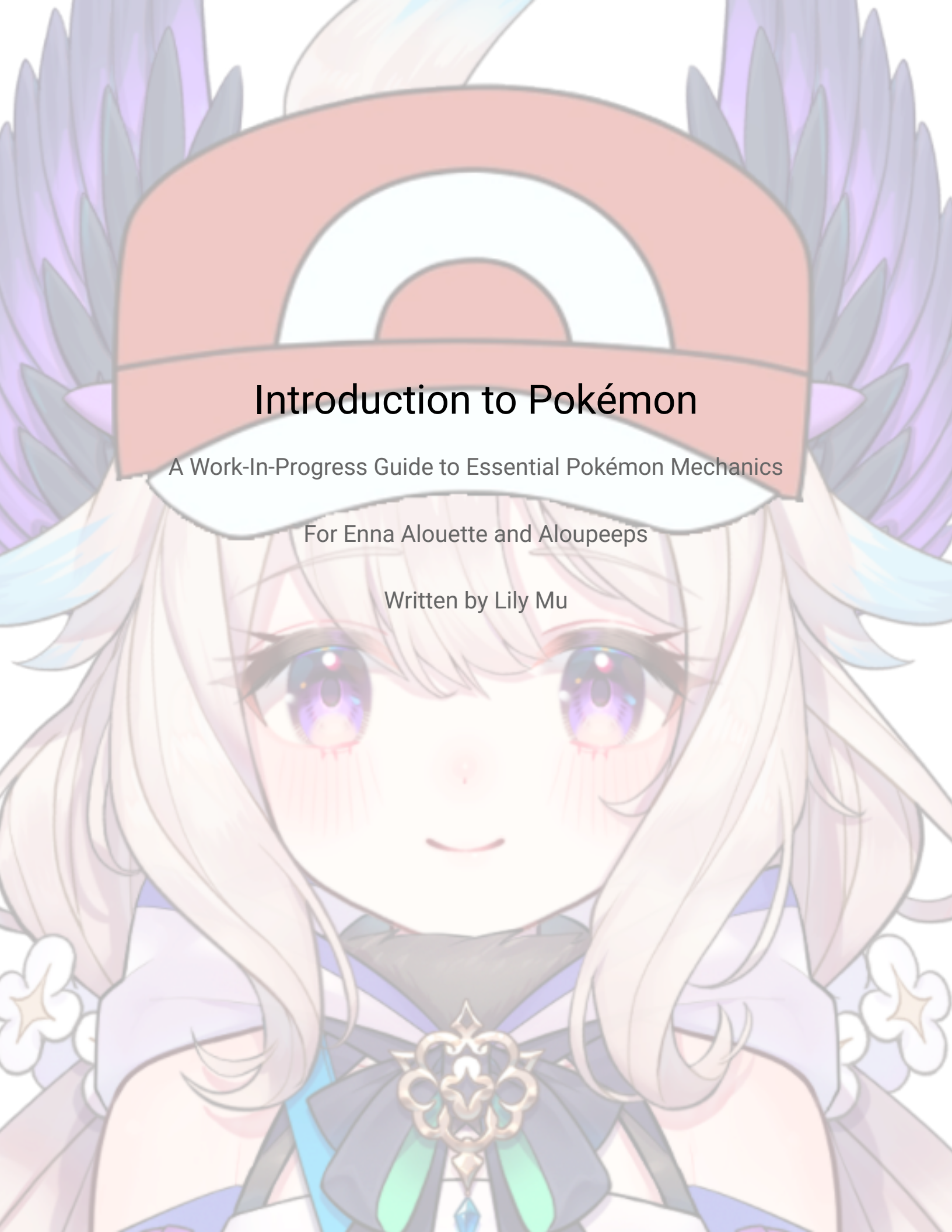




Introduction to Pokémon

A Work-In-Progress Guide to Essential Pokémon Mechanics

For Enna Alouette and Aloupeeps

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These sections are not yet fully organized. Please bear with me!

*Sections marked with an **asterisk** (*) will probably be easier to understand for players who have at least somewhat familiar with the Pokémon games.*

Pokémon Attributes

Stats

A Pokémon's stats are numerical values that ultimately determine how it performs in battle ("Stat"). Pokémon have six stats, and each stat can be increased through various means. Stats can also be temporarily increased during battle by using specific moves or items.

Permanent Stats

HP

Hit points—abbreviated HP—determine the maximum amount of damage a Pokémon can take before it faints. If a Pokémon's HP reaches zero, the Pokémon will be unable to battle until it is healed.

Attack

Attack influences the amount of damage dealt when using a physical move.

Defense

Defense influences the amount of damage taken when hit by a physical move.

Special Attack

Special attack—abbreviated Sp. Atk—influences the amount of damage dealt when using a special move.

Special Defense

Special defense—abbreviated Sp. Def—influences the amount of damage taken when hit by a special move.

Speed

Speed determines which Pokémon will attack first in the turn order. Pokémon with a higher speed stat will act before those with a lower stat.

In-Battle Stats

In addition to the six stats shown on a Pokémon's summary screen, there are two stats that exist only in battle: **accuracy** and **evasion**. Both of these stats work in conjunction with move accuracy, among other things, to determine whether a move will successfully hit.

Accuracy

A Pokémon's accuracy stat influences how often its moves will hit its target.

Evasion

A Pokémon's evasion stat influences how likely it is to be hit by an opponent's moves.

Moves

Pokémon can use a skill in battle known as a **move**. There are many different moves, and no species of Pokémon is capable of learning every move; each species has a predetermined set of potential moves often referred to as a **learnset**. Learnsets follow a theme, generally relating to the type and concept of each Pokémon ("Move").

A Pokémon may know between one and four different moves at any given time; if a Pokémon knows four moves and tries to learn another, a move must be replaced.

Moves are used with the ultimate goal of knocking out the target, but not all of them deal damage; some instead offer helpful effects that can tip the battle in your favor.

Power

All damaging moves have a set **power** which influences how much damage it deals. Generally speaking, higher power equates to higher damage; however, power is not the sole determiner of damage ("Power").

Accuracy

A move's **accuracy** determines how frequently it will successfully hit the target. Changes to the user's in-battle accuracy stat or the target's evasion stat further affect the chances of a move hitting.

PP (Power Points)

Every move has a set amount of **PP**, or **power points**, which determines the number of times a move can be used. When a move is used, its PP will be reduced by one; If a move reaches zero PP, it will become unable to be used until its PP is restored either via an item or by healing at a Pokémon Center.

If all of a Pokémon's moves reach zero PP, it will only be able to use Struggle, a low-power move that heavily damages the user through recoil damage.

Move Categories*

All moves are assigned to one of three categories: **physical**, **special**, or **status**. Moves that deal damage are almost always either physical or special; the exact category is typically relevant to the concept of the move. Most status moves do not deal damage; they instead offer effects that are helpful to the user.

Physical Moves

A physical move usually involves the user or a solid object making direct contact with the target. The user's Attack stat is considered when dealing damage.

Examples of physical moves:

- Tackle
- Karate Chop
- Rock Tomb

- Bite

Special Moves

A special move usually involves either an element or some sort of intangible concept attacking the target. The user's Special Attack stat is considered when dealing damage.

Examples of special moves:

- Absorb
- Ember
- Water Gun
- Confusion

Status Moves

A status move has an effect that is beneficial to the user. Any move that is not physical or special is a status move, as these moves typically do not deal damage. The aforementioned effects depend on the move, but some possibilities include restoring the user's HP, buffing its stats, or afflicting the target with a status condition.

Examples of status moves:

- Recover
- Defense Curl
- Work Up
- Thunder Wave

Types

There are a total of 18 different **types** in Pokémon. Every species of Pokémon has at least one type, and it is not uncommon for a species to have two types. All moves also belong to one of the 18 types. Types are an important battle mechanic to understand, as a Pokémon's type can influence the amount of damage it takes from moves.



Fig. 1. Pokémon Wiki, *The 18 Pokémon types*.

Type Effectiveness

A Pokémon can potentially take either increased or decreased damage depending on a move's type. Moves that do not have any of the following effects on the target Pokémon will deal neutral (1×) damage.

Super Effective Moves

Each Pokémon type has a **weakness** to at least two types of moves. A damaging move is "super effective" and deals 2× damage against a Pokémon if it is weak to the move's type.

Not Very Effective Moves

Every Pokémon type also has at least one **resistance**, with the majority of types having more than two resistances. A move is *not very effective* and will deal $\frac{1}{2}\times$ damage against a Pokémon if it resists the move's type.

Type Immunity

Some Pokémon types have **immunity** to certain types. If a damaging move is used on a Pokémon who is immune to the move's type, that move "has no effect" on the Pokémon—it will take no damage.

Dual-Type Weaknesses and Resistances

As mentioned in the previous section, there exists species of Pokémon who have two different types. These dual-type Pokémon take damage based on the combination of weaknesses and resistances provided by each of its types:

- If a move is super effective against one of the target Pokémon's types and is not very effective against the other, it will deal neutral damage;
- If a move is super effective against each of its target's types, it deals $4\times$ damage;
- If a move is not very effective against each of its target's types, it deals only $\frac{1}{4}\times$ damage.

Type effectiveness plays an integral part in Pokémon battles. While the prospect of having to memorize type matchups may seem overwhelming at first, it is not something to worry about. The constant exposure provided by each and every Pokémon battle will help you quickly memorize the most prominent type matchups.

Pokémon Battles

The Pokémon franchise primarily focuses on Pokémon battles, and this concept is especially prevalent in the franchise's core series of video games. A Pokémon battle is a competition in which two or more Pokémon—at least one of which is typically owned by a **Pokémon Trainer**—fight against each other. In the Pokémon world, a Trainer is a person who raises Pokémon and directs them in battles against fellow Trainers.

Pokémon battles in the core series of video games are conducted in a turn-based format. When battling against another Trainer, your goal is to temporarily knock out all of your opponent's Pokémon. Battles in the Pokémon video games can be extremely nuanced, but they are now more accessible than ever for newcomers to the series. This section will highlight some of the basic mechanics of battles that are featured in modern Pokémon games.

(From this point onward the term "Trainer" will refer to both the player and the NPCs and their AI in battle unless otherwise specified.)

Overview of Trainer Battles

While exploring in a Pokémon game, you will encounter many Trainer NPCs who are eager to challenge you to a battle. Interacting with willing Trainers will initiate battle, and many will challenge you on their own accord if you walk near enough to them.

A typical battle against these Trainers is conducted in a one-on-one scenario, and will allow you full access to the Pokémon in your **party**. Battles will progress in turns until all of either your or your opponent's Pokémon have **fainted**, at which point the Trainer with Pokémon still able to battle is declared the winner. When defeated, a Trainer will award the player with money; however, if you are the one who is defeated, you will lose a sum of money and return to the last Pokémon Center you visited, where your Pokémon are then healed. You may retry the battle until the Trainer in question is defeated, after which they will no longer challenge you.

Trainers that you encounter at the beginning of your journey will be rather weak, but as you progress through the region, they will become considerably tougher.

Battle Options

There are four main options available to the player in most Pokémon battles. The current turn in battle will proceed once the player locks in to any of these options.

Fight/Battle

Selecting *Fight* or *Battle* will display all of the moves known by the **active Pokémon**. One move may be selected per Pokémon per turn.

Pokémon

Selecting *Pokémon* will display your party and basic information about each of your Pokémon. Here you may choose to forgo attacking, opting to instead recall your active Pokémon before it faints.

Bag

Selecting *Bag* will open your inventory to display all **items** that are able to be used in battle.

Run

Selecting *Run* will allow you to attempt to flee from a wild Pokémon, prematurely ending the battle. This option does not work in Trainer battles.

Same-Type Attack Bonus

When a Pokémon uses a damaging move of a type that matches one of its user's types, the move receives a damage boost known as **same-type attack bonus**, abbreviated **STAB**. A move that receives STAB has its damage increased by 1.5×. This greatly increases the potency of many offensive moves.

As a general rule of thumb, you should usually prioritize using a STAB-boosted move whenever the target does not resist the move's type.

Glossary

active Pokémon. In battle, a Pokémon that is currently on the field.

fainting. Status condition in which a Pokémon is unable to battle ("Fainting"). Fainted Pokémon gain no experience from battle. Must be healed before partaking in battle.

items. Various resources and commodities collected throughout the game. Stored in the player's Bag.

party. The selection of Pokémon that a Trainer carries with themselves. Consists of at least one Pokémon up to a maximum of six.

Pokémon Trainer. A person who owns and raises Pokémon and directs them in battle.

recalling. The act of switching the position of your active Pokémon with that of one in your party.

recoil. Secondary effect of particular moves that causes the user to lose an amount of HP after damaging the target.

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