

How To Hookshot: A Young Link ZAir Guide

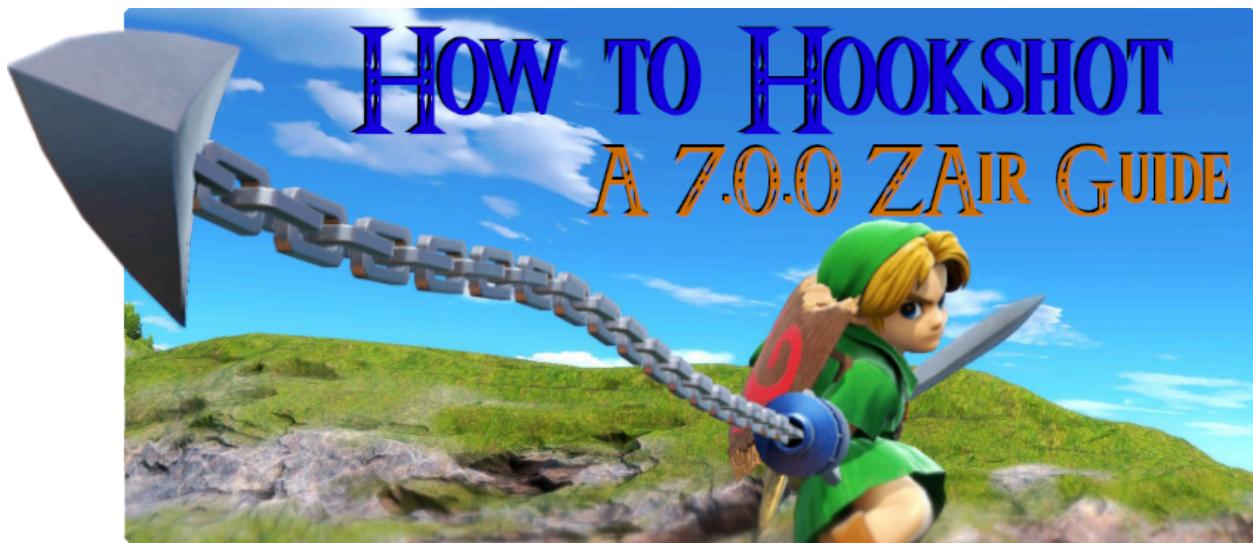


Image created by Swevester.

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Section I - Basic Data & Quick Overview



Max Range ZAir.

Basic Data

- Active on frames 9-16
- 8 frames of landing lag
- Hitstun increased by 4 frames in Patch 7.0.0
- Launch angle changed from 38° to 60° in Patch 7.0.0
- 4.0% base damage (4.8% in 1v1)
- ZAir is not affected by the short hop damage multiplier.
- -3 on shield (with max frame advantage)
- ZAir detects ledge only on frame 2.
- The new launch angle is slightly up and away.
- When ZAir reaches max distance while airborne, it recoils back to Young Link up and in. Essentially the “noodle” aspect of ZAir. Performing a short hop landing ZAir avoids the “noodle” aspect.
- The hitbox is on the hook, not the chain itself.

Quick Overview

Before Patch 7.0.0, ZAir was a rarely used part of Young Link's toolkit. It had only one minor use in being used from a double jump off ledge to escape a ledge-trapping situation. Outside of being an alternate recovery option as a tether, it saw little use.

Much about this move has changed due to the buffs in the patch. ZAir now consistently reaches max range, is active faster, and so much more rewarding. It now serves as a combo tool, tech chasing tool, and can even confirm into KOs at the appropriate percentages. As many of Young Link's moves have low range, having this one long-distance move compliments his moveset very well, giving him more options at a variety of ranges.

Section II - ZAir Usage In Neutral



Max range ZAir on Smashville.

As mentioned before, ZAir serves well as a long-ranged move in Young Link's short-ranged kit. It is not an all-purpose move, however; it has higher risk, start-up, and lacks the safety of some of his faster moves such as NAir and BAir. However, ZAir is safe on shield (-3) and can be spaced to prevent the opponent from punishing the ending lag. It is very good at catching the opponent while they are short-hopping (with landing or short hop rising ZAir), and is essentially non-committal. ZAir is able to out-space pressure from aerial attacks and movement mixups in footsies as well as being a safe landing tool when running or dropping down platforms. It can also be used out of a short hop to hit opponents on Battlefield platforms.

When ZAir connects with the opponent, the opponent will be sent up and away (with a launch angle of 60°). The knockback angle is comparable to Fire Arrow, but deals less knockback. It is quite potent and safe as a combo tool (see section III). Although it can combo and kill confirm, it is more important as a pressuring tool; even if you cannot start a combo with it, hitting ZAir will result in more control of the stage. With the amount of hitstun ZAir has, there is ample time to reposition and punish the opponent for their next action.

Realistically, ZAir will not always connect. Sometimes you may simply miss the move, or the opponent may dodge or shield the hit. Despite ZAir being -3 on shield, you won't be able to apply direct shield pressure afterwards when the move is spaced safely.

ZAir's usefulness depends on the match-up in question. For example, against Bowser, ZAir is a great tool that Young Link can use somewhat often to harass Bowser without risking direct interactions with his short-ranged aerials. Additionally, Bowser's size makes him quite the easy target. It also does well at catching opponents that like to hang low in the air, such as Peach or Inkling. However, ZAir can struggle to hit opponents who are too small to be hit, such as Pichu or Pikachu, or characters that are too fast or too hard to line up a ZAir against, such as Fox or Palutena.

Executing ZAir:

Properly executing ZAir relies on two factors: where Young Link is as he is falling, and how far away he is from the foe. The closer you are, the closer to the

ground you must be when executing ZAir for the move to be fully optimal. For example, if you plan on using it point-blank, you'll need to use it as quickly as possible before landing; given the move's startup is frame 9, you will need to be about halfway between the apex of a short hop and landing before using it. If you plan on using it at max range, you will need to use it within the first few frames of coming down after the apex of a short hop. If you plan to fast fall ZAir, you will need a lot more height before using the move, else you risk landing before getting a hitbox out. Keep in mind that during a ZAir, a fast fall cannot be input; in order to fast fall, it must be performed before the move.

Optimal spacing, point-blank:



Optimal spacing, mid-range:



Optimal spacing, max-range:



Optimal spacing from a full hop fast fall:



Section III - Combos & Kill Confirms

ZAir's Combo Potential: ZAir does not send the opponent into tumble until rather high percentages without rage (71% on Roy for example), which means the opponent cannot DI high damage ZAir combos. The percentage that ZAir will start to tumble decreases as Rage grows; at max Rage, even the heaviest fighters will tumble at 0%. Below is a list of some of the more optimal combos, but not all of them. Though there are still combos above tumble percentages, tech chasing usually offers a greater reward.

Clarification: “Point-blank” refers to landing ZAir while being directly next to the opponent and is usually required for the combo to work. If not specified, the required spacing is usually just mid-ranged ZAir. The higher the percent, the tighter the spacing will be.

Pre-Tumble Percent Combos

- ZAir > GSA > Aerial Follow-up (NAir, BAir, UAir)
- ZAir > DTilt > Aerial Follow-up (NAir, BAir, UAir)
- ZAir > BAir > Follow-up (2nd Bair, DA, Turnaround Grab) (Works better on floaties)
- ZAir > Nair (nair sets up for tech chases, and is very lenient with spacing)
- Fire Arrow > ZAir (combos at %s where NAir would but works from farther away)

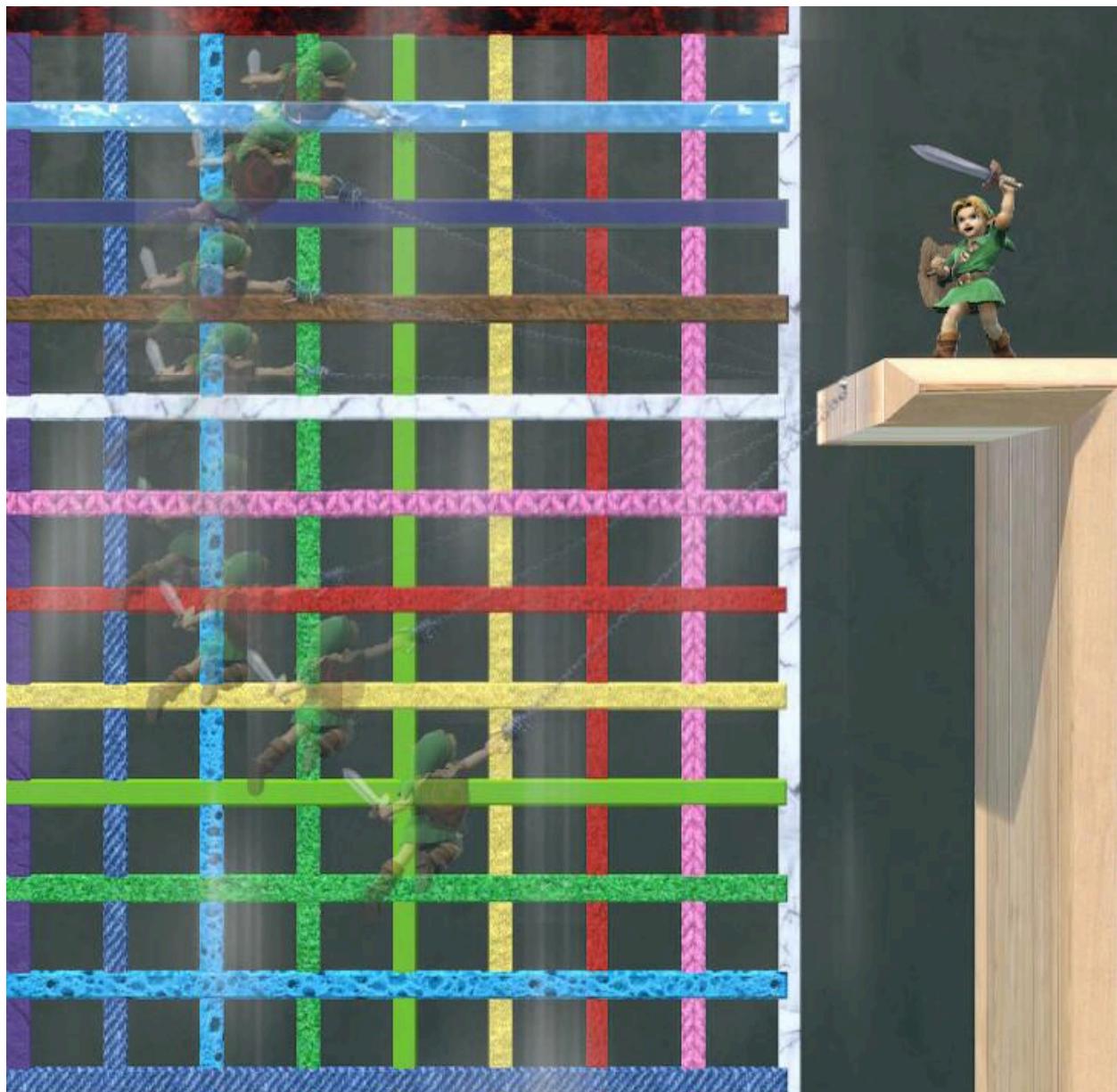
Post-Tumble Percent Combos / Kill Confirms

- ZAir > NAir / DA (these two are true, can kill, and are low-risk but also low-rewarding)
- Landing ZAir / Fire Arrow > ZAir (This is used for platform tech chases)
- ZAir > USmash
- ZAir (Point-Blank) > DAir
- ZAir (Point-Blank) > FAir1
- ZAir > FAir
- ZAir > run off ASA at ledge

Video reference for all ZAir combos:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FvmBYcyLqgE>

Section IV - Tether Recovery

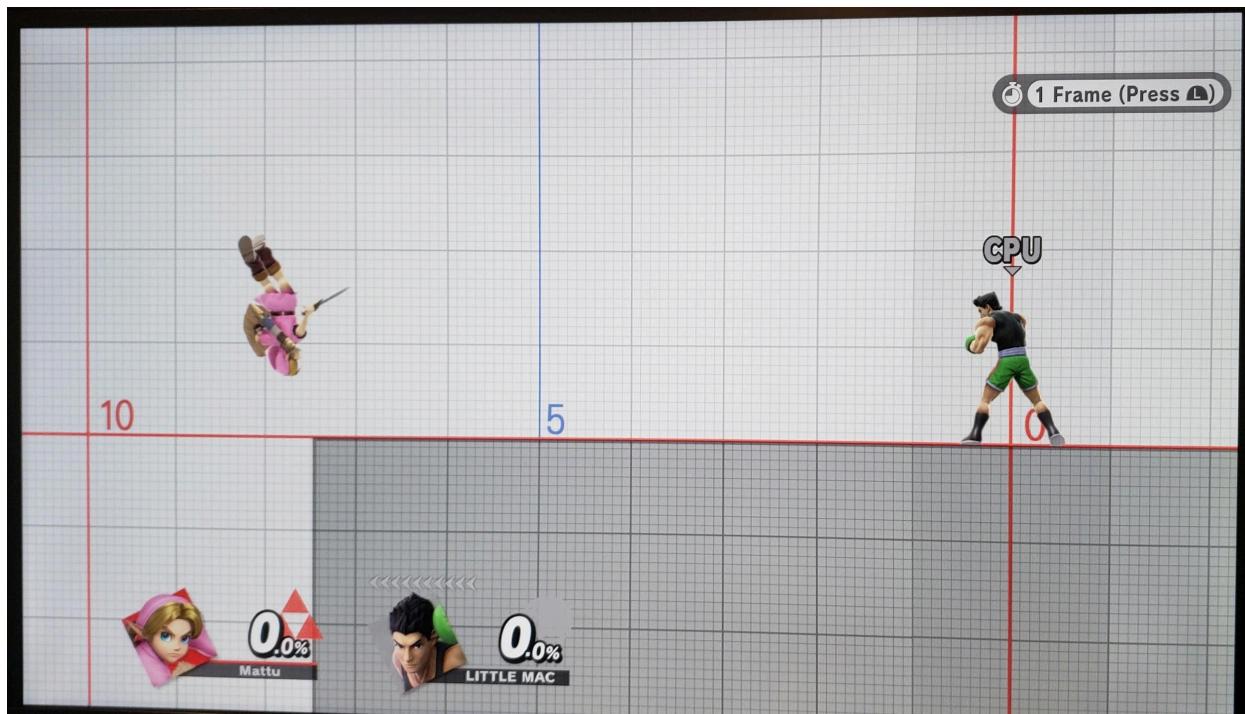


Max range on tether recovery from all angles.

Tether Recovery: Young Link's ZAir as a tether recovery did not get any changes in the Byleth patch, but it still has distinct differences from its function as an attack. It requires 2 frames for ledge snapping and has 73 frames of end lag.

Tether Cancelling: If you are above the ledge, you can hold down on the control stick to cancel your tether. This is a good way to mix up a recovery, as it puts you above the ledge. You can throw out a move before landing such as NAir, FAir, DAir, and even another ZAir. [Here](#) is a video about tether cancelling for further details.

Fast Tether Cancel (FTC): When double jumping back to ledge, you are able to perform a FTC by jumping at a certain height (see image below) and reeling in the Hookshot back onto stage instead of grabbing onto ledge. Once you land you will be able to attack immediately. [Here](#) is an example of an FTC performed correctly.



Please note that this exact spot is hard but possible to hit. This tech is still being labbed to find more easier and consistent setups so this section may be updated in the future!

Lagless Pull: The exact reasoning for this tech is not yet known, but when approaching the stage from above and reeling in at a specific height, it is possible to land on stage without any landing lag, allowing for instant attacks. Sometimes, if you reel in from above, you may land on stage and experience 3-4 frames of landing lag. There is currently no definitive answer as to why lagless pulls happen, and as such, there is no consistent set up to replicate. [This video](#) is an example of what it would look like if they were to occur. This is being labbed for a consistent setup.

Section V - Miscellaneous

Tether Ledge Trump: By performing a short hop and drifting slightly away from ledge and tethering to ledge, one can perform a tether ledge trump. [This video](#) is a good guide and provides examples of what you can do with this. This is also able to be done from platforms on Kalos and Yoshi's Island by doing a drop down quarter circle away from the stage and Zairing.