

Aphotix's Setsuki guide (updated 7/16/21)

Setsuki is an aggressive character who relies on rapid movement, tricks, and big combos in order to overwhelm her opponent. She has the most varied movement options and angles of attack out of the entire cast. To counterbalance her immense offense, she only has 5 hit points and lacks defensive options, giving her one of the shortest average round lengths of any character.

Setsuki is one of the most demanding characters to use in Fantasy Strike. She requires you to press buttons more frequently and more quickly than any other character, and she often has to commit to her next attack before either player is fully aware of how the current situation is playing out, forcing you to be one step ahead. Setsuki also requires great knowledge of your opponent's character to break through their defense. This gives Setsuki a challenging learning curve and an exceptionally high skill ceiling.

Move breakdown

jA (jumping A) is your go to attack in the neutral game. It is a dive kick that you can angle two ways, which you can use by holding back (for a steep angle), or neutral/forward (for a flatter angle that covers more ground). It is important to note that Setsuki has one of the fastest jumps in the game, the kick's startup and travel speed are fast, and she can start the kick quickly after leaving the ground. It can be tricky for opponent's to anti-air your dive kicks due to the variety of angles, heights, and timings that you can vary between. On all characters aside from Rook, Oni, and Dragon Midori, most dive kick hits will combo into nA, which can be further comboed into her Super, or canceled into one of her special moves, leading to mixups. When blocked, it leaves you with some amount of frame advantage based on where the kick connects.

nA (neutral A) is a knee strike and is your primary ground attack. With only 5 frames of startup, it is tied for the quickest normal attack in the entire game. It has limited range, but due to Setsuki's mobility, it is not difficult to get the opponent in range and start to bully them with it. You can cancel the knee strike into an elbow strike by pressing nA again during the knee. If the knee hits, it does *not* combo into the elbow strike (it will combo on counterhit though). Both the knee strike and elbow strike can be canceled into specials or super. On hit or when blocked, the knee strike leaves you at -4 (4 frames where your opponent can act before you), but if you cancel into the elbow strike, the opponent will not have enough of a gap to use any move except an invulnerable/armored reversal. On hit, the elbow strike leaves you at +2 and when blocked leaves you at ± 0 . It is important to note that the frame data should not be considered in a vacuum, because the special cancels Setsuki can do gives you the initiative in most situations.

You have a myriad of ways to abuse all of these options off of connecting with nA (whether it is blocked or not). Some of the basics are:

(on hit or block) cancel into elbow strike, the remainder of these options remain true whether you are using the knee or elbow strike

(on hit or block) cancel into C for a mixup.

(on hit or block) recover, then go for a normal throw

(on hit or block) recover, then jump forward and use jA or jC as soon as possible

(on HIT) cancel into S for a combo.

(on COUNTERHIT KNEE) combo into the elbow strike, then S for a 3 damage combo. It is nearly impossible to react to the knee counterhitting, but if you blindly choose to do the elbow cancel, you can react by the time the elbow hits and get the super cancel.

C Starlight Tumbler is Setsuki's ground C. If tapped (and not held), Setsuki will do a forward flip that is projectile-invulnerable for a brief period, then will land with a few frames of recovery. Importantly, the tumbler can be canceled *from* nA or fA, and doing so will cause the opponent to be stuck in hit/blockstun during your startup. You have several options during the flip besides letting it finish.

hC (hold C) performs a command grab from the flip that deals 1 damage and knocks-down. The opponent has to jump or use an invulnerable move to avoid the throw. This is your primary weapon from the tumbler, and you will use it often. If it whiffs, Setsuki has significant recovery, and if the opponent neutral jumped it, they can generally punish for significant damage.

PROTIP There are ranges and timings (close, but not point blank; at point blank the grab usually whiffs) where you can use the grab safely against reversals like Flash Gear and Dragonheart. If they reversal, you sail right past them.

C>A Pressing A during the flip will make Setsuki dive kick. This dive kick always has the forward angle, regardless of holding b/f. The dive kick is relatively safe even if it whiffs, making it useful for hedging your bets when you are unsure how the opponent will defend. If the opponent doesn't commit to a jump or reversal, they will be stuck blocking the kick, which will let you pressure into another C.

The dive kick is difficult to hit with though, because in many cases the opponent can jump out before the kick hits them. So, to get maximum value out of C>A, you need to know when it will hit a jumper. This will depend on spacing, and the amount of hit/blockstun they were in when you started the tumbler. Canceling into C>A from fA will leave the opponent in the most hit/blockstun, for reference.

PROTIP C>A has some wonky crossup potential against cornered opponents (and against Argagarg from anywhere on screen, curiously). Use it more often than usual when you have the opponent trapped there (or your opponent is trapped by being Argagarg against Setsuki).

C>B (More on jB later) Pressing B during the flip does her normal jB, which is Kunai. C>B is a trickshot/fakeout type of move that will let you hang in the air for longer than anticipated, to bait something like a throw or parry.

C>C Pressing C during the flip does an anti-jump rising cape attack. If done as soon as possible, and from a close distance, it will catch the jumps of most characters and cause a ground bounce, which can be juggled into nA if you land close enough (remember to cancel that nA into another C for more mixups in rapid succession). This is your punish for opponents who jump to avoid hC throw. Make sure the opponent is consistently jumping hC before using C>C often.

There are some challenges with using C>C. Firstly, be SURE you mash C if you plan on using C>C, since any delay will ensure the cape whiffs. You also need to be extremely close (near point blank, or preferably point blank) when you start the C or it may whiff. Finally, you'll want some frame advantage so that you're already in the air when they leave the ground for maximum success rate. I rarely use this move due to these issues, but it can come in clutch if you're very precise.

C>S (More on jS later) Pressing S during the flip will cause Setsuki to do her air super. C>S is a useful trick to bait and punish a reversal attack.

C (no follow up) There are a few situations where empty C is the way to go. Against characters with fast reversals, doing a blockstring into C cancel will cause you to get hit unless you opt not to follow up (you could also C>S). There are also applications to empty C through projectiles from long distances, followed up by a quick attack after landing.

S Esper Dash is Setsuki's ground super. The startup of the dash is NOT invulnerable, but when she starts dashing and is in active frames, she is fully invulnerable until the active frames end. She is once again vulnerable in recovery frames, meaning a whiff or blocked dash can be punished. The dash reaches over half of the screen, so it is handy as an anti-air even if the opponent is fairly distant. It can also be used to go through projectiles and punish the zoner's recovery. Due to the vulnerable startup, it is NOT a reversal and will NEVER allow you to escape moves that are about to hit you. It is also the only super in the game that can be canceled from normal attacks, and it combos from both nA and fA for an extra damage and a knock-down.

jC Flying Fox is Setsuki's jumping C. It causes Setsuki to do a swooping cape attack. You can do a second air action (A, B, C, S) when it connects (hit or block) or when it ends naturally. It deals 1 stage of chip on block, and is one of your primary means of dealing chip damage. It has

a strange attack angle, and will force opponents to anti-air differently than if you only use dive kicks to attack from the air. Between steep dive kicks, long dive kicks, capes, other tricks (like jB and jS), anti-aiing Setsuki is extremely difficult to do consistently, even with a great anti-air attack.

You also have the option to hold back while pressing C, and she will do the cape backwards (regardless of what direction she was moving prior). That comes in handy if you do an ill-advised jump towards a character that you do not want to be next to, or to bait a super attack out of the opponent.

PROTIP Against a knocked-down opponent, you can jump forward as they are getting up, then quickly cape forward (which will hit as a crossup), immediately cape BACK (which combos for 2 damage), instantaneously land with enough time to combo into nA (or fA, but it's a lot tighter). Vary between the crossup cape and a bA dive kick, which will land same side instead of crossing up. This mixup creates a 50/50 that deals up to 4 or 3 damage, respectively. This is a lot easier to pull off on some characters than others, and is significantly easier to do in the corner than at mid-screen.

B Ninja Port is Setsuki's ground B. It is a mid-range dashing attack, and there's a lot going on with it. The dash is invisible and temporarily invulnerable after startup. Ninja Port hits once during the dash, then, once she stops, she'll either do a kick (if you tapped B) or attempt a jumpable command grab (if you held B). The kick reaches high in the air, and has some invulnerability frames. It will usually hit people attempting to jump away (and you can juggle into S if they get anti-ai'd from high enough). Due to opponents not knowing exactly where you will appear, sometimes you will do an unexpected crossup. The command throw has a short reach, so you need to space the dash well to ensure you're right next to them or the throw will whiff. Much like her hC throw, the opponent jumping hB can lead to a multiple-damage punish.

It is possible to get both the dash hit and the kick to combo. It requires hitting from the max distance, so that the dash just barely hits before its active frames run out. On counterhit, the kick will always combo from the dash, and even the THROW will combo from a counterhit. This makes it tempting to fish with B, but usually it leads to being punished and put into a terrible situation. Only use this move with proper spacing, timing, and a strong read on what the opponent is doing.

fA (forward A) is a thrusting double palm strike. Functionally, it's a slower, longer-reaching version of nA that does more hit/blockstun. It is special- and super-cancelable, and has advantages due to the longer hit/blockstun it causes.

Due to having more hitstun, it naturally combos into B's first hit, meaning that you can use B as a combo ender in situations where it is lethal and save your super meter (you can obviously use it when it isn't lethal as well, but now you're risking being punished since the B kick or grab can be avoided as normal). In blockstring situations, it is preferable to cancel fA (over nA) into C

since it will keep the opponent stuck in place longer, making it easier to hit with C>A or C>C. However, the slower startup means that a blocked dive kick is not usually a true blockstring with fA, so the opponent can reversal out (which is not true of nA -- nA is always a true blockstring from dive kick and the opponent cannot act). Mix in the fA blockstring once you've conditioned the opponent to never press buttons after blocking a dive kick. fA can also be used as a whiff/recovery punish when nA wouldn't reach (and S can be used when neither would reach!)

bA (Back A) is a slow, long-reaching slide attack. It has niche applications while applying your normal pressure, and is more of a reactive move for specific situations. Due to how low to the ground Setsuki is while sliding, it can anti-air many jump-ins and sneak under airborne moves (such as Jaina's knee). It has surprisingly high priority against grounded opponents, and can beat out some pokes the opponent might try in neutral. Going for a dive kick is usually better pressure though, so don't approach with slides too often.

If the slide is blocked from point blank on the first active frame, it leaves you at -2, but if done from the MAX range, and blocked on the LAST active frame, it leaves you at +10. Neither one of those things happens often, but it's good to realize that a close blocked slide will leave you minus, and a far slide will leave you plus. On HIT, the spread is ± 0 from point blank, and +12 from max range. This gives the slide a handy application, which is to use it as a meaty attack after a distant knock-down. You will not usually hit your opponent with it, but even if it's blocked it will leave you with enough frame advantage to follow up however you want. If it does happen to hit from far away, you can potentially combo into nA.

jB Kunai is Setsuki's jumping B. You can hold back or forward to get a steep or wide angle (similar to her dive kick). You can use kunai to hang in the air for an unexpected amount of time, and throwing the kunai completely stops your horizontal momentum. The kunai has the unique and unfortunate property of being HITTABLE. The opponent can use moves with forward reach to smack it out of the sky, negating it entirely. This heavily limits the kunai's usage in neutral situations, since it will not reliably cover your approach. Instead, it is best used as a meaty, while the opponent is knocked-down. If they are forced to wake up into the kunai, they will either have to reversal, or block and take 1 stage of chip (which is very helpful when followed up by jC! $\frac{2}{3}$ of a full point of a chip on their wakeup).

jS Surprise Gift is Setsuki's jumping super. When activated, Setsuki freezes in midair (both vertically and horizontally), and attempts to parry an attack. If she is struck by an attack or projectile, the parry is triggered and the cinematic plays. After it ends, a log replaces Setsuki, and will fall vertically and hit as a projectile. Holding back or forward during the cinematic will teleport you to either side of your opponent, and you gain a few seconds of semi-invisibility (you flicker in and out of being visible). If the log hits the opponent, you can potentially combo them (or juggle them if they are airborne). It can be a huge blowout if you can bait an opponent into wasting their own super in an attempt to anti-air you, only to parry and punish them.

The Combo

(Notation Key | x = cancel | , = move finishes)

It is worth highlighting that Setsuki has the most practical 4-damage combo in Fantasy Strike. jC x jA, (land) nA x S is one of the best punishes in the game, and warps how often opponent's will attempt reversals that risk being blocked and punished for 4 damage.

If you don't have super meter and hit at the correct angle, you can do a jbA (the steep divekick) instead of the regular one, which will combo into fA (jfA will not combo into fA). As you know, fA can combo into B, giving you a meterless 4-damage combo as well. You should always try to do the meterless version if it is enough to kill, sparing your meter for the next round. To recap, the meterless version is jC x jbA, (land) fA x B.

Matchups

Because Setsuki is a heavily polarized character, there is generally only one avenue for success against her. Due to her incredible mobility and arsenal of moves that ignore projectiles, she is nearly impossible to keep out for more than a few seconds. This doesn't make zoning tools useless against her, but they are not ever going to account for the majority of damage against a competent Setsuki player. Every character has to do their best to pressure Setsuki as soon as they can get some frame advantage or a knock-down. Due to her complete lack of an invincible reversal attack, almost every character can do a surprising amount of offense against her if they get the chance. Live by the sword, die by the sword.

Setsuki also has a few ways to do a chip damage checkmate against characters who lack an invulnerable reversal. If you knock-down the opponent while they have 1 life, do a meaty kunai, jC x jA, A x B. Kunai is 1 stage of chip, jC is 2, B kick is 3. If the opponent cannot escape the kick, they have no way out. You can do some variations on this using 2 jCs, or 2 kunais, but the first method will work from anywhere on the screen as long as they don't have an escape.

With that in mind, here's some matchup specific advice.

Grave - Grave's hB (big fireball) is hard to jump over (or even flip through with C), so you're better off using S to punish it. B isn't an ideal punish, because unless you get the 2 hit combo, he can always reversal with C (sword) on reaction to your B follow up (regardless of which you choose). He also has a great reversal and anti-air in his S, so you'll have to bait that out. If you block it, you can do the 4 damage combo. If you block his sword, you will not have time for a big punish, so settle for any hit you can get. S will always punish a blocked sword, but you may be able to get something better if you're closer.

If Grave ever knocks you down, you are in huge trouble. His oki mixups can easily kill you before you get out, so be mindful of his moves that knock-down.

Jaina - Jaina is a similar challenge to Grave. Her C costs 1 HP, so she needs S to cleanly reversal your B follow up (I would not use it too often regardless). Her dive kick can pressure you really hard, but ultimately you have air superiority due to your greater set of angles and timings, so you should focus on staying higher in the air than her. Her S (a normally niche move) happens to beat your B and C (unless you didn't follow up the C and can jS in response). Both C and S can be punished with the 4 damage combo.

Geiger - Geiger is a similar story to Grave and Jaina, but Geiger is a bit harder to get in on due to fA being an amazing poke. Geiger's jC is also a tricky move to navigate, and requires precise spacing and quick reactions to punish. If he's directly above you while starting it, you can walk underneath him and punish with nA. If he's a bit farther back, you will have to Super. If he's farther back than that, you can get above him in the air and make him block (but not usually hit with) a dive kick. If you block a C (Flash Gear), you can do the 4 damage combo.

Argagarg - Of the zoners, Arg has the most opportunity to deal damage from long range due to his nA and fA. However, it is not particularly hard to avoid these moves, and you can deny Arg from using his special cancels when he gets you to block one of them. If you block fA, and he attempts to cancel into B or C, Esper Dash will punish from all but the farthest ranges, and hC will punish from closer ranges. Normally blocking fA or nA is bad for Arg's opponent because of the special cancels, but since he is unable to cancel them (except from really far away), blocking them gives you the momentum instead.

The two tools that truly keep the match from being a lopsided pounding are his bA and S. Predictable dive kicks will result in being anti-ai'd by bA, and with only 5 HP, you can't afford to run into too many. bA also outranges your normal throw, so you have to attack with odd timings to make him whiff.

S (Bubble Shield) is his get out of jail free card. To overcome Arg's S while he is knocked-down, you will need to only do safe meaty attacks as he is waking up (usually a dive kick). If he opts to super, you have a 50/50 between throwing him or going for nA (nA will hit before the bubble can pop, which cancels it). If you opt for a throw and he yomi counters, he now has a bubble active, and another ready to go, so you'll probably lose the round.

If you're in neutral and he has S ready, you have to somehow trick him into using it. You can try a jump then to a jbA as soon as possible (to abort the jump) and hope he reacts with S. You could try jumping towards him and throw a kunai, or you could boldly walk up as far as possible and see what he does. In any event, it really warps what options you have, because you do not want to run into Bubble Shield for free.

Lum - Your B follow up is a true 50/50 against Lum (if spaced properly so the throw won't whiff), and while you still shouldn't spam it, it definitely has more power than in an average matchup. bA is notably great for beating mini lums, since it will also beat Lum's roll if he tries to press

forward while they are marching. The only time you'll be in a lot of trouble is if Lum knocks you down, and can go for a jA ambiguous crossup, which will lead to 3 damage if you guess wrong.

Lum also struggles to anti-air both capes and dive kicks. He needs to S (slot machine) just to trade with them, otherwise he has to preemptively jump and hope to hit you air to air, or preemptively nA, both of which can be easily baited and punished.

Valerie - Val can wall you pretty effectively jAA until you have super meter. You have no choice but to be patient and get her to block a dive kick or anti-air her with super. Once you get on offense, she only has S to deal with the pressure, so baiting S should ensure your victory.

If Val gets you to block an attack, you have to block until you have frame advantage (usually from blocking a Yellow or Rainbow Stroke). Do not try to mash your way out of her pressure.

DeGrey - DeGrey's ghost is a real issue for you. While it is a projectile, the startup and recovery are too quick for your anti-projectile tools. He has deadly mixups, and his jS will beat every one of your attacks in the air. This means you need to go full tilt whenever his super is down, while still managing the ghost. Once he has super, you'll have to mix in empty jumps in the hopes of him reacting with jS, in which case you can jS in response. DeGrey can also avoid and punish your B follow ups with his B, so use it sparingly.

The good news is that once you get him to block something, his only true reversal is S (parry), which can be thrown. This is one of your harder matchups, but still perfectly doable.

Midori - Midori is tricky due to his parry. If you approach with predictable timings, he will steamroll you by parrying you then mixing you up. His yomi counter is also exceptionally deadly, since it deals 2 damage and gives him full dragon meter. Midori also has an above average throw range, so going for lots of grounded pressure can get you scooped up. If you can avoid running into these issues, you get to dictate the pace of the match. Be wary of hanging in the air when he gets full super, since he can anti-air you from far away and knock you down.

Dragon form is deadly, and remember that since the dragon is tall, even if you manage to land jC x jA, it may not combo into nA if you hit at the top of your jump. If you can ever jump over a C grab, you can potentially punish for 5-6 damage (using a jB or jC x jB for extra damage while he's stuck grabbing the air). When dragon form ends, Midori cannot block on the first frame of his transformation, so if you can meaty a kunai or jC, he has to take the full combo.

Rook - You have to fight Rook much more mindfully than against most other characters. Being thrown will usually lead to losing the round. His C grab beats your command throws. This means you can only use them once he's conditioned to stop trying to C throw after blocking your strings. His C throw has 1 hit of armor, so jC x jA will break through it. The issue is that if you jump at him with jC, he will cleanly beat you with jump back C. This means you need to mix in jA

(which will hit him trying to jump back), but that loses to C throw. Yikes. His S has infinite hits of armor, but still can be baited by doing jC x jB, or jS.

You can get more mileage out of kunai against Rook due to how big and slow he is, but being too predictable will get you jC'd or B'd. Your B kick breaks armor, but it is still extremely risky to use against Rook. Your primary way of starting pressure is to anti-air him with S from long range, then using the knock-down to apply some safe meaty pressure.

Setsuki - The mirror is all about staying above the other person in the air. Kind of like the game Divekick. That's mostly what you'll be doing. Make them block you first and you can roll them over.

Onimaru - Oni relies on armor to stop rushdown even more than Rook. You can exploit that by jumping in with jC more often than in a typical matchup. Oni has poor air defense in general, and will rely on super risky prediction jC's to hit your approach if he lacks super meter. His super is his only reliable tool to counter your pressure, but it has no throw invulnerability, so if you can bait him into using it while he's throwable, you can counter it as well.

Quince - Quince has a great anti-air tool with his bA. You need to be varied and unpredictable in your attacks or you'll run into it over and over. He also has some gimmicky options such as jB, which can be surprisingly hard to hit air to air or anti-air. Finally his jS is deadly and will smack anything you do in the air, meaning you will need to avoid jumping when his super is loaded unless you ALSO have super meter and can counter his jS with your own jS.

Good luck, and thanks for reading.