

ZROUTE: REDEMPTION

SQUAD BUILDING GUIDE

A comprehensive guide to building one extremely powerful main squad

INTRODUCTION

This guide focuses exclusively on building a single, extremely powerful main squad. One of the most common mistakes players make is dividing their resources across three or four different squads. Rather than ending up with one dominant squad, they wind up with multiple weak ones. This guide is all about making your main squad as strong as it can possibly be. Your other squads will naturally level up as you progress, and if you are the kind of player who invests heavily into the game, those additional squads will grow alongside your primary one as a matter of course. This guide is aimed primarily at newer players and those who don't spend a great deal of money.

Building a powerful main squad relies on eight key areas working in unison: your heroes, their star level, skills, gear, tech research, jet, wingman, and base level. Each of these elements contributes to your overall strength, and neglecting any one of them will hold you back. Of all these interconnected systems, hero building involves the most nuance, because your heroes interact with one another in ways that can be difficult to see from the inside. The single best thing you can do after any fight is share your battle report with an experienced and knowledgeable player. They will spot weaknesses that aren't immediately obvious to you.

HERO TIERS

There are three tiers of heroes:

- **Gold (Legendary):** These represent the endgame standard and your ultimate goal for all five slots in your main squad. Invest everything here.
- **Purple:** Useful in the early game and for killing monsters. Most Purple heroes have one skill that provides a buff against monsters, which makes them helpful initially, but they are not well suited for fighting other players or dealing out substantial damage. Use them until you have collected enough Legendary heroes.
- **Blue:** Never spend resources here. You will never use Blue heroes in a serious fight.

A 3-star Legendary hero will generally outperform a 5-star Purple hero. Always prioritize developing your Legendary roster over maxing out Purple heroes.

FORMATION BONUSES

Running heroes of the same type together grants your entire squad a bonus to HP, ATK, and DEF. There are three hero types: Warrior, Tactical, and Assault. The more you stack the same type, the larger the reward:

Formation	Bonus
3 of the same type	+5% HP / ATK / DEF
3 of one type + 2 of the same type	+10% HP / ATK / DEF
4 of the same type	+15% HP / ATK / DEF
5 of the same type ■ This is the goal	+20% HP / ATK / DEF

Early on, group your strongest heroes together while ensuring they fill the correct roles. As your roster expands, begin to sort them by type — aim for three of the same to start, then push toward four, and eventually five. Once you have five Legendary heroes of the exact same type, they will naturally form their own dedicated squad.

HERO ROLES

Every hero has a role indicated by an icon in the top-left corner of their hero screen:

- **Shield icon** = Tank (frontline)
- **Gun icon or healer icon** = Attacker (backline)

Every squad follows the same layout: two tanks in the front, three attackers in the back. There are no exceptions to this structure.

SLOT POSITIONING

Original research and findings credited to VladTheImpaler.

Not every slot in your formation is equal. Specific positions attract more or less incoming damage, and understanding this distinction can be the deciding factor in a close fight.

Front-Right = Most Damage Received. You should always place your most heavily invested, best-equipped tank in this slot. Damage is still split between both frontliners, but the primary focus is squarely on Front-Right. If your strongest tank sits in Front-Left instead, your weaker tank will die first, after which all five enemy heroes will focus their fire on one remaining frontliner, and your line will collapse quickly.

Back-Center = Least Damage Received. You should always place your most powerful DPS attacker here. They will survive the longest and output the greatest amount of damage before taking any significant hits themselves.

Slot	Damage Taken	Who Goes Here
Front-Right	MOST	Best tank — highest gear and stars. Primary focus of incoming fire.
Front-Left	High	Second tank.
Back-Center	LEAST	Best DPS attacker — the most protected slot in the formation.
Back-Left	Medium	Remaining attacker, ordered by strength.
Back-Right	Medium	Remaining attacker, ordered by strength.

BUILDING YOUR TEAMS

Team	Purpose
Team 1 — Main Squad	Primary attack squad. ALL best heroes, gear, and resources go here.
Team 2	Resource collection and rally support only.
Team 3	Resource collection and rally support only.

In the early game, simply group your strongest heroes together while ensuring the correct roles are filled: two tanks up front and three attackers in the back. Don't worry too much about matching hero types at this stage. Winning battles matters more than chasing formation bonuses when your roster is still small.

As your roster grows, start sorting by type in order to chase those formation bonuses. Aim for three of the same type first, then build toward a full five. When you acquire Gold heroes, slot them into your main squad immediately. Once you possess five Gold heroes of the same type, form them into their own dedicated team.

Your end goal is three dedicated squads — one Warrior, one Assault, one Tactical — each running five of the same type for the full +20% bonus, with every hero placed in their correct slot.

STARRING UP YOUR HEROES

This is perhaps the single biggest factor that separates an average player from a strong one. Everything you do in the game should be done with one eye on collecting Legendary hero shards,

because starring up your heroes delivers immense returns.

Star Level	Cost Per Point	Total Shards	Cumulative Total
1 Star	5 shards	25 shards	25 shards
2 Stars	10 shards	50 shards	75 shards
3 Stars	20 shards	100 shards	175 shards
4 Stars	60 shards	300 shards	475 shards
5 Stars	100 shards	500 shards	975 shards

Each star level significantly boosts your power. Reaching a new star level also unlocks additional skills at every tier.

Star Targets

- **3 stars:** This is an achievable milestone for most players.
- **4 stars:** This is your priority goal. Reaching 4 stars unlocks the hero's 4th skill, which is a Specialty skill granting +20% ATK, DEF, and HP, as well as +10% Skill Cooldown Speed. This alone makes 4 stars a genuine game-changer for your main squad heroes.
- **5 stars:** Requires some investment but represents the ultimate goal for all five of your main heroes.

Where to Get Shards

Every Monday, when the in-game shops refresh, make this your very first stop:

- **Alliance Shop** — purchase Gold shards as a priority.
- **VIP Shop** — purchase Gold shards as a priority.
- **Trial Shop** — purchase Gold shards as a priority.
- **Honour Shop** — updates monthly; always check for Gold shards whenever it refreshes.

Pillaging trucks: Only bother pillaging trucks that are carrying hero shards. Do not waste your pillages on anything else.

Spending money: If you are willing to spend, the daily hero packs offer a cheap and efficient way to target shards for a specific hero. Hero Day on Thursdays also brings weekly specials on hero shards, and there are specialty shops that appear less frequently which also provide good value for money on hero shards.

HERO SKILLS

Every hero possesses four skills. Each skill unlocks a higher tier as your hero reaches each star level, and the 4th skill only becomes available when your hero reaches 4 stars. This is one of the key reasons why 4 stars is such a crucial milestone.

While every hero in the game has different skills for their first three abilities, one rule applies universally: once you have leveled up a skill, you cannot go back or recycle those skill points. If you make a mistake or change your mind, those resources are gone permanently. Take the time to understand precisely what each skill does before you spend any points.

Skill Levels and What Unlocks Them

Skill Level	Unlocks At	Notes
Level 10	3 Stars	Quite achievable for most players.
Level 20	4 Stars	Takes more time and resources. This is where you need to start making careful decisions about which skills to prioritize.
Level 30	5 Stars	This is where the biggest decisions happen. Getting skills from 20 to 30 represents a substantial investment. Only three of the four skills can be leveled to 30, so choose wisely.
4th Skill (Specialty)	4 Stars	Cannot be leveled further. Identical for every hero in the game: +20% ATK, DEF, and HP, and +10% Skill Cooldown Speed.

These boosts apply permanently in battle and are applied to every hero once they reach 4 stars, which is precisely why pushing to 4 stars is every player's priority goal. The other three skills are unique to each hero, and this is where your decision-making comes into play. Take your time, read each skill carefully, and if you are at all unsure, ask an experienced player before spending points that you cannot get back.

GEAR

Gear Types

There are four types of gear. Match each type to the correct hero role:

Gear Type	Role	Notes
Helmet	Tank	Provides defence. The Vest offers more defence than the Helmet at the same level.
Vest	Tank	Provides higher defence than the Helmet at the same level — prioritise this item for your tanks.
Rifle	Attacker	Provides higher damage than the Scope at the same level — prioritise this item for your attackers.
Scope	Attacker	Provides damage. The Rifle deals more damage than the Scope at the same level.

Gear Tiers

There are four tiers of gear. Always aim for the highest possible tier on your main squad:

- **Legendary:** The goal for your main squad. Invest everything into crafting and upgrading Legendary gear.
- **Purple:** Acceptable while working toward Legendary. Dismantle once replaced.
- **Blue:** Dismantle immediately at the Gear Craft Centre. Do not use.
- **Green:** Dismantle immediately at the Gear Craft Centre. Do not use.

LEVEL 0 GEAR ON NON-MAIN SQUADS: This is the single biggest mistake players make. Every hero outside of your main squad should have Level 0 gear, full stop. Every resource you spend leveling gear on a secondary squad hero is completely wasted. Your 2nd and 3rd squads exist to collect resources and start rallies — they do not need upgraded gear. All stones, all resources, everything goes exclusively into your main squad gear. If you replace an item with a Legendary piece, or if you currently have any gear leveled up on your 2nd or 3rd squad, take it to the Gear Craft Centre and dismantle it so you can reuse those stones on your main squad.

Gear Placement by Role

This is one of the most significant mistakes players make. The goal over time is to equip all four gear slots on every main squad hero with Legendary items. However, when it comes to which heroes receive your highest-level gear, you must always follow the hero's role:

- **Tanks** — Equip the Helmet and Vest only. Your very best, highest-level Helmets and Vests must always be worn by your frontline tanks.

- **Attackers** — Equip the Rifle and Scope only. Your very best, highest-level Rifles and Scopes must always be worn by your backline attackers. There is absolutely no point in placing your highest-level Rifle on a tank when your attacking heroes are the ones dealing the damage. Always ensure your best gear is on the correct hero type and in the appropriate slot.

Gear Craft Centre

This is where everything happens. You can craft new gear, dismantle unwanted gear to recover resources — including stones from any gear you have already leveled up — and fuse lower-tier resources together to obtain Legendary resources for crafting Legendary gear.

Levelling Gear and Milestones

Every level increases power, but at every 10 levels a significant bonus buff is applied. These are the milestones you should push toward:

Milestone	What Happens
Level 10	Significant bonus buff.
Level 20	Significant bonus buff.
Level 30	Significant bonus buff.
Level 40	Significant bonus buff; at Level 40 you can start starrng up the gear from 1 to 5 stars, with each star providing significant additional buffs.

As a general rule, a Level 10 Purple item is roughly equivalent to a Level 0 Legendary item. This is exactly why we focus on collecting Legendary gear from the very beginning.

Levelling Order

Work toward reaching Level 10 on all main squad gear first, then push toward Level 20. As you go, follow the role priority:

- **Tanks** — level the Helmet and Vest first. Prioritize the Vest, as it offers more defense at the same level.
- **Attackers** — level the Rifle and Scope first. Prioritize the Rifle, as it deals more damage at the same level.

Get every single piece to Level 10 before you push anyone toward Level 20. Reaching Level 20 on your gear is fairly achievable; past this point, it starts to cost a significant number of stones. Once you begin to establish which heroes are performing best through your battle reports, you can start making smarter, more targeted decisions. You may discover a hero who is dealing truly massive damage, which makes it beneficial to push their Rifle to a higher level than the rest. The same

principle applies to your tanks — if one hero is absorbing significantly more hits than the other, focus on leveling their Vest higher. Let your battle reports guide these decisions over time.

JET (SKY FIGHTER)

Your jet is one of several interconnected systems that contribute directly to your overall hero strength. Leveling it unlocks new aircraft and weapon upgrades at key milestones, each bringing passive buffs that apply to your entire squad.

To level your Jet, you will need to collect Fighter Parts and Combat Chips. These can be found throughout the game and, like everything else, can also be purchased.

Key Milestones

Level	Unlock / Upgrade
Level 1	RX-1 Sky Eye (3 stars) — basic scout, intelligence, and firepower support.
Level 30	Inferno Missile upgrade.
Level 40	RX-2 Viper (4 stars) — Fighter ATK +5,000.
Level 50	Inferno Missile upgrade — module upgrade can deal an extra 22% damage.
Level 70	Inferno Missile upgrade — applies a jamming signal, increasing damage taken by 26% for 3.2s.
Level 90	Inferno Missile upgrade — module upgrade increases bonus damage to 45%.
Level 100	RX-3 Orion (5 stars) — All Hero ATK +5%.
Level 110	Inferno Missile upgrade — applies a jamming signal, increasing damage taken by 26% for 4.2s.
Level 140	RX-4 Destroyer — All Hero Skill DMG +2%.
Level 190	RX-5 Phantom — All heroes take -5% DMG.

Always be aware of your next milestone. If you are sitting close to one of these levels, push through and hit it — the increases in power and damage are significant. Stopping just short of a milestone means leaving a meaningful upgrade on the table. For example, if you are at level 68, spend the resources to reach level 70 rather than sitting just beneath that bonus.

Components

Your jet has six component slots, all of which can be leveled up. Components are mostly obtained randomly and can also be purchased, so level whatever you happen to receive. They all offer significant buffs to your jet and your heroes, so make sure you are opening the relevant boxes on Day 3 of the VS event and fusing those parts. Components can also be found in the Alliance Shop and VIP Shop, which is particularly helpful in the early game.

WINGMAN

Wingmen are an additional system that contributes to your squad's overall strength. There are three types: Warrior, Tactical, and Assault. Just as with your heroes, you want to match your Wingmen type to your hero type. Each Wingman is assigned to a set position in your squad automatically.

Wingman Positions

Position	Role	What It Does
Initiate	Shield	At the start of battle, your heroes gain a fixed shield. After the shield expires, damage taken by your party is reduced for the remainder of the battle.
Defense	DEF Boost	At the start of battle, your heroes gain a DEF bonus, and your frontline gains additional DEF for the entire battle.
Attack	ATK Boost	When the Fighter bombs, your heroes gain an ATK boost for a short duration, and bombing targets increase.
Support	Damage + Counter	When the Fighter bombs, your backline heroes gain a damage bonus, and incoming enemy Battle Skill damage is reduced.

Take the time to read through each position carefully. Depending on your heroes and how your squad performs in battle, you may want to prioritize upgrading certain positions over others in order to secure the buffs that will benefit your squad the most.

Wingman Tiers

Green → Blue → Purple → Gold. The ultimate goal is to field four Gold Wingmen. Work through the tiers in exactly the same way you do with your heroes. Purple Wingmen become upgrade fodder once you have acquired Gold replacements.

Be extremely careful when selecting Wingmen to use as fodder. They are not particularly well labeled, and it is easy to accidentally consume one that you still need. Always double-check the type before feeding any Wingman into an upgrade. Evolving a

Wingman requires duplicates of that same Wingman. Hold onto duplicates wherever possible, because evolved Gold Wingmen provide dramatically stronger buffs.

BASE LEVEL

Your Base Level is one of the most crucial parts of building a strong squad. Every time your base increases in level, your Hero Level Cap also rises by 5 levels, allowing your heroes to continue growing stronger.

What many players overlook are the major milestones tied directly to Base Level progression. Higher base levels unlock stronger soldier tiers and improve access to Training Centres that significantly boost hero stats.

What Should You Build?

The game naturally recommends your next building upgrades, and many players make the mistake of trying to level every building equally alongside their base. This approach is unnecessary and actively slows your progression. Focus only on the buildings required to progress efficiently. For instance, if you have three Drill Grounds, there is no need to keep all three at your current Base Level. Keep one upgraded while leaving the others at whatever level is affordable for your RSS income. To upgrade your Base, you only need the required prerequisite buildings at the correct level. Plan your upgrades carefully and follow progression guides wherever possible to avoid wasting resources and speedups. Efficient building progression is one of the biggest differences between fast-growing players and those who fall behind.

Soldier Training Camp

As your Base Level increases, always keep one Soldier Training Camp upgrading whenever you possibly can. This building unlocks stronger soldier tiers — the troops that fight behind your heroes in battle. Stronger troops massively increase your squad power and overall battle performance. There are 10 Soldier Tiers in total:

Soldier Tier	Base Level Required	Notes
T1 through T6	Early Base Levels	
T7	Base Level 20	
T8	Base Level 24	
T9	Base Level 27	This should be the goal for every player.
T10	Base Level 30	Requires significant investment.

Always push toward the next troop tier as efficiently as possible. Higher-tier soldiers provide one of the most substantial strength increases in the game.

Training Centres

There are three different Training Centres, each tied to a specific hero class: Warrior, Tactical, and Assault. These buildings increase the stats of all heroes within that class. Focus primarily on the Training Centre that matches your main squad type. For example, if your main squad is Warrior-based, prioritize upgrading the Warrior Training Centre above all others. Avoid the temptation to spread resources evenly across all three early on. Concentrating your resources into your strongest squad will yield vastly better results in PvP, events, and overall progression.

TECH RESEARCH

Tech research warrants its own dedicated guide and offers an enormous range of benefits to practically every aspect of the game. For the specific purpose of building a strong squad, however, this guide focuses on four key trees. Tech research is one of the most commonly neglected parts of a player's build and one of the biggest mistakes you can make. Investing in the right tech trees will give you some of the most significant boosts to your heroes in the entire game.

Each tech tree focuses on a specific aspect of your heroes' capabilities, including attack, defense, resource management, and support. Prioritizing the right trees based on your play style and squad composition will truly set you apart from other players.

Two important points to understand before diving in: the further down a tree you progress, the more expensive each upgrade becomes. You will also notice that certain upgrades repeat further down the same tree, offering the same buff but at a much higher cost. Because of this, it can often be more beneficial to level the top of a tree first before pushing deeper, unlocking stronger skills as you go rather than burning resources on expensive early duplicates.

Hero Tree

This tree requires careful decision-making. There are four areas within it: Warrior, Tactical, Assault, and All Heroes. The rule here is simple — only invest in the type that matches your main squad. If your main squad is predominantly Warrior, focus exclusively on Warrior skills as you work your way down the tree. There is absolutely no point leveling Assault or Tactical skills if you are not running those hero types — only level those branches just enough to unlock further progress. As you work down the tree, you will encounter type-specific skills for each class:

- Warrior / Tactical / Assault Hero ATK +
- Warrior / Tactical / Assault Hero DEF +
- Warrior / Tactical / Assault Hero HP +
- Warrior / Tactical / Assault Hero DMG +

At the very bottom of the tree sit four skills that apply to all heroes regardless of type: Hero ATK, Hero DEF, Hero HP, and Hero Damage. These are the most valuable skills in the entire tree, because they buff your whole squad universally. Work toward unlocking these as your end goal.

Soldier Tree

Soldiers are the troops that stand behind your five heroes in battle, and this tree directly buffs their effectiveness. Four skills repeat five times as you work your way down the tree, becoming more expensive with each tier:

- Soldier ATK +
- Soldier DEF +
- Soldier HP +
- Soldier Load Increase

The same rule applies here as everywhere else: the further down the tree you go, the more expensive each upgrade becomes, so work your way down steadily. Soldier Load is less of a combat priority, but ATK, DEF, and HP all directly impact how your squad performs in battle, so do not neglect this tree.

Squad 1 Tree

This tree boosts all the same hero stats already discussed — ATK, DEF, HP, and DMG — but also improves your squad's march speed to rallies, zombies, monsters, and other players, and reduces the number of troops killed in action. This is the least expensive of the four trees and represents fantastic value for every resource spent. You don't need to focus on it exclusively, but whenever your tech is sitting idle, this should be the first place you look. Chip away at it consistently, and you will find yourself maxing it out without it ever feeling like a drain on your resources.

Super Soldiers Tree

This is probably one of the most important trees in the entire game, and also one of the hardest to level. It requires significant resources and a separate currency called Research Data, which is specifically needed to unlock skills in this tree. The skills in this tree directly boost your heroes in ways the others do not. DMG to Heroes always represents a significant jump in power when you unlock it and should be treated as a priority. The tree also includes Enhanced ATK, DEF, and HP for your soldiers, as well as Soldier Load, Combat Defense, and Soldier Morale — all of which compound powerfully over time. Because Research Data is difficult to come by, you must be strategic about where you spend it. Ideally, you should work toward unlocking the bottom of the VS event tree, as this unlocks maximum rewards for the Cross VS event. However, any time you have collected enough Research Data, come straight back to this tree and keep pushing — do not let it sit idle.

ZRoute: Redemption — Squad Building Guide | For questions speak to your R4 or R5

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