**Forum Posts for Week 2**

***Domin8 writes:***

**A Guide to Starter Island** **(for noobs)**

So, the new player experience for this game has changed quite a bit throughout the betas. New players used to be dumped onto the main continent with very little instruction. Now, once you are done making your character, you will find yourself on what is unofficially called Starter Island – more than likely in the town of Beginnings.

As far as I know, this tutorial phase cannot be skipped or shortcut in any way. If you find a way, feel free to post it. A lot of people would thank you.

**Beginnings**

Anyway, the town is small, but has pretty much all the basics for new players. The central area contains a bunch of NPC run shops.

* *Sword & Shield* – This is the all-purpose smith. The owner Algos and his apprentices, Milo and Pria sell basic starter weapons and starter medium and heavy armors.
* *The Wild Hunt* – This store sells bows, staffs, and light armor. The purveyor, Fennis, will also give tips on locations to hunt if he is bribed/diplo-ed.
* *Ilbrona’s* – Named after the old crone behind the counter, this place sells basic potions. Lots of simple buffs and low-tier heals. She does sell color potions, but they are expensive for beginning players, so I suggest holding off unless you really need that extra sustain on a long adventure.
* *General Store* – No idea why this doesn’t have a name. I think maybe there was a translation problem when the game came over from the east. In any case, this place is serviced by Yvonne, who might be the most pleasant and cheerful NPC to have ever been scripted. If you get on her good side (not super-hard to do), she has a few rumors to hand out.
* *The Dark Eye* – The local tavern. You can rest up here and buy cooking supplies from the innkeeper, Brutus.

In general, most of this stuff is no better than your starting gear, but if you lose something, or it breaks, you can come here to replace it. Also, though I have not seen it myself, I have several reports from guildies that these stores occasionally get higher tier pieces, and even some minor magic items. These items are expensive, but if you would happen to buy one, it might carry you through the first couple of levels.

**Other Notable Locations/NPCs**

* *The Gate* – From here, you can get lots of other places on the island. Just speak a phrase and step through. If you ever need to return to town, the phrase “Town of Endless Beginnings” will work.
* *The Barracks* – Beginnings is a hub for the Soldiers, and as such, they have a base here. The Barracks is run by Captain Aldo and his soldiers act as the town guard. Characters with martial backgrounds might be able to find missions here, and if you are a Recruiter and want to find a man-at-arms, this is the place to go – but be ready to pay cause these guys aren’t cheap!
* *Pip* – Pip is the town crier in Beginnings. For 1G, Pip will deliver messages to other players, or will shout your message throughout the town. Once you leave town though, you will have to use the scribe messages.

**Quests and Missions**

Quests are “dynamically generated” by the game’s AI. I have no idea exactly how that works, but generally it means that you might find quests from any of these NPCs. Talk to everyone. There are usually one or two storylines in the town at any given time, and chatting up the NPCs will allow you to learn what is going on, and maybe get you signed onto a quest or two so you can get those sweet rewards.

The rewards for completing missions is almost always some amount of gold, some crafting mats, and some number of free checks. Sometimes, you will even get straight up XP, and one or two items.

**The Scaled Queen**

One recurring event on Starter Island is the attack of the Scaled Queen. One of the main enemies on Starter Island is a massive army of kobolds that dwells in the southwest. The Scaled Queen is the ruler of these kobolds, and periodically, she will muster her troops and attack human settlements across the island with her ultimate goal being the destruction of Beginnings.

It is unclear exactly how this event plays out. As far as I know, the Queen has never succeeded in destroying the town, and though her plans have been thwarted, I have never heard a credible story about a group of players killing her. Typically, you defeat her army, and her lieutenants and she skulks back to her castle in defeat, only to return in a few weeks.

**Other Locations and Adventures**

Though the Scaled Queen event is on quite often, you might get unlucky and start your Swordsphere adventures during a quiet time. I did… and so I never got to tangle with the kobold army, but even so, there are a ton of places to go, so you should be able to find something to do to level up. In the interest of not spoiling the entire island, I won’t list everything, but here are some highlights.

* *Ontaro and Felgarden* – These are the two other human towns on the island. They are similar to Beginnings in that they have some basic shops and services tailored to noobs. Neither of these places has much of note, but if you can’t find any quests in Beginnings, you might try talking to the NPCs here. I didn’t find much excitement in either town, but mostly that is because I spent nearly all my noob time with Beginnings as my hub, and I never ran out of things to do there.
* *The Den* – This is a large tavern, with a bunch of smaller buildings nearby. The Den is home to the Rogues and as such is of interest to characters with a shadier nature. The store here sells lock picks, traps and disarming kits. If you are a purveyor of the dark arts, the Crone and Warlock sometimes can be seen in the dark corners of the tavern, selling spells to those willing to do them favors. This place isn’t my speed, but if you do go, do your best to befriend the tavern keeper, Olog as he is said to sell rumors to his friends.
* *The Lost Mine* – This is where I did a lot of leveling. This is a three-level dungeon taken over by spiders and troll-kin. You can travel either through, or around, the mountains, but I will save you a lot of effort -- you can get there using the phrase “Greed Brings Ashes”. Each level is maybe 6-12 rooms? The first level isn’t so bad, but once you get to the second and third levels, you are going to be outclassed – so bring a party. We never fully finished the place, but there is a rumor that at the end of the third level, there is a special fountain that gives a permanent boost to a stat.
* *The Mountain Chapel* – The phrase “Lonely Mountain Chapel” will bring you to this cold, windy place. The Chapel is a base for The Order, led by Pilgrim Winifred and defended by Knight Caldo and his paladins. Characters in good standing with The Order can rest and tithe here for white magic, as well as purchase a couple new spells. Also, I think this is the possible start point for one or two quests. This place counts as a holy site for pilgrims as well… so if you are a pilgrim, visit before you leave the island to get your Pilgrimage reward.
* *The Scaled Temple* – A huge snake guards the entrance to this dungeon. This place is only one floor, but it is pretty expansive, with lots of twists, turns, locked gates, and traps to disarm. There aren’t too many enemies here because I think this dungeon is meant as a test for thieves, but there are a couple rooms with undead lizard-man priests and their pet bone serpents. The chest at the end is guaranteed to drop one magic item

***ChelseaBrianna replies:***

Did you even spend ***any*** time in Felgarden? The library there has tons of lore and the librarian there will give a quest to find landmarks.

***Leonardo replies:***

Don’t forget the Boatmens’ Guild in Ontaro. You can rent passage on a boat, or even sail your own boat. It is pretty damn cool actually… and there are fishing spots in the water where you can get some rare cooking ingredients. This guy has no clue what he is talking about!

***Domin8 replies:***

I think I said I didn’t spend much time outside of Beginnings. I am sure the other towns are nice too, but it seems unlikely that most new characters will have much reason to spend time in either of them. The noob experience is much, much shorter than it was in early tests. Once you level up, you are basically ushered out of the starter zone and into Valice hub.

***Jacko replies:***

“Nest of Larceny” will gate you to The Den. If anyone tells you otherwise, ignore them – they are trolling you.

***Paladina writes:***

I am a tiny bit confused by this gate thing. What exactly do I do?

***Jacko replies:***

It’s simple, P. You walk up to a gate, say a phrase that relates to the gate you want to ***travel*** ***to,*** and step through once you see the shimmering light. Try the phrase “Lonely Mountain Chapel” and then “Town of Endless Beginnings” to get back.

***Paladina replies:***

How do you know any of the words to say?

***Jacko replies:***

If you can find a gate, it will often have the phrase written somewhere on it, or nearby. The Language skill is good for translating this. Or, you can use Gate Lore to learn the passphrase for a gate… and if you use essence, you can learn the phrases for nearby gates to which your current gate can link.

***Loresee replies:***

Yeah, you can use Gate Lore on a gate to see the number of *other* gate keys (phrases) that you can learn. You will see a list of ???s. You can then burn an essence and make another use of Gate Lore to learn on of the keys on the list. Generally, you unlock them top to bottom, but there is a little randomness to it, so you *might* learn the bottom key first; it is just super unlikely.

***Leonardo replies:***

In general, don’t even bother with that stuff, Paladina. The system is crap. Gates you have been to already don’t even appear as discovered on the list. So, you might be wasting essence to “discover” gates you already know. Plus the chance to learn “rare” gates is super low. For example, the Beginnings gate shows 4 items on its list

“Lonely Mountain Chapel”

“Nest of Larceny”

“Greed Brings Ashes” and

“???”

Yes, I wasted 3 freakin’ essence only to realize that I was learning nothing new. I am not wasting another essence to find a phrase to Ontaro or Felgarden. That’s Bullsh\*t!!!. Just learn the gate phrases from other players. Essence isn’t cheap and you’ll need it for other things.

***ReddDog writes:***

I need your help! I got killed near “Kingdoms in Endless Conflict” and somehow I dropped a ton of my stuff… including an epic magic item I lucked into finding. I am in a bit of a death loop trying to get my corpse. Please someone come and help me do my corpse run.

***GhostOfHelgen writes:***

I am about ready to get off this island and move onto the mainland, folks!!! As a thank you to my fellow newbies, I am selling all my food resources at the low, low cost of 2G. Meet me at the NW gate in Beginnings and let’s deal!!!