PREFACE

A long time ago, in late 05 when I was first getting into piracy, I wrote a guide that has since become one of the staple piracy guides on the sticky.

(A side note: this was on another character, who I sold for ISK [which I gave to in-game friends] when I thought I was quiting the game for good. The player who bought my character seems to be taking credit for my hard work now, and I cant go back and delete my old post in favor of this one *sigh*. Anyways:)

Since then, I've learned much about the way the game is played and how to pirate. I feel I owe it to the community to contribute what I've learned back to the noobies of today, in the hope that they might take to piracy and roam the seas of low sec like I did then, and still do now.

Piracy is the most fun you can have in EVE in my opinion, and something many new players seem attracted to. I myself played many long hours of mind numbing mission running before I attempted my first PvP combat. I died quickly, and could not find any guides that provided the information I needed to survive. So I set about learning to pirate properly all by myself, armed with nothing but a stack of T1 frigates and a desire to yar.

Now, many years and four corporations latter, I am finally confident enough to pass my knowledge on.

EVE is a deep and complex game, and nowhere is this complexity more obvious than in PvP. In every fight, the myriad of factors and variables that can effect the outcome can be overwhelming in number, and thats even supposing you can find someone to fight in the first place. Life as a pirate, or any PvPer, can sometimes be frustrating, and it is rarely easy. It can take months to become competent at PvP, and years to become skilled.

Don't be discouraged, however: the path of the PvPer is an enjoyable one. The rewards of EVE PvP are greater in terms of satisfaction, adrenaline, and just plain fun than any other computer game I have personally ever played. The adrenaline rush you receive every time you jump into combat as a new PvPer (and which I still experience when I'm in a particularly dangerous situation) can be almost unreal.

This guide is intended to thoroughly fill you in on the basics you need to pirate, and get you up and running with the minimum of hassle. Provided in this first draft is everything you need to know to get out and yar, including settings for your UI, scanning skills, basic tactics, advice, and fittings and tactics for T1 frigates (and before you ask, YES they are effective pirate ships, even solo, and NO you don't need high skill points! Trust me!)

Further versions will include everything you see in the index. New players should read each one of the linked guides IN ORDER (with the exception of the last one, "what ship to train for", which is optional) before heading out to pirate.

And without further ado, I present:

THE BEGINER'S GUIDE TO PIRACY

(Version 2.1, last updated 01/10/09)

By Jack McSwain
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INDEX

Items in *Italics* are coming soon, items in **bold** are finished.

SECTION I

On Piracy, and PvP Basics

I - I: PIRACY 101

Piracy is the easiest type of EVE PvP to get into as a new player. Within a few hours of starting the game, you can strap a warp scrambler on a frigate, head out to low sec, and begin a life of piracy. With luck, determination and the right knowledge, you might even begin racking up kills and/or ransoms on your first day. But,

WHAT IS A PIRATE, EXACTLY?

Wikipedia defines Piracy as: "Robbery committed at sea, or sometimes on shore, without a commission from a sovereign nation (as distinct from privateering, robbery with sovereign commission)."

In EVE, we broaden that definition to mean: a Pirate is a pilot who hunts (and/or camps for) other pilots in low-security (0.4 or below) space, then attacks them for fun and/or profit.

Piracy is a form of PvP (player vs player) combat. Other forms of EVE PvP include (but are not limited to): Mercenary Work, CONCORD-Sanctioned Warfare, Factional Warfare, and Alliance Warfare. Like historical piracy, piracy in EVE is distinct from other forms of EVE PvP by virtue of being non-politically motivated, unsanctioned by any sovereign nation or organization (NPC or Player Controlled), and is not commissioned or prearranged by business agreement.

In other words, piracy is indiscriminate PvP.

WHY SHOULD I PIRATE?

If you are reading this guide, you're likely interested in learning to PvP in EVE. With that in mind:

1) **Piracy is the easiest type of EvE PvP to get into as a new player in EvE**, as I have already stated, because it doesn't require much money, any political ties, or even much planning. You simply strap on a warp scrambler (or disruptor), fly into low sec, find someone to attack and do it.

2) **It's a good way to learn** how to PvP. When you first begin pirating in low sec, you will likely be on your own or with a small group of friends: there will be no faceless Fleet Commander barking confusing orders at you, prioritizing targets based on criteria you can't comprehend yet. Your targets will (at first) be frigates, cruisers, mining ships, haulers, and other similarly-sized vessels: you will learn what ships and weapons do what, and making a mistake will rarely result in instant annihilation. Gatecamps in low sec are typically small, and do not have bubbles: you can learn the basics of evading camps and blockades in a relatively safe environment, learning to swim without going off the deep end.

3) **Piracy is scalable:** if you decide you like the life of crime, you can stick with it your entire career as a PvP pilot. There are bigger fish than noob NPCers to attack in the seas of low sec, and if you enjoy gatecamping, you can turn a rather decent profit camping bottleneck systems and alliance jump-off points with bigger ships (if you're good). If you decide you DONT like the life of a pirate, however, the skills you learn from piracy transfer over seamlessly to alliance warfare, high-sec wars, or any other kind of PvP you might be interested in.

4) **Freedom:** you rarely have to limit your targets based on the political maneuvering of your corp or alliance. You don't have to spend time worrying about losing your 0.0 rights, or whether or not so-and-so alliance is going to try and move in on your territory. No long, tedious POS takedowns (unless you want to), no obligations to your alliance overlords. Just lots of things going boom.

5) **You can make money pirating.** Piracy is the only PvP profession (with the possibly exception of Mercenary) where you can make money. While you will probably never get rich as a pirate (and your income will be erratic at best) if you're good at what you do (and, typically, ransom a lot) you can keep yourself stocked with ships and modules, and perhaps even have a bit left over. If you're REALLY good, and lucky, you might even earn a nice big pile of booty over time.

6) **It's Fun.** To me, this is the most important point. Blowing up or extorting money from random people is FUN. The squish of a popped pod is deeply satisfying. Getting to yell "YAR!" when moving in for an attack is fun. Looking terrifying with a flashing red icon and a little skull is great. Having "WANTED" splashed across your portrait in bright red letters is cool, and knowing some carebear was so annoyed at you that they dished out some of their hard-earned cash to put a bounty on your head is amusing and satisfying. Piracy is, in my opinion, the most fun you can have in EVE.

I – II: PVP BASICS

THE CARDINAL RULES OF EVE PVP

1- THE FIRST RULE OF EVE PVP IS: Don't fly what you can't afford to lose. (Or could not make do without)

This one seems obvious, but every day I see noobies (and even friends and corp mates) out hunting in ships that would cost more than their current wallet balance to replace.

2- THE SECOND RULE OF EVE PVP IS: DON'T FLY WHAT YOU CAN'T AFFORD TO LOSE!!

I'm really serious about that one. Why?

3- THE THIRD RULE OF EVE PVP IS: You WILL lose.

Often. This does not mean at all that you will not win as well, but it is certainly not the only outcome you will experience. The instant you decide you are going to use a ship to PvP, that ship is very very likely destined for destruction. Best to start by assuming that it's already as good as gone; that way it will hurt less when it inevitably pops.

4- THE FOURTH RULE OF EVE PVP IS: Everyone (and everything) is out to get you.

The only people worthy of your trust in EVE are you friends and corp mates, and they are only worthy of trust because EVE would be a lonely place if you didn't trust someone. When you enter local, assume that everyone present is hunting you specifically. Don't take anyone's word for granted if you don't have to. And never, ever agree to a 1v1 unless you have enough backup waiting around to make your opponent pay if and when he decides to violate the duel and have his friends jump you. Speaking of which:

5- THE FIFTH RULE OF EVE PVP IS: Everything that can go wrong, will go wrong.

Always assume that: that 1v1 guy's friends WILL jump you (and they will bring a titan with them). There IS a hostile gatecamp on the other side of that gate. You are going to run out of ammo. The enemy will smartbomb all your drones. Always assume the worst, and you'll have a much better chance of being prepared when the worst comes to pass (and it will, often).

6: THE SIXTH RULE OF EVE PVP IS: Do not willingly fight on your enemies terms.

Never let an opponent goad you into a fight. Do not take the fight to the enemy when you know the enemy is waiting for you (unless, of course, you know something they don't, which is fighting on YOUR terms). Avoid getting forced into a fight under all circumstances. Choose your own fights, and

don't give credence to any insults to your courage. Courage is not the same thing as stupidity.

7: THE SEVENTH RULE OF EVE PVP IS: Know thy enemy.

When you warp into combat, you should already have a reasonable idea of what you are up against. What ship your opponent is flying, a guess at how experienced they are in game, and knowledge of what other ships are present in system and may pop in on you. Know as much as you can about the capabilities and limitations of whatever ship(s) they happen to be flying, and be prepared for any possible setups. Be as well appraised of any possible blobs and backup as you reasonably can be.

8- THE EIGHT RULE OF EVE PVP IS: Know thy self.

All that goes for your enemy goes double for yourself. Know your ship and setup's capabilities and limitations with you skill points, and know those of your allies and wingmates as well. Be aware of your own skill as a pilot, and act accordingly. And last but not least:

9- THE NINTH RULE OF EVE PVP IS: Don't give free intel.

Rename your ship so it doesn't display "Your Name Here's Ship" on scanner (right click the ship > set name). Don't telegraph your presence in local. Don't discuss your ship(s), fitting, or any fights you had in local (unless you died, in which case its a moot point). Make any opponents present work for every spec of information about you.

10- THE TENTH RULE OF EVE PVP IS: It's a game, don't take it too seriously and HAVE FUN!

EVE is a dark, twisted, and serious game. The thing that we too often forget is that it is indeed a game. The reason we are playing EVE right now instead of doing the dishes or working on that report for Bob at the office is that we want to enjoy ourselves. If EVE ever gets to be keyboard-breakingly anger inducing, you need to take a step back and a deep breath. It's a game; do your best, kick some ass, and try like hell not to get kicked back, but at the end of the day if you end up in your pod (or even in a clone vat) you have to remember to enjoy yourself anyway. Victory would not be so sweet without the challenges on the way.

THE ABOVE RULES ARE NOT SET IN STONE (except the first two). They are guidelines. Sometimes they can be bent, often they are broken. They merely represent a set of principles to keep in mind while playing, concepts that will help you get ahead in the cutthroat universe of EVE.

A QUICK NOTE

Before you do any PvP, press ESC and go into the general settings tab. Find "autotarget back" and set it to 0. This will prevent you from accidentally shooting allies, NPCs, and other things that target you in the middle of a fight.

WHAT TO TRAIN FOR

As a beginning pirate, you should begin by flying T1 frigates. Contrary to popular belief, it is not only possible to PvP and pirate effectively in a simple T1 frigate, it is quite effective (especially since Quantum Rise reduced the power of Stasis Webifiers). T1 frigates are able to stay "under the guns" of

larger vessels, evading a large part of the damage from cruiser-sized and larger weapons, and pack enough of a punch to take down anything below a battlecruiser, given enough time, and even larger things in groups. They are easy to train for, as even hour-old characters can get in the ships, and they can have them fully fit out for PvP within 24 hours. Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, learning to pirate with T1 Frigates far easier on your wallet than any other ship type.

So what modules does your T1 frigate need? I've included detailed fittings and tactics for frigate setups in the Ships and Fittings section, near the end of this guide, but every one of those fittings includes some common things, listed here.

PvP in EVE usually requires: weapons to hurt your enemy with, and some way of keeping your enemy from simply running away. The latter is more true in piracy than almost any other type of PvP, as combat is non-consensual and thus your opponent is very likely to want to flee. Even if you opponent does want to fight you, if defeat looks inevitable they will likely try to retreat. To that end, you will need "tackle". "Tackle" is the slang term for Warp Jammers (scramblers and disruptors) and sometimes Stasis Webifiers.

Warp Jammers

These modules stops a target from warping away. They come in two flavors:

Warp scramblers have 2 points of scramble power and function at between 7.5 and 9km. Scramblers also turns off a target's Micro Warp Drive (if active).

Warp disruptors have 1 point of scramble power, do not turn of Micro Warp Drives, and function at 20-24km. Warp Disruptors, however, use too much capacitor and are take too much fitting to be viable on a T1 frigate.

These Modules require:
Propulsion jamming I
Navigation II
Electronics III

Stasis Webifiers

Stasis Webifiers slow your opponents velocity by a set amount. Not every ship NEEDS a webber, but they help keep your enemy from escaping if they are faster than you, and on larger ships your guns sometimes can't track ships that are going too fast. Named webbers slow opponents down more than un-named. A simple t1 stasis webber or a 'Langour' should be enough for simple frigate combat, but X5, fleeting or T2 webs are standard for higher-end PvP.

Stasis Webifiers have the same skill requirements as warp scramblers.

Speed Mods

You will also probably need some way of closing in on your opponent quickly. You will often warp in beyond the range of your warp jammer, and have to get into range quickly to prevent their escape. There are two kinds of active speed boosting modules in EvE: Afterburners and Micro Warp Drives

(ABs and MWDs). You can only run one or the other at any time, and only one of each can be active. Thus, there is no reason to ever fit both an afterburner AND a micro warp drive (especially considering the unique penalties associated with Micro Warp Drives).

Afterburners

Afterburners boost your speed by a set percentage when active, draining capacitor as they do so. Afterburners do not boost your speed as much as MWDs, but they use MUCH less capacitor and have less steep fitting requirements. Because of their less severe cap drain, afterburners can sometimes be left on during combat to aid in evading damage (though without very good cap skills, running an afterburner, tackle, and a armor rep or shield booster can quickly sap a frigates power dry). Afterburners are also useful in that they work in places and situations that MWDs do not: unlike MWDs, afterburners function in deadspace complexes, and they are not deactivated by warp scramblers. It is almost always advisable to fit an afterburner instead of a MWD on a T1 frigate: the large fitting requirements and massive capacitor drain make them more of a liability than an asset. There are only two notable exceptions: kiting frigates (artillery rifters, for example) and suicide tacklers (though these are often wasteful: an interceptor or even assault frigate would do the job better).

Afterburners Require:

Navigation I
Afterburner I

Micro Warp Drives

Micro Warp Drives boost ship speed by 500% (modified by skills and the mass of your ship), resulting in a massive jump in velocity. The downside? They drain a massive amount of cap while active, and merely fitting one on your ship will reduce your capacitors maximum power by 25%. Another huge problem with MWDs is that they blow up your signature radius by a massive amount, making you much easier to hit (despite your higher speed). They are also deactivated by warp scramblers, and do not work in deadspace complexes. Despite all these drawbacks, on PvP setups for many ships larger than frigates (and on many T2 frigates), MWDs are vital, as afterburners simply don't provide enough speed.

MWDs Require:

High speed maneuvering I
Navigation IV
Afterburner IV

So now you know what the essentials are (and, hopefully, have checked the Frigate Fittings section and trained for a specific setup for your chosen ship) its time to learn the way of the pirate. The techniques and skills in the next few sections should be setup and practiced in high sec or under the supervision (and protection) of an experienced mentor before applying them in low sec, to avoid being attacked while in the middle of figuring them out.

I – III: BOOKMARKS

You might have already stumbled on the bookmarks tab, in the People And Places window (right underneath the character sheet tab), and if you're coming to PvP from carebearing you might have even used them before for saving good mining spots or mission looting locations. For those of you who haven't, and those who need a refresher course, heres the basics of what they are and how to use them:

First, open up the bookmarks tab (in aforementioned People And Places window). When you click "add bookmark" another window will pop up, asking for a name and a description. Always name your bookmarks something you can remember, preferably related to the bookmarks purpose (example: "Safe Spot" or even "Safe Spot Near Planet IV"). Now the most important thing to remember about bookmarks is that the bookmark is created at the location you ship is when you click "OK" in the add bookmark window, NOT when you press "add bookmark" in the people and places window. This will become especially important when we talk about safe spots in the next section. Once you have named and placed a bookmark, you can warp to any bookmark in your current system by right clicking in space, going down the bookmark's name on the dropdown menu, and click "warp to".

Now for the different types of bookmarks and their relevance to piracy and PvP in general.

SAFE SPOTS

Before you even begin to think about attacking people, you first have to know where you're going to retreat too when combat is over. If you are the aggressor in combat (and do not have kill rights or war rights on your target), you will have a Global Criminal Countdown of 15 minutes following combat (this is covered in detail in section I – VII: A PIRATE'S LIFE) and cannot warp to a gate or station without being fired upon by the sentry guns. Now if you lost, and escaped with your pod intact, you can simply dock and wait out the GCC (sentry guns don't fire on pods), but supposing you won or escaped intact, you'll need a safe place to wait. Sitting at a belt or at a planet is a good way to get killed by another pirate, or even your last target and/or any backup he can scrounge up. You could run through the guns and dock, but that has its own unique risks, and, if you're too weak to tank the guns, prevents you from getting any more kills until your GCC passes. So where can you hide?

A safe spot is a bookmark in the middle of empty space, not located at any belt, station, or other astronomical object. They provide a relatively safe and private place to wait out GCC, and are also the perfect place to scan for targets (see scanning, later in this section). So, on to how to make them.

Remember what I said about bookmarks being created at your location when you press "okay" in the add bookmark window? Well this is always true, Even if you're in warp at the time. So, to create a bookmark in the middle of empty space, simply warp between two locations and drop a bookmark while in warp. If you don't have time to write a label in warp, you can always change the name from the default (spot in X solar system) name by going to the bookmarks tab, right clicking the bookmark and going to edit (sort by "jumps": green-labeled bookmarks are located in your current system).

Now, I like to create several different kinds of safe spots. First, and most importantly, are scanning safes. These are located within 14.1 AU (maximum directional scanner range: we will address the

scanner latter) of a cluster of belts, preferably less than 0.5 AU so that you can visually distinguish individual belts. These are the kind of safes you require for basic belt piracy. They are also typically the kind of safes you run to after a successful attack (or retreat) to wait out GCC.

The second kind of safe spot I like to make myself is the gate safe. A gate safe is what I call a safe spot thats very very close to a stargate. You can create them by warping to the stargate in question, then dropping a safe spot when you're very close to the gate (1,000-25,000km away from exiting warp). These serve a number of purposes. Firstly, they give you an additional place to run to. Secondly, they provide a good place to scan the gate if you suspect a camp. Thirdly, they are vital for gate camping (see tactics and strategies section) for both the campers (pounce campers in particular) and the scout on the other side of the gate, who can safely sit and scan the gate without alerting passersby to the possibility of a camp. Fourth, they can be a vital resource when you need to evade pursuit: you can warp to one of these safes, and it will appear as if you are warping to the gate; however, when your pursuers attempt to follow, you can double back in an attempt to shake them off. This fourth use also makes gate safes a kind of evasion safe.

Evasion safes (or, as I like to think of them, clever safes) are safe spots that are located very very near astronomical objects, so that when you warp to them, it appears to a pursuer that you are warping to the object (a belt, planet, station, gate, beacon, or the system's sun). When they attempt to follow you, they will find you missing from the location, buying you vital time to escape. To make the most of them, first align to the object your evasion safe is near to make warp as quick as possible.

Then theres deep safes. These are safe spots located many AUs away from any astronomical object, and, preferably, at slight odd angles to the rest of the solar system. Not every solar system provides the necessary geography for the creation of these safes, but in those systems that do allow their creation they can be a vital tool for hiding, allowing a pirate to wait out their GCC beyond the range of most scan probes. To create one, you need to go into the solar system map and find an area where there is a large (35 AU or more) gap in the solar system, ideally somewhere slightly off to the side of standard warp travel lines (IE not directly between two distance stargates). To make a safe in this dead zone, fine an astronomical object on one side of the gap, then warp to another on the other side. To create particularly puzzling deep safe, you can even use one of your own safe spots as a jumping off point (they are shown on the system map as a thumbtack icon).

Though safe spots are the most common (and the most vital) use of bookmarks in PvP, they are not the only use. However, the two other most common types of PvP bookmarks are generally a lot less useful to pirates, so if you're riling to get on with things you can skip the rest of this section (at least for now). For sake of completeness, however, here they are:

INSTA UNDOCKS

Insta undocks are bookmarks that allow a pilot to warp nigh-instantaneously upon exiting a station. They have one real use: escaping station campers. A proper insta undock will be located 400+ km away from the station's undock point, directly along the vector that ships undock at. This means that the instant the black screen fades, you can right click, go down to your bookmark, and enter warp with less than a seconds delay. This is because your ship is "pre-aligned" to the bookmark, and you barely have to waste any time at all waiting for you ship to align to warp.

Insta undocks are only truly useful to have for stations you plan on undocking from often, and worry about being camped into. If you plan on setting yourself up in a specific low-sec system, you definitely

want a set of insta undocks for all of the station in your new home. However, if you are a casual pirate (or do not have a single permanent home) they're relatively useless, because for every station it takes a fair amount of time and effort to create one and there are simply too many stations in the EVE universe to bother with.

A note: once upon a time, everyone undocked on the same vector. CCP changed this so that all ships exit at a random angle of up to 15 degrees, supposed to help with high-traffic station congestion. There was much whining that CCP was secretly trying to nerf insta undocks, but these worries proved to be groundless as they are still very very effective. However, this means that it is harder to find the central exit vector (the exact center of all possible undocking vectors) which is the ideal vector to use for placing insta undocks. There are two main methods for creating insta undocks: the first is to manually fly down the exit vector (in a fast ship, or with a lot of time on your hands) and place a bookmark when you get to 400+ km out. The other is to use an astronomical object that is roughly aligned with the undock point as a warp-to point, dropping a bookmark very early in warp (or, more easily, late in warp when warping back to the station). Now, to locate an aligned astrological object, you have to simply use your eyes and guess. However, if you wish to use the former method, I have devised a way of determining a stations true exit vector with a fair degree of accuracy:

Undock from your target station. Once you've undocked, stop your ship (ctrl+space). Open up the tactical overlay (icon is located just to the right of capacitor/shield etc.). Now, you should be able to see four "spokes" of numbers going out in four directions. These four spokes are aligned to EVE's inherent X and Y axis: you'll quickly notice that whatever station you are currently located at is aligned to these axis as well. That means that the undock point will be roughly aligned with one of these spokes (note: this is not true for stations that push you out at weird angles, like the Amarr station design that spits you out strait down or the Caldari design that pushes you at an upward angle. These stations require you to estimate the exit vector.) Since the tactical overlay is centered on you, and you are right on top of the undock point, this spoke will be almost precisely along the stations central exit vector. Aligning your camera so that this line of numbers converges in the middle of your screen, you can double click somewhere in the distance along the line and your ship will begin heading down that vector. Get to 400+ KM out, drop the bookmark, etc.

TACTICAL BOOKMARKS

Last (and least) of the basic PvP uses of bookmarks, tactical bookmarks are what I call on-grid bookmarks that are created to provide a tactical advantage on that grid. For example: a sniper bookmark 200 KM directly above the undock point of a station. Making them is fairly easy: manually fly to where you want the BM and place it. They are typically very useful for warfare, but far less so for piracy. While having a robust set of tactical bookmarks provides some tactical and strategic advantages in a system, they're usefulness tends to be limited to snipers and EWAR ships.

Like insta undocks, their advantages tend to be outweighed by the simple impracticality of making them. To get any real use out of them, you must have sets for every grid you plan on fighting on. The amount of time required to make even a single system's set means that their impractical to use in more than a handful of systems. However, if you have a regular headquarters or small hunting grounds, and some time on your hands, it might be worth it to make a set.

I – IV: INTEL AND INFORMATION

THE IMPORTANCE OF INTEL

Information is the lifeblood of PvP. If you couldn't find out where the enemy was, you could never fight them in the first place. If you didn't know how much damage the opponent had taken, or how close they were to blowing up, it would be much harder to make quick and careful tactical decisions. Without the overview, it would be next to impossible to target people and sort the battlefield out. In EVE, the victor is often the one who escapes with their ship intact. With that in mind, the ability to accurate predict the outcome of a fight, and be able to quickly and easily tell when and how a tactical situation is changing (reinforcements inbound, for example) is often the difference between winning, losing, or retreating and living to fight another day. Itel also encompasses the art of finding targets to attack: without the ability to locate a target, there would be no PvP at all.

Being able to gather and assess intel and combat information is what distinguishes the clumsy from the skilled PvPer. The tools required are relatively simple to use, once learned, though difficult to master. Without assistance from someone well versed in their use, however, it can take months (if not years) of trial and error (supplemented by the occasional well-intentioned but often misinformed opinions and anecdotes of friends and corp mates) to figure out how to merely use these tools, much less perfect them. To that end, this section (and the next three following it) are dedicated to helping you locate and learn the uses of these tools.

The first tool in your intel arsenal?

LOCAL

Wait, what? Isn't that the name of a chat channel? Yes, yes it is. The Local chat channel, if used properly, can be one of the most important tools in the acquisition of intel. Local chat consists of everyone present (and online) in your current solar system. Unlike corporation or alliance chat, however, the instant you log on or jump into the system, your name appears on the list. No matter how hard you try, its impossible to hide your presence from local chat. As a pirate, this means its possible to tell at glance if there are any potential targets in a system. Furthermore, by clicking on "show info", you can determine if other people in local with you are pirates, alliance PvPers, experienced carebears or noobies with a fair degree of accuracy. Local chat also provides an excellent "heads up" alert: when the number of people in local "spikes" suddenly in low sec, chances are a hunting party of some kind is coming through. If you're lucky, they will be factional warfare pilots, mercenaries, or alliance PvP with a NRDS (not red don't shoot) policy. If you're unlucky, it will be a pack of pirates, bounty hunters, or your victim's allies coming to guard them or chase you off.

Local, then, if your single most important asset. Before heading out to PvP, the local channel should be un-stacked from any other channels and dragged to where you can see it at a glance (usually right above the rest of your chat channels, in a seperate window). The press the little circle icon in the upper right hand corner to pin it in place, making it transparent as well. I CANNOT OVERSTATE the importance of this. You need to be able to see instantly when the number of people in local changes, and be able to quickly move your mouse over to "show info" on newcomers (though this part is optional, and usually only for when you're in a safe enough location that you have at least a few

seconds grace).

You (and/or your corporation's leaders) can extend the usefulness of Local chat by using standings.

STANDINGS AND LOCAL CHAT

You're probably already aware of standings if you've played around with agent missions before. But did you know players, corporations and alliances can set their own standings? Your standings towards a pilot (and/or his corporation/alliance) is indicated in local chat (and in other channels) by a little colored icon near their name, and in space by either a colored icon or backround. Dark blue is very good standings (+5.0 or above), light blue is good standings (+1.0 to +4.9), orange is bad standings (-1.0 to -4.9) and red is very bad standings (-5.0 and below).

Standings have been intrinsic to EVE's politics and game mechanics for so long that they have become an integral part of it's terminology. Alliances describe their policy of PvP towards "neutrals" as either NRDS (Not Red? Don't Shoot) or NBSI (Not Blue? Shoot It), (though their actual policies tend to be more complex: for example, some NRDS alliances allow shooting of light blues and neutral targets if they wander too far into restricted territory). A NAP (non-agression pact) is a semi-formal treaty or agreement where two parties agree to set each other to "mutual blue" and not attack each other. Friendlies are referred to as "Blues" and enemies as "Reds".

Knowing this, you can use standings to make it easier to see who is a threat in local. You (or your corp) can set pirates and pirate/NBSI PvP corporations/alliances to -10.0 standings, allowing you to see when a possible major threat enters the system. I like to use orange for people who are not major threats or pirates, but I should still be wary of: for example, carebear corps that are good about guarding their own, and incompetent PvPers that can still be a danger in numbers. Setting hauler alts and friends to blue can help insure you don't accidentally kill you allies.

The "show info" option (right click a person on a chat list) is an important component of local chat, and a valuable intel asset. A person's security status, bounty, and corporation name and logo are displayed prominently right next to their character portrait, and there can be little doubt that a player with negative security status and/or a bounty is a PvPer. Corporation names and logos can also be a good indicator: A corp called something like " Evil Murderous Killers" sporting a skull and crossbones logo is probably a pirate corporation, for example. Bios (often with red text) bragging about kills, listing ransom information, or talking about piracy/PvP are also good indicators. Once you've decided if someone is predator or prey, you can go over to the "Employment History" tab to make an educated guess at their skillpoints and experience: you can tell by the age of the first entry how old their character is. Younger characters are usually less tough and experienced than older ones. Note that just because a character is a PvPer or pirate does not mean that they won't make a viable target: just remember that they're likely to be a lot tougher for their age than non-PvPers.

With your Local window placed in a prominent location, its time to move on to the overview.

I – V: OVERVIEW SETUP

The overview is an incredibly important part of EVE PvP, and, in fact, EVE in general. Along with the HUD, it can provide nearly all the information you need to manage a fight. Unfortunately, like much of EVE's UI, it can be incredibly confusing to a beginner.

The following is a guide on how to set up your overview like I do. This is by no means the ONLY way to set up an overview, and you will probably want to customize your own settings at some point based on your own habits, needs, likes and dislikes.

COLLUMNS

First, save your current overview type selection. To do so, go to the top of your overview where is says "overview (not saved)". Right click on the little arrow next to that and go down to "Save current type selection as". Save it as whatever you like (this is to ensure that if you need to go back to ratting/missioning/whatever you wont have to setup your overview again, also it helps to have a baseline to go back to if you mess up.)

Now we need to set up your columns. Right click that arrow again, and go to "open overview settings." Go to the columns tab. Now, for small gang PvP and solo piracy I like to be able to easily see these things: A ships Icon, Name, Velocity, Radial Velocity, Angular Velocity, and Type.

Icon: roughly shows what kind of ship it is, and allows you to differentiate different kinds of astronomical objects on overview (triangles belts, squares are stations etc.) Also allows you to see if a ship is targeting you.

Velocity: The speed the ship or object is going. This is helpful for assessing your opponents capabilities and actions.

Radial Velocity: The speed the ship is going relative to your position, either moving towards you (positive value) or away from you (negative value). This allows you to see whether an opponent is approaching you or fleeing from you, and how much of a discrepancy there is between your speeds (as in, will they catch you or get away?)

Angular Velocity: Angular velocity is relative velocity with respect to speed, distance, and angle. It is measured in radians per second, and it is the speed that turrets use to calculate tracking. Having this on your overview allows you to assess your accuracy and guess at your opponents likelihood of tracking you.

Type: The type of ship the player is in. Very useful for many different reasons.

Now, if you agree that these should all be on overview, check their respective boxes. Another important thing to know for this tab is that EVE sorts from to top down. So that means whatever is on top of the list is going to be at the left-most position on the overview. So, using the move up and down buttons, arrange the list in the order listed above (Icon at the top, Type at the bottom). Now that thats done, go

to your overview and resize it to HUGE size so you can see all the columns. Now resize each column. The Velocity column needs to show up out to 4 digits: the top of the column should read "VELO" with the right size. Now the Radial velocity likewise needs to show that many digits, so resize it out to the point where the column name reads "RADI". Ditto for Angular (ANGU). Type should be big enough that you can read "Thorax" or similar in it (try sizing it so stargates read "Stargate (Cal" [or "(Gal" "(Ama" or "Min" etc.) Name should be as big as you like it (so long as you can differentiate things by name on overview).

That done, size your overview back down, and we'll move on to filtering your display colors.

DISPLAY

A lot of people advocate not having your gang/fleet/corp/alliance mates on overview to prevent you from targeting them on accident or getting cluttered. To some degree I agree with this opinion, but I believe it is sometimes vital to see where your mates are in a fight without having to zoom out. However, it does require a little setup to make it easier to quickly and easily differentiate them from enemies on overview when you do have them visible.

Go to the "appearances" tab in the overview settings, and go to the "background" tab. Check the box next to "pilot is in your fleet" and highlight it. Then click "move up" (button at the bottom) till "pilot is in your fleet" is at the top of the list.

This will highlight your fleet mates with a bright purple background, allowing you to easily sort them out on overview.

In tab settings, later, we'll set it up so that some tabs don't show allies, but leave this as it is for now.

DEFAULT TAB

Now we're ready to set up your default tab. This will be your directional scanner tab, traveling tab, and will serve as a template for the rest of your overview tabs.

Open overview settings and go to filters, then types.

For Asteroids, make sure none are checked.

Under Celestial, check Asteroid Belt, Beacon, Stargate, and Warp Gate. (if you like collecting corpses, add biomass [corpses] as well)

Under Charge, check all three.

Under Deployable, check the one option.

Under Drones, you'll have to decide for yourself. I personally uncheck everything but Fighters (ALWAYS have fighters selected, it might save your ship some day), because I like my scanning to be clean, but some people have them all checked and like to find and collect lost drones that people have left behind. It can also be helpful for assessing what drones people have launched. I leave it up to you.

Under entity, keep everything checked (or check everything) except Large Collideable Ship and Large Collideable Object, which should be unchecked.

Under NPC check (or leave checked) everything.

Under Ships, make sure every single one is checked (sometimes the game omits one or two, for some unknown reason, and you do NOT want to find out the hard way that you don't have Recon ships on your overview)

Under Station check (or leave checked) Station.

Under Structures make sure nothing is checked.

Now right click on the little arrow next to overview and go down to "save current type selection as". Save this as "default" or "standard" or whatever pleases you. You now have a proper default overview tab for PvP, but we're not done yet.

OTHER TABS

Re-open your overview settings and go the the "Overview Tabs" tab. For the first one, leave it as "default", and select you "standard/default/whatever" type selection from the list. Leave bracket profile blank.

Now, go down to the next one and name it "Clear". Do not choose a type selection for this one or the rest. The next on the list should be called "Clear/Drones". The one after that will be "Clear/Gang" and the last one will be "Looting" or "Wrecks/Cans". When you're done naming them, hit apply at the bottom of the window.

Now four new overview tabs should appear under the bar that says "overview" on your overview, to the right of you Default tab, with the names you just entered. Click on the first one (clear). Now, re-open your overview settings. Go back to filters, then types again.

Under Celestial, uncheck everything. Do the same for Drones (but leave Fighters Selected!), and Station.

Then, go to the "states" tab (still under Filters). Uncheck (pilot is in your) Fleet, Corporation, and Alliance (but leave Militia checked, as some FW people can be less than kind to flashy red pirates, even when they are on the same side).

Now, save this type selection as Clear, then go into the Overview Tabs tab and set it to the type selection for the Clear tab.

Now, with the Clear tab still selected, click on the next tab to the right (Clear/Drones).

This is the easiest of the lot. Go into overview settings > filters > states > drones and check everything on the list. Then save type selection as Clear/Drones, and set it to the tab like you did with the Clear type selection profile.

Now for the next tab (Clear/Gang), deselect the drones again (save fighters), then re-add Alliance, Corp

and Fleet mates in the states tab. Save as Clear/Gang, set it to tab etc.

For the last one, simply add Biomass, Cargo Container, and Wrecks under types > celestial and re-add all drones, then save as Looting (and set to tab).

There. So now you have a default tab for scanning and traveling, a Clear setting to keep clutter off the overview in combat, and a Clear + Drones tab for when you need to shoot the enemies drones (drone ships, EWAR/Web/Logistics drones and the like), a Clear/Gang tab for when you need to run logistics or check the positions of your fleet, and a Looting tab for picking up booty after a kill.

I – VI: THE DIRECTIONAL SCANNER

The Directional Scanner is probably the most powerful, versatile, and useful tool in a pirates arsenal. Often referred to as the pirate swiss army knife, it is essential for both the location of targets and the avoidance of those who could ruin your day. A skilled scanner user can narrow a ship down to a single belt, planet, station, or even moon within a 5 degree slice of sky within seconds of spotting them. It can help a pirate locate enemy POSes (player owned stations), detect anti-pirate gangs, locate prey and even find out important tactical information about a target, all from hundreds of millions of kilometers away.

As with almost everything in EVE, however, the scanner can be confusing and difficult to use for the beginner.

The scanner can be opened by pressing CTRL+F11, or by clicking the "scanner" button to the left of the HP/Cap readout. In it, go to the directional scanner tab. For starters, set the scan range to maximum (in the range box, 2147483647 km, or just type a long line of nines, the game will default it down to maximum). This is about 14.3 AU (astronomical units) of range.

This is why you want to place your safe spots within 14 AU of belts, see?

So for a first scan, check the box that says "use current overview settings" and switch to your default tab. Set scan to max range and 360 degrees. This will make your scanner scan everything within 14.3 AU of you in every direction. When hunting, this will be you first preliminary scan.

Now hit scan. This should bring up a long list of objects. I like to sort by name, in reverse alphabetical order: this keep asteroid belts at the bottom, letting me glance through the list for ships more quickly.

So lets say you see a Caracal on scan. Now, you know he's within 14.3 AU of you, but where exactly? For that, we'll have to use the Directional part of the scanner.

The Directional Scanner's angle is based on your camera facing, centered on the exact middle of your screen (on your ship). To best take advantage of this, you're going to want to zoom out a bit and click on your ship. See that little white box? Think of that as you scanner crosshair. Where you point that box, there your scanner is directed.

The scanner is a cone of scanning, centered on this crosshair. If you set it to 180, you scan the entire hemisphere of space on the side your camera is facing. 90 is slightly bigger than your screen (depending on screen size), 60 is slightly smaller than your screen, 30 is a circle in the middle of your screen (half your total vertical screen size, typically), 15 is half that again (an inch or so, visually, around the centerpoint) and 5 degrees is only a few pixels wider than that box.

Searching for people with the directional scanner, therefore, is a process of elimination. For example: back to that Caracal. First, set your scanner down to 180 and scan either in front of your or off to one side (left or right). If the Caracal disappeared from the list, turn around and scan again.

(note: If it is still not there, it might have left scanner range OR your angle could be stilted a bit. To

check which, set it back to 360. If it is on 360, but not on either 180, set it to 90 and look strait up and down.)

Now that you know which side of you the Caracal is on, you can start to figure out where on that side it is. First, look around in space and see if there are any asteroid belts, planets, beacons (deadspace, faction complexes, or control bunkers) within 14 AU in that direction. If there is a belt cluster, try scanning that first. To narrow it down from 360, set the scanner down to 90 degrees and scan each section of the sky in front of you till you find the Caracal on scan. Then narrow it to 60, then 30 or 15, etc. until you can be reasonably certain there is only one possible astronomical object the ship could be at.

This technique can take a lot of practice to master, but it can be one of the most essential piracy skills when used properly.

TIPS AND TRICKS

Tip: Remember how I said the 5 degree scan was a few pixels bigger than that box? For really precise scanning, frame any astronomical object's icon (the triangle of an asteroid belt, the circle of a planet...) in that box and click scan. This will scan that object (and anything in between you and it) elusively, allowing you to be very precise. In instances where more than one object is visually occupying the same 5 degrees, you can try to discriminate which by taking advantage of those few pixels beyond 5 degrees on the scanner. Move your crosshair box just a few pixels to the left or right of the objects and scan again: sometimes this will remove one or the other of the objects from the scan.

Places to look for people with the scanner (while hunting): Asteroid Belts, Beacons (deadspace plexes, faction compounds), and Planets are the most common, with Moons coming in fourth.

Tip: If you really cant find someone, or locate them in empty space, consider the possibility they may be in a safe spot or mission. Turning off "use current type selection" can sometimes show mission wrecks near a target, to show for sure. If your target is indeed in a mission or safe spot, you will need a scan probe to find them. On rare occasion, however, your target will be in a Cosmic Anomaly. Set your scanner range to 747990000 km (5 AU) and scan again: if they are within that range, and you feel you have the time, try scanning out their anomaly by going to the system scanner tab, selecting "Cosmic Anomaly" and then "onboard scanner" and clicking scan. This takes 30 seconds (a note: Cosmic Anomalies are the ONLY thing on this list that the on-board scanner can find. For other things, you will need scan probes.)

How to find people at moons (and determine if they're at a POS): To determine if someone is at a moon, you will need to be close enough to a planet that you can see the planet in space (you can try just warping to the planet itself, but DO NOT sit at 0: warp in at 70km, unless you suspect your opponent is at the planet, in which case warp to 0 in case they're there). Now, change your scanner range to 100,000,000 km (this is about 2/3rds of an AU) and hit 360 degree scan. If you're target is on scan, he is somewhere near that planet. Narrow you opponent down to a 90 or 60 degree section of the sky, then visually look for tiny golden lights in that area (slightly brighter than stars). Those are moons. You can try to lock them down and scan on 5 degrees, or just guess and hit them at 15 degrees.

In either case, when you determine where you target is with a fair degree of accuracy, uncheck "use current overview selection" and scan again. You should see a moon (or more than one), as well as your target's ship. If you're unlucky, you'll also see a long list of modules (one of which will be a control

tower). This is a POS. But wait! Don't run away yet. If theres more than one moon, check to see if you're target is really at the moon with POS. If he is, check the list of POS modules for warp scrambling (or disruption) batteries, stasis webification batteries, and small or medium guns. (Cruise missiles and Torpedos in particular are harmless to small ships). If the POS includes none of these things, it still might be worth warping in on it to see if the ship is outside the POS bubble. (The POS bubble is a blue forcefield around the POS control tower, which cannot be penetrated without the proper clearance or an ungodly amount of firepower).

SCANNER RANGES

Another (often overlooked) feature of the directional scanner is the range setting. While using this setting actively to find people is WAY too slow compared to simply using the directional settings, it can be useful when you are having a very difficult time locating someone, or you need to know which scan probe to use. A good rule of thumb is 150,000,000 km = 1 AU, but when using scan probes you're going to want to be a lot more accurate than that.

AU to KM Conversion Chart:

1 AU = 149598000 km (149,598,000)

2 AU = 299196000 km (299,196,000)

3 AU = 448794000 km (448,794,000)

4 AU = 598392000 km (598,392,000)

5 AU = 747990000 km (747,990,000) * Snoop Scan Probe Range

6 AU = 897588000 km (897,588,000

7 AU = 1047186000 km (1,047,186,000)

8 AU = 1196784000 km (1,196,784,000)

9 AU = 1346382000 km (1,346,382,000)

10 AU = 1495980000 km (1,495,980,000) * Fathom Scan Probe Range

11 AU = 1645578000 km (1,645,578,000)

12 AU = 1795176000 km (1,795,176,000

13 AU = 1944774000 km (1,944,774,000)

14 AU = 2094372000 km (2,094,372,000)

+

(Spook Scan Probes have a 20 AU range)

I – VII: HUNTING

By now, you should have everything you need to attempt your first act of piracy. You should be in a ship (probably a frigate or cruiser) fit with at least weapons and a warp disruptor or scrambler. You're overview is set up properly, and you should have a pretty good idea of how to create safe spots and scan for targets. You might even have an interested friend or two to come with you. This is all important, of course, but by now you have to be wondering: "When we are going to get to the actual act of piracy itself?"

Well its time to warm up the guns and head out hunting. Unless you want a quick, toasty death at the hands of CONCORD, you will have to go to low sec (0.4 – 0.1 systems) to find prey. The easiest way to find low sec space nearby is with either the in-game map (set star color to "sec status" and look for orange) or with the Ombey's excellent 2d EVE maps PDF package (http://www.ombeve.co.uk/) which also includes the fantastic "OGLE" (the Outlaw's Guide to Lowsec Enterprise) which is a fantastically useful map of all connected low security systems. However, even if you do use Ombey's 2d EVE maps, you can still use the in-game map to help you pick which systems to go to.

YOUR FIRST ROAM

You're probably going to have to move around a bit to find targets. If theres no one in system, you will have to go to a different system, and then another, until you find prey.

First, pick a border system that you can jump to from high sec to start your roam out from. Filtering by number of people in system (though it might seem counter-intuitive: the fewer the better, to avoid camps/blobs/giant corps, although completely empty system is worthless) pods destroyed in the last hour (avoid: again, blobs or camps) and ships destroyed in the last hour can help you pick good a good location.

Once you've entered low sec, take a few minutes to get your bearings. Set up some quick scanning safes near the major belt clusters in the system, and any other bookmarks you might want later, or on return trips. Once your safes are set up, warp to the first one. Take a look at local to see if there are any people in system besides yourself. If so, open up the scanner and do a 360 for targets. Repeat at each belt cluster safe spot until you're sure theres no prey around or until you locate someone. For the purpose of this guide, we're going to assume you don't find someone in you first system. If you do, skip the rest of this part for now and go strait down to "Your First Fight" below.

Now that you're done with this system for now, its time to plot your roaming rout. Using the 2d map and/or the in game map, find a low sec system that is 6 to 20 jumps away through low sec (plan based on how long you intend to spend pirating: give yourself 15 minutes per system at minimum, as you will be through them twice before your roam is over) and set your destination there. Set autopilot settings to "prefer less safe" and set the security penalty to 100. Avoid plotting routes through 0.0 space on accident. All the systems in this rout will be your hunting grounds.

Proceed to warp to the first system on your planned rout (the stargate will be indicated in yellow on the overview) and jump in. As with the first, spend a few minutes getting your bearings and laying down safe spots. Eventually you will get so fast at this that you will be able to set up safes in a system while actively hunting without slowing down, but for now take as much time as you need. You don't yet look

like a pirate in local, so you're not likely to lose many targets by your presence. Repeat until you find someone, or reach the end of your route.

When (and if) you reach the end, set destination back to your original starter system and repeat. You can roam the same route as long as you feel like, or chose a new route from any point at your discretion: you want to cover as much ground as possible, and revisit the same systems again in case they latter become populated. If you're lucky, and use your directional scanner well, you will eventually find prey.

YOUR FIRST FIGHT

Let me give you a situation: You have been roaming for an hour when you see a Caracal on scan. Only one other player in local, and he's only a few months in game. You narrow the Caracal down to a single belt, with a reasonable level of certainty that it isn't at a POS. You hit warp in. Now what?

Ideally, you will land right on top of your target, within 1-10km away, though the distance is often greater than that. Either way, flick on your speed booster as you click "approach" on your victim and target lock them.

Now, first thing to remember is your number one priority is preventing escape. Once they notice you, you likely only have a few second to get into scrambler/disruptor range (supposing you didn't land right on top of them) and pin them down. As you lock them, if you're within scrambler/disruptor range, have your warp jammer module "hot" (activated, blinking, ready to activate as soon as you aquire lock), or cick it the EXACT INSTANT you get into range. (Tip: warp jam BEFORE you use web! Web can actually make people turn faster, as it reduces inertia, making them escape quicker).

Now that you have them pinned down, open fire!

So supposing you're winning, you now have a choice to make: ransom or kill?

For beginning pirates, I highly recommend ransoming ships of cruiser size or larger. Piracy is a difficult profession to make money at, so any possible income is very helpful. To ransom, cease fire when your opponent is clearly going to die, somewhere around structure damage or low armor. Invite them to a ransom channel or private convo, then demand isk. Simple as that. Typically, price the ransom at half the ship's market value, modified by character age (more for older, less for younger characters). T2 ships can be ransomed for nearly their full market value (80-90%) as they don't have proper insurance payouts.

However, if the fight is close, they refuse ransom, or you'd rather get the killmail; shoot them until they explode.

Once they pop, you have another choice to make. What to do with their pod? If you haven't yet decided to commit to a life of piracy, or you plan on being a casual pirate, its highly advised to let them go rather than risk the intense sec status hit. If, however, you plan on dedicating yourself to a life of crime, you can either blow the pod up or attempt to ransom it (even if the pilot turned down ship ransom). I generally charge about 2-5 mil per month the character has been playing, or a lot more than that for older characters (as much as 100+ mil) who likely have expensive implants. The thing with ransoms, however, is that you must back up your threats if they choose not to accept your terms. If the pilot refuses ransom, or tries to barter the price down too much, send him back to the clone vat.

Things to watch out for while ransoming: Delaying by taking a long time to answer questions or transfer isk (could be stalling for wingmates to get in system and save him), wrong sized payments (1,000 isk when you asked for a million, for example) can be an attempt at tricking you or another stalling tactic, local spikes (friends showing up to save him?) and other fishy behavior. Pilots that refuse to stop shooting you during ransom negotiations, likewise, should be dealt with.

What to do if the fight goes bad: So you're halfway into the fight and its obvious you're going to lose. What do you do? Well first, attempt to flee. Pick a celestial object (NOT a station or gate! Sentry guns will shoot you as long as you have a Global Criminal Countdown in the upper left hand corner of the screen) and hitting "warp to". If that doesn't work, your opponent probably has a warp jammer. Try to afterburner/mwd out of range and then warp, using the align command. If, however, you can't escape with your ship, its time to start thinking about getting your pod out.

Pod escape: when exploding is inevitable (if, for example, you're entering/in low structure and obviously not going to kill you opponent) pick any celestial object, select it, and begin "spamming" the warp-to button (repeatedly clicking it, in a frantic manner). This will almost always ensure that when you do go pop, your pod will enter warp nigh-instantly and you'll escape with your implants/clone intact. Then head to a station and dock up to wait out your GCC (sentry guns wont shoot pods, but...).

What to do when you win: So you killed or ransomed the Caracal and/or its pod. Good work! Now its time to wait out your GCC. As long as the Global Criminal Countdown is active, gate and station guns will shoot you on sight. For a frigate (and for many cruiser setups), this can be almost instantly fatal, and getting shot by the guns also resets your criminal countdown (as an aggression countdown to the NPC corp that owns that gate, but a sentry gun countdown nonetheless). So, where to go? You have two choice. You can either A: Make a run for a station (warp to at zero and spam "dock") and wait out the GCC in relative safety, or B: Warp to a safe spot and wait it out in space.

Both options have their own advantages and drawbacks, though I almost always recommend option B. Option A causes the station you dock at to set an invisible agro timer for 15 minutes from when you docked, for which time that stations sentry guns will shoot you. If you undock before this timer is up, you will come under fire. As the timer is invisible to the player, this leads to a lot of noobie PvP deaths. The other disadvantage to docking up is that you can't see if any other targets enter the belts before GCC is up.

Waiting it out in space is not completely foolproof either. If one of your opponents has scan probes, they can find you with a bit of effort. To help combat this, you're going to want to align to a celestial object (like a planet or the system's star) while in your safe, and keep that object selected in case you need to make a quick escape (this is where Evasion Safes come into play, as well). This is however, fortunately rare, and it is difficult to scan down small ships such as frigates. Despite the uncommonness of probing out younger pirates, try not to alt-tab or leave the keyboard while waiting in a safe spot. Its a bad habit that might get you killed one day, and it also prevents you from scanning for more kills while waiting.

I – VIII: A PIRATES LIFE

The first thing to address when considering a life of piracy is the very thing that makes it different from other things in EVE: its Illegality. Attacking players in low sec may not instantly invoke a CONCORDOKEN, but it can quickly start to dig into your security status, and if you aren't careful, you can quickly find yourself outlawed from empire space.

Merely aggressing someone (activating weapons, EWAR, or tackle modules on them) will get you anywhere between a -0.3% sec status adjustment all the way up to a -0.8% modifier. Destroying a ship can yield anywhere from -1.5% all the way up to -2.6%. A pod kill bears the massive penalty of between -15.8% all the way up to nearly -18%. (note: the % is out of how far you are from -10.0, so if you have a good sec status you get hit harder by sec hits).

Once your sec starts dropping, you wont be able to access certain high-sec systems with ease any longer. When you enter those systems, the local faction navy will attempt to scramble, jam, and open fire on you. A quick frigate or shuttle can warp quickly enough to not get caught, but almost anything else has no choice but to try and crawl back to the gate (if you can survive the firepower) or explode.

*** Security status: Empire restrictions ***
Below -2.0 = restricted from 1.0 sec systems
Below -2.5 = restricted from 0.9 sec systems
Below -3.0 = restricted from 0.8 sec systems
Below -3.5 = restricted from 0.7 systems
Below -4.0 = restricted from 0.6 systems
Below -4.5 = restricted from 0.5 systems
-5.0 or below = Kill on Sight in all empire.

(Please note: Faction police ARE NOT CONCORD! They cannot instawtfkill you, and evading them is not cheating!)

Sec status has some other effects as well: When you get below -0.1, your background will display a threatening yellow to other players. When you hit -5.0, you will be a scary flashing red. Once you're into negative sec status, you can also have bounties placed on your head (to be collected on your pod kill). Since its very difficult to lose a pod, except to lag, these are fairly meaningless. However, they serve as a nice little ego booster and add a little skull to your overview icon, making you look that much scarier!

Being below -5.0 also carries some other penalties. Once you're a full "Outlaw", you can be shot anywhere by anyone without invoking GCC or a sec status hit.   You can even be podded as well. This makes you uniquely vulnerable at gates and stations, but this can also be a thrill.

PIRACY AS A CAREER?

Now that you've had a taste of the yar, its time to decide if you want to make piracy your permanent career or not. Basically, you have to choose between two options: Casual Pirate (AKA Weekend Pirate, Yarbear, etc.) or Hardcore Pirate. Of course, you do not have to stick with your choice once you make it, but it is MUCH easier to chose to go Hardcore from Casual (the other way around requires a ton of

NPC grinding... usually in 0.0).

If you're not sure that piracy is for you yet; just want to toy around with it as a break from missioning/mining/whathaveyou; or you want to pirate, but aren't ready to give up high sec access just yet, casual piracy is the way to go. Casual piracy requires care: you should try and ransom more often than kill, and avoid pod killing your opponents at all costs. Even if you're careful, you will still likely have to grind level 3 or higher missions to help offset your sec loss (don't use your mission ship to pirate!). The upsides of this way of life are: easier to support yourself (full wallet means more ships), easy access to high sec markets (thus ships and equipment), and being less noticeable as a pirate in local. On the downside: less yar, more grind, (need to support yourself, and can't pod kill) you learn slower, and it's not as much fun. Another thing worth noting is that career pirates tend to look down on "Weekend Pirates", and the vast majority won't let them into their corporations.

If you have decided that piracy is your thing, and want to make it a way of life, you're headed down the path of the Hardcore pirate. Hardcore Pirates (or Career Pirates) are pirates that have thrown caution to the wind and let their sec status plummet in the interest of having fun, and have made piracy their full-time EVE job, or at least their primary occupation. Becoming one is easy: simply stop caring about your sec status while pirating. The upsides: fun fun fun. The downsides: difficult to make a living, hard to get supplies, eventually you can be shot anywhere, and many carebears and factional warfare pilots will look down on you (not that you care).

I personally feel that you haven't played EVE to it's fullest till you've hit -5.0, but I see nothing wrong with casual piracy either. The rest of this section (with the exception of the Honor section, which should apply to all pirates), however, is aimed at the issues of the Hardcore pirate (as the casual pirate has it easy in these respects).

SHIPS AND SUPLIES

The first thing you want to consider as you embark on your life of crime is: how are you going to get your ships and supplies from high sec? There are several different options available, the first of which is a hauler alt.

Hauler alts are easy to train up on the same account as your main. I have found that the best way to go about it is to make a Brutor with maxed Perception and Willpower, then the Military > Special forces options. With this done, train Mechanic I and Hull Upgrades I (for cargo expanders) and then go strait for Minmatar Industrial to lvl II. With that, you can fit out a Hoarder with a rack of Local Hull Expanded Cargo Holds, which will net you enough cargo space to haul four frigates or one cruiser + supplies and ammo, with only a couple hours lost on training for your main. If you ever find yourself upgrading to battlecruiser-sized ships, its a simple 5-day train to get your alt up to Mammoths, and thus the ability to haul more than the 15km3 required for a battlecruiser. Battleships, however, must be delivered by freighter or piloted into system. A freighter alt will require around 2 billion isk and a few months of training, and is best done on a second account.

Another option is to find a pirate corporation that will handle your hauling for you.

The third and final option is to get a gimp. A gimp is a player or corporation that will either do your hauling for your or build your ships in low sec for a fee. This is the least reliable way to do things, but is preferred by many who don't want to waste time training an alt.

A PERMANENT HQ

So, now you know how you're going to get supplies, but where are those supplies going to be dropped off? You're going to want to find yourself a base of operations for piracy. Your home station should include both a Cloning Facility and a Repair Shop, no matter what. But what else makes a good base? First, try and locate a system thats fairly close to a major trade hub (Jita, Rens, Oursulaert), and either right on the border between low and high sec or no more than a couple of jumps in (to keep hauling through low sec to a minimum).

Ideally, your system should be in a fairly quiet area, but have easy access to higher traffic portions of low sec. (Tip: unless you find some really good spot I don't know about, Amarr low sec is a terrible place to learn to pirate. Its huge, and populated sparsely except for the occasional massive FW gang.) Try to avoid Alliance jump spots (systems that large 0.0 alliances use as a logistics point, moving supplies from empire to carriers who jump them to 0.0) and systems that already serve as the HQs of highly active pirate corporations. First, locate a few possible systems using Ombey's 2d maps and the in-game map. Spend at least a day scouting the area. If camps are common in the area (especially if they occur on the jump to high sec), its probably a good idea to relocate.

Of course, if you belong to a pirate corp, they will already have located an HQ for you to use instead.

MAKING MONEY

The biggest issue of (and the most difficult thing about) piracy is the question of ISK. How can you possibly make money at a profession where you run the risk being blown up every time you attempt it?

The first option is to simply run missions or rat, either in low sec or 0.0. However, this is both highly risky (pirates and other PvPers) but also incredibly boring.

Another option is to make money with an alt. Again, this has the problem of being very boring, and it can be taxing for those of us who can't afford second accounts.

The third and final option is to make money from piracy. This is the most fun, but it is also the most difficult. If you have a high-end ship and a group of wingmates, you could try your hand at gatecamping for isk. Though it doesn't usually require much skill and it is almost as boring as mission running, it can occasionally yield very profitable results. If that doesn't appeal to you, or you don't have a large enough ship, you're going to have to try ransoming.

Roaming around and ransoming people is one of the most profitable ways to pirate, (Techniques for ransoming are discussed under the Hunting section), but the true trick to making them profitable is NOT LOSING MONEY. If you don't lose any money, you don't need to acquire as much to keep yourself afloat. To avoid losing money, fly cheap, easily replaceable ships like frigates (t1 and t2) and cruisers. When you do fly larger ships, fly them with extreme caution and do your best not to engage in fights you can't win until your wallet is fat. When you're in need of isk, fly with caution bordering on paranoia, and follow the Ten Cardinal Rules of EVE PvP (in section 1) to the letter. You can be reckless when you've got isk to spare.

HONOR

An important part of making money as a pirate (particularly when it comes to ransoms) is being an honorable pirate. If you ransom people, then blow them up anyways after getting the payment, you not only harm your own reputation but the overall reputation of pirate in general. For the sake of us all, DO NOT DO THIS. Violating the terms of 1v1s, likewise, hurts all of us by making people less willing to engage in duals against us, and makes people at large trust pirates that much less.

Over time, the lives of those of us who ransom has gotten harder and harder due to dishonorable pirates who do these things. Whether or not you choose to ransom your victims, have some respect for them, yourself, and your fellow pirates and don't be a jerk.

FINDING FRIENDS

As with everything in EVE, piracy is often easier and more enjoyable with friends. A good way to find like-minded individuals is to join an established pirate corporation (though it can be hard to find one that will accept noobies) or found your own. Look for a corp that matches your time zone, play style, and the level of activity you want. Another thing to look for is a private killboard and ventrilo or teamspeak server (voice chat can be incredibly helpful, if not essential, for group PvP.)

(Shameless self advertisement: As long as I am in game, I will make a place in my corporations for young pirates in need of training and guidance. Check my forum signature for a link to our recruitment post)

Of course, going lone wolf is always an option, and many incredible pirates enjoy the peace and quiet of completely solo play. Whatever you enjoy, EVE can accommodate.

SECTION II

Strategies and Tactics

II – I: STRATEGY, TACTICS, AND ATTRITION

"A Strategy is a long term plan of action designed to achieve a particular goal, most often "winning." Strategy is differentiated from tactics or immediate actions with resources at hand by its nature of being extensively premeditated."

"A Tactic is a conceptual action. In military usage, a tactic is used to implement a specific mission and achieve a specific objective, or to advance toward a specific goal. A tactic is implemented as one or more tasks."

-Wikipedia

EVE is a game of attrition, which is to say that at it's simplest, two ships open fire on each other and whichever one has the most firepower (or the least tank, or some combination of the two) will eventually lose. This is the part that new players (and some game reviewers) often never seem to get past, and it tends to lead to comments like "EVE combat is boring," "you just turn on your guns and the game does the rest for you" or "PvP is just like missioning, right?". However, despite appearances, EVE is not ONLY a game of attrition: it is also a game of strategy, tactics, and changing circumstances.

EXAMPLE ONE: a Rifter (Minmatar frigate) attacks a Thorax (Gallente cruiser). Many people would have you believe that this fight is decided in advance. A cruiser with that kind of firepower has to rip apart the measly little frigate, right? Well, if both pilots were to approach to their optimal firing ranges and sit still, taking the full bunt of each other's fire, this would be true. The Rifter would be quickly reduced to dust, while the Thorax would barely get it's paint scratched. However, this is not how such a fight would (or should) be conducted.

EXAMPLE TWO: If the Rifter did not sit still, but instead orbited the Thorax at very close range (500m or so) with an afterburner on, the angular (relative) velocity would rise to a very high amount between the two. The Thorax's big guns wouldn't be able to cut it, and would begin missing most of the time. The Rifter's small guns, however, with their much better tracking, would be able to keep hitting the Thorax just fine. In such a way, the Rifter could bleed the Thorax to death.

This is an example of a proper application of *Tactics* on the part of the Rifter pilot. Orbiting close in at high speeds to avoid gun damage is one of the primary tactics of frigate combat.

EXAMPLE THREE: Let us now suppose a similar scenario, except that in this case the Thorax had specifically fit light drones to counter attacks from frigates. In such a case the light drones would rip the Rifter apart. This would be an example of a use of small-scale strategy on the part of the Thorax pilot: planning out and preparing a way to take out frigates (not that I recommend fittings light drones on a Thorax: this is just a hypothetical example)

EXAMPLE FOUR: Of course, if the Rifter pilot had a friend nearby in a battleship, he could coordinate an attack on the Thorax: pining it down for the battleship pilot, who could then destroy it in a matter of seconds (possibly before the light drones even became a problem). This would be a simple example of EVE's reliance on attrition: outnumbering and outgunning your opponent is often the simplest way to ensure victory.

BLOBBING

A Blob is a derogatory term used to refer to a large fleet or gang of ships. It is often used as a form of insult ("You only won because you blobbed us!") by frustrated players when an opponent defeated them by outnumbering them. However, contrary to popular belief, there is nothing wrong with blobing, ganking, or any other PvP strategy.

EVE is a sandbox game, and this is true of it's combat as well. Just as there is no wrong way to play in a sandbox, there is no wrong way to play EVE. Different strategies, tactics, fittings, and fighting styles of players in EVE are not inherently better or more respectable than others. The only real differences are how effective a play style is, how fun it is for the person who is using it, and how much player skill/money/skillpoints/practice it takes to pull it off. Often, players in EVE will confuse these three concepts, and thus falsely judge other players based on their play styles.

For example: a common claim of those who prefer high player-skill strategies is that "blobbing" does not take player skill, and that it is therefore "not as fun" for the players involved as their own style of play is. What they often neglect is the fact that it is undeniably effective. Piling a large group of players onto the enemy may not be the most original or daring method of taking them down, but it is extremely effective. Also, while some people (like myself) may not enjoy (or even hate) "blobbing", others might find it very fun.

The allegation that it does not take skill needs some examining as well. While it is certainly true that the actual act of killing someone by outnumbering and outgunning them is fairly easy, it is rather difficult to sneak up on someone with a large gang, or force them to fight you if you are at a station or gate. Also, what happens when a fleet of equal size engages the so-called blob? A fleet must be well managed, composed and commanded to win such a fight.

Just like every play style, sometimes it takes skill and sometimes it does not. The important thing is that it is NOT an illegitimate or dishonorably play style: it is merely a different way of playing in the sand.

It must also be stressed, however, the the opposite is also true. While many many players will tell you that blobbing is boring, stupid, lazy, unfun, etc, just as many (if not more) players will tell you that solo PvP is dead, camping is the only way of things, you cant PvP without X super awesome ship type or X million skillpoints. These people are just as wrong (if not more wrong) than the other variety.

ATTRITION

Blobbing gets back to something I said earlier, which is that EVE is at its base a game of attrition, meaning that whoever has the worst ratio of firepower to durability in a fight ultimately loses. However, there are many ways to swing the balance of power. Skill, by way of strategies, fittings and tactics, comes into the equation as various methods of applying attrition and nullifying enemy attrition.

For example: Lets go back to the Rifter and the Thorax. In the first example, both ships subjected themselves to the full brunt of each other's firepower, and the ship with the greatest force of raw attrition (the Thorax, in the form of Tank and DPS [damage per second]) won easily. However, in example two, the Rifter evaded the Thorax's guns, thus greatly lessening the Thorax's ability to use its

greater firepower to its advantage. Thus, although the raw attrition power of the Thorax was far greater than that of the Rifter, it had trouble applying it, and thus its effective attrition power was drastically reduced.

In a large gang, (or a "blob") the strategy is often to merely maximize total attrition by upping the amount of ships (and thus, available firepower) in the group. However, simply HAVING a ton or raw attrition power does not guarantee the ability to put it to good use. Opponents can attempt to flee or avoid engagement entirely, thus making it impossible to apply your great firepower.
EVE combat, then, consists of a myriad of methods and strategies for applying attrition to the enemy while lessening the attrition coming from your opponent. But the real skill occurs before the fight even begins: fitting ships, choosing strategies, practicing tactics, and choosing whether or not to engage in a fight with a specific target (or group) in the first place.

KNOWLEDGE

Ultimately, the only way to become truly good at EVE PvP is to know as much as you can about the game. Without a thorough and nuanced understanding of game mechanics, strategies, tactics, ships, modules, and fittings; no one can be expected to fit their ship properly, or know which fights to engage in and which to avoid.

To become a masterful PvP, strive to know everything you can about the game. This does not, however, mean that you should avoid PvP until you know everything. You can only learn so much from reading and studying, you eventually have to go out and gain some in-combat experience. However, being well versed on the basics will certainly make your first few fights easier.

II – IV: WEAPON SYSTEMS

The first thing you should study is the game's various weapon systems. Without them, there would be no combat in the first place.

DAMAGE TYPES

The first thing to know about weapon systems in EVE is that each does a difference balance of the four essential damage types: Explosive, Kinetic, Thermal and EM. (abreviated exp, kin, therm, and EM respectively)

The official EVE guide has this to say about damage types:

There are four types of damage: EM, Thermal, Kinetic and Explosive. EM is best against shield, while Explosive is best against armor. Thermal and Kinetic do moderate damage to both shield and armor, with Thermal leaning towards shields and Kinetic towards armor. This is due to the resistances of ships, on which you find details in the Attributes tab of the ship.

This is more or less true, though it doesn't really explain very much. What we can divine from it, however, is the following:

MOST EFFECTIVE AGAINST

ARMOR			SHEILDS
Explosive	Kinetic	Thermal	EM

This is a general rule of thumb chart. This is not, however, the whole story. At first glance, it would appear that EM damage should always be used against shield tankers, and explosive against armor. Since armor tanking is somewhat more common in EVE than shield tanking (especially in PvP, where shield tanks can often limit the fitting of vital utility modules), it would follow that explosive is the best damage type to use in EVE. While explosive is a very effective damage type for many situations, however, there are several factors that prevent it from being the best.

In PvP, players tend to homogenize their tanks, meaning they try to even out the resistances so they don't have any major "resistance holes" or weaknesses to specific types of damage. When homogenizing tanks, setups (by either taste or necessity) tend to over-comphensate on more severe weaknesses (EM for shields, Explosive for armor) and thus are stronger vs these damage types than the other two. For this reason, and the fact that some ships armor tank and some ships shield tank, Kinetic and Thermal are often the best damage types to deal in PvP.

Also, (and this is particularly relevant for pirates) both Serpentis and Guristas rats (the kinds most common in Gallente and Caldari space, where you will likely be flying due to its high population) deal primarily kinetic damage, meaning many ratters tank for kin. This means that thermal is often the best general purpose damage type.

However, when fighting ratters (people who kill NPCs in belts or at complexes) and T1 Frigates (who don't have enough slots to cover resistance holes) switching to an ammo type that does EM or Explosive damage prior to engagement, when possible, can make a big difference.

WEAPON TYPES

In EVE, there are three primary categories of weapon systems, each with its own unique advantages and disadvantages. They are: Guns, Drones, Missiles, and AOE weapons.

Guns are the most common weapon system: their main advantage is a high DPS and versatility, and their main drawback is their reliance on tracking and accuracy to determine hits (which means they can be avoided). Drones are the second most common weapon system, as almost every ship in the game above frigate sized has a drone bay.

Drones are the utility weapons of EVE. Their main advantage is that they do not have to be the same caliber or damage type as the ship they are launched from, and that they are less hindered by tracking and accuracy than guns.

Missile are the third most common form of weapon systems in EVE. They are primarily different from other weapons in that you can choose their damage type, and the guided variety put out very reliable and steady damage (though less dramatic damage than gun systems, usually).

AOE (Area of Effect) weapons are used very rarely in EVE, and consist of smart bombs, bombs, and doomsday devices. Each one of these weapon systems is unique, and should be addressed separately, but (with the exception of the doomsday, which is a Titan only weapon system anyway) they are not very good and useful only in a few situations and fittings.

GUNS

The most easily understandable weapon system in EVE, at least a first glance, guns are also the most common weapon system in the game. There are three different types of gun turrets in EVE: Lasers, Projectiles and Hybrids. Each one of these weapon systems has two sub-types: one close range, high damage type, and another long range, lower damage type. Guns are primarily limited by their reliance on signature resolution and turret tracking to calculate accuracy This Guide, from the official EVE player guide, does a pretty good job of explaining turret tracking and signature resolution for the uninitiated.

LASERS (ENERGY TURRETS)
Amarr

Lasers fire a high-energy pulse or beam of energy at the target. They are the primary weapon of Amarr starships. They deal EM and Thermal damage. Lasers do not use ammo: instead they are altered by "focus crystals" which change the range, damage, and balance of damage types dealt by each turret. To compensate for their lack of ammunition, they also drain a large amount of capacitor power each time they fire.

Variations:
  - Beam Laser (good range, very good burst damage, medium tracking)
  - Pulse Laser (short-medium range, very good burst damage, moderate/high DPS, good tracking)
Good Against:
  Shields (deals EM + Thermal)
Not so Good Against:
  Armor
Pros:
  Doesn't use ammunition, high damage against shields, can quickly change optimal firing range due to fast swapping of crystals.
Cons:
  Heavy use of capacitor, tight fitting requirements and only EM + Thermal damage.

Beam Laser Specific

Beam lasers have the best tracking of all long-range turrets, making them great for mid ranged engagements. They also deal impressive burst damage (AKA "Alpha-strike") and have very long range, all of which makes them great for sniping and fleet engagements.

Pulse Laser Specific

With the best range and 2nd best tracking of all the short-range turrets, Pulse lasers are excellent for chasing off kiters or kiting with a gang, and on damage-bonused Amarr ships they can deal impressive DPS.

HYBRID TURRETS
Caldari and Gallente

Hybrid turrets use a hybrid of solid ammunition and energy, with plasma-charged rounds fired from a magnetic cannon. Railguns fire the plasmatic ammunition in solid state, and are preferred by Caldari in general. Blasters are the signature weapon of Gallente ships, and hurl their ammunition as solid balls of plasma for ridiculously high damage. They deal primarily Kinetic but also Thermal damage.

Variations:
  - Railguns (long range, highest DPS of long range turrets, but lowest burst, bad tracking)
  - Blasters (shortest range of all turrets, impressive damage, good tracking)
Good Against:
  Shield and armor (deals Kinetic + Thermal)
Not so Good Against:
  Since Kinetic and Thermal only do moderate damage to armor and shield, Hybrid guns miss out on the high-damaging EM and Explosive, and so can be considered the middle-ground. This means that Hybrids are good against anything, but not perfect against any one thing.
Pros:
  Uses less capacitor than energy weapons, good damage for requirement balance.
Cons:
  Take up cargo space, short range w/blasters, rails are long ranged but lacking in burst damage

Railgun Specific

Railguns are the longest range of all turrets, but deal the least burst damage of all long-range guns (which can be a hindrance in fleet warfare). They deliver solid DPS for a long range weapon, however, and can be used quite effectively by small-gang support ships.

Blaster Specific

Blasters deal the highest raw DPS of all turrets, but are limited by their very short range. They remain extremely popular, however, due to their extreme damage potential.

PROJECTILE TURRETS
Minmatar

Projectile turrets use explosive charges to fire solid ammunition at high velocities. Unlike energy or hybrid turrets, they do not use capacitor to fire. The damage type dealt varies by ammunition type, but always includes explosive and kinetic damage. They are sometimes fit by non-minmattar ships due to their lack of capacitor usage.

Variations:
> - Artillery (long-range, high burst damage, moderate DPS low firing rate, bad tracking)
> - Autocannon (short to mid range, low burst damage, good DPS, high firing rate, good tracking)

Good Against:
> Armor (deal mainly Kinetic + Explosive damage)

Not so Good Against:
> Actually, everything, as the highest damage T1 ammo deals primarily EM damage

Pro:
> No capacitor use, damage type variation, high rate of fire for autocannons, impressive burst damage from artillery

Con:
> Need to be reloaded often, takes up cargo space

Artillery Specific

Artillery is a very potent ranged gun type, with very high burst damage (AKA "Alpha-strike") and good range.

Autocannon Specific

Autocannons, like Minmatar in general, are a very flexible weapon system. With Barrage ammo (and many Minmatar ships with falloff bonuses), ACs can out-range most other close-range gun turrets, allowing Minmatar pilots to kite very effectively at mid range. They also have flexible damage types, and can be a very effective anti-shield weapons when fit with EMP.

DRONES

Drones are the second most common weapon system in EVE. They are basically small, automated spaceships with weapons on them (though drones with other functions exist). Gallente and Minmatar Almost every ship in the game has them, and they can be incredibly useful. On many ships, drones serve as "flak" weapons and utility items, providing defense against small, fast-moving attackers or adding functionality to a setup. On many others, drones serve as a supplementary damage system, pushing up the ship's total DPS and adding specialized damage to the mix. Some Gallente and Amarr ships even use them as a primary weapon systems, boosting their damage with ship bonuses.

Like missiles, one of the big advantages of drones is that their damage and accuracy is unaffected by the speed and position of their parent ship. Another advantage of drones it is easy to fit a different tier of drones than the size of guns on your ship, allowing you to fit light drones for frigate defense. Additionally, you can fill your drone bay with many specialized non-damage drones, such as EWAR drones or remote-repair logistics drones. The main disadvantage of drones is that they can be shot down and destroyed.

T2 drones are as durable as the next size up (so a T2 small drone is as durable as a T1 medium drone of the same racial type). Drone damage type and damage per second is based on their racial type. Normal drones come in three sizes: Light (good at hitting frigates and other small/fast things) Medium (bad at hitting frigates, good at hitting cruiser sized and larger things) and Heavy (bad at hitting cruiser sized things unless they are going slow, good at hitting battlecruiser or larger things)

Gallente Drones

Gallente drones deal Thermal damage, and have the highest damage per second of all drones. However, they have a slow rate of fire and are the slowest moving of the lot. They are by far the mot popular type of drone on the market.
Light: Hobgoblin **Medium:** Hammerhead **Heavy:** Ogre

Minmatar Drones

Minmatar drones deal Explosive damage, and have the second lowest damage per second of all drones (below Caldari, but above Amarr). Minmatar drones are the second most popular type of drones on the market, due to their damage type and speed. They are also the fastest of all drone types, which makes their light drones highly sought after as anti-frigate weapons.
Light: Warrior **Medium:** Valkyrie **Large:** Berserker

Caldari Drones

Caldari drones are very rarely used, but are still more common than (the abysmally bad) Amarr drones. They deal Kinetic damage, and do the second highest damage per second. As far as statistics go, they're fairly middle of the road in durability, speed and tracking, which makes them a fairly mediocre choice.
Light: Hornet **Medium:** Vespa **Heavy:** Wasp

Amarr Drones

The bottom of the bucket, Amarr drones deal EM damage. They are slow, fragile, and deal the least damage of all drone types. The one thing they have on their side is good tracking, but beyond that there is no reason to use them in PvP (unless you know for a fact your opponent has a huge weakness to

EM and EM only, and a decent amount of time to prepare to fight them).
Light: Acolyte **Medium:** Infiltrator **Heavy:** Praetor

Sentry Drones

Sentry drones are the snipers of the drone world. They take up as much space and bandwidth as heavy drones, and are thus limited in their applications, but they can deal significant damage at very long ranges. Unlike normal drones, they remain stationary once deployed until their parent ship picks them up again. They come in four flavors (one for each race) and with the exception of racial damage type, have oddly different statistics from their mobile counterparts.

Warden (Caldari): Kinetic damage, longest range, lowest DPS
Bouncer (Minmatar): Explosive damage, second longest ranged, second lowest DPS
Curator (Amarr): EM damage, second lowest range, second highest DPS
Garde (Gallente): Thermal damage, shortest range, highest DPS

Other kinds of drones, such as EWAR drones, are covered in the support section.

MISSILES

Missiles are the next most common weapon type in EVE (and the most common in the game if you count Caldari mission runners...). They are the most reliable and even weapon systems, delivering damage at the same rate regardless of distance or variables such as wrecking hits and poor shots. However, they are some of the slowest weapon systems, traveling slowly across the battlefield before colliding with the target, rather than striking instantaneously like turrets. And while they are unaffected by such variables as turret tracking and falloff, missile damage is strongly affected by the speed (non-relative velocity) and signature size of the target.

Missile damage is generally explained here: http://www.eve-online.com/guide/en/g61_3.asp

One major advantage of missiles is that you can select which type of damage to deal. Each warhead does a different damage type, as indicated by its statistics and thumbnail picture color (Silver is Kinetic, Red is Thermal, Gold is Explosive, and Blue is EM).

Missiles, like guns, come in two flavors: Short ranged, high damage, unguided missiles; and long-ranged, lower damage guided missiles. Unlike guns, however, these two varieties of missile function quite differently, and use different ammo.

The higher DPS variety (unguided) have three main tiers: Rockets (for frigates and some cruisers), Heavy Assault Launchers (HAMs: Cruiser and Battlecruiser sized, not to be confused with the "Assault Launchers" which guided anti-frigate launchers) and Torpedoes (battleship sized). In addition, Dreadnoughts and titans use "Citadel" Torpedo launchers.

Unguided missiles usually do less damage per hit than their guided counterparts, but have a much higher rate of fire. Unfortunately, they have much less range and explosion velocity, as well as larger explosion radii, than guided weapons, and are therefor less versatile and much less effective against smaller targets (with the notable exception of rockets, which are quick enough to hit ships of any size).

Guided missiles, on the other hand, are much longer ranged and more precise, but deal less overall

DPS. Guided missiles come in three flavors of missile, but have four different tiers of launchers. Light missiles are small, frigate-caliber missiles with extreme accuracy and medium range. Heavy missiles are medium-caliber weapons which, while considerably more precise than other medium-sized weapons, are not quite as accurate as frigate weapons. Cruise missiles are battleships and stealth bomber weapons with extreme range and volley damage, but low velocity and accuracy. The different tiers of guided launchers are: Standard Launchers (frigate size, fits light missiles), Assault Launchers (cruiser sized anti-frigate launchers, fires lights at a high rate of fire), Heavy Missile Launchers (cruiser sized, fire heavy missiles) and Cruise Missile Launchers (Battleship, fires cruise missiles).

While the damage output is not very good compared to most other weapon systems, guided missiles have several advantages. Because they hit independent of the ship that launched them, coupled with their decent range, they make very good kiting weapons. Their high precision also makes them especially good at killing frigates, assault launchers in particular (though heavy missile ships are sometimes vulnerable to frigates due to the slow explosion velocity).

SECTION III

Ships and Fitting Database

III – II: FITTING IN GENERAL

The art of fitting ships is one of the deepest and ultimately most challenging aspects of EVE online. Choosing a balance of speed, gank, tackle, tank, cap stability, (and a myriad of other factors) that is ideal for your ship and play style can be a headache, and learning how to best take advantage of any one ship can take years of study. For those without a head for the tricks and tradeoffs of ship fitting, and/or lacking an affinity for the mental gymnastics involved in any ship setup, classic "cookie cutter" setups are often easy to find for any given ship, and my vessels excel with suck setups.

The absolute best setups, however, are rarely shared. Blah blah etc.

EVE FITTING TOOLS

Before you take another step into this guide, there is an essential application you will want to download. EVE fitting tools (EFT) is an incredible app that allows you to test out setups before you buy a single item in game, by importing your skills and fitting modules from its comprehensive database. With EVE fitting tools, you can plan whether or not your fitting skills can handle your planned setup, how long your capacitor will hold out, how much raw DPS and DPS of various damage types your setup can nullify (defense rating), your speed, raw damage per second, range, effective hit points, and many many more aspects of your ship's statistics. It is a vital tool when making skill plans or designing/assessing setups.

The latest version of EFT can be found here: http://myeve.eve-online.com/ingameboard.asp?a=topic&threadID=548883 courtesy of **Gripen** (and many thanks, Gripen, for such a fantastic app)

A WARNING: EVE fitting tools only provides raw numbers, and while it is possible to glean quite a bit of information from it, EFT statistics are not (and never should be) the last word on a ship setup. While EFT can definitively tell you if you can or cannot fit a setup, and very accurate info about other stats, EFT numbers should not be taken as a measure of a ships worth. EVE combat is amazingly complex, and mere numbers of tank or DPS are not the best measure of a ships worth in actual usage. Relying too heavily on numbers and not enough on piloting skills and tactics can result in a syndrome known as "EFT Warrior", which can severely inhibit ones PvP skills.

YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED.

ESSENTIAL SKILLS

As soon as possible, as a higher priority than any other skill set (except, of course, for learning) flesh out your fitting skills. That means: Engineering V, Electronics V, and Weapon Upgrades IV at very least. When you have a gap in your skill training, get Weapon Upgrades to V, and get AWU (advanced weapon upgrades) to IV. Without these skills, many fittings will be unavailable to you, and you will lack the ability to fly many ships to their best advantage.

For a T1 frigate, these skills are a bit less vital than for larger vessels. You can get away with Engineering and Electronics IV and Weapon Upgrades II or III for the vast majority of simple frigate fittings. Some frigates and certain frigate setups, however, have more difficult fitting requirements.

Using EFT to check what you require to fit any given setup before trying it is always a good idea. There are a few cruiser setups, as well, that don't necessarily require perfect fitting skills. Some ships have spare powergrid or CPU, and are less demanding to fit. The main point, however, is that you should train your fitting skills to match your setup, NOT tailor your setup to match your fitting skills whenever possible. To do otherwise puts you at a severe disadvantage against other pilots.

The second highest priority group on the skill list is capacitor skills. NO PVP PILOT should go without Energy Management and Energy Systems Operation IV, and both skills should be eventually taken to V. Again, when you first start off your career, its okay to pilot for a while without these skills while you get the hang of things, but they should be near the top of your priority list as you move up in the game. It does not matter what race you are or what ships you fly, these skills are vital.

FITTING BASICS: GENERAL

Do not dual tank (tank both shield and armor). A dual tank will always be weaker than a focused one, as a focused tank can use spare slots that the other tank would otherwise occupy to maximize it's tanking ability. This one is REALLY IMPORTANT.

Do not fit against a ship's bonus. Every ship is good at certain things, as dictated by both its slot layout and its ship-specific bonuses. In each ships description is a bonus, based on its ship skill.

 Example: a Rifter, a Minmatar Frigate, has a ship bonus of "Special Ability: 5% bonus to Small Projectile Turret damage and 7.5% bonus to tracking per level." This means that for every level of "Minmatar Frigate" a pilot has, a Rifter he pilots will get 5% more Small Projectile Turret Damage and 7.5% more tracking speed on modules turrets fit on the Rifter.

By looking at this bonus, we can surmise that the Rifter is a combat frigate, and should be fit with Projectile turrets. Secondarily, the bonus to tracking speed implies that the Rifter is best suited for quick, up-close and personal combat, where having a high tracking speed can mean more damage against an enemy.

Therefor we can devise that fitting a Rifter with railguns is probably not a great idea, as they would not benefit from its damage bonus and would thusly not be taking advantage of the ships design.

This is a bit more of a flexible rule than other ones, however. Some ships have useless bonuses, or have good fittings that do not take advantage of the ship's bonuses to best advantage. However, until you really know what you're doing with fittings, experimenting with fitting against ship bonus is a bad idea.

FITTING BASICS: TACKLE

Coming soon!

FITTING: TANKS

Coming soon!

FITTING: WEAPONS

Coming soon!

III – III: T1 FRIGATES

This section is dedicated to providing fittings and tactics for T1 frigates, which should be the kind of ship you fly when you first start pirating.

Most people think you can't PvP in a t1 frigate effectively. "Most People" are wrong. It has always been possible, and since quantum rise it is even more viable. Frigate piracy is one of the most fun things you can do in eve, and although its very challenging its also cheap, and the rewards are good after a while. Any nooby can do it, right out of the gate. Once you learn to pirate with a t1 frig, you know how to pirate with anything.

FRIGATE TACTICS

Fit high damage, close range guns. Rush you opponent, then orbit at 500m while shooting. Your speed will fling you out a bit wider than that, but don't worry about that. If the enemy launches light drones, either run or target then and take them out as soon as possible, as they can rip frigates to shreds. In a frigate, you're not trying to out gun your opponent so much as out last them. You want to keep your tank running as long as possible in a fight, to give you as much time as possible to bleed their hit points away.

Ideally, your targets should be mining ship, destroyers, other frigates, and cruisers (and you will be pleasantly surprised at how many cruisers you can take down). With a small (2-5) gang of frigates, you can also take on some battlecruisers, and other ships as well.

AMMUNITION

LASERS: Multi freqs on pulses. Keep other sizes around and experiment with ranges. They switch so fast no reason not to try it out.

BLASTERS: Antimatter. With the short range on small blasters, the range bonus of other ammos is not worth the massively reduced damage.

ROCKETS: Use thermal if you're not sure what your opponents weak spots are (foxfire), EM if they're a shield tanker (gremlin) and explosive (phalanx) if they armor tank. (note: the resistances of T2 ships are somewhat different. Caldari T2 ships are still weak to EM, and most Gallente T2 ships are weak to EXP, but Minmatar are weak to Kin, and Amarr are weakest vs Thermal)

PROJECTILE: Autos: Use EMP ammo for shield tankers and fusion for armor tankers. If you have T2 ammo, fit barrage instead of fusion. Also, play around with the range on barrage, you will find you can out range small blaster fit ships with ease if you fight in falloff range (try setting orbit to 5km). This is also a good tactic against other punishers and rifters, which are both weak to exp and often don't have T2 ammo to counter you with.

DRONES: Fit Warriors (explosive). If you're in a gang and damage types are covered, use hobgoblins (thermal) as they do more damage.

FRIGATE FITTNGS

Here is a brief breakdown of the PvP capable frigates, from best to worst (in each category):

Solo Ships/Serious Piracy
1) Rifter   (Minmatar)
2) Punisher (Amarr)
3) Incursus (Galente)
4) Merlin (Caldari)
5) Tristan (Galente)

Gang Support/Specialized
1)Kestrel (Caldari)
2) Vigil (Minmatar)

Electronics Warfare
1) Griffin (Caldari)
2) Maulus (Galente)

AMARR

Amarr has one good PvP frigate: the Punisher. Amarr's lack of variety in this area is easily justified, however, as the Punisher is one of the best PvP frigates in the game (if not the best: depending on opinion, the Rifter may hold that honor instead)

PUNISHER

As a PvP frigate, the Punisher lives up to its name. For a new pilot, this ship is a great introduction to the Amarr race, as it shares in almost all of Amarr's racial advantages and disadvantages. It's heavy on the tank, with four low slots and an excellent resistance bonus. It has plenty of turret slots, but slightly too few mid slots. Also, like many Amarr ships, fitting lasers on it can lead to severe capacitor and fitting problems.

In fact, the Amarr laser problem is even more severe on this ship than on almost any other. Lasers simply aren't any good on this ship at all. A scant few people have flown laser punishers with success, but the fitting and cap use on them is so insane that you have to sacrifice low slots to keep them running. In such a case, your tank is severally impaired, and against other frigates you will have trouble. I strongly advise training for either hybrid blasters or projectile autocannons if you intend to use this ship. If your stubborn, or a purist, and MUST use lasers, try the classic laser 'Bleeder' setup listed at the end.

The punisher's main weakness is its lack of a spare mid slot for a web. Without a web, a punisher pilot has a lot of trouble dealing with faster frigates like rifters, especially those that kite with long range weapons. However, if you enemy fits a MWD, they should be relatively easy to pin down as your scrambler can negate their speed bonus.

Its biggest strength (with a non laser fit) is its massive tank, making it almost impossible to kill for other ships of its size (and even some cruisers).

200mm plate AUTOCANNON SETUP

Highs: 3x 150mm autocannons, 1x Small Nosferatu I

Mids: 1mn Afterburner, Warp Scrambler

Lows: Small armor rep, 200mm plate (rolled tungston), damage control, energized adaptive nano membrane

Setup Specific: Try fitting blasters on this instead for even more punch. This setup tanks extremely well, and can withstand bombardment by many other ships with ease. Your main tactic is to outlast your enemy, slowly tearing them apart.

CLASSIC 'BLEEDER' PULSE LASER SETUP

Highs: 2x Medium Pulse Laser I 1x Dual-light Pulse Laser I 1x Small Nosferatu I

Mids: 1x 1mn Afterburner, 1x Warp Scrambler

Lows: 1x small armor rep I 3x cap power relays

Setup Specific: A relatively useless setup, as you have to gimp yourself severally just to keep the guns active. If you drop a cap power relay for a power diagnostic system, you can fit an extra medium pulse, but you lose out a bit in cap stability.

CALDARI

While Caldari in general are not ideal for solo PvP, and their frigates are not the top of the pile, they are nowhere near bad. Both of them can pump out quite a bit of damage for their size.

MERLIN

The merlin is a decent frigate for piracy. Its major weakness is speed and the fact that it shield tanks. Shield tanking is not bad, but if you fit a warp scrambler it fills a slot you would normally put shield enhancements in.

NOS/TANK FITTING

High Slots: 2 rocket launcher, 1 blaster (neutron), nosferatu (I like the knaves, cheap but pretty good)

Mid slots: Cold gas arc jet afterburner, warp scrambler, small shield booster, small shield extender or stasis webifier
Low slots: Damage Control, and whatever you may need for fitting, probably a power diagnostic unit

Setup Specific: This setup tanks well as long as the enemy has cap. It tends to not do as well against other frigates as it does against larger ships due to its highly shield-boost dependant tank, but it still deals enough damage to take some of them out. Fit the web if you're having problems with people running away, or you gang needs more tackle, but fit the extender for more survivability.

HIGH DAMAGE FITTING

High Slots: 2 rocket launchers, 2 blasters (neutrons if you can fit them)

Mid slots: Afterburner, Warp Scrambler, Small Capacitor Booster (use cap booster 200 charges) small shield booster (t2 if you can)

low slots: A damage control unit, then a power diagnostic unit or reactor control unit if you need more powergrid, otherwise fit a magnetic stabilizer or ballistic control unit

Setup Specific: Don't forget that cap booster uses cap booster 200 charges like ammunition, and must be manually turned on. Put 10 or so in your cargo hold and load the module before you undock. In combat, activate your cap booster RIGHT before you run out of cap for best results. This fit is more cap stable than the other one, and deals more damage, but tanks slightly less or lacks a web, depending on you fitting.

KESTREL

GANG SUPORT

Highs: 4x rocket launchers

Mids: 1x 1mn afterburner, 1x Warp Scrambler, 1x small shield booster

Lows: 2x ballistic control units

Setup Specific: Fragile, but high damage. Good for gang support, but pretty mediocre otherwise.

GALLENTE

Gallente are typically very good at close-range PvP, with brutal, high-damage blasters and drones and sturdy armor tanks. The incursus is a brutal blaster boat in the best of the Gallente tradition, though like many blaster ships it can have problems with bigger ships than itself, where its insane damage may not be enough to save it. The Tristan, on the other hand, actually tanks fairly well, and has a decent fitting alotment for tackle, but sacrifices the Incursus' insane damage for its survivability, and is somewhat the worse for it. While the Tristan might have an easier time taking on certain cruisers, like Caracals, the Incursus is overall the better of the two.

THE INCURSUS

COOKIE CUTTER 2.0 DAMAGE DEALER

Highs: 3x blasters, highest tier you can afford to fit, probably a mix of ions and electrons

Mids: 1mn microwarp drive, warp scrambler, 1x stasis webifier

Lows: magentic field stabilizer, 200mm Rolled Tungston plate

1x hobgoblin or warrior light drone

Setup Specific: Get in close and maul them. This setup excels at dishing out damage, and is particularly good at ripping other frigates to shreds. With its high speed (with its MWD) it makes an incredible gang tackler as well, capable of zipping up to the target and locking it down before other ships are able to get into range. To achieve all this, however, this setup has to make some sacrifices. Without a local armor rep, this setup will often fall apart after sustained bombardment from ships that can track frigates, such as heavy missile ships and ships with medium drones. In general, the incursus is one of the most lethal frigates out there when fighting other frigates, but is not quite as good as others when it comes to taking out larger vessels solo. That isn't to say it CAN'T take on cruisers, just that an incursus pilot should be very cautious when attempting such a fight.

TRISTAN

BLASTER/NOS SETUP

Highs: 2x electron blasters, 1x rocket launcher, 1x small nosferatu

Mids: Afterburner, Warp Scrambler, Stasis Webifier

Lows: 1x 100mm (or 200mm if you can fit it) rolled tungston plate, 1x small armor repairer, 1x damage control

Drone bay: 1x light drone (hobgoblin or warrior)

Setup Specific: this setup flies similarly to a Rifter, though its a bit slower. Don't forget to launch your drone and order it to attack in combat. Just bring it in close, orbit and shoot, and hope you outlast your oponent.

HIGHER DAMAGE/BOOSTER FITTING

Highs: 2x electron blasters 2x rocket launchers

Mids: 1x 1mn Afterburner, 1x Warp scrambler, 1x small cap booster with Cap Booster 200 charges (fit as many as you can in your hold)

Lows:1x 100 (or 200 if you can fit it) rolled tungston plate, 1x small armor repairer, 1x damage control

Drone bay: 1x light drone (hobgoblin or warrior)

Setup Specific: Don't forget that cap booster uses cap booster 200 charges like ammunition, and must be manually turned on. Put 10 or so in your cargo hold and load the module before you undock. In combat, activate your cap booster RIGHT before you run out of cap for best results. This fit is more cap stable than the other one, and deals more damage, but lacks a web. Don't forget to launch your drone

and order it to attack in combat.

MINMATAR

Minmatar are a fantastic choice for PvP, as their ships are versatile, fast, and often powerful. The Rifter is no exception.

RIFTER

Like Amarr, Minmatar only has one PvP frigate, but it happens to be be the best of the lot. It has exactly the right mixture of damage, speed, tank, range, and mid slots for tackle to make it ideal as both a gang ship and a solo craft. Long after people have moved on to other ships, you can still find Rifters serving as heavy tacklers for large gangs. It also has a hidden advantage: Its weapons deal explosive and sometimes EMP damage, damage types that noob ratters and other t1 frigates are weak to, making it deal more damage than it would seem on paper.

CLASSIC RIFTER

Highs: 3x 150mm autocannons, Small Nosferatu

Mids: 1mn Afterburner, Warp Scrambler, Stasis Webifier

Lows: 1x 200mm reinforced rolled tungsten plate, 1x Small Armor Repairer, 1x Damage Control Unit

Setup Specific: This setup really needs a good armor rep and nosferatu to shine, but it works well with simple out of the box t1 equipment too. If you're repairing enough to keep your armor at full during combat, turn it off when you're armor is at 100% to save cap.

HIGHER DAMAGE/BOOSTER FIT

Highs: 3x 150mm autocannons, Rocket Launcher

Mids: 1mn Afterburner, Warp Scrambler, Small Capacitor Booster (w/cap booster 200)

Lows: 200mm reinforced rolled tungsten plate, Small Armor Repairer, Damage Control Unit

Setup Specific: This setup is highly effective at taking down other frigates, with its slightly boosted damage. It also performs well against cruisers, though cruisers with afterburners can cause you trouble if they know what they're doing, as it lacks a web. Don't forget that cap booster uses cap booster 200 charges like ammunition, and must be manually turned on. Put 10 or so in your cargo hold and load the module before you undock. In combat, activate your cap booster RIGHT before you run out of cap for best results.

ALTERNATE SHEILD TANKED RIFTER

Highs: 3x 150mm autocannons, Rocket Launcher

Mid: 1mn Afterburner, Warp Scrambler, 1x MEDIUM F-S9 Regolith shield extender (note the size)

Lows: 3x shield power relays

Setup Specific: This setup runs a passive tank, which means your tank doesn't require activating any modules to keep it running. This particular kind of passive tank is rarely seen on non-caldari ships, and is most common on the Drake and Ferox battlecruisers. The Jaguar, one of the two assault ships based on the Rifter, also runs this kind of tank most of the time, though it does it much better than the Rifter due to higher resists and base hit points. It may have problems keeping the cap up late in the fight, so it should be used primarily as a gang ship.

III – IV: WHAT SHIP TO TRAIN FOR

So you're getting down with frigate piracy, but you want to move up in the world of EVE eventually. What are some good ships to set your sights on? This is a brief overview of ships with applications regarding piracy, and how long they take to train for properly.

NOTE: As with everything in this guide, this only represents my opinion, and is not the undeniable truth. Also note there is no such thing as the best ship, or the best kind of ship. It is all about what you enjoy flying.

Format
SHIP TYPE: Description
Good Piracy Choices: Ship Name (race [A = Amarr C = Caldari etc.) from best to worst (these are all-around good ships, whether solo or with a gang)
Good Gang Ships: Ship Name (race [A = Amarr C = Caldari etc.) from best to worst (these are ships that are generally not as good/useless outside of a gang setting, but work well if not great with wingmates)

SHORT TERM GOALS

Cruisers, Assault Ships (AFs), Interceptors (ceptors), Electronics Attack Frigates (EAFs), Stealth Bombers (Sbs)

These are ships that are fairly easy to get into after frigates. You should make sure you are able to fit T2 modules on the frigate-sized ones before training for them.

CRUISERS: The easiest ship to get into after a frigate, cruisers pack a decent punch, and are very cheap and easy to fly for their power.
Good Piracy Choices: Thorax (G), Rupture (M), Vexor (G), Arbitrator (A), Maller (A), Moa (C)
Good Gang Ships: Blackbird (C), Caracal (C), Celestis (G)

ASSAULT SHPS: Known colloquially as Assault Frigs or AFs, assault ships are T2 combat frigates with a focus on tanking and damage dealing. They are comparable to cruisers are far as power is concerned, but are (arguably) slightly better for piracy, as they can evade large guns like a frigate. They are, however, much more expensive than cruisers, and require more skill training to fit and fly well.
Good Piracy Choices: Jaguar (M), Ishkur (G), Wolf (M), Enyo (G), Vengeance (A), Harpy (C)
Good Gang Ships: Retribution (A), Hawk (C)

INTERCEPTORS: 'Ceptors are the ship to chose if you like speed and agility. Ceptors are the kings of tacklers, able to pin down almost anything in seconds. However, they take both skillpoints and piloting skill to fly right, most don't deal much damage (the Taranis is a very notable exception, with the highest damage of any frigate) and they are quite fragile, They're fairly expensive to lose, as well.
Good Piracy Choices: Taranis (G), Malediction (A), Crow (C), Crusader (A)
Good Gang Ships: Stiletto (M), Ares (G), Raptor (C)

ELECTRONICS ATTACK SHIPS: EAFs are mini Recon cruisers: frigates with enhanced electronics warfare capabilities. They are very very good gang support ships, but they tend to be much more difficult to solo in due to fragility and reliance on EWAR.
Good Piracy Choices: Sentinel (A)
Good Gang Ships: Kitsune (C), Keres (G), Hyena (M)

STEALTH BOMBERS: Stealth Bombers use high-precision cruise missiles to deal high burst damage, emerging from cloak and quickly launching a volley from long range, before an enemy can retaliate. Despite how cool this sounds, however, stealth bombers are weak, overpriced, and very limited in their uses. They do, however, make decent gang support (added DPS or anti-EWAR) and are fun to fly. They seem to be made of wet paper, however, and are very expensive to lose.
Good Piracy Choices: None
Good Gang Ships: Manticore (C), Hound (M), Nemesis (G), Purifier (A)

MEDIUM TERM GOALS

Battlecruisers, Heavy Assault Ships (HACs), Recon Ships (Recons), Heavy Interdictors (Hictors), Logistics Cruisers

These are ships that require good support skills and much training to fly well. You should have T2 weapon systems and tank modules before considering these.

BATTLECRUISERS: Fitting cruiser sized guns, but dealing nearly as much damage (and tanking nearly as well) as a battleships, while maintaining nigh-cruiser speed and agility, battlecruisers are an excellent choice for piracy. However, they require very good support skills (capacitor, gunnery, fitting, etc.) to really shine, and are somewhat unforgiving to the novice pilot.
Good Piracy Choices: Hurricane (M), Myrmidon (G), Brutix (G), Harbinger (A)
Good Gang Ships: Drake (C), Cyclone (M), Prophecy (A)

HEAVY ASSAULT SHIPS: Known as HACs (Heavy Assault Cruisers), these are considered by many to be the ideal pirate ships. These T2 cruisers have battlecruiser-like firepower and tank, but are even quicker and more agile. Many of them are highly specialized, making excellent kiting ships or snipers, but not being good for much else.
Good Piracy Choices: Vagabond (M), Ishtar (G), Sacrilidge (A), Deimos (G), Zealot (A)
Good Gang Ships: Cerberus (C), Munin (M), Eagle (C)

RECON SHIPS: Recon ships are T2 cruiser specialized in the use of electronics warfare. If used correctly, they can make incredible pirate ships for both solo and gang support. They take high support skills to fly effectively. The Force Recons are higly sought after by pirates for their ability to warp cloaked with a Covert-Ops cloaking device.
Good Piracy Choices: Pilgrim, Lachesis, Curse, Arazu, Hugin, Rapier
Good Gang Ships: Falcon, Rook

HEAVY INTERDICTORS: These T2 cruisers have the ability to activate warp disruptor fields in 0.0, but are still incredibly useful as heavy tacklers in low sec (especially at camps) due to their ability to

use a module that is basically an infinite-point, long range warp disruptor (in other words, no amount of warp core stabilizers will let the target warp). They tend to be slow and low on the damage, relying on a gang for support (though they are not impossible to solo with).
Good Piracy Choices: Phobos (G)
Good Gang Ships: Broadsword (M), Onyx (C), Devoter (A)

LOGISTICS SHIPS: These are exclusively gang ships that specialize in the use of remote-repair, remote shield booster, and or remote cap transfer modules. These ships wont net you killmails, but they will keep your gang alive much much longer in a big fight.
Good Piracy Choices: None
Good Gang Ships: Guardian (A), Basilisk (C), Oneiros (G), Scimitar (M)

LONG TERM GOALS

Battleships and Command Ships

These are the big bruisers, ships with insane range, damage dealing potential, tanks and/or gang boosting ability. As tempting as it may be to go for a battleship as soon as possible, you should wait until your support skills are very very well fleshed out, and you can use T2 large guns and/or missiles of your races types (preferably both short and long ranged) before getting one. Command ships, likewise, should be attempted only when you skills are very solid in other areas (though this is easier, as they take an extremely long time to train for in of themselves).

BATTLESHIPS: Battleships represent the pinnacle of sub-capital firepower, range, and durability on the battlefields of EVE. They can either be fit for insane range and burst firepower, or for high damage, in-your-face bruiser action, and perform incredibly well at either role. Battleships, however, are not the most ideal pirate ships for a number of reasons. First, they are very difficult to solo in, and you should only attempt to do so if you are very experienced. Their terribly slow speed and low agility means they have a hard time catching things. This also makes them sitting ducks for quick roaming gangs, and their high price tag means they attract attention like corpses attract flies. However, in a group of them, or with support, they are unmatched. They also make fantastic gatecamping or camp-busting ships.
Good Piracy Choices: Megathron (G), Tempest (M), Abaddon (A), Dominix (G), Hyperion (G), Armageddon (A), Typhoon (M)
Good Gang Ships: Maelstrom (M), Scorpion (C), Rokh (C), Raven (C), Apocalypse (A)

COMMAND SHIPS: Command ships come in two flavors: Field and Fleet command ships. Field command ships are some of the best out-and-out combat ships in the game, with Battleship firepower and/or tank, cruiser tracking, and battlecruiser speed and agility. They are, however, more expensive and difficult to train for than battleships. Fleet command ships, in contrast, are all out gang ships. Design to fit Warfare Link modules, they represent the ultimate in fleet boosting capabilities. Their tanks are even tougher than a battleship, but they lack somewhat in firepower.
Good Piracy Choices: Sleipnir (M), Astarte (G), Absolution (A)
Good Gang Ships: Claymore (M), Damnation (A), Vulture (C), Nighthawk (C), Eos (G)

VERY LONG TERM GOALS

Dreadnoughts (Dreads), Carriers

Capital ships represent the ultimate in firepower, tank, and logistics, required for massive fleets to destroy and wrecking havoc on POSes, other capital ships, or the battlefield at large. They are cripplingly expensive, and take years to train for. Along with their price tag, they trade in versatility for raw power, and are impossible to effectively solo in. These should only be trained for if you absolutely NEED one, and only when you have maxed our near maxed support skills.

DREADNOUGHTS: Dreadnoughts are siege platforms, plain and simple. They put out heavy firepower on stationary targets, and take a beating while doing it. They are only really usable against POSes and other capital ships, due to the limitations of their massive guns. If you need a player station or carrier taken out, though, there really is no substitute.
Good Piracy Choices: None
Good Gang Ships: All, depending on your taste.

CARRIERS: Carriers serve as direct damage, remote repair support and battlefield presence. Like Dreads, they are slow and unwieldy, requiring an extensive support fleet to operate. They are also useful for moving large amounts of supplies across large areas of space safely, due to their jump drives.
Good Piracy Choices: None
Good Gang Ships: All, depending on your taste.