



Introduction

What Street Fighter is to 2D fighters, Virtua Fighter is to the 3D half of the genre. Virtua Fighter pioneered fighting in 3D, and with the fifth installment the folks at SEGA AM2 have fine-tuned the fighting engine even further, offering an unparalleled amount of depth among its 3D fighter cousins.

New to Virtua Fighter? We know your pain. That excellent depth that makes Virtua Fighter so competitive can be a bit of a barrier for new comers, leaving rookie players wondering what to focus on. The only way to truly master any fighting game is to play competitively with fellow players, and our in-depth guide to Virtua Fighter 5 will give you a head start in dominating your local opposition.

Just remember to *keep it moral*.

In this Virtua Fighter 5 strategy guide, you'll find:

- **BASICS** // Essential fighting tips and explanations to help even the novice Virtua Fighter player.
- **FIGHTERS** // Combos and key moves, plus specific strategies for each of the seventeen characters.
- **QUEST MODE** // An overview of Virtua Fighter 5's Quest with tips on where to start.
- **Q & A** // Answers to common Virtua Fighter 5 questions, including info on unlocking Dural.

Guide by: Mark Ryan Sallee

This PDF Guide is property of IGN Entertainment. Any unlawful duplication or posting of this document without the consent of IGN Entertainment will result in legal action.



**IGN INSIDER
EXTRAS**

IGN Insiders get exclusive access to extra guide features:

- Downloadable PDF guides for offline viewing and printing.
- PSP-formatted guides for instant access, anywhere.
- Video tips and strategy for added gameplay assistance.

[▶ JOIN TODAY](#)

Basics

Fighting Essentials

Command Legend

HIGH, LOW, MID GAME

Every attack in Virtua Fighter 5 fits into one of three categories: *high*, *mid*, or *low*. When learning a new character, it is important to know which attacks hit at which height so that you can effectively break your opponent's guard.



HIGH // A *high* attack will only connect with an opponent that is standing. *High* attacks can be defended with a standing guard or with a crouching guard. In general, *high* attacks are the easiest to defend as they don't require any special reaction. An opponent can simply hold the guard button in any position and the attack will not connect.

MID // *Mid* attacks, on the other hand, will connect with an opponent that is either standing or crouching. More importantly, they can only be defended with a *standing* guard. If an opponent is crouching in guard, a *mid* attack will hit regardless as the crouching guard does not defend against *mid* attacks. *Mid* attacks then are among the best in your arsenal.

LOW // Finally, *low* attacks will also hit either standing or crouching opponents. Where they differ from *mid* attacks, though, is that they can only be blocked with a crouching guard. A standing guard will have no effect versus a *low* strike.

The key thing to remember with all this is that *mid* and *low* attacks must be defended in different ways. Guarding against a *mid* attacks means you are vulnerable to a *low* attack, and the opposite is also true; guarding against a *low* attack means that you are vulnerable to a *mid* attack. Because these attacks require the strictest defense, mix them both into your striking game to keep your opponent on his toes.

T H R O W S

Most throws will only connect with opponents that are standing, making them much like *high* attacks. The difference here is that throws cannot be guarded against (though it is possible to cancel them with a throw of your own or a well-timed strike). Throws make a good tool for bullying opponents that like to defend a lot. After throwing an opponent a couple of times, he'll frequently start guarding low, at which point you can tag him with a *mid* launcher to move into a juggle combo.



Some characters have throws that will connect with crouching opponents (usually $\downarrow / \blacktriangleleft + P + K + G$) and even pick up opponents off the ground. With these, it's important to note that the low throws will *not* connect with standing opponents.

HIT EFFECTS

Different strikes have different effects. Most strikes are pretty solitary, though others work well together, starting combo opportunities. An important thing to remember is that a single strike can have a different effect depending on how it hits. A simple punch might normally have no effect other than damage, but if it hits as a counter that same strike might launch the opponent for a juggle, stagger him, or simply drop 'im in a way that doesn't normally occur.



STAGGER // If a move connects and causes a stagger, a joystick icon will display behind the victim as he recovers. During the stagger, the victim is unable to defend against incoming attacks. Use attacks that stagger to start combos and add extra damage to strings you already use. But keep in mind that opponents can shorten the time they spend in stagger by wiggling the control stick left and right.

LAUNCH // All characters have launchers, some better than others. Effectively, attacks that launch will, when connected, knock opponents into the air high enough that you can follow with a juggle combo. Most launchers tend to hit *mid*, though it's worth noting that some *low* strikes will launch opponents if they connect as counters.

DROP // Some strikes, when connected, will simply drop opponents to their knees. When hit with one of these attacks, an opponent will sort of go limp and curl up as he falls to the ground. You can usually follow these attacks with attack strings for quick combos. Note that most attacks that drop opponents come from counter attacks.

RING OUTS

Depleting your opponent's health bar is only one way to win the battle. You can also win a round by knocking an opponent out of the ring, as long as the arena you're in has low walls or no walls at all.



Each character has different attacks that are good for causing ring outs. Some characters, like Wolf, have excellent throws for tossing opponents out of the ring. Others, like Akira, have simple jumping kicks or lunging strikes that knock opponents backwards and into the air.

You can push a ring out ending by moving the battle to the edge of the ring. Either move your back to the edge of the ring or push the opponent backwards until he's near the edge. The different attacks from characters are good for pushing opponents forwards or sometimes backwards, so know which way you want the opponent to go. Most characters have throws that will swap positions with the opponent, letting you put yourself near the edge of the ring so that you can swap and put the opponent at the edge of the ring. Just keep in mind that you're also putting yourself in danger of a ring out when you get near the ring's limits.

Fighting Essentials

Command Legend

LEGEND

- P PUNCH
- K KICK
- G GUARD
- ↑ Press UP on the control stick
- ↓ Press DOWN on the control stick
- ← Press LEFT on the control stick
- Press RIGHT on the control stick
- ↖ Press UP and LEFT on the control stick
- ↗ Press UP and RIGHT on the control stick
- ↙ Press DOWN and LEFT on the control stick
- ↘ Press DOWN and RIGHT on the control stick
- ⇨ Press direction and hold for one second
- + Press buttons surrounding + at the same time
- , Comma separates attacks from previous directional inputs
- / Slash denotes either / or

Fighters

AKIRA

TACTICS // Akira's a bit of a powerhouse, with his sharp, snappy strikes that hit with loud thuds and smacks. Surprisingly, his juggle combos don't do more damage than those of the average character, but that doesn't spoil Akira's appeal. The snap of his strikes gives Akira a different beat, so to speak, and for opponents more used to the general P P P K strings, Akira's twisting *mid* strikes can be intimidating.



Another benefit to Akira's odd beat is his ability to cancel various strikes with one of a couple temporary stance changes. His $\blacktriangle + P$ can be canceled with $P + K + G$ or $\blacktriangle + P + K + G$ for different effects. Akira's $\blacktriangle + P$ can be canceled with \blacktriangle or \blacktriangledown to sidestep counter attacks and keep the pressure from different angles. And really, Akira is all about keeping pressure. Pressure opponents into hiding behind a block, then throw in a quick stagger (like $\blacktriangle + P + K + G$) to break their guard and launch 'em into a combo.

Akira's throwing game is pretty straight-forward, with no options to grab crouching opponents. However, he does have a throw that launches opponents into the air ($\blacktriangle + P + G$), letting you follow up with juggle combos before they hit the ground. As well, Akira has a solid set of defensive counters. Activate them with $\blacktriangle + P + K$ or $\blacktriangledown + P + K$ to counter *high* and *mid* strikes, then quickly turn the momentum of the fight in your favor.



Key Moves

$K + G P$

YOUSHI SAIKEN // This quick string hits *mid* twice and is good for ending combos *and* starting them. You can tack the string onto the end of most juggles, and even pick up a quick few ground hits after starting with this attack (we suggest $\blacktriangledown + K + G K \blacktriangle + P$).

$\blacktriangledown \blacktriangledown + P$

YOUHOU // Of all of Akira's launchers, we like this one best. The *mid* hit does great damage by itself and launches the opponent pretty high, letting you follow with an assortment of juggles, one of which we've listed below.

➡➡ + P + K ↑ / ↓

SENZANKOU~SHICHISEIHO // Akira actually has a couple of attacks he can cancel into the Shichiseiho sidestep. We suggest using these quick strikes for general pressure, and canceling them into sidestep on either side of the opponent. The sidestep will effectively cancel the recovery time of the attack, plus put you in a good position if the opponent tries to counter right away.

➡ + P + K + G ➡➡ + K

KAIKO~UTANKYAKU // The first hit in this string staggers a standing, blocking opponent. The stagger is pretty short, so quickly follow with the ➡➡ + K to launch the opponent into the air. From there you can continue with your favorite juggle combo.

Combos

↖↖ + P, ↙➡ + P, K + G P

This is the most powerful combo we've found for Akira, and it's pretty simple, to boot. The biggest downside here is that the first attack (↖↖ + P) has a bit of recovery and puts you in a bad spot if the opponent guards. Still, if you know the opponent is crouch blocking, this combo is a good way to score quick and easy damage.

↓↙↖ + P, K, ↙➡ + P + K

The first hit in this combo starts out a bit slow but has solid range and is a bit safer to throw into the mix since it doesn't send Akira forward at all. The rest of the combo is really simple and deals solid damage.

↙➡ + P + G, ↙➡ + P,
K + G P

The neat thing about this combo is that it starts from a *throw*. If your opponent is good at defending your attacks, grab 'em with this throw and hit them as they fall from above. The combo doesn't deal quite as much damage as Akira's best throw (↙➡ + P + G), but we think it's easier to execute in a pinch.

PAI

TACTICS // Pai's a strong character with excellent speed and an even better mix-up game. She has quick attack strings that can end in a variety of ways, which is a huge strength for Pai players. Example: Pai's basic P P P string can be ended with K or ↙ + K or ↓ + K to attack *high*, *mid* or *low*. In cases like this, you'll usually want to stick to switching between the *mid* and *low* hits, as the opponent will have to change his defense depending on which attack you use. Mix it up and you'll have an always-guessing opponent ripe for nailing.



Another way to mix up your attacks is to use Pai's very good *low* strikes. Her Renka Sentai (↙ + K K) string is a good way to start a combo from a low hit. Also, her ↖ + P ➡ + P string is a good way to force your opponent to switch blocking stances in the middle of a string. It's not an easy thing for your opponent to do, especially if they don't see it coming.

To round out Pai's strengths, she's also got a solid throwing game. Her ➡↖↙↓↙↖ + P + G throw does great damage, and she's also got options for throwing crouching opponents. With her ability to throw and combo crouching and standing opponents, Pai's got lots of options. And that's what makes her mix-up game so good.



Key Moves

☞ + P

RIKENSUI // This quick *high* punch sets up easy juggle combos that'll deal good damage and frustrate your opponent. Because the attack hits high, it won't connect with crouching opponents. However, Pai's step backwards before unloading the punch makes the Rikensui a great counter attack to intercept advancing opponents.

☞ + K + G

ENBU RENKYAKU // The Enbu Renkyaku has excellent range, comes out quick, hits *mid* and sets up quick juggle combos. It's a good attack with the weakness of putting Pai into danger if the opponent blocks the kick up close. Try to hit with the tips of Pai's feet, and use the attack after sidestepping to better your chances of catching the opponent off guard.

☞ + K K

RENKA SENTAI // Pai has lots of good *low* attacks, and this is one of them. The two kick string *will* combo *if* the first kick hits as a counter hit. It's a good attack to throw under an opponent's high attack and to set up a quick combo.

P + K
(From Bokutai)

BOKUTAI-KINKEI // Pai's Bokutai stance has a number of attack options you should get used to. This one hits *mid* and happens to set up some very easy juggle combos. When using the Bokutai stance, change up your *low* and *mid* attacks. If you get your opponent guessing, you can nail 'em with the Kinkei attack and continue with massive damage.

Combos

☞ + P, P P K K, ☞ + K

The main drawback of the first hit in this combo is that it hits *high*. However, the step back that Pai makes before the punch makes it great for countering advancing opponents, and this combo is the logical follow up.

☞ + K + G, P P P ☞ + K

We say the first kick in this combo is one of Pai's best combo starters, risky as it may be. You'll have to end the following juggle string with either ☜ + K or ☚ + K. The former is a more guaranteed hit if the combo connects close, while the latter works better if the combo hits from range and the opponent doesn't nail a fall recovery.

☞ + K K, ☞☞ + K + G

As we said in the description of the Renka Sentei kick combo, the two first hits of this string will only combo *if* the first kick is a counter hit. That's not at all a rarity, though, making this a very good combo that starts *low*. That's a good place to start, and the added damage from the ☞☞ + K + G is a good end.

LEI-FEI

TACTICS // Lei-Fei is a very complicated character to use. He's got *eight* different stances, and the execution of relatively normal attacks will send Lei-Fei toggling between the stances. This means that the learning curve for playing him is pretty steep as you'll need to commit to memory not only the moves for each stance but also remember which attacks lead into stance changes.



This complexity isn't just to frustrate you as a Lei-Fei player. It can work to your advantage if you've got his attack strings and patterns memorized while your opponent does not. Lei-Fei doesn't have a lot of *really* good attacks, but his attacks become good through their diversity. Keep constant pressure and bully your opponent into playing defensively by throwing wild strings of attacks, constantly thinking one step ahead to move with Lei-Fei's stance changes.

Lei-Fei *does* have some pretty good combos, though, including one we've listed below that does nearly 50% damage to the opponent. Mix up Lei-Fei's *low* and *mid* attacks, then work in combo starters to really punish the opponent. Success lies in your ability to keep the opponent overwhelmed and your subsequent skill in finishing with combos when the opportunity arises.



Key Moves

→→ + K

TOUKYAKU // This *mid*-hitting kick is pretty quick and instantly staggers your opponent, making it good for setting up combos. As well, if you hold the K button you'll switch stances to Dokuritsu Shiki, a safe way to transition.

↺ + K + G

CHISEN COUKYAKU // This is a somewhat unorthodox move that sends Lei-Fei twirling towards the opponent. It has good range and can set up very basic juggles (try following with ↺→→ + P + K). Most importantly, you can follow up with a second somersault by pressing K after the initial move, or choose *not* to follow up with the second kick. Most opponents will cautiously wait for the second somersault, but if you withhold the attack you can recover safely and maybe even execute a throw while they guard standing up.

P + K P P

KONGOU RENSHIN HOUDA // You'll get a short combo with this attack, though the damage isn't as good as what you'll see with more serious combos (listed below). What makes this attack effective is its quick *mid* hit and, like the Chisen Coukyaku, the ability to follow with the last two punches *or* hold back. If you see your opponent guard the first hit, you might not want to tack on the others, letting *you* escape without fear of a counter attack. Conversely, if your opponent is used to you ending the string after two hits, you can throw in the third to mix it up and catch him when he thinks it's safe to counter.

P + K
(From Bokutai)

HANSHOUDA // This very quick strike hits *high* and is good for setting up juggle combos. The low position of the Bokutai stance makes it inherently good for countering incoming high attacks. Use this move to counter these high attacks and turn them around in your favor.

Combos

→→ + K, ↘ + K, P K

You start this combo with the excellent Toukyaku kick and follow with a pair of juggles that deal considerable damage. If the first hit connects as a counter hit, this combo alone will deal almost 50% damage to the opponent.

↘ ↘ + P P, K, P + K, ↘ + K

This flashy combo starts with a *mid* hit that's executed while ducking, making it a good counter to incoming high attacks. Be ready to abort the execution of the final ↘ + K in case the opponent quickly recovers from the fall.

↓ P + K, P P, K K

(From Hai Shiki)

Many of Lei-Fei's moves will leave him in the Hai Shiki stance, and tapping ↓ will momentarily put him in Bokutai. From here, these quick attacks start by hitting *high* and make a great counter to incoming attacks.

A O I

TACTICS // Aoi has solid offensive strategies mixed with an outstanding defense. Her combos are easy to execute and deal considerable damage, and many of them come from attacks that are safe and effective to use on their own. The damage from the combos isn't astounding, but it's enough to get the job done and frustrate your opponent.



Aoi's defense comes in many forms, including her Tenchi In'you stance. You can activate the stance at any time by pressing ← + P + K + G and holding the buttons to maintain the form. In this stance, all incoming *mid* and *high* attacks will be deflected. Best of all, many of Aoi's moves can be cancelled into the stance by simply press P + K + G immediately after inputting the original attack command (consult the moves list to see all moves that can have Tenchi In'you added).

On top of the combos and defense, Aoi also has a good throwing game. Her throw strings that stem from the Cougarami throw (←↘↓↘→ + P + G) are powerful, though the timing can be tricky. She can also grab ducking opponents and execute bone-crushing holds on fallen foes.



Key Moves

➡➡ + K

SOU'UNHA // Execute this kick and Aoi will lunge forward before kicking *mid* and launching the opponent into the air. After launching the opponent, you can continue with a quick juggle combo. The move has a good deal of recovery time, so don't use it too often. Rather, catch opponents off guard while they block low or advance towards you.

⬅ + K

KAMAGERI // This *high* hitting kick is a pretty safe move, and if you hit with it you'll instantly stagger the opponent. The kick has good range and won't put you into danger if you execute it at the right distance. After the stagger, we suggest following with the aforementioned Sou'unha kick (➡➡ + K).

↓ + K P P

KASUMI RENSHOU // This brief attack string doesn't combo by itself, though the mix up of *low* and *mid* makes it good for breaking defense. More importantly, the string *does* combo as a juggle and makes for a great way to end a combo.

🐼🐼 + P + K

SODESHINKEN // Because Aoi moves forward with this *mid* attack, use it carefully, when you're sure it'll hit. You'll be rewarded with a nice launch attack that puts the opponent high enough to hit with most any follow-up attack.

Combos

⬅ + K, ➡➡ + K, ↓ + K P P

The combo starts with the excellent Kamageri kick (⬅ + K), which staggers the opponent no matter how it hits. It does hit *high*, though, which makes it fairly easy to defend. Still, the attack is pretty safe to throw out and random, and the connection means a big combo for you.

⬅ + K + G, ↓ + K, ➡➡ + K K

Note that this combo only works if the first kick (⬅ + K + G) connects as a counter. The kick will then drop the opponent, letting you follow with the other hits in the combo. The ⬅ + K + G kick works well against incoming high attacks, as Aoi ducks low and hits *mid*. When you see it land, you've got time to react and continue with the combo. If it doesn't connect, try following with ↓ + K + G instead.

↓ + K + G, ⬅ + K + G,
↓ + K, ➡➡ + K K


Like the previous combo, this one only works if the first hit (↓ + K + G) connects as a counter. Unlike the previous combo, this combo starts *low*. Again, it works well against incoming high attacks. And even if the first hit doesn't knock the opponent down, it's a good *low* strike worth throwing out.


GOH

TACTICS // Goh's got decent all-around skills, with strong throws and solid combos. His kicks are especially good for poking, but not so good for setting up combos. When fighting from an outside range, poke with Goh's great kicks (including his deflecting Kyosengeri, ⬅➡ + K). When the opponent moves in closer, go for combos starting with *mid*-hitting punches.



Goh's grappling strengths lie in his powerful and easy throws, like the Tsuyubarai~Todome (⬅➡↓🐼➡ + P + G),

and his many options for picking opponents off the ground ( + P + G). Goh also has throws for grabbing ducking opponents, which further strengthens his arsenal against turtling enemies.


Use throws to drive opponents into a crouching defense, then attack with *mid* hitting kicks and punches to go for combos. Another move good for driving opponents into a ducking defense is the Uchikurubushigeri ( + K). The advancing low kick is quick and can even set you up to follow with a throw.



Key Moves

  + K

GARYU // This powerful kick has lots of range, both forward and down. Goh steps forward to kick, and while the kick hits *mid* it'll actually hit opponents that've just fallen on the ground. The Garyu kick is then a good follow up to any attack that knocks an opponent down, and is easy to follow with an off-the-ground grapple.

 + P + K

YOROIDOSHI // Like many deflect moves, this punch will drop opponents no matter how you hit them. While the opponent falls in pain, follow up with a quick combo for good damage. The punch hits *mid*, and since it deflects incoming, it's a good way to turn your defense into a combo opportunity.

  + K

KYOUSENGERI // This is Goh's second deflect move. The kick has loads of range, so it's good to stick out there every once in a while. It'll also pick up hits off the ground if you time it right.

     + P + G

TSUYUBARAI-TODOME // Of all Goh's throws, this is the one we most recommend for general use. It's one of the most powerful throws Goh has and is easier to execute than some others.

Combos

 + P + K, P K,   + K

This is a nice, straight-forward combo starting with a *mid* punch that comes out pretty quick. It's easy to land and can be followed with a ground grab if the opponent doesn't get up quick.



 + P + K,  + K,   + K

Like most of Goh's best combos, this one starts from a *mid* hitting punch. What makes this especially good is that the initial hit is a deflect move, letting you push away incoming *high* and *mid* attacks to land the combo.

 + P + K P,   + K

The initial two hits from this quick combo are fast and have surprisingly good range (especially the second hit). Unfortunately the second hit knocks the opponent pretty far away, limiting your follow-up attacks.

KAGE

TACTICS // Kage is one of the most unique characters in Virtua Fighter 5. He's quick and has some wild acrobatics that make for somewhat confusing attacks. He can be difficult for an opponent to read, as long as you don't get predictable. Try mixing up with attacks that start with similar animations but require different defenses from the opponent (like mixing between the  + K + G attack and the  + P + G throw).



There are lots of moves in Kage's repertoire that'll start combos, especially off of counter hits, so always be ready to unload a quick juggle string when you've got the opponent in the air. Ranged attacks like the $\rightarrow + K + G$ kick come out quick and set up combos against ducking opponents, while standing opponents can be nabbed with the Ko'enraku throw ($\rightarrow \leftarrow + P + G$) to set up an unblockable juggle combo.

Kage even has a solid set of *low* attacks, like the Ryu'eikyaku ($\rightarrow \rightarrow + K$) and the attack string $\leftarrow + K K K$, which forces opponents to block *mid*, *low*, then *mid* again. These low attacks won't do much for setting up combos or dealing lots of damage, but they are good to throw into your attack patterns to catch too-defensive opponents off their guard.



Key Moves

$\rightarrow + P P$

SHIPPUZAN // This simple, quick set of punches is good for setting up juggle combos. The first hit connects *mid* and the second hit will combo if the first connects. It's a good combo starter to throw into close-range combo.

$\rightarrow \rightarrow + K$

RYU'EIKYAKU // This is a good low kick that has loads of range that comes from the slide Kage performs. Opponents may start to see it coming if you use it too often, but you can cancel it (by holding G) to throw 'em off.

$\rightarrow + K + G$

ENGETSUGERI // The Engetsugeri kick has great range and comes out pretty quickly, hitting *mid* and letting you follow with a juggle combo. The forward flip of the move closely resembles the flip at the beginning of the $\rightarrow + P + G$ throw. Since either move must be guarded differently (the kick standing, the throw ducking), you can mix things up to confuse the opponent.

$\rightarrow \leftarrow + P + G$

KO'ENRAKU // This excellent throw launches the opponent into the air (and behind Kage). As they slowly float back down to earth, you have time to set up an excellent juggle combo. Or for easy damage, just time the Fusen Renkyaku ($\rightarrow + K + G$) to connect at the same time the opponent hits the ground.

Combos

$\rightarrow + K + G, P, \downarrow + P + K K$

The combo starts with the solid range Engetsugeri attack. The punch after the kick will pull the opponent off the ground, and the last couple of hits should follow without problem.

☛ + P P, P P K K

The punch string that starts this combo is better for close-in combat than the Engetsugeri kick. It hits *mid* and launches the opponent a decent height so you can easily follow with the rest of the string.

K, ☛ + K + G, ☛ + K P P

(From Hagakure-ryu In Shippujin)

Many of Kage's attacks can be canceled into the Hagakure-ryu In Shippujin stance (or you can go to it manually by pressing ☛ + P + K + G). The first kick from this stance causes the opponent to stagger, at which point you can follow with a relatively standard combo for excellent damage. **Note:** Every part of this combo *after* the first kick will work if you're in Kage's normal stance, but deals less damage.

SARAH

TACTICS // Sarah's got some decent combos, as well as two stances to mix things up, but we're still unsure of her quality as a fighter. Sarah doesn't seem to excel in any one area, though at the same time she doesn't have huge faults. Playing Sarah well will then require you to be pretty on point with your moves, precise and purposeful with most everything you do.



With that said, Sarah has combos that deal solid damage. Her best combo starter is the Dragon Smash Cannon (☛☛ + K) which we suggest you use often. Sarah has a number of other combo starters that all hit *mid*, though none seems to work as well as the Dragon Smash Cannon. Perhaps her best strength in striking is her ability to push opponents towards the edge of the ring. Her Dash Knee is a good range attack to finally launch the opponent out of the ring (as is the first combo listed below).

Sarah's throwing game is pretty standard fare, though her Rolling Face Crush (☛ + P + G) has good range. Her most damaging throw requires a 360-degree input. It can be tough at first, but we suggest getting used to it to make the best of any throw opportunity.



Key Moves

☞☞ + K

DRAGON SMASH CANNON // With this kick, Sarah ducks down a bit and delivers a *mid* hitting strike that launches the opponent into the air. This is our favorite way to start combos as the kick has respectable speed and launches opponents *very* high.

☞☞ + K

DASH KNEE // Though this kick has lots of recovery time (bad), it's good for tagging opponents from a distance. If you see a crouching opponent near the edge of the arena, unload a Dash Knee to nail 'em from afar and knock them off the arena.

☞☞ + K + G K

SPEAR KICK COMBO // The first kick in this combo hits *high* and staggers opponents if it connects. If the hit *does* connect, you can follow with the second K for a quick combo. If the initial kick *does not* connect, you have time to reconsider that second kick. Since you have the option to continue from the first kick, this quick combo is pretty safe to try.

P + K

HIGH SIDE KICK // This quick kick will instantly put you into the Flamingo stance, making it a good way to change up the fight with your opponent. As well, the kick acts as a deflection, nullifying incoming *mid* attacks and countering.

Combos

☞☞ + K, ☞ + P K, P P P K

This is Sarah's best combo we've come up with. The initial *mid* kick launches the opponent high into the air, letting you easily follow with the rest of the hits.

☞ + P + K K, ☞ + P K, ☞ + K

The combo starts with a quick two-hit string that first hits *mid* and launches the opponent. The kick has a fair bit of recovery time, so try not to use it unless you're sure it will connect. The attack comes out quickly enough that you can react to a crouching opponent.

☞ + K + G, P, ☞ + K K

The first kick in this combo has solid range and hits *mid*. The punch afterwards will pull the opponent off the ground high enough that the last two kicks should connect without a problem.

JACKY

TACTICS // Jacky's got some strong combos and a number of good launchers (including ☞ + K + G and ☞ + K). He's also pretty quick and has a decent mix-up game with his many ways of ending attack strings. Remember which strings can be cancelled into the Slide Shuffle (usually by pressing ☞ at the end of the string) so you can shorten the recovery time from these strings and move into another set of options.



Jacky's best combos stem from his Step-in Middle Kick (☞☞ + K + G) which has great range and staggers opponents. Use it against advancing opponents to catch them as they close in. If you get a surprise knock down, follow up with Jacky's Rage Kick (☞ + P K) for a quick combo for decent damage.

There's not much to Jacky's throwing game, which is a shame (his best throws are ☞☞ + P + G and ☞☞ + P + G).

You'll instead want to focus on breaking an opponent's guard with his myriad mix-ups and Slide Shuffles (his Side Slide Shuffle is a good way to avoid incoming attacks while staying on the offensive).



Key Moves

↖ + K

DOUBLE DRAGON // There's lots of range from this set of two kicks, enough that you can kick from maximum range and land pretty safely out of range of your opponent's throws. The first kick hits *mid* and the second combos off of it. Since it comes out pretty quickly, this is a good kick to throw in occasionally against crouching opponents.

→ → + K + G

STEP-IN MIDDLE KICK // Connect with this *mid* kick and you'll stagger the opponent no matter how you hit them. From the stagger, you can follow up with a number of combo options, one of which we've listed below.

↖ + P K

RAGE KICK // It's good to have a basic *low* hitting combo, and this one fits the bill. Unfortunately, the hits won't combo unless the first *low* punch connects as a counter. It's still worth throwing into the fray as Jacky will duck under higher attacks. As well, this quick string works well at the end of combos.

K + G ↓ + K + G

SPINNING KICK LOW SPIN KICK // This short string of two kicks connects as a combo if the first *high* kick connects. If the *high* kick is blocked, the second kick hits *low* to trip up opponents. It's easy to get predictable with this move if you're not prudent with its usage, but mix up your attacks by throwing out just the first kick (K + G) and not following with the second. Keeps the opponent guessing if the following *low* sweep will follow.

Combos

→ → + K + G, ↖ → + K,
↓ + P, ↖ + K K, → → + K

The first kick in this combo has great range and staggers an opponent no matter how it kicks. With the opponent staggered, quickly follow with the second kick (↖ → + K) to knock him to his knees. That's the first part of the combo. The second part actually only connects versus a few opponents (Sarah, Jeffry, and a couple others). If you're not fighting one of these characters, we suggest following instead with ↖ + K, ↖ → + K, which should connect versus more opponents. The second option does a bit less damage.

↖ + K + G, P, ↓ + K + G K

This combo starts hitting *mid* and, unlike in the previous combo, there's no adjustment needed depending on your opponent. The damage isn't as good, but it's a more sure-fire way to connect.

→ + K, ↖ + P + K P P

This is a pretty simple combo starting from a solid, *mid*-hitting knee. The knee is a good counter to advancing opponents, but has a fair bit of recovery time. Thus, we suggest using it sparingly. Still, the combo is easy damage if it lands.

EILEEN

TACTICS // We don't think Eileen is among the best characters in Virtua Fighter 5, but she does have a good mix-up game that can keep opponents guessing...constantly. She has a set of moves that can follow a number of basic attacks, letting you follow simple two-hit jabs with high, low or mid attacks. Be sure to mix up the attacks you follow with. If you

get your opponent thinking you'll go low, you hit with the Koushi Choukan ($\downarrow \blacktriangleleft \blacktriangleright + P$) to hit *mid* and set up a combo.



Eileen has a lot of good *mid* attacks, but if you use them too much your offense will be easy to defend. Mix in a lot of low strikes to keep your opponent blocking low, setting them up for the great *mid* strikes that lead into Eileen's best combos.

Another good way to force your opponent into blocking low is to use throws liberally. Her somersaulting Zenkuhon throw ($\downarrow \blacktriangleleft \blacktriangleright + P + K$, $P + G$) is quick and should put opponents on the defensive. Mix it into your attack strings along with standard throws.



Key Moves

$\blacktriangleleft \blacktriangleright + K$

KOUSOKUTAN // Eileen's deflection move is a *high* kick that deflects incoming *mid* and *high* attacks. The kick has good range and is decent for throwing out randomly. If it hits, the kick staggers the opponent letting you move in for a follow-up attack.

$\downarrow \blacktriangleleft \blacktriangleright + P$

KOUSHI CHOUKAN // This lunging forward attack hits *mid*, and though it's a bit slow to come out it's great for setting up combos. Get predictable with this move and you'll get punished, but throwing it out every once in a while (like after a whiffed wake up attack from the opponent) and you'll have a good combo starter against low blocking opponents.

\uparrow or \downarrow , $P + K$





SHASHIN HON'YAKU // Press $P + K$ during a Defensive Move (tap either \uparrow or \downarrow) and Eileen will perform a spinning kick that hits *mid* twice. The move is especially good because it'll sidestep enemy advances. Unfortunately it's hard to follow with anything other than a quick down hit, so while the move is pretty safe, the payoff isn't huge.

$\blacktriangleleft + K$


SOKUTANTAI // This is a good, clean, quick kick for poking at opponents from a distance. It hits *mid*, so use it against opponents you've bullied into blocking low, or just to snuff incoming attacks. The move has a chance to stagger, but it's tough capitalizing on the stagger from the distance you'll normally hit.

Combos

P  + P K,    + P

This is more of a combo setup than a true combo, as the first few hits don't actually combo. We use the first string (P  + P K) against low blocking opponents to stagger them with the final kick. Once they're staggered, there's time for a Koushi Choukan (   + P) which *will* combo if you're quick enough. After that lands, you can follow up with a juggle combo of your choice. We suggest P P P K.

  + K,  P P,  + P

If you get good with the deflection attack (which we suggest), you can follow up the attack with a nice combo for good damage. After the first kick connects, you'll likely have to move in closer before landing the  + P P string. It *will* combo if you're quick enough. You should also have time to follow with a down attack to tack on more damage.

K + G,  + P P K K



Lots of start up, but potential for good damage. The combo starter *hits high*, so it's easily defensible, but the unorthodox nature of the kick makes it good for catching opponents off guard (especially after a whiffed wake up kick).

BRAD

TACTICS // Brad's a pretty slick fighter, with decent combos stemming from his multitudinous forward/back/side-stepping maneuvers. Memorize Brad's strikes and strings that can be canceled into his various stances. A good Brad player will be constantly toggling between stances, ducking forward and side-stepping around opponents to confuse them and break their guard.



On top of memorizing the lead-ins to Brad's stances, it's important to know which attacks to use from those stances. Many attacks will lead into combo opportunities (try Long Ducking into a K K combo, or Slipping Right into a simple P to start a juggle). Other attacks are good for pressure, as you can mix up *mid* and *low* strikes to keep your opponent guessing on defense.

Because Brad's mix-ups are so good, his combos don't deal a ton of power and his throwing game is pretty bare. You can increase the power of Brad's combos by starting with the Pap Sawk Kao kick (  + K + G), but remember that Brad is to be played smart, not with brute force.



Key Moves

←→ + K

STEP CHANGE KNEE // This knee comes out quick and hits *mid* to launch the opponent into the air. From there it's easy to follow with a quick juggle combo for good damage. The kick has relatively low recovery time, too, making it a good strike to throw into the mix.

→ + K

KNEE UPPER // This is a good, multi-purpose kick that hits *mid* and comes out quick. If the knee connects as a counter hit, it'll launch the opponent into the air for a quick juggle. As well, you can easily cancel the kick into one of Brad's Ducking or Slipping stances. Not only does this give the kick lighting quick recovery, but it also lets you continue the offensive effort in a number of ways.

↓ + P

(From Phasing Turn)

GRAND SWEEP HOOK // In all your spinning about with Brad, we suggest occasionally throwing in this little *low* hook to trip up the opponent. When you've got plenty of *mid* hits to threaten with, opponents will often block high. Throw in a couple Grand Sweep Hooks to keep 'em guessing.

←→ + K + G

PAP SAWK KAO // Hit with this quick *mid* strike and you'll instantly stagger the opponent. From there you can move into combos starting with moves like ←→ + K and →→ + K to add tons of damage to Brad's already solid arsenal.

Combos

←→ + K, ↓ + P, ↘ + P,
←→ + K + G

This four hit combo deals solid damage and comes from Brad's excellent Step Change Knee strike. The timing is pretty lenient, letting you wait to make sure the Step Change Knee connects before committing to the rest of the combo.

P, ← + K + G K, →→ K K
(From Slipping Right)

From the Stepping Right stance, simply hit P to quickly drop the opponent with a *mid*-hitting punch. After landing the following pair of kicks (← + K + G K), move into Brad's Long Ducking stance by pressing → twice. From that stance, tap K twice to land the last two hits of the combo.

↘ + P, ↘ + P, → + K K

For this combo to work, the initial punch *must* connect as a counter hit. The *low* strike is good for countering higher attacks from your opponents (and good anyways for normal striking since it hits *low*). If you see the punch land as a counter, the opponent will drop, letting you follow the other attacks.

SHUN

TACTICS // Shun is a very unique character that will take time and dedication to learn completely. Many of his attacks lead to a variety of stances, each with its own attack set (though they're pretty shallow). But the variety of stances isn't the only thing that makes Shun unique.



What's more important is the drink counter that'd displayed under Shun's health bar. As you imbibe more and more drinks, Shun's arsenal of attacks grows, with some of his best attack strings not available until after drinking sixteen or more drinks. Because it's necessary to unlock these moves in every fight, you'll want to work in attacks that give Shun a drink at the end. Some strikes, like $\blacktriangleright + P + K$ and the standard $P + G$ throw, will give Shun four drinks at one time. You can also increase your drink count by simply pressing $P + K + G$ and enduring a brief animation.

Your drink count resets at the beginning of each fight, but carries over from round to round of any given fight. Focus on building drinks early so that you can unload the most of Shun's attacks. He's got some good strikes and combos (listed below) and a solidly confusing attack style that help make Shun an imposing attacker.



Key Moves

$\blacktriangleright + P + K$

TENSHIN SOUCHUSHOU // There are lots of ways to build up your drink count, and this punch is one of the good ways. Connect with this *mid* strike and Shun will automatically slam down four drinks. The low crouch Shun performs before the strike makes it good for countering *high* attacks from your opponent.

$K K \blacktriangledown + P K$
(16 or more drinks)

RENSHU HAIKA RYUKYAKU // This is a *great* attack string that unfortunately is only available after downing sixteen drinks. Once you've got that number of drinks, you can tack the string onto the end of most juggle combos. More importantly, this attack string ends with a very quick *low* punch into a *mid* kick. That's a combination that's very hard to defend, and if either hit connects the opponent will be launched high enough to juggle.

$\blacktriangleright \blacktriangleright + K$

CHUBU SOUTENKYAKU // This cartwheel kick hits *mid* and launches the opponent well into the air for a juggle combo. It comes out quick, which is good, but unfortunately puts Shun in danger if the attack is blocked. Because of this, we suggest using the Chubu Soutenkyaku only when you're relatively sure it'll connect. It's good for hitting crouching opponents from a fair distance away.

$\blacktriangledown \blacktriangleright \blacktriangleright + P$

CHOUWAN RYOUKEN // This fast *mid*-hitting punch is another good way to put opponents into the air for a juggle. If you've got six or more drinks under your belt, you can tack on an extra P ($\blacktriangledown \blacktriangleright \blacktriangleright + P P$) to launch the opponent higher, making for an easier juggle.

Combos

➡ ➡ + K, K K ↓ + P K
(16 or more drinks)

This is a pretty simple combo requires a fair number of drinks. The first kick (➡ ➡ + K) comes out quick and hits *mid* to launch the opponent into the air. From there you can continue with the K K ↓ + P K if you have 16 drinks in you. If not, the first three hits will still connect.

← + K P, K K ↓ + P K
(16 or more drinks)

Like the previous combo, this one calls for a lot of drinks, but you can actually land all but the last hit even if you've got no drinks in you. The first kick staggers the opponent with a *mid* hit and the follow-up punch drops 'em to the ground.

↓ + K + G, ↘ + P K
(1 or more drinks)

There's nothing fancy about this quick three-hit combo. But what makes it good is its *low*-hitting strikes that'll trip up opponents with a standing defense. The combo starts quick, and while it doesn't deal a lot of damage it is still good for putting on the pressure.

LAU

TACTICS // Lau is a pretty basic character, sporting just one alternate stance that doesn't offer a lot. However, what Lau does have is a repertoire of simple combos that come from great launchers. Attacks like ↘ + K and ➡ ➡ + K have good range and come out quick, hitting *mid* to launch the opponent for a quick juggle.



To compliment his direct-hit launchers, Lau even has a few really good strikes that will start combos if they hit as counters. The P + K from Defensive Move is a good defensive strike, and if you connect as a counter hit you can move into one of Lau's simple attack strings for quick damage.

Unfortunately Lau's throwing game is a bit simplistic, though his strongest throw is easy enough to execute (↘ ↘ + P + G). What Lau does have is perhaps the most useful jumping attack in the game. Tap ↑ or ↘ + P for a quick *mid* strike that can be followed with standing punches for a quick combo.



Key Moves

↖ + K

TOUKU KOSENKYAKU // This quick *mid* kick has decent recovery and is thus a pretty good start to a quick juggle combo. Since Lau lunges forward with the attack, it can be a bit dangerous if blocked. Fortunately, the quickness of the kick should work well to throw in against an opponent's offense.

P P P ← / ↓ + K

RENKAN KYAKU // This combo string has three possible endings—K or ↖ + K or ↓ + K—and each hits a different location on the enemy. We suggest mixing up between ↖ + K and ↓ + K to play the *mid* and *low* hitting game that'll force your opponent to guess which way to guard.

→ + P + K

TENSHIN SENCHUGEKI // This simple *mid* strike puts Lau in a very short stance, letting him strike under incoming attacks that go high. Even better, if the strike hits as a counter hit, the opponent will be stunned, setting him up for a quick combo.

P + K

(From Defensive Move)

KOUSOKUHI KO'ENSHOU // Like the Tenshin Senchugeki (above), this *mid*-hitting punch will drop an enemy if it connects as a counter. The added benefit here is that the strike comes from a Defensive Move, making it a great counter to an incoming enemy.

Combos

↖ + K, P ↖ + P P

This combo does a fair bit of damage and is really easy to connect. After hitting with the first *mid* strike, the rest of the juggle should come easily. As we mentioned earlier, the first kick (↖ + K) can be a bit risky if blocked, so we suggest going for this combo only when you see the opponent crouching.

← ← + P, ↓ + P P P ↓ + K

Lau takes a low stance for the first strike in this combo, letting you duck under incoming attacks up high. He also looks like he's going to go for a *low*, though the *mid* strike may catch some opponents off-guard.

→ + P + K, ↖ + P P P ↓ + K

This combo will only work if the first hit connects as a counter strike. If that *mid* punch hits as a counter, you can quickly follow with the *mid*-hitting combo string for good damage.

JEFFRY

TACTICS // Jeffry is a *big* character, and as such you shouldn't expect him to be very quick. But that's alright, 'cause what Jeffry lacks in speed he makes up for in power. Jeffry's got some vicious throws, including some throw strings you'll want to learn.



His most powerful throw string starts with two Head Butts and ends with a Head Crush (← → + P + G, → + P + G, ← + P + G). If you know you're guaranteed the throw, execute this string for massive damage. Otherwise, we suggest using the Front Backbreaker (← → ↓ ↖ → + P + G) as it's easier to execute in a pinch, and does comparable damage. Jeffry's Threat Stance (P + K + G) has its own special throw (P + G) that makes Jeffry lunge forward for the grab. It's good for nabbing opponents from a distance.

Jeffrey isn't all throws, though, as he's got some devastating combos to work with. Most of his best combos start with *mid* attacks, which works well as the threat of Jeffrey's throws will often push opponents into a crouching defense. His Rising Hammer two-hit attack is always great for tacking on extra hits to moves that knock down or stagger opponents, so get used to the motion.



Key Moves

← + P P

RISING HAMMER // This two hit attack connects *mid* and does solid damage. More importantly, this works well as a follow-up to any attack that knocks the opponent down or staggers. The long range of the attack, combined with the relatively low hit, makes for a great way to tack on extra hits.

↘ + P

FULL SWING UPPER // With this move, you can hit *mid* pretty quickly and launch the opponent high into the air. After the opponent is launched, you can follow with a number of options, including some *high* hitting attack strings.

← → → + P + K

FULL SWING DOUBLE HAMMER // There's a fair deal of start up that comes with this move, so don't use it all the time. Jeffrey sort of steps in towards the opponent and rolls his body before unleashing a nasty upwards strike that knocks the opponent into the air. You can follow with a *high* hitting combo on most opponents, though some will drop too quickly. We suggest using this move as a counter to an opponent that rushes in from a distance. Since Jeffrey ducks low, they may be baited into blocking low, only to get hit by the *mid* attack.

← → ↓ + P + G

FRONT BACKBREAKER // This isn't Jeffrey's most powerful throw, but it is one of the easiest ways to score loads of damage. For most general throw attempts, we suggest this throw as it's easier to execute than Jeffrey's more damaging throws.

Combos

↘ + P, P K P, ← + P P

Here's an example of how you can combine some of Jeffrey's key moves. The combo starts with a relatively quick *mid* hit, so set up your opponents by attacking low or threatening with throws. Some opponents tend to fall a bit too fast for the P K P string to connect (depending on how cleanly the Full Swing Upper connects), but most will take the hits and still be vulnerable to a follow up from the Rising Hammer.

↘ + P P, ← + P P

This simple combo deals solid damage and comes from two very quick *mid* punches. The punches are good for throwing into the mix up close, and when you see them connect you can easily move into the second attack to get the real damage.

↘ + K + G, ↓ + K P

This is a nice quick combo that starts out *low*, good versus opponents that keep stuffing your *mid* combo starters. For this to combo, you *will* need to charge the initial kick (↘ + K + G), though you don't have to charge it all the way. Any amount of charge will knock the opponent down, opening them to the following couple of hits.

VANESSA

TACTICS // Vanessa has two main stances with different attacks unique to each (you can toggle between them by pressing P + K + G, even before the round begins). Her defensive style is inherently more geared to defense—duh—by way of giving Vanessa multiple ways to counter enemy attacks. By pressing *no buttons* at all, Vanessa can intercept any incoming *high* attacks (you can then follow with P, K or P + G for different effects). As well, Vanessa has reversals for *high* and *mid* hits that you execute by pressing ◀ + P + K or ▶ + P + K.



Her offensive style similarly has strengths, though clearly more geared to attacking. In the offensive style, Vanessa has multiple methods of taking the opponent to the ground from far away—the Takedown (⬆ or ⬇, P + K) being the most straight-forward method. From the ground, you can follow with some ground and pound or go for a quick bone snap (P + G) for extra damage.

On top of all this, Vanessa has some decent combos, all of which come from *mid*-hitting attacks. She's also got powerful throws (◀▶⬇⬆⬇ + P + G works in both stances for great damage) and the ability to grab opponents that are ducking (⬇ or ▶ + P + K + G). And while she's not particularly strong in any one aspect, her outstanding variety makes Vanessa a difficult opponent to read. Mix up your game with her and take advantage of her many options for attack and defense.



Key Moves

◀ + K + G

LEG BOMBER // This move seems to work the same whether you're in defensive or offensive stance. It's relatively quick, hits *mid*, and sets up an easy juggle combo. Definitely keep the attack in mind no matter which stance you're in.

▶ + P
(Offensive Style)

BUNKER BUSTER // This is another quick *mid* attack that leads to good combo opportunities. Vanessa jumps forward when she unloads the attack, giving it good range in spite of her short arm extension. But because she jumps forward, you'll be vulnerable to a counter attack if the hit doesn't land. Use it carefully to distanced catch opponents off guard.

↑ or ↓, P + K
(Offensive Style)

TAKEDOWN // From a Defensive Move (not to be confused with Vanessa's Defensive style), press P + G to perform a lunging grapple that takes opponents to the ground. The best part about this move is its range, as you can grab blocking opponents from a long distance...as long as they're standing. Don't abuse the Takedown against opponents that block low or you'll make yourself vulnerable to whatever your opponent can dish out.

P P P + K + G

SWITCH BACK BLOW // Vanessa's strengths come from her two stances and being able to switch up on your opponent at a moment's notice. Simply pressing P + K + G to switch is often a bit dangerous. We instead suggest using this quick combo (works in both styles) to pressure the opponent and change stances in one move.

Combos

↵ + K + G, ➡ + P K K, ↑ + P
(Defensive Style)

This combo assumes you're in the defensive stance, though a similar combo can come from the offensive stance. You'll want to set up opponents to get hit by the starting *mid* attack, then quickly follow with the juggle.

↵ + K ➡, K, ➡ ➡ + K P
(Offensive Style)

The startup on this combo is pretty weird in that it's an attack fake that leads into an actual attack. Play mind games by being offensive with sharp, snappy attacks, then throw this into the mix to catch 'em off guard. It's a good way to tack on extra damage to an unorthodox move.

↵ + P, ↵ + P,
↓ + K P P + K + G
(Offensive Style)

This combo starts with the quick, offensive style Bunker Buster attack and ends with Vanessa in the defensive stance. If your opponent isn't paying attention, he might not notice that you've switched stances, making this a great combo for mixing up your game.

WOLF

TACTICS // We think Wolf's a pretty awesome character. He's got solid combos from good launchers, and his throw game ranks with the best. Because Wolf's throw game is so strong, you'll be able to easily bully opponents into a crouching defense. From there you can move into Wolf's combos (which start with *mid* hits) to scare opponents back into a standing defense. Then throw them again. And let the cycle repeat.



Wolf's best throw is his Giant Swing (↵ ↵ ↓ ↵ ➡ + P + G). It deals massive damage and tosses opponent very far behind you, letting you easily toss enemy fighters out of the ring. That's not Wolf's only throw trick, though, as he's got good throws for grabbing crouching opponents (↵ + P + K + G). His Low Sway Tackle (↵ ↵ + P + G) and Sidestep Catch (P + K during Defensive Move) give Wolf some unorthodox throws that are good for mixing up your game.

When moving to combos, Wolf's various *mid* hitting launchers will be your friend. The Short Shoulder (↵ ➡ + P + K) is quick and launches opponents very high, though the Pounding Elbow (↵ + P + K) is arguably quicker and safer to throw out (though it doesn't launch as high).



Key Moves

← ↘ ↓ ↘ → + P + G

GIANT SWING // This powerful throw is multi-purposed. Not only does it deal a *load* of damage, it also launches the opponent very far behind you. You can then use the throw to toss opponents out of the ring by backing yourself towards the edge. You don't even have to be especially close to the edge of the ring to get the opponent outside.

→ ↘ ↓ ↘ ← + P + G

TURBO DROP THIRD // This throw isn't quite as powerful as the previously mentioned Giant Swing, but it does still have a use. Just as with the Giant Swing, the Turbo Drop Third toss is good for throwing opponents out of the ring. The difference here is that the Turbo Drop Third throws the opponent *forward*, making it effective if you've pushed the opponent's back to the wall.

← → + P + K

SHORT SHOULDER // This quick shoulder bash hits *mid* and launches the opponent higher than any other of Wolf's moves. The launch is good for stringing together juggle combos, such as the one we've listed below.

→ + K + G

ROLLING SAVATE // This *mid*-hitting kick has good range and instantly staggers the enemy. From the stagger you can move into most any of Wolf's combos, including two of the combos we've listed below.

Combos

← → + P + K, P,
→ ↘ ↓ ↘ ← + P P

For such a simple combo, this one packs a pretty good punch. The first hit comes out quick and connects *mid*, launching the opponent pretty high. If you connect the first hit versus a crouching opponent, you should go straight into the → ↘ ↓ ↘ ← + P P, skipping the standing P before as it won't connect in most situations.

↘ + P + K, → + K,
← → + K + G

The first hit of this combo comes out quick and hits *mid*. More importantly, it has good recovery, and the following → + K can come out fast enough to catch off guard opponents that blocked the first hit. It's a very simple, three-hit combo that deals solid damage.

P + G, → + P P
(From Deadly Move)

You need to move into the Deadly Move stance by pressing ← / → + P + K + G before executing the combo. From that run, P + G will toss the opponent into the air. Just as they hit the ground, time your → + P P to connect and combine the damage of the punches with the impact on the ground.

LION

TACTICS // Lion is an excellent striking character with lots of good kicks and setups for combos. Focus on tagging opponents with his combo starters, then flow into a quick juggle for good damage. Lion has good low attacks (like ↓ + K) that can force opponents into habitually blocking *low*. When you've got them in that pattern, counter with some *mid* combo starters.



Lion also has two temporary stance changes that give you other options for attack. The Tourou Soufu ($\blacktriangledown + P + K + G$) and the Tourou Maifuku ($\blacktriangleleft + P + K + G$) make Lion step forward or backwards, below high attacks.

Lion's throw range is pretty short, and his throws anyways are very basic. That said, the best way we've found to nail a throw is during the aforementioned Tourou Soufu stance. Execute the Tourou Soufu and Lion will step towards the opponent. During the inward step, press P + G to execute a unique throw. The forward step that comes from the Tourou Soufu will artificially increase the range of Lion's throw, giving him a solid option from outside jab range.



Key Moves

$\blacktriangledown \blacktriangleleft \blacktriangleleft + P$

RYUSEI KOUSHUGEKI // Not only is this a solid combo starter (you'll have to follow with low hits, like $\blacktriangledown + K K$), but it also has a deflective property. The first part of the move will deflect incoming *high* attacks. If you're close to the opponent, the deflection will be followed by a hit, though it is possible that the following hit will miss if you deflect from far away.

$\blacktriangleleft + K$

SENKYUTAI // This quick two-hit kick *hits low* and has good range. Moreover, a successful hit acts as a good quick combo starter. You can follow up with a couple of down hits for an easy combo that starts low.

$\blacktriangleright \blacktriangleright + P$

SENSHIPPO // This punch has good range, but a significant amount of start up. Bait your opponent into attacking low, then tag 'em with the Senshippo to *hit mid* and stun him. You can then follow with a quick combo (usually has to be low, but taller characters can be hit with high combos after the stun).

K + G

SENPUKYAKU // Not only does this *high* kick do great damage from range, it also sets up some of Lion's most powerful combos. There's lots of start up, so don't use the move too often or while in close. But as a counter to a rushing opponent, execute the Senpukyaku launch a combo. The counter options are even better if this hits as a counter hit.

Combos

$\blacktriangledown \blacktriangleleft \blacktriangleleft + P$

Lots of start up, but potential for good damage. The combo starter *hits high*, so it's easily defendable, but the unorthodox nature of the kick makes it good for catching opponents off guard (especially after a whiffed wake up kick).

➡➡ + P, ↙ + K + G, ↑ + P

The second part of this combo is actually very usable in more than just this application. Normally, the ↙ + K + G and ↑ + P series doesn't combo, but it *will* after any stun (in the provided combo, the ➡➡ + P creates the necessary stun). That also means that if the ↙ + K + G connects as a counter hit, you can follow with the ↑ + P and actually have it combo. This deals surprisingly solid damage for little work and risk.

↙ + K, ↓ + K K

It's good to have an all-low combo in your repertoire, and this one fits the bill. The combo starts with a pair of low hits, then follows with more low for an easy juggle. This combo is especially effective at pushing opponents towards the edge of a ring...and possibly off.

EL BLAZE

TACTICS // El Blaze has surprising speed for what you might assume is a typical wrestling character. Needless to say, he's not typical, and combining speed with powerful and impressive throws to devastating effect. Perhaps his best strength is the unorthodox Lucha Libre style, giving El Blaze running kicks and throws to mix things up.



The Rocket Discharge run (➡ or ➡ + P + K + G) gives El Blaze the option of kicking *low* (↓ + K + G), hitting *mid* (P + K + G, P K) into a juggle, or grabbing a standing opponent (P + G). There are more options, but these are the ones you should focus on as they'll force your opponent to change their defense, guessing what you might do.

And as a Lucha Libre wrestler, El Blaze has an obviously decent throwing game. He can throw crouching opponents, and many of his throws can be used to change your position relative to the opponent (i.e. put them near the edge of the ring). His Whirlwind throw into Just Face Lock (➡➡↓➡➡ + P + G, P + G) does very good damage and is easy to execute, especially after you've scared opponents into a standing block with El Blaze's excellent *mid* attacks.



Key Moves

→→ + K

SHADOW LANCE // The Shadow Lance kick has good range and staggers opponents it hits. It's also relatively safe to throw, and won't put you into an awful position if it doesn't connect. Further, the move can be canceled into Blaze's Rocket Discharge run, from which you can follow up with *mid* or *low* kicks, or a throw to catch a blocking opponent.

←→ + P + K

HAMMER SMASH // This *mid* hitting punch is quick and, more importantly, sets up combos if it hits as a counter. It has good range, and because of the input command you can execute it immediately after backing away from an advancing opponent.

P + K

(From Defensive Move)

QUICK BACK SPIN // After executing a Defensive Move (by tapping ↑ or ↓ to step into the background or foreground), press P + K for this quick *mid*-hitting kick. Blaze takes a *huge* sidestep with the kick, and you can cancel into the Rocket Discharge to add options to the attack.

←↘↓↘→ + P P K

FAKE ROLL~VENUS DIVERSION // Execute the Fake Roll and press P to trigger the rising punch out of the roll, then tap K the moment Blaze comes out of the roll. You should execute a two hit combo that starts *mid*, knocking the opponent into the air for a quick juggle.

Combos

↘ + K + G, K, ← + K P P

This combo starts with a *low* kick that will stagger as a normal hit, or straight-up knock the opponent down. Note that if the first kick (↘ + K + G) hits a standing, blocking opponent, it won't deal damage but will still stagger.

←↘↓↘→ + P P K, → + P K

The first attack here, the Venus Diversion (from the Fake Roll) is quick and comes from a forward roll that gives the attack lots of range. The rest of the combo is fairly simple and it deals solid damage.

↘ + P, ← + K P P

The ↘ + P attack has El Blaze lunge forward with a *mid* hitting strike. The range from the forward jump is excellent, and it sets up a very easy juggle to follow.

Quest Mode

Virtua Fighter 5's Quest mode is actually a lot simpler than it looks. It's completely open and non-linear, traits that in other games mean complexity. But the difference here is that nothing really matters. The main goal of Quest mode is to simply build your character's rank by winning more battles than you lose, and to use the money and items you earn to customize your character's look.

IN THE BEGINNING

When you start Quest mode, you must pick *one* character. That character will forever be tied to that profile, and you won't get a chance to change it in the future (though you can always make new profiles for different characters). In this way, Quest mode hopes to build a relationship between you and your single fighter.



The first screen you'll find in Quest mode is a world map. From here you can travel to various arcades to do battle with the local players. You can enter any arcade you choose, though Club SEGA Downtown, just north of Home, tends to have the easiest opponents. When you've entered into an arcade, you can pick one of three opponents and have a chance to see their rank and win percentage before challenging them. If you win the battle, another opponent will join automatically. It's like playing in a real arcade, except it's not totally deserted!

BUILDING RANK

As you fight and *win* battles, you'll fill up an experience bar that you'll see at the end of every fight. When the bar fills up, you'll move up a rank, gradually making your way towards the top rank of Conqueror.



You start Quest mode as a lowly 10th kyu. As you rise in rank, you'll move from 10th kyu to 9th kyu, to 8th kyu and so forth until reaching 1st kyu. When you level up from 1st kyu, you'll reach the rank of 1st dan. Unlike the kyu rankings, dan rankings don't get higher with lower numbers. Instead, you'll rise from 1st dan to 2nd dan, to 3rd dan and so forth until reaching the rank of 10th dan.

As a side note, it's important to note that rankings do not really affect anything. A higher ranking doesn't make your character more or less powerful. The ranking simply represents your skill level and gives you a rough idea of what level of opponents you should be fighting (read: look to fight opponents of a skill level just slightly higher than yours).

PRIZES & TOURNAMENTS

While building your rank is a major part of Quest mode, arguably more important is your ability to unlock new items with which to customize your fighter. Not every fight will reward you with items. Just keep on truckin' through opponents in the arcade and occasionally you'll be informed of an Item Battle. The winner of that fight will be rewarded with a clothing item, orb, or money.



Orbs are the most mysterious award you'll get. When you start the Quest mode, you'll automatically be equipped with one Orb Disc. The Orb Disc has seven slots that are filled, one by one, as you earn orbs in ranking matches. When you've filled up an Orb Disc, you'll be rewarded with a special item and the Orb Disc will be used up. If you want to continue being able to collect orbs, you'll have to purchase another Orb Disc from the Customize shop.

As you play more and more arcade matches to earn items, you'll eventually unlock tournaments that take place in one of the various arcades (or at Event Square). The first tournament will typically appear after your fifteenth battle. When you get the notification of a tournament in progress, we suggest leaving your current arcade seat to enter the tournament. From the world map, look for the arcade with a glowing ring to find the tournament.



Tournaments are especially good for earning prizes as you can often unlock massive amounts of cash to spend at the Customize screen. Note that not all tournaments are equal, as some will have varying degrees of difficulty as well as varying rules. Some tournaments will have standard best-of-five battles, while others will require best-of-nine. Other tournaments have shorter time limits, making it almost impossible to KO an opponent before time expires. In these tournaments, simply deal as much damage as you can, then go on the defensive to let time expire.

Q & A

Q :: How do you unlock Dural?

A :: To unlock Dural as a playable character, simply complete the Arcade mode with all seventeen of the main characters.

Q :: Why can't I change characters in Vs. mode?

A :: When you enter any of the play modes, you'll be asked to choose a profile. Once you make a profile, that profile will *always* be locked to the first fighter you choose. If you want to play as another character and keep track of wins and losses with that character, you'll have to make a new profile.

In most modes, however, it is possible to play without using a profile at all. On the menu that asks you to choose a profile, simply scroll up to "Play without using data." This option will let you choose any fighter you'd like without having to create a profile. This is generally the best option for playing in Vs. mode with buddies and want to quickly switch between characters.

Q :: What else can I unlock?

A :: Each character starts with two selectable costumes. You can unlock an additional two costumes (making four total per character) by playing through the Quest mode. You'll unlock Costume C by reaching the rank of 1st dan. To unlock Costume D, you must fill out at least one Orb Disc with orbs earned in Quest mode battles.

Q :: Got the costumes, now how do I pick them?

A :: In most modes, holds the START button down while selecting your character. In Quest mode, you can change the default costume your character wears on the Customize screen. Go to Costume Settings and choose "Main/Sub costume settings." You can change the defaults there, and *must* select "End adjustment" when you're done. If you back out by pressing CIRCLE, your changes will not be saved.

Q :: I'm a huge SEGA fan, what do I do?

A :: Uh, try holding down the CIRCLE button after loading your save data on startup. You'll get a nice audio easter egg that can hopefully sate your SEGA fandom.