



Season 9

Patch 9.0

Welcome to Season 9 of Ishar, launching early on Friday, October 18th, an exciting and transformative step in the evolution of our game! This season marks the beginning of a new rhythm in our seasonal cycles. For the first time, we introduce the concept of Enigmas: unique, chaotic twists on the traditional Ishar experience. Season 9, titled Fractured Threads, will immerse players in a world where fate itself has unraveled, reshaping gameplay into something unpredictable and intense.

New Seasonal Structure: Enigmas

Going forward, odd-numbered seasons will feature an Enigma, offering new mechanics, challenges, and surprises. These Enigmas will vary, with each introducing fresh dynamics to keep the world of Ishar ever-evolving. In contrast, even-numbered seasons will provide the familiar and balanced gameplay, allowing players to recover and prepare for the next twist of fate.

Fractured Threads: The First Enigma

In this first Enigma, the Dancers above Ishar have spun out of control, tearing at the weave of reality. Players will experience:

- **Classless Play:** You are forced into the role of the Fated—a new classless archetype with no guild, no starting skills, and no fixed path. Instead, every time you level up, you'll be offered a selection of three random skills, allowing you to build your character as you progress.
- **Hardcore Mode:** True to rogue-lite tradition, every player in this season will experience Hardcore mode—you have one life. Death is permanent, but remnants of your journey can persist in the form of Fated Skills, which carry over between remorts.
- **Progression Through Remorts:** Each time you remort, you can choose one skill from your previous life to become a permanent Fated Skill. These skills are carried forward to future Fated characters during the season, creating a unique progression system.
- **Death at Level 15:** If your Fated character dies after reaching level 15, you are still granted the ability to choose a Fated Skill to carry over.

Changes

- **Access to All Class Quests and Gear:** As the Fated, you will have access to all class-based quests and equipment, although starting gear upgrades will not be available, and no relics will be awarded.

- **No Access to the Temple of Israelin.**

Mob Intelligence Overhaul

We've fully replaced the old mob AI system with our new dynamic threat-based intelligence across all classes and mobs in the game, except for specific legacy Mocha functions. This new system allows mobs to make smarter decisions in combat, responding to player actions like damage, healing, and threat management. Expect more engaging, unpredictable combat experiences where mobs evaluate and adjust to the highest threat on the battlefield.

It is important to note that this will be constantly evaluated and adjusted based on observations and player feedback. Several skills are still notably excepted such as; Dispel Undead, Dispel Magic, and a couple of others. Expect this system to continue to mature as it is exposed.

Targeting System Update

We've reworked how NPCs decide who to attack in combat, moving away from the old random lackey-to-master system and introducing threat-based aggro switching.

- **New Threat System:** Every round, NPCs evaluate who the highest threat is based on damage, healing, and other actions. For the first 2 rounds of combat, NPCs gather info before deciding on a target.
- **Targeting Phase:** After 2 rounds, if a player becomes the highest threat, the NPC will "target" them. This triggers a warning echo.
- **Aggro Switching:** If the same player is still the highest threat on the following round, the NPC will "acquire" the target with another echo. On the next round, if the NPC is using a melee attack, they will push past the tank to attack the target. For ranged attacks or spells, the NPC will keep hitting the tank while launching the ability at the highest threat.

Counterplay:

- If a player leaves combat (e.g., via flee, disengage, or blink), it will clear the target debuff.
- Fade still works to remove targeting.
- If the NPC's target is forcibly replaced (e.g., rescue, taunt) or distracted, it resets the process, putting the NPC back into the 'acquiring target' phase.

These changes should make combat more dynamic and give players more chances for strategic counterplay, while also challenging traditional Ishar combat.

Passive Skill Overhaul

With the introduction of Season 9, we're making significant changes to passive skills. These updates not only enhance the overall flexibility of character development but also provide a more transparent and strategic progression system for both regular players and The Fated during the Fractured Threads Enigma.

New Passive Skill Category

- Passives now have their own dedicated skill category, separating them from active abilities and giving players a clearer view of their character's passive development.
- These passives can be found across various classes and, for The Fated, are available in the pool of random skills offered as you level up.

Tiered Passives and Their Effects

Each passive skill can now scale in tiers, with each tier increasing the efficacy of the skill. For example:

- Training: Speed: Grants -1 speed per tier, making characters faster as they invest more into this passive skill.

Revamp of Innate Rogue Speed

- The rogue's old innate passive, which granted -1 speed every 6 levels, has been transitioned into the new Training: Speed passive. This has no immediate impact, but allows visibility through verbose level up and the new skill command.
- Additionally, rogues now have 1% Foresight as a passive.

New Warrior Passives

Warriors now have access to two new passives, adding depth to their skill trees:

- Training: Armor: Increases the character's effectiveness with armor. This passive grants 4% armor value for armor per tier. E.g. Leaf Mail gives 33 armor.
- Training: Attack: Improves attack power with each tier, providing more offensive capability as the skill scales. This grants 4% of your innate class / stat attack per tier.
- Relentless: Warriors now naturally have 1% Relentless as a passive.

Orcs

Orcs now have 2% Relentlessness

These new passives are also part of the Fated skill pool, meaning they could appear as random options for Fated characters to choose as they level up during this Enigma season.

New Essence Upgrades

Ancestral Knowledge: Relentlessness - Grants 1 stack of Relentlessness per tier, each stack giving 1%% chance to immediately follow-up a successful melee strike with another melee strike.

Cost 5 / 10 / 15

Ancestral Knowledge: Foresight - Grants 1 stack of Foresight per tier, each tier giving you a 1% chance to fully dodge any incoming damage..

Cost 5 / 10 / 15

Hardcore Improvement

In response to the grueling journey of Hardcore players, and to offer some relief for The Fated during Fractured Threads, we've introduced a new "Quick Restart" feature for all Hardcore characters.

Upon dying as a Hardcore character, you will now be prompted with the option to quickly restart your character. This feature immediately puts you back in the game as a fresh version of the same character, retaining your name, class, race, and starting conditions. This ensures a smoother, faster transition back into the action, sparing you the lengthy process of full character recreation.

For players who wish to restart their character later, you can also do this directly from the character select screen. When attempting to enter the game as a dead Hardcore character, you will now be prompted to restart.

New Hardcore Splash Screen

When restarting, a new splash screen will display, listing your character's core attributes alongside your Hardcore Statistics:

- Total Deaths: The total number of deaths as a Hardcore character.
- Highest Remort: The highest remort level achieved by this character.
- Highest Level: The highest level reached before death.

While this version of the system tracks Hardcore statistics on a per-character basis, future improvements are planned to expand these statistics to be account-wide, giving players a deeper sense of progression across their Hardcore experiences. Currently, if you delete the character, all associated stats are lost, but future Hardcore (and Fated) characters will not only have access to these expanded stats but will also reflect your full journey across multiple Hardcore lives.

This new feature is just the first step in making the Hardcore experience more enjoyable and trackable, and we're excited to see how players use it to push their limits!

Regular Gameplay

Balance Adjustments

- Reanimate now creates classless corpses. With the addition of the new, smarter mob decision making, we thought this was an appropriate change. In a future state, there will be unique undead racials that corpses will inherit.
- The "glowing" fairy challenge reward has been updated to have an effect for Survival / Hardcore characters. Now, when obtaining the fairy, it will store your current level. When opened, it will give you 50% of that level (the equivalent XP needed to obtain divine favor).

Misc.

- The "train" command has been updated to always display your aux. statistics (previously hidden beneath "train all"). Similarly, "all" has been removed as an argument to "train".
- If your account has gained 2 essence or you have a single recorded Hardcore death for your current character, you will no longer be given the "fairy" new player guide. Additionally, the game will no longer stop you from entering combat at low health or attacking a level 2 as a level 1.
- A miscellaneous season change; seasons now begin and end on Thursday's.