

# Exploration Guide V2.0

*By Joerd Toastius, in association with DNightmare Productions*

**If you want to understand the mechanics of the probing system, you need to read Hoshi's guide on probing which can be found [here](#).** For the purposes of this guide I'm just going to cover the practical aspects as they relate to exploration, and skip as much of the theory as possible.

## Introduction

The Revelations expansion (codename Kali) introduces proper exploration to Eve. Over 250 individual exploration sites have been created and added to the game, offering a wide variety of content. Each site is unique, but there are four broad categories they fall into - combat sites, profession sites, mining sites and gas cloud sites.

Sites are distributed randomly all over the Eve cluster, in all security statuses and regions. They appear in planetary gravity wells, stick around for a while and then disappear again. As such sites are not permanent enough to be documented, you have to track them down yourself using the exploration tools if you want to make use of them, and it's these tools that will be explained in this guide, along with some notes on how to deal with the sites themselves.

## Cliff Notes mechanics

Exploration is done using scan probes. Changes to probes in Revelations make them all chance-based, and that applies to exploration too. You'll need to get your equipment and skills together, and load up with the right probes. You use a Multispectral Probe to check if there's anything in the system worth looking for and, if there is, launch a Quest probe around each planet. You then analyze them all together, over and over again, until the random number generator spits out the right number and you get a result. Once you get your first result, you can use more accurate probes to zero in on the site, eventually dropping you right on top of it. Then you just pew-pew the bad guys and apply whatever tools are necessary to plunder your site.

Some things to note:

1. **Exploration is chance-based.** You will often need to run a lot of analysis cycles before you find anything
2. **Exploration uses a fair number of new skills.** It's worth training up and getting prepped first
3. **Exploration rewards people who know what they're doing.** So read the guide carefully!

## **The Walkthrough**

Each section will start with a bullet list of the steps you need to take, and then will explain each step

### Skills

#### **You will NEED:**

- **Astrometrics IV**
- **Signal Acquisition I**

#### **You will WANT:**

- **Covert Ops**
- **Astrometric Triangulation**
- **Astrometric Pinpointing**
- **Signal Acquisition**

#### **As high as possible**

- Astrometrics IV is needed to use all the probes properly. You *can* succeed with level III, in theory, but it'll be very hit and miss (mainly miss).
- Signal Acquisition I (or some other bonus that has the same effect, see discussion on ships and rigs shortly) is needed to prevent your probes from expiring before you finish analysing them
- Covert Ops ships give the same bonus as the Signal Acquisition skill, and is therefore by far and away the best ship type for exploration. The bonus increases per level of Covert Ops, so the higher your level, the better.
- Astrometric Triangulation increases the strength of your probes, making them more likely to find something in the first place
- Astrometric Pinpointing reduces the scan deviation of your probes, making them more accurate
- Signal Acquisition reduces the amount of time it takes to analyse a result, and thus the amount of time it takes to find a site

Additionally, you will need the skills to make use of the sites you're looking for. If you're after combat, have a good combat skills, and ideally some friends. If you're after mining, look up the mining guide [here](#). Profession sites require either Archaeology and Salvaging, or Hacking. The higher these skills are, the faster you'll be able to loot the site of valuables. Gas Cloud sites are a special case that will be discussed later.

## Equipment

### **You will NEED:**

- **Scan Probe Launcher I, with a base analysis time of 600s (10 minutes)**
- **A ship that can fit said Launcher (does not require a launcher hardpoint, but does need to be able to handle the CPU load)**
- **Some probes (see later for exactly which ones you'll want)**

### **You will WANT:**

- **A Covert Ops ship - the one with the Astrometrics bonus, not the Stealth Bomber variant**
- **Failing that, a T1 Frigate with the Astrometrics bonus (none for Amarr, sorry)**
- **A Covert Ops Cloaking Device II for your Covert Ops (for safety in low-sec/0.0)**
- **A pair of Gravity Capacitor Upgrade I rigs**
- **Ships and equipment to deal with the sites you find**

The Scan Probe Launcher I is the launcher you'll use for exploration. It's a lot slower than the Recon Probe Launcher, but it's big enough to actually hold exploration probes, which the Recon variant isn't.

The Scan Probe Launcher I uses 220tF of CPU, so you'll need a ship that can cope with this

Probes will be discussed in the next section

Covert Ops ships are excellent for exploration. They have the Astrometrics duration bonus that you also get on the Signal Acquisition skill, which is extremely important for exploration. These bonuses multiply one after the other - if you have Signal Acquisition V and Covert Ops V (and you're flying a Covert Ops ship), you'll get a 0.25x multiplier on your analysis time. Signal Acquisition V gives you a 0.5x multiplier, and then Covert Ops V gives another 0.5x, and  $0.5 \times 0.5 = 0.25$ , making you four times faster than the base speed.

Three of the four races have a T1 frigate with the same bonus as Covert Ops ships, but at 5% per level rather than 10%. This isn't ideal, but it's much easier to train Frigate V than Covert Ops V. There is no Amarr ship in this role though (due to the lack of a 6th frigate), so if you're Amarr, it's either Covert Ops or crosstrain to another race for this bonus. Bear in mind that you need Covert Ops III before your Covert Ops ship becomes better than the base T1 frigate (you need Frigate V to use the Covert Ops in the first place).

The cloaking device is optional, but very useful. If you're working in 0.0, it's almost a necessity to keep you safe, but in high-sec you can ignore it if you're not at war with anyone. As you can't warp while analysing, the Prototype or Improved cloaks will do the job ok, and cost a lot less to boot.

The Gravity Capacitor Upgrade I rigs do another -10% duration each, for a further 0.8x multiplier on your scan time with two. This takes you down to 0.2x total modifier with max skills, which is not to be sniffed at

You will, obviously, need the ships and kit to deal with the sites you find. Combat sites need combat ships, mining sites work great with barges, while profession sites need a ship with the appropriate modules fitted - Analyzer and Salvager for Archaeology/Salvage sites, Codebreaker for Hacking sites. You *can* fit these on your Covert Ops, but this will usually mean someone else coming along in a combat ship to clear the place out first. Generally I put my profession modules on my combat ship, because I prefer not to risk the Covert Ops unless absolutely necessary

## Probes

### **You will NEED:**

- **At least one Multispectral Probe for every system you want to explore**
- **A pile of Quest probes matched to the type(s) of site you're looking for**
- **A few Pursuit probes of the same type(s)**
- **A few Comb probes of the same type(s)**
- **A few Sift probes of the same type(s)**

### **You will WANT:**

- **As many probes as you can lay your filthy hands on**

Multispectral Probes are used to do the initial analysis of a system. They'll tell you, with 100% accuracy, what types of site there are to find in the system (if any).

You may want to bring additional Multispectral Probes with you so you can double-check that the site you're after is still there in between scans.

Multispectral Probes can indicate any of five types of signature. They will indicate which types are present, but not how many of a particular type of site.

- **UNKNOWN:** Combat sites. Can be found with **ANY PROBE TYPE**.
- **GRAVIMETRIC:** Hidden asteroid belts
- **MAGNETOMETRIC:** Archaeology/Salvage profession sites
- **RADAR:** Hacking profession sites
- **LADAR:** Gas Cloud sites

To go with these site types, there are four "flavours" of probe - GRAVIMETRIC, MAGNETOMETRIC, RADAR and LADAR. As you can see, each probe flavour is associated with a particular type of exploration site - Gravimetric probes are best for finding hidden asteroid belts, for example. Unknown sites can be found **equally well with any flavour of probe** - you don't need an "unknown" probe, you can use any type and it will work equally well.

This is where you need to start planning what you're after. If you just want to mine, you'll only really need Gravimetric probes; if you want to do profession sites, you'll need equal quantities of Radar and Magnetometric probes; if you want combat sites you won't really care what probe types you use, just buy whatever's cheapest or easiest to find.

See the section on "Types of Site" for more info on particular types of site.

Each flavour of probe comes in four sizes: Quest, Pursuit, Sift and Comb. You'll find the full set in the market - Gravimetric Quest, Gravimetric Pursuit, Gravimetric Comb, Gravimetric Sift, Radar Quest, Radar Pursuit and so on.

- **QUEST** probes have a range of 4AU but are the least accurate. You will need a lot of these
- **PURSUIT** probes have a range of 2AU and below-average accuracy. You will only need a few of these
- **COMB** probes have a range of 1AU and above-average accuracy. You will need a few of these too.
- **SIFT** probes have a range of 0.5AU and are the most accurate. You'll need a reasonable number of these.
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You will, in addition, need one multispectral probe for every system you want to look in.

### Using Multispectral Probes

The first stage to exploration is using your Multispecs properly. This is fairly easy.

- **Launch a Multispec probe in a system you want to check out**
- **Select and analyse it**
- **Check out the results**

Go to a system you want to survey, and load a Multispec probe into your launcher. Find somewhere safe to settle down and launch the probe. The 999AU range means it doesn't matter particularly where you launch it.

Open your Scanner window (Ctrl-F11) and go to the "System Scanner" tab (first one). **Wait for your probe launcher to stop flashing** - you can't analyse until it's finished. Make sure you're not in warp, and you're not cloaked. Then select "Cosmic Signature" in the "groups" menu - you **always** want to use "Cosmic Signature" when exploring, as **all** exploration sites are of this type. Your Multispec probe should be listed in the box below. Click on it, and then hit analyse. This will change the window to a blank black box with a counter in one corner. You may now cloak, but **do not warp anywhere**. I'd also recommend moving away from the probe - not only can you not cloak within 2000m, but if you sit very close by it's very easy for someone to see the probe, head over and decloak you.

Wait for the counter to tick down to 0. Yes, it will take a while, particularly if you've got weak skills. Hopefully you're now beginning to appreciate why I keep saying you want to get as many bonuses which reduce analysis time as you can!

Once the counter finishes, it'll do one of two things. Firstly it might say "nothing found", in which case that system is, at this moment in time, empty of exploration sites. Secondly, it might list one or more of the types of signature - Unknown, Gravimetric and so on - listed above. This means there are one or more sites of each type listed somewhere in the system.

If some of the types of site you're interested in are listed, then you can get on with hunting them down. If not, move on to the next system and keep using Multispec probes until you find the type of site you want

### Using Quest Probes

This is the tricky bit...

- **Launch Quest probes so that you have all space within 4AU of any planet covered**
- **If you can't get perfect coverage, do the best you can**
- **Select ALL THE PROBES**
- **Analyse**
- **...and analyse...**
- **...and analyse, until you get a result**

Probably the hardest part of exploration is getting your Quest placement right. You have a couple of constraints you'll want or need to meet:

1. Sites spawn between 1AU and 4AU from **planets** and only planets, so you want to cover as much of this volume as possible
2. You **cannot** launch a probe within the scan radius of another probe - it just won't let you

For the outer planets, it's pretty simple - drop a Quest at the warp-in, and move on. For the inner planets, where there's often three or four within 4AU of each other, rule 2) comes back to bite you in the behind - if you drop a Quest at one, you won't be able to drop it at any of the others within that probe's range.

The first thing you'll want to do to figure this stuff out is to open the 3D System Map mode, by pressing F10 and going to System Map. This will let you see the whole system. Next, turn on your Tactical Overlay, which will give you a nice 5AU circle around your current position. Have a good look at the system, and start planning your placement. Sometimes it's easy. Sometimes you'll want to make midwarp bookmarks to maximise your coverage. Sometimes it just can't be done properly with one set of probes, so plan for two separate sets of placements (or go somewhere else). Once you drop a probe, selecting it in the System Scanner will give you a nice little bubble on the map showing its range.

Experiment, practice and check out DNightmare's site (link at the end) for some nice pictures. You'll get the hang of it.

Once you have your Quests out nicely, select **all of them** and click Analyse. This will

analyse all probes in parallel, taking advantage of increases sensor strengths where they overlap.

**Keep analysing over and over again until you get a result.** Have a book or a DVD or something to keep you occupied. Or just get bored, if that's your thing.

### Interpreting Results

If you think a system's taking too long, then by all means go elsewhere, but the site is there to find, somewhere. If it's hard to find it's often also very valuable/difficult, so it's up to you whether or not to keep trying. You may also need to rework your probe placement - scan strength decreases as you get further from the probe, so if you have one probe covering two planets, consider shifting it to the other planet to give it some more loving.

Eventually, if you're persistent enough and your probe placement doesn't suck, you *will* get a result.

Results come as several columns:

- Type. This should be "Deadspace Signature", if you're doing it right
- Signal Strength. This is a nice big number that tells you the exact probability you had of getting this result. It's a value derived from various numbers and unique to your particular situation and probe placement, rather than a value attached to the site itself.
- Distance. This is how far the result is **from where you are right now**
- Accuracy. This is the **exact** distance **from** the result **to** the actual site

If you don't see all four columns, expand your system scanner window and/or resize them until you do

Signal Strength can tell you a lot, if you know what you're looking for. For example, an exceptionally low number may suggest that you've found the wrong type of site. As you gain more experience you'll get a feel for signal strengths and learn what's high, what's low and what they tend to result in. This is just something you'll need to practice, though.

**Also note that it is possible to find the "wrong sort" of site with a particular probe.** If you look at say the Gravimetric Quest probe, you'll see it has a Gravimetric Sensor Strength of 250, and a Sensor Strength of 50 for the other types. This means it's five times more likely to find a Gravimetric site than it is to find another site of the same difficulty, **but it is still possible to find one of those other types.** As some sites are harder than others, you may find your Gravimetric probes are finding an "easy" Radar site faster than a "hard" Gravimetric site, for example. This is just something you have to get used to; Unknowns are a particular pain in this regard as any probe will find them, so if you're looking for something else and there's an Unknown in system, you'll probably pick it up at some point...

## Using More Accurate Probes

- **Warp to the result**
- **Drop the most accurate probe that will still reach the site**
- **Analyse**
- **Repeat until you get a result with an Accuracy of under 500km**

You can right-click the result in your results window and warp to it. Alternatively, it will be displayed as a coloured circle on the system map, and you can right-click and warp-to from there.

Once you're at the result, look at your results window again. The Distance should be around 0, give or take a few thousand metres. The Accuracy should be the same.

You'll now want to launch a more accurate probe that will take you even closer. Check the Accuracy again, and then select a probe type that has a range greater than the Accuracy. For example, if your Accuracy is 0.6AU, a Sift probe (range 0.5AU) won't pick it up from where you are, but a Comb probe (range 1.0 AU) will. A Pursuit (range 2AU) will also pick it up, but the Comb has better sensor strength and is thus more accurate. **Note that if the accuracy is displayed in kilometres, it means it's less than 0.1 AU.**

Drop the right probe and analyse again, and keep analysing until you get a new result. When you get this result, do the same thing - warp to it, check the Accuracy, launch the best probe you can, and analyse until you get a new result. Eventually you'll get one within 500km or so, which is generally close enough to get you to the site

## Checking Out The Site

- **Warp to the result in a ship which either won't die or which you don't mind losing**
- **Don't leave your Covert Ops ship at a nearby result**

If you get a result within 500km or so, warping to it will generally land you in the same grid as the site. **Sites don't spawn until you enter their grid.** Once you land in the grid and the site spawns, **the deadspace warp inhibition effect kicks in.** This means two things:

1. If you bookmark your current location (say 400km away from the actual site), warp out and warp back in, you'll land right in the middle of the site
2. You can't warp to any point within the Deadspace zone (I'm not sure exactly how big this is)

Point 1) means that it's often dangerous to scout sites with a Covert Ops, as there's usually something near the warp-in that will decloak you and get you killed. Point 2) means that if you park your Covert Ops nearby and scout in your pod, you probably won't be able to warp back to it due to the deadspace effect. I always park at least 1AU away, just to be safe.

Once you're at the site, **remember to bookmark it.** Also, if you zoom back out to the System Map, it will flag up a little box telling you the name of the site. For profession

sites, this is usually fairly informative - it'll tell you what type of site it is, how hard it is to find (the "Base" level, ranging from 1-4), what faction owns it and so on. For Mining sites, it usually tells you what ore types are present and how big the field is. For Combat sites it'll often just give you a cryptic name.

The names are useful both because they may tell you something about the site, and also because if you have problems with a site, knowing the name will let other people help you out much easier.

### Types Of Site

As mentioned earlier, there are various different types of site. It should be noted that content in exploration sites (NPCs, asteroids etc) do not respawn. The sites themselves seem to respawn at random after completion (and not just at downtime), but the exact mechanism is unknown.

**COMBAT:** These tend to involve lots of shooting. Currently there's very little reward in the initial sites you find, and the 0.0 ones in particular are REALLY hard. However, each combat site has a chance of escalating, which will give you a time-limited bookmark in your journal to the next site in the "escalation chain" - the journal entries are stored in the "Expeditions" tab. This site will in turn have another chance of escalating you to the next site, and so on. If you reach the "final" site in each chain, you may be rewarded with some faction loot. Also, a word of warning - leaving an expedition site before completing it may result in your expedition being terminated there and then.

**MINING:** These generally have roids better than you'd expect in whatever security status (high, low, 0.0) you're in. Some sites are better than others. Often they'll be guarded by Rogue Drones or other pirates, and normal belt rats may spawn too. Asteroids in these sites do not respawn - once they're gone, they're gone

**HACKING:** These will have a bunch of Hacking structures in. **Hacking targets look like cans in your overview, but have models that look like structures.** If you try to open one, it will tell you you need proper tools. Target it and activate a Codebreaker module on it and your ship will try to hack it. If it succeeds, you can open the can and loot it. This is chance-based, so it may take several cycles to succeed. Hacking sites drop Datacores, Data Interface BPCs, Decryptors and other invention gubbins

**ARCH/SAL:** Short for "Archaeology/Salvage", these generally contain some Archaeology cans and some Salvage cans. Again, they look like cans on the overview but have other modules, and tell you you need tools to open them. Generally, anything that sounds like a broken ship (eg, Derelict) needs to be salvaged, while anything that sounds like wreckage (eg, Ruins) needs to be Analyzed (archaeology). Doing a "Show Info" on a can should tell you what tools you need to access it. These sites drop lots of rig parts, the occasional T2 rig BPC and Invention skillbooks

**GAS CLOUDS:** These are used for Booster-related stuff, and will be discussed later.

## Completing The Site

- **Do whatever's necessary to finish the site**

Each site has a "completion" trigger. This may happen when you attack something, or open a can, or mine out a belt, or kill the last NPC, or whatever. Once a site is completed, it will despawn once everyone leaves it; some profession sites complete as soon as you kill an NPC, so you need to finish them off in one go. In Combat sites, the Escalation trigger is tied to the completion trigger, so it will not complete until you've either got an escalation or hit a dead end - it should notify you in either case. If a combat site isn't going away, it's because you haven't completed it yet (or it's bugged, of course)

## Boosters

Boosters are specialist drugs that you can take to improve your performance in combat. There are eight 0.0 COSMOS constellations scattered around the map, and each has a particular Booster associated with it

I'm still sussing out the details, but here's roughly what you need to make a Booster

### **Cytocerin of the right kind**

- Needs to be harvested from Gas Clouds using a Gas Cloud Harvester I (or named version) module; found through exploration/COSMOS missions
  - Needs the Gas Cloud Harvesting skill; found through exploration/COSMOS missions and seeded in pirate stations

### **The appropriate reaction**

- Needs to be recovered from COSMOS exploration sites

### **A Biochemical Reactor POS module**

#### **Some silos**

- Still establishing exactly what kinds for what, but you need a silo for each input and one for the output

#### **A Booster BPC**

- Needs to be recovered from COSMOS exploration sites

#### **Either a Drug Lab or an Outpost**

- (Probably) needs the Drug Manufacturing skill; found through exploration/COSMOS missions and seeded in pirate stations

Harvest the cytocerin, stick it in a Biochemical reactor hooked up to the correct silos along with the necessary reaction, react it, throw the resulting stuff along with the right BPC into either a Drug Lab or an Outpost, build the Booster. More info as I find it.

## **MORE INFO**

### **Join the "EXPLORATION" channel ingame**

This is full of explorers, who will be only too happy to help you out with questions that aren't covered in this guide. Please do read the guide first though - we're not a helpdesk, and we're not going to make the effort to explain everything from scratch because you're too lazy to read it yourself. I realise this comes across as a little harsh, but it is becoming

something of a problem, and there's only so many times you can answer "What probe type do I need for 'Unknown'?" before you snap...

**Check out DNightmare's site in the IGB (in-game browser) > <http://www.d-nightmare.de/exploration/>**

This has a whole bunch of cool stuff, including diagrams, videos and even a database of sites that people have found. It's very useful, I recommend checking it out

- The "Trusted Site" thing is needed to make the DB work. If you don't want to trust him, that's fine, just don't visit the site

## **Summary**

### **You will NEED:**

- **Astrometrics IV**
- **Signal Acquisition I**

### **You will WANT:**

- **Covert Ops**
- **Astrometric Triangulation**
- **Astrometric Pinpointing**
- **Signal Acquisition**

### **As high as possible**

### **You will NEED:**

- **Scan Probe Launcher I**
- **A ship that can fit said Launcher (does not require a launcher hardpoint, but does need to be able to handle the CPU load)**
- **Some probes (see later for exactly which ones you'll want)**

### **You will WANT:**

- **A Covert Ops ship - the one with the Astrometrics bonus, not the Stealth Bomber variant**
- **Failing that, a T1 Frigate with the Astrometrics bonus (none for Amarr, sorry)**
- **A Covert Ops Cloaking Device II for your Covert Ops (for safety in low-sec/0.0)**
- **A pair of Gravity Capacitor Upgrade I rigs**
- **Ships and equipment to deal with the sites you find**

### **You will NEED:**

- **One Multispectral Probe for every system you want to explore**

- **A pile of Quest probes matched to the type(s) of site you're looking for**
- **A few Pursuit probes of the same type(s)**
- **A few Comb probes of the same type(s)**
- **A few Sift probes of the same type(s)**

**You will WANT:**

- **As many probes as you can lay your filthy hands on**
- **Launch a Multispec probe in a system you want to check out**
- **Select and analyse it**
- **Check out the results**
- **Launch Quest probes so that you have all space within 4AU of any planet covered**
- **If you can't get perfect coverage, do the best you can**
- **Select ALL THE PROBES**
- **Analyse**
- **...and analyse...**
- **...and analyse, until you get a result**
- **Warp to the result**
- **Drop the most accurate probe that will still reach the site**
- **Analyse**
- **Repeat until you get a result with an Accuracy of under 500km**
- **Warp to the result in a ship which either won't die or which you don't mind losing**
- **Don't leave your Covert Ops ship at a nearby result**
- **HAVE FUN!**

Credits

Special thanks to the following people:

**DNightmare**, for being my partner in crime, setting up the exploration website and channel, and generally knowing his stuff. Couldn't have done this without him.

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