

# EVONY: THE FIRST TWO HOURS (V2.0)

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ABSTRACT. We present a step-by-step, approximately optimal, guide to playing the first few hours of the online game Evony.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The biggest question most beginners have when playing Evony is: "What do I do?". Although the game eventually involves combat with other players, the opening phase is purely a single-player puzzle, with the goal to maximize resource production while also building buildings and performing research to support later developments. It involves many tricky tradeoffs.

For example, when building a resource producer such as a Farm, you give up current resources in exchange for a future resource stream. Doing this intelligently requires some sense of an implied rate of return, as well as an awareness of the requirements of other actions. It is very easy to "paint yourself into a corner".

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One typical beginner mistake is to spend too much on resource production at the beginning. If you do this you may not have enough resources left to e.g. upgrade your Town Hall. Due to quest bonuses, upgrading your Town Hall from level 1 to 2 is essentially free, so you would like to do it fairly soon; but if you invest too much in Farms and Sawmills etc. then you may have to wait for an hour before you have enough resources again.

The following sequence is probably not perfect, but it has been tested through game play on multiple servers and will keep a beginner out of trouble. Much of it can just be followed mindlessly, but I will comment whenever there is an important point to be understood, or where you need to make a decision.

Because luck (e.g. getting 40,000 lumber from an amulet spin) can significantly alter what the "best" strategy is, this strategy should be treated as a default guideline that is only close to optimal when no such luck intervenes. After you've played for a while, you will understand how to adapt to such events (for example, by being a bit more willing to spend lumber on things, a bit less willing to invest in lumber production, and a bit more interested in selling lumber in your Marketplace), but I won't cover that sort of thing in detail here.

To keep the text compact, we use the following notation. A building or research name, followed by a number, means to build or upgrade that building or do that research to that level. A following '\*' means a free speedup is available and that you should use it. A following '! ' means that this action's completion enables a quest bonus which you should (sooner or later) collect; a double '!!' means that you *must* collect the bonus immediately, usually because it enables some other quest. So

- Cottage1 \* !

means that you should select an empty square in the town, build a level 1 Cottage on it, speedup the build, and maybe collect the quest bonus when it is done, while

- IronMine3 !!

would mean you should upgrade an IronMine level 2 to level 3, wait for it to complete, and collect the bonus (and all other outstanding bonuses) immediately before doing anything else. I will usually not explicitly tell you to "Click X to close the window" or "Switch from Town to City"; you're smart enough to figure those out by yourself.

OK, ready? Here we go.

## 2. FROM START TO FEASTING HALL

**2.1. Cottages and Population.** The first phase is to build up some population.

- Cottage1 \* !
- Cottage2 \* !
- Cottage1 \*
- Cottage2 \*
- Cottage1 \*
- Cottage2 \*
- Cottage1 \* !!

We do this first because, when you build cottages, it takes some time for them to fill with people. Thus you want to begin this process well before you need those people.

**2.2. Resource Production.** The bonuses in the previous section added to your population. Now it's time to give those people some work to do.

- Farm1 \* !
- Sawmill1 \* !
- Sawmill2 \* !
- Quarry1 \* !
- Ironmine1 \* !!

**2.3. Administrivia.**

- Go into Town Hall, select Production, and set all production rates to 100. Collect the bonus.
- Go into Town Hall, select Tax Rate, and set it to 20. Collect the bonus. Then go back and set the tax rate to 5. (Leave it there until your loyalty reaches 95, in about half an hour, then set the tax rate to 0.)

**2.4. Newbie Package and Production Bonuses.** To celebrate your progress so far, let's open your Newbie Package.

- Click on My Items, click on Chest, click on Newbies Package, click Apply, click Close. Collect the bonus.

Among the items you got in your Newbies Package were ones that give a 25% bonus to production rates. Because resource production is so critical early in the game, and becomes less so later (in the late game you get most resources by looting NPCs and other players), I usually recommend using these bonuses as early as possible.

- Click Produce, click Arch Saw, click Apply

- Click Plowshares, click Apply
- Click Quarrying Tools, click Apply
- Click Blower, click Apply

2.5. **Stone Soup.** Food is not very important in the beginning, so we concentrate on the other resources. It's important not to spend too much on resource production here, though, so that we leave enough for big items like Town Hall. Everything prior to this step has been essentially "free" because quest bonuses gave back what we invested. These items, however, actually cost us something.

- Quarry2 \*
- Quarry1 \*
- Quarry2 \*
- Quarry1 \*
- Quarry2 \*
- Quarry1 \* !

It is worth noting that resource investments have fairly long break-even times. For example, a Sawmill1 costs 750 resources (plus 10 people) to build, and generates 100 resources per hour. Thus (assuming all resources to be equally valuable, and 1 person = 1 resource) it takes about 7.6 hours to break even, and only after that are you ahead. For the goal of getting as much done in the first few hours as possible, it is a dead loss.

Nonetheless, I think some fraction of our total effort should go into such longer-term investments. One thing to consider is this: Suppose we want to build something (like an Embassy) which does not produce resources, and a resource-producer (like a Sawmill), and we have enough resources to build both in either order, and there is no particular requirement on the order. Then it is always better to build the resource producer first, because that way we collect its production while the other one is building. This implies that resource producers should be built "as early as possible, but no earlier".

This then is our quandary: if we build up production too soon, we cripple our ability to do other important things, but if we do it too late, then we waste valuable time and lose the resources that could have been produced during it.

You may wonder why we are concentrating on stone here, when most Evony guides say that lumber is the most critical resource early in the game. The reason is that we are aiming to reach Beacon Tower 3 as quickly as possible, and it requires 12000 stone. The quest bonus for BT3 is very generous (it pays back 20000 stone!), and so doing BT3 is

highly profitable ... *if* you have the resources. (We'll be pulling a few other tricks to reach that critical 12000 stone as we go along.)

**2.6. Inn Town.** Having spent as much as we can afford to at this stage on resources, let's get back to building up our town.

- Inn1 \* !
- RallySpot1 \* !
- Barracks1 \* !
- FeastingHall1 !

Feasting Hall is the first thing we've built that can't be sped up for free. While it finishes:

- Collect your DailyQuest Amulet bonus.
- Click on amulet wheel (the thing in the lower left that looks like a roulette wheel), click Apply, wait for spin. Collect the bonus.
- (optional) Use your other amulets also.

Although later in the game a prize of resources might not be very good, in the early stages it can be quite helpful.

Also while Feasting Hall finishes, check the hero in the Inn. Up to this point everything (except amulet spins) has been deterministic; you will get the exact same results every time you do it. However, whether you get a good hero or a bad hero here is a matter of luck. What you *want* is a cheap (preferably level 1 or 2) hero with very high Politics. You probably won't get it.

If you *do* get a good hero, or even a decent one:

- Recruit the hero. Collect the bonus.
- Appoint the hero to be your mayor. Collect the bonus.

After recruiting the hero, check the Inn again to see what new hero you got. It might be even better!

If you get a bad hero, you have some hard choices to make:

- (1) You could continue without recruiting it, and with no mayor. This is the cheapest path but it loses all mayor production bonuses until you find a hero you like.
- (2) You could apply a Hero Hunting to roll a new hero, and hope your luck is better. Be careful not to use your last Hero Hunting, though, as you will need one for a quest later.
- (3) Another possibility would be to upgrade the Inn to level 2, which gives you an additional hero. This has the advantage that if you now apply Hero Hunting, you get *two* new heros. This is, however, pretty expensive in resources.
- (4) You could spend gold to recruit the hero, check if the new one in the Inn is better, and if so dismiss the bad hero and recruit

the better one. (This technique is worth noting, as it can be very useful late in the game when you have lots of gold but no or few Hero Hunting.) The problem here is that you have less than 20K gold at this point, and blowing up to 5K of it on a hero you are just going to dismiss is pretty much a dead loss.

- (5) You can recruit the bad hero and appoint it mayor anyway. At least this way you will get *some* production bonus. This strategy is best if the hero has high Attack or Intelligence, because then later when you get a good Politics mayor you can just move them over to a different job.
- (6) If you happened to get a helm from an amulet roll, you could use it to recruit a free hero. (Note, however, that this does NOT give you the bonus for recruiting a hero from the Inn.)

Because I want this guide to work for everyone, I have to take the worst-case of all the above, which is that you have no mayor but spent the recruitment gold anyway (e.g. you recruit a hero, dismiss it, find that the new hero is also bad, and decide not to recruit it, leaving you with no mayor). Most of the time, you will be better off than that.

### 3. ALARMING DEVELOPMENT

Now we focus entirely on getting to BeaconTower3. This section will feel slow because we don't get free speedups.

- BeaconTower1 !
- Barracks2 !

While your Barracks is upgrading to level 2, your loyalty should reach 95. When it does, set tax rate to 0.

- BeaconTower2 !
- TownHall2 !

While your Town Hall is upgrading to level 2, your loyalty should reach 100; this will allow your population to increase over time to PopMax (currently 1050). (Note: Do not do the Lieutenant quest yet unless you got extra gold from an amulet spin. You will need the gold for research first.)

- Barracks3 !

While Barracks3 is building, your population should reach PopMax of 1050. Collect the population increase bonus. Then go into your Town Hall and do a Stone Levy. (This will lower your loyalty to 80, but it will slowly rise by itself.) Collect the levy bonus of 1000 stone. Set the tax rate to 100. Collect the tax bonus. Set the tax rate to 15.

- BeaconTower3 !

You should have enough stone for BT3 here; if, for some reason, you don't, just do Academy1 and 2 while you are waiting for enough stone. Click SpeedUp on this one and use a Beginner Guidelines to save 15 minutes. Collect the guidelines bonus. After BT3 is complete, collect the most generous bonus in the whole game. You now have plenty of resources to continue.

#### 4. GETTING WOOD

Now that we are a bit more comfortable on resources, it's time to get back to ramping up resource production. Lumber first, because it's critical for cottages and later for archer towers.

- Sawmill1 \*
- Sawmill2 \*
- Sawmill1 \*
- Sawmill2 \*
- Sawmill1 \* !

#### 5. ACADEMIC INTEREST

- Academy1 !
- Start researching Lumbering1 !
- Academy2 !
- Continue researching Agriculture1 !, Masonry1 !, Forging1 !, ...

After Academy1, you now have the capability to do research. This complicates our sequence, because now there can be two things happening at once: building a building, and researching a technology.

It is worth noting here that some research has a long payback time. For example, Agriculture1 costs 500 food and 1000 gold, and increases food production by 10% of your base. (The bonus gives you the 1000 gold back.) Your base at this point is 100/hour, so the increase is 10/hour, so this will take 50 hours to hit break-even in food! Later - when your base production is higher - the payback time for this gets much smaller. Thus, you should not feel obligated to do this kind of research immediately.

Other research may have no direct payback at all, but be necessary for strategic capabilities. We'll explain these as we get to them. One of our main goals will be improving Archery, since it enables archers (at level 1), archer towers (at level 3), and ballistae (at level 6).

While waiting for academy, do the Correspondence quests and collect the bonuses.

## 6. RESOURCEFULNESS

Then iron:

- Ironmine2 \*
- Ironmine1 \*
- Ironmine2 \*
- Ironmine1 \*
- Ironmine3 !

Note that we built an Ironmine3 above even though it's less efficient. This is to enable Forge in the next section. It is probably possible to upgrade Farms some at this point, but at the moment I don't.

## 7. THE WALL

- Forge1 \* !
- Forge2
- Workshop1 !
- Walls1 !!

Note that you will need Forge and Workshop later to support research. In a secondary city, you might choose to follow the "minimal footprint" approach: build Forge2, build Workshop1, and then demolish the Forge. You need to keep a Workshop1 in every city until the Walls are maxed at 9 (or 10); after that, you can demolish the Workshop too. These buildings are required for *researching* certain technologies, but not for *using* them after they have been researched.

## 7.1. Oh Lord!

- TownHall3 !!
- Click on My Items, click on Chest, click on Lords Package, click Apply, click Close.
- Click on Junior Medal Box, click Apply, click Close.
- Collect bonuses.
- Promote yourself to rank Lieutenant.
- Promote yourself to title Knight.

With the title of Knight, you are now allowed to build or capture a 2nd city. However, you're not quite ready to do that yet. (Patience, grasshopper!)

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