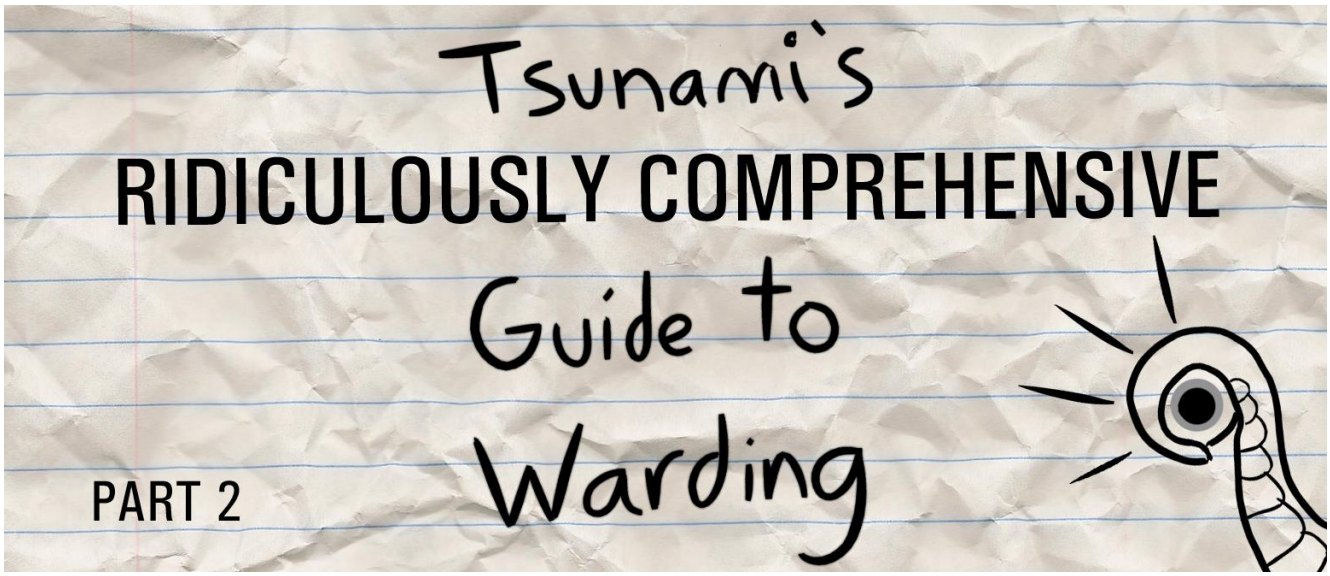
April 16, 2014
*Current as of Balance Patch - **6.80***
Written by: tsunami



Tsunami's Ridiculously Comprehensive Guide to Warding

Part 2 – Pushing Wards

Rune wards and pull camp wards are pretty straightforward. They're both small areas to work with and both teams are constantly contesting those areas, so there really isn't much room for situational ward placement. Pushing on the other hand, leaves the entire lane open for unique ward coverage.

Pushing

The goal with warding during pushes is to be able to guess what the enemy's plan is during a defense. The defending team is inherently at an advantage because they have a bonus unit shooting 100 damage fireballs every second. You need all the information you can get when you're pushing and having vision puts you at a significant advantage. Seeing Batrider Firefly and immediately getting back. Giving vision to your Bounty to cast a few Tracks. Nailing the right moment to kill off their Wraith King. These are a few of my favorite things.

Tier 1 Towers

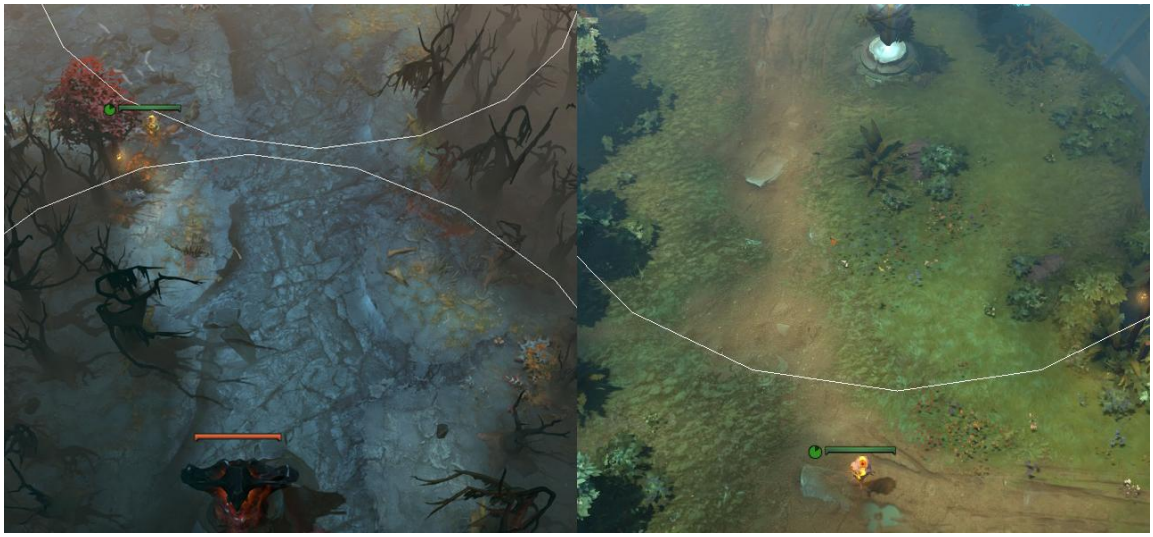
Dire Top and Radiant Bottom Towers (Safe Lane)

The white circles represent the towers' true sight radius

The enemy's safe lane probably will get the most TP reactions in the early game, mainly because the carry is farming there. **These wards allow you to know precisely when and where someone is TPing in to defend.** Not only does this help you play more defensively when the whole team shows up to defend, but it'll also help you initiate with certain heroes who can benefit from setups, like Mirana or Disruptor.

Dire Bottom and Radiant Top Towers (Hard Lane)

When pushing into the enemy's hard lane, you're better off just putting wards in front of the tower. You get less vision, but these wards get the job done with little risk. If you *really need the vision* to get super aggressive, then you can try placing wards behind these towers, but I don't recommend it because placing these wards…



…is hard as hell. I'm including them for the sake of completion, but don't feel obligated to place them. Thankfully, the hard lanes will typically be defended less frequently than the safe lanes, so getting vision behind the tower isn't as important.

Oh right, people are going to call me out if I don't include this ward.

BUT MOMMMM, I SAW NA'VI PLACE IT THERE ONE TIME

You see that little health bar on the rock at the top right? Yeah, that's a ward. Yes, it's very funny that you can place it there, and no, it'll pretty much never get countered. The advantage that this ward has is that it can see behind the tree (where Lina is standing), which is a common hiding spot for Radiant initiators. The disadvantage is that this ward can see pretty much nothing else. Only place this ward if you know exactly what you're doing. And trust me, you probably don't know what you're doing.

Dire Middle and Radiant Middle Towers (Middle Lane)

omg radiant op

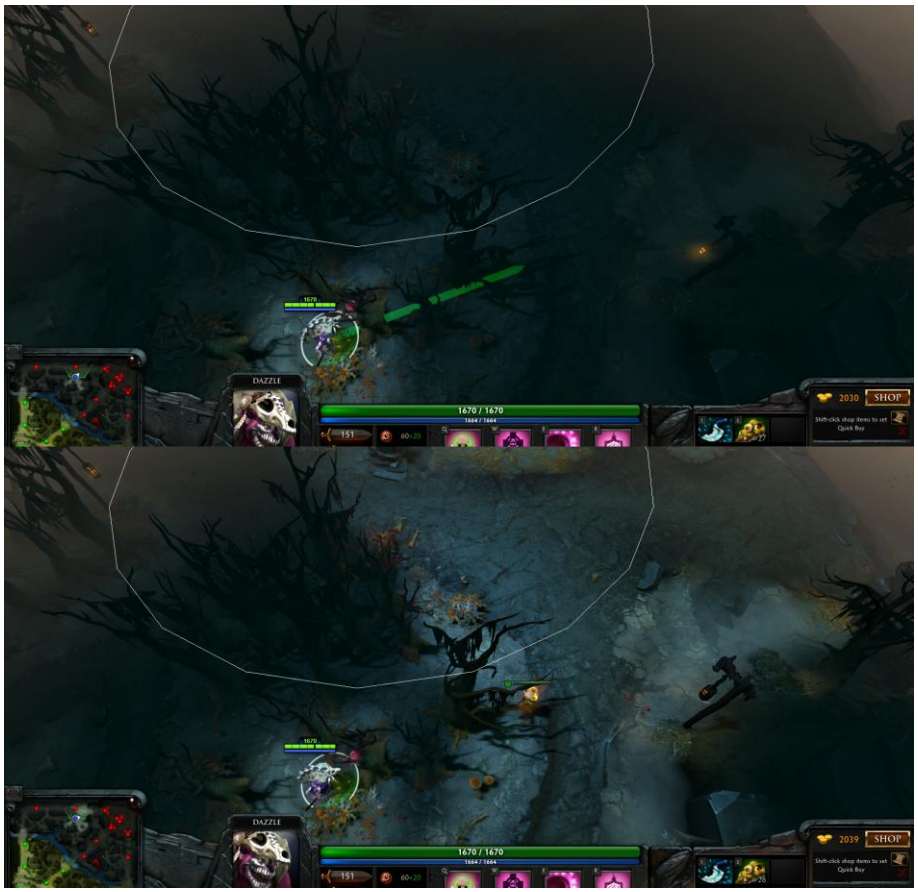
These wards are common all game long, but they're particularly useful when pushing the mid lane. Again, a ward in front of the tower will usually provide adequate vision. If you're pushing against Dire, though, you can place a ward behind the mid lane somewhat safely.

This ward straddles the true sight radii for the Dire T1 and T2 mid towers pretty well and can be placed from the high ground, making it unlikely that a Dire hero will catch you placing it.

Tier 2 Towers

Before I continue, I'm just going to clarify once again that these wards are not the only viable wards that can be placed. As long as a ward isn't getting killed, it's viable. These are just guidelines. As I move on to tier 2 towers, I'm no longer going to include the wards in front of the tower because they're less practical at this stage in the game and this thing is getting long enough as it is.

Dire Top and Radiant Bottom Towers (Safe Lane)

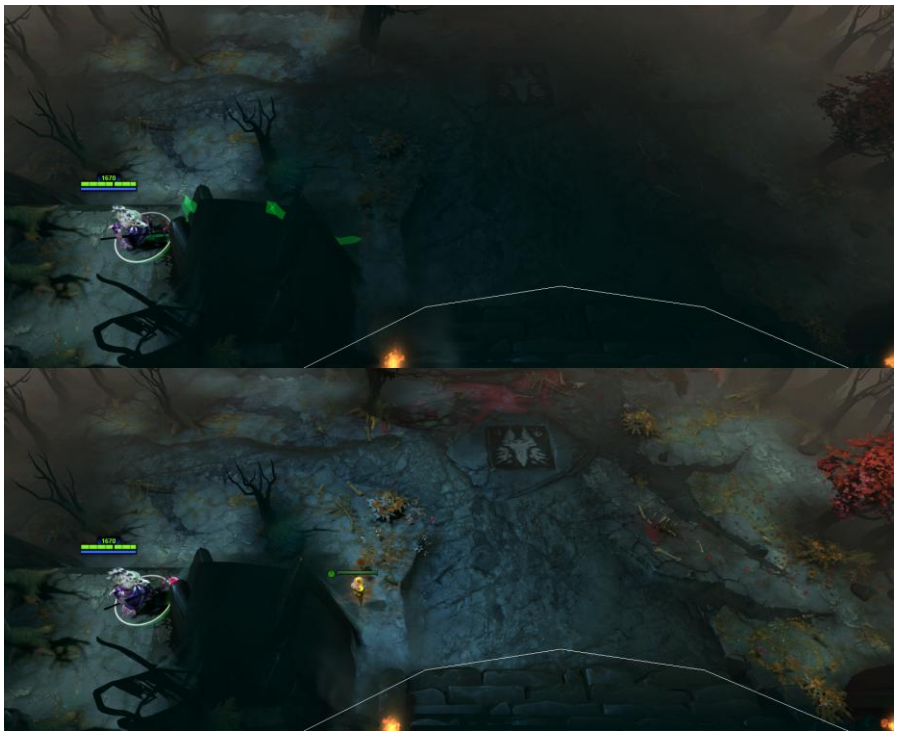


Everyone knows about the cliff ward, but that ward can be unsafe for Radiant heroes to place and it can be countered from a variety of angles. This ward is safe to place, gives vision behind the tower, and can sometimes escape hasty countering attempts.

There isn't really an equivalent for the Radiant side.

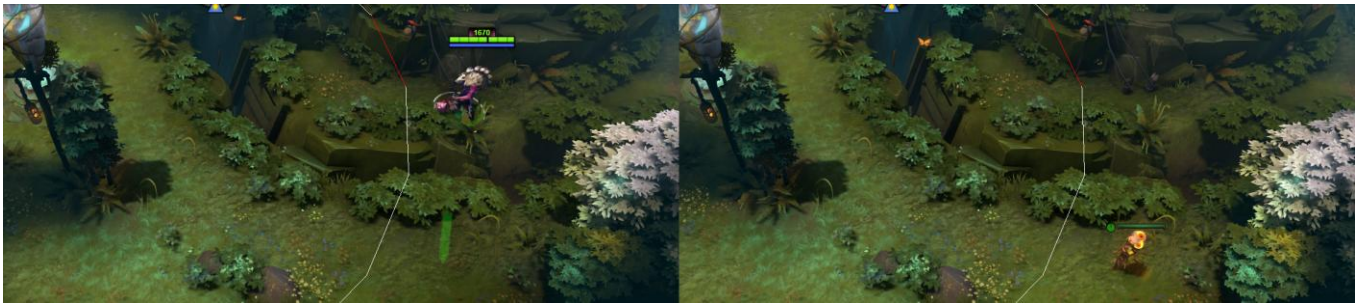
This ward *kinda* works, but those two trees block off some of the most important areas that would be nice to see. Plus, I can't imagine there are many games in which you'll be able to safely place this ward without getting molested by the entire Radiant team.

Dire Bottom and Radiant Top Towers (Hard Lane)



Yet again, this ward is **easy and safe to place and gives vision behind the tower.**

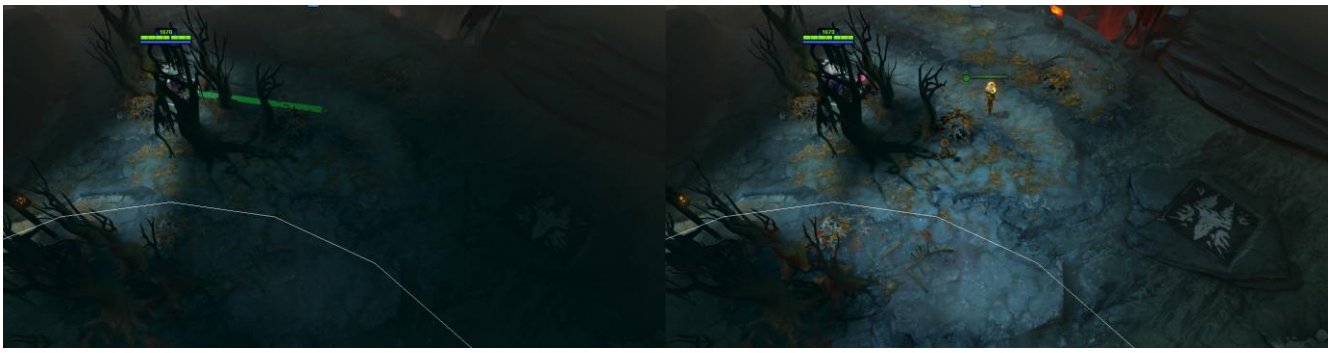
This is the typical ward used when pushing against Radiant's top tier 2. It's somewhat safe to place since this area doesn't get much traffic, but if you don't have time to prep this ward in advance before your team starts pushing, this'll do you no good. If that's the case, consider:



Dire Middle and Radiant Middle Towers (Middle Lane)

There are two main options when pushing against Dire's mid T2. You can use the secret shop.

Or you can ward behind the lane.



The secret shop is safer to place, but the mid lane ward gives better vision and arguably gets countered less.

Against Radiant, there are also two primary ward spots. You can ward the cliff.

Or behind the lane:

If you've noticed, my hero has been relatively hidden for nearly all of these ward placements. When you're pushing tier 2 towers, you're almost guaranteed the possibility of a teamfight. This brings up two considerations that are especially relevant for warding tier 2s (and tier 3s) -- **how do I ward without getting caught** and **how do I ward without being noticed?** The first point is simple enough. Ward only when you're sure you're safe and your team can protect you if you need it. There's no point in placing a ward if you die over it and your team can't push.

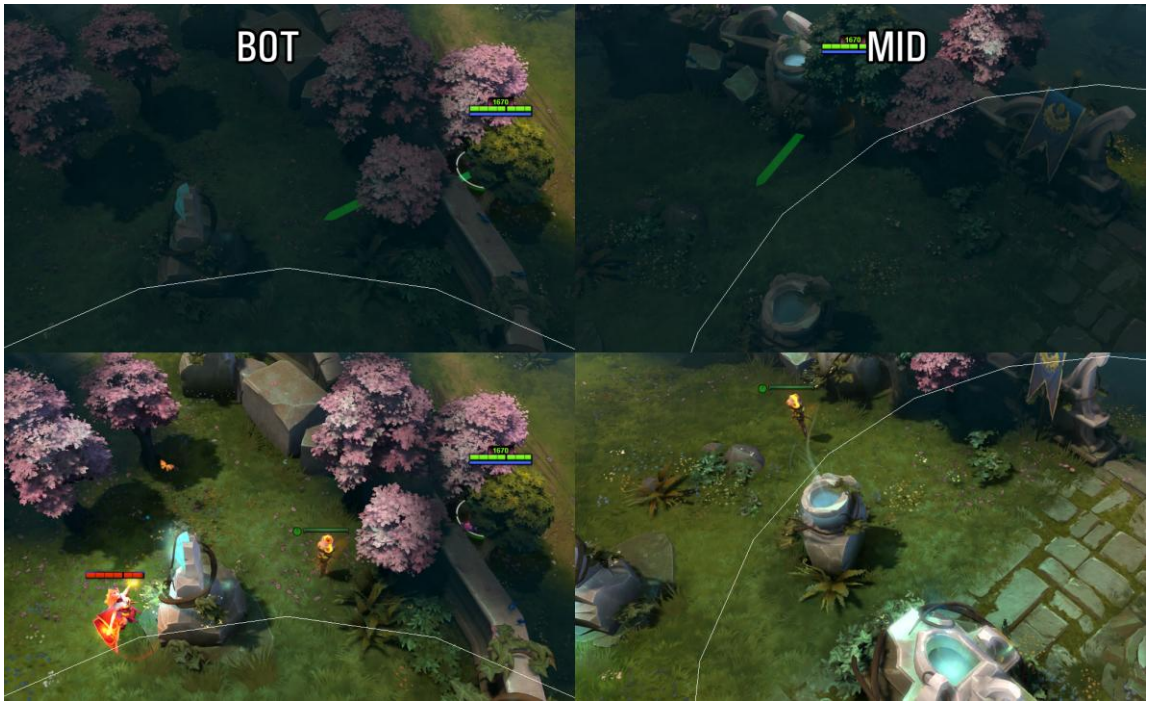
The second point means more than just the enemy team not having vision of you. **Warding without being noticed means you need to avoid pathing over to a spot in the middle of nowhere, standing still, and then promptly turning around.** The easiest way to avoid all that, is to just ward from fog.

Tier 3 Towers

These are some of the most important pushing wards in the game, but also the least frequently placed in pub games. It isn't intuitive, I know. There's no reason why you should be able to put wards up here. But you can, and you should.

Radiant Tier 3 Towers

Yes, that's all there is to it. Just sit down there from the low ground, wait for a moment when everyone is distracted and won't notice you getting way too close to the wall, and sit the ward down. Breaking high ground without vision will lose you games so take advantage of these wards. In higher level games, these spots will have sentries stationed on it constantly because of the advantage it gives. Take your pick for what tower you're pushing, and put a ward down.



Dire Tier 3 Towers

Dire is slim and treeless enough that you can cover two lanes with one ward.

There is one bonus ward for the top lane, but I don't recommend placing it.

The tower can see the ward on the bottom, but not the one on top. Tis a silly ward.

Fountain Farming

The most common mistake players make is placing it too far out of the fountain. The ancient has a better chance of noticing your ward than the fountain does. Don't let that compromise your quest to needlessly pad your K/D/A while the enemy team begs for the sweet release of death in their base.

When I say 'Comprehensive,' I mean it.

This it is not the be-all end-all index to every possible ward location in the game! Every game is unique and sometimes a critical ward in one game may be completely useless in another. These are just a compilation of the wards that I've noticed to be consistently effective in most games. My original roadmap of getting this guide out into three parts clearly was not feasible. I'm envisioning this taking two more parts for miscellaneous wards/blocking ancients and counterwarding, but I'm clearly not good at estimating how much stuff there is to write about this topic, so who knows.

Images taken from Dota 2.

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