Season 7
Patch 7.0

Welcome to Season 7 of Ishar! This season, we are excited to introduce substantial updates that improve both the infrastructure and gameplay experience. These changes not only enhance current features but also lay the groundwork for future innovations. Here's what you can expect in the upcoming season:

Highlights:

- Enchanting System Overhaul: Complete revamp into a true crafting profession with new skills, components, and exclusive class-based enchants.
- Achievements System Introduction: New feature to track and reward player achievements with essence, titles, and unique cosmetics.
- Game Economy Rebalancing: Reduction in sell values and adjusted prices for high-end items to address inflation and enhance economic stability.

New Gameplay Mechanics:

- Spell Damage and Healing Power Enhancements: Improved calculation methods and new stat pairings to deepen strategic gameplay for casters.
- Death Mechanics: Introduction of "Death's Veil," a new buff providing temporary invulnerability post-resurrection to prevent immediate re-death.

New Content:

- New Playable Race - Triton: Explore the new race with unique racial abilities and start in the mystical city of Jolnara.
- New Game Mode - Survival: Adjusted gameplay modes to include increased XP gains and higher stakes with gear and money loss on death.

Infrastructure Enhancements:

- Mob and Object Database Migration: Transition to a more dynamic and robust system for managing game entities and interactions.

Quality of Life Improvements:

- Affect Persistence: Ensures buffs and other temporary effects persist through logouts, enhancing gameplay continuity.

Anticipated Future Updates:

- Continued Development of Crafting Trees: Expansion of new crafting systems introduced with the enchanting overhaul.
- Economic and Gameplay Adjustments: Ongoing refinements to balance the game economy and player experience based on community feedback.

New Features

Enchant Rework

Season 7 introduces a transformative update to the enchanting system in Ishar, reshaping it into our first true profession-based crafting tree. This new system significantly enhances the role of enchanting in the game, aligning it more closely with classic RPG and MMORPG crafting mechanics.

Major Changes to Enchanting:

- Removal of Old System: The previous enchantments (minor, moderate, major, frost, and flame) and possess systems are discontinued. All enchanter NPCs have been repurposed or removed from the game.
- New Enchanting Skill: Both Necromancers and Mages now have access to the "Enchanting" skill, which opens the door to a wide range of crafting possibilities. While there are some exclusive enchants for each class to maintain class flavor–such as Spirit Edge and Profane enchants for Necromancers, and Defense and Flaming enchants for Mages–the majority of enchants are available to both.

Enchanting Mechanics:

- Applicability: Any equippable item can now be enchanted, with the limitation that items can only hold one enchant at a time. Applying a new enchant overwrites the existing one.
- Requirements for Enchanting:
- Skill/Primer: Players must discover and learn specific enchanting recipes, which are skills or primers found throughout the world.
- Level Requirement: Players must be at the required level to use the enchanting recipe, similar to other skills.
- Components: Specific components are needed to perform each enchant, varying in rarity and type.
- Recipe Acquisition: Recipes can be found as rare drops, obtained through quests, or purchased in specialized shops. Players can track their progress in recipe acquisition through the enchanting menu:

```
  W[N][D][E]S> enc
Enchanting (1/x)
```

- Enchant Specificity: Enchants are tailored to specific equipment slots, such as weapons, rings, body items (chest, legs, arms), feet, and wrists.
- Component System and Disenchant:
- Component Sources: Components can be obtained from a variety of sources, ranging from common items to exotic materials like daemon heartstones.
- Disenchant Mechanic: Introduced at level 4 for necromancers and mages, this allows players to break down magical gear into components. The power of the item dictates the quality of components received.

Supporting Changes:

- NPC Role Changes: Aaron, previously an enchanter, now serves as a quest giver and shopkeeper, specializing in mage-related enchanting quests and running a component shop. A similar setup exists near the necromancer guild.
- Racial Updates: Certain races now drop unique items that serve as components for enchanting. These elements will be expanded as new crafting trees are introduced.
- Temporarily all "enchanted objects" (Wyvern Claw, Thin Opal, etc) simply load their enchanted variations. There will be a replacement to this part way through the season.

The reworked enchanting system not only diversifies the gameplay but also enhances player interaction with the world of Ishar, making the crafting experience more engaging and rewarding. Detailed help files for both enchanting and disenchanting are available in-game, and new players can explore these mechanics through introductory quests available at the mage and necromancer guilds in Mareldja.

Achievements System Introduction

Season 7 proudly introduces the Achievements system, a new feature designed to celebrate your journey and accomplishments within the cyclical world of Ishar. As you explore and conquer, your actions—ranging from the simplest tasks to the most arduous challenges—will be recognized and recorded as achievements.

Purpose and Benefits of Achievements

Achievements in Ishar are more than just milestones; they are reflections of your bravery, skill, and wisdom. They offer several benefits:
- Catch-Up Mechanic: For players joining in later seasons or those looking to accelerate their progress, achievements can award essence, providing substantial boosts to quickly gain necessary upgrades.
- Celebrating Milestones: New and returning players will find achievements particularly motivating as they offer recognition from the very start, encouraging persistence and exploration in the challenging world of MUDs.
- Long-Term Engagement: For veteran players, achievements offer goals beyond the traditional grind for remorts and renown. Pursuing these can yield unique cosmetics, additional essence, and a renewed sense of progression.

Viewing and Tracking Achievements

Achievements can be accessed and monitored through a straightforward command system:
- List Achievements: Simply type achievement to view all your achievements, indicating which have been completed and which are pending.
- Detailed View: For details on specific achievements, including requirements and rewards, use achievement [Achievement Name].

Introducing Cosmetic Rewards

Achievements also usher in Ishar's first-ever set of cosmetic rewards, enhancing how players experience and display their characters in a text-based environment:

- Titles: The new system revamps titles as a cosmetic reward. Titles are now earned through achievements, quests, or events, and once unlocked, can be applied to any character on your account. For example, completing a specific achievement might grant the title "the Mad," allowing your character to be displayed as "Aelic the Mad."
- Memories: These are unique items tied to your account that can be summoned at will. Memories range from non-functional decorative items to fun, interactive objects like unique chairs or toys. Some powerful memories come with a cooldown to maintain balance.

Account Command Update

To support the new features, the account command has been enhanced to provide a comprehensive view of your account status, including essence total, titles, achievements, and memories:

```
W[N][D][E]S> acco
Your Account

Name: tyler
Email: admin@isharmud.com

Essence: 127
Total Essence: 56

> Titles (2)
> Achievements - 5 Points (1 Completed)
> Memories (1)
> Settings
```

This new system aims to enrich your gameplay experience, offering new layers of interaction and recognition. Get ready to explore new challenges, earn unique rewards, and make your mark in the world of Ishar.

Infrastructure Enhancements

Mob Database Migration

We have transitioned our mobs from the old file system to the database. This significant upgrade facilitates dynamic interactions and better tracking of mob activities, such as encounters, kills, and flight incidents, through a new mob_stats table.

Object Database Migration

Similarly, objects have been migrated to the database, opening up new possibilities for interaction and functionality within the game environment.

Gameplay Improvements

Character Creator Overhaul

   The character creation process has been redesigned for intuitiveness and ease of use, featuring a summary screen that previews your character's final appearance.

Game Modes

A new game mode has been added - Survival. The old Survival Mode (aka permadeath) has been renamed to Hardcore. Here is an overview of each mode:

- Classic - Normal experience gain. If you die; you may suffer gear damage, lose a little bit of experience, and need to retrieve your corpse.
- Survival - 50% increased experienced gain. If you die, all of your equipment and money are lost.
- Hardcore - 100% increased experience gain. If you die, your character dies permanently.

Races

New Concept: Racial Starting Cities

In a continued effort to increasingly diversify races and the gameplay experience, we are beginning to introduce new starting cities that can be tied to a specific race.

Racial Abilities

Similarly, we have begun to expand unique playable racial abilities. This concept will continue to grow.

Human - Innate Potential (+2 stats)
Gnome - Wanderlust (30% reduction in movement cost)
Halfling - Arcane Sensitivity (innate detect magic)
Elf - Darkvision
Half-Elf - Elven Repose (30% increased regeneration while sleeping)
Half-Orc - Darkvision

New Race: Triton

Dive into the role of the Triton, a new amphibious humanoid race, starting their journey in their native city of Jolnara.

Racial Ability: Amphibious (Innate waterbreath and water walk)

New City: The Kingdom of Jolnara

The ancient kingdom of Jolnara was established millennia ago around a mighty magical whirlpool. This whirlpool, said to be the source of Jolnara's vast magical energy, pulses at the heart of the kingdom, its currents protecting and powering the sprawling civilization built in its wake.

Over the centuries, Jolnara expanded outward in all directions, driven by a blend of necessity and ambition. The tritons, known for their strategic minds and militaristic prowess, developed a society that valued strength, honor, and intelligence. Their expansion inevitably led to encounters with the merfolk of Erolos, sparking a resource driven conflict that escalated into a prolonged civil war, known as the War of the Tides.

This conflict raged under the waves for many years, casting a shadow over both civilizations. However, recognizing the futility and devastation of their endless fighting, leaders from both cities eventually agreed to a ceasefire and signed a peace treaty. Over time, what began as a fragile peace grew into a strong alliance, characterized by intermarriage, shared cultures, and joint ventures.

Today, Jolnara is a beacon of military strength and magical sophistication. The kingdom's armed forces remain among the most formidable in the oceanic realms, ready to defend their waters against any threat. The leaders of Jolnara have also established extensive trade networks with the neighboring cities Erolos and Kulani. These trade agreements have not only brought prosperity to Jolnara but also facilitated cultural exchanges that have enriched triton society with diverse influences.

Mechanical Adjustments

Spell Damage / Healing Power

In Season 7, we've refined the mechanics of spell damage and healing power to enhance gameplay balance and expand the strategic depth for casters. Here are the details of these changes:

Enhanced Calculation Method

- Increased Efficiency: Spell damage and healing power now scale more intuitively. Each point in spell damage or healing power will increase the respective spell's output by 1 point or 1%, whichever results in a higher value. This adjustment ensures that both high and low base value spells benefit proportionally from enhancements.

  For instance:
  A fireball spell with a base damage of 115 will gain an additional 11 damage from 10 spell power, resulting in a total of 126 damage.

  A frostbite spell with a base damage of 70 will instead benefit from the full 10 extra damage, bringing it to 80 damage.
-
  Capped Increases: To maintain balance, especially for lower-cost spells, the increase from spell damage or healing power is capped at 50%. This cap prevents excessive efficiency gains that could otherwise skew the gameplay experience.

  Examples:
  A magic arrow with a base damage of 25 can only be increased to a maximum of 37.5 (rounded down to 37) damage.
  A higher base damage spell like fireball can increase from 115 to a maximum of 172.5 (rounded to 172) damage.

New Stat Pairings for Casters

- Stat Dependencies: To allow casters to further specialize in enhancing their spell-based capabilities, we've introduced specific stat pairings that link directly to spell damage and healing power:

  Focus/Perception (Per/Foc): For Mage and Necromancer casters, this pairing influences spell damage. This combination allows these classes to optimize their build around their core attributes.

  Willpower/Perception (Wil/Per): For Shaman and Cleric casters, this pairing is crucial for optimizing spell damage, aligning with their traditional stat strengths.

  Willpower/Focus (Wil/Foc): This pairing affects healing power across all caster types, ensuring that those focused on healing are adequately supported through their main attributes.

Ethereal Bond / Summons

In Ishar - experience is distributed after a kill based on the group that killed the mob - this includes mobs or summons within the group. This has long been of particular annoyance to mage and necromancer, as summons are a core part of their kit and can be very beneficial for xping. Enter - Ethereal Bond. This is a new passive ability granted to mages and necros alongside when they gain their summons.

With Ethereal Bond - 1 summon does not count towards XP, so if a level 10 necromancer kills a level 12 mob with a level 9 corpse, it will distribute XP as if the necromancer killed it alone.

Death

Post Death

- For a long time there has been a hidden 24 minute heal debuff that was applied to your character after dying. This has been removed, as it was not very clear and seemed unnecessary.
- Death's Veil - A new "buff" is present on your character for 10 seconds after death called "Death's Veil". This makes you completely invulnerable to damage, and prevents you from dealing damage. It serves as a sort of "grace" period after dying, and should remove all remaining instances of the "double death" bug.

Minor Flavor Enhancements

Continuing with the theme of trying to enhance the lore and immersion of Ishar, dying as either a Hardcore or Survival player has received a unique echo.

Challenges

In a continued effort to find the right spot for challenge balance / rewards, there is another adjustment to how challenge rewards works in Season 7.

Challenge rewards now decrement per completion. So a level 17-20 challenge can be completed 3 times for a resplendent, glowing, faint orb. 10-17 twice (glowing, faint) and 1-10 once (faint). You can still help others do them, but won't get orbs.

Remorting

- Remort stats have been once again decreased to 3 stats per remort.
- When remorting, dying as a Hardcore (perm death), or Survival character, the entire game is now scanned for any gear that is bound to you and it is likewise reclaimed.

Gear Usage

In theme in utilizing seasons as a way to experiment with what mechanics are working and which aren't, we are toying with the parameters for valid gear usage this season.

- Gear sizes are no longer used, meaning you will be able to wear what you get and will not need to resize.
- Aligned gear has been removed as a concept - meaning a good aligned character will be able to use Portis' gear, and an evil character will be able to use Tabitha's Charm and Eventide.

This one especially is an experiment, and more a challenge to how we have previously viewed aligned gear. Expect it to return next season, in a modified form.

Mob Summons

Background and Issues

In Ishar, there has traditionally been a distinction between the core gameplay code (server) and the code that imparts unique effects to items, mobs, and rooms (mocha), such as shopkeepers and special items like the Bloodreaver. Although mocha provides brilliant and unique interactions, it sometimes leads to inconsistencies in game mechanics across different sections of the game. One such inconsistency we've decided to address this season involves the mechanics behind mob summons derived from mocha, such as the "Wax figurine of an elf" and "a thick bottle of billowing black smoke".

Identified Problem

These mocha-derived items previously operated outside the standard server logic applied to similar mechanics like reanimate and charm. This led to discrepancies, such as a level 1 player being able to summon and control four level 8 elves, which could result in unintended and potentially game-disrupting interactions.

Implemented Changes

To resolve these issues and bring more consistency to the game, we've updated the mocha functions to align with the server logic used for charm and reanimate spells. This change ensures that a player's ability to control a summoned mob will now follow the same rules, thereby maintaining game balance and integrity.

Adjustment to Stat Pairings

Additionally, to mitigate the impact of this change on non-summoning classes, we have adjusted the stat pairing that determines a player's control over summoned mobs. Previously based on Perception/Willpower (or Focus/Willpower for Necromancers), it will now utilize the Primary Stat/Willpower pairing. This means:
- Rogues will use Agility/Willpower.
- Warriors will use Strength/Willpower.

Affect Persistence

As many are aware - when we migrated to the new server and players were moved to the

database, one thing I was unable to make work was "affects" persisting to the database. Meaning, if you had buffs when you logged out, they were lost when you logged back on. This had a fairly minimal impact, as most buffs were short lasting enough to be inconsequential. However, Experience buffs were severely hampered by them, and was especially exasperated by game crashes.

I am happy to report that affect persistence is finally fixed, meaning next seasons if you log out with five hours remaining on an experience buff, you should still have the experience buff the next time you play.

Balance Adjustments

Affinities

Resistance

Last season saw the advent of resistances being obtainable by players. While mostly we think this is an interesting mechanic, I underestimated how much of an impact this would make. To keep this mechanic alive, but allow for more granularity we are introducing the concept of "Lesser Resistances".

Where Resistance is a 50% damage reduction to the damage type, Lesser Resistance is a 20% damage reduction.

Adjustments
- Elemental Boon has been changed once more. It has lost it's bonus to saves, and instead grants lesser resistance. Fire = Fire Lesser Resistance, Water = Cold, Earth = Acid (previously electrical), Wind = Electrical (previously slashing).
- Skyrazor's Legscale Hauberk now grants lesser resistances to Slashing and Elemental damage types.
- Stoneheart Amulet now grants lesser resistance to Slashing.

Game Economy / Sell Values

Current Economic Challenges

The economy of Ishar has faced significant challenges, compounded over time by various changes, including the removal of rent costs, the introduction of an exceedingly expensive rare goods merchant, the elimination of merchant coins, and the implementation of dynamic gear evaluation. These factors have contributed to severe inflation, reducing the value of money and disrupting the game's economic balance.

Importance of a Balanced Economy

For money to serve its intended function in Ishar, it must be a valuable and sought-after resource. Players should find diverse and meaningful ways to spend their money, such as on preparations, convenience services, gear repairs, enchanting, and spell components. Moreover, acquiring money should require effort and strategic gameplay. The ease with which players could amass wealth last season—often earning up to 60% of the standard maximum bank capacity from a single zone run—is indicative of a deeper imbalance that needs correction.

Initiatives for Economic Reform

In response to these issues, we are implementing several key adjustments aimed at steering the economy towards a more sustainable and balanced state:

- Reduction in Sell Values: To address the issue of inflation and excessive liquidity, sell values for all items, except treasure, have been reduced to 25% of their former value. For example, an item previously sold for 1000 obsidian will now fetch 250 obsidian. This recalibration is intended to make money more scarce and valuable, reinvigorating its importance within the game's economy.

- Price Adjustments for High-End Preps: Prices for various top-end preps, including the entire stock offered by the Rare Merchant, have been adjusted downward. This change makes these items more accessible to a broader range of players, encouraging economic activity and enhancing gameplay satisfaction.

These changes mark the beginning of an ongoing effort to restore economic stability and value to Ishar. By adjusting the inflow and utility of money, we aim to enhance the overall gameplay experience, ensuring that financial strategies and decisions hold meaningful weight for all players.

Relics

Relics, launched two seasons ago, have made quite the splash. While in general, we are happy with the feel and direction of them and hope to expand on them further in the future, they also exacerbate existing issues with the nonnecessity of end game gear. In efforts to correct this some, we are making two adjustments.

- Relics now reach their "final form" at level 14 (previously 18), this effectively removes the top tier of each relic. Various relics have had their forms mildly adjusted to account.
- Relics no longer contribute to gear value for the purpose of remorting.

  Note: This is also coupled with buffing various end game pieces (see the gear adjustments section below).

Sustained Spells

Sustained Spells are a powerful way to leverage your mana at the cost of losing access to larger spells. However, they are still performing at a higher level then we would like. To add more downside / threat to using them we are adding an additional way to "lose concentration" on the

spell.

Now if you take damage that results in "OUCH!! That hurt!", which translates to 20% of your total HP, you will be forced to make a dc5 flat check (roll a d20 and need to get a 5 or higher) for each spell you are sustaining, or else be unable to continue to sustain the spell.

Gear Adjustments

• Tabitha's Charm has been reduced to 1 charge
• Ivory ring's decay timer has been shortened
• Necklace of Bloody Talons has been reduced to +1 damage from +2 damage
• Amulet of Accuracy - removed the function from it. Reduced to +10 attack from +20 attack. Decreased decay timer
• Battered Amber Stone - Decreased decay timer
• Blessed Knight Gauntlets - +8 attack to +5 attack, +4 damage to +2 damage. This is partially due to align being removed.
• Blasphemous Hide of the Yglrogmou - Readded curse. Decreased from 13/13/13 to 9/9/9 ac/hp/mana
• Hammerfist - Removed +1 strength, reduced from 8 ac to 6ac.
• Spiked Iron Faceplate changed from +1 resilience, +1 perception to +1 damage, +2 critical strike.
• Tai-Fun the Gathering Storm - removed the -1 damage
• Green Wool Robe - Reduced to +5 mana from +10 mana
• Sparkling Ruby Crown - Increased from 5 ac to 8 ac, gained +5 spell damage
• Intricate Silver Mask - Changed from +8 mana to +5 mana +1 expertise
• Velvet Smoking Jacket - Increased to 6 ac from 4 ac, changed to +1 heal all from +1 heal hit
• Darkly Glowing Obsidian Bracer is now 9 ac, up from 7 ac. Is now +2 save all instead of +1 endurance.
• Long scarf of black silk is now +2 perception, up from +1 perception
• Hammer of Endless Dreams is now +4 Healing Power instead of +10 AC
• Robes of Deepest Slumber are now 5*6, up from 0*6
• A tattered cloak of royal velvet is now +1 damage +5 attack, changed from +1 agil +5 hit points
• Mask of Endless Sorrow is no longer -2 willpower
• Runestaff - now loses between 1-3 charges randomly, accelerating how fast it explodes and adding an element of uncertainty.

Abilities

• Disengage now uses a save against reflex to determine success.

Seasonal / Meta

Overhauled Season Cycle

This is mostly administrative, but season cycle has been completely rewritten to be more error redundant, have better logging and control.

Mechanically - when the season cycle starts, the game is locked and you may no longer log in. Additionally, there are automatic backups taken in case something goes wrong.

Minor Flavor Enhancements

Season cycle echos have been rewritten and adjusted to help enhance the immersion / lore.

Alts Gaining Essence

We've restructured how essence is earned, encouraging players to explore multiple characters and classes. Essence is now awarded based on the performance of individual class leaders within your account, rewarding more personalized gameplay achievements.
Previously:

2 essence for having an active character

Then it pulled the highest remort and renown across all characters
1 essence if you have 1 or more remorts
3 essence for every 5 remorts
1 essence for every 100 renown

Now:

2 essence for having an active character
1 essence for a *single* character having 1 or more remorts

Then each character gains essence individually
3 essence for every 5 remorts
1 essence for every 100 renown

Account Comm Points

Comm points (used for shouting, etc) are now stored at the account level. Meaning on a new season, you should have enough points to be able to communicate.

Historical Data

Starting with season 5 (the last season I had a database backup of), there is now historic data for your account, a record of how you performed in previous seasons. This is planned to be surfaced soon, so you can review and compare how you have done, and will be leveraged for achievements.

Experience Display

The way experience bonuses / penalties are shown have been split up to help promote clarity

When typing 'remort' you will see your xp like so

Your current XP modifiers are: 200.00% (base) * 60.00% (remort) * 100.00% (game type) = 120.00%.

Similarly, the display for "verbose experience" has been cleaned up to only show the total.

Bug Fixes

- Fixed various issues with fly (display, follower checks, etc)
- Forgive should function as expected once more.