



Table of Contents

Getting Started.....	1
Character Creation Guide.....	3
Character Development Guide.....	9
More Information.....	14

Getting Started

So you've decided to try your hand at crafting a legend in the world of Aerynth? Let me welcome you and wish you many enjoyable adventures! I'm going to warn you right from the start, that this game isn't like any other MMORPG you might have played. At it's heart, Shadowbane is a Player-versus-Player (PvP) game. It has arguably one of the shortest leveling grinds ever found in a MMORPG, and unlike most others, Player-versus-Environment (PvE) is merely a means to a greater end in this game, rather than the bulk of the game itself. If you want to form parties and wander the land completing quests and slaying formidable dragons, then this game is probably not for you. However, if you wish to test your wits and skills against other players in an online world where you can duel other players, battling over mines, gold, adventuring areas, and most importantly, building and destroying cities and empires, then this is the game for you.

But, to get to the end-game, there are a few things you must accomplish and understand. First and foremost is Character Creation.

Finding a Guild

Since Shadowbane is based around group conflict, one of the best pieces of advice any player can give you is to join a Player Guild! Guilds within Shadowbane are more than a collection of players banded together for the sake of camaraderie: typically, the members of a Guild share common in-game goals and aspirations. In Shadowbane, player created and controlled Guilds can claim and own territories within the virtual world, building entire Cities, strengthening their defenses, and increasing the effectiveness of their City's shops and buildings. City building and territorial conquest are the primary activities of most Guilds. Because Cities are notoriously difficult to pack

up and move around, Shadowbane Guilds tend to be more local and stationary than the player organizations seen in other games. A Guild's fortunes are bound to the health of its City and its territory within the game. Guilds may wander around initially, but after gathering enough power and resources, a Guild or an alliance of Guilds will usually settle down, founding or conquering a City-State to use as a home base, open marketplace, or military stronghold.

Finding a guild will not only give you a great knowledge base but also make the game more enjoyable. We don't play MMOs for the single-player experience, we play them to adventure alongside and against others! The best place to find a guild is by perusing the Enlistment forums for the various servers on [the official Shadowbane Forums](#).

Character Creation Guide

Before you can play Shadowbane, you first have to decide what type of character you want to play. There is a great deal of room for customization, so this may seem a little intimidating at first. It is best to remember that different people appreciate different aspects of the game.

One way to navigate the character creation process is to start with a character concept. Many players enjoy mimicking figures from history, myth, or popular culture. Those who enjoy a challenge sometimes construct a flawed character. Perhaps they might take a classical stereotype and play it in a new and refreshing manner. Regardless of where the inspiration comes from, once you have a concept the process of character creation is much easier.

Creating a character is exciting, but it can be a daunting process. If you are ever unsure of how to proceed or how to make the best decision, you may wish to peruse the [Official Shadowbane Forums](#), which contains individual discussion boards for each Profession, and the [Shadowbane Player-Created Guides](#).

Things to Know

When you first begin Shadowbane, you will need to create a character. A character is your 'avatar' in the world of Shadowbane, the role you adopt when interacting with the game's ongoing story. You control your character's statistics, appearance, movement, and actions. Currently, you can have five (5) character slots per account unless you own the [Rise of Chaos](#) expansion pack which allows you to have six (6) or seven (7) if you have the [Throne of Oblivion](#) expansion. Only one character may be used in-game at any one time.

Before we delve too far into the basics of character creation, let us dispel a few rumors:

- Your character will not need to eat or sleep. "Resting" allows your character to refresh and heal between periods of combat and travel, but characters never need to "sleep" in Shadowbane.
- There is no Permanent Death for your character in Shadowbane. When your character "dies" in Shadowbane, you are brought back to life at the "Tree of Life" which is in the center of the city you are bound at. More about that later.

Now, let's get into the actual act of creating a character. Click on the New button in the Character Selection Screen.

Choosing a Server

When you first start Character Creation, a window will slide in and give you a list of servers that you can create a character on. This list will give you a variety of information

about each server, to include the server's name, a map of the landmasses, a little bit of history behind it, and information about experience, gold, and any special conditions that server may have.

To learn more about the various servers, [click here](#).

Choosing a Name

When creating a character in Shadowbane, it is important to choose the name carefully. This name will become famous (or infamous) based on your actions. On top of that, character First Names are unique to each server world. This means that no matter what city you belong to, people will be able to recognize you by your name. By contrast, last names in Shadowbane are not unique. Players and often guilds will create characters that share a common last name.

So, the first thing you will do when creating a Shadowbane character is choose your avatar's name. Shadowbane characters, like the players that run them, have both a first and a last name. If you like, you can opt for an epithet (a term used to characterize a person or thing, such as Catherine the Great or Lief the Lucky) instead of a last name.

As stated above, First Names are unique to each server while Last Names are not. A character's first name can be no longer than 15 characters and cannot contain special characters or any blank spaces. Your last name (or epithet) must also be 15 characters or less. You may use any approved symbol, including blank spaces, in your character's last name. Or if you like, you can go the celebrity route and simply leave the last name blank entirely.

Both first and last names are filtered for profanity, and inappropriate names will not be allowed.

Selecting Gender

On the same window you input the name you wish to use, you can also choose what gender you wish your character to be (and yes, there are only two.) Keep in mind, however, that some races (such as Dwarves and Minotaurs) are gender specific for reasons relating to the backstory. Likewise, some of the classes are gender specific (such as the "Huntress" and "Warlock" specialty classes). Due note that gender does not play a role in determining the the minimum and maximum statistics of your character.

Picking a Race

At the beginning of Character Creation, you are given 30 Ability Points to help customize your Character. Ability Points are used to select your Race, obtain Talent and Trait Runes, and to modify your Character's Attributes. The exact cost (in Ability Points) of each Race varies, as does the Attribute minimums and maximums. For example,

making your character Human costs nothing but you must spend 15 Character Points to become an Elf.

To select a race, you must simply choose the appropriate Runestone from the table of available Races. Note that gender does not play a role in determining the the minimum and maximum statistics of your character. Keep in mind, however, that some races, such as Dwarves and Minotaurs, are gender specific for reasons relating to the backstory.

The following races are available to starting characters:

- **[Aelfborn](#)**: The Half Breeds, Children of Two Worlds
- **[Aracoix](#)**: The Bird Men, Born of the Winds
- **[Centaur](#)**: The Horselords, Masters of the Plains
- **[Dwarves](#)**: The Shaper's Sons, Born of Stone
- **[Elves](#)**: The Firstborn, Kings in Exile
- **[Half Giants](#)**: The Brutes, Pillars of Strength
- **[Humans](#)**: The Sons of Men, Heirs of the All-Father
- **[Irekei](#)**: The Outcasts, Devil Men of the Burning Wastes
- **[Minotaurs](#)**: The Beats Men, Terrors from the North
- **[Nephilim](#)**: Disciples of Chaos (Requires either the [Rise of Chaos](#) or [Throne of Oblivion](#) Expansion Pack)
- **[Shades](#)**: The Pale Ones, Born of Darkness
- **[Vampires](#)**: The Nightborn, Generals of Oblivion (Requires the [Throne of Oblivion](#) Expansion Pack)

To learn more about the various Races, [click here](#).

Picking a Base Class

Choosing your character's apprenticeship (more commonly referred to as your "Base Class") is perhaps the most important choice to make during Character Creation. Players may choose one of the following four apprenticeships: [Fighter](#), [Healer](#), [Mage](#), or [Rogue](#). Bear in mind that some Races are restricted from taking certain classes. A Dwarf, for example, cannot become a Mage. Choosing an apprenticeship will determine the base set of skills and powers available to your character.

In the course of gameplay, characters will be able to also choose a Specialty Class, or Profession, and a number of multi-class kits (or Disciplines) to gain additional skills and powers. Apprenticeships are selected, as with Races, by choosing a Runestone from the table of options. There is no cost to obtain an Apprenticeship for your character.

You cannot choose your Profession during character creation, only the apprenticeship (or Base Class). Once your character has spent some time adventuring, Professions and Disciplines will become available. Be aware that your character's gender can impact which Professions are available! Some of the Profession are gender specific

such as the Fury, Huntress, and Warlock. The best advice is to investigate the route you wish to take your character, from [Base Class](#) to [Profession](#) to [Disciplines](#).

Explaining Attributes

Attributes represent the physical statistics of your player character, and determine (to a large extent) your character's potential within the Shadowbane world. Each character has five primary attributes that measure their mental, physical, and spiritual capabilities. Each attribute is expressed as a number (which falls, typically, in a range from 1 to 100.) Having a "100" in any particular attribute means that your character has reached the theoretical maximum limit a human can achieve. Each Race has its own maximum potential, some of these are above 100, some below. There are also ways to increase a Race's maximum potential which is explained in the Talents and Traits portion below.

Each attribute is defined as follows:

Strength: A character's physical strength and brawn. Stronger characters do more damage per swing in combat, and can carry heavier loads. Fighters tend to have more strength than other Base Classes and Professions. Note that some fighters choose dexterity over strength, especially those aspiring to be [Archers](#), [Blade Masters](#), [Blade Weavers](#), and [Rangers](#) that use Braialla's Blade (a Ranger specific sword) since all of their weapons use dexterity as their primary attribute when determining attack ratings and damage.

Dexterity: This attribute measures raw speed, agility, and general coordination. Rogues tend to prize Dexterity above all other stats, but any class will find Dexterity very useful and important.

Constitution: A measure of toughness, resilience, and fortitude, a high Con score ensures that a character can endure more punishment before dying. Constitution is the basis of a character's Health and Stamina scores.

Intelligence: Reasoning, memory, and education are all factors in a character's Intelligence score. Higher scores give characters a bonus to their skill levels, and also speed skill advancement. A must for casters but it is also recommended pure melee characters have at least a score of 40 Intelligence since it does affect their Skills but the average is around 65.

Spirit: Spirit defines how strong-willed a character is, and also measures how "in tune" a character is with the inner workings of the universe. A high score indicates acute sensitivity to divine or supernatural influences, and will yield a high Mana score.

Every character also has three derived attributes that are determined by their Race, modified by their primary attribute scores, and increase with each new level gained by your character. These attributes are expressed as point totals, and characters will lose and regenerate points under certain conditions.

Health: A measure of how well characters deal with injury, hit points decrease every time a character gets hurt. When they reach zero, the character dies.

Mana: Strongly influenced by Spirit, Mana is used to power magical spells. Each spell cast will reduce the character's Mana total. Once all Mana is expended, a spell user will be powerless until their Mana can be recovered.

Stamina: A measure of a character's endurance, Stamina measures their capacity for physical activity. Running and fighting can use up a character's Stamina quickly, but Stamina points are also quickly recovered. Unlike Health and Mana, Stamina increases very little over time.

Each Race starts with a specific set of Starting Attributes that are modified when you choose a Class. Also note that each Race has defined Minimum and Maximum Attributes, which can only be overcome through the use of "*Talents and Traits*."

Adding Talents and Traits

In the final stage of Character Creation, players are given the chance to flesh out their Characters by increasing and decreasing Attributes, and by purchasing "Talents" and "Traits." A Talent or Trait is a particular gift or area of expertise, such as "Heroic strength", which will, in many cases, allow players to overcome normal racial attribute maximums and/or give them access to hidden in-game powers. As with Races and Base Classes, Talents and Traits are represented by Runestones, and may be purchased with Ability Points.

The Runestones with brown symbols denote "Traits," special advantages granted to a character based on their background, history or training. Traits typically impart a bonus to the maximum value of one or more of your attributes, giving your character the potential to exceed his or her racial limitations such as "Hero's Strength" which will increase a Race's maximum Strength allowance by 10 points.

The Runestones with gray symbols denote "Talents," special gifts or abilities that are granted to a character through birth, fortune, or bloodline. Talents typically provide characters with an intrinsic benefit in some particular area of gameplay, such as "Stormborn" (more resistant to lightning attacks) or "Giant's Blood" (which will increase your strength but lessen your maximum potential in other attributes).

If you have any points left, players can also adjust their Attributes by clicking the small buttons beside each attribute in the Statistics window. The plus ("+") button raises the corresponding attribute by one point at the cost of one Character Point, and the minus ("-") button decreases the attribute by one point, freeing up a Character Point in exchange. Note that characters will be unable to sell down an Attribute below the minimum value or raise it higher than the maximum value for your race (unless modified by Talents/Traits, as described above.)

As players adjust their Attributes, note that the derived Attributes are also changed. In addition, their character's appearance will sometimes shift (as the "Strength" and "Constitution" attributes can increase and decrease your character's height and bulk.)

To learn more about the various Talents and Traits, [click here](#).

Final Touches

There is an enormous amount of customization that can be done to your player character. Depending on the Gender and Race chosen, various aspects of your Character can be personalized to fit your taste, including such things as: skin tone, hair style, hair color, facial hair style, and facial hair color. You can also pick what "starting kit" you wish your character to use, which changes the items he or she has equipped. Also note that increasing or decreasing certain Attributes will also affect your character's height and weight.

Now that you have your character made, look over it one more time making sure you spelled your name correctly, **have the correct server selected**, and that all the information is correct. If it is, click on Finish button and prepare for your entry into the lands of Shadowbane!

Character Development Guide

Before you begin on your journey of becoming a legend, there are two pieces of advice that are more vital than anything you will read in this.

First, learn not only from the success of others, but from their mistakes, too. There is a wealth of knowledge to be found from people who have been playing Shadowbane for years. While you may not want to make a character just like someone else's (and when you have this much depth to character development, why would you?), you can learn a lot from studying other players. The greatest source of this information can be found on the official Shadowbane Forums under the [Shadowbane Player-Created Guides](#) and [The Shadowbane Workshop](#) which contains individual discussion boards for each Profession.

Second, and probably even more important, find a Player Guild to join. While adventuring in Shadowbane as a solo player can be fun and adventurous, playing with a group of players will only increase the enjoyment. There is a reason we have chosen to play a massively multiplayer online game... to game with others. If we wanted to play alone, there are plenty of single-player games out there with multiplayer aspects for a quick fix. Being a part of a guild will bring a new dimension to gameplay and will give you a sturdy foundation of knowledge to lean against. The adage holds true; The whole is greater than the sum of the parts.

You can find a guild using a variety of methods. You can peruse the various enlistment boards on the [official Shadowbane Forums](#). You can use the Looking for Guild (/lfgu) toggle in-game. Or you can use the Shadowbania Guild Database (coming soon!).

Starting Out

When your character first steps into the world, they will appear inside of a **Safehold**. A Safehold is a protected town fashioned by the Shadowbane Developers. Players cannot engage in combat of any kind while in the Safehold and surrounding areas, and these towns cannot participate in territorial conquest. Conveniently for starting characters, Safeholds tend to be located near low level adventuring areas.

The initial possessions your character has will be dependent upon the Race and Base Class you chose during Character Creation; thus providing your character with a "starting kit" consisting of clothing and a weapon. Initial items have no monetary value to any of the merchants in the game, and cannot be sold for profit.

While Shadowbane is a Player-versus-Player (PvP) game, you will be safe from such conflict until you leave the lands where all players begin. Once you reach Level 10, you'll have the option to venture to the mainland but will not be forced to until you hit Level 21. Furthermore, while you are on the starting adventuring zones, whenever you

die, you will respawn with all equipment you have and are carrying. This will not be the case when you venture forth into the battlegrounds on the mainland.

Once you are in the game world, adjust your interface so it works for you. All windows can be moved around by moving the top of your cursor to the top of the window simply holding down both the Shift Key and the left Mouse Button at the same time. Then simply "drag" the window to anywhere you want. There are also additional windows you may wish to have onscreen that can be found under the Character Info and Windows menus on the Main Menu. The one window you will want up at all times is your Local Map.

Look around and you should find some creatures nearby where you enter the game. You will be able to distinguish them by the red plus sign (+) in the Local Map. Green plus signs are other players who belong to the same guild and/or city as you, blue ones are other players who belong to other guilds, and yellow ones are non-hostile Non-Player Characters (NPCs). Once you find these creatures, attack them. Do not worry, these monsters will not attack you until you attack them, they are merely target practice. Others will not be so gentle.

Gaining Levels and Experience Points

Every time a character defeats an opponent, he or she will gain Experience Points (XP). Experience Points are an abstract measure of a character's improvement; the amount of experience gained for killing a foe is determined by comparing the Level of your character and the Level of your opponent. The higher level your opponent is compared to you, the more experience you will gain. The reverse is also true; lower level opponents yield less.

Continue slaying creatures the best way you see fit, be it with spells or your weapon, until you level up to level 2. Whenever a character reaches a set amount of Experience Points, he or she will advance to the next Level. Each time a new level is reached, your character receives a number of benefits, including an increase to their maximum hit points, stamina and mana. Additionally they are granted a number of Practice Points and Character Points which can be used to increase Skills and Attributes respectively. In accordance with the diminishing returns system, fewer bonuses are granted as a character increases higher and higher in level.

At Level 2, you will have 5 stat points now, and some training points, so you may run back to town and train up your spell or weapon skill. Skills and Powers are special abilities that shape the individual nature of a character. Only a few Skills and Powers are available to a beginning character, but more will open up as you advance in Level. To advance in a Power or Skill (including those obtained from Disciplines), you must visit a Trainer suitable for your Class. Training Halls are located in towns and cities throughout the world. Most trainers will charge a fee for their services and are limited in how far they can train a character in any particular skill or power.

You may also increase a character's various Attributes by spending Character Points gained through leveling. These points may be used at any time after they are awarded, and do not have a monetary cost attached to them. You need only to open your Character Window to allocate these.

Once you're satisfied, adventure a little further out until you come across stronger creatures. These will yield not only better loot but also better experience. Rest as you need to. Continue to ask for groups every so often, and try to find people to level with. Do note, grouping in Shadowbane will help you level faster since there are experience bonuses associated with the system.

Once you have hit level 5, run back to the hamlet and train up some more then head back out. If you adventure even further out, you will find even better creatures to slay. Beware, though, no longer will these creatures sit idly by until you attack. These creatures will attack you if you stand too close, so be very careful that you do not pull more monsters than you can handle. This process, if you are on your own may take a while, but if you find a good group, you can move to the mainland quickly. Many players will leave the island once they get to level 10, and never come back, but I would recommend trying to stay a bit longer, exploring the higher level zone, and getting to know your character.

Taking on a Profession

You can get to level 10 at many of the camps located near the hamlets, also known as Rank 1. Both characters and monsters in the world of Shadowbane are referenced (in terms of power) by their Level. Level is always expressed as a number, running from one and going up. Level defines how seasoned and experienced a given character is and how effective they are as members of their Class or Profession.

Rank, a by-product of Level, is a measure of the status that comes along with reaching higher levels. I.e. a character or monster's rank is equal to their level divided by ten. Thus, characters spend Levels one to nine at Rank 0, and both a 39th level Wizard and a 33rd level Druid would be considered Rank 3. Rank provides a good (but not decisive) means of gauging a foe's power, but it can still be deceiving. A Level nine monster, for instance, is much deadlier than a Level one beast, and both would read as Rank 0. Some items and powers in the world are also rumored to allow a character to disguise his or her Class and Rank.

As the measuring stick of a character's power, Rank has other important uses in Shadowbane. As the old saying goes, Rank has its privileges: an increase in Rank can sometimes give access to new Powers, Skills, Disciplines and equipment. As each Class in the game is represented by a single icon, these icons are in turn used to display the Rank of the character or monster currently selected.

Once you have reached Level 10, go back to town. You must now promote into your Profession. Professions are advanced, more specialized careers that characters can

follow in the world of Shadowbane and can be chosen based on a character's apprenticeship, race and gender. Do note that some Specialty Classes are available to more than one Base Class. Choosing a Specialty Class will offer the character a host of new Skills, Powers, and other benefits (such as Class specific weapons and armor.) Characters MUST choose their Specialty Class when they reach Rank 1 (10th level). To learn more about specific Professions, [click here](#).

The easiest way to reach a trainer is to go to the Runemaster in the hamlet, and cycle through the speech options until you get "How do I leave this village?". You can then pledge to other towns, including player owned towns, where you can buy items later on, and more importantly, train your character. Later on you will want to go to training towns with friends, to help guard each other from players wishing to kill you. For now, repledge to the city that shows on your world map near you. There you will be able to find the trainer you need to promote to your Profession.

Moving to the Mainland

While a character can move to the "mainland" as early as Level 10, they must leave the starting areas at Level 21. This is considered graduation day to many players because they have moved from the learning stage to the "real world". While your character will function the same on the mainland, the rules have changed. With the exception of Safeholds, players are free to engage in Player-versus-Player (PvP) combat now. And when you die, your character will leave anything in their inventory behind on their corpse (but will keep hold of everything equipped).

Disciplines

Advancement works much the same way for the rest of your character's career with a few exceptions. When a character reaches Level 20, he or she can take up to three (3) Disciplines and then an additional slot at Level 70 for a total of four (4) in all. Disciplines are a form of multi-classing in Shadowbane, and represent a distinct area of expertise that a character can pursue. Some Disciplines focus on specific styles or types of combat, while others represent membership in specific groups, study in a particular school of magic, or even inborn supernatural abilities. While every character has only one Class, they may follow up to three Disciplines. As with their Specialty Class, a character joins a Discipline by attuning themselves to a Runestone for that Discipline.

All Disciplines convey some sort of benefit to those who seek to study or practice them. Some provide skill rating and attribute bonuses, and many also grant access to new Powers and Skills that would otherwise be unavailable. Some disciplines are specific to certain races and classes, and still more are hidden within the game and can only be found through gameplay.

Note, however, that characters will always receive the same number of Practice Points to spend on Powers and Skills, including those obtained from Disciplines. Thus disciplines provide more options to players, but not necessarily more power!

To learn more about specific Disciplines, [click here](#).

The "Soft Cap"

Unlike many games which have a "maximum level" that characters can achieve through the course of gameplay (a "hard cap" on levels, if you will) Shadowbane's leveling system is designed around a "Soft Cap" approach. The Soft Cap works as follows :

The amount of experience a player earns from killing foes is dependent upon the character's Level when compared to the level of their opponent. Thus, as characters increase their level, they must seek out increasingly stronger foes to continue gaining the same amount of experience per kill. Eventually even the strongest monsters in the game will begin to result in smaller and smaller yields. Couple this with the fact that the benefits of gaining levels decline as a character rises in Rank (to the point where players are receiving nothing more than the bragging rights of the newly gained level.)

Practice Points decrease their benefit as Powers and Skills approach mastery, and a high Rank character receives far fewer new hit points, stamina points, and mana than a character that rises from first to second level. Furthermore, Attributes have maximum values (determined by character Race and modified by Traits, if any). The implied plateau created by the diminishing returns is called the "Soft Cap," and it places an indirect limit on how powerful a character can become.

More Information

For more information, visit the Shadowbane Community website, the Chronicle of Strife, at <http://chronicle.ubi.com/>.