

Asylum Demon



The Asylum Demon

(□□□□□□) is the first boss encountered in *Dark Souls*, serving as an introductory challenge that familiarizes players with the game's mechanics and combat system.

Information

The Asylum Demon is a greater demon spawned from the Bed of Chaos, the source of all demons in the game's lore. It wields the formidable Demon's Great Hammer and resides in the Northern Undead Asylum, acting as a guardian to prevent the imprisoned undead from escaping. Its presence underscores the perilous world players are about to explore.

Strategy

First Encounter:

- **Escape Option:** Upon first encountering the Asylum Demon, players are equipped only with a broken weapon, making direct confrontation challenging. It's advisable to evade the demon by sprinting to the left and exiting through the gate, which allows players to acquire proper equipment before re-engaging.
- **Early Defeat:** For those seeking an early challenge, defeating the Asylum Demon during this initial encounter is possible. Choosing Black Firebombs as the starting gift enables players to inflict significant damage, potentially defeating the demon with approximately five bombs. Success in this encounter rewards the Demon's Great Hammer.

- **Blocking:** Every class' starting shield, apart from Pyromancer's, can effectively block most of his attacks. You'll take nearly no damage from a blocked hit. Preserving stamina doesn't matter; it can even slightly hurt you, because whether you're at full stamina or next to none, you'll still fully block his hits, and if you're at low stamina, you'll receive the shorter guard-break animation instead of the major knockback animation at high stamina. It's essential to stay close to him because if you get too far away, he'll use long-range wide-arc attacks, which are hard both to block and dodge. While you're close to him, his only attacks that can't be blocked are his prolonged forwards overhead attack, which you can easily step out of the way from, and his fly-up butt-slam attack, for which you can simply back away, then close back in. It's recommended to keep trying to circle behind him, as it sets you up for getting a lot of attacks off between his hits.
- **Dodging:** There is an almost completely safe spot standing right behind him; while in it, he will usually only go for his sideward swings. He'll hit on whichever side of him you're currently on. To evade them completely, you can stand on one side, await the attack, then quickly strafe to the other side. This lets you continuously have him keep doing the same attack while you hit him as many times as you'd like. Sometimes he'll start turning around or fly up to butt-slam instead; in both cases, keep circling him and wait for him to recommence his side swings.
His most dangerous move during this cycle is his backstep; however, it's extremely rare. If he does it, you'll almost always end up in front of him and in range for him to do any attack, which requires you to move much more refinedly to dodge.
If you mistime and end up in front of him and in range for his hits, you can try rolling through his attacks; if timed properly you'll both take guaranteed no damage, and it lets you immediately get back behind him. If you fail, you're only at about the same disadvantage as if you'd tried dodging away from his attack range.

Second Encounter:

- **Plunging Attack:** Re-entering the arena from an elevated platform provides an opportunity to perform a plunging attack, dealing substantial damage to the demon at the outset. To execute this, step off the ledge and press the attack button mid-fall.
- **Close-Quarters Combat:** Staying close to the demon, particularly near its legs, can mitigate the impact of its wide swings. Circling around and attacking from behind reduces the risk of being hit. Be cautious of its ground pound attack; when the demon leaps into the air, move away to avoid the area-of-effect damage upon landing.
- **Ranged Attacks:** For players with access to ranged weapons or spells, maintaining distance and attacking from afar is a viable strategy. However, ensure ample space to dodge the demon's leaping hammer smash, which can cover significant ground.

Drops

- **Souls:**
 - New Game (NG): 2,000 souls
 - New Game Plus (NG+): 10,000 souls
- **Items:**
 - Big Pilgrim's Key: Dropped upon defeat, allowing progression to the next area.
 - Demon's Great Hammer: Awarded if the demon is defeated during the first encounter.
 - Humanity: A consumable item that can be used to restore human form or kindle bonfires.

Attack Patterns

Attack	Damage	Damage Type	Parryable?	Speed	Tracking (left/right)
Hammer Swing	190	Normal	No	Medium	Neither
Hammer Driver	190	Normal	No	Slow	Neither
Hammer Backswing	205	Normal	No	Medium	Right
Hammer Scoop	205	Normal	No	Medium	Left
Hammer Smash	245	Normal	No	Medium	Neither
Butt Slam	305	Normal	No	Slow	Both
Leaping Hammer Smash	275	Normal	No	Medium	Neither
Double Hammer Swing	200	Normal	No	Medium	Neither

Video Guides

https://www.youtube.com/embed/gRNW_UDtmaU

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/Px0EnvvhN84>

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/tNnmuu-9Q8M>

Lore

The Asylum Demon is one of the greater demons born from the Bed of Chaos, the progenitor of all demons in the *Dark Souls* universe. After the war against Gwyn's Silver Knights, it survived and eventually took residence in the Northern Undead Asylum. Its role as a guardian emphasizes the Asylum's purpose: to confine the undead and prevent them from threatening the world outside.

Notes

- If the Asylum Demon is defeated during the first encounter, the Big Pilgrim's Key is instead obtained from Oscar of Astora, an NPC found later in the Asylum.
- The demon's attacks are slow and telegraphed, providing opportunities for players to learn dodge timing and attack patterns early in the game.

Trivia

- The Asylum Demon shares similarities with the Vanguard Demon from *Demon's Souls*, both in design and function as an introductory boss.
- The boss theme for the Asylum Demon is reused for other bosses in the game, such as the Taurus Demon and the Demon Firesage.
- Defeating the Asylum Demon during the first encounter is a challenging feat for new players, often serving as a rite of passage for those seeking to master the game's mechanics early on.

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