

A COMPREHENSIVE NEW PLAYER GUIDE **TO TANKING**



Written by – Friedrich Psitalon

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Author's Note: This article is not intended for "advanced" readers – it is more of an intermediate and basic player's guide. It is as exhaustive as such a guide can be, and to the best of my knowledge continues no inaccuracies. If you think something should be added or is in error, please feel free to post about it. This article is the result of a great deal of board reading, and if this work is helpful to other players, it is because I have merely stood on the very high shoulders of some excellent members of the Eve Forums, and reformulated/garnished much of what is found on the forums with my own observations and thoughts. The example fittings provided are by no means the last word, but unlike many on the forums, the fittings are all inexpensive and Tier 1, and the assumption is that the player does not by any means have every skill maxed-out, and possibly some not trained at all.

One of the simplest tasks in Eve, yet also the most critical, is staying alive. If this comes as a surprise to the reader, please stop reading now. There are three ways to ensure that you stay alive:

1. Be able to sustain more damage than the other fellow can.
2. Be able to do more damage than the other fellow can.
3. Be able to evade hostile contact or break that contact.

The first of these criteria will be the focus of this article. Sustaining damage effectively can mean the difference between collecting a bounty or a trip back in your pod... or worse. The ability to sustain major amounts of damage without being destroyed/killed is referred to in nearly all MMORPG's as being a "tank" or "tanking."

The Nature of Tanking in EvE

In most games, tanking is the ability to greatly reduce the amount of damage you take and/or absorb a large amount of punishment to begin with. In EvE, the strength of a tank tends to be more resistance-based than high-health based, because of the immense damage potential of the game's combat system. Technically, there are four methods of tanking in EVE, but only three are actually used. The four methods are: Active Shield Tanking, Passive Shield Tanking, Armor Tanking, and Structure Tanking. Of these four, structure tanking is not used, because a failure of the structure tank even for a moment would lead to the player's demise (amongst other reasons.) Each of the three tanking systems has some benefits and some disadvantages. None of the systems is "better" – simply different, and utilizing different skills. Shield tankers enjoy the fact that, should their tank fail, they can still flee while armor protects them. Armor tankers enjoy the fact that they can rush in and engage in combat, and their shields protect them from even having to engage their tank right away. Below, each of the three major tanking systems is discussed. After the three tanking systems, a vital component of all three – resistance to damage – is covered.

Active Shield Tanking

Active shield tanking (AST) relies heavily on two items – shield boosters, and shield boost amplifiers. The AST name comes from the nature of the defensive style – you use your shields as your main source of damage absorption, and you actively reinforce

them as they take damage. Both a shield booster and a shield boost amplifier use mid-slots; active shield tanking does not utilize low slots.

Shield boosters grant a very quick boost in shields for (usually) a similar amount of capacitor energy. Boost amplifiers increase that amount gained by a percentage, thereby allowing you to “heal” more per boost – considerably more energy efficient than using two boosters. While the overall healing rate may not be as fast as two boosters, the energy usage makes it superior in efficiency. For players who may not be able to afford the burn of two boosters, this is a viable option.

Medium Shield Booster (x2) uses 120 energy to give 120 shields every 3 seconds. (40 energy per 40 shields per second)

Medium Shield Booster and Shield Boost Amplifier uses 60 energy to give 78 shields every 3 seconds. (20 energy per 26 shields per second)

Thus at the 30 second mark, the pair of boosters will have repaired 1200 shields, but also burned 1200 capacitor in the process. The booster and amplifier will have repaired 780 shields, but done so at a cost of 600 capacitor. If your tank is sufficient so that a little more than 600 shields per 30 seconds will suffice, you can save yourself a lot of capacitor this way. (Alternatively, you can simply leave 1 booster on automatic and manually trigger the other, but that requires more attention than many players would prefer to devote.)

AST users should seriously consider investing in a Capacitor Booster. Cap Boosters are a sort of “gun” for your capacitor – requiring cap booster ammunition, this injects raw capacitor energy into your cap, giving you more juice to funnel into your shields. Cap Boosters take a mid slot, and have a pretty significant cost in CPU and Grid as they increase in size, however. The larger your Cap Booster, the larger (or more) ammunition you can put in it, and the longer/faster you can inject energy into your capacitor before it needs to reload., temporarily stopping the “refueling” process.

Active Shield Tankers should train in...

- Shield Compensation: this cuts the amount of capacitor energy used per boost. Essential!
- Shield Upgrades: this cuts the amount of grid needed to install your extender, but not the booster, sadly. Still somewhat handy for keeping fitting manageable.
- Energy Management: this grants you more capacitor. Not vital for small ships, but it can make a real difference in bigger ones.
- Energy Systems Operation: This may not grant you lots of extra boosts, but in longer fights, faster capacitor regeneration might come in quite useful.

Advantages of Active Shield Tanking – Defensive regeneration “on demand.” Boosters are very quick reacting. Their regeneration speed as a result is very customizable; on precisely when you need it, off precisely when you don’t. Unlike armor tanking, it is very difficult to overestimate or underestimate your needs, and it responds much more quickly than armor tanking to a “panic” situation (most armor repairers take 9-12 seconds, vs. a shield booster’s 3 seconds.) Of the three major types of tanking, AST is the most micro-manageable. AST grants much faster regeneration, on average, than

the same number of modules allocated to Passive Shield Tanking. As a rule, a good AST can use as few as three modules, all of them middle slots; making it far superior than a PST in this regard, which can use several mids and lows when really optimized.

Disadvantages of Active Shield Tanking – You pay a price for your regen-on-demand. Active Shield Tanking is inherently less damage-efficient than Armor Tanking, as the total base resistance on Shields is 120% - 0% Electro Magnetic, 60% Explosive, 40% Kinetic, 20% Thermal. Armor Tanking, in contrast, has a base value of 140% - 60% EM, 10% Exp, 35% Kinetic, 35% Thermal. Active Shield Tanking uses a great deal more capacitor energy than Armor Tanking, as well – Armor is repaired at least a 2 armor to 1 capacitor ratio or better, often as high as 3-to-1. Since Passive Shield Tanking uses no capacitor at all, it is vastly superior in this regard.

An Example of an Active Shield Tank System:

Cyclone (Minmatar Battlecruiser) – bonus to shield boosting per BC level
3x Assault Missile Launcher (anti-frigate)
5x 650mm Artillery Cannon I (anti-larger)
1x Large Shield Extender I (Damage Padding)
1x Large Shield Booster I (The tank regen tool)
1x Medium Capacitor Booster I (For refreshing the capacitor)
2x Damage-Specific Hardeners (See last section for notes on resistance)
2x Power Diagnostic System (Increase regen rates, total shield, and provide more grid for above grid-hungry modules)
1x Co-Processor (More CPU for all above)
1x Gyrostabilizer (Increased damage mod to compensate for no heavy launchers)

Passive Shield Tanking

Passive Shield Tanking is a rather unorthodox strategy probably best suited for PvE combat, but is very noteworthy in that situation. PST works on a rather bizarre principle of EVE: no matter how much shields (or capacitor) you have, it always regenerates in exactly the same amount of time, unless you have modified your regen rate. A Vexor's shields will always regenerate in 900 seconds, no matter if it has 900 shields, or 9,000,000 shields. In the first situation the regeneration of the ship is unimpressive – 900 shields in 900 seconds is merely 1 shield per second regenerated. In the second situation, though, the rate of regeneration is staggering – 10,000 shields per second!

Obviously, no one is going to get 9,000,000 shield points on a cruiser – there simply aren't modules impressive enough, enough slots, or enough CPU and power grid available. The concept, though, of decreasing regen time and increasing maximum shielding to take advantage of this “golden rule” is a relatively sound one.

Typically, a PST'r may use:

- Shield Extenders; these use a lot of CPU (at any size) and grid (the amount of grid used depends on the extender size), but grant you a great deal more shield points, thereby raising your total shields, and increasing your regen rate. These are mid-slot

items.

- Shield Rechargers; these use a lot of CPU, but very little power grid. Their purpose is very simple: they increase shield recharge rates. These are also mid-slot items, and good for increasing regen when you can't afford the grid drain of an extender.
- Shield Flux Coils; these use a moderate amount of CPU, and no grid, but actually take AWAY from your maximum shield total. In exchange, they provide a larger recharge rate. These are low-slot items.
- Shield Power Relays; Relays use a very small amount of CPU and no grid, but have very serious impacts on your capacitor recharge rates. These, too, are low slot items.

Mid slots, then, give you more regen for CPU and Grid, and the low slots give you more regen in exchange for max shields or capacitor regen. How does one decide which to use when?

The Mids: Extenders vs. Rechargers: Generally, it's never a bad idea to have at least one significant extender anyhow, because a passive shield tanker will not be able to control his regeneration rate, and so will want some extra "padding." After that first extender, though, some math comes into play. For a ship that has 1000 shields regenerating in 500 seconds, an extender that adds 500 more effectively increases the shield regen rate by 50%. (1000 in 500 seconds = average of 2 per second; 1500 in 500 seconds = average of 3 per second.) There aren't any Shield Recharge Units that can add anywhere near that amount of recharge; the best commonly available only adds 15%. Adding a shield extender to a ship that only increases that 1000 shields by 100, though, is not as good as simply adding a recharger. Unfortunately, very few ships (realistically, probably none) can afford to slot as many Shield Extenders as they might like, so Shield Rechargers become a very good option for those lacking grid but having CPU, and wanting a faster regeneration rate, rather than using a smaller-size extender.

The Lows: Flux Coils vs. Relays Frankly, neither of these modules are for the faint of heart. If you're using these, you're robbing some part of your ship's total abilities in order to improve another part; too much of this can leave you in a bad place. Judiciously used, though, both of these devices can be quite potent. Both of these devices require knowing what your ship is good at, and where it is weak. Shield Power Relays strip a large chunk of your capacitor regeneration for shield regeneration (35% Cap Regen for 20% Shield in the biggest ones), but if your ship doesn't use much in the way of capacitor, this may not be a big deal. Ships that use no shield boosters, little/no propulsion boosters (Afterburner/Microwarp Drive), and few other cap requiring devices can usually get away with slotting as many as two of these, lowering their cap regen by a frightening 70% - but if you're a missile firer or projectile user, it may very well be that your only cap uses are warping in and out and the occasional shield boost or web. If that's the case, Shield Power Relays may be for you. Flux Coils, on the other hand, are for players who are very confident that they have enough shields to get them through (maybe you have 3+ extenders onboard) and don't mind crippling that to increase their regeneration rate. A Flux coil usually pulls 10% out of your maximum shield capacity, and in exchange gives you 25% more regeneration; a net benefit for you of 15% regen, in exchange for 10% of your total shield. Again, using these is a question of judgment - experiment carefully.

One passive shield tanking school of thought would suggest NOT using Flux Coils;

instead relying on shield extenders and boosters, and, where possible, power relays. The other, slightly more maniacal school of thought takes advantage of a strange fact about Eve: regeneration rates are not a flat slope. Simply: If your average shield regen rate is 10 shields per second, at 90% shields you will get much less than 10/sec, and at 30% shields you will get much more than 10/sec. Approximately 25-35% shields seems to be the region of maximum possible regen/sec. This “sweet spot” is where your passive shield regeneration is at its finest.

The truly brave hybrid passive-and-active shield tanker, then, would do this:

Put one extender, perhaps two, to extend the “range” of shields that falls between 25-35%. (With 100 shields, 25-35% is only 10 points. At 1000 shields, 25-35% is 100 points.) Then, install one shield booster, and load up on Flux Coils. Enjoy your high-speed regeneration with the Flux Coils (and anything else you have installed) and use the booster to keep your shields hovering at 25-35%. Since they’re naturally going to fall faster (you have less), they will be spiking up and down rather quickly – you have very fast regen and loss. The shield booster can be used to push a shield system that has fallen below optimum (say, to 10%) back up to the 25-35% range, keeping shields at maximum regeneration per second. It should be noted that this strategy is quite risky unless you have mastered it, and is only for NPCs, where the damage rate is highly predictable, and requires a rather insane attention to detail in order to keep ideal. Over-boosting to above the 25-35% range isn’t a big deal, but not boosting and letting your armor get chewed up is never a good thing for a shield booster. Hybrid Shield Tanking is NOT for the faint of heart. It might, though, be the best option for players also looking to take advantage of shield resistance amplifiers, which take mid slots, but not low (since Flux Coils are low slots), and as a result tend to take less damage and stay in that regen “sweet spot” for even longer.

Passive Shield Tankers should train in...

- Shield Management: 5% more shield capacity per level, which results in 5% faster regen, too! Essential.
- Shield Operation: 5% faster regen – not as good as Shield Management, but close!
- Shield Upgrades: Let’s face it – Extenders HURT your grid. This one’s vital for cutting down the pain.
- Engineering/Electronics: More Grid and more CPU can come in handy when slotting these hard-to-fit modules.

Advantages of Passive Shield Tanking – Unless we’re talking about the Hybrid tankers, Passive Shield Tanking is very, very easy on the brain when in combat: when the shield goes under 10%, initiate warp and leave. Simple! No boosting, no capacitor to worry about, nada. Speaking of which, PST’ing means your capacitor isn’t being hurt at all. You can use your cap for much more intensive activities; afterburners, microwarps, high energy-usage weapons, etc. This isn’t suggesting you throw lasers on your favorite non-Amarr ship, but you can be a lot more free with the juice. If your PST has very high resists (say, on a Ferox, or if you’ve done a hybrid and put extenders/resist modules in your mids and fluxes in your lows) the regen rate can be pretty darn impressive. (20 shield per second is unimpressive in most cases, but if you’ve got 80% resist to Electromagnetic, it would require 100 damage/second to equal the regen rate your 20/per is pulling in.) For attention-monitoring purposes and

capacitor-using purposes, nothing beats a Passive Shield Tank.

Disadvantages of Passive Shield Tanking Again, Hybrids aside, PST'ing means your regeneration rate is absolutely out of your control... and that can be pretty scary. It means you can't pour on the juice if you're getting clobbered, and it means you can't divert energy elsewhere if you're not being hammered. That regeneration rate can be quite swift, but generally is not as fast as a Shield Booster or Armor Repairer would be. Passive Shield Tanking usually requires more slots to do effectively than AST or Armor Tanking, or cross-level slots. (AST requires all mid, Armor all low, but Passive dips into both.) As a rule, the fact that you can't heal as quickly, and that the healing is uncontrolled, means that PST'ing is more a tactic for those who fight NPCs, rather than other players.

An Example of a Passive Tank System

Ferox (Caldari Battlecruiser)– bonus to Shield Resistance Levels

3x Heavy Missile Launcher (major targets)

2x Assault Missile Launcher (frigates)

1x Medium Nosferatu (regain energy you're not getting from the crippled capacitor to operate hardeners)

1x Small Tractor Beam (you've got a turret slot, but not a lot of "Free" capacitor in this build, and the Ferox is slow... bring cargo to you!)

3x Large Shield Extender (this is somewhat overkill, you can swap out one for a Web or Painter if you're having damage-dealing problems; don't swap two unless you're quite confident of yourself)

2x Shield Hardeners (see last section for notes on resistance)

2x Shield Power Relay (slaughters cap regen by 70%, but gives you 40% more regen)

1x Shield Flux Coil (A small hit to max shields, but worth it since you have so much)

1x Ballistic Control System (for all those missile systems you're using)

If you have skills with drones, you could substitute in light drones to deal with frigates and lower/remove the number of Assault Missile Launchers.

Armor Tanking

People who tank using their armor as their source of protection/regeneration follow a different philosophy. They accept that their shields will be chewed away swiftly, and call that "borrowed time" before they have to engage their tank – saving their capacitor for later. The risk involved is not insignificant; armor tankers who "lose their tank" are immediately taking damage on ship structure, and the end of THAT is a trip to your pod.

Armor tanking is a fairly easy concept: slap an armor repairer on your ship and turn it on. What makes an armor tank effective is the relatively low cost "per point" of armor repair (a shield tank repairs 1 shield for 1 energy, typically, while an armor tank can give as much as 2 or 3 armor for 1 energy.) No boosters exist for armor repair, except in the case of the Brutix – a ship type with a bonus to armor repair.

Armor repairers, armor plates, and armor resistance enhancements are all "low slot" items, which also makes them rather popular for players who have other uses for their mid slots – afterburners, webbing modules, warp scramblers, etc.

Typically, Armor Tanking is supplemented by resistance enhancers, but some players choose to install extra plating. Plating requires a specific, relatively minor amount of CPU and greatly increasing amounts of Power Grid as you increase plate density. Repairers likewise tend to take a moderate amount of CPU and greatly increasing grid. Hardeners tend to take very little grid, and a moderate amount of CPU.

While Active Shield Tankers tend to rely on Capacitor Boosters to supply them with large amounts of capacitor, Armor Tankers have another, more efficient option: capacitor regeneration items. A total of four items exist – two for the medium slots, and two for the low slots. (Sound familiar to shield regeneration items?) The medium slot items are simple Capacitor Rechargers (just like Shield Rechargers) and Capacitor Batteries (which function in the same way as Shield Extenders, including their affect on recharge rates.) The low slot options are (again, these may sound familiar) Capacitor Flux Coils and Capacitor Power Relays. Much like Shield Flux Coils, Capacitor Flux Coils lower the maximum capacity in exchange for faster regeneration. In this case, though, the other option is nearly always better: Capacitor Power Relays. A CPR lowers the shield boost rate (basically, the opposite of a Shield Boost Amplifier) in exchange for faster capacitor regeneration. This is rarely an issue for armor tankers, though, who usually do not even fit a shield booster module!

Armor Tankers should train in...

- Hull Upgrades; required for higher end armor plates, and also grants more armor to the vessel.
- Mechanic; required for you to use more effective armor repairers, and grants more structure... handy if your tank fails.
- Repair Systems; decreasing your repair time makes your healing cycle faster, allowing you to handle damage at faster pace.
- Energy Management; more capacitor means more times you can repair.
- Energy Systems Operation; since armor tanking can potentially extend for quite a period of time, faster regeneration of your capacitor can grant you several additional repairs.

Advantages of Armor Tanking – Speaking in capacitor terms, Armor Tanking is a middle ground between Passive and Active Shield Tanking methods. Obviously, it uses more capacitor than Passive Shield Tanks, but it is considerably more efficient than Active Shields. Armor tanks take their bites of capacitor every 10 seconds or so, allowing a ship more time to regenerate capacitor between bites. Armor tankers also have a much easier time increasing their resistances to very high levels. Armor tankers have a slower rate of “healing” than an Active Shield Tanker, but usually much quicker than a Passive Shield Tanker.

Disadvantages of Armor Tanking – The middle ground is just that: the middle ground. Your rate of healing may not be as swift as is needed in extremely high damage situations. It is still possible to run out of capacitor, though it may happen more slowly than an Active Tanker. Lastly, you have to be ready to move fast if your Armor Tank should fail – structure doesn’t tend to be very durable!

An Example of an Armor Tank System

Brutix (Gallente Battlecruiser) – bonus to armor repair rate

6x 200mm rail I (Most favor blasters over rails, but until you have significant drone skills, this will cause problems in dealing with cruisers that like to hang at 22km and run away when you close. Once you have significant drone skills, or you don't mind switching guns between missions, switch to blasters.)

1x Small tractor beam (Same as Ferox- handy, and you can't afford another rail anyhow; discard this when you switch to blaster)

1x Stasis Web I (There aren't any mid-slot items to assist with an armor tank, so work to increase your damage – this helps a lot with frigs)

1x Painter I (Same as above, nice for long-range targeting.)

1x 10mn AB I (Useful for keeping distance as best you can, and for closing when you get blasters, swap for another capacitor battery or recharger if you like)

1x Capacitor Recharger I (to help keep your tank running)

1x Medium Armor Repairer I (get this to Repairer II ASAP)

2-4x Resistance Hardeners (This is up to you; the more hardeners you use, the less damage you take. I've used pairs of two hardeners for NPC missions quite well, but when the damage finally DOES start stacking up, you burn cap a lot quicker.)

0-2x Capacitor Power Relay (weakens shield boosting in exchange for more capacitor recharge...but do you see a shield booster on this ship?)

Hopefully you do have SOME drone skills by the time you're in a Battlecruiser and need a real tank, as drones are one of your best tools for dealing with frigates in a Gallente vessel.

Below we will cover a section of very great interest to Armor Tankers, and some significant interest to Shield Tankers as well.

Making Life Easy On Your Tank – Resistances to Damage

Shields and armor both have a natural base resistance to damage:

Shields: 0% vs EM, 60% vs Explosive, 40% Kinetic, 20% Thermal.

Armor: 60% vs EM, 10% Explosive, 35% Kinetic, 35% Thermal.

The way this resistance works is very simple: if you were to take 100 points of explosive damage and your shields were still up (they have not already been destroyed), your shields would ignore 60 of those 100 points; only 40 would actually be applied to your shield total. If those 100 points were Electro Magnetic, however, your shields would not ignore any of the damage, and all 100 would be applied to your total remaining shields!

Similarly, armor has a strong suit – EM does little to harm it – and a weak suit – explosives do nearly full damage. The question that quickly arises to any intelligent player then: “What can I do to increase my resistance to X in my shields/armor?” Resistance upgrades go by several different names, depending on if they are armor or shield units, and passive or active in nature. A passive resistance module never needs

to be turned on, and uses no capacitor, but usually uses a little power grid. An active resistance module uses no grid, but does actually need to be activated, and once you do activate it, your capacitor will begin to experience some drain. The benefit of an active resistance module, though, is that it tends to do a great deal more for your defenses.

Passive shield resistance modules are called “Shield Resistance Amplifiers,” while passive armor resistance modules are either “Membranes” or “Plating” depending on which variety you choose. Active shield and armor resistance modules both go by the same name: “Hardeners.”

Why should I use a resistance module when I can just slap on another extender/armor plate?

Two reasons: first, extenders and armor plates tend to be quite hard on the grid and CPU, and in the case of armor plates, they also add to the total weight of the ship – slower, clumsier ships get hit more often! Secondly, many times, a resistance module actually adds more to the “true” hit point total of the ship than another armor plate would.

A ship with 3000 shield points actually has four different shield hit point totals. Since shields have no natural resistance to EM, the ship’s EM hit point total is exactly what it starts with: 3000. Shields have a 60% resistance to explosive damage; 60% of all explosive damage is ignored. Thus, to do 3000 points of explosive damage to a ship, you would actually have to do a great deal more. When 3000 explosive damage is applied, only 40% of that - 1200 gets through. You would have to do 7500 points of explosive damage to actually breach a 3000 point shield! 🤪 A 3000 shield ship can actually withstand almost eight thousand points of explosive damage before the shield is defeated!

Using this knowledge, then, it is not always better to add an extender or an armor plate. A ship with 1000 shields/armor that added 100 more shields/armor is only adding another 100 points of total resistance, or 10% more “true” hit points. If, instead, the player added a kinetic resistance module that granted 50% (which most actives do) the ship would have a “true” hit point total of a great deal more.

Why shouldn't I just use two kinetic hardeners? Then I'm immune to all kinetic damage, right? 100% added to my base 35, woo!

Not quite. When you add 50% resistance, it doesn't actually stack perfectly with your base resistance. A 50% resistance hardener takes the amount of damage you would normally have taken after your ship's base resistance (40 or 35, depending on shields/armor) and then cuts that damage by 50%. Another 50% hardener takes the total after the first hardener, and cuts that by 50% - effectively adding another 25% to your “true” resistance. (Half your damage removed, and then half of your half remaining.)

More modules are never bad, but in terms of “true” hit points added, you get the most defense by adding hardeners where you are weakest. 50% hardener to your shield EM

resistance (base of 0) really does cut all incoming EM damage in half. 50% hardener to your armor EM, though, only cuts in half the damage that gets by your armor's base level of 60%... half of the remaining 40% of damage, basically. There is also a penalty for stacking multiple modules of the same type of resistance – diminishing returns exist. Sparing the reader the painful math, the “best” number of a module that stacks you can use is three – more than that, and the stacking penalties become brutal enough that nearly anything would probably be more useful.

So which ones do I use?

The first decision to be made is the one between active and passive hardeners. Passive hardeners have the advantage of using no capacitor, but typically, they grant only a 32% bonus; while active hardeners grant 50% in exchange for using capacitor energy. Balanced against this, though, are the “Compensation” skills: Armor and Shield compensation skills grant 5% to passive hardeners per level, per type. (Kinetic Armor/Shield Compensation increases your passive hardener bonus by 5% per level, and so on. Due to how the math works, these bonuses will never allow you to reach the same levels as Active Hardeners, but you can come fairly close with “X” Compensation Level V. The ultimate question involved here is one of capacitor use when choosing Active or Passive hardeners – Passive Shield tanks can almost certainly handle the capacitor use involved in using Active Hardeners. Active shield tanks may or may not; armor tanks usually can. Much depends on what guns you are using, other active modules, etc. Experimentation is key here – you want a tank that can last long enough for you to accomplish whatever your task is, but if the tank would last far longer than your needs require, you probably could be using some modules or capacitor differently.

After you make the decision between passive or active hardeners, you will need to decide precisely which modules to use. Both shields and armor have an active and passive hardener for each type of damage. Armor also has an “all in one” passive hardener (Adaptive Nano Plating) and active hardener (Damage Control.) Shields, on the other hand, have only an active “all in one” hardener – Invulnerability Fields. Damage control units cannot be stacked, but Invulnerability Fields and Adaptive Nano Plating can (subject to stacking penalties.) Which ones you fit are dependent on what kind of fighting you're doing and what kind of damage you expect to take. Against other players, it can be difficult to predict what you will face, but NPCs always do a specific kind of damage, based on what faction you are facing. (Serpentis, for example, always do kinetic and thermal damage. Rather than fitting two “all in one” fields or hardeners of each type, fitting as many kinetic and thermal hardeners can be very effective in dealing with that faction. With two kinetic and two thermal hardeners, the Serpentis are nearly “defanged.”)

Putting It All Together

Obviously, a pure tank without resistances isn't going to be as effective as a combination would be, and a pure resistance setup will falter as well. An effective tank will have enough hit points to make properly utilize resistance bonuses, and enough resistance bonuses to make sure your opponent doesn't just plow through your hit points. Most ships will have a pretty clear indication of which way they are intended to tank – Amarr and Gallente are usually armor tankers (though a few can be

shield tanked), while Caldari and Minmatar ships tend to be better as shield tankers. Most ships have more shielding as a base than they do armor or vice versa, and more mid-slots than low-slots, or vice versa. Ships with more base armor or low slots tend to be better armor tankers, and ships with more base shielding and mid-slots tend to do better at shield tanking. None of these is a hard and fast rule, but provides a good rule of thumb. Experience is the best teacher – this article can give you the background, but ultimately, you'll need to take a few ships out there (hopefully, but not certainly, without being shot down) to determine the combination that works best for you.

Concluding Notes

Hopefully this article has been useful to you. If there's something missing, incorrect, or badly stated, feel free to let me know – the hope of this article is that more players will pick up EVE that much more swiftly, and as a result, more pilots will be in EVE space to interact with. If you enjoyed the article, please feel free to send an encouraging EVEmail or ISK – the problem with being an experimenting pilot is that you end up sampling a lot of gear, and unlike many of the excellent posters in this forum, I'm far from a grizzled veteran of vast financial sums. ;)

Until next time, and thanks for reading this long first attempt at an Eve guide! :)