

Final Fantasy VIII

PC Any% EzCM Notes



By awesomeWaves

[Twitch](#) [Discord](#) [YouTube](#)

This route was greatly helped and edited
by W1ndows

[Twitch](#)

Section Labels

Option

Options are underlined where available.

Where text box choices are not mentioned, first choice is implied.

Menus

Larger menus should be learnt outright. They will be outlined, with a full version at the end of notes for learning. They clutter the notes otherwise.

Party

For any Party Switch menus & junction exchanges with them.
(These will not include switches within a menu).

Boss

Boss Battles and larger encounters.

Encounter

Encounters mentioned when they are different from normal.

Steps

For step-route related events, not just steps. If a menu is highlighted, the menu is either in a specific location for a buffer (or to avoid a buffer).

ELEVATOR

Balamb Garden Elevator will be highlighted separately.

(EF:yes/no) means 'End Flee'

If you should continue to flee for the fanfare.

(savename)

If there is a GF to name after the fight.

[breaks] Times you can go afk.

Directions are often abbreviated throughout.

(U = Up, R = Right, DL = Down+Left etc.)

Side/Safety Notes:

Where needed additional information for varying strats or safety information will be outlined

What is EzCM?

ECM stands for Early Card Mod, which is a route designed to get the GF Quezacotl's Card Mod ability substantially earlier than in the normal routes. ECM learns it in Dollet, whereas normal routes learn it in Timber (after Gerogero).

EzCM is simply just a more straightforward way of running the mainline ECM Any% route but with safer options included for some of the games' more difficult sections.



Since I discovered an easier and safer way to gain the AP required to do so, almost all of the major hardships in the game could be removed or simplified. This seemed like the ideal opportunity to route a more beginner friendly set of notes for Final Fantasy VIII that could still be run competitively. These are also closely tied to my own Any% notes and make for an easy transition afterwards.

This route is designed to have zero prerequisites except for a basic understanding of how the game works. Having at least completed the game casually should really be enough.

However, if you wanted to give yourself an advantage there are certain things you could practice beforehand. Namely the first hour of the run, even with EzCM will be the most difficult.

The most difficult may be the X-ATM092 fight if you are not comfortable using Duel. Even though it is just spamming two combo inputs, it's worth practising this in advance.

This route also requires no actual card manipulation software, you can simply open the notes and run the game. However it will save you some time if you wish to use it. You can download manipulation software from the speedrun.com resources page: [here](#)

There are tutorials in the guides section also that will explain the basic usage. Any further questions can be addressed the the FF8 speedrunning discord: [here](#)

Throughout the run don't be afraid to pause and think about what you need to do, it's better to lose a few seconds rather than game over and lose the whole run. I have added various safety notes throughout which should protect you from major resets.

Have fun and happy running!

Always Fleeing

By holding the L2 and R2 buttons together, you can flee from battles. This is bound by default to D and F keys on the keyboard on the PC version. Depending on your controller it may be slightly different also.

If you've seen a Final Fantasy VIII speedrun, you may have noticed that the players are constantly trying to flee battles that are inescapable. That is because fleeing in battles skips a bunch of different animations.



There is a "ready up" animation each character does after you have given them an action and before they take the action, there's the standing up animation that characters in critical HP do before taking an action, and also the crouching animation that critical HP characters do after taking the action. All of these animations are skipped if you are fleeing and it might seem like a minor time save, but over the whole run it ends up saving minutes.

It is important to NOT flee the battles that are escapable, but you want to fight though! For example the bats in the Fire Cavern or the soldiers on the bridge and mountain in Dollet.

Most important is the battle that lets you enter Lunatic Pandora in Esthar, as if you flee that battle you will have to go to the next contact point and lose many minutes.

Freezing ATB

As the game is speedrun with ATB: Wait in the config setting, this means that we can effectively freeze the ATB bars while selecting items, magic or even some limit breaks from the battle menu.

Interestingly in FF8 specifically, while the ATB is frozen we are still able to escape from battles. This can be used throughout the run to freeze enemy ATBs so that we can flee from battles without any enemy attacks.

Item is most commonly used as it's typically the last item in the battle menu. Pressing up and the confirm button will enter the item sub-menu.

Battle Speed

Another setting that we can change in the Config menu is: Battle Speed. We set this value in the first menu we perform before or in the Fire Cavern. As we typically want to go fast, we set the speed to 100% when we are trying for quicker times.

However, the time lost is relatively minimal and for starting out you would probably lose more time by setting it too fast. This would give the enemies more attacks before you can input yours, resulting in longer and more dangerous fights. Especially when you want to look for limit breaks, slower can be better.

Depending on how confident you feel with the game you can set this to your preference. 0% is maybe too slow unless you haven't tried the game before. 25% or 50% would be comfortable and you can progress to 75% and 100% as you see fit.

Side note: There are specific times where we adjust the battle speed in an Any% run, even if we start with 100%. Later when we learn the Initiative Ability we actually set the battle speed back to 0% as we get to attack first anyway.



How Limits Work

As you will see in the run, limit breaks are our main method of winning most battles. When certain criteria are met (critical HP levels and K.O.'d allies for example), the character will have a specific Crisis Level which allows them to use their Limit Break.

There are 4 levels for Crisis, simply abbreviated to CL1, CL2, CL3 & CL4. Different CL means slightly different versions of the characters Limit.

Squall will have more or less hits with his Renzokuken, Zell's Duel will be longer or shorter, Selphie will have access to different Slot spells and Irvine's limit Shot would be longer or shorter also for example.

Using an Aura Spell or Aura Stone can be used to increase a player's CL, enhancing their limit breaks.

How to Use Limits

Once the criteria above are reached and the character has a Crisis level to use a limit, the game will perform a check.

To abuse this mechanic, we can continually press the menu button in battles to refresh the ATB repeatedly and activate a Limit.

After it becomes available, it is on the right of the Attack slot in the battle menu.



Attack buffering

Attack buffering is a technique used to minimize enemy turns. The idea is to use a useless character's attack, or any other action, to buy time in order to find the important character's limit break.

All animations during battles freeze the ATB for the duration of the animation, so the idea is to use the attacks when the important character has their ATB filled. This makes the fights much safer as the enemies get fewer turns but also make the finding of limit breaks easier as the useless character's turns aren't there to take time when skipping turns to find limit breaks.

A good example is the Elvoret fight, where Selphie is not junctioned and has relatively useless turns, but her attacks can still be very important!

X-ATM092

The ECM route hinges on defeating the X-ATM in Dollet as he supplies the 50AP we need to learn Card Mod early.

After dealing damage to 20% of its health, it falls down, stops fighting and enters recovery mode. In a normal route (non-ECM), this is where you would flee and continue your escape.



We will however not run away and opt to deplete it's full health. X-ATM will either have 5672 HP or 5492 HP, depending on whether it is high or low Level. X-ATM cannot be destroyed on the first encounter with it, however, if we can deal that damage to him we will receive 50AP anyway for having defeated it.

Early Flee Trick

One of the newer elements to help make ECM more viable was the discovery of the Early-Flee Trick. This technique allows us to Flee from the X-ATM battle while he is exiting recovery mode. This eliminates the time spent having to knock X-ATM a final time before we can escape.



If the damage threshold is met (depleting its HP to zero) while the party is fleeing, the party can still escape and gain the rewards for defeating him.

As X-ATM has either 5672 HP or 5492 HP you can just count the damage.

What currently works (but is still being tested) are certain safe outcomes that allow you to flee without having counted exact HP numbers.

There is a simple Duel method used in these notes. Alternatively, there is a Renzokuken method that saves a further 20-30s but requires good RNG and limit counting to execute effectively in a run.

Resources

Tutorial Video: <https://youtu.be/2RxwmUEX8Jg>

This is a live run I completed of the route to explain what is happening throughout. It uses many of the optional extras incorporated in the route and has a decent set of splits which could be run against. (This route has a more dangerous Fisherman's Horizon on Disc 2)

EzCM AP Chart: <https://tinyurl.com/EzCM-AP>

You can use the chart to accompany the AP gained on each GF during the run.

PC Controller Set-up Tutorial: https://youtu.be/lNsT6SbU_3U

This tutorial is mainly focused on achieving background input to use the card manipulations. In the process though you will also achieve normal operation.

Dollet Spider Escape Tutorial: https://youtu.be/1s_PVGRCnZonZo

A simple tutorial of how to avoid all the extra X-ATM092 encounters.

FF8 Speedrun.com: <https://www.speedrun.com/ff8/>

If by chance you didn't find these notes on this website, be sure to check the guides and resources sections on the sidebar.

FF8 Speedrun Discord Invite: <https://discord.gg/6q8Q3huh2E>

The discord for Final Fantasy 8 speedruns. It has a dedicated channels for various aspects of the game. Feel free to ask anything there!

(If this has expired, there is also a link on the sidebar of the speedrun.com page to the general Final Fantasy Speedrun discord, which will lead you there.)

EarlyQ & 2nd Try Zell: https://youtu.be/rj_9jYKDimg

This is a tutorial on how to use FF8 Utilities to get EarlyQ and 2nd try Zell.

Rinoa Skip for PSX Disc: https://youtu.be/tecvd_TVEus

Tutorial for performing the skip by ConnorCordell. Only works on PSX Disc or emulator versions. Will not work on PC/HD versions.

Easy Cid Skip Setup: https://youtu.be/tecvd_TVEus

Tutorial for performing the skip by Thomas_8989.

DISC 1

Hard Reset the Game before Starting a run.

[Intro FMV: 3:25]

Balamb Garden



Choose the first option when asked and rename Squall to S.

Hold down and mash confirm when walking through the hallway with Quistis.

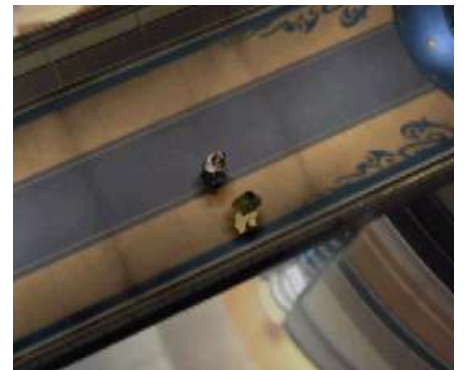
In the Classroom leave your desk and talk to Quistis.

Exit the classroom after Quistis and move down the hall.

Select the second option twice when you encounter Selphie in the hallway. Exit right.

Talk to the person in the hallway to get the free cards before entering the Lift.

Move down from the elevator into the main lobby.



Safety Notice: If you are not too confident with Early Quistis Card you can save in the main lobby so that you can retry it. Otherwise you will have to reset and watch the intro FMV again if you miss it.

Note: If you are using the LateQ manip you can skip this page.

Note: Since making this guide, FF8 Utilities now has seven winnable EarlyQ frames. Check FF8 resources page for a link. What is in the notes is still accurate but if you are having trouble with mashing frames 1-3, maybe have a look at it.



Quistis Card

Use the Guide Box in the center of the main lobby to go to the Cafeteria.
(Hold Right and Confirm)



After the brief dialogue between Seifer, Fujin and Raijin run up to the back of the room. Here you will see people sitting at tables. Approach the people on the right and press square (or S on the keyboard by default) to challenge them to a card match.

Select: "...the guy in the back".

You will need to accept this game on one of the first 3 frames. This requires quite a quick button mash. Once you confirm "Yes" to start the card match, mash confirm as fast as you can. It's often easier to mash from the "Yes" option until the card selection screen appears.

When you have arrived at the selection screen, select your cards in this order:

1. Geezard
2. Funguar
3. Gayla
4. Fastitocalon-F
5. Caterchipillar

If everything went to plan we will see the opponent's hand contain the Quistis card. We should also see one of these cards appear, which lets us know we have landed on the correct frames:



Elastoid (Frame 1)



Malboro (Frame 2)

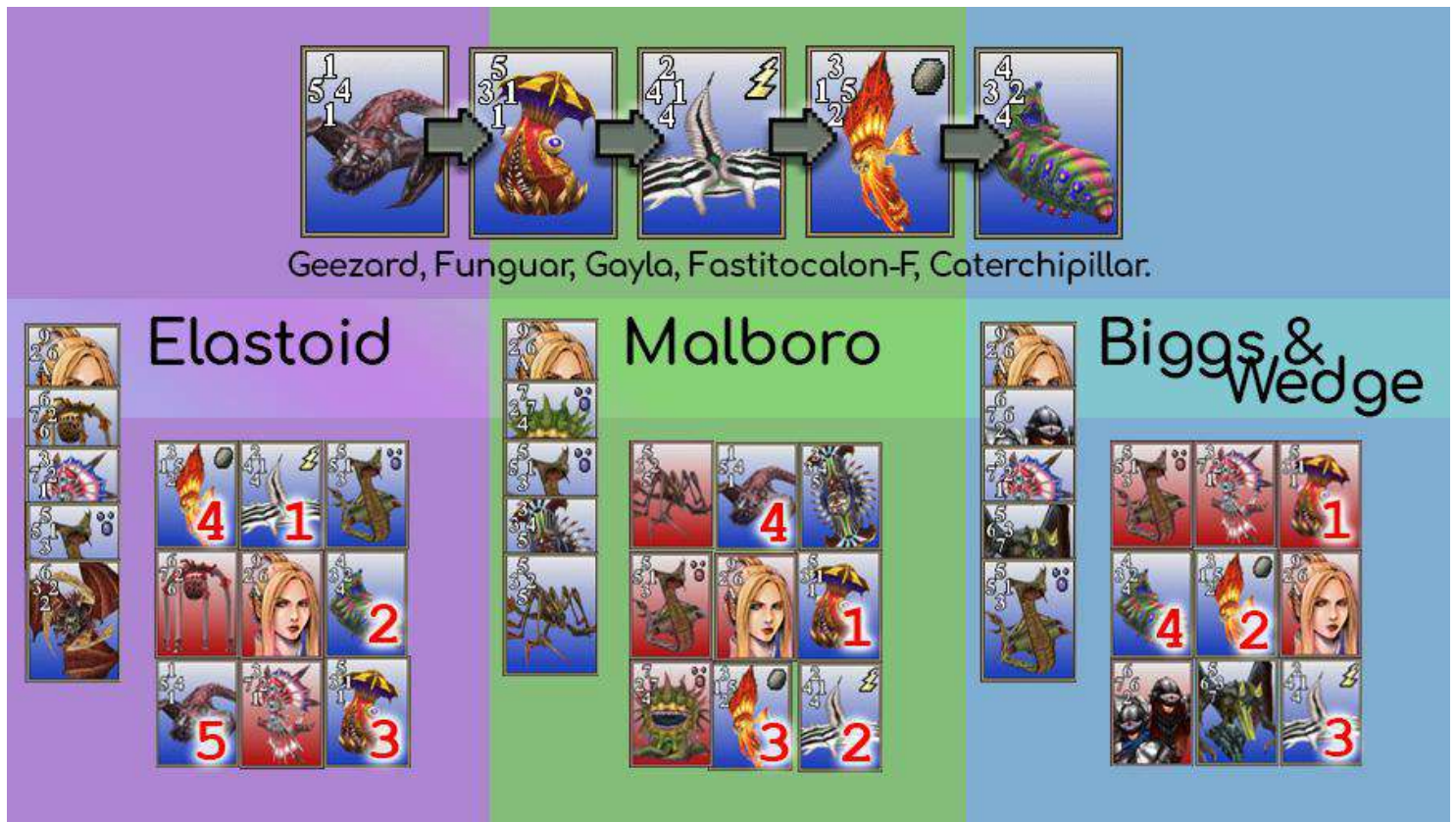


Biggs & Wedge (Frame 3)



Note: There are some late frames that do contain Quistis & Elastoid or Malboro but also contain a Tonberry King card. These patterns are incorrect, just reset/reload and try again.

Once you have gotten one of the correct patterns, follow the placement map below with the cards in the correct order to win the Quistis card.



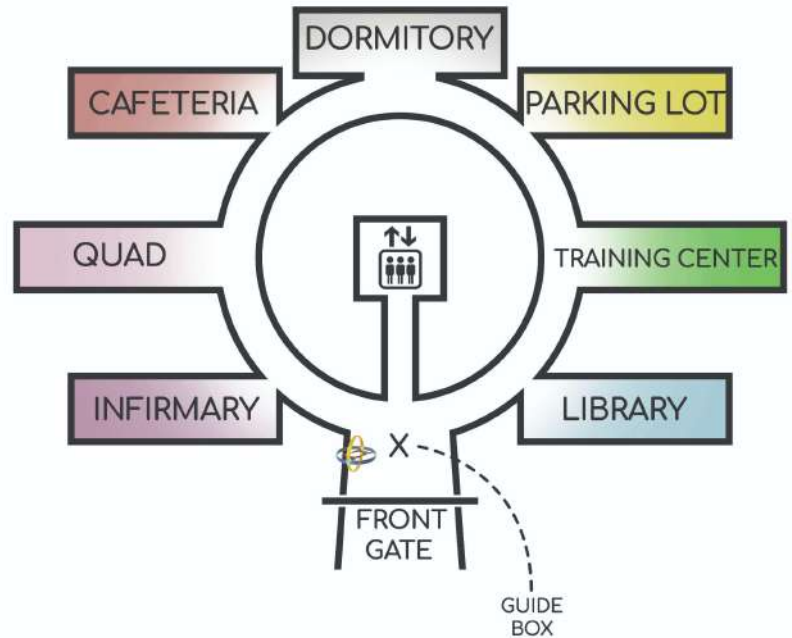
Note: If you want to do the second try Zell card manipulation later, you need to remember which pattern you got in this card game.

With your new found Quistis card in your pocket, leave the cafeteria by the same way you entered and continue out and down to reach the main Lobby once again.

Use the Guide Box and to go to Front Gate (Hold Up and confirm)

Move down to Quistis,
Confirm GF names twice (Start then Confirm)

Hold cancel to skip the tutorial.



Leave the Garden and head east to Fire Cavern, fleeing any encounters you meet.
(Press Select button to bring up the minimap.)



You can flee from any encounters you meet along the way.

On arriving, skip the next tutorial and select the second option with Quistis when she asks.

Continue forward and talk to the attendants by the cave entrance.

Choose the first option twice to say you are ready and then choose the first option again for 10 minutes.



Early on the 3rd Screen:

Menu #1

Junction → Quistis → Add Shiva
Magic, Draw, Item

→ Squall → Add Quezacotl
Magic, Draw, Item

GF Quezacotl → Learn Card
Shiva → Learn I-Magic RF

Config → Cursor: Memory
Camera: 0%
Battle Speed: 50% (Set to how comfortable you are, 50% = default)
Battle Message: 100%

Don't Run from this Battle!

Bat Encounter

Squall & Quistis → Draw 8 Thunders each (First Option)

Squall & Quistis → Attack → Kill both Bats



Optional Note: You can do a menu buffer in the 4th screen.
(Open and close the menu once while running.)

Boss: Ifrit

EF: Yes
savename



We need 18 hits of Squall's gunblade (with the trigger) to kill Ifrit.
Each hit = 1 Rough Divide = 1.5 (Quistis limit = 3)

Squall needs to finish the battle with 6 thunder remaining, so just attack himself instead if you only have 6. We can use physical attacks and thunder spells on ourselves to lower HP.

Note: When Ifrit is attacked 5 times he will use his punch attack, so it's best to just avoid using Quistis to attack Ifrit at all.

Squall/Quistis → **Get Squall to low HP first**
Squall needs to be at ~130 HP to use his Limit Break: Renzokuken

Squall → **Renzo until Ifrit dies (usually 3 or 4 times)**
Quistis → **Lower own HP to be ready to use Limit Break.**

Confirm Ifrit's name after the fight. (Start then confirm button)

Hold Cancel to skip tutorial after Ifrit fight and head out of the Fire Cavern.
Flee from all the encounters while you exit.

On the second screen of the Fire Cavern you should get a **Bomb** encounter:

On the final screen before leaving:

Menu #2

Junction:

Squall → Remove Quezacotl
Add Ifrit

Quistis → Add Quezacotl

Item: Potion Squall

GF: Ifrit → Learn Str+20%





Leave the Fire Cavern and go to the Beach.
(Simply holding down works most of the time.)

Force world map encounters on the beach by running around. Take care to stay on the beach.



Don't Run from these Battles!

Fish Fights

Get 5 Fins

EF: Yes

Squall → Thunder (makes the fish pop up)

Quistis → Laser Eye (Limit Break)

If Quistis is still too high HP to limit, use her to attack herself or use a thunder on herself if needed. She can use her limit from ~150 HP.

Count Fish Fin drops.

Once you have fought the three encounters (killing 6 Fish and getting minimum 5 Fish Fins), return to the Balamb Garden.

If you did not get 5 Fish Fins after fighting 3 battles, you can just do extra battles.

Side Note: You can also choose to only kill one of the two fishes and then escape if you are only missing 1 Fin.

Continuing with fewer than 5 Fish Fins is not recommended. In general, people reset and start again if they do not get 5 Fins in max. 4 battles.

After the brief Tutorial, return to the lobby and use the Guide Box and go to Dormitory (Hold confirm)

Approach the bed and select the second option to change uniform. Exit the Dormitory once again.

Mash through the dialogue, hold cancel to skip the Zell tutorial. Once the Headmaster Cid finally says "Good Luck", you can exit the screen by holding Up Right.



Drive the car to Balamb Village. Cancel tutorial and Square to go Forward.

Very Important: Hold a direction to drift the car while going through Balamb.



Enter the Ship, mash text and choose the last option after Xu leaves. Select the first option with Seifer and hold Down Right to leave the screen.

[1:10 Break for FMV]



Dollet Mission

When you arrive on the beach:

Menu #3

Switch: Zell → Quistis

Abilities: I Mag-RF Refine 5 Fish Fins onto Squall so he has 100 Waters.

GF:
Quezacotl → Learn Card Mod
Shiva → Learn Str-J

Junction: Squall → Auto → Atk

Side Note: Squall will need to use his limit break on the upcoming boss fights. He can use his limit with less than 170 HP. Ideally having his HP between 80-150 is ideal. You can always take the risk of starting the fights with lower HP and just reviving him with Phoenix Downs if he dies.

Proceed up the steps after Seifer and continue into the Town.
Fight the forced soldier encounters all the way to Fountain Square.

Go to the top right of the square for the last soldier encounter.
After the soldier is defeated, return to Seifer and talk to him.

When the scene changes, hold down and Mash X
Squall needs to move twice, so hold down until Seifer does his Dialogue.

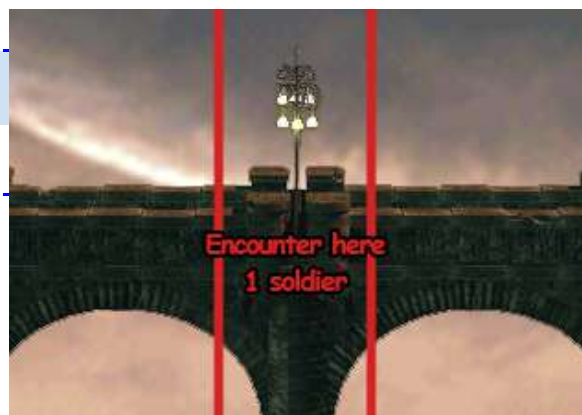
After the conversation, follow Seifer onto the bridge.

Don't Run from this Battle!

Bridge Encounter

Anyone → Kill Soldier

If you got this encounter a little earlier, do a menu buffer. (Open & Close Menu while running).



Boss: Anacondaaur

EF: Yes

The Snek always goes first and Zell will have the first move for your party. You can hold X to attack first with Zell but be careful not to attack with Squall also. If Squall has too much HP, you can opt to attack him with Zell or Seifer.

Zell → Attack (*Squall if High HP*)
Squall → Renzo
Seifer → Attack



Don't Run from this Battle!

Mountain Encounter

Anyone → Kill Soldier

You can do a buffer here if you get the encounter a little earlier than expected.

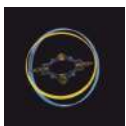
After Selphie jumps from the hill, hold up and choose the first option to also jump from the cliff.

Hold Up and Left to enter the tower.

Whether you are planning on maintaining step count or not, it's probably at least worth trying the following:

When inside, after the brief dialogue hold up and walk 2 steps. (Hold cancel while moving to walk)

First option to go up on the Elevator.



Safety Note: There is a save point in the tower if you want to save here

Boss: Elvoret

Danger: 3rd Attack (Turn 4)

EF: Yes
savename

It's very important in this fight that the 2nd Squall Limit goes onto Wedge (**Blue** Soldier that appears). Make sure you target him correctly!

Squall → Renzo → Biggs
Squall → Renzo → Wedge

Zell → Draw → Siren [last Item]
Squall → Renzo x2



Elvoret always skips his 3rd turn and his 4th turn is always Storm Breath. That attack does ~150 damage to all party members.

If Squall dies, use a Phoenix Down and Renzo again. It's safe to revive him up until Elvoret's 2nd attack and still have time. Remember to use attack buffers with Selphie!

If Elvoret doesn't die after 2 Limits, just use Physical Attacks.

Confirm Siren's name after the fight. (Start then confirm button)

When Leaving Tower:

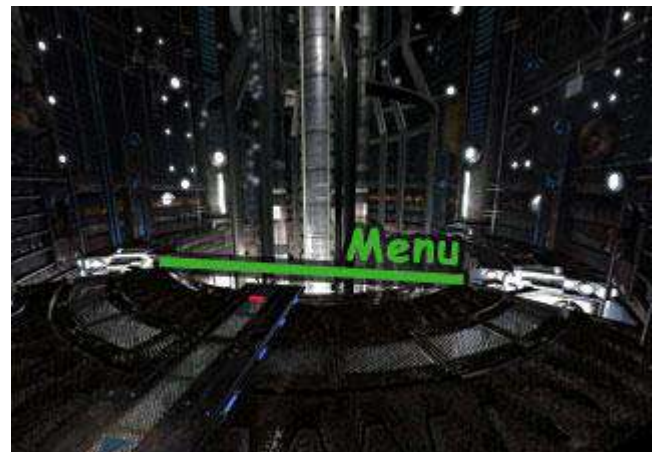
Menu #4

Junction: Selphie → Add Siren

Item: Potion → Squall to full

GF: Ifrit → Learn HP-J
Siren → Learn L-Mag-RF

Switch: Zell → Squall



Safety Note: There is a save point in the tower if you want to save here. The next fight, if not performed correctly, can end the run.

Boss: X-ATM

Danger: 3rd Attack

5492 - 5672 HP
1098 - 1134 dmg to knock

For this fight we will be using Zell's Limit Break: Duel

This means we need to reduce Zell's HP quickly so he can activate it. Zell needs to have less than 175 HP to use his limit break.

We have 3 turns to do this, as X-atms third attack is always Ray Bomb. This does almost 100 damage to all our characters. (Alternatively, you could wait for this attack to hit as we know it does this damage.)

We will use a simple combination and do 40 attacks on the boss. These 40 attacks must be done over minimum 2 limit breaks. The first one brings X-atm into Recovery mode and then the second one finishes depleting his HP.



Starting with 4s or 6s limit, the combo is:

- Booya
- Heel Drop



Starting with 9s or 11s limit, the combo is:

- Heel Drop
- Booya



When you have 30 hits done, hold Flee (L2 and R2) until you complete 40 hits and escape the fight. You will know this has worked when you escape right as the X-ATM recovers but you still escape gaining 50ap.

This combo can be input super fast by spamming the button rather than inputting them one at a time. You can mash, left and right before the input selection appears, to perform a Booya for example. Also, some people find that using the arrow keys on the keyboard makes this more consistent. Find what is most comfortable and works for you.

(If you are still having trouble here, you can divide it into 3 limit breaks, but only do 30 hits with the first two Duels and do the remaining 10 hits with the final one, while holding Flee.)

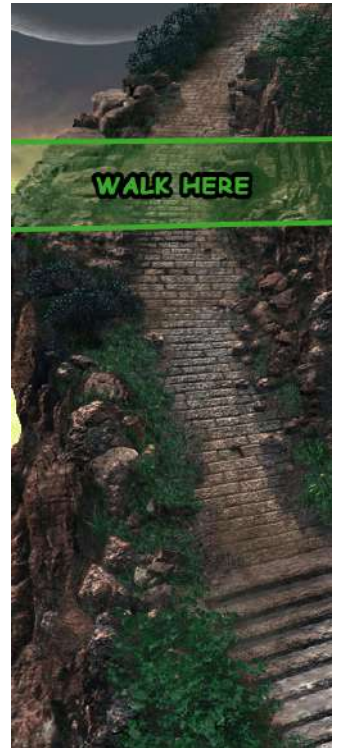
Escape Sequence ([Video Tutorial](#))

After defeating X-ATM and hopefully getting our sweet 50ap, we begin the escape sequence of Dollet. The Spider-Tank begins to chase the party and if we get caught we will have to fight him again.

If you get caught, instantly Duel (as Zell's HP should be ready to Limit) and perform **10 hits** of Booya/Heel drop. This should force him into his recovery mode, allowing you to flee. (L2 & R2)

On the first screen: simply hold **Down**.
Second screen: hold **Left**.

On the third screen we must do something slightly different. We must walk over an invisible trigger line. See the image attached on where to walk. (Hold Cancel while moving to walk)



On the next screen just move off the screen Down and/or Down Right.



On the Bridge, run past the center lamp post and quickly move to the left side of it again. Once you hear the sound of the X-ATM landing and moving, cross the lamp post from the left to right and continue right. This causes the X-ATM to jump back over you once again.

In the Fountain Screen simply Hold Down.
Interact with the dog to save him (unless you're a monster).



After the next simple screen you arrive at a longer screen and meet students exiting the bar. When they leave, enter the bar yourself to avoid X-ATM. When you emerge from the bar, continue to the beach and escape on the ship.



Safety Note: There is a save point upstairs in the Hotel if you want to save before the Zell card. If you lose a match and lose a card it's pretty much a reset.



Zell Card

After you pass the Hotel screen, enter the first door on the right.

Once you enter, Zell will automatically speak with Ma Dinch. When they are finished, go right to the next room and then return back once again to the first room (You cannot play cards otherwise).

Challenge Ma Dinch to a card game

Optional Note: if you are doing the second try Zell manipulation you would need to mash and accept the game on the first seven frames.

When you have arrived at the selection screen, select your cards **in this order:**

1. Geezard
2. Red Bat
3. Gayla
4. Ifrit
5. Quistis

Optional Note: Enter values to program if you are using the second try manipulation. It's safest to do it beforehand as you may accidentally close the match after.

If Zell card is not played in her first hand, use the pattern on the right to win/draw.

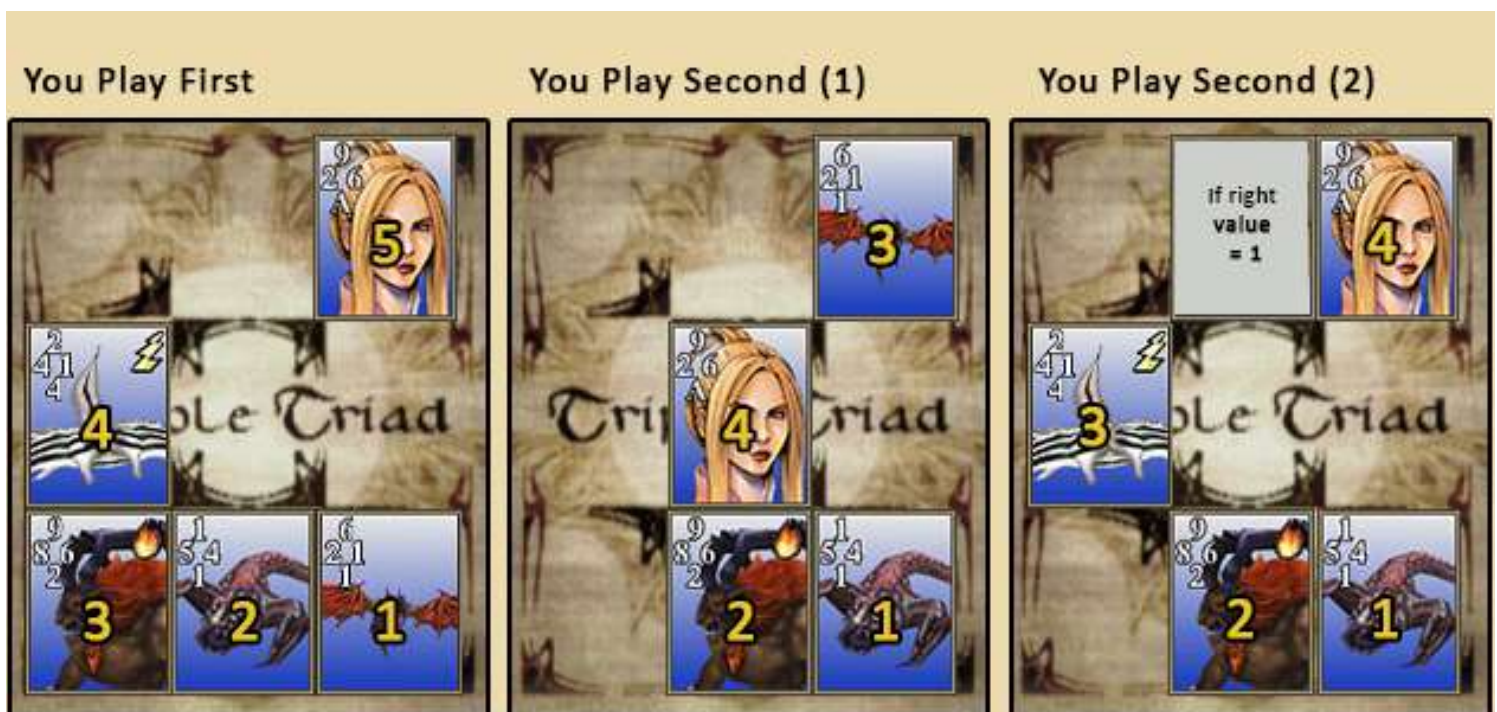


If you are confident with cards, you can use the Quistis card as the 4th card and bat as the last card. This will result in more draws (taking less time) but is also not 100% win if you blindly play it.

Continue to play Ma Dinch in cards until she plays the Zell card. When the Zell card does finally appear in her hand, use the diagram below to win the game.

She has a 10% of playing the card each game. It may take some time but it is quite safe as long as you play the patterns shown here.

Optional Note: For manipulations, this is where you would start the game at the same time as the timer script. Make sure you have entered the card pattern for your Early Quistis card match. Accept the game at the correct time and Zell card should be played by Ma Dinch if you did it correctly.



Exit the house and head up the street.

Rent a Car from the shop in the next screen before leaving Balamb, select the first option.

Drive the car near Balamb Garden, leave the car outside for later.
(You can only exit the car when it's not too close to the road or garden)

Garden Return

After the Dialogue in the lobby, exit Up-Right and go to the screen on the right.

Talk to Seifer and after the Dialogue head back to the main lobby and go to the Elevator.

Go towards the classroom and when on the screen with other people waiting and Zell walking, do the menu.



Optional Note:

There is an optimisation of this next menu where you wait for Zell to turn around and begin your menu. This can more easily be timed as 51 seconds from when you enter the screen (using your split timer as a reference).

If you complete your menu and only close it when 51 seconds have passed, Zell's animation will trigger the end of the wait screen sequence quicker.



Begin the menu just after Zell Turns

Take your time with this menu if needed. It may kill the run if done incorrectly.

2F Hallway

Menu #5

Switch: Squall → Zell,
Zell → Quistis

Ability: Life Mag RF → All Tents & Cottages → Squall (For 90 Curagas)
Card Mod → Caterchipillar, Ifrit, Quistis and Zell

GF: Quezacotl Learn HP-J
Ifrit Learn Str+20%

Magic: Squall → Exchange → Waters → Quistis → Thunders (or slot 1 if empty)

Items: CAREFUL HERE!

Use: Hyper Wrist → Ifrit and Shiva.
Spider Web → Quistis

Battle: Swap Potions with Elixirs.
(Elixirs should be first battle item)

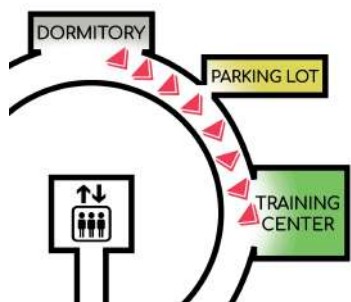
Junction: Squall → Ability → Add Str +60% (Bottom part of abilities)
→ Auto → Atk

Quistis → Ability → Add Str +60%
→ Auto → Atk

After graduating as a SeeD, hold down to Exit the headmasters office.
Hold Left after exiting the elevator.

In the Dorm, enter the bedroom and second option to change outfit.
When you leave the bedroom, hold left and mash X to talk to Selphie

At the graduation ceremony, choose the second option with Selphie.
(The option appears on the 3rd textbox after she appears on screen)



[Ballroom Dance: 1:50 Break]



<-- best looking guy here

Hold Up after Quistis dialogue to leave

Change outfit at bed and head to the Training Center

After dialogue and tutorial with Quistis (skip the tutorial by holding cancel), go up the hall and then enter the Training center via the left door.

Optional Note:

If you are trying to maintain a step count, [here](#) is an example of the movement for this screen as it often causes issues. Don't worry too much if you are just starting out.

Proceed up to the Secret Area. It is the top exit of the next screen.

Don't Run from this Battle!

During a random Grat encounter

Any → Attack Grats

We want to kill these Grat(s) to help ensure Ifrit is level 10 by the time we reach Esthar later in the game.



After the dialogue with Quistis head back out the way you came and you'll encounter your next Boss fight.

Boss: Granaldo

Raldos: 203-243 HP

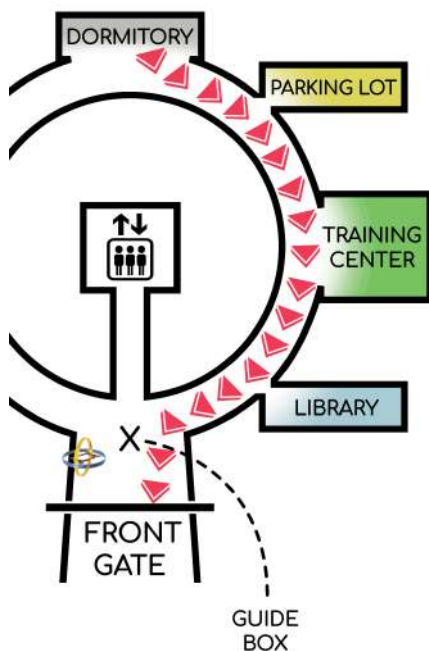
EF: Yes

Squall & Quistis



Hold X to Win.
[Trigger with Squall]

Literally just hold X to win here. It's 4 hits on Granaldo and 1 hit for each Raldo.



Hold down to exit the Training Center and return to the Dormitory the same way you came.

In the morning exit the Garden by Front Gate (Don't use the Guide Box)

After Cid has finished talking, talk to him once more to receive the Magical Lamp Item.

Exit the Garden and by using the car from earlier, drive into Balamb Town.

Optional Note:

You can reverse to Balamb if you had lined up the car earlier. Also as Squall will exit the car on the right side, you can opt to park the car outside the town and exit onto the road. By walking into town you save some seconds.

After entering Balamb, head to the left screen and use the Shop:



Balamb Shop

Menu #6

SHOP:

<u>Sell</u>	→ Elem Atk x3
	→ Hyper Wrist x1
<u>Buy</u>	→ Phoenix Down x 11
	→ Tent x 31
	→ Shotgun Ammo x 21

Right after the Shop:

Menu #7

Switch: Selphie → Squall
Squall → Quistis

Abilities I Mag-RF → All Wizard Stones → Selphie (80 Blizzagas)
L Mag-RF → Tents → Squall, Selphie (100 Curagas for both)

GF: Ifrit Learn Str +40%

Junction: Selphie Ability → add Str+20% (bottom section)
→ Auto → Atk

Hold Up+Left to approach the Train Station.

When the attendant asks, choose the first option to buy a ticket.

Continue holding UL to enter the next screen and then board the train.

Follow Zell to the hallway then into the SeeD Room.

You can mash through the text with Zell as it is the first option three times.

Laguna Dream #1

Optional Note:

If you are still maintaining step count, **walk 2 steps** at the beginning of the Laguna Dream after gaining control of the party. You can take the steps instantly by holding UR and Cancel. If you are correct you will only get 2 random encounters in the forest. One by the draw point and one at the end of the same screen or very early on the next.

Movement for each screen:

UR R (DR at end) U -> UL -> L on bridge UL UP + Mash X

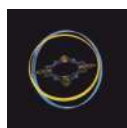


Laguna and the party will enter the vehicle and arrive in Deling.

Exit screen right.

Continue forwards on the next screen and then enter the Hotel on the next.

Do not go down the stairs until you beat Diablos!



Safety note: The next fight is not super dangerous anymore but it can go wrong if he gets too many attacks off. So if you're feeling a little nervous you can opt to do a quick save in the Hotel lobby. Nobody will think less of you.

Once you enter the hotel lobby:

Menu #8

Item: Use → Magical Lamp

Boss: Diablos

Ward → Limit x2 (Big Anchor)

Pray for a critical on the first Limit.

Cry if you get a crit on the second Anchor.

Confirm GF name after the fight.



EF: Yes



After the battle, don't worry about healing just proceed right and head down stairs. Talk with the waitress in the middle of the room and choose the second option: "Alright, I'm there!"

After some dialogue Laguna will stand up while the piano music is playing.

Here you can perform the following menu:

Menu #9

Junction: Laguna → Add Diablos (second page of GFs)

Item: Use: Potion → Laguna

Sort

Arrange: Move Elixir to Slot 1

GF: Diablos Learn Time Mag-RF (down 1)

Ability: Card Mod → Diablos

After the menu hold UL to approach Julia. After Laguna does his limping around, hold DR to return to the table. No need to mash to start the dialogue, simply approaching Kiros is enough.

Leave the room and head back up to the Lobby. Talk with the receptionist and choose the first option.

In the bedroom you will have to approach Julia twice to talk to her. Shortly after you will regain control of Squall and company on the train.



Train Mission

Arriving in Timber, walk down the stairs to trigger the Dialogue with Watts
Choose the last option: "But the Owls are still around" then follow Watts.



Note: If you are running on PSX Disc, you can optionally perform the "Rinoa Skip" here. It only works on the PSX version and a tutorial VOD can be found [here](#)

After the initial greetings onboard the train, head up the steps and enter the final room on the train. Here you will meet Rinoa. When she moves left you must walk to her and speak to her once again to progress the dialogue.

When given the chance, rename Rinoa to R.
You can simply accept Angelo's name and cancel the tutorial after that.

Afterwards head out of the room and back down to join your party. Follow them into the next room where you will be given a rundown of the mission.

Side note:

Depending on your own personal button mapping and layout setting, the diagram below may or may not be the same for you.

In any case they will be: 1 = Menu, 2 = Confirm, 3 = Card, 4 = Cancel.

If it's your first time, perhaps avail of the practice tutorial here before the actual mini-game in the mission.

Near the end of the explanation you will be given the option to press L1 to skip the tutorial on inputting the train codes.

If you're confident with the code inputs, leave the room and speak to Watts in the room outside. Choose the second option to begin the Mission.



This is the button layout if:
X is confirm, Square is Card,
Circle is Cancel and Triangle is Menu



Once the mission sequence begins, hold left and mash X to traverse the train roof.

On the third screen after approaching Rinoa select the first option.

Once Rinoa says how much time is remaining, press **down** to abseil the side of the train.

Enter the codes she calls out by pressing the correct buttons.

Input the codes 3 times.

If you think a soldier is approaching Squall, you can press **up** between inputting the codes. You can only climb back up between codes so if you need to, you can input the code incorrectly then go up. Normally you can enter the first 3 codes in one attempt if you are relatively quick with the inputs and make no mistakes.

Leave the screen by holding right.

For the second set of codes, repeat the procedure from before. However this time you will need to watch for soldiers yourself. You can hold R1 to keep the camera panned to the right. As soon as you see them moving, it's safer to finish your code and return up. The soldier patterns are random but, typically you can enter the first 2 codes before a soldier approaches, then the final 3 on a second attempt.

Input the code 5 times.

Leave the screen by holding left.

Once the mission is complete, you will be automatically presented with the menu screen.

Do the following menu:



Menu #10

Junction: Selphie → Ifrit
→ Auto → Atk
Magic, Draw, Item,
Str+20%, Str+60%

Switch: Squall → Selphie

Once the menu is complete, speak with Rinoa and choose the second option to face the next boss.



Boss: Gerogero

High Lv: 535 HP

EF: Yes

(Wait for Squall & Selphie ATB to be full)

Squall → Attack (Use Trigger)
Selphie → Item → Elixir → Gerogero

Be careful with the targeting of the Elixir here, use it on the boss.

You can also queue up the Elixir onto the Boss even as soon as the Fake President is doing it's death animation.

Once the boss has been defeated, the Forest Owls will discuss their plans. When Rinoa has kneeled down to discuss the contract with Watts and Zone, move down and speak with her to progress the dialogue.

When presented with a party selection, put Selphie in the third slot.

Party: Rinoa, Squall, Selphie

Leave the room (you must slightly move around Rinoa) and speak to Watts in the hallway once again. Choose the second option to depart the train.

Timber

Optional Note:

If you are still maintaining step count, you should get an encounter right after exiting the train. Walk 5 steps after the encounter. It's important to let the screen fade in after the encounter ends before taking these steps.

Walk down off the platform and exit the screen on the right. On the next screen exit right and then finally head down the stairs (where a lady is walking up).



Soldiers Encounter

Squall/Selphie → Attack

We avoid using Rinoa's attack because it's slower & weaker.

After the encounter, you will receive a Buel card. Move upwards to enter the pub. After the brief dialogue, approach the drunk man near the back door.



Choose the second option twice:
"Talk to him" and "Tell him about the card".

You will get a Tonberry card which will be useful later on and the drunk man will move aside.

Proceed through the doorway, into the alley and up the stairs. Once you are in front of the large television the characters will begin to talk.

Choose the first option when Squall approaches Rinoa:

"Yeah, I'll tell you"

And when Selphie approaches Squall choose the second option:

"We'll just leave it at that"

Continue up and into the TV Station once the conversation ends. Follow Seifer to the next room once he takes the president hostage.

After the TV Station sequence has ended, backtrack the way you came and follow Rinoa into the resistance leader's house.

In the upstairs room, move and talk to Quistis twice. Follow the party downstairs again and try to leave. Cancel the party selection (no need to change anything), get the free items and head out. Go right after leaving the house to meet Zone.

Afterwards don't follow Quistis and Rinoa, instead head left, then down to return to the first screen where you arrived in Timber.

This time go downward and continue until you see the screen on the right. Try to leave by walking past the guards.

Choose the second option twice to ignore their warnings and leave anyway.



Follow the road from Timber, taking the first right and heading North. Stay on the road as you cannot get random encounters while on it.

After the second bridge, go left off the road and into the forest.

Once in the forest a cutscene will begin and you will once again gain control of Laguna, Kiros and Ward.



Laguna Dream 2

Choose the first option with Laguna and continue forward.

Menu #11

Magic

Laguna → Exchange → Blizzaga → Kiros → Water

First Encounter

EF: No

Laguna/Kiros → Kill Ward

Laguna/Kiros → Attack Soldiers

Second Encounter

EF: Yes

Laguna/Kiros → Attack



After the two mandatory battles go right and take the ladder down.

Optional:

For step count, walk 7 steps after descending the ladder when the dialogue ends. Walk another 5 steps after an encounter happens. Take care to not walk until the fade out from the experience screen has finished.

After turning left in the small screen, go up at the first crossroad and then in the next screen go right. Once you reach the save point, go up and you will reach the end of the road where you will fight multiple battles.



Forced Encounters

EF: No

Laguna/Kiros → Hold X to Win

The last battle ends with a scripted attack on Kiros: Soul Crush.



You'll then be returned to Squall's party again.

Leave the forest and enter Galbadia Garden.

Galbadia Garden

Hold up and enter the Garden. Continue pretty much straight, past the main lobby and into the hallway.

Head up the stairs to the upper floor and then enter the room with the man standing outside.



In waiting room talk to the characters in the following order:



1. Zell
2. Zell
3. Selphie
4. Quistis
5. Rinoa

Once Rinoa is finished talking, walk up towards the door and then to the left. (Follow the green arrow)
After some text Squall will leave.



Head down the stairs and back out the same way you came.

After the conversation with Fujin and Raijin, draw Hastes from the center of the main lobby.

In the next screen speak with Quistis, then follow her to the entrance of the Garden.

Talk to Rinoa on the right hand side to trigger the arrival of the Headmaster.

Once the plan is explained and Irvine is introduced, choose the second option after screen fade when Irvine decides the party. Instead choose the following:

Side Note: The party members' selections are listed in order from top to bottom e.g. Irvine is the top position in this selection, Zell is on the bottom.

Party Members: Irvine, Squall, Zell

Junction Switch: Irvine → Selphie

Skip the tutorial and you will find yourself on the World map.

The next steps involving a save and hard reset are to manipulate an upcoming code we need when entering the Caraway Mansion in Deling.

Deling Train Station

Walk south west and outside the Train Station save the game.



Once you have saved, close the game (X out the window or Alt+F4 if you're confident) and reopen it again.

Load the save file you just made and enter the train station.

Optional Note:

If you are aware of the pole counting method in the Train, you can do that instead of the save and hard reset. It's not super difficult and can be learned quite easily. A guide for the manipulation can be found on speedrun.com: [Click Here](#)

Enter the Train Station and perform the following menu before boarding the train:

Take your time with this menu if needed. It may kill the run if done incorrectly.

Menu #12

Ability: Time Mag-RF Black Holes → 100 Demis → Squall, Zell, Irvine

CAREFUL HERE:

1 Samantha Soul → Irvine	= 60 Triples
1 Samantha Soul → Zell	= 60 Triples
1 Samantha Soul → Squall	= 60 Triples

GF: Diablos Learn Enc-Half

Magic: Squall → All → Zell This takes the Triples from Zell (Squall has 100 Triples)
Irvine → All → Zell This takes the rest from Zell (Irvine has 80 Triples)

Junction: Irvine → Auto Atk → R1 → Squall → Auto Atk

When you board the train, try to exit, triggering Selphie's arrival.

Follow Irvine to the hallway and count the poles on the right if you are doing the manipulation. Mash through the text while holding down to leave the screen as soon as possible, returning to the first screen once again.

Deling

Once you arrive off the train, quickly leave the screen downwards and on the next screen go up the escalator. Talk to the party member standing on the right and leave the screen by holding up.

Go left to exit the next screen and then continue left in the next.

Finally you arrive at the screen pictured. Cross the road and talk to the guard on the right.

After receiving the instructions and the map, immediately forget that plan and instead just speak to him again to enter the code.



If you have used the hard reset method, the code will be 052. If you opted to use the pole counting method, it would be a different code. (If it's not 052, try 084)

Enter Code Backwards! (E.g. Code 052 = 2 - 5 - 0)



Proceed right and after entering the Caraway Mansion; Talk to Rinoa twice, choose the second option when prompted.

After the conversation simply follow General Caraway through Deling as he explains the plan of attack for assassinating the Sorceress. You don't need to move while he is running around the large area, just mash the text away.

Once Caraway is finished explaining, leave the screen under the arch by going upwards. On the next screen go right to use the shorter path back to the Caraway Mansion. Enter the mansion once again to progress the story.

When you are given control of Quistis, try to leave the room.

Follow Caraway from the mansion, across the street and under the Arch.

Optional Note:

There are two upcoming opportunities for movement techniques here.

1. The first is to hold up when leaving the mansion to re-enter it, hold left to leave it immediately and then continue down as normal. This allows Squall to run, rather than walk on the screen outside the mansion.
2. The second movement tech is the infamous Selphie Skip. This involves getting ahead of Selphie when crossing the road, saving some seconds.

My personal setup is:

- Hold left and watch until Squall has walked 2 steps
- Next hold Down-Left until you are just above the catseye on the road (the light in the middle of the road).
- Then simply hold left to leave the screen before your party.



Talk to Caraway under the tower and follow him off this screen and down left on the next screen. You will be given control of Quistis once again where you return via the shortcut to the Caraway Mansion. Once the party gets trapped in the room you will be given control of Rinoa next.

Approach the boxes and hold up and X to climb all the way to the top. In the next screen climb the ladder and eventually you will arrive in a room with the Sorceress Edea. Approach and talk to her. After Rinoa says "Ugh!" you have a short break.

(Rinoa's left leg needs to be on the center-line of the floor to interact with Edea.)

[After Rinoa says "Ugh!", 1:05 Break]

Back with Quistis in the Mansion, approach the shelf on the left and hold confirm to pick up the wine glass.

Afterwards simply hold up and confirm to place the wine glass in the statue, revealing a hidden exit from the room.

Enter the Sewers and climb down the ladder. Interact with the water wheel to climb it. Hold up and mash confirm to interact with the gate and open it. After running up a short distance, the parade above will begin and we will be returned to Squall and Irvine.

Simply hold right and mash the text to move Squall through the parade.



Safety Note: There's a missable GF to draw in the next fight. It's relatively safe but if you are worried you can save in the next screen before climbing the boxes.

Climb the boxes the same way as before. Once you climb the ladder, hold UR and confirm then UL and confirm to climb the ledges. Move past the screen with the podium, hold down on the next screen and arrive at the next boss.

Boss: Iguions

EF: Yes
savename

Irvine → Draw Carbuncle

Squall → Attack x1

Make sure Carbuncle was acquired successfully before killing the second Iguion!!!

Squall → Attack x1



Confirm Carbuncles name after the fight (start and confirm)

After the fight, hold down to leave the screen.

Immediately after, hold Up-Right and mash X to open the hatch.

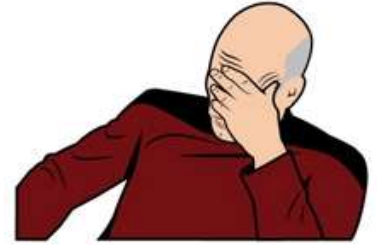


Hold Left and mash X to interact with the Sniper Rifle.

Sewers

Here is a crude sewers map I bashed together: [Link](#)

Once you see Squall dramatically facepalm 'Picard-Style', hold Up to begin moving with the party in the Sewers.



Once you pass the first screen;
Hold UL and mash confirm for 3 screens
Hold UR and mash confirm for 3 screens

Hold DR and mash confirm to climb the next waterwheel.
Hold DR and mash confirm to descend the second waterwheel.

Hold DL and mash confirm to go through the gate at the bottom.

Alternate between DR and DL while mashing confirm for 2 further screens to descend waterwheels and open gates as you go.

Keep holding DR and mashing confirm for 3 more screens until you climb one final waterwheel. Hold Up and mash confirm to go through the final gate.

Move Up for one more screen. (On step count you should get an encounter here)
In the final screen, cross the small bridge and climb the ladder.

You can hold UR in this final screen and tap walk once to get onto the footbridge easier. Hold Up and confirm to climb the ladder once across.

Once atop the ladder, interact with the ladder once more and choose the first option to go up again. In the top room, keep moving and mashing until the FMV begins. (The FMV is triggered once Selphie moves, so just keep running.)

After the short FMV, hold DL and mash to interact with the switch on the bottom left of the screen, dropping the gate and trapping the float beneath.

Optional Note: You will not have access to items to freeze enemy ATB while fleeing in the sewers but you can enter Quistis' Limit menu to pause ATB. Once Irvine finally decides to take the shot, mash cancel to close the menu (there's no need to do anything) and watch the cool FMV.

[Before Seifer: 1:05 Break]

Boss: Seifer

EF: No

Squall → Attack



Boss: Edea 1

EF: No

Squall & Irvine → Attack
[Trigger with Squall]

This can take just two attacks or maybe three if Edea is higher level. Just keep attacking until she dies.

We avoid Rinoa's attack again as it's slow and weak.

RIP Squall



[After XP screen: 0:55 Break]

That's one disc done, just three more to go.

DISC 2

Laguna Dream 3

After talking with Laguna, follow Ellone down the stairs and just exit the house. Once you are outside, go down and enter the next building. Ellone will follow.

After the short conversation, move to the bar and speak with Kiros. Choose the last option when given the opportunity and then leave.



Outside the Bar:

Menu #13

Junction: Kiros

→ Add Quez, Shiva & Diablos

→ Auto Atk

→ Magic, Draw, Item

→ Enc-Half, Str+60%

Laguna

→ GF → Carbuncle → Auto Atk

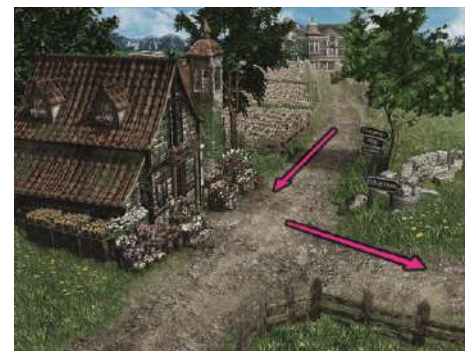
After the menu, continue downwards across the bridge and out of the village.

On the next screen take the right hand path to take the shortcut. After that screen, continue down to the end of the village to trigger the story dialogue with Kiros.

Optional Note: On the final screen where the next conversation happens, you will normally get an encounter.

After this encounter, walk 10 steps.

(Take care to start walking after the screen fade has ended)



After the conversation, just hold up and mash text back to the village. Re-enter the pub and go up the stairs on the left. Talk with Raine and report your lack of work completed. Afterwards, head back down, leave the pub and return to the bed where you began the dream. First option on the bed to end this section.

D-District Prison



Get those mashing fingers ready!

Hold DR and mash to move Zell and talk with Rinoa twice.

Just mash with Squall each time.

When back with Zell for a third time, choose the second option after the guard attacks the Moomba (the orange spiky dude).

Just mash with Squall again. It's the first option but you can just continue to mash and you will automatically select it.

When back with Zell for the fourth and final time, move DL and talk to Quistis.

Finally when Zell leaves the cell, hold left and:

Menu #14

Switch: Zell → Squall, Irvine → Quistis (Yes to confirm hp, if prompted)

GF: Carbuncle Learn HP-J
Diablos Learn Enc-None

Go left and up the stairs. Approach the two blue soldiers. Hold down as you need to approach them again once they finish speaking.

Just use basic attacks with Zell to defeat them and reclaim your weapons. Hold X to Win.

Back with Squall, you guessed it: continue to mash as the Moombas rescue him.



After the party shows off their weapons, mash cancel to close the menu and prepare to face Biggs & Wedge again

Boss: Biggs & Wedge 2

EF: Yes

Zell → Attack x2

After the super difficult battle, leave the cell by holding down.

The alarm will start once you leave. Go up the first set of stairs to your left and use the shortcut on Floor 8 to simply go up the stairs again. For the next floors you will need to run the full lap of the prison each time. Once you arrive at the top floor, go right and talk to the moomba closest to the door to open it. Enter the room and regain control of Squall.



Once in control of Squall, talk to both of the Moombas in the room. You do not get a second chance to pick these options so select carefully

Moomba Shortcuts

Top/Left Moomba

→ last option (floor 5)

Bottom/Right Moomba

→ first option (floor 4)

Leave the bottom of the screen with Squall once you have set the shortcuts.

Inside in the Elevator you need to hold up and press confirm to activate it. When at the bottom, move to the right and then up and interact with the door.

This next section happens quicker than you would think. Once the screen turns black, hold down while mashing. This will start to run as Zell when you gain control. Exit the screen before the guard can catch you.
(You need to fight him if you get caught)

After the party gets rescued by Irvine and Rinoa you will be presented with a party selection:

Party: 3rd Slot → Quistis

Junction Switch: Zell → Rinoa

When you gain control of Squall, go up all the way to the top of the Prison. You'll have to do the full lap every time this time.

With Irvine, go down the stairs to the bottom of the Prison. Every floor should have a shortcut with Irvine, except for the floor with the Save Point so you don't need to go all the way around.

After Floor 4, you regain control of Squall for a final time.
Continue upwards until you exit at the very top.
Here you face another Boss fight:

Boss: GIM52A x2 & Red Soldier

EF: Yes

Rinoa → Angelo Cannon (Limit Break)

After the fight and short text, exit once again to where you just fought the boss.

Continue along the walkway until the FMV begins.



When Squall is hanging from the walkway,
Hold Right to climb along with Squall.

Safety Note:

You will Game Over if you do not move right.



You will arrive at a fork in the road after some conversation.
Talk to Selphie twice.

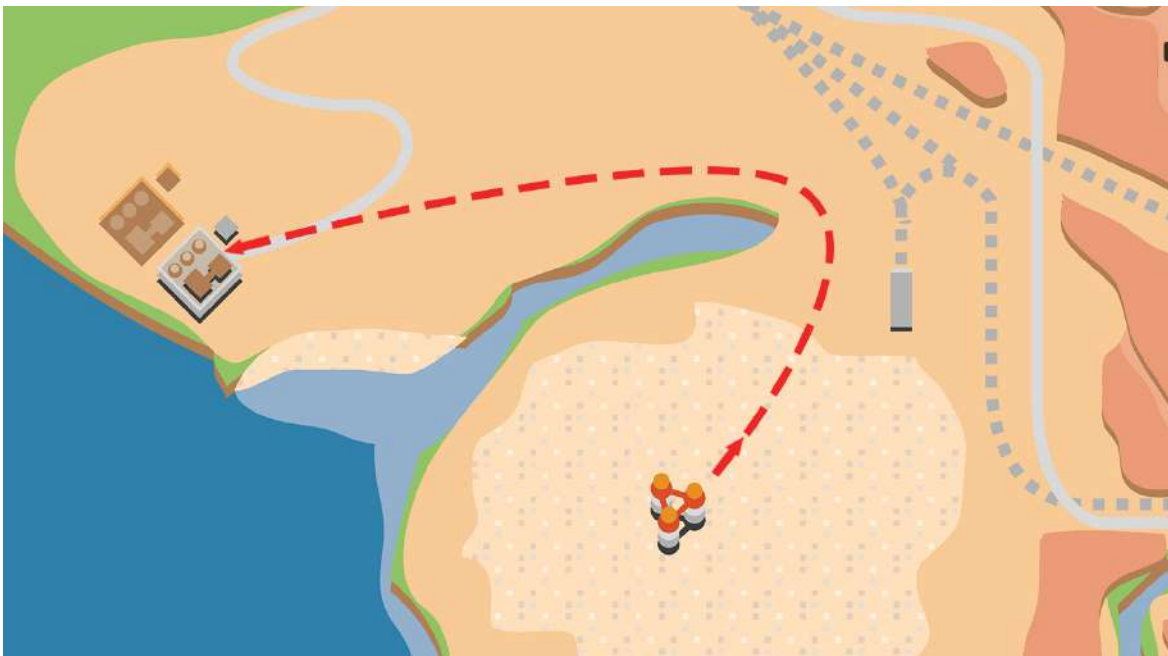
When prompted, select the group:

Party Selection: Zell, Squall, Irvine

After the party selection, choose the second option to confirm the selection.

Once the parties part ways, exit screen left and then board the train with Squall.

When in control of Selphie in the car, drive the car into the Missile Base.



Missile Base

Once the party exits the vehicles in their new Galbadian attire, head left and enter the door. In this next screen you need to interact with the card reader just to the right of the left hand door.

Enter the base and when prompted select the last option: "Try to sneak by" and continue right.



Continue onwards and across the walkway to the next screen.



1. First go to the room underneath the stairs and talk to the uppermost soldier on the right.
2. Return to the previous room and go through the upper door. Talk to the guard up on the left. Choose the first option.
3. Return to the first soldier under the stairs once again.
4. Finally return back out to where you met the first soldier earlier and enter the room.

In the Generator Room approach the console on the left and choose; the second option, then the first option.

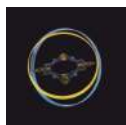
Head outside, when the guards approach choose the first option to battle them.

Forced Encounter

EF: Yes

Rinoa & Quistis → Attack

5. After the encounter, go right once more to the base control room.



Safety Note: There is a save point in the hall before entering the control room. The next two fights have potential to kill the run if you get very unlucky or do something wrong.

Encounter: Base Leader & Soldiers

EF: Yes

Rinoa & Quistis → Attack

or

Rinoa → Dog Cannon (if she get first ATB)

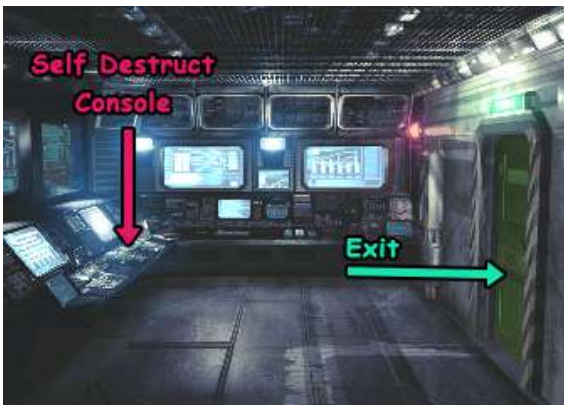
Prioritize killing the base leader first
(this red dude) as he can cast confusion on your party members.

If Rinoa or Quistis gets confused, you can try to attack them with
Selphie or use a remedy to remove confusion.



After the fight ends, hold up and mash confirm to interact with the console.
Then hold DL and mash confirm to talk to Rinoa.
Afterwards move UR into the back room.
Use the console on the left and set the self-destruct timer.

Safety Note: If this is a blind run, set the timer to 20 minutes: second option.
If you have done this before, 10 mins is the first option.



Leave the room by using the emergency door on the right.

DO NOT LEAVE THE BASE YET!
You will Game Over, *dramatically!*

After the brief cutscene with the defeated soldiers go back in the left hand door and return to the main control room entrance again.

Talk to the soldier blocking the stairs. Choose the third option when prompted and he will give you the password for the Missile Console on top of the screen.

Use the Missile Console by entering the password: **E-D-E-A**

Select [Target] → [Set Error Ratio]

Hold right to increase it to the maximum value. Confirm this selection.

Choose [Data Upload] and [Yes]

Once the upload is complete. Choose [Exit] Twice.

Go Left and up the stairs to head out once more, this time exiting the Missile Base entirely. Move right to trigger the short FMV of the missiles firing.

Menu #15

Junction: Rinoa → Ability → Add Str+40%

Item: Potion → Rinoa + Quistis to 500+ hp.
Not any more as they need to use limits in the next fight.

Move right once again to encounter the next Boss Fight.

Boss: BGH251F2

EF: Yes

Wait for both ATBs to be full then use:

In this order!

Rinoa Limit → Dog Cannon

Quistis Limit → Ultra Waves (2nd option)



You can queue Quistis' Limit once Rinoa uses hers.

If something goes wrong, you can use another Dog Cannon or simply attacking with Quistis and Rinoa will kill the soldiers that emerge from the BGH.

After the fight:

Menu #16

Switch Rinoa → Irvine
Squall → Quistis

Item Elixir → Squall

Go all the way left to the wall. Then go all the way down right. Finally return to the center to trigger the FMV.

Optional Note:

This is a setup that does minimal movement to trigger the FMV.

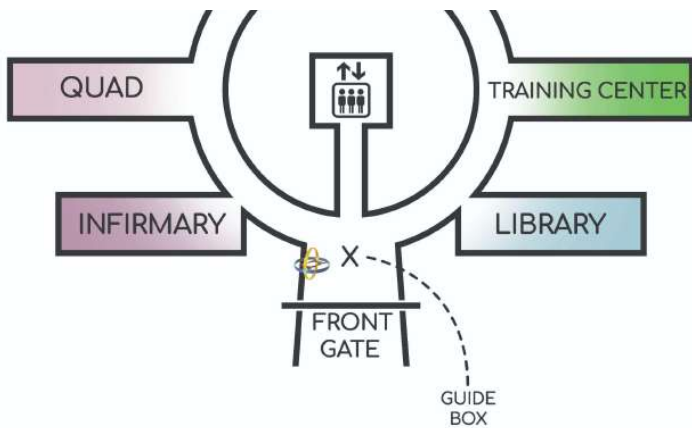
End of the fight hold DL + Menu, perform the menu then

Run: Left all the way → Right all the way → Back to center

Garden Commotion

On returning to the Garden entrance with Squall, head on into the Garden as before. When you are questioned by a Garden Faculty choose the first option. Continue until you meet Fujin and Raijin in the Main Lobby.

After the chat, leave the screen UR and make your way into the **Training Center**. Once there you will be greeted with some dialogue.



As soon as the talking ends, you can leave immediately.
(You just need to see the text happen, nothing else)

Head back out the way you came and head into the previous available entrance which was the **Library**. Move right and talk to the Garden Faculty in the hallway. Choose the second option to engage.

Encounter: Grat

Squall or Irvine → **Attack**

Hold right after the encounter ends to enter The **Library** proper. Talk to the girl pictured on the right to receive a Mega Phoenix.

(We actually don't need this item but it is a story trigger, so we have to get it)

Leave the **Library** once again and make your way directly across the Main Lobby and enter the **Infirmary**. Move left and after the brief scene before a confrontation begins, choose the second option to not help.





Finally return once more to the Main Lobby.

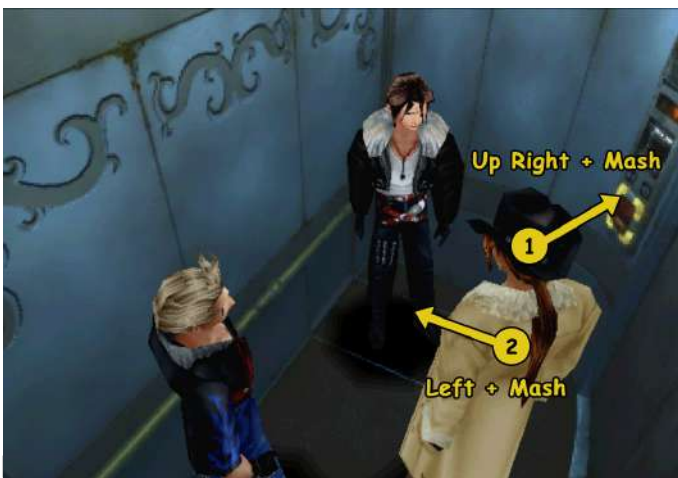
Mash the text away and follow Xu up the stairs and into the elevator.

On the second floor go left and up the hallway passed the classroom door.

Once she tells you where Cid is, head back to the elevator and up to the 3rd Floor

Enter the Headmasters Office and talk to Cid. When he takes a stumble, move right and speak with him again. (pictured right)

He'll give you the key for the Elevator, to access the MD Level. Once the music changes, move down to enter the elevator once again.



After the short FMV You'll be stuck in the lift.

UR and mash confirm, then Left and mash confirm to have the party find an escape.

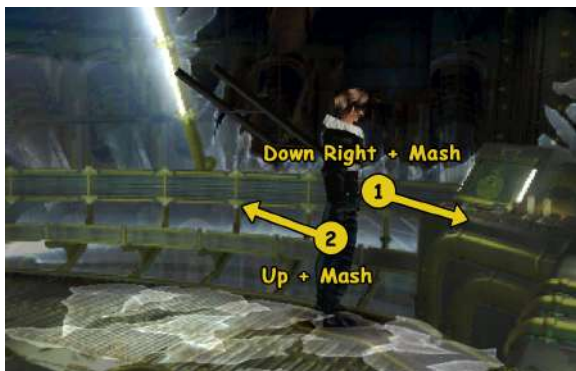
Continue down the ladder and open the hatch to the area below.

MD-Level

When Irvine asks, choose the second option to dismiss the explanation. Continue to the next screen, mount the ladder and head down. You will eventually arrive in the valve room. Here there is a minigame where you mash your card button (S on keyboard by default) to open the valve.

This is incredibly difficult to complete on the first attempt (especially on PC) but by all means you can try as it is not impossible. I'd recommend just waiting and mashing on the second attempt.

After it opens, leave through the door and head down the ladder. Continue down the walkway and run UL towards the central tower. When asked choose the second option to get Squall to check it out himself. Move Squall down a little and climb the ladder. (it's on the same screen)



Once the ladder falls, hold DR and mash to interact with the console in the picture shown.

Afterwards move up and mash confirm to get back on the ladder, choosing the first option to go back down.

Choose the second option: "Kind of", when asked and move to the green flashing light at the foreground of the screen.

Once the gate is open go down the ladder.



At the foot of the ladder pull the lever then run toward the back of the room where you will encounter Oilboyles.





Safety Note: These next guys can be jerks and just decide to kill your run. Saving here is a decent option.

Boss: Oilboyles

EF: Yes

Irvine → Shotgun Ammo x2

If they use their attack that damages all of your characters, it has a chance to curse you members.

This gives them a darker appearance and prevents them from using Limit Breaks.



If Irvine gets cursed, use a Remedy on him with Squall or Zell, then Limit.

After the encounter proceed up to the back of the screen then down the next ladder to trigger another FMV. Once that ends, continue down the ladder and approach the console on the left.

Press up and mash confirm until Squall tries something
Then right and mash confirm to make him interact once more.
This starts the machine.

[2:00 Break: after closing the "!!!" text boxes]



Talk to Cid once the sequence ends. Move to the lift platform and pick the first option to go down.

Head back into the elevator and head out to the **Balcony**. It is located through the last door at the end of the hallway on the second floor.

Once the FMV ends, re-enter and move down the hallway to encounter Xu again.

Norg

Leave the dorm and head to the main lobby, taking the right side pathway. You will be met by a Garden Faculty member who will tell you to enter the elevator.

Once you enter and arrive on the Basement floor, move down until your party and then Cid appears.

After Irvine and Zell join, menu and do this switch to lower Squall and Irvine's HP.

Menu #17

Switch

Zell → Squall (yes)

Squall → Irvine (yes)

Irvine → Squall

Squall → Zell



Safety Note: If you forget to menu, there is a last second chance right before the fight occurs. Mash the menu button while mashing text after you see the Garden Faculty members leave. The menu will open just before the fight.

Boss: Norg

EF: No

Squall → Renzokuken (once Irvine's ATB is full.)
Irvine → Shotgun Ammo x4

You can buffer a Zell attack here to prevent having three full ATBs to cycle through.

The order is in this way so they can be queued and performed before Norg can talk.

If you input them backwards, just 2 shots are required with Irvine on the Pod **however** you must select Norg (which is not the first option) manually with the Renzokuken which is quite difficult to time before he can speak.

After the fight is over, exit right and head back up the elevator.

White Seed Ship

Head left to the **Infirmary** and talk to the Doctor. Select the second option when she asks if you want to speak with Cid.

Leave immediately after selecting it and head to the Main Lobby to meet Xu.



Head up the stairs to your first encounter with the real villain of Final Fantasy VIII:

The Elevator

Round 1:

SECOND OPTION

Note: I will only mention the times that you need to select an option other than the first option. I will refer to the option as it appears in the menu, not the specific floor. This should avoid confusion.

Once you have defeated the elevator (for now), go to the **Balcony**. When the conversation is over, hold right to leave the screen.

Down the elevator once more and head right to the **Library**. Hold right to continue over and enter the screen furthest right.

After some dialogue Squall is greeted by Zell in the dormitory.

Choose the second option with Zell then **use the bed to rest to full HP!**

Hold down to exit the dorm and the next FMV sequence will begin.



Fisherman's Horizon

After Cid gives you your orders, head down the lift from the bridge and into the elevator below.

Elevator Boss

Round 2:

SECOND OPTION

Head out to the **Balcony** as before.

After the conversation head right , through the FMV screen and right again. Choose the first option to go down the elevator when you are prompted.

Optional Note: In the screen with the short FMV you can move Squall. You can position him just before the stairs to exit the screen and when the FMV ends you can leave the screen immediately. Take care not to go too far as you will be passed the loading trigger and Squall will have to walk back first.

Bottom of the Elevator: hold right, next screen hold up and then hold right once again to arrive in the center of FH.

Enter the house and head up the stairs on the left. After the conversation, head back the way you came until you meet the Mayor.

Safety Note: If you forgot to rest at the bed to fully recover your hp, now is your last chance to potion Squall and Irvine. The next Boss has an attack that can deal up to ~750hp, often killing in one hit if you're not prepared.

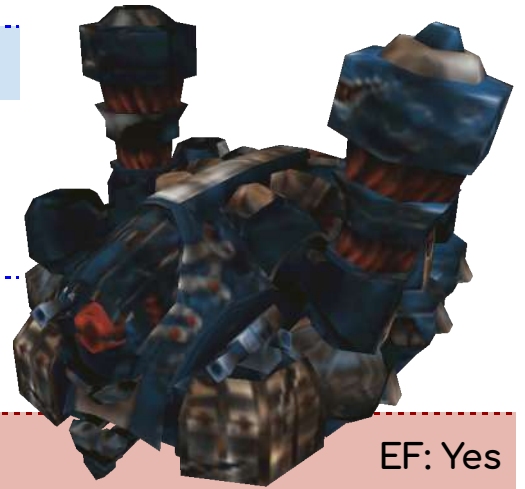


Follow the Mayor to the right, past the save point screen and up all the way on the next long screen. Choose the first option to "Go help" the Mayor then move left to the battle grounds to face your next encounters.

Forced Encounter: Soldiers

EF: No

Irvine & Squall → Attack x3



Boss: BGH251F2 (2)

EF: Yes

Irvine & Squall → Attack (Don't forget to Trigger with Squall)

Just Hold X to Win here. If Squall or Irvine dies, you can use limit with the other also.

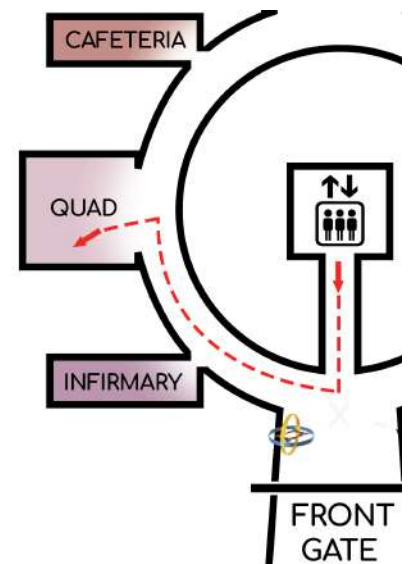
Once the fight is over and you get reunited with Selphie's party, leave the screen (there's no need to talk to Rinoa) and head back the way you came towards the Garden.

Speak with the man at the bottom of the lift and choose the first option then enter it to go back up. Continue along to the left while progressing the dialogue with Irvine as you make your way to the **Balcony**.

Head inside, down the elevator and make your way to the **Quad**.

At the bottom of the **Quad** you will find Selphie with the ruined stage. Talk to her and choose the second option to let Irvine handle it.

Squall will automatically leave when called to the Bridge.



Concert

Shortly after you will be presented with the party members trying to choose the music for the concert. There are two options available.

Eyes on Me is the faster option (by 7 seconds) but the Irish Jig will fill you with the motivation you will need to continue the run. The choice is yours.



Select the instruments using the table below and then move to the person, selecting the first option each time to confirm.

<u>Eyes on Me</u>			<u>Irish Jig</u>		
Zell	→ Sax	[Down 1]	Zell	→ Guitar	[confirm]
Irvine	→ Electric	[Down 2]	Irvine	→ Violin	[Up 4]
Selphie	→ Piano	[Down 3]	Selphie	→ Flute	[Up 3]
Quistis	→ Bass	[Up 2]	Quistis	→ Tap	[Up 1]



When you regain control of Squall, exit the dorm and talk to Rinoa.

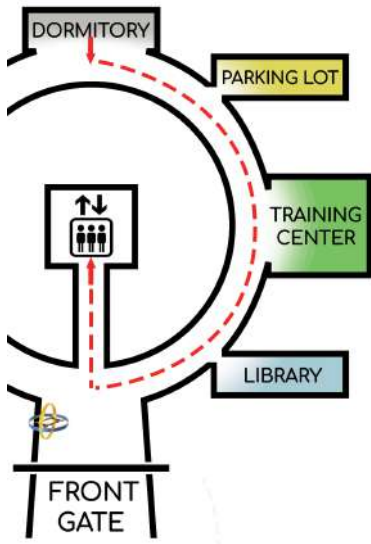
Watch for her to bend over then choose the second option.

Back in Fisherman's Horizon, talk to Irvine twice and then proceed down the walkway to the center area, where the concert will begin.

After a moment you can move right to the next screen.

Simply hold DR and mash confirm to interact with the magazine, which will begin the cutscene with Rinoa.





Once the concert ends and Squall wakes up in the morning, head to the **Bridge**.

Elevator Boss
Round 3:
LAST OPTION

Once on the bridge and the conversation ends, move forward and talk to the pilot Nida.

Choose the first option and once the short cutscene ends:
Party Selection: Irvine, Squall, Zell

Drive the Garden forward and slightly left to arrive on Balamb Island.
Park on the grass and exit the Garden.



Safety Note: There is a tough fight with a missable GF draw coming up.
There's no shame in saving as you'll be in the menu anyway!

Before you even move!

Menu #18

Junction: Irvine → Add Ifrit & Carbuncle
Auto Atk → Item
Str+20%, Str+40%, Str+60%

Squall → Ability Add: Enc-None

GF: Diabos → Learn ST Mag-RF

When you are finished with the menu,
enter Balamb Town.



Balamb Siege

Once you enter Balamb, talk to the G-Soldier in the bottom right of the screen.

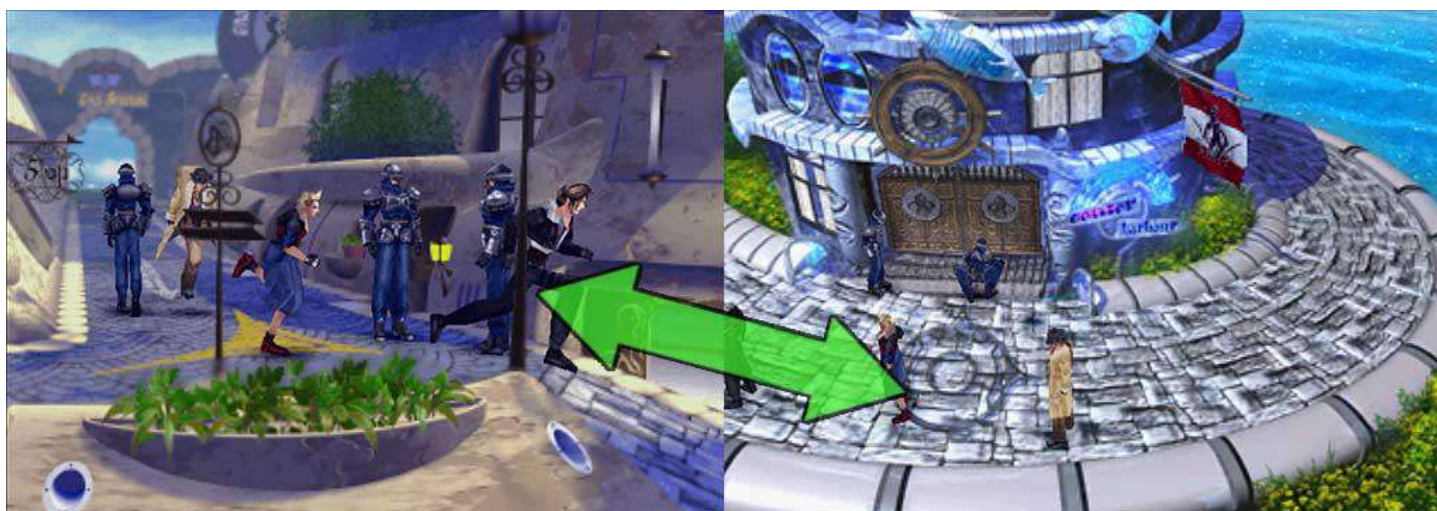
Once the conversation ends, move all the way left then all the way right to trigger his next dialogue.



When prompted put Irvine back in Party:

Party Selection: Zell, Squall, Irvine

Continue downward then enter and exit the Hotel Screen 9 times
(17 Screen Transitions in total)



Once you have done enough transitions, the soldier on the right will be crouched on the ground as shown.

Speak with both soldiers once to trigger the next Boss fight:

Boss: Raijin & Soldiers

EF: Yes



Irvine → Shotgun Ammo x3

Boss: Fujin & Raijin

EF: Yes
savename

Squall → Draw → Fujin → Pandemona (Last draw option)

Do not use Limit until Pandemona has been acquired!!!

Irvine → Shotgun Ammo x3

Confirm Pandamonas name after the fight (start and confirm)



Trabia

Once the conversation ends you'll be given control of Squall on the Bridge.

After Selphie leaves again, perform the following menu:

Menu #19

Junction: Squall → GF Add: Pandemona

Item: Elixir → Irvine

GF:
Pandemona → learn Initiative
Diablos → learn Darkside
Ifrit → learn F-Mag RF

After the menu, talk to the pilot Nida and choose the first option.

Party Selection: Zell, Squall, Selphie



Drive the Garden east, towards the Fire Cavern.

Ramp over the entrance and island hop your way around north.

If you fall off the islands, simply drive in the water and up the beach again.

Park outside Trabia and enter on foot.



Once you arrive, follow Selphie up the netting and over the wall to get inside.

Continue forward for the first screen, then go left three screens until you finally arrive at the basketball court.

Hold right while mashing so that Squall tries to leave the court when the text ends.

This triggers Selphie's arrival and another dialogue heavy section.

When a ghostly looking Squall appears, move upward to follow Irvine out the door. Outside, ignore the young Squall and move down the left path. Finally move down the steps to arrive on the beach with the party.

Once again, follow Irvine out the right hand door when given control of Squall.

Lastly, on the beach you need to talk to the characters in the following order:

1. Irvine
2. Quistis
3. Selphie



Once the scene returns to the basketball court, hold right to leave with the party and after the short conversation with Rinoa:

Party Selection: Zell, Squall, Selphie

Junction Switch: Selphie → Squall
Squall → Irvine

Next up is quite a long Garden journey to the orphanage. Using the map below as a guide, head north off Trabia and head North West to circumnavigate the map.

If you get lost, press Select to bring up the full map and try to find your way.



Safety Note: When you arrive on the island, try to position the Garden firmly on land before bumping into the G-Garden.

That is, not slightly on the beach or in the forest. This should prevent an issue later when you could be unable to exit via the front gate later on.

Garden Battle

Once Nida informs you of the approaching G-Garden, you'll be tasked with giving orders to the students.

Choose the following:

- Down 2 [Prepare Attack]
- Down 3 [Prepare Defence]
- Up 2 [Take care of the juniors]
- Up 1 [No Orders/END]



Go down the lift from the bridge and speak to Quistis.

Party Selection: Irvine, Squall, Quistis

Junction Switch: Squall → Irvine

Enter the elevator and directly after the FMV, re-enter the Elevator again. Choose the first option which brings you to the first floor and then make your way left and up to the **Quad**.



Head down the steps and continue until you can talk to Zell. As soon as the conversation ends, simply move with Squall to leave the screen. There's no need to speak to anyone else.

When you get control of Zell, move down to the left and all the way down until you get an FMV where Rinoa falls from the Garden.

After the cutscene, leave the **Quad** and head to the Front Gate.



Safety Note:

Take this next option slowly and carefully as it can be an issue if you select the wrong option.

After Irvine speaks, Squall makes the gesture on the left. Then choose:

Last Option (Irvine and Selphie)

After the FMV, head upwards to the main lobby once more and up the elevator.

If you accidentally selected the first option: junction switch Quistis and Irvine.

If you accidentally selected the second option: junction switch Quistis and Selphie.

In any case, use basic attacks with Quistis/Selphie to kill the soldiers coming up. You will also have to swap the junctions back again once you arrive at G-Garden soon.

Head into the classroom where you started the game. Hold down during the FMV so that Squall will run as the soldiers crash in the windows.

Encounter: Paratroopers

EF: No

Irvine → Shotgun Ammo x1

After the fight, talk to the SeeD protecting the children. Exit the classroom and head to the Elevator again.

Elevator Boss

Round 3:

2ND OPTION



Once you enter the Bridge, Squall will be beckoned to the cockpit by the Doctor.

[Once you clear the text box with 'You probably don't know...': 1:50 Break]

After the speech, go down the elevator to the second floor. Continue all the way towards the balcony exit and speak to the child.

Once the Air-Soldier pins Squall against the door:

1. Mash confirm to open the option window: select the last option.
2. Mash confirm again and choose the second option, opening the door and falling outside.



Air-Soldier

The controls are as follows for this minigame:

Confirm = Kick
Card = Block
Cancel = Punch

The strategy is to hold kick+block buttons together until the Air-Soldier blocks at the same time as Squall. Once you see this pattern, hold punch+block buttons together.

If done correctly, Squall will alternate between a punch and then blocking at the same time as the Air-Soldier.

If the Airsoldier falls out of the blocking pattern, simply start again with kick+block and move to punch+block.

Avoid using Deathblow as it can softlock if used on the first screen.

[After winning Air-Soldier: 1:00 Break]

Once Rinoa bends over (pictured):
Name Griever (Start and Confirm)
Then choose the second option.
Move Up-Left then Left to enter the G-Garden.



G-Garden

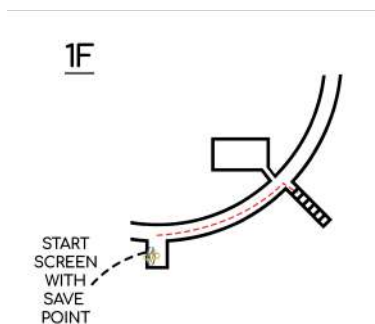
Once the party has finished talking select the following party:

Party Selection: Irvine, Squall, Selphie

Junction Switch: Selphie → Squall

Note: This place can be very confusing if it's your first time through here.

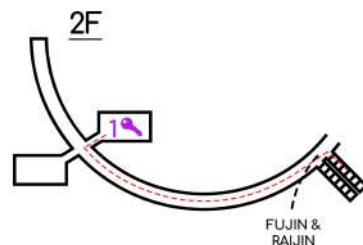
I've tried to divide the process of finding keycards into going to and from the save point screen where you start to make it easier. It is displayed as best as I can to make the movement easiest.



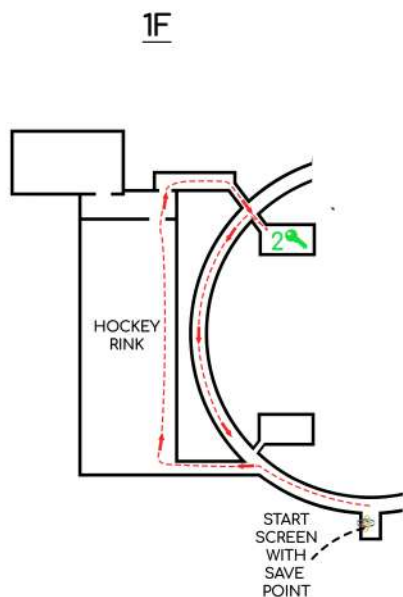
Go right, forwards and then up the stairs on the right.

Once on the 2F head then Left, Up the hall and in the right door.

Talk to the student here to receive Key#1



Retrace your steps going back down to the screen where you started.



This time head left and take the left side door on the next screen.

Head straight across the Hockey Rink and out the other side to arrive back on a hallway.

Cross the hallway and enter the right door,

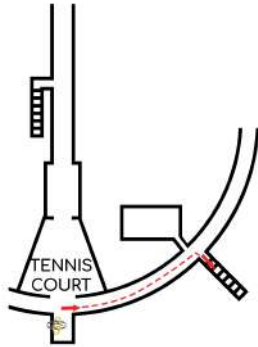
Talk to the student here to receive Key#2.

When you exit the room, move down and unlock the door.

Continue down until you once again find yourself at the first screen.

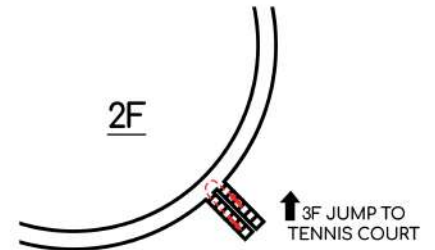
1F

Go right and up the stairs as we did earlier.



This time continue up the stairs to the top floor.
You can hold Up after the 2F.

Exit the top door and move left until you jump off the ledge and traverse the tennis court.



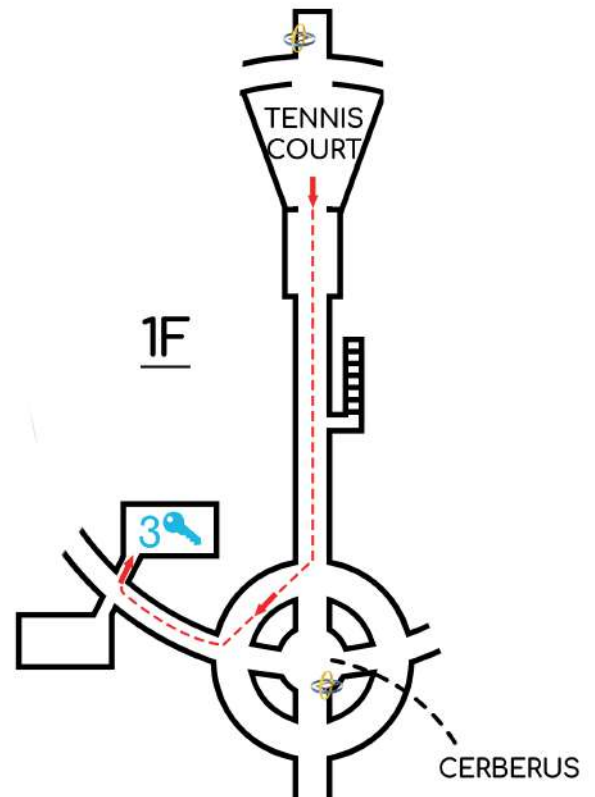
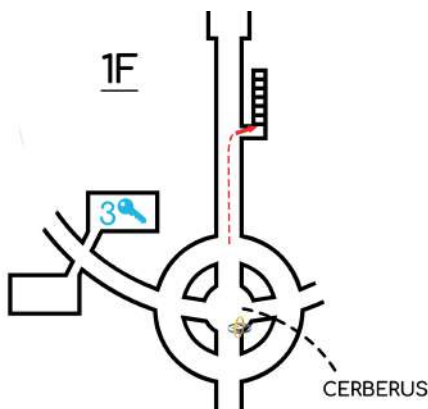
Continue to move downward until you arrive on the large lobby screen with Cerberus in the middle.



Cerberus Skip

Very carefully, hold Down-Left on this screen to navigate past Cerberus without fighting them.

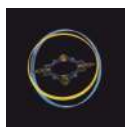
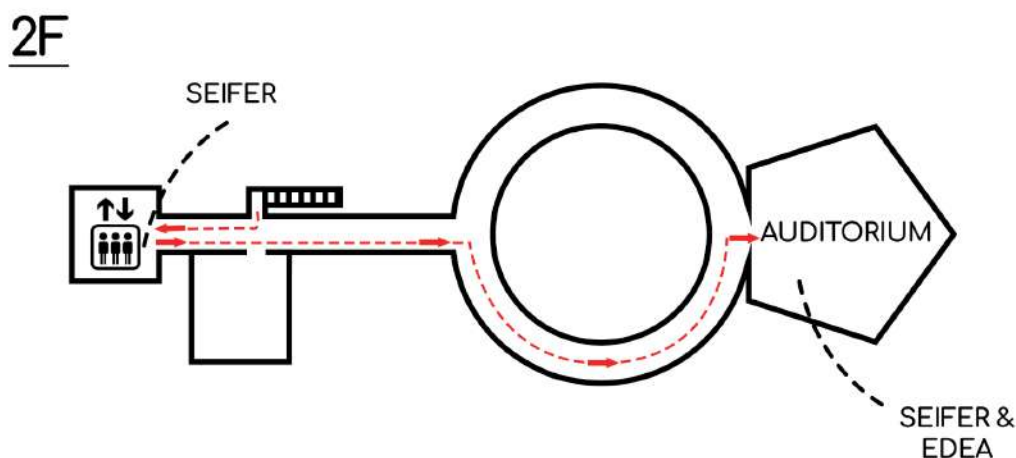
Down the next hallway and enter the left door.
Get the Key#3 from the student inside.



Return to Cerberus Screen and then move upwards..

Head up the staircase on the right, which you passed just earlier.

On the 2F, head left towards Seifer. Move forward and into the elevator.



Safety Note: If you're not confident there is a save point in this room where you can save before approaching Seifer and Edea. This first fight isn't too scary though, but you may not have saved in some time.

Simply approach Seifer and Edea to begin the next Boss fight:

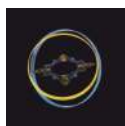


Boss: Seifer 2

EF: No

Either Limit will work.

Squall or Irvine → Limit Break
(If Irvine: Normal Ammo x2)



Safety Note: If you haven't saved above, here is a final chance to save before the Edea 2 fight. This fight is much scarier than the previous one, so maybe save here if you haven't already.

(Use the above map of the 2F for reference here if required.)

Exit the room and head right.

Continue all around the upper Main Lobby until you arrive in the Auditorium.

Approach the podium to trigger Edea's arrival.

Boss: Edea 2

EF: No

Wait for Squall and Irvine's ATBs to both be full. We will use both limits right after one another so that Edea will not get a turn after Seifer dies. You can queue the limit on Seifer while he is dying and it will auto target Edea.

Order doesn't matter, just that you use both Limits together.

Once the first limit is queued you can buffer Selphie's attack to make finding the second limit easier.

Squall → Renzokuken
Irvine → Normal Ammo x4 (or until zero)

In the exp screen after the fight, try to see if you get either a 'Hero' or 'Holy War' drop. These are important for the end game section.

GG on Disc 2!



DISC 3

Leave the **Infirmary** and exit the Garden via the Front Gate.

Party Selection: Zell, Squall, Selphie

Note: If you cannot leave, just go to the bridge and leave that way.

Optional Note: You can re-enter the Garden immediately after exiting to gain control of it and drive it slightly toward the Orphanage. (Squall exits on the right side)

Enter the Orphanage and enter the building.



Optional Note: There is a movement technique that can be performed once you enter the orphanage called 'The Cid Skip' saving about 10s.

On PC, the technique is to hold UR when entering the room, which locks Squall in a position. Then for a brief moment, release R (while still holding U) then back to UR again. (Roll your thumb)

This is just enough to get Squall towards the exit without Cid appearing.

From Kiitoskia's notes:

On PSX, the method is to hold walk and up on the D-pad until Squall starts turning left (you need to react quickly) and then hold Up + Right. You can release walk once around the corner.

Head out the right hand door, approach and talk to Edea. Mash only with the confirm button here because you can accidentally challenge Edea to cards.

Watch Edea as she looks at Squall, then Zell, then Selphie, then Squall. Finally when she says "I ask for your support..." , hold down to end the sequence.

Leave the Bridge and head to the **Infirmary**.

Enter the room with Rinoa asleep to join Laguna once again.

Laguna Dream 4

Laguna → Squall
Kiros → Irvine
Ward → Quistis

When the dialogue ends you're presented with another mini-game.

Mash Cancel = Attack
Hold Card = Block

You can quickly attack as soon as the HP bars appear, allowing you to get in a cheeky early hit on the dragon. Other than that, you can just attack until you see the dragon move, signaling an attack and try to block it. Some attacks are just unblockable however.



If you lose, it's the first option to try again. The second option will Game Over.

Careful Here!!!

Once the other party members arrive the screen will fade to black. Choose the second option then perform this menu:

Menu #20

Junction:

Kiros → Ifrit → Auto Atk
→ Item
→ Str+60%

L1
Ward → Carbuncle → Auto Atk
→ Item



After the menu, head right and interact with the Ruby Dragon to fight it.

Boss: Ruby Dragon

EF: Yes

Kiros → Limit

White SeeD Ship

After the dream sequence ends, head out of the **Infirmary** and exit the Garden via the Front Gate once again.

Party Selection: Zell, Squall, Selphie

Note: If you cannot leave, just go to the bridge and leave that way.

Enter Edea's Orphanage as before and head out to the back and speak to her. She will give you a letter to show the White SeeDs when you locate them. Once you have the letter, head out and enter the Garden.



[This map is not super accurate but it will get you very close to the Seed Ship]

Once in the Garden, face north and drive directly off the beach heading between the two land masses either side.

Once on your way, keep right and after the second right turn you will see the White SeeD ship tucked into a corner.

Simply bump into the ship to board. Once on the ship, continue right until you enter the room with the Captain.

When the first conversation ends, move to talk to him a second time.

Once this sequence finally ends, leave the Bridge and make your way to the **Infirmary** for a final time. Enter the room with Rinoa to have Squall embark on his quest with Rinoa on his back.

Hold right and mash confirm to progress through the Fisherman's Horizon screen and when Squall is finished talking on the tracks, hold UR and mash confirm to pick up Rinoa once more and continue onward.



Great Salt Lake

Squall arrives at the train station, joined by the rest of the party and Edea.

Talk with Edea, choosing the first option and try to move to trigger the arrival of Irvine and Selphie shortly after.

Select your party when prompted:

Party Selection: Irvine, Squall, Quistis
Junction Switch: Quistis → Irvine

Move upwards to exit the screen, avoiding the other characters.

On the World map, simply move East to enter the Great Salt Lake.

When given the option to change parties members again, cancel the menu and continue forward.

Go up on the first screen, hold right on the second. Hold UL on the third and Left on the fourth.



Finally, move forward and UR to encounter the next Boss

Boss: Abadon

EF: Yes



Similar to Gerogero on Disc 1, we just need to use an Elixir on the Boss to defeat them.

Enter the Item menu then take your time selecting.

Anyone → **Item** → **Elixir** → **Abadon**

(If using List Targeting: Up X X Left X)

(If using Cursor Targeting: Up X X Up X)

Safety Note: **IMPORTANT!**

Revive and Heal Squall to 500+ HP if he died or was seriously injured in the Abaddon Fight! You will more than likely **GAME OVER** in the next Laguna Dream if Laguna has low HP for the first fight.

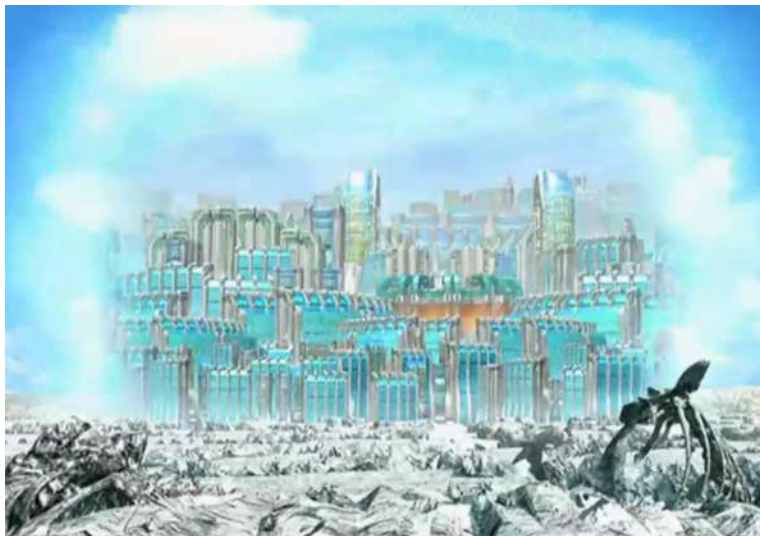


Continue Up-Right to leave the screen after Abaddon and arrive at the screen pictured.

Move to the center of the next screen and try to interact with the cliff to climb the ladder.

(I use the little semi-circular hole in the cliff as a visual marker to locate the invisible ladder. You can see it just under the characters climbing.)

Once you enter the shaft, continue forwards through the linear pathway. You simply must wait on all the elevators while progressing the text. When the elevator has finished moving, hold up and mash confirm to open the next doorway.



Once the city of Esthar has been introduced the party will soon fall asleep and be brought for a final time to a Laguna Dream

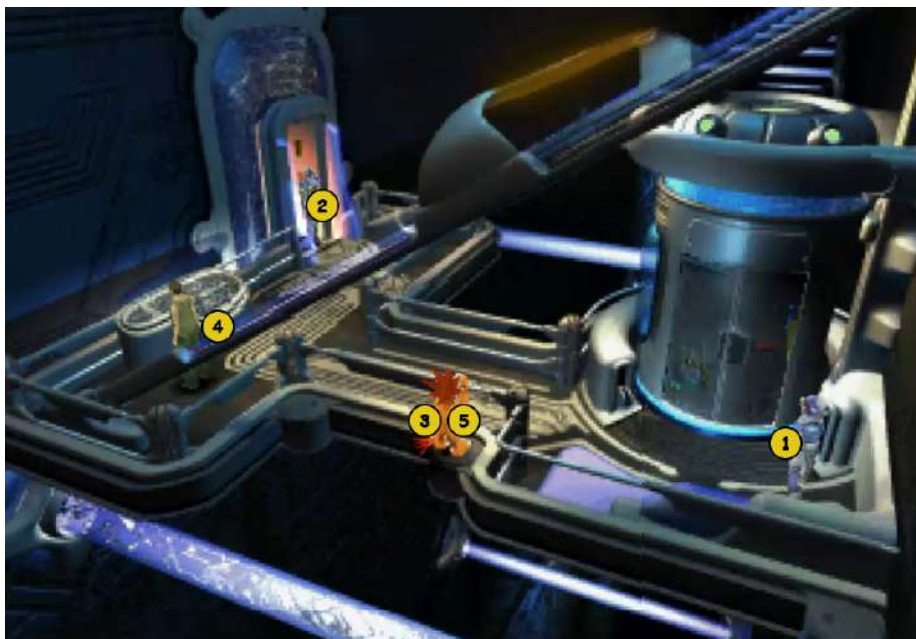
Laguna Dream 5

Laguna → Squall
Kiros → Quistis
Ward → Irvine

Last reminder to heal Laguna if Squall died or is in low HP (Less than 200 HP)

Talk with people in the following order:

1. Guard on the Right
2. Guard in the Back
3. Moomba
4. Man on Left
5. Moomba



First Encounter

EF:Yes

Laguna → Attack

After the fight, choose the first option to use the menu:

Menu #21

Junction:

Kiros → Ifrit → Auto Atk
→ Item
→ Str+60%, Str+40%

After the menu, select the second option to start the next fight.

Second Encounter

EF:Yes

Laguna/Kiros → Attack Gesper & Elite Soldier first
→ Kill Ward
→ Attack Esthar Soldier



After the fight, move right to enter the Elevator. Once in the upper level, exit via the door on the right. Mash the text then head back in and down the elevator once more when you regain control of Laguna.

When you get down, move left to approach Doctor Odine, triggering the next fight.



Elastoid Encounter

EF:Yes

Kiros → Attack Elastoid
Laguna/Kiros → Attack x2

Only Kiros can kill the Elastoid in one attack.

Afterward, get back in the elevator and head outside. You will be taken to Odines Laboratory in the car.

Once you arrive you will have another forced encounter with two Esthar Soldiers.

Soldier Encounters

EF:Yes

Laguna/Kiros → Attack x2



Move forward and interact with the central seat, choose the first option. Enter the room above to have yet another forced encounter with 2 Esthar Soldiers.



Interact with the computer on the right after the encounter. Ensure it says: [Unlocked] after the interaction, as there are two consoles here. Holding right and mashing X should make you interact with the correct one.

Go back down the lift and enter the door at the end of the lower room, to have Laguna finally be reunited with Ellone.

Esthar

You regain control of Squall in the Esthar Palace after talking with the present day Doctor Odine. Simply leave the room by holding down when you can.

Hold right for two screens and board the lift, choosing the first option to leave.

Exit screen right for 2 screens, then Down for a further 3 screens.



Interact with this terminal and choose the first option to rent a car.

Drive to Lunar Gate:

Take the first hard left then continue straight while veering slightly right when you need to.

Once you exit the greater city, keep the water on your right until you round the corner heading South East, then drive straight to the Lunar Gate.



Park outside and enter the Lunar gate on foot.



Enter the doorway on the left and when inside, follow the girl to the room on the left.

In the next room, follow the scientist to the left.

After he explains the plan about going to space, choose the second option.

When asked to trust Zell with the care of Edea, choose the second option again.

You'll be asked to select the third member to go to space with Squall and Rinoa:

Party Selection: Rinoa, Squall, Quistis

Then choose the first option to confirm your selection, then walk into the pod.

Once Squall has departed, leave the Lunar Gate with Zell the same way you entered.

Outside you'll be prompted to select a party:

Party Selection: Edea, Zell, Selphie

Junction Switch: Squall → Selphie



Optional note: If you've done this journey before, it's not too difficult to reverse all the way back to Esthar rather than turning the car around.

Outside, enter and drive the car back the same route you came from Esthar City.

Park the car on the blue part of the road and simply walk into Esthar on the red section of road. This skips the rental car return FMV sequence.



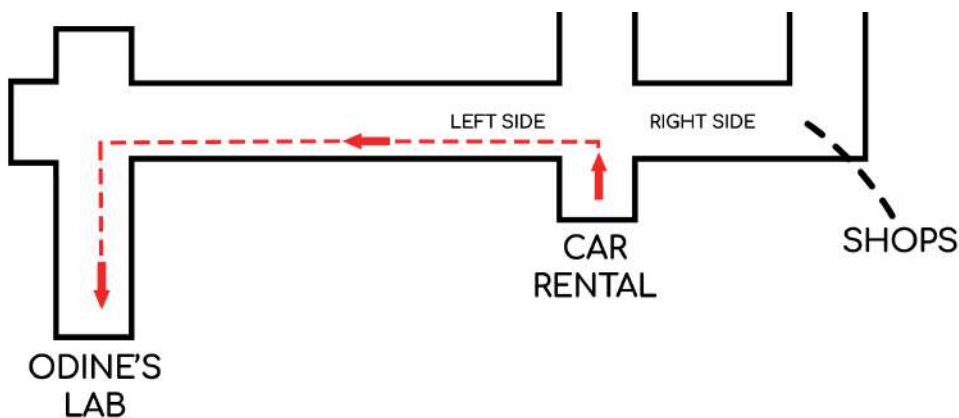
Safety Note: Big menu coming up. Maybe save on WM.



Leave the car rental screen and head left for 2 screens.

Go down between the guards on the next screen and approach Odine's Laboratory entrance.

Speak with the person at the doorway and choose the first option to enter.

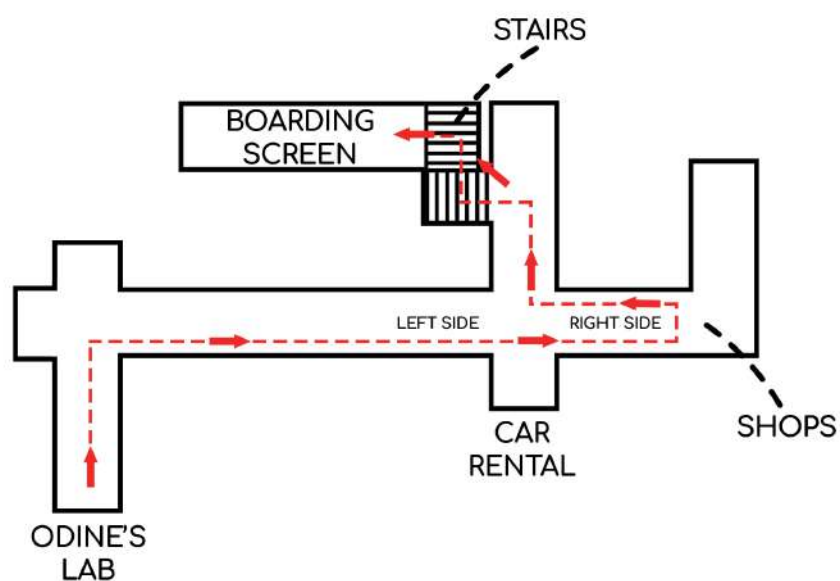


Approach the seat lift as before, choosing the first option to ascend. Enter the console room and speak to Odine.

After he has explained the situation about the approaching Lunatic Pandora, exit the same way you entered and mentally prepare yourself for the Esthar Menu. Go back down the lift.

Have a quick look at this map of where you will be going for the menu:

Once you exit the Laboratory the 20:00 timer will begin.



GL with menu

Note: if you do not board the Lunatic Pandora before 12 minutes click: [here](#)

Esthar Menu

Make your way right, towards the shopping screen while closing any text boxes that appear along the way.

Perform the first menu below anywhere before entering the shops.

Menu #22

Abilities: Card Mod → Buel & Tonberry

GF: Ifrit → Learn Ammo RF,

Items: Sort → Use: Potion → Squall & Irvine (to between 500-700hp)
Str Up x2 → Irvine

Bottle: Page 1 last slot → switch with Hero (Page 5 slot 3)
If you had the Holy War drop from the Edea fight, it's going to be on Page 6 and you can move that instead.

Note: Interact with the shops on either side of the shopping screen and select yes to use them.

The last shop is the one on the bottom right: Cheryl's Store.

The first shop is the top left one: Rinrin's Store - Pet Shop-

Menu #23

(Hold Left and X to attempt to enter the last shop)

Enter Last Shop: → Rosetta Stone

(Mash X to enter first shop)

Enter First Shop: → Sell Mega Potions (2nd item)

→ Buy 4x Str-J Scrolls,
3x HP-J Scroll

(If you are short on money, sell Force Armlet + Mega Phoenix also.)

Once you are finished with the shops, exit the shop screen downwards, then up on the next screen. Move to the top of the stairs to your left.

Note: I recommend doing the next menu here, because if you accidentally close the menu while on the boarding screen you might accidentally trigger the boarding cutscene.

Menu #24

Sorry for the smaller text but it's important to have it all on one page.

Junction Switch: Edea → Quistis
Squall → Selphie

Ability:

St Mag-RF: Magic Stone → 5 Berserks → Edea
Time Mag-RF: Wizard Stone → 100 Stops → Squall
Black Hole → 100 Demi → Everyone
L Mag-RF: Tents → 100 Curagas → Zell & Rinoa
Zombie Powder → 20 Zombies → Everyone
F Mag-RF: Flare Stone → 1 Flare → Everyone
Wizard Stone → 20 Firagas → Squall

Magic:

Edea → Exchange → Thunder & Water → Delete (Square then Yes)
→ Haste → Zell → Split (Page 2 of Zell's magic, so both have at least 1)
→ Berserk → Zell → Split (Page 8 of Zell's magic, so both have at least 1)
R1 x3
Squall → Blizzaga → Delete (Square then Yes)
→ Triples → Edea (left once) → Take All
→ Rearrange → Manual → Move Curaga, Demi, Triples and Stops to Page 8.

Item:

Sort → Use: HP-J → Shiva, Siren, Diablos.
Str-J → Quez, Siren, Diablos & Carbuncle.
Rosetta Stone → Pandemona

Junction:

Edea → Off → All → Yes
(Use R1 to cycle through characters here)
Zell → GF → Add Siren
→ Auto Atk → Magic, Item
Squall → GF → Remove Quez & Shiva & Diablos, Add Ifrit.
→ Auto Atk → Item → Str+20%, Str+40%, Str+60%,
Irvine → GF → Add Quez
→ Auto Atk → Item
Rinoa → GF → Add Carbuncle
→ Auto Atk → Item
Edea → GF → Add Shiva & Diablos
→ Auto Atk → Magic, Darkside, Item
→ Str+60%, Enc-None

Junction Switch: Zell → Selphie
Zell → Edea
Edea → Squall

Only if you have time remaining before the 15:00 boarding time, you can do some of the following. They are just optimisations, so skip if you don't have excess time.

Listed in priority:

- Arrange your magic. Moving important spells to pg 8 like you did with Squall earlier. Prioritize Zell & Selphie if you've already done the switch above. You can ignore Squall and Quistis as they have no GFs but may have magic.
- You can move all ammo related items to the top of page 18 for easier access later: Chefs Knife - Fuel - Running Fires and/or Missiles (if you have them)
- You can move Megalixir to Page 1 slot 1 also for later.
- You can set GFs; Quez, Shiva, Siren, Diablos & Carbuncle to learn nothing.
- You can go to Config and change battle speed to 100% for the boarding fight.

The Lunatic Pandora's first boarding point is the screen to the left. You can board between 15:00 and 12:00 remaining.

This includes winning the fight, so 12:45 is a safe cut off.

DO NOT RUN FROM THE NEXT FIGHT!

Boarding Encounters

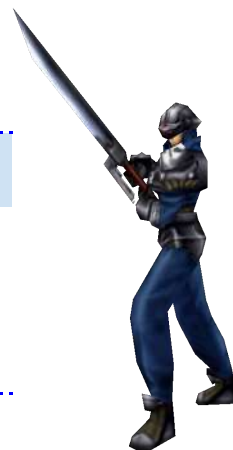
(DO NOT RUN)

Did I mention do not run?

Edea/Zell

→

Attack x2



Safety Note: If you did not board the Lunatic Pandora before 12 minutes click: [here](#)

Proceed to the 2nd contact point (with 10:00 left on the timer until 5:00)

→ 2 screens above the shops, then left at the intersection.

or 3rd contact point if required (with 3:00 or less remaining on the timer).

→ Screen above the shops.

Besides losing some time, it has no consequence on the route so you can continue as normal.

Safety note:

There is a very small chance that Ifrit did not reach level 10 and you were not able to set him learning Ammo-RF in the previous menu.

If this is the case, remove Enc-None in the Lunatic Pandora and force a random encounter. Kill enemies until Ifrit is level 10. Set Encounter-None back on and continue as normal.

Lunatic Pandora

Once you have entered the Lunatic Pandora,
perform the following menu:

Menu #25

Config:	Battle Speed 0%
Switch:	Edea → Squall



If you boarded Contact Point #1

Head straight up the stairs, then enter the Left elevator (01)
Continue all the way up to the top of the next two screens.
Finally you will encounter the MT-8 and get ejected from the Lunatic Pandora.

If you boarded Contact Point #2

Hold left for two screens to travel along the tube. On the third screen you'll see an elevator labeled 03. Enter it to arrive at the central lobby and get automatically ejected from the Lunatic Pandora.

If you boarded Contact Point #3

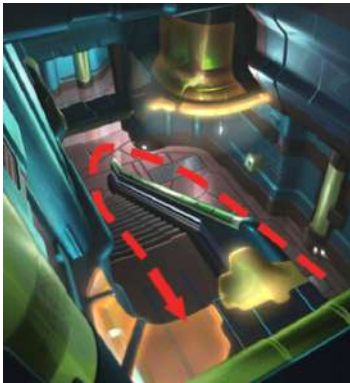
Hold up to travel through the first tube, then exit the top of the next screen to encounter the MT-8 and get ejected from the Lunatic Pandora.

Either way you will see the Lunatic Pandora sail off into the sunset and you'll begin your Space adventures with Squall.

Space

After the FMV Hold Right while mashing until Squall leaves the first screen. This skips having to wait for gravity to be restored and the need to pick up Rinoa.

Enter the door immediately on your left then the upper door to drop off Rinoa in the medical chamber.



Leave the medical area and continue up the hallway. Head upstairs (pictured left) and continue all the way down until you meet Ellone. Talk to her and she will follow you.

Head back downstairs and this time continue forwards to the control room of the Lunar Base.

After your party member speaks, go to the right console.

After the FMV, head out of the control room and back towards where you left Rinoa.

Once the alert sequence starts, move towards the medical area to see a possessed Rinoa.

Once you can see her, exit the hallway upwards once. Then re-enter and exit the screen when you see Rinoa has moved 2 steps.



Repeat this one more time so that she appears on the next screen.

Next you can simply run ahead of her into the control room.



In the Control room, simply hold up to approach Rinoa and get pushed away.

Afterwards approach the console on the right once again.

Head out of the control room and up the stairs.

After the short conversation, enter the locker room on the right. (pictured)

Approach the left exit to watch Rinoa leave.

Use the locker and change into the space suit.



Use the left exit to follow Rinoa.

When floating in the next screen there's no need to follow Rinoa. Don't move and just mash.

Wait for the text box:

"(...Sorceress Ultimecia...)" to be visible and then leave the screen by holding down.

Exit the locker room and make your way back to the control room one final time.

Talk to Piet, the scientist on the Left of the control room.

Once everybody leaves the right of the screen, talk to Ellone.

Then follow them to the Escape Pod (exit right)

Board the lift with Ellone after an FMV you will be on a screen with a save point.

Safety Warning: IMPORTANT!

You can softlock the game quite easily on the next screen!

Hold Walk on the screen after the save point to prevent this



Enter the right hand screen (holding walk) and talk to Ellone. Enter the empty chamber.

Mash... text...

Just after the cutscene with Ultimecia
Ellone will fall.
Talk to her to progress the dialogue again.

Mash... for... ages....

Finally Squall will decide to go out to space and rescue Rinoa.

Safety Note: You will Game Over if you fail this minigame!

For Safety, wait until you can see Rinoa appear on the screen.

Then hold cancel to speed up the camera and position her in the middle of the screen.

Simply keep her here until the timer reaches zero.





Ragnarok

Eventually you'll find yourself on board the Ragnarok Spaceship.

Once there, move forward and Squall will interact with the gravity switch and then proceed forward.

These next bosses need to be killed in matching colours, so make sure to avoid the incorrect colours when reaching the next fight.

Safety Note: If Squall falls below 700 HP during any of these battles, potion him between fights. These guys hit fast and can quickly make a situation turn bad.



Purples

Go down the stairs on the right and fight the first purple.
Go up through the next doors and quickly move through the left door.

Fight the second Purple here.

Boss: Propagators

Squall → Attack (No Trigger required)

For the first two fights, these guys will potentially get some attacks in.

Once you junction Initiative after the first 2 fights, Squall will always get the first attack. From then on you can simply hold confirm when starting each fight.

Once the Purples are defeated:

Menu #26

Junction: Squall → Ability → Add Initiative

GF: Pandemona → Learn Spd-J

Green



Go through the door on the left and fight the Green that is just standing there.

Afterwards, head back to the right to the screen where you fought the first purple. Enter the door on the back-right of the room. Fight the green Prop in there.



Safety Note: Once you defeat the second Green Propagator, there is a save point behind them. We need to get an Aura stone drop from the next two fights. If it does not drop at least one, you will need to reload and fight them again.

Watch for Aura Stone item drops after defeating these Reds.



Red

Once again, head back the way you came and through the large doors. Finally, fight the red Prop that you've passed twice now. Go left through the next screen and go down in the room with the elevator (where you fought the first green)

The second red will attack you in the next screen.

If Aura stone did not drop, reload the save and fight the reds again.



Yellow

Continue down after defeating the last red. Fight the yellow in the next screen.

Head straight back up and enter the room on the left of the elevator where you fought the first green. You will be automatically attacked here.

Once the final propagator is defeated, you can finally use the elevator to enter the cockpit with Rinoa.

[Once Squall is in the seat and you close the textbox "Thanks"
(Squall beckons Rinoa to the seat)
Eyes On Me Cutscene: 5:30 Break]



Return to Earth

Once Rinoa leaves, board the Ragnarok and enter the left door.
Enter the Conference Room, where you fought the final Propagator.
Once Selphie and Irvine leave and after the music stops, try to exit the room.
(After Squall says "We're going to get Rinoa back!")

Enter the cockpit to finally gain control of the Ragnarok for yourself.

[Side Note: The Ragnarok has an Autopilot feature if you use Select to open the World Map in full screen and simply select your destination.]



The movement buttons are much the same as the Garden movement. Card button to go forward and Confirm button to exit the vehicle.

Fly North East towards the Sorceress Memorial.

Park outside and enter on foot



Continue linearly, rescuing Rinoa and exiting the Memorial. You will shortly find yourself back in the Ragnarok Cockpit once again.

Fly the Ragnarok to the Edea's Orphanage on the Centra Continent.





Park nearby and before entering the Orphanage, perform the following menu:

Menu #27

Party Selection: Rinoa, Squall, Irvine

Junction Switch: Irvine → Squall
Squall → Zell

Ability:

Ammo-RF: (These will be on pg18 if you did optional arranging in Esthar)

Chef's Knife → AP ammo x20

Running Fire and/or Missile → Demolition ammo x100

Fuel → Fire Ammo



Enter the Orphanage and go left to enter the Flower Field.

Once Irvine leaves, Move Right and talk to Rinoa. (It's possible to soft lock here if you try to talk to Angelo so just moving right is very important)

After Zell appears, exit the Orphanage.

Just after leaving, perform the following switch on the World Map:

Menu #28

Party Selection: Irvine, Squall, Selphie

Board the Ragnarok,
Fly to the Esthar Airstation.



The building is pictured above.

The Air Station is on the north west part of Esthar City, a cylindrical tower. Once the Ragnarok is positioned over it you can press confirm to enter Esthar directly.
[You can always open the map and use Auto-Pilot if you are unsure of its exact location]

Exiting the Airstation, head upward for two screens. On the third screen hold right to arrive at the front of the Esthar Palace. Use the chair lift to enter the Palace by choosing the first option.

Once inside, go left for three screens and up on the last screen to enter the throne room. After the initial monologue, continue forward.

Move up and talk to Laguna, choose the first option.

After Odine speaks then waves his arms, choose the second option.

Finally talk to Laguna once more and choose the first option.



Lunatic Pandora



After some more dialogue you will be automatically put in control of the Ragnarok .

Fly to Lunatic Pandora, which is hovering above Tears Point.

Leave the cockpit, head right and out to exit the Ragnarok.

Optional note: You can talk to Zell on the bridge, choosing the first option to gain control of the Ragnarok on the World Map. Then simply re-enter the Lunatic Pandora once more to avoid having to walk out manually.

Boss Rush Hype

Move down the steps to be met by Fujin and Raijin.



Boss: Fujin & Raijin 2

Note: From now on Irvine will have initiative, meaning his ATB will be full at the start of each fight. Aim to use his limit immediately in each of the next fights. (By simply holding the right button at the start, can often find it instantly)

Irvine → Fire Ammo x3

Once defeated, continue down the steps. In the next screen walk forward all the way and veer right at the end. Ignore Biggs, Wedge and the save point on the next screen and simply continue left for the next few screens until you enter the 02 lift.

Board the 01 lift on the left of the screen and continue upwards.



Safety Note: There's a save point right here and the next boss can be a bit of a stinker sometimes. It is worth saving if you're not feeling super confident.

Continue upward for one final screen to be confronted with Mobile Type 8:

Boss: Mobile Type 8

EF: Yes

Irvine → **Demolition Ammo x4**

*If only 3 shots, use Darkside with Squall (with Trigger!!!)
Be careful, Darkside does ~250 HP to Squall.*

Safety Note: MT8 has a counter attack, so do not buffer attacks onto it. If you really need a buffer, maybe buffer a Selphie attack onto herself.

Don't worry about healing/reviving anyone here just go.
Squall gets a free full heal and other party members are
Revived automatically.

Continue forward once again to meet the Disk 3 finale:

Boss: Seifer 3

EF: Yes

Irvine → **AP Ammo x2**

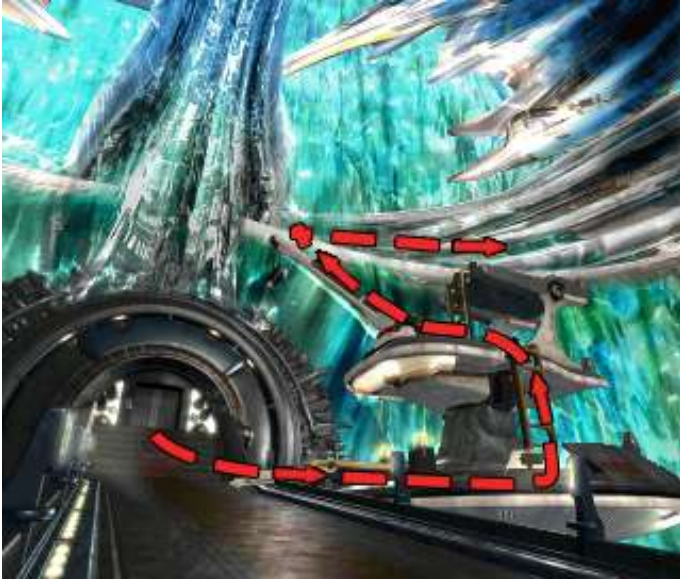
See if you get either a 'Hero' or 'Holy War' drop here.

Cancel through the party selection screen.

GG on Disc 3, just the final stretch now!



DISC 4



Continue downwards to leave the room.

Hold DR to move to the structure on the right and up the first ladder.

Move up along the platform to the top and then to the right.

Continue forward for the next few screens until you reach Rinoa, Seifer and Adel.

Boss: Adel

EF: No

Irvine → AP Ammo x2

After the FMV, move down to the save point.



Safety Note: This next boss can outright kill you if they feel like it. I would almost always recommend saving here when starting out. You're standing on a save point anyway!

At the Save Point

Menu #29

Junction: Irvine → Auto→Atk
Item: Megalixir

Enter the next room to begin the next Boss Fight.

Boss: Sorceresses

EF: No

Hold Confirm when the fight begins,
Irvine will kill the first Sorceress.
Until you get Berserk cast onto Irvine attack with him.

Squall/Selphie → Magic → Berserk → Irvine
Squall/Selphie → Magic → Haste → Irvine

Once berserk is cast on Irvine, he'll auto-attack.



Once six of the Blue Sorceress have been killed,
four Red Sorceresses will begin to appear.

BE SUPER CAREFUL HERE:

Wait until the cursor is fully on the "Sorceress" name before pressing confirm. If the selection disappears while targeting, the command will land on your own character. That would be upsetting for everyone involved.

Squall → Queue Darkside (Trigger) → 1st Red Sorceress
Selphie → Queue Death Stone → 2nd Red Sorceress
(If you did not get a Death Stone drop, ignore the Selphie step.)



When Final Sorceress Spawns:

Irvine will attack the Sorceress C and get counter attacked.

1. Irvine → Will attack and get countered.
(If this kills Irvine, skip to #3)
2. Squall → Darkside → Irvine
3. Selphie → Phoenix Down → Irvine
4. Irvine → AP Ammo x3

You have until the countdown ends to use this limit.



Hold Right after the fight and proceed forward in the next room.

Ultimécia's Castle

Continue forward and all the way up along the chain until you arrive at the castle entrance. **Don't go up the steps!**

Instead go to the save point to save your game. This isn't for safety, this is a manipulation for the final party.



SAVE & HARD RESET AT ENTRANCE



Once you reload the save file, move forward to the stairs. Cancel the party selection. Once inside, go straight up the staircase.

At the top you need to sidestep around the boss show on the left. It's not as scary as it seems. Continue up.

(If you're worried you can just hold UR to go too far, then move back while holding UL, and then you will be past them)

Move forward on the next screen to make the chandelier fall down. Once you crash to the floor beneath, interact with the hatch in the floor (Pictured). Head down the stairs, and interact with the Boss beneath to begin the fight.



(Do not run from fights)

Boss: Tri-point

DO NOT RUN

It's very important that nobody else attacks in this fight. **ONLY IRVINE!**

Irvine → Attack x2

→ [Unlock Limit]

Head back up the stairs and once in the upper room, move forward. On the fountain screen, move around the green area on the ground, continuing forward. (Just select cancel if you accidentally touch it)

Head up the stairs on the right of the next room. Cross the bridge, entering the door on the left.

For the next few screens, traverse your way up along the tower walkway until you reach the pendulum. Interact with it when it's on the left side to jump across.



Exit through the right hand door. Approach Tiamat and interact to start the fight.

Boss: Tiamat

DO NOT RUN

Irvine → AP Ammo x4

If you only get 3 shots off, don't panic.
Just use Irvines' limit again to fire one more shot of AP ammo.

→ [Unlock Item]

After defeating Tiamat:

Menu #30

<u>Item:</u>	Rocket Engine → Pandemona
<u>Junction:</u>	Irvine → Str+20% and switch it with → Spd+40%
<u>(Config:</u>	Ensure battle speed is set to 0%)

Leave the screen and cross the pendulum once again. This time continue to climb the tower to the next screen.

You can skip the next section if you are using the Final Party FMV Manipulation



After climbing into the clocktower, you will see a draw point in the corner of the room.

Check the draw point 4 times.

No more, no less

Note: If you are running in French, 1 draw check will work. Or Alternatively, take 1 walking step on the final approach.

Exit the bottom of this room and walk along the clock face, down the ladder.

This is very important:
READ THIS ENTIRELY BEFORE CONTINUING!

When you climb down the final ladder (pictured right), as soon as the screen fades; **hold up!**
Nothing but up, just up. Press up on your controller/keyboard and nothing else.



When you arrive at the door for Ultimecia, a warning text box appears which you need to mash through.

Release the up button once the text box begins to appear and immediately mash confirm to choose the first option as quickly as possible.

If this was completed correctly, you will have a final party with Irvine included.

Boss: Ultimecia

Irvine → Demolition Ammo x3



Boss: Griever

Two parts here, don't proceed to part two until the setup is complete.

Take your time and target the characters correctly.
(Use L1 to activate List Targeting if needed)

1. Setup:

Anyone	→	Aura Stone	→	Irvine
Anyone	→	Hero/Holy War	→	Irvine & another party member.
Anyone	→	Hero	→	Another party member.

You can use a Holy War instead of Hero if you were lucky enough to get one.
If you only have 1 Hero when you go to use it, you probably have one (page 6 of items).
It will cast Hero on all 3 party members. You can skip ahead to part 2 then.

2. Limit:

Irvine → Demolition Ammo x6

Boss: Ultimecia & Griever

This part is free, just load them full of ammo as soon as Irvine can use Shot.

Irvine → Demolition Ammo x8

And Finally:

Boss: Ultimecia

The safest way to do this 100% is to Queue up Irvines' Limit and hold the cursor on Ultimecia until she does her second Hell's Judgment attack. As long as the cursor pointer is on Ultimecia just wait.

It is always the second attack. Right when she starts using it, shoot.

Note: If you used a Holy War and have 3 surviving characters right now, don't wait for the second attack just use the Limit immediately.

Final Back-up Note: If Ultimecia has drawn Apocalypse and you really feel you won't get 5 hits done in time, you can use Limit and use Fire-Ammo x2 with Irvine to prevent Apocalypse happening for an extra turn. (This is not fool proof though)

Irvine → AP Ammo x8
Anyone → Hold X to win. Takes 5 hits.

The second to last hit triggers the text "And..."

GG on the final hit.

Eyes on Me

[Verse 2]

My last night here for you
Same old songs, just once more
My last night here with you?
Maybe yes, maybe no
I kind of liked it your way
How you shyly placed your eyes on me
Did you ever know
That I had mine on you?

[Chorus 1]

Darling, so there you are
With that look on your face
As if you're never hurt
As if you're never down
Shall I be the one for you
Who pinches you softly but sure
If frown is shown then
I will know that you are no dreamer

[Verse 3]

So let me come to you
Close as I want to be
Close enough for me
To feel your heart beating fast
And stay there as I whisper
How I love your peaceful eyes on me
Did you ever know
That I had mine on you?

[Chorus 2]

Darling, so share with me
Your love if you have enough
Your tears if you're holding back
Or pain if that's what it is
How can I let you know
I'm more than the dress and the voice
Just reach me out then
You will know that you're not dreaming

[Chorus 1]

Run Appendix

This has all the menus, party switches and step locations but no story triggers.

#1 *Entering Fire Cave*

Junction → Quistis → Add Shiva
Magic, Draw, Item

→ Squall → Add Quezacotl
Magic, Draw, Item

GF Quezacotl → Learn Card
Shiva → Learn I-Magic RF

Config → Cursor: Memory
Camera: 0%
Battle Speed: 50% (Set to how comfortable you are, 50% = default)
Battle Message: 100%

#2 *Leaving Fire Cave*

Junction:
Squall → Remove Quezacotl
Add Ifrit

Quistis → Add Quezacotl

Item: Potion Squall

GF: Ifrit → Learn Str+20%

#3 *Dollet Landing*

Switch: Zell → Quistis

Abilities: I Mag-RF Refine 5 Fish Fins onto Squall so he has 100 Waters.

GF: Quezacotl → Learn Card Mod
Shiva → Learn Str-J

Junction: Squall → Auto → Atk

Enter Comms tower: walk 2 steps

#4 *Before X-ATM*

Junction: Selphie → Add Siren

Item: Potion → Squall to full

GF: Ifrit → Learn HP-J
Siren → Learn L-Mag-RF

Switch: Zell → Squall

#5 2F Hallway (51 seconds)

Switch: Squall → Zell,
Zell → Quistis

Ability: Life Mag RF → All Tents & Cottages → Squall (For 90 Curagas)
Card Mod → Caterchipillar, Ifrit, Quistis and Zell

GF: Quezacotl Learn HP-J
Ifrit Learn Str+20%

Magic: Squall → Exchange → Waters → Quistis → Thunders (or slot 1 if empty)

Items: CAREFUL HERE!

Use: Hyper Wrist → Ifrit and Shiva.
Spider Web → Quistis

Battle: Swap Potions with Elixirs.
(Elixirs should be first battle item)

Junction: Squall → Ability → Add Str +60% (Bottom part of abilities)
→ Auto → Atk

Quistis → Ability → Add Str +60%
→ Auto → Atk

#6 Balamb Shop

Sell → Elem Atk x3
→ Hyper Wrist x1

Buy → Phoenix Down x 11
→ Tent x 31
→ Shotgun Ammo x 21

#7 Before Diablos

Switch: Selphie → Squall
Squall → Quistis

Abilities I Mag-RF → All Wizard Stones → Selphie (80 Blizzagas)
L Mag-RF → Tents → Squall, Selphie (100 Curagas for both)

GF: Ifrit Learn Str +40%

Junction: Selphie Ability → add Str+20% (bottom section)
→ Auto → Atk

Start of Dream: walk 2 steps

#8 Diablos Lamp

Item: Use → Magical Lamp

#9 *Laguna Dream 1*

(15-18 seconds)

Junction: Laguna → Add Diablos (second page of GFs)

Item: Use: Potion → Laguna

Sort

Arrange: Move Elixir to Slot 1

GF: Diablos Learn Time Mag-RF (down 1)

Ability: Card Mod → Diablos

#10 *Before Gerogero*

Junction: Selphie → Ifrit
→ Auto → Atk
Magic, Draw, Item,
Str+20%, Str+60%

Switch: Squall → Selphie

Before Gerogero

Party: Rinoa, Squall, Selphie

After 1st Timber Encounter: walk 5 steps

#11 Laguna Dream 2

Magic Laguna → Exchange → Blizzaga → Kiros → Water

Climb down ladder and after conversation: walk 7 steps

After next Encounter: walk 5 steps

Leaving G-Garden

Party Members: Irvine, Squall, Zell

Junction Switch: Irvine → Selphie

#12 Deling Train

Ability: Time Mag-RF Black Holes → 100 Demis → Squall, Zell, Irvine

CAREFUL HERE:

1 Samantha Soul → Irvine	= 60 Triples
1 Samantha Soul → Zell	= 60 Triples
1 Samantha Soul → Squall	= 60 Triples

GF: Diablos Learn Enc-Half

Magic:

Squall → All → Zell	This takes the Triples from Zell (Squall has 100 Triples)
Irvine → All → Zell	This takes the rest from Zell (Irvine has 80 Triples)

Junction: Irvine → Auto Atk → R1 → Squall → Auto Atk

#13 *Laguna Dream 3*

Junction: **Kiros** → Add Quez, Shiva & Diablos
 → Auto Atk
 → Magic, Draw, Item
 → Enc-Half, Str+60%

Laguna → GF → Carbuncle → Auto Atk

After 2nd LD3 Encounter: walk 10 steps

#14 *Prison Menu*

Switch: **Zell** → Squall, Irvine → Quistis (Yes to confirm if it prompts)

GF: **Carbuncle** Learn HP-J
 Diablos Learn Enc-None

Prison Switch

Party: 3rd Slot → Quistis
Junction Switch: Zell → Rinoa

Before Missile Base Switch

Party Selection: Zell, Squall, Irvine

#15 After BGH1

Junction: Rinoa → Ability → Add Str+40%

Item: Potion Rinoa + Quistis to 500+ hp.

Not any more as they need to use limits in the next fight.

#16 After BGH1

Switch Rinoa → Irvine
Squall → Quistis

Item Elixir → Squall

#17 Before Norg (Hp Switch)

Switch Zell → Squall (yes)
Squall → Irvine (yes)

Irvine → Squall
Squall → Zell

When Zell arrives: Rest in the Dorm to fully heal

First Garden Control (Going to Balamb)

Party Selection: Irvine, Squall, Zell

#18 Entering Balamb

Junction: Irvine → Add Ifrit & Carbuncle
Auto Atk → Item
Str+20%, Str+40%, Str+60%

Squall → Ability Add: Enc-None

GF: Diabos → Learn ST Mag-RF

Entering Balamb

Party Selection: Zell, Squall, Irvine

#19 Going to Trabia

Junction: Squall → GF Add: Pandemona

Item: Elixir → Irvine

GF: Pandemona → learn Initiative
Diablos → learn Darkside
Ifrit → learn F-Mag RF

Going to Trabia

Party Selection: Zell, Squall, Selphie

Leaving Trabia

Party Selection: Zell, Squall, Selphie

Junction Switch: Selphie → Squall
Squall → Irvine

Start of Garden Battle

Party Selection: Irvine, Squall, Quistis
Junction Switch: Squall → Irvine

Entering G-Garden

Party Selection: Irvine, Squall, Selphie
Junction Switch: Selphie → Squall

Disk 3 Start: Leaving Garden (Cid Skip)

Party Selection: Zell, Squall, Selphie

Laguna Dream 4 Switch

Laguna → Squall

Kiros → Irvine

Ward → Quistis

#20 *Laguna Dream 4*

Junction:

Kiros → Ifrit

→ Auto Atk

→ Item

→ Str+60%

L1

Ward → Carbuncle

→ Auto Atk

→ Item

Going to get Edea's Letter/White SeeD Ship

Party Selection: Zell, Squall, Selphie

Before Great Salt Lake

Party Selection: Irvine, Squall, Quistis

Junction Switch: Quistis → Irvine

Laguna Dream 5 Switch

Laguna → Squall
Kiros → Quistis
Ward → Irvine

#21 *Laguna Dream 5*

Junction: Kiros → Ifrit → Auto Atk
→ Item
→ Str+60%, Str+40%

Party for Space selection

Party Selection: Rinoa, Squall, Quistis

Leaving the Lunar Gate with Zell

Party Selection: Edea, Zell, Selphie
Junction Switch: Squall → Selphie

#22 Esthar Menu: Part 1

Abilities: Card Mod → Buel & Tonberry

GF: Ifrit → Learn Ammo RF,

Items: Sort → Use: Potion x3 → Squall
 Potion x3 → Irvine
 Str Up x2 → Irvine

Battle: Page 1 last slot → switch with Hero (Page 5)

#23 Esthar Menu: Shop

(Hold Left and X to enter last shop)
Enter Last Shop: → Rosetta Stone

(Mash X to enter first shop)
Enter First Shop: → Sell Mega Potions (pg3)
 → Buy 4x Str-J Scrolls,
 3x HP-J Scroll

#24 Esthar Menu Part 2

Junction Switch: Edea → Quistis
Squall → Selphie

Ability:

St Mag-RF: Magic Stone → Berserks → Edea

Time Mag-RF: Wizard Stone → 100 Stops → Squall
Black Hole → 100 Demi → Everyone

L Mag-RF: Tents → 100 Curagas → Zell & Rinoa
Zombie Powder → 20 Zombies → Everyone

F Mag-RF: Flare Stone → 1 Flare → Everyone
Wizard Stone → 20 Firagas → Squall

Magic:

Edea → Exchange → Thunder & Water → Delete (Square then Yes)
→ Haste → Zell → Split (Page 2 of Zell's magic, so both have at least 1)
→ Berserk → Zell → Split (Page 8 of Zell's magic, so both have at least 1)
R1 x3
Squall → Blizzaga → Delete (Square then Yes)
→ Triples → Edea (left once) → Take All
→ Rearrange → Manual → Move Curaga, Demi, Triples and Stops to Page 8.

Item:

Sort → Use: HP-J → Shiva, Siren, Diablos.
Str-J → Quez, Siren, Diablos & Carbuncle.
Rosetta Stone → Pandemona

Junction:

Edea → Off → All → Yes
(Use R1 to cycle through characters here)
Zell → GF → Add Siren
→ Auto Atk → Magic, Item

Squall → GF → Remove Quez & Shiva & Diablos, Add Ifrit.
→ Auto Atk → Item → Str+20%, Str+40%, Str+60%,

Irvine → GF → Add Quez
→ Auto Atk → Item

Rinoa → GF → Add Carbuncle
→ Auto Atk → Item

Edea → GF → Add Shiva & Diablos
→ Auto Atk → Magic, Darkside, Item
→ Str+60%, Enc-None

Junction Switch: Zell → Selphie
Zell → Edea
Edea → Squall

#25 *Boarded Lunatic Pandora*

Config: Battle Speed 0%
Switch: Edea → Squall

#26 *After Purple Propagators*

Junction: Squall → Ability → Add Initiative
GF: Pandemona → Learn Spd-J

#27 *Entering Edea's Orphanage*

Party Selection: Rinoa, Squall, Irvine
Junction Switch: Irvine → Squall
Squall → Zell

Ability: Ammo-RF: (These will be on pg18 if you did optional arranging in Esthar)
Chef's Knife → AP ammo x20
Running Fire and/or Missile → Demolition ammo x100
Fuel → Fire Ammo

#28 *Leaving Edea's*

Party Selection: Irvine, Squall, Selphie

#29 *Before Sorceresses*

Junction: Irvine → Auto→Atk

Item: Megalixir

#30 *Before Ultimecia*

Item: Rocket Engine → Pandemona

Junction: Irvine → Str+20% and switch it with → Spd+40%

Version Log

Version 0.1

Initial edit, format and layout taken from my initial Any% ECM route.
Changed EzCM for the route name. (Thanks Birt)

Version 0.11

Disc 1 completed. Test run done and corrections made.

Version 0.12

Completed up to middle Missile Base.

Version 0.14

Completed routing of menus/switches. Added Tents back into the Balamb shop D1 to make the Esthar menu easier to arrange. Can review later. Needed to have a route ready for a trial race.

Version 0.15

Birt's test run completed, apart from memes (he got Odin) we estimate he would have gotten around a 7:45 ish time on PC. Changed pre-Granaldo HP setup as it was clunky. Updated the earlier sections, adding extra pages for card manipulations.

Version 0.16

Finished up to the Balamb Siege. Added some of WimblyD's images. Moved Garden Return menu back to the Missile Base so the movement setup can still be used. Moved Enc-None to before Balamb so no risk of WM encounters if the Garden is parked badly.

Version 0.17

Finished up until Trabia. Proofed and checked by Windows. Made some clarifications and edits.

Version 0.18

Finished up until Esthar Menu (with the exception of G-Garden as I will add WimblyD's new maps and write the directions to match. Lots of maps added for all the world map movement.

Version 0.19

Inserted the G-Garden maps and the directions. Technically all finished up until the Esthar menu. Proofed by Windows again at this point with some minor corrections made.

Version 0.2

First full finished version for release. Added Appendix which contains menus, steps and switches.

Version 1.0

Corrections Made. Route has now been run by enough people to convince me it's in a good state. I've run the route myself as a tutorial. Also shout out to Ayymart and Thomas_8989 for running it. I've changed the setup in F.H. as it seemed too risky overall. It removed an elixir on Squall also which is nice. Added extra Ultimecia P4 notes for Holy War and Fire-Ammo. Moved Elixir.

Version 1.1

Removed the Grinaldo Renzo strat and opted to use the attack only strat that pingval mentioned. It removes a lot of HP management that was required in the past. Instead we fully potion Squall before X-ATM which should be safe enough for him to have high enough HP for then also.

As it recently happened to Aymart, I added a backup note after the Esthar menu for a level 9 Ifrit. I also made it clear in the Training Center encounter, why we choose to kill the Grat.

Version 1.2

Thankfully there wasn't much to fix up here. There are some newer runners of the route who were able to give some feedback; namely Neon_Genesis, Earinor, Suika & sonicglenjamin. Thank you to them.

I moved the Siren Junction to Selphie before X-ATM, removing the need to remove Siren in LD1. Clarified some locations the need Squall trigger; Grinaldo and Edea 1 for example. Added a backup code for Caraways: 084. Clarified the events of Prison a little. Made a note also about MT8's counter and not to buffer attack.

The Esthar menu now has the magic arrangement for the Ifrit carried included in the main section of the menu. I'll just have to see how this goes, it's certainly safer but it might lead to confusion.

Version 1.3

Finally decided to make the notes compatible with PSX. I removed the table of contents to make editing easier. Added some new tutorial links, including also that FF8 Utilities now caters for more EarlyQ frames. Changed the Sorceress Strat to accommodate all versions. Shout out to Kiitoksia as I used his notes/route as reference for adding the console strats and also created the FF8 Utilities application.

Version 1.4

Added an extra menu before BGH1, to equip Str+40% as some runners had been low rolling and missing out on the extra 20ap.

Swapped the EarlyQ and 2nd try Zell tutorial to my newer one.

For Esthar I mentioned saving on the World Map beforehand if a runner is unsure. Put in extra backup items to sell if money is short for some reason. Also clarified that the extra optional items are only worth doing if you have more than 15:00 remaining on the timer.

Added a note about not using Deathblow on the Aircsoldier minigame as it can softlock.

Fixed some typos and edited some formatting. All menus after BGH are increased by one due to the new menu.

Version 1.5

Added Thomas_8989's Cid Skip tutorial video to the resources. Fixed who was in the pilot seat before Fujin & Rajin 2. Fixed Discord invite links.

Version 1.6

Included AP chart to resources. Reworked Zell card image order, at the request of thebroodles. Added link for Dollet escape to the section within the notes. Clarified LD1 menu sort/arrange. Added note to confirm 0% Battle speed for Ultimecia. Clarified Norg menu is after Irvine and Zell join.

A Quick Thank You

Thank you to everyone who made this possible, since I learned to run FF8 in February 2021 all the way up to routing ECM and making these EzCM notes.

I would try to list everyone but at this point I would need to name everyone in the whole community. However some large contributors:

Firstly, Windows for the advice and editing throughout the entire note creation process. He never hesitated to have a look over anything I asked.

WimblyD for the fantastic images she helped create for these notes. The images alone will be valuable outside of the notes. To Brofar for being awesome and doing the original layout in my ECM notes, which transferred to here.

Also Jester who has always been a good friend and fountain of knowledge. Never refused to answer any of my stupid questions. Kaivel who conceived the original ECM route, which I used to create my own route and then in turn to create this route.

To Birt for initially trial running the route and giving fantastic feedback to help make them better. To Thomas_89, for being the pioneer in learning to run FF8 with these notes and giving great insights into what people really need to know when starting. To thebroodles for running the route exclusively whilst learning the game, sharing the route on stream and providing further feedback.

Thank you all for the support and patience. I look forward to improving these going forward and making them the best, easy to use competitive notes available for FF8.

