



Introduction

What would the 90s arcade scene have looked like without Mortal Kombat? — Wait, scratch that.

What would our popular culture look like were it not once guided by the gentle hand of Mortal Kombat? Movies, television shows, comic books, card games, novels, evening newscasts denouncing the evils of pulling spines out of little sculptured warriors – the Mortal Kombat games, for better or worse, defined how our country looked at video games. And with Mortal Kombat: Armageddon, this generation's final MK, 62 characters reunite for one last bloody hurrah.

Mortal Kombat: Armageddon isn't just a game. Why, it's the end of an American era.

Pay your respects with our Mortal Kombat: Armageddon guide, complete with:

- **BASICS** // The do's and don'ts on your quest for total supremacy of all realms of Mortal Kombat. Includes a look at the new features of Armageddon, including Kustom Fatalities and a revamped Krypt.
- **KOMBATANTS** // Sub-Zero or Scorpion? Ashrah or Meat? Strategies and combos for every character in the game to end your dilemma.
- **KONQUEST** // Just what *is* going on in this game? Konquest Mode answers your questions, while our Konquest section reveals the location of all 60 relics.
- **MOTOR KOMBAT** // Every racer reviewed, though we make no judgments on how eco-friendly each kart is.

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The logo for IGN Insider Extras, featuring a stylized blue and white star-like shape to the left of the text "IGN INSIDER EXTRAS" in a bold, sans-serif font.

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Basics

Basics	Fatalities
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Controls Chart			
CONTROLS	ABBRV.	PS2	XBOX
Up	U	D-PAD	D-PAD
Down	D	D-PAD	D-PAD
Back	B	D-PAD	D-PAD
Forward	F	D-PAD	D-PAD
Attack1	A1	SQUARE	X
Attack2	A2	TRIANGLE	Y
Attack3	A3	X	A
Attack4	A4	CIRCLE	B
Stance Switch	ST	L1	L
Throw	TH	R1	BLACK
Block	BL	R2	R

Offense

Combos

Combos are the lifeblood of the Mortal Kombat series, so most people tend to gravitate towards the powerful characters capable of stringing together attacks with devastating results. The series has lightened up a bit since it gone 3D, mainly due to the introduction of death traps and arena weapons, which give projectile and poking characters more options.



The most powerful combos are air combos. Every character has at least one or two moves per stance that will launch the opponent into the air, who can then be further attacked as they fall back towards the ground. Once you settled on your character, it's paramount to find which moves will start the air combo, and which moves should be used to end it (typically, the moves with the most button inputs will also deal the most damage).

Special moves

Special moves have been decreasing in usefulness over the years, though they've made some progress in Armageddon. Roughly half of them still aren't too great, or too dangerous to use during battle, but the good ones can keep you safe or integrate well into a combo. Check the overview on each combatant to see what's going to make the cut in the heat of battle.

Defense

Blocking

You'll usually want to block low. Not only will they let high attacks swish around harmlessly above your head, you'll be able to quickly counterattack with your own combo. In addition, a significant number of the uppercut moves that punch the opponent into the air start in this position.

The block button is also used for parries and breakers, which interrupt attacks. Parries push the opponent back, while breakers knock the opponent to the ground. While breakers are impressive, you only get three per match so use them wisely. Save them for the second and third rounds.

Sidestepping

With edges to fall off and death traps ever present, not to mention weapons strategically littered throughout the arenas, sidestepping is an important move to get away from traps and maybe pick up a weapon along the way. Sidestepping is riskier than blocking and should only be used against projectiles or when you feel confident it'll pay off. Sidestep your opponent to avoid their combos and start your own.



The Krypt

The Krypt is a dark and dingy room that contains all the unlockable items (alternate costumes, concept art, tunes, arenas, etc) available in Mortal Kombat: Armageddon. To unlock these items, you either have to fork over its designated koin cost, or unlock them in Konquest Mode if that choice is available. Naturally, why bother spending koins on items you can find in Konquest Mode? And to take that question further, why bother playing Konquest mode if you're not going to go all the way?



The most important items in Konquest Mode are called relics, little mementos from Mortal Kombat's wide and bloody history. For every 10 relics collected, you're given a reward. Collect all 60 relics and everything in the Krypt is unlocked. Yep, every last thing. And since you didn't waste any koins in the Krypt, these koins can now be used in Armageddon's amazing and incredibly flexible Kreate-a-Fighter mode. With your newfound wealth, you'll be able create the most fearsome Wolverine or Jack Bauer clone Xbox Live will have ever seen.

Basics	Fatalities
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Getting tired of the bland, familiar rip-the-spinal-cord-out-of-some-dude fatality? The designers of Mortal Kombat: Armageddon agree. Where's the art? Where's the finesse? Besides Kreate-a-Fighter mode, the major addition to the series are Kustom Fatalities. Fatalities are no longer one note events. Kustom Fatalities are epic affairs, where you link and chain maneuvers together for bloody tableaus of impaling, appendage tearing, and other unpleasant forms of bodily harm.



When the announcer declares "Finish him/her!" at the end of the round, a timer bar and a big number will appear. The number denotes which chain you're at within the fatality chain. You're given a max of 10 chains to execute within the fatality. You can stop at any time before the timer runs out, but the last action has to be a finisher, otherwise the fatality doesn't count. Transitions do not count as actions within the fatality. They're used to position and reposition your character to execute the chain you desire.

Some chains and transitions can only be done by characters of a specific class (depending on what type of weapon the character uses). Big characters (or the boss characters that have only one fighting stance) have their own selection of transitions, chains, and finishers to choose from.

NORMAL CLASS

Baraka
 Bo Rai Cho
 Chameleon
 Daegon
 Darrius
 Drahmin
 Ermac
 Frost
 Havik
 Hotaru
 Hsu Hao
 Jade
 Jax
 Johnny Cage
 Kabal
 Kai
 Kitana
 Kobra
 Kung Lao
 Liu Kang
 Meat
 Motaro
 Mokap
 Nightwolf
 Nitara
 Noob Saibot
 Quan Chi
 Raiden
 Rain
 Reiko
 Reptile
 Sektor
 Shao Kahn
 Sheeva
 Shinnok
 Shujinko
 Sindel
 Smoke
 Sonya Blade
 Stryker
 Tanya
 Taven

CLASS 1

Dairou
 Kenshi
 Li Mei
 Scorpion
 Sub-Zero

CLASS 2

Fujin
 Sareena
 Shang Tsung

CLASS 3

Ashrah
 Cyrax

CLASS 4

Kano
 Kira
 Mavado
 Mileena

CLASS 5

Jarek

BIG CHARACTERS

Blaze
 Goro
 Kintaro
 Moloch
 Onaga

FORWARD	
Forward Transitions	
Action	Notation
Behind	D, F, A1
Knees	D, B, A1
Knees	D, F, A4
Pull Out Sword	U, D, U, A1
Face Down	D, B, A2. For normal, class 3, and class 4 characters.
Forward Chains	
Knee to Head	F, F, A1
Spin Punch	F, B, A1
Gut Punch	U, U, A1
Spin Kick	B, B, A1
Groin Kick	D, D, A1
Heart Rip	F, F, A2
Brain Rip	B, B, A2
Rib Rip	D, D, A2

Thigh Rip	F, B, A2
Arm Rip	U, U, A2
Double Arm Rip	B, F, A2
Arm Break	D, D, A3
Arm Rip Hit	While holding an arm: U, U, A3
Double Arm Rip Hit	While holding an arm: B, F, A3
Forward Chains for class 1, 2, 3, and 5 characters	
Left Arm Slice	F, F, A1
Right Arm Slice	F, F, A2
Impale Chest	B, B, A1
Impale Gut	B, B, A2
Forward Chains for class 4 characters	
Head Stab	B, B, A3
Gut Stab	D, D, A3
Left Arm Slice	F, F, A1
Right Arm Slice	F, F, A2
Impale Gut	U, D, U, A2
Impale Head	U, U, A3
Forward Finishers	
Head Rip	U, U, A4
Neck Break	B, B, A4
Spine Rip	D, D, A4
Head Crush	F, F, A4
Torso Rip	F, B, A4
Arm Rip Finishes	
Arm Finish	F, F, A3
Double Arm Finish	B, B, A3
Forward Finishers for class 1, A2, A3 and 5 characters	
Decapitate	F, F, A4
Forward Finishers for class 4 characters	
Decapitate	F, F, A4

KNEES	
Knees Transitions	
Face Forward	D, B, A1
Pull Out Sword	U, D, U, A1
Face Down	D, B, A2. For normal, class 3, and class 4 characters.
Knees Chains	
Neck Snap	U, U, A2
Kick to Head	D, D, A2
Knee to Head	F, F, A2
Right Punch	F, F, A1
Left Punch	U, U, A1
Kick	D, D, A1
Knees Chains for Class 1 characters	
Impale	B, B, A1 (Will no longer be able to use sword actions)

Knees Finishers	
Neck Break	F, F, A4
Rip Out Spine	U, U, A4
Knees Finishers for class 1 characters	
Decapitate	U, D, U, A4

BEHIND	
Behind Transitions	
Face Forward	D, F, A1
Pull Out Sword	U, D, U, A1
Face Up	D, B, A1. For normal and class 1 characters only.
Behind Chains	
Back Break, with Fist	U, U, A1
Back Break, with Knee	F, F, A1
Arm Break	D, D, A1
Neck Snap	B, B, A1
Brain Rip	D, D, A2
Heart Rip	F, F, A2
Kick in the Butt	U, U, A2
Punch to Face Forward	B, B, A2
Behind Finishers	
Head Clap	F, F, A4
Head Smash	U, U, A4
Behind Finishers for class 1 characters	
Shish Kabob	F, F, A4

FACE DOWN	
Face Down Transitions for class 1, class 3, and class 4 characters	
Face Forward	D, B, A2
Knees	D, B, A1
Pull Out Sword	U, D, U, A1
Face Down Chains for class 1, class 3, and class 4 characters.	
Knee Drop	B, B, A1
Back Stomp	U, U, A1
Punch to Head	F, F, A1
Face Down Finishers for class 1, class 3, and class 4 characters	
Spine Rip	F, F, A4
Face Down w/ Sword Finishers for class 3 characters	
Head Stab	F, F, A4

FACE UP	
Face Up Transition for normal and class 2 characters	
Behind	D, B, A1
Knees Behind	D, F, A2
Pull Out Sword	U, D, U, A1
Face Up Chains for normal and class 2 characters	
Punch to Face	F, F, A1

Face Up Finishers for normal and class 2 characters	
Head Stomp	F, F, A4
Knee Crush	D, D, A4
Face Up Finishers for class 2 characters	
Decapitation	U, U, A4
Head Stab	F, F, A4

KNEES BEHIND	
Knees Behind Transitions for normal and class 2 characters	
Behind	D, F, A2
Pull Out Sword	U, D, U, A1
Knees Behind Chains for normal and class 2 characters	
Punch to Back	B, B, A1
Knees Behind Chains for class 2 characters	
Impale Back	B, B, A1
Knees Behind Finishers for normal and class 2 characters	
Head Rip	B, B, A4

BIG CHARACTERS

FORWARD	
Forward Transitions	
Behind	D, F, A1
Knees	D, B, A1
Face Down	D, D, A2
Forward Chains	
Crush	U, U, A1
Kick	F, F, A1
Spin Punch	F, B, A1
Knee to Chest	D, B, A3
Fist Slam	F, D, A2
Forward Finishers	
Torso Punch	F, F, A4
Uppercut Decapitation	B, B, A4
Head Clap	U, U, A4
Kick Decapitation	D, U, A4
Torso Explosion	F, B, A4

KNEES	
Knees Transitions	
Forward	D, B, A1
Knees Chains	
Kick to Face	F, F, A1
Knee to Face	B, F, A1
Knees Finishers	
Torso Shatter	F, F, A4
Head Clap	U, U, A4

Kick Decapitation	D, F, A4
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BEHIND	
Behind Transitions	
Face Forward	D, F, A1
Face Up	D, B, A2
Behind Chains	
Knee to Back	F, F, A1
Behind Finishers	
Head Smash	F, F, A4
Kick Decapitation	F, U, A4
Head Clap	U, U, A4

FACE DOWN	
Face Down Transitions	
Knees	D, U, A2
Face Down Chains	
Punch to Head	F, F, A1
Face Down Finishers	
Head Pop	U, U, A4
Knee Crush	U, D, A4

FACE UP	
Face Up Transitions	
Behind	D, B, A2
Knees Behind	D, F, A2
Face Up Chains	
Knee Drop	F, D, A1
Face Up Finishers	
Head Smash	D, D, A4
Arms Off	B, D, A4

KNEES BEHIND	
Knees Behind Transitions	
Behind	D, F, A2
Knees Behind Chains	
Kick to Head	F, F, A1
Knees Behind Finishers	
Head Clap	U, U, A4

Kombatants



Rain

Rain is a very well-rounded character and has enough variety of moves to suit whichever style of fighting you fancy at the moment. Both of the best moves from Rain's zi ran men stance (Mind and Body and Stormy Weather) will propel the opponent into the air. If you used Mind and Body, follow it up with Stormy Weather. If you used Stormy Weather, it'll automatically switch you to his Storm Sword, which should then be followed up with Dazzle. Rain's Storm Sword is good from midrange and the simplistic button commands for his sword moves make this weapon easy to master.

If you're beyond midrange from your opponent, each of Rain's special moves are projectile variants, so whatever position or location Rain is in, he has something to back him up.

Stance	Combo
Zi Ran Men	(A1, A1, A3), (F + A2), (A1, A1, A3)
Storm Sword	(B + A2), (A4, A4, A4)

Reptile

Reptile doesn't do a lot of damage, nor do his normal moves have much range. This doesn't make him a bad character, just more suitable for patient players who are willing to nick away at life bars as opposed to jumping into the fray and taking out as much life as possible. When using pao chui stance attacks, try not to commit yourself into combos or drawn-out moves like Sneaky Lizard unless you're sure they'll all connect.

Cloaking special move, like Reptile's Chameleon, are always fun to use. Your opponent will either start attacking wildly or stand still and wait for you to make the first move. With the latter, use Acid Spit and attack from afar, and with the former, block and then counter attack with Sneaky Lizard or some simple jabs and then retreat.

Stance	Combo
Pao Chui	(A1, A1, B + A2), (A1, A1, B + A2)
Kirehashi	(B + A4), (A2, A2, A3

Scorpion

Scorpion's most famous for his Bloody Spear special move, where he'll pull the opponent in with a barbed rope, and it's as useful as ever in Armageddon. Use Bloody Spear as often as you can (without becoming predictable); it does 4% damage and preps the opponent for a combo. If an opponent jumps towards and away from you, use this move; it'll connect as the opponent lands.

Between the other special moves, like Hellfire and Hellfire Punch, and the hapkido stance, Scorpion pretty much has everything covered. The mugai ryu stance has its fair share of good close range moves (like Zero Gravity and Guiding Light), the hapkido stance has moves of simpler button commands (like Hell's Warrior) that does as much damage.

Stance	Combo
Hapkido	(B, F + A1), (A2, A3, U + A4), (1, A1, A4), (3, A3, A4)
Mugai Ryu	(B, F + A1), (F + A1), (ST), (A2, A3)

Sub-Zero

Sub-Zero's a decent character, though there's not much that makes him truly stand out, except for maybe his cool outfit. Naturally, pay extra attention to his special moves, an arsenal of ice and freeze moves. Use Icy Pillar and Cold Shoulder to set up combos or if your opponent is putting on pressure and you need to momentarily retreat.

Sub-Zero's Kori Blades and Shotokan attacks are easy to execute, but don't do a lot of damage. Use this to your advantage: have simple moves like Mountain Punch set up air combos and follow it up with Deep Chop or Spiked Blade.

Stance	Combo
Shotokan	(A1, A2, B + A2), (A1, A1, A3, ST)
Kori Blade	(B + A2), (ST), (A1, A1, A3, ST)

Chameleon

Chameleon, like Shujinko, has a special moves list that borrows heavily from other ninjas. However, unlike Shujinko, his normal stance moves leave something to be desired. His Crane stance attacks are ambitious (Hunting Prey, his best move, requires eight button inputs!), while his Ninja Sword stance moves are easy to execute, but neither lead into major damage-inflicting combos. Play conservatively, pecking away at your opponent's life bar when they make a mistake. And since there's so much variety in his special moves roster, mix it up and keep your opponent guessing.

Stance	Combo
Shorin Ryu	(A2, A1, A1, A4), (A2, A1, A1, A3, A3)
Nunchaku	(B, F + A1), (B + A2), (ST), (A2, A1, A2, U + A4)

Ermac

Ermac has some moves that add an interesting quirk into the gameplay. His Mystic Float special move lifts him up into the air where he'll stay suspended for about five seconds. If you have a health advantage and you're not fighting against any projectile/ranged characters or characters with anti-air moves, you can do this a few times to run down the lock. While in the air with Mystic Float, you can do a Dive Kick, where he'll slice diagonally down towards the opponent, or Mystic Bomb, in which he'll drop back to the ground and deal 10% damage to the opponent no matter his location.

His Axe has the stopping power of a hammer, but the versatility of other weapons; long hammer moves usually involve Ermac hitting once with the hammer and then following it up with jabs. This leads to a big variety of combos, though they do slightly less than other power characters.

Stance	Combo
Choy Lay Fut	(A1, A1, B + A2), (A1, A1, A2, ST)
Axe	(U + A2), (U + A2), (ST), (A1, A1, A2, ST)

Noob Saibot

Who would've thought what started as a bad in-joke at Midway would become one of the better characters in this installment of Mortal Kombat? Noob doesn't have a huge selection of moves, but virtually all of them will prove themselves useful at one point or another. Outworld Guard and Krazy Apes are easy to execute moves that will initiate juggles, while Prowler will is a move that will cause Noob to attack twice with his fists and then one more time with his Troll Hammer.

The Troll Hammer is a unique weapon in that each of its moves uses a maximum of one attack button and one press on the directional pad. This means that while it's difficult to ease the Troll Hammer into a prolonged combo, its one-off hits is a good way to pound the point home at the end of a combo.

Stance	Combo
Monkey	(A1, A1, B+ A2), (A1, A1, ST)
Troll Hammer	(B + A2), (ST), (A1, A1, ST)

Smoke

Both of Smoke's fighting stances are unarmed and he has an array of odd special moves, so you need to combine all three together efficiently in order to win. Stinky Cloud puts a black pall of smoke either on top or in front of your opponent, trapping him on the side of the screen or forcing him to sidestep. With his mobility limited for a few seconds, use Play Dead to warp to the other side of your opponent and punch him into the cloud.

Being Judo, some of the moves in that stance will end in a throw, so save them for the end of a combo. Metral Fury is the best Judo attack, since it launches the opponent into the air while giving you enough time to either change into the more combo-friendly mit zu stance or finish the move with another Judo attack.

Stance	Combo
Mit Zu	(U + A4), (A1, A2, A4, ST)
Judo	(A4, A4, B + A2), (ST), (A1, A2, A4, ST)

Cyrax

Cyrax is a bit on the weak side, but he has two special moves that make using him interesting: Detonator Far and Detonator Close. With the Detonators, Cyrax opens his chest and shoots out a bomb that lies on the ground for a few seconds before exploding. If your opponent is caught in it, she'll lose 12% of her health. If your opponent doesn't have a teleport move, she'll have to block at which point you can go in for a throw. Cyrax's throw is stronger than most character's, doing about 16% (5 for the grab, and 11 for the toss). What's interesting is that if your timing's good, the bomb will explode between the grab and the toss and your opponent will take the Detonator damage, dealing 29% damage.

Stance	Combo
Ninjitsu	(F, B + A1), (A1, A1, U + A2)
Pulse Blade	(F, B + A1), (A1, A1, A3, A4)

Kabal

With Kabal, you'll want to stay in his hookswords stance most of the time. The best combos come from the hookswords, such as combining Blazing Fury with Unholy Strength (A34%), or Blazing Fury and Shady Blows (A36%). In fact, just about anything starting with Blazing Fury, a simple three-button move, is handy. If you are in his other stance, sun bin stance, stick with the upper tier moves like Stone Death, which will switch you to hookswords stance while setting you up for an air combo.

Stance	Combo
Sun Bin	(A1, A4), (ST), (A1, A1, B + A1)
Hookwords	(A2, A1, A4), (A1, A1, B + A1)

Sektor

Though Sektor is more than capable of handling himself in close combat, he performs even better at long distances. Attack from midrange with Flame On or various pokes with his pulseblades, mixing your attacks with jumps backwards. When your opponent gets fed up with your jumping and starts to aggressively pursue, use Rocket Punch in midair. Sektor will plunge into a warp in the ground and appear on the other side of your opponent with an uppercut. One of the sneakier moves in the game.

If your opponent becomes paranoid of ambush Rocket Punches and stays away, use Chest Missile and Upward Missiles to coax him out of blocking and force him back into offensive.

Stance	Combo
Kenpo	(F + A1), (A1, A1, ST)
Pulseblades	(F, F + A4), (A1, A1, A4)[ENDROW]

Stryker

Mortal Kombat has always been a combo-centric series, relying more on relentless beatdowns than projectiles. This became almost truer as the series went 3D and sidestepping and tech rolls became a major factor. Stryker is a projectile character, but he's the best one in the game. Each of his special moves are meant to be used at a distance. Use Ground Gun Blast, Stun Gun, or Low Grenade to pick away at your opponent's life bar, and use High Grenade or Upward Gun Blast if they start getting bouncy in their approach towards you. If your opponent starts sidestepping in for the kill, Stryker's speed is a good advantage to use. His Dirty Fists is a quick three-hit move that will launch the opposition into the air. Follow it up with a Krazy Kop or Dual Tonfa Snuff, and then back away to start the grenade lobbing again.

While it's tempting to unleash a barrage of bullets with the Gun Blasts, the animations are very long and a skilled opponent can easily sidestep and clear the distance to you if you rely too heavily on shooting.

Stance	Combo
Hua Chan	(Y, B + A1), (ST), (B + A2, A1, A1, U + A1)
Night Sticks	(B + A1), (B + A2, A1, A1, U + A1)

Dairou

Though Dairou is decent up close, his real strengths come from his ranged special attacks. Tombstone Drop launches your opponent towards you and is unblockable and cannot be sidestepped. Though your opponent can jump to avoid it, get the timing down right and use Iron Leg to shoot a projectile and hit your opponent as she touches upon ground again.

Like many other characters in the game, Dairou has a teleport move: Stealthy Shadows. However, it does no damage on its own. Instead, you and your opponent instantly switch places, leaving your opponent momentarily stunned and open for a possible combo. On stages with death traps, edge as close as you can to the death trap, and then use Stealthy Shadows to switch places. Try to knock your stunned foe to win the round without breaking a sweat.

Stance	Combo
Mi Zong	(A2, A2, U + A4), (A1, A2, A2, ST)
Autumn Zao	(F, B, D + A1), (A1, A1, F + A3)

Darrius

With all of Darrius's special moves, he hones in on your opponent from midrange. Chest Cruncher and Target Practice are both the same special moves, only one aims high and the other aims low. Stay at midrange with Darrius and wait for you opponent to think she has an opening, and then counterattack with a special move or a combo.

With Darrius's goju ryu, don't bother with the moves like Monster Kombo or Time Stopper. They don't do enough damage for the number of button inputs they require. Instead, stick with low attacks like Scratching Heels, and using No Escape to start juggles.

Stance	Combo
Goju Ryu	(A1, A2), (A2), (A1, A4)
Gauntlets	(A3), (A1, A2, A4, A4, A4)

Jarek	
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Jarek is more of a ranged character if only because his individual attacks and combo are so weak. Fortunately, he has some special moves that'll fit this strategy. Rhino Stomp is an unblockable move that deals 8% damage no matter where the opponent is. Both his Tricky Switch and Lasso Snatch are used to ambush and charge the opponent trying to close the distance; the latter pulls the opponent in with a whip and can start an air combo. Use either Switching Axe or Twisting Dragon.

Stance	Combo
Dragon	(D, B + A1), (A1, A1, ST)
Kick Axe	(U + A2), (A1, A2, A3, A3, A3)

Reiko	
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Reiko is another of the few characters that has a hammer, so his second stance, and what can be done with it, is limited. Part of the success with Reiko lies in his Devastating Flip Kick special move. Not only does it roll Reiko forward and kick the opponent into the air, it can be done twice in succession. After the opponent starts falling from the second Devastating Kick, your options are wide open. If you're in ying yeung stance, you can do either Finger to the Eyes, Serpent Takes Prey, Heaven and Hell, Good and Evil, or False Emperor. The first three moves will deal about 27% damage, while False Emperor, which is also more difficult to pull off, will deal about 31%. If you have the Crude Hammer equipped, virtually any attack will add another 7% to the damage count and then stop the combo.

Reiko also has two more notable special moves besides Devastating Flip Kick: Assassin Throwing Stars and Shadow Grab. Assassin Throwing Stars has Reiko throwing nine stars at the opponent, beating out Stryker and his Gun Blasts for most annoying projectiles. Shadow Grab is an anti-projectile move, where Reiko disappears from the screen and then reappears behind the opponent for a body slam.

Stance	Combo
Ying Yueng	(D, F + A4), (D, F + A4), (A1, A1, A3)
Crude Hammer	(A3), (A3), (B + A4)

Bo Rai Cho	
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The extra range given with a weapon stance is especially helpful with someone like Bo Rai Cho, who is slow and vulnerable in his normal stance, drunken fist. Keep people at bay with his Jojutsu stick and moves like Rolling Wind. When your opponent gets too close, Puke Puddle is both humiliating and helpful: it stops your opponent and sets her up for a combo.

Stance	Combo
Drunken Fist	(A3, A3, ST), (A2, A4, A4, U + A3)
Jojutsu	(A2, A4, B + A1), (A2, A4, A4, U + A3)

Fujin	
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While Fujin has the standard knock-people-up-into-the-air combos, two of his special moves also contribute to this. Tornado Wind shoots a tornado across the screen that lifts the opponent into the air, while Air Funnel is a midrange attack that does the same thing. Both Tornado Wind and Air Funnel have lengthy animations and will leave you vulnerable if they don't connect, so play conservative with Fujin. However, you can use Air Funnel from across the screen and if it connects, you'll have just enough time to run up to your opponent with his sword and start an air combo.

Stance	Combo
Lui He	(D, F + A1), (A1, A1, A3, ST)
Devastator	(D, F + A1), (U + A2), (A2, A2, A3, A3)

Hotaru

At midrange, use Hotaru's Grass Hopper, Fury Punch and Escape, and Lava Burst, though that last one is tricky is slow (the reward, however, is a juggle opportunity). Or instead of the special moves, stay in his naginata stance, a powerful spear with incredible range.

Overall, the best opportunities for victory will arise in his pi gua stance. Rushing Ridge Hand and Rain From Above are fantastic just inside of midrange, while Rolling Heels is a strong attack that will switch you to the naginata, where you can follow up with his strong Demonic Warrior.

Stance	Combo
Pi Gua	(A2, B + A1), (A2, A2, U + A1)
Naginata	(A1, B + A1), (A1, A1, U + A2)

Mavado

Mavado has some interesting special moves that make him most efficient from midrange to long range. All of his special moves are either meant to escape yourself from a tight spot, or attacking without committing yourself into a vulnerable spot. While Mavado will jump back with Escape Grapple, Low Grapple Slide is almost always better. Rather than retreating, Mavado will step to the side and uppercut the opponent into the air.

Grapple Hook Strike can strike from almost any distance. Mavado will attach the grapple to the ground, run in for a kick, and then snap back. Even if your opponent blocks or sidesteps, she won't have enough time to strike back as you would've snapped back by that time.

Try to always have the strength-increasing Anger Management activated when you're fighting hand-to-hand, using Long Tiger Claws or Shady Blows for the best result.

Stance	Combo
Long Fist	(A1, A1, B + A2), (A1, A1, ST)
Hookwords	(A2, A1, A4), (A4), (A1, A1, A4)

Cage

When not using his fists to make his point clear, Cage's other fighting style is with nunchaku. Obviously, range is not Cage's strong suit. When the match starts, get close as quick as possible and don't let up. While Cage is a strong character, being this close constantly will require you to anticipate counterattacks and to effectively switch your attacks between highs and lows.

If your opponent is making it hard to bridge the distance between by using projectiles, use Sliding Uppercut. If things go right, you'll slide under the projectiles and launch your opponent into the air and in prime position for a combo with Somersault Kicks, which can be used twice: once from the ground and then once more in the air. However, if the Sliding Uppercut fails to make contact, Cage will be vulnerable to a combo. The key is to establish how far the Sliding Uppercut slides forward.

Stance	Combo
Shorin Ryu	(A2, A1, A1, A4), (A2, A1, A1, A3, A3)
Nunchaku	(B, F + A1), (L + A2), (ST), (A2, A1, A2, U + A4)

Kano

Kano is one of the few characters with a move that either powers the character up or replenishes some of the life bar. In this case, Kano's Inner Rage increases Kano strength. Use it whenever your opponent is thinking about backing away,

and then bombard them with projectiles like Eye Laser and Cannon Ball.

Beyond that, both of Kano's stances are like your average character's. They're both well-balanced, and for a quickie 29% damage combo, use two Full Motions in a row with Kano's knife.

Stance	Combo
Xing Yi	(A2, B + A1), (A3, A4)
Butterfly Knives	(B + A1, F + A2), (B + A1, F + A2)

moka	
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And here we have MoKap, perhaps the jokiest character in fighting game history. He's fairly difficult to use in that both his stances are unarmed and thus has little range. MoKap is somewhat speedy but a majority of his attacks do little damage.

His special move, Power Hands, is one of fastest projectiles in the game and excellent to use to surprise the opponent at a distance. Berserker Rage is another weak move, but can be used as segue into big combos. Follow it up with JKD Special.

Because MoKap's wing chun stance has the better moves, and it's annoying to switch stances during combos, use the special move Magic Lift to start a combo with Wing Chun stance. Magic Lift has very little range, but even someone trying to sidestep MoKap cannot avoid being lifted up off the ground. As the opponent bounces off the ground after Magic Lift, do Whispering Tail for a combo that rack up damage in the low 30s.

Stance	Combo
Jeet Kune Do	(A1, A1, F + A2), (A1, A1), (A2, A4, ST)
Wing Chun	(D, B + A2), (A1, A2, A4, A4, A3)

Nightwolf	
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Though Nightwolf is ostensibly built and modeled like a power character, in reality his combos do little damage compared to other true power characters. Nightwolf's closer to a long range character. He has an excellent projectile special move in Spirit Arrow, while his Reflector, a special move that reflects projectiles, is priceless in a projectile war.

While his tomahawks stance is more varied and effective than his basic val tudo stance, the Val Tudo's Soaring High is a four-hit move which, at the end, will automatically switch you to tomahawks stance. Try using that as often as possible, and then once switched over to Tomahawks, use Drifting Stones or Kracked Axe.

Stance	Combo
Val Tudo	(A1, A1, A1, ST), (ST), (A1, A1, A1, ST)
Tomahawks	(A1, A2, F + A2), (A1, A2, A3, A4)

Jax	
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Despite his obvious appearance as a powerhouse character, Jax is one of the more versatile fighters in the game. He has a gun projectile attack exactly like Stryker's, and he has one of those ground pounding moves (literally called Ground Pound here) that cannot be sidestepped or blocked and hits the opponent from any location. These are comparatively weaker than his regular attacks, but it's something to keep in mind if your opponent insists in keeping wide open spaces between the two of you.

Though Jax's tonfa stance has no range, they're quick and easily enter into combos. His Watching You is very easy to execute and starts an air combo, which you can follow up with any other upper tier attack in Jax's moves list. For simplicity's sake, another Watching You is suitable and does a total of 36% damage. So with Jax, his weakness is midrange; use his special moves if you're far from your opponent, and relentlessly assault with the tonfas when you're engaged in close combat.

Stance	Combo
Muay Thai	(A1, A1, ST), (B + A2, A1, A1, U + A1)
Tonfa	(B + A2, B + A1), (B + A2, A1, A1, U + A1)

Kai

Kai is best used at a distance, somewhere between midrange and the maximum distance away from the opponent. His Spiked Club stance lacks the pizzazz of hammers, but it's just as limited in regards to the number of moves you can do with it. At beyond midrange distance, his Downward Fire Blast and Fire From Above can both be used to create a wall to preventing your opponent from getting too close without concerted effort. As the saying goes, a good defense is a good offense and these two moves are both offensive and defensive: they'll damage your opponent while keeping them away.

Stance	Combo
Moi Fah	(D, F + A1), (A2, A2, ST)
Spiked Club	(D, F + A1), (A1, A1, A4)

Kenshi

Kenshi is a midrange attacker. At far distances, he's prey to projectiles, with nothing to directly counteract with. However, he does have Mind Warp, which instantly whisks him off the screen and to reappear in front of his opponent. If you time it so that you use Mind Warp right at the end of the opponent's attack animation, you can counterattack with a combo.

Ideally, you'll always have Kenshi at midrange. His katana stance is best suited at this distance and his special moves, all of them revolving around telekinetic attacks are useless further out, and if used closer than midrange makes him vulnerable to counterattacks.

Stance	Combo
Tai Chi	(B + A1), (B + A1), (A4, A4, B + A2)
Katana	(U + A2), (A2, A2, A4)

Shujinko

Shujinko is the oldest human combatant in the tournament and his experience shows through his extensive moves list. His special moves are a smorgasbord of moves from other similar humans: he has Scorpion's spear (Throw Spear), Sub-Zero's ice attack (Icy Breeze), Ermac's telekinetic lift (Opponent Slam), and Liu Kang's silly bicycle kick attack (Bike Kicks). Opponent Slam is best used when you have the sword equipped: after Shujinko lifts the opponent, she'll fall towards the ground very quickly and it's going to take a wide high attack to catch him (use Upward Moon Slice).

Shujinko has a huge amount of moves in his mantis stance that take at least four button presses. Take the time to memorize these so you can recall them easily in the heat of battle.

Stance	Combo
Mantis	(B, F + A1), (A1, A1, A2, B + A2), (A1, A1, A2, A4)
Dan Tien Dao	(B, F + A1), (U + A2), (ST), (A1, A1, A2, A4)

Hsu Hao

Hsu Hao is an excellent upper-tier character, combining both strength and speed. His Champion Blades move is key to his major damage combos; it takes only three button commands and leaves the opponent in the air for a juggle. Though the timing is tricky, after doing Champion Blades, switch back to his sumo stance and do another Champion Blades before your opponent hits the ground.

Easier to pull off is Champion Blades in sumo style and following it with air attacks. After finishing Champion Blades, press U + A2 three times to get Hsu Hao to do three air kicks in rapid succession, dealing about 40% damage.

Hsu Hao also has a decent selection of special moves. His Thunder Klap shoots out a vacuum of material out of his hands and then dissipates, good for mid-range situations. His Bouncing Death and Krystal Lazer are the slowest projectiles in the game, which can be worked to your advantage. If your opponent is start to get up from the ground and there's a lot of distance between you and your opponent, use Bouncing Death or Krystal Lazer. Bouncing Death bounces slowly across the screen, while Krystal Lazer shoots out a solid energy beam that stays on-screen for several seconds; as your opponent gets up, she'll have to either block instantly or take damage from these projectiles.

Stance	Combo
Sumo	(A1, A2, ST), (U + A2), (U + A2), (U + A2)
Sunmoon Blades	(B + A1, F + A2), (ST), (B + A4, A2, A2)

Kobra

Despite the martial arts outfit, you'll want to stay in Kobra's machete stance. It's not super excellent, but will get the job done. With the machete, do the standard air combo of using a simple move to launch the opponent into the air (Assault) and then using the stance's best move to mop up (King Thunder).

With the machete, you'll be covered at midrange. And at long distances, do like Liu Kang and alternate high and low projectiles (Chi-Blast and Crouching Chi-Blast) to keep your opponent dancing.

Stance	Combo
Kickboxing	(D, B + A4), (A1, A4, ST)
Machete	(D, B + A4), (A3, A4, A2)

Taven

There's a reason Taven's the guy you play as during Konquest mode: he's one of the most rounded characters in the game, making him a perfect stepping stone into this huge, sprawling game.

Taven in drakesword stance is similar to Mitsurugi in the Soul Caliburs: a bit unwieldy, but has a wide range and can inflict major damage with just a few slices. Taven also has a projectile special move, which may have been more useful if not for his Ring of Hatred. Though Ring of Hatred will leave you vulnerable both before and after (Taven jumps high into the air and slowly gets up after landing), Ring of Hatred is unblockable and will hit from virtually any location.

For a power combo, combine Dragonkin, Swing Blast, and Speed of Light. After the Dragonkin, you'll be automatically switched to Drakeword style and your opponent will be in the air. With the Swing Blast, you'll knock him even further up, which will give you time to execute Speed of Light. Taven will rush forward and pound your opponent three more times before she hits the ground, dealing 34% damage.

Stance	Combo
Gold Dragon	(A1, A1, A2, ST), (B + A3), (D, B + A1)
Drakesword	(B + A3), (ST), (A1, A1, A2, ST)

Kung Lao

Up close, use Kung Lao sholin fist stance to punish opponents with moves like Gifted Warrior or Golden Power. At midrange, switch to broadsword stance. There aren't any devastating moves you can do with the broad sword, but it has reach and gives you time to figure out whether you want to move back in and switch stance or move back and play defensively with his special moves.

Kung Lao has more teleport moves than any other fighter in the game, though the hand-based Wind Teleport Hand Bash and Wind Teleport Fist Smash are the useful ones since they knock your opponent into the air. Air Dive Kick is another handy move which you can use to fake out your opponent. Act as though you're jumping back to retreat and then use Air Dive Kick to go back in for the kill in midair.

Stance	Combo
Shaolin Fist	(A1, A1, A3, ST), (A1, A1, F + A3)
Broadsword	(B + A2), (B + A2), (A1, A1, F + 3)

Liu Kang

At a distance, put the pressure on by alternating between High Dragon Fire and Low Dragon Fire. Continue mixing it up when you're up in your opponent's face, alternating between Shin Blaster and Gun Punches. Midrange is the worst position for Liu Kang. His nunchaku attacks don't have the versatility of Cage's similar stance, and don't have the range of a more substantial weapon. Stay close and use high and low attacks (like the aforementioned Shin Blaster and Gun Punches) to keep your opponent on guard.

Stance	Combo
Jun Fan	(F + A2), (A1, A1), (D, F + A4)
Nunchaku	(B + A2), (A1, A1, A3, A4)

Quan Chi

Quan Chi is one of those tough characters you're careful around when you face them in the arena. Look at his moves list and the last few listed under his escrima stance (Souterhn Beat, Fierce Snake, Death Bed) are lengthy attacks which, if they fully connect, can take out more than 20% of a life bar. Furious Blade Kombo is a force to reckon with; prefix it with something like Southern Beat or Heel Slide (both of which knock the opponent into the air) and that's already enough to knock away 40%.

His Broadwords doesn't have a lot of variety, so you'll mainly want to use them in-between Escrima assaults, just to keep the action varied. Quan Chi has some decent special moves, like the aforementioned Heel Slide, which slides underneath projectiles and knocks the opponent into the air. Quan Chi will jump into the air with the Body Stomp and do nasty dance on the foe, another good way to avoid projectiles. Body Stomp won't work on opponents that are on the ground, though.

Stance	Combo
Escrima	(A2, A3, A1 B + A2), (A2, A3, A4, A4, ST)
Broadwords	(B + A2), (ST), (A2, A3, A4, A4, ST)

Shang Tsung

Shang Tsung's best attack is Outer Fire Ring, a projectile that guides two fireballs along the outer edge of the arena. It's the only projectile in the game that can't be sidestepped, and used in conjunction with the Forward Fireball, you can trap your opponent on the far edge of the screen. Close Fire Ring, a shorter version of Outer Fire Ring, and Mysterious Magic, where Shang Tsung will charge and then appear on the other side of the opponent, is handy when your opponent starts closing in.

Shang Tsung's Straight Sword is surprisingly user-unfriendly, not very fast or capable of starting combos. Stick to his snake stance, which sounds exactly as advertised: moves full of quick jabs and long combos.

Stance	Combo
Snake	(B + A3), (A1, A1, A3, ST)
Straight Sword	(A1, A1, A3)

Daegon

Cloak of Avoidance and Rolling Hatred are the two key special moves of Daegon. Being a character that works well when face-to-face with opponents, anything outside of midrange is ineffective for Daegon. Rolling Hatred can roll underneath projectiles, bring him closer to the opponent. Cloak of Avoidance has Daegon jumping back and then forward again for a strike. This is useful if you're up against poking characters.

Daegon's best combo comes from using Rolling Hatred and Fork It Over in drakeswords stance. After rolling forward and striking with Rolling Hatred, the opponent will be launched into the air. From there, the drakeswords strong moves, Fork It Over, will finish the job, ringing up 38% damage.

Stance	Combo
Fu Jow Pai	(F, D + A2), (A1, A1, A2, ST)
Drakeswords	(F, D + A2), (ST), (A1, A1, A2, A4)

Raiden	
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When using Raiden, you'll want to stick with his nan chuan stance. There's no shortage of moves that'll result in 20%-25% opponent damage. His Staff has an incredible reach, and can poke and strike the other combatant from a half-screen away. However, it is unwieldy, and the best moves with the Staff don't compare with the best moves of Nan Chuan.

Raiden's best combo combines Tricky Stick and Whirlwind Air Flow. Do Tricky Stick and at the end of the move Raiden will switch to the Staff. From there, quickly do the Whirlwind Air Flow. It'll knock your opponent away, but after taking away 31% of her life.

Stance	Combo
Nan Chuan	(B + A2), (F + A1)
Staff	(A4, A4, A3), (A4, A4, B + A2)

Shinnok	
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Shinnok's one of those characters that just fun to use. While his Judgment Fist, which shoots an enlarged fist from his hands (similar to Quan Chi's Skull Toss) is cheesy and not very effective, his Summoned Fiend and Tricky Portal are interesting. With Summoned Fiend, a giant skeletal hand pops out of the ground to grab and shake the opponent, while Tricky Portal warps Shinnok to the other side of the level where he body checks the opponent. While they're not very strong, you can use Summoned Fiend to grab a person as they're falling from an air combo, and then Tricky Portal as they're getting up.

Attacks with Shinnok's Amulet Staff are individually strong, but hard to but together into a combo. Turning Glowing Staff is the main move to use if you want to launch the opponent, and Shinnok knocks them high enough so that you have enough time to change stances and do either Red Crown or Shin Lord in his kuo shou stance for about 30% damage.

Stance	Combo
Kuo Shou	(B + A1), (A4, A4, ST)
Amulet Staff	(U + A1), (A4, A4, A3)

Jade	
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Though Jade has some decent moves in her fan zi stance (Fan Zi Switch, for example), there's little reason to use them when she has an alternate stance as good as her Bojutsu. This stance gives her a staff with midrange reach and the excellent Green Warrior move. In just 3 hits, it does 34% damage, as much as other characters' best combos. Best of all, your opponent is left in the air after Green Warrior. Because you'll be next to your opponent after Green Warrior, and the staff isn't great in close quarters, it is difficult to really milk a juggle out of it. Use two jabs (Head Knocker) after Green Warrior and you'll take out 43% of your opponent's life.

With her bojitsu stance, stay at midrange and keep your opponent at bay, initiating the Green Warrior combo as frequently as the battle safely permits.

Stance	Combo
Fan Zi	(A3), (ST), (A2, A1, U + A3)
Bojutsu	(A2, A1, U + A3), (A1), (A1)

Kitana	
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With Kitana, Horse Kick and Sky Fan Left will be your centerpieces to both a good offense and defense. Both are the major attacks that can start a juggle, while a successful parry or block of a major assault can use these two moves to reinitiate your offense. When in ba gua stance, use Busted Nails or Dark Vengeance to keep the juggles going. With the

steel fan, you have more options (Psycho Fans, Low Poke, Stabby Fans) though they'll all do about the same damage in the end.

Stance	Combo
Ba Gua	(U + A4), (A1, A2, A2, A4)
Steel Fan	(A1, A1, B + A2), (A2, A2, A2, F + A2)

Mileena

Typically, you want to find a simple move that launches an opponent into the air and then following it with the best, most complicated move of that stance in order to inflict the most damage. In Mileena's case, the strongest move in her sai stance an air launcher. The problem is that this move is weak compared to other characters, and the other moves in her sai roster don't fare better. If you're in sai stance, use Raising Dragon (said strongest move) and then quickly switch stances to finish the combo with either Outworld Wonder or Black Flight.

If you're fighting defensively, Rolling Thunder and Kick from Above are your best bets. Kick from Above can attack from any location and Rolling Thunder will roll underneath projectiles. Neither are very strong, but good in a pinch.

Stance	Combo
Mian Chuan	(A4, A1), (A4, A3, ST)
Sai	(A1, A1, U + A2), (ST), (A4, A3, ST)

Sonya

Most of Sonya's special moves aren't that good, though Flying Boots is a very fast anti-air move, handy against opponents who are too jump-happy. While Sonya is capable of some easy-to-execute, damaging combos (try two Over Head Bashes, and then followed with Windy Pain for a 34% combo), her strength lies in quick attacks and counterattacks. Her Kali Sticks are quick, but she also has a variety of low and high attacks in her tae kown do stance to keep the opponent guessing. Nitro Kicks that causes Sonya to attack with three rapid kicks, starting with a low and then working her way up, while Wild Things does the opposite with a high kick assault that then goes for the body and shins.

Stance	Combo
Tae Kwon Do	(A3), (ST), (A1, A1, A2, A4, B + A3)
Kali Sticks	(F + A1), (A1, A1, A2, A4, B + A3))

Ashrah

Ashrah is a difficult character to use in that very few of her moves deal much damage individually, some of her combos can be devastating. This means that you have to wait for your opponent to make mistakes or provoke them into attacking if they're being timid in order to guarantee your combos can be initiated and completed.

Play like you're a poking character initially, doing jabs or tripping your opponent with sweeping kicks to provoke them into attacking. Priest of Light, your typical four-button combo that launches your opponent into the air, is a good starting point for a major combo. Light Cleansing Bride, while seemingly just a series of punches and kicks, does more damage than it might appear. Priest of Light combined with Light Cleansing Bride can be enough to turn the battle's tide.

Stance	Combo
Chou Jaio	(A2, A2, A1, ST), (A3, A3, A2, A2)
Kriss	(D, U, A3), (A3, A3, A2, A2)

Frost

Though Frost is lacking in the combos department, she more than makes up for it with excellent special moves and well-balanced fighting stances, making her one of the most versatile characters in the game.

Frost's tong bei runs the usual gamut of moves seen with most of the other characters in the game, including Stopped Cold, the handy four-hit combo that switches Frost to her other stance. In her Daggers style, Up and Down, Spinning

Hilt, and Frozen Tips are her most effective attacks. They only take two button presses to activate, resulting in two-hit jabs that dish out nearly 25% damage. These moves are hard to implement into a prolonged combo, so a hit-and-run strategy is good. Fortunately, Frost's special moves specialize in these. Ground Freeze and Ice Puddle stop Frost's opponent in her place and vulnerable for attacks. Frosty Slide is similar to Cage's Sliding Uppercut: it zips forward, sliding under projectiles, and pounds the opponent.

Stance	Combo
Tong Bei	(U + A1), (A1, A1, A2, ST)
Daggers	(D, B + A2), (D, B + A2), (A2, B + A2

Li Mei	
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As far as Li Mei's special moves go, all of them are useless except for Carnival Spin. And since Carnival Spin is an excellent close attack, you'll likewise want to keep Li Mei at midrange or closer to your opponent. Carnival Spin is a very fast move that will kick the opponent into the air while doing 11% damage.

You'll want to stay in kunlun dao stance most of the time, as it gives Li Mei a fast, versatile sword that also has a good reach. Her kunlun dao moves are easy to execute (get acquainted with Blood Thirsty) though none of them can start a juggle. Leave that up to the aforementioned Carnival Spin. Use two in a row and then complete the juggle with Blood Thirsty, Unmatched, or Kunlun's Best.

Without a strong lineup of special moves, Li Mei is also lacking defensively. Though her sword is good at midrange, you can't afford to make major mistakes with Li Mei.

Stance	Combo
Lui He Ba Fa	(F, D + A3), (D, B + A4), (A2, A4, ST)
Kunlun Dao	(U + A1), (A1, A1, A4)

Tanya	
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It takes two to tango, unless we're talking about Tanya, in which case it's just better to waltz away. Tanya doesn't have much range, but several of her Kobu Jutsu can deal a stunning amount of damage.

Mad Momma is Tanya's great cheapie move that'll quickly hit four times for nearly 30% damage. Hold Back while pressing the two X buttons and she'll interrupt Mad Momma with Overhead Smashes, bouncing your opponent off the ground. From there you can initiate a juggle. Cloud Stars is a great way to finish any combo, but it's lengthy and the timing is tricky. But do the Mad Momma/Overhead Smash/Cloud Stars combo right and you'll deal nearly 40% damage.

As for special moves, keep the Human Cannon Drill in mind. It'll get you to the other side of your opponent while knocking her to the ground. Also useful against projectile characters like Stryker.

Stance	Combo
Yue Chan	(A1, A1, A2), (ST), (B + A2, A1, A1, U + A1)
Kobu Jutsu	(B + A2, B + A1, B + A1), (B + A2, A1, A1, U + A1)

Kira	
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If you're looking for a challenge, you'll find it with Kira. Both of her stances are oddly empty, and her Dragon Teeth stance, while speedy, lacks range and power. Aussie Hunter is her best attack in her Yuan Yang stance as it'll automatically switch her over to the Dragon Teeth knives, which you can then follow up with Rising Dragon Teeth and Dragon Tooth. Two out of her three special moves are lifted from Sonya's lift, and they weren't even very good with Sonya, a superior character to use. Black Dragon Ball is unique, which puts her into a Blanka-esque cannon ball. It's fast and her best bet at midrange distance.

Stance	Combo
Yuan Yang	(A1, A2 ST), (ST), (A1, A2, ST)
Dragon Teeth	(A2), (A1, A4)

Nitara

Nitara has some interesting moves, such as the Jumping Blood Spit (where she jumps in the air and spits a blood loogie diagonally forward). Blood Thirst is her throw move, whereupon she jumps onto her foe, leeching out 17% while taking 6% for herself. However, throws rarely ever connect in Mortal Kombat, so the risk is probably greater than the reward.

Nitara also has an escape maneuver called Quick Escape, where she does an enormous leap backwards and out of harm's way. Unfortunately, this also puts her opponent out of harm's way; Nitara has ineffective long range attacks. Her normal Blood Spit is weak, and while the aforementioned Jumping Blood Spit has its uses, if you miss and your opponent quickly homes in, you're vulnerable to a juggle. Though Nitara is difficult to use, she has some very strong quick attacks, such as Blood Frenzy and Scissor Death.

Stance	Combo
Leopard	(B + A1), (A1, A3, ST)
Kama	(B + A1), (ST), (A1, A3, ST)

Sareena

At first, Sareena looks like a poking character: she's quick, and her second stance doesn't add much range beyond her first stance. Even though she doesn't have any standout attacks, her combos are strong. Stand your ground and wait for your opponent to make a mistake. If you're pushed beyond midrange, her Throwing Knife is a quick solution, but no substitute for her hand-to-hand game. Because her demon fang knife doesn't have that much range, at midrange use the special moves like 5-Star Kick or Gut Buster and then work your way back in.

Stance	Combo
Ba Shan Fan	(A2, B + A1), (A2, A1, ST)
Demon Fang	(U + A1), (A1, A1, A4)

Sindel

Sindel's one of those combatants that can lay it on thick in close combat though a botched move will really open up an counterattack opportunity. However, Sindel's kwan do stance equips her with a staff that has good reach (indeed, the Kwan Do's best move is called Keeping Distance). A good strategy with Sindel relies on hitting your opponent from afar, goading them into an angry, sloppy attack from which you can counterattack. If your opponent thinks two can play at your game and starts with the projectiles, Sindel has a Sliding Foot Grab that will slide underneath those.

Sliding Foot Grab will only work from midrange, and that is Sindel's ideal position. Her Banshee Scream is also a midrange attack, and it pulls the opponent towards you. From there, you can execute a Turning Amazon, Keeping Distance combo for 31%.

Stance	Combo
Zha Chuan	(B + A1), (B + A1), (A1, A1, A2)
Kwan Do	(U + A1), (A4, A4, A3)

Baraka

Like with all characters, Baraka's is a potentially powerful character but he is better suited to beginners and people getting used to the game. Though very few of his moves pave the way to air combos, this makes his combos uncomplicated. While Speedy Elbows (in Silat stance) or Up and Beyond (in Blades stance) deal almost no damage, they can be used to launch your opponent into the air where you can then use Out of Kontral Slashes, a move that sounds exactly as advertised. Though this deals only a little over 30% damage, this is Baraka's most powerful combo and easy to execute.

Otherwise, use Baraka's long blades to keep your opponent at a distance, while slicing and pecking away at the life bar.

Stance	Combo
Silat	(A1, A1, A2), (ST), (A3, A3, A2, A1, A1)
Blades	(U + A3), (A3, A3, A2, A1, A1)

Havik

Havik's healing move, Corpse Taunt, is the best of its kind in the game. The first Corpse Taunt will replenish 15% and each subsequent use will decrease from there. If you're in a jam, back away to Corpse Taunt, using Crackling Legs Projectile to protect yourself. Crackling Legs Projectile is one of the more useful special moves since it shoots low and most opponents won't be expecting it.

Stay in tang soo do stance for most of the round as that's where most of the combos will derive from. Havik's morning star is strong in individual, one-button attacks, but that stance's strongest attacks (Basic Steps and Fast Fists) don't even involve the morning star, they're jabs with Havik's free hand.

Stance	Combo
Tang Soo Doo	(TH), (A1, A1, A2, F + A2)
Morning Star	(B + A2), (ST), (A1, A1, A2, F + A2)

Motaro

When trying to mount an offense against your opponent, keep in mind the Donkey Kick. From inside midrange, Motaro will quickly turn around and use his hind legs to kick the opponent into the air. It's strong and fast enough to use as a counterattack. Donkey Kick is also fast enough to be used as the second attack in the juggle after the first Donkey Kick.

Despite his large size, Motaro has good defense capabilities. His Mount Stance special move will put him on all fours, where pressing another attack button will launch a projectile attack. Mount Stance is good if you're far from your opponent or if she's initiating a projectile war; in Mount Stance, Motaro is low enough to avoid projectiles and press A1 will launch a counter-projectile. If you're within midrange, press either A2 or A3, which will cause Motaro to rush the opponent for a double-digit damage attack.

Stance	Combo
Basic	(D, B + A3), (D, B + A3), (A2, A2)

Sheeva

Sheeva is a borderline boss character, with her large frame and brute kicks and punches. This is offset by her shokan blades stance, which is quick way to attack, but is fairly weak and with little range. Her best combo is comes from using two Upper Slashes in her Shokan Blades stance, and as the opponent is launched into the air and falling back down, the three-hit Stomach Stab will finish the job with 36% life taken out.

Sheeva's Death From Above is her best special move. She jumps into the air and lands on the opponent no matter where he is, resulting in 20% damage. Though Death From Above can be sidestepped, the move is fast enough so that the opponent shouldn't have enough time to react, unless she's expecting it from you overusing it. Also, after being knocked down by Death From Above, an alert opponent will counterattack with a ground attacks. Ground attacks never deal a lot of damage, but nonetheless, you're still giving up life whenever you use Death From Above so only use it when you're healthy.

Stance	Combo
Kuatan	(A2, A1), (ST), (A1, A2, A4)
Shokan Blades	(B + A1), (A1, A2, A4)

Drahmin

Drahmin, though creepy looking, doesn't have much to distinguish him from the other fighters by way of moves. He can attack from any distance (Ball-O-Flies is his long distance projectile special move), though he's best at midrange, where he's safer from opponent combos. He has a special move similar to other character's special moves that cause them to jump up and down and inflict damage except that his Ground Smash launches the opponent into the air. His Propeller

Clock and throw can also be used to initiate a juggle. He also has arguably the strong A3 attack in the game: just one press does 17% damage and is capable of knocking someone into a death trap.

Stance	Combo
Hung Gar	(A1, A2, ST), (A1, A1, A2)
Iron Club	(A1, A1, B + A2), (A1, A1, A2)

Meat

Meat is one of the more powerful characters in the game. Though his special moves are mostly useless, his stances are what all stances should strive to be: strong and balanced. His Wrestling does less damage but is more combo-centric, while cleavers is slower but does more damage. Stay within midrange and closer, and take advantage of your opponent's mistakes as fast as you can with one of his combos.

Execute Rotting Flesh followed with Cleaver Tips for one of the strongest combos in the game; though it'll take practice in order to get all the hits to connect, when they do they'll have done 51% damage.

Stance	Combo
Wrestling	(A2, A2, ST), (A1, A1, U + A3)
Cleavers	(B + A3), (A1, A1, U + A3)

Moloch

Even though Moloch is the weakest of the big characters (the bosses with only one fighting stance), he's also the fastest. A lot of his single attacks deal a lot of damage, but they're resistant to stringing together into a significant combo.

Moloch has some ranged attacks, but they're generally useless; slow to start and deal little damage compared to other projectiles and his own attacks. The key then is close range attacks. Using Unstoppable Force, Moloch rushes across the screen to body check the opponent for 16% damage. Naturally, a spry opponent can easily counterattack so Unstoppable Force is better in combos. Use Suction Breath to bring you and your opponent together: the move will pull the other person to Moloch where you can do a quick attack.

Moloch's best combo starts with Head Hunter, which begins a juggle, and then follow that with Untamed Beast. Due to some odd physics of both Untamed Beast and Head Hunter, it's actually possible to continuously do Untamed Beast until you hit a wall, dealing well over 50% damage under good circumstances. Naturally, with breakers, parries, and small arenas, these circumstances rarely show up. Instead of trying to do another Head Hunter, rush the falling body Unstoppable Force, dealing 36% damage.

Stance	Combo
Basic	(A4), (A1, A1, U + A3), (F + A4)

Shao Kahn

Shao Kahn's one of those big characters that looks like he should be classified as a boss. But he does have two stances, the second being a hammer, meaning that his moves are probably the easiest ones to execute in the game. Use this to your advantage by setting up simple combos that don't have many hits to them but deal significant damage. Angry Ruler, a three-hit move that automatically switches Shao Kahn to his Wrath Hammer stance, will leave your opponent in the air and vulnerable to one or two more pounds from the hammer. Virtually any move from the hammer will net about the same damage at this point. The best combo: Angry Ruler, Screaming Hammer, Emperor's Shield. Tally: 38% damage.

Shao Kahn has a lot of special moves for someone his size, but most of them are close range and at the position you're better off just swinging with the hammer. The aforementioned Emperor's Shield does an impressive 16% damage, but it's slow and leaves you vulnerable if you miss. It's better off saved for the climax of a combo.

Stance	Combo
Tai Tzu	(B + A1, B + A1), (A1, A1, A3)
Wrath Hammer	(A3), (A3), (ST), (A1, A1, A3)

Blaze

After playing Blaze as the final boss in Armageddon, you know that one of the major factors in success in the game is waiting for your opponent to make a mistake. There isn't a lot of variety to Blaze's moves, and his combos are about on par with everybody else, surprising considering his size and role in the story of Armageddon.

Melting Death is essential to all major combos: it sets up a juggle, takes only two button presses, and alone already does about 15% damage. Follow it up with Third Scoop, Molten Death, or maybe even Steam Roller. Because, as a boss character, Blaze takes less damage, you're given more room to be cautious and wait for your opponent to make a mistake and then counterattack.

Stance	Combo
Flames	(A1, A2), (A1, A1, A4)

Goro

Play Goro almost the same way you would play as Kintaro. Because they both can take more punishment as boss characters, you'll want to wait out your opponent. A majority of Goro's attacks are one button and each enough to deal double-digit damage, so even if you're not engaging in a lot of combos, just a few well-timed punches and kicks are enough.

Goro's Tremor Pound is a special move that will send your opponent flying towards you. Use the opportunity to start a juggle.

Stance	Combo
Shokan	(A1, A2), (A1, A1, A3)
Dragon Fangs	(B + A1), (B + A1), (A4, A3)

Kintaro

Kintaro only has two special moves and they do opposite things. Breathe pulls the opponent in for an air combo, while Grab rushes Kintaro forward for a close encounter with the opponent. Grab also opens up for an air combo but the window of opportunity for one is much lower than Breathe and will require some timing and finesse to start one.

Those special moves are only useful if you're at midrange, which is not an ideal location for Kintaro. Try to stay as close as you can to the opponent with Kintaro; neither his Tiger Fist nor his Saber Teeth stances have much range. They're slow, but they do a lot of damage, so even if you start any combos, you'll be taking away more life than you might expect.

Stance	Combo
Tiger Fist	(B + A2), (ST), (A4, A2, A1)
Saber Teeth	(A3), (A4, A2, A1)

Onaga

While the boss characters are disadvantaged by having only one fighting stance, they have powerful punches and kicks to compensate. While Onaga does can pack in some heavy hits, he only has one weak combo (Collar Bone Buster, Collar Bone Buster) that'll launch the opponent straight into the air, leading to a possible juggle. All of his other moves that cause the opponent to go airborne cause the opponent to fly back rather than straight up. So with Onaga, it's better to be attacking from the offset of the battle, using moves like Deceptive Fury or Horror Swipe (which will take out about 25%) rather than trying to string together a big combo.

Stance	Combo
Basic	(A4, B + A1), (A1, A1, B + A2)

Konquest

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In Konquest Mode, you control Taven, a resurrected (in a way) warrior who must discover his purpose within the realms of Mortal Kombat. His quest is split up in 14 stages, each filled with bad dudes to take down, warriors to fight in Mortal Kombat, and a supply of items to collect spreading beyond this realm and the next. Most of the items are Krypt-centric, such as soundtracks and alternate costumes. You can collect them here in Konquest Mode as opposed to saving up and purchasing them separately in the Krypt with your coins. However, those coins are better spent on creating a kick ass fighter in Kreate-a-Fighter. So focus on collecting all 60 relics instead, little mementos of Mortal Kombat's history spread throughout Konquest mode, which will unlock everything in the Krypt.

For each map, the green dot denotes the level's starting area and the red dots are the relics.

1. Botan Jungle



1. **Kobra's Glove.** Break the first log in your path and you'll find this glove in the middle of the path.



2. **Kira's Knife.** Before the fight with Kobra, there is a stump to your left. Break it to find the knife.

3. **Kai's Wristbands.** Once you enter the cave, walk up the path a bit and look to the right.



4. **Cage's Picture.** Right before the section of spitting star statues is a magnifying glass. Pick it up and Cage's Picture will appear.

5. **Jarek's Vest.** After you get ambushed by the Black Dragons and dispose of them, check one of the doors they spawned from to find the vest.



6. **Kabal's Mask.** In the second area with the Black Dragons, the mask will be in the left side of the fighting area. Pick it up before you finish the fight.

2. Temple of Argus



7. **Dairou's Keys.** In the first room, stick to the left wall and you'll find the keys.



8. **Hotaru's Flag.** From the keys, go to the opposite side and uncover this well-hidden flag.

9. **Stryker's Radio.** In the balcony room where you're ambushed by the red bad guys, you'll find the radio next to a treasure chest.



10. **Moloch's Ball.** Turn around from where the Radio lies and go the opposite wall, where a treasure chest and this ball awaits.

11. **Hsu Hao's Watch.** After the obnoxious crushing spikes, walk straight and pick up the watch. Can't miss it.

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3. Tekunin Warship



12. **Cyrax's Bomb.** Once the level starts, take the left path and you'll find the Bomb in the plain view.



13. **Kung Lao's Hat.** In the room where you need to find a keycard, inspect the first corpse you see to get this stylish hat.

14. **Nightwolf's Axe.** Don't miss the axe in the room where you uppercut bad guys into the fan. It's on the opposite side of the exit door.



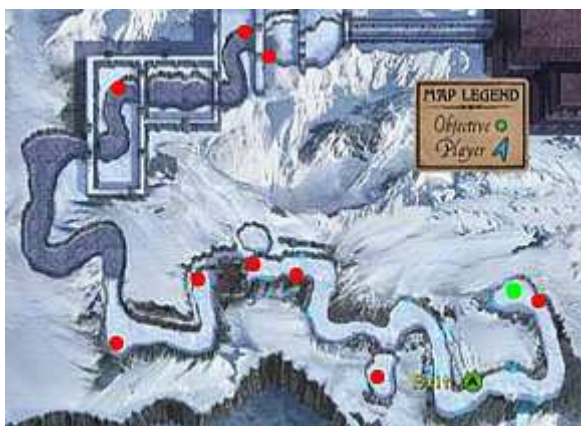
15. **Sektor's Rocket.** You'll find this rocket in the room where you obtain the fireball power. It's to the right of the exit door.

16. **Jade's Bracelet.** In the room where you find the green sword, you'll also find Jade's Bracelet spinning around in plain sight.



17. **Sonya's I.D.** In the next hallway, you'll encounter two patrol men. You don't need to kill them, but taking out the one on the left will net you Sonya's I.D.

4. Arctika



18. **Baraka's Blade.** You'll find this in the starting area to your left.



19. **Blaze's Essence.** In the area where you rescue the abbot, light the unlit fire pit with a fireball and it'll spit out this item.

20. **Havik's Mask.** At the first gauntlet of crushing mechanisms, you'll find this Mask to your left after the first mechanism.



21. **Ermac's Gem.** After the gauntlet, you'll fight a band of warriors. In the corner is a campfire and behind that will be the Gem.

22. **Jax's Beret.** After being ambushed by warriors and dispatching them with your sword, there is a wall of snow in front of you in the next area. Knock it down.



23. **Darrius' Shades.** Continue on from the Beret and you'll see a magnifying glass in plain view. Pick it up to reveal the Shades behind a campfire.

24. **Rain's Mask.** After a while, you'll have your first encounter with Lin Kuei archers, and then another set of spinning blades. Pick up the magnifying glass among the blades to discover the location of Rain's Mask.



25. **Ashra's Doll.** After another assault of Lin Kuei archers and spinning blades, break the snow wall to your left before you go through the doors.

26. **Kano's Mask.** At this section, you'll be bombarded with arrows and flaming catapult rocks. To your right you'll find Kano's Mask.

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5. Lin Kuei Palace



27. **Shang's Stone.** In the first hallway, get the stone from this pot. Ahem.



28. **Frost's Mask.** Next is a doorway covered in ice. Break the ice with your fists, pick up the magnifying glass, defeat Frost, and pick up her mask.

29. **Sub-Zero's Amulet.** Toss a fireball at the statue (the one the arrow of coins is pointing towards) for the amulet.



30. **Kitana's Fan.** After forming an alliance with Sub-Zero, the first hallway you run down will have this fan.

31. **Liu Kang's Armband.** In the next room, you'll scrimmage with the army of shadow stalkers. To your left will be a dead body. Check it three times for the armband.



32. **Onaga's Helmet.** In the hallway immediately after the shadow stalker fight, hug the left wall until you find some cracks. Break open the crack, dodge the fireballs, and you'll discover this helmet.

33. **Noob's Stars.** In the same hallway, break the next cracked wall on your left. Again, avoid the fireball and break open the pots, one of which will hide the stars.



34. **Smoke's Mask.** Find this mask in the hallway after you trounce Smoke.

6 + 7. Krimson Forest, Red Dragon Caves



35. **Sindel's Brush.** Pick up this memento at the starting area. It's in front of you, to the left. The Krimson Forest level does not have a map. Right after the Krimson Forest fight, you'll warp to the Red Dragon Caves, whose map is listed above.



36. **Fujin's Cape.** Once inside the caves, look to your left. Wedged between the chest and the wall is the cape.

37. **Tanya's Choker.** Continue down and take the first left. Break through these barrels and you'll find the choker hidden before the door.



38. **Mavado's Hooks.** Walk into the room where you learn Time Stop. Directly to your left (in front of the A1 door) are the hooks.

39. **Daegon's Belt.** Same room as above, next to the computers on the right side of the room.



40. **Kenshi's Blindfold.** On the bridge where you first encounter the lizard monsters, on the opposite side from where you enter.

41. **Sareena's Sash.** Right after the burly brawl with Sareena, Jataka, and Kia, one of the two barrels on your left in the next hallway will have the sash.



42. **Reptile's Medal.** In the next room, cross the bridge but don't wander too close to Reptile. Break this barrel on your left to find the medal.

8. Netherrealm Cliffs



43. **Shinnok's Crown.** After the first freefall, you can pick up this crown during the fight with the undead.



44. **Li Mei's Sandals.** After jumping down a few more levels, you'll come across a section that requires you to pound some switches. Once done, a wall will break, leading to a monolith and these sandals.

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9. Shinnok's Spire



45. **Bo Rai Cho's Jug.** On the second floor, when you're fighting the summoner demon and its imps, check one of the corners for this sporty jug.



46. **Nitara's Orb.** Keep fighting your way up until you enter a room with a flaming sword. Look to your left and there'll lie the orb.

10. Shao Kahn's Fortress



47. **Shao Kahn's Helmet.** Destroy the pillar on the right located at the start to get this skull helmet.



48. **Mileena's Veil.** From the pillars, stay to the left, go into the building, and climb the stairs. Successfully avoid the rolling spiked balls and you'll find the balcony along with the veil.

49. **Meat's Steak.** Go the other balcony to activate a switch that opens the gate. Inside the gate, you'll be forced into a battle on an elevator. On the left side you'll find this unusual item.

11. Shao Kahn's Fortress: Dungeon



50. **Quan Chi's Amulet.** Once descending further into the fortress, one of the first rooms will challenge you to defeat enemies in less than two minutes. This amulet is in the corner close to the door you entered from.



51. **Drahmin's Mask.** Open the cells and free the prisoners in the next room. Go back to the first cell on the right to pick up this mask.

52. **Mokap's Sensors.** Continue back up the hallway and enter the last cell on your left to find Mokap's lost sensor.



53. **Shujinko's Medal.** After putting the executioner out of commission and free Shujinko, enter his cell and take the medal.

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12. Shao Kahn's Fortress: In the Shadow of the Colossus



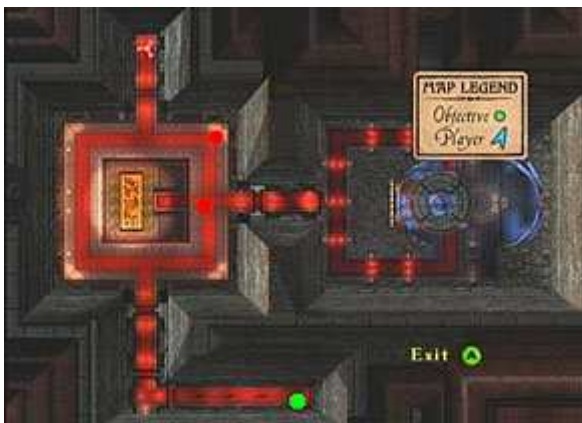
54. **Sheeva's Earrings.** During the fight with the Shao Kahn statue, fireball the orb on the right. The fire below will douse itself and reveal these earrings.



55. **Kintaro's Armor.** Repeat the above step, this time on the orb on the far left.

56. **Goro's Gauntlets.** Repeat the above step, this time on the orb on the near left.

13. Shao Kahn's Fortress: Throne Room



57. **Raiden's Hat.** After clearing the first batch of enemies, take the right path and you'll see the iconic hat.



58. **Reiko's Chest Plate.** Continuing down the same path, you'll come across this unlit torch. Light up and you'll get this nifty reward. Note: this can only be activated after you defeat Reiko.

14. Edenian Ruins



59. **Scorpion's Spear.** Scorpion's Spear will be in plain view after defeating the initial wave of enemies.



60. **Motaro's Horn.** After crushing the skulls at the cliff, continue forward where about half a dozen treasure chests will materialize. Towards the end, you'll find the horn in plain view.

Motor Kombat

Following the tradition established in the previous 3D Mortal Kombats, Motor Kombat is a kart racing mini-game, picking up the best attributes of the genre like power-ups, death pits, and branching paths. Best of all, it's playable on Xbox Live. With five deadly tracks and 10 shrunk warriors, use this character guide to make sure you're the sole victor.

Baraka

Baraka's special attack is the very cool double spark, which shoots out two projectiles in rapid succession. While this attack doesn't home like Scorpion's or Sub-Zero's, it's fast enough so that if your aim is even half-decent, the target is in for a shock. Also the only projectile useful against a crowd of racer since you can aim for two targets instead of one.



Bo Rai Cho

If you don't want to end up like Bo Rai Cho, don't drink and drive. His special attack makes him look behind and toss out a trail of tepid brown puke. While these kinds of attack are useful in other kart racers, the puke disappears quickly and you have to hold A2 to look back and A3 to attack, which is an awkward layout. Plus, if you're racing against humans, who would be dumb enough to be behind someone they know only has backwards attacks?



Cage

Emulating the green highlight of his shadow kick, Cage pumps out a ball of green goo. It goes up into the air and lands several feet in front of Cage's little red convertible. While not a bad weapon, a weapon that launches into the air is no comparison to Baraka's, Scorpion's, or Sub-Zero's straight shooters.



Cyrax

Cyrax drops a bomb for his special attack. Like with Bo Rai Cho, to use the attack effectively, you have to hold A2 to look back and press A3 to drop the bomb. And like with Bo Rai Cho, this button layout is unwieldy. Cyrax's bomb is better than the puke attack; at least with the bomb, it bounces around erratically, making people trying to swerve around you less safe.



Jax

Jax's special weapon, the ground pound, is similar to Raiden's in that it will attack enemies within a surrounding radius. Though more powerful than Raiden's electro circle, because Jax jumps up in the air to do his ground pound, it takes longer to activate and he does lose some speed when doing it. A good character to use when you're an expert at the tracks, but Raiden is more of a catch-all character.



Kitana

An excellent character to use for novices trying to get a feel for the lay of the land. Kitana's special weapon, a shield, will protect her from all projectiles. In addition, it saves her from death traps like the rising fires in Outworld Refinery or the dropping pillars in Botan Jungle. Falling off the track, however, is a different story.



Mileena

Mileena's special weapon, a boost that smashes the speedometer needle all the way to the right, is effective whether you're playing offline or on. When offline, because of some nasty rubber band AI, it's virtually impossible to keep first place for more than 10 or so seconds. With Mileena's boost, you can steal first place right at the finish line before the AI gets its own miraculous speed boost.



Raiden

Was there any wonder what Raiden's special weapon was going to be? With the touch of a button, Raiden unleashes an electric pulse, creating a wide circular field around his vehicle that chars anyone within. Useful when you're lost among the crowd, and especially at the beginning of a race when everyone's still relatively packed together and trying to pick up power-ups.



Scorpion

Only one racer gets a sound clip when attacking and that honor goes to everybody's favorite baddie, Scorpion. Yelling his "Get over here!" catch phrase, he launches out a hook that latches onto its target. The unlucky racer gets pulled back while Scorpion roars ahead. Useful at any point in the race, but for extra irritation use it when you're second place on the final lap to steal the victory.



Sub-Zero

Once equipped, Sub-Zero will launch an ice ball that freezes anything it touches. The ice ball is also slightly homing, so Sub-Zero is a good, rounded character to use on any track.

