Blindly Escaping: A Blind Person’s Guide to Hades

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Introduction: INTD

Welcome to my Hades guide. Here, I will attempt to teach you the basic principles of the game, as well as things to consider while playing. I will provide tips and strategies for playing the game as a blind person. I will, however, make a point not to teach you everything, because some things should be discovered for yourself. With that in mind, let’s get started.

A note: This guide will assume you’re playing Hades in its default state. That is, without the incredible accessibility mods that now exist for the game. An additional section dedicated to the mods and their use may be added later. The reason for this decision is so that a potential blind player can pick up and try any version of Hades, including the newer console versions. It is my hope that, whether you are playing Hades on a PC, Switch, Playstation, or Xbox, you will find enjoyment in it. It is a game I love, and want others to love too.

About the Game:

Hades is developed by Super Giant Games, an independent developer with a team of around 20 people. It is their 4th game ever, and is all the more impressive for that. Their previous games, Bastion, Transistor, and Pyre, are also well-regarded, though none of them are blind accessible. Hades is available on PC via Steam and Epic Games, Nintendo Switch, Xbox consoles, and Playstation 4 and 5.

What is it?

Hades is a Roguelike, so yes, there is a lot of repetition in the technical sense. In fact, simply completing your first run does not mean you’ve finished the game. Not even close. Finishing the main story actually requires 10 completed runs, and that’s still not the end. The story continues for a long, long time even after that. You might think “Well crap, that’s gonna get boring real fast,” but I promise you’re wrong.

Hades stands out from other repetitive roguelikes because it is great at progression in all sorts of ways. Not only do you get stronger, but the story is on a constant train forward, providing you more and more character and plot exposition both during each run and also between runs in the House of Hades. Even bosses will sometimes change aspects of themselves based on your previous encounters with them. There are multiple permanent currencies as well, ensuring you’ll always have something to buy, upgrade, or learn. You even unlock more opportunities and challenges as you progress onwards.

A Note about Playing Blind:

I want to add a note for the sake of clarification here. This game does not feature any sort of automatic menu narration or self-voicing beyond character dialog which, while sometimes quite informative, doesn’t tell you nearly enough. OCR, (Optical Character Recognition), is required for things like the options menu, BOON selections, Well of Charon choices, and so on. I recommend NVDA’s OCR solution here, as it is the best out there in my opinion.

What is God Mode, and Why Should I Use It?

God Mode in Hades is not what you might be thinking it is. It doesn’t just simply make you invincible, preventing you from dying or even taking any damage. That approach wouldn’t make much sense in this game, as the occasional death is part of the story. What God Mode does in Hades is very slightly increase your overall defense every time you die. It gives you a 20% boost immediately, and then increases by 2% increments with each death up to 80%. This means, at its maximum level, you will take 80% less damage from everything. The idea is, even though you’re still expected to die, (Hades is not an easy game), this mode exists to offset its difficulty a little for players who don’t like extreme difficulty, don’t feel comfortable with it, or in my opinion, blind players who quite frankly have enough to deal with. Yes, I recommend turning on God Mode in Hades. You don’t have to, of course. If you wish to set that incredible challenge for yourself, feel free. However, I recommend doing so because there will be blindness-specific struggles in this game, like the dangers of lava in the second biome. Turning on God Mode, the way it works in this game, actually helps bring it closer to a kind of balance. Not a perfect one, sure, but it certainly doesn’t hurt.

How to Activate God Mode:

This set of instructions applies to all versions of the game. To activate God Mode, enter the options menu either by going down once in the main menu before you begin gameplay, or during it by entering the pause menu and doing the same. (God Mode can be activated and deactivated at any time). Once there, go down 5 times, then right once. If using an Xbox controller, press A to activate God Mode. X on a Playstation controller, or enter on a keyboard work as well. The options menu of Hades has a strange and confusing layout. The first 4 or so options are modified with left and right, but then the menu splits into columns. So when you go right after going down 5 times, you’re actually moving over to the right column, in which God Mode is the first option. I hope this is clear enough.

Controls: CTLS

Below, you will find a list of controls for Hades. Please note, this list does assume you’re playing Hades with a controller, which is the recommended method if you’re a blind player. I will provide controller definitions for both Xbox and Playstation controllers, though I do not play the Switch version, and am thus uncertain if any of the controls differ there. You may have to do a bit of conversion here if you intend to play Hades on the Switch. And with that, here goes.

Basic movement/menu navigation: D-pad or left stick on either controller. This is how you move, literally. While move speed can be modified by boons and other effects, it is otherwise static. By this I mean that there is no run button. It just is what it is.

Dash: A on Xbox, X on Playstation. The dash is your greatest movement tool, allowing you to dodge incoming attacks, and move more quickly through the game’s environment. Be careful with spamming this, though, as you do not always dash in a straight line. That said, you will find yourself using this a lot.

Attack: X on Xbox controllers, Square on Playstation. This is your primary strike with whichever weapon you’re currently using. Its usage does change depending on weapon as well. For instance, you are free to tap the attack button to your heart’s content while using the sword, but you must hold it and charge your attack, then release when you wish to fire the bow. This is definitely something to keep in mind as you learn how each weapon differs from the others.

Special: Y on Xbox controllers, triangle on Playstation. This is your special attack, which also differs massively depending on the weapon being used. The special with the sword is a slash that creates a nova, doing area of effect damage, while the special with the spear is a throw that skewers your enemies. This, again, is important to keep in mind as you learn the properties of each weapon.

Cast: B on Xbox controllers, circle on Playstation. Your cast is, in its default form, a projectile attack, regardless of which weapon you choose. Casting actually throws out a blood stone, which gets lodged into the enemy it contacts, then drops either after a certain time, or once that enemy is defeated. The properties of your cast can, however, be changed by boons and other things including certain weapon aspects. There isn’t much need to worry about this immediately, but it is definitely worth keeping in mind.

Interact: Right bumper on Xbox controllers, R1 on Playstation. The interact button is one of the biggest ones. It’s how you pick up room rewards, it’s how you enter the next room once you’ve located the door, it’s how you converse with other characters, it’s how you activate wells of Charon… You get it. If you want to do something that isn’t attacking, casting, specialing, or dashing, try the interact button first. Of course, there are other buttons and other mechanics coming up next, so uh, maybe check those out too.

Gift/Call: Right trigger on Xbox controllers, R2 on Playstation. The gift/call button is also important, and as the name suggests, it serves 2 purposes. The first is to gift characters you meet throughout the game with either Nectar or Ambrosia (depending on your relationship level), thus triggering more conversations with them and furthering your friendships. The second is the Call, which is a specific type of boon you may occasionally get from the Gods of Olympus. The Call allows you to, in some way, summon that god’s direct aid in combat. These are typically very powerful moves that differ greatly depending on the god from whom you received the call, and you’ll need to learn their effects over time to determine which works best for your playstyle.

Codex: Left bumper on Xbox controllers, L1 on Playstation. The Codex is largely useless as a blind Hades player, but once obtained via a conversational event, contains descriptions of basically everything you encounter, gods, enemies, and side characters alike. These descriptions are often updated as you learn more about the things in question, and these updates come with a cartoon-like sucking sound, almost as though the new information was being pulled into place.

Pet Cerberus/Companion Call: Left trigger on Xbox controllers, L2 on Playstation. The first thing this controller does is exactly what it says up top. This is how you pet one of the giant heads of 3-headed hound Cerberus if you should so desire, though I would recommend doing this, as there may be additional benefits aside from the warm fuzzies you get when you do it. The second feature of this button is for the companion call, which is something you won’t get until much later in the game, and requires high relationship levels with certain characters. These also vary greatly, and I think I’ll leave it at that. Better to retain some of their mystery, I say.

Boon menu: Back/view button on Xbox controller, touch pad on Playstation. This button does what it says it does. It brings you a list of the boons you currently have active. OCR doesn’t read this list super well, so it has minimal use for the blind, but hey, now you know.

Pause: Start on Xbox and Playstation controllers. Brings up the pause menu during gameplay, allowing you to modify settings or save and quit at your current position. Please note, you cannot save and quit on the first room of any run until that room is clear.

In-depth Gameplay Discussion: IDGD

Basic Gameplay Loop:

In Hades, you, Zagreus, son of Lord Hades himself, proceed through a series of ever-changing rooms spread through 4 biomes while defeating a wide variety of enemies and bosses and collecting rewards of all kinds as you try to make your way to the surface and escape the land of the dead. If you die, you are placed back in your home, the House of Hades, where you can upgrade things, learn new talents, and perhaps most importantly of all, converse with everyone else in the house. Much of the story proceeds this way, through conversations. Keep that in mind.

Deeper Explanations:

This is where the meat of this guide is going to be. Here I will explain things in even greater detail, and will fully capitalize certain key words to ensure important things stand out. Refer to the glossary at the end for game-specific terminology and contexts.

BOONS:

As you play Hades, you will encounter many of the pantheon of Greek gods and goddesses. They will offer you BLESSINGS or BOONS, which are IMPERMANENT effects that improve or change something about you for the current run. For instance, Athena’s Divine Dash causes your DASH move to inflict damage to enemies, and also allows it to reflect their attacks, including projectiles, back at them. These BOONS can be leveled up with POMS OF POWER, (and by some other means too), which increase the power of each individual effect. An extremely buffed Divine Dash, to hold to the same example, can allow you to clear certain rooms simply by dashing repeatedly into enemies. BOONS also possess a rarity level, (common, rare, epic, legendary, and heroic), which determine that BOON’s starting power, as well as how much that power increases per level. A heroic BOON will not only be quite strong at its first level, but will also increase exponentially in power if leveled up. The exception here is legendary BOONS, which are very specific BOONS that only have the legendary rarity. These are usually massively powerful BOONS with effects strong enough to turn the tide of a run.

A note about BOONS: While there are many BOONS with many different effects, there is a very important rule you must pay attention to. I’ve already spoken of a BOON that modifies your DASH. There are also BOONS that modify your ATTACK, your SPECIAL, and your CAST. The rule is that you can only have 1 BOON that directly alters ATTACK, SPECIAL, DASH, and CAST active at a time. That’s 1 for each of those things. There are supplemental BOONS that further improve the properties of something, which you are free to add on, but only one major BOON per button. Think of it this way. If Athena offers you her DASH BOON, then Ares offers you his DASH BOON, (called Blade Dash), accepting his will replace hers. The game does display this next to the BOON in question, but it’s worth knowing in case you decide to select a BOON quickly.

DAEDALUS HAMMER:

Something that is in the same category as BOONS but is nevertheless a bit different is the DAEDALUS HAMMER. When found, this HAMMER specifically modifies your current weapon with an IMPERMANENT effect. Each weapon in the game can undergo a completely different set of modifications, as each weapon is itself very different. For example, the bow can be modified with something called Chain Shot, which makes each shot fire 3 arrows in a line, but certainly you couldn’t apply this same effect to the sword. There are many, many HAMMER modifications, and it’s worth experimenting to find the ones that fit your playstyle the best. Remember, if you try something and fail… You’re still guaranteed more story.

ROOMS (also called CHAMBERS):

When each run begins, you are in the starting ROOM. This ROOM will always contain a BOON or a HAMMER. Once you’ve selected your choice of buff, you’ll have a set of monsters to defeat. Then, you move onto the next ROOM. The first ROOM always plays out this way, with the exception of your very, very first run, where you receive the reward immediately, then need only pass through the first door.

It should be noted that you can’t go backwards. The only way is forward. No backtracking, no going back to get a reward you missed… You’re always moving forward. Hades puts a huge focus on the action/build creation aspects of a Roguelike. So where does player thought and player choice enter into the equation? To answer that, we need to talk more about ROOMS.

When you clear a ROOM of enemies, the exits to that ROOM activate and become available. All ROOMS in Hades work this way. When you then approach the exit doors, (before you proceed through them), you will actually be shown what the clear reward for that ROOM will be via an icon. Please note that these icons are not blind accessible. Without the accessibility mods, you are unfortunately limited to just going through whichever door you find first, because there is no way, not even with OCR, to tell what your reward will be. However, as I will reference later in the guide, there are ways to modify the RNG, (random number generation), in the game which do offset this somewhat. Also, doors do make a sound when they activate, this is right after you clear the room of enemies, and you can use this sound to, at the very least, determine where the doors are relative to your own position.

So to break this down in terms of gameplay, you clear a ROOM, collect your reward for that room, and then make your choice for what reward may help you the most between the available exit doors in that ROOM. No matter what, you must live or die with your decision.

SAVING:

While certain other roguelikes live and die on the idea that you can never save during a run, Hades… does not do this. In fact, Hades actually saves your game a shocking 3 times per chamber! Once as soon as you enter, again when the room is clear and your reward is on the ground, and yet again after you’ve taken the reward. However, it should be noted that there is one strange quirk about saving in Hades. While the game is saving a lot, that save doesn’t actually move to your permanent save file until you close the game in a natural way. Quitting to the main menu, for instance. Quit to the menu at any of the times I’ve specified, and you can load up exactly where you were going forward. The reason this is important is because, if the game, or your system, crashes mid-run, it is still possible to lose the run that way. However, crashes of the game are extremely rare to nearly nonexistent, so this shouldn’t actually be a problem.

CURRENCY:

Hades contains many different types of currency, and guess what? Most of them are PERMANENT. See the list of currencies below, along with basic descriptions.

1: OBOLS: OBOLS are an IMPERMANENT currency used in shops dotted throughout the game to purchase things to help you on your current run. Examples are health items, additional BOONS, and even other currency types.

2: DARKNESS: DARKNESS is a PERMANENT currency used almost exclusively to purchase TALENTS, which are PERMANENT upgrades for your character. There are many of these, and you will be collecting a heck of a lot of DARKNESS as you play.

3: GEMS: GEMS are a PERMANENT currency that are used to unlock many things. Some of these things are cosmetics for the House of Hades, but not all. Some of them modify aspects of your runs through the land of the dead, pretty much always in positive ways. For example, you can use gems to place FOUNTAIN chambers in each biome, giving you a chance to find one there. FOUNTAIN chambers are empty of enemies, and always contain the reward shown on the door as well as a FOUNTAIN that gives you some health back. That’s just one example of many.

4: KEYS: Yes, KEYS in this game are a currency, but they are a PERMANENT one. You use them to unlock new weapons, and reveal new upgradeable TALENTS as you proceed. That said, there does eventually come a point where KEYS are essentially useless, except as trading items. Still, in the early game, KEYS are extremely valuable to you.

5: DIAMONDS: DIAMONDS are essentially GEMS 2.0. They unlock even more game-affecting things, including some important story-related content, and even more sweeping cosmetic changes for the House of Hades. DIAMONDS are difficult to obtain for a long time, and thus will likely always be valuable to you. And yes, DIAMONS are a PERMANENT currency.

6: TITAN BLOOD: The blood of the titans is also a PERMANENT currency, and one you’ll want as much of as possible. TITAN BLOOD is used for PERMANENT weapon upgrades, as well as unlocking new ASPECTS for each weapon, which completely change its properties. I’ll leave you to discover the effects of ASPECTS yourself, as they can be quite… transformative.

7: NECTAR: The NECTAR of the gods is a PERMANENT currency that is used as gifts to Hades House members, some additional characters you meet along the way, and even to the gods themselves. In exchange, you will receive KEEPSAKES. There will be more on those later. NECTAR, along with every other currency, can also be traded for other currency types.

8: AMBROSIA: AMBROSIA, is the ultimate gift both to and from the gods. It is another PERMANENT gift item/currency, used to further strengthen your relationships with the characters of the game. It may also have some effect on certain items in the KEEPSAKES menu, but I’ll leave you to discover that as well. Even AMBROSIA is tradeable.

KEEPSAKES:

KEEPSAKES are given to you by the characters you encounter throughout the game, and each has a different effect. Before a run begins, (and if you purchase a certain upgrade, between biomes), you can choose a KEEPSAKE which maintains its effect as long as it is equipped, or in some cases until that effect is used up. One KEEPSAKE which gives you a guaranteed extra life becomes useless once that life has been spent. KEEPSAKES like this one, of course, regain their usage upon your next run.

Some of the most important KEEPSAKES, though, are those given to you by the gods themselves as they actually allow you to slightly affect the game’s RNG. Equip a god’s keepsake, and 2 things will happen. First, the chance of BOONS offered by that god to be rare or better will be greater. And second, you will guarantee that the god whose KEEPSAKE you have equipped will be the very next god you encounter, with only a few exceptions. This allows you to exercise some control over the build you’re attempting to make. There are other ways to affect the game’s RNG as well, but I won’t be talking about those here.

One more thing. KEEPSAKES have ranks. A KEEPSAKE will rank up after you go a certain number of encounters while wearing it. When it ranks up, its power will increase in ways that are dependent on what that KEEPSAKE does. KEEPSAKES from gods will increase the rarity of that god’s BOONS while wearing it. The KEEPSAKE that gives you an extra life will increase the amount of life you have when you’re resurrected, and so on.

CHAOS:

CHAOS is where the risk-reward aspect of Roguelikes comes into Hades, but I would urge you not to simply dismiss it because of that. In the Hades universe, CHAOS is an additional deity that you may encounter along your journey. For a small health cost, you can enter CHAOS’s realm and speak to them. CHAOS will always offer you a BOON, but CHAOS BOONS work very differently from the BOONS of other gods. Every CHAOS BOON starts out as a negative effect. However, survive a specific number of ENCOUNTERS or CHAMBERS, (how many will be indicated in the BOON’s description), and the effect will change into an immensely positive one. Both the negative and positive effects will be revealed to you when you look through the BOONS on offer, and they are always mixed and matched. The rewards for accepting CHAOS BOONS and surviving their negative side can be quite substantial, including absolutely huge damage increases, so at the very least, they are worth your consideration.

AN ADDITIONAL NOTE ON WEAPONS:

Once you’ve started unlocking weapons, you actually get to choose which weapon you start each run with. Choosing a weapon that fits your playstyle is so important to creating a good build that it’s absolutely essential. I highly encourage you to try all of the weapons multiple times, (different HAMMER modifiers, different ASPECTS, and so on), and the game does incentivize you for doing this. Certain rewards require you to perform certain tasks with each weapon, for example. Eventually, you will start finding particular builds you like, and with certain RNG-affecting decisions you can push for those builds.

A final additional note:

The truth is, Hades is not an easy game. If you die after, say, 5 or 6 rooms on your first run, you’re actually doing pretty well. You’re not expected to go in and just be a boss. Despite this early difficulty, I encourage you to push on. Look at all my uses of the word PERMANENT, and know that there will always be more story, there will always be more upgrades, there will always be more. And keep this in mind, too. I’ve told you a lot here, but I haven’t nearly told you everything. Not nearly. There is a ton more for you to discover. Take death in stride, learn to enjoy it because it means more conversations, and have a great time! Best of luck!

Walking the House: WTH

What follows is a guide for walking the house as a blind Hades player. The experiences of blind players do tend to vary, however, so it’s worth mentioning that these instructions are based purely on my experience, and how I do things, with only a single exception which I learned from a friend. There is a chance you will eventually come up with methods that work better for you, or perhaps you already have. Nevertheless, this guide will serve to acclimate new players to the House of Hades. And one more thing, there are many things in the house that are only available after certain story elements occur. I will be including those, but separate from everything else to mitigate spoilers. Enjoy!

The pool of Styx:

This will always be your starting point when entering the house. It is in the extreme southern portion of the area, so when you emerge from it, you should almost always be heading north-northeast, as that is the way toward the central area of the house. The central area will be our hub going forward, so getting the pool out of the way first is doubly important.

Hypnos:

The sleepy keeper of the list of the dead is likely always going to be your first encounter as you head away from the pool. Most of the time, he is easily trackable via audio. Just follow the snoring. However, there are a few situations in which he does not snore, (when in a conversation with another house member, for instance), so it is a good idea to familiarize yourself with this entire guide in order to ensure you have some context clues.

The Desk:

You may be hearing some scribbling going on near Hypnos. This is the lord Hades himself, scribbling on his parchment, while probably smirking at you as you approach. There’s a lot of interaction around here, so I’ll try to cover it as best I can.

Cerberus: The 3-headed guard dog of the underworld can be found in front of the desk, often breathing heavily and waiting for your interactions, and of course, your pets.

The House Contractor: Directly to the left of Hades, which is technically your right, is the house contractor. He doesn’t speak, but does make a cheerful honking sound when you interact with him, and brings up a menu filled with many choices ranging from modifications to the biomes you run through to cosmetic items for the house and more. Note: The contractor is not available after your first run, but will be available after your second).

Achilles: From the start of the central hub, where Hypnos is located, head northwest. This should take you straight into the west hall, and if you’re lucky, straight into Achilles, who patrols there. He doesn’t actually move, but that’s the idea. He’s almost always there, and rarely splits off to have other conversations, though this does happen on occasion. And then there are times when he’s just gone, but these things are always worth checking.

Administrative Chamber: Another feature of the west hall is the administrative chambers, which are in the southwestern corner of that hallway, almost a straight shot southwest from Achilles himself. Please note that, until certain story events unfold, this door will remain locked, but it will eventually become quite valuable to you.

Lord Hades’ Chambers: The final major feature of the west hall, the chambers of Lord Hades are actually almost not in that hall. They’re in the northeast corner, right near the way back to the hub. From Achilles, go north to the wall and start making your way east, and you should find this door. As with the administrative chambers, this door is also locked until certain story events unfold.

The Lounge: Heading back to the hub and going southeast from the desk area, then heading west toward the crowd noise, will bring you to the Lounge. You may occasionally find certain characters here, and they’ll always be near the lounge entrance when they are present, but as that is not guaranteed, I will stick to the static elements.

The Board: The board, which always shows the number one house servant, (this changes every run), can be found right near the lounge entrance. If there is a character present for conversation in the lounge at the time, the board will be right near them, I believe slightly to their right. If not, you’ll have to search around the lounge entrance to locate it.

The Wretched Broker: The Wretched Broker is a creature with whom you can trade your various currencies. He doesn’t say much, but he still gets pretty vocal when he’s happy with a trade. He can be found directly southeast of the board, about 2 steps.

The Head Chef: The Head Chef, who is always happy to accept your fish if you should perchance have any to offer, can be found in the extreme southwestern portion of the lounge. He can be reached by dashing directly left from a character if one happens to be in the lounge at the time. If not, be aware that it’s possible to become stuck on an inner wall that divides some sections of the Lounge. If this happens, try either dashing southwest, or heading north a bit and then southwest. The chef’s cooking audio should become positionally central once you’re in his area, and may even go off to the right a little.

General Lounge Tip: One tip I have for you when it comes to the Lounge is to purchase a rug from the contractor for the lounge as soon as you can. This is a case where doing so is extremely helpful. The rug is placed across the Lounge’s main entry area, and thus the board, the Wretched Broker, and any character that might be there can be easily accessed from it. The point here is that placing a rug changes the sound of your footsteps when you’re walking on it, making it a good location identifier.

East Hall:

Heading once more back to the hub, move toward the contractor. Then, go a little southeast, followed by a bit northeast, and you should make your way into the east hall. There isn’t much here, but it’s all important.

Nix: The Goddess of the Night herself is often stationed here, right as you enter the hall. She is usually easy to find, though she makes no idle sounds, which can make it a little challenging if you’re slightly off. If the sound of your footsteps starts moving to the right, you’ve gone too far.

Room entrance: The entrance to Zagreus’s room is here as well, and likely where you’re headed if you’ve gone too far to the right of Nix. If you’re heading straight for it from the entrance, typically just running northeast in this hall will get you there. It is, however, possible to go too far to the right of the entrance, so be careful.

Your Room:

At last, a new area that requires an actual loading screen. There are a few things of note in here.

The Mirror of Night: The mirror where you upgrade your talents and add new ones can be found just north and a little bit west of the room’s entrance. There is always a carpet where the mirror approximately is, so if your steps become noticeably softer, you might be quite close to it.

Mirror tip: The Mirror of Night is, at first, a horizontal list of available talents, with options to purchase more talents with keys, and to reset all your darkness, at the bottom. However, there will come a point where the mirror is expanded as a result of a story conversation with Nyx. When this happens, there will be a new column on the left, which will allow you to flip each individual talent on the right to a mirror of that talent. If you flip Death Defiance, for example, (the talent that gives you 1 extra life per rank), it becomes Stubborn Defiance, which instead gives you an extra life on a per chamber basis, meaning you can die once per chamber and return, but no more than that. Upgrading this talent merely increases the health you get after returning. When using the mirror, browse your talents on the right column. If you wish to change one, highlight that talent, move left, and press A on Xbox controllers, X on Playstation to activate the flip, then move back to the right to see what the flipped talent is. Repeat this if you want to change it back. Keep in mind that talents and their flipside talents cannot both be active at once. You are swapping one for another. I hope this helps with mirror useage.

The Fated List of Minor Prophecies: This item does require unlocking, but I’m making an exception and putting it here because doing so doesn’t spoil anything. Once unlocked, the fated list is on the west wall right near the entrance. This can be troublesome, as it is possible to click on the list while leaving the room at the exact same time, so be aware of that.

Courtyard Entrance: From your room, you can make your way to the courtyard, from where you will ultimately escape back into the underworld. The entrance is on the east wall, and your room is big enough that it can be a little difficult to find at times. This becomes especially true once you start adding things to it. This brings me to my next point.

General Room Tip: One easy way to get to the courtyard entrance is to head first to the mirror of night. If you are in range of it, step south a tiny bit, then dash to the right twice. This should put you right in line with the courtyard entrance, and if it wasn’t enough to go through on its own, head a little further right and you should make it.

The Courtyard:

Welcome to the courtyard, from where you will make your escape. That isn’t all that’s here, however, so let’s talk about some of the other things.

Skelly: Technically, Skelly does require an unlock, but it is almost immediate, requiring only that you purchase one weapon. Skelly can be found just a few steps northeast of you as you enter the courtyard. He makes very obvious skeletal shuffling noises, so shouldn’t be too difficult to locate.

Weapons: While I won’t be revealing the placement of every single weapon, as that bit honestly still gets me sometimes, I will say that your weapons are clustered along the north wall above Skelly, so basically in the middle section of the courtyard. They are all in weapon holders, more of which appear over time, and must be unlocked with keys with the exception of the sword, which you begin the game with.

Keepsake Collection: The chest holding your collection of keepsakes is the furthest, most western item in the courtyard near your collection of weapons. If you’ve just switched a weapon, keeping north but heading a little west should take you to your keepsakes.

Escape window: Heading to the southern section of the courtyard, below Skelly and slightly to the east of him, you should find the escape window. Conveniently, it makes a fiery sound when you’re near it, and thus can be tracked. Interestingly this sound changes, actually improving, once you’ve unlocked the Pact of Punishment, which I won’t be discussing here.

Viewing Point: If you ignore all else and head to the northwestern portion of the courtyard, you’ll eventually reach a viewing point. The camera will automatically zoom way out, (this makes a sound), and Zagreus will look out at the underworld realms he must traverse, speaking about them all the first time you do this. It’s interesting enough that I thought I’d include it here.

Spoilery House Guide

What follows are the locations of characters and areas that are initially locked. I will do my best to organize these by likely order of unlock, so you can hopefully look only at the latest one you’ve gotten if you need to, and no further.

Orpheus: The court musician himself, Orpheus is fairly easy to find. If you head to the contractor, Orpheus stands almost directly south. It’s not far either, just a step or two. His music stand, once unlocked, will be next to him on the right.

Thanatos: Essentially Death himself, Thanatos is a busy man, and is actually not there more often than he’s there, even after you unlock him. However, if he is choosing to be available to you, he will be in the west hall, in the southwest corner next to the door to the administrative chamber. He does make some occasional rustling noises as he shifts around, and they do sound different than the ones Achilles makes, so you should be able to avoid confusion on that front. Please note it’s possible to accidentally enter the administrative chamber while attempting to speak to him. If this happens, exit the administrative chamber and try dashing down once. That should hopefully get you to him.

Persephone: Mother of Zagreus, and wife of Hades, Persephone can often be found next to him at his desk. She is slightly to the left and above him though, making me think her placement is either on the side of, or behind the desk. She sometimes calls out to you when you approach, which can help, but makes no sound otherwise. She can also appear in another location, which leads me to my next unlock.

Persephone’s Garden: The most out of place area in the house of Hades, Persephone’s garden can be found by heading southeast in the east hall. Make sure you’re far enough east that you’re in the east hall first, or you’ll just end up heading toward the lounge. You’ll know you’re in the garden because the terrain will change to sound more gravely, and you’ll hear the sound of wind blowing through the area. Not sure how Persephone achieved that in the underworld, but we’ll take what we can get. Persephone can sometimes be found here, right near the entrance.

Piece of Olympus: Not unlocked until you reach the true, true ending of the game, the piece of mount Olympus is beyond the garden, even further southeast. There is no story reason to go here, but you can get a bit of narration if you click around here a bit. The environmental audio changes here too to help you identify it.

Other Assorted Blindness Tips: ABLT

The following is a list of other, very general tips to get you started. I hope you find these helpful as well.

1; In Charon’s shop, the items Charon is selling are often presented in a triangle, located either to the left or right of Charon himself. Charon, identified by his heavy breathing, is easy enough to find, and typically the items will be on the opposite side of the exit door. So when you step into a shop, listen for which side the door activation sound plays on. If it plays on the left, then head to Charon’s right side, and vice versa.

2: When in Asphodel, the second area of the game, there is a trick I use to avoid taking lava damage in the first room, which is always the same. Once you arrive, start moving down, then right in single steps. Do this until you hear the sound of a geyser faintly on your right. If at any point you get stuck in a small corner before you hear this geyser, move up just a little, then right, then resume going down and right in single steps. When you hear the geyser faintly on the right, shift your focus to going up and right in single steps instead of down and right. Do this carefully, and you should end up walking right onto the little bridge that leads to the little boat you can activate to reach your next destination. Once you hear the sound of the terrain under your feet change to the rattling sound of the bridge, take a couple steps directly right, and then press the appropriate button to transition to the next room. This is complicated, but I hope it helps.

3: Once you’ve unlocked fishing, listen for a very audible ding noise after completing each room. It is a lower pitch than the door activation sound, but plays at nearly the same time. If you hear this sound, move carefully around the room, listening for the occasional splashing sound. This will clue you into the location of the fishing point. Once you’re close enough, (you don’t have to be perfectly centered for this), you should be able to activate the fishing point. You’ll hear the line being tossed in, and then you wait. Small splashes are attempts to trick you at this point. Wait for the large splash and big vibration, and when you get it, press your action button again as fast as you can to pull in the fish. That’s all you have to do. A final note though, be especially careful around fishing points in Asphodel. You will literally be fishing in lava, but you can’t activate the fishing point if you actually step in lava. You will have to carefully edge around these until you find a spot from which it can be triggered.

4: When you reach the final area of the game, you start in a temple entrance which is fairly large and noisy. Proceed mostly up and right, past all the gear-churning sounds you’re hearing, and eventually through the door. The final area’s layout is split into 2 major sections, the shop and the tunnels. The shop is on the right, and this time there will be 6 choices instead of 3. I believe they are arranged in a 3 by 3 grid, but I’ll absolutely admit that it’s hard to pinpoint one of these, as they are fairly close to one another. Use the items that make sound, (diamonds, titan blood, occasionally centaur hearts), and Charon himself, to try to get the things you want. If you can’t afford anything, or if you’ve purchased what you want for now, head to the leftmost portion of the shop and then up and left to reach the tunnels, which you can enter like any other room transition. The difference here is that there are 5 tunnels, and once you complete one, you will be popped back out into this central shop area. If you haven’t found the thing you’re looking for, (no spoilers here), then you must pick another tunnel, or if you feel like it, head a bit southeast and go buy something first. Once you have found what you’re looking for, go very slightly west of the shop, and then north to interact with the appropriate character, (again no spoilers), then directly northeast from them once that interaction is finished in order to resume.

5: As you traverse the tunnels in the final area, there is a chance you will become poisoned. Some enemies hit you with poison-tipped blow darts, which can be dodged or reflected with the proper boons, and some just spew liquid poison along the ground, which is audible but difficult to track in any meaningful way. When you are poisoned, you’ll notice you’re taking damage every 2 thirds of a second or so, even if you’re not being hit. This damage is pretty significant, but there is a cure. Curing fountains are in every tunnel room, and are usually located in the upper portion of the room, sometimes near the exit door. It is possible to track them with audio, but admittedly very difficult to do during combat. Still, here’s the tip. The bubbling sound that is accompanied by a kind of hissing indicates poison. The slightly lower bubbling sound that has no hissing is your cure fountain. This part of the game is intentionally very difficult, and the poison will be a large part of that struggle. Hopefully this tip helps offset that somewhat.

6: When you beat the game, you will be in a very large area. Proceed in a generally up and right direction, correcting slightly if you ever get stuck. Also, you may wish to tap the action button as you go through this the first few times, as there are some narration spots scattered along the path. You will eventually transition into another, smaller area. Keep heading onwards northeast until you hear your target. You should be heading straight for them, but if not, their call should allow you to track them with positional audio. Interact, and enjoy!

Glossary: GLSR

Note: This glossary contains a few items not spoken of in detail earlier in this document.

AMBROSIA: A PERMANENT currency used to further strengthen your relationships with characters in Hades beyond the point that NECTAR will no longer work.

ASPECT: A different form of the weapons in Hades, triggered through the use of TITAN BLOOD.

ATTACK: Your Primary attack. On an Xbox controller, this would be X.

BOON: IMPERMANENT blessings given to you by the gods, which offer different helpful effects.

CAST: Your cast is kind of magic, kind of not. You throw blood stones when casting, but what they do can be tremendously affected by BOONS and even weapons. On an Xbox controller, you cast by pressing B.

CHARON’S SHOP: A room that can be found in every biome containing a variety of random items for purchase with OBLES. These can be health items, BOONS, and even other currencies.

CHAMBER: Defined as any room you enter in Hades, regardless of whether or not an enemy encounter takes place there. Important distinction when dealing with BOONS of CHAOS.

CHAOS: A mysterious entity who offers BOONS with both a negative and positive side.

DAEDALUS HAMMER: A hammer which can modify your existing weapon in a variety of ways. The options available are dependent on the equipped weapon.

DARKNESS: A PERMANENT currency used to unlock TALENTS at the MIRROR of NIGHT.

DASH: Your dash move, which moves you quickly, offers a small amount of invincibility, and can go through enemies. This can also be modified with certain boons. On an Xbox controller, the dash is performed by pressing A.

DIAMONDS: A PERMANENT currency used for purchasing story-related content, higher-level cosmetics, and other modifications.

ENCOUNTER: Specifically defined in Hades as an encounter with enemies. This is an important distinction when dealing with BOONS of CHAOS

FOUNTAIN: An item found in both FOUNTAIN CHAMBERS and between biomes from which you can drink to restore some health before proceeding onward.

FOUNTAIN CHAMBER: A room you can unlock for each biome which will always offer you a free reward, (no ENCOUNTER required), and a FOUNTAIN.

GEMS: A PERMANENT currency used for unlocking cosmetic items and certain other world-changing things.

IMPERMANENT: Something that exists only for the particular run you are currently on. You will lose anything impermanent if you die, or if the run is completed.

KEEPSAKE: An item given to you in exchange for a gift. Each KEEPSAKE has its own unique effect, which is maintained as long as that KEEPSAKE is worn or the effect isn’t used up.

KEYS: A PERMANENT currency used to unlock new weapons, as well as new TALENTS on the MIRROR of NIGHT, which can then be upgraded with DARKNESS.

MIRROR OF NIGHT: A strange mirror placed in your bedchamber, where you can spend DARKNESS to upgrade your PERMANENT TALENTS.

NECTAR: A PERMANENT currency/gift item which can be given to all characters in the game to obtain KEEPSAKES, and strengthen your relationship with them.

OBOLS: an IMPERMANENT currency to be used in CHAERON’s SHOP, or in WELLS of CHAERON to purchase certain items which will help you on your current run.

PERMANENT: Anything which is persistent across multiple runs in Hades. Upgrades, currency, weapons and so on.

POM OF POWER: An item that takes the form of a pomegranate which increases the level of one of your BOONS.

ROOM: (see CHAMBER)

RUN: An attempt to escape the realm of the dead. Ends in either death or success.

SPECIAL: Your special attack, which is entirely dependent on the weapon you are using. On an Xbox controller, this is performed by pressing Y.

TALENTS: PERMANENT upgrades to your character’s abilities, purchased via the MIRROR of NIGHT.

TITAN BLOOD: A PERMANENT currency used for weapon upgrades.

TROVES: treasure chests that can appear randomly in some rooms, and offer their own rewards, which you will be shown before selecting the chest. Triggering a TROVE begins an additional, optional ENCOUNTER wherein your goal is to defeat all enemies as quickly as possible. As time goes by, the treasure within the TROVE starts to disappear, meaning a quick victory means you get more treasure.

WELL OF CHARON: A pool found in some rooms from which you can make purchases of exclusive items to help you on your current run.