

Final Fantasy II / IV Minimum Steps Challenge

by GirkDently

Updated to v1.0 on Feb 3, 2020

This walkthrough was originally written for Final Fantasy II on the SNES, but the walkthrough is still applicable to the PSX version of the game.

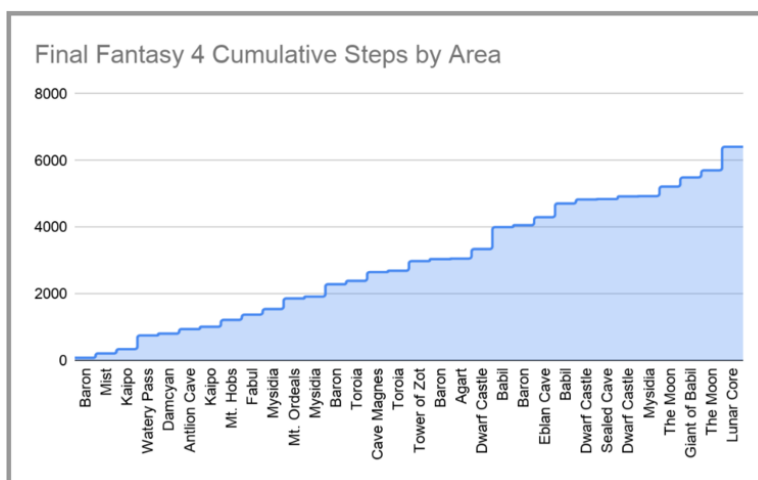
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FF2/4 Minimum Steps Challenge: Introduction

Based on the minimum-step challenge (“MSC”) for Final Fantasy 3/6, I’ve decided to adapt the challenge to Final Fantasy 2/4. Yes, FF2/4 does not *have* a step counter, which makes it difficult to verify whether you’ve taken the absolute minimum number of steps. By and large, however, it is straightforward to chart out the shortest possible path from beginning to end in every room and overworld segment of the game, and even if you misstep here or there, the spirit of the challenge remains. If anyone knows how to make a hack that would include a step counter, shoot me a message!

Here’s the deal: do not stray one square up, down, left, or right further than you need to beat the game. No visiting shops or inns that aren’t on your path, no running around fighting monsters, nothing. By my count, you can get from the halls of Baron Castle to Zeromus’s lair in the Lunar Core in 6,410 steps, or 7,090 if you complete the Sealed Cave. Here they all are:



I don’t expect anyone to track their steps during this run. I did it once because I was curious, and so I could make that chart. Yay charts. If you’re curious, my room list is available here: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/16hYtp7ADoS4f3_s-2ymGaWP5dpSdatRvwbs1cx_dfys/edit?usp=sharing.

I like this challenge because it combines aspects of other challenge runs into one:

- You cannot grind, so level-gaining is limited, although not as limited as a true low-level run.
- Items and equipment are limited, so this has shades of an initial equipment/no-item run. You can only pick up treasures that are directly on your path, and you will only come across one store in the entire game (the Fabul item store)
- There are very few opportunities to restore your HP/MP, so health management is critical, especially when several fights are strung together.

The walkthrough here will detail how to achieve this. I will assume you are familiar with the plot and mechanics of the game, and will mostly say things like “progress the plot” until we come to a situation germane to the MSC.

A few finer points about the run:

- This guide is written for the US release of Final Fantasy IV (also known as FFII). Many of the strategies should translate directly to the JP version, though I haven’t tested them myself yet.
- Like in FF3/6 challenge, I don’t count travel on chocobos, hovercraft, or airship towards your step count, meaning you should take these forms of transit whenever possible. I also don’t count steps inside chocobo forests, so don’t worry about waiting for a bird to walk right up to you.
- I recommend you skip the Sealed Cave as it cuts 680 steps off the run (it also makes the final few bosses more difficult), but I’ve written a how-to for that section for the purists.
- I discourage saving and resetting during overworld segments to maximize the number of fights you get into. To me, this is not only boring, but goes against the spirit of the challenge as you’re effectively taking extra steps. If you’re really struggling with a boss and need to beef up your levels a bit, fine, but I’ll assume you’re fighting monsters at the regular rate.
- I also discourage “grind” fights, such as repeatedly killing the monsters called by Alerts, Seachers, Summoners, etc. To me, this allows for easy leveling and removes such of the challenge, but it’s your run! In such fights, I only fight one of the summoned monsters and then kill off the summoner before proceeding.

Version History

Version 1.0

- Date uploaded: January 29, 2020
- Description: Initial upload

General Advice

EXP Management

EXP management is probably the most important aspect of this run. Because of our terrible equipment and items, The Four Fiends and Zeromus are hard. We need our final characters to be as strong as possible given the limited EXP gaining opportunities we have.

In FF4, characters that are outside the party (e.g. Rosa between Fabul and Valvalis) receive the amount of EXP shown on the victory screen. Since EXP is divided among surviving party members, this means your "shadow" party receives more EXP if only one character survives versus if every character survives.

For example, the Dark Elf gives 6000 EXP. If Cecil, Tellah, Cid, and Yang each survive the fight, then Kain, Rydia, and Rosa receive 1500 EXP a piece, meaning your final party receives 6000 EXP in aggregate. If only Cecil survives, however, Kain, Rydia, and Rosa receive 6000 EXP a piece, so your final party receives 24,000 EXP, a four-fold increase!

To that end, here are the general principles for EXP management in this run

- Win every random encounter you can
- Make sure non-final characters are KO'ed at the end of every fight
- When you have shadow party members, try to win fights with only one character alive (so as to maximize total EXP given to the party)
- Give Kain and Rosa as much EXP as possible, since they are the key characters for Zeromus

These goals aren't always achievable - sometimes random encounters are too risky, or reviving characters after fights isn't feasible - but they're good to keep in mind. Early in the run it's less critical that we do these things since we're dealing with low EXP totals.

Item and Equipment Management

Since we get so few items and equipment in this run, we need to take advantage of what we do. To that end:

- Unequip characters before they leave the party, as their equipment can be used to outfit other characters.
- Pick up all chests that are right in your path.
- Know when the game will refill your HP and MP (see list below). This will help you avoid using items when you don't need to.
- On a related note, when an HP/MP refill is coming up, or when a magic user is about to leave the party, prioritize using MP instead of items (with the caveat that you keep enough MP to make it through whatever fights you have coming up)

Times when the game automatically refills your HP/MP:

- After fight Rydia in Mist
- Before and after the guard fight in Kaipo
- After the save point in the Watery Pass
- After getting Rosa
- At the beginning and end of the Fabul battles
- After Cecil becomes a Paladin
- After getting Yang back in Baron
- After the first Dark Elf fight
- After defeating Valvalis
- Immediately before Rubicant
- Immediately before the Four Fiends fight
- After the CPU fight
- Before the Zeromus fight

Walkthrough

Let's get to it.

Baron - Mist

Once you gain control of Cecil in Castle Baron, head directly to his room and go to bed. After the cutscene, you will be dumped outside of Baron.

Remove Cecil's armor and walk towards the chocobo forest west of Baron. We don't want Dark Knight Cecil hogging more EXP than he needs to, so in your first fight, kill Cecil (we removed his armor to make this easier) and move Kain to the back row. As a reminder, you generally want to win every random encounter you come across in this run.

Take a chocobo to the entrance of the Misty Caves. In the caves, you can cut straight across the second and third set of stairs you come across, as shown below:



From there, make your way to D. Mist ([link](#))

After beating the Mist Dragon, walk towards the Mist Village. Right before entering, unequip Kain of all his gear, and re-equip Cecil's armor.

Kaipo - Watery Pass

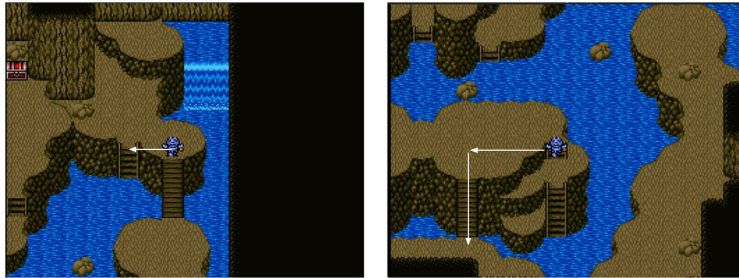
After the cutscene in Mist, walk to Kaipo. In the Inn, you'll be attacked by an Officer and three Soldiers. Make sure to defeat the Officer before finishing the last Soldier, which will net you an extra 400 EXP. In the morning, visit Rosa in the northeast building of town. On your way out, there's an Ether1 in an urn right along your path.

From here through Antlion's Cave is one of the tougher stretches of the run, because we need Rydia to learn Warp at the conclusion of the Antlion fight (so that we can Warp out of the Cave, reducing our step count). Rydia learns Warp at Level 12, so she needs 5185 EXP between now and the end of the Antlion fight, which is possible, but difficult.

Right now Rydia isn't strong enough to face monsters on her own, so keep Cecil alive but make sure Rydia stays alive! With her in the back row parrying she should be alright.

Head to the Watery Pass, and make your way to Tellah and put him in the back row. Even though we don't want Tellah taking EXP from the group, I find it useful to keep him alive here. For one, his magic makes it possible to take down Zombies and Jellies, which you would otherwise have to run from. Second, he can revive Rydia if she happens to get taken out, which is handy since we don't have any Lifes yet.

In the room after you pick up Tellah, there are two stairways you can cut across to save a step:



Feel free to use as much of Tellah's MP as you like before the save cutscene. If you get into a fight within ~15 steps of the save point, kill off Cecil and Tellah at the end of it so that Rydia can absorb all the EXP.

After the save cutscene, we need to be disciplined with our MP usage. Do not use any of Rydia's magic between here and Octomamm. Keep Tellah alive and reserve his magic for enemies like Jellies and Zombies, otherwise let Cecil do the work. Again, make sure Rydia survives every fight.

Two fights of note: 1) CaveToads and MadToads can (surprisingly) cast Toad on your party, which requires 20MP for Tellah to heal. We really want to avoid this, as Tellah's MP is precious in this stretch. Try to take them out quickly with Ice, but if too many of your party members get Toaded, you may need to reset. 2) TinyMages are annoying as they cast Hold after every attack and are resistant to our magic. Attack them only with Cecil and hope for good damage rolls. These fights give too much EXP to run away from.

The path to Octomamm is straightforward. If your health is low prior to the fight, have Tellah cast a group Cure2 prior to the Octomamm fight ([link](#))

Damcyan - Sandruby

After defeating Octomamm, unequip Tellah and walk to Damcyan Castle. Go straight to the third floor. After the famous "spoony bard" cutscene, you will be in a hovercraft outside the castle.

Head east and park directly below the entrance to the Antlion's Cave. Unequip Edward, save, and then enter the cave. In the first room, there are two paths to the door in the southeast corner. From the staircase just south of the entrance, you'll see staircases to your southeast and southwest - either gets you to the door in the same number of steps (paths A and B below).



If you followed the Octomamm strategy, Rydia should have at least 30MP and Cecil may or may not be knocked out when you enter Antlion's Cave. You can safely use 21 of Rydia's MP (i.e. 3 Chocobs or 4 Ice1/Lit1s) to get through fights in this room and the next. In your first random encounter here, knock out Edward, which will shunt more EXP to Rydia. Knocking Edward out can be tricky due to his Hide function, so I tend to have Rydia cast Ice1 on him. You may need to reset once or twice to get him down.

In the second room, there's a Life Potion lying right in our path! Revive Cecil if needed, and cast one Cure1 on him with Rydia. Give Rydia your Ether1, and use the secret passageway to get to Antlion's Nest. If Rydia has more like 3685 EXP before the Antlion fight ([link](#)), she will learn Warp. If so, Warp out of the Antlion's nest, get in the hovercraft, and return to Kaipo. Congrats - you just saved yourself 139 steps!

If you didn't learn Warp in time, don't despair. Just walk out of the Antlion's nest, but run from fights to avoid accumulating excess EXP.

When you get to Kaipo, park the hovercraft on the southern edge of town, since this is where you'll be placed when you leave town.

Before speaking to Rosa, re-equip Edward and put him in the back row. After giving Rosa the Sandruby, you'll enter a forced encounter with Edward against a Water Hag. This is why I suggested you put Edward in the back row - since he's still Level 5, I've lost to the Water Hag when Edward was in the front row! Deal three hits and the Hag will fall.

The next morning, cast Warp with Rydia and then walk out of town (Warp only works once, sadly). Take the hovercraft to Mt. Hobs.

Mt. Hobs - Fabul

Prior to entering the mountain, set up your party as follows: put Rydia, Rosa, and Cecil in the back row and Edward up front.

After Rydia learns Fire, head straight to the summit of Mt. Hobs. Kill Edward in your first random encounter. If needed, have Rosa heal your party before you engage Mom Bomb ([link](#))

Equip Yang. On the way down from Fabul, kill off Cecil and win all the random encounters with Yang, Rydia, and Rosa. Feel free to use as much of Rydia and Rosa's MP as you like, as they will be leaving us soon.

When you reach Fabul, save, and put Edward and Cecil in the front row with Yang in the back. Unequip Rosa, remove Edward and Cecil's armor, and give Yang a Cap and an Iron Ring. Now speak to the king and you will be forced into a series of battles ([link](#)).

After losing the Crystal, walk to the Inn in Fabul. Here, there is a blessed Item Store right in our path! This is the only store we will come across on this run, so let's make the most of it.

- First, remove Edward's Harp and Cecil's Shadow Sword.
- Then, sell the Sword, Harp, Kain's Spear, any Leather gear you have, your Iron Rings (not the Iron Glove from Kain), and any Rods/Staves you have.
- Do NOT sell Kain's Iron gear. I also hung onto the Ruby Ring, Yang's FireClaw, and my Bow and Arrows

In all, I had about 10,000GP with which to buy items. I bought 45 Lifes, 7 Heals, 7 Tents, and spent the rest of my money in Cure1s (about 60). Spend every penny you have, as there's no other opportunity to use your money in this run. Now let's just hope this gets us through everything :).

If you're planning to do the Sealed Cave, buy 9 Tents and cut back on Cure 1s.

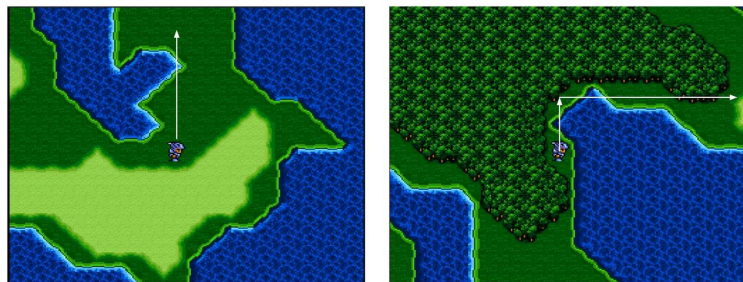
After talking to the King, give Cecil the Black Sword, then leave Fabul. Completely unequip Rydia, Yang, and Edward, then board your ship.

Mysidia and Mount Ordeals

After the wreck, walk to Mysidia and talk to the Elder. After Palom and Porom join your party, leave and head straight to Mount Ordeals.

Kill Palom and Porom off in the first you get into. From here until the Tower of Zot, we really want to have one character standing at the end of each fight, since in that way Kain, Rydia, and Rosa will get the full EXP value of the battle. This isn't always possible, but around Mount Ordeals Cecil will do just fine.

There are a few corners you can cut on the way to Mount Ordeals to save steps, shown below:



Go straight up Mount Ordeals. After you get Tellah back, kill him off in your first fight. If Cecil gets low on HP, use a few of the Cure1s you picked up in Fabul.

At the summit of Mount Ordeals, you can go left or right from the spot you enter. Before engaging Milon, use one Life on Tellah, and have him revive Palom and Porom and then cast Cure 2 on the group. Once you're ready, attack Milon ([link](#)). Afterwards, make sure Cecil is in the front row, then cross the bridge and fight Milon Z ([link](#)).

After Milon Z, go to the shrine where Cecil will become a Paladin. Your party will be restored, but you want Cecil to win every fight coming down Mt. Ordeals on his own. To that end, give Cecil the Iron Armor we took off of Kain at the beginning of the game.

In the first fight, use Tellah and others to help whittle down your foes, then knock them out and finish it with Cecil. Don't be shy about using Cecil's magic or your Cure1s to keep his HP up, and you shouldn't have too much trouble completing all the fights.

Once you're off the mountain, go to the chocobo forest a short ways southwest, and return to Mysidia. The elder will reopen the Devil's Road, which you can take to Baron.

Return to Baron

Once back in Baron, go to the Inn and use a Life on Tellah and restore his health. Walk up to find Yang and some Baron guards ([link](#)). After beating them, Yang will give you a key to the Baron waterway.

After your stay, cast Warp with Tellah to exit the Inn. The entrance to the Waterway is to the northwest.

Before going into the Waterway, equip Yang (Fire Claw/Leather Helm/Leather Armor/Iron Ring). I try to beat the monsters in the first two rooms of the Waterway with Cecil alone (of course, in the first fight you can use the whole party to whittle the enemies down). Feel free to use Cecil's Cure1 in between fights to keep your HP up.

In the second room of the waterway, use the hidden path to cut off a good chunk of the room:



In the third room, revive Yang. In this room and the next there are fights with Guards, which can get ugly with Cecil alone. Guards counter every attack with Size, which dramatically reduces your defense if it hits. Guards don't have much health, so just attack again with whoever was not targeted by Size and you should finish him off.

When you get back to Baron Castle, use a Life on Tellah and have him restore everyone's HP. Put Yang in the front row and remove his armor, then head directly to the King's Room. Along the way you'll be attacked by Baigan ([link](#)). After the fight, use a Life on Tellah, and make sure Tellah and Cecil each have at least 300 HP and are in the back row. You can use Tellah to cure if needed, but make sure he has at least 60 MP for the Kainazzo fight. If his MP is tight, have Cecil cure or use Cure1 items.

Unequip Palom and Porom, and then head to the King's Room where you'll face Kainazzo ([link](#)). Continue the plot until you're hovering in the Airship above Baron.

Toroia and The Magnetic Cave

Normally this is a point in the game to explore and pick up some handy items. Sadly, we will not do so in this run. Our unwavering march towards the end of the game must continue, so take the ship and land next to Toroia.

Go into the castle and wrap around to the western side to find Edward. After receiving the Twin Harp, cast Exit to leave the castle and walk north towards the chocobo forest. Cecil should solo any fights in this stretch.

After picking up the Black Chocobo, fly over to Cave Magnes and land two squares south of the entrance. At this point, use a Life on Tellah, and use your first Tent of the game. Cid and Yang should still be knocked out. Save and enter.

Cave Magnes is tough, so it's not realistic to solo all the random encounters with Cecil. But Cecil and Tellah together can make it work. First, remove Cecil's Sword and Shield, and then give him a Leather Helm and Armor, plus a non-metallic ring if you have one. Put Cecil and Tellah in the back row.

If you run into Panthers or Cave Bats, a group Virus should take them all out. For Mages and the fights with VampGirls and Cave Bats, I use a group Ice3 to end things. Ogres are actually my favorite fight here, since Tellah can Psych them and easily refill his MP. Have Cecil Cover and keep his HP up, and use Virus with Tellah.

If Tellah is out of MP and you don't run into an Ogre fight, don't be afraid to run away. Also, feel free to use Cecil's Cure1 in between fights, as he will get an MP refill after the first Dark Elf fight.

At the end of the cave you'll run into the Dark Elf ([link](#)). After defeating him, gather the Crystal, leave the Crystal Room, and immediately cast Exit with Cecil.

Return to the chocobo forest, and then ride a yellow chocobo down to Toroia Castle (it doesn't seem to matter which side you enter the castle from). Walk straight up to the Cleric's room, trigger the cutscene, and then cast Exit with Cecil.

Before getting on the Airship, use a Life on Tellah and then use a Tent to restore their HP and MP.

The Tower of Zot

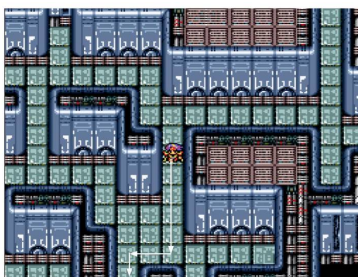
We *really* want to solo all the fights in Zot with Cecil. Kain, Rydia, and Rosa are all out of the party, so a 5000 EXP fight here gives the final party 20,000 EXP! Other than the Giant of Babil and possibly the Lunar Core, this is the best EXP gaining opportunity in the entire run.

To that end, put Cecil in the back row. Most fights he can churn through by attacking. Use his Cure1 spell or your Cure1 items in between fights. If you run into a fight with an Ice Liz and three Slimes, revive Tellah and have him use a group Virus, which should take out the Slimes. Kill Tellah off, then finish the Ice Liz with Cecil. If Tellah's getting low on MP, Psych the Ice Liz before knocking him out.

Fights with two Ice Liz and two Carapace are also hard with Cecil on his own, since Carapace are fast and do a lot of damage. One approach is to revive Tellah and have him cast Ice Two on the Carapace, Psych an Ice Liz, and then knock him out again.

If you get back-attacked, switch to the back row immediately. If Cecil got badly hurt before switching rows, either run away or have him Cure2 himself before proceeding. Use your judgement.

Routing-wise, Zot is a little confusing. On the first floor, go around the southeast corner of the room (but don't go to the southernmost row, just the second from the bottom). On the second floor, follow the arrow shown below (you entered the room above the top right of this picture):



From there, head towards the door in the northwest corner.

On the third and fourth floors, just walk around the outside of the room.

On the fifth floor use a Life on Tellah and have him revive Yang and Cid and restore their HP. Proceed north to fight the Magus Sisters ([link](#)).

After the fight, unequip Tellah, then progress the plot until Kain and Rosa rejoin your party. Equip Rosa, put Kain, Cecil, and Rosa in the back row, then walk down a step to encounter Valvalis ([link](#)).

After Zot collapses, walk out of Baron Castle (too bad Exit/Warp doesn't work here) and get in the airship. Go south to Agart, and park one square away from town (doesn't matter which side). Walk straight north to the well, drop the Magma Key, and then cast Exit. Get back in your ship, and head down to the underground.

The Dwarf Castle and Babil

Side Note: Now that Kain and Rosa are back in your party, we want to shunt as much EXP to them as possible leading up to Zeromus. In general, try to win fights using only those two; I will call out any exceptions to this policy.

After crashing by the Dwarf Castle, enter, unequip Cid and then walk straight up to speak with the King. Yang will notice something behind the wall, which will lead into the Calbrena ([link](#)) and Golbez ([link](#)) fights.

Immediately after these fights, have Rosa revive Rydia and then cast Warp with Rydia. If you want to skip the Sealed Cave, collect the Crystal from the Crystal Room. In either case, cast Warp three more times into you're on the castle walkway. Walk down one step and then one up to enter the main hall, and then head to the stairs in the northwest corner. From there, navigate to the basement entrance, and follow the basement to the world map screen.

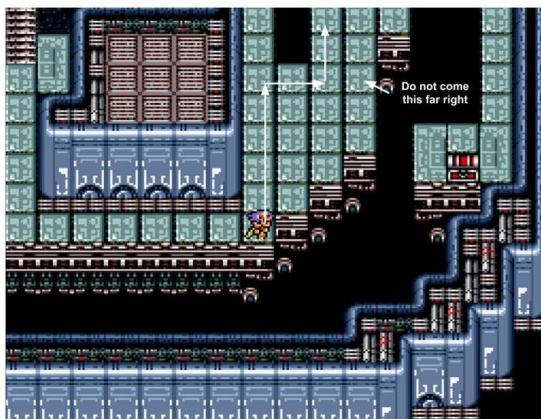
Once on the world map, head west and then north to Babil. There are a few ambiguous spots along the route, noted below:



Knock Rydia out again in your first fight. You can manage this section with just Kain and Rosa.

Babil is largely straightforward - Jump with Kain and attack or heal with Rosa. Be careful with Flame Dog fights, as when there is only one left they cast a powerful Flame attack. Also, no grinding from the Marion fights! Keep your HP high between fights - the most efficient way to do this is to use Cure1 outside of battle.

On the fifth floor, be careful not to overshoot the door:



When you reach Lugae, put your two Prisoner armors on Kain and Rosa. These grant protection from sleep, which makes the fight easier (Prisoner armor strats for the win!). Revive the party, heal up, and approach Lugae ([link](#)).

After beating Lugae, put your regular armor back on and then backtrack to the Cannon room on the fifth floor (again, win random encounters with Kain and Rosa). Unequip Yang and head in. After taking out the Dark Imps and losing Yang, walk back to the entrance of Babil.

The Elban Caves and Babil Revisited

After a brief cutscene, you'll be back above ground with the Airship. Land on the rightmost square on the south side of Baron castle, and then walk to the eastern side of the castle. Talk to Cid's mechanic (either one, they're the same number of steps to reach), and they'll attach a hook to the Enterprise for you.

Fly the Enterprise to Mt. Hobs, pick up the Hovercraft, and then drop in near Eblan Castle. Park the Enterprise one square away, get on the Hovercraft, and take it to the entrance of Eblan Cave. Before entering, I'd recommend using two Tents to recover Rosa's MP.

Walk straight through the Eblan Caves. Thankfully, there are a few treasures right along your path: an Ether1, a Tent, a Cabin, a Cure2, and 850GP (that last one is worthless). In the "Pass to Babil" there are two Elixirs through the hidden passage on the right side. They're not on-path, but if you're worried about the Zeromus fight, having these will make life a lot easier. The run is doable without them, though.

The fights along here aren't too bad - just jump with Kain and attack/heal with Rosa. Use Cure1 with Rosa between battles to make maximum use of your MP.

After Edge fails to take down Rubicant, head straight up into Babil. Kill off Edge in your first fight and continue on through the tower. The battles here are manageable; make sure to take out BlackCats in one hit (Kain's Jump should do), as they can counter with Bluster, an instant death attack. Keep your health up between fights; Rubicant will refill your MP, so don't worry about drawing it down. Lastly, no grind fights with the Sorcerers!

As far as routing notes:

- On the first floor, don't go too far down in the first area:



- On the second floor, go around the outside of the room (avoid the stairway in the middle)
- The third floor is easy - just walk to the nearest door
- On the fourth floor, go to the right, and then follow the path
- On the third floor again (the floor numbering is weird in this building), go to the right, then head to the far right door
- The next room is obvious
- On the fifth floor, go left one step and then down before heading to the stairway

At the top of the stairway, a cutscene will trigger, after which you will fight Edge's parents. Do nothing for three rounds. Rubicant will then show up. Before talking to him, give Kain Edge's Bandanna and Black Belt, which will boost his damage for the Rubicant fight. Once you're ready, talk to Rubicant and he will restore your HP/MP before attacking you ([link](#)).

After defeating Rubicant, walk straight up to the Crystal Room, which will drop you down several floors. Follow the path until you reach the new airship. Feel free to use Rosa's MP here, since we can use a Tent/Cabin once we leave. Head back to the Dwarf Castle, and park the airship on the southern side, to the right.

The Sealed Cave

Walk up to the King's Room and he'll give you the key to the Sealed Cave. Cast Warp three times so that you're back on the castle walkway. Go down and up, then head to the northwest staircase and make your way to the infirmary.

After Cid retrofits the airship, leave the castle (you have to walk out from the infirmary; just retrace your steps).

Fly to the Sealed Cave. If you collected the Dark Crystal earlier, unequip Kain before entering. Give Cecil his Silver gear, and give Edge the Black Belt and Bandanna back. Walk straight north to trigger the cutscene, after which Kain will leave the party. Congrats, the Sealed Cave is done! Walk back out, get on your ship, and return to the Dwarf Castle (park on the southern side, to the right).

If you didn't get the Dark Crystal earlier, keep Kain equipped and use your Cabin before entering.

There are three Trap Doors you need to fight in the Sealed Cave, which aren't too troublesome. Jump with Kain, attack with Cecil/Edge, and use Virus with Rydia. Have Rosa cast Life as needed, or revive her if she's targeted.

The routing in the Sealed Cave is largely straightforward:

- First Floor: make for the door in the northwest corner. Cut along the top of the southern landmass
- Hallway - easy
- Second Floor: just swing around the outside, but don't go further north than you have to
- Hallways - easy
- Third Floor: make for the stairs in the southeast corner
- Save Room - Easy
- Fourth Floor: make for the stairs in the southwest of the room. Cut along the top of the southern landmass again
- Fifth Floor: Cut between the two lanterns

At the end of the bridge on the fifth floor, you'll be attacked by Evil Wall ([link](#)). After defeating it, go north to the Crystal Room, retrieve the Crystal, and then retrace your steps out (Warp/Exit doesn't work here).

Before returning to the entrance of the Sealed Cave, remove Kain's equipment and give it to Cecil. After the cutscene, return to the airship and land on the southern side of the Dwarf Castle, on the right.

Back in the Dwarf Castle, walk straight north to speak with the King. After Cid attaches a drill to the airship, walk out and board the airship (Warp/Exit doesn't work). Fly to Mysidia and park one square to the left of the town. Enter and progress through the cutscene. Afterwards, board the Lunar Whale, walk to the central crystal, and go to the moon.

The Lunar Path

Use your Cabin before entering the Lunar Path (or Tents, if you did the Sealed Cave and used your Cabin there).

The monsters here are tough, so don't worry too much about who survives each fight - just try to win what you can. Before getting FuSoYa I run from Red Worm fights, as they have too much HP. Rydia is useful here: for Procyote/Jucyote and Pudding fights, Titan is effective, whereas for Grenade fights I use Virus. Just keep your HP up and do what you can. After you get FuSoYa, the Red Worm fights become feasible, as he can cast Weak on them.

Before re-entering the Lunar Whale, save and use a tent or two or restore everyone's MP.

The Giant of Babil

Maybe the most important segment of the run. This is a crucial spot for getting Kain and Rosa the EXP they need to beat Zeromus. In fact, if you play it right, something like half the EXP you earn in the game will come from the next seven rooms.

The random encounters here are hard, but we will try to win all of them. Ideally Rosa and Cecil (or in some cases, just Rosa) will be the only characters standing at the end of every fight.

My general setup for Giant fights is as follows:

- Put FuSoYa, Rosa, and Cecil in the front row, and Rydia in the back
 - I do this in anticipation of back attacks, so you won't get destroyed before getting a turn in.
 - If you get into a regular fight, have the first character flip rows so FuSoYa, Rosa, and Cecil are in the back
- Give Rosa FuSoYa's equipment, as this will greatly increase the power of her white magic. Give FuSoYa whatever you have.
- Before every fight, revive Rydia and FuSoYa with Rosa. Have Cecil restore his HP using Cure1 (or Cure1 items, if you have any left), and have him cast one or two Cure1s on FuSoYa. We want FuSoYa to have more than 190 HP (to survive Beam), but less than 475 (so that Cecil will protect him).
- Rosa's main job during fights is to cure Cecil, since he will be shielding everyone. Unless Cecil's HP is completely full, have Rosa use a Cure2 on him

Here are some notes for specific fights:

- For Horseman/Beamer fights, use Quake with FuSoYa or Titan with Rydia to kill (or almost kill) the Beamers. Knock FuSoYa and Rydia and finish the fight with physical attacks.
- For an all Beamer fight, have FuSoYa/Rydia use Virus and then kill two Beamers with physical attacks. Knock out FuSoYa and Rydia, and then finish the fight.
- If there's a MacGiant, have Rosa win this fight on her own. Cast Weak on the MacGiant with FuSoYa, and then kill off any other monsters. Then queue Rosa's turn and wait until Cecil's HP turns critical. Have Rosa cast Cure2 on herself, wait for Cecil to get killed, and then finish the Giant off with a physical attack from Rosa. These fights generate a TON of EXP for Rosa and Kain.
- If you run into a Searcher, my policy is to only kill one of the monsters it summons. I do this by attacking it (to summon the monster), casting Weak on it, and then killing it with another attack.

Don't be shy about using the Ether1 from the Eblan Caves on FuSoYa, as it may let you eke out another fight. With this approach, you should be able to win most of the fights between entering the Giant and encountering the Fiends. Even if Rydia and FuSoYa run out of MP, Cecil can still take out strong enemies so long as Rosa has enough MP to cure him.

When you reach the Lung the Four Fiends are 9 steps north of you. No changes in setup are needed, so let them restore your HP/MP (thank goodness) and then wipe them out ([link](#)).

After beating the Fiends, walk north to the CPU's room, which is a much easier fight ([link](#)).

After defeating the CPU, let the plot progress until you're outside the Lunar Whale on the moon.

The Lunar Core

Get back on the ship and navigate up to the Lunar Path. Again, don't worry too much about who survives the fights in this stretch - just win them. I honestly still run from Red Worm fights, though if Rosa has learned White at this point that would make things easier.

Use tents and save outside the Lunar's Lair - it's your last chance to do so! Put Kain, Rosa, and Cecil in the back row.

Important note: you should have 20+ Lives left at this point. Make sure to conserve at least 15 for the Zeromus fight.

To be honest, the Core sucks in this run. You'd expect it to be a great opportunity to gain levels in preparation for Zeromus, but our armor and item situation is so bad that it's hard to make it through many fights here. Wizards are terrifying because they can Psych away Rosa's MP, which we need to keep us alive until Zeromus.

My general approach to the Core is to run from:

- Wizards
- King/Ging Ryus (before getting the Protect Ring)
- Blue Dragons
- Veterans

So long as Rosa's MP is okay, I'll tackle Karys, Red Giants, D. Bones, D. Fossils, and Trickers. Once you pick up the Protect Ring on the fifth floor hallway (are you kidding me? The Protect Ring is on path in a minimum steps challenge??), equip it on Kain. You can now take down single King Ryus pretty easily (just Jump), since Blitz no longer takes off half of Kain's health. Fights against two Ryus can still get ugly due to their Entangle ability.

Take advantage of Cecil's MP. After the first few fights, you can revive him and have him heal the party using Cure1. Not much, but it saves Rosa a little MP.

Don't overextend yourself. You want Rosa to have at least 200MP when you enter the Crystal section of the Core; if you're not in the Crystal section and you've hit that threshold, just run away.

In the Crystal section, pray for Behemoths in the first three rooms. Kain and Rosa can easily take these down together with Kain jumping and Rosa using Cure2 as needed. Run from Red Dragons and Evil Masks.

In the fourth room, pray for Breaths. They have a ton of HP but only cast Scan, so they're an easy 60,000 EXP. Just Jump with Kain and attack with Rosa. I run from Minds, as their group Charm ability makes life difficult.

At long last, we've made it. We're at Zeromus's doorstep without having taken a single step more than required (or so I believe). Ideally Kain and Rosa should each be around Level 50 for the strats I recommend (in my run, Kain was Level 51 and Rosa Level 50). Before approach Zeromus, read **this section** for the relevant setup. Then walk up and give him hell. Congrats on finishing one of the tougher FFIIV runs I've come across!

Boss Strategies

D. Mist

- HP: 465
- EXP: 700
- Party: DK Cecil, Kain
- Surviving Members: Kain

This fight is straightforward. Cecil should be dead, so just Jump with Kain 3-4 times before he turns into Mist. Two or three rounds of this and the fight will be over.

Octomamm

- HP: 2350
- EXP: 1200
- Party: DK Cecil, Tellah, Rydia
- Surviving Members: Rydia (and maybe DK Cecil)

Look at Rydia's EXP before the Octomamm fight. Remember we want her to get to 5185 EXP after the Antlion fight, and between Antlion and the Antlion's Cave, we can count on ~1800 EXP for Rydia after Octomamm. So, if Rydia has 2785 EXP or more, you can safely win the Octomamm with Rydia and Cecil. I've done this with Rydia as low as 2600 EXP, but you're gambling at that point.

Another straightforward fight: have Cecil attack, Rydia parry, and Tellah use Lit or Attack. Reserve 17 MP for Tellah so that he can: 1) revive Rydia if she happens to get knocked out, and 2) use a Cure 2 on Rydia near the end of the fight. Knock Tellah out once Octomamm is down to two tentacles.

If you need to solo this win Rydia, pay close attention to Octomamm's health as you'll need to finish him off with a Lit1, which can do ~30-50 damage, so the window is tight. Once Octomamm is one hit away from dying, kill off Cecil and finish the fight with Rydia.

Antlion

- HP: 1000
- EXP: 1500
- Party: DK Cecil, Edward, Rydia
- Surviving Members: Rydia

Nothing too scary. If Rydia has 3685 EXP or more, we want her to be the sole survivor of this fight so she can learn Warp. Rydia should be in the back, and Cecil in the front.

If you've followed the guide to this point, Rydia should have at least 50 MP, and we need her to use three Warps after the fight, which costs 12 MP. You can therefore use 5 Chocobs and a Cure1 or two in this fight. 5 Chocobs should do ~800 damage, so you'll want to whittle away ~250 health with Cecil before killing him off and finishing the fight with Rydia. If Antlion's counterattack hits Rydia too many times, have her cast Cure1 on herself.

Mom Bomb

- HP: 11,000 (Mom Bomb – I only dealt ~900 damage before it transitioned), 50 (Bomb), 100 (GrayBomb)
- EXP: 2460
- Party: DK Cecil, Rydia, Rosa, Edward, Yang
- Surviving Members: Flexible. Rosa for sure, definitely not Edward.

Mom Bomb is nothing special. If Edward isn't already knocked out, knock him out at the start of the fight. Otherwise just attack with Cecil, Yang, and Rydia, and heal with Rosa. Once Mom Bomb explodes, kick with Yang, attack with Cecil and Rydia, and heal with Rosa. The only person to really focus on keeping alive is Rosa, as we'll need her white magic to get us through the random encounters from here to Fabul.

Fabul Battles

- General and Fighter (x3)
 - EXP: 1430 (kill the General too)
- Weeper, Imp Captain, Water Hag (x2)
 - EXP: 490
- Gargoyle
 - EXP: 320
- Party: DK Cecil, Yang, Edward
- Surviving Members: Yang

In the first battle with the General and two Fighters, kill off one Fighter, then have Edward attack the remaining Fighter to put him to sleep. Now take out the General, kill off Cecil and Edward, and finish the fight with Yang. You may need to reset if you damage Edward into the critical range and he hides (or deal with the lower EXP for Rosa and Kain).

Win the rest of the fights with just Yang. The second time you face a General and two Fighters, you can try to take out the General if your HP is in good shape, but if you want to play it safe just take out the Fighters. For the third General/Fighter fight, take out the General unless you're seriously in danger of getting knocked out (it's your last fight before a refill).

Milon

- HP: FF Fandom says 3100, but for me he transitioned after ~2250 damage
- EXP: 3800
- Party: DK Cecil, Tellah, Palom, Porom
- Surviving Members: DK Cecil

At the beginning of the fight, use Palom and Porom's Twin or Fire1 with Tellah to take out the Ghosts.

Whittle Milon down by attacking Cecil, using Tellah to heal him. Don't worry if the Twins fall - we want that to happen! If you need an MP refill, Tellah can use Psych on Milon.

Once Milon has ~500 HP left, let Tellah die and finish the fight with Cecil.

Milon-Z

- HP: 3000
- EXP: 4000
- Party: DK Cecil, Tellah, Palom, Porom
- Surviving Members: DK Cecil

If you put Cecil in the front before the fight, he'll be in the back due to the back attack. With this setup, Milon's attacks don't do much damage to Cecil. Just attack and he should fall without much trouble. If you happen to get some bad damage rolls, give Cecil a Cure1 or two and you should be fine.

Yang and Guards

- HP: 300 (Guards), 62,000 (Yang – don't need to do all this)
- EXP: None
- Party: Cecil, Tellah, Palom, Porom
- Surviving Members: Doesn't matter

Not sure if this deserves a section. Have Tellah use Virus on the Guards. Don't bother attacking them because you risk their annoying Size counterattack.

For Yang, attack him with Cecil after his second kick and the fight will end. Cure Cecil between kicks if needed.

Baigan

- HP: 3500 (Main Body), 350 (Arms)
- EXP: 4820
- Party: Cecil, Tellah, Palom, Porom, Yang
- Surviving Members: Cecil

Have Cecil and Yang take out one of Baigan's arms off the bat, and hit the other one once. Tellah should cast Ice3 on Baigan's body, and then cast Psych on the remaining arm and then the body (his Wall will have worn off by now). Now take out Yang and Tellah and let Cecil finish the fight on his own.

Kainazzo

- HP: 4000
- EXP: 5500
- Party: Cecil, Tellah, Palom, Porom, Yang
- Surviving Members: Tellah

Two Lit-3s with Tellah and the fight's over. Kill Cecil off after the first Lit 3, since at this point Big Wave is no threat to Tellah.

I wish there were a way to win this fight with just Cecil, but sadly he can't deal enough damage to overcome Kainazzo's healing when his health gets critically low.

Dark Elf

- HP: About 2000 to transition, 3000 after
- EXP: 6000
- Party: Cecil, Tellah, Yang, Cid
- Surviving Members: Tellah, Yang, Cid

With all the solo-Cecil fights we've done to this point - plus the fact that the Dark Elf is weak to Cecil's Legend Sword - this fight is a breeze. Keep Yang, Cid, and Tellah around until he turns into the Dark Dragon, which should only take one or two hits from Cecil. Heal Cecil if he was hit by Weak, then knock out Yang, Cid, and Tellah and have Cecil blast through the Dark Dragon.

The Magus Sisters

- HP: 2500 (Sandy), 4300 (Cindy), 2200 (Mindy)
- EXP: 9000
- Party: Cecil, Tellah, Yang, Cid
- Surviving Members: Cecil

Have Tellah start the fight off with an Ice3 against the back sister, then just attack the middle sister with Cecil, Yang, and Cid. Have Tellah cast Cure2 (just not on Walled members!) and cast Life1 if anyone falls. If Tellah's MP runs low, you can Psych on the back or front sisters. If Tellah falls, use a Life item, though hopefully you won't have to burn too many of these.

After the middle sister falls, focus on the back sister. Once she's down, kill off Yang, Cid, and Tellah, and finish the fight with Cecil.

Valvalis

- HP: 6000
- EXP: 9500
- Party: Cecil, Kain, Rosa, Yang, Cid
- Surviving Members: Kain, Rosa, and Cecil

Valvalis is pretty straightforward. Jump with Kain and attack with Cecil when Kain lands. There's no need to restore Kain/Rosa's HP if they get hit by Weak, since Cecil will defend them. Use Rosa to keep Cecil's HP up and to cast Heal if anyone is close to getting petrified. If Cecil gets hit by Weak, cast Cure2 on him immediately.

If Rosa has a spare turn or two, cast Slow on Valvalis to make life a little easier.

Calbrena

- HP: 1000 (Cal), 300 (Brena)
- EXP: 1000 each, 6000 total
- Party: Cecil, Kain, Rosa, Yang
- Surviving Members: Kain, Rosa, Cecil

To make the challenge harder, I recommend you beat the Cal/Brena dolls without letting them transform into Calbrena. Doing this, you only receive 6000 EXP as opposed to 18,000-20,000 EXP by defeating the merged Calbrena.

If either the Cals or the Brenas are the only dolls remaining, they will transform into Calbrena. I typically Kick twice with Yang, have Cecil attack two Brenas, and Kain jump on two Cals. Once there's own Cal and one Brena left, have Cecil attack the Cal once. Kill off Yang, then Jump at the Cal with Kain. Once Kain is in the air, attack the last Brena with Cecil. Unless you get bad damage rolls, you should kill them both in quick succession, preventing them from transforming into Calbrena.

Golbez

- HP: 2250? (FF Fandom says 9,999, but he fell after about 2250 for me)
- EXP: 20,000
- Party: Cecil, Kain, Rydia, Rosa, Yang
- Surviving Members: Kain, Rosa

Assuming Kain gets his turn first, wait a second or two and then jump. With any luck, Kain will remain up above while Golbez starts to take out your party.

In either case, once Rydia is back revive Rosa and Kain (if needed). Then have Rydia cast Virus on Cecil and then herself and win the fight with Kain and Rosa. Golbez will go down after a few jumps.

Dr. Lugae

- HP: 6600
- EXP: 15,000
- Party: Cecil, Kain, Rydia, Rosa, Yang
- Surviving Members: Kain, Rosa

In the first instance of the fight, focus your attacks on Dr. Lugae, and heal with Rosa if necessary. After a few rounds he will fall, and Balnab will explode, taking out one of your characters.

When the fight begins again, revive whoever was knocked out. With Kain and Rosa wearing the Prisoner armor, Lugae can't put you to sleep, so there's not much to worry about. For the first half of the fight Laser might kill whoever it targets, but just revive them and keep Jumping with Kain and attacking with Cecil.

Rubicant

- HP: 25,200
- EXP: 25,000
- Party: Cecil, Kain, Rydia, Rosa, Edge
- Surviving Members: Kain, Rosa (and maybe Cecil)

Rubicant counters physical attacks with a group Fire2. He also absorbs Ice attacks when his cloak is drawn. I tend to just Jump with Kain and use everyone else to revive people after Glare knocks someone out. You're really not in much danger of losing this fight.

When Rubicant's health is getting low, kill off Edge and Rydia (Virus works well for this), and finish the fight with Cecil, Kain, and Rosa. If Cecil gets hit by Glare, don't worry, but if Kain or Rosa does, revive them before ending the fight.

Evil Wall

- HP: 28,000
- EXP: 23,000
- Party: Cecil, Kain, Rydia, Rosa, Edge
- Surviving Members: Whoever - just win

The key to this battle is speed, as we don't want to use up a bunch of our Lives recovering from his Crush attack. Set the battle speed to 6 (the slowest). Have Kain Jump, have Rosa cast Slow on Evil Wall twice, then cast Fast on Kain. Don't bother healing anyone except Cecil, as he can act as our tank against Evil Wall's physical attacks. Have Rydia use Titan, and attack with Cecil and Edge.

Once Evil Wall starts using Crush, case Life1 with Rosa if her turn is queued up or coming soon, otherwise use a Life. When I did this battle, he used Crush three times before falling.

The Four Fiends

- HP: See discussion below
- EXP: 62,500
- Party: Cecil, Rydia, Rosa, Edge, FuSoYa
- Surviving Party Members: Rosa and FuSoYa (unless you're feeling lucky, in which case just Rosa)

Most guides quote the health values of the Fiends as:

- Milon: 17,000
- Rubicant: 39,000
- Kainazzo: 21,000
- Valvalis: 27,000

From the testing I've done, this appears to be wrong. As best I can tell, Milon and Rubicant share a pot of 46,000 health, while Kainazzo and Valvalis share a pot of 47,000 health. Milon will transition to Rubicant after you deal 17,000 damage, and any excess damage done to Milon will count against Rubicant's total. Likewise, Kainazzo will transition to Valvalis after 20,000 damage, and excess damage done to Kainazzo will count against Valvalis's total. However, excess damage done to Rubicant does not carry over to Kainazzo, meaning you always need to deal 20,000 damage while Kainazzo is on screen to beat him.

I'm not sure if this difference is due to the version I'm playing or if the previous guides are incorrect. I would appreciate input if anyone knows the source of the discrepancy. I apologize if I'm playing a weird version and my strats below throw you off.

Anyways, on to the strategy. In general, for Milon and Rubicant, have FuSoYa use Level 3 elemental spells, Rydia use Level 2 spells, and Edge the appropriate Ninja technique. Milon is weak to Fire, Rubicant to Ice.

During Milon, have Cecil/Rosa revive and heal anyone who gets knocked out. Beginning with Rubicant, have Rosa cast group Cure 3 and Cecil group Cure 2 every turn.

Once Kainazzo comes on screen, stop attacking with Rydia and Edge (I do this to set up the end of the fight). Use three Lit3s with FuSoYa, and Valvalis will appear. Psych Valvalis with FuSoYa and then have him cast another Lit3 on her. While this is going on, focus on keeping Cecil's HP up so that he can protect the party after Storm. Revive any members that are knocked out.

There are two ways to end the fight:

- The safer way: Rosa and FuSoYa will win the fight. To do this, queue FuSoYa's turn and cast Cure 3 on him when Valvalis casts Storm. Have Rosa cast Cure 3 on herself, and have your other party members kill themselves off. Cast Lit3 with FuSoYa, and the fight will be over. If Rosa is killed before she can heal herself, have a party member use a Life on her.
- The aggressive way: Rosa will win the fight herself. At this point, Valvalis has 7004 HP left. Cast Nuke with FuSoYa, which should do between 6,000 and 7,000 damage. Whittle Valvalis down with Rosa's physical attack until she's one hit away from dying. Kill off everyone except FuSoYa and Rosa, and queue Rosa's turn. When Valvalis uses Storm, have her cast Cure3 on herself, and then have FuSoYa cast Fire1 on himself. Attack with Rosa and the day is yours! This approach nets Rosa and Kain an extra 31,250 EXP each, but can go very bad if Rosa's hit misses or doesn't do enough damage.

CPU

- HP: 20,000 (CPU), 2000 (Attacker), 2000 (Defender)
- EXP: 150,000
- Party: Cecil, Rydia, Rosa, Edge, FuSoYa
- Surviving Party Members: Rosa

This fight is a breeze after the Fiends, if a little slow. Have FuSoYa Psych the Defender (bottom right), then take it out with attacks and Rydia's Virus. After that, focus your attacks on the CPU. Have FuSoYa use a group Cure 3 every other round to offset the Attacker's Maser. If he runs low on MP, you can Psych the Attacker, too.

Once the CPU falls, whittle the Attacker down to ~500 health, and then let it kill off the party except for Rosa (have her use Cure3 on herself when she's 2-3 hits away from dying). Then finish off the Attacker with Rosa solo, and enjoy the 150,000 EXP she and Kain just got!

Zeromus

- HP: Variable (61,000 plus a possible refill of 45,000 - 49,000)
- EXP: None
- Party: Cecil, Kain, Rydia, Rosa, Edge
- Surviving Party Members: Kain, Rosa

This fight is a fun one! I set up my party as follows:

- Kain: Samurai Shield/Gungnir/Bandanna/Black Belt/Protect Ring
- Edge: Short/Short/Nothing else
- Cecil: Legend/Nothing else
- Rydia: Whip/Nothing else
- Rosa: Lunar Staff/Wizard Helm/Sorcerer Robe/Diamond Ring

Set the battle speed to 6, although this is doable at normal battle speeds.

I hope you've been diligent managing your Lifes to this point. You'll want at least 15 for this fight, though with Kain and Rosa at Level 50 I typically only need 11.

The battle has four phases, which I'll discuss in turn:

First Phase

When the fight opens, perform the following:

- Wait until Zeromus shakes a second time, then use the Crystal with Cecil while he's shaking
- Press and hold attack with Kain

- Zeromus will transform
- Immediately cast Slow with Rosa and hope it doesn't hit Kain
- Attack with Edge/Rydia/Cecil
- Jump on Kain's second turn
- Use a second Slow with Rosa

If all goes well, Zeromus will cast Big Bang while Kain is in the air, though that doesn't always happen. Sometimes he even casts it before Rosa uses her second Slow. Don't worry too much, as the first Big Bang is quite weak.

Once Kain lands, cure him with Rosa if he was hit by a Nuke counter, otherwise attack until Kain's turn comes up again. Wait for Zeromus to cast his Big Bang (Kain has enough health to tank this). There are two cases to be ready for:

1. If Rosa is killed by Big Bang, have Kain use a Life on her, and then have Rosa use Cure 3 on Kain and Kain attack Zeromus (it's possible for Kain or Rosa to get their turn first after the Life, but either way is fine). On Kain's next turn, Jump. Don't do anything with Rosa, and Zeromus's next Big Bang should kill Rosa and miss Kain.
2. If Rosa survives Big Bang, have Kain attack, then have Rosa use Cure 3 on Kain. Have Kain attack again, defend with Rosa, and then Jump with Kain. Don't do anything with Rosa, and Zeromus's next Big Bang should kill Rosa and miss Kain.

If you've made it this far, congrats! We're onto the second phase.

Second Phase

In this phase Zeromus will repeat the following attack patterns:

- Virus, Black Hole, Disrupt, Disrupt, Big Bang
- Black Hole, Disrupt, Disrupt, Big Bang
- Black Hole, Disrupt, Disrupt, Big Bang

Use the following pattern to navigate this section:

- Virus, Black Hole, Disrupt, Disrupt, Big Bang
 - Kain uses Life on Rosa (during Virus animation)
 - Attack with Kain (before/during Black Hole animation)
 - Rosa uses Cure 3 on Kain
 - Kain Jumps (during Cure 3 animation)
 - Big Bang kills Rosa (you can attack with her prior to this if you want, but just wait until Kain is in the air to enter the inputs)
- Black Hole, Disrupt, Disrupt, Big Bang
 - Attack with Kain (during Black Hole animation)
 - Jump with Kain
 - Big Bang misses Kain
- Black Hole, Disrupt, Disrupt, Big Bang
 - This window is pretty wide - it's worked for me from 8-16 beats. The song is at ~180 BPM, by the by
 - Black hole is cast before your turn queues
 - Once your turn is available, wait for 10 beats of the music, then Jump

The auditory cue is the best I could come up with, but is quite consistent. If you try to attack after Black Hole and then Jump, you'll be behind at the start of the Virus round.

After 45,000 damage, Zeromus will transition to his third phase, which you want to look out for. There are a few ways to do this:

- Count damage/rounds - at my levels and with my equipment, Zeromus typically transitions after casting his fourth Virus, so I'm always on alert after this point. Counting exact damage is tough since there's so much else going on in this fight
- Watch Zeromus - if he's still in Phase Two, when Kain lands he will either cast Black Hole or Virus as you're getting your turn. If he hasn't done either of those, he's transitioned and is about to use Big Bang, so Jump
- Watch for a long pause - when Zeromus transitions, you'll typically experience a longer than usual pause between Kain's turns, again a sign that you should jump on your next turn.

Third Phase

In this phase Zeromus will repeat the following attack patterns:

- Disrupt, Disrupt, Big Bang
- Black Hole, Nuke, Disrupt, Disrupt, Disrupt, Big Bang

Use the following pattern to navigate this section:

- Disrupt, Disrupt, Big Bang
 - Kain will be landing from a Jump at the start of this pattern. Just Jump again on your next turn
- Black Hole, Nuke, Disrupt, Disrupt, Disrupt, Big Bang
 - Attack with Kain (during Black Hole animation)
 - Use Life on Rosa (during Nuke animation)
 - Attack with Kain
 - Use Cure 3 on Rosa
 - Jump with Kain (during Cure 3 animation)
 - Big Bang kills Rosa

It takes 49,000 HP for Zeromus to transition from his third phase to his fourth phase. With my levels and equipment, I would repeat the above pattern five times. The sixth time you revive Rosa in Phase Three, don't attack with Kain during the Black Hole animation or after using Life. Have Rosa use a group Cure 4 instead of Cure 3, and then Jump with Kain. On Rosa's turn, have her cast Cure 3 on herself during the Big Bang animation. With any luck, Kain's Jump will knock Zeromus into his fourth and final phase; you'll know if this happened if Zeromus casts Meteo after Kain lands.

If Zeromus does not cast Meteo, Jump with Kain and again have Rosa cast Cure 3 during Big Bang. If that still doesn't do it, have Kain attack and Rosa cast White on the subsequent round.

Fourth Phase

If Zeromus cast Meteo on you when Kain and Rosa had full health, you're done! Jump with Kain once or twice and cast White with Rosa, and the fight will be over.

If you don't have White, no worries. Just Jump with Kain and have Rosa keep your HP up.

If Rosa was killed by the first Meteo, or can't survive a second one, you may be in trouble. At this point you're praying for Meteo to miss. Jump with Kain, and if Meteo misses Rosa, have her Cure3 herself and you're good. If she falls, you can either keep jumping with Kain and hope enough Meteos miss that you can finish Zeromus. Alternatively, you can use a Life on Rosa and hope a Meteo will miss and that she'll be able to heal herself.

If you picked up the two (off-path) Elixirs in the Eblan Caves (or somehow got one as a drop), you don't need to worry about Rosa for this phase. Just Jump with Kain and use an Elixir when his HP gets low. After five or so Jumps Zeromus should fall.

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