

The Architect's Arsenal: A Deep Dive into Once Human Weapon Build Crafting

Introduction: Beyond the Blueprint – Mastering Build Principles

In the dynamic world of Once Human, simply replicating popular weapon builds can only take a player so far. True mastery and sustained effectiveness, especially as the meta evolves with seasonal changes and new content, demand a profound understanding of the underlying mechanics. This guide is crafted for the discerning player ready to move beyond mere imitation, equipping them with the analytical tools and foundational knowledge to dissect existing builds, adapt them to their unique playstyle, and ultimately, engineer their own optimized arsenals. The core objective is to enable the creation of new, effective weapon builds by gathering comprehensive learning data and understanding design philosophies. This report will systematically break down every component of weapon builds, from the granular details of mods and substats to the synergistic power of armor sets, key gear, accessories, cradle overrides, and even the strategic advantage of food buffs. Furthermore, it will delve into the design philosophies of renowned community creators like Doomeris and Mawn, extracting universal principles that empower independent build design. Finally, the guide will cover essential tips, tricks, and a comprehensive compendium of Deviants, detailing their utility and acquisition methods. The aim is to provide a comprehensive, RAG-friendly resource for an AI bot, ensuring all information is presented clearly and logically.

I. Foundational Elements of Weapon Builds

This section lays the essential groundwork, dissecting the core components that constitute any effective Once Human weapon build. A thorough understanding of these individual elements is the critical first step toward unlocking their synergistic potential and crafting truly innovative setups.

- **A. Weapon Mechanics & Damage Types:**

- **Elemental vs. Non-Elemental Weapons:**

Once Human features a critical distinction between elemental damage types (Fire, Frost, Shock, Explosion) and non-elemental (physical/raw) damage. This choice profoundly influences subsequent build decisions, from mod selection to armor set synergies.¹ For instance, the Unstable Bomber damage from weapons like Little Jaws is purely elemental and cannot crit or strike weak spots, making it less

effective against elemental immune foes.² This distinction is vital because certain formidable enemies, notably specific bosses like the Forsaken Giant, possess immunity to elemental damage.³ This crucial detail underscores the necessity for players to cultivate build diversity, maintaining a potent non-elemental option or a flexible secondary weapon to overcome such encounters. The presence of elemental immunities implies that no single "best" elemental build will suffice for all content; players must either specialize and swap builds or incorporate a strong non-elemental secondary weapon for versatility. This becomes a critical strategic consideration beyond merely maximizing damage.

- PSI Intensity:

PSI intensity is a direct multiplier for elemental damage output. Higher PSI intensity translates to significantly increased elemental damage, making it a cornerstone stat for elemental builds.¹ Specific gear pieces, particularly certain mods and key items, are designed to influence PSI intensity. Identifying and integrating these components becomes a critical consideration for maximizing elemental build effectiveness.¹

- Star Rating, Tier, and Calibration:

These three attributes define a weapon's inherent quality and potential. Star Rating and Tier represent the weapon's base power level, while Calibration offers specialized stat adjustments to fine-tune its performance.¹ Calibration plays a strategic role in build optimization. For example, Little Jaws benefits from the Heavy Style calibration, which allows the clip to hold more rounds, increasing the chances of getting the Unstable Bomber proc per reload.² Similarly, weapon calibrations like the Lightweight style are suitable for sets that benefit from drastically increased reload speed.⁵ This goes beyond simple stat boosts; it reveals calibration as a strategic tool capable of fundamentally altering a weapon's operational behavior and its synergy within a build. For instance, increasing magazine capacity directly enhances proc-based weapons by increasing proc uptime, while boosting reload speed significantly benefits builds reliant on frequent reloads or rapid bursts. This means calibration is a powerful, often overlooked, mechanism for tailoring a weapon precisely to a build's specific needs, enabling novel playstyles, mitigating inherent weapon weaknesses, or amplifying strengths, moving beyond raw numbers to optimize the tactical feel and combat flow.

- **B. Mods & Substats: The Core of Customization:**

- Mod Functionalities and Slot Specificity:

Mods are paramount for customizing weapon and armor stats and imbuing them with unique effects. A critical distinction lies in their application: armor mods are universally active, benefiting all equipped weapons, whereas weapon mods are exclusive to the specific weapon they are attached to.⁶ This distinction fundamentally shapes mod prioritization. Players should focus on securing high-quality armor mods for general build strength, reserving weapon mods for specialized effects or to amplify the unique attributes of a particular weapon. This

also implies that a well-optimized "universal" armor mod setup can effectively support multiple distinct weapon builds.

■ **Key Mod Examples and Their Effects:**

- **Precision Charge:** This weapon mod is optimal for boss encounters where weak spots are easily accessible. It grants a 4% elemental damage bonus for every 10% weak spot hit rate of the previous magazine, stacking up to 24%.⁷
- **Abnormal Increase:** This weapon mod is suited for single-target engagements against enemies lacking easily targetable weak spots. Its effect is to grant a 10% status damage bonus for 12 seconds when the magazine is empty, stacking up to three times. The bonus typically ranges from 10% to 20% due to the time it takes to unload a magazine.⁷
- **Deadshot:** A highly recommended pants mod. It provides a significant crit damage bonus, granting 5% crit damage for each crit hit by non-melee weapons, stacking up to a massive 45%.⁸ This mod impacts both bullet damage and Unstable Bomber damage.⁹
- **Covered Advance:** A potent boots mod. Its effect is to grant a 20% weapon damage bonus for 30 seconds after taking no damage for only 4 seconds. This is considered a very good option due to its less conditional nature or superior buffs compared to other boot mods.⁸
- **Lunar/Violent Suffix:** For top mods, prioritizing Lunar or Violent suffixes with the best substats, ideally triple gold, is crucial for achieving peak performance.⁸

○ Substat Prioritization:

Mods feature various stat lines (purple, blue, green), with higher base points generally correlating with superior overall mod quality. A minimum 10-point mod includes one purple and at least three green stat lines, potentially populating as blue. Reaching 66 points can guarantee a purple and a blue stat line, usually with two additional greens, resulting in an 11-point mod.¹⁵ However, the optimal substats are entirely dependent on the specific build's objectives.¹⁵ For example, status elemental builds generally do not benefit from crit weapon or weak spot damage, and vice versa, as these stats can dilute effectiveness.¹⁵ The Little Jaws (Unstable Bomber) build, for instance, specifically benefits from a double elemental damage bonus on its substats.² This combination of mod "base points" and "stat lines" reveals a crucial optimization layer: it is not just about getting a high-rarity mod, but ensuring its substats align perfectly with the build's primary damage scaling. A "perfect" mod is one that has high base points *and* ideal substats, emphasizing targeted farming over general rarity. This principle of "build purity" means a concentrated focus on a few mutually reinforcing damage multipliers rather than spreading stats thinly across disparate categories.

- **C. Armor Sets & Key Gear: Synergistic Foundations:**

- **Armor Set Bonuses:**

Armor sets provide significant bonuses when multiple pieces of the same set are equipped, with effects often scaling from one to four pieces.⁵ These bonuses are crucial for defining a build's overall power and playstyle.

- **Falcon Set:** Highly recommended for most damage builds throughout the game due to its significant bonuses. A two-piece Falcon set grants +12% Crit Damage. With three pieces, if stamina is over 90%, it provides an additional +5% Crit Rate and +20% Crit Damage. The four-piece bonus increases maximum stamina by 25 and restores 30 stamina on a kill.⁵ This set shapes gameplay around rolling and sprinting around enemies.¹²
- **Shelter Set:** Provides elemental damage bonuses. Two pieces offer +8% elemental damage. Four pieces can grant up to +30% elemental damage through Deviant Energy stacks (each stack provides 1% elemental damage, up to 20 stacks). It is often paired with Treacherous Tides for elemental builds.²
- **Lone Wolf Set:** Focuses on crit stats. Two pieces grant +5% crit rate and +10% magazine capacity. Three pieces gain 1 stack of Lonely Shadow (+6% Crit Damage for 30s) for every 2 crit weapon hits. Lonely Shadow can stack up to 10 times with four pieces, making it popular for crit-focused builds.⁵
- **Bastille Set:** Offers weapon damage buffs. One piece provides +10% weapon damage if HP is above 70%. Three pieces grant +40% weapon damage when crouching for 0.5 seconds (entering Bastille state). However, the full four-piece set can disable sprint and increase stamina consumption, making it less ideal for mobile playstyles or Prime Wars.⁵ Most players prefer one or two pieces for weapon damage or reload speed.¹²
- **Renegade Set:** Increases weak point damage. Two pieces provide +10% weak point damage. Three pieces gain 1 stack of Archer's Focus (increasing weak point DMG by 4% up to 10 stacks) for consecutive shots, which is halved when the target is changed.⁵
- **Treacherous Tides:** Maximizes burst at reduced survivability. Two pieces grant +10% weapon and status damage if HP is above 70%. Three pieces automatically use the weakest activator in the backpack if HP is below 30%. This set is ideal for low HP presets, offering +50% weapon damage and +50% status damage when HP is below 70% and sanity is low.²
- **Heavy Duty Set:** Fantastic for elemental weapons. Three pieces grant +20% movement speed for 2 seconds and +40% elemental damage after killing an enemy, decaying over 8 seconds. Four pieces provide +4% damage reduction per enemy within 5m, stacking up to 4 times. This set is good for clearing mobs of enemies.⁵
- **Agent Set:** Focuses on weak spot damage and precision kills. Two pieces increase weak point damage by 10%. Three pieces gain "Bullet Saver" on

precise kills, increasing weak spot damage by 15% for 8 seconds (stacks up to 3 times). Four pieces grant +20% reload speed and +10% fire rate after a weak spot kill, removed on reload or weapon swap.¹²

- **Scout Set:** Perfect for stealth gameplay. Two pieces increase weapon damage by 8%. Three pieces grant +20% weapon and item damage when undetected. Four pieces increase movement speed by 12% and stamina regeneration by 20% if HP is below 50%.¹²
- **Raid Set:** Focuses on utility and carrying capacity. Two pieces increase carrying capacity by 20. Three pieces grant 10% less damage taken and +20% weapon and item damage if carrying capacity is over 80. Four pieces reduce stamina costs by 30% when gliding or rolling.¹⁶
- **Blast Set:** A decent set for early-game melee combat. Two pieces increase melee weapon damage by 15%. Three pieces increase HP by 600. Four pieces increase collection speed by 20%.¹²
- **Blackstone Set:** Similar to Shelter for elemental builds. Two pieces increase elemental damage by 8%. Three pieces grant 1 stack of Deviant Energy per weapon hit. Four pieces increase the maximum stack of Deviant Energy by 10 (total 20 stacks, +20% elemental damage).¹⁷

Armor sets introduce a "conditional playstyle" element. Players must choose sets that not only boost desired stats but also align with their preferred combat approach (e.g., aggressive low-HP, stealth, sustained fire, weakspot targeting). This deepens build strategy beyond raw numbers, as many bonuses are activated under specific conditions (e.g., HP thresholds, stamina levels, stealth).² This means that build crafting is about finding optimal breakpoints and synergistic effects across different gear slots, often involving combining the 2-piece and 3-piece bonuses of different sets for powerful synergies, rather than committing to a full 4-piece set.¹⁸

- The Role of Unique Key Gear Pieces:

Key gear pieces are unique items that often provide powerful, build-defining effects. Their selection is often dictated by the chosen weapon, acting as a primary anchor around which a build is constructed.¹⁹

- **Explosive Front Top:** Optimal for the Little Jaws SMG, offering 0.3 seconds of Unstable Bomber delay (a +45% bonus) and +30% Unstable Bomber damage.²
- **Viper Mask:** Another key gear piece for Little Jaws, increases Unstable Bomber range and grants a 1% damage bonus per 2% range increase, amplifying Hazardous Object blasts for AOE content.²
- **Gasmask Key Item:** Used for Shotgun builds.¹⁹
- **Mayfly Goggles:** Essential for Power Surge SMG builds.¹⁰
- **BBQ Gloves:** Significantly ramp up the power of the KVD Boom Boom LMG.¹⁰

- **Oasis Mask:** Key piece for Predator builds.¹⁰
- **Sharp Blade Pants:** Used for Brahminy or Kumawink builds.¹⁰

These pieces often act as the "lenses" through which a weapon's core mechanic is amplified or altered. This implies that a build often starts with a weapon-key gear synergy, then builds around it, rather than simply picking the "best" weapon in isolation. This suggests a top-down approach to build crafting: choose the weapon, identify its synergistic Key Gear, and then fill in the rest of the armor, mods, and accessories to support that core synergy.

- **D. Weapon Accessories: Precision & Performance:**

Weapon accessories are critical components that provide crucial stat adjustments to a weapon's handling and performance. These include muzzles, optics, grips, and magazines, each impacting aspects like accuracy, stability, recoil control, and magazine capacity.² For instance, for the Little Jaws SMG, equipping a Small Break muzzle provides crucial accuracy, while the Compact Reflex Sight optic and Cobra Grip further stabilize recoil. A Weighted SMG Mag extends sustained fire, maximizing proc uptime.² Similarly, for the MG4 Predator LMG, accessories like the Hammer Compensator, Compact Reflex Sight, Cobra Grip, and Large LMG Drum Magazine are recommended to improve accuracy, stability, and magazine capacity.¹³ The choice of ammo—Blasting AP Ammo, Suppression AP Ammo, or Penetration AP Ammo—should also align with content requirements.²

Accessory choices reflect a player's combat priorities (e.g., accuracy for weak spots, stability for sustained fire, larger magazines for proc uptime). The diverse acquisition methods for these accessories add a layer of exploration and meta-game knowledge to build optimization. Accessories are found in specific locations, often tied to unique puzzles.

- **Muzzles:**

- **Short Suppressor:** Reduces muzzle flash, potentially sound. Found at a Camera Pose puzzle (5148, -3281) in Iron River .
- **Integrated Compensator:** Improves accuracy and stability. Found at a Camera Pose puzzle on a hill in Iron River .
- **Small Brake:** Improves accuracy. Found at a Mysterious Painting puzzle in the middle of an island in Broken Delta .
- **Hammer Compensator:** Provides +9 Accuracy and +19 Stability. Found at a Balloon puzzle²² and recommended for the MG4 Predator build.¹³
- **Osprey Suppressor:** Reduces muzzle flash, potentially sound. Found at a Broken Billboard puzzle near a road in Broken Delta .
- **Small Compensator:** Found at a Shadow Shield puzzle .
- **Integrated Flash Hider:** Found at a Shadow Shield puzzle .
- **Extended Brake:** Found at a Balloon puzzle .

- **Grips:**
 - **Vertical Grip:** Stabilizes recoil, improves accuracy. Found at a Fire Barrier puzzle (4630, -6041) in Broken Delta or a Vine Cage puzzle .
 - **Cobra Grip:** Stabilizes recoil, improves accuracy. Found at a Camera Pose puzzle (5597, -6009) in Broken Delta .
 - **Back Guard Grip:** Found at an Ice Block puzzle .
 - **Triangle Grip:** Found at a general location .
 - **Front Guard Grip:** Found at a general location .
 - **Tactical Laser Sight:** Found at a Vine Cage puzzle .
 - **Folding Bipod:** Found at a Vine Cage puzzle .
 - **Small Laser Sight:** Found at a Mysterious Painting puzzle .
 - **Large Laser Sight:** Found at an Ice Block puzzle .
- **Optics:**
 - **Recon Combat Optic:** 2.0x Zoom, stability, aiming speed. Found at a Car Climb puzzle (floating cars) in Broken Delta .
 - **Compact Reflex Sight:** Recommended for Little Jaws ² and MG4 Predator.¹³
 - **Mid-Range Optic:** Zoom for snipers. Found at a Lighted Doors puzzle (stone ruins) in Broken Delta .
 - **Light Reflex Sight:** Improves aiming speed, stability. Found at a Spinning Statues puzzle (graveyard) .
 - **Light Optic:** Found at an Ice Block puzzle or a Mysterious Painting puzzle .
 - **Large Optic Sight:** Found at a Camera puzzle .
 - **Simple Reflex Sight:** Found at a Dolls puzzle .
 - **Reflex Sight:** Found at a Hungry Squirrel puzzle .
 - **Sealed Reflex Sight:** Found at a Shadow Shield puzzle .
 - **Fastened Reflex Sight:** Found at an Ice Block puzzle .
 - **Tactical Rifle Scope:** Found at a Mysterious Painting puzzle .
- **Magazines:**
 - **Weighted SMG Mag:** Extends sustained fire, maximizes proc uptime. Found at a Jump Pads puzzle (4290, 1720) in Blackheart Region .
 - **Extended Rifle Mag:** Increased magazine capacity. Found at a Jump Pads puzzle (on river) in Blackheart Region .
 - **Extended Pistol Mag:** Increased magazine capacity. Found at a Lighted Doors puzzle (4004.80, 147.09) in Blackheart Region .
 - **Tactical Pistol Mag:** Increased magazine capacity. Found at a Broken Billboard puzzle along the road north of Highland in Iron River .
 - **Tactical SMG Mag:** Increased magazine capacity. Found at a Vine Cage puzzle (7197, -4066) west of Rippleby in Iron River .
 - **Calibrated LMG Drum Mag:** Found at a Broken Billboard puzzle .
 - **Amended SR Mag:** Found at a Broken Billboard puzzle .
 - **Light Rifle Mag:** Found at a Shadow Shield puzzle .

- **Large LMG Drum Magazine:** Recommended for the MG4 Predator build.¹³

This means players should prioritize acquiring the recommended accessories for their chosen weapon build, even if it means engaging with diverse gameplay content like puzzles.

- **E. Cradle Overrides: Strategic Power Infusion:**

- Explanation of Memetics and Cradle Override Features:

The Memetics Cradle, accessed by hitting 'O' on the keyboard, is a system that allows players to gain access to different technologies and special abilities. It enables the creation of new things and the enhancement of existing abilities through Cradle Override features.¹⁷ The Cradle menu displays available Override features on the left and nodes for insertion on the right. These nodes are unlocked by clearing dungeons or defeating bosses, while the Override features themselves are unlocked by reaching certain character levels or when a new seasonal phase begins.¹⁷ Players can view details of unlocked or upcoming features by hovering over their icons and can equip them by pressing 'F' or dragging them to a node.¹⁷

- Impact of Weapon-Specific and General Overrides on Combat:

Cradle Overrides can be weapon-type specific or provide general buffs. For instance, in Season 2, a specific override might be required to make non-elemental weapons effective as a "countermeasure" against Super Anomalies.²³ This means that simply hitting mobs with a weapon might do nothing without the correct override.²³ This system acts similarly to Destiny 2's champion mechanics, where specific weapons or mods are required to stun or counter certain enemy types.²³ For example, a Bull's Eye sniper rifle dealing raw non-elemental damage might require a specific "Anti Balance: Sniper Rifle override" to be effective against certain anomalies.²³ This implies that Cradle Overrides introduce a seasonal meta-shift, forcing players to adapt their builds or acquire specific overrides to counter new or challenging enemy types. This means a "perfect" build is dynamic and requires ongoing adjustment based on game updates and content, as a long-farmed build could be rendered ineffective against certain enemies without the appropriate override.²³ Players must be prepared to invest in new overrides to stay competitive in endgame content.

- **F. Food Buffs: The Culinary Combat Advantage:**

- Mechanics of Food Buffs and Stacking:

Food and drinks provide temporary buffs that can significantly enhance various character stats, including weapon damage, crit rate, elemental damage, status damage, and movement speed.²⁴ The Chef class allows for "Creative Cooking," where players can make custom food items using up to four different effects listed in a spreadsheet. These effects can be further enhanced by eating up to five of the same creative meals, though the margin of enhancement might be small (e.g., a 10% or less increase).²⁴ The success rate of creative meals, which can roll special additional multipliers like HP or weapon damage, can be increased using

peppercorn and high-tier ingredients.²⁴ The efficiency of meals can also be drastically increased by having Chosa Wax in the base 26, and boosted further with a buffed kitchen sack and the Cheyosaurus Rex deviant.²⁷

- **Key Food Items and Their Effects:**
 - **Mixed Fried Hot Dog:** Provides a +20% damage bonus against marked targets, making it a strong option for builds utilizing Bullseye weapons.⁹
 - **Surprise Spring Roll:** Increases elemental damage by 5% to 15%, with the effect doubling to 30% if the player's HP is below 40%. This synergizes well with low-HP playstyles.²⁹
 - **Popcorn:** Increases Unstable Bomber damage by 10%, serving as a strong multiplier for builds centered around this effect.²⁹
 - **Whimsical Drink:** Offers a +25% status damage bonus.¹ It can also provide movement speed buffs.²⁴
 - **French Fries:** Grants a +20% weapon damage bonus while in Fortress Warfare.²⁵
 - **Crumbly Bread:** Provides a +25% weapon damage bonus, serving as an alternative if a player does not wish to continuously mark enemies.²⁷
 - **Raspberry Shaved Ice:** Increases Bullseye activation by 2 seconds, beneficial for builds relying on marked targets.²⁷
 - **Bone and Deviated Sausage:** A slightly weaker alternative to Mixed Fried Hot Dog, useful against bosses.²⁸
- **Ingredients and Farming:** Obtaining ingredients for these buffs often involves specific farming methods. For example, French fries require deviated potatoes (grown from seeds with fertilizer mutation), masala (seeds from vendor), and cheese (found in crates or crafted from milk).²⁵ Deviated saffrons, purified water, and ice cubes (from fridge) are also common ingredients.²⁵
- Food buffs are a critical, often overlooked, layer of optimization that can provide significant, temporary power spikes. The synergy between food buffs and specific build mechanics (e.g., marked targets, low HP, elemental damage) allows for burst windows or sustained advantages, making them essential for challenging content. This means food buffs are not generic consumables but are strategically chosen to amplify specific build mechanics or combat scenarios, pushing damage ceilings. This also implies that food buffs represent a continuous resource sink for players seeking peak performance, highlighting the importance of efficient farming and resource management.³⁰

II. Deconstructing the Meta: Insights from Community Masters

This section will analyze the approaches of prominent Once Human content creators, extracting their underlying philosophies to help players develop their own build-crafting

intuition.

- A. Doomeris's Design Philosophy:

Doomeris is recognized for "straight to the point" guides and direct, high-impact builds, often emphasizing raw damage and ease of use.³ His philosophy often centers on identifying a weapon's primary damage mechanic and then stacking all relevant stats and buffs to amplify that specific mechanic to its absolute maximum. This approach frequently leads to "meta-defining" builds that are powerful but can be less adaptable to niche situations.

- Boom Boom LMG:

The KVD Boom Boom LMG is widely considered one of the strongest and easiest builds in the game, excelling in most situations due to its explosive damage on hit.³ It offers excellent crowd control and boss damage, particularly when paired with the Pyro Dino deviant.³ The Pyro Dino provides a significant 39.2% extra damage, which can stack up to 100% with multiple players, and possesses a hidden 300% multiplier for a Level 5 Pyro Dino.³²

- **Key Components:** This build typically uses a 4-piece Shelterer set with 1-piece Lone Wolf, and BBQ Gloves as the Key Piece, which significantly ramps up the weapon's power.¹⁰
- **Mods:** Flame Resonance for the gun and chest, Deviation Expert for the helmet, Blaze Amplifier for the mask, Status Enhancement for gloves, Covered Advance for boots, and Reload Rampage for pants.¹⁰ The mod suffix is typically "Talents".²⁹
- **Calibration:** Overflow with double elemental stats.¹⁰
- **Downside:** The primary downside of this build is its elemental nature, as some enemies, like the Forsaken Giant, are immune to elemental damage.³

- Last Valor (Shrapnel Build):

The Last Valor, a shrapnel-based build, is described as basic but effective for destroying Great Ones and dominating PvE.¹⁰ It relies on maximizing Crit Chance, aiming for a proc chance close to 50% for its Shrapnel effects, which deal 55% of weapon damage each.¹¹ This build leverages raw mod and gear power, making it less ideal for new players due to its reliance on a maxed Crit Rate.¹⁰

- **Key Components:** The SOCR – The Last Valor is the primary weapon (with mods like Obliterate-Violent or Shrapnel Smash), and the Recurve Crossbow is used as a secondary weapon (with Vulnerability Amplifier) to apply the "Bull's Eye" debuff, which is crucial for amplifying damage.¹¹ A 4-piece Falcon set is essential for improving the Bull's Eye debuff and granting extra Crit Chance and Crit Damage.¹¹ The Gas-Tight Helmet serves as a key piece.¹⁰
- **Mods:** Precise Strike for the helmet, Targeted Strike for the mask (providing +10% crit rate and +25% crit damage on marked enemies)¹⁴, Crit Amplifier for gloves, Lifeforce Boost for the chest, Deadshot for pants (+45% crit damage)⁸, and Slow and Steady for boots.¹¹ The mod suffix is typically

"Violent".²⁹

- **Calibration:** Rapid with double Crit Rate.¹⁰
- **Potential Drawback:** The Targeted Strike mask mod might require a Bullseye weapon to consistently mark targets.¹⁰
- Doomeris's approach is excellent for players who prefer straightforward power and less intricate rotational play. It emphasizes the importance of acquiring strong base legendary weapons and then focusing on high-quality, universally beneficial mods and armor sets (like Falcon or Lone Wolf for crit, Shelter for elemental).
- B. Mawn's Analytical Approach:

Mawn is renowned for "a ton of research & in-depth explanations of every build" ³, focusing on understanding the underlying mechanics, situational utility, and complex synergies. Mawn's approach emphasizes a holistic understanding of build interactions, including conditional buffs (HP/Sanity states), secondary weapon utility (marking, stacking buffs), and deviant synergy. This leads to more complex, often situational, but highly optimized builds that extract maximum value from every game system.

 - Little Jaws (Unstable Bomber SMG):

This build centers around the Little Jaws SMG, which benefits from a 20% damage buff, making its Unstable Bomber procs exceptionally potent.² Each hit applies an Unstable Bomber effect that detonates after 0.9 seconds, dealing 120% base blast damage, with shot procs adding a 20% final damage bonus per bullet.² The build leverages Little Jaws' high single-target damage and augments its AOE capability through complementary secondary weapons.²

 - **Calibration:** Heavy Style to increase clip size for more Unstable Bomber procs, with substats favoring a double elemental damage bonus.²
 - **Accessories:** Small Break muzzle for accuracy, Compact Reflex Sight optic and Cobra Grip for recoil stabilization, and a Weighted SMG Mag for extended sustained fire.²
 - **Secondary Options:** Hazardous Object for AOE, Gulped Lure for Unstable Bomber damage stacks, or Bingo for vulnerability.²
 - **Deviants:** Shattered Maiden stuns foes and increases explosion damage taken by Great Ones, while Mini Feaster grants status damage bonuses.²
 - **Key Gear:** Explosive Front Top (single-target) or Viper Mask (AOE) further enhance Unstable Bomber damage and range.²
 - **Armor Sets:** Can vary between low HP presets (e.g., 3x Treacherous Tides, 2x Shelter) or high HP presets (e.g., 4x Shelter, 1x Renegade).² The Lucky Rabbit Fur mask hide provides a +10% elemental damage bonus on hit.²
 - Corrosion Power Surge Shotgun:

This recently buffed power surge shotgun build focuses on proccing lightning strikes and amplifying their damage.³⁴ It is effective at any range because its main damage comes from Power Surge, which ignores distance as long as a bullet hits.¹⁰ The build is considered beginner-friendly due to the high critical hit and critical damage provided by the weapon and key piece alone.¹⁰

- **Key Components:** ACS12 - Corrosion as the primary weapon (with Static Shock mod), the Gas Mask Hood as the Key Piece, and often a 4-piece Lone Wolf set with a 1-piece Renegade.¹⁰
 - **Calibration:** Rapid with Crit Hit and Crit Damage.¹⁰
 - **Armor Options:** Two Lone Wolf pieces for crit and magazine capacity or two Shelter pieces for elemental damage, though the latter may reduce magazine capacity.³⁶
 - **Deviant:** Lonewolf's Whisper is recommended for its ability to aggro mobs and deal extra weapon damage to bosses.³⁶
 - **Food Buffs:** Mixed Fried Hot Dog (for marked targets) or Surprise Spring Roll (for elemental damage, especially at low HP) are often utilized.²⁸
- Kumawink Bounce SMG:

This build is a fun and effective option for AOE, where bullets bounce and deal damage.³ It is considered the best AOE raw weapon damage build and a good alternative to elemental builds.³ The build focuses on weapon damage and crit, leveraging the unique bounce mechanics of the Kumawink.¹⁰

 - **Key Components:** Kumawink as the primary weapon.
 - **Mods:** Deadshot for pants (up to 45% crit damage) and Covered Advance for boots (20% weapon damage bonus).¹²
 - **Mask Hides:** Animal hides, particularly wolf hides, can be crafted into masks that boost weapon or weak spot damage.²⁷
 - **Food Buffs:** Mixed Fried Hot Dog is a top option, providing a 20% damage bonus after marking an enemy with a Bullseye weapon. If continuous marking is not desired, Crumbly Bread offers a 25% weapon damage bonus.²⁷ Raspberry Shaved Ice is the best drink buff, increasing Bullseye activation by 2 seconds.²⁷
 - **Synergy:** Portable turrets are also noted to synergize well with the Kumawink Bounce build.³⁷
- Hazardous Object Unstable Bomber Pistol:

This build focuses on the Hazardous Object pistol's Unstable Bomber procs and elemental damage.¹⁰ While it offers good damage, it has a significant drawback: very high ammo consumption, requiring 24 bullets in the magazine for maximum benefit.¹⁰

 - **Cradle Perks:** Anti-Coherence, Rapid Aid, Tactical Combo, Status Enhancement, Deviant Energy Defense, Elemental Sense, Explosive Bonus, and Marked Strike.³⁸
 - **Food Buffs:** Surprise Spring Roll (for elemental damage, especially at low HP) and Popcorn (for Unstable Bomber damage) are beneficial, along with whimsical drinks for more damage.²⁹
- C. Principles for Innovative Build Creation:

Synthesizing the approaches of Doomeris and Mawn provides a robust framework for creating new and effective weapon builds. Doomeris's focus on amplifying a single,

powerful weapon mechanic, combined with Mawn's meticulous layering of synergistic buffs from all game systems, forms a comprehensive strategy. True innovation comes from understanding both the deep specialization of a single damage type and the intricate interplay of all game systems, allowing players to either refine existing archetypes or forge entirely new ones.

- **Identify the Core Mechanic:** The first step is to understand the primary damage source or unique effect of the chosen weapon (e.g., explosion procs, critical hit scaling, weakspot amplification, elemental surges). This core mechanic will serve as the anchor of the build.
- **Stack Multiplicative Bonuses:** Prioritize stats that multiply each other for maximum damage output. For elemental builds, this means elemental damage combined with status damage. For crit builds, it involves stacking crit rate, crit damage, and raw weapon damage. It is crucial to avoid diluting stats with conflicting types, as this can reduce overall effectiveness.²
- **Leverage Synergistic Gear Pieces:** Actively seek out Key Gear, armor sets, and accessories that directly enhance the core mechanic or provide crucial utility. For example, selecting Key Gear that amplifies a weapon's unique ability², or choosing accessories that improve reload speed for proc-based weapons or accuracy for weakspot builds.²
- **Adapt to Content with Overrides and Consumables:** Players must understand that endgame content may require specific Cradle Overrides to counter unique enemy mechanics.²³ Additionally, food buffs offer temporary but significant boosts to damage or utility.²⁴ These are flexible tools that can be utilized for specific encounters to push performance limits.
- **Optimize for Consistency AND Peak Performance:** While achieving peak DPS is important, it is equally vital to consider consistency for general gameplay and farming. Factors like ease of proc activation, ammo efficiency, and survivability contribute to a build's overall effectiveness in various scenarios.²
- **Prioritize Smart Farming:** Focus on acquiring high-base-point mods with ideal substats rather than simply chasing high rarity. Understanding where to farm specific accessories and deviants is key to efficient build progression.¹⁵
- **Continuous Learning:** The game's meta is dynamic and constantly evolving with updates and new content. Staying updated with community discussions (Reddit, YouTube) and patch notes is essential for adapting builds and maintaining optimal performance.¹

III. Deviants: Strategic Companions & Resource Catalysts

Deviants are more than just pets; they are integral to optimizing a character's power, providing combat utility, crafting benefits, or territorial advantages. They represent a unique layer of meta-progression that extends beyond direct combat. Their "likes" introduce a base-building

and resource management mini-game that directly impacts their combat or utility effectiveness, creating a holistic feedback loop for player power.

- A. Deviant Types & Core Utilities:

Deviants in Once Human are categorized by their primary function, offering diverse utilities that can significantly impact gameplay.

- **Combat Deviants:** These actively participate in battle, offering direct damage, crowd control (like stunning or fearing enemies), healing, or aggro management.³⁹
- **Crafting Deviants:** These specialized Deviants produce unique materials or enhance crafting processes within the player's territory.⁴¹ For example, Atomic Lighter produces Split-Core Cotton for Fusion Lighters, which cause explosions on impact.⁴¹
- **Territorial Deviants:** These provide passive benefits within the player's base, such as automatically gathering resources (like ore or wood), increasing production efficiency of crafting stations (Furnace, Electric Furnace), or patrolling for territory defense.⁴¹
- **Securement:** To maximize a Deviant's Power and Mood, and thus its efficiency, players must secure them in Isolated Securement Units and cater to their specific "Likes." These "Likes" are environmental factors such as Red Light, Electricity, Music, Toys, Flowers, High Temperature, Low Temperature, or Crops.³⁹ This means players must actively manage their base environment to optimize deviant performance, linking base-building and resource management directly to combat effectiveness.

- B. Festering Gel: Defensive Fortification:

The Festering Gel is a combat deviant that primarily focuses on protection and healing rather than dealing damage.³⁹

- **Effects:**
 - **Flawless Fortification:** When thrown, it knocks back enemies near the hit location and transforms into a short wall, providing immediate cover.³⁹
 - **Build Fortification:** When used for protection, this wall grants allies around it 4.0 health and 2.0 Sanity per second, making it a valuable source of sustain during prolonged engagements.³⁹
- Acquisition Methods:

The Festering Gel Deviant is unlockable through the first main quest, "Welcome Back," in the Dayton Wetlands.³⁹ Its primary acquisition method is as a chance drop after defeating the Ravenous Hunter in the Monolith of Greed . To access the Rift Entity within the Monolith, players must activate Rift Anchors in the region.³⁹ It is recommended to have a Pollution Resistance of 60 or higher before entering the Monolith to avoid health degradation.³⁹ While finding specific loot crates (Gear, Weapon, Mystical) within the Monolith area can provide additional rewards, it is not mandatory for defeating the Rift Entity.³⁹
- Optimal Uses:

The Festering Gel is ideal for players who tend to panic in battle or frequently

need to recuperate, as it provides a reliable source of cover and healing when natural cover is unavailable . It is also recommended for combat support in Territory operations.⁴² This deviant exemplifies a "utility-first" combat companion. Its value lies in survivability and tactical positioning, making it a crucial tool for players struggling with sustain or facing overwhelming enemy pressure. This highlights that "optimal" does not always mean "highest DPS."

- C. Lonewolf's Whisper: Aggressive Support:

Lonewolf's Whisper is a combat deviant that actively participates in battle, providing aggressive support to the player.⁴⁰

- **Effects:**

- **Designated Target:** Players can designate a specific target for Lonewolf's Whisper to attack.⁴⁰

- **Auto Attack:** The deviant autonomously attacks enemy targets, transforming into a black wolf. It actively attracts aggro from nearby enemies and, crucially, increases the weapon damage received by the attacked target by 21.6% (some sources suggest up to 43.2%).¹³ When a target dies, Lonewolf's Whisper can also spawn a clone.⁴⁰

- Acquisition Methods:

Lonewolf's Whisper is obtained by defeating the Shadow Hound Boss in the Monolith of Thirst .

- Optimal Uses:

This deviant excels at increasing weapon damage taken by enemies and managing aggro, making it a powerful force multiplier for damage-focused builds.⁴⁰ It is considered the "best pick for a gun-based build" due to its weapon damage buff, which stacks with other weapon damage bonuses.¹³ Its ability to increase damage taken by targets means it synergizes multiplicatively with any damage-focused build, making it a top choice for maximizing DPS, especially in single-target scenarios like boss fights.

- D. Comprehensive Deviant Compendium:

To maximize Deviant benefits, players need to actively manage their base layout and resource production to cater to their Deviants' "likes," adding another layer of long-term progression and optimization beyond just combat.

- **Mr. Wish:** A combat deviant that uses Target Paint (Bull's Eye) and Auto Attack. It is obtained as a chance drop from Securement Silo - SIGMA (PVP only). Its securement likes are Red Light, Music, Toy, Flower, and Electricity 10W.³⁹

- **Nutcracker:** A territorial deviant that acts as a Territory Guard, attacking suspicious targets in the base. It is obtained as a chance drop from defeating the Forsaken Giant in Red Sands. Its securement likes are Green Light, Toy, and Electricity 5W.³⁹

- **Orb Lightning:** A crafting deviant that produces Lightning Bottle, which enhances nearby Turrets. It can be found at Alternate Reality Research Institute, White Cliff, 73 Source Extraction Point, and Alpha Institute. Its securement likes are Electricity

10W.³⁹

- **Paper Doll:** A territorial deviant that restores durability of Stardust Resonant Filter and structures, and finds gains during Territory Purification. It is found in residential areas with Deviants. Its securement likes are Red Light, Toy, and Flowers.³⁹
- **Artisan's Touch:** A crafting deviant that provides a Universal Toolkit for crafting All-Purpose Hand to repair Gear. It is obtained as a chance drop from defeating Elite Enemy - The Scorcher or Sentinel in Hearst Industries or Greywater Industrial Zone. Its securement likes are High Temperature and Electricity 10W.¹⁰
- **Atomic Lighter:** A crafting deviant that produces Split-Core Cotton for Fusion Lighters, which cause violent explosions. It is obtained as a chance drop from clearing Securement Silo - PSI. Its securement likes are Red Light, Music, and Electricity 10W.¹⁰
- **Atomic Snail:** A crafting deviant that produces special materials for crafting Whim Elixir. It is obtained in PvE scenarios by participating in Prime War and opening Stardust's Advent Loot Crates, with a chance to acquire. Its securement likes are Crops, Flowers, and Electricity 5W.¹⁰
- **Butterfly Emissary:** A combat deviant that uses Designated Target and Auto Attack, marking enemy Weakspots and increasing Weakspot DMG by 20%. It is obtained by completing the Tutorial Task - The Eve of Evolution, or as a chance drop from clearing the hidden stage of Securement Silo - ALPHA, or in Gaia Research Center Ruins. Its securement likes are Green Light and Flowers.¹⁰
- **Buzzy Bee:** A territorial deviant that boosts the mutation probability of grown plants. It is found on farmland in the wilderness (e.g., Citrus County, Sutherland Vineyard, Dayton Wetlands, Winding Ridge Farmland). Its securement likes are Music, Flowers, and Crops.¹⁰
- **By-The-Wind:** A combat deviant that creates a Gravity Lift for air movement. It is obtained by participating in Prime War in PvE Scenarios. Its securement likes are Blue Light, Red Light, Flowers, and Electricity 5W.¹⁰
- **Chefosaurus Rex:** A territorial deviant that boosts the effects of food crafted at the Stove. It is obtained as a chance drop from clearing the hidden stage of Securement Silo - PHI. Its securement likes are Red Light, Toy, and High Temperature.¹⁰
- **Disco Ball:** A crafting deviant that produces special material for crafting Whim Elixir (extends Whim duration). It is found near World Exploration: Hales' Moving House. Its securement likes are Green Light, Blue Light, and Red Light.¹⁰
- **Dr. Teddy:** A combat deviant that provides Ranged Healing (restores 100% HP, revives downed allies) and Timed Healing (revives/heals nearby allies periodically). It is obtained as a chance drop from clearing the hidden area of Securement Silo - THETA in Red Sands (PVP Scenario Only). Its securement likes are Green Light and Toy.¹⁰
- **Dreamcatcher:** A crafting deviant that produces special material for crafting

Whim Elixir (cobweb traps slow enemies when rolling). It is obtained as a chance drop from defeating Arachsiam at Mirage Monolith in Iron River. Its securement likes are Blue Light, Music, and Flowers.¹⁰

- **Electric Eel:** A territorial deviant that increases the power output limit of generators. It is obtained as a chance drop from fishing. Its securement likes are Blue Light, Music, and High Temperature.¹⁰
- **Enchanting Void:** A combat deviant that increases melee damage received by targets by 100% for 20s. It is obtained as a chance drop from clearing the hidden stage of Securement Silo - THETA in PvE Scenarios. Its securement likes are Red Light, Flowers, Low Temperature, and Electricity 5W.¹⁰
- **Extradimensional Cat:** A territorial deviant that grants Cat Snooze (accelerates HP recovery when resting in bed). It spawns at neutral Strongholds (Deadsville, Meyer's Market, Greywater Camp, Tall Grass, Blackfell). Its securement likes are Toy.¹⁰
- **Fetch-A-Lot Bunny:** A territorial deviant that automatically gathers shrubs. It is obtained as a chance drop from chopping down Dracaena or Bald Cypress Trees in the wilderness. Its securement likes are Crops, Toy, and Flowers.¹⁰
- **Flame Essence:** A territorial deviant that increases the production efficiency of Furnace & Electric Furnace. It is found on Pipes by Sutherland Chemical Plant and at some other buildings locations like in Hearst Industries. Its securement likes are Red Light, Toy, and Electricity 10W.³⁹
- **Frog the Leaper:** A crafting deviant that produces special materials for crafting Whim Elixir (enhances jumping). It is found near Riddle Spots - Lotus Leaf, Car Stacks. Its securement likes are Toy and Electricity 2W.¹⁰
- **Gingerbread House:** A territorial deviant that produces Cracker Crumbs for crafting Morph Crumbs (transform into objects). It is found near World Exploration: Hales' Moving House or in some morphic hunt loot drops. Its securement likes are Red Light, High Temperature, and Crops.¹⁰
- **Growshroom:** A territorial deviant that automatically plants seeds and accelerates crop growth. It is obtained as a chance drop from gathering Mushrooms. Its securement likes are Green Light, High Temperature, and Electricity 10W.¹⁰
- **Grumpy Bulb:** A combat deviant that uses Garlicify (AoE Status DMG, disrupts hostility, causes enemies to attack each other) and Constant Provocation (attracts hostility). It is obtained as a chance drop from harvesting Onions you grow. Its securement likes are Crops, Flowers, and High Temperature.¹⁰
- **H37:** A territorial deviant that explores Settlements and collects resources from Loot Crates. It is obtained as a chance drop from clearing the theater room in Securement Silo - Alpha. Its securement likes are Music, Toy, and Electricity 10W.¹⁰
- **Harveseed:** A crafting deviant that produces special materials for crafting Whim Elixir [Living Armor] (restores 100% HP when HP < 20%). It is obtained as a

chance drop from defeating Treant at Gaia Cliff Monolith in Broken Delta. Its securement likes are Crops, Flowers, and High Temperature.¹⁰

- **Hug-In-A-Bowl:** A crafting deviant that produces Delicious Soup for crafting Homestyle Noodles (fully restore Sanity). It has a chance to appear in the wilderness (e.g., west of Hearst Industries). Its securement likes are Crops and Flower.¹⁰
- **Lethal Rabbit:** A territorial deviant that hunts animals and obtains resources from them. It has a chance to spawn when Rabbits are killed in the wilderness (PVP: Sigma Sideroom). It has no specific securement likes listed.¹⁰
- **Logging Beaver:** A territorial deviant that logs Trees efficiently. It can be found near rivers (e.g., southeast of Deadsville, southwest of Meyer's Market) or docks with fishing events. Its securement likes are Music, High Temperature, Electricity 3W, and Crops.¹⁰
- **Masonic Pyramid:** A crafting deviant that provides Predator (first hit in Stealth guaranteed Crit) and Parapsychology (notifies when enemy aims outside FoV). It is obtained by participating in Stronghold Conquest (PVP). Its securement likes are Blue Light, Music, High Temperature, and Electricity 10W.¹⁰
- **Mini Feaster:** A combat deviant that uses Auto Attack (summons tentacles to whip/damage, increases Weapon DMG when triggering Bounce) and Designated Target. It is obtained as a chance drop from achieving exploration goals of Mist Zones. Its securement likes are Red Light, Music, and Toy.¹⁰
- **Mini Wonder:** A combat deviant that uses Bullet Absorption (absorbs bullets, reloads weapon) and Designated Target (buffs allies). It is obtained by talking to Lowe in Blackfell Town and completing Rift Traveler, or as a chance drop when crafting Vortex Generator. Its securement likes are Blue Light and Red Light.¹⁰
- **Party Monkey:** A crafting deviant that produces special materials, repairs replicas, and attracts monster threat. It is obtained by doing Production Facility events with permit access cards (e.g., Eastern Junction Rainway). Its securement likes are Music and High Temperature.¹⁰
- **Polar Jelly:** A combat deviant that uses Frostlash (AoE Frost DMG) and Auto Attack (Frost DMG, reduces Movement Speed by 50%). It is obtained as a chance drop from clearing Securement Silo - EX-1 or Cargo Shuttle Event completion. Its securement likes are Blue Light, Low Temperature, and Electricity 3W.¹⁰
- **Pup Buddy:** A crafting deviant that produces special material for crafting Featherweight (increases Max Load). It is found near a balloon holding a Zombie (Blackfield Oil fields, Evergreen). Its securement likes are Green Light, Music, and Toy.¹⁰
- **Pyro Dino:** A combat deviant that uses AoE Attack (Blaze DMG, inflicts Burn) and Single-Target Attack. It is obtained as a chance drop from clearing the hidden stage of Securement Silo - PHI. Its securement likes are Green Light, Toy, and High Temperature.¹⁰
- **Rain Man:** A territorial deviant that provides Psychic Rain Curtain (enhances crop

Vitality, provides irrigation). It is obtained as a chance drop from killing Rainfall Reapers at strongholds (e.g., Harborside, Sutherland Chemical Plant). Its securement likes are Blue Light and Low Temperature.¹⁰

- **Rebecca:** A territorial deviant that summons Mitsuko (plays piano, increases Deviant Power recovery speed). It is obtained as a chance drop from defeating LEA Research Lab in Red Sands. Its securement likes are Green Light, Toy, and Flowers.¹⁰
- **Shattered Maiden:** A combat deviant that fears and freezes enemies. It is obtained by doing Production Facility events with permit access cards (e.g., Eastern Junction Rainway) or completing the side mission Farmside Fright. Its securement likes are Blue Light, Red Light, and Flowers.¹⁰
- **Snow Globe:** A crafting deviant that produces special material for crafting Snowballs (slows/freezes targets). It is found by exploring Securement Silo - PSI in Red Sands (PvE Scenario). Its securement likes are Blue Light and Low Temperature.¹⁰
- **Space Turner:** A crafting deviant that produces Spatial Keystones for Space Twister (teleports teammate). It is found near Riddle Spots - Strange Door. Its securement likes are Blue Light and Toy.¹⁰
- **Strange Door:** A crafting deviant that produces special material for crafting Portals (enables teleportation). It has a chance to spawn at Riddle Spots - Stranger Door in the wilderness. Its securement likes are Blue Light, Red Light, and Flowers.¹⁰
- **Upper World Spawn:** A crafting deviant that produces special materials for tactical items (short period of immunity to all damage while losing movement). It is obtained as a chance drop when completing Silo - PSI (PVP Scenario Only). Its securement likes are Red Light, Toy, Low Temp, and Electricity 10W.¹⁰
- **Voodoo Doll:** A combat deviant that shares DMG taken (ally: player shares, enemy: enemy shares player DMG). It is obtained by completing the Carnival of Doom quest or found in Coastside Plaza and Sunbury Middle School. Its securement likes are Blue Light, Red Light, Music, and Toy.¹⁰
- **Zeno-Purifier:** A combat deviant that uses Designated Target and Auto Attack (teleports to target for melee, grants player same ability). It is obtained as a chance drop from opening Weapon Crates at Strongholds or by completing the Season Goal to kill 200 enemies with a Melee Weapon. Its securement likes are Red Light and Music.¹⁰

IV. Advanced Tips, Tricks & Optimization Strategies

This section moves beyond specific build components to broader gameplay strategies that enhance overall efficiency and power in Once Human.

- General Gameplay Tips:

Optimal combat performance is deeply intertwined with efficient non-combat gameplay. True mastery in Once Human requires a holistic approach, where efficient base management, resource acquisition, and character progression directly support and enable advanced weapon build crafting. It is not just about the gun, but the entire ecosystem supporting it.

- Resource Management Fundamentals:
A good rule of thumb is to gather everything encountered, as needed materials are unpredictable.⁴² For specific lower-tier materials, scavenging in lower-level areas is more efficient.⁴² Players should unlock the Fuel Refinery in the Memetics tree to convert Acid (harvested from enemies) into premium fuel, saving significant time compared to searching cars.⁴² Spoiled food should not be discarded; it can be processed into Fertilizer in a Compost Bin for farming.⁴² Once "Basic Storage" is unlocked, players can create storage crates in their base, allowing access to materials for crafting and building from anywhere within the base, preventing encumbrance.⁴² Starchrome is the most important currency for weapon and armor blueprints, so research builds before spending it on gacha, and remember to claim it from the Stellar Stairway.¹⁸ Energy Links can be gained by selling items to traders, with a weekly limit of 50k EL per trader.¹⁸
- Base Management & Mobility:
Establishing a garage as soon as possible is essential for maintaining and upgrading motorcycles, and for unlocking new vehicles.⁴² Players should consider moving their Territory (base) to new, higher-level areas as they progress. This makes it easier to gather higher-tier resources without constant warping.⁴² The base can also be used for fast travel, as players can always teleport back to their own base from anywhere, then proceed to another Teleportation Tower.⁴² AI companions like The Digby Boy (for Ore) and The Logging Beaver (for Wood) can be assigned to passive farming roles at the base, gathering basic materials while the player focuses on other activities. These companions require fuel and rest to operate optimally. For farming, strategically placing a single sprinkler and light can efficiently water and illuminate a 5x5 grid of crops, maximizing yields.
- Character & Health Management:
Sanity degrades in polluted zones, impacting health. The easiest way to restore Sanity is by sleeping in a bed, which also restores health and removes Sanity degradation. The blueprint for a bed is unlocked via the Basic Furniture 1 node in the Memetic upgrade tree.⁴² A character's weight impacts various stats, with different weight bands offering pros and cons (e.g., increased max stamina vs. increased base load), so monitoring and adjusting weight to suit playstyle is advised.⁴²
- Advanced Combat Strategies:
Endgame success in Once Human is not just about having one powerful build, but about having a repertoire of optimized builds or flexible loadouts that can adapt to different enemy types and content mechanics. This encourages players to invest in multiple weapon types and understand their respective strengths and weaknesses.

- **Understanding PSI Intensity:** PSI intensity directly affects elemental damage and is influenced by specific gear, making it a key consideration for elemental builds.¹
- **Boss Mechanics & Immunities:** A critical strategic consideration is that some bosses are immune to elemental damage, necessitating the use of non-elemental secondary weapons or entirely different builds for these encounters.³ The recurring theme of elemental immunity and the necessity of specific Cradle Overrides for "Super Anomalies" ²³ indicates that no single "best" build will suffice for all content.
- **Prime War Preparation:** Prime Wars are brutal encounters that require thorough preparation. Players should go in fully prepared with heals, biomass missiles, and coordinated group strategies. Paying attention to on-screen pop-ups for boss mechanics, such as destroying incoming missiles or understanding immunity phases, is crucial for success .
- **Gear Star & Collection Boosting:** Maximizing gear stars is a method for achieving ultimate player power. Phantom cubes, unlocked every 30 levels, can be used to unlock alternate cosmetic versions of keyword special effects .
- **Efficient Farming Methods:**
 Farming is not a separate activity but a foundational pillar of build crafting. Mastery of farming methods directly translates to faster and more complete build progression, creating a positive feedback loop for player power.
 - **Farming Loadout:** Players should equip specialized tools like enhanced pickaxes and harvesting knives, along with backpacks that have expanded capacity. Certain gear pieces offer perks such as increased gathering speed or reduced stamina usage during collection. It is important to ensure the inventory is clear before major farming runs to avoid overburden penalties; junk gear can be dismantled or excess loot stored at the base .
 - **Farming Cycles & Respawn Rates:** Resources in Once Human do not replenish instantly, especially rare ones. Players should create rotation systems between different zones to maintain a consistent flow of items without waiting for respawns. Marking high-yield nodes on the map for future revisits can also improve efficiency .
 - **High-Risk, High-Reward Zones:** Anomalies and corrupted zones offer concentrated rare materials but are guarded by powerful enemies. It is recommended to enter these zones with a full team or upgraded gear. Building forward outposts nearby is advisable to quickly offload materials and minimize travel time .

Conclusion: Your Path to Once Human Mastery

Mastering weapon build crafting in Once Human transcends mere replication; it demands a

deep understanding of interconnected game mechanics and strategic foresight. The journey to becoming a true "Architect of the Arsenal" involves several key principles:

First, a foundational understanding of weapon mechanics, including the critical distinction between elemental and non-elemental damage, PSI intensity, and the nuanced role of calibration, is paramount. This knowledge allows players to select and fine-tune their primary weapon effectively.

Second, the intricate system of mods and substats offers unparalleled customization. Recognizing that armor mods provide universal, always-active buffs, while weapon mods offer specialized enhancements, guides efficient allocation of resources. The principle of "build purity" dictates that substat prioritization should align strictly with the build's primary damage scaling, avoiding conflicting stats to maximize efficiency.

Third, armor sets and unique Key Gear pieces form the synergistic backbone of any build. Players must select sets that not only boost desired stats but also align with their preferred playstyle or conditional combat strategies. Key Gear, often directly amplifying a weapon's core mechanic, serves as a central anchor for build construction. Weapon accessories further refine performance, with their acquisition often tied to engaging with the game's diverse world puzzles.

Fourth, the game's dynamic meta is heavily influenced by Cradle Overrides, which can introduce seasonal counters to specific enemy types, demanding adaptive build strategies. Complementing this, food buffs offer significant, albeit temporary, power spikes, acting as a crucial layer of micro-optimization for challenging content.

Finally, Deviants are integral companions, providing combat support, crafting benefits, or territorial advantages. Their selection should synergize with the overall build, and their effectiveness is further enhanced by strategic base management that caters to their specific "likes." Beyond individual components, overall mastery is underpinned by efficient resource management, smart farming methods, and a continuous commitment to learning and adapting to the evolving game.

By embracing these principles—identifying core mechanics, stacking multiplicative bonuses, leveraging synergistic gear, adapting with overrides and consumables, and prioritizing smart farming—players can move beyond prescriptive guides to become adept weapon build architects, capable of consistently developing innovative and highly effective loadouts that dominate the evolving landscape of Once Human. The community remains a vital resource for shared insights and continuous learning, encouraging ongoing experimentation and collaboration.

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