

ELEMENTALIST

LEARN IT, BOOKAH!

GUILD WARS 2 PRE-RELEASE COMPREHENSIVE ELEMENTALIST GUIDE

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Harmony.

As the elements dance in sync with the natural order of the world around us, such that the air spreads the fire, as it scorches the earth then is doused by water.

So does the Elementalist flow with it, becoming one with the gentle breeze, the soothing ember, the soft soil, and the cool puddle.

However, in times such as these, greater forces are called to meet upon the battlefield. Storms rip through the sky, volcanoes conflagrate the ground, the earth swallows creatures whole, and the ice bitterly freezes limb and organ, all in the vengeance produced of an Elementalist.

Let our allies walk with their steel, their arrows, and their technology, for they cannot begin to fathom our ancient roots of power!

For we are Elementalist...

For we are one with the world...

For we wield ultimate power...

And this...

Is our story...



ABOUT THIS GUIDE

GLOSSARY

Projectile	A type of skill that launches from the character, through the air, and strikes the enemy after crossing the distance.
Point-Blank	A type of skill that only affects foes directly adjacent to you.
Area	A type of skill that affects a designated area, usually in the form of a circle.
Cone	A type of skill that emits in front of the character in a 45 degree angle.
Wall	A type of skill that creates a wall-like effect.
Trap	A type of skill that triggers when the enemy moves past a certain point where the skill is designated on the ground.
Form	A type of skill that changes the player's form.
Special	A type of skill that has an uncommon form of range or path it follows, detailed in the review underneath the skill type.
Instant	This skill has no cast time.
Quick	This skill has a cast time of .25 seconds to 1 second.
Charged	This skill has a cast time of 1.25 seconds or greater.

RANKINGS

Each ranking receives a number between 1-5, 1 being slightly effective or not at all, in the associated manner, and 5 being very effective in the associated manner.

Offense	How offensive this skill is, usually contributing to, either directly or indirectly, the amount of damage dealt to a foe.
Defense	How defensive this skill is, usually contributing to, either directly or indirectly, the amount of damage or debuffing mitigated from yourself or an ally.
Support	How supportive this skill is, either through healing/buffing allies, or debuffing foes.

DISCLAIMER

Keep in mind while reading this extensive, comprehensive guide that this information was researched, reviewed, and published based on wiki information and videos of pre-release demos. Because of this, the game is still a work in progress, and as such, some information provided in this guide may not be accurate to the current version of the game. Rest assured, updates to the guide will be applied on a regular basis as further information comes available.

CHAPTER 1: AIR MAGIC

Whats this? A pupil? You think your bookah brain can handle the teachings of an Asuran Elementalist? Ha! We'll see what you've got then!

*What more left to do now
but play in the rain.
With strike downs of lighting
quick running blue veins.
A simple sensation
right under my skin.
Another translation
as death marches in.*



No other element has, and never will be, so devastating to a single foe as the power of air. One hundred million volts of electricity passing through a body, it cares not for the armor of man. Relentless, unstoppable, air magic is the supreme epitome of concentrated destruction.



Storm Aura: While attuned to air, lightning bolts strike enemies near the elemental.

STAFF SKILLS



Chain Lightning
Quick Projectile

Your basic attack skill on the two hander. This attack hits multiple enemies, so far I've only seen it hit 2 people max, and the wiki lists a trait that allows it to hit more foes. A decent projectile attack, however it deals less damage to a single foe than some other basic attacks.

Offense: 3

Defense: 1

Support: 1



Lightning Surge
Charged

This skill, deals a good bit of damage and puts a stack of blind onto an enemy, which makes them miss with their next attack. Keep in mind that multiple applications of blind are redundant. So this in combination with Signet of Air will not put two stacks of blind on an enemy, so don't do it bookah!

Offense: 4

Defense: 3

Support: 2



Gust
Point-Blank Quick

Foes in front of you are knocked back roughly 10 feet. This skill is best used to interrupt casting, or to keep some melee bookah away from you.

Offense: 1

Defense: 4

Support: 1



Windborne Speed
Instant Area

You, and nearby allies (roughly 2m radius) gain swiftness, which increases the character's speed by 33%, for 10 seconds. It is currently unknown if this stacks with the speed increase provided by Storm Aura. You can never get where you need to go too fast, so whether its retreating, or getting to the battle faster, this makes for a great utility.

Offense: 1

Defense: 1

Support: 4



Static Field
Quick Area Trap

This skill places a medium sized area where you designate. Foes are dazed if they attempt to enter/exit the area. A trait allows you to make this skill stun instead. More recent data shows that it always stuns, however I'm going to safely assume that demo characters are pre-traited to a certain balanced build. The opportunity to combo other AoEs onto the stunned enemy are tremendous after dropping this on somebody.

Offense: 1

Defense: 4

Support: 2

SCEPTER SKILLS



Lightning Strike
Quick

This basic attack is the most powerful amongst other basic attacks in air magic, dealing around an additional 33% more damage than its staff and dagger counterparts, and isn't a projectile, meaning it can't be obstructed or dodged in most cases. It lacks in the fact it can only hit one foe, and the others can hit multiple, so choose your weapon carefully for the nature of your encounter bookah! Also, this attack may deal additional damage to foes that are knocked down, more research will be necessary for that detail.

Offense: 4

Defense: 1

Support: 1



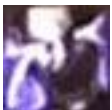
Arc Lightning
Instant Sustained

This attack when activated, starts dealing damage immediately, and when uninterrupted, can deal quite a bit of damage over time. The sustain lasts for about four seconds, so know that you won't be casting anything else for that period of time. Not a good initiator for PvP as this attack instantly gives away your position, even if you're out of range to deal damage, the animation still connects to the foe.

Offense: 4

Defense: 1

Support: 1



Blinding Flash
Instant

This attack is similar to Lightning Surge, except that the cast time is zero seconds. One of them may be AoE, but the videos haven't made that easy to determine. Further research is necessary.

Offense: 3

Defense: 3

Support: 2

FOCUS SKILLS



Swirling Aura
Quick Area

A projectile reflector that lasts 4 seconds is good stuff, so a ranger's Rapid Fire and possibly Barrage, and a thief's Unload, will end up being quite a ruiner of days with this active on you.

Offense: 2

Defense: 4

Support: 2



Gale
Quick

So far, I haven't seen this in a video as of yet, so I can't comment on it, but the description is similar to Gust, so I will rate it as such.

Offense: 1

Defense: 1

Support: 4

DAGGER SKILLS



Lightning Whip
Quick Special

This is an interesting basic attack in the manner it hits foes (like a whip as the name would insinuate), it deals damage similar to Chain Lightning, unless you hit at the furthest maximum range, in which it deals half of the usual total damage. So far it doesn't appear that there is a maximum number of foes you can hit with this attack, so if there are 3+ foes expected at close range in your encounter, this is the basic attack for you.

Offense: 4

Defense: 1

Support: 1



Lightning Touch
Instant Sustained Cone

This sustained lightning cone skill provides excellent close ranged damage, and applies a stack of Vulnerability, lowering your foe's overall defense. However it still suffers from the same inability to cast other spells during the sustain, but unlike Arc Lightning, you're not having to worry about revealing your position in PvP, because you're already in their face anyways.

Offense: 4

Defense: 1

Support: 2



Shocking Aura
Instant Shield

This shield, that lasts 5 seconds, will stun attackers, for roughly half a second. A good stun ability for the low cast time spells you'll be using with the various off-hand weapons available to use, will allow you time to get some spells off with less possible interruption, take less damage, and dish out more uninterrupted damage.

Offense: 1

Defense: 3

Support: 2



Ride the Lightning
Instant Form

This skill transforms you into a torrent of lightning. While targeting a foe, you automatically move towards them and damage them at the end of the movement, crossing paths with an unintended foe will stop your movement and damage them instead. You may use this ability without a target to move about the battlefield, however, Mist Form would be better for general movement and retreating purposes.

Offense: 3

Defense: 2

Support: 1



Updraft
Unknown

Another skill I have barely seen used, I will provide more information about it later. But so far, last I saw it used, it is some kind of dodge ability.

Offense: 1

Defense: 3

Support: 3

If your brain hasn't exploded yet bookah then come around next session in which I teach you the ways of the ebb and flow, the sifting of the tides, Water Magic!

CHAPTER 2: WATER MAGIC

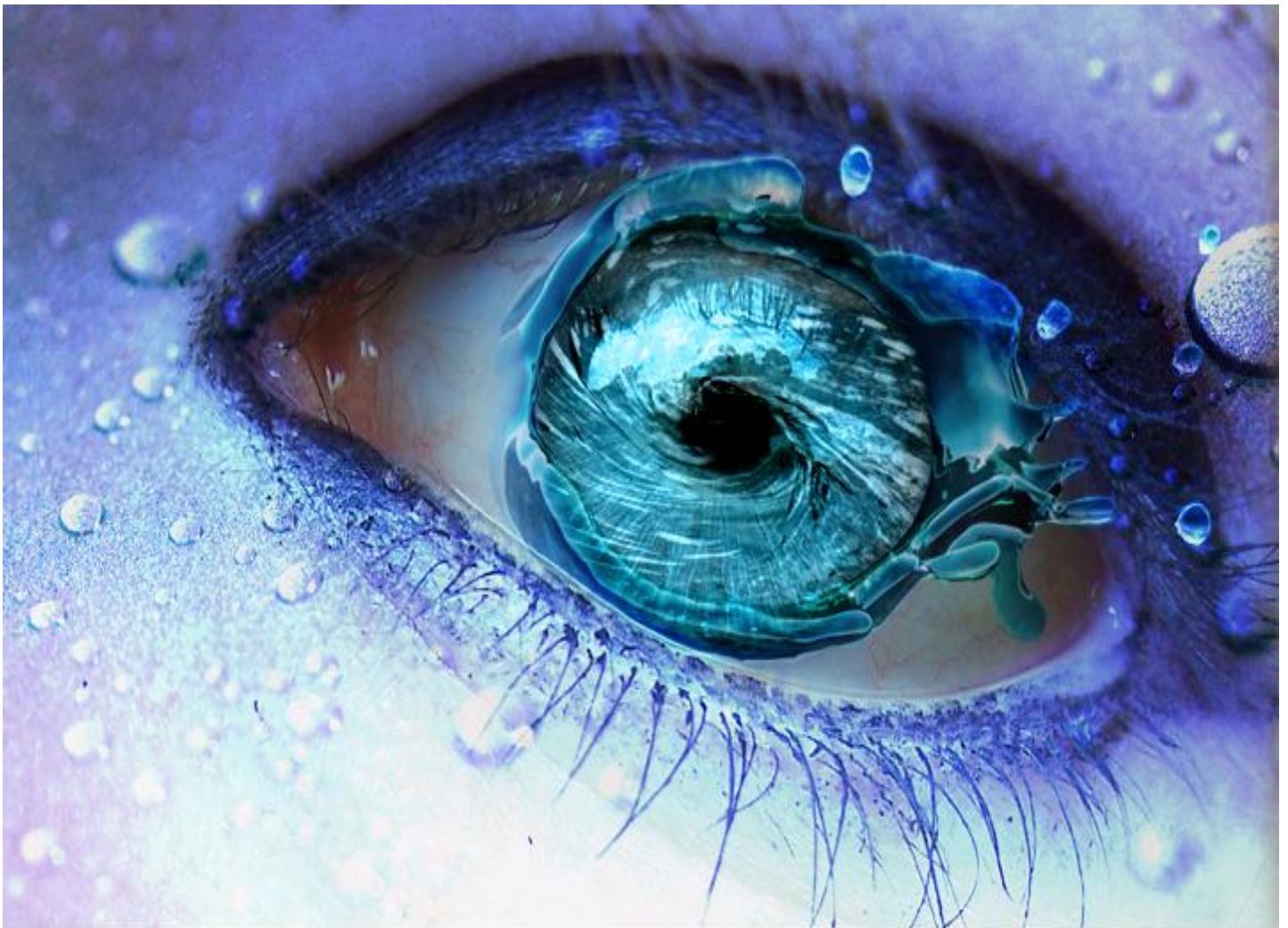
Your brain must be practically melting from my lesson on Air Magic, but you'll simply have to endure it, because we're moving right along to Water Magic, take notes if your puny non-Asuran brain can't handle it.

*Laced with seduction
it falls from the rocks.*

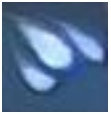
*Laced with foam
it rushes to shore.*

*Filled with life
it dances and sparkles.*

*Filled with hope
it brings life to all.*



Although water magic is my least favorite, as wet Asuras are about as hideous looking as wet cats, I will forgo my distaste for it, and teach you the push and pull of the tides, the natural nourishment, and the bitter cold that comes from water magic.



Frigid Aura: Allies near to the elementalist are continuously healed. When Water becomes attuned, nearby enemies are chilled.

STAFF SKILLS



Water Blast
Quick Projectile

This projectile attack for the staff is sup-par damage (half that of Fireball's) supplied with a small AoE heal for allies within melee range. I'll admit, I'm not too impressed with this basic attack, the others from water are much better.

Offense: 2

Defense: 1

Support: 2



Ice Spike
Charged Area

This spell has a one second cast time, then there is a one second interval before a large ice spike hit's the ground dealing fairly significant damage and applying Vulnerability, which reduces defense, for about 5 seconds, to each enemy in the AoE. (Damage may be larger the closer the foe is to the area's epicenter)

Offense: 4

Defense: 1

Support: 2



Frozen Ground
Quick Area

This is a massive AoE (duration 5 seconds) that deals no damage but causes freezing, which slows all foes within the area by 66%, increases cool down time of foe's skills by 33%, and disables dodging. The debuff sustains as long as the foe is within the area. This is a great spell for group encounters in which you can drop more AoEs. This ability combos into Ice Spike quite well, as it helps to keep your enemy within the similarly sized area, and makes it so that Ice Spike's long total cast time is less troublesome, and impossible to dodge out of.

Offense: 1

Defense: 3

Support: 2



Geyser
Area Quick

This small area spell creates a geyser that heals allies and damages foes within the area. Because of its lengthy cool down time, it's important to save this for decisive group battles that will also hit foes. If you just need to heal the group with no foes about, either wait for your Frigid Aura to heal allies, or if your party is in an emergency situation, use the next spell.

Offense: 3

Defense: 1

Support: 4



Healing Rain
Quick Area

So far this, and Healing Wave, are best group healing spells I've seen on the elementalists's pallet. The area is colossal, the regeneration is three seconds, and the regen can be replenished for as long as you're in the spell's area, and on top of that, removes conditions on allies. A great way to get an temporary advantage in the midst of a large, decisive group battle.

Offense: 1

Defense: 1

Support: 5

SCEPTER SKILLS



Ice Shards
Quick Projectile

This basic attack is astoundingly good for water magic. It projects four ice shards to your foe each dealing decent damage individually. Their combined total damage competes with the single target damage of Lightning Strike and causes vulnerability. However, the ice shards may impact upon other unintended targets if they are in the way of the projectile.

Offense: 3

Defense: 1

Support: 2



Shatterstone
Area Instant

Although this skill has a zero second cast time, the crystal doesn't explode and deal damage until after a 2 second wait, giving the enemy a chance to escape from the area before the damage occurs. Best to combo this after Freezing Gust (Focus) to make their escape less likely to occur.

Offense: 4

Defense: 1

Support: 1



Water Trident
Quick Projectile

This missile attack reminds me of Water Blast, except a more powerful version. I'm probably not seeing some other aspects of it because the bookahs in the demo videos tend to solo, so there may be some other support parts of it that aren't apparent, further research will be necessary.

Offense: 3

Defense: 1

Support: 2

FOCUS SKILLS



Freezing Gust
Quick

This skill freezes the opponent where the target is located, don't be fooled however, as this looks like it could be a small AoE centered on the target, but it only effects the target. The freeze lasts for about 4 seconds, and deals decent damage. Keep in mind that freeze is a very good mobility debuff, so its best used to combo into a string of other spells that are normally easy to dodge out of for maximum damage, or to retreat. Also a great spell to catch a fleeing target.

Offense: 3

Defense: 1

Support: 4



Comet
Quick Area

The area of this spell is not designated. The center of it is focused on your current target. All foes in the area (which is fairly small) take good damage and are dazed (interrupted and can't use skills) for 2 seconds. A good skill for a group battle in a narrow passage where 2 seconds of daze will see the most benefit, and if your focusing on one target, it combos well after Freezing Gust.

Offense: 4

Defense: 2

Support: 3

DAGGER SKILLS



Vapor Blade
Quick Special Projectile

This skill emits from the elementalists in a line towards the current target, or directly in front of them if there is no target. It then boomerangs back to the character after traveling about 10ish meters, dealing decent damage each time it passes through any number of foes. This spell takes a bit of directional skill to produce maximum damage. Also, if the Vapor Blade impacts some kind of environment such as a stone wall, it will not return.

Offense: 4

Defense: 1

Support: 1



Cone of Cold
Instant Point-Blank Special

I ought to slap the bookah that named this skill, don't let it fool you, this is NOT a cone spell, it does NOT spray in an acute angle in front of you like Fire's Dragon's Claw or Air's Lightning Touch, I would rename this skill to something like Frigid Breath. Rant aside, this point-blank ability deals good damage to any number of foes in a LINE in front of you.

Offense: 4

Defense: 1

Support: 1



Frozen Burst
Quick Point-Blank Area

This spell produces a decent sized area centered on the elemental that deals decent damage and freezes opponents for roughly 2.5 seconds. A spell for the elemental that likes to be in the thick of group battles, or needs an escape plan from an ambush.

Offense: 3

Defense: 1

Support: 3



Armor of Frost
Unknown Area

I haven't seen this spell used in any videos so far, so no calculation on the cast time, but a spell that gives yourself and allies additional armor for five seconds, and when hit, freezes foes, sounds pretty good. A potentially good group battle crowd control spell.

Offense: 1

Defense: 3

Support: 3



Healing Wave
Unknown Area

Another spell I haven't seen much of, so no cast time until later, however what I have seen (mainly various descriptions) have shown that this is a powerful large area healing skill, similar to Healing Rain, but with a different animation.

Offense: 1

Defense: 1

Support: 5

Still keeping up ay? Water's pretty easy to learn with its crowd control and healing, but I hope you're prepared for the next mind blowing session in which I go into the dynamics of the inferno, the scorching conflagration, Fire Magic!

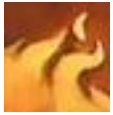
CHAPTER 3: FIRE MAGIC

I figured you would have dropped out of these sessions by now bookah, glad to see that your brain hasn't melted out of your tiny ears. Today we continue our lessons with Fire Magic.

*It cackles when it laughs,
Destroying everything in its path,
Those who try to stop will suffer a horrific death.
Turning their bones into a grayish ash,
But sadly it will die down to rest,
Dreaming of things to destroy,
For when it wakes up next.*



Fire, it has and always will be one of the most dangerous magics to work with, where it reluctantly bows to Air in the destruction of solo foes, it gladly takes it's place as the master of uncontrollably wild immolation. It spreads itself, its hunger never satiated, leaving nothing, not even a foe's corpse, in it's wake.



Blazing Aura: All enemies striking the elementalist within melee range take fire damage.

STAFF SKILLS



Fireball
Quick Projectile

This basic attack deals the highest single target damage amongst other basic attacks on the staff from the other 3 elements. This would be good enough, but it also deals damage to foes adjacent to your target, a great basic attack.

Offense: 4

Defense: 1

Support: 1



Lava Font
Quick Area

This attack deals initial damage followed by additional damage if foes stays inside the area. It is important to remember that the area is very small, which makes it easily avoidable after the initial damage, not even necessarily by dodging, but just by moving normally. Fire doesn't have much for crowd control, so combo this after something like Frozen Ground or Static Field to keep them in the area. A trait causes Lava Font to fire projectiles if you need it.

Offense: 4

Defense: 1

Support: 1



Flame Burst
Quick

Ever felt like watching your opponent simply burst into flames? Its quite satisfying. Anyways, this is free damage, and about as close to instant cast time as you can get. Although the damage isn't much, there's no reason for this spell to be off cool down when attuned to Fire. Keep in mind that burning is a stackable damage over time condition.

Offense: 3

Defense: 1

Support: 1



Burning Retreat
Instant Special Wall

Your one and only, staff only, non-utility, gtf0 spell. You dodge directly backwards, about double the length of a normal dodge, leaving an equally lengthy wall of fire in your wake. You get out of trouble, and your ranger friend squeals with joy, because now they get to shoot fire arrows through your wall. The wall applies burning if they pass through the wall, which is two stacks of burning. Why two stacks? Why?! Because I just told you Flame Burst should always be on cool down bookah! Pay attention!! *fwap*

Offense: 2

Defense: 4

Support: 2



Meteor Shower
Quick Area

Arguably the most powerful area of effect spell on the staff, each meteor deals around 25% more damage than Fireball. I forbid you, **FORBID YOU**, from using this spell without casting a halfway decent piece of crowd control with it (preferably before it): Frozen Ground; Static Field; Unstable Ground; Shockwave; naked /dance for all I care! Something to keep the foes within the spell's area, as the destruction, and the cool down, are far too ridiculous for you to screw it up and only hit with one meteor. If its anything you take away from this session, its that you **DO NOT** cast Meteor Shower without crowd control!

Offense: 5

Defense: 1

Support: 1

SCEPTER SKILLS



Flamestrike
Quick

More DoTs you say? Stack burning to your hearts content with this ability. Low cast time/cool down means you'll see quite a bit of health fall off every half second. This spell demands it be spammed, as just one stack of burning is never good damage.

Offense: 3

Defense: 1

Support: 1



Dragon's Tooth
Charge

This spell has a one second cast time, then there is a one second interval before a large ice spike hit's the ground dealing fairly significant damage...Sounds familiar right? Yes, Fire isn't very original, and like's to cheat off it's neighbors. This is the Fire version of Ice Spike, but it traded vulnerability for huge damage (seen it crit for 5.5k in PvP).

Offense: 5

Defense: 1

Support: 1



Phoenix
Quick Area Special

This spell's an AoE that follows a trail based on the closest enemy in the designated area, then hits other foes in the area, then returns to the caster to replenish some health. You can cast it without any enemies in the area and it will still replenish health.

Offense: 4

Defense: 1

Support: 2

FOCUS SKILLS



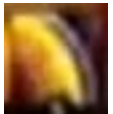
Flamewall **Quick Wall**

A basic wall of fire, applies a stack of burning to foes that pass through it, and makes your allies feel like you acknowledge their existence by providing a projectile enhancer. Due to the nature of this spell, I've witnessed it invade various Guardian bubble protection spells and deal damage, good thing to remember.

Offense: 3

Defense: 1

Support: 2



Fire Shield **Quick**

This is a very short lived fire shield, it only lasts around four seconds, and burns foes that hit you, not much damage here unless your foe simply has no idea what this is.

Offense: 2

Defense: 1

Support: 1

DAGGER SKILLS



Dragon's Claw **Quick Projectile Cone**

This spell throws out three flames that scorch across the ground in front of the elemental in the form of a cone. Hitting a single target with one flame deals less damage than Fireball, but if you're up close, it deals about twice the damage of Fireball by hitting with all three flames. Keep in mind that these projectiles do not pierce through foes like Vapor Blade, once a flame hits a foe, it stops.

Offense: 4

Defense: 1

Support: 1



Drake's Breath **Quick Point-Blank Special**

This skill is similar to Cone of Cold, except properly named, as it too is not an actual cone. This spell appears to deal damage as well as apply stacks of burning, I've seen up to 4 stacks on a mob after taking the full punishment of Drake's Breath, and dealt about three times the total damage of Cone of Cold. Combos well into Flame Touch.

Offense: 4

Defense: 1

Support: 1



Burning Speed **Instant Sustained Special Wall**

Oh look, Burning Retreat, except in the other direction. Same trail of fire that applies burning stacks. One interesting difference is that, while the movement of this spell is started immediately after casting, hence the instant keyword, there is a sustained duration in the form of a cast timer, which means that the spell, and ultimately your movement, can be interrupted by you or the enemy.

Offense: 2

Defense: 1

Support: 3



Ring of Fire
Unknown Area

Cast time unknown until more up-to-date videos are released. Essentially this is Flamewall in the form of a circle, causing burning and providing a cross class combo opportunity.

Offense: 3

Defense: 1

Support: 2



Flame Touch
Quick Point-Blank

A quick single target high damaging spell, deals even more damage if your target is burning, easily combos after Flamestrike (Scepter) or Drake's Breath (Dagger) for significantly high DPS.

Offense: 4 (5 if target is burning)

Defense: 1

Support: 1

Sweating from the heat huh? Well you can rest your bookah brain, that's it for Fire Magic. Next session we work with something that Asurans are quite familiar with, as our ancestors came from deep within it. The benevolent protector of all, the slow conqueror of all things living and non, Earth Magic.

CHAPTER 4: EARTH MAGIC

And here you are again, you've gotten this far, maybe you really do have what it takes to be a quality elemental. But you've still got a ways to go, we're only halfway done with the teachings.

You walk all over me
all the time.
But I don't mind.
You throw me around,
tossed so carelessly.
But that's okay.
You use me,
to take the beatings.
But I like that.
You discard me,
like you don't need me.
But I'll always be there
for you.



Earth brings us into existence, and will protect us, no matter how many times we take advantage of it. Today I will show you how to take full advantage of the ground beneath your feet, and use it to cripple your foes, and keep you from harm.



Magnetic Aura: The elementalist gains additional protection against magical damage.

STAFF SKILLS



Stoning
Quick Projectile

This basic attack deals sub-par damage, but not as bad as Water Blast, however it does apply a stack of Weakness, so a nice way to prep for oncoming damage from say, a melee attacker who is inevitably going to close in on you.

Offense: 3

Defense: 1

Support: 2



Eruption
Charged Area

The cast time for this spell is actually immediate, but I used the charged keyword since after the cast, there is a roughly 2.5 second interval before the eruption actually occurs. If your foe is still in the area after this long interval, they will take decent damage as well as six stacks of bleeding.

Offense: 4

Defense: 1

Support: 1



Magnetic Aura
Charged

This spell provides a shield that reflects projectiles for roughly 4.5 seconds. Unlike swirling aura which protects a large area, this shield only protects yourself. Yet still applies to things such as Ranger's Rapid Fire and Thief's Barrage.

Offense: 2

Defense: 4

Support: 1



Unsteady Ground
Quick Wall Trap

This medium sized wall trap deals light damage and applies a stack of cripple to any foes that pass it. It is a great way to set boundaries. People that know what this spell does don't like crossing it ("I don't like cripple, gotta stop or go around, but it won't be the end of the world if I go through."), and people that don't know what this spell does, really don't like crossing it ("Omg wtf is this shit some OP one hit kill trap, nuh uh, ain't gettin me broski, imma go the other way around!") (call it soft fear/mind games). Examples of good ways to place this is during some kind of retreat, around a corner as a trap, to defend you location, or in cases where you need cc to keep your foe inside a powerful AoE spell.

Offense: 1

Defense: 3

Support: 1



Shockwave
Quick Area

So a little birdie told me you wanted some overpowered crowd control, well here it is. A 10 meter AoE centered on yourself that applies a stack of bleeding and a roughly 5 second immobilize. This is a no brainer, immobilize and blow them up, do it.

Offense: 2

Defense: 4

Support: 1

SCEPTER SKILLS



Stone Shards
Quick Projectile

This projectile deals slightly less initial damage than Stoning, but applies 2 stacks of bleeding. A good initiator for a big bleed stack combo.

Offense: 3

Defense: 1

Support: 1



Rock Barrier
Charged



Hurl
Unknown

Rock Barrier conjures five stones that hover around you and provides you additional protection for however long you maintain them. The cool down for this spell doesn't occur until you have performed the secondary action for this chain skill (Hurl) for each stone (5) that you conjured. When you're wielding a scepter, you should always have Rock Barrier summoned, as you will usually be closer to your foes when wielding a scepter.

Offense: 3

Defense: 3

Support: 1



Sandstorm
Quick Special

This spell casts some form of tornado in your target's direction, this tornado proceeds in a line path beyond that for about 15 meters, blinding (auto miss next hit) and dealing sub-par damage to any foe it passes through. Its not what I would refer to as a high priority group battle spell, but it's certainly an option if you've got the extra time to toss it out.

Offense: 3

Defense: 3

Support: 1

FOCUS SKILLS



Magnetic Wave
Instant Area

I haven't seen too many quality examples of this spell, it deals good damage at instant speed, but there are some other aspects of this spell that aren't quite clear as of yet, will update as more information becomes available.

Offense: 4

Defense: 1

Support: 1



Obsidian Flesh
Quick



Obsidian Flame
Unknown

Need four seconds of invulnerability to /dance taunt your foes? Or do something productive like retreat or work on killing them without taking damage? This'll do exactly that. During the four seconds you are immune to damage, assuming that for a condition to apply to you, that ability would have to actually hit, so you may be able to also dodge any conditions (will require more research). Also during the four seconds, you have the ability to chain into Obsidian Flame, which I have yet to see, however I imagine it is a decent to good damaging AoE centered on yourself.

Offense: 3

Defense: 5

Support: 1

DAGGER SKILLS



Impale
Quick

This spell deals light damage and applies a stack of bleeding, which lasts about 8 seconds. This reminds me of Flamestrike from Fire (Scepter), as it too demands that you spam it for good bleeding damage.

Offense: 3

Defense: 1

Support: 1



Ring of Earth
Quick Area

This small AoE deals good damage, and applies a 12 second stack of bleeding, and provides you five seconds of additional protection. I can see this being weaved into a defensive combo somewhere.

Offense: 4

Defense: 3

Support: 1



Magnetic Grasp
Quick Special

This is a gap closer for Earth, however Burning Speed is probably the better option as it leaves behind a flame wall and applies burning. This spell would be a decent option if it applied a bleeding stack.

Offense: 3

Defense: 1

Support: 1



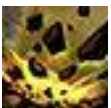
Earthquake
Quick Area

This AoE is more about the crowd control then the sub-par damage dealt. A two second knockdown will be long enough for you to string together a few spells without them getting very far, especially for this next monster of a spell.

Offense: 2

Defense: 3

Support: 2



Churning Earth
Charged Area

Charged is an understatement, the cast time on this spell is a startling 5 seconds, and the maximum area is about the size of Healing Rain (massive). Currently undetermined as to if you can cut the cast time short with a smaller area, after further research I will update on that. During the cast, the area expands, foes caught within the expanding area become crippled (-50% movement, can't dodge), possibly meaning they can't escape the area. The damage of this spell is intense for Earth's standards, and applies 4 stacks of bleeding to all foes within the area.

Offense: 5

Defense: 1

Support: 2

And that's Earth for you, slow to move, but provides the best personal defense of all the elements, and nobody likes being stoned. What? You think we're done now that we've covered all four elements? Not even close bookah! Wipe that dirt off, because here comes the hard part. Applying all of these elements together, and strategizing for each weapon set, hope you're ready!

CHAPTER 5: WEAPON SET STRATEGIES

The only things I've learned about outside of Asuran teachings, is melee combat, from a Charr Tribune. Mostly he babbled on about his favorite weapons, but he taught me something very important; the aspects that measure a weapon's effectiveness.

For a melee weapon, the factors that determine a weapon's effectiveness are power, range, and control. A weapon lacking power can make combat outstretch one's own survivability. A weapon lacking an amount of range brings a combatant that much closer to his demise, and tends to lack a deadly amount of power. A weapon lacking control is not one with the wielder, and will leave the wielder vulnerable to attacks. A weapon without this balance contains flaws, and flaws in a weapon can mean life or death to the wielder.

I pondered for many a fortnight on this, and considered how I could compare this to the variety of spells at my disposal. I realized that spells, much like a sword, are nothing more than extension of our own body, so an Elementalist that doesn't know the dynamics of their spells is like a Warrior not knowing which end of their sword goes where.

Essentially these three aspects still apply to spells, and the most powerful elementalists will always have a firm grasp on each of these factors. An elementalist must be able to distribute a tremendous amount of power to make up for what it lacks in survivability. An elementalist must maintain range compatible with its power and control, a lack of this balance will lead to melee combatants overcoming them with their superior close-combat power and survivability. An elementalist must be able to maintain control, and this control must cover the entirety of their current reach. An elementalist that has no control over their territory, means that the battle is no longer fought on the elementalists' terms.

An elementalist always battles on their terms!

The only reason a Warrior will ever strike you with his sword is because you allow it!

The only reason a Ranger will ever pierce you with his arrow is because you allow it!

The only reason your enemy even continues to draw breath is because you allow it!

You are an Elementalist!

With unlimited power at your fingertips!

So if your enemy bests you, then you have nobody to blame for your failure but yourself!

Remember these things, and you will be unstoppable...

Now then, let's move on to our spell combinations with the various weapons at our disposal.

In the following, I will provide the total Offense, Defense, and Support ratings from previous sessions for each weapon set, keep in mind however that these ratings are to get a general idea of the weapon's style, and don't mean much to the overall performance of the spell set, as it's the environment, combination of spells, and how you react to various situations that determine overall performance. I will also be discussing the power, range, and control of each set of spells associated with our weaponry.

STAFF



Offense Total: 52

Defense Total: 41

Support Total: 37

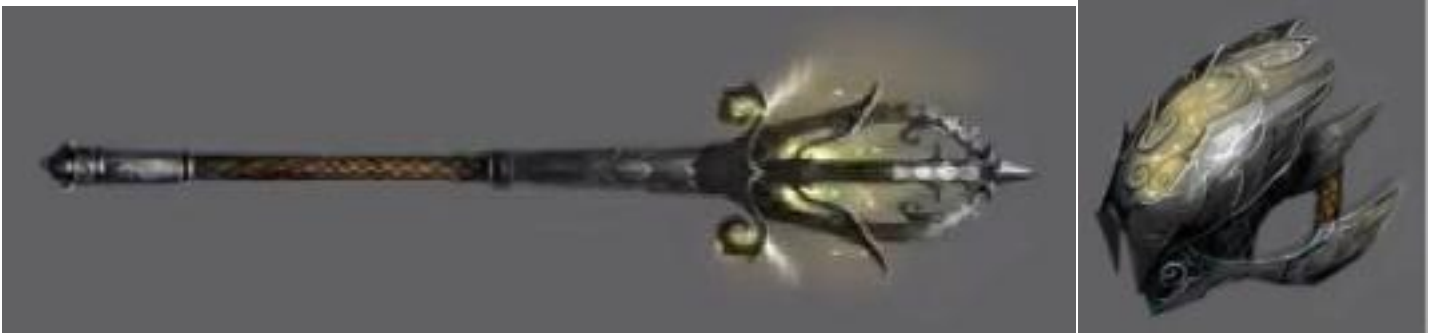
Power: There's an important reason the Staff's Offense Total is an average of 11 points lower than the other weapon sets. Most of the Staff's spell set have the Area keyword, and it would be highly imbalanced if you could deal Dagger/Focus damage with the area presence of the Staff. Also take note that most spells on the other spell sets deal damage along with other effects, contributing to the high Offense Total, whereas a number of very good Staff spells deal little to no damage (Static Field, Shockwave, and Healing Rain come to mind). The Staff, more than any other weapon set, is reliant on the combination of spells used, which of course, is dependant on the situation at hand. It is vital that your spell combination leads to your many area attacks landing properly. Placement of your area spells is also critical to this spell set's power, thus watching your opponent's movements, predicting where they are going to go, and placing well calculated area spells are what separates master elementalists from fledglings. You can't just go throwing area spells anywhere bookah!

Range: The spells provided by the staff are best cast between mid and long range, I'm going to make a humble guess that the maximum range is around 15 meters, or the distance from the center of the Clocktower to directly outside one of its windows. This goes back to the statement that elementalists only battle on their terms, mid to long range on Staff is just one of those terms. Melee attackers should be kept at appropriate range with the use of your control (examples are Gust, Unsteady Ground, Shockwave, Burning Retreat, and Frozen Ground) and dodging. Ranged Marksmen should be dealt with through less control and more damage, as well as well timed shields (For example, Magnetic Aura), and dodging. Ranged spell casters such as rival elementalists, necromancers, and the 8th class (whatever it may be), will be most difficult and should be primarily dealt with a combination of Earth magic (for the additional magical protection), various interruption spells (when facing these kind of opponents, you may forgo the range guideline so that you can use Gust as a consistent interrupt), generally having faster reaction time, and as always, dodging. Always battle on your terms, this includes completely withdrawing when necessary, you have Windborne Speed and Burning Retreat for a reason! Survival and retreat is always better than dying!

Control: The Staff spell set has the most control amongst spell sets, and rightfully so, to keep you're range you'll need to use all of it constantly. Control not only contributes to your survivability, but also contributes to your power, as weaving your control into your spell combinations will yield the maximum potential damage. For instance, Meteor Storm and Lava Font together take about two to three seconds to cast and deal a ton of damage, however most of the major punishment from both can be easily avoided with a single dodge. But Shockwave/Static Field/Frozen Ground, followed by Meteor Storm and Lava Font, followed by another form of control, takes about 6 to 7 seconds to cast, but deal the intended amount of damage without any chance of the enemy avoiding the attack.

Conclusion: A lot of fledgling elementalists seem to think that Staff is a good weapon to start out with, however I feel that it requires the most skill of all the weapon sets. You can't simply run in with a Staff and throw around spells bookah style like with Dagger/Focus. Spacing, timing, precision, movement prediction, support, battlefield awareness, all of these things are doubly important when wielding a Staff, it will take practice.

SCEPTER/FOCUS



Offense Total: 61

Defense Total: 34

Support Total: 35

Power: From here on out we look at spell combinations that only vary slightly from one another, as you may notice, the offense total between the next four sets are roughly the same. Scepter has some of the most powerful single target and small area nukes, this is balanced with various defensive and utility spells provided by the Focus, presenting one of the better sets of spells for use in PvP. As such we will concentrate mainly on PvP when discussing this weapon set. Usually you won't need this many personal defense and utility spells (Magnetic Wave, Obsidian Flesh, Fire Shield, Freezing Gust, Swirling Aura, Gale) in PvE. Again, most of your power from this spell set comes from the Scepter, so when you're focusing on putting out the damage, most of your spell combination will come from hotkeys 1-3, slipping the occasional 4 or 5 key in the midst of your combos as a defensive measure. Basic attacks on the Scepter deal higher average damage than any other main hand weapon, so elementalists that enjoy spamming spells will find the Scepter quite comfortable on damage output. However, in decisive battles where there are two or more opponents, the small area spells should be the first to fly, and don't worry about cool downs, most of them are less than 15 seconds on the Scepter.

Range: The range of Scepter/Focus, is actually any range, but primarily meant to be in the mid range. You have the defensive abilities of the Focus to assist you in close range, and your spells aren't reliant on you being close enough for you to hit, so you can still cast at long range. However, as Elementalists only battle on their terms, you want to stay mid range so that your small area attacks (Phoenix, Dragon's Tooth, Comet, Sandstorm) don't miss, and this time you can't rely on an abundance of control to keep your enemies in place like you can on Staff, you need precise timing and placement. Your defensive skills from the Focus will be instrumental in your survival, however keeping melee opponents just barely outside of their reach is what you want, and you should be close range with caution against ranged opponents. Kiting on this weapon set is going to be critical, if you aren't comfortable with kiting, you may want to consider a different weapon set.

Control: Your control on this weapon is limited to Gale and Freezing Gust (Which only targets 1 creature). Not too many options right? The element of surprise (punctastic) is always going to give you the advantage in a fight, however it is most beneficial when using Scepter/Focus, an unexpected Dragon's Tooth and Comet back to back will surely ruin anybody's day. Again, your defensive spells on the Focus will be replacing the necessary amount of control needed in this set, so use them when you can't get to the range you need for the moment, reposition, then continue firing.

Conclusion: I like the nukes on Scepter/Focus, Glyph of Arcane Power (the one that makes your spells crit for a certain duration) loves this spell set. New players will find this weapon set enjoyable, as it gives a similar feel to the stereotypical mage class. If you want to play structured PvP and aren't comfortable with the Staff dependency on

spell combination, try this weapon set. However I don't think this set works very well in PvE, too much personal defense, if you want a good PvE weapon set, I suggest looking at the next weapon set.

SCEPTER/DAGGER



Offense Total: 64

Defense Total: 33

Support Total: 36

Power: So we've dropped the defense of the Focus and picked up more offense, with the Dagger. We already know that the Scepter provides great nukes, but what does the Dagger bring to the fight? Earth brings some great AoE control and offense with Earthquake and Churning Earth, and Fire brings Ring of Fire and Flame Touch. Air and Water will be mentioned later. Now you may be asking "Master, isn't the additional damage a bit redundant?" And the answer is...it depends. In structured PvP, this extra power can seem a bit excessive and does not balance well with your range or control. This is more suited as a weapon set for PvE, and might be viable in WvWvW PvP. So the rest of the discussion for this weapon set will be in the scope of PvE. While in a group, with other players able to do the defending for you, you can focus on damage, as this set provides both good single target spells, as well as great area damage. An added bonus is the ally support spells from water (Armor of Frost, Healing Wave) are great for dungeon PvE.

Range: The range for Scepter/Dagger is short to mid range, long range doesn't isn't suitable when you have spells like Flame Touch, Armor of Frost, Healing Wave, Earthquake, and Churning Earth to choose from. It shouldn't be too difficult in PvE to keep your range since you have your allies to rely on for that. Just keep in mind that you want to stay between mid and short range, to avoid agro, yet stay close enough so you can use your area spells that are centered on yourself.

Control: What control? With this weapon set there is almost no way to control the battlefield here, with the exception of only a light amount of defense. This is the main reason that you can't take this weapon set into structured PvP, you can't keep your melee enemies at the necessary range, you'll either get overpowered and killed, or you'll have to retreat from most battles. The only alternative is having your pocket defender with you at all times, but even that is iffy and generally unproductive in that setting.

Conclusion: Scepter/Dagger is a great weapon set for fledgling elementalists in group PvE, providing a variety of spells, both single target and area, to produce the best damage for the given situation. This weapon set doesn't

carry enough control or defense to be efficiently used in structured PvP, however it wouldn't surprise me to see use in WvWvW PvP.

DAGGER/FOCUS



Offense Total: 66

Defense Total: 32

Support Total: 36

Power: Enter the point blank weapon, the main-hand Dagger. As we have seen previously, the Focus doesn't contribute much to damage, so we will be discussing mainly the Dagger when talking about the potential power. These point blank offensive spells pack a good punch, most of which effect targets directly in front of you or around you. A lot of the damage here is consistent damage, and not particularly burst damage as we see on the Scepter, a lot of burn and bleed DoTs on this weapon. In structured PvP, you have to mix in your Focus' defensive spells into your rapid offense to keep yourself alive while maintaining a relatively high amount of damage output. In PvE, this weapon set is best if you want to play as the somewhat tanky roll (Obsidian Flesh comes to mind here).

Range: With most of spells being point blank, you have to stay in short range. Not only are the spells mostly point-blank, but you have two spells that act as gap closers to keep you in short range just as well as any melee profession. You'll have to rely on your protective spells to keep you safe while you maintain your close range against melee opponents.

Control: You have a decent amount of control here, with Frozen Burst, Shocking Aura, Freezing Gust, and Gale, this means that you can effectively hold your own in most situations in structured PvP. However this weapon has the same issue as Scepter/Focus, such that Focus defensive spells are geared a bit more towards PvP, and are a bit excessive for PvE. For a main-hand Dagger PvE experience, I would suggest the last weapon set.

Conclusion: Dagger/Focus is great for folks that want to throw themselves into combat, pull up the defense when they're targeted, and blast their foes at close range. It's great for Elementalists who want to be in the thick of things, and experience visceral combat by being as close to the danger as possible. Thanks to the Focus, you have the amount of defense and control to survive at this range in PvP. However in PvE, the defense is a bit over exaggerated unless you intend on absorbing some of the agro and the damage that comes with it. For a primarily offensive option at close range in PvE, take a look at the last weapon set.

DAGGER/DAGGER



Offense Total: 64

Defense Total: 31

Support Total: 37

Power: Our last weapon set, the visceral Dagger/Dagger set. Now you have 3 gap closers, with the addition of Ride the Lightning, so you should never have any problem staying on top of your foe. With the Dagger off-hand's offensive abilities, you have great potential combos such as Drake's Breath to Flame Touch. Structured PvP is still doable here, its just going to be very intense and hit and run tactically. With the addition of the off-hand Dagger, your damage goes from sustained to burst, which means you'll have to deal a lot of damage and then back off to recover your health and defensive spells, but your spell combination with the off-hand Dagger will easily yield higher damage. This set shines in PvE however with it's plethora of damage spells in close range.

Range: If Dagger/Focus was cautiously short range, Dagger/Dagger is "in your face" range. You want your Flame Touch and other breath attacks (Drake's Breath, Lightning Touch, Cone of Cold) to hit without any problems. In PvP you want your foe to attempt to retreat because you won't have any problems catching up to them with your gap closers. The minute they try to run, they've already lost, because nobody escapes from an Elementalist with double Daggers.

Control: The off-hand Dagger doesn't add much for control, Armor of Frost is the best you get out of it, so your still left with Frozen Burst and Shocking aura, in PvP you'll have to be reliant on well timed dodges to avoid damage. You'll have better results in PvE in a group that can help defend you, as you'll be putting out more damage at short range than most other professions.

Conclusion: Dagger/Dagger provides a simply endless barrage of close ranged spells, providing both sustained damage through DoTs, and burst damage. Your spell combination will be important on this weapon, as the best damage will come from certain strings of spells like Drake's Breath into Flame Touch, so research them well. Due to this weapon sets general lack of control or defense, I wouldn't recommend PvP on this weapon set.

That's all I'm teaching you for now bookah, hope you don't forget it all before our next session!