

Riot is expanding access to the Valorant beta starting today

Riot will make it easier to gain access to the closed beta of its popular new tactical shooter *Valorant*, the game developer announced late Tuesday. Now, not just select Twitch streamers, but all Twitch streamers who have access to the game can now drop the coveted beta access keys, so long as those streamers playing are actively live streaming the game and turn on the in-game drops feature.

This should make it much easier for eager *Valorant* fans to gain access to the game by watching different streamers and not just the select few Riot has given early access to and partnered with for the key distribution. To do good by the game's fast-growing community, Riot says it's also gone through thousands of the most dedicated Twitch users who've been eagerly awaiting a key by watching streams day and night and manually given them access. "Thank you, your internet, and your eyeballs," reads the blog post by lead producer Anna Donlon and game director Joe Ziegler.

In addition to the change in how beta keys are dropped, Riot is also increasing its server load capacity by 25 percent to account for the spike in new players. Donlon and Ziegler says Riot has also "already banned a number of account sellers and are actively tracking more to ban."

Valorant, a tactical shooter influenced heavily by Valve's *Counter-Strike: Global Offensive* and Blizzard's *Overwatch*, entered into closed beta last Tuesday with an explosively popular launch, thanks in part to tying keys for the beta to

watching popular streamers on Twitch.

Valorant has amassed 165 million hours watched

Not only did *Valorant* break the single-day watch record with 34 million hours watched, but it also came in second for highest concurrent stream account behind only Riot's 2019 *League of Legends* World Championship. Since then, Riot tells *The Verge* *Valorant* has amassed 165 million hours watched, "breaking another Twitch viewership record," a company spokesperson says.

The game won't come out for months, but esports and gaming lifestyle company 100 Thieves held the first invitational tournament today to another wave of massive viewership. *Valorant* is already well positioned to be a popular esports, partly because it bucks industry trends by moving away from the battle royale genre.

So it's no surprise scores of fans have wanted in on the closed beta, despite the difficulty and random luck of nabbing a key. These changes should make that process a little less brutal.

<https://www.theverge.com/2020/4/14/21221483/riot-valorant-beta-access-expanded-twitch-keys-server-capacity>