

COBRA: The most aggressive tower

Introduction

What is COBRA?

COBRA is one of the most complicated, unique, and aggressive towers in the game. Compared to other towers that usually do damage, COBRA changes the game itself; changing what Bloons the rounds generate, getting your opponents to defend whenever you want them to, sending bloons much earlier than usual, and so on.

Why is it considered the most aggressive tower?

COBRA enables you to put pressure on the opponent throughout the entire game by getting them to build more defense than needed or surprising them with early Bloon sends. It flips the game into what you want, and completely changes the gameplan of your opponent.

General strengths

- Can be used on any map
- Provides another way to generate income
- Stop the opponent from generating income
- Forces the opponent to spend money defending

General weaknesses

- Has weak DPS
- Needs multiple COBRAs to pull off a specific gameplan
- Needs a support tower
- Weak to early rushes

Basics for beginners

What to know first

The main goal for COBRA is to change how the game plays out and having the game be beneficial for you. It is not used for popping

Bloons itself. This is the difference between other towers in the game. When using COBRA, you always want to be on your feet and doing the following 2 things: putting constant pressure on the opponent and having constant control over the game. To do this, you must have the aggressive mindset - i.e. taking less care of what the opponent does and putting more care on what you can make that opponent do.

Upgrades explained simply

- Wired Funds - Generates income
- Bloon Adjustment - Upgrades AI bloons
- Monkey Stim - Decreases the Tower Boost cooldown
- Offensive Push - Decreases the round unlocks for Bloons
- Double Tap - Adds another gun
- Attrition - Steals lives from the opponent
- Finish Him! Decreases the Bloon Boost cooldown
- Misdirection - Sends the highest tier Bloon to the opponent

Beginner tips

- Use COBRA with a cheap group-popping tower - e.g. Mortar and Bomb; COBRA has very low DPS
- Don't overspend on Bloon Adjustment COBRAs early on - balance your defense and prioritise having stable defense
- COBRA shines in the mid game, so focus on surviving in the early game
- Don't get Attrition COBRAs early on

Strategy and gameplans

Loadout synergies

Since COBRA is a tower that tries to create aggression within the game, the game will often end early. It has very weak DPS, so you need to defend early on. Here is a list of common COBRA synergies:

- COBRA + Mortar
 - Mortar has very good cheap group damage for the early game, can attack anywhere, and removes camo detection off camo Bloons.
- COBRA + Bomb

- Bomb, like Mortar, has decent group damage for the early game and has good MOAB-class damage.
- COBRA + Tack
 - Tack has the best early DPS in the game on some maps, and has the decent MOAB-class damage.
- COBRA + Wizard
 - Wizard has group damage that is somewhat expensive, but is an excellent all-round tower.

With these synergies, we can pair these with other towers to fill all the weaknesses the synergies have:

- COBRA + Bomb + Mortar
- COBRA + Tack + Mortar
- COBRA + Bomb + Sub
- COBRA + Tack + Sub
- COBRA + Tack + Wizard
- COBRA + Wizard + Ace

Standard COBRA Gameplan

The gameplan for COBRA is pretty set in stone, however you mustn't go too far away with the basic principles and steps of this gameplan as a small slipup can transition into a large deficit later on.

1. Start with a defense tower (e.g. Mortar) to survive and pop Bloons early on.
2. Start getting Wired Funds until the midgame whilst steadily building eco.
3. Transition into the gameplan you want in the midgame (e.g. getting Bloon Adjustment COBRAs.)
 - a. Make sure the opponent overdefends whilst maintaining your eco.
4. Send rushes that capitalise on the opponent's weaknesses.

There are many factors that can affect your gameplan, but the standard principles should be in your priority.

When to get Bloon Adjustment

Bloon Adjustment COBRAs upgrade the AI Bloon's tiers and add properties, and some strategies are weak to this. Specifically, strategies that have weaknesses to Camo Bloons, Regen Bloons, and Ceramic Bloons, and strategies with unstable income generation.

Farm strategies are somewhat prone to this as the opponent bases all their income on farms in general. When getting Bloon Adjustment COBRAs, this usually forces the opponent to sell their farms, and slowly decrease their income generation, causing them to lose money and be in a losing position. Expensive towers (e.g. Heli) are also prone to Bloon Adjustment COBRAs.

Bloon Adjustment COBRAs should be bought by round 18, slowly increasing the amount of Bloon Adjustment COBRAs until they are not beneficial (i.e. the opponent can defend many Ceramic Bloons with Camo and Regen properties.)

When to get Offensive Push

Offensive Push COBRAs decrease the Bloon round lock number which can stack. This can catch opponents by surprise and, specifically, those who are still building their income.

Eco strategies are especially prone to these, as they base their generation by eco. Eco takes some time to make back profit, so sending early MOAB-class Bloons (i.e. spaced BFBs and a spaced ZOMG) is usually the critical and winning play in the game.

Offensive Push COBRAs should be bought a couple rounds before you can send a MOAB-class Bloon, and don't spend money on income that will therefore not create profit early on (e.g. stopping income generation a few rounds before Round 17 - a few rounds before BFBs can be sent.)

Defending with COBRA

Placing COBRAs shouldn't be something to worry about, however the best placements are usually places where the COBRAs can pop the AI Bloons early to antistall and/or where the COBRAs can pop the opponent's Bloon sends early to defend well.

COBRAs should always be set on Strong targeting priority.

Having a lack of Tower Boosts is fine as the game will, at most times, end early on. However, you should still use Tower Boosts wisely. If you think the game will go later than usual, try your best to save a Tower Boost for the late game, but don't sacrifice too much for it.

Monkey Stim decreases the Tower Boost cooldown. You can use this if the opponent sends rush and your Tower Boost is off cooldown, or to cycle your Tower Boosts more quickly.

Counterplay, pressure and top level tactics

Timing attacks

It is important to plan and time when your attack will come into play, so here are a few things to note when to attack with your gameplan.

AI rounds have 'spikes' where the Bloons are more difficult in a particular round compared to others. You can use Bloon Adjustment COBRAs when the AI rounds spike. Here are a few examples:

- Round 16 has Zebra Bloons which can turn into Ceramic Bloons when you have Bloon Adjustment COBRAs.
- Round 18 has Rainbow Bloons which can turn into Ceramic Bloons when you have Bloon Adjustment COBRAs.
- Round 25 has many grouped bloons which can turn the entire round into a Camo Regen Ceramics Bloon 'flood'.

If you see the opponent gaining income via eco through the mid game, you can surprise them and render some of their income worthless by getting Offensive Push COBRAs and sending early BFBs or a ZOMG.

Counter strategies (when the opponent uses COBRA)

There are a few key ways to counter COBRA which gives you an insight to the opposing side of COBRA. This can be very useful to explore strengths and weaknesses on your own and that can give you more insight on your games.

1. Bring a tower that can defend well against grouped defense (e.g. Mortar and Sub) - this will help you defend the early Bloons the COBRA player will send and can defend AI Bloons that get upgraded by the Bloon Adjustment COBRAs.
2. Don't over-farm or over-eco when you see the opponent play like they are idle as this is a sign they could stack Bloon Adjustment or Offensive Push COBRAs.
3. Rush when the opponent over-invests into Wired Fund COBRAs early on.

Micro tips

When using COBRA, you are, more often than not, getting a lot of COBRAs. It is best to practise selling in quick succession in a short period of time to sell COBRAs quickly in case you need money to defend

Special game modes

COBRA can be absolutely a vital tower in some special game modes - with some arenas having COBRA banned because of how insane it is.

- In Bananza, Offensive Push COBRAs allows you to send ZOMGs quickly by farming well.
- In Defense Mode, COBRA is a slow but forcing way to win most games, however some of the strengths are muted because of how Defense Mode works.
- In Mega Boosts, Monkey Stim and Finish Him! shine as it decreases the Tower Boost and Bloon Boost cooldown, allowing for upgrading towers via the powers quicker.

Matchups - Playing with and against COBRA

As the COBRA player

The COBRA player needs to get the mindset of being aggressive. Remember, COBRA doesn't want to pursue the long game, it's to pressure the opponent at every possible opportunity and stage. The goal is to disrupt the opponent's gameplan, force defenses that are usually not needed, and punish any income they try and attempt to generate.

1. Play for the control
 - a. You need to get the opponent to respond to you the entire time throughout the game.
2. Punish greed
 - a. When your opponent farms or builds eco too hard, use COBRA to punish them.
3. Get the opponent to play inefficiently
 - a. Make your opponent try and spend money on defense at times which are unusual.
4. Be active at all times
 - a. COBRA doesn't work when you play passively as you try your best to dictate the match.

Against the COBRA player

Against the COBRA player, you need to get the mindset of being defensive. The opponent will always try to throw you off the gameplan you try and create before you can do anything to save the game. If you try to be greedy, you will most likely fall behind.

1. Play safe
 - a. If you over-farm or over-eco, the opponent will punish you as soon as they can.
2. Stabilize the game
 - a. If you can defend their aggression, you will be able to go into the late game where COBRA falls off.
3. Force defense
 - a. Their damage is weak, so sending rushes forces them to defend instead of keeping their aggression.
4. Don't try and panic
 - a. The idea of COBRA is to make you trip and create mistakes, so if you defend well, their early aggression can leave them falling behind later on.

Quick references

Round pressure guide

Below is a list of rounds which are good with Bloon Adjustment COBRAs:

- Round 16 - has Zebra Bloons.
- Round 18 - has Rainbow Bloons.
- Round 19-21 - most bloons are at a tier which can turn into Ceramics.
- Round 25 - has many grouped Green Bloons which - with enough Bloon Adjustment COBRAs, can turn into Camo Regen Ceramics.
- Round 31 - has many grouped Zebra Bloons - even though it is late to the round, it is a very underrated round if the opponent isn't careful.

Wired Funds efficiency

The total cost of a Wired Funds COBRA is \$825 with the sellback value being \$660. The true investment is \$165, which is the net cost you need to earn back before it becomes profitable. Wired Funds generated $\text{Income}(r) = 70 + r$, where r is the round number.

With this information, we can figure out the following thresholds:

- If you buy on rounds 1 to 11, you need 3 payouts.
- If you buy on rounds 12 to 94, you need 2 payouts.
- If you buy on rounds 95 and higher, you need 1 payout.

This is useful as you can keep purchasing Wired Funds in the late game to make extra money.

Do's and don'ts

There are some common mistakes which players make when using COBRA.

Do:

- Get Wired Fund COBRAs early
- Time Bloon Adjustment COBRAs
- Mix a few attacking gameplans together
- Think about how the map works
- Stay aggressive constantly

Don't:

- Get too much Wired Fund COBRAs early
- Get too little Bloon Adjustment COBRAs
- Rely on COBRAs for DPS
- Go past ~15-25 Bloon Adjustment COBRAs
- Play passively

Closing tips and final thoughts

What to do now?

Now that you have learnt COBRA to a good degree, practice different matchups and play many games. Intuition goes well with aggression, and having a few standard gameplans against specific strategies gets you to somewhat relax a little as you know - give or take - how the game will turn out.

Experiment with different COBRA synergies. This guide doesn't mention COBRA + Boomerang + Heli, as that is an extreme COBRA strategy which only works when played to a high degree of accuracy.