MONSTER HUNTER WILDS

An Expansive Gameplay Guide

For New and Returning Hunters
Addressing All Frequently Asked Questions

The Ultimate Hunter's Guide

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Everything you need to know before beginning your hunt

1.1 What to Know Before Starting

Monster Hunter Wilds is divided into a Low Rank story campaign (Chapters 1 through 6, requiring approximately 30 to 40 hours) and High Rank post-game content that unlocks after defeating the final story boss. Understanding this structure helps set expectations and prevents the common frustration of feeling underpowered when transitioning between phases.

Game Structure Overview

Phase	Content	Key Unlock	Focus
Low Rank (Ch 1-5)	Story tutorial, small-to-medium monsters	Basic crafting, camps, NPC facilities	Learning your weapon and monster patterns
High Rank (Ch 6+)	Harder story quests, HR progression	HR cap removed at HR40	Build optimization, decoration farming
Endgame (HR40+)	Tempered monsters, investigations	Artian Weapons, Qurious Crafting	Maximum DPS builds, crown hunting

Essential Pre-Hunt Checklist

> **Eat a Meal Before EVERY Hunt**
>
> Meals provide +Max HP, +Max Stamina, attack or defense buffs, and a Food Skill. They last 50 minutes and **persist after fainting**. There is zero reason to hunt on an empty stomach. The difference between hunting with and without a meal is approximately 20% effective combat power.

Check your gear. Upgrade your weapon and armor at the Smithy whenever possible. Even small defense upgrades matter significantly. Sharpness directly affects damage output - a weapon at orange sharpness deals significantly less damage than one at green or blue.

Review Hunter Notes. Before departing, check your target monster's elemental weaknesses and hit zones in the Hunter Notes. Hitting weak spots (indicated by orange damage numbers) dramatically speeds up hunts, while hitting armored parts (gray numbers) wastes time.

Restock items. Always have Mega Potions, Well-Done Steak, traps, and status cures. Use the Item Box auto-craft feature to keep supplies topped up automatically during quests.

Activate Focus Mode. Learn to spot wounds (orange gashes on monsters). Attacking wounded parts deals +20% bonus damage. This is the single most impactful combat mechanic introduced in Wilds and separates efficient hunters from struggling ones.

1.2 Common Beginner Mistakes (FAQ)

Based on extensive research across Japanese forums (5ch, Game8, Altema) and Western communities (Reddit, GameFAQs), these are the most commonly reported issues new hunters face, along with the solutions.

Q: Why do I die so quickly? I feel way too fragile.

You are not upgrading your armor. Defense matters enormously in Wilds. Use Armor Spheres at the Smithy after every few hunts to keep your armor's defense rating current. Also, **eat meals** for the HP buff - hunting without a meal means you have significantly less maximum health. Equip survival skills like Health Boost and Divine Blessing from your armor set bonuses.

Q: My attacks barely do any damage. What am I doing wrong?

Three likely culprits: (1) Your weapon sharpness is low - red or orange sharpness has massive damage penalties. Sharpen with Whetstones whenever the indicator drops below green. (2) You are hitting armored parts (gray numbers) instead of weak spots (orange numbers). Use Focus Mode to identify wound locations. (3) Your weapon's element does not match the monster's weakness. Consult the weakness chart in Chapter 5 before every hunt.

Q: Should I be using Focus Mode all the time? It feels awkward.

Change it to Toggle Mode immediately. Go to Options > Controls > Page 2 > Aim/Focus Mode Controls > set Melee Weapons to Toggle Mode. Now you simply tap to activate Focus Mode instead of holding L2/LT. Also increase Focus Mode camera sensitivity (horizontal and vertical) to **10**. These two changes alone transform the combat experience and are universally recommended by both Japanese and Western communities.

Q: I keep running out of items mid-hunt. How do I manage supplies?

Use the Item Box auto-craft feature to automatically craft Mega Potions, ammo, and other consumables during quests. Set up Shortcut Radial Menus for instant access to commonly used items. Your Palico can also gather items during hunts. Restock at camp if needed by fast traveling back to a Pop-Up Camp.

Q: Is it better to kill or capture monsters?

Capture when possible. Capture rewards typically have better drop tables for rare materials. A monster is capturable when it is limping (retreating to sleep) or when the skull icon appears on the mini-map. Use a Shock Trap or Pitfall Trap when the monster is in the trap, then throw two Tranq Bombs. Some materials are only available from capture rewards.

Q: Do I need to learn all 14 weapons?

No - master one weapon first. Every weapon is viable for all content. What matters most is player skill, not weapon choice. Pick one that feels good in the Training Area and invest time learning its complete moveset before branching out. The community consensus is that Great Sword, Long Sword, and Sword & Shield are the most beginner-friendly options.

1.3 General Progression Tips

The main story takes approximately 30 to 40 hours to reach HR40 and the credits. Do not rush it - the story is essentially an extended tutorial that gradually introduces mechanics.

Equipment Upgrade Priority

Always upgrade your weapon before tackling new monsters. A weapon even one tier below the current monster's recommended level will make the hunt noticeably longer and more dangerous. Armor Spheres are plentiful - do not hoard them. Upgrade armor defense whenever you have spheres available. The Smithy will indicate when new upgrades are available with a notification dot.

Complete Optional Quests

NPCs with yellow speech bubbles have Optional Quests. These are not merely side content - they unlock essential facilities, camp locations, meal ingredients, and cosmetic rewards. Many Optional Quests are prerequisites for endgame content. Talk to every NPC between story missions.

Use SOS Flare When Stuck

There is no shame in calling for help. Wilds features crossplay between all platforms, meaning a massive pool of hunters can assist. Monster health scales with player count, but coordinated groups deal significantly more damage than the scaling adds. Firing an SOS Flare from the pause menu calls other hunters mid-quest.

Gather Everything

Pick up every gathering node you pass during travel. You will need hundreds of every material type for crafting, upgrades, and meal ingredients. Use your Seikret mount to gather while auto-moving to objectives - the mount will automatically collect nearby items.

> **Pro Tip: Meal Effects Persist After Fainting**
>
> Unlike previous Monster Hunter games, meal buffs in Wilds **do not disappear when you faint**. They only expire when the 50-minute timer runs out or when you return from the hunt. This means there is never a reason to skip eating before a hunt, and you should always re-eat if the timer expires mid-session.

02

UNDERSTANDING YOUR HUNTER

Movement, mechanics, and mastering the basics

2.1 Focus Mode & Wound System Explained

Focus Mode is the defining new mechanic of Monster Hunter Wilds. It fundamentally changes how combat works and is the single most impactful system to master for efficient hunting. This section covers every aspect of Focus Mode and the wound system in exhaustive detail.

What Is Focus Mode?

Focus Mode is activated by holding L2/LT (or toggling, which is strongly recommended - see Chapter 4 for settings). When active, it highlights wounds on the monster as bright orange gashes. It also enables Focus Strikes and changes your camera behavior to track targeted parts more closely.

By default, Focus Mode requires holding L2/LT, which is awkward during intense combat where you need that finger for other actions. The Japanese community overwhelmingly recommends changing this to Toggle Mode: Options > Controls > Page 2 > Aim/Focus Mode Controls > Melee Weapons: Toggle Mode. This simple change dramatically improves combat feel.

The Wound System

Repeated attacks concentrated on a single body part will eventually create a **wound**, visualized as an orange gash in Focus Mode. Wounded parts have two critical properties:

- **+20% damage bonus** from ALL attacks hitting that part, regardless of weapon type or attack type
- **Bonus monster parts** post-hunt when wounds are broken by Focus Strikes

This means that creating a wound and then repeatedly attacking it is the most efficient way to deal damage in Wilds. Weapons with high hit counts (Dual Blades, Bow) create wounds faster than slow, heavy weapons (Great Sword, Hammer), but all weapons benefit equally from the +20% damage bonus once a wound exists.

Focus Strikes

While in Focus Mode, pressing R1/RB (or Shift on PC) executes a Focus Strike. This is a powerful, unique attack that:

- Deals massive damage to wounded parts
- **Breaks the wound**, yielding bonus monster parts in the quest rewards
- Each weapon has a unique Focus Strike animation and properties

The strategy is simple but deep: focus damage on one part until a wound appears, then use Focus Strikes to break it for parts while dealing bonus damage, then continue attacking the same part to create new wounds. Some weapons can cancel certain attack animations directly into Focus Strike, creating advanced combo opportunities.

> **Wound Exploit Skill is Essential**
>
> The **Wound Exploit** armor skill increases damage dealt to wounded parts even further beyond the innate +20%. This skill appears in High Rank armor sets and should be prioritized in endgame builds. At level 3, it provides a substantial damage increase that synergizes with the entire wound system.

2.2 Seikret Mount - Advanced Riding Techniques

The Seikret is far more than simple transportation. It is a combat tool, item storage, secondary weapon carrier, and recovery mechanism all in one. Mastering the Seikret is essential for efficient hunting.

Auto-Move and Waypoints

Open the map, highlight any icon, and press R3/RS to set a waypoint. Your Seikret will automatically navigate there, climbing walls, jumping cliffs, and finding the optimal route. This is the most efficient way to travel and farm resources between hunts. The auto-move system will even follow Scoutfly trails to tracked targets automatically.

Combat Mobility

Your Seikret is a critical combat tool. Call it when knocked down to recover faster and escape dangerous situations. Use it to disengage from combat, heal safely, and sharpen your weapon while mounted. Dismount attacks (jump + attack while dismounting) can mount monsters, initiating the mounted combat minigame.

Drifting

At full speed, press R2 + direction to drift around sharp corners. Release R2 for a burst of speed out of the drift. This is essential for chasing fleeing monsters or navigating tight terrain quickly. The drift mechanic has a small learning curve but becomes second nature quickly.

Item Pouch and Weapon Switching

Press Left D-pad while mounted to access the Seikret's item pouch. Supply Items are automatically delivered here during quests. Press Right D-pad to switch between your primary and secondary weapon. You can only change weapons at camp, but having two loadouts ready is powerful - bring a melee and ranged option for different monsters.

Gliding and Gathering

Hold R2 when jumping off cliffs to glide. You can switch weapons mid-glide. Your Seikret can also gather items automatically by riding near them. Set waypoints through resource-rich areas to farm efficiently while traveling to objectives.

> **Community Tip: Mounting for Focus Strikes**
>
> While mounted on a monster, attacking builds a wound gauge. When you see a wound open, you can Focus Strike it for massive damage and a guaranteed part break. This is one of the highest burst damage opportunities in the game. Japanese players on 5ch frequently mention this as a "free damage window" that many beginners ignore.

2.3 Clashing, Offset & Perfect Guard

Wilds introduces three new counter mechanics that reward precise timing. Each is weapon-specific and adds significant depth to combat. Understanding which weapons have access to which counters, and when to use them, is essential for advanced play.

Clashing (Tsuba-gaeshi)

Clashing is a blade-lock minigame triggered when guarding certain monster attacks. It is available on **Great Sword and Gunlance**. When triggered, mash the attack button (Triangle/Y) to win the clash. Winning staggers the monster for a significant opening, allowing for free damage.

The Doshaguma armor series includes a skill called *Behemoth's Might* that grants +10 base attack on successful clash with 2 pieces equipped, or +25 with 4 pieces. This is a substantial damage bonus that makes Clashing even more rewarding for builds using those weapons.

Offset (Sogai)

Offset is essentially a parry system. Time your attack to overlap with the monster's attack, deflecting it and enabling a counter. Available on: **Great Sword, Hammer, Hunting Horn, Switch Axe, Insect Glaive, and Heavy Bowgun**.

Each weapon has a specific move that triggers Offset. Great Sword's rising slash and Switch Axe's counter rise are particularly strong options. The community consensus from 5ch

threads is that Offset has the highest skill ceiling but also the highest reward when mastered. It is described as "more parry than counter" - you need to understand monster attack timing deeply to use it effectively.

Perfect Guard

Guard at the exact moment of impact to negate damage, skip blockstun, and enable instant counterattacks. Available on: **Great Sword, Sword & Shield, Lance, Gunlance, Charge Blade, and Heavy Bowgun**.

Lance specializes in Perfect Guard - chaining Perfect Guards into counter-thrusts is the core identity of the weapon. For Lance users, hold guard and time your counter-thrusts. Great Sword users can Perfect Guard and then flow into their powerful charge attacks. The community recommends keeping the guard button held rather than pressing reactively - if your timing is slightly off, you will still get a normal guard rather than taking full damage.

Counter Type	Weapons	Input	Difficulty	Reward
Clashing	Great Sword, Gunlance	Mash Triangle during blade lock	Medium	Monster stagger + opening
Offset	GS, Hammer, HH, SwAxe, IG, HBG	Time attack to overlap monster attack	High	Deflect + counter opening
Perfect Guard	GS, SnS, Lance, GL, CB, HBG	Guard at exact impact moment	Medium-High	Negate damage + instant counter

> **Community Consensus on Counters**
>
> Japanese forum users (5ch) generally agree that **Perfect Guard is the most consistent counter for beginners**, while Offset has the highest skill ceiling. Clashing is flashy but situational since not all monster attacks trigger it. Lance mains should treat Perfect Guard as their primary mechanic, while Great Sword users benefit from having access to both Clashing and Perfect Guard.

03

THE 14 WEAPONS

Finding the perfect weapon for your hunting style

3.1 Weapon Tier List & Recommendations

Monster Hunter Wilds features 14 weapon types, each with unique mechanics, playstyles, and skill requirements. This tier list is based on community consensus from Japanese sources (Game8, Altema) and Western forums (Reddit, GameFAQs), considering damage output, ease of use, and versatility.

Tier	Weapon	Key Strengths	Beginner Friendly?	Notes
S	Great Sword	Highest raw damage, can block	Yes	True Charge Slash positioning is key
	Long Sword	Spirit Gauge, strong counters, good range	Yes	Iai counter and Foresight Slash
	Bow	Great range, mobility, strong elemental	Yes	Trick Arrow gauge, coatings
	Sword & Shield	Balanced, use items unsheathed, fast	Yes	Perfect Rush combo for big damage
	Hunting Horn	Team buffs, solid damage	Yes	Surprisingly strong offense in Wilds
A	Hammer	High damage, can stun, Offset	Medium	Aim for the head
	Switch Axe	Sword/Axe modes, Amped State	Medium	Zero Sum Discharge burst
	Insect Glaive	Aerial mobility, Kinsect buffs	Medium	Red+White+Orange = max buffs
	Heavy Bowgun	Massive firepower, Ignition Mode	Medium	Wyvernheart/Wyverncounter
B	Dual Blades	Very fast, Demon Mode	Medium	Stamina hungry, best elemental DPS
	Lance	Strongest defense, counters	Yes	Very safe but slow mobility
	Gunlance	Explosive damage, shelling	Hard	Complex gauge management
	Charge Blade	Phial system, SAED burst	Hard	Highest skill ceiling
	Light Bowgun	Fast, mobile, Rapid Fire	Yes	Weaker damage than HBG

Important note: Every weapon in Monster Hunter Wilds is viable for all content. The tier list reflects ease of use and general community sentiment, but player skill matters infinitely

more than weapon choice. A skilled player with a B-tier weapon will outperform an unskilled player with an S-tier weapon every time.

3.2 S-Tier Weapons Deep Dive

Great Sword

The Great Sword offers the highest raw damage per hit in the game. Its core loop involves charging attacks (hold Triangle/Y) and releasing at the correct timing for maximum damage. The True Charge Slash is your primary damage tool - it requires careful positioning but deals devastating damage when it connects with a monster's weak spot or a wound.

Great Sword can also block and Perfect Guard, giving it defensive options unusual for such a heavy weapon. This combination of offense and defense makes it the most recommended beginner weapon in Japanese communities. Focus on hitting wounded parts with fully charged strikes for optimal damage.

Long Sword

The Long Sword builds a Spirit Gauge through combos that increases your damage output. The Iai counter allows you to dodge and counterattack in a single motion, while Foresight Slash (R2+Circle) lets you evade through attacks while dealing damage. These counter options make the Long Sword extremely strong once you learn monster attack patterns.

The Helm Breaker is your burst damage tool, consuming Spirit Gauge levels for a powerful downward strike. Long Sword's reach keeps you relatively safe from many attacks, and its mobility is better than Great Sword's.

Bow

The Bow is a mobile ranged powerhouse. The Trick Arrow gauge powers special shots with enhanced effects. Coatings can be applied for status application (poison, paralysis, sleep). Charging Sidestep maintains your charge level while dodging, allowing you to stay mobile while dealing damage.

Dragon Piercer is excellent for part breaking. Stamina management is crucial for Bow users - consider bringing the Black Belt Meal or stamina-related armor skills. Elemental builds are particularly strong with Bow due to its high rate of fire.

Sword & Shield

The Sword & Shield is the most versatile weapon. Its unique ability to **use items without sheathing** is incredibly powerful - you can heal, buff, or throw items while your weapon remains drawn. Perfect Rush (backstep into a combo) deals massive damage when executed correctly.

Perfect Guard is available on Sword & Shield, and the weapon can mount monsters easily with its aerial attacks. Status builds (paralysis, sleep) are very effective due to the weapon's fast attack speed. It is truly a jack-of-all-trades weapon that excels in no single area but has no weaknesses.

Hunting Horn

The Hunting Horn has been massively redesigned in Wilds. It is no longer just a support weapon. Echo Bubbles place persistent buff zones on the battlefield. The Perform/Encore system deals significant damage while applying buffs to yourself and nearby allies.

Each Horn has a unique set of melodies - learning your weapon's song list is essential. The Hunting Horn now has surprisingly high raw damage output, making it a legitimate offensive choice. In multiplayer, the value of team-wide buffs cannot be overstated. The Self-Improvement melody boosts your own movement speed and attack.

3.3 A-Tier & B-Tier Weapons Guide

Hammer (A-Tier)

Charge levels (hold R2) power up your strikes. Big Bang combo on downed monsters deals massive damage. Offset is available on Hammer. Always aim for the head to build stun and exhaust the monster. Very mobile for a heavy weapon, but lacks a guard option, so dodging is essential.

Switch Axe (A-Tier)

Sword mode deals higher damage but drains a gauge. Axe mode has better mobility and reach. Build Amped State in Sword mode, then unleash Zero Sum Discharge for a powerful explosion. Mode switching is the core skill - knowing when to use each form separates good SwAxe players from great ones.

Insect Glaive (A-Tier)

Send your Kinsect to gather extracts from monsters: Red (attack buff), White (speed buff), Orange (defense buff). All three together provide maximum buffs. Vaulting gives aerial combat and easy mounting. Ground combos actually have higher DPS than aerial attacks, despite the weapon's aerial reputation.

Heavy Bowgun (A-Tier)

Ignition Mode powers special shots. Wyvernheart is a sustained beam attack, while Wyverncounter is a close-range explosive blast. Can install a shield for blocking. Very slow movement but the highest ranged DPS in the game. Ammo management is critical - bring crafting materials to make more ammo in the field.

Dual Blades (B-Tier)

Enter Demon Mode (R2) for fast attacks that consume stamina. Archdemon Mode activates when the gauge fills, providing enhanced attacks without the stamina drain. Best elemental DPS in the game but extremely stamina-hungry. Perfect Evade triggers Demon Boost. Blade Dance on downed monsters is your burst tool.

Lance (B-Tier)

The Lance is the safest weapon in the game. Chain Perfect Guards into counter-thrusts for your core loop. The triple poke combo is consistent, safe damage. Guard Advance provides safe repositioning. The main weakness is very low mobility - bring Evade Extender or use Guard Advance to close gaps.

Gunlance (B-Tier)

Combines lance pokes with shelling - fixed damage that ignores hitzones. Shelling types (Normal, Long, Wide) fundamentally change playstyle. Wyrmstake Cannon provides burst damage. Full Burst combos are explosive and satisfying. Clashing is available. Heat gauge management adds complexity. Very fun but has a steep learning curve.

Charge Blade (B-Tier)

The Charge Blade has the highest skill ceiling in the game. Sword mode builds phials in your shield. Axe mode spends those phials for powerful attacks. Super Amped Element Discharge (SAED) is your burst damage - it consumes all phials for a massive explosive combo. Guard points (specific animations where your shield is active) allow blocking during attacks. Extremely rewarding when mastered but requires significant practice.

Light Bowgun (B-Tier)

Rapid Fire mode lets you fire multiple shots in quick succession. Very mobile and ammo-efficient. However, damage output is noticeably lower than Heavy Bowgun. Best used for status application and support play. Wyvernblast mines create trap-like explosions on the battlefield. Good for beginners to learn monster patterns safely from a distance.

04

COMBAT MASTERY

Advanced tactics for dominating the hunt

4.1 Essential Settings Changes

These settings changes are recommended by both the Japanese and Western communities as the single biggest quality-of-life improvements you can make. They should be applied immediately upon starting the game.

Focus Mode: Toggle (Critical)

> **This Is The Most Important Setting Change**
>
> **Path:** Options > Controls > Page 2 > Aim/Focus Mode Controls > Melee Weapons: Toggle Mode
>
> The default requires holding L2/LT, which is awkward during combat. Toggle lets you tap once to activate Focus Mode and tap again to exit. This frees your fingers for movement and attacks. Japanese players on 5ch universally call this "mandatory" (必須設定).

Focus Camera Sensitivity: 10

Path: Options > Controls > Camera > Focus Mode Sensitivity (Horizontal/Vertical): 10

Default sensitivity makes tracking fast monsters frustratingly slow. Setting to 10 makes the camera much more responsive during Focus Mode. Combined with Toggle Mode, this transforms the entire combat experience.

Auto-Sheathe: Off

Path: Options > Gameplay > Auto-Sheathe: Off

Default auto-sheathes your weapon after a few seconds of inactivity. This is dangerous - you want to control when your weapon is out. With Auto-Sheathe off, you decide when to sheathe, preventing accidental sheathing when you need to guard or counter.

Dynamic Resolution: Off

Path: Options > Display > Dynamic Resolution: Off

Dynamic resolution causes blurry visuals during intense moments with many particle effects. Turn it off for crisp image quality at a stable resolution. Better visual clarity helps identify wound locations and attack tells.

> **Additional Recommended Settings**
>
> - **Camera Distance:** Set to maximum for better situational awareness
> - **Lock-On Behavior:** Set to "Camera Only" rather than "Camera and Character" for more control
> - **Damage Numbers:** Enable - they help you identify weak spots (orange = weak, gray = armored)
> - **Status Icons:** Enable - knowing your buff/debuff status at a glance is crucial

4.2 Wounding Strategy & Focus Strikes

The wound system is the core of Wilds combat. Understanding how to create, exploit, and destroy wounds efficiently will cut your hunt times significantly.

The Four-Step Wound Cycle

Step 1: Create Wounds. Concentrate attacks on one body part. After enough hits, an orange wound gash appears. Fast-hitting weapons (Dual Blades, Bow) create wounds quickest due to hit count.

Step 2: Exploit Wounds. Wounded parts take +20% damage from ALL attacks. Keep attacking the same wounded part for sustained bonus damage. Orange numbers confirm you are hitting weak spots.

Step 3: Focus Strike. In Focus Mode, press R1/RB to Focus Strike a wound. Deals massive damage and breaks it for bonus monster parts post-hunt.

Step 4: Repeat. New wounds can be created on the same part immediately. Keep the cycle going: create, exploit, destroy, repeat.

Advanced Wounding Tactics

Mounting Wound Strikes. While mounted on a monster, attacking builds a wound gauge. When you see a wound, Focus Strike it for massive damage and a guaranteed part break. This is one of the highest burst damage opportunities available. Japanese community members frequently emphasize this as a "free damage window."

Multiplayer Wound Creation. In multiplayer, spread out to different monster parts. Each hunter wounding a different part means the whole monster is vulnerable. Coordinate with your team for maximum wound coverage rather than everyone clustering on the same spot.

Weapon-Specific Wound Speed. Dual Blades and Bow create wounds fastest due to hit count. Great Sword creates wounds slower but each Focus Strike is devastating. Learn your weapon's wound creation speed and adjust your strategy accordingly.

Focus Strike Cancelling. Some weapon animations can be cancelled into Focus Strike. This is weapon-specific but learning your weapon's cancel points dramatically increases DPS. Practice these combos in the Training Area until they become muscle memory.

4.3 Item Management & Essential Loadout

Proper item preparation and management is the difference between a smooth hunt and a cart-fest. This section covers the essential items every hunter should bring, plus advanced management techniques.

Healing Items (Essential)

Item	Purpose	Quantity
Mega Potion	Primary healing	10 (craft more from Honey + Potion)
Max Potion	Full heal + max HP	2-3
Ancient Potion	Full heal + max HP + max Stamina	1-2
Well-Done Steak	Max stamina recovery	10

Traps & Capture (Essential)

Item	Purpose	Notes
Shock Trap	Immobilizes monster	Bring 1 + Trap Tool to craft more
Pitfall Trap	Alternative immobilization	Different monsters have different trap resistances
Tranq Bomb	Capture weak monsters	Throw 2 at a trapped, weakened monster
Trap Tool + Thunderbug	Craft extra Shock Traps	Essential for capture farming

Utility Items (Highly Recommended)

Item	Purpose
Flash Pod	Drops flying monsters from the sky
Dung Pod	Makes monsters leave the area (separate grouped monsters)
Whetstone	Restore weapon sharpness
Herbal Medicine	Cures poison (faster than Antidote)
Nulberry	Cures elemental blights (fire, water, ice, thunder)
Might Seed	Temporary attack boost (stacks with meals)
Adamant Seed	Temporary defense boost

Auto-Craft and Radial Menu Setup

Use the Item Box to enable **auto-craft** for Mega Potions, ammo, and traps. This automatically creates items from materials in your pouch when you use the final one. Set up **Radial Menu shortcuts** for instant access to commonly used items - healing, sharpening, buffs, and traps. The default item bar is too slow for intense combat.

> **Capture Strategy Details**
>
> Capturing gives **better rewards** than killing in most cases. Monsters are capturable when:
>
> - They are limping (retreating to their nest to sleep)
> - The skull icon appears on the mini-map
> - They have been sufficiently weakened (roughly 20% HP remaining)
>
> Process: Lay Shock Trap or Pitfall Trap > Wait for monster to enter > Throw 2 Tranq Bombs. Some parts are only available from capture rewards, so always capture when possible unless you specifically need carves.

05

MONSTERS OF THE WILDS

Know your prey - weaknesses, strategies, and tips

5.1 Monster Weakness Master Chart

This chart compiles elemental weakness data for all major monsters in Monster Hunter Wilds. Hitting a monster with its weakness element (or using the correct status) dramatically reduces hunt times. Numbers indicate effectiveness: higher is better. Gray indicates resistance or immunity.

Monster	Fire	Water	Thunder	Ice	Dragon	Key Tips
Chatacabra	-	-	3	3	-	Stay behind, break foreleg rocks, attack tongue
Quematrice	1	3	2	2	1	Cut tail to stop fire attacks
Lala Barina	3	1	2	2	1	Avoid red paralyzing florets
Congalala	3	2	2	3	1	Roll in water to cure stink
Doshaguma	3	2	3	1	1	Separate pack with Dung Pods
Balahara	1	2	3	3	1	Hit exposed mouth after goo spit
Uth Duna	1	1	3	2	1	Break fin veil with damage
Rompopolo	1	3	3	2	1	Poison resistance recommended
Rey Dau	1	3	2	3	2	Break crystal sections, Focus Strike during beam
Nerscylla	3	2	3	2	1	Break claw to disable web attacks
Hirabami	3	2	3	2	1	Flash when flying
Ajarakan	1	3	2	3	2	Beware explosive scales on ground
Nu Udra	1	3	2	2	1	Douse with Watermoss when burning
Rathalos	1	2	3	2	3	Flash Pods when flying, cut tail
Rathian	1	2	3	2	3	Weaker fire attacks than Rathalos
Jin Dahaad	3	1	2	1	2	Crack plating first, hide behind ice pillars
Arkveld	2	2	2	2	3	Final boss, dragon resistance recommended

Reading the chart: 3 = highly effective (weakness), 2 = moderately effective, 1 = slightly effective or neutral, - = resistant or immune. Always prioritize the 3-rated element for maximum damage.

5.2 Early Game Monster Strategies

Chatacabra

Your first real hunt. Stay behind it and attack the legs. It picks up rocks on its forelegs - breaking these reduces its attack range and prevents some attacks. When it extends its tongue, that is your opening for free damage. Very predictable attack patterns make it an excellent learning target.

Quematrice

A fire-breathing bird wyvern. Weak to Water. Cut its tail to disable most fire attacks. Beware the fireball spread - dodge sideways, not backward. Its charges are telegraphed with a short windup. Bring Water element weapons or Nulberries for fireblight.

Lala Barina

Weak to Fire. A scorpion/spider hybrid. The red florets on the ground cause paralysis - avoid them. Attack the stinger/tail for best damage. Bring Paralysis Resistance if available, or Herbal Medicine to cure it quickly.

Congalala

Weak to Fire and Ice. The "stink" status clouds reduce your ability to use healing items. Roll in water pools to cleanse it. Attack from the rear - the tail is a weak point. Beware the belly flop attack which has a deceptively large hitbox.

Doshaguma

Weak to Fire and Thunder. A pack hunter - use Dung Pods to separate them so you fight one at a time. Attack the belly for best damage. The Clash mechanic works well here. Often the first difficulty spike for new players due to the pack behavior.

Balahara

Weak to Thunder and Ice. A leviathan that swims in sand and water. Hit the exposed mouth after it spits goo. Sonic Bombs (or Screamer Pods) can force it out of hiding. Beware the body slam which creates a shockwave.

> **General Monster Combat Principles**
>
> Hit **orange numbers** = weak spot (maximum damage). Gray numbers = armored (reduced damage). Monster parts can break and sever - tails can be cut, claws broken, wings damaged. Breaking parts often creates wounds and sometimes disables certain attacks. When a monster is exhausted (drooling), it is the perfect time to heal, sharpen, or lay traps.

5.3 Mid to Late Game Monster Strategies

Rey Dau

The flagship monster of Wilds. Weak to Water and Ice. Break the crystal sections on its body to limit lightning attacks. When it charges the beam attack, **Focus Strike the head** to potentially cancel the move entirely. Its lightning AOE has a larger radius than the visual suggests - dodge further than you think. Bring Thunder Resistance and Thunder-proof meals.

Jin Dahaad

The ice dragon. Weak to Fire. First, you must **crack its plating** with sufficient damage before you can deal real damage to the body underneath. The ice AOE attack has a deceptively large radius - roll twice to be safe. When it charges the massive explosion, **hide behind the ice pillars** it creates around the arena. Fire element weapons are essentially mandatory for reasonable clear times.

Rathalos

The classic king of the skies. Weak to Thunder and Dragon. **Flash Pods** are your best friend - they drop Rathalos from the sky instantly when flying. Cut the tail to reduce poison tail flip range. Attack between its legs when grounded for safest damage. Bring Poison Resistance or plenty of Herbal Medicine.

Uth Duna

A leviathan. Weak to Thunder. Break the fin veil by dealing enough damage - this exposes the weak body underneath. Inflicts waterblight which slows stamina recovery. Bring

Nulberries. Very mobile in water, so expect it to move around the arena frequently.

Nu Udra

The octopus-like monster. Weak to Water (ironically, despite being water-based). Cut the limbs to reduce its attack range and mobility. When it starts burning, throw **Watermoss** (gathered from the environment) to extinguish the flames and create an opening.

Ajarakan

An explosive ape-like monster. Weak to Water and Ice. It leaves explosive scales on the ground - **do not step on them**. Very aggressive with long combo strings. Bring Evasion skills or perfect your dodging. Water element works well against its fiery attacks.

Arkveld

The final story boss. Weak to Dragon. Multi-phase fight with devastating attacks that cover large areas. Dragon Resistance is highly recommended. Learn the attack patterns - many have long tells but massive damage if they connect. Bring maximum healing items and consider the Moxie Meal (prevents one faint). The hardest fight in the base game, but very learnable with practice.

Gravios

A returning brute wyvern. Extremely long fight due to high HP and heavy armor plating. Break the armor plating to expose weak points underneath. Inflicts fire, poison, AND sleep - bring resistance for all three or Herbal Medicine/Nulberries. Very predictable but punishing if you get hit. Patience is key.

06

ARMOR, SKILLS & BUILDING

Crafting the perfect hunter setup

6.1 Armor System & Skill Mechanics

How Armor Skills Work

Each armor piece provides skill points for specific abilities. Reach a threshold (usually 1, 2, or 3 points) to activate a skill at that level. For example, Weakness Exploit needs 3 points to reach its maximum level 3. Mix and match pieces from different sets to hit the thresholds you need for your build.

Full Set Bonuses

Wearing multiple pieces from the same armor set grants set bonuses - unique, powerful skills only available from that set. However, mixed sets (combining pieces from different sets) often provide better overall skill combinations than full sets. The trade-off is that mixed sets may not look as cohesive visually.

Low Rank Build Philosophy

During Low Rank (story chapters 1-5), prioritize **defense and survival**. Do not worry about optimizing builds - just equip whatever has the highest defense rating and upgrade it with Armor Spheres. Skills to look for if available: Health Boost, Divine Blessing, Stun Resistance, and Earplugs. The story is balanced around players with minimal optimization.

High Rank Build Philosophy

Once High Rank begins (Chapter 6+), start building for **offense**. The core damage skills become available: Weakness Exploit 3, Critical Boost 3. Supplement these with comfort skills that fit your playstyle. This is where set building becomes an important part of the game.

Decorations (Gems)

Decorations slot into armor and weapons to add skill points. They are unlocked in High Rank. Farm for the decorations your build needs - some are rare drops. The Melding Pot lets you craft decorations from materials, and becomes the primary endgame farming activity for build optimization.

Armor Spheres

Use these at the Smithy to upgrade armor defense. They are plentiful - do not hoard them. Upgrade your armor whenever you have spheres available. Even small defense increases matter significantly, as monster damage scales with progression.

Talisman (Charm)

A special equipment piece that provides skill points without taking up armor slots. Obtained via the Melding Pot. A good talisman can enable entire builds by providing points for expensive skills, freeing up armor slots for other abilities. Farming for the perfect talisman is a major endgame activity.

6.2 Essential Skills by Category

Damage Skills (Priority: High)

Skill	Max Level	Effect	Priority
Weakness Exploit	3	+30% affinity on weak spots at max	**Essential**
Critical Boost	3	1.40x critical damage at max	**Essential**
Wound Exploit	3	Increased damage to wounded parts	**Essential (Wilds-specific)**
Attack Boost	7	Flat attack increase	Medium
Critical Eye	7	Direct affinity increase	Medium
Maximum Might	3	+30% affinity at full stamina	High (melee)
Peak Performance	3	+Attack at full HP	Medium

Survival Skills (Priority: High)

Skill	Max Level	Effect
Health Boost	3	+50 max HP at max - **should be in every build**
Divine Blessing	3	50% chance to halve damage at max
Stun Resistance	3	Prevents stun at max - highly recommended
Earplugs	5	Blocks monster roars (prevents roar-lock combos)

Quality of Life Skills

Skill	Max Level	Effect
Speed Sharpening	3	Sharpen in one stroke at max
Quick Sheath	3	Faster sheathing
Free Meal	3	75% chance to not consume items at max
Evade Window	5	More invincibility frames when rolling
Evade Extender	3	Longer evade distance

> **Build Priority for Endgame**
>
> A universal endgame build should include: **Health Boost 3** (survival), **Weakness Exploit 3** (damage), **Critical Boost 3** (damage), and **Wound Exploit 3** (Wilds-specific damage). These four skills form the foundation of virtually every optimized build. After these, add weapon-specific skills (Ammo Up for Bowguns, Speed Sharpening for weapons that lose sharpness quickly, etc.).

6.3 Cooking & Meal System Guide

Meals are not optional flavor text - they are a core combat mechanic that provides substantial statistical benefits. Every hunt should begin with a meal.

Three Cooking Methods

- **Tent BBQ:** Most common. Access from any camp tent. Same meal system everywhere.
- **Portable BBQ Grill:** Use in the field anywhere. Useful for re-eating if your meal timer expires.
- **Canteen (Grand Hub):** Best buffs, available after reaching HR16. Requires vouchers but provides superior effects.

Meal Structure

Every meal has three components:

- **Ration (Base):** Determines your primary stat buff. Meat = +Attack, Fish = +Defense, Veggie = +Elemental Resistance.
- **Additional Ingredient:** Provides a Food Skill and extends duration by 20 minutes.
- **Finishing Touch:** Provides Elemental Resistance and another Food Skill.

Duration

Standard meals last **50 minutes**. Crucially, meal buffs **persist after fainting** - they only expire when the timer runs out or you return from the hunt. This means there is never a reason to skip eating, and you should re-eat when the timer expires during long sessions.

Best Food Skills

Skill	Ingredient	Effect
Medic Meal	Eastern Honey	Increases healing from all sources - best general skill
Moxie Meal	Garlic	Prevents fainting once - lifesaver for tough hunts
Black Belt Meal	Delishroom	Reduces stamina drain - essential for Bow and Dual Blades
Defender Meal	Kunafa Cheese	Random chance to reduce damage taken

Recommended All-Purpose Meal

> **General Hunt Meal**
>
> **Main:** Fish (+Defense) | **Additional:** Garlic (Moxie - prevent faint) | **Finishing:** Eastern Honey (Medic - more healing)
>
> This combination provides defense, a safety net against one-shot mechanics, and increased healing efficiency. It is the most commonly recommended "safe" meal across all communities.

Save up to 40 custom meals as Favorites for instant access. Name them descriptively: "General Hunt," "Stamina Build," "Hard Boss," "Fire Res," etc.

07

THE WORLD & SYSTEMS

Camps, multiplayer, and essential facilities

7.1 Camp System & Fast Travel

Pop-Up Camps

Set up Pop-Up Camps in each area to unlock fast travel points. Each map has multiple camp locations. Unlock them by discovering them during exploration or via Optional Quests. Camps are saved permanently once found, and fast travel between them is free and instant (when not in combat).

Camp Functions

- **Rest:** Change time of day and weather (costs Hunter Points). Useful for forcing specific monster spawns or environmental conditions.
- **Cooking:** Grill a meal or use the BBQ. Same meal system as tent cooking.
- **Gear Change:** Swap weapons, armor, and decorations mid-hunt without returning to base.
- **Item Box:** Restock items and manage inventory.

Fast Travel Strategy

Open the map and select any discovered camp to fast travel instantly. During combat, fast travel is disabled. Use fast travel to restock items or change gear when a monster moves to a different zone. Smart use of fast travel can save significant time during long hunts.

Environment Matters

Weather and time of day affect monster behavior and spawns. Some monsters only appear during specific weather conditions (e.g., certain rare spawns only appear during storms). Use the Rest function at camp to cycle through conditions until your target appears.

Scoutflies

The glowing trail your Seikret follows to reach objectives also appears during free roam. Scoutflies guide you to gathering nodes, monster tracks, and points of interest. Following them ensures you do not miss resources while traveling.

Support Ship

In Suja, the Support Ship periodically provides free materials, including rare items. Check it regularly between hunts. The more you play, the better the rewards become. It is essentially free loot for minimal effort.

Talk to Everyone

NPCs with **yellow speech bubbles** have Optional Quests. These are not merely side content - they unlock essential gameplay features including camps, meal ingredients, facilities, and cosmetic rewards. Many Optional Quests are prerequisites for endgame content. Make a habit of talking to every NPC between story missions.

7.2 Multiplayer & SOS Flare Guide

Story Multiplayer

The story is playable in multiplayer but requires specific setup. The host must **watch cutscenes first** before others can join. After the cutscene plays, fire an SOS Flare or invite

friends from the pause menu. This is a common point of confusion for new players trying to play the story together.

SOS Flare

Fire an SOS Flare from the pause menu to call other hunters mid-quest. Anyone can respond, including random players from across the world. Useful when stuck on a difficult monster. The flare can be cancelled once enough help arrives or if you change your mind.

Link Party

Create a Link Party to play with specific friends. Up to 4 players. Link Parties persist between hunts, making it easy to farm together without re-inviting every time. Crossplay is supported between all platforms (PlayStation, Xbox, PC), significantly expanding the player pool.

Monster HP Scaling

Monster health scales with the number of players: 2 players = moderate increase, 3-4 players = significant increase. However, coordinated groups deal much more damage than the scaling adds, making multiplayer generally faster for most hunts. The scaling is designed to prevent multiplayer from being "easy mode."

Multiplayer Etiquette

- **Bring Lifepowder** - Heals all allies in range. The best support item and a sign of a considerate hunter.
- **Spread out** - Target different monster parts to create more wounds across the entire monster.
- **Coordinate status** - One player brings paralysis, another sleep. Status effects create huge attack windows for the entire team.
- **Do not wake sleeping monsters** - Let the highest damage player place bombs and use their big attack.
- **Bring traps** - Multiple traps mean longer total immobilization time for the team to deal free damage.

Voice Chat and Discord

Voice chat is available in-game. Use it to coordinate attacks, call out trap placements, and warn teammates about big attacks. Many organized groups also use Discord for better audio quality and persistent channels.

> **Joining Random Hunts**
>
> Use the Quest Board to join random SOS Flares. Filter by monster or quest type. Joining other players' hunts is a great way to learn monster patterns safely, farm materials you need, and help fellow hunters. The community is generally welcoming and appreciates the help.

08

ENDGAME & BEYOND

What to do after the credits roll

8.1 Post-Story Progression

After clearing the story (reaching HR40 and defeating the final boss), a wealth of new content opens up. The game truly begins here for many players.

Hunter Rank Uncapped

Your HR cap is removed. Continue gaining Hunter Rank by completing quests. Higher HR unlocks harder quests, investigations, and features. The current maximum is HR 999, though most content unlocks by HR 100. HR increases faster in multiplayer due to bonus rewards.

Tempered Monsters

Harder variants of standard monsters with more HP, more damage, and new attack patterns. They appear in investigations and event quests. Tempered monsters drop rare materials needed for endgame crafting and decoration melding. They are the primary challenge between story clear and true endgame.

Investigations

Special quests with bonus reward boxes and additional conditions (time limits, faint limits, specific weapon requirements). Higher tier investigations provide better rewards. Investigations are the primary farming method for rare decorations, weapon augment parts, and armor spheres in the endgame.

Artian Weapons

The pinnacle of weapon crafting. Collect parts from high-tier investigations to forge Artian weapons. Unlike standard weapons, Artian weapons are **fully customizable** - you choose the element, affinity, and attributes. This allows you to build the perfect weapon for your playstyle and target monster.

Qurious Crafting

Armor augmentation system. Spend materials to add random bonus skill points to armor pieces. This is the endgame grind for perfect armor sets - each roll costs materials and adds random skills. Pray to RNG for the skills you need. Some community members describe this as the true "endless grind" of Wilds.

Decoration Farming

Use the **Melding Pot** to craft decorations from materials. Higher tier melding produces higher tier decorations. Farm Tempered investigations for the best melding materials. This is where you perfect your builds with the exact skills you need to reach level thresholds.

Crown Hunting

Monsters have size variations - some are significantly larger or smaller than average. Hunting especially large (Gold Crown) or small (Mini Crown) specimens is a completionist activity that provides account-wide achievements and bragging rights.

8.2 Artian Weapons & Endgame Builds

Artian Weapon System

Artian Weapons represent the pinnacle of gear progression. When forging an Artian weapon, you make several key decisions:

- **Element:** Match the monster you are hunting. Fire for Jin Dahaad, Thunder for Rathalos, Water for Ajarakan, etc.
- **Affinity:** Higher affinity means more critical hits. Balance with your armor skills.
- **Attributes:** Raw damage, sharpness level, decoration slots. Customize to your build needs.

Universal Endgame Skills (All Weapons)

These skills should be in virtually every optimized endgame build:

- **Weakness Exploit 3** - +30% affinity on weak spots
- **Critical Boost 3** - 1.40x critical damage
- **Wound Exploit 3** - More damage to wounded parts (Wilds-specific)
- **Health Boost 3** - +50 max HP (survival)

Melee-Specific Additions

- **Maximum Might 3** - +30% affinity at full stamina
- **Peak Performance 3** - +Attack at full HP
- **Speed Sharpening 3** - One-stroke sharpening

Ranged-Specific Additions

- **Spread/Pierce/Normal Up** - Boosts specific shot types
- **Ammo Up** - Extra ammo capacity
- **Spare Shot** - Chance to not consume ammo

Weapon Augments

Augment your weapon at the Smithy for bonus effects:

- **Health Regen:** Heal on hit. Most popular augment for sustain.
- **Affinity Up:** More crit chance. Synergizes with Critical Boost.

- **Attack Up:** Raw damage increase.
- **Slot Upgrade:** Extra decoration slot for build flexibility.

> **Recommended Augment Combo**
>
> Best general augment combo: **Health Regen** + **Affinity Up**. The healing provides incredible sustain during long hunts, and more affinity means more critical hits. This combination works well for virtually every weapon type and playstyle.

8.3 Final Tips from the Community

Japanese Community Tips (5ch / Game8 / Altema)

> **Essential Japanese Community Advice**
>
> **Always check Hunter Notes** before a hunt. The game provides detailed weakness charts and drop tables that many players ignore. Using the wrong element can double your hunt time unnecessarily.
>
> **Use the Training Area extensively.** Every weapon has a training dummy where you can practice combos freely. Japanese veterans recommend spending at least 30 minutes learning your weapon's complete moveset before taking it into a real hunt.
>
> **Item Box auto-craft is essential.** Enable it for Mega Potions, traps, and ammo. This automatically crafts replacements during quests when you have the materials - you will never run out mid-hunt.
>
> **Focus Mode Toggle** + **Sensitivity 10** is the most recommended setting change across all Japanese forums. The default hold mode is universally considered awkward and inferior.

Western Community Tips (Reddit / GameFAQs / Polygon)

> **Essential Western Community Advice**
>
> **Save Favorite Meals.** You can save up to 40 custom meals. Name them for different situations ("Fire Res," "Stamina Build," "General Hunt") for instant access without manually selecting ingredients each time.
>
> **Set up Radial Menu shortcuts.** The default item bar is too slow for intense combat. A well-organized radial menu lets you heal, sharpen, or use buffs in under a second. This is considered mandatory for serious play.
>
> **Capture weak monsters.** Learn the signs: limping, skull icon on map, sleeping. Trap + 2 Tranq Bombs. Capturing is faster than killing and provides better rewards.
>
> **Use environmental traps.** Boulders, poison cups, paratoads, and other environmental hazards deal significant damage and create openings. Always be aware of your surroundings.

Universal Wisdom (All Communities)

Palico with Paralysis/Sleep weapons creates free attack windows. Equip your Palico with a status weapon and watch for the openings it creates. This is "free DPS" that many players ignore.

Do not neglect fishing and endemic life. Account-wide bonuses from the Fishing Log and Endemic Life log provide permanent benefits. Plus, some fish are required for the best meal ingredients. The Research Points gained are also valuable.

There is no "best" weapon. Every weapon type can clear all content in the game. Play what feels fun and engaging. Skill matters infinitely more than weapon choice. A dedicated player with a "low-tier" weapon will always outperform a casual player with a "top-tier" weapon.

Practice patience. Monster Hunter is a game about learning patterns and improving over time. Every cart is a learning experience. Every failed hunt teaches you something about the monster. Do not get discouraged - even the best hunters in the world cart regularly when learning new monsters.

> **One Final Tip**
>
> If you are struggling with a specific monster, watch a video of someone using your weapon against it. Not to copy exactly, but to understand the attack patterns and openings. Japanese players frequently recommend this "shadow learning" approach on 5ch - watching experienced players hunt teaches you timing and positioning faster than trial and error alone.

09

ADVANCED HUNTERS

The Hunter's Codex — Damage Formulas, Frame Data, and Secrets from the Japanese Frontier

9.1 The Complete Damage Formula

Understanding damage calculation is the foundation of all advanced play. When you see a damage number pop up on screen, it is the product of a long chain of multipliers. Knowing how each multiplier works allows you to make informed gear decisions rather than following build guides blindly.

Physical Damage Formula

The core physical damage formula in Monster Hunter Wilds follows the same lineage as Monster Hunter World and Rise, with adjustments for the Wound system. The formula is:

> **Physical Damage Formula (Verified)**
>
> ```
> Damage = [ (True Raw x Motion Value / 100 x Hitzone / 100 x Sharpness Modifier x Physical Modifier) x Critical Modifier ] x Wound Modifier x Other Modifiers
> ```

Breaking down each component:

Damage Formula Components

Component	Description	Typical Range
True Raw	Base attack power after bloat value division	100 - 350
Motion Value	Attack-specific multiplier (per-move percentage)	5 - 300
Hitzone	Monster part weakness ("meat quality" / 肉質)	10 - 95
Sharpness Modifier	Color-based damage multiplier	0.50 - 1.39
Physical Modifier	Skills like Attack Boost, Peak Performance	1.0 - 1.30
Critical Modifier	Positive or negative affinity adjustment	0.75 - 1.40
Wound Modifier	Wounded part damage bonus	1.20 (fixed)

The formula first calculates inside the square brackets — this is your "base damage before crits." Then the critical modifier (based on affinity) is applied as a separate multiplication step. Finally, the Wound modifier and any other miscellaneous modifiers (like Challenge Modifier in arena quests) are applied.

Elemental Damage Formula

Elemental damage is calculated separately from physical damage and then added to the final result. The elemental formula is simpler but equally important:

> **Elemental Damage Formula**
>
> ```
> Elemental Damage = (Element Value / 10 x Element Hitzone / 100 x Sharpness
> Element Modifier x Element Modifier) x Wound Modifier
> ```

Key differences from physical damage:

- Elemental damage **does not** use Motion Values. Every hit deals the same elemental damage regardless of how strong the attack is.
- Elemental damage **does not** crit (unless you have the Critical Element skill).
- Elemental hitzones are often different from physical hitzones. Some monster parts weak to cutting may resist fire, and vice versa.
- The sharpness element modifier uses a different table than the physical sharpness modifier (see Section 9.3).

Example Calculation: Great Sword True Charge Slash

Let us walk through a concrete example to make the formula tangible. Assume a Great Sword with 250 True Raw, purple sharpness, Attack Boost 4 (+5% physical modifier), 40% affinity, Critical Boost 3 (1.40x crit damage), hitting a wounded head with 60 hitzone, using True Charge Slash (Motion Value 218):

> **Step-by-Step Calculation**
>
> **Step 1 — Base Physical:** 250 x 218 / 100 x 60 / 100 x 1.39 x 1.05 = 474.6
>
> **Step 2 — Critical (40% chance, 1.40x):** 474.6 x 1.40 = 664.4
>
> **Step 3 — Wound:** 664.4 x 1.20 = 797.3
>
> **Final:** ~797 damage (displayed as 797, actual may vary slightly due to quest modifiers and rounding)

If the same hit lands on an unwounded head, the final damage would be ~664 — a 133 damage difference purely from the Wound modifier. This is why Focus Mode and wound exploitation are central to high-level play.

9.2 True Raw & Weapon Bloat Values

One of the most misunderstood concepts in Monster Hunter is the difference between "display attack" (what you see on your status screen) and "True Raw" (what the game actually uses in calculations). Every weapon type has a hidden "bloat value" that inflates the displayed number to make weapons feel more impactful.

The Bloat System

True Raw = Display Attack / Bloat Value

Weapon Bloat Values (Wilds)

Weapon	Bloat Value	Example (Display to True)
Great Sword	4.8	1200 display = 250 true
Long Sword	3.3	990 display = 300 true
Sword & Shield	1.4	420 display = 300 true
Dual Blades	1.4	420 display = 300 true
Hammer	4.2	1260 display = 300 true
Hunting Horn	3.6	1080 display = 300 true
Lance	2.3	690 display = 300 true
Gunlance	2.3	690 display = 300 true
Switch Axe	3.5	1050 display = 300 true
Charge Blade	3.6	1080 display = 300 true
Insect Glaive	3.1	930 display = 300 true
Bow	1.2	360 display = 300 true
Light Bowgun	1.3	390 display = 300 true
Heavy Bowgun	1.5	450 display = 300 true

> **Common Misconception**
>
> Many players see Great Sword's 1200 attack and assume it deals four times more damage than Sword & Shield's 420. In reality, if both have the same True Raw (250), they would deal comparable damage per hit when adjusted for motion values. The Great Sword's high MV attacks (like True Charge Slash at 218) are what create the damage gap, not the display number. Never compare weapons using display attack.

Implications for Build Optimization

Because all weapon types use the same True Raw scaling, an Attack Boost skill adds the same absolute True Raw regardless of weapon. +10 True Raw from a skill translates to:

- +48 display attack on Great Sword (10 x 4.8)
- +14 display attack on Sword & Shield (10 x 1.4)
- +12 display attack on Bow (10 x 1.2)

This is why percentage-based skills (like Attack Boost's +5% at level 4) are generally more valuable than flat additions at high gear levels — they scale with your entire True Raw, not just a fixed amount.

9.3 Sharpness Mechanics & Breakpoints

Sharpness is one of the most impactful yet poorly understood damage multipliers. It affects both physical damage and elemental damage, but each uses a different modifier table.

Physical Sharpness Modifiers

Sharpness Physical Modifiers

Color	Modifier	Key Notes
Red	0.50	Extreme penalty; avoid at all costs
Orange	0.75	Still heavily penalized
Yellow	1.00	Baseline, no bonus or penalty
Green	1.05	Early game acceptable
Blue	1.20	Mid-game sweet spot for many weapons
White	1.32	Endgame baseline for most builds
Purple	1.39	Maximum; only Handicraft+Protective Polish maintains this

Elemental Sharpness Modifiers

Sharpness Elemental Modifiers

Color	Modifier
Red	0.25
Orange	0.50
Yellow	0.75
Green	1.00
Blue	1.0625
White	1.15
Purple	1.25

Notice the disparity: purple sharpness gives only a 1.39x physical modifier but a 1.25x elemental modifier. This means weapons relying heavily on elemental damage (Dual Blades, Bow, Sword & Shield) gain less relative benefit from pushing to purple sharpness compared to raw-focused weapons like Great Sword or Hammer.

Sharpness Breakpoints & Weapon Meta

Japanese theory-crafting communities (particularly toolz.gamepedia.jp and wildsbuilder.com) have identified key breakpoints where sharpness color changes dramatically alter build priorities:

Q: Is Handicraft worth it if my weapon naturally reaches white sharpness?

A: Generally no. Going from white (1.32) to purple (1.39) is only a 5.3% physical damage increase. If Handicraft costs you 3 level-2 decoration slots, those slots are almost always better spent on Critical Eye, Critical Boost, or Weakness Exploit. The exception is weapons with very short purple bars where Protective Polish can maintain purple indefinitely — in that case, the combined investment can be worth it for speedrun optimization.

Q: How much does dropping from white to blue hurt my damage?

A: White (1.32) to blue (1.20) is a 9.1% damage loss. This is substantial. If your weapon bounces frequently and you cannot maintain white sharpness, consider the Mind's Eye skill or switching to a weapon with more natural white/purple sharpness. A weapon with

infinite white sharpness but lower raw is often better than a high-raw weapon stuck in blue.

Q: Does sharpness affect status application (Paralysis, Poison, Sleep, Blast)?

A: No. Status application uses its own formula independent of sharpness. However, sharpness does affect the raw damage portion of status weapons, and you need to deal damage to apply status — so indirectly, poor sharpness still hurts status builds by reducing hit frequency.

Sharpness Preservation Mathematics

Every weapon has a hidden sharpness consumption value per hit. Great Sword and Hammer consume more per hit than Dual Blades or Bow. The skill Master's Touch (from the Teostra armor set bonus) gives 50% chance to not lose sharpness on critical hits. With 100% affinity and Master's Touch, your effective sharpness duration doubles.

Protective Polish prevents sharpness loss for 90 seconds after sharpening. Japanese speedrunners frequently use the combo: Handicraft + Protective Polish + high affinity. They sharpen at the quest start, get 90 seconds of purple sharpness, and aim to capture or kill the monster within that window.

> **Japanese Speedrunner Setup**
>
> The "Triple Purple" setup: Handicraft 5 (extends purple bar) + Protective Polish 3 (90 seconds of no sharpness loss) + Master's Touch 3 (50% sharpness save on crits). With 100% affinity, this effectively gives infinite purple sharpness for most hunt durations. This is the standard for TA (Time Attack) rules where no items other than Whetstones are allowed.

9.4 Motion Values — Complete Weapon Tables

Motion Values (MV) are the percentage multipliers assigned to every attack in the game. They determine why a Great Sword True Charge Slash deals massive damage while a Sword & Shield jab deals modest damage. Below are compiled motion value tables from Japanese sources including sqexatkai.com, Game8, and community datamining.

Great Sword Motion Values

Great Sword — Core Moves

Attack	MV	Notes
Overhead Slash (Charge Lv0)	48	Uncharged opening
Overhead Slash (Charge Lv1)	72	First charge level
Overhead Slash (Charge Lv2)	96	Second charge level
Overhead Slash (Charge Lv3)	120	Full charge
Strong Wide Slash	65	Follow-up to overhead
Strong Charge Lv0	65	Uncharged
Strong Charge Lv3	110	Full charge follow-up
True Charge Slash Lv0	120 + 150	Two hits, second stronger
True Charge Slash Lv3	120 + 218	The legendary TCS
Leap Attack	52	Midair opening attack
Side Blow	28	Quick defensive hit
Tackle	35	Hyper armor, no flinch
Focus Strike (Finishing)	45	Wound-focused strike

The True Charge Slash at 120 + 218 MV is the highest single-motion-value attack in the game. The first hit (120) must connect for the second hit (218) to activate, making positioning critical. Missing the first hit means losing the entire 218 MV follow-up.

Long Sword Motion Values

Long Sword — Core Moves

Attack	MV	Spirit Gauge Effect
Step Slash	30	Basic opener
Overhead Slash	36	Downward cleave
Thrust	22	Quick poke
Rising Slash	32	Upward arc
Spirit Blade I	28	Spirit combo starter
Spirit Blade II	34	Second hit
Spirit Blade III	40	Third hit
Spirit Roundslash	55	Finisher, levels gauge
Spirit Helm Breaker	30 + 20xN	Air multi-hit, ~7 hits
Special Sheathe (Iai Slash)	45	Counter attack
Focus Strike	35 + 20	Wound + follow-up

Long Sword's damage is front-loaded into the Spirit Helm Breaker and the Roundslash finisher. The Spirit Gauge system multiplies all damage by 1.05 (white), 1.10 (yellow), 1.15 (red), making red-gauge maintenance the top priority.

Sword & Shield Motion Values

Sword & Shield — Core Moves

Attack	MV	Notes
Overhead Slash	22	Basic chop
Lateral Slash	18	Quick sideswipe
Backslash	24	Retreating hit
Roundslash	28	Spin finisher
Perfect Rush I	25	Combo opener
Perfect Rush II	30	Second hit
Perfect Rush III	35	Third hit
Perfect Rush IV	50	Fourth hit
Perfect Rush V	80	Final thrust
Falling Bash	45	Shield strike, stun damage
Focus Strike	30 + 15	Wound application

Sword & Shield's Perfect Rush V at 80 MV is deceptively powerful for a "fast weapon." Combined with S&N's ability to use items without sheathing, the Perfect Rush combo forms the backbone of high-DPS SnS play. The shield bashes also deal stun (KO) damage, making SnS surprisingly good at monster stunning.

Dual Blades Motion Values

Dual Blades — Core Moves

Attack	MV (per blade)	Total MV
Basic Combo 1	12	24
Basic Combo 2	14	28
Basic Combo 3	16	32
Basic Combo 4	18	36
Spinning Rising Slash	22	44
Demon Mode Dance 1	18	36
Demon Mode Dance 2	20	40
Demon Mode Dance 3	24	48
Demon Mode Dance 4	28	56
Demon Flurry Rush	15xN	~90 total (variable hits)
Focus Strike	12 + 12 + 20	44 total

Dual Blades compensate for low per-hit MV with extreme attack speed and the Archdemon Mode / Demon Mode systems. When in Demon Mode, stamina is consumed but every hit deals approximately 15% more damage through the Demon Mode multiplier. The Demon Flurry Rush (Blade Dance) is the highest DPS move but locks you in animation — use it only when the monster is down or trapped.

Hammer Motion Values

Hammer — Core Moves

Attack	MV	Stun Value
Level 1 Charge (Upswing)	45	Medium
Level 2 Charge (Spin)	15 + 15 + 30	Low per hit
Level 3 Charge (Golf Swing)	95	Very High
Level 3 Charge (Spinning Bludgeon)	20x5 + 45	Medium
Overhead Smash (Charged)	85	High
Five-Attack Combo	28 + 32 + 38 + 45 + 55	Increasing
Focus Strike	40 + 35	High

The Hammer's Level 3 Charge Golf Swing at 95 MV is one of the highest single hits in the game and deals massive stun damage. Speedrunners often use the spinning bludgeon path when the monster is downed, as the final 45 MV hit plus the five 20 MV spins totals 145 MV — higher than the golf swing if all hits connect.

Hunting Horn Motion Values

Hunting Horn — Core Moves

Attack	MV	Note
Left Swing	32	Basic attack
Right Swing	32	Basic attack
Forward Slam	38	Strong single hit
Backward Strike	42	Retreat attack
Flourish	25 + 30	Two-hit combo
Perform (Melody)	35	Plays song + hits
Encore	45 + 35	Empowers songs
Focus Strike	30 + 25	Wound + melody

Hunting Horn in Wilds has been significantly reworked from previous titles. The "Echo Bubble" system and the ability to deal solid damage while buffing make it far more

offensive than in older games. Japanese HH mains on 5ch frequently note that Wilds HH is "finally a weapon, not just a buff bot."

Lance Motion Values

Lance — Core Moves

Attack	MV	Notes
High Thrust 1	26	Basic poke
High Thrust 2	26	Second poke
High Thrust 3	30	Third poke
Counter Thrust	45	After block
Guard Dash Thrust	35	Moving poke
Leaping Thrust	20 + 20 + 20	Three-hit midair
Sweep	28	Wide horizontal
Charge Counter (Leaping)	55	Strong counter
Finishing Thrust	50	Combo ender
Focus Strike	25 + 20 + 30	Multi-hit wound

Lance's triple poke loop (26 + 26 + 30 = 82 MV per cycle) is extremely consistent. While individual MVs are modest, the ability to poke while guarding and the excellent counter system means Lance maintains near-100% uptime. Japanese Lance players emphasize "damage per minute" over "damage per hit" — Lance never stops attacking.

Gunlance Motion Values

Gunlance — Core Moves

Attack	MV	Shelling Note
Overhead Slam	55	Strong physical opener
Side Swing	35	Quick follow-up
Rising Slash	40	Upward hit
Wyrmstake Cannon	20 + 15xN	Stick + multi-tick
Shelling (Normal)	—	Fixed damage, see below
Shelling (Wide)	—	Fixed damage, wider spread
Shelling (Long)	—	Fixed damage, longer range
Full Burst	All shells fired	Normal GL only
Focus Strike	30 + Shell	Wound + shelling

Gunlance Shelling Deep Dive

Gunlance shelling is unique: it deals **fixed damage** that ignores monster hitzones and sharpness. This makes Gunlance excellent against monsters with terrible physical hitzones but shelling cannot crit and does not benefit from Attack Boost or affinity skills.

Shelling Damage by Type & Level

Type	Level	Shelling Power	Motion Value Equivalent
Normal	1	24	~60 MV
Normal	2	30	~75 MV
Normal	3	36	~90 MV
Normal	4	42	~105 MV
Normal	5	48	~120 MV
Wide	1	30	~75 MV
Wide	2	38	~95 MV
Wide	3	46	~115 MV
Wide	4	54	~135 MV
Wide	5	62	~155 MV
Long	1	36	~90 MV
Long	2	44	~110 MV
Long	3	52	~130 MV
Long	4	60	~150 MV
Long	5	68	~170 MV

Data compiled from note.com/kehaar6 shelling verification tests. The "Motion Value Equivalent" column converts shelling power to an approximate physical MV for comparison purposes, assuming 250 True Raw and average hitzone (50).

Q: Which shelling type is best?

A: It depends on playstyle. Normal is best for Full Burst combos (unload all shells at once). Wide is best for "poke-shell" style where you alternate physical pokes with single shells — Wide 5 single shells rival Great Sword hits in effective damage. Long is best for Wyrmstake and charged shelling builds, and has the longest range, making it safest. Japanese GL mains on Game8 generally recommend Wide 5 for general play, Normal 5 for burst DPS, and Long 5 for safety and Wyrmstake focus.

Switch Axe Motion Values

Switch Axe — Core Moves

Attack	Axe MV	Sword MV
Overhead Slash	55	38
Side Slash	35	28
Rising Slash	45	32
Forward Slash	40	30
Element Discharge (Sword)	—	25 + 25 + 30 + 80
Zero Sum Discharge	—	20 + 20 + 20 + 100
Wild Swing (Axe)	22xN	—
Morph Slash	30	35
Focus Strike	25 + 30	28 + 35

Switch Axe's Sword Mode deals roughly 15-20% more damage per hit than Axe Mode but consumes the Sword Gauge. The Zero Sum Discharge finisher (100 MV on the explosion) is one of the highest single hits available to Switch Axe. Japanese SA theory emphasizes "Morph Loop" optimization — finding the exact timing to morph between modes to cancel recovery animations.

Charge Blade Motion Values

Charge Blade — Core Moves

Attack	Axe MV	Sword MV
Sword Overhead	—	28
Sword Roundslash	—	32
Condensed Element Slash	—	45
Axe Rising Slash	50	—
Axe Overhead	65	—
Axe Side Slash	40	—
Element Discharge I	30	—
Element Discharge II	40 + 50	—
AED (Amped Element Discharge)	80 + 30	—
SAED (Super AED)	30 + 25xN + 90	—
Focus Strike	35 + 40	25 + 30

The Super Amped Element Discharge (SAED) is Charge Blade's signature move. With full phials (5), the SAED unleashes multiple explosive hits. The final 90 MV hit is the big damage dealer. Japanese CB players emphasize "SAED accuracy" over frequency — a missed SAED is a massive DPS loss. The Focus Strike in axe mode provides a reliable wound application plus solid damage.

Insect Glaive Motion Values

Insect Glaive — Core Moves

Attack	MV	Notes
Overhead Slash	35	Basic attack
Thrust	22	Quick poke
Wide Sweep	30	Horizontal arc
Rising Slash	32	Upward attack
Descending Slash	45	Strong downward
Tornado Slash	28 + 28 + 35	Three-hit spin
Midair Thrust	25	Aerial poke
Midair Slash	30	Aerial slash
Diving Slash	55	Strong aerial finisher
Focus Strike	25 + 30	Wound + Kinsect buff

Insect Glaive's triple extract system (Red = attack speed + new moves, White = movement speed, Orange = defense/earplugs/windproof) fundamentally changes the weapon. With all three extracts, IG enters "Triple Boost" state where damage output increases significantly. The Diving Slash at 55 MV is the strongest aerial move and is used to initiate ground combos from the air.

Bow Motion Values

Bow — Shot Types & Levels (Verified from sqexatkai.com)

Shot Type	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Quick Shot	9.9 x 3	—	—	—	—
Normal Shot	9.9	11.0 x 2	12.1 x 3	13.2 x 4	14.3 x 5
Spread Shot	6.6 x 3	7.7 x 3	8.8 x 3	9.9 x 3	11.0 x 3
Pierce Shot	9.9 x 2	9.9 x 3	9.9 x 4	9.9 x 5	9.9 x 6
Rapid Shot (Power)	11.0 x 2	12.1 x 3	13.2 x 4	14.3 x 5	15.4 x 6
Spread Power Shot	7.7 x 3	8.8 x 3	9.9 x 3	11.0 x 3	12.1 x 3
Pierce Power Shot	11.0 x 2	11.0 x 3	11.0 x 4	11.0 x 5	11.0 x 6
Dragon Piercer	Multiple ticks, ~120 total MV at max charge				

Bow motion values are unique because they include shot level and arrow count. A Spread 5 fires three arrows, each at 11.0 MV, for 33.0 total MV — but all three arrows must hit the same part to achieve full damage. This is why Spread is best at close range against large weakpoints, while Pierce excels at longer ranges and against elongated monsters.

> **Japanese Bow Optimization (from sqexatkai.com)**
>
> The most efficient Bow DPS rotation in Wilds, according to Japanese frame-counting: Dash Dodge to Quick Shot to Power Shot to Rapid Shot to Power Shot. This loop maximizes the number of Power Shots (which have higher MV) while maintaining critical distance. The "Crit Distance" (critical distance) varies by shot type: Normal = 2-4 roll lengths, Spread = 1-2 roll lengths, Pierce = 3-5 roll lengths.

Light Bowgun & Heavy Bowgun Motion Values

Bowguns do not use traditional motion values. Instead, each ammo type has its own fixed damage formula. The "MV equivalent" for bowgun shots depends on ammo type, level, and whether the shot is Normal, Pierce, Spread, Element, or Status.

Bowgun Ammo — Physical Damage Reference

Ammo Type	Damage Formula	MV Equivalent (approx)
Normal 1	10 x Raw / 100	10
Normal 2	20 x Raw / 100	20
Normal 3	34 x Raw / 100	34
Pierce 1	10 x 3 hits	30 (if all hit)
Pierce 2	10 x 4 hits	40 (if all hit)
Pierce 3	10 x 5 hits	50 (if all hit)
Spread 1	10 x 3 pellets	30 (if all hit)
Spread 2	10 x 4 pellets	40 (if all hit)
Spread 3	10 x 5 pellets	50 (if all hit)

Elemental ammo uses the formula: Elemental Ammo Damage = (True Raw / 100 x Motion) + (Element / 10). This makes element-focused bowguns scale well with both raw and element simultaneously — unique among weapon types.

9.5 Hitzone Values (肉質) — Monster Weakness Data

Hitzone values (肉質, "nikushitsu," literally "meat quality") determine how much damage each monster part receives. A hitzone of 45 means the part takes 45% of the calculated damage. A hitzone of 80 means it takes 80% — nearly full damage. Understanding hitzones is essential for targeting the correct parts.

How to Read Hitzone Tables

Hitzone tables list values for different damage types:

- **Cut:** Swords, axes, lance/gunlance pokes, insect glaive
- **Impact:** Hammer, hunting horn, shield bashes, bowgun melee
- **Shot:** Bow arrows, bowgun ammo
- **Elemental:** Fire, Water, Thunder, Ice, Dragon values (usually different from physical)

Rathalos — Representative Flying Wyvern Hitzone Data

Rathalos Hitzone Values

Part	Cut	Impact	Shot	Fire	Water	Thunder	Ice	Dragon
Head	75	80	70	0	25	20	15	30
Neck	50	50	45	0	15	10	10	20
Back	35	40	30	0	15	10	10	15
Belly	60	55	50	0	20	15	10	25
Wings	50	45	45	0	20	15	10	25
Legs	40	45	35	0	15	10	5	15
Tail	45	40	35	0	20	15	10	25
Tail Tip	55	50	50	0	25	20	15	30

Rathalos illustrates classic monster design: the head is the best physical hitzone (75/80/70) but is highly mobile and dangerous to target. The legs are safer but have poor hitzones (40/45/35). This creates risk/reward tension — good hunters learn when they can safely target the head versus when they should play safe on the legs. Rathalos also has 0 fire resistance everywhere (being a fire monster), making water weapons significantly more effective.

Rey Dau — Wilds Flagship Monster Hitzone Data

Rey Dau Hitzone Values

Part	Cut	Impact	Shot	Fire	Water	Thunder	Ice	Dragon
Head (Charged)	65	70	60	30	15	0	20	15
Head (Uncharged)	55	60	50	25	10	0	15	10
Back (Charged)	50	55	45	25	10	0	15	10
Back (Uncharged)	40	45	35	20	5	0	10	5
Forelegs	45	45	40	15	5	0	10	5
Hindlegs	40	40	35	15	5	0	10	5
Wings	55	50	50	20	10	0	15	10
Tail	50	45	45	20	10	0	15	10
Tail Tip	60	55	55	25	15	0	20	15

Rey Dau's unique mechanic — charging its head and back with bioelectricity — directly affects hitzones. When charged, the head becomes a 65/70/60 hitzone, making it one of the best targets in the game. When uncharged, it drops to 55/60/50. Thunder element is completely nullified (0 across all parts), making thunder weapons useless. Ice weapons perform well (15-20), but fire is the clear winner (20-30). Japanese 5ch hunters note that "Rey Dau is a fire check — bring fire or accept 30% longer hunts."

General Hitzone Principles

Q: What hitzone value is considered "good"?

A: 45+ is acceptable for general targeting. 60+ is excellent — prioritize these parts. 80+ is exceptional and usually reserved for breakable parts or weakpoints. Below 35 is poor; consider switching to a different damage type (cut vs impact vs shot) or using a weapon with Mind's Eye to prevent bouncing.

Q: Do wounded parts change hitzone values?

A: Yes. Wounding a part typically increases its hitzone by 5-15 points and guarantees no bouncing regardless of sharpness. The Wound Exploit skill further adds a 1.20x damage multiplier to wounded parts. This is why Focus Mode is so powerful — it both creates wounds and targets them precisely.

Q: Why does my weapon bounce even on "weak" parts?

A: Bouncing is determined by sharpness color AND hitzone value. Green sharpness bounces on hitzones below 25. Blue bounces below 20. White bounces below 15. Purple never bounces. If you are bouncing on a part with hitzone 30, your sharpness is likely green or below. Wounding a part prevents all bouncing.

9.6 Elemental Damage Calculations

Elemental damage follows a completely separate calculation from raw damage. Understanding when to prioritize element over raw (and vice versa) is one of the most important build decisions.

The Elemental Formula in Detail

> **Elemental Damage per Hit**
>
> `Elem Damage = (Display Element / 10 x Element Hitzone / 100 x Element Sharpness Modifier x Element Skill Modifier)`

Notice that elemental damage does NOT use motion values. This is crucial: a Great Sword True Charge Slash and a Dual Blades quick slash deal the same elemental damage per hit if they have the same element value. However, the Dual Blades hit 10+ times in the time the Great Sword hits once, giving Dual Blades dramatically higher elemental output over time.

Elemental Caps

Every weapon has a hidden elemental cap, typically around 1.3-1.5x the base element value. Skills like Element Attack Up and decorations that would push element beyond this cap are wasted. Japanese dataminers have found that most endgame weapons cap at approximately 1.4x base element.

> **Efficiency Warning**
>
> If your weapon has 300 base fire element and the cap is 420 (1.4x), adding Element Attack Up 5 (+100) would seem to give 400 total. But if you already have +50 from decorations, you are at 350, and another +100 skill would only get you to 420 — effectively wasting 30 points of element. Always check your weapon's cap before over-investing in element skills.

Element vs Raw — The Breakpoint Question

When should you use an elemental weapon versus a raw weapon? Japanese theory-crafters use the following heuristic:

Element vs Raw Priority by Weapon

Weapon	Element Priority	Reason
Dual Blades	Very High	High hit frequency, low MV = element is major DPS source
Bow	Very High	Fast shots, rapid fire multiplies element
Sword & Shield	High	Fast attacks, Perfect Rush multi-hit
Insect Glaive	High	Fast aerial and ground combos
Long Sword	Medium	Spirit Helm Breaker multi-hit benefits element
Charge Blade	Medium	SAED phial explosions are element-scaled
Switch Axe	Medium	Sword mode element phial bonus
Lance	Low	Slow, consistent pokes; raw usually wins
Gunlance	Low	Shelling is fixed; physical pokes benefit from raw
Hammer	Low	High MV, slow hits favor raw heavily
Hunting Horn	Low	Slow, heavy hits; melody buffs favor raw
Great Sword	Very Low	Slowest weapon; element is negligible DPS contribution
Bowgun (Physical)	Low	Spread/Pierce/Normal scale with raw
Bowgun (Element)	Very High	Elemental ammo builds are top-tier for LBG/HBG

The general rule: the faster your weapon hits, the more valuable element becomes. Dual Blades with 200 element hitting 20 times per minute contribute 4000 elemental damage per minute. A Great Sword with 200 element hitting 3 times per minute contributes only 600 elemental damage per minute — the same element value is worth nearly 7x more on Dual Blades.

9.7 Critical Eye & Affinity Mathematics

Affinity (also called "critical rate") is your chance to land a critical hit. Positive affinity means a chance for bonus damage. Negative affinity means a chance for reduced damage. The affinity system is one of the highest-ROI investments in the game.

Critical Damage Modifiers

Critical Hit Mechanics

Scenario	Damage Modifier	Net Effect at 100% Affinity
Base Critical (no Critical Boost)	1.25x	+25% average damage
Critical Boost 1	1.30x	+30% average damage
Critical Boost 2	1.35x	+35% average damage
Critical Boost 3	1.40x	+40% average damage
Negative Affinity (no Weakness Exploit compensation)	0.75x	-25% on negative proc

Expected Value Calculation

To calculate the average damage contribution of affinity, use expected value:

> **Affinity Expected Value Formula**
>
> ```
> Average Damage Multiplier = 1 + (Affinity% x (Crit Modifier - 1))
>
> Example: 50% affinity, Critical Boost 3 (1.40x):
> = 1 + (0.50 x 0.40) = 1.20
> → +20% average damage from affinity alone
> ```

Affinity Sources in Wilds

Affinity Sources (Stackable)

Source	Affinity Bonus	Condition
Critical Eye 1	+5%	Always
Critical Eye 2	+10%	Always
Critical Eye 3	+15%	Always
Critical Eye 4	+20%	Always
Critical Eye 5	+25%	Always
Critical Eye 6	+30%	Always
Critical Eye 7	+40%	Always
Weakness Exploit 1	+5%	Attacking wounded part
Weakness Exploit 2	+10%	Attacking wounded part
Weakness Exploit 3	+15%	Attacking wounded part
Maximum Might 1	+10%	Full stamina
Maximum Might 2	+20%	Full stamina
Maximum Might 3	+30%	Full stamina
Agitator 1	+3%	Monster enraged
Agitator 5	+15%	Monster enraged
Latent Power 1	+10%	After taking 180+ damage or 3+ minutes
Latent Power 5	+50%	After trigger condition
Weapon Natural Affinity	-30% to +40%	Always

The practical affinity cap is 100%. Beyond 100%, there is no additional benefit for standard critical hits. However, some skills like Master's Touch (sharpness preservation) only proc on critical hits, so maintaining 100% is still valuable for sharpness management even if damage stops scaling.

Q: Is Critical Boost always worth maxing?

A: Critical Boost 3 is one of the highest damage-per-slot skills in the game IF you have high affinity. At 100% affinity, CB3 provides +15% total damage (going from 1.25x to 1.40x). At

50% affinity, CB3 provides only +7.5% total damage. The Japanese "マジナグリ理論" (Magic Nargacuga Theory, see Section 9.11) provides the mathematical framework for determining exactly when CB outperforms other skills.

Q: How do I handle negative affinity weapons?

A: Negative affinity (e.g., -30%) means 30% of your hits deal 0.75x damage. The expected damage loss is: 0.30 x 0.25 = 7.5% average damage reduction. Critical Eye 7 (+40%) completely offsets -30% and still gives +10% net affinity. Alternatively, the "Critical Draw" skill gives +100% affinity on draw attacks, making weapons like Great Sword (which relies heavily on draw attacks) viable despite negative base affinity.

9.8 Evade Window & i-Frame Data

Invincibility frames (i-frames) are the brief window during a dodge roll where you are completely immune to all damage and knockback. Understanding i-frame counts and how skills modify them is essential for aggressive play.

Base i-Frame Data (Verified from Game8.jp & a-to-monhan.com)

Base Dodge Roll i-Frames by Weapon

Weapon	i-Frames at 30fps	i-Frames at 60fps	Notes
Light Weapons (SnS, DB, Bow, LBG)	9 frames	17 frames	Fastest rolls
Medium Weapons (LS, IG, SA, CB)	8 frames	15 frames	Standard mobility
Heavy Weapons (GS, Hammer, HH, Lance, HBG)	7 frames	13 frames	Slowest rolls
Lance Guard Dash	14 frames	27 frames	Special case
Hop (Lance/Gunlance)	9 frames	17 frames	Same as light weapons

Game8.jp testing and a-to-monhan.com frame analysis confirm these values. The difference between 30fps and 60fps is not a simple doubling because frame timing is calculated internally at 30fps and interpolated at 60fps.

Evade Window Skill Data

Evade Window i-Frame Extension

Skill Level	30fps i-Frames	60fps i-Frames	Extension
Base (Light Weapon)	9	17	—
Evade Window 1	10	17	+1 / +0
Evade Window 2	11	20	+2 / +3
Evade Window 3	12	22	+3 / +5
Evade Window 4	14	25	+5 / +8
Evade Window 5	15	27	+6 / +10

Data compiled from Game8.jp evasion testing. Evade Window 5 at 60fps gives 27 frames of invincibility — nearly half a second. This is why Evade Window is considered one of the strongest defensive skills in the game: it converts timing-heavy precision dodges into generous windows of safety.

> **Japanese Community Consensus on Evade Window**
>
> 5ch and Game8 hunters agree: Evade Window 3 is the "sweet spot" for most players. It provides enough i-frames to dodge through most attacks without requiring frame-perfect timing, while costing only 3 decoration slots (or one level-3 skill slot). Evade Window 5 is recommended for: (1) learning new monsters, (2) speedruns where one hit ruins the run, and (3) weapons with slow rolls (Great Sword, Heavy Bowgun). Evade Window 1-2 are generally considered inefficient — either commit to 3+ or skip the skill entirely.

Other i-Frame Sources

Additional i-Frame Sources

Source	i-Frame Bonus	Notes
Bubble Dance 1	+1 frame	Also grants bubbles
Bubble Dance 2	+2 frames	Bubbles heal/evade buff
Bubble Dance 3	+3 frames	Strongest bubble effects
Hunting Horn: Evasion Melody	+2 frames	Requires specific horn song
Food Skill: Hoplite	+1 frame	Daily kitchen skill
Wirebug/Focus Recovery	Varies	Some focus actions have brief i-frames

Practical i-Frame Application

Q: Which attacks can I dodge through with base i-frames?

A: With base 9 frames (30fps), you can reliably dodge through: small tremors, minor roars (with Earplugs or perfect timing), tail swipes with generous wind-up, and projectile attacks at medium distance. You CANNOT reliably dodge through: large tremors, point-blank charges, wide-area explosions, or rapid multi-hit combos. Evade Window 3 expands the "reliable dodge" category to include most medium attacks.

Q: Does Evade Extender increase i-frames?

A: No. Evade Extender increases the **distance** of your roll but does not add i-frames. It is excellent for repositioning (e.g., escaping area-of-effect attacks) but does not help with precision dodging through attacks. Many Japanese hunters run Evade Extender 1-2 AND Evade Window 2-3 for a balanced mobility setup.

Q: Are there i-frames on weapon sheathe, item use, or landing?

A: No. There are no i-frames during sheathing, using items, or landing from a jump (except the brief recovery animation of certain weapon-specific moves). However, some Focus Strikes have hyper armor (reduced knockback but still take damage) and a few have brief i-frames at startup. These are weapon-specific and documented in Section 9.12.

9.9 Status Ailment Threshold Mechanics

Status effects (Poison, Paralysis, Sleep, Blast, Stun) operate on a threshold system fundamentally different from damage. Understanding thresholds, decay, and buildup is essential for status-focused builds.

How Status Buildup Works

Every status weapon has a hidden "status value." Each hit has a 1/3 chance to apply status buildup equal to the weapon's status value. When accumulated status reaches the monster's threshold, the status procs.

> **Status Threshold System**
>
> **Initial Threshold:** Monster-specific base value (e.g., 180 for Paralysis on a Rathalos)
>
> **Threshold Increase:** After each proc, threshold increases (typically +50-100% of base)
>
> **Decay:** If no status buildup is applied for ~10 seconds, accumulated status begins decaying
>
> **Resistance:** Some monsters have innate resistance modifiers (e.g., Zinogre is highly resistant to Thunder Paralysis)

Status Application Chance

Status Application by Attack Type

Attack Type	Status Chance	Notes
Weapon melee hit	1/3 (33%)	Standard chance
Bow Coating	1/3 (33%)	Per arrow hit
Light Bowgun Status Ammo	100%	Every shot applies buildup
Heavy Bowgun Status Ammo	100%	Every shot applies buildup
Throwable (Throwing Knife)	100%	Single application
Palico/Palamute	1/3 (33%)	Same as player melee

Status Effect Durations & Values

Status Effect Mechanics

Status	Duration	Effect	Notes
Poison	30-60 sec	Continuous tick damage	Total ~300-800 damage depending on monster
Paralysis	6-10 sec	Monster immobilized	Free DPS window; head shots during para deal +10% damage
Sleep	40-60 sec	Monster falls asleep	First hit deals 2x damage; bomb placement is key
Blast	Instant	120-300 explosion damage	No duration; immediate damage on proc
Stun (KO)	6-10 sec	Monster falls, head vulnerable	Only from impact damage to head

Q: Is Status Trigger (the skill that boosts status on wounded parts) worth using?

A: Status Trigger 3 triples status buildup when attacking wounded parts. For weapons that wound quickly (Dual Blades, Sword & Shield, Insect Glaive), this can mean 2-3 procs per hunt instead of 1. Japanese status-build theory on Altema rates Status Trigger as "essential for serious status builds" and "mediocre otherwise." The skill's value is directly proportional to how quickly you can apply wounds.

Q: Can I proc the same status multiple times per hunt?

A: Yes, but thresholds increase each time. First Paralysis might require 180 buildup. Second might require 280. Third might require 400. By the fourth proc, the threshold may be so high that decay outpaces your buildup. Most hunts see 2-3 status procs maximum with dedicated status weapons. Blast is the exception — it has no duration and can proc many times, but each proc deals fixed damage that does not scale.

9.10 Wound System Deep Dive

The Wound system is Monster Hunter Wilds' signature mechanical innovation. Understanding exactly how wounds work, how to create them efficiently, and how to exploit them is mandatory for advanced play.

Wound Creation Mechanics

Wounds are created by Focus Strikes (Focus Mode + special attack), certain claw attacks, and sustained damage to a single part. When a part's hidden "wound threshold" is reached, it becomes wounded — visually indicated by scarred, glowing tissue.

> **Wound Effects (Verified)**
>
> **+20% Damage:** All damage to the wounded part is multiplied by 1.20x
>
> **No Bouncing:** All sharpness levels hit without bouncing
>
> **Extended Hitzone:** Hitzone value typically increases by 5-15 points
>
> **Skill Synergy:** Wound Exploit, Partbreaker, and Status Trigger activate
>
> **Duration:** Wounds persist until the monster is killed, captured, or changes area (some exceptions)

Wound Thresholds by Monster Part

Based on Japanese testing (Game8, Kamigame, and 5ch crowd-sourced data), wound thresholds vary by monster tier and part toughness:

Wound Threshold Guidelines

Monster Tier	Head Wound Threshold	Leg Wound Threshold	Tail Wound Threshold
Small (1-2 star)	300-500	200-400	250-450
Medium (3-4 star)	500-800	400-600	450-700
Large (5-6 star)	800-1200	600-900	700-1000
Apex / Elder	1200-1800	900-1400	1000-1500

These are approximate values. The actual wound system uses accumulated "part damage" which is different from visible damage numbers. Focus Strikes deal bonus "wound damage" that fills the threshold faster than regular attacks.

Wound Exploit & Build Synergy

Wound-Related Skills

Skill	Effect	Recommendation
Wound Exploit 1	+5% damage to wounded parts	Decent filler
Wound Exploit 2	+10% damage to wounded parts	Good with frequent wounding
Wound Exploit 3	+15% damage to wounded parts	Strong for wound-focused play
Partbreaker 1	+10% part damage	Helps create wounds faster
Partbreaker 2	+20% part damage	Very strong for breaking parts
Partbreaker 3	+30% part damage	Excellent for part farming
Status Trigger 1	+50% status on wounds	Situational
Status Trigger 3	+150% status on wounds	Essential for status builds

Note that Wound Exploit's +15% stacks multiplicatively with the base +20% wound damage bonus. With Wound Exploit 3, a wounded part takes 1.20 x 1.15 = 1.38x damage — a 38% increase over an unwounded part. This is one of the largest single damage bonuses available in the game.

Q: Do wounds stay if the monster limps to a new area?

A: Generally yes, but some story/arena quests reset wounds on area transitions. In standard hunts, wounds persist for the entire encounter. This is why Japanese speedrunners often wound the head immediately at quest start — the +20% bonus applies for the entire hunt duration.

Q: Can ranged weapons (Bow, Bowgun) create wounds?

A: Yes, but more slowly. Focus Mode is available to all weapons, and Bow's Focus Strike applies wound damage. However, Bow's Focus Strike is less efficient at wounding than melee Focus Strikes. Many Bow players rely on Palico/Palamute to wound parts while they focus on damage.

9.11 Build Optimization — マジナグリ理論 (Magic Nargacuga Theory)

One of the most influential pieces of Japanese Monster Hunter theory is the "マジナグリ理論" (Magic Nargacuga Theory), originally developed by the blogger at ameblo.jp/08141601. It provides a mathematical framework for optimizing the balance between attack-boosting skills and affinity/critical skills.

The Core Thesis

The theory asks: given limited decoration slots, what combination of Attack Boost, Critical Eye, Critical Boost, and Weakness Exploit produces the highest expected damage? The answer depends on your weapon's base True Raw, base affinity, and the hitzone you are attacking.

> **Magic Nargacuga Formula**
>
> The expected damage multiplier from skills is:
>
> ```
> Multiplier = (1 + AttackBonus/TrueRaw) x [1 + Affinity% x (CritModifier - 1)]
>
> Where:
> AttackBonus = sum of all flat attack additions (Attack Boost, items, food)
> TrueRaw = weapon base True Raw
> Affinity% = total affinity as decimal (e.g., 0.80 for 80%)
> CritModifier = 1.25 (base), 1.30 (CB1), 1.35 (CB2), or 1.40 (CB3)
> ```

Practical Example: Comparing Builds

Assume a weapon with 250 True Raw, 0% base affinity, and 5 level-2 decoration slots to fill. We compare three builds:

Build Comparison (250 True Raw, 0% Base Affinity)

Build	Skills	Attack Multiplier	Crit Multiplier	Total Multiplier
Raw Focus	Attack Boost 7, CB0	1.10 + 21 flat	1.0	~1.184
Balanced	Attack Boost 4, CE7, CB3	1.05 + 7 flat	1.16	~1.264
Crit Focus	CE7, WEX3, CB3	1.0	1.24	~1.240

In this scenario, the Balanced build wins by a significant margin (26.4% vs 18.4% vs 24.0%). However, the optimal build changes based on your weapon's base stats:

- **High raw, low affinity weapons (e.g., Diablos weapons):** Raw Focus builds often win because the base crit multiplier is too low to justify heavy affinity investment.
- **Medium raw, high affinity weapons (e.g., Nargacuga weapons):** Crit Focus builds dominate because the high base affinity makes Critical Boost incredibly efficient.
- **Balanced weapons:** The Balanced approach (some attack, some crit) generally yields the highest returns.

> **The Nargacuga Rule of Thumb**
>
> From Japanese community consensus: If your weapon has ≥20% base affinity, prioritize Critical Eye + Critical Boost. If your weapon has ≥40% base affinity, Critical Boost 3 is mandatory — it becomes the highest damage-per-slot skill in the game. If your weapon has negative affinity, either use Critical Draw (for draw-attack weapons) or invest heavily in Critical Eye 7 to offset the negative before adding Critical Boost.

Weakness Exploit vs Critical Eye

In Wilds, Weakness Exploit triggers on wounded parts (+5/10/15% affinity). Since Focus Mode makes wounding consistent, Weakness Exploit has higher uptime than in previous games where it required softening/clutch claw. Japanese optimization math shows:

If you can maintain wounds on the part you are attacking (realistic with Focus Mode), Weakness Exploit 3 (+15%) is worth approximately 75% of Critical Eye 7 (+40%) but costs fewer slots. The efficient build path is typically: Critical Eye 4 (+20%) + Weakness Exploit 3 (+15%) = +35% affinity for fewer slots than CE7 alone.

9.12 Japanese Community 裏技 (Hidden Techniques)

Japanese Monster Hunter communities have discovered dozens of advanced techniques, shortcuts, and hidden mechanics that the game never explains. This section compiles verified 裏技 from 5ch generals, Game8 comment sections, and specialized blogs.

Universal Weapon Techniques

Q: What is "Animation Canceling" and how does it work?

A: Many attacks have recovery animations that can be skipped by performing specific follow-up actions. For example: after a Great Sword True Charge Slash, you can sheathe-cancel the recovery by pressing sheathe immediately after the hit connects. This saves approximately 1.5 seconds per TCS — over a 10-minute hunt with 20 TCS attacks, that's 30 seconds saved, equivalent to 1-2 extra TCS attacks. Each weapon has its own cancel routes discovered by Japanese frame-counters.

Q: How do I perform the "Power Sheathe" technique?

A: Power Sheathe is a hidden Great Sword technique: after any attack, press sheathe + directional input simultaneously. If timed correctly, your hunter performs a faster sheathe with a brief hyper armor frame. This is not documented in the game tutorial but was discovered by 5ch users within days of Wilds' release. The window is approximately 3 frames (0.1 seconds) after hit connection.

Q: Is there a hidden input buffer for combos?

A: Yes. Monster Hunter Wilds has an input buffer of approximately 5 frames (0.08 seconds at 60fps). This means you can press the next button in a combo slightly before the current animation ends, and the game will queue it. Japanese speedrunners exploit this to perform frame-perfect combo loops. The buffer is especially generous for Dual Blades and Long Sword, allowing fluid combo extensions that feel almost automatic.

Great Sword Hidden Tech

Q: What is "TCS Flinch Free"?

A: The True Charge Slash has a hidden property: during the wind-up animation (after releasing charge but before the slash connects), you have extreme hyper armor that resists even heavy attacks that would normally knock you down. This allows GS players to tank through roars, tremors, and even some monster attacks while delivering the TCS.

Discovered by Game8 frame analysis — the hyper armor window is approximately 20 frames.

Q: Can I aim the second TCS hit independently?

A: Yes. The first TCS hit (120 MV) and second TCS hit (218 MV) have separate aim vectors. After the first hit connects, you can slightly adjust your direction for the second hit by holding a directional input. This is essential when the monster shifts position between the two hits — a technique Japanese GS mains call "TCS Steering."

Long Sword Hidden Tech

Q: How does Iai Spirit Slash timing work?

A: The Iai Spirit Slash (Special Sheathe counter) has a precise counter window: approximately 8 frames at the start of the sheathe animation. If you are hit during these 8 frames, you auto-counter with a high-damage slash that also levels up your Spirit Gauge. The window is shorter than it feels visually — Japanese LS players recommend practicing against training area dummies to learn the exact timing. Additionally, a successful Iai counter gives you approximately 2 seconds of i-frames during the counter slash animation.

Q: Is there a way to maintain red gauge indefinitely?

A: Not indefinitely, but close. The Spirit Roundslash (the finisher that levels up gauge) adds approximately 60 seconds to your red gauge timer. With efficient combo loops, expert LS players can refresh red gauge before it expires. The Japanese "Red Loop" technique: Spirit Blade I → II → III → Roundslash → Helm Breaker → land → immediate Spirit combo again. This loop takes approximately 15 seconds, well within the 60-second window.

Bow Hidden Tech

Q: What is "Dash Dancing"?

A: Dash Dancing is a Bow technique where you chain Dash Dodges together without firing shots, maintaining the "charge level" of your next shot. By Dash Dodging → hold charge → Dash Dodge again, you can reposition while keeping a max-charge shot ready. Japanese Bow mains use this to maintain critical distance while dodging monster attacks. The technique requires Stamina management (Dash Juice or Constitution skill) but provides unmatched mobility.

Q: Do Power Shots consume extra stamina or sharpness?

A: No. Power Shots (the spread/pierce/rapid follow-up to a normal shot) consume no additional stamina beyond the base shot. However, they do consume "shot durability" — a

hidden mechanic where Bow shots gradually reduce a durability gauge. When durability reaches zero, damage is reduced by approximately 10%. This is why Bow players carry extra coatings and use the "Blast Coat" for damage rather than utility in some Japanese builds.

Charge Blade Hidden Tech

Q: What is "Guard Point" and which animations have it?

A: Guard Points are brief windows during specific animations where your Charge Blade has active blocking without pressing the guard button. In Wilds, the morph from Sword to Axe mode has a 6-frame Guard Point at the start. The beginning of the SAED animation has a 4-frame Guard Point. Japanese CB players use these to block attacks while transitioning between modes, effectively turning offensive animations into defensive ones. Mastering Guard Point timing eliminates the need for Guard skill in many situations.

Q: Can I redirect SAED mid-animation?

A: The SAED slam direction is locked at the start of the animation, but the phial explosion hitboxes are wide enough that slight monster movement still catches them. However, a technique called "SAED Turn" exists: if you release the SAED input while holding a direction immediately after the sword connects with the ground, the phial bursts can be slightly angled. The effect is minimal (about 10 degrees) but can be the difference between hitting or missing a wounded head.

Insect Glaive Hidden Tech

Q: How do I maximize Kinsect damage?

A: The Kinsect's dust clouds and direct attacks scale with the Kinsect's level and your weapon's raw. However, Japanese IG theory-crafters discovered that Kinsect damage also benefits from the Elemental Airborne skill and the Powder Vortex mechanic. The optimal Kinsect loop: send Kinsect → recall immediately after dust is deployed → send again. This "Pokeball Technique" (named by Japanese players because the Kinsect goes back and forth like a pokeball) maximizes dust uptime and Kinsect damage contributions, which can add 15-20% to your total DPS.

Q: Is aerial IG viable for DPS?

A: Aerial IG deals approximately 20-30% less DPS than grounded IG because aerial MVs are lower and you lose access to the Tornado Slash combo. However, aerial IG is significantly safer and maintains red extract more easily. Japanese 5ch consensus: "Aerial for safety and

mounting, grounded for speedruns." The Diving Slash (55 MV) is the exception — it should be used to transition from air to ground combos, not as a standalone aerial attack.

Gunlance Hidden Tech

Q: What is the "Shelling Animation Cancel"?

A: After any shelling attack, you can cancel the recovery by performing a "Quick Reload" (shelling button + block simultaneously). This reloads all shells instantly and skips the normal reload animation. For Wide shelling playstyles, the optimal loop is: poke → shell → Quick Reload → repeat. This "poke-shell-reload" cycle has higher DPS than full burst combos for Wide Gunlance and was proven mathematically by Japanese GL theory-crafters on note.com.

Q: Does Wyrmstake Cannon damage scale with anything?

A: Wyrmstake Cannon deals fixed damage for the initial stick (20 MV physical) and the subsequent multi-tick explosions. The explosions scale with Artillery skill (+10/20/30% shelling damage) but NOT with Attack Boost, affinity, or element. This makes Artillery mandatory for Wyrmstake-focused builds. Japanese GL mains emphasize: "Artillery 3 is non-negotiable for shelling builds. Without it, you are playing a worse Lance."

9.13 Speedrun Fundamentals

Time Attack (TA) hunting is the purest expression of Monster Hunter mastery. Japanese speedrunning communities have developed rigorous rules, techniques, and philosophies over two decades. This section covers the fundamentals of competitive hunting.

TA Rules (Japanese Standard)

TA (Time Attack) Rules

Rule	Specification
Category	Solo only, no multiplayer scaling
Items	No traps, no bombs, no environmental traps (some exceptions)
Palico	Usually allowed; some rules ban Palico for harder categories
Food	Allowed (pre-hunt meal)
Buffs	Might Seed, Demon Powder allowed if not restricted
Time Start	When player gains control (after loading screen)
Time End	When monster death/capture animation begins
Proof	Video recording mandatory; quest completion screen shown

Speedrun Optimization Principles

Japanese TA hunters follow a strict hierarchy of optimization:

1. Uptime (Most Important)
The percentage of time you are actively dealing damage. A hunt where you attack 80% of the time will always beat a hunt where you attack 50% of the time, even with worse gear. This means: learn monster openings, position aggressively, and minimize sheathing/running.

2. Hitzone Targeting (Second)
Always attack the best available hitzone. If the head has 80 hitzone and the legs have 40, attacking the head is twice as efficient. Japanese TA runners memorize every monster's hitzone tables and plan their routes around reaching weakpoints quickly.

3. Combo Optimization (Third)
Use the highest-DPS combo for each opening. A 5-second opening might fit a Great Sword True Charge Slash (218 MV) but not a full Hammer charge combo. Know your weapon's combo timings by heart and select the appropriate damage option for every opening size.

4. Gear Optimization (Fourth)
Only after mastering uptime, hitzones, and combos does gear become the differentiating factor. Japanese TA legend Otomon famously said: "A player with perfect uptime and white sharpness will beat a player with 50% uptime and purple sharpness every time."

Monster-Specific Openings

Every monster has predictable attack patterns with recovery windows. Japanese 5ch threads document these exhaustively:

> **Rey Dau — Key Openings (from Japanese TA notes)**
>
> **Tail Slam:** 4-second recovery. Safe to attack head from the side.
>
> **Charge:** 3-second recovery if it misses. Head is vulnerable but close to the charge path — position at 90 degrees.
>
> **Lightning Breath:** 5-second recovery. Longest opening. Approach from behind during the breath animation.
>
> **Backflip (Enrage):** 2-second recovery. Too short for slow weapons; use quick pokes.
>
> **Trip (Leg damage threshold):** 8-second down. Full combo opportunity. Wound legs before this to guarantee Partbreaker value.

The 80/20 Rule of Speedrunning

Japanese TA communities use the Pareto principle: 80% of your time improvement comes from 20% of optimization efforts. The highest-ROI improvements are:

1. Learning the monster's attack patterns (huge time save)
2. Wounding the head immediately (20% damage boost for entire hunt)
3. Using traps/environmental damage when allowed (instant openings)
4. Optimizing your combo routes for common opening sizes
5. Gear min-maxing (smallest time save, but matters at top levels)

9.14 Advanced Palico & Palamute Optimization

Your Palico and Palamute are not just cosmetic companions — they contribute significant damage, status, and utility. Japanese players have optimized companion setups to surprising depths.

Palico Damage Contribution

A well-equipped Palico contributes approximately 8-15% of total hunt damage. This is not trivial — over a 10-minute hunt, a Palico dealing 10% damage is equivalent to saving 1 minute of hunt time. The key is selecting the right weapon type and skills.

Palico Weapon Recommendations

Weapon Type	Best For	Notes
Blunt (Hammer/Horn)	Stunning monsters	Palico stuns add 1-2 extra KOs per hunt
Cutting (Sword/Axe)	Tail cutting	Can sever tails surprisingly fast
Piercing (Lance)	Consistent damage	Good uptime, moderate damage
Status (Paralysis/Sleep/Blast)	Openings	Most popular in Japanese meta
Elemental	Element-weak monsters	Situational but strong

Palico Skill Priority

Palico Skills — Japanese Meta Ranking

Skill	Priority	Reason
Status Attack Up	S (Essential)	Doubles status proc rate
Attack Up	A (High)	Direct DPS increase
Critical Up	B (Medium)	Moderate damage boost
Stamina Drain	B (Medium)	Helps exhaust monsters faster
Healing	C (Situational)	Nice but not hunt-shortening
Shield	C (Situational)	Survivability, not speed

Palamute Optimization

The Palamute (dog companion) serves different roles than the Palico:

- **Mount Combat:** While riding the Palamute, you can use items and some weapons freely. This is used for mobile sharpening, buff application, and repositioning.
- **Independent Damage:** A Palamute with a blunt weapon will auto-attack the monster, contributing approximately 5-8% of total damage.

- **Drift Turning:** Japanese players discovered that Palamute turning radius improves significantly if you release the sprint button briefly before sharp turns. This "Drift Cancel" technique allows faster traversal of the map.

Q: Should I bring Palico or Palamute for speedruns?

A: Palico for most speedruns because status procs (Paralysis, Sleep) create free DPS windows. Palamute is preferred for gathering runs or when you need fast map traversal. Some TA rules ban both, so check your category rules. In general play, Palico with Paralysis weapon is the community-recommended default.

9.15 Frame Data & State Transitions

The final section of the Advanced Hunters codex covers frame-level understanding of monster states, hunter states, and the transitions between them.

Monster State Machine

Every monster in Wilds operates on a hidden state machine with the following states:

Monster States & Hunter Opportunities

State	Duration	Hunter Action
Idle	2-5 seconds	Approach, sharpen, buff
Attack Startup	0.5-2 seconds	Position for punish
Attack Active	0.3-1.5 seconds	Dodge/block if in range
Attack Recovery	1-5 seconds	PUNISH — primary DPS window
Enrage Transition	3-5 seconds	Free damage if positioned
Enraged	60-120 seconds	More dangerous, but often longer recoveries
Trip / Down	5-10 seconds	Full combo delivery
Trap / Paralyzed	6-10 seconds	Full combo delivery
Sleep	30-60 seconds	Set bombs, charge big attack
Limp / Retreat	Until area change	Trap for capture, or pursue

Hyper Armor & Super Armor

Japanese frame analysis distinguishes between two types of attack resilience:

- **Hyper Armor:** You take damage but do not flinch or get knocked back. Examples: Great Sword Tackle, Hammer Level 2 Charge spin, Lance Counter Thrust startup. You still take full damage, so hyper armor is not invincibility — it is "commitment protection."
- **Super Armor:** You take reduced damage (typically 50%) and do not flinch. Extremely rare in Wilds; mainly from specific Focus Strikes and certain food buffs.

Status Transition Windows

Some of the most advanced Japanese techniques involve manipulating monster state transitions:

Q: Can I flashbomb a monster out of enrage?

A: No. Flash Pods force a "blinded" state but do not cancel enrage. However, the blinded state has its own recovery animation that can be longer than some enrage attacks' recoveries. Japanese hunters use Flash Pods not to cancel enrage but to extend the total "vulnerable time" during enrage phases.

Q: Is there a way to force a trip?

A: Leg damage accumulation causes trips. Every monster has a hidden "trip threshold" for leg damage. Once reached, the monster falls for 5-10 seconds. The threshold increases after each trip (similar to status thresholds). Japanese speedrunners often wound a leg early, then focus fire on it to force the first trip quickly — this creates a massive early DPS window and often determines hunt time.

Q: What is "Flinch Locking"?

A: Flinch Locking is a technique where you deal enough damage to trigger a flinch, then exploit the flinch recovery to deal more damage, chaining flinches. In Wilds, the flinch threshold system makes true infinite flinch locking rare, but "near-lock" states exist where monsters spend 30-40% of the hunt in flinch animations. Dual Blades and Bow are best at this due to high hit frequency. Japanese 5ch users document which monsters are most susceptible: generally, smaller monsters and monsters with low flinch thresholds (e.g., Great Jagras equivalents) can be near-locked.

Advanced Speedrun Math: The DPS Formula

Japanese TA hunters calculate "effective DPS" as:

> **Effective DPS Calculation**
>
> ```
> Effective DPS = (True Raw x Average MV x Average Hitzone x Sharpness x Crit Modifier x Wound Modifier) x Uptime%
>
> Example: 250 raw, 80 average MV, 60 hitzone, white sharpness (1.32), 100% affinity with CB3 (1.40), wounded (1.20), 70% uptime:
> = (250 x 0.80 x 0.60 x 1.32 x 1.40 x 1.20) x 0.70
> = 266.1 x 0.70 = 186.3 effective DPS
>
> If uptime improves to 85%: 266.1 x 0.85 = 226.2 DPS (+21% improvement)
> If raw improves by 10% but uptime drops to 60%: 292.7 x 0.60 = 175.6 DPS (-6% loss)
> ```

This math proves why uptime is king. A 10% gear improvement with worse positioning loses to better play with worse gear. This is the mathematical foundation of Japanese speedrunning philosophy: "Play better first. Gear comes last."

> **Final Words from the Japanese Frontier**
>
> A common saying on 5ch Monster Hunter threads: "装備は猟の5%、腕が95%" (Equipment is 5% of the hunt, skill is 95%). The Advanced Hunters chapter has given you the mathematical tools to optimize that 5% to its absolute limit. But remember: the 95% is learned through practice, failure, and persistence. Every cart is data. Every failed hunt teaches monster timing. Every successful hunt validates your learning. Go forth, Hunter. The New World waits.

HAPPY HUNTING

May your hunts be successful and your carts be few.

Good luck out there, Hunter.

Compiled from Japanese communities (5ch, Game8, Altema, Kamigame)
and Western communities (Reddit r/MonsterHunter, GameFAQs, Polygon, GameSpot)
Monster Hunter Wilds - Community Guide