

Finding and Entering the Blackrock Mountain Instances

Blackrock Mountain contains the following dungeons (instances):

Blackrock Depths (BRD)	52-60+	5 player limit
Upper Blackrock Spire (UBRS)	55-60+	10 player limit
Lower Blackrock Spire (LBRS)	55-60+	10 player limit
Blackwing Lair (BWL)	60+	40 player limit
Molten Core (MC)	60+	40 player limit

This guide will help you find the Blackrock Mountain instances, and the keys necessary to enter and complete the various quest. Strangely enough, most of the instance guides out there tend to overlook this essential location and entry information for beginning players.

Your first excursion into Blackrock Mountain, like mine, will no doubt be driven by curiosity as your first character explores either Searing Gorge (Level 43 zone) or Burning Steppes (Level 50 zone) in your high 40's and early 50's. Although you will need to be well into your 50's, and part of a group, to actually take on these dungeons, that won't stop you from poking around a bit and getting comfortable with the entrances, which are not easy to find as a newcomer. The following information will help you with that exploration, and advance you from the "total noob" state in preparation for your first party adventure here.

It is actually quite safe to move around the Molten Span area, as there are few mobs, and most are stationary and generally seen from a distance. One exception would be approach to the BRD instance portal.

Entering Blackrock Mountain

Enter Blackrock Mountain, either from Northwest Burning Steppes or from Southwest Searing Gorge. You'll enter the upper regions of a huge cavern, called Molten Span, with molten lava below and a large stone road around the circumference. Travel around the outer rim to the north side where you'll find a large chain crossing the path. Down this chain is LBRS and Molten Core, and up this chain is Blackrock Spire (upper and lower) and the Blackwing Lair portal (read on if you would prefer an alternate, and more difficult, route to the upper dungeons).

Blackrock Spire (Upper and Lower)

Blackrock Spire contains UBRS and LBRS in a single instance. Both parts of the dungeon are level 55-60+ for a party of up to 10 players, although LBRS is generally considered easier. There is no key needed to enter LBRS, but UBRS entry requires one member to have the Seal of Ascension.

Getting to the Blackrock Spire Instance

The Blackrock Spire instance holds both the UBRS and LBRS dungeons in a single instance.

The easiest path to the upper instances is to climb the chain from the walkway in Molten Span.

Travel to the north end of Molten Span until you reach the large chain. Travel up the chain (on the left side) to the top, and jump off, continuing forward but slightly left. This is an unusually dark area, and poor graphics performance may make it almost impossible to navigate - don't worry, if this is your plight. Move straight forward about 10 metres and you'll come to the cavern wall. Turn right along the wall, hugging the wall, which will now be on your left. It will curve slowly to the right and upward, and after about 10-20 metres of travel, open upward into the caverns (and visibility) again. You'll see a railing and a smooth stone balcony ahead of you - a slight hop will get you onto the balcony platform. (If you miss the hop, you'll land safely on the ring road below - return to the chain and try again). Once on the balcony, turn left into a small anteroom, and you'll see the entry to the Blackrock Spire instance ahead of you. Be wary of an orc or two just outside the other doorway to your right once you've entered the foyer, especially if your level is low (and aggro range high). Otherwise a level 60ish character is safe here, and on the other side of the portal.

Alternately, you can fight (or stealth) your way through the lower hallways to reach this instance, (see Getting to the Blackwing Lair Entrance, below) but it is much more difficult.

Entering UBRS and LBRS

Upon entering the Blackrock Spire instance, you will be facing up a ramp, and the area will be identified by the minimap as the "Hall of Blackhand".

Just up the ramp is a large foyer full of Scarshield orcs (54+ to 55+). The room has 3 sets of stairs directly ahead: either downward, up and left, or up and right.

The way to LBRS (Lower Blackrock Spire), is to work your way down the centre stairs and then to the right, or, to work your way up the right stairs and then jump down from the second corridor on the right (easier). This is considered the start of LBRS, although there is technically no door or portal that officially starts it, other than the instance portal itself.

The door to UBRS (Upper Blackrock Spire) is up the left stairs from the entrance and then left, marked on the mini-map as Dragonspire Hall. The door is not an active game object (it just looks like a dead end) unless you have the key: the Seal of Ascension, which is a ring built from the quest chain starting with Seal of Ascension (see Vaelan, below). There is no "lock" on this door so it cannot be picked.

Key to UBRS (Seal of Ascension)

The **Seal of Ascension** quest is received from Vaelan (a human form of the dragon, Vaelastrasz), who is disguised as a "**Scarshield Infiltrator**" just inside LBRS (he is the only Scarshield Infiltrator). See "Finding Vaelan", below, for instructions on how to find him.

The Seal has four components:

- Unadorned Seal of Ascension** (uncommon drop)
- Gemstone of Spirestone** (dropped by Highlord Omokk)
- Gemstone of Smolderthorn** (dropped by Warmaster Voone)
- Gemstone of Bloodaxe** (dropped by Overlord Wyrmathalak)

All these components drop in LBRS, and are Bind on Pickup (BoP). You do not have to have the quest to find or loot any of the components, but you **MUST** have the Unadorned Seal of Ascension before Vaelan offers you the Seal of Ascension quest. They are not "group loot" items; only one player may loot one of these items when it drops.

The first part of Vaelan's quest is to gather all four parts and assemble the Unforged Seal of Ascension.

The second part of the quest requires you to break the will of Emberstrife, a dragon in Dustwallow Marsh. Using components given to you, you will create the Seal of Ascension ring using Emberstrife's dragon breath, once he is subdued.

Once you have the Seal of Ascension, you may "open the door" (technically, remove the blocking wall) to UBRS for all members of your party for the duration of the instance. Anyone may open the door for a raiding party, but **SOMEONE** must have the Seal to start a raid on UBRS. In desperation, some groups recruit a Seal-bearing player just to open the door, and then replace the player with someone waiting outside.

Finding Vaelan to get the Seal of Ascension Quest

The Seal of Ascension quest is given by Vaelan, who will offer the quest to any player who is carrying the Unadorned Seal of Ascension. Vaelan is disguised as a Scarshield Infiltrator, located just inside LBRS.

Use the method explained above to enter the LBRS side of the Blackrock Spire instance. At the point where you drop down from above, you will be facing a half-dozen Scarshield orcs and their wolves, guarding a tunnel entrance to your left, at the end of a gentle downward ramp.

Fight or stealth past these, and the two-orc patrol, which is on about a one-minute circuit. Enter the tunnel to the left, zigzag through the tunnel and walk a few paces straight ahead after leaving the tunnel. The Scarshield Infiltrator (Vaelan), should be visible immediately above and forward on your left.

Pass under the Scarshield Infiltrator and loop around leftwards and upwards to reach him, as follows: continue leftward along the wall (clearing the next group of orcs if necessary), and work your way left and upwards across the rough stone just past the orc encampment. Although it is not clearly visible, the rough stone leads steeply upward and leftward to the platform upon which the Scarshield Infiltrator is standing. As you approach, it will transform into the (friendly) Vaelan form and begin a monologue with you.

You must be carrying the Unadorned Seal of Ascension to be offered the UBRS key quest, "Seal of Ascension".

Blackwing Lair

Blackwing Lair (BWL) is a level 60+ instance for raids of up to 40 players. Entry is through UBRS or via the **Orb of Command** portal device in Molten Span.

Getting to the Blackwing Lair Entrance

Entrance to Blackwing Lair is through Upper Blackrock Spire. After fighting your way through the stadium and Rend Blackhand, and continuing eastward to the end of the hall, turn left (north) instead of turning right (south) to climb to the Furnace and the Beast's lair. You can see the green portal down the hall behind you just as you're climbing the ramp into the Furnace.

The short-cut entrance to Blackwing Lair is achieved by using the Orb of Command in a chamber in Molten Span. If you have completed the **Blackhand's Command** quest (see below) to get the **Mark of Drakkisath** in UBRS, using the orb will port you to Blackwing Lair.

The easiest way to approach the orb room is to travel straight down the hallway from the foyer outside the UBRS/LBRS instance entrance. You will have to deal with only a few Scarshield Orcs, and the Scarshield Quartermaster, to get to the room.

Another, more difficult, way to get to the orb room is through the tunnel along the east side of the ring road in Molten Span. The corridors wind their way through numerous Scarshield Orc guard posts before emerging in the hallway just next to the foyer outside the UBRS/LBRS instance.

Key to Blackwing Lair (Orb of Command)

You must get the Mark of Drakkisath brand before you are able to use the orb. Obtain the quest, "Blackhands Command" from a letter dropped by the Scarshield Quartermaster outside the orb room. You must then kill General Drakkisath (the end boss of UBRS) and "use" the orb behind him to get your attunement Mark. You will thereafter be able to use the Orb of Command portal to BWL.

As BWL is a raid instance, you cannot enter the instance from UBRS, or from the Orb of Command, unless you are in a raid party. A game message will inform you of this if trying to enter the instance alone from UBRS, but if using the Orb you will only get the message that the instance was "not found".

Blackrock Depths

Blackrock Depths is a level 52-60+ instance for up to 5 players.

Getting to BRD

Rather than travelling up the chain to Blackrock Spire, travelling down will lead you through a jumble of stairs and corridors, precipices, caverns, and more chains, to the entrance to BRD. Unlike the other

Blackrock Mountain instances, there are a number of hostile-populated caverns and corridors outside the BRD instance portal.

Blackrock Depths itself has no keys for entry, although there are (pickable) locked doors within the instance, as well as the entry to Molten Core, which requires an “attunement” quest for each player to enter.

The Prison Cell Key

Prison Cells in Blackrock Depths require the [Prison Cell Key], or lock picking skill 245, to open. Prisoners include Marshall Windsor, target of a number of Alliance quests from the Onyxia key quest chain, and Commander Gor'shak, target of the horde quest chain involving the rescue of Princess Moira Bronzebeard.

The Prison Cell Key is dropped by High Interrogator Gerstahn <Twilight's Hammer Interrogator>, who is in the southernmost room of the central area of the prison cell loop.

The Shadowforge Key

The [Shadowforge Key] opens the Shadowforge Gates (pickable at level 275), which include the shortcut gate to the Dark Iron Highway, just inside and north from the BRD instance entrance, as well as the door to the East Barracks, which opens the way to much of the northwest BRD dungeon.

The Shadowforge Key is a reward from the quest, “Dark Iron Legacy”, given by the ghost, Franclorn Forgewright. Franclorn can only be seen or spoken to when you are in ghost form, descending back to the BRD portal after an untimely demise. He is in the room not far below the second chain and Lothos Riftwalker, the warden of the Molten Core portal.

To complete Dark Iron Legacy, slay Fineous Darkvire in BRD and recover the hammer, Ironfel. Then take Ironfel to the Shrine of Thaurissan and place it on the statue. A compartment will open, offering you the Shadowforge Key.

Relic Coffer Keys

The Relic Coffer Keys open the 12 coffer in the Black Vault, and drop from most, if not all, of the mobs in Blackrock Depths. One key is required, and consumed, to open each of the 12 coffer. Keys can be picked up and used by any party member, and are persistent – they may stay in your bags or the bank until needed.

Dark Keeper Key

The Dark Keeper Key is used to open the Dark Coffer (the 13th coffer) in the Black Vault. The key is dropped by one of the Dark Keepers, who will spawn in one of 6 locations, only when you interact with (“use”) the Dark Keeper Portrait in the Black Vault. Once the Keeper has spawned, the Portrait reveals his location.

Molten Core

Molten Core is a 60+ Raid instance for up to 40 players. Entry is near the back of the BRD instance, and requires “Attunement to the Core” to enter it directly.

Getting to Molten Core

The entrance to Molten Core is just southeast of the Black Forge, at the northeast end of the BRD instance. The web has many resources, including videos, on how to get to the MC entrance.

Once Attuned to the Core, one can port directly to MC from the portal crystal near Lothos Riftwalker, and return directly to the crystal by travelling outward from the MC instance portal.

The Key (“Attunement”) to Molten Core

The quest, **Attunement to the Core** is given by Lothos Riftwalker, whom you encounter on your descent to BRD. The quest requires you to recover a core fragment from just outside the MC instance, deep in Blackrock Depths. Once you return the sample to Lothos, he will “attune you to” the portal to MC, which is

just beside him. You will thereafter be able to port directly to and from MC at his location, rather than grinding all the way through BRD to get there.

Carry the attunement quest with you when first entering BRD. The common way to reach Molten Core for the first time is for a party to fight its way to the MC entrance and collectively gather core fragments. However, there are also ways to solo the core attunement by running lava flows and skirting mobs, using some combination of stealth, good healers, or fire protection and invisibility potions. You can also summon characters to the [Core Fragment] area from just inside the BRD instance (see below). Check the web for guides and videos if you're an adrenaline junkie!

Warning: Spoilers!

You might have a free ticket out after collecting your [Core Fragment]. If you are in a group and a certain (sorry I don't know) character level, simply step through the portal into the Molten Core, and then back out. You will find yourself standing beside Lothos Riftwalker. Warning – this will also convert your group to a Raid, if it wasn't already, which may change your ability to complete certain aspects of BRD afterward. Although I have taken this shortcut, I know it should not work, since you haven't yet turned in your attunement quest. Shall we protest to Blizzard?

Trying to enter the instance when you don't meet the raid group/character level requirements will give you an error message stating the exact requirements. I was careful to write it down ... somewhere ... #\$\$@!

You might also have a free ticket in to the core fragment! You can easily attune a whole gang of people without their having to make their way through the Depths. Our guild sent a contingent of 3 level 58-60 members, without fire protection or invisibility, through the lava and around the mobs, to the instance portal (see the various videos on the Internet). This required skilled healing from the priest, who jumped ahead to the next dry land and healed each of us as we hopped across the lava. It also required a final death sprint to the portal (unless you have the ability to fight all those elementals). We simply sprinted past the last mobs and died as close as possible to the instance portal. Our priest then soulstoned (our warlock was waiting for the cooldown timer, and forgot to soulstone him on one trip, if you can believe it!) and resurrected the party.

We then stood at the portal, just out of aggro range, while our Warlock summoned several other guild members (they needed only to step into the BRD instance to enable a summon). Worked like a charm. Everyone hearthstoned out, or entered the instance and ported back to Lothos.

Don't forget lots of shards, a soulstone on the priest, and a 3rd member to assist with the summoning!

Summary

Here, in a nutshell, are the various keys needed to enter and adventure in Blackrock Mountain:

Dungeon / Instance	Level	Player Limit	Name of Key Quest	(q)uest giver / (d)ropper
Blackrock Depths (BRD)	52-60+	5	no key required to enter	
Shadowforge Key	(275)	-	Dark Iron Legacy	(q) Franclorn Forgewright
Prison Cell Key	(245)	-	none	(d) High Interrogator Gerstahn
Relic Coffin Key	n/a	-	none	(d) common BRD Drop
Dark Keeper Key	n/a	-	(Dark Keeper Portrait)	(d) Dark Keepers (6)
Upper Blackrock Spire (UBRS)	55-60+	10	Seal of Ascension	(q) Vaelan, LBRS
Lower Blackrock Spire (LBRS)	55-60+	10	no key required to enter	
Blackwing Lair (BWL)	60+	40	Blackhand's Command	(d) Scarshield Quartermaster
Molten Core (MC)	60+	40	Attunement to the Core	(q) Lothos Riftwalker

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