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Jan 1 Feb 1 Mar Apr May 1 Jun 1 Jul 1 Aug 1 Sep 1 Oct 1 Nov 1 Dec 1 Reddit and its partners use cookies and similar technologies to provide you with a better experience. By accepting all cookies, you agree to our use of cookies to deliver and maintain our services and site, improve the quality of Reddit, personalize Reddit content and advertising, and measure the effectiveness of advertising. By rejecting non-essential cookies, Reddit may still use certain cookies to ensure the proper functionality of our platform. For more information, please see our Cookie Notice and our Privacy Policy. From Guild Wars 2 Wiki Jump to navigationJump to search A symbol is a marked effect that guardians can place on the ground. It lingers for a few seconds, where upon creation and with every pulse, it inflicts damage to enemies and, except for Ignition, delivers a boon to allies that stand on it. All symbols are light fields. List of symbols[edit] Weapon skills[edit] # Skill Weapon Description 2 Symbol of Faith Mace 0.75¾ 8 Symbol. Smash the ground to heal allies and create a mystic symbol that damages foes and regenerates allies. 3 Symbol of Ignition Pistol 0.25¼ 12 Symbol. Create a symbol that ignites when you strike an enemy inside it or shoot a projectile into it, damaging and burning enemies inside it. If the symbol is ignited by a projectile, it enchants that projectile to burn its target. 2 Symbol of Punishment Scepter 0.25¼ 10 Symbol. Create a symbol on the ground that strikes foes and grants might to nearby allies. 2 Symbol of Blades Sword 8 Symbol. Teleport to your target, and blind nearby foes. Create a symbol at your feet that damages nearby enemies and benefits allies. 4 Symbol of Resolution Greatsword 0.25¼ 12 Symbol. Pierce the ground with a mystic symbol that damages foes while granting resolution to allies. 1 Symbol of Protection Hammer 1 Symbol. Smash a mystic symbol onto the ground that gives protection to you and your allies. 3 Symbol of Swiftness Staff 0.75¾ 12 Symbol. Sear a mystic symbol into the target area, damaging foes and granting swiftness to allies. 4 Symbol of Spears Spear 0.5½ 20 Symbol. Create a spear wall in front of you that damages foes that remain in its area. 5 Symbol of Luminance Spear 0.5½ 20 Symbol. Places the Symbol of Luminance on the ground, knocking back enemies on initial cast. While active, the symbol grants boons to allies and inflicts conditions on enemies. While standing within the symbol, your spear attacks are automatically illuminated and do not consume the illuminated effect when used. Resistance granted by this skill can only be granted once per interval.Illuminated. While the symbol is active, all other spear skills are illuminated, even if you move out of the range of the symbol. 3 Symbol of Light Trident 0.5½ 15 Symbol. Create a pillar of light that does damage every second at your foe's location. 4 Symbol of Energy Longbow 0.5½ 12 Symbol. Fire a slow, arcing arrow that explodes on impact to burn targets and sear a symbol of energy into the ground. 2 Symbol of Vengeance Axe 1 8 Symbol. Cleave your axe into the ground, reducing enemy movement and carving a razor-sharp symbol of vengeance. Downed skills[edit] [edit] Trait skills that have the type symbol Traits that improve symbols Gallery[edit] Screenshots Renders Notes[edit] All symbols except for Symbol of Punishment apply their effects once upon activation and pulse once per second thereafter. A 4-second symbol will pulse its effect 5 times. After the July 26, 2016 game update, all of guardian's main-hand and terrestrial two-handed weapons include 1 symbol skill. The May 08, 2018 game update expanded that treatment to underwater weapons, so that now all possible weapon combinations include 1 symbol skill each. Celebrate the Wintersday spirit and treat your friends and family—or yourself—to the gift of Guild Wars 2. Guild Wars 2 Expansion Sales The following discounted items are available from now until January 5 on the official Guild Wars 2 website and participating retailers listed below. Guild Wars 2—The Complete Collection Experience the entire dragon cycle saga from beginning to end with Guild Wars 2—The Complete Collection. This bundle contains all three expansions and all purchasable Living World episodes to date. You'll also get two Level-80 Boosts, allowing you instantly level up two characters and jump straight into our latest content, with two Shared Inventory Slots to easily share items with every character on your account. This collection is available now at a 20% discount during the Winter Sale for $79.99 USD. Guild Wars 2—All Expansions Collection Begin your journey to discover the secrets of the Elder Dragons in the Heart of Maguuma, where a Pact fleet has gone down in flames on their way to confront the jungle dragon, Mordremoth. Travel to the Crystal Desert to stop the god of fire and war from destroying Tyria in his arrogance. Finally, discover how a new cycle begins in the land of Cantha. The Standard Edition includes all three Guild Wars 2 expansions, along with a Shared Inventory Slot and a Level-80 Boost to help your character get started in Cantha. (This collection does not include Living World Seasons 2 through 5.) This collection is available now at a 30% discount during the Winter Sale for $34.99 USD. Expansion 3—Guild Wars 2: End of Dragons™ The future of Cantha is now. The dragon cycle that has sustained and blighted Tyria for ages is collapsing. Mortal hearts and choices will define this moment in history—and echo in the future forever. Unlock new elite specializations, Masteries, and more, including access to fishing and skiffs. This expansion is available now for $23.99 USD, a 20% discount. Expansions 1 and 2—Guild Wars 2: Heart of Thorns™ & Guild Wars 2: Path of Fire™ Unlock mounts, gliding, and more with the first two expansions for Guild Wars 2. This package grants you access to a new profession, the revenant, as well as eighteen elite specializations to change the way you play. Experience the joy of movement with the best mounts in MMOs. This expansion bundle is available now for $14.99 USD, a 50% discount. Third-Party Retailers You can also purchase these items from the following third-party retailers: If you've just finished leveling up in Guild Wars 2, you've got a whole world to explore! While you can use waypoints to travel quickly between regions and explorable zones, mounts are the best and fastest way to get to where you want to go—especially if where you want to go is high in the air, in unfriendly waters, on the other side of a big canyon, or concealed from mortal eyes by centuries of magics. Those places usually have the best treasure. The maximum character level in Guild Wars 2 is 80. Instead of increasing that cap, expansions include new Mastery tracks, which give your characters new ways to interact with the world. Mounts are part of the Mastery system, and their unique abilities are suited for different tasks and terrain. By filling out your stable of mounts and upgrading their skills with masteries, you'll be prepared for anything Tyria throws your way. You can customize your mounts' coloring with dyes. In the Gem Store, you'll find a huge selection of cosmetic mount skins to change their markings, their breed, and even their species! These appearance changes have no impact on your mounts' abilities or power, so choose the looks that tickle your fancy. You'll need to be level 80 to unlock mounts, but every character on your account can use your unlocked mounts at any level! Raptor Required Content: Guild Wars 2: Path of Fire™ (unlock and Mastery track) or Guild Wars 2: End of Dragons™ (unlock only) Path of Fire Mastery Points to Fully Unlock: 10 The raptor is the easiest mount to unlock if you own Guild Wars 2: Path of Fire and having one of your own will make covering ground in Tyria a breeze. To unlock the raptor in Guild Wars 2: Path of Fire, just complete the first chapter of the main story, "Sparking the Flame." You'll be given a raptor to use to help clean up the devastation Balthazar's Forged forces leave in their wake, and it's yours to keep after completing the mission's renown heart. Hold the Leap skill while running, and your raptor will leap forward. This is a great way to get across chasms, broken bridges, floors made of lava, and sleeping charr who are blocking your path. After you unlock the Round Up Mastery, the raptor's Tail Spin engage skill will pull enemies toward you for easy whacking. The Ravenous Strike Mastery increases Tail Spin's damage, and Ravenous Discipline increases the damage of every mount's engage skill. If you only own Guild Wars 2: End of Dragons™, you can unlock the raptor by speaking to Strigidae in New Kaineng City. You'll need Guild Wars 2: Path of Fire to fully unlock the Mastery track. Springer Required Content: Guild Wars 2: Path of Fire (unlock and Mastery track) or Guild Wars 2: End of Dragons™ (unlock only) Required Mastery: Canyon Jumping (Raptor) Cost: 50 Trade Contracts and 1 Gold Path of Fire Mastery Points to Fully Unlock: 14 Springers are adorable creatures with wiggly noses and powerful legs. Use your springer to hop up cliffsides, bounce onto tall pillars, and terrify anyone who wasn't expecting to see a giant rabbit at high elevations. To unlock the springer in Guild Wars 2: Path of Fire, visit Highjump Ranch in Desert Highlands. The expansion story chapter The Sacrifice will lead you to this area, and you'll need your springer to fully complete it. After you complete Stablemaster Unja's renown heart for the first time, you'll find the springer for sale in her vendor list. You can use the springer's Rocket Jump skill to bounce straight upward. Hold the skill button to charge up, and you'll bounce even higher! As you explore, look for cliff faces with tiered ledges. Even if you can't reach the top of an obstacle with one jump, you can often scale them by bouncing from foothold to foothold. After you unlock the Forceful Impact Mastery, the springer's Cannonball engage skill will knock enemies down. The Fortified Descent Mastery decreases the amount of fall damage your springer takes, and Masterful Descent extends the fall damage reduction to all your mounts. If you only own Guild Wars 2: End of Dragons™, you can unlock the springer by speaking to Lieutenant Zhao in New Kaineng City. You'll need Guild Wars 2: Path of Fire to fully unlock the Mastery track. Skimmer Required Content: Guild Wars 2: Path of Fire (unlock and Mastery track) Required Mastery: Canyon Jumping (Raptor) Cost: 50 Trade Contracts and 4 Gold Path of Fire Mastery Points to Fully Unlock: 22 Skimmers can carry you safely across water, toxic sulfur, and dangerous quicksand. When you unlock the final skimmer Mastery, Skimming the Depths, you can even ride them underwater and make undead Orrian sailors, krait, and other deep-sea foes eat bubbles. You'll unlock the skimmer in Guild Wars 2: Path of Fire during the story chapter The Way Forward. Visit Skimmer Trainer Ardra at Skimmer Ranch in Elon Riverlands and complete her renown heart to purchase it from her. The skimmer's Hover High skill boosts it into the air for a short time, making it possible to pass barriers in water. After you unlock the Nimble Recovery Mastery, the skimmer's Barrel Roll engage skill grants you and your allies protection and swiftness. The Nimble Benevolence Mastery extends this benefit to all your mounts. Jackal Required Content: Guild Wars 2: Path of Fire (unlock and Mastery track) Required Mastery: Fully master either the springer or the skimmer's movement skills. Cost: 200 Trade Contracts and 30 Gold Path of Fire Mastery Points to Fully Unlock: 14 Jackals are even more wild than the unusual animals you've encountered so far. Despite being crafted out of magical sand, they do enjoy treats. You'll reach the Desolation during the Guild Wars 2: Path of Fire story chapter Bringing Out the Archon. To unlock a jackal, you'll need to complete either the springer's High Vault Mastery or the skimmer's Ride the Wind Mastery. Visit the Djinn Enclave and complete the renown heart to purchase your jackal from Drojkor, Spirit Squall. As you explore the Crystal Desert, you'll encounter mysterious sand portals that are impassable on foot. After unlocking your jackal's Shifting Sands Mastery, you can use its movement skill, Blink, to investigate them! Some portals are shortcuts to different areas of explorable zones or hidden areas and others lead to puzzles that require careful maneuvering and quick thinking to solve. It's a good idea to practice using Blink before tackling tough puzzles. The jackal's Enhanced Evasion Mastery allows you to dodge attacks while using Blink. The Adroit Evasion Mastery extends this benefit to all your mounts' movement skills. Once you've got all four of these mounts, take some time to familiarize yourself with their movement skills and fill out their Mastery tracks—and complete the Guild Wars 2: Path of Fire storyline as a prerequisite for unlocking your griffon. The griffon is a hidden mount that costs a total of 250 gold to unlock and requires you to travel across the Crystal Desert to complete collections, so you can prepare by saving up and fully exploring Guild Wars 2: Path of Fire zones. In the next blog post in this series, we'll look at how to unlock and use the griffon, roller beetle, warclaw, and skyscale. Happy riding! Developed by Last items Crafting disciplines Mystic Forge Guild Emblem Generator The second Guild Wars 2 press beta weekend has come and gone, and Massively was there every step of the way. Stay tuned throughout the day today for even more guides, impressions, videos, and Q&As to get you ready for the highly anticipated sequel to Guild Wars. In just the few minutes that it takes to traverse the 10 screens of Guild Wars 2's character creation process, I'm left with one overriding thought: This game looks ridiculously good. Ludicrously so, even. And I didn't even enter the game world yet! I always love a good, in-depth character creation system, as there's a joy in spending a good amount of time making exactly the sort of character you want to play. Unfortunately, most MMOs have stripped this process down to the bare basics, which is why I'm pleased to announce that it's actually a mini-journey in and of itself in Guild Wars 2. The point of this process isn't just to make a character but help you grow attached to this person and get to know him or her through it. What are this character's motivations? What branch of his or her profession is the most appealing? How did you become a hero? What obstacles do you have to overcome? Instead of playing the game itself, I took some time over this beta testing weekend to dissect every step of the character creation system and bring my findings back to those of you who want to start building your character in your mind.Part 1: Race The first few steps of Guild Wars 2's character creation are as straight-forward as can be. On the initial page, you'll choose your race: Charr, Human, Norn, Sylvari, or Asura. In this past weekend of testing, both Sylvari and Asura were disabled from testing, so I wasn't able to report on their looks and choices.Part 2: Gender Male or female. It's a doozy. Take your time.Part 3: Profession All eight classes are available for play in the beta. I thought it was a neat touch that whichever you select, your character's outfit, background, and ambient noises will change as a result. I really liked how the background was a mixture of the static painted image and moving parts, such as the embers swirling around the Elementalist or the gears revolving near the Engineer.Part 4: Appearance This is the screen where you'll probably be spending the most time, fine-tuning your looks until you've sculpted the character that suits you best. There's a dizzying array of options here, starting with a basic height slider and physique selection. Be it muscly, hairy, thin, busty, or sculpted, there's a good-looking option available (no overweight or ugly people allowed through Tyria's customs, I guess). Charr get the extra option of fur here, and Norn can select from a fine display of tattoos. Head options allow you to choose not only your character's face but his or her skin tone as well. Hair styles and colors are, as always, fun to play with, and within five seconds I had a Legolas-lookalike prepped for my Ranger. Human and Norn males get an extra option here -- facial hair -- whilst the womenfolk will have to go without. Additionally, Charr can pick their horns. Next up are your facial details, and it's here that simple "pick a box" selections morph into sliders. I'm personally not crazy about sliders for character creation, as it's too easy to make a freakishly weird-looking person. Just for kicks, I threw all my eye sliders over to the right and discovered I'd made large cat eyes. Aaaahhhh! The final part of the appearance page has you choosing your outfit's color scheme. The upper body, lower body, and footwear areas can each be shaded with three different colors, and there are 23 colors from which to choose.Part 5: Character choice #1 Once the look of your character is complete, it's time to start building the groundwork for his or her own personal story. ArenaNet does this through a series of four choices that are the launch pad for your personal in-game story. Think carefully about each, for they will have long-lasting consequences. With each of these choices, additional exposition is provided at the bottom of the screen to give you an idea about what this choice entails. The first choice is the only one that's dictated to you by your class, and whatever you choose will change the initial appearance of your character.Elementalist: "I study all the elements, but I wear a gem that symbolizes my love of _____." (Water, Fire, Earth, Air)Warrior: "I wear _____ on the battlefield. Because of this, I am recognized and given proper respect." (A spangenhelm, A cap helm, No helm at all)Guardian: "As a symbol of my dedication, I wear _____." (Conqueror's pauldrons, Fanatic's pauldrons, A visionary's helm)Engineer: "The most useful tool is my _____." (Universal multi-tool pack, Eagle-eye goggles, Panscopic monocle)Ranger: "My pet ____ fights at my side and guards my back." (Three pets are offered based on your race. This will be your starter companion.)Necromancer: "A Necromancer's closest companion is death. In acknowledgement of this, I mark my face with a symbol of a _____." (Trickster demon, Skull, Ghostly wraith)Thief: "In my line of work, it's important to understand the power of _____." (Anonymity, Determination, Subterfuge)Mesmer: "A Mesmer's mask creates an image. I choose to look out from behind a _____." (Harlequin's smile, Phantasm of sorrow, Fanged dread)Part 6: Character choice #2 This is a personality choice that's universal among all three races that I tested:Universal: "Trouble may come, but I use my _____ to overcome it." (Charm, Dignity, Ferocity)Part 7: Character choice #3 The seventh page concerns your character's basic background -- where you came from and how you got your beginnings.Human: "I was raised _____." (In the streets, By common folk, Among the nobility)Charr: "I am proud to be _____." (A Blood Legion soldier, An Ash Legion soldier, An Iron Legion soldier)Norn: "The most important quality of a great hero is _____." (Strength, Cunning, Instinct)Part 8: Character choice #4 I like to think of this choice as a connection to the game world, something that happened in your past that still influences you today.Human: "One of my biggest regrets is that _____." (I never searched for my true parents, I never found my sister's body, I passed up an opportunity to perform in the circus)Charr: "I would die for my warband, especially ___, my sparring partner." (Maverick, Euryale, Clawspur, Dinky, Reeva)Norn: "At a recent celebratory moot in Hoelbrak, I _____." (Blacked out, Got into a fight, Lost an heirloom)Part 9: Character choice #5 The last choice is about a backstory fact that your character had no direct control over.Human: "Everyone said I was blessed by _____ when I was young." (Dwayna, Grenth, Balthazar, Melandru, Lyssa, Kormir)Charr: "They tell me the soldier that sired me is a _____." (Loyal soldier, Sorcerous shaman, Honorless Gladium)Norn: "When I was still a kid, I had a vision. A Spirit of the Wild spoke to me and offered me its guardianship. That Spirit was a _____." (Bear, Snow Leopard, Wolf, Raven)Part 10: Summary and name It's here that your character's looks and background are summarized in a short story that weaves together the choices you've made up to this point. If you approve, you "sign" the story and thus enter your name as your final step. As with the first Guild Wars, you can have a two-part name. From then on it's time to enjoy a gorgeous cinematic that introduces you and your race. Depending on the choices you've already made, the cinematic will be tailored to reflect your background.Even a Bookah like you knows that Guild Wars 2 is on the way, but it takes an Asura's intellect, a Human's charm, a Sylvari's wisdom, a Charr's passion, and a Norn's love of strong mead to dive into beta and make sense of a game this complex. Fortunately, we have all five on the Massively staff. Enjoy our previews, guides, and our weekly GW2 column, Flameseeker Chronicles! 2012 video game by ArenaNet 2012 video gameGuild Wars 2Developer(s)ArenaNetPublisher(s)WW: ArenaNetWW: NCSoftCN: Tencent GamesCN: Kongzhong (formerly)Director(s)Colin Johanson (2012–2016, 2021)Mike O'Brien (2016–2019)Mike Zadorojny (2019)John Taylor (2019–2021)Joshua Davis (2021–present)Producer(s)Amy Liu (2022–present)Designer(s)Colin JohansonEric FlannumArtist(s)Daniel DociuKekai KotakiWriter(s)Ree SoesbeeJeff GrubbBobby SteinTom AbernathyComposer(s)Jeremy SouleMaclaine DiemerLena RaineStan LePardSeriesGuild WarsPlatform(s)Microsoft WindowsReleaseAugust 28, 2012[1] August 23, 2022 (Steam)Genre(s)MMORPGMode(s)Multiplayer Guild Wars 2 is a free-to-play,[2] massively multiplayer online role-playing game developed by ArenaNet and published by NCSoft. Set in the fantasy world of Tyria, the core game follows the re-emergence of Destiny's Edge, a disbanded guild dedicated to fighting Elder Dragons, colossal Lovecraftian-esque entities that have seized control of Tyria in the time since the original Guild Wars (2005), a plot line that concludes in the third expansion End of Dragons (2023). The game takes place in a persistent world with a story that progresses in instanced environments.[3] Guild Wars 2 is the fourth major entry in the Guild Wars series, and claims to be unique in the MMO genre[4] by featuring a storyline that is responsive to player actions,[5] something which is common in single player role-playing games but rarely seen in multiplayer ones. A dynamic event system replaces traditional questing,[6] utilising the ripple effect to allow players to approach quests in different ways as part of a persistent world. Also of note is the combat system, which aims to be more dynamic than its predecessor by promoting synergy between professions and using the environment as a weapon,[7][8] as well as reducing the complexity of the Magic-style skill system of the original game. As a sequel to Guild Wars, Guild Wars 2 features the same lack of subscription fees that distinguished its predecessor from other commercially developed online games of the time, though until August 2015 a purchase was still required to install the game.[9] The game sold over two million copies in its first two weeks.[10][11] By August 2013, the peak player concurrency had reached 460,000.[12] By August 2015, over 5 million copies had been sold, at which point the base game became free-to-play.[13] By August 2021, over 16 million accounts have been created.[14] On 16 August 2022, it was announced that Guild Wars 2 will be releasing on Steam as part of the game's 10th year anniversary celebration.[15] Five major expansion packs have been released for the game; Heart of Thorns (2015), Path of Fire (2017), End of Dragons (2022), Secrets of the Obscure (2023), and Janthir Wilds (2024). A sixth expansion pack is in development, slated for October 2025.[16][17] Each expansion pack introduces new content, including new regions of the world to explore, end-game encounters and masteries, with the first three also offering new professions, elite specializations, and seasons of 'Living World'; live content updates that continue expansion storylines and bridge the gap between them.[18] In February 2023, it was announced that future Guild Wars 2 expansions starting with Secrets of the Obscure would be adopting a new release model. Instead of releasing every two to four years with a season of Living World in between, smaller scale expansions would be released more frequently at a slightly reduced price. Additional content for these expansions will then be added through quarterly releases.[19] Guild Wars 2 features an extensive character creation system that allows the player to fine tune the look of their characters. Guild Wars 2 allows a player to create a character from a combination of five races and nine professions. The five races are the humans, the charr (introduced in Prophecies), the asura and the norn (introduced in Eye of the North), and the sylvari, a race exclusive to Guild Wars 2. The professions are divided into armor classes: "scholars" with light armor, "adventurers" with medium armor, and "soldiers" with heavy armor — five of the professions make a reappearance from Guild Wars. There is no dedicated healing class[20] as the developers felt that making it necessary for every party to have a healer was restrictive. The race and profession of the player determines the skills they can access. Guild Wars 2, like Guild Wars, uses a skill-based combat system, whereby players must select only 10 skills from a much larger pool, introducing an element of strategy. However, unlike Guild Wars, skill slots have predefined roles: the first five are determined by player's weapon and profession, the sixth is for healing, the seventh through ninth will be skills with no defined roles that are unlocked as the game progresses, and the tenth slot will be for an "elite" skill, which is also initially locked. In a departure from the high number of skills present in Guild Wars, Guild Wars 2 will focus on quality of skills over quantity[21] and attempt to minimize skill splits across game modes to reduce balancing complexity — one of the most common issues present in MMORPGs.[22] The low level cap of Guild Wars (20) was replaced with one at 80, which the developers stated struck the correct balance between allowing for character development and avoiding forcing players into the grind-based gameplay that too often accompanies a high level cap,[23] the elimination of which was a core design principle of the original Guild Wars. Player versus environment features a scaling system that lowers the players level and stats to reflect the levels of monsters, thereby maintaining a global level of difficulty. In player versus player, a player will have access to almost all skills and items, and compete at the fixed level 80,[24] so that all players will be on a level playing field. In addition to a small-scale, tactical combat PvP, the game features "World versus World", large scale combat taking place in a persistent world independent of the main world. Players are able to drop in and out "on the fly" and possess the ability to construct siege weapons, with rewards commensurate with their success. Guild Wars 2 offers eight crafting disciplines, allowing the player to practice two at a time, with a fee for switching. While there are basic recipes to follow, the player can experiment with different combinations of ingredients to discover new recipes.[25] As the game is set 250 years after its predecessor, players are unable to carry over their characters. There are, however, a small number of achievements and honors earned in Guild Wars which are carried over to Guild Wars 2. The accounts of both games must be linked in order to acquire these bonuses.[26] The Heart of Thorns expansion introduced raids, more difficult endgame content that introduce bosses with several unique mechanics, testing a squad's coordination, damage output, positioning, as well as the player's builds. There have been several additional raid wings with multiple bosses released since, along with Strike Missions, raid-like encounters focusing on a single boss, as well as more challenging Challenge Mode encounters. Wordmark of the game Guild Wars 2 takes place in the high fantasy world of Tyria, 250 years after the players' defeat of the Great Destroyer in the Eye of the North expansion. Five 'Elder Dragons' sleeping beneath the continent have awoken in the time since Guild Wars, causing widespread destruction to Tyria and corrupting its inhabitants. The once dominant humans of Tyria are in decline, supplanted from most of their land by natural disasters and war with the Charr,[27] who have finally reclaimed the last vestiges of their ancestral homeland of Ascalon from the humans. To the north, the Norn, a proud race of Nordic hunters, have been forced south by the rise of Jormag, the elder dragon of ice. In the west, the technologically advanced Asura have been forced to establish permanent homes above-ground after the minions of the first dragon to awaken, Primordus, took control of the Depths of Tyria. Near the forests where the Asura make their home are the Sylvari, a new race who have appeared in Tyria in the last 25 years, unaffected by the difficulties that plague the other races but with some as yet unexplained connection to the Elder Dragons. To the south, the continent of Cantha has been cut off by an isolationist and xenophobic political climate, which is reinforced by Zhaitan's undead navy. The continent of Elona, too, has been cut off; the only hint of its continued prosperity being the ongoing battle between the lich Palawa Joko's Mordant Crescent and Kralkatorrik, the crystal dragon in the Crystal Desert, as well as occasional spy reports from the secretive Order of Whispers. The Battle Isles have been wiped off the map entirely by the tidal wave caused by the re-emergence of the fallen kingdom of Orr, which came with the awakening of Zhaitan. The advancement of time from Guild Wars is reflected in the changes in culture, including armor and clothing, as well as in the advancement of in-game technology and a unified common language.[28][29] Guild Wars 2 features an expansive storyline called 'The Elder Dragon Saga', a story that is told through the first three expansions and 'Living World' seasons: replayable live content updates that continue storylines in an episodic format, bridging the gap between expansions. The Elder Dragon Saga plot line starts with the original game, and concludes in the expansion End of Dragons (2022). In the core game, the player character is tasked with reuniting the members of the disbanded Destiny's Edge, a multi-racial adventuring guild whose members' struggles and eventual reunion serve as a microcosmic metaphor for the larger-scale unification of the playable races and their groups into "The Pact", whose combined strength is needed to effectively combat and defeat Zhaitan, the undead Elder Dragon.[30] After the defeat of the Elder Dragon Zhaitan in the game's core story, the player character meets and forms together a new group of characters to battle the enigmatic and insane Sylvari, Scarlet Briar, as she creates strange enemy groups such as the "Molten Alliance" (a team-up between evil Charr and mole-like Dredge), the "Toxic Alliance" (a combination of lizard-like Krait and a splinter group from the "Nightmare Court", a group of evil Sylvari), and the "Aetherblades", a group of steampunk sky pirates. As the player and their new group of heroes, made up of characters from each race, battle Scarlet, they also learn about her past and investigate what she could be searching for. The season culminates with Scarlet attacking the main player city of Lion's Arch, landing a giant drill known as "The Breachmaker" in the center of the City. The player and their fellow heroes fight back and kill Scarlet, but not before Lion's Arch is left in ruins, and the Breachmaker pierces a magical Ley Line, awakening a previously unknown Elder Dragon, Mordremoth; the jungle dragon. Season 2 of the "Living World" picks up where Season 1 left off, sending the player towards the Maguuma Wastes to battle Mordremoth with the help of their fellow heroes and Destiny's Edge. The season begins with the unexpected explosion and crash landing of the "Zephyr Sanctum", a group of airships populated by the "Zephyrites", followers of Kralkatorrik's deceased dragon champion and daughter, Glint, who had escaped from his control and had tried to help Destiny's Edge kill him before the events of the game (see tie in novel, "Guild Wars 2: Destiny's Edge"). The player and their allies follow Scarlet Briar's path into Dry Top, a region to the west, and learn about the Elder Dragons and the motivations for her destructive conquest in Season 1. The player also learns that Zephyrites were transporting an egg laid by Glint before her death and go in search of it. At the end of the season, the Pact prepare once again to battle an Elder Dragon. However, while the player continues to hunt down Glint's Egg and learns that the Sylvari race are in fact minions of the Jungle dragon, the Pact fleet is destroyed over the jungle by a devastating attack by Mordremoth. Main article: Guild Wars 2: Heart of Thorns Following the events of Season 2, the entire pact fleet is in ruins and burning, strewn all over the heart of the Maguuma Jungle. The Jungle Dragon, Mordremoth begins to send its minions, the Mordrem, forth to establish its hold on Tyria—and to bring the Sylvari race under its control. The pact commander journeys through the jungle picking up the pieces, locating their missing allies, exploring and meeting different factions in the jungle and mastering new skills to use for their advantage. During the story the commander also continues their hunt for Glint's egg, which was taken by Caithe. Whilst doing so they discover a hidden golden city, Tarir, built after the events of Eye of the North to incubate and protect Glint's offspring. After catching up and reconciling with Caithe, the egg is then left there, guarded by the city's inhabitants, the Exalted. At the end of the expansion, the pact commander enters Mordremoth's mind and destroys him from the inside, and as a result, his magic is dispersed across Tyria, some being absorbed by Glint's egg in Tarir. Raids are introduced with Heart of Thorns which tell optional side stories, some of which lead into future releases. Heart of Thorns introduces raids, which together form their own optional side-story, leading into the story of Living World Season 3. Living World Season 3 is the third instalment of the Living World, picking up a year after the Guild Wars 2: Heart of Thorns story left off. The story deals with the aftermath of the expansion story, the effects of the death of two Elder dragon's on the planet, a political coup and Human civil war, and the return of Lazarus the Dire, a member of the thought-to-be-extinct antagonistic race, the Mursaat. During the season, Glint's Egg also hatches into a baby dragon, Aurene, Glint's daughter. It is revealed towards the end of the season that Lazarus is in fact the human god, Balthazar, in disguise. He has turned rogue and returned to Tyria to destroy the rest of the Elder Dragons and take their power for his own; an act that would rip Tyria apart. Main article: Guild Wars 2: Path of Fire Following the events of Living World Season 3, the pact commander has thwarted the first stage of Balthazar's catastrophic plan to destroy the Elder Dragons and absorb their power—but now he's raised a zealous army to cut a path of terror and destruction across the south, through the Crystal Desert. While humanity struggles with the sudden return of one of their patron gods, the Pact Commander travels to the desert, chasing after Balthazar to stop him before the god's ruthless crusade can upset the delicate balance of magic in Tyria and lead to the end of the world. Whilst doing so, the commander tricks the undead Lich, Palawa Joko trapping him in the underworld realm of the mists. Throughout the expansion the commander discovers more of Glint's secrets, such as Aurene's true purpose to replace the Elder Dragons and control their magic. At the end of the expansion, together Aurene and the Commander kill Balthazar. The death of the god causes a massive release of magical energy, most of which is absorbed by the Elder dragon Kralkatorrik, but Aurene receives some as well. Aurene then flies off, with Kralkatorrik closely following. After the events of Path of Fire, the Commander and their allies must contend with the empowered Elder Dragon, Kralkarorrik threatening Elona, which remains under the thrall of Palawa Joko's Awakened army generals. After Palawa Joko is freed from his captivity in the underworld, in retaliation he launches an all-out assault on Tyria which is eventually thwarted by the pact commander. After receiving a prophecy from Aurene that only one of them can live, the commander decides that the damage Kralkatorrik is doing to the mists outweighs the potential threat to Tyria of destroying him. They then launch an offensive of the dragon, with the goal of replacing him with Aurene. At the end of the season, Kralkatorrik defeated, Aurene manages to ascend to become an Elder Dragon and flies off, as the rest of the crew fly back to Lion's Arch, having successfully defeating another Elder Dragon. The Icebrood Saga focuses on the norn and the charr, as they defend their homelands in the Far Shiverpeaks and the Blood Legion Homelands from the threat of Jormag, the Elder Dragon of Ice and Persuasion. The saga begins with the four charr High Legions gathering in Grothmar Valley to celebrate the death of Kralkatorrik, while Jormag begins to stir in the far north. Through its promises of power, the Elder Dragon has amassed a sizable army of Icebrood. After the Charr blood legion imperator, Bangar Ruinbringer launches a mass-offensive to capture Jormag, Rytlock Brimstone, Braham, and Jhavi Jorasdottir lead the venture into the inhospitable Far Shiverpeaks to stop him, where players face eldritch abominations, learn about the history of the Spirits of the Wild, and confront Jormag themself. During the season, Jormag tells the player of a prophecy that either they or the fire Elder Dragon Primordus must kill the other. Jormag takes Rytlock Brimstone's son, Ryland Steelcatcher, as their champion, and begins attacks all over Tyria. Braham and the spirits of the wild merge as Primordus' Champion in hopes of steering the dragon directly into battle with Jormag. With both dragons primed for a clash, they are lured out to a field so that their champions and minions can battle each other. The Commander and any allies willing and able meet them on the battlefield and ensure that one side doesn't overtake the other. Eventually, both Jormag and Primordus are weakened and enraged enough that the two lunge at each other, destroying each other in the process. In the aftermath of their crash, both Braham and Ryland lose their champion status and return to normal. However, while Braham is relieved to be free of the influence, Ryland still holds a lot of anger. After a long fight with him against the Commander and both his parents, Ryland is killed and dies in Rytlock's arms. After witnessing the clash between the two Elder Dragons, Taimi and Gorrik returned to the Eye of the North, setting up a laboratory near Aurene so they could study and investigate the dragon cycle and any changes to the world from the magical fallout Main article: Guild Wars 2: End of Dragons End of Dragons opens with the reappearance of the Aetherblades, a group that have not been seen since Season 1. After capturing Gorrik, the commander leads chase through the mists with Aurene which ends with a crash landing in Cantha, a region of Tyria not visited since Guild Wars Factions. Since the events of Guild Wars Factions, the Empire of the Dragon severed all bonds with central Tyria and Elona. Cantha has its own history of turmoil and triumph, reflected in ancient landmarks, enduring artistry, and modern life. The Jade Wind petrified everything it touched, devastating the southeastern coastal regions. A stone sea holds no food—but it's absorbed centuries of magic. Canthan innovators have long sought practical applications for the material now known as “dragonjade”, achieving solutions undreamed of elsewhere in the world. New innovations are on the horizon. The expansion story deals with the effects on the world due amount of magic that has been released upon the death of the five elder dragons, resolving many plot threads from the game's ongoing storyline. The players meet the sixth elder dragon, Soo-Won, the dragon of water, who has been cleansing and controlling the released magic, filtering it through her to create Dragonjade, and effectively stopping the planet from collapsing in on itself. The commander learns that the five other elder dragons were the offspring of Soo-won and used to be benevolent creatures; only becoming corrupt because of greed and the amount of magic they consumed. During an explosion caused by the Aetherblades, Soo-won leaves the reactor and becomes quickly corrupt with magic. The world then begins to fall apart with the combined magic of the Elder dragons, called the Draconic Void. The commander journeys through Cantha to extract the Void from Soo-won, and restart the dragon cycle. Upon the void's extraction, Soo-Won dissipates and Aurene absorbs her magic, replacing her as the filter of magic throughout the world. The cycle of the dragons finally ends and a new era begins: the Age of Aurene. Months later, the commander is invited to a party hosted by Rama, who has formed a new detective agency with Gorrik. Taimi calls the commander with a tip about some jade miners who have gone missing, and the group decide to investigate the case. The commander arrives at the Gyala Delve with Rama and Gorrik to question the remaining jade miners, but finds them acting strangely and violently. Yao and Chul-Moo, the Brotherhood leader, agree to help them figure out what is going on in the mine. They explore the caves and discover them to be full of demons and shadow creatures. A shape-shifting demon called the 'Ravenous Wander' who is feeding on a ley line, attacks them and makes the commander faint. A few weeks later, the group come up with a plan to defeat the demons. The commander needs to face their past to charge a Recollector, a device created by Taimi. that can lure out and defeat the Ravenous Wanderer. They revisit some painful memories from earlier in the game to charge the recollector and start to feel more at peace with themself. Rama arms himself with an ancient Kurzick rune and practices a sealing spell to trap the wanderer. They lure it out of the ley lines, and fight it on the surface, eventually defeating the demon. In the aftermath of the battle, Rama invites the commander, Gorrik and Taimi to a triple date with Min, a minister. At the date, the commander realizes that their emotional healing is gradual and that the pain they feels can be a reminder of how far they have come. With the conclusion of the Elder Dragon Saga in the expansion End of Dragons (2022), it was announced that future storylines would be self-contained and feature characters, settings and plotlines that would be introduced and conclude in their respective expansions. Title Release Type Release Name Release date Notes The Elder Dragon Saga[31] Guild Wars 2 Base Game Launch Release August 28, 2012 8 story chapters. Fully free-to-play[2] Living World Season 1 Living World S1E1: Flame and Frost April 19, 2022 5 episodes. 1 Strike Mission (raid-style encounter) Originally released in 20 temporary, bi-weekly instalments between November 2012 – March 2014, later re-released through 5 replayable episodes in 2022.[32] Fully free-to-play[2] S1E2: Sky Pirates May 24, 2022 S1E3: Clockwork Chaos July 19, 2022 S1E4: Tower of Nightmares September 13, 2022 S1E5: Battle for Lion's Arch November 8, 2022 Living World Season 2 Living World S2E1: Gates of Maguuma July 1, 2014 8 Episodes. S2E2: Entanglement July 15, 2014 S2E3: The Dragon's Reach: Part 1 July 29, 2014 S2E4: The Dragon's Reach: Part 2 August 12, 2014 S2E5: Echoes of the Past November 4, 2014 S2E6: Tangled Paths November 18, 2014 S2E7: Seeds of Truth December 2, 2014 S2E8: Point of No Return January 13, 2015 Guild Wars 2: Heart of Thorns Expansion Launch Release October 23, 2015 17 story chapters Introduces gliding 4 raid wings (15 encounters) Purchased in a bundle with Guild Wars 2: Path of Fire[33] Living World Season 3 Living World S3E1: Out of the Shadows July 26, 2016 6 episodes Requires Heart of Thorns expansion to purchase S3E2: Rising Flames September 20, 2016 S3E3: A Crack in the Ice November 21, 2016 S3E4: The Head of the Snake February 8, 2017 S3E5: Flashpoint May 2, 2017 S3E6: One Path Ends July 25, 2017 Guild Wars

and rewards. The Living World's second season continued on November 4 with the release Echoes of the Past, which included a lengthy new story segment focusing on the story of Glint and her Dragon Egg among other things, an entire brand new map called The Silverwastes which added WvW mechanics in a PvE environment and including a number of new rewards and collections included an earnable Luminescent Shoulderguard armor piece. This was followed by Tangled Paths released on November 18, 2014, which added a new story segment, a few new rewards including another Luminscent armor piece, and an underground section to the Silverwastes map. On December 2, 2014, the seventh release in Season Two was released, called Seeds of Truth, which contained a new story instance, a large underground addition to the Silverwastes map which nearly doubled the map's size, a number of improvements to PvP and associated matchmaking, and two new Luminescent armor pieces for players to earn. This was followed on January 13, 2015, by Point of No Return, the final eighth and final episode in Season 2. This update included several new story instances, a brand new large group boss, two new Luminescent armor pieces for players to earn, and a number of new achievements, among other things. This episode serves to lead directly into the first expansion, Heart of Thorns. Main article: Guild Wars 2: Heart of Thorns On January 24, 2015, at PAX South held in San Antonio, ArenaNet announced the first expansion for the game titled Heart of Thorns.[68][69][70] The expansion introduced new group challenges, new profession specializations, a new profession, and an account-based "mastery" system for character progression through the new territories featured in it, as well as changes to current player versus player content.[68][69][70] It was released on October 23, 2015, to positive reviews.[71][72] With the second of the Living World seasons over, and an expansion on the way, releases were smaller as teasers for the expansion were released. On January 27, 2015, a number of bug fixes and balance improvements were released. Following that, a small scale Festival was released on February 10, 2015, called the Lunar New Year. This update included a relaunch of an older activity called Dragon Ball, featuring reworked gameplay, as well as new Daily Lunar New Year achievements, and new rewards. On August 29, 2015, the base game was made free to download. The free version of the game includes some restrictions over the core game, such as fewer character slots and some chat limitations.[13] The first episode of the 3rd season of the Living World was announced on 12 July 2016. Entitled Out of the Shadows, it was released on July 26, 2016,[53] containing a new story instance and map with related achievements, a new PvP map with related achievements, a new fractal, some tweaks to the PvP and WvW game modes, and a number of balance changes. Main article: Guild Wars 2: Path of Fire Guild Wars 2: Path of Fire is the second expansion pack for Guild Wars 2. It was made available for pre-purchase on August 1, 2017, and released on September 22, 2017.[73] The expansion introduces new features such as mounts, additional elite specializations for each profession, a bounty system for defeating certain enemies, and access to the areas of the Crystal Desert and Elona (first seen in the first game's Guild Wars Nightfall expansion).[74] It will also introduce new raids and season four of the living world storyline. Living World Season 4 refers to a schedule of content updates, beginning on the 28th of November, 2017.[53] It continues the story of Guild Wars 2: Path of Fire, picking up immediately where the story instance Small Victory (Epilogue) left off. It included six new open world zones, new mounts, raids, fractal dungeons, as well as new PvP arenas. The story tells the consequences of the Path of Fire events and a new threat from the Elder Dragon of Crystal and Fury. The Icebrood Saga is the fifth Living World series of content and story releases. It was announced at PAX West 2019 with a live presentation at Moore Theater in Seattle, Washington on August 30, 2019. Announced features included new playable zones with expansive meta-events, a new fractal dungeon, as well as new types of instanced content, Strike Missions and Dragon Response Missions. The new story chapters focus on the norn and the charr as they defend their homelands from the threat of the Elder Dragon of Ice and Persuasion. Main article: Guild Wars 2: End of Dragons The third expansion was announced on March 12, 2020.[75] The name, Guild Wars 2: End of Dragons, and a teaser trailer were revealed on August 25, 2020. It was made available for pre-purchase on July 27, 2021, and then released on February 28, 2022.[76][77] It includes a new story and maps set in the southern region of Cantha (first seen in the first game's Guild Wars Factions expansion), additional elite specializations for each profession, the first multiplayer mount, skiffs, fishing, challenging Strike Missions, as well as additional mastery types.[78] On March 22, it was announced that End of Dragons had outsold the previous expansion Path of Fire, with the active player count more than doubling over the last three years.[32] In February 2023, it was announced that future Guild Wars 2 expansions and content would be adopting a new release model, with the aim of providing more support for popular game modes and making frequent quality-of-life improvements to core gameplay systems such as professions. Instead of launching an expansion every two to four years with a season of Living World in between, smaller expansions would be released more frequently at a slightly reduced price. Additional content for these expansions would then be added through quarterly updates.[19] The first release in the End of Dragons expansion cycle was released on 28 February 2023, exactly one year after the initial End of Dragon's release. It brought with it a new open-world map and additional story chapters. On 16 August 2022, it was announced that Guild Wars 2 will be releasing on Steam as part of the game's 10th year anniversary celebration.[15] Steam players are able to experience the core Guild Wars 2 game for free (with the same restrictions applied to free accounts created on GuildWars2.com), with options to upgrade to Guild Wars 2: Heart of Thorns, Guild Wars 2: Path of Fire, and Guild Wars 2: End of Dragons from day one. A separate 'Complete Collection' bundle that includes all three expansions and Living World Seasons 2 through 5 for one price was also made available. The game was released on Steam on August 23, 2022.[79] A fourth expansion alongside future 'post-End of Dragons story updates' was announced on March 22, 2022.[32] On June 27, 2023, the name of the expansion, Secrets of the Obscure was announced.[80] The expansion centered on the Wizard's Tower, a long-standing mystery in Guild Wars lore, and the introduction of the Wizard Court, an ancient secretive organization battling incursions of creatures from the Mists. It was released on August 22, 2023. The expansion introduced new features, such as the Relic system for character customization and two new vertical exploration zones, Skywatch Archipelago and Amnytas. Updates to gameplay mechanics included streamlined access to elite specializations and revisions to existing content like Strike Missions. ArenaNet adopted a new release model, providing smaller, regular updates to expand upon the initial launch. Following the launch release, the game received 3 additional large additional content updates, which continued the expansion story and added an additional zone, Inner Nayos. Critics noted the expansion's emphasis on post-launch support and its integration of gameplay mechanics with narrative themes. The fifth expansion, titled Janthir Wilds was released on August 20, 2024.[citation needed] It was officially revealed on June 4, 2024, and released on August 20, 2024. The expansion introduces the uncharted region of Janthir, a land steeped in the history of the Mursaat and their White Mantle followers. Key features of the expansion include the introduction of Homesteads, a customizable player housing system, and the addition of spears as a new terrestrial weapon type for all professions. Two new open-world maps were added at launch, with additional maps and story content released in quarterly updates. The expansion also features new group content, including the first new raid wing since Guild Wars 2: Path of Fire and fractals, as well as updates to the Warclaw mount and new masteries. ReceptionAggregate scoreAggregatorScoreMetacritic90/100[81]Review scoresPublicationScoreComputer and Video Games8.9/10[82]G4 5/5[83]GameSpot9.0/10[84]GameSpy[85]GamesRadar+[86]IGN9/10[87]PC Gamer (US)94%[88] Guild Wars 2 was released to universal acclaim. It received a score of 90/100 on Metacritic.[81] PC Gamer's Chris Thursten gave the game a 94% rating, calling it "an accomplished and rewarding online RPG that does a great deal to reclaim the promise of its genre."[88] IGN's Charles Onyett rated the game a 9/10, commenting that the game is "one of the most exhaustively detailed and rewarding MMOs in existence, one that never unfairly penalizes and fosters an incredible urge to explore through a generous reward system and achingly pretty environment design".[87] GameSpot's Kevin VanOrd opened his review with "Guild Wars 2 is a paradise for explorers and thrill-seekers alike, and the best online role-playing game in years" and gave the game a 9.0/10.[84] Computer and Video Games Games Editor Andy Kelly gave a verdict of 8.9/10 closing with "An entertaining MMO that combats the dreaded grind with smart design. The lack of a monthly subscription fee only sweetens the deal."[82] GamesRadar's Hollander Cooper wrote in his review, "Everything a massively-multiplayer online RPG should be. It's original, massive in scope, and wonderfully social, removing many of the gates that held back the genre in the past. Being able to play with friends regardless of level or class is a gigantic leap forward, and one that, when mixed in with all of the other innovations in the genre, make Guild Wars 2 one of the best MMOs currently available." and giving it 4.5/5[86] and GameSpy's Leif Johnson wrote, "To Guild Wars 2's credit, its issues do little to detract from the immensely rewarding experience of the whole. It doesn't overthrow the conventions of the MMORPG, but it presents them in fresher and livelier packaging than its competitors."[85] Time listed Guild Wars 2 as the top video game of 2012. Editor Matt Peckham noted that "Guild Wars 2 is one of those rare games that unexpectedly knocks your life off-kilter, like a meteoroid banging into a satellite"... [It has] the feel of a living world, and the sort of compulsive anywhere-you-go playability other MMOs only dream of."[89] During the 16th Annual D.I.C.E. Awards, the Academy of Interactive Arts & Sciences nominated Guild Wars 2 for "Role-Playing/Massively Multiplayer Game of the Year".[90] ^ Mike Fahey (2012-06-28). "Guild Wars 2 Leaps Into Action August 28". Kotaku. Archived from the original on 2012-07-01. Retrieved 2012-06-28. ^ a b c "Play for Free Today". Archived from the original on 2023-07-15. Retrieved 2023-08-04. ^ a b c "Important Guild Wars 2 Questions Answered". ZAM. September 2009. Archived from the original on 2009-10-01. Retrieved 2009-10-03. ^ Mike O'Brien (2010-04-27). "Guild Wars 2 Design Manifesto". GuildWars2.com. Archived from the original on 2022-04-12. Retrieved 2015-01-15. ^ "Personal Story". 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