

Final Fantasy VII Speed Walkthrough

by GarlandG

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GarlandG's Speed Run FAQ/Walkthrough for
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Version 3.3
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Table of Contents

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Use quick find (Ctrl+F) to easily find what you want. To easily find a boss or a battle, just look at the Boss & Battle list and type in the code in front when searching. For example B23 for Demon's Gate.

1 - Important Stuff

- * 1.1 <> Copyright
- * 1.2 <> Intro
- * 1.3 <> Gaming Info
- * 1.4 <> Frequently Asked Questions
- * 1.5 <> PAL and NTSC differences
- * 1.6 <> Perfect Run Info

2 - Walkthrough: Midgar

- * 2.1 <> The First Mission
- * 2.2 <> Aftermath
- * 2.3 <> The Second Mission
- * 2.4 <> Back To The Slums
- * 2.5 <> Wall Market
- * 2.6 <> Slums Revisited
- * 2.7 <> Shinra Headquarters

Boss & Battle List

- B01: MP x2
- B02: Guard Scorpion
- B03: Air Buster
- B04: Aps
- B05: Reno
- B06: Mighty Grunt x3
- B07: Sample:HO512
- B08: Hundred Gunner
- B09: Heli Gunner
- B10: Rufus
- B11: Motor Ball
- B12: Bottomswell
- B13: Jenova-BIRTH
- B14: Dyne
- B15: Sneaky Step x3
- B16: Stinger #1
- B17: Stinger #2
- B18: Gi Nattak
- B19: Materia Keeper
- B20: Palmer
- B21: Flapbeat x3
- B22: Red Dragon
- B23: Demon's Gate
- B24: Jenova-LIFE
- B25: Stilva
- B26: Icicle + Evilheads
- B29: Schizo
- B30: Jenova-DEATH

3 - Walkthrough: The Rest Of Disc One

- * 3.1 <> The First Continent
- * 3.2 <> Junon
- * 3.3 <> The Second Continent
- * 3.4 <> Cosmo Canyon
- * 3.5 <> Nibelheim & Mt. Nibel
- * 3.6 <> Rocket Town
- * 3.7 <> Before The Temple
- * 3.8 <> The Temple Of Ancients
- * 3.9 <> Bone Village & The Forgotten City

4 - Walkthrough: Disc Two & Three

- * 4.1 <> Adventures In The Snow
- * 4.2 <> Gaea's Cliff
- * 4.3 <> Whirlwind Maze
- * 4.4 <> The Time Without Cloud
- * 4.5 <> Junon Underwater Reactor
- * 4.6 <> Rocket Town & More
- * 4.7 <> Return To Midgar
- * 4.8 <> The Northern Crater

5 - Additional Info

- * 5.1 <> Record Run Results
- * 5.2 <> Speed Run Videos
- * 5.3 <> Contacting Me
- * 5.4 <> Version History
- * 5.5 <> Credits
- * 5.6 <> Final Words

- B31: Attack Squad x2
- B32: Train Battles
- B36: Attack Squad
- B37: Ultimate Weapon
- B38: Submarine Crew x2
- B40: Submarine Crew x3
- B41: Underwater MP x2
- B42: Carry Armor
- B43: Submarine Crew x2
- B45: Submarine Crew x3
- B46: Attack Squad x2
- B48: Senior Grunt + AS x2
- B49: Rude + Attack Squad x2
- B50: Senior Grunt
- B51: Diamond Weapon
- B52: The Turks
- B53: Proud Clod
- B54: Hojo
- B55: Hellectic Hojo
- B56: Lifeform Hojo NA
- B57: Jenova-SYNTHESIS
- B58: Bizarro-Sephiroth
- B59: Safer-Sephiroth

The first part of this guide, Important Stuff, is named like that for a reason. Not reading it is not a wise choice if you want to do a Speed Run, so take your time to read it. I know you will anyway.

1.1 <> Copyright

This guide is Copyrighted © to Audun Arnseth, 2004 - 2008, and is for private use only. You may download it and print it out, but you are not allowed to reproduce it, sell it or use it for any kind of profit. You may host it on your website if you get my approval, but the contents may not be changed, and I must be given credit. If this is desired, you can send me an email and ask for my permission. However, should I find it necessary, you will have to remove it at my request. Violation of my copyright will be taken very strictly, and I will consider it an ethic violation and breaking of moral. It also shows lack of respect for other people's work. And most importantly, don't forget that copyright violations are illegal and you might come in conflict with the law.

Most of this guide is my work, and is written out of my own gaming and my own experiences. When other sources of information are used in the process of making the guide, credit will be given in the credits section.

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If you break my copyright, I will hunt you down and kick your ass and it will hurt, so I advise you not to do it.

1.2 <> Intro

A Speed Run is in my opinion the best challenge for any game ever. You have one simple goal: Beat the game as fast as you can, using whatever the game has to offer, except bugs and glitches. That's it. But why would that be the best challenge ever? Well, there are many reasons. First of all because it's fun. If you think you're good at a game, you can test your skills and knowledge in a Speed Run. You will most likely do some mistakes the first time, but just give it another try and you will beat your record. You can do it many times, and it won't get boring until you can't beat your record. I have done eight FFVII runs myself, including three test runs, and so far it has just gotten more and more fun each time. Of course, this increases the replay value of the game.

It's also the most popular challenge out there, and you can find many websites dedicated to Speed Runs. People from all over the world come to these sites and discuss strategies and they even record their runs so that everyone can see them. As of June 4th, Farringa has recorded a complete FFVII run, that should be available at the Speed Demos Archive (<http://speeddemosarchive.com/>) within the month. As for me, I'm currently recording my "perfect" run and I will submit it to SDA when it's done. In the meantime, I will upload every segment to Youtube as I proceed.

My Youtube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/GarlandTheGreat>

This FAQ will guide you through the challenge and by following it, you should be able to beat the game in less than 12 hours, even if you've only beaten the game once. You will find all the necessary information you need in order to complete the challenge and the walkthrough will have all the best and fastest

strategies for shaving off time. Every time you have to save, you will find my record time and recommended times for 9, 10 and 12 hour runs. The 12 hours run is for beginners, the 10 hours run is for advanced players and the 9 hours run is for experts. Since my record is 8:57:59, I won't make any recommended times for a 9 hours run this time. If you have beaten the game a fair amount of times and have some experience, you should have no trouble beating it in 10 hours by following the guide. I have received emails from several people saying they beat their first run in less than 10 hours, so it's far from impossible.

A Speed Run is similar to a Low Level Game in many ways. To save time, you can only fight boss battles, other mandatory battles and certain enemies to learn enemy skills, so your levels will always stay low. Your levels won't be any higher than 45 by the end of the game. Because of that, it is recommended to have beaten a regular Low Level Game if you want to achieve a good time. If you aren't used to fighting on low levels, this challenge could get far more difficult than you had expected. Well, challenges are supposed to be difficult after all, so I won't stop you even if you've only beaten the game once.

Some people deny the fact that this is a true Speed Run. They claim that a Speed Run must be beaten in one sitting and the time spent from the very moment you select "NEW GAME" until Sephiroth is dead is your final time. Anything you do in the meantime will be included in the final time. In other words, you cannot load up and play a part over again if you screw up. If you do that, you will just get a crappier result. I get the point, but I couldn't disagree more. That's more like the ODINS and HDINS challenges (these have an own section in this new version of the guide), just that you're allowed to save in case you should get a game over. The challenge described in this guide is indeed a Speed Run, and I can't understand why you shouldn't be allowed to save, load up and play a part over again until you achieve the best result. That's what a Speed Run is all about after all.

As I said, I have done eight Speed Runs myself, including three test runs and the HDINS Challenge. Here are the results:

1. Early 2003 - 11:04
2. Late 2003 - 10:14
3. April 2004 - 9:29
4. June 2004 - 9:46 (test)
5. July 2004 - 8:39
6. May 2005 - 11:50 (HDINS)
7. September 2005 - 10:41 (test)
8. April 2006 - 8:36 (test)

All the times are from the final saves. The 4th, 7th and 8th runs were test runs where my only intention was to test new strategies, so I didn't put much effort into them, something you can see from the results. I wrote the first version of this FAQ during the first test run, but I found out a lot of things that could've been done better during this run. I also had three people testing this version of the guide; KADFC, lolo26 and Bergqvist, who also came up with a lot of new ideas and strategies, so I decided to start over and re-write the FAQ. I ended up beating my old record with 50 minutes and I set a record that everybody thought was incredible. However, I knew that I had made a couple of mistakes, so I decided that I would do another run one day, but first I needed a long break from Speed Runs. In May 2005, me and lolo started discussing Speed Runs again and we came up with a lot of new strategies. Lolo did a test run with the PC version where he tested these new strategies and he set an incredible new record. We came to the conclusion that the game could be beaten in less than 9 hours. Then, a guy named BrutalAl showed up and he had a lot of new ideas as well, so we all started testing stuff again and finally we came to the conclusion that the game could be beaten in less than 8:30. Time will show

when the final perfect run is over. I'm the guy writing this guide, but we have all contributed with ideas and strategies and my record would never been as good without the other guys.

If you've played FFIIX, you may remember what Amarant says before entering Ipsen's Castle.

"working alone beats working in a team any day, and I'm gonna prove it."

You know what? I just proved him wrong. As I said, my record would never have been as good without the other guys. Co-work rocks!

There's one more thing I'd like to say in this intro. After completing the third Speed Run in April 2004, I created a topic about it on the message board and most people didn't believe me. Beating the game that fast was impossible and I was obviously lying since I didn't have any evidence. They said that the world record was 14 hours (or something like that), so there was no way I could reach the bottom of the crater in 9:29. That was two years ago. Now, I have beaten that record with more than an hour. What if I'd said 8:25 back then? The main reason why I couldn't beat the game that fast was because the bosses would pwn me on low levels and other crap. No good arguments whatsoever. Back then, I was really pissed, but today I just find it amusing. I mean, there are just too many ignorant people in this world that don't know what they're talking about. I have proved the n00bs on the message board wrong so many times it's almost scary. Thankfully, you don't see many of these n00bs nowadays. Now, you can usually post a challenge topic without ten people saying it's impossible. I guess this FAQ and all the other challenge FAQs are the main reason for that.

Although there are many idiots out there, some people just can't be blamed. Let's take an example. When I was playing FFIIX for the first time back in 2001, this guy told me that you have to reach the end of the game in less than 12 hours to get the best weapon. I was like "no way, that's not possible" as I had spent like 60 hours beating the game. But then I did some thinking and realized that I had too little knowledge about the game to question the challenge, and that's my advice for all the unbelievers out there. Don't question a challenge if you have too little knowledge about a game. There are always better players with tons of skills, knowledge and experience out there, and these people can do stuff you never thought was possible. I have beaten FFIIX in less than nine hours and it's up to you if you want to believe me or not. But seriously, do you honestly think I've spent hundreds of hours writing a joke FAQ?

1.3 <> Gaming Info

THIS SECTION IS VERY IMPORTANT, AND I STRONGLY ENCOURAGE EVERYONE TO READ AND UNDERSTAND IT BEFORE YOU START PLAYING. YOU WILL FIND THE MOST IMPORTANT INFO YOU NEED IN ORDER TO SAVE TIME HERE, SO YOU HAVE TO READ IT, NO MATTER WHAT.

Rules

Yes, there are a few rules for the challenge.

* The save point must be placed at the bottom of the crater, in the area where you meet up with the party before the last battles. This place is also known as the point of no return, and if you open the menu here, it will say "Bottom

of Nothern Cave". That's right, another typo. Think of this area as a clock, and place the save point at 8. At least don't go any further than 9, or the cutscenes will start.

- * You must be able to beat the final bosses directly from the final save. If you somehow can't, you will have to go back and obtain whatever's needed and then save again. The time spent doing this will then be included in the final time, thus making it crappier. You shouldn't have to worry about this if you follow the FAQ.
- * The game is considered beaten when you no longer have control over the game, and that's when you deal the final blow to Sephiroth in the final battle with him. There's still text to skip after Safer-Sephiroth and you have the choice of whether or not to use Omnislash against Sephiroth, so the game is not considered beaten until you've defeated him.

Random battles

All random battles must be escaped. No questions asked. Trust me, the levels you may gain from fighting battles will not make up for the time spent.

The time it takes to escape a battle varies. Some times, you will escape before the enemies get to act, but other times you may not be able to escape before all the enemies have attacked. Thankfully, you will escape after one attack most of the time. Since all battles theoretically can be escaped before the enemies start attacking, you will lose time every time an enemy attacks you throughout the game. You can live with one or two attacks in a regular run, but restart if you get attacked too many times.

Attacks from both sides is something you don't want to happen. These cannot be escaped before you defeat the enemies on one of the sides and needless to say, that takes time. Also take note that you will lose four times as much health when an enemy attacks a character from behind in these battles, so you might get killed if the enemies are too strong. Consider an attack from both sides an instant restart in most cases. Thankfully, it doesn't happen very often.

Skipping text

All text must be skipped as fast as possible. I will tell you to [skip text] a million times in the walkthrough, so you better get used to it. Whenever you see the [skip text] box, you simply have to tap the action button until the talking is over. If there's only one box of text to skip, I will in most cases not bother with a [skip text], but simply tell you to skip one box of text or something like that.

Many times, there will be options to select, like when the guards are chasing Aerith in the church. You know what I mean. When you have to select the first option, I won't bother telling you, so it will just say [skip text] as usual. If another option has to chosen, I will of course let you know, as selecting the wrong option in most cases will cause you to lose time.

Something you have to do seven times during the game is naming characters, but you're not free to call them whatever you want. Since it takes a certain amount of time to display a character, you have to shorten everyone's name to one

character. That's right. This is one of BrutalAl's many brilliant ideas. You only save a few seconds overall by doing this, but it's still a brilliant idea.

Saving

First of all, make sure to use a memory card with no other FFVII files. The more files, the longer it takes to load the memory card before you get to save.

We save for several reasons in this challenge. The most important ones are those where we save to avoid a random encounter. Yes, that's true. Many times, saving will make the next battle go away. The random encounters aren't random in this game. Start a new game and run through the first reactor as fast as you can a couple of times, and you'll know what I mean. The battles always occur at the same places all the time. Yup.

Sometimes, we can save to prevent the next battle from occurring, and since saving takes less time than escaping a battle, we have to take this opportunity to save time whenever it's possible. The first time we do this is when we save before Guard Scorpion. If you don't save, you will get a battle on your way back to the save point, but by saving, it "disappears". You have to soft-reset first though. If you continue on after saving, it won't disappear. The same thing also works on the world map, and not only that; it works all the time! However, the pattern of encounters can vary from time to time on the world map, so you can't do a practice run first to find out exactly where the next encounter occurs and then save just before this point in the major run.

Thanks to this "system" or whatever we should call it (it's definitely not a glitch), we get to save pretty often without losing any time at all, but unfortunately, we can't just save at these occasions. Some times, there's a tricky part that requires luck coming up, and it may have been a while since we last saved, so saving would be wise. Even though we lose time by saving, we could have lost more time if we had to play that part over again. It can also be that we just got past a tricky part after tons of attempts, and you never know what can happen. Other times we just save because it's been a while, and playing a long part over again because of a small mistake ain't fun.

Using the menu

Since this is a Speed Run, you have to be fast when using the menu, and it's very important when you have to do many things. You could easily lose a minute fumbling around in the menu.

Sometimes, you have to do many changes in equipment and materia before boss battles, and in these cases, it's a very good idea to save first. Then you should practice doing the changes until you get fast and you can do it with your eyes closed. Of course, you don't have to be lightning fast unless you're a perfect runner, but even regulars should give it five minutes.

The use of limit breaks

This is something most people find out the first time they play the game, that

limit breaks have priority before anything else. When you have a character use a limit break, it will always be used right away, no matter whose turn it is.

Usually, when fighting a single opponent, your characters get one turn each before it's the opponent's turn again, but by taking advantage of the limit break system, you can have a character act twice before the opponent's turn. If all three characters have limit breaks, you can get a total of six turns between the opponent's turn and thus save time. Let me explain how to do this.

Let's say your party is Cloud, Barret and Cid and you're fighting Proud Clod, using Magic Breath to deal damage. Proud Clod attacks Cloud and he gets a limit break. Now you have an opportunity to act four times before it's Proud Clod's turn again. To make this work, you must have Cloud act first and then the others. Let's say you have Barret act second and then Cid. Cloud will now cast Magic Breath first and his ATB bar will start filling up when it's Barret's turn. Then Barret casts Magic Breath and by the time he's done, Cloud's ATB bar should be full. Then it's Cid's turn, and now it's time to activate Cloud's limit break. Just make sure you don't activate it too early, or he will use it before Cid's turn. Do it when Cid starts moving and you see the text "Magic Breath" at the top of the screen. After Cid is done casting Magic Breath, Cloud will use his limit break and you successfully got four turns in a row.

That's how it works. Test it out in a regular battle a couple of times, and you'll easily learn how to handle it. It's not very complicated after all. Just take note that when you're fighting on the highest battle speed, which you must do in a Speed Run, you don't necessarily have to let the character who got a limit break act first. Since the ATB gauge fills pretty fast, you can let this character act second and still be able to use the limit break before it's the enemy's turn again.

Note: This only works with ATB at Active. We change to Recommended and Wait a few times during the run, so it won't work then.

To do or not to do?
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You can only do the necessary things in order to proceed with the story. You have no time to visit places you don't have to, like the Chocobo Farm, Gongaga, the Shinra Mansion and so on. But why would you anyway? I have gotten a couple of emails from people saying they've beaten the game in 15 hours, but they did this and that sidequest. Seriously, folks, this is a Speed Run, and in a Speed Run, your goal is to beat the game as fast as possible. Why the hell do you want to do sidequests? If you love the sidequests so much, then beat the game regularly, or save before you do them and then load up afterwards.

Also, you can only pick up the necessary items like the Fire Ring, Bolt Armet, Ribbon and so on. In some cases, we will spend time getting a certain item, but don't worry; the item will make up for the time spent getting it, or else we wouldn't have gotten it in the first place. There will be some shopping as well, but mostly for items and materia. All the equipment we need will either be found or won from enemies, except for one weapon, the Force Stealer, which is bought in North Corel.

Speed is the key!
#####

This is a Speed Run, so speed is naturally the key to success. If you play racing games, you should know that you have to cut every turn as correctly as possible in order to save time. Think racing in the fields and take the shortest course. Doing so could prevent a battle and saving you 20 seconds, if not more, so this is not for perfectionists only.

Patience, my friend! Patience!
#####

If you want to achieve the best times, you will have to play certain parts over and over again until you get the best results. And in some cases, there are loads of things to do between a save and a boss fight that requires some luck for the best result. Palmer and Red Dragon can be mentioned. If the battle fails, you have to go through tons of cutscenes and dialogues before you get another try. Carry Armor is an even better example, as you have to fight two battles before you can take a shot at him, and many things can go wrong in these battles as well. Of course, the amount of patience needed depends on how fast you want to beat the game. If you have no patience at all, a Speed Run is definitely not for you.

1.4 <> Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

This section contains questions that have been or may be asked. If you have a question you think should be added here send me an email. Read section 5.2 for info on how to contact me. Needless to say, only good questions will be added.

Q: Just how fast is it possible to beat the game?

A: With near-perfect execution and close to maximum luck manipulation, it is possible to beat the game in less than 7 hours and 45 minutes. Theoretically, you can get closer to the 7:30 mark, but that would require strategies with such low odds, it's no longer realistic. A TAS could probably get below 7:30. See the question further down if you don't know what a TAS is.

Q: How good is your record?

A: My current record is not that great. After all, it was only a test run, so I didn't put much effort into it. First timers will have a hard time beating it, but you can easily beat it if you're good.

Q: What about Cait Sith's Slots. Can I use them to instantly kill all bosses?

A: No, you can't. Using an instant win attacks is the only thing you can't do in a Speed Run. Just like Zanmato in FFX. Why, you may ask? Because we use skills, speed and strategy in a Speed Run, and an instant win attack isn't a strategy. We have discussed this matter, and our conclusion is that you can achieve a better result by using the Slots, but not a much better one.

The Japanese Ultimania dudes have completed a Slot Run. Time: 7:26:37 and I think it was the time at the final save (not a 100% sure here). Also, the Japanese version is shorter by an unknown amount of time, as described in

section 1.5, so that time can't be compared with my NTSC time.

Q: Is there any way to skip dialogues, cutscenes and FMVs?

A: I don't know if you can do this even with a gameshark, but you're not supposed to anyway. In a Speed Run, you play the game legitimately and any use of a cheating device is considered cheating. Text must be skipped by tapping the action button and all cutscenes and FMVs are to be watched normally. I know you can skip the FMVs in FFI by opening the hatch/disc tray, but that's plain cheating in my opinion. And no, it doesn't work with FFVII. Thank God.

Q: Will the timer stop if I pause the game in battles?

A: Yes, it will. If you need a break and haven't saved for a long time, then pause the game during battle. There are no other ways to stop the timer. Don't ever leave the game in the middle of a dialogue or a cutscene. My phone once rang at Aerith's house when "listening" to Elmyra's story, and I had no other choice but to leave the game and then restart afterwards. Make sure nothing will interrupt you when you do this challenge. You can also pause the snowboard minigame.

Q: How do you get the seconds for your save times?

A: After saving, I note down the seconds shown by the timer when I get back to the menu again. If you load a file and open the menu at once, it will show three seconds more than this. If the seconds are between 00 and 02, for example 2:07:02, the save file will say 2:06 when you load the file. After saving at the end of a disc, I open the menu immediately on the next disc and then note down the seconds.

Q: I don't have a PS/PS2/PS3. Can I use the PC version for a speed run as well?

A: Yes, you can, but take note that the PC version is faster than the PS version, so you can never compare your times with mine. It's hard to say exactly how much faster it is, and it could depend on how fast your PC is as well, but I'm not sure about that. However, if you use the PC version, you have to make sure to play on low resolution, as the timer seems to be very slow if you play on high resolution. Lolo told me that 60 seconds on the timer was actually 144, and I don't want any emails from people saying they've made it in 4 hours... :p

There is a small issue regarding random battles for PC runners. On the way to the save point at Mt. Corel, you have to get into a battle with two Bombs on the bridge right before it. Farringa ran into some trouble here. When he first got here, he didn't get a battle with two Bombs on the bridge. Then, every time he loaded up to try again, he get the exact same battle on the way there, so he simply couldn't get a battle with two Bombs on the bridge.

Thankfully, he found a solution to the problem too. When you get into the undesired (the battle you get instead of the 2x Bomb battle), make sure to kill your party so that you return to the title screen and load up. The

battles should change. If you close the program instead of killing yourself, the battles won't change. If you don't get the right battle now, you must kill the party again and load up from the title screen. Do that until you get the right battle. Once you quit the program, the original battles will return, including the undesired one.

Q: If I use a PS2, does it make any difference if I set Disc Speed to Fast and Texture Mapping to Smooth?

A: Yes, it does. BrutalAl did some research and this is what he found out:

I placed myself at the entrance of the 2nd house to the left in Kalm and ran inside, up the stairs, then down and out again. I repeated this procedure ten times in a row and then noticed how long it took me with the different PS2 settings.

Disc Speed Fast, Texture Mapping Smooth: ~78 sec

Disc Speed Standard, Texture Mapping Standard: ~107 sec

My "course" consisted of 40 screen load-ups so Disc Speed Fast saved me ~0.75 sec per screen load in this test. I also did another test where I just ran back and forth between two screens and in that test Disc Speed Fast saved me 0.9 sec per screen load (20 load-ups, 40 sec compared to 58).

Also, I didn't do a full test of this but I did notice that the difference between Standard and Fast Disc Speed when I...

-Loaded a save (on the world map)

-Ran into Kalm

-Ran into the Inn and then directly out again

-Opened the menu

...was more than 6 seconds on the menu timer.

I tried to determine if Texture Mapping Standard or Smooth was the fastest but I couldn't come to an apparent conclusion, though some differences were observed. The longer course took 78 sec to run on average with Smooth and 79 on average with Standard. The shorter course seemed to average just below 40 sec with Smooth and just above 40 sec with Standard.

Conclusion: Make sure to set Disc Speed to Fast and Texture Mapping to Smooth before you start playing. Just take note that the PS2 resets these settings every time you turn it off, so you have to do it every time you turn it on.

Q: How about that PS3? Does it load the game any faster?

A: No, it doesn't. A PS2 with the Fast & Smooth setup will load the game faster than a PS3. I don't know if the downloadable PSN version is faster or slower than the regular game, but it doesn't really matter unless you're going for the record. If you do, you have to make sure you have a PS2. And no, the PSN version has not been altered in any kind of way. It's the exact same game, so you can compare your PSN run to any other run console run.

Q: What's a perfect run?

A: As a matter of fact, there is no such thing as a perfect run. That's just what we call a near-perfect run. The purpose of a near-perfect run is to do things as perfect as possible and that's why we call it a perfect run. Read section 1.6 for more info and if you want to do this challenge.

A true perfect run would mean only necessary saves (saving to avoid random encounters), the least amount of random encounters possible and all of them had to be escaped at once, before you got attacked by the enemies. You would also have to beat all bosses as fast as possible, using Cait Sith's Dice for maximum damage whenever that would be possible. And the list goes on. You couldn't do it even with all the luck in the world.

Q: What are the ODINS and HDINS Challenges?

A: ODINS = One Day In No Saves. Objective: Start a timer at the exact moment you select a new game and defeat the last Sephiroth within 24 hours without saving. You are not allowed to pause the timer, so anything you do in the meantime will be included in the final time. I'm sure anyone who has beaten the game at least five times should be able to pull this off without too much trouble. As long as you know what to do and where to go in order to proceed with the story, and you don't waste any time doing unnecessary things, you should have more than enough time to level up for bosses you think might be a problem. You don't have time to fight every random battle you get into, but spend some time fighting in areas with good battles. Just make sure you defeat the enemies as quickly as possible.

HDINS = Half Day In No Saves. Same rules as ODINS, but the time limit is 12 hours. Needless to say, this is A LOT tougher. This challenge is for experts only and it requires good speed run skills and full knowledge of the game from beginning to end. You have to be prepared for every thinkable situation and you must know exactly what to do if something should go wrong. Most importantly, you have to know exactly how to deal with all the bosses. If you don't come prepared for a boss, you will most likely watch the game over screen after a short time and that hurts if you've come far. Since you can't save, you have to make sure the strategies don't require any luck at all. Many of the strategies in this FAQ require luck, but with some adjustments, you can use most of them in this challenge. I won't go into details, as you should be able to figure it out on your own if you think you're good enough to do this challenge. I'll give you a tip, though: Learn Magic Hammer!

You can also add other restrictions to the ODINS Challenge. Thundaka has beaten both NIIENA ODINS and NMIENA ODINS, but those are for true experts only. Adding No Materia should be more than enough for regular players.

Q: What's a TAS?

A: TAS stands for Tool Assisted Speed run or Tool Assisted Superplay. You play the game on an emulator and use save states for maximum luck manipulation and you can slow the game down for perfect execution. Save states allow you to save the game anywhere with the push of a button, and you don't lose any time doing so. This allows you to do things that are only theoretically possible, but a regular human being never could be able to do. For example, you can make sure you always get critical hits and that you always escape random battles immediately.

Basically, a TAS is movie making rather than pure gaming, and the result is a

demonstration of what's theoretically possible. In other words, you're not allowed to use any gameshark codes for your advantage, like starting with level 99 characters and max stats. Compared to a regular run, a TAS can be considered cheating, but the only things you're cheating are luck and time. A TAS doesn't require the same amount of skill as a regular speed run, as you can just save state before a hard part, but you obviously need to know all the strategies in order to get the best result.

For more info, check out this site: <http://tasvideos.org/>

Q: We use Tifa to deal major damage in pretty much every battle starting Red Dragon. Why is she able to deal so much damage with the Powersoul?

A: Because of the weapon's mechanics. When you check the weapon in the menu, it says that it deals more damage when near-death, but she also deals more damage if she's under Death Sentence. It works like this:

Critical (yellow) HP: 2x damage

Death Sentence: 4x damage

Deathblow: 2x damage

Together, that's 16 times normal damage. Deathblow also ignores back row, so it's 32 times back row damage. Awesome, huh? And in addition, we equip her with armor and accessories to boost her strength. We also use Added Cut after the Great Glacier, which allows us to surpass 9999 damage. This is what makes Tifa the ultimate killing machine.

Q: What's the "Wait Trick"?

A: First of all, ATB must be at Wait for this to work.

The Wait Trick abuses the fact that all ATB bars will freeze (both yours and the enemies) when you are navigating in any battle sub-menu (e.g. magic, item, limit, "select target"). Normally, commands will queue up and be executed in the order they were entered. Only after the command has been executed that character's (or enemy's) ATB gauge can begin to refill.

Now, let's say we've got these two commands queued (in this order):

1. Enemy - Attack
2. Tifa - Deathblow

While the enemy is executing his Attack have Cloud force a WAIT by entering the Item menu, this will freeze all ATB gauges but queued commands will still be executed. Normally the enemy's ATB gauge would start to refill once he is done with his Attack, but since we are forcing a WAIT it will remain empty even during Tifa's Deathblow. When Tifa's Deathblow is over both the enemy's and Tifa's ATB gauge will be empty. Now we "remove" the forced WAIT by simply exiting the Item menu, and as long as Tifa's bar fills quicker than enemy's, she'll get to execute another, second, command before the enemy gets to act again.

The Wait Trick is first used in the Mighty Grunt battle on the 59th floor of the Shinra HQ and then in some late disc 2 battles, like The Turks and Proud Clod. Check the videos for these battles if you want to see how it works.

Q: What's the deal with the music in the videos? That melody is not from FFVII!

A: Most of the videos are done by lolo26 and he usually adds something else than the regular boss or battle music to them. Some melodies are from other FF games, some are from animes and he occasionally uses something by The Black Mages. Just ask on Youtube if you want to know what melody he uses in a certain video.

In case you don't know, The Black Mages is a band featuring Nobuo Uematsu himself on keyboard, that plays heavy metal versions of FF melodies. They are really awesome, so I recommend you to check them out.

Q: Why do you call her Aerith? Her name is Aeris!

A: Don't even start. You can call her whatever the hell you want, but I will always call her Aerith in my FAQs. Why? Because I'm used to it. I was once told that Aeris was a mistranslation and that Aerith was correct, so I started calling her that and now I'm used to it. However, I was later told that it's not a mistranslation after all and both names apparently are correct. But then again, they changed it back to Aerith in Kingdom Hearts and that's my argument for still calling her that today, except for being used to it. They didn't change it back without a reason. In a Speed Run, however, you have to shorten her name to "A" to save a few seconds.

1.5 <> PAL And NTSC Differences

The differences between PAL and NTSC cause so much trouble for this challenge that I decided to give them an own section. I'm not planning to go into details explaining what PAL and NTSC is, but I can tell you that PAL is the system used in Europe and NTSC is used in North America and Japan. I believe Australia, Africa and parts of South America use PAL as well, but I'm not sure. Let me know if you can confirm this. Anyway, you can just look at your game to find out what version you have. It says either PAL or NTSC in the upper left corner.

Now let me tell you exactly what causes the trouble. PAL runs on 50 Hz and NTSC on 60 Hz. I'm not going into details here either, but at least I'll tell you what causes the trouble. Because of the frequency differences, the PAL version is 1,2 times slower than the NTSC version. At first we didn't think this was such a big deal. Alright, so the PAL version is 1,2 times slower. It only means that PAL gamers spend more time playing than NTSC gamers, but there is no way you can tell from looking at the clock in the game, as the clock is 1,2 times slower as well. God, how I wish it was that easy.

Then Bergqvist mentioned something about the FMVs. He found out that the FMVs are run at the same speed in both PAL and NTSC versions. Now that's a problem. In the PAL version, FMVs are run at NTSC speed, but the clock is still 1,2 times slower. This is an advantage for PAL gamers, as they will gain the length of the FMV divided by 1,2. PAL gamers already have a 20 seconds advantage after the opening FMV because of this. Of course, this isn't fair for NTSC gamers, so I had to invent the PAL Gamers Penalty, so that PAL and NTSC gamers could be able to compare their times with each others.

To find out how much the PAL Gamers Penalty was, I had to calculate how much time the PAL gamers gained from all the FMVs throughout the game. Lolo gave me

a complete list of FMVs and their lengths so that I could do the calculations and it turned out to be 5 minutes and 37 seconds. So, when PAL gamers have beaten the game, they have to add 5 minutes and 37 seconds to their time to be able to compare their result with NTSC gamers.

That's not all, though. After beating Jenova-SYNTHESIS, you get to open the menu a last time to check your time, but after that you no longer have a game clock to tell you the time. You have to use a stopwatch to find out how much time you spend beating Bizarro, Safer and Sephiroth himself. As I said, the game isn't considered beaten until Sephiroth himself is defeated. Anyway, NTSC gamers can simply add the time shown on the stopwatch to their final save time, but it's not that simple for PAL gamers. Since the game is 1,2 times slower, they have to divide the time from the stopwatch with 1,2 before they can add it to the time shown by the game clock after Bizarro.

God, why do different parts of the world have to have different systems? It makes things so damn complicated. I say the whole world should have used the NTSC system. It's not fair that the parts of the world that uses PAL must play games at a 1,2 times slower speed than the rest of the world. Damnit.

It must also be mentioned that people using the Japanese version of the game have an advantage. As you most likely know, they use these symbols instead of regular letters and since the amount of symbols is much smaller than the amount of letters, you will gain time every time there's text to skip. I have no idea how much, though, but it can't be 'that' much.

1.6 <> Perfect Run Info

You think a regular run is too easy? You want to compete with the best and achieve a best possible time? Or maybe you just want to test your patience? In any case, a Perfect Run is what you seek.

A Perfect Run is a Speed Run for experts, but it doesn't really require much more skills than a regular Speed Run. The biggest difference is the amount of luck and patience needed. In most cases, you can do a few changes in a boss strategy and save a varied amount of time, but in most cases, these changes also increase the amount of luck needed drastically.

Since a perfect run has different strategies, you also have to buy different things and use different setups for battles. This FAQ is written for both regular and perfect runners, so you will find all the info you need here in order to complete a Perfect Run. The stuff only perfect runners have to read is separated with lines of stars.

Like this.

So if you're doing a regular run, you don't have to read this stuff. In boss strategies, perfect strategies are found at the bottom, below a line of stars.

Just let me warn you before you start a Perfect Run. It requires A LOT of patience and a lot of time. Although the timer will say 8 hours or less at the final save, that's only a tiny bit of the time you've spent playing. It takes at least 100 hours and probably over 200. . If you had patience issues in a regular run, a Perfect Run is not for you. I won't take any responsibility for people going insane. You have been warned.

2 - Walkthrough: Midgar

Some important notes before you start:

Read and understand the walkthrough up to the next save point before you start playing, so that you know what to do WHEN playing. You can't just leave the game and check the guide in case you're not sure what to do. Of course, you can pause the game in battle, so it's not that important in areas with random encounters or if a boss battle is coming up.

Also, you always have to make sure everyone is alive at the end of battles. If someone gets killed and doesn't receive EXP, you have no choice but to restart.

And finally, if you use a PS2, make sure Disc Speed is set to Fast and Texture Mapping is set to Smooth before you start playing. As I said in section 1.3, these settings reset every time you reset the console.

When you're ready, just select "NEW GAME" and watch the intro FMV.

2.1 <> The First Mission

Before we start playing, we have to do some configurations in the menu. Start tapping the menu button after Barret tells you to follow him and the menu will open at the earliest point possible. Depending on what version you have, the timer will now show you one of the following times:

PC - 2:17
PAL - 2:03
NTSC - 2:23

As you can see, you already have a 20 seconds advantage before you even start playing if you use the PAL version. Since I used the NTSC version for this run, you'll have no trouble beating my time at the first save point if you use the PAL version, but logically enough, you have to beat it by more than 20 seconds to actually 'beat' it.

Anyway, enter the "Config" menu and set Cursor to Memory, ATB to Active and all the speed bars at the fastest. After doing the configurations, just run straight ahead and the first battle will soon be a fact.

```
#####  
                                B01: MP x2  
#####  
Just hold the attack button down until the battle is over.
```

```
*****  
The MPs can attack you either once, twice or three times, depending on how much your ATB bar is filled when the battle starts. Perfect runners can only accept one attack, and for that to happen, your ATB bar must be filled more than the soldiers'. Of course, there's no way you can tell how much the soldiers' bars are filled, so just hold the attack button down and hope for the best.
```

```
#####
```


Leave the Platform through the open door and head over to the members of Avalanche. Talking will start automatically.

[skip text]

This includes naming Cloud and Barret. As I said in the intro, you have to shorten the names to one digit in order to save time. Just tap X until there's one letter left and then push start and the action button. Holding X is faster, but make sure not to hold it too long, to avoid erasing all the letters. Cloud will automatically move on to the next area when the talking is over.

Make your way to the reactor. You'll get your first random encounter on the bridges, most likely by the junction, but of course, it all depends on how fast you are. In the next area, just head over to the crew and talking will start.

[skip text]

Talk to Biggs to open the first door and Jessie to open the second door and the elevator. Quickly push the button inside the elevator to move down. If you're fast enough, you can push the button and get the message "switch on" before Jessie tells you to push it.

[skip text]

Run out of the elevator and follow Jessie down the stairs. You can pass her if you're fast enough, but she'll be in front of you again in the next area either way. Here, follow her and talk to her before jumping on the ladder. Then move on until you reach the bottom, but don't pick up the Potion now, as you have to pick it up on the way back up anyway.

If you're too fast, saving before Guard Scorpion won't make the next battle disappear. This happened to lolo in his test run, but we couldn't understand why. Then it happened to me as well, and I knew there could only be one reason. We were being too fast. Your third random encounter will come on the pipe over the save point, and if you've paid attention, you'll know that it says "M-3" where it curves. If you get the battle after the "3", the saving trick won't work, so if that happens, you have to make sure to "waste" some time before saving. Don't run straight to the save point after descending the ladder, but run along the fence instead. That did the trick for me. Even though we only lose two seconds at most, I find this damn annoying. It's just ridiculous.

[SAVE YOUR GAME]

My time: 7:02
Rec. time (10h): 7:50
Rec. time (12h): 9:25

This is the first time we save to avoid a random encounter, so don't forget to soft-reset and load up before you continue on.

The perfect strategy against Guard Scorpion won't work if your magic stat is too low. I'm not sure how high it should be, but you must be able to deal at least 90 damage on average.

Pick up the Restore Materia in the next area and move on a little bit further to trigger the cutscenes.

[skip text]

It's time to fight the first boss, the almighty Guard Scorpion. Big surprise.

B02: Guard Scorpion

You need both Cloud and Barret to have a limit break after this battle, to make sure the battle with Air Buster gets as short as possible. Don't worry, I've made a strategy for you, but for this strategy to work, Cloud must get a limit break before GS raises the tail. If you're lucky, one Scorpion Tail is enough, but you'll most likely have to take two attacks. In case you don't know, GS will use Search Scope on a character and then attack the target with either Rifle or Scorpion Tail, and he will do this twice before he raises the tail. You will most likely have to restart a couple of times, but it doesn't matter, as you just saved anyway.

Cloud and Barret will have four turns each before GS raises his tail. Have Cloud cast Bolt and Barret attack regularly, in that order, and make sure to use Cloud's limit break at once when he gets it. Yes, by taking advantage of the limit break system so that he uses it before it's GS's turn again.

When GS raises his tail, have Barret defend and Cloud cast Bolt. Guess what GS does. Now comes the most important part. Have Cloud cast Bolt again and have Barret select the attack command, but don't attack just yet. Just make sure he's aiming at GS until he lowers the tail again. Barret will get a limit break now, but since you selected the attack command before he got it, he will only attack regularly when you push the action button. Well, when GS lowers his tail, have Barret attack and Cloud cast Bolt again and Guard Scorpion's days will be over for this time.

A few notes:

- * If Barret's ATB bar is almost full when the battle start, have him attack. If he gets a shot at GS before he uses Search Scope, you will get an easier battle, as Barret won't have to attack after GS lowers the tail again.
- * You may not be able to defeat him after Cloud's last Bolt if your stats are too low. Yes, your stats will vary from time to time when you start a new game, and it also varies how much they increase at level up. Example: Cloud once did 84-88 damage with Bolt, but another time he did 92-96. I suggest restarting from the beginning if your stats are too low.
- * If GS attacks both Cloud and Barret with Scorpion tail, they might both get limit breaks before he raises the tail. Sure, you can use both, but then you have to let Barret attack twice when the tail is raised as you'll kill him too early if you use Bolt. If Barret got to attack before GS's first turn, and both Cloud and Barret get to use their limit breaks before the tail is raised, you will kill him too early either way.

Perfect runners only need Cloud to have a limit break after the battle. Make sure Barret gets to use a limit break before the tail is raised and then have him defend. Now have Cloud cast Bolt once and GS will do what he usually does when the tail is raised. Then have Cloud cast Bolt and Barret attack again. If your stats are high enough, he will be dead now. Cloud's magic stat must be at

least 25 for this strategy to work.

If it's lower, you can need either Cloud or Barret to get an attack in before GS uses his first Search Scope. Logically enough, you'll lose a couple of seconds because you need an extra attack.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s5RjvhvRZPco>

A quicker, but more luck requiring strategy is to make sure Barret gets to use two limit breaks. For this strategy to work, GS must use Scorpion Tail on him twice. On the fourth turn, wait until you know what attack he will use until you select Cloud's action. If he uses Scorpion Tail, you can have him attack regularly instead of casting Bolt for the next two turns. Since the animation for the Bolt spell is much longer than that of a regular attack, you'll save a few seconds. However, the damage dealt by the second Scorpion Tail and Tail Laser might not be enough to fill up Barret's limit bar. If it doesn't, you can just hit the reset button. Since you already had Cloud attack regularly twice, there's no way you can beat GS in time without another limit break by Barret. If Cloud's magic is 25 or 26, Barret must attack regularly four times during the battle. If it's lower, he must attack five times.

If Cloud's magic is 26 and Barret's strength 21, which both are the highest possible, you can defeat him after Cloud's last Bolt. But if you already have these stats, there's a strategy that's around 30 seconds faster! Of course, this strategy requires too much luck. It goes like this: First of all, you need one or both of the characters to get in an attack before the first Search Scope. If you only get in one, you need one of Barret's attacks to go critical. Then, you need GS to attack both Cloud and Barret and Barret must get a limit break. And here comes the best part: This limit break must go critical! Yeah, that's very likely to happen. Here's a video of a successful attempt, recorded by BrutalAl: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xrLulxPm4Tg>

Cloud's magic stat must be 26 for this battle to work, but you don't need perfect strength stats. I'm not sure what the minimum required amount is. If you manage to pull this off, you should save after the battle. You still save around 20 seconds, something you easily can lose on the long way to the next save point.

Wow, I wrote that much about Guard Scorpion? Damn...

#####

[skip text]

It's time to head back and make sure you hurry cause you only have ten minutes! Well, if you're fast enough, you can make it with more than eight minutes left on the timer. Make sure to pick up the Potion and talk to Jessie on your way up, or else you won't get anywhere. After riding the elevator, talk to Jessie to open the first door and Biggs to open the second. When you leave this area, the game will run automatically until you get to control Cloud in Sector 8.

[skip text]

2.2 <> Aftermath

Climb the stairs to enter the next area. Cloud will go talk to a certain girl here, but unfortunately, we have to disappoint her by not buying a flower this

time. You can't be nice all the time, eh? Of course, the main reason is that you save time.

[skip text]

Follow her to the next area and continue on until you encounter the MPs. Don't bother picking up the Potion, as you really don't need it. Needless to say, you don't have time to fight the MPs, so make sure to choose "later", which is the second option. You have to do this three times before Cloud jumps on the train.

[skip text]

Inside the train, you get to control Cloud again after Jessie cleans his face. Just follow the others to the next car.

[skip text]

Go talk to Jessie when you get to control Cloud again.

This can be a little tricky. Jessie is standing between Wedge and the entrance to the next car. If you run too far, Cloud will attempt to enter the next car, and then the conductor will come running, telling you that you're bothering the other passengers. However, if you don't run far enough, you might talk to Wedge instead of Jessie. I really hate this part, and I don't know how many times I've screwed up here, but I guess all I can say for advise is to pratice it.

[skip text]

Approach Barret and talking will start automatically.

[skip text]

The train will arrive at the station in Sector 7 after the FMV and you get to control Cloud after he jumps out of the train. Just run down to the others.

[skip text]

I recommend you to save here if this is your first Speed Run, since it's a long time until the next "mandatory" save. Then enter town and talk to Barret when all the others have entered the 7th Heaven. Tifa is the last one to enter, and there's no point talking to him before she's inside.

[skip text]

You have to name Tifa during this one. Don't forget to shorten her name. This is the last time I say this, so you're on your own from now on. Head back to the door after talking and Barret will come running.

[skip text]

Take the elevator down to the hideout and approach Barret.

[skip text]

Start moving back and Tifa will come.

[skip text]

Then take the elevator upstairs and move just ahead towards the exit. Tifa will soon come up for some talking. This includes the flashback and Barret giving you the money.

[skip text]

After sleeping, Cloud will wake up in the basement. Head back up and talk to Barret. You have to be careful now, because Barret will ask you to give him a materia tutorial, and you have to select the bottom alternative to prevent that. This is what Barret says:

"Our next target's the Sector 5 Reactor. Head for the station first. I'll fill you in on the train. Yo! Cloud! Before the next mission, I got somethin' I wanna ask you! I, uh,I don't really know how to use Materia! I'll give you that Materia you found. Just teach me how to use it!"

Then you get to select options and make sure you select the bottom one. Leave town and enter the train when you get to control Cloud again.

2.3 <> The Second Mission

[skip text]

You get to control Cloud again after Tifa tells you to come over and look at the monitor. Just run over to her and talking will start automatically.

[skip text]

The alarm goes off, and it's time to escape. If you're fast enough, you can leave this car before the timer shows up at all.

[skip text]

We're leaving the train now, but since we have 15 seconds to spend, we might as well take the opportunity to equip Barret with his Assault Gun. We don't lose any time doing this, as the timer still runs when using the menu, and we have to wait for it to reach 0 anyway. Talk to the man standing on the left side afterwards and choose the first option to receive a Hi-Potion. Then wait until the timer reaches zero.

[skip text]

Now, attempt to enter the next car and you'll be forced to jump off the train.

[skip text]

Start heading north, and make sure to run close to the wall on the right side to save time. After four screens, you'll reach the security sensors and you'll have one line of text to skip. Then find the entrance to the duct on the left side and select the second option to enter.

Inside, pick up the Ether and keep moving on until you reach the plate area. Here, climb up the first ladder, crawl through the shaft and climb down the ladder on the left side in the area with Jessie. Then continue on until you reach the bottom of the reactor.

[skip text]

Plant the bomb and head back to the save point. This save will also make the next random encounter go away, so don't forget to load up after saving.

[SAVE YOUR GAME]

My time: 31:16
Rec. time (10h): 34:52
Rec. time (12h): 41:50

Head back up after saving. You know where to go. Pick up the Ether after riding the elevator and enter the room to the left for the lovely panel challenge.

You will lose plenty of time here if you keep screwing up, so you should do some practice first. My trick is to count quickly to five, but this is something you have to figure out on your own. I can tell you that Barret and Tifa push the panels 1,5 seconds after you skip the line of text. It's actually very easy when you get a hang of it, but it's up to you to decide how many attempts to accept. You lose around 6-7 seconds for each attempt. BTW, how come Barret and Tifa always push the panels at the same time? Are they able to read each others minds or something?

Saving here won't make the next encounter go away, but if you had a really hard time with the panels, then you're free to save. Then just continue on until the soldiers show up on the bridges.

[skip text]

The President will, as usual, send Air Buster on you.

#####

B03: Air Buster

#####

Just hold the attack button down and Barret, Cloud and Tifa will attack in that order. Unless you have bad luck with the damage dealt by the limit breaks, the battle will be over after Tifa's attack. Just have Cloud attack one more time if that happens. Easiest battle so far.

Perfect runners need Cloud's limitbreak to go critical, so that the battle gets as short as possible. I have no idea what the chance for that to happen is, but I have gotten critical limit breaks more often in this battle than any other battles. Once, both Cloud and Barret's limit break went critical in the same battle. Just hold the action button and Barret will open with a regular attack. Air Buster will counter and then Cloud will kill him with his limit break if it goes critical. That is, if his strength is high enough. If it's too low, you must have Tifa attack as well. If the limit break doesn't go critical, you know what to do.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vkKWCjrli00>

#####

[skip text]

That's it for the reactor missions. We're going back to the slums again.

2.4 <> Back To The Slums

After the explosion, Cloud falls down to the slums and the screen goes black.

[skip text]

You get to control Cloud after a while. Just talk to Aerith. She's standing to the right of Cloud now.

[skip text]

Talk to her again. Now, she's standing in front of Cloud. This time, you also have to name her.

[skip text]

After a while, Reno and his men will show up. Approach them and Aerith will say one line. Then go back and talk to her.

[skip text]

You get to control Cloud again in the back room, and it's time to escape the church. Just move on. Talking will start automatically when you reach the gap.

[skip text]

Aerith will fall and the soldiers will attack. Tell her "RUN" the first time, which is the third and bottom option. Then head up to the barrel on the top of the screen, or at twelve o'clock if you want, and wait there until the second soldier attacks. Tell her "hold on" this time and then push the barrel. Tell her "RUN" again when the last soldier attacks and just wait until she reaches the top and the screen changes to another view. You'll have one line to skip here before the screen changes again. Then you get to control Cloud again, and you're free to leave the church.

[skip text]

Control Cloud through the scrap area by tapping the left direction button. Aerith will fall behind and you have to wait for her.

[skip text]

Continue running to the left and you'll end up on the streets.

[skip text]

Just head for town and Aerith's house and pick up the items in Aerith's garden. It's an Ether and a Cover Materia, to be more precise. Talking will start automatically when you enter the house.

[skip text]

Run upstairs.

[skip text]

Time to leave. Cloud will walk automatically out of the bedroom, and if you push the action button when passing by the bag, you will be able to pick up the Potion and Phoenix Down when he's walking, thus not losing time picking them

up. Then walk slowly downstairs and make sure to stay away from Aerith's door, or she'll bust you. When you get out, it's time to save. Don't forget to load the file before you move on.

[SAVE YOUR GAME]

My time: 44:50

Rec. time (10h): 50:00

Rec. time (12h): 1:00:00

Before we leave for the Wall Market, it's time to do some shopping. Enter the caravan and talk to the woman to the right.

Sell: Everything in your inventory!

Buy: 68 Grenades.

You can't spend all the money on Grenades because you need 280 Gil to buy various stuff at the Wall Market. Leave town when you're done shopping and Aerith will be waiting for you outside the gate to Sector 6. Just approach her to trigger the cutscenes.

[skip text]

Just get through this area as fast as possible.

[skip text]

Follow Aerith and talk to her when she stops moving.

[skip text]

Proceed to the Wall Market.

2.5 <> Wall Market

Alright, we're gonna have Corneo choose Cloud as his date for tonight. To make that happen, we have to get a few more items than usual and many things have to be done in order to get them. But why are we having Corneo choose Cloud, you may ask. Don't we lose a lot of time getting all the extra items? The answer is no. If Cloud is chosen, you're taken directly to Corneo's room, but if one of the girls are chosen, you have to fight Corneo's Lackeys and that takes a while. Lolo tested both options and found out that it's 30 seconds faster when Cloud gets chosen.

You'll have one line to skip before you get to control Cloud. To make this easier, I'll make a list with all the things to do, point for point with numbers. There will be one or more lines of text to skip at the end of each step. Don't screw this up now.

1. Go ask the fat man in front of the Honeybee Inn about Tifa. That's the first option, so just skip the text until he's done talking.

2. Go talk to the guy outside Corneo's mansion.

3. Enter the Boutique (clothing store) and talk to the girl behind the desk.
4. Enter the Materia Shop and talk to the man. Just skip the text and you'll agree to do the favour.
5. Eat at the restaurant and tell them the food was all right. It's the second option. You'll receive a Pharmacy Coupon. It doesn't matter what you eat.
6. Enter the Pharmacy and exchange the coupon for the Digestive, which is the third and bottom option.
7. Sleep at the Inn and buy the drink for 200 Gil. That's the second option.

Perfect runners should save now, as this is the last time you pass by the save point. Saving after dressing up as Miss Cloud will cost you 6-7 seconds.

8. Enter the Materia Shop again and talk to the man. He'll give you the Diamond Tiara for doing the favour.
9. Enter the Bar and give the Digestive to the girl at the toilet. She'll grant you the Sexy Cologne.
10. Talk to the owner of the Boutique and select the second option both times when he asks what kind of dress you want.
11. Head back to the Boutique and talk to the owner behind the desk.
12. Enter the Gym and beat Big Bro in the squat contest. Select the second option twice when talking. The price you get for winning the contest is the Blonde Wig.
13. Head back to the Boutique again and enter the changing room. Cloud will now change into Miss Cloud.

[SAVE YOUR GAME]

My time: 55:09
Rec. time (10h): 1:01:32
Rec. time (12h): 1:13:51

Time to go pay a visit to Don Corneo. Talk to the man outside to enter.

[skip text]

Go upstairs and then downstairs to the basement to find Tifa. Approaching her will trigger the cutscenes.

[skip text]

Talk to Tifa.

[skip text]

Pick up the Ether, head back up and enter Corneo's office. Run ahead and to the right to trigger just by his desk the cutscenes.

[skip text]

Cloud will be chosen and you'll be taken directly to Corneo's back room for some quality time. You'll have one line to skip before you can go talk to him, but make sure to pick up the Hyper behind his bed first. Select the second option twice to get things over with as soon as possible.

[skip text]

Head over to the girls when you get to control Cloud again.

[skip text]

Talk to Aerith and Tifa in that order. Aps will soon appear.

#####

B04: Aps

#####

Have the girls throw Grenades and Cloud cast Bolt in that order. Then have everyone throw Grenades until the battle is over. Don't use any limit breaks. Using the girls' limit breaks is a waste of time, and you have to save Cloud's for later. Aps will use Sewer Tsunami three times with this strategy, but if you're lucky and manage to throw a Grenade before he uses the first Tsunami, he will only use the attack twice.

If you open the battle with three Grenades and then use Bolt on the next turn, he will only use Sewer Tsunami twice. You can also have Cloud attack instead of using Bolt, but then the attack must go critical. This strategy is faster than the regular three Tsunami battle as long as he uses Tail Attack and not Lick on the turn between the two Tsunamis. However, if you manage to throw a Grenade before his first Tsunami, the original strategy is faster again, so needless to say, perfect runners have to get a Grenade in before the first Tsunami.

Video (perfect battle): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qvue8_8aYLY

#####

[skip text]

Get through the sewers and make sure to pick up the Steal Materia. Climbing the ladder will take you to the Train Graveyard.

2.6 <> Slums Revisited

[skip text]

I would recommend saving here if you don't know exactly how to get through this area. Then you can do some practice runs until you know exactly where to go and what to do. Don't forget that you have to jump into the locomotives to move them before you can leave. Also, make sure to pick up the Hi-Potion on the first train. Things will happen automatically when you reach town.

[skip text]

We're saving here, no matter what. Make sure to load up before you move on.

[SAVE YOUR GAME]

My time: 1:06:44
Rec. time (10h): 1:14:27
Rec. time (12h): 1:29:20

Then climb all the way up and talk to Barret.

[skip text]

Reno will be your next opponent.

#####

B05: Reno

#####

First have Cloud attack regularly and then throw Grenades until the battle is over. Yes, Reno will open the battle by trapping one of the characters inside a Pyramid, but just let the remaining characters take care of him. You will actually lose time if you take out the Pyramid to free the trapped character. If Cloud gets trapped and didn't get to attack first, just have Barret attack instead on the next turn. The same goes if Cloud already has a limit break when the battle begins. If both Cloud and Barret have limit breaks, you must have Tifa attack. As long as you only use 7 Grenades, it doesn't matter.

Perfect runners must have Tifa get trapped inside the Pyramid and you should also make sure Cloud gets attacked all the time. That way, your party will have as much HP as possible before the Shinra HQ. Cloud automatically gets healed after the battle, so it doesn't matter if he loses HP. Needless to say, this requires some luck, but hey, you just saved at the bottom of the pillar. Also, take note that Electro-mag Rod might paralyze you and make you lose time. Restart if that happens.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4NnUlhKtclw>

#####

Talk to Tifa after the battle and then push the action button by the panel after skipping one line of text. Tseng will show up.

[skip text]

You can control Cloud during this cutscene. Place him just in front of Barret. Talk to him once the cutscene is over (or at least try to) and he'll find the wire. You'll have one line to skip before they jump off.

[skip text]

Cloud will go on alone to the next area. Just move on and the others will soon come running.

[skip text]

Head back to Aerith's house and listen to Elmyra's story. Just enter the house and things will happen automatically.

[skip text]

Approach the door and Barret will come running down.

[skip text]

We're going back to the Wall Market again. You know how to get there. If you aren't comfortable with the climbing, you should save when you get there and then do some practice. Especially practice jumping on that swinging pole, as you lose more than 10 seconds if you miss it. It makes a noise just before you have to jump. Knowing that should make it easier. If you don't save, and keep missing it, you'll end up losing a lot more time than the ~13 seconds you would have lost if you saved. Also, remember that you only have to use two batteries.

Anyway, enter the Weapon Shop and talk to the man to the left. Just skip the text and you'll buy the Batteries. Then follow the kids to the next area and approach the wire.

[skip text]

What can I say? Just get through here as fast as possible. When you reach the top, the party will automatically move on to the next area.

[skip text]

Whether you saved or not at the Wall Market, we're saving here. Make sure to set ATB to Wait first.

[SAVE YOUR GAME]

My time: 1:23:09
Rec. time (10h): 1:32:44
Rec. time (12h): 1:51:17

2.7 <> Shinra Headquarters

Regular players can take the stairs, but perfect runners have to go in through the main entrance and take the elevator. If you take the stairs, you should pick up the Elixir in the fifth area. Also, the party will stop for some talking in the sixth area and when you reach the top. At the top, Cloud will automatically move on to the next area after talking.

Depending on how many times you have to stop the elevator and how many times you run into the Shinra guy, it can be up to 145 seconds faster than the stairs. Unfortunately, the chance of getting the best outcome is only 1/1845. A perfect runner should restart until he gets that outcome, but even if you are lucky and get it, you still have a long way to go before you reach the next save point and there are many things that can go wrong on the way there. First, we have the Mighty Grunt battle, where the outcome varies from time to time, depending on how many times the enemies get to attack. You also have to go through several random battles on floor 65, and you already know that the number of times you get attacked before you're able to escape varies. And on top of everything, you might get nervous and do mistakes. The guards on floor 60 can be mentioned here. Sure, you can practice that part until you can do it with your eyes closed, but if you just got a 1/1845 outcome in the elevator, there's a chance you'll be a little nervous. I know I would be. In other words, you might end up losing all the time you gained from the best outcome, and if you already got the best outcome, there's no chance in hell you'll get it again. No one is that lucky.

Thankfully, there are many other outcomes that are faster than the stairs, and the chance you'll get one of these is around 1/5. That's not bad at all. You'll face much worse odds later. These outcomes are faster than the stairs:

- 1 battle and 3/4 shinra employees
- 2 battles and 1/2/3/4 shinra employees
- 3 battles and 0/1 shinra employee

The best outcome is one battle and three shinra employees.

After entering the building, you'll have some text to skip and then a forced battle with some Grenade Combatants. Here's how to take care of the enemies:

- Moth Slasher: Grenade + Bolt or Bolt + Beat Rush
- Hammer Blaster: Grenade + Bolt, Tifa attack + Bolt or Beat Rush + Bolt
- Sword Dance: Grenade + attack, Grenade + Beat Rush
- Grenade Combatant: Grenade
- Mighty Grunt: 2x Grenade

You can also use Cloud's limit breaks instead of Grenades. Make sure to use it as soon as possible. You can also use the Wait Trick (described in the FAQ section (1.4) and in the Mighty Grunt battle below) to "remove" an enemy attack and thus save time.

Note: You can't use more than 9 Grenades in total before you reach floor 59.

Note 2: Before doing anything, you should play ahead and see if you get a random encounter after the Mighty Grunts battle on floor 59. If you do, you won't be able to escape it and that's bad for several reasons. You can only encounter Mighty Grunts on floor 59, and since they're harder to deal with than the other enemies, you should run around on floor 1 and make sure you get the battle there instead. You can't escape that one either, but at least you'll have easier enemies to deal with.

Floor 59
#####

Run straight ahead and the three Mighty Grunts will attack. There's one line to skip before the battle starts.

B06: Mighty Grunt x3

We're going to use the Wait Trick in this battle. Have the first two characters who get a turn throw Grenades at different targets and have the last character select a Grenade and move the cursor to the enemy the others didn't attack. Wait until you see the damage from the second Grenade before you confirm. Then simply hold the action button until the battle is over.

Note: You should practice the Wait Trick before you attempt this battle for real. You don't want to screw up here if you just had a great outcome in the elevator. Once you get the hang of it, it's really simple.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=30lDKZMvKqE>

Note: Make sure to set ATB back to Active before floor 65.

[skip text]

Enter the elevator to the right after picking up the keycard and push the action button by the panel inside. Select floor 60, which is the third option. Then talk to Barret and Tifa to proceed.

Floor 60
#####

After a short cutscene, you get to control Cloud from a kinda strange view. Hold the direction up and right buttons down to exit this screen. Doing that will bring you closer to the room on the left side when you get the regular view of this floor. You save an entire second by doing this. Anyway, just enter the room and there will be some talking. Cloud will automatically move outside afterwards.

[skip text]

You know how this works. If you're spotted by the guards, you have to fight two Mighty Grunts, attacking from both sides. You don't want that to happen. The left side is easy, as the guards are only walking. You really suck if you get spotted here. The right side, however, can be tricky even for experts, as the guards are running and you have to act quickly when they start moving. To make it easier, you should wait until there is no guard in front of the first open area. Then you can simply start running when the guards start heading for the other side. And by doing that, there will be no guard in front of the last open area when you get there, but there will always be a guard in the middle. You should really practice this if you aren't comfortable with it.

If you're fast enough, you can cross the first area without stopping at all with Cloud and only take one break with Barret and Tifa. Then you only have to stop once with Cloud and Barret on the other side, but Tifa must stop twice. This is something you really have to practice for the major run.

[skip text]

Floor 61
#####

Proceed to the next floor. The man that will give you the keycard to floor 62 is walking around in the room, and you'll find him to the left of the elevator when you enter the floor. Talk to him and select the second option to receive the keycard. Then proceed to the next floor. Use the stairs.

Floor 62
#####

Great news! BrutalAl discovered a quick way to find out what the password is! These are his words:

So, after having mapped every shelf for every password, luck would have it that one out of all those 24 shelves actually did have a unique title for each password, and the lost time for reading it is only 4,5 seconds! The Magic Shelf is in the 'Space Dev. Research Library' (Green Shelves, Blue floor). It's on the left side of the middle bookshelf and the magic titles are as follows:

BEST - 2 Economic report: Space Dev Program
KING - 1 Results of failed space mission "YA-79"
BOMB - 1 Breakdown of SOLDIER members by class
MAKO - 10 New plans for urban planning

If the password is MAKO you'll probably lose another second just because you have to move the marker all that way to the bottom in Dominos guess-list, but that's it =)

Of course, we lose 4,5 seconds compared to just guessing the password, but we need the Elemental materia, and this section is hard enough as it is. Take the elevator up to floor 65 when you're done.

Floor 65

#####

Yes, that's the floor with the Midgar Parts. The first chest will always be the same, but after that, the next chest that will open depends on where you place the parts. Place the first part just to the right of the entrance, or at five o'clock if you want and then continue counter-clockwise around. By doing that, the chests will open in the order shown by this excellent ASCII art:

```
-----  
|           |           |  
|           |   [5]   |  
|           |           |  
|-----|           |  
|  [3]  |           |  
|           |           |  
|  [1]  |           |  
|-----|           |  
|  [2]  |           |  
|           |           |  
|  [4]  |           |  
|-----|-----|
```

Make sure to go left to reach the fifth chest. It's a little bit faster than going right. After placing the fifth and last part, the chest containing the keycard to floor 66 will open up and you can proceed to the next floor.

Floor 66

#####

Run down the hall and enter the toilet. Choose to climb up, which is the second option and crawl down the shaft to do a little spying on the Shinra.

[skip text]

Head back down and move on to floor 67. Cloud will stop at the corner, and you

have to wait until Hojo leaves the floor before you can move on.

Floor 67
#####

The party will stop for some talking before you get to do anything here.

[skip text]

Run down the hall to the room with Red XIII and Jenova. You know where. When you get there, the view will change. Run just ahead to trigger the cutscenes.

[skip text]

Move on, pick up the Poison Materia from the chest and save. If Cloud or Tifa's HP is low, you have to heal with the Hi-Potion from the Train Graveyard before you save. There's no need to heal Barret.

[SAVE YOUR GAME]

My time: 1:38:26
Rec. time (10h): 1:49:48
Rec. time (12h): 2:11:46

Then take the elevator up to the next floor.

Floor 68
#####

Just run out of the elevator to trigger the cutscenes.

[skip text]

We're using Tifa against H0512 and you have to select the second option for that. Also, make sure to rename Red XIII to R afterwards.

B07: Sample:H0512

You could just throw eight Grenades at him and the battle would be over, but I'm afraid it's not that simple. First of all, you need Cloud's limit bar to be at least half full after the battle. Ideally, it should be full, but that's very hard to accomplish. But that's not all. The number of times the small guys attack varies from time to time and logically enough, the more they attack, the more time you lose. You also want to avoid him using Shady Breath twice. Well, it's all up to you, so keep restarting until you get a satisfying result. Needless to say, perfect runners have no choice.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bci0s4q4Snk>

#####

[skip text]

Note: If Cloud doesn't have a limit break now, you have to make sure he gets it before Rufus. Also, if Cloud's HP is very low and you get into a battle before you reach the elevator on floor 66, he might die. I recommend doing a test run first, to find out if you get a battle on the way to the elevator. If you do, and Cloud's HP is low, you should save on floor 67 just after the battle.

Pick up the Enemy Skill Materia and leave this screen to the right, the way you came from. Then take the elevator back down to floor 67 and then continue down to floor 66 and enter the elevator there. As usual, Rude will come and bust you.

[skip text]

Captured

#####

You'll wake up in a cell on floor 67. Approach the door and select the third option to wonder what Aerith is doing. Then, before the talking starts, place Cloud just by Tifa's head. You have to approach the door again from a certain distance when the scene is over, or you won't trigger the option box.

[skip text]

Approach the door again and choose to get some sleep now. It's the third option, but the cursor will be at this option either way, so you just have to tap the action button.

Okay, I think I'll explain this step-by-step this time, to make it easier. As usual, there will be one or more lines of text to skip at the end of each step.

1. When you wake up, the door will be open. Approach the door and Cloud will wonder what's happened.
2. Go examine the guard.
3. Head back to tell Tifa.
4. Tifa will run out to the guard. Follow her and talk to her.
5. Go talk to Barret and Red.
6. Now, they will go examine the guard. Follow them and talk to Barret.
7. Go talk to the girls. A party of Cloud and the girls will be formed.

To The Top!

#####

Follow Red to the Jenova room. You'll have one line to skip when you get there. Then, the save point will be your next stop.

[SAVE YOUR GAME]

My time: 1:46:50
Rec. time (10h): 1:59:10
Rec. time (12h): 2:23:00

Keep going up until you find the President on floor 70.

[skip text]

Rufus arrives after a while. Go out the door to find him and listen to his little speech.

[skip text]

Cloud will stay with Rufus and the others head back down.

[skip text]

You'll be given a choice of what to do with Cloud's materia. Make sure to leave it as it is, which is the second option. Then enter the elevator for another two battles.

#####

B08: Hundred Gunner

#####

Just throw Grenades until the battle is over. All limit breaks must be saved for Heli. It's important that Aerith isn't the one dealing the final blow to Hundred, or else Heli will most likely be able to attack between the two Grenades and the limit breaks, so that you won't be able to take advantage of the limit break system. To prevent that from happening, you simply have to make sure she throws the first or second Grenade, as the character that throws the third one will be the one that deals the final blow.

HG will attack twice with Aux/Hidden Artillery and once with Main Artillery, but he won't live long enough to use Wave Artillery. If both of the Aux/Hidden Artilleries hit the same character (with the exception of Aerith), you should restart. We're not supposed to heal in these battles, and the target will most likely die against Heli if that happens. Aerith's in back row, so hope he attacks her at least once.

#####

B09: Heli Gunner

#####

This battle is harder because Heli's attacks can inflict statuses. AB Cannon can put a character to sleep, C Cannon can poison you and Firing Line, which hits the whole party, can inflict both. Thankfully, you don't get the statuses very often. If you get poisoned, there's really nothing you can do about it, so just keep fighting and hope it doesn't kill you. It's much worse if a character is put to sleep, as you may not be able to kill him before he kills one of your characters. Still, you can just keep fighting and see what happens. If you're lucky, he attacks the same character again so that he wakes up. You lose time either way, though, so perfect runners cannot accept being put to sleep.

Strategy: Throw two Grenades, use Barret and Red's limit breaks and throw three more Grenades. That should take care of him, but there's a chance he still has a few more HP left. If that's the case, then have Barret attack regularly. Red is allowed to get killed in this battle.

If you have 18 or more Grenades, there is a faster strategy you can use. On the first turn, have Aerith and Red throw Grenades and Barret use his limit break. Then have Barret attack regularly and the others throw Grenades. Now, you need

two more Grenades to kill him. For this strategy to work, Heli cannot put anyone to sleep with his AB Cannon, or else he will be able to attack more than three times and the strategy will be slower again.

Video (both battles): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FF3M3JqjVzA>

#####

After the battle, the scene will change to Cloud and you're given the choice to remove materia from the others and open the menu. Now why would we want to do that? Just push the start button.

[skip text]

#####

B10: Rufus

#####

Start the battle by using Braver on Dark Nation. If Rufus opens the battle with his shotgun, you need to select the limit break quickly, or Dark Nation might get a turn too and you will lose five seconds. Killing Dark Nation is faster because you don't have to watch his attacks every turn, but it also reduces the chance of dying to zero. Two Bolts and the battle would have been over. When he's gone, throw four Grenades at Rufus to end the battle. You will get another limit break, but it must be saved for Motor Ball.

Note: There is a small chance you won't deal enough damage to kill Dark Nation with Braver. He's got 140 HP. If Cloud's Strength is 22, Cloud will deal about 134 to 142 damage, so then you need some luck. If it's 21, you won't be able to deal 140 at all. In that case, you can simply attack him on the next turn if you don't mind lose ~10 seconds, but if you do, you're gonna have to redo the last segment and hope you get a higher strength gain when you defeat H0512.

You should have at least 12 Grenades at the start of the battle, but if you only have 11, you have to kill him with three Grenades and Bolt. Also, Rufus should open the battle with his shotgun. If Dark Nation opens the battle, you lose about two seconds.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cEiSs7nROHg>

#####

The Escape

#####

Head back down to floor 69 and talk to Tifa. I would recommend saving here if you're not comfortable with the motorcycle game. After talking to Tifa, the scene will then change to Aerith on the first floor. Head for the exit to trigger the cutscenes.

[skip text]

Before the motorcycle game starts, you get the chance to form a party and open the menu, but just push the start button again. During the minigame, just make sure Cloud, Barret and Tifa don't take too much damage. Aerith and Red don't matter. I'm not an expert at this game, and you might do a lot better than me. If you truly suck at it and lose too much HP, you can use BrutalAl's strategy, as explained below.

I often go with a lame but effective tactic in this mini-game:

- 1) Swing your sword at all time
- 2) Never kill a red bike
- 3) Stay close to the car

Since the red bikes "dodge" your sword they will stay away from you at all time, and if you are close to the car then they will stay away from the car as well. Once there are 3 red bikes on screen you're home safe.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MPx9sXeD8VU>

#####

B11: Motor Ball

#####

Thanks to the back attack, you'll be in back row for this battle. Open the battle by having Cloud cast Bolt and let the others follow up with Grenades. Make sure Bolt always is the first move every turn. Use Cloud and Barret's limit breaks as soon as they get them and make sure to take advantage of the limit break system. Don't use Tifa's limit break. Keep casting Bolt and throwing Grenades, and it could be over after Cloud's fifth Bolt. If it isn't, throw another grenade, or, if you have none left, use a regular attack from Barret, and hope it kills him.

It mostly depends on Cloud's magic stat whether you'll be able to kill him or not. You don't have time to check his stats, so you have to pay attention to the damage. If he deals less than 220, you're in trouble. That is, unless you have an extra Grenade.

In the beginning of the battle, he will use Arm Attack twice and he's able to use this attack twice in one turn. Perfect runners should restart if he uses it more than twice in total.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mtdsD3yxLfs>

#####

[skip text]

Run to the bottom of the screen when you get to control Cloud on the ground and choose the second option.

[skip text]

Form a party of Cloud, Tifa and Red and leave through the bottom of the screen. On the world map, you have to skip one box of text before you get to control Cloud. Run for about five seconds before you save. That will make it easier to reach Kalm without getting an encounter.

[SAVE YOUR GAME]

My time: 2:02:47
Rec. time (10h): 2:16:48
Rec. time (12h): 2:44:10

My goal is to make it out of Midgar in less than two hours. Will I make it? Time will show, but I have a feeling it's going to be very tough.

=====

3 - Walkthrough: The Rest Of Disc One

=====

Congratulations! You've made it to the world map and put Midgar, the most boring part of any challenge behind. It gets a lot more interesting from here, but before we can start having fun, we have to stop by at Kalm, and you know what's waiting there.

3.1 <> The First Continent

Okay, get your lazy ass over to Kalm and get that damn flashback over with. No, wait a minute. This is a Speed Run, right? Well, then I'm afraid it's not that simple. First of all, you have to reach Kalm without getting any encounters, but if you did like I said and ran for about five seconds before saving, that shouldn't be a problem. Just soft-reset if you do and you most likely won't get one the next time. After entering town, run just ahead to trigger a cutscene.

[skip text]

Follow the others up to the second floor of the Inn and simply approach the crew to start the flashback.

The Flashback - Part I
#####

[skip text]

After a while, the Dragon will attack and Sephiroth will take care of it.

If the Dragon kills Cloud, Sephiroth might revive him and you know what that means. You can only accept one attack by the Dragon and two by Sephiroth.

[skip text]

When you arrive at Nibelheim, Sephiroth will tell you about his parents and you get to control Cloud after a while. Run straight forward into town and Barret will interrupt.

[skip text]

In Nibelheim, you get to control Cloud after Sephiroth tells you that you may visit your family and friends. You've got no time to do that, so enter the Inn, run upstairs and talk to Sephiroth twice. The second time, you have to select the second option when he asks if you're ready to sleep. Cloud will wake up in the morning and automatically move outside. Go talk to Sephiroth.

[skip text]

Next, you get to control Cloud on the bridge. Talk to Tifa and then follow her. The bridge collapses and you fall down to another area.

[skip text]

Take the path to the right, enter the cave and run ahead.

[skip text]

Keep running ahead to the exit.

If you get a battle here, you must be able to escape it. You lose too much time if Sephiroth casts a magic spell to kill the enemies.

[skip text]

You get to control Cloud again in front of the reactor. Run a few inches ahead.

[skip text]

You know where to go inside the reactor, right? Just follow Sephiroth and talk to him in front of the Jenova room.

It's a bit tricky to run in the right direction after climbing down the ladder. You have to let go of the direction down button immediately when you reach the bottom and then push the direction up button to run in the right direction. It doesn't matter if you run a few inches in the wrong direction now, though. Sephiroth walks slowly in front of you and you can't pass him until after the bridge, but you have to be really careful the next time. This is something you should practice if you don't want to lose a couple of seconds.

[skip text]

Go close to the valve and talk to Sephiroth twice.

[skip text]

The monster will break loose and the scene will change back to Kalm. After four boxes of text, Barret asks if you want to take a break and save. Make sure to select the second option to avoid that.

The Flashback - Part II
#####

Cloud will run out from the Inn and enter the mansion. Just head down to the basement and find Sephiroth.

[skip text]

Head back out the door when you get to control him again. Text will appear on the screen, but it runs automatically, so you don't have to skip it. Cloud will wake up on the second floor in the morning. Head back down and find Sephiroth.

[skip text]

Follow him back up, leave the mansion and head over to the burning village.

[skip text]

Enter Cloud's house.

[skip text]

The next time you get to control Cloud now is inside the reactor. Climb down and run ahead to find Tifa.

[skip text]

Follow her to the next area.

[skip text]

Go help Tifa and follow Sephiroth to the Jenova room.

[skip text]

This will end the flashback and the scene will change back to Kalm again. Make sure to select the second option when Barret is leaving. You get to control Cloud again on the first floor, at the bottom of the staircase. Approach Barret and he will give you the PHS.

[skip text]

Then you're free to leave town. Hurray!

Crossing the Marches
#####

It's time to start using the save trick on the world map. Head for the marches and run for about 10 seconds before you stop to save.

[SAVE YOUR GAME]

My time: 2:24:49
Rec. time (10h): 2:42:00
Rec. time (12h): 3:14:24

Load up before you move on, or else it won't work. Then run for another ten seconds before you save again. If you want to save 13 seconds, you can restart until you reach the marches without getting an encounter.

Perfect runners can only save once between Kalm and the Mythrill Mines. It's possible to get only one encounter between Kalm and the marches and it's possible to cross the marches without running into the Midgar Zolom, so you cannot accept more than one save.

Since the pattern of enemies can vary from time to time, you'll never know when you get the first battle after Kalm. If you're lucky and get the best pattern, you can almost reach the marches, but you can of course get the worst pattern too. Gambling is not a good idea since you just did the flashback in Kalm, so I recommend saving after ten seconds.

You need some luck to both reach the marches without being attacked and cross the marches without running into the Midgar Zolom, so you will most likely have to restart many times before you succeed. You just saved, though, so it's not

that bad. Just imagine if you had to do the flashback every time...

Okay, we're gonna use the save trick to cross the marches as well. Here's how it works: Start running into the marches and make sure to pay attention. You have to push the menu button as soon as the Midgar Zolom appears on the screen. If he gets too close, he will get you, even if you already pushed the button. Just give it a try and see for yourself what happens. Anyway, save your game if you successfully managed to open the menu and then exit the menu again. Now, the battle will start immediately, but you can just escape and then soft-reset. When you load the file now, the Midgar Zolom will be at a different location and you can safely continue over to the other side.

Just be aware that you may have to save again if he appears too close to you. It depends on how far you got into the marches before you saved. Some times, he appears only a couple of seconds after you set your foot in the swamp, but you can also be lucky and reach the other side. It depends on his location when you start crossing. If he appears too early, you will encounter him again, so that you have to save twice. If you get about halfway through, it'll work, so make sure you get that far if you don't want to save twice.

When you safely reach the other side, the screen will automatically change to the screen with the killed serpent. Cloud will run ahead, and you'll have one line of text to skip before you get to control him. Just run left to exit this screen and hold the direction down and right buttons when the screen turns black. By doing that, you will hardly see the world map again before you're inside the mine. Here, just run left and enter the next area where you meet some old friends.

[skip text]

Climb up and leave the mines. Back on the world map, run for about ten seconds again before you stop. For the first time since the train lockdown, you have to do some changes in the menu.

Cloud: Give him Poison and Steal

Tifa: Equip the Mythril Armlet and give her Restore=All and Enemy Skill

[SAVE YOUR GAME]

My time: 2:27:30

Rec. time (10h): 2:44:24

Rec. time (12h): 3:17:17

Then continue running for another ten seconds before you save again. Perfect runners can only accept one save, but I guess you figured that out on your own.

3.2 Junon

When you enter town, there will be a short cutscene and you'll have one box of text to skip. Another boss battle awaits on the beach, but first you need more Grenades. Enter the shop to the right and buy so that you have 36 Grenades. If you don't have enough money, you must sell the Talisman first. Then you'll have more than enough. Head down to the beach after shopping. Things will happen automatically when you get there.

[skip text]

Your next opponent is...

#####

B12: Bottomswell

#####

Open the battle by having Cloud cast Bio and the others throw Grenades, in that order. Restart if you fail to poison him. If you manage to poison him, you can have everyone throw Grenades, but make sure Tifa acts first. That's very important, as you have to activate her limit break when the third Grenade is thrown. Make sure you get a "yeah". Now, Bottomswell will use Waterpolo, but that's nothing to worry about. All you have to do now is to throw four more Grenades and the battle will be over. That is, after Big Wave.

Note: If Bottomswell uses Waterpolo on a character that has been attacked twice by Tail Attack or taken a critical hit, there's a chance this character won't survive Big Wave. Bottomswell will only use Tail Attack twice, so the chance for that to happen isn't very high.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JXs4gTzEc3k>

#####

[skip text]

It's time to revive Priscilla. 41 breaths are needed to revive her, so you have many options. You can fill the gauge completely four times and then take a final breath, or you can go with the 9-9-9-9-5 strategy. As long as you only breathe into her five times, it doesn't matter.

[skip text]

Go talk to the old woman in front of the house where you can sleep for free.

[skip text]

Select the second option to sleep. This is the first out of five times in a row where you have to select the second option.

[skip text]

Leave the house and go climb the stairs to Priscilla's house. Cloud will stop at the beginning of the second staircase and Priscilla comes down.

[skip text]

It's time to enter the actual city of Junon. After all, this place is called "Under Junon". Just head down to the beach and talk to Priscilla.

[skip text]

When Priscilla asks if you want to jump with Mr. Dolphin, choose the second option, "sure". Don't move at all in the water. Just push the square button twice to get up. Run up-left to the ladder and you'll get to see the cutscene with the Highwind.

#####

You get to control Cloud again at the airport. Run down to the next area and use the elevator to get down to the lower level. You can control Cloud when the elevator goes down, so make sure to place him as close to the exit as possible.

[skip text]

Now enter the room to the left. It's actually up-left, but Cloud will go in that direction if you push the left button.

[skip text]

Find the uniform in the second locker and choose the second option to change.

[skip text]

After getting a demonstration on what to do, you have to select the second option to proceed. Head down and find the save point when you get to control Cloud again. Perfect runners can't save here.

[SAVE YOUR GAME]

My time: 2:38:20
Rec. time (10h): 2:56:24
Rec. time (12h): 3:31:40

It's time for marching and you have to get a higher score than 50%. Your reward for that will be 5000 Gil and trust me, you really need the money. I know there are many people out there who can't handle the marching, but I have come up with a strategy that can't fail, unless you screw up somehow.

Many people screw this up because they do like the other soldiers and run to the back to reach the open spot. Well, you can't do that. Instead you must run straight ahead, "through" the other soldiers. Simply put, just hold X and the direction down button when you get to control Cloud and he will run straight into the open spot. Now let go of the X button and hold the direction left button and Cloud will start marching in the same tempo as the others. Now, the number "1" will pop up on the screen and you can start tapping the action button to increase the percentage. If you do this right, you should have no trouble getting 50% or more. My personal record is 65%! Do some practice and you will find out that it's easier than you ever imagined.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Hlxc2lwWoc>

Enter the door to the left to get out on the street.

[skip text]

Now, run down the street and go between the two soldiers to enter the alley. This can be a little tricky, so I suggest practicing it.

[skip text]

Then we have the marching. Get 50% or more. Period.

[skip text]

Back to the dressing room for some more lectures.

[skip text]

First, the soldiers will show you what to do, and then you get to do some practice yourself. You have to skip one box of text after they finish showing you. That's after "right turn". Then it's your turn, but you can just watch. Make sure to choose the second option when they ask if you've got it. That's the fifth and last time we have to select the second option for now. Thank God.

[skip text]

Head for the docks. Things will happen automatically when you get there.

[skip text]

When posing for the president, make sure to score 60-90 points. You get ten points for pushing the right button when you're standing in the right position. The final pose is worth 30, but don't perform it. Just get 60 points and wait until the score counter goes away. Your reward is a HP Plus Materia.

[skip text]

Just enter the boat.

[skip text]

Shinra Boat
#####

Go upstairs and talk to Tifa and Red. Then head back down and talk to Aerith until she mentions Barret. Now head back up and talk to Barret twice. The alarm will go off. Head back to the deck and the crew will gather for some talking.

Perfect runners must save after talking to Red, as that's the only time you're close to the save point.

[skip text]

You get to form a party after a while and we'll go with Cloud, Tifa and Red again. You also have to do some changes in the menu.

Cloud: Equip the Power Wrist and give him the Hyper.
Place everyone in back row.

[SAVE YOUR GAME]

My time: 2:49:34
Rec. time (10h): 3:09:00
Rec. time (12h): 3:46:48

Head back down, enter the cargo room and run ahead.

[skip text]

As usual, he's arranged some company for us. Time to fight the first Jenova...

#####

B13: Jenova-BIRTH

#####

First of all, she must open the battle with Stop and it must miss. There's a 50% chance she opens the battle with Stop and it tends to miss very often, so that shouldn't require too many restarts. Now, throw seven Grenades and use Braver by taking advantage of the limit break system. That means you should have Cloud throw the second and fifth Grenades. If Cloud doesn't have a limit break now, you must have used it without permission and that's your problem. Also, make sure to use Red's limit break as soon as possible. Then keep throwing Grenades and make sure you get to use Braver at least once more. The best is if you get to use it three times in total. There's also a chance you'll have to heal, depending on how many times Jenova attacks. Ideally, she should only use one attack per turn. You obviously lose time each time she uses a combo, but it's up to you how many attacks you'll accept. The battle should end after the second Stop.

The perfect battle should go like this:

1. Grenade before Stop
2. Stop (miss), 7 Grenades + Braver
3. Laser on Cloud, 3 Grenades
4. Tail Laser, 3 Grenades + Braver
5. W-Laser, 3 Grenades
6. 2-3 grenades
7. Stop (miss), grenades until she dies

If you fail to throw a Grenade before Stop, you can use an additional Sled Fang as long as you take advantage of the limit break system.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JWkrYx5ghuk>

#####

[skip text]

Select the second option to prevent Cloud from explaining what Sephiroth meant with "The time is now". Then leave the boat. No, you don't need Ifrit, so there's no need to waste three seconds picking it up. Cloud will say a few lines before he goes off the boat.

3.3 <> The Second Continent

[skip text]

Leave the docks. Rufus and Heidegger will appear.

[skip text]

Enter the villa straight ahead, go downstairs and open the box. Ignore the other items. You don't need them.

[skip text]

Then leave Costa del Sol. Back on the world map, run for about ten seconds before you save, as usual. I saved where the brown area starts.

It's very hard to reach North Corel without healing, so you have to heal at least once. Regular runners should heal now, but perfect runners should wait until the next save.

[SAVE YOUR GAME]

My time: 2:57:40
Rec. time (10h): 3:18:00
Rec. time (12h): 3:57:36

Restart if you get an encounter on your way to the entrance to Mt. Corel.

Mt. Corel
#####

Head for the save point, but before you get there, you have to steal two Right Arms from bombs on the bridge. Bombs come in groups of two here, so that you can steal both of them in one battle. Restart if you get any other battle than that. If you don't get a battle in this area, you have to run back and forth until you get one.

When you get a battle with two Bombs, you have to steal a Right Arm from each of them, but that's easier said than done. The chance of getting a Right Arm isn't very high, so you most likely won't steal them in one attempt. That's not a big deal unless you're doing a perfect run, though. However, you can't spend too many attempts, or else it won't be worth it. I'd say restart if you spend more than ten attempts in total. You will most likely have to restart quite a few times here, but as I said in the intro, this is a challenge that requires patience. Just be grateful if you're not doing a perfect run, because...

Perfect runners need even more patience, as you need to be able to steal them in one attempt if you want the best possible result. But that's not all. First of all, you have to make sure you get a battle on the bridge. Whether that happens or not depends on how good you've done in areas with random encounters from the very beginning of the game. If you haven't done good enough, you will get that battle before you reach the bridge. As I said in the perfect run section, you must make sure to get through the areas with random encounters as quickly as possible, or else you'll get that battle too early and that ruins everything. If you don't get a battle on the bridge, you have failed.

If you do get a battle on the bridge, you must of course make sure it's the battle with two Bombs. Anything else is restart-material. There's a 17/64 chance you'll get that battle. Then comes the toughest part. If you truly want a perfect run, you have to be able to steal a Right Arm from each Bomb in only one attempt each time. The chance for that to happen is about 1%. That's right, one damn percent. How many attempts to allow is up to you.

[SAVE YOUR GAME]

My time: 2:59:33 (I didn't steal any Right Arms)
No recommended times here until I complete the perfect run.

Tip: Before you proceed, you should play up to North Corel and save outside town on a different file. You have to do some shopping here and that's something that can cost you a lot of time if you screw up, so practicing it is not a bad idea.

Move on. When the floor breaks, tap the action button like crazy and Cloud will jump over. Restart if you fail. Then proceed to the shack to lower the bridge, but make sure to stop by and pick up the Turbo Ether first. It's the purple item. Aerith says "Go Cloud" or something like that when you're running over the upper bridge, but that's nothing to worry about. When you get inside the shack, however, you have to...

[skip text]

Then move on until you reach the final bridge before North Corel. Here, you have to steal three more Right Arms. Don't accept more than 20 attempts in total. Bombs only come in groups of one here, so you need at least three battles. Just take note that you might also get attacked from both sides by three Cokatolises. Sure sucks for perfect runners if you already managed to steal a Right Arm in one attempt. Unfortunately, there's nothing you can do about it. When you eventually have three Right Arms, you can proceed to North Corel. Perfect runners only need two.

Perfect runners have two choices here:

1. If you just move on, you will get a battle before the save point in Corel Prison and if you run into a Bandit or two, they might steal an important item from you. They always steal the best items, so you can't just hope they steal a Phoenix Down or something. Getting a Right Arm stolen from you sure sucks after restarting hundred times before you could steal them in one attempt, so you really don't want that to happen.

2. To avoid getting a battle inside the prison, you can spend a couple of seconds running back and forth on the bridge to make sure you get that battle before North Corel. It's only a matter of two to three seconds, but as I said, you might get attacked from both sides by three Cokatolises.

It's up to you. Either way, there's a chance you will have to start over and restart another hundred or more times. I know, it sucks, but that's how a perfect run is. I would go for option #2.

North Corel
#####

When you reach North Corel, just run ahead and talking will start.

[skip text]

Go talk to Barret. Afterwards, it's shopping time. If you haven't already been here and practiced, you should go out on the world map and save first.

Sell: 2x Ether, White Cape, Guard Source, Protect Vest, Star Pendant, Talisman*

Buy (regular runners): 21x Molotov, Force Stealer (2200), 11x Tranquilizer.
Buy (perfect runners): 27x Molotov, Force Stealer (2200), 3x Tranquilizer.

* If you didn't sell it in Junon.

Tranquilizers are bought at the shop to the right and Molotovs and the Force Stealer are bought at the shop to the left. No need to stop at the shop in the middle. Proceed to the Gold Saucer when you're done.

[skip text]

Gold Saucer
#####

You get to control Cloud again after the tram arrives at the Gold Saucer. Go talk to the woman in front of the entrance. Just skip the text and you'll buy a regular ticket. Then enter.

[skip text]

Talk to Tifa and choose to go with her, which is the first option. Then jump down to Wonder Square. It's the second hole from the right.

[skip text] (includes naming Cait Sith)

Jump down to Battle Square. You're standing on the E, so you can almost run directly down.

[skip text]

Corel Prison
#####

You get to control Cloud again after talking to Barret in Corel Prison. Go find the save point. If you run into a bandit and get something stolen from you, you know where the restart button is.

[SAVE YOUR GAME]

My time: 3:14:57
Rec. time (10h): 3:37:12
Rec. time (12h): 4:20:38

Enter the house.

[skip text]

Form a party of Cloud, Barret and Red and go find Dyne. You know where he is. It doesn't matter if Barret gets attacked on the way, as he gets fully healed before the battle begins.

[skip text]

#####

Throw a Right Arm and the battle will be over. Perfect runners must restart if he uses his final attack. There's a 50% chance he'll do that.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AQvHrqcqPPw>

#####

[skip text]

Make sure to select the second option inside the elevator, to avoid Ester explaining how to ride a chocobo. You get to control Cloud again after talking to Joe. Pick up Ramuh and go to the exit and wait there until the chocobo race is about to start.

[skip text]

Ester now comes back. Talk to her and make sure to select the second option again to avoid that explanation. Then it's chocobo racing time. Switch to manual steering with the select button and hold down R1, R2 and square until you reach the top of the spiral. Use the circle button from now and you're guaranteed victory. However, it doesn't matter if you win by a second or a year, as you have to wait until one of the others reaches the finish line anyway. Just tap the start button when that happens.

[skip text]

Form a party of Cloud, Tifa and Cait and head for Cosmo Canyon. You can save after crossing the first river and again after crossing the second river. Make sure to park the buggy right outside town, to prevent it from breaking down. That'll save you a few seconds.

It's possible to get to Cosmo Canyon and only save once, but for that to happen, you have to drive much further than the river before you save. Yes, you will most likely have to replay Dyne a couple of times before you get it right.

[SAVE YOUR GAME]

My time: 3:27:36
Rec. time (10h): 3:51:36
Rec. time (12h): 4:37:55

3.4 <> Cosmo Canyon

Climb the stairs and Red will come running.

[skip text]

Go talk to the man and select the second option, No!

[skip text]

If you entered the Shinra HQ through the front door, you must now enter the Inn and pick up the Elixir. It's not visible, but it shouldn't be too hard to find. Just check the couch and you'll find it. Head back out and talk to Red after

you find it.

[skip text]

Climb all the way up to Bugenhagen and talk to Red when you get there.

[skip text]

Climb back down and enter the far right door. Talk to Cait and form any party. Then climb back up, enter the door and talk to Bugenhagen. You have to skip one box before you can enter.

[skip text]

Now go all the way back down to the candle and talk to Barret, Tifa, Aerith and Red in that order.

[skip text]

Bugenhagen will come, and it's time to visit the Cave of the Gi. Form a party of Cloud, Red and Tifa and head for the save point. Equip Cloud with the Force Stealer before saving.

[SAVE YOUR GAME]

My time: 3:38:57

Rec. time (10h): 4:04:12

Rec. time (12h): 4:53:02

Go talk to Bugenhagen in front of the entrance to the cave. Cloud will automatically enter the cave after talking.

[skip text]

Climb all the way down to the bottom and enter the next area. Here, enter the cave to the left of where the entrance to the next area is and skip one box of text to open the entrance. If you don't know which cave I'm talking about, then find out and restart. The party will stop for some talking before you get to enter the next area.

[skip text]

In this area, you have to get into a battle with three Sneaky Steps. The main reason is to learn Death Sentence, but you also have to win at least one M-Tentacle, for use in the Stinger battles. Hopefully, you get a battle on the run, so that you won't have to waste time running around.

#####

B15: Sneaky Step x3

#####

You can't waste time waiting for the Sneaky Steps to use Death Sentence on Tifa, so select to throw a Right Arm and hope one of them uses it on her before the Right Arm is thrown. If Tifa successfully learns Death Sentence, you just need to pray you receive at least one M-Tentacle.

Perfect battle: Only one Sneaky Step acts before the Right Arm is thrown. Of course, his act must be Death Sentence on Tifa.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4HGtqGLicQQ>

#####

Just get through this area as quickly as possible. The party will stop for some talking again before you can enter the next area.

[skip text]

Keep moving and enter the second of the five openings. Next comes two battles with Stingers.

#####

B16: Stinger #1

#####

Throw an M-Tentacle and use Braver to take care of him.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e61yPfxOLqY>

#####

Just proceed to the next battle.

#####

B17: Stinger #2

#####

Have everyone throw Molotovs and make sure Cloud throws the fourth or fifth one, so that he gets Sting Bombed and gets his limit bar filled. Then use Braver when the sixth Molotov is thrown.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A8G-Fjw6oHI>

#####

Heal the party back to full health and proceed. Bugenhagen will interrupt a last time before you enter the next area.

[skip text]

Enter the next area and move ahead.

[skip text]

#####

B18: Gi Nattak

#####

Throw an Elixir at him and the battle will be over. Phoenix Downs work as well, but there's a chance they'll miss. Elixirs never miss.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g57j4rkPKzE>

#####

Pick up the Gravity Materia and enter the final area for the most touching part of the game in my opinion.

[skip text]

You get to control Cloud again at the Cosmo Candle, but you have to form a party first. We'll go with Cloud, Tifa and Cait this time. Head for the exit and Red will come running.

[skip text]

Then leave and head for Nibelheim. Save before the river. It's possible to get from Cosmo Canyon to Nibelheim without getting an encounter, but that's a risk you don't want to take after all the trouble in Cosmo Canyon.

[SAVE YOUR GAME]

My time: 3:49:07

Rec. time (10h): 4:15:36

Rec. time (12h): 5:06:43

3.5 <> Nibelheim & Mt. Nibel

Before you move on, there's something you have to find out. Cloud must be able to deal exactly 99 damage with Bio against Materia Keeper and depending on your magic stat, he might not be able to with the usual setup. Equip him with the Silver Armet and give him Fire, Shiva, Ramuh, Ice and Gravity in addition to Steal and Bio. Then go fight Materia Keeper five times to see if you're able to deal 99 damage. And make sure to save on a different file when you get there. If you deal too little, you'll have to replace Steal with Lightning. If you still deal too little damage, you have to give Poison to Cait and then find a combination that works, but you also have to do some other materia changes. See details below. Don't forget to delete the new file when you're done testing.

Perfect runners should replay Cosmo Canyon if you can't possibly deal 99 damage with Cloud, as you lose a lot of time changing materia back and forth for the Cait + Tifa strategy.

After entering town, just run ahead to trigger the cutscenes.

Just run ahead and talking will start.

[skip text]

Then leave Nibelheim and head for the save point at Mt. Nibel. Enter pipe #2 inside the cave and you'll land just by the save point. Yes, you have to pick up the Powersoul before you can jump down, but that's really a good thing, since the Powersoul is the most important weapon in this run.

Note: You need Cait to have a limit break after Materia Keeper and Trine isn't enough to fill his bar completely. Therefore, you have to make sure he takes some damage on the way there. Go fight Materia Keeper and make sure he opens with Trine first, so that you know exactly how much damage he needs to take.

You're only supposed to get one battle on the way to the save point. If you get a second battle just before the save point, you haven't been fast enough in the areas with encounters. If that's the case, you'll lose 13 seconds or more.

Before saving, you have to do the following equipment/materia changes:

Cloud: Equip the Silver Armlet and give him the amount of red and green materia needed for him to be able to deal 99 damage with Bio. Or Cait/Tifa setup if Cloud couldn't deal 99 damage even with the maximum amount of materia equipped.

Cait: Give him Cover and place him in back row.

Give Tranquilizers to everyone and heal the party to full health.

If you have to use Cait/Tifa strategy, you must do some additional changes:

Remove Cure=All from Tifa (this can affect the damage, but hopefully an additional green/red materia on Cait will take care of that)

Give Cure=All to Cloud in the Silver Armlet.

Give Cait the required combination of red and green materias.

Also, if Tifa has a limit break, you must reset it.

I know this costs extra time, but you really have no choice if Cloud can't deal 99 damage with Bio whatsoever. You also have to change back to the original Materia Keeper setup before Palmer, but you can keep Cure=All on Cloud, as he needs it in the temple. Preferably before you save on the world map before Rocket Town.

You really want to do these equipment changes before saving, as you have to restart MANY times to get the Materia Keeper battle right. Practice it until you can do it with your eyes closed before you do the major run.

[SAVE YOUR GAME]

My time: 3:51:57

Rec. time (10h): 4:18:36

Rec. time (12h): 5:10:19

Go get Materia Keeper. Unlike the Stingers, you have to push the action button to activate this battle.

B19: Materia Keeper

This strategy requires a lot of luck, but since this battle is as close as you can possibly get after a save point, it doesn't really matter.

First of all, he must open the battle with Trine. After changing our minds about ten times, we finally came to the conclusion that we need Trine. If he does, have Cloud cast Bio, Tifa Cure=All and Cait defend. Now, pray Cloud deals 99 damage with Bio and that Materia Keeper gets poisoned. If not, you can throw a Right Arm at the party to quickly get back to the title screen. If he deals 99 damage and Materia Keeper gets poisoned, you can wait until he attacks again and have Tifa Cure the character who just got attacked. Then watch what happens. I'll let this one be a surprise for those who don't know what happens.

If you have to use the Cait/Tifa strategy, you must have Cait cast Bio, Tifa attack and Cloud Cure=All in that order. Then have Cloud Cure the character who got attacked.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K7mpeCNpqLE>

#####

Leave Mt. Nibel and run for about five seconds before you stop and save. You don't need the Counter Attack Materia, so don't bother wasting two seconds picking it up.

[SAVE YOUR GAME]

My time: 3:53:29

Rec. time (10h): 4:20:24

Rec. time (12h): 5:12:28

Then load up and proceed to Rocket Town.

3.6 <> Rocket Town

After entering town, you have to skip two boxes of text before you get to control Cloud. Then enter Cid's house and go out the backdoor to find the Tiny Bronco. Shera will come for some talking.

[skip text]

Enter the shop in the middle of town.

Sell (regular runners): Wizer Staff, Jem Ring.

Buy (regular runners): 21x Potion, 15x Tranquilizer, 6x Phoenix Down, 17x Hi-Potion, 1x Tent.

Buy (perfect runners): 11x Potion, 19x Tranquilizer, 3x Phoenix Down, 2x Hi-Potion, 1x Tent (you don't have to sell anything).

Note: The amount of Hi-Potions is the total amount you need. Your amount at this point can vary because you might had to use one in Midgar and because you can win the from Stingers. There's a chance perfect runners don't have to buy any at all.

Now go find Cid inside the rocket. You have to talk to him twice. The first time includes naming him and you have to ask him about the rocket the second time, but that's the first option, so just...

[skip text]

Climb back down and enter Cid's house. Move just ahead and the long cutscene will start. This one lasts for about five minutes.

[skip text]

You get to control Cloud again after Cid goes out to talk to the president. Follow him outside.

[skip text]

Shera will take you back inside and tell you to go talk to Palmer in the backyard, as he seems to be stealing the Tiny Bronco. Palmer will say something when you enter the backyard, but you don't have to skip it. Just head over and talk to him.

[skip text]

#####

B20: Palmer

#####

The battle should go down in three turns :

1. Have Cloud cast Bio, Tifa throw a Molotov, Cait throw a Molotov and Cloud use Cross-Slash, in that order.

Note: If Cloud's ATB bar isn't full enough and you have to wait too long for it to fill up, Palmer might attack before Cait throws his Molotov. You can't allow that to happen.

2. Have Tifa, Cait, Cloud and Tifa throw Molotovs in that order, followed by Cait using Dice. With a 2400 Dice, the battle will most likely be over after the next poison damage (or even before). True perfect runners must restart until you get that 2400 Dice, but I suggest that you continue if you get at least 1600. Then it should be over after two more Molotovs, or even one, depending on Molotov/Cross Slash damage. Even a 1200 Dice could be enough, but then you need two more Molotovs for sure. And with a little luck, Palmer won't attack again.

3. 1-2 additional Molotovs in case Dice dealt low damage. With some luck, Palmer will still not attack (he will only use Mako Gun once in the entire fight, despite getting a low damage Dice, as you can see in the vid).

With any luck (he pretty much uses Mako Gun either once or twice, so the only way to die is if he does use it twice and uses it twice on the same character) you don't need any healing. If he uses it more than twice, you must restart.

Regular runners who don't want to restart until you get a 1600 Dice or higher can just keep throwing Molotovs and have Tifa heal whenever someone gets attacked. Even if you got a 300 Dice, it shouldn't take more than four extra Molotovs to finish him off. If Cloud gets a limit break again, don't use it, as you need it for Red Dragon.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eX8EOPbIg4A>

#####

[skip text]

Congrats on a new vehicle! It's time for another Gold Saucer visit.

3.7 <> Before The Temple

Head northeast towards Nibelheim, follow the river through the continent and leave the Tiny Bronco just after the mountain ends and the river turns south. Then run for about ten seconds before you save.

[SAVE YOUR GAME]

My time: 4:05:20

Rec. time (10h): 4:33:36

Rec. time (12h): 5:28:19

Get to North Corel without being attacked and head directly to the railway station and board the tram.

Buy the ticket, enter and go find the keystone in Dio's showroom. It's located next to the battle arena. Enter the third hole from the right to get there. Dio will appear when you find it.

[skip text]

Time to fight on the battle arena. Well, not really. Just escape the battle as you would escape from any other random battle. If you get a Flapbeat battle, you can attempt to steal a T/S Bomb from one of them before you escape. The chance of stealing one is about 39%.

[skip text]

Leave and go talk to the man in front of the tram.

[skip text]

Next up is the date.

[skip text]

During the play, make sure to ask the knight and then select the second option twice. Inside the tram, don't touch the controller until you've seen an FMV. If you do, you will see more than one and thus lose valuable time.

You get to control Cloud again when Cait runs off with the keystone. Go to Chocobo Square, the first hole from the right. Here, follow Cait Sith inside, run around the circle and leave. Talking will start on the outside.

[skip text]

Leave the room.

[skip text]

Form a party of Cloud, Aerith and Tifa and leave the Gold Saucer, but before leaving North Corel, you have to stop and buy more Molotovs. Make sure you have 15 of them. Then leave town and run for about 10 seconds on the world map before you save.

Perfect runners don't have to buy more Molotovs and you're not allowed to save before the Flapbeat battle either. Yes, you have to replay the Gold Saucer until you get the Flapbeat battle right, but that's really not so bad, as the Gold Saucer doesn't require any luck at all.

[SAVE YOUR GAME]

My time: 4:20:20
Rec. time (10h): 4:50:24
Rec. time (12h): 5:48:29

Before heading for the temple, you have to acquire a couple of T/S Bombs. These are stolen/won from Flapbeats, a regular enemy in this area. Make sure you get into a battle with three of them.

#####

B21: Flapbeat x3

#####

Have Cloud steal and Tifa cast Trine. This will end the battle, but you cannot proceed unless you receive at least two T/S Bombs. The chance you'll win two isn't very high, so make sure Cloud can steal one.

Perfect runners must make sure Cloud gets hit by Flying Sickle, to build up his limit break. It would be best if he got Sickle'd twice, as one isn't enough, but he can also get attacked in a battle on the way to Red Dragon.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=keTN1Q6ye4w>

#####

Our next destination is Gongaga. We have to go there to pick up one of the most important materia in this challenge, namely Deathblow. Save just before you reach town. After entering town, go left and you'll find Deathblow on the second screen. Then leave town and head back to the Tiny Bronco.

If Cloud doesn't have a limit break, you should get into a battle with a Grand Horn and make sure he gets Grand Punch'd while you're in the Gongaga area.

Both regular and perfect runners should save again before you get back to the Tiny Bronco and you should also do the necessary equipment/materia changes for the temple now.

Cloud: Remove the Power Wrist and give him HP Plus instead of Steal.

Tifa: Equip the Powersoul and the Power Wrist, replace All with Deathblow, give her Steal in the weapon and remove Enemy Skill and give it to Aerith.

Perfect runners must give Tranquilizers to the girls now.

That's for the perfect strategies. If you don't want to restart tons of times to get the boss battles right, you should do the additional changes:

Cloud: Give him Cover and All=Restore (if he isn't already equipped with it).

Aerith: Equip the Fire Ring.

[SAVE YOUR GAME]

My time: I didn't save here, as I didn't go to Gongaga.

No recommended times here until I complete the perfect run.

Once back in the Tiny Bronco, you can head for the temple. If you don't know exactly how to get there, you must find out and practice the route. Needless to say, you cannot accept any battles on the way to the temple.

Note: If you don't know exactly how to find the Lunar Harp, you must play ahead and practice. Demon's Gate requires a lot of luck and you're not allowed to save before entering town. Also, make sure to practice the equipment/materia changes before Jenova-LIFE. She requires a lot of luck too, so you really want to do the changes before you save.

3.8 <> The Temple of Ancients

Move just ahead and Aerith will interrupt.

[skip text]

Climb the stairs and enter. You have to take a small right turn on the top, or you'll run into a black caped guy.

[skip text]

Now place the keystone on the altar.

[skip text]

First run downstairs and climb down the wall to get to the next level. Here, run down the stairs and climb up to the wall. Follow the ancient guy and go through the opening with an item in front. Pick it up and follow this path until you've climbed up another wall. Now go left and enter the next area. This is where you have to dodge those rolling boulders. Make sure not to screw up. Things will happen automatically when you reach the other side.

If Cloud doesn't already have a limit break, you have to make sure he gets it in a battle on the way here. Also, make sure Tifa doesn't get attacked. You need her HP to be full before Red Dragon, and you can't rest, as that will make Sadness go away.

[skip text]

Move on to the clock room. Push triangle to move it yourself and then hold circle until the minute hand is at six. No, you don't need the Ribbon. Enter the room and talking will start.

[skip text]

You have to catch the ancient guy to unlock the door. Jump down to the next level and enter the third door here to find him. Then rest, give Tranquilizers to everyone and save.

[SAVE YOUR GAME]

My time: 4:29:11
Rec. time (10h): 5:00:00
Rec. time (12h): 6:00:00

Note: All the battles from this point depend on Tifa's strenght and Cloud's magic. Since it can be different from file to file, you should always go ahead and test it first and see if you deal the same (or more) damage than in the videos. If you deal so much less that the tactics don't work (for example Carry Armor doesn't go down after the second DB=AC) you have two choices:

- Perfect runners should restart and hope to get better stats at level up.
- Regular runners have to adapt the strategies.

Most battles should work, so it shouldn't be too much to worry about. The only battle where you need a specific stat is Schizo.

Jump down to the lowest level and enter the fourth door here to get back up. Then enter the main door that leads to the room with the murals. Here, you have to go through a lot of talking before the battle with Red Dragon, but it's not as bad as Palmer.

It goes like this: Skip text, move ahead, skip text, move ahead, skip text, move ahead and skip text again. Eventually, you get to fight...

#####

B22: Red Dragon

#####

First of all, Red Dragon must open the battle with Red Dragon Breath on Tifa. There's a 1/4 chance he'll do that. If he does, have Aerith cast Death Sentence on Tifa, Tifa use Deathblow and Cloud use Cross-Slash in that order. Then have Tifa Deathblow, Aerith throw a Right Arm, Cloud defend and Tifa use Deathblow again. If none of the Deathblows misses, the battle will be over now.

If she does miss, you can try again, but Red Dragon will start attacking again. Have Aerith defend after throwing the Right Arm. Have Cloud Cure himself and Aerith if they lose HP, but never Tifa, as her HP needs to stay yellow for Deathblow to deal max damage. You can also revive Cloud and Aerith if they get killed, but if Tifa gets killed, you know where the reset button is. Logically enough, you lose time each time Deathblow misses, so it's up to you how many misses you will accept.

Guess you already figured that none of the Deathblows can miss, but it doesn't hurt to mention it. Also, Red Dragon cannot attack more than the one time in the beginning of the battle. After Cloud defends, you can just hold the action button and you will automatically have Tifa use Deathblow.

Note: Tifa must have at least 36 Str for this strategy to work, but that most likely won't be a problem. If it really is lower, you should remove some green materia from Cloud, to get higher damage with Cross-Slash.

Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1lYRe3T_i2E

#####

[skip text]

Pick up Bahamut and move on to the next area. Yes, to the right.

[skip text]

Leave the room. Before saving, you must have Cloud cure himself and Aerith back to full health if they lost HP against Red Dragon. You can't rest, as Tifa's HP needs to stay low. If you don't want to restart until you get the perfect Demon's Gate strategy right, you have to set ATB to Recommended and you must heal Cloud and Aerith to full health.

[SAVE YOUR GAME]

My time: 4:36:13

Rec. time (10h): 5:07:48

Rec. time (12h): 6:09:22

Then there's only one thing to do. Go get Demon's Gate. You have to skip a few lines before he attacks.

```
#####  
B23: Demon's Gate
```

```
#####  
First of all, he must open the battle with waving his arms. That means Demon  
Rush will be his next attack. If he does, have Cloud throw a Right Arm, Aerith  
cast Death Sentence on Tifa and Tifa use Deathblow, in that order. Demon's Gate  
will now start waving his arms again. Have Aerith throw a Molotov, Tifa use  
Deathblow and Cloud give a Hi-Potion to Tifa, in that order. Demon's Gate will  
then use Demon Rush. If it misses Tifa or criticals and kills someone, you must  
restart. Then have Tifa use Deathblow again and the others throw Molotovs and  
Demon's Gate will start waving his arms again. Repeat the last turn and the  
battle should be over after the last Molotov if none of the Deathblows missed.
```

This is the optimal outcome, so perfect runners should restart until they pull this off. Here's the regular battle:

DG must open the battle with waving his arms. On your first turn, have Aerith throw a Right Arm, Tifa throw a Molotov (yes, she attacks in the video, but Molotov is obviously better) and Cloud throw a Right Arm in that order. DG will now wave his arms again. Then have Aerith cast Death Sentence on Tifa, Tifa use Deathblow (must hit) and Cloud give a Hi-Potion to Tifa. DG will now use Demon Rush. Now have Aerith throw a Molotov, Tifa use Deathblow (can miss) and Cloud throw a Molotov. Even if Deathblow misses, DG will start waving his arms again.

The next part is complicated and I don't feel like re-writing everything lolo said in the Speed Run topic, so I'll basically just copy/paste it. His writing style here is a bit different from mine in the guide, but that shouldn't be a problem. Oh, and just in case: DB = Deathblow and DR = Demon Rush.

You now have two options (I prefer number 1):

1. Gamble and not heal Aerith more than with Cure=All (the runner should actually do tests to see how likely it is she survives in his game). She can survive DR, but it can very well happen she dies.

- DB (can miss, but if both the second one and this one miss, you need to make sure the 4th one hits before DR), Potion on Tifa, Cure=All
- possibly another DB from Tifa.
- Demon Rush, Aerith could be KO'ed.

If Aeris is KO'ed:

If 2 DB hit for full damage:

- DB (has to hit), Molotov.
- DB (has to hit); Molotov + Cross-Slash can be enough, depending on the previous damage, but it's a gamble.

If 1 DB hits for full damage, one for half:

- DB (has to hit), Molotov.
- DB (has to hit)

If 2 DB hit for full damage, one for half:

- DB (has to hit and it could be over), Molotov if needed.

If 3 DB hit for full damage:

- DB (over if it hits). Cure=All/Hi-Potion.

If DB misses, he must use Rock Drop only once and on Cloud (you could also get lucky and he uses it twice but misses) but then the next one should really hit.

If Aeris isn't KO'ed:

If 2 DB hit for full damage:

- DB (can miss), 2x Molotov.

- DB (can't miss if the previous one missed). Over if both hit, else 2 more Molotov will finish him (actually to make sure, one should use 3 Molotovs if the first Db hit).

If 1 DB hits for full damage, one for half:

- DB (has to hit), 2x Molotov.

- DB (over if it hits), Potion on Tifa (not needed if you know she has enough HP to survive DR, in which case, a Molotov should be used), Cure=All. If it misses, the next one (after DR) should hit (and finish him).

If 2 DB hit for full damage, one for half:

- DB + Molotov to end it.

Or to play it safe: DB (can miss), Cure=All, Hi-Potion on Tifa. If both Cloud and Tifa survive the Rock Drops, DB again and hope it sticks this time.

If 3 DB hit for full damage:

- basically the same as above. 2x Molotov + Cross-Slash could be enough, but it's unlikely, so it's quite a gamble.

I didn't even bother mentioning it, but if you get 4 DB before the second DR, and all 4 hit, and he's not dead, 1-2 Molotovs will finish him.

Most of the time it's possible to get more than 2 DB in before DR, as you can see in the vid. But sometimes it will just not happen.

2. Heal everyone back to full

So Healing Wind instead of Potion to Tifa.

Same as above, you have to adapt the rest of the battle depending on how many of the Deathblows hit (pausing the game and thinking ahead, as well as using a calculator to keep track of his HP really helps here). The problem here is that Tifa will not be in critical condition, so Deathblow will only deal half damage. But with the help of Hi-Potions, one should be able to survive. No real need to heal Aerith once he waves his Arms around again, she will die from the third Demon Rush that way, but by then it should be close to over.

Video (regular strategy): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I1CaFJTgd5A>

Video (perfect strategy): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n0Zz7Hn9mQU>

#####

[skip text]

This one goes until Cloud wakes up in Gongaga, but you have to stop tapping the action button when Cloud walks slowly towards Sephiroth and gives him the Black Materia. You can control the small Cloud when he does that. When he's given it to him, you can keep tapping. When you finally get to control Cloud,

you can just head outside. You really don't need the X-Potion, but regular runners could have a use for it against Schizo, so you should pick it up.

[skip text]

Leave Gongaga. Cloud will stop and look at the ruined reactor on the way and you have to skip one line of text. Very annoying. On the world map, head south to find the Tiny Bronco. Then make the journey to Bone Village. You have to travel back through the continent and then follow the shoreline to get there. Before entering town, you must replace Barret with Cait. If you set ATB to recommended before Demon's Gate, you have to set it back to Active now.

[SAVE YOUR GAME]

My time: 4:49:55
Rec. time (10h): 5:23:24
Rec. time (12h): 6:28:05

3.9 <> Bone Village & The Forgotten City

Enter Bone Village and talk to the man outside the first tent. Just skip text and you'll choose to dig for the Lunar Harp. If you don't know exactly where it is, you must find out before you do the major run. It's hard to explain exactly where it is, but it's located to the left of the tent on the second level. Place some searchers and you'll find it. Yes, it's always at the same spot.

When you successfully receive the Lunar Harp, you can enter the forest and get through it as quickly as possible. Then proceed to The Forgotten City. Here, go right and enter the second house. Inside, pick up the Elixir in the chest, climb the ladder and move just ahead to trigger a short cutscene.

[skip text]

Approach the bed and choose to have some sleep, which is the first option. Cloud will wake up in the middle of the night.

[skip text]

Pick up the Enemy Skill Materia behind the bed and leave the house. It's time to go find Aerith. You know where she is. Cloud will stop and say something when you get back to the first screen. You have to save before Jenova, but a few equipment/materia changes must be done first.

Cloud: Give him the Enemy Skill Materia with Death Sentence.
Tifa: Equip the Gigas Armlet and give her a Tranquilizer.
Cait: Give him the other Enemy Skill Materia.

[SAVE YOUR GAME]

My time: I didn't save here.
Recommended time:

After jumping over to the altar, the screen will change and you can control Cloud. Run towards Aerith and he will stop a few seconds and do some strange things. Then go talk to Aerith and just tap the action button until he tries to kill her. You'll have one line to skip too, before the infamous FMV.

[skip text]

#####

B24: Jenova-LIFE

#####

Start the battle by having Cloud cast Death Sentence on Tifa, Cait throw a Molotov at Tifa and Tifa use Deathblow in that order. Unfortunately, a Molotov isn't enough to bring her HP down to the yellow level, so she has to eat an attack from Jenova as well. That's ONE attack. Two will kill her. Have Cloud use Cross-Slash when Tifa attacks and then have Tifa use Deathblow twice to end the battle. As always, Deathblow can't miss for this strategy to work.

Jenova likes to attack often, so this battle can be very fatal if Deathblow should miss. As long as Tifa stays alive, you can keep trying, but she's not likely to stay alive for a very long time. Also, you need Cloud and Cait to be standing when you kill her, so make sure they don't die. You can have Cloud heal if you gave him Cure=All before the temple. Oh, and Aqualung = instant game over, so you don't want to see that attack.

As usual, Deathblow can't miss for perfect runners. In addition, you don't really have to throw the Molotov. It's very likely Jenova will attack twice before you get to act, so she "just" has to attack Tifa twice, and you save yourself the animation time of a Molotov.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U3t3OyVsdWk>

#####

[skip text]

That concludes disc one.

[SAVE YOUR GAME]

My time: 5:02:23

Rec. time (10h): 5:37:12

Rec. time (12h): 6:44:38

=====

4 - Walkthrough: Disc Two & Three

=====

Well then, we should be about 5/9 ways through the game now, but we still have some challenges ahead. If you're ready for more action, you can load your file and continue playing. In fact, you must load your file, as time still runs when you change discs. You'll start up outside a house in the Forgotten Capital. Move ahead, skip some text and follow Sephiroth to the next area.

4.1 <> Adventures In The Snow

You have to climb some walls in the second area, and you have to pick up the Bolt Armet. First, climb the second wall and jump off to the left. Then climb the next wall and jump off to the left. You can actually open the chest with the Bolt Armet from the ledge below it, so you don't have to climb up to it. After picking it up, jump to the opposite side of the wall, run across the screen to the next wall. Jump off to the left, climb the next wall and choose

to climb down the ladder. You'll find the Magic Plus Materia on the bottom, a materia that is very important for some strategies to work. After picking it up, you can climb all the way up and exit the cave. Run for about ten seconds before you save on the world map. You have to save twice.

It's possible to only save once on the world map, but then you have to wait longer than ten seconds before you save. A very luck requiring part is coming up, so I suggest that you find out where the latest possible point you can get the first battle is and then restart until you manage to save just before that spot. You might have to replay the first part of disc two a lot of times, but it's totally worth it.

Before saving, you should give Tranquilizers to everyone and heal the party to full health.

[SAVE YOUR GAME]
My time: 5:06:05
Rec. time (10h): 5:41:24
Rec. time (12h): 6:49:41

Icicle Inn
#####

Enter the first house to the right and find the map. Choose the second option to take it. You won't be allowed to go snowboarding without it, so you kinda have no choice but to pick it up. Also, pick up the item to the right in the room behind it. You don't need the left one. Then go talk to the guy at the edge of town. Elena will show up.

[skip text]

Just tap the left button to dodge her punch. After talking, enter the house in the middle of town and talk to the kid. You have to skip two boxes of text before he lets you take the snowboard. Then there's nothing else to do than go snowboarding. Just run past the man and exit the screen to start the minigame.

Tap the direction up button and Cloud will take off. Go right at the first intersection and left in the second. What else can I say? If you want to lose as little time as possible, you should practice this minigame until you get good at it. The most fatal parts are the forest and the crystal caves. If you crash, it'll most likely happen there. In the forest, you should go next to the right wall. If you find the right spot, you don't have to dodge any trees at all, but you have to take a sharp left to avoid a tree at the end. That's something you must practice. The area with snow boulders coming from the sides can also be tricky, but if you go a little to the left from the center, you should be able to avoid most of them without making any sharp turns. It's all about finding the right spot.

BrutalAl's record in the NTSC version is 2:27:20. That was the last time that was possible to read. In the NTSC version, the timer fades instead of stopping, which is pretty stupid. I said I would beat this record, but as of today, I haven't managed to beat it yet. As always, it's up to you, but I suggest restarting if the timer passes three minutes. That's for the NTSC version. PAL and NTSC times are different in this minigame, so three minutes is a better result in the PAL version. If you use the PAL version, you should restart if

you pass 3:15.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nu5oMpUEkvo>

Great Glacier
#####

[skip text]

Leave this screen through the exit to the right and follow this path until you reach the screen with four exits. Here, head for the exit in the upper right corner. However, before you leave this screen, you have to get into a battle with an enemy called Snow (you know, that hot chick) and steal a Circlet. Sounds simple? It's not. First of all, you should get the battle "on the run", meaning that you don't spend extra time running around to get the battle. Of course, you have no choice if you don't get a battle on that screen, but let's hope that doesn't happen. The chance to get a single Snow battle here is 12/64. She can also be accompanied by two Bandersnatches in a side attack, but you don't want that battle. If you get any other battle, you should restart. Yes, you have to replay the snowboarding, but you'll lose too much time if you run around until you get the right battle. And especially if you keep getting the wrong battle.

Stealing the Circlet isn't easy either. You have a ~7,8% chance of stealing it in one attempt. Again, it's up to you how many attempts to accept, but don't forget that Snow isn't just standing there. Her Fascination confuses you and that doesn't really make it any easier. Perfect runners must be able to steal it in one attempt.

Note: You can also encounter Snow on the screen where you land, so you can steal the Circlet here if you get a battle here without running around.

When you finally manage to steal it, you can leave this screen and follow this path until you reach the wide open area, but don't forget to pick up the Added Cut Materia on the second screen. If you don't know exactly where it is, you should find out before you do the major run. In the wide open area, just head north and place markers all the time. A blizzard will mess up the camera angle, but thanks to the markers, you'll always know where to run. Eventually, you'll reach Mr. Holzoff's hut. Enter and find the save point. The following equipment and materia changes must be done before saving:

Cloud: Dragon Armlet and Circlet. Give him Magic Plus instead of Fire and Restore=All instead of Ramuh and shiva.

Tifa: Fire Ring. Give her Added Cut instead of Restore.

Cait: Bolt Armlet. Give him Elemental=Lightning in the armor, Gravity instead of Manipulate and Fire instead of Transform.

Perfect runners must give Elemental=Lightning to Tifa instead of Cait. Other than that, everything is the same.

[SAVE YOUR GAME]

My time: 5:15:25
Rec. time (10h): 5:51:36
Rec. time (12h): 7:01:55

Then leave and head for the cliffs.

4.2 <> Gaea's Cliff

You can get through the first climbing without recovering your temperature, so make sure to practice it if you don't want to lose time here. Then get through the first cave area as quickly as possible and make sure to pick up the Ribbon. However, you can't just leave without doing some work first. You have to learn Magic Breath. As you probably know, this enemy skill is learned from Stilva, and these giant spiders lurk inside these caves. As with the Circlet, you must learn it "on the run" to lose as little time as possible, but that shouldn't be a problem. I've run through these caves many times, but only a few times have I not encountered Stilva. Just make sure to keep Cloud at full health or at least close to full until the Stilva battle, as he won't survive otherwise.

Perfect runners should restart if Cloud gets attacked before the Stilva battle, as you lose a lot of time each time you have to heal.

B25: Stilva

Pray that Magic Breath is used as soon as possible. Cloud needs full HP to be able to survive, so make sure to Cure him if he gets attacked physically. Tifa will take no damage from Magic Breath and Cait will be healed, so you don't have to worry about them. Just make sure they don't get killed. Of course, you lose time each time the Stilva uses another attack, so restart if you feel that you've lost too much time. When Magic Breath is used, you must quickly have Cloud cast it back, to kill the enemy.

Note: You have to hope for two things: First, that Cloud has enough HP to survive Magic Breath. Thanks to the Circlet it should only deal around 800 damage. Second, that he kills the Stilva with one Magic Breath. Both should go well, but I'm just pointing out that both are close. If needed, you can remove green materia from Cloud.

Magic Breath must be the first and only attack Stilva uses.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=03IRAHzNZXE>

#####

Heal the party after the battle and proceed. It's impossible to get through the second climbing without recovering your temperature, but if you're fast, you only have to recover a couple of degrees. Recover five, just in case.

Perfect runners can only recover the necessary amount of degrees, which seems to be 2, but that really requires you to climb perfect, so recover 3. Also, in addition to giving Cait the Ribbon, you must give Tifa the Power Wrist before the Icicle battles. And also, don't pick up the Elixir in the next cave.

When you reach the next cave, go right to pick up the Elixir and then head for

the save point. Before saving, you must give the Ribbon to Cait and give an Elixir to Cloud.

[SAVE YOUR GAME]

My time: 5:22:20
Rec. time (10h): 6:00:00
Rec. time (12h): 7:12:00

Then it's time to go fight some Icicles. When you reach the area where the Icicles are, make sure to pick up the Fire Armlet before you start fighting the Icicles. That's for regular runners only.

B26: Icicle + Evilheads

The battles should go like this:

1. Cait: Demi on the Icicle
2. Cloud: Trine (kills the bats)
3. Tifa: Molotov

Sounds simple? It's not. The Evilheads live up to their names, as they have an attack called Ultrasound. Guess what it does. Yup, Silence. Cait has a Ribbon, but Cloud doesn't, so pray they don't use this attack on him before Trine has been cast. But that's not all. There's also a chance that Demi might miss, so getting through these three battles requires a lot of luck.

If you managed to steal a T/S Bomb from a Flapbeat on the battle arena, you can use it in one of the battles instead of Demi. The Icicles are weak against Gravity, so it will kill them instantly. However, you need the EXP from the Evilheads, so you have to cast Trine first. If Trine deals even damage, you can use the T/S Bomb. If the Icicle has odd HP, like 1965, the T/S Bomb will only deal 1964 damage. The reason for that is because the original 982,5 damage is rounded down first.

The Icicle has a 50% chance to counter any attacks with Icicle Drop, except when you kill him, so this can happen 0 to 6 times. Of course, the best would be if it never happened, but that's a 1/64 chance, something you don't want in addition to the luck these battles already require. I say restart if it happens more than three times.

Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_hg-2mghFaA

#####

After each battle, you get to choose if you want to jump down. Select the first option after the first two battles and proceed to the next Icicle. You only have to fight three of them, so select the second option after the third battle, to jump down. Make sure to heal the party to full health between the battles, unless you lost very little HP.

When you finally get through the battles, you can jump down and proceed. Don't bother healing Tifa; it's actually a good thing if she dies in battle on the way to Schizo. Also, make sure to pick up the Enhance Sword. It's in the only chest you pass by on the way up. Perfect runners don't have to pick it up. The next climbing session is the easiest, so recovering your temperature shouldn't

be necessary, but I recommend recovering a few degrees just in case.

When you reach the cave, head directly for the save point. Do not touch the healing spring! You have to do a couple of things before you save. First, give the Fire Armband to Cait. Then heal Cloud and Cait to full health. If Tifa died in battle on the way here, you can simply give her a Phoenix Down, a Hi-Potion and a Tranquilizer. Otherwise, heal her to 700-800 HP. You can't heal her to full health, as she needs to be in a certain HP range in order for Schizo to reduce her HP to the critical range with his regular attack. And finally, set ATB to Recommended.

You also have to reset Tifa's limit bar if it's too full. You should test run and see if she gets a limit break after getting attacked by the ice head. If she does, you have to reset it. This won't be a problem if Tifa died on the way here, so you should really aim for that to happen.

Tifa's strength must be EXACTLY 77 for the perfect Schizo strategy to work, so if it's higher, you need to adjust it with green materia. If it's lower, well, then you have no choice but to replay the Icicle battles. Thankfully, that's not very likely to happen. Also, give the Fire Ring to Cait.

[SAVE YOUR GAME]

My time: 5:30:28
Rec. time (10h): 6:08:24
Rec. time (12h): 7:22:05

Before you attempt Schizo for real, you should go beat him once and see if you get a random battle after Schizo, before you exit the cave. If that happens, you won't be able to escape it, because of a glitch. It most likely won't happen, but if it does, you have to run around some to make sure you get the battle before Schizo. You lose a few seconds, but it really can't be helped. You can also run around before you save and hope saving removes the battle, but you have to test run from the save before the Icicles to see if that works.

B29: Schizo

This is by far the most annoying battle in this challenge. At least for perfect runners. To get through this battle, you have to obey the following rules:

1. No one is allowed to die during the battle.
2. Heal Cloud and Cait whenever they get attacked, and make sure to do this before you have Tifa attack.
3. Make sure to keep track of each head's HP and how many times you've attacked the fire head. It counters every fifth attack with Quake3.

And a reminder: The more times Deathblow misses, the more time you lose. It's up to you how many misses to accept.

The strategy is pretty simple, but it requires a bit of luck. First of all, the ice head must attack Tifa on its first turn. That'll bring her HP down to the critical level, so that she can deal twice as much damage with her attacks. On your first turn, have Cait give a Hero Drink to Tifa, Cloud cast Death Sentence

on Tifa and Tifa Deathblow the ice head (left), in that order.

If the first Deathblow sticks, you have two options:

1. Heal Tifa to full health and continue to use Deathblow (and heal) every turn until the ice head dies. Deathblow can't miss four times in a row, or else he'll use the Quake3 counter attack. There's a very small chance that will happen, though.
2. Don't heal Tifa and attack the ice head with a regular attack. For this tactic to work, the ice head must attack Cloud/Cait on turn two and three. After the second regular attack, the ice head will be almost dead. On the turn where Tifa attacks for the second time (third turn), have Cloud cast Cure=All. Then quickly have Cait use a Hi-Potion on Tifa and have Tifa Deathblow to finish him. If Deathblow misses, the ice head will still die. If it sticks, you'll get a full damage Added Cut attack on the fire head.

If the first Deathblow missed, you can simply Deathblow again. If this sticks, you can either take the risk and attack once regularly (and not heal Tifa) or heal Tifa. If the second Deathblow misses, the third has to hit and then you can finish the ice head with another Deathblow.

When you kill the ice head, Schizo will use his final attack and bring Tifa's HP back to the critical level. Now, give a Hi-Potion to Cloud and make sure to keep track of how much damage you've dealt to the fire head. Tifa deals about 7000 damage with Deathblow and 3500 with Added Cut on critical HP. The table below tells you what to do when you've dealt this and that much damage. In addition, you must heal Cloud when/if needed.

- 0: Deathblow. Miss will bring you to 3500 and hit will bring you to 10500.
3500: Deathblow. Miss will bring you to 7000 and hit will bring you to 14000.
7000: Deathblow. This one must hit and it will bring you to 17500.
10500: Heal the party to full health and use Deathblow twice to kill him. Both must hit, or else he'll Quake3 you. You can also not heal the party and use Deathblow and hope it misses, but I wouldn't recommend it. If you do, it will bring you to 14000 HP.
14000: Heal the party to full health and use Deathblow to kill him. Must hit.
17500: Heal the party to full health and use Deathblow or Dice. You will kill him either way.

Video (regular battle): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kShCysqUGCM>

Perfect strategy:

This is the most luck-requiring battle in the whole challenge. First of all, one of the heads must attack Tifa to bring her HP down to the critical level. The other head must attack Cloud or Cait. The best thing would be if the ice head attacks Tifa and the fire head attacks Cait. On your first turn, have Cloud cast Death Sentence on Tifa, Cait give her a Hero Drink and Tifa use Deathblow in that order. It doesn't matter if this Deathblow misses. When Schizo attacks again, just pray he doesn't kill anyone.

If the first Deathblow missed, you must now have Tifa Deathblow again and this time it must stick. If the first one stuck, have her attack regularly now. Either way, you must then have Cloud Cure=All and Cait cast Fire2 in that order. That'll take care of the ice head, but make sure to have Tifa attack regularly again before she takes damage from the final attack and her limit bar fills up. Cloud and Cait don't have to do anything this turn. As for Schizo, he must attack either Cloud or Cait. On your final turn, have Tifa Deathblow,

Cloud Cure=All and Cait use Dice in that order. Logically enough, Deathblow must stick. Otherwise, you're screwed.

Note: It can be a problem to use Fire2 in time. Make sure to set the cursor to Fire2 while waiting for Tifa's bar to fill and then be lightning quick at selecting everything (Attack, Cure=All, Fire2). You should practice this before you attempt the battle for real.

Video (perfect battle): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qg_G_7L5hUw

It should be mentioned that there is an even faster strategy, but it has odds worse than 1/300. Here's a video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t75LJjOS5es>
#####

When you eventually beat him, you can just exit the cave and climb up to the top. On the top, the camera will start moving, but you can control Cloud. Make sure to run as far as you can. By doing that, you will start in the next area after the scene with the crater.

[skip text]

4.3 <> Whirlwind Maze

Note: If Tifa dies in battle on the way to Jenova, you can revive her with a Phoenix Down, but don't do it before you reach the area where the Jenova battle takes place. Else she might die again and the time you spent reviving her goes down the drain together with the Phoenix Down you used.

Just move on when the talking is over. You will run into a caped man on the way down here, but just "talk to him" to make him disappear. The party will stop for some talking again in the next area.

[skip text]

Then proceed to the save point, but make sure to pick up Neo Bahamut on the way. Thankfully, there are no random battles in these two areas. We'll use the same setup for Jenova. Perfect runners must set ATB back to Active.

[SAVE YOUR GAME]

My time: 5:37:39
Rec. time (10h): 6:16:48
Rec. time (12h): 7:32:10

Move on and Rufus will show up in the Highwind.

[skip text]

In the next area, you will run into some caped men again and you have to skip one box of text. It's safe to cross now, so just move on to the next area. Here, you won't see Cloud at first, but you can control him all the time. Move left and a little up now and then and you should be able to get as far as possible. This is something you should practice if you want to save as much time as possible. If you don't know what you're doing, you will most likely run into something and get stuck. Anyway, make sure to pick up the Kaiser Knuckles on your way through this area.

Next comes the second whirlwind crossing, but here you can't just run over. In addition to the wind, there are green whirlwinds here. It's safe to cross after the fourth one. You only have to wait a few seconds, though. Then we have the area where the Jenova battle takes place. If Tifa has been killed in battle, you must revive her now and heal Cloud to full health. Just don't heal Tifa.

Perfect runners don't have to pick up the Kaiser Knuckle and you have to make sure you don't have to heal anyone.

B30: Jenova-DEATH

Have Tifa use Deathblow until Jenova dies and heal Cloud when necessary so that he doesn't die. That's it. Of course, don't let Deathblow miss too many times.

The battle should go like this:

1. Jenova: Silence
2. Cloud: Death Sentence on Tifa
3. Tifa: Deathblow (+ Added Cut)
4. Cait: Attack
5. Tifa: Deathblow (+ Added Cut)
6. Cloud: Cross-Slash
7. Tifa: Deathblow (+ Added Cut)

No misses, as usual.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f6dAValhYbk>
#####

[skip text]

Give the Black Materia to Red and then talk to Tifa. You have to skip two boxes of text before you get to control Cloud. Pick up the MP Turbo Materia and move on to the save point. Set ATB back to Active before you save.

[SAVE YOUR GAME]
My time: 5:46:10
Rec. time (10h): 6:25:48
Rec. time (12h): 7:42:58

Pick up the Poison Ring from the chest and move on to the next area. It's safe to cross here after the third green whirlwind. Keep moving and Sephiroth will start his show of illusions.

[skip text]

Talk to Tifa after Sephiroth disappears.

[skip text]

Talk to Sephiroth.

[skip text]

Talk to Tifa.

[skip text]

Next, you get to control Cloud when he's upside down and you have to find Sephiroth. Here's lolo's explanation on how to do this:

After a certain amount of time (always the same) Cloud will walk to a spot and then the FMV will start. In the meantime you can run around. But the best is, of course, to get him at the exact spot he will walk to anyway. A very easy way to get almost exactly there is to walk (walk, not run!) there by doing a step up (push up, this is to turn around), then a step down and right (push down + right, you get it I hope >_>), and then right.

[skip text]

This one lasts until you get to control Tifa in Junon.

4.4 <> The Time Without Cloud

You can control Tifa while the camera moves now. Go over to Barret. Talk to him after the scene with Meteor and Rufus will appear.

[skip text]

You get to control Barret now. Just follow the others to the next area. Save here if you want to. Perfect runners can't.

[skip text]

You will be attacked by two Attack Squads, but this battle can be escaped. Head over to the gas chamber when you get to control Barret and tap the action button until he says it won't move.

[skip text]

You get to control Barret again after some cutscenes with Weapon. Go talk to Cait and go out the door. Here, run just ahead to trigger another short scene.

[skip text]

Exit this building to the right and head for the airport. In the next area, you will see a short cutscene with Weapon and you have to skip a box of text afterwards. On the airport, make sure to run while the elevator ascends. Then head right and you'll find the Highwind.

[skip text]

Then it's time to get Tifa loose. Push the buttons in this order:

X, X, Triangle, X & Triangle, Triangle & O, O

Of course, you can't just push the buttons like crazy. Anyone who's played this game at least once will know what to do. When she's free, push the button on the left side of the chair and then try to open the door.

[skip text]

Climb down, run left and climb futher down. After falling down, head for the end of the cannon. Scarlet will catch up with you

[skip text]

Slapping time! To save time, just let Scarlet win. Afterwards, you will be told to run to the end of the cannon, but you don't have to.

[skip text]

Head down to the bridge.

[skip text]

Then enter the cockpit.

[skip text]

Talk to Red and then the pilot.

When you get to control Tifa again, head down to the operation room and form any party. Then talk to the pilot and you'll get to control the airship. Your destination is Mideel. Before entering town, you must remove the Fire Ring from Tifa. Perfect runners must remove the Fire Ring from Cait and the Power Wrist from Tifa. Save here if you want to. Perfect runners can't.

[SAVE YOUR GAME]

My time: 6:18:28
Rec. time (10h): 7:01:48
Rec. time (12h): 8:26:10

Mideel
#####

Enter town, but don't go find the dog yet. First, it's shopping time! Enter the Materia Shop, which is located on the ground level, on the right side of town, near the clinic.

Sell (regular runners): Transfrom Materia, Fire Ring, Power Wrist, Edincoat, Enhance Sword, Reflect Ring, Poison Ring, Kaiser Knuckle.

Sell (perfect runners): Transfrom Materia, Fire Ring, Power Wrist, Edincoat, Jem Ring, Reflect Ring, Poison Ring.

Buy (regular runners): 3x HP Plus, 5x MP Plus, Destruct.

Buy (perfect runners): 2x HP Plus, 5x MP Plus, Destruct.

If you don't have enough money, you can sell the Bolt Armlet and the Manipulate Materia as well. Also, regular runners can sell the Fire Armlet and perfect runners can sell the Wizer Staff.

When you're done shopping, go find the dog to trigger a very long cut-scene.

[skip text]

This one lasts until you get to control Cid inside the Highwind. Get down to the operation room and form a party of Cid, Red and Cait. Then head back up and talk to the pilot. Next stop is North Corel.

North Corel/Mt. Corel
#####

Well, just head to the save point. Some preparations must be done before the train battles.

Cid: Give him Gravity and Steal in the weapon and Elemental=HP Plus (the one with the most AP) in the armor. Also, place him in back row.

Red: Equip the Seraph Comb and give him Enemy Skill and Restore=All.

Cait: Equip the Wizard Armlet and the Circlet. Give him the following materia in this exact order:

Weapon: Magic Plus, MP Plus, Ramuh and Lightning.

Armor: 4x MP Plus, Enemy Skill (the one with Trine), Neo Bahamut, Fire and Bahamut.

Finally, use a Tent and give Tranquilizers to everyone.

[SAVE YOUR GAME]

My time: 6:31:57 (I went to Fort Condor first)

No recommended times here until I complete the perfect run.

Then go fight the guys in front of the reactor. You have to skip one box of text before the battle.

B31: Attack Squad x2

Have Red cast Magic Breath to kill them.

Note: These guys can put you to sleep with a smoke shot attack. You obviously don't want Red to be put to sleep.

Perfect runners should restart if the Grenade attack is used, since its animation is rather long compared to the other attacks.
#####

[skip text]

Then you have to catch up with the train, something I really hate. I managed 9:57 once, but I've never gotten close again. Seriously, I have no idea how this works. Even if you push the buttons as fast as you can without screwing up, you might not be able to catch up with the train before 9:30. As always, you decide what to accept, but I would restart after 9:45. After jumping over to the other train, you have to move a bit ahead to trigger the first battle. You can heal between battles if necessary, but it is possible to get through all the battles without having to heal.

Perfect runners can heal after Wolfmeister, when you have to give a Turbo Ether

to Cait. And obviously, Demi can't miss.

#####

B32: Train Battles

#####

1. Gas Ductor

Have Cait cast Magic Breath and Red throw a Molotov.

These guys can inflict both Poison and Silence with their Smog Alert attack. No need to explain what happens if Cait gets silenced.

#####

2. Gas Ductor x2

Have Cait cast Magic Breath and the others throw Molotovs.

#####

3. Wolfmeister

Have Red and Cid throw T/S Bombs, Cait cast Magic Breath and Red use Sled Fang, in that order. Also have Cid attack or use his limit break just in case.

Give Cait a Turbo Ether after the battle.

#####

4. Eagle Gun

Have Cid cast Demi, followed by Cait casting Magic Breath twice. If Demi should miss, you can have Cait cast Magic Breath again.

Note: It's not very likely, but if Cait has less than 150 MP after casting Magic Breath twice and you didn't get an S-mine from the Attack Squad battle, Demi can't miss.

#####

Move on. Some talking will take place before the last battle.

[skip text]

#####

B36: Attack Squad

#####

If you got an S-mine from the first Attack Squad battle, you can use it here. If you didn't, just have Cait cast Magic Breath.

#####

Video (all train battles): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iLtJFuekq2g>

[skip text]

This includes stopping the train. You have to push both X and up the first time and triangle and down the second time. When you get back to North Corel, just move on to trigger the cutscene.

[skip text]

Next, you'll wake up at the Inn. Leave North Corel and head for Fort Condor. Save before you enter.

[SAVE YOUR GAME]

My time: I went here before Corel.
No recommended times here until I complete the perfect run.

Fort Condor
#####

No need to talk to the man here. Just run past him on the right side and climb up to the main area. Here, talk to the old man by the table. Then climb up to the top and talk to the man here. Select the sixth and second option to start the minigame.

Since it's faster, you have to win the minigame. Here's how you do it:

- Before the battle starts, place one Fighter at the lowest possible point.
- Then start the battle.
- Quickly place other Fighters, always as low as possible. Each time you place a Fighter, you will be able to place the next one lower. After five more Fighters, you should be close to where the enemies appear (on the right side of the screen).
- Now place three Attackers as close as possible to the first enemy, that by now will have appeared on the screen, and order them to attack it.
- Turn up the battle speed.
- Look at them quickly destroying the enemy. If you were fast enough they will kill the enemy before other enemies appear and you will win the minigame. If other enemies appear, then you're too slow.

This may sound complicated, but it's really not. Just practice it a few times, and you should easily get the hang of it. I mastered it after two attempts.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MDrzvllu3Bc>

[skip text]

Head back down and talk to the man by the table to receive the Huge Materia. Since you won the minigame, you have to get the Huge Materia to be able to advance with the story. I learned that the hard way, but thankfully, it was only a test run. Then climb back down to the ground and head for Mideel. PHS Cait for Barret and save before you enter town.

[SAVE YOUR GAME]

My time: 6:40:09
Rec. time (10h): 7:26:24
Rec. time (12h): 8:55:41

Mideel/Lifestream
#####

Enter the clinic and go talk to Tifa. An earthquake will start. Get out as soon

as Cid says "what the hell's goin' on".

[skip text]

B37: Ultimate Weapon

You have two objectives in this battle: Survive and steal a Cursed Ring. UW will flee after three attacks, so there's no need to deal any damage.

UW will open the battle with Quake2 and Barret will die. Now have Red give an X-Potion to Cid and have Cid steal. Next, UW attacks with his claw and this attack must be used on Red. If you failed to steal the first time, have Cid steal again. Finally, UW will use Ultima Beam and you get one last chance to steal before he runs off. If you failed to steal the Cursed Ring... you know.

Note: There's a chance Quake2 will kill Red. You can't have that happen. If it happens too often, you should give him a Tranquilizer before the battle.

If Red gets killed too often, you should still restart until it doesn't happen. You don't have a Tranquilizer to spare and it does cost time. But hey, you just saved, so it's really not too bad.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7MQCbnoLR8>

#####

[skip text]

You get to control Tifa after a while. First go talk to Cloud in front of Nibelheim. Then move into town to make things happen.

[skip text]

Talk to Cloud when he appears by the truck.

[skip text]

Go talk to Cloud in front of the well.

[skip text]

Talk to the last Cloud, head over to Tifa's window and talk to the small Cloud.

[skip text]

Now head back to Nibelheim and move into town.

[skip text]

Talk to Cloud when he falls, after all his forms have gathered.

[skip text]

This one lasts until you get to control Cloud again inside the Highwind. Try leaving the room and the guy will talk to you. You have to skip a few boxes of text before you get to form a party. The party is Cloud, Tifa and Cait.

[skip text]

Some equipment and materia changes must be done before you enter town.

Cait: Equip the Dragon Armlet and the Ribbon

Tifa: Equip the Cursed Ring. Give her 3x HP Plus (2 for perfect runners), MP Turbo in the weapon and Added Cut=Deathblow in the armor.

Cloud: Equip the Wizard Bracelet and the Circlet.

Exchange Cloud's materia with Cait's, give him Ultima instead of Ramuh and equip Shiva and Ice in the last two slots. Exchange Cait's materia with Red's and give him Cover and Destruct.

[SAVE YOUR GAME]

My time: 7:06:43

Rec. time (10h): 7:55:48

Rec. time (12h): 9:30:58

4.5 <> Junon Underwater Reactor

Important: Make sure Tifa's health is critical/yellow before you reach the save point at the bottom, or at least close to it.

Note: If you don't know exactly how to get to the bottom, you should do a couple of practice runs first.

Talk to the man in front of the elevator and pay him the 10 Gil. Then take the elevator up to Junon and head for the reactor. Cloud will stop halfway through the first area and you have to skip one box of text. Then, he'll stop when you run into the soldiers in the hallway.

[skip text]

Enter the elevator.

B38 & B39: Submarine Crew x2

Have Cloud cast Magic Breath to kill them. You can also have Tifa Deathblow, but that requires luck as Deathblow can't miss. It's about two seconds faster.

Note: Make sure you get at least two S-mine from these battles. It would be best if you got three, but you don't have to.

#####

Exit the elevator and you'll run into two more guards.

[skip text]

After the battle, you can just proceed to the bottom. When you reach the save point, give the last Turbo Ether to Cloud, give Tranquilizers to everyone and heal Cloud and/or Cait if needed.

[SAVE YOUR GAME]

My time: 7:13:41

Rec. time (10h): 8:03:36

Rec. time (12h): 9:40:19

Move on. In the next area, you have to make sure to run past the first guy, so that you get into a battle with all three of the guards here. You have to skip one box of text before the battle.

```
#####
                        B40: Submarine Crew x3
#####
Have Cait cast Magic Breath on the group of two and have Tifa Deathblow the
single one. If she doesn't have a limit break, you can simply attack, but she
most likely does. Tifa won't do the Added Cut attack if Deathblow sticks. Of
course, you lose a few seconds if it misses.
#####
```

Proceed to the next battle. Again, you have to skip one box of text first.

```
#####
                        B41: Underwater MP x2
#####
This battle is really annoying. Both of the enemies will attack three times
each unless you're really quick or lucky. Sure sucks, but that's how it is.
Have Cloud cast Trine to kill them.
```

```
*****
Either have Cloud cast Magic Breath or Tifa use Deathblow (depending on who's
ATB gauge is fuller) to try to avoid getting attacked six times. You should at
least make sure only one of the enemies gets to attack.
#####
```

Move on. Halfway through the next area, the party will stop and watch as the Huge Materia is taken out of the reactor. Before entering the next area, you should heal Tifa to 300-350 HP with Potions. Just make sure her HP stays in critical condition. That's regular runners only. Perfect runners can't heal.

[skip text]

When you enter the next area, you have to watch the Huge Materia being placed inside the submarine. Afterwards, you have to move just ahead to trigger the cutscene with Reno.

[skip text]

```
#####
                        B42: Carry Armor
#####
This battle is really simple, but there are many things that can go wrong.
First of all, Lapis Laser and Arm Grab can never be used. There's a 1/3 chance
he'll use Lapis Laser as a Sneak Attack and there's a 1/4 chance he'll use it
as his first attack, so he will open the battle with this attack at least half
the time. My record is five times in a row and lolo's is 11! On top of this,
Tifa must get two successful Deathblows. And yes, you have to replay the last
two battles and go through the boring cutscenes each time something goes wrong.
```

Strategy: Have Tifa Deathblow, Cloud cast Magic Breath and Tifa Deathblow again. That's it. The battle will be over after Tifa's last attack if none of the Deathblows missed. Regular players can always try again if one should miss, but you will most likely get destroyed by Lapis Laser.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BFvURGNETHA>

#####

[skip text]

Move on. Three more battles await before you can save inside the sub, but first you have to do some healing. Heal the guys to full health first. As for Tifa, she needs to get back to critical HP before Rude and that can be a little tricky with all the forced battles in between.

If you have two Molotovs or more and you don't mind wasting a few seconds, you can use Cure on her twice, which should bring her to full health. If you only have one Molotov or you don't want to waste any time, you can only use Cure once. That will bring her to about 950 HP, but that can be a little risky. If you don't want to take the risk, give her a couple of Potions too.

Perfect runners can only use Cure once on Tifa. As I said, that can be a little risky, but it should be enough to get safely to the save point inside the sub. If you don't want to take the risk, you can heal her to full health, but then it will be trickier to get her HP to critical condition before Rude and you might lose a little time. It's up to you.

B43: Submarine Crew x2

Have Cait cast Magic Breath.
#####

"Talk to" the next guards to trigger the next battle.

B44: Submarine Crew x2

Regular runners: Have Cloud cast Trine.
Perfect runners: Have Cloud cast Magic Breath.
#####

Cloud will automatically enter the submarine after the second battle.

[skip text]

B45: Submarine Crew x3
#####

Have Cloud cast Trine on the group of two and Tifa Deathblow the single one.
#####

Time to save. Perfect runners can either save here or before entering Rocket Town. I recommend saving before Rocket Town if you know you can handle the submarine minigame.

[SAVE YOUR GAME]

My time: 7:21:29
Rec. time (10h): 8:12:36
Rec. time (12h): 9:51:07

Enter the control room.

[skip text]

During these dialogues, you have to select the second option three times. After the third time, the submarine game will start.

This can be done really quickly if you know what you're doing. My record is 9:51. Start climbing as soon as the minigame starts, but wait for about one second before you start moving forwards. By doing this, you will find yourself just behind the red sub within a few seconds. Now hit the square button rapidly until you take it out. Do some practice, and you should easily be able to make it in 9:50. I wouldn't accept anything below 9:45, even in a regular run.

[skip text]

After talking, Cloud will take the submarine back to the surface and exit. Rocket Town is next, but first we have to go pick up the ancient key from the underwater cave near the northernmost continent. Get back in the submarine and take it as far to the north as you can get. Travel on the surface. When you get there, descend, enter the cave and find the key.

[skip text]

Head back, enter the Highwind and fly over to Rocket Town. When you get there, PHS Cait for Cid and remove all his materia. Regular runners should also heal Cloud back to full health and give a Hi-Potion to Cid.

[SAVE YOUR GAME]

My time: 7:26:28
Rec. time (10h): 8:18:00
Rec. time (12h): 9:57:36

4.6 <> Rocket Town & More

Enter town and head directly to the rocket. Approach the guards in front of the stairs to trigger the battles. There are three battles. You have to skip one box of text before each battle and Cloud will automatically move on to the second and third battles.

Note: If you don't already have three S-mines, you have to make sure you do after the third battle.

Note 2: Tifa's HP must be critical before Rude and that can be a problem if you enter Rocket Town with a lot of HP. Hopefully, a Molotov will be enough, but if not, you have to make sure she gets attacked in the first three battles.

B46 & B47: Attack Squad x2

Have Cloud cast Trine. Take note that these guys can put you to sleep. You don't want that to happen.

Perfect runners should use DB, but you can use Trine or Magic Breath (Magic Breath is faster than Trine), depending on how much MP you have left. You just have to make sure you have 95 or more MP at the end of B47.

B48: Senior Grunt + Attack Squad x2

Have Cloud cast Magic Breath.
#####

[skip text]

Climb the ladder and approach Rude.

[skip text]

B49: Rude + Attack Squad x2

Have Tifa Deathblow Rude. Since Rude is in love with Tifa, he won't attack her.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yl4DrrnFcwc>

#####

[skip text]

Enter the rocket.

[skip text]

B50: Senior Grunt

Have Tifa Deathblow him. If it misses, the added cut attack will kill him.
#####

Enter the control room.

[skip text]

You get to control Cloud again when it's time to escape. Head towards the exit and Cid will interrupt and you have to skip one box of text. Then exit and

climb down to the engine room. Keep moving and the infamous tank #8 will explode as you pass by it.

[skip text]

Proceed to the escape pod.

[skip text]

After a long time, you get to control the Highwind. Head for Cosmo Canyon and land on the green area as close to town as possible. Pray you won't get into a battle on the way to town. Thankfully, it's not very likely to happen. It's only happened to me once or twice out of 30+ times.

Cosmo Canyon

Climb all the way up to Bugenhagen's observatory and talk to him.

[skip text]

Approach the Huge Materia and select the third option to go back down.

[skip text]

You get to control Cloud again inside the Highwind. Head upstairs, talk to the pilot and head for the Forgotten Capital.

The Forgotten Capital

Head to the area with the music box. It's to the left. When you get there, enter the center area where Bugenhagen is. You have to skip two boxes of text before entering. Inside, go talk to Bugenhagen.

[skip text]

Go back inside after Bugenhagen places the key in the music box.

[skip text]

Time to leave. Cait will call before you climb the stairs.

[skip text]

Head back to the world map and enter the Highwind. Diamond Weapon will appear.

[skip text]

It takes a while for Diamond Weapon to reach Midgar. We're talking ~90 seconds if I remember correctly. Well, just wait until he gets close so that you can tell exactly where he's going to reach land. Then park the Highwind as close as possible and go wait for Diamond Weapon at the beach. Some preparations need to be done first.

PHS Cid for Cait and give him the 4th (3rd for perfect runners) HP Plus

Materia. Then remove Cover and give it to Cloud instead of Ultima. Place Ultima in the armor instead of Ice. Tifa: Give her Elemetal=Fire and Steal in the armor. If her HP is under 300, you must heal her with Potions, but like before, it must stay yellow. Give an Elixir to Cloud, heal Cait to full health and set ATB to Wait. Perfect runners must heal Cloud to full health regularly.

[SAVE YOUR GAME]

My time: 7:54:07
Rec. time (10h): 8:48:36
Rec. time (12h): 10:34:19

B51: Diamond Weapon

Open the battle with Beat Rush (yeah) and Dice and have Cloud cast Magic Breath. Then have Tifa use Deathblow and Cloud cast Magic Breath until the battle is over. One Deathblow is allowed to miss, but not more. Also, you have to restart if he gets to use Diamond Flash.

You can use the Wait Trick to make this battle easier.

Same strategy for perfect runners, except for Cloud casting Magic Breath every turn. Also, Dice must deal at least 1500 damage and Deathblow can't miss.

Note: If Tifa's Strength is lower than 113, you need a higher damage Dice. You can also cast Trine instead of getting a higher damage Dice, but obviously, that costs extra time.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ybKjoUGEQCU>

#####

[skip text]

Fly to the crater. You will trigger a cutscene when you try to fly over.

[skip text]

Fly back to Midgar and attempt to fly over the city.

[skip text]

Before jumping, you're given the choice to form a party. We're not going to do any more party member changes, so select the second option, NO! On the way down, make sure to press X and right after the parachute opens. By doing that, Cloud will do aerial tricks and you will land in the area with the save point.

4.7 <> Return To Midgar

When you land, just head to the save point. Before climbing down, you have to do a couple of things in the menu.

Tifa: remove the three HP Pluses (two for perfect runners) and MP Turbo.
Cloud: Give him MP Turbo instead of Shiva and HP Plus instead of Cover.
Cait: Give him the other two HP Pluses (one for perfect runners).

[SAVE YOUR GAME]

My time: 8:07:46
Rec. time (10h): 9:04:12
Rec. time (12h): 10:53:02

Note: Make sure Tifa gets killed or at least badly damaged on the way to the next save point. The easiest way is just to have her attack herself.

Then you can climb down the ladder to the plate area. If you don't know exactly how to get through this area, you need to do some practice runs. It's not that hard, though. Just run downstairs and climb down the ladder to reach the next area. Here, go right and jump over to the plate that breaks. When you land on the lower level, you only have one way to go. After jumping through the shaft, you only have to go upstairs to find the save point.

Before saving, you must give Cover to Cait, revive and give Tifa a Potion (or heal her to about 500 HP) and give Tranquilizers to everyone.

[SAVE YOUR GAME]

My time: 8:10:10
Rec. time (10h): 9:06:36
Rec. time (12h): 10:55:55

#####

B52: The Turks

#####

Deathblow Reno twice by using the Wait Trick: Have Tifa Deathblow, Cait defend and Cloud enter a sub-menu. Exit the sub-menu when you see the damage dealt by Added Cut and have Cloud defend as well. Then, quickly Deathblow Reno again and Tifa should be able to attack before they do.

If one Deathblow should miss, you can always try again, but don't forget that Tifa is far from immortal. She can survive an attack from Elena or Reno, but that's it. This battle is just after a save point anyway, so reloading until you get two Deathblows shouldn't be that much of a problem.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ew891NiWhzo>

#####

Before moving on, you must do a couple of things in the menu.

- Cait: Remove two HP Pluses (one for p.r.). Leave the one with one star.
- Cloud: Give him a red or green materia instead of HP Plus.
- Tifa: Give her the three HP Pluses (two for p.r).
- Heal Tifa to about 700 HP with Potions and Cure Cloud and Cait to full health.

Perfect runners can only heal Tifa to 500-550 HP and you also have to reset Cloud's limit bar.

Then you can proceed. Go left in the first intersection to get to Sector 8. Here, just run ahead and Cloud will automatically climb up. Then keep moving and Heidegger and Scarlet will show up with Proud Clod.

[skip text]

#####

B53: Proud Clod

#####

We're using the Wait Trick again in this battle. On each turn, have Cloud or Cait (whoever gets a turn first) attack, Tifa use Deathblow and the other guy select Attack and place the cursor at Proud Clod. Confirm the attack when you see the damage dealt by Tifa's Added Cut attack and have Tifa Deathblow again and the other guy select attack again. Repeat this until you kill him. Of course, you have to restart if Deathblow keeps missing, but it's always up to you how many misses to accept. You can also use Cloud and Cait's limit breaks when/if they get them and throw S-mines if you have any.

On the first turn, have Cloud attack, Tifa use Deathblow and Cait select an S-mine and set the cursor at Proud Clod. Throw the S-mine when you see the damage from Tifa's Added Cut attack and follow up with another Deathblow and have Cloud select Attack. Abort the attack when you see the damage from Tifa's Added Cut and have Tifa Deathblow, Cloud attack and Cait select S-mine. Throw the S-mine when you see the damage from Cloud's attack and have her Deathblow one last time. The battle will be over after Tifa's Added Cut if Deathblow never missed. You know what to do if it does.

Proud Clod can use all of his attacks twice per turn and that obviously costs extra time. If the Wait Trick works every time and he never attacks twice per turn, he will only attack twice in total. That's the perfect approach, but you can accept three attacks to make it a little less luck dependant. After all, you need four Deathblows to hit and you have to redo The Turks each time. Also, there's a little chance he will go down on his knees after the second DB. The animation is long, so restart if that happens. Materia Jammer's animation is also rather long, so try to avoid that one too.

Note: If Tifa has less than 119 Strength, the damage won't add up and you can use an additional S-mine, cast Magic Breath or Ultima or hope for a critical. You can also redo Diamond Weapon and hope you get higher stats at level up.

Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y_5bzI15TlY

#####

[skip text]

Move on. Open the two chests in the next area and head to the save point. You have to do a couple of things before saving.

Cloud: Equip Ragnarok and give him two green/red materia to boost his magic.
Tifa: Equip the Mystile.
Heal the guys to full health.

Perfect runners don't have to equip Ragnarok and the Mystile, but you have to reset Cait's limit bar.

Note: If you get a battle in the area with the save point, it will be with a Grosspanzer either way and these guys are known for dealing heavy damage. If you get one before the save point and a character gets killed, you can simply

use a Phoenix Down, but I recommend restarting if someone gets killed on the way to Hojo.

[SAVE YOUR GAME]

My time: 8:17:16
Rec. time (10h): 9:14:24
Rec. time (12h): 11:05:17

Time to go pay a visit to Hojo. Near the top of the first staircase, Cait will "come out of Cloud" and move on a little bit and then Cloud will automatically follow him. After that, you can just climb to the top and find Hojo.

[skip text]

#####

B54: Hojo

#####

Have Tifa Deathblow and Cait cast Magic Breath. Then quickly select Deathblow and Ultima, in that order, before he dies. Deathblow can't miss now that Tifa is equipped with the Mystile, so that's one less thing to worry about.

Deathblow. That's all.

#####

B55: Hellectic Hojo

#####

Tifa and Cloud will now open the battle with Deathblow and Ultima. Afterwards, have Tifa Deathblow again. With a little luck, she will perform this Deathblow before Hojo gets a turn and you will kill him without him ever getting a turn!

Deathblow him twice by using the Wait Trick.

#####

B56: Lifeform Hojo NA

#####

Have Tifa Deathblow, Cloud attack and Cait attack, in that order. If they have limit breaks, you must use them instead. Then have Tifa Deathblow again and Cloud cast Ultima and the battle will be over.

The only thing that can go wrong in this battle is that he might put Cloud to sleep or attack Tifa. Restart if that happens. Also, there's a chance Tifa might be able to attack before Hojo gets a turn, but that's not good, as he will then counter Tifa with Combo. Therefore, you must wait until he attacks before you command Tifa to Deathblow.

Video (regular battle): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8uiQ5XT435c>

Have Tifa Deathblow, Cloud attack and Cait attack, in that order. Then have Tifa Deathblow again and the battle will be over.

Yes, you need five Deathblows to hit in these battles. For an easier strategy where you only need four, have Tifa attack on the first turn and then have Cloud finish him off with Ultima.

Video (perfect battle): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FgZiWHziNTc>

#####

[skip text]

That concludes disc two. It's almost over.

[SAVE YOUR GAME]

My time: 8:29:34

Rec. time (10h): 9:28:12

Rec. time (12h): 11:21:50

This is what the timer shows if I open the menu as soon as possible on disc 3.

4.8 <> The Northern Crater

Climb down the ladder and run to the bottom of the screen. There's no turning back now, so choose the first option to go down. Before doing anything now, you must open the menu and set ATB back to Active. It's harder to escape battles on Wait, so you will lose more time than it takes to set ATB to Active if you don't do it. On the way down to the bottom, there are three items you need to pick up and the first is the Save Crystal. As you most likely know, it's located in the very first treasure box you find. Open it and get through this area as quickly as possible. In the second area, just take the right path and you'll be at the bottom in no time.

The third area can be a little tricky and I suggest that you practice it if you don't know exactly how to get through here. First, jump off and head right until you land next to a cave opening. Enter and run through here. Then jump off, go right, left (while jumping down twice) and right again. In the fourth area, you meet up with the crew.

[skip text]

Send Cloud, Tifa and Cait to the left and the others to the right. Left is the first option and right is the second. Then proceed to the next area.

[skip text]

Send everyone up, which is the first option. The second item you need to pick up is the Hero Drink located in a treasure box on the bottom right side of the second swamp area. The third and final item you have to pick up is the W-Magic Materia, which is located in the next area. It's partly hidden in the green stuff on the top of the screen. You should be able to see it. If not, you'll have to do a practice run and find out exactly where it is. After picking it up, just proceed to the next area, which also happens to be the bottom.

Think of this area as a clock and place the Save Crystal at 8. Give W-Magic to Cloud and Tranquilizers to Cloud and Cait before you save. Perfect runners have to do a few more things.

Cloud: Give him W-Magic along with two green or red filler materias to boost his magic stat. Perfect runners must also equip Ragnarok.

Tifa: Equip the Mystile.

Then you can make the...

[FINAL SAVE]

My time: 8:36:26

Rec. time (10h): 9:36:00

Rec. time (12h): 11:31:12

Move on. You'll have one box of text to skip when you enter the next area. Then approach the exit to trigger the cutscene.

[skip text]

You'll be given the chance to form a party, but you know very well what I said before entering Midgar, so just hit the cancel button.

Then... let's mosey!

On the way down, there's a 25% chance you'll get a battle each time you land on a rock. Yup, it's possible to reach the bottom without getting into a single battle, but the chance is just too small. My record is one battle and I've done it at least 100 times. How many battles to accept is up to you. Before entering the final area, you must heal the guys to full health and revive Tifa (she's most likely dead) and give her a Tranquilizer. Otherwise, just give her a Tranquilizer. Also, make sure to set ATB to Recommended. Things will happen automatically when you enter the final area.

Perfect runners shouldn't accept more than three battles on the way down and you have to reach the bottom without having to heal. Also, you don't have to give the Tranquilizer to Tifa.

[skip text]

#####

B57: Jenova-SYNTHESIS

#####

On your first turn, have Cloud W-Magic Ultima, Cait give the Hero Drink to Tifa and Tifa Deathblow in that order. Then have Tifa Deathblow again on the next two turns while the others do nothing.

Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uu-wuhry_UQ

#####

[skip text]

You get the chance to form a party again. Just hit the cancel button. However, you have to give an Elixir to Cloud and heal Tifa to 1100-1200 HP before the battle. Healing Tifa is for regular runners only. When it's done, you can note down the time shown by the timer and start the stopwatch at the exact moment you close the menu.

[FINAL TIMER CHECK]

My time: 8:43:09
Rec. time (10h): 9:43:26
Rec. time (12h): 11:40:08

[skip text]

B58: Bizarro-Sephiroth

On your first turn, have Cloud W-Magic Ultima and Tifa Deathblow the Core in that order. Then have Cloud W-Magic Ultima, Cait give an Elixir to Cloud and Tifa Deathblow and the battle will be over.

Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-InRziDo6_w

Beaten in: 3:43

B59: Safer-Sephiroth

Note: When the battle begins, the ATB bars will fill a little bit and then stop for about 10 seconds. It's possible that one or more characters get a turn now, but in that case, just wait.

On your first turn, have Cait cast DeBarrier on Sephiroth, Tifa Deathblow and Cloud W-Magic Ultima. Sephiroth will now cast Shadow Flare and all you can do is pray it misses. It most likely won't on Cloud and Cait, so you must also pray he uses it on Tifa. If someone gets killed, you won't be able to defeat him. Sure sucks, but that's how it is. Either way, have Cait throw an S-mine, Tifa Deathblow and Cloud W-Magic Ultima, as you must select the commands before Shadow Flare. Finally, have Tifa Deathblow again and the battle will be over.

Note: If the damage doesn't add up, you can have Cait cast Magic Breath instead of throwing the S-mine. If it still doesn't add up (very unlikely), you can use Dice and pray for good damage or make sure Cait learns Shadow Flare (very very unlikely) and cast it. However, depending on your stats, you might not need to throw the S-mine at all, so you should do some test runs and see how much damage you deal with 3x DB=AC and 4x Ultima. Just take note that the leveling up after Jenova affects the stats.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rny0wNpTV9M>

Beaten in: 11:33

#####

Recommended times for beating these bosses will be added when I complete the perfect run.

It's not over yet. As said in the intro, you have to reach the point where you can no longer control the game and make decisions before the game is considered beaten. And that's when Sephiroth himself has been defeated.

[skip text]

Finally, the battle with Sephiroth himself. To Omnislash or not to Omnislash? Sure, it's a cool move, but this time, it'll only make your result worse. Just wait until Sephiroth attacks and Cloud will counterattack. Stop the stopwatch exactly when you see the damage dealt by the counterattack.

My time: 14:50

Calculating The Final Time
#####

If you use the NTSC version, you can simply add the time after Sephiroth to the time after Bizarro and you have your final time.

Unfortunately, it's not that easy for PAL gamers. You have to divide the time after the final Sephiroth by 1,2 and then add it to the time before Bizarro. Here's a step by step explanation on how to do that. I'll use the time from my last PAL run as an example. My time after Bizarro was 8:49:33 and the time after Sephiroth himself was 31:51.

1. Divide the seconds by 60 to turn them into decimals: $51 / 60 = 0,85$
2. Add the minutes: $0,85 + 31 = 31,85$
3. Divide this time by 1,2: $31,85 / 1,2 = 26,54167$
4. Multiply the decimals with 60 to get the seconds: $0,54167 \times 60 = 32$
5. Take the minutes from point 3 and the seconds from point 4. 26:32
6. Add the seconds from the time after beating Sephiroth: $32 + 33 = 65$. If this number is higher than 60, then subtract 60 and add one minute to the final time. It happened here: $65 - 60 = 5$. 5 seconds, and 1 minute to be added to the final time.
7. Add the minutes: $49 + 26 = 75$. If the number is higher than 60, then subtract 60 and add one hour to the final time: $75 - 60 = 15$. If you got one extra minute on point 5, you have to add this. I did, so I've got 16 minutes, and 1 hour to be added to the final time.
8. Take the hours from the time after Bizarro and add one if you got one extra hour on point 7. I did, so I've got 9 hours. Then add the minutes from point 7 and seconds from point 6. 9:16:05
9. Add the PAL Gamer Penalty of 5:37. First add the minutes. $16 + 5 = 21$. If this number exceeds 60, you simply subtract 60 and add an hour. Then add the seconds. $5 + 37 = 42$. Same deal if this number exceeds 60. Subtract 60 and add a minute. Then you have the final time. 9:21:42.

The Result
#####

My final time: 8:57:59

My goal for this test run was to beat the game in less than nine hours and as you can see, I made it.

That's all, folks. The challenge is over. Let's go home proud.

=====

5 - Additional Info

=====

The final chapter of this guide, with info on how to contact me, version history, credits and some final words. I also moved the record run results here this time.

5.1 <> Record Run Results

Here are all the save times from my best speed run. Take note that these times were set during a test run, so in some cases you will have no trouble beating them or gaining time on me. In the beginning, I put some effort into the run, but after a while, I became more and more reckless and I didn't care if I lost a second or ten. I actually forgot to pick up the Huge Materia at Fort Condor, so I had to go back there and get it before entering Mideed for the second time, something that cost me about two minutes. But since it was only a test run, I didn't care. Also, I used many of the old strategies in this run and many of them were much slower than the new ones. As I said in the FAQ section, you should have no trouble beating my record if you're good, but first timers will most likely have a hard time. This record will be completely destroyed when I beat the perfect run.

Reactor 1, before Guard Scorpion	7:02
Reactor 5, after placing the bomb	31:16
Sector 5, after sleeping at Aerith's house	44:50
Wall Market, after changing into "Miss Cloud"	55:09
Sector 7, bottom of the Pillar, before Reno	1:06:44
Shinra HQ, in front of main entrance	1:23:09
Floor 67, before Sample:H0512	1:38:26
Floor 67, after breaking out of the cell	1:46:50
Reached world map	2:02:47
World map, between Kalm and the marshes	2:24:29
World map, between Mythril Mines and Junon	2:27:30
Junon, before marching	2:38:20
Shinra Boat, before Jenova	2:49:34
World map, between Costa del Sol and Mt. Corel	2:57:40
Mt. Corel	2:59:33
Corel Prison, before flashback in house	3:14:57
World map, between Corel Prison and Cosmo Canyon	3:27:36
Cosmo Canyon, before entering Cave of Gi	3:38:57
World map, between Cosmo Canyon and Nibelheim	3:49:07
Mt. Nibel, before fighting Materia Keeper	3:51:57
World map, between Mt. Nibel and Rocket Town	3:53:29
World map, Wutai Area, before learning Magic Hammer	4:05:20
World map, south of North Corel, before going back to Gold Saucer	4:07:33
World map, south of North Corel, after Gold Saucer visit	4:20:20
Temple, before Red Dragon	4:29:11
Temple, before Demon's Gate	4:36:13
World map, before entering Bone Village	4:49:55
Disc 1 beaten	5:02:23
World Map, between Corral Valley Cave and Icicle Inn	5:06:05
Mr. Holzoff's hut	5:15:25

Gaea's Cliff, before Icicles	5:22:20
Gaea's Cliff, before Schizo	5:30:28
Whirlwind Maze, before Jenova-DEATH	5:37:39
Whirlwind Maze, after Jenova-DEATH	5:46:10
World map, before entering Mideel for the first time	6:18:28
Mt. Corel (Fort Condor has been visited)	6:31:57
World map, before entering Mideel for the second time	6:40:09
World map, before entering Junon	7:06:43
Underwater Reactor, before Carry Armor	7:13:41
Inside the submarine	7:21:29
World map, before entering Rocket Town	7:26:28
World map, just before Diamond Weapon	7:54:07
Midgar, before climbing down to the plate area	8:07:46
Midgar, before Turks battle	8:10:10
Midgar, before Hojo	8:17:16
Disc 2 beaten	8:29:34
Final Save	8:36:26
Before Bizarro Sephiroth	8:43:09
Started stopwatch from that exact time.	
Bizarro Sephiroth beaten	+ 3:43
Safer-Sephiroth beaten	+ 11:33
Sephiroth himself beaten	+ 14:50
Final time, after beating Sephiroth himself:	8:57:59
FINAL TIME (yay, no PAL penalty this time):	8:57:59

Farringa's PC Record Run
#####

Farringa just completed his PC run and he ended up beating lolo's time with more than 40 minutes! Not because lolo did a bad job on his run, but that was almost two years ago and the strategies were very outdated. Farringa has been using the new strategies from the very beginning and the fact that he totally crushed lolo's record just shows how much better the new strategies are.

As a matter of fact, he didn't put that much effort into his run until Cosmo Canyon and he was actually 3 minutes behind lolo's time at that point. In other words, you shouldn't have any trouble beating his times up to Cosmo Canyon if you put some effort into it. After that, it will get tougher. In any case, I wish you good luck if you want to try and beat it.

If you can prove that you have beaten this record, and you have all the save times, I will put YOUR record here.

Reactor 1, before Guard Scorpion	6:22
Reactor 5, after placing the bomb	29:07
Sector 5, after sleeping at Aerith's House	42:09
Wall Market, after changing into Miss Cloud	52:02
Sector 7, bottom of the Pillar, before Reno	1:02:38

Wall Market, before climbing up to Shinra HQ	1:14:13
Shinra HQ, 67th floor, before H0512	1:32:40
Shinra HQ, 67th floor, after being captured	1:40:34
Reached world map	1:54:59
World map, after passing the Marches (didn't save in the marches)	2:17:30
Junon, before marching	2:27:25
Mt. Corel	2:46:43
Corel Prison, before flashback in house	3:00:19
Cosmo Canyon, before entering Cave of Gi	3:19:39
Mt. Nibel, before fighting Materia Keeper	3:30:54
World map, Gold Saucer Area, after Rocket Town	3:43:39
Temple, before Red Dragon	4:04:05
Temple, before Demon's Gate	4:09:51
World map, before entering Bone Village	4:21:31
Disc 1 beaten	4:31:41
World Map, just outside of Icicle Inn	4:35:17
Gaea's Cliff, before Icicles	4:48:57
Gaea's Cliff, before Schizo	4:55:26
Whirlwind Maze, before Jenova-DEATH	5:00:34
Whirlwind Maze, after Jenova-DEATH	5:05:25
Junon, the execution, just after you get to control Barret	5:21:16
Mt. Corel (Fort Condor has not been visited)	5:43:10
World map, before entering Mideel for the second time	5:53:40
Underwater Reactor, before Carry Armor	6:22:01
In the submarine	6:27:53
World map, just before Diamond Weapon	6:55:39
Midgar, before Turks battle	7:07:41
Midgar, before Hojo	7:12:52
Disc 2 beaten	7:22:32
Final Save	7:28:51
Before Bizarro Sephiroth:	7:33:23
Started stopwatch from that exact time.	
Bizarro Sephiroth beaten	+ 2:06
Safer-Sephiroth beaten	+ 4:36
Sephiroth himself beaten	+ 7:41
Final time, after beating Sephiroth himself:	7:41:04
Adjusting time to match game clock time:	- 0:09
FINAL TIME:	7:40:55

As you already know, PS and PC times can't be compared, but there's no doubt this record is a lot better than my current PS record.

5.2 <> Contacting Me

If you need to contact me, you can send an email to garlandg@online.no. You can ask me anything regarding Speed Runs, other challenges or FFXVII in general, but

don't bother asking me simple questions that can easily be found in the FAQs. Also let me know if you find typos, grammar errors or bad language that must be corrected. English is still my second language after all. Just be aware that I'm a busy (read: lazy) man and it might take a while before I reply.

Any tips or suggestions for the guide are appreciated, but professionals only. Don't send me a mail unless you know what you're talking about. And don't bother asking me how the hell it's possible to beat the game this fast. It's possible. Do you honestly think I've spent hundreds of hours writing a joke FAQ? If you don't believe me, you can read the FAQ or you can start a Speed Run yourself. By following the FAQ, you should be able to beat the game in less than 12 hours, even if you've only beaten the game once. You might end up having fun. I highly recommend it if you think FFVII is too easy.

You can find me on the FFVII message board as well. I'm not very active, but as long as I'm doing the perfect run, you can find me in the Speed Run Discussions Topic. Stop by and post if you're planning to do a Speed Run. You can also find me on Youtube, where I upload videos of my perfect run as I progress, as well as other FFVII challenge videos.

My Youtube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/GarlandTheGreat>

5.3 <> Version History

Simply a list over current and earlier versions of the guide. The current version is always at the top.

Version 3.3 -> March 26th, 2010 (261 kB)

Added a few more questions in the FAQ section (1.4). Apparently, I also made some other changes during the past three years, as the file was 259 kB before I added the question, but I have no idea what. Not that it matters much.

Version 3.2 -> June 11th, 2007 (256 kB)

Farringa has completed his PC run and crushed lolo's record, so I replaced his record times with Farringa's. As of right now, he has submitted his run to SDA, but it will take a while before it's available. When it is, I will update the FAQ with a link to it in the Intro section (1.2). In addition to that, I added a link to my Youtube channel, where I upload videos of my perfect run as I progress. You can find the link to the channel in section 1.2 and 5.2. I also added a video of the marching and fixed a few small mistakes and typos.

Fun fact: The FAQ has almost grown twice as big since the first version! :D

Version 3.1 -> May 10th, 2007 (255 kB)

This is the completed version of the new guide. The main differences are some new strategies, some new videos and the addition of the videos that were missing in the last version. I also fixed some mistakes and typos.

Version 3.0 -> April 9th, 2007 (245 kB)

This is the major update I promised in Version 2.2.1. Originally, my goal was

to complete it before the end of November 2005, but that couldn't be done. Not because I was lazy, but because the Speed Run discussions were far from over. Then, in July 2006, lolo finally completed his testing and I could finally finish the FAQ. However, things kept coming in the way, so I couldn't complete the FAQ until the end of the year. In fact, I completed it only 25 minutes before midnight on New Year's Eve. That's because I was lazy. I'll admit that.

However, I couldn't submit it to GameFAQs just yet. First, I had to let lolo go through the FAQ to find typos and other things to fix. Then I had to fix all the stuff he pointed out, have him proofread it again and fix the things he pointed out again. After some more testing and a final proofread, the FAQ was completely done and I could submit it to GameFAQs.

So, what's the big difference from the last version? Well, the FAQ has been entirely re-written and hardly anything remains from the last version. The most important difference is, of course, the fact that the entire run has been improved to a maximum. You can achieve a much better result with this new FAQ. In fact, only a few bosses use the same strategy as last time. I also added the Perfect Run section and moved the Record Run section to the Additional Info part of the guide.

I decided to submit the FAQ to GameFAQs on April 9th, as I saw no point in waiting any longer. A few things are still missing, like videos for some of the last battles, but they will be added once lolo finds some time to record them.

Version 2.99 -> December 31st, 2006 (226 kB)

I finished the new FAQ, but there were still things I needed to fix before I submitted it to GameFAQs.

Version 2.2.2 -> August 3rd, 2005 (186 kB)

Fixed a couple of mistakes. Thanks to Squire636 for pointing them out. I also made a few small changes in the guide.

Version 2.2.1 -> June 6th, 2005 (186 kB)

Corrected TONS of typos and some grammar mistakes. There will be a major update some time in the future.

Version 2.2 -> January 4th, 2005 (186 kB)

Here we are again. Bergqvist discovered that FMVs are shown at the same speed in any version of the game, so I had to make some changes again. I also got some useful info on Sephiroth from Terence that allowed me to make an easier strategy, and I corrected some typos and grammar mistakes.

Version 2.1 -> July 25th, 2004 - (177 kB)

Bergqvist reminded me of why the PAL game is slower, and I quickly had to change some important things. Calculating the final time got way easier.

Version 2.0 -> July 24th, 2004 - (177 kB)

I promised a re-write in Version 1.0, and I started working on this only two days after the completion of that version. This version was far more detailed and many bosses had better and faster strategies.

Version 1.0 -> July 8th, 2004 - (134 kB)

The first version of the guide. Pretty simple, but good enough for a first timer. After re-writing the guide twice, I have to admit that this version was very embarrassing. Thankfully, it was only available for 16 days. I still have it stored on my computer, though, so let me know if you want to see it.

5.4 <> Credits

Giving credits to whoever helped out is a golden rule here on GameFAQs and here is the section where that will be done. I would like to thank the following:

lolo26

I think it's safe to say that he is the one who has done the most for the Speed Runs during these years. Since he joined the Speed Run discussions, he's come up with tons of ideas and strategies and he's probably spent more time testing stuff than the rest of us together. He's the mastermind behind the so-called "Tifa-san plan" and many of the strategies we use today are made by him. He's also proofread all the versions of the FAQ several times. Also, for recording videos for all the battles.

KADFC

KADFC made the "Low Level Game" topic, where the Speed Run discussions started. He was the first person to test my guide and he came up with some ideas during his run that we are still using today.

Bergqvist

This Swedish guy was the third person to join the Speed Run discussion and also the third person to test the first version of this guide. He didn't come up with that many ideas during his two runs, but he was the guy who discovered that FMVs are run at the same speed in different versions of the game.

BrutalAl

Another Swedish guy. He joined the Speed Run discussions in 2005 and he's done A LOT for the Speed Runs since then. This includes A LOT of testing and he's come up with many brilliant ideas. He also deserves credit for the "Tifa-san plan", as he was the one who lead the way with the entire Deathblow-Death Sentence-Powersoul issue. He did some of the videos too. He also came up with the "Wait Trick" that made some late disc 2 battles easier.

Terence

The AI information in his Enemy Mechanics FAQ is always useful and some of the strategies wouldn't have existed if it wasn't for his work.

Farringa

This guy has been using the new guide since the very beginning and he's pointed out a lot of stuff that needed to be fixed. He also discovered a random battle problem in the PC version and he also found a solution for it. See the FAQ section (1.4) for details.

In addition to this, he also has the best speed run record with the PC version. He totally crushed lolo's old record of 8:22:03 when he used the new strategies in his run. Therefore, you will now find Farringa's PC times in the Record Run section (5.1) now. He also submitted his run to SDA and I posted a link to it in the intro section (1.2).

Squire636, whitehelm, eo31459, Ekudeht:

For suggestions and/or pointing out mistakes and typos in the guide.

Defcon999

For informing me that where you place the Midgar Parts on the model determines which chest opens next.

Squaresoft

For creating many of my favorite games. Keep up the good work!

CJayC and Gamefaqs

CJayC created GameFAQs, the best place to go when you're stuck in a game, if you need tips or strategies or just want to discuss a game with people from all around the world. This FAQ would most likely not exist if CjayC hadn't created GameFAQs. Of course, GameFAQs wouldn't exist today without all the contributors either, so thanks to everybody who put a lot time and effort into making all the FAQs.

5.5 <> Final Words

This section will be left open until I beat the perfect run. For now, I'll just end the FAQ with Barret's famous quote:

There ain't no gettin' offa this train we on!

(c) Audun Arnseth (GarlandG), 2004 - 2008

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