an outline of where he can place a temporary smoke. You can then adjust the distance by using the MB1 to increase distance, and MB2 to decrease distance from yourself. Then select the ability 3 button to throw dark cover. Ability 3 travels through walls, and if placed in the air, will slowly fall until it hits a horizontal surface. This smoke currently lasts the second longest in the game, and is the only hollow smoke in Valorant. Agents are able to see perfectly while inside of the orb, however the orb itself cannot be seen into, or out of. You are able to own a maximum of 2 per round, however

you automatically start with both each round. Ability 3 refreshes 1 charge after a 35 second cool down.

**Ultimate: From the Shadows** - When the ultimate is used, a full view of the map appears on your screen. You can then utilize MB1 to select any location on the entire map to teleport to. Using the ultimate is very loud, and easily flanked by experienced players before you can fully take form. If you are shot and killed before you fully form, you are automatically placed back at your previous location. A smart enemy will wait until you are fully formed to shoot at you. Be sure to move immediately the very moment you can, as you're more likely to escape this way, however, if you do not feel comfortable dodging, or you feel as though you are about to die when you form, you can cancel your ultimate by clicking the ultimate button again. Which will use your ultimate points, but allow you to appear back in your original location. Good Omen users will appear in unsuspecting locations that are generally safe to warp to. Keep in mind, when the enemy hears your ultimate voice line, they likely will immediately begin suspecting you to come from an off angle, and play accordingly.

## **Viper**

Viper is one of the most underrated Agents in the game. Her kit offers reusable smokes and walls made from decaying poison. Viper can obstruct the view of an entire bomb site with her poison abilities, and can completely deter entire attacks from the enemy team. Her ultimate is one of the most difficult ultimates to counter, and a great pick for any player looking to play a complex, yet punishing agent.

**Passive:** None

**Ability 1: Snake Bite** - When Ability 1 is used, Viper equips a small vial of poison that can be launched great distances. Snake bite will bounce off of walls and deploy the moment it makes contact with a horizontal surface, which causes the surrounding area to be covered in acid that slowly damages agents that walk through it as well as places the enemy in a "fragile" debuff state, causing them to take increased damage from all sources. Viper and allies can also be hurt by this ability. It is the only ability Viper has that causes lasting damage. You can purchase up to 2 snake bites at the start of each round.

**Ability 2: Poison Cloud** - When ability 2 is used, Viper equips a small device that can be thrown by clicking MB1. When activated, this device creates a cloud of poison that slowly depletes Viper's poison bar. The smoke can be turned on and off at will, but will only stay on as long as there is poison left in her tank. When the ability is not active, Viper gradually replenishes her poison bar. When allies and enemies stand inside of the active Poison Cloud they take decay damage, which slowly diminishes their health to 1hp, however 2.5 seconds after they step out of the cloud, they rapidly heal back any damage that has decayed. You can only purchase 1 Poison Cloud at the start of each round, however you are able to pick up the device and throw it in another position.

**Ability 3: Toxic Screen** - Toxic screen is very similar to Poison Cloud. When Ability 3 is activated, viper equips her Toxic Screen Device, which when used, will lay down a very long line of devices in a straight line in front of her, this can be shot over obstructions and buildings to get the maximum amount of distance out of the wall. Once Ability 3 activates the entire line of devices form a wall of decaying poison that obstructs the view of allies and enemies through it. The wall can be activated and taken down at will just like Poison Cloud, and also utilizes Viper's Poison tank. Good Vipers will use this ability to block the vision of hard to peek corners and hidden cubbies that enemies may be hiding in. You cannot pick up Viper's wall once it has been placed down. You automatically start each round with this ability.

**Ultimate: Viper's Pit** - Personally, I believe Viper's Pit is one of the scariest Ultimates to see used by an enemy. When used, Viper can choose a location with MB1 that forms a massive bomb-site sized cloud of decaying poison that dramatically reduces visibility of those inside of it. Allies and Enemies both take decaying damage, however Viper does not. Viper's enemies also highlight bright red while they are inside of the Pit, making it much easier to find and terminate your opponents before they see you. This ultimate seems straightforward at first glance but good Viper players can utilize her ultimate in many different given circumstances.

*Last but certainly not least, we have the defensive experts: Sentinels. There are currently 2 Sentinels in Valorant. Cypher and Sage. Sentinel #3; Killjoy has been confirmed by riot, her information is being listed even though she won't be released for another week or two. We are going to dive into all 3 character's play style and description of their abilities.*



## Cypher

Cypher is one of the best allies to have on your team, especially if you are defending first. Cypher has the ability to gather large amounts of information using his kit, damage, concuss, and stall his opponents. His ultimate reveals the location of every living enemy on the entire map to your entire team. Cypher has been proven to be able to hold entire bomb sites by his own, or to at least continually stall the enemy long enough for your team to rotate to your position.

**Passive:** None

**Ability 1: Cyber Cage** - Cypher places down a small device on a horizontal surface in front of him. Which can be activated by looking in the direction of the device and clicking the ability button, or you can activate multiple traps at once by holding down the ability button. Enemies who walk through this while activated will make a zapping noise, causing enemies to usually wait until the cage's timer is up, stalling the enemy greatly. You can purchase up to 2 cages at the start of each round.

**Ability 2: Spycam** - Equip a small camera that can be attached to walls and obstructions. By clicking the ability button you are able to switch views between Cypher and his Camera. You can look around with the camera and you can shoot tracking darts at enemies. The tracking dart will ping the enemy's location to your entire team until they remove the tracking dart by holding down "F" for a few moments. Cypher's spycam can be shot and broken, even if it is not active, however while it is active a large red and blue light shine, making it easy to spot and destroy. Good cyphers will place their camera in hard-to-see locations. You automatically receive 1 at the start of each round. Cypher's Spycam can fly back to Cypher if it is not broken to be placed in another location later in the match.

**Ability 3: Trapwire** - Cypher's Trapwire is known as one of the most devastating and useful abilities in the entire game. Equip a small device that can be attached to walls and objects that are directly across from a nearby object or wall to form an invisible tripwire. When enemies get close to the wire, the wire makes a buzzing noise and becomes visible, allowing the enemy to break the device. Good Cyphers will find unusual, but high traffic locations to place their Trapwires, when an enemy runs into it, they are slowed to a halt, given a short moment, and then the device explodes, causing the enemy to be dazed, reducing vision, blurring their sight, damaging them, and disorients their aim. This device also reveals the location of the enemy

who tripped the wire while it is active and momentarily after the wire explodes. This information is shown to your entire team, and allows you to take advantage of the situation and remove the opponent from the round. You can purchase a maximum of 2 at the beginning of each round. You can also collect unused trap wires at any point if you are near them.

**Ultimate: Neural Theft** - Upon killing an enemy, a hologram will appear above their corpse, if you use Neural Theft on a corpse you will throw your hat on top of them, and every one of the remaining living enemies location will be pinged for a quick snapshot that your entire team can see, no matter where they are located on the map.

## **Sage**

Sage is currently an absolute MUST PICK at all levels of play, her abilities are vital to every team composition. Sage can heal herself or her allies multiple times each round. Known as the premier staller Agent, she can place a large barrier in front of pathways to block advancing opponents and deny them access to important locations. Sage can also cast slowing fields that affect everyone in it, even if they are not touching the ground, allowing for large amounts of counter play when enemies try to push through anyway. The biggest reason Sage is a must pick for any level of play comes from her Ultimate. If you like being vital to the success of your team, you will enjoy playing Sage.

**Passive:** None

**Ability 1: Barrier Orb** - Equip a orb that projects the image of a barrier in front of you. Using MB2 the image will rotate 90 degrees according to your orientation. Press MB1 to cast the wall, which will form directly where the image was projected. You can purchase one barrier orb at the start of each round, however it is the most expensive ability in the game, use it wisely!

**Ability 2: Slow Orb** - Equip a cracked crystal orb which can be cast with MB1. The orb will be thrown out in front of you, bouncing off of walls and activating when it comes in contact with a horizontal surface. The slow orb then surrounds a large area in a crystal substance that slows allies and enemies greatly who walk through it. When an Agent is moving through the slowing field a loud crackling sound will play, notifying everyone nearby that someone is there. Be sure to walk through any slow fields to silently move through them! You can purchase 2 Slow orbs at the beginning of each round.

**Ability 3: Healing Orb** - Equip a soft glowing orb that allows you to heal allies in LOS of you over-time even from a long distance by clicking MB1. Clicking MB2 will allow you to heal yourself. Note: you cannot preemptively begin healing allies or yourself before a gunfight. Once the healing orb has been used it is placed on a cooldown, if used properly you can get 2 or 3 uses out of your healing orb each round, which provides tremendous value. You begin each round with your Healing Orb for free.

**Ultimate: Resurrection** - Equip a resurrection orb, which can revive an ally to 100 health with all of their remaining abilities and weapons that they had previously. If your ally died, and an enemy took their weapon, they will no longer have a weapon when they spawn. The resurrection process takes a few seconds, so ensure you and your ally are in a safe location, or that you are divided from your enemy with the use of your barrier orb before you resurrect your ally or they will just immediately be killed again!

## **Killjoy**

Killjoy is the German Engineer who has been working side-by-side with brimstone in the lore, however killjoy has a mind of her own, with unparalleled abilities that literally watch your back for you, Killjoy is the perfect Agent for players who are crafty and prefer to know everything going on around them when preparing for a fire fight

**Passive:** None

**Ability1: Alarmbot** - Place this little droid anywhere on the map and he will hunker down, turn invisible and lie-in-wait for any poor enemy that passes by. Alarmbot will jump up, latch onto the enemy, and debuff the enemy so that they take x2 damage from all sources, allowing you and your allies an easy pick to give yourselves the upper hand. Alarmbot can be picked up and replaced if it has not been used. Be careful! If you pick it up, there is a 20 second cooldown before you can use it again, and if that cooldown is not complete when the round is over, you will need to buy a new one! You can purchase one per round.

**Ability 2: Turret** - Place this turret down, and in .75 seconds it will activate and shoot any enemies that enter its 180 degree sight path. Doing minimal damage at 3 shots per volley, this turret won't be pulling too much weight against enemies, however it is a wonderful scouting/protection informational tool. Place this down so it watches your flank, to notify you

of when an enemy pushes towards you. With 125 health, and between 4-8 damage depending on distance, this little guy will be easy to break, and shouldn't cause too much trouble for the enemy team. Playing smart around the info you collect is the key to maximizing the value you can get out of the turret. The turret can be picked up whenever, even after it's been used. You start with a max of one each round.

**Ability 3: Nanoswarm** - Nanoswarm is a tiny pill shaped bot that gets placed down and awaits your command to activate. Nanoswarm does immense damage and is activated exactly the same way Cypher's Cyber Cages are activated. Nanoswarm can be broken, so make sure to hide it in a place the enemy won't see! You can purchase a max of 2 at the start of each round. Nanoswarm can not be picked up.

**Ultimate: Lockdown** - place this totem down to set off a ginormous radius of electrical nodes that will completely lock down every enemy that doesn't respect the social distancing. With a long start up time this ultimate takes 13 seconds to activate, and can be destroyed at any time. Enemies caught in its massive radius cannot shoot, use abilities, and can hardly walk for 8 full seconds! The totem has 150 health and will be a high priority target for any enemy team looking to push where it is located.

*NOTE: The information in Chapter 2: Agent Introduction is based on the current information in patch 1.01 that was released on 9 June 2020. Please keep in mind that depending on how deep into the life of Valorant this information may be drastically different. I will update this list as more heroes are released.*

## CHAPTER 3

### Choosing a "Main" and a "Secondary"

It has been proven time and time again that in hero-based video games it is always beneficial to choose one hero and master that specific hero, rather than playing many different heroes and being an average player with every hero. This is the same case in Valorant. You can only choose one hero to be throughout the entire match, so you should choose who you enjoy playing

the most. I have seen far too many times 4 players lock in their mains as soon as the Agent select screen appears, leaving the pressure on the 5th to choose Sage, and all too often the player who is pressured into playing Sage does not have even basic fundamental understanding of the proper way to utilize their character, essentially becoming a dead weight that drags the success of the team down, and then getting flamed for it by the people they are suppose to be working together with.

I firmly believe that having 5 players who are playing off meta characters at a high capacity will always trump 5 players who have some of them playing characters that they are not used to. Players who are not accustomed to using their Agent's abilities often make the same two huge mistakes, either 1) They get terrible value out of their abilities, and/or 2) They use their abilities at bad times and are often punished for it, getting themselves or their teammates killed.

"So, Drowsy, my main squeeze, how DO I choose who I want to play for the rest of time and all eternity??" Simple! There are two different ways to decide on who should be your Main Agent!

1. The first way is to develop your personal roster as you are playing the game, the benefit of doing it this way is that you get hands-on experience right off the bat, and generally you will begin to tune your Agent to match exactly YOUR OWN STYLE of play. *(When I say your own style, I don't mean playing as a controller, yet you are always lurking. I mean developing your own strategies in your role, figuring out what placement options for your utility works best for you and your team on your own when defending, etc.)* There are two downsides to this; it usually takes longer to make your final decision, and you oftentimes will lower your MMR as you progressively finalize your choice. If you choose to go this route, you will begin by loading into the practice range, mess around with each hero, and see what feels naturally comfortable, who you just seem to click with. Maybe look at who is the most intriguing to you. Do not focus on meta or who the pros are playing *(For example: My first main was Viper, who everyone sees as the worst agent in the game during the time that I am writing this*

*guide, but TenZ who is the first person to ever reach the highest tier ranking possible in NA almost exclusively plays Viper)* Do not pay attention to the meta, focus on who *you* feel you have the most success with. I recommend playing a little bit of target range on easy for new players, and medium for more experienced. Then, when you've learned the abilities and you are starting to narrow down your list, move onto the "Spike Defusal" area. Set the difficulty to medium for new players, and hard to intermediate players. Spike Defusal is a fantastic place to try out different abilities and heroes. I do not recommend using the Spike Planting Scenario to get comfortable unless you are trying out Cypher, as his kit is highly defensive, and the Spike Planting on hard mode is brain-dead easy for some reason. Once you have an idea of what kind of play style you generally enjoy, take your top 3 favorite heroes (even if you aren't completely comfortable with their kit yet) and queue up for unrated to play with actual people. Lock in one of your 3 characters and try to communicate and coordinate your abilities, see how you enjoy playing each of your agents alongside people, listen to your gut as you practice with a mindset that you are just trying to learn, *don't take losses or deaths to heart*, playing a new Agent takes time to even begin to be confident with them. Once you have played with your 3 different Agents a few times, and you're beginning to develop the fundamental aspects of each Agent, you should start to feel a strong urge to play only one specific Agent. Maybe you will have a strong urge NOT to play another, either way, as you play more and more you will be able to whittle down your list until you have the final two.

*Note: Many times people have asked me how to decide between a hero they really enjoy, and another hero that they think is better in the Meta. I give the same answer every single time. "PLAY WHO YOU ENJOY PLAYING." If you enjoy one character more, play them, as each character has completely untapped potential, Valorant has only been available to the public for an extremely short time, every single character has incredible untapped potential and strategies that no one has even thought of yet, master a character now, develop your OWN strategies and study the game. I promise you will perform much better as a character you love over a character that is deemed better by someone else. (Lets face it, tier lists are 50% personal opinion anyway!)*

2. The second method to finding a main is found through the answer of little surveys and questionnaires. The positives about this method is that it is much much faster, you won't lose MMR as you play a bunch of heroes, you can immediately start to develop your talents with your selected Agent. The downside is that it is not nearly as accurate, and you *may* end up switching Agents later on if you end up disliking your chosen character after a while. The only other downside is that you won't have as much of a familiarity with the other Agents on the roster because you have not put in as much time playing a bunch of agents like you would in option 1. The questionnaire goes something like this:

a. Which of these do you find the most interesting? Which would you like to study more of?

i. Outsmarting the opponent strategically

ii. Setting synergistic traps and capitalize off of mistakes

iii. Precise execution to outplay opponents through superior knowledge

iv. Outskilling opponents mechanically consistently

*If you chose "i" move on to question "B", If you chose "ii" move on to question "C",  
if you chose "iii" move on to question "D", If you chose "iv" move onto question "E"  
below.*

b. If you chose option "i", answer the following question:

i. Which answer better describes how you normally perform when you are under pressure?

1. I like to be aggressive, let my actions do the talking, It is better to go out and accomplish what must be done with drive and purpose.

2. I like to be methodical, I want to know all of the facts before I make decisions. This way I can do it right, and avoid mistakes.

*Answer Key: 1) Try Breach - 2) Try Sova*

c. If you chose option “ii” answer the following question:

i. Which of the following options makes you feel the most safe and in control when you must accomplish a task?

1. If I maintain self discipline with precision I can achieve any goal
2. If I ensure there are no complications first, things will go smoothly
3. If I can manage my resources, and ensure high quality work, I am most effective.
4. If I cover every detail personally, I will get all the glory, or receive all of the punishment myself

*Answer Key: 1) Try Omen - 2) Try Brimstone - 3) Try Viper - 4) Try Killjoy*

d. If you chose option “iii” answer the following question:

i. According to your personal values; which is more true?

1. Sincere and genuine work with others is the best way to complete any challenge too big to face alone
2. No challenge is too big to face alone if you have the right tools at your disposal and you have prepared well enough



*Answer Key: 1) Try Sage - 2) Try Cypher*

e. If you chose option “iv” answer the following question:

i. If you wanted to invest your life’s time/energy/money into creating a work of art, what would be the most important aspect of your life’s work to you?

1. The art **MUST** be without flaw, even if it takes many attempts
2. The art **MUST** be intricate, and brilliant. A masterpiece
3. The art **MUST** be completely unique, extraordinary, and loud
4. The art **MUST** encompass the blood/sweat/tears it took to finish

*Answer Key: 1) Try Phoenix - 2) Try Jett - 3) Try Raze - 4) Try Reyna*

Now that you have found your main, answer the questions again. This time choose the next best option when you answer them! This should give you your pre-determined secondary Agent that will fit you based on your personality.

## CHAPTER 4

### Equipment Introduction

In this chapter we will be having a basic discussion about each of the current weapons in Valorant. We will break it down by weapon type, and their strengths and weaknesses. I will not be discussing exact damage values as by the time you have read this, balance changes may have happened. We will also discuss the difference between hip firing and Aiming Down Sights (ADS) for each weapon, as not all weapons are affected the same way! Without further ado:

*Note: Eco Value, and Economy (often referred to as Eco) are two separate things. Eco Value refers to your point value that is summed up at the end of each match, which calculates the amount of damage you give per \$1000 spent. Economy or Eco refers to how much money you/your team/enemy team has to buy equipment and abilities at the beginning of each round.*

## **SIDEARMS**

In every round of Valorant's unrated and rated mode, players will begin each round with the "classic" pistol. Side arms are the cheapest weapons in the game, and if utilized correctly, can be punishing in the right situations, even when placed against the highest valued weapons in the game. However, sidearms have much more weaknesses when put up against rifles and other much more expensive weapons in the game. Successfully killing enemies with pistols provide extremely high "eco" value, alongside Melee kills. Sidearms can be extremely useful in tight pinches when you do not have time to reload your main arm. Switching between your main weapon to your sidearm during a firefight instead of backing off and reloading will save your behind more often than not. I recommend only reloading when you *know* you are in no danger. For example: If you are holding a long angle with a sniper, and you need to reload, and you have a teammate covering you from another angle, and the enemy cannot damage you with any of their abilities from where they are, you may back off and reload, and then re-engage. Ensure you constantly communicate important actions with your teammates. Get in the habit of changing weapons if you run out of ammo, skilled enemies will also listen for a reload, you can begin to reload, and then switch to your sidearm, prepare for them to peek you, and hit them with an unexpected dose of pow pow.

- The first sidearm on our list is the **Classic** the basic pistol with a punch
  - The Classic is free at the beginning of each round unless you already own a different sidearm. The Classic is most effective at medium to short ranges. MB1 will shoot 1 bullet at a time, and MB2 shoots 3 at the same time with a random

spread. The classic has 12 bullets per clip, it will not kill a 100hp target with a single headshot.

- Pros:
  - Good rate of fire
  - Good accuracy
  - Free
  - High eco value
- Cons:
  - Smaller clip size
  - Poor damage per bullet

- Next up we have the **Shorty**, a sawed off shotgun
  - The shorty is the cheapest gun in the game (aside from the free knife and classic naturally) a Close Quarters Combat (CQC) powerhouse, the Shorty punishes enemies who do not respect their social distancing. There are a few extreme drawbacks to using the shorty.
    - Pros:
      - High damage output for its cost
      - Cheapest sidearm
      - High Eco value
      - Can one-shot at appropriate range
    - Cons:
      - Extremely limited range

- Only 2 shots per clip
  - No ADS or alt fire mode
  - Long reload time for a sidearm
  -
- Next on our list is the **Frenzy**, a automatic pistol
  - The Frenzy has the highest fire rate of any sidearm in Valorant, however its accuracy lacks heavily, and is only effective and consistent in CQC situations. High damage fall-off and medium sized clips give this weapon some promise when used in the right hands.
    - Pros:
      - Highest rate of fire within Sidearms
      - Higher end of kill time CQC during pistol rounds
      - Perfect weapon to finish off targets with extremely low health
      - Middle of the pack price for Sidearm
    - Cons:
      - Worst accuracy among sidearms
      - Clips go extremely fast, must have high quality aim to be effective
      - Poor damage fall off
- Next up we have the controversial **Ghost**, which is a silenced accuracy machine
  - One of the most used pistols in the game. Strong range, highly accurate, good clip size, can 1 tap unarmored targets, making it very strong for pistol rounds against players who did not buy armor. The biggest drawback to this weapon is

the price, second most expensive sidearm, and prevents you from buying it and light armor.

- Pros:
  - High rate of fire
  - Good accuracy
  - Low damage fall of at long distances
  - Good clip size
  - 1 tap potential
- Cons:
  - Expensive
  - Poor Eco value
  - High risk high reward play during pistol rounds

- Finally we have the **Sheriff**, a 6-shooter that can 1 tap any target at great distances
  - Strongest sidearm in the game. The Sheriff comes in with a punch that can 1 tap heavy armor targets. Medium rate of fire, poor spray accuracy, almost useless to players who are not accurate. Proper Aim and timing is essential to get the most out of the Sheriff.
    - Pros:
      - Strongest sidearm
      - Highest kill potential on any target
      - Can 2 tap the body of an unarmored target
      - 0-30 Meter range

- Cons:
  - Most expensive sidearm
  - Poor Eco value
  - 2nd slowest rate of fire among sidearms
  - Small clip size

## SUB MACHINE GUNS (SMGS)

Sub machine guns are the perfect middle-ground between Eco value, and damage output for its price and range. SMGs are often the preferred weapon category when the team decides to perform an “anti-eco” round. SMGS have high rates of fire, short-medium ranges. SMGs are used most often when players and their teams do not have enough money to buy armor and a Rifle, or when you are trying to “light buy” in order to stockpile your economy in preparation for an improved economy in future rounds.

- The first Submachine Gun on our list is the **Stinger**, the more CQ of the two SMGs
  - The stinger is the second cheapest weapon in the buy menu that is equipped to your main arm. The Stinger has an impressively high rate of fire, allowing for easy clears in tight corridors. The clip size is small and the damage per bullet is low, but the biggest drawback is its range.
  - Pros:
    - Highest rate of fire
    - High Eco value
    - Short time to kill at close range
    - Affordable automatic weapon
  - Cons:

- Low Wall penetration
  - Terribly Poor damage fall off
  - Small clip size
  - Weak damage per bullet
  - Poor accuracy
- When hip firing the Stinger, it is fully automatic. When ADS the stinger switches to burst fire (4 bullets per click) and speed reduction applied.
- The second SMG is the **Spectre**, the stronger and more accurate of the two
  - The Spectre is slightly better in every way than the stinger aside from 3 things, slower time to kill than its counterpart, slower fire-rate, and it is more expensive.
    - Pros:
      - High damage output per cost
      - Medium eco value
      - Short time to kill at close range
      - Affordable automatic weapon
      - Medium Wall Penetration
    - Cons:
      - Almost twice the cost of the Stinger
      - Does not excel at anything, “average” at everything
      - Poor range

- When hip firing the Spectre, the weapon is fully automatic. When ADS the Spectre is fully automatic with a slight reduction in fire rate, but also a slight reduction in bullet spread

## SHOTGUNS

Shotguns have haunted the dreams of FPS players since the dawn of the digital age. Every one of us knows what it's like to walk around a corner you think is safe, and without warning, your soul has separated from your body. Although shotguns require a keen sense of positioning, and timing, you really can't go wrong buying a shotgun to get some early round picks when you are performing a "light buy" with your team.

- There are two shotguns available for purchase in Valorant. First up we have the **Bucky**.
  - The bucky has two firing modes. MB1 shoots the gun like normal, while MB2 shoots a projectile roughly 9 meters in front of you, and then explodes into the usual shotgun spray. If positioned correctly, and accurately, you have a high chance of one tapping opponents even at a length range for the typical shotgun.
    - Pros:
      - Two firing modes to adjust distance
      - Cheapest main hand weapon available
      - High eco value
    - Cons:
      - Slow rate of fire
      - Poor ability to kill multiple targets
      - Poor range
      - Low wall penetration



- The second shotgun on our list is the **Judge** which is a semi-auto shotty.
  - The judge is often chosen over the bucky due to its larger magazine and faster rate of fire. The judge shows much more success when dealing with multiple enemies, even if it does slightly less damage at longer ranges than the bucky. However, the Judge costs an additional 66% more than the bucky, putting you at risk of losing eco value.
    - Pros:
      - Rapid fire rate
      - Best shotgun against multiple enemies
      - Medium Wall penetration
      - Large magazine
    - Cons:
      - Average eco value
      - Poor range

## RIFLES

The 2nd largest number of weapons share the Rifle classification. With a diverse range of options at your disposal, making the right choice can be the difference in getting the kill or being killed. Each rifle has its own unique and high quality pros. Most discussion around “meta” weapons revolves around the Phantom and the Vandal. We won't go into too much detail about that in this chapter however, as I want to make sure we stick with the basics!

- The first rifle we have at our disposal is the **Bulldog**, an automatic/burst fire eco pick

- The Bulldog can be a strong contender for one of the best purchases you can make if you just won a pistol round, as it's the cheapest option and packs a lot of punch at any distance with no damage fall-off. With two fire modes, and a healthy magazine size, the Bulldog may be one of the best guns in the game to start learning early on in your Valorant career.
  - Pros:
    - Medium/Large magazine
    - No damage fall-off
    - Two fire modes to adapt to different situations
    - Cheapest Rifle option
    - Good Eco value
  - Cons:
    - Weakest Rifle
    - Medium Wall penetration
    - Suffers in CQC against most weapons
    - Slower rate of fire than most weapons
- Next on our list we have the **Guardian**, a Semi-Automatic rifle for precise, ranged effect.
  - The Guardian is a one tap at a time gun with the slowest rate of fire out of any rifle, but packs a serious punch at any range, this gun is the first rifle on our list that can 1 tap fully armored enemies. Valued at 2500 credits, it is a good choice when you want abilities, armor AND a rifle.
    - Pros:
      - Accurate at long distances without scoping in

- 1 Tap potential
  - Costs less than the Phantom or Vandal
  - Only rifle with Heavy wall penetration
- Cons:
  - Semi-automatic only
  - Slowest rate of fire among rifles
- ADS with the Guardian reduces the spread slightly.
- Next Item on our agenda has the Valorant community split in two, the **Phantom**
  - Comparable to the M4A1-S in CSGO, the Phantom is the most expensive rifle matching the price of the Vandal. The Phantom boasts the highest rate of fire among Rifles and is most effective at ranges from 0-15 meters. The Phantom is the bridge between rifles and SMGs.
    - Pros:
      - Largest magazine out of all rifles
      - Fastest rate of fire out of all rifles
      - 1 Tap between 0-15 meters
      - Easy to control spray pattern
      - Good in CQC and ranged conflicts
    - Cons:
      - Anything outside of 15 meters requires two head shots to kill
      - Poor eco value
      - Medium wall penetration

- ADS reduces spread, and reduces rate of fire dramatically, hip fire whenever possible
- The final weapon we have on our list is the phantom's big brother, the **Vandal**
  - Comparable to the AK-47 in CSGO, the Vandal boasts large magazine size, 1 tap potential at any range, and more effective time to kill vs the phantom between 30-50 meters. The Vandal's rate of fire is much lower than the Phantom, causing more difficult encounters when faced in CQC.
  - Pros:
    - 1 Tap potential at any range
    - 2nd Fastest rate of fire among rifles
  - Cons:
    - Difficult CQC encounters
    - Poor eco value
    - Medium wall penetration
    - Difficult recoil pattern to master.
- ADS with the Vandal causes slight spread reduction, and slower rate of fire.

## SNIPERS

Snipers are some player's best friends in tactical shooters, however they are high risk-high reward weapons. You lose the comfort of all CQC and mid-close range fights, but you gain a massive advantage over every weapon in the game at a distance.

- The first sniper on our list is the **Marshal**, A quick firing , accurate eco option

- The Marshal excels at taking out unarmored targets at a distance, making it the perfect option for attacking/holding long range areas immediately following a successful pistol round. Boasting a high rate of fire (for a sniper rifle) and impressive unscoped accuracy, this weapon can be utilized in multiple situations you normally wouldn't be able to with a sniper.
  - Pros:
    - One of the most affordable weapons
    - High eco value
    - 1 tap unarmored targets in the chest/head
    - 1 tap any target with a HS
    - High rate of fire
    - Good sized magazine
    - High unscoped accuracy
  - Cons:
    - Weak in many situations
    - Poor CQC ability
    - Medium wall penetration
- ADS increases accuracy and decreases fire rate.
- The next sniper we have on our list is also one of the most sought after, the **Operator** (OP for short, pronounced: "AWP")
  - The Operator is a one shot kill machine, facing against an enemy who performs well with an OP is one of the most frightening things to defend/attack against, and can all together deter a team from challenging the site altogether. With a low rate of fire, a small magazine, high cost make it essential to perform well

with the weapon in order to get your money's worth. This also attracts people because the Op can single handedly win rounds before a single “ team fight” begins.

- Pros:
  - Strongest weapon in the game (per bullet)
  - High Wall penetration
  - 1 Tap any target anywhere on the chest/head
  - Foot shots lower the target to ~20hp, making them an easy kill with a sidearm
  - High accuracy when ADS
- Cons:
  - Most expensive weapon in the game
  - Worst Eco value
  - Abysmal unscoped accuracy
  - Poor CQC ability
  - Slow rate of fire
  - If you die with an OP and the enemy picks it up, they receive tremendous value for free
- ADS increases accuracy tremendously, two options 2.5x zoom and 5x zoom.

## **HEAVY MACHINE GUNS (HEAVIES)**

Heavy machine guns can be difficult to use, but have the strength of a rifle, with the fire rate of an SMG, with accuracy in between the two. Heavies can be a good option when you want a powerhouse option that is cheaper than the Phantom or the Vandal.

- The first heavy on our list is the **Ares**.
  - The Ares is the budget heavy, as it costs the same as the Spectre, with an average fire rate that increases up to 30% as it shoots, the Ares offers A good pay out if you can catch opponents in the hailstorm.
    - Pros:
      - Low cost
      - High rate of fire
      - High damage
      - Good eco value
      - High wall penetration
    - Cons:
      - Small magazine for a heavy
      - Poor spread control
  - ADS causes spread reduction and does not affect fire rate.
  
- The final heavy on our list is the second most expensive weapon, the Odin
  - The Odin is the big gun that everyone pictures when they think of a heavy. Boasting an extremely high fire rate and punishing damage per bullet, it's not hard to see why the oden is a top choice for many playing holding a site on their own.
    - Pros:
      - High damage

- High wall penetration
- High rate of fire
- Large magazine
- Cons:
  - 2nd most expensive weapon
  - Low eco value
  - Poor accuracy
  - Difficult recoil pattern
  - Slow moving while equipped
- ADS causes slight spread reduction and does not require charging up to full fire rate

## **MELEE**

Not much is to be said about melee weapons, so I am going to keep this short. You ALWAYS have a knife (or an axe, or sword, depending on the skin you own) and all knives work the same exact way. When you have your knife equipped you walk at a much faster speed than say, and Odin. You cannot drop your knife, and it takes a few slashes to kill any enemy, but if you manage to sneak up behind one, you can MB2 to perform a powerful attack that is an instant kill on any target. MB1 has a faster attack rate than MB2, but does less damage no matter where you hit the enemy. The knife has no wall penetration. The knife is almost only used to move places faster. If you are killed by a knife, something went very very wrong.

## **ARMOR**

Armor in this game is pretty simple. Armor soaks up incoming damage, gives the Agent additional HP (max of 150) and cannot be healed back.



*Note: Reyna can Overheal back to 150 hit points, but does not provide her armor.*

- (Currently in patch 1.01) **Light Armor** soaks in 66% of the damage you take. It provides an additional 25 hit points and if bought during the proper times, Light Armor can:

1) Save your life against certain weapons which ultimately improves your chances at winning the round.

2) Provide more eco value in the right situations

- (Currently in patch 1.01) **Heavy Armor** soaks in 66% of the damage you take. It provides an additional 50 hit points. Heavy Armor provides everyone with the highest possible HP value; 150. This provides the same benefits as Light Armor, with an additional 25 hit points, but at a much higher cost.

Imagine if professionals knew exactly when they needed light armor and when they needed heavy armor every single round, and was never wrong. Their eco value and economy would boost immensely!

## CHAPTER 5

### Introduction to Game Modes

In Valorant there are currently a few game modes to choose from, with many more on the way. They are: Practice, Custom, Unrated, Rated, and Spike Rush. We will dive into the basic

concept of each game and their rules. Please note that certain rules may change depending on each patch, and as I am writing this guide the current patch is 1.01.

## **PRACTICE**

Practice mode is a private map that you can only load into solo. The Practice map holds the tutorial, a shooting range with many customizable options, a drone shooting range with no customizable options, a recoil tracker/damage counter with customizable distances, an obstacle course, a spike-planting practice area with customizable options, and a spike-defusal practice area with customizable options. In the practice map you can try out every single character in the game for free even if you do not have them unlocked, you have infinite money, abilities, and equipment to choose from at any time.

The practice mode is a fantastic place to take your time and learn each character, their abilities, and their playstyles. The practice range offers a wide variety of options to learn and practice the game for beginners. Daily, for my personal routine, at my pace, I ensure I warm up in the shooting range on medium first, and then when I hit a score of 25+ I move on to hard mode, and I don't leave until I feel comfortable and I hit a score of 20+. From there I like to move on to the Spike-Defusal Area, settings on hard, with infinite ammo off, I buy a Vandal and Heavy Armor, and run through the course, then I buy only a vandal, and defuse the bomb, I do the same with the Phantom, the bulldog, the Marshal, the Sheriff, the Ghost, and finally the classic. Cycle through all of your weapons of choice in the spike defusal arena on hard (if you can, if you're still learning, please lower the difficulty) and if you would like, the spike planting arena can be useful as well. Although currently, hard mode is unbelievably easy once you plant the spike.

## **CUSTOM**

Custom mode is a fantastic tool to explore, learn, and discover on every map at your own pace. Featuring a lobby that you can invite teammates, and enemies to join as friendly competition or to practice running strategies, find new ways and places to use your abilities, and much much more. Choose which map and mode you would like to play. Choose to enable or disable cheats,

and dive right in. When you load into the map you can activate and deactivate selected cheats in the menu (default esc key) in the top right. The cheats available to you are:

- GAME:
- Pause Game timer (on/off)
- End Game Phase
- Pause Game Phase
- Infinite abilities (on/off) *\*this doesn't work on certain abilities; i.e. Viper's Poison Wall\**
- Infinite Magazines (on/off)
- Infinite Credits (on/off)
- Ignore Shopping Restrictions (on/off)
- PLAYER
  - Invulnerability (on/off)
  - Auto-Respawn (on/off)
- Swap Team
- Ghost Mode (allows you to fly around the map)

Custom mode is where organized teams develop and practice strategic plays, participate in scrimmages against other teams, and where friends face off against one another. The sky's the limit within Custom mode.

## **UNRATED/RATED**

Unrated and Rated share the same rule set with one major difference. Unrated places you in a match with players similar to your current MMR, and Rated places you in a specific rank,

which you can raise or lower depending on individual performance. UR/R share the same rule set, which are as follows:

Two teams of 5 are pitted against each other for a first to 13 victory. One team is selected to attack, and the other to defend for the first 12 rounds, half time occurs, all of the money abilities and weapons are reset, and each team switches sides, defenders become attackers, and attackers become defenders for the remainder of the match. If the match comes to a 12-12 outcome, a tiebreaker round is performed. The Attacking team scores 1 point by either killing all of the enemies to end the round, or by planting a Spike (a bomb) and defending it until it explodes for 1 point to end the round. The attacking team is given one Spike, and 100 seconds to get to and plant the Spike on one of multiple designated areas, called Sites. Once the spike is planted, defenders have 45 seconds to successfully defuse the spike. Every defender has the ability to defuse the spike during every single round. The defenders can earn 1 point by either killing all of the attackers to end the round, or by defusing the spike once it has been planted, or a combination of both if necessary. During round 1 and round 13, both sides are given the same exact loadout; A Classic, a knife, an ability, and 800 credits to purchase their choice of equipment and abilities if they chose to do so. At the end of each round, if you survive, whatever equipment and abilities you still have equipped carries over to the next round (aside from round 13 when players switch sides) your ammo is refreshed, your health is set back to 100 but whatever your armor's health is stays the same. I.e. if you ended the round with 13 armor, you start the next round with 13 remaining armor. As each round progresses you earn money by doing different things, even after the round has ended. Every kill you get gives you 200 credits, planting a spike gives your entire team 300 credits, winning/losing the round gives you a set amount of credits that increases as the rounds progress deeper into the match. Before the match begins, each team chooses their characters. Each team can only have 1 of each character on their side, but two characters can be in the same match if they are against each other. Characters can not be changed throughout the remainder of the match. One final note is player ultimates. Each player begins Round 1, 13, and if there is a round 25, with only 3 points away from their ultimate ability no matter if it costs 6 or 7. On every map there are 3 ultimate orbs that are placed between the starting barrier phase holding zones that defenders and attackers will fight for each round. Picking up an ultimate orb takes a few seconds but grants you one ultimate point towards your ultimate ability and disappears for the remainder of the round after it has been captured. Killing an enemy also grants you an ultimate point, and defusing/planting a spike also gives the player who performed the action one ultimate point. If

a player leaves a match early the entire team is compensated by automatically receiving 25 armor each round for free, and a single ultimate orb in place of the disconnected character is left in spawn for any team member to collect before the round starts for free.

## **SPIKE RUSH**

Spike rush is Valorant's newest game mode. Spike rush shares the same rule set as UR/R however, there are a few differences which I will list now. Two teams of 5 are pitted against each other for the first to 4 victory. Half time occurs on round 4. Weapons and armor are pre selected and cannot be changed. All agents on both sides receive the same weapon and armor each round as well as full abilities aside from your ultimate bar. Round 1 per half starts all players off with no armor and the same random sidearm, round 2 gives all players light armor and either the same random SMG or Shotgun, Bulldog, Guardian, Marshal, or Ares. Finally, round 3 gives all players heavy armor and the same weapon which is randomly selected between the Phantom, Vandal, Odin, and Operator. The only other differences are the ultimates and ultimate orbs. kills/plants/defuses all give you 2 points per action. Ultimate orbs are no longer on the map, but are replaced by special orbs instead. There are currently 7 types of orbs, and 5 pre selected orbs are set for each match. These special orbs are randomized in certain locations between the attacker and defenders barriers each round, and only revealed what effect they will have 2 seconds before the round starts, and while the round progresses. As each half progresses, less orbs appear each round. The list of orbs are as follows: Golden Gun (gives a player a golden gun that does 200 damage per hit at any distance, is perfectly accurate, and only contains 3 bullets. Ammo is replenished after each kill, and is automatically reloaded after each kill, missing causes the reload speed to be dramatically slower) Ultimate Orb (grants the player a full ultimate bar) Healing Orb (slowly heals your entire team over time for 20 seconds) Blinding Orb (temporarily causes all enemies to lose most of their vision, and random footsteps and shooting sounds play all around them) Weapon Upgrade (raises your weapon to the next rank, i.e. if it is round 2, you will be given a round 3 weapon) Speed Orb (boosts the movement speed of all players who stand in the radius for a few moments even after they leave) Decay Orb (applies a decay effect removing HP from all enemies for a few moments, which is healed back up after the effect is over) Damage Orb (boosts Agent's damage by 30% for the rest of the round)

## CHAPTER 6

### ABC's of Aiming and Accuracy

One of the absolute most important skills to develop and master in every FPS ever created is your aim. Aiming is arguably the *heart* of competition in the FPS genre and without developing your aim you will never make progress. Aim is the mechanical ability to move your mouse to a specific destination on your screen and click correctly on the set of pixels you intended to. Accuracy is the controlled factor of each FPS. Each game from CSGO to Overwatch to DOOM requires you to aim in a different way and oftentimes is one of the most difficult things to get accustomed to when playing a new game. Fortunately there are hundreds of thousands of guides and videos and visuals and tools out there to help you improve your aim and accuracy. I will not be diving deeply into this topic, and I will not be touching on how to find the best sensitivity for you, and wrist vs arm aiming methods, as there are many guides that will help you more than I can. However, I can ensure you have the proper foundation required to begin to develop these skills. And provide little tips and tricks to help you along the way.

*Here is a conversion chart to help you adjust your settings if you're coming from another game.*



*Image was provided by u/ValorantSource on Reddit r/Valorant*

## AIM

First let's talk about Aim. Developing your aim requires dedication, practice, more practice, a WHOLE LOAD of practice. There are no shortcuts, however there are pleasantly a lot of options to choose from for free right in Valorant's Practice Mode. As a beginner, you must know that the head, body, and legs take different amounts of damage from each weapon. The head is the most vital part of the body, and all weapons do increased damage when they are applied to the head, many weapons can even kill an enemy with one shot, which is known as a 1 tap. The legs take less damage than the body so it is never a good idea to try to deal damage to an enemies legs unless you have no other option. Aiming can be improved simply through practice and proper movements of the mouse. Aiming requires you to find and stick with a specific sensitivity that is comfortable for you, and develop the muscle memory to continually perform the two different types of aim I will be discussing. The two types of Aim are: **Flicking**, and **Tracking**.

Flicking is moving your mouse quickly to get your crosshair on top of the target as quickly as you physically can. Flicking is used when you have to change your crosshairs position from one area to another as quickly as possible in order to increase your chances of survival.

Tracking means your crosshair is already on a target, but the target is moving and you need to keep your crosshair on the target throughout the process. Tracking is used primarily when an enemy is moving around and trying to dodge your bullets or when you have to move short distances between multiple enemies who are standing closely to each other, that does not require a flick.

In order to improve your aim you must improve your flicking and tracking skills. Fortunately, Valorant offers a great in-house area to practice and develop your aim. The *Shooting Range* in the Practice mode. There are two modes to try that I will be going over, which will accomplish different things. You have a “Blinking Bots” mode that spawns 30 enemies, one at a time, in a random location in the provided area, holds them in place momentarily, and then makes the enemy disappear, a moment will pass and the next enemy will appear until all 30 have processed. Depending on what difficulty you set this mode to, it will change the amount of time that bots are present, and the amount of down-time between bots. This mode tracks how many of the 30 bots you successfully killed, 30 is a perfect score. The next mode is a timed mode I call “Speed-Run” where you kill a set amount of bots (either 50 or 100) as quickly as you can. The bots will spawn one at a time, and will appear in a random location in the provided area. The provided area is much larger than the Blinking Enemy mode, so be sure to check the entire area when you can't see the bot. Your score will be how many seconds it took for you to kill all of the bots. The lower the score the better.

Before I tell you the different training programs I have prepared for “First FPS or First PC” players, and Beginners players, I need to tell you about one more concept. There is a famous saying that goes like this, “The shortest distance between two points will always be a straight line.” What are the two points? Point A, is where our crosshair currently is located. Point B is the head of the enemy. Once you kill that enemy, your current crosshair placement immediately becomes point A, and the next enemy's head becomes point B. Now, you might have noticed that every bot's head will be at a very similar level, albeit it may be a good distance away horizontally, enemies heights are all the same in Valorant. Therefore, moving in a straight line is obvious, but what really determines the fastest way to get from point A to point B will depend



on the location point A is in relation to point B. For example. **You NEED to start developing a habit out of ALWAYS keeping your crosshair at head-height, and if you have a bad habit of not doing this, you NEED to change it as soon as possible!** I bolded that because that is single handedly the best Aiming tip you can possibly get for a tactical FPS like Valorant. The only time you adjust the vertical height of your crosshair is when you are compensating for recoil (which we will cover in the Accuracy section below) or when you are aiming at a location that is not on the same level ground as you are. This concept is most difficult to do if you are above the enemy, and you are aiming downward towards them. Here are some visual examples of this concept:

Look at this Sage player's crosshair placement.



Can you see what is wrong with this picture? If enemies are coming around that box, or from the hall in front of her, she is going to have to pull off a big flick to successfully survive the encounter.

*Continue below.*

Outlined in the image below, you will see 4 new pieces of the picture.



The Red line is the head height of enemies who could walk right out from behind the double boxes. The Yellow line is the head height of enemies who could be walking around the corner from the right of that hallway further ahead. The green circle represents the ideal crosshair placement if you suspect an enemy is currently behind the boxes to the left. The blue circle is the ideal crosshair placement if you suspect an enemy may be coming from right.

*Note: The further away enemies are, the lower you must adjust your crosshair!*

Now: Look at this side by side comparison.



The image on the left is bad crosshair placement. The right is good crosshair placement. Even though the enemy did not come from the left side of the boxes like our sage player had

suspected, look at how much closer they are to being able to turn and kill the enemy than the sage on the left. Our Sage player on the right is far more likely to survive and kill the enemy, thanks to proper crosshair placement.

Finally, look at this example of being on an elevated surface above your opponent.



This is where Aiming and crosshair placement becomes slightly more complex. This same principle applies to any situation where you and your opponent are not on the same level of ground. As you saw in earlier examples, the *height* of your crosshair placement must be adjusted based on the distance between you and the enemy. Now if you and your opponent are on different levels of ground, no matter how slight it may be, you must be prepared for it. Note the Lines represent the head height of each of the 3 characters in this picture. The circles represent the actual heads of the 3 characters in this picture. Notice how dramatic the blue circle is away from the red circle. Both characters are the same even ground, but because you are not, you must adjust and plan accordingly.

**Now that we have covered those basic, but important concepts, I want to tell you some training routines I have outlined for Beginner and Intermediate players.**

## First FPS or PC Game?

If you are brand new to FPS games or PC gaming in general, I HIGHLY recommend starting off with Speed Run. Set the bots to 50, buy a Guardian or a Vandal, stand centered in front of the podium, and shoot the start button. Be sure to stand still throughout the exercise. Your goal is not to get a good score. When you do this at first, *I want you to completely ignore what score you get*. Don't pay any attention to it because getting a good score is not your objective. Right now, what I want you to do is to take your time, and as slowly, and smoothly as possible aim towards the heads of the bots, actively and mindfully feeling what it's like to move the center your crosshair right to the middle of the enemies' forehead, and then click MB1 one time, then once again, move to the next bot, and do the same thing. Rinse and repeat until you have killed all 50, being mindful of how your arm and wrist move, and how it feels. Do this again but actively restrain yourself from clicking until you are matched right on their heads. Once you feel comfortable and you feel ready for the next step: do it again. This time, however, time yourself with the scoreboard at the top of the Shooting Range. Try to improve your time. Remember: "Slow is Steady, Steady is Accurate, and Accurate is Fast" keep repeating until you can kill all 50 bots in under 125 seconds. This allows 2.5 seconds to kill each bot with a headshot. Once you feel comfortable and happy with this you can move on to the Beginner Training.

## Beginner

Ok, now as a beginner the Blinking Bots mode will be the most useful. If you would like, before you perform this training routine, you can warm your fingers up by performing the First FPS training above. When you are ready, set the settings to Easy, purchase a Guardian or a Vandal, and shoot the start button and get ready to practice. During this practice session your goal should be to be able to kill as many enemies as possible by 1 tap head shots.

I want you to start every round of this training by centering your crosshair from the middle of the wooden beam in the back of the shooting range at head height. We will refer to this as the "**Resting Point**". As bots appear; move your crosshair in a straight line from the resting point to the bots head, kill, then move back to the resting point. Repeat this for all 30 bots. Try to do this and score as high as possible. If you continually get a score of 30 you can make it more

difficult on yourself by using the Classic sidearm, which cannot 1 tap. Practice this for 15 minutes when you first log in, and in between each unrated/rated/spike rush match. If it is still too easy, try medium difficulty.

## **ACCURACY**

As I stated before: Accuracy is the controlled factor of each FPS. Each game from CSGO to Overwatch to DOOM requires you to aim in a different way. CSGO requires you to be immobile while you shoot, or to use techniques like counter-strafting or ADAD strafing to be accurate. Overwatch, on the other hand, has Soldier 76 who does not care if you are moving or standing or crouching, because his shooting patterns and helix rockets have a set accuracy. Or Widowmaker who can literally fling herself a mile in the air and snipe 2 or 3 people on the way back down with perfect scoped accuracy. Valorant is not like Overwatch at all, it IS often compared to CSGO. There are many differences and I won't go into extreme detail (again because there are hundreds of guides out there) but I will be laying out the basics. One of the most basic concepts are the different levels of accuracy. Crouching is the most accurate and reduces spread slightly on most weapons. Standing still offers exactly no benefit or disadvantage and is used as a baseline for weapon accuracy. Shift+walking while shooting decreases accuracy by a very slight amount. Running is terrible for your accuracy, and if you are jumping or flying through the air, you are the least accurate you can be.

In Valorant your accuracy varies from weapon to weapon. Certain weapons require you to be scoped in and immobile while you shoot them, and others couldn't care less if you are Jett, flying at mach speeds. As you saw in Chapter 4, guns that shoot quickly often have less accuracy, the more slow and controlled it is (aside from shotguns) the less spread you must deal with. The only exception to this rule is the Phantom and the Vandal, which have great fire rates and manageable spread. Although almost all weapons suffer from "running and gunning" there are some weapons that require you to be completely immobile. The Operator, Sheriff, Marshal, Ares and Odin are all practically useless if you are moving and shooting at the same time. On the other end of the spectrum, many lethal ultimates have perfect accuracy even while jumping through the air. Some of these include, *but are not limited to*, Jett, Raze, and Sova's Ultimate ability, and the golden gun in spike rush. Finally we come to one of the most discussed

and often confusing concepts in Valorant: The recoil pattern. Recoil in Valorant is when you hold down MB1 with an automatic weapon (this is called spraying a weapon) and the bullets travel upwards ABOVE your crosshair and start to sway left and right throughout the spray. Valorant has a semi-random recoil pattern for every single weapon. This means that the first few shots are the same exact pattern every time, but the remaining shots are set to travel along a path, but will randomly sway left and right throughout the rest of the magazine. Sounds complicated right? Well do not fret, there is a very easy method to counteract recoil that just requires what any skill requires. Practice, practice, practice!

Another aspect to Accuracy is the ability to shoot through walls, better known as a “Wall Bang”. With well timed and placed shots, a player can wall bang another without the enemy even being able to fight back. What is and is not wall bangable depends on your weapon, the material type, and the thickness of the material. Almost all weapons are Medium to Low Wall Penetration, however some weapons can pierce even thick metal, allowing flushing and easy picks against targets who think they are safely hidden.

Below is a chart made by u/Quarkez that explains every single weapon, and its wall penetration, at what distances, and much more. Thank you for allowing me to include this awesome information in my guide Quarkez! You can also find his very in depth Youtube explanation here: [Quarkwy](#)

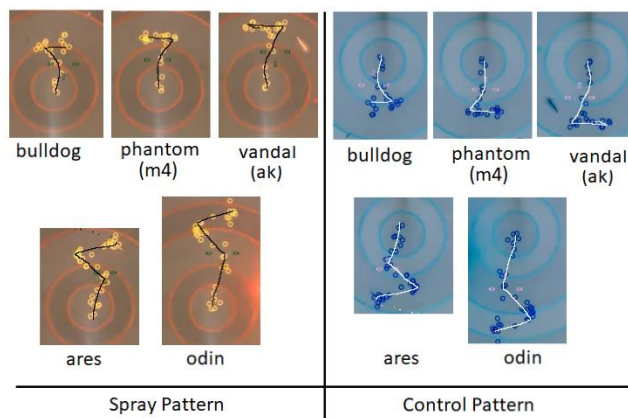
Made by: Quarkwy													
		Fire Rate		Penetrati		Alt Fire		HS = Headshot		BS = Bodyshot		LS = Leg Shot	
Gun	Primary Fire	(Rounds/Sec)											
Sheriff	Semi-Automatic	4	High	N/A	N/A	159/55/46	0m-30m	145/50/42	30m-50m	N/A	N/A	6	800
Operator	Semi-Automatic	0.75	High	2.5x, 5x Zoom	0.75	255/150/127	0m-50m	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	5	4500
Ares	Fully Automatic	10-13	High	1.25x Zoom	10-13	72/30/25	0m-30m	67/28/23	30m-50m	N/A	N/A	50	1600
Odin	Fully Automatic	12-15.6	High	1.25x Zoom	15.6	95/38/32	0m-30m	77/31/26	30m-50m	N/A	N/A	100	3200
Classic	Semi-Automatic	6.75	Low	3-Round Burst	2.22	78/26/22	0m-30m	66/22/18	30m-50m	N/A	N/A	12	0
Shorty	Semi-Automatic, 15 pellets	3.3	Low	N/A	N/A	36/12/10	0m-9m	66/22/18	9m-15m	9/3/2	15m-50m	2	200
Frenzy	Fully Automatic	10	Low	N/A	N/A	78/26/22	0m-20m	63/21/17	20m-50m	N/A	N/A	13	400
Stinger	Fully Automatic	18	Low	1.15x Zoom, 4-round burst	4	67/27/23	0m-20m	62/25/21	20m-50m	N/A	N/A	20	1000
Bucky	Semi-Automatic, 15 pellets	1.1	Low	Semi-automatic	1.1	44/22/19	0m-8m	34/17/14	8m-12m	18/9/8	12m-50m	5	900
Ghost	Semi-Automatic	6.75	Medium	N/A	N/A	105/30/25	0m-30m	87/21/25	30m-50m	N/A	N/A	15	500
Spectre	Fully Automatic	13.33	Medium	1.15x Zoom	12	78/26/22	0-20m	66/22/18	20m-50m	N/A	N/A	30	1600
Judge	Fully Automatic, 12 pellets	3.5	Medium	N/A	N/A	34/17/14	0m-10m	26/13/11	10m-15m	20/10/9	15m-50m	7	1500
Bulldog	Fully Automatic	9.15	Medium	3-Round Burst, 1.25x Zoom	4	116/35/30	0m-50m	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	24	2100
Guardian	Semi-Automatic	6.5	Medium	1.5x Zoom	6.5	195/65/49	0m-50m	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	12	2700
Phantom	Fully Automatic	11	Medium	1.25x Zoom	9.9	156/39/33	0m-15m	140/35/30	15m-30m	124/31/26	30m-50m	30	2900
Vandal	Fully Automatic	9.25	Medium	1.25x Zoom	8.32	156/39/33	0m-50m	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	25	2900
Marshal	Semi-Automatic	1.5	Medium	2.5x Zoom	1.2	202/101/85	0m-50m	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	5	1100

To counter aim in order to control recoil is a simple concept but it is not very easy to master. If the gun you are spraying recoils upwards for 8 shots, and then sways to the left and right,



you simply need to do the opposite. Pull your crosshair downwards at the same pace until you shoot 8 shots, and then you sway the mouse to the right, and then left. Each weapon has its own recoil pattern and it is highly recommended that you choose one weapon and stick with mastering that single recoil first before moving on to others. You may be thinking, “But wait! Drowsy, you handsome man, you said after a few bullets, the recoil sways left and right randomly! How am I supposed to control that?” Ahh good point! Never fear! The devs at Valorant have already thought of that. When your weapon has begun to randomly spray, you will notice that the tip of your barrel will sway left and right as well! The barrel leads the recoil pattern ever so slightly. So you must learn to watch for this out of the corner of your eye. When the barrel sways left, you sway right, when it sways right, you sway left! NOW! Go practice on the target next to the Shooting Range to try to learn recoil control!

The following image below is an example of recoil, and how to counter aim to control the recoil.



## CHAPTER 7

### Economy Introduction

**Economy** (not to be confused with Eco Value) is one of the most important aspects to Valorant, and can legitimately cause you to lose matches if improperly managed. Economy refers to the amount of money you earn each round during UR/R matches, and how you manage that money

throughout the match. I want to give you a very basic outlook on some do's and don'ts with economy management. When playing UR/R the Economy is valued and earned at the same exact pace. As I said earlier in Chapter 5, You earn money through killing, planting, defusing, winning, and losing. All members of both teams start off Round 1 with a Classic, Knife, 1 ability, and 800 credit to spend. What you choose to purchase or not purchase is up to you. There is a lot of debate as to what is the most valuable, we will touch on 1st and 2nd round purchases, for each half of the match.

There are a few different types of economic terms you have to understand. A "Save round" means that no one on your team spends any money, strictly performs the round with whatever equipment they have on hand or pick up off of enemies. A "Light Buy" is when each individual on your team spends a small amount of their money in order to be fully prepared for the next round and possibly some rounds afterwards. Light buying is often used when you are ahead on economy, and your team is performing really well, or when you are behind on economy, and you need an economic boost to better prepare yourself for the future of the match. A "Full buy" is when you spend as much as you can to fully load your abilities, side arm, main arm, and armor to the best of your ability. You can also buy weapons for other players, this can be done if some of your players have a lot more money than others, and in order to continue having the best chance at winning the round, you would purchase a weapon to bring your teammate back into the foreground of their ability to fight.

Let's pretend you are on attack, and you just won the pistol round. Your team will have a large advantage over the enemy team because your economy is not only guaranteed to be strong enough to light buy, but the enemies' economy will be in poor shape. Looking at the economy from this perspective is the most important way to approach in order to expertly manage it. Not only do you want to manage your economy, but you want to want to compare it to your enemy's economy. Here is another example: If your enemy that has been defending Long C on Haven for 3 rounds in a row with an Operator has died, and each round he has purchased an Operator, then by the 4th round he will have absolutely no credits to spend. If the rest of the enemy team is also low on funding, this will mean that the enemy will absolutely not have an Operator this round, and it will be much more safe to peek the long hallway with a long ranged weapon



yourself, putting you and your team in an advantageous position if you enter the site through C long, where defenses are weak.

Another good reason to save or light buy is if it is a close game, your economy is pretty weak, you have 12 wins and the enemy team has 10, and their economy is stronger than yours, it is beneficial to save, or light buy one round in order to prepare yourself to take on the final rounds with a strong economy. Imagine your team gets swept, and the enemy wins the round, your team is now in a 12-11 position with a strong economy. TLDR; don't be afraid to give up a round or two in order to reset your economic strength. Forcing is less common, as you should only force in desperate situations, or if you have the upper hand because of abilities and ultimates.

Now, let's talk about Round 1 and 2, and how to approach them. Round 1 is one of the most important rounds in the game. Essentially if you win round 1, you have a high probability to win round 2. It is common for a team to save after losing a pistol round. In order to set up a strong economy for round 3 and 4. There are a few common purchases for players to make, and they each have pros and cons. They are as follows:

- Light Armor + Classic + Abilities (I call this going A.C.A.)
  - As we all know, proper ability play can make or break a round. The more abilities you have the higher your chance of success if your enemies have the same weapon types as you. The argument is that a classic has a high rate of fire, is an accurate sidearm, and using Light Armor provides you with protection against almost every sidearm available, putting players who use this loadout, and players who spend their money on a Ghost or a Frenzy on an even playing field as you. Essentially giving you the upper hand by having more abilities than the opponent.
  -

- Ghost + Abilities or Ghost + Save (no catchy nickname for this one sorry)
  - Up against ACA this build is safe to purchase due to the poor damage output the classic has. However, Ghost vs Ghost users often find themselves killing and dying to each other quickly, leaving the living Ghost users damaged enough to get 1 tapped by ACA. I personally only recommend using this build if you are confident in your Aim and you have self healing capabilities. Personally, I only recommend a few members purchasing this, to balance abilities among the others, and being protected vs full ACA.

Now, Round 2 almost always depends on what unfolds from round 1. If you are attacking, and you lose round 1, but you DID plant the bomb, your team can potentially light buy, and through careful team play, and good communication skills, you have a fighting chance of winning round 2. If you are attacking, and you lost and DID NOT plant the bomb, I would highly recommend saving in most situations, or just buying a cheap sidearm and baiting out kills as you will be severely out gunned 99% of the time. If you are Attacking and your team won you will have enough money to perform a light buy, if you got 3 or 4 kills, you have the ability to buy a Phantom or a Vandal, which can put you at a large advantage over a full team at a distance. Defending works the same way aside from there is no spike to plant. So you only have a win or lose outcome. Team composition is also something to keep in mind, teams with high aggression characters will be able to take more chances when attacking. The key word when looking at the economy is always **VALUE**. As in: what value do you get out of buying a sheriff round 1, when you aren't comfortable making those tough shots yet? Compared to having more success just playing ACA with precise ability usage. The answer? None.

The final thoughts I have on economy for this chapter is that managing economy will always be a balancing act between risk and reward. What can you afford, and what can you afford to lose? When you need to build economy you must communicate with your team your purchase plan and work together to figure out the bare minimum purchase required as a team to have the highest chance at winning the round. This way even if you fail you can have a stronger opportunity next round to succeed. If your economy is in a comfortable place and you notice the enemy has an economy that won't allow their team to buy full armor AND a strong weapon.

Therefore you can feel confident purchasing a Rifle and Heavy Armor, giving you the upper-hand and forcing the enemy to lose any economy they were attempting to build, keeping your team in an advantageous state. Remember: always keep Value in mind!!!

## CHAPTER 8

### Beginner Practice Ideas for New Teams

Congratulations on forming a new team of like minded individuals who have all committed their time and energy to starting their Valorant organized team journey. I am going to assume that your team has already figured out the essential information. I.e. Who is the team captain? Do you have a coach? If so; who? Do you have a member of the team who can analyze vods and strategize? Do you have a practice schedule? Is the practice schedule consistent every week? How long/how many days do you practice each week? Etc. What I will be explaining in this chapter is what you, as the leader of your team should be looking at and developing in the early stages of working with a new team. First off, you need to set a goal that is clear, simple, and achievable for your level of play. Such as “*We want everyone on the team to reach the rank of platinum by \*insert date here\**” or “*We would like to enter into a tournament and finish top 3 within \_\_\_\_ Months*”. Discuss this goal and your expectations with your team. Ensure everyone agrees and is on the same page. If one member does not have their heart in it, and would rather go play unrated all the time, or a whole other game instead, you may have to find a replacement. Once you have set your goal in mind, and you have all of the basics figured out it's time to figure out: What is the most essential need I must have my team work on? What is the most rudimentary skill that we should begin developing for our first practice session? As a leader, you will have to decipher that for yourself, because every single team will have its own strengths and weaknesses, however, I personally vouch for communication being a top priority for 99% of teams. Especially for games, like Valorant, that require precise information the moment it becomes available. This is practically the perfect place to start. How do I develop practice methods of communication? Simple! Set your expectations, and enforce them. Here is an excerpt from one of my coaching documents I wrote specifically for my Overwatch team, feel free to copy pasta for your own benefit:

*Note: Please keep in mind this is for Overwatch, so a lot of this com information won't make sense to people who have never played it.*

### **General coms:**

-Speaking the right amount

1. This is simple, Ideally you want the coms to ONLY give vital information quickly and efficiently as soon as it is required
2. Teams have been known (as we have) to clutter coms with congratulations and wow's and such, only leaving us to be late setting up for our next engagement and leaving our pre-fight briefing without all of the information we require before the enemy is showing up
3. Cluttered communications can also cause players to miss vital call outs. If our DPS player's flank gets squandered, and they sigh or act shocked over the coms, at the same time our Off Tank spots an opening they can punish, we will statistically not have everyone on the same page, which could cause the enemies mistake to turn into *our* undoing for that individual team fight
4. As difficult as it may be, we must keep our composure until at least the round is over
5. We should hold each other accountable as well, if a member is calling out a target over and over "REAPER REAPER REAPER REAPER REAPER" this is the worst type of call out, and completely ruins the communication for anyone else trying to make an important call. Aside from the fact that, no one on the team knows where on earth the enemy Reaper is, if he has wasted his cooldowns, looking for an Ult, or the amount of health he may or may not have
6. Ensure your call outs are simple, efficient, and only the most vital information is stated no more than twice "Reaper flanking right side, no wraith, right side" or "Zarya no ally bubble, focus Rein, focus Rein"

-speaking with the right tone

1. This one is more difficult
2. We have put an extreme amount of effort into progressing at Overwatch, we are all very passionate about our individual and team performance
3. As long as we aim to improve ourselves in any sense, there will be frustrating setbacks and unfair moments
4. When team members become frustrated, or begin to raise their voice whether it is directed at the enemy or another member of the team, it is NOT okay, and it will NEVER be okay
5. Once we become official, we will be going TDY to different conventions and tournaments, literally as an embodiment of the USAF, so we need to start to act like it now during matches. “Practice like you Play”
6. Complaining, Sighing, Groaning, and Talking crap to the enemy (not in a playful BM way) or to our teammates is the single-handed biggest offense you can commit during a match.
7. Similar to over-communicating, it is disruptive, blocks everyone else from being able to communicate vital information while you are throwing a temper tantrum, and it distracts everyone in the voice channel from the match, and absolutely worst of all, it can have detrimental impact on the team’s attitude as a whole for the rest of the practice, and possibly end up causing people to avoid working with you
8. Every member of the team is expected to identify if a member is beginning to overcrowd the coms with unimportant information, or begins to be disruptive with negative talk or noises, and shut it down by offering positive, motivating, and straight-forward encouragement when possible. Example: “Shake it off, we got the next team fight”, “Don't sweat it (your mistake) We are still up on Ultimate Economy”, or finally “TURN OFF YOUR INTERCOM IF YOU’RE GONNA BAWL LIKE THAT” with love.

#### -Keeping coms clear of clutter

1. Keeping coms clear of clutter is most important for “Mid-Fight” communication

2. As important as pre-fight planning is; plans change
3. Keeping coms clear of clutter allows for all players to make their necessary call outs to be able to adjust for unexpected circumstances that arise during team fights
4. As we are currently a “brand new” team, our team fights won't be as efficient and as quick as they will be a year from now, so it is especially crucial that we keep our coms focused and accurate while we are growing and maturing
5. Positive changes may occur as well during team fights, that may completely change the team's course of action, perhaps our Reinhardt got a huge 6-man fire strike, and gained 3000% ult charge, causing your best option to switch from a 2-Ultimate combo, to the Reinhardt calling his Earthshatter, and the Shot Caller tells the team to switch offensive ults to Rein
6. If your coms are cluttered it becomes nearly impossible to set up ultimate combinations successfully, If the brig is about to dive behind the enemy Reinhardt for a stun to set up the Ally rein for a big slam, it won't be possible unless the Brig communicates clearly their intentions (or it was decided upon by the shot-caller) and the Brig clearly calls out “Stun in 3-2-1” allowing the Rein to know exactly when the perfect moment arrives

*It should be noted that the person, using their ability is in charge of the Countdown, and their countdown may say “3/2/1” in 0.5 seconds, or it will be adjusted to say 5, 4, 3 ,2 1, NOW to account for a Zarya bubble they are waiting to disappear. Or an Ana who slept an ulting Genji, and is counting down her anti-nade. Those who are working with the counter, must expect and prepare for the countdown to be erratic. Some examples include, Zarya using either bubble to block incoming damage or negate stuns on an ulting ally McCree, Orisa using her pull with a Road Hog hook or Zen volly.*

#### -Post fight enemy Ultimate discussion

1. Shot Caller will immediately notify team of defensive holding location, or which route they will be attacking from
2. Ultimate tracker immediately reviews their data, example: “They used Grav and Beat, they should still have Earthshatter, Valkyrie, and EMP.”

### 3. So on and so forth...

As you can see, communications management is much more complex than people realize, and having clear, concise, and informative communication with set rules will help streamline the rest of your team's time working together. Once you have laid out your expectations it's time to put it into practice. Hop into a match with a game style of your choice and listen specifically to the call outs, actively give feedback in between rounds. Take notes, refresh them with your team and review them after the match, and begin the process again until your team starts to self-regulate themselves on the matter before you move on to the next weak point you would like to cover. *Remember: practice practice practice. Refreshing these ideals and rules you have laid down will engrain them in your player's mind.*

If your team is holding some of their first practices ever, and they haven't known each other for a long time, they may not perform at their peak because, like all humans, they can be nervous about performing in front of their peers. Playing on a new team where you don't know anyone is nerve racking and can lead to poor performance, minimal coms, and simple mistakes being made. DO NOT WORRY! This is normal, teams always have a period where they are trying to analyze each other, learning about each other's boundaries, their personalities (are they try-hard or do they like to joke while they play?) if the other players like them? Do the other players think they are good enough to be on the team? All of these insecurities and more may come out when a team is just beginning, even if the players act like they don't. Be patient. You don't have to immediately dive right into lessons and VOD reviews and figure out what your team needs to improve on right away because the only thing they should be worried about in the beginning, is doing their best, and socializing/bonding with their teammates. This is key, and it is something I think every new coach or team captain should understand. Besides, if the team is all over the place, and their performance fluctuates tremendously from round to round, it's extremely difficult to find out exactly what's wrong, and what to improve on, without the players performing at their best to begin with.

*Please note: Each team is subjective and requires personalized work, pay close attention to why you are losing team fights and matches. Ensure you have set rules and regulations to abide*

*by and keep your improvement points basic, but dive deep into the problem to find the root of the issue, and call people out on it politely.*

## CHAPTER 9

### Intermediate Practice Ideas for Teams

So, you have had a schedule going, your team is very comfortable with each other, coms, positioning, aim and accuracy, positioning, and other aspects of the game are improving steadily. What can we do to reach the next level of team play? What could be next? Minimizing mistakes is constant progressive work, what is the next step to advance? Maximizing the *proper* utilization of ALL team abilities and equipment. This takes more brain power than chapter 8. Maximizing proper ability usage is the bane of an unimaginative player's existence. To maximize your value you must discover, practice, develop through trial and error, and perfect your own *strategies and defense tactics*. I will give you an example. During Beta, the Valorant Development team invited FPS professionals/streamers to play in a 3 match tournament against them on Bind, Haven, and then Split. Developers generally are not very good at their games, and although there are ex CSGO pros on their dev team, no one expected it to be much of a fight vs the current professional FPS streamers... We could not have been more wrong. The Dev team demolished the streamers 3-0, with a round W/L record of 39-10. Bind went 13-3, Haven went 13-5, and Split went 13-2. Which just goes to show that Aim & Accuracy + teamwork can get you far, but to truly make an impact as a team, you ABSOLUTELY REQUIRE pristine ability usage. One of my favorite examples that no one thought of when the Beta was being played until the Dev team showed us, was on Bind. The dev team played their Cypher on B, who had a tripwire and a cage set right at the entrance to hookah, with their Raze positioned on A site. The Stream team pushed aggressively into hookah, were caught by the tripwire, Cypher activated his cage, and Raze threw her Cluster Grenade THROUGH THE PORTAL on top of the cage, killing multiple members without anyone even engaging each other. They did this strategy and effectively secured multiple kills not once, but TWICE in the same match!



Now, if you want to see just how far you can take a character in this game, find Flights' Raze Montages on Youtube. The game has not even been in full release for more than a few weeks and this man is taking Raze above and beyond what anyone thought was possible through superior blast pack usage, and by thinking outside of the box when using his ultimate as a mobility tool, rather than a killing blow. Thinking about ability usage from a new angle, pairing abilities, comparing and contrasting efficiency on each map, each site, each entrance will set any team apart from the good, and the great. Some good combinations to try out are Sage's slow orb paired with Raze's cluster grenade, Cypher's camera paired with Sova's ultimate, Maybe use two ultimates at the same exact time (on different sites, when the enemy is split) to confuse, and cause the enemy not to know exactly what and where ultimates are being used. Sit down with your team as a group, and come up with as many ideas as you can, no matter how ridiculous it may sound (as long as it's worth the value. Using 12 abilities to kill 1 or 2 enemies is not worth the value) and then practice them, try to develop communications call outs and positioning that will work with these strategies. Look for the best spots to use these strategies on each map. Have a goal in mind for these strategies. Maybe use these concepts to tackle a weakness you have. If your team struggles holding mid on split, focus on perfecting that through ability usage. An organized team will beat out a more "skilled" team 10-1. I am going to stop this discussion here, as I believe this will give you more than enough to work on...

## CHAPTER 10

### Advanced Practice Ideas for Teams

Successful? Because you all are a high rank? Because you have placed high in a few tournaments? That's not what we call success! Success is taking yourself above and beyond what you thought was possible! Success is pushing yourself as far as you can go. Success is seeing a record you want to break, or a goal you want to achieve, working as hard as you can, and absolutely blowing it out of the water!

If I learned anything in my time in the military, it's that "Nerves are for the unprepared". You have practiced, you have studied, you have developed, you have committed yourself, and your

team has too. You are at your limits and progression has slowed. Tell me, how do you get this metaphorical train that is weighed down by carrying all of your accomplishments, trophies, strategies, and game knowledge up this massive mountain before the other teams when they may have a shiner, new model of engine? You push every bit of knowledge, skill, effort, and strategy to the brink of value, and then you push it *over the edge*. This is when you start taking risks. As a competitive player, making calculated risks should be second nature. You may have gotten comfortable with your decision making skills and therefore your progression has slowed to a crawl. With your team in mind, you need to push each other to your absolute limits. In baseball, a player can make it into the hall of fame with a 70% fail rate trying to attempt what they broke records doing. It took Tony Hawk countless attempts to land the famous 900. Tony broke ribs, and strained his back, but the mentality to stay committed to doing something no one has ever successfully done takes fortitude. This is the mentality you and your team must develop. You will not make the biggest plays of your life by always playing it safe. Attempt plays and enter gunfights in a smart way, but don't be afraid to push your abilities as a player to do things you didn't think you could. Now, from a team perspective, your teammates can help you, with proper communication and coordination, you can completely outplay the opponent with the safety that your teammate can cover your back, or rotate to a new position and cover multiple areas at once, so you can focus on the task at hand. The last thing I would like to state about pushing yourself to the limits is to do it within reason. This may sound contradictory to what I just stated above, but I will try my best to explain what I mean by that. As Omen, you wouldn't ult directly into the middle of the enemy team to try to make a big play, as you will have 5 players staring you down, waiting for you to fully form. You need to think about what is actually possible against players your level and more importantly players above your level. Keep your risk making within logical reason, but don't be afraid to fail trying, as failing is the key to improving. Doing these things can be very difficult, and your Winrate/KDR will absolutely take a hit when you first start doing this. Keep the long-term goal in mind and the work will eventually become worth the wait...

I cannot express how firmly I believe that finding and hiring a coach for your team is one of the most important things you can do in Esports, and is absolutely essential to improving as advanced players. Being able to critique yourself mid-match is one of the most difficult mental battles you will face. It is near impossible to know what minor mistakes you and your team are making mid match that are truly causing you to lose unless they are extremely basic mistakes

made by rookies. (which is unlikely when you are playing with an experienced team who play synergistically with each other) Even critiquing a VOD Review yourself is difficult, as you know exactly what your mindset was when making the play you did. To find a deep rooted issue that may be holding you back will require a 3rd party at the highest levels. Coaches are able to find individual player weaknesses, and to spot weaknesses in your current strategies as a team much more successfully, as their entire job is to analyze, adapt, and overcome. One benefit coaches have is that they do not have the pressure of performing in-game on top of their shoulders. In fact, most coaches are rather garbage at the game, especially compared to top tier players. You wouldn't expect the Coach of Manchester United to play as well as Cristiano Ronaldo, and vice versa, you wouldn't expect Cristiano to know as much about the game as his Coach. This takes the pressure off of you and your team to find your weak points and areas required to improve, and allows you to focus more attention on actually improving these things. Forgive me for another sports reference, but it is important to make cross references as the sports world and esports world are currently colliding and referring to traditional sports is an entire realm of knowledge that will always be relevant in some way to Esports. I apologize, I digress... There was a famous batter who was outplaying every pitcher with a high home-run percentage. Coaches played the videos back and found out that he cannot recognize a break-ball pitch to save his life. From then on, pitchers one by one started throwing him ONLY break-ball pitches, and his strikeout rate shot up to a frightening high percentage. He was able to counteract this by taking the advice of *his* coaches. This player worked with his team and coach to develop a training regimen, and practiced recognizing and hitting break-ball pitches throughout the entire off-season, which proved successful. This gives us a great example of how difficult it may be to recognize exactly what *you* as a player are doing wrong, or to recognize when to capitalize off of a seemingly invincible enemy's mistakes without an outside source's help. This is why coaches are so prevalent in Esports. Fun fact, this was not always the case though! There were even rules against having a coach help talk things through with their players in between matches during pro tournaments in CSGO. Luckily this changed and the entire scene improved because of it.

## CHAPTER 11

### Health, Performance, and Routine

The world of Esports is changing dramatically for Professional esports athletes, and you should follow their lead. More and more over the past few years Esports have become one of the biggest entertainment industries in the world, but professional players seem to have unusually short careers in the pro scene. Some of these players retire after 2 or 3 years in the industry. After working your entire life up to this point, why would you leave after such a short run? And why are there so many players who have done the same exact thing? This is because professional Esport teams and leagues are still developing their understanding of Health and Performance. Esports Professionals are often overworked, travel far more often than traditional sports, and have to practice more to keep their spot. The pressure is *always* on in the world of Esports. Fortunately this is all changing, and has been in the most recent years of its existence. Medical Sports Professionals and Nutritionists are being added to professional team rosters more and more. Team managers are starting to figure out that players often need mental check ups and physical breaks to maintain spirits, and to perform at their best. Many teams offer top level lodging, and working facilities, with professional staff to help ensure the players are in tip top conditions moving into each match. Unfortunately for the 99% of us who cannot afford those things, we do not have that luxury. However, this does not mean we can neglect it in the slightest.

Health is one of the biggest factors that determines if a player's performance stays sharp and consistent or not. Fortunately there are infinite guides/studies/apps/websites out there that will not only provide different ways to maintain your health, but can also be personalized to fit you specifically. There is some basic information you should be aware of when learning to improve and maintain your health. The first is the **5 pillars of health**. These pillars are essential to maintaining a healthy lifestyle, especially when dedicating large amounts of time in a chair in front of a screen. These pillars must all be individually maintained, because if one of them is weak, the entire structure can collapse. The 5 pillars are: Spiritual, Mental, Physical, Social, and Emotional. Let's break each one down and take a look at how we can improve, and maintain these pillars in a healthy way.

## **Spiritual**

When we discuss spiritual wellness, we are unable to perfectly summarize all that it encompasses. This is because Spiritual Wellness is dependent on each person. A spiritual aspect of one's life is not a part of the body, an object or person, or thoughts within the mind. It can be one's belief system, their hopes and aspirations, a sense of purpose, peace, religious beliefs, a "Gut feeling", and more. While not all of these concepts apply to everyone, it is important to take a general look at a broad scope to help you develop your Spiritual Pillar.

Some of the things you can do to maintain your Spiritual pillar, is to take time away from work, and hobbies to do something you truly find relaxing on a regular basis. While doing these things, you should look at yourself from within. Ask yourself what do you hope for yourself in life, picture your desired outcomes. During your spiritual refreshers you should not be focused on problems or issues that need to be resolved. You should not be thinking about pathways or routes you will need to improve yourself on. You simply connect with yourself and enjoy the peace of your allotted time frame to rest your spirit. Speaking of time, when you are setting aside time to recoup your spiritual needs, you should set aside more time than you think you will need, this way you do not stress yourself out looking at the clock and counting the time until it's over. You should not stress yourself in any way during this time.

## **Mental**

Your Mental wellness is one of the more under discussed aspects of one's health. Studies have shown more and more in recent times that your mental wellness is every bit as real, and flexible, and in some cases fragile as your physical health. The most complex organ in the entire human body is the brain. Your mind is astounding and has the power to change your entire perspective on life through what I have come to know as your "*Inner Coach*". Your inner coach is that little voice inside you that talks to you when you are doing something or making decisions. It's that voice of reason inside of your head, your conscience. Ask yourself; When was the last time you were very stressed out, or in a very uncomfortable situation, or were very pressured to get something done. Like most people, it probably even happened earlier today for you! Picture

that moment in your head. Think back to your thoughts and feelings. What was your inner coach telling you at that moment? Was your inner coach telling you things like: “There is no way to get this done in time” or “I will not survive this” or “I did \_\_\_\_\_ and I am going to be in so much trouble!” or was your inner coach talking to you with encouragement and advice, such as: “Keep going, you can do this” or “I am lucky I am not dead after the accident today” or “I am proud of myself for how hard I tried to complete this, and I am going to try again.”? Your inner coach is your mental guide. Your mental wellness can be changed if you stop your mental coach from talking negatively, and you look for positivity that is in almost every scenario. Having a negative inner coach causes your performance and quality of work to plummet. After losing 8 straight rounds of high intensity play, with your heart racing at speeds similar to Nascar driver’s, your adrenaline can sometimes give out, and spirits among the team may be low, and it is especially crucial at this point that your inner coach is positive.

Lets picture a scenario, You are in the finals of a tournament, during the final match, the score is 12-11, the enemy team has planted the spike and it's a 1-1 scenario, your team’s economy is completely ruined, the enemy has every advantage, so you have to make a big play NOW. You see a golden opportunity, and you shoot for it, and you end up missing up every shot and you get killed. Now... Imagine your team moaning and groaning and seeing their heads hang low as they know they have no chance of winning. The enemy team is celebrating and congratulating themselves and each other. What is your inner coach saying? Can you imagine how alone and depressed you would feel if you **allowed** your inner coach to speak negatively to you in that moment? You need to redirect your inner coach, have the mental fortitude to pull yourself together, and clutch the next round. This exact scenario happened during a high school basketball game, when a player accidentally gave the ball to an enemy player when the score was tied up, and the final 2 seconds were left on the clock during the final quarter of the state championship. The player did not throw a tantrum, or get down on himself. His coach did not show any expression. The player looked at the coach for guidance, as well as his inner coach, and without saying a word knew that he was going to try to pull off an amazing feat to get the victory back. He stole the ball, and threw a hail mary across the court within the final two seconds of the clock, and sunk it, giving their team 3 points for the win. Now the surprise part about this event is that after they won, what was the coach's reaction? Same as the mistake made before, no screaming, no yelling, no shouting, jumping up and down, excitement, absolutely stone cold face. When asked about why later, he simply stated that he did not care

about the outcome of the game, as long as his players put everything they have out on the court, which they did, and thanks to an inner coach as strong as the player's they came out on top with a major win.

## **Physical**

This is the part where many of us gamers dread. Eating habits, Sleep, Physical activity, and cleanliness are all important parts of your Physical Health. If you feel and look your best, you will perform your best. I am not going to go deep into food guides, as everyone is different and require different types of diets and planning, but I will say that eating the wrong foods will slow your reaction time, reduce your energy, lower your stamina, and cause your mood to swing in negative ways. Look into how you can help your diet, and take the time to learn about healthy foods, you may find you have a new hobby! Sleep is one of the most under appreciated forms of physical health. When you sleep you repair your mind and body, if you do not get proper amounts of sleep for yourself, you will play terribly. Setting a specific routine for your sleep schedule is one of the most important and necessary aspects to being physically and mentally healthy. The average adult requires a minimum of 6 hours, however most sleep cycles last about 4, which is why it is recommended that you get 8 hours of sleep during the same exact time every single day, even during your weekends. Physical activity can be done in countless ways, running, hiking, gym, traditional sports, playing outside with your pets, and so much more. Try keeping a small set of weights where you play so you can get small sets in here or there in between matches. Physical activity is one of the poorly looked after aspects of players who spend as much time as they can improving in a game, and can often make the biggest difference in overall physical health. Finally we have cleanliness, many jokes and cosplays and tv shows depict gamers as sweaty and unclean. I can personally vouch for the fact that if you feel good about yourself, you're clean, you've got a nice haircut going on, or a new set of clothes or something that you are proud of you will play like it. Confidence is one heck of a boost for mental and physical health. Being clean is the best way to feel confident.

## **Social**

As gamers, being healthy socially comes a little differently than others. Although when we play online we are constantly working with teammates and sometimes finding friends, it's easy

to forget that we are neglecting our other social needs. Finding a social group to be a part of can be a difficult task, and one that many introverted gamers tend to neglect out of fear. But being around supportive, like-minded individuals can be a massive support system for when you are feeling socially distant. Look for a discord or a LFG thread on reddit or facebook can be an easy way to have a lot of options to choose from! Another issue that gamers always seem to face is toxic teammates. Being social is healthy, but removing toxic social threats is healthier. You can be in the best mood, performing like you have never performed before, and then you get placed in a match with players who are high above your skill rating or smurfing, and all of a sudden you cant perform like you have been. If your teammates start offering you toxic statements or making rude remarks it can ruin that good mood you were in. The worst thing you can possibly do is respond with rude comments. This offers no help to the problem, and can only elevate these issues. Instead, you can tell the member politely that you are trying, and that it would be helpful if he could calmly critique what is happening, rather than losing their temper about it. If this does not work, I highly suggest muting them altogether. Having no coms is better than having toxic coms. As a team captain or a coach it is YOUR responsibility to always keep your cool and to extinguish any toxic comments the moment they happen. Remember, no coms is better than toxic coms.

## **Emotional**

Trying to learn or improve at anything will always involve emotion. Emotion is the heart and soul of Esports. Whether it's a feeling of pride after winning a world championship tournament, or the shock and excitement of watching your favorite pro player pull off a strategy that completely turns the entire match upside down. Like many players, competitive gaming brings out the best and worst in us, but having strong emotional control over yourself can allow you to outplay your opponent strategically and come back from a no-win scenario. For example: there was a Tekken 7 Tournament recently where a pretty popular clip emerged from. Two rivals sat down next to each other to play the finals of the tournament. Player 1, got in Player 2's face in real life, and started screaming and trying to intimidate Player 2, shouting things and proclaiming how much better he is than Player 2. Player 2 did not show fear, or timidity, or joy or even anger at this obnoxious display of events. Instead, Player 2 stayed calm and focused and ended up crushing his opponent without losing more than a few rounds out of 5 full bouts. Emotional wellness also includes taking self-care of your needs. You deserve to be



happy and comfortable, and if you are not, how can you perform with a clear mind and emotional slate? Handling your emotions is one thing, being unable to control them due to outside circumstances is another.

## CHAPTER 12

### Establishing a Routine

When applied in the correct manner, consistency produces vivid results. Establishing a routine and sticking to it produces consistency. In this chapter we will be discussing the importance of establishing a routine, and we will look at an example of one.

Getting in the habit of performing a daily routine provides structure for yourself, and allows you to keep your health in balance while maximizing your available practice time. This can be applied to anything you want to work on in life. Having a healthy lifestyle with all 5 of your pillars of wellness being maintained properly offers you a clear mind, and undivided attention to focus on what you actually want to focus on, improving at Valorant! Why else would you be reading this mammoth of a guide? To establish a routine you first must look at your current daily schedule. Do you work? Do you have school? Are your parents or loved ones supporting you as you work towards becoming a professional full time? Factor these into your routine schedule, as you should not be late to work, possibly losing your way of life just to play an extra round of spike rush any time soon. Then mark in the times you plan on eating breakfast, lunch, dinner. Next look at your responsibilities, or any weekly tasks you need to complete, laundry on Mondays, grocery shopping on Sundays, and cleaning the house on Wednesdays, and so forth. Finally factor in your 5 pillars maintenance times, this will be your sleep (8 hours

a night) physical (1 hour at least 3 times a week is a good place to start) meditation and self reflecting for your spiritual health once or twice a week for an hour, and so forth. Try to group as much of it together as possible. Make yourself a nice open window of time to play and improve at Valorant. Your Valorant schedule will come next. For example, if you have 5 hours each weekday to play, you should dedicate some time to: Warm up physically (stretches, typing tests, reaction time tests and such) and mentally (listen to music to get your heart pumping, review what you need to work on for that day, picture your routine in your head) and then begin the in-game warm up, or the assisted warm up with Kovaaks or similar tools. Generally a warm up will last around 30 minutes. Next play for 4 hours, reviewing yourself throughout the match. Capture some Vods, have a coach review them \*looking at my discord link on the cover page\* review them yourself, take notes while you are queued up for the next match, focus on improving your notes or mentally develop strategies to fight a lost round that bugged you during your last match, and so on and so forth. Finally you should get in the habit of warming down, as it allows your mind to ease off of the gas when you have had some seriously busy practice sessions going on. There are numerous benefits to warming-down, which you can find on google. Go back into the Shooting Range, or Kovaaks, play on a difficult setting, one time and one time only, and then lower the setting to a medium difficulty, and finally perform your stretches again. Once again, there are countless stretches you can do for your wrists/hands, back, legs, neck, and so on which you can discover through the beauty of Google Images. Here is a list of a made up routine I made for someone who has a full time job (left), and for someone who doesn't (right).

HOUR	ACTIVITY	1	HOUR	ACTIVITY
7 AM	Wake/Gym	1	7 AM	Wake/Gym
8 AM	Clean Self/Breakfast	1	8 AM	Gym/Clean self
9 AM	Start Work	1	9 AM	Breakfast/Review schedule
10 AM	Work	1	10 AM	Start Laundry/Clean home

11 AM	Work	1	11 AM	Laundry/Review Notes
12 AM	Work/Lunch	1	12 AM	Stretch/Warm Up/Start
1 PM	Work	1	1 PM	Game/Review/Take Notes
2 PM	Work	1	2 PM	Lunch/Review Notes
3 PM	Work	1	3 PM	Game/Review/Take Notes
4 PM	Work	1	4 PM	Game/Review/Take Notes
5 PM	Grocery/Home/Eat	1	5 PM	Game/Notes/Warm-Down
6 PM	Stretch/Warm Up/Start	1	6 PM	Social/Mental
7 PM	Game/Review/Take Notes	1	7 PM	Dinner/Clean Home
8 PM	Game/Review/Take Notes	1	8 PM	Study/Warm up/
9 PM	Game/Review/Take Notes	1	9 PM	Strat Development
10 PM	Game/Notes/Warm-Down	1	10 PM	Warm Down #2
11 PM	Spiritual HP/Prep for Bed	1	11 PM	Spiritual HP/Prep for Bed

As you can see, with scheduling, and a 9 hour work day you are able to take time to improve yourself. So long as you space out your other chores throughout the rest of the week.

## CHAPTER 13

### Agent Breakdown

Woo! This one is going to be a big one... buckle up! It's currently midnight, and I'm 2 chapters behind my quota for the day, but I am pushing this out because I made a commitment to the community, and darn it, I plan on following through!

Each Agent in Valorant is completely unique from the others, some of them share similar abilities, however they all offer a wide variety of , as each smoke, each “flash”, and each damaging ability has its own place and can be used in ways no one has even thought of yet. Through practice, development, trial and error, YOU could be the one making leaps and bounds discovering and implementing techniques that will change the Valorant community indefinitely!

Let's begin by remembering the 4 current “classes” or “roles” in Valorant. There are **Duelists**, **Initiators**, **Sentinels**, and **Controllers**. There are many mixes and matches with positive and negative results depending on which map you play, and what strengths each player on your team possesses. But, as there is no set-in-stone Meta currently, you are pretty much free to try out what you want! However, there are some Agents that are clearly being chosen more due to their kit. The most consistent across the board that I have seen in High caliber tournament play would be Sage, Cypher, either a Sova or Breach, and at least one Duelist. The 5th is usually an Omen/Brimstone/Reyna/Jett to counterplay Ops as much as possible.

Let's take a look at some of the Agent's kits and their unique playstyles, and some techniques that the highest level of players have been using to master their abilities.

## **DUELISTS**

### **Jett**

Jett was perceived by many as one of the worst agents when the game was in closed beta, however as time has progressed I think the players who really wanted Jett to be meta, and saw the bigger picture (along with a buff or two) realized just what she was capable of. Jett is an Agent who can hold what would be bad positioning for any other agent, catch opponents unprepared, and escape to the next position again, and again. Her kit offers so many get out of jail free cards that when she is managed correctly, she can create a massive problem for the enemy team.

**Cloud Burst** - Jett offers multiple quick-firing smokes that allow her to escape enemy sight in a pitch, or to reposition safely without worry of cross fire. Jett's smokes are often used by newer players like Brimstone's or Omen's as a way to clear a bunch of angles to help push onto a site. This is one of the worst uses for Cloud bursts... (if there is a will though, there is a way) Jett's smokes only lasts for a few seconds, and gives you hardly enough time to even walk onto the site, let alone clear every nook and cranny. Instead, use her smokes mid fight to block angles that the enemy will be double peeking, or eliminate LOS between yourself and the enemy Reyna to momentarily nullify her Leer, and allow you to tailwind around a corner to safety. Jett's Cloud bursts can be curved through the air, so practice getting comfortable throwing it around tight corners and down hallways, or through double doors on Haven's Garage. Try curving it up and landing on a box, and using Updraft to reposition safely behind it to give you a better angle when peeking on a site. Just a few seconds is enough to kill an enemy on the ground and fall back to reposition for your next kill. Having pristine cloudburst usage is key to a good Jett player, but playing around your own Cloud bursts makes a fantastic Jett player. One of the best uses I've seen for Cloud Burst is to throw it up against a wall to give you a one-way smoke onto elevated surfaces. From the bottom of the ramp, to the wall on the left and right of A Long, Haven, allows for you to see the enemies feet, and secure a kill, while neither heaven or hell players can see you... I believe it was Hiko, who was using Jett

when he Killed an enemy that was attacking from Long C on Haven. He threw a cloud burst down the hall and landed it right next to the cubby. Dashed in, and Up-drafted above his own cloud burst. Instead of floating back down slowly, he spotted an enemy and immediately dropped to the floor, flicked to where he last saw the enemy, and secured the 2nd kill, which allowed him to place a second cloud burst and fall back to C into a new position, giving his team a massive advantage by using some quick thinking, 2 cloud bursts, 1 updraft, and his tailwind that will reset on his next kill.

**Updraft** - updraft is useful for repositioning to high grounded areas to catch the opponent off guard, or to gather information. Updraft can be used to allow you to jump up above a doorway, float across, and land on the other side. The opponent might suspect you are still where you were, allowing for an easy pick. Updraft is mostly used as an informational tool or a repositioning tool. The only other use for Updraft is through your ultimate (with some slight uses for shotguns) At the start of the round there are many locations you can double-updraft, and peek over top of buildings and structures to catch unsuspecting players who are holding an angle, mostly on defense, causing an easy headshot with Blade Storm, as it is 100% accurate even if you are floating through the air. Updraft is very loud, and easily recognizable, so against experienced opponents who know your location, you can use updraft hidden safely behind cover, drop to the ground and peek out from below, as your opponent will be suspecting you to be floating around a corner from above. speaking of corners, when you are aiming to collect information using updraft, be sure to hug corners and use LOS to your advantage. If the enemy does see you, and you are floating out in the open, you're an incredibly easy target. If you hug corners, you have much more of a chance to glide back around the corner, out of fire and out of site. As of right now there isn't much high-tier, mind bending strategy that revolves around this ability, just be sure not to try to shoot while floating down, as your accuracy is terrible on every single weapon aside from your ultimate, and the golden gun. Shotguns are surprisingly accurate vs other weapons while you are floating through the air. If you are performing a light buy with your team, a shotgun may be a good tool to help you catch your opponents off guard.

**Tailwind** - Tailwind is one of Jett's best abilities by far. Always free at the beginning of the round, which refreshes on two kills makes this ability an absolute must on the list of important usage. Tailwind causes Jett to dash in any direction your crosshair is pointed in IF you are not holding a movement key. If you ARE holding a movement key, you will dash in that direction no matter where your crosshair is positioned. You cannot dash vertically at all, so, one tactic you can use is to place a cloud burst on the ground blocking the visual sight from your

opponent, using tailwind straight into the ground, making the opponent think that you have dashed to the other side of your cover, and peeking around the corner to shoot at your unsuspecting opponent from the angle you were already positioned in. Tailwind is extremely valuable and potentially endless. However, because there is only one charge, and you can only use it multiple times if you get 2 kills, you will need to ensure you use it properly, without wasting it to move to places faster when it is not needed, or to dash into an opponent who has a shotgun, or some sort of CQC weapon. Tailwind is a perfect counter tool against players who love to use Snipers or any semi-automatic weapon meant for long range engagements. In fact, Jett's whole kit is perfect to help you counterplay Ops. This can make her an absolute must pick, as the meta currently favors Ops.

**Bladestorm** - As we stated earlier, Bladestorm is Jett's Ultimate ability, and it has 100% accuracy, with an instant kill on HS. 3 shots to the body/legs will also kill any player. Bladestorm is extremely valuable against long range targets who do not suspect wildly random angles. When using Bladestorm at the beginning of a round, it is best to find a location that you can catch opponents off guard with the least amount of ability usage as possible, for example; on Ascent, B site, as a defender, you can jump up to get a clear view of B Lobby/B Main by only using ONE Updraft. This allows you to peek into this location twice! Allowing for twice the opportunity to get a pick. No other agent can view through that window from Defender's side with accurate aim. Search for locations on attack/defense for each map to learn these spots before you try to attempt them.

Here is a screenshot for reference.



Notice I am still hugging the right-hand side of the window, allowing for safe escape if I am seen, as well as creating a harder shot for my opponent to land on my Agent. Also notice the crosshair placement is relatively head height, looking towards where I believe the enemy will peek from.

## Phoenix

Phoenix is the Staple entry Agent. With abilities that damage, heal, flash, zone, impair visuals (Wall), give you multiple lives, and so forth. Phoenix's biggest weakness is his lack of mobility compared to some other agents. Phoenix players are often aggressive and like to get the fights started. As a Phoenix player you need to be quick, accurate, and confident. Phoenix offers a nice all-around play style for those who solo queue, or don't like to rely on team play, while still maintaining some sort of utility use for the team. Phoenix has one of the strongest carry potentials out of any hero. It is important to know that although Phoenix is a jack of all trades, he is a master of none. If you like to play Phoenix because of his healing, Reyna and Sage can do it better. If you like him because of his Wall of fire, Viper is a much better choice. If you like his flashes, Breach is better. The only thing that no one can surpass Phoenix on is his Ultimate. Phoenix's ultimate usage is what sets a good Phoenix apart from an amazing one.

**Blaze** - Blaze offers a wide variety of uses, to utilize it most properly relies on accurate game sense and proper timing. Blaze casts a wall of fire that can heal Phoenix, however this should



only be used in this manner in a pinch. It blocks your vision pretty greatly and allows enemies to see where you are from both sides of the wall, as you have to stand directly on the fire to heal. This wall can be used to divide your location into two parts so that you may better reposition, or to intimidate the opponent into not pushing through it until it falls. Blaze offers cover for your teammates as well, as it can be laid down quickly. For example, if you and your teammate are at long A on Haven, and your teammate is on the right side of the wall entering onto the site, and enemies are watching their position from heaven and hell, your teammate has little to no ability to escape this situation easily. Fortunately you can help by casting Blaze along the pathway from you to your teammate, allow the enemy to try to guess when you're moving, try to time it correctly and move to safety in between their shots. This will force them to stay back and wait, and deter them from pushing through your fire to try to secure two kills that will likely be prepared for them to come. Blaze can also be used to block certain locations on the site, causing your enemy to attempt to push from an unbeneficial angle. As an example, if you're on Split, B site, defending, and the enemy pushes in from the garage, you can blaze from behind cover in the center pillar over to a wall across from it. This will deter the enemy from rotating around the pillar counter-clockwise as they won't know what enemies are just waiting for them behind the wall, and they will take damage from the wall if they do. Most of the time they will be forced to rotate clockwise around the pillar, right into your crosshairs, making it a nice simple game of timing. To eliminate the opponent. Now this is a basic example as the enemy could wait for the wall to extinguish and then push, or use flashes and other methods to impede your sight. Which brings me to a better option in most cases. If you use your blaze to cut off one half of the bomb site, you can then use a curveball *through* your fire flashing an unsuspecting aggressive group, allowing for an easy kill or two. Don't forget your wall can curve if you flick your crosshair while it is being deployed, use this to your advantage when you can!

**Curveball** - Curveball is one of the more difficult flash bangs to use in Valorant, but it can be very versatile, allowing for strong outplay potential. Curveball does not heal you, and can accidentally flash you as well as your teammates so use of curveball must be pristine. Curveball is best suited for close/mid ranged engagements. Agents who are flashed are only unable to see for a few seconds, it is very short compared to Breach's flashes. To flash over an obstacle you can stand sideways up against the object, look upward and then curve the flash in the direction of the object, so that it flies straight from your crosshair, over the object, and curves directly over top of it. Curveball can be paired well with any smoke or wall, by throwing the flash from

the inside to the outside of a smoke, or from one side of a wall to another. For the best possible chance of contact with the enemy, the flash should detonate the moment it crosses the threshold. Curveballs are quick but they are able to be turned away from by higher level players. Ensuring the point of detonation is at the earliest possible point that the enemies see it, gives you the greatest chance of successfully flashing the enemy. Curveball is well used as a defensive move as well. If an enemy is aggressively pushing you, you can toss it out around a corner to blind them, making it an easy pick if you keep your ears open. If you plan on flashing right as soon as a round starts, make sure you activate the ability before the barrier round ends, as when Phoenix snaps it is very loud and very distinct. If you open the ability before the barrier phase is over, Phoenix snaps his fingers when the enemy cannot hear it, allowing for an even higher chance of a successful flash.

**Hot Hands** - Hot hands works very well as an area denial tool, or a tool to heal Phoenix back up. Phoenix's hot hands is a molly that works very similar to Brimstones, however it does not last as long and it does less damage. Making it more fit as a healing tool. If played correctly it can be both! For example: if you are attacking A site on Bind from Bathrooms, and the defender pushes you as well. You can back off just outside of back rooms around the door, throw your Hot Hands directly in the doorway, and hide inside of the flames behind cover, thus healing yourself, and denying the enemy the ability to push you aggressively. It's recommended that you watch videos and learn/develop line ups to push enemies out of hiding or to land directly on a planted spike to kill enemies who are attempting to defuse it from a safe location.

**Run it Back** - Run it back is essentially one of the strongest abilities a team can have on their side, allows for hyper aggressive pushes onto a site, an informational scouting tool, a way to attempt to get multiple picks to turn a fight to your favor, and a way to stall a point for as long as possible. Run it back does have one major drawback, in that it will spawn you in a set location, with a large lag time between being mortal, and being able to shoot your weapon. If the enemy is able to sneak around and find your spawning point, you will be completely defenseless as they have the ability to simply tap your head before you can move. With teammates watching your back, you can push in without fear of a flanking enemy. A few things to note is that you heal back up to 100 health when run it back is complete, if you grab the spike while ulting and your timer runs out the spike warps back to your spawn point with you, and any ammo you have is reloaded automatically as well. Run it back works very well with retaking a site as well! Pushing onto a site, gathering as much information as possible while collecting skulls can turn a losing 1v5 into a strong 2v5 if you are talented enough. One more

use for his ultimate is to gather info and protect a downed spike. If the enemy dropped the spike, and you are protecting it. You should be aware of when enemies are approaching. You can safely push out an attempt to kill as many as possible to make the hold easier especially if you have a teammate to protect you. This turns a 2v4 scenario into a 3v4, which is much more winnable.

## **Raze**

Raze is my personal favorite, as her outplay potential is through the roof. Raze's utility is a nightmare for the enemy team when used correctly, and can cause some pretty raging moments if the enemy team does not respect the power she holds. Raze has some seriously high potential to be an unstoppable force, but can easily be countered in every way. Raze offers an informational tool, a mobility tool, a lethal flushing tool and a deadly ultimate. Raze players generally don't play many lurking positions but can reach places and take out opponents before they ever realize what's happening. Raze works in high caliber on offense and defense, making her a solid choice in many team compositions.

**Boom Bot** - Razes boom bot is one of the most effective tools to gather information with, as the boom bot drives a considerable distance, bouncing off walls, locking-on, beeping, jumping, and exploding in enemies faces when they don't play around it correctly. You can wait to find out where the enemy is located by watching and listening to the bot as its outline appears through walls for you, or you can push in with it, forcing you enemies to make a choice between shooting at you, or at the bot. Either can be lethal. The boom bot currently does enough damage to kill any unarmored targets in its vicinity, but will only severely damage players who are caught in it most of the time, allowing for easy picks. The boom bot can be launched up and over small ledges with the use of blast packs. The boom bot generally takes a long enough time to find a target, turn, move, jump, and explode. Making patience a virtue for players playing against Raze. When a boom bot targets you, Raze players will tend to peek with the bot, stay focused, keep crosshair placement, kill the Raze, and then kill the bot if you can. If you cannot, get out of LOS from the Raze, kill the bot, and be prepared for a Cluster Grenade to be thrown right on top of your position.

**Blast Pack** - Blast packs are what bring Raze to the next level of play. Proper blast pack usage is what separates the good the bad and the downright dirty players you see maining this

Brazilian. Blast packs do a considerable amount of damage in a wide radius, pushing allies and enemies away from its blast. It can be shot and destroyed but in most cases this is extremely difficult to do. You can use blast packs to flush enemies out of corners nearby, you can kill enemies above you in heaven or hookah, but most importantly you can use the blast packs to boost yourself in different directions. This can be used to launch yourself on top of a position to shoot down at your enemies, or this can be used to launch yourself into places that the enemy won't be prepared for you to be at so quickly. If you have any confusion on how this can be accomplished you MUST look up a player named "Flights" who has many highlight reels of locations and time after time killing multiple enemies through superior blast pack usage, and is in my opinion, playing Raze to the absolute peak her potential out of any Player I have seen play any Agent so far.

**Cluster Grenades** - Cluster Grenades are Raze's most hated ability. High damage, low risk, good distance, flushing capabilities, area denial, and easy kills against high aggression pushes makes this ability one of the most feared in the game. Cluster grenades are easily a top tier ability with many uses. Proper timing with a single CG can demolish an entire push, killing one or more enemies, and absolutely tearing apart those that were able to fall back in time. Cluster grenades are a good way to ensure you are not pushed momentarily by any enemy with its area denial. One of my favorite uses is on Bind, being on attack, pushing into bathrooms. Throwing a grenade up the hall towards A site forces anyone who is there to back off, and if timed correctly, gives you free access to the Ult orb during its duration. Quickly building up Raze's ultimate. Using the grenades on tight corners or, in small corridors is its most optimal usage. If a sage throws up a wall, blocking herself inside of a smaller area believing she is safe, you can simply throw a grenade over the wall, and watch as she is unable to escape, getting a kill, and breaking down her wall at the same time. Cluster grenades are perfect to ensure certain corners and trouble areas are free of any enemy, eliminating the 50/50 bet, and allowing you to have the peekers advantage against defending agents. Cluster Grenades can also be used to block enemies off from their escape route, allowing for aggressive pushes and minimal room to breath. Don't forget, this ability is free each round, and resets on each 2 kills Raze gets, even if the Cluster Grenade is what caused them! Always know when the enemy Raze may have her CG in hand, and avoid tight corridors, and absolutely be sure not to clump together, as it makes it much harder to escape. Cluster Grenades are perfect to kill enemies through the portal at Bind into Hookah, and Killing enemies in Heaven on A on Haven. To counter this, always be

aware of when the enemy Raze has her cluster grenades, communicate it to your team. Play slow, bait out her CG and then push in.

**Showstopper** - Raze's ultimate is devastating against players who are not aware of how it works. Raze's ultimate is however, fairly beatable. Raze's ultimate is a one hit kill with a wide area of effect, perfect accuracy, and pretty quick to use. Many players like to use Raze's ult on defense immediately after the round starts, jumping up in the air with a blast pack and launching it directly towards the area that the enemy team may be pushing in from. In most cases, they will not find very many kill this way. But every now and then you can catch 3 or 4, even all 5 players hard pushing a single site, only to be cleaned up immediately after the round begins. Showstopper has also recently been discovered as a good tool for mobility as well. And when paired with two proper blast packs, can put you from Long A on Haven, up into Heaven, looking down at the enemy before they even realize where you are. The possibilities of travel are endless, and I imagine we will see mind bending tactics with this knowledge in the near future. (Just look at Flights, only 2 weeks after release at that!) Showstopper is a great tool to ensure you kill a pesky player who is holding close angles in a particular position, as the rocket is slow, and not very effective against players long distances away (plenty of time to move to a safe location) To counter Showstopper, make sure your team is aware of when the enemy Raze has her ult, where she normally positions herself at the start of each round, and absolutely **DO NO CLUMP TOGETHER**. I cannot tell you how many times I have gotten a 2 or 3 kill with Raze's ult, only to see the enemy sarcastically complain: "Oh Raze isn't broken AT ALL!" No she isn't broken, you just handed me the win is all!

## **Reyna**

Reyna is the newest agent in Valorant, and is highly regarded by many as the strongest character in the game. (I am one of those people when looking at her from a solo perspective) and many people regard her as the absolute worst character in the game. (This is absurd. Her numbers are through the roof) Reyna makes plays by making plays. What this means is, in order to really shine and carry as Reyna, you have to consistently outplay the opponent. You do not get to slow them down, or kill them from vast distances. But you can take on fight after fight without consequence. Reyna boasts the ability to heal over 500 HP each round, blind players with two strong Leers, and be given boosts in strength, speed, and reload speed (an invisibility) when you achieve these kills. Reyna's biggest weakness is that she has almost no

value to her team other than Leer. When Reyna is not getting kills and utilizing her abilities as she should, she becomes a dead weight on the team, and gives the enemy an easy economic and ultimate advantage.

**Leer** - One of the most misused abilities in the game. Leer is a good way to completely ruin your opponent's positional advantages. By placing the Leer higher in the air, the opponent must aim away from your head, destroy the leer, and then back down to you. Spray and pray in the position they think you are, or avoid it all together. You can equip two of these Leers and they travel through objects, making peeking an absolute breeze. Now, what many people do incorrectly, is to throw it directly where they will be walking, or too high, or too far away from their peek, allowing enemies to simply adjust their positioning to no longer be affected by the leer. One of the best ways to use Leer is by throwing it nearby on the ground. This still applies the same effect against the opponent, but they will have a much harder time adjusting themselves to cut off the Leer, and the distance is completely within your control since it does not go below ground like Omen's does.

**Devour** - One of the strongest abilities in her kit, and one of the strongest in Valorant on pistol rounds, as you can kill an enemy, and gain back full health AND 50 overheal (essentially armor) making her the only person who gets stronger after being attacked. Players often will buy a Ghost with Reyna instead of going ACA, as they won't need the armor, they just need Devour. Allowing for longer range, more accuracy, and more damage, creating consistency with their pistol rounds. You want to use Devour when you are not in immediate danger, and you do not need to be invincible or invisible to reposition.

**Dismiss** - Dismiss shares the same ability pool as Devour. Up to 4 charges, Dismiss allows you to reposition without worry. With a long lag time you have to be careful not to set yourself up for failure when using dismiss. Many players have used Dismiss to reposition, find out they're stuck out in the open, and are picked off completely defenseless. The Dismiss animation also cannot be terminated early, which has lost player's the defuse in time sensitive situations. If you have killed everyone, healing back up is completely pointless, being invincible is completely pointless. All it can do is delay your defuse, which in many cases will be too late, and you will have lost the round for your entire team. Dismiss should ONLY be used to reposition. However, there are two circumstances that are rare, but are also fairly acceptable uses of Dismiss. 1 is to peek while you are invincible, try to gather information, and then duck back behind cover before you are shot, which is far more likely than situation 2. Which can be

used to get in the face of an OP user, strafing, jumping, and moving sporadically, to safely cause them to miss a shot or waste it, and then punishing them before they can even chamber the next round. The biggest indicator of when you should use Dismiss or Devour is to know whether or not you are in immediate danger in your current position.

**Empress** - Finally we have Empress, Reyna's ultimate, which allows her to be stimulated wherever she goes, lasts for a VERY long time, and resets its timer on kill. Empress is the perfect ultimate for players who are trying to clutch against their opponent, or give their allies a boost in advantage by taking out a few enemies at the very beginning of the round. Empress also changes her Dismiss ability to turn her invincible while she uses it. This allows for her to reposition behind enemies, and take an easy victory. However the big issue with Empress is that you glow a bright pink/purple, making you very noticeable, and every ability you use is very loud. When invisible, you should listen for the enemy Reyna's smokey sound effect, as it lasts for a set amount of time making it easy to time your shots as she comes out of her dismiss form. Also, when you hear her laugh and turn invisible, BACK UP. She cannot get behind you if you run backwards. She will either be forced to reposition, or she will attempt to get behind you and allow for an easy pick right in your face as she reappears. The biggest issue newer players have when facing Reyna, is that they let their nerves get the best of them. They will not take their time to hit their shots, and essentially allow Reyna to take control of the situation.

## **INITIATORS**

### **Breach**

Breach is a strong asset to your team on both offense and defense. Breach can make way for your team to force themselves onto a site with almost no utility usage at all. Good Breach players will often use their abilities to force enemies out of hiding for their team to pick them off. Clearing a site before they even step foot onto it. Breach can also stop an enemy push with multiple of his abilities. Making Breach an easy pick for anyone looking to play aggressively.

*Note: I apologize if the breach tips seem lackluster, Breach is currently my least studied character, but I will develop this guide as I find more useful information.*

**Aftershock** - Probably the most effective flushing tools in the game. Its long range, timely cast time, and high damage output for anyone who doesn't avoid it makes this an easy way to force an enemy out of their favorable position. As with any flushing tools, having a teammate helps you catch enemies who are trying to escape the flush, and helps protect you as you use the abilities. Aftershock is the perfect entry ability. Be sure to use this ability when you suspect an enemy is hiding away, or when you are entering a site, and you want to worry about the least amount of corners and campers as possible.

**Flashpoint** - Another effective flushing tool, however this one is much faster, and much more effective. Compared to Phoenix's flash Breach's has many positives and negatives to it. Breach's flash requires there to be a wall in between the area you want to flash and yourself, Phoenix's doesn't. However, Breach's flash has a wider area of effect, and can be cast long distances away. Making for an easy entry tool and defensive tool, which is less punishing to be used incorrectly. Breach's flash works very well against rushing targets, as it forces them to look away, or to stop all together if they get caught in it.

**Fault Line** - One of the more difficult abilities to master, requires a keen amount of game sense, and high speed follow up, this ability is much better suited for players who are stacked in teams, rather than solo players. Enemies caught in the ability can still shoot, so be careful not to slow peek corners, you want to wide swing against enemies, as their mouse and fire rate are much slower than usual. Proper fault line use can completely remove multiple defenders from play momentarily, allowing for easy pushes and quick clean up.

**Rolling Thunder** - like I stated in Ch 2, Rolling thunder is Fault Line on steroids, and does not need to be charged up, covering half of any given bomb site, this Ultimate leaves enemies defenseless if they come in contact with it.

## **Sova**

Sova is one of the characters that requires vast study and game knowledge to use at high tiers. Line ups are your best friend and so are wall bangs. Good Sova players know exactly where their recon arrow is going. And is ready to follow up before it even gives him information. If you enjoy studying and developing strategies your own way Sova is for you.



**Owl Drone** - owl drone is a fantastic scouting tool. Safety fly in and ping enemies for the whole team to see. With an owl drone players can peek with you in order to bait the enemies into shooting the wrong target. The Owl drones ping paired with hunters fury makes for a remarkable and frightening combination. When in owl mode, it's best to fly at very low altitudes as enemies will have to aim down at you, which can save you just enough time to ping them before you're drone is shot down.

**Shock Bolt** - a good ability able to flex wildly different uses. To stall a point players can plant a spike and using these figures, stall as much as they need to effectively reduce the amount of time the enemy has to defuse the spike:

Here's the time's these take to land. (rounded up the number's so it's cleaner)

1 BOUNCE 1 CHARGE 3 SEC TO EXPLODE / AIMED AT AIR

2 BOUNCE 1 CHARGE 3 SEC TO EXPLODE / AIMED AT AIR

1 BOUNCE 2 CHARGE 5 SEC TO EXPLODE / AIMED AT AIR

2 BOUNCE 2 CHARGE 6 SEC TO EXPLODE / AIMED AT AIR

1 BOUNCE 3 CHARGE 15 SEC TO EXPLODE / AIMED AT AIR

2 BOUNCE 3 CHARGE 18 SEC TO EXPLODE/ AIMED AT AIR

1 BOUNCE 1 CHARGE 2.5 SEC TO EXPLODE/ AIMED AT FLOOR

2 BOUNCE 1 CHARGE 3.5 SEC TO EXPLODE /AIMED AT FLOOR

1 BOUNCE 2 CHARGE 4 SEC TO EXPLODE/ AIMED AT FLOOR

2 BOUNCES 2 CHARGE 6 SEC TO EXPLODE/ AIMED AT FLOOR

1 BOUNCE 3 CHARGE 14.50 SEC TO EXPLODE/ AIMED AT FLOOR

2 BOUNCES 3 CHARGE 24 SEC TO EXPLODE/ AIMED AT FLOOR

Shock bolt can also be used as a nice flushing tool. Be cautious of the lengthy lag time at the end of the ability. You don't want to be caught out in the open.

**Recon Bolt** - Recon bolt is an ability that can make or break your team. If you have a skilled and knowledgeable Sova who times his recon bolts correctly you can obtain vast amounts of information throughout each match and each map you play on. Capitalizing on this given information is the key to making the most use out of Sova. Recon bolts don't have to be fancy, in fact in high pressure situations it's almost always better not to be, however being able to fire your recon from a safe location is absolutely key to playing Sova. Study up, develop your roster of recons and memorize which ones work better and which ones are useless in most cases. Be careful of misleading information, as enemies can easily hide behind something to block LOS from the arrows, leaving you without the full picture.

**Hunters Fury** - strong ultimate that can be used aggressively, defensively, to stall the refusal or plant of the spike, and etc. Good sovas will ping the spike or location they want to use their Ult on, to not only be able to see it easier through the wall, but to allow them to see how high or low vertically it is as well. This Ult pairs well with any pinging ability. Dodging it is essential as an enemy because you're further revealed when hit. Making the next shot an easier hit. Aim to disrupt or damage with this ability, killing is optimal but not always the best use of it.

## CONTROLLERS

### Brimstone

Brimstone has been a staple character on every team since launch. The longest lasting smokes with solo-hold potential on the spike causes for high quality out-play ability. Brimstone can force the enemy into moving in whatever direction he wants them to with his smokes and incendiary grenade. Forcing them to walk right into a trap.

**Stim Beacon** - One of the most underused abilities in the game Brimstone's stim beacon gives anyone who stands in it an edge with faster fire rate and reload speed, be cautious, the enemy can use this to their advantage as well. I have not seen it done but I often wonder how using it as bait might play out?

**Sky Smokes** - Brimstones sky smokes are often misused by brand new players because they will place all 3 down and run into a site and attempt to plant the spike without clearing it themselves. The enemies

Are still there and they are going to attempt to peek you when they hear the spike. Brimstones sky smokes are best used spaced out one by one to deter enemies from coming in a particular entrance onto site. Or to at least be cautious when they do, giving up valuable time in exchange for a false sense of security.

**Incendiary** - one of the best area denial tools in the game, Molly's can be used similar to Sovas shock bolts from a distance to land right on top of the spike, delaying it for a good amount of time. Players at full HP cannot stand in it, and even defuse half way before they burn to death. This allows for an easy reduction in available defusal time if the brimstone is still alive. If you have multiple allies you will want to send someone to go kill the brimstone or distract him while you defuse to negate this strategy.

**Orbital Strike** - possibly the best area denial tool in the game. Orbital strike can be used from great distances, lasts for a long time, and paired with incendiary to stall the spike defusal is top tier stall. Orbital strike is deadly and can be used in any sort of bait you set for the enemy team. Using it in a dropped spike or on an enemy that's planting or defusing is the most common way to get value out of your ultimate.

## **Omen**

Omen is one of the characters that offer a wide range of outplay ability, and whose potential is just being tapped. Omen offers mobility, the element of surprise, smokes similar to Brimstones power, a fast traveling blind and an ultimate that can guarantee a plant or allow you to fix mistakes if you went to the wrong bomb site.

**Shrouded Step** - allows Omen to teleport across doorways, behind enemies, onto objects, into defensive locations and more when used properly. Omen's teleport can be a little slow so timing is crucial to ensuring you live through the ordeal. Shrouded step is best used similar to Jett's tailwind, to reposition to wallop your enemies with the element of surprise. Shrouded step and dark cover are the most utilized combination of abilities Omen has. Shrouded step can be used

to fake use of a teleporter on Bind, and can be used to get behind unsuspecting enemies for easy kills.

**Paranoia** - paranoia received a buff that makes it fly much faster, proper paranoia usage will save your skin multiple times each match. Try to aim it in locations the enemy may be hiding, to hit campers who may be waiting for you to push, or to remove the site of an Operator who has been waiting on you to leave the cubby for an easy escape. Paranoia is a good initiative tool or a tool to help you escape bad situations.

**Dark Cover** - dark cover is one of Omen's best abilities, as it can be cast across the map to confuse the enemy in your whereabouts. Dark cover, when placed in the air, slowly falls to the ground, which makes it perfect to cast above an object, teleport into the smoke on top of the object, and wait as the smoke falls to the ground, giving you a strong positional advantage against unsuspecting victims!

**From the Shadows** - there are 3 main uses for this ultimate, I have not dived deep into the capabilities of his ultimate so I will list the 3 uses that I have seen, however I hope to see more uses and tricky plays will come soon with ranked mode being announced next week!

Situation 1: the entire enemy team is defending on point A, so you teleport to point B and plant the spike there for free.

Situation 2: you confuse the enemy by using your Ult directly into your same location, causing them to always watch their back as they may think you teleported behind them somewhere, when you are in front all along.

Situation 3: Use it to fast travel closer to a planted bomb to help your team push in from multiple angles. This one is the most often used, but the trickiest, as you must find a position within close proximity, but not too close so the enemy can try to kill you when you spawn in.

## **Viper**

Viper is one of the least played Agents, and has been mentioned by Riot that has not been tapped into her full potential yet. Viper is one of the strongest controllers and has a high degree of impact on offense and defense.

**Snake Bite** - once considered the worst area control ability in the game, patch 1.04 buffed the snake bite, hurts everyone who touches it, even viper; but does little amounts of damage, now that the damage per second has been increased and the fragile debuff has been implemented this is an ability you do NOT want to get caught in! Use this similar to any area denial tool to give yourself time to reposition, to flush out enemies, or to stallspike defusal/pushes from the enemy team!

**Poison Orb** - my personal favorite and what I believe is the best smoke in the game. Although it must be thrown, and may be difficult to find line ups for, this smoke can be activated and deactivated at will, catching pushing enemies off guard, and unable to see or destroy it as you reposition. Poison orb can be picked up and moved, and lasts for a very long time if fully charged. Not to mention the enemy takes decay damage while inside of the orb!

**Poison Wall** - although this wall can't be picked up or moved it is the strongest wall in the game. Poison walls can cut off entire sites, and can be placed in multiple angles which, when used correctly can cut off visual access from two separate entrances. Causing defenders and other players to fall back, or to push forward into an unfavorable position. Poison wall can be deployed and taken down at will similar to the Poison orb, so whenever you want, you can make a call out to your teammates that you are lowering your wall, lower it, and prepare to shoot at enemies who are not prepared for it to fall. NOTE: If your poison orb and wall are both deployed at the same time, they each only reduce the poison meter at no additional cost! Use them both and use them wisely!

**Viper Pit** - Finally Viper's Ultimate; One of the scariest things to see on the enemy team. The pit allows for big plays when used correctly. Placing your Pit in the optimal position is something I don't see a lot of Vipers utilizing to their optimum ability! I will get into this more in a second, but for now I want to talk about uses. There are 4 big reasons to use Viper Pit:

1. You are on Attack, you have just planted the spike and you place your pit on top of the spike to defend the area.
2. You are on Attack and you would like to get onto site and plant the bomb without needing to worry about any OPs or snipers in the distance, so you use VP right before the entrance to the site, allowing you to plant within the pit. (Risky, but I have seen it done successfully multiple times)

3. You are Defending and you use it right when the round starts to deter enemies from even approaching the site, or you use it when you see the enemies are approaching your site to better defend it, or force them to rotate all together.
4. You are Defending, you have killed the spike carrier, and you want to defend its currently downed location. (Least likely occurrence but a very valuable play)

Vipers pit is oftentimes used in a mediocre way during scenario 1. Improving usage during scenario 1 will dramatically improve its success rate. Viper's pit can be easy to master, simply you need to be aware of 3 things, the locations you place it so that you create pockets to hide in, playing in unsuspecting locations to negate any prefire disadvantages, and ensuring your teammates are in a good position/you have good awareness of how many enemies are left, where they are coming from and so on. Viper's pit should be placed in a location that allows a pocket of air in a safe corner of a site. For example: On Bind, point B, the viper pit can be placed so that in the back North West corner of the main site, you can physically step out of the Pit, to hide from your enemies when they are close, or when you are in danger of being spotted. This allows for an easy pick when they walk right past you. You have to use this pocket carefully as you have a limited amount of time you can be outside of the pit before it shuts down, also do not forget that while walking in-and-out of your pit, you are temporarily unable to see due to the solid wall like substance on the outer layer of the pit.

## **SENTINELS**

### **Cypher**

Cypher is the ultimate defender. Being able to cover multiple angles with intuitive trapwire placement, and blocking off enemies path with Cyber cage, you can essentially solo bomb sites. Cypher offers a wide range of visual sight to the team with his Trapwire, Spycam and Neural Theft allowing for wall bangs, engaging the enemy when they are caught, or being paired with other abilities such as Raze's Cluster Grenades with little to no communication. Cypher offers players who like to rely on themselves a solid kit of informative and stalling capabilities. Players who play Cypher like to outsmart their opponents and play more passively.

**Cyber Cage** - Cyber cage is Cypher's smoke, when enemies pass through it, a loud zapping sound occurs, notifying you of how many people pass through the walls of the cage. Cypher's cage has to be activated manually, however it can be activated from anywhere by looking at it and hitting the ability button. This can cause confusion for the enemy team, thinking that you may be close by when you are in fact rotating from an entirely different site. It can also be used to allow yourself time to reposition to take on the enemies from a new angle. Cypher's Cage can be used in many different circumstances, it's up to you to determine which ones are most useful to your playstyle.

**Trapwire** - One of Cypher's best abilities. If the enemy does not respect the trapwire, they will be revealed to the entire team time and time again. Trapwire can be used in hallways and doorways, but what I find the best use for it is at angles, like the entrance to B on Split, the boxes immediately to the left of the entrance are close enough to allow the cypher to place a trapwire between the corner of the box, and the center pillar. This is good placement as most enemies travel directly in that path, allowing for an easy wall bang from behind the wooden cabinet in the back of the site. One issue many new Cyphers have is their vertical placement height. Place it too low and it can be jumped over, making it useless. Raze's boombot and Sova's Owl Drone can also activate the trapwire if they run through it. Making it too high allows for an easy flick to shoot the trap wire, try placing it at waist height or in unsuspecting locations to throw the opponent's aim off. Trapwire usage can be used vertically and horizontally. Try placing it directly in the center of tight corridors vertically from the roof to the floor, this will make it difficult for enemies trying to push onto a site without hitting it. Also listen for enemies who shoot or stab your wire before it is activated, as if they are walking slowly they can see and hear the wire before it activates. There are lots of Trapwire tutorial locations online, find them or develop your own!

**Spycam** - Spycam is one of the most frustrating tools to get hit by, as you have to fall back to a safe location, and then hold F to remove the tracking dart. Spycam can be used in a few different ways:

1. To see enemies coming from specific locations, or to allow full view of a site while maintaining a safe location
2. To try to tag an enemy for wall bangs, or easy ult usage, such as Raze's Sova's Brimstone's etc

3. Placed on the wall facing a site from the entrance, or around corners or objects, which does not provide any value in seeing where the enemies are coming from, but rather gives you long visual contact as enemies won't be checking behind them up onto walls and objects trying to see if there is a camera there. This gives you plenty of time to see enemies and make call outs to your team, giving you a strong retaking opportunity. Be careful not to get caught, as once the enemy is set up defensively, they are more likely to see the camera and shoot it down. The only other downside to this is that it requires you to place the camera before the enemies get to the site, so you must fall back to a safe location to use it properly.

**Neural Theft** - Cypher's ultimate gives you the best information you can possibly get in Valorant currently. When activated you get a snapshot of where every living enemy is located and their character model, as well as their positioning on the mini-map. Neural theft can save you on defense when you were unaware that the enemy was rotating to another site, or when you are on offense it can give you the information that no one is defending A, or that the enemy Jett is flanking you from your spawn. Neural theft should be used by the entire team to gather as much information as possible, and to decide what to do with that information. When using Neural theft take note of where the enemy's character model is facing, is it running with its knife out towards B? Or do they have an OP watching mid? Try to communicate with your teammate every detail you can see in the moment that it is given to you. Ping the enemies locations on the map, and work with your team to take advantage of the information you have been given. When an enemy Cypher uses Neural Theft, try to move in the direction you are NOT currently headed, pretend to be watching Mid, or hiding behind one box, once the flash occurs, you are free to reposition or head back in the original direction you were headed. Giving your enemy faulty information is the key to countering this ultimate.

## **Sage**

Last but not least we have our pimiire stalling agent, an absolute must-pick for organized team play, as her healing capabilities, stalling, and ability to completely revive a member of your team is one of the most valuable abilities in the game. A good Sage player will often sit behind their team, allow them to push in and use their abilities to clear sites, heal up allies the moment they become damaged, and are constantly communicating with their team on their cooldown. If you are Sage and you are the first person to be hurt on your team, you are using her



incorrectly. Sage players are always aware of the flow of battle, maintain good wall usage, and slow orb counters to enemies who are trapped in corridors and rooms.

**Barrier Orb** - Sages Barrier orb is one of the best abilities in the game, especially in early pistol rounds. The barrier orb provides actual stoppage to pushing enemy teams, lasts for a good amount of time (almost a full spike countdown) and gives you information when enemies try to break it with their abilities or weapons. Be careful, as many agents can simply get over top of the wall, such as Jett, Omen, Raze, Sova (when using his ultimate) and other Sages. Other Sages might gather with their team, and raise all of them above the wall at once, to push onto the site together. Be prepared for this, by listening to footsteps and paying attention to the sound of the enemy sage using their wall. Sage's wall can be useless if placed incorrectly, for example: in C site on Haven, if the Sage places her wall at the foot of the stairs in the back of site towards B, enemies can simply hop onto the wall without using any abilities, ensure you do not allow other players access to get onto the wall by placing the barrier as high as possible in corridors and hallways. The Wall can also be used straight on down a hallway, forcing the enemy onto one side of the hallway, making picks, abilities, and peeking a breeze to kill enemies.

**Slow Orb** - Slow orb covers a wide range, can be thrown very far, and can completely stop an enemy from attempting to peek from certain areas, as they will be out in the open, with no way to maneuver or dodge oncoming abilities. Listen for the sound of your slow orb to diminish before placing another down, you want to extend the life of your slow orb as long as possible. Slow orbs and Barrier Orbs have the ability to deny access to a site much longer than it takes for your entire team to rotate and get in position to defend a site. This is what makes Sage the premiere stall agent.

**Healing Orb** - Healing Orb is one of the most sought after abilities in the game. Many players will peek in more confidently knowing they can be healed up afterwards, however it is important to manage your healing orb as well as possible. You always want value out of your orb. Using the orb on a player who has 80 HP when there is another nearby who has 20 is a waste of your ability. If a player peeks in and gets hit for 20 damage, and you know the team is about to push in together, likely causing more damage, you want to save your orb until after the fight. However this is a balancing act, as you will want to use it as many times as possible, as quickly as possible throughout each round to get the most value. The cooldown time is long and usage has to be quick and efficient. It's up to you to decide when the time is right to heal

allies up, and when to allow them to be partially damaged for the greater good of the round later on. Healing orb can also be used on yourself, if your whole team pushes in and you and an ally are both at critical health, you need to heal yourself. You are a priority target when staying alive, and if you heal the enemy, they rush in and get killed, leaving you with 20 hp for the next 45 seconds, you won't be of any use to your team. You are always a priority in a fight unless all allies and enemies are currently engaged in a gun fight and you are sitting in the back at a safe distance.

**Resurrection** - Resurrection is one of the abilities that new sages mess up the most. As strong as it is, if you revive someone right after they die without removing the threat that killed the ally, they will just immediately die again before they can even move, wasting your ultimate. There are a few tricks you can do to maximize your success rate when resurrecting allies. You can kill the enemy and allow your teammates to guard you while you ult, or you can use your wall to block off the threat while you Rez. You can also utilize teammate's smokes or walls to remove LOS while resurrecting. Even just being unable to see the enemy can make your aim inaccurate.

When deciding between multiple players on who to resurrect you want to consider the following: 1) Who has the most utility left, and will be most useful to your current situation?

2) Who has the highest KDR currently, or who is performing the best? (would you rez your ally who is 30-5 or the ally that is 0-15? It's a no-brainer)

3) Who has the best weapon? The reason this is the 3rd consideration is because you can simply pick up the better weapon if you are fast enough and it is safe to do so.

There is one more use I know of that I have seen work successfully on multiple occasions, if you are defending a site, and it's a 1 on 1 scenario, you are playing ring around the rosie with an object in the center of the site, you can Rez an ally to distract the enemy and bait them into shooting at the ally while they are an easy target. peeking right as they start to shoot at your ally from the other direction. This will either cause them to stop shooting your ally, turn and shoot you, giving you and your ally some time to try to kill the enemy, or they will kill your ally and leave themselves completely defenseless while you peek and kill them... Please do

not use this tactic when the entire enemy team is alive. You may kill an OP'er doing this, but it's not worth the value of using your ultimate. Also, the only time you should resurrect an ally after a round is won, is to allow them to save their weapons to further improve or to save your economy. This is a valid reason, and can be the difference between your ally using an OP or a Vandal, or using the shorty hoping for a kill.

## **Killjoy**

Killjoy is the perfect agent to play if you like to adapt to situations through strategic planning and bait/switching your opponent. I suspect Killjoy will be an annoying agent to play against, but I stand by 100% with a sure mind that Killjoy IS NOT BROKEN! From the scenarios I have run and tested over the past few days I believe Killjoy will be extremely adept at two things: 1 - Protecting herself by holding down an area. and 2 - Setting up strong team synergistic combos through the debuffs and information she provides. Killjoy is not a duelist. She cannot charge in and play aggressively. She has no smokes, no flash, no mobility. To play killjoy you NEED to play passively, and make the most out of your strong abilities to see the best results. Charging in first will not only guarantee you get rocked, but will make all the credits you have spent on abilities completely pointless.

**Alarmbot** - Alarmbot is one of the more unique informational tools, as it forces you to act to make use of it. Alarmbot is not a “fire-and-forget” mechanic and definitely requires a quick reaction to take full effect of. Alarmbot has a small radius so it will be extremely strong when placed inside of a smoke that is blocking a high-traffic area; such as a choke point leading onto a site. This will prevent enemies from just rushing in immediately, and when paired with an AOE ability, or spraying through the smoke you will find that you will get an easy pick almost every Single time... just make sure you're coordinating with your team. Another thing I want to mention is that this ability is best used to attempt to get a kill, and should be used much less as an attempt to gather information. Don't forget to pick it up if you haven't used it and you are relocating!

**Nanoswarm** - Boy am I not excited to get hit by this. The damage is insane, the activation is extremely convenient and quick, you can use this in sooooo many different ways, this ability will be incredibly difficult to dodge and will absolutely be winning rounds if used correctly. THIS is the ability we all need to fear. Nanoswarm can be used to kill aggressive enemies, to

stall, to deny the defuse, to flush out enemies and more. Use this ability whenever you see a strong opportunity to get a lot of value. This is the closest thing to an “escape option” that Killjoy has, due to its area denial for 5 seconds, allowing you to rotate or fall back. Nanoswarm can be used on the fly, or can be pre-determined exactly where you think the enemies will be coming from! This ability will pair well with Sage’s slow orbs, and Cypher’s trapwire! I recommend buying one every chance you get, even over the turret and the Alarmbot.

**Turret** - the controversy this thing has caused is historical, 125 health, 8 damage x3 with a slow fire rate, and extremely harsh fall-off damage, and only 180 degree vision? This turret will get low ranking players killed more than it will help them. This turret needs to be placed perfectly, quickly, and in good positioning, however you will find yourself wasting it if you are not in the correct position yourself! 180 degree view means that if you place it just a little to slanted in one direction; you have essentially just added a tiny little “wet floor” sign to the map. Use the turret before your enemies arrive, and place it in a location that will force the enemy to look in a drastically different angle from where you are currently hiding to ensure the highest chance of survival. You’re going to have to switch up the positioning as it’s low HP makes it an easy target to destroy by many different abilities. Be careful when using the turret, you’ll get caught with your pants down for sure.

**Lockdown** - this ability is one I cannot help you with until I see it in action. 13 seconds may be long enough to force players to act and easily push a site and kill you and your totem, or they may just always fall back. Maybe they will completely lose their minds and rush in without checking corners looking for the totem, giving you easy access to some kills. It’s hard to say; but personally I will be falling back. 13 seconds is short enough to wait for. A lot of smokes last almost as long if not longer. Just wait for the timer to count down before making your push, or rotate sites all together. Lockdown will be most useful when time is short and the enemy NEEDS to plant the spike. You can throw it down and wait for the plant sound, and choose to either peak and look for the kill, or wait for the ability to activate, forcing the enemy to try to hide from you. This is how I will undoubtedly be attempting to play with this ultimate.

## CHAPTER 14

### Specific Weapon Breakdown

In this chapter, I will be reviewing a few of my personally most used weapons, and the weapons that I have seen used in most high tier tournament play. These weapons will include the *Phantom*, *Vandal*, *Marshall*, and the *Operator*.

#### Phantom vs Vandal

The debate between the Phantom and the Vandal is ongoing, and just like Counter Strike's M4 vs AK47 debate, will likely last for the entire life of Valorant. However there are a few numbers that can help you determine which one you would like to master and which one you should use for your character and play style. First up is the Phantom, the shorter ranged, accurate, speedy weapon that favors aggressive play, but fails to deliver at long distances as often as the Vandal does. Look at this attached chart below, which shows us their average "Time To Kill" (TTK)

150 hp	0-15 m	15-30 m	30-50 m
Vandal	0.00 / 0.32 / 0.43	0.00 / 0.32 / 0.43	0.00 / 0.32 / 0.43
Phantom	0.00 / 0.27 / 0.36	0.09 / 0.36 / 0.45	0.09 / 0.36 / 0.45
Vandal ADS	0.00 / 0.36 / 0.48	0.00 / 0.36 / 0.48	0.00 / 0.36 / 0.48
Phantom ADS	0.00 / 0.30 / 0.40	0.10 / 0.40 / 0.50	0.10 / 0.40 / 0.50
125 hp	0-15 m	15-30 m	30-50 m
Vandal	0.00 / 0.32 / 0.32	0.00 / 0.32 / 0.32	0.00 / 0.32 / 0.32
Phantom	0.00 / 0.27 / 0.27	0.00 / 0.27 / 0.36	0.09 / 0.36 / 0.36
Vandal ADS	0.00 / 0.36 / 0.36	0.00 / 0.36 / 0.36	0.00 / 0.36 / 0.36
Phantom ADS	0.00 / 0.30 / 0.30	0.00 / 0.30 / 0.40	0.10 / 0.40 / 0.40
100 hp	0-15 m	15-30 m	30-50 m
Vandal	0.00 / 0.21 / 0.32	0.00 / 0.21 / 0.33	0.00 / 0.21 / 0.34
Phantom	0.00 / 0.18 / 0.27	0.00 / 0.18 / 0.27	0.00 / 0.27 / 0.27
Vandal ADS	0.00 / 0.24 / 0.36	0.00 / 0.24 / 0.36	0.00 / 0.24 / 0.36
Phantom ADS	0.00 / 0.20 / 0.30	0.00 / 0.20 / 0.30	0.00 / 0.30 / 0.30

*This image was made by u/MisterEskere\_ on r/Valorant*

As we can see, in the 0-15 meter category, the Phantom has a faster TTK at all amounts of HP. This shows us that in CQC the Phantom will beat out the Vandal every time by equally skilled players with equally strong accuracy.

In the 15-30 meter category, the Vandal squeaks by as the faster TTK on all armored targets, but still loses to the Phantom against unarmored targets. In a more likely scenario, this means that if your ally has broken an enemy's armor, whether or not they heal back up with Sage or Phoenix, the Phantom is the most optimal weapon. This makes the Phantom the superior weapon when retaking a site against most opponents.

In the 30-50 meter category, the Vandal has a faster TTK on all armored targets once again, especially with the ability to 1 tap at any distance. However, as you can see, the Phantom still maintains its top spot against damaged and unarmored targets. If you are a player like Sage or Cypher, who plays it slow. Or a player who likes to get right in the enemy's face or hold tight angles like Phoenix or Breach, you will probably find the most success with the Phantom. However, with the 1 Tap potential that the Vandal has, if you have high aim and accuracy, and you are confident in your abilities, the Vandal should be your choice of weapon. It doesn't matter if you can kill a full armored enemy at 50 meters in 0.45 seconds if you simply get 1 tapped in 0.00 seconds. I find it is best to choose your favorite, and stick with it, learning its recoil pattern and getting used to how long it generally takes to kill, but also keep in mind your positioning. If you are holding long angles, you might want to purchase the Vandal instead of the Phantom. Use your head and trust in your abilities to pull off what you need to pull off. It's also worth it to note that the Phantom's recoil is easier to manage, those who don't have good accuracy may find it easier to kill enemies at longer distances, even with the longer average TTK

## **Marshall vs Operator**

There is no question about which one you should use, it all comes down to the situation in which you find yourself. For example: If you do not have enough money to buy an op and armor, it is extremely recommended that you don't buy the Op at all. However, there is a loadout nicknamed the "Glass Cannon" in which you buy an Op with no armor, allowing for quicker access to the Operator, with some high risk. In order to pull off a glass cannon successfully you will need to be on point with your shots, and in a position to back off and save yourself if things

go wrong. However if you have enough for the Op and Armor and abilities, you should double check your team's economy, and the enemies' economy as well before you make the purchase. If your enemy will not have long range weapons the Operator will be devastating. If they are able to full-buy, but your team is not, perhaps light buy or save with your team, or perhaps purchasing a gun for your teammates will be a better use of your money, and you can still utilize the power of the Marshall. The Marshall's unscoped accuracy and rate of fire, coupled with its high damage output makes the 1,000 credit gun a considerable option when trying to build a strong economy. The Marshall has the ability to 1 tap at any distance, and is much lighter weight than the Operator, allowing your agent to be much more mobile while using it. Juggle peeking, AD strafing, wide peeking, and boosting/dashing in with abilities will be much more effective when using a Marshall over an Operator. The marshal is the perfect tool to peek long angles, trying to damage opponents forcing them to fall back and heal, or to reposition as they are too weak to take on a team full face. This allows Phantom users to come in and clean up. After the initial shots have been fired. The Operator is a menace when used properly, after each shot, switch to your knife to duck behind cover faster, prep your next shot, peek out and repeat the process. If you find yourself missing, and the enemy is peeking you, it's time to either outsmart them, through the use of abilities, (maybe sova arrow + wallbang) or by repositioning to a different location. Too often I watch teammates peek over and over, missing shot after shot, only to finally get tapped in the head losing the control over the site they had in their position. peeking in the same location every single time makes you predictable, and easy to counter. The enemy can simply throw a smoke, blocking your sight, or wide peek you, causing you to miss. Be careful getting in a habit of pulling your knife out in between each Operator shot. Unlike in CSGO, your fire rate decreases dramatically. Those split seconds are always what decide whether you live or die in an even fight.

## CHAPTER 15

### Individual Play, and Team Roles

In this chapter we will be going over what to look for and how to play when you Solo Queue, and team roles that you must adhere to in order to give yourself the most optimal chance of winning. There is a lot to go over, however the most important thing to remember is to always

be aware of yourself, your enemies, and especially what your teammates are doing. Let's start at the beginning of each match.

Once you enter a lobby your teammates will begin to select their characters. If you are dead set on playing one character go ahead and lock them down, however if you're looking for the highest probability of winning sit back and wait for your teammates to choose their agents. Optimally you want your team composition to look something like this:

- Sage
- Brimstone/Viper
- Sova/Jett/Breach
- Phoenix/Raze/Reyna
- Cypher/Omen

The most used agents at high levels of play have been Breach/Sage/Cypher/Sova/Brimstone. This offers high amounts of defensive and offensive capabilities, with control, stall, initiation, and healing utility. map dependent of course, but this is the most likely used characters. Jett and Reyna have been seeing more and more play lately as well. Essentially the idea is; whatever roles your team is lacking in, you can make up for it if you are well rehearsed in the agent. Don't forget what I said earlier however that it will always be better to have a high aptitude player on an agent they can play effectively rather than to have a player choose a "top tier" agent, and play like crap with them the whole game. I've seen far too many times everyone quickly locks in their characters only to complain and get mad when the last player doesn't want to play Sage, or doesn't perform well with her the entire match because they have no idea what they are doing.

Next let's talk about barrier phase positioning. When you're on defense you need to make sure all of the bases are covered. Discuss with your team what everyone is planning on playing, where they like to cover and let them rotate to their locations. See where the defense is weak and cover there. Each round you need to be aware of your teammates locations and where you should cover. Many times teammates will randomly switch their positioning without telling



anyone, you can call it out (politely) or you can switch them positions. If multiple people are in the same location, keep a sharp eye on the outcome. They may be in discord talking through a strategy amongst themselves, but sometimes they're just playing improperly, which you may have to compensate for later, or rotate early if they both get picked in the beginning of the round. You should get in the habit of trying to sort this out at the beginning of each round. I find a lot of success when rotating to a new starting position if I ask my teammates where the enemies normally like to peek from near my current position, as patterns tend to form on both teams.


Next we will talk about defensive cover on a site. In many cases (depending on map, team composition, and play style of your team and the enemy team) you will have 2 players defending on one site, one player defending Mid, and 2 players defending another site. It's important to position yourself to give you the most optimal chance at survival, while generating a good crossfire with your teammate. For example: on Haven A site you have many options to position defensively. These, again, will be most optimal depending on different weapons/agents/play-styles. However, if you are playing Omen, and your teammate is playing Brimstone, you can crouch on the right side of the window in heaven, peeking A Long with an Op, and your Teammate can be positioned at the entrance of site A next to the connector coming from B. As long as your teammate who is holding B doesn't die, your Brimstone can safely sit in this position watching A Short. This is an example of *goodpassive* positioning. Passive meaning you allow the enemy to peek onto site before action is taken against them. Both you and your Brim are able to fall back behind cover and reload or heal up. Both of you can control when you peek and engage the enemy, and both of you are sitting in positions that with a few short steps, can help cover your teammate with cross fire. If all enemies are running up A short, you can safely peek it with your position in heaven. If they are rushing from long, your teammate can rotate to the left or the right of the center boxes to peek them at his pace. You may also take an *aggressive* defensive position, by peeking down long a with the Op, and your brim peeking down short from the double boxes at the top of the ramp. If you are pushed you can fall back and reposition, however you and the enemy are likely to get to the point of contact at the same time, making it a battle of accuracy and reflexes to survive and take the kill. One other position you may decide to take is directly to the right or left of an entranceway to catch the opponent off guard. As peeking corners and clearing a site is common practice it may be

hard to pull off, as you have nowhere to relocate to if you are caught, and can be taken out easily with flushing abilities.

The next thing I want to mention is the awareness you must maintain when defending a site with a teammate's vision. If your teammate is watching an entrance, but the enemies could be rushing in from behind them at mid, you do not want to ALSO cover the same entrance. Make sure you watch each other's back from all angles possible. Just a few minutes ago I was playing a match on Ascent, I pushed onto B without a problem, as I peeked into the garage I found both the enemy Brimstone and the enemy Sage were ADS towards mid. I simply 1 tapped each one and planted, and prepared for the retake attempt. If either of those players had stuck to their post and watched the entrance at B, they both might have still survived the round. The second part of awareness is the awareness of your teammates on other sites and your mini map. Keeping an eye on your mini map can provide you with more information than your teammates can sometimes. Let's say 2 of your teammates on A scouted 3 enemies trying to attack A, and one of your teammates is watching mid, and is in a fire fight against the enemy. You still hold B as you have not yet identified where the 5th enemy is located. However on your mini map you see 2 bodies at mid. Your teammate didn't call it out because they happened to glance down to check their ammo right as the enemy double peeked at him as he was ducking back to reload. You now know that there are 3 at A, and 2 at mid, therefore there are no enemies near B to defend against. You call it out and you and your teammate at B can choose if you want to push in behind the enemy to try and flank them, or if you want to rotate behind to A to help protect the site from the attack. You could also split and allow your teammate to rotate to A while you flank from behind. If there is a lot of time left in the round remember that the enemy can always rotate back and push to B. If this is the case, try to leave at least one teammate at B to protect against the possible rotation.

Keeping an eye on both team's economy and ultimate availability, and calling out what the enemy is able to buy or do at the start of each round can be incredibly helpful for your entire team. Turn this into a habit! Here I have an example of a mid-match score board.

Let's break it down:

	NAME	ULTIMATE	KDA			WEAPON	CREDS	PING
		6 / 7	3	3	0		▣ 300	24
		5 / 6	2	3	0		▣ 100	20
		READY	1	3	0		▣ 100	24
		6 / 7	1	3	3		▣ 1,400	20
		3 / 7	0	3	0		▣ 5,600	1,020
ATK	1							
DEF	2							
		READY	6	1	1		▣ 6,500	32
		6 / 7	4	5	5		▣ 5,300	20
		6 / 7	3	2	0		▣ 5,300	20
		3 / 6	1	2	1		▣ 3,200	32
		1 / 6	0	1	0		▣ 2,000	28

[ MB3 ]: TOGGLE CURSOR

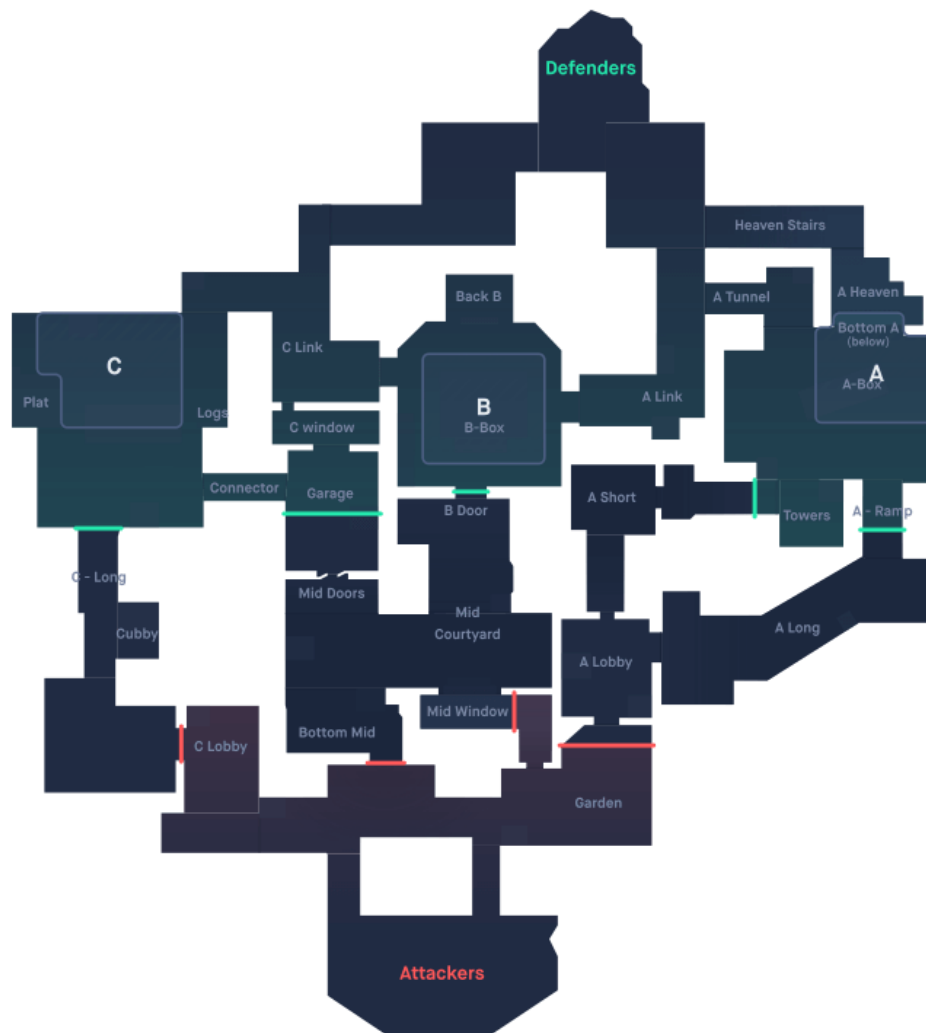
Let's pretend you are the Phoenix on the blue team. At the start of the round you see your team's load out. Generally you will want to play at longer ranges, your Sage has a strong economy, and would benefit the team if the Jett sold her bulldog and requested a Phantom or a Vandal. I would normally suggest that the Sova be the one to replace their weapon, but it seems that all 5 of your teammates have died all 3 rounds. Meaning every teammate purchased what they have currently. This shows that the Sova is the only one playing with the economy in mind. Sage has the most money? Why don't I think Sage is also playing smart? Because the Sage has saved the last 3 rounds and even with a huge economic advantage she built up for her team, she is still purchasing poorly by buying a guardian. There are much better options for her and her team. You (Phoenix), Viper, and Jett are not playing with the economy in mind because you have spent nearly all of your credits to get the load outs you have now. This type of buy is considered a "force buy" and is very risky, as you will be broke if you do not win, or if the three that forced do not survive this round. They are fortunate however, that the Sova is buying light, and that the Sage's poor choices might give them a second try because of all of those credits saved up. As she will be able to help buy equipment for next round if things go wrong. Now even the max amount of 9,000 isn't enough to full buy the team rifles. Let's now look at the enemy's economy. The Viper, Sage, and Cypher can all full buy, the Brimstone can light buy, and the enemy Phoenix is completely broke. Having such wildly different economic numbers often turn into a "broken buy" where players full buy what they can, but allow those who cannot to remain without weapons, hoping to pick one up off of a dead enemy during the round. If the enemy team is playing together, you can expect that the Viper will likely buy a

weapon for the Phoenix, and that the Brimstone will buy a cheap weapon that can pack a punch like a shotgun or a Marshall to compensate. If they go this route they will have a strong economy if they win, but if they lose they will still be able to light buy in preparation for round 6, or full save to set up for 6 and 7. Now let's look at the Ultimates. Only Jett on your team and Viper on the enemy team have their ultimates. However, you, your Viper, and your Jett are all 1 point away from having theirs. The enemy is also close, being 1 point away from their Resurrection and their Neural Theft. These are two big ultimates, and with how fragile your economy is, you must make sure the enemy cannot get a free kill off of your team, or capture an ult orb for free. So your team should play this round slower than most, try to bait out cool downs and ensure you protect the ult orbs. Any ultimate on your team can win the round for you if played correctly, but your coordination must be on point. If the enemy gets a few ultimates right off the bat at the start of the round, you must play safe, and try to win through double peeks, and wait for the opponent to make a mistake.

That was a lot, but to reiterate for your team, you can simply say "our economy is poor, play it safe, play for picks, and make sure the enemy don't get the ult orbs for free."

## CHAPTER 16

### Haven Manual



First on our list of maps I would like to discuss is Haven. As you may have discovered, each map has a unique mechanic to it to set it apart from the others. Haven's unique mechanic is that it is the only map that contains 3 possible sites the attackers can plant on each round. Haven offers mostly medium ranged engagements with defense heavy starting positions. From a defensive point of view, the A site is the only site that attackers can contest long and short at a similar time as the defenders, causing a lot of fire fights to happen at A Long and A Short. So with that in mind, let's discuss A site first.

## A - Attack

When attacking A site, control of the ultimate orb and short A are crucial in the very beginning of the round. Many defenders will play aggressively to try to capture the ultimate orb, or to get a pick on crossing allies. Ensuring you peek long A as quickly as possible gives you the highest chance of successfully killing the enemy before they can kill you, as they have a couple meters

further to travel to reach their peeking position. Always have a teammate back you up to protect against aggressive A Short rushes as well. Pushing onto site in either direction can be a bit tricky, however you have much more space when peeking from Long A, onto site, allowing for good double peeking opportunities. And ability outplay. (Such as Jett's one way smokes). It is good to note that almost all of Heaven is wall-bangable, making a well placed Sova Recon Bolt invaluable. If you're an Omen player and you want to ult into Hell, rather than heaven, select the back of the building, away from the window, as you cannot warp into the wall on heaven, so it automatically warps you below it into hell. The optimal planting point varies with team composition, however in a clutch scenario, the best place to plant is here:



This angle can be seen from deep in A Short, A Long, Heaven, and if positioned correctly, Hell as well. Allowing for easy picks when the enemy tries to defuse, or strong outplay with stalling abilities like Orbital Strike.

## **A - Defense**

As a defender you have two options, playing in an aggressive stance (left) or playing passively (right). Here they are two positioning suggestions side by side:



Your aim on the aggressive side (left) is to pick any enemies you see, and to bait out early ability usage, and gather information for your team. The aim on the right is to protect the ultimate orb and strive for survivability while maintaining control over the immediate site.

### **B - Attack**

Attacking B site is the most difficult in every aspect, difficult to take, difficult to hold, and difficult to defend against retakes. The enemy has the ability to come at you from 3 separate directions, and is always nearby, this means that planting on B must be butter smooth and as fast as can be executed. B site offers multiple points of cover, it will generally be flushed out by smart enemies. It is not recommended to plant here often.

### **B - Defense**

Mid control is very important on Haven. However with so many bomb sites, defense is often stretched thin. You will generally not have more than 2 players in close proximity to another.



Generally defense is set with 1 on C, 1 in C Garage prepared to rotate to C or B when needed, 1 on B, and 2 on A (one long and one short). If being pressured from mid, or if you have a weak player holding B, it will be much harder to rotate to retake sites, however you can counter this by having the short A player rotate to B to help watch the front entrance from the hall on the east side of B.

## C - Attack

There are 3 clear ways onto site, but only two are recommended, unless you have a brimstone to secure areas from Long with his sky smokes. Full push to C from Long, with one member watching behind to ensure nobody flanks, a split of 2 long, and 3 C garage, or a full push into Garage, with one member peeking B to try to get a pick of the B player rotating to help garage. Pushing onto C site can be tricky, there are many locations to be attacked from, and generally is easier to retake than A. There are 6 places that enemies can be lurking when you push onto site, immediately to the left when you come from long, behind the boxes towards garage to the right, on top of elevator to the left, behind elevator, behind the center stack, and on top of the wooden dunnage in the right side of the site. Make sure all of these areas are clear before planting the spike, or the enemy will have a very easy time getting a pick or two or three. The most optimal position to plant is here:

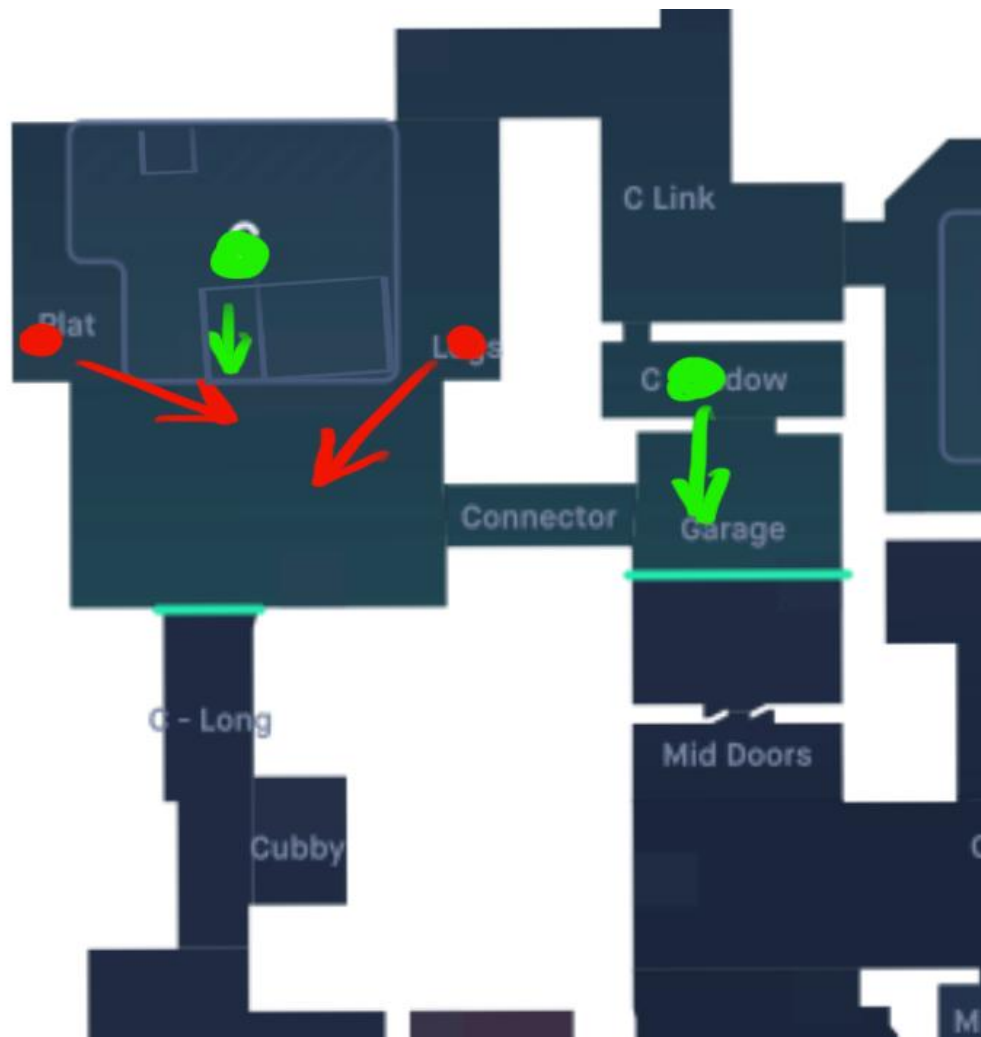


As it can be seen from any entrance, and has a wall to bounce grenades, molliies, and ultimates off of to stall the defuse.



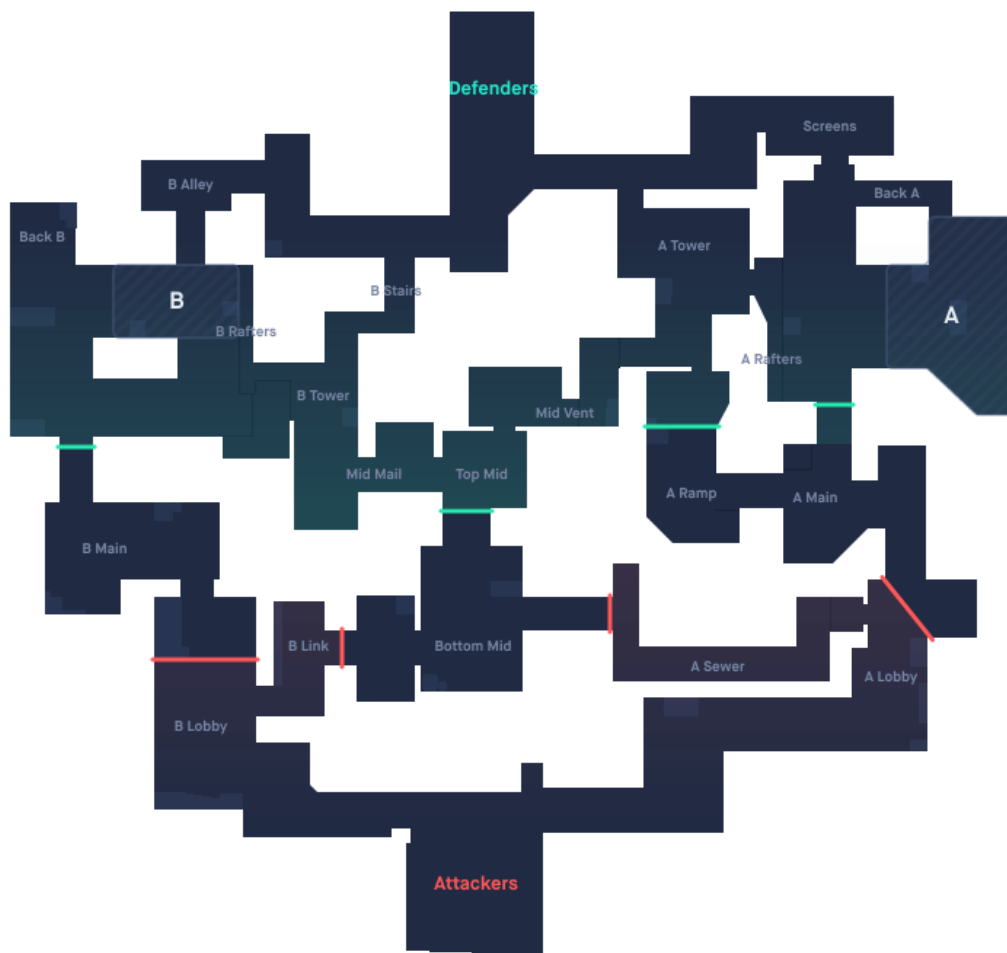
## C - Defense

To defend C, you will need a player watching garage, which can be done from the corner above the elevator on C, or from the window. Inside of garage. One player can play behind the center stack to dodge in and out of enemy fire at long. This can also be viewed from dunnage in the corner, and behind elevator in the corner of C. Be careful, if your teammate dies at B you are unprotected from the back of site. Few the diagram I drew up here:



Red is for cross fire, which is less optimal escape wise, but better aggressively. And Green is safer, but provides nearly no cover fire or double peeking ability.

## Split Manual



Split is all about the two separate sections of the map. A side and B site, which is divided into a very important section of mid ground and two back routes. Having mid control on split is

crucial to attacking and defending either site. Mid fights are almost guaranteed every single round. Defenders have a large advantage at being able to stay in position and set up before attackers can even peek in. However playing aggressively as a defender from A or B is almost impossible as the attackers have the advantageous position.

### **A - Attack**

Attacking A site is a smart move during a pistol round, as the positions that the enemy is likely to try to defend from are very limited. With only 2 well-placed smokes, you can block off half of the map allowing for an easy push onto site. After gaining control of the site it is crucial that you clear heaven, as defenders travel through Heaven above A site, more often than any other location to get to A site. Holding Ramp can be powerful, as you can see the entire width of Heaven without moving or risking being shot from behind, but it is a small window of opportunity, and is often the first place defenders check when attempting a retake. The best places to plant the bomb are either on the back corner of the site, or near elbow, as they both offer some cover, and can easily be incendiary or have cluster grenades thrown at them to push enemies away without a fight.

### **A - Defense**

If the enemy has a Viper on their team that knows their stuff, they can place a toxic wall that can remove visual ability out of both Ramp and Heaven. This can also be done with well placed Brimstone or Omen smokes, forcing you to either push out of heaven or ramp and expose yourself, or to sit back and allow the enemy to push onto site freely, and attempt a retake. It is generally ideal to have one player play back in Screens behind A site, to negate this effect and have a strong visual of the A Main crossing. This player can call out how many enemies there are, and which direction they are headed without risking much. This ally can also take a shot here or there, and generally is most efficient when using a Marshall on round 2 for easy picks. The other ally does best playing aggressively at the top of A ramp, falling back to heaven when overwhelmed or in danger. Be cautious of enemies pushing in from mid, as this player can be an easy pick if they are not paying attention. Refer to the positioning below:



As you can see the starting position of the two defenders are the green dots. If the enemies are pushing towards A main, the player at A ramp would fall back to A Rafters outside of Heaven. Player 2 in screens would call out what information they can gather, in which case the player in heaven could decide to rotate from Rafters to the lower point in heaven, peeking towards Ramp and trying to stop the push. Falling back even further to get healed if need be, to prepare for the retake.

## **B - Attack**

B site is a little more tricky to get onto, however it is generally easier to hold. The corridors are tight and the corners are sharp, allowing for easy picks on players who don't clear rooms. The corridor onto B site is very narrow, an ideal place for Cyphers and Razes to take advantage of stacked enemies. Try to push in quietly, and bait out enemies' utility, while having a fixed eye on the right side of the hallway towards the center tower, and the left side of the hallway towards the double boxes and the wooden cabinet in the back of the site. Enemies positioned

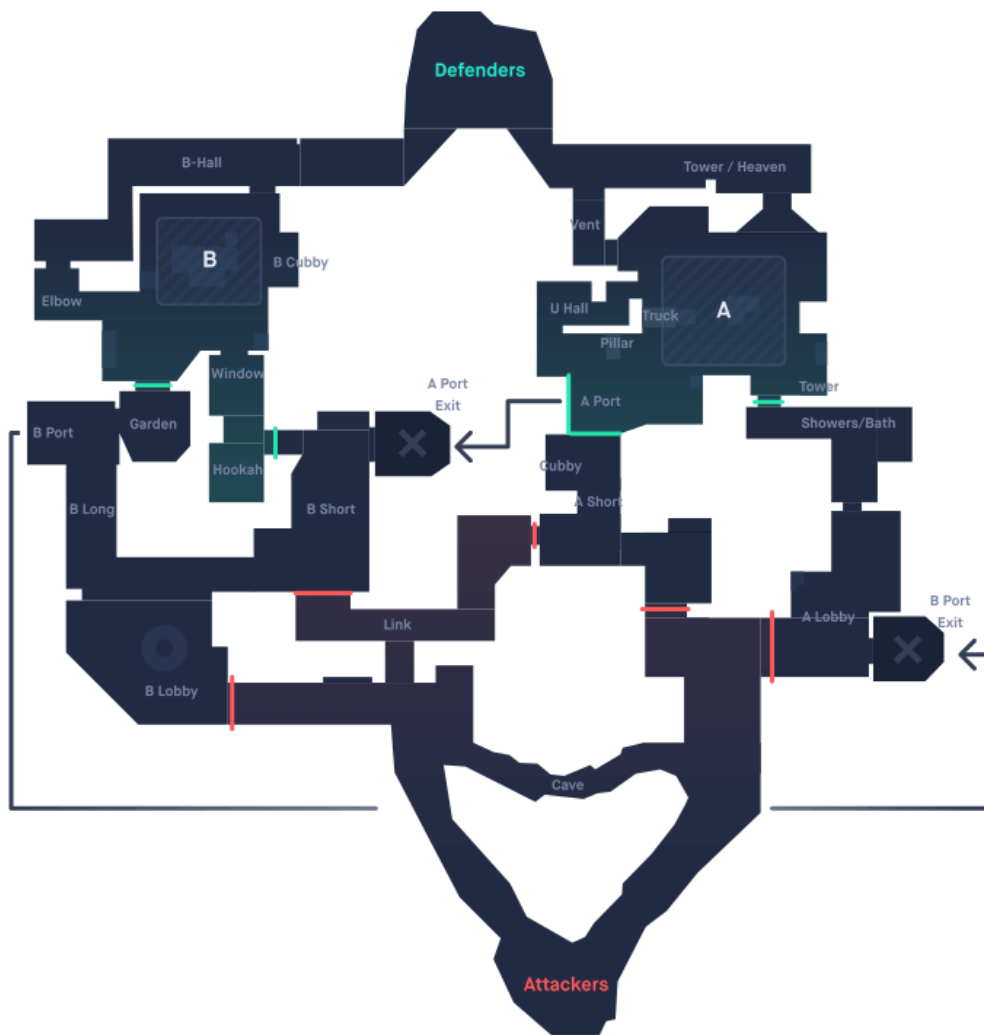
behind the wooden cabinet are easy to pick, as they can be flushed out, and wall banged, so be sure to fire a recon bolt or a flashpoint to check this area before moving forward with the attack. Once on site, be sure to check the area immediately to the left of hallway, heaven, and then the corner below heaven, as it is very easy to hide from enemies there. Once those are cleared, set up defensively to protect the site from Defender's spawn, Mid, and Garage. Utilize the center pillar to play ring around the rosie with enemies to stall the point in one on one scenarios, as it cannot be shot through and is pretty easy to hear players footsteps from a mile away on that metallic floor.

## **B - Defense**

B side defense is generally based around Mid control, Having 2 players watching mid from both Mail and Vent allow for peace of mind when holding the site against Garage pushes. Generally you want to have your strongest defensive character holding B site alone, as Mail can always rotate to help if there is no action at Mid. Cypher and Sage can stall the enemy long enough to allow for a rotation from your team, and Raze/Reyna can keep enemies at bay with their utility. Brimstone is also a good choice here, as his smokes and incendiary can stop a push in its tracks. However Brimstone usually benefits from A and Mid defense more often than not. Be sure to have an escape plan, because B rushes hit hard and hit heavily in most cases. This will usually result in a 1 on 4 situation. Don't take on challenges you are not calm or in a position strong enough to defeat. Attempt to stall, and wait for backup. Fall back if you must and allow the enemy to take the site, for a retake attempt.

## CHAPTER 18

### Bind Manual



Bind is one of the largest maps in the game, and often benefits players who have good accuracy, rather than the element of surprise like Haven. Bind's unique feature is its teleporters and teleport stations. There is one that leads from A to B Short, and one that leads from B long to A Lobby. These teleporters are not two way, and they are very loud, you can hear them from anywhere on the map. Keeping your ears open for teleports is a very wise thing to do when playing on this map. Abilities can be tossed through teleporters and land on the other side, if positioned correctly, you can throw abilities from A port into Hookah, allowing for easy kills or foiled plans making counter attacking Hookah easy and less risky. Bind offers a lot of fakes and rotations to trick your opponents with. Being able to deny plants and defuses will deny your enemies a large chunk of their credits for each round.

## A - Attack

In most cases, A is the first site to be attacked, as it offers long range battles, making it easy to collect information and test the waters before you commit to the attack, however if you are not careful U hall can hold an enemy agent that is ready for your push through A short. Showers and Bath allows for good site clearing before you even see Heaven, giving you a sort of checklist to peek one area by one until you determine its clear, and then commit to peeking Heaven to try to challenge the defender that will be there more often than not. Although obtaining A site may not always be easy, it's important to note that it is harder to defend against retakes, as the enemy can come from all 4 locations. This requires you to successfully defend your areas, and constant communication with your team to ensure all enemies are accounted for, and each location is covered. The most optimal place to plant the bomb is usually right south of Truck, as it can be walled off by sage or smoked off for an easy plant, and a defuse that can be much more difficult. The second most optimal location is on the South East corner of the site, as it can be seen from Vent, Heaven, Showers, and Portal.

### **A - Defense**

Generally A will only have 2 defenders guarding it, as it is no more difficult to defend than B at the start of the round, but MUCH easier to retake. Enemies attacking A site will either come from A short, or Bathrooms. When retaking the site you can rotate from Link to A Short, B Portal to Bathrooms, or Cave to Bathrooms, Defenders Spawn to Vent or Defenders spawn to Heaven, not to mention if you are able to take back control of U Hall, you have two additional locations to peek site from there. Defensive positions generally are one player on U hall, or Near the double boxes across from A Portal, which will generally be played by Razes, as they can simply throw utility through the portal to kill enemies in Hookah, while simultaneously defending A Short from a safe location. And Player 2 who will play Heaven. Do not be afraid to fall back and prepare for a retake as, it has been stated before, it's easy to do comparatively to retaking B.

### **B - Attack**

When attacking B, you have the advantage against aggressive players in Hookah, if they peek out, you will already be looking and aiming directly in their location, allowing for easy picks. Try to flush out enemies that may be hiding on the left side of hookah from Mid entrance, as peeking both the left and right side can be devastating, players can hide behind the wooden box to the right and kill you, or if you wide peek, players located on site or in the hallway can easily 1 tap your head. Flushing the left side allows you to prefire the right without worry. It is always

best to clear the left side of the elevator and then the right side of the elevator, and then the back hallway before pushing out of Hookah onto site. Try to time your entrance with Players located at long, and prepare for utility and enemies to teleport into Mid. They will almost always have the jump on you if you sit in hookah and aim towards the Teleport, as they can be in a very wide area, half hidden behind a hard metal shooting at you, where as if you sit inside of hookah, and wait for them to walk out of the portal all together, you will have a much easier time cleaning up the mess. When pushing B Long, it's important to note that the enemy will be there before you are, so be cautious peeking that corner, and be ready for a Sova arrow to try to recon near you. Sovas generally like to play on B when on defense. When pushing into B, make sure you have one member watching the right cubby on B site, as you cannot peek at them until they want you to, which ends up as a death more times than not. And clear the left side immediately following Garden, and Elbow, which many players like to hide in, as they can line up Hookah and Gardens at the same time. When planting on B, the most optimal location is always dead center of the southside of the Elevator, like so:



As you can see, this location can be seen from Garden/B Long, Elbow, Hookah, and in some cases B Hall. This allows for easy ult usage and easy kills against enemies who try to defuse it.

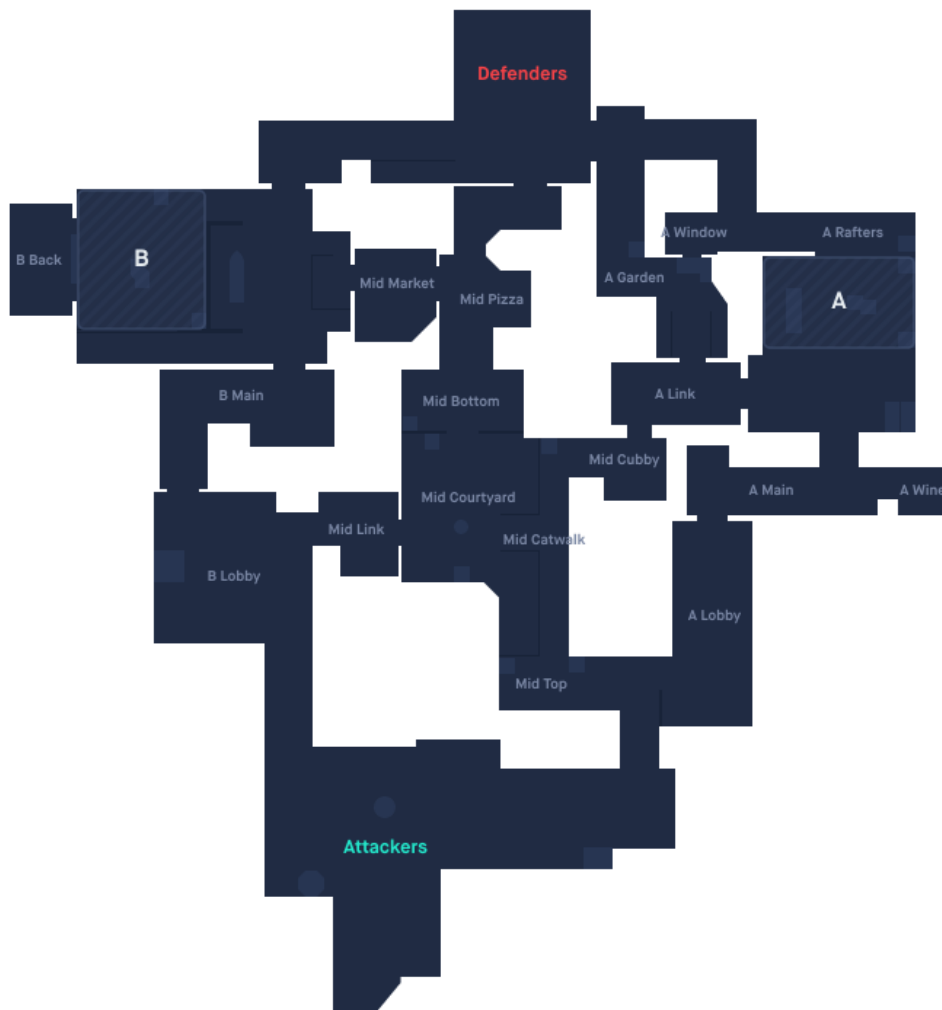
## **B - Defense**



To defend B site, you will generally have 3 players. One playing aggressively B Long, and falling back to Elbow when they need to, One playing in Hookah, and one playing behind Elevator or in B Hall watching Hookah being prepared to rotate to A if required. Players who play aggressively on B site MUST understand that their positioning and space is vital, and at all costs should not be given to the enemy team for free. If you are under fire, you should fall back immediately, the only acceptable win is if you peek, and get a 1 tap. Jiggle peeking both Hookah and B Long can be deadly, and is almost never a good idea. Hookah can be wall banged, and B Long usually pits you against long ranged weapons like the Guardian, Vandal, Marshall, or Operator. Sages will usually play B hall or Elevator, allowing for easy heals when your teammates need them most, and Walls holding enemies inside Hookah or outside of Gardens, giving time for defenders from A site to rotate.

## CHAPTER 19

### Ascent Manual



Finally we have Ascent, the newest addition to the map pool in Valorant. This Manual will be more brief as I am still studying the positives and negatives of attacking and defending each site from different angles and perspectives. Ascent's unique feature is its Deployable doors that can be broken, blocking off an entrance from Catwalk/A Link at A and Mid Pizza/Market at B. These doors cannot be deployed until 10 seconds after the round begins, and can be raised and lowered by anyone on the Bomb site side of the door. Ascent required maximum mid control, as all of mid is connected between A and B, holding strong at Mid can completely stop any rotations, and cut off enemies from splitting entrances to a site. Rotating from A to B through defender spawn is quick, allowing for fast rotations. Giving defenders an optimal chance when playing safely. Retaking sites on Ascent is very difficult, however Retaking A is more difficult due to its many hiding places and corners you must check.

## **A - Attack**

When attacking A site, most players will have 1 player stay mid looking for aggressive Pizza players, and Aggressive Catwalk players. Be sure not to stand out in the open, allowing for easy double peeks, and putting yourself in a losing situation. Players pushing A Main must be silent, as any noise whatsoever will cause A defenders to panic, and shut the door, and hide on site while their teammates huddle up in heaven, and rotations begin to take place. When pushing onto site, you should have one member stay in A main with the sole purpose of watching heaven, to ensure no enemies peek and kill allies trying to sweep the other 10 nooks and crannies around the unorganized A site. Generally two players will push in sweeping from left to right, looking behind objects and eventually meeting towards hell below rafters. Only peeking at extreme angles will allow you to see defenders tucked away on either side, ensure this is clear before pressing onward. The most optimal place to plant the bomb that I have seen so far is in the open in front of the center box, allowing it to be seen by players in A Main, Heaven, and A Link.

### **A - Defense**

When defending A site, you will want to have 2 defenders on A site, possibly one in Heaven, and the other near door, ready to fall back behind the metallic box on the west side of the site, or behind the center boxes, prepared to peek out and attempt to get a kill on an enemy sweeping the site. You may also opt into having a 3rd member playing A link, peeking out Mid to play against early round aggression at Mid Link towards B. If there is no aggression, you may push up to try to pick an enemy at Top of Mid aiming towards Pizza. Giving you Mid control. However if you are pushed at A, you can fall back to a corner in A Garden near Link, that allows you to peek into the entrance of A main. Which is a fantastic defensive location in all aspects. I highly recommend playing this strategy if you are a Phoenix player or a Reyna, as your healing capabilities allow you to play aggressively this way, and not be punished as heavily for it.

### **B - Attack**

To attack B you usually require Mid control, as it is very difficult to sneak through the hallways and push out of B Main without being punished. There are just too many stalling abilities in the game to prevent rushes of this sort. Instead, bait out utility, and play slow, be prepared for Omen to teleport to the right side of B main or for a Raze or Sova to throw utility through the windows. Also note that Sage can wall on top of the boxes at B Main, allowing for a wide view of the site, and possible picks into Market against enemies who are not prepared for this. Be

warned, Using Sage's wall this way can be worthless, as it is the most expensive ability in the game, and does not always give you value. Once your members assume mid control by B Link Mid, to Pizza, you can begin pushing together onto site, as soon as you take control, shut the door and have one member plant while the others quickly set up defense, most importantly against defender spawn, as it is the fastest rotation on the map. The most optimal planting location at B main has always been slightly away from the corner here:



This is the most optimal location as it can be defended from Stairs on the North side of the shack, Walkway on the south side, both openings in B Back, and can be easily stalled with utility and ultimates against that back wall from a safe location.

## **B-Defense**

When defending B you will generally only have one player on site somewhere looking at B Main at all times. This player can be on top of the barrels or right side of Defender's side hallway, crouched on the stairs leading to Market, close right on the walkway or hugging the southern corner of the Shack in the center of the B. All of these are unfavorable positions as they are hard to fall back from, or to play aggressively. Some players like to peek into B Main and play aggressively there. However, the player with the strongest chance of survival is the player in Market, as they can fall back easily, and are generally only there once the B site defender calls it out, many times the Market defender is holding Mid control looking for picks at Mid Top. If enemies take over Mid control, and are pushing into B main, the Market defender

is going to have an extremely hard time surviving, however if they are fast enough, they might be able to sneak out through defender side hall, and back around to defender spawn to try to regain Mid control at Pizza. Teams who cannot maintain mid control will find it very difficult to defend their sites, and will often be required to rely on their retaking skills to come out on top on defense.

## CHAPTER 20

### Gaming Etiquette

Gaming Etiquette goes hand-in-hand with being kind, and is something I wanted to touch on heavily, because many new players and veteran players are finding that the Valorant scene can be extremely toxic, as with any competitive game. I would like to discuss what we as a community should and should not allow when playing the game, as in order to change the stigma of a toxic community, we have to change the climate. What do I mean by that? If players are being toxic, racist, or sexist, it should be the norm to call them out on their crap, and mute them if you have to collectively as a team no matter who you play with. There will always be toxic players, there will always be racists, and there will always be sexists, and people who cannot handle their emotions. It's every one of our responsibilities as players to set the tone for each match, and to hold a standard to our fellow teammates. I find that however a game starts, is how it is likely to play out. If you are being kind, and discussing strategies, without being overbearing, or annoying, the rest of the team will follow. If you are in a lobby and a female speaks up, act like it's nothing, and treat her like the rest of us. Because she is, just like the rest of us. When matches start out, and people start making jokes, and being obnoxious, the rest of the match always seems to play out that way. If you hear a female talking, and a teammate or two begin harassing her, tell them that they are not being funny, and they are going to throw the round if they don't get serious. Politely try to get the team to buckle down, and focus. If you don't feel comfortable doing this, try to have a friend speak up for you! This goes for racism

as well. If you hear teammates saying racist things and being ignorant, don't be afraid to call them out. Tell them that they aren't making anyone laugh, and that they're just making themselves look idiotic. Your teammates love this type of stuff and 9 times out of 10 will back you up and speak up themselves. If a teammate is continuing their toxic behavior, mute them and report them. Riot does not tolerate racists and sexist remarks, and has a reputation for taking action against these types of players. Remember, all of us as players set the tone each and every match. Play and talk how you want to be remembered for playing and talking. If you want to become a pro player, don't mess around, take every round seriously and help those who don't know what they are doing, and correct those who are making the experience a negative one for everyone else. I will always do my part to stop these types of comments when I can. I hope you all do the same, as it can only make our community better for it.