EDUCATION

Nasus Aram Guide

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Mastering the Dreaded Dog of the Sands in ARAM: A Comprehensive Nasus ARAM Guide

In the chaotic and action-packed corridors of the Howling Abyss, few champions strike fear into the hearts of opponents quite like a well-played Nasus. While often seen as a late-game juggernaut on Summoner's Rift, Nasus in ARAM is a completely different beast. The constant team fights, the single lane, and the accelerated gold and experience income transform this champion from a patient farmer into an unstoppable force of nature. This comprehensive Nasus ARAM guide will teach you everything you need to know to dominate the Howling Abyss, from the optimal runes and item builds to the advanced strategies that separate the good doggos from the truly terrifying ones.

Why Nasus is a Hidden ARAM Powerhouse

Many players dismiss Nasus in ARAM, believing he is too easily kited or that his stacking mechanic is useless in a mode with constant fighting. This is a critical mistake. While it is true that Nasus has weaknesses, the unique dynamics of ARAM actually amplify his strengths. The presence of a single, narrow lane means that once he commits to a fight, he can stick to his targets with surprising ease, especially with the help of Snowball and Righteous Glory. Furthermore, the constant minion waves and the presence of enemy champions mean you will be stacking your Siphoning Strike (Q) far more frequently than you ever would on the Rift. A good Nasus in ARAM can reach 300-400 stacks by the 10-minute mark, turning his Q into a devastating nuke that can one-shot squishy carries.

The key is adapting your playstyle. You are not a patient farmer waiting for the late game. You are an aggressive, opportunistic bruiser who uses early trades to build stacks while simultaneously whittling down the enemy team. This Nasus ARAM guide will show you how to leverage the map, your abilities, and your itemization to become the frontline terror your team needs.

Optimal Runes for Nasus in ARAM

Choosing the right rune page is the first step to success. While the standard Fleet Footwork build has its place, the most consistent and powerful setup for Nasus on the Howling Abyss revolves around the Precision and Resolve trees.

Primary Tree: Precision

- Keystone: Conqueror - This is the undisputed king of runes for Nasus in ARAM. The constant fighting allows you to stack Conqueror rapidly. The bonus adaptive damage is fantastic, but the real prize is the omnivamp at max stacks. In a mode where poke is abundant, the healing from Conqueror keeps you in the fight longer, allowing you to stack more and sustain through the enemy's opening barrage. It significantly boosts your dueling and team fight power.
- Triumph - This is a no-brainer for ARAM. The bonus gold on takedowns helps you hit your item spikes faster, and the missing health heal after a kill or assist can be the difference between dying and cleaning up the rest of the enemy team.

- Legend: Tenacity - ARAM is filled with crowd control. From Morgana bindings to Lux snares and Leona stuns, you will be locked down. The extra tenacity from this rune is invaluable for reducing the duration of these effects, allowing you to reach your targets and get your Qs off.
- Last Stand - As a frontline fighter who dives into the thick of the enemy team, you will frequently be at low health. Last Stand amplifies your damage when you are below 60% health, making you even more dangerous the longer you survive in a brawl. It synergizes perfectly with your ultimate, which grants bonus health, resistances, and a damage aura.

Secondary Tree: Resolve

- Demolish - While turret plating is not present, demolish is still incredibly useful for taking down towers quickly after a team fight victory. In ARAM, tower damage is crucial for map pressure and securing the win. A few procs of Demolish can be the equivalent of several waves of minions attacking a tower.
- Second Wind - This is the superior choice over Bone Plating in ARAM. The constant poke from enemy champions and minions (especially from enemy caster minions) will constantly trigger Second Wind, providing a steady stream of health regeneration. This dramatically improves your laning sustainability against the endless barrage of skill shots.

Alternatively, you can take **Unflinching** for even more tenacity, but Second Wind's sustain is generally more beneficial for the early game stacking phase. An alternative primary keystone is **Phase Rush**, which is excellent for sticking to targets and avoiding kiting, but it lacks the sustained damage and healing of Conqueror.

Core Itemization: The Nasus ARAM Build Path

Itemization is where many Nasus players go wrong. You need to balance damage, tankiness, and utility to be effective. Rushing full tank items will make you a damage sponge with no threat, while rushing full damage will cause you to melt instantly. The secret lies in a calculated build order that emphasizes movement speed and ability haste.

Starting Items

- Guardian's Horn - This is the single best starting item for Nasus in ARAM. It provides health, health regeneration, and a passive that blocks a flat amount of damage from each incoming enemy attack or ability. Combined with your passive lifesteal, it makes you incredibly durable against early poke. It is almost always non-negotiable.
- Boots - You can start with Boots of Speed if you feel you need the extra mobility to dodge skill shots or chase for stacks, but Guardian's Horn is generally more valuable. You can pick up boots on your first or second back.

Core First Items

- Mercury's Treads or Plated Steelcaps - Choose your boots based on the enemy team composition. Mercury's Treads are superior in most games due to the tenacity, but Steelcaps are excellent against teams with multiple auto-attack-reliant champions (like Jinx, Yasuo, or Tryndamere).
- Frozen Heart - This is an exceptional first full item for Nasus against physical damage dealers. It grants a massive amount of armor, a huge chunk of ability haste (critical for stacking your Q faster), and a mana pool that keeps you casting. The aura that reduces attack speed of nearby enemies is incredibly disruptive to AD carries. If the enemy team has 2 or more AD threats, rush this item.
- Force of Nature - When the enemy team is heavy on magic damage (e.g., Brand, Ziggs, Lux), this is your go-to first item. It provides massive magic resist and movement speed, which is crucial for sticking to targets. The passive also gives you increased movement speed when hit by magic damage, helping you close the gap.

Mythic Item Choice

- Divine Sunderer - This is the clear winner for Nasus in ARAM. The spellblade passive deals percent max health damage, making it incredibly effective against the tanky frontliners you will often face, while also giving you a burst of damage and healing against squishier targets. The hybrid stats (health, attack damage, ability haste) are all perfect for Nasus.
- Trinity Force - While not as popular as Divine Sunderer in ARAM due to the lack of sustain, Trinity Force is a valid option against very squishy teams. It provides more attack speed for faster Q resets and more movement speed for kiting, but the lack of healing makes it a riskier choice.
- Iceborn Gauntlet - This is a strong option if you need to be the primary frontline against a full AD team. It provides a slowing field that helps you and your team kite or chase, but it lacks the raw damage and sustain of Divine Sunderer.

Full Item Build Example

1. Guardian's Horn + Refillable Potion (starting)
2. Mercury's Treads
3. Frozen Heart (vs AD) or Force of Nature (vs AP)
4. Divine Sunderer
5. Spirit Visage (for massive healing amplification with your passive, Conqueror, and Divine Sunderer)
6. Gargoyle Stoneplate (for a massive shield in team fights) or Thornmail (against heavy healing on the enemy team)

This build provides an excellent balance of damage, durability, sustain, and crowd control resistance. Remember to adapt your build order based on who is fed on the enemy team. Do not be afraid to delay your Mythic item to finish a defensive item like Frozen Heart first if the enemy champion is already 5/0 at 6 minutes.

Gameplay Strategy: From First Wave to Final Fight

The Nasus ARAM guide would be incomplete without a detailed breakdown of how to actually play the game. Your role changes as the game progresses, and understanding these phases is critical.

Early Game (Level 1-6): The Stacking Phase

- Focus on CS: Your primary goal in the first 5-6 levels is to stack your Siphoning Strike. Do not be overly aggressive. Stand back, use your E (Spirit Fire) to soften minion waves, and last-hit with Q whenever it is safe. Use the brush to de-aggro minions and avoid poke.
- Trade Using E: Your E is a powerful tool. Drop it on the enemy backline minions to secure last hits while simultaneously poking the enemy champions standing near them. This is a safe, reliable way to build up damage over time.
- Use Snowball (Mark): The ARAM summoner spell, Mark/Dash (often called Snowball), is essential for Nasus. Early on, do not use it to engage fights unless it is a guaranteed kill. Instead, use it to secure a stack on a champion you have nearly killed, or simply to apply pressure. Hitting a Snowball on a low-health enemy makes them play more cautiously.
- Manage the Wave: Do not perma-shove the wave under the enemy tower. It is better to let the minions meet near the middle of the lane. This keeps you safer from tower dives and gives you more opportunities to Q the wave without being punished.

Mid Game (Level 6-11): The Power Spike

- Ultimate is Your Go Button: Once you have your ultimate (Fury of the Sands) and your Snowball, you are a real threat. Look for opportunities to engage. Hit a Snowball on a priority target (ADC, Mid Laner), press R, and dash in. Your ultimate grants you bonus health, armor, magic resist, and a damage aura. You are incredibly tanky during this duration.

- Wither is Your Kill Tool: Your W (Wither) is one of the strongest slows in the game. Use it immediately on the enemy ADC or the primary carry. The crippling attack speed slow will neuter their damage output, and the movement speed slow ensures you stay on top of them.
- Focus the Squishy: In team fights, your job is to dive the backline. Do not waste your time on the enemy tank if you can reach their carries. Use your Q on the squishy targets. At this stage, a single Q from 200+ stacks combined with Divine Sunderer can take 40-50% of an ADC's health bar.
- Stack Between Fights: There is always downtime between fights or after a respawn. Use this time to stack the minion waves. Do not waste a single Q that could be used for stacking. Even if a fight is not happening, you should be farming.

Late Game (Level 11+): The Unstoppable Juggernaut

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