

EVE ONLINE ULTIMATE ISK GUIDE

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Introduction:

This guide will take you through many ways of generating a vast amount of isk in a legal and non macro way and also help you hopefully enjoy the game for what it is as well as having a good time with many people you will meet along the way.

This guide is not for people who just want to have vast amounts of isk by simply having a macro or other illegal ways. This is just for the player who wishes to fully expand his or her isk generating capabilities.

Background:

I have been playing eve for what to me seems like an eternity but in fact has been since early 2005. Much of which I have spent playing not one but many aspects of the game and sharing knowledge with other gamers. I have come across many people in eve and for the most part they are exactly like eve by being deeply cold hearted at time with little help being given for nothing and in most cases everyone trying to take full advantage of you for your hard earned or sometimes not so hard earned isk.

When I first started playing I played part time and began to generate small amounts of isk and as time went and I began to understand more about the game I became more efficient in the things I was doing and generating more isk for the amount of time I was playing and was therefore able to pay for the account by the use of isk which help because at the time I was not in a good way financially in real life.

Due to playing with a friend I ended up pvping which costs a lot to sustain at times due to the inevitability of ganks etc so this was also another reason that I needed to maximise how much isk I was making for the time I was playing which resulted in me acquiring various knowledge of the many types of ways to make isk and which are the best ways.

Types of isk Generating:

There is a quick summary of the main types of isk generating below, all of which I will elaborate on further on in the guide.

Mining:

This consists of in general using a ship with mining lasers or strip miners to take ore from asteroids from either an asteroid belt or plex etc and then selling the ore etc.

Moon Mining:

Mining a moon with a pos (player owned station) to collect the moon minerals which are needed in the building of tech 2 components.

Building:

The production of ships, items etc from mineral or components for a profit.

Trading:

In basic terms the principal of buying items, ships etc low and selling high for a profit.

Ratting:

This is the killing of npc's in asteroid belts repeatedly and collecting the loot, salvage and bounties.

Plexing:

Similar to ratting and mission running as it is killing npc's in a plex often with a boss at the end and can sometimes give you expensive items to sell.

Mission running:

Killing npc's mostly however there are many types or missions all of which is where an agent set you objectives for you to do in return for isk, loyalty points and sometimes items.

Scamming:

Basically social engineering to take another player's isk/items/ships from them.

This covers all of the major types of isk generation in the world of eve.

Common Knowledge:

This is knowledge that is extremely useful, however is seen as common knowledge to most of the eve community.

Trade hubs: Places of high trading between players "the most likely place to sell something fast or buy something fast". In particular the solar system jita is the main trade hub of eve, however is extremely laggy. Below is a list of the main trade hubs in the eve universe with green text being the race located in the area and the bolded text being the region the solar system is in.

Minmatar

Metropolis

Hek

Eram

Heimatar

Rens

Lustrevik

Molden Heath

Gelfiven

Gallente

Placid

Stacmon

Essence

Oursaleart

Sinq Laison

Dodixie

Caldari

The Forge

Jita

Perimeter

Lonetrek

Nonni

The Citadel

Kaunokka

Amarr

Domain

Amarr

Tash-Murkon

Resources for information:

Research into how to make what you are doing more efficient is critical and many people do not take full advantage of the resources out there such as the great eve online forum at <http://www.eveonline.com/ingameboard.asp> Where there are many people who have created tools/calculators as well as many people willing to help you out with your decisions and/or problems, however be warned that the forum can be hostile at times if you have an attitude so be nice and you will be rewarded with the answers to your problems. As well as creating a topic there are always other asking for help and they may be asking what you need to know as well as at the top of each sub forum there are sticky posts which have a tonne of information in which I have found very handy in the past.

There are also several other websites that need a mention, the two websites that are particularly good for help with missions are www.eveinfo.com and <http://eve-survival.org/wikka.php?wakka=MissionReports>

Isk generation:

Mining:

Mining is where the majority of eve players start off in the world of eve when they are in their “noob” ships mining veldspar, however it is a great way to make isk if you want to play with little effort or have other things to be getting on with or doing (xbox or tv anyone?).

The principle of mining is that you gain the ore from the asteroid and then sell this on or refine this into minerals and then sell which is seen as the more efficient way as people don't offer a great deal for the ore.

In general if you have a battleship or an exhumer or mining barge you will typically earn around 5 to 10 million isk an hour with a few exceptions such as in 0.0 when mining more rare asteroids, however then you have logistics to sort out such as the moving of the ore from remote areas to places where you can sell, which in most cases are the empire trade hubs which I have outlined.

In general mining needs a great deal of research before starting as there are a great many things that dictate the amount of isk you can make such as ship, setup and I would highly recommend that you look at the mining guide at http://www.lsjv-eve.com/completeminersguide/completeminersguide_v3-0.pdf which will explain to you in details everything about mining you could ever want to know.

The profession of mining can go very well with the profession of building, but for most cases you can't mine enough for the amount you need to build, but is great for a future expansion or for just something to do while things build.

Overall mining is recommended as a profession which needs little attention except the odd click every few minutes and can make for some easy isk although not a great deal of isk while you get on with other things.

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Moon Mining:

This is a mostly passive way of generating isk, however can involve a lot of settings up with a high isk start up cost and work from time to time. It is well known that you can only moon mine in space which has a security status of 0.3 or less and therefore this means you player owned station (pos) may come under attack from other players, furthermore you need to be in a corporation as well as have the correct roles to manage and anchor the pos.

The reasons above make me suggest that if you want to moon mine either have isk ready to hire mercenaries onto the players trying to kill the pos or be in a corporation or alliance that can easily protect your pos.

There are many different types of moon minerals some of which are more rare than others with many of the more rare being fought over for by large alliances so the majority of

the moon available may be less profitable so I recommend you grab one of the spreadsheets created and available on the eve online forums and calculate the cost and isk you can make to see if the start up costs of the pos itself and fuel are worth the risk.

Overall I would recommend this if you have a spare billion isk and want some passive income and you have a way of protecting the pos as well as not minding the managing of the pos by setting it up and supplying it with fuel.

Great resource for pos information is here : <http://www.eveonline.com/ingameboard.asp?a=topic&threadID=990696>

Building:

The principle of this is very simple, you get a blueprint copy or original, and you buy the minerals or components needed to build the product then you build the product and sell it for a higher price then you bought the minerals/components as well as any costs such as for the factory slot.

What I will say again and again is to do your research, it is ok me saying to build this and build that but by the time you have made it you may be making a loss because the market has changed since I made this guide and make use of the calculators available.

In general as a starting point t1 items are the way to go as you can sell them often in bulk at sometimes good prices but make sure you check out the market so that you can make a reasonable percentage over the amount of isk you spent on the minerals.

In the trade hubs many places are packed full of people and as a result you will often see that there are no factory slots available for you to build in, this makes selling items in the area particularly awkward so location is specifically important. For example you can make items a few jumps away then bring them into the trade hub in bulk at a time or you can find a nice market around the area where you can sell the item steadily for example at places where there are mission agents there will be usually a large amount of people buying things for their mission running ships such as ammo.

So you can take full advantage of this and dominate the market in that area and possibly raise prices so you can make more isk, however it is likely the stock will sell slower then at a trade hub, so it is a trade off.

For a start t1 items such as cruiser, frigs can be ok but after a while you end up building a large amount and not be able to shift them fast enough, this means your efficiency has gone down. So then you need to research the market once again for items that meet the criteria of being able to make a decent profit from whilst also being in your price range to produce on a relatively large scale at a time whilst also having an active market where many sell.

I myself have not tried t2 building, however I do know people who do and it needs a lot of attention but the rewards can be a lot if you put the time and effort in and of course the research. An example of this is t2 ships such as heavy assault cruisers, assault frigates etc which often cost sometimes only half what they sell for so there is great potential for a

great profit if you put the time in and get your be active within the trade channels to get your all important supplier of the materials needed for a low price.

There are 2 types of blueprints, one of which is called a blueprint copy (bpc) and once of which is a blueprint original (bpo) the difference is relatively simple in that an original blueprint can be used as many times as you want whereas a copy can only be used so many times of which it says when you right click on it and go show info.

There is one major skill that needs to be at level 5 for you to succeed at building and that is production efficiency to level 5 which reduces the amount needed to product items or ships etc.

On the blueprint info there are things called production efficiency and material efficiency and these determine the amount of time taken to produce the product and the amount of materials etc needed to produce the product. These numbers can be increased by having the blueprint researched in a lab slot, however this can only be done with blueprint originals. The higher these numbers the better, however after around 15 (but it differs hugely between items) I would say most aren't worth anymore time researching in a lab slot as the amount you save isn't worth it. There are calculators on the eve online forums for calculating how high to increase these numbers by which is extremely helpful.

a great calculator that I found on the forums for calculating cost etc is here and I recommend you use this <http://www.eveonline.com/ingameboard.asp?a=topic&threadID=993762>

Overall building is a great way to make isk however can have problems such as suppliers of materials/ minerals and the amount you can sell. It can also be done whilst doing other things so is not always a lot of work.

Trading:

Trading in EVE is probably one of the most lucrative, and dangerous, occupations one could take up. You can make millions and millions of ISK's, and loose them just as quickly. While there are things to you can do to mitigate your risks, there are some fundemental building blocks you must understand before pursuing this career or you are destined to fail. Below are the most basic of tenants you must understand to be successful trading in EVE.

The Economics

While most have a grasp of making ISK's few really understand the concept at its core. The idea is to buy something at a low price and sell it at a higher price. This part is simple. Anyone can load up and Indy and fly a few jumps, sell it and call themselves a trader. While most traders of these types see this is the all inclusive path to success, there are "points" that separate a basic trader from a "successful trader". They are..

Time is money -

Trading takes time. Real time. How you spend your minutes in EVE trading directly relates to how much you will have at the end of your session playing. A trade run that takes 20 jumps and makes and 1 hour to complete and makes you 6 million ISK, is not as good one 3 jump route that only makes you 2 million ISK each but takes 45 minutes. Obvious? You'd be surprised. Many people want that long haul, the instant infusion of large sums of cash to make their wallets fat, and completely ignore the "short haul", smaller payout runs. You can make more than these short-sighted people if you do the math.

The point? DO THE MATH.

Size Matters -

I'm talking about volume. The physical size of the commodity/item, you are trading. On the surface some items look extremely lucrative to trade, but a closer examination reveals this is not always the case. Items in EVE have varying volume and knowing how "big" something is can go a long way to deciding if it's profitable to carry. The bottom line, is you are selling your ship's cargo bay, for as much as you can. Take for example construction blocks. This "type" of commodity is new players bait if there ever was one. At first glance you might see a buy order for 700 ISK somewhere nearby and quickly dash off to buy those blocks in your station for 600 ISK. Good deal? Nope.. Because each block has a volume of 4, which translates to 1/4 of the amount you can carry(capacity) per run. Remember you are selling your cargo cap, so those oh-so-lucrative looking CB's now have a "cargo point per ISK ratio of 25", not 100. Conversely, take for example the antibiotics. These only have .5 volume, and usually only make 18-36 ISK per unit. BUT, you can carry two, per "cargo point" which equates to 36-72 ISK per cargo point. Much better than those old Construction blocks, wouldn't you agree?

The Point? "KNOW" YOUR CARGO.

Know your region -

Knowledge is power. Knowing what trades, what doesn't, and the supply and demand of your chosen area will either make you or break you. Take the time to research your local solar system, (and surrounding areas) and see what is sold, consistently, in your operating area. Learn the prices, both buying and selling. Take notes of both the prices AND the volume supplied and bought. There is a big "gotcha" here. A lot of times you may find a trade good that buy low and sells high, reasonably close, seemingly a great run. But, if the supplier(or demander) only needs 176 of that item, while the supplier has 157k for sale,(or vice-versa) does not make this a worthwhile trip. There's IS an exception to this, and will be covered in the advanced trading section, but for now, leave this type of trade alone.

The point? DO YOUR HOMEWORK.

Skills -

The Skill sets required for trading are both many and diverse. While not as involved as a combat or mining profession, the time investment is substantial none the less. You begin with very limited access to the higher tiered skills (as opposed to the other professions), but they can be quickly gained with just a bit of effort. With a bit of research, you can create a character that has a "leg up" on these basic skills, which gives you room to grow quickly. They are:

Frigate- Needed as pre-requests for flying most all starships, but specifically, industrials.

Navigation- A must have, for the large base of higher tier skills, promoting speed, handling, and economy of flight.

Mechanic- Another must have, allowing modification of ship modules, and adding increased cargo capability.

Trade- The obvious. Again to allow you to access greater skill sets, and place many orders for buying and selling.

Industrial- Based on the ship of choice, most often on the race you started with.

Note: These are just the most basic of skills to have, with most needed to allow further progression. They are not the end, but the means..

Now, some will argue that the learning skills (learning, and the 5 basic "brain power" skills should be in here as well. And I do agree, however, to begin trading, and that's what we are covering here, they are not "necessary". They should be gained though, as quickly as time(and money) allows. Saving you tons of time later when you train the higher tier skills you will be wanting.

Equipment -

In the beginning, you will undoubtedly be limited both in skill and cash, to the most basic of equipment. A fast frigate, some cargo expanders and maybe an afterburner or micro warp drive. But fear not, this will change quickly. As cash flows in, you can upgrade to more skills, and better ships (more cargo) and higher worth trade goods.

A lot can be said here on the "best" gear to have, but it's an area I choose to leave to you to sort out. The most important items I'd say were, speed and cargo cap. Pick an industrial you wish to fly and train the skill, and buy one. A bestower (a hauling ship) makes a good choice, as to the lower Mark series Iterons. I started his way, using a bestower for short hauls, making enough until i could buy the Gallente industrial skill, and started training it. The mark V is the ultimate cargo hauler. It can't be beat for maximum cargo, BUT, it's a long skill time to train, somewhere around 29 days, learning skills

depending. Ask around. Most industrial pilots love talking about their ships, as do most other pilots. Some times an Indy or Frig does not fit the bill either. A lot of successful traders fly various types of cruisers, destroyers or even interceptors. Each has their usefulness, but most beginning traders have little spare time to train these skills or the cash to buy them, much less the ships themselves. Point is, be aware that later in your career you may (or should) be looking at other ship options for some runs. More on this later.

It takes money to make money, but how can you make money with no money? Well you can't. You must either do some mining, agent missions or if you are particularly brave, pirating. I'd recommend Agent running. In a fast ship, you can make several million in just a few days if not less, even at the most basic of agents. If mining is more your style, then strap on some miners and have at it, but the point is you are going to need at least a few million before you are "viable" as a trader. It can be done with less, but it takes more time. If you have made friends, you might be able to persuade them to part with a bit, to back your venture, however if you choose this route, make sure you pay them back, on time and without problems. Not doing so may incur the wrath of some up and coming fighter pilots, people you don't need to meet later in your career, flying that fully loaded industrial

into low security systems, with your life savings aboard.

The Market -

The Eve market is where you buy and sell most goods. Some items cannot be listed on the market and are sold on escrow. I'm not going to cover Escrow, other than to say it's out there, and different. The market screen allows you to sort by the number of jumps from you an item is, the volume, cost, location and also if its a region, solar system or station buy/sell order. Pay attention to that. Make sure when you buy (or sell something) you have not bought "region/system wide" if you didn't want to. I once bought 40 million in data sheets over the entire Lonetrek region. There are 2/3 options available to you for your search "scope", for example how far away you want to look from where you are. There is also an often over looked but very useful history tab, that will tell you the price and vol of an item over varying amounts of time. Use it. It can tell you if the price you are paying (or selling for) is on target, and just as importantly, how much of the item (volume, in sales) the item is moving. This is very useful in determining if you are in a busy area, with lots of competitors, or have the area to yourself.

The First few Trades -

So, you have a few skills, have ran missions or mined your way to your first couple of million, and you have a fast frigate or industrial ship. You have decided to set up "somewhere" and found, using your noodle and a bit of common sense, a few low cost trade runs. Now you're thinking Ill just buy X amount of items and load them up and head over, yes? Well, yes and no. There are some things you must ask yourself first. They are..

Is your cargo full? If not, you should look again and see if there's a close (in destination) system that requires something you can bring as well. This must be balanced with the time it takes you both to deliver (and pickup) this "filler" load.

Is there a return trip load? In the late 20th century, Fossil fuelled delivery vehicles, called 18 wheelers, would often carry cargo to one destination only to find nothing to carry on the return trip, costing them both money, and time. These were called "Deadheads". Avoid this at all cost.

Sometimes you can't, but you should try.

Are you using the right equipment? If you have found a run that has somewhat high priced items, taking just a few hundred cargo it may be better to run that fast frig twice, rather than the big slow industrial once. Remember the return trip though. Time is money.

Are you running into low security systems? In the beginning I'd avoid this. While some juicy runs are in < 0.5, you are not the only person that's going to be there, plenty of pirates know how to use the trade system to find riches too. Be aware of this, and if you must run there, set up instant-jumps first. And use the map.; check the ships/pods destroyed in the last hour setting. If there's been any activity, don't go, it's that simple. You have been warned.

Of note, the market supply and demand now changes with every buy and sell order processed.

When you sell something to an npc the demand price "usually" goes down, as the orders are filled. And the buy price goes up as more is purchased. The temptation is to deliver and sell, deliver and sell, completing the demand at a station, but doing this will leave some profit behind, as the price changes with every transaction, "most of the time". So get it all there first, and sell it together, buy the same way, all at once.

ADVANCED TRADE

So now you have gotten the hang of it. And are actually making a bit of money. Not a lot, but its coming in. So what to do now to increase your profits? Well there are some.

Skills -

By now you should have an idea of which skills are becoming important. The Navigation sets, with the afterburner, MWD and handling are critical. So is hull modifications, namely hull upgrades (better cargo expanders). The Starship skills you have chosen should meet the goals you have set for the types of delivery ships you wish to use, and you should be on your way to a "bigger" Industrial. So what of the rest? Well, now we are going to concentrate on the ability to use trade skills to our utmost advantage. You have probably noticed by now that you are getting socked with a hefty sales tax and broker fees. These can put a dampener on your bottom line, every day, every trade. You should have trade V by now, if not get on it. At least to level 3. Now go get marketing, broker relations, and Accounting. Broker relations and accounting will decrease the fees you pay when you place a buy order for items not yet listed to sell, and the tax (10% per level) for each and every sale you make (Acct) Why marketing you might ask? Ok I'll tell you, but under the market section.

Equipment -

Upgrades, Upgrades, Upgrades! Price better cargo expanders and buy them if you can afford them. Buy them one at a time, if you must, but get more cargo capability. Remember you are selling your cargo space, and if by expanding your cargo, you can shorten the number of trips you make per run, then do it. Also, buy some GSC's (giant secure containers), as many as you can fit in your hold. They can be a "poor mans expander" if you get them cheaply enough. All cargo containers have the special ability that allows you to put more volume in them than they take to carry themselves. It isn't a whole lot but every little bit helps. Another bonus is, should you meet an unfortunate demise, a secure can (password protected) can be anchored wherever you died, prohibiting the offending party from scooping the cans and opening them, getting your cargo. Corp management and anchoring skill is required for this though. It doesn't always work (high security regions, cans too close to each other) but it can save you some if you are lucky.

The Market -

Now theres a whole new world of buying and selling, and some VERY creative ways to do it. The marketing skill allows you the ability to buy (and sell) remotely! For example you don't have to be in the station, or even the same system. Now with a high enough skill you can manage your profits without ever having to leave the station.

Advanced Trade goods

Strategy One -

Lets say you find a good deal on those antibiotics we talked about earlier. But, if they want over 100k of them, and you find yourself looking at 17 different stations selling just 8k volume each. Do you spend a day flying around and gathering them all to one station? You could, but chances are someone will beat you to it, or at least part of them, dropping the buy price by the time you get them all there. What to do? Stockpile. Don't sell them for less just gather them. The market rises and falls with every order filled, remember, so they will go back up and you can still make the money you intended. With the marketing skill you can login in a day or so, check the market, and if your number is met, just open assets and click sell. Assuming you are in range (level dependent) you never have to undock.

Strategy 2 -

Building on the above you can take it a step further. Pay people to haul those scattered assets for you! Set up courier missions (you must be in target station unfortunately) and pay those young industrial haulers just a bit of your profits to move your stuff for you. Now you are saving tons of time to do other things, make the "commissions" back that you pay for this service, or whatever. Point is you have others doing you hauling for you, and you just sell it when it arrives. You must be in a good position cash wise, and be prepared to wait for your orders to arrive, but for those with a lot of cash and better things to do with their time, this is a viable option.

Other goods such as minerals, the life blood of all production corps. Volumes could be written on trading minerals. Some regions don't have access to noxium (mineral), others have problems finding Isogen. Learn what is in demand and the current prices. And stay current. Mineral prices rise and fall like a nun in a cucumber patch, so just because you sold isogen (mineral) one day at 100 doesn't mean you can do it a week from now, or tomorrow. Mineral trading takes a lot of effort and time (research) but the rewards are huge.

Module trading. This I liken to speciality trading, a niche market, taking even more research and time to effectively manage. Some modules can cost millions and millions for just one item. For those brave enough, with enough cash, this is probably the highest tier of trading in EVE. Its not for the faint of heart. As of this writing I have yet to dabble in this and I have a sizable bankroll. While the rewards are great, the risk is even greater.

Summary Tips

A few lessons to learn, and reinforce. They are:

Don't fly empty, ever, if you can help it.

Do you research, your homework, and especially the math, do not forget these three points if you want to make it worthwhile

Train skills towards the future. Lean towards bettering your ship, setup, and profits.

Check your route for security concerns, never fly into ships/pods destroyed unless you KNOW you will be safe doing it, ever.

Never "Gang" with anyone that you do not trust. Many an Indy have been ganked by pirates

spamming gang invites and killing you, gang members don't take sec hits.
Use cargo cans to increase your hold space
Upgrade your gear.

Ratting:

Ratting is the process whereby a player character will enter a star system and warp towards an asteroid belt or a stargate. At these locations, NPC rats may be present. The player will kill these NPC character and in return receive a bounty. This bounty will reflect the difficulty of killing the NPC - Battleship NPCs will give more bounty than a Cruiser NPC for example. The bounty is added to the player's wallet and from there, spent on whatever the player wants - ships, items etc.

Maximising your profit:

Ratting takes up time. It takes time for you to kill a NPC and you want to do this as quickly as possible so that you can move on to your next victim.

This means you want to do as much damage as possible in the shortest amount of time possible.

To that end, ratting is very much like doing missions - you should fit weapons on your ship that are effective against the rats' native resistances.

The following rat types and damage types detail what you should be aiming for:

Guristas: Kinetic then thermal damage.

Blood Raider: EM then thermal damage.

Sanshas Nation: EM then thermal damage.

Serpentis: Kinetic then thermal damage.

Angel Cartel: Explosive then Kinetic damage.

By design, these are also the resistances you should be aiming to use on your ship as well - Guristas deal out Kinetic and Thermal damage, but not EM or explosive (in any noticeable way, anyway).

The only exception to that rule is Angel rats - they actually deal out all types of damage. Mostly it is Explosive, but you'll find the odd EM ship or thermal ship to combat as well. Explosive is always their weakest link so always use explosive, but be prepared to receive Thermal torpedoes from the Angel Saint rats, for example.

Whilst I was ratting in Angel space, I never put any EM hardeners on my ships. I know in missions

they deal out EM damage, but with ratting it's not really something I've really come across. Be warned, though, that it is a possibility.

Obviously this can cause problems with some ships. Amarr, for example, using LASER weapons, will have a hard time damaging Guristas or Serpents rats because they have relatively high resistances against Thermal and especially EM weapons.

The same can be said of Gallente ships ratting in Blood Raider or Sansha space - the Kinetic damage from blasters or railguns isn't too great against these rats as the native resistances are quite high against these damage types.

There are ways around this of course - Gallente ships and some Amarr ships have large drone bays. Drones, of course, have different damage types, so you can get around this issue by having drones that deal the primary damage you're looking for.

Caldari have the best options here as they can change their primary weapons on a whim - missiles. Missiles can be fitted for any damage type AND their battleships usually have enough space for five medium drones as well!

Whilst I personally find the Raven to be the most efficient ship in this regard, that doesn't mean as an Amarr you can't rat in Guristas space - it may take a little longer but there's no point spending three or four months training up the skills for a Raven and missiles if you're an Amarr spec character just to rat in my opinion.

Location, location, location

As any good estate agent will tell you, location is the most important thing to consider when buying a house. The location of where you rat is also important. Two systems next to each other can give wildly different isk-results over the course of two hours, despite there being no appreciable difference between them. A system is a system, right? Well, no. What it comes down to is Security Status.

In 1.0-0.9 space, there are actually no rats. You won't find any at a belt because they don't exist. Ratting in somewhere like Jita (0.9) is pointless because there's nothing to rat. You'll need to go down to 0.8 space or below in order to find some targets.

There's a general rule in EvE that the lower the security status of a system, the more the bounties are for the rats present. For example in a 0.8 system you might find a rat with a 5-10k bounty, whereas if you go to a 0.5 system, you might find rats with 30-40k bounties if you're lucky.

If you live in perpetual fear of being targeted by another player, you can stop reading the guide at this point, as that more or less can cover ratting in high sec space. The only other thing to remember is more belts = more spawns = more isk. So find a nice 0.5 system with 20 belts and rat away, but to be honest you're better off doing missions.

If you go into low security space or live in 0.0, read on, as there's some juicy information here for manipulating spawns to do your evil bidding.

The rest of this guide will be based as if you are ratting in 0.0 space. The following applies to Low Sec to a degree.

Once you get into 0.4 space and below, the rats will start to increase in bounties by quite a bit. By 0.1 space they are about 235k each which, compared to the 5-6k of high sec is quite an improvement.

When you get into 0.0 space, things change. Battleship class rats appear with bounties ranging from 500k to 1.85 million isk. That's a lot of isk!

It's fairly common knowledge, but by no means universal, that 0.0 space is not all 0.0 space.

In fact, just as "empire space" has security status ranging from 1.0 to 0.1, 0.0 has security status ranging from 0.0 to -1.0 (negative 1.0)! this information is not displayed on the client - all you ever see is 0.0 as the security status, but it's there.

The most effective places to rat, therefore, are at the lower end of the negative scale - systems that are -1.0 ("true 0.0") to about -0.7. These systems are where you'll find spawns of two or three 1.85m isk rats. It's these rats you want to kill lots of, if you're after ISK or your own sec-status increases. These are also the "hardest" rats to kill - by no means difficult, if you are not careful with your tank, they can deal quite a bit of damage. In theory, they shouldn't be able to kill you if you're paying attention. You'll also find spawns here that will web you or warp scramble you, which is actually more dangerous - if you're being scrambled by 3 small interceptors and an enemy fleet, gang or even 1 player comes in system looking for an easy kill, you're going to be caught with your pants down. So be careful!

There are maps which display the true security status of a system on the net. Another way is to look at the asteroids - if you see Morphite (the red crystals), you're in a system that will have big rats in it.

You'll also come across special spawns, mostly in 0.0 but especially in the true 0.0 systems (or those close). These spawns are commonly called "Hauler" spawns, "Commander" spawns (sometimes referred to as "faction spawns") and "Officer" spawns.

Hauler Spawns

These spawns are interesting, if you like minerals and have a hauler nearby. They are industrial ships (Badger, Iteron, Bestower, Mammoth etc) belonging to the pirate faction of the space you're in. If you pop them, they drop minerals - anything from Tritanium to Morphite (apparently. The most I've come across is Zydrine but ho hum). The lowest hauler spawns start at 250k bounties and drop Tritanium or Pyerite (usually about 1 million units - it is a LOT of hauling). They progress upwards - 500k gives you Isogen, 750k gives you noxium and isogen, 1m isk gives you zydrine, so you can tell at a glance if they're worth looting or not. They don't drop modules. If it's 750k or above I might take a

look inside, if it's 500k or below I tend to ignore the wrecks, although I will always announce it in the Alliance or Corporation channels in case anyone else wants it. I mean, if I'm not going to use it, it may as well go to some use, eh?

Commander spawns

On the face of it, these are ordinary rats - they shoot you, have a bounty and drop loot. However, their bounties are much higher than ordinary spawns. The loot they drop is also usually of much better quality. If you've ever wondered where a "Dread Guristas Invulnerability Field" (that sells for about 350 million isk) comes from, this is it.

Each pirate faction (Guristas, Sansha's Nation etc) has a commander spawn associated with said faction, as described below:

Guristas - Dread Guristas - Venal Region

Sansha's Nation - True Sansha - Stain Region

Blood Raider - Dark Blood - Delve Region

Serpentis - Shadow Serpentis - Fountain Region

Angel Cartel - Domination - Curse Region

You will notice these ships on your overview as they have the prefix of their Commander name. For example, a Dread Guristas Usurper will have a huge bounty (it's the Dread version of the 1.85m rat) on the order of about 15 million isk. You may encounter a Domination Saint etc.

These spawns are highly sought after for their loot, rather than the bounty. Sometimes the loot is rubbish - some faction ammo and a tag. Sometimes you can get the aforementioned DG Invulnerability Field. If you encounter one of these spawns, it is important that you go after the commander ship first. This is because I have noticed if you go after the escort (usually just normal ships), and kill them, the commander becomes "scared" and vanishes. This is normally to another belt or stargate, but if there are other people in the system with you, they might get there before you do! Salvaging a commander wreck also gives you more salvage components than normal - some special salvage components are very valuable.

Officer Spawns

The holy grail of ratting is to encounter an Officer spawn. These are like Commander Spawns on steroids. The bounties are nearly 30 odd million a piece and the salvage is very lucrative. However, that's not why we go after them...

Officers drop "officer mods". These, like faction modules, offer extra abilities. For example, probably the most sought after module in the game, certainly the most expensive anyway, is Estamal's

Modified Invulnerability Field, which grants 50% shield resists across the board. I've seen this sell for around 8 or 9 BILLION ISK. Other items of interest, which can bring in billions, are capacitor modules and smart bombs. These are usually whisked away by mother ship and titan pilots who use them on their multi billion isk ships.

Officer spawns are incredibly rare and I've only ever encountered three of them. Some people go for years without encountering them, some people find them in their first day in 0.0 space. It's luck, I'm afraid, just like Commander spawns.

Or is it?

If you want to know how to manipulate the rats to get the maximum out of them for your needs, here's how.

Let's take a 0.0 system. It should have multiple belts inside it. The lower its true 0.0 security status is, the better. The lower it is, the more "difficult" the rats become (triple 1.85m spawns) and the more isk you'll make. The more belts there are, the more spawns will be available to you. I've found that on average, there's a spawn of rats for every 4 belts in a system, including stargates (give or take). Say you have a system with 12 asteroid belts and 3 stargates - you'll likely have about 3 or 4 spawns of rats in there. We'll use this as our example below.

1. Chaining

there's a bit of confusion over what "chaining" means. In the old days, if you killed a ship in a spawn, it would reappear if you didn't kill off the spawn quick enough. The more you killed, the more NPCs would appear - so if you got a 1.85m spawn, you could potentially get 2 more coming, then 3, 4, 5, 6, 7... all in very quick succession. Assuming you could take the DPS from the rats, you'd make a mint, literally killing non stop for as long as you could last or your ammo was stocked.

This was classed as a bug and it got fixed. These days, chaining refers to the art of finding a spawn (any spawn, but it'd be best if it had high bounties) and killing off the battleships (the big isk earners). After about 5-10 minutes, if you've left the frigates/destroyers/support alone (or at least not killed them) the battleships will return one by one. They'll keep this up indefinitely, and you keep coming back to the belt every 10-15 minutes or so and killing them off. Why stop at one? Maybe there's 2 or 3 good spawns in the system. Chain all of them. If there's others in the system ratting as well, tell them in Local what you are doing, and request they leave the support ships alone so that they'll chain properly. Occasionally the rats may vanish but you'll usually find them at another belt - they move around every hour or so. This is perfectly normal.

Sometimes you'll encounter support that warp scrambles you. This can be a pain when you want to chain because you want to warp off to another belt, but can't. But you can't kill the support else the battleships wont reappear. As this is 0.0, it's not a good idea to be scrambled in a belt, webbed, and unable to move. You COULD fit a couple of ECM modules and jam the frigate rats that scramble you. This is easier if you're in an armour tanking vessel as you'll have the spare mid slots. In something like a Raven or a Drake, this isn't so easy as your mid slots are taken up by your tank. It's up to you

what you do here. Personally, I kill off the frigates as I don't want to risk being caught by an enemy gang, but that's just me.

2. Increasing your chances of a commander or officer spawn

There's a secret to how rats work. A spawn of rats is not random. Let's say we're in our 12 belt system and there's no one else around. It's just you ratting. You encounter a 3x cruiser and 2x frigate spawn of rats. Rubbish. So you ignore it - why waste your time on it? Well, there's a good reason to waste your time on it. If you kill it off, it is usually replaced with a slightly better spawn. Perhaps it'll be 3x battle cruisers and 3x cruisers. Not much better, sure. But you kill that one off too. That gets replaced by, say, a double 500k isk battleship spawn. Kill that, it gets replaced with a 650K spawn. Kill that, you get a 800k spawn...>>>> triple 1.85 spawn (Assuming your system's sec status allows it).

Now this isn't always completely linear. You may find that it skips some steps - 500k > 800k for example. Again this is perfectly normal and nothing to be afraid of. The replacement spawn doesn't appear straight away, it takes the usual 5-10 minutes to respawn and it's not always in the same belt either! I am not exactly sure on the figures so I can't give you the equation, but if you rat in a system by yourself for a long time, you'll notice a general trend for the rats to get bigger and bigger and bigger.... and then all of a sudden they go rubbish again.

They go rubbish because you've reached the end of the "spawn" - once you've killed off the top spawn, it resets to a rubbish one, and the cycle starts again.

At the end of the cycle, there's a chance, a small one, that instead of resetting, you'll get a Commander Spawn, a hauler spawn or possibly an Officer spawn.

So it's a decision - if you chain every spawn (or most of them) you won't get many commander or hauler spawns, but overall you'll likely get more isk on average per hour. On the other hand, if you wipe through every spawn killing off everything, you'll have a higher chance of getting a commander or hauler spawn at some point, but overall the isk per hour will be slightly less. It's up to you, how you play, and what your goal is, to make that decision.

Lies, damned lies and statistics

There are a lot of rumours about ratting - lots of supposed "secrets" to it. They're all pretty much rubbish, frankly. What I've said above is everything there is to ratting effectively. Below are some of the lies, misinformation and mistakes that players spread amongst themselves. These well known "facts" are simply urban legends (or cosmic legends, I suppose) and you should ignore them.

Mining in a belt will increase the chance of a rat appearing in that belt.

Leaving the cans alone will increase the spawn rate of rats.

Killing off all the cans (shooting them) will increase the spawn rate of rats.

Leaving a rat in half-armour when chaining will increase the speed (or in some versions "is required") to make the chain continue.

Chaining rats prevents you from getting a Commander spawn.*

Chaining rats will lead to poorer rats in the system.

The system will produce crappy rats if you "wear it out" by chaining or ratting excessively. Give it a few days to "calm down".

These are all wrong and it's best to ignore them.

* This isn't so much a lie, it's more a misunderstanding of how the ratting system works. Chaining a rat spawn has no effect on if a commander will appear. Commanders (may) appear at the "end" of a cycle of a spawn. If you keep this cycle "stuck", it will of course never cycle through to get the chance for the commander to appear. If you are chaining every spawn in system, yes, you won't get a commander whilst chaining because the spawns are "stuck" at a certain level. They can't mature to their new cycle and thus have the chance to appear. If you kill off the chains completely, you'll get your chance like everyone else.

Think of it like rolling a dice. If you continually just pick up the dice and then put it down again, same side down as it was before (chaining) you won't ever get the chance to roll a 6, because you're always on 5. Do it 100 times in a row and you will always just have a 5 because you're not allowing the dice to roll. But the minute you stop doing that and actually roll the dice (kill off the spawn), you MAY get a 6. Odds are that you won't of course, but the chance is there.

Plexing:

Plexing is a lot like missions, however by many are seen as a lot more fun and less repetitive as well as the fact you have to find the gates yourself by scanning and not all systems have 1 present at all times. While some can give a good income it is not seen as steady unless you have access to some of the better 0.0 where plexes can be scanned for which can give some nice modules to sell for billions of isk.

Plexes are rated from 1/10 to 10/10 with 10/10 being the hardest with the most rewards and 1 being the lowest which can be found in empire (high sec). Low sec plexes (systems with security of 0.4 to 0.1) can also give nice rewards, however highest plexes I have heard in low sec is 6/10 although I could be wrong.

Plexes are found by the use of probes by using your scanner, they can be found faster by the use of a specialised ship such as a covert ops ship that has scanner speed bonuses. A greate guide of how to scan for plexes and scanning in general is at <http://www.eveonline.com/ingameboard.asp?a=topic&threadID=1020474>

As I have also found out by experience you may need more than 1 person for plex's of a difficulty of 6/10 and certainly when they are above that so often rewards can be high but are shared.

Mission Running:

Before starting I would like to say that all missions have been documented at <http://eve-survival.org/wikka.php?wakka=MissionReports> and I have used this many times and is very useful.

By many this is seen as one of the most boring way to make isk, however many do it and become very rich from it with rewards being very high compared to the risk. A complete guide of everything in missions is at <http://wiki.eveonline.com/wiki/Mission#Missions> and is far better than I can explain.

A few points I wish to add are that the ship you use to do missions can drastically change your income amount as well as the setup you have. For instance whether or not you have a tractor beam on as well as a salvager may change how much isk you make due to the high amount of loot and salvage that can be gained in a mission, however if your ship is primarily setup for killing then this can also make just as much.

I would highly recommend you spend a great deal of time coming up with a mission running ship and method which suited you personally which is for me the golem with tractors and salvagers to collect loot whilst I kill the npcs and is highly effective however can be boring at times and pointless as some missions are not well known for dropping a high amount of loot or salvage.

I would recommend this type of income as a start to the game, however after time there are better ways such as trading to make money without spending as much time.

Scamming:

This is often seen as morally wrong or seen as exploiting the game by many, however many scams are perfectly legal and in fact most are just preying on the people in the game who have more isk than sense.

Most scams that are pulled off are done so by gaining trust by many people of a few and then after a while being trusted with isk or resources etc. Other scams include generally being annoying and getting a massive bounty and then getting an alt (another character you own) to pod kill you and claim the isk someone else has put on you.

A place where most scams are done is jita in local chat, many here spam too much and have little evidence they are not scammers and therefore fail a great deal, however if you work hard and have common sense there are ways to prove you are to be trusted with sometimes what can be billions of isk and all you need to do is prey on people's greed.

Many scams can be seen being shown in jita chat so it is likely if you hang around there for a while you will learn many of the scams which also include contracts and will probably give you little ideas of coming up with your own because many people can do the same scam but the first people to pull off a new scam often make a great deal from it.

How much you make from this all depends on how good you are at it with some pulling in

multibillions and other the odd few hundred million and it is advised you never admit to being a scammer as news often spreads quickly over the forums etc and then you may need to use another character.

Summary:

Overall in eve you must not trust anyone as it is a cold place with many scammers around so to start it is advised to start mission running and get into a small corporation and build up your knowledge of the game as well as skill and isk running missions or mining and then as your knowledge grows explore greater opportunities and generally enjoy your time in different situations.

I myself would say trading to be overall the best way to make isk however you need isk to make isk so this is where the other types come into play which can be great fun and you can meet some great people and have fun.

Good luck in eve.