

# From Software

- [Dark Souls](#)
- [Dark Souls 2](#)
- [Elden Ring DLC: Shadow of the Erdtree](#)

# Dark Souls

Un-dated microblog format.

- 1: Okay, I get that this game is supposed to be hard, but this is absurd. I cleared the Asylum with little problem, but now I'm getting absolutely butchered by those skeletons in the graveyard. This is completely imbalanced.
- 2: It seems I was trying to go the wrong way. The path through Undead Burg is easier.
- 3: Okay this game is awesome.
- 4: Okay this Capra Demon is bullshit.
- 5: I put a shield on and killed the dogs, now the Capra demon is dead. Like my spirit.
- 6: Okay fuck these sludge tunnels and every curse-vomiting lizard in them.
- 7: Wait there's a back door?
- 8: Okay the back door is much easier.
- 9: Heh, spiderbewbs.
- 10: Okay fuck this spiderlady and her lava.
- 11: Heh, mute spiderbewbs.
- 12: This game is making me angry, why am I still playing?
- 13: Seriously, I've died 800 times and have been playing for 11 hours straight.
- 14: I should be writing a Bachelor's Thesis.
- 15: Sen's Fortress axes are assholes.
- 16: ... damn Anor Londo is pretty
- 17: Anor Londo is fucking awful. Who put this rafters section in the game and why weren't they fired?
- 18: or killed?
- 19: Okay I cleared the rafters, activated the lift and got SNIPED BY AN ARCHER FIRING MISSILES.
- 20: Bonfire. Friend?
- 21: Ornstein as Smough are the most unbalanced thing in this game so far.
- 22: Seriously this is bullshit. What were the developers smoking?
- 23: Oh good, when I kill one of them, the other gets all their health back and goes Super Saiyan.
- 24: Fucking fuck.
- 25: Introduce that giant hammer into your own rectum.
- 26: Okay I killed them. Fuck both of these enemies. I hope their faces melt.
- 27: Amazing Chest Ahead.
- 28: Did that painting just attack me?! I can't even look at a painting in this fucking game.
- 29: Oh this is a pretty zone. It reminds me of Finland.
- 30: Just got stabbed. Still reminds me of Finland.
- 31: The boss didn't attack me and asked me to leave her in peace. Still very much reminds me of Finland.

32: Well, Ceaseless Discharge died quickly.

33: What is this Bed of Chaos bullshittery.

34: I spent more time running to that boss than I spent fighting it.

35: Pinwheel died immediately. Why am I suspicious?

36: Ah, Gravelord Nito, that's why.

37: You wouldn't even be difficult without your constantly reviving adds, you dead fuck.

38: ... okay maybe you would.

39: Hah, now you died. Dead fuck.

40: PUPPY!

41: Don't make me kill the puppy.

42: =(

43: If they're called 4 kings, why did I kill 5 of them?

44: Seath the assless.

45: Seriously where are his legs?

46: Where did all my health go?

47: Time for the final boss!

48: Oh, he can be parried.

49: But if I don't parry, I die.

50: High risk parry win.

51: Well, that was fun. I'll try the DLC now. It can't be any harder than this.

# Dark Souls 2

don't care what the reviews said. I enjoyed Dark Souls 2. That being said, I understand what the reviews complained about. The difficulty peaked relatively early, and remained fairly static right through to the end. An abundance of summons for every single boss fight gave the option to trivialize difficult encounters, which I'm sure some players opted for. It's not a perfect follow up to Dark Souls. But standing alone, it's a good game.

I did have an advantage in one thing: I played the Scholar of the First Sin only. I imagine a lot of the problems with the original game were rectified by that point. Not to mention, Frozen Eleccium Loyce was one of the stronger sections of the game.

I did mow through bosses like they were not in a Dark Souls game, though. I think I killed 12 in a row without having any significant problems, several of them killed in the first attempt on my first run. That should be an oddity in a Souls game, not the standard.

Still, I enjoyed it. And this gives me a chance to outline my playstyle.

I like to make 4 characters, based off the 4 horsemen of the apocalypse. They seem suitable for this game.

Her (Death): Magic user. Typically wields enchanted sword or scythe and big magic. High int.

War: Big armor, big sword, big ouch. Sometimes goes Faith for lightning, sometimes Pyro for flames.

Entropy (Famine/Pestilence): Some kind of more unique playstyle. In this, rapid fire bleed/poison claws.

Conquest: Soul Level 1 character, designed to get as far as possible.

I have yet to complete an SL1 run, but I've given it a fair attempt. My DS1 SL1 run ended at Four Kings, with Bed of Chaos already down, Seathe and Nito to go.

I'm going to start Conquest now in DS2 and see what I can do.

# Elden Ring DLC: Shadow of the Erdtree

I want to like this DLC. I genuinely do. There are good and bad parts to it, and while the good come close to outweighing the bad, in the end they just don't.

## Pros:

The Shadow Realm is well made and visually pleasing.

The new weapons are extremely fun.

The story is interesting and compelling, if somewhat subtle.

The negatives, however, are somewhat serious.

## The world feels empty

This one is somewhat subjective, but the open world felt empty and vacant. The original Elden Ring excelled in making the world feel alive and rewarding exploration. In this DLC, whole swathes of territory are empty or uninteresting, with nothing but the occasional scattered skull with glowing eyes to trample with your horse.

## Bosses are artificially difficult.

There are two problems with bosses in the DLC. The first is that they've overtuned. They hit too hard, they have too much health. At times you have no time to learn the bosses because you'll be dead before you've seen more than 1-2 attacks.

But the second, more problematic issue is one of poor design. From Software have clearly learned nothing from the feedback regarding the last sections of the original game. Bosses attack relentlessly, with combos of up to 10 hits allowing for very few attack windows, and then only if you're perfectly timed. At the end of this combo, they'll start another almost immediately. They're not held back by things like stamina, FP or any sort of limiting.

The hit boxes on most of these attacks are comically poor. A boss with a flaming spear can hit you with a thrust attack aimed a full 150 degrees away from you. It is as if someone asked the lead dev where the hitbox should be and they responded with "yes".

Then there's the boss movement which is, for the most part, wild and erratic, leading to more deaths through camera angles than mechanics in a lot of places. Any attempts at ranged combat miss altogether, forcing you into one specific meta: find a way to make the opponent bleed,

summon mimic tear to do it twice as fast, cheese the enemy and then go onto forums to brag "I didn't find this hard at all, l2play" which seems to be code for "I used the meta to cheese it, fluff my ego."

And on the subject of metas...

## The Miyazaki Meta is still a thing

While it's true that bosses are overtuned, so are some of the enemies. I actually enjoyed this at the start of the game. The enemies hit like trucks, but they also died quickly. It led to a fast, frenetic gameplay loop that was challenging and satisfying.

Then I progressed in the game and things rapidly fell off a cliff. Each enemy started to feel like a miniboss who required dedicated time and tactics to beat, could kill me in one combo, had infinite stamina and FP to spam their abilities with no downtime for healing or recovery, had a healthpool that required a fight of at least a minute to beat them, and gave paltry rewards when you did.

This brought everything back to what I like to call the Miyazaki Meta; the idea that it's more sensible to run through the enemies instead of engage them, pushing for a speed-run style daisy chain of one Site of Grace to the next, purely because of how frustrating it was to dump 3+ healing potions on a standard enemy, only to have another waiting around the corner.

## The level-up mechanic is terrible

The level-up mechanic, which I saw one Redditor refer to as "doohicky levelling", a completely fair term, involves wandering and exploring the world to find one of two items that makes you more powerful. That's all. With one item, you take less damage and deal more. With the second, your summons take less damage and heal more.

There's no satisfaction to this levelling scheme. The levels you built up in the main game seem to mean nothing in comparison, and your power level in the Shadow Realm has no connection to your combat skills or any time dedicated to increasing your power. Unlikely all previous From Software titles, there are set and defined limits you can reach before facing any particular boss. As such, if you're struggling against on particular boss and you've collected all the Doohickies you can, you're pretty much screwed.

## From Software learned nothing from Elden Ring endgame

Elden Ring original endgame had such a difficulty spike that, unless you were cheesing it with a katana (and lets be fair, most players were) or using something like Comet Azur to melt enemies, you were in for a rough time. It would have been, in my opinion, the best game of all time without the arbitrary turning of all enemies into mini boss damage sponges who kill you in 3 hits.

In the DLC, From Software doubled down on this mentality, and it shows.

**Addendum: Post balance patch, From misses the point.**

From released a balance patch. This balance patch is... comical. It increases the power of the early "leveling doohickies" you pick up and... nothing else. They attempted to address the least problematic part of their whole design, cementing the idea that they've completely lost the plot.

Has anything been done to slow down bosses from two shotting you as soon as you enter the room? Technically, yes. Now they three-shot you as soon as you enter the room. They're still problematically aggressive, leave tiny windows (and frequently none at all) for attacking or recovery, hit you with any attacks they make regardless of where you are in relation to them, and explode in AoEs that remove half of your health pool on the rare occasions they happen to miss.

Players said "I want a fair fight, and I want to have fun. Please stop kicking me in the balls." and From Software's response was "We are providing you with a cup, and will continue to kick you in the balls."

Extremely disappointing to have waited a year and a half for this.