

Parry

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Description

Parrying is a technique where you deflect an enemy attack, leaving the enemy in a special staggered state, vulnerable to ripostes.

Parrying is a technique usable against most humanoid enemies in Dark Souls. It requires some amount of studying enemy attack behaviour, but learning it will provide the player with an advantage in numerous situations.

Execution

1. Equip a shield or weapon that can parry in your left hand. An empty hand works as well but is not recommended as failing the parry will have you take full damage.
2. Face a parriable enemy, lock-on recommended though not required, stand as close as possible. Since your weapon/shield has to connect with the enemy attack itself, your chance also increases if you are nearer.
3. Press **L2** (PS3) / **LT** (XBox) / **TAB** (default on PC) at the moment (the first frame) the enemy's weapon begins its motion towards you (i.e. after the windup).
4. On successful parry, the enemy will be thrown back for about one second, and you'll hear a echoing cue sound.
5. The enemy will be in an unique staggered state. Ripostes can only be done in this unique state. It is possible to perform actions before the riposte as well e.g. two-handing for higher strength scaling then riposte or even swap weapons, rings (for example to a hornet ring) or even armor, it is also possible to attack, cast offensive magic, heal or run away. Additionally it's possible to attack an enemy, who has poise, otherwise they will be staggered by the attack, with some quick attacks, then riposte afterwards. In PvP circles this is referred to as a "Burrito". Even if you're not performing a riposte, the enemy will receive 40% extra damage within this staggered state.
6. The game allows for players to begin the riposte by pressing R1 while they're still in the parry animation. This inclusion is likely the reason the PvP tech "Parry Backstab" exists.

List of Weapons and Frame Data

Parry animation could be thought of as the active window and the recovery window.

- Active frames are when the enemy will be parried if their weapon connects with your weapon.
- Recovery frames are the "cooldown" period where you can't do anything at all. Animations in Dark Souls can almost always be "cancelled" into different animations, how early this happens depends on what other animation is queued to follow next. The earliest cancel in general occurs by dodging. All weapons are classified by Weapon Speed into fast and slow weapons, which decides whether their animations can be cut off earlier or later. This also applies to parries.

Weapon	Active Parry	Shortest Recovery	Earliest Cancel	Total	Notes	RH Attack	Dodge	Move	Block/LH Attack	Else
Fast Thrusting Swords	6 frames	12 frames	Shared	18 frames	-	12 frames	12 frames	15 frames	15 frames	14 frames
Estoc	6 frames	15 frames	Shared	21 frames	Only slow Thrusting Sword	15 frames	15 frames	15 frames	15 frames	17 frames
Fast Fist Weapons Fast Whips	7 frames	10 frames	Dodge	17 frames	Including bare-handed	13 frames	10 frames	16 frames	15 frames	15 frames
Dragon-Bone Fist Guardian Tail	7 frames	13 frames	Dodge	20 frames	Only slow weapons of their classes	16 frames	13 frames	19 frames	18 frames	18 frames
Fast Daggers Fast Katanas	7 frames	10 frames	Dodge	17 frames	-	12 frames	10 frames	15 frames	15 frames	15 frames
Slow Daggers Washing Pole	7 frames	13 frames	Dodge	20 frames	Only slow Katana	15 frames	13 frames	18 frames	18 frames	18 frames

Fast Curved Swords	7 frames	11 frames	RH Attack	18 frames	Except Gold Tracer ¹	11 frames	14 frames	19 frames	19 frames	14 frames
Quelaag's Furysword	7 frames	14 frames	RH Attack	21 frames	Only slow Curved Sword	14 frames	17 frames	19 frames	19 frames	17 frames
Fast Shields	7 frames	10 frames	Dodge	17 frames	Small Shields except Effigy Shield and unique Includes numerous Normal Shields	13 frames	10 frames	15 frames	13 frames	13 frames
Slow Shields	7 frames	14 frames	Dodge	21 frames	Includes Effigy Shield Excludes numerous Normal Shields ²	17 frames	14 frames	19 frames	17 frames	17 frames
Buckler Target Shield Parrying Dagger	8 frames	12 frames	RH Attack	20 frames	Unique Animation	12 frames	17 frames	19 frames	19 frames	17 frames

Partial Parry

When you parry a little too early (i.e. already entered recovery frame) or are hit with an attack that can't be parried while parrying, you will do a "partial parry". You don't actually parry the attack (no parry SFX), and you don't technically block the attack either (no deflection), but it has several properties:

- You still take damage, but the damage is partial. The damage taken is calculated from your weapon's actual blocking abilities divided by 2 (e.g. a partial parry by a Target Shield will give you 39% physical damage reduction instead of the normal 78%).
- You don't suffer any kind of block stun, hit stun, or Poise damage.
- You can do this to almost all kinds of attack in the game, including projectile attacks. The only exception is grab attacks; you must dodge those.

- If an enemy's attack would take away more stamina than you have remaining, you will get knocked back. For example, the Mushroom People's punch or the Gaping Dragon's tail swipe.

List of Parriable Enemies

Some of these enemies use the same base model as the player (NPCs, Clan of Forest Protectors, Dark Spirits, etc.). As such, they may carry parriable weapons and thus can be parried.

Ordered by normal playthrough without the Master Key.

Enemy	Location	Notes
All normal-sized NPCs	Various	NPCs with the same base model as the player all carry parriable weapons
Hollow	Undead Asylum Undead Burg Undead Parish Depths Painted World of Ariamis	The archers don't have parriable attack
Armored Hollow	Undead Burg	-
Undead Soldier	Undead Asylum Undead Burg Undead Parish	-
Balder Knight	Undead Parish Sen's Fortress	The crossbow-wielder in Sen's Fortress doesn't have parriable attack
Heavy Knight	Undead Parish Sen's Fortress Painted World of Ariamis	Can be parried but can't be riposted
Andre of Astora	Undead Parish	NPC His dropkicks cannot be parried
Clan of Forest Protectors	Darkroot Garden	-
Havel the Rock	Undead Burg	-
Undead Assassin	Lower Undead Burg	-
Butcher	Depths	Her left hand grab cannot be parried
Dark Spirit Kirk, Knight of Thorns	Depths Demon Ruins Lost Izalith	-
Infested Barbarian	Blighttown	The boulder-wielding ones don't have parriable attack
Infested Ghoul	Blighttown	Their grab attacks cannot be parried

Dark Spirit Maneater Mildred	Blighttown	-
Serpent Soldier	Sen's Fortress The Duke's Archives	-
Serpent Mage	Sen's Fortress The Duke's Archives	-
Undead Prince Ricard	Sen's Fortress	-
Painting Guardian	Anor Londo	-
Dark Spirit Xanthous King, Jeremiah	Painted World of Ariamis	Cannot parry the Notched Whip, but if you interrupt his spell casting, he might punch you with his Pyromancy Flame, which you can parry
Silver Knight	Anor Londo	-
Hostile White Phantoms	Anor Londo	Lautrec's lackeys when you invade him using the Black Eye Orb
Darkmoon Soldiers	Anor Londo	Only in dark Anor Londo
Skeleton	The Catacombs	The archers don't have parriable attack
Vamos	The Catacombs	NPC
Dark Spirit Paladin Leeroy	Tomb of the Giants	-
Darkwraith	New Londo Ruins	-
Undead Crystal Soldier	The Duke's Archives	The archers don't have parriable attack
Crystal General	The Duke's Archives	-
Daughter of Chaos	Lost Izalith	If you interrupt her spell casting, she might punch you with her Pyromancy Flame which you can parry
Black Knight	Undead Asylum Undead Burg Undead Parish Darkroot Basin Catacombs Tomb of the Giants Kiln of the First Flame	-
Gwyn, Lord of Cinder	Kiln of the First Flame	The only parriable boss His grab attack cannot be parried
Scarecrow	Royal Wood	Additional Content only
Bloathead	Oolacile Township Chasm of the Abyss	Additional Content only
Bloathead Sorcerer	Oolacile Township Chasm of the Abyss	Additional Content only

List of Enemies Who Can Parry

These enemies have a special defensive stance. If you attack them in this stance, they will attempt to parry you and if you're close enough, you'll get parried and get riposted.

Enemy	Location	Notes
Balder Knight	Undead Parish Sen's Fortress	Only the rapier-wielding ones can parry you
Undead Assassin	Lower Undead Burg	-
Skeleton	The Catacombs	The scimitar and falchion-wielding ones can parry you

Aside from the enemies above, some hostile NPCs (the ones with the same model as the player) will attempt to parry you when they hold up their left-hand weapon (either a shield or a Parrying Dagger). They differ from the "normal" enemies above in that they will dodge backwards (or just block the attack) if they got attacked by a non-parriable attack.

NPC	Location	Notes
Undead Prince Ricard	Sen's Fortress	Parries you with Buckler
Crystal General	The Duke's Archives	Parries you with Crystal Shield even though normal Crystal Shield can't parry
Crestfallen Warrior	Firelink Shrine New Londo Ruins	Parries you with Heater Shield
Oswald of Carim	Undead Parish	Parries you with Parrying Dagger
Lady of the Darkling	Anor Londo	Parries you with Parrying Dagger
Knight Lautrec of Carim	Undead Parish Firelink Shrine Anor Londo	Parries you with Parrying Dagger
Darkmoon Soldiers (Balder Knight)	Anor Londo	Parries you with Balder Shield

Tips

- All Jump attacks (forward + strong attack) can't be parried and are therefore useful against mobs able to parry the player. This should not be taken as advice for PvP.

Notes

- The classification of Small and Normal for shields does not technically have anything to do with parrying, however with the exceptions of the Effigy Shield and Heater Shield they do

correspond to fast and slow shields.

- It is possible to parry an attack from an allied phantom (or the host, if you're summoned)

Footnotes 1. Additional Content only. 2. East-West Shield, Large Leather Shield, Wooden Shield, Heater Shield

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