

MAJOR SLACK'S
DEAD SPACE 2
SECRETS

**CAMPAIGN STRATEGY GUIDE
& COMPLETE WALKTHROUGH**

DS2 101

Introduction

Dead Space 2 is a third-person shooter, survival horror video game. Third-person shooter means you can actually see the character you control as you make your way through the game (as opposed to a first person shooter where you only see the weapon your character holds). The Dead Space 2 third-person view is an over-the-shoulder kind of thing where the game displays your character, Isaac Clarke, off to the left of the screen allowing you to peer over his right shoulder to see what lays ahead.

Survival horror typically means the story line is horror based and, more importantly, there is not enough ammo in the game to just shoot away at the enemies with reckless abandon. To avoid having to spend all your time running around panic stricken in low health while carrying a near-empty gun clip, you'll have to use good tactics and strategy to make the most of your resources.

The following strategy guide is a detailed compendium of said good tactics and strategies compiled by yours truly (Major Slack), a gamer who has played all the chapters of Dead Space 2 countless times and on all difficulty levels. The pages that follow will walk you through the entire game, show you where the enemies are (and how to blow them away with finesse), help you decide what the best weapons are, show you how to best upgrade those weapons using the least number of power nodes, show you how to save a ton of ammo and more.

Difficulty Levels

Dead Space 2 has five difficulty levels described in the game as follows:

casual	Enemies are weak. With some effort, you can survive.
normal	Ammo and health conservation are the keys to survival. A skillful trigger finger is needed to survive.
survivalist	For veteran Dead Space players. Ammo and health are less plentiful, and enemies are more deadly.
zealot	Ammo and health are scarce and enemies will brutalize you.
Hard Core	You will find the bare minimum of health and ammo to stay alive. When you die, you restart from your last save. You can only save three times.

Dead Space 2 definitely opens up a bigger can of whoop-arse (read: *kindly-kick-your-butt-back-to-the-stone-age*) than the original Dead Space so if you're an average gamer then you're probably best to start off with **normal** difficulty.

Hard Core Difficulty

The **Hard Core** difficulty level becomes available after completing the game at least once on any other difficulty setting. This is a special hybrid between the survivalist and the zealot difficulty levels. Enemies are survivalist grade while ammo drops are zealot grade. There are no checkpoint restarts and you only have three saves allotted to you to complete the *entire game* hence you must finish the game in four sittings.

Game Controls

Here are the default controls for the PC version:

Move	W/A/S/D
Activate Zero-G	ALT
Look / Aim	Mouse
Locator	B
Reload	R
Action / Confirm	E
Quick Heal	Q
Telekinesis	F (while aiming)
Recharge Stasis	C
Stasis	C (while aiming)
Run	Left Shift/Right Shift
Stomp	SPACE
Aim	Right Click/Caps Lock (Toggle)
Melee	Left Click
Fire Weapon	Left Click (while aiming)
Alt. Fire	SPACE/MOUSE3
Choose Weapon	1/2/3/4
Pause Menu	ESC
RIG	TAB

Slack's Custom Controls

Many viewers on my Youtube channel (<http://www.youtube.com/MajorSlackVideos>) have asked me about my custom keyboard settings. Here's how I've set them for Dead Space 2:

Move forward	D
Move backward	C
Slide left	S
Slide right	F
Activate Zero-G	Q
Look / Aim	Mouse
Locator	B
Reload	X
Action / Confirm	V
Quick Heal	Z
Telekinesis	T (while aiming)
Recharge Stasis	W
Stasis	W (while aiming)
Run	Left Shift
Stomp	SPACE
Aim	Right Mouse Button (hold down)
Melee	Left Mouse Button
Fire Weapon	Left Mouse Button (while aiming)

Alt. Fire	Space bar
Choose Weapon	1/2/3/4 or Rotate Mousewheel
Pause Menu	ESC
Show Inventory	G
Show Logs	L
Show Objectives	M

Many of my keyboard settings are standard for all my games including the movement controls (D/C/S/F), the reload button (X) and the heal button (Z).

Save Stations

You can save your progress through Dead Space 2 by using Save Stations which are placed throughout the game (usually there are numerous save stations spread throughout each chapter in the game). Dead Space 2 allots you 20 save slots in the save station menu meaning you can have up to 20 separate save games to choose from when loading or reloading a game.

A good save game system to use is to dedicate one save slot for the beginning of each chapter in the game (there are 15 chapters in all). Then as you work your way through each chapter, use a new save slot at each save station. This will allow you to return to an earlier part of a chapter in case you totally mess things up. Once the chapter is complete to your liking, delete all the current chapter saves except the first one and then save the game for the beginning of the new chapter. Continuing in this manner, when you complete the game, you'll have a collection of saves for the beginning of every chapter in the game making for easy replay. This collection of chapter saves will be immensely useful when practicing for Hard Core mode to help you quickly reload a problem chapter and replay it until you get it down pat.

Another ideal time to save the game is right before using the bench to make some weapon/equipment upgrades or before doing some major buying and selling at the store. That way, if you don't like the way things turned out you can reload that save and try something else.

Checkpoint Restarts

When Isaac dies, the game will automatically restart at the nearest checkpoint. Checkpoints are series of predesignated locations in between save stations. You can also force a checkpoint restart at any time by simply pausing the game and selecting the Checkpoint Restart option in the pause game menu. Be advised that doing a checkpoint restart may make changes to some enemy spawn points and scripted loot points that follow (which may or may not be to your advantage). See the Ruby Semiconductor Cheat for an example of this.

New Game+

The New Game+ option is earned by completing the game at least once and saving the game when prompted to do so at the end. This will allow you to start a new game with all the ammo, weapons and upgrades you acquired during your previous playthrough. All your stuff will be available at the first Store in the game. You can also choose to play a New Game+ at a higher difficulty setting than your previous playthrough (with the exception of Hard Core).

This means that you could conceivably complete the game on casual difficulty (where you get 50% more loot) and then have an easier go of it when you start a new game+ on Zealot difficulty using all the goodies and whatnot you got from the casual playthrough.

Inventory

The Inventory is Isaac's backpack where he carries his current supply of weapons and ammo. The inventory has four available weapon slots (stays the same throughout the game) and ten default inventory slots to carry ammo and other equipment. The number of inventory slots can be increased by purchasing better suits (armor) as they become available while progressing through the game.

Store

Dead Space 2's ingame 'Store' is where you can buy weapons, ammo, suits and other equipment using the game's currency (credits). Credits are amassed from pickups and enemy drops throughout the game. You can also use the store to sell

excess ammo and equipment or even weapons that you previously purchased.

Each store also has a Safe where you can stash ammo and equipment that you might want to use later but don't want currently using up precious space in your inventory. Unlike your inventory, the safe has no limits so you can cram as much as you like in there without having to worry about running out of space. The safe can be accessed from any store location throughout the game.

Schematics

Some weapon and ammo types will be automatically made available to purchase at the store as you progress through the game (e.g., the Line Gun, the Javelin Gun) but for the most part, you will be required to locate special item schematics, e.g., the Pulse Rifle schematic, and bring them to any store so that that item is made available for purchase. Many schematics are located inside Power Lock Rooms so always save one power node to open these rooms as sometimes it may be critical to your survival to acquire a certain weapon or ammo type.

Here is a complete list of all the default weapon and item schematic locations in the game organized according to chapter and order of appearance in the game:

Chapter 1

(There are no schematics in Chapter 1.)

Chapter 2

- ***Power Node Schematic*** — At the beginning of the chapter in the Power Lock Room at the end of the concourse just past the save station.
- ***Stasis Pack Schematic*** — Near the end of the chapter on the empty train track in the Galilei Transit Station. Use TK to grab it.

Chapter 3

- ***Pulse Rifle Schematic*** — At the beginning of the chapter behind the tram wreckage at the back of the warehouse on the left.
- ***Javelin Spears Schematic*** — At the end of the chapter in the Cassini Towers lobby where you get locked down with a bunch of enemies. The schematic is up a short flight stairs to the left of the Marker statue.

Chapter 4

- ***Security Suit Schematic*** — Mid-chapter, after using stasis to pass through the slamming door, you'll pass a save station. The schematic is high up on a shelf to your left.

Chapter 5

- ***Ripper Schematic*** — Early in the chapter after exiting the crypt you enter the Gravity Control Room and take a cargo lift to the bottom floor. The schematic is on the far wall to the right as you get off the lift.
- ***Medium Med Pack Schematic*** — Mid-chapter, after enabling zero-g in the Gravity Control Room, fly to the top and pass through a hole that caskets are passing through. The schematic is floating in mid-air in the middle of the next area.
- ***Line Racks Schematic*** — Mid-chapter later, after crawling through a vent, you drop through to the floor below. Go straight and hang a left into the next room. The schematic is straight ahead in front of the entrance.
- ***Detonator Schematic*** — Near the end of the chapter in the save station room right before meeting Daina.

Chapter 6

- ***Seeker Rifle Schematic*** — At the beginning of the chapter, you'll find a save station in a laundromat. Opposite the laundromat is a door leading out to a balcony. The schematic is on the floor on the right side of the balcony.
- ***Pulse Rounds Schematic*** — Mid-chapter, after the cutscene with Ellie where she releases the door lock, turn right and go to the end of the balcony just past the Bold Stylings sign.
- ***Flamethrower Schematic*** — After the gymnasium battle, exit the gym and follow your locator to find a classroom on the right. Enter the classroom and find the schematic on the floor to the right.

Chapter 7

- ***Ripper Blades Schematic*** — At the beginning of the chapter at the very bottom of the zero-g area where you have to repair the elevator.
- ***Force Gun Schematic*** — After fighting off all the Tripods in the Solar Array Elevator, exit the elevator and turn left to find some lockers. The schematic is in one of those lockers.
- ***Contact Beam Schematic*** — Late in the chapter, you go onto a catwalk and fight off a whole bunch of enemies after which you do a hack to enter the Solar

Array Control Pod to go out into space. There is a Power Lock Room at the end of this catwalk. The schematic is in that room.

Chapter 8

- ***Vintage Suit Schematic*** — At the beginning of the chapter, go in the Operation Control Room to find a Power Lock Room on the right. The schematic is in the Power Lock Room.
- ***Detonator Mines Schematic*** — Mid-chapter, just inside the Pressurization Control room to the left on the floor (room with the Bench).
- ***Large Med Pack Schematic*** — At the end of the chapter in the room where you meet Ellie and Stross.

Chapter 9

- ***Flame Fuel Schematic*** — Mid-chapter, after taking the Elevator to High Pressure Storage, you enter a 'hull-breach' room containing an Exploder and a Slasher. Continue from here to Fuel Pressurization Tower Mid-Level where you'll see two ramps leading up to the right. The schematic is at the top of the first ramp (watch out for trip mines) on the right behind some crates.
- ***Seeker Shells Schematic*** — Near the end of the chapter at the end of the trek through the stalker warehouse, you encounter a Guardian. There is a secret nook between the Guardian and the elevator. The schematic is in there (along with some other goodies).

Chapter 10

- ***Force Energy Schematic*** — Mid-chapter, on the bottom floor of the zero-g Centrifuge puzzle room.

Chapter 11

- ***Contact Energy Schematic*** — Mid-chapter, when you're out in space, you'll find the schematic all the way to the back on the right side of the exterior of the tube you have to go in to escape (after moving the lasers).
- ***Advanced Suit Schematic*** — Mid-chapter, in the Power Lock Room after working your way through the catwalk full of Slashers and Pukers.

Chapters 12, 13, 14, 15

(There are no schematics in chapters 12-15.)

Suits

Starting at the first store, special suits can —and in the case of the engineering suit, *must*— be purchased to facilitate a more 'pleasant' journey through the Dead Space 2 environment. Although each suit offers some small extra protection against alien attacks (armor %), the real advantage in upgrading to a better suit is extra slots allotted to your inventory allowing you to carry more stuff.

Here is a rundown of all the suits available in a default, non-patched new game:

Engineering

10 inventory slots, 5% armor bonus, automatically available at first store.
Cost: 1,000 credits.

Security

15 inventory slots, 10% armor bonus, +5% pulse rifle damage bonus, schematic found in Chapter 4. Cost: 20,000 credits.

Vintage

20 inventory slots, 15% armor bonus, 10% discount on all items at store, schematic in Chapter 8. Cost: 40,000 credits.

Advanced

25 inventory slots, 20% armor bonus, 50% stasis recharge time bonus, schematic in Chapter 11. Cost: 40,000 credits.

As Isaac dons each new suit, all the armor and inventory slot bonuses acquired from previously purchased suits are retained and included along with the bonuses of the new suit.

WEAPONS

Dead Space 2 has ten default weapons (not including downloadable or bonus content) well suited to a number of different playing styles and preferences. If you're into something more conventional than go with the Pulse Rifle which fires just like a machine gun or the Force Gun which handles like a shotgun. Other weapons are less conventional but more powerful such as the Ripper which excels in close combat and does it very cheaply or the Contact Beam which instantly kills most enemies although ammo is expensive.

Schematics

Weapons and ammo are gradually made available for purchase by finding special schematics throughout the game and then bringing those to the next store. When you bring a weapon or ammo schematic to a store, that weapon or ammo type will be available to purchase at any store from that point on.

Be advised that if you miss or simply can't find a weapon or ammo schematic, that weapon or ammo type will become automatically available for purchase starting at the *second store* after the point where that schematic is normally found or the first store in the next chapter (which ever comes first). Hence, all weapons and ammo will eventually become available for purchase at the store regardless of whether you retrieve schematics or not (which is something you may want to consider if your inventory is too full to take on a schematic). Finding schematics will just make those weapons or ammo types available earlier.

Buying Weapons

Once available at the store, weapons are not that expensive to buy, ranging from 8000 to 11,000 credits. All weapons can be resold back to the store for half of their original value. If they have been upgraded with power nodes, each placed power node will add 5000 credits to the resale price but you should only sell upgraded weapons if you absolutely have to.

A much better idea would be to wait until Chapter 7 where you'll be granted the RESPEC option at the bench which will allow you to pay 5000 credits to grab back all the power nodes you used on any particular weapon. Those nodes will be added back to the supply in your inventory and the weapon can then be resold for half of its original sale price without losing all the power nodes you used on it.

Ammo Drops

Although the types of ammo dropped from killed enemies are random as well as the types of ammo at predesignated ammo pickup locations, the chances that those ammo drops and pickups will be for a particular weapon increase if the weapon is *currently equipped*. In other words, if you're currently carrying the Javelin Gun, you're more likely to find Javelin Spears ammo.

You can further tweak things in your favor by simply carrying less weapons. For example, you're more likely to find Javelin Spears if you ***only carry the Javelin Gun*** as opposed to carrying the Javelin Gun along with other weapons. If you carry other weapons then the game will then be triggered to drop ammo for those other equipped weapons as well. This is a trick you can use to get extra ammo for a newly acquired weapon until you can find the ammo schematic allowing you to purchase that ammo type at the store.

A few more quick notes to remember about all weapons in the game:

- When you become more proficient with various weapons (meaning you can afford to sell spare ammo), an important factor to consider when deciding which weapons to equip is how much that spare ammo can sell for and more particularly how much a full inventory stack can sell for. For example, a full inventory stack of Contact Beam ammo sells for a whopping 6000 credits. Compare this to a Javelin Spears inventory stack which sells for a piddling 1000 credits.
- Weapons that are not currently equipped cannot be upgraded at the bench. However, previously applied upgrades will not be lost when storing weapons in the safe.
- Weapon magazines will be refilled automatically when applying a CAP upgrade at a bench. Hence, a part of your strategy should be to arrive at a bench with your weapon(s) empty or near empty so you can get a free refill by applying a CAP upgrade.

Best Weapon?

There is no absolute best weapon but rather it's a matter of personal preference. My personal preference leans heavily towards a reasonable mix between efficiency (kill the bad guys dead quick) and economy (do it cheap). The following Dead Space 2 weapons review is based on this preference although each and every weapon has its merits and, for your convenience, these are all analyzed in considerable detail. The weapons are listed in the order in which they become available in the game.

Plasma Cutter

Weapon Name	Plasma Cutter
Weapon Description	High energy mineral cutter
Weapon Cost	Free in Chapter 1
Primary Fire	Fire a narrow cutting beam vertically
Alt Fire	Fire a narrow cutting beam horizontally
Default clip size	10
Ammo Name	Plasma Energy (Ionized Gas Cartridge)
Ammo Cost	1200 credits (stack of 6)
Inventory Slot Stack Size	25
Full Inventory Stack Sell Price	2500 credits
Weapon Schematic Location	N/A - Given free in Chapter 1
Ammo Schematic Location	N/A - Ammo automatically available for purchase at first store in Chapter 2

Basics

The Plasma Cutter is the first weapon available in the game and is fairly easy to use although handling requires some precision since it relies heavily on dismemberment to be effective. This makes it less conventional as a weapon but all in all, it is the most versatile and serves well as a main weapon in the first half of the game and then later as an emergency backup when more powerful weapons become available.

Alternatively, if you learn some advanced techniques (see below), a fully upgraded Plasma Cutter can serve you well throughout the game and can achieve a low cost-per-kill ratio on all kinds of enemies.

The two firing modes of the Plasma Cutter are simply how the cutter is oriented, either **vertically** (ideal for dismembering arms) or **horizontally** (ideal for dismembering legs). Pressing Alt Fire simply toggles between the two firing modes.

Ammo is cheap for the Plasma Cutter although ammo drops are so plentiful that if you play carefully, not only will you never have to buy ammo but you will be able to sell all spare ammo you collect in order to get extra credits to buy more power nodes. Up until about Chapter 10, it should be fairly safe to forge ahead from every store location with just a full Plasma Cutter magazine as the game will readily feed you enough plasma energy ammo to handle all tasks suited for this weapon. However, this assumes you know how to handle the Plasma Cutter efficiently and economically (see below).

Claw-ectomies

The Plasma Cutter excels against Slashers especially in the first half of the game. You should be able to kill most Slashers with a single plasma energy round using the following tactic which I've dubbed the 'Claw-ectomy':

1. Put the Slasher in Stasis.
2. Set the Plasma Cutter to vertical and cut off one arm (usually takes one shot).
3. Use TK to grab a claw off the dismembered arm.
4. Spear the Slasher with its own claw.

For most Slashers, this will result in an instant kill making the Plasma Cutter an extremely economical weapon to use with an excellent cost-per-kill ratio and for this reason, upgrading the Stasis Module should be one of the first things you do to enable you to use this tactic more often.

Groin shots

When you have no stasis (or time) to perform a Claw-ectomy, an alternative tactic is to put the Plasma Cutter in horizontal firing mode and aim carefully for the groin (Slashers, Pukers and Spitters). Groin shots deal extra damage for undocumented reasons and often result in 1-2 shot kills (probably because shooting the groin simultaneously deals damage to three main hit areas on the enemy, i.e., the body and both legs). This is especially useful on Pukers since Claw-ectomies don't work on them because they don't have claws you can cut off and shoot back at them.

Crippling

As a last resort, e.g., when really pressed for time against an advancing mob, put the Plasma Cutter in horizontal mode and fire off a couple of quick shots at the enemy's leg to chop it off and put it in crawl mode. Then you can put the Plasma Cutter in vertical mode and chop off an arm to kill it.

Upgrading

The most significant upgrades you can make to the Plasma Cutter is to do the following at (or before) the bench in Chapter 5:

- Three DMG upgrades (60% increase in damage)
- One SPD upgrade (increases the fire rate)
- One CAP upgrade (increases magazine size to 12 shots)

These upgrades—which will cost you seven power nodes— will make it much easier to handle the boss monsters in Chapter 5, i.e., the Tripod-Slasher hybrid in the Grand Hall and the Tormentor boss at the end, both of which the game forces you to deal with in a series of quick-time event scenarios. With the above upgrades, each of the four scenarios in the Tormentor quick-time event (where you have to shoot the yellow infected flesh) can be handled with a single Plasma Cutter shot.

The SPC Upgrade

A fully upgraded Plasma Cutter will cost you a mere 18 power nodes (4 node slots can be skipped). Even though this is a devastating weapon sporting a 20-shot magazine and a rapid fire rate, I typically abandon the Plasma Cutter around Chapter 10 because a fully upgraded Ripper can do most of the heavy lifting with regards to close combat and can do it considerably cheaper than the Plasma Cutter.

Notwithstanding, if you like the feel of the Plasma Cutter, it will serve you well fully upgraded but you should understand a thing or two about the SPC upgrade:

The SPC upgrade sets the enemy on fire with each shot and, more importantly, creates a post-shot burn effect similar to the flamethrower where the enemy takes continuing damage after being set on fire. As a result, you may want to slow down your rate of fire to take advantage of this.

As an example, a fully upgraded Plasma Cutter *without* the SPC upgrade typically takes four shots to kill a Lurker (shooting directly at the Lurker's body). With the SPC upgrade, you can consistently kill Lurkers with three body shots, sometimes as little as two. This will render moot the tactic of having to carefully aim to dismember each of a Lurker's three tentacles to get a kill essentially making it much easier to kill Lurkers. Similar results can be achieved if you take advantage of the post-burn effect on other enemies.

Plasma Cutter Cheats

Here are some, ahem, *notes* on how to use your fully upgraded Plasma Cutter effectively:

- *Against Slashers and Spitters* - Put it in stasis and go for an instant kill with some carefully placed groin shots pausing between each shot to maximize the SPC post-burn effect. This works extremely well on normal Slashers which can be killed with one or two shots. Super Slashers will take three shots to the groin to bring them down and a final shot to dismember an arm to kill it.
- *Against Pukers* - Same technique as the Slashers. Put it in stasis and try for an instant kill with some slow well-placed groin shots (two or three shots). If you end up only crippling it, stasis it again and then run up close and line up your line of fire (with the weapon in horizontal mode) so that it will shoot all the way through its body starting at the head. This will do a lot more damage than trying to dismember an arm with the weapon in vertical mode. You can typically finish off a crawling puker like this with one or two shots.
- *Against Crawling Stalkers* - Crawling Stalkers have a strange weak point directly on their shoulders (not on the joint but right on the shoulder itself). A fully upgraded Plasma Cutter can often one-shot kill Crawling Stalkers hit directly on the shoulder.
- *Against Lurkers* - Yeah I know... Dismember all three of a Lurker's tentacles to kill it. But did you know that Lurkers have a weak spot on their heads just below the center tentacle? Two shots here with a fully upgraded Plasma Cutter will usually get an instant kill.
- *Against Pregnants* - Pregnants are weak at the ankles. A fully upgraded Plasma Cutter can bring down a Pregnant with a single shot to one of its ankles. Then shoot one of its arms a couple of times to finish it off.
- *Against Brutes* - This is probably a poor choice of weapon to take up against a Brute but if you must, a fully upgraded Plasma Cutter can dismember a Brute's arm with eight shots (shoot directly at the yellow infected flesh with the Plasma Cutter in vertical mode). Alternatively, you may want to run around behind the Brute and chop off one of its tiny legs instead (easier). Once dismembered, the Brute will be put in 'spit-bomb' mode. You can use TK to catch the spit bombs and then launch them back at it to kill it (typically three to five spit bombs will kill it).

