

Ancient Dragon

Lore

<i>Soul of the great ancient dragon that stands magnificently, deep within the shrine. This powerful being stands and waits, for whoever may visit him.</i> — Description of the Guardian Dragon Soul	<i>The magic of the ancient dragon allows one to delve into the memories of the withered.</i> — Description of the Ashen Mist Heart
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Location

Dragon Shrine:

From the bonfire make your way up the Shrine. The Ancient Dragon is found up a long set of stairs that is guarded by many enemies.

Bonfire Intensity	Health	Souls
1 (NG)	19,840	120,000
2 (NG+)	23,800	240,000
8 (NG+7)	45,236	480,000

Bonfire Ascetic respawn: Shrine Entrance bonfire.

Summons

- Head of Vengarl
 - Found in the hallway right before the dragon. Survives surprisingly well against the fire breaths, but gets one shot when crushed. Only available if his quest was completed.
- Melinda the Butcher
 - Found at the back of the platform to the right at the bottom of the giant staircase before the dragon. Only available if her invasion was defeated.
- Bashful Ray
 - Small white sign. After dropping down to the chest with the Titanite Slab on the way to the Petrified Egg. The sign is in the corner of the courtyard near the chest. *Dark Souls II: Scholar of the First Sin* only.

The added resistances to the boss due to their presence and the general inability of the AI to deal with a dragon makes their summoning unwise.

Drops

- Ashen Mist Heart (if you don't speak to him before attacking)
- Petrified Dragon Bone
- Soul of a Giant

Moveset

Stomp:

Stomps with any of his feet.

Tail Smash:

Smashes with his tail.

Bite:

Bites.

Forward Fire Breath:

Breathes fire forwards, sways left and right slightly

Flying Fire Breath:

Starts to fly and breaths fire towards the ground. Large area of effect.

Below Fire Breath:

Stands on hind legs and breathes fire under himself.

Strategies

After you go through the fog, the boss will stand up and welcome you with a fire breath. While he's doing that, you want to run around and under him, and literally wedge yourself in the gap between the big and middle toes of his back leg. From here on get a hit or two in, wait until he lifts the leg to stomp on you and dodge it. Sprint to the other leg, once again get in between his toes, and get a hit or two in. He will proceed to lift the leg to do a stomp, dodge it and run to the other leg. Rinse and repeat for an extremely easy win. If done properly, he will NEVER use any of his other attacks, even the under-belly fire breath.

If he does the fire breath under himself, back off to the outside of the leg you were attacking and hack away. The fire should not hit even if you're hugging the leg.

If he looks like he's about to launch himself and rain fiery death on you, watch where the tail is and run towards it. If you start running early enough, the fire will not hit you. Don't stay directly under the tail, as it'll crush and kill you when he lands.

When using his aerial fire attack, the Ancient Dragon will almost always attempt to be turning towards you, and by extension, turning his tail away from you. Use this to your advantage to turn the dragon and keep him from standing awkwardly on a ledge where you'll be in danger.

Don't underestimate his massive amount of health. Consider bringing a second weapon, as it's quite possible that whatever you're using will degrade faster than he will.

890 Fire Defense:

If you have 890 fire defense you are 99% resistant to fire damage, so just keep your distance or roll through the physical attacks. As any kind of caster this tactic is very easy because you will have built in fire defense and spells that do damage from a distance, but it's possible to use with any build. Here is some equipment that will help you reach 890 fire defense: Pharros Mask (100 fire defence from being wet), Flame Quartz Ring +3 (150 fire defence), Dispelling Ring +1 (120 fire defence), Dragon Tooth (50 fire defence even without the Strength), Flash Sweat (300 fire defence for 60 seconds).

Best armor that require Twinkling Titanite (298 fire defense): Penal Mask, Hexer's/Chaos Robe, Penal Handcuffs, Hexer's/Chaos Boots.

Best armor using normal titanite (250 fire defense): White Hollow Mage Hood, Alonne Captain Armor, Alonne Knight Gauntlets, Alonne Knight Leggings.

Best armor without using titanite (237 fire defense): Black Dragon Set.

As of patch 1.06, it is no longer possible to obtain 900 Defense immunity to any forms of non-physical damage.

See Fire Defense for more info on how to increase it.

Ranged Strategy with a Greatshield:

Required stats: 35 Strength (maybe 18 will work if shields work just as well when two handed as they do with proper Strength) and at least 20 Endurance. Stock up on as many spells as possible, and bring a couple spell restore items and Green Blossoms if you want.

Required items: Gyrm Greatshield, which has 100% Fire resist. Cloranth ring for stamina regeneration.

IMPORTANT: Always two hand the greatshield when the boss is using his breath attack, it will do far less stamina damage this way.

For this fight, you're essentially going to walk in a big circle for probably ten or so minutes. Just stick to the outer rim of the fight and you should be fine. He'll focus mainly on two attacks, his fire breath (ground) and fire breath (air).

Stay roughly in his frontal cone, so that he will alternate between his two breath attacks only. When he's on the ground and using the fire breath, make sure you are out of the range of it and shoot away. After his breath is stopped, shoot once or twice more until you see his wings flap. At this point keep moving in your arc and switch to two hand shield. Wait until he's in the air, and flaps twice while moving as quickly as possible away from where you just were. After the second flap he'll start his fire breath, and if you were quick enough to get around the center blast, you'll take two hits of 0 damage, but become staggered. If this is the case, congratulations, you just won the fight. Now repeat this until he's dead.

Double Shield Tank Strategy:

Although very niched, this tactic works out if you have the prerequisite gear and stats. Get yourself a Gyrm Greatshield, as reinforced as possible (farmable in Doors of Pharros), and any shield with a Stamina Recovery effect. Equip the stamina shield in your left hand and the Gyrm Greatshield in your right. Two-hand the greatshield and attack by bashing his legs. If you position yourself directly below him and bash his back legs, he won't slam his tail, but be reduced to either stomping you, breath fire beneath himself, or fly up in the air for a shower of fire. When he stomps, simply roll away and bash the other leg. When he prepares to breathe fire beneath himself (stands on back legs only) roll outside and bash his feet. When he flies up into the air, hold up your shield and tank the damage.

The fire does damage two to three times, seemingly random, and drains a lot of your stamina. An upgraded shield and the stamina regeneration should help you soak this without taking damage, worst case being staggered at the last tick. To hasten stamina regeneration during the breath, drop your guard for a short amount of time($\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ second) and put it up again. Not recommended unless you feel you have a knack for the timing. This strategy IS doable (and recommended) naked, which improves your stamina regeneration and your running speed. Variation may include having a better weapon in your right hand and switching to the Gyrm Greatshield when he flies into the air for the fire breath attack.

Failsafe, No Health Loss, Strategy:

Initially run to his left side. Stay just outside the circle, at the level of his head and slightly to the front. The thing is, he must always see you. If you get it right, he will always turn towards you to do the ground fire-breathing attack. When he does, move to his opposite front leg, slice three times and move away to take the same position on his right side. He will turn again towards you. Move to the opposite front leg and attack thrice. Move away to his left... Rince and repeat until he's down. After the first two attacks do not use the circle as reference. Just try to maintain the distance and, most importantly, eye contact. The second he loses eye contact, he will launch in the air. If you're too close he'll move to bite. Nail the position, and you'll beat him bare foot, bare knuckled, bare chested.

For additional safety you can combine this with the 890 fire defence strategy and Flash Sweat, if the dragon does his flying firebreath simply use Flash Sweat putting you fire defence at 890 and minimize the damage you take.

Scraps of Life Strategy:

Probably one of the faster strategies (which helps because this boss's sheer amount of health can be tiresome). Simply equip scraps of life (two scrolls of it if you can. In addition you can wear the hexer's hood for additional uses). When you enter the boss fight, run to where you are behind his back legs, then use scraps of life. In a moment, he will raise his back leg to try and hit you. Simply role to the other leg as fast as you can. Every once in a while, he will shoot fire behind him underneath his legs. This is easily telegraphed by his standing up on his back two legs before hand. Simply move to the outside, and as soon as he is done, attack his leg again. The trick is to remain under his legs as much as possible so he doesn't use his firebreath AOE. If he does, simply run in the direction of his tail.

Notes

- If you attack it, Cromwell the Pardoner can undo the sin and make it unaggressive again.
- Its hostility and death does not cause the Dragon Knights to become aggressive.
- Being in the area behind its heel will cause it to only do two attacks, one being the stomp and the other being its aerial fire attack between its legs.

Dialogue

All dialogue text is © From Software Inc.

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- **First Encounter**

The murk shifts and stirs.

Yet another stands before us...

Then so be it.

For the curse of life, is the curse of want.

And so, you peer...

Into the fog, in hope of answers.

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