

# Soul Searching: A Dota 2 Guide to Shadow Fiend

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Oh my poor Shadow Fiend, how the mighty have fallen. One of the most iconic mid-laners in the game, Shadow Fiend (or SF) had always held a key position in the metagame until very recently. Similarly to how all the top professional mid-players have Invoker in their arsenal; Shadow Fiend is also among their most played heroes. Such was the dominance of this cuddly, black demon that Icefrog felt the need to nerf him into oblivion just a few patches ago. Having said, Shadow Fiend is by no means unplayable and he still possesses an unparalleled skill to takeover a game, though he is not quite the game-breaking animal that he used to be.

Your skill build on Shadow Fiend should always be the same. You max out your Razes (The Q, W and E, which share skill points, so 1 point gives you all three) and Necromastery as soon as possible. This means that you DO NOT get your ultimate at the usual level 6, but get it at 9 instead. There are two simple reasons for this: Until you get your maximum souls, your ultimate will not do too much, and you need your Razes to farm up those souls. After Level 8, get your ultimate whenever possible, with the other passive in between.

Playing Shadow Fiend in mid is really simple. First, you have to accept that your early game will be horrible. His incredibly low base damage means he simply cannot last hit very well until he has a few souls. Skill Necromastery at Level 1, sit back and

kill some creeps. If all goes well, you should hit Level 7 without dying, as well as Level 4 Razes and Level 3 Necromastery. This is the point when Shadow Fiend really takes off. When maxed, two Razes kill an entire creep wave. Go from camp to camp killing creeps with Razes, and you will have a lot of money very quickly. A trick to landing Razes is to right-click on the target first so you turn to face him. The one limiting factor to your farming speed is mana.

Like most mids, your first item should be a Bottle. This should be followed by Power Treads and a Eul's Sceptre. The Eul's is essential for solving your mana problems as well as the one-shot combo. After this, you have a decision to make regarding the rest of your item build. On Old school SF, you would get a Shadowblade or Blink Dagger, a BKB and Sange & Yasha before right-clicking on people. You can probably sell the Bottle and Eul's at this point for a Skadi and either a butterfly, Daedalus or MKB. However, in the new and tanky meta, SF simply does not have quite enough right-click damage to carry hard. As such there is a new school build going around, where you focus on using that big ultimate. You still get the Blink, Eul's, and a BKB, but then finish with an Aghanaim's and a Shivas Guard. The point of this build is simple: you blink in, Eul's someone up and blow them to smithereens. You use BKB so you aren't stunned, and the Shiva's attack speed slow keeps you alive until your ulti hits and heals you up. Keep in mind that, if you die, you lose half your souls. So, like a



brooding, emotional type, SF has to go huge 42 soul ultimate, that will just about one-shot anybody with a well-timed Eul's combo.

Also, due to your farming speed, you are worth a LOT of money. All in all, Shadow Fiend is not quite as abusive as he used to be, but as long as you manage your mana and stay alive, you can still dominate a game through sheer farming speed. He can still right click decently, but these days it may just be more worthwhile to build around that

huge 42 soul ultimate, that will just about one-shot anybody with a well-timed Eul's combo.

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**Release:** March 26, 2001  
**Developer:** Nintendo  
**Platform:** Nintendo 64

The Pokémon series has had quite a mixed reception if its console games are taken into account. But, the second installment of Pokémon Stadium is sensational.

Pokémon Stadium 2 is a standout in Nintendo's catalogue. Newcomers have nothing to get adjusted to so they can start off right away. One particular thing about the game that makes me want to play it, even today, is its insanely high fun factor. I have spent hours playing Pokémon Stadium 2 and every now and then, I still come back to it when I have the urge to partake in a Pokémon battle.

There are no story lines in the game, which already makes it unique from other Pokémon games. Progress in the game is made by winning trophies in the Stadium, with a tournament mode consisting of four cups (Poké Cup, Prime Cup, Challenge Cup, and Little Cup) and the Gym Leader Castle. After completing all these, the player's rival challenges him as the final battle. Once it's all over, the same thing can be repeated on a higher diffi-

culty.

The game's battles are worthwhile. The graphics are packed with beautiful 3D models, special effects and for a game released in 2001, it's pretty amazing. The battles are outstanding with loads of options available to the players. Teams of six can be built with the matches taking place on the 3v3 format as in the stadium. Imported Pokémon from Gameboy cartridges can also be used (if you are playing in the N64). With 251 Pokémon from the first two generations at your disposal, the chance of repetitive fights is very slim. In addition to this, there are also fun mini-games available. Even though the commentary during the battles can come off as annoying, it's just a minor setback to a massive success.

Pokémon Stadium 2 can be played on the Nintendo 64. If you have one lying around collecting dust or if a friend does, do bring it out and relive those memories of becoming the ultimate Pokémon Master.

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