

# Monk: Your Multi-Purpose Shield

By: Problem

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## **Introduction:**

This guide is to iterate the role Monks play in GvG. This is guide is primarily my opinion and should be taken as such. Out of all the roles in GvG, the Monk is one the most complex characters in GvG.

## **Basics:**

### **The Attributes:**

1.) Divine Favor, Healing Prayers, Protection Prayers, Smiting Prayers, and of-course, Non-Linked Attribute.

Divine Favor - For each rank of Divine Favor, allies are healed for 3.2 whenever you cast Monk spells on them. Several Monk skills, especially spells related to Energy gain and healing, become more effective with higher Divine Favor.

- From that description, Divine Favor becomes important not because of the latter, but the former. It means that, whenever you cast Monk spells, you are not only getting the primary effect of the spell, but essentially, a free heal (at the cost of Attribute Points).

Healing Prayers - No inherent effect. Many Monk skills, especially spells related to healing, become more effective with higher Healing Prayers.

- Healing Prayers generally consists of slower casts, but they generally heal for more than other attributes. It is important to note that skills in this line are generally more reactive than proactive.

Protection Prayers - No inherent effect. Many monk skills, especially enchantments which prevent damage or provide healing, become more effective with higher Protection Prayers.

- Protection Prayers is the strength of the Monk and is what seperates this profession from other professions with healing capabilities. These skills are generally more proactive than reactive and generally take more skill to use.

Smiting Prayers - No inherent effect. Many Monk skills, especially those related to dealing holy damage, become more effective with higher Smiting Prayers. Holy damage is especially powerful against the undead.

- Smiting Prayers is where Monks get to do damage. This is generally where "gimmick" builds are created out of and will not be at the forefront of this guide.

## **Objectives:**

2.) These are the primary objectives of Monks in GvG:

- Preventing Damage: This is primary objective number one, the MOST important objective. This is essentially what alleviates the need for any form of energy management. This is the most efficient way of conserving energy and the best way to maximize survival potential. Your primary way of doing this is by way of Prots.

- Healing Damage: This is the result of damage getting through prots, lack of awareness, poor skill usage. When you notice you are reacting to damage rather than reacting to future damage, it is very important you evaluate yourself and change the way you are monking, FAST!

- Mitigation of Damage through Communication: This is probably one of the most underemphasized parts of a Monk's job. Communicate to your team, how they can better mitigate damage by spreading out, kiting, moving the lines to better accomodate geographical advantages, etc.

- Keeping Your Team/Yourself/NPCs/Guild Lord Alive: This is pretty self-explanatory and will automatically accomodate itself when you do the previous three objectives.



## **The Build:**

3.) Successful Monk Builds generally follow this template:

Small Prot, Heavy Prot, Direct Heal, Condition Removal, Hex Removal, 3 Utility Skills (One of which is usually Reversal of Fortune). Another important note is that Team Builds shouldn't cater to Monk Bars, but rather Monk Bars cater to Team Builds.

Small Prot - The general consensus is that these are cheap, effective skills that prevent damage and often have quick recharges. This includes, but is not limited to Guardian, Shield of Absorption, Shielding Hands. I also like to think of Reversal of Fortune as a Small Prot as well. These skills generally do not have the power to prevent a spike, but are more used to prevent auto-damage.

Heavy Prot - These are the more costly skills, that unlike small prots, can prevent spikes. To maximize the efficiency of Heavy Prots, you generally only want to use them when you know a target will take damage greater than 60 HP. The general consensus here is that the Heavy Prots are, Protective Spirit, Spirit Bond, and Shield of Deflection.

Direct Heal - During the course of GvGs, or any PvP for that matter, there will be a time when Protection Prayers isn't enough, and the damage that gets through Prots needs to be "healed" up. These skills include, but are not limited to, Dwayna's Kiss, Word of Healing, and Gift of Health. Direct Heals will generally be your Healing Prayers, and are really one-dimensional in nature.

Condition Removal - Condition Removal is necessary in GvG, as there will almost always be conditions in GvG. These conditions include, but are not limited to, Deep Wound, Poison, and Crippled.

Hex Removal - Hex Removal is another necessity in GvG as even non-hex centered builds, will still have hexes. The common balanced build includes hexes such as Diversion as well as Water Snares. While sometimes you can simply allow Diversion to blink, it may be necessary to remove it to not receive too much pressure from the enemy team because your defense is shut down. Water Snares are used to limit movement and must be removed in situations of retreats and flag running.

Utility Skills - As previously stated, many a time, Monks will refuse to leave home without Reversal of Fortune, leaving essentially two utility skills. These utility skill can range from self-preservation, to more party-wide defense, to energy management, to signets heals, and even skills just to have fun (Distracting Shot anyone?). These last two utility skills will remain largely dependant on the structure of your team build.

## **The Gear:**

4.) Monks will generally make use of all the Weapon Slots available. Monks should have sets including a Defensive Set, Protection Efficiency Set, Healing Efficiency Set, High Energy Set, Low Energy Set.

Armor - All Health Insignias, Minor Runes of Healing, Protection, Divine Favor, Superior Vigor, Cripple Reduction Rune

- This is my preferred set up, some Monks prefer the extra Vitae rune to the Cripple Rune, I just find the Cripple Rune to be invaluable especially when coupled with the Cripple Reduction Shield vs. Crip Shots and Burning Isle

Defensive Set - This is the main set you should be idling in when not casting, to reduce the most damage done to yourself. This set will be the set with the highest health totals as well as armor totals. Generally,



it is unnecessary to leave this set to cast Reversal of Fortune or Signet Heals.

**Main Hand:** Sword/Axe/Spear of Fortitude (+30) w/ ideally a Crippling Mod Prefix when using Return and a +5 Energy Inscription

**Off Hand:** Shield (16 AL) of Fortitude (+30) w/ Inscriptions of +10 Armor vs. X for all Damage Types as well as Cripple Reduction Shield

- Note: You do not have to meet the req. for the Max AL and will still gain half the AL, meaning for a shield with 16 AL, you gain 8 AL from the shield, as well as the armor from the inscription.

- Optional: Get an additional Shield (16 AL) of Fortitude (+30) w/ whichever +10 Armor vs. X inscription you like, that requires you to spec 7 Tactics.

Protection Efficiency Set - This set will increase the efficiency of your Protection Prayers, as most of the Protection line, are enchantments. Lengthier enchantments such as Guardian, Aegis, Shield of Absorption, Spirit Bond, Protective Spirit, Shielding Hands, allow you to save energy in the long run. The effects of the spell will be realized longer, for a lesser number of casts. The fast cast chance on this is invaluable as it can save you from, what would otherwise be a debilitating interrupt.

**Main Hand:** (Req. 9 Protection) Staff of Enchanting (20%) with 20% Fast Cast Staff Head as well as the 20% Fast Cast Inscription for staves

- Note: This set can be used to cast things like Holy Veil/Remove Hex or any spells found in Non-Linked Attribute and you can get Fast Recharges on those spells because this set has a Universal 20% Chance to attain a Fast Recharge.

- Note: Req Protection Prayers aren't normally found in PvE, and this must be crafted. Currently, the only places to get the ideal Protection Prayers based staves are in the form of the Tormented Staff and the Destroyer Staff.

Healing Efficiency Set - This set will increase the efficiency of your Healing Prayers. Many Healing Prayers are generally long in cast time and benefit greatly from the 38% chance to get a Fast Cast. There are an abundance of 1 second cast Healing Prayers, which at high levels of play, are very easily interrupted on reflex by Rangers and Mesmers. The skills will also benefit from the Fast Recharges; this is especially useful when being heavily pressured and damage consistently gets through the Prots.

**Main Hand:** Healing Wand with 20% Fast Cast and Fast Recharge Inscriptions

**Off Hand:** Healing Focus with 20% Fast Cast and Fast Recharge Inscriptions

High Energy Set - Appropriately named, this is your High Energy Set. Although many people like to view this set as the "Emergency Set," it really is just another set, but it isn't the most efficient set. With proper use of focus swapping, Monks will be able to attain levels of 72 Energy, bypassing the -2 Energy Regeneration in the set, and still maintain 4 pips of Energy Regeneration. A lot of monks, when they get low in their primary casting sets, will simply lower the amount of casts, in an attempt to regain energy. This is a result of the "Emergency Set" viewpoint. If you treat this set as a normal casting set, you will instantly become more durable as you are making use of your total energy pool. However, it is very important to communicate your use of the High Energy Set, as it is imperative that you get back to a stable level of energy.

**Main Hand:** Divine Based Wand w/ +15 Energy, -1 Energy Regeneration and 10% Fast Recharge All Spells Inscriptions

**Off Hand:** Divine Based Focus w/ +15 Energy, -1 Reneration and 10% Fast Cast All Spells Inscriptions

Low Energy Set - This set has essentially become obsolete, even though it still has its uses. This set was Monks' way of battling Energy Denial when it was prevalent in the metagame. This can still be used as an effective way to cancel Shame and Fear Me spam. Proper use of Focus Swapping in this set, will allow



a Monk to "hide" energy, allowing the Monk to swap back up to cast, and still have a good amount of energy to perform the necessary casts.

**Main Hand:** Sword/Axe/Spear of Fortitude (+30) w/ ideally a Crippling Mod Prefix when using Return and a -5 Energy Inscription

**Off Hand:** Non-Specced Focus of Fortitude (+30) w/ a +5 Armor, -5 Energy Inscription

### Weapon Slot Setup

5.) My preferred set-up is as follows:

Weapon Slot 1: Protection Efficiency Set w/ Low Energy Set Offhand

Weapon Slot 2: Defensive Set

Weapon Slot 3: Healing Efficiency Set

Weapon Slot 4: High Energy Set

- I put "half" of my Low Energy Set in Weapon Slot 1 so if I ever need to quickly switch in my Low Energy Set to cast through Shame or avoid Energy Denial, all I would have to do is double click my Low Energy Set Main Hand. Other than that, I generally find that F2 is a nice medium for switching in between Efficiency Sets and the Defensive Set. It just feels comfortable.

- Note: I play with my Backpack open which allows me to do this easily.

### Interface

6.) It's up to you to find a comfortable interface that works for you. Things to keep in mind are that in designing an interface are:

- Maximize Visibility

- Maximize Awareness

It is very important as a Monk to be able to see the field as because, generally teams will collapse when Monks become too reactive and less proactive. It is very important to remain, for the majority of the GvG, proactive. I cannot stress enough how much more important preventing damage is compared to healing it. An enlarged compass helps to increase awareness as you can see where lines are shifting, where the enemy is, and where friendlies are.

### Key Configuration

7.) Again, this is up to you to find a comfortable key configuration. Things to keep in mind when designing your key config:

- Maximizing Accessibility to Skills

- Maximizing Accessibility to Weapon Sets

- Maximizing Accessibility to Party Members (If you decide to Hotkey)

### Advanced:

#### The Builds:

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Word of Healing

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Restore Condition

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## Shield of Deflection

These are the current, basic meta-monk templates I would run with the attributes I prefer. If weakness becomes more prevalent in the metagame, I may rethink my Divine Favor spec, but until then, 9 is where it will stay. Of course, as previously stated, each build can be modified to suit the build and also, other utility skills can be substituted in.

Alternates: Mend Condition, Remove Hex, Cure Hex, Reverse Hex

Utility Skills: Divine Spirit, Deny Hexes, Balanced Stance, Shield Bash, Return, Dark Escape, Glyph of Lesser Energy, Aura of Stability

- Note: Recent metagame changes have influenced Monk bars to include Aura of Stability as well as Balanced Stance because kills are becoming about who can get the other backline "knock-locked."

Argument b/t Prot Spirit and Spirit Bond: Recently, an argument has arisen between which Monk should carry which Heavy Prot. My personal take on it, is that it really doesn't matter because both monks should be landing their Prots regardless. There is no spike that should go through a double prot unless its a spike that ignores prots.

- Note: I chose not to list Infuse because I feel it really isn't necessary anymore. I've noticed more and more, that I can pretty much catch spikes only using Heavy Prot and a Condition Removal and possibly a Reversal of Fortune. Infuse will be necessary as long as your awareness/reactions aren't up to par. Both of these will improve as you Monk more and more.

- Note: I'll update these templates as the metagame changes.

### **Awareness and Recognition:**

1.) It is vital to team survivability that a Monk is able to be aware of what is causing damage, what will cause damage, when damage will occur, and where it will occur.

Awareness: Always know where the Enemy Warriors are, who they are doing damage to, and approximate their Adrenaline Flow as well as recharges on Bull's Strikes. Identify any Enemy Paragons as threats equivalent to the Enemy Warriors. Always know who Enemy Paragons are attacking. Identify who the Enemy Midline are focusing on.

Recognition: Once you've identified everything above, it is important/imperative that you have to follow through with the appropriate action.

- For Warriors: Knowing the Adrenaline Flow, Frenzy Animation, Bull's Strike sound should all trigger a Monk to follow through with appropriate Prots. Generally Auto-Damage can be handled by Guardian and Reversal of Fortune. If a Warrior lands a Bull's strike, they will generally unload adrenaline shortly after. It is very important that a Heavy Prot be placed on these targets.



- Note: Eventually your reaction will become good enough that you will be able to get a Heavy Prot during the Enemy Warrior's Bull's Strike, which will most likely trigger the effect of the Heavy Prot.
- For Paragons: Generally you want to use Small Prots against Paragons because they can switch targets so quickly, that using Heavy Prots versus Paragon damage will just be a waste of Energy in the long run. Not to mention that Paragons generally won't trigger Heavy Prots unless they achieve Critical Hits. However, you cannot deny the effect of Paragons, not acknowledging Paragons will be a great detriment to yourself as well as your team.
- For Enemy Midline (Disruption): Always be ready to fake/cancel casts if the Enemy Midline is focusing on you. If a Ranger/Mesmer is auto-attacking you, you generally don't want to cast long casts because most likely they are focusing on you for interrupts. Good Rangers/Mesmers will use this however to mask their intended targets.

### **How Prots Work:**

2.) Prots are both independent of one another and they work together. By this I mean, if two Prots are on one target, both will recognize the damage incurred.

Example: Lets say you have an Ele with a 65 Damage Flare attacking you with it. You cast Spirit Bond as well as Reversal of Fortune on yourself. Your Reversal of Fortune heals for up to 76 and your Spirit Bond heals for 96. The 65 damage Flare will be realized by both the Spirit Bond and the Reversal of Fortune and you will gain both the 65 HP heal from Reversal of Fortune and the 96 HP heal from Spirit Bond. It is this mechanic that allows Spirit Bond and Protective Spirit to "stack" and gain a net effect. This mechanic is also the reason why Life Sheath doesn't synergize well with other Prots.

### **Weapon/Shield Swapping:**

3.) As a beginner, Weapon/Shield Swapping may be a little too much to micromanage, but when you get better and understand when/where to use skills, Weapon/Shield Swapping will greatly increase your proficiency as a Monk.

What Focus/Shield Swapping Accomplishes - It increases the efficiency of skills, allowing you in instances to cast less, cast more, and cast faster.

Casting Less - By increasing the duration of Enchantments through Weapon Swapping to a Weapon with an Enchanting mod, you gain the benefit of that Enchantment for longer, and it will therefore need to be cast less to receive that benefit. Things like Guardian, Shield of Absorption, Aegis, Shielding Hands, all benefit greatly from Weapon Swapping because it goes back to the number one objective of Monks: Prevent Damage. When a Monk can prevent more damage while reducing energy uses through less casts, that monk greatly increases efficiency.

Casting More - There will always be fluctuations in the amount of pressure your team receives in GvG. This is where Fast Recharges come in. You may need to cast your spells more often to prevent that damage or heal the damage that seeps through, in order to stabilize Health Bars.

Casting Faster - The ability to fast cast important spells such as Aegis, Guardian, Shield of Absorption, Light of Deliverance, Dwayna's Kiss, is invaluable versus a competent team with competent/proficient interrupters. Casting Faster allows you to Prevent Damage that much quicker.



### **Kiting/Pre-Kiting/Positioning:**

4.) Going back to the Primary Objective of Monks, Preventing Damage, the Damage one can prevent without using Energy is invaluable.

Kiting: Using movement to lower Enemy Warrior/Paragon Damage Per Second (DPS) by avoiding/minimizing their ability to successfully land attacks. Kiting isn't a skill independent to Monks, but should be a skill used by everyone on your team. A Warrior cannot do damage, if he cannot hit you. Kiting will often force Enemy Warriors to switch targets because their main objective is to do damage and kill things. If you take that away from them, you reduce your energy expenditure as well as reduce the damage inflicted to your team. The DPS Warriors lose by having to chase a kiting target and then having to switch targets add up in the end. Kiting is generally the more reactive out of the three.

- Note: It is possible to kite away from a Warrior in Bull's Charge. You can kite in between Enemy Warrior swings. Generally, when you do this, Warriors will activate Frenzy and you will be free to fully kite away.

Pre-Kiting: Using movement to lower Enemy Warrior Damage Per Second (DPS) by avoiding/minimizing their ability to successfully land attacks. This skill comes along with Awareness and Recognition and is generally result of good positioning on your part. This skill, being more proactive, is kiting away from an Enemy Warrior(s) before they actually have a chance to hit you. Often times, Enemy Warriors wont realize they've been Pre-Kited until they have already lost valuable time chasing you while they should have been doing damage.

Positioning: Readjusting your character in accordance with the Enemy Warriors while maintaining casting range of your team. You generally don't want to be too close enemy Warriors, because it leaves you prone to getting spiked. If Enemy Warriors are attacking a specific target on your team, distance yourself from that teammate while maintaining casting range so you can apply the appropriate skills. The distance also increases awareness because it allows you to more accurately see, and therefore react to Enemy Changes. Basically, positioning gives you more time to be able to do your job.

### **Psychological Warfare:**

5.) The game isn't only about pressing buttons, it is also about knowing what the Enemy wants to do, and when they want to do it. You can effect how the Enemy uses their skills by out-thinking them. This however, shouldn't be your primary focus if you can't keep your team alive first. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Forcing Enemy Warriors to miss Bull's Strikes
- Forcing Enemy Warriors to cancel the Speed Boosts
- Forcing Enemy Warriors to be stuck in Flail
- Faking Casts to avoid interrupts
- Hiding Energy
- Running Forward pretending to want to cast
- Wandering Enemy Mesmers pretending to be watching them



**Communication:**

6.) Communication is vital. It is very important to communicate when key interrupts are landed, forcing your defense to be temporarily down, communicate energy expenditure, communicate to your team on how they can mitigate damage, communicate Enemy Movement, communicate Diversions/Shames, communicate the need to lineback, communicate the need to retreat before you actually collapse, and most of all, communicate what is preventing you from doing your job.

*Disclaimer:* The statements/views expressed herein are strictly my opinion of the game and yeah, I copied off of Chiizu/Yue. If i find that I've missed something, or find that something can be edited, I will add to this.

