

# A Carebear's Guide to PvP

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## Introduction

From various comments I've heard since joining IXC I get the impression that there are a few people here with little, or no, experience of PvP. Well I was in the same boat 4 months ago and Joined Euphoria Released to help Xetic fight the Five and to learn how to PvP. I thought it might be useful to a few of you if I tried to distil what I learned in the last four months of full on PvP.

First the caveat: I don't claim to be an expert, a top fleet commander, or a tactical genius! I was just a simple foot soldier in a very good PvP corp and have flown with all of the above. This is just what I know; others feel free to add/correct at will.

A lot of this is blindingly obvious, but I know what it is like not wanting to look like a n00b by asking silly questions. Just skip over the bits you already know.

## The Golden Rules

If you are going to do any PvP you must follow these two rules.

(Just to clarify this: PvP does not just mean going out to find someone to shoot, it includes flying through low sec, flying through 0.0 and even empire space if there are wars on. In fact it could also include general 0.0 activities)

Only fly what you can afford to lose.

Don't Panic!!!

So to the first point, don't put all your eggs in one basket, if you want to have a go at PvP take a T1 frig for the first few ventures, if you have a load of expensive stuff to haul make several smaller trips. Basically the point is to ruin someone else's day, not yours!

On the second – I have been involved in many kills where the target could probably have survived, or at least taken some of us down with him, if they had kept their cool and fought back. Lots of people seem to lock up like a rabbit in a car's headlights and do nothing. They are probably desperately re clicking "warp to" or their tanking. Keep cool and fight back, if they start to take losses they might bail out.

## **The Psychology of a killer**

The first and most important thing to learn about PvP is that it is an attitude, a state of mind and a willingness to lose all that makes a PvPer; not Skill Points, Ship Fitting or (to an extent) real skills.

You need to know that you will probably lose your ship, you stand a good chance of getting podded and you must not care! The reason people panic is that they are actually seriously concerned about losing their ship, mods, pod or cargo and become actually scared. Remember it is just a game and all you are really losing is some time.

A warning is that it can get seriously addictive. The thrill of the chase, the trying to out wit your foe and the adrenaline buzz are great

## **You only live twice**

First off I'll talk a bit about some ways of staying alive while just traveling around. This bit applies to everyone, not just the aspirant fighters. The first thing is to follow rule 1 above. If you are traveling around in a 1 billion Isk faction ship, a hauler full of all your zydrine or mega on your own and you get ganked – it's your own stupid fault & you deserve to die! Harsh I know, but that sort of target is screaming to get ganked and you really should have been taking precautions.

## **Scouts**

Unless you are in an interceptor you really need to move carefully. Check the map for recent ship/pod losses and try and move round them. Get an alt or corp mate to move ahead of you in an interceptor and scout out the route. You really don't want to jump into an well-organized gate camp in something expensive. Keep your scout a jump or 2 ahead, move him in check out any locals (be very aware of alt corp spies) and don't jump in unless you know it's safe. If it's a small camp or solo hostile you can attack with the scout to either kill them or draw them off the route.

## Bookmarks

Book marks are your friend! We all know this and I'm sure we all have a full set to empire and back. But these are not enough. Most pirates and gankers will have interceptors who will chase you, and tackle you while the rest catch up. You need to have safe spots, and you need to have U-Turns. If you are attacked and manage to warp out go to a SS not a planet, as they will watch where you go and will follow you. If possible get 3 SS so you can keep moving to avoid the probes.

Time for one of the silly questions that no one wants to ask: "How do I make safe spots?"

While in warp open up People and places, go to the places tab. At the bottom there is an Add Bookmark button. Hit that while in warp, quickly name it (ss1, ss2, ut1 etc) and hit return. The BM is made where you are when you press return, NOT when you click the Add Bookmark button.

So for an emergency exit in a system where you don't have SS warp out to a planet (or moon if you are sure there are no hostile POS in system), drop a SS on route, warp back to your SS, pick another (distant) celestial object and warp to it, drop another BM and go back to the first one. Keep an eye on the scanner and move the second you see 3AU probes and every couple of minutes anyway.

U-Turns are BMs between gates that you have BMs for. Their value is that you can use your existing BMs to get to the gate for a quick exit. Next time you are flying a regular route, drop a U-turn in every system. (I keep on meaning to do this for the Impass-Empire route)

## Aggression

Aggression can be another friend. Remember that once someone is aggressed they can't follow. So if the camp is on a warp-in gate and you land right on the gate try not to jump straight away! Counter intuitive I know, but bear with me. I have sat in tons of camps and when you warp in someone will be shouting "Contact, contact" and the tacklers will be trying to lock you. If you jump before they get a lock and you are in something slow, they WILL jump through after you and tackle you as you get up to warp speed. If you hold a few seconds while the tacklers lock you and aggress, and then jump they won't be able to follow you.

## **Local people**

Local is a useful tool, make sure you use it. Add known hostiles to your inappropriately named buddy list (and delete all your friends). Add new people as you uncover their hostile intent and clean it out when hostiles become neutral. It's best to keep people in corporation folders so you can delete the whole folder when the war ends. By the way eve-kills or other kill boards are a good way of finding out who is in a corp, what they usually fly and who is most active. Pay special attention to those who get lots of solo kills and keep an eye out for them.

It goes without saying, but before you enter a system with your main (or when you are still cloaked if you don't have a scout) do a 'show info' on everyone in local and scan for known hostiles (the ones with the green square). I know this can be a pain, especially in empire, but what is worse – lose 10 mins scanning local, or 4 hours mining for a new ship?

If you are at war and in Empire, you probably won't have time to scan everyone before you uncloak, so warp to that U-turn I told you to make earlier and do it from there (keeping an eye out for scan probes of course).

## **Die with style**

Some times, with a well organized camp, or fleet you won't stand a chance and you will die. Oh well it's only a game after all and some you lose.

But let's do it in style, we have our own and our corp's reputation to think of.

Do not log, ever, ever ,ever!!!! It is lame; you will be mocked on the forums and rightly so. 90% of the time you will still die anyway and how can you fight back if you are dead?

Fight to the last – a brave but futile final stand is always good. Try and take at least one of the buggers down with you!

Do not smack in local, by eve mail or on the forums. It makes you look so stupid.

## **Into the Valley of death...**

For those that want to try PvP who haven't done much before – this section is for you. It comes to us all, time to hang up those mining lasers, put away the haulers and forget about npcs – they are just nuisances at gates that you sometimes have to kill right? This is what the game was coded for: life & death battles amongst the stars

## **Leadership**

This probably goes without saying but leadership is pretty important. Without it you will die very quickly. Even in a gang of very experienced PvPers including a few very good fleet commanders ONE person must be in command. He makes all the decisions, he calls the targets, he sets the strategy, and he dictates the terms of the battles you will fight. And importantly he decides when you will die. It is a horrible job that I have only had to do a few times. Everything is down to you and when people die it is your fault.

If you join a gang you are implicitly agreeing to these terms: I agree to do what my leader says and will happily sacrifice my ship and my pod on his command.

Some times some one has to jump in first, some times bait will be required, and frequently someone will have to dive in and make the tackle knowing full well they will die. If the commander chooses you, well off you go and smile while your doing it...

On the plus side a good commander never leaves anyone behind and will lead the gang into hopeless odd to try and save someone.

As I said it's a very difficult job, you have to know what everyone is in, what their skills are, what range they are fitted for, how much experience they have and where they all are at any given point in time. And everything is always your fault. Remember this and support whoever is in charge.

## **Communications**

Again an obvious one, but it bears repeating – when in, or about to enter action STFU!!! Only the commander and the scouts should be speaking.

No one cares if you are dying, keep quiet. A simple "Joram is down" will do. You'll get you hugs in gang chat after the battle is over.

And that follows on from the other obvious communications 101: If you want to do PvP get a microphone and get on Team Speak. If you don't and you die – it's your fault! And worse if you don't and someone else dies, it's probably your fault too!!

## **Fittings**

I have no pretensions here, I'm crap at fitting ships. If you are like me in that then just ask someone who knows.

Fit for Gank always, face it if you are called primary you are almost certainly going down. Your tank can never hold a concerted attack, so fit damage modules and trust your luck. WCS are another thing – they have their place and if you are operating alone or behind enemy lines you might fit one – but never in fleet ops, it's just a wasted slot.

## Static Battles

A lot of the time one of more of the apposing fleets will be static (or relatively so). They will be camping a gate, a station, a POS, or even be just sitting at a safe spot. The trick here is to engage so that you have the advantage. This does not have to mean out blobbing them, a well organized and decisively led gang can almost always get kills of a larger fleet by working fast.

As I said above the trick is to get into an advantageous position. If your enemy is fitted for long range – go for ultra short range gank and get under his guns, if his fleet is full of gankageddons, go get some sniperthrone and shoot him from a distance. Completely out gunned – that's what scorps are for, pack them full of racial jammers and lock down half the fleet, if you are in a frig fleet keep warping in and taking pot shots & get out quick, sooner or later you will find a lone BS and be able to kill it.

But remember your enemy will be trying to do the same thing to. Never relax!! I have seen fleets devastated in a safe spot after a successful engagement. Everyone sitting around patting each other on the back, unaligned, and POW in comes the enemy fleet! Complete carnage.

Just because you can't see scan probes does not mean your SS is not compromised. As a rule of thumb always delete you safe spots and re make them every couple of days if you continue to fight in the same system.

In static battle your covert ops [covert ops ships can move around, and warp cloaked] pilot is at his most important. If you fly covert ops you are the most important person in the fleet. You cover ops guy should always be busy. He will be sniffing out enemy safe spots, spying on their fleet, making safe spots or working his way into position for a sling shot .

*[Sling shot is when he positions himself behind the enemy from your position at a known distance so you can warp in at your preferred range].*

I don't fly covert ops, so I can't give any advice on skill requirements or fitting, but I'm sure there is someone in the corp who can.

Lets take an example of some of those covert ops tasks above. It will give you a feel for how many static battles go. For this I am assuming a medium or small fleet engagements with a mixed fleet.

## The spy who loved me

The first thing you need to know in a fleet battle is what you are facing. If they are at a warpable object an intrepid interceptor pilot might be able to get in and have a look without getting killed, but a covert ops is best. Your spy will warp in and list first the ship types and numbers. Someone will be detailed to write this down. Next the commander will want to know the names of the battleship pilots and which ship they are in so he can make a cunning plan. A covert ops ship is able to fly around and get all this essential information and relay it back to the commander. He will use this information when calling targets. Usually only total noobs warp in with no idea what will be there.

Also important is what is the fleet doing. Is it all at full speed and *aligned* (and if so where to) or is it stationary and pointing every which way? Imagine the fun of seeing a fleet aligned for a gate and sending your tacklers to that gate while the main fleet jumps in. With luck they will just warp right into your waiting arms mwuhahaha!

Even without covert ops use the scanner to narrow down what they are in and where they are in the system. You can usually get ship types and a pretty good guess at where they are. They may not have read this and be sitting at a moon

## Mobile Bookmark

Once you know what is there the commander will have an idea of how to best manage the fight. Lets say in this case the enemy is camping the gate with mainly long range ships 120km off it and we have lots of short range damage dealers. The covert ops pilot will need to move up and around the enemy fleet. He is trying to act as a book mark so we can hump in right on top of the enemy. The plan is that they will be messing around trying to change ammo, or shooting at us with long range ammo. The surprise of coming straight gives a vital few second of advantage.

Of course the enemy will have a pretty good idea of what you are trying to do and will change their station now and again. But in my experience it is amazing how infrequently this actually happens. One thing to bear in mind is that camping is boring so they will probably just jump between spots so if you are nearly at a spot carry on and BM it for next time the warp there.

If you haven't got a covert ops ship with you an interceptor can try to do this. You need a brave but stupid pilot, but it can work well. With the new 100km warp in this should be a bit easier. Another ploy is to look for a can near them that could be bookmarked and use to warp to. Don't be afraid to move the fleet around so that things like this can be used.

## Probing Questions

I have to admit that I haven't a clue how they do it, but your magic covert ops pilot who can sniff out the enemies safe spot is worth his weight in gold. I'm sure someone else can add a 'How To' guide for probing, but however it is done the carnage that can ensue from warping in on someone's SS is a joy to behold. Remember that it's worth waiting for the big prize! Let's say you find a safe spot, but there is only one ship there. Save it and hope they get careless. Next time the whole fleet might be there and you can jump them without the risk of them seeing the probes. Blade Runners corp did this to E-R in an empire war with devastating effect.

## Warping in

This is the crucial moment and is more complicated than it seems.

To be effective your whole fleet should be appearing out of warp at the same time. People's overviews suddenly filling with red can invoke a bit of panic. To do this everyone should be aligned for the enemy fleet and at full speed. When the commander says warp, do it AT ONCE, not a few seconds early, not a few seconds late but right on the mark. The commander will make this easy and say "we are warping in 1 minute, we are warping in 30 seconds, we are warping in 10, 9, 8.....1, Warp" Apart from losing the effect of a mass warp in there are two very good reasons for following my advice here. If you are first out of warp, you will probably be primary, and if you are last in you will probably be last out which is almost as bad!!!

Obviously Gang warp is preferred, but you can't gang warp to member, so often it has to be individual warps.

The next important thing about the warp in is the timing. Your scout will be feeding you Intel and you may need to act on it fast. The fleet might be changing direction or stopping, or just warping in. To do this you will probably need to make a 1AU BM near to them so you arrive in plenty of time. But don't hang around there long – you will be scanned and they will react.

## Warping out

Just as important as the warp in is the warp out. The general rule is the moment you start taking damage, get out.

This can be tricky so make it easier by aligning the moment you come out of warp. I'll repeat that because it is vital if you are to survive. The moment you come out of warp, do a 180 degree turn and get aligned. To be completely specific: as you are warping in rotate your view so you are looking backwards. The first thing you do as your warp bubble collapses is to double click on a warpable object behind you. Next start targeting primary as you spin round & start shooting. You may ask why a 180 when there might be a warpable object in your line of flight? At some point the commander will gang warp you out. This will be a disaster if the fleet is not all aligned for the same spot.

So, you have warped in, turned round and are shooting the hell out of primary. You are shooting primary aren't you? You better had be! It doesn't matter who is shooting you, or who is at your optimal or anything. Shoot primary and lock secondary. Fleet battles rely on concerted firepower from the whole fleet. There is no point you being there if all you are doing is stripping the shields off someone else while primary is warping out with 18% structure.

Now sooner or later your overview will start flashing yellow – this means you need to think about leaving. Don't go yet, let them waste time targeting you. But the moment you start taking damage GET THE HELL OUT don't be fooled into thinking you can tank it because at first your shields start to go down slowly, that will soon change when everyone is on you, and by then it will be to late. So once you take any damage go, go, go!

Should I come back? This is a tricky one & if you get it wrong it will cost you your ship, or loose the fleet a kill. Most fights like this are running ones and you won't have time to get back, but some will go on for a while. The fleet commander may be able to advise, but he is likely to be pretty busy, so don't rely on it. If the fight seems to be going well, or slowly, get back in when you can. But be aware if the fleet gang warps out while you are warping in you are a dead man.

At some stage the commander will decide that it's time to go and will gang warp you off. You are glad you were aligned now aren't you. Of course if the gang leader goes down you will have to do an individual warp when commanded to do so.

## Guerrilla War

If you are good at both the warp in and the warp out is it easily possible for a fleet half the size of the enemy to warp in, gank a BS, and get out without losing a ship. In E-R we harried ATUK for a couple of weeks at the end of the Xetic war. The most memorable occasion was when we warped our frig fleet bang on top of the ATUK mixed fleet, took out a Geddon and a Ferrox and got out having lost a single Kestrel.

## WTF is going on?

Fleet actions, even small ones, can be very confusing so just concentrate on what you are supposed to be doing. If you are in a BS that's pretty simple – just fire everything you have at primary. For frig fleets, or if you are in a frig in a mixed fleet things are a bit harder. As a frig (in either case) your first job is to tackle primary, get in range, lock and warp scramble. (I recommend fitting 20km disrupters for most jobs). Once the targets are scrambled you can start to join in the fun. First off take down enemy tacklers then help with primary if they are all dead. Frigates, interceptors and assault frigs all have slightly different roles, but the main thing is to tackle and to kill tacklers. If you are in an EW ship, well I'll talk about that later. One thing – if you are getting scrambled and you know who is scrambling you write something in gang chat, or at a pinch say "Lunas is scrambling Joram". The fleet commander may direct fire on to the bad guy, but keep shooting primary till he does.

If you are not sure what to do, don't be afraid to ask. Just make sure you do it before the warp in. Before you go you will probably know the name of primary and secondary and what they are both flying. Sort your overview by name to make them easier to find. Run through in your mind what is going to happen and what you will be doing: be prepared.

## Camping

Really the opposite of the preceding section. This time you are the ones staying still and the hostiles are going to appear soon at a cinema near you.... (sorry I got carried away then). After reading the section on hunting a static target you might wonder why anyone stays in one place at all. The main reasons are that you know your targets will be coming there so you can be sure of a fight, you are defending a static object like a station or POS and you can be reasonably sure (at a gate at least, or if the enemy are docked at a station) of getting your whole fleet at their optimum range.

But remember, everything I said above. The enemy will be trying all the tricks in the book to get you at a disadvantage. So, don't get sloppy, keep an eye on local, keep scanning for them in short range safe spots, keep your Covert ops busy looking for them and telling you what they are doing, stay aligned for something, and keep moving your sniper spots and creating new ones. Your interceptors can be buzzing round the gate and the snipers at the warp in points in an attempt to uncloak the inevitable covert ops ship. If you are short range kiss the gate ready for a quick exit. If you are a tackler kiss the gate then if anyone jumps through they will be in 20km scammer range (and you are ready for a quick exit).

Just because you are camping location 1 does not mean your whole fleet will be there. You will want scouts on the gates, preferably in adjacent systems and you may want a mobile reserve at a SS at full speed and ready to warp in (remember their covert ops will be trying to work out what's in your fleet) if you have enough ships. On the subject of secrecy rename your bloody ships! I see so many [insert n00bs name]'s Raven on scanners. I will almost certainly know who is hostile, but I might not know what you are in. Oh hang on a sec lets look at the scanner, oh Joram's in a raven today.

If you are camping a gate get fast locking tacklers on both sides of it.

The scanner is a fine tool btw. If you are camping have someone with their scanner set to a few AU pointing at where you think the enemy are coming from. Then as they warp in you already know their numbers and ship types.

## **Dealing with scouts**

This is worth a separate mini section. If the enemy do not have a covert ops you will get interceptors warping in from time to time to have a look. Send someone up after them, drive the buggers off and keep their commander blind. Even better see if he is warping into the same spot, or same set of spots and have a few frigs waiting for him next time. Keep an eye on containers in space. The enemy might be using them to warp in on, and there might just be one near that interceptor that just warped in at 300km. Jump to the can and take him down.

## **In real life**

Of course in a real battle things are a bit more fluid than described above. You will probably be camping one minute and trying to break a camp the next. Be flexible, think things through, try and understand what the enemy will be doing and don't panic!

## **Moving Battles**

All the preceding assumes that you and your enemy are pretty much in the same place. Obviously this is rarely the case, so you have to go look for them. This could either be as a prelude to a static battle or it could be a combat patrol through enemy space looking for targets of opportunity. You could be part of a fast frig fleet, or a mixed fleet with Battleships and support. If it's the latter you will be slower, but the principals are pretty much the same.

One important thing here to understand is that the fleet will move at the speed of the slowest ship. So don't slow a frig fleet down with a BS or cruiser. Decide in advance – fast and light, or slow and devastating.

## Getting around

Getting from A – B works just like in the 'how to stay alive' bit above. You won't have to worry about lone pirates though as they will probably log or safe spot as they see local suddenly jump! If you are in a mixed BS fleet you will want your scout a little further ahead though as if he spots a big fleet you'll have less time to run away (if that's what the commander decides). It's also worth having two scouts as the rest of the fleet will take longer to catch up if they run into someone to fight. It is also a good idea to have someone following on behind. Often people will safe spot or log as you come through, but you can bet that they have told your mates that you are there and you may well have a fleet forming behind you to give chase, or block your escape.

The mechanics of fleet movement work like this. A destination system will be given out, you will enter this into your autopilot, the gang leader will gang warp the fleet (for mixed fleets this usually will be on a route with BMs, for a frig fleet it might not), on contact with the gate you should jump through unless orders have been given to hold, once through the gate find the next gate (the yellow one) and align for it. The commander will know how many people there are in gang and will be watching for people to uncloak, he'll give everyone a few seconds to align and then gang warp to the next gate. Rinse and repeat.

Do Not turn your Auto Pilot on, ever!!! Someone always does and jumps when they are not meant to & it really pisses the commander off!

If you are moving through an area where no one has bookmarks a couple of interceptors will be detailed to move slightly ahead to create sling shots for the slower ships to warp to.

The key things here are to move fast and to stay together. People not aligning slows the whole fleet down and can get people killed.

## Scouting

While moving around the Fleet Commander will need eyes up ahead finding targets. If you are in an interceptor you may be asked to do this job. If this happens you need to be able to find those targets or you won't be very popular! So this is how you do it:

When you enter a system 1-2 jumps ahead of your fleet check local. If you see a person there, then open scanner (which should be minimized ALWAYS when scouting) and do a 360' degree max-range scan. If you see a suitable target i.e. an Apoc then drop down to 60-90 degree scan and start scanning planet clusters. if you got him towards planet 5, 6, 7, 8 then drop down to 30' degree and find the right planet.

If the cluster is so close you can't see which planet then warp to one of the planets and narrow the search to a single planet using 5-15'degree scan. Warp to the target planet and use 30'degree scanning the belts (belts are these in-space), locate the approx belt and do a 5'degree scan towards the belt to verify.

Call the FC about the location belt and if you don't have scramblers then call in the fleet to the target belt.

If you see a person in local, but no targets on scanner then warp to the sun and do a 360'degree scan, if you see an appropriate target then narrow to the planet and then to belt as explained above.

If he's not near the sun, then open wordpad (or just remember) which planet/-s are further away then 15 AU which your scanner cannot reach and warp to those planets in order and do a 360'degree scan and narrow down.

NB: Using the scanner u need to place the camera behind your ship towards the object u want to scan.

Time for one of the silly questions that no one wants to ask: *"How do I use the scanner?"*

Open up the scanner and you will see a plan view of the system, with the location of your ship shown. To get a maximum range scan press "999999... etc" in the distance box and click on scan. It will default to 2,147,483,647 (or 15AU). You will get a list of everything in that range. To make the list shorter check "use over view settings" and just those things that would show up in the overview are shown.

Useful as this is it won't help you pin point anyone! The trick is to narrow down the scan angle so you are only seeing what is in front of you. By spinning the camera around in space you can look at specific locations and scan. If you are trying to scan a gate and you don't get the gate on the list you are out of range and need to move nearer.

By gradually bringing down the range and tightening the angle you can get a pretty good idea of where someone is. Get a mate to hide in a system and spend half an hour trying to find him.

## Contact!

If you encounter any hostiles engage: lock, scam (if you can), and start shooting. Then see what it is. If you hang around trying to identify the ship and work out whether you think you can take it, well, it will probably warp off. Aggression is the key here attack, attack, attack. Remember what I said earlier, you have already resigned yourself to losing your ship, so you have nothing to worry about even if you have to warp off, someone else will have taken over by then.

Oh this is one of the few occasions you are allowed to speak on Team Speak. Don't just scream contact though – say where you are, enemy numbers and as soon as you know – ship type. "*Contact, 68ft gate, 2 frigs, engaging*" will do. If you have a scam on, call when you have the target scrambled as well "Joram scrambled for 1" That will stop one target getting away while everyone scrambles the other one.

And Don't Panic!!

## Where to go

You shouldn't have to worry about this – that's the commanders job. He'll be checking the map for info and talking in the commanders channel of the alliance channel trying to find you targets. You just have to do what he says.

## Jumping in

As I said above when traveling you will normally jump on contact with the gate. But when enemies are around you don't jump unless told to. Nothing makes people SS faster than local suddenly jumping from 2 to 20. What will probably happen is that the scouts will have found someone and will be trying to engage. With only one or two of them in system, in interceptors the enemy may let them, or may even attack themselves. In this case get on the gate and get ready to jump. As soon as the enemy are tackled you will be told to jump in and warp to the tackler. Move fast – it could be 1 crow against a Raven in there and he will need help fast.

Another scenario is where the scout has seen someone moving towards you. In that case he may move on (to avoid suspicion) and you will take up gate camping positions as described earlier.

If you come across a gate camp and you out number it you don't want to scare them and you need to maximize your fire power. In that case the normal aligning rules don't apply. The fleet will jump in together, but stay cloaked. Maximum surprise, or shock tactic, comes from all uncloaking at once. The best way to achieve that is by the gang leader clicking on the "regroup" button. Sometimes one person will be detailed to uncloak first. Especially if the enemy are kissing the gate. This is to try to get them to aggress so they can't jump. It is worth leaving a tackler on the other side of the gate as well if you can spare one to catch any that do make it through.

What if they out number you? Well it will take them a while to lock so you will probably be gang warped away, but the frigs should cancel the warp and stay to take down anything that's scrambling one of you BS'. Once you are in and safe you can move to a static battle to take them out.

## **Getting out**

Two parts to this really – getting the fleet out is the reverse of getting there. Often by another route as you enemies have probably go organized behind you and will be blocking your escape. The other part is getting out of individual engagements. The rules for this are as described above. Get out if you are taking damage unless you are the only tackler in which case stay there keep him scrambled and hope that the fleet gets there soon. Otherwise die with style.

## **In hot pursuit**

The first scenario here is where you scouts have made contact with the enemy and have engaged. Normal travel rules cease to apply. The frigs will speed after the scouts to help them out and the slower ships will continue to move as normal, except that they will wait for no one. If you are slow to align, ctd or whatever you will be left to catch up.

The second is when the target has decided to run for it ( the first can turn into this quite easily) This is a tougher one to call. You want to catch them, but you risk leaving the fleet spread over a number of systems. The best plan is to detail a pursuit squad to give chase and keep the rest of the fleet moving together at the pace of the slowest ship.

In either case the pursuit squad is trying to catch then, tackle them and (depending on the target) hold them till the fleet arrives or take them down.

## **Home alone**

It happens sometimes, you are deep behind enemy lines and you have to log. Real life got in the way again. Normally the commander will take the gang back out to safety at the end of the operation, but people do occasionally get left behind. Plan for this, if you think you might have to log early take a frig. There are few things as bad as logging on in hostile space in a BS with no BMs home. If this happens you should try and get someone with BMs to come and get you out. If that's not possible mover very, very carefully home and SS at the first sign of trouble. Oh! And do it right after DT if you can.

## **Flying solo**

If all the above sounds a bit daunting and complicated you can go it alone. The advantage is that you will move much more quickly will be less easy to spot and are less likely to find a fleet waiting to kill you. The disadvantages are obvious – less fire power, no support and you will probably die. If you decide to do this try it with a cheap, fast frigate the first few times. This sort of action is what interceptors were designed for and so they are the obvious ship of choice, but I know people who regularly go solo in BCs or BS. Assault ships are another good option here because of the damage they can kick out, but they are expensive – your call.

Pick your targets well. Assuming you are in a ceptor you are looking to hit your enemies industrial base (Barges & Haulers), and to take down solo frig, other ceptors and possibly cruisers. That being said if you can find a friend I have seen BS taken down by two interceptors – it just takes a long time!

## **Tips, Tricks, Traps & Ruses**

There are a lot of these and I can't cover them all here. Your fleet commander will know them all and will be telling you what to do. This section is really just so you are aware of what is going on.

## **Dealing with fear**

Familiarity is your best tool here, get in a cheap frigate, run up to HED and try to kill some pirates, if possible go with someone who has done it before. You will lose some ships, you might even get some kills, but the more you do it the less scary it will get. The last thing you should do is fly off in your npc raven and lose it. I saw a lot of brave but stupid pilots lose ships as Xetic was falling, coming up to E8 to engage ATUK in their expensive ships as their first experience of PvP. They panicked, they died. Don't let it happen to you.

The first few times you will forget to scram, or let him get out of range, or target the wrong ship (please don't target the gate in Empire!!), not notice you are taking damage, forget to align, or what ever. Don't worry about it, you will learn. Remember when you were learning to drive and changing gear needed intense concentration. Now you don't think about it in fact you probably don't even notice your self doing it half the time. This is just the same: Practice makes perfect.

## **Overview settings**

A little work here can save a lot valuable seconds in combat. First off go to your filters and turn of show corp members, alliance members and gang members. Turn of all police, customs, navy, etc ships. Turn of sentry guns, bill boards, stations and cargo containers. There your overview looks a lot nicer now!

'Sort by' is a tricky one and will probably change during the op: If you are in empire sort by corp, then all your hostiles will be nicely grouped together. In a fleet battle sort by name so primary/secondary is easy to find, for general flying around sort by distance to help you chose your targets more easily.

I mentioned above that you should keep Stargates showing to make them easier to find when traveling. The risk here is that you might target one by mistake and, in empire, get Concorde ganked. Just be aware of this and occasionally you might want to turn them off.

## **Dealing with Laaaaaaaag**

Even in small battle lag can be an issue, so try and minimize it as much as possible. First thing is to turn off the sound (Ctrl + Shift + Alt + F12), then general effects (Ctrl + Shift + Alt + E), then turret effect (Ctrl + Shift + Alt + T). Also your frame rate will increase if you zoom the view out.

I'm sure there are some more things you can do as well. Any suggestions any one?

## **Activating modules short cut**

Just a quick tip here. If you are sitting there waiting for someone to jump in activate all you modules (guns, missiles and most importantly scramblers) The moment your target appears click on them in the overview or in space and you will start to target them. Once targeted your modules will all activate without the need for further clicking. This can make the difference between some one getting out and getting taken out.

## **The log in trap**

This one has taints of an exploit, so don't use it often. It's a simple trap though. Everyone logs off bar one and sits at the character selection screen. The map and local don't know you are there. When hostiles are spotted you all log on and shout "Boo!"

## **The tanked bait**

Assuming your enemy is scouting as well PvP is pretty consensual. That is if they don't want to fight they usually don't have to. This is a ruse to make them think they have the advantage so they decide to fight. You get one ship (often a Scorpion) tanked to the max and he moves into the hostile system/gate camp/station or what ever. The enemy commander senses an easy kill and warps in. The tanker has to hold out long enough for the rest of you fleet to arrive and ruin their party. Industrials also make great bait. put some armour plates in the lows (makes you move slower and looks like you have expanders in), and act like you don't have BMs.

## **Uncloaking**

I mentioned this one earlier. If you are all jumping in often it is a good idea for one ship to uncloak and trigger an act off aggression before the rest of the fleet do.

## **Saving Your Pod**

I only learnt this one a few days ago! When ever your ship is destroyed there is a moment of lag which can be enough for your Pod to get targeted, jammed and killed. This can be reduced by turning Blink off in your eve mail as the ship destroyed mail is one of the main causes of the lag. So you should get time to warp off. Also When you see, or know, you are going to lose your ship then quickly find a planet/gate and select it so it shows on "selected items" right above your overview. Right before you die start spamming warp to 15km button and as soon as your pod enter space you will warp.

NB: You know you have escaped when you start seeing 10 windows of Planet/Gate info

## Mobile Warp Scramblers

These can be a real pain if you run into them, so I'll deal with that first.

These little buggers do two very nasty things. Firstly if you are inside the bubble you can not warp away! Secondly if you are warping to a gate say, where one is deployed it can either ruin your warp to, dropping you some distance from the gate, draw you in so you exit warp inside the bubble, or sometimes have no effect at all. If you see hostiles in local and think the gate might be camped warp to your U-Turn and scan the gate for a warp bubble.

On the plus side these do not mean instant death – they still have to kill you so if you are fast or tanked, or preferably both you can still either get out or make it to the gate.

In fleet ops sometimes you can just ignore them, jump in and fight as normal. People sometimes get careless when they have a bubble up and you can use that to your advantage by doing the unexpected and warping straight into their trap. Doesn't always work though.....

Bubbles are indiscriminate, so you can sometimes get the other sides one to do your work for you. I was once in a fleet that jumped through a gate into a bubble camp. All the hostiles were kissing the gate in their own bubble. I decloaked (by mistake), they aggressed, I died, their fleet was massacred because they could neither jump or warp.

Using bubble is another mystical art like using probes. I have read many theories on this one and most disagree with each other. The theory I use is that the bubble should be placed where you would be if you were making a BM. That is 15km behind the gate in the path of the warp from the other object. I'm sure this one will raise much discussion, so I will leave it at that.

## **EW**

EW can win a battle for you, or lead to your total annihilation. It gives you the capability to render your opponents weapons useless and turn a bad situation into a victory. The use of EW is a very complicated subject with tons of skills and specialist ship fittings needed. If you want to know about this have a read through the eve-o forums where there are several guides. I will just present an over view here to give you a feel for it.

When planning an attack the first thing to look for are any Scorpions or Blackbirds in your enemies fleet. If they are there you need to be careful. Similarly it is always a good idea to have a few EW ships along with you. If you both have them in becomes as who locks first wins game, so make sure you have Sensor Booster IIs fitted.

The most devastating EW tool is the jammer. If you are jammed you can't lock anything so you can't fight. The best jammers are race specific so you need the right ones fitted for the enemy you are attacking. This is where your covert ops comes in. Remember earlier I said that he was getting ship types and names? Well the commander will now what jammers you have fitted and will tell your EW pilots who they are to jam before you warp in. That way no one gets missed and no one gets double jammed.

If you know you will be facing EW sometimes it is a good idea to fit counter measures – this is one time where you don't just fit for Gank. If in doubt ask your commander.

Target painters, tracking disrupters and dampers are also used a lot and often it is worth every ship having at least one fitted.

## **The instalock**

Enemies, when out numbered, have a distressing habit of warping off before you can kill them. Obviously this isn't fair and can lead to much frustration on your part. Shuttles and interceptors are the worst culprits, but some frigs can be almost as bad. The key here is to get your lock time down to less than it takes your dastardly foe to warp off. The best tool for the job here is a specially fitted interceptor, as they have pretty fast lock times anyway, the Stiletto is a good choice. The plan is to fit enough sensor booster IIs and Signal Amplifiers to get your Scan resolution to >3000mm (remember to fit a warp disrupter too). With that you should be able to lock and scramble pretty much anything before it gets away.

## **The Support ship**

In fleet engagements support ships should be very useful. I will admit I have never flown with one though. Perhaps someone more knowledgeable on the subject could send me some words...

## **The suicide smart bomber**

Imagine the situation your enemy has a load of warp bubbles and tacklers waiting to trap you outside the station when you undock. What can you do? Well here's an option!! Fit as many large Smart Bombs as you can, undock and blast them all away !! The bigger ships will get you but it can be effective and clear the way for your friends!!.

## **The "Druid Maneuver."**

This was something that Druid came up with when we were playing station pingpong with the [5] and MASS during the MASS/[5] war. Since everyone has turrets off to reduce lag, have all the ships warp in on the station, but set them up with long range ammo. Have the missile boats blast away. Then when the enemy comes in to gank the (supposedly) short range station assault team, they find themselves staring down the bores of long range-fitted beams, rails, and artillery.

## **The End**

That's it, pretty much all I know that can help you get to grips with PvP. I hope you found it useful and that it has inspired you to give it a go. Remember the golden rules though.

Only fly what you can afford to lose

Don't Panic!!!

And most of all have fun.

*Joram McRory*

*eXeede Inc.*