

Knowing the Enemy - Classes Overview

BY MIIRKAT // AUGUST 24, 2011

While it's important to know your class in and out, often you don't have the opportunity to have that same level of understanding of other classes. Not correctly knowing how enemy abilities work or when they will be used against you only puts you at a disadvantage.

In these series of articles, I cover the basic abilities and mechanics of enemy classes to understand and look out for while in Arena or Battlegrounds. Reading up and becoming familiar with all this information will guarantee better results in rating.

While this article lists the important cooldowns and abilities to look out for, diving into each class article will paint a bigger picture of what to expect from the class and how the cooldowns are used with one another.



Chill of the Grave Rank 2
Contagion Rank 2
Crimson Scourge Rank 2
Death's Advance Rank 2

Runeforge
Death
Pestilence

KNOWING THE ENEMY: DEATH KNIGHT



Fury of Stormrage Rank 2
Fury Swipes Rank 3
Gale Winds Rank 2
Genesis Rank 3

Menzies
Bear Form
Nature's
Rip Cat Form
Barkskin

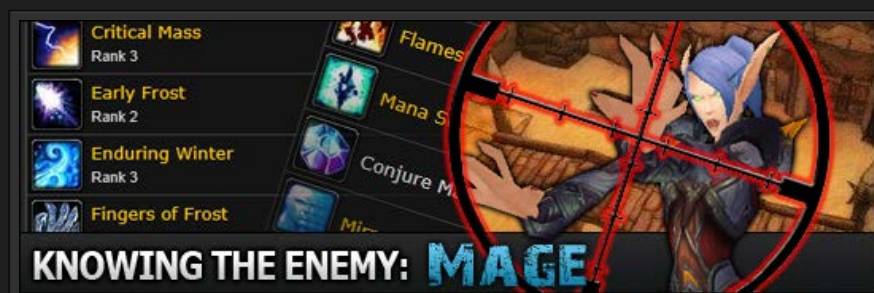
KNOWING THE ENEMY: DRUID



Snake Trap Nature - Trap Launcher
Master's Call
Misdirection
Deterrence

Entrapment Rank 2
Frenzy Rank 3
Go for the Throat Rank 2

KNOWING THE ENEMY: HUNTER



Critical Mass Rank 3
Early Frost Rank 2
Enduring Winter Rank 3
Fingers of Frost

Flames
Mana Shield
Conjure Mana

KNOWING THE ENEMY: MAGE

	Divine Light
	Seal of Justice
	Hand of Salvation
	Avenging Wrath

	Arbiter Rank 2
	Blazing Light Rank 2
	Blessed Life Rank 3



KNOWING THE ENEMY: PALADIN

	Mana Burn
	Holy Nova
	Hymn of Hope
	Shadowfiend

	Shadowy Icon Rank 3
	Sin and Punishment Rank 2
	Soul Warding Rank 3



KNOWING THE ENEMY: PRIEST

	Cloak of Shadows
	Deadly Throw
	Shiv
	Tricks of the Trade

	Seal Fate Rank 2
	Serrated Blades Rank 2
	Slaughter from the Shadows Rank 3



KNOWING THE ENEMY: ROGUE

	Ghost Wolf
	Wind Shear
	Cleanse Spirit
	Earthbind Totem

	Cava Summoning Rank 2
	Maelstrom Rank 3
	Nature's Blessing Rank 3



KNOWING THE ENEMY: SHAMAN

	Fire and Brimstone Rank 3
	Hand of Gul'dan
	Haunt
	Impending Doom Rank 3

	Improved Invisibility Rank 2
	Improved Fear Rank 2
	Improved Fearless Rank 3



KNOWING THE ENEMY: WARLOCK



The image displays a portion of a game's skill tree for a Warrior class. On the left, four skills are listed in a vertical column, each with a small icon and a description:

- Inner Rage** (Icon: Red flame)
- Stance Mastery** (Icon: Blue shield), **Passive**
- Retaliation** (Icon: Silver sword), **Battle Stance**
- Recklessness** (Icon: Red sword)

To the right of these skills, a diagonal path of skills is visible, including:

- Rank 2** (Icon: Blue sword)
- Impale** (Icon: Silver sword), **Rank 2**
- Impending** (Icon: Red sword), **Rank 2**
- Improved** (Icon: Silver sword)

The background features a circular portrait of a warrior character with a red crosshair overlaid on it. At the bottom of the image, the text **KNOWING THE ENEMY: WARRIOR** is displayed in a bold, metallic font.

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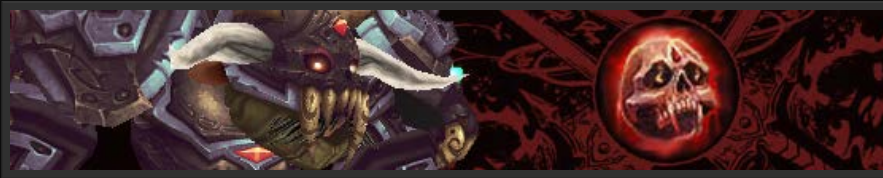
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While it's important to know your class in and out, often you don't have the opportunity to have that same level of understanding of other classes. Not correctly knowing how enemy abilities work or when they will be used against you only puts you at a disadvantage.

In this article, I'm going to address the important cooldowns to be looking out for when playing against the Death Knight class. Unlike most classes, Death Knights have all three trees that make appearances in arena, making it even more confusing as to what spec they are and what they do. In that case, we're going to cover the three specs and go over the important points of each.



BLOOD DEATH KNIGHT


Blood Death Knights are the least common in arenas, but can show up randomly, especially in 2v2, or as flag runners in Rated Battlegrounds. Blood is the intended tanking spec, but because of the amount of healing and absorbs a Blood Death Knight can do, and damage increase by Vengeance, this spec can become a formidable opponent.


How do you recognize a Blood Death Knight?

For starters, you can look if the Death Knight has a Ghoul out or not. This will at least rule out if the Death Knight is Unholy or not. From there, take a look at the Death Knight's buffs. Blood Death Knights will often be in [\[Blood Presence\]](#), but can be in other presences like Unholy. Another buff to look out for is [\[Abomination's Might\]](#) which is exclusive to the Blood tree.


The first thing to realize is that specing into Blood gives the Death Knight the [\[Vengeance\]](#) ability. Every time the Death Knight is hit, his attack power will increase. With Death Knight healing and being a durable tank on top of Vengeance, it makes it difficult to go toe to toe with the DK. However, Vengeance can be countered by being dispelled with [\[Soothe\]](#), [\[Tranquillizing Shot\]](#), or [\[Shiv\]](#).

Speaking of Death Knight healing, let's cover the abilities that allow a Blood Death Knight to heal himself.

[\[Vampiric Blood\]](#) is a huge cooldown that allows the Death Knight to increase all healing received. Along with  [\[Glyph of Vampiric Blood\]](#) the Death Knight can have even more healing.

Next we have [\[Rune Tap\]](#). Every 30 seconds the Death Knight can heal 10% of his total health. A Blood Death Knight can even pick up  [\[Glyph of Rune Tap\]](#) to heal team mates when this ability is used. Finally, most will spec into [\[Will of the Necropolis\]](#) giving the Death Knight a free heal at 30%, and becoming harder to kill.

[\[Blood Parasite\]](#) are random spawns that heal party members as they do damage.

And finally, the big heal to look out for is [\[Death Strike\]](#). Death Strike for a Blood Death Knight is much more deadly compared to when a Frost or Unholy uses it. With support abilities like [\[Improved Death Strike\]](#) and  [\[Glyph of Death Strike\]](#) it's definitely something to look out for. Also, it's important to note that the Blood Mastery is based around Death Strike – [\[Blood Shield\]](#). This shield can stack.

The more Death Strikes a Blood Death Knight can cast, the more healing he receives, as well as the bigger his shield becomes. Because Death Strike is a

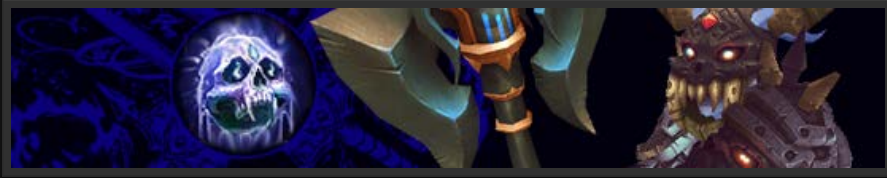
physical ability, you can prevent a lot of his healing by just staying out of melee range and kiting.

On top of preventing the healing and shields, you will be preventing another Blood specialization – [\[Blood Rites\]](#). This ability can become really dangerous.

Blood Death Knights can convert all their runes into Death Runes – runes that will satisfy count as either a Blood, Frost, or Unholy rune. Basically a wild card.

The dangerous thing about this is that once a Death Knight has four or more of his runes as Death Runes, he can spam [\[Necrotic Strike\]](#) or [\[Heart Strike\]](#) over and over again. This burst is even more devastating when used in combination with [\[Dancing Rune Weapon\]](#) and [\[Empower Rune Weapon\]](#).

Finally, by spec'ing into [\[Hand of Doom\]](#), a Blood Death Knight's [\[Strangulate\]](#) becomes a one minute cooldown.




FROST DEATH KNIGHT

It's extremely easy to identify a Frost Death Knight. First of all, there is no Ghoul. Secondly, the Death Knight will have the [\[Icy Talons\]](#) buff.

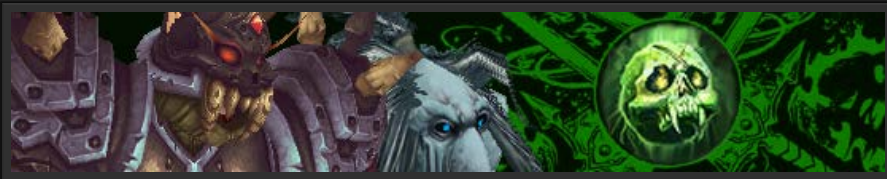
Frost is a very straightforward damage spec, revolving around building Runic Power for big bursts.

The key thing to look out for against a Frost DK is their CC chain which is very simple and predicable. A Frost DK will build up his Runes and Runic Power, then use [\[Death Grip\]](#) to pull in a target he wants to control, which is typically a healer. He will then immediately use [\[Hungering Cold\]](#) to freeze everyone in place.

Hungering Cold is on a one minute cooldown and doesn't cost anything with  [\[Glyph of Hungering Cold\]](#). Again, this is the key cooldown to be looking out for.

To counter this, the healer should be trying to heal at max distance and out of range of Death Grip. Priests and Paladins can use [\[Shadow Word: Death\]](#) or [\[Hand of Sacrifice\]](#) to try and break the CC. Of course, stunning and preventing damage during this time is key as well. Expect that the enemy team will chain even more CC off Hungering Cold, and will anticipate trinkets, dispels, or breaking the CC with Shadow Word: Death or Hand of Sacrifice. Knowing who is going to follow up on the CC and preventing it from happening will give you a chance to survive the high damage. **Bottom line, you need to give your healer the ability to heal and not be locked out in CC for 15+ seconds.**

The last big cooldown to look out for, which is also on a minute cooldown, is [\[Pillar of Frost\]](#). This will most likely be used in conjunction with Hungering Cold because the Death Knight will have all his Runes and Runic Power.



UNHOLY DEATH KNIGHT

Finally we take a look at the Unholy Death Knight. The signature feature of Unholy is the Ghoul, and even Gargoyle pets, as well as disease and shadow damage.

So let's talk pets. For just spec'ing into Unholy, the Ghoul become a permanent pet for the Death Knight. While the Ghoul has 4 abilities, the big one to remember is the stun, [\[Gnaw\]](#), which is on a minute cooldown.

As the game progresses, a Death Knight can generate [\[Shadow Infusion\]](#) every time he uses [\[Death Coil\]](#). At 5 stacks, the Death Knight can use [\[Dark Transformation\]](#) to empower the Ghoul, giving it enhanced abilities.

- * [\[Sweeping Claws\]](#)
- * [\[Monstrous Blow\]](#) – Stun
- * [\[Shambling Rush\]](#) – Interrupt
- * [\[Putrid Bulwark\]](#)

Not only does the pet still have a stun, but it gains an interrupt.

On top of the Ghoul, the Death Knight can summon a Gargoyle every 3 minutes with [\[Summon Gargoyle\]](#). This is a big cooldown, and should be taken into

consideration when it is summoned.

Both the Ghoul and Gargoyle are Undead, so they are susceptible to abilities like [\[Turn Evil\]](#) and [\[Shackle Undead\]](#).

Another annoying ability of the Unholy tree is [\[Desecration\]](#). With the ability to easily lay this AoE snare anywhere, it becomes disadvantageous to fight in a single area when trying to pursue an enemy or when trying to escape. Death Knights will also use [\[Death Grip\]](#) to pull healers in out in the open, easily putting them into interrupt range, or creating a swap opportunity with the healer unable to flee easily. You can save cooldowns like [\[Hand of Freedom\]](#) for times like these.

Finally, Unholy has access to an ability called [\[Unholy Frenzy\]](#). This ability straightforward is used as a damage increase on the selected target, but there is a more interesting use to this ability. Because it does damage, it allows the opportunity to be a method to break CCs. Is the healer Polymorphed? Cast Unholy Frenzy on him to break it!


But there is something you can do about it. Unholy Frenzy is an Enrage effect, so it can be dispelled by [\[Soothe\]](#), [\[Tranquillizing Shot\]](#), or [\[Shiv\]](#).

OTHER DEATH KNIGHT ABILITIES

While this is a talent in the Frost tree, [\[Lichborne\]](#) is picked up by every PVP Death Knight. By gaining the attribute of being Unholy, the Death Knight can avoid some CCs as well as having the opportunity to heal themselves with [\[Death Coil\]](#). Because they are Unholy, however, they are open to [\[Turn Evil\]](#) and [\[Shackle Undead\]](#).

While Unholy Death Knights have a permanent Ghoul, Frost and Blood can use [\[Raise Dead\]](#) to gain a temporary Ghoul. Most often, this will be summoned for the sole purpose of being a heal, by sacrificing the pet through [\[Death Pact\]](#)

Death Knights are very anti-caster. While having strong spell abilities themselves, they can also protect themselves from incoming spell abilities with [\[Anti-Magic Shell\]](#). This is a very short cooldown of 45 seconds, and the Death Knight can use this offensively or aggressively. Often, you will want to force this ability so the Death Knight can't use it to become immune to most CCs when blowing his burst.

Death Knights also have two forms of interrupts. First off is their basic kick ability, which is [\[Mind Freeze\]](#) on a 10 second cooldown. However, Death Knights also have a long cooldown silence ability called [\[Strangulate\]](#) on a 2 minute cooldown. This silence can be chained off of other CC, but with  [\[Glyph of Strangulate\]](#) the lockout can be increased if Strangulate is used on a cast. Also remember, Blood Death Knights have this ability on a 1 minute cooldown.

As a pseudo interrupt, [\[Death Grip\]](#) can be used every 35 seconds to pull a target while they are casting, essentially stopping the cast. Death Grip can also be used to swap to other targets. Unholy Death Knights pick up [\[Unholy Command\]](#) which turns Death Grip into a 25 second cooldown.

Another anti-caster ability is [\[Dark Simulacrum\]](#), and a very important one to look out for. Every minute this will be placed, and the Death Knight's goal will to copy an important spell. This effect is really subtle, so tracking mods and checking your debuffs closely will help to catch when it's thrown up. You can either ride out the duration and not cast a spell, or use a trash spell to give to the Death Knight.

For burst, [\[Empower Rune Weapon\]](#) will be used to instantly have the Death Knight's Runes replenished, allowing him to use all his big hitting abilities immediately. This has a long cooldown though of 5 minutes.

Finally, the last ability you want to look out for is [\[Necrotic Strike\]](#). This is an anti healing shield that absorbs healing incoming, but can stack higher and higher with multiple applications. Death Knights will typically stack this while a healer is controlled, so once they are able to heal again, they will have difficulty bringing the target back up because they then have to deal with Necrotic Strike. It's best to prevent the Death Knight from having big strings of applying this ability.

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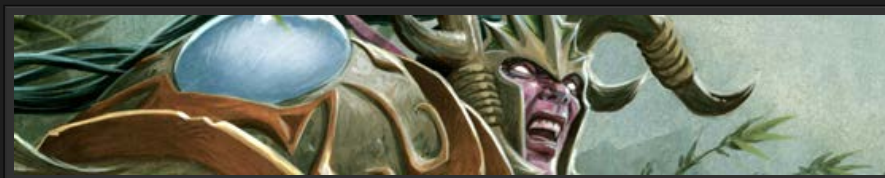
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In this article, I'm going to address the important cooldowns and abilities to be looking out for when playing against the Druid class. We will be covering all three specs of the Druid class: Balance, Feral Combat, and Restoration.



DRUID ABILITIES

The biggest Crowd Control to look out for from a Druid is [\[Cyclone\]](#). While this ability only lasts for 6 seconds, it's unique because it blocks all damage and healing done to the target, friendly or unfriendly. This crowd control can not only be used to lock down an enemy, but it can also prevent needed heals on the target, causing healing to blow their biggest cooldowns into nothing.

Secondly, Druids have a casted root called [\[Entangling Roots\]](#). This ability is a standard root that can be dispelled.

However, [\[Nature's Grasp\]](#) is another ability Druids have that automatically casts Entangling Roots on any melee who strike them, up to three charges. This buff can be dispelled or eaten by abilities like [\[Hand of Freedom\]](#) or [\[Bladestorm\]](#).

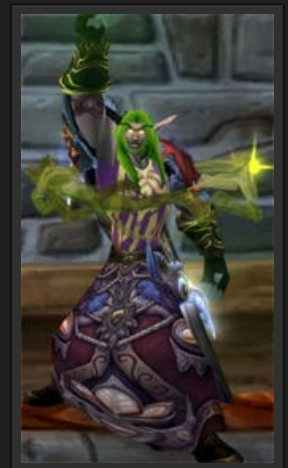
Druids also have a 3rd casted CC in the form of [\[Hibernate\]](#) which only affects other Druids, Hunter pets, and Shamans using [\[Ghost Wolf\]](#).

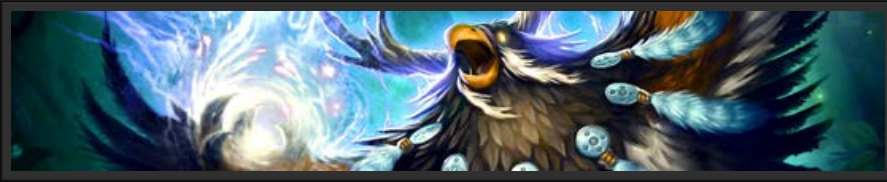
[\[Barkskin\]](#) is one of the few defensive cooldowns Druids have, reducing all damage taken for 20%. This ability cannot be dispelled, and can be used while the Druid doesn't have control of their character or is silenced.

Used by all three specs, [\[Tranquility\]](#) is a large AoE and channeled heal. The healing from this ability can be really big.

Every spec has access to the Feral abilities [\[Bash\]](#) in Bear Form and [\[Skull Bash\]](#)/[\[Skull Bash\]](#) in either form all on a minute cooldown. If you see a Druid go into Bear Form and coming toward you, there is a big chance that you are going to either get stunned or interrupted.

Finally, each spec has access to [\[Innervate\]](#) which can be used on the Druid or one of the Druid's allies. While the Feral's Innervate is significantly weaker, keeping track of and dispelling any Innervate is extremely important.

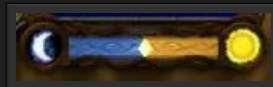




BALANCE DRUIDS

Iconic to the Balance tree, **[Moonkin Form]** provides the Druid with a flat 15% damage reduction and 5% spell haste for themselves and allies. Moonkins can also shift in and out of Moonkin Form to remove all snares and roots.

Balance Druids also use an alternate resource bar that measures Solar, representing Arcane damage, or Lunar, representing Nature damage, energy. Essentially, Druids will use either Arcane or Nature spells to push them into an **[Eclipse (Lunar)]** or **[Eclipse (Solar)]** state, increasing the damage of that spell school by 25%.




Solar or Lunar Power is gained much faster through hard casted spells, such as Wrath, Starfire, or the specialization talent **[Starsurge]**. Said simply, the last thing you want is a Moonkin sitting back and hard casting spells, pushing them into an Eclipse state, causing those hard hitting abilities to now hit 25% harder.


Starsurge can be made instant cast through **[Shooting Stars]**.

[Typhoon] is an ability to watch out for on maps such as Blade's Edge Arena or Dalaran Sewers. Standing next to a ledge will quickly be taken advantage of by an enemy Moonkin.

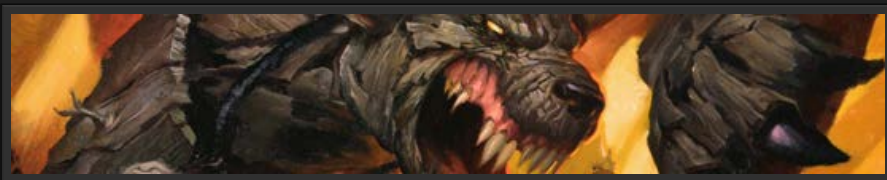
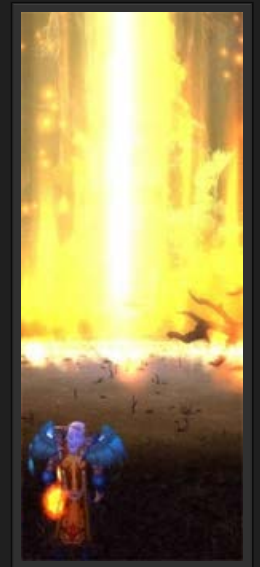
Balance Druids can summon 3 Treants with **[Force of Nature]**. These allies last for 30 seconds and, combined, can hit hard. The treants are not terribly difficult to kill, but they can also be easily controlled by an AoE Fear or root.

When the treants die, or when **[Wild Mushroom]** is triggered, an AoE falls on the ground slowing enemy movement speed by 25% through the **[Fungal Growth]** talent.

[Starfall] can be cast every minute with  **[Glyph of Starfall]**. While active, it does lots of damage to all targets in the area around the Moonkin. However, if the Moonkin loses control of his character in any way, the Starfall effect is suppressed. Because of this, it's important to try and CC the Moonkin as soon as possible once Starfall happens.

The last major ability to look out for is **[Solar Beam]**. With  **[Glyph of Solar Beam]**, Solar Beam places a large beam of light in an area that silences all enemies within it for 15 seconds. Because players can roam freely in the beam and move out of it, typically a Druid will first cast Entangling Roots to lock the target in place, then cast Solar Beam.

Healers should watch out for this especially and dispel any roots instantly as to not get trapped in CC for an extended period of time. A Moonkin that traps you in a Solar Beam will be waiting to make your day worse with a Cyclone following the silence.



FERAL COMBAT DRUIDS

Feral Druids utilize both the Cat Form and Bear Form to do damage and perform defensive roles.



Feral Druids move naturally faster than every other class due to **[Feral Swiftiness]** and well as their PVP set bonus.

Feral Swiftiness also allows Ferals to remove roots from themselves when they use **[Dash]** or **[Stampeding Roar]**/**[Stampeding Roar]**. Glyphed, Dash has a 2.4 minute cooldown, and Stampeding Roar a 2 minute cooldown. This ability only removes existing roots and snares once, so the Feral is susceptible to roots and slows immediately after using Dash or Stampeding Roar.

With **[Brutal Impact]**, Bash and Pounce last longer, but most importantly, the cooldown for Skull Bash is reduced – making the ability a 10 second cooldown. Skull Bash is a unique ability because it has a larger range than other


melee interrupts. Because of this, standing further from the Feral while casting is a smart idea. Skull Bash can also be used as a gap closer.

An important proc to look out for, **[Predatory Strikes]** gives a chance for the druid to proc **[Predator's Swifttness]** every time the Druid uses a finisher. This proc allows the Druid to instantly cast one ability, such as Cyclone, Entangling Roots, or Healing Touch. It's extremely important to watch for this proc to expect incoming CC. Even more, dispelling this proc quickly will completely shut down the Feral's day.

Because the Feral's biggest basic attack, **[Shred]**, requires the Feral to attack from behind, hiding your back from the Feral is one of the greatest ways to avoid lot's of damage.

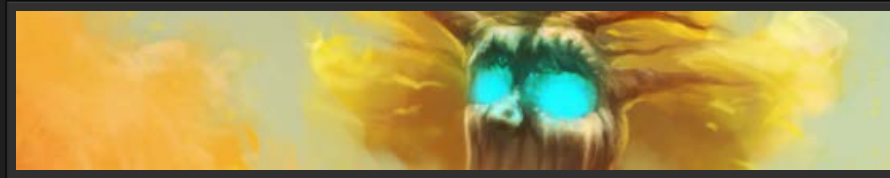
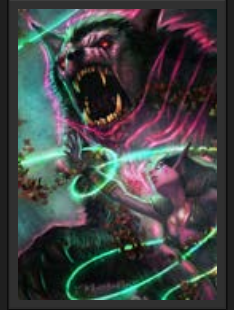
Bear Form and Cat Form have their own versions of Feral Charge. **[Feral Charge]** for Bear Form immobilizes the target for 4 seconds and is on a 15 second cooldown. **[Feral Charge]** for Cat Form dazes the target for 3 seconds, but can also be used to jump up to higher levels of ground. Also, the talent **[Stampede]** allows the use of Ravage after Feral Charge – Cat is used. This ability hits very hard, but the proc only lasts for 10 seconds.

Every 30 seconds, the Feral can use **[Tiger's Fury]**. Along with **[King of the Jungle]**, Tiger's Fury instantly gives the Feral 60 energy. This ability is typically used to allow the Feral to setup a lot of damage.

The other major damage cooldown to lookout for is **[Berserk]**. This ability lasts for 25 seconds with  **[Glyph of Berserk]**, and can be devastating while active. Doing everything to control the Druid during Berserk is ideal.


Defensively, Ferals also get **[Survival Instincts]** reducing all damage by 50%. This is a huge defensive cooldown to want to force the Druid to use early.

Going into Bear Form in general is also a very defensive move for a Feral Druid. Many Ferals pick up **[Natural Reaction]** on top of all the defenses Bear Form has. Bear Form also has a heal called **[Frenzied Regeneration]**. This ability converts Rage into healing. Because this ability eats a lot of Rage, preventing the Druid from attacking, and gaining additional Rage, will starve him the Rage needed to fully benefit from this heal.



RESTORATION DRUIDS

Restoration Druids heal through abilities that heal over time.

The specialization ability, **[Swiftmend]**, is a powerful ability that instantly heals a target that has Rejuvenation or Regrowth on the target.  **[Glyph of Swiftmend]** causes the ability to no longer consume the heals, however, Rejuvenation or Regrowth must still be present. This can be taken advantage of by offensively dispelling the Druid before they can use Swiftmend.

Another specialization ability Restoration Druids get is **[Disentanglement]**, allowing them to shift out of all snares and roots.

[Nature's Swifttness] allows the Druid's next ability to be instant cast, such as Cyclone or Entangling Roots. However, if the cast is a heal, the heal is increased by 50%.

As one of the few ways to heal multiple targets, **[Wild Growth]** is a heal that affects all the member's of the Druid's party.

Finally, the unique form for Restoration Druids is **[Tree of Life]**. This shapeshift ability turns the Druid into a giant tree for 25 seconds, enhancing the Druid's healing as some abilities. While this form is active, Lifebloom can be used on multiple targets, Regrowth and Entangling Roots is instant, and Wrath can be cast 50% faster.

Controlling the Druid during this form is the best strategy.

Overall, Restoration Druids are very straight forward. When focused, they can take lots of damage and be in trouble. They rely a lot on casting heals, as well as being able to offensively cast Cyclone or Entangling Roots. Also, because Lifebloom can now only be on one target, making hard swaps to different targets puts a huge strain on an enemy Restoration Druid because he has to rebuild all the HoTs on the new target to get heals going.

Training a Restoration Druid removes all their ability to be offensive with CC and makes it difficult to heal outside of HoTs.

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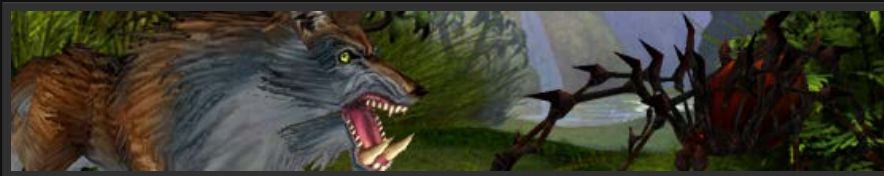
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In this article, I'm going to address the important cooldowns to be looking out for when playing against the Hunter class.



PETS

The icon of the Hunter class is the use of a variety of pets that have a huge range of abilities. Often, many players don't realize exactly what these pets do or how they assist the Hunter.

First of all, hunters have a choice in a class of pet – Cunning, Ferocity, or Tenacity. Ferocity pets are focused on damage, and Tenacity pets make great tanks. Cunning pets, however, power in their useful abilities thus making them perfect for PVP and the typical pick for a PVP Hunter. Some Hunters also use Tenacity pets.

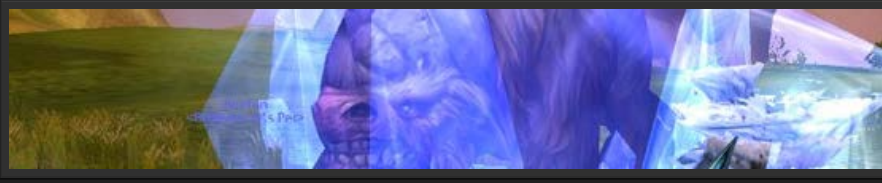


It's important to note that each pet class has their own unique pet talent tree that give the pet various stats and some abilities.

Examples of Cunning pets are bats, birds, dragonhawks, monkeys, nether rays, ravagers, serpents, spiders and sporebats.

With Tenacity Pets, they have access to [\[Roar of Sacrifice\]](#) on a minute cooldown that works like Soul Link or Hand of Sacrifice.

Another roar these pets have is [\[Roar of Recovery\]](#). This ability gives the hunter increased focused regeneration, thus allowing him to use it for increased burst. This is one of the longer cooldowns to look out for if you want to avoid lots of damage.



TRAPS

Another icon of the Hunter class is the use of various traps.

Hunters have access to 5 traps: Explosive Trap, Immolation Trap, Freezing Trap, Ice Trap, and Snake Trap. Explosive and Immolation share the same cooldown, and Freezing and Ice share their own cooldown as well. Explosive and Immolation Traps are really not that important in PVP, but let's cover the rest.

[Freezing Trap] and **[Ice Trap]** often get confused with each other so let's make it clear. **FREEZING Trap FREEZES the target in a CC** while **ICE Trap puts a layer of ICE on the ground**.

Because these abilities share cooldowns, typically hunters will want to use spell. Normally a hunter lays down traps right where they are standing, but Trap Launcher allows them to project the trap to their desired target.

Now Traps take a second or so to trigger right after they are placed, so to ensure that their Target is going to be on the Freezing Trap to trigger it, they use **[Scatter Shot]** to disorient the target in place – right on top of the trap. If done correctly, once the Scatter Shot ends, the target will be immediately put into the Freezing Trap.



This is where you want to look out and prevent this CC chain. First of all, both Scatter shot and Freezing Trap are broken on damage, so using abilities like **[Hand of Sacrifice]**, **[Shadow Word: Death]**, or **[Unholy Frenzy]** will break these abilities.

Now this isn't up to the healer to prevent either. Any team mate can attempt to stand on the Freezing Trap and try to trigger themselves, eating it for the healer. Also, stunning or CCing the Hunter during the scatter, before he lays the trap, will allow your healer to run and escape.

Because this CC chain can happen every 30 seconds and is extremely deadly, it's important for everyone on a team to look out for and prevent this.

Finally, it's important to note that when **[Ice Trap]** or **[Snake Trap]** are triggered, **[Entrapment]** creates a root for 4 seconds. This root cannot be broken, but again remember that it's only when the trap is initially triggered, and not any time after.

ASPECTS

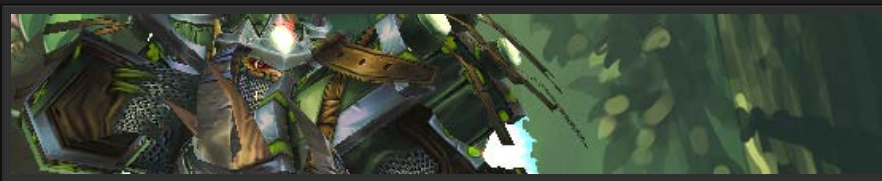
Hunter's use a system called Aspects. In PVP, they jump in and out of **[Aspect of the Hawk]** and **[Aspect of the Fox]**. This is something I notice a lot of players don't recognize nor know the importance of being in either aspect.

Aspect of the Fox was added in Cataclysm to allow the Hunter to channel **[Steady Shot]** or **[Cobra Shot]** while running. This may sound awesome, but actually, using this aspect comes at a price for the Hunter.

Alternatively, the Hunter can use Aspect of the Hawk to increase his attack power by a significant amount.

The difference is that a Hunter will only go into Aspect of the Fox when he needs to be mobile, like running from enemies. Otherwise, if a Hunter can stand out in the open and his target is foolish enough to stay out in the open with him, the Hunter will enjoy the increased damage on all his shots and really lay into his target.

This is why it's important to not let a Hunter plant his feet and reap the benefits of not only having 100% uptime on his target, but also enjoying his big damage.



HUNTER ABILITIES


Hunters have a few defensive abilities to consider.


First off is **[Feign Death]**. This ability can be used to avoid spells while they are being cast, to drop enemy targets, and to even drop focus targets. While many joke about this ability, many a time I've seen people actually fall for a very low HP Hunter using Feign Death and looking like they are dead. It is always

beneficial to check 100% if a Hunter died, and in arena, you can always look at the top of your screen to see how many players are remaining.

The big defensive cooldown for Hunters to use is **[Deterrence]**. During this time, the Hunter deflects all damage incoming, however, doesn't prevent existing damage from DoTs. This means that if you believe a Hunter is going to use Deterrence, you have the option to refresh your DoTs on him to continue doing damage through the Deterrence.

Also, a Hunter must have a weapon equipped in order to use Deterrence, so using **[Disarm]** or **[Dismantle]** as you are going for the kill completely prevents the Hunter from using this ability.

[Disengage] is another ability that Hunters use defensively to create distance. There are also lots of things that affect his base ability such as **[Posthaste]**, **[Survival Tactics]**, and  **[Glyph of Disengage]**.

Finally, Hunters can use **[Concussive Shot]** frequently to slow targets, along with  **[Glyph of Concussive Shot]** that works like Judgement of Justice.

Offensively, a huge cooldown that Hunters use is **[Rapid Fire]** modified by **[Posthaste]** and **[Rapid Recuperation]**. A Hunter will use this when he can get his biggest burst on the target, so you really want to watch out for this ability and either line of sight or control the Hunter.

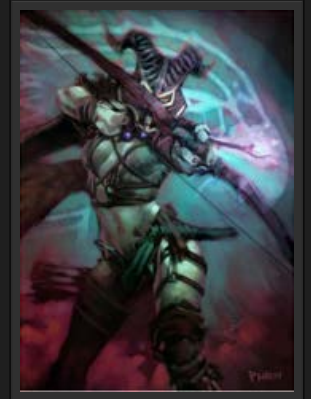
On top of this, Hunter's can use **[Readiness]** to gain back all of their cooldowns, including all shots, traps, and huge cooldown abilities. A Hunter can use this in a variety of ways. Straightforward, a Hunter can refresh all his damage cooldowns during his big burst. Often, Hunters will also use Readiness to refresh their crowd control abilities like Silencing Shot or Freezing Trap to lock out a healer for a long enough time to create a kill. Finally, a Hunter that is panicking a lot can use this to refresh Deterrence to try and live longer.

This last scenario is best because you force the Readiness on your own terms rather than allowing the Hunter to refresh his cooldowns when he wants them aggressively.

To add more to the offensive and control capabilities of a Hunter, **[Silencing Shot]** is on a 20 second cooldown and silences for 3 seconds.

Druids, namely Feral, and Shamans running in Ghost Wolf have to look out for **[Scare Beast]** which is a fear castable only on beasts.

Finally, Hunters can use **[Tranquillizing Shot]** to remove spells as well as Enrage effects.



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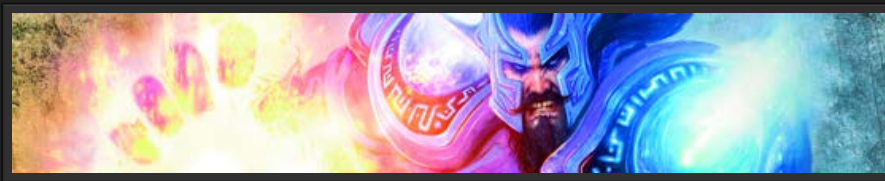
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While it's important to know your class in and out, often you don't have the opportunity to have that same level of understanding of other classes. Not correctly knowing how enemy abilities work or when they will be used against you only puts you at a disadvantage.

In this article, I'm going to address the important cooldowns and abilities to be looking out for when playing against the Mage class. We will be covering all three specs of the Mage class: Arcane, Fire, and Frost.



MAGE ABILITIES

Mages are the most fragile class in the game. To compensate, Mages are given various abilities to protect themselves, to get away, and to control enemies.

Armors

Mages have access to three different armors that can only be used one at a time. These armors are Mage Armor, Molten Armor, and Frost Armor.

[Mage Armor] is the armor that most Mages enjoy being in, due to the fact that the armor increases spell resistance as well as reducing the duration of harmful spells on them. However, the main feature is that the Mage is granted passive mana – which over the course of a long fight, Mages will use a lot of.

[Molten Armor] is an armor that is not commonly used over a fight, but will be swapped to when the Mage wants some extra crit to do more damage.

[Frost Armor] is the armor Mages swap to when going against melee targets, reducing 15% of physical damage and slowing enemy movement and attack speed.

Shields and Absorbs

Mages also have cooldowns that can absorb damage.

One common spell is **[Mana Shield]** which absorbs a certain amount of damage and can be used every minute lasting us to 12 seconds. This ability can be dispelled.

For spells, Mages can protect themselves from Fire, Frost, and Arcane damage through **[Mage Ward]**. This ability can also be dispelled.

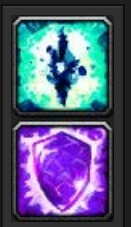
It's important to note that when going against an Arcane Mage, **[Incanter's Absorption]** will increase the damage of the Mage by 20% of how much damage the shields absorbed.

Frost Mages also have a talent which gives them another shield: **[Ice Barrier]**. We'll talk more about this in the Frost section.

Defensive Cooldowns

Mages also have a few other tricks up their sleeve to survive.

Usable every 15 seconds, a Mage can use **[Blink]** to instantly teleport 20-25 yards in the direction they are facing. This ability can be used while the Mage is stunned or rooted to remove the CC.





Some Mages will be extremely tricky with this ability but running in one direction, and quickly turning their mouse and Blink right through and behind you. Some players lose track of the Mage when they use this trick, so always be sure to check your back if you lose the Mage after a Blink.

However, because Mages can only Blink in the direction they are facing, this information can be used to your advantage. Knowing that a Mage can Blink out of a stun, you can time the stun while the Mage is facing a wall. Even if the Mage gets out of the stun, he will still be right next to you and won't be able to escape.

Every 25 seconds, Mages can use **[Frost Nova]** to root all enemies to the ground.

A large defensive cooldown Mages have is **[Ice Block]**. This ability removes all harmful effects on the Mage and the Mage becomes invulnerable to harmful abilities and attacks. The Mage can still receive healing while in the Ice Block, and the only way to remove the effect is through **[Mass Dispel]** and **[Shattering Throw]**.

Although this is a 5 minute cooldown, Frost Mages can use **[Cold Snap]** to have Ice Block become available. However, when the Mage first uses Ice Block, a debuff called **[Hypothermia]** is applied. This prevents the Mage from using Ice Block back to back. If you're going for a kill on the Mage, a great time to do it would be while the Mage still has Hypothermia.

In a sort of "defensive" cooldown, Mages can quickly regenerate their Health and Mana by using **[Evocation]**. This ability must be channeled, so it can be interrupted. Most Mages will try to run away and hide behind line of sight before using this ability, but they still may use it while in combat.

Control

Mages also have other forms of control that is important to look out for.

[Polymorph] is the most common. This basic crowd control has no cooldown and will be used most often by the Mage. Any damage will break the Polymorph effect, so trying to time abilities like **[Shadow Word: Death]**, **[Hand of Sacrifice]**, or **[Unholy Frenzy]** when you are going to get hit by long CC chains will help you in the worst of scenarios.

An extremely dangerous cooldown added in Cataclysm, **[Ring of Frost]** is a spell that freezes any opponent that crosses it's ring. However, most players still don't understand fully how this ability works.

A ring is placed on the ground. **For the next three seconds, while the ring is still turning, no one will be frozen. It is best to use this short amount of time to escape and get away from the Ring of Frost.**

After three seconds, when the ring stops moving, anyone caught on the ring will be immediately frozen.



Being **INSIDE** the central area of the ring will not freeze you. The **ONLY** time you will be frozen is if you touch or try to cross any part of the **RING** visual. To help visualize this, all areas in green on this image is safe for you to stay in. However, once you touch or cross the red area, you will become frozen.

The ring effect lasts for 12 seconds.



Other Cooldowns

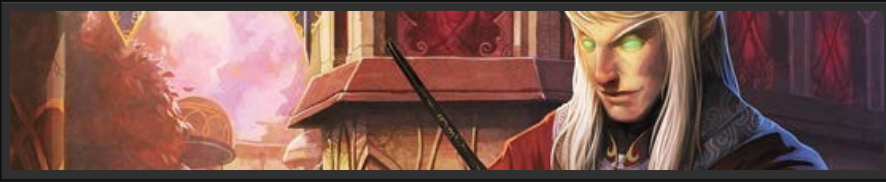
At the start of most arena matches, Mages will use **[Invisibility]** to hide their movement and position themselves to have a strong start. While only other invisible targets can see the Mage, hitting the Mage with an AoE effect will knock the Mage out of invisibility.

[Mirror Image] is another damage/utility cooldown.

However, in both the case of Invisibility and Mirror Images, the important thing to note is that your target and focus target will be removed if it is the Mage. This becomes important to then refocus the Mage quickly. However, using macros that target enemy arena frames become much more reliable in cases like this.

Finally, Mages can interrupt and silence casts with **[Counterspell]**. Normally this ability just interrupts for 7

seconds, however, with **[Improved Counterspell]**, this ability can be used as a 4 second blanket silence. 24 second cooldown.



ARCANE MAGES

Arcane is all about hard hitting abilities. It's important to note that the multiple buffs Arcane Mages can get have the ability to stack together and cause extreme damage.

Arcane burst will be surrounded by this single ability: **[Arcane Power]**. For 15 seconds, the Mage does 20% more damage on all abilities. This ability has a 1 min 30 second cooldown through other talents.


Arcane power is typically followed up with **[Presence of Mind]** to instantly cast a hard hitting ability. However, it's good to note that Presence of Mind can be used to instantly cast a Polymorph as well.

[Arcane Potency] causes the next two spell casts of the Mage, after receiving Clearcasting or using Presence of Mind, to have 15% increased critical chance.

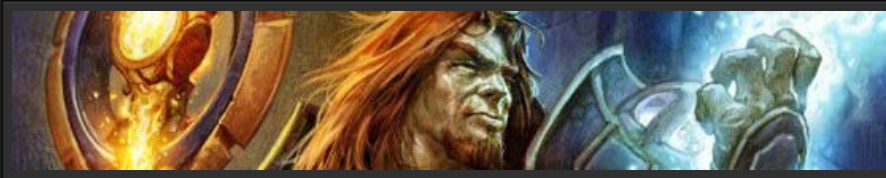
[Slow] is another annoying spell to deal with, as it will affect both casters and melee. This ability is spammable and can also be used as dispel protection for abilities like Polymorph.

Other things to note about the spec is that **[Improved Polymorph]** still stun the target if polymorph is broken on damage. This can add on as additional CC or be a backfire to breaking the polymorph via Shadow Word: Death or Hand of Sacrifice.

We talked a bit about Incanter's Absorption.

[Improved Mana Gem] gives the Mage a damage boost when he uses his  **[Mana Gem]**.

And finally, Arcane Mage's Invisibility can be instant with **[Prismatic Cloak]**.



FIRE MAGES

The fire tree is all about burning the target down with hard hitting abilities that cause stuns, slows, and damage over time effects.

[Blast Wave] is on a 15 second cooldown and slows all targets affected by it by 70% for 3 seconds.

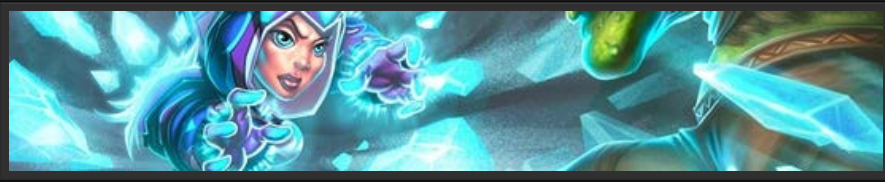
Fire Mages can also move very quickly though **[Blazing Speed]**. While this talent has a random change to proc off physical damage, **[Molten Shields]** works off casters once Mage Ward is used up. Mages can always cast Scorch on the move via **[Firestarter]**.

[Impact] is an important proc to keep track off, for all specs of Mages. This proc allows the Mage's next Fire Blast to stun the target for 2 seconds. This can be used as an interrupt on casters, or simply as a stun to get away or control a target.

Another ability to look out for is **[Dragon's Breath]**, usable every 17 seconds with it's glyph. This ability will disorient all targets in the breath for 5 seconds. Since this ability is casted in a cone, noting when a Fire Mage is running into a group is a sure sign that a Dragon's Breath is coming.

The proc **[Hot Streak]** is another burst of damage to look out for which allows the Mage to instantly cast a Pyroblast.

Finally, when the Fire Mage's health goes to zero, he will be instantly put to 40% health from the **[Cauterize]** talent.



FROST MAGES

Frost Mages are the most common spec in Arena and Rated Battlegrounds. This class brings more control, but has extremely high burst potential.

For this you have to understand **[Shatter]**. Any target that is rooted to the ground by Frost Nova or frozen by Deep Freeze or other similar abilities are considered to be frozen. The Mage essentially has near 100% chance to crit on these targets, with an additional 20% damage increase from Frostbolt.

Mages will often "Shatter Combo" by freezing the target, then hard casting a Frostbolt. Normally the Frostbolt will break roots from Frost Nova, so right as the Frostbolt finishes its cast, the Mage instantly uses Ice Lance or Fire Blast. However, the game still considers the target to be frozen when the Ice Lance or Fire Blast is cast. This results in two hard hitting spells that crit at the same time, resulting in a huge burst that is devastating to someone who isn't prepared for that much damage all at once.

Of course, the Frost Mage's **[Summon Water Elemental]** helps in setting up the Shatter combo with its **[Freeze]** ability. This can be used every 25 seconds.

Should you kill a Water Elemental? In many cases, no. Upon summoning the elemental, there is a 3 minute cooldown. In arena, there is a 1 minute prep time, so that gives you less than 2 minutes to kill the elemental before the cooldown is ready. Even so, Cold Snap can instantly bring the Water Elemental back.

Now with that said, you can interrupt and control the Water Elemental to prevent its Freeze. **[Banish]** and **[Bind Elemental]** both work, as well as other CC's.

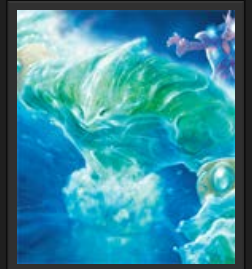
[Deep Freeze] is an instant ability that stuns and freezes the target for 5 seconds. This ability can only be used on frozen targets.

However, there is a workaround to this. **[Fingers of Frost]** is a proc that allows Deep Freeze to be casted on a target that isn't frozen, and causes Ice Lance to essentially take advantage of Shatter. This is a huge proc to look out for!

Another big burst ability to look out for is **[Icy Veins]**, giving 20% more spell haste.

[Ice Barrier] is an additional shield that Frost Mages get that absorbs a large amount of damage. This ability can be dispelled. However, if the shield is broken, **[Shattered Barrier]** roots all targets in the area for 4 seconds.

Finally, **[Cold Snap]** instantly refreshes all the cooldowns of the Mage's Frost abilities such as Deep Freeze and Ice Block.



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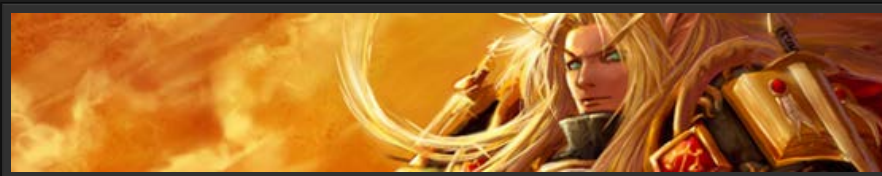
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In this article, I'm going to address the important cooldowns to be looking out for when playing against the Paladin class. Because both the Holy and Retribution tree are represented in arenas, I will cover each in their own section.



PALADIN ABILITIES

First I'd like to go over some of the basic abilities and mechanics of the Paladin class, because they extend over the two specs.



Holy Power

Paladins have a second resource mechanic called [\[Holy Power\]](#) that builds up to 3 times. Various abilities generate Holy Power so that bigger abilities can be used. Unfortunately, you cannot see an enemy Paladin's Holy Power.

Hand Of

Paladins have various abilities that start with the prefix "Hand of". This is important to note because a character can have only one of these abilities active on themselves at a time.

One of the most common of these abilities is [\[Hand of Freedom\]](#). While active, the target has all movement impairing effects removed and is immune to these effects. This is either used as a way to stay offensive on a target or to get out of a tough situation. Hand of Freedom can be dispelled or stolen. [\[Acts of Sacrifice\]](#) and [\[Guardian's Favor\]](#) reduces the cooldown and extends the duration of this ability.

Because Paladins are so susceptible to CC, [\[Hand of Sacrifice\]](#) is a great ability to not only take damage from a team mate, but the damage taken can be used intentionally to break CCs on themselves. This is a cooldown to look out for when wanting to control a paladin and keep them locked in that CC.

Finally, [\[Hand of Protection\]](#) is a huge cooldown that erases all negative physical abilities and protects the target for 10 seconds from physical attacks. Spells still go through this bubble, however, and the ability itself can be dispelled. This ability causes Forbearance.

On a side note, paladins can use their taunt [\[Hand of Reckoning\]](#) in PVP as an interesting way to keep enemies in combat at a 30 yard range.

Forbearance

The debuff [\[Forbearance\]](#) is applied on the target who receives one of the big Paladin saving abilities, and lasts for 1 minute.

The ability we just mentioned above, Hand of Protection, causes Forbearance.

Similar to Hand of Protection, [\[Divine Shield\]](#) is a huge ability that can only be cast on the Paladin



Forbearance
Unlimited range
Cannot be affected by Divine Shield, Hand of Protection or Lay on Hands for 1 min.

himself. It applies Forbearance and removes all negative effects and causes the paladin to be immune to all physical and magical attacks and effects for the duration. The only way to remove this is with the Priest ability [Mass Dispel] or the Warrior ability [Shattering Throw]. This is the Paladin's trump card that can easily be countered by these two abilities if precasted.

Finally, while this isn't useable in Arena, [Lay on Hands] is a 10 minute cooldown that can be used in Rated Battlegrounds. This pretty much completely heals the target 100%, but also applies Forbearance. Since this is such a long cooldown and will only be seen once or twice in a match, it's important to announce the use of this ability to your RBG team mates when an enemy Paladin uses it.

Now, while this ability doesn't cause Forbearance, I want to couple it with the rest because it's a defensive cooldown that fits well here. [Divine Protection] is useable every minute and causes the Paladin to take 20% less damage.

Seals

There are a variety of Seals that a Paladin can choose that will give the paladin various effects depending on the Seal. A Paladin can easily swap Seals based on their need, so it's good to recognize what Seal they are using and what they are trying to do. Unleashing a Seal's secondary ability is done through [Judgement].

[Seal of Insight] is the typical Seal that a Holy Paladin will use along with [Glyph of Seal of Insight]. While the Glyph provides 5% healing while the Seal is active, the Paladin can heal 4% of his base mana every time he melees a target. If you notice a paladin running out of mana, be sure not to leave a pet on the Paladin and provide him with an easy means of gaining back mana.



[Seal of Righteousness] and [Seal of Truth] are the common Retribution Seals, but typically the later.

And lastly, [Seal of Justice] is used in a rare occasion to prevent enemies from running more than normal run speed, but is still very important to look out for if you're trying to escape.

Crowd Controls

[Hammer of Justice] is the stun available to all Paladins that lasts for 6 seconds on a minute cooldown. While it may be less predictable from a Ret Paladin, with the short range, Holy Paladins have to run in close to melee range to use this ability. Because of this, you can watch out for the Paladin's movements trying to run it, or just not stand near a Paladin when you believe his Hammer of Justice is about to be ready. The debuff, however, is magical and can be dispelled.

Specifically for Warlock and Death Knight pets, as well as Death Knights using Lichborne, Paladins can use [Turn Evil] instantly with [Glyph of Turn Evil] to Fear any Undead or Demon. [Holy Wrath] is another ability with a similar effect.

Offensive Abilities

[Inquisition] eats Holy Power in order to gain a 30% Holy Damage bonus for the duration based on the number of Holy Power Charges consumed.



Another cooldown used for burst healing or damage is [Avenging Wrath]. This animation is extremely obvious and gives the Paladin giant, gold wings. This ability can be dispelled or stolen.

Paladins also have an execute ability when their target is at or below 20% health. [Hammer of Wrath] can be used by both Holy and Retribution Paladins, and both hurt significantly.

[Rebuke] is a baseline kick ability. While it's more difficult for a Holy Paladin to get into melee range to use this ability, it is good to remember that they can interrupt just like a Retribution Paladin can.

Miscellaneous Abilities

Another cooldown to look out for is [Divine Plea]. This grants the Paladin mana while active, at the cost of halving their healing capabilities. This can mean one of two things. One, you can try and go out of your way and dispel Divine Plea (although most Paladins will be line of sight when they use it) or you can take advantage of the fact that they can't heal well and rush your cooldowns into him or another one of his team mates. The Paladin will definitely be forced to remove his Divine Plea when faced in this situation, and if not, come out and heal in the open.

Finally, we have the last baseline cooldown given to Paladins. [Guardian of Ancient Kings] summons a guardian to aid the Paladin dependent on what the Paladin's spec is. The guardian cannot be targeted nor controlled.

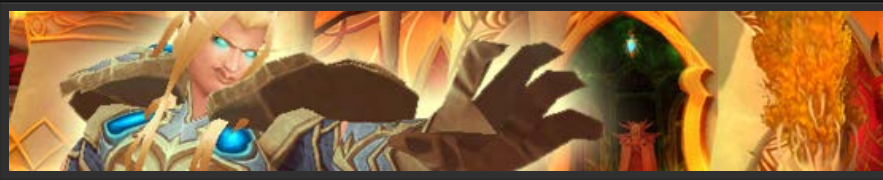
Holy:

Summons the Ancient Healer, who uses the [Light of the Ancient Kings] spell to also heal your target. This basically mimics the casting Paladin's heal on the same target. However, if you prevent the Paladin from healing, the guardian won't heal either, so you can make this cooldown into a waste by stopping the Paladin's healing.

Retribution:

Summons the Ancient Crusader, which causes the paladin to gain [Ancient Power] each time the Guardian attacks. When the guardian is defeated or flees from battle, [Ancient Fury] is released, causing damage split between all targets in range.





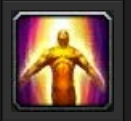
HOLY PALADINS

Holy Paladins are the healers with huge heals, but at a cost. Most of the Paladin abilities must be casted which make them extremely vulnerable in PVP to interrupts and silences.

The specialization heal given to Holy Paladins is **[Holy Shock]** which is a big heal with no cast time. This ability also generates Holy Power and gives various other effects through **[Infusion of Light]** and **[Daybreak]**.

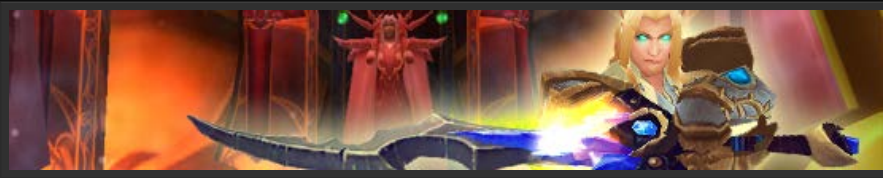
[Divine Favor] is a straight up healing boost on a 3 minute cooldown, increasing the haste and critical chance of the paladin by 20% for 20 seconds.

With heals that need time to cast and no AoE healing ability, Holy Paladins have to rely on **[Beacon of Light]** to be able to heal two targets at once. The Paladin has to buff one of his team mates with the Beacon so it's obvious who is receiving the extra heals. This buff can be dispelled, and doing so may very easily cripple the Paladin's capability if you constantly swap or have splash damage. If you're constantly pressuring the Paladin while dispelling Beacon of Light, he won't have the globals to keep refreshing it and will definitely fall behind.



One way a Holy Paladin can protect himself from silences and interrupts is by having Concentration Aura active and using **[Aura Mastery]**. This effect lasts for 6 seconds, and a Paladin will only use this ability when he feels he absolutely needs to get heals off.

Finally, while a baseline ability, **[Holy Radiance]** can heal the Paladin's team mates near him, however, with **[Speed of Light]** the Paladin can use this ability every 30 seconds and have a mini sprint.



RETRIBUTION PALADINS

Ret Paladins are a hard hitting melee class that have access to a lot of the defensive and healing capabilities that Holy Paladins do as well. This biggest thing to look out for with a Retribution Paladin is his use of cooldowns, and when his cooldowns are coming up.

Only available to Retribution Paladins, **[Repentance]** is a mid range CC ability that is instant on a minute cooldown. This is typically used on healers, so stay out of 20 yards to make it more difficult for the Paladin to get this CC off.

[Crusader Strike] is their base ability that generates Holy Power, but it shares the same cooldown with **[Divine Storm]**. Most Rets don't pick up Divine Storm.

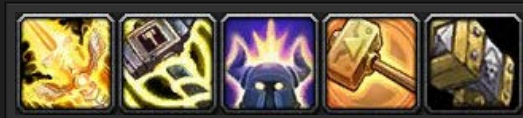
However, with Crusader Strike, **[Zealotry]** is a huge cooldown that gives 3 charges of Holy Power instantly, allowing the use of huge abilities. This cooldown comes every 2 minutes and lasts for 20 seconds.

[Templar's Verdict] is the Retribution specialization ability that takes advantage of this, doing more damage for every Holy Power consumed.

The Paladin could also use these charges for **[Word of Glory]**. The reason that Rets make such good healers is through this ability as well as the talent **[Selfless Healer]**. Note that the increased healing only works on the Paladin's team mates, and not the Paladin himself.

Also, we can't forget **[Avenging Wrath]**. With the talent **[Sanctified Wrath]** the Paladin can use Hammer of Wrath up to 3 times during the Avenging Wrath.

It's extremely important to watch out for the above named abilities because these are what take Ret Paladins into God mode. Doing things like controlling the Paladin through CCs or disarms, or completely outranging him will improve your survival during the burst.



As a random proc, **[The Art of War]** gives a chance for the Paladin to have an instant Exorcism.

[Acts of Sacrifice] takes the Cleanse ability and allows the Ret to also remove one movement impairing effect only on himself.

Finally, as a pseudo Cheat Death, Retribution Paladins have an ability called [\[Sacred Shield\]](#) that procs once the Paladin dips under 30% health. This effect cannot be dispelled so you either have to try and burn through the shield, or swap off of him for 15 seconds.

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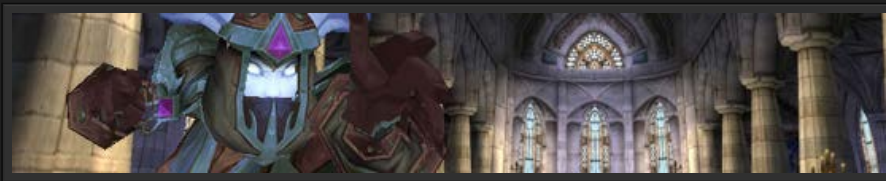
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While it's important to know your class in and out, often you don't have the opportunity to have that same level of understanding of other classes. Not correctly knowing how enemy abilities work or when they will be used against you only puts you at a disadvantage.

In this article, I'm going to address the important cooldowns and abilities to be looking out for when playing against the Priest class.

Because there are two specs of Priest that are represented in arena, Discipline and Shadow, I will split this article into parts to cover each.



DISCIPLINE PRIESTS

As the PVP healing spec, Discipline Priests are unique to other healing classes because of their large range of abilities and capability of playing very aggressively. The spec revolves a lot on shields and damage absorption, so let's get right into it.

The main shield that Priests cast is **[Power Word: Shield]**. This ability absorbs a huge amount of damage, and prevents a lot of abilities that "proc on damage" from happening. Once Power Word: Shield is applied, a debuff is also applied called **[Weakened Soul]** preventing any other Power Word: Shield to be cast on the target for its duration.

This is something to look out for for your advantage, and being able to predict when PW:S will be up or not. Note that also this shield can be dispelled, which is huge considering how much damage it absorbs.

[Divine Aegis] is another shield that a Priest can apply passively through critical heals.

On the Priest himself, there is a passive ability that triggers, called **[Focused Will]** that can reduce up to 20% of the damage received by the Priest every time he is critically hit.

The last shield is a huge cooldown that affects multiple targets. Similar to Anti-Magic Zone, **[Power Word: Barrier]** creates a huge sphere on the ground absorbing 25% of damage and preventing spell knock-backs (but not interrupts and silences).



Another huge cooldown to look out for is **[Pain Suppression]**. This is the trump card for Discipline Priests to use to keep people alive. Once this ability is forced, it will be much easier to kill the Priest or his team mates. Typically, the Priest becomes extremely vulnerable to a kill after Pain Suppression is used, and is a great choice to swap to.

Pain Suppression can also be used while the Priest is stunned with **[Glyph of Desperation]**.

As the central heal of the Discipline Tree, **[Penance]** has a lot of talents that effect it. This 12 second cooldown can be reduced to 10 seconds with **[Glyph of Penance]**. **[Grace]**, **[Inspiration]**, and **[Renewed Hope]** make Penance even more powerful.

3 ticks of Penance come out every cast, and the Priest has to channel the ability. This may seem like a great ability to want to interrupt or kick, but often



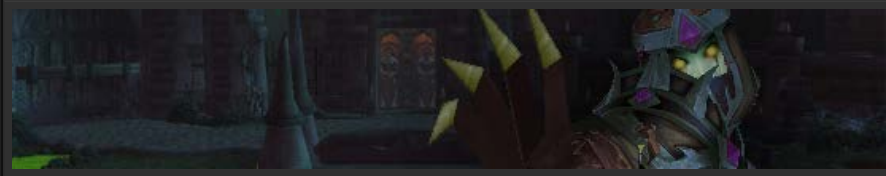
Priests are aware of this and will often only use one or two ticks and break the cast early if they feel any risk. Since Penance can be cast every 10 seconds, you can get a good idea to preemptively prepare to interrupt the Priest.

Priests have two forms of "armor" that they apply to themselves, **[Inner Fire]** to increase armor and spell damage and **[Inner Will]** to reduce mana cost and increase movement speed.

[Inner Focus] is a huge spell to look out for, and has an incredibly obvious animation. Not only does this ability give the Priest a mana-free heal with increases critical chance, but with the talent **[Strength of Soul]** the Priest also becomes immune to interrupts, silences, as well as dispels for 5 seconds, on a 45 second cooldown.

Discipline Priests can use **[Power Infusion]** on themselves or their partners to reduce cast time by 20%, as well as mana cost. This is a huge ability to look out for when set on top of burst. Priests will typically want to use it offensively on a friendly class like Mage, but can use this defensively for needed healing.

Finally, **[Desperate Prayer]** can be picked up from the Holy Tree and used as a big heal in a tight spot.



SHADOW PRIESTS

Similar to Warlocks with shadow Damage over Time abilities, Shadow Priests also provide a lot of hard hitting direct abilities.

To start off with, Shadow Priests can't be Shadow Priests without **[Shadowform]**. While giving various benefits, it's important to note that while the Priest can't use Holy spells in this form, they can still use every Discipline ability available to them. This includes stuff like **[Power Word: Shield]** and **[Dispel Magic]**.


Shadow Priests have a power up mechanic in the form of **[Shadow Orbs]** which is also their Mastery (**[Shadow Orb Power]**). So as it comes down to it, **[Shadow Word: Pain]** and **[Mind Flay]** generate Shadow Orbs to increase the damage of **[Mind Blast]** and **[Mind Spike]**.

[Harnessed Shadows] also increases the chance of receiving Shadow Orbs.

One of the bigger abilities to be concerned with is **[Vampiric Touch]**. While this is just another casted DoT, with **[Sin and Punishment]** this now serves as dispel protection as well as a horror for those who dispel it, and those around the dispeller.

Because of this, if you are trying to dispel, it's a good idea to realize the potential to get CC'd by this affect, and to potentially affect your own team mates. With a 6 yard range of the horror effect, you don't want to be standing around your team mates while potentially dispelling Vampiric Touch.





As another horror effect, **[Psychic Horror]** is extremely deadly as a form of CC. Since horror is different from fear, this ability doesn't share diminishing returns with Psychic Scream, thus allowing the Priest to chain these abilities together easily.  **[Glyph of Psychic Horror]** puts this ability at a 1 min 30 second cooldown.

On top of this chain, **[Silence]** can be added to further lock out a healer or caster. With the 3 abilities combined, a healer can be potentially locked out for up to 16 seconds by the Shadow Priest alone.

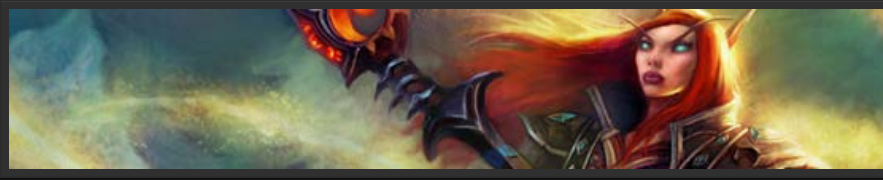


By dipping a bit into the Discipline Tree, Shadow Priests pick up **[Evangelism]** and **[Archangel]**. Every time the Priest uses Mind Flay, a DoT damage bonus is gained up to 5 times. The Priest can then use Archangel on burst to increase the big hitting abilities up to 20% of their normal damage. This is a huge burst setup to really look out for, and prevent the Shadow Priest from casting any of these abilities while Dark Archangel is active.

Defensively, Shadow Priests can use **[Dispersion]** reducing damage taken by 90% and regenerating mana. This cooldown turns into 1 min 15 seconds with  **[Glyph of Dispersion]** meaning it will be up extremely often and for most burst attempts.

[Fade] is also another useful ability for Shadow Priests because with **[Phantasm]** Fade removes all movement impairing effects. **[Veiled Shadows]** and  **[Glyph of Fade]** combined reduces the cooldown to 15 seconds.

Regardless of the defenses, Shadow Priests are very trainable and can be shut down easily by melee classes and melee cleaves due to the Priest's reliance on cast abilities as well as Dispersion also preventing the Shadow Priest to perform any action other than move.



OTHER PRIEST ABILITIES


Of course, **[Psychic Scream]** is a big one to look out for. It's often easy to tell when a Priest is going to use this ability when they try to run in a group or towards a healer to fear bomb. The best thing to do about this is to always be at range to the Priest and if you do notice them coming in, try and apply and kind of slow or root and keep your distance.

[Shackle Undead] is an important ability to watch out for as a Death Knight as it can control the Ghoul, Gargoyle, as well as the Death Knight himself under the effects of Lichborne.

Lastly, **[Mind Control]** is a spell that many Priests like to use to test how opponents will react. While this ability is useful in dropping players off ledges in Blade's Edge Arena and Dalaran Sewers, it's important to note that this ability is from the Shadow Tree. Some Priest intentionally want to bait the interrupt giving allowing them to cast their heals freely.



Not only do Priests have a lot of CC's, but they have means in preventing them as well. **[Shadow Word: Death]** can take advantage of the damage return to break a CC like Polymorph that is cast on them. This is where juking CC and baiting the SW:D becomes strategic.

Also, while in kill range, Shadow Word: Death's damage is increased for Shadow Priests with **[Mind Melt]** as well as the ability for the Priest to cast the ability twice with  **[Glyph of Shadow Word: Death]**. Being at 25% health or lower is extremely dangerous against a Shadow Priest.

Priests can also prevent a Fear on a friendly party member with **[Fear Ward]**. This ability is often used very strategically when two Priests face each other.

[Divine Hymn] and **[Hymn of Hope]** are two extremely long cooldowns that heal or gives mana, respectively. Both of these abilities are channeled, and Priests will typically try and run line of sight to use them.

Another method for Priests to receive mana is with **[Shadowfiend]**. This summons a fiend that returns mana every time it attacks. The critter is susceptible to crowd controls, so once it comes out, take advantage by controlling and preventing any action done by the Shadowfiend. **[Sin and Punishment]** and **[Veiled Shadows]** reduces the cooldown of this ability for Shadow Priests.

Finally, **[Leap of Faith]** is a new ability added in Cataclysm that has multiple uses. Not only can a Priest pull a team mate out of harm's way, but he can also aggressively pull a team mate into a strategic position. For example, the Priest can pull a friendly Warrior who is slowed into the Warrior's target. This ability can also pull members up ledges like in Blade's Edge Arena and Dalaran Sewers.

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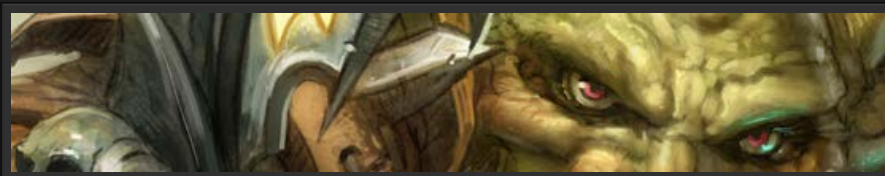
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In this article, I'm going to address the important cooldowns and abilities to be looking out for when playing against the Rogue class.



ROGUE ABILITIES

Being the nimble class of WoW, Rogues use speed and stealth to attack enemies and avoid damage, as well as having tricks to remove opponents from battle giving the Rogue an obvious advantage. Rogues are extremely cooldown based, so it's even more important to know and recognize these abilities and prepare for them.

Stealth

First off, let's start with the abilities Rogues gain while they are [\[Stealth\]](#).



In group fights, Rogues will always initially try to remove an opponent with [\[Sap\]](#). Controlling a target right from the start gives the Rogue and his team mates the initiative and advantage in the start.

There are several ways to try and avoid this. First off, a Rogue cannot Sap a target if they are already in combat. Rogues also cannot Sap Undead targets, so using [\[Lichborne\]](#) as a Death Knight will allow you to become immune. Of course, you can use AoE around you to try and bring the Rogue out.

[\[Cheap Shot\]](#) is the most common opener used by Rogues. This opener stuns the target for 4 seconds.

Because Cheap Shot shares diminishing returns with other stuns and does no damage, a Rogue may want to get in quick damage and start his burst right off the bat. This is where [\[Ambush\]](#) is typically used.

Finally, Rogues can choose to not stun, but rather silence the enemy with [\[Garrote\]](#). This ability is useful for preventing Mages from Blinking away or Priest's using Pain Suppression.

Rogues are normally only able to go back into Stealth while out of combat, however, Rogues can use [\[Vanish\]](#) every 2 minutes with [\[Elusiveness\]](#) and be placed immediately into stealth.

Combo Points

Some Rogue abilities build Combo Points that are used as a cost for some of their other abilities. The basic combo generating abilities are [\[Sinister Strike\]](#) and [\[Backstab\]](#), while Rogues can specialize in [\[Mutilate\]](#) as Assassination or pick up [\[Hemorrhage\]](#) as Subtlety.

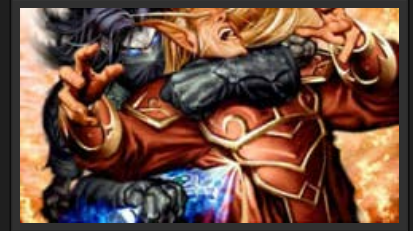
The biggest thing to realize against most combat Rogue is that their harder hitting ability, Backstab, requires them to be behind their target. The best way to

avoid this damage, as well as piss off the Rogue, is to never leave your back exposed. This is where learning to strafe while kiting will pay off. Also, you can put your back to a wall or over a ledge.

Finishers

After building up to 5 combo points, Rogue can use special abilities called finishers that have various effects.

[Kidney Shot] is the most common of these finishers. This ability is useable one every 20 seconds and can last up to 6 seconds. A Rogue will use this offensively with burst, or can use it defensively to peel a team mate or to stop an enemy from acting and doing damage. While a Rogue won't necessarily use this ability exactly when it becomes available, it's important to note when a Rogue is able to use this stun, and prepare for it.



Added in Cataclysm, **[Recuperate]** is a heal over time given to Rogues. Modified by **[Energetic Recovery]** and **[Improved Recuperate]** the Rogue can take less damage, heal more, and gain additional energy. Even with all these bonuses, don't let them discourage you from making the Rogue a kill target.

[Envenom] is a big damage finisher used mostly by Assassination Rogues, but the big thing to notice here is that this finisher applies magical damage through poisons. This is important because it can go through things like **[Hand of Protection]** which only block physical damage.

As one of the many snares available to Rogues, **[Deadly Throw]** can be used at range to slow down the target and allow the Rogue to catch up.

Other finishers include **[Eviscerate]**, **[Slice and Dice]**, **[Expose Armor]**, and **[Rupture]** essentially do damage or increase damage but are not that significant to really look out for or keep track of.

Defensive Cooldowns

Because Rogues are so squishy, they have a variety of defensive cooldowns that allow them to stay on the offensive.

[Evasion] increases the Rogue's Dodge rate by 50% for 15 seconds. While Rogues already have a high Dodge rate, this makes it's extremely difficult to hit them. If you're a melee class, remember that players cannot Dodge attacks from behind, so attacking the Rogue's back will help a lot.



Another ability that deters physical damage is **[Combat Readiness]**. This ability can stack up to 5 times every time the Rogue is hit, allowing the Rogue to have up to 50% physical damage reduction for 20 seconds. The interesting thing about this ability, though, is that if the Rogue isn't hit for a period of 10 seconds while this ability is active, Combat Readiness is immediately removed. This is good to know if your kill target is the Rogue. Once he uses Combat Readiness, you can immediately peel off and only have to wait 10 seconds to switch back onto him.

Rogues also have a disarm ability called **[Dismantle]** useable every minute.

Against spell casters, Rogues have **[Cloak of Shadows]** which is useable every 1 minute 10 seconds with **[Elusiveness]**. Rogues will often use this ability in conjunction with Vanish to remove DoTs that would break them back out of stealth. Also, this can be used to avoid incoming CCs like Polymorph or Fear.

Other Cooldowns

[Blind] is the biggest CC to look out for from a Rogue, because it will typically be used following a trinket, or to force a trinket. Rogues can setup scenarios extremely well to make Blind an extremely annoying ability to deal with. Using and timing things like **[Hand of Sacrifice]**, **[Unholy Frenzy]**, or **[Shadow Word: Death]** will help tremendously.

Because this ability will keep a target locked out for an extremely long time, it will drop the target out of combat, allowing the Rogue to Vanish and Sap, causing an even longer CC chain. It's important to prevent the Rogue from doing this.

[Redirect] is a very tactical ability that can be used in various ways. This allows the Rogue to easily swap to a new target and have a huge setup on them. Also, a Rogue can use this ability to Redirect a combo points to a healer to immediately Kidney Shot them as a form of CC.

[Smoke Bomb] can be used offensively or defensively. The Smoke Bomb prevents all opposing ranged damage and healing for anyone outside of the smoke trying to target someone in the smoke.

Offensively, this ability will almost always being used with a Kidney Shot to lock the target in place, preventing them from leaving. Healers need to watch out for this and might have to risk coming in close into the Smoke Bomb just to allow any kind of healing.

Defensively, a Rogue can protect himself or team mates from ranged attackers.

Note that you will know if you are in the Smoke Bomb are not by the debuff it gives. If you become immune to that debuff, for example with **[Divine Protection]**, you won't be able to heal your target in the Smoke Bomb. Also, since Smoke Bomb applies a debuff, it takes any Rogue or Druid in stealth and pulls them out, for some reason.



[Tricks of the Trade] is a damage increase cooldown that will be used during burst. This ability gives 15% increased damage to a target, which is huge. It's good to watch for this ability to also get a warning of incoming burst.




SUBTLETY ROGUES

Because nearly every Rogue you will encounter in PVP is Subtlety, we will only cover this spec. The easier way to identify a Subtlety Rogue is through their [\[Honor Among Thieves\]](#) buff. While this ability gives the Rogue and all his team mates 5% crit, it also allows the Rogue to generate free combo points every two seconds.

The highlight of this spec is [\[Shadow Dance\]](#). This talent allows full use of every opener ability for the duration of up to 10 seconds every minute. Rogues can get extremely creative with this ability by throwing out extreme burst of Ambush, or controlling multiple targets with Cheap Shot and Garrote.

This is THE cooldown to look out for from a Rogue.

[\[Preparation\]](#) is the other cooldown to look for, allowing the Rogue to reset the cooldowns of Sprint, Vanish, and Shadowstep. Rogues also pickup  [\[Glyph of Preparation\]](#) giving them Kick, Dismantle, and Smoke Bomb as well.

Finally, the Subtlety specialization ability is [\[Shadowstep\]](#). This ability gives the Rogue extra mobility, but can also be used to quickly [\[Kick\]](#) or use Redirect to hit and control a target at range.



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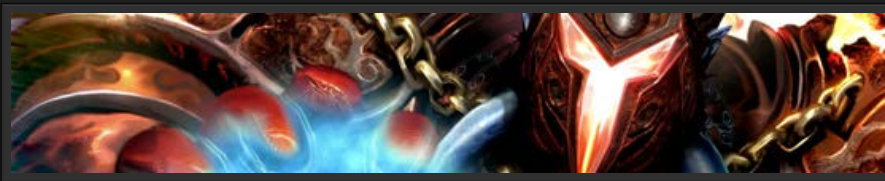
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In this article, I'm going to address the important cooldowns and abilities to be looking out for when playing against the Shaman class. We will be covering all three specs of the Shaman class: Elemental, Enhancement, and Restoration.



SHAMAN ABILITIES

First off, Shamans have an offensive dispel in the form of [\[Purge\]](#). This ability has no cooldown, and can be spammed to remove opponent's beneficial effects and buffs.

Shamans have the ability to morph into a [\[Ghost Wolf\]](#), granting them increased mobility. Not only does the Shaman move faster, but slows will only bring the Shaman down to 100% movement speed while he is in the Ghost Wolf form. However, because this form turns the Shaman into a beast, this form is vulnerable to [\[Hibernate\]](#) and [\[Scare Beast\]](#).

While not useable in Arena, [\[Bloodlust\]](#) and [\[Heroism\]](#) can be used every 5 minutes in Rated Battlegrounds. This is a huge cooldown to look out for when teams are going to try and overwhelm the other. This ability is dispellable, but will have to be dispelled on each target affected.

[\[Spiritwalker's Grace\]](#) allows the Shaman to cast spells while moving. This is extremely useful for Elemental Shamans and Restoration Shamans who are trying to pursue their enemy or to flee while still casting damage or heals.



TOTEMS

The iconic feature of the Shaman class is the use of totems. For many players, totems can be confusing and unclear if they are worth looking out for or killing. Let's clear up some questions and confusion.

First of all, totems must be manually targeted and killed. Macros do not allow you to automatically target a totem. Totems can be used while the Shaman is silenced.

Totems all look similar, and you can only identify them based on their small animation. Orcs, Dwarves, Trolls, Tauren, Goblins, and Draenei have unique totem models.

It's important to note that there are 4 classes of totems: Earth, Fire, Wind, and Water. A Shaman can only have one of each totem up at a given time, allowing a total of 4 totems.

Earth

[\[Strength of Earth Totem\]](#) is a buff totem for melee classes. This totem isn't a huge priority to destroy.

[[Earthbind Totem](#)] slows all enemies down within 10 yards of it. This totem can become annoying when trying to pursue the Shaman or running away, especially if it's placed strategically around a pillar.



However, when an Elemental Shaman uses this totem, [[Earth's Grasp](#)] also roots enemies in place for 5 seconds. Enhancement Shamans, through [[Earthen Power](#)] can have slowing effects removed from themselves and their partners, but does not remove roots.

A very important Earth Totem to keep track of is [[Tremor Totem](#)]. This totem can remove Fear, Charm, and Sleep effects, and can be used even if the Shaman is affected by these effects. This ability has a one minute cooldown and will immediately break the effect the moment the Shaman uses the totem. If you are a Priest or Warlock, it's going to be important to keep track of this cooldown.

[[Stoneclaw Totem](#)] simply puts a shield on the other totems, but also has a chance to stun you if you attack this totem. This is the only totem that has any significant amount of health, so it's not a great idea to attack this totem. However, many Shamans pick up [[Glyph of Stoneclaw Totem](#)] which also gives them a shield on themselves when Stoneclaw Totem is used. This has a 20 second cooldown.

Fire

[[Flametongue Totem](#)] is the spellcaster buff totem. This totem isn't a huge priority to destroy.

While this totem doesn't do much damage in PVP, [[Magma Totem](#)] is used as a utility to try and hit stealthed Rogues and Druids. This totem pulses damage every 2 seconds, so if you wish to engage an enemy near a Magma Totem without getting hit, you should consider this small window of opportunity.

[[Searing Totem](#)] is a basic turret totem that does minor damage. This damage and utility can be increased through the [[Searing Flames](#)] in the Enhancement tree.

Wind

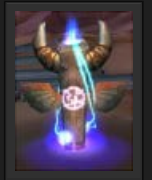
[[Windfury Totem](#)] is a buff totem for melee classes. This totem isn't a huge priority to destroy.

[[Wrath of Air Totem](#)] is the spellcaster buff totem. This totem isn't a huge priority to destroy.

The big Air Totem to look out for is [[Grounding Totem](#)]. This totem will eat up one harmful spell, protecting the Shaman and his allies. This totem will usually be used strategically to try and block incoming crowd controls. This totem has a 25 second cooldown.

However, [[Glyph of Grounding Totem](#)] increases the cooldown of the totem to 1 minute, but now reflects the ability back at the caster. Because, again, the Grounding Totem is typically used to protect against CC, this means that the totem will turn around and reflect the CC back to you.

Grounding Totem will eat up any harmful spell then die, so the best way to handle this totem is to use some type of trash spell on the Shaman or his partners to destroy the Grounding Totem, then use your CC.



Water

[[Healing Stream Totem](#)] is a buff totem that lightly heals all party members in the area. It's important to note that many Shamans pick up [[Glyph of Healing Stream Totem](#)] which increases their spell resistance to Fire, Frost, and Nature by 195. For Mages, Warlocks, Death Knights, Druids, and other Shamans – this totem should be considered when gemming for spell penetration or needs to be constantly destroyed.

[[Mana Spring Totem](#)] grants mana over time. When fights come down to mana wars, this totem becomes key in destroying.

Heart

Hmm, this section seems to be missing...

While Shamans will normally lay down individual totems, it's good to note that Shamans can preset totems and lay all 4 down at the same time with [[Call of the Elements](#)], [[Call of the Ancestors](#)], and [[Call of the Spirits](#)].

For the most part, totems provide various buffs, but aren't a huge concern – minus a few specific totems. Now this doesn't mean to completely ignore them. If you have the ability to swap to a passing totem as you are running to a target, it helps a lot to do it. Not only does this remove the buff of the totem, but the Shaman will have to spend time replacing lost totems.

Do note that there are other totems available to Shamans based on their spec, as well as the spec modifying the totems just mentioned. We will discuss this more when we go over each specific specialization tree.



SHIELDS


Shamans have two shields in which they can use – [Lightning Shield](#) and [Water Shield](#). Each shield gives varying buffs, especially depending on the spec they have chosen.

Most Shamans of all specializations pick up [[Improved Shields](#)].

[[Lightning Shield](#)] reflects damage when the Shaman is hit, consuming charges in the process. Depending on the spec, these charges can be used offensively without being attacked.

Elemental Shamans can consume extra charges to add damage to Earth Shock through **[Fulmination]**. These charges are also refreshed with Lightning Bolt and Chain Lightning through **[Rolling Thunder]**.

Enhancement Shamans can also consume charges every time they use Lava Lash or Stormstrike through **[Static Shock]**.

[Water Shield] gives passive mana regeneration as well as mana every time the Shaman is hit. However, Restoration Shamans will gain back mana through **[Resurgence]** every time they land a critical with their direct heals.  **[Glyph of Water Shield]** grants more passive mana regeneration.

The last shield is a Restoration specialization ability – **[Earth Shield]**. Unlike Lightning and Water Shield, this shield can be used on other team mates.


Of course, Earth Shield heals the target every time it's hit, but the Shaman's direct healing on the target is increased through **[Nature's Blessing]**. Because of this, swapping targets off the Earth Shield target can put the Shaman behind on healing.



CONTROL

While totems provide some utility to control, there are two key abilities than Shaman can use that need to be looked out for – Hex and Wind Shear.

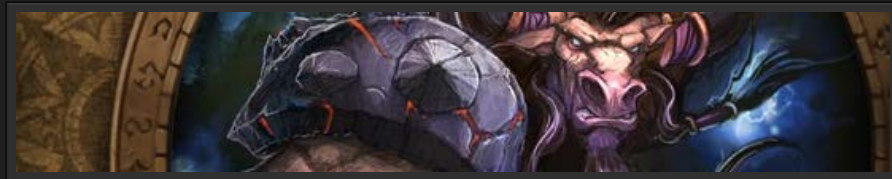
[Hex] is a unique crowd control ability in the fact that it is a curse. Only **[Remove Curse]**, **[Cleanse Spirit]**, and **[Remove Corruption]** can remove this ability.

Hex can be used every 35 seconds with  **[Glyph of Hex]**. This CC will typically be chained with others, especially to try and force the use of a trinket. Because this ability can be used twice before each trinket use, avoiding the second Hex can be critical.

Enhancement Shamans can instantly cast Hex through their **[Maelstrom Weapon]** proc.

[Wind Shear] is a ranged interrupt that can interrupt up to 25 yards, and can be used every 6 seconds. This ability is off the global cooldown, making it extremely easy for a Shaman to interrupt players constantly. As any kind of caster, this ability is really important to look out for and try to juke.

Note that **[Bind Elemental]** can be used to control things like the Mage Water Elemental.



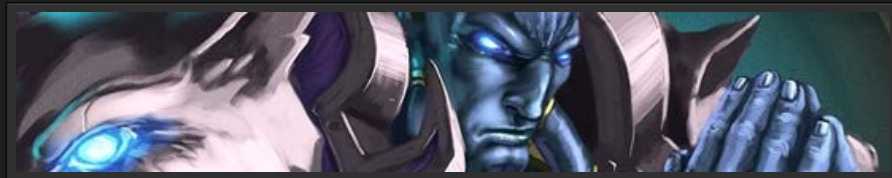
ELEMENTAL SHAMANS

As the Elemental specialization, **[Thunderstorm]** not only does AoE damage, but also knocks players back at a huge range. On maps like Blade's Edge Arena, Dalaran Sewers, and various places in Battlegrounds, this utility can be amazing. Be sure to not stand by edges or to have your back placed against a wall. Note that this ability can also be used while the Shaman is stunned.

When **[Elemental Mastery]** is used, it's a sure sign of some crazy burst. The Shaman's next spell is made instant, and all spells after for the next 20 seconds have 15% more damage and 20% more haste. The Shaman should be controlled or avoided while this ability is active.

It's good to note that when **[Flame Shock]** is dispelled against an enemy Elemental Shaman, **[Lava Flows]** kicks in – giving the Shaman 90% spell haste for 6 seconds. Because of this, it's good to try and avoid dispelling Flame Shock.

Finally, **[Earthquake]** is an AoE that has a 10% chance to knock down enemies in the effect. You either want to interrupt the cast, or try and stay out of the animation to avoid the RNG control.



ENHANCEMENT SHAMANS

[Lava Lash] is the Enhancement specialization ability and is an elemental attack that ignores armor. This ability's damage is increased through **[Improved Lava Lash]** and **[Searing Flames]**, meaning that Searing Totem becomes a higher priority against Enhancement Shamans.

[Shamanistic Rage] is a huge defensive cooldown for Enhancements on a 1 minute cooldown.

As the Enhancement Shaman attacks, they build up charges of [Maelstrom Weapon]. These charges reduce the cast time of the Shaman's next spell, allowing the Shaman to instantly cast an ability at 5 charges. This is important to realize for when an Enhancement Shaman has Hex ready.

To allow the Shaman to get on his target, using Frost Shock at 15+ yards will trigger [Frozen Power], causing a root effect.

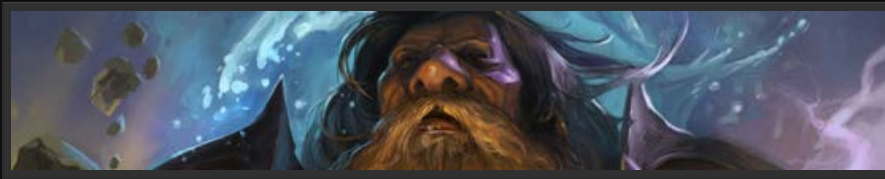
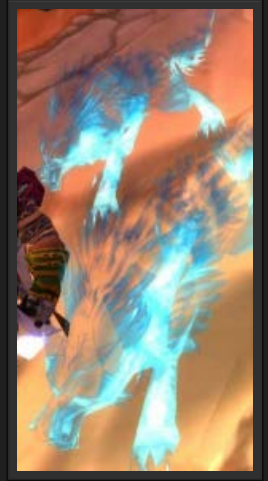
Finally, the big ability used by Enhancement Shamans is [Feral Spirit]. This summons 2 spirit wolves to fight alongside the Shaman.

While active, [Spirit Hunt] allows the wolves to heal themselves and the Shaman, making it more difficult to kill the Shaman.

Only once while the wolves are up, the Shaman can use [Bash] to stun a target.

Finally, the Shaman can use [Spirit Walk], removing and making the Shaman immune to all movement impairing effects for 15 seconds.

Spirit Wolves are killable through cleave damage, and is a viable option if you have an opportunity to kill them.



RESTORATION SHAMANS

[Earth Shield] is the Restoration Shaman specialization, which we discussed in the shields section.

[Nature's Swiftmess] causes the next ability to become an instant cast.

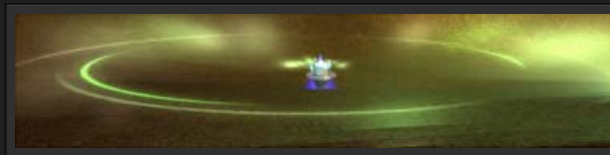
The last talent in the Restoration tree gives [Riptide]. This heal is an instant heal with a HoT attached, useable every 6 seconds.

Restoration Shamans also have access to two unique totems.

[Mana Tide Totem] is a much bigger version of Mana Spring Totem, giving lots of mana to all party members over the duration. This is a totem to look out for and quickly kill.

Finally, [Spirit Link Totem] is a new totem added in 4.1 and is a huge cooldown for Restoration Shamans. This totem reduces all damage by 10% to all party members, but the key thing is that it takes all of their health and make it so that everyone is has an equal share of their total health.

Spirit Link will typically be used on a target just about to die. Note that this totem lasts for 6 seconds and realigns the health every second. The totem only has 5 health, so it should be very easy to swap and kill it.



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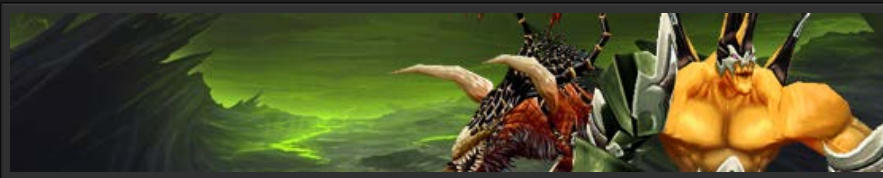
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While it's important to know your class in and out, often you don't have the opportunity to have that same level of understanding of other classes. Not correctly knowing how enemy abilities work or when they will be used against you only puts you at a disadvantage.

In this article, I'm going to address the important cooldowns to be looking out for when playing against the Warlock class.



DEMON FOLLOWERS

One of the biggest features of the Warlock class is the use of demonic pets that have unique abilities. While Felhunters tend to be the PVP pet choice, the other pets do have strategic uses that are good to be aware of. Here's the abilities to look out for:

Imp

[[Singe Magic](#)] – A Warlock will typically use the Imp for the defensive dispel.

Succubus

[[Seduction](#)] – While typically weak and not commonly used, a Warlock will use Succubus for its crowd control ability. This is something you want to control or interrupt because the rotating CCs can be very annoying.

Voidwalker

[[Sacrifice](#)] – This shield is applied to the Warlock, but can be dispelled.

[[Consume Shadows](#)] – More commonly used in Duels against Rogues and Feral Druids. The Voidwalker flails madly, giving the Warlock increased stealth detection.

Felhunter

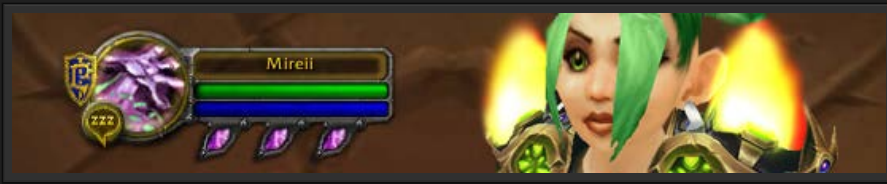
[[Devour Magic](#)] – This ability offensively dispels one magic buff. However, every time the Felhunter does this, it also heals itself slightly.

[[Spell Lock](#)] – It's good to note that this ability silences the target for 3 seconds, but the duration is doubled to 6 seconds if it manages to catch a spell cast. Watching and fake casting this ability every 24 seconds is a must.

Felguard

This pet is only usable by Demonology specialized Warlocks.

[[Axe Toss](#)] – This 4 second stun will commonly be used in combination with [[Hand of Gul'dan](#)] for even longer stun chains.



SOUL SHARDS

Warlocks use a second resource system in the form of three Soul Shards. These Shards are used as a cost for some Warlock abilities, but since there are only three, keeping track of how many Soul Shards a Warlock has can be used to your advantage.

Soul Shards don't regenerate. However, there are two methods for a Warlock to regain his Shards.

First of all, a Warlock can use [\[Drain Soul\]](#) on a dying target to gain back all their Shards. In arena, this spell typically won't see much use at the point where it matters.

The most common method to regenerate Soul Shards is for a Warlock to use [\[Soul Harvest\]](#). This ability is channeled and can easily be interrupted, however, the Warlock can only use this ability when he's out of combat. When you know a Warlock is out of Soul Shards, it is advantageous to prevent him from leaving combat and crippling many of the Warlock's abilities.

When the Warlock is channeling Soul Harvest, the first Soul Shard is received when the channel is at 66%, the second at 33%, and the final Shard once the channel is complete. Even if you let the Warlock begin to channel Soul Harvest, you still have the ability to prevent him from gaining only a few shards, or preventing them all together.


Now that we've talked about how the Warlock gains Soul Shards, let's talk about how they use them.

[\[Soulburn\]](#) – This single ability comes every 45 seconds and consumes a single Soul Shard. When a Warlock activates this, many other their other abilities become "enhanced" and gain additional effects.

[\[Drain Life\]](#) – Halves the channel time.

[\[Demonic Circle: Teleport\]](#) – Increases movement speed by 50% for 8 seconds. [\[Soul Fire\]](#) – Becomes an instant cast.

[\[Searing Pain\]](#) – Increases the crit chance by 100%, and subsequent Searing Pains by 50% for 6 seconds.

 [\[Healthstone\]](#) – When a Warlock Soul Burns a Healthstone, their maximum health is increased by 20% for 8 seconds. This is a common defensive combination of both abilities, and really good if you can force these two at once.

[\[Summon Imp\]](#)

[\[Summon Voidwalker\]](#)

[\[Summon Succubus\]](#)

[\[Summon Felhunter\]](#)

[\[Summon Felguard\]](#)

With Soul Burn, any of these Demon summons become instant. This is where you want to determine if killing a Warlock's pet is a viable strategy or not. If you keep track of how many Soul Shards a Warlock has available to him, you will know exactly how many instant summons he has. If the Warlock doesn't have any Soul Shards, he will have to hard cast a summon – which all take 6 seconds.

However, there is one more method a Warlock has to get an instant pet summon.

TIP: Using Soul Burn to summon an exact same copy of the current pet will "reset" the pet's cooldowns. For example, a Warlock with a Felhunter can use it's [\[Spell Lock\]](#) then immediately Soul Burn another Felhunter and have Spell Lock immediately available again. This is important to look out for when Warlocks are trying to play extremely aggressive. This only works in Rated Arenas.

DENYING THE DEMON PET

As we just learned, there are some limitations with Warlock pet summoning. However, this is not the full extent of it. There is a talent that most Warlocks pick up in the second tier of the Demonology tree: [\[Demonic Rebirth\]](#).

When the Warlock's pet dies, the Warlock immediately gains the Demonic Rebirth buff, lasting for 10 seconds. This allows the Warlock to instantly summon a new pet with no cost, and no Soul Stones required.

This can be tricky, because the Warlock will guaranteed use Demonic Rebirth over a Soul Burn to replace a killed pet. However, Demonic Rebirth is a 2 minute cooldown, giving you plenty of opportunity to kill it again before Demonic Rebirth can become available again.

Also, the Demonic Rebirth buff only lasts for 10 seconds. There are plenty of ways to completely deny the use of the buff my strategically controlling the Warlock with Stuns, Silences, or other methods.

So to wrap-up, a Warlock has two methods to instantly summon their pet. Soul Burn costs one of three Soul Shards and can only be used once every 45 seconds. Demonic Rebirth doesn't cost any Soul Shards, but only procs when the demon dies every two minutes.

Now the big question is, "Is killing the pet a viable strategy?"

This can be a tough question, but in longer games it's definitely an option. Because you will have to get through all three Soul Shards and Demonic Rebirth, having this strategy assumes the game will go longer than 5 minutes.

Many times a Warlock pet can get low from damage being spread, but most importantly is through [\[Soul Link\]](#).

Soul Link is the ability that makes Warlocks so durable in PVP. Even when putting massive damage on the Warlock, it will seem like the Warlock is fine – but in reality the demon is sucking up 20% of the damage.

A Warlock's demon can easily run around with 50% and neither team pays much attention to it. Even if your strategy isn't to kill all the Warlock's pets, sometimes Warlocks are so pressured they don't manage their pet's health, or notice when one dies.

Many times it's good to look out for low pets and spend a few globals to swap and kill it. This is more or less of a judgment call if you can spare the damage to swap or not.

Even if the Warlock summons another pet with the methods above, they have to spend another global to reapply Soul Link to the new pet. This can be prevented with a stun and the Warlock will be taking 100% damage for the duration.

NOW YOU SEE ME...

If you've ever encountered a Warlock in PVP you probably have a general idea on how this works.

[\[Demonic Circle: Summon\]](#)

[\[Demonic Circle: Teleport\]](#)

The Warlock places a portal on the ground, and every 30 seconds he can teleport himself to that portal. Typically, portals are placed in strategic places that make it difficult to pursue the Warlock such as behind pillars or on a different floor. Because this can be such a useful tool for a Warlock to foil the offensive, it's good to have a plan prepared for when a Warlock does get away from you.

First of all, a Warlock needs to be at the spot he wants to place his portal. Many cleave or rush teams take advantage of that fact and gun straight for the Warlock at the beginning of the match, preventing him from laying down a portal, or if he does, placing it in an undesirable spot for himself.

If the Warlock does lay the portal down where he wants, then here is where you want to really coordinate to your partners about switching. You can target the Warlock until his portals away, but chasing him most likely is disadvantageous. Communicate before the match begins who you will swap to when the Warlock portals and what you'll be doing from there. You can either make the swapped target your new kill target, or once the Warlock comes back, you can immediately call it out and coordinate the swap back to him.


No matter what you do, you want to have a strategy beforehand that will prepare for what you and your team will do once the Warlock uses Demonic Circle.

TIP: 90% of Warlocks are good friends with GMs, who, in return for friendship, grant the Warlock the ability to always choose Blade's Edge Arena when queuing arena games.

HERE COMES THE BURN!

Now let's end this by identifying the damage cooldowns a Warlock can use to ruin your day.

Based on what pet the Warlock is using, [\[Demon Soul\]](#) will give a specific buff. Since most Warlocks are using a Felhunter, this means 20% more shadow DoT damage. Demon Soul doesn't affect existing DoTs, so expect the Warlock to start applying fresh (and harder hitting) DoTs on a target. You can interrupt the casted DoTs or attempt to completely CC the Warlock once Demon Soul is cast for 20 seconds.

Next, Affliction Warlocks have a talent called [\[Soul Swap\]](#) and [\[Soul Swap Exhale\]](#). Along with  [\[Glyph of Soul Swap\]](#), a Warlock can easily spread his DoTs to multiple targets. Healers should definitely watch when Soul Swap is being used to anticipate when targets will need healing.

And finally, Demonology Warlocks have a large cooldown called [\[Metamorphosis\]](#). The defenses on Demon Form are huge, so CCing the Warlock is a far better choice rather than trying to tackle him down. While most of the abilities gained are damage abilities, it's good to note that the Warlock can use [\[Demon Leap\]](#) for a two second stun once during the Metamorphosis.

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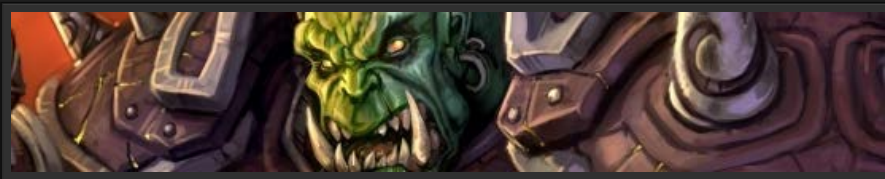
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While it's important to know your class in and out, often you don't have the opportunity to have that same level of understanding of other classes. Not correctly knowing how enemy abilities work or when they will be used against you only puts you at a disadvantage.

In this article, I'm going to address the important cooldowns and abilities to be looking out for when playing against the Warrior class.

Because all three trees are represented in Arenas or Rated Battlegrounds, I'm going to cover each spec in it's own section.



WARRIOR ABILITIES

To start off with, we have to realize that Warriors have three Stances that they can be in that determine what abilities they can use. These stances also provide other bonuses, and are [\[Battle Stance\]](#), [\[Berserker Stance\]](#), and [\[Defensive Stance\]](#). While an Arms Warrior may sit in Battle Stance most of the time, it's important to recognize when they swap stances to get a hint on the ability they will use next, such as something like Spell Reflection. This may also determine if a Warrior is going on the offensive or playing defensive, and you can base your play around knowing what stance the Warrior is in.

Unfortunately there is no buff that allows you to spot check the Warrior's current stance, you just have to recognize one of the 3 icons that appear over the Warrior's head once he changes.



Most Warrior utility baseline abilities are done through Defensive Stance, so let's check these out first.

When the Warrior is taking heavy melee damage, or even damage from Hunters, a Warrior may pop [\[Shield Block\]](#). Note this ability only increases the block chance, so attacking the Warrior from behind will completely make this ability useless for the Warrior.

Another common ability that Warriors will do is [\[Spell Reflection\]](#) to avoid a CC and reflect it back to the caster. As of 4.1, this ability can now also be used in Battle Stance, so Arms Warriors can very easily use it every 25 seconds. The key thing to look out for is the swap to a one hander and shield, as well as the giant reflect animation over the Warrior's head. You can either wait out this ability, or throw a trash spell that you know won't hurt you (or CC you) when reflected.

[\[Disarm\]](#) is very easy to recognize a bit ahead of time because it must be done in Defensive Stance as well. Warrior's can either use this defensively every minute, but also will use these abilities aggressively to prevent stuff like [\[Deterrence\]](#).

Finally, we have [\[Shield Wall\]](#), a large defensive cooldown that a Warrior will use only when he feels extremely pressured or when anticipating the biggest burst. This is an extremely great ability to try and force with a fake burst/swap, because on the second swap the Warrior will have nothing.

On that note, Shield Wall shares a cooldown with two other abilities – [\[Retaliation\]](#) only useable in Battle Stance and [\[Recklessness\]](#) limited to Berserker Stance. Now what I mean by shares a cooldown is that not that they share

the 5 minute cooldown, but rather, **once one of the 3 abilities are used, you cannot use any of the other 2 for 12 seconds**. What this effectively means is that if a Warrior uses Recklessness, then suddenly gets pressured, **he won't be able to use Shield Wall until those 12 seconds are up – even if he uses a macro to cancel Recklessness**.

This is extremely important to recognize because it creates a small window where you can really make a Warrior panic, for more of his other cooldowns or cooldowns of his team mates, and potentially kill him.

Now let's go over Retaliation and Recklessness. **[Retaliation]** allows the Warrior to counterstrike any melee attacks done to them. Once again, this can be negated by striking the Warrior from behind or stunning him. Two Warriors uses Retaliation is extremely amusing to watch, however, as both can literally blow each other up in a blink of an eye.

Now **[Recklessness]** is a bit different. This is an extremely huge cooldown that Warriors will use on their biggest burst.

In fact, certain macros have been popularized to essentially blow all cooldowns around Recklessness, and we'll cover this burst in the Arms and Fury sections.

[Colossus Smash] is an ability that Warriors put up while having some Rage and about to use some hard hitting abilities. This ability removes 50% of the target's armor in PVP, thus making all of the Warrior's physical abilities hit much harder.

Warriors also have a fear on a 2 minute cooldown. **[Intimidating Shout]** can fear everyone in the area, but any damage immediately breaks the effect. Normal Fear breaks can avoid this ability.

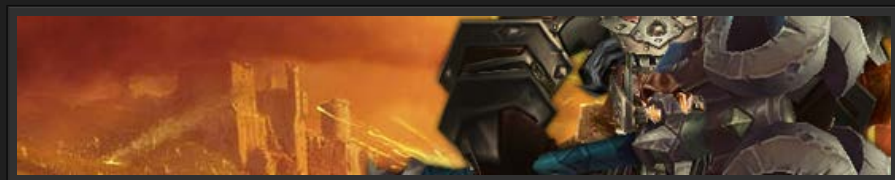
Speaking of Fear breaks, Warriors also have that in the form of **[Berserker Rage]** every 30 seconds, with an uptime of 10 seconds. This ability also removes abilities like **[Sap]** and **[Repentance]**. Finally, this ability is also an Enrage which can be dispelled, but is also gives the Warrior other benefits with other abilities.

Baseline, one of these abilities is **[Enraged Regeneration]**. This is one of the big heal cooldowns Warriors can use, but they must have an Enrage effect active on them to use this ability.

Added in 4.1, Warriors also received a new ability that works similarly to **[Last Stand]**. However, while Last Stand is a Protection only ability, **[Rallying Cry]** is baseline for all Warriors and also is much more powerful. Both Last Stand and Rallying Cry share the same cooldown, however.

Warriors are unique along with Priest's **[Mass Dispel]**, as in, **[Shattering Throw]** can be used to break immunities such as **[Divine Shield]**, **[Blessing of Protection]**, and **[Ice Block]**. However, there are many people who don't realize there is a second effect to Shattering Throw. Many times I've seen Mages prematurely break their Ice Block just so that they can gain some distance while the Warrior is channeling Shattering Throw. If this ability doesn't break an immunity, instead, it applies a debuff that reduces the target's armor by 20%. Unless you are absolutely going to get away, it's pointless to remove your immunity before Shattering Throw does it itself.

Finally, every minute, a Warrior can use **[Heroic Leap]** to reach his target, or to escape from combat. While they cannot use this while rooted, it's good to note that this ability is usable to get out of **[Smoke Bomb]**.



ARMS WARRIOR

Arms Warriors are the most common of the Warrior specs in any form of PVP. Identifiable by a single two handed weapon, this spec applies extremely high pressure and damage.

The main ability of this spec is **[Mortal Strike]**.

Even though this ability applies good damage and the healing reduction effect, there is another reason why this ability is so crucial to the spec. **[Lambo to the Slaughter]** is a huge passive talent that stacks up to 3 times for every successful Mortal Strike hit. This ability improves the damage of all **[Execute]**, **[Overpower]**, **[Slam]**, and **[Mortal Strike]** by up to 30%! Not only that, but it also refreshes **[Rend]**.





As long as Warriors have uptime on their target, they can quickly build Lambo to the Slaughter and immediately start doing near max of their damage. The absolute best way to prevent this is to slow or root a Warrior and have this buff fall off. Also, if Mortal Strike is used and is blocked, dodged, parried, or missed, Lambo will not refresh and more easily fall off.

Also, **[Cruelty]**, **[Impale]**, **[Wrecking Crew]**, and  **[Glyph of Mortal Strike]** all give benefit to Mortal Strike.


Finally, Mortal Strike is also affected by **[Juggernaut]**.

This big thing about Juggernaut, however, is that **[Charge]** becomes the centralized mobility ability for Arms Warriors, and completely removed Intercept from

the picture.  [Glyph of Long Charge] and  [Glyph of Rapid Charge] are both used by Arms Warriors.

[Sweeping Strikes] Allows the Warrior to double up on damage on any nearby target. This is one reason not to stack up with a team mate when being beat on by a Warrior.



Another huge AoE cooldown exclusive to Arms is [Bladestorm]. Now while this ability does do AoE damage, the highlight and true use of this ability is surrounded by the movement impairment immunity, allowing the Warrior to get out of roots and snares and to continue to apply pressure.  [Glyph of Bladestorm] can bring this cooldown to 1 min 15 seconds.

[Throwdown] is a 5 second stun on a 45 second cooldown. This ability is usually the precursor to big damage coming from the Warrior.

And finally, the last ability is one that assists even more to the Warrior damage. [Deadly Calm] causes all of the Warrior's abilities to cost no Rage. This allows the Warrior to unload all this abilities without worry, and can also spam [Heroic Strike] on cooldown (which is on a separate GCD than all the other Warrior abilities).

A macro that has become extremely popular allows a Warrior to blow most of his hard hitting cooldowns and force most of his burst in a small window. It looks something like this:

```
Have Rend up
Go to Berserker Stance
Apply Colossus Smash
Use Deadly Calm
Use Recklessness
Use Trinket
Return to Battle Stance
Apply Throw Down
Unload Damage (Mortal Strike, Overpower, Slam, Heroic Throw, Heroic Strike spam)
```

While probably not the best method to go all out for the Warrior, this is still a good example of the worst case scenario if the Warrior can catch you with all these cooldowns used. (Although I'm probably going to get flamed that this isn't the optimal order or w/e, it's just an example.)

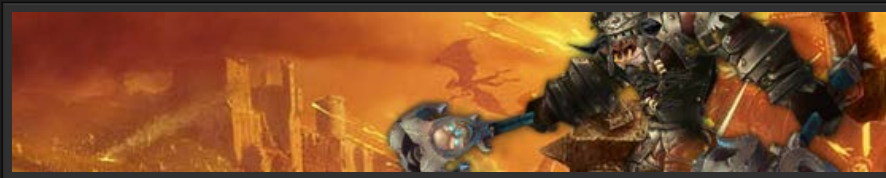
Arms Warriors also have some interesting passive healing abilities. Aside from Enraged Regeneration, Warriors pick up 3 talents that help their self healing.

[Field Dressing] increases all healing the Warrior by 6%, but self healing by 20%. These self healing talents are [Second Wind] and [Blood Craze]. Both abilities apply heal over times on the Warrior, but are triggered every time he is stunned or rooted, and a chance when he takes damage. While these heals can be easily out damaged, it is something to consider in longer fights with Warriors.

While [Hamstring] is a baseline ability as well as the Warrior slow, some Arms Warriors pick up [Improved Hamstring]. What this talent does is that if a Warrior applies Hamstring to a target, then applies it again, the target will become rooted for 5 seconds. The Warrior has this option every 30 seconds.

Also, Arms Warriors go a bit into the Fury tree to pick up [Piercing Howl]. Unlike Hamstring, this ability can be applied up to a 10 yard range, but costs more Rage. Also, this ability is an AoE slow, and has about half a duration than Hamstring. Warriors rely on this ability to try and get back on targets just out of reach, but can quickly eat a lot (if not all) of their Rage using this multiple times.

Lastly, another talent that Arms Warrior's go for in the Fury tree is putting one point into [Rude Interruption]. Not only does getting hit with Pummel stop you from casting, but it allows the Warrior to also have 5% increased damage.



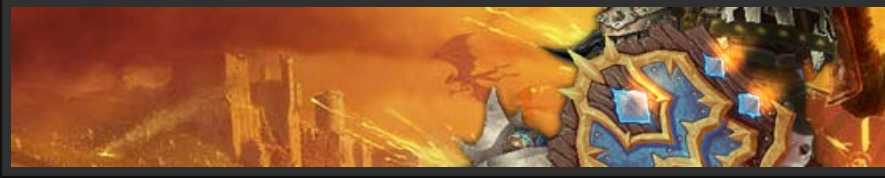
FURY WARRIOR

Fury Warriors are most identifiable through their ability to dual wield two two-handers with the talent [Titan's Grip]. Overall this is a gimmick spec that relies on cooldowns to put out burst. Otherwise, this spec is extremely easy to handle once you know what to look out for.

A Fury Warrior will build up his Rage, build [Enrage], use his trinket and then use Recklessness along with [Death Wish] to cause all of the Warrior's abilities to hit ridiculously hard for the duration. The abilities hit so hard during this burst that they can kill a target in a blink of an eye, often having people go "What just happened to me?"

Of course, you can try and control the Warrior when he pops all his cooldowns, but the Achilles heal to this spec is that Death Wish is an Enrage effect and can be dispelled with [Soothe], [Tranquillizing Shot], or [Shiv], as well as the other Enrage buffs this spec gives.

Unlike Arms Warriors, Fury Warriors use [\[Intercept\]](#) for mobility. However, Fury can pick up [\[Skirmisher\]](#) to reduce the cooldown, as well as an activated ability, [\[Heroic Fury\]](#), to free them from roots and immediately allow the use of Intercept.



PROTECTION WARRIOR

Protection Warriors seem to be one of the biggest gems in Rated Battlegrounds as Flag Carriers. Having access to the Defensive Stance utility we mentioned in the first section, many Protection talents actually enhance these abilities even further.

The big thing to realize is that all tanking classes have access to [\[Vengeance\]](#). This means that the more damage the Prot Warrior takes, the stronger he's going to become. Vengeance can stack extremely high in RBGs with multiple targets trying to kill the flag carrier, so it's good to know that there is a point where the Prot Warrior can actually be doing high damage in return.

However, Vengeance is an Enrage effect and can be easily dispelled with [\[Soothe\]](#), [\[Tranquilizing Shot\]](#), or [\[Shiv\]](#).

Aside from that, Protection Warriors are known for their stuns. [\[Concussion Blow\]](#) and [\[Shockwave\]](#).

Prot warriors also pick up a talent called [\[Warbringer\]](#), giving them full use of Charge and Intercept – meaning more stuns and mobility. When [\[Intervene\]](#) is used, they can also become free of movement impairing effects.

With these abilities, a Protection Warrior can easily become a nuisance by stunning multiple targets and stopping kill opportunities on himself or on team mates.

The last thing to note is the Silence Prot Warriors can pick up and chain with their stuns. [\[Gag Order\]](#) now causes Pummel and Heroic Throw to silence the enemy, as well as reducing Heroic Throw to a 30 second CD.

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- HIGH CONTROL
- HIGH BURST/SWAP OPPORTUNITIES
- STRONG OPENERS

WEAKNESSES

- VULNERABLE TO HIGH PRESSURE
- COOL-DOWN RELIANT

- SWAP OFTEN - UTILIZE YOUR CONTROL - HAVE GOOD AWARENESS

WEAKNESSES  **RMP**

- VULNERABLE TO HIGH PRESSURE
- COOL-DOWN RELIANT

 Recklessness 3 min. cooldown Reckless Berserker stance Grants your special attacks an additional 50% damage to enemies. The total maximum of damage against the enemy is 100%.	 Avenging Wrath 4% of total mana Reduces cooldowns of damage and healing spells by 50% for 30 sec.
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BIG OFFENSIVE COOLDOWNS SUCH AS RECKLESSNESS/WINGS HAVE LONG CDS, THEY'RE USUALLY ONLY EVER USED WHEN GOING FOR A KILL. THIS MEANS YOU HAVE TO BE SUPER CAREFUL WHEN THEY'RE UP.

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