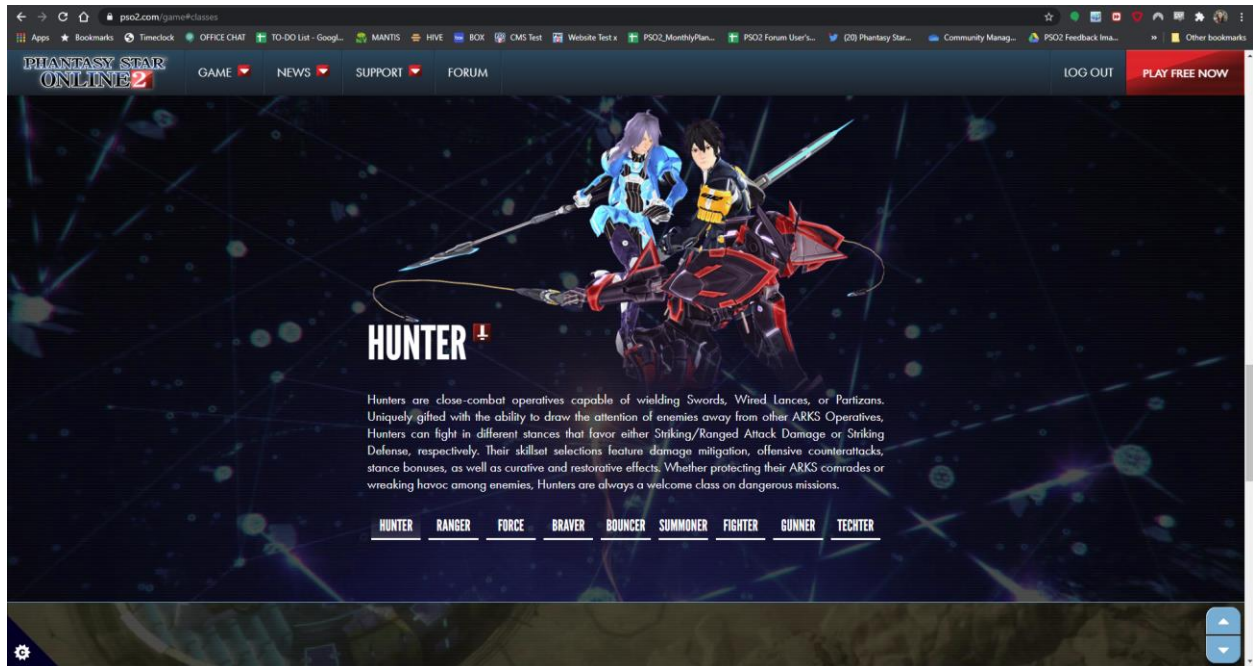


Relevance: After learning what the main story was, when creating the website for this newly North American game, we needed text that would inform the player about their world and their options within it. It was my responsibility to weave the story, setting, and gameplay mechanics into website content while maintaining the game's theme.

<https://pso2.com/game>



Synopsis:

Welcome to Oracle, an intergalactic fleet at the forefront of deep-space travel and exploration. You are the newest recruit of ARKS, a taskforce dedicated to scouting inhospitable planets by exploring, surveying, and monitoring the biospheres within these worlds.

The home base for ARKS is the fleet of ORACLE, and the inhabitants are comprised of four species that complement each other in a symbiotic way. To facilitate battling hostile lifeforms, ARKS operatives can select from one of nine classes and are taught basic instruction in 18 different weapons. These classes are each capable of manipulating photons, whether through direct application of Photon Techniques or through martial application of Photon Arts. The rallying cry of the intercom sounds, calling all ARKS to active duty. Good luck operative, you're going to need it.

Races:

Humans – A jack of all trades, their unique versatility allows them to adapt quickly in all environments, able to face challenges head-on. With a good mix of physical strength and endurance, as well as capability with the photon arts, they are a good fit to take up any class or weapon.

Newmans – While masters of Photon Arts, they are less favored with health and dexterity. If desirous of wielding restorative or elemental forces, this race is an excellent selection as they are unrivaled in their

ability to learn, wield, and resist photon arts. Engineered by genetically-manipulating select Humans to create a race that excelled in photon aptitude and easily identifiable by their sharp and pointy ears.

CAST – Formerly Humans or Dewmans with weak constitutions but strong photon aptitude who were transplanted to a stronger robotic body to survive. While the transplant somewhat weakens their photon powers (and removes their ability to wear some of the latest fashions), the form in which they are now “cast” excels at ranged or close-quarters combat.

Deuman – An artificially created race with high potential for the manipulation of photon arts. The most obvious feature they possess is either their unique horns or their chance to have dichromatic eyes, making this race quite distinct from the others.

Classes:

Hunter – Hunters are close-combat operatives capable of wielding Swords, Wired Lances, or Partizans with the ability to draw the attention of enemies away from other ARKS operatives. Stances can be utilized to either favor striking and ranged attack damage or striking defense respectively, depending on whether the Hunter would like to emphasize overall damage or protect fellow operatives. Their skillset selections feature damage mitigation, offensive counterattacks, stance bonuses, as well as curative and restorative effects. Whether protecting other ARKS or wreaking havoc among enemies, Hunters are always a welcome class on Missions.

Ranger – A ranged class who masterfully uses the Assault Rifle or Grenade Launcher to exterminate foes and empower allies from afar. Individual Assault Rifle shots may not be overtly powerful, but when riddled with enough bullets the outcome of enemies is certain. When swarms of enemies amass, the Grenade Launcher provides a sure-fire way to win, so long as the Ranger has the time and protection needed to safely fire the slow-firing weapon. Skillsets can be augmented to emphasize overall damage, exploit individual weak points, or amplify supportive boons for the Ranger as well as fellow ARKS operatives. This makes them particularly welcome on Missions with strong enemies.

Force – For those with high photon power who seek to study the use of Techniques (specific, patterned photon applications), the Force is a sound class to embody. They prefer the use of Rods or Decks when expending photon power. Techniques allow the Force to excel in various situations with diverse enemies, so long as they aren't getting hit very often as their defensive abilities are reduced. For those they group with, they can provide restorative, curative, and empowering effects while wielding elemental Techniques chosen to exploit the target enemy weakness.

Braver – For those who want the option to switch between short and long-ranged combat, Braver is a good choice. In melee combat they favor the Katana, while at a distance they use the Bullet Bow. The use of the Katana requires careful precision and timing in the effort to overwhelm enemies with a flurry of carefully orchestrated moves. In contrast, the Bullet Bow is as straightforward as an arrow, though it

requires relative stability and can benefit from specific chains of photon arts. The skillset of the Braver therefore includes abilities to empower either of these weapons as well as increases to overall damage.

Bouncer – The highly mobile Bouncer devastates enemies using either Dual Blades or Jet Boots. Bouncers excel at weaving Techniques into their Photon Arts as well, providing support to allies in Missions. With every successive attack by the Bouncer, damage dealt increases, providing the eventual option of unleashing photon blades to obliterate enemies and increase photon power regeneration. Attacks can be made in either a stance that magnifies elemental damage corresponding to enemy weakness, or damage dealt to enemy weak points. The Bouncer skillset includes the choice of enhancing these unique capabilities to complement the preferred playstyle.

Summoner – Summoners are quick-witted puppetmasters, needing fast decisions on which pet to use to achieve the most efficient victory against enemies. So long as fast action is taken, the Summoner can respond to almost any combat situation the unknown may throw at them. Unlike other classes, the Summoner does not have a choice in the weapon they use and relies solely on the Baton to control their pets (the real weapons of a Summoner). Some pets are better at area-wide attacks, while others excel at ranged, single-target damage. The skillset of the Summoner is naturally replete with pet ability bonuses in attack, defense, or support categories.

Fighter – Fighters are close-combat operatives perpetually in the flush of battle rage, single-mindedly decimating enemies without thought of self-preservation. Capable of wielding the Twin Dagger, Double Saber, or Knuckles, this class rewards those who play dangerously. In fact, some choices in their skillset can even provide additional damage when the Fighter is cornered, wounded, or afflicted. Their skillset also allows for preference of fighting position; with Brave Stance boosting damage done while in front of the target, and conversely Wise stance increasing damage inflicted while behind the target.

Gunner – The Gunner combines the lethality of the Ranger with the gladiatorial nature of the Fighter to produce a class that excels in up-close, single-target combat through high burst damage. Their skillset leads to a preference for the Twin Machine Gun, though they can also use Assault Rifles. The Twin Machine Gun rewards the Gunner for high mobility and avoiding enemy attacks by increasing damage dealt with every enemy attacked. Being able to use the Assault Rifle allows the Gunner to also inflict ranged damage, however there are no damage bonuses for this safer positioning. The Gunner is always welcome on Missions due to their Chain Trigger skill which increases damage dealt to a target by all sources with successive attacks.

Techer – Techers are masters in manipulation of the photon arts, casting them with either Wands or Decks and consequently dealing striking or technique damage, respectively (and sometimes cumulatively). Unlike others who practice Techniques however, they can use the wand, which is an especially potent weapon in the hands of a Techer. When combined with the skill Wand Gear it

unleashes element-augmented explosions, which affect multiple targets. Couple this with enemy-manipulation and support techniques for party members, and you have a class that excels in eradicating multiple enemies at a time.

Fleet Oracle: Your Ship

The Fleet of Oracle is comprised of hundreds of ships providing sanctuary to ARKS, researchers, crew, and civilians. ARKS are encouraged to apply for residence on ships where they have friends, as this helps foster feelings of camaraderie for when Missions become more dangerous. Each ship hosts a variety of amenities, including a Gate area, the Shops, private Rooms, Franka's Café, and even a Casino.

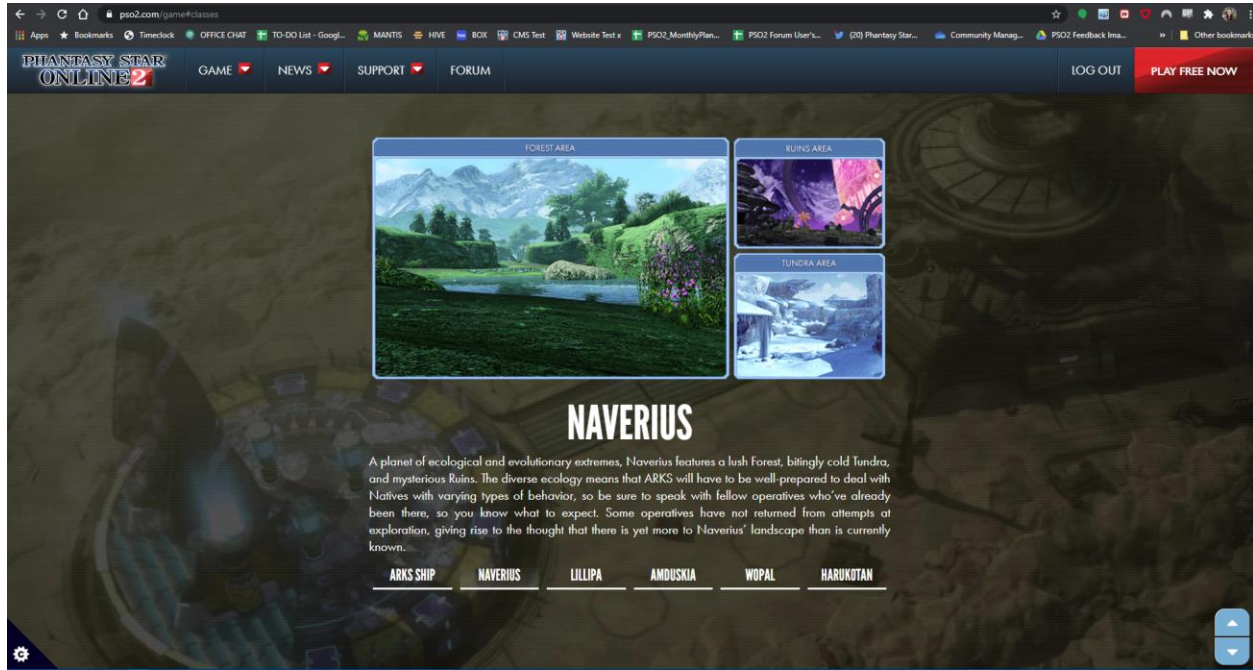
Operatives are briefed on Missions, gather with their teammates, or can seek additional guidance from Class Leaders at the Gate. Last minute purchases or storage searches can be performed from terminals at the sides of the lobby in case you left something in your room. A class consultant is more than happy to assist ARKS in augmenting their skills and the medical terminal is there if you need a check-up or pick-me-up.

The Shops are aptly named, as they are where operatives go to improve their weapons, sell any items found, or perhaps report back to a collector who requested delivery of specific items or information. Zieg tends to hang out here as his weapons usually prove to be stronger and therefore sell better than the ones found by hopeful ARKS and identified by unimpressed weapon shop personnel. On the second floor is the Beauty Salon – in case ARKS discover they need a hairstyle that stays out of their eyes better while in combat or if they just want some pampering.

From the Shops, operatives can access their Room through use of the enclosed Teleporters. Standard rooms provided by ARKS are quite roomy and even include a balcony, and further upgrades can be obtained through careful saving and furniture shopping. Crafting can be done here, where concentration is assured. There are no room inspections, so feel free to decorate your space in the manner that is most comfortable to you.

Franka's Café is easily accessed from the Shops, or by other enclosed Teleporters. Here, Franka and her staff assist operatives in preparing beneficial meals sure to keep hunger off the minds of exploring ARKS. Franka has also been known to reward operatives for bringing her back tasty and rare ingredients, so it's a good idea to check in with her before departure. Additional purposes can be found for rare ingredients with the Jeweler, who can create rings that offer additional benefits to the wearer.

Accessible directly from every location (except the private Rooms of ARKS so as not to encourage bad habits) is the Casino. Here, operatives can unwind with a game of Rappy Slots, Mesetan Shooter, or Black Nyack, so long as they get some rest before deploying on Missions. This means you, ARKS.



Planets

Naverius – A planet of ecological and evolutionary extremes, Naberius features a lush Forest, biting cold Tundra, and mysterious Ruins. The diverse ecology means that ARKS will have to be well-prepared to deal with Natives with varying types of behavior, so be sure to speak with fellow operatives who've already been so you know what to expect. Operatives have not returned from some attempts at exploration, giving rise to the thought that there is yet more to Naverius' landscape than is currently known.

- Preparation is a must when traveling through the Forest, as the weather can change suddenly and leave an operative soaked to the skin or floundering in the fog. Some of Naberius Forest's known Native species include the burrowing Nab Rappy, the ape-like Oodan, the fiery Agnis, and the sleek Fangulf.
- Should an operative tire of the humidity of the forest, a sojourn to the Tundra may seem desirable. However, the dry and bitterly cold air does nothing to dissuade attacks by the aggressive Native species discovered thus far; the bellowing Malmoth, acrobatic Rockbear, or

the ambushing Fang Banther. Avalanches here are frequent, and the observant operative may happen upon treasures hidden in the snow.

- The Ruins are deceptively tranquil at first, but the mysterious remains of a past civilization and an eerie stillness create an overall feeling of unease. Translucent aqua waters, verdant greenery, and elegantly crumbling architecture are the features of this landscape. But this jewel-toned veneer masks a malevolent Falspawn presence; thus far ARKS operatives have encountered defensive Ga Wonda, teleporting Dicahta, and armored Micda.

Lillipa – The frequent sandstorms and scarred terrain of Lillipa are not what entices explorers to venture there. Rather, observant ARKS operatives will catch tantalizing glimpses of ancient structures created long ago by an advanced civilization and be helpless to resist the lure of discovery. From the Camp Ship the sands of the Desert are visible, and dark shadows indicate the possible presence of caverns or Tunnels. Large machinery and groupings of buildings hint at resource-harvesting, perhaps even a Quarry.

- Amidst the endless sands and howling winds of the Desert appear small buildings clustered in the lee of boulders. Somehow still functioning, automata creep forth when boundary gates are activated to swarm intruders. Recently, inspection of machines that have been forcefully decommissioned by ARKS operatives revealed text that could be read as “Spardan A”, “Spargun”, and “Gilnas”. Be wary ARKS, for the same ingenuity that created the automata also planted traps that do not kill, but only maim the victim; leaving them to die a slow death of exposure amidst the spiraling sands.
- Below the sands lie a labyrinthine network of Tunnels and catwalks that seem to meander through monstrous man-made caverns of rusting metal and stale air. Billowing dust is made visible by green phosphorescent lights that are strangely still operational. Footsteps clang on the metal walkways, and automata creep forth, alerted by the vibration of intruders. ARKS must be on their guard, for as above in the sands, traps are frequent in these crypt-like chambers. Destruction of the few automata encountered thus far has revealed some of the same machines as were found in the desert, in addition to those engraved with text that appears to read “Signo Beat”, “Guardine”, and “Glnach”. From these and other engravings found amidst the debris ARKS researchers are hard at work developing a key to the language and a theory on the purpose of the complex, but they’ll need more evidence collected. Are you up to the task, operative?
- Rocky outcroppings break up the monotony of the bleached sands, and near them ARKS operatives have discovered massive machinery and towering structures patrolled by bristling automata that hint at the presence of a Quarry. Discarded rock lies strewn about, giving rise to

the theory that these are the sources of the strange ore and gems found in the Tunnels. Slowly the sands creep down the surrounding hills, seeking to bury the timeless compound beneath their shifting dunes. Shadows flit, and operatives have yet to determine the creature responsible for them. Falspawn have been seen here amongst the newly discovered automata Vinto Vargr and Jagd Vargr. The terrain is dotted by mining pits, so watch your footing (and your back) ARKS.

Amduskia – Amduskia is home to a triad of biomes; with the fetid stench of sulfur pouring from thermal vents in the muggy Volcanic Caverns, the vivid foliage and cooling breezes of the Skyscape, and the confining corridors of the Sanctum. The known draconic species that inhabit Amduskia have thus far been hostile to exploring ARKS operatives, hindering the ability to document flora and fauna.

- It is imperative that ARKS operatives mind their footing as they make their way down rough-cut passages into the Volcanic Caverns. Cooling molten rock is slick with the precipitation from dripping stalagmites. Sparse vegetation is present in the form of heat-tolerant moss and lichen that forego the sun in favor of the luminescent lava. Keep your wits sharp about you, as this is not the sauna in the Oracle Beauty Salon. Isolation traps honeycomb the caverns, used by the dragonkin to sequester and eliminate foreign threats. Falling rock and small gas eruptions can also take the oblivious adventurer by surprise. Finally, listen for the slick sounds of scales on stone and beware the dragonkin operatives have named “Digg” and “Sil Dinian”.
- Buoyed by rising steam from the Volcanic vents from below, the Skyscape is comprised of a mass of floating platforms sprinkled with vegetation in softly iridescent colors. The land seems shaped by past currents, though by wind or water remains unknown. The surrounds are shrouded in an opaque mist that lulls an operative with a feeling of false security, making one forget the consequences of a misstep – plummeting to the rocky landscape far below. Dragonkin are present here as well, and operatives have discovered a blue-scaled version of the Sil Dinian they’ve named the “Sil Sadinian”. The aptly named “Windira” can soar in the winds that breeze past the plates of the Skyscape, though beware of the projectiles of condensed energy they fire. A few clever Technique-using ARKS discovered structures that magnify the application of lightning-imbued photon applications, creating a field of charged electrical energy useful for wiping out swarming enemies. While this may seem to mean an easy exploration, do not be overconfident, for Dragonkin have engineered traps here as well and ARKS have yet to figure out the trigger mechanism.
- Sanctum – The Sanctum sits at the cold core of the Skyscape. Walls, ground, and ceilings are a mosaic of azure tiles that seem to glow along the edges with an otherworldly aquamarine light. Inscriptions of an unknown language scroll along the visible edges and surfaces of the tiles, and ARKS may wonder at whether these are the source of power for the oddly cold incandescence. If so, perhaps their purpose is more malevolent; to fuel the isolation traps and photon cannons hidden within the confining space. Water cascades from a seemingly endless and invisible

source, then pools in small depressions found at intersections or defies gravity and snakes along the walls. The terrain here is slippery, as the tiles are coated with a type of algal growth. Perhaps the noise of the water serves to mask the approach of ambushing dragonkin. Only a few expeditions have managed to make headway within the maze, and thus far only the Sil Sadinian has been encountered.

Vopar – Vopar, or Wopal as some call it, is a planet of sea foam and salt air. Weathered rock dots the landscape of the Coast, where hostile marine lifeforms emerge from the surf to prey upon visitors distracted by the pretend paradise. Seabed caverns lie below the sun-warmed sands, the briny air mingling with the odor of fishy decay in the home of deviant Oceanids. A Floating Facility of sorts has been spied by operatives with assisted vision, and the F-factor signal received from the unnatural landmass is strong. Be mindful, ARKS, as this is no island getaway on which to relax.

- The horizon of the Coast is dotted by what appear to be typhoons but are instead deluges of water from a moisture-laden atmosphere. Evaporation is high along the coast, but instead of precipitating in the known pattern of rain, it instead falls back to Wopal's surface in waterfall form. These can occur at a moment's notice, so ARKS should be sure to bring a change of attire should the sky open on them. Remind party members to remain on guard, as translucent Seglez'n are hard to see against the backdrop of the surf, a tactic they utilize to attack the unwary with shocking ability. The Aqulupus, nicknamed by some operatives as the sand shark, are noticeable by their distinctive fin as they circle land-bound operatives before erupting from the sand for the attack. Be sure to bring your sword and sunscreen ARKS, for both will be needed when visiting this location.
- Below the shoals of the Coast lies the Seabed, enormous caverns that defy the massive weight of the sea above, forming open-air spaces. Mysterious pumps control the level of water on the floor of the Seabed, perhaps allowing certain areas to hold a variety of experimental forms of marine species. Resplendent carvings seem imbued with rainbows, though many lie crumbling on the seabed, the marble pitted with decay. Columns of water spew from above, perhaps serving to relieve some pressure due to the crushing weight of water above. Once elegant, cracked columns stand in ankle-deep water, distracting operatives from the encroaching mutant oceanids like the three-headed Vid Gilos and the Tag Aqulupus. Be sure to clean your weapons after visiting these waters, ARKS, for the briny air will leave them rusting.
- Some ARKS have managed to get closer to the Floating Facility, as they have called it, that can be seen from the Coast. The same iridescence seems impregnated within the stone used to sculpt carefully designed arches and massive cupolas. At the center of the immense structure, its creators seem to have engineered a way to ensure a constant deluge, as operatives have noticed that unlike the sky-falls of the Coast, this cascade does not stop. In fact, the building seems constructed to harness this phenomenon of meteorology, though for what purpose we

can only guess since no one has been able to coax forth any kind of response from the crumbling stone mechanisms. F-factor readings are strong here, though operatives have yet to encounter any Falspawn in great numbers. Operatives have encountered crawling Tarvolpus and the hard-hitting Falgarbon, which can stun operatives to render them helpless. Report any response from the ancient structure immediately, as ARKS researchers are still unsure of the danger it may yet pose.