

The ultimate guide from Elostart.com

Your ELO Improvement starts today!

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Preface

First of all thanks to my friends for the support for writing this.

Secondly I want to thank the help of all the people I have mentored and helped over the time as this book would simply not have been possible without you. :-)

I also want to dedicate a few lines to my first team Prophets from whom I have learned everything I know!

This was the team I stuck with for more than two years all while winning more tournaments than I can count and forming great friendships along the way. Hope you guys had fun – I know I did!

Bear in mind that this book is focusing entirely on soloqueue 5v5 on Summoners Rift with a bit of team ranked on the same map. The techniques explained may apply to different maps but there is no guarantee.

Me and my story for success

My online nickname is Gregersen and I started out getting level 30 in late season 1. I only managed to play about 18 ranked games after which I was stuck in the bronze ELO¹ shortly before the season ended. Only a few months later season two would launch and I would rise to diamond ELO as well as being one of the top players in my country playing on one of the most dominant teams. As a team maxing out 1800 ELO which meant just below diamond, we were never a team that managed to rise high in terms of perceived skill. However come tourney day and scrims against much higher ranked teams we would proceed to completely demolish teams with much better players on them, consistently. That meant winning a lot of LAN events as well as online competitions. How? Was it cheating? Better teamplay? Or some obscure belief that we were just better at LAN events? No. Partly teamplay but mostly the fact that we played the game *by the Meta*.

We were always good at reading what champions currently had a strong position in the game as well as analyzing which strategies and summoner spells were adequate for certain situations.

We simply won games by having a *good understanding of the game* that allowed us to win even against much more skilled opponents whom stuck to certain champions and/or playstyles.

I am not saying this to pad myself on the shoulder, but rather to try and give you an understanding of what it takes to be a good league of legends player; it doesn't necessarily mean having the best mechanics or learning everything by experience. Experience is good but as with all knowledge it can be taught.

I simply applied the same techniques in soloqueue, playing whatever role I had to fit in but rather than sticking to one or two specific champions I simply played currently strong champions, thus improving my chances of winning assumed that I already know how to play these champions just a little.

I have already coached many players who have went from lower bronze to mid-high platinum in just a few weeks because they simply started listening instead of shouting louder.

I am probably the worst player ever to have won several tournaments both offline and online as well as competing against very well-known professional teams and players like Rekkles, SK Jesiz, Copenhagen Wolves, aAa and many more.

A very easy and understandable trick to how I and my team achieved this was to read patch notes extensively and staying ahead of the curve in terms of understanding the game. Feel like you just recently learned that champion X was strong because he slapped you around in a ranked game after a patch? Yeah, that's what we used to do. Sometimes the patch notes make it really obvious which champions are going to get buffed and which get hit by the nerf-bat.

Martin "Gregersen" Gregersen is the man behind the book solely focusing on improving League of Legends players.

With a long list of prize earnings and top-placements both online and offline he has cut out all the theoretical aspects of improving and gives you a hands-on guide that you can start using today.

¹ ELO was used as a measurement of skill in the first two seasons before ranked brackets were introduced

Before writing Gregersen has been a more-than-averagely successful League player, earning several thousands playing League of Legends as well as coaching numerous players at all levels to a better place than they started.

A full list of prize winnings can be found below:

- 1st place @ Clanbase Online Seasonal Tournament Winter 2011
- 1st place @ Clanbase Online Seasonal Tournament Spring 2012
- 1st place @ Nordic Net Party 2011
- 1st place @ Nordic Net Party 2012
- 1st place @ WuLAN 3.0
- 2nd place @ WuLAN 4.0
- 2nd place @ NPF 2013
- 2nd place @ AlienWare Arena Winter season 2012
- 3rd place @ HKLAN 2013
- 3rd place @ HKLAN's 2013 finals for gaming.dk online league
- Numerous top 3 ESL Go4LoL tournaments
- Numerous winnings of unnamed one-day tournaments with cash and hardware prizes.
- Numerous winnings of former danish 'lolleague'



Identifying yourself and your problems

Before going in-depth with the guide itself I want to take a chapter out to address some issues that I have seen reoccurring over and over again while mentoring many lesser experienced players.

First of all the single-most important piece of advice I am going to give you is to be honest with yourself and your learning. BONUS; this applies to your life overall as well!

If, for example, you are currently stuck in bronze, there is no need for you to focus on improving minor skills that would close the gap from platinum to diamond, but rather realize that you are no better than you are and focus on improving different (but major) parts of your game first as it will allow for much better results in the long run.

Regarding yourself too highly is what's stopping almost every single player from becoming better; you are your own greatest obstacle. If you can overcome yourself by going at this *logically* rather than emotionally you are bound for great success.

However before reading on I want to underline that by reading this book I do not guarantee you a spot in CLG or TSM or the streaming revenue of a professional. However, I do sincerely believe that this book will be a tool that, if used correctly, will allow anyone to easily achieve Challenger.

League of Legends is a game that anyone can get good at with enough dedication, persistence and self-insight. The latter being something that 99% of the community does NOT possess and that is why we have so many players claiming that they are way better than the ranked tier they are currently in. So am I saying they were right all along? No, but I am saying that they probably *could* be wherever they wish to be if they were to focus on improving over the long term, rather than trying to win every single game and get caught up in emotions and frustrations over a single loss here and there.

The trick is knowing which mistakes you made and why. This will be learned through experience but some quicker methods will also be explained in a following chapter. You don't need to be talented. You need to be motivated and willing to learn, because if you focus on improving you will improve.

In soloqueue you shouldn't think in terms of what-ifs and things your team could have done. Be harsh; you are the only variable. You need to focus on what you could've done differently rather than what anyone else could've done differently. You are the only variable you can change anyway.

So be honest with yourself, you are where you are for a reason and the only one that's stopping you from improving is yourself and not your teammates.

General tips and how to improve your gameplay

First of all I want to point out that the main focus of this book is to improve sole player's skill while attempting to climb in soloqueue rather than improving teamplay. However a chapter regarding playing on a team and how to evolve as a team will also be included, although still from an individual standpoint.

Anyone can become a professional league of legends player. Talent helps but there are no physical limitations as there is in sports or psychological barriers if you are just willing to learn.

If you have ever listened to a player like Doublelift and how he became professional he has only had one mindset; if he got beaten by another player he would look at what that player did differently from himself and try to copy that. Simple enough right? Well he has been professional for many years now so what's stopping you? Adopt the mindset of improving and trying to copy what better players do rather than get stuck in your own head thinking you are doing the best you can – you are your own greatest obstacle. That being said there are some underlying mindset things that needs to be in place before getting into a game all of which are going to make your quest for improvement much, much easier.

1. Maintaining a positive attitude throughout every game

I can't stress this enough. Being positive at all times will help you progress because of so many things. First and foremost it allows you to stay logical and actually learn from both mistakes and failures in any game rather than repeating it all over again and again.

Staying positive means you are not defending yourself in an argument but instead you welcome feedback and self-insight.

Remember that learning is the goal in itself, not winning. When you learn you will automatically start winning at a faster rate, because you improve faster than players around you.

Secondly it will mean less flaming on your team which will boost the performance of everyone – yes this means that you are not allowed to flame and blame anymore. The chat should only be used to relay game-vital information such as timers and the occasional "gj". If you find yourself unable to stay away from a chat-based argument, do mute all players in the beginning of every game. It will help you focus on your game and improvement and not allow opponents to distract you.

2. Having a good computer and a good internet connection.

This speaks for itself. Having the correct equipment is completely necessary to improving your gameplay. How are you going to make clutch plays if your internet connection lags out, or your screen freezes for a second? This is not a requirement but the better you become and the better the competition becomes the more you are going to need these to be good.

You don't need a brand new super computer, but you do need at least 60 steady FPS even in heavy teamfights. A chapter on how to improve your FPS is included.

3. Healthy living

If you ever feel you're unfocused or can't concentrate even just on a few games in a row it's probably time to get physical. Your brain and body are two sides of the same coin and both need to be sharpened for it to have any value. Among other rewards such as general health and a better move your brain will actual be able to concentrate for much longer periods of time. All it takes is a sport or workout 2-3 times a week and you will feel significant improvements. Eating healthy also improves your ability to concentrate as the empty calories from pizza and fastfood just leaves your body without fuel and you are easily starved of energy and will permanently feel tired and lack

energy. This is not what you want in a setting where focus and concentration are of utmost importance.

Having a healthy sleep cycle also enforces you to be more productive in your waking hours because a better sleep means more energy when you are up. Ever been at a LAN-party where you just felt like drinking Cola and not moving too much from the computer? All the result of poor sleep. Poor sleep also means you won't learn very quickly, so make sure you get that sleep!

4. Breaks!

Breaks are not only good but very much needed if you aim to become good at league. That being said, breaks can be used for many things that will stimulate your progress in League of Legends. You could spend time paying attention to your body, going outside, renewing your energy with a shower or even watch an old replay of your own. Watching replays is a surefire way to improve much faster than you would expect, but more on that later. The reason breaks are important is because computer screens tire out your eyes which in turn tires out the brain.

This is also important because it stops you from going on tilt² and is directly related to maintaining a positive attitude in the sense that if you are suddenly not positive that's a good sign that you need a break.

A good way is to setup a rule for yourself along the lines of 'If I lose 2 games in a row I am going to take a break for 45 minutes to clear my mind' after which you can get back to gaming with a refreshed state of mind and new a renewed positive attitude.

5. Asking better players

When you want to improve it is essential you put away your pride and not thinking about yourself as the best player ever. Confidence is good but until you're actually rank 1 there will always be a better player. It's not about being better than everyone else, it's about being better than you used to be.

Having mentored many players the thing that they all replied was the most meaningful was actually watching replays of their own plays with me and just listening to my commentary of the games and improving on those points. What's the point of improving on X if it's actually Y that needs to be corrected for your progress to skyrocket? Asking someone that has been in your situation and knows how to improve, is often better than trying to figure it out on your own.

If you ever watch any top players' stream, they are actually teaching you a lot if you are willing to listen. Some (like Wingsofdeath) actually make streaming centered on being educational. Don't just watch for watching's sake when there's so much information out there, ready to be soaked up.

6. Persistence and seriousness.

Now this one is the tough one. Many players claim they want to be pro – myself included a long time ago – but never actually stick with the effort and persistence to achieve this. You will be surprised at how much you can achieve if you stick at it for a few months or even just weeks. This also goes hand in hand with being serious. You should never succumb to 'trolling' because in terms of improving, that is just giving up when it looks hard. Always play as seriously as possible and play to win every single game. Even if you are 0-20 and they are knocking at your base towers, you might still get a good ultimate off which could win a teamfight. I have not voted yes in a surrender vote since I started wanting to improve and most games are actually winnable at any

² Tilt is the word many league players use to describe a bad state of mind where you will lose game after game because your approach is emotional rather than logical.

point no matter the overall score. Everyone makes mistakes, even your opposing team.

Never giving up is also the perfect mindset to learn as it brings a lot more than you would think to the table when players start to get onto ranked 5 teams. One of the main reasons teams lose here are negativity and lack of momentum – at least from my past experience.

Even when a game is lost you should not give up. You are going to lose LP, you can't change that. But you can change what you take from the game and what you learn. Take something positive instead of feeding and spamming surrender. The games in which you are not winning with a stomp are often the ones where there is most to learn from.

7. Watching replays

Replays? What replays you might be wondering. League doesn't even have a replay function! And you are correct.

However, there are services out there that allow you to capture and review your plays as third-party replay functions. This has been allowed by Riot for a very long time and currently still is. Services such as LoLReplay and BaronReplay are currently what I consider the best and I urge you to get either.

Watching replays is highly underrated and super important as it is a surefire way to skyrocket your progress faster than you can imagine. I could explain this myself but I'm going to let the results do the talking and let AlexMcDaddyD whom I have formerly mentored do the talking.

"Watching replays might not seem as important as it really is until you try it. You may think that you played the game and there is nothing you can fix but when I was stuck in Bronze 4, watching replays made me realize how all of my little mistakes add up to me losing lane or even the game.

There are a few things that stick in my mind from when I was being mentored and watching replays is one of them. In one case, I was watching a replay of a game where I lost lane in, at least I thought I lost lane. I had recently been working on CSing and that is all I would focus on. Because of that, I kept dying and I thought I was far behind in gold. Watching the replay showed me how because I was so high in CS I actually had more gold and I could actually kill the enemy repeatedly.

I got it into my head that I was really behind yet I wasn't. Because of replays, I learned the real importance of CSing that is why I believe watching replays is one of the best ways to improve as a player who is stuck in a certain division.

You need to be very strict on yourself. Little things like putting your first point into a spell when you spawn could get you killed and seeing things on the map you could have helped but didn't see. To conclude watching replays is unbelievably helpful and I advise everyone to do it if you want to improve."

If you are ever in doubt of whether something were done correctly or not, ask someone who is better, preferably someone who is diamond. Even if that means that, you have to ask a Diamond player after a normal game if it's cool that you add them (assuming you don't know anyone or do this already). They will often come up with a surprising - and often correct - answer that will help you focus on the specific problem that is holding you back from becoming a better league player.

So that concludes the general tips. There are a ton of resources online that will be more detailed and can help you work on specific areas of your game, but before doing that you need to identify your problems. Ranked tier lists the following subchapters, so if you are already ranked and are in a certain tier you can just skip ahead and find your tier for the skills you need to focus on in order to improve.

League of Legends is a game that consists of 95% knowledge and 5% mechanics so I do believe that skill can be taught in this game. You just have to pass on knowledge.

This naturally assumes you have already worked on the prerequisite skills from the lower tiers. Otherwise feel free and read the entire thing – maybe you'll even learn a new thing or two.

More of these points are related to your real-life well-being and not so much gaming related and you might be thinking they're arbitrary. They're not however. Your mind and body are two sides of the same coin so if you are physically ill or not well your mind will not be able to perform at maximum capacity. Make sure you take these things serious and keep a healthy real life next to League of Legends. It is after all just a hobby. Help you help yourself.

Getting ready

Before getting in deep about how to improve through the tiers there are some preparations to be made. We are going to be playing the odds as much as possible, rather than playing against them.

One of the things we are going to do is to make the correct Mastery and Rune pages. There is no reason to have outdated or inefficient runepages. If you don't have the IP to buy the runes needed; fear not there is also a solid 'standard' runepage.

Game Settings

Starting with the absolute basics we are going to go over setting up game settings. I recommend you enter a custom game with only you in it, to adjust these settings. Note that when adjusting settings it should be done on the Summoners Rift as the other maps use a bit more computer power.

So the goal with the settings is to set up the game so you get as high amount of FPS as possible, while not having screen tearing or visual (or audio) bugs. League of Legends does not provide a huge variety of settings to mess around with but, still enough that it can make a difference.

The goal here should be to make it so you have at least 60 FPS in a full on 5v5 teamfight on Summoners Rift. Any less will make it too difficult to make clutch plays and at a higher level of play that can turn a really good play into a really bad one.

Video – If you open up the video settings you will see a bunch of video options. Set the resolution to the one that you prefer, I recommend the highest ones as it allows a better overview of things. Secondly you should set your game to Full Screen Mode unless you want to stream or video record your games (not replays but actual screen capture) you want to set this to Borderless Mode. After that you simply want to adjust the slider so you get your desired FPS. Good graphics are nice but you should not prioritize it over high FPS in a competitive game like League of Legends.

In the bottom left you will see advanced settings and this is where the kicker is. You want to make sure that the box labeled "Wait for Vertical Sync" is unchecked. Then you want to set your Frame Rate Cap to Uncapped. These two things combined will make you able to get a lot higher FPS. If you start having screen tearing or artifacts showing up, you might have to reverse this and set a Frame Rate Cap; preferably to at least 60 FPS.

I also recommend enabling Colorblind Mode as it gives cleaner colors in the game but this is entirely up to you, as it is just a preference.

Audio – In the audio the only real thing you want to make sure is that you can clearly hear ingame events such as Flashes being used, while also being able to hear anyone you might be communicating with through voice-chat.

I recommend that you disable "Music" entirely and also "Voice" but the latter is not as important. Completely disabling Voice will make you unable to hear when people spam emotes which can be annoying on certain champions. Background music is just a distraction so make sure you slide that all the way to 0.

Interface – In the interface section you will find three sliders in the top. Play around with these until you find something you like. I recommend making the HUD as small as possible, while still readable as it will give you more visual screen to actually play the game in.

You want to move your Minimap slider all the way to 100 and make sure it stays there. Map awareness is a

big deal in League.

Pretty much everything else in this section is highly based on preferences. I do recommend that you disable Summoner Names (they serve no purpose), enable Health Bars and enable Chat Timestamps.

Game – In the last section all you need to focus on is setting your mouse to a comfortable speed. I like to play without Camera moving on respawn but again the choices here are based on preference. Do make sure you check the box labeled Auto Attack as it will make it easier to kite enemies in fights and less forgiving if you are not completely content with your mechanics (ie. Missing right clicks).

Having all of these options set in place from the beginning will make it easier to focus on the game and never mess around with settings in the game.

However, for some reason the client can be weird and will sometimes reset some of your choices in the options between games so check up on it every once in a while or if anything feels out of order.

Mastery Pages

Masteries are flexible currently and as such, you could argue that any build is better; however, there are some pages that are considered standard among high-level players and the pros. I am going to go through these so that you have a set of runepages that are usable in most scenarios.

AD Toplane (For tank-type champions. Currently used by OGN toplaners) – [9/21/0](#)

AP Toplane (For tank-type champions like Lissandra) – [9/21/0](#)

AD Assassins (Top/Mid offensive build. Good with Lee Sin, Kha’Zix, Zed and similar) – [23/7/0](#)

AP Junglers (Offensive ones like Elise and Evelynn) – [21/9/0](#)

AD Junglers (AD Based junglers like Skarner, Xin Zhao etc.) – [21/9/0](#)

Mid utility (Currently used by OGN midlaners and is really effective. Less safe.) – [21/0/9](#)

Mid defense (If you won’t be getting blues or don’t feel safe in the matchup) – [21/9/0](#)

ADC Caster (Such as Lucian and Ezreal) – [21/6/3](#)

ADC Attack Speed (Such as Caitlyn or Jinx) – [21/9/0](#)

ADC Standard (The baseline for AD carries. Formerly the most popular ADC Mastery Page) - [21/9/0](#)

Standard Support (Braum, Leona, Thresh. Good balance between defense and utility) – [0/16/14](#)

AP Support (More offensive. Best used on champions such as Karma and Zyra.) – [9/7/14](#)

The above concludes all the basic Mastery Pages that you need and provides a good setup for most champions. More unique champions might require more specific and finetuned builds such as Ryze, so it is always a good idea to look up guides. However, you should be more than ok using the above Mastery Pages on any champion in that specific role.

Rune Pages

Rune Pages are, just like Mastery Pages, an essential part to the game. They are a nice help and certainly have an impact but they are not going to be the bread and butter of your success so do not put too much into it. As earlier stated there is a standard Rune Page that can be used by most champions if you find yourself only with the starting two pages available and can't afford additional.

Something that many high-MMR streamers and possibly even some pros are mistaken about is the fact that the game uses decimal values. Yes, values are rounded up and down on the Rune Page itself but this is only for readability. Values are not applied like that in game, but instead the correct decimal values are used. Bear that in mind when messing around with numbers.

The most basic runepage (To be used with any champion, if you can't afford more runes or runepages) – 9x AD Marks, 9x Armor Seals, 9x Magic Resist Glyphs, 3x AD Quintessence's.

Bruiser Hybrid Top vs AD (Use this page for Shyvana and Mundo mainly) - [9x Hybrid Pen Marks, 9x Scaling Armor Seals, 9x Scaling CDR Glyphs, 2x HP Regen Quints and 1x Armor Quint](#)

Bruiser Hybrid Top vs AP (Shyvana and Mundo against AP top) - [9x Hybrid Pen Marks, 9x Scaling Health Seals, 3x Scaling CDR Glyphs, 6x MR Glyphs, 2x HP Regen Quints and 1x Armor Quints](#)

Heavy AD vs AD Top (Riven, Lee Sin, Kha'Zix and Renekton) - [9x AD Marks, 4x Armor Seals, 5x Health Seals, 6x CDR Glyphs, 3x MR Glyphs, 3x AD Quints](#)

Heavy AD vs AP Top (Riven, Lee Sin, Kha'Zix and Renekton laning against mages) - [9x AD Marks, 4x Scaling Health Seals, 5x Health Seals, 3x Scaling CDR Glyphs, 6x MR Glyphs and 3x AD Quints](#)

Strong AD Jungler (Lee Sin, Kha'Zix, Pantheon) - [5x AD Marks, 4x Armor Pen Marks, 9x Armor Seals, 6x CDR Glyphs, 3x MR Glyphs, 3x AD Quints](#)

The reason why you want some armor pen marks is to shred enemy's defenses when you gank. Many times they'll be stacking armor or getting armor runes/masteries, so getting 3 armpen marks is really noticeable.

Farming Jungler (Udyr, Jax etc) - [9x AS Marks, 9x Armor Seals, 6x Scaling CDR Glyphs, 3x MR Glyphs, 3x MS Quints](#)

Basically the farming page. MS is just so useful to clear faster and AS allows to proc many spells helpful to clear, such as Udyr's phoenix stance or Jax's ultimate's passive.

Hybrid Jungler (Evelynn, Elise) - [9x Hybrid Pen or AD Marks, 9x Armor Seals, 3x MR Glyphs, 6x AP Glyphs, 3x Hybrid Pen or AP Quints](#)

AP Mid vs AD (Playing mages against AD's as Zed or Yasuo) - [9x Mpen or Hybrid Pen Marks, 9x Armor Seals, 9x Scaling AP Glyphs and 3x Flat AP Quints](#)

You can either get hybrid pen marks or magic pen marks. Hybrid pen marks are awesome for early game trades but decay over time. Magic pen is much better late game.

AP Mid vs AP (Standard matchups against other mages) - [9x Mpen or Hybrid Pen Marks, 9x Scaling Health Seals, 6x MR Glyphs, 3x Scaling AP Glyphs and 3x Flat AP Quints](#)

Caster ADC (Such as Ezreal or Lucian) - [9x AD Marks, 5x Flat health Seals, 4x armor Seals, 5x MR Glyphs, 4x mana regen Glyphs, 2x AS Quints and 1x AD Quint](#)

Auto Attack ADC (Such as Kog'Maw, Caitlyn and Twitch.) - [8x AD Marks, 1x AS Marks, 5x Flat Health Seals, 4x Armor Seals, 4x AS Glyphs, 5x MR Glyphs and x3 AS Quints](#)

Reason why you want 1x AS mark is just to round the total amount better.

AP Support (Karma or Morgana) - [9x Hybrid Pen Marks, 9x Flat Health Seals, 9x MR Glyphs and x3 Armor Quints](#)

The reason you wanna get hybrid pen marks is because as a support you use your auto attacks alot so they really come in handy. The 3 armor quints are because you are really squishy as an AP support.

AD Poke Support (For Thresh mostly) - [9x AD Marks, 3x Armor Seals, 6x Health Seals, 9x MR Glyphs, 2x Health Quints and 1x Armor Quint](#)

Full Armor Support (Braum and Leona) - [9x Armor Marks, 3x Armor Seals, 6x Health Seals, 9x MR Glyphs, 2x Health Quints and 1x Armor Quint](#)

If you don't have the IP for all of these pages and are stuck with the two your account is entitled to, just stick with the basic page and one of the others. I recommend choosing your main/preferred role before buying runes for that as re-choosing can be expensive.

Runes – as previously stated – do not add *that* much effect to a game. Sure it is nice and can make a bit of a difference, but challenger is easily reachable with only one runepage; the standard one. So do not spend energy complaining about this particular part of the game, they're a nice little help but nothing more.

To duo or not to duo – that is the question

Whether or not you should duoqueue is widely discussed topic. I would recommend not duoqueueing with anyone if your goal is to improve, for a few reasons. Firstly, yours and your friend's attention spans are not the same so you are not going to be able to stay focused for exactly the same amount of time. Secondly, you never know if your partner has the same ambitions and/or self-insight or even desire to improve, that you do. If not, then you may not be a good fit for queueing together. Thirdly, when you duoqueue you are going to inflate your MMR³ which means you are going to meet opponents at a higher MMR than your own. This will learning more difficult than necessary.

That being said, if you can find a friend that share your goals and ambitions and you are prepared to meet stronger opponents feel free to go for it. I do not recommend it as it will hinder the learning progress, but League is after all just a game, so we have to remember to have fun too.

³ Match Making Rating – the system used by the game to determine your skill level.

Advancing through the tiers

In the following chapter we will (finally) go in depth on how to improve through the different ranked tiers!

The chapter has been divided into five subsections each of which describes how to raise from a certain bracket to the next, and what you as a player need to focus on to make that improvement.

The sections will be constructed as stacking skills. That means that skills required to pass from platinum into diamond will be elaborations of skills already described in the lower tiers. New focus points and skills will also be introduced but they will all be connected in some way. It is possible to read a later chapter if you already have a high understanding of the game, as it is assumed, you will already know the simpler things taught in previous tiers.

Additionally in the book I will not be talking about mechanics much as that is something which is easier learnt from experience. Knowledge on the other hand can be taught so that's the main focus of this guide. Improving the league you are playing in and thus playing against better opponents will also increase the rate at which you improve your mechanics. Better opponents equal better learning.

That being said I will include some advanced tips and tricks that should be translated into mechanics in a later section of the book.

Bronze to Silver

Find yourself frustrated? Are you stuck in bronze with poor teammates, and seemingly no pattern in your match history, which can help you figure out what you do right and what went wrong? Does winning and losing seem to be occurring randomly, and are you not in control of the outcome of every game?

Maybe you're even trying to improve, but simply spending your time poorly by focusing on improving certain aspects, which are only netting small results.

No matter the case, this chapter is for you as a Bronze player, who wants to make the climb into the next ranked tier!

However, before getting too it, we are first going to focus on the mindset. Many players in Bronze are quick to call out KS when somebody finishes off a kill. League is a team-based game so getting a kill is more important than who gets it. Over the course of a game, you might want to donate kills to your carries, but that is not the focus right now. Before reading on, I suggest that you completely remove this word from your vocabulary; there is no such thing as a KS.

Following will be a list of tips I highly recommend working on, in order to improve. Bear in mind however that to improve you need to do your absolute best, *but to win you just need to do better than your opponent does*.

- **Sticking to one champion**

This is always the first thing I recommend players in lower leagues, even though it is in direct opposition with something earlier stated. The reason for this is focusing on one champion and learning their abilities, cooldowns and limits by heart, will free up your mind to focus on many other essential skills that need to be learnt as well.

This is a huge advantage to swapping champions every single game, and thus having to learn

cooldowns, abilities and limits over and over again while also trying to focus on last-hitting and winning lane. If you can master one champion relatively quickly you are well on your way to work against that diamond tier!

Let's say you have played Ezreal for 10 games in a row, you will automatically start to remember his cooldown on Mystic Shot, which means that you will free your focus from looking at cooldowns every so often and instead can focus on last-hitting and harassing better.

Some good tips on how to pick the right champion, is to pick something relatively easy to play. Click on a champion icon in your profile, and you will see the bar labeled "Difficulty"; the lower the better. Second is to pick something that is not often banned and/or played by other players. Picking a champion that does not have skillshots will also make your life easier. Annie is a great example of an easy-to-play champion with no skillshots that is rarely, if ever, banned or picked.

I also highly recommend that you start out trying this champion in a custom game, to get a feeling for auto attacks, ability ranges alongside with cooldowns and damage output. Custom games are also a great playground to focus on last-hitting.

Bear in mind that this does not mean sticking to one champion, and only playing that one champion forever and ever. But make sure you have at least 10-20 games with a champion and you know the limits of said champion before branching out to play more champions.

- **Last-hitting**

I often see players in bronze, spending enormous amounts of time trying to improve their laning mechanics, gank better or to zone better. But I see WAY too few trying to improve their last-hitting. I have more than often been against bronze players and lost lane hard, after which I could still proceed to demolish them, just because I had much higher farm. It is such an underrated skill. If we look at the math; after about 15 minutes of gametime 1 kill is equal to 12 minions, which is just two waves not including cannon minions. If you are ahead by 50 CS but down 3 kills you can safely assume that you are at least equal with your opponent, if not even ahead in gold, not accounting for global gold.

If you like playing jungle champions last-hitting is not difficult but it is still an important skill to learn for two reasons; 1. You can't always expect to get your preferred role and 2. When you are to hold a lane for a teammate it is vital that you get as much gold from it as possible so you reduce downtime. Even if you like jungling you should try to improve your ability to CS on a lane.

In order to improve, try to get into a habit of not attacking minions at all until they are low enough for you to kill with one auto attack. And do not use abilities to kill minions unless you will otherwise lose that CS.

I strongly recommend going into a custom game and setting yourself a goal which could be "I want 5/6 last-hits from every wave". Having an 80% CS efficiency will put you ahead of 90% of the playerbase. A great tool for improving last-hitting abilities is the "Last hit like a challenger challenge" which can be found [here](#) (also linked in the Resource section).

As an added bonus if you can CS properly, and you keep improving this skill, you can and will be better than most players all the way up to Diamond I, and it will improve your success rate more than you thought possible.

If you prefer jungling or want to get better at jungling, there is a skill similar to last hitting. Timing buffs. Knowing the timings of and how to handle the first or two first buff rotations is an essential

skill. If you are playing someone strong at invading (Lee Sin or Nunu for example) it is even more important to know these timers as they allow for invades.

A typical buff rotation is first buff -> camp -> second buff -> gank/farm. This means that the first round of buff respawns will happen at approximately 7:10 minutes into the game and around 8:00. Being on time for these is important, so make sure to pay attention to the clock!

Warding

On the other hand I don't see anyone in this tier warding. Barely even the supports. This is an easy point to improve on. Bear in mind that you don't need to have 100% of the map warded, but rather try to increase your own awareness of your lane, by buying a new sight ward every single time you base and place it so it covers you from ganks. It does not have to be diamond level warding in odd spots and all over the map, keep it simple. There is not a lot of warding in this ranked tier, and even less ward wars; not a lot of player sweeps for wards.

Junglers don't dictate games as hard in the bronze tier as they do on higher levels, but they are still a threat and can make your life difficult if no precautions are taken. On top of that, warding is a good habit to get into and will ease your transition into higher tiers.

Challenge yourself to buy and place wards, and you will be able to dodge ganks and live for longer. I have chosen to include an [imgur album here](#) in which will show of key warding positions from blue side's point of view.

Done deal. This sounds much easier than you ever imagined right? To win you need to kill your lane opponent, and force the enemy jungler to focus on your lane so your team has more freedom right? To win you have to carry? Both wrong. At least in bronze. All you have to do is stay alive and farm, farm and farm. Include the jungle if possible. Are you a midlaner? Do wraiths and wolves occasionally. Are you a toplaner? Do big wraith on blue side and golems on purple.

If you continue to play the same champion, learning its limits and pushing your cs higher and higher, your champion will eventually be much stronger than the enemy team just out of sheer item lead. At this point you won't have to sweat it to win, you simply will.

If you are still not winning, maybe you are still swapping around champions too often, or you did just not find a suitable champion for your playstyle. Try out a new champion if your success doesn't seem to improve after 10-20 games with the same champion. There are plenty to choose from and only six of them are regularly banned at any given time. Perhaps you are just not CSing as well as you were planning on or hoping to? Be honest with yourself and have some insight. If you are averaging about 50-60 minions by 10 minutes you can – and should – do better. Otherwise you are just lying to yourself and no progress is going to come from that. Put away your pride and dig deep. It's going to hurt but League is about to get much easier for you.

Map objectives generally do not play a huge role in bronze either, as the first dragon is rarely, if ever, taken down before at least 10 minutes of play, and most towers are left standing for a long time even, because they are just not the focus of the players in this tier.

Be the difference in the tier. Start working on the simple things instructed above and you should climb out of Bronze relatively quickly. Remember that being honest with yourself is key to improving and that your goal should be to improve; not to win.

Silver to Gold

If you are placed in silver I have good news for you; the average player base is defined in silver so once you rise any higher you are going to be above average!

For now, however, we are going to work on how we get out of being average to actually becoming better. Silver is often chaotic with many players trying out new champions way too often and you will often find that one lane snowballs in favor of your or your opponents team which is why I'll introduce a new term that to me defines silver; damage control (or lack thereof).

In silver you will often see that the enemy Zed midlane gets one or two early kills and then proceeds to dominate the entire game while making it look like he's a smurf from challenger. Why? Because he's better? No, because most players in the silver tier lack damage control. You can probably recognize yourself in this position: You are losing lane but instead of falling back and CSing back up slowly you proceed to fight – and feed – the lane opponent.

Thus the introduction of damage control, which describes the phenomenon of knowing when to play passive and when you can apply some pressure. Again, league is 95% knowledge and just 5% mechanics. However, there are many factors to this specific scenario among which are matchup knowledge, map awareness and gold difference.

If you for example find yourself against a Zed whom is a high burst champion you should try to get your CS as high as possible without giving him a chance to harass or completely kill you. Also itemizing correctly will help you in this scenario. More on that in later chapters.

Getting back on topic, damage control is not the only thing to improve on but it does have to do with some of the most important skills relevant to this specific tier.

1. Sololanes and their importance

Ever been in a champion select where 4th pick aggressively types MID OR AFK three times in a row and then proceeds to pick mid? Yeah, thought so. This is because a lot of players are aware of the importance and impact of solo lanes in silver. However many players tend to play it poorly if not straight up wrong. Have you ever watched the LCS? Pay attention to how little they try to win their lanes, they try much harder not to lose lane, and instead punish their opponent's mistakes. That's what the goal should be. Not losing lanes rather than trying too hard to win a lane.

If we assume you followed the steps in the previous tier you should be quite content with one champion right now, having anywhere between 10 and 30 games. If this champion is suitable for sololanes (let's assume you picked Annie and she can be used mid) you will actually discover that winning lane feels like a breeze, simply because you are already used to playing that champion and know the abilities, damage output and cooldowns without looking.

This will in turn allow you to harass much more easily as well as keeping that CS as high as possible. Not losing lanes is in the silver tier the number one sticking point for many players and the reason they are not improving as rapidly as they would like to. Furthermore, sololanes are really important in this tier because it is difficult to make your team group and make the right decisions, so having strong sololaners can really make for an easy win. Especially when you consider that carries misposition really often and sololaners are often equipped with enough burst to take a carry out in an instant if they misposition.

2. Lane control and Jungler presence

If you paid attention to the lesson learned in the previous tier, warding and last-hitting should slowly start becoming second nature. Especially warding is going to make for an easy transition into the next bracket, because as players start to get better, junglers will start to apply more pressure rather than just farming creeps the entire game.

If you can easily manage all the tasks given to you already try to force yourself to look at the minimap every so often. If you see the enemy jungler in a different lane, or if you see your own jungler nearby your lane it is okay to move for a kill or harass. If you do not see the enemy jungler you should be cautious of your movement, because getting ganked once or twice will make your time much more difficult.

Playing as the support of the team is usually the role that makes sure that your team has wards up and takes care of pinging the jungler on the map and keeping teammates safe from ganks – at least during the laning/early phase of the game. The most important function of the support is the focus on donating gold to wards and winning vision wars, whereas most other roles only use money in this department if a lead is acquired.

If you are the jungler what you should do is try to apply pressure to one or two lanes (preferably all three but this can prove a difficult task) and make sure that you snowball that lane in favor of your team. This is best done by choosing the lane with the least escapes and settling on that for a few minutes. If your midlane lets you know that he forced the enemy Ahri's flash at level 3, go gank her. She will not have any escapes up until level 6 and is an easy kill. Kill her a few times to make sure your midlane gets a lead, because the killing will most likely stop when Ahri hits level 6 and/or gets her flash back up.

When ganking you should always choose the route that gets you behind the target. A typical error is trying to gank midlane from the side, rather than coming from behind as seen in the example below. You rather want to follow the green route and stay away from the red route. And vice versa when ganking from the opposite side (topside of mid).



This route will put you as far behind your opponent as possible which will often give you the best results. If he is pushed all the way up to the friendly turret, taking the red arrow-route is naturally the smarter alternative. Generally speaking, midlaners won't pass the middle of their lane and as such the green arrow route will net better results.

This is also a valuable lesson for bot and toplane ganking as shown in the following examples:



If you manage to get your top Tryndamere 2-0 or 3-0 by 10 minutes he is going to be a huge pain the ass for the opposing team and he is going to be almost impossible to deal with. If, however, you have a laner that is losing and giving up a lot of kills early on, don't try to gank that lane unless you are fed yourself. Trying to gank a fed laner might just get him an extra kill and that's pretty much game over. It is also a huge and unnecessary risk to take; what if the enemy jungler is there waiting for you and you give up two or three kills for free. Try to stay away from ganking overfed lanes. Instead try to help a different lane become similarly fed so you have a strong member of your own team that can deal with the fed enemy later on.

On the other side of that example, if you are laning against a snowball champ like Riven or Tryndamere, make sure to always stay out of range for their harass combos and CS as good as you can. If they are not getting kills and you keep your CS high you can deal with them as a team later on. Not dying to this type of champion is essential and also the reason why they're picked less in higher ranked tiers where players are more aware of damage control.

So while laning is pretty self-explanatory – you get there, you get CS you try to win – jungling can be a bit harder to grasp. Especially if you're new to it!

The standard way to jungle, which is more commonly used, is to start with the buff near your bottomlane, regardless of which jungler you are playing. This is because your bottom lane has two players and can help you out more effectively with killing the first buff. Make sure to smite even though you are getting help. So if you're on blue side this means you start red buff, and on purple side you start with blue. This is reversed in case of laneswaps.

After the first buff roam to the nearest creep camp (wraiths for blue, wolves for purple) after which you proceed directly to your 2nd buff. Smite should be available already or in the coming few seconds, so secure that buff for yourself and go gank toplane. This is the most commonly used route. If you judge that you will not be able to win a 2v2 (always assume the enemy jungler is top level 3 as well) let your toplaner know and keep farming your jungle. Junglers that are generally not good at fighting 2v2 are champions that are reliant on their ultimates for effective fighting and thus needs to farm level 6 first; champions like Skarner & Warwick.

3. Objectives and why they're important

Objectives are the bread and butter of any league players gold income during each game. They are alfa and omega. Games are won on gold leads as they allow item leads. Gold leads are most easily achievable through objectives and objective control, as it gives gold to everyone on your team. However a lot of players, even at higher levels of play, seem to misinterpret what an objective really means and/or in which order you should prioritize objectives, so we're going to start with the order of priority:

Nexus > Nexus Tower > Inhibitor > Baron Nashor > Inhibitor Tower > Inner Tower > Dragon > Outer Tower

The above order is the correct way of prioritizing objectives in almost any scenario. There are a few situations which may vary but as a rule of thumb, follow the order above.

Sometimes rotations are made poorly which means that a team gets a free objective. This is an elaborate science that is even difficult in the diamond bracket and we will get more into that in later chapters.

For now what's important is that you actually focus on objectives as a means of winning not as something that can be done. Let's exemplify that:

You are laning top. You are ahead by 1 kill and 20 cs. You spot your lane opponent with his team at dragon through a ward see that the enemy team starts doing it. In this situation dragon is probably already lost, so the best thing you can do is *trade equally* by demolishing the top tower. After that goes down, your lane is done and you are free to roam and maybe you can help siege mid turret or gank mid so it allows for a second turret for your team. Instead, what a lot of players chose to do in this scenario is they think: "Shit my lane opponent is at drake so I should be at drake!" and start moving there. They then get there way too late and maybe some of his/her teammates die whilst moving and the enemy team gets dragon regardless, although you may kill one or maybe two of them, although unlikely. So what happened overall? You gave them a free objective. It is much better to realize that lost is lost and get that trade objective from the toplane turret. This also sets the baseline for a skill discussed in a later chapter named *making good decisions*, which is very fundamental to winning games in league.

Similarly if you are the jungler and ganking top and you see the enemy team start dragon because they spot you top, don't panic and try to make it to dragon (unless you have teammates that can stall the enemy team) as in the above example. Instead, try to help your top-laner push down the turret and maybe even the next one. Always think in terms of objectives and objective trading. If you watch high-level player streams, you will notice that this is actually how they play the game.

4. Itemization

We're going to lightly touch the subject of itemization, although if you have been focusing hard on your last-hitting ability it isn't quite a necessary focuspoint yet. I am however going to mention a mistake I see excessively often in lower ranked brackets. Building penetration items too late is one of the major reasons carries has less impact in lower tiers.

Try to get into the habit of buying your big penetration item no later than 2nd or the very latest as 3rd item. That means Last Whisper for AD-based champions and Void Staff for AP-based champions. This naturally only goes if you are in a carry role. If you are a tank, this does not apply to you unless you get an unbeatable lead.

Also don't refrain from using information given to you online through guides, it is much easier to copy someone better than having to invent everything all over on your own. Especially if you are new to a certain champion or role, I actually recommend doing this over trying to work a build out on your own. At least until we get into itemization again in a later ranked tier.

That being said there are some rules you should follow. Let's assume for this scenario you're playing a tanky toplaner like Renekton. What you want do is build items that fit into the role you are playing; in this case tanky. Playing against an AD-based champion in lane you should start with Sunfire Cape, where if you are playing against an AP-based champion a Magic Resist item like Spirit Visage is the way to go.

If you're playing a carry role and you get a huge lead, then that is a good time to get a defensive item. Let's say you are playing AD-carry and you have Infinity Edge and Last Whisper and your opponent only just finished his Infinity Edge or a different first item. This would be the perfect time for you to build a Guardian Angel or a different defensive item, because you are still going to match your opponent on damage items. Solidifying a lead is done through defensive items as they allow you to stay alive for longer, while dealing the same amounts of damage (or more) as your less tanky counterpart.

This also means that if you fall behind as a carry you should just go all out on offensive items. You need to catch up to your counterpart in terms of damage.

Despite learning a lot of new skills to focus on, do remember to keep focusing on making last-hitting second nature. It is so important, and the sooner you get good at it, the sooner you will start improving and seeing progress in your game.

Last hitting while not losing your lane will most likely put you miles ahead of players on the enemy team; I and mentor students know this from experience. "If you get good at farming, you get good at the game".

Gold to Platinum

Congratulations! If you are already in gold you are above the average League of Legends player in terms of skill! However you probably feel as if you yet have much to learn and you keep getting stomped by plats whenever you are in your promotion series. Can't seem to figure out what you do wrong or what's working? Fear not, for in this chapter we will cover how to make the climb from gold to platinum. As the skill level goes up and the competition grows stronger, so does unfortunately the requirements for passing the bar. I do believe however that the crossing from gold to platinum is the most difficult one and once you pass it you are almost indefinitely bound to reach diamond at one point or another.

If you paid attention in the previous tiers we were focusing on playing one champion. If you did manage to stick to only one champion all the way through, great job! If you managed to branch out a bit and still get this far, great job! For this tier and improvement from hereon we are going to be talking a bit about champions, roles and consistency.

1. Settling on a role

A sticking point for many players trying to win games in soloqueue, even in lower brackets than gold, is not settling on a role. When you are getting to the gold bracket, you should have tried playing at least a few champions here and there in every role, and you should start having a good idea of which champions – and even better – which roles, you like.

Improving from gold and upwards is going to be much easier if you settle on a role rather than trying to become good at everything simultaneously. The best players in the world did it this way; they focused on one particular role all the way to the highest rating after which they started branching out. But didn't they lose games when they tried to branch out at high levels of play?! Sure, they did. But they also learned to play those roles much more efficiently and at a higher speed than you would learn it in lower brackets. There is almost nothing to win by branching out in this tier of play, when you can just do it later and learn faster.

High-level players like PhantomLord, Wingsofdeath and Nightblue all amounted their skill level like this; sticking to one role until they were at their peak skill level and only then branching out.

PhantomLord, and possibly others, even stuck to just one champion!

So decide with yourself which role you like the most and which you will settle for, because sticking with it for a while is important (and hopefully permanent). Do you like the 1v1 skill- and knowledge-based matchups? Top it is. Do you like slowly harassing your opponent to the point where you can unleash a full combo on him and instantly remove him? Pick mid. Or do you prefer playing rather passively CSing until your opponent makes a mistake for which you can punish him? Pick the AD-Carry. Do you like making clutch plays, initiating at just that right time, getting your team fed and helping everyone on your team win the game? Pick support. Maybe you like farming quietly and having the underlying threat of your proximity make laning impossible for the enemy team – pick jungle.

Settling on a role you like is important as you should stick with it – for the most part – for the rest of your time improving at league. However, sticking to one champion is not necessary from this point on, as different champions in the same role share many basic principles. For example does many mid-laners have the burst to take down the enemy midlaner if they get just a bit low on health points. So this is not a skill that needs to be relearned every time you pick a new champion. However, I do recommend that you limit yourself to initially 3 champions in that specific role. Later

you will learn 5 and eventually more.

The reasoning behind this is the same simple reasoning behind sticking to one champion; you need to free up your mind to focus on a lot of additional skills now, so having core champions you know by heart is essential to freeing up that extra mental focus.

If you are picking completely new champions, start off with practicing last-hitting in custom games, as this remains the single-most important skill all the way up to challenger.

Sticking with one role also makes it a lot easier to consistently play well and thus improve your chances of learning, which in turn leads to you becoming better. It's a win/win situation!

2. Map awareness

I hope attention was paid to warding earlier and that it is slowly but steadily becoming a habit, whether you're playing support, toplaner or ADC. Warding is for everyone, it's a team game so warding is a team effort. Gold is where we will start using our warding skill more intelligently. So, the first thing we are going to do when trying to develop map awareness is go into the "Game" section of options, and scale the map all the way up to 100. Hopefully you already did this! Having it this size will make it easier for your peripheral vision to pick up on minimap movement, as well as make it easier to glance without losing focus of your champion and positioning.

Secondly we want to start pinging. Using the smart ping system to maximum efficiency.

Since being in bronze and sticking to the warding habit I'm sure you have picked up on some standard warding positions that generally benefit the team. Make sure to keep warding key spots in the game as often as possible.

However, having positioned wards all around the map we are going to start developing an essential skill labeled map awareness. And how do we actually do this? We look at the map. Consistently! Consistency is key, especially in this area of the skillbank. A good way to quickly learn how to be aware of the map, is to look at the minimap every time you take a last-hit. If you're still struggling to get 80-100% of all last-hits don't try to focus on this skill just yet – keep focusing on getting all of those sweet CS. But make sure you glance at the minimap at least every once in a while. Especially before making a play. About to go for a kill on your enemy midlaner? Glance at the map, if you see the enemy jungler in another lane, go for it. If not, maybe wait a little bit, your lane opponent might just be baiting you.

I do however highly recommend that you take some time to play custom games and focus on the last-hit challenge, so you can make this truly second nature. Having freed up your mind to focus on different things is going to help immensely, especially when focusing on skills that revolve around last-hitting, like looking at your map when you take one.

3. Knowing your limits

This point will be a further elaboration of the above and will set the frame for consistently delivering good results.

In the previous tier, we went over damage control and how not to lose lane. We are going to take that a bit further and build the fundament for making good decisions which in turn allows for consistent good results and improving at league. Not knowing limits and/or making poor decisions, is a sticking point for the vast majority of players. Even in lower diamond tiers this is still an issue, so we're going to slowly get into the habit now, to ease the transition into diamond later on.

So what exactly do I mean by knowing your limits? The easiest way to explain it is, if you're a laner you should always follow the rule of 'Rather recall one time too many than one time too few'. But

won't I lose out on CS and XP if I recall all the time? Yes you will. The intention is not for you to recall often, the intention is that if you get low on HP then rather than staying in lane and making yourself an easy dive, it is better to recall, lose the XP but not giving your opponent that kill lead on you. This is also a really good way to learn new champions, because if you can survive laning with a 0-0-0 score you should be fine in terms of teamfighting.

But there's more to knowing your limits. Having basic map awareness is just one of the skills necessary. Knowing your limits means not chasing too far, it means rather giving up that kill than chase. It means not staying in lane if you are low on HP, it means not overextending if you do not have wards out, it means not facechecking bushes in the midgame.

A great way to learn this skill is; if in a ranged vs ranged champion matchup trying not to take damage while CSing. Try to not take any damage at all, while getting those creep kills even if it means backing away from a CS just to avoid an auto attack. This will also mean that unconsciously you will start paying more attention to the crucial skill, positioning. The same goes if you're in a melee vs ranged or vice versa matchup. Try to stress yourself to not take a CS that will result in you taking (free)⁴ damage from your opponent. Taking a bit of creep damage is okay.

More on it later, but getting into the habit of not taking damage will make learning later skills easier, thus reducing the overall time needed to improve.

If you are the jungler, try not to force your team into situations where you have to dive to get kills, instead go help your teammates push the tower down. Objectives are safer and still worth gold. Your goal should be to not die, but rather just farm and try to gank a few times. Finding the balance between the two is definitely hard, but if you do not have time to spent unnecessary time death, it will be a lot easier. If you find yourself being counter-ganked, make sure to prioritize the opponent without flash. If both has flash, go for the one that is less tanky. If you recall the basic jungle route earlier explained you will often find yourself in 2v2 matchups early in the game in top lane. In these situations it is common practice to go for the enemy jungler, as their double buff is a dangerous buff to their damage output.

Having this in mind and learning how to play 'safe', is the fastest way to improve because you learn what your champions can and can't do, but more importantly it builds the foundation for an even more important skill; making good decisions.

4. Objective and buff control

We already dove a bit into the area of objectives and why they're important, when the goal was to climb out of silver. As previously stated, once the competition gets better it gets more difficult to put yourself ahead. This is where objective and buff *control* becomes important.

Already knowing to play for objectives and why they're important, what makes objective control different and how?

Objective control simply describes a player's ability to foresee which and when objectives come into play, and how one can plan or make a play to take these. A good example of this would be if you're playing bottom lane and you know that you just forced your opponent laners back and pushed the wave in. The jungler is likely to either come hold that wave of XP to defend the turret or if he doesn't show he is most likely farming in the topside of his jungle. That means dragon is a free objective because you have numbers advantage; and should the enemy jungler try to interrupt, you

⁴ Free damage is referred to as the phenomenon of taking damage without trading back. This is why punishing for last hitting is a great skill to have.

can most likely kill him/her. Another example could be killing the enemy jungler at blue buff or as a countergank in midlane. This also frees up dragon for taking. Remember turrets are also objectives worth taking, so if your jungler can't tank dragon or is simply not nearby, take a few shots at the enemy turret before recalling.

As players get better to the game, it is important to visualize and make these decisions ahead of time. For example, if you know you have a stronger botlane you can force the enemy lane back, which then results in a dragon. Coordinate this with your jungler for maximum game control. This is how all good teams manage to get, and stay, ahead even in professional games.

Trying to control objectives will also help developing your own gamesense and understanding of what certain team compositions can do at certain points in the game.

Remember, if you're still not improving at the rate you believe you should, try settling on a different role or maybe different champions. Maybe they're just not adept for your playstyle. And never ever forget to keep that CS high. It is through all brackets the single most important skill you need to become better.

Platinum to Diamond

In this bracket we're (finally?) going to go into more advanced techniques, as I believe most of you have been looking for all along. Who would have thought, that getting all the way to platinum was going to be such a breeze and all while playing so passively? However, once attaining platinum we are getting near the best percentage of the playerbase and as thus, it is no longer sufficient to play not to lose, which has gotten us all the way here, but rather the aim should now be playing to win. This means carrying, taking a lead and keeping that lead. Remember however, that this does not mean that you should forget everything previously learned. Those are all good, and essential, habits upon which we are going to build another layer of skills, which will help us reach the diamond tier.

So we're finally at the topic of carrying. But how does one exactly carry? Well, first of all *every* role can carry. It is a team game after all and each role benefits the team with different inputs. It is a wrong belief many players seem to have, that certain roles can't carry. Supports are a known victim of this school of thought.

A high ranked friend of mine described it so: *"Carry your team because they aren't going to carry you"*.

1. Taking command

The first step towards carrying your team is by no more sitting idle by and waiting for everything to be okay and the enemy team to outplay themselves. Now we need to take action. How does one do that? Good thing we already learned about objective and buff control, because this is what it is all about! As you build experience with league, you will become increasingly better at this because your judgment of what you can do at which point in the game, becomes better with experience. But first steps first. Sticking to a role will also allow you to develop this skill much faster because you can free up your focus to learn new things, like paying attention to the situation and your chances of doing successful objectives.

Here's an example. Let's say you play midlane. You just got a kill on the enemy midlaner and you glance at the map. You see the enemy jungler at toplane; ping the dragon and move towards it. Go and help your team, you have a 2man numbers advantage, assuming your own jungler is nearby and botlane is healthy enough. Don't expect anyone on your team to take the lead, but instead take command yourself, and show your team the way to victory. Developing this sense for the game will not only improve your overall gameplay, but also make you a better teamplayer if you decide to stick with a ranked 5 team.

It is also extremely important that you maintain a positive attitude when trying to take command of a team, otherwise no one is going to have faith in your capabilities or judgment. Remember to lead through example and respect, rather than fear and caps lock.

2. Winning lanes and jungle

After paying attention to lessons in the previous tiers, did you experience not losing lane very often? Awesome! Do you still lose every once in a while? Less awesome, but still okay! Now we're going to focus on being proactive, instead of reactive and start winning lanes rather than just playing them out passively.

So what does winning a lane even entail? Does it mean getting 10 kills and get superfed? Well maybe, but that is not the goal. The goal is to matter. As the skill level of players get higher, it does

get harder to get immensely fed from lane, so having that as a goal would be counterproductive. As always, we are going to ease the transition into skills developed later on, and we're going to start now with the term *pressure*. Applying and having pressure is how you win a lane. This is directly opposed to how we played lane earlier, but with good reason. Firstly, it is now going to be much easier to win a lane, because you already know how not to lose one. Secondly, a lane is won and lost on pressure alone.

So what does this mean when you're in game? It means the more you respect your opponent the more pressure he actually has in lane. Ever heard of Silsol? No? He was (might still be) a rank 1 player on the NA server. He had despite his very poor KDA one of the best winrates on the server. Why and how? Pressure. Silsol was very known for playing singed top and was the inventor of the popular proxy-farming⁵ technique. This strategy got hit hard by riot, as it was highly successful because of that one factor; pressure.

Silsol would proceed to have something like 0-12 scores, but instead of returning to lane and respecting his opponent he would continue to push and proxy farm, which in term creates pressure. It creates pressure because it makes the enemy jungler, and maybe even mid, rotate to help kill Silsol, while Silsol's lane opponent is stuck farming at his turret.

This specific strategy is to my knowledge not possible anymore, but it is this kind of pressure that is needed to win games. So just because you go 0-1 it doesn't mean that you must and have to respect your lane opponent. Knowing whether you should or not is all dependent on your knowledge of the matchup.

For now the challenge should be, rather than playing too safe, playing too aggressively. It will result in deaths and many jungler ganks, but let's take a second to reflect upon that. If the enemy jungler is camping your lane because you are giving free kills (which continue to decrease in value) you have two other lanes, and a jungler, whom can do whatever they want.

If you are the jungler, pressure can be applied by camping one or two lanes and making your presence known, rather than farming the jungle. Trick2g is the master of this kind of play and has many YouTube videos showing how to apply pressure.⁶

3. Snowballing other lanes

Winning lane is beneficial and can help a lot, but actually isn't the most important aspect of the game for a variety of reasons. First, you cannot dictate the enemy jungler's patterns, so maybe he is camping your lane for one reason or another. In this scenario, it is not realistic to win, barely even to go equal.

However, that does not mean that you are going to be useless, or that the game is over. If you fall behind in lane there are two possible scenarios; 1. You can stay in lane and try to hinder your opponent from taking your turret, but chances are you will not get many more CS and your tower will die eventually nevertheless, as your opponent is stronger and will be pushing. 2. You can roam and leave your tower to die, but hopefully snowball and thus win a different lane, which increases your team's overall chances of winning.

Playing as a mid laner it is as much your responsibility to snowball the sidelanes, as it is the junglers. A good trick is to notice who is more fed and has better gank potential of your jungler and midlaner. Then whoever is more fed should proceed to gank, while the other holds mid lane. That

⁵ A technique where a player would overextend greatly and farm minions between turrets in the enemy base.

⁶ Can be found in the recourses chapter.

means the midlaner is free to rotate top or bot while the jungler kills creeps in the midlane and protects the tower.

If you are the jungler your goal is to gank, which you should know by now. However, ganking doesn't necessarily mean giving one kill to every lane on your team. What about giving three kills to one lane? That will give this lane such a big lead that, the opposing jungler will be unable to gank this lane, and you have successfully snowballed a lane and the lane has been won (in most cases).

4. Ward control and vision wars

Getting caught is probably the biggest problem for the majority of players, trying to make it into diamond. Warding should definitely be second nature by now, which means it's time to take the vision game a bit further. We're not just going to stick with buying sight wards and having vision anymore. We are also going to start denying the vision of our opponents through clever use of pink wards and sweepers⁷.

So, the easiest way to get into this, is to follow this simple rule; when you gain a lead, whether it be just your lane or your team overall, swap out your warding trinket with the red trinket and start denying vision of your opponent(s).

The reason behind this approach to the game is built upon a phenomenon earlier discussed; pressure. It creates pressure on the enemy team. If they are already being pushed back and they can't ward up to maintain a position, they are in a really bad spot and you are putting yourself miles ahead. Getting caught and dying, and letting that death open up an objective for the opposing team is what loses games for many platinum players. The problem in this bracket is not mechanics, as you will start to slowly pick up on this by just improving and playing against better opponents.

This concludes the climb from platinum to diamond and especially the last point is an important one. As stated, getting caught is probably the biggest problem in platinum, so working on winning those vision wars will win you games. Knowing limits and accepting an objective, and not going for more, will net you the win in the long run, although it might be a bit slower.

⁷ Also known as red trinket and/or oracle.

From diamond to infinity and beyond!

Passing from the low Diamond brackets to the top, and through to the new Master, or even Challenger, bracket is going to prove a difficult challenge! It is naturally the most difficult tier to progress through, so before we delve into some of the advanced techniques, I want to touch on the subject of consistency yet again.

We have discussed consistency in the introduction, as an important part of making it through the tiers. However, to reach challenger you are going to need consistency in results (winning more than you lose), but losses ARE bound to happen. When losses happen, you are going to focus on not going on tilt. Tilting is a big part of why many players in high Diamond I don't make it. A great trick to avoid tilting is to level up a second account, and play on that as well, because then you will feel like "It's just a smurf it doesn't matter" and that relaxed attitude often keeps you off tilt.

You are also going to need persistency when trying to achieve the highest of tiers, simply because every player here plays a lot and has a lot of experience. Everyone is good. You are also going to need persistence in playing much. Play A LOT.

Remember those 5% mechanics I mentioned? This could be what sets you apart from the rest of the players trying to achieve the highest tier, and is mostly learned through experience and doing. You should already have built solid fundamentals, so improving from here on out should be easier for you, because now you only have to worry about focusing on a few skills.

Working on mechanics is naturally a thing that should be done in-game, but you can add a bit of help to that by playing reflex-intense games that will boost your reaction ability. Good games for that purpose, would be Osu or Aimbooster⁸. I can say myself that I didn't believe this to be of any help when I was first introduced to the idea, but after trying it the effect is intense. Playing these reflex games will really up your reaction time in League of Legends as well, and you will be able to make much clutch plays!

A key part is to never surrender, never give up and never throw. Make good decisions!

1. Making good decisions

In previous chapters we lightly touched on the subject of making good decisions through many of the skills explained throughout the book. This is a part of the game that is more difficult to teach, as it is mostly learned through experience. However, we have already started building that experience, as well as the foundation for making good decisions. Let's summarize what we have actually learned thus far:

Last-hitting. Playing for objectives. Settling on a role. Knowing how to win (at least not lose) lane. Map awareness. Vision control. Knowing your limits and taking command.

So how does these help make good decisions? If you have paid attention you should already be doing this subconsciously. Good decisions can vary from simple on-the-spot decisions or long-term decisions. One example could be "Ok I know I'm playing Irelia and she's weak before level 6. I'm just going to let my opponent push me, and farm what I can under the tower. They can't dive when I'm at full HP and can't harass at my tower, so I should be fine in the long term".

Another example could be pinging and telling your team to back off after a successful dive, so that you don't overstay and give away kills while attempting to get a second tower. Situations like that are based upon greed and trying to win quickly, rather than safely.

Taking command is good here too. Stuff like typing "We take outer tower then back off or they can

⁸ Links can be found in the resource chapter.

drake” and then pinging retreat after the tower dies, is a good way to take command.

Objective control is absolutely needed if you intent to progress to the highest level of play. Forcing early drakes and towers should be the focus point of games, rather than taking kills here and there. Objectives wins games.

If you have a lead, the only way that lead is going to diminish is if you fuck up, so as long as you keep making good decisions and do not fuck up, you are going to stay ahead.

Rotating is also something that will become increasingly important. Towards the midgame when the laning-phase starts to end, the team who rotates better will usually get the upper hand.

What you want to do ,is always try to fill the missing spot on the map. Let’s have an example: You are the midlane for your team and your team just killed 2 opponents and are attempting to do dragon. Your top is there but the enemy top is still top. The best thing you can is to rotate top and try to defend the tower, provided you are healthy enough. Dragon is easily securable and even if it isn’t, your team still got a few kills and will likely get more if opponents try to interrupt. Their best bet is to get the top tower, so if you can stop that you will extend your lead even further (from a ‘money saved is money earned’-perspective).

Another good decision to make is to group early, and as such play on the full strength of your setup. Grouping up is done way earlier in high level play, than it is in lower level play. Therefore, if you think you tend to stay on lane a bit long after the laning phase has ended, try to break that circle and group with your team.

In extend to grouping with the team, if you are ever in a situation where you have to choose between helping yourself (maybe take another wave of farm, or make a recall for an item) or helping your team securing a Dragon or helping defend mid-turret, you should always prioritize helping your team. Being a teamplayer is a huge part of being good at League of Legends.

This is only mentioned now because I don’t believe it to be necessary at lower ranked brackets.

2. Knowledge of matchups

As you become better, it becomes more important to have knowledge of the game, and specifically knowledge of matchups. This applies in all lanes, even the jungle. Knowing when, and how, you can punish your opponent’s mistakes, becomes important as mistakes will be fewer and also opponents will begin to capitalize on your mistakes.

Having knowledge of matchups should already slowly have been built if you paid attention, and have been focusing on one (or a few) champions for a specific role. Obviously, some matchups you will not have tried yet, but you should have a fairly good understanding of how your champion works by now. If you don’t, there is a few good ways to learn. Commentators from LCS know what they’re talking about and the same does high-level streamers. If they say X beats Y in a specific matchup, you should pay attention to that, and pay attention to how the matchup should be played. Small things like poor cooldown management or damage rotations or missing some skillshots can make the difference between winning and losing certain matchups. This one is a bit harder to be taught and is mostly a skill to be learned through experience, but if you pay attention to streams or look up some guides online, you will be fine! Knowledge is key.

3. Knowing your limits and Damage Control 2.0

One of the main reasons players have trouble improving from low diamond to high diamond, and challenger, is because of greed. This phrase sums it up pretty well: “Greed is feed”.

From experience, what separates the good from the best is that they are very good at damage control. Players are very aware of what they can do, and don't push that limit. Instead, they are actually playing safely and will rarely bait or make clutch plays, if there is nothing to gain from it. In other words, fewer risks are taken throughout a game. That is because players understand their limits and you should too. Follow this rule; if you feel like doing something would mean taking a chance then don't do it.

This is where good decisions become most important, as the best decision is to not feed during the laning phase. Sure enough, you might have had to carry your team in Platinum to win, but in high Diamond everyone knows how to carry a game, all you need to do is make sure your opponents won't be able to do it. Not giving kills and just farming on lane is absolutely fine. Your team will group up and fight as a unit with improved chances of winning.

Lastly, I am going to say it one more time because it is such an important skill; keep focusing on getting that CS high! If you plan to make it into challenger, you can never miss a CS and you might even want to add other lanes to your farm as well. Anyone I have talked to regarding writing this book all – with no exception – mentioned last-hitting as the most crucial skill to improving at League.

If you made it this far and are still struggling to improve, go take a look at the Advanced Skills chapter as there will definitely be some tricks you can apply to your game that will make your climb easier.

Best of luck!

Basic skills

The following chapter will delve into some of the basic skills required to be a successful league player, that wasn't already mentioned, or needs elaboration.

Key warding positions

We're going to be starting with the most basic of skills; basic warding spots. You probably have seen these during your time as a player or LCS. The key to good wards is to put them in spots where they cover as big an area as possible, and preferably a chokepoint. Having vision in chokepoints means you can catch players of the enemy team out where they have a slim chance of escaping, and prevent your own teammates from doing the same.

Try to position your wards in the center of any given brush, like in examples given in the warding album. Try to look at the pictures and you will notice that the wards provide as much vision as they are allowed, rather than positioning them right next to a wall.

Something to add to the key warding positions, is knowing when and where to ward. This will mostly come with experience, but a good rule is to always ward at timings where the jungler is near a buff. So, knowing that the jungler is most likely going to take both buffs then gank, a good timing to ward the *topside* of the map is 3:00. That means topside of middle, as well as top lane, putting a ward out in river or tribrush, depending on which side you're playing.

After this point, good timings to put wards are near buff respawns, which are typically 12:10 (bottom side buff) 13:10 (top side buff) and again at 17:10 and 18. Warding key warding positions just before these timings are also going to help you stay alive for longer or even catch an unlucky opponent rotating around!

Buff management

On top of objective and buff control, we also have to discuss buff management a bit. Specifically how to donate buffs as a jungler and when you, as a laner, should start minding buffs. Buffs enhance fighting capabilities a lot more than you would think, especially red buff has great impact on fights.

So first things first; what does the buffs actually do? Blue buff allows you to spam away abilities without having to worry about resource cost. Red buff allows you to kite and chase much more easily all whilst dealing extra damage to your opponents. Keep this in mind when managing buffs.

Let's assume you're the jungler. In this case it is a good general rule to start giving away your buffs to laners no later than the 3rd buff, preferably the 2nd if it can be spared. Typically you may want to keep on to your 2nd red but may want to give blue to your midlaner if he or she has established a lead. If behind feel free to pick it up for yourself. You have to think in terms of who can make the most of the buff in order to establish a (bigger) lead.

If your botlane goes 3-0 before 5 minutes, you might want to consider giving your AD-carry the second red buff, because with all likelihood this will enable bottom lane to snowball even further, even though you would normally want to hang onto this buff.

If you are a laner and you are doing good, don't hesitate to let your jungler know that having this buff would allow you to snowball the lane even further. This, however, entitles that you don't die to a gank immediately after, as you will have given away a valuable resource. Having buffs on lane means that you need good warding, so that you don't risk giving away the buff to the enemy jungler.

Usually you will want to give red buff to your team's ad-carry unless he is performing poorly or is very far behind. In this scenario you might want to consider giving it to a different auto-attack based champion, if any are present on the team. This could be Yasuo, Riven, Master Yi or similar.

Blue buffs are likewise usually given to the team's midlaner depending on the team setup. If the midlaner is Yasuo and the toplaner is Ryze however, you might want to give that blue buff to Ryze later on. Why? Because Yasuo already do not need to worry about resource cost, as he has none, while Ryze is mana-dependent (not to mention cooldowns). So, having the buff on Ryze will result in the overall higher percentage increase in damage output from your team.

Picking Crowd Control

Crowd Control (also known as CC) is the term regularly used to express abilities that can cripple your opponents in one way or another, be it slows, stuns or something different.

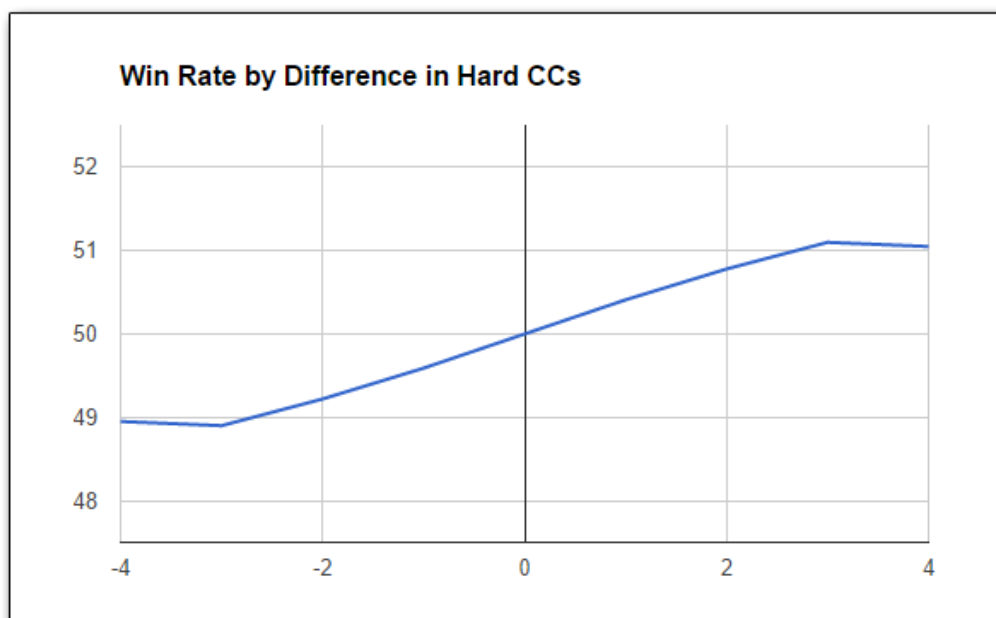
A way to make your climb on the soloqueue ladder a lot easier, is to make sure that every team you are in has some form of hard CC⁹, so make sure your team has some either by suggesting it in champ select or picking a champion with CC for yourself. There are many to choose from and only very few champions possess no CC at all (even some AD-carries have CC abilities).

This works better the lower league you are in, because players generally have less experience and knowledge on how to play around it. That means that champions like Amumu are immensely strong here because of their high CC potential. They can lock up entire enemy teams for a short duration, while your own team is free to deal damage. As you climb the ladder, CC will still be strong but will be less of a turning point.

As with everything; moderation is key. Picking CC on every champion likely means you will be lacking on damage. Thus I recently did the research¹⁰ for you and discovered that this is actually the case. Win rate does not increase unrestricted with more CC, but rather with *some* CC as shown below:

⁹ Hard CC means stuns, preferably Area of Effect (AoE) of the kind.

¹⁰ Someone else did the numbers; with research I infer discovering whether or not the thesis holds (which it does)



As the picture shows, having a deficit difference in hard CC is going to decrease your chance of winning, whilst having 1-4 hard CC abilities on your team will increase your chances of winning. As you can probably also tell, you will 'only' increase your chances of winning by a few percent from picking more CC, but I recommend you take what you can and never play against the odds.

Not getting your preferred role

I want to discuss what your options are in case you do not get that specific champion or role you have been working so hard on. Naturally, this means you will be in a less confident setting, where you might get outplayed by players who main that particular role. However, this does not mean that you should quit the lobby or give up beforehand. There are plenty things to be learnt from playing a role in which you are not at your best. This means that you will have to focus a bit on your champion again and use some of your brainpower there. This means that you will focus more on the lane and probably won't have as much focus on the map; that is how I and my friends usually experience it, when trying to pick up a new champion. Some good things to focus on are warding, itemization and playing the lane correctly. If you become a good laner in a certain setting, chances are that you develop some general skills – like harassing – that can be translated over into other lanes, which then improves your chances for winning here or if nothing else, the speed of which you adapt the lane.

Maintain the positive attitude and learn from it what you can. Trying to learn everything all at once at the same time you're figuring out a new champion, is next to impossible. But playing against better opponents in roles you're unconfident with, will make you skyrocket if you have self-insight and try to analyze what was good and what was bad. Chances are you will not dominate your lane/jungle if you are just trying it out because champion select forced you into it, but that does not mean you shouldn't try. What if you accidentally discovered a champion, or role, that you really enjoy or are really good at?

Roles, their purpose and how to play them

Each role in league of legends more or less has the same objective in every game. For example, if you play support, your job is to (try to) get your AD-carry fed while maintaining good vision control and helping your team out throughout the game. In the following I'm going to explain what each role does and what the most important skill when playing it is.

Typically, the way to win the game is to keep your AD Carry alive for longer than the enemy teams AD Carry. That should be the goal of every teamfight and is also why positioning is crucial for these players.

Toplane: Typically you will want a tank or something that can push quite hard on toplane. Your job for the longest part of the game is splitpushing and trying to bring attention to the toplane, which can free up objectives like the dragon for your team. When you group up with your team, your job will typically be initiating and soaking up the primary burst for your carries.

Playing toplane means you need very good lane control and preferably the ability to win a lane. You are going to be playing 1 vs 1 for a long part of the game, so knowing how not to fall far behind is crucial. Otherwise you might just lose the game for your team all alone.

You don't want to think of a 'tank' as someone who can go in and take a ton of damage *without* dying. Instead consider this role a damage soak. Naturally, surviving is always the better option, but if you can soak cooldowns and in that way prevent the enemy team from killing your ad carry, it's usually worth it. If the enemy team blow their cooldowns trying to get Renekton down your AD Carry is going to have a much easier time staying alive and winning the fight for your team.

You want to position yourself in front of your team, in order to bait out big cooldowns from the enemy team, so that you may win a fight. The Toplane role is also typically considered the initiator and is why he must be up front, so he can initiate at a given chance.

Jungle: When jungling there are a variety of champion types to choose from. The jungle role is naturally good at complimenting what the team lacks. If your team's toplaner picked an assassin you might want to get a tank-type of jungler and vice versa. Junglers are usually strong in one or more of these categories; Early-game pressure (Lee Sin, Jarvan etc.), farming and carrying late game (Udyr, Jax etc.) and CC/teamfighting (Nautilus, Skarner, Warwick etc.).

Picking something that compliments your team setup will greatly increase your chances of winning. If you pick something like Skarner, you have great potential for destroying the carries of the enemy team.

Playing Jungle is all about game knowledge and map awareness. Knowing how to trade objectives and which matchups needs the most help, and how your team is most easily going to win the game will help. Jungling is difficult because it requires you to be at the right place at the right time. This is also why good junglers in higher ranked tiers have so much impact.

Typically, this type of champions will stick with the Toplaner to dive the enemy AD Carry. However, they can also be really adept at finishing fleeing enemies off or providing a bit of extra peel for your teams AD Carry. Jungler picks can be very diverse.

Depending on the pick, you want to position yourself either on the sideline as an assassin or between your AD Carry and Toplaner sort of like a backup tank. Junglers can also be the initiator of the team with picks like Amumu, and if so you need to position yourself like the Toplane; in front of your team.

Midlane: Midlaners will typically be mages or assassins that have a high amount of burst. Midlaners have as much responsibility for their team winning as the junglers do. Midlaners can roam to sidelanes and make sure to snowball their lanes. Later in the game, the focus will be on blowing up high-priority targets, which is essentially the most fed enemy player. Saving high-cooldown abilities for priority targets is essential to

midlaners, instead of trying to help take down that Zac.

Playing midlane is all about damage control. Not getting the enemy laner fed, and hopefully getting fed yourself, is the goal. Trying to snowball sidelanes is a huge plus. It is all about paying attention to who's stronger on the enemy team and unloading your burst on that player in a teamfight.

Because of the burst provided by most Midlane champions, you want to position yourself out of vision or somehow by the sideline, where you can get a jump on the enemy teams carries with your big cooldowns. If you have picked something heavily teamfight-oriented like Orianna, it is okay to position yourself with your team rather than to the side. In this case you want to stick somewhere close to your AD Carry but not so close that the two of you could get hit by the same spell.

AD Carry: AD Carries will – as the name suggests – end up carrying. However, these are squishy and usually have low mobility. Positioning well is the most important skill when playing AD-carry, so make sure you've mastered it. The second-most important skill for AD-carries is last-hitting. If you can't last-hit well, you will not have much success. Being as item dependent as they are, you need to get fed and the only way you can guarantee that, is through last-hitting. All AD-carries follow the same basic principles (positioning, lasthitting, kiting) but some are more slippery than others, while some again are being categorized as hyper-carries; Kog'Maw, Vayne, Tristana, Twitch.

Playing AD Carry requires you to be extremely aware of positioning. This is something – unfortunately – best learned through experience. A good rule of thumb is, if a teamfight hasn't broken out yet, you should always stay out of flash + ability range. Yes, you need to stay so far away that Malphite couldn't catch you with flash + ultimate if he wanted to.

Your initial position when grouping with your team should always be in the back, near your Support. When a fight erupts you should always try to stay as far away from damage as possible, *while dealing damage*. This is mostly learned through experience, and if you have the knowledge Replays are an insanely valuable tool to learn better positioning. I know it worked for me when preparing for tournaments.

Support: The role of the support is to help the AD carry during laning phase. Later on, depending on picks, the support can either chose to help initiate, (if the support is someone like Leona) or peel for the AD Carry. Furthermore, support is considered the role that does the primary warding on the team. Everyone should be warding at all times, but supports buying Sightstone will be able to put down a few more wards. Getting the Red Trinket and pink wards and thus winning vision wars, is also on the shoulders of the support, as well as good map awareness and pinging for your team mates.

If you want to play support you should have good map awareness, always be glancing at the map. Making calls on objectives and winning vision wars is on the support. Make sure to get the Red Trinket at the same trip back as you get your Sightstone. Games are won on vision.

When your team is grouped up, as the support you want to (try to) make sure everyone stays alive. Your primary focus should be your AD Carry however, so try not to blow your big cooldowns saving someone else, unless your AD Carry is already absolutely safe.

You will want to position yourself near your carry and make sure to keep enemies off of his back, so he can deal the consistent damage he has built for.

Some good tips on how to get started with each lane:

Toplane: Vision is alpha and omega, as overextending can make or break the lane. Buy wards!

If you have the weaker part in a matchup, just let your opponent push you and possibly even take your tower. Just, do not die. A good healthy habit is to ward your lane at the 2:55 time mark, as it will prevent

you from overextending and dying to a jungler gank, in almost every game.

Toplane is also a lane that is way more dependent on how you play the matchup, than having a better pick, so getting really comfortable with just one champion (Irelia is so good for this purpose) is a good way to learn top.

Midlane: Playing midlane means you will usually be playing mages or assassins with a high amount of burst potential, to instantly kill an opponent. Learning how to punish enemy players for mispositioning and avoid doing so yourself, is what makes and breaks midlane. Getting hit by Charm while playing against Ahri can be devastating enough that you have to recall and lose out on XP and gold, which puts your opponent ahead.

As a midlaner you will need good map awareness and need to spot situations where you can do a successful roam to either top- or bottom-lane or perhaps even invade the jungle, as snowballing your team is something these type of champions are usually good at.

Jungle: As the jungler your job will be to vary between farming and applying pressure on lanes, as well as being the main drive force in securing objectives. Playing jungle means having high game knowledge and matchup knowledge. Knowing when to be where, and when to do what is what differs the good junglers from the bad.

A very difficult role to play but a very influential one; especially in high solo queue.

AD Carry: Playing as the AD Carry means having mechanics and knowing how to kite. When playing in bottomlane, you want to be good at dodging skillshots as you will have two enemy champions throwing them at you. Knowing when, and how, to punish your opponents for even small mistakes, is what makes an AD Carry great (see advanced skill section).

Mechanics are needed for this role, as they provide the most damage throughout a teamfight and you need to be able to get off as much damage as possible, rather than running around without attacking.

Support: As with the AD Carry, playing botlane means you have to be good at dodging skillshots. Mechanics are not as needed with supports, because many of them have targeted abilities. However you need good game knowledge (not as much as a jungler) and knowing when and how to ward is a crucial skill. Many supports get picked off while facechecking a brush with the intention of warding, because they don't know *when* to ward. As with toplane you want to get into a habit of warding around the 2:55 time mark, because if the jungler is not ganking toplane he will most likely be here.

Calling your teammates off and pinging the map is usually a skill that support players need to be good at, as – as previously stated – mechanics are not as required in this position, but knowledge is.

Keeping your AD Carry is the most important job for any support. Even more so if the AD Carry gets fed.

Auto attack animation cancelling

Many may consider auto attack cancelling an unnecessary skill but truthfully it is not; it is much needed and is definitely something that needs to be second nature if you plan on becoming good in League.

That being said, however, it is also a fairly easy skill to learn.

Auto Attack animation cancelling – also known as orb walking - is the art of cancelling the auto attack animation so that damage is applied, while not keeping your champion static. This is an essential skill to becoming a good league player and even more crucial for AD Carries, as they will obviously rely on it a whole lot more, to put out as much damage as possible.

The reason you want to learn this, is so that it is possible for you to reposition your champion rather than

being locked in an animation where you can't do anything. You want to constantly be doing as much damage as you possibly can, without sacrificing your champion control.

Alright, awesome! So how do you do it? Actually it is fairly easy. It takes a bit of practicing but is applicable to any champion in the game, even the melee ones.

What you want to do is load up a custom game, preferably on a champion you are a little bit comfortable with, I would recommend going with Ashe for practice. Once in a game, proceed to a lane and wait for minions, so you can practice on them. For practice purposes, make sure you have enabled damage in the game menu (damage showing above targets). Right click on a minion and immediately after right click somewhere on the ground so your champion moves. You want to start moving in the instant that the projectile leaves your champion. In case you're using a melee champion this will be a bit harder, as you want to start moving when your animation is more than 50% done. This requires you to know the champion and is therefore a little harder. Pay attention to the targeted minion so you can see if damage was applied or not, if it was; congratulations you just cancelled your first auto attack animation.

Getting used to this with the champions you play the most is essential to becoming a good league player, and while this principle can be applied to melee champions as well it is a bit more difficult.

With some champions you might even be able to cancel the animation before the projectile leaves the champion, but I would not recommend you start practicing that immediately. However, make sure you get into a custom game and learn how to do this on your favorite champions and make it a habit to do it every single time you use your auto attack. It may seem overzealous, but there is no reason to ever finish the rest of the animation if you can begin walking backwards a little bit, which will generally allow you to be a bit safer in lane.

As a jungler you might mitigate an attack or two from some of the melee camps in the jungle, so there is bonuses to learning this for everyone.

Advanced skills

In this section I am going to elaborate on some already explained techniques, as well as thoroughly go through how to win a lane.

Advanced Objective Control

Objective control has already been covered in a different section of the book where the objective priority-list was introduced:

Nexus > Nexus Tower > Inhibitor > Baron Nashor > Inhibitor Tower > Inner Tower > Dragon > Outer Tower

Now while this is still correct and applies *generally* there are scenarios where you might want to prioritize differently because of scenario-specific circumstances.

Typically, in order to get an Inner Tower your team might decide to siege it down. Sieging describes the process of everyone on your team grouping up in order to help each other take down a turret. Sieging is usually done when a team is far ahead of the other and can win a fight 5v5 without much struggle. This will, however, not always be possible if the enemy team has strong waveclear champions like Caitlyn, Lux or Ziggs. If that's the case, your team may be better off getting dragon, warding the enemy jungle and then trying to rotate around and catch the enemy waveclear champion, after which sieging should be possible until said champion respawns.

Being able to rotate and change target objective is also an essential skill needed when a lead has been acquired and you intent to keep it. Just because an Inner Tower is open for damage does not mean it is an easier, or more immediate, objective than dragon. Try to always keep the lower tier objectives off the table, as it will reduce the chances of the opposing team making a comeback. While higher tier objectives are worth more, not in terms of gold but in terms of overall map pressure, they are usually harder to take down too. That is why baron is commonly known as the throw magnet. That means you should get all Outer Towers and Dragons off the table before trying to commit to Inner Towers.

This also builds into the next advanced skill I want to touch upon.

Understanding and picking team compositions

Understanding what certain champions can do, and how they interact is a really important skill in League. It sets the baseline for how you should play a specific game, and how to avoid playing into the advantages of the opposing team, but rather exploiting your own strengths to the best ability to score a win.

There are many types of team compositions and some may even be good at more than one specific thing. Overall, there seems to be strengths and weaknesses you should aim to get on your team. Back in season one and two, the game was highly teamfight centered (try watching some Youtube videos from back then) and thus all tournaments would revolve around picking good teamfight champions.

Today the game is more about pushing and taking objectives, so you might want champions with pushing power or zoning potential or waveclear. That being said usually teams are stronger than the opposing team in at least one aspect; I'm going to briefly describe each, what they do and how to counter them.

- **Pick comp.** This type of teamcomposition is usually good at rotating around the map and jungle and will punish extremely hard for poor positioning or rotation. Usually consists of multiple champions with hard CC and some burst like Morgana, Thresh, Lux, Taric, Riven. To play against this type of

composition you need to win the vision game. Ward up and deny the enemy team vision, their strength is primarily in rotations. Grouping as 5 and trying to siege towers can work well too.

- **Teamfight comp.** This setup can be devastating and almost impossible to beat if you group and fight 5vs5. Usually consisting of high burst and AoE CC makes cleaning up 5 enemy team members a walk in the park. Champions like Orianna, Jarvan, Amumu, Morgana and Malphite are really good for this type of composition. The composition is extremely reliant on landing all of their abilities on all five opposing members as their consistent damage output can be somewhat lackluster. They will almost always include some sort of hard initiation¹¹ which allows them to land their combos. Playing against a teamfight oriented composition usually means having to splitpush the game and trade objectives, while trying not to get into a grouped fight. Having a pick-comp and eliminating one or two members before they rally can also be extremely effective. Difficult to play but great potential. High risk high reward.
- **Poke/siege comp.** This type of comp is the easiest to play and one of the most annoying to deal with. Consisting of champion with high amounts of ranged poke and preferably some heals, they will come knocking at your door and stay around for days while slowly taking down your Towers. Champions like Ezreal, Caitlyn, Jayce, Ziggs and Lux are good for this type of composition. They are, however, weak in a prolonged 5vs5 fight if the enemy team can close in, which means they get quite easily countered by hard initiate.¹² Closing the gap is the biggest issue in fighting a poke comp, so a pickcomp can do really well against it, provided an initiation is possible. Another thing that can slow a poke comp down is having strong long-ranged waveclear champions like Lux or Ziggs.
- **Splitpush comp.** This type of composition is usually based around one or two champions that are heavily push oriented. This could mean having a Jax top which the jungler tries to snowball, so that there will be no stopping him from pushing down towers. It could also mean having a well-protected (in the sense of vision) Caitlyn bot that doesn't give a hoot about grouping up with her team.
- **Protect the (AD) Carry.** Protecting the AD carry is an efficient, but extremely difficult, setup to pick and play. It has great potential but also many problems to it. The biggest of which is that you are heavily reliant upon having a strong AD carry, and depending upon this person to not get caught or blown up instantly. If he/she does, you are left with nothing. These comps usually revolve around picking a hypercarry like Vayne or Kog'Maw.

Something valuable to understand is that you're in a game and your AD carry gets immensely fed you should *always default to this strategy*. If you have a 10-0 Tristana/Caitlyn/whatever, you are going to automatically win fights if you can keep that champion alive. And the opposing team will easily win if he/she is killed. Try to always defend your carries if fed, rather than trying to initiate or chase. Peel¹³.

Peeling is also often discussed as fighting backwards or fighting forwards. When you are defending your AD Carry, you want to be fighting backwards and defending your carry rather than forwards where you would be diving on the enemy carry. When your AD Carry is weaker, you want to be

¹¹ Long range hard CC abilities which are not easily dodged such as Leona and Malphite ultimates.

¹³ Peeling means peeling enemy divers off of your carries.

fighting forwards because you want to be chasing down the enemy AD Carry and shutting him/her down as fast as possible.

Picking champions that have synergy on some level is going to allow for much easier plays and much safer wins. For example, picking two-three champions that fit into the “Pick comp”-category will allow you to make a 3-man gank squad that roams the map while snowballing all your lanes.

Likewise picking 3 champions in the ‘Poke comp’-category may be wise, but picking 5 could be dangerous as it likely means you will have no CC spells or disengages to keep the enemy team from engaging upon you.

Also notice that picking 5 champions that does not synergize in any way will make it extremely difficult for your team to win a game. It will make your lineup unable to do anything if you can’t do either of these things somewhat well.

Pressuring lane(s)

Pressure was mentioned earlier in the book, but I am now going to go more in-depth on it. After discussing with many of my high-level friends, they all agreed with me that pressure is the most single important thing during the laning phase of a game.

Pressure can be hard to understand, especially if you are not already at a high level of play. The best way it was explained to me was through the example of Silsol and the phrase: *“A lane is not lost until you give up”*. This shouldn’t be understood as if it is okay to feed and keep trying to kill your opponent when there is absolutely no chance, but rather being clever about pressuring and how. Let’s use an example:

You are playing AD Carry and you and your support just got a 2-for-2 trade in botlane. The enemy AD Carry got both kills and you got one each. So you are behind, right? Correct! However, while I already explained that damage control is important, it does not mean you should come back into lane and let yourself be zoned. You need to win back ground. Particularly in bottom lane this can be done in many different ways due to the amount of matchups available; if your support is someone like Thresh or Leona try to look for an initiate once you’re level 6. Or at least position yourself *as if you intend to do it*. The indication of intention is *exactly* what pressure is. You might know that you are not going to initiate, but because your opponent does not know that he will most likely respect the support positioning and back off a bit. This allows the AD Carry to farm safely!

That’s one for the supports, but what can you do as the AD Carry if you get behind? You should be using the advanced harassing technique I am going to explain in the following section.

Advanced Harassing Technique

Creating pressure on lane can be a difficult task if you are always running in and trading with your opponent in situations where he just hits you back. Sure, you created pressure but so did he, so nothing was really won. How do we help that? We eliminate the factor of your opponent being able to trade back! This is a difficult skill to learn, but one of the most important ones when you strive to climb to the Challenger league. From experience, I know that this technique was really an eye-opener, and has allowed me to almost always win lane (currently Diamond II, 63 LP). It will surprise you how far up the ranked ladder you have to go before players actually start utilizing this trick. Even throughout the Diamond tier it is fairly uncommon that players are good at this.

Note: This trick is best utilized on AD Carries and other ranged champions, but can also be translated onto

melee champions with some experience. I do recommend learning it on a ranged champion first, just as with the auto attack cancellation trick.

So here it is. What you want to do is, in addition to paying attention to the health of enemy minions, you want to pay attention to the help of *your own minions* as well. This will allow you to judge when an opponent will be going for a CS and will allow you to punish him for it. The goal is to put yourself in his shoe and think “from where would I take that CS” and then position yourself in a spot where you can hit him, while he is hitting the minion. He will be locked in an auto-attack animation for a last hit, while you are hitting him/her for free damage; he won’t be able to trade back. Even just one auto attack will be enough of a trade, because if you do this consistently it will be six auto attacks per creep wave, which early on is a lot of hp.

This technique is difficult to master but simply put one of the best tricks to get used to. I would a video for you, explaining the technique, but I prefer giving the honor to the guy I learned it from. [See the video here](#) for a visual example of the technique¹⁴:

Using minion waves correctly

The next skill we are going to go over is how to use minion waves correctly. This is now commonly used in any pro-game in the LCS, but was originally introduced by the OGN league. This mastery was one of the reasons why SKT T1 was able to win the Season 3 championships.

Using minion waves correctly means that you can freeze minion waves and have free farm in the early game, but it also means that you can apply pressure on one site of the map while having your team on the opposite. Managing minion waves correctly also means rotating correctly and realizing what’s going on early enough to do something about it. This can, naturally, be abused the other way around, because when you start to pay attention to minion waves you are going to know how the enemy team will rotate, which will allow you to catch them off during rotations and secure objectives for your team.

Freezing minion waves is somewhat simple; you want to get in a position where there are more caster minions on the enemy team than on your team. Caster minions decide how hard a wave pushes, as they are the one that deals the most damage.

This is most easily done if you hang back in lane and let the enemy laner(s) push towards you. At this point you want to avoid that the enemy creep wave(s) reaches your tower. Usually, some sort of lead or advantage is required to achieve this. You will see this happening in the LCS in Toplanes where the AD Carry with range will freeze the lane against an enemy melee champion. This is enough of an advantage.

If you can keep the creep wave away from your tower, you should be able to freeze them there for as long as you want. Keep in mind that if the enemy creep wave builds up too huge you might want to eliminate a few ranged creeps, as otherwise they might push into the tower. Freezing is fairly easy to do but takes a few tries. I recommend trying it out in a custom game; go to a lane and stay at the tower until the enemy minion wave starts pushing and is almost at your tower. When it is, start last hitting as late as you possibly can (last hitting actually means you push a little bit each time) and work on keeping the wave in place.

Make sure that there are always more enemy caster minions than friendly.

During the midgame, proper minion wave management becomes even more important, as it can be a huge factor in winning a game. The rule of thumb is that you should not be grouping and pushing as a team if

¹⁴ A link can be found in the Resources chapter as well.

minion waves in the sidelanes are pushing towards your team. This, however, should be ignored if you have a huge lead and can take down an inhibitor or even possibly end the game.

The most important thing you need to know is how to build a 'slow push'. A slow push is exactly what it entitles; you make sure that your minion wave push although slowly. Naturally you might be thinking, why slowly? The reason is that the slower the wave pushes the more minions will have time to join the crusade before reaching a tower. The bigger the wave that reaches the tower the more XP you deny your opponent and the bigger is your chance of actually killing that tower. Sure, you won't be getting that nearby extra 100g, but global gold – as we now know – wins games.

Slowpushing a wave is done by only killing the melee minions in a wave, when both waves are equally sized and healthy. This is most easily done after a wave-reset which means six minions meets six opposing minions (or seven, depending on tank minion appearance).

Try to pay attention to this and rotate around the map and pick up minion waves if the game is equal and you are looking to farm. If you are ahead and looking to close out a game, try to build a slowpush in bottom lane and go take vision control of baron. After a little while, one of three things will happen; (1) the enemy team will facecheck at baron and you can kill them, after which you can end the game or (2) an enemy player will go and clear the minion wave in botlane, in which case you can just kill baron as you have a numbers advantage or (3) The enemy team will not do either, in which case your minion wave will get you at least one free tower and possibly more.

If it happens to be option 3, in which case your opponents were smart, you can just repeat the process over and over until minions are bashing at an inhibitor or even Nexus, at which point you can take baron anyhow.

Timing Summoner Spells and events

We have probably all timed a dragon in our time with League of Legends. We might have timed baron too. If you are exceptional you have made a good (and correct) estimated guess of a Dragon timer that was taken without vision. If this is the case; good! But we are going to be adding the habit of timing everything. Timers are important in League of legends, as it is an information game (that's why warding is important!) and more information means higher chances of winning.

Getting into a habit of timing everything from wards to summoner spells will help you a lot in league of legends. Often, you will see players in the low-diamond bracket write things like "mid no flash" or "mid no summoners". This is fairly helpful but can be even better, and this is where we are going to be better.

When you notice someone blowing a cooldown you take a quick glance on the clock and add the cooldown of the spell to current game time and write that number in chat. So instead of writing 'mid no flash', if you see the enemy midlaner flashing at 08:53, you write "Ahri flash 15:53(8.53+5)". Champion name is better because it is more specific, and the cooldown for flash is five minutes. Below is a list of all the cooldowns in the game as of today. This may change in the future so make sure you always stay updated on patch notes and know the cooldowns on spells.

Barrier – 210 seconds (3.5 minutes).

Heal – 240 seconds (4 minutes).

Cleanse – 210 seconds (3.5 minutes).

Ignite – 210 seconds (3.5 minutes).

Exhaust – 210 seconds (3.5 minutes).

Smite – 40 seconds.

Flash - 300 seconds (5 minutes) – can be shortened to 240 seconds (4 minutes) with Distortion boot enhancement.

Ghost – 210 seconds (3.5 minutes) – can be shortened to 168 seconds (2.48 minutes) with Distortion boot enhancement.

Teleport – 300 seconds (5 minutes) – can be shortened to 240 seconds (4 minutes) with Distortion boot enhancement or by teleporting to a tower.

Revive – 540 seconds

Making sure to keep specific track of these summoners and make a written, or mental, note of them will allow you a much higher chances of winning fights. Keeping track of when the enemy AD Carry and midlaner have their flashes on cooldown, will in many cases allow you to capitalize on it and win fights and thus secure an objective or possibly win the game.

Playing solo VS Teamranked and how to play on a team

Now that you're way up the ladder and in a much better position than when you started reading this book, you might have started thinking about joining a premade ranked team on which you can further develop your skills and compete in tournaments like the ESL weekly Go4LoL or possibly even the LCS!

Playing in a ranked team is much different than playing soloqueue, so if you are not hitting high tiers right away don't get discouraged. Team ranked IS harder and more difficult to achieve the same ranked tier in that you have in soloqueue.

You can easily be Diamond I in soloqueue while struggling to even get Diamond V in teamranked; that's just the game, it is a much harder one.

However there are some tips I will give away, to help you ease your way into the team scene. Remember, I used to be in the exact opposite situation; my soloqueue ELO was very bad, meanwhile my ranked teams were hovering Diamond III. I just understood the teamgame better, because I have always played LoL on teams.

The first and most obvious one, is that when you play on a team you want to settle on a role. You don't want your lineup to be shuffling roles every game or two that's not going your way; so chose a role and stick with it.

Defining ambitions and teaming up with four likeminded people

This one may seem obvious, but It is not. You hear about it all the time and probably have experienced it yourself as well; teams fall apart in a relatively short amount of time if everyone is not having the same ambitions for the team. One of the reasons I achieved as much as I did on the League scene was due to the fact I played with the *exact* same lineup for more than two years.

So before focusing on getting into a game you should find four persons that have the same ambitions and expectations for playing on a team as you do. That way you will stick together much longer and sticking together is what makes teams good. Take a look at the LCS, every time a team has any major swaps their performance always decreases for a while, until they have played more together *as a team*.

This is an important factor so make sure you focus on getting a team that you can get along with, because sticking with the same people for a longer time will usually net your team better results, even if you are worse players. Knowing each other in and out will make it easier to play as a team.

Having a 'try-hard' mindset

This is another aspect that seems obvious at first glance but really isn't – I know from firsthand experience. No matter how poorly you are doing in a game you always need to be focusing and trying to think of a comeback, rather than giving up. When ahead by miles try to push your lead and end the game without letting the opponents having a chance to make a comeback. Challenge yourself every game, even the ones that seem easy. This is an important mindset to get into, because once you start playing against the best teams out there, they will punish you for not trying to end as quickly as possible, or giving away a few stray kills.

A good phrase that exactly outlines the mindset you want to be having goes like this:

Every match is a scrim, and every scrim is a match

So what exactly do I mean with this? If you start playing matches in smaller (or bigger) competitions don't let it get into your head that you are playing for a prize. When you are playing, remember that it's just another scrim and it's no big deal. It'll help you perform better and not stress over the prize. Likewise, when you are playing scrims remember to treat it just as seriously, as if it were a tournament game. Getting around playing like this will make sure that you are always focused and don't throw games while ending the ones you can as quickly as possible.

This will also train your focusing muscle a bit more, so if you ever chose to attend any LAN events you will have the mental endurance to keep a high level of play even through a full day of tournament games.

Playing your strongest champions

Once you have decided on a team, I recommend making a spreadsheet of everyone's strongest champions. Simply list the 3-5 champions that you play the best and put them in a spreadsheet. If everyone on your team puts their 3-5 best champions you can start figuring out what sort of setups you can play and this will be a huge boost, as it will give you a plan in champion select.

I also recommend you make a list of 2-3 champions you want to learn. This could be for a variety of reasons, but should usually be because they are considered safe or good at any given point (FOTM)¹⁵. Having a plan will make winning easier in long terms, because you know which champions you want to get while knowing which can possibly counter your setup the hardest. Say you are playing a hard poke comp you might want to ban out a hard initiate champion like Malphite. This is the kind of strength that a plan in champion select will give you.

Once you have figured out what your strongest champions are, make an agreement to only play these champions while playing team ranked. The 2-3 champions you have listed that you want to improve on, are practiced outside the team-ranked environment until a given player feels confident enough with a champion, to bring it into team ranked. And as always; be honest with yourself, don't bring in a new champion after only 3 games. Play at least 10-20 as you will contribute much more to your team's chances of winning and your own chances of improving.

Only playing your strongest champions serves the same purpose as settling on one champion. You will free up mental focus to learn other things which is important in team ranked, as it is a different game than soloqueue.

Finding the backbone of your playstyle

When you have figured out which type of team compositions might work for you, start practicing that specific type of champion select. Team ranked often means playing the same champs over and over again. Stick with what works, at least for a while. Having a core setup that you know your team can play is a strong plus.

I personally recommend starting playing something heavily teamfight oriented (Malphite + Orianna combo for example) and just grouping up early. However, this is just a recommendation and you should pick the type of setup that you find is working for you. No one type is better than any other, they have strengths and weaknesses each.

¹⁵ Flavor of the month – a phrase commonly used to define champions that are popular at certain times. Mostly because pro's have success with them and everyone sees it as an eye-opener to how strong a specific champion can be.

Naturally when you improve and start reaching a higher level of play, you will want to branch out and start playing more type of compositions, so you can counter your opponents rather than just sticking to the same thing over and over. Having a backbone type of setup is great to rely on, especially when times get tough. If you ever find yourself unable to win any games and it's just loss after loss, try going back to basics and just picking your strongest champions.

Diamond I is reachable just doing this.

Picking flavor of the month

Whenever a patch comes out and a certain champion or more gets a huge buff, make sure you start practicing them immediately so you can bring them into team ranked as soon as possible. Having any sort of edge from the numbers in the game will also increase the odds of your team winning.

Remember when I said I am probably the worst player to ever have a long list of price winnings in League of Legends? This is exactly how we did it. It helps a lot more than you would think, because sometimes Riot Games will unintentionally buff certain champions to a point where they are just too strong for most setups to deal with.

However, picking flavor of the month should not be on the compromise of sacrificing your preferred team setups, if you have found something that is working for you. For example, if a poke champion gets particularly buffed in one patch, I don't recommend switching to poke compositions as the only type of setup you play, if you are not usually playing these.

While all of this being said you should still note that playing team ranked is just different than solo queue. Soloqueue will teach you the game basics and the mechanics you need to succeed on a ranked team, but actually succeeding takes a lot more. You have to learn many things all over again. The tips explained here should ease the transition.

If you have watched the LCS you will also notice that in team ranked games can be won and lost over very, very few mistakes. It could be a drake plus two kills that throws the balance to the enemy team after which they take the lead, play it safe and just go for the win.

Experience from team ranked and soloqueue will help you know when to play safe, when to push your lead and how to make a comeback play. All of which is required knowledge when trying to learn team ranked.

On a final note, in soloqueue you might not be respecting or listening to pings from your teammates. While I think it is a good idea and that you should, it is not necessary. However, in team ranked it IS necessary. You want to get used to respecting every single ping that is being put out; by now you should already have enough map awareness to be able to glance at the map whenever a ping is transmitted.

Listening to - and trusting - your teammates is essential for building a strong team and is a habit that you need to get in to.

Resources

As a final chapter I am going to include some links to sites, which has helped me over the years whilst improving in league of legends, and also providing links to webpages and alike mentioned throughout the book, that I recommend.

Using online guides are worth the time reading/watching and can give you some tools to work with to improve your skill in the given category.

For example, if you are being new to a champion you should never turn down the chance to go online and visit a website for a short introduction to that champion and the playstyle.

Here are some recourses that I have used through my time as a league player:

LolReplay (<http://www.leaguereplays.com/>) – A third-party replay program which allows you to record and review your plays. As close to built-in as it gets. Allows you to forward, rewind and pause plays as well as control speed. My personal favourite but does exactly the same as BaronReplay.

BaronReplay (<https://ahri.tw/en/>) – Similar to LolReplay but some people that I know prefer this over lolreplay. Don't have much experience with this program.

TSM Guides (<http://www.solomid.net/guide?>) – How-to-play champion X guides are all here. Learn from the pros and best players around the world with in-depth detail about anything. The guides range from specific guides for any champion to generic role-specific guides that can be used to quickly learn how to play and itemize in a given role. Highly recommended.

LolKing (<http://www.lolking.net/>) – A great tool for analyzing yourself. Look up your summoner name for details on your performance with specific champions and compare yourself to the rest of the world. Win/loss ratio as well as KDA (remember KDA is unimportant for the most part, although fun) is tracked and summarized nicely into an average for all your games played with said champion. If used correctly it is a great tool for analyzing which champions (or even roles with some work) you perform better with.

WardScore (<http://wardscore.loltools.net/>) – An even greater tool that allows you to check up on how effectively you're actually warding. Warding has been pointed out thoroughly throughout this book so here's your chance to measure if you have learnt anything or not. Highly recommended.

ChampionSelect (<http://www.championselect.net/>) – Championselect is an awesome site for helping you pick accordingly to your opponent, if you have no clue what to pick. Sticking to what you know is recommended but when you get better and start to branch out this might just ease the learning process. Highly recommended.

How to Lasthit like a Challenger (<http://i.imgur.com/orWUCKH.jpg>) – A short descriptive guide on how to get instantly better at last-hitting by practicing like the challengers do. If you're struggling to reach 80-100% of all CS when laning this is definitely a guide worth checking out as it will increase your ability to last-hit quite quickly.

Advanced lane harassing guide (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2ktlXTUo9cQ&feature=g-user-u>) – An in-depth guide on how to effectively harass on lane and how to balance between harassing and last-hitting

while still coming out ahead. A bit of patience is required when applying this skill as it is difficult but a core skill for a professional league player. Highly recommended.

The Only Rune Pages You Need

(http://www.reddit.com/r/leagueoflegends/comments/268xzk/the_only_runes_pages_you_need/) – A short but descriptive guide explaining which rune pages you need to cover every role. If you are unsure on how to build your rune pages this is a great guide. Updated with season 4.

The Only Mastery Pages You Need

(http://www.reddit.com/r/leagueoflegends/comments/265qgn/the_11_masteries_pages_you_need/) – A short but descriptive guide much like the above but instead describing which mastery pages you need. If you are not one for checking out guides often, this is a great core and will allow you to have strong core mastery pages that don't need much changing. Updated with season 4.

Aimbooster (<http://www.aimbooster.com/>) – Aimbooster is a fun and useful game to play while on loading screen. Stimulating yourself with reflex-based games during loading will also help increase your mechanics in League because you start to think and respond faster than you normally would. It's all connected.

Osu (<http://osu.ppy.sh/>) – Osu is an extremely hard but really fun game that you can also play during loading screens and downtime from playing league. Many professional gamers have used this game to hone their reaction times and ingame mechanics. Extremely challenging but highly recommended. You can feel an immediate improvement in your reaction time in League, just after playing this for a few days.

Thanks for reading and best of luck improving summoner!